

Circumcision Wars VIII

Fred R. Coulter

We've been going through the book of Galatians and we have the study booklet and the *Interlinear* together. We've been in Gal. 4, and we want to review just a couple of things.

Galatians 4:3: "In the same way, when we were children, we were held in bondage under the **elements**... [elemental spirits] ...**of the world**." The world is controlled by God through the righteous angels and the angels of Satan the devil.

The Galatians were those that Paul came to and preached the Gospel to in Lystra, Derby and Iconium. Remember what happened when they healed the impotent man. The priests of Jupiter proclaimed Barnabas to be Jupiter and Paul to be Mercurius, because Mercury was the spokesman (Acts 14). This is important to realize. These people came out of pure paganism and then the Jews came after them later on.

Here's what he's telling them, v 8: "Now on the one hand, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to those who are not gods by nature." Meaning that they were in bondage to the demons.

I want to plug in a just a couple of more Scriptures to go with that so we can see that. That's a key thing to remember, because when it says that they are 'turning back again to it' it doesn't mean like the Protestants say, that they were turning back to the keeping of the commandments of God or the laws under the Old Covenant.

Acts 17—this is where Paul comes to the city of Athens. What he says there is very profound. It's kind of buried in the translation, but nevertheless, it is there. Idols by nature are not gods. Demons by nature are not gods. Righteous angels are not gods. Anything to do with those can never bring you eternal life. Where does eternal life come from? How do you receive eternal life?:

- Repentance!
- Sacrifice of Christ!
- It is the gift of God!

Since it's eternal life, it can only come from God Who is the Originator of eternal life. Angels were created by God, so they can't originate eternal life. Demons have already been rejected and they are only around because of the sins of men. Then you come down to a lower level and the myths and superstitions and traditions of the pagans and their idolatry are not 'gods by nature' either.

Notice how these philosophers in Acts 17:16: "But while Paul was waiting for them...

[Silas and Timothy] ...in Athens, he saw *that* the city *was* wholly given to idolatry, *and* his spirit was sorely moved within him." Today I don't know if we could see a city like that unless we would go to the Far East, Thailand, India or something like that. But that's what it would be like; nothing that we would say is even 'paganized Christianity.' Yet, in the middle of it there was a synagogue!

Verse 17. Because of this, he reasoned earnestly in the synagogue with the Jews... [devout persons] ...and those who worshiped *there*..." Gentile converts to Judaism who fell into one of three classes:

1. Those who didn't believe in following idolatry—unclean Gentiles
2. Those who—like Cornelius—were keeping the laws of God and had a change or conversion, but not a spiritual conversion, from paganism to the religion of Judaism

—which in the religion of Judaism at that time was not as wholly pagan as it is today. They still followed a whole lot more of the Law of Moses and so forth than they do today.

Those who observed it were able to then attend a part of the synagogue that was for the uncircumcised Gentiles, but in observing these things they were now called *common* instead of unclean, because they were uncircumcised.

In the proselytizing by the Jews of the Gentiles, the finality of proselytizing was after they began keeping the laws that they find in the Bible and the laws of Judaism. They would finalize it with circumcision. Then they became a full-fledged proselyte. They were considered now a citizen of the Jewish nation even though they were in the Diaspora spread abroad.

Notice that in each case we have the Jews with the 'devout persons' and he disputed with them in the synagogues, "...and daily in the marketplace with those who met with *him*. Then some philosophers of the Epicureans and the Stoics encountered him. And some *of them* said, 'What will this babblers have to say?'.... [If they're accusing him of being a babblers you know that he was out there talking.] ...And some *said*, 'He seems to be a preacher of **foreign gods**'... [there we have the religious pagans, *strange gods*; that's how *they viewed* what Paul was preaching] ...because he was preaching to them the Gospel of Jesus and the resurrection" (vs 17-18).

Verse 19: “And they took him and brought *him* to Mars Hill, saying, ‘May we know what this new teaching *is* that is spoken by you? For you are bringing certain strange things to our ears. So then, we desire to know what these things mean.’ (Now all *the* Athenians and the strangers sojourning *among them* spent their leisure in nothing other than to tell and to hear something new.)” (vs 19-21).

I wonder when they worked? These were probably the rich plutocrats who didn’t have to work and they had slaves. All they had to do is stand around and talk.

Verse 22: “Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars Hill *and* said, ‘Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities”—superstitious—devoted to demons. It is true, whenever you have a lot of superstition, you have a lot of demonism, because that’s what demons like to do is keep you in ignorance and superstition.

Verse 23: “For *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, ‘To an unknown God.’ So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the one *that* I proclaim to you.”

Galatians 4:8: “Now on the one hand, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to those who are not gods by nature.” That’s precisely what we’re describing here in Acts 17. Paul preaches the *true God!*

Acts 17:24: “He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands; nor is He served by the hands of men, *as though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things. And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; in order that they might seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us” (vs 24-28).

