



2 Cor. 3:18

Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

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The Abomination of Desolation

David Clayton



The phrase, “the abomination of desolation,” was used by Jesus when speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem and is recorded in both the books of Matthew and Mark. There are many different ideas as to what this phrase really means but as we see definite signs that we really are at the very end of the world, it becomes important that we gain an understanding of what Jesus really meant when He spoke of this “abomination of desolation.”

JESUS' REFERENCES

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) (Matt. 24:15)

But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let

them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains: (Mark. 13:14)

These passages evidently refer first of all to the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus was telling His disciples to look for a certain sign. When they saw this sign it was to be an indication that they were to get out of Judea as fast as possible in order to escape the coming destruction. Jesus referred to this sign as the “abomination of desolation,” and specified that this was the same abomination of desolation which Daniel had written about. However, He added a word of caution, “let him that readeth understand.” This suggests that there is something about the interpretation of Daniel’s statement which is not as straightforward as it appears at first.

This abomination of desolation is something which would stand in the holy place. Mark states that it would be, “standing where it ought not.” When we look at the same statement as recorded by Luke, we gain a better understanding as to what Jesus really meant. In Luke, Jesus says:

And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. (Luke 21:20)

This prophecy of Jesus was literally fulfilled in AD 70 when the armies of Rome surrounded Jerusalem shortly before they destroyed it. When the pagan emblems, the flags of the Roman army were set up in the holy ground which surrounded Jerusalem, then this was the fulfillment of Jesus’ prophecy. The abomination of desolation was standing where it ought not

and it was the sign that God’s people should leave as soon as they saw an opportunity. The Roman armies did withdraw for a short time and the Christians in Jerusalem used this opportunity to escape from the city before it was destroyed, as Jesus had warned them to do.

So this was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus. But let us remember something; Jesus cautioned, “let him that readeth understand.” There is more to this prophecy than Jesus’ application of it. Jesus was actually quoting from the book of Daniel, but when we look at Daniel’s book, we cannot find the phrase, “the abomination of desolation.” We find something similar, but it states it a little differently and this difference adds additional meaning to the phrase. Let us look at how this phrase appears in the book of Daniel.

DANIEL'S REFERENCES

And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. (Dan. 11:31)

And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away,

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

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and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. (Dan. 12:11)

The phrase appears in both of these passages in almost an identical way. Here, we read of the “abomination that maketh desolate.” This abomination would *cause* desolation. Both of these verses mention that something called the “daily sacrifice,” would be taken away before the abomination that makes desolate is set up. Notice also that the “daily sacrifice” which is taken away is related to the “sanctuary.”

These references in Daniel to an abomination which causes desolation, are clearly not all referring to the same event. However, there is one of these references in Daniel 9 which serves as a guide in helping us to interpret the other passages.

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and

the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Daniel 9:26-27)

This is the passage that Jesus was referring to when He spoke of “the abomination of desolation.” In this passage we see that Jesus the Messiah would be killed and the Roman Prince (Titus) who would come shortly afterwards (AD 70) would destroy the sanctuary. He (Jesus), would confirm the covenant with the Jews for one week (7 years), but in the midst of that week He would bring an end to the daily sacrifices and offerings associated with the covenant made with Israel. This was fulfilled when Jesus died three and a half years after beginning His ministry, thus bringing an end to the system of sacrifices and offerings.

Let us take careful notice of what happened:

1. When Christ was crucified, the sacrifices ceased. The daily sanctuary service was taken away.
2. The Jewish nation was left “desolate.” (Matt. 23:38)
3. This was accompanied by the “overspreading of abominations.”
4. Shortly thereafter the city and the sanctuary were completely destroyed.

This is the passage which Jesus was referring to. His statement does not apply to all the other places where this abomination is referred to in Daniel and this is the reason for His caution, “let him that readeth understand.” In other words, the abomination of desolation has more than one meaning in the book of Daniel. It appears at different times in different settings, but each time it

appears, the interpretation as to what it means is similar, though not the same. Jesus’ application of it provides a template and gives us guidelines as to how we may understand the other passages.

There has been much debate among Christians and particularly Seventh day Adventists as to what the “daily sacrifice,” the “sanctuary” and the “abomination of desolation,” signifies.

THE DAILY

First we should note that the phrase, “daily sacrifice,” should simply read, “the daily.” The word, “sacrifice” was added by the translators of the King James version, but it is not in the original text of the Bible. They added the word because they believed it was speaking of the sacrifices associated with the sanctuary. Were they correct In adding this word?

The word in the Hebrew text is, “tamid,” This word first appears in the Bible in connection with the sanctuary service and is used over and over in association with the different services of the sanctuary. It is translated as “always,” “continually,” or by different variations of this word. It refers to the continual burnt offering, it also refers to the high priest bearing the names of Israel on his breastplate continually, to the bread being on the table always, to the 7 branched candlestick being made to burn continually etc.

