

5 *Did Paul Negate the Law's Further Applicability?*

Applying the Consistency Test

No one ever seriously claims Paul made any qualifying prophecy. Certainly nothing he predicted of a highly improbable nature has yet come true. Thus, the addition of Paul to canon immediately has a wobbly foundation. It appears to violate Deuteronomy 4:2.

Assuming for argument sake that Paul made some qualifying prediction, we next must apply the Bible's second level test. Even if they come with "signs and wonders" that come true, the Bible says they are still a false prophet if they simultaneously try to "***seduce you from the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk.***" (Deut. 13:5.) If they "diminish the Law," they violate God's word and must be false. (Deut. 4:2.) Jesus in the same vein warns of those with true "signs and wonders" but who are workers of *A-Nomia*, *i.e.*, negators of *Nomos*—the word for *Torah* in Greek. (Matt. 7:15, 24:11, 24.)¹ As a result, even though Paul insists his "signs and wonders" validated his message (Romans 15:19), we need to examine whether Paul's teachings are consistent with the Scripture that preceded Paul. We will thereby follow the example of the Bereans who used Scripture to test Paul's validity. (Acts 17:11.)

1. See "Did Jesus Warn of False Prophets Who Would Negate the Law?" on page 59 *et seq.*

Did Paul Abrogate the Law for Everyone?

Paul has many statements that appear to abrogate the Law *in its entirety*. Paul does not merely say that Jesus fulfilled the law of sacrifice, making actual sacrifices *moot*. (This is Barnabas' reasonable approach in *Hebrews*.) Paul does not merely say the sacrificial ceremonies within the Law are gone. Rather, it appears Paul says Jesus removed the Law in its entirety as a code.

Luther believed Paul unequivocally declared that all aspects of the Law were abolished. Paul even abolished the moral components of the Law. Luther wrote:

The scholastics think that the judicial and ceremonial laws of Moses were **abolished** by the coming of Christ, but not the moral law. They are blind. When Paul declares that we are delivered from the curse of the Law **he means the whole Law**, particularly the moral law which more than the other laws accuses, curses, and condemns the conscience. The Ten Commandments have no right to condemn that conscience in which Jesus dwells, for Jesus has taken from the Ten Commandments the **right** and power to curse us.²

We can find handy one-line proofs in Ephesians 2:15 and Colossians 2:14. Paul declares the Law is abolished for Christians.

Ephesians 2:15

Let us start with Ephesians 2:15. We will quote its wider context to be sure of its meaning.

2. Martin Luther, *Epistle on Galatians 4:25* (1535), reprint at <http://www.biblehelpsonline.com/martinluther/galatians/galatians4.htm> (last accessed 2005).

(14) For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition [at the Temple of Jerusalem]; (15) **Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances;** for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; (16) And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (Ephesians 2:14-16, ASV)(bracketed text added by ASV to make flow better)

Most reputable commentators agree that Paul says here that Jesus abrogated the *entire* Law of Moses. Gill clearly says it is the Law given at Mount Sinai. Gill says Sinai means “hatred” in Hebrew. Thus, Paul is engaging in word-play with its synonym in Greek—*enmity*. Gill then explains Paul means that from Sinai “descended ‘hatred’ or ‘enmity’ to the nations of the world: now this Christ abolished.” Jamieson likewise says Paul means Jesus abrogated the entire Law of Moses. Jesus supposedly replaced it with the “law of Love.” Henry hedges a bit. He says Paul means the “ceremonial law” was abrogated.

Colossians 2:14

Second, Paul rewords Ephesians 2:14-16 in Colossians 2:14. The abrogation of the Law is crystal clear in Colossians. *All the Law* including the commandment to rest on the Sabbath *is abolished*:

(14) **Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way,** nailing it to his cross; (15) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (16) **Let no man therefore judge you** in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an **holyday**, or of the new moon, or of the **sabbath days**: (17) Which are a **shadow of things to come**; but the body is of Christ. (Colossians 2:14-17, ASV)

Here the commentators have no disagreement. Paul means by ordinances blotted away “primarily...the Mosaic Law.” (*Vincent Word Studies*.) This is not merely the ceremonial law. Paul picks out one of the Ten Commandments—the Sabbath command. Then Paul sweeps it away. As Martin Luther in a sermon entitled *How Christians Should Regard Moses* given August 27, 1525³ says of this passage:

Again one can prove it from the third commandment that Moses does not pertain to Gentiles and Christians. **For Paul** [Col. 2:16]...**abolish[ed] the sabbath**, to show us that the sabbath was given to the Jews alone, for whom it is a stern commandment. ⁴

Paul will repeat this abolition of Sabbath in Romans 14:5-6. Paul writes: “One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.” Christian commentators explain this means regarding Sabbath: “Christians are permitted to make up their own minds about a special day.”⁵ You can take it or leave it. It is up to you.

Paul also wipes out all the food laws and festival days. (*See also*, 1 Tim. 4:4, ‘all food is clean.’) Paul clearly is teaching against any obedience to the Law of Moses *per se*.

In Colossians, we have a clearer idea of the “enmity” spoken about in Ephesians 2:15. *All* the ordinances of God in the Law of Moses are “against us.” (Col. 2:14.) Vincent says Paul’s meaning is that the Law of Moses had the “hostile character of a bond” or debt. In Christ, Paul clearly is saying we (Jew and Gentile) are free from this debt. The proof is in the pudding. Paul says in verse sixteen that no one can judge you any

3. Martin Luther, “How Christians Should Regard Moses,” *Luther’s Works: Word and Sacrament I* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960) Vol. 35 at 161-174.

longer for not obeying the Sabbath. The command for a Seventh Day-Sabbath rest is clearly not a ceremonial law about sacrifice. It is one of the Ten Commandments.

Furthermore, Paul makes it clear that there is no distinction between Jew or Gentile who are so liberated from the Law. In both Ephesians 2:15 and Col. 2:14-17, Paul emphasizes how “one new man” emerges (Eph. 2:15). He explains this is so because the Temple wall that barred Gentiles from sacred parts of the Temple has been spiritually abolished. *Id.*

Did Jesus Say We are to Obey the Pharisees or Moses?

i.e., Moses]

i.e.

i.e.

Hebrew Yeshua.

4. In the ellipsis of this quote, Luther claims the following passages also abolish the sabbath: Matt. 12:1-12; John 5:16; 7:22-23; 9:14-16. Luther does not realize this, but if Jesus abolished the Sabbath, Jesus would be an *apostate and false prophet* under Deuteronomy 13:5. So Luther had better be correct. In fact, these passages do not stand for this proposition. Rather, in Matthew 12:1-12, Jesus says it was taught the priests are permitted to work in the temple on the Sabbath and “are guiltless.” If this were true for priests, Jesus says this is true for Himself for one greater than the Temple is before them. The remaining three passages likewise do not support Luther’s claim: John 7:22-23 (if the Jews keep the command to circumcise a certain number of days after birth even if it takes place on the Sabbath, then they should permit Jesus to heal on Sabbath); John 9:14-16 (Jesus healing on sabbath); John 5:16 (Jesus told a man to pick up his mat, interpreted by Jewish leaders to be a *work*, but *Jesus disapproves this understanding*, saying there is no command against *doing good* on the Sabbath). *Cfr.* Jer. 17:21-24 (“be careful to not carry **a load** on Sabbath.”) *See also*, “Sabbath” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. David N. Freedman) Vol. 5 at 855-56 (Jesus misunderstood as disaffirming Sabbath, but rather reaffirmed it universally for all men in Mark 2:27. Jesus’ criticisms were against the man-made teachings that violated the true spirit of the Sabbath command); *cf.* Matt. 12:12 (lawful to do good).

The Abolished Law Was A Ministry Of Death

Paul has a section of Second Corinthians that totally demeans the Ten Commandments. He then unequivocally says they have “passed away.” Once more, Paul demonstrates certainly that he is teaching Jews and Gentiles to no longer follow the Law of Moses.

In this passage from Second Corinthians, Paul calls Moses’ ministry one of “death” and “condemnation.” Paul calls Christianity a ministry of Spirit and liberty. The Law of Moses kills. Christianity gives life. (Incidentally, Paul’s reasoning is dubious at best.)⁶ The Law of Moses is “done away with.” Its “glory was to be done away with.” It is “done away.” Finally, it is “that which is abolished.” All these quotes are found in 2 Corinthians 3:6-17:

(6) Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for **the letter killeth**, but the spirit giveth life. (7) But if **the ministration of death**, written and **engraven in stones**, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of **Moses** for the glory of his countenance; which **glory was to be done away**: (8) How shall not the ministration of the

5. Dan Corner, *Six Facts For Saturday Sabbatarians To Ponder* at <http://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/sabbath.htm> (last accessed 2005).

