

**A COMMENTARY ON
GALATIANS (KJV)**

Dr. John Gill D.D.

About the Author

This commentary written by John Gill (1697 - 14 October 1771) is a verse by verse comment on each verse of the gospel of Matthew. It is part of his 3 volume set of the New Testament (1735-38). He was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life.

John Gill was awarded in 1748, an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Aberdeen. He was a profound scholar and a prolific author.

His most important works are:

- The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated (London, 1731)
- The Cause of God and Truth (4 parts, 1735–38), a retort to Daniel Whitby's Five Points
- An Exposition of the New Testament (3 vols., 1746–48), which with his Exposition of the Old Testament (6 vols., 1748–63) forms his magnum opus
- A Collection of Sermons and Tracts[1]
- A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-Points, and Accents (1767)[1]
- A Body of Doctrinal Divinity (1767)
- A Body of Practical Divinity (1770).

He taught and maintained the Doctrines of Grace and contended against the Arminianism of John Wesley and has been classified by some as a Hyper Calvinist.

His views on Eschatology were Historic however his treatment of the Olivet Prophecy in Matthew shows he noted the significance of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and it is believed by the publisher that had Dr. Gill known J.S. Russell the eschatology taught in his his book *The Parousia*¹ he would have been enabled to further the cause of God and Truth and clearly teach a fulfilled view of prophecy know as Preterism. It is hoped this commentary will be of helped to those Preterist who have no knowledge of Calvinistic soteriology.

¹ See Further Publications at the end of this book.

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INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS

The persons to whom this epistle is written were not such who made up a single church only, in some certain town or city, but were such of which several churches consisted, in a region or country called Galatia, as is evident from Ga 1:2 and the members of these churches seem to be chiefly, if not altogether Jews, since the apostle includes them with himself; as having been under the law, under tutors and governors, and in bondage under the elements of the world, and to whom the law had been a schoolmaster, though now they were no longer under it as such, Ga 3:23 or however, though some of them might have been originally Gentiles, yet, previous to their conversion, had become proselytes to the Jews, and now were returning to Judaism again, as appears from Ga 4:8. When and from whence this epistle was written, is not very clear and manifest: some have thought, that it was written about the time of the writing of the epistle to the Romans, and upon a like occasion; but if it was written about that time, it could not be written from Rome, as the subscription to this epistle attests, since it is certain, that when the apostle wrote his epistle to the Romans, he had never, as yet, been at Rome. Beza is of opinion, that it was written from Antioch, between the return of Paul and Barnabas thither from their first journey, and the troubles which broke out in that church, Ac 14:28. But to this it is reasonably objected, that it is questionable whether there were so early any churches in Galatia at all; and if there were, it does not seem that the defection from the faith, complained of in this epistle, as yet had took place in any of the churches; for it was after this date that the troubles upon this head arose at Antioch, which seems to have been the first place, and the church there the first church the judaizing teachers practised at and upon. Some Latin exemplars testify that it was written from Ephesus; of which opinion was Erasmus; but as Dr. Lightfoot observes, the same reason is against this as the former, seeing the corruption that was got into this church was then but beginning, when the apostle was at Ephesus: it seems therefore most likely, that it was written from Rome, as the subscription in the Greek copies affirms; and which is strengthened by the Syriac and Arabic versions, seeing it seems to have been written after the apostle had made the collections, in several places, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, Ga 2:10 and when the apostasy from the faith had got to a great pitch; nor is it any objection that there is no express mention made of his bonds in it, as there is in those epistles of his, which were written from Rome; since,

when he wrote this, he might have been delivered from them, as some have thought he was after his first defence; and besides, he does take notice of the marks of the Lord Jesus he bore in his body, Ga 6:17. Dr. Lightfoot places the writing of this epistle in the year and in the "fifth" of Nero; some place it in 55, and others in 58. That there were churches in Galatia very early, is certain from Ac 18:23 but by whom they were planted is not so evident; very likely by the apostle, since, it is certain, both from this epistle, that he was personally in this country, and preached the Gospel here, Ga 4:13 and from

Ac 16:6 and if he was not the instrument of the conversion of the first of them, which laid the foundation of a Gospel church state, yet it is certain, that he was useful in strengthening the disciples and brethren throughout this country, Ac 18:23. But after his departure from them, the false teachers got among them, and insinuated, that he was no apostle, at least that he was inferior to Peter, James, and John, the ministers of the circumcision; and these seduced many of the members of the churches in this place, drawing them off from the evangelical doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, persuading them that the observation of the ceremonial law, particularly circumcision, was necessary to their acceptance with God, and justification in his sight: wherefore the occasion and design of this epistle were to vindicate the character of the apostle as such; to establish the true doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the works of the law; to recover those who were carried away with the other doctrines; to exhort the saints to stand fast in the liberty of Christ, and to various other duties of religion; and to give a true description of the false teachers, and their views, that so they might beware of them, and of their principles.

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS

This chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, the apostle's usual salutation of the persons he writes to, and the charge he brought against them for their fickleness and inconstancy, in showing any manner of disposition towards a removal from the Gospel; the truth, certainty, and authority of the Gospel, and an account of himself, who was a preacher of it; of his life before conversion; of the nature and manner of his conversion; of his travels, labours, and usefulness afterwards. The inscription is in Ga 1:1 in which the writer of the epistle is described by his name Paul, and by his office, an apostle; which office he had not of men, but of God, of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and of God the Father, who is described by his power in raising Christ from the dead. The persons to whom the epistle is inscribed are the churches of Galatia, and those that joined the apostle in the salutation of them were the brethren that were with him. The salutation follows, Ga 1:3 in which mention being made of Christ, there is a declaration of a singular benefit by him, which contains the sum of the Gospel, as that he gave himself for the sins of his people, to deliver them from the present evil world, according to the will of God, Ga 1:4 upon which a doxology, or an ascription of glory is made, either to Christ, who gave himself, or to the Father, according to whose will he did, or to both, Ga 1:5. After which the apostle proceeds to exhibit a charge of levity against the Galatians; and which he expresses in a way of admiration, that they should so soon be carried away from the doctrine of grace, to another doctrine the reverse of it, Ga 1:6 though he somewhat mitigates this reproof by laying the blame on the false teachers, who were troublers of them, and perverters of the Gospel of Christ; and corrects himself for calling their false doctrine by the name of another Gospel, Ga 1:7 and delivers out, and pronounces an anathema on all such, whether angels or men, that should preach any other Gospel than he had preached, and they had received, Ga 1:8. The excellency of which Gospel is set forth, by the matter of it, being not human but divine, and by the manner of preaching it, with all simplicity and honesty, not seeking to please men, Ga 1:10 and from the efficient cause of it, it being denied to be after man, or received from, or taught by man, but is ascribed to the revelation of Christ Jesus, Ga 1:11. And that the apostle had it not from men, he proves by the account of himself, and his conversation before conversion, as how that he had been a persecutor of the church of God, of those that professed the Christian religion and doctrine;

wherefore he could not have the Gospel, as not from nature and education, so not from the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, who encouraged him to persecute, Ga 1:13. And this he further makes to appear by his great proficiency in the religion of the Jews, and his abundant zeal for the traditions of the fathers, which set him at the greatest distance from, and opposition to, the Gospel of Christ, Ga 1:14. And, on the other hand, that he received it of God, and by the revelation of Christ, he proves by the account he gives of his effectual calling and conversion; the source and spring of which was the sovereign will of God in divine predestination, and the moving cause of it, the free grace of God, Ga 1:15. The manner in which this was done was by a revelation of Christ in him; and the end of it was, that he might preach Christ to the Gentiles, which he immediately did, without consulting flesh and blood, Ga 1:16. And as it was a clear point that he could never receive the Gospel from the Jews before his conversion, he and they being enemies to it, and persecutors of it; so it was evident that he did not receive it, after his conversion, even from Christian men, seeing he did not, upon his conversion, go directly to Jerusalem, and confer with the apostles there, who were the most likely persons to have taught him the Gospel; but instead of this he went into Arabia preaching the Gospel, and then came back to Damascus, where he was converted, Ga 1:17. And it was three years after his conversion, that he went to Jerusalem to visit Peter; and his stay with him was very short, no longer than fifteen days; and he was the only apostle he saw there, excepting James, the brother of Christ, Ga 1:18 for the truth of all which he appeals to God the searcher of hearts, Ga 1:20. And then goes on with the account of himself, and his travels; how that when he departed from Jerusalem, he did not go into any other parts of Judea, and visit the churches there, but went into the countries of Syria and Cilicia; and was not so much as known by thee, or personally, by any of the churches, or members of the churches in Judea, Ga 1:20 so that as it could not be thought by his short stay at Jerusalem, and the few apostles he saw there, that he received the Gospel he preached from them, so neither from any other ministers, or body of Christians in the land of Judea; for all they knew of him was by hearsay only, as that he who was formerly a persecutor of them, was now become a preacher of the Gospel he had sought to destroy, Ga 1:22 wherefore it was a clear case he had not received the Gospel from them. Besides, as they had heard that he preached the Gospel of Christ, they glorified God for it, who had revealed it to him, and

bestowed gifts upon him, fitting him for such service, Ga 1:24.

GALATIANS CHAPTER I

6 He wondereth that they have so soon left him and the gospel, 8 and accursed those that preach any other gospel than he did. 11 He learned the gospel not of men, but of God: 14 and showeth what he was before his calling, 17 and what he did presently after it.

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

[2] And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

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

[4] Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

[5] To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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

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

[8] But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

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

[10] For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

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

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

[13] For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

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

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

[16] To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

[17] Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which

were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

[18] Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

[19] But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

[20] Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

[21] Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

[22] And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:

[23] But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

[24] And they glorified God in me.

JOHN GILL'S COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS
CHAPTER I

Galatians 1:1

Ver. 1. **Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man,**

... The writer of this epistle, Paul, puts his name to it, as to all his epistles, excepting that to the Hebrews, if that be his, being neither afraid nor ashamed to own what is herein contained. He asserts himself to be "an apostle", which was the highest office in the church, to which he was immediately called by Christ, and confirmed in it by signs and wonders. This he chose to mention, because of the false teachers, who had insinuated he was no apostle, and not to be regarded; whereas he had received grace and apostleship from Christ, and was an apostle, "not of men", as were the apostles or messengers of the sanhedrim²; See Gill on "2Co 8:23" and as were the false apostles, who were sent out by men, who had no authority to send them forth: the apostle, as he did not take this honour to himself, did not thrust himself into this office, or run before he was sent; so he was not sent by men; he did not act upon human authority, or by an human commission: this is said in opposition to the false apostles, and to an unlawful investiture with the office of apostleship, and an usurpation of it, as well as to distinguish himself from the messengers and ambassadors of princes, who are sent with credentials by them to negotiate civil affairs for them in foreign courts, he being an ambassador of Christ; and from the messengers of churches, who were sometimes sent with assistance or advice to other churches; and he moreover

² Misn. Menachot, c. 10. sect. 3. & Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5.

says, "nor by man"; by a mere man, but by one that was more than a man; nor by a mortal man, but by Christ, as raised from the dead, immortal and glorious at God's right hand: or rather the sense is, he was not chosen into the office of apostleship by the suffrages of men, as Matthias was; or he was not ordained an apostle in the manner the ordinary ministers of the Gospel and pastors are, by the churches of Christ; so that as the former clause is opposed to an unlawful call of men, this is opposed to a lawful one; and shows him to be not an ordinary minister, but an extraordinary one, who was called to this office, not mediately by men, by any of the churches as common ministers are:

but by Jesus Christ;

immediately, without the intervention of men, as appears from Ac 26:16. For what Ananias did upon his conversion was only putting his hands on him to recover his sight, and baptizing him; it was Christ that appeared to him personally, and made him a minister; and his separation with Barnabas, by the church, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, Ac 13:2 was to some particular work and service to be done by them, and not to apostleship, and which was long after Paul was made an apostle by Christ. Jesus Christ being here opposed to man, does not suggest that he was not a man, really and truly, for he certainly was; he partook of the same flesh and blood with us, and was in all things made like unto us, sin excepted; but that he was not a mere man, he was truly God as well as man; for as the raising him from the dead, in the next clause, shows him to be a man, or he could not have died; so his being opposed to man, and set in equality with God the Father, in this verse, and grace and peace being prayed for from him, as from the Father, Ga 1:4 and the same glory ascribed to him as to the Father, Ga 1:5 prove him to be truly and properly God. The apostle adds,

and God the Father;

Christ and his Father being of the same nature and essence, power and authority, as they are jointly concerned and work together in the affairs or nature and Providence, so in those of grace; and particularly in constituting and ordaining apostles, and setting them in the church. This serves the more to confirm the divine authority under which Paul acted as an apostle, being not only made so by Christ, but also by God the Father, who is described as he,

who raised him from the dead;

which is observed, not so much to express the divine power of the Father, or the glory of Christ, as raised from the dead, but to strengthen the validity

of the apostle's character and commission as such; to whom it might have been objected, that he had not seen Christ in the flesh, nor familiarly conversed with him, as the rest of the apostles did: to which he was able to reply, that he was not called to be an apostle by Christ in his low and mean estate of humiliation, but by him after he was raised from the dead, and was set down at the right hand of God; who personally appeared to him in his glory, and was seen by him, and who made and appointed him his apostle, to bear his name before Gentiles, and kings, and the people of Israel; so that his call to apostleship was rather more grand and illustrious than that of any of the other apostles.

Galatians 1:2

Ver. 2. And all the brethren which are with me,

.... Meaning either the brethren of the church where he was when he wrote this epistle, who were children of the same Father, regenerated by the same grace, belonged to the same family and household of God, and were heirs together of the grace of life; or else his fellow ministers, who were assisting to him in his work, and were companions with him in his travels, and whom he sometimes mentions by name and joins with him in his epistles, as Sosthenes, Silvanus, and Timothy; and the rather he takes notice of the brethren here, whoever are meant, to show that they agreed with him in the doctrines of grace he defends, and in the charges he brought against this church, and in the reproofs and advice he gave them; which he might suppose, and hope, would have the greater weight and influence upon them;

unto the churches of Galatia;

Galatia was a country in the lesser Asia, inhabited by the Gauls, who coming thither out of Europe, mixed with the Grecians; whence it was first called Gallo Graecia, and afterwards Galatia; See Gill on "Ac 16:6". The metropolis of it, as Pliny³ says, was formerly Gordium, and the chief towns or cities, according to him, were Ancyra, Tavium, and Pessinus; and in some, or all of these places, it is very probable, were the churches here mentioned; See Gill on "Ac 18:23". It seems there were more than one in this country; for the primitive churches were not national nor provincial, but congregational, consisting of persons called out of the world, and joined together in holy fellowship and who walked in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord: and though these churches had many among them that were disorderly, and were swerving from

³ Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 32.

the faith of the Gospel, yet were not unchurched, but honoured still with the name of churches, there being no perfection to be expected in this state of things; as not in particular persons, so not in congregated bodies and societies; though it is observed by some, that they are barely called churches, without any additional epithets, as churches of God, beloved of God, called to be saints, faithful and sanctified in Christ, which are bestowed on other churches; whereby the apostle is thought to show his indignation and resentment at their principles and practices. For quickly after the Gospel was preached unto them, false teachers crept in among them, endeavouring to subvert it, by mixing it with the law, and joining Moses and Christ; and in which they very much succeeded; and is the reason of the apostle's writing this epistle.

Galatians 1:3

Ver. 3. Grace to be you,

.... After the inscription above, in which the writer of the epistle, and the persons joined to him, are described, and the churches to whom it is written, follows the salutation in these words, and which is common to all the epistles of this apostle; of the sense of which, See Gill on "Ro 1:7". The Alexandrian copy reads, "from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ"; and the Ethiopic version reads, "our Father".

Galatians 1:4

Ver. 4. Who gave himself for our sins,

.... The antecedent to the relative "who, is our Lord Jesus Christ", Ga 1:3 and the words are an illustration of the good will of God the Father, and of the grace and love of Christ, in the gift of himself, for the sins of his people: he did not merely give, "sua, his own things", what were his properly, but, "se, himself"; not the world, and the fulness of it, gold, silver, and such like corruptible things; no, nor men for them, and people for their lives; nor angels, his creatures, and ministering spirits; but his own self, his life, his flesh, his blood, his body, and soul, his whole human nature, and this as in union with himself, a divine person, the eternal Son of God. He gave himself freely, cheerfully, voluntarily, into the hands of men, justice, and death itself, as a sacrifice for sin, to expiate it, make reconciliation and atonement for it, which could not be done by the sacrifices of the legal dispensation; to procure the remission of it, which could not be had without shedding of blood; and utterly to take it away, finish it, and make an end of it, and

abolish it, so as that it might never rise any more to the condemnation of his people: and this reached to "sins" of all sorts, not only original, but actual, and these of thought, word, and deed; and this oblation of himself upon the cross, was not for any sin of his own, who had none, nor for the sins of angels, of whom he was no Redeemer and Saviour, but "for our sins"; not the sins of the apostles, or of the Jews only, nor yet of all mankind, but of God's elect, called the friends of Christ, his sheep and church, for whom he gave himself; and his end in so doing was,

that he might deliver us from this present evil world; by which is meant, either the Jewish world, or church state, in which were a worldly sanctuary, and which were subject to ceremonies and traditions, called the elements and rudiments of the world; and who were possessed of worldly notions, and in expectation of a worldly kingdom to be set up by the Messiah; and both in principle and in practice were sadly degenerated, and were become very evil and wicked: or the present age and generation of men, whether of Jews or Gentiles, which was so corrupt, as the like was never known; or in general the present world, and the men of it, in distinction either from the world before the flood, as in 2Pe 3:5 or rather from the new heavens and earth, which will be after the present ones, and wherein will dwell righteousness; or, in a word, from the world which is to come, as they are frequently opposed in Scripture: and which is said to be "evil", not with respect to the matter, that being all very good, as created by God; but with respect to the men of it, who lie in wickedness, under the power of the wicked one, and of their own sins; and to the things which are in it, all which are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Now Christ gave himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, that as in consequence of this they might be delivered and saved from the damning power, so from the governing power and influence of all that is evil in this present world; as from Satan, the god of it, who has usurped a power over it; from the lusts that are predominant in it; from the vain conversation of the men of it; from the general conflagration of it at the last day, and from the perdition of ungodly men, and their eternal destruction in hell: and all this is

according to the will of God, and our Father,

It was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that Christ was delivered up into the hands of wicked men, and put to death by them; it was his will of purpose and decree, to deliver him up into the hands of justice and death, and that he should give himself

sacrifice for sin; yea, it was his will of command, that he should lay down his life for his sheep, to which he was obedient; it was his pleasure, it was what was agreeable to him, was to his good liking, that he should die for the sins of his people; it was owing to the love of God, who is our Father in Christ, and by adopting grace, and not to any worth or desert of ours, that Christ gave himself for us; as his own love, so his Father's will, were what solely moved him to it.

Galatians 1:5

Ver. 5. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. That is, either to Christ, who gave himself to expiate the sins of his people, on the account of which all honour and glory are due to him from them; or to God the Father, according to whose will of purpose and command Christ gave himself, for which glory ought to be ascribed unto him; and it may well be thought, that both are taken into this doxology: the Father is to be glorified, who of his everlasting love, and free favour, did in his eternal purposes and decrees in his counsel and covenant, so wisely frame and order things, that his own Son should be given to be an offering for sin; and Christ is to be glorified, that he, of his free rich grace and love, agreed to give himself, and did give himself to be a ransom for his people, which has been testified in due time. This ascription of glory to both shows the greatness of the blessing, and the grateful sense which all interested in it ought to bear upon their minds continually, "for ever and ever"; or "to the ages of ages", a Jewish phrase, the same with *Nymle ymlē*⁴. To which the apostle adds his "Amen", as joining with all the saints, above or below, in ascribing salvation, and the glory of it, to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Galatians 1:6

Ver. 6. **I marvel that ye are so soon removed,**
.... The apostle now enters on the subject matter of this epistle, and opens the occasion and design of it, which were to reprove the Galatians for their instability in the Gospel; and, if possible, to reclaim them, who were removed, or removing from the simplicity of it; and which was very surprising to the apostle, who had entertained a good opinion of them, looked upon them as persons called by the grace of God, well established in the doctrines of the Gospel, and in no danger of being carried away with the error of the wicked the person from whom he says they were removed is,

⁴ {c} Zohar in Gen. fol. 72. 3.

from him that called you into the grace of Christ; by whom is meant, not the apostle himself, who had been an instrument in the calling of them to the knowledge of Christ, and the participation of his grace, and from whose Gospel, or the Gospel as preached by him, in its clearness and purity, they were now departing; but either Christ, and so the Syriac and Arabic versions read the words, "from Christ who called you by own grace"; or rather God the Father, and some copies read, "into", or "by the grace of God": to whom calling is most commonly ascribed in the sacred writings: and which is to be understood, not of a ministerial call, or a call to preach the Gospel of Christ; though there might be some in these churches who were called both internally and externally to that sacred office; nor a mere outward call by the ministry: for though doubtless there might be some among them who were only so called, yet as much as they were under profession of Christ, and nothing appearing to the contrary, they were all in a judgment of charity looked upon as effectually called by the grace of God; which calling is here meant: for they were called "into the grace of Christ"; some read it, "in", or "by the grace of Christ": referring it either to the moving cause of calling, which is not the works and merits of men, but the free grace and favour of God in Christ; or to the efficient cause of it, which is not the power and will of man, but the efficacious grace of Christ, through the powerful operations of his Spirit: but the words are well rendered, "into the grace of Christ"; that is, to the enjoyment of the fulness of grace which is in Christ; of all the blessings of grace he has in his hands; such as justification, peace, pardon, atonement, wisdom, strength, joy, comfort, and every supply of grace; and particularly fellowship with him, into which the saints are called, and than which nothing is more desirable: but the difficulty is, how such persons can be said to be removed from God, who has thus called them to partake of grace in Christ. They are not, nor can they be removed from the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to them in Christ, of which their calling is a fruit, effect, and evidence; nor from their covenant interest in him, which is immovable and inviolable; nor from a state of justification, in which they openly are, who in the effectual calling have passed from death to life, and so shall never enter into condemnation; nor from the family and household of God, in which they are; no, nor from the grace of calling with which they are called by God, and which has eternal salvation inseparably connected with it; but this must be understood doctrinally of their removal from the Gospel of Christ,

though not of a total and final one. It is observed by some, that the word used is in the present tense, and shows that they were not gone off from the Gospel, but were upon going, so that the apostle had some hopes, yea, confidence of their being restored, Ga 5:10. And besides, though such as are truly called by grace cannot be finally and totally deceived by false prophets and false teachers, yet they may be greatly unhinged by them, and may fall from some degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of faith, which was the case of these Galatians: but what increased the apostle's surprise, and aggravated their sin and weakness, was, that they were "so soon" removed from the simplicity of the Gospel; he having been with them but a few years before, and preached the Gospel to them, which the means of their conversion, and of planting churches among them; at least he had lately paid them a visit, when he afresh strengthened them in the faith of the Gospel, Ac 18:23. Or this may regard that easiness of mind which appeared in them, who upon the first attack of them by the false teachers, were weakly and cowardly giving up their faith, and at once giving into the notions of these men, as soon as they were proposed unto them. That which they are said to be removed

unto

is

another Gospel,

different from that, and very unlike to what had been preached to them, and they had received; which had nothing of the grace of Christ, of the doctrines and blessings of grace that had, by which they were called; very different from the Gospel of Christ, and his apostles, insomuch that it did not deserve the name of a Gospel; and the apostle calls it so, not that he thought it to be one, but because it was in the opinion of others, and was so styled by the false apostles; wherefore, by way of concession, he so calls it, though he immediately corrects it.

Galatians 1:7

Ver. 7. **Which is not another,**

.... It is no Gospel, no joyful sound, no good news, and glad tidings; the doctrine which attributes justification to the works of the law, or mixes grace and works in the business of salvation, which was the doctrine of these false teachers, is no Gospel; not truly so, however it may be called; nor does it bring any solid peace and joy to distressed minds. There is but one pure Gospel of the grace of God, and Christ, and his apostles; there is not one and another; there is but one faith, one doctrine and

scheme of faith; the Gospel is single and uniform, all of a piece, has no yea and nay, or contradiction in it; this trumpet gives no uncertain sound, nor any dreadful, but a joyful one:

but there be some that trouble you;

meaning the false apostles, whose names he does not think fit to mention, as being unworthy to be named, and to have their names transmitted to posterity. These troubled the churches with their doctrines and principles, by raising disputes and controversies among them, injecting doubts and scruples into their minds, which puzzled and confounded them, and made them uneasy, and which broke in upon that peace of soul which the Gospel brings and establishes; for no true solid peace is attained to, and enjoyed, but by the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, which the doctrine of justification by works, &c. tends to destroy.

And would pervert the Gospel of Christ;

which has Christ for its author, subject, and preacher; and particularly the doctrine of justification by his righteousness, which they sought to change, to throw into a different shape and form, to adulterate by mixing it with the works of the law, and so, if possible, destroy it: to this they showed a good will, but were not able to effect, for the Gospel is an everlasting one; it is immovable, and so is that particular doctrine of it; it remains, and will remain in spite of opposition to it. Thus the apostle prudently lays the blame of the Galatians removing from the Gospel to another upon the false teachers, hoping he should be able to reclaim them by solid arguments, and gentle methods.

Galatians 1:8

Ver. 8. **But though we, or an angel from heaven,**

.... The apostle, in order to assert the more strongly the truth, purity, and perfection of the Gospel, as preached by him; and to deter persons from preaching another Gospel, and others from receiving it, supposes a case impossible; and, in such a case, denounces his anathemas. It was not possible, that he, or any of his fellow apostles, who had been so clearly led and so fully established in the Gospel of Christ, and of which they had had such a powerful and comfortable experience in their souls, could ever preach one different from it; nor was it possible that a good angel, one that is in heaven, that always beholds the face of God there, is ever ready to do his will, as he never could be employed by God in publishing another, so he never would; and yet, was

it possible or such a thing to be done by such men, or such an angel, he or they would deserve the curse of God and men; their having the highest names, or being of the highest character, and in the highest office and class of beings, would not screen them; and therefore how should the false apostles, and those who followed them, ever think to escape, since even these would not, should they

preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you;

that is, not only anyone that is contrary to it, but any one besides it; for such was the perfection of the Gospel, as preached by the apostle, who declared the whole counsel of God, and kept back nothing that was profitable to the churches, that no addition could, or might be made unto it:

let him be accursed,

or "anathema"; see 1Co 16:22 which may respect his excommunication out of the church, and his sentence of condemnation by Christ at the last day; and the sense be this, let him be ejected from the ministry of the word, degraded from his office, and cast out of the church; let him be no more a minister, nor a member of it; and let him be abhorred of men, and accursed of Christ; let him hear the awful sentence, "go ye accursed", &c.

Galatians 1:9

Ver. 9. **As we have said before, so say I now again,**

.... Either when he first preached the Gospel among them; or rather referring to what he had just now said, which he repeats with some little alteration; as if any, men, or angels, be they of what name, figure, rank, or office whatever,

preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have received;

and as the apostle thought, readily, willingly, sincerely, and heartily, in the love of it; assenting to the truth, feeling the power of it, and openly professing it:

let him be accursed;

which he repeats, for the more solemn asseveration and confirmation of it; and to show that this did not drop from his lips hastily and inadvertently; nor did it proceed from any irregular passions, or was spoken by him in heat, and in an angry mood, his mind being ruffled, disturbed, and discomposed; but was said by him in the most serious and solemn manner, upon the most thoughtful and mature consideration of the affair.

Galatians 1:10

Ver. 10. **For do I now persuade men, or God?**

.... To "persuade", is to teach; see Ac 18:4 the sense of which, with respect to men, is easy, but, with regard to God, difficult; and indeed cannot be applied to him, consistent with his divine perfections; and therefore something must be understood, and which may be supplied either thus, "do I now persuade", you or others, that "men or God" are to be hearkened to? not men, but God; the apostle did not teach them to hearken either to himself, or any of the other apostles, Peter, James, and John, any further than as he and they preached the pure Gospel of Christ; but should they do otherwise, they were not to be attended to, but God, who spake by his Son; or Christ, who is God as well as man; who is the great prophet in the church, a son in his own house, whose voice is to be hearkened to in all matters of doctrine, worship, and duty: or thus, "do I now persuade" you, to obey "men or God"; not men, but God; he did not teach them to regard the traditions of the elders, or to obey the commandments of men, but, on the contrary, the ordinances of Christ, who is the one Lord, and only master, whose orders are to be observed: or thus, "do I now persuade", to trust in "men or God?" to believe in the one or the other; not in men, in the wisdom, strength, riches, and righteousness of men, but in the living God; in the grace of God, and in the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ: or thus, "do I persuade" for the sake of "men, or God?" not for the sake of gaining honour, glory, and applause from men, as the Pharisees and false apostles did, but for the glory of God, the hour of Christ, and the good of immortal souls: or else not persons, but things are meant, by men and God: and the sense is, that the apostle taught and persuaded men to believe, not things human, but divine; he did not preach himself, or seek to set up his own power and authority over men; or set forth his eloquence, learning, parts, and abilities; or to gain either applause or riches to himself; he did not teach human wisdom, the vain philosophy of the Gentiles, and opposition of science, falsely so called; nor the traditions of the elders, nor the commandments of men; nor the power and purity human nature, or the righteousness of man: but delivered things divine; he persuaded to things concerning God, and the kingdom of God; see Ac 19:8 he taught, that without the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, no man should see, and without the justifying righteousness of Christ, no man should enter into the kingdom of heaven, as his Lord had done before him; he preached the things concerning the grace and love of God, the person and offices of Christ, and the Spirit's work of regeneration

and sanctification: the word "now", refers to all the time since his conversion, to the present: before his call by grace, he persuaded persons to hearken to men, to obey the traditions of the elders, to trust in their own righteousness for justification before God; but now he saw otherwise, and taught them to lay aside everything that was human, and to believe in God, trust in and depend on his justifying righteousness; and this he did, without any regard to the favour and affection of men, as appears from what follows:

or do I seek to please men?

no, he neither pleased, nor sought to please them; neither in the matter of his ministry, which was the grace of God, salvation by a crucified Christ, and the things of the Spirit of God; for these were very distasteful to, and accounted foolishness by the men of the world; nor in the manner of it, which was not with excellency of speech, or the enticing words of man's wisdom, with the flowers of rhetoric, but in a plain and simple style. There is indeed a pleasing of men, which is right, and which the apostle elsewhere recommends, and was in the practice of himself; see Ro 15:2. This proceeds from right principles, by proper ways and means, and to right ends, the glory of God, the good, profit, edification, and salvation of men; and there is a pleasing of men that is wrong, which is done by dropping, concealing, or corrupting the doctrines of the Gospel, to gain the affection and applause of men, and amass wealth to themselves, as the false apostles did, and who are here tacitly struck at; a practice the apostle could by no means come into, and assigns this reason for it:

for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ:

formerly he had studied to please men, when he held the clothes of those that stoned Stephen, made havoc of the church, hating men and women to prison; and went to the high priest, and asked letters of him to go to Damascus, and persecute the followers of Christ, thereby currying favour with him; but now it was otherwise, and he suggests, that was this his present temper and conduct he should have continued a Pharisee still, and have never entered into the service of Christ; for to please men, and be a servant of Christ, are things inconsistent, incompatible, and impracticable; no man pleaser can be a true faithful servant of Christ, or deserve the name of one: the apostle here refers to his office as an apostle of Christ, and minister of the Gospel, and not to his character as a private believer, in which sense every Christian is a servant of Christ; though to men is even contrary to this; for no man can serve

two masters, God and the world, Christ and men. The Septuagint version of Ps 53:5 is, "for God hath scattered the bones", נִכְסְרָאֲפֻרִינָא "of men pleasers", to which agree the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Galatians 1:11

Ver. 11. **But I certify you, brethren,**

.... Though the Galatians had gone such lengths with their false teachers, yet the apostle still calls them "brethren"; as hoping well of them, that they were born of God, did belong to his family, and were heirs of the grace of life; and this he the rather makes use of, to show his affection to them, and to engage their attention to the assurance he gives, of the divine original and authority of the Gospel preached by him; which though they formerly knew and believed, yet through the insinuations of the false apostles, were drawn into some doubts about it: wherefore he declares in the most solemn and affectionate manner,

that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man. Their guides that were leading them wrong, did not presume to say, that the Gospel was after man, for they themselves pretended to preach the Gospel; but that the Gospel preached by the apostle had no other authority than human, or than his own to support it: wherefore he denies that it was "after man"; after the wisdom of man, an human invention and contrivance, a device and fiction of man's brain; nor was it after the mind of man, or agreeably to his carnal reason, it was disapproved of by him, and beyond his capacity to reach it; nor was it of his revealing, a discovery of his; flesh and blood, human nature, could never have revealed it; nor is it in the power of one man to make another a minister of the Gospel, or to give him or himself success in the ministration of it, but the whole is of God.

Galatians 1:12

Ver. 12. **For I neither received it of man,**

.... Not from Gamaliel, at whose feet he was brought up; he received the law from him, and knowledge in the Jews' religion, and in the traditions of the elders, but not a whit of the Gospel; on the contrary, he received prejudices against it from him, or was strengthened in them by him; no, nor from the apostles of Christ neither, whom he saw not, had no conversation with for some years, after he was a preacher of the Gospel, and therefore did not receive it at their hands; no, nor from Ananias, nor any other man:

neither was I taught it:

that is, by man; he did not learn it of men, as men learn law, physics, logic, rhetoric, natural philosophy, and other things at school:

but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;

meaning, not through Christ being revealed to him by the Father, as in Ga 1:16 though it is a sense not to be overlooked; but by Christ, the revealer of it to him; and regards either the time of his rapture into the third heaven, when he heard words not to be uttered; or rather since that is not so certain when it was, the time of his conversion, when Christ personally appeared unto him, and made him a minister of his Gospel; and immediately from himself, without the interposition, or use of any man, or means, gave him such light into it, and such a furniture of mind for the preaching of it, that he directly, as soon as ever he was baptized, set about the ministration of it, to the admiration of the saints, and confusion of the enemies of Christ. These words furnish out another proof of the deity of Christ; for if the Gospel is not after man, nor received of, or taught by man, but by Christ, then Christ cannot be a mere man, or else being by him, it would be by man; and which also confirms the authority and validity of the Gospel, and carries in it a strong reason for the apostle's anathematizing all such as preach any other.

Galatians 1:13

Ver. 13. **For ye have heard of my conversation in time past,**

.... His manner and course of life, in his state of unregeneracy, how diametrically opposite his education and behaviour, his principles and practices, were to the Gospel; which show that he had not received it, nor was he taught it of men. This they might have heard of, either from himself, when he first preached among them, who was very free to acknowledge his former sins and errors; or from the Jews, who were scattered abroad in the several countries; and it may be, from them, who were forced to fly to strange cities, and perhaps to some in Galatia, on account of his persecution: now his life and conversation, before his conversion, were spent

in the Jews' religion;

or "in Judaism". He was born of Jewish parents, had a Jewish education, was brought up under a Jewish doctor, in all the peculiarities of the Jewish religion, and so could have received no hints, not in a notional way, of the truths of the Gospel; which he might have done, had he been born of Christian parents, and had had a Christian education: besides, he was brought up in the religion of the Jews, not as it was founded and

established by God, but as it was corrupted by them; who had lost the true sense of the oracles of God committed to them, the true use of sacrifices, and the end of the law; had added to it a load of human traditions; placed all religion in bare doing, and taught that justification and salvation lay in the observance of the law of Moses, and the traditions of the elders: add to this, that he was brought up in the sect of the Jewish religion, Pharisaism, which was the straitest sect of it, and the most averse to Christ and his Gospel; so that he could never receive it, or have any disposition to it from hence; so far from it, that he appeals to the Galatians, as what they must have heard,

how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God;

which he now knew, and believed to be the church of God; though then he did not, but rather a synagogue of Satan; and this he mentions, as an aggravation of his sin, under a sense of which he was humbled all his days: when he is said to persecute it "beyond measure", the meaning is not, as if there were any lawful measure, or due bounds of persecution, but that he persecuted the saints in a most violent and outrageous manner, beyond all others that were concerned with him: the church of God at Jerusalem is particularly designed, and the members of it, the disciples of Christ; whom he hated, and committed to prison, and breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, and destroyed: wherefore it follows, and wasted it; or destroyed it; as much as in him lay, he sought to do it, though he was not able to effect it entirely; he made havoc of it, dispersed its members, caused them to flee to strange cities, persecuted them to death, gave his voice against them to have them punished and put to death: such an aversion had he to the followers of Christ, and the Christian doctrine.

Galatians 1:14

Ver. 14. **And profited in the Jews' religion,**

.... Or "in Judaism"; and the more he did so, or was versed in, and wedded to their principles, the more violent a persecutor he was. He was under a very considerable master, Gamaliel, a Rabbi of great note among the Jews; and he himself a youth of uncommon natural abilities, so that his proficiency in Jewish learning was very great; even, as he says,

above many my equals in mine own nation:

not proselytes in other nations, but such as were natives of his own country: or were "in his own kindred", his near relations, who were his contemporaries, of the same age with him; and very modestly he says "many",

not "all":

being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers:

he had a zeal, but, not according to knowledge; and a greater degree of it than the rest of his countrymen; and that not so much for the written law delivered to his fathers, as for the oral law, the traditions and customs of his ancestors; which had been handed down, as they pretended, from one to another, and were now swelled to an almost infinite bulk; and mean the traditions of the elders, condemned by Christ, as making void the commandments of God: now his close attachment to, and eager zeal for these traditions, put him upon using more violent measures in persecuting the saints, and further off from the Gospel of Christ: and now from this account of himself it is a clear point, that during this period of his life he could never have received the Gospel from men, which is his view in giving it.

Galatians 1:15

Ver. 15. **But when it pleased God,**

.... Here begins his account of his conversion, and call to the ministry; all which he ascribes entirely to the sovereign good pleasure, and free grace of God:

who separated me from my mother's womb.

By his "mother" is meant, not in an improper and figurative sense, the Jewish church, or the old synagogue, the mother of all its members; the Jerusalem which then was, and was in bondage with her children; from which bondage, blindness, ignorance, superstition and bigotry, he was delivered, when called by grace: nor the church at Antioch, which is never called a mother church; and though he was by that church, with Barnabas, separated for the work of the ministry, yet not from it: but by his "mother", without a figure is meant, his real natural mother, whose name is said to be Theocrita; and this separation from her womb is to be understood either of that distinction made of him in Providence, as soon as born; which not only took him, and safely brought him out of his mother's womb, but ever since took special care of him, and saved and preserved him to be called; for all the chosen vessels of salvation are distinguished from others, in a providential way; they are more under the special care of Providence than others are, even whilst in a state of unregeneracy; God's eye of Providence is upon them, his heart is towards them, he waits upon them to be gracious to them, and many are the remarkable appearances of Providence for them; see Ps 22:9. Or rather this designs divine predestination, which is a separation, a setting apart of persons, for

such and such purposes, as here of the apostle; and the eternity of it, it being very early done, from his mother's womb; whilst he was in it, before he was born, and had done either good or evil; from the beginning of time, from the foundation of the world, and before it, even from eternity: all which phrases express the same thing, and intend either his predestination to grace and glory, to holiness and happiness, to sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, and to the obtaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; or his predestination to apostleship, to the work of the ministry, to the Gospel of Christ, to which he was separated in eternity, and in time; reference seems to be had to Jer 1:5 or indeed both, and his separation or predestination to both was owing to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, as was also his after call:

and called me by his grace;

which follows upon separation, as it does on predestination, in Ro 8:30 and is to be interpreted either of his call at conversion, by powerful and efficacious grace; when he was called out of Jewish darkness, blindness, and ignorance, into Gospel light and knowledge; out of the bondage of sin, Satan, the law, and traditions of the fathers, into the liberty of Christ; from conversation with the men of the world, among whom before he had it, into the fellowship of Father, Son, and Spirit, angels and saints; out of himself, and off of a dependence on his own righteousness, to trust in Christ: in a word, he was called into the grace of Christ here, into a participation of all the blessings of grace, and to eternal glory by him hereafter; which call was not of men, but of God, as the efficient cause of it; and by his grace, as the moving and procuring cause of it, and without the use of means, the word, which is the ordinary way in which God calls his people; so that it is plain his first light into the Gospel, was not of man, nor so much as by the means of man: or this call may respect his call to the ministry, which was at the same time he was effectually called by grace; and which also was not of man, nor of himself; he did not thrust himself into this work, but God called him; and that of his mere grace and good will, without any respect to any merits, deserts, or qualifications in him.

Galatians 1:16

Ver. 16. **To reveal his Son in me,**

.... This clause stands in connection with that in the preceding verse, "but when it pleased God"; the revelation of Christ in the apostle being the mere fruit and effect of God's will and pleasure: some versions read it "by me", making the apostle to be the instrument and

means, by whom God revealed his Son Jesus Christ to others, which is a certain truth, but this is rather contained in the following clause: others read it “to me”, and which also is true; for Christ was revealed to him in the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, the necessity, suitableness, and completeness of his salvation; not objectively in the Gospel, or merely notionally, speculatively in the theory of things, but spiritually, experimentally, and savingly; and which is better expressed, and nearer the original, by “in him”; for he had an internal discovery of him as God’s salvation, and of his interest in him as such; Christ was formed in him, his Spirit was put within him, his grace was implanted in him; he lived and dwelt in his heart by faith, as the Son in his own house; he was known unto him, as Christ in him the hope of glory: now the end of all this, of his separation from mother’s womb, of his call by the grace of God, of the large revelation of Christ to him, and in him was,

that, says he,

I might preach him among the Heathen;

as he did: Christ was the subject of his ministry; the things respecting his person, as that he was very God, the Son of God, God and man in one person the things respecting his office, as that he is the only Mediator between God and man, the prophet of the church, the high priest over the house of God, and King of saints; the doctrines of his grace, and which concern his obedience, sufferings, and death; as that peace and pardon are by his blood, justification by his righteousness, reconciliation and satisfaction by his sacrifice, and eternal life and complete salvation alone by him; all which is evangelizing, or preaching good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners: the persons to whom he was to preach these things, and did, were “the Heathen”, or Gentiles; he was a chosen vessel for this purpose; Christ, when he called him, sent him to them; the work he was to do, and did, lay chiefly among them; hence he is called an apostle, and teacher of them:

immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood;

which some understand of carnal reason, and that he did not stand reasoning and debating the matter with himself, whether it would be for his credit and reputation, for his worldly interest and advantage, to enter upon the ministry of the word; whether it would be advisable to expose himself, by so doing, to reproach and persecution; but immediately, as soon as he was called by grace, and Christ was revealed in him, he set about it: others, by “flesh and blood”, understand carnal men; and others his countrymen the Jews, and

those of them that were his relations, his own flesh; but rather men in general are intended, any whatever, and especially the apostles; whom, he afterwards says, he had no conversation with, upon his first setting out in the ministry. It is usual with the Jews to call men, in distinction and opposition to God, *Mdw rvb*, “flesh and blood”. Infinite almost are the examples that might be given thereof out of their writings. See Gill on “Mt 16:17”. See Gill on “Eph 6:12”.

Galatians 1:17

Ver. 17. **Neither went I up to Jerusalem,**

.... That is, immediately, as soon as he was converted, not till three years after, as follows; though by the account which Luke gives of him, Ac 9:23 and by that which the apostle gives of himself, Ac 22:17 it looks as if he went to Jerusalem some little time after his conversion, and before the date here given: and therefore some have thought that he did go up to Jerusalem pretty quickly, when, praying in the temple, he fell into a trance, and was ordered to make haste from thence, and go far hence unto the Gentiles and accordingly he made no stay, did not go to any of the apostles, and neither saw nor conversed with any of them, which is what he here says, to them which were apostles before me. The twelve, who were called, ordained, and sent forth as apostles before he was; for last of all Christ appeared to him, and was seen by him as one born out of due time: his meaning is, not that he was a successor of the apostle’s, but that they were instated in the office of apostleship before him; and this he mentions to show that he did not receive the Gospel from men, no not from the apostles themselves; since, upon his conversion, he did not go up to Jerusalem to see any of them, and talk with them; nor did he stand in need of any instructions from them, being immediately furnished sufficiently by Christ himself; nor did his work lie at Jerusalem, nor so much among the Jews as among the Gentiles, and therefore to them he went: but I went into Arabia. This journey of the apostle is wholly omitted by Luke, nor should we have known anything of it, had it not been for this account: how long he stayed there, what he did, and what success he met with among the Arabs are no where related; no doubt but he preached the Gospel to them, and as his ministry everywhere was owned and blessed by God, it may be very reasonably thought it was here at his first setting out in it. The Arabic version reads it, “I went to Balcam”, which was a city in Syria; but without any foundation for it; for it was not Syria, but Arabia to which he went. There are three countries

which bear the name of Arabia, and which are called to distinguish them from one another, Arabia Petraea, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix; of which See Gill on “Ac 2:11”. It is very likely it was the former of these which the apostle went to, as being nearest to Syria, since from Damascus, the metropolis of Syria, he went thither; and Damascus itself was at this time under the government of an Arabian king, see 2Co 11:32. So Pliny frequently speaks of Arabia as near to Syria, Palestine, and Judea: in one place he says ⁵, Arabia divides Judea from Egypt; and elsewhere ⁶ observes, that Syria is distinguished by many names; for it is called Palestina, where it touches the Arabians, and Judea, and Coele, and Phenice; and Peraea, or the country beyond Jordan, he says, is next to Arabia and Egypt; and on the east of the lake of Asphaltites he places Arabia, that belongs to the Nomades; so likewise Josephus ⁷ places Arabia at the east of Peraea, or the country beyond Jordan; and says ⁸ in another place, that Arabia borders on Judea, the metropolis of which was Petra, where Aretas the king had his royal palace: Jerom ⁹ likewise observes, that the river Jordan divides Judea and Arabia; so that this country into which the apostle went was not a great way off of Syria and Judea, whither he returned again after some time; which seems to be about the space of three years, by what follows in the next verse, and when he had done the work and will of God in those parts; where doubtless he was the instrument of converting souls, and planting churches, and here it is certain were churches in ages following: in the “third” century were churches in Arabia, mentioned along with the churches in Syria, by Eusebius ¹⁰; in which age lived two famous Arabian bishops, Beryllus and Maximus; and the same historian ¹¹ reports, that in the times of Dioclesian there were some wonderful martyrs in Arabia, who suffered the most cruel tortures and death, for the sake of Christ: and in the “fourth” century there were Arabian bishops in the Nicene council, and in other synods, as at Jerusalem and Sardica; and in the same century there were bishops of Arabia Petraea, at the synod in Antioch, whose names were Nicomachus and Cyrion: and also in the “fifth” century there were churches and bishops in

⁵ Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 21.

⁶ lb. l. 5. c. 12, 14, 16.

⁷ De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 3. sect. 3.

⁸ Antiqu. l. 14. c. 1. sect. 4. & l. 4. c. 4. sect. 7.

⁹ De locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. G.

¹⁰ Eccl. Hist. l. 7. c. 5.

¹¹ lb. l. 8. c. 12.

the same country ¹², not to trace them any further: and returned again unto Damascus; and then it was, that being increased in spiritual strength and knowledge, he proved that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, to the confusion of the Jews there; which drew upon him their resentment and indignation, so that they took counsel and lay in wait to kill him; but the disciples let him down through a window, by the wall of the city in a basket, and so he escaped them.

Galatians 1:18

Ver. 18. **Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem**

.... Not three years after his return to Damascus, but after his conversion; and now it was that he moved to become a member of the church at Jerusalem; but they did not care to admit him, fearing that he was not a disciple, till such time that Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles Peter and James, and related his conversion and his boldness in preaching the Gospel at Damascus: his view in going up to Jerusalem at this time was partly his own safety, being obliged to fly from Damascus, but chiefly to see Peter. The Alexandrian copy, and another, read “Cephas”, and so does the Ethiopic version, the same with Peter: not to see what sort of a man he was, but to pay him a Christian visit; to converse with him about spiritual things; to know how the work of God went on under him, as the minister of the circumcision; and to relate to him, what success he had met with as the minister of the uncircumcision; but not to receive the Gospel from him, or to be ordained a preacher of it by him; for he had been three years already in the work of the ministry, before he made him this visit; and besides, his stay with him was very short, nor could he have received much from him, in so short a time, in an ordinary way: and abode with him fifteen days; and even all this time was not wholly spent in conversation with him; for he was, during this time, coming in and going out at Jerusalem, where he preached boldly in the name of Christ, and disputed against the Grecians.

Galatians 1:19

Ver. 19. **But other of the apostles saw I none,**

.... This is observed to show, that as he did not receive the Gospel from Peter, so neither from any of the other apostles, whom he did not so much as see, much less converse with; save James the Lord’s brother; not James

¹² Hist. Eccl. Magdeburgh. cent. 4. c. 9. p. 350, 390, 405, 425. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2. c. 10. p. 552.

the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, whom Herod slew with the sword; but James the son of Alphaeus, he who made the speech in the synod at Jerusalem, Ac 15:13 was the writer of the epistle which bears his name, and was the brother of Joses, Simon, and Judas, who are called the brethren of Christ, Mt 13:55 and that because they were the kinsmen and relations of Christ according to the flesh, it being usual with the Jews to call such brethren. The relation came in and stood thus; this James was James the less, the son of Mary the wife of Cleophas, Mr 15:40 which Cleophas was the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary the mother of our Lord, as Eusebius, from Hegesippus, relates; and so our Lord and this James were brothers' children, as was supposed: or else the wife of Cleophas the mother of James, was sister to Mary the mother of Christ, as she is called, Joh 19:25 and so they were sisters' children, or own cousins; and thus Jerom ¹³, after much discourse on this subject, concludes that Mary the mother of James the less was the wife of Alphaeus, (or Cleophas, which is the same,) and the sister of Mary the mother of the Lord, whom the Evangelist John surnames Mary of Cleophas; and persons in such a relation, and even uncles and nephews, were called brethren by the Jews; see Ge 12:5 nor is James one of our Lord's disciples being called his brother, any contradiction to Joh 7:5 as the Jew ¹⁴ affirms, where it is said, "neither did his brethren believe in him"; since they might not believe in him then, and yet believe in him afterwards: besides, Christ had brethren or relations according to the flesh, distinct from his disciples and apostles, and his brethren among them; see Mt 10:1 such as were James, Judas, and Simon; nor does the Evangelist John say, that none of Christ's brethren believed in him, only that they that came to him and bid him go into Judea did not. Some have been of opinion that a third James, distinct from James the son of Zebedee and James the son of Alphaeus, is here meant; who was not of the twelve apostles, and was surnamed James the just, and called the brother of Christ because of his faith, wisdom, and becoming conversation; but certain it is, that this James was of the number of the apostles, as appears from the exceptive clause, "other of the apostles saw I none, save James", &c. and from his being put with Cephas and John, who were pillars and the chief among the apostles; and besides it was James the son of Alphaeus, who was surnamed the "just", and Oblias ¹⁵, and presided over

¹³ Advers. Helvidium, Tom. II. fol.

