

**Paragraph 8.3.**  
**Galatians 4:10**

**Weak and Beggarly Principles, A Relapse into Paganism**

**8.3.1.1.**

**“Law”**

There are as many pamphlets on this Scripture as the categories of their inferiority. “The weak and beggarly principles” “whereunto ye desire to turn again” and “desire to be in bondage” to, they all say, are principally manifested in and represented by **keeping of the Seventh Day Sabbath**. These “weak and beggarly principles”, they generally allege, show and prove a “return” to “Judaism”, “Judaism” enhancing the “weak and beggarly principles” of which Paul writes. And, mind you, these little masterpieces of draconian law agree that a keeping of the First Day as the “Lord’s Day” sorts not under such religious “bondage” as keeping of the Sabbath does.

Strikingly only **controversial** “expositions”, specifically aimed at attacking the Seventh Day Sabbath, pose such attitudes and arguments, while (rare) treatises of **integrity** and real scholarship, seldom if ever, reach any conclusions that might incriminate or just implicate the Seventh Day Sabbath in Galatians 4:10.

The Church, in any case, as that catholic Body of Christ, has never accepted or tolerated the denial of the **Law’s** validity – which denial is necessary to propagate such arguments against the Sabbath Day and its observance. Even in its worst mutilated version the Law is confessed as saying, “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy” (The Roman Catholic or Vulgate Fourth Commandment). The **Protestant** Church has always believed the Fourth Commandment unadulterated. The Church Catholic has always held that the Law’s binding claim constitutes the **duty of Christian freedom and worship**. The Church has always believed that the fruits of a Spirit-filled life “according to Christ” could never be in conflict with the spirit of the Law – which is God’s Law after all. Christ is more and greater than the Law and Christ’s greatness and superiority is what also elevates and magnifies the Law – which Christ thus and to this end fulfilled: “Lo I come to magnify thy Law o God!” Christ cannot be divided against himself – division is characteristic of the house of Satan.

The **presupposition** of all **Paul’s** arguments regarding the Law – the *nomos*, is its **validity**. If the Law were supposed in the Scripture under consideration, it beforehand would imply that Paul speaks not **against the Sabbath**. But seeing Paul in no uncertain terms speaks **against** whatever he speaks about here in Galatians 4:10, it cannot be the Sabbath Day. Paul’s position on the Law in a word is that the Law

is “holy”, “spiritual” and “good” – Ro.7:12, 14, 16, and that it “**witnesses to the righteousness of God**” – which implies the Law’s immutability. But the Law is desecrated and violated “if **by the works of the law** justification be obtained”, or “if **by the law** righteousness should come”, Gl.2:16, 21 – **which also** implies the Law’s immutability.

But these arguments and arguers of whom we speak say that God’s Law in so far as God’s Sabbath Day is concerned, has of Christ’s own doing (of Christ’s own “*breaking*”) become a “weak and beggarly principle” – which to my mind to say stops nowhere before blasphemy. (Says one of these Doctors, “*Now that Christ for the believer has earned redemption it is a denial of Christ to keep the Sabbath* (Seventh Day)”). The propagators actually reason that man before Christ came, obtained righteousness through the Law and by the works of the Law – as if they needed not the Saviour for the salvation of their souls – which again to my mind to reason stops nowhere before blasphemy. Moreover do they claim, “*We are not under the law*”, yet they keep their own “Sabbath” – Sunday!

**8.3.1.2.**

**“Judaism”**

*“Whatever the Lord’s Day (Sunday) had was its own, not borrowed from the Sabbath, which was regarded for religious purposes as existing no longer. Nay more, when certain Judaizing persons had troubled the Church by insisting that the law of Moses was binding upon Gentile converts, the Apostles met in council. Their decision was that certain things should be abstained from by the Gentiles, but they did not enjoin any positive ceremonial observance connected with the older Covenant, not even the Sabbath. And to this should be added that St. Paul in writing to the Colossians (2:16), to the effect, that ‘the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us’, was ‘blotted out by Christ’, ‘taken out of the way by Him’, and ‘nailed by Him to the cross’, subjoins this remarkable **exemplification of his meaning**: ‘Let no man therefor judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days : which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ’.* (Emphasis CGE)

James said that the Council’s resolutions should be added to the Christian Confession of Faith, “*through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved*”. He said not that the Christian Faith and Confession should be added to Moses. The Church Confession and the resolutions against idolatrous practices were to be read in the Church, everywhere, every Sabbath Day, as and when, “Moses” was “preached”, that is, as and when the Gospel of Jesus Christ was

preached “from Moses and the Prophets” — from the Old Testament Scriptures! Moses and the preaching of Moses accommodate and serve the Gospel, every Sabbath Day, in the Church, everywhere. Now if that doesn’t show the Christian Day of Worship, it is of no avail to try and “persuade from the Scriptures” any man that it is.

“*Christ blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us*”, says Paul. Considering “the Sabbath was made, *for man*” by ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that is, was made to man’s benefit, the Sabbath cannot be “against” man, and **cannot sort under the category of “ordinances that was against us”** (the Christian man or people). This argument is final, because it is New Testament, “Christian”, in the strictest possible sense!

*“Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain’. No testimony can be more decisive than this to the fact that **the Sabbath was of obligation no longer**. .... In the Galatians and Colossians (Paul) is treating **entirely of the Jewish Law**. **Not days simply are before his thoughts, but Sabbath Days, festal seasons or times, (as the Seven Days of the Passover), New Moons, Sabbatical Months, Sabbatical Years, all of them distinctive features of Judaism, are aimed at. He is not thinking, so far as we can gather his thoughts from the context, of anything Christian, but simply protesting against the retention of anything Jewish. The very terms which he uses, will not include Christian days, they are essentially Jewish. ... These days of Judaism, which are professedly skiaì, or dispensations of shadows ... It is, however, worth notice, that St. Paul, according to his own testimony, (1Cor.16:2), had already urged on the very Galatians whom he desires not to be bound by Jewish days, the performance of the duty of alms-giving on a certain Christian day, the first day of the week.***

*“Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain’. No testimony can be more decisive than this to the fact that **the Sabbath was of obligation no longer**.”*

By admitting this, one admits that **no** testimony existed that the Sabbath was **not** of obligation **still**, and that no testimony shall be found, because of “*days, and months, and times, and years*” none are the Sabbath! And by admitting this, one admits that **no** testimony existed that the Sabbath was **not** of obligation **still**, and that no testimony to the effect shall be found, because at that time the Church “in every city **on every Sabbath**” at the “**preaching of Moses**” witnessed to the Christ!

*“In the Galatians and Colossians (Paul) is treating **entirely of the Jewish Law**”, says Hessey. This is entirely an unfounded claim, and also an illegitimate association of “*Galatians and Colossians*”. Hessey serves to illustrate how of a matter of course these false principles of interpretation are applied, from which to reach false conclusions. In the Galatians and Colossians Paul is treating **entirely of different things**. In Colossians he admittedly, does treat on “*Jewish*” “feasts”, **but not in Galatians, plainly and intelligibly not!***

*“**Not days simply are before (Paul’s) thoughts**”, Hessey correctly observes. It is not surprising he noticed Paul presupposes of these “days” a peculiar meaning – not at all common. But to claim that “**Sabbath Days, festal seasons or times, as the Seven Days of the Passover, New Moons, Sabbatical Months, Sabbatical Years, all of them distinctive features of Judaism, are aimed at**”, is but a repetition of Hessey’s false principles of interpretation and of his false conclusions. There is no logic in them, no substance and much and total prejudice. For their peculiar character the “days” “*aimed at*” by Paul obviously and simply were “days: like months, like seasons and like years”. They were “days” “observed” in the sense of being “in bondage” and under “servitude” to “gods by nature no gods” and to “elemental principles of the world” **of the former state of pagan worship** to which the Galatians in forsaking the pure faith of Jesus, “**returned**”. Those, “*simply*”, were the “*days before Paul’s thoughts*”.*

In writing to the Galatians Paul in **no** “*like manner*” says what Peter and James in Acts 15, **not** speaking on the Sabbath Day, say. However, in writing to the Galatians Paul in **very** “*like manner*” says what Peter and James in Acts 15, **also** on **pagan error** speaking, say.

No “*similar train of remark will apply to the passage in the Romans*.” In fact “*The Apostle is there urging upon his disciples the duty of mutual forbearance and tenderness for one another’s scruples*”. In Galatians though Paul shows **no** forbearance and tenderness for the backsliders’ “*scruples*”. In Galatians 4:9-10 there is **no** thing connected with Judaism or Heathenism in respect to which the virtues of forbearance and tenderness might find due exercise. “**In vain**”, says Paul, “I fear, have I laboured for your sakes”!

“**So again**”, Hessey reiterates, “**with respect to Judaism some would observe Jewish days as a matter of conscience, though they were converted to Christianity, lest they should cast any slight upon things which were originally of God’s ordaining – others thought of those same days as things no longer of obligation, and rejoiced in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free ... But the general rule is, ‘in non-necessariis libertas, in omnibus caritas’”. J.A. Hessey, Sunday, pp. 37, 137. (Emphasis CGE)**

“*So again ... with respect to Judaism, Jewish days ...*”, while **there’s no suggestion of it in Galatians!** Hesse cunningly **smuggles** the kind of “days” mentioned in Romans **into one’s thoughts** on the “days” mentioned in Galatians. He fails to see the **uniqueness** of each of the three so-called “parallel” texts. His is of course the usual strategy to confuse. But these texts taken **contextually** clearly show little if any resemblance the one with the other. Of the three texts only Romans 14 and Colossians 2 contain a common feature in that “**Jewish**” “days” are supposed (in the case of Romans) and mentioned (in the case of Colossians).

And when we admit that the “days” relevant in Romans and Colossians were “**Jewish**”, we deny that they were “days” of “**Judaism**”. They were in fact “days” of **Old-Testament** institution, in fact Old Testament “**ceremonial**” “days” – but **far** from “Judaism”. “**Judaism**” is not “*anything Jewish*”, and “*anything Jewish*” is not “Old Testament”, and not everything “Old Testament” “*was blotted out by Christ*”. The “*law of Moses*” is no “*distinctive feature of Judaism*” but distinctly was a *feature* of **God’s** own dealings with Moses and Israel for being God’s **Church** of old.

The “days” supposed in **Romans** and in **Colossians** were, in Hesse’s own words, “*Jewish days*”, “*originally of God’s ordaining*” but “*converted to Christianity*”, which “*some* (in fact **everybody** **Christian, at first**) *would observe as a matter of conscience*”. But **Galatians** 4:10 neither supposes nor mentions “Jewish” “days”, but **heathen** “days of divination”.

As for the real meaning of these Scriptures, Hesse gives the exact interpretation in the case of Romans 14, “*The Apostle is there urging upon his disciples the duty of mutual forbearance and tenderness for one another’s scruples*”. Hesse is right in that the Church in Rome “*would observe Jewish days as a matter of conscience, though they were converted to Christianity*”. “*Lest they should cast any slight upon things which were originally of God’s ordaining*” Old Testament institutions such as Passover were observed. But not only “*some*”, “regarded days”. **Everybody** did. **Nobody** – no Christian in Rome – “*thought of those same days as things no longer of obligation*”. In Rome “*the general rule (which Paul set, was), ‘in non-necessariis libertas, in omnibus caritas’*”. The “necessity” or rather “non-necessity” in the Church of Rome, in the context of Romans 14, was not whether “days” should be regarded, but **which** days should receive **preference**, “**one** day above the others”, or, “**every** day alike”? But we don’t want to repeat this technical point which was already made clear in Paragraph 8.2.1, and we shall leave the matter here. Of importance is however, that Hesse

himself has grasped the **true issue** in the Church in Rome. He has himself found it to be an issue about the “important things” of the Christian Faith – things that concern the **heart** and Christian **relationship** and **not** the “regard” Christians paid “days”.

But Hesse implies **gross inconsistency and great partiality** on the part of Paul. And in fact gross inconsistency and great partiality on the part of Paul in matters *necessariis libertas* – things “**important** to (Christian) liberty”, “*the (Christian) duty of mutual forbearance and tenderness*” – **love!** In Romans Paul in amiable spirit on the issue of “days” acts the peacemaker, but in Galatians he on the issue of “days” acts the judge of no remorse – that is, according to Hesse.

Hesse’s statement, “(They) *rejoiced in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free*” could just as well or even better have served as a conclusion to the meaning of the **Colossians 2:16** passage. In the case of the Church in Colossus, **all** the Church “*rejoiced in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free*” and Paul would not allow the **Church**, “**you**”, the “*rejoicing*” – “in respect” of your feasting – to be judged by “**any**”, that is, by the heathen religious “**world**” of “philosophy”. But Hesse of course would not admit that, the “days” of “the three parallel texts” being the Don Quixote windmills of the Knights of the Day of the Sun.

Says Hesse, “*In the Galatians and Colossians (Paul) is treating entirely of the Jewish Law.*” Now **Paul in Colossians, is not at all** “*treating of the Jewish Law*” or of any “Law” to any degree. The word “law” or the concept or even idea of “Law” nowhere features **as the point at issue** in Colossians. Again we won’t repeat, so see Paragraphs 8.3 (“Paul and the Law”) and 8.2.2 (“A spectre of the Church”). Here the point is that in Colossians Paul has “*before his thoughts ... not days simply ... but Sabbath Days*”. “*All of them*” despite the fact that they were **not permanent**, yet were “*distinctive features*” of the **Christian Church!** Paul is thinking of “*things Christian*”. He protests against anything the Church could be **deprived** of through “philosophy” or the “world”.

Nobody was “**bound by Jewish days**”, not in the Church in Colossus, not in the Church in Rome, and not in the Churches of Galatia. In Rome as in Colossus the celebrating of these days was **free** and not from bondage. In Galatians the days **were not** these days, the days of Old Testament institution and of divine origin, but “days, like months, like seasons, like years, observed”, “in bondage”, to “gods by nature no gods” and under “principles”, “cosmic”, and “weak and beggarly”! Paul in Colossians *protests against* the **unbelievers’ judgment** of the Church in its **freedom** “regarding eating and

drinking of feasts and Sabbath Days”. “**Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days.**” Paul protests notwithstanding the fact that these were of Old Testament institution and retention, “*professedly skiaî, or dispensations of shadows of things to come, indeed the Church as Christ’s Body*”. The Body still had to “**grow with the growth of God**” (2:17, 18). All this is **most positively a defence** of the Church’s Faith and Practice, *subjoining Paul’s meaning* in the face of “the world”. It is no less than Paul’s endorsement of the stand the Church took **for believing in Jesus Christ!** But verse 17 is a **reminder to the Church** that it has not reached “fullness” yet and that its eating and drinking do not constitute the Kingdom of God (as Paul phrased the matter in Romans 14:17). The Church should strive towards perfection when “Christ (will be) all in all” and the Body will have reached “fullness”. **To boast perfection** is distinctive of the “wisdom”<sup>Wd7</sup> and “doctrine” of the “world”. **To strive and persevere towards perfection** is distinctive of the “Body that is Christ’s”. Paul in Colossians boasts achievement, attainment, “fullness”, “**in Christ**”. Colossians is occupied with Christ Jesus. It wastes no attention to “anti-Jewish” sentiment.

Paul’s **castigating** reprimand in Galatians 4:10 and 5:2 starkly contrasts with his approving, defensive and protecting **vouching** for the Church in Colossians. Nevertheless neither of the passages in any negative way concern **Jewish or Old Testament “days”**. In Colossians the **world’s judgment** on the Church over its **free-in-Christ celebrating**, feasting, eating and drinking, causes Paul’s belligerent outcry, “Let no man judge you”. In Galatians the Church’s “**bondage**” to “principles / rulers of the world” and “**relapse**” into idolatry causes Paul’s cry of anguish, “*You are fascinated by days, months, seasons, years! I am afraid for your sakes my labour was in vain!*”

The three texts should not be thrown together and interpreted with one word, “**Judaism**”! They must each be interpreted to the demands of their own **contexts and immediate content**, and while Romans 14:5-6 and Colossians 2:16-17 do shed some light one upon the other, neither helps understanding of Galatians 4:9-10 but by way of **contrast**.

“*The Sabbath ... was regarded for religious purposes as existing no longer*”, says Hesse. Yet he observes, “*the Apostles ... did not enjoin any positive ceremonial observance connected with the older Covenant, not even the Sabbath*”. Why would they not? The Council itself decided “That we write unto them (the Gentile

Churches) **because Moses** since of old has his preachers, he being read in the Churches in every city every Sabbath Day”. “*Moses already tells all believers that they should abstain from idolatrous pollutions, from idolatrous fornication and from idolatrous eating of strangled meat and blood. We write to them that they should heed Moses in this regard and have an ear for the Gospel that sets them free from such things.*” These “decrees that were ordained of the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem” were put in writing (15:29) and carried by Paul and company and delivered in person to each Church “as they went through the cities ... for to keep”, 16:4. For Paul had decided, “Let us go again and visit our brethren **in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord, and see how they do!**” “And so were the Churches established in the faith, and increased in numbers daily”. In Troas (of all places) Paul received a vision and as direct result and without any by-ways went to Philippi “and on the Sabbath ... where prayer was wont to make, spoke” the Gospel and baptised believers, 16:9 to 15.

**Paul delivered the Council’s decisions precisely where and when Moses was read in the Churches.** Moses and the Sabbath were God’s instruments for the hearing of the Gospel. “*Those who in every city every Sabbath preach Moses*” is James’ terminology for the **organisational infrastructure** of the Christian Church of his time. In it lay its **activity and strength. It was of God’s providence.** Paul used the very opportunity the reading of Moses offered for the purpose of “proclaiming the Word of the Lord”! (Jesus did exactly the same Himself – He used the Scriptures of the prophets to explain the things concerning Himself – “as His custom was on the Sabbath Day”!) “Every Sabbath Day” created opportunity for proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the “preaching of Moses”. **Yet,** says Hesse, “*The Sabbath ... was regarded for religious purposes as existing no longer*”! Could it be farther from truth or reality?

The Church’s **diction**, the reading of the **Scriptures** – “Moses”, guards its **decision** (the Council) and its **mission** (the Gospel)! And the **Sabbath** serves vehicle to its proclamation, that is, according to Acts 15:21! “*The Apostles did not enjoin any positive ceremonial observance connected with the older Covenant, not even the Sabbath*” because they, **undersigned, employed its positive institutional observance connected with the New as with the Old Covenant.** The observance of the Sabbath – “*originally of God’s ordaining*” – was the *status quo* in the Church at the time of the Council. Certainly *the Sabbath for religious purposes was regarded as existing still.*

But the main problem with Hessey's mention of the Jerusalem Council in connection with Galatians 4:10, is its **irrelevancy**. There exists no relation between the two passages but what for Hessey's own purposes he creates. James *is not thinking, so far as we can gather his thoughts from the context, of anything not Christian* in Acts 15 **but what he specifies for not being Christian in verse 20**. And James *is, in fact, thinking, so far as we can gather his thoughts from the context, of nothing but things Christian* in **verse 21 as necessities**, that *subjoin*, support and carry his own and the Council's decision and vision for the Church. And Paul *is not thinking, so far as we can gather his thoughts from the context, of anything Christian* in Galatians 4:9-10. In both Scriptures though – and **herein lies their only semblance**, both James and Paul are *but simply protesting against the retention of anything heathen and idolatrous*. The **very terms used** by James in Acts 15:20 *will not include Christian* – or "*Jewish*" – practices, or by Paul in Gal.4: 9-10, *will not include Christian* – or "*Jewish*" – practices. The **practices** referred to in Acts 15:20 *are essentially idolatrous, and heathen*. "**Because of Moses**", **idolatry** cannot be allowed or tolerated in the **Christian Church!** The "**days**" referred to in Gal.4:19 *are essentially idolatrous, and heathen*. And because of Christ, because of God's Law, and because of the apostle Paul, cannot be allowed or tolerated in the **Christian Church!** *These days* as these **practices** are *professedly* "pollutions" and spiritual "fornications" from the Gentiles' former status when they "knew not God and did service unto them which by nature are not gods". Now converted Christians, these Gentiles "desire to be in bondage again" to these old gods of theirs! Unimaginable! These indeed were *dispensations of shadows* of hell and perdition. *St. Paul, according to his own testimony, urged on the Galatians not to be bound by pagan days*. He urged upon them *the duty* not to "**turn again**" to such "**weak and beggarly principles**", "**worldly principles**" that manifested itself in the "**observations**" of "days and moons and seasons and cycles of years". As when "**you knew not God**" these time-cycles like deities secured for the Galatians their future and fate. This was the case with regard to Galatians 4:10. This was Paul's first letter, written while the converted still lived very near their heathen roots. This was **not** the case with regard to the Church in Colossus. In Colossians the matter of being "*bound by* (pagan) *days*" no longer existed. The whole letter to the Colossians is a manifest of Christian liberty. "*That 'the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us', was 'blotted out by Christ', 'taken out of the way by Him', and 'nailed by Him to the cross', subjoins this remarkable exemplification of Paul's meaning: 'Let no man*

*therefor judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days : which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ'.*" "Who condemns us? Christ is the One who died, yea rather, who is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us" ... will **He** condemn us? "He makes intercession for us!" Will **He** judge us? Indeed yes, and no man! "Then let no man judge you!" For "who shall separate us from the love of Christ, tribulation, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded", says the same Paul who wrote Colossians and 2:16, "that neither death, nor life, nor **angels**, nor **principalities**, nor **powers**, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord". Here are two Scriptures that **for the purpose of their own meaning and message** may and should be compared and associated, Colossians 2:16-17 and Romans 8:33-39. The early Christians **rejoiced**, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us". Christ the King served **us**, his **servants**, and wrought for us **eternal glory as though we were greater than kings**. Because **Christ** did it for us, we **are** greater than kings and conquerors! **What then, shall we not celebrate?** Shall we not eat, not drink, not on Feasts, not on New Moons, not on Sabbath Days of all days? "(God) left not himself without witness in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, **filling our hearts with food and gladness**", Acts 14:17. Shall we not eat our fill nor quench our thirst? Is not the Bridegroom and his the Spirit with us? Will any fast? Shall we not because we know Christ or rather are known by Him, **rest our hearts and our bodies?** What do you take us for, spirits, ascetics, men of the world? Do you take us for **strangers** to the promises and the covenant of grace and the sure word of prophecy? Strangers to the fathers and the patriarchs and prophets? Is not Jesus, Son of man and Son of God, Lord also of our salvation and of our Sabbath Days – his own Sabbath Days? You, who so envy our freedom in **Christ**, shall not be the judge of **us!** This says Paul in Colossians 2:16. **This freedom Paul** in Galatians 14:9-10 **supposes by many of the Church scorned and slighted**, by many who "desire to turn again to the weak and beggarly principles" of the world of their former state in paganism.

**1 Thessalonians 1:9b - 10:**

How to  
God  
turned ye  
from idols  
to serve  
the living and true  
God  
to wait  
for his Son whom He  
raised from the dead,  
from heaven,  
Even Jesus who delivered us  
From the wrath to come

How after you have come  
to know God  
do you turn back again  
to things that by nature are no gods  
you desire to do servitude  
to weak and beggarly  
powers / rulers / principles  
you augur / haruspicate /divine

days,  
months,  
seasons,  
years

“And now that you know God, or rather now that you are known by God, how do you turn again to the weak and beggarly rulers whom you desire to serve all over again? You really even divine days, months, seasons, years!” *‘Incomprehensible!*

*Unbelievable!* says Paul. *Can these masters save you from the wrath to come? Do these rulers upon whom you fix your sight of their own rise from the dark like Christ by the power of God rose from the dead? You pine after your former celestial gods. These you would love to worship again. While **turning your back** on the Lord you really **look to** days, months, seasons and years! But even of these rulers Jesus Christ our Lord is Lord and He over their rule rules. So you improve or progress not, but turn back and fall low serving rulers themselves poor and beggarly. They are by nature no gods, but you make of them gods, serving and worshipping them as gods as if they could save you from the wrath to come!*”

Colossians 2:16-17 and Galatians 4:9-10 should not be compared for the sake of “Jewish days” or “Judaism”; also not Colossians 2:16-17 and Acts 15:20-21; also not Acts 15:20-21 and Galatians 4:9-10, and also not in between, beginning with and ending with Romans 14:5-6! For in the Scriptures of Romans and Colossians, the “days” are meant as Christian and, that of Galatians, as pagan. In Acts, in Romans and in Colossians, the “Law of Moses” opposes not the law of Christ nor does Christ oppose Moses, but the servant serves its Master faithfully “everywhere every Sabbath Day in the Church”.

“So **again** with respect to Judaism”, says Hessey, Paul, “in writing to the Galatians (4:9, 10) says in like manner ... some would observe Jewish days ...”. Hessey – and any in agreement with him – really has no argument. He only repeats over and over, the **one**

**assumption**, that Paul in these “parallel” texts, speaks of “*Judaism*”, “*Jewish days*” and “*anything Jewish*”. Hessey may call it “*the Law of Moses*”, or “*ceremonial*”, Ridderbos may call it “*axioms*” of “bondage”, but at bottom the “**Judaism**” they have in mind differs nothing. While speaking on Galatians 4:10 having nothing substantially to say because nothing of what they beforehand wanted to have said can be found in this Scripture, Hessey like everybody else on Galatians 4:10 no more than **repeats** his digression on **Romans 14:5-6**. So it’s **Paul** who repeats himself in **three** Scriptures. “*In the Galatians and Colossians (Paul) is treating **entirely** of the **Jewish Law ... and a similar train of remark will apply to the passage in the Romans***”.

Hessey implies that Paul repeats himself in **four** Scriptures, if Acts 15:20-21 is understood as the writing to the Churches of the apostles collectively, Paul included. **See Par. 7.1.5.1.1 Part 3/1**. Acts 15 should not be applied vindictively against the Sabbath (of which Jesus is **forever** Lord). **The Council supposed the furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ** through the reading of the Scriptures and the preaching of Moses “every Sabbath in the Church in every city”. In this must be seen the vindication of the Sabbath in Church-life of apostolic times. That would be the proper and just approach to the *Sitz im Leben* of the beginnings of Christianity. It must be concluded, that *when certain Judaizing persons had troubled the Church by insisting that circumcision was binding upon Gentile converts because the law of Moses required it, the Apostles met in council. Their decision was **1**, that by authority of Moses the question of circumcision justifies no discussion by the Council because it is fully answered by the truth of the doctrine of righteousness by faith only to which Moses and the Law fully agree. **2**, Their decision by authority of Moses was as far as the Gentile converts were concerned, that certain idolatrous things should be abstained from. By authority of Moses these idolatrous abominations were not “Lawful” for **Christians. 3**, Their decision by authority of Moses did not enjoin any positive ceremonial observance connected with the older Covenant, not even the Sabbath, because by authority of Moses the Scriptures being read in the Church everywhere every Sabbath vindicates completely, salvation in Jesus Christ by faith only.*

As if the Church knew “Scriptures” other than the Old Testament, Hessey and his like speak scornfully of Moses and the Sabbath. It is most inept to bring Acts 15 into support of arguments **against** the Sabbath claimed from the three so-called “parallel” texts.

### 8.3.1.3. “Superstition”

“In Galatians, as in Romans, the Sabbath is not explicitly mentioned. Paul does mention, however, that some Galatian Christians had themselves circumcised (Gal 6:12; 5:2) and had begun to “observe days, and months, and seasons, and years” (Gal 4:10). In many respects the polemic in Galatians 4:8-11 is strikingly similar to that of Colossians 2:8-23. In both places the superstitious observance of sacred times is described as slavery to the “elements”. In Galatians, however, the denunciation of the “false teachers” is stronger. They are regarded as “accursed” (Gal 1:8, 9) because they were teaching a “different gospel”. Their teaching that the observance of days and seasons was necessary to justification and salvation perverted the very heart of the Gospel (Gal 5:4).” Prof. S. Bacchiocchi, *The Sabbath in the New Testament*, vii, *The Sabbath in Galatians*, p. 121.

“In many respects the polemic in Galatians 4:8-11 is strikingly similar to that of Colossians 2:8-23.” I am unable to see striking similarity in any respect between these two passages. Is it true that “in both places the superstitious observance of sacred times is described as slavery to the “elements”? In Galatians “the superstitious observance of sacred times is described as slavery to the “elements””, but not in Colossians. How can Prof. Bacchiocchi assert that “In Galatians, the denunciation of the “false teachers” is stronger” when in neither passage Paul attacks “false teachers”? In both Letters Paul addresses the **Church** as such. In Colossians he **encourages** the Church not to be “judged in food or drink of (Old Testament) feasts” etc. In Galatians he **denounces** the Church for its “observance” of “cosmic” “days”. “However” (which means **difference** between the two Scriptures), says Prof. Bacchiocchi, “some Galatian Christians had themselves circumcised”. The Colossians did not. The Galatians “are regarded as “accursed” because they were teaching a “different gospel””, the Colossians are not. Paul defends the Colossians in their practices. **Their** “Gospel” was Paul’s, **their** “regard” for “days” was Paul’s. **Their** “days” were Paul’s, regardless of the future possibility that later Christians would even better than Paul understand these “days” as no longer binding or at least no longer binding in the same way and sense.

“In Galatians, as in Romans, the Sabbath is not explicitly mentioned”, says Prof. Bacchiocchi. Fact is, in Galatians, as in Romans, the Sabbath is not explicitly mentioned nor even implicitly suggested. The correct understanding of Ro.14:5-6 and Col.2:16 does not demand the denial of the fact but its acceptance that the Sabbath was kept in the two Congregations **for the very reason** that the Sabbath is not mentioned or even thought of in these passages. Also the Sabbath can be understood as **involved though not even implied** as the Sabbath-“**day**” “with regard” to which no one should judge the Church. The “strong” “regarded the day” and **naturally** would not have neglected the Sabbath Day! The inference follows from the **fact of the Sabbath’s observance** and not from its being mentioned or supposed in either of these Scriptures. And the inference follows not from the Sabbath’s **denunciation** in any way!

#### 8.3.1.3.1.

##### Persons Or Personifications?

“Be there **some** that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ ... let **him** be accursed”, says Paul in 1:7-8 “Foolish **Galatians**, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth?”, he asks in 4:1. Paul clearly supposes “false teachers”. He regards them “as “accursed” (Gal 1:8,9) because they were teaching a “different gospel”.” They tried to impose their perversion of the Gospel upon “them which are of faith, the same which are the children of Abraham”.

Nevertheless, the fact does not require that Paul meant these “bewitchers” **personally, throughout** his Letter. Rather, Paul “speaking after the manner of men” (3:15), imagines the **doctrines as such, as personae**. He addresses no separate clique of “false teachers” who harass the Church. He does not direct his words **at** “false teachers” nor does he have any in mind personally. Paul held the Galatians **Church** responsible. When saying, “they intoxicate / zealously affect you; yea, **they** would exclude you that you might affect **them**” (4:17), Paul has in mind the **“principles that rule”**, the **impersonal “elements** ... whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage” (9), to do “service unto **them** which by nature are **no-gods**” (8). “Do you see me, Paul, for your enemy?” (16) “I am not your enemy, “they”, these “non-gods” and “elements”, and the “strange gospel” are your personal enemy! “They” are “those” “who” “bewitch” you.”

Thus Paul **personifies** also the **Law**. “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not **hear the law (speak)?**” (21). “God sent forth his Son ... to redeem them that are under the Law ... wherefor thou art no more a **servant** (of the Law as a personified master) but a

son.” “These things are an **allegory** of two covenants”, says Paul, “The one”, says he, “stands for **Agar**” – Agar **personifies** the one covenant (24). “We are not children of the bondwoman, (31), but of the free “woman”. “Jerusalem above” seen as “**mother** of us all” (26), is the **personification** of God’s **Church**. “The heir ... is under **tutors and governors** (the law personified) ... so even we ...” (1, 2). Paul **personifies** the Law **and** the **idols**. He makes “**them**” **speak**; he makes them **lords, mothers, intimidating tyrants**, and the enticed believers, their pitiable servants and slaves. Paul speaks of “*false teaching*” as being “false **teachers**”. “**Who** hath bewitched you?” asks Paul as though he cannot indicate any specific **persons**. “*Their teaching that the observance of days and seasons was necessary to justification and salvation*” must be remembered actually is, **the teaching as such** that the observations of days and seasons was necessary to justification and salvation. And so it seems the **whole Galatians Church** had been led astray. Paul reasons as were the **errors, persons**.

“*Some Galatian Christians had themselves circumcised (Gal 6:12; 5:2) and had begun to “observe days, and months, and seasons, and years.”*”

Paul addresses the **whole** Galatians Church. He does not indicate or implicate specific persons **in the proximity of 4:8-10 – not before 5:7 and 10**. And that is most important for the correct understanding of Galatians **4**, because Paul regards the “**gods**” and “**rulers**” of verses eight and nine as “persons”. Says Paul, “Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth, that **they** zealously affect you badly. Yes, **they** would exclude you (from the adoption of sons, 4:5) that ye might affect **them** (“be entranced by **them**” = “be **their** zealots” – *autous dzehloute*)”, 4:16-18. “**They**” are nowhere in the **foregoing context** indicated **but as** the “**gods** that by nature are no gods”, “weak and beggarly **rulers or principles**”, indeed the “principles or rulers of the **world**”, 4:5. **Verses 17 and 18 clarify and exemplify what Paul has earlier stated in verse 9**. “You desire to be in bondage again **to those things you used to be enslaved to** in observing days and months and seasons and years ... **to those things** (– *tois*, personal pronoun) **who** by nature are **no-gods** ... weak and beggarly **principles** (rulers / powers / elements – *stoichehia*)”.

#### 8.3.1.3.2.

##### “**These Things Are An Allegory**”

Paul writes to people from the same background – Gentiles. They were “*gendered* = born under bondage”.<sup>24</sup> Then Paul “at the first preached the Gospel” to them.<sup>13</sup> “Don’t you hear what the Law says?”<sup>21</sup> The Law says, “He of the freewoman is born of the

promise!”<sup>2</sup> “These things (what the Law says) are an **allegory**”, says Paul.<sup>24a</sup> Those born “after the flesh”<sup>23a</sup> are “born unto bondage”, 24b. The Galatian converts received a second mother, Jerusalem which is above, (the) **free**”.<sup>26</sup> “Jerusalem above”, **the Christian Faith**, is “mother of **us all**” – Jews and Gentiles.<sup>26</sup> “We now, brethren, (I, Paul, reckon myself as being born of Agar, as being brother of her sons.) **as Isaac**, are the children of promise!”<sup>28</sup> But the Gentiles who also had become “children of the promise”, were **forsaking their Christian “liberty”** (5:1) only to “become entangled **again** with the yoke of (their **former**) bondage”. **They surrendered their adoption of sons**<sup>5</sup> for bondage under the elements (“rulers”, “principles”) of the world.<sup>3</sup> They traded their blessedness<sup>15</sup> for animosity.<sup>16</sup>

This “yoke of bondage” of 5:1, Paul calls that bondage “to the weak and beggarly principles of the world” in 4:3 and 9! In 5:2 Paul tells these erstwhile Gentile heathen and pagans, “Listen, I, Paul, tell you, you may circumcise yourselves, but Christ shall profit you nothing!”<sup>5:2</sup> On the contrary, you will be worse off, “For I guarantee you, everyone circumcised is under obligation to keep the whole Law perfectly”.<sup>5:3</sup> To have yourselves circumcised exempt you not, protects you not, pardons you not. **You only bring yourselves under greater judgment**. “Christ has become of no benefit to you”.<sup>5:4</sup>

**But why is Paul so severe and strict?** He nowhere else in his letters so sternly denounces the circumcised. He in fact himself had Timothy circumcised. He said he would become like the Jews if for their salvation, as he would become like a heathen if for their salvation. Why would he not allow others the same adaptability? Why would Paul fear that “All my labour on you will be of no avail”?<sup>4:11</sup>

**They made it their own** burden to work out their salvation. “Whosoever is justified by the law have actually fallen from grace”. How can one be justified by something one is an offender of, by that which condemns? It is simple. If the Law should justify, one is **doubly damned**. Circumcision of oneself only **seals** one’s already sure doom because man by Law is a sinner **already**. God shall not be mocked nor intimidated! “When you are in Jesus Christ, to be circumcised or not helps you nothing”.<sup>5:6</sup> **Circumcision brings you not into Christ**. If you are in Him, He exclusively is your justification and your salvation. “Faith that by the love of Christ works”, does avail. “You have done well so far. Who then hindered you that you will not obey the truth? This persuasion you have not received from Him who called you.”<sup>5:8</sup> “God who sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, **He** is calling, Father, Father!”<sup>4:6</sup> “I have confidence in you (“persuaded of better things concerning you”, Hebrews) through the Lord, that you will be like-minded. And for



certain he that troubled you shall suffer the judgment of the Lord whoever he might be.” (“Whoever he might be ...” Paul all along had been speaking about things as persons!)

### 8.3.1.3.3.

#### **Syncretism**

“*Some Galatian Christians*” did **two** things, they “*had themselves circumcised*”, and they “*had begun to “observe days, and months, and seasons, and years”*”. These backsliders though, “*had begun*” by “observation (not “observance”!) of days, and months, and seasons, and years”, and **then, to crown their arrogance**, they also had themselves circumcised.

Paul in Galatians addresses **two conglomerated issues, within the Church**, one clearly of **Judaistic** sentiment and the other just as clearly an inclination to **heathen** habits. These should not be confused or identified. An unprejudiced survey of the whole letter and its main concerns makes it easy and simple to realise that there had been **different philosophies behind** the different **manifestations of error**. They were distinct but combined were even deadlier sins. The two errors have **traditionally** been **identified** and the **standard** interpretation of the phrase, “You observe days, months, seasons and years”, has been that these time-cycles were “Jewish Sabbaths”. Those who “observed” them were “Judaistic”, and so “**Judaism**” is **incorporated into the Galatians religion**. But in Galatians the “Judaism”-aspect is not derived from idolatrous days, but from circumcision. “Observers” of these cosmic time-cycles at the time need not have been Jews because Gentiles as converted but backsliding Christians could just as well have entertained enthusiasm for (“Jewish”) “days”. As for the issue of circumcision, Paul supposes an adult practice. All Jews were circumcised as eight days olds and could not have had themselves circumcised as adults. Those who “*had themselves circumcised*” had to have been **Gentiles**.

It is clear that while Paul writes chapter 5, chapter 4 is prominent in his mind constantly. The circumcision Paul in chapter 5 speaks of for no moment loses its relation with the backsliding he in chapter 4 speaks of. These persons are not circumcised in order to **enter** the Church. They **are** the Church, **as un**circumcised, but now are corrupted by being circumcised. They have themselves circumcised **so as to make good for their backsliding** into heathen observation of horoscopic days.

The **main reason** why Paul shows the backsliders **no mercy** is that the Galatians as the Church of Jesus Christ has **added to its idolatry, audacity**. The professing Christian Body of worshippers **left its post, returned to idolatry** and now **tempts God, defying his**

**judgment.** *We shall have ourselves circumcised and force the hand of God. We will live a double life of sin and piety. While sticking to our old pagan ways we will be Jews as well as Christians.* Learned men call this misfeasance “**syncretism**”. In Paul’s eyes it was nothing but the worst form of **hypocrisy**. *You may call yourselves Christians. But I tell you, you are not. “You are cut off from Christ.” Your pretence I Paul see through. Do you think God does not? Well, then you are mistaken for what you are busy with is idolatry, well may it be circumcised idolatry, Judaised paganism, but idolatry non the less!*

### 8.3.1.4.

#### **Irreconcilable Polemic**

*“In many respects the polemic in Galatians 4:8-11 is strikingly similar to that of Colossians 2:8-23.”*

Any similarity there might be does not seem to “*respect polemic*”.

<b><u>Romans 14:5-6</u></b>	<b><u>Colossians 2:16-17</u></b>	<b><u>Galatians 4:9-10</u></b>
An internal Church matter	An external menace	An unholy mongrelism
Church divided	Worldly principles of philosophy	Weak and beggarly principles
Judged one another	“Don’t be judged by any man”	Judged by God
Paul addresses various factions in the Church	Paul addresses “you” the Church suffering for the Faith	Paul addresses The Church apostate
He admonishes all parties	He “consoles” the Church and exhorts Growth	He condemns the presumptuous backsliders
The kingdom of God is not food and drink	Go on! Feast! for these are but a shadow of the coming!	I fear my labour was in vain! You’re cut off from Christ!

*“In both places (Gal.4:9-10 and Col.2:16) the superstitious observance of sacred times is described as slavery to the “elements”.* *In Galatians, however, the denunciation of the “false teachers” is stronger. They are regarded as “accursed” (Gal 1:8,9) because they were teaching a “different gospel”. Their teaching that the observance of days and seasons was necessary to justification and salvation perverted the very heart of the Gospel (Gal 5:4).”* Prof. Samuele Bacchiocchi, *The Sabbath in the New Testament*, p. 121, par. a

“In both places (Gl.4:9-10 and Col.2:16) the superstitious observance of sacred times is described as slavery to the “elements”.” In Galatians the observation of times indeed is “superstitious”, and “sacred” to pagan beliefs. It should rightly be regarded “as slavery to the “elements”.” (Thus again, “elements” are personified. “Elements” are the slave-masters.) But in Colossians there is a world’s difference because there Paul propounds the **innocent and free Christian feasting of divinely** ordained sacred occasions. Nowhere and no how in Colossians is this holy feasting of Christ’s freemen “described as slavery to the “elements”.” Rather, it is there **defended** against being incriminated against by the “cosmic rulers”. **No resemblance** with Galatians’ superstitious times exists in Colossians.

“Their teaching that the observance of days and seasons was necessary to justification and salvation perverted the very heart of the Gospel (Gal 5:4).” By their practice of observance of superstitious times the Galatians proved their defying the justification and salvation that is the heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Theirs was not merely a perversion of the Gospel, but its negation, denial and defiance. The Galatians forsook the Gospel of Christ for the idolatry of their former pagan heathendom. That is what the **plain language** of 4:9-10 conveys. And the plain language of 5:1 and further states that these backsliders added to their backsliding the **presumptuous and defying abuse of the Abrahamic sign**, circumcision. But Paul refuses such **malpractice**. “They which be of **faith** are blessed with the faithful Abraham (not they that forsake faithfulness to God) ... for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth **not in all** things which are written in the book of the Law to **do** them”. You cannot claim the blessings while despising the blessings’ claim on you. The Law shall be your enemy, “for as many as are of the works of the Law are under its curse”. (3:9-10)

“Paul’s concern is not to expose the superstitious ideas attached to these observances, but rather to challenge the whole system of salvation which the Galatians’ false teachers had devised. By conditioning justification and acceptance with God to such things as circumcision and the observance of days and seasons, the Galatians were making salvation dependent upon human achievement. This for Paul is a betrayal of the Gospel: “You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace” (Gal 5:4).” 122, c.

I cannot see how “Paul’s concern is not to expose the superstitious ideas attached to these observances”, “but rather to challenge the whole system of salvation which the Galatians’ false

teachers had devised”. Paul is as concerned “to expose the superstitious ideas attached to these observances”, as he is “to challenge the whole system of salvation which the Galatians’ false teachers had devised”. The false teachers for Paul are none other than the Galatians Church, and “the superstitious ideas attached to these observances” are none but those of the Galatians Church.

**Paul doesn’t confront individuals as much as he combats ideologies.** He exposes the idolatrous “principles” **basic to** observance of superstitious times. He challenges the Galatians’ syncretistic system of pagan worship and abuse of the Mosaic Law for perverted ideological advantage. *Paul’s concern* clearly and emphatically *is to expose the superstitious ideas attached to these observances*. He *challenges the whole system of error and godlessness the Galatians’ false teachers had devised*. Christianity cannot be compromised. Even if one were a son of Abraham by self-inflicted “mutilation” of the body (= “circumcision”), it could not persuade God to justify the ungodly and faithless. The Law cannot save one, it can only condemn one. One cannot, against the Law, worship God while worshipping idols physical or ideological.

**The theological misconception must be rejected that Paul in 3:10 says that unless one keeps the whole law perfectly it cannot save one.** Such a supposition implies that if one keeps or could keep the law perfectly, it is possible to be saved through perfect keeping of the law. Paul speculates not. What he says, he means, that God gave the Law for any and all “to continue in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them”. And he confirms this Biblical fact of “The Law”, saying, “That no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God is evident, for (it is written in the Law) ‘The just shall live by faith’.” **It is not a matter whether he keeps it perfectly or not.** “The man that keeps the Law shall live therein”, 11-12. The man that believes God’s Law must keep it and does keep it. Paul says **no more or any different**. He means, suggests, implies or insinuates no more or any different. Man, the law of God is there for you to obey. It is your life-long duty. “Don’t you know the Law has dominion over man as long as he lives?” (Ro.7:1) **And if you belong to God you so much the more obey the Law!** Of course it is not there to save you. The Law is conditional of man’s duty, not of his salvation. “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” any honest man looking at himself in the light of **Christ Jesus, must cry out. He does not come to realise his helplessness through beholding the Law!** Man shall be saved in Jesus Christ by grace through faith. That is the whole Gospel, the full Gospel - the **only** Gospel. Paul’s is the Gospel, the Gospel he preached and taught in his Letters, **as here in**

**Galatians.** “I through the Law am dead to the Law that I may live unto God!” (2:19). *Therefore, o man, don’t think you’re at liberty to break God’s Law serving your erstwhile idols and then boast God’s Law having yourselves circumcised as though the Law could justify your breaking it. The Law could not justify you for its keeping how much less for its breaking! You cannot be justified for breaking the Law. The Law confirms you in your lost state of idolatry and weak and beggarly debt and servitude. The Law is the harshest disciplinarian at the command of God!* (3:24) **You, o Galatians, think that the Law will not kill if disobeyed, but in the face of God will pardon in its provocation? Are you mad!** “O foolish Galatians, who have bewitched you that you will not obey the truth? There is no one but yourselves to be blamed, you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth as among you crucified?” “You are cut off from Christ!” (5:2)

“By conditioning justification and acceptance with God to such things as circumcision and the observance of days and seasons, the Galatians were making salvation dependent upon human achievement.”

I think Prof. Bacchiocchi does not grasp the seriousness of the Galatians’ heresy. He understands it as something synergistic like Pelagianism. “Making salvation dependent upon human achievement” in essence of course, is idolatry, but it is not as mockingly arrogant as **to seal one’s relapse into idolatry with the holy institution of circumcision.** Paul for no moment finds fault with the Abrahamic covenant sign, but with its **abuse**, namely **to wed the Christian Faith with paganism.** In Colossians the “false teachers” boasted “human achievement”, “perfection”, “fullness”, true “wisdom” etc. In Galatians the defect reached tragic proportions. Paul commends a defensive mood in Colossians. In Galatians he laments a seemingly irrevocable, “weak and beggarly” decadence. Again one and all must witness in awe the triumph of the Gospel, in view of the fact that Christianity must have heeded Paul’s plea and had then put away its false gods and superstitious “days and months and seasons and years”. (Or am I rejoicing too soon?)

Galatians is Paul’s earliest Letter. Time up to the writing of the letter **lacked** for the Church to have developed a sophisticated “Christian” heretical dogma that might be likened to Pelagianism. It was **raw heathen worship** that lured the first isolated and frail Christians away from their New Way back to their old, as they must have thought, **mighty and worldly**, “principles” and “rules and rulers” and “gods”. Like in the Ephesians Church, membership at some stage must have dropped sharply (See Paragraph 7.1.9.) and like

in the Church in Corinth, doctrine must have degraded alarmingly. (See Paragraph 7.1.8, 1Cor.12.) *By such things as circumcision and the observance of days and seasons, the Galatians were actually sacrificing the Gospel of Christ and saving grace in return for their **former status and practice** without hope and without God in the world. They lost hold on salvation and even their human achievement must have suffered as a result. There is no *conditioning of justification and acceptance with God* but on Christian principle, by grace through faith in Jesus Christ only, or it exposes itself a “weak and beggarly principle” and “servitude” to “gods that are no-gods”. Paul wrote his letter to defend the Gospel. And it seems the Gospel proved the victor in the Galatians Church because Paul never had to write a second and even more letters like he was forced to do through the heresies of the Corinthian Church (that were also forms of idolatry).*

#### **8.3.1.4.1. Irreconcilable Times**

Prof. Bacchiocchi says the Galatians “conditioned” “justification and acceptance with God” “to such things as circumcision and the observance of days and seasons” and thereby “were making salvation dependent upon human achievement”. That means Prof. Bacchiocchi places “the observance of days and seasons” within the scope of normal Christian practice. He supposes the only thing wrong about the Galatians’ “observance of days and seasons” in their normal scope of Christian practice was that they, through it, “were making salvation dependent upon human achievement.” (That to an extent was the problem in Colossians, not in Galatians: ‘... just remember these things, eating drinking, feasting, resting, are but a shadow of what awaits the Body of Christ.’) **Paul gives no hint that that is what he means here in Galatians.** Had these times been permissible and “Lawful” for Christians, Paul would have had no reason to doubt or judge the Galatians’ observance of “such things”. It is hard to imagine how **duty and privilege** can condition Christian salvation or make of it “human achievement”. It is easy to understand how **salvation** “conditioned” on **no** “human achievement”, can determine Christian duty though! The whole thrust of Paul’s argument requires that the times “observed” are **not** “Christian”.

That the times were not even **“Jewish”** but **pagan** is obvious in the first place from the **context** within which Paul mentions them. Says Paul, “After you got to know God or rather after that you had been visited by God’s grace, **HOW** do you **turn back to** the weak and beggarly rulers (– gods that by nature are no gods, 8) unto whom you desire to be in bondage **all over**? You look to days, months, seasons and years *as if these are gods and could determine your destiny.*”

“I am afraid that I have bestowed my labour upon you **in vain**” - insinuating the Galatians’ former lost state as well as the cosmic gods’ seeming success in enticing the Galatians away from the Gospel. The times which the Galatians “observed”, were **pagan divinations**. They **before** had known “days, months, seasons and years” **only** in association with the “world” of idolatrous “gods” and “rulers”. Paul doesn’t judge the Church for keeping “days” or times of **Old Testament** institution! Paul begs the Galatians to be like him and to remember how they at first, when they were still heathen Gentiles, received him **as though he was an angel** (4:12, 14). That indicates what kind of worship the Galatians were used to and were now returning back to. These “**times**” were idolatrous because **what the Galatians in practice did** with and through these times, only allows for superstitious and idolatrous divinations and “bewitching”. They would **serve no purpose** under Christianity even like those “**gods**” would serve no purpose under Christianity.

*“It is generally agreed that the Galatians’ observance of sacred times was motivated by superstitious beliefs in astral influences. This is suggested by Paul’s charge that their adoption of these practices was tantamount to a return to their pagan subjection to elemental spirits and demons (Gal 4:8-9). Apparently, on account of their pagan background, the Galatians, as aptly stated by W. Rordorf, ‘could discern in the particular attention paid by the Jews to certain days and seasons nothing more than religious veneration paid to stars and natural forces.’”* P. 122, b.

Scholars do not admit frankly what they admit with clever cover-up for saving face. To frankly admit the plain truth would be tantamount to capitulation of their applying this Scripture against the Sabbath. Prof. Bacchiocchi simply takes for granted and states that the “*times*” the Galatians “*observed*” were not “**sacred**”. The “*times*” the Galatians “*observed*”, were **not** “**sacred**” “according to the Scriptures” or because they were “holy to the Lord”. They in fact were “**sacred**” because they were “*motivated by superstitious beliefs in astral influences*”! The Galatians’ “*adoption of these practices*” was not “**tantamount to a return**” but a **real, total** and seemingly **irrevocable** “*return to their pagan subjection*”. The Galatians’ “*observance of sacred times*” (according to Rordorf clearly “*discern(ed) in the particular attention paid by the Jews*”) was a no vague return “*to elemental spirits and demons*”, but to “gods that by nature (were) no gods” but “cosmic” and “elemental” deities. **Through their very “divination of days, months, seasons and years” the Galatians committed idolatry**. Their “gods” possessed all the essentials of “*elemental spirits and demons*”, so that Paul calls

them “weak and beggarly rules or rulers” (principles” / “elementals”). It wasn’t simply “*Paul’s charge*”, but **fact**. *On account of their pagan background, the Galatians paid particular attention to certain days and seasons discerned in the definite religious veneration of stars and natural forces.*

From where does Rordorf get the idea that “*the Jews paid attention to*” these “*days and seasons*”? **From his imagination, and from so many others who have so imagined before him!** O yes, the Jews were prone to *paying particular attention to certain days and seasons besides* or rather **instead** of the certain days and seasons that **God** ordained for their observance. Their Old Testament history confirms the tragic truth. But **in the context of Galatians** there’s no indication of **Jewish** veneration of such things. To bring the Jews into the picture is quite wilfully the interpreter’s own idea, in this case, Willie Rordorf’s.

*“Whether or not the Sabbath is alluded to in Galatians depends upon interpretation of “days” (hemera – Gal 4:10)”,* Bacchiocchi continues. *“Some critics argue on the basis of the parallel passage of Colossians 2:16, where “sabbaths” are explicitly mentioned, that the ‘days’ certainly indicate even the Sabbaths. We do not deny this possibility, but we have shown earlier that the plural “sabbaths” used in Colossians was the common designation not only for the Sabbath day but also for the whole week. Thus, the plural “days” of Galatians could well indicate that the Colossians’ “sabbaths” are “week-days” and not vice versa. If Paul in Galatians 4:10 meant the Jewish festivals, why did he not give them their customary names as he does in Colossian 2:16?”*

Only the last remark is of integrity. It is the obvious question from which to start one’s investigation as to the meaning of the Galatians phrase, “days, months, seasons and years”. *“If Paul in Galatians 4:10 meant the Jewish festivals, why did he not give them their customary names as he does in Colossians 2:16?”*

There shall be found but a single “*parallel*” of the phrase, “days, like months, like seasons, like years” in all of Scripture – and it is **not** the Colossians phrase, “feasts, new moons, Sabbath Days”.

Not only is the **order** in Colossians – first the longest, “feasts” cycle, last the shortest, “days” – out of order. In Galatians the shortest cycle, “days”, is mentioned first, and the longest, “years”, last.

The **kind** of periods has nothing in common. In Colossians they are by the name Jewish or Old Testament occasions of feasting / eating and drinking. In Galatians there is nothing of such nature. On the contrary, in Galatians the cyclic periods mentioned pose a threat to those who “observe” – the threat of them being brought under the

“bondage” of “weak and beggarly rulers” and “no-gods”.

Also the **number** of things mentioned is wrong – four in Galatians, three in Colossians; or just two if “New Moons” and “Sabbaths” are taken for the “Feasts” meant; or just one, if “Feasts” are explained, “New Moons” and “Sabbaths”.

So is the **nature** of things mentioned – **cosmic cycles of times** in Galatians, **occasions** of worship (Old Testament) in Colossians.

So is the **association** – with idolatry in Galatians, with worship of the true God in Colossians.

So is the **attitude** of the champions – defensive and reserved in Colossians, defying and audacious in Galatians.

So is the **atmosphere** – with regard to things mentioned in Colossians, free and feasting; with regard to things mentioned in Galatians, slavish and fearing!

So, which is that **single Scripture** that shows similarity with our Galatians 4:10 phrase? It is found in **Genesis 1:14-19**. “And God said, Let the lights in the firmament of heaven be **to divide** the day from the night; and let the signs (the moon-phases) be to divide seasons, and let the days (of the moon) be to divide years. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and it was so. And God made two great lights **to rule**, the greater: to rule the day; and the lesser – also the stars: to rule the night. And **God set them** to give light in the firmament of the heaven, and upon the earth to rule over the day and over the night, and upon the earth to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.”

The perversion of this very order that God set **for nature**, to be “divided” and “ruled” by the heavenly bodies, has through all ages been the **core of idolatry**. From the beginning God also set the rule and order and division of time for **true worship**. **True worship** was **not** to be ruled by these “rulers” of nature or “cosmic elements”.

**God’s own work and rest, He by own Lordly Rule**, “blessed” and “set apart” the “Seventh Day”. **God** “perfecting” the “Seventh Day” – **“divided” by no astral cycles** – and **God**, appointed it, “holy”.

Similarity between **Galatians’ order** of things and the **perversion** of the Divine Creation-Order (Genesis 1) is apparent.

As in Genesis 1, in Galatians 4:10 the “**seasons**” of “days, months, seasons, years”, are **divided** by **moon-cycles** or “signs”. (“He appointed the moon for seasons”, Ps.104:19. “Signs” in Genesis indicate the moon as neither the sun nor stars “signals” by **phases**.) As in Genesis 1, in Galatians the “**years**” of “days, months, seasons, years”, are **divided** by **day-cycles**.

The **number** of things mentioned in Genesis – four, are four in Galatians. If counted as grouped, the number is two in Genesis. If considered in chiasmic order, “days / years”, A / D, months / seasons”, B / C, the number is the same in Galatians: two.

So is the **nature** of things mentioned – cosmic-cycles in Genesis, cosmic-cycles in Galatians.

So is **association** – in Genesis, “rule” or “principles” and earth, sun, moon and stars. In Galatians, “rule” or “principles” and the philosophic “cosmic elements”.

So are the **attitudes** towards the things mentioned naturally opposites – protection and approval in Genesis, apathy and disdain in Galatians.

So is the **language** naturally opposite with regard to the things mentioned – in Genesis, God by nature True God speaking – “Let there be” heavenly bodies, “to rule” and to serve – “to give light”. In Galatians, “gods by nature no-gods”, cosmic cycles and bodies, “manifest” (5:19) unto “bondage” and “servitude”, and, in defiance of God, “divined” (“observed” = worshipped).

The question “*Whether or not the Sabbath is alluded to in Galatians*”, scarcely need “*depend upon interpretation of “days” (hemera)*”. Not in the way Prof. Bacchiocchi minces matters.

“*We have shown earlier that the plural “sabbaths” used in Colossians was the common designation not only for the Sabbath day but also for the whole week. Thus, the plural “days” of Galatians could well indicate that the Colossians’ “sabbaths” are “week-days” and not vice versa.*” We have shown (See Paragraph 8.2.2.5.2.1 towards its end.) that *the plural “sabbaths” used in Colossians was the common designation for Old Testament “Feast”-Sabbath-days* and that it was **never ever** used *for the whole week*. “*That the plural “sabbaths” used in Colossians was the common designation not only for the Sabbath day but also for the whole week*”, is an unfounded allegation. The word *sabbaton / sabbatohn*, where in the New Testament used by itself always and only means the Sabbath Day. Only when used **with the numeral** (like “first” – *mian / miai*), does it in the New Testament refer to the (First) Day (of the week, Sunday). When Paul says “days” in Galatians (and in Colossians) he does not mean the Sabbath or the week or any of its days. He means “days” as in its contextual setting, that of idolatrous practice and worldview in Galatians; that of Jewish festival in Colossian (and Romans).

*Thus, the plural “days” of Galatians could never ever indicate that the Colossians’ “sabbaths” are “week-days” and never ever as well, vice versa!* Prof. Bacchiocchi in fact contradicts himself literally or I lack the sense to see congruity in his argument, for, says he, “*the*

plural “sabbaths” used in Colossians was the common designation ... also for the whole week. Thus, the plural “days” of Galatians could well indicate that the Colossians’ “sabbaths” are “week-days” and not vice versa”.

“Some critics argue on the basis of the parallel passage of Colossians 2:16, where “sabbaths” are explicitly mentioned, that the ‘days’ certainly indicate even the Sabbaths. We do not deny this possibility”, says Prof Bacchiocchi not speaking for everybody, please note. Firstly we deny the possibility of calling Colossians 2:16 and Galatians 4:10 “parallel passages” and our whole endeavour attempts to show just that. That “the ‘days’ (of Gal.4:10) certainly indicate even the Sabbaths”, we deny for every reason already stated above and still being stated here. The hypothesis exists and persists but on strength of tradition and to serve tradition.

The question “whether or not the Sabbath is alluded to in Galatians”, exegetically rather depends upon interpretation of the phrase “days and months and seasons and years”. **As a unitary and unique expression**, only the “parallel” phrase in the Genesis 1 story of the Fourth Day comes to mind. The “days” of Galatians contextually, etymologically and theologically show no similarity with “Jewish” or “sabbath” “days”. “If Paul in Galatians 4:10 meant the Jewish festivals, why did he not give them their customary names as he does in Colossians 2:16?” remains the only valid question.

“It is within this context that Paul’s denouncement of the observance of days and seasons must be understood”, says Prof. Bacchiocchi on p.122 d. We must qualify this observation with yet another **disagreement and denial** of Prof. Bacchiocchi’s statements, that “Paul’s concern is not to expose the superstitious ideas attached to these observances ...”, and with an occasional **agreement**, that “Paul’s concern”, in fact, “is ... to challenge the whole system of salvation which the Galatians’ false teachers had devised”. “The whole system of salvation which the Galatians’ false teachers had devised” was one of idolatrous, pagan **worship**. “The observance of days and seasons must be understood” “within the context” of that, “whole” idolatrous “system of salvation”.

“If the motivations for these observances would not have undermined the vital principle of justification by faith in Jesus Christ, Paul would only have recommended tolerance and respect (as he does in Romans 14), even if some ideas were foreign to Old Testament teaching.” We could add, even if some ideas were foreign to New Testament teaching as in Colossians 2:16. But seeing the worst was fast becoming reality in the Galatians Church, Paul drew the sword against the real “enemy”. “Am I become your enemy?” he asks the

Galatians while he makes war upon the enemies of the only true God and true salvation! It implies Paul’s combating of **false gods** (“gods by nature non-gods”) as of false teachers (“whoever he might be”) and false teachings (“weak and beggarly principles”). Paul views the “whole system” as one Personified False Deity. The “whole system” “adulterated the very ground of salvation”. “The motivations for these practices”, “the perverted use of cultic observations which were designed to promote salvation ...” almost captures every expression and word we in this study will soon employ while indicating that in Galatians 4:9-10 **idolatry was the object of Paul’s opposition and the subject of the Galatians’ surrender**. Note already at this point our full agreement with Prof. Bacchiocchi’s choice of words, “cultic observations” instead of “observances”. To the present writer it is incomprehensible how Prof. Bacchiocchi could not allow or even consider the simplicity and satisfaction that the concept of “idolatry” with regard to the “whole system” affords the exegeses of the passage.

Says Prof. Bacchiocchi, “The perverted use of cultic observations which were designed to promote salvation as a human achievement rather than as a divine gift of grace.” (p. 122/123, emphasis CGE) The reach of **Paul’s** intention, is that the perverted use of cultic observations were designed to promote salvation as an achievement of “no-gods” and “principles” or “rulers” or “powers”. It excludes the divine gift of grace of the only true God and Father of **our Lord Jesus Christ**. The perverted use of cultic observations was designed to promote servitude to idolatry. Practically that would come down to **human achievement as failure and damnation**. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was at the losing end. It was defamed and maimed. It was adulterated as it used to be fornicated by idolatry for many ages before. Man at heart changed nothing for the better through time. He at heart and by nature is an idolater. So were the Galatians. Only as Christians their circumstance was more trying, their position more vulnerable. **They heard the Gospel the first time in a sea of pagans and stronghold of heathen “philosophy” and “powers” or “principles”**. It was “gods” against God. Who would judge them? **Paul** did – to snatch them from the fire for Christ. It required not human achievement, but the almighty power of the grace of God in Jesus Christ ... and a Paul, to bring them back. “My little children, of whom I travail in birth until Christ again be formed in you”, 4:19.

“In the final analysis, Paul’s attitude toward the Sabbath must be determined not on the basis of his denunciation of heretical and superstitious observances ...”. (p. 123 e) By saying this Prof. Bacchiocchi implicitly admits the Sabbath cannot be classed under the

“days” of Galatians 4:10. But Prof. Bacchiocchi is correct in concluding, *“heretical and superstitious observances may have influenced Sabbathkeeping”*. The problem is that he supposes this influence to have been the work of **Judaistic** *“false teachers”* and not of **pagan philosophy and worship**. The problem further is that he diminishes idolatry to *“salvation”* as an attempt of *“human achievement”* and therefore by *“observance of sacred days”*. Prof. Bacchiocchi fails to see into the furthest stretches of the abyss into which Jesus Christ had to reach to save the backsliding Galatians. (*“the greatest distance that is recoverable by grace”*, John Owen) He had to bring the “weak and beggarly” up twice into the glory of his presence. Observance of sacred days would have been their Christian freedom, as with the Colossian Church – were those “sacred days” Christian or even Old Testament sacred days. But now they are from the lowest realms of spiritual darkness, “you venerate and fear days, like months, like seasons, like years”.

We may as well at this point quote from Prof. Bacchiocchi’s *“Conclusion”*, *“The failure to understand that Paul rejects the law as a method of salvation but upholds it as a moral standard of Christian conduct has been the root-cause of much misunderstanding of Paul’s attitude toward the law in general and toward the Sabbath in particular”*. No statement could be more factual and relevant. But it is our conviction that the *“root-cause of much misunderstanding”* as far as Galatians is concerned is to **in any way** bring the **Law** under discussion as the subject of contention in 4:9-10 in particular and in Galatians at large. Paul argues not about the Law, but about the Galatians’ arrogant, of their own motivations, and for their own purposes, **abuse of Law. They** say, “See, o God, with your own holy institution and seal of fidelity, circumcision, we have sealed ourselves as your sons and heirs.” But, as Paul says in **5:13**, *“Only don’t use your liberty for licence”! Don’t, like the rich young man, turn again to your idols while as if by my own Kingly proclamation your Master and God I am forced to take you sons and heirs!* Paul teaches nothing different than Jesus’ teaching, “Your faith has saved you. Go! And **sin no more!**” Paul in Galatians confirms the Law by exactly his incidental reference to it. For no moment, by not so much as a single word or thought, does Paul discuss the Law for the sake of the Law itself, whether it is binding still and binding for Christians or not. That, altogether, is not his point!

### 8.3.2.1.

#### **Idolatry Generally Acknowledged, Then, Denied!**

*“In verse 8 two sets of contrasts are in play. Formerly the Galatians were in a state of bondage. In a sense this could be understood: (not merely temporal but causal also) they did not know God. Now they may rejoice in freedom. If they do not do so – well, that cannot be understood. For they have now come to the knowledge of God.*

*What the Gentiles in their unconverted condition” (... total estrangement ... involving the whole of human existence ...) knew about God (Rom. 1:19-21) was not the true knowledge of God that is possible only through faith in Christ. From this want of true knowledge issued the life of slavish fear, and a worship of them that by nature are no gods. The apostle calls them gods, for so they were generally referred to. But in the same breath he says that in essence, according to their real nature, they are not gods. The reference is to idols of polytheistic paganism which the Galatians had formerly served.*

*Now there is no explanation to be given of their conduct, or any justification of it. They have learned to know God, ‘have come to know God’, that is, as He is in Christ. Better still: they have been known by God. The bond uniting them with God was not established by them but by God himself. He had wanted to know them as His own, interested Himself in their behalf, had chosen them. (This time, ‘gnohntes’, not ‘eidontes’, is used. It points out the beginning of the great change. Moreover, the ‘gnohntes’, like the ‘eidontes’, speaks of a very particular relationship, such as that which God effects. ... This knowledge has not the quality of a mystical union in the sense of the Hellenistic cultus-mysticism, but signifies the acceptance of God’s grace on the basis of what happened at Christ’s coming.)*

*Verse 10 tells us in what this service of the rudiments consists, namely, in the observation of all kinds of ceremonial regulations, most specifically the one stipulating holy seasons. Inasmuch as Paul’s argument is entirely directed against Judaism, the ‘days’ presumably refer to sabbath-days, the ‘months’ to the days of the new moon, the ‘seasons’ to the Jewish feasts, and the ‘years’ to the sabbath and jubilee years ... The intent of the apostle is to say that they had taken over the whole system. The summing up of them all, the cumulative heaping up, is intended to express what is quantitatively legalistic in their course of conduct. And all this they are now busily painstakingly reintroducing.*

*Paul expresses the fear that the trouble he has gone to for their sakes has been bestowed in vain. For the issue is one of basic*

*principle. It is not the observation (sic.) of religious usages as such (cf. 1 Cor. 16:2 and Acts 20:7) that is the bone of contention, but the basis of the justification before God. The issue is: Judaism with its auto-soteriological, legalistic scheme of redemption or the gospel of free grace. These two are irreconcilable. They must choose between them. Otherwise all of Paul's trouble and exertion for their sakes will prove futile.*" Herman N. Ridderbos, *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia*, Eerdmans, 1978. (Emphasis CGE)

I can only try to explain better how Ridderbos **contradicts** himself by concentrating the essentials **under a quick glance**:

<u>Formerly</u>	<u>Now</u>
the Galatians were in a state of <b>bondage</b> They <b>did not know</b> God <b>Gentiles</b> in their <b>unconverted</b> condition of total <b>estrangement</b> involving the <b>whole</b> of human existence What <b>they</b> knew about God was <b>not the true</b> knowledge of God From this <b>want</b> of true knowledge issued the life of <b>slavish fear</b> and a <b>worship</b> of them that by nature, in essence, are no gods.	they may rejoice in <b>freedom</b> they <b>have now come to the knowledge</b> of God They have been <b>known by God</b> <b>The bond uniting them with God</b> <b>established</b> by God himself. that signifies the acceptance of God's <b>grace</b> <b>They have learned to know God</b> <b>as He is in Christ</b> <b>True knowledge only through</b> faith in Christ He had <b>wanted</b> to know them as His own <b>They have been known</b> by God.
<b>The 'gnohtes', like the 'eidontes',</b> has not the quality of Hellenistic cultus-mysticism it refers not to idols, <b>generally known</b> as gods of <b>polytheistic paganism</b> which the Galatians had <b>served</b> <b>formerly</b> .	speaks of a very particular <b>relationship</b> that is possible <b>only</b> on the basis of what happened at <b>Christ's coming</b> God <b>interested Himself</b> in their behalf <b>Now ...</b>
<b>There now is no explanation to be given for their conduct, or any justification of it.</b>	

After this beautiful and authentic illustration of the **Galatians' pagan past** and **Christian conversion**, Ridderbos suddenly **looses track**. What **he** plunges into I'll note down in the left-hand column. What **Paul concludes** from his own argument thus far, I'll note down in the right-hand column.

**Verse 10 tells us in what, this service of the rudiments consisted, namely,**

**Ridderbos**

Inasmuch as Paul's argument is entirely directed against **Judaism** in the observance of **all kinds of ceremonial regulations**, most specifically **holy seasons**, the 'days' presumably refer to sabbath-days, the 'new moons' to the days of the new moon, the 'seasons' to the Jewish feasts, and the 'years' to the sabbath- and jubilee years.

**Paul**

Paul's utter **condemnation** is entirely directed against the **relapsing pagans who** under "**servitude**" to "**gods by nature no gods**", "**observing, divined**" the "**weak and beggarly principles of the world**", **cosmic times-cycles** of "**signs ... seasons; days ... years**"—"lights in the firmament of the heaven" that "ruled" and "divided" "times".

**Paul's Intent**

The intent of the apostle is to say that Jewish **Sabbaths** had taken over the whole system.

The intent of the apostle is to say that polytheistic paganism had taken over the Gospel

Paul had no trouble finding words to name the "*the Jewish feasts*", "Feasts, New Moons, Sabbaths", in **Colossians**. Why should he, if he meant "*the Jewish feasts*", in **Galatians** find it impossible to indicate them with this **usual and peculiar** nomenclature, "Feasts, New Moons, Sabbaths"? Did Paul find it impossible? Fact is, he does not use the Colossians' description in Galatians at all. Fact is the Galatians description corresponds with the Genesis description. And fact is, about every word Paul uses in Galatians 4:8-11 **here and elsewhere** shows peculiar meaning and application in the context of **pagan worship**. (See further on "observe".) Therefore, yes, Paul does find it **impossible to use any other choice of words** and ideas than what he does use in Galatians 4:8-11. Why should Paul **remind** the Galatians **where they came from** – **paganism**, if "*now*" they don't "**return**" to the **paganism** of their "**former**" condition, but to "*Judaism*"? Yes, Paul does blame the Galatians for **circumcising** themselves, **but does he indicate that they reconsidered, returned and stopped or changed direction in backsliding to their "former" state of "serving gods that by nature are no gods", "weak and beggarly rulers" or "principles"**? Not at all! And **where**,



**contextually**, does Paul blame the Galatians for **circumcising** themselves? **Thirty-two verses and his whole argument** about free grace for the **totally ignorant sons of the bondwoman – heathen pagans – further!**

Paul introduces the subject of circumcision into his discussion **thirty-two verses further** only because the **Galatians** introduced it into **their** scheme of “*syncretistic*” religion, only because **they**, just like Abraham did, tried to override the providence of God. Paul’s argument in the foregoing and following context of verse 10 is “*entirely directed*” **not** “*against Judaism*”, but against the “*idols*” of solid “*polytheistic paganism*”. He does not refer to “*all kinds of ceremonial regulations*” at all. He refers to the “Law” only after having devoted another **ten verses** to the Galatians’ **heathen past**. And then, when Paul at last mentions the law in 4:21, he stipulates no particular “*ceremonial regulation*”. He continues to discuss the **basic principle** of how anybody in bondage to **idols, and idolatrous philosophies, and idolatrous practices**, could become a freeman – it is the marvel of grace, the fact of God’s free election! Paul finally explains the “liberty wherewith Christ has made us free” in 5:1 and immediately warns **once again**, against getting “entangled **again** with the yoke of bondage” – the very “yoke” of their “former” state of “bondage” under the “world’s principles” and under “gods by nature no gods”. Up to here Paul has **not** referred to **circumcision once**. He **still** speaks of the “bondage”, “**whereunto ye desire again** to be in bondage” – the “bondage” supposed in **verse 9** – “you observe days” etc. “**Now look!**” says Paul right **here** 32 verses later, ‘*I Paul tell you, that if you have yourselves circumcised its over! Christ is useless to you. There is great irony in this, you who have fallen from grace, that you in your sinning apply the Law to save, exactly where it condemns!!*’

**Actually Paul argues in defence of the holiness of circumcision and the indefatigability of the Law!** God intended circumcision for his divine and holy purpose for the bringing into action and fulfilment his eternal Covenant of Grace; now the Galatians come and **desecrate it for their weak and beggarly bondage under idols!** They frustrate God’s eternal purpose (if it were possible) utterly! ‘*You are not truly justified. You may think you are. But you refuse to let go your old principles and gods and superstitious bargaining with fate, you actually return to be in bondage to them again, yet you dare to challenge God: ‘We will have ourselves circumcised and be justified by your own Law, o God!’* No wonder Paul declares unequivocally, “**You have fallen from grace**”. This unholy marriage between the “world’s rulers” and the rules of God’s

Law indeed is worse than a return to their former status without God and without hope in this world (Eph.2:12). They would not be forgiven. (Read Hebrews 6 from verse 4.)