6. In saying the earlier covenant is *death* and the second *life*, Paul demonstrates a lack of understanding of what Jesus’ atonement represents. Jesus is the atonement satisfying once for all the atonement-requirements in the Law, as Paul should admit. If so, then Jesus’ sacrifice provides the same grace that was provided by the sacrificial system in the Law of Moses. The only difference is Jesus’ payment is *one-time* rather than *repetitive*. Thus, the Levitical atonement-system cannot minister death while Jesus’ death ministers life. The outcome of both is identical: forgiveness by God’s mercy through atonement. Grace was in both systems. In both, the penitent does not suffer the blood-atonement which pays the price for sin.

spirit be rather glorious? (9) For if the **ministration of condemnation** be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. (10) For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. (11) For if **that which is done away was glorious**, much more that which remaineth is glorious. (12) Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: (13) And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look **to the end of that which is abolished**: (14) But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; **which vail is done away in Christ**. (15) But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. (16) Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. (17) Now the **Lord is that Spirit**: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, **there is liberty**. (ASV)

There is nothing unclear in this passage. Paul says the Law of Moses is done away with. The glory that fell upon Moses' face has faded away. This fading away was a foreshadowing that the Ten Commandments would be done away with later. Paul says this time is now. We are entirely free of any and all of the Law's commands.

Gill in his famous commentary is blunt. This passage of 2 Cor. 3:11-17 means that the "law is the Old Testament, or covenant, which is vanished away."

Barnes concurs. He says "the former [*i.e.*, the Law] was to be done away...." Barnes comments on Paul's explanation that when we turn to the gospel, we simultaneously turn away from the Law. It was merely a veil blocking our view of God. Barnes concludes: "When that people should turn again to the Lord, it [*i.e.*, the Law] should be taken away, 2 Cor. 3:16."

Romans Chapter Seven Says the Jews Are Released From the Law

Paul makes his views clear again in Romans 7:1 *et seq.* Paul says he is addressing those who *know the Law*. Paul then teaches that the Jews under the Law are the same as if Israel were a wife of God. When Jesus died, the husband died. This then “**releases**” the bride (Jews) from the Law. (Rom. 7:2.) The Jews are now free to remarry another. In this instance, they can now join with the resurrected Jesus who no longer offers the Law to follow. The Law instead, Paul says, is a bond to the dead husband-God, applying Paul’s analogy.

There is no doubt on Paul’s meaning in Romans 7:2. The word translated as “releases” is from the Greek *katarge*. Paul uses the same Greek word in Romans 6:6. There he prays the body of sin “may be *destroyed*,” and uses the word *katarge* to mean *destroyed, abolished, etc.* *Katarge* means in Greek *bring to nothing* or *do away with*. It is the same word Paul uses in Ephesians 2:15 to say the Law was “abolished.”

Thus, Paul clearly taught in Romans 7:2 again that the Law was abolished. He made this truth specific to Jews too.

The New Morality In Its Place

One of the proofs that Paul declared the Law abolished is how Paul explains a new morality exists for Christians. If Paul intended us to view the Law of Moses as abolished, then we would expect Paul to utter a new standard to guide us in our ethical conduct. We find that Paul does provide a replacement ethical system. Paul teaches a new morality based on what is “obvious

allows.” (Rom. 14:22.) Issues of whether to observe Sabbath at all are reduced to sentiment of what feels best to you: “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” (Rom. 14:5.)

This new morality is another proof that the Law is done away with. As one commentator notes:

As we have said, one of the three aspects of our ‘liberty in Christ’ is our freedom from the Law of Moses. So, when Paul says ‘all things are lawful for me’ he is simply referring to the fact that we are free FROM the Law of Moses.⁷

Thus, if you are in Christ, Paul teaches anything is allowed that conscience permits. The Torah no longer applies. If your conscience allows you to think something is permissible, it is permissible. It is as Bob George—a modern Christian radio personality and author of numerous books—said one day in response to whether fornication was prohibited:

And as Paul said, “All things are permissible, but not all things are profitable.” So is committing fornication permissible? Yes. Is it profitable? No, it is not.⁸

Accordingly, Paul’s repeated axiom “all things are lawful for me” was not some pagan truth that Paul was mocking, as some prefer to think. It arose from Paul abolishing the strict letter of the Mosaic Law “which kills.”

The proof that this is Paul’s viewpoint is how Paul analyzed actual issues. He repeatedly used an expediency test to resolve what is right and wrong. For example, this expediency principle had its clearest application in Paul’s reinterpretation of the command not to eat meat sacrificed to idols. He says he is free from that command. Paul knows an idol is

7. “Liberty, 1 Corinthians 10, and Idolatry,” *Christian Bible Studies*, at <http://www.geocities.com/biblestudying/liberty14.html> (accessed 2005).

8. Bob George, *People to People* (Radio Talk Show) November 16, 1993.

nothing. However, it is not necessarily expedient to eat such meat if someone else you are with thinks it is wrong. So when in the company of this “weaker” brother, Paul will not eat meat sacrificed to idols. The test depends upon *who may be benefited or harmed by your behavior*. In a word, the test is its *expediency*.⁹

Paul’s expediency test is evident again in his lack of concern for the letter of the original Law of the Sabbath. This was God’s command to rest on the “seventh day” of the week—sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. (Ex. 20:10.) On this point, Paul says in Romans 14:5: “One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” It’s all relative to *how you feel about it*.

Paul thus clearly identifies a new moral law *divorced* from the written precepts of the Law. Paul made the new morality depend on the circumstances. It also depended on its expediency. There are no strict moral rules to follow.

Paul’s doctrines are what traditionally we would call *antinomianism*. If your conscience “led by the Spirit” is your guide, and you reject the Law of Moses in its *express* moral precepts, then you are *antinomian*. You are using your own decisions “led by the Spirit” of when and how to comply, if at all, with any of the express commands in the Law of Moses.

This aspect of Paul is what makes him so attractive to the world. Paul gave flexible guidelines about what is sin. Paul also established a system where a believer is allowed to sin without risk of eternal damnation (Rom. 8:1) as long as you follow some simple steps. You are eternally secure if you confessed Jesus and believed in the resurrection. (Romans 10:9.)

Jesus’ teachings are not so attractive as Paul’s teachings in this regard. Jesus required you live a good life according to the commandments in the Law. Anyone who taught

9. For a full discussion on this, see “Paul Permits Eating Meat Sacrificed to Idols” on page 118 *et seq.*

against the validity of the Law given Moses by God was least in the kingdom of heaven. Not one jot or tittle from the Mosaic Law would pass away until heaven and earth pass away. (Matt. 5:18.) Jesus told the rich young man that if you would “enter life,” obey the Ten Commandments. (Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 18:18-26.)¹⁰ If you violate the commandments, Jesus required severe repentance from such sin to avoid being sent to hell. (Matthew 5:29, Matthew 18:8, and Mark 9:42-48.) Jesus described the repentance needed as ‘cutting off the body part ensnaring you to sin.’

Paul is much easier, and far more attractive. For Paul, by contrast, when you sin against the Law, the issue is whether your conscience can allow you to live with it. “Happy is he who does not condemn himself in that thing which he allows.” (Rom. 14:22.)

Most of those in the world coming to Christ opt to follow the message of Paul. They can even boast of their lack of perfection and bask in the feeling of being forgiven. Based on Paul, they are confident they are destined for heaven regardless of never truly *repenting* from their sin against the Law. They are sure they are heading for heaven despite blatant disobedience to the Law of God, *e.g.*, the duty to rest on the true Sabbath. Paul has become a magnet for the modern Christian. Jesus’ message of righteousness *in action, obedience to the Law, and severe repentance after failure* has lost all its appeal.

Denigration of the Law as Given by the Angels

The most troubling aspect of Paul’s writings on the Law is his attribution of the Law to angels. As we will discuss next in depth, Paul in Galatians says the Law was given by angels to Moses as a mediator. If we want to go back to

10. Some think it is significant that the Sabbath command is not repeated in this same context. Christians have developed an odd hermeneutic that if a recap of applicable law in the NT omits a single command, it is abolished. Why? Jesus said all the Law, to the least command, remains. (Matt. 5:13.)

following the Law, Paul says we are desiring to submit to those who “are no gods.” We want to submit to the “weak and beggarly elements (angels).” (Gal. 3:19; 4:8-9.) Thus, Paul clearly says the Law was not given by God.

This is also evident in how Paul derides submitting to the Law, because given by angels. We contrast this with how Paul insists we must submit for conscience sake to government officials as “ministers of God.” (Romans 13:1, 4.) Yet, we must not submit to the Law because given by angels. We come up with a troubling deduction. Paul must be understood to be saying that we do not have to submit to the Law because angels *alone* gave it. Unlike government officials, the angels must not have been ministers of God when giving the Law. This is why the angels are not even on par with government officials whose decrees (Paul says) must be followed as God’s ministers.

