

Torah Fulfilled

Why Christians Don't Keep the Sabbath & Other Mosaic Laws

∞ Church Fathers ∞

Introduction

Why is it that Christians do not observe the Sabbath, Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles or insist that all their male children be circumcised on the eighth day after their birth? The answer to that question is found in rightly understanding the Christian's relationship to the Mosaic Covenant. One the best explanations of that relationship given in the history of the Christian church was penned by Eusebius of Caesarea in his work entitled *Demonstratio Evangelica*. In Book One of the *Demonstratio*, Eusebius lays out an in-depth and exacting exegesis of the Biblical texts pertaining to the old and new covenants and demonstrates that the Old Covenant was never intended to be observed by all nations, that it was fulfilled by Christ and that Jesus has inaugurated a new covenant with a new law that is as ancient as Adam, Enoch & Abraham. I hope that you find this work as helpful and insightful as I have.

A note about this translation

This version of Book One of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Demonstratio Evangelica*. Is largely based on Tr. W.J. Ferrar's 1920 translation. However, I've take the liberty to update the language, particularly in regards to the Biblical texts quoted by Eusebius. The goal was to create a readable version for a modern audience.

Enjoy!

Chris Rosebrough
@PirateChristian

EUSEBIUS: SON OF PAMPHILUS

DEMONSTRATIO EVANGELICA

BOOK 1

INTRODUCTION

SEE now, Theodotus, miracle of bishops, holy man of God, I am carrying through this great work with the help of God and our Savior the Word of God, after completing at the cost of great labor my Preparation for the Gospel in fifteen books.

Grant then, dear friend, my request, and labor with me henceforward in your prayers in my effort to present the Proof of the Gospel from the prophecies extant among the Hebrews from the earliest times. I propose to adopt this method. I propose to use as witnesses those men, beloved by God, whose fame you know to be far-spread in the world: Moses, I mean, and his successors, who shone forth with resplendent godliness, and the blessed prophets and sacred writers. I propose to show, by quotations from them, how they forestalled events that came to the light long ages after their time, the actual circumstances of the Savior's own presentment of the Gospel, and the things which in our own day are being fulfilled by the Holy Spirit before our very eyes. It shall be my task to prove that they saw that which was not present as present, and that which as yet was not in existence as actually existing; and not only this, but that they foretold in writing the events of the future for posterity, so that by their help others can even now know what is coming, and look forward daily to the fulfillment of their oracles. What sort of fulfillment, do you ask? They are fulfilled in countless and all kinds of ways, and

amid all circumstances, both generally and in minute detail, in the lives of individual men, and in their corporate life, now nationally in the course of Hebrew history, and now in that of foreign nations. Such things as civic revolutions, changes of times, national vicissitudes, the coming of foretold prosperity, the assaults of adversity, the enslaving of races, the besieging of cities, the downfall and restoration of whole states, and countless other things that were to take place a long time after, were foretold by these writers.

But it is not now the time for me to provide full proof of this. I will postpone most of it for the present, and perhaps, from the truth of what I shall put before you, there will be some guarantee of the possibility of proving what is passed over in silence.

CHAPTER 1

The Object and Contents of the Work.

IT SEEMS now time to say what I consider to be desirable at present to draw from the prophetic writings for the proof of the Gospel. They said that Christ, (Whom they named) the Word of God, and Himself both God and Lord, and Angel of Great Counsel, would one day dwell among men, and would become for all the nations of the world, both Greek and Barbarian, a teacher of true knowledge of God, and of such duty to God the Maker of the Universe, as the preaching of the Gospel includes. They said that He would become a little child, and would be called the Son of Man, as born of the race of Mankind. They foretold the wondrous fashion of His birth from a Virgin, and—strangest of all—they did not omit to name Bethlehem the place of His birth, which

is today so famous that men still hasten from the ends of the earth to see it, but shouted it out with the greatest clearness. As if they stole a march on history these same writers proclaimed the very time of His appearance, the precise period of His sojourn on earth.

It is possible for you, if you care to take the trouble, to see with your eyes, comprehended in the prophetic writings, all the wonderful miracles of our Savior Jesus Christ Himself, that are witnessed to by the heavenly Gospels, and to hear His divine and perfect teaching about true holiness. How it must move our wonder, when they unmistakably proclaim the new ideal of religion preached by Him to all men, the call of His disciples, and the teaching of the new Covenant. Yes, and in addition to all this they foretell the Jews' disbelief in Him, and disputing, the plots of the rulers, the envy of the Scribes, the treachery of one of His disciples, the schemes of enemies, the accusations of false witnesses, the condemnations of His judges, the shameful violence, unspeakable scourging, ill-omened abuse, and, crowning all, the death of shame. They portray Christ's wonderful silence, His gentleness and fortitude, and the unimaginable depths of His forbearance and forgiveness.

The most ancient Hebrew oracles present all these things definitely about One Who would come in the last times, and Who would undergo such sufferings among men, and they clearly tell the source of their foreknowledge. They bear witness to the Resurrection from the dead of the Being Whom they revealed, His appearance to His disciples, His gift of the Holy Spirit to them, His return to heaven, His establishment as King on His Father's throne and His glorious second Advent yet to be at the consummation of the age. In addition to all this you can hear the wailings and lamen-

tations of each of the prophets, wailing and lamenting characteristically over the calamities which will overtake the Jewish people because of their impiety to Him Who had been foretold. How their kingdom, that had continued from the days of a remote ancestry to their own, would be utterly destroyed after their sin against Christ; how their fathers' Laws would be abrogated, they themselves deprived of their ancient worship, robbed of the independence of their forefathers, and made slaves of their enemies, instead of free men; how their royal metropolis would be burned with fire, their venerable and holy altar undergo the flames and extreme desolation, their city be inhabited no longer by its old possessors but by races of other stock, while they would be dispersed among the Gentiles through the whole world, with never a hope of any cessation of evil, or breathing-space from troubles. And it is plain even to the blind, that what they saw and foretold is fulfilled in actual facts from the very day the Jews laid godless hands on Christ, and drew down on themselves the beginning of the train of sorrows.