These “bewitched” Christians added the “Law” of circumcision to their crooked ways, not realising that thereby they **increased their sin** and in no wise could be justified thereby. **Fortunately Paul postulates**. He warns the Galatians, **If this is so**, then Christ shall profit you nothing! In the words of Hebrews 6:9, “But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, **though we thus speak**”. It shows the absolute consistency of cause and result supposed. It seems Paul’s warning was heeded and the Galatians profited from the love of God in Jesus Christ through the Gospel Paul taught them. If they ended the way they started in the freedom they were made free with (5:7) all would be well. But if Paul’s fears were for real, then the Galatians’ **relapse** into the bondage **which Paul supposes and identifies** and the “*sacred*” “times” **which he refers to and identifies in connection with their bondage**, had everything to do with **heathen** “principles”. Then these “times” are “weak and beggarly rulers” – “*sacred*” for reasons that God would never have hallowed, blessed and perfected with the holiness, blessing and perfection of his own Being, own presence and own interest. Then these “days, months, season and years” are not Jewish or Old Testament “*ceremonial regulations*”, but **cosmic, superstitious and idolatrous practices, the perversion of God’s purpose for the creation-order**—“signs and seasons, days and years”.

Contrarily to such absolute conclusion as we have reached, Ridderbos finds it possible to conclude on his part,

*“The summing up of them all (holy seasons), the cumulative heaping up, is intended to express what is quantitatively legalistic in their course of conduct. And all this they are now busy painstakingly reintroducing”*. And, “*inasmuch as Paul’s argument is entirely directed against Judaism*”, Paul, according to Ridderbos, finds it possible to reduce the bizarre Galatians affair to the **overdoing yet commonplace** among Christians “*to express what is quantitatively legalistic in their course of conduct.*” And Ridderbos blames the **Jews** for it! “*And all this they are now busy painstakingly reintroducing.*” says he.

Very true, provided one keeps in mind **what** “*all this*” was about – what it “formerly” **used to be**. It used to be part and parcel – the essence – of “*the whole system*”. And Paul painstakingly describes what that “*whole system*” “**formerly**” was.

**Asks Paul, “How is this possible:** When you knew God not you served them that by nature are no gods but idols. (*One could*

understand that.) **but now, after you got to know God** (in Jesus Christ) – or rather **AFTER YOU CAME TO BE KNOWN BY GOD**, how is it possible that you **NOW turn back** to those weak and beggarly rulers under whom you used to serve in bondage, and **NOW**, desire to serve in bondage **all over again?** You (really) participate in the divination of days, months, seasons and years! (That one could never understand!) I am afraid for you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain!”

“**All this they are now busy painstakingly reintroducing.**”  
 “**This**” – and nothing “Jewish”! They “formerly” were not Jewish, but **heathen and pagan.**

Paul expresses the fear that the trouble he went to for the sake of the Galatians had been in vain. For the issue is one of **basic principle**. It is not the observance of religious usage such as “(sacred) Feasts, New Moons, Sabbaths” that is the bone of contention. It is the **basics of the justification before God**, the **knowledge and faith of the true God as it is in Christ** and the sending forth of his Spirit into the heart. The issue at this contextual point is: **Paganism** with its superstitious and idolatrous “**observations**” of astral cycles of times **topped with the observance of circumcision**. Such religion remains a pagan “**mutilation of the body**” and never could be the practice of the Body that is **Christ’s!** The issue is: This “cosmic” scheme of “bondage”, **or**, the gospel of free grace. These two are irreconcilable – mutually exclusive. The Galatians must choose between them. Otherwise all of Paul’s trouble and exertion for their sakes will prove futile. All of Paul’s trouble and exertion must prove futile if this basic issue is lost sight of and “the Law” **by abuse** is made the issue. Then come religious Professors and from the Law, select the Seventh Day, “Sabbath of the Lord your God”, and make it the target of Paul’s attack. It is an unthinkable animosity against God’s Law and Sabbath which the Church of Christ revels in.

### 8.3.3.1.

#### “Observances”, Or, “Observations”

The reader will have noticed my use of the word to “divine” for “to observe”. We speak of an “observatory” for the place where the “heavenly bodies” are “observed”. But the word “observe” can have too many other meanings so that the meaning required **purely contextually** in our passage, may come out not precise enough. As seen above, Henry Zylstra accidentally translated Ridderbos with the word “observations” while his intent for certain was not to contrast the difference between “observance” and “observations”. But even the word “observations” allows for a purely

“scientific” “study” of astral-logics or astral-metrics where Paul needed a word to express the **religious** connotation the specific word carries within itself.

The thrust of Paul’s argument demands a word that will transfer the idea of **pagan worship** of “**gods that by nature are no gods**” but the creation of man’s imagination. It demands a word that will transfer the idea of “**cosmic rule**” – *stoixeia tou kosmou*, usually translated “elements of the world”. And it demands a word that will transfer the idea of “first principles” or “(basic) elements / components of the outer space”.

The “lower” “elemental components” according to Greek philosophy were **earth, water, sky and fire**. There were many such “first principles”. They were viewed as **deities!** The “rulers / principles” of the “heavenly” “cosmos”, were the sun, “ruling” days and years, and the moon and stars “ruling” the “seasons”. These heavenly bodies and the “signs” they gave were meticulously “spied”, for the **welfare and future** of man fully depended on the **favours or omens** determined by and received from these deities. **Their worship constituted the “basics” and fibre of idolatry.** These ominous bodies in fact **were** the very “**gods**” or “**rulers**”. Seen from the standpoint of the Christian Faith, they “**by nature are no-gods**”, that is, they by nature are not **creators** but **created** “things” **made the object of worship!** These in fact were the very “mighty” that of themselves had no power but depended fully on the power of God **through their periodic heavenly journeys**. It simply cannot be doubted that Paul meant that the Galatians “formerly” were worshippers of these false gods and were “**now**” by “**divination**” “**busy painstakingly reintroducing**” **worship of these**. These “gods”, the “gods” of “days, months, seasons and years”, the Galatians “now again” – for no reason and for no excuse – “desired to be in bondage to all over again”.

“*Those who interpret stoixeia as star-spirits see a connection between the stars and the time-divisions. The planets are presumed to regulate the calendar. As we see it, this relationship is quite unfounded. There is no evidence anywhere to show that Paul traces the origin and character of the Jewish ceremonial law to the dominion of the planetary spirits.*”

Of course Paul does not “*trace the origin and character of the Jewish ceremonial law to the dominion of the planetary spirits.*” It is a ridiculous presumption to think that anybody would think so. What is ridiculous though is to introduce “**Jewish ceremonial law**” into the issue. To “*interpret stoixeia*” taking into account the “*connection between the stars and the time-divisions*” is just keen and realistic

observance. *There is no evidence anywhere to show that Paul traces the origin and character of the dominion of the planetary spirits to the Jewish ceremonial law! Ridderbos twists the facts!* The “principle” of the Galatians’ heresy “*presumed*” that “*the planets regulate the calendar*” as well as man’s fate and wellbeing – **even his salvation**. It is quite well and factually **founded right here in context** in Galatians and in contemporary history! Even the **country of Galatia** is associated with pagan observations of astral times and bodies on a par with other geographical regions like Egypt and Syria. “*This relationship*” between *stoixeia and the time-divisions* underlies Paul’s reason for his writing to the Galatians. It indicates his *intent, inasmuch as his argument is entirely directed against* “**gods by nature no-gods**”, “**cosmic rulers**” and “**bondage**” of the *spirit* of man. We quote; we do not surmise these things. “*This relationship*” is relevant and connected logically as well as contextually. *There is every evidence contextually to show that Paul traces the origin and “character of the dominion of the planetary spirits” to these things, “gods by nature no-gods”, “cosmic rulers” and “bondage”, manifested in the Galatians’ “observation” of “days, months, seasons and years”.* The fact that Paul describes these “observations” as of “days and months and seasons and years” show that they all were “observed” as the full cycles they are and for their full duration **as if in themselves immortal deistic entities**. Their “observations” exhibit a feature that has **neither parallel nor analogue** in “*Jewish ceremonial law*”, culture or religion as far as that law, culture and religion stood in the sign of the Covenant of Grace. But when it departed from its divine roots, even “*Jewish ceremonial law*”, culture and religion were perverted into idolatry. But that is not what we admit here in Galatians to be the case, for here it is not Jews who go back to Old Testament worship nor Jews who go back to pagan worship, but pagans converted to Christianity who return to their former state under pagan worship.

In the words of Paul, the “cosmic powers / rulers” are then “observed / divined” as the “*tyrants*” that bring mankind under “bondage” as long as mankind remains in **or returns to** an original state of ignorance of the true knowledge of God. (The true knowledge of God “*as it is in Christ*”.)

*Stoixeia*, plural, from *stoixos* singular, “*That which has its position in a series or row, such as the letters of the alphabet, or figures in a column.*” Ridderbos, p. 153, note 5. That which has **first** or **capitol** position in a series or row, gives the applied meaning of the **plural**. “*Hence: the elementary ... principia*”. The *stoixeia* are the “rulers” or “principles” (of the series or row or whatever). “*The star-*

*forces or powers ... according to the pagan mythological conception ... are then interpreted as the tyrants of mankind in the period of its minority before the coming of Christ*”, Ridderbos concludes.

“*Mankind in the period of its minority before the coming of Christ*” is a good description for what Paul calls “the one born by a bondmaid”, those of the covenant by the initiative of Abraham, “the one which is Agar”, the “barren” and “desolate”. Her children are “many more than she which hath an husband”, Israel the Jewish nation. “*Paul is representing Jewry, and its bondage to the law, as co-subject to these spiritual forces*”. Exactly, but Paul confirms this logical consequential **fact not in 4:8 to 11, but only in verse 25**. He incidentally in verse 25 observes, “This **Agar** ... corresponds to **Jerusalem** which now is and is in bondage with her children” – **the unbelieving Jewish nation**. The two correspond; they are not identical. “**Together they are in bondage**”.

It cannot be denied that the **Jew**, like the Gentile **pagan** before the “*great event*” of coming to the knowledge of God “*as it is in Christ*” are all together and alike “*co-subject*”, “*under bondage*”. That is the case even today and concerns all men, all unbelievers, any not Christians, who have not yet come to that true knowledge of God “*as it is in Christ*”. But it cannot be denied that what the Jew of Old Testament times “*knew about God*” differed from what the heathen pagans knew about Him. The Jew “*knew about God*” the **true** God, and “*what they knew about God*” was that the Anointed of God would come as Saviour and in fact and in effect **already was** their eternal Saviour **through faith!** That was the object lesson of “*the whole system*” of the “*Jewish economy*”. **Nothing** the like can or may be said of the whole scheme of idolatrous worship that in the world surrounded this **true** knowledge and worship of God entrusted to the equally enslaved children of Israel.

Paul says, these “things”, “are an allegory” of “two **covenants**”, 4:24. He doesn’t talk about the Eternal Covenant of Grace or its constituent parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. **Both “covenants” Paul here supposes are covenanted by man.** **Both “covenants”** refer to the works and merit of man generally. “The one from the mount Sinai” – **long before Moses** – being the works of **Abraham**, “is **Agar**” from whom “gendered” (*ghenmohsa*) the Gentiles. This “covenant”, “**corresponds**” or “is similar to” (*suntoichei*) “Jerusalem which now is (*i.e.*, the children of **Sarah**), for it serves in bondage **just like** (*meta*) her (Agar’s) children”. Paul does **not** speak of the Old - and the New Testament-covenants. He compares two **man-made** “covenants”, **both** Abraham’s, and both “gendering unto bondage”. But **covenanted by God**, “**Jerusalem**

above, is free, the mother of us all". This "Covenant", this "country", was "seen afar off" by faith even by Abraham himself. "Jerusalem" – which in the days of Abraham or Moses was not yet existing – by "divine agreement", **by oath of God's fidelity to his eternal purpose of salvation, would become "mother of us all", that is, mother of all believers in Jesus Christ.**

Paul compares "**the Law**" with "guardians", taskmasters, and "stewards" "schoolmasters", "**to bring us unto Christ**". The Law brings us to the "Covenant" called "Jerusalem above" which will harbour all men "gendered" in bondage from either of Abraham's "covenants" **but "redeemed"** by the "sending of God's Son" and "the Spirit of his Son". Eventually Paul's whole argument opens up into the freedom whereby exactly those born of **any** "bondwoman" (whether of Agar or Sarah) are become sons and heirs being born by "the Spirit of his Son", 4:6! "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are **children of promise**", 28, even though and despite the fact that **we all** were born of **Abraham's infidelity and faithlessness.**

**Paul does not equalise the Law with paganism.** He **equalises all men** before the judgment seat of the Holy One of Israel. He **identifies the state of all men** under the bondage of the "lack of the knowledge" of God "as it is in Christ".

Paul by the nature and principle of his argument, does "represent Jewry, and its bondage to the law, as co-subject to these spiritual forces" which the **Gentiles** were in bondage to. "The one" man is born of Agar, the other of Sarah, **but both are the offspring of Abraham.** Paul factually does **not** "represent Jewry, and its bondage to the law, as co-subject to these spiritual forces" which the **Gentiles** were in bondage to. (He calls Abraham the father of them that believe whether they were born from Agar or from Sarah!) He speaks of those **without any true** knowledge of God – who could not be the Jews under the "dispensation of the Law" because that was a dispensation of true divine revelation.

In verse 4:3, says Ridderbos, "The apostle speaks of Jews and Gentiles in a comprehensive sense, this time not as both being subject to the law but (both being subject) to the rudiments (or elements) of the world. ... The passage has reference to definite principles or axioms (cf. Heb.5:12), according to which men lived before Christ, without finding redemption in them." A little further on Ridderbos writes, "Since the apostle speaks of being held in bondage under these rudiments, we shall probably have to think of the prescriptions and ordinances to which religious man outside Christ surrendered himself, and by means of which he tried to achieve redemption. Before the coming of Christ the whole world was slavishly subjected to these

rudiments or elements, also those who by means of the works of the Law tried to earn their justification before God. For even, though the Law was of divine origin, the use that man made of it was wrong. Those who lived under the law in this unwarranted way lived in the same condition of bondage as that under which the Gentiles, for all their exertion, also pined".

**The situation as Ridderbos here describes exactly was the Galatians' situation.** They broke the Law and every principle and commandment of it in desiring to worship idols and to venerate pagan practice. **Then** they picked and chose of the Law what might suit their purpose. They chose to circumcise **to insure themselves** against damnation **for rejecting Christ.** Their decision was the abnegation of faith and obedience.

In Galatians 4 Paul explains his **presupposition stated in 3:28-29** of **how** heathen pagans can become children of God. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And **if ye be Christ's, then** are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise". **One becomes Christ's first, by election of sovereign grace, before one becomes Abraham's child.** The **crux** of the matter is, **you must be found in Christ Jesus** in order to be a saved person. The **question** is: **How do I become "in Christ"?**

*"This is the Gospel in a nutshell, and I Paul shall now explain it to you, o Galatians. I shall explain it to you by analogy of the Jewish race. Now if it had been possible for us the Jews to be found in Christ, then how not you Gentiles also? Because no man ever could find himself in bondage to principles that bar him from salvation more than us Jews found ourselves in. We, just like you Gentiles, were servants to "the important things of the world". But we Jews had been under the Law also – revealed to us by God himself! We could never be excused for sin, the Law made sure of that. Where would we find refuge then but in the Good News of Free Grace as God revealed it through the sending of his Son? If this had been the case with us Jews, tell me, who did hinder you Gentiles, that you should not obey the truth?"*

Paul from verse 1 to verse 7 tells what the grace of God had done **for the Jews**, "Now I say, That (we Jews, God's) heirs, as long as we were babies, **differed nothing** from (our Gentile) **servants, although** we were the owners of all God's promises. But we were kept under strict rule under protection of tutors and guardians (the Law) till the time our Father decided upon. Although we were the heirs, when we were immature lived by "**rule of worldly things**". We lived by the 'stoixeia' - just like you erstwhile Gentiles. We who were born

under God's Law were estranged from God and **loved the world and its godless ways**. We, Jews, **knew** the only true God and Father but served Him not like sons would. We were enslaved to the world's most important things. We forsook God despite the fact that He entrusted his holy Law to us, despite the fact that we were a people through His faithfulness and by his will to choose Sarah. You Gentiles though are a people by the faithlessness of Abraham and his own will and way with Agar.

But God appointed the time and fulfilled it in **sending forth his Son** his rightful heir. He is the brother of us all, the **One Seed of Abraham**, in Whom we all – we Jews as well as you Gentiles - receive our inheritance according to every promise from the mouth of our Father. That is how God kept Word with us all! He proved Himself the faithful God of that covenant **He** by word of oath made with us who were then still in the loins of our father Abraham. He sent his Son, made of a woman. Born under the law. He really became a human being, indeed a Jew! He received no privileges. The Law sought Him out especially. Where we children invariably proved ourselves disobedient, God in Him always found great pleasure. Even the guardians and tutors retired. The Law was so satisfied it took its leave. Even the righteousness of the Law was as without glory against the Son's brightness. You could imagine how some of us, yea, all of us got jealous of our Brother, how we scorned Him, beat Him, despised Him. We at last killed Him for his righteousness and spotless character and conduct. Only afterwards did we realise: it was the sending of God our Father of his Son. **God so loved the world He sent his Son to redeem them**, even us, us the Jews so responsible for having received the Law and therefore so much heavier laden under sin, that we might receive the adoption of sons – that we might be real sons and heirs. Hear, it is God speaking, 'And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, calling Father, Father! For this reason you no longer are a servant or stranger, but a son. And if you are son, then heir of God through Christ your Brother, whose Spirit you have now received into your hearts.'

By both Incarnation and Spirit God respected his eternal Covenant of Grace with the Jews the ones He had every reason to reject and disinherit. **Sons after the flesh therefore are not real sons**. Only when born of the Spirit do "babies" become "sons" of God and "heirs" of the Promise – as for the Jews, so for the Gentiles. It shows how great the mercy, how totally of grace God makes us his own. It shows **God saves us not because we are Jews but in spite of the fact that we are Jews**. And whatever Paul might have said in passing about the Law, not only leaves the Law intact, but leaves it

honoured more than erstwhile when it had not been proved through Christ so divine yet.

This passage of verses 4:1 to 7 is interpreted **as to apply to the Gentiles as well**. By this passage Paul proves **the possibility of the impossible**. Despite the attempt to make this passage apply to both Jews and Gentile, this truth cannot be avoided: If Jews could be saved, there is no reason why the Gentiles could not.

*'The Scriptures (the Law) concluded all mankind (Jews and Gentiles) under sin ... Before faith came we (all) were kept under the law, shut up (in bondage) until the faith which should afterwards be revealed ... Now I say that the heir (the Jews) for as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a servant (you the Gentiles) though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed by his father. Even so we (all, Jews and Gentiles), when we (alike) were children were (all) in bondage under the elements ("principles" or "rulers") of the world. (All, Jews like Gentiles, were "in bondage", as "under the law", so "under the principles of the world".) But, when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman (like us all), made under the law (though, like not all of us, but like the Jews rather than like the Gentiles). God sent forth his Son to redeem them (not us all, but them) that were under the law (that is, the Jews) that we (all, Jews and Gentiles) may receive the adoption of sons (not by the Law but because God sent forth his Son). And because you (Greeks, Gentiles) are sons (as well not by the Law but because God sent forth his Son) God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts (also, as He sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts) calling, o Father our Father! Therefore (because God is Father of us all) you (o Galatians) are no more servant, but son! And if son, then you (o Gentile Galatians) are heir (like "us" the Jews). You are heir of God (the true God) through Christ (only and alone)!*

Whichever way one decides to interpret this passage, it, while being the explanation of how **any man** may become "in Christ", nevertheless **retains sharp contrast with verses 8 to 11:**

**"But then in fact** (*alla tote men*), you (former heathen pagans) in utter ignorance of God (*ouk eidontes Theon*) ("at the first" – verse 13) slavishly served things that by nature are no gods (*edouleusate tois fusei meh ousin theois*). **But now** (*nun de*) that you do know God, yea rather, now that you are being known by God – **HOW COULD** you (*pohs*) **again** turn **back** (*epi plus strephete*), **again back** to (*palin plus epi ...*) the weak and beggarly rulers (*ta astheneh kai ptochha stoicheia*), which **again** and **anew** (*palin anoththen*) you cherish to serve (*douleusai thelete*)? Days you **again** serve by divination

(*hehemeras paratehristhe kai*), months you **again** serve by divination (*mehnas paratehristhe kai*), seasons you **again** serve by divination (*kairous paratehristhe kai*), (and) years you (of course “again”, “serve by divination - *eniautous paratehristhe*). I fear I (initially, “at first” and till “now”) bestowed labour on you in vain!” The verb “you serve by divination” – *paratehristhe*, is each time repeated by implication – ellipsis – as well as by force of the connective *kai*. The idea of the repetition of a former condition is distinguishable also in verses 15 to 17 and 5:1. The idea of repetition though is **strikingly wanting** in verses **21** and **31** where Paul refers to the **law**. They who “formerly” were under bondage of **idolatry**, “now” – **for the first time** – **also** “desire to be under (the bondage of) the law”.

If it is possible that God could redeem Jews, then how could He not redeem Gentiles? Now if more probable that God may redeem Gentiles rather than Jews, **how impossible that Gentiles could return to their former gods?**

By way of all the “again’s” and “and’s”, Paul leaves no doubt that the Galatians were returning to their **original state in pagan heathendom** and that that was what he could not understand of their conduct.

### 8.3.3.2.

#### A Certain Word Required

The relation between “things no gods” and “weak and beggarly rulers”, and the divination of **cosmic cyclic times**, is **direct and absolute**. *‘After all this grace bestowed on you by God, after all this might and power of Him to save, after all this labour bestowed on you by me, and you again turn to your first lovers those lustrous powers who appear like gods but really are cruel tyrants ... Well. God may not, but I give up if this be true.’*

You “observe”, says Paul, “days, months, seasons and years” - the four “elements” of “**time**” – *kairos*. *Kairos* in Greek thinking means “**opportunely**”, “**vital**”. For the Galatians their “observation” was vital, and had every thing to do with **fate**.

The **contextual thrust** of Paul’s argument demands a word that will transfer the idea of **pagan worship** of,

**1, “those things in / by nature being no gods”** – *tois physei meh ousin theois*, but that by nature are the creation of man’s imagination.

It demands a word that will transfer the idea of **veneration** of,

**2, “cosmic powers”** – *stoixeia tou kosmou*. *“The star-forces or powers ... according to the pagan mythological conception ... interpreted as the tyrants of mankind”*. The **act of worship** Paul

supposes was not that of the “observance” of “Mosaic” or “Jewish” “Law”, but the **veneration of the major primitive cosmic cyclic periods**.

The **contextual thrust** of Paul’s argument demands a word that will transfer the idea of,

**3, “enslavement-worship”** – *edouleusate / douleusai*, by,

**4, “wilful”** human headstrongness – *thelete*, to,

**5, “return”** – *epistrephete*, **“again”** – *palin*, and “anew” / **“all over again”** – *anohthen*, to a **former idolatry**.

The **contextual thrust** of Paul’s argument demands a word that will transfer the idea of pagan worship such as,

**6**, would find **analogy in Scriptures**. Paul refers to Scripture to show by “an allegory” that all men are born and are by nature found “in bondage” and are freed only by virtue of “Jerusalem above”. So all men’s worship and religion are idolatry “before faith came”.

An analogy of the Galatians’ worship and religion is found under Manasses’ kingship, 4 Kings 21 (LXX). Manasses means “The **Forgetful one**”. He forgot the God of his fathers and “did that which was ... **according to the abominations of the nations**” = “principles of the world”. “He built **high places** (for the “observation” of “cosmic elements”, “days, months, seasons and years”). “He built again which Ezekias his father had demolished”, just like the Galatians “returned again” to “worship” (*douleuoh*) and to be “entangled again with the yoke of bondage” – **that which the Gospel had demolished**,

“Manasses set up an altar to Baal (the sun-god) ... and worshipped (*prosekunehse*) all the hosts / powers of heaven (*pasehi tehi dunamei tou ouranou*) and served (*edouleusen*) them. (To “worship” and to “serve” are synonymous.) He built an altar in the house of the Lord whereas he had said, In Jerusalem I will place my name. And he caused his sons to pass through the fire. And used divination (*eklehdonidzeto* – *to klehdonisma*, “a sign or omen”) and auspices (*oiohndizeto* – “to take omens, to forbode”). And made groves (*alseh / temeneh*. *To temenos* – “a piece of land sacred to a god”, “the precincts of a temple”: hence, *temeneh* from the worship offered to the “cosmic rulers” – *stoicheia tou kosmou* – Galatians, or, “*the heavenly hosts*” - *dunami tou ouranou* – 4 Kings. *Alseh* - “especially sacred groves” (Classic Greek Dictionary) were grown specifically for the purpose of “observations” of heavenly bodies and to “work out days, months, seasons and years”. (Even the Incas designed their temples and shrines around groves for this very purpose.) ... And “read the fullness of time” (*gnohstas eplehthuneh*) so as to do that which was evil, **in the face of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger**. Manasses ... did all these evils and abominations” (literally

“stinking” presaging – *to bdelugma*, from the entrails of animals). Most conspicuous was his provocation of the Lord, to taunt Him in his face: **“The name of Manasses in the house of the Lord!”** Just so the Galatians: They abused the Name of the Lord through the holy institution of circumcision to give an appearance of godliness to their idolatrous “religion”. Theirs was not a religion of “syncretistic Judaism”, but of perverted, **idolatrous Christianity**. (Notice the wizardry practised by Constantine “The Great” and the Roman Catholic Church who even today practice astrology and angel- and saints-worship – acknowledged “theological” disciplines in that “church”.)

Finally the **contextual thrust** of Paul’s argument demands a word that will transfer the idea of

**7**, the **“observation”** or scrutinising, obsessive devotion to “cyclic rule”.

All the components of an idolatrous religion **as would require the use of such a word** as we are searching for would at the time of Paul’s writing have made up universal heathen worship. (To compare, Zen Buddhism of modern Japan disposes of every ingredient of just such a religion. As today such a religion in Paul’s day was real and practical and assertive despite its semblance of being enquiring and meditative. But such idolatry is as real today in the Christian Roman Catholic Church especially in Portugal, Spain, Italy and Latin America as it never was in Paul’s day. Paul preached the Gospel to counter such a religion of doctrine and worship.)

**For contextual, topical and practical reasons**, the meaning of the word usually translated **“observe”** in Galatians 4:10 should rather be rendered **“observations”** and **for contextual, topical and practical reasons** the **times** mentioned there, should be understood for **time-cycles** of heathen and superstitious and idolatrous “divinations” / “observations”.

#### **Words and Phrases One Could Expect (?) Paul Would Have Used**

Traditionally claimed the texts Colossians 2:16 and Romans 14:5-6 are “parallels” of Galatians 4:9-10. The most popular word used to describe what the Christians did whenever they “Judaised”, is “observe”. (In **Colossians 2:16** the NAB even says, *“Let nobody prescribe to you to **celebrate** the Sabbath”*.) In the meantime the Greek – the original – says, “Let no one judge you in meat or in drink regarding feasts, new moons or sabbath days”. **Paul uses no verb**, no predicate whatsoever to indicate that the Colossians “observed” feast

days. He **supposes** their “celebration”, but he supposes **it their act of “eating” and “drinking”**, “with regard to” these occasions. There is nothing “parallel” between Galatians 4:10 and Colossians 2:16.

In **Romans 14:5** Paul says, “One person regards a day above the others; another person regards every day equally important”. Here Paul supposes the “observance” or “celebration” of “Jewish” feast days. He uses the words, *krinoh* and *phraneoh*. He doesn’t use these words in Galatians 4:10 though. He doesn’t blame the Galatians for “observing” “days, months, seasons, years”. For good reason!

Paul would have had every reason to simply use the word **tehreoh** (“**Keep** the commandments”, Mt.19:17 et al.) in Galatians 4:10, had he meant, *‘You observe days and months and seasons and years as the Jews observe their feasts, new moons and Sabbaths’*. But no! And so one could go on to point out words **just right** for Paul’s purpose, **were** they to mean to “observe”, “obey”, “celebrate”, “hallow” etc.

#### **8.3.3.3.**

##### **“By Divination to Worship”**

**In fact Paul uses a very peculiar word in Galatians**, *paratehreoh*. (The middle voice, *paratehreomai*, has the active meaning. Blass Debrunner 2, 16, 1.)

*The Classic Greek Dictionary*, Ricker Berry, University of Chicago, Follett, 1962, *Paratehreoh*. *“To watch closely or narrowly: to observe superstitiously”*.

*“The preposition (para) denotes the presence of the observer on the one side and the energy of participation on the other”* (Kittel). *Paratehreoh* does not denote objective observation, but rather involved subjectivity and subjection.

W.K. Hobart, *The Medical Language of St. Luke* 1882, 153, referring to *paratehreoh*, explains in terms of medical “observation” or “diagnostics”.

Aristotle of Stageiros (384-322 BC) *Historia Animalium*, IX 34, p, 620a, 8, *Paraterohn anaduomenon ek tehs thalassehs* – “(the white-tailed eagle) while rising from the sea **keeping (it) in sight** (chasing a bird)”.

Polybius of Megalopolis (210-120 BC), Book 18, 3.2, *“Lie in wait / **ensnare** and **bewitch** / keep in prison / **tightly watched**”*.

Cebes, *Tabula* 9, 2 (First Century AD), *Paratehrousin tous eilehphotas ti para tehs tuchehs* – “They **lurk upon** them whomever **according to fate** taking”. Notice the use of *paratehreoh* in connection with *heh tucheheh*. The *Tucheheh Sohteira* – “**goddess of fortune**”.

Dionysius of Hallucarnassus (about 30 BC), *On Old Sayings – Peri Tohn Archaiohn Rehtorohn*, II, 53, *tous anaghinohskontas chreh paratehreïn* – “those who recognise signs of fate”. Notice the use of *paratehreoh* with *chreh* – *to chrehn*, “**sign of fate**”.

Clemens Alexandrinus (150-215 AD), *Stromata* I, 73, 6, *paratehrei moi tous chronous eis sunkrisin tehs Mohuseohs hehlikias* – “it **strikes** me these times in the **coming together** of the Mosaic **dispensations**”. Notice the context in which *paratehreoh* is used, “the **coming together of dispensations**”.

*Stromata* VI, 66, 5, *hoper kai epi tohn prophehteuein nun deh leghomenohn paratehreteon* – “whoever indeed on prophecy speaks should now be speaking divination”. Notice the almost synonymous meaning of *paratehreoh* and “**prophecy**”.

Dio Cassius of Nicea (155-235 AD), Book 38, 13, 6, *ta ek tou ouranou ghighnomena paratehreïn* – “to be on the look-out for **omens** coming from the **heavens**”.

Vettius Valens, Greek **astrologer** of the second century, Book 4 (Krol Ed.), 29 (205, 13), uses the word for his “science”.

“(The Indian gymnosophists) resolve to **divine / foretell** (*dokousi de paratehreïn*) the **heavens** (*ta ourania*) and through these **signs** of the **nearing** things (*kai dia tehs toutohn sehmeiohseohs tohn mellontohn*) to **ensure** some(thing) (*promanteuesthai tina*). (Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata*, III, 60, 4.)

*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (edited Grenfell and Hunt), *paratehreïsthai tehn phialehn* - “**to read / interpret the disc of a heavenly body**”. The *Areos phialeh* – **Mars War-god-protector** (shield). Cf. the *tucheh sohteira* – “goddess of fortune”. Also cf. *sohtehr phulaks* – “tutelary god” or “sentinel” (Classic Dictionary).

In the Septuagint, *paratehreoh* in Ps.36:12 / 37:12; 129:3 / 130:3, means “to mark (iniquities)”; in 1Sm.1:12, Ps.55:7 / 56:6, it means “to pay heed to”. It **never** means to “observe” in the sense of “to keep / celebrate (commandments)”.

Josephus (32-97 AD) uses *paratehreoh* with the meaning of “to find by observation (*Bellum Judaicum* 2, 468), “to wait for” (“Test. Sol. 6:4” ... ?)

Says Josephus in *Apology* 2, 282, *hai nehsteia kai luchnohn anakauseis kai polla tohn eis brohsin humihn ou nenonismenon paratehrehitai* – “fasts and kindling lights and more things to do with food that concern us (Jews) **not recognised in divinations**. Notice the use of *paratehreomai* in conjunction with *nenonismenon* : Perfect Passive *nenonismai* from *nomidzoh* : *ta nenonismena tou nomidzein theous* – “**to recognise the gods acknowledged by the state**”! (Classic Dictionary) That implies, “things to do with food that

concern us (Jews) **not recognised in divinations**” ... **of the gods!**

*Pseudoclementine Homilies*, 19, 22, 2-9, “a passage which, probably in direct controversy with Paul (in Galatians 4:10), deals thoroughly with the significance of observing specific times in the begetting of children. In the context one finds the following terms, *aparetehretohs* (inexpedient), *akairohs* (undue), *kairos* (convenient), *epitehdeios* (studied, designedly) *epitehresimoi hehmerai* (days in waiting), *amelehsantes tehn paratehresin* (signs un-delayed).” (Kittel 148)

In the New Testament the word *paratehreoh* / *paratehreomai* appears in Mk.3:2, Lk.6:7, 14:1, 20:20, and in Acts 9:24. Read these texts from the Scriptures. **Notice the Law is not once the thing “observed”.**

According to Kittel, “The term also means ‘to keep’ with reference to cultic observance”. And he quotes **one text, Galatians 4:10**, to illustrate what he means. Now that would have been a fine remark. In Galatians 4:10 the meaning for sure is “‘to keep’ with reference to cultic observance”. But what is **not** the meaning in this Scripture-passage, is that “Paul says that relapse into Jewish observance is like a relapse into polytheism (that) means a loss of freedom”. (Emphasis CGE) “**Jewish observance**”? Why “Jewish”? We need not repeat everything we have so far elaborated on but that Paul does not say, suggest, imply or insinuate “**Jewish observance**” in Galatians 4:10, but heathen, pagan, idolatrous “**observation**”, NOT of “**Jewish**” “feasts, new moons and Sabbath Days”, but of the “cosmic”, “elemental” time-cycles, “days, months, seasons, years”.

**But just look at this:** “The word ‘observe’ in Gal. 4:10 is important. The original word appears only six times in the New Testament, namely in Mark 3:2, Luke 6:7, 14:1, 20:20, Acts 9:24 and the text we here concern ourselves with, Gal. 4:10. Except in Acts 9:24 where it literally means ‘to guard (a gate)’, it is every time used to indicate how the Pharisees tried to protect the Sabbath, how they ‘kept’ Jesus ‘in the eye if He would heal any one on the Sabbath’. From this it is obvious that the original was a special word to indicate the Pharisees’ protection of the Sabbath. And Paul was a Pharisee (Phil.3:5) who knew their terms. If then he uses specifically this word, ‘observe’ in Gal. 4:10, it supplies even greater evidence that he spoke of the Jewish Sabbath.” Prof. Adrio König, *Sondag*, p. 19a. (Emphasis CGE)

“**It is every time used to indicate how the Pharisees tried to protect the Sabbath ... a special word to indicate the Pharisees’ protection of the Sabbath**”. **Professor Doctor** Adrio König, unbelievable! “... a Pharisee (Phil.3:5) who knew their terms ...” a



Greek word the language of the Arimaic-speaking Pharisees – the Pharisees of all Jews!? “... the original ... special word to indicate the Pharisees’ “protection of the Sabbath””? This Greek word from the reference-framework of pagan and heathen idolatrous philosophy had its origin with the Pharisees? What an insult to your alma mater Faculty of Theology, Professor Doctor Adrio König!

“The compound (para plus tehreoh) ... seems to have the sense of ‘anxious, scrupulous, well-informed observance in one’s own interest’ which does not fit the traditional celebration of the Sabbath or other Jewish feasts but does fit regard for points or spans of time which are evaluated positively or negatively from the standpoint of the calendar or astrology.” (Kittel)

This commentator contradicts Prof. König’s meaning. But then he continues, “Naturally it is conceivable that Jewish feasts, especially in the Hellenistic sphere, were regarded and celebrated superstitiously”. (Emphasis CGE) From where, again, does this scholar get the idea that Paul has “Jewish feasts” in mind? The one interpreter after the other only echoes others. But M.J. Lagrange, *Saint Paul, Epistle aux Galates*, “on 4:10 points out that the very neutral terms days, months, times and years (as distinct from the formulation in Col.2:i6) are chosen so as to cover Hellenistic superstition in general.” The concept of “Jewish feasts” is **irrelevant and unnecessary**. Whether or not superstitiously celebrated, “Jewish feasts” are not Paul’s concern, but rather “points or spans of time which are evaluated positively or negatively from the standpoint of the calendar or astrology”. “Evaluated positively or negatively from the standpoint of the calendar or astrology” is what the word *paratehreoh* / *paratehreomai* means, seen in the light of these many incidences of its use as well as in the specific context of this Scripture, Galatians 4:10.

To complete the picture of the word *paratehreoh*’s meaning, reference must be made to another form of this word as used in the Scriptures. That form is the **noun** *paratehrehsis* derived from the **verb** we have considered up to now.

“It means “observing” by scientists or physicians”, e.g. Sextus Empiricus, physician in Alexandria (c. 200 AD), *Adversus Mathematicos*, I, 153.

Diodorus Siculus of Agyrion in Sicily (time of Augustus 63 BC – 14 AD), *History of the World*, I, 9, 6; I, 28, 1, 5, 31, 3, “In Egyptian or Babylonian astronomy”, *hai tohn astrohn arxaioatai paratehrehseis* – “the **search** for the beginning of the stars”. *History of the World*, 5,

31, 3, *palaiahi tini kai polychroniohi paratehrehsei peri toutohn pepisteukutes* – “overseeing / **scrutinising** (human sacrifices)”.

Flavius Clemens Alexandrinus of Athens (150-215 AD), *Stromata* I, 135,2, *ta pleista ek paratehrehseohs kai eks eikotohn proeirehkotes* – “things commonplace foretold from **observations** and from probabilities”. *Stromata* VI, 32, 1, *ek tehs tohn metarsiohn paratehrehseohs polla proleghohn* – “from the highly **speculative** many things being forecast”.

Claudius Galenus of Pergamon (129-199 AD), renowned physician of imperial Rome, *Hippocratis Prognosticum*, III, 15, 257, *ek paratehrehseohs didachthohnai* – “to learn from inspection / observation”.

“In the LXX there are no instances of paratehrehsis, but it occurs in ’A at Ex.12:42 in nuks paratehrehseohs ... LXX: nuktos prophulakeh ... ekeineh heh nuks hauteh prophulakeh kuriohi.” “It is a night to be strictly fixed / worked out precisely / anticipated fervently”.

“In the New Testament paratehrehsis occurs only once at Lk.17:20. The interpretation of the verse is important here in fixing the sense of paratehrehsis.” “When He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The Kingdom of God comes not with signs (*meta paratehrehseohs*). Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!, for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.”

“One must ask whether paratehrehsis is related directly to the temporal pote of the preceding question of the Pharisees whereas idou ohde eh ekei in distinction herefrom has a local sense, whether the reference is thus to the calculating of times on the one hand and the local establishment of visible signs on the other. It may be said in this regard that the temporal and the local aspects are very close in all apocalyptic. For this reason it is as well to regard the two negative statements of the logion as virtually synonymous. (It should be noted that the meaning “observation” is naturally suggested for paratehrehsis by the texts adduced above and also by the astronomical contents. In these texts paratehrehsis never means the calculation of future phenomena but the concrete observations which underlie such calculations) [as **stoicheia** underlie the concepts of time] Another problem is whether to take the saying as future so that the calculation or observation of the signs of apocalyptic events stands in contrast to the sudden (future) incursion of the Kingdom of God. Or is the reference to the Kingdom of God already come? The latter view is to be preferred, and so is the interpretation “among

you”, “in your midst”, or even “in your sphere”, for entos humohn. Does this mean that in the two parts of the logion the calculable futurity of eschatological events according to Jewish expectations is contrasted with the presence already of God’s rule in the coming of Jesus? Behind this kind of exposition is the improbable assumption that paratehrehsis means the calculation of future events with the help of signs. But the examples from profane literature show that the sense which fits best is that of the rational-empirical observation and fixing of signs and symptoms.”

Why is “the calculation of future events with the help of signs” an “improbable assumption”? Is not “the calculation of future events with the help of signs”, also “virtually synonymous” with what “the examples from profane literature show”, that “the sense which fits best is that of the rational-empirical observation and fixing of signs and symptoms”? Is not “the calculation of future phenomena” also “virtually synonymous” with “the concrete observations which underlie such calculations”? It should be remembered “the temporal and the local aspects are very close in all apocalyptic”.

“Lk.17:20 further thus means that whether the Kingdom of God has already come cannot be decided on the basis of events which intimate and anticipate the final consummation as though the desire for rationally and empirically accessible signs and proofs could be satisfied therewith. In the measure that the divine dominion is already at work it can be known and grasped only by faith. The saying is one of the Synoptic statements concerning the mystery of the Kingdom of God, which is not accessible to the Pharisaic demand for signs. The expression ouk erchetai heh basileia tou theou meta paratehrehseohs shows that the attitude of the Pharisees expressed in their Messianic and eschatological expectations is quite inadequate in face of what is effected by the coming of Jesus in the midst of His people.”

#### 8.3.3.4.

#### **“Divination” of Another Sort**

It is clear that *paratehrehoh* / -*omai* / *paratehrehsis* indicates “observation” in the sense of “divination”, because that was exactly how the Pharisees expected the Kingdom of God to come and exactly what Jesus said they were mistaken in. Had one to retranslate the word into the language Jesus spoke, it certainly would have been with a word that had the meaning of “divination”. And this is the sense in which *paratehrehoh* perfectly fits Paul’s purpose in Galatians 4:10. Paul did not have the “keeping” of the different Jewish “Sabbaths” in mind, but the superstitious “divination” of those very pagan “gods” or “principles” (*stoicheia*) of time, namely “days, months, seasons (times) and years”. The Galatians “returned again” to their “former”

**idolatry**, and not to Judaism, and then **topped their error** with abuse of the pure and Biblical institution of circumcision.

“In the mysterious cosmic speculations of the Fathers”, says Samuele Bacchiocchi, quoting Jean Daniélou, “the incorporation into the Christian mystery of a whole solar mythology (is found) The conflict of light with darkness (the motive Justin uses for the creation of light on the First Day) is expressed by the myth of Ormuzd and Ahriman, of Apollo and Poseidon. But Christ is the sun of the new creation: His name is Orient, the Dawn of the East. He attacked the power of darkness, and, on the day of His Resurrection, He completely scattered the darkness of death and of sin. So Christianity disengages the cosmic symbols from the pagan myths ... and incorporates them as figures of the mysteries of truth. This line of thought shows”, says Daniélou, “that we are in the fourth century, at the time of the decline of paganism, when Christianity began to clothe itself in its garments.”

Justin Martyr uses amulets of word of the light-god who put up a fight against the darkness-god and prevailed on the First Day of creation. Says he, Christians keep the Sun’s Day. “There are many other ways” and “other Christs”. Jesus becomes Jupiter and his cross the Tau; God the Father, Bacchus. And Anti-Christ worships idols and images and calls them by the Name of Jesus Christ! It happens when the Christ of Christian Worship is de-historicised and diluted into the vapour of man’s own “faith”.

Daniélou (as Bacchiocchi) is concerned with the Easter problem and therefore applies these facts of history to the fourth century. But these lines and the facts therein mentioned perfectly apply to the first century and the situation in the earliest missionary Congregations of Galatia. This Roman province historically and even geographically lent itself to paganism and today still carries topographic names of the gods and battles of the gods. The gods not only created its history but also its landscape. From this part of the world came the greatest challenge to the purity and innocence of the young and tender faith of Christianity. Daniélou could just as well have said, This line of thought shows that we are in the **first** century, at a time of the **ascending** of paganism, when Christianity began to clothe itself in its garments. And if Bacchiocchi’s phrase, “the mysterious cosmic speculations of the Fathers” would be translated into Greek, the word used for “speculation” certainly would have been *paratehrehoh*.

When Professor Doctor Adrio König wants to know, “What does Paul want to say about the Sabbath in Galatians 4:10”, the answer is, **Nothing!** The Sabbath has no bearing on the subject and

the subject has no bearing on the Sabbath. When Professor Doctor Adrio König and with him the whole world allege that Paul wants to say “*very serious things*” about the **Sabbath**, he and the world are seriously, sanctimoniously mistaken. Paul, according to this false piety, wants to teach “*emphatically that those who still observe the Old Testament Sabbath, return to the weak and beggarly principles*”. “*But even more serious*”, according to these judges, “*Paul fears that such persons might not be Christians*”! Says König, to keep the Sabbath “*is as serious as to have yourself circumcised for religious motives*”. Even had the Sabbath because it is an Old Testament institution been abrogated, it, like circumcision, remains an institution of God, and holy and sinless. It should not be derogated for being abrogated (were it so) **or for being abused**. But the Lord of the Sabbath shall avenge his Lordship of that Day as He jealously did in Old Testament times. He the more surely shall avenge his “Holy”, the Sabbath Day, for the very reason of the present enlightenment and heavenly gift and partaking of the Holy Spirit and taste of the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. And this is exactly what God in Galatians 4:10 to 11 by the mouth of Paul does in respect of **circumcision!** God avenges his Law of Circumcision in that Paul judges on His behalf, saying, That if you circumcise yourselves, o Galatians, after you have forsaken God and the true worship of God through Jesus Christ **in the way you have done**, then, I am afraid, I must judge that you are cut off from Christ!

We are forced to listen to what the Professor Doctor further has decided on those who keep the Sabbath, “*Then you are cut off from Christ, then you have fallen from grace. Here we have in principle the same danger against which the Apostle warns in Colossians two: to hold fast to the shadow and consequently to deny the body, Christ.*” As if he could read hearts, the Professor acts the judge while he is not even able to observe that the Body is the Church and Christ its Head. He cannot discern that **the Sabbath which the Head of the Church is Lord of**, “holds good for the People of God” like a shadow holds fast to the Body that casts it. Where the Church be, it shall bring its shadow along with it and shall shelter the weary pilgrim like the tree under which God met with Abraham even while He overshadowed him with the grace of His Eternal Covenant.

Prof. König tries to explain the difference in Paul’s attitude in Romans and in Galatians, “*In (Gal. 4 and Col. 2 Paul) strongly expresses himself against the observance of the Sabbath, but in Rom. 14 he allows it. This difference in his attitude may be explained therein that the false teachers in Galatia and Colossus put the keeping of the Law against Christ as though salvation is contained in the*

*keeping of the Law rather than in the faith in Christ, while the Sabbath in Rome was more a case of practical nature not bound up with salvation. Then one is able to comprehend that Paul in Galatians and in Colossians rejects the Sabbath with all his might, but in Romans notwithstanding wants to see certain Christians who were only recently converted from the Jews and who still thought it is a sin to break the Sabbath be allowed for some time still to celebrate the Sabbath the Jewish way.*”

Paul “*in Gal. 4 and Col. 2*” **in no way** “*expresses himself against the observance of the Sabbath.*” “*In Rom. 14 he allows observance of the Sabbath*” **only by implication**. Paul in Romans 14 as unambiguously “*expresses himself against*” making of food and drink the Kingdom of God as he “*expresses himself against*” one Christian acting judge of another. “*In Rome*”, food and drink, and the regard or non-regard for Jewish feast “days”, were “*more*” than merely “*a case of practical nature*”. These Christians’ scruples were as “*bound up with salvation*” as could be. Paul “*rejected*” **the principle of it** “*with all his might*”.

In **Colossians** the issue was not the “*the keeping of the Law against Christ as though salvation is contained in the keeping of the Law rather than in the faith in Christ*”. In Colossians Paul endorses and defends the believers’ freedom of feasting despite it being Old Testament feasting – just like in the case of Romans 14. In **Galatians though**, “*the keeping of the Law (was put) against Christ as though salvation is contained in the keeping of the Law rather than in the faith in Christ*” – which is perfectly true, but must be understood from the perspective that “*faith in Christ*” is here sacrificed not in favour of the Law, but in favour of heathendom. And that the Law is here abused to bless and sanctify the cursed and unholy practice of idolatry. (The same method is used today still by the Christian keeping of the heathen Sunday, where the Fourth Commandment is abused to give sanctity and acceptability to Christians’ idolatrous disregard and contempt for Law and Lord.) “**Now I say**”, writes **Paul, and he proceeds with treating on the backsliding of (converted) pagan heathen to their former and original state without knowledge of God and without having been known by God. Certain Christians who were only recently converted from the Gentiles, thought it no sin having themselves circumcised** – “*the Jewish way*”, **and, they, thought it no sin having themselves circumcised as guarantee and seal** in the salvation that is of **Christ**. Theirs was a perverse concoction of asceticism, hedonism, Judaism and Hellenistic cosmic worship. They wanted the best of all worlds, and in the process forfeited the only true salvation and happiness.

*“It remains difficult though”* continues König (meaning “impossible”), *“to understand how Paul could be so tolerant about a practice which is so irrefragable past for the Christian. In fact, he who still celebrates the Seventh Day, did not realise who and what Jesus Christ is (Col.2:16-17). It at least therefor is a very serious fault in understanding Jesus Christ if we still want to celebrate the Sabbath, that is, the Seventh Day – and it cannot simply be pardoned.”*

*It remains difficult to understand how Paul could be so tolerant about a practice if that practice is so irrefragable past for the Christian and “cannot simply be pardoned”.* No such enigma exists though in the relevant Scriptures. The difficulty results from fanciful or rather wilful surmising. The **Sabbath** is read into these Scriptures for **no** reason but the **Sunday-propagators’** dire need of anti-Sabbath matter of fact. In view of the fact they find nothing to suit their purpose they resort to judgment of the Sabbath-keeper as of the Sabbath. Then suddenly the Sabbath of the Lord your God, the Sabbath the Lord Jesus Christ claimed Himself Lord of, is the Jewish Sabbath, and he who keeps it becomes a Judaiser.

The Christians of **Rome** made just such a boast of **their** “regard” of “days”, as did the **Galatians** of **their** “observation” of “days”. It remains difficult to understand how Paul could be so **intolerant** in the case of the Galatians yet so lenient in the case of the Romans about a practice **forever and everywhere** forbidden for the Christian and that *“cannot be pardoned”* at all.

It is true, **both** Churches *put the keeping of the Law against Christ as though salvation is contained in the keeping of the Law rather than in the faith in Christ.* Both Churches made of the Kingdom of God something else than “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”. One cannot understand why Paul would pardon the Rome Church but not the Galatians Church **if there had been no other reason of difference between them.** Arguments that the Sabbath had been the bone of contention are self-destructive for it presumes the same enthusiasm causing irreconcilable reactions on the part of Paul.

Paul in the Church at **Rome** found a **practice** he could live with, but a  **motive** he could never tolerate. In Rome the practice was the mostly Jewish Believers’ “regard” paid “Jewish” “feast” “days”. Paul found it not only acceptable but partook in the practices himself. But Paul found **pride and exclusivity the motive behind** the practice. Paul judged this motive and motivation and condemned it. He could not disapprove of it more seriously. If one thinks Paul is not serious in his denunciation of the **Rome** Church’s pride, he has no

inkling of what Paul says in Romans 14.

Paul also found both a practice and a motive in the Church of the **Galatians, he for his life could not permit.** It was not a “regard” for “Jewish” “feast” “days”. It was **Gentile converts’** idolatrous, “superstitious” “divination” of “days and months and times and years” – their “slavish worship” of “no-gods” and “weak and beggarly rulers”. But Paul found a further practice in the Galatians Church that disclosed the motive and the motivation behind the practice. It was the practice of circumcision. Circumcision was the insurance policy the Galatians signed and paid for security against the judgment of God over their godless relapse. Paul could say nothing else than what he says, You have fallen from grace. Christ shall avail you nothing. I am sorry. God forbid I am right and you really have gone so far.

**A Relapse Into Paganism Or Into 'Keeping of  
Sabbath Days'  
In Galatians 4:8-10?**

**If Ye Be Christ's,  
Then Are Ye Abraham's Seed,  
and Heirs According to the Promise**

A vying for the heart and allegiance between religion and salvation; between the world and Christ

(Refer, *Second Peter, the Earliest Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia.*)

**GE: Verdana** "... The Galatian Church '*relapsed*' into a '*bondage*' under '*heathen*' '*idolatry*'".

**EB: Courier New** "... the Judaizers with their OT Laws were seen here as "in bondage" ".

**BR: Garamond** "... Paul gets to the point about their FORMER pagan practices and the RETURN "BACK AGAIN" to those practices".

**Scripture: *Monotype Corsiva*** "... *How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly principles whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?*"

**The Issue on which this Conversation Concentrates**

The standard Christian opinion with reference to Galatians 4:10 is that Paul with his words there, and with his specific word, "days", there, actually meant, the Sabbath Day, and that he with this reference of his to the Seventh Day Sabbath of the Old Testament, actually intended it to be the direct object of his denouncement in this passage particularly, and indirectly to be the object of his denouncement in the broader context of the entire Letter; that Paul intended the Sabbath condemned through Christian Faith – and that he intended a condemnation of Sabbath observance here, that is indicative of and in agreement with his overall understanding of the Gospel basics. That would explain the severity with which he condemned the practice of Sabbath observation in Galatians 4:10-11 and 5:1-2.

In **EB** we have represented the viewpoint, it is not the Sabbath or the Law directly or as such "being condemned" in Galatians 4:10-11, but "the people's inability to keep it (the Law) right", their "trusting in it as

a mandatory of means of gaining justification"; that "the Galatians were not doing it unto the Lord", but "to justify themselves" and to "give a motive" for "judging others". "People's EVIL OBSERVANCE (of the Law and Sabbaths) is condemned." This is what, in the opinion of **EB**, constituted the 'bondage' – "another type of bondage" – towards which the Galatians "veered off".

Paul does indeed speak of a 'day' 'observed' – 'religiously observed' – and therefore, of a 'religious day'. And, Paul 'condemns'; he 'condemns' the religion as the 'day'. Paul doesn't condemn the religion only, or the motive only, or the inability or shortcomings only. Paul does not exempt the 'law' behind or underneath the 'day'; he makes no distinction, but 'condemns' the whole – practice, motive, merit, source – the lot as one.

**The Conclusion to This Discussion**

The Galatian Church '*relapsed*' into a '*bondage*' under '*heathen*' '*idolatry*' that involved the '*worship*' by '*divination*' of the Greek "*no-gods*" of time, "*days, months, seasons, years*", and therefore, the Sabbath of the Scriptures had nothing to do with the "*weak and beggarly principles*" of the Galatians' '*sorcery*' (syncretism), that '*availed*' them '*nothing*', but instead – their obtestation by '*circumcision*' despite and for the very reason of it – that "*severed*" them "*from Christ*".

This – the above – is precisely what, and how, the Galatians themselves thought (in the words of EB), "(N)o one can be under bondage as long as they have "God's Word"; not the HEARERS are justified; only the DOERS, and WHO does it perfectly?; so ONLY pagans (are) in bondage..." – our not-gods besides let's make ourselves Jews and we shall be heirs!

**So what shall we do in order to obtain a saving  
"knowledge of God"?**

We shall be universalists, pluralists, inclusivists – all religious traditions talk about the same reality – God, eventually. The Abrahamic covenant can be ours also even though we worship "*gods*" that "*by nature*", are "*not gods*" of '*The, Israel of God!* There are in fact, other, Names, and, other, Ways – religious ways – of leading a full, authentic, and human life, other, than the Christian Way, other, than the Name of Jesus Christ! (Notice the italics – a la Paul F Knitter.)

No "NEW type of BONDAGE" was this; nor is it today!

### The Purpose to This Discourse

The purpose of this conferring is ONLY, to answer the question, **WHAT** the "*days, months, seasons, years*" (hehmeras mehnas kairous eniautous) mentioned in Galatians 4:10, in actual fact, were. Were they '*Old Testament Sabbaths*' – '*holy times of the Law*', **or**, were they the '*by-nature-not-gods-weak-and-beggarly-principles-of-the-world*' and of paganism – 4:8,9,3?

The idea is not a sermon, although – speaking for myself – I find it impossible not to be confronted by the Gospel and make decision for Christ, in this matter.

### Contra Suppositions

The entire thesis of a relapse supposedly into 'Old Testament practices' as were 'the Law' and / or "*the works of the Law*", the "*weak and beggarly principles*" of the Galatians' blasphemous devotion –**4:7-11**–, is built upon **four** main suppositions (or assertions),

First, That verses 8 and 9 speak of **different** things;

Two, That a 'Jewish' corruption permeates 'the whole **context**'.

Three, That the **Jews** mainly were to blame for error.

Four, That Judaism and Christian **Sabbath**-keeping are virtually undividable and indistinguishable.

### Summary of the Context in Pericope:

- 4: 1-3 **From** the Particularly 'Judaizer' Condition, "*Now . . .*  
 4: 4-7 Intermediate, Transitional Passage, "*But when . . .*  
 4: 8-11 **To** the Particularly **Gentile** Relapse, "*Howbeit then . . .*  
 4:9-20 Analysis of Relapse,  
*"Brethren . . . Where is . . . My little children . . .*  
 4:21 The **Law**, Related to Bondage, "*Tell me, ye . . .*  
 4:22-31 Allegorical Illustration, "*For it is written . . .*  
 5:1 **Admonishment**, "*Stand fast . . .*  
 5:2 Circumcision Related to Bondage "*Understand, if you ..*  
 5:3-4 **Conclusion**, "*I testify again . . .*

### 1. The 'Worship' by 'Divination' of the "Natural", 'Elemental', "Not-Gods", "of the World" of Galatians 4:8-10

Wisdom 7:17, **A Judaistic Eulogy to the God Wisdom**

*En gar cheiri autou kai hehmeis kai hoi logoi hehmohn,*  
 For in his hand both we and our mind are;

*pasa te fronehsis kai ergateiohn epistehmeh;*  
 all wisdom also and experience / fullness / exactness of science;

*autos gar moi edohke tohn ontohn gnohsin opseudeh, eidennai:*  
 for he gave me mature / conclusive / correlating / accumulative  
 knowledge of the things that are, **namely / being** (the  
 correlation between):

*sustasin kosmou kai energeian stoicheiohn:*  
 the founding / sustaining of the world and the ruling / control of  
 the **principles / rulers / gods**:

*archehn kai telos kai mesotehta chronohn:*  
 the first, last and middle (basic components) of **times** (days,  
 nights, months);

*tropohn allagas kai metabolas kairohn:*  
 the alternating of the tropics and change of **seasons**;

*eniautohn kyklous kai asterohn theseis;*  
 the circuits of **years** and stellar positioning;

*fyseis zohohn kai thymous thehriohn;* (Centaurus)  
 the nature of living things and the furies of the constellations;

*pneumatohn bias kai dialogismous anthrohon;*  
 the force of the winds (four directions) and the mentality of  
 people;

*diaforos phytohn kai dynameis rhidzohn –*  
 the potencies of plants and the powers of roots –

*hosa te esti krypta kai emphaneh egnohn.*  
 all such things as are either secret or manifest, I know!

**Background**  
**Paul and the Law in Romans**

*"For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. ...*

*But now being made free from sin, and being become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

*... What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ...*

*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Ro.6: 23)*

*"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Ro.8: 6)*

*"The wages of sin is death" ... "to be carnally minded is death". "The servant of sin" is "dead in trespasses and sins". (Eph.2:1) He is "under the Law, for (= "now" = "then") the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath,, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. ... They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: **against such there is no law.***

*And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. **If we have the Spirit**, let us also walk in the Spirit. **Let us not be desirous of vainglory**, provoking one another, envying one another" – Christ, being our glory, our challenge, our inspiration ... our Law!*

If a man do "*such like*" is AGAINST the Law of God, "*THEN*", while thinking he is 'free from the Law' – and while thinking he is "*not under the Law*" – he in fact is, "*under the Law*" as well as under "*the curse of the Law*"!

But if a man "*(be) Christ's*" "*there is no Law*" "*against*" him or "*against such*" as "*is the fruit of the Spirit*" in his life.

Clearly the Law of God is Law because it is against all things and anything not of or in **Christian** Faith! It condemns everything and only those things not saving faith through Jesus Christ and the fruits thereof.

Paul therefore gives strongest possible reason for God's Law and clearest possible indication of its holy and eternal nature. Let no one speak against the Law of God, for Paul here thinks most highly of it. He shows forth the Law's only glory, which is, that everything the Law of God is against, is idolatry, and belongs to those who have no knowledge of God, because '*such things*' fit not into what belongs to God in Christian Faith; fit not into the knowledge of God through Christian Faith; fit not into what is received from God by Christian Faith; and fit not into what should be returned to God from Christian Faith. Christianity graces the Law of God.

*"The works of the flesh (good or bad indifferently) ... SUCH THINGS shall NOT inherit the kingdom of God. ... The fruit of the Spirit ... against SUCH THINGS, there is no law ... THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts; THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S ... live in the Spirit ... walk in the Spirit". "There is therefore now no condemnation to THEM THAT ARE IN CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit – For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin and death ... that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Ro.8:1-2, 4)*

Whenever the Law is "*against*" "*things*" as "*such*" – "*such*" as Paul here mentions – it is "*the Law*" of God as the "*power of sin*" and "*the Law*" as the "*condemnation*" to "*death*" – it is the Law of God as "*the Law of sin and death*". The Law of God is Christ Jesus, "*for judgment I am come into this world*". Jesus Christ means the death of "*the man of sin*", who, unless pulverised by the Rock, shall not live, but shall die. (Jn.9:39) Christ is the condemnation to all evil works of men and to all men of evil works. "*Behold my Servant ... He shall show judgment to the Gentiles*". (Mt.12:18)

Now here is Paul's message – throughout all his Letters : WE ALL, "*AT THAT TIME*", WHILE, "*ye sometime were afar off*", were "*without Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*". This word applies to each one and all "*who are made nigh by the blood of Christ*". (Eph.2:12-13) (Unless one is crucified with Christ and **in Him** is made sin, he shall not be raised with Christ and **in Him** be made the righteousness of God – Ro.6:6-12) – which is no how possible,

but through faith that is the work of the Spirit of God and not at all the inheritance of the flesh.

These "*without Christ*", we all, are, whenever and for as long as we offer for righteousness before God the sacrifice of merit – the merit of "*the flesh*" – hereditary; or the merit of "*works*" – of "*works*" "*in the Law*" or "*without the Law*"; of "*works*" Old Testament or New Testament; of "*works*" Jewish or Christian – the merit of any "*works*" of piety or righteousness or evil! (The difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.)

It is a righteousness in all as good as that of the "*Gentiles in the flesh*", for we all "*without respect of person*", "*in the flesh*", ARE, Gentiles, **Gentiles even WHILE Jews**, spiritually being "*without Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God, in the world!*"

We simply do not and cannot meet, come by, earn, or merit, salvation: no one of us all, Jews and Gentiles; Jews or Christians – it is the free "**gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord**", "*According to the eternal purpose God purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him!*" (Eph.2:11-12)

No one is saved differently than others who are saved: "*But now in Christ Jesus ye who were afar off (We all like sheep have gone astray) are made nigh (the Israel of God) by the blood of Christ.*"

In this light – the light of '*Paul's Gospel*' – also his Letter to the Galatians should be understood.

We, two thousand years after Paul, take many things for granted the Christians of Paul's day, would, or might have, or would or might not have!

For example, we, take for granted that Jews are justified by the Law and saved by their works of the Law; but Gentiles by grace through faith. We, take for granted that those who respect the Law are under its curse; but those who claim they are free to transgress the Law, are under grace.

Such things never entered the mind of Paul while writing to the Galatians, but may have ruled in the minds of many Christians of his day, just like it does in our own.

There in fact is a "*bondage*" such as being "*under the curse of the Law*". The "*curse of the Law*" is death! To deny is death. Paul's Letter to the Galatians, among other Scriptures, is about such things as bring one under condemnation. Therefore, "*The creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption (sin*

and death) *into the glorious liberty ('eternal life') of the children of God*" (Ro.8:21) through Christ Jesus, by faith, only, "*without the works of the Law*" good or bad, without the stipulations of the Law who the Jews are and without the stipulations of the Law who the Gentiles are – "*children of God*" are "*children of God*" without the Law in every respect! "*For the Scripture hath concluded all under sin . . . we were kept under the Law, shut up . . . under the Law (under the Law 'in bondage' TO SIN), . . . unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed . . . until the time appointed of the Father.*" (Gal.3:22-25, 4:2) "*The Scripture hath concluded all under sin*" but the Elect in '*the death of death in the death of Christ*' (John Owen).

"**Christ our righteousness**" . . . Romish Error hates it. "*The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*". (Ro.8:7) "*For to be carnally minded is death*" Ro.8:6, and "*The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the Law*". (1Cor.15:56) And **the Strength of the Law is God**.

How is it possible anyone could today think God's Law is abolished? Oh yes, the Law had been "*abolished*" – but "*abolished*" in the Person and body and in the Will and Power of Christ crucified; of Christ who died . . . AND . . . who rose again! "*I have POWER to lay down my life; I have POWER to take up my life again!*" Jn.10:18.

In Christ –the Power of its abolishment– the Law finds its institution and establishment, once for all, in the power of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, for He is the Power and Strength of God's Word; the validity, authority and, Power, of the Law – in God!

"*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Father, our Father!*" (Ro.8:14) It never can be through lineage – through Law – it shall be by "*adoption*" for the Jew as for the Gentile, or not at all.

"**Not** (to be) subject to the Law of God", "*is enmity against God*"; "**Not** (to be) subject to the Law of God" means to be under "*servitude*" – that is, to be '*in bondage*' – to sin! "*To **BE** subject to the Law of God*", is NOT being '*in bondage under the Law*'! Paul never says anything near! "**Not** (to be) subject to the



*Law of God* means to be a sinner – a sinner outside, or, “without the Law” – to be a Gentile spiritually! “**Not** (to be) subject to the Law of God” means NOT to be in harmony or NOT to be in pace with the Law of God! “**NOT** (to be) subject to the Law of God is enmity against God”, is the Word. If you’re not a sinner you can’t be saved! God pardoned us “while we were enemies of God”, not, ‘while we were such exemplary obedient to the Law’; God loved us not while we loved God; but “while we were haters of God”. God saved us then. He justifies the unjust. He forgives them who have much to be forgiven. God always saves us when sinners; He only saves us when sinners. God now, saves us when sinners – while we now, are “**not** subject to the Law of God”, but in bondage under sin. Am I going to be saved a sinner or in perfect subjection to the Law of God? Are you? “Of such are the Kingdom of heaven” – of slaves; of the helpless; of the not-heard, not-seen; of the fearing and fleeing! The Kingdom of God is a bunch of sinners – a Kingdom of saved sinners – its hosts, the David’s chosen band – outcasts, cave-dwellers, vagabonds. “Thy Kingdom come!”

Nowhere does Paul ever speak of such a thing as a ‘bondage under the Law. Sin is that ‘bondage’ which the Scripture and the Law have “concluded (us) all under” – even in our Lord Jesus in propitiation for our sins!

Sin then is the ‘bondage’ and Christ our freedom from it!

The Law of God – God unto Himself is Law – condemns the sinner TO ‘bondage’ UNDER SIN. When under sin, one is under the curse of the Law – “dead in trespasses and sins!” God saves no one He saves but from being “dead in trespasses and sins!”

Jesus Christ stood under sin carrying the load of it, and under the curse of the Law, Himself the Power by which He laid down His life – and in His, ours; Himself the Power by which He took up again His life – and in His, ours. Christ needed the same Power He needed to take up His life again, to lay it down. Christ needed and had to apply no less a power to die, than He needed and had to apply to rise from the dead and live again! It was none but God triumphing over grave and hell who was delivered over to be crucified, and died, and was buried; who “was made sin for us”! Alleluia! “I believe in God, Almighty . . . I believe in Christ!”

Says Paul, speaking of that “liberty” which “false brethren privily came in” to “spy out, that they might bring us into bondage” – the “bondage” of SINNING again the sin that will lead us into

servitude to death again (Galatians 2:4). Those and such were the sins counted and enumerated in 5:19-20 – none of which sins were ‘Jewish’ sins particularly, but which all are ‘Gentile’ and ‘pagan’ sins because all are **human** sin – sin of the “world”, and of “man” : idolatry!

All are the sin of **merit** : again : all are the sin of **idolatry!** All are “such things” as do not “inherit”, “the kingdom of God”, nor EARN the “promises of God” or the “blessing to Abraham”, but EARN “the curse of the Law”. All are human sin = sin “after the flesh” – that was Paul’s finding, having personally experienced it first hand – 4:3 with reference to 1:13-14! “If thou be a breaker of the Law thy righteousness is made uncircumcision” Ro.3:25!

My daughter once when still a little girl so sweetly innocent, asked me, “Pa, are all Jews Greeks?” And in fact, one, although Jew by every right, breaking the Law, becomes a heathen, a ‘Greek’, by every right! How wrong was the answer I had given her, then, No dear, Jews are Jews and Greeks are Greeks!

In Galatians then, “Even so we (Paul and kind) when we were children”; when we were not “reckoned righteous” yet; “even so, when we were . . . breakers of the Law . . . we were in bondage under the rulers of the world”, Gal. 4:3! We were “made uncircumcision” – heathen, Gentiles, Greeks! There is NO difference between Jew and Gentile before the throne and rule of God! “**BUT NOW**”, and here comes the vital difference: “But now, the righteousness namely of GOD, by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them (IN Christ) that believe, is **MANIFESTED**”, Ro.8:1, 3:21. The Righteousness of GOD, Jesus Christ! “Because ALL have sinned and (in themselves) come short of the glory of GOD”, and are “made uncircumcision”. In the eye of God Jews are Gentiles and men of religion, are men of the world.

The mirror of the Law revealed, “manifested”, our righteousness like *uncircumcision* against God’s **glory**. “God has set forth”, and “declares HIS righteousness . . . to declare, say I, at this time, His righteousness – that HE, might be just and the Justifier of him who believes in Jesus!”

Thus, it is even ground for all. The ‘bondage’ cannot be restricted to sins and sinfulness of the ‘Jews’. Their sins are the sins of mankind and humanity ‘by nature’ and at large (“in general”, BR). Sins of the Jews and of the Judaist Paul properly, fall under “bondage under the first principles of the world” – the

"bondage / servitude" of an overall and ultimate, "Gentile / heathen", "world", which may include even 'Christian religion' because it is 'religion' of "man" and "of the flesh" – like Paul's, **erstwhile, own, "Judaism"!**

To Paul's mind therefore "bondage under the first principles of the world" is the 'bondage' without Christ and of being held captive **in death** – as was his personal experience when 'under' "Judaism".

Paul brings all sin and sinners, under the reach and hold of the Law and "the curse of the Law", so that even his own righteousness for Paul was like being "in bondage under the first principles of the world" (Gal.4:3) – "without Christ", and like being the slave of sin and death no different than the pagan.

The Law forced **everyone** upon Christ – 3:24. The "bondage under the first principles of the world" is the furthest severance from grace; it is the remotest ends the Law condemns the sinner to, away from Christ, for "the curse of the Law" is the remotest ends grace brings the sinner from, to Christ. The Law forced us upon Christ – 3:24.

The "bondage under the first principles of the world" thus becomes the furthest severance from Christ, the remotest ends He condemns the sinner to, away from Himself; for *the curse* Jesus had taken upon Himself is the remotest ends He brings the sinner back from, to Himself.

Is it not hell Jesus descended to, to save sinners? Is it not hell Christ within his own soul took His redeemed to, being sacrificed and having died for their sake in their place, eternal death? Was it not Christ Jesus who hung on the tree, God's "Holy" "made sin" for sinners?

Is not what Isaiah saw in chapter 53 Christ Jesus in His suffering? Paul speaks of 'bondage'; was not Christ Jesus "oppressed"? Was He not "taken from prison and from judgment"? Paul speaks of "death" and "curse"; did Jesus Christ not "pour out His soul in death"? Was He not "stricken", and "cut off out of the land of the living"? So that Jesus Christ is both God's Yes and God's No to man (Karl Barth); is both the Law and the Judgment OF GOD, and the Promises and Blessing, OF GOD.

Whatever sin it might be, it is a bondage; and whatever bondage it might be, it is under sin and sinning and its wages, death. But also, whatever righteousness it might be, if not "the righteousness of God... without the works of the Law" – if not Christ Jesus alone and only and without the merit of us or our

works or all 'synergism' – it is a bondage of sin and sinning and its wages – it is the Galatian error, the Galatian "bondage under the principles of the world" – the Galatian 'syncretism'. (I do see the 'Galatian heresy'; I cannot see a 'Colossian heresy'.)

'Bondage' to Paul's opinion never is the Law, never is the worst obeying of the Law. **'Bondage' to Paul is merit – death penalty – for the best obeying of the Law;** a servitude to the forces of hell "under the curse of the Law" mocking highest human achievement. "The wages of sin, is death" – and "the strength of sin is the Law"! Sin kills by the power of the Law! The Law offers no wages but its curse – death penalty for the best obeying of it so contaminated by the touch of human depravity! Roman Catholicism pronounced anathema on Protestantism for this truth; and since the Reformation most of Protestantism – virtually like the Galatians – has returned to the arms of mother harlot on the very issue of total depravity.

Paul's was a bondage acquired by himself while serving his own righteousness – a "bondage under the first principles of the world". Paul's self-righteousness was a sin that differed in no respect from the sin that is the "bondage under the first principles of the world" – the sin-bondage a heathen serves under, so "weak and beggarly" is it! Paul's doctrine in Galatians was that of total depravity, simply! Paul's was the bondage the very best of men merit! "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the Law", Gal 6:13. "For while he is nothing, a man thinks himself to be something, he deceives himself." (6:3)

"Because the carnal mind is not subject to the Law of God"!