These statements are extremely troubling because Paul contradicts the Bible on two points: (a) his claim the Law was given by angels; and (b) the Law given to Moses by angels was not worthy of submission, implying the angels acted without God’s authority. To the contrary, the Bible is clear that the Law was given directly by God to Moses. Furthermore, even if given by angels, Jesus says the angels of heaven are always obeying God.¹¹ We would still obey a set of decrees if we only knew angels of heaven were its author.

Have you ever looked carefully at Paul’s remarks? They require strict scrutiny in light of the obvious heresy behind them.

11. The Lord’s Prayer asks that God’s will be done on earth “as it is done in heaven.” This implies the angels of heaven are in perfect obedience. The angels of which Jesus speaks are depicted as *in heaven*. See, Matt. 18:10 (the guardian angels of children “do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven”); Luke 15:10 (joy among angels for one sinner saved).

Paul Says the Law Was Ordained through Angels

Starting with Galatians 3:19-29, we read:

(19) What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, **till** the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; and **it was ordained¹² through angels by the hand of a mediator.** (20) Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one. (21) Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law. (22) But the scriptures **shut up** all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. (23) But **before** faith came, we were **kept in ward under the law**, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (24) So that the law is become **our tutor to bring us unto Christ**, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But now faith that is come, **we are no longer under a tutor.** (26) For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. (27) For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. (28) There can be **neither Jew nor Greek**, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus. (29) And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise. (ASV)

Above, Paul starts out his attack on obeying the Law by saying it was “ordained by angels through the hands of a mediator,” *i.e.*, Moses. (Galatians 3:19.)

12. The Greek word Paul uses for the angels' activity is *diageteis*. It means *arrange, set in order, often instruct or command*. It refers back to *ho Nomos*, the Law. The *Nomos* was commanded *dia* (through) *aggelos*—the angels.

This attack fits precisely into Paul's message. He says the Law is no longer binding on us. Paul is saying the same thing he said in Ephesians 2:15 and Colossians 2:14. He tells you the reason: the Law was "ordained by angels," not God the Father. (Gal. 3:19.) Paul will repeat this idea again twice—in Galatians 4:8 and 4:9. (We will discuss these verses next.) There is no mistaking Paul's point is to demean the Law so we will accept his teaching it has been abolished.

Why Be Subject to Those Who Are Not Gods (*i.e.*, *Angels*)?

Paul has more to say about the angels. In chapter 4 of Galatians, Paul will say that because the Law was given by angels, why do we want to be subject to those who are not gods? (Gal. 4:8.)

In this portion of Galatians, Paul speaks of the Law as bondage. Rather than the Law being a positive thing, Paul recasts the nature of the entire Hebrew Scriptures to make this a very bad thing.

Paul does this by a fanciful re-telling of the Bible story of Abraham. Paul says the bondage of the Law now belongs to the son Ishmael produced by Abraham and Hagar. The Law thus carries a curse on Hagar's child Ishmael. Paul's ideas were a total invention, having no basis in the Scripture itself. Then Paul says Hagar's son Ishmael corresponds with Israel of Paul's day. This likewise was pur

tioning it came from the angels? If you agree Paul makes either claim, then realize ***both claims are completely contradictory of the Bible.*** Why? Because the Law was given to the Sons of Israel on Mount Sinai by God’s own voice (***not angels***) through the mediator Moses. (Exodus 20:22.)¹³ The son of Abraham and Hagar is Ishmael. (Gen. 15:16). The son of Abraham and Sarah is Isaac. (Gen. 17:19.) It is with Isaac’s “seed” that God will fulfill an “everlasting covenant.” (Gen. 17:19.)¹⁴ Isaac’s son with Rebekah was Jacob. (Gen. 25:26.) **Israel was the new name God gave Jacob.** (Gen. 32:28.) Ishmael was never given the Law. Instead, he and his mother were cast out by Abraham into the desert. (Gen. 21:14.) The Law was given to the sons of Sarah (Israel), not the sons of Hagar. (Ex. 20.)

TABLE 2. The Great Inversion

Hagar’s son is “born after the flesh.” (Gal. 4:23.)	Hagar’s son is Ishmael. (Gen. 15:16.)
Hagar bore sons “unto bondage” (Gal. 4:24.)	Hagar & Ishmael were cast out into the desert. (Gen.21:14.)
This son (Ishmael) has a “covenant” of bondage at Sinai. (Gal. 4:24.) “Jerusalem... is in bondage with her children.” (Gal.4:25.)	The covenant at Sinai was with the sons of Israel, not Ishmael. (Ex. 20:22.) The Law was given at Sinai to the sons of Israel. (Exodus 20.)
Sarah’s children are children of the “freewoman.” (Gal. 4:22.) “Jerusalem that is above is free.” (Gal. 4:26.) Christians are children of the free-woman. (Gal. 4:31.) <i>Sarah’s children are not bound to the Law</i> ; only the sons of Hagar are bound to the Law.	Sarah’s son was Isaac, whose son Jacob had his name changed by God to Israel. (Gen. 17:19, 32:28.) The Law was given to the Sons of Sarah, not Hagar. <i>The children of Sarah were bound by God to the Law.</i> (Exodus 20.)

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13. “And Jehovah said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the **children of Israel**, Ye yourselves have seen that **I have talked with you from heaven.**” (Exodus 20:22, ASV.)
14. “I will establish my covenant with him for **an everlasting covenant** for his seed after him.” (Gen. 17:19, ASV.)

Paul thereby provides an “allegory” that is totally at odds with the Biblical record. It is a 100% inversion of Scripture. ***No one has liberty to break God’s promise to Israel by redefining to whom the promise was given.*** Paul has redefined Israel to be Ishmael. He thereby claims that Christians can inherit the promise to Isaac (father to Israel) apart from the true seed of Isaac who Paul, in effect, puts under a curse. Paul therefore says we are free to ignore the Bible-story that Israel (son of Isaac) was later given the Law. Paul invites us to accept that instead the Law should now be seen as given to Ishmael as a curse. It never happened. This is *rewriting the Bible* with an *agenda in hand*. I can come to any outcome I want if I can rewrite the passages. That is not Bible exegesis. This is Bible-contradiction.

Not even a Prophet of God is given the power to make up stories—calling them *analogies*—that contradict Scripture to spin the Bible to fit a desired outcome. As the Bible itself says:

[Compare teachers] [t]o the Law and the Testimony [and], if they speak not according to *this* Word, it is because there is no light in them.
(Isaiah 8:20).

Yet in Galatians 4:1-11 and 20-31, we read Paul not speaking at all according to this Word:

(1) But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from ***a bondservant*** though he is lord of all; (2) but is ***under guardians and stewards*** until the day appointed of the father. (3) So we also, when we were children, ***were held in bondage*** under the rudiments of the world: (4) but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (5) that he might redeem them that ***were under the law***, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (6) And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

(7) So that thou art **no longer a bondservant**, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God. (8) Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, **ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods**: (9) but now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how turn ye back again to **the weak and beggarly elements**,¹⁵ **whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again**? (10) Ye **observe days, and months, and seasons, and years**. (11) I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain. **** (20) but I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my tone; for I am perplexed about you. (21) Tell me, **ye that desire to be under the law**, do ye not hear the law? (22) For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid [*i.e.*, a bondservant], and one by the freewoman [*i.e.*, Sarah]. (23) Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise. (24) **Which things contain an allegory**: for these women are two covenants; one from mount Sinai, bearing **children unto bondage, which is Hagar**. (25) Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for **she is in bondage with her children**. (26) But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother. (27) For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband. (28) Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, **are children of promise**. (29) But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was **born after the Spirit**, so

15. The word is *elements*, but the ASV changes this to *rudiments*, as if a *principle* were involved. The correct translation is *elements*. (See Lat. Vulgate “elementa”; KJV, YLT, Webster “elements”.)

also it is now. (30) Howbeit what saith the scripture? ***Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman.*** (31) Wherefore, brethren, ***we are not children of a handmaid, but of the freewoman.*** (ASV with change in verse 8 as noted in fn 15.)

Paul clearly is referring to the angels in verse 8. He says 'you' desire to be in bondage to them who are "not gods." This is because Paul mentions that returning to obey the Law is being in "bondage again." So when Paul says being in bondage again to the Law is the same as bondage to them who are "not gods," there is only one conceivable explanation. Paul is harkening back to Galatians 3:19. There he says the Law was ordained by angels. They are "no gods." Paul thus means the Galatians' desire to be in 'bondage' to the Law is a desire to be in bondage to those who are "not gods."