Some of the SDA pioneers believed and taught that the “daily” referred to paganism and that when it was taken away, it made way for the establishment of the Papacy, which they understood to be the abomination of desolation. However, many of them (among whom were such bright lights as AT Jones), had a different understanding and believed that the “daily” was referring to the sanctuary services. After studying the issue myself, I am persuaded that this understanding is the correct one. The sanctuary services are full of this word, “tamid.” Almost every aspect of the sanctuary worship was governed by this word. The vari-

ous ceremonies and sacrifices were to be carried on, “always,” or “continually.” In Numbers 28 and 29 alone, the word is used seventeen times, referring to the continual service in the sanctuary. On the other hand, the word “tamid” is never used in the Bible to refer to paganism. Neither the context nor the word itself supports the idea that the “daily” is paganism.

So the “daily,” referred to the continual services ordained by God to be carried out in the sanctuary. As we have already seen, these services were taken away by Christ, from the literal Sanctuary service, in AD 31, when by His death, He put an end to the earthly sanctuary service forever. In this case, it was He, Christ, who took away the “daily.”

However, these services all represented the work of Christ as our Mediator and High Priest and in the context of the end-time abomination, the “daily” applies to His continual work in the heavenly sanctuary, and not the services of the earthly sanctuary which He abolished in AD 31, and which ceased permanently at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. It is true that no earthly power can literally take away the ministry of Christ. However, if the knowledge of Christ’s ministry were to be obscured in such a way that people lost the knowledge of what Christ means to humanity, then the work of Christ on man’s behalf would be ineffective. Man must believe in order to receive the benefits of Christ’s mediation.

The “daily” was taken away from the earthly service in AD 70, but the true daily was taken away from God’s people by the establishment of the Papacy and the introduction of an earthly priesthood and the corrupting teachings which promoted the idea that God’s blessings were to be obtained through this earthly priesthood, by the intercession of saints and Mary, by works and penance and the payment of indulgences. Christ was effectively taken away from the people and His ministry rendered ineffective as far as they

were concerned.

So during the dark ages, as the Roman Catholic Church was rising, it did indeed take away the “daily,” in the sense that it removed the knowledge of Christ’s continual ministration from the minds and the consciousness of Christendom. In place of it, it substituted the abomination of a human intercessor, with a man being established as supreme and taking the very place of God.

DESOLATION

When the daily is taken away, in every case, in all applications of the prophecy, the result is the setting up of an abomination which results in desolation. What does this word “desolation” imply? In examining several places in the Bible where the word is used, I came to the conclusion that in many instances it signifies a state of being forsaken, especially by God. Here are a few examples where it carries that idea:

Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, (Isaiah 6:11)

Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. (Isaiah 24:6)

And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. (32) And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. (Lev 26:31-32)

And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. (Jer 25:11)

ABOMINATIONS

Of course it is abominations which cause desolation. In the following

verses the Lord clearly states what the reason is why the land of Israel is to become desolate, forsaken of the Lord. In each case He says it is because of the abominations which they have committed.

So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day. (Jer. 44:22)

Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed. (Ezek. 33:29)

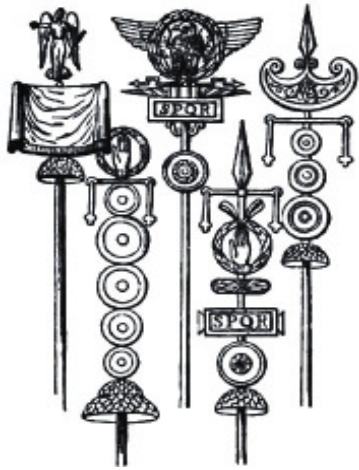
God abandons or forsakes people when they commit abominations. Daniel’s phrase literally reads, “the abomination which causes desolation.” Strong’s Hebrew dictionary indicates that the word translated as “abomination” is the Hebrew word, “towebah,” and it is defined as follows:

Abomination - 8441. tow’ebah:- something disgusting, an abhorrence; espec. idolatry or an idol:—abominable (custom, thing).

So essentially, an abomination is something disgusting, probably some custom or practice, often associated with idolatry. When this abomination should stand where it had no right to be, it would be an indication that God had forsaken His professed people and that desolations would follow. This is how it was fulfilled in the time of Jerusalem’s destruction and each time when the abomination of desolation returns, including at the end, this is the pattern which it will follow.



A Pattern of the End



Most Christians believe that the destruction of Jerusalem is a pattern of the end of the world. This conclusion is based on the fact that in Matthew chapter 24 Jesus referred to the destruction of Jerusalem and seemed to apply the events associated with it, to the end of the world also.

And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? (Matthew 24:1-3)

Jesus' response was to give the prophecy of Matthew 24. This prophecy covers the period from the time of Christ, until the end of the world. In actual fact, when we examine this prophecy closely, we see that it really applies first, to the destruction of Jerusalem, secondly to the great persecution of God's people during the dark ages, and finally, to the end of the world at the coming of Jesus.

The disciples had questioned Jesus

concerning three things.