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned SIN in the flesh: That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Ro.8:1-4) Who live under Grace by faith in hope persevering.

*The righteousness of the Law* demands the sinner must die; so that he shall be raised in Christ. "He that overcometh (he who died with and in Christ's overcoming of death) *shall not be hurt of the second death.*" Rv.3:11

"*Condemned sin in the FLESH:*

Is it not the Law's function to "*condemn sin*"? But it is God who condemns sin; God who condemns to bondage! Therefore it must be Christ who is the Law, who is The Condemned, who is the Delivered Over and the Crucified, who died, and was buried ... and "*the third day rose, according to the Scriptures*"! The Condemned the Glorified! No condemnation, no glorification.

But we entered upon this subject, not to satisfy it, but only for it to function as background for our understanding of Galatians 4:7-11, as we undertook at the start.

### **Differences Between Romans and Galatians**

"*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, as of many; but as of One, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.*" (Gl.3:16) "*No one shall make of no effect the faithfulness of God!*"

**The Jews thought they were that only 'seed'!**

"*For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?*" (Ro.3:3)

"*For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law*".

"*For there is no respect of persons with God.*" Romans 2:11, 12.

It has already become clear that there are basic differences between Romans and Galatians, their great similarities notwithstanding.

Certainly **readership** formed a major difference.

The **majority** of believers in the Church in **Rome**, most commentators agree, were Jews, and, most commentators agree, the majority was great.

Converts from **heathendom** though, made up the Churches in **Galatia**. Jewish membership was insignificant, and in many or most instances, was nil.

Paul adapts his approach to the problems in the distant Churches – to their several **demographics**. (1Cor.9:20, "*For the Gospel's sake ... I unto the Jews became as a Jew (in / under the*

*Law / 'circumcision')* ... to them that are without Law (Gentiles / 'uncircumcision'), as without Law."

In Galatians, the principle of works of the Law is not the main theme as it is in Romans. Paul's theme in Galatians, concerns merit through and of works in another sense, but in line with merit in **hereditary**, sense – in the sense of "*after the flesh*". The difference lies in one's **works**, says the one lost; the difference lies in **oneself**, says the other lost.

Galatians was written a good time **before** Romans, when it was still thought very strange that any other people than the Jews might be blessed with the Blessing that actually belonged to Abraham and to his posterity – the Jews, as it was taken for granted. For the Galatians to receive the Blessing, they **had** to be circumcised with the circumcision in and of the **flesh** – they **had**, to become **Jews**, and all **their** works, were aimed at obtaining this end. For them, it wasn't a matter of 'doing good', but for the leopard to change its spots for stripes in order to become a tiger.

The basic pre-condition of all this, of course was, that the Galatians were **Gentile** in their constituency. A very simple fact; but very important in this discussion, as we shall see.

For **Jews** their problem was the **Law** – their **merit!** They wanted to make good through **works** of the Law, for **God**. Asked the Jews, Don't the "*sons of Abraham*" **merit**, "*the blessing of Abraham*"? **Proved** not their breath-taking "*works of the Law*" their "*son*"-ship, and **earned** their "*son*"-ship "*after the flesh*" them not the "*inheritance*", even before God? The Jews were "*children*" of the Father, become grown "*sons*" and "*heirs*" now, through diligent "*works of the Law*". God our Father should notice – or so the Jews thought! **They never thought Faith meant anything!** (Can you see where Judaism started; can you see its similarity with Roman Catholicism?)

For the **Gentiles** the question was, What is the relation between our justification and our '**rights**' by Law? What the relation between '**the Law**' and our claiming our *heritage* – our demanding "*the promises*"? For Gentiles their main concern was **their lineage** – their **demerit**. They – like the Jews – wanted to make good through works of the Law, but for **themselves!** They found God, no issue, while fighting for their '*legal rights*' – for them, simply their '*human rights*'! They could worship whatever they liked!

The Gentiles could not claim 'rights' to the *Blessing* and *Promises* as far as "*the flesh*" or 'blood(line)' was concerned. So how could the "*servant*", become a "*son*", and the "*servant*", the

"heir"? (4:1) It HAD to be through the flesh because it HAD to be through the Law – and only circumcision fulfilled all requirements – flesh, Law, and, works!

The Gentiles therefore – "servants" become 'lords' or possessors through the flesh – became "boasters" (6:13)! 'In the identical flesh as yours'-ideology (*en tehi hymeterai sarkĭ kȃuchehsontai*), they meant they "in the flesh", attained the Blessing "through the works of the Law". **They also, never thought Faith meant anything!**

The whole of Galatians do in fact deal with the preposterous appropriation by 'fleshiby' engagement of the Abrahamic 'Inheritance' covenant – that a man must be an "Israelite" "according to / after the flesh" in order to obtain – to qualify – as recipient and "heir" of the "blessing" and "promises" of God and be "justified" and saved.

But "the Israel of God" (6:16), are "heirs", "through faith", that is, "through the Spirit" – "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith".

(5:5) (True Christian belonging is eschatological.) "There is neither Greek nor Jew, there is neither bond nor free . . ." only the "one", the "all" (Gl.3:28) – "the People of God" (Hb.4:9), "the Body of Christ's" (Col.2:17). The entrance into the Kingdom of God and heaven is through "the Door", Jesus Christ (Jn.7:9), "through the veil, that is, (through) His flesh" (Hb.10:20) – not through "the flesh"; not through "the works of the flesh"; not through "man"; not through "the world"!

Paul deals with both aspects of the issue of "the flesh" – "works" and "lineage" – in his two Letters, Romans and Galatians, but places the emphasis according to the readership, so that the difference between Romans and Galatians then, lies herein, That whereas Romans places the emphasis on "**deeds of the Law**" for the "Inheritance" of "the Blessing", Galatians places the emphasis on deeds "**in the flesh**" for the "Inheritance" of "the Blessing".

**Romans says, You're NOT saved by what you DO by Law; Galatians says, You're NOT saved by who you ARE by Law! Both say: You're saved by grace alone through faith only without the Law!**

[[Salvation is not through the Law perceived as saviour, but through the Saviour perceived as Law; therefore salvation comes without the Law but in Christ.]]

If this is so, then one may understand why Paul in **Galatians** is so against having oneself circumcised – so against circumcision *vis-à-vis* one's returning to one's old and godless ways, so against circumcision making of the unbelieving the child of Abraham, making of the perfidious the child of God, making of the mocker the legal claimant to the inheritance of salvation.

In Rome there were many Jews, and therefore Paul in Romans treats on the Law as the Old Testament Law of ceremonies and institutions. But in all his other Letters, Paul addressed heathens (mainly) – Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, and Corinthians. Paul converses with Gentiles in these letters – with both faithful and unfaithful – Gentiles, Christians, irrespective – not, in the first place, with Jews. The **body** of the Mission Church is 'Gentile', 'heathen', and **the world itself whence it came, was greatest threat and menace to the Faith**. To close one's eyes for the world and its great and noble influences on the Church and to blame the Jews for everything not of faith, is foolish.

Why anyone, while saved through grace, would for no reason forsake the Gospel after the gods of this world, remained an enigma for Paul, so that he cried out in desperation: "O foolish Galatians, who bewitched you?" (3:1) Who could be able, to bewitch you? Who is it, for it is impossible anyone could! Be it a Jew, be it a Gentile, "*who (possibly, could have) bewitched you?*"

Nothing indicates it had been "some Hebrews" who menaced the Church in Pagan-land! The only reason Paul gives, for the Galatians' inexplicable deserting of the Faith, was their inherent nature, their "*desire*" – their "*lust*" having overcome them.

Nothing indicates "some Hebrews (tried) to get the gentiles . . . to "live like the Jews"", because not only Jews may believe they are saved by their own works of the Law, but Gentiles just as well as indeed irrefutably indicated by Paul's argumentations in the whole of Galatians as in the fifth chapter of it! There, Paul outright states: "*In Jesus Christ, neither circumcision (neither being a Jew or making oneself a Jew), nor uncircumcision (nor having been a Gentile "after the flesh" or staying one or returning to be one once again) availeth anything*" – "*God respects not the person!*" (Ro.2:11, Eph.6:9, Col.3:25 – from the OT Law: 2Chr.19:7!)

"*For as many as have sinned without Law shall also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law*" – Ro 2:12! It had been the Law in Old Testament

times – “Where Law increased, sin increased.” (“Sin increased so that grace increased overwhelmingly!”)

The Law can only make things worse for anyone – in no way better! Being confronted by Christ as Judge, and not as Saviour, promises condemnation – not salvation; the Galatians’ fatal mistake!

This then was the sin amongst the Galatian Congregations: They were Gentiles who **transgressed** God’s Law and despised His Christ. Theirs was no apostasy of keeping the Law of God! They broke the Law that says, “*Thou shalt have no other gods!*”, 4:7-11 – about which they recently were informed through the Gospel of Paul. But then they piled up further transgression of God’s Law by having their ‘no-gods-worship’, ‘baptised’, by circumcision of the flesh: “*Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain!*” The Galatians’ religion exactly was what is called ‘*syncretism*’ – the wedlock between the profane and the divine – the ridiculing of true Christianity.

The notion that the worm in the wood in Galatians was ‘Hebrews’ who troubled the Churches with keeping God’s Laws like the Sabbath, finds no support in this Letter.

“*He that troubles you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be*” (5:10b) – it says not ‘*Jews that they are!*’ For here are the Gentiles – or some of the Gentiles become Christians – who “*returned*” and “*desired to be in bondage again*” like under their former status “*when (they) knew not God (and) did service to them which by nature are not gods*” (4:8), getting “*entangled again with the yoke of bondage*” (5:1b), “*turning again to the weak and beggarly elements . . . all over divining days, months, seasons, years*”, **now avowing and adjuring their sinful relapse by their (new) works of the Law – their having themselves circumcised** as though that could justify and sanctify their godlessness! For sooth, their circumcision of themselves had them sanctified and sealed in the bondage of servitude to and under their former ‘*of-nature-not-gods*’ – in a deathly “*strangle*” or “*entanglement!*” For this, the Law’s most false and despicable of **abuses**: “*If you circumcise yourselves, Christ shall profit you nothing!*” (5:2) You taunt and tempt God, thinking you could force his hand to justify and bless your wickedness. “*Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh*” (3:3), having yourselves circumcised? (5:2) **You really believe you’re Jews now?** “*Be not entangled again with the yoke*

*of bondage!*” (5:1b)

This only explains why Paul found circumcision acceptable in some cases and in others not.

It makes no difference, be the “*yoke of bondage*” “*under the Law*”, or be it “*under the first principles of the world!*” “*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision (all one’s life having been a Jew) availeth anything, nor uncircumcision = nor being a Gentile = becoming a Gentile again*”. (5:6) “***Thy circumcision has become uncircumcision!***”

In these words Christ is seen the unforgiving Judge, the Law: “*in Jesus Christ circumcision availeth nothing*” . . . but condemnation! “*This misconception is not from Him who called you*” (5:8), whether the “*bewitcher*” (3:1), “*persuader / impostor / fraud*” (5:8), “*trouble maker*” (5:10), had been the Jews or the Gentiles – it *is not from Him!* This is not how Jesus saves from sin; this is how the devil is served.

The Galatian Christians married paganism and Judaism, and joined together what God never joined together. **They circumcised as good as baptised, idolatry!** Strange? The Roman Catholic Church has been baptising idolatry for two thousand years now, and nobody seems to have found it strange!

The Gentile converts first ‘*returned*’ to their former “*not-gods*” – chapter 4, then circumcised themselves to sanctify their idolatry in the face of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ – chapter 5! They were Gentile Christians fallen away, who tempted God through the joint-works of their former idolatry and perverted Christianity: ‘**syncretism**’; **not obedience to the Law!** This miscarriage the God of mercy would not take pity on – “*You are cut from Christ!*” “*This misconception is not from Him who called you!*”

The short answer to EB’s protests against a relapse into paganism presupposed and expressed ‘*in context*’ in 4:7-11, is, That the Galatian heresy was in fact a ‘*syncretism*’ of ‘*Gentile*’ idolatry, the Judaistic ‘*religion*’, and **compromised and false** Christianity. The matter supposed in Galatians lay not with the Law of God, nor with a true obedience to it, but all the matter lay with man, and with his religion – his **religion of disobedience** to the Law of God.

Is the issue in Galatians and specifically in 4:7-11 then, Jews (“*Hebrews*”), causing Gentiles to become Jews or teaching them that they are “*justified by the works of the Law*” (Old Testament)? By all means, no!

While there is no necessity or indication Jews were the culprits, the teaching of the guilty in fact and non the less,

amounted to the error of 'justification by works' – 'the works of the Law', 'in the flesh', 'according to', 'the flesh' – in even its most abominable form of the very combining together of false Christianity – the "not-gospel" – and pagan idolatry!

**"The EXACT FORMULA"**

BR:

I was also pressed into this position on the subject of Gal 4 until I found the distinctive focus change in vs 8-11 from the previous general focus of vs 1-7.

And then as I found other authors that saw vs 8-11 applying to very real problems encountered by the Christian churches in the pagan/gentile nations of Rome – what a huge explanation that provides for the "formula" of "days, months, seasons and years" (something we see nowhere else in scripture).

EB

This "formula" or "system of worship" involving sacred periods of time IN ITSELF can be EITHER pagan or Judaistic. For both religions had sacred "days, months, seasons and years". It's the CONTEXT that shows us which it is; ... on BOTH SIDES of v.8-11 we see Jewish practices done by the people Paul is talking to, and called "bondage". The subject was a "Return" to BONDAGE; not a return to paganism; because paganism is not mentioned in the REST of the passage; but Judaism is! Once again; you have to go and show how all those other 71 verses have nothing to do with the 4 you focus on, before you can plug "paganism" in there.

What was condemned was scrupulously/insidiously "OBSERVING" days (for the purpose of works-justification); not "MEETING" on a day."

GE

EB has said it! "in the REST ... both sides OF"; NOT, inside, "v.8-11"! In the REST, both sides OF v.8-11, "the subject", is, "Judaism" – in fact! But what about "IN ... the passage", "IN", "v.8-11"? Common sense! There, "the subject", "is ... paganism"!

Therefore, what can the "days, months, seasons, years" be, but the "weak and beggarly principles", "returned to" and "lusted after", be, but the "by nature not gods" the Galatians "when (they)

knew not God", "slaved under / worshipped"? What else? What else if one take Paul at his word? But no, you, EB, say the Galatians "return(ed)", to "Judaism", not to their former "by nature=nature's not-gods"! That means – let us get this straight from the start – that the "days, months, seasons, years" the Galatians "returned" to, according to you, EB, were "days, months, seasons, years" of "Judaism" – unambiguously, of "days", like the Sabbath! And that places – no, that makes YOU – place the Sabbath under the category of the things the Galatians "desired / lusted", namely, the "weak and beggarly principles / elements", condemned by Paul as frustrating and spoiling his efforts on the Galatians' improvement and salvation. What you really mean is to derogate the Seventh Day Sabbath as a Christian institution and 'practice'. You have a go at the Sabbath of the Bible, and your referring it to Old Testament, Divine, Commandment and the Jews, is simply a hypocritical eye-blinder for referring the Sabbath to, and associating it with, Judaism – or rather, to paganism, through Judaism!

That, despite your double-talk – in fact directly due to it – makes YOU, EB, against your will reveal your 'agenda', because your own argument makes of the two verses of "the passage", 8 and 9, a unit, with an unitary, common 'subject', namely the common object of the Galatians', Gentiles', idolatry – in 8 the "not-gods" of "paganism"; in 9, the "not-gods" of "paganism". And that again, makes you do what you never stop doing, **contradicting** yourself. You constantly get caught up and *entangled* in the frantic efforts of your fears – the Seventh Day Sabbath of the Bible has become your worst nightmare. Your dream has one bright spot though that might wake you up to peace and rest – the Scriptures so constantly contrary to it!

You, EB, have said, No, it's "Judaism", "Judaism", that only knew the Sabbath 'Days' (although perverted), of Old Testament, Divine, institution, in Galatians 4:7-11! Therefore, you, EB, make Paul condemn the Sabbath and the Sabbath Commandment for *weak and beggarly*, and for being a *principle of the world* in opposition with the Gospel of Christ. You condemn the Sabbath as a false, hypocritical, anti Christian evil! Indeed you, 'plug' the Sabbath in there where you 'plug in', "Judaism", which is 'paganism' anyway! Blame no one but yourself for "charges" against you for "attacking the Law (of God) itself as (being) condemned", EB! And then, don't accuse anyone who may consider you and your

attempts at playing right into the hands of some obscure and sinister "Sunday-conspiracy"!

Your assertion, EB: "This "formula" or "system of worship" involving sacred periods of time IN ITSELF can be EITHER pagan or Judaistic" you make without warrant. I haven't seen one scholar who could substantiate the identical claim, and I've seen many trying to. There is a lot of assumptions and presumptions, no more than WILD speculation, precisely like yours – the only impression it makes that of capital letters and irrelevancies. But it is not the decisive point. What is more important again, is 'context' and normal eyesight.

Let's look at your as usual sweeping statement again, section by section:

"This "formula" . . ." Have you noticed that 'this "formula"', 'involves' no "sacred periods of time" of Old Testament Faith? In fact the only place where it is described in the Old Testament, it happens within the setting of the 'creation' – "Genesis" per se; in a 'context' of things 'natural', exactly, as in the case of Paul's use of it, and, exactly as in the case of Paul's use of it, without reference or relation to the Sabbath whatsoever!

Have you noticed that 'this "formula" of "worship" of "days, months, seasons, years", "IN ITSELF", is a "system", or, "religion" – thus, idolatry?

And have you noticed that, in the case of the Galatians' relapse, the "system" was the combination, the 'syncretism' – it "involv(ed)" **both** "pagan" and "Judaistic" 'elements'? Have you noticed that the one 'element' of the "system" or "formula", the 'pagan' 'element / principle / head' of it, consisted of the "sacred periods of time", "days, months, seasons, years"; while the other 'element / principle / head' of the 'system' or "formula" was the 'Judaistic' 'element' of it – its 'resemblance' or 'in tune / in step' counterpart so typical of the *stoicheia* – consisting of "circumcision"?

But – and now we encounter your 'agenda' squarely: This last mentioned, 'Judaistic' 'element', of the complete, pagan, 'system' and 'formula', is encountered in chapter 5 only! Only there and then, does it get mentioned at all, only there and then, does it become relevant, only at last, does Paul treat on it pertinently! The 'Judaistic' 'element' is the last ingredient added with abracadabra to the divination mysteries of the Galatians. Have you not noticed? I bet you did, but won't admit.

The 'pagan' and the 'Judaistic' 'systems' together, formed the 'system' or syncretism, or, the "*weak and beggarly principles*", or, the "*potion*", of the Galatians', 'Gentile', 'pagan', apostasy.

In 4:9 Paul does not say again, '*of the world*', as in 4:3, because '*the world*'s or 'pagan' 'system' supposed in verse 9, had been brought into 'syncretism' with the 'Judaistic' 'system' supposed in verse 3. But one is able only to **deduce** this fact from the whole section '*put together*'; one does not read it in so many words – it in 4:8-10 is still an argument from silence and one case of such argument really valid, there!

So, yes, the Galatians did in fact "*desire*" to '*turn*' or "*veer off*" to the "*weak and beggarly principles*" of your "Judaizers" – they wanted ("*wished*" / "*desired*" / "*lusted*") to have themselves circumcised, undeniable! But this was not the "*RE-turn*" of the Galatians, "*back*", "*again*" to "*as before*" read about in verses 8-11, but this was an additional "turn" – a "NEW type of bondage" – to go fetch and haul in Judaism, and to carry it along on their high-way to destruction, **read about**, only in the 5th chapter! Still, it was not Christianity or Old Testament Faith, but 'Judaism', in synchronisation and in collaboration and in absolute unity with the pagan idolatry of "*superstitiously-worshipping-paratehrei*" the Greek "*not-gods*" of time, the "*days, months, seasons, years*", "*of the world*", and, "*of / by nature*"! It had ABSOLUTELY NOTHING in common or to do with Old Testament holy times, or with the New Testament holy '*days*' of Sabbath Days. And, it had EVERYTHING to do with the pagan worship or veneration of the "**Venerable Day of the Sun**" or also historically proven called "*Day of the Lord Sun*", *hehmera kuriou hehliou*. [[Refer Odom]]

Three words, "*venerable*", "*lord*", and "*sun*"; three words indicating the direct idolatrous worship of the '*Day*'. This very same direct idolatrous worship of '*Days per se*', is also and just so absolutely, contained in the simple and basic use of the Possessive – the Genitive – "OF": "The Day OF the Sun", *hehmera tou hehliou*. It means the Day DEVOTED TO the Sun; the Sun as a god – the "*by nature not a god*" "*day*", being made, objectified, divined, venerated, worshipped, AS a god: IDOLATRY! And this, idolatry, in, and by, the Christian Church! Really, till today! I cry my heart out!

The emperor Hadrian wrote a letter to his brother-in-law, Servianus, in which he – objectively – relates, "*Egypt ... I find frivolous, unstable, and shifting with every breath and rumour. There,*

*those who worship Serapis\*\* are Christians, and those who call themselves bishops of Christ, devotees of Serapis. There is in that country no ruler of the synagogue of the Jews, no Samaritan, no Christian priest, who is not astrologer, soothsayer, or apothecary. Even the renowned patriarch, when he comes to Egypt, is compelled by some to worship Serapis, by others, to worship Christ. ... Their one god, is money. Him, Christians, Jews, and Gentiles alike, adore.*" (Emphasis GE)

[[\*Serapis, "Graeco-Egyptian god combining attributes of Apis and Osiris. ... Apis, sacred bull worshiped at Memphis. ... Osiris, ruler of the underworld and judge of the dead. ... **Bull, constellation Taurus; second sign of the zodiac.**" (Collins); Apis, Calf, or **Saturn**. Identified with Bacchus; identified with Nimrod. The Calf is portrayed **yoked**. Paul says the Galatians "served / worshiped" under the "slavish yoke" or "servitude" of the "principles of the world" – its "not-gods" that all somehow are related to deified and "superstitiously observed / divined" 'heavenly' "elements", inevitably induced for being the "days, months, seasons and years" Paul refers to in Galatians 4:10.]]

Why do the Church defend and stand by Sunday so, today then, if it is so clearly idolatry? For any reason but money? Go, search thy heart, o Christian, for money! I'll loose my job! I'll loose prestige! What about my living standards! On the other hand: Money has got nothing to do with it! I won't be permitted to proclaim the Gospel any more! What about the love and peace in my family; and, in the Church? What about division and strife?

You are satisfied with your reasons? No matter what the Scriptures says? *You're under grace!* Do as you wish then! *Use your liberty for occasion*, for justification! Is yours not 'justification by the works of the Law'? Is yours better than being "in bondage under the principles of the world"? Then *use your liberty* to conform the Scriptures to your judgment – as everybody seems to do and have peace with nowadays; it is only God's throne you appear before! Perhaps He will smell your fire, and see your cuts and hear your cries, o priests of Baal!

Said Langenhoven, "Smarter people than I have tried to change this world, in vain; and people weaker than I have simply conformed." Capitulation starts with me! Sunday sacredness is one thing that needs changing in the Church. Putting off the issue or accepting status quo cannot rectify or justify what is wrong – "it is conforming too. By not fighting the system when you know it is wrong – that is conforming also! The challenge is two-pronged – be as strong a person as you can, and never give up or

*loose hope . . . smarter people have tried to change the world – and failed. Whatever you do, do not become despondent. There is purpose in this fight!*" ('Editor', From, 'Professional Nursing Today Vol. 9 No 2)

EB:

"It's the CONTEXT that shows us which it is..."

GE:

Yes! Not our prejudices and dislikes; and the above is precisely what the context shows like a yellow flower is yellow for everybody but a colour-blind!

EB:

"... and as I have just shown above on BOTH SIDES of v.8-11 we see Jewish practices done by the people Paul is talking to, and called "bondage"."

GE:

Falsely alleged! You haven't 'shown' anything of the kind 'above'! On BOTH SIDES of v.8-11 we see none of "Jewish practices" or beliefs – not even in the 5th chapter, because Paul in 5, talks of the circumcision of **Judaism and paganism 'entangled in bondage'** – 'syncretised' and synchronised to the spectacular rhythm of the Sun on "days, months, seasons and years".

"... done by the people" – Paul only refers to his own "Jewish practices" in 4:1-3. In 4:8-11 his reference is to the 'practices' of the apostate Gentiles, with regard to their "bondage" under the "weak and beggarly principles" or old, "not-gods", "days, months, seasons, years".

In chapter 5 the 'Judaism' and the circumcision of it there evaluated, were not even the 'Judaism' or the circumcision that Paul, used to believe in when he, was a "prominent Judaist", and in which he, while a practicing Judaist, stood **outside both** the Christian Faith and the Faith of the Old Testament. Not even the circumcision and Judaism of which Paul was the champion – the circumcision and 'Judaism' under which he (as he confesses and witnesses) was held "in bondage under the first principles of the WORLD" – compares with the circumcision of **Judaism and paganism 'entangled in bondage'**! How could the circumcision of God's Word even though God's Word of the Old Testament, be confused for the circumcision of **Judaism and paganism 'entangled in bondage'?**



So we have two or three types or grades of circumcision – not just one.

All and everything about this '*entanglement*'-farrago / "*pharmakeion*" - "*sorcery*" of "*divining days, months, seasons, years*" OF THE GALATIANS, and THEIR circumcision, tastes and is, "*of the world*", and was and is, antichrist! **It was a circumcision "of the WORLD", as the "by-nature-no-gods", were "of-the-WORLD"!** So that the pagan cum Judaistic practices and religion involved in 'the whole context' of Galatians and its '*world*', were as "*weak and beggarly*", and as "*of-the-World*", as the "*elements*", "*days, months, seasons, years*", were "*of-the-World*" and "*weak and beggarly*".

Never say, of the Old Testament, or, of the Law, or, of God – never!

"Jewish practices ... "bondage"" – speaking of Gal.5:1b, 2a and 4:10? "Jewish practices ... "bondage"" – these are euphemisms for the 'circumcision' the Galatians 'practiced'! For *having begun with the flesh*, they *perfected* their "*fornication / lust / desire*" after the "*not gods / idols*" "*of this evil world*", assuming a 'spirit' whereby thinking to *bewitch* God, *rounding off* their wickedness *with the spirit* namely of man, *the spirit* namely of *the world*, *the spirit* namely of *the flesh*! The Galatians' was a '*dogma*' and an '*ism*' formidable indeed!

EB:

The subject was a "Return" to BONDAGE; not a return to paganism; because paganism is not mentioned in the REST of the passage; but Judaism is! Once again; you have to go and show how all those other 71 verses have nothing to do with the 4 you focus on, before you can plug "paganism" in there.

Nobody is saying they "returned" to "Old Testament Law". The point was that both those under the OT Law, as well as those under idolatry were in BONDAGE; because neither system justifies anyone before God! So to go from one system; supposedly accept the truth; but now veer off into the OTHER system; is not a return to "the SAME EXACT THING". But it IS a RETURN to BONDAGE. That is the point of the passage.

GE:

For sure! Good you admit, "Judaism" – not Old Testament Faith! Nevertheless, EB, you only pretend that you don't "say they "returned" to "Old Testament Law"". You do say it, though ambiguously, and so say it more effectively! And this whole discussion would not have happened, have you not.

EB:

It's like walking a razor's edge (hence; "the narrow path"). You can be lifted up from one side; set straight, and fall off the other side. You are now in a totally different place than you were before; but you have still FALLEN, and RETURNED to the ABYSS; whichever "side" of it it is, is unimportant!

GE:

Not for Paul. For Paul the Galatians traversed the total spectrum of Christianity to get back to where they started from. The Galatians' for Paul was no sudden slip or loss of balance like a rope-walker's. The Galatians premeditatedly, determinedly, anxiously, and with great effort, made u-turn to their old gods and the worship of them.

EB:

No; it's the BONDAGE! Why can't you two SEPARATE the LAW from man's BONDAGE under it? The Law is holy, good and just, but MAN is fallen, sinful and rebellious, and CANNOT KEEP THE LAW; and is therefore in BONDAGE!

GE:

Paul never spoke of "man's BONDAGE under it (the LAW)".

Your mistake is you mistake Paul's "*conversation / behaviour / experience in time past in the Jews' religion / in Judaism ... being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers*", for obedience to, or for endeavour howbeit insufficient to obey, the Law – to obey God's Law and Laws according to the Scriptures. One cannot, for example, live by killing one's neighbour (which is what Paul did, 1:13b) and, love one's neighbour.

Paul – and we – talk about deeds – not about abilities or motives! Forget "SEPARAT(ing) the LAW from man's BONDAGE" – Paul never busied himself with such hypothetical impossibilities. Better begin to think on the inseparability of deeds and motives. Motives – like "*zeal*" – are as much actions

of a responsible person as are his walking and working and sleeping; as are his doing or neglecting. Hate is an act no less than *destroying the Church* is; one shall give account of his inner feelings just the same as of his outbursts. Sin is sin, whether "under the Law", or "without the Law", under cover or openly – because the Law ultimately is God none other than Rule, Ruler and Judge.

No; shortcomings or inability or just being sinner ordinarily, is not what brings one under the wrath of God or in bondage under His Law; these things are what brings a sinner under grace! "*Where sin abounded, grace abounded more exceedingly!*" Only God's unfathomable love can explain how and why.

First, EB, get your principles – your '*stoicheia*' – about the Gospel right, and your ideas about the Law will 'fall in place' – '*stoixēōfi*'.

No, Paul's "*bondage under the principles of the world*" was Judaism; was DISOBEDIENCE of and "rebellion" AGAINST the Law of God. As the stark reality of this truth dawned upon Paul himself, he understood his need of Christ and grace unmerited – he recognised his ONLY qualification for the tender mercies from God's love: being a SINNER! The moment Paul realised this, he was set "*free*", never "*to use (his) freedom as an occasion / excuse / reason / defence / motive / guarantee . . . for sin*", again!

Christian freedom is also no insurance policy against sin's results. In Christian freedom circumcision is unable to protect one against God's visitations. In Judaism it is claimed it can. In paganism it was believed "*divining (of) days, months, seasons and years*", guaranteed God's favour. Put the two ill-conceptions together and you get The Galatian Error!

With these words, "*Only do not use your freedom as an occasion / excuse / reason / defence / motive / guarantee . . . for sin*", Paul has given us the best definition of '*Judaism*' as well as "*bondage under the tyranny of the world*" – **they were both an allusion and delusion of FREEDOM, that in fact was a BONDAGE, under the tyranny of SIN.**

The Law of God can't in any way be associated with either Judaism of paganism, or God, must be associated with both. Yes, bondage / slaving / servitude can be associated with "*the curse of the Law*", yes! A bondage under sin, surely! A *bondage under the law of sin* – under the law of the "*propensities of man's heart = desire = lust*", under the law of total depravity –

absolutely! But never, a word, in the Scriptures, of "a bondage under the Law" of God! This is the Gospel of Christ, 'Paul's Gospel', the Gospel of FREEDOM – the only Gospel that saves any man saved!

This freedom merited and obtained by grace unto grace, is the creation of the Church. In and by the Truth of the Gospel of Grace, the Assembly of the Saints is brought into being ex nihilo; the Body of Christ's Own is born of the Spirit . . . and holding to the Light and Head, the Body by this Truth of the Good News of Christ, receives content and coherency and begins casting its shadow; and the shadow, adhering to the Body more obviously with it starts moving, while the Body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, begins increasing with the increase of God! Therefore in fact, remains for the People of God, their keeping of the Sabbath Day – "**a spectre of things to come!**" "*Do not you therefore, let anyone judge you pertaining your feasting your Sabbath Days!*" Feast! "*By grace are you saved, through faith – it is the gift of God*" – His gift of freedom.

We shall pay attention to the 'context', later on.

For now, let's look at EB's very careful playing with words; his manoeuvring with verb; EB's doing for the Galatians what he wants them to do for him.

You, EB, define 'paganism', 'bondage', and vice versa, 'bondage', you define, 'paganism'; quote: "...bondage is bondage; whichever form it takes"; "the BONDAGE of "not gods"; "BONDAGE to "elements"".

But you refuse, and 'veer off', desperately denying, protecting a phantom, attempting, "So for those who were pagans, to become Christian; but then veer off into Judaism (for the purpose of gaining justification); it would NOT be a "return" to "PAGANISM"; but it WOULD be a "RETURN" to BONDAGE."

It would in fact be "to BONDAGE" if they "veer(ed) off into Judaism"! Because Judaism **is**, a 'form' of "bondage"! It only "would NOT be a "return"", but a "veer(ing) off into Judaism" straight ahead! But if a "*re-turn*", it would be a "*return to bondage under the tyrants / rulers / principles of the world, again!*"! Only, before and at first, they used to be in a state of since their birth having fallen into "PAGANISM" and since their birth having been in "BONDAGE" and since their birth having lived under "PAGANISM" and under the bondage of paganism. "*But now*", to "PAGANISM" "those

who were pagans" would "RETURN" *"after"* they had "become Christian". For *"now"* (not "then") "they veer off" and "RETURN", "...to PAGANISM"! "It WOULD be a "RETURN" to BONDAGE" – to quote your only fact you so '*pharmakayed*' with all your other '*stirring and mixing*'. (Gl.5:20, Rv.18:23)

Then, How could you say, "The subject was a "return" to BONDAGE; not a return to paganism"? You explain, "... because paganism is not mentioned in the REST of the passage; but Judaism is!" But just now you have said paganism is bondage; not to mention the **plain untruth** of your **whole** claim here that "paganism is not mentioned in the REST of the passage; but Judaism is!"!

First, dear EB, YOU, have to go and show how all those other 71 verses mention Judaism, and have nothing to do with paganism, before you can plug "Judaism" in the 4 verses we focus on!

This however we nevertheless shall try to do, to show how all those other 71 verses have less to do with 'Judaism' than with 'paganism'; and how the 4 verses we focus on, have everything to do with paganism and by themselves, have nothing to do with Judaism.

EB:

"For both religions had sacred "days, months, seasons and years"."

GE:

True, but don't use those quotation marks, because their use makes of both religions' sacred times, the "*days, months, seasons and years*" of paganism, while there actually were many differences. Pagan religion's sacred time periods mixed up with the Judaistic adjuration ceremony of circumcision is what Galatians 4:7-11 talk about – not about the Law or Old Testament Faith.

Old Testament Faith had its Feast Days – never astrologically; never as "*gods that by nature are not gods*"; its Feasts of Month – one day, not the whole month *per se*; its Feasts of season - one day or a few days long, but never a season for its special powers; its yearly Feasts – the very same as those of season, never the year itself, "*worshipped / divined / served*". Never are Old Testament

Feasts attached to natures' dictate and powers, but they are derived from the great deeds and power of God. Never does

the Old Testament Faith attach to its Feasts any life, power or personality or "*nature*", like pagan idolatry ascribes to its '*by nature-not-god-(time)-elements*', like it is here indicated through Paul's use of the words '*paratehreofi*' and "*nature*" – and, like it is here indicated through the 'whole context' so easily ignored by EB, telling others how they neglect it!

Old Testament Faith had nothing in common with paganism's "sacred" "*elements*"; in fact, Paul (Christianity) called them "*weak and beggarly elements*".

They were in no respect comparable with Christian Faith's Old Testament "Feasts". Paul doesn't say "feast"; he doesn't say "Sabbath"; he doesn't say "sacred"; he doesn't say "celebrate", or "sanctify"; he doesn't say "remember" or "keep". He wrote of nothing Christian whether Old Testament- or New Testament, but of something exclusively pagan and idolatrous, writing, "*ye observe days, months, seasons, years*". Yes, Paul does write that within a context of which the 'whole theme' is the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ by grace through the '*knowledge of God*', which '*knowledge*' in the first place came by God's grace "*in Christ*" ("*or rather were known by God*"). These are the boundaries of the ultimate universal scope in verse 7.

So that Paul, CONTINUING talking about God's GRACE, continues talking about how ANY man, even if a Gentile man – yea rather, EVEN IF A JEW! – "*if (he)*", according to "*the Promises of God*" and the "*Blessing of Abraham*" "*in Christ*", "*is a son, (he) then (IS) AN HEIR OF GOD*", "*THROUGH CHRIST*"! The "context" demands it; the "whole theme" drives towards including Gentiles – and most unexpectedly, Jews as well – within the universal scope of God's Mercy, *Promises* and *Blessing* through Jesus Christ the only and ultimate limitation to the universal scope of God's Mercy.

BR:

Quoting EB: "This "formula" or "system of worship" involving sacred periods of time IN ITSELF can be EITHER pagan or Judaistic." I "suppose" if you ignore enough of the details in Gal 4 – you could finally come around to making yourself believe what you said. In the mean time we "do" have the facts – quite to the contrary of your claims.

#1. THERE IS NO formula for "Days, months, seasons and years" in the Word of God. So trying to pin this on God's Word "is not possible".

#2. There IS the EXACT formula of “observe days and months and seasons and years” WAS used among those accused of Emperor worship!

S. Mitchell writes, “the major obstacle which stood in the way of the progress of Christianity, and the force which would have drawn new adherents back to conformity with the prevailing paganism, was the public worship of the Emperor. The packed calendar of the ruler cult dragooned the citizens...into observing days, months, seasons and years which it laid down for special recognition and celebration.”

So the MAJOR PROBLEM facing the NT Christians in pagan nations had to do with days, months, seasons and years!! Wow! Let’s “pretend” we don’t notice that – ok?

#1 God’s Word did not command His people to “observe a formula of the form “days, months, seasons and years”. (Though some like to “try” to make this a problem in God’s Word RATHER than a reference to the ACTUAL formula used by the pagans practicing Emperor worship... And so attempt to equate the Word of God with paganism!)

#2. Using another word for “observance” -- The “observances of days” is mentioned in Romans 14 and the “Condemnation” there is against anyone who would “condemn” the “observances”.

Bending Gal 4 to point at the very practices employed in Romans 14 is an abusive example of eisegesis.

#3. In this case months and seasons are lumped in with days. The indication of a pagan system of practice is clearly – and repeatedly brought to view.

Nothing here is ordained by God – established by God – given by God as a practice for God’s people.

It is utterly condemned as originating from pagan worship alone.

#5. Paul says this is “a return” to the worship of things which “by nature are no gods at all”. He says these pagans-turned-Christian are [b]”enslaved all over AGAIN” – these gentiles, these converted pagans – were never Jews. They are not returning to “salvation by keeping the Law of God” as something they “used to do”. This is simply “another” problem Paul is identifying among the Galatians that is in “Addition” to their problem with Judaizers. How many ways are there to ignore these blatant and obvious facts?? I think we are seeing that effort in all of its glory.

GE:

I agree with BR, and may add, that in fact THERE IS a formula for “*Days, months, seasons and years*” in the Word of God – RIGHT HERE in Gal.4:7-11, namely, the “*weak and beggarly elements*” of time “... *by nature not gods*” “*of the world*” and

natural man without a *knowledge of God in Christ* :- “*days, months, seasons and years*”. EB simply won’t accept the Word of God for it. Here, in these verses, we have the Word of God through the pen of Paul supplying us the best possible definition of what the “*days, months, seasons and years*” were. How far could one go to escape the simplicity of it? Never far enough!

EB:

You have not even TOUCHED all of that detailed proof I gave from the context of the surrounding chapters. You just repeat the same claims and quotes from some scholar, as if that wipes away all I have shown. The problem is that you have not actually “shown” anything. You’re creating “truth” by fiat!

GE:

How many times have you, presented your argument of the ‘context’? Yet you “have not even TOUCHED” one of your surmised “detailed proofs” yourself! Where have you so much as “TOUCHED” on any “detailed proof” ‘from the context of the surrounding chapters’? ‘All’ you have done, was to ‘quote’ and to ‘just repeat the same claims and quotes’, ‘AS IF THAT’, ‘proved’ or “showed” anything! You’re the one who is “creating “truth” by fiat!” And it is you who just repeat your own claims and quotes as if that wipes away all real ‘detail’ to the contrary. The problem is, you, EB, have not actually “shown” anything.

EB:

You two keep avoiding the context of the passage (especially AFTERward; which neither has even touched yet)...

GE:

Yes, not yet, even though the need for it seems small, it being a section that comes ‘afterward’, that is, after 4:8-11, and which resulted by Paul’s having changed subject and direction.

BR:

#1. THERE IS NO formula for “Days, months, seasons and years” in the Word of God.

GE: Except in Galatians 4 verses 7 to 10!

BR:

#2. There IS the EXACT formula of “observe days and months and seasons and years” it WAS used among those accused of Emperor worship!

EB:

You're getting hung up on "formula". That really is a word you introduced (and maybe some of those scholars you cite); but Paul does not SAY "you observe a FORMULA of days, months, seasons and years that God has never taught us". So that's another red herring/straw man we could stand to get rid of.

EB:

(Quote) "S. Mitchell writes, quote: "the major obstacle which stood in the way of the progress of Christianity, and the force which would have drawn new adherents back to conformity with the prevailing paganism, was the public worship of the Emperor. The packed calendar of the ruler cult dragooned the citizens...into observing days, months, seasons and years which it laid down for special recognition and celebration""

EB:

So the MAJOR PROBLEM facing the NT Christians in pagan nations had to do with days, months, seasons and years!!

Wow! Let's "pretend" we don't notice that - ok?

GE:

Again, BR, we could not have given a better answer than EB himself has given! EB, you pretend too obviously! Do yourself a favour and don't just gloss over this MAJOR PROBLEM that faced the NT Christians in pagan nations. That fish still swims the seas of modern day Christianity like a coelacanth everybody thought vanished from the deep; like a red herring evolved into a gigantic ferocious shark - Sunday sacredness!

EB:

And THIS (man's theories) is your only proof! I gave you the entire BODY of the surrounding text of scripture showing the context; and you cannot even address that; but only cite what some scholar says, and presume to dismiss it all in one swipe with that. This is your ultimate proof; then, not God's Word; so just admit that your doctrine is scholarly, but unbiblical. It's just some human theory that has no bearing on what God really said or expects from us. Fine for you; but I don't have time to argue the shifting sands of man's

theories. I'm interested in what the bible says on its own. So I don't have to notice it. It does not carry the weight of scripture. God is not going to judge me for not keeping the sabbath based on what this man says. (which still does not even contradict that Paul was addressing problems of the Jews here. Before AD 70; the major problem in the Church was the Jews).

I have gone to great lengths to prove it; even breaking down the entire four chapters involved. But you two choose to ignore it to preserve your doctrine, and instead resort to ad-hominem tactics to cast doubts on my integrity instead.

GE:

We have had "the entire BODY of the surrounding text of scripture" available ourselves, thank you, EB!

"... even breaking down the entire four chapters involved"? Nonsense! Where? You're kidding!

But he had his plan neatly broken down, this EB! Unfortunately not the Scriptures he quotes! EB does not explain that he arrived at his conclusion above via the exact mental process (science) of first equalising the SUM of being under the bondage of the Law and the SUM of being under the bondage of idolatrous paganism, and then of extracting the factors that reduce the result to the Law = Paganism. That was the result BR got, and EB cannot blame him, for BR followed EB's formula to the letter!

EB:

He did not follow MY formula at all; he took it and twisted it into his own straw man; infused with his own theories of what scriptures means; and what I mean, and spewed it back out repeatedly as if I had really said something I in fact did not. So you all think you know what I think or mean or intend to convey better than me! That is what makes this so aggravating.

GE:

Be that as it may; what is important, remains, that ordinary earthlings swallow whole that the Law=Paganism if under any or both man might be in bondage; and that that is what ordinary well meaning Christians by exegetes and

commentaries (like EB's) are being MADE to understand from Paul's Letter to the Galatians.

How do they the learned men, do it? By 'exegesis' or 'hermeneutics' so called, that departs from the pre-judged disposition that "the whole context" of Galatians 4:10, is, "under bondage of the Law"; so that THE THING the Galatians "*turn(ed) to again*" (9a) and "*desired to be in bondage to again*" (9b) – namely, "*the weak and beggarly elements (of the world)*" – in the first and last analysis considering "the whole context", must be, the Law, the Old Testament, its Institutions, its Sabbaths!

This is EB's "only proof" he is again and again "giving" us, "problems of the Jews here" . . . "the major problem in the Church was the Jews" . . . "the entire BODY of the surrounding text of scripture showing the context; and you cannot even address that"!

Has EB 'addressed' it, or anything? Am I blind that I cannot see if he did except that he repeatedly submits his theory, 'the entire context' and 'Jews the major problem'. But 'addressed'? He only cites what he has said himself, and presumes to dismiss with that, all the scholars and what God's Word says, in one swipe. This is his ultimate proof then – not God's Word. So just admit his doctrine is pretentious and opportunistic, and individualistic, but unbiblical.

EB:

Quoting BR: "#1 God's Word did not command His people to "observe a formula of the form "days, months, seasons and years". (Though some like to "try" to make this a problem in God's Word RATHER than a reference to the ACTUAL formula used by the pagans practicing Emperor worship... And so attempt to equate the Word of God with paganism!)"

GE:

The "Emperor" had nothing to do with this, I give you credit. But otherwise, I agree with BR.

EB:

No; God did not command the people to observe a "formula"; they just did it on their own! That was precisely one of the problems with them! Once again; you keep slanderously twisting my intent to impugn the Word of God. I have kept saying it is NOT the Word of God; it is the people's inability to keep it right (either adding to the letter or neglecting the

spiritual aspect of it) that made them condemned. So they made "formulas" out of the observances God commanded; and then tried to push them on the gentile converts. Yet you keep repeating this lie.

In Acts, we see they met every day. Church attendance was not fixed to any WEEKLY day, originally. So we see both meeting in the Temple on the Sabbath; as well as references to the first day. You yourself (BR) said it is OK if the Church has meetings on any other day of the week. So don't try to change up the subject now. (First, you have me saying that the Law is condemned; now you are going to start having me say that fellowship altogether was condemned. Once again; you can think my thoughts for me better than I can!)

GE:

"... now you are going to start having me say ..." – I wonder who is thinking for another his thoughts before he has thought them himself! Nevertheless, "God did not command the people to observe a "formula" – He through Paul here 'condemns' the 'observance', as he condemns the 'formula' – God here, through Paul, condemns the 'observance', OF, the "formula", which means, it simply is pagan idolatry that is here condemned.

EB, "I have kept saying it is NOT the Word of God; it is the people's inability to keep it right."

GE:

What have we here? What was "It"? Not the "*days, months, seasons, years*"; not the "*elements*"; not the "*not-gods*"? Of course yes! Then "it", was, quote: "NOT the Word of God"; so the Sabbath Days were not 'the Word of God'! But EB denies when we, say "it", the "*days*", were not Sabbaths!

Then too "the people" didn't "ma(k)e "formulas" out of the observances"; they "*observed superstitiously*" the "formulas" – "formulas" which not "God commanded", but the "formulas" they "*lusted*" after – the "*principles / elements*" – the "*weak and beggarly principles*" – "*principles OF THE WORLD*" which 'THEY', "the gentile converts" THEMSELVES, "*returned back to again*" to "*worship /*

*observe / serve / divine* "IT"!

And the whole business is what was "condemned by God"; not their 'negligence', "inability to keep it right" or whatever. (Idolatry can never be 'kept right'.)

And, "the people", "just did it on their own!" In fact, that was precisely THE problem with them!" "With them", '*bewitchers*' of themselves!

EB saying just what we say, BR! The whole caboodle was 'pagan' stuff, to which the Galatian deserters "*returned back to again ... again ... praying to days, months, seasons, years ... the weak and beggarly principles ... of the world*" and of pagan idolatry. So why does EB fight our view by contradicting his own all the way? Only because he knows he is losing his fight, AGAINST THE SABBATH that he will not see triumph to the honour of God, he so loathes it!

This applies to everybody who says Paul in Galatians condemned Sabbath-observance. EB joined the choir of such people and heartily enjoys singing his own tune while they sing their own – like here, "... it is the people's inability to keep it right (either adding to the letter or neglecting the spiritual aspect of it) that made them condemned."

EB just cannot see how radically he promotes Sabbath-keeping! He cannot because he is totally tone-deaf!

In any case, just look at EB again including the Sabbath under the things so unconditionally condemned by Paul in 10-11. It can only be the Sabbath of the Scriptures (Fourth Commandment) implied if the "days" of verse 10 were not "ke(pt) right (either adding to the letter or neglecting the spiritual aspect of it)", because EB's is a direct referral of it to both the literal and spiritual aspects of the Sabbath of the Scriptures!

EB:

So they made "formulas" out of the observances God commanded; and then tried to push them on the gentile converts.

GE:

Where do you read that, EB? You make it up yourself! All you say, confirming, insisting, is, the "*days*" of verse 10 were the Sabbaths of the Word from the mouth and Spirit of God – **which they were either not, for being idolatrous, or, were condemned, for being idolatrous!**

Paul doesn't talk to or about somebody else or warns against anybody else's influence on the "converts". He

addresses the "converts", themselves, directly, saying: Howbeit then, at first you were the serfs of strange gods, and now, you turn back to THEM? Who bewitched you but yourself!

BR:

#2. Using another word for "observance" -- The "observances of days" is mentioned in Romans 14 and the "Condemnation" there is against anyone who would "condemn" the "observances". Bending Gal 4 to point at the very practices employed in Romans 14 is an abusive example of eisegesis.

EB:

You're leaving out the rest of it. The condemnation is against anyone who condemns the observance OR non-observance. The latter is what you are guilty of. And you have to ignore or twist scripture, as well as my statements to do it!

Paul condemns observance only because the Galatians were not doing it unto the Lord, as he instructed; but rather to justify themselves. THAT IS CONDEMNED! For they would then be "debtors to do the WHOLE Law". And we see in the following text how these "observances" Paul condemns even extended to circumcision--a distinctively Jewish; not "pagan" practice; commanded by GOD; not the emperor! So once again; why don't you accuse Paul of teaching "Obedience to God's Law is condemned".

GE:

"The condemnation is against anyone who condemns the observance OR non-observance" is true in the case of Romans 14; this is Galatians!

Consider: "Paul's condemnation even extended to circumcision--a distinctively Jewish; not "pagan" practice..." We shall get to this point later on. It is of crucial importance to know whether the "*circumcision*" Paul wrote about, is the "circumcision" EB decided had to be "a distinctively Jewish; not "pagan" practice". Simply: Was there in Paul's day such a thing as a circumcision that was a distinctively 'pagan', practice, that had nothing whatsoever to do or in common with the circumcision of God's covenant with Abraham and his posterity?

Consider: "The condemnation is against anyone who condemns the observance OR non-observance",

said EB! Not true though; not remotely suggested – not, in “Galatians”. Again, we are not dealing with “Romans 14 and the “Condemnation” there” (as BR said). You cannot to your own fancy ‘bring into’ the text (‘eisegesis’) and reject what the text itself offers; reject what you get ‘out of’ the text – ‘exegesis’! In “Galatians” the condemnation is against anyone who “observes” by “*observation – divining - worship – paratehrein, days, months, seasons, years – not-gods*”.

Later on EB reiterated his views, with these words, with reference to Gal.4:8-10, specifically, “(P)eople’s EVIL OBSERVANCE (of the Law and Sabbaths) is condemned; judging others instead of esteeming it to the Lord (is condemned).”

This, he said, “I keep repeating over and over and over, and over, that it is not the LAW, the OT; or even the sabbath that is being called pagan; neither is it condemned; but rather people’s EVIL OBSERVANCE of it; judging others, instead of esteeming it to the Lord. You must be running out of arguments to have to resort to (and now defend, below) BR’s smear tactics.”

So EB steps forward the great promoter of true Sabbath-keeping babbling denials incessantly. You’re a master, EB, at ‘ignoring or twisting scripture’, because Paul does not condemn observance **because** the Galatians were not unto the Lord doing it, or **because** not as he instructed, or, **because** to justify themselves. That is NOT condemned – not *per se*! **Romans 14 is not the ‘subject’ in Galatians, please!** And therefore, Paul does not in Gl.4:7-11 ‘condemn’ **reasons** in the first place like he does in Romans, but the **actions** flowing from those reasons – in the first place, and directly; here in Gl.4:7-11! “*You DESIRE to again be in bondage (because) you WORSHIP days . . .*”

Yes, “people’s EVIL OBSERVANCE”, “is condemned”, but not, “people’s EVIL OBSERVANCE” “of the Law and Sabbaths”! Listen to yourself, EB! One cannot hear a word Paul is saying you so loudly shout against him. It is **your**, “Law and Sabbaths” that “is condemned”, over against **Paul’s** “*days*” that “is condemned”! Is it possible to be clearer YOU, EB, condemns the Law and Sabbaths?

Yes, people are, “condemned”, but they are “condemned” for “*worshipping days, months, seasons, years . . . weak and beggarly principles*” – they are “condemned” for

“*worshipping*” the “*by-nature-not-gods*”, “*of the world*”, and not, for “*worshipping*” “of the Law and Sabbaths”; they are “condemned” for “*desiring / lusting*” after these things – “*g-o-d-s*” “*by-nature-not-gods*” and not OF God, but of the devil and of man’s ‘wicked’ *nature* – “*of the flesh*”, and, “*of the world*”. And that, is ‘paganism’ – idolatry, and not EVEN the false worship of things “God commanded” like the false keeping of the Sabbath; that, is not, what YOU say it is not, EB – it is not, “people’s EVIL OBSERVANCE . . . of the Law and Sabbaths”.

Then again, yes, people are, “condemned” for “judging others” – but not in this passage of Galatians! Yes, people are, “condemned” for not “esteeming” their service ‘to the Lord’; but here in Galatians they are condemned for “esteeming” their atrocities “to the Lord” the only true God, and that, while they at the same time, ‘esteemed it’ to the “*weak and beggarly principles / gods*” mentioned – which were: “*days, months, seasons, years worshipped / divined*”. These were the “*weak and beggarly principles (of the world) . . . worshipped / divined*” – these were “*the by-nature-not-gods (of the world) . . . worshipped / divined*”, and therefore:- these were “*the WORLD . . . worshipped / divined*” – humanism; idolatry; paganism! These “*not-gods*” were the “*Days, months, seasons, years . . . worshipped / divined / served / slaved under / being subjected to*”!

That shows just how EB (like all the Sunday-worshippers), ‘ignores, twists’, and corrupts, “Scripture” directly contradicting what is written there, and substituting in its place his own misconceptions!

Till right to the end, EB, you could not produce a **single**, relevant argument, and so forced BR and me to ‘keep repeating over and over and over, and over’ – just like yourself – that it is not the “EVIL OBSERVANCE” namely “of the Law and Sabbaths”, not ‘LAW’, not the ‘OT’, not the Sabbath, not ‘not esteeming it to the Lord’, not ‘judging others’, that is being called ANYTHING, neither “is condemned” in “vs 8-11”. You must be running out of arguments to have to resort to such tactics! No, people’s – in fact the Galatians’ – ‘EVIL OBSERVANCE of’ “*the weak and beggarly*” “*observation / divination / superstitious worship*”, of “*days, months, seasons, years*”, IS, “what IS condemned”, “here”, in Galatians, in “vs 8-11”!



[[Note the interesting feature of the Genitive in Colossians, "*OF feasts- OF month's- OF Sabbaths' occurrence*", obviating the large difference with Galatians, in which Letter "*days, months, seasons, years*" are the direct Object in the Accusative of "*superstitious and idolatrous reverence - paratehreoñ*".]]

The Galatians "*again*", "*worshipped*", **their**, old "*not-gods*", and Paul 'condemned' them for that! Not for **not** doing that – not for "non-observance" of "it"! Paul makes no distinction between motive and act. He not in these verses distinguishes between practice and excuse or justification, but only pays attention to the actual error. Paul is exact; the Galatians cannot misunderstand him. No excuses, no motivations, regardless, for your idolatry, I Paul, am afraid I laboured in vain for you!

BR:

#3. In this case months and seasons are lumped in with days. The indication of a pagan system of practice is clearly – and repeatedly brought to view. Nothing here is ordained by God – established by God – given by God as a practice for God's people.

EB:

I don't see how that is "clearly brought into view". That in itself specifies neither pagan nor Jewish; and you cannot show that it is pagan only; except through your scholars.

GE:

Check up above, Wisdom 7:17, where "*days*" are supposed "the first, last and middle (the basic component) of **times**", "*arhehn kai telos kai mesotehta chronohn*". Therefore BR is correct, saying, "In this case months and seasons are lumped in with days... indication of a pagan system of practice".

The point BR makes – for which he gives as reason a typical mannerism of paganism – is these "*elements*" were not Divinely ordained, and therefore could not belong to Israel. What for do you then bring in your arbitrary remark, "That in itself specifies neither pagan nor Jewish"? Then what for to you twist BR's words, replacing his "indication of a pagan system of practice", with your own, "specifies neither pagan nor Jewish"? BR made a logical inference; you make an absolute allegation to the end the liar might make of the speaker of truth the liar! But "*stoicheia*" and every word besides in 4:7-11 specify not Jewish, 'clearly', and that implies it specifies 'pagan', 'in itself'! Why are we arguing with you? Should anybody else be confused by your inflated and fanciful mind!

EB:

God even did condemn practices He gave the Israelites. "Where is the house that all of you build unto Me? and where is the place of my rest?" (Is.66:1)[didn't He instruct them to build the Temple?] "He that kills an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrifices a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offers an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burns incense, as if he blessed an idol." (v.3ff) Then, ch.1:11-14 "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? says the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

1:12 When all of you come to appear before me, who has required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

1:13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. [Didn't He command them to do these things?]

1:14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them". This and Amos 5:21-23 some try to say was "pagan practices" also; but clearly, we see sacrifices that God did command them. The problem in all of these cases was once again; that they, while keeping all of those practices, was neglecting other commands, such as "justice". So even the things God did command them became "abomination" (condemned). This is what happened again in the NT. The Jews never repented after all the preaching of the prophets. So they remained condemned in all their practices. A Christian could continue to keep some of them "unto the Lord". But neither were they to judge others for not keeping it. But we see that God does condemn things He commanded, and the problem lies in man; not in the commandment itself.

(Are you STILL going to keep saying I "intend to condemn God's word as paganism"?)

E:

How obtused can you get?

*"The prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time. Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live"* (Amos 5:13-14) – but you invented the bad where there is none. God never "did condemn practices He gave the Israelites". You allege, "God even did condemn practices He gave the Israelites", but 'clearly', God here 'condemns the Israelites' for **not** having **obeyed** his instruction to build or restore the Temple! "Where is the house that all of you build unto Me? and where is the place of my rest?"

Where, once, 'did God condemn practices He gave the Israelites' in the following, "He that kills an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrifices a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offers an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burns incense, as if he blessed an idol."

Each time it is the man, "he that", who is 'condemned'.

Each time the man is 'condemned' for NOT doing as God commanded!

"He that kills an ox is as if he slew a man" ... and "we see sacrifices that God did command them"? No! You see it!

Where did God 'instruct' contempt and disdain – the bravado of unbelief – of the priests in office?

Then, God "condemned" the Galatians for the exact same "practice" "the Israelites" made themselves guilty of – no "practice" was it He, "instructed"! The Israelites "burn(ed) incense as if (they) blessed an idol"; the Galatians circumcised themselves exactly for reason they "*worshipped the by-nature-not-gods!*" In fact, in both cases the transgressors – not any obedient! – actually practiced idolatry and "*worshipped things by divination*" – making the "*days*" "*worshipped*", '*divine*'; "*obeying and serving*" as "*lords / principles / heads*", "*the weak and beggarly*" things "*of the world*" and "*of the flesh*"! God ever "instructed" idolatry? Blasphemous idea! I reject with contempt your notion, EB, "God condemn(s) practices He gave"!

*Vanity and iniquity* are OUR '*works of the Law*' ever for so long as WE, WHILE, we kill an ox to the Lord, slay a man; WHILE we sacrifice a lamb, also cut off a dog's neck to our neighbour; WHILE we offer an oblation, cease not sinning but reach for the extremity, "as if offer(ing) swine's blood" to the Thrice Holy. Indeed, "He that burns incense, (he is) as if he blessed an idol"!

Amos had no message than Paul's, "*I Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised*", WHILE you "*turn again*" to "*worship anew*" your "*not-gods*" and WHILE you "*get entangled again with the yoke of bondage*" "*under the principles of the world*" – "*I Paul, say unto you, Christ shall profit you nothing; ... Christ is become of no effect unto you ... you are fallen from grace!*"

God be merciful to us! How have we profaned your Sabbaths; how trodden underfoot your patient bearing with us! Who can see your Name above all; who may notice your honour and glory? Who is there in Israel that humbles himself before you? To what purpose is the multitude of our sacrifices unto you? We pray: We are so full of our burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of our fed beasts; and we delight in the blood of our bullocks, and of our lambs, and of our he goats. When we all of us come to appear before you, have you required any at our hand, to tread your courts with handfuls? O forgive us our vain oblations; incense that is an abomination unto you. Our new moons and our sabbaths, our calling of assemblies, you cannot away with; it is iniquity, even our solemn meeting. Have you not, o Lord our God, have you not commanded us to do these things? Our new moons and our appointed feasts your soul hates: they are a trouble unto you; you are weary to bear them. O How shall we find peace with you, our God? Prayed Amos. Prayed he as did Daniel, "*O LORD the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him and to them that keep His commandments; We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments. ... All this evil is come upon us; yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we may turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.*"

No, the Galatians turned from truth towards, their iniquities, and by departing from God's precepts, wrangled and choked God's covenant of mercy to them that love Him and keep His Commandments. "*To us belongeth confusion of face!*", prayed

Daniel. Shame upon us! Yet? "For if a man thinketh of himself" – "boasts / affects" his *iniquity* – "he deceiveth himself... he is nothing!" (6:3 and 4:17) Pride is the trademark of humanism; and the Galatians made a show not only in their own persons, but in numbers – "They would exclude you / parade you (as before spectators), yea, that they might affect / impress them (the masses)."

Each time it is the man, "he that", who is 'condemned'. And what have all those transgressions of old Israel got to do with our subject – with the fact the "no-gods" were the "elements", and the "elements" were "days, months, seasons, years", and the "days, months, seasons, years" were "weak and beggarly principles", and the "principles" were "of the world"? What have all those transgressions of old Israel got to do with the facts such as here in Galatians are concerned – facts like Sunday- veneration instead of acceptable obedience unto the LORD in regard to His Sabbath-Commandment? It only reveals the same spirit of man ruling! You, EB, brought Amos into the conversation!

Do you want to say the fact God commanded the Sabbath Day be honoured makes it condemnable? That is what we – in this place – argue, and argue with Paul, that no, it doesn't; and we judge nobody; we – in this place, and with Paul – judge weak and beggarly pagan elements infecting and corrupting Christian worship, such as the weak and beggarly principle of Sunday- sacredness. May God judge us for doing so. We fear God and His justice in this matter!

BR:

It is utterly condemned as originating from pagan worship alone.

#5. Paul says this is "a return" to the worship of things which "by nature are not gods at all" .

EB:

And there you start twisting the order of the text again! He does not SAY "return to what by nature are not gods". He says they came FROM the BONDAGE of "not gods", and now "return" to the same type of BONDAGE to "elements" through ANOTHER VEHICLE; which as we see in the following verse includes circumcision! God commanded it; but as Israel depended on it to justify themselves, (while breaking other commandments) TO THEM, it was "of the world"; and they were in "BONDAGE" to it, and trying to bring the gentile converts into bondage!

GE:

Better stick to the plain text than stick out your neck to be chopped, dear EB! BR's "order of the text" is perfectly legitimate, while your corruptions of the text are obnoxious. 2=2 it doesn't matter which side of the equation any 2 stands.

Galatians 4:7-11, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then heir of God through Christ. *HOWBEIT, THEN, WHEN ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are not gods. 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? Days ye observe, and months, and seasons, and years – I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain!*" Galatians, you are BACK to "THEN WHEN" you were "a servant"! You are back to square one: in bondage under paganism, serving and praying to idols.

But worse! You circumcise yourself just like the Judaists do, and think to impress and oblige God.

Here, without a moment's doubt, "them which by nature are not gods" EQUALS (=) "the weak and beggarly elements" EQUALS (=) "Days ye observe, and months, and seasons, and years" EQUALS (=) "the world". No matter where you place any, all factors are equal; all factors are characteristic: of the "weak and beggarly" "service", or the "weak and beggarly" "bowing / crawling", or the "weak and beggarly" "worship", or the "weak and beggarly" "begging", or the "weak and beggarly" "praying", or the "weak and beggarly" "honouring / divining / superstitious observance / observation of / bemusement by" the "servant", before his 'god' or "gods" or "masters" or "principles" of "then when (he) knew not God", but "worshipped no-gods" – the "no-gods" "days, months, seasons, years" . . . "of the world"!

A full circle turn-about, back, "AGAIN" to where it all started from. That's what upset Paul so much. "IN VAIN" concluded he, "bestowed I labour on you", Galatian pagan Gentiles! "IN VAIN" do you, cutting your foreskins, try to save the pieces. That's what upset Paul the more! The first "IN VAIN" is pronounced in 4:8-11; the last, in 5:2.

Paul in 4:8-11 gives "some Jews", no moment's attention! He gives circumcision, no moment's consideration! Not at this stage in his Letter! Facts – "DETAILS", as BR said. And therefore, exactly, does Paul even in chapter 5, give "some

Jews", no moment's attention! He, even in chapter 5, gives the circumcision of no Christian consideration! At this point in his Letter –chapter 5– the facts – the "DETAILS", are, that Paul denounces the un-Scriptural, un-faithful, and **pagan**, 'practice' of the 'Judaizers' – not the Abrahamic covenant sign of God's Word and of His Faithfulness!

Say you, EB, by your own admitting, "He (Paul) says they came FROM the BONDAGE of "not gods", and now "return" to the same type of BONDAGE to "elements . . ." " Yet then you try to change all this to suit your own designs, by simply exchanging Paul's words for your own. Whence comest thou, Gehazi, alleging, ". . . through ANOTHER VEHICLE; which as we see in the following verse includes circumcision!"? What seest thou, two, no, three, yea more, untruths, "ANOTHER VEHICLE", "in the following verse"; "circumcision", upon which you construct your "WHOLE THEME"?

It is impossible to comment on your "ANOTHER VEHICLE", seeing it is absent, not mentioned; not implied; not suggested.

"In the following verse" ("we see in the following text") – which reads, "*Days ye observe, and months, and seasons, and years.*" Where, do you get your "circumcision", from? To the SAME, 'type of bondage', to the very same "*elements*", which, "as we see" in the very SAME, "verse", "includes", the very SAME, "*weak and beggarly elements*", the very SAME, "*no-gods*" of "*formerly*", "*when then ye knew not God (yet)*" – to THESE, "*no-gods*", and to the very SAME, "*VENERATING / WORSHIP / DIVINATION*", of "*days, months, seasons, years*", "they now "return(ed)""", through the very 'SAME, vehicle': their own "*LUST / DESIRE / NATURE / obstinacy!*"

"*Seek / desire / wish good, and not evil, that ye may live.*" (Amos 5:13-14) "*Seek / desire / wish*" "*the weak and beggarly*", "*o Galatians*", and not God, that ye may make to nothing Paul's labour towards your life's salvation.

This is the truth; these are Paul's words; this is HIS, 'theme'; this, HIS, "subject" – in these 'verses', as well as in this 'context'. This is '*Paul's Gospel*' assaulted by "*this evil world*". Yea more! Sayest thou, EB, most profoundly: "BONDAGE to "elements" through ANOTHER VEHICLE; which . . . God commanded"! Let me tell you one thing – no

need you tell me –, circumcision indeed brought those Galatians under 'bondage' irretrievably! "*You are cut off from Christ!*" – Paul's verdict! And yes, it is I who may tell you, EB – no need you tell me – that it was "through (the) VEHICLE" of circumcision, which NEVER, "God commanded" that the Galatians chose course and "*veered off*" into damnation.

What the Galatians did with and to circumcision here, was EXACTLY what Israel did with, and to, God's Sabbaths in the time of Amos you quoted from!

And again, let me tell you another thing – no need you tell me – what the Galatian Christians did with and to circumcision, was: they "depended on it to justify themselves" as well as upon all their "breaking" of the "other commandments" of God – first and foremost of which was – just as today – their breaking and complete disrespect for the Commandments that say, "*Thou shalt have no other gods besides Me nor make an image as were it Me you worship*". ("*Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart!*")

Oh, have you told me all that already? I guess you did! "This is what happened again in the NT. The Jews never repented after all the preaching of the prophets. So they remained condemned in all their practices. A Christian could continue to keep some of them "unto the Lord". Only the Gentiles repented and remained faithful? All the Jews never repented? (Quote: ". . . none of them were true "doers"; but only pretenders!")

What is more meaningful, is this: "A Christian could continue to keep some (practices) "unto the Lord" . . .", yet, "remain condemned in all." In fact, a Christian could continue to keep all "unto the Lord", yet, "remain condemned in all" as the Galatians remained in their self-righteous abuse and transgression of all God's Commandments. Didn't the Israelites do just that? "Unto the Lord, unto the Lord!" while "*an abomination (are) unto me your new moons and sabbaths, your calling of assemblies; I cannot stand it – it is an iniquity my soul hates: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them*". (Just like Jesus said, "*Not every one who says, Lord, Lord shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven!*") God here actually vents his displeasure with "the people", "not", with "the Law" as you say, EB. O yes, as YOU say, EB – I quoted you saying, EB!

What for then, do you apply these Scriptures to Galatians 4:8-11, where God does not find fault with the people only, but particularly with THEIR –NOT, His– “*days*”, and “*lust*”, and “*principles*”, and “*gods*” – from verse 8, to verse 10, in defining, logical, reverse, sequence, which if taken in textual sequence, remains a defining, logical, consequential textual and contextual sequence? By misplaced application, you corrupt the purity of the Scriptures, and by applying the true Word of God to support your false and perverting purposes, you also falsify the Scriptures and foul moral principle so that either no longer is the Word of God, but the word of the arrogant bewitcher of God’s Word and of God’s People.

One thing the soul of God hates, and is an abomination to Him: hypocrisy, arrogance! Hypocrisy and arrogance were the sin of the Galatian Churches because they thought they could carry on in their old and wicked pagan, ways, just as long as they received the guarantee “*in the (boastful) flesh*”, they are the “*heirs*” of the “*promises of God*” and “*blessing of Abraham*”. Absolutely, they did the same as Israel did in the days of Amos (or at any other particular time), ‘spiritually’, but their case was their case, and not, one, the other’s! That, EB, is the crux of the matter between you and us, GE, and BR! And that is the crux in the matter of the Church’s persistent Sunday worship and persistent rejection of Sabbath observance.

What a different tone is necessary in discussion of Galatians 4:10 than of Colossians 2:16! No pleasure, truly! Even Paul wished he could “*change voice*”!

BR:

... the EXACT FORMULA for days, months, seasons and years that PAUL identifies in Gal 4.

EB:

Both paganism and Judaism had this “formula” as you call it. Just read in the Law the practices of sabbath days, new moons, harvest seasons, and jubilee years! (In fact; we see almost this “formula” in the Col.2:16 passage!)

BR:

As it turns out “nothing” in Col 2:16 actually “says” - days and months and seasons and years so you are challenged to “insert it” into the text “as if” this is what the problem was. However I am sure with some imagination and effort you may be able to bend Col 2 to your purpose there.

But in the quotes I gave we DO have the EXACT formula - but oh WAIT! - that would be about the ACTUAL problem that the gentile

churches DID face regarding emperor worship! The THINGS that are by nature not gods AT ALL.

GE:

Maybe – just maybe – EB formed his opinion on impressions he might have obtained from SDA writings of not that long ago – and perhaps more recent writings – that USED to teach that “*days, months seasons, years*” in Galatians 4 referred to Old Testament ‘*ceremonial*’ holy times. Your own explanation, BR, is correct, but you are not in agreement with your Church, and EB actually reasons from the standpoint of your Church which goes against your own.

Nevertheless, we right here, in this phrase of Paul’s, “*days, months, seasons and years*”, do (as said before and as BR also maintains) in fact find ‘the EXACT FORMULA’ for that’ which ‘PAUL identifies in Gal 4:8b and 9b as “*the weak and beggarly elements (‘stoicheia’)*” of the “*by-nature-not-gods*” whereunto the Galatian Churches “*now, after ye ... are known of God ... desire(d) again to be in bondage*”; those very “*by-nature-not-gods*”, you Galatians, before “*when ye knew not God, did service unto*”. The antagonism in the equipollent is defined and absolute:– “*God*” / “*not-gods*”. The equiponderant is not between “*God*” and something of God – not between “*God*” and ‘the Law of God’ (anybody saying). But Paul supplies the full and ‘EXACT’ ‘FORMULA’ or definition himself – it is his definition of the “*not-gods*” and the “*worship*” of the “*not-gods*”, over against the true “*God*” and the “*knowledge / worship*” of the true “*God*”. It is not “*God*” against Himself in His Law!

One needs no more or besides what Paul has said himself, to know what “*days, months, seasons and years*” in fact **were**: they were the “*stoicheia*” – the “*principles / gods / authorities*” in reality and in practice of the Gentile Galatians; they were the ‘*elements*’, the ‘*not-gods-by-nature*’ – the ‘*stoicheia*’, of **time**: “*days, months, seasons, years*”!

#### **The Word ‘Paratehreofi’ – “ObservATION”**

Galatians 4:10 supposes heathen and pagan “*observation*” of “*days, months, seasons, and years*” – NOT the ‘observance’ of ‘*Jewish*’ or ‘*Old Testament*’ ‘*institutions*’! “*Paratehreofi*” is the word Paul uses here as verb to describe what the Galatians going astray did.

The usual way – in fact the only way it is found ‘translated’, is, “*to observe*” = ‘*to keep*’, holily, religiously,

according to (some) Law, or something to the same effect. That, if it is further assumed that the times listed represented 'Jewish', 'Old Testament', 'feasts' or 'holy days', creates the impression the Galatians '*observed days*' etc. according to Old Testament 'Law'.

But this word "*paratehreoh*" was specifically used for "*divining*", that is, for the observa-TION, astrology, superstition (Calvin's term), worship, of the "*no-gods*" of time, of Hellenistic Paganism, "*days, months, seasons, years*"!