This also tells you that God is not way off, though a lot of people like to think He is. I’m of the opinion, though we can’t see it, the throne of God is a whole lot closer to the earth than we imagine. If Jesus could ascend to the Father and back in the space of three hours, and be accepted as the sacrifice for all the sins of mankind, then you know it can’t be too far away.

Verse 28: “For in Him we live and move and have our being; as some of the poets among you also have said, ‘For we are His offspring.’” It’s interesting that certain of the philosophers had some elements of Truth in what they taught. But elements

of Truth does not mean that it is the Truth. The best way you can have a counterfeit is to have elements of Truth in it.

Verse 29: “Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man.” Things by which by nature are not gods.

Verse 30: “‘For *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by* raising Him from *the* dead.’ And after hearing *about the* resurrection of *the* dead, some mocked; but some said, ‘We will hear you again concerning this *matter*.’ And so Paul went out from among them. But certain ones *who* believed joined themselves to him, among whom also *were* Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them” (vs 30-34). After he spoke to maybe hundreds, we don’t know! There were a half dozen people; it’s always been a few.

Let’s look at a couple of other things in 1st and 2nd Peter showing about their ‘religious’ activities and how this was a thing that has absolutely nothing to do with Judaism, as most Protestants think. I’m convinced that we, at this time, need to fully understand these, because this is how the Church of God was taken down. They didn’t understand these things and they came with all of their doctrinal reasons and good sounding things and took them down.

1-Peter 1:18: “Knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from *your* forefathers.” These were former pagans. Again, having nothing to do with Judaism.

Here he makes a comparison, 2-Peter 1:16: “For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths... [What are the myths of the gods of the Greeks? *Classics!* This is what they teach in schools to this day—isn’t it? *Yes!*] ...*as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory.”

Let’s read Gal. 4:8 again and once you understand v 8 then you’re going to understand v 9 a whole lot more. “Now on the one hand, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to those who are not gods by nature. But on the other hand, after having known God—rather, after having been known by God—how *is it that you are turning again...*” (vs 8-9). Turning back again; if you left something—which we have seen as paganism—and

they're turning back again to it, what element is being added to this? *The element of paganized Judaism with circumcision!* That's what's being added to it. We've seen that in Gal. 3 and we're going to see in Gal. 5 when we get there.

"...to the weak and impotent elements, to which you again desire to be in bondage?" (v 9). So, they were going back to what they were before they were called.

Verse 10: "You are *of your own selves*..."—a very interesting Greek verb—a middle voice—meaning you are the subject and you are the object. In other words, you are doing it for yourselves, or of yourselves—*not of God!*

"...observing days..." (v 10)—he doesn't say *Sabbath!* If you go back to the 'elemental spirits' of Jupiter, Mercury and Venus—all of the days of the week are named after pagan gods—you can't tell which days they are observing—can you? *No!* In Col. 2:16 if Paul was talking about the Sabbath, he would have written *Sabbath*. Protestants look at this and say, 'Oh, they're going back to Sabbath-keeping.' No so, it doesn't say it!

"...and months..." (v 10)—it doesn't say new moon. It just says *months*.

"...and times and years" (v 10). The only way they could observe *times*—God says you're not to (Deut. 18); and the only way they could observe *years* would be if they were in the land and they had the right, proper Jubilee. In Galatia they weren't in the land of Judea, so they couldn't be keeping the Jubilee. Are there years that pagan's observed? *Yes!*

Then Paul says, v 11: "I am afraid for you... [I don't know what to think of you] ...lest somehow I have labored among you in vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am*, for I also *am* as you *are*: you have not wronged me in anything. Now, you know that at first I preached the Gospel to you in the weakness of the flesh; and the temptation—namely, my *trial* in my flesh—you despised not, nor rejected with contempt; rather, you received me as a **messenger** of God, *even* as Christ Jesus Himself" (vs 11-14). The Greek there is 'angelos' and could be translated either *messenger* or *angel*.

Verse 15: "What then was your blessedness? For I bear you witness that, if *it were* possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. Now then, in speaking the Truth to you, have I become your enemy?" (vs 15-16). Isn't that something? That people could be turned and have their mind so moved away from Christ that when you speak the Truth to them they look upon you as the enemy. Well, they probably thought that Paul is intolerant! 'Paul doesn't understand! Paul is picking on me!'

Verse 17: "They are zealous after you, *but* not for good rather, they desire to exclude you, in order that you may be zealous after them." We can take this and just apply it to the church experience that we've had in the Church of God—right? Where those zealots were after them to get those in the Church of God to keep Sunday, Easter, New Years, and finally turn them. If you go talk to any of them you are the enemy. They may be nice to you and kind of look at you with this kind of look, 'you helpless little creature; we don't need these things anymore.' What's the matter? *They're desiring to exclude you from us in order that they be zealous after them, after their ways!*

Verse 18: "Now, *it is* right to be zealous in a right *thing* at all times, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, for whom I am again laboring in pain until Christ has been formed in you. I desire to be with you now, and to change my voice, because I am at a loss concerning you" (vs 18-20).