1. When shall these things be (the destruction of Jerusalem).
2. What shall be the sign of your coming
3. What will be the sign of the end of the world

Of course there would be a gap of nearly two thousand years between the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of Jesus, but the disciples did not know this and they had the belief that all these things would occur at round about the same time. As far as they were concerned, if Jerusalem was destroyed it could only be because it was the end of the world! Jesus did not want to discourage His disciples by informing them that the world would still have a very long wait before He returned. Instead, He gave this interesting prophecy in Matthew 24, in which He compressed everything into one and outlined developments in such a way that we could have a progressive picture of the way things would develop. In addition we can see that many of the things which Jesus mentioned as happening at the time of Jerusalem's destruction have a two-fold application and have another fulfillment in the final days, just before the return of Jesus.

One of these prophecies mentioned by Jesus which has a dual application is the prophecy concerning the "abomination of desolation." This was fulfilled at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, but it has another application at the time of the end. Let us consider first of all how this prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70.

The Roman army, led by the General, Cestius Gallus, first approached Jerusalem in AD 66 and set up its standards in the holy ground surrounding Jerusalem. The Christians who were present in Jerusalem and the surrounding countryside recognized this as the

signal which Jesus had warned them about. They recognized that this was the abomination of desolation standing "where it ought not," in "the holy place, and they looked for the opportunity to flee. This opportunity came shortly afterwards when Cestius, for no apparent reason withdrew from the siege. The Jews pursued the retreating Roman army and inflicted great damage on them, slaughtering many of them. The Christians however, seized the opportunity to escape and fled the doomed city. Most of them found refuge in the city of Pella.

Four years later, the Roman armies, led this time by Titus, renewed the assault on Jerusalem. On this occasion there was no withdrawal, although the Jews believed until the bitter end that their city could never be destroyed. When the city was finally taken after a dreadful siege in which many died of starvation, the Romans slaughtered the Jews by the hundreds of thousands. It is estimated that over a million of them were killed while the remainder were taken away as captives and sold as slaves to different nations. Jerusalem itself was utterly destroyed and Jesus' words were fulfilled when the temple itself was demolished and laid level with the ground.

A PARALLEL

We can look at the principles involved when this prophecy of the abomination of desolation was first fulfilled and gain valuable insights into how the final crisis will develop.

First of all, we notice that at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem the people of God, the Christians, had two determined enemies. First among these were the Jews. The Jews represented the apostate people of God, a people professing to belong to God, but who, in reality were in the greatest rebellion against Him. They had been instrumental in the crucifixion of His Son and

ever since then had been engaged in carrying out a determined vendetta against the newly-formed Christian Church.

Secondly there was Rome, a mighty secular power which at first was at peace with the Jewish nation, but which eventually became its bitter enemy and utterly destroyed it. This Roman power in cooperation with the Jews crucified Christ and persecuted His people. God's people escaped being destroyed by this power when they fled out of Jerusalem before it was overthrown.

These three powers, Rome, the apostate professing people of God, and God's true people, all appear again in the end-time conflict. In Revelation 17 and 18 we see the beast, (secular Rome – the European Union) being ridden by the woman Babylon, the apostate professing people of God. While Babylon may be plainly identified with the Roman Catholic church, Babylon also extends to all other false religious systems.

But is it logical to say that God's church becomes Babylon? Again we can learn from looking at the example of the Jewish Church. In Matt. 23:35 Jesus says:

That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. (Matt. 23:35)

Jesus said that all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from the time of Abel would come upon the Jewish nation. This is exactly what we are told concerning Babylon in Revelation 18.

And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. (Rev. 18:24)

So we see that when Israel became apostate, she actually became a part of the great spiritual system called Babylon which has always existed ever since the tower of Babel and which has always opposed God's truth

and His people in every age. Therefore we see the principle that it doesn't matter who you are or what you are or whether or not God has used you or called you in the past. If you turn your back on Him and embrace abominable ways, you become a spiritual part of the great Babylonian system, even if you are not physically joined to it.

The professed people of God, the Christian church, becomes Babylon when the following events occur:

- a. When the daily is taken away.
- b. When the abomination of desolation stands in the holy place.

When these things occur in the professing Christian Churches then Babylon is completely fallen and it is then that she becomes desolate.

And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. (Rev. 18:19)

This religious system, Babylon, and secular Rome, are the two enemies of God's people at the end of time along with the false prophet, the USA. As we look at what happened at the time of Jerusalem's destruction we get a picture of what will happen at the end.

The secular power (Rome – the European Union) will eventually turn against apostate religion and destroy it. This is exactly what we are told in the book of Revelation. We are told that the ten horns on the beast will "hate the whore, make her naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire."

COME OUT OF HER

But what of God's people? It is evident that there are many of God's people still entangled with the false religious systems of the world today. They are wrapped up in denominations and systems with many of them still being members of these institutions. Jesus' prophecy concerning the abomination of desolation is applicable to them again today. Something is to hap-

pen which will be an indicator that it is no longer possible for God's people to remain in these institutions. Revelation 18 tells us that at that time, a mighty angel comes down from heaven with a message for the people on earth:

"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. (Revelation 18:2-4)"

This is the moment when the abomination of desolation is set up. Something happens in the professing Christian churches which is so clearly wrong, so plainly opposed to God's will, that it becomes unmistakably evident that this system called Babylon is really controlled by Satan and not by Christ. This is the "abomination of desolation," standing where it ought not, in the holy place, and this will be the final opportunity for God's people to get out of the denominations and systems which constitute Babylon. Those who continue to associate with her beyond that point will seal their doom. They will partake of her sins and ultimately, receive of her plagues.