The Greeks had other no-gods besides their 'gods' of time, "*days, months, seasons, years*", like water, fire, earth and sky. They were called the "*principles / authorities*", *stoicheia*, or "*gods / lords*", *theois*, of the universe, life and destiny. Precisely so Paul calls these "*by-nature-no-gods*", "*the first principles of the world*". What more is needed to show Paul has a "*return*" of the Gentile converts back to their "*former*", PAGAN, "*no-gods*", in mind?

There are many who WITHOUT BRINGING INTO ACCOUNT the word *paratehreoh*, reach conclusion of a return into paganism from the context of 4:10. EB, I think your concept of a falling back into Judaism is outweighed by the information reachable from the context alone. Paul though, also uses the word '*paratehreoh*' to describe the superstitious and pagan religious and holy practice of the "*observa-TION*" – not 'observance' – of these time-no-gods ("*first principles*") of the Hellenistic world, "*days, months, seasons, years*"!

No sure, this is a knock-out delivered to the Sundaydarians. But EB is not a Sundaydarian – he plainly is an antinomian.

EB:

The New Testament teaches that these issues of "days" and other practices are a matter of "Faith" and conscience. Just because people decide to make up their own ideas of "The Law"; and then fight each other (As you and BR), and then me (as I stand against both) doesn't mean they are right. Talk about all the "contributions"; all your mindset and these sabbath disputes has contributed is more strife; and all the other things we see condemned in 2Co.12:20 1Tim.6:4, 2Tim.2:23, etc.

Rather than maintaining peace by "choosing" one group and following whatever

they say; if everyone was willing to admit that their group could be wrong, and just read the bible in its proper contexts for themselves (without the filter of traditions); then, ironically, we would see less of these strifes, or at least they would not carry on as fiercely and stubbornly as this (where people have to ignore a whole body of text and substitute some scholar as proof, and twist the opponent's words or intentions; because whatever they do; they cannot just admit their tradition was wrong. I guess that would be "antinomian"; right?)

BR

Indeed. Galatians 4:8-11 zeroes in on the "Specific" problems of the gentile church in Galatia. Gentiles that USED to observe the "days, months, seasons and years" according to the practice of "Emperor" worship common at that time among the pagans of the Roman empire. Paul goes from the general problem of "mankind" regarding sin and the Law in vs 1-7 to the SPECIFIC problem of the Galatian Christians that were going BACK to those things that "by nature are no gods at all".

... Yet some Christians today - want to so much to abolish Christ the Creator's Law - that they are willing to turn the text of Gal 4 as it addresses the pagan lifestyle of the gentiles in Galatia and their practices - and attribute to God - the authoring of paganism.

"10 you observe days and months and seasons and years."

NOTE: This pagan practice is also condemned in the OT.

"Lev 19: 26 You shall not eat anything with the blood, nor observe times (KJV)."

Bible scholars have long recognized the pagan system being referenced here.

GE:

Scholars usually "reference ... the pagan system being referenced here" by the "formula", "*days, months, seasons and years*". They scarcely ever "reference" "*days, months, seasons and years*" by the word "*paratehreoh*". However see 'Rordorf' lower down. For me Rordorf as quoted was a unique and recently discovered exception.

The scholars are quite right even though they base their conclusion upon the nature of the **phrase**, "*days, months, seasons and years*" as such, and not upon the special meaning of heathen, superstitious, and idolatrous "*curious art*" (Acts 19:19) which the **word**, "*paratehreoh*" has of itself. The time-"*elements*"

or time-*"by-nature-no-gods"*, *"days, months, seasons and years"*, were 'observed' by the *"curious art"* of *"observation"* – an idolatrous way of *"worship"* or *"service"*.

BR:

Quote:

Martin Luther "Almost all doctors have interpreted this reference ("days, months, seasons and years") as concerning the astrological days of the Chaldeans", A commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, rev, trans, [London: James Clarke, 1953], 392.

GE:

Note the correlation between "astrological days" and their *"observation"*.

BR:

Quote:

Troy Martin agrees with Luther,

"In 4.8 Paul mentions the former pagan life of the Galatian Christians. In 4.9, he asks them how they can desire their former life again. He then proposes their observance of the time-keeping scheme in 4.10 as a demonstrative proof of their reversion to their old life...Considering only the immediate context of Gal 4.10 the list must be understood as a pagan temporal scheme"

["Pagan and Judeo-Christian Time-keeping Schemes in Gal 4:10 and Col 2:16" NTS 42 (1996):105-119 (p 113) Troy Martin];

R. A. Cole, "it is not necessary...to see any Jewish influence in these Galatians; in all forms of paganism there is some form of 'casting horoscopes', with consequent 'lucky' and 'unlucky' days". (The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians: An Introduction and Commentary,, R. A. Cole. TNTC [London: Tyndale, 1969], 119);

S. Mitchell writes, "the major obstacle which stood in the way of the progress of Christianity, and the force which would have drawn new adherents back to conformity with the prevailing paganism, was the public worship of the Emperor. The packed calendar of the ruler cult dragooned the citizens...into observing days, months, seasons and years which it laid down for special recognition and celebration". [S. Mitchell, Anatolia; Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor, Volume 2 The rise of the Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), P. 10.]

Even authors that "insist" on using Gal 4 as a method to attack Christ the Creator's memorial of His creative act - and given as His holy day in Gen 2:3 (a blessing for all mankind Mark 2:27) - admit that their blind use of 4:10 as a reference to God's Ordinances in His Word - is merely a preference not a fact dictated by the text.

"They (the days, months, seasons and years) could equally well of course refer to the quasi-magical observances (Emphasis GE;

'observations' would have better given the actual meaning.) that we know to have been rife in Ephesus and presumably in other parts of Asia Minor too (Acts 19:19) Heterodox Jews as well as pagans certainly practiced these arts as we see from Acts 19:"

[The Rev. Cannon R. A. Cole, M.Th, Ph.D. The Letter of Paul to the Galatians (Inter-Varsity Press, 1965, 1989) P. 165]

Even those that presume that the only influence on the Galatian Christians are Jews -hoping even to limit it to orthodox Jews- we find, "Apparently on account of their pagan background, the Galatians, as aptly stated by W. Rordorf, 'could only discern in the particular attention paid by the Jews to certain days and seasons nothing more than religious veneration paid to stars and natural forces'". [Samuel Bacchiocchi Ph.D, The Sabbath in the New Testament, Biblical Perspectives 1995, p 122 (Graduate from Gregorian Pontifical University - Summa Cum Laude)]

Willy Rordorf Sunday: The History of the Day of Rest and Worship in the Earliest Centuries of the Christian Church (Philadelphia, 1968), p133,

#1 The Greek term for "observe" in Gal 4 is NOT the term used in Romans 14\* that is also translated "observe". Rather in the unique Gal 4 case it means" to "watch with evil intent" and refers to something like the astrology practices seen today.

(\* "krinoh" - "judge / esteem / regard" GE)

Lev 19 describes it in other Bible translations as -

26 "Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood; neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe omens.(KJ21)

26 You shall not eat anything with the blood; neither shall you use magic, omens, or witchcraft [or predict events by horoscope or signs and lucky days].(AMP)

So "instead" of the Gal 4 text addressing the popular notion of "obeying God's Word when you don't really have to if you don't feel like it" - the Gal 4 text is condemning "observe" as in the pagan practice "...to inspect alongside" (i.e. to note insidiously). Where "Insidious" can be to "intend to entrap or beguile", or "stealthily treacherous or deceitful.

#2. God's Word did not command His people to "observe seasons or months".

#3. Using another word for "observance" -- The "observances of days" is mentioned in Romans 14 and the "Condemnation" there is against anyone who would "condemn" the "observances". Bending Gal 4 to point at the very practices employed in Romans 14 is an abusive example of eisegesis.

#4. In this case months and seasons are lumped in with days. The indication of a pagan system of practice is clearly - and repeatedly

brought to view. Nothing here is ordained by God - established by God - given by God as a practice for God's people. It is utterly condemned as originating from pagan worship alone.

#5. Paul says this is "a return" and that they are "enslaved all over AGAIN" - these gentiles, these converted pagans - were never Jews. They are not returning to "salvation by keeping the Law of God" as something they "used to do". This is simply "another" problem Paul is identifying among the Galatians that is in "Addition" to their problem with Judaizers

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Here is the ultimate proof - this is a practice never to be defended (so it is not anything like the practices being defended in Romans 14). It is a practice that invalidates the gospel, salvation lost for those who engage in returning to those pagan systems of worship - pagan practices.

**EB:**

I showed ALL the other uses of paratero-- "inspect alongside"; or "note insidiously"; which is also translated "watched" in Mk.3:2, Luke 6:7, 14:1, 20:20; Acts 9:24. NONE of these have anything to do with "pagan no-gods" or the emperor. (But most do involve the sabbath, though indirectly, and all involve the Jews!)

I don't know where you're getting your definition "divining" from; (you don't even have some scholastic or grammatical source this time) but that is NOT how the Greek word is ever used in the NT. (You're probably getting it mixed up with Lev.19; which is HEBREW; a totally different word, in a totally different language. Their only connection is that the English translators used a common word for them). We cannot just pull these definitions of words out of our hats and ignore their contexts and uses in scripture.

The most you could get out of this divination" / "horoscopes" definition is "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (1 Sam.15:23); and the Jews were guilty of rebellion (against God's Messiah) and leading gentile converts into it. Therefore, they were being led "back" into a type of "witchcraft"; SPIRITUALLY. This I am in perfect agreement with, and is what I have been saying all along. But still; it was "The works of the Law" that

was the venue this spiritual "witchcraft" was being done through. Not because the Law was bad; but because their INTENT (hence "paratero") was!

GE:

Re, "I don't know where you're getting your definition "divining" from; (you don't even have some scholastic or grammatical source this time ..."

As to the scholars ('support') you expect: Did you not scorn the scholars when BR presented them to you?

Re, "I showed ALL the other uses of paratero ..." You "showed" what you hoped would suit you're scheming, and even then, you "showed" 'insidiously'.

Re, ""(D)ivining" ... is NOT how the Greek word is ever used in the NT ..." says EB!

'*Superstitiously observing*' is exactly the meaning of *paratehreooh* in the instance of Galatians 4:10, and largely its meaning even in every other case of its use in the rest of the New Testament. You only cannot admit, because if you did, it's finished with your own 'evil intent'! Yours reminds me of Prof. Adrio König's pathetic - no, scandalous - remonstrance! See, *Lig Op die Dag van die Here*, 1994. König maintains *paratehreooh* is used specifically as a "defence of the Sabbath"; so it is any one's guess the word also must mean a "defence of (a) gate" in Acts, so that in Galatians it should mean a "defence of days" in the sense of 'worship' or 'venerate' or "superstitiously observe". In the end truth triumphs through the lie!

And there you have helped me to realise, in fact the meaning of *paratehreooh* is, to worship! But with specific reference to your *apothecary*, EB, the meaning you attach to *paratehreooh*, turns upon yourself, and proves the unity and common substance of verses 8 to 10 which you deny, for it identifies the very "days, months, seasons, years" of verse 10, as the very "**not-gods-of-nature**" of verse 8 of the very "**weak and beggarly powers / principles**" of verse 9! Your argument implicates them as being the very '**elemental-not-gods-of the WORLD**' "**watched with evil intent**" - 'worshipped' - believe it or not! So that of course, you would be "in perfect agreement" that what the word really means, means being 'guilty of rebellion against God'. That can only happen through worshipping other gods than God the true God. Now, apply that to



the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment – what the word really means, being ‘guilty of rebellion against God’ – and still insist you are not against the Sabbath or its Commandment! Yea, confirm you, “it was “the works of the Law” that was the venue this spiritual “witchcraft” was being done through”! The sharer is as good as the thief; the ‘vehicle’ as good as its witch; the Sabbath as good as its keeper.

Re, “ALL the other uses of paratero ...”

Said I at first, “Haven’t you noticed something common to them all? Something very obvious? To explain in negative terms, they not one use the word in the sense of ‘observe’, like ‘worship’.”

EB:

So? IT means “watch with evil intent”; and the Judaizers “observance” of the days was not really about true “worship” anyway. Neither of course was their “watching” of Jesus on the sabbath; or Paul. **It was all about self-justification**; and condemning those who preached the true Gospel that destroyed that self-justification. So no; it is not “worship”. That is precisely my point.

So still; all of this does prove that not only pagans had “days and months and seasons and years”. The fact that the “formulas” were so similar shows a parallel between the state of the Jews and the pagans. Though the Jews’ “times” may have been authorized by God; they still had no more **merit in salvation** than the forbidden practices of the pagans, and could become a stumbling block or barrier to the freedom they had in Christ; if they were done for the wrong reason; hence “Observe”=“watch with evil intent”! (Emphasis GE)

NEITHER (BR: “NEITHER the weekly cycle NOR the Sabbath is mentioned AT ALL in the chapter”) necessarily supports “divined idolatry” exclusively, (you just gloss over my proof; try to turn it in your favor, and now just reiterate your unproven assertion); and do you have any support for you statement about it being “too unordinary?” Or are you just making up your own theory? (Keep in mind; even if it did refer to

divination; we see in many places where the Jews’ rebellion is called such things and names associated with pagans!).

GE:

There you say it again: “It means “watch with evil intent”; and the Judaizers’ “observance” of the days was not really about true “worship” anyway.” “Watch with evil intent” means ““worship” anyway” although not “true “worship””. ‘Anyway’, ‘worship’! And, according to Galatians 4:8-10, the ‘worship’ of the false gods of this world’s wisdom and powers! You will get ‘*entangled in*’ your own words and they, will entangle the Sabbath anyway in what according to you, is condemned.

Re, “(T)he Jews were guilty of rebellion (against God’s Messiah) and leading gentile converts into ... “rebellion ... as the sin of witchcraft”...”. Which Scripture do you have in mind, dear EB, with your “the Jews were guilty? I cannot see how any of Galatians 4 or 1 Samuel 15 could be relevant – not at all!

But surely the Galatians “were being led “back” into a type of “witchcraft”; SPIRITUALLY” – a good definition of what *divining* the *elemental not gods by nature of days, month seasons, years* of Hellenistic paganism and the ‘science’ in fact of its ‘Wisdom’, was, this “type of “witchcraft”; SPIRITUALLY”! This pagan witchcraft, added, the “*fleshly*” ‘practice’ of the circumcision of **Judaism**, resulted in and made up, **perverted** Christianity. “God”, NEVER, “commanded it”! It was the ‘circumcision’ of neither the Old nor the New Testament – it was THEIR –the **Galatians’**–, “*divining*” of the “*elements*”, THEIR –the **Galatians’**–, “*worshipping / serving the weak and beggarly principles*” :- “**YOU – Galatians–, DIVINE /worship, days, months, seasons, years!**” This having been their, “type of “witchcraft””; their, “type of SPIRITUALITY”; their, “NEW type of BONDAGE” – because of the ‘type’ of circumcision ‘in there’ – it was the circumcision, NOT, of the Old Testament, the circumcision, NEVER, which “God commanded”. It was the circumcision of Judaism and of pagan idolatry!

The Galatians’ “*divining*” thus, was precisely itself, “the venue”, or, the “vehicle”, “this spiritual “witchcraft” was being done through” – if you so

wanted to describe their "*divining ... days, months, seasons, years*". Ultimately, "this spiritual "witchcraft"", was the end, the arrival, the getting back to where they "*wished / yearned / desired again*" to get back to. Their "*divining ... days, months, seasons, years*" was their goal reached; their "*turn*" completed; their "*lusting*", satisfied, their "*no-gods*" "*served anew*", and SEALED, "*with the circumcision not of Christ*", but "*of the flesh*".

I cannot see how mentally you can deny it. Then how can you regardless argue the "*days, months, seasons, years*" implied the Sabbath of God's Command? How can you regardless deny you argue against God's Commandment the very while you here as elsewhere again and again, argue God "condemned" what He himself commanded: "...observances" Paul condemns even extended to circumcision--a distinctively Jewish, not "pagan", practice commanded by GOD ... God even did condemn practices He gave the Israelites. ... But we see that God does condemn things He commanded ... "the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting". [Didn't He command them to do these things?] ... that "observance" of something God commanded could ever be "condemned". But here we see it is."

Despite therefore your holy question, "Are you STILL going to keep saying I "intend to condemn God's word as paganism"?", and despite your self-righteous excuses, "I have kept saying it is NOT the Word of God; it is the people's inability to keep it right (either adding to the letter or neglecting the spiritual aspect of it) that made them condemned. ... And we see in the following text how the problem lies in man; not in the commandment itself ... practices (being) distinctively Jewish ...", despite, and I therefore, "STILL", and precisely because of your feeble excuses, say, yours is but false, double talk – and so all talk that Sabbaths were and are the "*days*" indicated or implicated and "condemned" in Galatians 4:10!

EB:

Because he (BR, saying, "NEITHER the weekly cycle NOR the Sabbath is mentioned AT ALL in the chapter") is brushing aside the rest of the text like it is

nothing; or like it is my own theory or something. They (the scholars) are subject to the text; not the text subject to them; and they can be wrong; not the text.

GE:

Only EB can't be wrong.

You will see I refer to one 'scholar', Kittel – a REAL authority, maybe the most monumental 'scholarly' work ever on the whole of the NT vocabulary.

I did not refer to any of BR's authorities as I was unaware of them. Which shows how feeble one's best attempts can be. And I'm so glad I did so badly! Here's a bonus undeserved! (I mean these other sources presented by BR.)

EB:

I wasn't asking you for scholars; I just noted that you just came up with this off the top of your head out of nowhere. I do not see any reference there; unless by "your paragraph", you mean on your page. Maybe you should copy and post the pertinent parts of it here (like I post some of mine --but don't get ridiculous; as we only have but so much space here). I haven't yet really had time to read the page. (Reading and answering you and BR alone takes long enough; and I can spend the better part of a day on it).

Still; the only REAL authority is the context of the bible itself. Men may or may not get it right; as they often have some doctrinal agenda that slants their writings. You two keep avoiding the context of the passage (especially AFTERward; which neither has even touched yet), and none of these men can change that no matter how hard they try.

GE:

You want us to believe you, that you haven't got "some doctrinal agenda"? Your "doctrinal agenda" in a nutshell will be found in these words of yours, "it was "The works of the Law" that was the venue this spiritual "witchcraft" was being done through."

To me it is impossible to argue, and confirms everything BR has consistently been saying you are doing, which is, that you in the end, make of the Law itself, witchcraft. If you can't see how any sound-minded person must see your arguments, it's worthless to further debate. Don't come with your excuses

every time, "Not because the Law was bad; but because their INTENT was!", it's sanctimonious bigotry! What the Galatians were doing was what they were DOING – their "INTENT" or "*desire*" included and foremost – and it was idolatry, pagan idolatry, and NOTHING like Old Testament "practices". Paul doesn't deal with 'motive' here; he deals with actions and motives in and as actions! It is pagan idolatry mixed with Judaism and false Christianity Paul 'condemns' – by far NOT, "*the Law*", or "the works of the Law" – not even as a "vehicle"; but most, the weak and beggarly "*motivations / desires / evil intentions*" of the '*weak and beggarly principles of the world!*'

BR:

"In Rom 14 the "*observing of ALL days*" of the list of Bible holy days in Lev 23 is protected and ONLY those who would condemn that observance – are to be condemned. The annual feast days are bible based, so that made the observance "unto the Lord" an act of Obedience in harmony with God's Word.

EVEN in pagan systems like Emperor worship the "*observance of the day*" ("*observation*", GE) was done in honor or worship TO the pagan deity/object and was in obedience to pagan practices/laws/rites. For this reason the MERE OBSERVANCE itself is sin.

In Gal 4:8-11 Paul condemns the MERE OBSERVANCE itself as sin!! Paul said it is a RETURN BACK to the Pagan practices worshipping those things which are by nature no gods at all!! And as noted – historians readily agree that one of the MAJOR PROBLEMS facing the early NT gentile church was the inclusion of emperor worship into Christianity.

GE:

Yes! "In Gal 4:8-11 Paul condemns the MERE OBSERVANCE itself as sin!!" And not, as EB asserts, the 'motive', or, "the people's inability to keep it (the Law) right", or, because "they were trusting in it as a mandatory of means of gaining justification". Paul does not argue, "the Galatians were not doing it unto the Lord", or, they did it "to justify themselves". Not even Gal.6:13, "gives us a motive" for what is going on in 4:10. It is 4:10, that supplies the reason and motive for what is going on in chapter 5 and in 6:13! Paul is not "addressing problems of the Jews, here" in 4:10 – or for that matter in 6:13 – for he here in both 4:10 and 6:13, addresses problems of the relapsing, Gentile

Christian Community of Galatia irrespective of the very unlikelyhood Jews had anything to do with their relapsing.

EB

And look; BR; in chapter 5, (which both of you keep ignoring); the mere "OBSERVANCE" of circumcision is sin! Why? And this given the passage in Romans where they are granted liberty to observe commands of the Law? Now; paratero is not used here; but still; you are questioning that "observance" of something God commanded could ever be "condemned". But here we see it is.

Paul tells us why; because they were not doing it in the sense he taught in Romans; but rather they were trusting in it as a mandatory of means of gaining justification. If that were right; they would have to do the WHOLE LAW; and Christ obviously would mean nothing.

I have explained this time and time again; but it just isn't registering to you. You must block it out to maintain your charge that I am condemning the Law of God itself. That is the only response you can bring against me, but it is not valid.

GE:

If you say it is not the Law you condemn, then you argue the "*weak and beggarly principles*" are in fact the "*days, months, seasons, years*". If it were true you are not "condemning the Law of God itself" you have no further basis for defending the viewpoint the Sabbath of the Law of God is the "*weak and beggarly principles*" which Paul mentions in 4:10, and to which the Galatians were "veering off" and 'came under bondage to again'. If you say, it is not the Law you mean, then you also wreck your importation of Judaism into these verses, for there is no third 'subject' in there mentioned or implied. You mean the Law – that's all you mean, your protests to the contrary notwithstanding.

Re, "chapter 5, which both of you keep ignoring (you two keep avoiding the context of the passage)..."

No, why should we ignore chapter 5 while we discuss chapter 4? You think nothing of handling chapter 5 as if it immediately carries on from 4:11, and so you keep on ignoring the intermediate context and the plain fact of

**separation** in both content and context between chapter 4:11 and chapter 5 and 6:13. There's no "following" you speak of.

But yes, of course both passages – chapters 4 and 5– deal with the Galatian error, and presuppose all involved factors and aspects of their error; but both don't directly bear on all aspects at once, but concentrate on the different components of the Galatian error. In chapter 4:7-11 it PERTINENTLY is pagan idolatry concentrated on; in chapter 5 it is Judaistic circumcision introduced in Paul's evaluation of the situation, PERTINENTLY being concentrated on.

Re, "You are questioning that "observance" of something God commanded could ever be "condemned". But here we see it is." No EB, we see nothing of the kind here, or anywhere! If someone today would offer sacrifice, for example, or would circumcise, he would NOT do "something God commanded"; he, the 'worshipper', would "be "condemned"" for "observance" of something GOD, could NEVER, have commanded. Grasp it? Not? Just too bad then, because it has become time for you to question your, questioning "observance" of something God commanded – that, is the bone of contention here.

Quoting EB, "the mere "OBSERVANCE" of circumcision is sin!"

Completely a distorted view of circumcision as such! For circumcision was not a sin where and as ordained by God. But for its purpose in Galatians 5 the "use" of circumcision to "oblige God", was, and is, another matter; for that reason "the mere "OBSERVANCE" of circumcision is sin!" *"It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God."* (Mt.4:7) In Galatians 5 then, for that reason! And that reason was to justify and sanctify their idolatry first – and then, themselves, while "obliging God"! The reason for their observance of circumcision was to justify the pagan converts in their own error – an error and "sin" for which no one but themselves was responsible or accountable. Error and "sin" upon error and "sin" was theirs – the crust to the custard to the tart as the custard to the crust to the tart.

This is the given – stick to it.

EB:

No such "open door" to OBSERVING the pagan days of emperor worship where "days, months, seasons and years" are observed -- is given to the church of Galatia.

No; he's not saying "observe the days if you want to". They had a serious problem with the days; as well as circumcision. It's like what Paul elsewhere discusses in Romans and Corinthians; about the CONSCIENCE Being "Defiled". The Galatians were not the Romans. The Romans were being harassed by people trying to get them to observe Jewish practices; but they apparently had not bought into it like the Galatians had. So while Paul gives the Romans (as well as the Colossians) liberty; he tells the Galatians that they have been bewitched; and had better avoid the practices; or Christ will profit them nothing. They faced a danger the others did not. I don't know why you two can't see this. So it's funny how you accuse me of turning the text into "johnny-one-note"; when you're the ones who can't acknowledge the different circumstances being addressed. You think only paganism was ever a problem; and that the Jews were alright; because they had "God's Word". But the entire NT disagrees; and this becomes its main point. Not just "hearers" are justified; but doers; and none of them were true "doers"; but only pretenders!

GE:

"It's funny"! At first I thought I was reading BR, until I got to "I don't know why you two can't see this." And when I got to, "... the entire NT disagrees; and this becomes its main point. Not just "hearers" are justified; but doers; and none of them were true "doers"; but only pretenders!", I of course knew and couldn't further doubt, that because only the Jews are blameable and all the Jews, guilty, it was old EB himself again!

Says EB: "They (the Galatians) faced a danger the others (the Colossians and Romans) did not."

What made the difference? Motives? A spirit of judging? Then the Romans should have won the contest – they really envied one the other's devotion!

And still, Paul does not judge them as harshly as he condemns the 'motivational' Galatians.

The Colossians had to face their judges, and had to fear nothing as far as their celebrations were concerned – just what

Paul told them, "*Do not you let anyone judge you!*" No jealousies, emulations or judging among the Galatians are lifted out in chapter 4, like they are late in chapters 5 and 6! On the contrary, Paul found the Galatians' concern for him in his lowly estate almost embarrassing in chapter 4, just after our texts, e.g. verse 14. Therefore, the matter in chapter 4 wasn't so much – if at all – one of "judging others" as EB has hoped!

No, Paul calls a spade a spade. The "*days, months, seasons, years*" of the Galatians' "*admiration / adoration / esteem*" ("*worship / divination*") and "*choosing / lust*" ("*desire*"), to him were "*weak and beggarly principles*" – indeed the "*no-gods*" "*of the word*" and "*of the flesh*". And vice versa, the Galatians encountered a "serious problem with the days", it having been the very "*weak and beggarly principles*" they "*again chose / lusted desired*" to "*RETURN*" to "*once more*".

At this stage in Paul's writing, within this point of context, 4: 7-11, he has as yet not touched upon the crowning act of the Galatians' arrogance – their baptising their idols in the name of Christianity – with even greater bigotry than they idolised their pagan no-gods – having themselves circumcised with the covenant sign of the flesh and works of the flesh in the name of God – the lowest while most arrogant form of taking the Name of the LORD in vain.

Does the Church do any different with its Sunday veneration today?

Re, EB using the word "*bewitched*" for '*paratehreofi*' in 4:10: "So while Paul gives the Romans (as well as the Colossians) liberty; he tells the Galatians that they have been bewitched; and had better avoid the practices; or Christ will profit them nothing."

You have given me and BR one more clue as to of what nature the Galatians' relapse was, namely, that is was a relapse into their former heathen, gentile, pagan, "bewitched" and "divined", idolatry! Your definition of what '*baskainoh*' can actually mean, namely, to "malign", or...to "fascinate", comes in most handy. The heathen, gentile, idolaters, were much maligned and fascinated by their "elemental no-gods" of time, "days, months, seasons and years"! Very good, I thank you!

EB:

"Oh no, you don't! You should have checked the Greek before trying this trick. Not only is "bewitched" not "paratero"; it has no more necessarily to do with "to divine" or

"idolatry" than does that word. It is "baskaino" meaning to "malign", or (by ext.) to "fascinate" (by false representations)! This means a simple misleading by false arguments; not any actual "pagan witchcraft".

And the Judaizers were similarly "fascinated"; by their works-righteousness, and belief that God was obligated to send them the Messiah for their own selfish reasons; and ESPECIALLY "mislead by false arguments". You can't tell me they weren't "bewitched" in some fashion when they screamed and gnashed their teeth demanding Christ to be crucified; and even appealing to Caesar! All of this over "the Law". So thank you for admitting my point!

GE:

'*Baskainoh*' then, is a word used in the NT but this once – too unordinary a word for the Judaizers' age old doctrine of salvation by works of the Law – and which, once more, here implies what I've adduced above, that this word, like '*paratehreofi*', supposes heathen, gentile, pagan, "*bewitched*" and "*divined*" idolatry!

But no, says EB, Paul in Galatians 4 "tells us", "the mere "OBSERVANCE" of circumcision is sin!" And he "tell(s) us why", as EB would have it, "because they were not doing it in the sense he taught in Romans; but rather they were trusting in it as a mandatory of means of gaining justification".

Even though true by itself, EB's is an irrelevant and useless observation in this place, chapter 4.

What is true though in chapters 5 and 6 where circumcision is first mentioned, is that the Galatians were trusting in it as a mandatory means of gaining justification, of their error, over against God – they "obliged God", in more words of EB's own! They were trusting in circumcision as a mandatory means of gaining justification of their error – of having "*returned*" to their '*former*' idolatry of "*worshipping*" or "*divining*"; of their error of "*superstitious observation*" of "*days, months, seasons, years*"; of their error of "*lusting / fornicating / desiring after*", "*the elementary-by-nature-no-gods-of-the-world*"! Every word Paul uses, breaths the "*nature*" of the "serious problem with the days" the Galatians had. And yes, every

word he uses also breaths the "*nature*" of the circumcision Paul further on refers to. It was the circumcision of the worshippers of the "*elements of the world*"; not of the "*Israel of God*" – Old, or, New Testament, because, the circumcision of both the Old and New Testaments, was an act of faith in the true God and Saviour of the "*Israel of God*" – an act of obedience, and not an act of disobedience; an act of faith, and not the act of superstitious unbelief, which you, EB, got mixed up!

**"Observe", Not, "Regard"**

BR:

The speculation that Paul defended this practice in Romans 14 as a practice not to be condemned - only shows the lengths to which some will go to launch an attack on the creator's own holy day (made holy by him when he created earth) - as he calls it the Sabbath day (not merely leaving it with a day-number God tells us the 7th day is the Sabbath of God).

Of course the fact that the Jews themselves - who lived in these pagan centers - had begun to incorporate these pagan practices into the Hebrew faith, only made the problem more difficult for gentile Christians.

#2. Using another word for "observance" -- The "observances of days" is mentioned in Romans 14 and the "Condemnation" there is against anyone who would "condemn" the "observances".

Bending Gal 4 to point at the very practices employed in Romans 14 is an abusive example of eisegesis.

In your argument above you admit you are thinking of this as the REAL annual holy days of the OT – and in Romans 14 Paul argues that they are CONDEMNED who would condemn God's people for choosing to keep those days.

Your argument is hopelessly floundering.

EB:

You're leaving out the rest of it. The condemnation is against anyone who condemns the observance OR non-observance. The latter is what you are guilty of.

BR:

Again you leave the subject and are off onto another rabbit trail.

The point remains – Romans 14 forbids condemnation of anyone who may choose to keep one of those annual Sabbath festivals. In your ceaseless efforts to bend Gal 4 to speak of the Word of God INSTEAD of addressing the obvious problems in paganism – you make Gal 4 contradict Romans 14. Your argument could not be any worse to defend. I don't know why you stick to it.

EB:

Paul condemns observance only because the Galatians were not doing it unto the Lord, as he instructed; but rather to justify themselves. THAT IS CONDEMNED!

BR:

Here again your refusal to actually read vs 8-11 and pay attention to the details gets you into trouble.

Paul does NOT argue "you COULD KEEP observing days, months, seasons and years as long as you do it thinking well and to the Lord". No such opening is provided in Gal 4.

In Gal 4 IT IS THE PRACTICE ITSELF that is condemned!

NO Mention of doing the SAME thing but "unto the LORD".

The practice ITSELF is "the weak and elemental thing of this world". The practice ITSELF is the thing which is by nature not god at all. In Romans 14 the PRACTICE is PROTECTED as done "to the Lord".

In Gal 4 the PRACTICE is condemned – only condemned. And the only solution is to STOP the practice. You seem to "pretend" that the solution in Gal 4 is to GO AHEAD with the PRACTICE But start thinking of it "differently"!! You have surely bent the text to an indefensible point!

GE:

Paul condemns 'observance' / "*worship*" – THAT, IS CONDEMNED! He condemns the OBJECT as he condemns the SUBJECT as he condemns the motive, the intentions, the degree, and the direction and aim of "*veneration divination / worship / service / subjection*". To Paul "the intent", was all "evil" – *paratehreohi*, 'observe with evil intent'. He condemns the *worshippers / slaves / serfs* – the Galatians – who were 'doing it', but who were NOT 'doing it unto the Lord', but *worshipped idols / no-gods / elements*, as God instructed should NOT be done, that a man thereby should not condemn himself! All self-justification by works of own merit is idolatry and all idolatry is self-justification by works of own merit. It constitutes the difference between the Gospel of Christ (and of Paul), and all religion of men. Idolatry encompasses the whole disagreement between Christianity and Humanism. Judaism is just one and awkward form of humanism. Greater humanism more comfortably accommodates itself in Hellenism – in the Wisdom of the World of idolatry and superstition. Idolatry is the great sin of Christianity that in the Church most strongly manifests through Sunday-veneration and false prophetic office. Just like of old.

EB:

And we see in the following text how these "observances" Paul condemns even extended to circumcision--a distinctively Jewish circumcision.

BR:

And by that you mean "distinctively GOD's WORD" since Jews did not author the OT – God did.

There is no doubt that in OTHER texts Paul does address OTHER problems – but that does not get you out of the hopeless spot your argument falls in with vs 8-11.

GE:

And by that EB miscalculates completely, for the circumcision Paul writes about in Galatians has nothing "Jewish" about it whatsoever, but is exposed for its dark and unholy distinction – a distinction 'distinctively' pagan and idolatrous, that no one has the liberty or right to label or seal "*the Israel of God*" with. We shall again encounter EB's claim there is no 'pagan' circumcision – just another of his blunders.

EB:

(Circumcision) commanded by GOD; not the emperor!

BR:

But in those cases Paul does NOT argue that Circumcision is "NOT of GOD" and of that which "by nature is not god at all" NOR that God gave in HIS WORD "the weak elemental things of this world". ALL of THOSE condemnations are reserved ONLY for the PAGAN practice of vs 8-11.

How easy this would be if you would just let the bible speak as it is written.

GE:

Circumcision not ever "commanded by GOD" is this the circumcision Paul refers to in Galatians— man's grotesque caricature of it – in every dimension and aspect distorted to the measure of the *weak and beggarly elemental no-gods of the world*.

Quoting BR, "ALL of THOSE condemnations are reserved ONLY for the PAGAN practice of vs 8-11." Sorry to differ with you, BR, where we so far have agreed so much. But Paul 'reserves' his most severe 'condemnations', not "ONLY for the PAGAN practice of vs 8-11", but for the Galatians' crowning act of arrogance, for their abusing circumcision for justification of their headlong plunge into the abyss of *bondage / service / worship under the elemental not-gods* of pagan idolatry; for going bent

under the yoke of *the world's* religion, and overtaken by *the curse of the Law* and death, yet tempting God that it is Him they served! ("*How have we annoyed the Lord?*") Only at this point is it that Paul declares, "*You have fallen from grace; you are cut off from Christ*" – which is a far worse and far more 'severe' 'condemnation' than "*I am afraid of you, that I have bestowed labour on you in vain!*" ... A little difference, but still important, I think, because it emphasises the close nexus that existed between the Galatians' pagan worship and the Judaistic obtestation of their transgression. "*I will cut off the remnant of Baal ... them that worship ('observe') the host of heaven upon the housetops – them that swear by the LORD, and, by Malcham – who turned back from the LORD ... Hold thy peace at the presence ('judgment' / 'condemnation') of the LORD!*" Zeph.1:15-17

(It looks like Paul had this Scripture in mind when he wrote Galatians 4!)

Judah's ultimate audacity was that they swore on their pagan worship by the Name of the true God, and, of Malcham! **The Galatians did no different nor Christianity since.** It still is the identical situation. We only have sophisticated our pretence and pretentiousness.

BR:

#1 The Greek term for "observe" in Gal 4 is NOT the term used in Romans 14 that is also translated "observe". Rather in the unique Gal 4 case it means" to "watch with evil intent" and refers to something like the astrology practices seen today.

Lev 19 describes it in other Bible translations as -

26 Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood; neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe omens.(KJ21)

26 You shall not eat anything with the blood; neither shall you use magic, omens, or witchcraft [or predict events by horoscope or signs and lucky days].(AMP)

So "instead" of the Gal 4 text addressing the popular notion of "obeying God's Word when you don't really have to if you don't feel like it" – the Gal 4 text is condemning "observe" as in the pagan practice "...to inspect alongside" (i.e. to note insidiously). Where "Insidious" can be to "intended to entrap or beguile", or "stealthily treacherous or deceitful.

#2. God's Word did not command His people to "observe seasons or months".

#3. Using another word for "observance" -- The "observances of days" is mentioned in Romans 14 and the "Condemnation" there is against anyone who would "condemn" the "observances". Bending Gal

4 to point at the very practices employed in Romans 14 is a abusive example of eisegesis.

#4. In this case months and seasons are lumped in with days. The indication of a pagan system of practice is clearly – and repeatedly brought to view. Nothing here is ordained by God – established by God – given by God as a practice for God's people. It is utterly condemned as originating from pagan worship alone.

EB:

I never tried to compare the WORD "observe" in Romans with the one here. (yet another red herring!) But while we're at this; the word here (In the GREEK) is not the same as the HEBREW in Leviticus! ... I showed all the other uses of paratero--"inspect alongside"; or "note insidiously"; which is also translated "watched" in Mk.3:2, Luke 6:7, 14:1, 20:20; Acts 9:24. NONE of these have anything to do with "pagan no-gods" or the emperor. (But most do involve the sabbath, though indirectly, and all involve the Jews!)

So sorry; you can't just take the statement "observe days, months, seasons and years" and just move it over to the pagans just because they have similar practices; when neither the context, not even the word used fits.

And all of that scholarship quoted cannot change this. They are subject to what the bible says; not the other way around.

GE:

Hear who's talking! "(Y)ou can't just take the statement "observe days, months, seasons and years" and just move it over to the pagans just because they have similar practices; when neither the context, not even the word used fits." In the meantime, you can't just take the statement "observe days, months, seasons and years" and just move it over FROM the pagans where Paul put it in context, and bring on the 'Jews' to carry the pagans' load; while neither the context, nor even the word used ('*paratehrehoh* / *divine*'), fits!

EB:

"... I showed all the other uses of paratero ...

No, you "showed" none of 'all the other uses of paratero'. (You also don't seem to have noticed the different words, 'paratero' and '*paratehrehoh*'.) You only showed what you thought would support your liking. In any case, in no instance was the Sabbath, "watched". In each case it was the Jews (Pharisees and leaders) who "watched", and they "watched" Jesus (or Paul or a gate). So you made your remark to incriminate the Sabbath, plainly, and plain falsely!

### The Oneness of Verses 7-8 and 9-10

EB:

So yes; these four verses, and some scholar's interpretation of them DO wipe out the context from the entire surrounding three chapters. That is some wild exegesis!

BR:

... EB hopes to ignore Gal 4:8-11 as IT deals SPECIFICALLY with problems among the gentiles related to their FORMER pagan practices -- IN THE HOPES of ONLY giving attention to the problems of the Gentiles in Galatia regarding the Judaizers.

INSTEAD of allowing Paul to address MORE THAN ONE POINT in the book of Galatians (as Paul addresses MORE THAN ONE POINT in ALL of his letters) EB is trying to IMPOSE a Johnny-one-note wooden restriction on the book of Galatians and then "Call that exegesis".

So no MATTER HOW clearly Paul gets to the point about their FORMER pagan practices and the RETURN "BACK AGAIN" to those practices (infusing it into Christianity JUST as many other cultures did over time) -- EB longs to turn a blind eye to that specific problem and RECAST EVERYTHING as "just a problem with Judaizers".

But sadly enough for EB – this is a "BOTH – AND" problem not subject to his "EITHER/OR" bifurcation.

So the point remains.

EB:

... The entire book is about the LAW, and there is NO "DISCUSSION" of "paganism"; only a PASSING REFERENCE and really, it is not even all four of the verses you focus on; but rather ONE: 4:8 "Nevertheless then, when all of you knew not God, all of you did service unto them which by nature are no gods". THIS is the ONLY EXCLUSIVE reference to paganism in the text. ... You kept trying to merge this verse with the next one; rendering "return to that which



is not God"; but that's NOT what it SAYS. (Emphasis GE)

1) They FORMERLY served that which is not God; and 2) NOW have come to God; but are 3) being "bewitched" (3:1) into a NEW (to them) kind of bondage; the SAME Paul was under (v.4:3) which he has been describing all along; and then returns to describing at least by v.17 (who are "they" who "zealously affect" them?). As pagans they did not have "the Law" (v21) or "circumcision" (ch.5), which is clearly what Paul identifies in 5:1 as the "BONDAGE" they are falling "back" into!

Yet you clearly admit now; that all of this can be thrown away for just this one verse (really) and men's interpretation of it. Fine; you can read it that way if you want; but you cannot judge all of the Church as disobedient to God's commandments based on that. Scripture is not to be handled that carelessly and irreverently if one is interested in the truth.

Now, you're trying to say they were being affected by BOTH Judaism AND paganism; but then you have been denying that Paul and the Jews could have possibly been "in bondage" under God's Law; because that would be insulting God's Law; no one can be under bondage as long as they have "God's Word" (not the HEARERS are justified; only the DOERS, and WHO does it perfectly?); so ONLY pagans were in bondage. So to you; it IS only ONE problem; so don't try to say it's more than one now; and accuse me of making it only one. I admit both are there; but clearly; it is one of them that is the main SUBJECT; while the other is a passing reference."

BR:

I see your ceaseless efforts to recast the discussion on paganism in Gal 4:8-11 BACK into a discussion about God's Word being "the weak and elemental thing of this world" continues without letup. Too bad because the text of scripture is already much too clear to be clouded by your attempt to gloss over these scriptures.

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods[b].

9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, [b]how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain ...".

EB:

And once again; you are interpreting the passage by that ONE verse; and throwing the rest of the text away. ...

Once again; the SUBJECT was "BONDAGE". ... No; they did not have a time in their lives before when they were Jews. Yes they did have a time in their lives when they were pagan. And yes; this was "bondage". But then those who were Jews were ALSO in "bondage". So for those who were pagans, to become Christian; but then veer off into Judaism (for the purpose of gaining justification); it would NOT be a "return" to "PAGANISM"; but it WOULD be a "RETURN" to BONDAGE. Can't you get this into your head without twisting it? It is a very simple, symmetrical concept. Jews who thought they were keeping the law and gaining justification from it were just as much in BONDAGE as the pagans; and even MORE SO; because of the very fact that they had the Word of God, and should have all the more KNOWN BETTER!"

#### **Where to Divide the Text**

So here is the crux: Galatians 4 – from verses one to 10 – is divided, according to EB, between verses 8 and 9. Up to verse 8, it is the 'old' bondage of paganism; from verse 9 on, it is the "new type of bondage" which, you EB, say, corresponds with "the WHOLE THEME" of "Paul's past under THE LAW". And so ostensibly the "*days, months, seasons and years*" are being brought under the category of "the bondage (the Galatians) were being brought under", 'currently' – "the new type of bondage" of being "under THE LAW" of the Old Testament in the Christian era. As I have said, you, EB, perform this marvellous manoeuvre of yours elsewhere; it is your most critical argument.

Therefore, first on with a general overview. Christians indiscriminately were "still considered under "bondage"", by neither Paul or God, but were reckoned "*freed*", by both God and Paul . . . only not the Jews, says EB!

Then directly contradicting Paul, who says, "*how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?*", EB says, "1) They FORMERLY served that which is not God; and 2) NOW have come to God; but are 3) being "bewitched" (3:1) into a NEW (to them) kind of bondage; the SAME Paul was under (v.4:3)".

<u>Paul</u>	<u>EB</u>
Now	Now
you (Galatians)	Jews / Judaism main subject
turn back	bewitched
to no-gods	the Galatians
"you" "then" "at that time (before)"	currently
"served"	affected
again desiring to serve all over again things	new kind / "type" of bondage
to which you (used to be) enslaved	the same Paul was under
the by nature no gods weak and beggarly elements	"bondage" under God's Law
bondage under elements of the world	bondage they "veer off into"

The "kind of bondage...Paul was under (v. 4:3)" was not "the Law". To have it the Law, one has to make the Law bondage, and bondage the Law – which Paul doesn't do.

Paul while having been 'in Judaism' was a "Jew who thought (he was)... gaining justification from ... keeping the law", sure! And that was about the same thing as having been "*in bondage under elements of the world*", sure! But EB, that was and is and ever will be by far NOT "keeping the law" – it is the breaking of the Law!

It is the sin of Judaism to think justification comes by the works of the Law! Paul calls it "*bondage under elements of the world*" – his own bondage he used to be under; the Reformers called it idolatry. The Reformers don't call God's Law, idolatry – neither does Paul.

To 'gain justification from keeping the law' was not what Paul spoke about in verses 9-10. "(Thinking) keeping the law and gaining justification from it", is one thing – a truth; "The Law was bondage" is another – a lie – EB's lie!

That Paul condemns these things in this place, 4:7-11, is another lie – another of EB's lies. Paul doesn't talk about anybody's attempt at 'gaining justification from the Law'; he talks of people who have made up their mind they will "return to" (their 'former') "*no-gods*" – "*weak and beggarly principles*", "*of the world*"!

Then what has Acts 15:10, "Now therefore why tempt all of you God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?", got to do with Galatians 4:7-11? Why do you quote this text? To say the Sabbath is "a yoke upon the neck". What else for? So the "*sign between*" God and His People is the yoke upon their neck, God's Sabbath Day – else you would not have quoted Acts 15:10!

The same personae are the subject in both verses 8 and 9. Paul does not switch subjects or suppose different subjects anywhere in these verses. He does not in verse 8 speak TO "you" the **Gentiles** who "*served*" the "*no-gods*", but in verse 9 –as according to EB– OF "some Hebrews (who) went to the gentiles and tried to get them" –"them" all of a sudden– "to "live like the Jews"". Paul does not "SAY", "again to be in bondage to the Law" – the Law which in any case the Galatians never before had been in bondage to! No, the Galatians themselves "*desired once more to be in bondage*" as they "*before*", used to "*desire*", as formerly, "*when*" they "*knew not God*"! Those of verse 8, who, "*when (they) did not know God ... served those by-nature-no-gods*" –the pagan Gentiles– are those of verse 9, who, "*now, after that (they) have known God, turn(ed) again to the weak and beggarly elements desiring to serve them all over again*".

"*Slaving / being in bondage*" is the action in both verses. Paul does not switch verbs or suppose different 'practices' anywhere or anyway in these verses – he does not in verse 8 speak about "*slaving*" "*unto them*" the "*no-gods*", but in verse 9 about "*bewitching*" / "to go and try and get others" do something else, that was, "to "live like the Jews"".

The adverbs, "*then when*", "*now after*" and "*again*", imply one and the same issue. "*You*", "*then when*" before in verse 8, "*now after*" in verse 9, "*again*", repeat the wrongs of the past, implying "*yet again*" the same people and yet again the same, **pagan, practice**.

**“Focus Change”**  
**“Switch from the General ... to the ‘Specific’”**

BR:

4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Paul has already stated in Romans 3 that ALL are under the law and ALL are condemned by it - hence our need of a Savior.

Clearly “in the fullness of time” points to the fact of Daniel 9 and Mark 1:15 showing the time of the Messiah’s ministry “The time is fulfilled” Mark 1:15.

Paul makes the argument that instead of Christ coming and “dumping God’s Law so that people would follow a different law” - Christ comes “under the LAW” of God and perfectly complies with it. In fact in Matt 5 Christ condemns anyone who “teaches others” to ignore the Law of God. Certainly something we might expect God to be saying in Gospel as Christ perfectly serving “under the Law” to redeem those who are under the condemnation of the Law discussed in ch.3.

The problem solved is a global problem for all mankind. And the solution is “one” it is the Gospel solution for ALL mankind.

6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

This is the “conversion” moment - when the lost becomes born again - an adopted child of God. It is a ‘contrast in faith’ between the lost state and the saved state. It is not a contrast between the saved OT saint and the saved NT saint as many have vainly hoped in recent years.

7 therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

This ends the section applicable to all mankind “in general” apart from anything specific at Galatia. But then Paul starts to focus “specifically” on the condition of the pagans-turned-Christian IN the church of Galatia. Comparing their condition before salvation with their condition afterwards and the errors they were starting to lapse BACK into.

Let’s take a look at Gal 4 again where it specifically focuses on the error of the gentiles in Galatia worshipping pagan idols.

Gentiles who “did not even KNOW the ONE true creator God”.

Gentiles who worshipped “THINGS” that were “BY NATURE” not gods at all. Gentiles who are “turning back AGAIN” to the “Weak and elemental things of the WORLD”. Gentiles who USED to observe

“days and months and seasons and years” in their old system of emperor worship and are now introducing something like it mixed with Christianity.

GE:

I would qualify rather, BR, and say, Gentiles who used to observe “days and months and seasons and years” in their old system of *elemental* time-gods-worship, re-introducing something like it mixed with Judaism (circumcision), and not, “mixed with Christianity” at all. It was something that meant the death-knell to true Christianity.

BR,

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods[b/].

9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, [b]how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Obviously the problem with these Galatians pre-conversion is not about Gentiles in Galatia being obedient to the Law of God prior to being a Christian!

8 however at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no Gods. Clearly Paul addresses the gentile churches in Galatia and mentions that in their lost state - before becoming Christian they were worshipping false gods. The Hebrew nation-church by contrast was established by the one true God of creation who was to send his only son as messiah-Christ-savior was known by the Hebrews and Paul agrees to this in Romans 3:1-3 as well as his reference to Timothy’s up-bringing. “9 but now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?”

Clearly Paul refers to going back to practices of the pagan system - returning to be enslaved by the pagan superstitious practices - again.

1. There is no place where Paul (or any Bible author) calls obedience to God’s Word - “Slavery”. Yet some Christians today prefer to think of it that way.

2. There is no place where Paul (or any Bible author) refers to God’s Word as “The weak and elemental things of this World” - yet some Christians do.

3. There is no place where Paul (or any Bible author) says that the Word of God is “worthless” and “pertaining to that “which by nature is not God”.

Rather - when it comes to abuses of the Word of God - Paul speaks of God's Word as "Holy Just and Perfect" and as "condemning the sinner" - it is not the Law or the Word of God that he condemns - it is always the sinner that IT condemns."

EB:

"...So for those who were pagans, to become Christian; but then veer off into Judaism ... it would NOT be a "return" to "PAGANISM"; but it WOULD be a "RETURN" to BONDAGE" ...

GE:

... seeing their 'bondage' was their keeping of the Sabbath, EB wished. What EB really wants to say is, their "RETURN to BONDAGE" was not the Galatians' own and very "return to PAGANISM", but to 'Old Testament' "practices" - to Sabbath-keeping!

This is no "very simple, symmetrical concept" - it is all very simple, symmetrical, preconceived, but incoherent, lying nonsense! It collects from all over, things, out of context. Paul nowhere writes of 'bondage under the Law'! And their 'veering off' was clearly different from a return to keeping God's Laws, but their 'veering off' was a "return", and a "return" "back" and "into and under" 'paganism' - a full u-turn to, into and under, "bondage", "under the weak and beggarly principles... of the world... days, months, seasons, years"! Just one word of EB's, and everything gets corrupted!

It will soon be found the difficulties of our text, 4:7-11 'in context', is much easier solved if the issue is amended to, "Switch from the *Judaistic* ... to the 'Gentile'. It provides a more precise grid of expected and unexpected obstacles and pitfalls in the road to a better understanding of the passage.

BR,

In the actual text of Gal 4 - Paul switches from the general problem of mankind being lost - to the "specific" issue of the Galatians worshipping false gods and now falling back into the superstition of emperor worship mixing that in with Christianity and basically negating the work of conversion that had been accomplished in them.

GE:

Two 'specifics', BR,

One, the unnecessary involving of "emperor worship", in stead of calling it what it essentially was, namely, pagan idolatry. (Compare Polycarp and his age for 'emperor worship'.)

Two, in the actual text of Gal 4, Paul switches from the specific problem of being lost as under **his**, own former system of

"Judaism", to the "specific" issue of the Galatians now falling back into superstition and worshipping false gods as under **their**, own former system of 'paganism' - into exactly their first condition "erstwhile", of before they became Christians. (I write "before", as were it Paul's own word, because it is the antonym of "no more", *ouketi*. "You (**before**) were a servant / slave / in bondage", "now", "no more", *ouketi*, 7a.)

Then further on 'in context' (chapter 5), Paul denounces the Galatian Churches for justifying their idolatry "with the flesh" - by abusing the rite of circumcision to their unholy ends.

EB,

Quoting BR: "Galatians 4:8-11 zeroes in on the "Specific" problems of the gentile church in Galatia. Gentiles that USED to observe the "days, months, seasons and years" according to the practice of "Emperor" worship common at that time among the pagans of the Roman empire."

EB:

There is NO MENTION of emperor worship there. You cannot just add this to the text.

GE:

Quite right! There is also no mention of "the Roman empire" here, so that the relevant 'principles' were neither 'Roman' nor 'Emperor' religion, but Greek Philosophy and Wisdom- as had been the case in Colossians.

In Colossians there may be a better chance for finding "emperor worship", for instance in the "written ordinance against" the Colossian believers for feasting their Sabbath Days.

EB quoting BR:

#5. Paul says this is "a return" and that they are "enslaved all over AGAIN" - these gentiles, these converted pagans - were never Jews. They are not returning to "salvation by keeping the Law of God" as something they "used to do". This is simply "another" problem Paul is identifying among the Galatians that is in "Addition" to their problem with Judaizers

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Here is the ultimate proof - this is a practice never to be defended (so it is not anything like the practices being defended in Romans 14) . It is a practice that invalidates the gospel, salvation lost for those who engage in returning to those pagan systems of worship - pagan practices.

The speculation that Paul defended this practice is Romans 14 as a practice not to be condemned - only shows the lengths to which some will go to launch an attack on the creator's own holy day (made holy by

him when he created earth) – as he calls it the Sabbath day (not merely leaving it with a day-number God tells us the 7th day is the Sabbath of God).

EB:

Of course the fact that the Jews themselves – who lived in these pagan centers – had begun to incorporate these pagan practices into the Hebrew faith, only made the problem more difficult for gentile Christians.

And several scriptures show that returning to the Law would “invalidate the gospel” and result in “salvation lost”. Remember the REST of this text:

5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled AGAIN with the yoke of bondage. [NOW what does “again” refer to? It refers back to the subject he has returned to: the practices of the Jews!]

5:2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if all of you be CIRCUMCISED, Christ shall profit you nothing.”

Why?

5:3 “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. [which no man can do. Therefore, “salvation lost”]

5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; all of you are FALLEN FROM GRACE.

So if you think only “paganism” is serious enough to warrant a fall from grace; you need to read this again and again. Rather than being “not so bad”, or even “good, as obedience to God”; it is a total slap in the face to Christ and His work.

GE:

Quoting EB, “Remember the REST of this text:

5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled AGAIN with the yoke of bondage. [NOW what does “again” refer to? It refers back to the subject he has returned to: the practices of the Jews!]

You say “Remember the REST of this text”, the one discussed, 4:7-11, then jump across “the REST” lying in between, to “5:1”! And you do your cross-over as if nothing could make a difference ‘contextually’! So in effect you employ only the single ‘argument’ – which is more a method than an argument – of an invariable (BR: “Johnny-one-note”) context, that brings to nothing anything else you may employ to prove your point.

Quoting EB, “NOW what does “again” refer to? It refers back to the subject he has returned to: the practices of the Jews!” Denied! Neither “the practices of the Jews” nor they, are mentioned or are ‘refer(red) back to’ in 4:7-11. This is not what Paul had written in chapter four, or, what he had written in chapter five,

*“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and don’t be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. See, I Paul say to you, that if you have yourself circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing!”*

Here, Paul’s reference to circumcision concerns the Galatians’ **abuse** of it, which was, that they **arrogated**, they only needed to circumcise themselves in order to “*gain*” a ‘right’, or a ‘Lawful’ **claim**, on the “*profit*” that “*the Promises*” and “*the Blessing of Abraham*” “*after*” or “*through the FLESH*”, **presumably**, would bring them. Like in the days of the prophets Israel swore on God by their sins, the Galatians by their idolatry circumcised themselves on the Name of Christ. So “*bewitched*” were they EVEN WHILE they became “*entangled again with the (same) yoke of bondage*” of “*before*” they had “*come to know God*”. “*The yoke of bondage*” was the same of “*THEN WHEN*” – ‘formerly’ – they were “*under the yoke of bondage*” – the “*bondage*” the Galatians USED to be “*under*”, “*before*”.

And the “*vehicle*” they got back there with, was nothing, but nothing else than their own sinful “*desire*”, or “*inclination*”, or “*will*”, or “*nature*”. Their depravity and choice were their “*vehicle*”, for whom no one, but no one else, was responsible, or could be blamed for – least, the Jews who brought them the Gospel of Christ. This fact, is what urged Paul at the first to call out his desperate question, “*Who bewitched you, o foolish Galatians?*” It was their own “*foolishness*” or *stupidity* that led them back to their former idolatrous ways – *stupidity* only that caused them to “*worship days, months seasons,*

years'. How *stupid* can one get? The Galatians' choice – every man's inherent propensity – shows! "Only", warns Paul, "don't use your liberty for an occasion to sin!" Here is where and how the Galatians lost track, and "veered off", into the wrong direction, and "returned", straight "back" to the hopeless state they used to be in 'before' they "knew God", and perdition.

Therefore, not "currently" "veering off" in 4:7-11; and not, "had begun to incorporate", but "returned back", "after", namely, "that ye have known God", and AS, "when erstwhile BEFORE", you had heard the Gospel – a clear reference to 4:8-9, which –remember your own admitting– had been "the ONLY EXCLUSIVE reference to paganism in the text"! SIMPLY WHAT PAUL HAD SAID.

"Are you so foolish", Paul asks these Gentiles already in 3:3, "Are you so foolish, having begun with the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? "Christ won't profit you", "fools" that you have become, he concludes in 5:1!

Paul doesn't mean any trying to obey the Law – or any "works of the Law", but dependence on and conceiting the privileges of 'fleshly lineage' for 'gaining / profiting' the "liberties" or "rights", of "the Promises of God" and "the Blessing of Abraham". Their interests were purely selfish and not at all to the honour of God; to the breaking of His Laws and not to the regarding of them. Paul contrasts "freedom" with "bondage" – the new man as he should be in his new status in Christ, with how instead, he is found "entangled again with the yoke of bondage".

"NOW what does "again" refer to? It refers back", to their former 'bondage', "then when" they 'still', "worshipped", "observed", the days-months-seasons-years-by-nature-no-gods-of-time of the "Greek", "world". The Galatians have returned "again" – simply the truth – NOT, "to ... the practices of the Jews", but to pagan idolatry, to Sun- and Sunday-worship its main and most 'divine' feature and object, of "worship-by-divination", *paratehrehoh!*

The Church in the second century started this sin all over again, and hasn't given it up since. It seems Paul really laboured in vain!

You (EB), yourself, in fact, with "the subject he has returned to" have in mind, and insinuate, 'the subject' Paul discussed in 4:7-11. But you deny that there, it had been 'pagan' bondage Paul spoke about! Clever, but too cunning.

In 4:7-11, Paul discussed the practices of the Gentiles' religion; there, the circumcision of Judaism was not the subject, yet. The perfection of their abomination is not dealt with yet in chapter 4. In chapter 4 Paul just begins to loose hope, "I'm afraid I have laboured in vain for your sakes!" In chapter 5 things have gone beyond hope: "I tell you, Christ will profit you nothing!" (See above.)

The Galatians' error was a 'syncretism', as we have said before. Their relapse into idolatry is the irrefutable implication of that syncretism that incorporated the circumcision of the flesh, according to the desires of the flesh, and not according to the Spirit of Faithfulness. Not as in the Old Testament where circumcision was a sign of the Promises of God in the Blessing of Abraham, a sign of The Seed, of Christ Jesus.

Quoting EB: "So if you think only "paganism" is serious enough to warrant a fall from grace; you need to read this again and again. Rather than being "not so bad", or even "good, as obedience to God"; it is a total slap in the face to Christ and His work."

GE:

When you reacted on my defence of the fact Paul in 4:7-11 has paganism in mind, you said the same things, "... your arguments make the Jews out to be basically good and innocent because of their "Old Testament Law/institution" ... Then the rest of the New Testament is to be thrown out. The Jews were justified by the Law; and thus better than those "dog" pagans, as they called them. Pagans were the only "sinners"; and therefore the Jews were justified in looking down on them as "sinners of the Gentiles"."

GE:

Would it be unfair if I turned your words to make them say of you, that your arguments make the Gentiles out to be basically good and innocent because of YOUR anti-"Old Testament Law/institution" attitude? If I said that YOU make it sound the whole of the Old Testament should be thrown out because it talks Law and Sabbath; that the Gentiles are justified without the Law; and thus are better than those cursed Jews (as the Gentiles called them); that YOU make it sound Jews were the only 'sinners'; and therefore the Gentiles were justified "in looking down on them as "sinners under the curse of the Law" and 'in bondage to the weak

and beggarly principles of the Law' "?

Fair, indeed it would have been! But just look at yourself, *accusing others* of what *you are guilty of yourself*, as Paul said. These are "your arguments", EB, while Paul's sole purpose of writing his Letter to the Galatians was to remove any distinction or discrimination between men with regard to their salvation; to tell them that "*the flesh*", works and the workers of "*the flesh*", do not make of any "*the Israel of God*", but '*fools*'!

'The whole theme' of Paul's, reasons with people who '*by nature*' – '*in the flesh*' – were NOT, '*Israelites*', but '*naturally*' – "*after the flesh*" – were '*Gentiles*', so that the 'whole context' 'surrounding' 4:7-11, is '*naturally*' '*Gentile*', so that Paul, while he speaks about Gentiles in verse 8, will most '*naturally*', go on speaking to and about Gentiles in verse 9. And in chapter 5, Paul still, '*naturally*', speaking to and about Gentiles –former pagans now returning pagan– judges their predispositions, motives and practices, and finds their chief sin their arrogance "*in the flesh*".

Two things bring about a '*focus change*' or a change in approach by Paul in the two verses, 4:8 and 9,

One, "*when*": these Gentiles at first, "*begin(ning) with the Spirit*", "*through faith*", received the Gospel;

Two, "*but now*" (the impossible): "*turning (their) backs*" to the Gospel and "*end(ing) with the flesh*" (*circumcision*), "*desiring / yearning after*" their '*natural*' 'religion', and "*again becoming enslaved / in bondage / again serving*" their former "*natural-no-gods*" – described in detail as unmistakably 'pagan' "*gods / principles / elements*" (*stoicheia*), "*of the world*", so that the "*days, months, seasons, years*", were nothing but the objects of their superstitious "*worship-by-divination*" and "*lust / desire*" of their "*natural-no-gods*" **idolatry!** (verse 10)

How does Calvin stress the constant threat of "*superstition*" with regard to '*observance*' of "*the Lord's Day*" - **Sunday!** And, who has noticed his exception taken to the arrogance of its observers and observances?

## 2. Context

### 1. "*Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you?*"

We are first looking for an answer to the question, "*Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you?*" (3:1) ("*bewitched / hindered / troubled / leavened*")

#### Why Ask "Who?"?

Why do we want to find out, "*Who bewitched you?*", if we want to know, **what**, in chapter 4:10, the '*days, months, seasons, years*' were?

EB:

And I'm not "asking". And Paul is not asking. "Who has bewitched you" is a rhetorical question. He knows who it is in general (though perhaps not in an individual sense; which leader has come in and spread the falsity). The whole contexts go on to tell us who. Gentiles did not compel anyone to be circumcise; Jews do; who else could it be? (even if there were some faithful Jews who did not do this).

GE:

"Who has bewitched you" is a rhetorical question", says EB.

With admitting that, EB admits the addressed –the Galatians– ARE the implicated in the question, "*Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you?*"

So, in 3:2 in Paul's second rhetorical question, the answer is a given – given in the question: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?" So in his third rhetorical question, and in the fourth –3:3-4– the question IS the answer to itself.

Therefore, if Paul asks, "*Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you?*", he in his question has already given the answer: YOU, o foolish Galatians, have bewitched yourself – it was not the Jews who bewitched you, but you, yourself!

The Vocative in the form of a question for dramatic effect and emphasis of a known fact – that is "a rhetorical question".

Why then if we already know who "you" were do we further want to find out, "*Who bewitched you?*"? Because we want to find out **what**, in chapter 4:10, the '*days, months, seasons,*

years' were. If the 'bewitchers' / 'enthusiasts / zealots' who "troubled" the Galatians (3:1, 1:7, 5:10, 2:4, 4:17), regardless of the above, were not Gentile Galatians, but Jews, then the 'days, months, seasons, years' might have been 'Jewish', and therefore perhaps might have been of Scriptural derivation, like the Sabbath.

(The Jews were guardians of the Scriptures – supposedly. It in any case is a myth the Diaspora remained faithful. The reverse is the likelier – many of them had become pagans, just like the Gentile Galatians, and they were as little interested in the Scriptures or the true God as the Gentiles.) So, if the 'bewitchers' were **Jews**, people like EB perhaps **may**, have had a point, that the Sabbaths and Feasts of the Law 'of the Jews', were the "~~weak-and-beggarly-principles~~" (8) which the Galatians being under influence of the Jews, **may**, have "returned back unto to do them service all over again" (9).

With these 'bewitchers' the **heathens / Gentiles** though, the 'days, months, seasons, years' certainly were the "elements" or 'gods' of the heathen, Gentile, "~~WORL.D~~" of Greek and pagan Myth and Philosophy, "days, months, seasons, years". In fact, with these 'bewitchers' the **heathens / Gentiles**, the things "~~fallen back into~~" "under bondage" "again" – were the "~~by-nature-no-gods-weak-and-beggarly-principles-of-the-world~~, days, months, seasons, years" . . . AND even the circumcision spoken of in chapter 5! It so obviously is the correct contextual and thematic conclusion, it seems senseless to enter into further debate on the question what the "days, months, seasons, years" – as well as circumcision in that context – really, were.

The question: "~~WHO?~~" therefore is pivotal for our purpose. This question was also pivotal for a faithful understanding of Colossians 2:16-17. There as well as here, the answer to this question, "~~Who?~~", explains the context. Here it is, "~~Who, bewitched you?~~" In Colossians it was, 'Who, judged? In Colossians it was the "~~world~~", the world or "~~anyone~~" of it, who judged "~~you~~", the Church. Here, in Galatians, Paul asks, "~~Who bewitched you the Church?~~"

In Colossians the usual answer automatically comes: 'The Jews!' In Galatians, the standard answer just as matter of fact is a given: 'The Jews!' And in both cases, for the same reason – got from nothing in the text, but from tradition only! For are these two Scriptures not the famous '~~parallel Scriptures?~~ Are these two, not of the infamous 'triple' or "three red

herrings" [[not EB's description, but EB using it without acknowledgement]] – Romans 14 being their third 'brother' – the "~~false brethren~~" of the "false teachers" 'conspiracy' of Jewish "~~reputation~~" "~~who came in privily (furtively) to spy out (and spoil) our (Christian) freedom!~~"

Never forget the question, "~~Who?~~"!

If it had been Jews who "~~bewitched~~" the Galatian Christians, then we haven't noticed it in the Passage so far; if it had been the Galatian Christians who "~~bewitched~~" the Galatian Christians, the passage so far still makes sense, and agrees with Paul, so categorical, about "~~who bewitched you~~" the Church.

Why then, would we still want to know who, the "~~Who?~~" were? Didn't Paul know who the troublemakers were? Is it not a preposterous question to ask while Paul admitted he himself did not know who really '~~bewitched~~' the Galatians?

EB: "Who has bewitched you" is a rhetorical question. He (Paul) knows who it is in general though perhaps not in an individual sense; which leader has come in and spread the falsity."

GE:

Here is EB at his best, where he so unobtrusively successful ~~smuggles in~~ falsities! Paul doesn't know "in an individual sense", "who has bewitched you", but EB the spy does! He, knows – just like he under our noses has come in and is spreading falsity – he knows a "~~leader~~" has come in and spread the falsity"! How would EB know, a "~~leader~~"? Through presumption, that magic wand of Sunday-exegetes; through presumption!

Notice how ambiguous EB plans his words, "He (Paul) knows who it is in general though perhaps not in an individual sense; which leader has come in and spread the falsity." Does Paul know "which leader" or does he not? If a 'leader', and Paul knew not who he was, Paul would have been a bad pastor; not an Apostle! Does Paul know "in general", or does he know "in an individual sense"? Truth is – and truth in this matter is what EB obviously fears – Paul knew "in general" as well as "in an individual sense". He knew it definitely, it had been the Galatians themselves individually! He himself in the beginning of his Letter has already cleared the names of every possible Jew it could have been.



So in fact EB, you did notice, the "converts", were "gentile" after all! You only tried to push an imaginary 'third' party (some obscure condemned Jews, according to you) who "made "formulas" out of the observances God commanded; and then tried to push them on the gentile converts".

What Paul, knew, was, that, You, Galatians (Gentiles) desire to return into bondage under those weak and beggarly elements to worship them as you used to afresh, superstitiously observing days, months, seasons, years! You are mesmerised yourself by these very days, months, seasons, years weak and beggarly no-gods you are "troubled" with so much, "craving" them "once again" like the Israelites the food-pots of Egypt!

EB:

What Gentiles would try to get Christians- or ANYBODY to be circumcised in order to be saved? THAT is what makes no sense! You keep ignoring this vital part of the text!

The whole contexts go on to tell us who. Gentiles did not compel anyone to be circumcised; Jews do; who else could it be? (even if there were some faithful Jews who did not do this).

GE:

So it had to be the Jews, is what you say! What about believing Paul for a change, and accept the fact he said it was the Galatians, even if there were some unfaithful Jews who did this?

A 'rhetorical question' means the answer to it is contained in the question itself. By rhetoric the logical completion of the question is left to the common sense of the hearer: "*Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you BUT YOURSELVES?*" Why would EB still insist, "The whole contexts go on to tell us who"? Because the whole contexts do not go on to tell us, "Jews do"! So EB creates the presupposition "Gentiles did not compel anyone to be circumcised; Jews do", by wishful thinking . . . once again! He sucks it from his thumb – the whole contexts do not go on to tell us THAT, because it could be anybody else, in fact it could be the very unfaithful Gentile converts Paul here reprimands for being unfaithful! Who else could it be? No silly rhetorical question to ask if asked with reference to the KNOWN person or group; silly, if asked with reference to an unknown

person or group. Paul asked no silly question! "*Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you BUT YOURSELVES?*" "Paul doesn't ask", EB has said himself!

Paul **very well knew** who the "*troublemakers*" were, as EB very well realised but tried to blur with confusing duplicity. Paul knew their origins, and what their aims and what their motives. He only acquainted them not personally; he could not name them or point them out one by one, for they "*had entered stealthily / privily / wily / unawares*" and Paul wasn't "*present in person*". (4:20) They were 'locals', and therefore, Gentiles, the '*bewitchers*'.

And, remember, we all the while have talked with reference to 3:1, and not directly with reference to 4:8-11, because in 4:8-11, this matter of who the '*bewitchers*' were, has already been settled, and remains it a presupposed fact solely the Galatians themselves were the responsible for their "*enthralment*" by the "*weak and beggarly principles*" – a fact supposed, to may perhaps serve for an answer if possibly someone might still –through inattentiveness– ask, 'Who, may have influenced these Galatians? Who, may have 'tried' to *persuade* them to *return* to their old *no-gods*? . . . to satisfy people like EB.

That's why Paul also could say, "*It doesn't matter who they are*" – because he knew! What mattered was that the Galatians knew whom Paul had in mind, and that they, knew it was them, personally and collectively, he had in mind, and that they themselves knew, what they did – which was to return back into the bondage of under their former idolatry. 4:7-11 says no word than this; 4:7-11 does not specifically speak out on circumcision. And Paul – although at this point in his writing fully aware of circumcision and its role in this issue – reserves the specific discussion of it, for further on in his writing; he was a systematic thinker!

I say Paul at this stage is already aware of circumcision's role in the Galatians' relapse, but it is not noticeable in any mention of it in as many words. Wherein then, is circumcision noticeable, here, in 4:8-11? Paul's awareness of circumcision and the importance of it to the Galatians in their erring, is noticeable in the whole thrust of Paul's reasoning, but more concentrated in certain words he uses. He says, "*You DESIRE*". Now "*DESIRE*" is a trait of the mind wherein a man will "*boast*" his "*lusts*" through "*works of the flesh*" – his SELF-righteousness; and to this end circumcision "*served*" the end perfectly.

But we shall encounter these aspects more frequently as we progress. It now is of immediate bearing, that IDOLATRY has always been man's first and foremost and most *'natural'*, *"propensity / inclination / lust / desire"*, that is, man's first and foremost sin, making God the liar, and the liar, god; telling men their religion saves them, and not grace; that *'works'* justify them – *'in the flesh'* – *'works of the Law'*, or, *'works, not 'of the Law'* but nevertheless, *'of the flesh'*; that not forgiveness by the blood of Christ justifies them, but that *'inheritance'* brings with it the *'rights'*; that not the *'Blessing'* and the *'Promises of God'* bring salvation through faith only; that salvation does not *'begin'*, and, *'end'*, *'with the Spirit'*, but with one's own will deciding the matter eternally!

Religion is this TEACHING: *"You shall be as God"*. (KJV *"gods"* is an error.) What was so important in that first sin, was that the *"boasting"* comes IN THE SINNING! Your very eating against God's Command, o man, fore-swears, invokes, upon you, God's likeness . . . runs the Big Lie! Just so with the Galatian apostasy! Return, return, and be entangled again in your former lusts and gods of your lusting, and seal with the oath of circumcision your pretence in the face of God, *"You invoke days!"* You worship God the Saviour Creator on the Day of the Lord Sun! I am afraid, brethren, in vain had been Paul's warning and penal judgment!