But the prophecies of these inspired men did not begin and end in gloom, nor did their prescience extend no further than the reign of sorrow. They could change their note to joy, and proclaim a universal message of good tidings to all men in the coming of Christ: they could preach the good news that though one race were lost every nation and race of men would know God, escape from the daemons, cease from ignorance and deceit and enjoy the light of holiness: they could picture the disciples of Christ filling the whole world with their teaching, and the preaching of their gospel introducing among all men a fresh and unknown ideal of holiness: they could see churches of Christ established by their means among all nations, and

Christian people throughout the whole world bearing one common name: they could give assurance that the attacks of rulers and kings from time to time against the Church of Christ will avail nothing to cast it down, strengthened as it is by God. If so many things were proclaimed by the Hebrew divines, and if their fulfillment is so clear to us all today, who would not marvel at their inspiration? Who will not agree that their religious and philosophic teaching and beliefs must be sure and true, since their proof is to be found not in artificial arguments, not in clever words, or deceptive syllogistic reasoning, but in simple and straightforward teaching, whose genuine and sincere character is attested by the virtue and knowledge of God evident in these inspired men? Men who were enabled not by human but by divine inspiration to see from a myriad ages back what was to happen long years after, may surely claim our confidence for the belief which they taught their pupils.

Now I am quite well aware, that it is usual in the case of all who have been properly taught that our Lord and Savior Jesus is truly the Christ of God to persuade themselves in the first place that their belief is strictly in agreement with what the prophets witness about Him. And secondly, to forewarn all those, with whom they may enter on an argument, that it is by no means easy to establish their position by definite proofs. And this is why in attacking this subject myself I must of course endeavor, with God's help, to supply a complete treatment of the Proof of the Gospel from these Hebrew theologians. And the importance of my writing does not lie in the fact that it is, as might be suggested, a polemic against the Jews. Perish the thought, far from that! For if they would fairly consider it, it is really on their side. For as it establishes Christianity on the basis of the

antecedent prophecies, so it establishes Judaism from the complete fulfillment of its prophecies. To the Gentiles too it should appeal, if they would fairly consider it, because of the extraordinary foreknowledge shown in the prophetic writers, and of the actual events that occurred in agreement with their prophecies. It should convince them of the inspired and certain nature of the truth we hold: it should silence the tongues of false accusers by a more logical method of proof, which slanderers contend that we never offer, who in their daily arguments with us keep pounding away with all their might with the implication forsooth that we are unable to give a logical demonstration of our case, but require those who come to us to rest on faith alone.

My present work ought to have something to say to a calumny like this, as it will assuredly rebut the empty lies and blasphemy of godless heretics against the holy prophets by its exposition of the agreement of the new with the old. My argument will dispense with a longer systematic interpretation of the prophecies, and will leave such a task to any who wish to make the study, and are able to expound such works. And I shall take as my teacher the sacred command which says "sum up many things in few words," and aspire to follow it. I shall only offer such help in regard to the texts, and to the points which bear on the subject under consideration, as is absolutely necessary for their clear interpretation.

But I will now cease my Introduction and begin my Proof. As we have such a mob of slanderers flooding us with the accusation that we are unable logically to present a clear demonstration of the truth we hold, and think it enough to retain those who come to us by faith alone, and as they say that we only teach our followers like irrational animals to shut

their eyes and staunchly obey what we say without examining it at all, and call them therefore “the faithful” because of their faith as distinct from reason, I made a natural division of the calumnies of our position in my “Preparation” of the subject as a whole. On the one side I placed the attacks of the polytheistic Gentiles, who accuse us of apostasy from our ancestral gods, and make a great point of the implication, that in recognizing the Hebrew oracles we honor the work of Barbarians more than those of the Greeks. And on the other side I set the accusation of the Jews, in which they claim to be justly incensed against us, because we do not embrace their manner of life, though we make use of their sacred writings. Such being the division, I met the first so far as I could in my Preparation for the Gospel by allowing that we were originally Greeks, or men of other nations who had absorbed Greek ideas, and enslaved by ancestral ties in the deceits of polytheism. But I went on to say that our conversion was due not to emotional and unexamined impulse, but to judgment and sober reasoning, and that our devotion to the oracles of the Hebrews thus had the support of judgment and sound reason.

And now I have to defend myself against the second class of opponents, and to embark on the investigation it requires. It has to do with those of the Circumcision, it has not yet been investigated, but I hope in time to dispose of it in the present work on the Proof of the Gospel. And so now with an invocation of the God of Jews and Greeks alike in our Savior’s Name we will take as our first object of inquiry, what is the character of the religion set before Christians. And in this same inquiry we shall record the solutions of all the points investigated.

CHAPTER 2

The Character of the Christian Religion.