But this "abomination of desolation" is supposed to stand, "in the holy place." How could this "holy place" be applicable to Babylon? Let us look again at the original fulfillment of the prophecy. At the time when it was destroyed, the Jewish people were no longer God's people. The temple in Jerusalem was no longer His temple and the worship of Judaism was obsolete and meaningless. The Jewish nation, in fact, was the equivalent of modern Babylon, a

people professing to serve God, yet who were in the greatest apostasy and who were persecuting God's true people. Yet, Jesus referred to their city as "the holy place." This is where He said that the abomination of desolation would stand and He was referring to the "holy" ground which surrounded Jerusalem. Obviously, Jesus used the term, "holy place," because He was speaking in terms of the general understanding concerning Jerusalem and the temple. He was not saying this place was still "the holy place" in God's eyes.

We may apply the phrase similarly in our day. The professing Christian churches are indeed "the holy place," by profession. They are viewed as the vessels of God's grace. They are identified with Him. But something is to enter the Christian body, something is to be established in Christendom which is referred to as "the abomination of desolation." It is an abominable thing which will result in desolation for the modern professing people of God. When this thing is set up, it will be the final straw for God's true people who are still associated with these denominations. They will then heed Jesus' command to "flee." This is the same as the command found in Revelation 18:1-4, "Babylon is fallen, come out of her my people."

Babylon is already in deep apostasy. There is no denominated Christian body today which has not been corrupted by worldly principles. They have all compromised the principles of Christianity in order to maintain their place and influence in the world. There is no way of escaping it, denominations survive because they cooperate with the powers of the world. The very fact that they are required to register and conform to certain government determined guidelines in order to exist predisposes them to compromise and guarantees that they will lower the standard of purity sooner or later.

However, loyal members of these institutions either fail to see, or refuse to see the decay which is taking place in

these churches, or else, if they do see it, they persuade themselves that it is not so bad or that things will change. However, the abomination of desolation will be the final straw, it will be the great, decisive, apostate compromise which will persuade every single honest Christian that it is no longer possible to be a Christian and remain in association with these churches. They will get out of them and just in time, because the setting up of this abomination in the holy place (the churches) will result in the complete departure of God's spirit from the professing Christian bodies (the daily taken away) and this will be followed shortly by the destruction of Babylon by the 10 kings

Seventh day Adventists have always had a view of prophecy which places the SDA church at the center. This view has been exaggerated and multiplied by independents and "offshoots" from the SDA church, with people like the Shepherd's Rods and the Reform Adventist Church believing that they are exclusively the people of God and that all others will be lost. This same position is held in varying degrees by many others who don't directly belong to these groups, but many of whom are so bound to the SDA concepts that they insist that it is necessary even to identify themselves by the name, "Seventh day Adventist."

In this view of prophecy, the final conflict is between different churches. The SDA Church is at the center and it is persecuted by all other churches. The Beast of course is identified with the Roman Catholic church system, so the conflict at the end is a conflict between false and true Christianity with true Christianity being represented by the SDA Church.

However, when we look at the prophecy of Revelation 17 and compare it with the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem, we see that the main enemy is to be a secular power, namely, secular Rome, which will be opposed to all Christendom. It destroys Babylon (false Christianity) and seeks to destroy true Christianity as well. In

this scenario, the world is not divided into Seventh-day Adventists versus the rest of Christendom. The antagonism is between the beast and religion.

It is true that Babylon (false religion) is also an enemy of God's people, just as ancient Jerusalem and its people were enemies of God's true church. She is drunken with the blood of the saints, but it cannot be denied that the last enemy of God's people is the beast, not Babylon. This is the power which institutes the Mark and imposes it on all persons. It seems likely that this mark is the same as "the abomination of desolation." Babylon will embrace this mark, something utterly abominable to God and it is this final apostasy of Babylon which opens the eyes of God's people in Babylon and causes them to flee out of her. There is going to be a great exodus from the organized churches at that time.

There are undoubtedly more twists and angles to this prophecy than we have expressed here and it is possible that some of these ideas may have to be modified as time passes. However, we are convinced that these prophecies need to be viewed with an open mind and with fresh eyes. Even if our ideas are not perfect, there are thoughts here which need to be examined closely, there are facts which we have been missing for a long time. Some of them may be keys which will open vital doors to understanding the prophecies more perfectly in these final moments of time.

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS,

So Jesus' phrase first had reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. When the Jews saw the standards of Rome approaching, this was the mark of Rome. It was the abomination of desolation, or the abomination that maketh desolate. For them, this was the mark of the beast and it was the sign of the end. It was the signal to get out.

Secondly it had reference to a similar situation at the end. In the end it is the mark of Rome again, the mark of the

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Galatians 4 and Feast Days

David Clayton



The feast-keeping movement is growing. Some feel that this is a welcome thing, others, that it is of little significance. Some like me, view it with alarm, believing that it is contrary to the fundamental principles of the gospel and that it will ultimately drag God's people back into Judaism, or something closely resembling it.