Paulinists such as Fowler concur this is Paul's meaning in 4:8. However, they fail to note Paul is contradicting Scripture. Commentators agree Paul's point in Galatians 4:8 is to emphasize once more that the Law of Moses is "secondary" because of its "indirect transmission" through angels rather than coming directly from God.¹⁶

What makes the point unmistakable is that Paul repeats this idea in the very next verse. It is *not readily apparent* in our common English translations. Paul says in Galatians 4:9 that the Galatians desire to be subject again to the "weak and beggarly *elements* of the world." What or *who* are *elements* of the world? Paul equates this desire to submit to the Law as being in "bondage again" to these "elements." Previously, this was equated with submitting to angels

16. James Fowler, *The Precedence of God's Promises* (1999) reprinted at <http://www.christinyou.net/pages/galpdp.html> (last accessed 2005).

because they ordained the Law. Here, Paul means by *elements* the same thing: *angels*. This is true in both Greek and Jewish thought.

One commentator points out that in Greek thought, the reference to “elements of the world...likely [means] celestial beings...”¹⁷ Likewise, in Jewish thought, *elements of the world* means *angels*. In *Vincent’s Word Studies* on this verse, we read:

The **elements** of the world are the personal, elemental spirits. **This seems to be the preferable explanation**, both here and in Col 2:8.

According to Jewish ideas, all things had their special angels. In the Book of Jubilees, chapter 2, appear, the angel of the presence (comp. Isa 63:9); the angel of adoration; the spirits of the wind, the clouds, darkness, hail, frost, thunder and lightning, winter and spring, cold and heat.

Thus, Galatians 4:8 and 4:9 are both evoking Galatians 3:19’s message that the Law was ordained by angels, not God himself. Paul is chiding them for wanting to be subject to



Hard to Believe

17. Comment on Gal. 4:9, from *New American Bible* (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine), reprinted at <http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/galatians/galatians4.htm>

a Law that did not come from God. Hence they want to be in “bondage over again” to the weak and beggarly “celestial beings.”¹⁸

TABLE 3. Who Are “no gods” and “elements” in Gal. 4:8, 9? *Angels*

Galatians' intended Lawkeeping is bondage to whom? (Gal. 4:8)	Galatians' intended keeping of Law given Moses is “bondage again” to “elements.” (Gal. 4:9) Who are “elements”?	How do we know Paul intends <i>No Gods & Angelic Elements</i> are the true source of the Law of Moses?
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There is no misreading of Paul involved here. Luke, a companion of Paul, repeats this in the words of Stephen in Acts 7:53. Stephen says: “You received the Law as **ordained by angels** and did not keep it.” Barnabas, a companion of Paul, and author of Hebrews, refers likewise to the “word spoken **through angels**.” (Heb. 2:2.) Both Stephen and Barnabas are making a misapplication of Scripture. It is correct to say as Stephen does in Acts 7:35 “the angel... appeared to him

(Moses) in the bush.” (See Exodus 3:2.) But it is incorrect to say that Hebrew Scripture indicate the Law was given by angels. Such a view contradicts Exodus chapter 20, and specifically Ex. 25:16, 21-22. This passage says God Himself gave the Law.

Paul's claim also directly contradicts Jesus. Our Lord said that “in the bush,... God spake unto him.” (Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37.)

In sum, Paul's unmistakable point is that because the Law was ordained through angels, it is secondary. It does not deserve our submission. Paul is asking the Galatians why do they want to be subject to those who are “not gods.” They are “weak and beggarly elements.”

However, we cannot ignore Paul's view on the angels *contradicts* the account in Exodus. There is no conceivable gap in Exodus chapter 20 that can ever justify Paul's claim, as some Paulinists suggest to avoid the dilemma. Exodus chapter 20 directly quotes God giving the Ten Commandments. Paul is flatly wrong.

Does Paul Imply The Angels Lacked God's Authority in Issuing the Law?

When you examine other letters of Paul, it is clear Paul means in Galatians that *the angels lacked God's authority in giving the Law*. You can deduce this by looking at Paul's comments in Romans 13:1 about our duty to submit to Roman authorities. Paul says they are God's ministers. By contrast, in Galatians chapters 3 & 4, we have no duty to submit to the Law “ordained by angels.” In other words, Paul gives the Roman governors a higher *spiritual authority than angels*.

In Romans 13:1, Paul says “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities....” Paul explains why. The Roman rulers are “the *minister of God* for your own good.” (Rom. 13:4, repeated twice.)

Next, look at Galatians 3:19, 4:8-9. Paul says you should not submit to the Law of Moses. It was merely ordained by angels. Paul says 'do not submit to those who are not gods.' (Gal. 4:8.) However, when we look at Romans chapter 13, Paul says you should submit to the "governing" (Roman) authorities as the "minister(s) of God."

The implication arises that the angels must *not* have been acting as God's ministers when they gave the Law. If they were, Paul would tell you to submit to the spiritual authority of these angels. They would be at least on par with the Roman rulers. Paul said such rulers were "the ministers of God." You owe them obedience for "conscience sake."

So why instead are Roman rulers deserving of submission but angels are not? Why does Paul fault a desire to submit to the Law as seeking to submit to those who are "not gods"—the angels? It must be Paul thought the angels acted without God's authority in giving the Law. That's the only explanation why you must submit to Roman rulers who are "ministers of God" but not to the angels who supposedly gave the Law of Moses. Paul must be understood as saying the angels gave the Law without God's authorization. In saying this, Paul certainly contradicts the Bible.

Jude Finds Paul's Ideas Heretical

Paul calls angels "weak and beggarly elements" (Gal. 4:8). He is severely putting them down. Paul also implicitly slights the angels for acting without authorization in bringing the Law of Moses to us. (Gal. 3:19; 4:7-8.)

Paul's statements bring to mind Jude's condemnation of those who make "grace a license for immorality." (Jude 4.) Jude was also a brother of Jesus. He mentions modestly his heritage in Jude 1 by saying he was a brother of James.

In warning us of teachers of a *dangerous grace*, Jude gives us a clue to identify such teachers. Jude says these same grace-teachers are also those who "rail at dignities." (Jude 8.) The word *dignities* is literally *glories* in Greek. (JFB). Com-

mentators concur Jude's meaning is *angels*. (Gill.) Thus, some translations say these "grace" teachers "slander celestial beings." (WEB). By Paul telling us that angels issued the Law, not God, and that they are "weak and beggarly," Paul is "railing at the glories." He is railing at the *angels*. Jude's letter appears directed at Paul on this point. This is especially evident when Jude describes the message of *dangerous grace*.

Jude's Criticism of A Dangerous Pauline Grace Teaching

Jude warned of wolves in sheep clothing who "have secretly slipped in among you." (Jude 4.) They are putting down the angels—slandering them. (Jude 8.) These false teachers are the same who teach "grace is a license to immorality." (Jude 4.) Jude then defines this as a teaching that once you are a Christian we do not risk "eternal fire" (Jude 7) if we engage in "immorality" (Jude 4, 7).

We can further deduce what this teaching was by studying the warnings Jude gave. Jude warns us from the example of Israel whom God "saved" initially from Egypt, but when they were afraid to enter the promised land, all but two "not having believed" became lost (Jude 5).¹⁹ Jude warns us again from the example of the angels who "did not keep their appropriate habitation" in heaven, but fell away by disobedience. (Jude 6.) The examples which Jude gives us are meant to identify an initial salvation, even presence with God in heaven, that is brought to nothing by sin/having lost faith. Thus, being initially saved and even being in heaven itself is not a guarantee one will be finally saved and not enter "eternal fire." Those who teach to the contrary, and guarantee salvation no matter what sin you commit after initially being

19. The Greek is *active aorist participle of pisteuo*. In context, it means "having not trusted/believed." See <http://abacus.bates.edu/~hwalker/Syntax/PartAor.html> (accessed 2005)(the aorist active participle for *have* means "having released.")

saved, Jude says are false teachers who are “twice dead”—meaning they were dead in sin, then born again, and died once more by virtue of their apostasy. (Jude 12.)

As a solution, Jude urges the reader to “keep yourselves...” (Jude 21). This reminds us of Jesus’ words that those who “keep on listening” and “keep on following” cannot be snatched from Jesus’ hand. (John 10:27-29.) Your security initially depends upon your faithfulness to God. *cf.* 1 Peter 1:5 (“kept by the power of God through faith/trust.”)

Jude explains your *keeping yourself* is to be an active effort at “contending earnestly”—a form of the word *agonize*—for the “faith” delivered “one time for all time.” (Jude 3.) By contrast, these false teachers “*disown* our only master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ.” (Jude 4.) The Greek meaning is *disown* (Greek *ameomai*). (Weymouth New Testament.) It means they were rejecting the *authority* of God’s word, delivered “one time for all time.” It was not that they denied the existence of God or Jesus, as some translations suggest. This is underscored in Jude 8 where it says they “despise authority.” Instead, in disrespect of God’s authority, these false teachers “speak proud things” about themselves (Jude 16) and disown the authority of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 4.)

