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AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF GALATIANS 3:10-14

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Exegesis of Galatians 3:10-14

By way of introduction to this portion of Scripture it would be helpful to observe the context and the argument of the Apostle Paul. One of the major themes of this epistle is that justification is by faith. This thought and the arguments for it, as well as the arguments against the contrary viewpoint are found throughout the epistle. In the immediate context of Chapter three Paul had just stated that justification was by faith. Therein was set forth the positive side of the theme. In verses 10 through 12 Paul defends the idea that justification is by faith from the negative viewpoint. He does this by showing the predicament in which those who seek justification by the law find themselves. The apostle might have asked the Galatians two questions: What does the law say about relying upon works of the law for justification? Was the purpose of the law to justify a man in the sight of God?

Verse 10 *δοσοι γαρ εξ εργων νόμου εισιν, υπό κατάραν εισίν γέγραπται γαρ ότι 'Επικατάρατος πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά.* Various commentators refer to this verse as the "argumentum e contrario". The *γαρ* introduces the argument in v. 10, in which Paul seeks to show by Scripture what happens to those who depend upon the works of the law. By the use of *δοσοι* Paul has in mind both Jew and Gentile, applying it particularly to those Judaizers who were relying on the law as a means of justification. It is placed first in the sentence probably for emphasis.

εξ εργων νόμου. This phrase is contrasted with *ἐκ πίστεως* of verse 7. *Merrill C. Tenney* in his book "Galatians-A Charter of Christian Liberty" has classified the various uses of the word "law". In the verse before us the article is absent in the Greek. *Tenney* comments: "The absence of the article usually means that the quality of the given concept is stressed rather than its identity, although in this context it refers to the Mosaic law as the chief embodiment of the concept." He gives the following translation; "as many as are of law-works". The

reference is more to origin than to agency. *Tenney* concludes, "Those who assume that they may be justified on legalistic grounds are by this phrase characterized as under the curse of the law, since they have not performed all that the law requires". There are two classes of men: those of faith, and those of law-works. The one class is justified while the other is cursed. To be of the "works of the law" means to rely on law-works to make oneself acceptable to God.

I think it is important in this paper to present some of the modern day commentators on this portion. The *Interpreter's Bible* makes the distinction between a legalistic sense of the law (which is said to be understood in these verses) and the divine law in a most general sense, by which the doers are justified before God (Rom. 2:13). Therefore the *Interpreter's Bible* can say: "Great care is needed to understand Paul here. He does not say that the curse is God's curse. It is the curse of law, and of law misconceived as a way of salvation". "His fellow rabbis reasoned that since the Scripture was God's word, the curse which it pronounced upon the disobedient was God's curse. He replied that the law was not God's way of salvation, but only a codicil which angels added through Moses the intermediary (vs. 19). That was a complete break with the synagogue. Instructed by the mind of Christ, Paul came to see that not all the things prohibited by the law were sinful, and that not all it commanded was right. The worst of its curses had fallen upon Jesus, the best of men. When Paul looked at the crucified Christ, he saw a cross, and not a curse, in the heart of God. He continued to recognize that sin invariably incurred its own inherent wrath (Rom. 1-2; cf. ib Rom. 1:18), but God was in Christ reconciling all things to himself. The curse lay in thinking about God according to the law court and the countinghouse, instead of according to Christ."

Burton in the ICC says the following about νόμου in Gal. 2:16: "νόμου is here evidently used qualitatively, and in its legalistic sense, denoting divine law viewed as a purely legalistic system made up of statutes, on the basis of obedience or disobedience to which men are approved or condemned as a matter of debt without grace. This is divine law as the legalists defined it. In the Apostle's thought it stands for a reality only in that it constitutes a single element of the divine law detached from all other elements and aspects of divine revelation; by such detachment it misrepresents the will of God and his real attitude towards men." *Burton* says on this verse in Gal. 3, "the word νόμου is, as always in the phrase ἔργα νόμου used in its legalistic sense (see on 2:16), and ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου are not οἱ ποιτὰὶ νόμου of whom Paul says in Rom. 2:13 that they will be justified, but men whose standing and

character proceed from(ἐκ) works of legalistic obedience to statutes. ὑπὸ κατάραν is a qualitative phrase, equivalent to(ἐπι) κατάρατος. While this sentence undoubtedly represents the apostle's real conviction, in the sense that a man who has only works of law and not faith to commend him to God will actually fail of divine approval (cf. 2:16), yet it is most important for purposes of its interpretation to notice that this is not what it is intended to affirm, but rather that the principle of legalism (which he contends is not the basis of God's actual judgment of men) leads logically to universal condemnation, by bringing all under the condemnation of the law. This appears clearly from the fact that the sentence by which he supports the assertion is one which does not express the apostle's own conviction as to the basis of God's judgment of men, but the verdict of the law. The curse of which the verse speaks is not the curse of God, but as Paul expressly calls it in v. 13, the curse of the law."

I have quoted these two sources to show how this verse is falsely and dangerously interpreted. It questions the fact that the Mosaic law was from God. It questions the fact that Christ bore the wrath of God for us because of our sin. And, it teaches a different way of justification. The law is from God and used here by Paul in a very proper sense. It was not intended to bring justification and cannot be relied upon to do so. Those who wish to rely on it must bear its verdict. Those who do not keep it fully are "cursed".

ὑπὸ κατάραν εἶσιν. This is the predicate and expresses the condition of those who depend on "law-works" for justification. The κατάραν is in contrast to the εὐλογία of verses 8 and 9. (This probably explains the absence of the article in ὑπὸ κατάραν. This κατάραν is from God. The apostle goes on to confirm this by quoting from the Old Testament, which was from God. The impersonal law has no power to enforce any curse or implement any blessing, but God has the power to do so. To be under the curse is to be under God's curse, the One who gave the law. The ὑπό brings a force to the κατάραν, as *Ridderbos* says in his commentary: "The ὑπό makes of the κατάραν a real power which reigns and brings devastation upon those subjected to it". For the ὑπὸ κατάραν without the article compare Rom. 3:9 (ὕψ' ἀμαρτίαν) and Rom. 6:14 (ὑπὸ νόμου, ὑπὸ χάριν).