The feast-keeping movement thrives on a legalistic outlook where the focus is more on works than on faith. Not surprisingly, a large percentage of those who get into this movement are also caught by the "holy names" deception and the New Moon Sabbath fallacy.

I was recently advised that in focusing on the feast days I am alienating people unnecessarily. I disagree. Alienating people, yes, I suppose there are those who will be upset because I am frequently opposing feast-keeping. However, it would be wrong to label this as unnecessary. The apostle Paul himself, when faced with the same kind of situation had this to say:

But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they

might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. (Galatians 2:3-5)

Paul knew what the consequences would be of simply ignoring legalism. He said that those who promoted it were seeking to bring God's people into "bondage," and he did not yield to them for even an hour.

There is great peril for God's people, justified by faith and living in Christ, if they should turn again to the works of the law. Paul was forceful in declaring the danger:

Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. (Galatians 5:2-4)

In fact, Paul specifically identified that the legalism to which the Galatians were turning was resulting in the observance of set times.

Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. (Galatians 4:10-11)

Those who observe the feasts tell us that these "days and months and times and years," which the Galatians were observing were pagan festivals. This is absolutely not true. There is nowhere in the book of Galatians where Paul suggests that the Galatians were having a problem with Pagan practices. From the beginning of the letter he identifies the problem: The Galatians were fascinated with the law and wanted to turn to keeping the law. Why would

they do something so foolish?

Paul explains that there were "false brethren" who came down from Judea and were poisoning the minds of these brethren, trying to convince them that faith in Christ was not enough for salvation, but that they also needed to do the works of the law. The first step in this legalism was circumcision and we can see Paul referring to this several times in his letter.

Galatians chapter 4 is one of the most decisive passages in the New Testament with respect to this issue. In this chapter Paul gives a very clear explanation of the place of the law, the reason why it was given, and the reason why it is no longer necessary for the Christian to live under its government. In spite of the clarity of Paul's explanation, some manage to turn the entire chapter upside down and to make it say the very opposite of what Paul meant to say.

In this article we will take a very brief look at the first 11 verses of Galatians 4 with a brief explanation. All who read with an open mind should be able to see what the passage is saying clearly.

THE EXPLANATION

*Now I say, That the **heir**, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; (Gal 4:1)*

This first verse tells us who the passage is speaking of. It is speaking of the "heir". It says the heir is no different than a servant, even though he is, by inheritance, the Lord of all. Who is this heir? The preceding verse tells us. It is the last verse of chapter 3 and here is what it says:

*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and **heirs** according to the promise. (Galatians 3:29)*

This last verse of chapter 3 tells us that if we belong to Christ then we are Abraham's seed (Christ is the seed – we become a part of that seed) and we are **HEIRS** in keeping with God's promise to bless the world in Abraham's seed. So we see that this is speaking of the heirs, those who belong to Christ. Paul tells us that this heir, the one who is to inherit all things, is treated like a servant as long as he is still a child. This does not mean that he is made to work like a servant, but simply that he is placed under the orders of others. He is not free to do as he pleases. This is to continue until a certain time arrives which has been appointed by the father. This is when he becomes a full-grown man.

But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. (Gal 4:2)

As a child, the heir is placed under “tutors and governors.” Who were these tutors and governors? Chapter 3:24 tells us:

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Galatians 3:24)

This is very clear. A schoolmaster is a tutor, he is a governor. So the “tutors and governors” is referring to the law. As children (spiritual children) God's people were placed under the schoolmaster of the law. They were placed under the control of laws and rules just like children are treated when they are immature.

Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: (Gal 4:3)

Paul shows the meaning of this illustration. He says that in the same way (even so) we were once under the control of the elements of the world. Who is Paul referring to when he says “we?” Is he speaking of gentiles or Jews? Well, Paul was a Jew, but the Galatians were gentiles, so why does he classify himself with them and say “WE?” It is because he is not speaking of them as either Jews or Gentiles,

he is speaking of them as people of God. Paul was a child of God and the Galatians to whom he was writing were also children of God. Paul is addressing Christians, not pagans. So he says, “we,” the children of God were once placed under the elements of the world. In other words, we were once controlled by things which pertained only to this world. When was this? When were God's people controlled by “elements of the world?”

It was during the time of the law! The law dealt **ONLY** with things of the world.

Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. (Heb 9:1)

The sanctuary was worldly, the sacrifice was worldly, the incense was worldly, so were the altars, the candlestick, the services, the people the land, **EVERYTHING** in the law was of the world. They pointed to heavenly things, but they themselves were **ELEMENTS OF THE WORLD**. Many who believe in the feasts will not accept this simple fact. The entire law consisted of types and illustrations which were only of the world. They were not the real things, but only represented the real things. How is it possible that reasonable people could deny such a thing? Yet, there are those who will not accept it.

According to them, Paul could not have referred to the laws which God gave as, “elements of the world.” Well, why not? This is exactly what they were. This is why Paul himself refers to the sanctuary as a “worldly sanctuary.” It was of the world, even though it was dedicated to the worship of God.