I HAVE already laid down in my Preparation that Christianity is neither a form of Hellenism, nor of Judaism, but that it is a religion with its own characteristic stamp, and that this is not anything novel or original, but something of the greatest antiquity, something natural and familiar to the godly men before the times of Moses who are remembered for their holiness and justice. But now let us consider the nature of Hellenism and Judaism, and inquire under which banner we should find these pre-Mosaic saints, whose godliness and holiness is attested by Moses himself. Judaism would be correctly defined as the polity constituted according to the Law of Moses, dependent on the one, omnipotent God. Hellenism you might summarily describe as the worship of many gods according to the ancestral religions of all nations. What then would you say about the pre-Mosaic and pre-Judaic saints, whose lives are recorded by Moses, Enoch for instance, of whom he says:

“And Enoch pleased God.” (Gen 5:22 cf. Heb 11:5)

Or Noah, of whom he says again:

“And Noah was a man righteous in his generation” (Gen 6:9)

Or Seth, and Japheth, of whom he writes:

“Blessed be the Lord God of Seth (Shem), . . . and may God make room for Japheth.” (Gen 9:26–27)



Fighting for the Faith

Add to these Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, include as is right the patriarch Job, and all the rest who lived according to the ideals of these men; they must, you may think, have been either Jews or Greeks. But yet they could not properly be called Jews, inasmuch as the system of Moses' Law had not yet been brought into being. For if (as we have admitted) Judaism is only the observance of Moses' Law, and Moses did not appear until long after the date of the men named, it is obvious that those whose holiness he records who lived before him, were not Jews. Neither can we regard them as Greeks, inasmuch as they were not under the dominion of polytheistic superstition. For it is recorded of Abraham that he left his father's house and his kindred altogether, and cleaved to the One God alone, Whom he confesses when he says:

"I will stretch out (my hand) to the most-high God, who created the heaven and the earth." (Gen 14:22)

And Jacob is recorded by Moses as saying to his house and all his people:

"Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone." So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem." (Gen 35:2-4)

These men, then, were not involved in the errors of idolatry, moreover they were outside

the pale of Judaism; yet, though they were neither Jew nor Greek by birth, we know them to have been conspicuously pious, holy, and just. This compels us to conceive some other ideal of religion, by which they must have guided their lives. Would not this be exactly that third form of religion midway between Judaism and Hellenism, which I have already deduced, as the most ancient and most venerable of all religions, and which has been preached of late to all nations through our Savior. Christianity would therefore be not a form of Hellenism nor of Judaism, but something between the two, the most ancient organization for holiness, and the most venerable philosophy, only lately codified as the law for all mankind in the whole world. The convert from Hellenism to Christianity does not land in Judaism, nor does one who rejects the Jewish worship become ipso facto a Greek. From whichever side they come, whether it be Hellenism or Judaism, they find their place in that intermediate law of life preached by the godly and holy men of old lime, which our Lord and Savior has raised up anew after its long sleep, in accordance with Moses' own prophecies, and those of the other prophets on the point. Yes, Moses himself writes prophetically in the oracles addressed to Abraham, that in days to come not only Abraham's descendants, his Jewish seed, but all the tribes and nations of the earth will be counted worthy of God's blessing on the common basis of a piety like Abraham's.

"Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a



Fighting for the Faith

blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Gen 12:1–3)

And again God said:

“The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?” (Gen 18:17–18)

How could all the nations and families of the earth be blessed in Abraham, if there was no connection between him and them, either of spiritual character or physical kinship? There was assuredly no physical kinship between Abraham and the Scythians, or the Egyptians, or the Aethiopians, or the Indians, or the Britons, or the Spaniards: such nations and others more distant than they could not surely hope to receive any blessing because of any physical kinship to Abraham. It was quite as unlikely that all the nations would have any common claim to share the spiritual blessings of Abraham. For some of them practiced marriage with mothers and incest with daughters, some of them unmentionable vice. The religion of others lay in slaughter, and the deification of animals, idols of lifeless wood, and superstitions of deceiving spirits. Others burned their old men alive, and commended as holy and good the customs of delivering their dearest to the flames, or feasting on dead bodies. Men brought up in such savage ways could not surely share in the blessing of the godly, unless they escaped from their savagery, and embraced a way of life similar to the piety of Abraham. For even he, a foreigner and

a stranger to the religion which he afterwards embraced, is said to have changed his life, to have cast away his ancestral superstition, to have left his home and kindred and fathers’ customs, and the manner of life in which he was born and reared, and to have followed God, Who gave him the oracles which are preserved in the Scriptures.

If Moses then, who came after Abraham and established a polity for the Jewish race on the basis of the law which he gave them, had laid down the kind of laws which were the guide of godly men before his own time, and such as it was possible for all nations to adopt, so that it should be possible for all the tribes and nations of the world to worship according to Moses’ enactments; which is the same as saying that the oracles foretold that through Moses’ lawgiving men of all nations would worship God and follow Judaism, being brought to it by the law, and would be blessed with the blessing of Abraham—then it would have been right for us to be keeping the enactments of Moses. But if the polity of Moses was not applicable to the other nations, but only to the Jews and not to all of them, but only to the inhabitants of Judaea, then it was altogether necessary to set up another kind of religion different from the law of Moses, that all the nations of the world might take it as their guide with Abraham, and receive an equal share of blessing with him.

CHAPTER 3

That the System of Moses was not Suitable for All Nations.