Paul appeals to Scripture to defend and validate his proposition (Deut. 27:26). In Deut. the purpose of the passage is to bring men to obey the law. The purpose in Galatians is to show men that they are cursed. Nevertheless, Paul is not making an improper application of this verse. In Deut. the sphere of operation is that of *grace*, and in that sphere there is a proper significance for the law, viz, to bind the reverencing of the law of God upon the hearts

of his people. Whereas in the Galatian's portion the law is being considered in the sphere of *merit* for justification. In Galatians the result is the cursing of which the law speaks to those who rely on "law-works" for justification. It is here that the Jewish legalism had entered in and perverted the true purposes of the law. The law was not intended to give life. The Pharisees, *et al*, had turned the law into a matter of salvation by works. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount brought the force of the law to bear on those who were trusting it for justification by showing that it was necessary to keep the spirit of the law as well as the letter of the law, and therefore giving the law one of its proper functions, to bring conviction of sin. As *Ridderbos* says, "the very thing that had been for Israel, so long as it lived out of grace, an impetus to living a life of grateful obedience to God, meant for those who looked to human merit for the fulfillment of expectation the end of all hope—this according to the absolute norm by which God judges".

The quotation is not in the exact words of the Hebrew or the LXX, though it is obviously a quotation from Deut. 27:26 and close to the LXX. Different words are used to give a better explanation. The Hebrew reads: "Cursed is he that confirmeth not the words of this law to do them". The LXX is: "Cursed is every man that continueth not in all the words of this law to do them". Paul changes "words" to "the things written in the book", making the idea clearer. The matter of constantly keeping is seen in the *ἐμμένει*, and the extent of the keeping is seen to apply to *πάντων*. The idea is to keep constantly and completely. Finally, there is the emphasis on doing (*ποιῆσαι ἀντά*) them. *πας* and *πάντων* are absent in the Hebrew, however, the latter is found in the Samaritan Pentateuch.

On this portion, *Burton* (ICC p. 164f) again distinguishes between the judgment of God and the judgment of the law. He says, "It is necessary, therefore, through out the passage, to distinguish between the verdicts of law and the judgments of God, and to recognize that the former are, for Paul, not judgments which reflect God's attitude now or at any time or under any circumstances, but those which the legalists must, to his own undoing, recognize as those of the law interpreted as he interprets it, and which on the basis of his legalism he must impute to God. *Ridderbos* says, "The curse of the law is only that medium by which we receive the curse of God. The two are the same—as the law is God's law".

ἔγγραται γὰρ. Because it is written and stands yet written (perfect). *ἐπὶ κατάρατος*. A verbal adjective and a strengthened form of the word, "curse"—cp. Mt. 25:41, where a similar form

is used and "eternal fire" is seen to be the result of the "cursed". This result would be seen to be in contrast to the result stated in verse 11 of those who are righteous by faith—*ζῆσαι*. (Cp. Rom 4:15, "for the law works wrath". Paul was trying to show the strict demands of the law. Its standard was high and unyielding. No one constantly keeps all the law and those who seek justification by this means are under a curse. He is seeking salvation by a means which in the final analysis condemns and brings him under a curse. Paul seeks to show that no one constantly keeps all the law and therefore it is folly to trust in this means of justification.

ἐμμένει. This is a stronger form of the word, "to abide", meaning to continue. The verb is present active indicative (continuing in).

τοῦ ποιῆσαι ἀντά. Aorist infinitive. *Ellicott* comments, "Purpose contemplated and involved in the *ἐμμένει*. The use of the infinitive to denote design, intention". The infinitive with *τοῦ* is expegetical and not final, *Robertson's Grammar* (1086). Further, *Lenski* says, "The aorist infinitive denotes complete doing, and 'all things' excludes exceptions".

Paul is writing to Gentiles and his argument is, of course, applicable to the Gentiles, though they had been raised outside the Jewish Law, however it is particularly applicable and forceful against those Jews who were trying to get the Gentiles to trust in the law for justification.

Verse 11. *ὅτι δε*, Paul seeks to prove his point by mean of another argument. The *ὅτι* is declarative, "that", not causal, "because". Some translate the phrase as "then again". The *δε* introduces the argument, and is translated as "and", not "but". This is actually a continuation of Paul's argument from a little different position. *Eadie* says in his commentary, "Justification is not of works, for legalists are under curse, since they cannot render perfect obedience, is the one argument (v. 10): but second is, Justification cannot depend on works, for Scripture asserts its connection with faith." (vv. 11, 12). The arguments in v. 11 and 12 is that the law was never intended by God to be the way of justification. Cf. 3:21 and the quotation from Hab. 2:4, as well as the teaching prior to v. 10.

ἐν νόμῳ. The idea of "in the sphere or domain of law" appears to fit the situation better. Tenney says, "It (*ἐν νόμῳ*) refers not so much to means as to sphere of operation. 'That no man is justified in the sphere of law before God is evident' might be a profitable translation of 3:11". Cp. Rom. 2:12; 3:19. However, the instrumental idea is grammatically possible—"through" or "by means of". It is not by means of the principle of law, but through faith. As *Ellicott* says, "the Apostle's object is apparently to show that the idea of justification falls

wholly out of the domain of the law, and is incompatible with its very nature and character" The meaning is not, "by the observance of the law". The condition of justification is not law, but faith. Any of the following interpretations would seem possible: instrumental dative, by means of; in the sphere of or domain of; the conditional or on the principle of. (*Lenski* has "in connection with" law, which seems like the idea of "sphere of"). However, "within the element or sphere of" is more in keeping with Paul's entire context.

οὐδὲν δικαιούται. Present passive indicative, "is justified".

παρὰ τῷ θεῷ. "in the sight of God". A not uncommon expression found elsewhere in Paul (Rom. 2:13; I Corth. 3:19; II Thess. 1:6; I Peter 2:20) possible to be understood as, "in the judgment of" God.

