

Original Contributions.

"The Law, Not of the Promise."

In Galatians iii. and iv. Paul clearly and expressly shows that the law was not of the Gospel promise, and could not have been added to it. Paul connects all the blessings of the Gospel to the Gentiles, through Christ "the promised seed," directly back to the promise, or covenant made with Abraham, that "in thee and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed." Now he says, that 430 years after that Gospel promise or covenant was made, and "because of transgressions, the law was added." Added to what, asks one? It was certainly added to those whose "transgressions" had required it. If it was the "transgressions" of Abraham that was the "because" of its being added, then it was added to Abraham, as a matter of course. But Abraham had been dead some 400 years, so that it could not be "because" of his "transgressions," and therefore it could not have been added to Abraham, nor to the covenant or promise that God made with him, for it could not have been "because of the transgressions" of either Abraham or "the covenant" that it was added; and so it could not have been "added" either to Abraham or to the promise, or covenant.

But as the law was added because of somebody's transgressions, and we read that "the church (?) in the wilderness" sinned so grievously, that with the many (or most) of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness; how can there be the least doubt or uncertainty as to whom it was added? There can be no more room for doubting as to whom it was added than there is uncertainty as to whose sins was the "cause" of its being added.

But Paul expressly says that it was *not* added to the Gospel promise, or covenant with Abraham, and was *no part of it*. For the only parties to that covenant of promise were God and Abraham; and *no change* in it, no adding thereto, or disannulling thereof, could be done, unless *both parties* were present. For speaking after the usages and manner of business men, Paul says (verse 15) that when men make a covenant, and it is "confirmed" or ratified by being signed and sealed, no other man, or party, can disannul or add thereto. Inasmuch, therefore, as the law was

given by Moses 430 years after the covenant with Abraham had been signed, sealed and fully "confirmed," and long after Abraham's death, it follows that the law could not and was not "added thereto."

All our interest in "the blessing of Abraham," or in the Gospel promise, passes by and over "the law" directly back to the promise of "the seed," which is Christ. For (verse 18) if we inherit through or by the law, we do not inherit through or by "the promise." Because if we inherit through the law (verse 17), it would make the promise of *none effect*; and we would also inherit through Israel. But he saith *not* "and to seeds," as of *many* (that is, of Israel), but of *one*, "and to thy seed," and that "seed" was Christ. We have *no inheritance* "through seeds," or through Israel; and no Christian is ever required to be, or is called "an Israelite" in the word of God.

Every one that was under the law, was under a curse (verse 10); but Christ redeemed the Jew (and all sinners) who accept him, from the curse of the law, in order that they might receive the adoption of sons. Servants were under law; but children are free. The son of the bondwoman was a servant and represents the "Israelite" who is "under law" and "in bondage," as are also her children. But Abraham was "free" and not in bondage to the law, nor any part of it. The fact that it was "added" 430 years after the Gospel promise proves that Abraham was ignorant of it, and was not under it. If Abraham had been under the Sabbath part of it, Paul would have excepted the fourth commandment of the law when he said "it was added, because of transgressions." It was not Abraham's "transgressions," neither was it the "transgressions" of Isaac, nor of "the seed" or the children of the seed; but it was the transgressions of "the congregation in the wilderness," the Israelites, that caused the law to be given; and it was only given to them *till* the seed (Christ) should come.

Though given 430 years after the promise, "the law was *not* against the promise," (verse 21), for it was not added to that promise, and did not and could not affect the promise in any way. This one chapter is enough to silence the clamor of every uncircumcised Jew, and all "who desire to be under law," or who "observe days" in all time to come. More anon.

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Reigion.

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Proposition 5. *A Cause for Reunion With God.*

The fountain from whence the river of the water of life clear as crystal issues, lies far back of the advent of the Redeemer, far back of the founding of Rome, aye it existed before the dazzling orbs of heaven wheeled into place, and the angels struck the first note in the grand anthem of creation new born. The Savior in accents of heavenly music has told that sweet story himself: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

"Oh for such love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues,
The Savior's praises speak."

Jesus tells the Jewish Rabbi that the cause of his coming to this world of sin and death was *the love of God*. Like the water from the riven rock which followed the Israelites through all the years of wandering in the wilderness the love of God follows sinful man in all his dark paths of sin. "They all drank of that spiritual rock that followed them and that rock was Christ." They could not drink till that rock was smitten; neither could men drink of the fountain of life through Christ until "he was smitten of God and afflicted."

That mysterious, inexhaustable, unfathomable "river of life" follows every child of Adam in whatever land, or haunts of vice and wickedness he may be, until he, like the Israelites, reaches and crosses the Jordan. While they were toiling on through a desert land, God gave them bread from heaven and sent a stream of living water from the smitten rock to sustain them, but as soon as they had passed the desert and crossed the Jordan they were reaping hope's fruition in a "land that flowed with milk and honey." Then it was unnecessary to feed and clothe them by miracle, and, therefore, they ceased. *Thus the love of God* has ever followed the children of men in every walk of life.

But to return. Jesus said the love of God sent him into the world to save men from perishing and give them eternal life.

The Savior left the palace throne,
And all his robes of light;
And down to earth in triumph came,
To break th' eternal night.

In silence, then, the angels stood,
With folded wings on high;
When Jesus shed his precious blood
That men might never die.

And through the Savior we have the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation. Paul tells the Corinthians that the Gospel is as follows: How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

But how can it be that the story of a violent death and a hasty burial and a resurrection from the dead is "God's charm" by which he draws men to him and gives them life. This is not the charm. It must be taught additionally that this was done "for our sins" and "according to the Scriptures."

Still more than all these, Paul says, "How that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again." It then becomes a part of the Gospel to tell the sinner the *manner* in which Christ did all these "for our sins." Yes, "Christ died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God." This was the cause of our coming to God. Paul says this is the means "by which you are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you." Again the Prince of Life says, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The Gospel is the medium through which the lifting up of Jesus reaches us and brings the power of God to bear upon us. God, therefore, draws men to himself by charming them. Again the Savior says, "I am the way, the truth and the life," or in more modern English, "I am the true way of life." This "True way of life" is "Chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely." No wonder then that men are drawn to God by his Son since he is so lovely. Through the Gospel of Christ we have the promise of the forgiveness of our sins, and by obedience thereto, eternal life in the great beyond.

When one has come into the Church of Christ he has only just enlisted in the army of God and engaged in a warfare for life. Having been reunited with God he is now a co-laborer with him, and thus advances "from glory to glory." James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the father is this, to visit (take the oversight) of the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world." This reunion with God manifests