THAT the enactments of Moses, as I said, were only applicable to the Jews, but not to all of

them, and certainly not to the dispersed (among the Gentiles), only in fact to the inhabitants of Palestine, will be plain to you if you reflect thus. For the law of Moses says:

“Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.”
(Exodus 23:17)

And it defines more exactly at what place they should all meet, when it says:

“Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel.” (Exodus 34:23)

You see that it does not bid them meet in each city, or in any indefinite place, but “appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose” (Deut 16:16) There thrice a year it enacts that they must assemble together, and it determines the times, when they must meet at the place where the rites of the worship there are to be celebrated. One season is that of the Passover, the second, fifty days later, is called the Feast of Pentecost, and the third is in the seventh month after the Passover, on the Day of Atonement, when all the Jews still perform their fast. And a curse is laid on all who do not obey what is enacted. It is plain that all who were to meet at Jerusalem thrice in the year and perform their rites would not be able to live far from Judaea: but they live all round its boundaries. If then it would be impossible even for the Jews whose home is the farthest from Palestine to obey their law, it would be absurd to hold that it could be applicable to all nations and to men in the uttermost parts of the earth.

Hear now in what way women after childbirth are bidden by the same Lawgiver to go

and present their offerings to God, as follows:

“The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
“Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If a woman conceives and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days.”
(Leviticus 12:1–2)

And he adds after saying something else:

“And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering, and he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her. Then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female.” (Leviticus 12:6–7)

Again, in addition to this the same law bids those who have contracted defilement by mourning or touching a corpse only to be purified by the ashes of a heifer, and to abstain from their accustomed work for seven days. This is what it says:

“And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. And this shall be a perpetual statute for the people of Israel, and for the stranger who sojourns among them.

“Whoever touches the dead body of any person shall be unclean seven days. He shall cleanse himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and



Fighting for the Faith

so be clean. But if he does not cleanse himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not become clean. Whoever touches a dead person, the body of anyone who has died, and does not cleanse himself, defiles the tabernacle of the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from Israel; because the water for impurity was not thrown on him, he shall be unclean. His uncleanness is still on him.

“This is the law when someone dies in a tent: everyone who comes into the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean seven days. And every open vessel that has no cover fastened on it is unclean. Whoever in the open field touches someone who was killed with a sword or who died naturally, or touches a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. For the unclean they shall take some ashes of the burnt sin offering, and fresh water shall be added in a vessel. Then a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water and sprinkle it on the tent and on all the furnishings and on the persons who were there and on whoever touched the bone, or the slain or the dead or the grave. And the clean person shall sprinkle it on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day. Thus on the seventh day he shall cleanse him, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and at evening he shall be clean.

“If the man who is unclean does not cleanse himself, that person shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly,

since he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. Because the water for impurity has not been thrown on him, he is unclean. And it shall be a statute forever for them.” (Numbers 19:10–21)

When Moses made this law he even determined the ritual of the sprinkling with water. He said that a red heifer without spot must be completely burnt, and that a portion of its ashes must be cast into the water, with which those who had been defiled by a corpse were to be purified. Where the heifer is to be burnt, where the woman is to bring her offerings after childbirth, where she is to celebrate the other rites, is not in doubt. It is not to be done indifferently in every place, but only in that place which he defines. This is plain from his enactment, when he says:

“then to the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, there you shall bring all that I command you” (Deuteronomy 12:11)

And he explains in accurate order, adding:

“Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, but at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.” (Deuteronomy 12:13–14)

And he makes this addition:

“You may not eat within your towns the tithe of your grain or of your wine or of your oil, or the firstborn of your herd or



Fighting for the Faith

of your flock, or any of your vow offerings that you vow, or your freewill offerings or the contribution that you present, but you shall eat them before the LORD your God in the place that the LORD your God will choose, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your towns” (Deuteronomy 12:17–18)

And proceeding he confirms the statement, where he says:

“But the holy things that are due from you, and your vow offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place that the LORD will choose” (Deuteronomy 12:26)

And again:

“You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the LORD your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there” (Deuteronomy 14:22–23)

And then in considering what ought to be done if the place designated by him were far off, and the yield of fruit large, how the year’s fruits for the whole burnt-offering could be carried to the place of God, he lays down the following law:

“And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the LORD your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the LORD your God chooses, to

set his name there, then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the LORD your God chooses and spend the money for whatever you desire—oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the LORD your God” (Deuteronomy 14:24–26)

And he again sets his seal on the actual place, when he says:

“All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose.” (Deuteronomy 15:19–20)

Next notice how he arranges the celebration of the feasts, not anywhere in the land, but only in the appointed place. For he says:

“And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose, to make his name dwell there.” (Deuteronomy 16:2)

And he again reminds them, saying:

“You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, but at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall



Fighting for the Faith

offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt. And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the LORD your God will choose.” (Deuteronomy 16:5–7)

Such, then, is the law of the Feast of the Passover. Hear that of Pentecost:

“You shall count seven weeks. Begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain. Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you. And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your towns, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are among you, at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there.” (Deuteronomy 16:9–11)

And hear where he commands the third feast to be celebrated:

“You shall keep the Feast of Booths seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winepress. You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are within your towns. For seven days you shall keep the feast to the LORD your God at the

place that the LORD will choose” (Deuteronomy 16:13–15)

As he is so insistent on the selected place, and says so many times that they are to meet there in all their tribes and in all their families, the law could hardly apply to those living even a little way from Judaea, and still less to the nations of the whole world, especially as he allows no pardon to those who transgress his ordinances, and invokes a curse on those who do not carry them all out to the minutest detail, in the following words:

“Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.”
(Deuteronomy 27:26)

Consider, again, other instances of the impossibility of all men following the law of Moses. He makes a distinction between voluntary transgressions and those hard to evade, and after assigning penalties to sins which deserve the severest punishment, he provides laws by which those who sin unwittingly are to receive different treatment. One of these runs as follows:

“If anyone of the people of the land sins unintentionally in doing any one of the things that by the LORD’s commandments ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, or the sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and kill the sin offering in the place of burnt offering. And the priest shall take some of its blood” (Leviticus 4:27–30)

You see here how one who has sinned unintentionally is required to present himself at the place where the whole burnt-offerings are sacrificed. And this is the place the law has already so often mentioned, when it says:

“The place which the Lord thy God shall choose.”