δῆλον. "is evident" -omission of the copula.

The clause preceding δῆλον is the subject of the proposition δῆλον(έσται). The clause that follows is the proof of it. The reverse would be grammatically possible, but the quotation from the O. T. does not require proof, but would be valuable for proof.

ὅτι ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται. ὅτι="because". The O. T. quotation is from Habakkuk 2:4. There are in this portion a number of problems, and they do not appear to be easily solved. Some of the difficulties are: 1. The Hebrew of Hab. 2:4 is CHDIQ BAMWNTQ YHYH (translation: the righteous in(by) his faithfulness (stedfastness) will live). The LXX has ὁδὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως(οἱ ἐκ πίστεως μου)(translation: and the righteous of my faithfulness will live). The "his" (Heb.) probably refers to the Jewish man, or Jews, in the historical situation of Habakkuk, whereas the "my" (LXX) is a reference to God. There is a problem of textual criticism. Paul has neither the "his" or the "my" in his writing. 2. A second problem is whether the ἐκ πίστεως is to be taken with the ἐκ δίκαιος or with ζήσεται. i. e. "the just by faith" will live (cp. RSV: "He who through faith is righteous..."), or, "the righteous will live by faith" (ASV and KJV-"just" substituted for "righteous" in the latter). 3. Does Paul use δίκαιος in a forensic sense or ethical sense? i. e. the man approved of God, or, the morally righteous. δικαιούται is used elsewhere in the forensic sense and is a parallel in the thought of this verse. Yet, Habakkuk, from which Paul is quoting, appears to refer to it more in the ethical sense. *Ridderbos* says the following about the meaning of the word here: "A person who judging by his conducts stands in right relationship to God; pious". This is more in keeping with the Hebrew and the LXX of Hab. 2 and it would not necessarily upset Paul's purpose in the argument, i. e. to show the complete difference between the law and the faith sphere. 4. How does Paul use

this same phrase in Rom. 1:17 and Hebrews 10:38? 5. Perhaps the most important question is, how does Paul use this verse in Habakkuk to support his argument?

It seems to me a proper translation would be one of this nature: *The just one* (the one who is justified) *will live* (the spiritual life which is experienced here and now, and will be for eternity) *of by faith*. πίστις came to express the AMWNH (faithfulness, faith used in an active sense and as a continuing principle). This would not mean Paul was using "faith" in a sense contrary to Hab. The usage would be in keeping with Habakkuk in view of the meaning of "faith" (in the Hebrew) as a way of justification. *Lightfoot* gives a careful treatment of this subject in his Comm. on Galatians, p. 154ff. *Elicott* says, "The Hebrew word AMWNH is not directly 'faith' meaning 'trust', 'belief', but 'stedfastness', 'faithfulness'. The context however justifies πίστις, even in the sense 'trust', as a paraphrastic rendering... In its original context the passage has reference to the temporal calamities inflicted by the Chaldean invasion. Here a spiritual meaning and general application are given to words referring primarily to special external incidents". Faith would be correctly conceived of as the basis of faithfulness. "Faith" in this verse is referred to as a principle. It is to be understood as "in the sphere of faith", in contrast to "the sphere of law".

The emphasis in this section is not on "living" or on "just one", but on *faith* as contrasted with law. Paul was concerned here with the cause of righteousness, not the life of righteousness. The above translation does justice to the O. T. meaning, is a proper N. T. translation and fits into the context of Paul's purpose for using the reference. *Burton's* comment is appropriate: "The particular sense which the words bore for Paul and which he intended them to convey to his readers is undoubtedly to be determined rather by Pauline usage in general, and by the part which the sentence plays in the apostle's argument, than by the meaning which the original Heb. had for the prophet". However, we need not conclude that Paul is misapplying, misquoting or making an improper use of this O. T. Script.

ζήσεται certainly includes the justification about which the apostle is writing.

The phrase "it is written" would not have been necessary, as this phrase was so well known as Scripture.

The Romans and Hebrews quotations do not argue against Paul's usage here, though the context and purpose of the Hebrews passage is different in emphasis from that of Romans and Galatians.

Although Paul has neither the "his" of the Hebrew or the "my" of the LXX, he is at one with Habakkuk in taking for granted that man's faith must be faithful and must rest on God's faithfulness. The *Interpreter's Bible* makes the following comment on this text: "When Paul says that the righteous man who is both just and justified is to live on the basis of faith, he is describing a way of life that is present as well as future. His faith is the determinant of action which makes righteousness actual even now". "Paul, like Habakkuk, means, faithful faith', i. e. faith which produces right living and holds fast to God..."

However, it should be remarked upon again that Paul's *emphasis* is that the ground, origin, of the righteousness is faith and not that of the life of the righteous. Righteousness is of (by) faith, not of works. The Habakkuk quotation should be understood in the sense in which Paul wanted to use it—showing that justification is by faith, not by law—an affirmation of the doctrine of justification by faith. As *Burton* comments, "It is by faith that he who is approved of God is approved". That our justification in the forensic sense is accomplished by Christ's work for us and not by our righteousness is brought out in the following verses.

Verse 12. *ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ πίστεως*. The condition of justification is not law, but faith. *Meyer* says, "the law is not an institution which has faith as the principle of its nature and action". Paul is talking about two spheres of operation, viz. faith and law. They are separate and should not be confused. Each has a proper function, but as regards the subject of justification they should not be confused. They are simply separate spheres of operation and should not be mixed. The one cannot be considered as fulfilling the uses of the other. The RSV translation, "but the law does not rest on faith" could be misleading and says more than the Greek does. "Rest on" is not in the original and it does not seem to me that this translation sufficiently points up the contrast intended in the original.