It sounds an awful lot like the book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* with Gnosticism coming in. There were Gnostic Jews who were pagan Jews who believed in circumcision and keeping their Gnostic laws or Judaism's Gnostic laws.

Most people today accept the foolish propaganda that is put out by the Jews that all the Jews believe the same thing. *Nonsense!* There are as many denominations and beliefs and sects of Jews as there are Protestant churches. They don't like other people to know that. The truth is that 99% of the Jews cannot stand the Orthodox, though they have political power in Israel. They hate them.

I saw a documentary where they interviewed the Jews. They were resisting and fighting the Orthodox coming into their community. Most Jews don't observe Sabbath, and one of the biggest imports of meat into Israel is 'kosher' ham! They shut down the community and they actually said—Jews said of Orthodox Jews—'those people are nuts, they're crazy!' Most people don't understand that Orthodox Judaism is another form of paganism.

The Gnostic Jews, as we were talking about, were coming around and causing a lot of those problems. The days that they observed, there was a day for every one of the planets. As was brought out in the book by Alan Knight—*Primitive Christianity in Crisis*—they were looking for the spirits to come from the different planets, and if they would be possessed by these spirits then they would be on the way to eternal life.

All of those things have a factor here in what we are talking about. So, I imagine the Apostle Paul was really truly in doubt about these people. After

they had received the Gospel and so forth, look what they were getting into: the strangest mix of anything that there can be. It wasn't going back to keep the Law of Moses, that had nothing to do with it. ***It was going back to paganism with circumcision! Unreal!*** That blows your mind! Most people cannot understand that.

I remember a noted scholar wrote a book: *The People that History Lost*, and he said that most people cannot understand that when they go into a Jewish synagogue and they see all the planetary signs and serpents and all of the pagan symbols in their synagogues that these were Jewish synagogues. He's here to tell you that they were Samaritan synagogues, which is not true. They were Jewish synagogues, because the Jews were just as pagan and Hellenized as anybody else. If you don't believe it, read Philo. He's the one who was right in the middle of mystic, kabala Judaism—which, by the way, believed that God was a trinity.

Verse 19: “My little children, for whom I am again laboring in pain until Christ has been formed in you. I desire to be with you now, and to change my voice, because I am at a loss concerning you. Tell me, you who desire to be **under law**, do you not hear the law?” (vs 19-21). Here is a perfect place for you to see that in one instance there is no definite article (v 21). In the *Interlinear* you can see very clearly that there is no definite article. At the end of the sentence there is the definite article ‘ton nomon’—*the law*.

Come back to the phrase *under law*—notice there is no definite article. *Under law* means any kind of law—pagan, Jewish or Scriptural law—if you use it in an attempt to gain eternal life. Here's something to understand: The commandments of God are required to be kept, because:

- you are not *saved in* your sins; you are *saved from* your sins.
- you are also not *justified in* your sins; you are *justified from* your sins.

Any law that you use for justification—to put you in right standing with God—or for salvation to give you eternal life, can never be accomplished because they inherently do not have life in them to give you life.

He going to give an example; he's going to compare the flesh with the spirit. Verse 21: “Tell me, you who desire to be **under law**, do you not hear the law?... [Notice what part of the Law he's going to quote, which is from Genesis. In this case the Law happens to be the book of Genesis. Part of the Law that is called the first five books of the Law or the Pentateuch.] ...For it is written that Abraham had two sons: one by the maidservant...” (vs 21-22).

Let's go back and look at that. Let's look at these two instances and let's see what happened. There's going to be another good lesson for us, a really profound lesson. You need to remember that when Paul talks about *the Law*: it can mean the first five books of Moses; it can mean the covenant given to Israel—you have to distinguish that from the context.

When you know that God has given you a promise, the lesson is to let *Him* fulfill it. Don't try and fulfill it *your* way, though it may be a legal method. Notice what Sarah did:

Genesis 16:1: “Now Sarai, Abram's wife, did not bear him any children. And she had a maidservant, an Egyptian, and her name *was* Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, ‘Behold now, the LORD has kept me from bearing. I pray you, go in to my maidservant. It may be that I may obtain children by her.’ And Abram hearkened to the words of Sarai” (vs 1-2).

If your wife asks you to sin, don't do it! That's what happened to Adam—right? Abram couldn't resist. He thought, ‘Well, you know, my wife's got some smarts and maybe she's giving me some good advice.’ He forgot all about what God told him in Gen. 15—‘of your own bowels.’ Well, this was from his own bowels, but it wasn't from the other half of his flesh, his wife.

Verse 3: “And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maidservant, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife (after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan). And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived....” (vs 3-4).