But, indeed, the Lawgiver himself perceived the impossibility for all mankind to carry out the law, and clearly noted it by not promulgating his law universally for all, but with this limitation:

“If anyone of the people of the land sins unintentionally”

And he lays down a second law which says:

“If anyone sins in that he hears a public adjuration to testify, and though he is a witness, whether he has seen or come to know the matter, yet does not speak, he shall bear his iniquity” (Leviticus 5:1)

What is he to do? He is to take the victim in his hands and go with all speed to the purification. And of course that must take place where the whole burnt-offerings are sacrificed.

And once more a third law:

“or if anyone touches an unclean thing, whether a carcass of an unclean wild animal or a carcass of unclean livestock or a carcass of unclean swarming things, and it is hidden from him and he has become unclean, and he realizes his guilt; or if he touches human uncleanness, of whatever

sort the uncleanness may be with which one becomes unclean, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it, and realizes his guilt” (Leviticus 5:2–3)

Here the only thing necessary for the polluted person is for him to go once more to the sacred place, and offer for the sin which he has sinned a female animal from his flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for his sin. And the law was the same in the case of a soul, which shall “swear pronouncing with his lips to do evil or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; and when he knows of it and is guilty in one of those things, and shall confess the sin that he hath sinned: he too, the law says, taking the same offering, is to go with all speed to the sacred place, and the priest is to pray on his behalf for the sin, and his sin shall be forgiven. And another law besides those I have quoted makes this provision:

“If anyone commits a breach of faith and sins unintentionally in any of the holy things of the LORD, he shall bring to the LORD” [And he shall bear it again to the high-priest to the place, that is to say the chosen place.] (Leviticus 5:15)

And he adds a sixth law in these words:

“If anyone sins, doing any of the things that by the LORD’s commandments ought not to be done, though he did not know it, then realizes his guilt, he shall bear his iniquity. He shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its equivalent for a guilt offering, and the priest shall make atonement

for him for the mistake that he made unintentionally, and he shall be forgiven.” (Leviticus 5:17–18)

The following is a seventh, law:

“If anyone sins and commits a breach of faith against the LORD by deceiving his neighbor in a matter of deposit or security, or through robbery, or if he has oppressed his neighbor or has found something lost and lied about it, swearing falsely—in any of all the things that people do and sin thereby— if he has sinned and has realized his guilt and will restore what he took by robbery or what he got by oppression or the deposit that was committed to him or the lost thing that he found or anything about which he has sworn falsely, he shall restore it in full and shall add a fifth to it” (Leviticus 6:2–5)

Here, again, after confession and reparation the transgressor had to go with all speed, putting everything else on one side, to the place, which the Lord our God should choose, and offer for his sin an unblemished ram, and the priest was to pray for him before the Lord, and he would be forgiven.

In this careful way our wonderful Moses distinguished sins done unwittingly and ignorantly from intentional offences, on which in the government of his people he set rigorous penalties. For he that would not pardon the unwitting offender before he had confessed his offence, exacted a small penalty from him in the sacrifice ordained, by requiring him to repair with all speed to the sacred place fostered both the

religious spirit and watchfulness of those who worshipped God by his rule, and of course restrained even more the desires of willing offenders. What, then, must be our conclusion from all this, when, as we have said, we find Moses summing up his whole system with a curse, where he says:

“Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.” (Deuteronomy 27:26)

Was it, then, meant that Moses’ future disciples from the ends of the earth must do all these things, if they were to escape the curse and receive the blessing promised to Abraham? Were they to go thrice a year to Jerusalem, and were the female worshippers of all nations, fresh from the pangs of childbirth, to undertake so long a journey, to offer the sacrifice ordained by Moses for each one of their children? Were those who had touched a dead body, or had forsworn themselves, or had sinned against their will, to come from the ends of the earth, to run and hasten to the purification that was required by the law, in order to escape the visitation of the curse? Of course it is clear to you that it was hard enough to follow Moses’ rule of life for those who lived round Jerusalem, or only inhabited Judaea, and that it was quite out of the question for the other nations to fulfill it.

Hence, of course, our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Son of God, said to His disciples after His Resurrection:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, “ and added: “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20)



Fighting for the Faith

For He did not bid them to teach the laws of Moses to all nations, but whatsoever He Himself had commanded: that is to say, the contents of the Gospels. And agreeably to this His disciples and apostles in considering the requirements of the Gentiles decided that Moses' enactments were unsuitable to their needs, since neither they themselves nor their fathers had found them easy to be kept. As St. Peter says in the Acts:

“Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?”
(Acts 15:10)

And agreeably to this Moses himself for this very reason said that another prophet would be raised up “like unto him”; and publishes the good news that he should be a lawgiver for all the nations. He speaks of Christ in a riddle. He orders his followers to obey him in these prophetic words.

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen...And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.”
(Deuteronomy 18:15, 19)

And that this prophet, who is clearly the Christ, should come forth from the Jews and rule all nations, he proclaims again when he says:

“How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel! Like palm groves that stretch afar, like gardens be-

side a river, like aloes that the LORD has planted, like cedar trees beside the waters. Water shall flow from his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters; his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.” (Numbers 24:5–7)

He makes it clear from which tribe of all the twelve that comprised the Hebrew race, namely the tribe of Judah, Christ the Lawgiver of the Gentiles according to the prophecy should arise. He is clear as to the date, for it would be after the cessation of the Jewish monarchy which had been handed down from their forefathers.