Law and faith have their good and proper purpose, but they can't be interchanged. As Paul goes on to show, the law is concerned with doing, i. e. working, keeping commandments. This is not the habitat of faith, Faith receives gratuitously. The law's sphere of operation is in statutes, judgments and commandments. It is not so with faith. The two are mutually exclusive for justification. The following illustration would seem to be appropriate in understanding the intention of this verse. In the Forest Service there are signs which read, "the right tool for the right job". The purpose for the sign was to keep workers from using a tool for a different job than that for which it was intended. For example, a shovel is useful to dig dirt, but not intended to pry out heavy rocks. A crow bar is useful for this latter task. Both of

these instruments have a good and legitimate purpose, but the one should not be used to do the job that intended for the other. The number of broken shovel handles in the shop revealed the disastrous results. Likewise, the law was not intended to justify. This was to be by faith.

δε This is better translated "but" or "now". It is more in keeping with the syllogism that is contained in this portion. *Meyer, Alford, Ellicott et al.* comment on the clear syllogism presented here by the apostle. The major proposition is: "the just shall live by faith"; the minor proposition is, "the law is not of faith" and the conclusion is, "in the law no man is justified before God."

ἀλλ' ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς. Here Paul quotes Lev. 18:5 to show the nature of the law. Cf. Rom. 10:5 where Paul refers to this same O. T. book. ἀλλὰ. "but" or "moreover". Paul seeks to show that law and faith are not the same. The usage of this phrase here, as in Rom., is not to show that a man could live by keeping the law (Romans in the KJV is "shall live by them"). The Hebrew *בָּ* should be translated "in" (though sometimes taken as an instrumental). The KJV translation of Gal. is acceptable ("in them"), but the RSV is misleading in translating both the Rom. and the Gal. passages as "by them". Moses did not teach legal righteousness (if you keep the law you shall merit justification). "Shall live in them" refers to living in them as a sphere of life. It is not, "shall live by means of them", but shall live (i. e. conduct his life) in that realm. And, as Paul had previously said in v. 10 by quoting Deut. 27:26, this meant constant and complete (*ἐμμένει πᾶσι*).

Ridderbos says in a footnote on this passage: "In Lev. 18 also such a life out of grace in the law is spoken of. Paul is not denying this. He wishes merely to point out that the Jewish scheme of redemption cannot be combined with faith (*Ridderbos* is referring to the Judaizers and the later Jewish redemption and merit system, which was being taught to the Galatians, and was, of course, false). So contrued, we must not blur the clarity of Paul's predications. He is not saying merely that the law in itself does not suffice, that divine help is necessary to fulfill it, and only then may we depend upon the works of the law. Rather, Paul is speaking here of the law as a life-principle. As such it stands diametrically opposed to faith".

The context of Lev. is not talking about keeping the law for salvation, as if justification were by merit, but brings out the function of the law as that which directs the outward conduct of God's people. Paul makes it clear in Rom. chp. 10 that he is not thinking of the law as a means of justification, because he goes on to quote Moses again, showing that right-

eousness is a matter of the heart—"that is, the word of faith, which we preach".

In Lev. 18:5 the context shows that there is a contrast between living in the ways of the Egyptians or the Canaanites and in the ways of the LORD God. The ordinances of the Lord are to be the Israelite's code of conduct, not the ways of the heathen. This is the emphasis of the passage, not that there is justification to be merited by keeping these ordinances.

Verse 13. Paul now turns in his argument to the correct answer to the question, "how can a man be justified?". He had shown his readers the folly of trusting in the law for justification, now he shows them what Christ had done for them. The reference is primarily to the Jews, but through His work the blessing of Abraham came on the Gentiles also.

Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου. The absence of a connective brings attention and shows the abrupt contrast. Christ is the answer to those who were relying on the law for justification. *Ridderbos* says that Christ is set in the foreground so emphatically because, "in this name lies the secret of the whole redemption, that of the Jews as well as that of the Gentiles." Note, that "faith" is not the basis of justification. *Christ* saves us. We receive salvation by faith.

The ἡμᾶς refers to those who were of the works of the law (v. 10)—the ὅσοι. The reference is to the Mosaic Law, which was particularly applied to the Jews, but since Paul was writing to Gentiles the ἡμᾶς would seem to include them as well, for they were trying to come under the law for justification. Eph. 2:14, 15 makes the law the "middle wall of partition" between the Jew and Gentile, which would seem to add weight to the consideration of ἡμᾶς here as referring only to Jews. However, Paul does not appear to be trying to draw a distinction between Jew and Gentile in the ἡμᾶς. Christ redeemed Gentiles as well as Jews. The Gentiles had to be redeemed from their sin and that redemption came only through Christ. Whoever is under the curse has been redeemed—providing, of course, that they accept Christ as redeemer. Of course, Paul is writing in the framework of the Jewish dependence on Mosaic law-works. The Gentiles were under a law (Rom. 2:12-16), but Paul's *purpose* in Gal. is not to show that all have sinned, as was the case in Romans. So, Paul's presentation in Rom. 2:12-16 is not particularly relevant to his usage of ἡμᾶς in this verse. This is not to deny that there is a close relationship at many points between Romans and Galatians, and Gal. 4:5 might indicate a closer connection than I have suggested at this point."

Ellicott's comment is to the point on this subject. He says, "Us—in the first instance, 'the

Jews', but not to be confined too strictly to them. The Apostle is writing to a Gentile (though Judaizing) Church, and he does not wish to exclude any of his readers. Though the Gentiles do not come directly under 'the curse of the law', they came under God's condemnation. From this they were released, and the blessings of the theocracy hitherto annexed to the law were thrown open to them by the death of Christ."

τὰ ἔθνη (14) does not need to be in contrast to ἡμᾶς; it could be added to explain what the redemption actually meant—the full release of the blessing to the Gentiles. Again, λάβομεν (14) would argue against restricting the ἡμᾶς to Jews only. However, having argued for this being inclusive of Gentiles, it should be noted that many able commentators restrict the meaning to the Jews, who only could be under the curse of the law as Paul uses it, and who are contrasted to the Gentiles in v. 14 (from the viewpoint of these commentators). *Alford* is decidedly in favor of restriction to the Jews. He brings out one additional point that has not been referred to here. He says, "the US is emphatic, and applies to Jews only". And, "the blessing of Abraham (justification by faith), which was always destined by God to flow through the Jews to the Gentiles, was set at liberty thus to flow out to the Gentiles".