Isn't that always the way? Remember what happened later with the two wives of Jacob? Leah had all the kids! Here's Rachel over here and can't have any. What did they do? *They pulled the handmaid trick again and BOOM! BAM! BOOM! Lots of kids born!* I'm glad we can't have more than one wife today. I don't know what I would do with more than one wife! My wife would probably not know what to do with more than one husband. Since that will never be, we'll go on.

“...And when *Hagar* saw that she had conceived, she looked *upon* her mistress with contempt. And Sarai said to Abram, ‘My wrong *be* upon you. I have given my maidservant into your bosom, and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes.... [She'd waltz around there and kind of poke out her belly; you can just see that. She'd look daggers at Sari and say, ‘Na, Na, Na, Na!’] ...The LORD judge between me and you.’ But Abram said to Sarai, ‘Behold, your maidservant *is* in your hand. Do to her as it pleases you.’ And Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her presence” (vs 4-6). A

little hair-pulling contest I suppose.

Verse 7: “And the angel of the LORD found her... [here we have an angel carrying out the will of God] ...by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain on the way to Shur. And he said, ‘Hagar, Sarai’s maidservant, where did you come from? And where will you go?’ And she said, ‘I flee from the presence of my mistress Sarai.’ And the angel of the LORD said to her, ‘Return to your mistress and submit yourself under her hands.’ And the angel of the LORD said to her, ‘I will multiply your seed exceedingly, so that they shall not be numbered for multitude.’ And the angel of the LORD said to her, ‘Behold, you are with child, and shall bear a son. And you shall call his name Ishmael because the LORD has heard your affliction. And he will be a wild man. His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him. And he shall live in the presence of all his brothers’” (vs 7-12). That’s true to the character of the Arabs today. All the Arabs know they came from Ishmael.

Verse 13: “And she called the name of the LORD Who had spoken to her, You *are* a God of Seeing! For she said, ‘Even here have I seen Him that sees me?’ Therefore the well was called The Well of the Living One Seeing Me. Behold, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered. And Hagar bore Abram a son. And Abram called his son’s name, which Hagar bore, Ishmael. And Abram *was* eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram” (vs 13-16).

Let’s look at what happened with the ‘promised seed.’ We saw the flesh. Genesis 18:9: “And they said to him, ‘Where *is* Sarah your wife?’ And he said, ‘Behold, in the tent.’ And He said, ‘I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and lo, Sarah your wife *shall have* a son.’ And Sarah heard at the tent door, which was behind Him. Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old, *well* advanced in days, and it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore, Sarah laughed within herself, saying, ‘After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?’ And the LORD said to Abraham, ‘Why did Sarah laugh, saying, “Shall I, who am old, truly bear a child?” Is anything too hard for the LORD? **At the time appointed...**’ (vs 9-14).

We’ve seen this all throughout the Scriptures in things dealing with Christ and so forth—*at the appointed time!* Whatever time it was that God said.

“...I will return again, according to the time of life, and Sarah *shall have* a son” (v 14). We find this occurred in Gen. 21. Then again we have the problems with Ishmael and he was finally put out.

Genesis 21:1: “And the LORD visited Sarah as He had said. And the LORD did to Sarah as He

had spoken, for Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born to him (whom Sarah bore to him) Isaac” (vs 1-3). Later, because of the taunting of Ishmael, he was put away.

Let’s see how God viewed Isaac, Genesis 22:1: “And it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ And He said, ‘Take now your son, **your only son** Isaac...” (vs 1-2). So, Ishmael was not even counted in the promise coming down to Christ, in the blessings given later to the 12 tribes of Israel. You know the rest of the story; Abraham took Isaac out to offer him.

Galatians 4:23: “Now on the one hand, he who came from the maidservant was born according to the flesh... [Had nothing to do with promise; had nothing to do with a miracle; had nothing to do with anything out of the ordinary.] ...but on the other hand, he who came from the free *woman was born* according to the promise.” Sarah was a *free woman*. Hagar was the handmaid, the slave.

Verse 24: “Which things are allegorical, because these are the two covenants....” It’s an allegory! Some people actually feel that the physical mountain of Sinai is in Arabia. I’ve read all the books by the ones who put it out and I can conclude with what I read in the Bible that it cannot be so. This is an allegory. What is he showing here?

- Through Ishmael did not come any promise of salvation!
- The covenant made with Israel—in *the flesh*—is no better than being an Ishmaelite!

It’s not going to bring you any closer to God.

“...*The one from Mount Sinai, which is Hagar, is engendering bondage*” (v 24). Why does the Old Covenant and Judaism engender to bondage? *Because there was no promise of the Spirit for eternal life given!* It engenders into bondage *because you focus on the things that it says rather than the meaning, the spiritual intent, behind it!* You get all involved in physical things. It engenders to bondage *because there is no eternal life given to it;* so you’re still in bondage to the flesh; you’re still in bondage to the elemental spirits of God.