In summary, Jude says we must not stray from the words of God and our Lord Jesus by listening to these false teachers who rail at dignities (angels), deny God’s authority (in giving the Law) and contradict Jesus’ teachings, boast of their own accomplishments, and who give us an assurance that God’s grace will protect us from any sin we commit after our initial salvation. (See website www.jesuswordsonly.com for further discussion “Of Whom Did Jude Speak?”)

Unless Stanley’s position in *Eternal Security: Can You Be Sure?* (1990) is wrong, Paul taught precisely what Jude condemns. Stanley insists Paul teaches that once you confess Jesus and believe He resurrected, you are saved (Romans 10:9), and now there is “no condemnation” ever possible again of such a Christian (Romans 8:1), no matter

what sin you commit. No sin that you commit can ever separate you from God again. Your inheritance in heaven is guaranteed. *See* 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:29-32; Col. 2:13-14; Phil. 1:6; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Thess. 5:24; Rom. 5:1,9-10; 6:1, 8-11, 23; 8:28-30, 39.

Paul otherwise fits the characteristics of which Jude speaks. We have already seen elsewhere that Paul denies God's authority in giving the Law (ascribing it to weak and beggarly angels), that Paul boasts unabashedly of his own accomplishments and that Paul routinely contradicts the message of Jesus on salvation (*e.g.*, the need to repent from sin). Jude appears to be certainly talking about Paul and his followers.

*Jesus Himself Condemns Paul's
Undermining of Moses' Inspiration*

If you accept Paul's views, then you have undermined the very authority necessary to trust in Christ. If one discredited the source of Moses' writings as delivered by "weak and beggarly" angels who are "no gods," Jesus said it is impossible to truly trust in Him. "If they hear not Moses...neither will they be persuaded if one rises from the dead." (Luke 16:31.) Trust in Moses' words is the way to truly know Jesus was Messiah. Jesus says this. Jesus says again "if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me." (John 5:46.)

If Paul were correct about the angels and the Law, then how do Jesus' words make sense that ***trust in Moses' writings as inspired from God is essential to faith in Jesus?*** Jesus' words make no sense if Paul is correct. Paul takes away the key that Jesus says is necessary to *truly know and trust in Jesus*. Something is seriously wrong in our tradition that includes Paul.

Paul Contradicts Jesus Too

Jesus also emphasized the validity of the Law up through the passing away of Heaven and Earth, thus confirming its inspiration and ongoing validity. In Matthew 5:17-19 we read:

(17) Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.
(18) For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass away**, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished [*i.e.*, **all things predicted appear on the stage of history**].²⁰ (19) Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, **shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven**: but whosoever **shall do and teach them**, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.
(ASV)

Thus, Jesus can never be accused of seducing any Christian from following the Law. Jesus cannot be a false prophet under Deuteronomy 13:5. Jesus said it remained valid until the Heavens and Earth pass away. This passing of

20. The Greek word is *ginomai*. Strong's 1096 defines it as "to become" *i.e.*, "come to pass"; "to arise" *i.e.*, "appear in history"; "to be made, finish." Some prefer to understand Jesus "finished" (which they read as 'completed') "all things" required by the Law. What Jesus means is until all things prophesied in the Law and prophets appear in history, *i.e.*, they come to pass, the Law remains in effect. This is evident from verse 17 where Jesus says He came to "fulfill" the "law and the prophets." The word there is *pleroo*. It means "to make complete in every particular," "fulfil" or "carry through to the end." (Thayer's.) Thus, in context, Jesus first says He came to fulfill the prophesies (verse 17) and the Law and Prophecies remain in effect until "all things" prophesied "come to pass" or "appear in history." For more explanation, see the discussion in the text.

heaven and earth occurs at the end of the Millennium. This is 1000 years after Christ's Second Coming, according to the Book of Revelation.

Some Paulinists respond by saying Jesus fulfilled *all* of the Law's demands at Calvary. They insist all the Law was dead letter thereafter. There are several fundamental impossibilities with this claim.

First, there are *two* "untils" in the same sentence: the Law shall not pass away "*until* the heaven and earth pass away...*until* all things be accomplished." One cannot ignore the first *until*, preferring to think instead the second *until* means the Law ends in just two more years at the cross.

Second, this Pauline spin ignores the Law contains a Messianic prophecy in Genesis 3:15 which will only be fulfilled at the point that the heavens and earth will pass away. This predicts a death blow to Satan's head by Messiah. However, this remains unfulfilled until the end of the Millennium which point happens to also coincide with the passing of the heavens and the earth. (Rev. 20:7-10.) Thus, this Messianic prophecy of Genesis 3:15 remains unfulfilled until the heavens and earth pass away. Thus, the Law remains in effect until all things prophesied, including Satan's final death blow, come to pass which is far off in our future.

This then proves the two *until* clauses were intended to identify the identical point. There is no less time signified by Jesus' adding the second *until* ("until all things be accomplished") as the Paulinist tries to spin the passage.

Third, Jesus clearly intended the commands in the Law to remain valid *in toto* until a point *after Calvary*. He combined His promise that not one jot or tittle will pass with His insistence that whoever teaches *against* following the least of the commandments in the Law would be least in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:19)—the Christian epoch.

Thus, Jesus did not envision the Law expired a couple of years later at Calvary. Rather Jesus saw it continuing until the passing of the heavens and the earth. And doing His will on earth as in heaven meant keeping the Law.

Martin Luther Defends Paul's Attribution of the Law to Angels & Its Abolished Nature

If you believe I have stretched things, I am in good company in concluding Paul taught: (1) the Law originated with the angels; (2) God did not intend to bless Jews with the Law; and (3) we are free to treat the Law as simply from Moses and disregard it entirely. Martin Luther goes so far as to say these are valid reasons why Christians do not have to obey the Law. I thus enjoy the very best of company in understanding Paul's words. The only problem is my companion so thoroughly rejects Moses that he does not see how what he is saying makes himself an apostate, tripped up by Paul's teachings. (Thankfully, Luther later repented. See page 106.)

In a sermon entitled *How Christians Should Regard Moses* given August 27, 1525,²¹ Martin Luther simply assumes Paul's words are *authoritative* on who truly spoke at Sinai. While Moses said it was God, and Scripture calls this person God, Luther says it really meant *angels* because Paul says this is who truly gave the Law. Listen how a man caught in a contradiction reasons this out. Luther says:

Now the words which are here written [in the Law of Moses] were ***spoken through an angel***. This is not to say that only one angel was there, for there was a great multitude there serving God and preaching to the people of Israel at Mount Sinai. ***The angel***, however, who spoke here and did the talking, ***spoke just as if God himself were speaking and saying***, "I am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt," etc. [Exod. 20:1], as if Peter or Paul were speaking in God's stead and saying, "I am your God," etc. In his letter to the Galatians [3:19],

21. Martin Luther, "How Christians Should Regard Moses," *Luther's Works: Word and Sacrament I* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1960) Vol. 35 at 161-174.

Paul says that the law was ordained by angels. That is, **angels were assigned**, in God's behalf, **to give the law of God**; and Moses, as an intermediary, received it from the angels. **I say this so that you might know who gave the law.** He did this to them, however, because he wanted thereby to compel, burden, and press the Jews.

Luther is distancing God from the Law of Moses, just as Paul had done. It was delivered by angels, not God personally. Luther is ignoring that Jesus Himself said that God was the *direct* deliverer of the Law from the burning bush.²² Having planted a false seed to distance God from the Law, Luther next begins talking as if God *did not give the Law*. Because Jesus is God, Luther's next remark has all the earmarks of someone who has not thought through the implications of his statement:

We would rather not preach again for the rest of our life than to let Moses return and to let Christ be torn out of our hearts. We will not have Moses as ruler or lawgiver any longer.

But it is not Moses who gave the Law. Nor did angels. It was Jesus who is the "I AM" who gave the Law. (Ex. 3:14, "tell them **I AM** sent you"; John 8:58, "before Abraham was, **I AM.**") Rewrite this and you can see how incongruous Luther's statement now appears:

We would rather not preach again for the rest of our life than to let [Jesus's words to Moses] return and to let Christ [preached by Paul] be torn out of our hearts. **We will not have [I AM who is Jesus who gave the Law] as ruler or lawgiver any longer.**

Martin Luther then announces proudly his total rejection of the Law.

22. Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37.

So, then, we will neither observe nor accept Moses. Moses is dead. His rule ended when Christ came. He is of no further service....***[E]ven the Ten Commandments do not pertain to us.***

If this is true, then why did Jesus teach to the contrary that whoever taught the smallest commandment of the Law should no longer be followed would be *least* in the kingdom of heaven? (Matt. 5:19.)