¹⁴ R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 8. p. 469.

¹⁵ Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 23. Hieron. Catalog. Script.

the church at Jerusalem, and was a man of great esteem among the Jews; and is by ¹⁶ Josephus, as here, called the brother of Jesus.

Galatians 1:20

Ver. 20. **Now the this which I write unto you,**

.... Concerning his education, his religion, his principles and practices before conversion; concerning his call by the grace of God, the revelation of Christ in him, and his preaching of him among the Heathen; concerning his travels to several places for this purpose, and especially concerning his not receiving the Gospel from men, not from any of the apostles; and how that upon his conversion he did not go up to Jerusalem to any of them, to be taught and sent forth by them; and that it was not till three years after that he wept thither to see Peter, with whom he stayed but fifteen days, and saw no other apostle, but James the Lord's brother. Now this being a matter of moment, and what he had been charged with by the false teachers, that the Gospel he preached he had received from men, in order to disqualify him and bring him into contempt as an apostle, and which they had insinuated to the Galatians; he therefore not only wrote these things, but for the confirmation of them solemnly appeals to God the searcher of hearts for the truth of them; behold, before God I lie not; which is not only a strong asseveration, but a formal oath; it is swearing by the God of truth, calling him to be witness of the things that he had written; whence it is manifest that an oath upon proper occasions, where there is a necessity for it, and a good end to be answered by it, may be lawfully made.

Galatians 1:21

Ver. 21. **Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.**

For having disputed against the Grecians at Jerusalem, and being too hard for them, it so irritated them, that they were going to murder him; which being known to the brethren there, they got him out of the way, and had him down to Caesarea, and so to Tarsus, a city in Cilicia; where he was born; in which places and in the countries about he preached the Gospel of Christ; to Tarsus, Barnabas went for him seeking him, and finding him brought him to Antioch in Syria; and both in Syria and Cilicia he preached, no doubt with success, since we read of believing Gentiles and churches in those parts he afterwards visited; being sent along with others, with Eccl. sect. 3. fol. 89.

¹⁶ Antiqu. l. 20. c. 8. sect. 1.

the letter and decrees of the synod at Jerusalem to them, and whom he confirmed; See Gill on "Ac 15:23"; See Gill on "Ac 15:41": in the Greek text these countries are called "climates"; a climate in geography is said ¹⁷ to be a part of the surface of the earth, bounded by two circles parallel to the equator, and of such a breadth as that the longest day in the parallel nearer the pole, exceeds the longest day in that next the equator, by some certain space, viz. half an hour-- . The beginning of the climate is the parallel circle wherein the day is the shortest, the end of the climate is that wherein the day is the longest;--each climate only differs from its contiguous ones, in that the longest day in summer is longer or shorter by half an hour in the one place than in the other:--vulgarly the term climate is bestowed on any country or region differing from another, either in respect of the seasons, the quality of the soil, or even the manners of the inhabitants, without any regard to the length of the longest day; in which sense it seems to be used here, as also in Ro 15:23. Of the country of Syria, See Gill on "Mt 4:24". Cilicia is a country of Asia Minor, now called Caramania; it had its name of Cilicia, as Herodotus says ¹⁸, from Cilix, the son of Agenor, a Phoenician: though Bochart ¹⁹ derives it from Challekim or Challukim, which signifies stones, it being a stony country; and so Herodotus ²⁰ calls it "mountainous" Cilicia; it is said to have Pamphilia on the west, the tops of Mount Taurus on the north, Mount Amanus on the east, and the Cilician sea on the south; Jerom says ²¹, Cilicia is a province of Asia, which the river Cydnus cuts in the middle, and Mount Amanus, of which Solomon makes mention, separates it from Syria-Coele.

Galatians 1:22

Ver. 22. **And was unknown by face,**

.... Or "in person". This is said to prevent what might be objected, that though the apostle had not received the Gospel he preached from any of the apostles at Jerusalem; yet he might have had it from the churches that were in the land of Judea, and from some of the principal men in them; but this was so far from being truth, that he was not so much as known unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ; for there was not only a famous church of believers in Christ at

¹⁷ Chambers's Cyclopaedia in the word "Climate".

¹⁸ L. 7. Polymnia, c. 91. Solinus, c. 51.

¹⁹ Canaan, p. 376. .

²⁰ L. 2. Euterpe, c. 34. {c} De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. M

²¹ De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. M.

Jerusalem, the metropolis of the land, but there were several congregated churches in the several parts of that country: by Judea we are to understand that part of the land of Israel so called, which was distinct not only from Samaria; but from Galilee and Perea, or the country beyond Jordan; for according to the Jews ²², the land of Israel was divided into three parts, Judea, Perea, and Galilee. Judea again was divided into three parts, the hill country, the plain, and the valley; and the plain of Lydda is as the plain of the south, and its mountainous part as the king's mountain; from Bethhoron to the sea is one province: and elsewhere ²³ it is said, that the hill country of Judea is the king's mountain, the plain of it is the plain of the south, and the valley is from Engedi to Jericho--from Bethhoron to Emmaus is mountainous, from Emmaus to Lydda is a plain, and from Lydda to the sea a valley; from which may be collected where this country lay, and where were these churches here spoken of; the foundation of which might be laid in the conversion of some in those parts, through the ministry of the disciples of Christ, who were appointed witnesses of him not only in Jerusalem, but in all Judea and Samaria, Ac 1:8 and about the time of the Apostle Paul's conversion, and his being at Jerusalem, there were churches gathered in Judea, as distinct from Galilee and Samaria, Ac 9:31 particularly at Caesarea, Lydda, Saron, and Joppa. It is very likely that all the apostles, when they first set out to preach the Gospel after the ascension of Christ and the effusion of the Spirit, began in Judea; though some might make a very short stay, and others a longer. The Apostle and Evangelist Matthew is generally thought to have exercised his ministry chiefly in Judea, and to have continued there long; here he wrote his Gospel for the sake of the Jews that believed ²⁴; and that, as a very ancient writer says ²⁵, when Peter and Paul preached at Rome, and founded the church there. Judas Thaddaeus is also said ²⁶ to go through Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia; and certain it is, that Philip, after he had baptized the eunuch, preached in all the cities from Azotus to Caesarea, where he seems to have stayed awhile and preached, Ac 8:40 and where afterwards was a Gospel church state, of which See Gill on "Ac 10:48" and at Lydda and Saron, which were both in Judea, there were saints who were

²² Misn. Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 2.

²³ T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4.

²⁴ Hieron. Catalog. Script. Ecclesiast. sect. 4. fol. 90. A.

²⁵ Irenaeus adv. Haeres. l. 3. c. 1.

²⁶ Hist. Eccles. Magdeburg. cent. 1. l. 2. c. 10. p. 449.

visited by the Apostle Peter, and others converted by him, about the time that our apostle here refers to; of the church at Lydda; See Gill on "Ac 9:32" at Joppa also, which was in the tribe of Dan, there were disciples at the same time, and very likely a church there; See Gill on "Ac 9:38" and it may be observed that the Apostle Peter was the minister of the circumcision, he had the Gospel of the circumcision committed to him, and he continued with and preached much to the circumcised Jews; and so in all likelihood was the instrument of planting the churches in Judea here spoken of. These are said to bein Christ, as the church at Thessalonica, and that at Corinth are elsewhere said to be; because they professed to believe in Christ, were called by his name, and called upon his name; and though every individual member of them might not be in Christ, really united to him, and have communion with him; yet since they were all under a profession of him, they are considered as in him. The Arabic version reads it, "the churches of Judea which believe in Christ"; which though not a literal translation, gives the true sense of the passage, and distinguishes those churches from the synagogues or assemblies of the Jews which did not believe in Christ.

Galatians 1:23

Ver. 23. **But they had heard only,**

.... What they knew of the apostle was only by hearsay; they had never seen him, nor heard him preach, nor conversed with him, only had it reported to them; that he which persecuted us in times past; some few years ago, and not them personally, but such as were of the same faith with them, the church at Jerusalem and the members of it; which he made havoc of, committing men and women to prison, and causing others to flee to strange cities; now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; all as in him lay he endeavoured to destroy it, though he could not entirely root it up; he destroyed many of the disciples that held it, and did all he could to discourage others from embracing and professing it; he made use of the strongest arguments he was master of to confute it, and of the secular arm to crush and extirpate it, but now was become a preacher of it: by "faith" is meant not so much the grace of faith, though to show the nature, necessity, and usefulness of faith in Christ, and to direct and encourage sensible sinners, as he did the jailer, to believe in him, was a principal part of his ministry; but rather the doctrine of faith, which is always designed, when it is said, as here, to be preached or to be obeyed, stood fast in and contended for, or to be departed and erred from, to be made shipwreck of

and denied. The Gospel is called the word of faith, the mystery of faith, the faith of the Gospel, common faith, most holy faith, the faith once delivered to the saints; it contains things to be believed; it proposes and directs to the great object of faith; and is the means of implanting and increasing that grace, and without which the ministry of it is of no use: it takes in all articles of faith, respecting the divine Being, the unity of God, the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the equal and proper deity of each person, their personal distinctions from each other, the attribution of all divine works, worship and honour to them; it relates to everything concerning man, in his original creation, in his state of innocence and integrity; concerning the fall of Adam, the imputation of his sin to all his posterity, the corruption of human nature, and the impotence of man to all that is spiritually good: it regards all the acts of grace of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in and towards any of the sons of men: it includes all the doctrines of it, as of the free, sovereign, everlasting, and unchangeable love of God; of eternal, personal, and irrespective election of some to grace and glory, by which both are secured; of the everlasting, absolute, unconditional, and sure covenant of grace; of particular redemption by Christ, proceeding on a full satisfaction to divine justice; of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ; of reconciliation and pardon by his blood; of regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit; of the perseverance of the saints in faith and holiness, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal glory: now this faith, in the several momentous branches of it, the apostle preached, published, declared, spoke out openly and publicly; fully and completely, without dropping, concealing, or keeping back anything; clearly and plainly, without using ambiguous phrases, or words of double meaning, with all faithfulness and integrity, boldness and constancy.

Galatians 1:24

Ver. 24. And they glorified God in me. Or "for me"; on his account; for the wonderful grace bestowed on him and wrought in him; for the surprising change that was made in him, that of a persecutor he should become a preacher, which they ascribed, as he himself did, to the abundant grace of God; they were greatly thankful and blessed God, who had given him such large gifts, and made him so greatly useful in the cause, and among the churches of Christ. And by observing this, how much the churches in Judea were affected with the grace of God vouchsafed to him, though they had never seen him nor heard him, he tacitly strikes at and rebukes the

false teachers, and the Galatians that adhered to them, for their different treatment of him; to whom he was not only known by face, but had preach among them so fully, clearly, and powerfully, the Gospel of the grace of God.

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS II

In this chapter the apostle proceeds with the narrative of himself, and gives an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, where he had a conversation with the chief of the apostles; in which they approved of his ministry, allowed of his commission, and took him into fellowship with them, but gave him no new instructions, nor added to his spiritual light and knowledge; from whence it appeared that the Gospel he preached was not after men, or received from men, as he had asserted in the preceding chapter; and he also gives an account of his meeting with Peter at Antioch, and how he reprovved him for some judaizing practices; which leads him to assert the doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the works of the law; which is the grand point he had in view to establish in this epistle, and which he vindicates from the charge of licentiousness. He begins with an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, the circumstances of which he relates, as the time when, fourteen years ago; the persons he took with him as his companions, Barnabas and Titus, Ga 2:1 what moved him to it, a revelation from God; and the business he did when come thither, he communicated the Gospel, and that not to any but to such that were of reputation, and not publicly but privately; his end was, that it might appear how successful he had been in his ministry, and had not laboured in vain, Ga 2:2 then follows a narrative of a particular event relating to Titus, who is described as one of his companions, and by his nation, a Greek; and who though an uncircumcised person, yet the apostles and elders at Jerusalem did not oblige him to be circumcised, which showed that they were of the same mind with the apostle in this point, Ga 2:3 and the reason of it was because of the false teachers, that they might not give them any handle; who are described by their character, false brethren, by their private manner of getting in among the saints, and by their ends and views, which were to spy out their Christian liberty and bring them into bondage, Ga 2:4 to whom the apostle opposed himself, and would not give way for the least space of time; for this end, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the Gentiles, Ga 2:5 and as for the apostles, though they were men of great character and reputation, nor would the apostle detract from it; yet they added nothing to him, he received nothing from

them, Ga 2:6 but, on the other hand, partly because they saw that as the Gospel to be preached to the Jews was committed to Peter, so the same Gospel to be preached to the Gentiles was committed to Paul; and partly because of the same efficacy and success in the ministry of the one as in the ministry of the other; as also because they perceived what gifts of grace were bestowed on the apostle; they gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, as a token of their mutual agreement, and as being of the same society, Ga 2:7 nor did they give him and Barnabas anything in charge, but only to remember the poor, to which he was forward enough of himself, Ga 2:10 after which follows an account of an opposition made by the apostle to Peter, which was done at Antioch, and to his face, and not without reason, Ga 2:11 for whereas some time before he ate with the Gentiles, which was commendable in him, he afterwards declined conversation with them, moved to it by fear of the converted Jews, Ga 2:12 and such was the force of his example, that other Jews, who before did not scruple eating with the Gentiles, separated likewise, and even Barnabas himself, Paul's companion, Ga 2:13 wherefore seeing this was not walking according to the Gospel of Christ, and with that integrity and uprightness which became such persons, the apostle publicly reprovved Peter, and expostulated with him; partly on account of his former conversation with the Gentiles, though he himself was a Jew, and therefore it was absurd and contradictory in him to oblige the Gentiles to live as the Jews did, Ga 2:14 and partly on account of the ledge which he and Peter and others who were Jews, and not sinners of the Gentiles, had of the doctrine of justification; that it was not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ; for to this end they had believed in Christ that they might be justified, not by the one, but by the other; which doctrine is confirmed by a passage referred to in Ps 149:2 and whereas it might be objected that this doctrine of free justification opened a door to licentiousness, the apostle answers to it by an abhorrence of it, Ga 2:17 and by observing that this would build up what he had destroyed, Ga 2:18 besides, he argues the contrary from his being dead to the law, that he might live unto God, Ga 2:19 and from his crucifixion with Christ, and of the old man with his deeds; and from Christ's living in him, and his living by faith upon him, Ga 2:20 and for the further confirmation of the doctrine of justification being by faith, and not by works, he suggests, were it otherwise, both the grace of God would be frustrated and made void, and the death of Christ be in vain, Ga 2:21.

GALATIANS CHAPTER II

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

[2] And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

[3] But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

[4] And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

[5] To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

[6] But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

[7] But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

[8] (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

[9] And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

[10] Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

[11] But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

[12] For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

[13] And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

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

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

[16] Knowing that a man is not justified by the works

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

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

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

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

[20] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

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

JOHN GILL'S COMMENTARY CHAPTER II

Galatians 2:1

Ver. 1. **Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem,**

.... That is, either after it pleased God to call him by his grace, and reveal his Son in him; or rather after he had been at Jerusalem to see Peter, with whom he stayed fifteen days, and then went into Syria and Cilicia; so that it was seventeen years after his conversion that he took this journey to Jerusalem he here speaks of; and he seems to refer to the time when he and Barnabas went from the church at Antioch to the apostles and elders about the question, whether circumcision was necessary to salvation, Ac 15:1 which entirely agrees with the account the apostle here gives of this journey, and which he went not alone, but

with Barnabas: and took Titus with me also; Barnabas is mentioned in Luke's account as going with him at this time, but Titus is not; who, though he was not sent by the church, yet the apostle might judge it proper and prudent to take him with him, who was converted by him, was a minister of the Gospel, and continued uncircumcised; and the rather he might choose to have him along with him, partly that he might be confirmed in the faith the apostle had taught him; and partly that he might be a living testimony of the agreement between the apostle's principles and practice; and that having him and Barnabas, he might have a competent number of witnesses to testify to the doctrines he preached, the miracles he wrought, and the success that attended him

among the Gentiles; and to relate, upon their return, what passed between him and the elders at Jerusalem; for by the mouth of two or three witnesses everything is established.

Galatians 2:2

Ver. 2. **And I went up by revelation,**

.... He was not sent for by the apostles at Jerusalem, nor did he go of himself, nor only by the vote of the church at Antioch, but by a divine revelation; not a revelation made to the church, or by the prophets there, but by God himself to him; he had a secret impulse from the Spirit of God, and a private intimation given him, that it was the will of God he should go up at this time; which is no ways inconsistent with his being sent by the church, but served as a confirmation to him, that what they determined was right, and according to the mind of God:

and communicated unto them that Gospel, which I preach among the Gentiles; that self-same Gospel, which he had preached, and still continued to preach to the Gentiles; relating to free and full remission of sin by the blood of Christ, justification by his righteousness without the works of the law, and freedom from all the rituals and bondage of the Mosaic dispensation: for as the Gospel he preached was all of a piece, uniform and consistent, so he did not preach one sort of doctrine to the Gentiles, and another to the Jews; but the very self-same truths which were the subject of his ministry in the Gentile world, which were a crucified Christ, and salvation alone by him, these he communicated, laid before, and exposed unto the consideration of the elders and apostles at Jerusalem; not with a view either to give or receive instructions, but to compare their sentiments and principles together; that so it might appear that there, was an entire harmony and agreement between them; and this he did not publicly, to the whole church, at least at first, and especially the article of Christian liberty, which respects the freedom of the believing Jews, from the yoke of the law; for as yet they were not able to bear this doctrine; they could pretty readily agree that the Gentiles were not obliged to it, but could not think themselves free from it; wherefore the apostle, in great prudence, did not avouch this in the public audience:

but privately to them which were of reputation;

or "who seemed to be", i.e. somewhat, very considerable persons; not in their own opinion, or appearance only, but in reality, they seemed to be, and were pillars in the house of God; particularly he means James, Cephas, and John, then in great esteem with the

saints, and deservedly honoured and respected by them, they being faithful labourers in the word and doctrine; so the Jewish doctors²⁷ call men of great esteem, Mybwvx, who "seem to be", or "are accounted of", a word to which the phrase here used answers: these were spiritual men, capable of judging of all spiritual things; men of full age, whose senses were exercised to discern between truth and error; and were very proper persons for the apostle to lay the scheme of his ministry before, and the various truths he insisted on in it: these he met "privately", or "separately", and "singly", as it may be rendered; he either conversed with the apostles alone, and all together, in some private house; or separately, one by one, in their own houses, and there freely and familiarly discoursed with them about the several doctrines of the Gospel; and particularly this, of freedom from the law: his end in it was, as he says,

lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain:

which is said, not with regard to himself, as if he had entertained any doubt of the doctrines he had preached, and needed any confirmation in them from them; for he was fully assured of the truth of them, and assured others of the same; or that he questioned the agreement of the apostles with him; or that his faith at all depended on their authority; but with regard to others, and his usefulness among them. The false teachers had insinuated that his doctrine was different from that of the apostles in Jerusalem, and so endeavoured to pervert the Gospel he preached, and overthrow the faith of those that heard him; and could this have been made to appear, it would in all likelihood have rendered, in a great measure, his past labours in vain, and have prevented his future usefulness: some read these words as an interrogation, "do I in any manner run, or have I run in vain?" no; from the account he laid before the church, the elders, and apostles, both in private and in public, Ac 15:4 it clearly appeared what success attended his ministry, how many seals he had of it, what numbers of souls were converted under it, and how many churches were planted by his means; for by "running" here is not meant the Christian course he ran, in common with other believers, which lies in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; but the course of his ministry, which he performed with great activity, application, diligence, and constancy, until he had finished it.

Galatians 2:3

²⁷ Vid. Sol. Ben Melech in Psal. xl 17.

Ver. 3. **But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek,**

.... There was such an agreement between the apostle, and his fellow apostles at Jerusalem, even about this article of the necessity of circumcision, and other rituals of the law of Moses, to salvation; that Titus, whom he brought along with him, an intimate companion of his in his travels, a fellow labourer with him in the ministry, and now upon the spot, though he was a Gentile, an uncircumcised person, yet even not he

was compelled to be circumcised: the elders did not urge it, or insist upon it, as proper and necessary; they looked upon it as a thing indifferent, left him to his liberty, and made use of no forcible methods to oblige him to it; yea, were of opinion, as Peter and James in the synod declared, that such a yoke ought not to be put upon the necks of the disciples, and that those who turned to God from among the Gentiles, should not be troubled with these things.

Galatians 2:4

Ver. 4. **And that because of false brethren,**

.... This is the reason why the elders did not insist upon the circumcision of Titus, why he did not submit to it, and why the apostle would not admit of it: had it been left as a thing indifferent, or had it been moved for in order to satisfy some weak minds, it might have been complied with, as in the case of Timothy; but these men insisted upon it as necessary to salvation; they were sly, artful, designing men; could they have gained their point in such an instance; could they have got such a precedent at such a time, when this matter was canvassing, they would have made great use of it in the Gentile churches, for which reason it was by no means judged proper and expedient. These men are described as "false brethren": they had the name, but not the grace, which entitles to the character of "brethren"; they called themselves Christians, but were in reality Jews: at the head of these, Cerinthus, that arch-heretic, is said²⁸ to be. They are further described as such,

who were unawares brought in, who came in privily;

into the churches, and into the ministry, into private houses, where the apostles were; or rather into the public synod, where they were convened together about this article of the necessity of circumcision to salvation. Their views, aims, and ends were,

to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ

²⁸ Epiphani. contr. Haeres. l. 1. Tom. 2. Haeres. 28.

Jesus;

by which is meant, not a liberty to sin, which is no Christian liberty, is contrary to Christ, to the Spirit of Christ, to the principle of grace in believers, and to the doctrines of the Gospel; but a liberty from sin; not the being of it, but the dominion and damning power of it: that branch of Christian liberty the apostle here chiefly designs is a freedom from the law, both the moral law, as in the hands of Moses, and as a covenant of works, though not from obedience to it as in the hands of Christ, and as a rule of walk and conversation; but from obeying it, in order to obtain life, righteousness, and salvation by it, and from the curse and condemnation of it; and chiefly the ceremonial law, circumcision, and all the other rituals of it, and the free use of all things indifferent, provided the glory of God, and the peace of weak believers, are secured. This liberty is said to be had "in Christ", because Christ is the author of it; it is that with which Christ makes his people free; and such as are made free by him, are free indeed; and is what they come to enjoy by being in him; for by having union to him, they come to partake of all the blessings of grace which come by him, and this among the rest. Now the design of these false teachers getting in privily among the apostles, elders, and brethren, was to make their remarks upon this liberty, to object to it, and, if possible, to break in upon it, and destroy it, and so gain another point, which follows:

that they might bring us into bondage;

to the moral law, by directing souls to seek for justification and salvation by the works of it, which necessarily induces a spirit of bondage, genders to a state of bondage and involves in it; and to the ceremonial law, by engaging to an observance of circumcision, that yoke of bondage, and of day, months, times, and years, and other beggarly elements, which naturally lead on to such a state.

Galatians 2:5

Ver. 5. **To whom we gave place by subjection**

.... Meaning not the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, who did not insist upon the observance of the rituals of the law as necessary, but were one and all of opinion that the Gentiles should be free from them; but the false teachers with whom they combated, and would not yield in the least unto, so as to be brought into subjection to their impositions, nor suffer others to yield unto them:

no, not for an hour;

for the least space of time, knowing what advantages

and improvements would be made of it, should they allow of the use of these things as necessary for any short time, though it should be agreed then to drop them. This is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they would express their steady adherence to any principle or practice; of which take the following instance from Gamaliel²⁹:

"it happened to Rabban Gamaliel, that he read the first night he was married; his disciples said to him, master, hast thou not taught us, that the bridegroom is free from reading the Shema, i.e. "hear, O Israel", &c. the first night? he replied to them, I will not hearken to you to cause to cease from me the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, אפילו שנה אחת, "even one hour."

The reason why the apostle, and others with him, were so resolute and pertinacious in this matter was,

that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you;

with the Galatians in particular, and with all the Gentiles in general, which otherwise would have been in danger of being entirely removed from them, at least of being adulterated and mixed with the Mosaic rites, and the inventions of men; whereas the apostle's desire was, that, the Gospel might be continued with them genuine, sincere, and unmixed, in opposition to the shadows of the law, and the false doctrines of men.

Galatians 2:6

Ver. 6. **But of these, who seemed to be somewhat,**

.... Not the false brethren, but the Apostles James, Cephas, and John, who were הגְּבוּרִים "men of great esteem": high in the opinion of all good men; not that they were looked upon to be more than human, as Simon Magus gave out that he was "some great one", and his followers thought him to be "the great power of God"; for such an extravagant conceit of these men was never entertained; nor were they thought to be something when they were nothing, for they really were somewhat; they were ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of grace; they were the Lord's ambassadors, and the apostles of the Lamb. However, says the apostle,

whatsoever they were;

ποτε, "formerly", some time ago, which our version does not so fully express,

it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no

²⁹ Misn. Beracot, c. 2. sect. 5.

man's person.

This is said, not by way of slight or contempt, but in vindication of himself, whom the false teachers endeavoured to lessen, by giving high encomiums of the apostles at Jerusalem. It looks as if they had upbraided the apostle with being a persecutor of the church before his conversion, when nothing of such a nature could be laid to the charge of these men, and therefore he was not to be set upon a level with them: to which he may be thought to reply in such manner as this, that as for himself, it is true, he had been an injurious person to the saints; and he was ready to own it, for his own humiliation, and to illustrate the grace of God in his conversion; and as these excellent men, what they were before their conversion, it was no concern of his; though, perhaps, was he disposed to inquire into their characters then, some blemishes might be found therein, as well as in his; but it is not what he and they had been, but what they now were: he could have observed, that they were persons formerly of a very low figure in life, of mean occupations, fishermen by employment, and very illiterate persons, when he was bred a scholar at the feet of Gamaliel; but he chose not to make such observations, he knew that God was no respecter of persons, nor was he influenced by any such external circumstances, but chose whom he pleased to such an high office; and that he, who of fishermen made them apostles, of a persecutor had made him one also. Or these false teachers perhaps had objected to him, that these valuable men had been with Christ from the beginning, were eyewitnesses of his majesty, heard the doctrines of the Gospel from his lips, and saw his miracles, had had a similar conversation with him, when he was a preacher of much later date, and could not pretend to such advantages, and therefore ought not to be equalled to them: his answer is, that whatever privileges of this kind they had enjoyed, as could not be denied but they were considerable, yet this mattered not, nor did it make any great difference between him and them; he had seen Christ too, though as one born out of due time; had received an immediate commission from him to preach his Gospel, and was appointed an apostle by him as they were, without any respect of persons: and whereas it might have been urged, that these men had entertained different sentiments from him formerly, concerning the observance of the law, he signifies he had nothing to do with that, to their own master they stood, to whom they must give an account, who, without respect of persons, will render to every man according to his works: and, adds he,

for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me;

whatever opinions they formerly gave into, in their conversation with him, when he communicated the Gospel he preached to them, they found no fault with it; they did not go about to correct it; nor did they make any addition to it; the scheme of truths he laid before them, which had been the subject of his ministry, was so complete and perfect, containing the whole counsel of God, that they had nothing to add unto it; which shows the agreement between them, that he did not receive his Gospel from them, the perfection of his ministry, and that he was not a whit behind them in knowledge and gifts.

Galatians 2:7

Ver. 7. **But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel,**

... James, Cephas, and John, were so far from blaming or correcting anything in the apostle's ministry, or adding anything to it, that they highly approved of it; and as a token of their agreement with him and Barnabas, gave them the right hand of fellowship: the reasons of their so doing are inserted here, and in the following verse, and in the next to that: the reason here given is, because

they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was to Peter;

by "the uncircumcision and circumcision" are meant the Gentiles and Jews; see Rom 2:26 by the Gospel of the one, and the Gospel of the other, two Gospels are not designed, for there is but one Gospel, and not another. Paul did not preach one Gospel unto the uncircumcised Gentiles, and Peter another to the circumcised Jews; but the same Gospel was preached by both, and is so called with respect to the different persons to whom it was preached by these apostles. The Apostle Paul was ordained a minister of the Gentiles, and he chiefly preached among them, though not to them only. Peter was principally employed among the Jews, though also as he had opportunity he sometimes preached to the Gentiles: however, the subject of both their ministrations was the Gospel, which is said to be "committed" to them, as a trust deposited in their hands, not by man, but by God; the management of which required both prudence and faithfulness, and which were eminently seen in these good stewards of the mysteries of God. This being observed by the apostles at Jerusalem, they came into an agreement that one part

should discharge their ministry among the Gentiles, and the other among the Jews.

Galatians 2:8

Ver. 8. **For he that wrought effectually in Peter,**

... The Syriac version renders it, "he who exhorted Peter to"; the Arabic version is, "he who strengthened Peter in"; the Spirit of God is meant, who filled Peter with such eminent gifts, and inspired him with so much zeal and resolution

to the apostleship of circumcision,

to discharge his office as an apostle among the Jews; and who wrought by him such wonderful works for the confirmation of it, as curing the man that was lame from his birth, striking Ananias and Sapphira dead for telling lies, and raising Dorcas from the dead, and communicating miraculous gifts by the imposition of his hands; and which same Spirit also made his ministrations effectual to the conversion of a large number of souls, as of three thousand by one sermon.

The same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles.

The Spirit of God wrought as effectually in, and by him, as in Peter; filled him with extraordinary gifts for the discharge of his work among the Gentiles, and inspired him with equal zeal, constancy, and intrepidity of mind; wrought as many miracles by him to confirm his mission; such as striking blind Elymas the sorcerer, healing the cripple at Lystra, raising Eutychus from the dead, with many other signs and wonders wrought by him among the Gentiles, through the power of the Spirit of God, whereby they became obedient by word and deed. The same Spirit also accompanied the Gospel preached by him, to the conversion of multitudes, by which means many famous churches were founded and raised among the Gentiles; and this is another reason which induced the apostles at Jerusalem to take Paul and Barnabas into an association with them.

Galatians 2:9

Ver. 9. **And when James, Cephas, and John,**

... These are the persons all along designed, though not till now named. James was the brother of our Lord, the son of Alphaeus, who wrote the epistle that goes by his name, made that famous speech in the synod at Jerusalem, Ac 15:13, presided in that church, was a man of great holiness, and much esteemed of by the saints, and had a good report of them that were without. Cephas is Simon Peter. This name was given him by Christ, Joh 1:42 and in the Syriac language signifies a

"stone", as Peter does in the Greek, to which our Lord alludes, Mt 16:18. John was the evangelist, and the same that wrote the epistles, was the beloved disciple, and who outlived all the rest:

who seemed to be pillars;

not as the Arabic version, "who thought themselves such", but were esteemed so by others, and very rightly. They were pillars among the apostles of the highest note and greatest eminence among them; they were the very chief of the apostles; for though they were all in the same office, and had the same commission, and were employed in the same work, yet there were some who made a greater figure than others, as these did, and are therefore called pillars; they were more conspicuous, and to be observed, and taken notice of, than the rest; they were pillars in the church, set in the highest place there, and the ornaments of it; see Pr 9:1. They are called so for their constancy and stability in preaching the Gospel, and suffering for the sake of Christ; they were steadfast and immovable in his work, nor could they be shaken or deterred from it by the menaces, reproaches, and persecutions of men; and they were the means of supporting others that were feeble minded, and of defending and maintaining the truths of the Gospel; and were set, as Jeremiah was, as a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brazen walls against all the enemies of Christ, and his Gospel; and were, as the church is said to be, "the pillar and ground of truth". The apostle may have respect to the titles of this kind which were bestowed on the Jewish doctors. It is said ³⁰,

"when R. Jochanan ben Zaccai was sick, his disciples went in to visit him; and when he saw them, he began to weep; his disciples said to him, lamp of Israel, ynymyh dwme, "the right hand pillar", &c. why dost thou weep?"

So another of their Rabbins is said ³¹ to be

"one of the walls, ydwmew, "and pillars" of the school."

The character better agrees with these eminent apostles, who when they

perceived the grace that was given unto me;

meaning not so much the grace of the Spirit of God that was wrought in him, or the good work of grace upon his soul, with which the church at Jerusalem, and the apostles there, had been made acquainted

30 T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2.

³¹ Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 46. 1.

some years before; but the grace and high favour of apostleship, which was conferred upon him, and all those extraordinary gifts of grace, whereby he was qualified for the discharge of it; and particularly the efficacy and success of his ministry through the grace of God which went along with it, and was so visible in it:

they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship;

as a token of a covenant or agreement between them; they took them, as it were, into partnership with them, admitted them as apostles into their society, and gave their full consent, particularly to this article,

that we,

Paul and Barnabas,

should go unto the Heathen, preach among the Gentiles;

and they,

Peter, and those that were with him,

unto the circumcision,

and discharge their office among the Jews; and, to show their joint agreement, used the above rite; and which ceremony was used as among other nations ³², so with the Jews, when covenants were made, or partnership was entered into; see Le 6:2 where the phrase, בַּתְּשׁוּבָה, "in putting of the hand", and which we render in fellowship, is, both by Onkelos, and Jonathan ben Uzziel, rendered בְּשׂוּחָתוֹת יָכָא, "in fellowship of the hand", or "by the right hand of fellowship"; that being given in token of their agreement and consent to be partners together, to which the allusion seems to be here; or to the making of proselytes, to whom they "stretch out the hand" to bring them under the wings of the Shekinah ³³, or in token of their being proselytes.

Galatians 2:10

Ver. 10. **Only they would that we should remember the poor,**

... Not in a spiritual sense, as some have thought, though these the apostle was greatly mindful of; but properly and literally the poor as to the things of this world; and may design the poor in general, everywhere, in the several churches where they should be called to minister, and particularly the poor saints at Jerusalem; who were become such, either through the frequent calamities of the nation, and a dearth or scarcity of provisions among them, and which affected the whole

³² Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 19. Cormel. Nepos, l. 2. c. 8. Gale's Court of the Gentiles, part 2. book 2, c. 6. sect. 9. & c. 9. sect. 3.

³³ Vajikra Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 147. 4.

country; or rather through the persecutions of their countrymen, who plundered them of their goods for professing the name of Christ; or it may be through their having given up all their substance into one common stock and fund, as they did at first, and which was now exhausted, and that in a great measure by assisting out of it the preachers who first spread the Gospel among the Gentiles; so that it was but just that they should make some return unto them, and especially for the spiritual favours they received from them, as the Gospel, and the ministers of it, which first went out of Jerusalem: the "remembering" of them not only intends giving them actual assistance according to their abilities, which was very small, but mentioning their case to the several Gentile churches, and stirring them up to a liberal contribution:

the same which I also was forward to do;

as abundantly appears from his epistles to the churches, and especially from his two epistles to the Corinthians. Now since the apostles at Jerusalem desired nothing else but this, and said not a word concerning the observance of the rites and ceremonies of the law, and neither found fault with, nor added to the Gospel the apostle communicated to them, it was a clear case that there was an entire agreement between them, in principle and practice, and that he did not receive his Gospel from them.

Galatians 2:11

Advice about this house requests ourselves

Ver. 11. **But when Peter was come to Antioch,**

.... The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, instead of "Peter", read "Cephas", who, by some ancient writers, is said to be not Peter the Apostle, named Cephas by Christ, but one of the seventy disciples. So Clemens³⁴ says, that Cephas, of whom Paul speaks, that when he came to Antioch he withstood him to his face, was one of the seventy disciples who had the same name with Peter the Apostle: and Jerom says³⁵ that there were some who were of opinion, that Cephas, of whom Paul writes that he withstood him to his face, was not the Apostle Peter, but one of the seventy disciples called by that name: but without any manner of foundation; for the series of the discourse, and the connection of the words, most clearly show, that that same Cephas, or Peter, one of the twelve disciples mentioned, Ga 2:9, with James and John, as pillars, is here meant. Our apostle first takes notice of a

³⁴ Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 1. c. 12.

³⁵ In loc.

visit he made him, three years after his conversion, Ga 1:18, when his stay with him was but fifteen days, and, for what appears, there was then an entire harmony between them; fourteen years after he went up to Jerusalem again, and communicated his Gospel to Peter, and the rest, when they also were perfectly agreed; but now at Antioch there was a dissension between them, which is here related. However, the Papists greedily catch at this, to secure the infallibility of the bishops of Rome, who pretend to be the successors of Peter, lest, should the apostle appear blameworthy, and to be reprov'd and oppos'd, they could not, with any grace, assume a superior character to his: but that Peter the Apostle is here designed is so manifest, that some of their best writers are oblig'd to own it, and give up the other as a mere conceit. When Peter came to Antioch is not certain; some have thought it was before the council at Jerusalem concerning the necessity of circumcision to salvation, because it is thought that after the decree of that council Peter would never have behaved in such a manner as there related; though it should be observed, that that decree did not concern the Jews, and their freedom from the observance of the law, only the Gentiles; so that Peter and other Jews might, as it is certain they did, notwithstanding that, retain the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses; and according to the series of things, and the order of the account, it seems to be after that council, when Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, and with others continued there for some time, during which time Peter came thither; see Ac 15:30 and the following contention happened,

I withstood him to the face:

not in show, and outward appearance only, as some of the ancients have thought, as if this was an artifice of the apostle's, that the Jews, having an opportunity of hearing what might be said in favour of eating with the Gentiles, might be convinc'd of the propriety of it, and not be offend'd with it: but this is to make the apostle guilty of the evil he charges Peter with, namely, dissimulation; no, the opposition was real, and in all faithfulness and integrity; he did not go about as a tale bearer, whisperer, and backbiter, but reprov'd him to his face, freely spoke his mind to him, boldly resist'd him, honestly endeavour'd to convince him of his mistake, and to put a stop to his conduct; though he did not withstand him as an enemy, or use him with rudeness and ill manners; or as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and false teachers resist the truth; but as a friend and an apostle, and in an amicable manner, and yet with all uprightness: his reason for it was,

because he was to be blamed;

some read it, "was blamed", or "condemned", either by others, by the Jews, for his going into Cornelius's house formerly; but what has this to do with the present case? or by those who lately came from James to Antioch, for his eating with the Gentiles there; yet this could be no reason for the apostle's withstanding him, but rather a reason why he should stand by him; or he was condemn'd by himself, self-condemn'd, acting contrary to the sentiments of his mind, and what he had declared in the council at Jerusalem; though it is best to render the word, to be blamed, which shows that the apostle did not oppose him for opposition sake, rashly, and without any foundation; there was a just reason for it, he had done that which was culpable, and for which he was blameworthy; and what that was is mentioned in the next verse.

Galatians 2:12

Ver. 12. **For before that certain came from James,**

.... The Lord's brother, mentioned before with Cephas and John, who resided at Jerusalem, from whence these persons came; and who are said to come from James, because they came from the place and church where he was, though, it may be, not sent by him, nor with his knowledge. They were such as profess'd faith in Christ; they were "judaizing" Christians believing in Christ, but were zealous of the law. Now before the coming of these persons to Antioch,

he, Peter,

did eat with the Gentiles;

which is to be understood, not of eating at the Lord's table with them, but at their own tables: he knew that the distinction of meats was now laid aside, and that nothing was common and unclean of itself, and that every creature of God was good, and not to be refused if received with thankfulness; wherefore he made use of his Christian liberty, and ate such food dress'd in such manner as the Gentiles did, without any regard to the laws and ceremonies of the Jews; and in this he did well, for hereby he declared his sense of things, that the ceremonial law was abolished, that not only the Gentiles are not oblig'd to it, but even the Jews were freed from it, and that the observance of it was far from being necessary to salvation: all which agreed with the preaching and practice of the Apostle Paul, and served greatly to confirm the same, and for this he was to be commended: nor is this mentioned by way of blame, but for the sake of what follows, which was blameworthy:

but when they were come he withdrew and

separated himself;

not from the church, and the communion of it, for then he had been guilty of schism, but from private conversation with the Gentiles: he did not visit them in their own houses, and sit down at table and eat with them, as he was wont to do; which argued great inconstancy and instability, very unbecoming one that seem'd to be, and was a pillar in the church of God, as well as much dissimulation, for he knew better than he acted; his conduct did not agree with the true sentiments of his mind, which he cover'd and dissembl'd; and which must be very staggering to the believing Gentiles, to see so great a man behave in such a manner towards them, as if they were persons not fit to converse with, and as if the observance of Jewish rites and ceremonies was necessary to salvation. What induced him to take such a step was, his

fearing them which were of the circumcision:

that is, the circumcised Jews, who profess'd faith in Christ, and were just now come from Jerusalem; not that he fear'd any danger from them; that they would abuse his person, or take away his life; but he might either fear he should come under their censure and reproofs, as he formerly had for going to Cornelius, and eating with him and his; or lest that they should be offend'd with him, and carry back an ill report of him, as not acting up to his character as an apostle of the circumcision. This led him into such a conduct; so true is that of the wise man, that "the fear of man bringeth a snare", Pr 29:25.

Galatians 2:13

Ver. 13. **And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him,**

.... Not the men that came from James, for they never acted otherwise, and therefore could not be said to dissemble; but the Jews that were members of this church at Antioch from the beginning; or who came along with Paul and Barnabas, and stay'd with them there; see Ac 15:35 and who before had ate with the Gentiles, as Peter; but being under the same fear he was, and influenced by his example, conceal'd their true sentiments, and acted the very reverse of them, and of their former conduct:

insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation; so good a man as he was, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost; who had been a companion of the Apostle Paul's in his travels among the Gentiles, had greatly assist'd him in preaching the Gospel to them, was a messenger with him at the council

in Jerusalem, heard the debates of that assembly, and the issue of them, returned with him to Antioch, and was one with him both in principle and practice; and yet so forcible was the example of Peter, and the other Jews, that, as with a mighty torrent, he was carried away with it, and not able to withstand it; such is the force of example in men who are had in great veneration and esteem: wherefore it becomes all persons, particularly magistrates, masters of families, and ministers of the Gospel, to be careful what examples they set, since men both of grace and sense are much influenced by them.

Galatians 2:14

Ver. 14. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly,

.... Or “did not foot it aright”; or “walked not with a right foot”: they halted, as the Jews of old did, between two opinions, being partly for God, and partly for Baal; so these seemed, according to their conduct, to be partly for grace, and partly for the works of the law; they seemed to be for joining Christ and Moses, and the grace of the Gospel, and the ceremonies of the law together; they did not walk evenly, were in and out, did not make straight paths for their feet, but crooked ones, whereby the lame were turned out of the way; they did not walk in that sincerity, with that uprightness and integrity of soul, they ought to have done:

nor according to the truth of the Gospel;

though their moral conversations were as became the Gospel of Christ, yet their Christian conduct was not according to the true, genuine, unmixed Gospel of Christ; which as it excludes all the works of the law, moral or ceremonial, from the business of justification and salvation, so it declares an entire freedom from the yoke of it, both to Jews and Gentiles. Now when, and as soon as this was observed, the apostle, without any delay, lest some bad consequences should follow, thought fit to make head against it, and directly oppose it:

I said unto Peter before them all.

The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read “Cephas”, as before. The reproof was given personally and principally to Peter, though Barnabas and others were concerned with him, because he was the first in it, the chief aggressor, who by his example led on the rest; and this was given publicly before Barnabas, and the other Jews that dissembled with him, and for their sakes as well as his; before the Jews that came from James for their instruction and conviction, and before all the members

of the church at Antioch, for the confirmation of such who might be staggered at such conduct; nor was this any breach of the rule of Christ, Mt 28:15 for this was a public offence done before all, and in which all were concerned, and therefore to be rebuked in a public manner: and which was done in this expostulatory way, if thou being a Jew; as Peter was, born of Jewish parents, brought up in the Jews’ religion, and was obliged to observe the laws that were given to that people: lived after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews; that is, he had done so, he had ate with the Gentiles, and as the Gentiles did, without regarding the laws and ceremonies of the Jews relating to meats and drinks; being better informed by the Spirit of God, that these things were not now obligatory upon him, even though he was a Jew, to whom these laws were formerly made: why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? he asks him, with what conscience, honour, and integrity, with what consistency with his own principles and former practice, he could compel, not by force, nor, it may be, even by persuasions and exhortations, but by his example, which was very strong and powerful, the Gentiles, to whom these laws were never given, and to observe which they never were obliged; how he could, I say, make use of any means whatever to engage these to comply with Jewish rites and ceremonies. The argument is very strong and nervous; for if he, who was a Jew, thought himself free from this yoke, and had acted accordingly, then a Gentile, upon whom it was never posed, ought not to be entangled with it: and in what he had done, either he had acted right or wrong; if he had acted wrong in eating with the Gentiles, he ought to acknowledge his fault, and return to Judaism; but if right, he ought to proceed, and not by such uneven conduct ensnare the minds of weak believers.

Galatians 2:15

Ver. 15. We who are Jews by nature,

.... I Paul, and you Peter and Barnabas, and the rest of the Jews at Antioch. Some are Jews by grace, in a spiritual sense, as all are that are Christ’s, that are true believers in him, that are born again, and have internal principles of grace formed in their souls, of whatsoever nation they be; see Ro 2:28. Others become Jews by being proselytes to the Jewish religion: such were the Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, that were dwelling at Jerusalem, when the Spirit was poured down on the apostles on the day of Pentecost, Ac 2:5, but these here spoken of were such as were Jews by birth; they were born so, were descended of Jewish

parents, and from their infancy were brought up in the Jewish religion, and under the law of Moses, and in the observance of it: and not sinners of the Gentiles: Mleih twmwa yevr, “the wicked of the nations of the world”, as the {l} Jews call them. Not but that the Jews also were sinners both by nature and practice, were involved in the guilt of sin, under the power of it, and defiled with it, as the apostle elsewhere most fully proves: nor is this said with regard to the vain opinion the Jews had of themselves, as very holy and righteous persons, who in their own apprehension needed neither repentance nor remission; and who looked upon the Gentiles as very unholy and unfit for conversation with them: but this more particularly respects that part of the character of the Heathens, that they were without the law, and were under no restraints, but lived in all manner of wickedness, without hope and God in the world, and so were notorious sinners, filled with all unrighteousness, profligate and abandoned to every evil work, and are therefore called emphatically “sinful men”, Lu 24:7. And indeed the word εἰδωτων, Gentiles, among themselves is sometimes used φορμερω τιν ποτηροτατον, “a certain most wicked part” of Gentiles in a city {m}, and so may here design such who lived the most dissolute lives and conversations, to which the Jews are opposed, who had a written law, and were under a better regulation and discipline. The reason of this description, both in the positive and negative branch of it, is to observe, that since they, the apostles, and others, who were born Jews, and so under the law of Moses, and, until Christ came, were under obligation to observe it, but had now relinquished it, and wholly and alone believed in Christ for righteousness and life; then it was the most unreasonable thing in the world, by any means whatever, to lead the Gentiles, who never were under the law, to an observance of it. {l} Mattanot Cehunah in Vajikra Rabba, fol. 164. 3. {m} Harpocratian. Lex. p. 93.

Galatians 2:16

Ver. 16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law,

.... That is, Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and other believing Jews knew this, and that from the law itself, which requires perfect and sinless obedience, and accuses, holds guilty, and adjudges to condemnation and death for the least failure, both as to matter or manner of duty; and from the prophets, which declare that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God, and who bear witness to the doctrines of remission of sin, and justification by the righteousness of Christ; and from the Gospel, in which this truth is

most clearly revealed; and from the illumination of the blessed Spirit, who led them into all truth; and from the revelation of Jesus Christ they were favoured with; and from their own experience, being fully convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the insufficiency of their own righteousness, and of the necessity, suitableness, and fulness of the righteousness of Christ. By “the works of the law” are meant, not only obedience to the ceremonial law, though this is included, but also to the moral law; for it can hardly be thought, that the men the apostle opposes could ever dream of justification by their compliance with the rituals of the ceremonial law if they believed there could be no justification by their obedience to the moral law; for if there is no justification by the latter, there can be none by the former: the words are therefore to be taken in the largest sense, as rejecting all works of the law, of whatsoever kind, from justification in the sight of God; and such works are designed, as are performed by sinful men in and of themselves, otherwise men are justified by the works of the law as performed by Christ in their room and stead, but not by any as performed by themselves, for at best they are very imperfect, and so cannot justify; they are opposed to the grace of God, to which the justification of a sinner is always ascribed, and therefore cannot be by works; such a scheme would disannul the death of Christ, and promote boasting in men, and indeed is impracticable and impossible: but by the faith of Jesus Christ; not by that faith, which Christ, as man, had in God, who promised him help, succour, and assistance, and for which he, as man, trusted in him, and exercised faith upon him; but that faith of which he is the object, author, and finisher; and not by that as a cause, for faith has no causal influence on the justification of a sinner; it is not the efficient cause, for it is God that justifies; nor the moving cause, or which induces God to justify any, for that is his own free grace and good will; nor the meritorious or procuring cause, for that is the obedience and bloodshed of Christ; nor is faith the matter of justification; it is not a justifying righteousness; it is a part of sanctification; it is imperfect; as an act it is a man’s own, and will not continue for ever in its present form, nature, and use; and is always distinguished from the righteousness of God, by which we are justified, which is perfect, is another’s, and will last for ever. Men are not justified by faith, either as an habit, or an act; not by it as an habit or principle, this would be to confound justification and sanctification; nor as an act, for as such it is a man’s own, and then justification would be by a man’s works, contrary to the

Scripture: but faith is to be taken either objectively, as it relates to Christ, the object of it, and his justifying righteousness; or as it is a means of receiving and apprehending Christ's righteousness; the discovery of it is made to faith; that grace discerns the excellency and suitableness of it, approves of it, rejects a man's own, lays hold on this, and rejoices in it: even we have believed in Jesus Christ; we who are Jews by nature, being fully apprized that there is no justification by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ, received by faith, have quitted all confidence in our own works, and are come to Christ, and believe in him, not only as the Messiah, but as the Lord our righteousness: that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; not that faith, as before observed, has any causal influence on justification. These Jews did not believe in Christ, in order by their believing to procure their justification before God, and acceptance with him, but that they might receive, by faith, this blessing from the Lord in their own conscience, and enjoy the comfort of it, and all that spiritual peace which results from it, and which they could not find in the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified; reference seems to be had to Ps 143:2 and contains a reason why these believing Jews relinquished Moses in his law, in whom they formerly trusted, and looked to, and depended on for their justification, because that by obedience to the law of works no sinful mortal man can be justified in the sight of God,

Galatians 2:17

Ver. 17. **But if while we seek to be justified by Christ,**

.... As they did, and not only sought for, but obtained what they sought for, because they sought for it at the hands of Christ, and not as it were by works, but by faith, even a justifying righteousness in him. We ourselves also are found sinners; that is, either we should be so, were we not to rest here, but seek to join our own works with Christ's righteousness for our justification, and so make Christ the minister of sin, of an imperfect righteousness, which cannot justify, which God forbid should ever be done by us; or we are reckoned sinners by you, judaizing Christians, for leaving the law, and going to Christ for righteousness; and if so, Christ must be the minister of sin, for he has directed and taught us so to do; but God forbid that any such thing should be said of him: or if we are still sinners, and unjustified persons, notwithstanding we seek to Christ to be justified by him, but need the law, and the works of it to justify us, then

Christ, instead of being a minister of righteousness, is a minister of the law, the strength of sin, which accuses for it, and is the ministration of condemnation and death on account of it, which God forbid should ever be: or this is an objection of the adversary to the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, as if it made void the law, discouraged the performance of good works, opened a door to licentiousness that men might continue sinners, and live as they wish, being under no restraints of the law, or under obligation to obedience it, and by such doctrine make

Christ the minister of sin;

who hereby teaches men to live in sin, and in the neglect of duty; to which the apostle answers,

God forbid;

as holding such consequences in the utmost abhorrence and detestation; see Ro 6:1.