Paul knew who they were, the Galatians' *"bewitchers"*, for Paul wasn't *'foolish'*, like the Galatians were! *"You who WANT to be under the Law . . ."* but ironically, *"after the flesh"* and *"by nature"*, **are**, not Jews; *"you, who WANT to be under the Law . . ."* physically and *"in the flesh"*, but *'spiritually / in the Spirit'*, pathetics, **are**, but poor Gentiles – pitiable men *'after the flesh'* and *'by nature "under the curse of the Law" – "you"*, are **not**, Jews and never will be Jews. *"You"*, *"who" "want" / "who" "desire to be in bondage"*, *"who" "want" / "who" "desire to be" "under the Law"*, *"you"*, *"who"* through *'mutilation of the flesh' / 'circumcision'*, *"desire" / "lust to be"* Jews, *"you"*, *"who" "after the flesh"*, *"desire" / "lust to be"*, *"children of Abraham"*, *you"*, *"who" "by the works of the Law"*, *"YOU . . . according to the flesh"*, **are**, the true *"troublemakers"* – *"YOU" Gentiles*, the true *"bewitchers"*!

*"WHO"?*

Because it cannot be the Jews!

It cannot be me, the Jew, Paul, you being my witnesses.

It cannot be the Jew, James, whom you have known even before he *"was carried away with the dissimulation"* – which was false, hypocritical discrimination; apartheid in practice – not a *"false teaching"* of the *"other Jews"*. And we know it wasn't James, from his Letter to the Churches, and from history itself.

It also couldn't be *"the other Jews"*, because we know from this very Letter of Paul to the Church in Galatia that the issue was settled there and then between him and them. And we know from this Letter, what in fact the trouble was with these, visiting, Jews. The Gentile Church was their host, yet dissociated they themselves most unbecomingly from the Community, through a false pride.

But we do learn from this Letter, that the Jews *"smuggled in"*, NO, *"false teaching"*! On the contrary, Paul says to them, How shameful of you! You are the teachers of the (undefiled) Gospel to these people. You, *"among (them) evidently set forth Jesus Christ, crucified"*, who was the example to us all in humbleness. Practice therefore before them what you preach before them and stop your apartheid politics!

We also learn from this same Letter, and from this same context, that the Jews *"smuggled in"*, NO, *"false teaching"*! On the contrary, we learn that Paul commended the Jews for NOT forcing ANY to be circumcised! And he implies the Jews' GOOD work in the above statement, that it was they who *"evidently set forth Jesus Christ crucified, among (the Gentiles)"*.

Paul himself could not tell, *"WHO, bewitched you"*.

So then with every category of Jews doubtful candidates for *'bewitchers'* of the Gentile Church, it must have been, as Paul confirmed, *"false brethren unexpectedly brought in, who came in / stole in stealthily to spy"* – TOTALLY UN-believers, and therefore, pagan, idolatrous, and heathen men – men *"of the world"*!

Most probably they were *'gentile' "brethren"*, consisted the Church if not fully then largely of former heathen Gentiles. But maybe Jews without Christ; we too, cannot say with certainty, if Paul couldn't. Fact remains, the *'context'* is unspoilt, *'Jewish'*, Christianity among the Gentiles, INTENDED, but NOT at this point in the Letter, spoilt yet, by no one knows who.

Thus *'The Context'* is the Church as Christian Faith, perceived as a *'Jewish'* Christianity among the Gentiles. A Christianity NOT, *"(brought) into bondage"* by *"false brethren"* – not at this stage supposed, viz. the context before 4:8-11.

Ascertains Paul: "False brethren . . . to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you", the Gentile, Jewish orientated Christian Church in Galatia.

"2:6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it makes no matter to me: God accepts no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me."

Although it matters everything for EB, simple truth is, as said Paul, "they who seemed to be somewhat in conference **ADDED NOTHING** to me". We also don't read "they added" anything to the Congregation in "false teaching". Which only confirms what we have already found, that no one of this session, or for the duration of their "conference", any Jews attending, as Jews, taught the Church false doctrine, or tried to lead believers back into their old ways, whatever their old beliefs may have been, Gentile or Jewish – "God accepts no man's person". And the only opportunity this conference offered Jews to instill false teaching, forfeited, the possibility Jews at any other occasion infiltrated the Church with heresies, is very slight indeed. Which is another reason to assume the "false brethren" were themselves of the same stock as the Church in Galatia universally, namely, Gentile "brethren"!

In Acts 15:10 the Jew Peter said, "all you", "Pharisees" (verse 5 – excluding those "many" Pharisees of course who were true believers), "tempt" God.

In Galatians, Paul asks, "Who bewitched ('tempted') you" the Galatians? The Jew Paul said he could not find out who did, thereby implying it must have been some "false brethren" from the Gentile Congregations themselves and not from the "Hebrews" who were acquainted 'brethren', visiting.

The "false brethren" more unlikely would have come from the Judaists who were not 'brethren' in any sense, but like Paul used to be, openly, were enemies of the "brethren"! The Judaists' presence in the Galatian districts at this point in history also, is a likelihood highly debatable. Nevertheless this very Letter proves the activities of Judaists; but whether they were from the Gentiles, or from the Jews, is impossible to tell. Only sure fact is, they were pagan, Judaists they were.

Paul consistently in Galatians addresses the Gentile Church in the Second Person Plural, "you". "You", the Church itself, decided to go back to worshipping idols. Gentiles returned

to their former Gentile idolatry, and then, like a heathen 'korban', presented the **perverted** Covenant-sign of the Jews to sanctify their heathen abomination! (We have now jumped forward to chapter 5.)

In the end Paul held nobody but the Galatian Churches themselves responsible for their relapse; he blames no one else, Jew or Gentile! He shows the 'false brethren' were Gentiles by every indication though, and that their 'temptation' or 'bewitchment' that "lured" / "persuaded" the young Gentile Churches back into their recent 'paganism', was exactly that very 'paganism' by which they "worshipped / did service unto / were in bondage" to – the "weak-and-beggarly-principles-by-nature-no-gods" of not that long ago!

Then having had ourselves circumcised our idols are baptised, and we can fornicate with them as we now 'after the flesh' are Jews 'legally', and irrevocably! Strange? Not, if the religion of more than a billion 'Christians' today.

"Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you?" "False BRETHREN" "who", "after the flesh", are of your own kind! So the 'bewitchers' facade throughout the Letter gets torn off piece by piece – it was Paul's exact reason for writing his Letter to the Galatians, to unmask these culprits and the dangers they would bring upon the Congregation. It nowhere appears they were specifically Jews, but all over appears they were pagans –pagan Gentiles– parading Judaists.

Paul characterises the "false brethren" unmistakably, and in his ending to his Letter, chapter 6 verses 12 to 17, with assurance confirms his initial intent with writing (especially 4:8-11), wherein the identity of the "troublemakers" is peremptorily, expressed. Most conspicuous in his ending is Paul's consistent referring to the "bewitchers" as **adults**, "zealots", "pretenders", "braggarts", who bossed it over their fellow Church members:

12 As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they, constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they, should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither **they who have themselves circumcised** (actively), keep the Law; but desire to have you circumcised (as well), that they may glory in your, flesh (too)!

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 / neither circumcision (being a Jew) availeth anything, nor / nor uncircumcision (not being a Jew), but a new creature ("being neither a Jew nor a Greek").

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."

Notice Paul's last words in his Letter, "Christ be with your spirit"! So the 'son' to Abraham, ends, as he had "begun", 3:3 – with the "Spirit"! This is the true "Israel of God", the "man" who "glories, in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" in FAITH, and not in "the marks" and "show in the flesh" – not in "genealogy"!

In Ephesians 3:4, Paul declares, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more". He referred to his genealogy, "Of the stock of Israel ... circumcised the eighth day ..." Yet even "more", referring to the bodily scars from "persecution for Christ", "I bear, in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" – "in stripes too many to count" (2Cor.11:23).\*\*\* "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh ... what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." So, all those who "desire to" "gain" and "boast", and to "make a fair show in the flesh", listen, "Let no man trouble me!" Whether you're a Jew or a Gentile, it's worthless before God!

**(To be baptised with water, or not to be baptised with water, is nothing, but to be baptised in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and be engulfed in His mercy and immersed in His grace and forgiveness and redeeming love in Christ.)**

[[\*\*\*This is a lesson the Church and the world have taken to heart very well. They have learned physical stripes are far less effective than stripes of subtlety and craftiness which are most effectively applied by silence, slight and pretermission.]]

Whereas Paul got his "scars" while and for being truly a "son" and no longer just a "child" –no longer just an unbelieving Jew and Judaist (3:3); no longer just a pagan (4:3)– the "troublemakers" had themselves circumcised while

being adults without ever having been real "children" or truly "sons" in any way "in the Spirit" or, "after the flesh"! They had never been persecuted for Christ. The mark they now submitted themselves to, was not for the sake of the Gospel a given mark, but for show and influence, a mark taken. Here we see the "bewitchers" of the Galatians – those circumcised; not "the circumcision" – the Jews.

These only could have been adult and therefore Gentile pagans falsely professing Christian Faith – "false brethren"! They could not have been Jews or circumcised as Jews while infants. They were grown ups circumcised as pagans in order to become Jews in order to obtain the riches of the Blessing and Promises all of which they thought were 'fleshly' and obtainable through the works or through merit, "according to the flesh".

The implication is irrefutable: The 'bewitchers' were Gentile converts who surrendered the unadulterated Gospel in return for their erstwhile idolatry, and who then with crass contempt adjured their spiritual witchcraft with circumcision of the flesh!

Verses 8 and 9 have one common subject "serving", and one common object "served", Gentiles "in bondage" who under the "no-gods" of pagan idolatry mentioned in verse 8, "observed / served / venerated / divined", the in verse 9 called "weak and beggarly principles" of "days, months, seasons, years" mentioned in verse 10!

Today it manifests through Sunday-sacredness, veneration and observance – the very same in essence and in form, unchanged, undiluted, unpretentious, unashamedly.

### **Short Answer**

Here is Paul's one, and only, and 'whole', 'theme', and, 'whole context':

"God accepteth no man's person!" (2:6) "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham!" (3:7)

The short answer to EB's protests **against a relapse into paganism** and **for a falling back** being spoken of in Galatians 4:7-11, supposedly into "**Old Testament practices**", is,

That the Galatian heresy was in fact a '**syncretism**' of Judaistic and pagan religion – particularly an obtestation by circumcision to mundane idolatry.

(The Galatians' was a perfect illustration of pre-Roman Catholic Roman Catholicism – only in the later error circumcision got replaced by water-baptism and Eucharist, and Sun-"day-

observation" prevailed.)

That commentators dragged the Sabbath into their conclusions has always been without provocation from text or context of this Letter.

Everybody, one could very well say, agrees the Galatian error was a *'syncretism'*, but the moment it is shown what that *'syncretism'* was made up of and how it functioned, everybody seems to have forgotten what they admitted.

The truth of the fact the Galatian heresy was a 'syncretism' of 'Gentile', idolatrous paganism and the 'religion' of Judaism, takes nothing from the other fact remaining, that the 'context' of the whole Letter – and of specifically the section 4:7-11 – is **predominantly**, 'Gentile', and **not**, predominantly, 'Jewish'. The 'trouble' contextually and from the nature of the case, requires typically syncretistic 'pagan / 'Gentile' world-view and circumstance – not Old Testament, at all!

The Galatian error was the effort made with the view to justification **to become Jews "to the flesh" no matter how** forgetting and demeaning the truth and condition, the true "Israel of God" is to "the Spirit" and not "to the flesh".

### **Judaism or Old Testament Law?**

The fact Paul uses the clash between himself and Peter being Jews, to warn his Gentile converts, implies the Gentiles' own fault was a fault of and amongst themselves. Paul saying, "even we", 'compares' the Jews' own situation with an almost unfathomable Gentile, pagan, idiosyncrasy.

EB,

This is no discussion ... of the "paganism" they were once under, before becoming Christians. Paul USES that as a comparison with the bondage they were being brought under.

GE:

And Paul uses the "paganism" they were once under as a comparison with the bondage they were being brought under, but this is no discussion of the "paganism" they were once under? Doesn't make sense to me!

BR:

Quote: Gal. 4:

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods[b/].

9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, [b]how is it that you turn back again to the weak and

worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have laboured over you in vain

It is clear - the pagan practices regarding "Those THINGS which are by NATURE not gods at all" in the observance of pagan "days, months, seasons and years" is the problem highlighted in vs 8-11.

Trying to bend it around to point at Jews who keep Sabbath for the ungodly idea that Sabbath might need to be kept - is totally foreign to scripture.

GE:

Herein the true 'comparison' lies, in Paul's comparing "even we", the Jews' with their knowledge of God through the Law, and "ye", the Gentiles, with their absolute ignorance "when ye knew not God".

"Because the Law worketh wrath", so much greater a wonder of grace is it Jews may "believe in Jesus Christ"; so much greater a wonder of grace is it that you Peter, and I, Paul, rather than these ignorant Gentiles, "may be justified by the faith of Jesus Christ"! Impossible we could think higher of ourselves than of them like it seems to me you have thought, Peter, "dissimulating" yourself from them!

This was Paul's argument with 'some Hebrews' – in the end, with Peter only – so that the Gentiles to whom Paul is writing, could see how they, like 'even we' the Hebrews, were saved by grace only.

**The Law helped us Jews nothing; our religion was vain, just like yours; we were "under bondage of the WORLD" – a bondage that knows no exceptions or boundaries!**

We, the Jews, could not be saved through the "works of the Law" – through the works not even of God's "good and holy" Law! How much less will your works after "the weak and beggarly principles (laws / gods) of the world" save you? How much surer it will destroy you! "I'm afraid I've worked in vain for you!" – verse 11.

Yes, a feeling of the Law's presence is felt, already here in 4:7-11: "I'm afraid I've worked in vain for you!" This is a tentative judgment. The Law is no more than 'felt' in these words at this stage – like a magnet hidden underneath, directing the compass-needle on the dial. One only intuitively is aware of the

direction the Galatian Congregations were heading, in the while they openly reverted to their former 'paganism' (and thus came under the curse of the Law).

Whether one has much or little of "the works of the Law"; whether one has the works of the pure and divine Law of God, or the works of the idolatrous "principles of the world", whether one has a lineage from here to Isaac or to Ishmael, doesn't matter, he is "not saved" by any works of or devotion to or descent according to the law of religion (like in Roman Catholic doctrine the pope descends from Peter). By grace through faith in Jesus Christ only is any one saved, saved! – Protestant Reformation doctrine.

There therefore is no issue of Jews causing an issue in the whole of Galatians except the temporary, political squabble about the Jews' "dissimulation". There is only, permeating the whole, the error of those who were dissatisfied with the Gospel. And those by every indication and undeniably, were the Gentile converts themselves – those who composed the membership of the Congregations in the regions of Galatia in the first place – those whom Paul condemns for being responsible themselves for their error. From their own ranks came their "bewitchers"!

Paul's only interest is in the question how men are saved, and how the answer to that question, may provide the solution for the riddle of how men could fall away again. It seems an impossibility any could fall away again, and therefore any explanation must be inadequate. "Who bewitched you?" "Who did hinder you?" No one knows because how could anyone?! What would it help in any case to know? "Howbeit then you desire to be in bondage again?" Impossible to say! **Who told you then it would help to be circumcised?** "I tell every one ... neither circumcision nor uncircumcision helps!" In other words, "Whether one is a Jew or a Gentile, it doesn't matter!" (5:3, 6), "God does not accept the person!" (2:6)

To over-insured declare the Jews were responsible, and that they caused a falling away into Judaism, is to directly contradict Paul's paradoxical struggle to find an answer as to who bewitched the Galatians. It also is to contradict Paul's conclusion that the Galatians in true Judaistic fashion abused circumcision to justify their totally inexcusable falling back into the "bondage of the weak and beggarly principles" (4:9).

Paul being uncertain as to precisely 'who persuaded' the Galatians, it unambiguously implies that what the Galatians fell back into, was their former 'paganism'. For Paul for certain

would have known 'who' the 'bewitchers' were, were they Jews or 'Jewish' = "some Hebrews", and it certainly would have concerned him greatly, for he would not have shrugged it off were they Jews, with saying, "Whosoever he be" (5:10), "it doesn't worry me". (2:6) For Paul knew too well the "wrath" which "the Law worketh"! He was too acquainted with the evil of the righteousness claimed "by the works of the Law" and especially the righteousness claimed by blood-line or "according to the flesh"! If Jews were the troublemakers in 4:9, he in 4:9 already, would have concluded like he would, in chapter 5 – 17 further –, saying, "It's finished with you!", and not, "I don't know yet if all my work on you had been for nothing!"

For these reasons we may be concerned with Paul, that "there be some ... from this present evil world" (1:4) that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ" (7), and ask, "Who, bewitched you, o Galatians?"

"This present evil world" through all ages has been the greatest threat to Christianity and this very day of ours manifests itself in its last-time splendour! But Paul's Gospel? "I assure you, brethren, that the Gospel preached of me, is not after man" (1:11) – not according to "this present evil world" or according to "the first principles" of it, but "according to the will of God", and "by the revelation of Jesus Christ". (1:4, 12)

Again, this implies a contrasting by Paul of 'his' Gospel, and the "no-gospel" / "soft message" of idolatrous humanism – of the 'Gentiles' "weak and beggarly first principles ... of this world" being "returned" to "again" by the Galatians as the result of the 'influence' of their own, "false", "worldly", brethren".

EB, like many others, simply underestimates the dangers 'paganism' posed for the Christian Faith and still poses in the form of humanism in its Sunday-go-to-meeting-outfit.

### An Abuse of the Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant

"THIS ONLY would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?" – wherein is summed up "the WHOLE THEME", "the ENTIRE CONTEXT", of Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia, and wherein is in no manner excluded the greater likelihood the apostates returned to their previously own 'paganism' of "spy-worshipping" the

time-'elemental' "by-nature-no-gods" of "days, months, seasons, years", therein, that they topped their idolatrous apostasy with abuse of the obsolete yet Scriptural institution of **circumcision**. They thought, We are circumcised, so can return to our old gods and ways – we after all now also are children of Abraham and heirs to the Blessing and Promises! (We are baptised, echoes the RCC, therefore scratch the Second Commandment ... and the Third ... and the Fourth ... and ... the First!)

Says Paul, "I wish them dead, those who trouble you thus, for brethren, you have been called to **LIBERTY**: only don't use your liberty for an occasion (**CLAIM**) to the **FLESH**!" Whereas before the Galatians **SERVED** (*douleuete*) their by-nature-no-gods / masters / principles (*stoixeia*), the Gospel set them **FREE** from "those weak and beggarly principles / masters", forthwith to "by love **SERVE** (*douleuete*) **ONE ANOTHER**". Then what happened?

**The Gospel still left the Galatians without "an occasion (CLAIM) to the FLESH"!** The great shortcoming of Paul's Gospel! "Soon" therefore, they got disgruntled with its righteousness by faith only doctrine, and "ABUSED" their new "LIBERTY". They had THEMSELVES CIRCUMCISED in order to by "the works of the Law" obtain for themselves that covetous "DISTINCTION according to the FLESH", that would validate their 'turning back' to "again be entangled with the yoke of bondage" of **SERVING** (*douleias*) those weak and beggarly principles / masters / gods, the *stoixeia* of time, "days, months, seasons, years".

The Galatians' was the best example of what a 'syncretism' is. True Christianity though, does not permit Christ be entangled with the no-gods of the world. Paul declares: "Christ shall profit you nothing; you are cut off from grace." Christian faith bears NO "DISTINCTION according to the FLESH", but "by love **SERVES ONE ANOTHER**". That was Paul's Gospel.

The circumstance, issue and development, in the Churches of Galatia, were only possible for and within a predominantly, virtually totally, heathen, Gentile demographic constituency. Jews, therefore, were not the 'instigators / bewitchers'; 'some' Gentiles were!

**"SPIRITUALLY the Same as a Return to Paganism"**

GE quoting EB: "No; the only way it fits together is what I have been saying: it is a COMPARISON, that the gentiles allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of legalistic Judaism would **SPIRITUALLY** be the same as a return to paganism."

GE:

"(I)t is" – speaking of what? Of the content of verses 8 to 10! Fine; then, "it is" "bondage under" the "not-gods-by-nature" that Paul speaks of, and not, "bondage under" "legalistic Judaism", that "the gentiles allow(ed) themselves to be brought under"; and then "it is" a matter of "allowing themselves to be brought under", "AGAIN" the fact you time and again ignore dead!

EB, First you deny BR's argument Paul distinguishes between two 'bondages'; then you presuppose two 'bondages' in order for Paul to make 'a comparison' between them; and then you once again argue the two 'bondages' actually are "the same" thing "spiritually".

Paul in any case doesn't employ the Middle Voice, "(the gentiles) allowing themselves to be brought under bondage".

He doesn't use the Passive, "brought under"; "how are ye turned again". He doesn't say, "You are made to observe days", "you are persuaded again to be in bondage" – by others than yourself!

No, the Galatians directly responsible and wilfully, sole Subject of their reasons, intentions, decisions and actions or 'practices', "turn(ed) again to", "desire(d) again to", in fact, "observe(d) / worshipped" "again", those "weak and beggarly principles" they, "before", "did service unto / worshipped" = "were under bondage to", "when yet" they "knew not God". (See for "before" somewhere else in this discussion.)

Paul says not, "were being brought under bondage to" like you EB, allege they were "made" to, by "some Hebrews"!

EB **confuses** Paul's 'comparing' **his own** works of the Law with like being in "bondage under the first principles of the world" – 4:3 –, **for the Gentiles** "bondage under the first

*principles of the world*" WITHOUT the Law, to which they, as EB puts it, "allowing themselves to be brought under", "returned" back to, "again", into the "bondage", of "serving / slaving / worshipping under the (weak and beggarly) first principles of the world".

The Galatian Churches were not, "allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of legalistic **Judaism**" – that was Paul's personal problem at first; it wasn't theirs, here, 'in context' of 4:7-11. And Paul – in the first chapter – held **himself** 'under the bondage of legalistic Judaism' – no '*Hebrews*' needed to do it for him or to him. In fact Paul used to be the outstanding instigator of "legalistic Judaism". So in 4:7-11 the Gentiles were the instigators of their relapse themselves – no '*Hebrews*' were needed. To conclude they fell back onto their former idolatry of 'paganism' would be just good common sense to conclude – in fact that is nothing but what Paul says in so many words.

It is not saying the Galatians were not "allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of legalistic Judaism" in the further or previous context of the Letter. It is only saying that **this particular context, verses 4:7-11**, in agreement with contextual **variations** before and after, concentrates on simply what the words of the passage say, words and concepts that neither speak nor imply "the bondage of legalistic Judaism", but that speak of and imply "*the weak and beggarly first-principles ... no-gods ... days-months-seasons-years ... of the world ... ye (erstwhile) "servant" (and non-Jew) ... did service unto (worshipped) ... whereunto ye ("servant" and non-Jew) ... now, after that ye ... are known of God ... turn to yet again (and) desire yet again to be in bondage to" . . . "servant" or "Gentile", returning to "servitude / bondage"! Not the "child" or Jew, forsaking son-ship!*

"Whereunto ye ("servant" and non-Jew) ... now ... returned", as "*when (before) ye knew not God!*"

I'm fully aware of my above arguing 'paganism', not paying attention to the dormant presence in 4:7-11 of circumcision; my argument not even is a denial of EB's ASSUMPTION, "that the gentiles allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of legalistic Judaism would SPIRITUALLY be the same as a return to paganism." My argument only asks for a consideration of relevancies and contextual substantiality,

and not for a consideration of senseless and useless presumptions even though they by themselves may be correct. For what is relevant in context, is that Paul – unlike EB – considers the Gentiles' allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of paganism again, as fateful beyond hope ... full stop! Gentiles are the Subject of the subject. Surely Paul would have agreed the Gentiles' allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of paganism again would SPIRITUALLY be the same as a return to legalistic Judaism – if that were what he was discussing, HERE! But that is not what he says, HERE. That was what he concerning himself had said already, before in the first chapter, and after – further on in 4:1-3 – had referred to again.

Judaism was not what Paul thought about, here, 4:7-11. Spiritualising won't remove the realities. Paul without ado thought that the Gentiles' allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of paganism "*again*", meant that he bestowed all his labour on them for nothing and that they were as good as before their having come to a knowledge of God: simply lost because simply having given up Christ for their old no-gods!

My argument is not this very "*bondage to the elements*" here conspicuously described in terms and colours of pagan heathenism, fell outside the reach of the Law, and came not under its judgment, condemnation and curse (as well)! It is not a denial this very "*bondage to the elements*" was a bondage under the Law no less, for eventually nothing escapes the Law of God. Sin was before the Law, so the Law was before sin, for there is no sin where there is no Law. The possibility only confirms the reality, validity and effectiveness of God's Law, "*NOW!*"

Matter of fact is that things different should not be identified because hypothetically they in the end receive the same fate. Paul in verses 7-11 expresses his intentions in words to the effect namely, that the Galatians' return was to raw, 'Gentile', idolatry, consisting of "*the elements*" ("*of the world*") stipulated: "*days, months, seasons, years*" being those very objects of "*divination*" or "*superstitious worship*" or "*bewitchment*" or "*lust / desire*", they "*returned to again*", regardless of the supposed true but *loco citato* obscure implication the Gentiles would account before the Law of God for all their relapsing.



### Paul's "Use" of "Comparison"

By Paul's own and very "use" of "comparison", he implies a "**return again**" (*epi+strephete*), "**again**", (*palin*) by the Galatians to their **OWN**, "**former**" 'paganism', "*all over again*" / "*ANEW*", **Adverb**, *anofthen*, to repeat their old "*slaving / serving / under bondage*" (*douleusat*).

The Galatians' was not, like you maintain, EB, a 'turning' to a "new" – **Adjective** – "type of bondage". Paul would not have written words like "**return again**" (*epistrephete*) and "**again**" (*palin*) – **Adverbs** – if the Galatians did not again begin to **DO** what they of old were used to **doing**. One also doesn't do something "*again*", if that something is "new" to him.

You have said it, not I! I'm not saying their bondage was beyond the reach of the Law! I'm saying their '*bondage*' – even their 'new type of bondage' was 'paganism' – not being '*under the Law*' although what they had done, brought them under the curse of the Law! If you can grasp, EB, this is what you yourself in spite of your arguments against yourself, argue for. You contradict yourself all the way!

EB:

"Quoting **BR**: "But this is NOT the focus in Gal 4 with the gentiles - pagans-turned-Christian. In their case Paganism REALLY WAS the problem! Their belief system itself was idolatry and error."

EB:

It was a problem BEFORE they became Christians. But afterwards, if those Jews who WERE "lost" (not those who truly worshipped God) who were now trying to bring them under THEIR bondage. And bondage is bondage; whichever form it takes.

GE:

**EB overpasses Paul** on a single traffic lane. He illegally crosses the solid white line! First, the Galatians, "afterwards", after "they became Christians", plainly were **not** "(brought) under THEIR bondage" – the 'bondage' of 'those', "other", 'people'! EB **wants** them to be anybody but the Gentile Congregation, and he **wants** 'those' "others" of his imagination, to be the Jews. But the Galatian Gentile Congregation (or some from amongst themselves) – whatever EB may wish – were falling back into their OWN former 'bondage' – into nobody else's, to whom it

would have been, a "new type of bondage"! What is EB's hidden motive then for casting in this irrelevant objection to the plainest of facts, that "In their case Paganism REALLY WAS the problem?"

'The context' does not demand anything of what EB here throws in, saying:

'Afterwards'. "*But now*", says Paul! EB says, "those Jews (who were lost)". "*You are*" presently, says Paul, "*known of God*". EB says, "who were now trying to bring them under THEIR bondage (of Judaism)". Paul says: "*How turn ye*" – not "those Jews"; and, he says, "*again*" – "*again to the weak and beggarly elements*" – their **own** "*elements*" – not the "Judaizers' bondage"; Paul says to the "*weak and beggarly elements*" of "*things by nature not-gods*" ("*weak and beggarly*" is descriptive of the "*nature*" of the "*not-gods*"); "*not-gods*" "*whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage*".

EB's scheme is to discredit the Sabbath, else his argument totally lacks purpose and meaning! To further this his end of discrediting the Sabbath, EB manhandles the Scriptures so as here seen.

EB:

Quoting **BR**: "By contrast this is NOT of all the Jews in Galatia. They are not considered "lost" prior to being Christians." But they were still considered under "bondage". Acts 15:10, "Now therefore why tempt all of you God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

GE:

EB, BR says "this is not of ALL the Jews in Galatia" (Emphasis GE), yet you ignore it flat. What BR says is true, and therefore NOT all the Jews were still considered under "bondage".

What difference is there between being "considered "lost"" and being "considered under "bondage"" anyway? This was precisely what Paul wanted to explain to the Gentiles, that if you're a Jew and without Christ, it is as good you were a Gentile and without Christ, and, *vice versa*!

Paul also in Ephesians 2:12 says, that to be "*without Christ*", is as good as to be "*without God*"! We all end up in the same place where we all are *without God or hope in the world* – 'in bondage' as good as 'lost'; 'in bondage' as good as "*under the curse of the Law*"; and for Paul, ultimately, 'in

bondage' as good as being "*in bondage under the first principles of the world*"! It cannot get worse! Or so one would think; but just hang on and see how bad it really got!

To the Galatians Paul says, Now that you are Christians, now you want to again become like you were "*when you knew not God*", like were you "*without God*" – in other words, you want to return to the state you originally were in and came from, YET BE GUARANTEED salvation! That unambiguously and undeniably implies – yes more, clearly presupposes – Paul presupposes an *en gross* Gentile, falling away within the Gentile Churches, and therefore a relapse into 'Gentile', 'paganism' – not 'Jewish' 'paganism' or 'Judaism'. Paul's consideration of the Judaistic aspect of the Galatian syncretism is still to come! (We're not at chapter 5 as yet!)

The Galatians' 'Gentile'-'before'-condition was one of 'paganism', you, EB, agreed. But this the Galatians' previous state, you insist, was for ever "past", so now you may call the "elements" of "days, months, seasons and years", their "current", "**new** type of bondage they were being brought under"; "THEIR bondage" which was "a different type of bondage"; "THEIR bondage" which "some Hebrews" took "to the gentiles and tr(ied) to get them to "live" under, namely, a 'bondage', "like the Jews". In one word, what you really want to say: a 'bondage' of Sabbath-keeping because for you, the Sabbath is Judaism! You yourself with this and many like statements annul every negation of yourself to the contrary that you have the Sabbath in the eye.

As you put it, "the WHOLE THEME is Paul's past under THE LAW, and his current dealings with people trying to bring the gentiles under THE LAW". (This was your emphasis, EB!)

Now what in 4:9-10 is described as an '*under-bondage*'-condition, WAS an '*under-bondage*'-condition "*under*", "*the weak and beggarly principles*" – WAS, an '*under-bondage*'-condition "*under the weak and beggarly principles*" that in 4:9-10 are described as the "*by-nature-no-gods*" and, WAS, an '*under-bondage*'-condition "*under*" their dominance or rule or lordship that they exercised over their bewitched, bemused, confused subjects or serfs or slaves or devotees or worshippers the Galatians. That is the full picture in these texts, 4:8-10!

Now EB reckons under these, the slave-masters; the bondage-tyrants, also and foremost, the Sabbath and Sabbath-

keeping, making of it slavish idolatry, just as BR has said EB does. In ordinary language what EB says is that "*days, months, seasons, years*" means Old Testament holy times, like the Sabbath and primarily the Sabbath. Just the old song, just holier and deeper from the dungeons.

Don't fool around, EB, it is what you have in mind, because your total protest aims at getting an excuse; at getting rid of the Christian's Sabbath-obligation! Why not rather face your Christian duty, and realise your Christian freedom and go out there and celebrate with joy and thanksgiving the Sabbath of the LORD your God? Accept God's Sabbath and its "*keeping for His People*" (Hb.4:9), and worship and honour Him in truth and in spirit through Sabbath-keeping.

The Sabbath Day is the only place in space and time "*left*" (the Sabbath is eschatological; it belongs in "*the last days*") for to "*worship the Father in spirit and in truth*". "*The Father seeketh them that worship Him in spirit and in truth*" (Jn.4:23), and finds them "*still*" – "*it remaineth therefore*" – '*feasting*'; and gives them comforting assurance, "*Do not you let anyone judged you with regard to your eating and drinking*" that is a spiritual '*eating and drinking*' – a "*feast*" "*in truth*" of **Christ** and "*of Christ's*"; a "*feast*" that is a spiritual "*eating and drinking*" of Christ who "**triumphed**", through resurrection from the dead over the "*principles / gods*" (Col.2:15-16), "*of (this evil) world!*" "*For* (having seen Him raise Christ from the dead) *your eyes have seen all THE GREAT ACTS of the LORD which He did: THEREFORE* (for having seen Him raise Christ from the dead) *shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong*" – "*strong*", "*by the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and exalted Him at His own right hand*" Eph.1:19-20 – "*and GO IN and possess the land!*"

And here's a word especially for you, "*today*", dear EB, "*if ye hear His Voice*", "*For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit, NOT ALL ... for we who HAVE believed (in Christ), DO ENTER INTO rest (in Christ) as God said, They (who do not believe) shall not enter into my rest*". Why, o why? "*For He spake in a certain Scripture of the Seventh Day on this wise, And God did rest the Seventh Day from ALL His works; and in this (here said),*

*AGAIN speaking, speaks, They who do not BELIEVE, shall not enter into my rest.*" Therefore if you believe, you will enter into that rest God, speaking of Christ by the Seventh Day, once spoke; yea, twice spoke, for "*in this place again*" in and through Jesus Christ having spoken, the LORD, "*having entered into His own rest, rested as God from His own works.*" You won't invite God's wrath upon yourself joining His Sabbaths'-feasters – only His blessing promised and confirmed by Word of Christ Jesus!

EB:

Quoting BR: "Obviously the specific problem for the Galatian pagans-turned-Christian was not a case of Gentiles being obedient to the Law of God prior to being a Christian!"

EB:

No; it was their trying to be obedient to it for justification, AFTER they were saved. But "by the works of the Law shall no flesh be saved". So they would be in no better condition than if they had just remained in paganism!

GE:

No; don't compose your own scripture! What you have said would have been true though, were it in some other context. But you argue out of context, EB!

It was their *returning again* to be obedient to their *former no-gods* for *venerating service* unto them, AFTER they were saved. By their *weak and beggarly principles* they thus *frustrated* all Paul's *endeavour on their behalf*, that he thought no flesh among them might be saved. So they would be in no better condition than if they had just remained in paganism!

EB:

Continuing in Galatians:

4:22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

4:23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; **[there go any ideas you may have of "flesh" only possibly referring to paganism!]** but he of the freewoman was by promise.

4:24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to BONDAGE, which is Agar.

4:25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in BONDAGE with her children.

4:26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

4:27 For it is written, Rejoice, you barren that bear not; break forth and cry, you that travail not: for the desolate has many more children than she which has an husband.

4:28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

4:29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. **[Once again; BR AND GE; these are NOT "pagans"!]**

4:30 Nevertheless what says 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.

4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. **[are you STILL going to say this refers to paganism?]**

5:2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if all of you be CIRCUMCISED, Christ shall profit you nothing.

5:3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; all of you are fallen from grace.

STILL say that is paganism?

All of this is so clear, I do not see how a argument like this could even go on for so long. I guess that's why the only recourse is to try to twist my argument into "the Law is paganism/weak elemental things of the world". But then again; argue that with Paul!

GE:

How have you argued that with Paul yourself, EB? Putting your own words and ideas in his mouth and mind, creating for yourself your only recourse to try to twist Paul's argument into *'the Law is paganism / weak elemental things of the world!* How have

**"The WHOLE THEME is Paul's Past Under THE LAW"**

EB:

Here, we see the WHOLE THEME is Paul's past under THE LAW, and his current dealings with people trying to bring the gentiles under THE LAW!

This is no discussion ("specifically"; let alone!) of the "paganism" they were once under, before becoming Christians. Paul USES that as a comparison with the bondage they were being brought under.

BR:

IT is fine to point out that all mankind in all groups can be lost if not truly converted - but Paul goes beyond that general idea starting after vs 7.

EB has 'historically' been trying to equate the observance of "days, months, seasons" etc with "Sabbath keeping" AS IF the instruction in God's Word about keeping Sabbath is like paganism's "weak and elemental things of THIS World".

He has not been trying to get at the idea of those who keep Sabbath without being Christian so much as getting at the idea of the Sabbath ITSELF in his approach to Gal 4 and the "days, seasons, months, years" etc. His argument was that if these gentile Christians were starting to keep Christ the Creator's Holy Memorial of Creation then they are in big trouble!

Let's take a look at Gal 4 again where it specifically focuses on the error of the gentiles in Galatia worshipping pagan idols.

Gentiles who "did not even KNOW the ONE true creator God".

Gentiles who worshipped "THINGS" that were "BY NATURE" not gods at all.

Gentiles who are "turning back AGAIN" to the "Weak and elemental things of the WORLD"

Gentiles who USED to observe "days and months and seasons and years" in their old system of emperor worship and are now introducing something like it mixed with Christianity.

GE:

I side with BR as far as Galatians is concerned – that it was former pagans turned Christians who fell back into worship of their erstwhile "no-gods". BR lets the Letter speak for itself!

EB:

Paul MENTIONS their former practice, to compare it with the new type of bondage they were being brought under. Once again; you cannot take a passage; even a chapter, in isolation.

GE:

Just our methods of interpretation differ so vastly, it's no wonder we'll never come near an agreement. "You cannot take a passage; even a chapter, in isolation". That's your method, not to take a passage; even a chapter, in isolation. In certain respects nothing wrong with – one must consider a passage; even a chapter, in context!

But one should also, give it its proper and own attention – which you surely do not do.

Then above all, one should not confuse a passage; even a chapter, for, or with, another passage; even a chapter – which you, EB, are doing without stop.

Chapter 4:7 to 11 is not chapter 5; and not even 5:1, is verse 2! Because it is important to see the connection 5:1 has with the section 4:7-11 – which is direct and pertinent; whereas 5:2 for the first time, concludes circumcision with the paganism that has been dominantly presupposed throughout the context thus far. Only from 5:2 on the emphasis will shift to circumcision!

Only in 5:2 is it possible for the first time, to discern in so many words that "new type of BONDAGE" EB has been talking about since the beginning of chapter 4!

No, Paul throughout chapters 3 and 4 does not discuss circumcision, 'in isolation' or necessarily, but he rather discusses the 'principle' of MERIT, that is, the 'principle' of "the flesh", and – as I have before stated – not so much with reference to the merit of the "WORKS of the Law", but mainly with reference to the merit of "LINEAGE" obtained 'according to the Flesh'!

Paul's 'main theme' in Galatians, rather than the doctrine of righteousness by works, is the equality of every human being before the Law and God. Even in the 'dissimulation' chapter the 'theme' is, that any human being that is of the

*Israel of God*, BECOMES so and REMAINS so, "of/by the Spirit" – which is, by grace through faith only! No one is an heir of the *Blessing of Abraham* and the *Promises of God* automatically, or forcefully "according to the flesh" like the Galatians thought!

It is only in chapter 5 that Paul turns to paying attention to circumcision, 'specifically' – and then, to a circumcision not at all of the Scriptures or of God's command, or of the true *Israel of God*, but the circumcision of Judaism, and therefore, the circumcision of the idolatrous '*principles of the world*' – the circumcision "of/in the flesh"!

GE:

"... the WHOLE THEME is Paul's past under THE LAW" – Simply not true! Here, we see the WHOLE THEME is Paul's Gospel, of how anyone is justified or saved, under GRACE, by grace, and through faith only. That only, was Paul's 'current dealings' WITH, the gentile Churches of Galatia, trying to bring THEM, to their senses before it was too late, pronouncing upon idolaters who sanctified their idolatry with (the perverted Old Testament institution of) circumcision and thus mocked the God who gave that institution its peculiar place and worth in His eternal purpose, "condemnation"!

This is no discussion ("specifically"; let alone!) of the "THE LAW" all men all their lives are under, not only before becoming Christians, but also after having become Christians. Paul USES 'the Law' – his own and his kin's experience under the Law – as a comparison with the bondage the Gentiles all their lives before they were known by God were being brought under, and "now" were "returning to", "again". In the eyes of the Law it meant Paul laboured in vain for these Gentiles. In the eyes of the Law it meant they were loosened from Christ and had no part in Him any longer. That was Paul's personal, final, and correct conclusion with only supposed reference to the Law, because he was dealing with the Gentiles' **idolatry** which they combined with "*works*" of "*the flesh*", contrary, and against, the Law!

Paul never argued against the Sabbath Day. To say Paul denounced the Galatians for 'observing' the Sabbath-"days", is to form lies from God's Word. If I may judge I would say men who unwavering say such things are loosened from Christ and never had any part in Him, but are accustomed to abuse the Word of God just like the Galatian apostates did who through their obtuse and occult application of circumcision hoped to

hallow their unlawful worship of '*days*'.

EB's is an one-sided, in fact "specifically", "Paul's-past-under-the-LAW", 'Jewish' approach, if ever! What it amounts to comes nothing short of blind denial of "the paganism they (the Gentiles) were once under".

If "this is no discussion ...

"specifically"", ALSO, "of the "paganism" they were once under, before becoming Christians", then Paul would not have been able to "USE that as a comparison", 'let alone'!

Different things are compared; not the same thing with itself, otherwise it cannot be 'USED as a comparison'!

Therefore, if Paul in fact 'compares', he must 'use' one "type of bondage", in "comparison with" another "type of bondage" – one the one he had 'MENTIONED' in 4:3, the other the one he 'mentions' in 4:8-11. Only so, could Paul 'compare', the Galatians' "former practice", with their "new type of bondage".

Only so could Paul 'compare' the 'bondage' the Jews by the very nature of it, LIKE HIMSELF, used, to be under, "with the new (type of bondage) they were being brought under ... once again" – which was, as it turned out to be, the very own and 'old' 'type' of bondage "*when they knew not God*", of the Gentile, membership of the Church!

Those then, in actual fact, are the two 'types of bondage' Paul 'compares' – **his** own old bondage, with the **Gentile's** own old bondage. Those then, in actual fact are the two 'types of bondage' found in textual sequence – 4:4, then, 4:9.

EB:

Then Paul continues to address the problem; and get into circumcision. All of this proves that the people bewitching them were influencing them with Judaic practices, not pagan ones...

GE:

True WHERE Paul continues, in chapter 5 – not in 4:7-11 where he is still busy with THIS 4:7-11 subject of paganism.

EB:

... so the "days" would also be judaic.

GE:

Good you said "judaic" and not 'Jewish', or, 'Old Testament'!

EB:

Once again; not evil in themselves; but rather MISUSED.

GE:

The '*days*' etc. were evil in themselves, Paul describing them "*weak and beggarly elements*", "*worshipped*"; against God's Law, FOR BEING "*by nature no gods of the world*"! Circumcision, yes, was "MISUSED" and abused; totally corrupted into something strange to the whole of God's Word the Bible! This circumcision – the circumcision the Galatians practiced – was pagan; was something which God never commanded; a misconception that originated in the mind of man, in the wisdom of the world, in the lusting of the flesh.

Just so, if ever a 'sabbath' so called were to be introduced into the text or context of Galatians, it would be one of one and the same nature as the circumcision spoken of in Galatians – just such a pagan 'sabbath', an idolatrous high day – not the Bible's, but man's!

While all logic goes against an importation of the Sabbath into Galatians 4, it in fact turned out the Sabbatharians are just as guilty as the Sundaydarians for craft-fully having transplanted the Sabbath into Galatians 4:8-11 – not even having uprooted it from its Old Testament grounds, but verily from its post-resurrection and Christian roots! But this is a historical issue, and we are not now occupied with the Sabbath's history of after the apostles. So, EB, do you think I unjustly class your interpretation under the gross of those who thus have introduced the Sabbath into Galatians 4:8-11?

Exceptions like BR and I claim that the Sabbath is no matter in this Scripture – it should not be mentioned, what transported in there with far distance heavy haulage hermeneutics!

But it is the Sunday proponents – under whom Sabbatharians and 'neutrals' like yourself, willy-nilly count – who say Paul according to this passage denounces Christians (or pseudo-Christians) for having returned to a keeping of the Sabbath. I reckon your overjoyed exclamation, "BINGO! THIS IS WHAT I HAVE BEEN SAYING!!!" was rather premature gambling.

EB:

You acknowledged a difference between "a believer under the Old Dispensation" and "a Judaist "being a zealot of my ancestral tradition"". This was one of the points I was trying to make. It was not the Law that was being condemned; but rather that zealotousness; and while Paul, James, and other

apostles and Jews may have been converted from that; there were still Jews who were that way, and would continue to harass the Church.

GE:

And which no one will deny – in general. But is it relevant in 4:7-11? NO!

I think we've struck the cord of discord. It is your assuming my assuming! Well, you're assuming my assuming wrongly! For I'll tell you exactly what I do not believe nor teach, "THAT EVERY SINGLE JEW ALIVE ACCEPTED THE GOSPEL AND THERE WERE NO OTHERS WHO DIDN'T". I also don't want you to waste your energy "to PROVE that there were Jews still opposing the Gospel" – save it for the true issues at stake here. There may have been Jews who completely were pagans – there today still are. They even may have had influence on the paganism of their day; there have been a number of Jews who have had significant influence on every imaginable 'modern' philosophy of unbelief. They are NOT though in Galatians distinguishable as "particular Jews", especially NOT in 4:7-11. In this place Paul distinguishes gentile pagans, naturally mainly of Greek stock, though Jews to the flesh may have counted a few among them. Nevertheless they do not HERE, feature, as '*Judaists*' like the old Paul elsewhere in context did. They were completely insignificant, literally weren't noticeable, in the matter under discussion in this part of Paul's Letter. If one would say HERE there were no single Jew alive supposed, he probably could be right. It's not the issue! It's not the issue there were in fact Jews who REJECTED the Gospel of Christ; it is, in Paul's words (near the beginning of his Letter), "*of no matter whatsoever*"! And it in this place –4:8-11– is of as little consequence those Jews were under bondage of the Law. Because Paul in these verses, 4:8 to 11, writes about pagans returning to paganism no matter the fact he elsewhere in THIS Letter, writes about Christians returning again to their former bondage under the Law WHILE having returned to their own and former pagan idolatry.

EB:

He (Paul) is not addressing two groups here. He is addressing the same group--who were being harassed by people who pushed among other things, circumcision.

GE:

Absolutely! But that's what we (I and BR) have been saying, that's not what you have been saying yourself all the time! And **among those other things you don't mention**

was the MAIN thing, the Galatians' own "return" and "lust" after their "former", "no-gods" of "days, months, seasons, years"!

EB:

There is none here pushing paganism.

GE:

Yes, and, no! Yes, no one else than the Galatians themselves 'pushed paganism'; they were ALL "pushing paganism" – that's why Paul exclaimed, "*Who, o foolish Galatians, bewitched you?*" **as if**, he could tell; he couldn't make one exception! No, no one else than they themselves – the same ones who also "here (were) pushing paganism" through their 'pushing' their circumcision-dogma!

EB:

The ONLY mention of paganism is in v.8, and that as PAST. And it is not a matter of "elsewhere in the letter". It is in the IMMEDIATE context!

GE:

Denied in toto! Even – and especially – where Paul deals with circumcision, he deals with these pagan pests who bewitched the Churches so. The very paganism of verse 8 is the paganism of verse 9, of verse 10, AND, of chapter 5 – the paganism, to which the Galatians now –presently– "*again returned*" to "*now again serve / now again worship / now again be in bondage to*" = to "*now again divine*" = to "*now again desire*" = to "*now again bend to / now again return to*". The "whole theme" and feeling of this "part" of the text and context is the *gods* and *religion / worship* of the world of the PRESENT – of paganism. And it IS a matter of "elsewhere in the letter" as well and thoroughly as it is in the IMMEDIATE context! In one word: **the circumcision of chapter five is the exact same paganism of chapter 4.**

BR:

So Paul EXPLICITLY identifies the pagan practices regarding the worship of those things "that are by NATURE NOT gods at all".

EB:

He identifies it as a PASSING REFERENCE to their PAST. Nothing more.

BR:

You DELETE paganism from the text.

**EB:** I don't delete it. I leave it as what it is-- a passing reference. It was never the subject TO BEGIN WITH.

BR:

In order to INSERT Christ the Creator's Seventh-day Sabbath that HE MADE a Holy day for mankind at creation -- though it is not mentioned AT ALL in the chapter!!

EB:

It is a "DAY" that is often "watched with evil intent". That is all the reference needed.

GE:

Never in the whole Bible! In not one of your own examples was the Sabbath watched with evil intent; which in any case has nothing to do with either 'observance' of the Sabbath or with another meaning of the word *paratehrehoh*, "*to divine / to observe superstitiously*".

BR:

And you do so at the expense of bending the text so far that you make it CONDEMN the observance of the VERY Sabbath you claim is DEFENDED in Romans 14. What horrible exegesis.

EB:

The two "observances" are NOT the same. I have shown you this; and now you are just repeating the same refuted arguments.

GE:

Wish you have also observed the difference between the two observances of the one word *paratehrehoh*!

BR:

God said,

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods[b/].

9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

**But EB said:** "I don't believe paganism is the subject there at all." What a contrast!!

God said – "8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. 9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, [b]how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things[b/], to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. 11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain."

**But EB said:** "That is not the SUBJECT!!! It is a PASSING REFERENCE!"

GE:

Not so 'passing', EB. Paul '(is) afraid' throughout the Letter. He writes almost all of his Letter with the view to THIS error – the one of 4:7-11. Even the subject of circumcision comes into play with direct bearing on THIS error – the circumcision of pagan idolatry that **sealed** the Galatians' return to "*superstitious observation-worship (of) days*" – the circumcision they '*by nature / inclination ... inclined / bowed to*' and by which they audaciously **obtested**, their idolatry.

With every right you may cite – as you did – those OT Scriptures where God expressed His displeasure with his People's offerings of disobedience as were they offerings of obedience!

BR:

Obviously the problem with these Galatians pre-conversion is not about Gentiles in Galatia being obedient to the Law of God prior to being a Christian! Obviously the problem IS about paganism -- see vs 8... However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no Gods.

That is NOT a reference to any God-ordained laws being followed! (Obviously)

EB:

The issue is NOT about "OBEDIENCE to (following) the Law" versus "paganism". The Judaizers watching days with evil intent and making Christ of no profit through their circumcision were NOT "obedient" to or following the Law of God at all ; and that has been the point all along. For they made themselves DEBTORS to do the WHOLE LAW; and none is ever obedient to the WHOLE LAW! So trying to twist this as a condemnation of "obedience" is what is most "transparent".

BR:

Clearly Paul addresses the gentile churches in Galatia and mentions that in their lost state - before becoming Christian they were worshipping false gods. The Hebrew nation-church by contrast was established by the one true God of creation who was to send his only son as messiah-Christ-savior was known by the Hebrews and Paul agrees to this in Romans 3:1-3 as well as his reference to Timothy's upbringing.

EB:

So were only pagans "lost"? Were all the Israelites saved then by their inheritance, and

by keeping the Law? (This is precisely what they believed!)

GE:

Spot on, EB!

BR:

Turning back "again"!!

Obviously NOT a reference to turn back AGAIN to "God ordained laws" and following/obeying God ordained scripture!

EB:

Once again; the Judaizers were not following/obeying God! If you say they were; then you attest that by the works of the Law, is man justified.

And once again; there is a whole **focal point**; which is bondage; not paganism

GE:

The "whole focal point" is neither "bondage", nor, "paganism", but 'pagan bondage'! And that 'pagan bondage' included and was perfected by and endorsed with the circumcision of the Galatians' God-"*desisting desire*"!

**Here's our big disagreement. I say, no, the whole focal point is paganism, not Judaism. Judaism is the serf of idolatry – not idolatry the serf of Judaism.**

And so it is in this Letter, focal point, 4:7-11, and, in whole and in context – that includes chapter 5. By circumcision the Galatians adjured their displeasure with the Gospel of Christ. Circumcision wasn't in this case 'simply another' Judaistic 'practice', but covenant sign – sign of allegiance – to the "*forces*" of *the world* and of *the flesh*, "*gods*" of *the world* and of *the flesh*, "*principles*" of *the world* and of *the flesh*, "*elements*" of *the world* and of *the flesh* – "*evil*", "*weak and beggarly*"! "*Evil, weak and beggarly*" are the adulations of magnificence of the "*principles of the world*"!

Their circumcision pledged the greater and real object of the Galatians' false religion. Judaism was not the lord but itself a menial '*in the flesh*'.

BR:

Clearly Paul refers to going back to practices of the pagan system - returning to be enslaved by the pagan superstitious practices - again. 1. There is no place where Paul (or any Bible author) calls obedience to God's Word – "Slavery". Yet some Christians today prefer to think of it that way.



2. There is no place where Paul (or any Bible author) refers to God's Word as "The weak and elemental things of this World" – yet some Christians do.
3. There is no place where Paul (or any Bible author) says that the Word of God is "worthless" and "pertaining to that "which by nature is not God".

Rather – when it comes to abuses of the Word of God – Paul speaks of God's Word as "Holy Just and Perfect" and as "condemning the sinner" – it is not the Law or the Word of God that he condemns – it is always the sinner that IT condemns.

EB:

BECAUSE; NO MAN KEEPS IT! So for some to think they are keeping it and justifying themselves; they remain in (or "return to" CONDEMNATION and SLAVERY, and make Christ of no profit. They are full of pride, which is a "weak and elemental things of this World" and making themselves "gods"; though they are not gods.

BR:

Yet some Christians today – want to so much to abolish Christ the Creator's Law – that they are willing to turn the text of Gal 4 as it addresses the pagan lifestyle of the gentiles in Galatia and their practices – and attribute to God – the authoring of paganism..

EB:

Now you're just repeating the same memorized responses that have nothing to do with anything I've said. You refuse to acknowledge that people could try to keep the Law and still be in bondage; so to say they are still in bondage is to attack the Law itself. If there is no separation from the Law and man's feeble attempts to keep all of it; then once again; but the worlds of the Law all flesh IS saved; and Paul contradicts himself.

GE:

We may find some of these phrases repeated in the rest of the discussion. The above is presented as it came in the end, and after ideas should have crystallised – which is obvious, wasn't the case.

**"All Those References to Jews"**  
and  
**"The Legalistic 'Worship' of the Judaizers"**

EB:

I give you the entire BODY of the context in the surrounding THREE chapters (a total of 75 verses!); and rather than "proving" it; these four verses wipe all of that away? I guess the argument is really between Paul and himself, then! Before you make some claims like this; you have to deal with all the rest of that passage and prove that all those references to Jews trying to get gentiles to live like Jews, and how this was seen as "bondage" somehow has nothing to do with v.8-11. And if you can; you have just justified ripping those four verses right out of the epistle! They should have been their own separate book, then!

No; the only way it fits together is what I have been saying: it is a COMPARISON, that the gentiles allowing themselves to be brought under the bondage of legalistic Judaism would SPIRITUALLY be the same as a return to paganism. Once again; the Jews were NO BETTER (Rom.3:9ff) than anyone else; just because they had Laws that originally came from the true God! (In fact, they were worse off, because "to whom more is given; more is expected"!)

GE:

EB, "All the rest of that passage" contains "all those references to Jews". "All that passage", is one big 'reference to Jews' then! "All of this can be thrown away for just this one verse (4:8) (really)", says EB!

So, "The surrounding THREE chapters", "a total of 75 verses!" – "all" – accumulate "references to Jews"! Comprehensive words working magic with dull minds.

Meantime the word '*Jew*' or '*Jews*' occurs but three times in Galatians, twice in 2:14-15 to distinguish Peter and his

company from 'all' the others who were Gentiles; and in 3:28 to emphasise "*there is neither Jew nor Greek*".

But in "the surrounding THREE chapters", "a total of 75 verses" – in "all of this" – "references", are "to Jews"?

The word '*Gentile*', occurs **7** times in **6** verses in **2** chapters, and the word '*heathen*' **3** times in **3** chapters (1:16, 2:9, 3:8).

Except for once with negative connotation (2Cor.11:26), Galatians is the **only** Letter of Paul in which the word '*heathen*' occurs and in which he 'uses it' with prophetic meaning, in direct fulfilment of Scriptures such as 1Chr.16:24, 2Sam.22:50, Ps.18:49, 46:10, 96:3, Ezek.39:21 et al.

The word '*Greek*' occurs in **2** texts in **2** chapters. (In one of these the word '*Jew*' shares with the word '*Greek*'.)

According to EB though, one will find in "just this one verse (really)" – 4:8 – the lonely reference to Gentiles, against "the surrounding THREE chapters", "a total of 75 verses", "all", "references to Jews"! Truth is, **3** times, in **3** verses from **2** chapters, one will find **2** references to 'Jews', against **12** times in **11** verses from **3** chapters, where one will find 'references to' '*Gentiles*'!

"The whole theme", is 'Jews'; "the whole context" is 'Jewish'? And we have not even included the incidences of the word 'world' – as over against 'Jews', once in 4:3; as over against faith, twice, 6:14!

"*Flesh*" – 18 times, once specifically referring to Jews, 1:16; specifically referring to Gentiles, 3:3, 4:23, 29, 6:12, 13 (5 times); referring to all men generally, 2:16, 5:24 (twice); referring to (pagan) man's natural tendencies – 3:3, 4:13, 14, 5:13, 16, 17, 19, 6:8 (8 times); referring to the flesh subdued (Christians) – 2:20, 5:24. Man as Gentile, pagan man, is supposed 8 times as over against one time the Jews are supposed! Nevertheless "The whole theme", is 'Jews'; "the whole context" is 'Jewish'?

EB:

Quoting **BR**: "ONE that IS worshipping that which "is by nature not god at all". One that IS "the weak and elemental thing of THIS world"."

True for paganism; but do you think God accepted the legalistic "worship" of the Judaizers as being genuinely done unto Him?...

GE:

EB, what grounds have you to say that in this place, Paul discusses "the legalistic "worship" of the Judaizers"? None!

In any case, with whom do you associate "the Judaizers" – with the '*heathen*' or with 'the Jews' of Old Testament Faith – with 'the Jews' who all for that matter were Christians!? Paul does not discuss the hypocrisy of the 'Judaizers', whether their 'legalistic "worship"' was 'genuinely done unto Him (God)' or not. For Paul, "the Judaizers" were "*in bondage under the first principles / gods of the WORLD*" no less than he himself as a Judaist before had been!

You cannot show your assumption the Jews were the guilty for misleading the Galatian Gentiles from anywhere in the 'whole context'. You, besides, are unable to show "the Judaizers" were Jews and not Gentiles! You simply ignore what Paul is saying in this place as well as in the whole, to have your own say instead.

You admit: "True for paganism"; then what gives you the idea Paul is not speaking about the Galatians' 'paganism'? Again, nothing! because you cannot quote a word of Paul's to support your idea that he does not speak about 'paganism'. You just grab a vacuum – 'Judaism' – from thin air – the non-existent surmised "whole context" of "the legalistic "worship" of the Judaizers". You argue in a circle of which you have drawn both the centre and the circumference yourself.

EB:

Quoting **BR**: "The Jews were NOT LOST "under the scriptures of God". The Jews were NOT LOST because they worshipped the ONE TRUE GOD! The Jews prior to Christianity HAD the ONE TRUE scriptures and worshipped the ONE TRUE God and comprised many of the saints of HE B 11. Even Paul himself argues for this in 2Timothy 1 speaking of "his forefathers" .

EB:

...apparently so! But I read all over the OT and NT where God rejects their worship. "IN VAIN do they worship Me" Christ quotes from the OT and applies to His day. They are also said not to know Him. They knew "about" Him; at most. All of this, as Paul explains here and elsewhere; because true knowledge and worship of God is by faith; not the works of the Law.

So while they technically "worshipped God"; they still for all purposes might as well have been worshipping other gods; and were thus in the same state as the pagans who didn't even know ABOUT God; in addition to not knowing Him.

GE:

I am sure neither I or BR can or would want to argue with you if a man is not in Christ, he is in bondage – and that any bondage of being outside Christ ends in being lost, whether by or under the Law lost, or by and being under pagan bondage lost – you're lost!

What we are trying to say here – BR and I – is that that is not the issue here in Galatians 4:8-11.

You cannot deny some Israelites – ALL the spiritual "Chosen" and "*Israel of God*" (6:16) – did in fact have a saving and "true knowledge of God" and 'worshipped' Him "by faith". (See my reference to the Letter to the Hebrew Christians.) They believed in the Christ to come that had come! You make the Jews all like you here describe them, "apparently" – that is, falsely – worshipping God; which is not true.

Then, although Paul in Galatians 4:3 declares of himself (as representing all of Israel "*to the flesh*"), "while they technically "worshipped God"; they still for all purposes might as well have been worshipping other gods; and were thus in the same state as the pagans who didn't even know ABOUT God" – is not the WHOLE picture, nor the end of the story as far as 'they', were concerned! Like Paul, many other Jews, eventually came to faith upon the sure "*Promises of God*" and on strength of the "*Blessing to Abraham*" – "*the Seed, which is Christ*"! Why don't you mention these things as well, EB, seeing you surely know about them? Don't you want to make mention of them, for reasons not too difficult to guess?

EB:

Quoting BR: "Those Jews lost pre-cross are like Christians today lost post-cross. It is NOT the BIBLE that is the problem - it is the lost person." AND THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I HAVE BEEN SAYING! But you keep ignoring this; to cast my argument as "the Law is the problem"; so you can dismiss me on that false ground. But you're not dealing with WHY some were lost while others were seen as worshipping the true God.

GE:

EB playing the martyr! Nevertheless, we gladly allow you the pleasure.

You should ask yourself the reason "... WHY some were lost while others were seen as worshipping the true God?"

I would also like to know it, for, to be honest, I find it difficult to gather the reason for it from what you are saying! Paul's reason was simple: "*The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen* (that is you, Galatians!) *THROUGH FAITH, preached before unto Abraham the Gospel, declaring: "In thee shall ALL nations be blessed"*. (That "*ALL*" includes you, Galatians, in fact refers to you peoples directly!) Because salvation comes neither through Isaac nor through Ishmael. The reason "WHY some were lost while others were seen as worshipping the true God", was the "*Gospel (the Seed) preached to Abraham*" so that it must be 'by faith' and not by descent – not of *Sarah* or of *Hagar*, but "*of Woman*" – '*Eve*', "*mother of ALL men*"! So is everyone saved, saved, lived he under God's Law or not; be he descendent of Isaac or of Ishmael. *One Seed* is eligible to both the *Promises* and the *Blessing*: not Isaac or Ishmael, but "*Christ*"! Should one be saved, he is justified and saved "*through faith*" were he Isaac or Ishmael or even Abraham himself! "*They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*" Therefore in Christ only shall ANY, be "seen as worshipping the true God" ... or be "lost".

"WHY"? For what reason besides? If there is no reason anyone is saved other than grace, then it is irrelevant whether he competed handicapped with the weight of the Law, being such a good horse, or had run his maiden race without handicap whatsoever. It becomes irrelevant who broke the ribbon first, for the champion horse like the stall mate raced the wrong direction altogether. Also Paul and kin got themselves into the straights the heathen found themselves in – "*in bondage under the first principles of the WORLD*".

Jew AND Gentile – all born of Eve – were as good as Gentiles, as good as pagans and idolaters. Therefore, precisely therefore, yes, for the "whole theme" of Paul's, any '*return*' demands it be a '*return*' back into '*heathendom*' and "*the weak and beggarly principles*" of 'paganism' – 4:3 already proved it, while 4:8-10 finally proves it!

Paul then where he in 4:8-10 touches upon the Gentiles' relapse – it having demanded circumcision irrespective and despite – does not have in mind a 'return' to a 'bondage under the Law, but a 'return' to a 'bondage under the first principles of the *WORLD* . . . "without the Law" (Romans)!

Because Paul reckons, 'While we Jews technically worshipped God, but still for all purposes might as well have been worshipping other gods and thus might as well have been in the same state as the pagans who didn't even know about God', he deduces, 'So you, o Galatians, returning to your former *weak and beggarly elements* still for all purposes might as well have been worshipping other gods and thus might as well have been in the same state as *when you didn't even know about God!*'

### The Accountable Jews

EB:

GE; you have basically turned the thrust of the text on its ear by trying to set the "context" to "gentile". But I should mention that there are two perspectives: those being harassed; and those doing the harassing. You refer to the Galatians worshipping "no-gods-" and Titus not being "compelled" to be circumcised. "context"? Of those who once worshipped false gods; you're right; it is "gentiles". Of those being "compelled"; again; you're right, it is "gentiles".

But who is DOING the compelling? Gentiles? Did pagans ever try to get their fellows who had become Christian to be circumcised? No; clearly the ones DOING the compelling would be JEWS! Sorry; but nice try. The pagans did not try to stop the Jews from keeping the Sabbath; so why would they try to stop the Christians from keeping it. Once again; you just cannot believe that Judaizers would ever try to compel the Christians to keep Jewish festivals. Gal.6:13 even gives us a motive for them: "For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law [!]; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

Still think Judaizers would never do that; or that these are pagans? . . . But Hebrews were under bondage too, before Christ. For some to go to the gentiles and try to get them to "live like the Jews" would be seen as bringing them BACK under "bondage"; though a different type.

GE:

Alright, no one denies "Hebrews were under bondage too" – for as long as they stayed unbelievers. But so were the Gentiles – for as long as they stayed unbelievers. And alright, the pagans' bondage, after that they had become Christians and then fell out of pace with Christianity and back again into idolatry, also "would be seen as bringing them BACK under "bondage"; though a different type". Of course they weren't the same as before any more – no man can prevent being changed through the Gospel of Christ; it will be for better, or, for worse! Then they were at last utterly corrupted through Judaism! So, surely, the Gentiles' "new bondage" must have been of "a different type" than the former directly due to their contact with Christianity. But the Galatians did not divorce Christianity for Judaism, but for their former gods and principles, standards or rulers. The ferocious monster that emerged from the amalgamation is described in vivid lines in 5:19-21, where Paul declares, ". . . of which I TOLD you before, as I had also warned you in the past . . .", alluding to the "labour (he) bestowed on (them)", 4:11 – it seemed – "in vain"!

Galatians then, and it specifically in 4:7-11, does it say, "Hebrews were under bondage too, before Christ"? It does not! Or it should have been the main theme, and clearly and consistently should have been explicated, which simply, is not the case. The overall problem for Paul was so enigmatic he even found himself, at a loss to pinpoint the real 'bewitchers' or 'entanglers' – which fact, simply, again implies they actually were, 'Gentiles'.

Does Paul argue it was without question, "some (Hebrews who went) to the gentiles and (tried) to get them to "live like the Jews""? Paul challenged Peter for setting a bad example through not, living like a Jew should! But otherwise he nowhere refers to "some (Hebrews who went) to the gentiles and (tried) to get them to "live like the Jews"" – not in this Letter, in any case. In fact, nowhere in any of his Letters! Or Paul should explicitly have said so here, and clearly and consistently should have shown how they did – but he does not.

To maintain he does, discloses an oversimplified and prejudiced approach to the real issues at stake in Galatians.

It is EB, simply, who **makes it up** "some Hebrews went to the gentiles and tried to get them to "live like the Jews"! For Paul rebukes Peter, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (2:14)

From this first of all, is clear, the Church in Galatia consisted of Gentiles – Paul says so in so many words! And therefore EB **falsely** supposes some 'lost' Hebrews – though Church "*brethren*" – went "to the gentiles (the Galatian Churches) and (tried) to get them to "live like the Jews"". As far as this incident, or as far as the rest of the Letter reveals or even implies, there were no Jewish members in the Churches of Galatia. The population of "*the great tract of central Asia Minor*" (F Roy Coad) was homogeneously 'Gentile'. Paul expounds on the fact he, was the appointed Apostle to the Gentiles. If the Galatian Churches were established by Paul (as is generally accepted), they were of Gentile membership. The instigators by all probability, therefore, were Gentiles, and Paul refers to them, as "*false brethren*" – kin of the "*heathen*", coming from the local Churches naturally.

The only Jews who before Paul could have influenced the Galatian Churches, were those Pentecostal missionaries who first took the pure Gospel to the Gentiles. Does EB want to tell us these 'Hebrew' missionaries now turned into spoilers of the Spirit's work? These Pentecostal missionaries, then Paul, then Peter and some other Jewish Church Leaders from Jerusalem visiting, were the only Jews mentioned to ever have come into contact with the Galatian converts. None of them '*bewitched*' the Galatians. Then who did? It obviously had to have been "*false brethren*" from the 'local' Churches – precisely those persons whom Paul implicated!

The **only** "Hebrews" (of influence) were the visitors from the Jerusalem Church – those whom Paul specifically mentions and disputed with. They were not, "*false brethren*", but despite their shortcomings, were the leaders of the '*General Assemblies of the Firstborn*'. Although Peter – "*a Jew*" – '*compelled*', it was Paul – a Jew – who "*withstood him to the face*". (11) At one occasion Peter, while he '*behaved like a Gentile*' – and not like a Jew, tried to '*compel*' the Gentile Christian members of the Church "to "live like the Jews"". What he actually did was to force

the Gentiles to **segregate**, "*dissimulate*" = '*differentiate*' or '*discriminate*' – "*he withdrew and separated himself*". Just "like the Jews"; and so he **divided the Congregation!**

The "*compelling*" of the "Hebrew" Apostles had **nothing to do with circumcision**, but in actual fact was, as Paul found Peter's behaviour, 'to live' "*NOT as do the Jews*", that is, "*NOT*", as true, Christian 'Jews' should live, but in effect 'to live' as **heathen!**

You ask, "Who is DOING the compelling?", which is a false question! Paul said, nobody did any 'compelling'! And he specifically said the Jews did no compelling! Paul doesn't ask, "Who is DOING the compelling?". He doesn't ask, "Who is compelling you to be circumcised?" It would be ridiculous of Paul to ask, because he is right here saying, Timothy wasn't circumcised, and that no one was forced to be circumcised. So it is ridiculous you still insist and persist asking, Who compelled circumcision?!

EB:

Those particular Jews may have been commended for not compelling circumcision; but there were OTHERS who clearly did. The fact that Paul is telling people not to JUDGE or let anyone JUDGE them shows that there were people going around compelling (through words of judgment).

GE:

"... but there were OTHERS ..." You FIRST PRESUME there were others, and that they were Jews. But you should first have SHOWN, One, There WERE others, and then, Two, that they were JEWS – which you don't do! Paul explicitly states that **no one** of the 'Jewish' Church, "*compelled*" anybody of the 'Gentile' Church in Galatia "*to be circumcised*" (2:3), so that any '*compelling*' must have come from other, and therefore, from 'Gentile', "*false brethren*" (2:4).

What gives you the idea, "clearly the ones DOING the compelling would be JEWS"? Even you use the word, "would", not 'were'!

None the less, you FIRST, assume and nothing better than assume, "Jews ..." if not these "particular" ones, then "others" eventually and from before IT HAD TO BE, in direct contradiction of what Paul expressly states, that NO ONE "compelled".

EB:

You are arguing that the problem can't be Judaizers; because of a few instances of Jews (including other apostles) accepting the apostles, or not compelling them to be circumcised. No; you are saying I PRESUME that there were "others" besides these! --besides these Jews who accepted the Church. ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT EVERY SINGLE JEW ALIVE ACCEPTED THE GOSPEL AND THERE WERE NO OTHERS WHO DIDN'T? I have to PROVE that there were Jews still opposing the Gospel? Wow! What a spin on history!

Once again; WHAT GENTILES would try to get Christians-- or ANYBODY to be circumcised in order to be saved?

It is up to YOU to prove that there was some group, sect, etc of Gentiles who practiced and pushed circumcision on others! --from the text or anywhere else!

GE:

One finds the proof right here in Galatians! It's exactly what we're debating.

EB:

Once again; some Jews accepted them; but you can't conclude from that that there was absolutely no opposition from the Jews. So it is not I who "informs" Paul; it is the context which tells us who the harassers are. And with all of that; both of you have forgotten chapter 5; which talks about circumcision. Once again; Pagans never compelled anyone to be circumcised. Now, let's see you try to get the Judaizers out of that one!

GE:

'Some Jews' may have 'accepted them' - but is not said here, or supposed here, 'some accepted them'.

"...but you can't conclude from that that there was absolutely no opposition from the Jews." Why should I conclude anything? It is not required here; to conclude, is irrelevant, here.

"... It is the context which tells us who the harassers are." Sure! Like through rhetorical

questions put to the involved as themselves the implicated, like above.

"... You have forgotten chapter 5; which talks about circumcision." No we haven't; here we are supposed to discuss 4:7-11! But thanks for informing us yourself WHERE Paul "talks about circumcision"!

EB:

"Most probably". "Who knows who". This shows that this is just your own theory of supposition; and you're not even sure yourself. But in trying to say it is pagans; YOU are the one "informing" Paul; just as BR's scholars.

As I said; the problem in Romans was not as bad as in Galatians. In Romans they had not compromised the faith; but in Galatians, people had gone over the edge into total error; being influenced by those telling them they had to keep the Law.

GE:

How many times more? We talk about 4:7-11 now, and what you're saying here has to do with chapter 5. You do it EVERY TIME so it by now must have become a lie. You lie -EB, you hear?- you lie, saying with reference to

4:7-11, "people had gone over the edge into total error; being influenced by those telling them they had to keep the Law." "People had gone over the edge into total error"; TRUE! "Being influenced by those telling them" what to do; Yes, AND, No! "They had to keep the Law" - NO! Only to circumcise themselves with a circumcision neither that of the Old Testament, nor that of the New Testament!