Nevertheless, I am still inclined to think that the Gentiles would be included in the ἡμᾶς. It appears to apply, in view of the thought, "whoever was (or might be) of law-works (including Gentiles) is under the curse". It was at this very point where the Judaizers were bringing the Gentiles into trouble. Limiting ἡμᾶς to Jews seems forced and unnecessary. The emphasis is on *Christ*, the Redeemer, who redeemed anybody out from under the curse, or anybody who tried to come under it.

ἐξηγόρασεν. This is a constative aorist meaning, to buy, to buy up, to buy back, to ransom, redeem or deliver. (lit. to buy out, cp. ἐκ foll.) As an aorist it refers to an event, not to something often repeated—point action. The word is used in Eph. 5:16 and Col. 4:5 in the sense of buying up the time. Gal. 4:5 uses it in the same sense as in our text. There is no reference here as to whom the price is paid. The word corresponds to the words λυτρόω and ἀπολύτρωσις. Cp. Rev. 5:9; 14:4; Mt. 20:28; I Tim. 2:6. The law could condemn us but not free us. A redemption from the curse was necessary. The word implies that deliverance involves cost of some kind by the one who ransoms.

ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου. The redemption is from the *curse* of the law. The text does not say that it is redemption from the *law*. In one way it would be true that we are redeemed from the law, in view of some of the ceremonial laws of the Mosaic economy—e. g., it is no

longer necessary to offer sacrifices described by Moses. However, man has not been delivered from the moral aspects of law. We are still bound to keep the moral requirements of the law, though this is not in order to justification. The emphasis here is upon the curse, which was pronounced upon all those who failed to keep its precepts in totality and perfectly. This statement in v. 13 carried us back to Paul's argument in v. 10. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law.

Before showing more fully the correct meaning of this expression, I feel it is necessary once again to point to the error of the ICC. *Burton* of the ICC says, "The curse of the law here spoken of can, consistently with the context, be none other than that which is spoken of in v. 10, viz., the curse which the legalistic passages of the O. T. pronounce on those who do not perfectly obey its statutes. As pointed out above on v. 10, this is not the judgment of God. To miss this fact is wholly to misunderstand Paul. But if the curse is not an expression of God's attitude towards men, neither is the deliverance from it a judicial act in the sense of release from penalty, but a release from a false conception of God's attitude, viz., from the belief that God actually deals with men on a legalistic basis. The work here ascribed to Christ is, therefore, of the same nature as that spoken of in Rom. 3:21ff., and there said to be accomplished by Christ in his death, viz., a revelation of the way of achieving acceptance with God, a demonstration of the divine character and attitude of men".

This sort of interpretation means that the O. T. law was not the expression of God, but a law which is falsely attributed to God and entails a curse. *Burton* says further on, "The only explanation that meets these conditions is that in the historic legalism of the O. T. Paul saw a real but not an adequate disclosure of the divine thought and will, one which when taken by itself and assumed to be complete gave a false notion of God's attitude towards men". And, "The curse of the law was, therefore, an actual curse in the sense that it expressed the verdict of legalism, but not in the sense that he on whom it fell was accursed of God".

The price of redemption is indicated in other verses of Scripture: Cf. I Corth. 6:20; 7:23; Rev. 5:9 and I Peter 1:18f. There was a particular price to pay ("the blood of Christ"). There was a curse, a particular penalty, for the failure to keep God's law. The Scripture indicates that this price was paid to God and thereby satisfied divine justice and redeemed us. It was not that Christ set men free from the thought that God's deals with men on a legalistic basis. As *Ridderbos* says, "A more particular thought is attached to this redeeming than simply that of the emancipation of a prisoner. At issue here is a satisfaction of violated justice". The "curse"

of the law was death. (Cf. Deut. 30:15, 19)

γενόμενος ὑπερ ἡμῶν κατάρα. We have been told *what* Christ did, now we are told *how* He redeemed us from the curse of the law. There is a causal as well as a temporal emphasis. A better translation would be: "(by) having become a curse for us". This is more accurate than the KJV ("being made a curse"). The prepositions are interesting here and in v. 10. In v. 10 we are described as being *ὑπὸ κατάραν* (under curse). In v. 13, Christ has redeemed us *ἐκ τῆς κατάρας* (out of the curse). Again in v. 13, He did it having become a curse *ὑπερ ἡμῶν* (over us, and so between us and the overhanging curse which fell on Him instead of us). See: *A. T. Robertson* in "Word Pictures of the New Testament".

ὑπὲρ implies substitution and was so used in the papyri and ancient Greek. In this Gal. context it should be understood as, "in our place", not merely "for our benefit". Though *Meyer* (and *Alford*) says that "for us" does not mean "instead of us" in this form of the sentence, but "on our behalf", "for our sakes", he also says "That it was vicarious is implied in the circumstances of the case itself". The verse demands the idea of substitution. Cf. John 11:50; 13:27, 28; II Corth. 5:20; Philem. 13. The resultant meaning of "for us" is "instead of", though the preposition does not bear this precise meaning.

Ellicott says, "The idea (in our stead) is, indeed, distinctly expressed in this very passage; but it must be gathered from the context, not from the use of the preposition. The preposition which means "instead" is found in Mt. 20:28; I Tim. 2:5. Paul and the apostles had the idea of "instead", however".

The comments of *Ridderbos* are worthy of note on the phrase "from the curse of the law". "Behind the imagery employed, there very probably lies the old practice, circumscribed by the Jewish legal code, according to which ransom money could be paid for a forfeited life (cf. Ex. 21:30). According to this line of thought those who were under the curse were to be regarded not merely as prisoners but as persons appointed to die (cf. Deut. 27:15ff. and 30:15, 19). It is from this sentence of death that Christ has redeemed them by Himself "becoming a curse" for them—that is to say, a cursed one. This refers to the way in which He gave Himself to death. What we have here, in other words, as is evident also from the phrase 'for us', is the thought of substitution. The curse, to which Christ yielded Himself victim, is not an independently operative principle, but the personal judgment of God, in which He had Christ undergo the sentence of the condemned ones (cf. Rom. 8:3 and II Corth. 5:21). How Christ ransomed his own in this way is not more specifically set forth. The thought is that God in

His grace made the punishment accomplished in Christ valid for His own, and so brought reconciliation through Christ's death. Such a redemption has not, therefore, the character of a transaction, a nice balance of the active and the passive, but is a mystery of salvation in which is manifested the integrity of God's justice and His grace, and the deep bonds of unity between Christ and His own".