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Gal 4:4-6)

But when the time arrived which the Father had appointed, the fullness of the time, God sent His son to be born and to live under this same system of the law. He sent Him to deliver or to redeem His people from the system which had been designed for spiritual children, the system of the law, so that they could be treated like mature heirs. They would receive the “adoption of sons.”

This signifies that they would be treated like sons instead of servants. Instead of being under the schoolmaster, the tutors and governors, the elements of the world, they would enter into their inheritance as mature heirs of the promise made to Abraham. They would be delivered from the government of the law which treated them like servants and be placed under the government of the spirit of Christ, full-grown sons of God. This spirit of God in the hearts of His people enables them to cry upon God as Father, instead of regarding Him as Judge and lawgiver.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (Rom 8:15)

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Gal 4:7)

So the conclusion is, we (the people of God) are no more servants, but sons.

Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. (Gal 4:8)

Paul said that “**THEN**” they served things which are not really gods. He said that at that time they did not know God. What time is he referring to when he says, “**THEN**?” Evidently he is referring to the time before they were treated like sons, when they were treated like servants, the time before Christ came, when they were placed under tutors and governors. At that time God's people worshiped by ritu-

als and ceremonies. They served things which are no gods. Their religion was centered around worldly things and it never really brought them to God. Instead, these rituals and ceremonies became their gods.

In order to understand what Paul is saying we only need to look at the condition of the Jews at the time when Christ was crucified.

Who did they worship? They kept all the rules of the law as best as men could, they worshipped in the sanctuary, they kept all the feast days, but who did they worship really? Jesus made it clear that the fact that they went through all that service did not mean that they worshipped God. His assessment of their worship was,

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:44)

So who did the Jews worship? Did their observance of the law mean that they were actually worshipping God? Not at all! Of course some of them did, but the point is, observance of the law did not constitute worship of God in and of itself. If it did, then all who practiced the law would have been said to be worshipping God. However, Jesus' words show that law-keeping in itself did not mean that the Jews were worshipping God. They became Satan-worshippers in spite of their law-keeping. This is what Paul is referring to when he says that at that time, when children, the people of God were actually serving things which are not really God because when a person is relating to rules and rituals, he never really can know God, he only knows the rules. We have to be delivered from that kind of worship before we can actually come to know God for the person that He is. Those who worshipped God in spirit and in truth went beyond the ceremonies and rituals and found God

Himself. The rest of them never went beyond the ceremonies.

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? (Gal 4:9)

Paul continues to express his amazement that the Galatians are embracing the law. Now that Christ has come and introduced them to the true religion of God, now that they are sons of God, how is it that they want to turn again to the weak and helpless works of the law, the worship services which pertain only to this world? Paul says they "desire again to be in BONDAGE." Remember that he had explained earlier on, in verse 3, that the people of God were in BONDAGE under the elements of the world when they were children. Now Paul was amazed that they had come to know God in Christ, and yet they wanted to go back to the stage of servants, to be again led by the law, to be again controlled by ceremonies and rituals which were only pertaining to this world. Ceremonies which were "weak and beggarly," because they made nothing perfect.

Is this really the point of the passage? Was it really the law that these people desired to go back to? We cannot mistake it, verse 21 makes it clear what these Galatians were wanting to do.

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? (Gal 4:21)

They wanted to be again under the government, the control of the schoolmaster, to be directed by the law. By making this choice they were actually rejecting the government of Christ by the spirit.

Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. (Gal 4:10,11)

This is the context in which Paul accuses them of observing "days and months, and times, and years." There

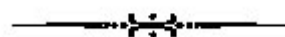
is no question that he is referring to the days, months, times and years of the law. The whole passage is speaking of the desire which the Galatians had to return to the works of the law. This was the point.

In the time of the early church, feast-keeping was continued by the Jewish Christians. In fact, many of them continued to do all the works of the law. Some of them were apparently so misguided that they actually continued to offer animal sacrifices. God winked at this ignorance because these people were Jews and they had a culture and a lifestyle which involved the law. It was very difficult for them to break away from it.

At the council of Jerusalem the decision was taken that the Gentiles had no need to observe the works of the law, but apparently, the Jews were to continue doing so. This explains why some Christians kept feasts and some were forbidden to do so.

This confusion affects us today, with some well-meaning brethren continuing to insist that feast-keeping is a necessary part of the Christian life. Of course the effect of turning to feast-keeping is a more and more legalistic lifestyle because embracing one of the works of the law naturally leads to the question, "why not all?" Now we see some of these feast-keepers following through and attempting to keep all the rules laid down in the law of Moses!

On the authority of the word of God I will say plainly and without apology that feast-keeping today is a denial of Christ. It is turning again to the type and rejecting the reality. Should we sacrifice animals today when Christ is our true passover? Should we keep the feasts today when Christ is the fulfillment of them? Should we continue looking at the photograph when the real person has arrived? Should we place ourselves under the schoolmaster when the time appointed by the Father has already arrived? The answer to these questions is a resounding, "NO."