By their OWN will and choice, and "*driven / compelled*" / *coerced* by their OWN people / "*brethren*", the Galatians, quote: "*lusted / desired*", and "*worshipped / served / slaved*"! "*YOU lust / desire*"; "*YOU lust / desire to again serve / be in bondage to the weak and beggarly principles*"; "*YOU lust / desire to serve and worship*"; "*YOU divine, days, months, seasons, years!*" Repeating what we have long since left behind - If it had been Jews who "bewitched" the Galatian Christians, then we haven't noticed it in the Passage so far; if it had been the gentiles who "*bewitched*" the Galatian Christians, the passage so far (4:8-11) can still make some sense. Fact is, nowhere in Galatians 4 does Paul hint at anything YOU, EB, say he "is telling people".

Nowhere and no how does Paul write that the "people going

around compelling", were – as YOU, EB, falsely, allege – "OTHER ... Jews"!

Then you again simply proceed assuming, these 'other Jews' "clearly ... (were) going around compelling (through words of judgment) people" to be circumcised. But show that from Galatians in context BEFORE 4:10? Impossible! So you AGAIN flee to other Scriptures and MIS-apply them to Galatians.

Even in Romans 14, Paul does NOT say, nor supposes, that it was "particularly" Jews, who judged. And he does not say, nor does he suppose, 'OUTSIDE' Jews judged 'inside'-the-Church-Jews; but he says, Christian brother accused and judged Christian brother.

Which was far from the Galatian circumstance.

For the same facts it is not true "some (Hebrews went) to the gentiles and (tried) to get them to "live like the Jews"", it also is not true "some Hebrews ... (brought) them BACK under "bondage". For the same facts, it must have been 'some Gentiles' who tried to bring them BACK under "bondage"!

Why are EB's assertions too bold to be true? Because Paul's whole argument depends on the idea "*we who are Jews by nature, (are) not sinners of the Gentiles*" like these new babies in the faith of the Galatian Churches. 'We', Jews, are found sinners more than 'ye' "heathen", are, seeing 'we' had the Law, and 'ye' 'Gentiles', never had the Law; seeing 'we' Jews, were considered "sons", while 'ye' 'Gentiles', were considered *strangers* and *servants* without *inheritance*.

Paul tells his own history – how he had become a *servant* of Jesus Christ. It is the history of the '*desired*', the *destroyer* (1:23), changed into the "*zealot for Christ*" (1:14); the history not of one of the original "*twelve*", but of the "*late born*", of Saul become Paul the '*labourer of no importance*'. An Apostle not through '*learning*' / '*academics*'; "*not of man*", "*not conferred with flesh and blood*" – but "*it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace*" (1:15); "*By revelation of Jesus Christ*" (1:12).

So, you also, heathen Gentiles, become believers, become Christians, "*sons, and if a son then heir of God through Christ*". NOT through works of the Law like you see the Jews do however

meritorious; NOT through "*lineage*" or "*after the flesh*" or "*in the flesh*" like you see in the Jews' case however meritorious!

Paul constantly presupposes a Gentile audience or readership! When he refers to the works of the Law or the Law as such or to "*the flesh*", it is to advise the Gentiles not to become like the Jews, or to become Jews, because "*by the works of the Law no one shall be justified*" or become "*the* (true or real) *Israel of God*"! And when he refers to "*flesh and blood*" or "*man*", Paul thinks of the Galatians and their fears that because they aren't Jews "*after the flesh*", they cannot be *heirs* of the *inheritance* or of the *promises of God* and *blessing of Abraham*. He informs them, Only through faith!

"EVEN WE", JEWS, Paul tells the Gentiles, "*have believed in Jesus Christ*". (16) "*Even we, have believed in Jesus Christ, that (even) we, might be justified by the faith of Christ, and (even we), might be justified – not, by the works of the Law*" as it may have seemed 'before Christ'!

Because of the Law, Paul tells the Gentiles, we Jews rather than you, are the ones every time found guilty because of that very Law, while you, the Gentiles, because you did not have the Law, instead of us, are found the ones so much easier pardoned and justified – humanly speaking. Whilst you are of '*the bondwoman*', you count among the greater number called God's People through grace!

"*For by the works of the Law shall **no** flesh be justified*" (which "**no**" implies "*even us*", **like**, "*you*", Gentiles! – "*For by the works of the Law shall **no** flesh be justified*" rather shall all *flesh* be judged and condemned, "*even us*", Jews, **like**, "*you*", Gentiles! We Jews – yes, "*even we*" – are "*flesh*"! And since we Jews take such pride in our "*works of the Law*", and in our "*lineage*", "*according to the Law*", "*even we*", rather than you, Gentiles, are penalised for all our own endeavours at getting "*justified by the works of the Law*" – we all the time were **inexcusable while "you", were "ignorant"** – "*did not know God*".

EB:

We see here time and time again this assumption that the Jews were completely innocent; they could not be "this present world"; they could not be in bondage to elements of the world; they would never push legalism on the Church; they could not possibly

be wrong since they had the Law. ONLY the pagans could be guilty of these things. So the Jews must have been justified by the works of the Law. If so; then AS PAUL WARNS HERE; Christ is "OF NO PROFIT"!

**Jews in Bondage Under the Principles of the World**

BR:

By contrast this is NOT of all the Jews in Galatia. They are not considered "lost" prior to being Christians.

GE:

Paul considering himself foremost in that very position while during his utmost fervour for the Law argues prior to being Christians all the Jews are considered "lost". He really thinks 'he would be in no better condition than if he had fallen back into paganism', declaring in so many words in 4:3 of himself and of all the Jews, "*Even so we (Jews) when we were children (prior to being Christians) were in bondage under the principles of the world!*"

It required Jesus Christ so that the Jews might be saved. Although they had kept the Law the Jews were not saved before Christ had come! No one has ever been saved through the works of the Law; everyone ever saved had been saved by grace through faith only.

Now because Paul said in 4:3 that to be "*in bondage under the principles of the world*" had been his own situation whilst "*under the Law*", EB insists one always is "under the Law" if "*in bondage under the principles of the world*". To be "*in bondage under the principles of the world*" – according to EB – cannot also mean the condition of the Gentile converts who fell back into their former "paganism" "*when*" "*without the Law*" (as Paul says in Romans). It cannot also be their reverting to their "*erstwhile*" idolatrous religion as supposed and explored by Paul in 4:7-11 . . . says EB.

Therefore, yes, as BR puts it, "The idea that Jews are lost because they keep Sabbath is not in Gal 4...". Just as little is the idea there or anywhere in Scripture that Jews because they keep Sabbath, are saved! No one in his sound mind would allege! For this simple reason, "... The idea that the specific FOCUS on the Galatian problem in vs 8-11 is anything OTHER than the former paganism practiced by the Gentiles - can not be proven in scripture...". We can only agree with BR, and find it utterly strange EB will not.

**"All Mankind in General", Or, Just Jews, Versus "the Pagans"?**

BR:

7 therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

This ends the section applicable to **all mankind "in general"** apart from anything specific at Galatia.

But then Paul starts to focus "specifically" on the condition of the **pagans**-turned-Christian IN the church of Galatia. Comparing their condition before salvation with their condition afterwards and the errors they were starting to lapse BACK into. (Emphasis GE)

EB:

Sorry; but your dichotomy of "all man in general" versus "the pagans" is just not there! Paul is talking first about the Jews. THEN, he mentions the gentiles' past in comparison. BOTH were in "bondage", and taken TOGETHER they would comprise "all men in general (Rom.3:9, 23, Gal.3:22).

But the ultimate disproof of this universal boundary of scope in verse 7 is that Paul then CONTINUES talking about **Jews**: Picking up in Galatians: 4:22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman... (Emphasis CGE)

GE:

"Jews"? Was Abraham a "Jew"? was "the one by a bondmaid", a "Jew"? Because no one of these personalities were "Jews", the "context" ultimately proves "the universal boundary of scope in verse 7" is NOT 'Jewish', but 'Gentile'!

These texts of course come AFTER 4:10, and therefore MUST be considered in their ACQUIRED context, whether new or maintained, which EB has NOT shown either way. No, EB first takes for granted it is 'Jewish', and for granted, it is maintained 'Jewish' since 4:10, and then says, Look, what is going before, must be what is going on after: "Paul then CONTINUES talking about Jews"! EB in fact far too easily jumps across 15 verses (fifteen!), claiming, "But the ultimate disproof of this universal boundary of scope in verse 7 is that Paul then CONTINUES talking about Jews: Picking up in Galatians: 4:22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman" etc.



Then he also turns a blind eye to the fact Paul emphasises "*Abraham had two sons*" – not just one, the Jew or the one who would become the Jew through his posterity only – "*by promise*" far and unreal at that point in time!

Because Galatians actually is "continuing" from 4:8, and not only from 4:22, it must be of importance to first find out what actually happened between 4:7 and 4:22.

Does Paul "continue talking about Jews" there? Not in the least! On the contrary, he talks about the firstborn "*son*" of Abraham there, about Agar's son, the "*bondwoman's*" son! You Galatians, are the ones "*born after the flesh*"! Paul even pictures himself in his "*weakness of the flesh*" as giving birth to these Gentiles! How is Paul "continuing talking about Jews"? He talks about 'the Gentiles', all the way! Then he ends his argument asking these Gentile converts: "*Tell me, you (o Gentile brethren) who want to be under the Law (like the Jews), don't you hear the Law?*" What privilege, what improvement, what gain, would you think, would it bring you to become Jews? Exactly the Law tells you you're wasting every advantage you might have had while Gentiles. Have I not told you (4:3) from personal experience (1:14) that we Jews, *under the Law* are "*in bondage under the first principles of the world*" just like you Gentiles are? "*Don't you hear the Law?*" "*O foolish Galatians!*"

Context? Gentile!

This is what we find, "Picking up in Galatians" from 4:7 to 4:22. And then we have not even touched upon verses 7 to 11 which are Paul addressing Gentiles in their worst 'paganism'.

EB:

We see in the entire context that the Galatians are being bewitched by judaizers. Paul then mentions his own background in this system; which he describes as "bondage under the elements". Then he mentions the Galatians background in paganism; but in being bewitched by Judaizers; they were being brought back into bondage: the bondage Paul was under; though through a different vehicle than the paganism that they themselves were once under.

GE:

First part-statement: "We see in the entire context that the Galatians are being bewitched by judaizers."

Main objection to this, concerns, "by judaizers". I really think it has been indicated amply it was not 'bewitching' exclusively, mainly, or necessarily, "by judaizers". On the contrary, our discussion of the 'context' of chapters 1 to 3, showed rather a 'Gentile' influence or 'bewitchment' on the Church.

Second part-statement of EB's, "Paul then mentions his own background in this system; which he describes as "bondage under the elements". In this, it has become inevitable, EB must be admitted, is correct!

Third part-statement: "Then he mentions the Galatians' background in paganism; but in being bewitched by Judaizers".

Where, EB, do you read that in the passage that follows on verse 11? IT IS NOT THERE! And you have done it hundreds of times, inserting your fancies into the text, ignoring what really stands there written, to jump directly into Paul's INTRODUCING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LETTER, the aspect of circumcision to the Galatian error. Not that he brings in a new subject, but that he now only begins to pay special attention to it. And the reason for only at this stage of his Letter doing so, lies before hand, namely, that the Galatians culminated their apostasy with their adjuration of their error through it – not that it followed in time and unawares crept in, in the end. Circumcision accompanied the Galatians' falling away from its initial stages, one may safely assume. Question for us though is not 'when', but 'how' – what was the place and importance of circumcision in the whole process of the Galatians' total losing of the Gospel and full-circle return to their past sins and gods? Had Judaism then, found itself already an ingredient of the Gentiles' syncretistic system of bondage under pagan idolatry? Obviously it did!

It is true "(Paul) then mentions the Galatians' background in paganism" in 4:7-8. But where does "then" begin, in the context; and where does it end in context?

It does not begin and end, with verse 8 – as EB alleges!

Where did the Galatians' background in paganism begin? Not in 4:3, because Paul there, speaks of the Jews, "*we*", the Hebrews, and says, "*We (also)*" – just like 'you' 'Gentiles' while in paganism – "*were in bondage under the first principles of the world*".

We have already seen how Paul meant the Jews were in bondage under the elements of the world, while in truth they were in bondage under the Law – which must never be separated from **the fact of the place where**, in his Letter, Paul meant he and the Jews were in bondage under the Law as were

they in bondage under the first principles of the world. Paul does NOT mean that in 4:9 – he HAD meant that in 4:3!

And Paul does not pertinently bring the 'new' subject of "the Galatians' background in paganism" to the fore again in chapter 5, but there, simply presupposes without even mentioning, the fact of "the Galatians' background in paganism" and CONCLUDES, that were one to circumcise oneself under the specific circumstances prevalent in Galatians and for the ends and purposes there entertained – which were to adjure and obtest their idolatry in the face of God in the name of Christ – he would only do what one who is "*cut off from Christ*", would, and could, have done. "The Galatians' background in paganism" is "*the yoke of bondage*" that Paul meant they who circumcised themselves, "*entangled (themselves) with again*" – NOT, any 'new TYPE of BONDAGE' of EB's invention.

The Galatians' 'new TYPE of BONDAGE' was their 'syncretism' or "*entanglement*", their 'MIX-UP' that consisted of, 1, "the Galatians' background in paganism", 2, THEIR Judaism, and, 3, THEIR, FALSE Christianity. The Galatians' 'new TYPE of BONDAGE' belonged to the Gentile converts from the region and religion of the land and "*world*" of the time – not to the Jews or "some" unknown "Hebrews" from nowhere.

EB's "then", also cannot start in 4:4, verse 4 clearly being a totally 'Jewish' verse that completely lacks a "background in paganism".

So also is verse 5, clearly and exclusively, 'Jewish', Paul still speaks of "*us*" / "*we*", as of "*those under the Law*".

It is with verse 6 that Paul starts changing subject, and switches over from the First Person to the Second Person, and refers to the 'Gentiles' as "*children*" for the first time! We have already seen how it is Paul could and had to speak of the Gentiles as "*children*" too – it was because the Promises of God and the Blessing of Abraham belonged to the One Seed that was Jesus Christ, and to no, 'son', of course – even though he was a 'son' by physical descent. Any and all 'sons' / 'children' of Abraham's according to the works of the Law, only become 'sons' or 'children' of our heavenly Father through the faith of the One, the "*Seed*", "*that is, Christ*"! (3:16) Thus is Paul able to call the Gentiles, "*children*", too. Saying "*children*", now, doesn't mean Paul means the Jews; it would have been a contradiction

of his whole argument throughout 'the entire context' to limit son-ship of God to the Jews only!

Therefore we are forced to deny EB where he endeavours to ultimately disprove the universal boundary of scope in verse 7, as if "Paul then CONTINUES talking about Jews". Paul in verse 7, as already from verse 6 in fact, had switched over from talking about Jews (in 4:1 to 4:5), to talking about the Gentiles (in 6 and on).

This is the very ground of my assumption: That Paul in the first verses (1 to 5) wants to show that EVEN the Jews – the Jews more than the Gentiles – are NOT children as a matter of course, but become children through "*adoption*" – "*because (they become 'children' just like) you the Gentiles, are children*", by grace through faith!

Thus our differences become apparent, squarely on the issue, Paul then mentions the Galatians' background in paganism being bewitched, NOT, by Judaizers, but by the very "*first-principles-of-the-world-days-months-seasons-years-no-gods*" – by the very "*observations*" and "*bewitchment*" of the pagan and idolatrous heathenism of the Gentiles ITSELF.

It answers our first question: "*WHO*" does the "*bewitching*"? (3:1)

They (the Galatians) were "*AGAIN*" being brought back into bondage, into a '*bondage*' that was not, "the bondage Paul was under" – whose was a bondage under the LAW that was AS GOOD AS a "*bondage under the first principles of the WORLD*", 4:3. For no, theirs –the Gentiles' ('yours', 4:6)– was a "*bondage under the first principles of the world*" DIRECTLY, which they / "*you*" were being brought under through a different vehicle than Paul's altogether, namely, not through the Law while being under the Law like Paul used to be under, but through "the paganism that they themselves were once under". Therefore "*you*", the Gentiles now, "*because God has sent out the Spirit of His Son in your hearts*", "*you*" too, now "*no longer are servant, but child, and accordingly are heir of God through Christ*". (6-7)

"*BUT ERSTWHILE, WHEN AS YET YE KNEW NOT GOD, YOU IN FACT WORSHIPPED THINGS THAT IN ESSENCE WERE NOT GODS. BUT NOW, after that you have known God – or rather, are known by God – HOW NOW turn you*

*again to the weak and beggarly elements – those things you ONCE AGAIN, wish to be in bondage to?"*

HOW? And how "so soon" – 1:6? Because the Gentiles CAME to a knowledge of God WITHOUT vehicle or mediator whatsoever, but immediately, through the Spirit (3:3). JUDAISM not at all brought them to a knowledge of God; Judaism was NO factor in their becoming "children" and "heir" – the Spirit of God's Son was the only factor in their conversion – 4:6!

But "now" – "so soon" – they "returned" to their "former" "no-gods", these Gentiles – "again", WITHOUT vehicle or mediator whatsoever, and, immediately. JUDAISM lured them not away from the knowledge of God; Judaism was NO factor blameable for their apostasy IN THIS MATTER!

No! If Judaism were the cause, then Paul would not have asked; would not have wondered; would have indicated that Judaism was in fact the cause.

No, blameable for their apostasy were those very "bewitching", those very "weak and beggarly FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD" – those very "former", "no-gods" of theirs. These precisely were to Paul the answer, explained to him how it was possible the Galatians so soon fell back – he wondered not in the least, but knew, and indicated, that the cause, and those "Who bewitched", IN THIS MATTER, were not 'the Jews', but man's most natural "propensity / lust / desire" – in fact the 'gods' of his affections or 'nature', yea rather his gods, affection and 'nature', viz., his 'lusts' and 'desires'.

You think Judaism is to be blamed for Christianity's 'modern' 'enticement' with pagan idols? They seemed so beautiful to the Galatians, these false gods, so immaculately innocent and virtuous – just like Christianity's temples, processions and shrines nowadays. Then why blame Judaism when it was not blameable for the apostasy of Christianity's earliest age?

Changes NOTHING of the truth, and not denied, Paul's erstwhile bewitchment with the Law was as good as being under the bewitchment and bondage of the first principles of the world. 'The Law' to Paul was just such an IDOL as the 'no-gods' were to the Gentiles – and as its pretence to hollow professing Christianity!

Witnessed Paul himself: "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jewish religion, how that I ... profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals ... being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." Quite frankly, Paul's (false) god was his religion and tradition – 'the Law'! His

bondage, being a slave of his god 'the Law', was no better or different a bondage than of any Gentile idolater! That's why Paul said he was in his (Jewish) religion – just like the Gentiles were in their pagan religion – "in a bondage", as "under the first principles of the world"!

Paul in Galatians teaches religion is idolatry, and salvation is grace, and that there is a vying for the heart and allegiance between religion and salvation, between the world and Christ.

EB:

"... the ultimate disproof of this universal boundary of scope in verse 7 ... that Paul then CONTINUES talking about Jews".

BR makes the mistake to describe the "boundary of scope in verse 7" as, "This ends the section applicable to all mankind "in general"". EB correctly discerns in this a "dichotomy of "all man in general" versus "the pagans"". We have

seen though, EB is also wrong, in that he insists "Paul then CONTINUES talking about Jews", and not about 'the pagans'.

So where is BR going astray? In that he insists "the section" is "applicable to all mankind "in general"" instead of to Paul and the Jews 'specifically'!

At last we get that "This", –4:7–, "ends the section applicable to" Paul and the Jews in particular, "apart from anything specific at Galatia. But then Paul starts to focus "specifically" on the condition of the pagans-turned-Christian IN the church of Galatia, comparing their, condition before salvation with their, condition afterwards and the errors they were starting to lapse BACK into."

I believe this offers a truer perspective on the issue. "Paul uses THAT", his own and the experience of his fellow Jews, even Peter's experience "under the Law" – they all being Jews (4:3) – as a comparison with the bondage they (the Galatian Gentile Church members) were being brought under", "anew". "Paul uses THAT" –the specific 'Jewish' aspect of his consideration–, as a comparison with the bondage of, and "under", the Galatians', 'Gentile', 'paganism', of "formerly"!

So we have the 'dichotomy' which in truth is Paul's 'comparison', between Jews and Pagans. And in consequence we find the "days, months, seasons, years" of 4:10 were "elements" or "by-nature-not-gods" "of the world" – indeed the "weak and beggarly basics / roots / origins / laws" which the "former" 'pagans', "returned" "back to", "again". We find the "days,

*months, seasons, years* of 4:10 had nothing in common or to do with Old Testament Holy Days or Feasts or Sabbaths, but in fact were the "no-gods" of the pagans, "no-gods" that were a law to pagan superstition, exposed and precisely identified by Paul!

This clear inference endorses, once more, that although Paul could not identify the "bewitchers" of the Galatians individually, he perfectly knew their character in that he unmistakably recognised their works – the fruits by which the tree shall be known. They were idolaters who (through Judaism), endeavoured to engulf Christianity into their wicked 'system' of "divining days", chief of which was the "The Lord Sun's Day" so superstitiously venerated. Paul declares with severest condemnation the practice as those who practiced it. He denounces a Church "worshipping" (*douleuoh*) the "world's" 'gods'-of-time, "days, months, seasons, years" – brazenly christened "after the flesh" through circumcision – "cut off from Christ", "fallen from grace"!

Paul today still stands by his word of two thousand years ago, and not only condemns Sunday-sacredness, but with it the persons, for whom Sunday is so important they will manhandle God's Word to sanctify their error and sin. Indeed, the Church in its audacity has gone beyond what the Galatians had done.

*"Two ends especially sin will press hard upon us ...*

*first, Satisfaction of our convictions and conscience; secondly, The praise of men; for self-righteousness and ostentation are the main ends of men that are fallen off from God in all moral duties whatsoever. In their sins they endeavour for to satisfy their lusts; in their duties, they endeavour to satisfy their conviction and pride."* (John Owen, *The Mind Diverted, Reminders of Indwelling Sin in Believers*, (6/3/10 p.236)

*"And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made SUPPLICATION unto the Lord: I FORCED myself therefore and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done FOOLISHLY: thou hast NOT kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which He commanded thee ... now thy KINGDOM shall not continue. . . . Saul adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth until evening, that I, may be avenged . . .!"* 1Sm.13:11-

14, 14:24

*"They zealously affect you . . . yea, they would exclude you, that you might affect them!"* (Gl.4:17) Zeal = affectation (one word, *dzehlousin*) = distinguish, recruit, select, initiate (*ekkleisai*) for their self-conceit = as their slaves = under their bondage (*autous dzehloute*).

The Galatians accepted circumcision of the flesh and of Judaism instead of "the circumcision of Christ" (Cl.2:11) unto a 'bind(ing) of themselves by oath under the penalty of a fearful curse'. (Crudens) The Galatians "turned back" to "slave again", "in bondage under the principles of the world" – "THIS, PRESENT, EVIL WORLD" – without slip or slew, a circumcision "not after Christ"! (Cl.2:8) They "turned back" to "again superstitiously observe/fear/worship, days, months, seasons, years"; to "again superstitiously observe/fear/worship, the weak and beggarly/slavish, not-gods-of-nature (and) of the cosmos/world" – UNDER THREAT OF THEIR OATH BY CIRCUMCISION!

The Galatians' was superstition to perfection – but superstition that over two millennia could still be improved on like by none other than the Christian religion.

### The Whole Context

EB:

Let's look again at the WHOLE CONTEXT!

2:1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

2:2 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.

2:3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

2:4 And that because of false brethren unexpectedly brought in, who came in privately to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into BONDAGE:

2:5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

2:6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it makes no matter to me: God accepts no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

2:7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

2:8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

2:9 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.

2:10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

2:11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

2:12 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. 2:13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

2:14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If you, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compell you the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

2:15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith

of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

2:17 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.

2:18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

2:19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

2:21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

3:1 O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that all of you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received all of you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

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

3:4 Have all of you suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

3:5 He therefore that ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

3:7 Know all of you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith,

preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed.

3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that

continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

**[i.e. keeps sabbaths but not sacrifices; does not keep the rest of the Law ABSOLUTELY PERFECTLY]**

3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

3:12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that does them shall live in them.

3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree:

3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

3:15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man nullifies, or adds thereto.

3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is Christ.

3:17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot nullify, that it should make the promise of no effect.

3:18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

3:19 Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and

it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

3:20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

3:21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

3:22 But the scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

3:25 But after that faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

3:26 For all of you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for all of you are all one in Christ Jesus.

3:29 And if all of you be Christ's, then are all of you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

4:1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

4:2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

4:3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the ELEMENTS of the world:

4:4 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

4:5 To redeem them that were under the

law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

4:6 And because all of you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

4:7 Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

4:8 Nevertheless then, when all of you knew not God, all of you did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

4:9 But now, after that all of you have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn all of you again to the weak and beggarly elements, unto which all of you desire again to be in bondage?

4:10 All of you observe days, and months, and times, and years.

4:11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. (Updated King James Version)

GE:

The promises of God and the blessing of Abraham belong to neither of the Jews and Gentiles – it is Christ's due and right, solely. So that no one, Jew, or, Gentile, shall be judged justified by works of the Law or by virtue of descent. "*For ye into freedom were called, brethren; only not to preferment by the flesh abuse your liberty, but serve one another by love*" – equally and indiscriminately! (5:13)

God is not called upon to witness to wickedness; circumcision does not justify idolatry. "*Only not to preferment by the flesh abuse your liberty!*" God is not mocked or obliged.

EB:

Paul (in Galatians 4:8-11) MENTIONS their former practice, to compare it with the new type of bondage they were being brought under. Once again; you cannot take a passage; even a chapter, in isolation. Let's look again at the WHOLE CONTEXT!

Here, we see the WHOLE THEME is Paul's past under THE LAW, and his current dealings with people trying to bring the gentiles under THE LAW! This is no discussion ("specifically";

let alone!) of the "paganism" they were once under, before becoming Christians. Paul USES that as a comparison with the bondage they were being brought under.

GE:

If the whole context of the whole Letter could vary, could sometimes be as we have called it 'Jewish', or could sometimes be as we have called it 'Gentile', or neither, or both, also the equation will become impossible, that "bondage under the Law" = "*weak and beggarly elements (of the world)*", 'paganism'. Then Old Testament Law will stand vindicated as true, Godly Faith, not abolished; and New Testament Faith as over against gentile paganism or heathen idolatry will stand vindicated the very same Faith as that of the Old Testament 'saints'. Then 4:10 will mean what it says with so many words, that the Galatian converts returned to their former pagan idolatry of "*observation*" of the Greek "*no-gods*" or "*elements*" of time, which were: "*days*", "*months*", "*seasons*", and "*years*". And the Sabbath of the LORD your God will stand vindicated, and its adversaries silenced and abashed.

EB:

Then the rest of the New Testament is to be thrown out. The Jews were justified by the Law; and thus better than those "dog" pagans, as they called them. Pagans were the only "sinners"; and therefore the Jews were justified in looking down on them as "sinners of the Gentiles".

But if all this is true; then Christ came and died for NOTHING. And the Jews were right to reject Him and have Him killed. How DARE He come and point out their blindness and bondage under the Law! How DARE He show that they were not keeping it! He should have been putting down those filthy heathens (Romans; etc) and making these righteous Lawkeepers the rightful rulers of the World, instead! And the Jews must now fight to restore the Temple and ALL the sacrifices, (ALL 613 Laws of the OT!) so they may finally earn God's blessings as the rulers of the world. THEN the OLD Testament Faith will stand vindicated as over against gentile paganism or heathen idolatry. And the Sabbath identifying the LORD as THEIR AND ONLY THEIR

God will stand vindicated, and its adversaries silenced and abashed. And they can continue to JUDGE everyone for not having all these "commandments" identifying them as God's special people!

Is THIS the "gospel" you want? Yes; as Paul said:

"If any man (or even "an angel from heaven) preaches any other gospel..."

GE:

I here reason in answer to EB who quoted Galatians from 2:1 to 4:11 in order to illustrate how "the WHOLE CONTEXT" underscores "the new type of bondage" the Galatian believers "were being brought under", a 'bondage' that, in the opinion of EB, was "under THE LAW", and for which he used "Paul's past" (which was 'Jewish' of course), "as a comparison".

I present as counter-proposition, that Paul's 'WHOLE THEME' throughout the "entire context", is, that "*there cannot be Jew or Gentile ... for ALL, are one, in Christ Jesus*" (3:27), as all, if not "*one in Christ Jesus*", are one in sin and perdition.

As applies to everyone the principle the Law applies to everyone – everyone having come under its curse through disobedience – so, applies to everyone the principle everyone who believes the Promises of God and the blessing of Abraham, "*is justified NOT by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ*": "*Even we*", 2:16, whether Gentiles or Jews.

"The WHOLE CONTEXT" and "the WHOLE THEME" for EB, are virtually the same. He wants to show HOW "the WHOLE CONTEXT" and "the WHOLE THEME" of Galatians **including 4:10 and immediate context**, are 'Jewish', and not 'Gentile', and indicate a "bondage under THE LAW!"

Let's therefore look again at these verses:

*2:1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.*

*2:2 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. 2:3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised ...*

and ask ourselves: Is the context 'Gentile', or is it 'Jewish'? :

*"that gospel which I preach among the GENTILES";*

*"Titus being a GREEK";*

*"NEITHER compelled to be circumcised".*

Context? Decidedly: 'Gentile'!

Let's further look at

*2:4 And that because of false brethren unexpectedly brought in, who came in privately to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into BONDAGE:*

*2:5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.*

*2:6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it makes no matter to me: God accepts no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:*

*2:7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;*

*2:8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)*

and ask ourselves the question: Is the context 'gentile', or is it Judaism? :

*"False brethren UN-expectedly, BROUGHT IN" –*

From where?

*"Who came in PRIVILY/ dishonestly / inconspicuously"!*

To do what?

*"to spy out OUR LIBERTY which we have in Christ" – not, which we have "in the flesh" (5:13).*

Was that, "BONDAGE", 'bondage under THE LAW' – Judaism? No, it was Christianity freed from paganism, once again infiltrated by paganism.

Context then? 'Gentile' Christianity!

*"That the truth of the gospel might CONTINUE with you":*

How did the Gospel BEGIN with these Galatians?

When they were worshipping the "*no-gods*" of the "*first principles of this world*" – when they were serving the pagan, gentile, "*world*"!

From being brought out from under this "*bondage*", Paul prayed they "*might continue*" in the Gospel.

Context therefore: Gentile!

*2:8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)*

Context and circumstance in Galatia "*toward the Gentiles*"?



Self explanatory, 'gentile'!

*2:9 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.*

Context of the issue implicated in 4:10, 'gentile', or, 'Jewish'?

Paul received the "*right hand of fellowship*" from the Jews, James and Cephas!

Could one, in view of this, expect problems from the Jewish sector of Christianity in Galatia? It would have been more "*unexpectedly*" than from the gentile sector of Christianity!

EB:

There were Jews who accepted the apostles (at least at first). This does not mean that NONE of them EVER opposed the Christians. Or do you think that all those involved with the Crucifixion; and the entire temple and Sanhedrin were all converted now? Gentile phony Christians did not have any sanhedrin to go back to persecute their brethren.

GE:

*2:10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.*

Those Christians in Galatia – from the gentiles – are asked to help the Christians in Jerusalem – Christians from the Jews.

Context? Neither Jew, nor Gentile, but Christian!

*2:11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*

Context in Galatia, Paul representing the Christians there? Free of Peter's prejudices, and therefore the local Christians must be supposed simply Gentiles become Christians. Context therefore: 'Gentile' if anything!

*2:12 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.*

*2:13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.*

*2:14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If you,*

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

The context here, is most interesting, and it will be seen was just the opposite of what you maintain it was, EB.

"*BEFORE*", James freely associated with the Gentiles who for all practical purposes were the total membership of the Church in Antioch in Galatia. James arrived among them the only Jew it seems. But with the Jewish Christians, *inter alia* Peter, present, James withdrew and separated himself out of fear for them.

So Paul confronted Peter before them all, and argued, that if Peter, being a Jew, behave like a Gentile, and not as a Jew is supposed to behave, how could he expect the Gentile converts to live like true Jewish Christians should?

Why EB? These verses say just the opposite of what you say they say. They presuppose, namely, that the Apostle Paul – and as would be expected, his fellow Apostle Peter especially – taught and expected his gentile converts to accept Christianity like they as Apostles and the Church Universal believed and practiced their Faith, which was, like true Jewish Christians should!

You wouldn't say Paul for his insistence on a Christian Faith "*as a Jew*" now after all his warning against "*false teachers*" was one himself, would you? Definite conclusion therefore: Context: TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles, Paul its chief proponent! TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles, was "*OUR LIBERTY which we have in Christ*" – it was no "*liberty*" "*in the flesh*"!

EB:

Paul emphasized his BACKGROUND as a Jew. Not that he was STILL living that way. In Gal. he describes his background ("*WE*", v.3) as "*BONDAGE*"; not "*liberty*"; even though it was often persecuted by the pagan rulers at times

GE:

Here is how Paul explains "*our liberty which we have in Christ*":

*" 2:19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God."*

It is TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles, Paul is talking about! TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles, means, "*I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.*" For no moment is it a "*STRANGE Gospel*",

for no moment, 'pagan'; yet for no moment, not, 'gentile' Christianity!

TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles, means, "2:20, *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*"

TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles, 2:21, "(Does) not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Just so *does* TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles *not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come "by the flesh", then Christ is dead in vain.* Truly 'Jewish' = truly 'gentile' Christianity. Faithful 'Jewish' Faith = faithful 'gentile' Faith. Faith is Faith, because it is one Christ believed through one Spirit!

This Gospel – not "false teaching" – was received from God through the Jews and as THEIR Faith was proclaimed to the Gentiles.

Therefore then, 3:1 *O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that all of you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*

*"That the truth of the gospel might CONTINUE with you":*

How did the Gospel BEGIN with these Galatians? When they were worshipping "no-gods" and the "first principles of this world" – the pagan, gentile "world". Context therefore: Gentile!

Why EB? These verses say just the opposite of what say they say. They presuppose, namely, that the Apostle Paul – and as would be expected, his fellow Apostle Peter especially – taught and expected his gentile converts to accept Christianity like they as Apostles and the Church Universal believed and practiced their Faith, which was, like true Jewish Christians should!

You wouldn't say Paul for his insistence on a Christian Faith "as a Jew" now after all his warning against "false teachers" was one himself, would you? Definite conclusion: Context: TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles,

Paul its chief proponent! TRUE, 'Jewish' Christianity amongst the Gentiles, was "OUR LIBERTY which we have in Christ".

Thus the context is the Church as Christian Faith, perceived as a 'Jewish' Christianity among the Gentiles, NOT, "(brought) into bondage" by "false brethren". Ascertains Paul: "False brethren ... to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour;

*that the truth of the gospel might continue with you",* the Gentile, Jewish orientated Christian Church in Galatia.

Galatians – so far – confirms the Galatian Church and the Galatian Faith, AS SUCH a Church and SUCH a Faith, as what Paul made them, and as what Paul wanted them to be. It implies the Galatian Church with Paul's blessing and to Paul's own satisfaction, was a Sabbath-keeping Church. (Not what you've thought it was, EB, is it?)

GE:

"Nice trick in trying to set the "context" to "gentile"", you say, EB. But is it not Galatians got interpreted to the discredit of the Sabbath Day by people trying to set the "context" to "Jewish"? By scholars who, like you, say the 'whole body', the 'entire context', 'the entire Letter' is approached by Paul from the standpoint Old Testament 'Law' directly was the cause of all trouble? If they say no, it's not that bad, they still say no, the Sabbath (which not remotely in 'the context' features) excepted. For in the last analysis it must be the Sabbath Day that is that "weak and beggarly element" they wish to wish away they are so uncomfortable with it. The Sabbath to Christianity has become an embarrassment, a stumbling block and an ever present accusation of its hypocritical and idolatrous defending and veneration of Sunday as were the day a god. The Day of the Lord Sun so basely served to the ridiculing of Christian integrity, the unwitting antinomians assist, defaming God's Sabbath the Seventh and Lord's Day. We still have the Galatians 4:8-11 heresy with us, only the more refined the coarser. Nice trick in trying to set the "context" to "Jewish"; it serves Sunday well!

Quoting EB, "You refer to the Galatians worshipping "no-gods-"; and Titus not being "compelled" to be circumcised. "context"? Of those who once worshipped false gods; you're right; it is "gentiles". Of those being "compelled"; again; you're right, it is "gentiles". But who is DOING the compelling? Gentiles? Did pagans ever try to get their fellows who had become Christian to be circumcised? No; clearly the ones DOING the compelling would be JEWS! Sorry; but nice try."

First, EB, you insisted – persistently, unequivocally – that "the whole body" / "the entire context" / "72 verses", etc, is "bondage under the Law", and that therefore, even 4:8-10 MUST be, 'bondage under the Law'.

Now you admit: "Of those who once worshipped false gods; you're right; it is "gentiles". Of those being "compelled"; again; you're right, it is "gentiles"." So, half of your "whole", already is not "bondage under the Law", but is bondage under paganism. With this half of your "whole"-argument goes the whole of it.

You still hold on to the other half, saying: "But who is DOING the compelling? Gentiles? Did pagans ever try to get their fellows who had become Christian to be circumcised? No; clearly the ones DOING the compelling would be JEWS! Sorry; but nice try."

Saying this, you contradict Paul who explicitly states the Jews involved in the Galatian issue – and he mentions them and all of them specifically – "*compelled NOT!*" Then you contradict Paul directly with YOUR OWN and arrogant assertion: "No; clearly the ones DOING the compelling would be JEWS!" Either you, or Paul, is lying here.

There goes your 'whole'-argument again with this last half of your original bolstering – twice demolished at once.

You blame me and BR for being so hiper-pro-Jewish we can't see them do any sin. But so are you anti-Jewish they can't do anything but it is so wicked they take everybody with them to hell. Then you are so totally blind to the pagans also being human and sinners, they too are in effect justified in their worst perdition by the Law since the Jews – the Law – were their bewitchers.

EB:

Right here; you begin to blur what I said into your straw man. I always acknowledged that v.8 was about gentile paganism, and NEVER said it was bondage under the Law. It was a CONTRAST of their past; with the new form of [equal] "bondage" they were falling into. But to you; it has to be all one or the other, so you can accuse me of making the Law paganism, or "the whole argument" falls. It is your recasting of my argument that falls. Not my real argument; which takes what each verse says, but within the context of the whole.

Next; are you suggesting that Peter's "living as a Jew" was RIGHT; and here COMMENDED by Paul? No; people lived in fear of the Jews;

trying to placate them. Paul for his insistence on a Christian Faith 'as a Jew' now after all his warning against 'false teachers' was one himself, would you assume that "false teachers" could only be pagan gentiles? But you have put the cart before the horse in this instance. No; there were Jewish "false teachers" who were corrupting the Church as well.

GE:

Quoting EB: "you and BR seem to be in total denial that Judaism was bondage as well." Untrue! It is you, EB, who deny –and don't only seem to be in denial– that paganism was bondage as well, or worse, than Judaism, because you insist where Paul speaks of the pagan *no-gods* of time, "*days, months, seasons and years*", he speaks of 'bondage under the Law'.

EB:

Here you project you two's own tunnel vision on me. In saying the Judaizers were culpable in Galatians; I NEVER suggested pagans were now innocent, justified, not human sinners; etc. It is your line of reasoning that suggests the Jews could not possibly go wrong under the Law. Once again: What do you think he would he be saying to them if they had fallen into Judaism? That they were OKAY? I have said that John dealt more with paganism. And of course, the OT condemns it a lot too. I have always said that BOTH were equally under bondage; but you two are so busy trying to twist my arguments into an assault on the Law itself; that you can't see that.

GE:

And I, in having admitted the 'Judaizers' were in fact culpable in Galatians, NEVER suggested they were 'Jews', or, 'were now innocent'. On the contrary, I have all along maintained they were of the stock of their heathen, pagan, Galatian, kin themselves. But what is more important, is that I have all along maintained that Paul in 4:7-11 does not consider the Galatians' '*bewitchers*' –call them 'Judaizers' if you like– separately, but that Paul in 4:7-11 considers the Galatians as the Galatian Church as a whole as apostatising to paganism –to Judaism inclusive paganism be that as it may– but I have not

admitted nor suggested the 'Judaizers' are mentioned or treated on in a manner clearly distinguishable in 4:7-11!

EB: "(A)re you (GE) suggesting that Peter's "living as a Jew" was RIGHT; and here COMMENDED by Paul? No; people lived in fear of the Jews; trying to placate them..."

GE:

Are you suggesting I suggested it? Then you're mistaken. Why not be so valiant and say it is you who so hold? Because you suppose "Peter's "living as a JEW"" was wrong, whilst Paul reprimands him his "living as a Jew", WAS wrong! You suppose, however to live as a Jew, is wrong; Paul supposes to live as a Jew, is, or, should be, the right way. And in this case the right way to live as a Jew was to truly live as a Christian. That is, EB, what you are unable – or rather, unwilling – to see. Therefore, no, I do not suggest "that Peter's "living as a Jew" was RIGHT"; I say just what Paul said, 'Peter, you are NOT living as a Jew now being so prejudiced towards your brethren of the Gentiles. Live as a Jew for being a Christian, should and would, before you can expect of these Gentiles to live like yourself.' Because Paul here commends living as a Jew, because it suggests living right and Christianly. Paul here does not condemn; he commends; you're right again, dear EB!

EB:

And here again; you make up your own definitions. Why would he refer to "living as a Christian" as "living as a Jew". "Living as a Jew" meant keeping the Law; and it was done "in fear of the circumcision". According to you; they lived as a Christian in fear of the Jews. Totally opposite of what actually went on. You are just picking verses out and completely ignoring the context. So now, in your version of Galatians; we have Jews justified by the Law and this made synonymous with "Christians".

GE:

No, EB, living as a Christian, 'meant keeping the Law'. And it context of our passage, that meant, for Peter to truly live as a true Jew should, 'meant keeping the Law' as a Christian should. And it not at all or in the least "was done "in fear of the circumcision"" – that's your distorting addition to the Scriptures.

EB:

"... there were Jewish "false teachers" who were corrupting the Church as well."

GE:

"... as well"! Only question remaining now, is, Who, most probable, who of the Gentiles, or, who of the Jews, were them "false teachers" besides? The probability is no longer in question; it is a confirmed fact, and because a confirmed fact, there's nothing improbable and still less impossible Paul in 4:8-10 refers to and supposes Gentiles and pagan teaching, doctrine or religion. Would you still assume that "false teachers" could only be Jewish, dear EB?

EB:

You speak of "Christianity freed from paganism", and while; of course, the pagans were in bondage, and Christianity would mean "freedom" of it (something I certainly never deny); still; you and BR seem to be in total denial that Judaism was bondage as well. Both of you now seem to be making some modified form of Judaism (no sacrifices; but most of the other rituals intact) the true "freedom" here, and in Romans and Colossians. But Paul in these 3 passages never says that they are being prevented from MANDATORY acts of obeying God. Instead; they are being judged for not observing practices. The pagans did try to force them to worship the emperor. But 1) that is not mentioned in these passages. 2) while the "observance" is "condemned" as BR puts it; it is not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law; such as worshipping other gods. It is the INTENT (hence; paratero; once again) in which things that were otherwise apart of the "good" Law were done for a bad purpose; which would render Christ "of no profit". We see this included circumcision; which as all will agree; was a command of the Law of God' not pagans.

"Worshipping God right", wouldn't you say; is no mere "liberty of Christians"; even if the powers that be are trying to prevent it. If that's what all of this was about; then Paul wouldn't speak of "liberty"; but rather of

compulsion; and that we should be compelled "to serve (worship) God rather than men". That would be the issue; not "liberty". "Liberty" (eleutheria/os) is "exempt(from compulsion)". You are making it almost opposite of what it means.

GE:

Quoting EB: "... while the "observance" is "condemned" as BR puts it; it is not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law; such as worshipping other gods."

Another blatant contradiction of yours, EB, of Paul's verdict: "... *ye turn again to the weak and beggarly ELEMENTS whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage: Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years – I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.*"

These, were the very "*by-nature-no-gods ... ye did service unto when ye knew not God*". But EB declares, "it is not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law; such as worshipping other gods."

"*I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.*" "*In vain!*", is, "condemned"! And why? Because these, were the very "*by-nature-no-gods ... ye did service unto when ye knew not God*" – that is, "*when*" you at first were "condemned" or lost! But EB declares, "it is not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law; such as worshipping other gods."

And if the "observance" is not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law, and if, the "observance" were not such as worshipping other gods, then, EB, why would Paul so harshly condemn both 'observer' and 'observed'? Would he condemn the poor Gentile believers for actually believing and doing "something" "*that by its very nature*" was in **agreement**, "with the commandments of the Law", and in truth was far from "something ... such as worshipping other gods"? Is that what you say, EB, made Paul in 4:11, 9 say: '*I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain*', because "you

*earnestly want to come under bondage all over again*"?

Fetching words and concepts from 5:2 and anywhere else but from 4:7-11 itself, "even breaking down the entire four chapters involved", pouring the pieces back into 4:7-11, you literally "have gone to great lengths to prove" your lying denials of Paul and the Scriptures, to "enchant – *pharmakein*" and "bemuse" with your intoxicating mix!

Say you indeed, "... it was "The works of the Law" that was the venue this spiritual "witchcraft" was being done through." You were prone to be caught in your own words; not once or twice, but often! Now don't come tell us you meant the Judaizers' works. The Judaists did NOT obey the Law – they transgressed it in every possible and impossible manner mocking both the Law and God through their "works of the Law". In any case, if with these words of yours you're not against the Law of God but against those who 'judge others over the Sabbath', why utter them at all? Don't you remember the actual issue under discussion here, namely, that Galatians 4:10 refers to heathen, idolatrous, pagan, Gentile "*not-gods*" of "*days*" etc, and no Sabbaths of the Law?

EB:

Oh ... you just refuse to separate God's Law from man's attempts at observance of it ("WORKS"), and you can't refute it. The two go together inseparable; and are BOTH perfect and blameless.

So I guess then, by the works of the Law all man SHALL be justified; but now we have a problem that much of the rest of the NT is false.

GE:

Poor EB! Just read what you say! Can't you see? Say YOU – not I – "The two go together inseparable". "The two..." Which "two" are "inseparable" – according to yourself? These: "God's Law", and, "man's attempts at observance of it ("WORKS)". You say they are "inseparable". But you shout at us, "you just refuse to separate God's Law from man's attempts at observance of it ("WORKS")!"

Then, infuriated by your thunder stolen, you blunder forth, "The two (God's Law (and) man's attempts at observance of it) are BOTH perfect and

blameless"! My!

I still maintain, What the Galatians were doing was what they were DOING – their "INTENT" included – and it was idolatrous "*lust*" – pagan idolatry, and NOTHING like Old Testament be it behind the times 'Jewish' faith; **nothing**, "BOTH perfect and blameless"! And what the Jews or 'Judaizers' might have been doing, they were doing it – while technically not 'idolatry', it was just as bad, inherently of the same "*nature*": "*not-gods*", not Divine, not according to the Scriptures, not according to the Law of God, but against it; not its obeying, but its transgression; the audacious, blatant, and 'blameable', 'judge'-able and 'condemnable' 'pagan', idolatry "*of the world*"! And THEREFORE: NOT, the Sabbaths of the Law of God, but the Sundays of the "*first in order of importance stoicheia*" of the "*divination*" of the heathen and pagan "*worshippers / slaving / serfs*". Those heathen pagans were they who "*apostatized / turned back / relapsed*", and those heathen pagans were they who "*bewitched*" / "tried to influence" "the others" of themselves. Not, "some Hebrews"!

EB:

Is God any more pleased with them in the NT then He was in the OT when they were falling into idolatry? No; it's now; with their rigorous pitching of the Law that they are led to reject God's Messiah; and eventually; judgment falls on the entire nation.

GE:

Just carry on!

EB:

Another blatant ignoring of the rest of the context on your part. Look at v.3 again: "**WE who were in bondage to the ELEMENTS**". Even if you insist this was "all of mankind" as BR says; still; this "WE" means Paul includes himself. Col.2:20 he says "Wherefore if all of you be dead with Christ from the **rudiments** of the world, why, as though living in the world, are all of you subject to ordinances, 2:21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 2:22 Which all are to perish with the using;) [here he defines what "ordinances" he was referring to in v.16; contrary to BR's "certificate"!] The Law had such "taste not;

handle not" ordinances; as well as the additional "commandments" added by men.

GE:

Who "ignor(es) the rest of the context"? Certainly, "this "WE" means Paul includes himself." But Paul from which part of the context? The Paul from before in the context, where he used to be a Judaist – not a true, 'Christian', not a true, Old Testament believer! And Judaism, as I have more than once stated, is humanism – a humanism that is just another appearance or manifestation of paganism. Paul the pagan, therefore, "includes himself" in "this "WE"" - "WE" all, "*of the world*" and "WE" all, "*being in bondage / being slaves / being worshippers under the principles of the world*"! Like pagan, like Judaizer.

"... Both of you now seem to be making some modified form of Judaism (no sacrifices; but most of the other rituals intact) the true "freedom" here, and in Romans and Colossians." How is it possible to discourse with you, EB, if you hold such what shall I call it, skew ideas? You presume all these things that "seem" and no more than "seem" to you because you want it to "seem"; so that you can have something (made up by yourself) to attack your opponent on! I have told you in previous discussion I believe the Law of God, His Living Word, abiding with us this day in the Person and Lordship of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ. There is NO 'law' of the Old Testament not found fulfilled and once for all established, "IN HIM". There is NO 'law' of "men", be it man's very best, found, or founded, fulfilled or established, "IN HIM" – not one! And so, in the NT. That is, what I believe, and teach, and find living the highest ideal.

EB:

This I would agree with; but then when you two speak of "Jewish Christianity freed from Paganism" being the only possible meaning of Galatians; then it SEEMS; once again, that you are redefining Christianity as Judaism; and ONLY pagans' encroachment was ever a problem. The Jews could do no wrong; because the Church was strictly Jewish in practice anyway.

GE:

All that you want to avail with this observation of yours, is to downgrade and negate there is the indispensable reality of a Sabbath Day of Worship-Rest still valid for the New Testament People of God. Why waste your breath on all this beating about the bush and not say it straight? The True Freedom is our

Saviour and Christ of God, and the Sabbath Day His gift for the enjoyment of this truth AS A PEOPLE. For without this PLACE IN TIME appointed by God Himself for it, The Body of Christ's simply won't be that which God wants it to be: The Church, Congregation in time and space in the Name of Christ Jesus, for a witness, and for the proclamation of Him, and worship, and praises, and prayer – AS THIS BODY. You show me this ENTITY EXISTING IN THE WORLD AND IN TIME, in the Christ-Era, without this, its Day in the world and time, in this the Era of Jesus Christ!

The devil himself and his deputy the Pope knows without this single earthly element the Kingdom of Heaven must vanish. That's why the powers of darkness united against God's Sabbath Day, and robbed it of its ONLY glory, its Christ-base – its total dependence – on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead "*in Sabbath's fullness of day*" – '*opse de sabbatohm tehi epiphohiskousehi*'.

EB:

Well; you said a person could work his job. You then do not keep it like the Commandment says; but have basically spiritualized its meaning; based on you "Christ is the Law" doctrine above. All of this I would agree with; so I don't see why you keep arguing with me.

GE:

I do nothing with the Law – God did a lot to it. And He didn't 'spiritualize its meaning' away, but 'based' it on Christ – which means He established and built it, and gave us the Origin of His Law, "*in Christ*", through Christ and for the sake of, Christ. This very day still, the Law serves no other master than Christ! That would give you the 'spiritualized meaning' of the Law, its Christ-centeredness, its Christ-essentiality and its Christ-base. Nothing of an ethereal, vague, uncertain, intangible, confused 'Feeling', but God's Word unmistakably and unmistakable, through Jesus Christ our Lord – our 'Law' by Rulership! Never has the Sabbath-Command-Word-of-God been so clear and 'mandatory' as "*in Him*"! How one synthesises it with one's job is between him and God – it is his "*freedom*", but it certainly will be in synchronisation with God's rhythm – "to the beat" of God's '*principles*'. Certainly a new and different freedom it will be; nevertheless no precedent, or "*opportunity for the flesh to obtestate transgression*"!

Although I'm not so sure all of this you would agree with, this is not why I "keep arguing" with you. We

were debating the meaning of Galatians 4:7-11, if I'm still on track.

EB:

You are closer to me than to BR who insists on OT Law, or at least a part of it. But you are using his types of arguments for some "mandatory observance"; which I don't see the logic behind when you do not believe in keeping the day as originally commanded.

GE:

I hope the above explains.

EB:

I believe that the Sabbath-rest is fulfilled in "Christ-the Law" as you put it, according to He b.4; and LIKE YOU, that it is not necessarily about ceasing from work on a day. But if someone wants to esteem the day unto the Lord; then they have the complete Liberty in Christ to do so. But they cannot JUDGE others for not doing so; because THEN that becomes "watching with evil intent", rather than worshipping the Lord. Our worship is between US and God; not about what others are doing. All of THIS is what I believe. I wish you two would deal with THIS instead of trying to recast it into what you think it means.

GE:

The Sabbath-rest is fulfilled in "Christ-the-Law", according to Hb.4 and all the Scriptures. God's Rest is God's perfecting His Word and Work ON THIS DAY (4:4-5). "*THAT IS WHY*", says verse 9, "*There remaineth still a Sabbath's-keeping for the People of God*". We before could not come to an agreement on this. We still are an eternity apart and will remain on different frequencies until such time we might get to an agreement on this one point.

If some want to esteem the day unto the Lord; then they have the complete Liberty, IN CHRIST, to do so. If not in Christ, then man has no right, no liberty, no claim to God's Day of Rest and Worship; then such an one does exactly with God's Sabbath that the Galatians did with the Old Testament's circumcision! Then obtesting through its Commandment, the Sabbath Day to that man becomes a Law of God to his condemnation. It is Christian Faith and Freedom, or no Sabbath Day!

Of course they cannot JUDGE others for not doing so; because THEN that becomes "watching with evil intent", rather than worshipping the Lord. Our worship is between US and God; not about what others are doing. We must obey God rather than man. The love of Christ constraineth! Just remember that Paul said, "*constraineth US*"; he didn't say, 'me'! The Sabbath is "*for the PEOPLE*" – not for the individual; and, for the People "*OF GOD*" – not for any wicked majority. So one will find the false 'Sabbath Day' among the great masses, and not among the "Few" of God's Elect, and the true Sabbath Day among the "Few" of God's Elect and not among the great masses. It is the newest of New Testament words, the one that reads: "*The Sabbath shall be a sign between Me and you, between I-AM-YOUR-GOD, and YOU-MY-PEOPLE.*"

### "THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD"

In 1:4, to begin with, Paul wrote, "... *that He might deliver us from THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD*".

No further explanation needed to see the 'whole context' is 'Gentile'.

In 1:6 Paul says, "*I marvel that you (Galatian Church) are so SOON, REMOVED from Him that called you [FROM, this present evil world] INTO the grace of Christ*".

Here the contrast between "*world*" and "*grace*" is direct – no relapse into an intermediate, mixed state or status as into Judaism or any syncretism also containing Christianity, is supposed.

Paul says the Galatians' relapse was "*unto another gospel which is NOT another gospel*". Nothing of what he says suggests it was Judaism the Galatians fell back into. Least of all does Paul consider the Old Testament "*ministration*" the 'system' into which the Galatian Christians relapsed. On the contrary, later on in his Letter Paul will use another and synonymous metaphor for this very "*no-gospel*" which the Galatians in their "*falling back again*" embraced, namely, the "*no-gods*" which, when still the Galatians "*knew not God*", they "*did service unto*", and "*now after*", "*return(ed) to again*". (4:8-9)

The Galatians "*fell back again*" from the pure Gospel to the '*no-gods-works-of-the-flesh-message*' – to their own syncretistic, "*conjured*", '*spell*' of 'salvation'. "*Witchcraft*" (3:1, Acts 8:11), "*sorcery*" (*pharmakeia* 5:20), paganism knotted to Judaism, the

worship of the gods of destiny "*sealed / perfected*" (3:3) with circumcision "*of the flesh*", not with the "*confidence*" "*of the spirit*" "*through the Lord*".

This was the abuse of the institution of circumcision of the flesh, a singling out of it for literally profaning purpose, WHILE NEGLECTING THE WHOLE LAW! "*A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*" (5:9) He who practices circumcision "*must keep the whole Law*" (5:3) – not just have himself circumcised and think he has satisfied every demand of God's Law. "*The man that doeth the laws shall / must live in them and by them all.*" (3:12) "*But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of GOD, is EVIDENT, because the righteous by faith will live!*" (3:11) "*The Law is / comes not out of faith.*" So these who have themselves circumcised thinking they could pacify the wrath of God for their misdeeds thereby, act not '*out of faith*', but out of "*malice*" (5:21), "*infatuating you too, to separate you into their own cult*", 4:17. Yea, they even, being "*born after the flesh*" (4:23), "*persecute*" you, the "*born after the spirit*" (4:29) – the "*born by the promise*" (4:23) into the household of God and the true "*Israel of God*" (6:16). "*They which do such things shall NOT inherit the Kingdom of God.*" They've got a FALSE "*hope*", but "*We through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.*" (5:5)

From the very beginning of the Letter it already seemed to be most unlikely, the falling away of the Galatians was a return to observance of Old Testament practices and principles, or that the issue was that Paul considered the Old Testament Faith as that to which the Galatian Churches were '*removed*' (1:7) back to. No, it was to a total disregard for the Law of God unto the point of no return in darkest idolatry and disparagement of God's unblameable Law.

You think the Galatians obeyed the Law of Circumcision? Then you've got no idea of what God's Law is or what it is to keep the Commandments of God! No, the Galatians in grossest manner violated the Law of Circumcision, in every respect loathed, abused, anfractuated it – and so the whole Law! Is not Paul's own definition of what the Galatians were falling back to – of the "*new type of bondage they were being brought under*" – clear enough, that they returned and fell back into the darkness of the kingdom ("*principality*") of "*this present evil world*"? (1:4) Therefore those who "*perverted the Gospel of Christ*", for all practical purposes were 'gentile' "*men*".



It at this stage of our discourse already has become clear that, like in the case of Colossians 2:16-17, we also in Galatians 4:10 are overwhelmed by preconceived and presumptuous prejudices against the Sabbath merely. For, for what other reason than to bring the Sabbath in disrepute would it be claimed the Galatian Christians all over again returned to 'Old Testament Law' and that 'Old Testament Law' was that, when originally they were converted, they were converted from? Or, that, 'paganism', was that when originally they were converted, they were converted from, but that now, a bondage under the 'Old Testament Law' was that to which they were returning to again? This scheming which ever way already is being exposed as a wilful and evil attempt at perverting the Scriptures as well as the pure Gospel, only to get into a more advantageous position from where to justify the pagan practice of Sunday-observance in the Name of Christ – otherwise, this scheming serves no purpose but to prove its own senselessness.

EB:

And here is where you make a glaring mistake. You seem to think it impossible that The Jews could be referred to as "the world". But "the world" is contrasted with "Christ"; not with "Christ and the Jews". You are either for Christ or against Him, and if against Him, then apart of "the world" and its spiritual ruler; the devil. There was no middle ground. Jews that were against Christ were not still on God's side because they had the Law. That is precisely what all the more exposed them as sinners against God! You need to watch out; because your arguments really seem to be insinuating that Jews actually WERE justified by the works of the Law; and thus "better" than anyone else. This contradicts the entire message of the NT; and therefore the Gospel of Christ!

GE:

"Whether WE preach any other gospel to you ..." (verse 8).

Refer verse 1, "Paul an apostle NOT OF MEN, neither by MEN, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father ... and ALL the brethren who are WITH ME – to the Churches of Galatia."

"We", were "all", "not of men", neither of the world, nor of Judaism. "We" were Christians, and because "the Churches in Galatia" were Christians too, "we all", were "brethren".

Context? Neither 'gentile', nor, 'Jewish', but Christian – Christian as over against the world – not Christian as over against Judaism or Christian as over against the Old Testament Law!

"If any man preach another gospel to you ..." (9).

Why must it be the reintroduction into Old Testament Law, and not a falling back into their previous heathendom and idolatry? "As we said before", with certainty, is that they were "pervert(ers) of the Gospel of Christ" (verse 7), those who "preached a nice message besides the Good News we have preached to you", verse 8. And as we have seen before, they must have been "men" of the "world", "who seemed to be somewhat" (2:6), of "evil intent", who, as confirmed in verse 1:10, liked to be "pleased" and to "please men", like true men of "this present evil world" would!

EB:

A hypothetical situation. IF a Christian happened to teach another Gospel; then he is accursed. This says nothing about whether that "gospel" is OT Judaism or paganism.

GE:

"A hypothetical situation"? If ever there had been a practical one, this is it – yours! "Hypothetical", therefore, "this says nothing about some Hebrews (who) went to the gentiles and tried to get them to "live like the Jews"."

"For I certify you that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man ('kata anthropon'). (1:11) By guarantee therefore of Paul's, the 'nice message besides', or the "other gospel" other than the true Gospel he preached, was "according to man", that is, was, 'humanism', and was NOT, Old Testament Faith called by liberals and antinomians, 'Jewish legalism' or 'bondage under the Law'!

Here Paul supplies us with an unequivocal definition of "the other nice / soft message besides": 'humanism' = 'to euangelion hoti estin kata anthropon!' "According to man" = "according to the flesh" = "according to the world" (6:14) = "according to nature" (4:8) = "according to lust" (5:16) Paul's Message was offensive and stupidity to human self-esteem; it did not "please" man, nor made sense to man (it did not "persuade men"), while the false gospel pleased, and flattered man and human nature – was humanistic, modernistic, liberal, open-minded, illuminated.

Paul's Gospel required he and the Galatian Church be "*the servant of Christ*" (10); the false Gospel demanded allegiance to "*the world*". So the Galatians were *persuaded* and *lured back* to a *servicing* of it, namely, to and of "*the world*", and not, to a serving of the Old Testament Law.

The Old Testament Faith by inspiration of God could never be what Paul here every inch denounces as the outright Gospel-opposing schemes of wicked men. That alone tells, Paul is writing to a Gentile readership out of whom stealthily crawled into the Congregation of Gentile believers, those whom Paul calls "*bewitchers*".

Would a man though place himself under a bondage again to serve the Old Testament Law, such a man would place himself under a bondage that is just as outright a Gospel-opposing scheme of wicked men of the "*world*". Again to serve the Old Testament Law would be like being "*under bondage (of) the first principles*" of "*this evil world*", for it under the dispensation of Grace has become impossible to keep on serving in Old Testament FAITH, Old Testament FAITH having awaited Christ, who now had come, and who is now in Christian "*freedom*", "*served*".

It is inconceivable "*if a man be overtaken in a fault*" (6:1) such as this, yet it happened to no less a man than Paul himself (4:3)!

Like the case was with Colossians 2:16, here in Galatians 4:10 the problem behind finding fault with the Old Testament and blaming it for everything that went wrong in Galatians, results from the purely fanciful – and wishful – thinking of the anti-Sabbatharians, despite it is also written, "... *for if that first ministration had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with THEM, He says, Behold the days come when I will make a new covenant with the house of ISRAEL ... In that He says, A New Covenant, it is obvious He has made the first covenant, old, so that that which decayed and aged, is as good as having vanished away completely. ... But now has He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises.*" (Hb. 8:7,8,13,6)

1:12, "*For I neither received it ('my' Gospel), of man*". That is, Paul didn't get the Gospel of Jesus Christ from the world, quite clearly. "*Neither was I taught it*". Paul was "*taught, according to the perfect manner of the LAW of the fathers, and zealous to God*"

(Acts 22:3) – yet it was not the Gospel which he received "*through the revelation of Christ*"! Context then? Neither 'Gentile', nor, 'Jewish', but Christian!

From this it is undeniable, "*the world*" of heathenism and paganism cannot be ignored as having played a major role in the slipping back of the Galatians into some "*non-Gospel*"-religion, which, naturally and most logically, would be the religion of the very role-playing factor itself, that of the heathen and gentile paganism of "*man*" and humanism itself – superstition and idolatry.

Twice in verses 11 and 12 Paul denies 'his' Gospel was "*of man*", while he only once denies he was "*taught*" it, implying that he did not receive it from Jewish teachers; 'his' Gospel he received through divine "*revelation of Jesus Christ*" – "*not by the flesh*".

By this broad and specific denial of where he got his Gospel from, Paul classes the system that "*taught*" him – the 'Jewish system' – under the broader category of the idolatrous human philosophy and wisdom of "*man*"! Paul not so much classes "*man*", that is, Gentile, pagan, religion, under the Old Testament Law-system as he places the Old Testament Law-system STILL ADHERED TO, "*under the bondage to the first principles of the world*"! This is impossible not to admit. It was the case with Saul of Tarsus and not to be denied!

Nevertheless, it does not mean Paul categorizes the Faith of the Old Testament and its Law, and specifically its Sabbath-doctrine, under the idolatrous practice, teaching and superstition of "*the world*" or '*man*'. Were the Old Testament and its Law, and specifically its Sabbath-doctrine, to the denial of the Gospel of Christ **maintained** though, it would no longer be Old Testament **Faith**, but nothing short of idolatrous religion – it would correspond perfectly with "*the bondage to the first principles of the world*".

[The Reformers named the doctrine of free will, "idolatry"! Why should Paul not name the abuse of Old Testament holy things "*the bondage to the first principles of the world*"?]

"Judaism"

*"For you heard of my conduct then in Judaism, that excessively I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it, and progressed in my race in Judaism beyond many contemporaries being a zealot of my ancestral tradition abundantly." (Marshall)*

One in verses 13 to 14 enters upon a section of Paul's Letter that seen with one's anti-Jewish coloured spectacles, may look like very much 'Jewish'. Yet this Letter has for so long been so interpreted that good Christians take it for granted Paul in and with it, effectively denounces Old Testament Faith and all Old Testament practice, specifically the keeping of the Sabbath Day, and brings the whole under the scope of the "bondage of the Law" as being no different than and in fact as being the very same thing as *"the weak and beggarly elements (of the world"* and 'paganism')" (4:9).

EB:

That is not how "good Christians" take it; it is how desperate sabbatarians twist their statements to mean; as a straw man to remove this clear proof against their judging over the Sabbath!

Here are 13 and 14 (Marshall): *"For you heard my conduct then in Judaism, that excessively I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it, and progressed in my race in Judaism beyond many contemporaries being a zealot of my ancestral tradition abundantly."*

EB:

Jews who rejected Christ and tried to justify themselves by the works of the Law were "conforming to the world" (either "age" or "kosmos") or "marching to its beat" ("elements" (Gal.)/"rudiments" (Col.) (stoicheion) simply means "orderly in arrangement"; coming from the following Greek word, stoicheo, which means to "conform" as someone marching in military rank) just as much as pagans who tried to justify themselves by rituals appeasing false gods; or those today who trust in achievements; or "I'm a good person; I've never done anything really bad", etc.) **The very context of this "philosophy" is a denial that "all the fullness of the godhead" dwelled in Christ. That was**

**primarily a Jewish problem** (Who tried to stone Jesus for maintaining His deity? The gentile heretics (gnostics) would corrupt the doctrine of the Godhead in almost the opposite way-- emphasizing his "godhood" to the exclusion of His true humanity!) Once again; your arguments make the Jews out to be basically good and innocent because of their "Old Testament Law / institution". But this is furthest from the truth.

GE:

First question is: What is Paul under "*Judaism*" referring to? To Old Testament Law? To insist he does, is to unanswerably be dishonest! For Paul writes of a "*contemporary*", "*Judaism*", which he saw himself (before his conversion) the best example of. Does Old Testament Law and belief (or practice) demand, or command, to *waste the Church of God*, for example?

Paul explicitly states he was a "*Judaist*", "*being a zealot of my ancestral tradition*" – it therefore must have been something VASTLY different from being a believer under the Old Dispensation / Old Testament / Old Ministration / Old Covenant / Old Testament **Faith!**

EB:

BINGO! THIS IS WHAT I HAVE BEEN SAYING!!!  
What I SAID was that the Law was bondage similar to paganism; because under either, man was condemned; unable to keep the Law – which is otherwise "good and holy and just". That is NOT the same as (saying) "the Law is paganism"!

GE:

If the whole context of the whole Letter could **vary**, could sometimes be as we have called it 'Jewish', or could sometimes be as we have called it 'Gentile', or neither, or both, then the inference is impossible, that because of the whole context being invariably 'Jewish', 4:10 must also be 'Jewish', that is, should also be speaking of "bondage under the LAW" (even while describing it as "*bondage under the principle of the WORLD*"). If the whole context of the whole Letter could **vary**, then the inference that "the Law" is the "*weak and beggarly principle of the world*", will be impossible. Then it has become impossible that the Sabbath is the weak and beggarly principle of the world par excellence!

Let us return to our question above, 'How do they do it?' This is EB's good example of how they do it, "Here, we see the WHOLE THEME is Paul's past under THE LAW, and his current dealings with people trying to bring the gentiles under THE LAW!

This is no discussion ("specifically"; let alone!) of the "paganism" they were once under, before becoming

Christians. Paul USES that as a comparison with the bondage they were being brought under ...".

**WHICH, of the Two 'Types of Bondage', are Implied in 4:7-11?**

EB by implication allows there are **two** 'types' of bondage – he will admit. Both 'types' cannot be a bondage 'under the Law' like with "Paul's past under THE LAW", otherwise Paul will not "USE that as a comparison". The ONLY question remaining is, WHICH, of the two 'types' of bondage, is implied, and WHERE, in the context? And it must be soon discovered from the CONTEXT, that our 'only question remaining', was a false question!

It is crucial that one at this very point may discover the true yet subtle difference there is between any 'types' of 'bondage'. For though Paul in 4:3 calls his own bondage a "bondage under the first principles of the world", yet it was a bondage "under the Law" by the very nature of things!

Paul doesn't refer to himself merely, but to his kinsmen, the "Hebrews", as were they all, "under the Law" while having been "under bondage to the first principles of the world"! So in 4:3 in the end Paul means his, and his fellow-Jews', bondage under the Law, and calls and equates it, with the bondage of being "under the elements of the world". That should be clear.

EB, do I see you acknowledge? Do I hear you say, "Bingo! That is what I have been saying all the time!"? I do!

Can this induction be found in agreement with the whole context? "The conclusion contains more information than the premises." (Collins)

4:3 then, explains the full Chapter 3 – it states emphatically the condemnation of all men – of "the world" – on strength of God's Law, and so confirms it God's Law. It in fact

confirms God's Law while it states emphatically the justification of all men saved, saved on strength of God's faithfulness without the Law.

4:3 already contains all this information, and brings it home as an awakening truth. Who will disagree? No one dares, or he would make of God the liar!

So 4:3 speaks of man's bondage under the first principles of the world for what it really is: his bondage under the LAW! It speaks of a bondage not only of "Paul's past under THE LAW", but of all men's past – of their whole life – WITHOUT the Law!

Then to say "the WHOLE THEME is Paul's past under THE LAW, and his current dealings with people trying to bring the

gentiles under THE LAW", comes short in many respects, and is even less than a half truth – it proves itself a one-sided, misleading, statement.

EB's explanation therefore contradicts itself,

"Here, we see the WHOLE THEME is Paul's past under THE LAW, and his current dealings with people trying to bring the gentiles under THE LAW! ... This is no discussion ("specifically"; let alone!) of the "paganism" they were once under, before becoming Christians", because here we see the WHOLE THEME is much greater than Paul's past under the Law, and surpasses his current dealings with people trying to bring the gentiles under THE LAW! For "the WHOLE THEME" of Paul's, implies and includes every conceivable 'bondage', whether of "under the Law", or, "of the "paganism" they were once under".

This is no discussion ("specifically"; let alone!) of either the "paganism" they were once under, before becoming Christians, or, of any "current dealings with people trying to bring the gentiles under THE LAW!"

One is forced by itself, to reject the whole of EB's proposition for being too narrow, one-sided and extremist, and to say, Paul (in 4:8-11) mentions the Galatians' CURRENT practice, to "once again", "return", to their "FORMER" 'type' of bondage 'they were being brought under', "before becoming Christians", for this reason simply, that Paul 'compares' THIS, the Galatians' 'new type of bondage', not, with THEIR own bondage of before, but with his OWN

bondage of before, that was a bondage of his whole tribe as of all men without distinction UNDER THE LAW OF GOD, a bondage AS OF, "under the first principles of the world"!

In 4:3 it in the end turned out to be a return to bondage under the Law as any and all relapse would! Just so in 4:8-11 it turns out to be a return to the pagan *no-gods* of the Galatians' former status NEVERTHELESS a status and *bondage* under the reach and condemnation of the Law.

### A 'Contrast in Faith'

GE:

This came to mind, referring your statement, BR,

*"6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba! Father!*

*7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God."*

*This is the "conversion" moment - when the lost becomes born again - an adopted child of God. It is a 'contrast in faith' between the lost state and the saved state. It is not a contrast between the saved OT saint and the saved NT saint as many have vainly hoped in recent years."*

These verses contain a historic moment, in which, and by which, a world-order had been changed – and in that sense, had become a 'contrast in faith' between the lost state all men find themselves in / under, and the saved state they may find themselves in or under "in Christ"! Herein had become true "the Promises of God" and "the Blessing of Abraham". "Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God".

One becomes a "son" IN THE "SEED", "an heir through God"!

God is faithful. God "promised" Abraham that in his "Seed", "all nations", shall be "blessed". God had made true His Promises. Whoever now is "in Christ", is, of the "Seed", and is, "heir" to "the Promises of God". Pertaining Paul's intentions in writing this Letter to the Galatian Churches it says: One cannot become "son" or "heir" through the help of "works of the Law" or the Law itself – no physical changes will change the fact one is not 'through the Law', the "son", or 'according to the Law', the 'heir', for by fact and feat of Law, only One is this "Seed", the Son,

Jesus Christ, Heir Elect of God. 'Genealogically', one could say, and 'legally', Jesus Christ is the Son of God – no one born "of the flesh"! All the rest must be born in Him through the Spirit, in order to be 'reckoned sons'.