Verse 25: “Because Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem...” The reason he’s saying this is because the Jews always have said, ‘as long as Jerusalem stands we are God’s people.’ Well, God soon took care of that—didn’t He? About 18 years after this Jerusalem no longer existed and the temple was destroyed.

“...and she is in bondage with her children”

(v 25). All the Jews were in bondage to the Roman Empire. All of her offspring, wherever the Jews were, they were under subjugation to someone.

Verse 26: “But the Jerusalem above is free, which is *the* mother of us all... [which refers back to Sarah] ...for it is written, ‘Rejoice, O barren who did not bear! Break forth and cry, *you* who were not travailing, because many more *are* the children of the desolate than of her who has the husband’” (vs 26-27).

Hagar was given to Abraham as his wife, so he technically became her husband. There was a multitude of children that were given to Hagar—correct? A multitude of children given to the children of Israel, as well. But what God is doing here is making a point: Those spiritual children of promise are going to be more!

(go to the next track)

We are talking about ‘the children of promise,’ which then are the ‘stars of heaven.’ Genesis 15:5: “And He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your seed be.’”

We will show that these are those who will be in the Kingdom of God, which then ties in together with Gal. 4. Let’s see what Jesus said about the righteous who enter into the Kingdom of God as compared to the wicked:

Matthew 13:41: “The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all the offenders and those who are practicing lawlessness; and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun... [which we now know is a star] ...in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear” (vs 41-43). This is what Paul is showing the promise of.

Now let’s go back to Isaiah 54 and let’s see the prophecy of this, which is talking about the New Testament Church.

Isaiah 54:1: “‘Sing, O barren, you *that* never bore; break out into singing and shout, *you* who never travailed...’” Because until the Church—though it was prophesied—until the giving of the Holy Spirit there could be no spiritual seed to Abraham. So, technically speaking, Sarah symbolizing Jerusalem above was barren until Christ came. This is what it’s talking about.

“...for more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman,’ says the LORD” (v 1). Abraham did take Hagar to be his wife. The Lord took Israel to be His wife, but she

did not bear very many spiritual children.

Verse 2: “‘Make the place of your tent larger, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings. Do not spare, lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes; for you shall break out *on* the right hand and on the left. And your seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited’” (vs 2-3). The spiritual seed who will be the Church resurrected from the dead to serve as kings and priests with Christ.

Verse 4: “Do not fear; for you shall not be ashamed, nor shall you be disgraced; for you shall not be humiliated; for you shall forget the shame of your youth, and shall not remember the reproach of your widowhood any more, for your Maker *is* your husband; the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer *is* the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called, for the LORD has called you as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when you were rejected,’ says your God” (vs 4-6).

Then it blends into a type of bringing Israel back. In this prophecy we have concerning spiritual Israel and then it blends into physical Israel. Now let’s see another prophecy of this referring to the Church.

Isaiah 66:6: “A sound of noise from the city, a sound from the temple, the sound of the LORD repaying His enemies. ‘Before she travailed, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a man child.... [talking about Christ] ...Who has heard such a thing?...’” (vs 6-8).

Now it blends into the Church. One of the reasons a lot of the prophecies in the Old Testament are hard to understand is because it will go from one topic in one verse to another topic in another verse. In v 5 it’s talking about Mary who bore Christ. In v 8 it’s talking about the result of Christ, all of those who will be born of the resurrection, those who come into the Church.

Verse 8: “Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such *things* like these? Shall the earth be made to bring forth *in* one day?...’” When does the earth bring forth? To give birth to whom? *Those who are resurrected from the dead!*

“...Or will a nation be born at once?... [Yes!] ...For as soon as Zion travailed, she also gave birth to her children” (v 8)—referring to the resurrection. That’s why the barren ends up with more children than the handmaiden.

Verse 9: “‘Will I bring to the birth, and not cause to be born?’ says the LORD. ‘Shall I cause them to be born, and shut the womb?’ says your God. ‘Rejoice with Jerusalem... [Who’s the mother

of us all above? *Jerusalem!* This is what it's talking about.] ...and be glad with her, all who love her. Rejoice for joy with her, all who mourn for her" (vs 9-10).

Then it goes right on in showing here that it blends in to those who are going to be born into the Kingdom of God.

Now, let's look at one more example. Let's come back and look at the mother of Samuel, This has a more direct reference to the seven churches of Rev. 2 & 3. 1-Samuel 2:1: "And Hannah prayed and said, 'My heart rejoices in the LORD, my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth is enlarged over my enemies...'" Who was her enemy? *The first wife Peninnah!* She had children and with women's jealousy they were enemies. That's what she's talking about here; although, this extends to Christ over the enemies of the Church.

"...because I rejoice in Your salvation. *There is none Holy as the LORD, for there is none beside You. Neither is there any rock like our God. Talk no more so very proudly. Remove arrogance out of your mouth, for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. They that were full have hired themselves out for bread, and they that were hungry have ceased to hunger; yea, while even the barren has borne seven...*" (vs 1-5). I want to focus in on the barren, because that's referring to the Church.