Christ is identified with the curse. It is used in the abstract or by metonymy to show that he didn't simply become an accursed person, but the curse itself. However, it was not simply a mathematical transaction, as has been indicated in the quotation above. Christ did not change the law so it was kindly toward us- He bore its curse. II Corth. 5:21 brings out more clearly that it was God who brought the curse upon Christ. Christ's crufixion is what is in view, and it was not for His own sin that He was cursed, but for our sin (*ὕπερ ἡμῶν*). Christ's sinlessness is implied.

γενομενος. Probably a participle of means.

Burton in the ICC gives five possible meanings to the phrase *γενομενος... κατάρα*. I will mention three because the other two are not very plausible. 1. He(Christ) became the actual object of divine reprobation vicariously, enduring the penalty of others' sins. 2. He experienced in himself God's wrath against sinners, not as himself the object of divine wrath, but vicariously and by reason of his relation to men. This involves his sympathetic relation with men, experiencing in himself the curse of God upon men for their sin. 3. He fell under the curse of the law, not of God or of men. *Burton* says #1 and #2 are not sustained by the apostle and not expressed in the context, or are inharmonious with the meaning of *katara* throughout the passage. He says, "The fifth(#3) though without support in any other passage of the apostle's writings, is more consonant with the context, if not actually required by it". I feel that #1 above would be the best interpretation. The curse of the law means the curse of God, for the law is of God. *Burton's* view of the atonement is like the *Governmental View*, or remotely the *Moral Influence* theory. In *Burton's* case, however, Christ is dying for a *false legalism* not God's law or God's character as the governor of a moral universe. He died for a perverted justice or legalism, according to this ICC commentary.

ὅτι γεγραπται "ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου". Paul quotes from the O. T. (Deut. 21:23) to support his statement that Christ had become cursed. (*Burton* said here: "Not that he thereby 'delivered us from the curse of the law', or that it was 'for us'). The Hebrew and the LXX read: "an accursed of God is every one...". Paul uses the reference in a manner that would

be appropriate to the O. T. usage, though, as we have already seen, we cannot always insist that Paul used the O. T. Scripture exactly as the O. T. intended it. It is sometimes difficult to fathom the mind of the apostle and to understand his usage of the O. T. We do not mean that Paul uses quotations in contradiction to the O. T., but he may have a different purpose in mind or give a different emphasis to support the point he is trying to make. Jesus did this when he referred to such a passage as "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" to support the idea of the resurrection. It must be remembered that when Paul quotes from Deut. 21:23 his entire purpose in this section is to show these Galatians, who were being deceived by the Judaizers, that justification was not by law-works. He has shown how the law places one under a curse and that the law was never intended for justification, but rather it was to be received by faith.

Paul, in verse 13 says that the answer to this problem is in Christ. The justice of God had to be satisfied. There had to be a deliverance from the curse. Christ has done this by becoming a curse for us. He has redeemed us from the curse of the law. To substantiate the point that Christ became a curse, Paul quotes Deut. 21:23. His purpose in the quotation is to get this one point across. The fact that Christ was cursed is true, even though the O. T. analogy cannot be compared at every point. For example, the O. T. usage refers to the hanging of persons, having been put to death by stoning, on a tree of shame. Such a hanged dead person was then called God's accursed. Crufixion was not practiced by the Jews. However, such a curss as was referred to in the O. T. could be applicable to Christ, who died by hanging on a tree and remained hanging there. Cp. Acts 5:30;10:39- "slew and hanged upon a tree". The LXX uses the perfect participle while Paul uses the present participle. (Of course, Christ arose from this death.) Others say, Christ actually fulfilled the O. T. text, because he was crucified (hung on a stake, a tree), even though it was not exactly the way in which the O. T. text was fulfilled by the Jews.

Meyer comments on the fact that there is no article with the *κατάρα*. "Because the object is to express that which Christ has become as regards the category of quality-He become a curse, entered into the position, and into the de facto relation of one who is visited by the divine wrath".

The hanging of a dead man was that which brought a curse from God. This that happened to Christ is apparently sufficient to fulfill the curse referred to in v. 10, or it is an adequate expression of that curse. The curse of v. 10 is upon, "those who do not remain in all things

written in the law to do them". In some way the divine wrath poured out upon Christ satisfies the justice of God and the curse that is upon those mentioned in v. 10. Paul is not explicit. There is a curse from God upon those who do not perfectly and completely fulfill the law, and Christ has become a curse for us. If a man were hanging on a tree as indicated in Deut. it would certainly apply to him that he had not done all the law. Cf. Deut. 21:22. This was certainly a worthy symbol of such a sinner. Other Scriptures clarify this in telling us that Christ bore the penalty of our transgressions.

Christ was cursed, and this was a valid representation or signification of one who had not remained in the law to do all things written therein (v. 10). In Deut. the identity on one who was hanging after he had died was one who was guilty of not keeping the whole law or of breaking the law.

It was in His death that He redeemed us from the curse. He was showing that God's wrath was upon Him in that He was hanging on the tree. The "for us" indicates it was not for his own transgression that he was cursed (*ὅπερ ἡμῶν*). By bearing the curse it does not mean we are now redeemed by the law. It is *Christ* who has redeemed us from its curse.

Christ did not have to break the law in His person to be under the curse. He was without sin and yet became sin for us (cf. II Corth. 5:21). The O. T. reference is most appropriate to describe just what Christ did do in His death for us. He was without sin and yet He became cursed. Why? It was for us, for we deserved the curse. This is part of the mystery of salvation; Christ was sinless, yet cursed, and that curse was in keeping with the O. T., though it was not for Himself but for us.