Galatians 2:18

Ver. 18. **For if I build again the things which I destroyed,**

.... Which must be understood not of good things, for formerly he destroyed the faith of the Gospel, at least as much as in him lay, and now he built it up, established, and defended it; in doing which he did no evil, or made himself a transgressor, but the reverse; he showed himself a faithful minister of Christ: but of things not lawful, such as the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses, which were now abrogated, and he had declared to be so all over the Gentile world; and therefore should he go about to establish these things as necessary to salvation, or teach men to join the observance of them with Christ's righteousness for justification, then, says he,

I make myself a transgressor:

for he could not be otherwise, be the case how it would with respect to the abrogation, or non-abrogation of the law; for if the law was not abolished, then he made himself a transgressor of it; by neglecting it himself, and teaching others to do so; and if it was abolished, then it must be criminal in him to enforce the observance of it as necessary to a sinner's justification before God. Now though the apostle transfers this to himself, and spoke in his own person to decline all invidious reflections and characters; yet he tacitly regards Peter, and his conduct, who had been taught by the vision the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and acted accordingly by conversing and eating with the Gentiles, and had declared that law to be an insupportable yoke of bondage, which the Gentiles were not obliged to come under; and yet now,

by his practice and example, built up and established those very things he had before destroyed, and therefore could not exculpate himself, from being a transgressor: or these things may regard sins and immoralities in life and conversation; and the apostle's sense be, that should he, or any other, take encouragement to sin from the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, as if he was the author and minister of sin, and allowed persons in it; this would be to establish sin, which the righteousness of Christ justifies from, and engage in a living in sin, to which, by Christ's righteousness, they are dead unto; than which, nothing can be, a greater contradiction, and which must unavoidably make them not only transgressors of the law, by sinning against it, but apostates, as the word parabathv here used signifies, from the Gospel; such must act quite contrary to the nature, use, and design of the Gospel in general, and this doctrine in particular, which teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that being dead to sin, they should live unto righteousness.

Galatians 2:19

Ver. 19. **For I through the law am dead to the law,**

.... The apostle further replies to the objection against the doctrine of justification, being a licentious one, from the end of his, and other believers, being dead to the law: he owns he was dead unto it, not in such sense as not to regard it as a rule of walk and conversation, but so as not to seek for life and righteousness by it, nor to fear its accusations, charges, menaces, curses, and condemnation: he was dead to the moral law as in the hands of Moses, but not as in the hands of Christ; and he was dead to it as a covenant of works, though not as a rule of action, and to the ceremonial law, even as to the observance of it, and much more as necessary to justification and salvation: and so he became "through the law"; that is, either through the law or doctrine of Christ; for the Hebrew word hrwt, to which nomov answers, signifies properly doctrine, and sometimes evangelical doctrine, the Gospel of Christ; see Isa 2:3 and then the sense is, that the apostle by the doctrine of grace was taught not to seek for pardon, righteousness, acceptance, life, and salvation, by the works of the law, but in Christ; by the doctrine of the Gospel, which says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved; he became dead to the law, which says, do this and live: or through the books of the law, and the prophets, the writings of the Old Testament, which are sometimes called the law, he learnt that righteousness and forgiveness of sins were only to be expected from

Christ, and not the works of the law; things, though manifested without the law, yet are witnessed to by the law and prophets: or through the law of his mind, the principle of grace formed in his soul, he became dead to the power and influence of the law of works, he being no longer under the bondage of that, but under grace, as a governing principle in his soul: or the word law, here twice used, may signify one and the same law of works; and the meaning be, either that through Christ's fulfilling the law in his room and stead, assuming an holy human nature the law required, and yielding perfect obedience to it, and submitting to the penalty of it, he became dead to it; that is, through the body of Christ, see Ro 7:4 and through what he did and suffered in his body to fulfil it; or through the use, experience, and knowledge of the law, when being convinced of sin by it, and seeing the spirituality of it, all his hopes of life were struck dead, and he entirely despaired of ever being justified by it. Now the end of his being dead unto it, delivered from it, and being directed to Christ for righteousness, was, says he,

that I might live unto God;

not in sin, in the violation of the law, in neglect and defiance of it, or to himself, or to the lusts of men, but to the will of God revealed in his word, and to his honour and glory; whence it most clearly follows, that though believers are dead to the law, and seek to be justified by Christ alone, yet they do not continue, nor do they desire to continue in sin, or indulge themselves in a vicious course of living, but look upon themselves as under the greater obligation to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

Galatians 2:20

Ver. 20. **I am crucified with Christ,**

.... Not literally, for so only the two thieves were crucified with him, but mystically; Christ was crucified for him in his room and stead, and so he was crucified with him, and in him, as his head and representative. Christ sustained the persons of all his people, and what he did and suffered was in their name, and on their account, and so they were crucified and suffered with him, as they are said to be buried with him, and to be risen with him, and to sit together in heavenly places in him. Moreover, their old man was crucified with him; when he was crucified, all their sins, the whole body of them, were laid upon him, and he bore them, and bore them away, destroyed and made an end of them; they received their mortal wound by his crucifixion and death, so as never to be able to have any damning

power over them; and in consequence of this the affections and lusts are crucified, and the deeds of the body of sin mortified by the Spirit and grace of God, in regeneration and sanctification, so as not to have the dominion over them; the world is crucified to them, and they to the world; and this is another reason proving that justification by Christ is no licentious doctrine. This clause is, in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, put at the end of the preceding verse.

Nevertheless I live;

which is to be understood, not of his natural, but of his spiritual life; the life of justification he lived, by faith, on the righteousness of Christ; and the life of sanctification which he had from Christ, by the quickening influences of his Spirit, by virtue of which he walked in newness of life. The believer is a mere paradox, he is dead to the law, and "yet lives" to God; he is crucified with Christ, and yet lives by him; yea, a crucified Christ lives in him.

Yet not I;

not the same I as before, but quite another man, a new creature: he did not now live as in his state of unregeneracy, and whilst in Judaism; he was not now Saul the blasphemer, the persecutor, and injurious person; nor did he now live Saul the Pharisee: or the life he had was not of his own obtaining and procuring; his life of righteousness was not of himself, but Christ; his being quickened, or having principles of life and holiness implanted in him, was not by himself, but by the Spirit; and the holy life and conversation he lived was not owing to himself, to his power and strength, but to the grace of God; or it was not properly himself, or so much he that lived,

but Christ liveth in me:

who was not only the author and maintainer of his spiritual life, but the life itself; he was formed in his soul, dwelt in his heart, was united to him, was one with him, whence all vital principles and vital actions sprung, and all the communion and comforts of a spiritual life flowed.

And the life which I now live in the flesh;

in the body, whilst in this mortal state, whereby he distinguishes that spiritual life he had from Christ, and through Christ's living in him, both from the natural life of his body, and from that eternal life he expected to live in another world; and which, he says,

I live by the faith of the Son of God;

meaning, not that faith which Christ, as man, had, but that of which he is the author and object, by which the just man lives; not upon it, for the believer does not

live upon any of his graces, no, not upon faith, but by faith on Christ, the object; looking to him for pardon, righteousness, peace, joy, comfort, every supply of grace, and eternal salvation: which object is described as "the Son of God"; who is truly God, equal with his Father; so that he did not live upon a creature, or forsake the fountain of living waters, but upon the only begotten Son of God, who is full of grace and truth: of whom he further says,

who loved me;

before the foundation of the world, from everlasting, prior to his love to him; and freely, without any regard to worth or merit, and though he was a blasphemer and a persecutor; and him personally, and particularly, in a distinguishing manner, of which he had a special knowledge and application by the Spirit of God; and was a reason and argument constraining him, and prevailing on him to live to him who loved him, and died for him, or, as he adds,

and gave himself for me;

his whole self, his soul and body, as in union with his divine person, into the hands of justice, and unto death, in his room and stead, as an offering and sacrifice for sin, and which he did freely and voluntarily; and is a strong and full proof of his love to him. Now though Christ gave his life a ransom for many, and himself for his whole church, and all the members of his mystical body, yet the apostle speaks of this matter as singularly respecting himself, as if almost he was the only person Christ loved and died for; which shows that faith deals with Christ not in a general way, as the Saviour of the world, but with a special regard to a man's self: this is the life of faith; and these considerations of the person, love, and grace of Christ, animate and encourage faith in its exercises on him.

Galatians 2:21

Ver. 21. **I do not frustrate the grace of God,**

.... Or "cast it away", as the Vulgate Latin version reads it; or "deny it", as the Syriac and Arabic; or "despise, reject, and make it void", as other versions; meaning either the grace of the Son of God in giving himself for him, just mentioned by him; or the particular doctrine of grace, justification, he is speaking of, as proceeding from the grace of God, upon the foot of the righteousness of Christ; or the whole Gospel, all and each of which would be denied, despised, rejected, made null and void, be in vain, fallen and departed from, should justification be sought for by the works of the law: but this the apostle did not do, and therefore

did not frustrate the grace of God: which to do would be to act the most ungenerous and ungrateful part to God, and Christ, and to that love and grace which are so largely displayed in the free justification of a sinner.

For if righteousness come by the law;

if a justifying righteousness is to be attained unto by the works of the law, or men can be justified by their obedience to it,

then Christ is dead in vain;

there was no necessity for his dying: he died without any true reason, or just cause; he died to bring in a righteousness which might have been brought in without his death, and so his blood and life might have been spared, his sufferings and death being entirely unnecessary; which to say is to cast contempt upon the wisdom, love, and grace of God in this matter, and to offer the greatest indignity to the person, character, sufferings, and death of Christ. Wherefore it may be strongly concluded, that there is no righteousness by the law of works, nor to be attained that way, otherwise Christ had never died; and that justification is solely and alone by his righteousness.

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS III

In this chapter the apostle reproves the Galatians for their disobedience to the Gospel, and departure from it; confirms the doctrine of justification by faith, by various arguments; shows the use of the law, and the abrogation of it, and makes mention of several privileges which belong to believers in Christ. He begins with a sharp reproof of the Galatians, and represents them as foolish and bewitched, and charges them with disobedience to the truth of the Gospel, which is aggravated by the clearness of the Gospel ministry, in which a crucified Christ, and justification by him, had been so evidently set before them, Ga 3:1, and by the fruit and effect of it, they having received the Spirit by it, and not by the preaching of the law of works, Ga 3:2 and it still increased their folly, that whereas they had begun with the Spirit of God, and set out in a dependence on him and his grace, they seemed now as if they would end in a carnal and legal way, Ga 3:3. To which is added, the consideration of their having suffered many things for the sake of the Gospel, which must be suffered in vain should they relinquish the Gospel, though the apostle hoped otherwise of them, Ga 3:4, nay, they had not only received through the preaching of the Gospel the Spirit, and his graces, but even extraordinary gifts attended it, for the confirmation of it, Ga 3:5, so that this case of theirs was a very aggravated one, and they were guilty of great folly and madness: from hence the apostle

passes to the main thing in dispute, the great truth of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, which these persons were departing from, and which he establishes by several arguments; and first from the instance and example of Abraham, who was justified by faith, as appears from that which he believed, being imputed to him as his justifying righteousness, Ga 3:6, and as many as are believers in Christ are his spiritual children, and so undoubtedly are justified the same way their father was, Ga 3:7, and particularly that the Gentiles are justified by faith is clear from the preaching of the Gospel to Abraham, and the promise made unto him, that in his seed all nations should be blessed; that is, with the blessing of justification, Ga 3:8. The conclusion of which instance and example is, that as faithful Abraham was blessed with a justifying righteousness through faith, so all that believe are blessed along with him with the same blessing, Ga 3:9, and that no man can be justified by the works of the law is certain, since the law is so far from justifying any on account of obedience to it, that it pronounces a curse upon all that do not perfectly and constantly fulfil it, Ga 3:10. And this is still further evident from a passage in the prophecy of Hab 2:4 which declares, that the just live by faith, or that those who are truly righteous are such who are justified by it, Ga 3:11. And this is illustrated by the law and faith being contrary; for if a just man lives by faith, then not by the law, for the law does not direct a man to believe, but to work, and to live by his works, Ga 3:12. And the apostle having spoken of the law as a cursing law, takes the opportunity of showing how believers are delivered from the curse of it, which is done by Christ's being made a curse for them; and that he was, appears from his being crucified and hanged on a tree; the ends of which were, that the same blessing of justification Abraham had, might come upon the Gentiles through Christ, and that they might by faith receive the promise of the Spirit, Ga 3:13 so that it is clear from hence, that the blessing of justification is through Christ's being made a curse, and is received by faith, and is not by the works of the law. The apostle next argues from the inheritance being by covenant, testament, or promise, and therefore not by the law: he observes, that a man's covenant or testament, when confirmed, can neither be disannulled, nor have anything added to it, and much less can the covenant or testament of God, confirmed of him in Christ, be disannulled by the law, or the promise in it be made of none effect by that which was several hundred years after a declaration of it to Abraham, to whom, and to whose seed, the promises were made; so

that it unavoidably follows, that since the inheritance or blessing of life is by promise, as is clear from its being given to Abraham by promise, then it is not of the law, Ga 3:15. And whereas an objection might arise, if this be the case, of what use and service can the law be? to what purpose, or for what end, was that given? The apostle answers, that it was added because of transgressions; and that it was to endure until Christ should come, to whom the promise was made; and accordingly it was published in a very grand and solemn manner by angels, and was put into the hands of a mediator, Moses, who stood between God as one party, and the people of Israel as another, Ga 3:19. Moreover, as it might be further objected, that, according to this way of reasoning, the law is against the promises; the apostle replies in a way of detestation and abhorrence of any such thing, and by an argument from the insufficiency of the law to justify, since it cannot give life, Ga 3:21. And then proceeds to point out another use of the law, which is to conclude men under sin, or convince men of it, that they, seeing their need of righteousness and life by Christ might receive the promise of it through faith in him Ga 3:22, and so far were men from being justified by the law under the former dispensation, that they were kept under it as in a garrison, and shut up in it as in a prison, until Christ, the object of faith, was revealed, and released them, Ga 3:23, and was moreover as a rigid and severe schoolmaster; and so it continued until the times of Christ; and these therefore being the uses of the law, it is a clear case that justification is by faith, and not by that, Ga 3:24. Besides, Christ being now come, the Jews themselves are no more under this law as a schoolmaster; it is now abolished, and therefore there is no justification by it, Ga 3:25. And that this is the case of true believers in Christ is evident, because such are the children of God, and are taught and led by the Spirit of God, and are free, and not under the law as a schoolmaster, Ga 3:26. Besides, as they are baptized into Christ, they have put him on, as the Lord their righteousness, and so profess to be justified by him, and him only, Ga 3:27, and these, let them be of what nation, sex, state, and condition soever, are all one in Christ, and are all justified in one and the same way; and being Christ's they are Abraham's spiritual seed, and so heirs of the same promise of righteousness and life as he, Ga 3:28.

GALATIANS CHAPTER III

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

[2] And I went up by revelation, and communicated

unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

[3] But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

[4] And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

[5] To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

[6] But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

7] But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

[8] (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:

[9] And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

[10] Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

[11] But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

[12] For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

[13] And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

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

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

[16] Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

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

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

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

[20] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

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

JOHN GILL'S COMMENTARY CHAPTER III

Galatians 3:1

Ver. 1. **O foolish Galatians,**

.... Referring not to any national character, as some have thought, by which they were distinguished from others for their rudeness in knowledge, their ignorance and folly, as the Cretians for their lying, &c. nor to their former state in unregeneracy, it being common to all men, to God's elect themselves, before conversion, to be foolish in a moral and spiritual sense; but to their present stupidity about the article of justification, it being an instance of most egregious folly to leave Christ for Moses, the Gospel for the law, and the doctrine of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, which brings so much solid peace and comfort with it, for the doctrine of justification, by the works of the law, which naturally leads to bondage. Now this was said, not rashly, nor in anger, or on purpose to reproach and provoke, and so not at all contrary to Mt 5:22 but in like manner as Christ said to his disciples, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe", &c. Lu 24:25. So the apostle here, as pitying the Galatians, grieved for them, and as one surprised and astonished that ever people of such light, that had had the Gospel so clearly preached to them, should ever give into such a notion.

Who hath bewitched you?

some false teacher or another had, or it cannot be conceived how their heads should ever have been turned this way; which must be understood, not in a literal and proper sense, as Simon Magus bewitched the people of Samaria with his sorceries, but in a figurative and improper one; that as sorcerers and enchanters cast a mist before people's eyes, or, by some evil arts or juggling tricks, deceive their sight, and make objects

seem to appear which do not, or in a different form than they really do, so these deceitful workers, who had transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ, as Satan sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light, had set this doctrine in a false light before them, thereby to corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ. Though the apostle reproves the Galatians for their folly and weakness in giving in so easily to such deceptions, yet he imputes the chief fault unto, and lays the greatest blame on the false teachers; whom he represents as sorcerers and enchanters, and their doctrine, particularly that of justification by works, as witchcraft; it being pleasing to men, a gratifying of carnal reason, and operating as a charm upon the pride of human nature. What Samuel said to Saul, 1Sa 15:22 may be applied to the present case, "to obey" the truth "is better than sacrifice"; than all the rituals of the ceremonial law: "and to hearken" to the Gospel of Christ, "than the fat of rams", or any of the legal institutions; "for rebellion" against, and opposition to any of the doctrines of the Gospel, and especially to this of justification by the righteousness of Christ, "is as the sin of witchcraft". The Greek word, *baskanw*, signifies "to envy", and hence, "to bewitch"; because the mischief, by witchcrafts, generally proceeds from envy; and so the Syriac version, which the Arabic follows, renders it, *Nwkb Mox wnm*, "who hath envied you", which suggests this sense, that the false apostles envying their light and knowledge in the Gospel, their faith, peace, comfort, and happiness, had endeavoured to introduce another doctrine among them, subversive of all this.

That ye should not obey the truth.

This clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Syriac version. By "the truth" is meant, either the whole Gospel, often so called, in opposition to the law, and the types and shadows of it; and because it is contained in the Scriptures of truth, and comes from the God of truth; the substance of it is Christ, who is the truth, and is what the Spirit of truth leads into; or else particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, which is the truth the apostle is establishing, and these Galatians seemed to be going off from, through the artful insinuations of the false teachers. Formerly these people had not only heard this truth, but embraced it: they received the love of it, were strongly affected to it, and firmly believed but now they began to hesitate and doubt about it; they were not so fully persuaded of it as heretofore; they seemed ready to let it go, at least did not hold it fast, and the profession of it, without wavering as before; they were fallen from

some degree of the steadfastness of their faith in, and of the obedience of it to this truth, which is what was the design of the false apostles, and is here charged upon the Galatians. The aggravations of which follow in this, and in some subsequent verses,

before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth;

meaning in the ministry of the Gospel, in the clear preaching of it by the apostle; Jesus Christ was the sum and substance of his ministry, in which he was set forth and described, and, as it were, painted to the life by him; the glories and excellencies of his divine person, the nature of his office, as Mediator, the suitableness of him as a Saviour, the fulness of his grace, the efficacy of his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, were so fully, and in such a lively manner expressed, that it was as if Christ was personally and visibly present with them; yea, he was so described in his sufferings and death, as hanging, bleeding, dying on the accursed tree, that he seemed to be as it were, as the apostle adds,

crucified among you:

for this cannot be understood literally, for he was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem; nor does it respect the sin of the Galatians in departing from the Gospel, as if that was a crucifying of him again, and a putting him to open shame; nor their sufferings for the sake of Christ, as if he, in that sense, was crucified in them, and with them: but it intends the clear Gospel revelation of a crucified Christ, in the preaching of him by the apostle, which was such that no picture, no image, no crucifix would come up to, and which, where such preaching is, are altogether vain and needless; and the clear view these saints had, by faith, in the glass of the Gospel of Christ, and him crucified, which so realized the object, as if it was present and before the natural eye. Now this was an aggravation of their weakness and folly, that after such clear preaching, and clear sight, they had of the Gospel, and of Christ in it, that they should in the least degree depart from it.

Galatians 3:2

Ver. 2. **This one thing would I learn of you,**

.... Though there were many things he could have put to them, yet he would only ask this one question, which, if rightly attended to, and honestly answered, must expose their folly, and put an end to the controversy upon this head:

received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

This question supposes they had received the

Spirit; that is, the Spirit of God, as a spirit of wisdom and knowledge in the revelation of Christ; as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification; as a spirit of faith and adoption; and as the earnest, seal, and pledge of their future glory. Now the apostle asks, whether they received this Spirit "by the works of the law"; meaning, either whether they could imagine, that they by their obedience to the law had merited and procured the Spirit of God; or whether they thought that the Spirit came to them, and into their hearts, through the doctrine or preaching of the law: the former could not be true, for if they could not obtain righteousness and life by the works of the law, then not the Spirit; besides, works done without the Spirit of God, are not properly good works: not the latter, for though by the law is the knowledge of sin, yet this leaves nothing but a sense of wrath and damnation in the conscience; it is the killing letter, and a ministration of condemnation and death, and not of the Spirit, and of life; this belongs to the Gospel, "or the hearing of faith"; for by "faith", is meant the Gospel, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; and by "the hearing" of it, the preaching of it, the report of it, Isa 53:1 which, in the Hebrew text, is שָׁמַענוּ "our hearing", that by which the Gospel is heard and understood. Now in this way the Spirit of God is received; while the Gospel is preaching he falls on them that hear it, conveys himself into their hearts, and begets them again by the word of truth: and in this way the Galatians came by the Spirit, and which is another aggravation of their folly, that they should enjoy so great an advantage by the Gospel, and yet be so easily removed from it.

Galatians 3:3

Ver. 3. **Are ye so foolish?**

.... Is it possible you should be so stupid? and do you, or can you continue so?

having begun in the Spirit;

that is, either in the Spirit of God, whom they had received through the preaching of the Gospel. They set out in a profession of religion in the light, under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit; they began to worship the Lord in spirit, and in truth, without any confidence in the flesh; they entered upon the service of God, and a newness of life, a different conversation than before, a spiritual way of living in a dependence on the grace and help of the divine Spirit: or in the Gospel, which is the Spirit that gives life, is the ministration of the Spirit of God, and contains spiritual doctrines, and gives an account of spiritual blessings, and is attended

with the Holy Ghost, and with power. This was first preached unto them, and they embraced it; this they begun and set out with in their Christian profession, and yet it looked as if they sought to end with something else:

are you now made perfect by the flesh?

or "in" it; not in carnality, in the lusts of the flesh, as if they now walked and lived after the flesh, in a carnal, dissolute, wicked course of life; for the apostle is not charging them with immoralities, but complaining of their principles: wherefore, by "the flesh" is meant, either the strength of mere nature, in opposition to the Spirit of God, by which they endeavoured to perform obedience to the law; or else the law itself, in distinction from the Gospel; and particularly the ceremonial law, the law of a carnal commandment, and which consisted of carnal ordinances, and only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; and also their obedience to it; yea, even all their own righteousness, the best of it, which is but flesh, merely external, weak, and insufficient to justify before God. This is a third aggravation of their folly, that whereas they begun their Christian race depending upon the Spirit and grace of God, now they seemed to be taking a step as if they thought to finish it in the mere strength of nature; and whereas they set out with the clear Gospel of Christ, and sought for justification only by his righteousness, they were now verging to the law, and seeking to make their justifying righteousness perfect, by joining the works of the law unto it, which needed them not, but was perfect without them.

Galatians 3:4

Ver. 4. **Have ye suffered so many things in vain?**

.... These Galatians had suffered great reproach, many afflictions and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel, as all that embrace it must expect to do; and which to them that persevere in the faith of the Gospel will not be in vain, they will be followed with eternal life and glory; not that these things are meritorious of such happiness, or deserve such a reward; the reward of them is not of debt, but of grace. But, if such who have made a profession, and have suffered for it, should after all relinquish it, their sufferings for it are in vain; they will come short of that glory which is promised to them that suffer for righteousness sake: and this is another aggravation of the folly of these persons, that they should suffer so much persecution for the Gospel, which, if not true, they must have suffered in vain, and might as well have avoided it; and, if true, by relinquishing it not only sustain a great loss, but bring great hurt and damage to

themselves:

if it be yet in vain;

by which words the apostle does, as it were, correct himself, and expresses his hope of them, that they would see their mistake, revoke their error, and abide by the truth of the Gospel.

Galatians 3:5

Ver. 5. **He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit,**

.... By whom he means not himself, nor any other minister of the Gospel, in whose power it does not lie to minister the Spirit, either the ordinary or the extraordinary gifts of it unto men; but either God or Christ who had ministered, and still continued to minister the grace of the Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel; or rather the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which were manifested at the first preaching of the Gospel to them for the confirmation of it, and which they were still supplied with, as the following words show:

and worketh miracles among you;

so that this is a distinct argument from that in Ga 3:2 and a further proof and aggravation of the folly and stupidity of the members of this church, who had not only received through the Gospel the Spirit, as a spirit of regeneration, at least many of them, but had seen the Gospel confirmed by the extraordinary gifts, signs, and wonders of the Holy Ghost, and which were still among them; and yet they were departing from this Gospel, through which all this was done: for it is asked,

doth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

and the apostle's meaning is, that these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and these miracles done among them, did not attend the preaching of the law, or the doctrine of justification by works, taught by the false apostles, but the doctrine of faith, of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, delivered by him and others, for the truth of which he appeals to themselves; and therefore they must be guilty of the most egregious folly, once to think of, or take anyone step towards a departure from that doctrine. The Alexandrian copy reads here, as in Ga 3:2, "received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

Galatians 3:6

Ver. 6. **Even as Abraham believed God,**

.... The apostle having observed, that the special

grace and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were received not through the preaching of the law, but through the doctrine of faith; by an easy transition, passes on to a further confirmation of the doctrine of justification by faith, by producing the instance of Abraham, what the Scripture says of him, and the promise made unto him; which is very appropriate to his purpose, since Abraham was certainly a righteous man, the first of the circumcision, and the head of the Jewish nation; and whom the false teachers much gloried in, and boasted of their being his seed, and of being circumcised as he was; and would fain have persuaded the Gentiles to the same practice, in imitation of him, and as necessary to their justification before God; whereas the apostle here shows, referring to Ge 15:6 that Abraham was justified by faith, and not by any works whatever, much less by circumcision; for what he here refers to, was many years before his circumcision; and since therefore he was a justified person, declared to be so, before it and without it, it was not necessary to his justification, nor is it to any other person's: he

believed God.

The object of faith is God, Father, Son, and Spirit; here Jehovah the Son seems principally intended, who in Ge 15:1 is called the "Word of the Lord"; the essential Word, who was with God from everlasting, and was God, and in the fulness of time was made flesh and dwelt among men; and "Abraham's shield", the same the apostle in Eph 6:16 calls "the shield of faith"; meaning not the grace of faith, but Christ the object of faith; which faith lays hold on, and makes use of as a shield against the temptations of Satan: and also his "exceeding great reward"; his all in all, being made to him, as to all believers, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: him he believed, not only that he was God, but he believed his word of promise, and in his power and faithfulness to fulfil it; which regarded not only his natural offspring, and a numerous race, the enjoyment of the land of Canaan, and many temporal good things in it, but the Messiah, and spiritual blessings in him: he "believed in the Lord", Ge 15:6 in Jehovah the Word, in him as his shield, and exceeding great reward, in him as the Lord his righteousness:

and it was accounted to him for righteousness;

that is, by God, whom he believed; for the sense is, not that Abraham ascribed righteousness to God, and celebrated his justice and faithfulness, as some; nor, as others, that Abraham was accounted a righteous man by the world; but that something was accounted by God to Abraham as his righteousness, which could not be

the act of his faith; for faith is not a man's righteousness, neither in whole nor in part; faith and righteousness are two distinct things, and are often distinguished one from another in Scripture: besides, that which was accounted to Abraham for righteousness, is imputed to others also; see Ro 4:23 which can never be true of the act of his faith; but is of the object of it, the word of the Lord, his shield and exceeding great reward, the Lord his righteousness and strength, who is made or accounted, as to him, so to others, righteousness. The righteousness of Christ, whom he believed in, was accounted to him as his justifying righteousness now for faith to be accounted for righteousness, is all one as to be justified by faith; that is, by Christ, or by his righteousness imputed and received by faith; and if Abraham was justified this way, as he was, the apostle has his argument against the false teachers.

Galatians 3:7

Ver. 7. Know ye therefore,

... Or "ye know"; this is a thing known by you, at least may, or should be; it ought not to be contradicted or disputed, it is so plain a case, and so clear a point:

that they which are of faith;

of the faith of Abraham, as in Ro 4:16 have the same faith as he had, for nature and kind; though it may not be to the same degree, yet exercised on the same object, Jehovah the Word, the Lord our righteousness, and wrought by the same Spirit; or who are of the faith of Christ, believers in him with all their hearts, and for themselves; who look to him for righteousness and life, who seek for justification by his righteousness, and trust in him alone for it, and not in the works of the law:

the same are the children of Abraham;

his spiritual seed, though they may not be his natural offspring; for he is the father of all that believe, whether of the circumcision or the uncircumcision, and of none else in a spiritual sense: in this the apostle strikes at the false teachers, who boasted of their being the seed of Abraham, his natural descendants, which they might be, and yet not his spiritual children; for none are such, but they that are of faith, or seek for righteousness by faith; not they that are of the law, or seek for justification by the works of it, and so not heirs of the blessing; were they, faith would be made void, and the promise of none effect, Ro 5:14 and his view herein is to prove, that the Gentiles, who believe, are the true seed of Abraham, the children of the promise, those in many nations, he was promised to be the father of; and his further view is to observe, that as the father of the faithful was justified, so

are all his children; and that as he was justified by faith, so are they.

Galatians 3:8

Ver. 8. And the Scripture foreseeing,

.... This seems to agree with the Jewish forms or citing passages of Scripture, bwtkh har hm, "what does the Scripture foresee?" and מה ראתה תורה, ³⁶ "what does the law foresee?" The Scripture here, by a "prosopopeia", is represented as foreseeing an event that would come to pass, and accordingly spoke of it before hand, and designs God the author of the Scripture; and so the Syriac version renders it, "for seeing" דקדמו יד אלהא, "that God" foreknew, &c. and means either the Holy Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, is privy to all his counsels and decrees, and to this of the justification of the Gentiles; or God the Father, who justifies the uncircumcision through faith, according to his own provision and predetermination of it, before the world was; for he was in Christ, reconciling the world, his elect among the Gentiles, from all eternity; when he resolved not to impute their sins to them, but to his Son, who engaged to be their surety: or rather the Son of God, since he was the preacher of this to Abraham; who lay in the bosom of the Father, and was not only acquainted with all his purposes and determinations, but entered into a covenant with him, for, and on the behalf of the people, the chosen ones, among the Gentiles as well as Jews; and undertook to bring in a righteousness for them, by which, being received by faith, they should evidentially, manifestly, in the court of their own consciences, be justified: wherefore the wisdom of God, the eternal Logos, having such a certain foresight, both as God and as Mediator, concerned in the covenant of grace for his people,

that God would justify the Heathen through faith:

that is, that whereas a righteousness would be wrought out, and brought in, for the justification of all God's elect, and the doctrine of it be preached among the Gentiles, to whom faith would be given to lay hold on, and receive this righteousness, God would hereby, and hereupon pronounce the sentence of justification in the court of conscience; from whence follow peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; the Scripture, the author, and substance of it, God the Word,

preached before, the Gospel unto Abraham;

for not to the Father or the Spirit, as to the Son, can preaching be so well ascribed: Christ was the first

³⁶ Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 10. fol. 201. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 122. 1.

preacher of the Gospel that ever was; he first preached it to Adam and Eve in the garden, and afterwards to Abraham: it was Gospel, it was good news to him, that the Messiah should spring from him, and all nations be blessed in him; he rejoiced at it, and by faith saw Christ's day and was glad and particularly that part of the Gospel, and which is a principal part of it, justification by faith; and that, as it concerned the Gentiles, was preached unto him; and before his circumcision, of which that was a sign and seal, namely, that the righteousness of faith should be upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; and before the law of works was given on Mount Sinai, and long before the doctrine of justification by faith was preached unto the Gentiles, and they enjoyed the comfort of it; which shows this to be the Gospel, and to be no new doctrine, nor different from what was so early taught; the sum and substance of which lies in these words, "in thee shall all nations be blessed"; the passage referred to, is in Ge 12:3 and is repeated Ge 18:18 and in Ge 22:18 is thus expressed,

in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

which shows, that this is not to be understood of Abraham personally, but of his seed; and which cannot intend Isaac, the immediate seed of Abraham, in whom it was never verified; and besides, is carried down to his seed, Ge 26:4 as not terminating in him; and for the same reason it cannot design Jacob, the immediate seed of Isaac; see Ge 28:14 nor the whole body of the Jews, the posterity of Jacob, in whom it never had its completion; for when and how have the nations of the earth been blessed in them? either whilst in their own land, when they would have no conversation with them, neither on a civil or sacred account, unless they conformed to their rites; or since their dispersion, so far from it, that their name is used by way of reproach, and as a proverb, a taunt, and a curse everywhere; but it is to be understood of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the son of Abraham, took upon him the seed of Abraham, and to whom it is applied, Ga 3:16 as by the Apostle Peter, Ac 3:25. The phrase being "blessed in" him, does not signify a blessing of themselves or others, or a proverbial expression that should be used among the Gentiles, "God bless thee as Abraham, or the God of Abraham bless thee, or God bless you as he did the Israelites, or seed of Abraham"; for no one instance can be produced of the nations of the world ever using such a form of blessing; no history, sacred or profane, makes mention that these, or any other Jewish forms of blessing, were ever used among the Gentiles: but here

it designs blessings in Christ, and not temporal, but spiritual ones, even all spiritual blessings; as redemption, reconciliation, peace, pardon, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life, and particularly justification; this is the blessedness more especially intended, which comes not upon the circumcision only, but the uncircumcision also; and they that partake of this are blessed indeed; for they are justified from all sin, are free from condemnation, secure from the wrath of God, have a title to eternal life, and shall certainly be glorified: and when it is said that “all nations” shall be thus blessed, the meaning is, not that every individual of all nations shall enjoy this happiness, for all are not in Christ, nor have his righteousness imputed to them, nor have faith in him, there are many that will be condemned with the world; but some of all nations, that God will have saved, and Christ has redeemed by his blood; and these are the many he justifies, even all the elect of God, in the various nations of the world.

Galatians 3:9

Ver. 9. **So then they which be of faith,**

.... This is the apostle's conclusion upon the whole, from the instance of Abraham, and, the promise made to him; and is an explanation of the preceding clause, and shows that it must be taken in a limited sense, and understood not of every individual; only of those who are of the same faith with Abraham, are believers in Christ, and seek for justification by faith in him, and not by the works of the law:

these are blessed with faithful Abraham;

in his seed Christ; they are blessed with a justifying righteousness in Christ as he was, and will be blessed with eternal life as he is; they shall sit with him, and with Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. The character of “faithful” given to him, respects not his uprightness and integrity among men, but his faith in God; and does not suppose that he was blessed for his faith, but that it was through faith that he received the blessing of justification, and not by the works of the law; and that in the same way, all that believe enjoy the same favour, for to them it is limited and restrained: nor can the Jews of all men find fault with this interpretation of the apostle's, since they themselves interpret the above clause of some particular persons of the nations of the world, and say in so many words, that

“the meaning is, not that all the men of the world should be blessed, but that every family that is in the world, לְמִשְׁפַּחַתוֹ וְאֶמְוֹנָתוֹ, “that

comes to the obedience and faith of him” (God,) to it shall adhere the blessing and providence.³⁷”

Galatians 3:10

Ver. 10. **For as many as are of the works of the law,**

.... The apostle does not say, “as many as were of the law”, to whom it belonged, who were born and brought up in it, and to whom it was given, the Jews; for there were some of them who believed in Christ, were blessed with Abraham, and not under the curse of the law; nor does he say, “as many as do the works of the law”: for the works of the law are to be done, though not in order to obtain righteousness and life by them; yet it is not the doing of them, but the not doing of them, that entails the curse on men: his meaning is, that as many as seek for justification by the works of the law, and trust in their own righteousness for acceptance with God, these are so far from being blessed or justified hereby, that they

are under the curse,

that is, of the law; they are under its sentence of condemnation and death, they are deserving of, and liable to the second death, eternal death, the wrath of God, here meant by the curse; to which they are exposed, and which will light upon them, for aught their righteousness can do for them; for trusting in their works, they are trusting in the flesh, and so bring down upon themselves the curse threatened to the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm; not only that trusts in a man of flesh and blood, but in the works of man; his own, or any other mere creature's: besides, by so doing, he rejects Christ and his righteousness, whereby only is deliverance from the curse of the law; nor is it possible by his present obedience to the law, be it ever so good, that he can remove the guilt of former transgressions, and free himself from obligation to punishment for them: nor is it practicable for fallen man to fulfil the law of works, and if he fails but in one point, he is guilty of all, and is so pronounced by the law; and he stands before God convicted, his mouth stopped, and he condemned and cursed by that law he seeks for righteousness by the deeds of:

for it is written, De 27:26

cursed is everyone that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.

The law requires doing; it is not content with mere theory without practice; it is not enough to know it,

37 Abarbinel in Pentateuch, fol. 54. 1, 2. Vid. R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 13. p. 135.

or hear it, it must be done. The Jews boasted of their knowledge, and trusted much to the hearing of it read every sabbath day; but not those who had a form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law, or were hearers of it, were just before God, but the doers of it are justified; and it requires perfect obedience, an observance of all things contained in it, which can never be performed by fallen man. The Jews pretend³⁸, that Abraham their Father קיים כל התורה כולה, “fulfilled all the whole law”; and the same they say {q} of the Israelites in common, than which nothing is more untrue; for in many things all men offend: moreover, the law requires constant perfect obedience; not only that a man should do all things commanded in it, but that he should continue to do them from his infancy, to the day of his death; and in failure hereof, it pronounces every man cursed, without any respect to persons, or any regard to pleas, taken from the infirmity of human nature, the sincerity of the heart, or repentance for transgressions. It should be observed, that the word “all” is not in the Hebrew text, in De 27:26, but is manifestly implied, an indefinite proposition being equal to an universal one; and agreeably to the true sense of the words, it is inserted by the apostle here, as it is in the Septuagint and Samaritan versions there; and perfectly accords with the sense of the best interpreters among the Jews; one of them has this gloss upon the words³⁹, כלל את כל התורה כולה, כאן, “here he (Moses) comprehends all the whole law”; and another⁴⁰ says the same thing, almost in the same words; this

“(says he) includes all the commandments which are in the law: and the note of a third is⁴¹, there are some that say, this is to be understood of the whole law”; and there are others that say, it is to be understood of those things that are mentioned (above), but they say nothing, for it is written “to do them”; and it is right in my eyes, that he curses for the negative commands mentioned, and he curses him who does not keep even secretly the affirmative precepts, wherefore he says “to do them”:

to which may be added, the observation of another of them⁴² that these words intimate, that a man ought

38 Misn. Kiddushin, c 4. sect 14. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 28. 2.

39 Jarchi in loc.

40 Bechai in loc. {t} Aben Ezra in loc.

41 Aben Ezra in loc.

42 R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 3,

to honour the law, במהשבה ובדיבור ובמשה, “in thought, and word, and in deed”: nor should this be thought to be too severe, that the law of God curses men for nonperformance of the whole. The Athenians⁴³ formerly condemned persons as guilty, though they had not broke the whole law, yet if they had transgressed but one syllable of it: upon the whole it is a clear point, that there can be no justification by the works of the law, since it curses in case of want of perfect and constant obedience to it.

Galatians 3:11

Ver. 11. **But that no man is justified,**

.... There are some that are justified, as all God's elect are, in his own mind and will from eternity; which will of his to justify them, upon the righteousness of his Son, undertook by him to bring in, is their justification in the court of heaven; and all that believe in Christ are openly and manifestly justified in the court of conscience, under the testimony of the Spirit of God: but no one is justified

by the law;

it is in the Greek text, “in the law”; there were many justified before the law was given, as Noah, Job, Abraham, and all the Ante-Mosaic believers; and there were many justified “in”, or under the legal dispensation; but none of them were justified by their obedience to the law, but by the righteousness they believed they had in the Lord: especially no man is justified

in the sight of God;

who sees the heart, knows the spring of actions, and whose judgment is according to truth; that is, by the law and the deeds of it, however they may before men:

it is evident;

it is a clear case, out of all dispute, as appears from Hab 2:4

for the just shall live by faith;

which may be read either, “the just by faith, shall live”: that is, the man who is just by faith, or justified by faith, not by it as a principle or act, or as the cause or matter of his justification, but by the object of his faith, Christ and his righteousness apprehended by faith, and so not just or justified by works; he shall live a life of justification, through that righteousness his faith receives; he shall live comfortably, with much peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, as the result of his being justified by faith; and shall live eternally, and never die the second death: or the “just shall live by faith”; he that is

43 Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 5.

righteous, not by his own works, but by the obedience of Christ, shall live not upon faith, but by it on Christ, and his righteousness, which is revealed from faith to faith; and this makes it a clear point, that he is not justified by the law, for if he was, he would not live by faith on Christ, but in and by the deeds of the law.

Galatians 3:12

Ver. 12. **And the law is not of faith,**

.... The Arabic version adds, "but of man"; which as it is an addition to the text, so it contains false doctrine; for though the law is not of faith, yet not of man, but of God; the law does not consist of faith in Christ, nor does it require it, and that a man should live by it upon his righteousness; it is the Gospel that reveals the righteousness of Christ, and directs and encourages men to believe in him and be saved; nor does the law take any notice of a man's faith; nor has it anything to do with a man as a believer, but as a doer, in the point of justification:

but the man that doth them shall live in them;

the passage referred to, is in Le 18:5, the word "them", relates to the statutes and judgments, not of the ceremonial, but of the moral law, which are equally obligatory on Gentiles as on Jews. The Jewish doctors⁴⁴ observe on those words, that

"it is not said, priests, Levites, and Israelites, but הארמי, "the man"; lo, you learn from hence, that even a Gentile that studies in the law, is as an high priest:"

so that whatever man does the things contained in the law, that is, internally as well as externally, for the law is spiritual, reaches the inward part of man, and requires truth there, a conformity of heart and thought unto it, and that does them perfectly and constantly, without the least failure in matter or manner of obedience, such shall live in them and by them; the language of the law is, do this and live; so life, and the continuation of that happy natural life which Adam had in innocence, was promised to him, in case of his persisting in his obedience to the law; and so a long and prosperous life was promised to the Israelites in the land of Canaan, provided they observed the laws and statutes which were commanded them: but since eternal life is a promise made before the world began, is provided for in an everlasting covenant, is revealed in the Gospel, and is the pure gift of God's grace through Christ, it seems that

⁴⁴ T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 1.

it never was the will of God that it should be obtained by the works of the law; and which is a further proof that there can be no justification in the sight of God by them, see Ga 3:21.

Galatians 3:13

Ver. 13. **Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,**

.... The Redeemer is Christ, the Son of God; who was appointed and called to this work by his Father, and which he himself agreed to; he was spoken of in prophecy under this character; he came as such, and has obtained eternal redemption, for which he was abundantly qualified; as man, he was a near kinsman, to whom the right of redemption belonged; and as God, he was able to accomplish it. The persons redeemed are "us", God's elect, both of Jews and Gentiles; a peculiar people, the people of Christ, whom the Father gave unto him; some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: the blessing obtained for them is redemption; a buying of them again, as the word signifies; they were his before by the Father's gift, and now he purchases them with the price of his own blood, and so delivers them "from the curse of the law"; its sentence of condemnation and death, and the execution of it; so that they shall never be hurt by it, he having delivered them from wrath to come, and redeemed from the second death, the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. The manner in which this was done was by being

made a curse for us;

the sense of which is, not only that he was like an accursed person, looked upon as such by the men of that wicked generation, who hid and turned away their faces from as an abominable execrable person, calling him a sinner, a Samaritan, and a devil; but was even accursed by the law; becoming the surety of his people, he was made under the law, stood in their legal place and stead and having the sins of them all imputed to him, and answerable for them, the law finding them on him, charges him with them, and curses him for them; yea, he was treated as such by the justice of God, even by his Father, who spared him not, awoke the sword of justice against him, and gave him up into his hands; delivered him up to death, even the accursed death of the cross, whereby it appeared that he was made a curse: "made", by the will, counsel, and determination of God, and not without his own will and free consent; for he freely laid down his life, and gave himself, and made his soul an offering for sin: for it is written. De 21:23, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree: it is in the Hebrew

text, ywlt, "he that is hanged": which is the very name the Jews⁴⁵ commonly call Christ by way of reproach; that is, "everyone that hangeth", as the apostle rightly renders it; which is always the sense of an indefinite phrase, unless a restriction is put: adding out of the same verse, "on the tree", by way of explanation; for which he cannot upon any account be found fault with, since it is manifest one hanged on a tree is meant, "who is accursed of God", or "the curse of God"; the curse of God, in vindicating his righteous law, was visibly on such a person; as it was on Christ, when he hung on the cross, in the room and stead of his people; for he was made a curse, not for himself, or for any sins of his own, but for us; in our room and stead, for our sins, and to make atonement for them: upon the whole, the Jew⁴⁶ has no reason to find fault as he does, either with the apostle's sense, or citation of this passage; for whether it be rendered "hangeth", or is "hanged", the sense is the same; and though the apostle leaves out the word "God", it is clear from what he says, that his meaning is, that the curse of God lighted upon Christ as the surety of his people, standing in their legal place and stead, in order to redeem them from the law and its curse; since he says, he was "made a curse" for them, which must be done by the Lord himself: and whereas the Jew objects, that it is impossible that anyone, even an Israelite, should be delivered from the curses of the law, but by the observance of it, this shows his ignorance of the law, which, in case of sin, requires a penalty, and which is its curse; and it is not future observance of the law will free from that: and as for the Gentiles, he says, to whom the law was not given, and who were never under it, they are free from the curses of it, without a redemption; but as this is to be, understood not of the ceremonial, but of the moral law, it is a mistake; the Gentiles are under the moral law, and being guilty of the violation of it, are liable to its curse; and cannot be delivered from it, but through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; by virtue of which, they have a part and portion in the blessings promised as follows.

Galatians 3:14

Ver. 14. **That the blessing of Abraham,**

.... The same blessing Abraham enjoyed, even justification by the righteousness of Christ; and what was promised to Abraham, that in him, his seed, that is Christ, the Gentiles should be blessed, or justified; for though this blessing may in general comprise

⁴⁵ Vid. Buxtorf. Lexic. Talmudie. col. 2596.

⁴⁶ R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 89. p. 469.

every spiritual blessing, yet it chiefly regards that of justification; or a deliverance from the curse of the law, and which is the end of Christ's being made a curse, that this blessedness

might come on the Gentiles;

the uncircumcision, as well as the circumcision; see Ro 4:9 that is, upon as many of them as were ordained unto eternal life, and in consequence of that believe in Christ; quite contrary to a Jewish notion, that

"no blessing dwells but upon an Israelite⁴⁷:"

now though this blessing, as all other spiritual ones, were laid up in the covenant of grace, put into the hands of Christ, and God's elect blessed therewith, as considered in him, yet the curse of the law for their transgressions stood in the way of their personal enjoyment of it, to their peace and comfort in their own souls; wherefore Christ is made a curse for them, to make way for the blessing to take place upon them; which is by an act of God's grace imputed to them, and is received by faith:

through Jesus Christ;

or "in Jesus Christ", as the words may be read; meaning either, that this blessing comes upon the Gentiles that were in Christ, chosen in him, in union with him, and represented by him, both in the covenant and on the cross; or else that Christ is the Mediator, as from whom, so through whom, this, as every blessing of grace, comes to the children of God: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith; Beza puts the copulative and to this clause, reading it, "and that we", &c. as does the Ethiopic version; thereby more clearly pointing out this to be another end of Christ's being made a curse for us: by "the promise of the Spirit" may be meant, either by an "hypallage", the Spirit of promise, who opens and applies the promises; or the Spirit promised, not as a spirit of regeneration, conversion, and faith; for, as such, he cannot be received by faith; Since, antecedent to his being so, there can be no faith; but rather as a spirit of adoption, in respect to which he is said to be received, Ro 8:15 and this blessing of adoption, as in consequence of redemption from under the law, its curse and condemnation, Ga 4:4. Or else a spiritual promise, in distinction from the temporal promise of the land of Canaan, made to Abraham and his natural seed, and means the promise of eternal life and happiness in the world to come; which promise is now received by faith, and that in consequence of the sufferings and death of Christ the testator; see Heb 9:15.