Luther Was Sometimes On the Right Track In This Sermon

In fairness to Luther, at other times in the same sermon, Luther's answer on whether the Law applies to us is to examine whether the passage is addressed to Jews alone. ***This is the only correct limitation.*** For example, if a command is solely to Jews, such as the law of circumcision (Gen. 17:11; Lev. 12:3, Josh. 5:2),²³ then it obviously does not apply to Gentiles. In the Jerusalem council in Acts chapter 15, James ruled this command does not apply to Gentiles. (Acts 15:19.) James said this not because the Law was abrogated in its entirety,²⁴ but rather because the circumcision command was

23.However, if a Gentile chose to enter the Temple *proper* of Jerusalem, Ezekiel says even "strangers" must be circumcised. (Ez. 44:9.)

24.The KJV atypically accepts one late textual corruption. This is in James' mouth in Acts 15:24. This makes it appear James said the Law does not apply at all to Gentiles. The KJV has it that James says some have tried "subverting your souls, saying, ***Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law:*** to whom we gave no such commandment." (Act 15:24.) However, the ASV & NIV correctly omits "ye must be circumcised and keep the law," saying instead some tried "subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment." Why did the KJV add the above bolded words? The UBS' *Greek New Testament* (4th Ed) says this *entire* phrase first appears in the miniscule 1175 (pg. 476), which dates from the Tenth Century A.D. (pg. 17). The phrase "keep the Law" first appears in quotations of Acts 15:24 in the *Apostolic Constitutions* and in the writings of Amphilochius (pg. 467). Amphilochius died "after 394," and this copy of the *Apostolic Constitutions* is dated to "about 380" (pg. 31.) All the earlier texts omit both changes to Acts 15:24.

limited to Jews whom James later told Paul must still, as converts to Christ, follow the circumcision command. (Acts 21:21, 25.)

That James was following this principle is evident again when he imposed on Gentiles prohibitions on eating certain animals with their blood still in it (Acts 15:20). The Law of Moses said this food-rule applied not only to Israelites but also to 'strangers' in the land. (Leviticus 17:10,12 (food with blood).) James likewise adds that Gentiles must refrain from fornication. James no doubt had the Hebrew meaning of that word in mind, which meant adultery.²⁵ Once again, we find this command against adultery was stated in Leviticus to apply not only to Jews, but also to "strangers that sojourn in Israel." (Lev. 20:2, 10.)²⁶

Was James following Scripture in making this distinction? Yes, indeed. The Law of Moses had an example that a command for a son of Israel not to eat meat of an animal that died naturally did not apply to non-Israelite sojourners who were permitted to eat such meat. (Deut. 14:21.) Thus, this proves that commands to Israelites do not automatically apply to the non-Israelite. James simply applied this principle to interpret the scope of other commands in the Law of Moses.

If you apply the Israel-sojourner distinction which James employed, then of the Law of Moses which applies to non-Jews it would *primarily* be the open-ended Ten Commandments²⁷ as well as sojourner-specific provisions in Leviticus chapters 19 & 20 & 24:13-24, and Exodus 12:19 (prohibition on leaven during feast of unleavened bread)²⁸ which Jesus alludes to many times. These are commands that do not introduce themselves as commands to only Israelites. If James' approach is valid, then all the fuss about *the Law* as some terrible burden is a non-starter. The burden on Gentiles is

25. See page 138 *et seq.*

26. On why the idol-food command that James also gives was a deduction as applicable to both Jew and Gentile, see Footnote 1 on page 118.

quite insignificant if we follow the distinction in the Law of Moses *itself* between “sons of Israel” and “sojourners” as James was obviously doing. The alleged burdensome nature of the Law on Gentiles was a *red herring* all along.

James thus did not *add* to the Law. Instead, he refused to apply Israel-only principles to Gentiles. ***He kept to the strict letter of the Law.*** James says the reason to maintain this distinction of Jew versus Gentile in the New Covenant is so that “we trouble not them that from among the Gentiles turn to God.” (Acts 15:19.) His ruling also complied with Deuteronomy 4:2.

So if James is right, when Jesus says “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach *men* so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:19), Jesus meant us to understand as to Gentiles, that no obedience would be required as to Israel-only commands (unless Jesus extended them). And if James is right, when Jesus says whoever teaches you to obey the least command in the Law would be the greatest in the kingdom, Jesus meant as to Gentiles that if you taught them to obey open-ended commands and commands directed at sojourners in the Law then you would be the greatest in the kingdom. (Matt. 5:19.) But if you go beyond this, and add Israel-only commands on Gentiles which God (including Jesus) never imposed on them, you are unduly burdening their entry into the kingdom of God. You are violating Deuteronomy 4:2 by *adding* burdens nowhere in the Law itself (unless a prophet, such as Jesus, *added* the command, pursuant to Deut. 18:15).

27. Some argue that the Ten Commandments (Decalogue) are not open-ended, implied from Exodus 20:2 which says “I...brought you out of the Land of Egypt.” This is largely irrelevant. You can find specific mention of most of the Ten Commandments imposed on sojourners: blasphemy — using God’s name in vain (Lev. 24:16; Num 15:30); murder (Lev. 24:17); Sabbath-breaking (Deut. 5:12-15; Lev. 25:6; Exo 23:12); adultery (Lev. 20:2, 10), etc. Even if the Decalogue as a whole does not apply, Bonhoeffer says Jesus extended the Decalogue to all in the New Covenant when He spoke to the young rich man. (Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 18:18-26.) See Bonhoeffer. *Cost of Discipleship* (1937) at 72-84.

Did Jesus ever speak this way Himself? Yes, this is one of the obvious applications of the principle behind the lessons about the *old and new cloth* and the *old and new wineskin*. (Matt. 9:16-17.) Combining the two items in each case makes things worse, and fails to preserve the *old* side-by-side with the *new*. The *new cloth* put on *old clothing* causes a “worse rent.” *New wine* in an *old wineskin* causes the wine to be “spilled and the skins perish.”

James similarly speaks that putting the Israel-only commands upon Gentiles is “trouble” for those “turning to God.” You cause more problems that you solve by doing so. The *new cloth* is not of the same inherent material as the *old cloth*, and lacks the same elasticity. It cannot be stretched as far as the *old*. The Jew can be pushed further in commands than a Gentile. It is inherent in their *culture*, as God molded the Jews. The *new wine* in an *old wineskin* will swell up from pressure trying to stay within the bounds of the *old wineskin*. The *new wine* will *spill out* (*i.e.*, become lost) if you try to make the *new* fit the *stiffness* and *boundaries* of the *old wineskin*. Gentiles cannot be pressed to follow the Israel-only provisions; the pressure will force them out of the wineskin.²⁹

28. Passover dinner, which precedes the feast of unleavened bread, is optional for the Sojourner. However, if he “will keep it,” then the Sojourner has to be circumcised. (Exo 12:48; Nu 9:14.) Thus, Passover was an honor for a non-Jew sojourner to celebrate. If he chose to do so, he must be circumcised. As discussed in Appendix C, Jesus contemplated His Jewish apostles would keep Passover, and amended the Passover remembrances to include His anticipated work on the Cross. If Gentile Christians observe Passover, it is an honor. When we do so, we were to do the remembrances that Jesus outlined in the last passover. This explains why the early apostolic church was anxious to and did keep Passover; and this is why Passover is a feast worldwide in all forms of Christianity (Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox) except in English-speaking nations where it is known as Easter. Why the different nomenclature? Because Catholicism could not root out the English/Germanic preference to call that season by the name of the goddess Eastre. As a result, English-speaking Christians have lost memory of what festival they are attempting to celebrate while Christians of all denominations and faiths in non-English speaking countries keep Passover under its proper name. For more discussion, see Appendix C: The Easter Error.

29. Yet, bear in mind, Jesus as Prophet can add a command to the Law of Moses.

Unfortunately, Luther in this sermon did not consistently maintain this valid Israel-Sojourner distinction. Luther ends the sermon by throwing off of the Gentiles *all* the Old Law, even the *sojourner* commands. He put the *New* beyond any testing for its validity against the Law given Moses. Luther says:

The sectarian spirits want to saddle us with Moses and all the commandments. We will just skip that. We will regard Moses as a teacher, ***but we will not regard him as our lawgiver — unless he agrees with both the New Testament and the natural law.***³⁰

Here you see how one falls into apostasy. No longer do you accept the Law given to Moses to define what is a false prophet. Thus, you have accepted a set of new teachings that are beyond the reach of God's prior revelation to test its validity. Luther thereby became in 1525 totally *antinomian*—making the validity of principles in the Mosaic Law turn on the superior validity of what Luther regarded as New Testament writings but only if also confirmed by natural law.