“A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations.”

What “expectation” could this be, but that expressed in the promise to Abraham that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed? Moses has, therefore, made it quite plain from his own words that he was quite well aware of the failure of the law he had laid down to apply to all nations, and that another prophet would be necessary for the fulfillment of the oracles given to Abraham. And this was He, of Whom his prophecy proclaimed the good news that one should arise from the tribe of Judah and rule all nations.

CHAPTER 4

*Why it is we reject the Jews' Way of Life,
though we accept their Writings.*

THESE, then, are the reasons why we have accepted and loved as belonging to ourselves the

sacred books of the Hebrews, including as they do prophecies relating to us Gentiles. And the more so, since it was not Moses only who foretold the coming of the Lawgiver of the Gentiles after him, but really the whole succession of the prophets, who proclaimed the same truth with one voice, as David, when he said:

“Appoint, O Lord, a Lawgiver over them: let the nations know that they are but men.” (Psa 9:20)

See how he too speaks of a second Lawgiver of the nations. And in the same spirit in another (psalm) he calls on the Gentiles to sing, not the ancient song of Moses, but a new song, when he says:

“ “Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength! Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!” (Psalms 96:1–9) “

And again: .

“Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved” (Psalms 96:10) “

And again:

““Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.” (Psalms 98:1–3)

And notice how he ordains the new song not for the Jewish race only; the ancient song of Moses suited them, but for all the nations. This new song is called by Jeremiah, another Hebrew prophet, “a new covenant” where he says:

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (Jeremiah 31:31–33)

You see here that he distinguishes two covenants, the old and the new, and says that the new would not be like the old which was given to the fathers. For the old covenant was given as a law to the Jews, when they had fallen from the religion of their forefathers, and had embraced the manners and life of the Egyptians, and had declined to the errors of polytheism, and the idolatrous superstitions of the Gentiles. It was intended to raise up the fallen, and to set on their feet those who were lying on their faces, by suitable teaching.

“the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane” (1 Timothy 1:9)

But the new covenant leads those who, through our Savior by the grace and gift of God are raised up, to a rapid march into the kingdom promised by God. It summons all men equally to share together the same good things. This “new covenant” Isaiah, another of the Hebrew prophets, calls the “new law,” when he says:

“many peoples shall come, and say:
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3)

This law going forth from Zion, different from the law enacted in the desert by Moses on Mount Sinai, what can it be but the word of the Gospel, “going forth from Zion” through our Savior Jesus Christ, and going through all the nations? For it is plain that it was in Jerusalem

and Mount Zion adjacent thereto, where our Lord and Savior for the most part lived and taught, that the law of the new covenant began and from thence went forth and shone upon all, according to the commands which He gave his disciples when He said:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19–20)

What could He mean but the teaching and discipline of the new covenant? Since, then, I have proved my facts, let us proceed to investigate together the character of the new covenant, and the new song and the new law that were foretold.

CHAPTER 5

The Character of the New Covenant of Christ.

I HAVE now proved that the old covenant and the law given by Moses was only applicable to the Jewish race, and only to such of them as lived in their own land. It did not apply to other nations of the world nor to Jews inhabiting foreign soil. And I have shown that the ideal of the new covenant must be helpful to the life of all nations: the members of its kingdom are to be restricted in no way whatever. Considerations of country, race or locality, or anything else are not to affect them in any way at all. The law and life of our Savior Jesus Christ shows itself to be such, being a renewal of the ancient pre-Mosaic religion, in which Abraham, the friend of God, and his forefathers are shown to have lived. And if you cared to compare the life of Christians and the worship introduced among all nations by Christ

with the lives of the men who with Abraham are witnessed to by Scripture as holy and righteous, you would find one and the same ideal. For they too turned their backs on the errors of polytheism, they relinquished idolatrous superstition, they looked beyond the whole of the visible creation and deified neither sun nor moon, nor any part of the whole. They raised themselves to the Supreme God, Himself the Highest, the Creator of heaven and earth. And Moses himself bears this out in his history of ancient times when he records Abraham's saying:

“I have lifted my hand to the LORD,
God Most High, Possessor of heaven and
earth” (Genesis 14:22)

And when, before this, he introduces Melchizedek, whom he calls the priest of the Most High God, blessing Abraham as follows:

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Possessor of heaven and earth” (Genesis
14:19)

And you would find that Enoch and Noah were reckoned just and well pleasing to God in the same way as Abraham. Job, too, a just, true, blameless, devout man, averse from everything evil, is recorded as pre-Mosaic. He underwent a trial of his utter devotion to the God of the Universe when he lost everything he had, and left the greatest example of holiness to posterity, when he spoke these philosophic words:

“Naked I came from my mother's womb,
and naked shall I return. The LORD
gave, and the LORD has taken away;
blessed be the name of the LORD.” (Job
1:21)

That he said this as a worshipper of the God of the universe is made quite clear when he goes on to say:

“He is wise in heart and mighty in strength—who has hardened himself against him, and succeeded?— he who removes mountains, and they know it not, when he overturns them in his anger, who shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble; who commands the sun, and it does not rise; who seals up the stars; who alone stretched out the heavens” (Job 9:4–8)

If then the teaching of Christ has bidden all nations now to worship no other God but Him whom the men of old and the pre-Mosaic saints believed in, we are clearly partakers of the religion of these men of old time. And if we partake of their religion we shall surely share their blessing. Yes, and equally with us they knew and bore witness to the Word of God, Whom we love to call Christ. They were thought worthy in very remarkable ways of beholding His actual presence and theophany.