⁴⁷ Zohar in Exod. fol. 51. 3.

{a} Zohar in Exod. fol. 51. 3.

Galatians 3:15

Ver. 15. **Brethren,**

... Whereas in Ga 3:1, he calls them “foolish Galatians”, which might seem too harsh and severe, therefore, to mitigate and soften their resentments, he styles them brethren; hoping still well of them, and that they were not so far gone, but that they might be recovered; and imputing the blame and fault rather to their leaders and teachers, than to them:

I speak after the manner of men;

agreeably to a Talmudic form of speech in use among the Jews, *דְּבַרָּה תּוֹרָה כְּלִשְׁנֵי בְנֵי אָדָם* “the law speaks according to the language of the children of men”, or “after the manner of men”⁴⁸, when they argue from any Scripture, in which a word is repeated, and the latter word seems to point out something peculiar: but the apostle’s meaning is, that the thing he was about to speak of was taken from among men, in common use with them, and what was obvious to the common sense and understanding of men, and might easily be applied and argued from, as it is by him:

though it be but a man’s covenant, or testament, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto;

if a covenant made between men, or a man’s will and testament, be confirmed, signed, sealed, and witnessed, in a proper manner, no other man can make them void, or take anything from them, or add anything to them, only the parties concerned by their own will and consent; and if this be the case among men, much less can the covenant of God, confirmed by two immutable things, his word and oath, or his will and testament, or any branch of it, be ever disannulled, or be capable of receiving any addition thereunto. The apostle seems to have a particular respect to that branch of the covenant and will of God, which regards the justification of men in his sight by the righteousness of Christ, to which the false teachers were for adding the works of the law.

Galatians 3:16

Ver. 16. **Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made,**

... The promises design the promises of the covenant of grace mentioned in the next verse, which are exceeding great and precious, better than those of any other covenant; and which are all yea and amen in

48 T. Bab Ceritot, fol. 11. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 94. 2. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2. Maccot, fol. 12. 1. Vid Halicot Olam, tract 4. c. 3. p. 199.

Christ, and are chiefly of a spiritual nature; though all the temporal blessings of God’s people come to them in a covenant way, and by virtue of the promise; for godliness has the promise of this life, that God will verily feed them, withhold no good thing from them proper for them, sanctify all their afflictions, support under them, and never leave nor forsake them: but the promises here intended principally are such as these, that God will be their God, and they shall be his people, the promise of Christ as a Saviour and Redeemer of them; of the Spirit as their sanctifier, and the applier of all grace unto them; of justification by Christ’s righteousness, and pardon by his blood; of adoption through free rich grace; of perseverance in grace, and of the eternal inheritance: now these promises were made, *εῤρηψησαν*, “were said unto”, or spoken of, to Abraham and his seed; that is, they were discovered, made manifest, and applied to Abraham, the father of many nations; and were declared to belong to him and his spiritual seed, even all that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles; for the apostle is not speaking of the original make and constitution of the covenant of grace and its promises, which were made from all eternity; the grand promise of life was made before the world began, and Christ was set up as Mediator from everlasting, before ever the earth was, which suppose a covenant in which this promise was granted, and of which Christ was the Mediator as early; it was made long before Abraham, or any of his spiritual seed, were in being; nor was it made with any single person, any mere creature, Abraham, or any other, but with Christ, as the head and representative of the whole election of grace: but what is here treated of is, the declaration and manifestation of the covenant, and its promises to Abraham; which was frequently done, as upon the call of him out of the land of Chaldea, upon his parting with Lot, when he was grown old, and when Eliezer his servant was like to be his heir, and just before the giving of him the covenant of circumcision, and again upon the offering up of his son Isaac:

he saith not unto seeds,

as of many; in the plural number, as if Jews and Gentiles were in a different manner his spiritual seed:

but as of one;

using the singular number:

and to thy seed, which is Christ;

meaning not Christ personal, though he was of the seed of Abraham, a son of his, as was promised; but the covenant and the promises were not now made with, and to Christ, as personally considered, this was done in eternity; but Christ mystical, the church, which is the

body of Christ, of which he is the head, and is called by his name, 1Co 12:12 and designs all Abraham’s spiritual seed, both Jews and Gentiles; who are all one in Christ, and so Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise; hence there is no room for the objection of the Jew to the apostle’s application of this passage to Christ⁴⁹, that the Scripture speaks not of any particular person, but of seed in a general and collective sense, of a large and numerous offspring; since the apostle designs such a seed by Christ, as numerous as the stars of the sky, and the sand on the sea shore, even all believers in all nations, Abraham is the father of; though did the apostle mean Christ particularly, and personally considered, there are instances to be given, where the word “seed” is used, not in a collective sense, but of a single person, as in Ge 4:25. Nor has the Jew⁵⁰ any reason to charge him with a mistake, in observing that the word is not in the plural, but in the singular number, when it is the manner of the Hebrew language to speak of seed only in the singular number; but this is false, the word is used in the plural number, and so might have been here, had it been necessary, as in 1Sa 8:15 concerning seed sown in the earth, from whence the metaphor is here taken. The first tract in the Jews’ Misna, or oral law, is called, *זְרֵיָא*, “seeds”; and the word, even as spoken of the posterity of men, is used in the plural number in their Talmud⁵¹; where they say,

“pecuniary judgments are not as capital ones; in pecuniary judgments, a man gives his money, and it atones for him; in capital judgments, his blood, and the blood *זְרֵיָא*, “of his seeds”, or posterity, hang on him to the end of the world; for we so find in Cain, who slew his brother; as it is said, “the bloods of thy brother crieth”; it is not said, the blood of thy brother, but the bloods of thy brother, his blood, and the blood *זְרֵיָא*, “of his seeds”.”

Galatians 3:17

Ver. 17. **And this I say,**

Assert and affirm as a certain truth, that is not to be gainsaid;

that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul;

49 Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 13. p. 134.

50 Ib. par. 2. c. 90. p. 468.

51 T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 1.

by “the covenant” is meant, not the covenant made with Adam, as the federal head of all his posterity; for this was made two thousand years before the law was given; nor that which was made with the Israelites at Mount Sinai, for that itself is the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after this covenant; nor the covenant of circumcision given to Abraham, for that was not so long by some years, before the giving of the law, as the date here fixed: but “a covenant confirmed of God in Christ”; a covenant in which Christ is concerned; a covenant made with him, of which he is the sum and substance, the Mediator, surety, and messenger; and such is what the Scriptures call the covenant of life and peace, and what we commonly style the covenant of grace and redemption; because the articles of redemption and reconciliation, of eternal life and salvation, by the free grace of God, are the principal things in it. This is said to be “in Christ”, *εἰς Χριστόν*, “with respect to Christ”; though the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out this clause, nor is it in the Alexandrian copy, and some others; meaning either that this covenant has respect to Christ personal, he having that concern in it, as just now mentioned, and as it was made manifest and confirmed to Abraham, was promised in it to spring from him; or rather that it has respect to Christ mystical, as before, to all Abraham’s spiritual seed, both Jews and Gentiles: and this is said to be “confirmed of God”, with respect thereunto; which must be understood, not of the first establishment of the covenant, in and with Christ, for that was done in eternity; nor of the confirmation of it by his blood, which was at his death; nor of the confirmation of it in common to the saints by the Spirit of God, who is the seal of the covenant, as he is the Spirit of promise; but of a peculiar confirmation of it to Abraham, either by a frequent repetition thereof, or by annexing an oath unto it; or rather by those rites and usages, and even wonderful appearances, recorded in Ge 15:9 and which was “four hundred and thirty years before” the law was given, which are thus computed by the learned Pareus; from the confirmation of the covenant, and taking Hagar for his wife, to the birth of Isaac, 15 years; from the birth of Isaac, to the birth of Jacob, 60 years, Ge 25:26, from the birth of Jacob, to his going down into Egypt, 130 years, Ge 47:9, from his going down to Egypt, to his death, 17 years, Ge 47:28 from the death of Jacob, to the death of Joseph in Egypt, 53 years, Ge 50:26 from the death of Joseph, to the birth of Moses, 75 years; from the birth of Moses, to the going out of the children of Israel from Egypt, and the giving of the law, 80 years,

in all 430 years. The Jews reckoned the four hundred years spoken of to Abraham, Ge 15:13 and mentioned by Stephen, Ac 7:6 from the birth of Isaac; but they reckon the four hundred and thirty years, the number given by Moses, Ex 12:40 and by the apostle here, to begin from the confirming the covenant between the pieces, though somewhat differently counted; says one of their chronologers⁵², we reckon the 430 years from the 70th year of Abraham, from whence to the birth of Isaac were 30 years, and from thence to the going out of Egypt, 400 years; and another⁵³ of them says,

”they are to be reckoned from the time that the bondage was decreed, in the standing between the pieces; and there were 210 years of them from thence to the going down to Egypt, and these are the particulars; the 105 years which remained to Abraham, and the 105 years Isaac lived after the death of Abraham, and there were 10 years from the death of Isaac, to the going down to Egypt, and it remains that there were 210 years they stayed in Egypt:”

another⁵⁴ of their writers says,

“that from the time that the decree of the captivity of Egypt was fixed between the pieces, to the birth of Isaac, were 30 years; and from the birth of Isaac to the going down of the children of Israel into Egypt, 400 years; take out from them the 60 years of Isaac, and the 130 years that Jacob had lived when he went into Egypt, and there remain 210.”

Josephus reckons⁵⁵ these years from Abraham's coming into the land of Canaan, to the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and makes them 430, agreeably to Ex 12:40 and to the apostle here, and to the Talmud; See Gill on “Ac 7:6”. However, be these computations as they will, it is certain, that the law, which was so long after the confirming of the covenant to Abraham, could not make it null and void: or that it should make the promise of none effect; the particular promise of the covenant, respecting the justification of Abraham and his spiritual seed, by faith in the righteousness of Christ.

52 Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 7. 1.

53 Juchasln, fol. 156. 2.

54 Jarchi in T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 9. 1.

55 Antiqu. l. 2. c. 15. sect. 2.

Galatians 3:18

Ver. 18. **For if the inheritance be of the law,**

... By the inheritance is meant, either the eternal inheritance, everlasting life and happiness in heaven, which is the gift of God through Christ, and not attained to and enforced by the works of the law; or particularly the blessing of justification, promised in the covenant to Abraham, and his spiritual seed; even to the Gentiles, and inherited by them; which is not obtained through obedience to the law of works, nor does it belong to those who seek for it by the deeds of the law, for these are not heirs of it; see Ro 4:14. For was this the case, it is no more of promise; it cannot be by merit and by promise, by works and grace too; these can never be reconciled, and consist together; if it is by promise, then not of the law; and if it is of the law, it is not by promise: “but” nothing is more certain than this, that God gave it, freely, without any consideration of the works of the law, to Abraham by promise; wherefore justification is not by works, but by the free grace of God, through faith in the righteousness of Christ; and in this way men become heirs according to the hope of eternal life: all which is directly opposite to the notion of the Jews, who say, that, Nde Ng wvry twum rkvb,”for the reward of the commandments, men shall inherit paradise {k}.”{k} Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 3.

Galatians 3:19

Ver. 19. **Wherefore why then serveth the law?**

... If this be the case, might an objector say, why was the law given? what ends and purposes are to be served by it? of what use can it be? there had as good been no law at all, if the inheritance is not of it, and there is no justification by it. To which it is answered,

it was added because of transgressions;

four hundred and thirty years after the covenant made with Abraham; it did not succeed it, nor take the place of it, and so make it null and void; but was over and above added unto it, for the sake of restraining transgressions; which had there been no law, men would not have been accountable for them; and they would have gone into them without fear, and with impunity; but the law was given, to lay a restraint on men, by forbidding such and such things, on pain of death; and also for the detecting, discovering, and making known transgressions, what they are, their nature and consequences; these the law charges men with, sets them before them, in their true light and proper colours; and convicts them of them, stops their mouths, and pronounces them guilty before God: moreover, this law entered in, over and

above any other revelation God was pleased to make, “that the offence might abound”, Ro 5:20 either that particular offence, the sin of Adam, the apostle is there speaking of; the heinous nature of which, its aggravated circumstances, and the justness of its imputation to his posterity, were more clearly discerned by this law; and so the Syriac version here renders it in the singular number, מַשְׁלַח מִשְׁנֵוּתָא, “because of transgression”; or all other offences and transgressions, which are increased through the multiplicity of precepts, and attended with more aggravating circumstances, than if no law was given, and more eagerly pursued after, through the prohibition of them; such being the corrupt nature of man, that the more anything is forbidden, the more desirous it is of it: add to all this, that the law was given for the punishing of transgressions, for which it curses, and threatens with death, and inflicts it on Christless sinners: hence it is clear there can be no justification by it, and yet it is not useless and insignificant:

till the seed should come,

to whom the promise was made; either Christ the seed of the woman, and of Abraham, who was to come in the flesh, and is come; and to whom the grand promise of life, and all the promises of the covenant were made; not for himself, but for those he represented, and in whom they are all secure: until whose coming to finish transgression, and bring in everlasting righteousness, the law was to continue in the form in which, and the use for which it was added, and then to cease as the ministration of Moses; for through the coming of Christ it received its full accomplishment, and came to an end; the ceremonial law was utterly abolished, and the moral law ceased to be a covenant of works, though it continues a rule of walk and conversation; and the whole Mosaic economy was no more: or else the seed here intends the spiritual seed of Abraham; particularly among the Gentiles, to whom the promise of blessedness, of justification, and eternal life was made; and the sense be, that till such time that a generation of faithful men, of believers in Christ, should arise among the Gentiles, the law was to continue with the Jews; but when they should spring up, the middle wall of partition should be broken down, and Abraham's spiritual seed among Jews and Gentiles make up one body, one people, and be fellow heirs and partakers of the promise of God in Christ, through the Gospel:

and it was ordained by angels;

not Moses and Aaron, and Joshua, as some say; for though Moses was concerned in the giving of the law, yet not Aaron nor Joshua, nor are any of them ever

called angels; but the holy elect angels are here meant, the ten thousands of saints, or holy ones, God came to Mount Sinai with, and the Lord was among, in the holy place; see De 33:2 and so the Jews say⁵⁶ that the Lord appeared on Mount Sinai gloriously, מִן כִּיחַיה דְּמַלְאכֵיהּ, “with companies”; or “troops of angels”, to give the law to his people: and this may be said to be “ordained” by them, inasmuch as it might be written and spoken by them, as the instruments and ministers God made use of; for though the tables are said to be the work of God, and the writing the writing of God, and to be written with the finger of God, and he is said to speak all the words of it, yet this hinders not, but that all this might be done by the means of angels; who might be employed in disposing and fitting the stones in the form they were, and in writing the law upon them; hence it is said to be given by the disposition of angels, Ac 7:53 and certain it is, that it was spoken by them, Heb 2:2 they forming in the air those articulate and audible sounds, when the law was delivered; who were also concerned in the thunderings and lightnings, and in the blowing of the trumpet, that waxed louder and louder at that time:

in the hand of a mediator;

not Christ, as many interpreters, ancient and modern, have thought; for though he was present at the giving of the law, as appears from Ac 7:38 and is the Mediator between God and man, and had the law in his hand, out of which it went forth as the lawgiver; and as the surety of his people has fulfilled it, and by so doing put an end to it, and delivered them from the curse and condemnation of it; yet he is the Mediator of the new and better covenant, not the ministration of death, but of life; and so Moses and Christ, the law and Gospel, the old and the new covenant, are continually opposed to each other; besides, the mediator here seems to be represented as inferior to the angels, and as receiving the law into his hands from them, by whom it was ordained; which to conceive of Christ, is very much to the demeaning and lessening of him. Moses is the mediator here meant, who stood between God and the people of Israel; not to make peace between them, but to show the word of God from him to them, and this at their own request; see De 5:5, and in his hand the tables of the law were, when he came down from the mount, and was a typical mediator of Christ. So the Jews say of him, that”he was yeuma, “a mediator” between them and God⁵⁷.”

56 Targum in 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

57 Tzeror Hammor, fol. 136. 1, 2.

Galatians 3:20

Ver. 20. **Now a mediator is not a mediator of one,**

.... A mediator supposes two parties he stands between, and these at a distance from, or disagreeing with each other; where there is but one party, there can be no need of, nor any reason for, a mediator; so Christ is the Mediator between God and men, the daysman, Job 9:33, that lays his hands upon them both; and Moses, he was the mediator between God and the Israelites:

but God is one;

not in person, for there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one, in nature and essence; so that though there are three persons, there is but one God, and who is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; who is of one mind concerning them, and has taken them into one and the same covenant, and makes use of one and the same method in the justification of them: but the true sense of the phrase here is, that whereas a mediator supposes two parties at variance, "God is one of the two"; as the Ethiopic version reads the words; he is a party offended, that stands off, and at a distance, which the law given by angels in the hand of a mediator shows; so that that is rather a sign of disagreement and alienation, and consequently that justification is not to be expected by it.

Galatians 3:21

Ver. 21. **Is the law then against the promises of God?**

.... If the law was added because of transgressions, and curses for them, and if the inheritance is not of it, but by promise, were it, it would not be by promise, then, says an objector, it is against the promises: these are contrary to one another, and God, in giving the one and the other, must contradict himself: to which it is replied,

God forbid;

a way of speaking the apostle uses, when he would express his abhorrence and detestation of anything, as here; for though the law and promises are distinct things, and have their separate uses, yet they are not contradictory to each other; the law has its use, and so have the promises; the promises do not set aside the law as useless on all accounts, nor does the law disannul the promises, but is subservient to them:

for if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;

but the law cannot give life, spiritual life to a dead sinner; God only can do this, Father, Son, and Spirit; so

far is the law from giving it efficiently, that it is not so much as the means of it; it is not made use of this way; God makes use of the law to kill, but not to make alive; he makes use of the law to strike dead all a man's hopes of happiness, by the deeds of it; but it is the Gospel he uses to quicken and comfort; that is the Spirit that giveth life. The law requires as much of a dead sinner, as it did of Adam in innocence, but gives him no life, activity, and strength to perform; could it quicken him, and enable him to do all its demands perfectly, then there would be righteousness, and so justification by it, as by the promise; whence it appears that there is no contrariety in the law to the promises: the reason why there is no righteousness is, because it cannot give life, spiritual life and strength; and if so, then not eternal life; which is the free gift of God, and not the merit of men's works: this is directly contrary to a notion of the Jews, who cry up the law as a life giving law; say they ⁵⁸,

"great is the law, שהיא נותנת חיים לנשיה, "for it giveth life to them that do it", in this world, and in the world to come:"

and elsewhere ⁵⁹"the law is a tree of life to all that study in it, yyx Nwl bhyml, "to give unto them life" in this world, and "to give unto them life" in the world to come."

Galatians 3:22

Ver. 22. **But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin,**

.... By the "Scripture" is meant, either the writing of the law in particular, the killing letter, or the whole Scripture, or God in it; and who by and in it has shown, declared, and proved, that all the individuals of human nature, Jews and Gentiles, and all that is in them, and done by them, are under the power and dominion of sin, defiled by it, and involved in the guilt of it; for it is not pantav, "all persons", but panta, "all things", belonging to all persons; all the members of their bodies, and faculties of their souls; all their thoughts, inclinations, and intentions; all their works and services, even their best righteousness, which is as filthy rags; all are declared to be sinful and polluted, and men on account of them to be guilty before God, and liable to punishment; from whence there can be no escape by the law of works; for they are like men concluded, or shut up in a prison, from which there is no apparent likelihood

⁵⁸ Pirke Abot, c. 6. sect. 6.

⁵⁹ Zohar in Gen. fol. 70. 3. & in Num. fol. 62. 1.

of deliverance: now the Spirit of God, discovering to men this their wretched and desperate condition, under the law and sin, reveals Christ and his righteousness to them, and enables and encourages them to believe in him, by whom only they can be justified from all things, they cannot by the law of Moses, in which they see themselves shut up, as in a prison:

that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe;

by the "promise" is intended, the promise of life and salvation, and particularly of a justifying righteousness; which is given, not merited; righteousness is a gift, a gift of grace, a free gift, and so is eternal life; salvation in all its parts is of free grace; Christ is a free gift, and so are all things along with him; yea, faith itself, by which they are received, it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; Christ is the author and finisher, as well as the object of it; and therefore here called "the faith of Jesus Christ": and such that have it, to them the promise, or the things promised, righteousness and life are given, which the law could not give; not to them that work, but to them that believe: thus the law is so far from being against the promises of God, that it is subservient to them; for though the law has no tendency in itself to bring persons to Christ, and to believe in him for righteousness, yet this concluding men under sin, showing them their desperate, and hopeless, and helpless condition, the Spirit of God takes occasion from hence to reveal Christ unto them, and to enable them as perishing creatures to venture on him, and lay hold on the hope set before them in the Gospel; and so they come to enjoy the grand promise of it, even life and salvation by Christ.

Galatians 3:23

Ver. 23. **But before faith came,**

.... This is to be understood, not of the grace of faith, which was under the former dispensation, as now; the Old Testament saints had the same Spirit of faith, and the same grace of faith, as for its nature, object, and use, as New Testament saints have; Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, &c. believed in Christ, and were justified by faith in his righteousness, as we are. It is much better to understand it of the doctrine of faith, which though preached to Adam, and by Noah, and to Abraham, and by Isaiah, and others, yet not so clearly, largely, and fully, as by Jesus Christ and his apostles; so that the times of the Gospel may be called the times of faith, in comparison of the times of the law, and which some think is here meant; but it is best to interpret it of Christ, the object of faith, who was to come, and is come

in the flesh, to fulfil the law; and, by so doing, has put an end to it; and to redeem his people from under it, and to save them with an everlasting salvation; for before this his coming in the flesh, the people of the Jews, of whom the apostle was one, were under the law:

we were kept under the law;

as persons in a garrison, as the word signifies; they were kept distinct and separate from the rest of the nations of the world, and had neither civil nor religious conversation with them; and so were preserved in some measure both from their impieties and idolatries, which otherwise they were naturally prone to; and as a distinct people, unto the coming of the Messiah, who was to arise from among them; so that their being kept under the law in this sense, was both for their honour and their safety: though the meaning may also be, that they were kept under it as persons under a military guard, as the word likewise imports; and signifies, that the law kept a strict guard and a watchful eye over them, as the Roman soldier had over Paul, that kept him, and held fast the chain in his hand, with which he was bound, that he might not get loose and escape from him; see Ac 28:16 to which the apostle seems here to allude; the law kept them close to the discharge of their duty, and held them fast as prisoners; and which is more fully expressed in the next clause,

shut up.

The Syriac version reads this in connection with the former, thus, נמוא נטר הוא לן כר הבישינו "the law kept us shut up", as in a prison; and the same way reads the Arabic version; which shows the state and condition the Jews were in under the law, and how they were treated by it; not as good and righteous persons, but as persons in debt, as criminals and malefactors; a prison is made, and so the law, for such sort of persons; the law considered and used them as sinners, as criminals convicted and condemned; it did itself accuse, convict, and pronounce them guilty, and condemned them to punishment; and detained them as prisoners in its dark dungeon, where they had little light and comfort; and were as in a pit, wherein is no water; though they lay here as prisoners of hope, in expectation of the Messiah's coming; who was to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and to say to the prisoners, Come forth, and to them that sit in darkness, Show yourselves. Also the allusion may be to the custom of the eastern nations, in the usage of their slaves and captives; who in the daytime used to grind at a mill in a prison house, and in the night time were put down into a pit and shut up, and a mill stone

put to the mouth of the pit ⁶⁰; and so describes the state of bondage and slavery the Jews were in under the law, who differed nothing from servants, to whom the saints under the Gospel dispensation are opposed, Ga 3:26 as being the children of God by faith in Christ. And in this uncomfortable condition they continued, unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed; that is, until Christ the object of faith came, who was to be revealed, or made manifest in the flesh; who, before his incarnation, not only lay in the bosom of the Father, but was in a great measure hid under the types and prophecies of the Old Testament; which though they gave some hints of him, yet but obscure ones, in comparison of the revelation made of him by his appearance in human nature; by the testimonies of his Father by a voice from heaven of angels, of John the Baptist, and others; and by his own doctrines and miracles, and by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

Galatians 3:24

Ver. 24. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ,

.... So the words should be read, as they are by the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; for the words "to bring us" are a supplement of our translators, and have nothing to answer to them in the original; and the sense of the passage is, that the law performed this office of a schoolmaster until the coming of Christ; which shows that till that time the church was in its minority, that the Jews were but children in knowledge and understanding, and therefore stood in need, and were under the care of a schoolmaster, the law, by which the whole Mosaic administration is designed. They were taught by the moral law, the letter, the writing on the two tables, with other statutes and judgments, their duty to God and men, what is to be done and to be avoided, what is righteousness and what is not, the nature of sin, its demerit and consequences; but these gave them no instructions about a Saviour, and life and righteousness by him. The ceremonial law gave them some hints of the Gospel scheme, and the way of salvation by Christ, but in a manner suited to their estate of childhood; by sights and shows, by types and figures, by rites and ceremonies, by shadows and sacrifices; it taught them by divers washings the pollution of their nature, their need of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin; by circumcision, the necessity of regeneration, and the internal circumcision of the heart; by the passover,

⁶⁰ Schindler Lex. Pentaglott. in voce xwr, col. 1712.

the daily sacrifice and other offerings, the doctrines of redemption, satisfaction, and atonement; and by the brazen serpent, the necessity of looking to Christ for life and salvation, and by various other things in that branch of the legal economy: but besides the instruction the law gave, it made use of discipline as a schoolmaster does; it kept a strict eye and hand over them, and them close to the performance of their duty; and restrained them from many things their inclinations led them to, threatening them with death in case of disobedience, and inflicting its penalties on delinquents; hence they that were under its discipline, were through fear of death it threatened them with, all their time subject to bondage: even the ceremonial law had something awful and tremendous in it; every beast that was slain in sacrifice was not only an instruction to them that they deserved to die as that creature did; but carried in it a tacit acknowledgment and confession of their own guilt; and the whole was an handwriting of ordinances against them. Moreover, the law being called a schoolmaster, shows that the use of it was but temporary, and its duration but for a time; children are not always to be under, nor designed to be always under a schoolmaster, no longer than till they are come to a proper age for greater business and higher exercises of life; so the law was to continue, and did continue, to be of this use and service to the Jewish church during its minority, until Christ came, the substance of all it taught and directed to: both the Jerusalem Targum and that of Jonathan ben Uzziel, on Nu 11:12 use the very Greek word the apostle does here, concerning Moses, rendering the words, as a "pedagogue" or "schoolmaster" bears a sucking child into the land, &c

That we might be justified by faith;

by Christ the object of faith, by his righteousness, which faith looks unto and receives, and not by the law and the works of it; the people of the Jews were in such a state under the law, and the law of that use unto them before the coming of Christ, as above represented, that it might be made manifest, be a clear point, and out of all dispute, that there is no such thing as justification by the law; for how could ever such a blessing be expected from it, when men were kept under it as under a military guard; when they were shut up in it as in a prison, and were treated by it as malefactors, convicted and condemned; and when they were under the discipline of it, as a rigid and severe schoolmaster? this being their case till Christ came, when it ceased to be all this to them, he being the end of it for righteousness, it became a thing self-evident, that justification is only by him and

his righteousness, and so the end here mentioned was answered.

Galatians 3:25

Ver. 25. But after that faith is come,

.... That is, since Christ the object of faith is come in the flesh, and has fulfilled the law, and redeemed them that were under it from its bondage, curse, and condemnation: we are no longer under a schoolmaster; under the law as such; as no longer under it as a military guard, nor in it as a prison, so neither under it as a schoolmaster; not needing its instructions, or its discipline; since Christ is come as a prophet to teach and instruct, as a priest to atone for sin, and make intercession for transgressors, and as a King to rule and govern; in whose hands, and not in the hands of Moses, the law now is, as a rule of walk and conversation.

Galatians 3:26

Ver. 26. For ye are all the children of God,

.... Not by nature, as Christ is the Son of God, for he is the only begotten of the Father, and in such sense as neither angels nor men are the sons of God; nor by creation, as Adam and all mankind, and the angels are; but by divine adoption by an act of God's rich and sovereign grace, putting them among the children in saying this the apostle directs himself to the Gentiles for their comfort, and says this of them all in a judgment of charity, they being under a profession of faith; lest they should think, because they were not Abraham's seed according to the flesh, nor were ever trained up under the law as a schoolmaster, that they were not the children of God: whereas they were such not by the law, as none indeed are, but by faith in Christ Jesus; not that faith makes any the children of God, or puts them into such a relation; no, that is God's own act and deed; of his free rich grace and goodness, God the Father has predestinated his chosen ones to the adoption of children, and has secured and laid up this blessing for them in the covenant of grace; Christ by redemption has made way for their reception and enjoyment of it; the Spirit of God, in consequence of their sonship, as a spirit of adoption bears strong reason and argument, proving that they are not under the law as a schoolmaster, in which light it is here set by the apostle; since they are sons and not servants, and so free from the bondage of the law; they are sons grown up into the faith of Christ, and are led and taught by the Spirit of God, as they are that are the children of God by faith; and as is promised

to the saints under the Gospel, that they shall be "all taught of God"; and therefore stood in no need of the law as a schoolmaster, which only was concerned with the Jews, whilst they were children under age; and has nothing to do with such, whether Jews or Gentiles, who believe in Christ, and are growing up into him their head, till they come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of him.

Galatians 3:27

Ver. 27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ,

.... Not that it is to be imagined that these churches of Galatia, or any of the primitive churches, consisted of baptized and unbaptized persons; for this would be acting contrary to the commission of Christ and the order of the Gospel: but this way of speaking supposes that there might be some of them, who though baptized in water, yet not into Christ; and that those who are truly and rightly baptized, who are proper subjects of it, and to whom it is administered in a proper manner, are baptized into Christ: not that by baptism they are brought into union with Christ, but into communion with him; for they are not merely baptized in his name, and by his authority, and according to his command, and into his doctrine, and a profession of him; but into a participation of the blessings of grace which are in him, and come through his sufferings and death; for they that are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death and resurrection from the dead; they are led by faith to behold the cleansing of their souls, and the remission of their sins by his blood, and their justification by his righteousness; how he was delivered for their offences, died for their sins, was buried in the grave, and their iniquities with him, and rose again for their justification; of all which, baptism, performed by immersion, is a lively emblem; and this is to be baptized into Christ, namely, being baptized believing in him, and calling on his name: and such have put on Christ; both before and at baptism: before it they put him on as the Lord their righteousness; his righteousness is compared to a garment, is called the best robe, the wedding garment, fine linen, clean and white, the robe of righteousness, a garment down to the feet; this is imputed to the elect of God by the Father, through a gracious act of his, and what they are clothed and covered with by the Son, and is put upon them and applied unto them by the Spirit; and which faith receiving puts off its own rags of righteousness, and makes use of this as its proper dress to appear in before the most High; and such through

divine grace are enabled to put off the old man and put on the new; that is, walk in their outward lives and conversation, not according to the dictates of corrupt nature, but according to the principles of grace, of the new man formed in the soul, for righteousness and holiness, and in imitation of Christ; having him for an example, and desiring to walk as he walked; which is another sense of putting on Christ, namely, a following of him in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; see Ro 13:14 and such persons, as they are the proper subjects of baptism, who have believed in Christ for righteousness, and walk worthy of him; so in baptism they may also be said to put him on as they thereby and therein make a public profession of him, by deeds as well as words, declaring him to be their Lord and King; and afresh exercise faith upon him, as their Saviour and Redeemer, and imitate and follow him in it, as their pattern; who himself submitted to it, leaving them an example that they should tread in his steps; which when they do, they may be said to put him on. The allusion is either to the putting off and putting on of clothes at baptism, which being performed by immersion, required such actions, which no other mode does; or, to the priests putting off their common clothes, and then bathing or dipping themselves in water, and, putting on the garments of the priesthood before they entered on their service; concerning which take the following rules prescribed by the Misnic doctors ⁶¹;

”no man may enter the court for service, though clean, *דְּשִׁטְבוֹל* “until he dips himself” five times, and washes his hands and feet ten times;”

for every time he immersed himself, he washed his hands and feet before and after: again,

”there is a veil of fine linen between him (the high priest) and the people; he puts off his clothes, *וּטְבַל לֵה* dry, “he goes down and dips himself, he comes up”, and wipes himself; then they bring him the golden garments, and “he puts them on”, and washes his hands and his feet; then they bring him the daily sacrifice, and a little after,

“they bring him (the high priest on the day of atonement) to the house of Paryah, and in the holy place there was a veil of fine linen between him and the people; he washes his hands and his feet, and puts off his garments: R. Meir says, he

⁶¹ Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 3, 4, 6. Vid. Misn. Tamid, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

puts off his garments, and then washes his hands and his feet; “he goes down and dips himself, he comes up again”, and wipes himself; then they bring him the white garments, and he puts them on, and washes his hands and his feet:”

all which may serve to illustrate this passage, and point out to us what the apostle alludes unto, as well as to observe to us the distinction the Jews made between the immersion of the whole body, and a washing of a part of it.

Galatians 3:28

Ver. 28. **There is neither Jew nor Greek,**

... Not but that there were such in being; and in the churches of Christ, for the primitive churches consisted of both; but the meaning is, that there is no difference between them, the middle wall of partition being broken down, and that, in the business of justification and salvation, it signified nothing whether a man was a Jew or a Greek; he was never the better for being a circumcised Jew, nor never the worse for being an uncircumcised Gentile; both by nature are equally sinners, and stand in need of the justifying righteousness of Christ, and the regenerating grace of the Spirit. The Gospel was equally preached to both, and was made useful to some of the one and of the other; and who, believing in Christ, had a right to the same ordinances and privileges of the Gospel, and shared in the same blessings of grace. There is neither bond nor free. There were such persons in the world then, and in the churches too; nor does the Gospel dissolve the civil and natural relations and obligations men are in and under to one another, it confirms and secures them; but the sense is, that God, in calling, justifying, and saving men, is no respecter of persons, as being high and low, rich and poor, bond or free, servants or masters: he calls, justifies, and saves men of every station and condition of life; and bond slaves and servants called by grace are Christ's free men, and have an equal right as those that are free to all the immunities of the Gospel: in some Heathen nations bond slaves and servants were not admitted, only freemen, to be present at the sacred service, and worship of their deities ⁶²; but the Gospel makes no such distinction of men in its doctrine, worship, and ordinances, which lie open to all ranks and orders of men: there is neither male nor

⁶² Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dierum, l. 2. c. 14. Aurel. Victor. de orig. Gent. Rom. c. 8. Aristophanis Thesmophor. & Bourdin in ib. p. 782. {

female; among the Heathens ⁶³ also females were not admitted to some of their sacred rites and ceremonies; and among the Jews the males only were concerned in many things both of a civil and religious nature; no female might be heir to an inheritance with a male ⁶⁴; females had no share in the civil government, nor in the priesthood; males were to appear three times a year before the Lord, and, according to their oral law, women and servants were exempted⁶⁵; the mark of circumcision, the sign of the covenant made with Abraham and his natural seed, was only upon the males; but now under the Gospel dispensation there is no distinction made between male⁶⁶ and female as to divine things; as they are alike called by the grace of God, they have the same right to Gospel ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper, and to every spiritual privilege. The apostle's design is to show the common right of believers, of every nation, condition, and sex, and to encourage the Gentiles, and demolish the pride, vanity, and boasting of the Jews, their men especially, who valued themselves upon these “three” very things which the apostle here makes no account of; as that they were Israelites and not Gentiles, freemen and not servants, men and not women; and in their public prayers they give thanks to God in this form,

”blessed be the Lord our God, the King of the world, that he hath made me an Israelite; blessed be the Lord, &c. who hath not made me a Gentile; blessed be the Lord, &c. who hath not made me a “servant”; blessed be the Lord, &c. who hath not made me a “woman”;

instead of which last the woman say,

”blessed be the Lord, &c. who hath made me as he pleased ⁶⁷:

”for ye are all one in Christ Jesus; being alike chosen in him, united to him, redeemed by his blood, justified by his righteousness, regenerated by his Spirit, the children of God by faith in him, and heirs of the same grace and glory, they make, both Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, male and female, as it were but one new man in him; one body, of which he is the head, one spiritual seed of Abraham and of Christs.

⁶³ Alex. ab Alex. ib. Aurel. Victor, c. 6.

⁶⁴ Maimon. Nechalot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

⁶⁵ Misn. Chagiga, c. 1. sect. 1.

⁶⁶ Maimon. Nechalot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.

⁶⁷ Sedor Tephillot, fol. 2. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 4. 1. Ed. Amst. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 13. 2.

Galatians 3:29

Ver. 29. **For if ye be Christ's,**

... Or seeing ye are his, not by creation only, but by the Father's gift to him, by the purchase of his own blood, by the power of his grace, making them willing to give up themselves to him; not only his by profession, saying they are the Lord's, calling themselves by his name; but by possession, Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, and they having his Spirit as a spirit of regeneration and adoption: then are ye Abraham's seed; not his natural but his spiritual seed, the seed that should come, and to whom the promises were made, Ga 3:16 and so were upon an equal foot even with the Jews that believed: and heirs according to the promise; being the children of God, they are heirs of God; and being the spiritual children of Abraham, the children of the promise, which are counted for the seed, they are, according to the promise made to Abraham and his spiritual seed, heirs of the blessings of the grace of life, and of the eternal inheritance; of the blessing of justification of life, and of everlasting salvation; of this world and of the world to come; of all the spiritual blessings of the covenant of grace, and of the incorruptible and undefiled inheritance of the saints in light; to which they are begotten through the abundant mercy of God, for which they are made meet by the grace of Christ; and to which they have a right by his justifying righteousness.

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS IV

In this chapter the apostle discourses concerning the abrogation of the ceremonial law, under which the Old Testament saints were, being as children under tutors; blames the Galatians for returning to it when they were freed from it; puts them in mind of their former affection to him and to his ministry; describes the false apostles, who had been the occasion of their departure from the truth, and by a beautiful allegory sets forth the difference between the legal and Gospel dispensations. And whereas in the latter part of the preceding chapter he had compared the law to a schoolmaster, under which the Jews were till Christ came; he here makes use of another simile to express the same thing by, which is that of an heir while under age being under tutors and governors, until the time fixed by the parent's will, Ga 4:1 an accommodation of which simile is in Ga 4:3, by which the Jews under the former dispensation are represented as children, and as in a state of bondage to the ceremonial law, from which there is a deliverance by Christ at the appointed time of the Father, by whom he was sent for that purpose; the act of sending is ascribed

to God the Father; the person sent is described as the Son of God; the time when is called the fulness of time; and the circumstances under which he was sent were, that he was made of a woman, and made under the law, Ga 4:4, the ends of his being sent were to redeem his people from it, who were under it; and that they might receive the adoption of children, the privilege and spirit of it, Ga 4:5. Hence because they were the sons of God, and as a fruit and effect of the redemption of them by Christ, the Spirit of God is sent down into their hearts, to make known and witness their adoption, Ga 4:6, and the benefits arising from hence are, that such are or should be no longer the servants of the law, but are children and free from it, and are heirs of God, Ga 4:7, and that the grace of God might appear the more illustrious in this privilege of sonship, and the folly of the Galatians be more manifest in returning to the ceremonial law, notice is taken of what they were and did before conversion, and what they were inclined to now; that whereas whilst they were ignorant of God, they served nominal fictitious deities, such as were not by nature gods; and yet now, though they knew God, and were known of him, seemed desirous of being in a state of servitude and bondage to the weak and beggarly elements of the ceremonial law, Ga 4:8, of which instances are given in their observing days, months, times and years, Ga 4:10, which gave the apostle a great deal of concern, fearing his labour among them was in vain, and to no purpose, Ga 4:11, wherefore he entreats them as his brethren to imitate him, who being a Jew, yet had relinquished the observation of the ceremonial law, Ga 4:12, and then he reminds them of their former regard unto him; how that though he preached the Gospel to them through much weakness, yet they did not despise him and reject him on account of his infirmities, but received him with all the tokens of respect imaginable, as if he had been an angel; yea, as if he had been Christ himself, Ga 4:13, who then reckoned themselves happy persons on account of the Gospel he preached to them, and then had such an affection for him, that if it had been needful they would have given their eyes unto him; and yet now he was become their enemy for preaching the same truths he did then, justification by faith in Christ's righteousness and the abrogation of the law, Ga 4:15, next he gives an account of the false apostles, who pretended a zealous affection for the Galatians; which was not a good one, nor with right views, Ga 4:17, though zeal in a good cause, and which continues, is very commendable, Ga 4:18, and such a constant and hearty attachment had the apostle

to them; wherefore he calls them his little children, says he travailed in birth on their account, it being his earnest desire that Christ might appear to be formed in them, Ga 4:19, wherefore since he was in doubt and distress about them, he was very desirous of being with them, and to alter his way of arguing with them; and from the law, and not the Gospel, show them their mistake and folly, Ga 4:20, which he does in the following allegorical way, by observing that Abraham had two sons, the one by a servant maid, the other by his lawful wife; the one was after the flesh, the other by promise; which allegorically signified the two covenants of Sinai and of Sion, Ga 4:22. Agar the bondmaid represented the covenant made at Mount Sinai in Arabia, under which the carnal Jews and their posterity were in a state of bondage; and Sarah the free woman, the covenant of grace under the Gospel dispensation and the Gospel church state, which is from above, free, fertile, and numerous, Ga 4:25, which is confirmed, Ga 4:27, by a passage out of Isa 44:1 and as these two women were typical of the two covenants, so their respective offspring represented the two sorts of professors, legalists and evangelical Christians. True believers in Christ are like Isaac, the children of the promise; legalists are like Ishmael, men after the flesh, and of the same persecuting spirit with him: wherefore as it was then, that carnal Ishmael persecuted spiritual Isaac, so at this time the carnal Jews persecuted the real Christians, Ga 4:28 nevertheless for the comfort of the latter, it is observed out of the Scripture that the former shall be cast out, and not be heir with them, Ga 4:30, and the conclusion of the whole is, that the saints under the Gospel dispensation are not in bondage to the law, but are made free by Christ; to which freedom they are called, and in which they should stand, Ga 4:31.

GALATIANS CHAPTER IV

[1] Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

[2] But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

[3] Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

[4] But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

[5] To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

[6] And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the

Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

[7] Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

[8] Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

[9] But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

[10] Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

[11] I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

[12] Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

[13] Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

[14] And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

[15] Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

[16] Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

[17] They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

[18] But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

[19] My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

[20] I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

[21] Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

[22] For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

[23] But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

[24] Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

[25] For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

[26] But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

[27] For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest

not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

[28] Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

[29] But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

[30] Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

[31] So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

JOHN GILL'S COMMENTARY CHAPTER IV

Galatians 4:1

Ver. 1. **Now I say,**

.... To illustrate what he had said of the law's being a schoolmaster to the Jews until the coming of Christ, and then ceasing as such, he proposes the case of an heir during his minority, till he come to the proper time of enjoying his estate.

that the heir, as long as he is a child;

anyone that is an heir to his father's estate, or another's, whilst under age, being reckoned as a child, as he is from his infancy to his manhood,

differeth nothing from a servant:

he is not his own man, nor at his own dispose; he cannot do as he pleases; he is under restraint; he is kept to school or to business, and is liable to correction and chastisement according as he behaves; nor can he have the free use of his father's estate,

though he be Lord of all,

of all the servants, according to the Arabic version; or of the whole estate his father left him, of which he is Lord in right, but not in possession; he is right heir to it, though as yet it is not in his hands, nor can he do with it as he will.

Galatians 4:2

Ver. 2. **But is under tutors and governors,**

.... The word rendered "tutors", is adopted by the Jewish Targumists and Rabbins into their language; and by the former is used⁶⁸ for any ruler and governor, civil or domestic; and by the latter, for such as are guardians of infants, fatherless children, and such as are under age, as it is here used; and who were either appointed

⁶⁸ Targum Jon. ben Uzziel in Gen. xxxix. 4. & xli 34, 35. & xliii 15. Targum in Esther i. 8. & 2. 3.

by the will of the deceased, or by the sanhedrim, of whom they say ⁶⁹, אפטרופא לדיקני לא מוקמינ, “we do not appoint a tutor or guardian for a bearded person”; that is, an adult person, one that is grown up to man’s estate; but אפטרופא לינוקא ליה אפוקמינ, “we appoint a guardian for an infant”; and they had not used to appoint women or servants, or such as were minors themselves, or any of the common people; but men of substance, integrity, and wisdom ⁷⁰; a fatherless child had two tutors ⁷¹; the power that guardians so appointed had, is at large described by Maimonides ⁷². Governors were such as acted under the tutors or guardians, and were employed by them for the improvement of their estates and minds, as stewards, schoolmasters, &c. until the time appointed of the father; by his last will and testament, which might be sooner or later, as he pleased; but if he died intestate, the time of minority, and so the duration of tutors and guardians, were according to the laws of the nation; which with the Romans was until a man was twenty five years of age; and with the Jews, for a male, was until he was thirteen years of age and one day; and for a female, until she was twelve years of age and one day, if the signs of ripeness of age appeared; but if they did not, the time was protracted until they were twenty, and even sometimes till they were thirty five years of age, before the matter was determined ⁷³.

Galatians 4:3

Ver. 3. **Even so we,**

.... Jews, for of such the apostle is only speaking, and to whom he applies the above case of heirs in minority; it was to the Jews he had spoken of the law, as being a military guard, a prison, and a schoolmaster to them; and then having addressed the Gentiles, as being the children of God, baptized into Christ, one in him, interested in him, the spiritual seed of Abraham, and heirs of all the blessings of grace and glory; he returns to the Jews, and represents their estate and condition under the law by the above simile, which he here makes an application of:

when we were children;

not in age, but in knowledge of divine, spiritual, and evangelical things; which must be understood not of every individual person among them, for there were

some grown men, men of great faith, light, knowledge, and experience; but of the bulk and generality of the people of the Jews, and that also in comparison of the clear understanding of the saints under the Gospel dispensation. The Jews were like children, peevish, froward, and perverse, and often stood in need of correction and chastisement; and as children are pleased with pictures, shows, sights, and gaudy amusements, so they were taken with an external pompous form of worship, and which they had, and was suited to their infant state; and which infant state of the Jewish church commenced from the time of their coming up out of Egypt, and lasted until the times of the Messiah; see Ho 11:1.

Were in bondage under the elements of the world;

by which are meant, not the four elements of fire, water, earth, and air; nor the angels, who by some are thought to preside over them; nor the sun and moon, according to whose revolutions the festivals of the Jews were regulated; but the several institutions of the Mosaic economy, which were to the Jews what an A B C, or an alphabet of letters, is to one that is beginning to learn; or what an accident and grammar be to such who are learning any language, and which contain the rudiments of it; as the physical elements are the first principles of nature, and the general rules of speech and language are the rudiments thereof, so the Mosaic institutions were the elements, rudiments, or first principles of the Jewish religion, taught them by the law, as their schoolmaster, and by which they were used as children: these are called “elements”, in allusion to the first principles of nature and learning; and the elements “of the world”, because they lay in outward worldly and earthly things, as meats, drinks, divers washings, &c. and because that hereby God instructed the world, at least a part of it, the world of the Jews: or as the word κοσμος may be rendered “beauty”, or “elegancy”, these were elegant elements, which in a most beautiful manner taught the people of the Jews the first principles of the doctrine of Christ: but nevertheless, whilst they were under the instructions and discipline of the law as a schoolmaster, “they were in bondage”; referring not to their bondage in Egypt, nor in the several captivities into which they were carried by their neighbours; nor to the bondage of sin and Satan, common to all men in a state of nature; but to the bondage which the law naturally gendered, led them to, induced upon them, and kept them in, through its sanctions and penalties; for, through fear of death, they were under a servile disposition, and were all their lifetime subject to bondage; they carried a yoke

of bondage upon their necks, and were under a spirit of bondage unto fear; they were like children closely kept to school to learn their letters, say their lessons, and perform their tasks; and, if not, receive due correction, which kept them in continual fear and bondage.

Galatians 4:4

Ver. 4. **But when the fulness of time was come,**

.... The time agreed and fixed upon between God and his Son from all eternity, in the council and covenant of peace, when the Son of God should assume human nature; which time was diligently searched into by the prophets, was revealed unto them, and predicted by them; as more generally that it should be before the civil government ceased from Judah, and before the destruction of the second temple; and more particularly by Daniel in his prophecy of the “seventy weeks”, towards and about the close of which there was a general expectation among the Jews of the Messiah’s coming; and was the fulness of time here referred to, and what is sometimes called the dispensation of the fulness of time, the end of the Mosaic dispensation and Jewish church state, the last days of that state, and the end of the Jewish world, as to their ecclesiastical and civil polity. The Jews themselves own that the time of the Messiah’s coming is fixed, and that at that time he shall come, whether they are worthy or not, for so it is asserted in their Talmud ⁷⁴;

“says R. Jochanan, the son of David does not come, but in an age which is all worthy, or all wicked; in a generation which is all worthy, as it is written, Isa 60:21 in a generation that is all wicked, as it is written, Isa 66:5 and it is written, “for my name’s sake will I do it”; says R. Alexander, R. Joshua ben Levi objects what is written, Isa 60:22 “in its time”; and it is written, “I will hasten it”; if they are worthy I will hasten it, if they are not worthy it shall be hteb, “in its time””

And accordingly a more modern writer of theirs says ⁷⁵,

“our redemption upon all accounts shall be, ⁷⁶ “in its time”, whether worthy or, wicked; but if worthy its time will be hastened;”

⁷⁴ T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1. Vid. Jarchi & Kinachi in Isa. lx. 22.

⁷⁵ Kimchi in Psal. cviii. 4.

it must be owned they do not always say so: this phrase, “the fulness of time”, is an Hebraism, and is the same with ימי מלאה, in Eze 5:2 which the Septuagint render thn πληρωσιν των ημερων, “the fulness of days”, and we, “when the days were fulfilled”, when the time was up; and the same sense it has here, and it is also the same with dewm, “the appointed time”, Hab 2:3 and answers to proyesmia tou patrov, “the time appointed of the Father”, Ga 4:2.