"...and she who had many sons has languished. The LORD kills and makes alive. He brings down to the grave and brings up. The LORD takes away, and He gives riches; He brings low; yea, He lifts up high" (vs 5-7).

We will see that Hannah, the mother of Samuel, only had six children, v 21: "And the LORD visited Hannah so that she conceived, and she bore three sons... [in addition to Samuel] ...and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the LORD." If Samuel is included in the three sons, then she had a total of five children; if not then she had a total of six. This again is another prophecy of the Church.

When Paul is writing, this is the background behind all of it. We can add much more to it than what he has here. Then he gives a summary:

Galatians 4:28: "Now we, brethren, like Isaac, are *the* children of promise.... [We are the ones who will be like the stars of heaven.] ...But as *it was* then, so also *it is* now: he who was born according to *the flesh* persecuted him *who was born* according to *the Spirit*" (vs 28-29). That's what

happened with the Church. Physical Jews persecuted the Christians.

Verse 30: "Nevertheless, what does the Scripture say? 'Cast out the maidservant and her son; for in no way shall the son of the maidservant inherit *the promise* with the son of the free woman.'" This is a prophecy of the total ending of the covenant that God made with Israel. All the things of the flesh now are going to cease.

The same thing is in the world today. We have all of these false Christians out there—there are millions. But when you are counting *spiritual* children, the Jerusalem above—the mother of us all—has far more than they, because though you have millions and millions of physical people, what does that count when you have the resurrected sons of God? *They count as nothing! They're physical! They're fleshly!* You can have millions, but that's less than however many make it to the first resurrection. That's what God counts.

He's saying that rather than go back and be encumbered with the Old Covenant—Hagar—or the paganism from which you have come out of, or go back to *justification by means of law*—you're free from all of that—or justification from circumcision.

Galatians 5:1: "Therefore, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and do not be held again in a yoke of bondage." Which is:

1. paganism
2. paganized Judaism

Verse 2: "Behold, I, Paul, tell you that if you become circumcised... [for justification] ...Christ shall profit you nothing!"—because you're looking to that missing piece of flesh for justification. How can you compare that to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

And in this we are also talking about, in circumcision, that it is a sacrificing of a bit of flesh, and there is blood involved, then you are trying to justify yourself by your own means, meaning you can't save yourself. No man has! That's why "...Christ will profit you nothing!"

Let's make one thing absolutely clear: ***Sabbath-keepers do not preach circumcision for salvation—period!*** Those who accuse us of doing it, those who accuse Sabbath-keepers of doing it, have no knowledge at all as to what we truly believe and what we practice! They're only accusing us of it because they don't understand the spiritual intent of the laws and commandments of God. They are carnal minded!

Verse 3: "Again, I am personally testifying to every man who is being circumcised that he is a

debtor to do the whole law”—all the laws in the Old Covenant plus all the laws of Judaism altogether. Could those in Galatia do all the law? *No!* They would have to go to the temple to do it. There was no temple in Galatia; there was no priesthood in Galatia. This shows then a misuse of circumcision by the Jews to attain their own end.

Verse 4: “You who are attempting to be justified by *works of law*, you are being deprived of any *spiritual* effect from Christ. You have fallen from grace!” Look at that in the *Interlinear*. We can see that there is no definite article.

King James Version, v 4: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by **the** law; you are fallen from grace.” There is no reason to put in the definite article in the *KJV*, because there is none in the Greek.

Interlinear, v 4: “You are deprived from all effect from the Christ whosoever **in law** are being justified... [The word for ‘in’ could also be *by law* are being justified.] ...you fell from grace.”

Let’s just review something that we know. God has provided the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and His blood alone, for justification—nothing else will work:

- no law
- no physical thing
- no circumcision
- no paganism
- no Judaism

—will justify you—*only the sacrifice of Jesus Christ!* That is the key important thing to remember here!

If you try any other means then you are avoiding *grace*. You’re also avoiding *repentance*. If you say, ‘Okay, now I have sinned, therefore, I’m going to tithe 30% until I make up for what I feel that my sin was.

You might feel pretty good about paying 30%—provided you had the money to do it—and at the end of it you might feel pretty broke, because you might be. By the time you have 20% for taxes and 30% for tithes you would be nearly broke!

- Have you repented? *No!*
- Did you do a work of law? *Yes!*
- Did that work of law forgive you? *No!*

Only God can forgive you, through Christ! So, any work of any law cannot justify you because you must repent.

This is also a monetary thing. Also at that time, Judaism was absolutely furious with hatred toward Christianity, because the Jews had this plan of proselytizing so they could bring more Gentiles

into the synagogue and they had their dues they had to pay at the synagogue. When the believing Gentiles and the believing Jews left the synagogue it was a financial crisis!