Please note, however, that later from 1532 to 1537 Luther reversed his position on the Law. He denounced anti-nomianism in the *Antinomian Theses* (1537).³¹ He said a Christian can spiritually die and become like a non-Christian. To revive, they must examine themselves by the Ten Commandments, and repent from sin. Luther's *Catechisms* of late 1531-1532 (which the Lutheran church uses to this day) state Jesus' doctrine on salvation and the Law ***while ignoring Paul's doctrines*** (except on how to treat government officials, wives, etc.) For this reason, evangelicals condemn

30. Luther repeats this statement later in his 1525 sermon: "In the first place I dismiss the commandments given to the people of Israel. They neither urge nor compel me. ***They are dead and gone***, except insofar as I gladly and willingly accept something from Moses, as if I said, 'This is how Moses ruled, and it seems fine to me, so I will follow him in this or that particular.'"

31. Martin Luther, *Don't Tell Me That! From Martin Luther's Antinomian Theses* (Lutheran Press: 2004).

Luther's *Catechisms*. Miles Stanford said the "Lutheran Church" turned into "legalism" by adopting an "unscriptural application of 'the law as the rule of life' for the believer."³² Likewise, Pastor Dwight Oswald regards Luther's *Catechism* as making Luther so at odds with Paul's doctrines that even Luther must be deemed lost and responsible for having led countless numbers to perish in hell.³³ Similarly, Calvinists at Calvin College skewer Luther's 1531 edition of his catechism for departing from the faith he previously taught so boldly.³⁴

However, prior to this radical switch, Luther was willing to endorse everything Paul said. Luther inspired by Paul said the angels gave the Law; the Law was a curse on Jews; Jesus never intended the Law applies to non-Jews who follow Him; and the Law is dead and we only follow those aspects that coincide with reason ('natural law') if re-affirmed in the New Testament. Accordingly, unless Luther in 1525 misread Paul, Paul must be understood to have thrown off the entire Law by denigrating its origin and purpose. I therefore enjoy the very best of company in my reading Paul the same way.

But we can take heart from the fact that Luther later made a radical separation from his own earlier antinomianism. Luther must have finally seen the error of the doctrine Luther deduced from *Galatians*. In fact, it appears no coincidence that Luther's switch quickly followed his lecture on *Galatians*. For in that epistle, we have Paul's most virulent anti-Law writings, with Paul's rationale clearly exposed in Galatians 4:22 *ff.* With such new conviction, Luther had the courage to reform himself. That's the best explanation for

32. Quoted in Bob Nyberg's *Covenant Theology Versus Dispensationalism A Matter of Law Versus Grace*, reprinted online at <http://4himnet.com/bnyberg/dispensationalism01.html>.

33. See Pastor Dwight Oswald, "Martin Luther's Sacramental Gospel," *Earnestly Contending For The Faith* (Nov-Dec. 1997). See also, *Lutheran Heresy* at <http://www.jesus-is-savior.com>.

34. Calvinists thereby find the 1531 *Catechism* defective spiritually. See Calvin College at <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/hcc7/htm/ii.v.xiv.htm>.

why we find *Jesus' Words Only emerging* in Luther's *Catechisms*. Luther made one more radical revolution, once more willing to face the charge of being a heretic. This time, however, it was for basing his *core* doctrine on Jesus' words only.

What About Pro-Law Comments by Paul?

Messianic Christians hallow the Law today. They regard the Law of sacrifice completed in Yeshua (Jesus). They have a variety of verses they like to cite from Paul to prove he did not abrogate the entire Law. Their view on the Law's ongoing validity is certainly a minority view. Messianics are regarded in this respect as borderline-heretical by many other Christians. However, Messianics are not deemed un-Christian. The Messianics are thus tolerated by mainstream Christianity. I suspect when Paulinist Christians realize they are about to lose Paul's validity, they might cite these Pauline pro-Law verses (which Messianics cite) as a last gasp to save Paul. So let us examine these verses which the Messianics cherish.

First, Paul said that by faith we "establish the Law." (Rom. 3:31.) Elsewhere, Paul says "Wherefore the Law is holy, and the Commandment is holy, and just and good." (Rom.7:12.) The Messianics even cite the self-contradictory verse: "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but *the keeping of the Commandments of God* [is what matters]." (1 Cor. 7:19).³⁵ Lastly, Paul is also quoted by Luke as saying: "I worship the God of my ancestors, *retaining my belief in all points of the Law...*" (Acts 24:14).

However, to lift these snippets from Paul's writings, and say this explains all of Paul's thought, is to mislead the listener. It allows self-deception too. It would be like taking Paul's statement in Romans 3:23 that "all have sinned" and say that Paul means Jesus sinned too. Paul clearly regarded

35.It is self-contradictory because circumcising Jewish children was a command of God. (Lev. 12:3.)

Jesus as sinless. To take out-of-context Romans 3:23, and apply it to Jesus, would be perverse. Likewise, to use these snippets to say Paul endorsed the Law's ongoing validity is just as perverse a lie as saying Romans 3:23 proves Jesus was a sinner. If you cannot take Paul out-of-context in Romans 3:23, you cannot take him out of context in Romans 3:31 or Romans 7:21.

Also, Paul's compliments about the Law's good nature in Romans 3:31 do not mean much. We can all speak kindly of the dead. It is only by agreeing that those principles are more than dead letter would Paul's words have any bearing. Such words are absent in Paul.

Furthermore, in 1 Corinthians 7:19, Paul is clearly self-contradictory. He says being circumcised is nothing. Paul then says keeping God's commands is everything. Since being circumcised is a command of God for Jews, these are two logically incoherent statements. But this self-contradiction is purposeful. What Paul is doing is using the word *commands* as a *neologism* (i.e., a word that the speaker privately holds an opposite understanding than what his listener would suppose) to lead the pro-Law listener to think he is on their side. It still works on the Messianics to this day.

How Acts 24:14 Unravels Paul's Authority

Finally, to prove Paul upheld the Law, Messianics cite to Luke's quoting Paul in a tribunal (Acts 24:14). Paul tells Felix that he "retains all my belief in all points of the Law." If Paul truly made this statement, it has no weight. It cannot overcome Paul's view on the Law's nullification. Those anti-Law views are absolutely clear-cut, repeated in numerous letters with long picturesque explanations.

Rather, the quote of Paul in Acts 24:14 brings up the question of Paul's *honesty*, not his consistency with the Law. If Luke is telling the truth, then Paul perjured himself before Felix. To prevent the casual Christian from seeing this, Acts 24:14 is usually translated as vaguely as possible.

However, pro-Paul Greek commentaries know Paul's meaning. They try to defend Paul's apparent lack of ethics. They insist Paul was not out to trick Governor Felix. For example, Robertson in *Word Pictures* makes it clear that Paul deflects the charge that he heretically seeks to subvert the Law by asserting he believes in all of it:

Paul has not stretched the truth at all....He reasserts his faith in all the Law....A curious heretic surely!

Robertson realizes that Paul disproves to Felix any heresy of seeking to turn people from further obedience to the Law by affirming "his faith in all the Law....," as Robertson rephrases it. Yet, Paul's statement (if Luke is recording accurately) was a preposterous falsehood. He did not believe in "all" points of the Law *at all*. Robertson pretends this is not stretching the truth "at all." The reality is there is *absolutely no truth* in Paul's statement. Paul did not retain his "belief in all points of the Law," as he claimed to Felix.

This account of Luke represents Paul making such an outrageous falsehood that a growing segment of Paulinists (such as John Knox) **believe Luke was out to embarrass Paul in Acts.**³⁶

If we must believe Luke is a malicious liar in order to dismiss that Acts 24:14 proves Paul is guilty of perjury, then this also undercuts the reliability of all of the Book of Acts. If so, then where does Paul's authority come from any more?

36. John Knox recently suggested Luke-Acts was written to bring Paul down and thereby counteract Marcion. (Knox, *Marcion, supra*, at 114-39.) If so, then it was Paul's own friend Luke who saw problems with Paul and presented them in a fair neutral manner. On their friendship, see 2 Cor. 8:18; Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11.

Luke alone in Acts preserves the accounts of Paul's vision of Jesus. That is the sole source for what most agree is Paul's only authority to be a teacher within the church. The vision-experience *nowhere appears in Paul's letters*. If Luke is a liar in Acts 24:14, why should we trust him in any of the three vision accounts which alone provide some authority for Paul to be a 'witness' of Jesus?

As a result, the Paulinists are caught in a dilemma. If Paul actually said this in Acts 24:14, he is a liar. If Paul did not say this, then Luke is a liar. But then Paul's sole source of *confirmation* is destroyed. Either way, Paul loses any validity.