God sent forth his Son;

God not absolutely and essentially, but personally and relatively considered, is here meant, namely, God the Father, as appears from the relation the person sent stands in to him, “his Son”; not by creation, as angels, Adam, and all men are the sons of God; nor by adoption, as saints are; or by office, as magistrates be; or on account of his incarnation or resurrection from the dead, for he was the Son of God before either; but by divine generation, being the only begotten of the Father, of his divine nature and essence, equal to him, and one with him: and who was “sent” by him, not out of disrespect to him, but love to us; nor without his consent or against his will, he readily and heartily agreeing to it; nor does it imply any local motion or change of place, but only designs the assumption of human nature; nor does it suppose any superiority and inferiority, for though Christ, as man, and in his office capacity, as Mediator, is inferior to the Father, yet not as to his divine nature, or as the Son of God; but it suggests, that he existed before he was sent, and that as a person, and as a distinct person from the Father, otherwise he could not with any propriety be said to be sent by him; and also that there was an entire harmony and agreement between them in this matter, the Father agreed to send his Son, and the Son agreed to be sent; and that as to his taking upon him the office of Mediator, and his assumption of human nature in order to obtain eternal redemption: all this was not of himself, but done in concert with his Father, from whom as Mediator he had his mission and commission;

made of a woman;

“made”, not created as Adam was; nor begotten by man, as men in common are; nor is he said to be born, though he truly was, but “made”; which word the Holy Ghost chooses, to express the mighty power of God, in his mysterious incarnation, wonderful conception, and birth; though some copies read, “born of a woman”; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic version: “of a woman”; whose seed he was from the beginning said to be; of a woman, without a man; of a woman, a virgin, as was

⁶⁹ T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 39. 1, 2.

⁷⁰ Maimon. Hilch. Necabot, c. 10. sect. 6.

⁷¹ Bartenora in Misn. Pesachim, c. 8. sect. 1.

⁷² Hilch. Nechalot, c. 11. {

⁷³ Ib. Hilch. Ishot, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

foretold; and not only made and formed in her, but of her, of her flesh and blood, of which he took part; and which denotes the low estate and great humiliation of Christ, and shows that as sin came into the world by the woman, the Saviour from sin came also the same way:

made under the law;

under the civil and judicial law as a Jew, to which he was subject, paying tribute to the collectors of it; and which was necessary; that it might appear he sprung from that nation, to whom he was promised; and that he came before the civil government of that people was at an end; and to teach us subjection to the civil magistrate: and as a son of Abraham he was made under the ceremonial law, was circumcised the eighth day, kept the several feasts of tabernacles, passover, &c. and which was proper, since he was the principal end of it, in whom it centres, and for whose sake it was made; and that he might completely fulfil it, and by so doing put a period to it: and he was made under the moral law, both as a man and the surety of his people, and was subject to all the precepts of it, and bore the penalty of it, death, in their room and stead, and thereby fulfilled it, and delivered them from its curse and condemnation. So the Targumist ⁷⁶, joins the incarnation of the Messiah and his subjection to the law together, as the apostle here does;

“the prophet saith to the house of David, because a child is born unto us, and a son is given to us, וְקָבַל אֶרְיָחָא לְיְהוּי לְמַטְרָה, “and he hath took upon him the law to keep it, and his name shall be called”, &c.”

Galatians 4:5

Ver. 5. **To redeem them that were under the law,**

.... By whom are meant chiefly the Jews, who are elsewhere represented as in and under the law, in distinction from the Gentiles who were without it; see Ro 2:12 the Gentiles indeed, though they were not under the law of Moses, yet were not without law to God, they were under the law of nature. The law was given to Adam as a covenant of works, and not to him as a single person, but as a federal head to all his posterity; hence he sinning, and they in him, they all came under its sentence of condemnation and death, God's elect not excepted, and who are the persons said to be redeemed; for Christ was not sent to redeem all that were under the

⁷⁶ In Isa. ix. 6.

law; for as all mankind were included in it as a covenant of works made with Adam, and all are transgressors of it, the whole world is pronounced guilty before God by it, and liable to the curse of it; but not all mankind, only some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, are redeemed by Christ, even all the elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles. The chosen among the Jews seem to be here principally designed; the redemption of them, which is the end of Christ's being sent, intends not only a deliverance of them from sin and Satan, and the world, to whom they were in bondage, but from the law under which they were; from the bondage of the ceremonial, and from the curse and condemnation of the moral law:

that we might receive the adoption of children;

by which may be meant, both the grace, blessing, and privilege of adoption, and the inheritance adopted to; both are received, and that in consequence of redemption by Christ; and such as receive the one will also receive the other. Adoption, as a blessing of grace, exists before it is received; nor does the reception of it add anything to the thing itself; it was in God's designation from all eternity, who predestinated his chosen ones unto it by Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will; it was provided, laid up, and secured for them in the everlasting covenant; and is part of that grace given them in Christ before the world began; but sin intervening, whereby the law was broken, obstacles were thrown in the way of God's elect receiving and enjoying this privilege in their own persons; wherefore Christ was sent to redeem them from sin and the law, and by so doing remove these obstructions, that so they might receive this privilege in a way consistent with the righteousness and holiness of God, as well as with his grace and goodness: receiving of it shows it to be a gift, a free grace gift, and not owing to any merit of the creature; faith is the hand which receives it, as it does all other blessings, as Christ himself, grace out of his fulness, righteousness, pardon, &c. and has no more causal influence on this than on any of these; faith does not make any the sons of God, or put them among the children; but receives the power, the authority, the privilege from God through Christ, under the witnessings of the spirit of adoption; whereby they become such, and have a right to the heavenly inheritance, which they shall hereafter enjoy.

Galatians 4:6

Ver. 6. **And because ye are sons,**

.... That is of God, so some copies read; and the Ethiopic version, “inasmuch as ye are his sons”; not

in so high a sense as Christ is the Son of God; nor in so low a sense as all men are his offspring; nor in such sense as magistrates are the children of the most High; nor merely on account of a profession of religion, as the “sons of God” was a phrase very early used of the worshippers of the true God; but by virtue of adoption, and which is not owing to the merits of men, who are by nature children of wrath, but to the free rich sovereign grace of God. It is a privilege and blessing of grace in which all the three persons are concerned. The Father has predestinated to it, and in the covenant has provided and laid it up; he set up his Son as the pattern to which these sons should be conformed, and proposed the glory of his own grace, as the end; by virtue of which act of grace they were considered as the children of God, as early as the gift of them to Christ; and so by him when he partook of their flesh and blood, and died to gather them together who were scattered abroad; see Heb 2:13. The Son of God has also an hand in this affair; for through his espousing their persons, they become the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; and through his assumption of their nature they become his brethren, and so to be in the relation of sons to God; through his redemption they receive the adoption of children, and at his hands the privilege, the power itself, to become such. The Spirit of God not only regenerates them, which is an evidence of their sonship, but as a spirit of adoption manifests it to them, works faith in them to receive it, and frequently witnesses to the truth of it; all which show how any come and are known to be the sons of God. This is a privilege that exceeds all others; it is more to be a son than to be a saint; angels are saints, but not sons, they are servants; it is more to be a child of God, than to be redeemed, pardoned, and justified; it is great grace to redeem from slavery, to pardon criminals, and justify the ungodly; but it is another and an higher act of grace to make them sons; and which makes them infinitely more honourable, than to be the sons and daughters of the greatest potentate upon earth; yea, gives them an honour which Adam had not in innocence, nor the angels in heaven, who though sons by creation, yet not by adoption. The consequence, and so the evidence of it, follows,

God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.

The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “our Father”; all the three divine persons here appear, as having a concern in this business, as before observed; here are God and his Son, and the Spirit of his Son, said to be sent; by whom is designed not any work of his upon the heart, nor any

of his gifts and graces; but he himself in person, even the same Spirit of God that moved upon the face of the waters at the creation of the world, and moved holy men of God to write the Scriptures; who formed and filled the human nature of Christ, and descended on him as a dove; and by whom Christ and his apostles wrought their miracles; and who is called the Spirit of his Son; as he is frequently by the Jews ⁷⁷, רִחוּוֹ שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ מְשִׁיחַ, “the Spirit of the King Messiah”; and sometimes ⁷⁸ חַיְמַיִם אֲשֶׁר בְּפִי הַיְיָ, “the Spirit of his word”, the essential word of God; because he proceeds from him as from the Father, and because he dwells in him, in an eminent manner, as Mediator, and is sent by virtue of his mediation and intercession; and he is the rather mentioned under this character, because adoption proceeds upon the natural sonship of Christ, and is what is the peculiar office of the Spirit to testify. When he is said to be “sent”, it does not suppose any local motion or change of place in him, who is a spirit infinite, immense, and omnipresent; nor any inferiority to the Father that sends him, or to the Son whose Spirit he is; for he is one God with the Father and Son, and with the Father is the sender of Christ, Isa 48:16, but it regards his peculiar office in this affair of adoption, by agreement of all the three persons; the Father predestinated to it, the Son redeems, that it might be received, and the Spirit is sent to discover, apply, and bear witness to it; which is a wondrous instance of the grace of God. The place where he is sent is “into” the “heart”: where he is as a principle of spiritual life, and which he furnishes and supplies with all grace; where he dwells as in his temple, and is the evidence of God's dwelling there, and also of interest in Christ; is there as a pledge and an earnest of future glory; and the whole is a surprising instance of condescending grace. The work he does there is various, and consists of divers parts; as convincing of sin, and righteousness, working faith, and acting the part of a comforter; but what is here referred to, is the discharge of his office as a spirit of adoption, “crying Abba, Father”. The word Abba is an Hebrew, or rather a Syriac or Chaldee word, signifying “father”; and which is added for explanation sake; and its repetition may denote the vehemency of filial affection, the strength of faith and confidence as to interest in the relation; and being expressed both in Hebrew and Greek, may show that God is the Father both of Jews and Gentiles, and that there is but one Father of all; and if it might not be thought too curious an observation, it

⁷⁷ Bereshit Rabba, fol. 2. 4. & 6. 3. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 156. 4. See Gill on “Ro 8:9”.

⁷⁸ Targum in 2 Chron. ii. 6.

may be remarked that the word “Abba”, read backwards or forwards, is the same pronunciation, and may teach us that God is the Father of his people in adversity as well as in prosperity. The act of “crying”, though it is here ascribed to the Spirit, yet is not properly his, but the believers; and is attributed to him because he excites, encourages, and assists them as a spirit of adoption to call God their Father; and may be understood both of the secret internal crying of the soul, or exercise of faith on God as its Father, and of an open outward invocation of him as such, with much confidence, freedom, and boldness.

Galatians 4:7

Ver. 7. **Wherefore thou art no more a servant,**

.... This is a benefit resulting from adoption, and the manifestation of it to the children of God, and supposes them to have been formerly servants; as whilst in a natural state they were the servants of sin, the vassals of Satan, slaves to the world, and the lusts of it, and in bondage to the law; but now being declared to be the sons of God under the witnessings of the Spirit, they are freed from the servitude of sin, from the captivity of Satan, from the slavery of the world, and particularly from the law, and that spirit of bondage which it brought upon them, which is chiefly designed; and from which they are delivered by the spirit of adoption, enabling and encouraging them to cry “Abba”, Father; so that they are now no more under the former servile spirit, the spirit of a servant,

but a son;

whose spirit, state, and case, are vastly different from those of a servant: the servant has not that interest in his master’s affections as the son has; nor that liberty of access to him; nor is he fed and clothed as he is, or shares in the same privileges he does; nor is his obedience performed in the same free generous manner, from a principle of love and gratitude, but in a servile and mercenary way; and though he may expect his wages, he cannot hope for the inheritance; nor does he always abide in the house as the son does. He that is once a son, is always so, and no more a servant: predestination to sonship is immutable; it is God’s act to put any among the children, and none can put them out; the covenant of grace, in which this blessing is secured, is unalterable; union with Christ, the Son of God, on which it is founded, is indissoluble; the spirit of adoption, wherever he witnesses, abides as such. They that are the sons of God may be corrected and chastised, as they often are, in a fatherly way; but these corrections

are proofs for, and not against their sonship; they may indeed judge themselves unworthy to be called the sons of God, and may be in such frames of soul as to conclude, at least fear, they are not; but still the relation abides, and ever will. They will never more be servants, but always sons. The very learned Mr. Selden ⁷⁹ thinks the apostle alludes to a custom among the Jews, who allowed only freemen, and not servants and handmaids, to call any Abba, Father such an one, or “Imma”, Mother such an one: but this seems to proceed upon a mistaken sense, and rendering of a passage in the Talmud ⁸⁰, which is as follows, *כְּדִימֵי וְשִׁפְחוֹת אֵינִי קוֹרְיִן אֹתָם אֲבָא פְלוֹנִי וְאִמָּא פְלוֹנִית*, which he thus renders, “neither servants nor handmaids use this kind of appellation, Abba”, or “Father such an one”, and “Imma”, or “Mother such an one”; whereas it should be rendered, “servants and handmaids, they do not call them Abba, Father such an one”, and “Imma, Mother such an one”; this is clear from what follows. “The Family of “R. Gamaliel” used to call them Father such an one, and Mother such an one”; which in the other Talmud ⁸¹ is, “the family of” R. Gamaliel “used to call their servants and their handmaids Father Tabi, and Mother Tabitha”; which were the names of the servant and handmaid of Gamaliel. Rather therefore reference is had to a tradition ⁸² of theirs, that

“a servant, who is carried captive, when others redeemed him, if under the notion of a servant, or in order to be one, he becomes a servant; but if under the notion of a freeman, *לֹא יִשְׁתַּבֵּד*, “he is no more a servant”.”

Or to the general expectation of that people, that when they are redeemed by the Messiah, they shall be servants no more; for so they say ⁸³,

“your fathers, though they were redeemed, became servants again, but you, when ye are redeemed, *וְךָ אֵינִי אֹתָם מִשְׁתַּבְּדִין*, “shall be no more servants”.”

which in a spiritual sense is true of all that are

⁷⁹ De Successionibus ad Leg. Ebr. c. 4. p. 33.

⁸⁰ T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 4. sect. 5.

⁸¹ T. Hieros. Niddah, fol. 49. 2. Vid. Massech. Semachet, c. 1. sect. 13.

⁸² Misn. Gittin, c. 4. sect. 4.

⁸³ T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 37. 2.

redeemed by Christ, and through that redemption receive the adoption of children, and is what the apostle here means.

And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ;

which is another benefit arising from adoption. Such as are the children of God, they are heirs of God himself; he is their portion and exceeding great reward; his perfections are on their side, and engaged for their good; all his purposes run the same way, and all his promises belong to them; they are heirs of all the blessings of grace and glory, of righteousness, of life, of salvation, and a kingdom and glory; and shall inherit all things, and all “through Christ”: he is the grand heir of all things; they are joint heirs with him; their sonship is through him, and so is their heirship and inheritance; their inheritance is in his possession, it is reserved safe in him; and by him, and with him they shall enjoy it. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, only read, “an heir through God”, and so the Vulgate Latin version; and the Ethiopic version only, “an heir of God”.

Galatians 4:8

Ver. 8. **Howbeit then, when ye know not God,**

.... Whilst in Gentilism, and in a state of unregeneracy, they had no true knowledge of God; though they might know by the light of nature, and works of creation, that there was a God, yet they did not know who he was, but called either mortal men, or some one or other of the creatures, or stocks, and stones, and images of men’s device, by this name; they knew not the God of Israel; they did not know God in Christ, and are therefore said to be without him; and a common description of them it is, that they knew not God: and whilst this was their case, what follows was true of them,

ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods;

only by name, and in the opinion of men, but have no divinity in them, are only called gods, mere nominal, fictitious deities, who have nothing of the nature and essence of God in them; for there is but one God by nature and essence, the Father, Son, and Spirit; all others have only the name and appearance, but not the truth of deity; and these the Gentiles in their times of ignorance did “service” to, which is what the Jews call *בְּוֹדָה זָרָה*, “strange service”; that is, idolatry, concerning which there is a whole treatise in the Talmud, and which bears that name ⁸⁴. This service lay in paying homage to them, worshipping of them, and performing various rites and ceremonies in a way of adoration, and which they

⁸⁴ Aveda Zara.

reckoned religious service; and which, comparatively speaking, whilst in this state of blindness, was excusable in them; though it is a wonderful instance of grace that such idolaters should be the sons of God.

Galatians 4:9

Ver. 9. **But now, after that ye have known God,**

&c.] God in Christ, as their covenant God and Father, through the preaching of the Gospel, and in the light of divine grace; God having caused light to shine in their dark hearts; and having given them the light of the knowledge of himself in the face of Christ, and having sent down into their hearts the Spirit of his Son, crying “Abba”, Father.

Or rather are known of God;

for it is but little that the best of these, that have the greatest share of knowledge, know of him; and what knowledge they have, they have it first, originally, and wholly from him: that knowledge which he has of them is particular, distinct, and complete; and is to be understood, not of his omniscience in general, so all men are known by him; but of his special knowledge, joined with affection, approbation, and care: and the meaning is, that they were loved by him with an everlasting love, which had been manifested in their conversion, in the drawing of them to himself, and to his Son; that he approved of them, delighted in them, had an exact knowledge, and took special care of them: but, oh, folly and ingratitude!

how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage?

meaning the ordinances of the ceremonial law, he before calls “the elements of the world”, and here “weak”, because they could not give life, righteousness, peace, joy, comfort, and salvation; and, since the coming of Christ, were become impotent to all the uses they before served; and beggarly, because they lay in the observation of mean things, as meats, drinks, &c. and which were only shadows of those good things, the riches of grace and glory, which come by Christ. The Galatians are said to turn again to these; not that they were before in the observation of them, except the Jews, but because there was some likeness between these, and the ceremonies with which they carried on the service of their idols; and by showing an inclination to them, they discovered a good will to come into a like state of bondage they were in before; than which nothing could be more stupid and ungrateful in a people that had been blessed with so much grace, and with such clear Gospel

light and knowledge.

Galatians 4:10

Ver. 10. **Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.**

Lest the apostle should be thought to suggest, without foundation, the inclination of these people to be in bondage to the ceremonies of the law, he gives this as an instance of it; which is to be understood, not of a civil observation of times, divided into days, months, and years, for which the luminaries of the heavens were made, and into summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, which is not only lawful, but absolutely necessary; but of a religious observation of days, &c. not of the lucky and unlucky days, or of any of the festivals of the Gentiles, but of Jewish ones. By “days” are meant their seventh day sabbaths; for since they are distinguished from months and years, they must mean such days as returned weekly; and what else can they be but their weekly sabbaths? These were peculiar to the Israelites, and not binding on others; and being typical of Christ, the true rest of his people, and he being come, are now ceased. By “months” are designed their new moons, or the beginning of their months upon the appearance of a new moon, which were kept by blowing trumpets, offering sacrifices, hearing the word of God, abstaining from work, and holding religious feasts; and were typical of that light, knowledge, and grace, the church receives from Christ, the sun of righteousness; and he, the substance, being come, these shadows disappeared. By “times” are intended the three times in the year, when the Jewish males appeared before the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the three feasts of tabernacles, passover, and pentecost, for the observance of which there was now no reason; not of the feast of tabernacles, since the word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us; nor of the passover, since Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; nor of pentecost, or the feast of weeks, or of the first fruits of the harvest, since the Spirit of God was poured down in a plenteous manner on that day upon the apostles; and when the firstfruits of a glorious harvest were brought in to the Lord, in the conversion of three thousand souls. And by “years” are to be understood their sabbatical years; every seventh year the land had a rest, and remained untilled; there were no ploughing and sowing, and there was a general release of debtors; and every fiftieth year was a jubilee to the Lord, when liberty to servants, debtors, &c. was proclaimed throughout the land: all which were typical of rest, payment of debts, and spiritual liberty by Christ;

and which having their accomplishment in him, were no longer to be observed; wherefore these Galatians are blamed for so doing; and the more, because they were taught to observe them, in order to obtain eternal life and salvation by them.

Galatians 4:11

Ver. 11. **I am afraid of you,**

.... Which shows the danger he apprehended they were in, by taking such large steps from Christianity to Judaism, and expresses the godly jealousy of the apostle over them; intimates he had some hope of them, and in the whole declares his great love and affection for them; for love is a thing full of care and fear:

lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain;

in preaching the Gospel among them with so much diligence and constancy, though so many afflictions and pressures lay upon him. Faithful ministers of the word are laborious ones; and such an one was the apostle; and who indeed laboured more abundantly than the rest in all places wherever he came; and such will be concerned, as he was, lest their labours should be in vain, not to themselves, but to the souls of others, whose everlasting good and welfare they are seeking. But how is it that the apostle should fear that his labour in preaching the Gospel would be in vain, and become of no effect through their observance of days, months, times, and years? because that hereby the pure spiritual and evangelic worship of God was corrupted, they bringing into it that which God had removed, and so became guilty of will worship; their Christian liberty was infringed, and they brought into bondage, a deliverance from which the Gospel proclaims; the doctrine of free grace in pardon, justification, and salvation, was made void, they observing these things in order to procure them thereby; and it was virtually and tacitly saying, that Christ was not come in the flesh, which is the main article of the Gospel; for since these things had respect to him, and were to continue no longer than till his coming, to keep on the observation of them, was declaring that he was not come; which is in effect to set aside the whole Gospel, and the ministration of it; so that the apostle might justly fear, that by such a proceeding all his labour, and the pains he had took to preach the Gospel, and salvation by Christ unto them, would be in vain.

Galatians 4:12

Ver. 12. **Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am,**

.... Though they had gone so far backwards, yet still hoping well of them that they would be reclaimed, he styles them “brethren”: not in a carnal but spiritual relation, as being born of God, and belonging to his family; and out of his sincere and hearty love for them as his brethren in Christ, he exhorts them to be as he was; which some understand of affection, as desiring them to show the same love to him as to themselves, that he might be to them as another I, as a part of themselves; so true friendship makes, and true friends look upon each other to be, as Jonathan and David, and the first Christians were, of one heart and soul. But this phrase rather seems to have regard to likeness and imitation; and the sense is, that he would have them to be as he was, and do as he did; to be as free from the law, and the servitude and bondage of it, as he was; to reckon themselves dead unto it, as he did; and to relinquish the observance of days, and months, and times, and years, and any and every part of the ceremonial law, and to account all these things, as he had done, loss and dung for Christ; and this he presses, not in an authoritative way, laying his commands as an apostle upon them, but in a kind and gentle manner entreating them: and which he backs with the following reason or argument,

for I am as ye are;

as your very selves; I have the same love for you, you have for yourselves; I love you as I do myself; this way go such interpreters that understand the exhortation to regard love and affection: but rather the meaning is, be as I am, and do as I do, “because I was as you are”; so the Syriac and Arabic versions read the words. Some think that the apostle particularly addresses the Jews in these churches; and that his sense is, that he was born a Jew, as they were, was brought up in the Jewish religion, and in the observance of these things, as they had been, and yet he had relinquished them, therefore would have them do so likewise: or rather his intention is, that he had been as zealous for the observation of the ceremonial law, and all the rituals of it, as they now were; and though he was a Jew by birth, and had had a Jewish education, and so had been prejudiced in favour of these things, yet he had renounced them all; and therefore they who were Gentiles, and were never under obligation to them, should never think of coming into bondage by them; and since he had accommodated himself to them, and had become all things to all, that he might gain some, whether Jews or Gentiles, so he hoped they would condescend to him, and follow his example: or this may have respect, not to his former but present state, according to our version; and the sense

be, I am as you are, and you are as I am with respect to things spiritual; we are both alike in Christ, chosen in him, and redeemed by him; are equally regenerated by his Spirit, and are all the children of God by faith in him, and no more servants; are all equally Christ’s free men, and have a right to the same privileges and immunities; and therefore be as I am, as free from observing the ceremonies of the law, and so from the bondage of it, since we are upon an equal foot, and upon the same foundation in Christ.

Ye have not injured me at all;

what injury they had done was to God, whose will it was that these things should be abolished; and to Christ, who had broken down the middle wall of partition; and to the Gospel, which proclaimed liberty to the captives; and to their own souls, by entangling themselves with the yoke of bondage; but no personal private injury was done to the apostle by their compliance with the law. This he says, lest they should think that he spoke out of anger and resentment, and on account of any personal affront offered to him; which leads him to take notice of their former kindness and respect to him, and which he designs as a reason why they should pay the same deference to him now as then.

Galatians 4:13

Ver. 13. **Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh,**

.... Meaning either their infirmity, to which the apostle accommodated himself in preaching the Gospel to them, delivering it in such a manner as suited with their capacities, feeding them with milk, and not with strong meat; or his own infirmity, respecting either some particular bodily infirmity and disorder, as the headache, with which he is said to be greatly troubled; or the weakness of his bodily presence, the mean outward appearance he made, the contemptibleness of his voice, and the great humility with which he behaved; or rather the many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions which attended him, when, says he,

I preached the Gospel unto you at the first;

not the law, but the Gospel; and this he did at his first entrance among them, and was the first that preached it to them, and was the means of their conversion; and therefore, being their spiritual Father, they ought to be as he was, and follow him as they had him for an example.

Galatians 4:14

Ver. 14. **And my temptation which was in my flesh,** The same with the infirmity of his flesh, and which was a trial of his faith and patience, and every other grace, as the afflictions of the saints be. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, “your temptation in my flesh”; that which was a trial of them, whether they would receive him or not. This

ye despised not;

nor the apostle on the account of it, nor his ministry; they thought never the worse of him, nor of the Gospel he preached, because of this:

nor rejected;

him, nor the counsel of God declared by him,

but received me;

as they did, into their cities and places of worship, into their houses, and into their hearts and affections: and that

as an angel of God;

with all that reverence and respect, that high esteem, veneration, and affection, as if one of the celestial inhabitants had been sent down from heaven to bring them the good tidings of the Gospel: or “as a messenger of God”, as the phrase may be rendered: as one that had his mission and commission from God, which was not at all disputed by them: but they looked upon him under that character, and regarded him as such,

even as Christ Jesus;

as his ambassador, as representing him, as being in his stead; yea, if he had been personally present as man among them, they could not have shown greater respect to him as such, than they did to the apostle; for as for any religious worship and adoration, that they did not offer to him; and had they, he would have addressed them in like manner he did the inhabitants of Lystra, Ac 14:14. Now since they showed him so much respect, notwithstanding all his infirmities, temptations, and afflictions, when he first preached the Gospel; what should hinder that they should not pay the same regard to him now, by abiding in his doctrine and following his example, since he was the same man in his principles and practices now as then?

Galatians 4:15

Ver. 15. **Where is then the blessedness you spake of?**

.... Or, as some copies read, “what was then your blessedness?” what, and how great was it? meaning, when the Gospel was first preached to them by him; when Christ was revealed to them as God’s salvation; when

the doctrines of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, and full pardon by his atonement and satisfaction by his sacrifice, were published among them; when the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, and the Spirit of Christ was sent thither, crying “Abba”, Father: but, alas! where was this blessedness now, since they were turning to the weak and beggarly elements of the ceremonial law, and were inclined to observe its ordinances, and bring themselves hereby into a state of bondage? They were happy persons while under the ministry of the apostle; as a Gospel ministry is a great happiness to any that enjoy it; for this is the way to find eternal life, to have spiritual peace and pleasure, joy and comfort, light and liberty, whereas a contrary doctrine leads to all the reverse. The apostle hereby puts them in mind how they were looked upon as happy persons by himself at that time, whom they received with so much respect and reverence, and his ministry with so much readiness and cheerfulness, and to so much profit and advantage; and also by other churches who were sensible of the high favour they enjoyed, by having so great a preacher of the Gospel among them; and even at that time they thought themselves the happiest persons in the world, and that they could not have been more so, unless they had had Christ himself in person among them; so beautiful were the feet of this bringer of glad tidings to them: for I bear you record, that if it had been possible ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me; so fully persuaded was the apostle of their strong and sincere affection for him at that time, that he was ready to attest the truth of this in any form to any persons; that were it a possible thing for them, and could it have been of any advantage to him, they would even have plucked out their eyes, than which nothing is dearer, or more useful to a man, and have parted with them to him, and for his sake; and doubtless persons so affected would cheerfully have laid down their lives for him; but things had taken another turn since.

Galatians 4:16

Ver. 16. **Am I therefore become your enemy,**

.... Not that he was an enemy to them, he had the same cordial affection for them as ever; he had their true interest at heart, and was diligently pursuing it; but they, through the insinuations of the false teachers, had entertained an ill opinion of him, and an aversion to him, and treated him as if he had been an enemy to them, and as if they had a real hatred of him: and that for no other reason, as he observes, but because I tell you

the truth; the Gospel so called, because it comes from the God of truth, is concerned with Christ, who is truth itself, and is dictated, revealed, and blessed by the Spirit of truth; and is opposed unto, and is distinct from the law, which is only an image and shadow, and not truth itself: it chiefly respects the great truths of salvation alone by Christ, and justification by his righteousness; and may also regard what he had said concerning the abrogation of the law, blaming them for the observance of it, and calling its institutions weak and beggarly elements; all which he told or spoke publicly, plainly, honestly, fully, and faithfully, boldly, constantly, and with all assurance, consistently, and in pure love to their souls; and yet it brought on him their anger and resentment. Telling the truth in such a manner often brings many enemies to the ministers of Christ; not only the men of the world, profane sinners, but professors of religion, and sometimes such who once loved and admired them.

Galatians 4:17

Ver. 17. **They zealously affect you,**

.... Or “are jealous of you”; meaning the false apostles, whose names, in contempt, he mentions not, being unworthy to be taken notice of, and their names to be transmitted to posterity. These were jealous of them, not with a godly jealousy, as the apostle was, lest their minds should be corrupted from the simplicity of the Gospel; but they were jealous, lest they should love the apostle more than they, and therefore represented him in a very bad light, and expressed great love and kindness for them themselves:

but not well;

their zeal and affection were not hearty, and sincere, and without dissimulation, but were all feigned, were only in word and in tongue, not in deed, and in truth: this zealous affection neither proceeded from right principles, nor with right views; they sought themselves, and their own carnal worldly interest, their own pleasure and profit, and not the good and welfare of the souls of these Galatians:

yea, they would exclude you;

that is, either from the apostle, from bearing any love unto, and having any respect for him. What they were wishing and seeking for was to draw off the minds and affections of these persons from him; or they were desirous of removing them from the Gospel of Christ unto another Gospel, and did all they could to hinder them from obeying the truth; and particularly were for shutting them out of their Christian liberty, and bringing them under the bondage of the law; yea, were

for separating them from the churches, that they might set up themselves at the head of them. Some copies read “us”, instead of “you”; and then the meaning is, that they were desirous of excluding the apostle from their company, and from having any share in their affections, which makes little alteration in the sense: and others, instead of “exclude”, read “include”; and which is confirmed by the Syriac version, which renders the word למחבשכותי, “but they would include you”; that is, either they would include, or imprison you under the law, and the bondage of it; or they would monopolize you, and engross all your love to themselves; and which is also the sense of the Arabic version: that you might affect them; love them, show respect to them, be on their side, follow their directions, imbibe their doctrines, and give up yourselves wholly to their care, and be at their call and command.

Galatians 4:18

Ver. 18. **But it is good to be zealously affected,**

.... A zealous affection when right is very commendable, as the instances of Phinehas, Elijah, John the Baptist, and our Lord Jesus Christ show, and a contrary spirit is very disagreeable. But then it must be expressed

in a good thing;

in a good cause, for God, and the things of Christ; for the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and for the discipline of God’s house, and against immorality and profaneness, errors and heresies: and it should be “always”; not at certain times, and upon some particular accounts, but it should be constant, and always continue; it should be ever the same towards God, Christ, and his ministers: and not only when I am present with you; by which the apostle suggests, that while he was with them they were zealously attached to him and truth; but no sooner was he gone from them, but their zealous affection abated, and was fixed on others, which discovered their weakness, fickleness, and inconstancy; whereas he was always the same to them, and bore the same love to them, as the following words show.

Galatians 4:19

Ver. 19. **My little children,**

.... A soft and tender way of speaking, used by Christ to his disciples, and frequently by that affectionate and beloved disciple, John. It is expressive of the apostle’s strong love and affection for them, and points out their tenderness in the faith, and that small degree of spiritual

light and knowledge they had, as well as signifies that he had been, as he hoped, and in a judgment of charity believed, an instrument of their conversion, and was their spiritual parent: hence it follows,

of whom I travail in birth again;

he compares himself to a woman with child, as the church in bringing forth souls to Christ sometimes is; and all his pains and labours in the ministry of the word to the sorrows of a woman during the time of childbearing, and at the birth. When he first came among them, he laboured exceedingly; he preached the Gospel in season, and out of season; he followed his indefatigable endeavours with importunate prayers; and his ministry among them was attended with much weakness of body, and with many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, comparable to the throes of a woman in travail: however, as he hoped he was the means of their being born again, of the turning of them from Heathenism to Christianity, and from serving idols to serve the living God, and believe in his Son Jesus Christ; but the false apostles coming among them had so strangely wrought upon them, and they were so much gone back and degenerated, that they seemed to be like so many abortions, or as an unformed foetus; wherefore he laboured again with all his might and main, by writing to them, using arguments with them, sometimes giving them good words, at other times rough ones, and fervently praying for them, if possible, to recover them from Judaism, to which they were inclined, to the pure Gospel of Christ.

Until Christ be formed in you;

which is the same as to be created in Christ, to be made new creatures, or new men in him; or, in other words, to have the principle of grace wrought in the soul, which goes by the name of Christ formed in the heart; because it is from him, he is the author of it, and it bears a resemblance to him, and is that by which he lives, dwells, and reigns in the souls of his people. Now though, as he hoped, this new man, new creature, or Christ, was formed in them before, when he first preached the Gospel to them; yet it was not a perfect man; particularly their knowledge of Christ, of his Gospel, and Gospel liberty, was far from being so, in which they went backwards instead of forwards; and therefore he was greatly concerned, laboured exceedingly, and vehemently endeavoured, which he calls travailling in birth again, to bring them to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is also the same as to be conformed

to the image of Christ, which in regeneration is stamped upon the saints, and is gradually increased, and will be perfected in heaven; and that this might more manifestly appear, over which a veil was drawn, by their departure in any degree from the truths of the Gospel, was what he earnestly sought after: once more, it is the same as to have the form of Christ; that is, of the Gospel of Christ upon them, or to be cast into the form of doctrine, and mould of the Gospel, and to receive a Gospel impression and spirit from it; which is to have a spirit of liberty, in opposition to legal bondage; to live by faith on Christ, and not on the works of the law; to derive comfort alone from him, and not from any services and duties whatever; to have repentance, and the whole course of obedience, influenced by the grace of God, and love of Christ; and to be zealous of good works, and yet have no dependence on them for justification and salvation. This is what the apostle so earnestly desired, when, instead of it, these Galatians seemed to have the form of Moses, and of the law.

Galatians 4:20

Ver. 20. **I desire to be present with you now,**

.... His meaning is, either that he wished he was personally present among them; that he had but an opportunity of seeing them face to face, and telling them all his mind, and in such a manner as he could not in a single epistle; or that they would consider him, when they read this epistle, as if he was really among them; and as if they saw the concern of his mind, the agonies of his soul, the looks of his countenance, and heard the different tone of his voice: and to change my voice; when present with them, either by a different way of preaching; that whereas before he preached the Gospel of the grace of God unto them, and his voice was charming to them like that of an angel, and even of Jesus Christ himself; but they having turned their backs upon it, and slighted it, he would now thunder out the law to them they seemed to be so fond of; even that voice of words, which when, the Israelites on Mount Sinai heard, entreated they might hear no more; as these Galatians also must when they heard the true voice of it, which is no other than a declaration of wrath, curse, and damnation; or by using a different way of speaking to them, as necessity might require, either softly or roughly, beseeching or chiding them, which might more move and affect them than an epistle could: for I stand in doubt of you, The Vulgate Latin reads it, "I am confounded in you"; and the Syriac, hymtd, "I am stupefied"; and to the same sense the Arabic. He was

ashamed of them for their apostasy and degeneracy; he was amazed and astonished at their conduct; or, as the word may be rendered, he was "perplexed" on their account; he did not know what to think of them, and their state; sometimes he hoped well of them, at other times he was ready to despair; nor did he well know what course to take with them, whether to use them roughly or smoothly, and what arguments might be most proper and pertinent, in order to reclaim them.

Galatians 4:21

Ver. 21. **Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law,**

.... Not merely to obey it, as holy, just, and good, from a principle of love, and to testify subjection and gratitude to God; so all believers desire to be under the law: but these men sought for justification and salvation by their obedience to it: they desired to be under it as a covenant of works, which was downright madness and folly to the last degree, since this was the way to come under the curse of it; they wanted to be under the yoke of the law, which is a yoke of bondage, an insupportable one, which the Jewish fathers could not bear; and therefore it was egregious weakness in them to desire to come under it: wherefore the apostle desires them to answer this question, do ye not hear the law? meaning either the language and voice of the law of Moses, what it says to transgressors, and so to them; what it accused them of, and charged them with; how it declared them guilty before God, pronounced them accursed, and ministered sentimentally condemnation and death unto them; and could they desire to be under such a law? or rather the books of the Old Testament, particularly the five books of Moses, and what is said therein; referring them, as Christ did the Jews, to the Scriptures, to the writings of Moses, and to read, hear, and observe what is in them, since they professed so great a regard to the law; from whence they might learn, that they ought not to be under the bondage and servitude of it. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, "have ye not read the law?" and so one of Stephens's copies; that is, the books of the law; if you have, as you should, you might observe what follows.

Galatians 4:22

Ver. 22. **For it is written,**

.... In Ge 16:15 that Abraham had two sons, not two sons only; for besides the two referred to, he had six more, Ge 25:2 but it being only pertinent to the apostle's purpose to take notice of these two, he mentions no

more, though he does not deny that he had any more. These two sons were Ishmael and Isaac: the one by a bondmaid. Ishmael was by Hagar, Sarah's servant, who represented the covenant the Jewish nation was under the bondage of. The other by a free woman. Isaac was by Sarah, Abraham's proper and lawful wife, who was mistress of the family, and represented in figure the covenant, and Gospel church state, and all believers, Gentiles as well as Jews, as under the liberty thereof.

Galatians 4:23

Ver. 23. **But he who was of the bondwoman,**

.... Ishmael, who was begotten and born of Hagar, was born after the flesh; after the common order and course of nature, through the copulation of two persons, the one able to procreate, and the other fit for the conception of children; and was typical of the Jews, the natural descendants of Abraham, who, as such, and upon that account, were not the children of God, nor heirs of the eternal inheritance: but he of the free woman was by promise; by a previous promise made by God to Abraham, that he should have a son in his old age, when his body was now dead, and when Sarah his wife, who had always been barren, was now grown old, and past the time of bearing children; so that Isaac was born out of the common order and course of nature; his conception and birth were owing to the promise and power of God, and to his free grace and favour to Abraham. This son of promise was a type of the spiritual seed of Abraham, whether Jews or Gentiles, the children of the promise that are counted for the seed; who are born again of the will, power, and grace of God, and are heirs, according to the promise, both of grace and glory, when they that are of the law, and the works of it, are not. All which is further illustrated in the following verses.

Galatians 4:24

Ver. 24. **Which things are an allegory,**

.... Or "are allegorized": so Sarah and Hagar were allegorized by Philo the Jew {p}, before they were by the apostle. Sarah he makes to signify virtue, and Hagar the whole circle of arts and sciences, which are, or should be, an handmaid to virtue; but these things respecting Hagar and Sarah, the bondwoman and the free, and their several offspring, are much better allegorized by the apostle here. An allegory is a way of speaking in which one thing is expressed by another, and is a continued metaphor; and the apostle's meaning is, that these things point at some other things; have another meaning in

them, a mystical and spiritual one, besides the literal; and which the Jews call *vr̄dm*, “Midrash”, a name they give to the mystical and allegorical sense of Scripture, in which they greatly indulge themselves. An allegory is properly a fictitious way of speaking; but here it designs an accommodation of a real history, and matter of fact, to other cases and things, and seems to intend a type or figure; and the sense to be, that these things which were literally true of Hagar and Sarah, of Ishmael and Isaac, were types and figures of things to come; just as what befell the Israelites were types and figures of things that would be under the Gospel dispensation, 1Co 10:11 for these are the two covenants, or “testaments”; that is, these women, Hagar and Sarah, signify, and are figures of the two covenants; not the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace. Hagar was no figure of the covenant of works, that was made and broke before she was born; besides, the covenant she was a figure of was made at Mount Sinai, whereas the covenant of works was made in paradise: moreover, the covenant of works was made with Adam, and all his posterity, but the covenant which Hagar signified was only made with the children of Israel; she represented Jerusalem, that then was with her children. Nor was Sarah a figure of the covenant of grace, for this was made long before she had a being, even from everlasting; but they were figures of the two administrations of one and the same covenant, which were to take place in the world successively; and which following one the other, are by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews called the first and the second, the old and the new covenants. Now these are the covenants or testaments, the old and the new, and the respective people under them, which were prefigured by these two women, and their offspring. The one from the Mount Sinai; that is, one of these covenants, or one of the administrations of the covenant, one dispensation of it, which is the first, and now called old, because abolished, took its rise from Mount Sinai, was delivered there by God to Moses, in order to be communicated to the people of Israel, who were to be under that form of administration until the coming of the Messiah. And because the whole Mosaic economy was given to Moses on Mount Sinai, it is said to be from thence: hence, in Jewish writings, we read, times without number, of *nyom hvml hklh*, a rite, custom, constitution, or appointment given to Moses “from Mount Sinai”, the same phrase as here. Sinai signifies “bushes”, and has its name from the bushes which grew upon it,⁸⁵; in one of which the Lord appeared to Moses; for Horeb

85 Pirke Eliezer, c. 41.

and Sinai are one and the same mount; one signifies waste and desolate, the other bushy; as one part of the mountain was barren and desert, and the other covered with bushes and brambles; and may fitly represent the condition of such that are under the law. Which gendereth to bondage; begets and brings persons into a state of bondage, induces on them a spirit of bondage to fear, and causes them to be all their lifetime subject to it; as even such were that were under the first covenant, or under the Old Testament dispensation: which is Agar; or this is the covenant, the administration of it, which Hagar, the bondwoman, Sarah’s servant, represented. {p} De Cherubim, p. 108, 109.

Galatians 4:25

Ver. 25. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia,.... The Arabic version, instead of Arabia, reads “Balca”. The Syriac version makes Hagar to be a mountain, reading the words thus, “for Mount Hagar is Sinai, which is in Arabia”: and some have been of opinion that Sinai was called Hagar by the Arabians. It is certain, that *rgx*, which may be pronounced Hagar, does signify in the Arabic language a stone or rock; and that one part of Arabia is called Arabia Petraea, from the rockiness of it; the metropolis of which was *trgx*, or “Agara”, and the inhabitants *Agarenes*; and Hagar was the name of the chief city of Bahrein, a province of Arabia {r}: and it may be observed, that when Hagar, with her son, was cast out, they dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, Ge 21:21 which was near to Sinai, as appears from Nu 10:12 so that it is possible that this mount might be so called from her, though there is no certainty of it; and near to it, as Grotius observes, was a town called Agra, mentioned by Pliny {s} as in Arabia. However, it is clear, that Sinai was in Arabia, out of the land of promise, where the law was given, and seems to be mentioned by the apostle with this view, that it might be observed, and teach us that the inheritance is not of the law. It is placed by Jerom {t} in the land of Midian; and it is certain it must be near it, if not in it, as is clear from Ex 3:1. And according to Philo the Jew {u}, the Midianites, as formerly called, were a very populous nation of the Arabians: and Madian, or Midian, is by {w} Mahomet spoken of as in Arabia; and it may be observed, that they that are called Midianites in Ge 37:36 are said to be Ishmaelites, Ge 39:1 the name by which the Arabians are commonly called by the Jews. The apostle therefore properly places this mountain in Arabia. But after all, by Agar, I rather think the woman is meant: and that the sense is, that this same Agar signifies Mount Sinai, or is a figure of the law given on

that mount. And answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; that is, agrees with and resembles the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of all the cities and towns in Judea; and she, being a bondwoman, represented that state of bondage the Jews were in, when the apostle wrote this, who were in a state of civil, moral, and legal bondage; in civil bondage to the Romans, being tributaries to the empire of Rome, and under the jurisdiction of Caesar; in moral bondage to sin, to Satan, to the world and the lusts of it, whose servants they in general were; and in legal bondage to the ceremonial law, which was a yoke of bondage: they were in bondage under the elements or institutions of it, such as circumcision, a yoke which neither they, nor their forefathers could bear, because it bound them over to keep the whole law; the observance of various days, months, times, and years, and the multitude of sacrifices they were obliged to offer, which yet could not take away sin, nor free their consciences from the load of guilt, but were as an handwriting of ordinances against them; every sacrifice they brought declaring their sin and guilt, and that they deserved to die as the creature did that was sacrificed for them; and besides, this law of commandments, in various instances, the breach of it was punishable with death, through fear of which they were all their life long subject to bondage: they were also in bondage to the moral law, which required perfect obedience of them, but gave them no strength to perform; showed them their sin and misery, but not their remedy; demanded a complete righteousness, but did not point out where it was to be had; it spoke not one word of peace and comfort, but all the reverse; it admitted of no repentance; it accused of sin, pronounced guilty on account of it, cursed, condemned, and threatened with death for it, all which kept them in continual bondage: and whereas the far greater part of that people at that time, the Jerusalem that then was, the Scribes, Pharisees, and generality of the nation, were seeking for justification by the works of the law, this added to their bondage; they obeyed it with mercenary views, and not from love but fear; and their comforts and peace rose and fell according to their obedience; and persons in such a way must needs be under a spiritual bondage.

{r} Castel. Lex. Polyglot. col. 804. {s} Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28. {t} De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. H. {u} De Fortitudine, p. 741. {w} Koran, c. 7. p. 126.

Galatians 4:26

Ver. 26. But Jerusalem which is above,

.... This Sarah was a type and figure of; she answered to, and agreed with this; which is to be understood, not of the church triumphant in heaven, but of the Gospel church state under the administration of the new covenant; and that, not as in the latter day glory, when the new Jerusalem shall descend from God out of heaven, but as it then was in the apostle’s time, and has been since. Particular respect may be had to the first Gospel church at Jerusalem, which consisted of persons born from above, was blessed with a Gospel spirit, which is a spirit of liberty, out of which the Gospel went into all the world, and from among whom the apostles and first preachers of the word went forth everywhere, and were the means of the conversion of multitudes, both among Jews and Gentiles, and so might be truly said to be the mother of us all. The church in general, under the Gospel, may be, as it often is, called Jerusalem, because of its name, the vision of peace; being under the government of the Prince of peace; the members of it are sons of peace, who are called to peace, and enjoy it; the Gospel is the Gospel of peace, and the ordinances of it are paths of peace; and the new covenant, under the administration of which the saints are, is a covenant of peace. Jerusalem was the object of God’s choice, the palace of the great King, the place of divine worship, was compact together, and well fortified: the Gospel church state consists of persons, who, in general, are the elect of God, among whom the Lord dwells, as in his temple. Here his worship is observed, his word is preached, and his ordinances administered; saints laid on the foundation, Christ, and being fitly framed together, grow up unto an holy temple in him, and are surrounded by him, as Jerusalem was with mountains, and are kept by his power unto salvation. This is said to be above, to distinguish it from the earthly Jerusalem, the inhabitants of which were chiefly men of the world, carnal men; but this heavenly Jerusalem, or Gospel church state, chiefly consists of persons born from above, called with an heavenly calling, and who bear the image of the heavenly one, whose conversation is in heaven, who are seeking things above, and in a little time will be there themselves; its constitution and form of government are from above, and so are its doctrines, and its ordinances. The Jews often speak of *al-yald Mlvwry*, or *hale*, or *hlem lv*, “Jerusalem above” {x}, as distinguished from Jerusalem below: and to this distinction the apostle seems to have respect here, who further says concerning this Jerusalem, that she is free; from the servitude of sin, Satan, and the world, from the yoke of the law, and from a spirit of bondage; having

the Spirit of God, the spirit of adoption, who is a free spirit, and makes such free that enjoy him; and where he is, there is true liberty. He adds, which is the mother of us all; that are born again, whether Jews or Gentiles, as particularly the church at Jerusalem was, and the Gospel church state in general may be said to be; since here souls are born and brought forth to Christ, are nursed up at her side, and nourished with her breasts of consolation, the word and ordinances. This form of speech is also Jewish: thus it is said {y} that "Zion, larvyd Nma, "the mother of Israel", shall bring forth her sons, and Jerusalem shall receive the children of the captivity." Again, explaining Pr 28:24 it is observed {z}, that there is no father but the ever blessed God, wma Nyaw, "and no mother" but the congregation of Israel. Some copies leave out the word "all"; and so do the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and only read, "the mother of us", or "our mother".

{x} Zohar in Gen. fol. 13. 2. & 16. 2. & 75. 4. & 77. 1. & 78. 2. & 114. 3. & 121. 1. & in Exod. fol. 6. 1. & 92. 2. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 5. 1. Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2. Caphtor, fol. 14. 2. & 25. 2. & 65. 1. & 68. 2. & 71. 2. & 118. 2. Raziell, fol. 13. 1. & 27. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 61. 3. & 150. 3. Nishmat Chayim, fol. 26. 2. Kimchi in Hos. xi. 19. {y} Targum in Cant. 8. 5. {z} Sithre Tora in Zohar in Gen. fol. 55. 2. & Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Lev. fol. 34. 1.

Galatians 4:27

Ver. 27. **For it is written,**

.... Isa 44:1, which is cited to prove, that the heavenly Jerusalem, or Gospel church state, is the mother of us all, and has brought forth, and still will bring forth, many souls to Christ, even many more than were under the legal dispensation by the Jewish church, though the Lord was an husband to them, Jer 31:32. The words are, rejoice thou barren that bearest not, break forth and cry thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband; by her that was "barren", and "bore" not, and "travailed" not, and was "desolate", is not meant the Gentile world, which before the coming of Christ was barren and destitute of the knowledge of him, and from among whom very few were called by grace; but the Gospel church in the first beginnings of it, in Christ's time, and especially about the time of his death, and before the pouring forth of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when the number of its members were few; for the names of the disciples together were but 120, when it seemed to be barren, and desolate, and deprived of its husband

Christ, but was quickly to have a large accession to, it, both of Jews and Gentiles; and therefore is called upon to "rejoice, break forth", and "cry"; that is, to break forth into songs of praise, and express her spiritual joy, by singing aloud, and setting forth in hymns and spiritual songs the glory of powerful and efficacious grace, in the conversion of such large numbers of souls, the like of which had never been known under the former administration. Three thousand were converted under one sermon, and added to this first Gospel church; and the number of its members still increased, and the number of the men that afterwards believed was about five thousand; and after this we hear of more believers being added to the Lord, both men and women; and also that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith; and when out of this church, the apostles, and other preachers of the Gospel went everywhere into the Gentile world, thousands of souls were converted, and a large number of churches formed, and a spiritual seed has been preserved ever since; and in the latter day Zion will travail in birth, and bring forth a numerous offspring; a nation shall be born at once, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in. Agreeably to this sense the Jewish writers, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra, understand this passage of Jerusalem; as does also the Chaldee paraphrase, which renders it thus: "Praise, O Jerusalem, which was as a barren woman that bringeth not forth; rejoice in praise, and be glad, who was as a woman which conceives not, for more are the children of Jerusalem forsaken than the children of the habitable city, saith the Lord."