Remember how Moses calls the Being, Who appeared to the patriarchs, and often delivered to them the oracles afterwards written down in Scripture, sometimes God and Lord, and sometimes the Angel of the Lord... Thus he says:

“Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it



reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth" (Genesis 28:10–14)

To which he adds:

"So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar" (Genesis 28:18)

Then further on he calls this God and Lord Who appeared to him the Angel of God. For Jacob says:

"Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am!'" (Genesis 31:11)

And then:

"I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me." (Genesis 31:12–13)

This same being who appeared to Abraham is called Lord and God. He teaches the saint mysteriously of His Father's rule,...Then, again, it is impious to suppose that the Being who answered Job after his severe trial was the same. For when He shows Himself first in the whirlwind and the clouds He reveals Himself as the God of the Universe, but He goes on to reveal Himself in a way which makes Job say:

"Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.' I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you" (Job 42:4–5)

And if it is not possible for the Most High God, the Invisible, the Uncreated, and the Omnipotent to be said to be seen in mortal form, the Being Who was seen must have been the Word of God, Whom we call Lord as we do the Father. But it is needless for me to labor the point, since it is possible to find instances in Holy Scripture. These I will collect at leisure in connection with my present work to prove that He Who was seen by the patriarchal saints was none other than the Word of God.

Therefore besides the conception of the Creator of the Universe, we and they have inherited also the conception of Christ in common. Hence you can find instances of the pre-Mosaic saints being called "Christs," just as we are called Christians. Hear what the oracle in the Psalms says about them:

"When they were few in number, of little account, and sojourners in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people, he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account, saying, "Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm!" (Psalms 105:12–15)"

The whole context shows that this must be referred to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: they therefore shared the name of Christ with us.



CHAPTER 6

The Nature of the Life according to the New Covenant proclaimed to All Men by Christ.

JUST as a life of virtue and a system of holiness is through the teaching of Christ preached to all nations without any reference to the Mosaic legislation, so by these men of old time the same independent ideal of holiness was upheld. They cared nothing for circumcision, nor do we. They did not abstain from eating certain beasts, neither do we. For instance, Moses introduces Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God, uncircumcised, not anointed with prepared ointment according to Moses, knowing naught of the Sabbath, paying no heed whatever to the commandments afterwards given by Moses to the whole Jewish race, but living exactly according to the Gospel of Christ. And yet Moses says he was the priest of the Most High God, and the superior of Abraham. For he is introduced as blessing Abraham. Such too was Noah, a just man in his generation, whom as a kindling seed of the human race Almighty God preserved in the destruction by the flood when all men on earth were destroyed. He again was quite ignorant of Jewish customs, he was uncircumcised, he did not follow the Mosaic law in any point, yet he is recognized as conspicuously just. And Enoch before him, who is said to have pleased God, and to have been translated, so that his death was not seen, was another like person, uncircumcised, with no part or lot in the law of Moses, living a distinctly Christian rather than a Jewish life.

And Abraham himself, coming later than those already named, being younger than they according to the age men reached in those times, though an old man in reality, was the first

to receive circumcision as a seal, for the sake of his descendants, and he left it to those who should be born of him according to the flesh as a sign of their descent from him. He too before he had a son, and before he was circumcised, by his rejection of idolatry, and his confession of the one omnipotent God, yea, by his virtuous life alone is shown to be one who lived as a Christian, not as a Jew. For he is represented as having kept the commandments and the precepts and the ordinances of God before the enactments of Moses. That is why God giving the oracle to Isaac says:

“I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” (Genesis 26:4–5)

So there were before the Mosaic law other commandments of God, and ordinances not like those of Moses, other laws and precepts of Christ, by which they were justified. Moses clearly shows that these were not the same as his own enactments, when he says to the people:

“And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the rules that I speak in your hearing today, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today.” (Deuteronomy 5:1–3)



Fighting for the Faith

See how distinctly he alludes to this covenant, when he says God did not give the same covenant to their fathers. For if he had said that absolutely no covenant was given to their fathers it would have been a false statement. For Holy Scripture testifies that a covenant of some kind was given both to Abraham and Noah. And so Moses adds that one “not the same” was given to their fathers, implying that other greater and glorious covenant, by which they were shown forth as friends of God. So Moses records that Abraham by his faith in Almighty God attained righteousness when he says:

Abraham “believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.”
(Genesis 15:6)

This text shows clearly that he received the sign of circumcision after his attainment of righteousness and after the witness to his holiness, and that this added nothing at all to his justification.

Again, you would find Joseph in pre-Mosaic times in the palaces of the Egyptians living in freedom not burdened by Judaism. Moses himself, the leader and lawgiver of the Jews, lived from his babyhood with the daughter of the King of Egypt, and partook of the Egyptian food without question. What is to be said of Job the thrice-blessed, the true, the blameless, the just, the holy, what was the cause of his holiness and justice, was it Moses’ commandments? Certainly not. Was it the keeping of the Sabbath, or any other Jewish observance? How could that be, if Job was earlier than the time of Moses and his legislation? For Moses was seventh from Abraham, and Job fifth, preceding him by two generations. And if you regard his life, you will see it was untouched by the Mosaic legislation, but not foreign to the teaching of our Savior.