ONIONS: love them or leave them

Lenworth Frankson



Onions are vegetables that are pungent when chopped and contain certain chemical substances which irritate the eyes. Many people avoid eating them raw because of the burning sensation on the tongue when chewed and the so-called “*bad breath*” effect but when eaten raw, they provide benefits that boost and improve one’s overall health and immune system. While onions may bring a tear to your eye and pungency to your breath they will also certainly bring delight to your taste buds. The onion, known scientifically as “*Allium cepa*”, is, on the surface, a simple brown, white or red, paper-thin skinned bulb; yet, despite its plain looks, it has an intense flavor and is a beloved part of the cuisine of almost every region of the world. The word onion comes from the Latin word *unio*, which means “single,” or “one” which describes the onion plant’s production of a single bulb, unlike its cousin, the garlic, that produces many small bulbs. The name also describes the onion bulb when cut down the middle; it is a union (also from *unio*) of many separate layers of different sizes with the same middle point.

Onions contains chemicals that have anti-inflammatory, anti-cholesterol, anti-cancer and antioxidant properties. They are often chopped, cooked and used in a variety of dishes to enhance flavor and taste but eating them raw is the better way to consume them if we wish to get the full health benefits. Onions contains lots of organic sulfur, vitamins, minerals and fiber, and they help prevent and treat several differ-

ent types of cancers. Bulbs from the onion family are thought to have been used as a food source for thousands of years and it appears that this was a food source humans truly enjoyed. In fact, the Bible tells us in Numbers chapter 11 that the children of Israel complained and were displeased with the food that the Lord provided. They wept and said:

“Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes” (Num. 11:4-6)

These folks clearly enjoyed eating onions and missed having them in the same way they missed eating cucumbers, melons, leeks and fish. Obviously onions were a part of their diet and something they enjoyed.

When onions are cooked they lose their sulfur and much of their nutritional content. They become less nourishing and effective, therefore lessening their ability to prevent or treat illnesses, cancers, or wounds. It is therefore necessary to eat them raw so as to get the maximum health benefits. Cooked onions also lose a compound called “allicin”. Allicin is an important compound that helps fight off bacteria, illnesses, cancers, and diseases. Allicin also helps treat open wounds and helps keep the heart and colon healthy.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Onions, like garlic, are members of the *Allium* family, and both are rich in sulfur-containing compounds that are responsible for their pungent odors and for many of their health-promoting effects. A wide variety of these sulfides are found in onion, including four major types of sulfides. One famous research showed that when onions were

put in a juicer and the extracted juice given to rats for three weeks their testosterone level rose by **314 percent**. According to this research done at Tabriz University in Iran, fresh onion juice raises testosterone levels as much as substances like nolvadex or clomid. The study showed that after twenty days the onion juice had improved sperm quality and increased the concentration of testosterone in the rat’s blood.

CARDIOVASCULAR BENEFITS

Unlike the research on garlic and its cardiovascular benefits, research specifically focused on onion has mostly been conducted on animals rather than humans. In animal studies, there is evidence that onion’s sulfur compounds may work in an anti-clotting capacity and help prevent the unwanted clumping together of blood platelet cells. There is also evidence showing that sulfur compounds in onion can lower blood levels of cholesterol and triglycerides, and also improve cell membrane function in red blood cells.

Many studies show onion to be a food that provides protection for the heart and blood vessels when consumed in a diet that is rich in other vegetables and fruits, especially flavonoid-containing vegetables and fruits (*Flavonoids are compounds that belong to a large group that includes many plant pigments. Flavonoids have beneficial effects in the human diet as antioxidants, neutralizing free radicals which damage body tissue and lead to heart disease, strokes and cancer*). The benefits of onion in this general dietary context contributes to the prevention of heart attack. In almost all of these diet-based studies, participants with the greatest intake of vegetables, including onions, gained the most protection. The flavonoid content of onions supports these research findings. It is important to note also that

onion is commonly consumed in relatively small amounts along with other foods rather than by itself. As a result, it is more difficult to provide large-scale dietary research studies that involve thousands of participants who consume in total, large amounts of onions on a regular basis.

SUPPORT FOR BONE AND CONNECTIVE TISSUE

Human studies have shown that onion can help increase our bone density and may be of special benefit to women of menopausal age who are experiencing loss of bone density. There is also evidence showing that women who have passed the age of menopause may be able to lower their risk of hip fracture through frequent consumption of onions. “Frequent” in this context means onion consumption on a daily basis. In this research on bone density in older women, very sporadic eating of onion (once a month or less) did not provide much benefit. That was to be expected but what was interesting was the finding that it took daily consumption of onion to show robust benefits for bone density. The message here is a clear one: Use lots of onions when you are incorporating them into your meal plan. The high sulfur content of onions may provide direct benefits to our connective tissue. Many of our connective tissue components require sulfur for their formation.

ANTI-INFLAMMATORY BENEFITS

While onion is not as well researched as garlic in terms of specific inflammatory health problems like rheumatoid arthritis or allergic airway inflammation, onions has nevertheless been shown to provide important anti-inflammatory benefits. *Onionin A*, a unique sulfur molecule in onion that is found in the bulb portion of the plant, has been shown to inhibit the activity of macrophages, specialized white blood cells that play a key role in our body’s immune defense system, and one of their defense activities involves the triggering of large-scale inflammatory responses. While macrophage activity is typically a good thing, restricting them

of their activity can sometimes be critical in getting chronic unwanted inflammation under control. Onion’s antioxidants, also provide us with anti-inflammatory benefits. These antioxidants help prevent the oxidation of fatty acids in our body. When we have lower levels of oxidized fatty acids, our body produces fewer inflammatory messaging molecules, and our level of inflammation is kept in check.