It must be remembered that Paul's primary interest in using the O. T. reference is to show that Christ was a curse. He is not in this instance using a reference to support the fact that it was "for us", though, as he had indicated already in this verse such was certainly the case. It is uncertain why Paul does not quote the LXX or the Heb. exactly, except that it was not pertinent to his argument. His intent was to show that Christ was a curse, and this he does adequately with the use of this verse.

Ridderbos has a helpful comment on the use of this quotation. He concludes his paragraph with these words, "The reference to Deut. 21 is intended precisely to point out the reality of the curse and, in connection with it, to set forth Christ's redemption as a satisfaction of the justice of God".

The Interpreter's Bible is forced to say that the death of Christ was a "demonstration that the law as a way of salvation was impotent...". The *I. B.* speaks of, "creative, vicarious suff-

ering for the good of others". "There was indeed a curse, but the curse was inherent in each act of wrongdoing, and operated in accordance with the principle of the identical harvest (6:7), rather than as a penalty imposed by a court for the violation of law". Christ's death in the commentary here is likened to Abraham and Moses's suffering for others.

Burton (ICC) likewise would in no wise consider Christ's death as a satisfaction of divine justice, but "a revelation of the way of achieving acceptance with God, a demonstration of the divine character and attitude towards men". The deliverance from the curse is not "a judicial act in the sense of release from penalty, but a release from a false conception of God's attitude, viz., from the belief that God actually deals with men on a legalistic basis".

Paul does not say, redeemed us from the curse "of law," but of *τοῦ νόμου*. He applies it specifically to the passage in Deut. To say, as does the *I. B.*, that it was "the law's curse, not God's" is to deny that the law is of God. It also denies the text itself, which says, "for he that is hanged is cursed of God".

Alford says, "they (the words "of God") were not to the point here, being understood as a matter of course, the law being God's law." *Robertson* and *Lightfoot* are weak at this point in that they do not understand the curse as being from God. *Meyer* comments on this point, "We must, in fact, simply abide by the explanation that he (Paul) quoted the passage of Scripture from a free recollection (as is already shown by *ἐπικατάρατος* and the addition of *ὁ*), and in doing so, having in view only the "cursed" as the point of the passage, left unnoticed the entirely obvious *ὁπὸ θεοῦ*."

Paul's reference in support of the fact that Christ became a curse for us (Deut. 21:23) is in keeping with the Scripture he referred to earlier in support of the contention that whoever is of the works of the law is under the curse (Deut. 27:26). The curse stems from the same source, for the same reason-transgression of the law.

I think it would be helpful to quote *Lightfoot's* comment on the phrase "cursed is the one hanging on a tree" (Comm. p. 154): "Crucifixion was not a Jewish punishment. The evangelist (John 18:32) sees a providence in the delivering over of our Lord to the Romans to be put to death, so that He might die in the manner He himself had forefold. It had been employed occasionally in seasons of tumult by their own princes, but was regarded as an act of great atrocity. Even the Roman looked upon crucifixion with abhorrence. To the Jew it was especially hateful, owing in part no doubt to the curse attaching to this ignominious exposure of the body in the passage of Deut. For though this passage did not contemplate death by crucifixion, the

implication was quite legitimate. It was the hanging, not the death, that brought ignominy on the sufferer and defilement on the land... Hence also later Jews, speaking of Jesus, called Him by the same name of reproach (CHLB) ('the gibbeted one'), which they found in the original text of the lawgiver. It was not that they mistook the meaning of the word, but they considered the two punishments essentially the same. No Jew would have questioned the propriety of St. Paul's application of the text to our Lord. The curse pronounced in the law was interpreted and strengthened by the national sentiment".

Verse 14 *ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Αβραάμ γένηται ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* This verse is divided into two purpose (final) clauses coming from, "Christ redeemed us", though these aren't the only purposes of the redemption, just two of them. The two thoughts are parallel, but the second is not simply an explanation of the first.

Christ was cursed in order that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles. *γένηται*. Aorist—something completed at a certain time. From the curse came blessing. *ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Αβραάμ*. (Cp. v. 8). The blessing promised to him, an objective genitive. The main content of the blessing of Abraham is faith and justification by faith (cp. Rom. 4:9, 19), "Blessing" not blessings *ἐν Χριστῷ*. 'Ἰησοῦ in (and by) Jesus Christ. *J. O. Buswell* says in his *Theology*: vol. I: "in Christ" is a phrase indicating agency". The phrase might be considered a dative of relation—in Christ as opposed to in law. cp. Gal. 2:17 (RSV). It was not necessary for the Gentiles to become Jews and follow the O. T. laws, as Christ had fulfilled and abolished the old symbols (of course, the moral law was not done away). This phrase adds weight to the apostle's main argument in this text that it is not through law that man is justified. The Jews received salvation by faith (v. 17), though it was incumbent upon them to live under the Mosaic economy as a rule of life (not for justification). The phrase, "in Christ" seems clearly to be a dative of agency, but there also seems to be reason to accept it as *Eadie* and *Burton* do in their commentaries. *Eadie* says, "In Jesus Christ—the element in which it is found, conveyed, and enjoyed—not in the law, which claims perfect obedience, and inflicts a curse on all transgressors" (when looked to for justification i. e. jkh). *Burton*: "This blessing came to the Gentiles in Jesus Christ in that it was through him that the purpose of God to accept men by faith was revealed, and that through faith in him they entered into actual participation in the blessing". "The preposition is doubtless used in its basal sense (comments on 2:17) (*ἐν Χριστῷ*). The most frequent usage of this phrase is that by which, representing Christ as the sphere within which the Christian lives, it expresses the intimate fellowship of the believer with Christ.