Escapes from this dilemma have been offered, but when analyzed they are unavailing. If Paul made this statement, he clearly was lying to Felix.³⁷

Thus, Acts 24:14 cannot be cited to prove the truth of what Paul asserted. Instead, it raises an unsolvable dilemma. Either Luke is lying or Paul is lying. This means Acts 24:14 proves the impossibility of accepting Paul's legitimacy *whichever way you answer the dilemma*. If Luke is lying here, it undermines all of Acts, upon which Paul's authority as a witness rests. If Paul is lying (and Luke is telling the

37. The literal Greek means: "I worship the God of our Fathers, continuing to believe [present participle active] in all things which are according [kata] to the Law and in the prophets." The ASV follows this translation. Some Paulinists emphasize the word *according* in the verse. They argue Paul means to reject anything that is no longer in *agreement* with the Law. Thus, Paul is read to mean that he only affirms agreement with the part of the Law with which he can still agree. (Given O. Blakely, *A Commentary on Paul's Defense Before Felix* at <http://wotruth.com/pauldef.htm>.) This argument fails because Paul believes in nothing from the Law except that it was pregnant with its own abolition. Paul was still being deceptive. Paul was in effect saying, he believes still in everything in the Law that is valid today, but since this is nothing, the statement is empty patronizing. Blakely commends Paul for his shrewd way of saying this. Paul made it appear he was affirming all the Law was valid when instead Paul meant to affirm its entirely fulfilled nature, and hence its defunct nature. Whether a shrewd way of expressing this or not, the literal words are still a falsehood in how Felix would understand the statement *in a court of Law*.

story truthfully), then Paul is disqualified *ipso facto* because he is committing perjury. Acts 24:14 proves to be a passage that unravels Paul's authority any way you try to resolve it.

Bless the Messianics. They cited Acts 24:14 to insist Paul was upholding Torah. What they did is bring to everyone's attention a verse whose very existence destroys viewing Paul as a legitimate teacher.

Did God Ever Respond To Paul's Teachings on the Law's Abrogation?

We already saw, Paul says that "***Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing...***" (1 Cor. 7:19.)

Then consider the following command in Ezekiel: if one "uncircumcised in flesh [is caused] to be in my sanctuary, to profane it," then it is an "abomination." (Ezekiel 44:9.) If uncircumcision became *nothing* after the Cross, then a Gentile was free to ignore this command and enter the Temple.

Did a Gentile friend of Paul ever trust this principle to the point of violating the middle wall of the Temple, which kept the Gentiles outside the Temple? We will see that this is precisely what took place in 58 A.D. We will also see how God responded, proving God's legal principles on what abominates had not evaporated at the Cross in 33 A.D.

What happened is that in 58 A.D., Trophimus, an uncircumcised Gentile from Ephesus, entered the prohibited area of the Temple. (Acts 21:28-29.) Neither Luke nor Paul ever deny Trophimus profaned the Temple. Instead, both Luke and Paul merely try to deny there was ***proof*** that Paul had brought Trophimus into the prohibited area. (Acts 21:29, 24:6, 13, 18; 25:7-8.) Luke says the Jews ***supposed*** Paul had done so because they earlier saw Paul together with Trophimus in Jerusalem. (Acts 21:28-29.) Trophimus was indeed a close companion of Paul. (Acts 20:4; 2 Tim.4:20.) Yet, Paul said his accusers merely found him (Paul) purifying himself in the temple. (Acts 24:18.)³⁸ This was the only inadequacy Paul cited to the charge that he (Paul) was responsible for

Trophimus' profaning the Temple. Paul did not make any stronger refutation such as that Trophimus had not breached the middle wall of the Temple, evidently because Paul knew that charge was true.

Why did Trophimus breach the middle wall that had warning signs declaring that no uncircumcised Gentile could pass into the Temple without facing a death penalty? Trophimus must have been convinced of a *new principle* that was *superior to the principle* God gave the prophet Ezekiel. Where did Trophimus learn such new principle that could give him such liberty?

There is little doubt that Trophimus, a travelling companion of Paul, must have relied upon Paul's doctrine. First, Paul said that "circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing." (1 Cor. 7:19.) Lastly and most important, Trophimus, an *Ephesian*, must have been convinced he could pass this middle barrier because of Paul's letter to the *Ephesians*. In it, Paul taught God "has broken down the *middle wall of partition*" at the Temple, "having abolished in his flesh... the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances..." (Eph. 2:14-15.) The true "habitation of God" is now the church, built upon the "apostles and prophets." (Eph.2:20-22.)

Yet, was this middle wall abolished in God's eyes? Or were the Prophetic words of Ezekiel still in place after the Cross of 33 A.D.? In other words, would an uncircumcised Gentile *inside* the temple still be an abomination *standing in the Holy Place*? The answer is *yes*. First, Jesus said that He did not come to do away with the "Law or the Prophets" (Matt. 5:17). Also, Jesus said not until "heavens and earth pass away will one little jot or tittle of the Law pass away..." (Matt. 5:18.) In the Law, we read God promises that if we "walk contrary to Me," then "I will bring your sanctuaries unto *desolation*." (Lev. 26:27,31.)

38. Incidentally, this was the charge that Paul appealed to Caesar, which caused his being taken to Rome. (Acts 25:8-11.)

Thus, if the Law and Prophets were still in effect after the Cross, then one would expect God would respond by desolating His own Temple for Trophimus' act. God's word appears to require He desolate it in response to such a crime.

Indeed, history proves this took place. God did desolate His temple in 70 A.D. Every stone of the Temple was torn down. Thus, the Law did not expire at the Cross. Instead, thirty-seven years later it was vigorously enforced.

If Paul's teachings misled Trophimus, look then at the horrible consequences of trusting Paul's views. Let's learn from Trophimus' mistake and only trust Jesus' view on the Law's continuing validity until heaven and earth pass away. (Matt. 5:18.)

Conclusion

Paul is blunt in Ephesians 2:15, Colossians 2:14, 2 Cor. 3:11-17, Romans 7:13 *et seq.*, and Galatians 3:19 *et seq.* The Law is abolished, done away with, nailed to a tree, has faded away, and was only ordained by angels who are no gods. If we were to cite Paul's condemnations of the Law in one string, the point is self-evident that Paul abrogated the Law for everyone. *See* 2 Cor. 2:14 ("old covenant"); Gal. 5:1 ("yoke of bondage"); Rom. 10:4 ("Christ is end of the law"); 2 Cor. 3:7 ("law of death"); Gal. 5:1 ("entangles"); Col. 2:14-17 ("a shadow"); Rom. 3:27 ("law of works"); Rom. 4:15 ("works wrath"); 2 Cor. 3:9 (ministration of condemnation); Gal. 2:16 ("cannot justify"); Gal. 3:21 (cannot give life); Col. 2:14 ("wiped out" *exaleipsas*); Gal. 3:19, 4:8-9 ("given by angels...who are no gods [and are] weak and beggarly celestial beings/elements").

To save Paul from being a heretic, some claim Paul is talking against *false interpretations of the Law*.³⁹ But this ignores that Paul tears away at the heart and soul of the Torah.

39.Martin Abegg, "Paul, 'Works of the Law,' and MMT," *Biblical Archaeological Review* (November/December 1994) at 52-53.

Conclusion

He disputes it was given by God. He claims instead it was given by angels. Paul says no one can judge you any longer for not keeping the Sabbath. This is one of the Ten Commandments. Paul, as Luther said, clearly *abolished* the Sabbath. All efforts to save Paul that do not grapple with these difficult passages are simply attempts at self-delusion.

Rather, Calvin was correct when he said “this Gospel [of Paul] **does not impose any commands**, but rather reveals God’s goodness, His mercy and His benefits.”

To Paul, faith was everything and a permanent guarantee of salvation. There was no code to break. There was supposedly no consequence of doing so for Abraham. We are Abraham’s sons. We enjoy this same liberty, so Paul teaches.

Then how do we understand the Bible’s promise that the time of the New Covenant would involve putting the “Torah” on our hearts? (Jeremiah 31:31 *et seq.*) How do we understand God’s promise that when His Servant (Messiah) comes, God “will magnify the Law (Torah), and make it honorable”? (Isaiah 42:21 ASV/KJV.)

You have no answer if you follow Paul. He says you no longer have to observe all God’s Law given Moses. You just choose to do what is expedient. You do not worry about the letter of the Law. You can, instead, follow your own conscience. Whatever it can bear is permissible.

How are the contrary verses about the Law in the New Covenant Age then explained? It is seriously asserted by commentators that when Christ returns, the Law of Moses will be re-established. Thus, prior to Paul, there was Law. After Paul but before Christ comes again, there is no Law. When Christ returns, the Law of Moses is restored. (See Footnote 20 on page 393.) So it is: Law—No Law—Law. God is schizophrenic! It is amazing what people can believe!

Consequently, one cannot escape a simple fact: Paul’s validity as a teacher is 100% dependent on accepting his *anti-nomian* principles. Then what of Deuteronomy 13:5 which says someone with true signs and wonders must be ignored if he would seduce us from following the Law?

Did Paul Negate the Law's Further Applicability?

Paul even anticipated how to defend from this verse. Paul has shielded himself from this verse by ripping away all of the Law. He would not even acknowledge that we can measure him by Deuteronomy 13:5. This is part of the Law of Moses. Paul claims it was given by angels (Gal. 3:19). Paul says you are