CANCER PROTECTION

Onion has repeatedly been shown to lower our risk of several cancers, even when we consume it in only moderate amounts. “Moderate” generally means 1-2 times per week, even though in some studies it has been used to mean up to 5-6 times per week. Colorectal cancer, laryngeal cancer, and ovarian cancer are the cancer types for which risk is reduced along with moderate amounts of dietary onion. For other cancer types, however, moderate intake of onion has not been enough to show significant risk reduction. For these cancer types, including esophageal cancer and cancers of the mouth, daily intake of onion is required before research results show significant risk reduction.

Many factors may play a role in these different research findings for different cancer types. However, the overall message suggests that: you do not want to err on the side of small onion servings or infrequent onion intake if you want to obtain the full cancer-related benefits of onion. A few thin slices of onion on a tossed salad are a good thing but probably not enough to provide you with the cancer-related onion benefit that you are seeking. In recipes that already call for onion, try to include at least 1 whole onion (medium size) in the recipe. In recipes that do not already call for onion, consider the addition of 1 medium size onion if you think that adding the onion would not change the taste in a significant way. In terms of individual portion sizes when you sit down to eat a meal, try to consume the equivalent of 1/2 onion. I know this will be challenging for some

folks but the benefits are rewarding.

OTHER HEALTH BENEFITS

In animal studies, onions have shown potential for improvement of blood sugar balance, even though it is not yet clear about the carryover of these benefits for humans who are seeking better blood sugar balance from their diet. Most of the animal studies have been conducted on rats, and most have used onion juice or onion extract as the form of onion tested. Future research is needed to clarify onion’s potential for helping lower blood sugar and improving blood sugar control, especially in persons with blood sugar problems.

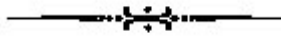
In terms of antibacterial benefits, onion unlike garlic, has not been extensively researched, nevertheless it has been shown to help prevent bacterial infection. The sulfur-containing compounds and flavonoids that it contains, especially “*quercetin*”, helps provide these antibacterial benefits. There are studies which do show the antibacterial activity of onion in relationship to the bacteria that are commonly involved in the production of tooth cavities. Antibacterial benefits have also been shown in the area of gum disease bacteria. Interestingly, in one study, fresh, chopped, uncooked onion had antibacterial effects on these potentially unwanted gum bacteria, but non-fresh, uncooked onion (raw onion that was chopped and then left to sit for 2 days at room temperature) did not demonstrate these same antibacterial properties nor did fresh onion that was grated and then steamed for 10 minutes. While it is not possible to draw broad conclusions from a single lab study, these findings suggest that length of storage (for onion that has been chopped but not cooked) and duration of heat exposure (in this case involving exposure to steam for 10 full minutes) can affect some of onion’s health benefits. For these reasons, special care should be taken in the storage, handling, and cooking of this vegetable.

There is enough evidence from research which shows that eating onions raw has health benefits. Some of these

would include lower blood pressure, less constipation, healthier arteries, strong lungs, normal blood pressure levels, less stress, fewer colds and flus, lower cholesterol levels, healthier urinary tract, less hemorrhoids, and less blood clotting. Raw onions also help prevent stomach, colon, breast, prostate, and lung cancers. I found out personally that eating raw onions does help in relieving some of the symptoms associated with my autoimmune disease. When I had a bad cold raw onions and garlic helped in my recovery. During the cold and flu season if a family member becomes infected with the cold I prepare a blended mixture of raw onions, garlic, cayenne pepper, lemon juice and honey for them to take periodically throughout the day, and before going to bed. I can honestly say that this concoction does wonders! It definitely helps in speeding up the recovery process.

Some people love eating onions raw,

but others don't, however, there are several ways to get raw onions into our diet without eating the onions by themselves. One suggested way is to add a few slices of raw onions in your sandwiches or on top of a baked potato with some crushed raw garlic along with your favorite cream topping. You don't need to just eat one kind of onion either, there are several to choose from. One of my favorite is Sweet Onions. A sweet onion is a variety of onion that is not pungent. Their mildness is attributable to their low sulfur content and high water content when compared to other onion varieties. All raw onions do have great health benefits and there is very little preparation involved before eating them. Try eating them raw and in time you might acquire a taste for eating them. Go ahead and start adding them to your meals, the benefits will be rewarding.



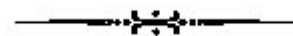
A Pattern of the end

Continued from page 6

beast. This time it is not a physical abomination such as the setting up of literal flags, but a spiritual defiance of God, nevertheless, it is the same abomination that maketh desolate.

The beast approaches God's people again (the church) with the standards of heathenism, seeking to overthrow it. When these standards of Rome stand where they ought not (in the holy ground) then it is the final opportunity to flee out of Babylon. To remain beyond this point will mean eternal disaster.

Is that time already upon us?



Open Face

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