Galatians 4:28

Ver. 28. **Now we, brethren, as Isaac was,**

.... The Ethiopic version reads, "you, brethren"; and so one of Stephens's copies. As the two women, Hagar and Sarah, might be, and are allegorized; so likewise their respective offspring. Isaac signified, and was a type and figure of Abraham's spiritual seed, whether Jews or Gentiles, under the Gospel dispensation: and as he was, so they are, the children of promise; as Isaac was promised unto Abraham, so were this spiritual seed, when it was said unto him, that he should be the father of many nations, as he is the father of us all, even of all them that believe, be they of what nation soever; and as Isaac was born by virtue, and in consequence of a promise made to Abraham of God's free good will and pleasure, and his generation and conception were beyond the strength and course of nature, were the effects of a divine power, and were something

supernatural; so this spiritual seed are born again, by virtue, and in consequence of a promise, not only made to Abraham, but to the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the covenant, that he should see his seed, enjoy a numerous offspring, and which should endure for ever; and also to the church, of whom it is said, that this and that man should be born in her; and particularly in consequence of the promise cited in the foregoing verse, from whence these words are an inference, deduction, or illustration: and these children of the promise, so called from hence, are born again, above and beyond the strength of nature; not through the power and free will of man, but through the abundant mercy and sovereign will of God, by his powerful and efficacious grace, and by the word of promise, the Gospel, as a means. Moreover, to these children, or spiritual seed of Abraham, signified by Isaac, do all the promises belong, as that of God, as a covenant God gave unto them; of Christ, as a Saviour and Redeemer; of the Holy Spirit, as a sanctifier and comforter; and of all good things, of temporal mercies, so far as are for their real good; and of all spiritual blessings, as righteousness, peace, pardon, comfort, all supplies of grace, and eternal life: and these likewise receive these promises; the Holy Spirit, as a spirit of promise, opens and applies them to them, puts them into the hand of faith, and enables them to plead them with God, and to believe the performance of them; so that this character in all respects agrees with them.

Galatians 4:29

Ver. 29. **But as then,**

.... In the times of Abraham, when Hagar and Sarah, the types of the two dispensations of the covenant, and Ishmael and Isaac, the figures of the two different seeds, the natural and spiritual seed of Abraham, legalists and true believers, were living: he that was born after the flesh; which was Ishmael, who was a type, or an allegorical representation of such who were under the Sinai covenant, and were seeking for righteousness by the works of the law; as he was born after the flesh, according to the ordinary course of nature, and was, as he was born, a carnal man; so are self-justiciaries, notwithstanding all their pretensions to religion and righteousness, just as they were born; there is nothing but flesh in them; they are without God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and have neither true faith, nor hope, nor love, nor any other grace; they have no internal principle of goodness in them; flesh, or corrupt, nature, has the government of them, is the reigning principle in them; their minds are fleshly, and so are their tenets;

and such is their conversation, they trust in the flesh, in outward performances, in their own righteousness, and so come under the curse; for as many as trust in an arm of flesh, or are of the works of the law, are under the curse of it: persecuted him that was born after the Spirit: by whom is meant Isaac, who, though he was not conceived under the overshadowings of the Holy Spirit, without the help of man, as Christ was; yet because of the divine power which was so eminently displayed in his conception and generation, under all the difficulties, and disadvantages, and seeming impossibilities of nature, he is said to be born after the Spirit: and besides, he was also regenerated by the Spirit of God, was a good man, and one that feared the Lord, as the whole account of him shows; and in this also fitly pointed out the spiritual seed, true believers, under the Gospel dispensation, who are born again of water, and of the Spirit, and are renewed in the spirit of their minds; in whom the work of the Spirit is begun, and grace is the governing principle; in whom the Spirit of God dwells and operates; and whose conversation is spiritual, and who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The persecution of Isaac by Ishmael was by "mocking" him, Ge 21:9 the Hebrew word there made use of is in allusion to Isaac's name, which signifies "laughter": and Ishmael laughed at him, jeered and derided him. The Jewish doctors are divided about the sense of this: some say that the word rendered "mocking" is expressive of idolatry, according to Ex 32:6 and that Ishmael would have taught Isaac, and drawn him into it; others that it signifies uncleanness, according to Ge 39:17 and that he talked to him in a lascivious and indecent manner, in order to corrupt his mind: others that it designs murder according to 2Sa 2:14 and that he intended to kill him, and attempted it {a}; it is pretty much received by them, that either he finding him alone, or they going out to the field together, he took his bow and drew it, and shot an arrow at him, with an intention to kill him⁸⁶, though he pretended it was but in play: and one of their writers on the text says⁸⁷, that the word used, by gematry, that is, by the arithmetic of the letters, signifies לְהַרְגוֹ "to slay"; so that this persecution was not by words only, but by deeds: but others⁸⁸ of them more rightly think, that it meant a contention about the inheritance, which Sarah's words to Abraham seem to confirm; and that Ishmael

⁸⁶ Jarchi & Bereshit Rabba, sect. 53, fol. 47. 4. Pirke Eliezer. c. 30.

⁸⁷ Baal Hattrim, in loc.

⁸⁸ Jarchi & Bereshit Rabba, ut supra. (sect. 53, fol. 47. 4.)

claimed the birthright, and despised Isaac as the younger son; insisted upon the right to the inheritance, and mocked at the promise of God, with respect to Isaac; and might threaten what he would do to him, should he claim it thereupon: mocking has been always reckoned a species of persecution; so the Old Testament saints, among other instances of persecution, had trial of "cruel mockings"; thus our Lord was persecuted, and also his apostles and even so it is now. The carnal Jews, who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, persecuted the spiritual seed that believed in Christ, both by words and deeds; they confiscated their goods, imprisoned their persons, and even put them to death; and the false teachers, though they did not, and could not go such lengths, yet as persons fitly represented by Ishmael, they derided the apostles, and mocked at the doctrines of grace preached by them, and despised those that embraced them; and pleaded that the inheritance belonged to them, upon the foot of the works of the law: and so it is at this day; though there is no persecution of men's persons and estates, yet there never was a greater persecution of the doctrines of grace, and of the righteousness of Christ, and the saints more mocked at and derided for maintaining them; and that by persons just of the same complexion as those in the apostle's time, signified by Ishmael, carnal professors, and self-righteous persons.

Galatians 4:30

Ver. 30. **Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture?**

.... This is a Talmudic form of citing Scriptures, and answers to harq yam, "what says the Scriptures ⁸⁹?" the passage referred to is Ge 21:10 and which are the words of Sarah to Abraham; but inasmuch as she spake them under divine inspiration, and they were approved of and confirmed by God, as appears from Ge 21:12 they are ascribed to God speaking in the Scripture:

cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.

There is very little difference in the citation from the original. The apostle omits the word "this" in both clauses, which though very proper to be expressed by Sarah, to point out the person she meant, and as being in a vehement passion, was not absolutely necessary to be retained by the apostle, since by the context there is no difficulty of knowing who is meant by her; though the Alexandrian copy has the word in it: and instead of "with my son, with Isaac", the apostle says, "with the

⁸⁹ T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 9. 2.

son of the free woman, Sarah"; there speaking of herself, whose character the apostle gives, in opposition to the bondwoman: in like manner a Jewish writer ⁹⁰ reads and interprets it,

"for the son of this woman shall not be heir
בן בני הגבירה, "with the son of the mistress".

The casting of Hagar and Ishmael out of Abraham's family was a type and emblem of the rejection of the carnal and self-righteous Jews from the Gospel church state; nor ought any carnal persons, any that are after the flesh, unregenerate ones, or that trust to their own righteousness, to be in a Gospel church; as they will also be excluded and thrust out of the kingdom of heaven, into which no unregenerate and unrighteous, or self-righteous persons shall enter. The Jews make this ejection of Hagar and her son to be both out of this world and that which is to come ⁹¹. The reason given why the one should not be heir with the other perfectly agrees with the Jewish canons; which was not because he was the son of a concubine, for the sons of concubines might inherit, if they were Israelites, and free, but because he was the son of a bondwoman, for thus they run ⁹²; "all that are near of kin, though by iniquity, are heirs, as they that are legitimate; how? thus for instance, if a man has a son that is spurious, or a brother that is spurious, lo, these are as the other sons, and the other brethren for inheritance; but if, בנו מן שפחה, "his son is by an handmaid", or by a strange woman, he is no son in any of these matters, Ilk vrwy wnyaw, "and no heir at all": and again ⁹³; "an Israelite that hath a son by an handmaid, or by a Gentile, seeing he is not called his son, he that he has after him by an Israelitish woman, בכור לנחכה, "is the firstborn for inheritance", and takes the double portion." The reason assigned for non-inheritance in the text implies that the children of the free woman, the spiritual seed of Abraham, shall inherit the privileges of God's house, the blessings of grace, and eternal glory; they are children of the promise, and heirs according to it; when the children of the bondwoman, self-righteous ones, shall not; for the inheritance is not of the law, neither are they heirs who are of the works of it; nor is it to be enjoyed by mixing the law and Gospel, grace and works, in the business of salvation.

⁹⁰ R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror, fol. 21. 3.

⁹¹ Pirke Eliezer, c. 30.

⁹² Maimon. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 1. sect. 7.

⁹³ Ib c. 2. sect. 12.

Galatians 4:31

Ver. 31. **So then, brethren,**

.... This is the conclusion of the whole allegory, or the mystical interpretation of Agar and Sarah, and their sons: we are not children of the bondwoman; the figure of the first covenant, which gendered to bondage, and typified the Jews in a state, and under a spirit of bondage to the law; New Testament saints are not under it, are delivered from it, and are dead unto it: but of the free; of Sarah, that was a type of the new and second covenant; and answered to the Gospel church, which is free from the yoke of the law; and whose children believers in Christ are, by whom they are made free from all thralldom and slavery; so the children of the mistress and of the maidservant are opposed to each other by the Jews ⁹⁴. The Vulgate Latin version adds to this verse from the beginning of the next chapter, "with the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free"; and the Ethiopic version, "because Christ hath made us free"; and begin the next chapter thus, "therefore stand, and be not entangled", &c. and so the Alexandrian copy, and three of Stephens's.

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS V

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to stand fast in Christian liberty, and warns against the abuse of it; and directs to shun various vices, and encourages, to the exercise of several graces, and the observance of several duties; and concludes with a caution against vain glory, provocation to wrath, and envy: and whereas, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, he had made it appear that the believers under the Gospel dispensation were free from the bondage of the law, he begins this with an exhortation to continue steadfastly in the liberty of the Gospel; and the rather, since it was what Christ obtained for them, and bestowed on them; and to take care, that they were not again brought under the bondage of the ceremonial law, particularly the yoke of Circumcision, Ga 5:1, and dissuades from submitting to it, by observing, that it tended to make Christ unprofitable to them, Ga 5:2, and that it laid them under an obligation to keep the whole law, Ga 5:3, and that it made Christ wholly useless to them; and that such who sought for justification by obedience to the ceremonial law were apostates from the Gospel of the grace of God, Ga 5:4, as also by showing, that it was contrary to the general faith and expectation of the saints, who were looking for and expecting eternal glory and happiness, not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ,

⁹⁴ Tzeror Hammor, fol. 152. 1.

under the influence of the Holy Spirit, Ga 5:5, nor were circumcision or uncircumcision of any avail, but the true faith in Christ, which shows itself by love to him and to his people, Ga 5:6, and likewise by reminding them how well they set out at their first conversion, and proceeded; nor had they any to hinder them from obeying the truth, and therefore it was shameful in them to go back to the beggarly elements they had first relinquished, Ga 5:7, nor was the present opinion they had imbibed, of God that called them, or what they received when first effectually called by grace, but what had been since taken up, Ga 5:8, and whereas it might be objected, that it was only in a single article concerning the ceremonial law, and which was, embraced only by a few persons, and therefore not to be regarded, the apostle puts them in mind of a proverb, that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, and therefore not to be connived at, Ga 5:9, however, a little to mitigate the sharpness of his reproof, he expresses his good opinion and confidence of them, that upon a mature consideration of things, they would not be otherwise minded than they formerly had been, or he now was; and lays the blame of all upon the false teacher, or teachers, that troubled them, and who should bear their own judgment or condemnation, Ga 5:10, and whereas it was insinuated, that the apostle himself had preached up circumcision as necessary to salvation, he removes this calumny by observing, that were it true, he would not suffer persecution as he did, nor would the Jews be offended at his preaching as they were, Ga 5:11, and then out of zeal for the glory of God, and hearty affection to the Galatians, he wishes those false teachers that troubled them with their pernicious doctrines were cut off either by the Lord, or from the church, Ga 5:12, and next he directs to the right use of Christian liberty, to which they were called; and cautions against the abuse of it; that they should not use it as an occasion to the flesh, but, on the contrary, serve one another in love, Ga 5:13 giving this as a reason, because love is the fulfilling of the law, Ga 5:14, whereas a contrary spirit and conduct are attended with pernicious consequences, even the destruction of each other, Ga 5:15, and therefore advises them to walk in the Spirit, whose fruit is love, and then they would not fulfil the lust of the flesh, Ga 5:16, for these two, flesh and Spirit, are contrary the one to the other, and the Spirit hinders the performance of the lusts of the flesh, Ga 5:17, besides, such who give up themselves to the conduct of the Spirit, and are led thereby, are not under the law, the bondage of it, nor liable to its curse, Ga 5:18, and having made mention both of flesh and Spirit, he

takes notice of the works and fruits of the one, and of the other, by which they are known; and as for the works of the flesh he observes, that they are manifest, and gives an enumeration of them in "seventeen" particulars; and to deter from them declares, that whoever lives in the commission of them, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, Ga 5:19, and as for the fruits of the Spirit, these are also well known by spiritual men, "nine" of which are particularly mentioned, and against which there is no law, Ga 5:22, and from the whole concludes, that such as are true believers in Christ, and are led by his Spirit, and have the fruits of it, have the flesh with its affections and lusts crucified, Ga 5:24, and ends the chapter with some exhortations to walk in the Spirit, and not be ambitious of worldly honour, nor provoke one another to wrath, nor envy each other's happiness, Ga 5:25.

GALATIANS CHAPTER V

[1] Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

[2] Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

[3] For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

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

[5] For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

[6] For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

[7] Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

[8] This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

[9] A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

[10] I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

[11] And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

[12] I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

[13] For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

[14] For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in

this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

[15] But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

[16] This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

[17] For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

[18] But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

[19] Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

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

[21] Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

[22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

[23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

[24] And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

[25] If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.[

[26] Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

JOHN GILL'S COMMENTARY CHAPTR V

Galatians 5:1

Ver. 1. Stand fast therefore in the liberty,.... There is the liberty of grace, and the liberty of glory; the former of these is here meant, and lies in a freedom from sin; not from the indwelling of it, but from the dominion, guilt, and damning power of it; from the captivity and tyranny of Satan, though not from his temptations and insults; from the law, the ceremonial law, as an handwriting of ordinances, a rigid severe schoolmaster, and a middle wall of partition, and from all its burdensome rites and institutions; from the moral law as a covenant of works, and as administered by Moses; and from the curse and condemnation of it, its bondage and rigorous exaction, and from all expectation of life and righteousness by the deeds of it; but not from obedience to it, as held forth by Christ, and as a rule of walk and conversation; and from the judicial law, or those laws which concerned the Jews as Jews: moreover, this liberty lies in the free use

of things indifferent, as eating any sort of food without distinction, so that it be done in faith, with thankfulness to God, in moderation, and with temperance, and so as that the peace and edification of fellow Christians are not hurt; also in the free use of Gospel ordinances, which they that are fellow citizens with the saints have a right unto, but not to lay aside or neglect at pleasure; which is not to use, but to abuse their liberty: again, another branch of it is access to God, with freedom and boldness at the throne of grace, through the Mediator, under the influences of the divine Spirit; to which may be added, a deliverance from the fears of death corporeal, who is a king of terrors to Christless sinners, and which kept Old Testament saints, all their lifetime subject to bondage and eternal, or the second death, by which Christ's freemen are assured they shall not be hurt: now, in this liberty, the children of the free woman, believers under the Gospel dispensation, are very pertinently exhorted to stand fast, in consequence and consideration of their character; that is, they should highly prize and esteem it, as men do their civil liberty; and maintain it and defend it, at all hazards; abide by the doctrine of it without wavering, and with intrepidity; not giving up anyone part of it, however, and by whomsoever, it may be opposed, maligned, and reproached; and keep up the practice of it, by obeying from the heart the doctrine of it, by becoming the servants of righteousness, by frequent attendance at the throne of grace, and continual observance of the ordinances of Christ; and then should take heed of everything that tends to break in upon it, as any doctrine or commandment of men; particularly the doctrine of justification by works, and all sorts of superstition and will worship: and the rather, because of the concern Christ has in this liberty, it is that

wherewith Christ hath made us free;

we are not free born, but on the contrary homeborn slaves, as Ephraim was; nor could this liberty in any of its branches be obtained by us, by any merit, righteousness, act, or acts of ours, but is wholly of Christ's procuring for us, both by price and power; whereby he has ransomed and delivered us out of the hands of all our spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, the law, and death; and it is of his proclaiming in the Gospel, and of his applying by his Spirit, whom he sends down into our hearts as a free Spirit, to acquaint us with it, and lead us into it, who works faith in us to lay hold upon, and receive this blessing of grace as others:

and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

The metaphor is taken from oxen put under a

yoke, and implicated with it, from which they cannot disengage themselves: some of the members of this church had been Jews, who had formerly been under the yoke of the law, and seemed desirous to return to their former state of bondage, from which the apostle dissuades, and therefore uses the word again: or else he may refer to the bondage of corruption and idolatry, which they as Gentiles were in, before their conversion; and intimates, that to give into the observance of; Jewish rites and ceremonies would be involving themselves in a state of bondage again; for by "the yoke of bandage" he means the law, which the Jews frequently call *twum lwe* "the yoke of the commandments"⁹⁵; particularly the ceremonial law, as circumcision; which Peter, Ac 15:10 represents as a yoke intolerable; the observance of days, months, times, and years; the multitude of sacrifices, and which could not take away sin; but proclaimed their guilt and obligation to punishment, and were an handwriting of ordinances against them, and thereby they were held and kept in bondage, and such a yoke is the moral law as delivered by Moses, requiring perfect obedience, but giving no strength to perform, nor pointing where any is to be had; showing a man his sin and misery, and so working wrath in his conscience, but giving not the least intimation of a Saviour, or of life and righteousness by another; accusing, pronouncing guilty, cursing, and condemning; hence such as seek for righteousness by it are in a miserable subjection to it, and are sadly implicated and entangled with the yoke of it: every doctrine and ordinance of men is a yoke of bondage which should not be submitted to; nay, any action whatever, performed in a religious way and in order for a man's acceptance with God, and to obtain his favour, and according to his observance of which he judges of his state, and speaks peace and comfort to himself, or the reverse, is a yoke of bondage: as, for instance prayer at such and so many times a day, reading such a number of chapters in the Bible every day, fasting so many times in the week, and the like; so that what are branches of Christian liberty, such as frequent prayer to God, reading the sacred writings for instruction and comfort, and the free use of the creatures, are turned into a yoke of bondage, which should be guarded against.

Galatians 5:2

Ver. 2. **Behold, I Paul say unto you,**

.... The apostle proceeds to give some reasons and arguments to enforce the above exhortation and

⁹⁵ Misn. Beracot, c. 2. sect. 2. T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 4. 2.

dissuasion: the first of which is introduced with a note of attention, “behold”; what he was about to say being matter of great moment and importance; and also mentions himself by name, as the assertor of it; and that, either because his name was well known to them, and the rather because of his apostolical authority; and to show his full assurance of this matter, and his intrepidity, and that he was no ways ashamed of it, they might, if they pleased, say it to whomsoever they would, that Paul the apostle affirmed,

that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing:

he speaks of circumcision, not as when it was an ordinance of God, but as it was now abolished by Christ; and that got as singly performed on some certain accounts for he himself circumcised Timothy for the sake of the Jews; but as done in order to salvation, or as necessary unto it; which was the doctrine the false apostles taught and these Galatians were ready to give into: now circumcision submitted to on this consideration, and with this view rendered Christ unprofitable, made his death to be in vain, his sacrifice of no effect, and his righteousness useless: besides, Christ is a whole Saviour, or none at all; to join anything with him and his righteousness, in the business of justification and salvation, is interpreted by him as a contempt and neglect of him, as laying him aside, and to such persons he is of no profit; and if he is not, what they have, and whatsoever they do, will be of no advantage; wealth and riches, yea, the whole world could it be gained, their works and righteousness, whatever show they make before men, God has declared shall not profit them; and trusting to these renders Christ unprofitable to them. This is directly contrary to the notions of the Jews, who think they shall be saved for their circumcision, and that that will secure them from hell; they say ⁹⁶ no circumcised person goes down to hell, and that whoever is circumcised shall inherit the land; but there is none shall inherit the land, save a righteous person; but everyone that is circumcised is called a righteous man {n}; so that circumcision is their righteousness, on account of which they expect heaven and happiness.

Galatians 5:3

Ver. 3. **For I testify again to every man,**

.... This is the form of an oath, a calling God to

⁹⁶ Shemot Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 104. 4. {n} Zohar in Exod. fol. 10. 2.

witness, swearing by the living God, and declaring as in his presence to every man, whether Jew or Gentile, whoever he be:

that is circumcised;

in order to obtain salvation, and as necessary to it:

that he is a debtor to do the whole law;

and this it is that made circumcision an insupportable yoke, for that itself might be bore, and was bore by children of eight days old; but the fulfilling of the whole law cannot be done by any man; and yet everyone that is circumcised, in order to procure righteousness and life, is bound to keep the whole law; because the law is only his righteousness, when he observes all that is required in it, and as the Lord has commanded; if he does not, he is pronounced accursed: and this proves what was before said, that Christ is of no profit to such persons; because they reject him and his righteousness, and, as much as in them lie, make void his obedience, sufferings, and death: hence the same thing is repeated, though not in the same words, in the next verse.

Galatians 5:4

Ver. 4. **Christ is become of no effect unto you,**

.... Or “ye are abolished from Christ”; or as others by an “hypallage” read the words, “Christ is abolished unto you”; for by their seeking for justification by their own works, it was all one to them as if there was no Christ, and no righteousness in him, and no salvation by him; they had nothing to do with him, nor he with them:

whosoever of you are justified by the law;

that is, who sought to be justified by their obedience to the law, or who thought they were, and trusted in themselves that they were righteous; for otherwise, by the deeds of the law, no flesh living can be justified:

ye are fallen from grace;

that is, either from that grace which they professed to have; for there might be some in these churches, as in others, who were only nominal Christians, and formal professors; who had declared they saw themselves lost and undone sinners, destitute of a righteousness, and professed to believe in Christ alone for righteousness and strength, but now trusted in themselves, and in the works of the law: or from the scheme of grace in the whole of man’s salvation, which will admit of no mixture of works; either it is one or the other, it cannot be both; wherefore by their taking on the side of works, they showed that they had entirely dropped the scheme of grace: or else from the Gospel of the grace of God, from whence they were removed, through the influence of false teachers; particularly the doctrine

of free justification by the grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ; which was entirely set aside by their seeking to be instilled by the works of the law; and from this they might be said to be fallen, who were on such a bottom.

Galatians 5:5

Ver. 5. **For we through the Spirit wait,**

.... Who have believed in Christ, Christians in general, and the apostle and the brethren with him in particular; who also were Jews born, and brought up as such; and yet they did not look for, and expect heaven and happiness through circumcision, or any of the works of the law, but through the righteousness of Christ received by faith, under the influence and testimony of the Spirit of God, and therefore much less should Gentiles:

for the hope of righteousness by faith;

by which is meant, not the believer’s justifying righteousness, as if it was something future he is waiting for; for this is already wrought out, and brought in by Christ, the end of the law for righteousness; is revealed in the Gospel from faith to faith; is discovered and applied to the saints by the Spirit of God; is put upon them, and imputed to them by the Father; and is what they now have, not in hope, but in hand; their faith having received it, as their justifying righteousness; in which they will ever be found, living and dying: but eternal glory and felicity is here intended, called “hope”; because it is the object of hope, or is what is hoped for; it is unseen, as what is hoped for is: it is future, and what is to be enjoyed hereafter, and therefore hoped for; it is certain, possible to be enjoyed, though with difficulty; which gives room for hope, and exercises and tries that grace; the foundation and encouragement of hope in it are the person, blood, sacrifice, and righteousness of Christ, who is our hope: and hence it is styled “the hope of righteousness”, because none but righteous persons shall enjoy it: and that by virtue, and in consequence of their being justified by the righteousness of Christ, which gives them their title to it; and hence they look for it, and shall enjoy it, on the foot of justice, as well as of grace and goodness: “waiting” for it supposes it to be certain, real, solid, substantial, valuable, and worth waiting for; which, when possessed, will be with the utmost pleasure, and be abundantly satisfying; and that the persons that wait for it have knowledge, and at least hope of interest in it; and do highly value and esteem it, having their hearts set on it, and looking with contempt on the things of time and sense, in comparison of it:

the manner in which they wait is, “through the Spirit”, and “by faith”; the Syriac version reads, “through the Spirit, which is of faith”; that is, by the Spirit received through faith; see Ga 3:14 but it is best to consider them apart; believers look and wait for heaven, under the influence and encouragement of the Spirit of God; who is the author of the faith by which they look for it, and of the hope which is concerned with it; and who is the revealer and applier of the righteousness of Christ, the foundation of it; and which gives some glimpses of the heavenly glory to the saints, shows them their interest in it, witnesses to their sonship, and so to their heirship; and is the pledge and earnest of their inheritance; all which gives great strength and encouragement to faith, by which they also expect it; believing not only the reality of it, but their own interest in it; and so walk by faith in the believing views thereof, until they receive the end of it.

Galatians 5:6

Ver. 6. **For in Christ Jesus,**

.... The Arabic version reads, “in the religion of Christ”; in the religion of Moses, or of the Jews under the former dispensation, the things after mentioned were of some moment and consideration; but are of no account in the Christian religion, and under the Gospel dispensation: circumcision and uncircumcision make no difference in the church of Christ, or are any bar to communion with it; nor do they make any alteration in the love and favour of Christ, who is all in all to his people, whether Jews or Gentiles; nor have they any influence at all on salvation, Christ being a common Saviour to the circumcised and uncircumcised; nor are they any evidence for or against a person’s being in Christ, or having an interest in him:

neither circumcision availeth anything;

not now as a command and ordinance of God, being abolished by Christ; nor as a type, having its accomplishment in him, and his people; nor as a privilege, giving any preference in any respect to the Jew above the Gentile; nor is it of any weight or consequence, or has any concern in the business of salvation:

nor uncircumcision;

it is no hinderance to the enjoyment of the Gospel, to entrance into a Gospel church state, or to admission to the ordinances of it; nor to the participation of the blessings of grace, as justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life:

but faith which works by love;

faith has a concern in justification and salvation, not

by way of causal influence, but as it is that grace which receives the righteousness of Christ, through which we are saved, and kept by the power of God unto salvation; yet not any sort of faith, but that which is operative, is attended with good works; and which works itself by love to God, to Christ, to his people, ways, worship, truths, and ordinances. The Syriac version renders it, zrmgtmd "which is perfected by love"; that is, is showed to be right, true, and genuine thereby; see Jas 2:22.

Galatians 5:7

Ver. 7. **Ye did run well,**

.... In the Christian race; when they first set out in a profession of religion, they embraced and held fast, and were zealously attached to the truths of the Gospel; they were in the lively exercise of grace on its proper object, and very diligent in the discharge of duty; they made great proficiency in the knowledge of divine things, and ran with cheerfulness and without weariness in the ways of Christ, and in the paths of truth and holiness. The metaphor is taken from runners in a race; see 1Co 9:24 so far this is said to their commendation, but this should have been persisted in:

who did hinder you; not the apostle, or any of his brethren; no, they encouraged them to go on, and gave them all the assistance they could, to help them forward; but it was the false apostles that hindered them, who did all they could to remove them to another Gospel, and turn them aside out of the right way:

that ye should not obey the truth?

of the Gospel, particularly the truth of justification by the righteousness of Christ; which they did not so cheerfully embrace, and show such a respect unto, as they had formerly done; see Ga 3:1, and which he says not by way of inquiry, but of complaint and concern; and with some indignation against the persons who had been the means of hindering their Christian progress, and with a view to reclaim the Galatians if possible

Galatians 5:8

Ver. 8. **This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.**

That is, the opinion they were persuaded to believe; and which the Syriac version renders, Nwkoyp, "your persuasion"; this is not of God, who had called them into the grace of Christ; nor of Christ, who had called them to the knowledge of himself, and communion with him; nor of the Spirit of Christ, who had called them with an holy calling, and who still continued to

call them to repentance; nor of any faithful minister of the Gospel, who had been concerned as an instrument in their effectual calling; meaning the notion they were persuaded to give into, that circumcision and the works of the law were necessary to salvation, and that these were to be joined with the righteousness of Christ for justification; such a conceit as this could never be of God, nor any evangelical minister, but must be of Satan or his emissaries, the false apostles.

Galatians 5:9

Ver. 9. **A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.**

A proverbial expression pretty much in use with the Jews; see 1Co 5:6, respecting either persons or things; and is in answer to, or prevents an objection that might be made, or something that might be said, in favour of these churches; that their case was not so bad, or the danger they were in so great, as was represented by the apostle; since they were only a few persons that propagated this notion, and but few that received it, at least thoroughly gave into it; and that, if it was an error, it was but a small one, and only regarded a single ritual, or a few rituals of the law; to which the apostle replies, by supposing, but not granting this to be the case, since they were pretty generally declined, and the error was not a slight one, that as a little sour leaven influences and ferments a large mass, or lump of dough, and makes it of the same nature with it, so a small error in doctrine, as it may be thought to be, increases to more ungodliness, and eats as doth a canker; and though a few hands may be first concerned in propagating it, and but few be infected with it, yet these may soon spread the contagion through the whole society: wherefore errors and false teachers should be nipped in the bud, and stopped in their beginnings, how inconsiderable soever they and their tenets may be judged to be.

Galatians 5:10

Ver. 10. **I have confidence in you through the Lord,**

.... Though the apostle had said many things which carried in them the appearance of roughness and severity, yet he still entertained hopes of them that they were not so far gone, but that they might be brought back again; and he here expresses his confidence of it. This confidence in them is not of faith, for no trust is to be put in men; no, not in the best; but of charity, or love, which hopes all things, and believes all things; and which proceeded upon a thorough persuasion he had, that there was some good thing in them; and therefore

was confident, that he that had begun the good work would perform it, and not suffer them to be carried away finally and totally with the error of the wicked: and this confidence he had "through the Lord"; either through the Spirit of the Lord, whose office it is to lead into all truth, as it is in Jesus; and who had suggested this to the apostle, and possessed him of this confidence; so that it was not a conjecture and fancy of his, but an intimation from the Spirit of the Lord: or through the Lord Jesus Christ, or "in the Lord", Christ, as the phrase may be rendered; that is, on account of their being in Christ, which the apostle hoped and believed; where they were safe and secure from a final and total seduction; he was confident, that whatever they might seem to be now, things would take a different turn in time:

that you will be none otherwise minded;

than he was, and they formerly were, when the Gospel was first preached to them, and embraced by them; and particularly in the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ which was the doctrine then called in question, and in debate:

but he that troubleth you;

he seems to have respect to some particular person, who was the principal of the false teachers, and most famous for his learning, knowledge, gifts, and abilities; and who had done, and was likely to do, the most mischief among them; and was a troubler of God's Israel, and of the pure waters of the sanctuary; he unsettled their minds, and caused them to halt between two, Moses and Christ, law and Gospel, and the doctrines of justification by works, and by the righteousness of Christ; the one being what gave true solid peace and comfort, the other introduced confusion, distress, and fears: the apostle threatens him, and declares that he

shall bear his judgment;

or condemnation, or damnation, his punishment in this, or the other world; for the judgment, or condemnation, of such that bring in damnable harasses, and pernicious errors, lingereth not, will not be long delayed; and their damnation slumbereth not, but in a little time will seize upon them; when as they have rejected Christ as a sin bearing and atoning Saviour, and his righteousness as the justifying one, they will, agreeably to their own doctrine, be left to bear their punishment themselves, which will be intolerable, and to all eternity; nor shall any escape it,

whosoever he be;

though ever so knowing and learned, and let his parts and abilities be what they will; or he be ever so famous among men, and cried up as a most excellent

preacher.

Galatians 5:11

Ver. 11. **And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision,**

.... The apostle was traduced by the false teachers, as a preacher of circumcision himself in some places; and this they did partly to show him to be a variable and inconsistent man, who preached one doctrine in one place, and another in another place, and so not to be attended to; and partly with others, to draw them into their scheme upon his authority: what might give them the handle, or at least what they improved to this purpose, might be his circumcising of Timothy; but though he did this as a thing indifferent, and for the sake of the Jews, to make them easy; yet he never preached it after his conversion, and much less as necessary to justification and salvation, as these men did. This calumny he refutes by putting the following question or questions;

why do I yet suffer persecution?

as is clear he did, for being against it, and preaching it down; great part of the persecutions the apostle endured was from the Jews, and that on account of his teaching them everywhere, that were among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, and that they should not circumcise their children, and walk after the customs of their nation; a clear point this, that he did not preach it; had he, persecution from this quarter would not have followed him; and he could have done it with a good conscience, he must act a very weak part in suffering persecution on that account. The Arabic version gives the words a very different turn, and yet furnishes an answer to the calumny; "why do I persecute him that uses it?" that is, if I am a preacher of it, why am I so warm and violent an opposer of those that submit to it? these things are so opposite that there is no reconciling them; to the same purpose is the Ethiopic version: "then is the offence of the cross ceased". The last mentioned version reads it, "the cross of Christ"; and so the Alexandrian copy; meaning not the cross of affliction, reproach, and persecution, which Christ has enjoined every follower of his to take up and bear for his sake, and is offensive to the carnal man; nor the cross on which he suffered, or the sufferings of the cross; but the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ, which was an offence and a stumblingblock to the Jews; now if the apostle had preached circumcision as necessary to salvation, the other doctrine must have been dropped, and consequently the offence taken at it must have ceased,

whereas it was not. The Syriac version reads by way of question, "is the offence of the cross ceased?" no it is not, a plain case then is, that the apostle did not preach circumcision, but only a crucified Christ, as necessary to salvation. Moreover, the Jews that believed would not have been so offended as they were at his preaching, had he preached the one as well the other; their offence was not that he preached Christ crucified, but that he preached, that, by the cross of Christ, circumcision and the other rituals of the ceremonial law were now abolished.

Galatians 5:12

Ver. 12. **I would they were even cut off which trouble you.**

These words are a solemn wish of the apostle's with respect to the false teachers, or an imprecation of the judgment of God upon them; that they might be cut off out of the land of the living by the immediate hand of God, that they might do no more mischief to the churches of Christ: this he said not out of hatred to their persons, but from a concern for the glory of God, and the good of his people. The word here used answers to the Hebrew word קָפַח, and which is often made use of by the Jews in solemn imprecations; we read ⁹⁷ of a righteous man, מִקָּפַח אֶת בְּנָיו, "that cut off his children": the gloss upon it is,

"he used to say, when he made any imprecation, אֶקָּפַח אֶת בְּנָי "may I cut off my children";"

that is, may they die, may they be cut off by the hand of God, and I bury them;

"says R. Tarphon ⁹⁸, may my children be "cut off", if these books of heretics come into my hands, that I will burn them;"

and says the same Rabbi ⁹⁹ may I "cut off" my children, or may my children be cut off, if this sentence or constitution is cut off, or should perish. There is another use of this word, which may have a place here, for it sometimes signifies to confute a person, or refute his notion ¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁷ T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 1.

⁹⁸ T. Bab. Sabbat, fol, 116. 1.

⁹⁹ {q} T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 17. 1. Misn. Oholot, c. 16. sect. 1. & Maimon, in Bartenora in ib.

¹⁰⁰ T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 52. 2. Nazir, fol. 49. 2.

"It is a tradition of the Rabbis, that after the departure of R. Meir, R. Judah said to his disciples, let not the disciples of R. Meir come in hither, for they are contentious; and not to learn the law do they come, but לִקְפָּחַנִי בַהֲלֹכֹתַי, "to cut me off"; (i.e. as the gloss says, to show how sharp they are that none can stand against them;) to confute and overcome me, by their sentences, or constitutions."

So the apostle here might wish that the mouths of these false teachers were stopped, their notions refuted, that they might give them no more trouble; to which agrees the Arabic version; "they that trouble you I wish they were dumb"; or that their mouths were stopped, as such vain talkers should be; see Tit 1:10 or the sense of the apostle is, that it was his will and desire that these men should be cut off from the communion of the church; with which views he mentions the proverbial expression in Ga 5:9 with which compare 1Co 5:6 or that they would cut themselves off, by withdrawing from them, going out from among them, and leaving them as these men sometimes did.

Galatians 5:13

Ver. 13. **For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty,**

.... He calls them "brethren", to testify his affection to them, and to put them in mind of their relation to one another, which required mutual love, a thing he is about to press them to; he asserts that they were "called" not merely externally, but internally, by the effectual grace of God, out of bondage to sin, Satan, and the law, unto the liberty of the Gospel and of the grace of God; that liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, Ga 5:1 this he said in a judgment of charity, hoping well of them:

only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh;

corrupt nature, which in unregenerate men takes encouragement from, and makes an ill use of the best of things, as the mercy and patience of God; and not only takes an occasion by the law, forbidding sin to work and stir up all manner of concupiscence; but also by the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, such as eternal election, free justification, &c. which though the source and fountain, the barrier and security, of all true and real holiness, are improved and abused by wicked minds, under the influence and instigation of Satan, to vile purposes; and though regenerate persons are not in the flesh, and do not live after it, yet that is in them,

and there is a proneness in them to sin; and Satan is watching all opportunities and advantages against them; so that there is need for such a caution as this, that they do not misuse their Christian liberty by indulging the flesh and the lusts of it, which is apt to take an occasion to cherish its lusts, and especially when given: Christ's free men should not do so, for that is to disgrace the doctrine of Christian liberty, to enthrall themselves in, bondage instead of using their liberty aright, and to give the enemy occasion to blaspheme: the doctrine of Christian liberty may be abused, or used as an occasion to the flesh, and to fulfil the lusts of it; when under a pretence thereof men think themselves exempt from obedience to the civil magistrate, which is using this liberty as a cloak of maliciousness; or that they are free from obedience to the law of God, as a rule of walk and conversation; or from subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel; or when they use the creatures God has given them the free use of without thankfulness, and in an immoderate manner; and when they make things indifferent which are not, or use indifferent things to the prejudice of others; and their liberty becomes a stumblingblock to weak Christians, which the apostle seems greatly to regard here; since he adds,

but by love serve one another:

the Vulgate Latin version reads, "by the love of the Spirit": and so some copies; Gospel liberty and the service of the saints are not at all inconsistent; as it becomes them to love one another, as the new command of Christ, their profession of religion, and their relation to each other, require, so they should show their love by their service; as by praying one with and for another, by bearing each other's burdens, sympathizing with and communicating to each other in things temporal and spiritual; in forbearing with and forgiving one another; by admonishing each other when there is occasion for it, in a meek, tender, and brotherly way; by instructing and building up one another on their most holy faith, and by stirring up one another to all the duties of religion, private and public.

Galatians 5:14

Ver. 14. For all the law is fulfilled in one word,

.... Not the ceremonial law, to which acts of mercy, kindness, and love are opposed, and from which they are distinguished; but the law of the decalogue given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and by him to the people of the Jews; and intends either only the second table of it, since only love to the neighbour is mentioned; or else the whole of it, both tables, since it is said, "all the law";

which by Christ is reduced to two heads, love to God, and love to the neighbour; and though the former is not here expressed, it is implied as a cause in the effect, for the love of God is the cause, and so the evidence of love to the neighbour; nor can there be the one without the other. The two tables of the law consist of Myrbdh trve, "ten words"; as the ¹⁰¹ Jews commonly call them, and we the decalogue, and yet they are fulfilled in one; that is, they are to be brought into such a compendium, reduced to such an head; or as the apostle in a parallel place says, they may briefly be comprehended in this saying, Ro 13:9. The Jews make the commandments of the law to be a very large number indeed, but at last reduce them to one, as the apostle here does,

"six hundred and thirteen commandments (they say ¹⁰² were given to Moses---David came and reduced them to eleven, Psalm xv, Isaiah came and reduced them to six, Isa 33:15 Micah came and reduced them to three, Mic 6:8 Isaiah came and reduced them to two, Isa 56:1, Amos came and reduced them to one, Am 5:4 but this being objected to, it is observed that Habakkuk came, txa le Ndymexw, "and reduced them to one", Hab 2:4 that is faith, as here the apostle reduces them to love:"

even in this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: these words are taken out of Le 19:18 and which R. Akiba says ¹⁰³, agreeably with the apostle, whose contemporary he was, is hrwtb lwdg llk, "the grand general rule in the law"; or the grand comprehensive of the law: the object of love, the "neighbour", signifies not only, as there the Jews explain it, those of their own people, or proselytes to their religion; but all sorts of men, whether in a natural, civil, or spiritual relation; and whether those that do us good or do us ill, friends or enemies: the measure or rule of love is, "as thyself"; and designs not an equality of affection, but a likeness of effects; that is, to do the same kind acts of love to others, one would choose to have done to ourselves: and this is the fulfilling of the law; that is, so far as a man loves aright, so far he fulfils the law; not that he does it perfectly, for man in his fallen state is unable to do that, for the law is exceeding broad, and reaches to thoughts, desires, and inclinations, as well as to words and deeds; and besides,

¹⁰¹ Exod. xxxiv. 28. Vid. Targum Onk. & Jon. in ib.

¹⁰² T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 23. 2. & 24. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 151. 1.

¹⁰³ In Jarchi in Lev. xix. 18.

love said to be the fulfilling of it, is imperfect; hence then there can be no justification by works of charity, nor by any services of men, which at best are imperfect; nor are they done in their own strength, and without the grace of God; nor is there any that can be said to have fulfilled the law perfectly but Christ, and to him must we look for a justifying righteousness. These words contain a reason engaging to love one another, and to do all kind of offices of love to each other; since it is a main and principal thing contained in the law, and to which that may be reduced.

Galatians 5:15

Ver. 15. **But if ye bite and devour one another,**

.... Another reason inducing to love is taken from the pernicious consequences of a contrary spirit and conduct. The allusion is to beasts of prey falling upon and devouring one another: for wolves or dogs to worry sheep is not strange; but for sheep to distress one another is unnatural. The apostle does not say, if grievous wolves should enter in among you and not spare the flock; but suggests if they themselves should act the part of wolves to one another; having reference to their controversies about the law and circumcision, and the necessity thereof to justification and salvation; which were managed with great heat and bitterness, occasioned great contentions, and threatened them with divisions, parties, and factions; and were attended with envy and malice, with reproachful words, biting sarcasms, scandalous invectives, and injurious actions, which must be of bad consequence: hence he adds,

take heed that ye be not consumed one of another; that is, either beware lest each other's particular peace and comfort be destroyed, which is oftentimes done this way, though a person's state and condition Godward may be safe; or lest their church state should be destroyed and come to nothing, since love is the cement of it, which being loosened, threatens a dissolution; for as no civil community, either public or private, divided against itself, can stand long, so no religious one; and for want of love the Lord threatens to remove, and sometimes does remove, the candlestick out of its place

Galatians 5:16

Ver. 16. **This I say then, walk in the Spirit,**

.... The advice the apostle thinks fit to give, and which he would have observed, is, to "walk in the Spirit", that is, either after the Spirit of God; making the word inspired by him the rule of behaviour, which as it

is the standard of faith, so of practice, and is the lamp unto our feet, and the light unto our path; taking him himself for a guide, who not only guides into all truth, but in the way of holiness and righteousness unto the land of uprightness; and depending upon his grace and strength for assistance throughout the whole of our walk and conversation: or in the exercise of the graces of the Spirit of God; as in the exercise of faith upon the person and grace of Christ, of which the Spirit is the author; and in love to God, Christ, and one another, which is a fruit of the Spirit; and in humility, lowliness of mind, meekness and condescension; all which is to walk in the Spirit, or spiritually, and strengthens the argument for love the apostle is upon: and this he encourages to by observing,

and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh;

he does not say there shall be no flesh, nor any lust of the flesh in them if they walk spiritually; or that the flesh should not act and operate in them; or that they should do no sinful action; all which is only true of Christ; and the contrary is to be found and observed in all true Christians, though ever so spiritual; but that they should not fulfil or perfect the lust of the flesh; should not give up themselves entirely to the power and dictates of the flesh, so as to be under it and at its command, and be obedient servants and slaves unto it; for, in this sense only, such that are spiritual do not, commit sin, they do not make a trade of it, it is not their constant employ or course of conversation.

Galatians 5:17

Ver. 17. **For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,**

.... By "flesh" is meant, not the carnal or literal sense of the Scripture, which is Origen's gloss, as militating against the spiritual sense of it; nor the sensual part of man rebelling against his rational powers; but the corruption of nature, which still is in regenerate persons: and is so called because it is propagated by carnal generation; has for its object carnal things; its lusts and works are fleshly; and though it has its seat in the heart, it shows itself in the flesh or members of the body, which are yielded as instruments of unrighteousness; and it makes and denominates men carnal, even believers themselves so far as it prevails: by "the Spirit" is meant the internal principle of grace in a regenerate man, and is so called from the author of it, the Spirit of God, whose name it bears, because it is his workmanship; and from the seat and subject of it, the soul or spirit of man; and from the nature of it, it is spiritual, a new heart and a new Spirit; its objects are spiritual, and it minds, savours,

and delights in spiritual things: and the meaning of the lusting of the one against the other, for it is reciprocal, hence it follows,

and the Spirit against the flesh,

is that the one wills, chooses, desires, and affects what is contrary to the other; so the flesh, or the old man, the carnal I, in regenerate persons, wills, chooses, desires, and loves carnal things, which are contrary to the Spirit or principle of grace in the soul; and on the other hand, the Spirit or the new man, the spiritual I, wills, chooses, desire, approves, and loves spiritual things, such as are contrary to corrupt nature; and this sense is strengthened by the Oriental versions. The Syriac version reads, "for the flesh desires that" aknd, "which hurts", or is contrary to "the Spirit"; and "the Spirit desires that which hurts", or is contrary to the "flesh"; and much in the same way the Arabic version renders it, "for the flesh desires that which militates against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires that which militates against the flesh"; to which the Ethiopic version agrees, reading it thus, "for the flesh desires what the Spirit would not, and the Spirit desires what the flesh would not"; the reason whereof is suggested in the next clause:

and these are contrary the one to the other;

as light and darkness, fire and water, or any two opposites can be thought to be; they are contrary in their nature, actings, and effects; there is not only a repugnancy to each other, but a continued war, conflict, and combat, is maintained between them; the flesh is the law in the members or force of sin, which wars against the spirit, the law in the mind, or the force and power of the principle of grace; these are the company of two armies, to be seen in the Shulamite, fighting one against the other. So the Jews say¹⁰⁴ of the good imagination, and of the evil one, by which they mean the same as here, that they are like Abraham and Lot; and that

"though they are brethren, joined in one body, הם אייביים זה לזה, "they are enemies to one another";"

hence it follows,

so that ye cannot do the good that ye would which may be understood both of evil things and of good things. The former seems to be chiefly the apostle's sense; since the whole of this text is a reason given why those who walk spiritually shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, because they have a powerful governing principle

¹⁰⁴ Tzeror, Hammor, fol. 15. 3.

in them, the Spirit, or grace; which though the flesh lusts against, and opposes itself unto, yet that also rises up against the flesh, and often hinders it from doing the works and lusts of it. There is in regenerate men a propensity and inclination to sin, a carnal I, that wills and desires sin, and wishes for an opportunity to do it, which when it offers, the flesh strongly solicits to it; but the Spirit, or the internal principle of grace, opposes the motion; and like another Joseph says, how can I commit this great wickedness and sin against a God of so much love and grace? it is a voice behind and even in a believer, which, when he is tempted to turn to the right hand or the left, says, this is the way, walk in it, and will not suffer him to go into crooked paths with the workers of iniquity; and so sin cannot have the dominion over him, because he is under grace as a reigning principle; and the old man cannot do the evil things he would, being under the restraints of mighty grace. This is the apostle's principal sense, and best suits with his reasoning in the context; but inasmuch as the lusting and opposition of these two principles are mutual and reciprocal, the other sense may also be taken in; as that oftentimes, by reason of the prevalence of corrupt nature, and power of indwelling sin, a regenerate man does the evil he would not, and cannot do the good he would; for he would always do good and nothing else, and even as the angels do it in heaven; but he cannot, because of this opposite principle, the flesh.