This was the error and the sin of the Galatians, that this, went against their "desire" – against their own will; the Gospel wasn't good enough for them! They had to earn their salvation; they had to adorn their justification by own achievement. The offence of Christ and faith they were unprepared to pride themselves in, but were "lured", "mesmerised", "delighted", "bewitched" by the mature, conclusive and austere science and Wisdom of the world. It seemed to Paul they were a hopeless case as far as the grace, faith and freedom of the Gospel were concerned – they "wanted / desired / insisted" to be "entangled / bound / enslaved", alas, "AGAIN", under the yoke of the "weak and beggarly principles" of the merciless, cold, dead, "by nature not gods of the world" of "days, months, seasons, years", only eventually through the merciless, cold and dead mutilation of the flesh, to seal their eternal lot and be cut off from Christ.

EB had this inserted after he presented 3:10: "3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the CURSE: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. [i.e. keeps sabbaths but not sacrifices; etc. does not keep the rest of the Law ABSOLUTELY PERFECTLY.]"

One can easily see how far he is off the mark. His remark is an unwarranted deduction and a false accusation. There are none, not guilty; no one who "continues in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them". So how are any, justified and saved? By grace through faith alone, of course! Which means, none are saved or justified "by the works of the Law". And that shall mean as well, none are saved or justified 'by the Law'. But this is only the one side of the coin.

The other side shows, that "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse", for the "cursed", are "continuing NOT in all things written". It says, "For as many as are of the WORKS"; it says not, 'for as many as are of the LAW'! It says, "under the CURSE"; it says not, 'under the Law'. No one DEPENDING on his "DOING them" – no on representing himself before God by his own "WORKS of the Law" done perfectly – "shall be justified", for the fault lies neither with the Law nor with his "doing", but with HIM! And circumcision rectified HIM, no bit. Man stays a sinner no matter how holy and just, or how unholy and sinful,

his works! (Paul, just like any Gentile, was "*in bondage under the principles of the world*".) The matter is with MAN. MORE than perfect obedience is what is required for this MAN, but the Perfect Man – "*the righteousness even of God*"! Then perfect obedience is required, "*to DO them*"; it says not, PART obedience is what is NOT required. Perfect obedience is required to the Law of God: it requires the Law of God is valid as ever before and man a sinner as ever before. But more is required – it requires the Gospel is as valid as ever before, for Christians, for Jews, for Gentiles, who are justified by neither the Law nor by the perfect works of the Law, but by faith, through grace – only. "*Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound!*" (Ro.5:20)

EB' therefore is an unreal and false supposition anyone would keep sabbaths but not sacrifices, etc. and would think he keeps the Law PERFECTLY. PERFECT OBEDIENCE is what is required, "*to DO them*" – AND MORE; it says not, PART obedience is what is NOT required. No one is able to obey perfectly the minutest part of the Law. Everybody is a Law-breaker by nature and in principle – not in sectional title hold!

**"From Pagan to Christian and Then to Judaistic"**

EB:

Read the rest of the passage (which I have quoted more than once, above), and see what "problem" Paul is dwelling on. I see a passing mention to their past background. What the focus was THEN; we see to be entirely from the Jews; but nevertheless "enslavement all over AGAIN". They did not have to be Jews. Jews were just as much under bondage, so to go from pagan to Christian and then to Judaistic, would be a "return" to basically the same state of "bondage" they were in before. You think that just because the Jews had the Law of God they were free of bondage or something. (Then you give a token admission that "some were lost". No, most were; except what was always called a "remnant"!)

So once again; deal with the rest of the passage; and stop taking those four verse in

isolation, and backing it up only with extra-biblical sources!

BR:

Simply doing a copy paste of 70 verses does not form a kind of "proof" in actually dealing with the "Details" of vs 8-11 in Chapter 4.

You need to actually "do some work" to show your point.

Deal with the "details". Admit to the specifics. Observe the points that are IN those texts as I pointed them out.

Ignoring them and then reposting chapter 2 and chapter 3 of Galatians verbatim is pointless.

EB:

In Acts 16 the very first thing Paul does is have Timothy circumcised.

In Gal 2 Paul points out that unlike Timothy – Titus was not compelled to be circumcised.

The point being – that neither OT nor NT ever commanded Gentiles to be circumcised. Further – as Acts 15, and Ephesians 2 point out – the act was not an isolated one – it meant that the person was now fully identified as a Jew in all respects.

So in Gal 5 Paul is addressing the argument of Gentiles that are buying into the argument of Acts 15 that you have to be circumcised to be saved. We can "know" this because it actually IN scripture – is recorded as a legitimate problem between Jews and Gentiles.

GE: This last paragraph of yours, EB, is – in my mind – exemplary of bad exegesis. "...in Gal 5 Paul is addressing the argument of Gentiles that are buying into the argument of Acts 15...". How you bring the two passages together must remain a mystery, even IF Paul addressed the same 'argument'. The two Sources are unrelated; the two events are unrelated; the authors are unrelated. Every possible corollary, the context, the time, the location, what have you, all differ and have nothing in common – nothing, not even and least of all, the subject – the 'argument'. Circumcision may have had something to do with the initial reasons for the Jerusalem Council, but on that Council received little or no attention. Then circumcision is in no way whatsoever the subject-matter of contention in the passage Galatians 4:8 to 11. You claim it is but it isn't. Then you use your thing claimed

to substantiate your thing claimed. Or you reason the whole context is somehow about circumcision so circumcision is also in here. Or you reason all sin is bondage under the Law so the Sabbath should be in here because the Sabbath is bondage under the Law, therefore behold: The Sabbath is a weak and beggarly principle.

EB:

So in Gal 5, Paul is addressing the argument of Gentiles that are buying into the argument of Acts 15 that you have to be circumcised to be saved. We can "know" this because it actually IN scripture - is recorded as a legitimate problem between Jews and Gentiles."

GE:

No, EB, in Gal 5, Paul is addressing the argument of Gentiles that are buying into the argument of their "*false brethren*" who "*bewitched / deluded / tempted / deceived / caused them to buy into*" the "*weak and beggarly principle*" of, and "*zeal*" for, '*disobeying the truth*' . . . "that you have to be circumcised to be saved", or are saved as long as you are circumcised, no matter what sins you commit; even if *again slaving under and venerating the by nature no gods of the weak and beggarly principles of the world, days, months, seasons, years*. We can "know" this because it actually IN this very scripture - is recorded as a legitimate problem between Gentiles themselves, WHO, put up a "*show*", "*in the flesh*" as were it possible to also "*bewitch / delude*" God; as were it possible to make Him '*buy into*' their "*boasting*" of having obtained righteousness by "*the works of the Law*"!

Dare one challenge EB in his muddled thinking, retorts he, "Your arguments make the Jews out to be basically good and innocent because of their "Old Testament Law/institution"; then EB is in his element, and rails paragraphs on end, "Then the rest of the New Testament is to be thrown out. The Jews were justified by the Law; . . ."

BR:

Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

NOTHING like that is EVER recorded about "Love for God" or "Love for your neighbor" or "keeping the Ten Commandments" or

"Thou shalt not murder" or "Keeping the Ten Commandments" or "Honor Christ the Creator's Holy Day".

Hence -- There is one way to equivocate (as you seem to want to) between circumcision of gentiles in Gal 5 and the authorized legit practices in Romans 14 - since circumcision is not mentioned in Rom 14 as something valid for gentiles. INDEED it was NOT something applicable to gentiles in EITHER OT or NT.

As for the Acts 15 argument that you must "do this to be saved" There is no such argument made about the annual feast days of Romans 14 OR about the pagan "days, months seasons and years" of Gal 4.

In Gal 4 they are condemned EXPLICITLY because they are the "weak and elemental things of THIS world pertaining to things which are by NATURE not gods at all".

How much easier could this be EB?

EB:

Don't think I'm too stupid to know what I said!

BR:

Yes indeed your argument has been to try to get the OBJECT that is being identified in Gal 4:8-11 to CEASE to be the pagan "days, months, seasons and years" of emperor worship -- that are being called the "weak and elemental THINGS of this World.. things that are by NATURE not gods at all" and then substitute IN THEIR PLACE -- The Law of God by repeatedly arguing "What I SAID was that the Law was bondage; similar to paganism." That should be clear enough by now - so that "we all get it".

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. 9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods.

Now here you 'want' to claim that these gentile Christians who WERE pagan and are NOW Christians did NOT have a time in their life - BACK - "At THAT TIME" where they "DID NOT KNOW God" and were in fact SLAVES to that those idols - false gods "which by NATURE are NO gods". Interesting how you claim this is NOT PAGANISM in your myopic mission to recast the entire book of Galatians as a john-one-note letter from Paul. AND WHAT is the danger - they are "turning BACK" to be "ENSLAVED ALL OVER

AGAIN"? Even The most careless reader could not have failed to "get the point".

EB,

And once again; you are interpreting the passage by that ONE verse; and throwing the rest of the text away. You are the one turning it into a "john-one-note" as you call it.

BR:

Quite the opposite – I am allowing for the obvious case that Paul addresses multiple problems in the letter to the Galatians. You are stuck in the wooden model of insisting on -recasting vs 8-11 so that it goes back to the problem of "judaizers" instead of REALLY dealing with the Gentile problems of coming OUT of paganism and then "GOING BACK AGAIN" the problem of "TURNING BACK AGAIN" the problem of "things that are by NATURE not gods at all" – the problem of the pagan system of "weak and elemental things of this world" -- something Paul NEVER says of God's Word.

EB:

Like I said before; this should be its own epistle, then.

BR:

ONLY if you could actually show that Paul always did a Johnny-one-note one-problem letter when he wrote to the churches instead of allowing himself to address MORE than one problem when writing.

So far you have failed to show that your one-problem-only letter idea – is ever anything Paul did – in all of time.

The subject in vs 8-11 is TURNING BACK AGAIN to the SAME weak and elemental things of THIS WORLD that they were ONCE enslaved to back "WHEN THEY DID NOT KNOW GOD".

Turning to things that are "BY NATURE not gods at all".

EB:

No; they did not have a time in their lives before when they were Jews. Yes they did have a time in their lives when they were pagan. And yes; this was "bondage".

BR:

You know, I think we are making some headway here.

And they were in a condition "When they did not KNOW God" where they were NOT reading God's Word but were practicing PAGANISM.

They were worshipping those "THINGS that were by NATURE not gods at all".

They were bound by pagan things that are distinctively "The WEAK and elemental things of THIS WORLD" (not the Holy Just and

good Law of God that is "Spiritual" Ro. 7) NOW in Gal 4 they are "TURNING BACK AGAIN" to those things. Merging them into their Christian lifestyle.

Paul says that this is fatal to their salvation. "I fear lest we have labored with you IN VAIN".

EB:

But then those who were Jews were ALSO in "bondage".

BR:

Indeed – TWO problems – not one. And in addressing the problems of the Jews Paul never calls the Word of God -- or what they were obeying "The WEAK and elemental thing of THIS world" nor even "The THING that was by nature no gods at all".

Those explicit terms for paganism are NEVER used in all of scripture to apply to God's Word NOR even to someone keeping God's Word!

EB:

So for those who were pagans, to become Christian; but then veer off into Judaism (for the purpose of gaining justification); it would NOT be a "return" to "PAGANISM".

BR

That is correct it would NOT be a "turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things of THIS world" for God's WORD is NEVER called that -- though it would be bondage.

This is why in EVERY case where Paul is CLEARLY talking about the "be circumcised to be saved" argument HE NEVER calls this "a TURN to the WEAK and elemental things of this WORLD" and he NEVER calls it "scriptural commands – things that are by nature not of god at all".

For those kinds of condemnation – Paul explicitly addresses the pagan practices – practiced by pagans "At a time when they did not know God at all".

So Paul condemns the Paganism of emperor worship with its worship of "days, months seasons and years" -- the worship of "THINGS that are by nature not gods at all" via the "Weak and elemental things OF THIS WORLD". You then SWAP OUT that pagan system that HE said they "were turning to BACK AGAIN" – and you INSERT in its place, quote: "Jews who thought they were keeping the LAW (of GOD) and gaining justification". Hoping to label IT the SAME as Paul is labeling the FORMER pagan practices of the gentiles – you show your view of it – but I urge that Paul NEVER uses those labels for the Word of God NOR EVEN for Jews who are OBSERVING the Word of God



– not ever. They are EXCLUSIVE to the PAGAN practices of the Gentiles AT a time BACK when they did not know God. And Paul explicitly speaks of a TURNING BACK AGAIN to those very THINGS.

So the contrast between the time when they DID NOT know God and the present time now when they DO know God and are KNOWN BY God is clear. The PAGAN days vs. the CHRISTIAN days of each of these GENTILE Believers.

EB:

Emperor worship is not mentioned anywhere in the passage. At least I "swap" in something that is discussed throughout the passage! I don't just pull something out of nowhere because it looks like it fits better.

BR:

Neither is the Creator's Seventh-day Sabbath – but the Emperor Worship problem of PAGANS DID use the EXACT formula Paul gives in Gal 4 and NO OTHER text does!! We have already been over that ground.

GE:

I think there is something important not to be misunderstood, for the sake of proper perspective, here. I have already referred to it above. There I made the point that there are more than one 'circumcision'. There is the circumcision God commanded and ordained – the Abrahamic covenant sign. It pledged the Blessing of Abraham and the Promises of God "according to the flesh" would come to the Israel of God "in the flesh". ("He who does not believe that Christ came in the flesh", said John, "is anti-christ!") God made true that Promise through and in Jesus Christ, and hence: "the circumcision of Christ not made with hands", "the circumcision of the heart", whereby a man if born again enters into the Faith of Jesus Christ. These are the two 'circumcisions' of the **Scriptures** and of the command and Faith of God.

The physical circumcision was taken by any man – **not only by Jews**, EB! – and was corrupted into a faithless and arrogant means to impress God with, through the works of the flesh, posing to be Jews eligible to the *Blessing of Abraham* and the *Promises of God* while denying the very faithfulness of God in that He had made true His Word in Jesus Christ – rejecting the Christ, and insisting on self-righteousness – the righteousness by and of works – instead. This was the 'circumcision' of **Judaism**.

Now mark, that the circumcision of Judaism in actual fact as well as in principle, does not belong to 'some Hebrews'

exclusively. And if belonging to 'some Hebrews', it belonged to them while and for being unbelievers, while and for being **pagans**, and haters of God – NOT, while they were or for them being believers or "*the Israel of God*"! So that, to believe and practice this 'circumcision' – in a certain sense – does in fact amount to the 'paganism' BR and I have in mind, as well as the 'Judaism' EB has in mind!

This in fact was the very 'circumcision' with which the Galatians adjured their idolatry. The two abominations were mingled into – as I have said elsewhere – "The Great Galatian Gyle"!

Refer Conversation on Romans 14, Appendix to Book 4.4.

EB:

(Referring to BR: "The PAGAN days vs. the CHRISTIAN days of each of these GENTILE Believers") What "CHRISTIAN DAYS"? Now; you're adding something to the text that is not there at all! Ah! That is something! The Sabbath and all other "*days*" of the Scriptures belonged to God Unchangeable and One, and so during the Old Testament Dispensation were as 'Christian' as their having come to fulfilment in the One Promised through the sacrifice and resurrection of Himself "in Sabbath's-time", was 'Christian'! Therefore BR has every right to call the Old Testament holy days – days 'set apart' to the service and purpose of the coming Christ – "the CHRISTIAN days". They were all 'Christian' they all having been eschatological!

BR:

I am merely pointing out the contrast in the lives of these gentile believers between the days when they were pagan and the days when they were Christian. Gal 4:11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. EB likes to pretend Paul is saying "OBSERVE those days if you want – but do it while thinking the thoughts I tell you to think". But in fact there is No such "open door" to OBSERVING the pagan days of emperor worship where "days, months, seasons and years" are observed -- is given to the church of Galatia.

EB:

No; he's not saying "observe the days if you want to".

BR:

Presto! We now have the smoking gun handed to us by EB himself

EB:

So while Paul gives the Romans (as well as the Colossians) liberty; he tells the Galatians

that they have been bewitched; and had better avoid the practices; or Christ will profit them nothing. They faced a danger the others did not.

BR:

Here is the point where EB now says what I have been accusing him of saying all along.

He fully admits that his logic would twist Gal around to the point that the VERY PRACTICE defended in Rom 14 is being CONDEMNED in Gal 4!!

EB argues that Paul ALLOWS in Romans 14 what he will not tolerate in Gal 4.

EB confesses that his logic has Paul accusing the Gentiles of Gal 4 of losing salvation for observing the SAME practices as those in Romans 14!!

A more complete failure of E's position could not have been stated.

EB:

But who is DOING the compelling? Gentiles? Did pagans ever try to get their fellows who had become Christian to be circumcised? No; clearly the ones DOING the compelling would be JEWS! Sorry; but nice try.

GE:

(I took this point up to another point above, so here is a duplication of it.)

"Who is DOING the compelling?" A false question! Paul said, nobody did any 'compelling'! We're back to where we started. And he specifically said the Jews did no compelling! Paul doesn't ask, "who is DOING the compelling?". He doesn't ask, 'Who is compelling you to be circumcised?'. It would have been ridiculous of Paul to have asked, because he is right here saying Timothy wasn't circumcised, and that no one was forced to be circumcised. So it is ridiculous you still insist and persist asking, Who? compelled circumcision!

Paul asked, "*Who bewitched you?*" And that is most significant, because to "*bewitch*" was in much the same way exactly what Paul accused the Galatians of doing in 4:10, "*to divine*", "*paratehrosfi*". Now here you've given me and BR one more clue as to of what nature the Galatians' relapse was, namely, that is was a relapse into their former heathen, gentile, pagan, "*bewitched*" and "*divined*" idolatry!

Thanks E!

Hey BR, you heard?

EB:

And the Judaizers were similarly "fascinated"; by their works-righteousness, and belief that God was obligated to send them the Messiah for their own selfish reasons; and ESPECIALLY "mislead by false arguments". You can't tell me they weren't "betwitched" in some fashion when they screamed and gnashed their teeth demanding Christ to be crucified; and even appealing to Caesar! All of this over "the Law". So thank you for admitting my point!

GE:

EB, here you say what I have tried to explain all along: "And the Judaizers were similarly "fascinated"; by their works-righteousness, and belief that God was obligated ...". Reckon, they did THIS, with their circumcision! It is only as to the purpose of their doing so that we still differ. I say the Galatians "by their works-righteousness" through circumcision, 'believed' that they 'OBLIGATED God' to accept their idolatry – their former worship of their old, pagan, gods they now have returned to – which you won't accept. Instead, you maintain, the Galatians by their 'fascination' with, or 'bewitchment' by, 'the Judaizers' through their circumcision-doctrine, 'believed' that they 'OBLIGATED God', "to send them the Messiah for their own selfish reasons". With the view to – of course – "their works-righteousness", 'under the 'bondage' of the Law!

Point of agreement therefore: we both believe the Galatians' "belief" was, "that God was obligated". Only concerning the actual subject-matter of the passages, 4:7-11 and 5:1-2, your creation applies aptly to the way you have "betwitched" Paul, obliging him to talk of Judaism!

BR

EB does a good job of pointing out many of the OTHER points made in OTHER texts in the book of Galatians.

He is just choking on the idea that Paul can talk about anything other than the problem with Judaizers once he gets on that topic.

And "now" EB has admitted that what is APPROVED in Romans 14 is CONDEMNED in Gal 4:8-11.

An amazing confession when you realize that what is APPROVED in Romans 14 – is done so in a way so as to CONDEMN anyone that disapproves of it. AND it is done in a "general way" so that the instruction of Romans 14 is NOT limited to Christians in Rome any

more than Romans 3 is limited to "Christians in Rome during the first century". Bottom line – E's argument has run aground.

EB:

In Acts 16 the very first thing Paul does is have Timothy Circumcised. In Gal 2 Paul points out that unlike Timothy – Titus was not compelled to be circumcised. The point being – that neither OT nor NT ever commanded Gentiles to be circumcised. Further – as Acts 15, and Ephesians 2 point out – the act was not an isolated one – it meant that the person was now fully identified as a Jew in all respects.

So in Gal 5 Paul is addressing the argument of Gentiles that are buying into the argument of Acts 15 that you have to be circumcised to be saved. We can "know" this because it actually IN scripture – recorded as a legitimate problem between Jews and Gentiles.

This all the FURTHER proves the point I was making there. Paul has Timothy circumcised; but tells the Galatians that if they are circumcised; Christ will be of "no profit" to them! This is how "observances" can be "forbidden" to some; but not to others. The Galatians; apparently WERE legalizing these Jewish practices (e.g. "buying into the argument that you have to be circumcised to be saved"--your words); so Paul steps in and forbids them; because they are in danger of compromising the Gospel of Christ through them; unlike the Gentiles in Acts, Romans and Colossians; who were therefore granted more liberty.

GE:

EB, you nearly made your most observant remark till now, "The Galatians apparently were legalizing these Jewish practices ...".

Just a pity you cannot perceive the Galatians ostentatiously were legalizing their, PAGAN practices, with the Judaistic '*works of the Law*' of circumcision, "compromising the Gospel of Christ

through" doing so; so Paul steps in and forbids them!

EB:

Quoting BR: "NOTHING like that is EVER recorded about "Love for God" or "Love for your neighbor" or "keeping the Ten Commandments" or "Thou shalt not murder" or "Keeping the Ten Commandments" or "Honor Christ the Creator's Holy Day"."

EB:

"Love", "murder"; no. Those are universal commands. But "days"; YES, right in this passage; and the influence of "days" is coming from the same place as the influence of "you must be circumcised to be saved"! NOW; we're finally getting somewhere with the context!

GE:

In fact! "Days"; YES, right in this passage (4:10, 5:1)! And the influence of "days" is coming from the same place as the influence of "you must be circumcised to be saved" (5:2)

"The same place ..." – not "days", or circumcision for that matter, from the Old Testament! But both – "*days / elements / not-gods*" and circumcision – "from" both – 'paganism'; and, "from", idolatrous Judaism. In fact, directly from "*Judaism*", came circumcision – the circumcision of paganism and idolatry! Both, "from" OUTSIDE Christian Faith; both, "from" outside INTO, 'Christianity-new-TYPE', "*spoiling*" TRUE Christianity, brewing and botching every conceivable "*element*" "*of the world*" and "*Judaism*" into '*The Great Galatian Gyle*'. No wonder Paul judged, "*You are cut off from Christ!*"

BR:

There is no way to equivocate (as you seem to want to) between circumcision of gentiles in Gal 5 and the authorized legit practices in Romans 14 – since circumcision is not mentioned in Rom 14 as something valid for gentiles. INDEED it was NOT something applicable to gentiles in EITHER OT or NT.

GE:

But important to notice here and to remember elsewhere, is that 'circumcision', or, "*mutilation of the flesh*" as Paul somehow calls it, indeed was something valid, and, 'applicable', and, in fact was, a precondition for initiation, into JUDAISM! As, into paganisms of all sorts!

EB's idea that circumcision, was always Old Testament and / or Jewish, is incorrect. And it is also incorrect to think that

Judaism, was an exclusively Jewish thing. Truth is, **countless Gentiles were fascinated and seized by Judaism's philander with paganism and idolatry** (even today are).

One is forced to categorize where Judaism belongs. It does not belong to Old Testament faith or practice; it belongs to, and it belongs with, paganism; to idolatry; to witchcraft. This question once settled, not much difficulty remains with any of the other aspects of our single question: Where do Sabbaths belong: to Old Testament faith and practice; or to Judaism? If not to Judaism, Sabbaths cannot belong to or with paganism; but must belong to and with Christian Faith and practice! Therefore it is impossible Paul could have had Sabbaths in mind, writing, "*days*" in Galatians 4:10. And therefore again, Paul must have had pagan "*days*" in mind, writing in Galatians 4:10!

EB:

Apparently; circumcision was not an issue in Romans; so it wasn't mentioned. Still; while circumcision wasn't "applicable" to gentiles; you yourself (BR) showed that it wasn't usually FORBIDDEN to them; as we see in Acts.

BR:

As for the Acts 15 argument that you must "do this to be saved". There is no such argument made about the annual feast days of Romans 14.

EB:

If they were told not to let anyone JUDGE them over them; then apparently whoever was harassing them WAS saying one must do them to be saved!

GE:

Yes, I think you're right, EB. That's why the one thought more of himself than of the other: pride, haughtiness. Just mind that you're talking about Romans 14 now, and not about Galatians. But if you are talking about Galatians, then I must say, you're wrong ... and yes, also not wrong. Because the Galatians did think of themselves the one better than the other! And alright, there was this harassing going on in Galatians too – and some judging, but totally of another kind, so that in Romans, it is Paul who intercedes for the observers – of both sides – and who tells them they should not judge ONE ANOTHER because everyone does it "*to the Lord*". But in Galatians Paul is the big judge, telling the Galatians no one is to *benefit*, but everyone is damned by what he was doing, "*cut off from Christ*" by the circumcision they, practiced, not to the Lord's honour, but to tempt and insult Him in the face. They *worshipped, not-gods,*

*all over again*, remember! "*NOW*", and while "*having (them)selves circumcised*"; while having themselves "*entangled all over again with the yoke of bondage*": - "*Days you divine, and months, and seasons, and years*"! Then think you can mutilate your flesh 'to the Lord, to the Lord, to the Lord!' and live to crow and rant your feigned freedom? "*You are fallen from grace; cut off from Christ . . . foolish Galatians!*"

Take a look at the Baal priests of Elijah's day! What fools! Here are the Baal priests of Paul's day. And so we find the Baal priests of our own day, still, and with us, who will give their lives to kill Gods Word in devotion to their day of worship!

BR:

About the pagan "days, months seasons and years" of Gal 4. In Gal 4 they are condemned EXPLICITLY because they are the "weak and elemental things" of THIS world pertaining to things which are by NATURE not gods at all". How much easier could this be EB?

EB:

They were condemned because they were by nature BONDAGE; just as trying to justify oneself by the works of the Law (Jewish days, circumcision, etc) was ALSO "BY NATURE" bondage! Remember, it's the "trying to justify oneself" part that is "bondage/weak and elemental"; not the Law itself!

GE:

EB always improving on the Word of God! Don't remind us of your misconceptions, EB; rather you "remember" Paul's words as they are! The Word here does not speak of "Jewish days, circumcision, etc.", as "ALSO "BY NATURE" bondage". The Word here is neither about "trying to justify oneself", nor about "the Law itself". (EB once again making of God's Law, "bondage"! It is not "the "trying to justify oneself" part that is "bondage/weak and elemental" here; it is the "*by-nature-not-gods . . . the weak and beggarly elements / principles / principals / rulers / lords / gods . . . you when you knew not God . . . slaved under / served / worshipped . . . divined / superstitiously observed*", "that is "bondage". And these pagan 'gods' are "condemned because they were by nature" what they were in practice: "*Days, months, seasons, years*", "*divined / worshipped / superstitiously observed . . . desired / lusted after*". The "*spell / enchantment / bemusement / bewitchment*" these TIME-

DESTINY-GODS had over the Galatians, was the BONDAGE they were AGAIN being brought UNDER!

BR:

Yes indeed EB, your argument has been to try to get the OBJECT that is being identified in Gal 4:8-11 to CEASE to be the pagan "days, months, seasons and years" of emperor worship -- that are being called the "weak and elemental THINGS of this World... things that are by NATURE not gods at all" and then substitute IN THEIR PLACE -- The Law of God by repeatedly arguing "What I SAID was that the Law was bondage; similar to paganism."

EB:

And that right there shows that you are not even paying attention to what I SAY. (You are so busy snipping out phrases to try to cast me as speaking against the Law). What I SAID was that the OBJECT was BONDAGE; and that Paul teaches them that both Jews trying to be justified by the Law as well as pagans worshipping that which was not God were BOTH in BONDAGE. To go from one to the truth to the other would be a "RETURN" to "bondage". Very simple; but you insist on twisting this point into being that THE LAW ITSELF is being called "bondage" or "the weak and elemental things of the world". And you simply repeat using that portion of my statement against me. (The whole statement is "What I SAID was that the Law was bondage; similar to paganism; BECAUSE under either; man was condemned; unable to keep the Law, which is otherwise 'good and holy and just'. That is NOT the same as 'the Law is paganism').

GE:

"That is NOT the same as 'the Law is paganism'." Then "that" does not belong with 4:8-10! Then "that" -- "'the Law'" -- is irrelevant and should not be considered or 'classed' with paganism that definitely is relative and considered in 4:8-10.

What then do you treat the Law for where Paul treats paganism? To class and consider the Law of the Sabbaths of the Law, with the "*days*" Paul treats on, and so inevitably, class and consider the Sabbaths of the Law and "THE LAW ITSELF" as and for "being called "bondage" or "the weak and

elemental things of the world" ... condemned"! For nothing else, or I am a fool.

Again, I say, you EB, are fooling around with the Word of God, and just so, **anybody**, who might try to maintain Paul **in any wise** thinks of the Law's Sabbath 'days' in Galatians 4:8-10! If the Law is relevant and involved, its Sabbaths are involved -- all of them. And then, all the Law and every of its Sabbaths and especially its Seventh Day Sabbath, are there, in 4:8-10, considered and classed by Paul, as "*bondage*" and as "*slaving*" under the "*principles*", of nothing less and nothing but, paganism -- nothing less and nothing but works-righteousness the hallmark of the paganism of humanism (which Paul in chapter 5 further elaborates on, it's "principles" already being present and perceivable in chapter 4). For paganism from start to finish and exclusively, is, what Paul there in 4:8-10 -- considering, judging, finding and condemning -- declares, the "*vanity*" of idolatry, the "*bemusement*" of "*worshipping*", "*not-gods*", indeed, is, what Paul there in 4:8-10, names specifically, "*nature's not-gods ... days, months, seasons, years being served / slaved / worshipped / observed superstitiously!*"

BR:

I am allowing for the obvious case that Paul addresses multiple problems in the letter to the Galatians. You are stuck in the wooden model of insisting on -recasting vs 8-11 so that it goes back to the problem of "judaizers" instead of REALLY dealing with the Gentile problems of coming OUT of paganism and then "GOING BACK AGAIN" the problem of "TURNING BACK AGAIN" the problem of "things that are by NATURE not gods at all" -- the problem of the pagan system of "weak and elemental things of this world" -- something Paul NEVER says of God's Word.

EB:

There are no "multiple problems". There is ONE problem addressed through the book. Once again; you ignore how Paul goes BACK into it after this verse. Pagans did not tell Christians that they must be circumcized to be saved! But in truth; you ignore that there was a Jewish problem at all; since they couldn't possibly have been under any kind of bondage with God's Law.

GE:

You're right, "There is ONE problem addressed through the book..." the pagan problem! Even where "Paul goes BACK into it after" these verses, and not

only "after this verse" of 4:8, he goes BACK even deeper into the paganism which the Galatians had fallen back under again as before they had come to a knowledge of God. This must be your fundamental error, EB, that you identify circumcision with exclusively Old Testament Law, and rigidly are unable to distinguish the Scriptures' circumcision from man-made laws which invariably are laws of transgression of and contempt for the true and pure Laws of God. Then you every time say it is man's inability and imperfection that something is wrong with, instead of seeing how the laws are different and unrelated and mutually destructive.

In a word, the circumcision Paul condemns in chapter 5, just like the "not-gods" of chapter 4, is not the circumcision of God's Law, but is the circumcision of idolatry just like the not-gods of chapter 4 are the gods of idolatry. Circumcision is not circumcision is circumcision!

Of course pagans told Christians that they must be circumcised to be saved! You read of that, here in Galatians! But in truth, you ignore that there was a Gentile problem at all since they couldn't possibly be under any kind of bondage other than God's Law. That's your insight, EB, that leaves much to be desired!

BR:

So far you (EB) have failed to show that your one-problem-only letter idea – is ever anything Paul did – in all of time.

EB:

This "johhny one note" thing is your concept. Paul's epistles have THEMES, or general topics. He mentions other problems in passing as they come up. But in Galatians, the whole topic clearly is Judaizers. Paul is basically saying "you were once under bondage as pagans; don't now fall into bondage under these Judaizers". It is so simple. It is not rocket science.

GE:

Could you contradict yourself worse?

"Paul's epistles have THEMES, or general topics. He mentions other problems in passing as they come up. But in Galatians, the whole topic clearly is Judaizers."

"Paul's epistles have THEMES, or general topics...", but, "...in Galatians, the whole topic clearly is Judaizers"!

Could you contradict Paul worse?

"Paul is basically saying "you were once under bondage as pagans". Then you say, he "is basically saying ... don't now fall into bondage under these Judaizers"", while he 'basically', i.e., in so many words, says: "*But now, after that you have known God ... how do you return again to the weak and beggarly lords / principles / principals under whom you force to come in bondage again? You headstrong go for divining days, months, seasons, years ... (inferring) the not-gods-of-nature!*"

You could not possibly contradict Paul worse!

No, it's not so simple – nor complex, because you, ADD, what not nearly IS there! Paul is basically saying "you were once under bondage as pagans; Paul is basically saying don't now fall into bondage; Paul is NOT basically saying, "under these Judaizers"! That is your complication, EB! Paul basically and simply says what he is basically saying, writing, "don't now fall into bondage under *"nature's not gods, the weak and beggarly principles, days, months, seasons, years – do not TURN BACK and serve / worship / venerate (them) AGAIN!"*

The possible truth, THAT, was, a "bondage under the Judaizers", is not mentioned at this point "in Galatians", yet! "the topic", is not "whole" yet, here in chapter 4, but is only completed in chapter 5.

Again: No, it's not so simple, and it is not rocket science, it 'clearly' is you, being obsessed and possessed with 'THEMES' and 'whole topics' of 'Jews' and 'Judaizers'. Paul is basically and actually saying, '*You were once under bondage as pagans; don't now fall back into it and think you can come away with it if you have yourself circumcised, because it won't help, you will be cut off from Christ; you will have fallen from grace.*' It is so simple.

BR:

The subject in vs 8-11 is TURNING BACK AGAIN to the SAME weak and elemental things of THIS WORLD that they were ONCE enslaved to back "WHEN THEY DID NOT KNOW GOD".

EB:

Now, you have to add to the text again. It does NOT say "SAME weak and elemental things". IT is the "Same" BONDAGE; through DIFFERENT "things"; including circumcision; which is definitely NOT the "same things" they had practiced before. NOW who is being "wooden"?

GE:

Look who blames! Just after you, EB, have 'added to the text again' with your "Judaizers", you accuse BR of 'adding to the text'. Now EB treats BR with the same disrespect he treats Paul.

BR writes: "The subject in vs 8-11 is TURNING BACK AGAIN to the SAME weak and elemental things." BR does not in the least pretend it is Paul who speaks or writes, but EB holly objects: "Now, you have to add to the text again. It does NOT say "SAME weak and elemental things"."

BR says the subject is the same, and the same subject it is, in Paul's very OWN words! And that's 'again', what the wise guy won't admit he is too proud, simply. No, this guy EB, has "to add to the text again", and "again", and, "again"! To whit: "I don't have time to argue the shifting sands of man's theories. I'm interested in what

the bible says on its own. ... that Paul was addressing problems of the Jews here." ETC. (Emphasis GE)

BR:

"Turning to things that are BY NATURE not gods at all". How easy can this be EB?

EB:

Is not a torah scroll a "thing" that "by nature is not God/a god"? Can it save? Can the words written on it save or justify? No; they only CONDEMN (Rom.7). The Jews were in the same bind as the pagans (Rom.3:2-20)!

GE:

Boring! Who's so leather-minded to ask? What's the pertinence to Galatians 4:7-11?

BR:

And they were in a condition "When they did not KNOW God" where they were NOT reading God's Word but were practicing PAGANISM. They were worshipping those "THINGS that were by NATURE not gods at all".

EB:

Did most Jews automatically know God? Especially those harassing Christians and saying they had to be circumcised to be saved? Are just HEARERS of the Law justified as

"knowing God"? Just going through the motions of the commandments of the Law of Moses?

BR:

They were bound by pagan things that are distinctively "The WEAK and elemental things of THIS WORLD" (not the Holy Just and good Law of God that is "Spiritual" Romans 7)

EB:

Did the Judaizers really follow this holy and just Law; though they pitched it at others? (Gal.6:13, Rom.2:17-27 John 7:19)

BR:

NOW in Gal 4 they are "TURNING BACK AGAIN" to those things. Merging them into their Christian lifestyle. Paul says that this is fatal to their salvation. "I fear lest we have labored with you IN VAIN".

EB:

What about those Jews who "believed on Christ" in John; yet when he exposed their true motives; turned on Him? What about all those in the Gospels who "walked no more with Him"? Are they "safe" because they are going back under the Law? Or have they returned to "bondage" too?

BR:

Indeed - TWO problems - not one. And in addressing the problems of the Jews Paul never calls the Word of God -- or what they were obeying "The WEAK and elemental thing of THIS world" nor even "The THING that was by nature no gods at all".

Those explicit terms for paganism are NEVER used in all of scripture to apply to God's Word NOR even to someone keeping God's Word!

EB:

No; but to someone trying to justify themselves by the works of the Law; that would be a different story; wouldn't it? Wouldn't you say that such a person's OWN works were "weak"; and his own sense of self-justification "of the WORLD"? Isn't he trusting in his own FLESH; which is like an idol, that "is no god at all"? Once again; you cannot deny that the Jews were just as much in bondage as the pagans.

BR:

That is correct it would NOT be a "turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things of THIS world" for God's WORD is NEVER called that -- though it would be bondage.

EB:

So you admit it would be "bondage". Why wouldn't it be the "weak and elemental things of the world"? That is what Paul is calling "bondage". Remember; the SUBJECT or OBJECT here is not "the Law" it is THEIR WORKS purportedly "of the LAW". It is basically the works of their flesh, just as much as the pagans. So this is "the weak and elemental things"; not the Law ITSELF.

BR:

This is why in EVERY case where Paul is CLEARLY talking about the "be circumcised to be saved" argument HE NEVER calls this "a TURN to the WEAK and elemental things of this WORLD" and he NEVER calls it "scriptural commands – things that are by nature not of god at all".

EB:

If you take the entire book in context; he IS. That is why you must try to separate this one verse from the rest. But then your "proof" that he "never" calls the works of the law "weak and elemental things" is taken to prove that the verse must be isolated from the rest in subject; and then this becomes your proof that he never calls the works of the Law "weak and elemental things". This is totally cyclical. You don't posit a statement, and fix it so that it is its own (and only) "proof"!

(Actually; as for "scriptural commands" (the law) being called "weak"; see Rom.8:3)

GE:

EB's disrespectful handling of the Scriptures! "... as for "scriptural commands" (the law) being called "weak"; see Rom.8:3 ..."

In Romans 8:3 and, 4, Paul says,

*"For what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* The Law was too weak to do what only God's love could do. That is the weakness of the Law, here in Romans 8:3.

You would not have done it have you not done it against the Sabbath, and consequently have done it for the sake of Sunday-worship.

In Galatians, however, Paul says, Galatians, *"How is it possible, that when you didn't know God, you served things which by nature are not gods (but weak and beggarly elements of the world), how is it you now, after you have known God, or rather, after you are known of God (who has the power to know His own, not like those dumb and deaf gods of yours), how is it you once again turn back to those weak and beggarly principles you so lust after you want to be in bondage under them all over again? Days you divine, and months, seasons, and years? You break my heart; have I worked so hard for your sakes for this – for nothing?"* That is the weakness of the no-gods of paganism, here in Galatians 4:7-11, which YOU, EB, says, is the Law's weakness, "the law ... being called "weak"! "

Now you still insist you never speak demeaning of the Law of God? You think any of us still believe your pretending one inch?

BR:

For those kinds of condemnation – Paul explicitly addresses the pagan practices – practiced by pagans "At a time when they did not know God at all".

EB:

And Jews were condemned for not [really] knowing God at all also! Knowing ABOUT Him, and going through the motions of "following commands" does not equate "knowing Him". So for the gentile converts to fall into that, would SPIRITUALLY be the same thing as their old life of paganism!

GE:

Another example of how 'infused with his own theories of what scriptures means', EB is! Apt illustration of 'the shifting sands' of his 'theories', how 'interested' he is 'in what the bible says on its own'; what 'the weight of scripture' is worth for EB.

BR:

So Paul condemns the Paganism of emperor worship with its worship of "days, months seasons and years" -- the worship of "THINGS that are by nature not gods at all" via the "Weak and elemental things OF THIS WORLD". You then SWAP OUT that pagan system that HE said they "were turning to BACK AGAIN" – and you INSERT in its place, "Emperor worship is not mentioned anywhere in the passage. At least I "swap" in something that is discussed



throughout the passage! I don't just pull something out of nowhere because it looks like it fits better."

Hoping to label IT the SAME as Paul is labeling the FORMER pagan practices of the gentiles – you show your view of it – but I urge that Paul NEVER uses those labels for the Word of God NOR EVEN for Jews who are OBSERVING the Word of God – not ever. They are EXCLUSIVE to the PAGAN practices of the Gentiles AT a time BACK when they did not know God. And Paul explicitly speaks of a TURNING BACK AGAIN to those very THINGS.

EB:

It's a CONTRAST of SPIRITUAL STATES. You refuse to understand this, and instead spend all your effort trying to label "my view". The Word of God is not given any label except "good and holy and just"; it's their rebellious STATE that is condemned; whether they are using pagan practices or the works of the Law.

GE:

BR does not deny these things, nor are they "my view" of yours from your off-pitch "total theme" song, EB, like pointed out to you by BR in the following,

BR:

There are no "christian days" ever mentioned. Whether one thinks they continued on the Jewish days or not; still, the debate is between Jewish days and pagan days. Either could become a stumbling block; including the Hebrew days if done compulsively to gain justification.

Notice that EB likes to pretend Paul is saying "OBSERVE those days if you want – but do it while thinking the thoughts I tell you to think". But in fact there is No such "open door" given to the church of Galatia to OBSERVING the pagan days of emperor worship where "days, months, seasons and years" are observed.

EB:

So while Paul gives the Romans (as well as the Colossians) liberty; he tells the Galatians that they have been bewitched; and had better avoid the practices; or Christ will profit them nothing. They faced a danger the others did not.

BR:

Here is the point where EB now says what I have been accusing him of saying all along. He fully admits that his logic would twist Gal around to the point that the VERY PRACTICE defended in Rom 14 is

being CONDEMNED in Gal 4!!

EB argues that Paul ALLOWS in Romans 14 what he will not tolerate in Gal4.

EB confesses that his logic has Paul accusing the Gentiles of Gal 4 of losing salvation for observing the SAME practices as those in Romans 14!!

A more complete failure of EB's position could not have been submitted.

EB:

WHAT??? Funny; you didn't quote ALL of my lengthy discussion of WHY he condemned it for some, but not others. But I do not see how you think this proves your view or is a "failure" on my part. This is nothing more than what I have been saying in these discussions; though it goes right over your head; and you just find other statements of mine to twist into "the Law is pagan". If anything; it is you who have failed; and now are forced to deal with these neglected points; but you really have nothing to say about it. Just some claim that I have failed; (set once again like some sort of trial; with a "smoking gun"; but you should be more concerned with own your stand before the judgment seat of God instead of judging others!) (GE: Now hear who is judging!) but you have just admitted that yes, Paul can condemn a practice in one place that he defends in another. It is the reason WHY a particular group is practicing it that is decisive. Once again; the sin lies not in the LAW itself; but in the MAN who attempts to justify himself by it. This was my point all along.

BR:

EB does a good job of pointing out many of the OTHER points made in OTHER texts in the book of Galatians. (GE: That's it – in a word!) He is just choking on the idea that Paul can talk about anything other than the problem with Judaizers once he gets on that topic.

And "now" EB has admitted that what is APPROVED in Romans 14 is CONDEMNED in Gal 4:8-11.

An amazing confession when you realize that what is APPROVED in Romans 14 – is done so in a way so as to CONDEMN anyone that disapproves of it. AND it is done in a "general way" so that the instruction of Romans 14 is NOT limited to Christians in Rome any

more than Romans 3 is limited to "Christians in Rome during the first century". Bottom line – EB's argument has run aground.

EB:

Oh, so this claim is supposed to be about ROMANS. Well; all I've said over there is that the issue is not judging over days and meats. Your argument is that these are annual days only (and I forgot what you did with the meats; we didn't really get that much into that).

But the PRINCIPLE is the same; and not only for then; but for now as well. This is what I have always said. (If I thought it was for Rome only; I never would have brought the passage up in these discussions and claim that you were violating them NOW). So once again; you project some idea on me that I never said. But once again; you have proven my view; not yours. I think it is your argument that has totally run aground; and you do not know WHAT to say anymore.

No one said the Jews were "the root of ALL evil". Pagan influence is mentioned in places in the NT. There is no contradictory "either-or" from my view. (It is you who keep making it that). The immediate overall context ... is Judaism (including "circumcision"). Once again; in the contexts, the ones BEING "bewitched" were "gentile"; but not the ones DOING the bewitching!

GE:

No one said the Jews were "the root of ALL evil", but you ARE saying ALL Jews were 'the root of evil', therefore "the ones DOING the bewitching" "were (not) "gentile"" – the Gentiles ALL – according to you – were only the poor innocent victims of the Jews.

To prove your claim, you say, "The immediate overall context ... is Judaism (including "circumcision")", actually intending, Old Testament circumcision! You falsely use the expression, "is Judaism"!

So the essence of our dispute has now been reduced to the question of 'context'. I have mainly been employed by the very subject from the beginning of our discussion, and have come to the exact opposite conclusion you had come to before we have even started, that the immediate overall

context is **Gentile paganism that included Judaism and its "circumcision"**; that the total error adds up to a **syncretism** AT THE COST of true Christianity. The Galatians' was NO Christianity that 'included' other religions; the Galatians' was paganism, that 'included' other religions like Judaism and **compromised, false**, Christianity, viz., the Galatians' religion was a 'syncretism' absolutely "*cut off from Christ*" and completely "*fallen from grace*".

To return your challenge, EB, Make of that, the observance of the Sabbath, or circumcision, or whatever '*Old Testament Law*! This has all along been your endeavour to prove and BR's and mine to disprove! "... this vital part of the text ..." – that exists nowhere but in your mind nevertheless reveals the true thrust of Paul's reasoning! No friend, it is you who, not realising what you're saying, keep ignoring this vital implication! What else is Paul trying to get into their stubborn heads than the danger and fact "Gentiles would try to get Christians to be circumcised in order to be saved"! That exactly was their "*bewitchment*"! "*(It, to be circumcised in order to be saved) profits not*", on the contrary, "*you're cut off from Christ*", concludes and declares, Paul! What more or besides does Paul attempt to teach these people? Nothing! With this observation of yours you admit the Gentiles were the bewitchers of the Galatians themselves – and not the Jews, and that – accordingly – the Galatians' falling away was back into their own old '*bondage*', only bonded and sealed the tighter, with their own and sinister, pagan, mutilation of the flesh.

It at this stage of our discourse again has become clear that, like in the case of Colossians 2:16-17, we also in Galatians 4:10 are overwhelmed by preconceived prejudices against the Sabbath merely. For, for what other reason than to bring the Sabbath in disrepute would it be claimed the Galatian Christians all over again returned to "Old Testament Law" and that "Old Testament Law" was that, when originally they were converted, they were converted from? This scheming already is being exposed as a wilful and evil attempt at perverting the Scriptures as well as the pure Gospel, only to get into a more advantageous position from where to justify the pagan practice of Sunday observance.

EB:

I was not part of any Sunday conspiracy.

GE:

You protest. Yet I may repeat what I've said above, that Galatians got interpreted to the discredit of the Sabbath Day by

people like yourself, who trying to set the "context" to "Jewish", covertly conspire against the Sabbath to the furtherance of Sunday-sacredness – consciously or unconsciously. As I said, the unwitting antinomians assist the Day of the Lord Sun so basely served to the ridiculing of Christian integrity and to the defaming of God's Sabbath Day. In this way you do make your little contribution, and do take part how insignificant it may seem, of an invisible yet universal 'Sunday conspiracy'. All your old 'arguments' again!

One: You're just ASSUMING, quote: "... there were OTHERS (Jews) which clearly did." You do not FIND that, in 4:7-11, or, in the context either before or after stating, 'Jews' who 'spread the falsity'. Stop importing your ideas into Paul's statements!

Two: You are out of bounds in CONTEXT, quote: "The fact that Paul is telling people not to JUDGE or let anyone JUDGE them shows that there were people going around compelling (through words of judgment)."

It, in chapter 4, is not "a fact"; not nearly! You're, Three, mixed up with Colossians 2.

Four: You gainsay Paul, and belie yourself, quote: "Paul is not asking. ... he knows who it is" "*who bewitched you*". "*You, o foolish Galatians*", is Paul's conclusion – he "is not asking"! "Jews", is EB's conclusion – EB "is not asking" either!

Paul (rhetorically) asked, "*Who bewitched you?*" And that is most significant, because to "*bewitch*" was in much the same way exactly what Paul accused the Galatians of doing in 4:10, "*to divine*", '*paratehreoſi*'. Now here you've given me and BR one more clue as to of what nature the Galatians' relapse was, namely, that is was a relapse into their former heathen, gentile, pagan, "*bewitched*" and "*divined*" idolatry! ... Thank you EB!

EB:

Oh, no you don't! You should have checked the Greek before trying this trick. Not only is "bewitched" not "paratero"; it has no more necessarily to do with "to divine" or "idolatry" than does that word. It is "baskaino" meaning to "malign", or (by ext.) to "fascinate" (by false representations)!

This means a simple misleading by false arguments; not any actual "pagan witchcraft".

Anybody misled into justifying themselves by the works of the Law in effect rejects Christ; crucifying Him anew, (He b.6:6, 10:29) and is thus "bewitched". Sorry; but you are still plugging meanings into English translated words despite the Greek word and the contexts.

GE:

EB using the word "*bewitched*" for '*paratehreoſi*' in 4:10, "So while Paul gives the Romans (as well as the Colossians) liberty; he tells the Galatians that they have been bewitched; and had better avoid the practices; or Christ will profit them nothing." But, protests EB above to my, correlating the words "*bewitched*" (*baskainohi*) in 3:10, and "*paratehreoſi*" in 4:10 ("Paul asked, "*Who bewitched you?*" And that is most significant, because to "*bewitch*" was in much the same way exactly what Paul accused the Galatians of doing in 4:10, "*to divine*", "*paratehreoſi*".

Now here you've given me and BR one more clue as to of what nature the Galatians' "*relapse*" was, namely, that is was a "*relapse*" into their former heathen, gentile, pagan, "*bewitched*" and "*divined*" idolatry! Again, thank you, EB, for this handy definition of what '*baskainohi*' can actually mean, namely, "to malign", or...to "fascinate". The heathen, gentile, idolaters, were much maligned and fascinated by their "*elemental no-gods*" of time, "*days, months, seasons and years*"! Very good!

Again, '*baskainohi*' is a word used in the NT but this once – too unordinary a word for the Judaizers' age old doctrine of salvation by works of the Law – and which, once more, here implies what I've adduced above, that this word, like '*paratehreoſi*', supposes heathen, gentile, pagan, "*bewitched*" and "*divined*" idolatry!

EB:

NEITHER necessarily supports "divined idolatry" exclusively, (you just gloss over my proof; try to turn it in your favor, and now just reiterate your unproven assertion); and do you have any support for you statement about it being "too unordinary"? Or are you just making up your own theory? (Keep in mind; even if it did refer to divination; we see in many places where the Jews' rebellion is called such things

and names associated with pagans!).

GE:

How do I “just reiterate (my) unproven assertion”? Do I “just mak(e) up (my) own theory”? You seem to forget I used your inducements! And do I “have any support for (my) statement about it (baskainoh) being “too unordinary”?” The New Testament uses it only once; so it is an unordinary word for the New Testament – our sole ‘support’ isn’t it?

BR:

Your attempt (EB) to obfuscate is noted.

The point remains – simply observing that BOTH systems are bondage does not serve to validate your attempt to turn the text of Gal 4:8-11 so that it STOPS referencing the weak and elemental things of paganism those THINGS that are by nature NOT gods at

all -- and bend it back on itself so that it now is in reference to scripture. The point remains that NO claim is EVER made by Paul that the things of God’s word are “THE WEAK and elemental things of THIS WORLD”.

The form of condemnation for the pagan practices selected by Paul in Gal 4:8-11 are NEVER said of the Jews, and NEVER said of the Word of God and NEVER said even of Judaizers! You seek to INSERT Christ’s own Holy day INTO the pagan system of honoring “days, months, seasons and years” AS IF both are the same thing and both are condemned in Gal.4. You also seek to CONDEMN in Gal 4 what you ADMIT is APPROVED in Romans 14.

A more devastating collapse of your position could not have been formulated.

GE:

But then BR and I say at a point Paul addresses the specific issue of the Galatians’ return to their former, pagan, state, and we say this ‘switch’ does NO harm to the trend or context.

BR:

Quoting EB, “Yes it does (harm the context); because you’re taking a PASSING REFERENCE (v.8); and projecting it onto the ENTIRE TEXT.” Here again we have utter failure to note the details in the discussion so far. The point made is that THE ENTIRE chapter can NOT be fitted into ONE single problem as you have tried to do. AS HAS ALREADY been pointed out – vs 1-7 address the GLOBAL problem for ALL mankind prior to Christ (and after for those who have not yet accepted Christ). Vs 8-11 addresses ONE specific problem of pagans-turned-Christian as they sought to BLEND pagan observances back into

Christian practices.

The PAGAN observances that are the WEAK and elemental things of THIS WORLD – the emperor worship observing “days, months, seasons and years” (Notice that the WEEKLY cycle is CONSPICUOUSLY missing from that list).

Then from 12-end Paul goes to ANOTHER problem – that of the Judaizers.

THREE levels of focus – THREE problems – THREE points addressed in that one chapter.

BR:

Quoting GE: “Now here’s what I had in mind when I started this topic:

*My conclusion from this Passage is, it reflects Sunday-observance, Sunday’s religious – superstitious and pagan just as it is today – “observation”, that tried to make its inroads into true Christianity, but which obviously must have failed, seeing the Church is never again reprimanded for the same heresy. It will be only in the second century that the SAME thing is seen as having found a foothold in Christianity, when we see Justin has embraced it with great affection.”* Certainly a good point. But to make that point you need to first get agreement to the obvious and plain fact that Paul IS addressing pagan practices being merged into Christianity in Gal 4:8-11. Something EB is dragging his heels on – no matter how obvious the text is about it and no matter how much church historians agree that this WAS a huge problem for the first century NT church. So we need to establish that first point before we can draw the corollary to changing the 4th commandment on behalf of “The Venerable day of the Sun”. To make that point you need to first get agreement to the obvious and plain fact that Paul IS addressing pagan practices being merged into Christianity in Gal 4:8-11.

It is true that any pagan system of worship could easily be labeled “elemental thing of THIS world” and “things that are by NATURE not gods at all” – However in the case of the very real problem of Emperor worship this “stand-alone” phrase found in Gal 4 “observing days, months, seasons and years” finds its perfect match! In other words -- it matches up BOTH on the count of being a pagan system whose source and origin (and substance) is perfectly fit for the labels Paul assign it (“by nature THINGS that are not gods at all”) AND it qualifies for the SPECIFIC practice of “observing days, months, seasons and years” -- nothing else comes close.

GE:

My whole attempt was at showing Galatians deals on pagan worship, BR; haven’t you read? Take the special example of the word ‘by divination observe’-‘paratehreh’. For Paul to react so, one could say, viciously, the Congregation had to have actually accepted and practiced these idolatrous ‘bewitchments’. But in view of the fact the same problem never during the first

century received attention again, it must be deduced the Church paid Paul due attention, and mended. This of course is more of a historical question, than a doctrinal.

Quoting BR, "So we need to establish that first point before we can draw the corollary to changing the 4th commandment on behalf of "The Venerable day of the Sun"."

You have said it for me too! Yes, we do in fact agree, and it is most rewarding!

To see just how Justin did precisely this changing the 4th commandment on behalf of the venerable day of the sun, only read his well-known claims!

Here's the most disturbing aspect of this very process, in that Justin perverted and corrupted the Scriptures in order to change the 4th commandment on behalf of the venerable day of the sun! Word for word and phrase for phrase he switched about and changed words and form and every grammatical and syntactical factor at interplay in the Scriptures, namely in Matthew 28:1. All modern Versions and 'Translations' of the Bible slavishly follow Justin's interpretation and version of this verse. One is forced to go to 'old' Versions like the KJV to get a better idea of what the text truly says.

The wangling and wrangling of the Scriptures don't end with Matthew 28:1. There in fact is scarcely ONE NT verse on the Sabbath or First Day of the week not TOTALLY corrupted in order to promote Sunday-worship and to discredit Sabbath-worship.

I would though, not bring in "EMPEROR" worship so strongly. It need not be emperor-worship in order to be just plain pagan idolatry, the worship of the 'god's of Hellenistic philosophy like the "*elements*" or "*first principles*", "*of this world*". The '*gods*' which Paul calls "*not-gods*" he enumerates in 4:10, these being the '*gods*' of TIME. The emperor at this stage in history had little or nothing to do with the "*worship*" Paul referred to.

EB

Oh, great. Just turn the text around and point it at those dreaded Sunday worshippers.

Funny; most who go to church on Sunday don't judge others for having a different day, but those who keep the sabbath are the ones judging and using the day more to compare themselves with others as "more obedient"; "I'm keeping more commandments than you"; etc. than seemingly for worshipping God. THIS I would say fits more with the "paratero" ("watch

scrupulously with evil intent") than what most Sunday worshippers do.

GE:

The old EB in a new garment. Where it used to be the baddies, the Jews, it now is "those who keep the sabbath"; and where he used to have the innocent pagans, he now has "most who go to church on Sunday". But he's not 'judging' anyone!

I'll tell you, EB – no use being shy or even dishonest about it – I do judge those who change God's Word in order to justify Sunday and condemn the Sabbath. But in the first place I judge and condemn the Sunday-worship of the Church as such, and the Church, for its Sunday-worship and Sunday-sacredness. God would judge me if I don't, because Sunday observance is pagan idolatry in the Name of Christ and Sabbath-neglect and Sabbath-opposition is rebellion against God and His providence!

To return to the specifics of our interest now, BR and I say at a point Paul addresses the specific issue of the Galatians' return to their former, pagan, state, and we say this 'switch' does NO harm to the trend or context.

EB:

Yes it does; because you're taking a PASSING REFERENCE (v.8); and projecting it onto the ENTIRE TEXT. Paul starts the passage talking about them being bewitched by people evidently teaching them "the works of the LAW" rather than "the hearing of faith"(3:1,2 . He then mentions HIS BACKGROUND in this legalistic faith; which he describes as "bondage" under a "tutor". Then in COMPARISON; he mentions THEIR background, serving "them which by nature are no gods". Now; they are "returning" to "bondage" of physical rituals and sacred days; rigorously "watched", but with "evil intent" (not done unto the Lord; for self-justification, etc.). Both Jews and pagans had these practices; and even though the Jews may have originally gotten theirs from God; they were still just as lost and in bondage under them. These things were only "tutors" anyway; as Paul just pointed out.

So if EITHER of those systems tried to impose their schemes on his Gospel; he would oppose it. The "institution" built around the Old Testament; while having its basis in God;

was still also perverted by man and his systems of self-justification. The two of you must stop confusing the INSTITUTION with the WORD OF GOD itself!

So to which set of rituals was Paul referring to? What has he been discussing all along? What were they bewitched with? "Receiving] the Spirit by the works of the Law; [not] the hearing of faith"!

GE:

And you base your 'entire theme' on dividing verses 8 and 9, and on assuming a 'total context' of 'Jews' and 'Judaizers' – both of which, are baseless and boneless. So you erect your flabby structure on a bottomless abyss.

Even were verse 8 "a PASSING REFERENCE", Paul himself in fact "project(s) it onto the ENTIRE TEXT". So does 5:1f directly infer the 'passing' section 4:7-11.

But the "PASSING REFERENCE" does not stop with verse 8 as you say – we have shown this before. The pericope strictly speaking even includes verse 6, and extends to verse 11.

Even Sunday-believing exegetes 'divide' the text so, or with minor variations; they don't end verse 8 with verse 8! The unitary section 'passes' with verse 11, but without losing its relativity to what follows right through to chapter 5!

The thought of verses 7-8 continues through verses 9-11, and for all the solid and sound reasons already given above.

Repetition won't in the end chop verse 9 from verse 8 – you need a much sharper axe for that!

You say, no, a 'Gentile context' is inadmissible because the trend so far had been and therefore must remain – equally exclusive as our view – 'Jewish'!

You, if WE restrict Paul to write the way HE wants to, do no different than us, and so you, restrict Paul. My question is WHY can Paul not talk about a local, contemporary, historical problem? The Galatians were in fact converted from PURE paganism – not from Judaism or ANY syncretism. They in fact returned to paganism – that certainly included Judaism, yes! But which in essence was pagan idolatry no less for the fact it included Judaism. Old Testament institutions nowhere feature and are nowhere implied! That is the bone of contention here – nothing else! All else is plain fact: the "*days, months, seasons, years*", were "*days, months, seasons, years*" of pagan idolatry squarely.

But EB, to end all controversy, just read yourself!

"Paul starts the passage talking about them (the Galatian Churches) being bewitched by people evidently teaching them "the works of the LAW" rather than "the hearing of faith" (3:1,2). He then mentions HIS BACKGROUND in this legalistic faith; which he describes as "bondage" under a "tutor". Then in COMPARISON; he mentions THEIR background, serving "them which by nature are no gods". Now; they, are "returning" to "bondage" of physical rituals and sacred days; rigorously "watched", but with "evil intent" (not done unto the Lord; for self-justification, etc.)." (Emphasis GE)

GE:

Now, listen to yourself, EB, further: "Both Jews and pagans had these practices; and even though the Jews may have originally gotten theirs from God; they were still just as lost and in bondage under them." This is no longer Paul or Paul's meaning you verbalise; these are YOUR ideas and YOUR words – which all may be true, but not applicable or true within context of relation to 4:7-11. These are your words and your ideas that do NOT express all factors and implications of the Galatian intricacy. You don't, most importantly, distinguish between Judaism and the Jews. So that if you had in mind the Judaists with your word 'Jews', and the Judaists' "physical rituals and sacred days", you may have been right. But if you had in mind the Old Testament with your word 'Jews', or the "physical rituals and sacred days" of the Old Testament, then you're wrong! You first collect momentum with some true observations, only to apply energy collected to "veering off" track into the netherworld of your fears.

EB:

... Because Paul starts off telling us what the problem is, (works of the LAW or hearing of faith). It is no mere "trend" of the passage. It is SET from the beginning! We cannot brush that aside and say "oh, no; these were former pagans, and historically, there were pagans influencing them; so it can only be paganism he is addressing".

GE:

No one said Paul addresses paganism "only" – that's you putting it into our mouths. We say Paul in this passage-section,

4:7-11, addresses paganism; and even then, we include Judaism under purely 'pagan'. You include Judaism under true Faith. See above how I have tried to fix attention – against your objections – to allusions to circumcision in 4:7-11.

And the human proneness to pride and self-righteousness and vanity – '*ostentation*', see John Owen above – isn't restricted to Jews; it is the 'universal problem' also of the Gentiles.

Therefore yes, "Because Paul starts off telling us what the problem is – works of the LAW or hearing of faith – it is no mere "trend" of the passage. It is SET from the beginning! We cannot brush that aside and say "oh, no; these were former pagans, and historically, there were pagans influencing them; so it can only be paganism he is addressing". Yes, we cannot!

But not I or BR "say" that! It is you, EB, who, where Paul does tell us, these were former pagans, and historically, there were pagans influencing them so that they returned to their old paganism, it is you, who say no, "Because Paul starts off telling us what the problem is – works of the LAW and no mere 'trend' of the passage – it can only be 'LAW' he is addressing in 4:7-11!

Then that implies you make the Sabbaths of the Scriptures out for pagan days.

And that, we cannot accept. Its your 'law' of interpretation – not Paul's!

What he addresses, Paul addresses, and in 4:7-11 it is 'paganism' – virtually 100% **pre-Judaism paganism, and NOT, post Christian Judaism**, which latter he only begins to directly address, in chapter 5!

EB:

... And as I have learned more over the past year; Jewish harassment of Christians was ALSO a "historic" problem, and right at the end of the letter; we see that they "desire...to glory in your flesh".

GE:

And that must have blurred out all previous knowledge or ignorance of the Gentile 'harassment of Christians', and the all too human propensity of even the noble Gentiles to pride and "*affection*" of which their '*mutilation of the flesh*' was the proud sign. No, EB, again, you, supply – out of context – the word "Jewish"! Just show me how, in chapter 6, or for that

matter, in the whole Letter, how Paul – like you do – insists it was "Jewish harassment" and I shall retract my animadversion, now, and without reserve or condition!

EB:

... They still felt that Messiah should be what they thought he should be, and removing these elements of the Law would only bring the nation under a curse (instead of God blessing it and making them the world rulers, as

Messiah was "supposed" to do); so those who did not outright reject Christ, would now creep into His Church (consisting of both Jewish and Gentile members), and try to turn it back into their system of works.

GE:

I accept your explanation, but not as sufficient reason to believe that is what Paul meant in 4:9 or in any other context of this Letter. Rather, think I, had Paul in mind a Gentile catechumen who were unable to cope with their shortcomings as far as the Law was concerned, and thought their former gods easier to please and more compensating to serve, "*lords*", who exacted of them only one condition: **to prove themselves "in the flesh"**! (No more of that "*persecution for Christ*"-stuff for them!)

EB:

Quoting **GE**: "The CONTEXT of the RELEVANT passage, presupposes a totally LOST state the Galatians were found in when converted, and NOW, AFTERWARDS, are RETURNING to, so that Paul says, "Hopeless case!" "

EB:

And that is the point. That is what I have been saying. But this in itself does not tell us the details of what either the previous "lost STATE" or the new "return"; it's only the STATE that is returned to. v.8 tells us what the former was, and the rest of the passage tells us the details of the new state.

This is the watershed of the entire issue. I'll repeat it again: God's LAW is not the same thing as man's OBSERVANCE of it.

For the last time; no one is saying "the things of God's word", "Christ's own Holy day", or any of your other red herrings are "condemned" or are "pagan" or "the weak and

elemental things of this world". You yourself (BR) said it: "it is the OBSERVANCE" that is condemned"! NOT the LAW itself! ONE can be condemned; while the OTHER is good.

God gives His Law; which is "JUST, HOLY AND GOOD". (This is ALL I have EVER said about the Law). MAN attempts to OBSERVE the LAW. But his OBSERVANCE is INCOMPLETE; shallow; PRETENTIOUS; SELF RIGHTEOUS/SELF JUSTIFYING, and at the same time JUDGING ("I keep more commandments than you"; etc). --all of this falling into the category of "EVIL INTENT" (paratero). THIS IS CONDEMNED. God DOES NOT accept it.

All of this is so easy to understand. But because it indicts the sabbatarian movement, on top of causing your arguments and judgments against all nonsabbathkeeping Christians to collapse; you have to fight against it tooth and nail and just rehash the same charges that I am attacking the Law itself as condemned, no matter how much I show you that that is not the case.

BR:

Here again we have utter failure to note the details in the discussion so far.

GE:

And here again we see in detail EB's pretence for what it really is – precisely the sort of '*bewitching*' the Galatians made themselves guilty of.

Says EB, in one breath: "... no one is saying "the things of God's word", "Christ's own Holy day", or any of your other red herrings are "condemned" or are "pagan" or "the weak and elemental things of this world". "No one is saying", still, EB says, they are "red herrings". And what is "red herrings", if not "the weak and elemental things of this world"? "No one is saying "the things" are "condemned"", but, EB, 'saying' they are "red herrings", says, they are "condemned"! So, 'no matter how much' EB may 'show' "that he is not attacking the Law itself as condemned", it – for all that it matters – is the case!

EB:

The point made is that THE ENTIRE chapter can NOT be fit into ONE single problem as you have tried to do.

BR:

No; according to you; the entire chapter fits into ONE single VERSE; rather than the other way around!

AS HAS ALREADY been pointed out – vs 1-7 address the GLOBAL problem for ALL mankind prior to Christ (and after for those who have not yet accepted Christ).

4:1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

4:2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

4:3 Even so we, when WE were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4:4 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

4:5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

4:6 And because all of you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit (o. pneuma) of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

4:7 Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

EB:

Where does it mention "all of mankind"? You are making things up out of nowhere to conform to your preconceived arguments to escape the teachings of scripture on the subject. I am aware of the common sabbatarian interpretation of "under the law" meaning "all mankind under the curse or 'certificate of death'". (that way, you can claim it is not the Law of Moses --of Israel that is done away; just the "condemnation" all were under; just like you do in Colossians with "handwriting of ordinances"). But this is NOT how it is used here. "Under the Law" refers to the Jews who were BOUND by "THE LAW" of MOSES! Paul refers to Gentiles as "WITHOUT LAW"; not "UNDER the Law" (Rom.2). So you can't just redefine his terms to suit your doctrine.

So there is NO discussion in these verses of "all mankind", or anything "GLOBAL"; ONLY of



the JEWS prior to Christ; including Paul himself; notice "WE". That does not include gentiles!

GE:

Once again, EB's pretence is obvious: Just now he has said, "God gives His Law; which is "JUST, HOLY AND GOOD". (This is ALL I have EVER said about the Law)." Then, immediately after, he says: "... you (sabbatarians) claim it is not the Law of Moses --of Israel that is done away; just the "condemnation" all were under ... But this is NOT how it is used here. "Under the Law" refers to the Jews who were BOUND by "THE LAW" of MOSES!" Here, and "this", "is", "ALL", EB in actual fact, has, "EVER said about the Law" – "the Law that is done away". It is easy to fool some, sometimes; but not everybody all the time!

EB's consistent inconsistency! Playing havoc with himself! With reference to "after", "vs 1-7", i.e., from verse 8 on, according to BR's delineation, EB has the following to say,

To BR: "Where does it mention "all of mankind"?"

To EB, we ask: Where does it "refer to the Jews who were BOUND by "THE LAW" of MOSES"?"

EB throws this accusation at BR,

"You are making things up out of nowhere to conform to your preconceived arguments to escape the teachings of scripture on the subject."

To EB, we ask: And what makes you think you, are not guilty of making things up out of nowhere to conform to your preconceived arguments to escape the teachings of scripture on the subject?

To BR with love from EB:

"I am aware of the common sabbatarian interpretation of "under the law" meaning "all mankind under the curse or 'certificate of death'". (That way, you can claim it is not the Law of Moses --of Israel that is done away; just the "condemnation" all were under; just like you do in Colossians with "handwriting of ordinances")."

To EB, with love, from the uncommon sabbatarians: "Under the law' means 'all mankind under the curse' or 'certificate of death'."

Is that what they say? (I mean the "common sabbatarians"?) Or is it what you say they say? I never realised! I have always thought they say, "Under the law'" means what Paul meant in Gl.3:23, where he says of all the Jews of all times before Christ, himself included, "*we were guarded / preserved (ephrourometha) under the Law being concluded together (sunkleimenoí – 'can-fruited')*". Compare vs. 22, "*sunekleisen, concluded together by the Scriptures*": by or under its promises and blessings, laws and prophecies) "**to the end faith being about to be revealed!**"

What a **blessed** and **privileged** state to be in "under the Law"! Only the "*Better Promises*" of these very "*Scriptures being fulfilled*" in Jesus Christ, surpasses it in blessedness and glory!

Ja, and then I also always have thought that they – the "common sabbatarians" – also believed, that Paul, with saying 'under the law', meant what he meant in Ro.7:1 when he said "*the Law has dominion over man as long as he lives*"? "*Man*" without exception! Even Christ was "*born under the law*", and lived under the Law until He died under the Law. So Christ "*fulfilled the Law*" so that the Law never stops to "*guard*", and to "*teach*", and to "*instruct*" (R2:18), and to "*train*" (G3:24), and "*persuade*" (A28:23) us, to come to Jesus Christ, "*the righteousness of God being witnessed by the Law!*" "*Christ is the end of the Law.*" (R10:4) Whether we are "*under the Law*", or "*under grace*" – no difference, the Law never stops! Because it is God's faithful '*servant*' (G3:19). No word from God's mouth shall return to Him empty – especially not His Word of Law – God meant the difference, though not a word of His shall ever pass, the Scriptures tells me in my naivety!

Then to see all of this and Christ the Object and the Subject of Divine Law Himself – how marvellous!

Of course, this is only the one 'side' of the Law, and at the sight of the other 'side', one will exclaim, 'How awesome!', rather than 'How wonderful!' For the other 'side' of the Law is its judgment-side. And that side too – just like the 'nice' side – is valid over all men visited by grace, or, visited by death and disgrace, all their lives.

I don't know, if it is not what the 'common sabbatarians' believe? Otherwise, I must tell you, I don't

know, and cannot stand in for how they, the 'common sabbatarian', believe, re, the Law. Except that I cannot believe you, EB, too readily. For I cannot believe anyone would confuse being under the curse of the Law with being under the privileges and advantages of the Law – which Paul said are great! And then I also have never read in the Scriptures of anyone being "in bondage under the Law" – "*bondage*", viz., "*to slave / serve / worship*" other than while in bondage to God and Christ.

But back now to EB's inconsistencies:

To BR, it is EB, disallowing: "But this is NOT how it ("under the Law") is used here ('here' = "after", "vs 1-7", BR)" – while there is no trace of its 'use here'!

"Under the Law", says EB, "refers to the Jews who were BOUND by "THE LAW" of MOSES!" – 'Jews only', of course! But we just above saw how Paul refers to all "man", "*as long as he lives*", as being "UNDER the Law".

Didactically EB reprimands BR, Keep to the context! "This is NOT how it ("under the Law") is used here "after", "vs 1-7"!"

Next, EB himself, alleges, "Paul refers to Gentiles as "WITHOUT LAW"; not "UNDER the Law" (**Rom. 2**). So you can't just redefine his terms to suit your doctrine." How instructive and exemplary in '*Do as I say, not as I do!*' You can't just redefine the terms to suit your doctrine, EB!

Finally – for EB especially – to remember: "So there is NO discussion in these verses of "all mankind", or anything "GLOBAL"! No! Paul speaks (or writes – carefully and difficult as he elsewhere describes how he wrote, and in "*BIG LETTERS*") ONLY of the **GALATIANS**, after, Christ had come into their existence, in 4:8-11. Paul writes of the Galatian Gentiles now, after he in 4:3 had written the words wherein he "including himself", declared "*we (Jews and Judaists) were in bondage under the first principles of the world!*" In 4:3 the Gentiles were not 'included' yet; but 'here', "**after**", "**vs 1-7**", the Gentiles are the 'included'!