They would come alone and say, ‘Hey! You better get circumcised here, guys. We’ve told you all this, you Gentiles, for a long time. By the way, you better come back to synagogue.’ Just like we have seen within the Churches of God when they left to follow the Truth. They said, ‘My, our income is going down.’ The only reason that it was for them to try and keep people was financial. Yes, it was financial!

Then when they made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, now then here Jerusalem gets all of this money, because they had to take their money and exchange it. They had to take their Gentile coins to the exchangers who sat there at the gate and would determine the exchange rate. They became thieves, because they were not honest in the exchange rate. Anything that you bought to be used for any temple sacrifice, any money you put in the treasury had to be temple ‘kosher’ coins.

They made money! Plus all of the sacrifices, all of the skins, except for the sin offering—the sin offering was burned—the priest would keep. They would sell that for the leather. So, it was a monetary thing!

As I mentioned last time, remember when Paul was in Ephesus—the center of the temple of Diana—the conversion of the people caused an economic depression because they could no longer make any idols. People were burning the books of Diana. Alexander the coppersmith said, ‘Hey, guys, we’ve got to get together and stop this.’ So, they had a big, tumultuous riot in the coliseum where they said, ‘Great is Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians’ and try and revive the old religion. You’ve got it coming from both ways.

If you want to be justified by any law, you have fallen from grace, because law was never given to justify. Now then, if—while the temple still stood—you thought that you would be put in right standing with God by circumcision and offering the animal sacrifices, you were still trying to be justified by law. Therefore, you have fallen from the *grace of Christ*, because you’re not believing in faith.

We need to say absolutely, unequivocally here, that though we keep the commandments of God—because you can’t be saved in your sins, and only those who are *doers of the Law* shall be justified—

- we believe in salvation by grace

- we believe in justification by grace through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin
- we believe in eternal life through the begetting of the Holy Spirit and the resurrection

Verse 5: “For we through *the* Spirit are waiting for *the* hope of righteousness by faith; because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision; rather, *it is the* inner working of faith through love” (vs 5-6). Meaning a converted heart, a converted mind, that you *believe in Christ* and you *believe Christ*—both! You *believe in Him* that He is the Messiah and His sacrifice and His blood for the forgiveness of sin and justification. And you *believe Him*, that is *what He taught!* That is the inner-working of faith through love.

Let’s come full circle here and let’s come to Matthew 22 and let’s see this. You have faith through love, and love through faith—they work together.

Matthew 22:37: “And Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” Notice that there’s nothing mentioned concerning sacrifices or laws or physical things to do. This is your whole being of love toward God.

Verse 38: “This is *the* first and greatest commandment; and *the* second *one is* like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (vs 38-40). Love supports all the Law and the Prophets, all the commandments of God.

Whereas when you have law, you’re trying to support God’s way with law going the other way. But something that is hanging can never be used as a pillar on which to build something. Let me explain it this way: Right here in this room we have hanging Venetian blinds. What is holding it up is the main thing at the top; the Venetian blinds are suspended. They are giving no support whatsoever, they’re just hanging.

It’s the same way with the Law and the Prophets. If you don’t have God Who is love, and if you don’t love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being then all you’re doing is having dangling things that never will have any substance to it.

When you sin—which you do—you will have guilt. When you do not go to Christ to bear that guilt, you are carrying it yourself. You delay going to Christ until you can get rid of the guilt. You can’t get rid of the guilt until you go to Christ. In a sense, when you carry guilt around with you, you are creating a law to yourself, which is: When I get rid

of the guilt I’ll go to Christ. You can’t be justified by carrying around your own guilt. You can only be justified by *repentance!* Believing *in Christ* and *believing Christ!*

Luke 7—This parable I really love; this is one of my favorites. Let’s go through the whole thing because it’s quite a lesson. It’s a lesson in faith and love; it’s also a lesson in judgment and self-righteousness.

Luke 7:36: “Now, one of the Pharisees invited Him to eat with him. And after going into the Pharisee’s house, He sat down *at the table*. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that He was sitting in the Pharisee’s house, took an alabaster flask of ointment, and she stood weeping behind Him, *and knelt* at His feet, *and* began to wash His feet with *her* tears and to wipe *them* with the hairs of her head; and she was ardently kissing His feet and anointing *them* with the ointment. But when he saw *this*, the Pharisee who had invited Him spoke within himself, saying...” (vs 36-39).

Notice, a point of judgment, have to discredit him, “...‘This *man*... if He were a prophet, would have known who and what the woman *is* who is touching Him because she is a sinner.’ Then Jesus answered *and* said to him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’...” (vs 39-40). Of course, he’s a big important Pharisee:

“...And he said, ‘Teacher, say *on*.’ [Jesus said]: ‘There were two debtors of a certain creditor; one owed five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty. But when they did not have *anything with which* to pay *him*, he forgave *them* both....’” (vs 40-42). There is the law that if you owe you must pay. So, they couldn’t be justified by the law, because they had nothing to pay.