Galatians 5:18

Ver. 18. **But if ye be led by the Spirit,**

.... That is, of God, who is the guide and leader of his people. It is a metaphor taken from the leading of persons that are blind; as such are before conversion, and whom the Spirit of God leads in ways they knew not, and in paths they had not known: or from the leading of children, and teaching them to go; so the Spirit leads regenerate persons, and teaches them to walk by faith in Christ. This act of leading supposes life in the persons led, for dead men cannot be led; the Spirit is first a Spirit of life from Christ before he is a leader; and also it supposes some strength, though a good deal of weakness; were there no spiritual strength derived from Christ, they could not be led; and if there was no weakness, there would be no need of leading; it is an instance of powerful and efficacious grace upon them, yet not contrary to their wills, though they are led, they are not forced; they go freely, being led, as there is good reason for it; for the Spirit of God always leads for their profit and advantage, and for the spiritual

delight, pleasure, and comfort of their souls; he leads out of the ways of sin, and so of ruin and destruction, and from Mount Sinai, and all dependence on a legal and moral righteousness; he leads to Christ, to his person, for shelter, safety, and salvation, to his blood, for pardon and cleansing, to his righteousness, for justification, and to his fulness, for every supply of grace; he leads into the presence of God, and to his house and ordinances; he leads into the covenant of grace, to the blessings, promises, and Mediator of it; he leads into all truth as it is in Jesus, in the ways of faith and truth, and in the paths of righteousness and holiness, and always in a right way, though sometimes in a rough one, to the city of their habitation; he leads from one degree of grace to another, and at last to glory: all which he does gradually; he leads by little and little into a man's sinfulness, and to see his interest in Christ, and by degrees into the doctrines of the Gospel, and the everlasting love of the three Persons; and proportionally to the strength he gives, and as they are able to bear: now such persons as these have nothing to fear from the law of God:

ye are not under the law;

such are not only delivered from the law in fact, but in their own apprehensions; they have the comfortable knowledge and experience of it; the law is no terrifying law to them; it works no wrath in them; they are delivered from the spirit of bondage to fear, by the Spirit of God, by whom they are led; nor are they under it, nor do they need it as a pressing forcing law to duty; they delight in it, and cheerfully serve it, being constrained by love, and not awed by fear; nor are its accusations and charges regarded, or to be regarded, by such who are led by the Spirit to Christ, the end of the law for righteousness; and they are entirely freed from its curse and condemnation, though they are under it, and desire to be under it, as held forth by Christ the King of saints; and, under the Spirit's influence and guidance, yield a cheerful and evangelical obedience to it.

Galatians 5:19

Ver. 19. **Now the works of the flesh are manifest,**

.... By "flesh" is meant corrupt nature, as before, and by the works of it, not only external acts of sin, but inward lusts; for such are here mentioned among its works, as "hatred", "wrath", "envyings", &c. and both external and internal acts are so called, because they spring from the flesh, or corrupt nature, and are what that urges and solicits to, and are wrought thereby, and are what denominate and show men to be carnal: these are said to be "manifest"; not that they are all, and always

publicly done, and are open to the sight of men; for they are works of darkness, and often done in secret, though they are always manifest to God the searcher of hearts, and will be brought to light in the day of judgment; but they are known to be sins in some measure by the light of nature, and especially by the law of God; and a clear case it is, that they are contrary to the Spirit, both to the Spirit of God, and to the principle of grace he forms in the heart; and that such who live in the commission of them are not led by him, nor are under the influence of his grace: which are these; though all are not mentioned, only some of the chief, by which judgment may be made of the rest: adultery; this is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Alexandrian copy; it is a defilement of the marriage bed, and is the sin of uncleanness committed by two persons, one of which at least is in a married state, is condemned by the law of God and light of nature: fornication; which though by many of the Gentiles was reckoned no sin, or a very small one, stands here among the works of the flesh, that are manifest and to be avoided; it is the sin of uncleanness committed by persons in a single state; uncleanness, it is a general name for all unchastity, in thought, word, or action; and may here design more especially all unnatural lusts, assodomy, self-pollution, &c. lasciviousness; or wantonness, all lustful dalliance, everything that leads on to acts of uncleanness, or attends them, as impure words, filthy gestures, and the like.

Galatians 5:20

Ver. 20. **Idolatry,**

.... Which some understand of covetousness, which is so called; but rather it means the worshipping of other gods, or of graven images:

witchcraft;

any real or pretended league and association with the devil, seeking to converse with familiar spirits, to gain unlawful knowledge, or to do hurt to fellow creatures; which, as it is doing honour to Satan, detracts from the glory of God, and rightly follows idolatry; conjuration, soothsaying, necromancy, and all kind of magic are included and condemned hereby:

hatred:

internal hatred of any man's person, even of our very enemies, is forbidden; in the original text it is "enmities": as the carnal mind is nothing else but enmity against God and Christ, against law and Gospel, and all good men, and everything that is good:

variance,

or "contentions"; fighting and quarrelling, by words scandalous and reproachful, what we commonly call scolding:

emulations

or "zeals"; not good, but bad: a boiling and rising up of the spirits and passions, at the honour and happiness of another:

wrath

or "wraths" violent emotions of the mind, moving to revenge, and seeking the hurt and mischief of others:

strife

or "strifes"; perpetual contradictions and cavilings, either expressed by words, or working in the mind; for this strife may be in a man's heart, according to Jas 3:14

seditions

or "divisions": schisms and factions, dissensions in things domestic, civil, and religious:

heresies;

bad principles and tenets, relating to doctrine, which are subversive of the fundamentals of the Gospel and the Christian religion; and are the produce of a man's own invention, and the matter of his choice, without any foundation in the word of God; and these are works of the flesh, for they spring from a corrupt and carnal mind, and are propagated with carnal views, as popular applause, worldly advantage, and indulging the lusts of the flesh.

Galatians 5:21

Ver. 21. **Envyings.**

.... Uneasy distressing tortures of the mind, grieving at the good of others, that any should be in an equal, or in a better condition than themselves:

murders,

destroying of men's lives, which is often the consequence of the above evils:

drunkenness;

excess in drinking of wine or strong drink, whereby the stomach is overcharged, the mind is intoxicated, and the body enfeebled and unable to perform its office; this is often the source of many, or all of the works of the flesh before mentioned:

revellings;

excess in feed, nocturnal riotings in eating, drinking, dancing, singing, chambering and wantonness. The Syriac version renders it, armz, "lascivious singing"; and the Arabic version, "songs" which are a part of the nightly revels: and such like which are of the same nature and kind; so the apostle shuts up the account, it being too tedious to give an enumeration of all the

works of the flesh; nor was it necessary, judgment may be made of the rest by these; nor might it be so proper, since the carnal heart is but the more pleased with, and irritated by, the mention of evil things:

of the which I tell you before:

before the judge comes and the awful judgment proceeds, when these will all be made manifest, and every man will be judged according to his works: this the apostle did, as putting them in mind of the evil nature of these things, and assuring them of the bad consequences that would follow, if grace prevented not:

as I have also told you in time past;

when he first preached among them, and warned them to flee from the wrath to come; he then laid before them the evil nature of these things, the dreadful effects of them, and showed that there was no salvation from them, but by Christ:

and that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God;

by which is meant the heavenly glory, called a "kingdom", because of the grandeur and magnificence of that state; and "of God", because it is of his preparing and giving, what he calls his own to by his grace, and puts them into the possession of and where he reigns and will reign for ever, and show forth the glory of his majesty: this is possessed in way of inheritance, which shows it to be a bequest of our heavenly Father's, a free grace gift of his, and not to be obtained by the works of the law, or merits of men; but what belongs, and is peculiar to the children of God, who are so by adopting grace: now they that do such works of the flesh as before enumerated; that is, that live in the commission of these things, whose whole lives are employed in such work, living and dying in such a state, without repentance towards God and faith in Christ, shall never enjoy eternal life and happiness; though such who have done these things, being brought to a sense of them, and to the blood and righteousness of Christ for pardon and justification, for life and salvation; such, notwithstanding the works of the flesh done by them, shall, through the free grace of God, and the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, inherit the kingdom and glory of God.

Galatians 5:22

Ver. 22. **But the fruit of the Spirit,**

.... Not of nature or man's free will, as corrupted by sin, for no good fruit springs from thence; but either of the internal principle of grace, called the Spirit, Ga 5:17 or rather of the Holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version reads it; the graces of which are called "fruit", and not

“works”, as the actions of the flesh are; because they are owing to divine influence efficacy, and bounty, as the fruits of the earth are, to which the allusion is; and not to a man’s self, to the power and principles of nature; and because they arise from a seed, either the incorruptible seed of internal grace, which seminally contains all graces in it, or the blessed Spirit, who is the seed that remains in believers; and because they are in the exercise of them acceptable unto God through Christ, and are grateful and delightful to Christ himself, being “his pleasant fruits”; which as they come from him, as the author of them, they are exercised on him as the object of them, under the influence of the Spirit; and because they are profitable to them that are possessed of them, seeing the promise of this life and that which is to come is annexed to them; and the good works which are done in consequence of them are profitable to men: once more, as the works of the flesh are the unfruitful works of darkness, and make men so, and therefore cannot be called fruit properly; these, as they are fruits, and are rightly and properly so called, so they make men fruitful, and to abound in divine things, and are as follow:

Love.

This the apostle begins with, it being the fulfilling of the law, the bond of perfectness, and without which a profession of religion is insignificant; it may be understood of love to God, of which every man’s heart is destitute, being enmity against God, until regenerated by the Spirit of God; when he sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, and which is the ground and reason of any man’s truly loving God: and also of love to Christ, which the natural man feels nothing of till the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ, opens his eyes to see the loveliness of his person, the suitableness of his grace, righteousness, and fulness, and the necessity of looking to him for life and salvation; and likewise of love to the saints, which a carnal man is a stranger to, until he is renewed by the Holy Ghost, who in regenerating him teaches him to love the brethren; and which is the evidence of his having passed from death to life, through the mighty power of his grace. Moreover, love to the house and worship of God, to the truths and ordinances of the Gospel, all which men have naturally an aversion to, may be included in this first fruit of the Spirit: the next follows, which is

joy,

even that which is in the Holy Ghost, and has him for its author. The object of it is God, not as an absolute God, but as a covenant God and Father in Christ; as the

God of salvation, as clothing with the robe of his Son’s righteousness, and as pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, full atonement being made by the sacrifice of Christ; who also is the object of this joy in his person, fulness, righteousness, offices, relations, and when beheld, embraced, and enjoyed in a way of communion. This joy, likewise, which is the produce of the Spirit, lies in spiritual things, and arises from an apprehension or good hope of interest in them, as justification, pardon, peace, adoption, and eternal glory; and is peculiar to such who have the Spirit, for a stranger intermeddles not with this joy, nor can he form any judgment of it, and is even unspeakable by the believer himself. Moreover, joy in the good of others, of fellow creatures and fellow Christians, in their outward and inward prosperity, in their temporal, spiritual, and eternal good, which, as it is a grace of the Spirit, may well enough be thought to be at least part of the sense of the word here; since it follows upon, and is joined with love, and stands between that and

peace,

which is another fruit of the Spirit: and designs peace with God in a man’s own conscience, produced there by the Spirit of God, in consequence of peace being made by the blood of Christ; and that through the application of the blood of Christ for pardon, and of his righteousness for justification to the soul of a sensible sinner by the blessed Spirit, the effect of which is peace, quietness, and tranquillity of mind; also peace with men, with the saints, and with all others; for such who are under a work of the Spirit of God, and are influenced and led by him, seek after the things which make for peace and edification among the brethren, and are desirous if possible to live peaceably with all men: hence appears another grace in them,

longsuffering;

which intends not so much a patient waiting for good things to come, for more grace, and for glory, through the Spirit; but a patient bearing and enduring of present evils with joyfulness, being strengthened by the Spirit with all might, according to his glorious power; being slow to anger, ready to forgive injuries, put up with affronts, and bear with, and forbear one another: and which is usually accompanied with gentleness, humanity, affability, courteousness, shown both in words, gestures, and actions; in imitation of the gentleness of Christ, and agreeably to that wisdom, that heavenly doctrine of the Gospel, which, among other things, is said to be gentle, and easy to be entreated. To which is added

goodness;

and what else can come from the good Spirit of God, the author of the good work of grace upon the soul? and which disposes it to acts of goodness unto men, in a natural, civil, moral, spiritual, and evangelic way, for the benefit both of soul and body; and which must here be understood, and which is well pleasing to God when done in the exercise of the following grace,

faith;

for though fidelity, both in words and actions, which is very ornamental to the Gospel, and a profession of religion may be meant; yet faith in Christ is not to be excluded, as it is generally by interpreters; for this is not of a man’s self, nor have all men it: it is a gift of God, the operation of his power, and the work of his Spirit, whence he is styled the spirit of faith; and which therefore must have a place among his fruits; and which lies and shows itself in believing in Christ for salvation, in embracing the doctrines of the Gospel, and making a profession of them, which is called the profession of faith; all which, when right, comes from the Spirit of God.

Galatians 5:23

Ver. 23. **Meekness,**

.... Humility and lowliness of mind, of which Christ is an eminent example and pattern; and which the Holy Spirit from him transcribes into the heart of a regenerate person; and lies in having mean thoughts of himself, in walking humbly with God, acknowledging every favour, being thankful for every blessing, and depending on his grace, and in behaving with modesty and humility among men. The last of the fruits of the Spirit mentioned is

temperance,

or “continence”; and designs both chastity and sobriety, and particularly moderation in eating and drinking. It may be observed, that these fruits of the Spirit are opposed to the works of the flesh. So love is opposed to hatred; joy to emulations and envying; peace to variance, strife, and seditions; longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, and meekness, to wrath and murders; faith to idolatry, witchcraft, and heresies; and temperance to adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, drunkenness, and revellings.

Against such there is no law;

meaning, against such fruits, graces, and good things; these being perfectly agreeable to the law of God, which is holy, just, and good, and spiritual; and are so far from being forbidden by it, that they are highly

esteemed and approved of by it: or against persons that are possessed of such fruits; for these appear to be in the spirit, and to be led by the Spirit; and therefore are not under the law, and have nothing to fear from it, as a terrifying, accusing, cursing, and condemning law. The works of the flesh, and they that are of the flesh, are such that come under the notice and lash of the law; and not the fruits of the Spirit, and they that are after the Spirit, as such are who partake of his fruit.

Galatians 5:24

Ver. 24. **And they that are Christ’s,**

.... Not all as yet that are secretly so, who are chosen in him, and by him, are given by the Father to him in covenant, and whom he has purchased by his blood, and considers as his people, his sheep, and his children, though as yet they are not called by his grace; of these, as yet, what follows cannot be said, and therefore must mean such as are openly Christ’s, whom he has laid hold on as his own in the effectual calling, who have his Spirit as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, who have truly believed in Christ, and have given up themselves unto him.

Have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts:

by the flesh is meant, not the natural body to be macerated and afflicted with fastings, watchings, &c. but the corruption of nature, the old man and carnal heart. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “their own flesh”; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; their concern lying with their own, and not with the corruptions, affections, and lusts of others. By “the affections and lusts” are intended, not the natural affections and passions of the soul, and the desires of it; but its vile and inordinate affections, its corrupt inclinations, evil desires, and deceitful lusts; all which are “crucified” first “with Christ”, as the Arabic version reads; see Ro 6:6 and which are so abolished, done away, and destroyed, by the sacrifice of Christ, that the damning power of them over his people is entirely gone. And in consequence of this crucifixion of the body of sin, with Christ upon the cross, when he finished and made an end of it, sin, with its passions and lusts, is crucified by the Spirit of God in regeneration and sanctification; so that it loses its governing power, and has not the dominion it had before: not but that the flesh, or corrupt nature, with its evil affections, and carnal lusts, are still in being, and are alive; as a person fastened to a cross may be alive, though he cannot act and move as before, being under restraints, so the old man, though crucified, and under

the restraints of mighty grace, and cannot reign and govern as before, yet is alive, and acts, and operates, and oftentimes has great sway and influence; but whereas he is deprived of his reigning power, he is said to be crucified: and though this act is ascribed to them that are Christ's, yet not as done by them in their own strength, who are not able to grapple with one corruption, but as under the influence of the grace of Christ, and through the power of his Spirit; see Ro 8:13.

Galatians 5:25

Ver. 25. If we live in the Spirit,.... Or "by the Spirit", as all do that are spiritually alive. Sin has not only brought on men a corporeal death, and made them liable to an eternal one, but has also induced upon them a spiritual or moral death; they are dead in trespasses and sin, nor can they quicken themselves, nor can any creature give them life; not the ministers of the word, nor the angels in heaven, only the blessed Spirit is the spirit of life from Christ; who entering into them, frees them from the law of sin and death, and implants a principle of spiritual life in them, whereby they live a life of faith on Christ, of holiness from him, and communion with him: and this the apostle makes use of, as an argument with believers to walk after the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit: or "by the Spirit"; by his help and assistance, according to the rule of his word, and under his influence and direction as a guide, to which he had before advised in Ga 5:18.

Galatians 5:26

Ver. 26. **Let us not be desirous of vain glory,** Ambitious of being thought wiser, and richer, and more valuable than others; of having the preeminence in the management of all affairs, and of having honour, esteem, and popular applause from men: this may well be called vain glory, since it is only in outward things, as wisdom, riches, strength, and honour, and not in God the giver of them, and who can easily take them away; and therefore is but for a time, and is quickly gone, and lies only in the opinion and breath of men. Provoking one another; not to good works, which would be right, but to anger and wrath, which is contrary to Christian charity, or true love; which, as it is not easily provoked, so neither will it provoke others to evil things. The Syriac version renders it by *ܢܩܠܝܢ* "sighting", or "despising one another"; and the Arabic version, "insulting one another"; vices to which men, and even Christian brethren in the same communion, are too prone. Envyng one another; their

gifts and abilities, natural and spiritual; their rank and station in the world, or in the church. These were sins the Galatians very probably were subject to; and where they prevail, there is confusion, and every evil work, and are therefore to be watched and guarded against.

INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS VI

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to the exercise of various things, which greatly become professors of religion, such as meekness towards backsliders, love to the saints, modesty in themselves, and beneficence to others; exposes the hypocrisy and ambition of the false teachers, in order that the Galatians might beware of them, and not be ensnared by them; and gives an account of his own disposition, conduct, and sufferings, as a rule and example to them, and by which they might judge of the difference between him and the false apostles; and concludes the epistle with his apostolical salutation and benediction. Having mentioned the fruits of the spirit in the preceding chapter, he singles out some of them, and a little enlarges upon them; and begins with meekness, as that should be used by spiritual men to fallen believers, which he persuades to, not only because they are brethren, and but men, and have been overtaken in sin unawares; but because, though they themselves are spiritual, yet should consider they are liable to be tempted, Ga 6:1. And next he advises to show their love to one another, by bearing each other's burdens, which he enforces by this argument, it being a fulfilling the law of Christ, Ga 6:2. And whereas pride and haughtiness lie in the way of such a deportment, he dissuades from a vain opinion of a man's self, that being no other than self-deception, Ga 6:3, and observes, that a man will have the best view of himself and see what occasion he has for glorying, when he considers himself simply and nakedly, and not in comparison with others, Ga 6:4, and there is good reason why he should do so, seeing every man must give an account of his own actions, be judged according to them, and receive his reward or punishment, Ga 6:5. Hence the apostle passes to liberality and beneficence, and first to teachers of the word, to whom such as are taught by them should communicate, and that in good things, and in all good things, Ga 6:6. The arguments used to enforce this exhortation are, that to do otherwise is a deception of themselves, and is a mocking of God; and besides, they shall be treated according to their actions, the use or abuse of what God has given them, signified by a proverbial expression, what a man sows, that shall

he reap, Ga 6:7, which is enlarged upon and illustrated, by observing, that he that spends his substance merely on himself, and on carnal pleasures, and to indulge the flesh, the issue of things to him will be ruin, temporal and eternal; but he that lays out his substance on spiritual things, and for spiritual purposes, the issue will be life everlasting, Ga 6:8. Wherefore the apostle renews the exhortation to be bountiful without weariness, seeing there is a reaping time coming, Ga 6:9, and then points out the persons in general to whom good is to be done as opportunity offers, even all men, but especially such as are believers in Christ, are of his family, and particularly stewards there, as ministers of the Gospel are, Ga 6:10. And thus the apostle, having finished what he chiefly intended in this epistle, observes to the Galatians the great regard he had to them, shown in writing to them so long a letter, and that with his own hand, Ga 6:11. And as his chief view was to detect the false apostles, he cannot conclude without taking some further notice of them, which he does by exposing their hypocrisy and ambition; they only made a show of religion outwardly, and obliged others to do that, which they did not choose themselves, namely, to be circumcised; and their ends in all this were, that they might be free from persecution, and have matter of glorying in the proselytes they made, Ga 6:12, but the apostle was of a quite different temper and disposition; so far was he from glorying in his own flesh, or others, that his determination was to glory only in Christ, and in his cross, and that for this reason, because the world thereby was crucified to him, and he unto the world, Ga 6:14, as also, because circumcision, which the false teachers obliged to, and gloried in, and likewise uncircumcision, were of no avail in religious, spiritual, and eternal affairs, but a new creature, Ga 6:15, and this is what everyone ought to attend unto as the rule of his walk and conduct, since upon such shall be mercy and peace, as upon the Israel of God, Ga 6:16. And whereas the false apostles boasted of the flesh, and circumcision in it, the apostle opposes thereunto the marks of his sufferings for Christ, which he bore in his body; and therefore with great gravity and authority charges, that no man should give him any further trouble about what had been the subject matter of this epistle, Ga 6:17, and closes it with his usual salutation, expressing his affection for the Galatians, as his brethren, wishing the best of blessings for them, the grace of Christ, and that this might be in their hearts, and with their spirits, Ga 6:18.

GALATIANS CHAPTER VI

[1] Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

[2] Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

[3] For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

[4] But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

[5] For every man shall bear his own burden.

[6] Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

[Be] not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

[8] For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

[9] And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

[10] As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

[11] Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

[12] As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

[13] For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

[14] But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

[15] For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

[16] And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

[17] From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

[18] Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. (To the Galatians written from Rome.)

JOHN GILL'S COMMENTARY CHAPTER VI

Galatians 6:1

Ver. 1. **Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault,** Or "be taken before" in one; not, as Grotius thinks,

before this epistle should come to them, which is a very jejune and empty sense of the words; nor before the conversion of the man, because sins before conversion do not come under the notice and cognizance of a church, or are liable to its reproofs and censures; but before the man is aware, through negligence and imprudence, for want of caution and circumspection, and so is carried away, either through the treachery of his own heart, and the power of corruption; or through the temptations of Satan, who goes about, and comes on the back of them, lays snares for them, and attacks them unawares, and takes all advantages of them; or by the ill examples of others, whereby they are drawn aside, and into sin. The apostle has no particular respect by a "fault" to schisms in the church, or to any errors or heresies in doctrine, though the restoration of such in meekness should be endeavoured; but rather to immorality in life and conversation, and indeed to any of the works of the flesh mentioned in the preceding chapter; and especially he means any "fall" of professors, as the word used signifies, into sin, through inadvertency and want of care and watchfulness, in distinction from a wilful, obstinate, and continued course of sinning; and intends not any man in the world, for those that are without, churches and members of churches have nothing to do with in a church way; but any man that is a brother, a church member, that stands in such a relation to them, when he falls into sin, is to be taken notice of by them. And so the Syriac version reads, "any one of you"; as does one of Stephens's copies.

Ye that are spiritual;

meaning not such who had greater spiritual gifts than others, their ministers, pastors, and ecclesiastical governors, though these may be so called; and to them it belongs to reprove and rebuke, recover and restore backsliders, which they should do in gentleness and meekness; but the apostle here addresses the brethren in general, the several members of the church, even all but those that were fallen: nor does he mean such as have more spiritual knowledge than others, in opposition to babes; nor regenerate persons, and such as had the Spirit of God, in distinction from carnal men; but such as live and walk in the Spirit, and are strong, and stand by the power and grace of the Spirit of God, as opposed to the weak, and who were fallen through the prevalency of the flesh, and force of temptation; whose duty it is, and on whom it lies, to

restore such an one, that is overtaken and fallen.

The allusion is to the setting of bones that are broken, or out of joint, which is done with great care

and tenderness. Professors fallen into sin are like broken and dislocated bones; they are out of their place, and lose both their comfort and usefulness, and are to be restored by gently telling them of their faults, and mildly reproofing them for them; and when sensible of them, and troubled for them, by speaking comfortably to them, and by bringing them again, and resettling them in their former place in the church, and restoring them to their former usefulness and good conduct: and which is to be done

in the spirit of meekness:

in the exercise of that grace which is a gift and fruit of the Spirit of God; or with a meek and humble spirit, not bearing hard upon them, and treating them in a supercilious and haughty manner, upbraiding them with their faults, aggravating them, and using them roughly, and with sharpness, which in some cases is necessary, but not in this:

considering thyself,

lest thou also be tempted: a spiritual man should consider himself as in the body, and as carrying about with him a body of sin, a corrupt and treacherous heart, that is full of deceitful lusts, by which he may be tempted also, and drawn away and enticed; and as being liable to the temptations of Satan, and of being overcome by; them, against which he should watch and pray; and should think with himself what he would choose, and should desire to be done to him in such a case, and do the like to others that are in it. This is a reason enforcing the exhortation; and indeed almost every word in the text carries an argument engaging to it. The relation the saints stand in to one another, as "brethren", should excite them to seek each other's welfare, and to restore any that are fallen, and to abstain from all roughness and severity. The persons addressed are "spiritual", and therefore should behave as such as have the fruits of the Spirit, and, among the rest that of meekness; and, since they are strong, should help the weak, and raise up the fallen: the persons recommended to them, as the objects of their pity, care, and concern, are not such who have given up themselves to sin, but are circumvented by it, and "overtaken" in it, suddenly, and at unawares. And besides, are men, frail sinful men, liable to sin, encompassed with infirmities, and exposed to snares and temptations, which are common to human nature, and therefore should be used gently and tenderly: The apostle having given an enumeration in the foregoing chapter, of the works of the flesh, and fruits of the Spirit, directs such as are in the exercise of the latter, how to behave towards those that fall into the commission of

any of the former, which may be expected, since there is flesh as well as spirit in the best.

Galatians 6:2

Ver. 2. **Bear ye one another's burdens,**

.... Which may be understood either of sins, which are heavy burdens to sensible sinners, to all that are partakers of the grace of God; Christ is only able to bear these burdens, so as to remove them and take them away, which he has done by his blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction; saints bear one another's, not by making satisfaction for them, which they are not able to do, nor by conniving at them, and suffering them upon them, which they should not do, but by gently reproofing them, by comforting them when overpressed with guilt, by sympathizing with them in their sorrow, by praying to God for to manifest his pardoning grace to them, and by forgiving them themselves, so far as they are faults committed against them: or else the frailties and infirmities of weak saints, which are troublesome, and apt to make uneasy, are meant; and which are to be bore by the strong, by making themselves easy with them, and by accommodating themselves to their weakness, and by abridging themselves of some liberties, which otherwise might be lawfully taken by them; or afflictions may be designed, which are grievous to the flesh, and are bore by others, when they administer help and relief under them, whether in a temporal or spiritual way; and when they condole them, and sympathize with them, bear a part with them, and make others' griefs and sorrows their own:

and so fulfil the law of Christ;

which is the law of love to one another, Joh 13:34 in opposition to the law of Moses, the judaizing Galatians were so fond of, and by which Christ's disciples may be distinguished from those of Moses, or any others. This is a law or doctrine which Christ has clearly taught, and recovered from the false glosses of the Pharisees; it is his new commandment, which he has strengthened and enforced by his own example in dying for his people, and which he, by his Spirit, inscribes upon their hearts. The Jews speak of the law of the Messiah as preferable to any other.

"The law (they say)¹⁰⁵ which a man learns in this world is vanity, in comparison of *xyvm lv wtrwt* "the law of the Messiah", or Christ;"

¹⁰⁵ Midrash Kohelet, fol. 83. 1.

by "fulfilling", it is meant, doing it, acting in obedience to it, and not a perfect fulfilling it, which cannot be done by sinful creatures.

Galatians 6:3

Ver. 3. **For if a man think himself to be something**

.... Of himself; to have anything of himself, to do anything of himself, and of himself to attain to life and salvation:

when he is nothing: of himself;

not even as a creature, but owes his being and preservation, and all the mercies of life, to another, even to God; has no grace nor gifts of himself, but what he has received, and can do no good thing, not think a good thought, or perform a good action, of himself, and much less of himself procure eternal life and salvation:

he deceiveth himself:

and will find himself sadly mistaken, and wretchedly disappointed another day; or whoever thinks himself to be some famous and excellent person, to be something more, and better than others, of a more excellent nature, and of greater abilities, that he is free from sin, or at least holier than others, and not liable to fall as others, whom he looks upon with disdain and contempt, wanting that charity which the law, and new commandment of Christ, requires, when he is nothing but sin and vanity, he is destitute of the grace of God, he deceives himself and the truth is not in him. This the apostle says to depress pride, and a swelling conceit of themselves, and all uncharitable, rough, and severe usages of others. A saying like this the Jews have¹⁰⁶;

"whoever he is that is something, or thinks in himself that he is Mwlk, "something", it would be better for him if he had never been created."

Galatians 6:4

Ver. 4. **But let every man prove his own work,**

.... Not concern himself about the actions and works of others; let him review his own heart and actions; let him examine, try, and prove his whole conduct in life by the rule of God's word, when he will find enough at home, without bearing hard upon, and censuring others:

and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone,

and not in another; which is either ironically said, he will then see what reason he has to rejoice and glory in his own works, and vaunt over others, and to boast of his performances, and despise others; so far from

¹⁰⁶ Midrash Kohelet, fol. 79. 1.

it, that he will have reason to be ashamed of himself, and to own and acknowledge his unworthiness and unprofitableness: or if, upon such a review, examination, and probation of his works, it shall appear that he has had his conversation in the world, by the grace of God, in simplicity and godly sincerity, this testimony of his conscience will be his rejoicing; see 2Co 1:12. He may rejoice “in himself”, in his own works, as the fruits of grace, but not as the effects of his own power and strength; and may glory and boast of them before men, in vindication of his cause and character, and as evidences of the truth of grace, but not before God, as if they were the matter of his justification and acceptance:

and not in another;

that is fallen into sin; making use of his sins and faults to set off himself, and to increase his own praise and condemnation; rejoicing in this, that he is better than others, and is not, as the Pharisee said, as other men are, as wicked as they, or has not fallen into such sins as others have done. He will have occasion to take such a method as this, if his conversation will bear the test; he will have rejoicing in the testimony of his own conscience, and will have no need to compare himself with others; his glorying will be on account of his own actions, and not through a comparison of other men's. This no ways contradicts a man's glorying in God, and rejoicing in Christ Jesus alone, in the business of salvation. It only regards a man's glorying before men, in a modest and humble manner, of what he is enabled to do, by the grace of God, without fetching in the characters of other men that are wicked, or have fallen, to illustrate his own.

Galatians 6:5

Ver. 5. **For every man shall bear his own burden.**

That is, either do his own work, which God has allotted him to do, whether in a more public or private station of life; which, because it is generally troublesome to the flesh, is called a “burden”, and “his own”, being peculiar to himself, and in which no other is concerned; and which he should patiently bear, cheerfully attend to, and constantly and faithfully perform while in this world: or he shall give an account of his own actions, and not another's, to God, in the other world; he shall be judged according to his own works, what they are in themselves, and not by a comparison of other men's, who have been more wicked than he; which will be no rule of judgment with God, nor of any advantage to man. Every wicked man will bear his own burden; that is, the punishment of his own sins, and not another's; so the

judgments of God, inflicted on men in this world, are often called מִשָּׂא, “a burden”; see Isa 13:1 and so may the punishment of the wicked in another world, which will be grievous and intolerable. The saints will be exempt from bearing this burden, because Christ has bore it for them, even all their sins, and all the punishment due unto them; but another burden, if it may be so called, even an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, shall be bore by them; and every man shall receive his own reward, and not another's; and that according to his own works and labour, and not another's; not indeed for his works, but according to them, the nature of them, according to the grace of God, from whence his works spring, and by which they are performed. This the apostle says to take off men from dwelling upon, and censuring the actions of others, and from making use of them to set off their own, and buoy themselves up with vain hopes, because they are better than others; and also to engage them to attend strictly to their own actions, and consider them simply and absolutely as in themselves, and not as compared with other men's, since they will be accountable for their own actions, and not other men's; and will be judged according to their own works, and not in a comparative view to others

Galatians 6:6

Ver. 6. **Let him that is taught in the word,**

.... Instructed in the knowledge of the word, either of the essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, of his person, office, and grace; or rather of the written word, particularly the Gospel, which is sometimes called the word, without any additional epithet, which distinguishes it, and directs to the sense of it; and sometimes with such, as the words of truth, the word of faith, the word of righteousness, the word of reconciliation, and the word of this salvation, so called from the nature, use, and subject matter of it. He that is taught in this, is, according to the original word used here, a “catechumen”; and which designs not one that is just beginning to learn the first principles of the oracles of God, but anyone that is instructed in it, as this word is rendered in Ro 2:18 whether more or less, or whether internally or externally: one that is internally taught in and by the word, is one that has been taught to know himself, and his lost state by nature; to know Christ, and salvation by him; to know the truths of the Gospel, and to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly. It may include everyone that is only outwardly taught, that is but an external hearer; and so the Syriac version renders the clause,

רִשְׁמֵ מִלְּהָא, “he that hears the word”: of which there are many sorts, and on whom it is an incumbent duty to

communicate to him that teacheth;

who is commissioned, and qualified and sent forth by Christ, and whose office in the church is to teach the word, to preach the Gospel, to instruct men in the truths of it, and teach them their duty also to God and men, such are to be communicated to; that is, such as are under their instructions ought to impart of their worldly substance to them, for their honourable and comfortable support and maintenance; for since they spend their time, and make use of their talents, gifts, and abilities, for their instruction in spiritual things, it is but reasonable, and no such great matter, that they partake of their carnal things; and especially since it is the will and ordinance of Christ, that they that preach the Gospel should live of it. The apostle adds,

in all good things;

which may be either connected with the word “teacheth”, and so be descriptive of the teacher, as the Arabic version reads, “him that teacheth all his good things”; good doctrines, excellent truths, the wholesome words of Christ, which he is intrusted with, has a knowledge and experience of; and who freely and faithfully imparts them, and conceals and keeps back nothing, but declares the whole counsel of God, all that he knows, and that is good and profitable; and carries in it a very strong argument why he should be communicated to: or else with the word “communicate”; and the sense either be, let him be a partaker of, and join with him in everything he says or does that is good, but not in anything that is evil, which is a sense some give into; or rather let him impart of his temporal good things unto him: temporal things are good as they are of God, and in themselves, and when rightly used answer good purposes; all a man's good things are not to be communicated, only a part, according to his ability, and in proportion to others; and yet the communication should be large and liberal, sufficient to support the teacher in an honourable manner, and to supply him with all the necessaries of life, that his mind may be free from secular cares, and he be at leisure to attend to the instructing of others.

Galatians 6:7

Ver. 7. **Be not deceived,**

.... By false teachers, who, in order to engross all to themselves, dissuaded the Galatians from communicating to their honourable pastors, and faithful ministers of the word; or by themselves, who being of

a tenacious and covetous disposition, devised various things to excuse them from performing this their duty to the preachers of the Gospel; as that they had families of their own to maintain, that their circumstances were such that they could give little or nothing this way, and the others, who were of better abilities in life, ought to bear this charge; and with such like things endeavoured to satisfy their consciences in the neglect of their duty: but this was all self-deception, for

God is not mocked;

nor will he be; men may deceive themselves, and others, with such excuses and false appearances, yet they cannot deceive God, who knows their hearts as well as their worldly substance, and that the omission of their duty arises not from want of ability, but from a covetous temper; and who looks upon withholding from his ministers that which is due unto them as mocking of him, and which he will not suffer with impunity:

for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;

as to kind, quality, and quantity, generally speaking; if he sows wheat he reaps wheat, if he sows barley he reaps barley; no man can expect to reap another sort than what he sows; and if it is good seed he may hope for a good crop; and if he sows bountifully, he shall reap bountifully; but if he sows sparingly, he shall reap sparingly; and if he sows nothing, he can never reap anything. This is a proverbial expression, and may be applied to all actions, good and bad, and the reward and punishment of them, and particularly to acts of beneficence, and the enjoying of the fruits thereof; See Gill on “2Co 9:6”.

Galatians 6:8

Ver. 8. **For he that soweth to his flesh,**

.... Not that taking due care of a man's body, seeking the preservation of its health, providing proper food and raiment for himself, and all necessaries for the good and support of his family, is to be called sowing to his flesh, nor is he to be called a carnal sower; but he is such an one that pampers his flesh, gratifies and indulges the lusts of it, who minds the things of the flesh, lives after it, and does the works of it, who spends his substance in a luxurious way upon himself and family; or whose whole bent, and study, and employment, is to increase his worldly riches, to aggrandize himself and posterity, to the neglect of his own soul, the interest of religion, the poor of the church, and ministers of the Gospel:

shall of the flesh reap corruption;

shall by such carnal methods procure for himself, in

this world, nothing but what is corruptible, as silver and gold be, and such treasure as moth and rust corrupt; such substance as will not endure, but is perishing, and may be by one providence or another taken from him; so that all his care in sowing comes to nothing, and is of no advantage to himself, nor to his posterity; see Hag 1:4, and shall fall into the pit of corruption, and be punished with everlasting destruction, and die the second death in the world to come.

But he that soweth to the Spirit;

not his own, but the Spirit of God; or that soweth spiritual things, that minds and savours the things of the Spirit, lives in the Spirit, and walks in the Spirit; that lays out his worldly substance in promoting spiritual things, in encouraging the spiritual ministers of the word, in supporting the interest of spiritual religion, in relieving the poor of Christ's churches, in contributing to the spread of the Gospel, and the administration of the word and ordinances in other places, as well as where he is more immediately concerned:

shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting;

in the use of such spiritual means, though not as meritorious, or as causes, he shall attain to, and enjoy eternal happiness in the other world; or of, and by the Spirit of God, by whose grace and strength he sows, and does all the good things he does, by and of him sanctifying him, and making him meet for it, and not of himself, or any works of righteousness done by him, shall he inherit eternal life; which is the pure gift of God through Jesus Christ, and bestowed as a reward of his own grace.

Galatians 6:9

Ver. 9. **And let us not be weary in well doing,**

.... This may be understood of well doing, or doing good works in general, of every sort; which are such as are done according to the will of God, from a principle of love to him, in faith, and in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God: or else acts of beneficence to Christ's ministers and poor in particular; which are agreeable to the mind of God, and wellpleasing in his sight: and in doing which men should not be weary; nor are they, when their spiritual strength is renewed, and grace is in exercise, though they may meet with many things which tend to discourage and make them weary; such as change in their own circumstances, losses in the world, the multitude of objects, the ungratefulness of some, and unworthiness of others:

for in due time we shall reap;

either in this world, sooner or later; in proper time, in God's own time, by enjoying an increase of the fruits of righteousness; for the seed sown shall spring up again; the bread that is cast on the waters will be found after many days; and such as honour the Lord with their substance shall be blessed with plenty of temporal good things, either they or theirs: or else in the other world, or at the end of this; which will be the harvest time, the reaping time, the time of enjoying eternal life:

if we faint not;

but continue to the end, persevere constantly in doing acts of beneficence, and patiently wait, as the husbandman does, for the precious fruits of the earth; for there must be a distance of time between sowing and reaping; men must not expect to reap as soon as they sow; and therefore should not be weary of sowing, nor impatient in waiting, though they do not see as yet the appearance of the fruits thereof; for in their season they will be seen and enjoyed.

Galatians 6:10

Ver. 10. **As we have therefore opportunity,**

.... Or "ability", so the phrase is sometimes used¹⁰⁷; as occasion requires, objects offer, as there is ability of well doing, and that continues; while the time of life lasts, which is the time for sowing, or doing good works:

let us do good unto all men;

not only to our relations, friends, and acquaintance, but to all men; to them that are strangers to us, of whatsoever nation, Jew or Gentile; and of whatsoever religion or sect, yea, even to our very enemies:

especially unto them who are of the household of faith:

the children of God, that belong to his family, are true believers in Christ, hold the doctrine of faith, make a profession of it, and keep it fast; these are more especially to be the objects of Christian beneficence and liberality. The apostle may have sense reference to a practice among the Jews, who took a particular care of the children of good men that were poor;

"there were two chambers in the temple, the one was called the chamber of secrets, and the other the chamber of vessels: into the chamber of secrets, religious men used to put privately, whereby were privately maintained the poor בני טובים, "of the children of good men"¹⁰⁸."

¹⁰⁷ See Hammond on. Phil. iv. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 6.

The Targumist on Jer 5:3 has a phrase much like to this applied to God, paraphrasing the passage thus; is it not, O Lord, revealed before thee, לְאוֹשְׁבֵי לְבַדֵי הַיְמִנּוּתָא, "to do good to the servants of faith?"

Galatians 6:11

Ver. 11. **Ye see how large a letter,**

.... Whether it be read as imperative, "see ye", observe, take notice; or as indicative, "ye see", ye do see, or you may see with your own eyes, it is of no great consequence: "how large a letter", or "with what letters"; which some understand of the largeness of the characters he wrote in; others of the deformity of them, he not writing a good hand, being an Hebrew, and not used to writing Greek; others of the grand and sublime matter which it contained; though neither of these seem to be the apostle's meaning; but he intends the length of the epistle, the prolixity of his writing; and which he mentions, as an instance and expression of his love to them, care of them, and concern for them: inasmuch as he took so much pains to write so long a letter to them, in order to set things right in their view, and recover them from error: not but that he had sent as long, or longer letters to other churches, as to the Romans, the Corinthians, and Hebrews: but then it is to be observed what follows,

I have written unto you with my own hand.

The epistle to the Romans was written by Tertius, though dictated by the apostle, Ro 16:22 as very likely the others were by Timothy, or some other amanuensis. The apostle only put his name, and wrote his salutation, which was his token, in all his epistles, of the truth and genuineness of them; 2Th 3:17, but this was not only dictated by him, but wrote with his hand, which very probably the Galatians knew; and since it was not usual for him to do so, it was the greater proof of his affection for them; that amidst so much work, and such labours as he was employed in, he should sit down and write so long an epistle to them with his own hand, in order to expose the errors of the false teachers, and reclaim them.

Galatians 6:12

Ver. 12. **As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh,**

.... By whom are meant the false apostles, who are here described, and their views, aims, and ends, opened and exposed. These were very desirous to carry a good face of things outwardly, of appearing outwardly

righteous before men, and to be accounted so by them; and therefore did all they to be seen of them, and gain applause from them. They were such, as the Syriac version renders the words, as desired דְּנִשְׁתַּבְּחוּ "to glory in the flesh"; their carnal descent and privileges, in their being Hebrews, the seed of Abraham, of the stock of Israel; and in the circumcision of their flesh; or in their external gifts, their natural parts, acquired abilities, learning, eloquence, and the like: moreover, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, "they were willing to please in the flesh": to please carnal men, Israel after the flesh, in carnal and fleshly things; they sought not to please God or Christ, but men, and so were not the servants of either. They were desirous, as the Arabic version renders the words, "that honour should be done them in" "the flesh"; they sought external glory from men, and to be outwardly and publicly honoured by them; and all their religion was a mere outward show, a piece of pageantry; which lay in the observation of carnal ordinances, such as respected meats and drinks, circumcision in the flesh, and other carnal commandments:

they constrain you to be circumcised;

not by using any outward force and violence; but either by their example, which had great influence, as that has both with respect to the embracing of evil principles, and giving in to bad practices: or by their doctrine; the arguments they made use of to persuade them to it, being formed and managed with great art and subtlety, wrought strongly upon them: or rather by overawing them, with threatenings of hell and damnation; affirming, that unless they were circumcised, they could not be saved: and their end was,

only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ,

or "by the cross of Christ"; meaning either the manner in which persecution might be suffered, as by being reproached, ill used, and suffering death as Christ did; or by bearing the cross of affliction and tribulation Christ has appointed for, and calls his followers to; or else the object for which it is endured, the preaching of the cross, or the Gospel of salvation by a crucified Christ; for this doctrine, and the preaching and professing of it, and living a life answerable to it, always bring persecution with them: and that persecution, which is more especially here regarded, was what came from the Jews, who in general were greatly offended at the preaching of a crucified Christ; and particularly from the professing part among them, who though they believed in Christ, and were not displeased at preaching in his name; yet were greatly affronted at, and highly

resented, and as much as in them lay, by reproaches and hard censures, and the like, persecuted those who opposed circumcision, and the ceremonies of the law; and to avoid the ill will, contempt, and persecution of these, the false teachers preached up circumcision, and obliged their people to submit to it.

Galatians 6:13

Ver. 13. **But neither they themselves that are circumcised,**

.... That is, the pleaders for, and preachers of circumcision, whether they themselves were actually circumcised, or not; it means those that were of the circumcision, on that side of the question, whether heartily or not:

keep the law;

of circumcision, as persons may preach up that, which they themselves do not practise; as did the Pharisees, the predecessors of these men; or if they did keep the law, and submit to it, yet this might be done, not out of regard unto it, and zeal for it, but for some other end; as Simon Magus submitted to baptism, and others preached Christ of envy and contention, and not of good will; or if they did do it in obedience to the law, yet this was not keeping the whole law, which circumcision obliged to; and which, unless they did so keep it, would signify nothing; and this no man is capable of keeping perfectly, and consequently no righteousness, life, and salvation, can be had hereby: besides, though these men were so zealous for the lighter matters of the law, the rites and ceremonies of it, as circumcision, &c. they disregarded the weightier and more material parts of it, as judgment, mercy, and faith; these they kept not, nor attended to: and many of them lived very dissolute lives and conversations, at least secretly, if not openly; which abundantly proved that they were far from keeping the law; and that their pleading for it, and submitting to some of the rituals of it, were not out of pure love and strict regard to it, but for some other end:

but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh;

that is, in the circumcision of it; or, as the Ethiopic version, “in your bodies”. Their view in bringing persons to submit to circumcision was, that they might have occasion to glory among the Jews, and boast to them of the numbers of proselytes they brought, and of the service they did to Judaism, and so increase their fame and glory among them.

Galatians 6:14

Ver. 14. **But God forbid that I should glory,**

.... The apostle, on the contrary, expresses his aversion to glorying in anything these men did; not in his outward carnal privileges, as a Jew; nor in his moral, civil, and legal righteousness; nor in his gifts and attainments; nor in his labours and success, as of himself; nor in the flesh of others, or in any outward corporeal subjection to any ordinance, legal or evangelical; his glorying and rejoicing were rather in the spirituality, the faith, hope, love, patience, order, and steadfastness of the saints, than in anything in the flesh, either his own or others: and indeed he chose not to glory in any thing,

save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;

meaning either the infirmities, reproaches, tribulations, and persecutions, which he endured for the sake of Christ, and the preaching of his Gospel; or the Gospel, the doctrine of the cross of Christ, and salvation by it: or rather a crucified Christ himself, whom he preached; though counted foolishness by some, and was a stumbling to others: he gloried in him, and determined to know, and make known, none but him, in the business of salvation; he gloried in him as crucified, and in his cross; not in the wood of the cross, but in the effects of his crucifixion; in the peace, pardon, righteousness, life, salvation, and eternal glory, which come through the death of the cross; he gloried in Christ as his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption:

by whom the world is crucified to me:

so that he feared not the worst men, and things in it, any more than he would one that was fastened to a cross, or dead; since Christ, by his crucifixion and death, had overcome the world, the prince of it, the men and malice of it, the sin that was in it, and had made him more than a conqueror also; his faith in a crucified Christ overcame the world likewise; so that he looked upon it as the Israelites saw the Egyptians, dead on the sea shore; nor did he affect and love, but trampled upon and despised, as crucified persons generally are, those things in it which are the most alluring to the flesh, the lusts of it; the doctrine of grace, of a crucified Christ, taught him to deny the riches, honours, pleasures, profits, and applause of the world; which were to him as dross, in comparison of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord: the ceremonial law also, the elements of the world, were dead unto him, being nailed to the cross of Christ, to be of no further use and service unto men:

and I unto the world;

that is, am crucified to the world, as the Syriac and

Arabic versions express it; that is, he was despised by the world for the sake of a crucified Christ, as the world was by him, in comparison of him; the world had no affection for him, as he had none for the world; and as the ceremonial law was dead to him, so he was dead to that, through the body of Christ, and had nothing to do with these beggarly elements, nor they with him, which sense is confirmed by the following words.

Galatians 6:15

Ver. 15. **For in Christ Jesus,**

.... These words are omitted in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; See Gill on “Ga 5:6”, See Gill on “1Co 7:19”, they contain a reason why the apostle gloried in a crucified Christ, and looked upon the world as dead to him, and he to that, in every state of it; particularly as it may design “the worldly sanctuary” of the Jews, and all the rites and ceremonies appertaining to it; and among the rest

circumcision, which availeth not anything;

neither as a command, type, or privilege; or in the business of salvation, being abolished by Christ:

nor uncircumcision;

being now no bar to the Gospel, Gospel ordinances, or a Gospel church state; or to any of the blessings of the everlasting covenant, which come upon the uncircumcision, as well as the circumcision. But to apply these words to baptism and non-baptism is a wretched perversion, and making a very ill use of them, whereby the minds of men are worked up to an indifference to a Christian institution; for though baptism is of no avail in the business of salvation, yet it cannot be said of it, as of circumcision, that it avails not anything as a command; for it is a standing ordinance of Christ; or as an emblem and sign, for it is significative of the death and burial, and resurrection of Christ; or as a privilege, for it is of use to lead the faith of God’s people to his blood and righteousness for pardon and justification; for he that believes, and is baptized, shall be saved; and it is necessary to church communion: and, on the other hand, it cannot be said that non-baptism avails not; it is a bar to church fellowship; and a neglect of baptism in those who are the proper subjects of it, is resented by Christ, and is a rejecting of the counsel of God against themselves; which was the case of the Pharisees, in the time of John the Baptist:

but a new creature.

The phrase is Rabbinical; See Gill on “2Co 5:17” by which is meant, not a new creation of a man, as a man, of the members of his body, or of the faculties of his soul;

nor of an external reformation, or a walking in newness of life, which is the fruit and effect of this new creation work; but an internal principle of grace, a good work of God begun in the soul, called the hidden man of the heart, the new man, Christ formed in us, of which faith that works by love is a part: this is called a “creature”, and so not of man, but God; for none can create but himself; and in which work man is purely passive, as the heavens and the earth were in their creation: it is “but” a creature, and therefore needs divine support, fresh strength from God, and frequent supplies of grace to maintain and preserve it; nor is it to be trusted in, but the grace which is in Christ, from whence it comes, and by which it is secured. This is a “new” creature, in opposition to the old man; and because it is a principle in man, which never was there before; it consists of a new heart and spirit, of new eyes, ears, hands, and feet, expressive of new principles and actions, of new light, life, love, desires, joys, comforts, and duties: now this is of avail; it is a branch of the new covenant of grace, which God has therein promised to bestow on his people; it is an evidence of interest in Christ, the new and living way to the Father, and eternal life; such are newborn babes, regenerated persons, and have a right and meetness for the kingdom of God; shall possess the new Jerusalem, shall dwell in the new heavens and new earth; they are called by the Lord’s new name, the adopted children of God; and have a new song put into their mouths, which none but redeemed and newborn souls can sing; and shall drink the new wine of endless joys and everlasting pleasures with Christ, in his Father’s kingdom. These words are said to be taken out of the Apocalypse of Moses, a spurious book, but without any foundation.