Thayer, "en" 16 b&c. But here (2:17) it has a *casual* or *basal* sense. Cp. v. 11 "en nomu"; Rom. 3:24; 5:9; Acts 13:39. Thus interpreted the expression "en Christo" is in a sense the complement of *dia pistews* or *ek pistews* of the preceding verse (16), the former expressing that on which justification rests, that which renders it possible, the latter the subjective conditioning cause. *Ellicott* says on "in Christ": "In the knowledge of Him and in His death, that the Gentiles receive the blessing". The order of the words "Jesus Christ" could be considered more appropriate for the Gentiles

ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη. Cp. v. 8. Might reach to the Gentiles—the object or destination. *Eadie* says on *γένηται*... *εἰς* "should come to or extend to (should reach)." Not, "inference to". The *ἵνα* is "to the end that"—purpose of Christ becoming a curse and redeeming us. *Meyer* comments: "Divine purpose in Christ's redeeming us from the curse of the law; in order that the blessing promised to Abraham (justification v. 8) might be imparted in Christ Jesus to the Gentiles". It is the Gentiles understood as a race, and the blessing had been especially opened to them in Christ. It does not mean that now all Gentiles have received justification. Not, "all peoples". Justification to the Gentiles by faith was promised and the promise was in connection with Abraham—"in thee". God worked through the Jews in the O. T. From Israel to Gentile (cp. John 4:22). The first *ἵνα* in this verse (here) is objective in nature, whereas the second is subjective. (in Christ; through faith). *Hogg & Vine* say, "Since the Jews were shut out from blessing by the very law in which they gloried, Gentiles could not hope to obtain it by putting themselves under that law. But if to the Jews the blessing was secured by the death of Christ, and in response to faith, then on the same ground, and on the same condition, the blessing, would extend to the Gentiles also".

ἵνα τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως. A complement (coordinate with) of the preceding "hina clause" and coming from the phrase, "Christ redeemed us having become a curse for us". Because of Christ's redemption we receive the promise of the Spirit. *λάβωμεν* would seem to include both Jew and Gentile (see on *ἡμᾶς* above). Receive in full, as fulfilled. (*Alford*) The amazing thing is that the blessing extends not merely to Abraham's descendants, but to the Gentiles. Not, "that *they* might receive the promise of the Spirit".

ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος. Cp. Joel 2:28; Luke 26:29; Acts 1:14; 2:17, 33; Ephesians 1:13 and the evident return in thought by Paul to Gal. 3:2. *διὰ* with the genitive (through faith). Though it would be possible to understand this as "the promised spirit", it seems better to take this as an objective genitive, "the promise which has the Spirit as its objective". This is better in Paul's

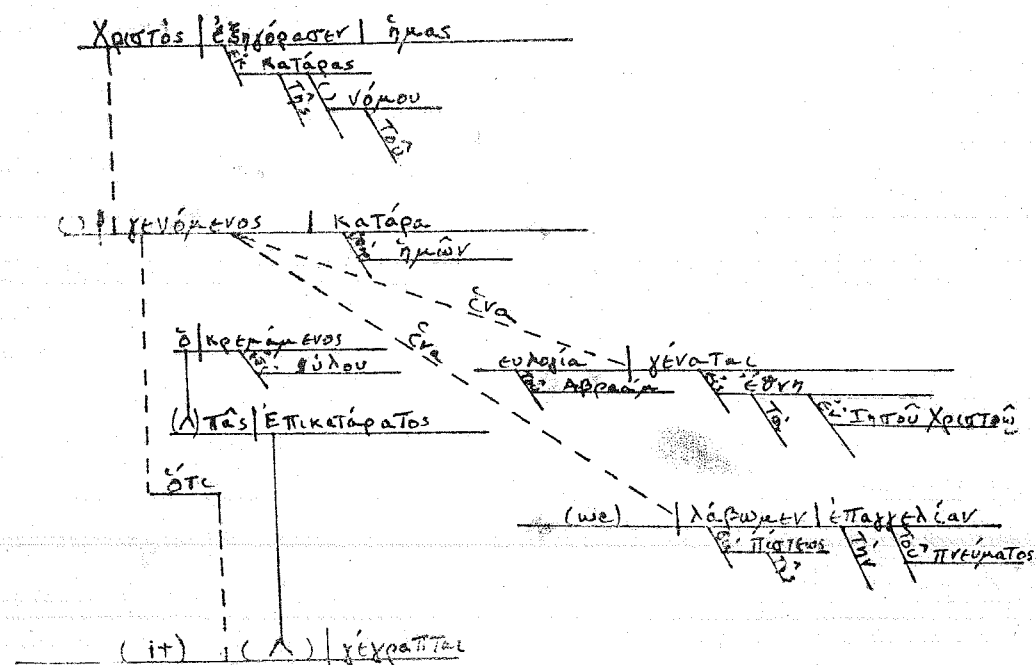
usage. A subjective genitive would be grammatically possible, but doctrinally the Spirit is represented as the pledge of the fulfillment of the promise rather than the source of it. *Robertson* refers to Acts 1:4 to argue for an appositional genitive.

This parallel *ἵνα* clause brings out the subjective side of things as over against the objective emphasis in the first clause. It seems Paul is driving home an argument in this second clause in view of the question in v. 2. For similar co-ordinate "*hinas*" see Rom. 7:13; II Corth. 9:3; Eph. 6:19. In the case before us the second clause is more than an explanation of the first, though parallel in thought.

ἐπαγγελίαν Cp. Isa. 32:15 and Ezek. 36:27 as to the promise of the Spirit. *Lightfoot* says that with the exception of Acts 23:21 this word is used only of the promises of God, and describes, "a gift graciously bestowed, not a pledge obtained by negotiation". In the book of Joel 2:28, 29 and Acts 2:16-21, 33, "the promise is said to be 'received' by the generation on which it is fulfilled", in the words of *Ellicott*. This is a consequence of that redeeming death.

διὰ τῆς πίστεως. The medium is "faith". "Faith is the apprehending cause, both of justification and of the reception of the Spirit". Cp. v. 2. (*Meyer*). This faith is the means by which, and the way in which, God grants the gift of the Spirit to the redeemed by Christ.

An Attempt at Diagramming Galatians 3:13, 14



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