“...‘Tell *Me* then, which of them will love him most?’ And Simon answered *and* said, ‘I suppose *the one* whom he forgave the most.’ And He said to him, ‘You have judged rightly.’ And after turning to the woman, He said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman?....’” (vs 42-44). Of course, He was thinking about her in His mind.

“...I came into your house, and you did not provide *any water to wash* My feet; but she has washed *My* feet with *her* tears and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. You did not give *Me* a kiss; but she, from the *time* I came in, has not ceased to ardently kiss *My* feet” (vs 44-45). Do you think a Pharisee would stoop that low, to kiss His feet?

Verse 46: “You did not anoint *My* head with oil; but she has anointed *My* feet with ointment. For this cause, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven **because she loved much**. But to whom

little is forgiven, he loves little.’ And He said to her, ‘Your sins have been forgiven.’ Then those who were sitting with *Him* began to say within themselves, ‘Who is this, Who even forgives sins?’ But He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you. Go in peace’” (vs 46-50).

- Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, “...because she loved much.”
- Her faith has “...saved you go in peace...”

Galatians 5:6: “Because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision; rather, *it is the inner working of faith through love*”—which leads you to repentance!

Luke 7 is a perfect example of that, where it is faith working through love. It’s inner-working from the inside, because it results in conversion. When you do something by law—such as to pay a debt—the only thing it does inside of you; it gives you a little relief, but now you don’t have to make the payments. That’s all!

It doesn’t convert you, because you may turn right around and go out and be indebted for something else that you want to buy. ***Faith, through love***—inner-working to change and to convert—***will lead you to repentance!***

Verse 7: “You were running well. Who hindered you, *persuading you* not to obey the Truth? This persuasion *is not coming* from Him Who calls you.... [Christ] ...A little leaven leavens the whole lump” (vs 7-9).

Once you start down the road of justification by works of law, you have works and works and works! Look at the Catholic Church. You have venial sin; you have mortal sin. However, you may buy your way out if you confess to the priest and you do what he commands you. You may have to do a special work.

The way that the last inquisition against the Waldensians was done was this way: King Louis XIV [transcriber’s correction] was in trouble with the Catholics because he was such a sinful, philandering corrupt person. He was getting older. So, the cardinal advised him that he could absolved the sins of his kingship if he would lead a crusade against the Waldensians and eliminate them. It may at first just do some ‘hail Marys’ and ‘our fathers,’ and you have to, like in Mexico, crawl on your knees a quarter of a mile until they bleed and then come up to the altar. Those are all *works of law* to justify. Once you start down that road a ‘little leaven leavens the whole lump’ and you build a whole hierarchical superstructure of laws and laws so that you can keep the whole thing moving. *It takes away faith, belief, repentance and all of that!*

Verse 10: “I am persuaded concerning you in *the Lord* that you will be otherwise minded... [and to serve Christ from the heart] ...and he who troubles you shall bear the judgment, whoever he may be. But I, brethren, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I yet being persecuted?....” (vs 10-11).

They were saying, ‘We know Paul. He’s coming along with this ethical conversion of Gentiles, but we know that he’s going to say that you need to be circumcised.’ That’s what they were saying here. That’s how they were able to persuade them *by saying* that they knew Paul was going to come back and enforce circumcision, so you might as well do it now before he gets back.’

“...Then the offense of the cross has been taken away.... [you not any longer dealing in faith] ... I would *that* they would even make themselves eunuchs... [the Greek there means *entirely cut off*; the extreme circumcision called *concision*] ...—those who are throwing you into confusion. For you have been called unto freedom, brethren; only do not *use* this freedom for an occasion to the flesh; rather, serve one another with love... [Rather than in judging who has had the flesh removed.] ...**For the whole law is fulfilled in this commandment: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’**” (vs 11-14).

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 4:3, 8
- 2) Acts 17:16-23
- 3) Galatians 4:8
- 4) Acts 17:24-34
- 5) 1 Peter 1:8
- 6) 2 Peter 1:16
- 7) Galatians 4:8-20, 19-22
- 8) Genesis 16:1-16
- 9) Genesis 18:9-14
- 10) Genesis 21:1-3
- 11) Genesis 22:1-2
- 12) Galatians 4:23-27
- 13) Genesis 15:5
- 14) Matthew 13:41-43
- 15) Isaiah 54:1-6
- 16) Isaiah 66:6-10
- 17) 1 Samuel 2:1-7, 21
- 18) Galatians 4:28-30
- 19) Galatians 5:1-6
- 20) Matthew 22:37-40
- 21) Luke 7:36-50
- 22) Galatians 5:6-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 14
- Galatians 3
- Colossians 2:16

- Deuteronomy 18
- Genesis 15
- Isaiah 66:5
- Revelation 2; 3

Also referenced: Books:

- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight
- *The People that History Lost*

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