Galatians 6:16

Ver. 16. **And as many as walk according to this rule,**

.... Or canon; meaning not the canon of the Scriptures in general, which is the perfect rule, and only standard of faith and practice; according to which we are to walk, believe, and act; but either the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, the subject of this epistle, the truth the apostle had been explaining, vindicating, and confirming; and which to depart from, is going out of the way of truth; and an abiding by it, is walking in it; and is a good rule and standard, by which to distinguish between truth and error; for whatever is contrary to that article of faith cannot be true: or else the rule delivered in the preceding verse, declaring circumcision and uncircumcision to be of no avail in

salvation, but a new creature; and to walk according to this rule, is to renounce all trust in, and dependence upon any outward things; to believe alone in Christ, for righteousness and life; to live by faith upon him, and to walk in newness of life, under the influences of his Spirit and grace:

peace be on them, and mercy.

This is the apostle's godly wish, unfeigned desire, and hearty prayer for all such persons, be they who they will; Jews or Gentiles, circumcised or uncircumcised: by peace he means, a view of their peace with God, made by the blood of Christ; peace in their own consciences, which passes all understanding, and arises from a comfortable sense of justification by the righteousness of Christ, of pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; and which is enjoyed in a way of believing; and also peace with one another, among themselves as brethren, which is a very desirable blessing: in short, it includes all prosperity and happiness, inward and outward, temporal, spiritual, and eternal: and by "mercy", he designs the love and grace of God, to sinful miserable creatures in themselves, which is the spring and fountain of all peace and prosperity; and which is displayed in the covenant of grace, and all the blessings of it; in the mission and incarnation of Christ, and redemption by him; in regeneration, forgiveness of sin, and complete salvation; and intends a fresh discovery, manifestation, and application of the mercy of God to his children; who often stand in need thereof, being distressed with the guilt of sin, or are under desertions or afflictive providences, at which time to have mercy showed them, is exceeding suitable and agreeable: when the apostle wishes these to be "on" them, it signifies that these blessings come from above, as every good gift does; that they descend as a cloud, and rest upon them, and abide with them, refreshing, comforting, and protecting them: he adds,

and upon the Israel of God;

which is a further description of the persons, for whom he prays for these blessings; and is not to be understood by way of distinction from them, but as an amplification of their character; and as pointing out the Israel, by way of emphasis, the Israel, or Israelites indeed, the spiritual Israel, as distinct from Israel according to the flesh; see 1Co 10:18. The "Israel of God", or as the Arabic version reads it, "Israel the propriety of God"; which he has a right unto, and a claim upon; who are chosen by him, Israel his elect; who are redeemed by him, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; who are called by his grace, and are

styled Israel his called; who are justified in his Son, and by his righteousness; and for whose sake he is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give them repentance and remission of sin; and who are, or will be saved by him, with an everlasting salvation; and is a name that includes all God's elect, whether Jews or Gentiles: though it may have a particular respect to such of the Israelites, or Jews, God had foreknown and reserved for himself; and who believed in Christ, and walked as new creatures, without confidence in the flesh. The Jews themselves own, that strangers, or proselytes, shall be called by the name of Israel; so they ¹⁰⁹ explain Isa 44:5, latter part.

Galatians 6:17

Ver. 17. **From henceforth let no man trouble me,**

.... Having so clearly stated and explained the doctrine of justification, and so largely proved that it is not by works, but by faith, and that circumcision and other rituals of the ceremonial law were not necessary to it, he desires, nay, in an authoritative way he requires, that they give him no further trouble on that head; signifying, that he expected they would be satisfied with what he had wrote, and abide by the truth and obey it, as they had formerly done; that he should hear no more objections from them, or complaints of them: nor need they further inquire his sense of these things; by this they would fully know his faith and practice; as indeed they might also by his suffering persecutions on the account of his faith, and his preaching the Gospel of Christ, and particularly this part of it:

for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;

by which he means, not the marks in Christ's hands, feet, and side; but the reproachful characters the apostle was stigmatized with; or the real scars in his body, made by beating, scourging, and stoning of him; or his sufferings and persecutions in general, which he endured for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; see 2Co 11:23. The allusion is either to servants and soldiers, who, when taken into service, used to have some particular mark put upon them, that they might be known to be such an one's servant, or soldier ¹¹⁰; as the Hebrew servant, who was willing to serve his master, had his ear bored through with an awl, Ex 21:6 so the apostle was known to be a firm and faithful servant, and a good soldier of Christ, by the reproaches and afflictions which he underwent for his sake; or else to those marks which, by way of reproach and punishment, were made upon fugitive servants, or soldiers, that deserted; as the sufferings of the apostle

¹⁰⁹ Jarchi & Abarbanel in Isa. xlv. 5.

¹¹⁰ Vid. Lydium de re militare, l. 1. c.

were designed as reproaches to him, and punishments of him, for preaching the Gospel of Christ; but these he gloried in, and bore and carried as trophies and marks of honour. Just as veteran soldiers show the scars and wounds they have received in battle, as tokens of their valour and courage, in facing and fighting the enemy in greatest danger: these he is said to bear "in his body"; not in the bodies of others, he gloried not in their flesh, as the false apostles did; nor in the circumcision of his own flesh, the scar that left there the mark of Moses and of a Jew; but in those things which were marks of his being a disciple of Christ, and not of Moses, and which he bore for his sake; and since therefore it was so easy to discern on which side of the question he was, from his suffering persecution for the cross of Christ; and since he had so many and such great trials and exercises, he, with apostolical gravity and authority, commands them to give him no more trouble, from the time of their reception of the epistle, henceforward **6. Galatians 6:18**

Ver. 18. **Brethren,**

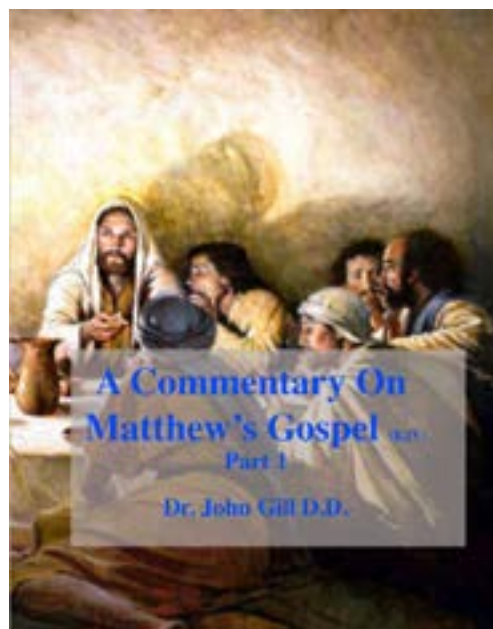
.... So he calls them, to testify his affection for them, notwithstanding their infirmity and instability, and the roughness with which he had treated them; and to show his great humility and condescension in owning the relation, and putting them on a level with himself, which the pride of the false teachers would not suffer them to do. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit: which is his concluding benediction and usual salutation and token in all his epistles: he wishes that more gifts of grace might be bestowed upon them; that the Gospel of the grace of God might be continued with them; that the love of Christ might be shed abroad in their hearts; that they might receive out of his fulness grace for grace; that there might be an increase of grace in their souls; that it might abound in them, and they grow in the exercise of it: he does not pray that the law of Moses, or the righteousness of works, but that the grace of Christ might be with them; not in the mere notion of it, but in the spiritual experience of it; that it might be in their hearts, and with their spirits, quickening, comforting, and strengthening them; making them more spiritual and evangelical in their frames and duties, and freeing them from a carnal and legal spirit: to all which he sets his

Amen;

signifying his desire that so it might be, and his faith that so it would be. The subscription of the letter follows, unto the Galatians, written from Rome; where perhaps he was then a prisoner; the Arabic version adds, "by Titus and Luke": who might be sent with it, but the

subscriptions of the epistles are not to be depended on.

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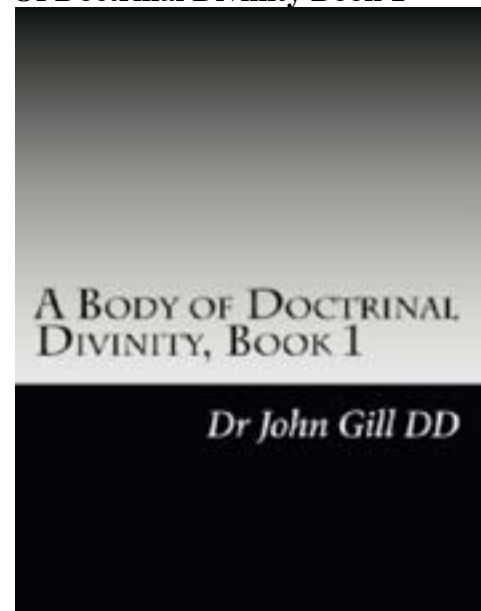
111 See The Last Decade, by E. Stevens, "When the New Testament Books Were written". ISBN 1-932844-17-1 – First Electronic Edition (PDF) Published by: International Preterist Association, Inc. Bradford, Pennsylvania USA <https://www.preterist.org/>

112 Luke 5 verse 27.

113 Matt 28 verse 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nation, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of The Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you;"

114 Matthew 24 verse 34. This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

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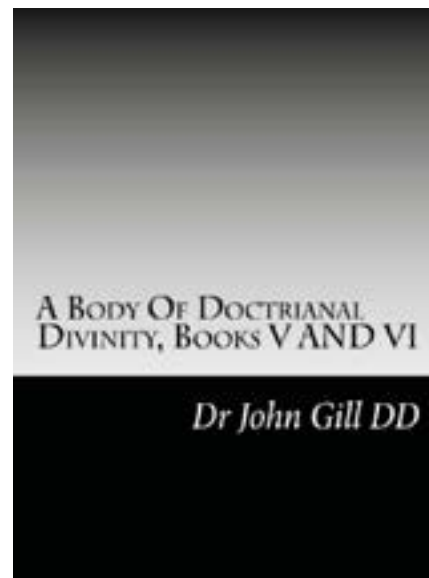
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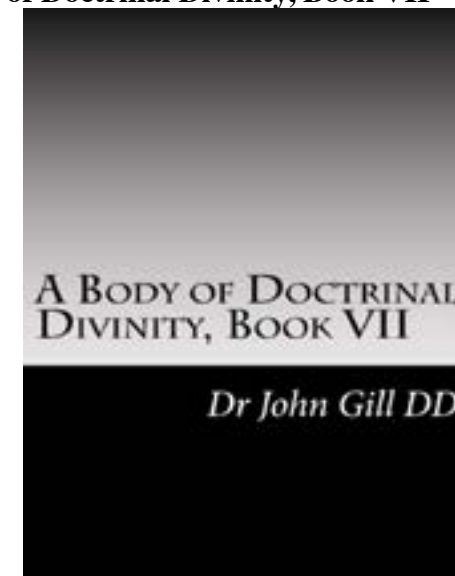
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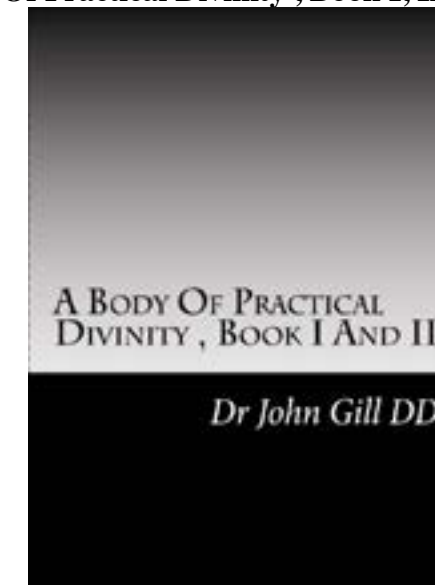
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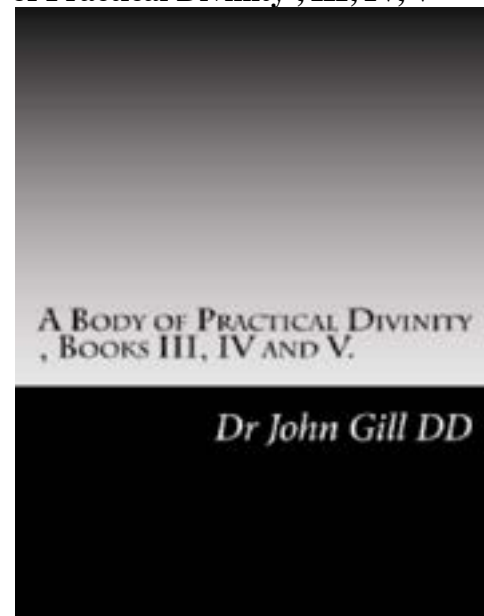
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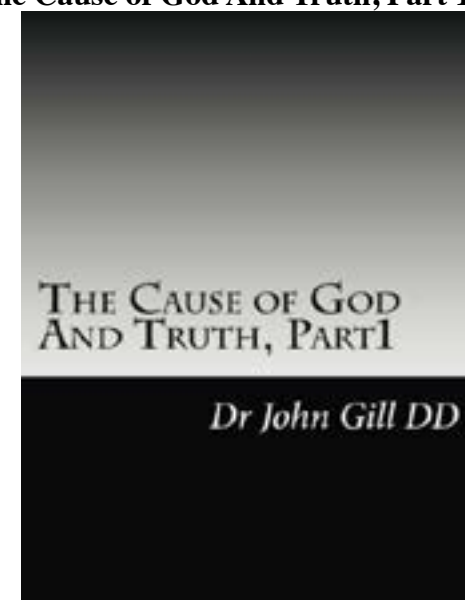
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to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work.

In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistical Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

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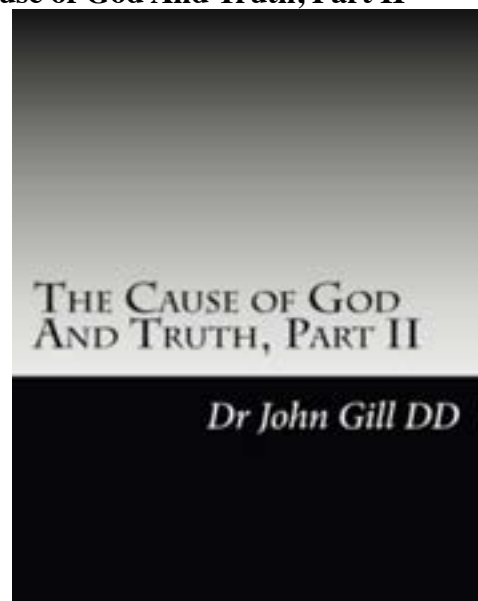
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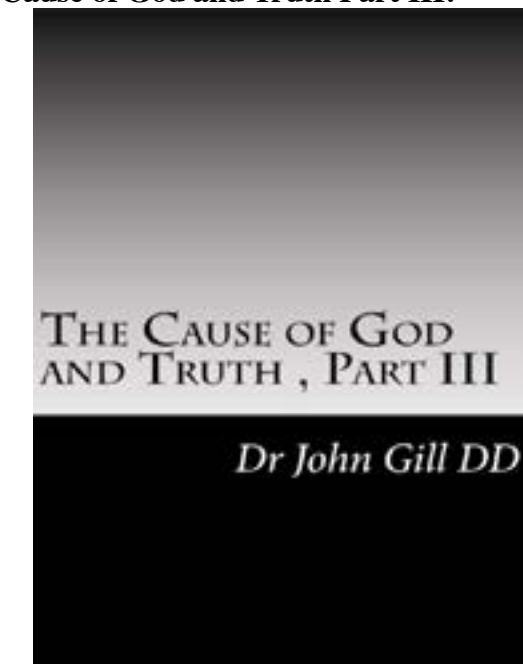
8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)
 Black & White on White paper
 108 pages
 ISBN-13: 978-1544648729 (CreateSpace-Assigned)
 ISBN-10: 1544648723
 BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic
 This is volume 2 of this 4 part series and it should be known that the following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work. In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistical Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture. The Second Part was published in the year 1736, in which the several passages of Scripture in favour of special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminian, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

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 Isaiah 59:21.
 Hosea 2:19, 20.
 Jeremiah 32:40.
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 John 10:28.
 1 Corinthians 1:8, 9.

The Cause of God and Truth Part III:



The Doctrines of Grace
 Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Authored by David Clarke CetEd
 List Price: \$9.99
 8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)
 Black & White on White paper
 108 pages
 ISBN-13: 978-1544810591 (CreateSpace-Assigned)
 ISBN-10: 1544810598
 BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic
 This book contains John Gill's answers to Dr Whitby objections to The Doctrines of Grace under the following heads.
 Chapter 1
 OF REPROBATION
 Proverbs 16:4.
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 1 Peter 2:8. 10
 Jude 1:4. 1
 Revelation 13:8. 1
 Chapter 2
 OF ELECTION
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 Romans 5:19.
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 OF REDEMPTION
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 Ezekiel 11:36:26.
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 Chapter 5
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 Genesis 6:5.
 John 3:6.
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 Romans 8:7, 8.
 Chapter 6
 OF PERSEVERANCE
 John 13:1.
 John 17:12.
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 Matthew 24:24.

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 Jeremiah 32:40.
 John 14:16.
 John 10:28.
 1 Corinthians 1:8, 9.

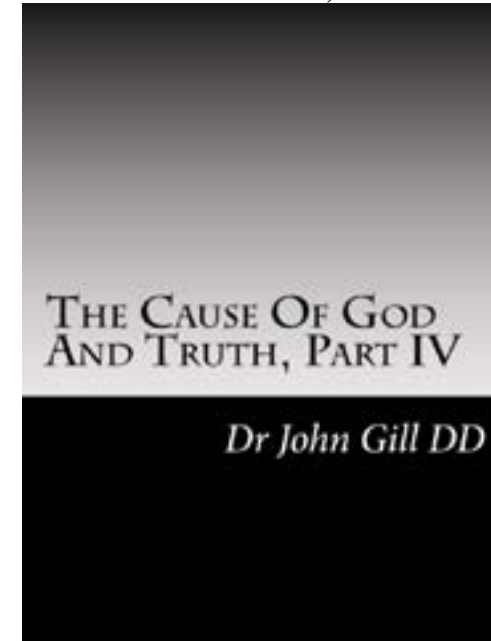
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In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistical Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

The Second Part was published in the year 1736, in which the several passages of Scripture in favour of special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminians, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

The Third Part was published in 1737.

The Cause Of God And Truth, Part IV



Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Created by David Clarke CertEd

List Price: \$8.99

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

126 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1544848709 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1544848706

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

It should be known by the reader, that the following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work.

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special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminian, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

The Third Part was published in 1737, and is a confutation of the arguments from reason used by the Arminians, and particularly by Dr. Whitby, against the above doctrines ; and a vindication of such as proceed on rational accounts in favour of them, in which it appears that they are no more disagreeable to right reason than to divine revelation ; to the latter of which the greatest deference should be paid, though the Rationalists of our age too much neglect it, and have almost quitted it ; but to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them.

In this part of the work is considered the agreement of the sentiments of Mr. Hobbes and the Stoic philosophers with those of the Calvinists, in which the difference between them is observed, and the calumny removed ; to which is added, a Defence of the Objections to the Universal Scheme, taken from the prescience and the providence of God, and the case of the Heathens.

The Fourth Part was published in 1738, in which the sense of the ancient writers of the Christian Church, before the times of Austin, is given ; the importance and consequence of which is shown, and that the Arminians have very little reason to triumph on that account.

This work was published at a time when the nation was greatly alarmed with the growth of Popery, and several learned gentlemen were employed in preaching against some particular points of it ; but the author of this work was of opinion, that the increase of Popery was greatly owing to the Pelagianism, Arminianism, and other supposed rational schemes men run into, contrary to divine revelation, This was the sense of our fathers in the last century, and therefore joined these and Popery together in their religious grievances they were desirous of having redressed ; and indeed, instead of lopping off the branches of Popery, the axe should be laid to the root of the tree, Arminianism and Pelagianism, the very life and soul of Popery.

This is Part 4 of 4 parts, and a new edition, with some alterations and improvements, is now published by request.

This work contains:

Chapter 1 Of Predestination

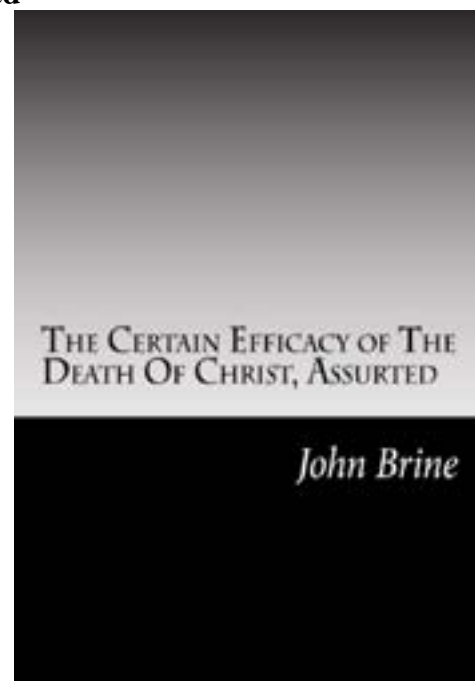
Chapter 2 Of Redemption

Chapter 3 Or Original Sin

Chapter 4 Of Efficacious Grace

Chapter 5 Of Perseverance
 Chapter 6 Of The Heathens
 A Vindication of The Cause of God and Truth
 This work contains:
 Chapter 1 Of Predestination
 Chapter 2 Of Redemption
 Chapter 3 Or Original Sin
 Chapter 4 Of Efficacious Grace
 Chapter 5 Of Perseverance
 Chapter 6 Of The Heathens
 A Vindication of The Cause of God and Truth

The Certain Efficacy of The Death Of Christ, Assured



**Authored by John Brine
 Created by David Clarke**

List Price: \$7.99
 8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)
 Black & White on White paper
 114 pages
 ISBN-13: 978-1973922254 (CreateSpace-Assigned)
 ISBN-10: 1973922258
 BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

This work declares the Glory of God in all his Perfections, the Honour of Christ, and the eternal Happiness of his People, all of which are intimately concerned in them. This is treated in four parts: In the First John Brine endeavours to prove the limited Extent of the Death of CHRIST, and the certain Salvation of all those for whom he died.

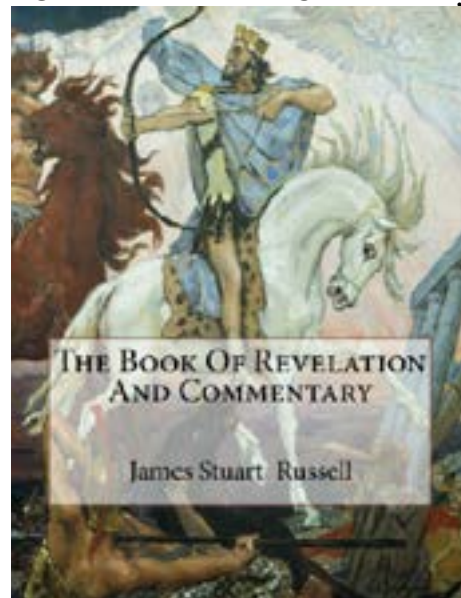
In the Second, the Objections which are usually urged by the Arminians, and others, will be answered.

In the Third shall attempt to prove the Impossibility of the Salvation of the Non-Elect, upon the Supposition of no other than a conditional Provision of Salvation being made for them.

In the Fourth Part shall attend to what he delivers on the Subjects of the Imputation of original Sin to Men, the Charge of Sin on CHRIST, and the Imputation of his Righteousness to his People.

This has been republished by Bierton Particular Baptists to further the cause of God and truth, it opposes Arminianism, Islam, and duty faith.

The Book Of Revelation And Commentary



Authored by James Stuart Russell, Created by David Clarke, Foreword by Don K. Preston

List Price: \$9.00
 8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)
 Black & White on White paper
 118 pages
 ISBN-13: 978-1973780359 (CreateSpace-Assigned)
 ISBN-10: 1973780356
 BISAC: Religion / Biblical Studies / New Testament

The book of Revelation has produced many idea's in the minds of men as to what the future holds for mankind and some believe Revelation predicts the end of the world. There are a range of views held by professing Christians about the meaning of the book and some believe much of what is spoken about in the book has yet to be fulfilled.

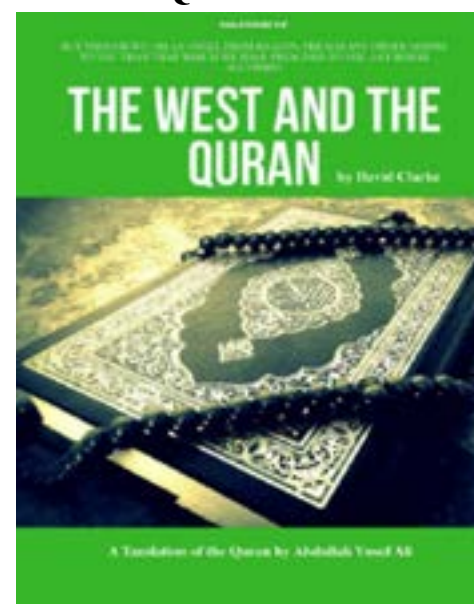
This book reproduces the The of Revelation written as published in the King James version of the bible and includes a commentary on Revelation, by James Stuart Russell. Russell has already clearly demonstrated, in part 1 and part II of his book (The The Parousia), that book of Revelations is a prophecy about the end of the Jewish

age and rule by Moses and that the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the promise of his return, to his disciples, at his coming in vengeance at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

We included in this book James Stuart Russell's part III of the Parousia, which is a commentary on the book of Revelation (Apocalypse) in which it is taken as fact that the Lord Jesus came again in Judgement upon old covenant Israel, in 70 A.D. destroying Jerusalem and the Temple, bringing a fulfilling end to the rule of Law by Moses.

Both the Muslim and those Christians holding to a futurist view of the end times are invited to challenge their views.

The West And The Quran



Translation of The Quran

Authored by David Clarke, Authored with Abdullah Yusuf Ali

List Price: \$9.99
 8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)
 Black & White on White paper
 248 pages
 ISBN-13: 978-1548914042 (CreateSpace-Assigned)
 ISBN-10: 1548914045
 BISAC: Religion / Biblical Criticism & Interpretation / General

This Publication treats the subject of the Quran and the reason for presenting this is due to a rise in Islamic terrorism which has caused great concern to many in the West. So with the current massive influx of Muslim's migrating from the various parts of the world into Europe, Great Britain and the USA, it seems reasonable to discover the roots of Islam in order to deal with the problems that have occurred. Our Politicians

seem clueless on how to deal with this enemy and when they are questioned they appear to know relatively little about Muhammad and his teaching. One of our greatest Prime-ministers in Britain William Gladstone declared the Quran an "Accursed book" and once held a copy of Muhammad's Quran up in Parliament, declaring: "So long as there is this book there will be no peace in the world".

Winston Churchill was one of the greatest leaders of the 20th Century, who served as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during World War II and again from 1951 to 1955.

As an officer of the British Army in 1897 and 1898, he fought against a Pashtun tribe in the north west frontier of British India and also at the Battle of Omdurman in Sudan. In both of those conflicts, he had eye-opening encounters with Muslims. These incidents allowed his keen powers of observation and always-fluid pen to weigh in on the subject of Islamic society.

While these words were written when he was only 25-years-old (in 1899), they serve as a prophetic warning to Western civilisation today.

"How dreadful are the curses which Mohammedanism (Islam) lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy."

Churchill apparently witnessed the same phenomenon in several places he visited. "The effects are apparent in many countries: improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live."

He saw the temporal and the eternal tainted by their belief system. "A degraded sensualism deprives this life of its grace and refinement, the next of its dignity and sanctity," he wrote.

The second-class status of women also grated at the young officer. "The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property, either as a child, a wife, or a concubine, must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power among men," he noted.

"Individual Muslims may show splendid qualities, but the influence of the religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world."

Well before the birth of modern Israel, its terror tactics and drive for world domination were felt. "Far

from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytising faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step, and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science, the science against which it (Islam) has vainly struggled, the civilisation of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilisation of ancient Rome.”

With the influx of Muslim people from the various parts of the continent along with their culture all of which is shaped by the teachings of Muhammad in the Quran.

Some objections and Observations are as follows:

Islam means submission

Islam does not mean peace

Multiculturalism is a failure.

Islam denies the natural rights of women

An Objection Halal Meat

An Objection To Shari-ah Law

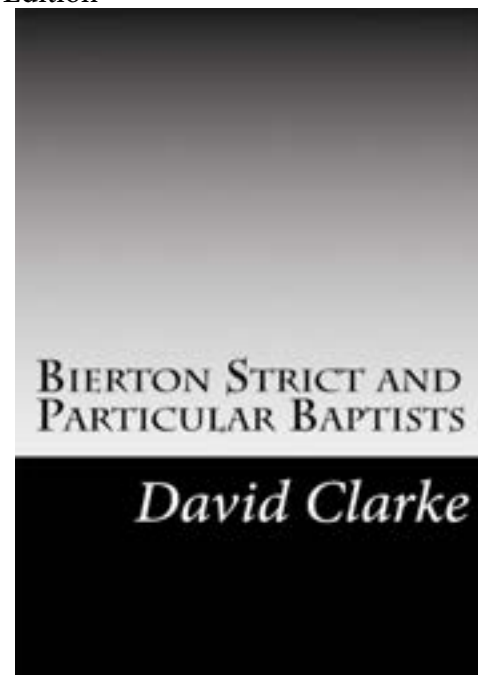
Objects to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

An objection to Jihad which seeks over throw Western culture through education, Social activity, political activation and Law.

For this reason, this publication is made available for education purposes. With this prayer that God may grant us all wisdom as to how we may respond to the rise and threat of Islam.

Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists

2nd Edition



Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert.

List Price: \$13.99

5.25” x 8” (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

356 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1519553287 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1519553285

BISAC: Biography & Autobiography / Religious

This book tells the story and life of David Clarke in the form of an autobiography. It is no ordinary book in that David and his brother were both notorious criminals in the 60’s, living in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, where they were MODs and were both sent to prison for and malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license . They were however both converted from crime to Christ and turned their lives around.

This story tells of David’s conversion to Christianity in 1970 and that of Michael’s conversion, 1999 some 30 years later.

It tells of their time in HMP Canterbury Prison and David’s time in HMP Wormwood Scrubs and Dover Borstal. It also tells of David’s criminal activity and the crimes he committed before his miraculous conversion from crime to Christ, during a bad experience on LSD, in 1970.

It tells how he became a Christian over night and how he learned to read in order to come to a fuller knowledge of the gospel. He learned to read through reading the bible and classical Christian literature. David tells of the events that led to him making a confession to the police about 24 crimes he had committed since leaving Dover Borstal in 1968 and of the court case where he was not sentenced. It tells how David’s educated himself and went on to Higher education, and graduated with a Certificate in Education and how he went on to teach Electronics, for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education.

It tells of his life as a member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church, which was a Gospel Standard cause, and how he was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel. David tells of the various difficulties that he faced once he discovered the many doctrinal errors amongst the various Christian groups he met and of the opposition that he experience when he sought to correct them. David recorded his experience and finding in his book “The Bierton Crisis” 1984, written to help others.

David’s tells how his brother Michael was untouched by his conversion in 1970 and continued his flamboyant lifestyle ending up doing a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996.

David tells how Michael too was converted to Christianity through reading C.S. Lewis’s book, “Mere Christianity”, and him being convinced that Jesus

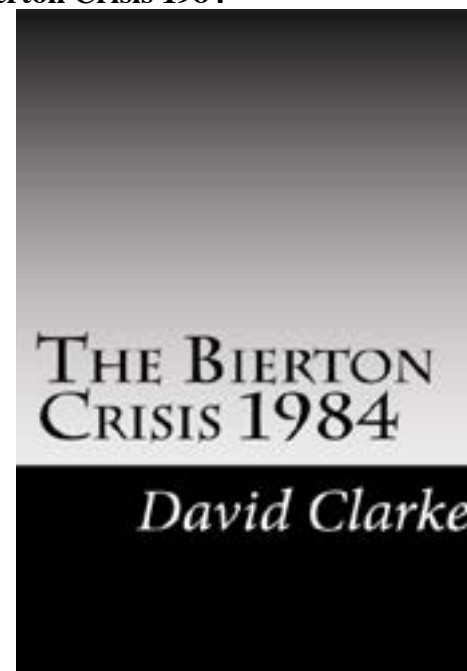
was the Christ the Son of the living God. David then tells of his mission to the Philippines, to bring help and assistance to Michael, in 2001 and of their joint venture in helping in the rehabilitation of many former convicted criminals, not only in New Bilibid Prison but other Jails in the Philippines.

David tells how he felt compelled to write this story in his book , “Converted On LSD Trip”. once he got news of his brothers arrest, in the Philippines, via ITN Television news broadcast, in 1995. This book was published when he got news of his brothers conversion from crime to Christ in 1999, which was after serving 5 years of his 16 year sentence.

This story is told in their joint book, “Trojan Warriors”, that contains the testimonies of 66 notorious criminals who too had turned there lives around, from crime to Christ, 22 of which testimonies are men on Death Row.

David say he believes his story could be of great help to any one seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ but sadly Michael died in New Bilibid Prison of tuberculosis, in 2005 before their vision of bringing help to many was realized.

The Bierton Crisis 1984



2nd Edition: A Testimony of David Clarke

Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert.E

List Price: \$10.99

5.25” x 8” (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

244 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1534701717 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1534701710

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

The Bierton Crisis is the personal story of David Clarke a member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church. He was also the church secretary and minister sent by the church to preach the gospel in 1982.

The Bierton Church was formed in 1831 and was a Gospel Standard cause who’s rules of membership are such that only the church can terminate ones membership.

This tells of a crisis that took place in the church in 1984, which led to some members withdrawing support. David, the author, was one of the members who withdrew but the church did not terminate his membership as they wished him return.

This story tells in detail about those errors in doctrine and practices that had crept into the Bierton church and of the lengths taken to put matters right. David maintained and taught Particular Redemption and that the gospel was the rule of life for the believer and not the law of Moses as some church members maintained. This story tells of the closure of the Bierton chapel when David was on mission work in the Philippines in December 2002 and when the remaining church members died. It tells how David was encouraged by the church overseer to return to Bierton and re-open the chapel.

On David’s return to the UK he learned a newly unelected set of trustees had take over the responsibility for the chapel and were seeking to sell it. The story tells how he was refused permission to re open or use the chapel and they sold it as a domestic dwelling, in 2006. These trustees held doctrinal views that opposed the Bierton church and they denied David’s continued membership of the church in order to lay claim too and sell the chapel, using the money from the sale of the chapel for their own purposes.

David hopes that his testimony will promote the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as set out in the doctrines of grace, especially Particular Redemption and the rule of life for the believer being the gospel of Christ, the royal law of liberty, and not the law of Moses as some reformed Calvinists teach, will be realized by the reader. His desire is that any who are called to preach the gospel should examine their own standing and ensure that they can derive from scripture the doctrines and practices they teach and advance and that they can derived the truths they teach from scripture alone and not from the traditions of men or their opinions however well they may be thought of.

Mary, Mary Quite Contrary

Second Edition: Does The Lord Jesus Want Women To Rule As Elders In His Church ? ?

Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert E

List Price: \$8.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

154 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1514206812 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1514206811

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / General

When treating the subject of women elders in the church we are not dealing with the affairs of a secular society and so it has nothing to do with women's rights, equality of sex or race in the world. This matter only relates to men and women in a Christian church. It is about the rules of the house of God, which is the church of the living God and rules for those who are members of the body of Christ and members of an heavenly county.

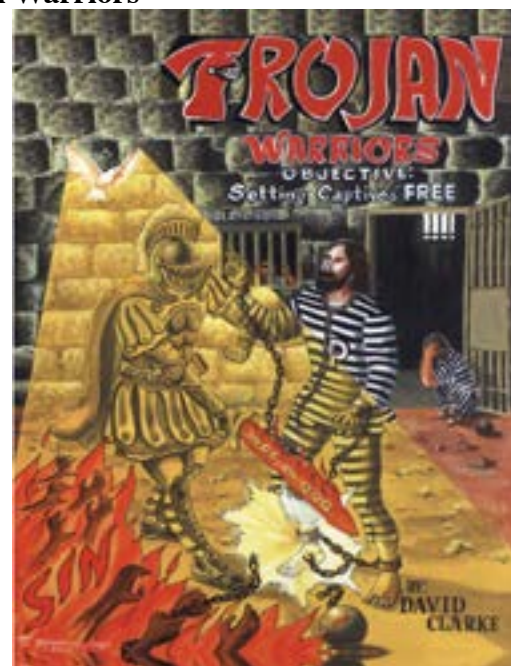
The Suffragettes

Emmeline Pankhurst (1858 -1928) was a Suffragette and worked very hard to bring equal rights for women to vote as men. In the year of her death all women over 21 gained the right to vote. The Suffragette movement brought about many changes for the better in a secular society but not so for women seeking to follow Christian principles. One of her famous quotes was, "Trust in God She shall provide". Terms which do not reflect Christian beliefs. We know God will provide and He is not a she.

In the USA and the UK, women's political rights were brought into general political consciousness

by the suffragettes and since then there have been legal rights granted to the Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups, same sex marriages, along with the development of the feminist movement and the appointment of persons from the LGBT community to responsible positions in the Church of England. All of this has caused conflict in the Christian community due to differences beliefs of right and wrong.

This book seeks to show what the bible has to say about the role of women in the church and family. Since these rules are taught by the Apostles of Christ they are the word of God to us and we should obey. The secular world may differ and turn from the narrow path taught in scripture but we should follow the word of God, this is our wisdom.

Trojan Warriors

Setting Captives Free

Authored by Mr David Clarke CertEd, Authored by Mr Michael J Clarke

List Price: \$15.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

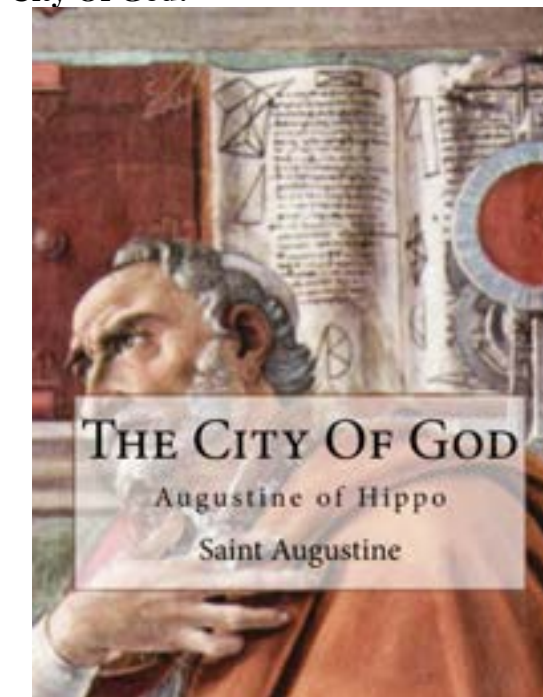
446 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1508574989 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1508574987

BISAC: Religion / Christian Life / General

Trojan Warriors is a true story of two brothers, Michael and David Clarke, who are brought up in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England. They became criminals in the 60's and were sent to prison for malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license, in 1967.

The City Of God:

Augustine of Hippo

Authored by Saint Augustine, Authored by David Clarke

List Price: \$10.28

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

272 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1547278985 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1547278986

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

The City of God, is a book of Christian philosophy written in Latin by Augustine of Hippo in the early 5th century AD. The book was in response to allegations that Christianity brought about the decline of Rome and is considered one of Augustine's most important works.

The City of God is a cornerstone of Western thought, expounding on many profound questions of theology, such as the suffering of the righteous, the existence of evil, the conflict between free will and divine omniscience, and the doctrine of original sin.

Augustine is recognized as a saint in the Catholic Church, the Eastern Christian Church, and the Anglican Communion and as a preeminent Doctor of the Church.

Many Protestants, especially Calvinists and Lutherans, consider him to be one of the theological fathers of the Protestant Reformation due to his teachings on salvation and divine grace. Lutherans, and Martin Luther in particular, have held Augustine in preeminence (after the Bible and St. Paul). Luther himself was a member of the Order of the Augustinian

They both turned from their lives of crimes in remarkable ways but some 25 years apart, and then they worked together helping other prison inmates, on their own roads of reformation.

David the younger brother became a Christian, after a bad experience on LSD, in 1970, and then went on to educate himself and then on to Higher Education. He became a baptist minister and taught electronics for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education. Michael however remained untouched and continued his flamboyant life style ending up serving a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996, where he died of tuberculosis in 2005.

When David heard the news of his brothers arrest on an ITN television news bulletin he felt compelled to wrote their story. And then when he heard of his own brothers conversion from crime to Christ, after serving 5 year of his sentence, he published their story in his book, "Converted on LS Trip", and directed a mission of help to the Philippines to assist his brother. This book tells the story of this mission.

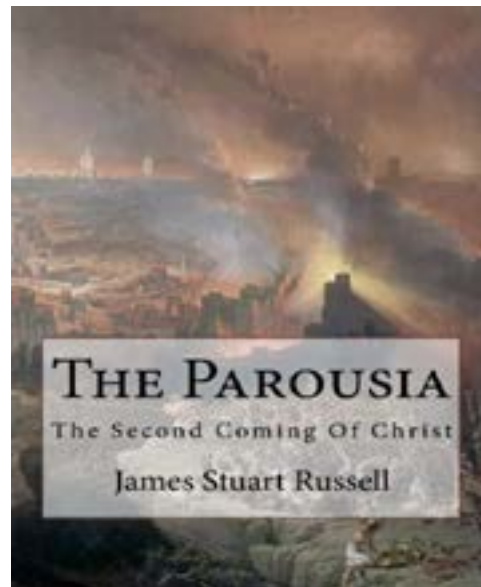
They then worked together with many former notorious criminals, who were inmates in New Bilibid Prison, who too had become Christians and turned their lives around. This help was to train them to become preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ .

This book contains the 66 testimonies of some of these men who convicted former criminals, incarcerated in New Bilibid Prison. They are the, "Trojan Warriors", who had turned their lives around and from crime to Christ. Twenty two of these testimonies are men who are on Death Row scheduled to be executed by lethal injection.

Revelation 12 verse 11: And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Eremites (1505–1521).

The Parousia 2nd Edition



The Second Coming Of Christ

Authored by James Stuart Russell, Preface by Mr David Clarke, Preface by Dr Don K Preston DD

List Price: \$17.85

7" x 10" (17.78 x 25.4 cm)

Black & White on White paper

404 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1519610942 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1519610947

BISAC: Religion / Theology

A reformation – indeed – a revolution of sorts is taking place in modern evangelical Christianity. And while many who are joining in and helping promote this movement are not even aware of it, the book you hold in your hand has contributed greatly to initiating this new reformation. This “new” movement is sometimes called full preterism, (Also, and preferably by this writer, Covenant Eschatology). It is the belief that all Bible prophecy is fulfilled.

The famous evangelist Charles H. Spurgeon was deeply impressed with the scholarly, solid research in the book, although he did not accept the “final” conclusions reached by Russell. In modern times, this work has, and continues to impress those who read it. The reason is simple, the New Testament is emphatic and unambiguous in positing Christ’s coming and the end of the age for the first century generation. To say this has troubled both scholars and laymen alike is an understatement of massive proportions.

This book first appeared in 1878 (anonymously), and again in 1887 with author attribution. The book was well known in scholarly circles primarily and attracted a good bit of attention, both positive and negative.

The public, however, seemed almost unaware of the stunning conclusions and the research supporting those conclusions, until or unless they read of Russell’s work in the footnotes of the commentaries.

Scholars have recognized and grappled with this imminence element, that is the stated nearness of the day of the Lord, seldom finding satisfactory answers. Scholars such as David Strauss accused Jesus of failure. Later, Bultmann said that every school boy knows that Jesus predicted his coming and the end of the world for his generation, and every school boy knows it did not happen. C.S. Lewis also could not resolve the apparent failed eschatology. Bertrand Russell rejected Christianity due to the failed eschatology - as he perceived it - of Jesus and the Bible writers. As a result of these “skeptical” authors, modern Bible scholarship has followed in their path and Bible commentaries today almost casually assert the failure of the Bible writers - and Jesus - in their eschatological predictions.

This is where Russell’s work is of such importance. While Russell was not totally consistent with his own arguments and conclusions, nonetheless, his work is of tremendous importance and laid the groundwork for the modern revolution known as the preterist movement.

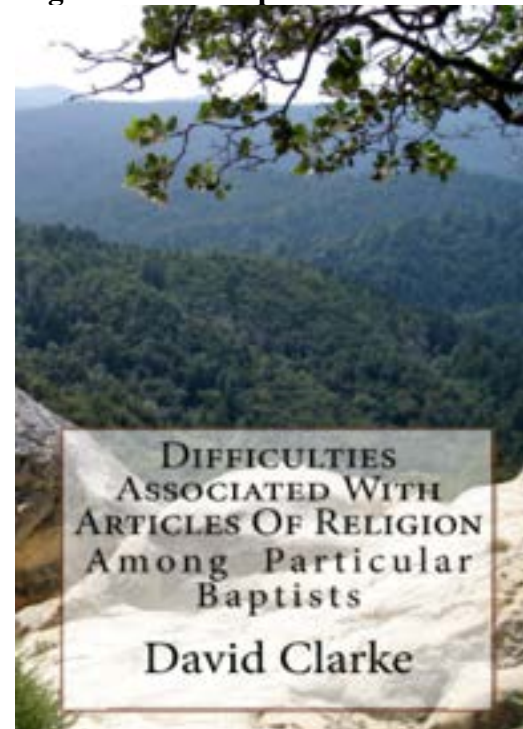
Russell systematically addressed virtually every New Testament prediction of the eschaton. With incisive clarity and logical acumen, he sweeps aside the almost trite objections to the objective nature of the Biblical language of imminence. With excellent linguistic analysis, solid hermeneutic and powerful exegetical skills, Russell shows that there is no way to deny that Jesus and his followers not only believed in a first century, end of the age parousia, but, they taught it as divine truth claiming the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as their authority.

Russell not only fully established the undeniable reality of the first century imminence of “the end,” he powerfully and carefully shares with the reader that “the end” that Jesus and the N.T. writers were anticipating was not the end of the time space continuum (end of the world). It was in fact, the end of the Old Covenant Age of Israel that arrived with the cataclysmic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70. Russell properly shows how the traditional church has so badly missed the incredible significance of the end of that Old Covenant Age.

Russell’s work is a stunning rejection – and corrective -- of what the “Orthodox” historical “Creedal” church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the “divines” missed

it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell’s main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical eschatology. And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

Difficulties Associated with Articles of Religion Among Particular Baptists



Articles of Religion are important when dealing with matters of the Christian Religion, however problems occur when churches fail to recognize there is a growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ in any believer. When a person first believes in the Lord Jesus Christ they cannot possibly have a comprehensive knowledge of a churches constitution or its articles of religion, before solemnly subscribing to them. The author David Clarke has introduced the Doctrines of Grace to Berton Particular Baptists Pakistan, situated in Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan and bearing in mind his own experience with articles of religion he has compiled Berton Particular Baptists Pakistan articles of religion from the first Berton Particular Baptists of 1831, of which he is the sole surviving member, the First London Baptist Confession, 2nd edition 1646, and those of Dr John Gill, in order to avoid some of the difficulties encounter by Particular Baptist during the later part of the 19 century and since. This booklet highlights the problem and suggests the Berton Particular Baptists Pakistan is as step in the right direction.

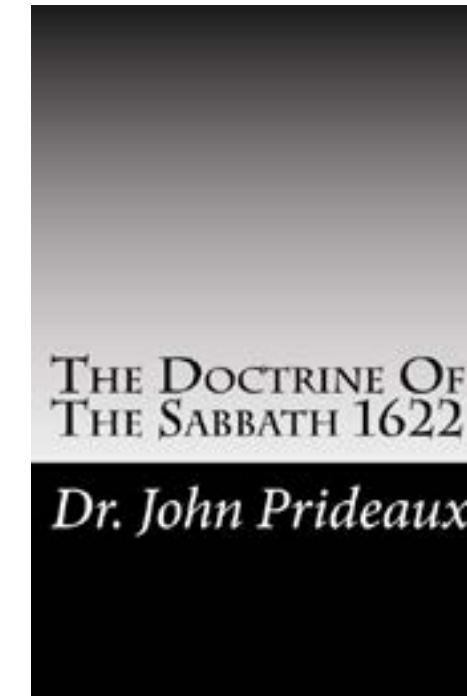
Isaiah 52:8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

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BISAC: Religion / Christianity / Baptist

The Doctrine Of The Sabbath 2nd Edition: 1622



Authored by Dr John Prideaux, Created by David Clarke

List Price: \$9.55

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

148 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1727722901 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1727722906

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

Of all the controverts which have exercised the Church of Christ, there is none more ancient than that of the Sabbath: So ancient that it took beginning even in the infancy of the Church, and grew up with it. For as we read in the Acts There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed, saying, that it was needful to circumcise the people, and to command them to keep the law of Moses; whereof the Sabbath was apart: Which in the general, as the apostles labours to suppress in their first General Council, held in Jerusalem: So did S. Paul, upon occasion of whose ministry this controversy first began, endeavor what he could against the particular, shapely reproving those which hallowed yet the Jewish Sabbath and observed days, and months, and times, as if he had bestowed his labor in vain upon them. But more particularly in his epistle to the Colossians, Let no man judge you in respect of a holy day or of the new moon,

or of the Sabbath days, which were a shadow of things to come but the body is of Christ. Both which expressions of Paul are in this following discourse produced to this very purpose. Yet notwithstanding all this care both generally of the Apostles and more especially of Paul to suppress this error; it grew up still and had its patrons and abettors.

This reproduction of, 'The doctrine of the Sabbath,' by Dr. John Prideaux has been presented for those who have been troubled by the insistence of those religious people who insist that the first day of the week is the Sabbath day and to be kept holy, as dictated by the law of Moses. It is not. We include also Dr. John Gill on the subject of the circumstances of public worship as to place and time. It is the view of this publisher that the time and place of Christian worship it is a matter for the Christian community to decide and is not legislated in the scriptures.