The letters bold enough? The ideas clear enough?

EB:

So? "Days" could be weekly or annual days. Still, either pagan worship; OR going through the motions of following God's Law while not

really loving Him ARE equally of "THIS WORLD"!

GE:

"Going through the motions of following God's Law while not really loving Him ARE equally" IMPOSSIBLE; VANITY; less than thin AIR! "Days" in the context of its use – which is 'pagan', IS, equally IMPOSSIBLE, "weekly or annual days" – which, in the context of their Scriptural use, are "*of faith*" – divine, everlasting, Scriptural and Christian, "*faith*", or, in OTHER context of its use – which is 'Scriptural and Christian', IS, equally IMPOSSIBLE, "*days*" of the *weak and beggarly principalities of this present evil world* of humanism and its *divination by superstitious observation!*

To "of "THIS WORLD"" belongs the idolum such exercises and deceit could be for real as "Days" could be weekly or annual days; still, either pagan worship ... going through the motions of following God's Law while not really loving Him ...".

You are getting extremely tiresome, EB!

Continues EB's inconsistencies: "And you continue to take some unbiblical "formula of paganism" build this argument off of it, when it is not used anywhere else in scripture in reference to "pagans" ..."

Inconsistent! For where is this "formula", anywhere in scripture, used in reference to "Jews"? No, EB is the one who continues to take some unbiblical "formula of paganism", and builds his argument off of it, when such 'formula' is not used anywhere in Scripture, 'in reference to' "Jews", or, 'in reference to' Old Testament (holy) "*days*".

Only EB may use the "formula"; BR is not allowed; neither Paul. So continues EB's audacities, building his own argument off of the "formula of paganism", but in the process corrupting it into some 'formula' of his own, that he wishes may suit "the Judaizers" who "judged Christian converts over their OT "days", "new moons", "[appointed] times", and "years".

Corrupted, indeed! Of these 16 words of EB's, four (strictly, 3), are in Paul's vocabulary of 4:7-11. And all four (or more correct, 3) of them, are corrupted with EB's obstinate use of "the Judaizers" who "judged Christian

converts"; and the words, "Old Testament", "new", "appointed". What exemplary exegesis!

Now EB clearly is aware of what he is doing. Admits he, he immediately reverts to his old 'argument', "the WHOLE context!",

"Even if this WAS "historically" a "pagan formula"; Scripture often does refer to the rebellious house of Israel in terms associated with "pagans". (Isaiah, etc) Whatever it is, the context still dictates that this was a Judaizer problem!"

BR:

Vs 8-11 addresses ONE specific problem of pagans-turned-Christian

EB:

Right!

BR:

... as they sought to BLEND pagan observances back into Christian practices.

EB:

Wrong; ...as they now sought to blend what Paul was just describing: the Jewish "elements" into Christian practices. And as these are "watched conspicuously" (paratero); it is thus blending "bondage" back into Christianity!

GE:

"...the Jewish "elements" ... Paul was just describing ... blending "bondage" back into Christianity!" EB!

Still you will not admit it is God's Law and God's Sabbath Day you, equate and identify with the "*weak and beggarly elements*" of the "bondage", "served under" by the Galatians? I give up!

"It was thus blending Christianity into "bondage"", in fact the bondage under paganism, in fact the paganism of heathenism and Judaism in one monstrosity, according to you, EB!

EB fearlessly changing and adding to "what Paul was just describing", "thus blending" all HIS OWN ideas into it, to make sure "the context still dictates that this was a Judaizer problem!"

Loathsome methods – saying "Judaizers" while meaning Old Testament believers, thus making of the pagan

'days', Old Testament 'Sabbaths'! And every word and attempt at it, just to rid himself of a Christian's Sabbath-obligations!

"... what Paul was just describing: the Jewish "elements" ...". Just now, EB, you have affirmed with a "Right!", it was "ONE specific problem of pagans-turned-Christian" in "... what Paul was just describing" in "Vs 8-11"; now you say, "Wrong", "this was a Judaizer problem"! Who can believe you, EB?

BR:

Then from 12-end Paul goes to ANOTHER problem – that of the Judaizers.

EB:

NO; he CONTINUES describing the SAME things and people he had already been describing since the previous chapter. Even if you were right that v1-7 was speaking of "mankind"; that would INCLUDE the Jews.

BR:

THREE levels of focus – THREE problems – THREE points addressed in that one chapter.

EB:

No! ONE present problem (Judaizers), and a PAST problem (paganism) mentioned in passing!

GE:

No! In verses 8 to 11 it is ONE present problem, PAGANISM, and that, NO problem PAST, NO problem 'mentioned in passing', but the PRESENT problem of the Galatians' 'current', contemporary and immediate and continuing apostasy and sin being **concentrated** on by Paul, in that the Galatians "*returned once more, back again, to (their) by nature not-gods, (their) former weak and beggarly principles and lords, superstitiously worshipping, heathenishly depending on, days, months, seasons, years*", "elemental", that is, pure and raw paganism and idolatry!

**Your most basic argument, EB, in every which way, directly contradicting Paul, and making God who spoke through Paul, a liar!**

And further, even by adding "Judaizers" and Judaism to the Galatians' 'paganism', won't change a thing! It will still be paganism and heathen idolatry. Now be careful, EB, and remember that it was through your arguments I was convinced

better than ever before in my life, how Paul by his argument in 4 verse 3 classified and included Judaism under *"the first principles of the WORLD"*, so that he actually made no difference between Judaism and the idolatry of paganism. In other words, THE FACT the Galatians' apostate *"return"* HAD been 'influenced' by "Judaizers", detracts zero from THE FACT their apostate *"return"* HAD been *"back to the weak and beggarly elemental not-gods"* of their ORIGINAL pagan, heathen, idolatry *"when (yet they) knew not God"* and were *"subject to / slaving under / divining / superstitiously worshipping, days, months, season, years"*.

Paul in the fourth chapter of Galatians does not touch on Judaism specifically, but suggestively alludes to Judaism merely – "in passing". Instead, Paul in the fourth chapter – even including verses 1 to 3 – concentrates on the heathen's pagan idolatry – even including his own former form of it, namely, Judaism.

Referring to BR, "... from 12-end Paul goes to ANOTHER problem – that of the Judaizers". Let's just make sure about that, BR, because I've got a feeling the Gentiles still receive the greater amount of attention in this interim section to chapter 5.

In these verses Paul addresses the *"brethren"*, and he recalls *"how I preached the Gospel unto you at the first"*, and how they *"received"* him – and, *"despised (him) not, nor rejected (him)"*. This then, undoubtedly, explains that for all purposes the Galatian Congregations were constituted of exclusively Gentiles, receiving this man whom they considered less a Jew than a Gentile, but an angel.

Verses 16-17 therefore, becomes very important for our question, "Who bewitched you?"

Paul asks these Churches of Galatia, *"Am I become YOUR enemy, because I tell YOU the truth? THEY, zealously affect YOU ... THEY would exclude YOU, so that THEY may boast in YOU."*

Paul poses himself over against the whole Galatian Community in its internal division. *"THEY"* and *"YOU"*, are of the one Community! Here am I, Paul, aghast at what I see! Three 'parties' in two, involved – Paul, and *"YOU"* the Church, comprised of *"YOU"*, who were not *"taken in by"*, and *"THEY"*, who were *"taken in by"* and were *"fascinated by / dragged along with"*, the *"bewitchers's"* *"craft"*.

Herein then, lies the solution – the answer – to the question *"WHO"* those were *"WHO"* Paul says in 3:1, *"bewitched"* the Galatian *"brethren"*. And again, precisely as in

that question, the answer is given right within the very words written in this place. Paul not at all here in 4:16-17, contradicts his rhetorical statement of 3:1, but in the words, and in the context, supplies the information of *"WHO"* *"THEY"*, *"WHO"* *"zealously affect(ed) YOU"*, were, so that *"YOU"* now regard Paul an *"enemy"* where at first *'you'* regarded him an angel! *"WHO"* had it been? None other than *"THEY"* – the *"BRETHREN"*, or *"FALSE brethren"*, *"WHO"* – from and among yourselves, *"o foolish Galatians"*, *"emotionally disturbed you so that they might make a pretence of you"*.

Paul gives not the SLIGHTEST indication the *"disturbers"* were any other than *"brethren"* – or then, *"FALSE brethren"* – from, and of, the geographical area, population and, Congregations, of his *"labour"* among the GENTILES according to his Apostolic calling, the credentials of which he had presented in chapters 1 and 2, and by which *"the Gospel of the Gentiles (uncircumcision) was given unto me"*, Paul!

*"I"*, Paul as in *"travail"* over *"you my little children"*, *"stand in doubt of YOU"* – none other, than those erstwhile Gentiles converted from paganism to Christianity, now returning to their old gods and religious principles. Verse 20. And no word in context from Paul on their circumcising as yet!

Now, in verse 21, Paul makes an interesting 'switch' in speech! He now addresses the referred – *"THEY"* of 16-17 – in the Second Person, *"Tell me, YOU now, who is enthralled by the Law, can't you hear the Law?"*

Here's another rhetorical question of Paul's, underlining the fact these *"brethren"* were *"under the Law"* as they were *"fascinated by the Law"* or *"desired / wished to be under the Law"*! It implies they originally were not so, but were originally, Gentiles!

They were definitely not *"zealously affected in a good thing"* . . . or *"BY a good thing"* – Instrumental Dative, *"en kałohi"*.

So they were *"taken in / fascinated"* by a BAD *'principle / fundamental'*, *"stoicheion"* – just as well, by a *'principle OF THE WORLD'*, *"tou kosmou"*, like Paul used to be *"in bondage"* to when he used to be a *"Judaist"*! (4:3 and 1:13-14) Here, in 4:21 for the first time, one must give EB credit, that *"they were being brought back into bondage: the bondage Paul was under"*. But is EB justly entitled the credit? No! For he insists the locos of this 'switch' is between

verses 8 and 9 of chapter 4!

In 4:21 then, we for the first time since 3:21-22, hear about the Law again, and still, no word of circumcision specifically. In 4:21 – therefore –, Paul begins to introduce 'legalism' into his consideration of the Galatian error, and – therefore –, it is only from here on, that one could agree with EB. But only from here on – that the Galatians "... were being brought back into bondage ... through a different vehicle than the paganism that they themselves were once under." One hundred percent!

Here, in 4:21, in Paul's argumentation, the legalists, hypocrites, zealots, Judaists, syncretists, religious pluralists, ecumenists, start their act (or are mentioned for it); not in 4:9 as EB maintains! In 4:9 the end-result of "being brought back into bondage" is first mentioned. And it makes *'the worlds' difference!* The difference it makes is that now we have, from 4:7 had to do with Paul dealing with the factor and aspect of 'paganism', 'specifically'; so that "*days, months, seasons, years*", were pagan, idolatrous "*days, months, seasons, years*", "*divined (by) superstitious, idolatrous, observation*" that had NOTHING in common with, or, to do with, any Old Testament institution like the Seventh Day Sabbath.

4:21 for the first time in Paul's apologia introduces the involvement of Judaism in the Galatian apostasy; which fact refutes EB's insinuation the Christian Sabbath Day is involved back in 4:9. To further expose the fallacy of the flesh of lineage being one's title to the Blessing of Abraham, Paul for the rest of chapter 4, (22-31) uses the argument of *'allegory'*. What Paul does there, is simply to tell that physical, hereditary, differences, make no difference with God in the matter of salvation or "*the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free*". For ALL are in bondage – that *'bondage'* we saw above – "***the bondage of the world***" wherein there is no difference between non-Jew or Jew, between paganism and Judaism – only between "*flesh*" and "*Spirit*", "*works*" and "*faith*"! ALL are in bondage – the posterity of Agar the "*bondwoman*", like the posterity of the "*freewoman*" (Sarah) – ALL Abraham's descendants "*in*", or, "*according to*", "*the flesh*", are in bondage – they are not "*free*"!

That without hitch brings Paul to the subject of circumcision and its relation to the matter IN HAND – that of the Galatians who have become "*entangled again with the yoke of bondage*" of paganism (that now included Judaism) because they

have not "*stood fast*", but have "*turned back to again slave under the weak and beggarly gods / principles*" which erstwhile while "*ignorant of God*" they "*served / worshipped / divined*", and now unscrupulously desired to seal their feigned righteousness through circumcision of the flesh!

I think, BR, this is how, not "*from 12*" but from 4:21 to 5:1, "*Paul goes to ANOTHER problem – that of the Judaizers*".

If EB could accept this, he might as well give up his entire remonstrance against consequences pertaining the Sabbath Day.

BR:

Paul IS addressing pagan practices being merged into Christianity in Gal 4:8-11. Something EB is dragging his heels on – no matter how obvious the text is about it and no matter how much church historians agree that this WAS a huge problem for the first century NT church.

EB:

No one was denying that paganism was a huge problem in the NT Church. But that does not mean it was the ONLY one; and prove that this must necessarily be paganism. John deals more with the pagan problem. But from THIS text; it is obvious that the issue is judaizers.

GE:

You beat about the bush, but won't scare the lion out, ever! This is about "THIS text", 4:7-11, not about "John"; and this is about the "huge problem" of "necessarily paganism", "in the NT Church", "ONLY", where, 'obviously' "the issue is", not "judaizers", but the "huge problem" very much real and active and pertinent, of "paganism".

EB:

God's LAW is not the same thing as man's OBSERVANCE of it. For the last time; no one is saying "the things of God's word", "Christ's own Holy day", or any of your other red herrings are "condemned" or are "pagan" or "the weak and elemental things of this world".

GE:

"...other red herrings..." – Can't you see, EB, how your actions belie your words?

EB:

You yourself BR, said it: "it is the OBSERVANCE" that is condemned"! NOT the LAW itself! ONE can be condemned; while the OTHER is good.

Romans 14 -- "One man OBSERVES one day ABOVE another while another OBSERVES Every day" (speaking of the list of annual feast days in God's Word)

BR:

Paul only condemns those who CONDEMN the OBSERVANCE when it comes to OBSERVING God's Word, OBSERVING God's annual feast days, OBSERVING what scripture speaks of.

The Letter to the Romans applies to ALL – even to us. It is SCRIPTURE. In Chapter 14 pagan practices are not being discussed NOR is the OBSERVANCE of God's Word by the GENTILES and JEWS of Rome (or today) called PAGANISM or called a RETURN to PAGANISM or ...

But when it comes to "OBSERVING the days, months, seasons and years" of paganism's emperor worship – well then in that case THE VERY OBSERVANCE is condemned WITHOUT RESPECT to who is observing it or what rationale they use for it.

EB:

But that is not what is being discussed in Galatians. It is not mentioned anywhere in scripture. But the Jewish days and other practices are mentioned here and in Romans. The Romans had been influenced to a small extent, and thus told by Paul not to be judging each other over it. The Galatians had completely bought into it to the point that they were scrupulously "watching rigorously" to a level that made Christ "of no profit". Yes, no matter who does this, or whatever rationale they use; it would be condemned.

BR:

The OBSERVANCE itself is purely and blatantly condemned since IT IS a RETURN to paganism. Paul argues that the conversion to Christianity is placed in question IF one dares to OBSERVE those pagan days after becoming a Christian.

EB:

No; the "observance" is condemned because it is by definition "scrupulously setting aside" or "watching with evil intent", just

like the Jews did with both Christ and Paul to trap them (often over sabbath observance!) This was a return to bondage, making them spiritually no better than they were as pagans. So yes; here too, conversion to Christianity WOULD be placed in question by this!

GE:

You blurt it out – every word blatant against the Sabbath of the Law, your denials despite! "This was a return to bondage..." "This" referring back to your own words, "This ... scrupulously setting aside"; "by definition" of what, but "sabbath observance"? Your direct object isn't "observance" as such; your object that "is condemned", is the thing "set aside" – which is the Sabbath Day, which is "set aside" for its "observance"! As BR says, "The OBSERVANCE itself is ... condemned since IT IS a RETURN to paganism. Paul argues that the conversion to Christianity is placed in question IF one dares to OBSERVE those pagan days after becoming a Christian."

EB says, "No; the "observance" is condemned because it is by definition "scrupulously setting aside" or "watching with evil intent", just like the Jews did with both Christ and Paul to trap them (often over sabbath observance!) This was a return to bondage". (Emphasis GE)

BR uses no alien ideas in his explanation like EB does, "like the Jews did ...". He explains the thing that needs to be explained with a relevant concept that Paul himself supplied within context, "OBSERVANCE" = "RETURN (to worship / serving)".

EB explains what must be explained with the concepts that the linguists give, with no relevance whatsoever to the context, "observance" = "scrupulously setting aside / watching with evil intent", the Sabbath! EB plainly cannot extract from the text or context to substantiate his claim like BR is able to. EB's attempt is pitiable; his denial proud obstinacy. Whom shall we believe, Paul, or the linguists and EB?

Confidence resides with reason, and therefore one should prefer Paul's restrictions. As BR explains Paul, "The OBSERVANCE itself is condemned since IT IS a RETURN to paganism."

BR:

Bottom line – Paul does not CONDEMN in Gal 4 the very thing he APPROVES in Romans 14!

EB:

Right! These are two totally different situations. (And “observe” here is “esteem”; a totally different word anyway!) He approves honest “estimation” of days in

Romans, and condemns evil scrupulous “watching” in Galatians! So far; you are proving my points!

GE:

No EB, you’re proving our point!

Paul “condemns evil scrupulous “watching” in Galatians!” Why would he? You give the answer: Because it is NOT “honest “estimation” of days” – like in Romans. In Galatians it was not the Galatians esteeming the Sabbath Day, honestly or not honestly.; “to the Lord” or not, “to the Lord”. In Galatians it was the Galatians “with evil intent watching”, i.e., “superstitiously divining” = “slaving / worshipping” = “lusting after / desiring”, the “no-gods” = “principles / fundamentals” = “days, months, seasons, years”, “of the world” = man / “you”, “not knowing God” = “the flesh” – spelled: l-d-o-l-a-t-r-y!

EB:

You (BR) are the one who is “deathly afraid of” the Jewish problem that Paul has been discussing all along; so you try to neutralize it into a “global” problem. But even if that was true; it would include the Jews! All were under bondage, and “returning BACK AGAIN TO bondage (whichever form it took) is the subject of the chapter.

BR:

In this case Paul addresses the HUMAN condition of being separated from God APART from Christ. Paul points out that our ADOPTION (the HUMAN RACE’s adoption) into Christ (as many as accept Him and are saints) is brought about through the death of Christ. As Paul points out in Romans 3 ALL are under the condemnation of the LAW – and ALL are held accountable NEEDING the Savior.

This is NOT just the case for Judaizers – but not Gentiles – 6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our

hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God

Again – NOT a truth “just for Judaizers”!! Paul is addressing the problem of the GLOBAL human condition and showing ONE solution for ALL mankind (not just for Judaizers!). Since Jews were a part of the human race; then something that applies to the whole human race applies also to them. So he (Paul) can mention THEIR part in it exclusively without mentioning the rest of the human race! All are **under the condemnation** of the Law; but you cannot then make that synonymous with “**Under the Law**”. **Those are two separate things**; though one is a subset of the other. Recall Paul’s distinction of “without the Law” from “in the Law” in ch.2. Both have “sinned” and shall “perish”, but they are not ALL “under” the Law! (Emphasis GE)

GE:

A keen and important observation, BR! “Both have “sinned” but they are not ALL “under” the Law” . . . While only the Jews were ‘*under the Law*’, both Jews and ‘*the world / Gentiles*’ are under the ‘condemnation’ or “*curse of the Law*”.

BR:

The PAGAN observances that are the WEAK and elemental things of THIS WORLD – the emperor worship observing “days, months, seasons and years” (Notice that the WEEKLY cycle is CONSPICUOUSLY missing from that list).

GE:

Another important remark! Why is the week absent? Simply because it is not determined by heavenly bodies and their movements and because it was not an ‘astral’ time-“element” or “god”. To get the week into their astral conglomeration, the heathen began to call its days after the planets – on its own another ‘proof’ of rampant pagan divination of the time-“elements” or “gods” in the days of Paul. In Galatians 4:10 the week is not mentioned because it was no astral thing, but a Scriptural, and Paul was speaking about the ‘astral’ time-“elements” or “gods”. The week’s absence in Galatians 4:10 is another indication of *paratehreooh’s* contextual and relevant –pagan–meaning, which is singular in Galatians 4:10, and not to be confused with the meaning of the word in the Gospels and Acts.

EB:

So? “Days” could be weekly or annual days.

BR:

“Again” you leap off the logical cliff to have a go at Christ the Creator’s Weekly Holy day.

Notice that in this leap off the cliff – you attack all weekly observance EVEN though NEITHER the weekly cycle NOR the Sabbath is mentioned AT ALL in the chapter!

By doing so – you squash First day, 7th day – ANY DAY of the week claiming that ALL are “weak elemental things of THIS world” and that they all “pertain to things that by nature are NOT gods at all”. You have killed both Sunday AND Saturday worship services by trying to drag ANY weekly observance in EVEN though WEEK is not mentioned NOR is Sabbath! You’re willing to go to any logical inconsistency if it will compose an assault on Christ the Creator’s memorial of Creation. Doesn’t that tell you something? -- yet?

EB:

You have been so thoroughly disproven, that your recourse now is to go back to accusing me of “Attacking” a DAY. I’m not attacking the day. If you want to observe (esteem) it unto the Lord; then you have my blessing. But if you come using it to “note scrupulously”; “Watching with evil intent” to put me down as “less obedient than you” or “Attacking God’s Law”; then THAT is what is attacked (“condemned”); both by me and by Paul. A brother in Church I had mentioned this discussion to pointed out that days unto the Lord, or whatever else we do, is to be all about love. Not “comparing [our]selves among [our]selves” (in order to “commend [our]selves”). (2 Cor.10:12) (GE: Too good to be true!)

And Remember, I do not advocate Sunday anyway, so it is no contradiction. (GE: It is only Sabbath-observance is hypocrisy; not Sunday-observance!) I used to keep the sabbath; but when I was shown this passage, along with Col. and Rom. it became clear that I was the one “watching with evil intent”, and not keeping the day unto the Lord. So I was taught that Christ was to be celebrated as the Creator, crucified and risen Savior EVERY day, and that is my position. (GE: And you ‘mentioned this’ to “a brother in Church” “EVERY day”? No? On Sunday, ‘Church-day’, then? Sure of course!)

So yes, ANY day of the week IS “squashed” when watched with such an evil intent! That’s

the whole point. (GE: Except Sunday!) The human PRIDE and self-righteousness behind such “observance” and the BLINDNESS (Rev.3:17, 18) and BONDAGE associated with it are the “weak elemental things of THIS world” that “pertain to things that by nature are NOT gods at all”. (i.e. MAN makes a ‘god’ out of himself through self-righteous judging; and yes, man definitely is “by nature, NOT god”!) Paul here is the one who squashes it; and that is why you must argue fiercely to reinterpret the text to avoid this clear truth. But voluntarily “esteemed” unto the Lord without judging others; THAT is what is approved.

GE:

Can you talk greater nonsense than: “NOT gods at all”. (i.e. MAN makes a ‘god’ out of himself through self-righteous judging; and yes, man definitely is “by nature, NOT god”!)? ... And I actually enter into dialogue with you! “(T)o avoid this clear truth”? My o my!

Note your inverted commas, where you state: “the “weak elemental things of THIS world” that “pertain to things that by nature are NOT gods at all”.” You are a fearless liar! Your inverted commas indicate quotation from Scripture. There is no such Scripture!

Nevertheless, you make the statement, “the “weak elemental things of THIS world” that “pertain to things that by nature are NOT gods at all”.” Now what do you argue these two things are not ‘pertaining’ each other, that verse 9 does not ‘pertain’ the things mentioned in verse 8, but that verse 8 is the one lonely text dealing with ‘paganism’, while verse 9 deals exclusively with the ‘veering off’ of the “Judaizers” into a “new type of bondage ... under the Law” – all according to yourself? You must have forgotten!

EB:

I don’t know about your (BR’s) whole discussion of “past” and “future”, or “changing the status of the saints”. Still; the point is; that “under the Law” is not a general category of all men; but only of **one group of men given a written law**. (Emphasis GE. I thought (again) it’s BR



speaking!) Others "without the Law" can be convicted or justified by the Law written in their hearts which they can do "instinctively". This shows that there is a universal moral/spiritual LAW that any man can know instinctively. (But of course, because of the sin nature, they still do not do it naturally, consistently without Christ). But who "instinctively" knows to "keep" a particular weekly day by not working on it, and having a worship service? No one, unless they have read the WRITTEN Law of Moses. You refuse to acknowledge the difference. So you continue of accusing people of "attacking the Law" or "abolishing ALL law" but that is not the case.

GE:

You have done nothing but attack the Law!

BR:

The text actually condemns "Observing DAYS, MONTHS, SEASONS and YEARS" -- You bend that around to condemning "WEEKLY" meetings like a Sabbath worship service and keeping Sabbath holy (GE: Only because it is from the Scriptures!) -- but in so "EXTENDING" it you have also condemned all week-day-ONE "observance" as well since you simply "insert" what you do not FIND in the text. You go so far as to "claim" that it is the SAME practice that is DEFENDED in Romans 14 -- where you claim that THE weekly SABBATH is also to be inserted into the text. You have painted yourself into a corner; now you seek to "back out" by saying that it is only "wicked observance" of week-day-ONE and Sabbath and ... whatever that is condemned which means that you either ADDING the idea of "WICKED OBSERVANCE" to Romans 14 (when you say that what was APPROVED in Rom 14 is now CONDEMNED in Gal 4) or you are saying that Rom 14 Sabbath keeping is NOT what is being condemned in Gal 4!! At one time your ever-changing-argument said that it was JUST ok for ROMAN Christians to keep Sabbath -- but NOT Galatian Christian. Your "anything but the Sabbath of the Lord Thy God" approach to scripture is "transparent".

GE:

Quoting EB, "... you and BR seem to be in total denial that Judaism was bondage as well." Untrue! It is you, EB, who deny -- and don't only 'seem to be in denial' -- that paganism was bondage as well, or worse a 'bondage' than Judaism, because you insist where Paul speaks of the pagan "*not-gods*" of time, "*days, months, seasons and years*", he

speaks of 'bondage under the Law' -- a phrase and concept yours, and never, Paul's.

Judaism is 'bondage' -- so is paganism; but Judaism is not the '*principle*' 'bondage', but paganism is (as I've made clear before). Because Judaism in fact is humanism in the attire of Jewish legalism; but paganism is humanism as the Greeks used to go -- naked! Humanism is the prince of the *principles*, the lord of the tyrants, the king of the despots, of the '*not-gods*', the 'god' himself. How absolutely blatant can you get, EB, and still maintain you do not condemn God's Law? Here are your very words of condemning God's Law: "... it is not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law; such as worshipping other gods."

Paul says it IS, "such as worshipping other gods". No! says EB, "it is not"! It is BECAUSE, says Paul, "*ye desire again to be in bondage: BECAUSE ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years!*" EB enters upon his private shouting contest with Paul -- and with the 'Sabbatarians' -- to what purpose?

To "show" the "*days, and months, and seasons, and years*" of Galatians 4:10 are "bondage under the Law"; to "show" that "it" -- the "observance" of these "*days*" -- was "practiced", "not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law", and to "show" that "it", was not "such as worshipping other gods"!

Then, EB, why would Paul so harshly condemn both 'observer' and 'observed'?

EB:

I repeat; "ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT EVERY SINGLE JEW ALIVE ACCEPTED THE GOSPEL AND THERE WERE NO OTHERS WHO DIDN'T?" You either ignored this point; or maybe you haven't gotten to it yet. But even in Galatia, there would still be Jews who opposed the Gospel; and those who "accepted Him" on a superficial level; but did not accept the Gospel, and would try to come in and corrupt it. For you to take a single mention to "Jews" and project that onto the whole race; or even all of the people in a particular town is ridiculous, and you are the one piling demolished arguments on top of

demolished arguments.

GE:

And if the "observance" is not because it is something that by its very nature conflicts with the commandments of the Law, and if, the "observance" were not such as worshipping other gods, then, EB, why would Paul so harshly condemn both 'observer' and 'observed'? Would he condemn the poor Gentile believers for actually believing and doing "*things that by its very nature were*" in agreement "with the commandments of the Law" – "*things that by its very nature were*" and in truth were far from "such (things) as worshipping other gods"? Is that what you say, EB, made Paul say: "*I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain, because you want to come under bondage all over again*"? (4:11, 9) (Although you use terms from 5:2 – another subtle 'trick' (as you say) of yours to confuse!) But yes, it is indeed what you want us to believe! BR has shown you this, but you will not have it!

EB:

It is not a trick; but rather part of the context. It is you two with the tricks to separate this and isolate v.8-10 as if they were their own complete epistle! Once again; even if ch. 5 was some totally separate issue; it still disproves your assertion that people cannot be accused of these things while trying to keep the Law.

Because they cannot do these things CONSISTENTLY to be in complete "agreement with the commandments of the Law"; and they will thus FALL SHORT. They would be bound to do the whole Law, and continue to fail miserably. Therefore; by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified; and to keep trying is to essentially reject Christ and make him of no profit. Even if BR was right that ch. 5 was some "new issue"; we see that this is still quite a serious offence!

BR:

The text actually condemns "Observing DAYS, MONTHS, SEASONS and YEARS" -- You bend that around to condemning "WEEKLY" meetings like a Sabbath worship service and keeping Sabbath holy -- but in so "EXTENDING" it you have also condemned all week-day-ONE "observance" as well since you simply "insert" what you do not FIND in the text. You go so far as to "claim" that it is the

SAME practice that is DEFENDED in Romans 14 – where you claim that THE weekly SABBATH is also to be inserted into the text. You have painted yourself into a corner, now you seek to "back out" by saying that it is only "wicked observance" of week-day-ONE and Sabbath and ... whatever that is condemned which means that you either ADDING the idea of "WICKED OBSERVANCE" to Romans 14 (when you say that what was APPROVED in Rom 14 is now CONDEMNED in Gal 4) or you are saying that Rom 14 Sabbath keeping is NOT what is being condemned in Gal 4!! At one time your ever-changing-argument said that it was JUST ok for ROMAN Christians to keep Sabbath – but NOT Galatian Christian. Your "anything but the Sabbath of the Lord Thy God" approach to scripture is "transparent".

EB:

And just like GE; you brush aside my explanation of the difference between the Law and wicked observance.

But here's another one I just thought of, You emphasize so much that Paul would never condemn here what he approves of somewhere else. Yet you are the one who often points to him having Timothy circumcised in Acts. **Now if Paul not only approves of, but has someone circumcised in Acts; then HOW can he condemn it in Galatians?**, if he would NEVER condemn what he approves; and no "observance" of the Law can EVER be wicked. The answers I have given would cover this, because it is all a part of the same issue. You however deny; but have missed this glaring example of what you deny. You, are the ones in a corner, my friends! And all you can ever do is brush aside my proofs; and then act like I have given no proof.

GE:

There is no "explanation of the difference between the Law and wicked observance." It is a delusion of yours. The Law is the Command or Word of God, and "wicked observance" is no "observance" of it, but is the direct transgression of it. In Galatians Paul condemns the transgression of most directly the Second Commandment, just as he condemns the transgressors, just as he condemns the false gods worshipped in the place of the one true God. What "explanation of the difference between the Law and wicked observance" can you offer that would explain it

was not false gods worshipped that Paul condemned, but that Paul condemned worship of the true God though "insufficiently" and so on – that Paul condemned everything but the worship of the "*not-gods-of-nature*"!

EB,

"And just like GE; you brush aside my explanation of the difference between the Law and wicked observance."

GE:

No, your distinction is artificial, and none of us needs it repeated in order to have something to say against your standpoint or even against you yourself. You are getting caught in and by your own words and arguments.

Consider:

"(N)o "observance" of the Law can EVER be wicked" – with which you – sarcastically – imply "observance" of the Law CAN be wicked! What wicked insinuation! Your 'basics / rudiments / elementals' are all wrong, EB!

What he "approves of somewhere else ... Paul would never condemn here". When Paul approved the circumcision of Timothy he did what was in the best interest then of the Gospel. Besides, Paul was an apostle with the obligations of an apostle that was no one else's rights. And what Paul disapproved and condemned in the case of the Galatians was totally another matter; he didn't condemn an institution of Scripture or an "observance" of the Law", but an atrocity of the enemies of the Gospel.

But here's the best (or shall I say worst) of your deception: Did Paul ever approve those inabilities, superficialities, selfish agendas etc. you insist the Galatians were 'guilty' of? No, he always 'condemned' it; he never 'approved of it'. "THAT is what is condemned" – says EB! But you say the very thing Paul in Galatians condemns, is that which he "approves of somewhere else", so it MUST be the Law, YOU, are talking of; so it MUST be the LAW that Paul, according to EB, "condemns", "here", but "approves of somewhere else"! Still deny?

EB:

You still act like you have me on trial or something. Neither of you have even shown how my distinction is artificial; or that I am only conjuring it up to get out of some "trap" or "corner" I have painted myself into. As I just told BR; if Paul can allow circumcision in one

case and then condemn it in another; then there must be a REASON for both instances; but you and BR are denying that what is approved in one place can ever be condemned somewhere else. Until you deal with this and stop brushing it off; you cannot claim that I am in some trap that I can't get out of. You are just SAYING that; because YOU are apparently the one trapped; and have no other answer. You can't disprove what I am saying; because I am not giving the same pat answers most non-sabbatarians give; which you two have your memorized responses for. So you need to search for answers to the issue; instead of making these claims about my character.

GE:

"(T)hat what is approved in one place" indeed, "can NEVER be condemned somewhere else" in Scriptures. So, "if Paul can allow circumcision in one case and then condemn it in another; then there must be a REASON for" it – which in this case, exactly is, that in one 'instance', 'circumcision' is not the 'circumcision' of the Scriptures that Paul or God, "allowed" or commanded; and that, in the other 'instance' of 'circumcision' in context of Galatians 5, it is the 'circumcision' of the Galatians' grotesque imagination and invention that went directly against the 'circumcision' of the Scriptures that Paul and God, both, "allowed". Pagans whether Gentile or not were the party that 'promoted' the Galatian 'circumcision' – they were pagan and idolater Judaists; not Christians or of true Old Testament Faith (which is Christian Faith after all). Had they been "Judaizers", pagans and idolaters had they been non the less. Were they 'Jews / some Hebrews', pagans and idolaters had they been non the less – non the less "*Gentiles*", and non the less "*of the world*"! And just so the involved 'circumcision'! Pagan was it, were the party that 'promoted' this 'circumcision', Gentiles or not – it was pagan and idolatrous 'circumcision' non the less. Were it the circumcision of the "Judaizers", pagan and idolatrous had their circumcision been non the less. Were the circumcision that of the 'Jews' or of 'some Hebrews', pagan and idolatrous had it been non the less – nay more, had it been the circumcision of the "*Gentiles*", and more, the circumcision "*of the world*"!

Here it should be allowed to quote Paul from Colossians, who pitches the different 'circumcisions' against one another: ". . . *the circumcision of being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh*"; against the circumcision of the Scriptures and of God's Law: "*in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ – the circumcision not made with hands*". So that the pagan circumcision of the "Judaizers", was a circumcision that boasted life from *death*, claimed *sonship of God* and adjured *inheritance of the Promises*, but in the eyes of God, was a circumcision condemned, that confirmed '*the partakers thereof in death and in sins* by the very circumcision "*of the flesh*" "*in the flesh*", being an "*uncircumcision*" of the heart and not, "*the circumcision of Christ – not the circumcision not made with hands*".

EB,

... these claims about my character ...

GE:

It, in view of the total absence of argument from the Scriptures, is inevitable your opponents in debate, EB, should conclude about your character. Your basic and one and only 'argument', is that you distinguish between keeping of the Law and the Law per se – which is no argument. So in 4:8-11 it is not 'the Law' that is the "weak and beggarly element", but man's (effort to) keeping of the Law. You put this one theme into many variations, thinking it may prove your 'distinction', which is no distinction but in effect and in fact through your total equalisation becomes an exact identification. Only in this indefinable way is it possible to maintain the weak and beggarly elements of our verses are not indeed the no-gods of paganism, but the works of a bondage under the Law. Only through such dishonesty, is it made possible. How can one not make decisions about your character?

EB:

Only because I am not giving the same pat answers most non-sabbatarians give; which you two have your memorized responses for.

GE:

"Memorised responses" to the "pat answers" of "most non-sabbatarians", or, to yours supposedly "not the same"? We answer (or try to answer) you, EB, on this – so it must be our responses to your claimed not so ordinary arguments. And we have our answers "memorised" and ready! Didn't know I – and BR – were clairvoyant!

What makes your arguments so distinctive, dear EB? You only parrot age old attacks on the Sabbath solely via Galatians! The whole of Galatians must so be coloured as to paint the Sabbath in most horrid sin's-purple, and Sunday-observation in lilliest white. Otherwise there's no point whatsoever to all your "answers".

"... you brush aside my explanation of the difference between the Law and wicked observance." To what purpose, dear EB, do you attempt an "explanation of the difference between the Law and wicked observance"? To "EX-PLAIN" it!, which means, to 'brush aside' and away, ANY difference remaining, that is!

How perfectly true it is what I've said, is that you – none else but you EB – insist "*the weak and beggarly elements*" were, quote: "*bondage under the Law*".

Paul makes a real and true distinction: "*For as many as have sinned WITHOUT THE LAW* (like the gentiles of Galatians 4:8-11) *shall also perish without the Law; whereas as many as have sinned IN THE LAW* (like the Jews and the Christians alike) *shall be judged by the Law*".

Your 'distinction', EB, is No distinction, it is the 'explanation' of the distinction – an explanation away of it!

EB,

Neither of you have even shown how my distinction is artificial ...

GE:

In fact yes, we were unable it being so obviously artificial it won't make any difference if we were able to show it!

I gave much thought though, to your "whole context" concept with regard to Galatians 4:8-11 and have gained better insight, I must say.

You are right, that 4:3 'sorts' 'Jewish' faith, under "*bondage under the elements of the WORLD*"! It pays to simply read the text!

Where the "*bewitchers*" tried to make of everyone Jews in order to be saved, Paul in Galatians taught that everyone should first become a heathen in order to be saved! So in 4:3 Paul undoubtedly speaks of the Old Testament '*dispensation of the Law*', he himself, being a Jew – a 'Judaizer'-Jew, saying, "*WE*": "*Even so WE (the Jews, those of the circumcision in the terminology of this Letter), WHEN* (–in the dispensation of the Law, or, "*when*", under the Old Testament **but believing in**

**works—)** *WE, were children* (–that is, when we were not “sons” of age, or “heirs”, or true believers in grace, yet, verse 7–), *were in bondage under the elements of the WORLD* still, trying, believing and hoping to earn and merit the *Blessing* we like a real Jacob so craved and *lusted* after! Paul says virtually the same thing in 3:23, “*But before faith came, we were kept under the Law, SHUT UP unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.*” Paul supposes ‘Judaizer Jews’ – not the true “sons”, not “*the Israel of God*” of Galatians 4 and 6. The Old Testament with its Law, Paul reckons under the “*principles of the world*”, but, when so reckoned it was because of the wrong motives and selfish interests!

We talk about chapter 4 verses 1 to 3 now!

And so one could also accept your explanation of ‘*stoicheia*’, “*principles / elements / rudiments / lords / gods / heads*”, that it means ‘to be in agreement with / in pace with’ wrong motives and with selfish ends, spelling, ‘Judaism’! Judaism is in pace and in agreement with paganism.

Certainly yes! Because Paul’s whole argument – the crux of it – is that, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HOW A JEW IS SAVED OR HOW A GENTILE IS SAVED! All, are saved by grace through faith, and all, are FIRST made and proved SINNERS BEFORE THE LAW as precondition they may be saved! It is final: “*The Scriptures* (the Law) *hath concluded ALL, under SIN*”! Where more so “*The Scriptures*”, than in the New Testament Scriptures?! UNLESS one has been included under SIN, UNLESS one has been found a SINNER, he is still, a LOST sinner, UNTIL “*the promise by faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe.*” (3:23)

EB applies a VALID Christian principle where it doesn’t apply. If a man is not in Christ, he is in bondage and at that, any bondage – ‘bondage’ of being outside Christ, whether under the Law or under the principles of the world – such a man is in bondage – is the slave of sin!

That though, is NOT THE ISSUE HERE in Galatians 4, because Paul, in verses 8 to 11, addresses the specific issue of the Galatians’ return to their former, pagan, state. Afterwards in the chapter up to verse 21, Paul ‘switches’ not the least as to the Gentile character of his argument. You, EB, on the other hand, say, no, the trend so far had been and therefore must remain, ‘Jewish’ throughout, except for that “PASSING REFERENCE ... not even all four of the verses ... but rather ONE: 4:8”!

Now, Even if a Christian would like to live like the truly believing Jews of ‘before Christ’, he must return back to a bondage under the Law that for him would be a return as to a bondage “under the elements of the world” – NO doubt! And such a return, would, from the nature of the case, be, a return to a keeping of ALL the Laws – or just a few such a ‘Christian’, might choose to keep – Laws, of the Old Testament Scriptures. I say, all those Laws, or just one, no difference, it must be, and is, a return to a bondage “under the elements of the WORLD” – **NOT though, according to Paul in both these verses, Gal. 4:3 and further in 8 to 11, but according to common sense**, for the simple reason Paul does not reason about such an hypothetical possibility in these verses or anywhere else in his Letter!

This is what EB should see to make him understand.

**K:**

The “Sabbath Rest” in Hebrews is talking about the coming Millennial Rest of 1000 years. To try and use it to justify Sabbatarianism is to do violence to Scripture.

GE:

J, don’t advertise your ignorance so, and don’t judge in things you display total ineptness for.

To K:

All your quotations come long after the time that mattered. That makes them rather useless information. So I’m deleting them.

Where did Sunday sacredness –indeed Sunday-worship– begin? That’s the question for now, if I’m right. Sunday “*Observation*” – or, “*worship / divination / veneration / service*”, began already in the first century after Christ, and during the Apostolic Age! Galatians 4:8-10 is as solid prove of it as one will ever find.

Next Sunday-propogandist was Justin Martyr.

Neither Barnabas nor Ignatius knew or said a thing about Sunday-observance. For Ignatius ‘the Lord’s Day’ was “Christian living of the Sabbath”; or “no more Sabbatizing (*i.e.*, “no more legalistic observance” of the Sabbath), but (“living” it) according to the Lord’s life”. And for Barnabas “the Eighth Day” was symbolised by the Sabbath.

But Sunday idolatry all had its beginnings already in Paul’s day, and I challenge the world’s scholarship to prove me wrong.

Said J, “It (the Sabbath) is NOT there in Heb 3-4.” That is too sweeping a statement! In fact, says this

Scripture in 4:4-5: "Thus God concerning the Seventh Day spoke: And God the Seventh Day rested from ALL His works". ... the Sabbath NOT there in Heb 3-4? You should consult your optometrist!

This is a New Testament statement about God's works – it implies and supposes God's works in Jesus Christ! It does not surprise therefore, that when supplying the ultimate REASON for being of "A KEEPING OF THE SABBATH DAY" in 4:9, that reason or basis or explanation consists of and directly calls on the ultimate, ALL-encompassing WORK of God – according to Ephesians 1:19 further – "WHEN HE RAISED CHRIST FROM THE DEAD". And "JESUS GAVE THEM REST ... FOR HE THAT ENTERED INTO HIS REST, RESTED FROM HIS OWN WORKS AS GOD ..."! The 'anapausis / katapausis' of Hebrews 3-4 is NOT the Sabbath, but is Jesus Christ; JUST SO, the 'sabbatismos' of 4:9 is NOT Christ, but is BASED on Christ and on God's works – on "all the works of God" – "finished / perfected / completed".

Plainer than how it is said it cannot be said, not by me or by any 'sabbatharians', but "SPOKEN" by "God in these last days ... in the SON"!

Who is next to dare declare this is violating the Scriptures? Come on, audacious liars, who?

**BR:**

I do not find them ("all K's above quotations") "useless".

They are good historic corrections to some of the usages that many have sought to make of the supposed ECF sources. It shows which ones are without historic support.

Clears away some of the muddy water surrounding claims about the ECFs.

It also shows what they did NOT say in support of a supposed change of the Sabbath Commandment.

What is in Gal 4:8-10 that points to Sunday?? (I know it references the observance of pagan days -- I just don't see where weekly first day observance is mentioned).

**GE:**

I have become tired of the stereotype defence against the Christian Sabbath in the Word of God for His People – a defence against it for what? For nothing but idolatry and false prophetic claim! (changing the Scriptures to suit satanic doctrine)!

"Weekly first day observance" needs not be "mentioned" in order to be IMPLIED; and being implied it there absolutely is implied. Where – you know – do the 'names' of the 'week-days'

come from? From NOTHING but its "VENERATION / OBSERVATION / SUPERSTITIOUS WORSHIP"; from NOTHING but the "SLAVING / BONDAGE / SERVICE" – "weak and beggarly", idolatrous stuff – paid it by the PAGANS; "DIVINATION" of their OWN and erstwhile "by-nature-not-GODS / ELEMENTS / PRINCIPLES / PRINCIPALITIES / LORDS / RULERS" – the heavenly bodies "studied with great veneration and awe"! To THESE 'not-gods' the Galatians "returned" and "DESIRED / LUSTED / WANTONLY URGED" to "PRAY TO" again and be "IN BONDAGE UNDER", "AGAIN". Paul declared: "You're cut off from Christ ... you're fallen from grace" FOR IT! "IN VAIN all my effort on you", IDOLATERS!

'Emperor worship' called on the worship – 'divination'; making god – of the emperor. It might have entailed making of the emperor some celestial body or something; but the OBJECT of 'worship', was the person of the emperor. This 'phenomenon' actually developed only later in history, and in Christian literature is FIRST seen in Polycarp's martyrdom.

In Galatians the well-known 'gods' of wisdom and knowledge of TIME, "days, months, seasons, and years", are not only mentioned, but implied in Paul's contrasting the "knowledge" of God, to the 'divination' of the 'not-gods', as well as in the presupposed universal 'knowledge' of the god/goddess 'wisdom' "of the world" and "of man", as contained in the "stoicheia" – the "ELEMENTAL (things)" or basic constituent parts thereof. Of the physical "world" – "cosmos", the constituent parts or 'elemental gods' were earth (dust), water, wind and fire – the parallel 'stoicheia' of the invisible dimension of the 'world of time', "days, months, seasons and years".

Compare Wisdom 7:17, for the 'parallelism' or "conclusive concepts" between the basic components or "powers". Here is my translation of the passage:

"For in his (wisdom's) hands are both we and our word, all wisdom also and maturity, For he gave me conclusive knowledge of the things that are, namely, how the world came together and the ruling of the principles (stoicheiohn), the elementals, beginning, end and centre of TIMES, (chronohn) (days and months), the alternating of the tropics and changes of seasons (kairohn), the turning of YEARS and stellar arrangements, the NATURE (physeis) of living things and the furies of the beasts (reference to horoscopic 'principles' / 'powers'), the violence of winds and the mentality of people, the advantages of plants and

the powers of roots, ALL SUCH THINGS AS ARE SECRET OR MANIFEST, I know! (says 'Wisdom').

EB:

I answered all of that stuff before, and you all rehash the same claims like I never said anything. (GE; I thought you changed your position before).

1) No one is calling the "word of God" or even "the Law" bondage, slavery, "The weak and elemental things of this World", or "worthless" and "pertaining to that "which by nature is not God". It was the Jews' condemned state trying to justify themselves by the works of the Law (without Christ) that was the bondage and the rest of those things.

2) "observe days and months and seasons and years" is NOT the same as "observe times" in Lev. Two totally different words in two totally different languages. And "observe" in Rom. is altogether different from those. You can't just pair things up like that without making sure it is the same thing.

3) the fact that "observe" in Gal. is "...to inspect alongside" (i.e. to note insidiously). Where "Insidious" can be to "intended to entrap or beguile", or "stealthily treacherous or deceitful", is the biggest proof of all, because it is the SAME WORD used for when the JEWS tried to "trap" both Jesus and Paul! There is NOTHING in the Greek AT ALL about "astrology"! Now are you saying the Jews used astrology to trap Jesus and Paul? Or was it the LAW they used?

Likewise, their watching the NT Christians and judging them for not keeping OT laws was the same thing, as is those who continue to do it today!

4) Your scholars are only a handful, and do not make the majority.

5) Nobody says there were only Jewish influences in the NT church. However, people do seem to think there were only pagan influences, and have underestimated the Jewish pressure and even persecution of Christians.

I no longer have the time to argue this stuff anymore. If you all think you are successfully convicting us as idolaters and satanic doctrines, (which is the charge constantly being thrown out) then go ahead, but remember that we have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and we'll see if all these lies (which are a violation of the Law!) will pass! (Once again, what you are doing is the "watching with evil intent" discussed in the passage).

GE:

Ah, Eric B, You're tiresome!

I changed my position – or more clearly took standpoint – on Gal.4:3. Not on 4:7-11 at all! And if you think I'm double-talking, go have a look at my standpoint as published in 1994 already, 'The Lord's Day in the Covenant of Grace', volume 4, "Paul", Paragraph 8.3.3, Galatians.

You haven't presented a single argument of substance otherwise that could have influenced me to "change position"! On the contrary, your every argument I have in the meantime analysed and answered thoroughly since we have last had a discussion.

Say you, "Your scholars are only a handful, and do not make the majority." Said Luther as noted by BR, "Martin Luther "Almost all doctors have interpreted this reference as concerning the astrological days of the Chaldeans". I'll take Luther as the better authority of you two.

EB:

If you accept 4:3, then the whole argument that 7-11 could not possibly be talking about "the Jews", or that taking it that way "calls God's Law paganism" falls. It all goes together. All were lost in bondage, and for any to return to their former way (whether pagan or Judaistic) would be a "return" to bondage.

I do not see a page on your site called "The Origin of Sunday Sacredness - Galatians 4". I see mostly a bunch of stuff disputing the SDA's, particularly, Bacchiocchi on the time of the resurrection. And you do seem to have a bit of a point on "Today since these things the third day". As for Calvin and Servetus, whether what Servetus did was against the civil law or

not, still the point is that it is not our job as Christians to make correct doctrine the civil law and torture and kill people over it. If he could not tell the difference between Servetus and the Muhammadans, he had no business being a church leader. Servetus' position actually was not that far off from the original truth. He was a bit more adoptionistic in the beginning (which did compromise the deity of Christ), but then modified it to say clearly that the Word was Christ. This made his position identical to the pre-Nicene fathers such as Tertullian and Hyppolytus, but Calvin still tried him for not saying "eternal Son of God", rather than "Son of the eternal God". The former is not in the Bible, but the latter is closer, yet Servetus was condemned over the unbiblical phrase.

This is the fruit of the union of church and state, and that is more a Romish tool of the endtimes than Sunday is! (And didn't Calvin also enforce Sunday as the sabbath and not the 7th day?) This was completely contrary to the gospel of Grace. The points I presented above are of substance, you did not answer, at least not here, but both of you would simply go back to answering your own straw men and other tangents.

GE:

None of us at the moment stick to the thread's theme: Hebrews 3-4!

And once again EricB takes the lead taking everybody with him 'down another rabbit trail' as Bob Ryan once remarked!

EB:

Actually, it was you and Bob who took the discussion off Heb.3-4, when you commented on Gal., and then Bob jumped in with his non-sequitur points.

I am not trying to take you down any rabbit rail. (still in accusatory mode, I see). I have been trying to wind down the discussions, because of time. But that could not go unanswered.

GE:

We have nothing to debate – the 'days' are 'pagan' and idolatrous; 'days' "known" by their pagan names, are implied; Sunday is there, first and foremost!

Anyhow, someone referred to Ignatius. Ignatius doesn't have an idea of Sunday; he thinks of the Sabbath – "sabbatidzontes" – "according to the life (or day) of the Lord" – "kata kuriakehn dzohntes" OR NOT AT ALL ("MEHKETI") which simply argues for TRUE, and CHRISTIAN, SABBATH-KEEPING. What the issue is about I really can't see – it (again) is something blown up by the Sundaydarians. As Ignatius says in 4,1, "We should be REALLY Christians, and not merely have the name!" "The unbelievers, bear the stamp of this world", says he in 5,2. (So does its 'Day' – 'Sun's-Day' and "the Lord Sun's Day"!)

EB:

My two statements together:

1)v.7-11 are NOT necessarily talking about "pagan"... That means that they at the most COULD refer to paganism; but MAYBE NOT!

2)the whole context of the chapter shows they are not.

This is the deciding factor. In #1, it was maybe or maybe not. #2 shows it was not. No contradiction. One builds upon the choice left by the other.

So it is not my "confused reasoning", but rather your confused perception!

Just like: quote: "I suppose if one is happy to make God the author of paganism or to equate HIS word with paganism -- then my pointing out how REAL paganism was in fact the more likely problem – would be inconvenient."

It's like my father used to say: I wish we could take a screwdriver, open up your head, and see what is going on in there. Nobody has said that God's Word is paganism, but you keep seeing that somewhere. You talk so much about "the commandments", do you really think God accepts this lying? Break one commandment to try to prove another! But then you HAVE TO do something, because your whole basis for self-righteous judging of non-sabbath Christians falls on chapters like this. Anything but admit that 'I am no more obedient than anyone else, and by judging, I am the one who is actually



not a "doer" of the Law!' (the spiritual Law, that is)

BR:

The "details" will show that I simply noted other respected historians and Bible scholars that were willing to "admit" to the pagan system that was referenced in Gal 4.

Since the comment was made that SUNDAY was possibly one of those pagan days -- I pointed to the history of emperor worship that HISTORIANS admit to be a problem in the first century for gentiles-turned-Christian.

But that would be "the details" again and I am sure they are inconvenient for some models.

I suppose if one is happy to make God the author of paganism or to equate HIS word with paganism -- then my pointing out how REAL paganism was in fact the more likely problem -- would be inconvenient.

GE:

EB, your insistent hammering on the whole context is bluff merely, and so your attempts to divide the text. You supply anyone with that screwdriver that fits the screws to the lid of your mind's interior. Only the screwdriver of the Word can open the Word though.

The Sabbath "*REMAINS*" for God's People. "*Apoleipetai*" -- it means, "*remains obligatory / true / valid / a given*", for "*God's PEOPLE*", His Christian Congregation -- not for 'the world'; not for UNbelievers; but for believers in HIM who "*HAD GIVEN THEM REST*" -- for believers in HIM who "*HAD ENTERED INTO HIS OWN REST AS GOD (from His own works)*". Jesus Christ had "*FINISHED THE WORKS THE FATHER HAD GIVEN (HIM)*"! Alleluia! He had risen from the dead "*the third day according to the Scriptures*" -- the '*third day*' of GOD'S 'Passover' -- of His Salvation by '*the exceeding greatness of His power when He raised Christ from the dead*' ... "*IN SABBATH'S-TIME'S FULLNESS*"! In the Fullness of God's "*REST*" that is, He, "*rested*", and "*revived*", and "*finished*", and "*perfected*", and "*sanctified*", and "*blessed*" -- THIS IS THE DAY OF GOD'S TRIUMPH THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD! Let us raise "*the Song of Moses and of the Lamb*" -- it the Song of Resurrection; it is a Sabbath's Song! "*I saw a Lamb as if slaughtered STANDING*"! And with Him the saved -- the Church!

EB:

You still don't get it. You still are reading what you want to read. Look again: "If you accept 4:3, then the whole argument that 7-11 could not possibly be talking about "the Jews", or that taking it that way "calls God's Law paganism" falls". This you say "which says 7-11 speaks about GENTILES". How do you figure that? The whole argument that 7-11 could NOT be talking about Jews FALLS. The whole idea that TAKING IT THIS WAY (as applying to the Jews) calls God's Word "paganism" FALLS. That means it still COULD possibly be referring to the Gentiles, but NOT NECESSARILY, as we see that the Jews are NOT EXCLUDED. Then, the remaining context is the clincher, showing that it is in fact about those pushing "the Law". So no "reversion", only the same truth I was building up to all along.

You are just throwing out a bunch of charges without even reading thoroughly what you are responding to.

The screwdriver analogy was about checking to see what makes you two think the way you do, not really about fixing it. Only the Word [of CHRIST] can remove the blinders (2 Cor.3:14) that cause you to distort the teaching that refutes your position.

And the "sabbath that "remains" is SPIRITUAL. Even you once told me I could do my secular job on it, and both you and Bob go on the Internet on it. That is certainly NOT the sabbath commanded in the Law!

GE:

You restate your position, that no real "*keeping of the Sabbath (sabbatismos) remains for the People of God BECAUSE OF (ara) the fact "Jesus had given them REST (katapausis/anapausis)*", "*BECAUSE OF*" the fact "*He who had entered into His REST (katapausis/anapausis) as God ALSO rested from his own works*" -- making of the TWO things, one.

But, what do YOU say, Ignatius means with his use of "sabbatidzontes" -- "NO LONGER sabbatidzontes"?

Don't you –like the Sundaydarians– say Ignatius speaks of 'no longer keeping THE SABBATH" (Seventh Day)'?

And what do you make of the papyri that use the word "sabbatismos / (sabbatidzontes)" "keeping of the Sabbath DAY"?

But most important, what do YOU, make of Hb.4:4-5, that says, "*GOD, THUS, concerning the Seventh DAY did speak, And God the Seventh DAY, RESTED?*" -No Eric B, your sophistry is transparent, like your whole argument restated above, that you actually DENY your own standpoint that you do not have anything against God's Law, because your whole argument is directed against the "*keeping of the Sabbath DAY*" commanded in the Fourth Commandment.

I'll never speak another word about this subject WITH YOU!

BR:

Though Hebrews 4 quotes the Sabbath commandment of Christ the Creator and though it gives the positive affirmation that the Sabbath rest REMAINS for the people of God -- some have so "edited" their text in their minds that they can ignore this entirely.

But it can not be denied that in Heb 3 and 4 there are TWO positive examples of REST given. The entrance into Canaan and also Christ the Creator's Holy Day.

These positive examples are used as a motivation to "persevere FIRM until the end" (as is pointed out repeatedly in chapter 3 and 4.

In addition the text of Psalms 95 – given to the Sabbath keeping saints of David's generation is offered as a basis of "contrast" between the message to David vs the negative example of failure by the generation in Moses' day that died in the wilderness "due to unbelief" and "disobedience".

The argument in chapter 4:1 is that we should "fear" that such a failure to enter God's rest should also happen to us.

Paul argues that the Psalms 95 promise to the Sabbath-keeping saints of David's day – (given after so long a time following the failure of the generation in Moses' day enter Canaan) "remains". He argues that some still have failed to enter – and it "remains for some to enter".

So these two positive examples of rest are used as "Motivators" in the Heb 3 and 4 text EVEN after the cross!

This means that the intent is to UPHOLD them as good things that we would WANT – good examples of "rest" motivating us to ENTER and not to fail to enter – as did the generation in Moses' day.

How then could this be twisted as a means to abolish those VERY examples of rest!??

GE:

I see things a bit differently. The "*rest*" we are in danger of not entering, is faith in Christ – faith in God's works accomplished in and through Him. ("*They entered not (God's Rest) because of unbelief.*") The writer refers to some illustrations from Scripture of man's unbelief. I am sure he also had in mind Adam's failure to believe in God, so that God swore that man would not enter into His rest, and drove Adam and Eve out of paradise. Howbeit, ultimately, man rejected God's Rest – the Rest He entered into in and through Jesus Christ. And having rejected THIS rest of God, God has sworn no one would enter into his rest, because – as this chapter here states – "*there is NO day after*". Christ is (was) God's last word to mankind for salvation. Do you enter in; or do you not? is the CRISIS of the AGES! "*IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE TODAY, THEREFORE: Harden not your hearts!*" For this is the day of salvation. There is NO OTHER SAVIOUR! Accept Christ or die in your stiff-necked sinning! That is the writer's MESSAGE – the Gospel! Nothing more! Thus the writer has created a firm foundation for concluding Christ's triumph and God's success – He WILL find a People who "*has entered!*" Rejoice! Worship God for His salvation! A People is born; behold, the Church of God! All because of CHRIST'S DOING – "*JESUS who had given them REST!*"; "*HE WHO had entered into His OWN rest as God from His*". This is the GRAND CLIMAX, and this is the very BASIS and GROUNDS FOR "*a keeping of the Sabbath Day for the People of God*".

Now the redemption of Jesus Christ –the redemption IN HIM– has become the NEW motive, the NEW reason, the FINAL FOUNDING, for the People of God's "*keeping of their Sabbath*" – the Sabbath of the LORD your God. Since of old –as the writer has amply illustrated– God's rest, God's salvation, God's Passover, has been the reason for His Commanding the Sabbath Day to be kept holy; the reason for and the blessing as such of it; the reason for and the sanctification as such of it; the reason for and the rest as such of it; the reason for and the perfecting as such on it; the reason for and the reviving as such in it – the Seventh Day the Sabbath of the LORD your God.

Christians believe and keep the Sabbath DAY, for no reason but the redemption of God in Jesus Christ through resurrection from the dead!

A keeping of the Sabbath Day THUS has become the Christian's obligation, or not at all! The Gospel – nothing more! What more could there be?

**Conclusion:**

"*Though but a man's will yet confirmed, it is impossible to annul, or to be added to.*" (3:15) How much surer therefore, of God's 'Will'!

God ensured His will – in Paul's own words – that "*the Blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles*". In the Old Testament – in "*the Scriptures*", says Paul in verse 8, "*it says, In you (Abraham), will all the nations be blessed*" – plural, many, "*all*" the nations, the Gentiles included!

Paul wonders, 'How on earth – the blessing of "*our father Abraham*" ... on the Gentiles?! How impossible, they are not "*sons*"? They are not the "*heirs*" by right – 'by Law'? Not those 'dogs'! Isn't this going to be grossly unfair of God that the "*children of Abraham*" – "*the Israel of God*" – are passed by, while the Gentiles, the "*cursed*" – "*for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth NOT in all the things which are written in the book of the Law, to do them*" – that they, receive "*The Promises of God*" and "*The Blessing of Abraham*", "*our* – the Jews' – "*father*"? These Gentiles, they don't keep the Law! We, the Jews, we, greatly respect God's holy Law. We, every day do our very best to obey every letter of God's Commandments and Ordinances. SHOULD NOT "*The Promises of God*" and "*The Blessing of Abraham*" come OUR way? Isn't it just fair, fair to us, who are the "*children of Abraham*" by promise and testament, sealed by the sign of circumcision; isn't it just fair to the Law that says the "*heir*" shall receive the blessing? Are not WE, the "*heir*"? How can "*The Blessing of Abraham*", "*come on the Gentiles*", those disobedient and "*cursed*" "*strangers to the promises of God*"?

Here is Paul's solution:

"*Now to Abraham, and / indeed his seed (that is, Jesus Christ), were the promises made*". Not, to the Jews first; not even to Abraham first, and then, to the Gentiles, but "*indeed*" to Christ first, and then to "*those who believe*"!

How obtained Abraham the promises of God? "*As Abraham believed God, it was accounted to him for righteousness.*" Abraham count under the last in the row! He too, like the Gentiles, had no 'lineage' or works-record to rely on! He simply had to believe God! "*KNOW YE THEREFORE, that THEY* [Abraham and the Gentiles], *which are of FAITH* [without the Law – without even

an obedience to it to show], *EVEN THEY, ("cursed"), ARE the children of Abraham THE SAME.*" Like Abraham had to believe so they '*the same*' have to believe because like Abraham even they were "*cursed*". ... "*Though but a man's will yet confirmed, it is impossible to annul, or to be added to.*" (3:15) This is God's will and confirmed, by Jesus Christ sacrificed and resurrected, "*impossible to annul, or to be added to*" – to the Gentiles belong the promises of God, but in and through Jesus Christ the Heir Ultimate! "*So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.*"

The Gentiles aren't blessed with the faithful Jews, but they – by the Oath of God with The Faithful Heir, through faith together are blessed with the faithful Abraham.

So then, Paul not only proves the Gentiles become heirs of God's promises by faith only, but the Jews too and even more urgently, by faith only.

**"Now to Abraham as to indeed his seed (Christ), were the promises made."**

And who is known to be Abraham's, only, Lawful, "*Seed*"? And who, the children "*as many as the sand of the sea*" of Abraham – "*according to the promises of God*"? It is CLAIMED, of course, Israel! The sign is physical of a physical race! Does not the Law attest, that the Jews by right of Law are the sons and heirs of Abraham's blessing? So they boast, and so indeed it is – **IF, they believe!** It belongs to them by Testament of God – **IF, they believed!** "*In thee (Abraham) shall ALL nation-S, be blessed*" – Jews too, but, "*together with the FAITHFUL (believing) Abraham!*"

How now? Is their a contradiction; is there a clash of interest? Is it a matter of conditions to the Will, or of changes in the Contract of Confirmation? Does it mean the annulment of the Lawful Document? Who gets done in? Who isn't paid his due? Who has worked for peanuts? No, it's all of grace!

"*To Abraham, and to his SEED were the promises made. God saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of One, And to thy Seed, WHICH IS CHRIST*" – "*This I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God, was confirmed IN CHRIST, and that the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, CANNOT disannul God's Promise, that it should make it of no effect.*" "*Though but a man's will yet confirmed, it is impossible to annul, or to be added to.*" This, is God's Will.

[Nobody argues here the other way round, that God's Promise, annulled the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years later than the Promise! How could the Promise when given have annulled something that not even then existed? It in any case is no how the intent of Paul to argue the ridiculous, as he says in Romans 3:31, consistently, "*Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yea, we* (by the faith of the Promise) *establish the Law.*" ]

In 4:3 therefore, Paul thinks of himself and his fellow-Jews (where he says), "*Even so we, when we, were children*", as over against those reckoned by God but not generally regarded as "*child*", "*son*" "*heir*" – the Gentiles!

4:1, "*Now I (Paul) say, the heir, as long as he is a child* (meaning the Jews '*before faith came*' – not in point of time, but in point of history) *differs nothing from the servant* (meaning the gentiles), *though he* (the "heir") *be lord* (owner by testament) *of everything. But he is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father* (in his testament).

Verse 3 continues with this "*heir*", the Jews, supposed as subject, "*Even so WE WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN* (the Jews / "*heirs*" **not of age yet**, and still "*a child*" or **unbeliever**, 3:1-2), *were in bondage under the elements of the WORLD.*" We were just like the Gentiles, without Christ, and as were we pagans. We were no better than them in no respect.

Paul from 4:1 to 4:3 has the Jews in the mind firstly and mainly. The 'context' is decidedly 'Jewish'. **Our question is: Does Paul CONTINUE to have the JEWS (exclusively) in mind further on, and through, verses 8 to 11?** Will the 'context' remain (exclusively) 'Jewish'? Or **does he change subject**, and has (exclusively) the Gentiles in mind in verses 8 to 11?

It is no easy question but gets very complex, and one should be wary of too simple answers.

One reason I think that Paul does change subject and context is that he will not unnecessarily repeat (in 8-11) what he has already said (in 1-3). I believe so despite the fact he somehow keeps on writing in the First Person.

4:4, "*But when the fullness of the time* ("*appointed of the Father*", 4:2) *was come* (as when "*faith came*", 3:23) *God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law ...*".

Notice "*made of a woman*" – not of Abraham! God sent forth His Son as a man for men, as the one for the many, as the second Adam for the first Adam and his heirs in sin and death.

Paul wants to say with this: Jesus Christ was sent by God for Gentiles as for all men, even for the Jews too; but in the first place for all men, and therefore for the Gentiles first: for sinners, specifically and originally; only afterwards, for the Jews who might be reckoned not those sinners the Gentiles were!

Notice "*made under the Law*" – and remember 3:22, "*The Scripture has concluded ALL under sin*", and that "*we were*", ALL, by the Scripture, "*kept under the Law (and) shut up ...*"!

Paul, saying either "*we*", or, "*ye*", now and here in this place, in view of the universal principle of divine salvation he takes cognisance of, includes all men, and all men as sinners and unbelievers and Gentiles, as being and for being under that very bondage he has concluded even the Jews under, before "*the fullness of the time was come*" and the *Promises* and the *Blessing* given!

5:1, "*To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*".

Because then God sent forth Christ to save men all being sinners, Paul including himself "*in bondage under the elements of the world*" and with the Gentiles including himself, concludes, finally, "*To redeem THEM that were under the Law*", sinners, heathen, idolaters, Greeks, Hebrews – all the "*curse*". Of whom Paul was chiefest! Declared he, "*that WE, (all) might receive the adoption of sons*". By "*adoption*" – never by lineage, genealogy, Law, works or whatever! The Jews physically were "*sons*" by lineage – *i.e.*, according to Law or "*under the Law*" – but "*we receive sonship*", by "*adoption*" – that is, spiritually, by grace through faith in hope; it is binding on the Jews as well!

Paul does NOT therefore speak of Jews in 4:5; he speaks of US, **all and everyone** of US, men, as Gentiles! And if not as of Gentiles, then in vain did God send forth His Son for whomever is not of the Gentiles! Then "*verily righteousness should have been by the Law*", and Christ is made "*of no profit*"!

God save you my friend, and me, as men, fallen and accursed men – as Gentiles – or not at all!

What Paul PREACHES here in 4:5, saying, "*them that were under the Law*", is, that a Jew, should first become a Gentile, a man merely, an ordinary human being – a sinner and mortal ultimately – or he cannot become a chosen of God, for "*God justifi(ies) the HEATHEN through faith*" (3:8) – not Jews through the Law! That is how God, "*PREACHED the Gospel before to Abraham*". There is no other Gospel proclaimed; this, is the only!

God saves them that are SINNERS, Gentiles, "*under the Law*", or Gentiles, "*without the Law*".

In verse 5 therefore, Paul **changes both subject and context**. He here reasons as were he a Gentile, so that when saying "*we*" or "*ye*", he means the Gentiles! So that even when saying "*sons*", it is the heathens or Gentiles he means are the "*sons*" – "*sons*" from the mother of us all, "*sons*" of Eve! How else would any Gentile be saved; how else any man for that matter, even were he a Jew, had he not become a son of Adam, a Gentile, a sinner, a 'lost'? Jesus came to save sinners – no one else.

Paul THUS ONLY is able to with absolute confidence declare:

4:6, "*And because YOU are sons* = have become "*sons*" from being "*children*"; from being not believers have become believers, since by Promise and Blessing God's to Abraham before the Law and before any Jew, "*God having sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your heart, crying, o Father, Father (of us all)!*"

Context? No, not 'Gentile', but of those saved by grace only and not by the works of the Law!

**4:7**, "*Wherefore thou art NO MORE A SERVANT, but a son!*"

Whom does Paul here suppose? Gentiles, who previously in fact had been "*servants*", even the "*servants*" of the "*children*" the Jews. Yes, but just as much does Paul here think of all men as Jews, who, for their works of the Law, were "*servants*", and "*in bondage*", as he has said in 4:3, "*in bondage under the elemental things of the world*" – Jews who so in effect were "*servants*" to the Gentiles, or, who so in effect were "*in bondage*" to "*the world*"! Paul finally thinks of **pagans**, irrespective whether they are Gentiles or Jews. He thinks of "*man*" – for being **released** from "*bondage*" together and without distinction – of "*servants*" become "*sons*" spiritually through faith, and therefore, of "*sons*" become "*heirs*". Paul presupposes all men, Gentiles, 'spiritually'; he next supposes them – those very Gentiles of **4:7** – "*no more, a servant, but, a son; and being a son* ('spiritually', *through grace by faith*), *an heir of God through Christ*". So here, since salvation came by grace through the faith of *the Promises and Blessing of God* – not *by the works of the Law* – salvation came on Jews and Gentiles **alike**. And **these** then, were the Subject of verses **8-11**, and the object of Paul's attention in it. The 'subject', "*ye*", is, the

**Gentiles!** Paul in the pericope **8 to 11**, supposes the Gentiles, "*you*", as having "*returned to*", and again being found in their, former own state, without Christ, and lost as ever before "*faith came*" – again being found "*worshipping*" their, erstwhile "*gods that were not gods*" but that were "*the weak and beggarly principals of the world*". "*Ye again lusting, worship days, months, seasons, years. In vain have I laboured so hard for you!*"

So this verse, **4:8**, supposes, as BR has said, a "general" pagan category of men, upon which supposition verse 9 further builds logical consequence.

3:11, "*That NO man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, is EVIDENT*" – if at all "*children*" of God's, "*children*" they shall be by "*adoption*" through the pure mercy of God, **unmerited** "*through the works of the Law*"! All, without 'ifs', in the matter of justification and acceptance with God, are **children of perdition, under the curse of Law**, irrespective and regardless, "*SO THAT the Promise by Faith of Jesus Christ might be given to THEM THAT BELIEVE*", irrespective and regardless: "*For ye are ALL* (Gentiles and Jews), *the children of God by faith IN CHRIST*"! (3:22, 26)

**For that to become true, also the Jew must become a Gentile first, and not vice versa – what the Galatians might have thought – that the Gentile must become a Jew first!**

Paul for no moment supposes the Law of no effect or not binding – it would make his whole argument ridiculous, arguing on strength of the strength of the Law (that allegedly, is 'annulled'). But Paul's argument departs from the strength of the Law that is a power invested by God in it, that it should bring under the curse of the Law, "*the doer of the Law*", like, and even as, "*everyone that continueth NOT in all things, written in the book of the Law*". (3:12, 10)

'No difference!', is all that Paul says. All are lost except "*in Christ*" – in Whom all, if found, are saved by grace through faith!

"*Is the Law against the promises of God? On authority of God, No! For if there had been given a Law able ('ho dunamenos') to make alive, really by the Law righteousness would have been!*" (Marshall) "*Therefore there remains for God's People their keeping of the Sabbath*". "*Therefore*" – "*for this reason*" – "*if Jesus had given them*

*rest"; "For He that entered into His own rest, rested even as God from His own works!" The Lord is able and had accomplished, therefore is "able to make alive"! "They sang the song of Moses and of the Lamb!" "I will sing unto the LORD, for He hath triumphed gloriously. The LORD is become my salvation; He is my God. Thy right hand, o LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, o Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown. Who is like unto thee, o LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee – GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS, FEARFUL IN PRAISES, DOING WONDERS?"*

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