Thus in reviewing his life in his apology to his friends he says:

“I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to help him. The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy” (Job 29:12–16)

This surely is exactly the same teaching which is preached to us all in the Gospel. Then again as one well acquainted with the words, “Weep with those that weep,” and “Blessed are they that weep, for they shall laugh”; and “If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it,” which are included in the Gospel teaching, he shows his sympathy for the miserable by saying:

“Did not I weep for him whose day was hard? Was not my soul grieved for the needy?” (Job 30:25)

Then, again, this holy man forestalls the Gospel teaching, which forbids unseemly laughter, when he says:

“If I have walked with falsehood and my foot has hastened to deceit; (Let me be weighed in a just balance, and let God know my integrity!)” (Job 31:5–6)

And where the Mosaic law says “Thou shall not commit adultery,” and assigns death as the punishment of adulterers, He who draws out the law of the Gospel teaching, says: “You have



Fighting for the Faith

heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

(Matthew 5:27–28)

Look well at the man of whom we are speaking; he was so good a Christian in his life that he restrained even his looks when they were wayward, and made it his boast so to do— for he says:

"If my heart has been enticed toward a woman"
(Job 31:9)

And he gives the reason, as he continues:

"For that would be a heinous crime; that would be an iniquity to be punished by the judges; for that would be a fire that consumes as far as Abaddon, and it would burn to the root all my increase."
(Job 31:11–12)

Here he shows his incorruptibility:

"if my step has turned aside from the way and my heart has gone after my eyes, and if any spot has stuck to my hands, then let me sow, and another eat, and let what grows for me be rooted out" (Job 31:7–8)

How he treated his servants we may learn from his teaching here:

"If I have rejected the cause of my manservant or my maidservant, when they brought a complaint against me" (Job 31:13)

And again he gives the reason:

"what then shall I do when God rises up? When he makes inquiry, what shall I answer him? Did not he who made me in the womb make him? And did not one fashion us in the womb?" (Job 31:14–15)

He adds:

"If I have withheld anything that the poor desired, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel alone, and the fatherless has not eaten of it (for from my youth the fatherless grew up with me as with a father, and from my mother's womb I guided the widow), if I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, or the needy without covering" (Job 31:16–19)

And again he proceeds:

"If I have made gold my trust or called fine gold my confidence, if I have rejoiced because my wealth was abundant or because my hand had found much"
(Job 31:24–25)

And again he gives the reason:

"if I have looked at the sun when it shone, or the moon moving in splendor"
(Job 31:26)

So, again, whereas the teaching of the Gospel says:

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:43–44): Job wonderfully anticipating the command by his own original teaching actually carried it out,



for he says:

“If I have rejoiced at the ruin of him who hated me, or exulted when evil overtook him (I have not let my mouth sin by asking for his life with a curse)” (Job 31:29–30)

And he adds:

“The sojourner has not lodged in the street; I have opened my doors to the traveler” (Job 31:32) showing himself no stranger in spirit to Him, who said, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35)

Then hear what he says about offences done unintentionally:

“If I have concealed my transgressions as others do by hiding my iniquity in my heart, because I stood in great fear of the multitude, and the contempt of families terrified me, so that I kept silence, and did not go out of doors— Oh, that I had one to hear me! (Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!) Oh, that I had the indictment written by my adversary! Surely I would carry it on my shoulder; I would bind it on me as a crown; I would give him an account of all my steps; like a prince I would approach him.” (Job 31:33–37)

So and in such ways the pre-Mosaic saints (for from the record of one we may imagine the life of all), waged their renowned contests for good, and were reckoned friends of God, and prophets. What need had they of the commandments

of Moses, which were given to weak and sinful men? From all this it is abundantly proved that the Word of God announced to all nations the ancient form of their ancestors’ religion, as the new covenant does not differ from the form of holiness, which was very ancient even in the time of Moses, so that it is at the same time both old and new. It is, as I have shown, very, very old; and, on the other hand, it is new through having been as it were hidden away from men through a long period between, and now come to life again by the Savior’s teaching.

And it was in this intermediate period, while the ideal of the new covenant was hidden from men, and as it were asleep, that the law of Moses was interposed in the interval. It was like a nurse and governess of childish and imperfect souls. It was like a doctor to heal the whole Jewish race, worn away by the terrible disease of Egypt. As such it offered a lower and less perfect way of life to the children of Abraham, who were too weak to follow in the steps of their forefathers. For through their long sojourn in Egypt, after the death of their godly forefathers, they adopted Egyptian customs, and, as I said, fell into idolatrous superstition. They aimed no higher than the Egyptians, they became in all respects like them, both in worshipping idols, and in other matters. Moses tore them from their godless polytheism, he led them back to God, the Creator of all things; he drew them up as it were from an abyss of evil, but it was natural for him to build first this step of holiness at the threshold and entrance of the Temple of the more Perfect. Therefore he forbade them to murder, to commit adultery, to steal, to swear falsely, to work uncleanness, to lie with mother, sister or daughter, to do many actions which till then they had done without restraint. He rescued them from their wild and savage life, and



gave them a polity based on better reason and good law as the times went, and was the first lawgiver to codify his enactments in writing, a practice which was not yet known to all men. He dealt with them as imperfect, and when he forbade idolatry, he commanded them to worship the One Omnipotent God by sacrifices and bodily ceremonies. He enacted that they should conduct by certain mystic symbols the ritual that he ordained, which the Holy Spirit taught him in a wonderful way was only to be temporary: he drew a circle round one place and forbade them to celebrate his ordinances anywhere, except in one place alone, namely at the Temple in Jerusalem, and never outside it. And to this day it is forbidden for the children of the Hebrews outside the boundaries of their ruined mother-city to sacrifice according to the law, to build a temple or an altar, to anoint kings or priests, to celebrate the Mosaic gatherings and feasts, to be cleansed from pollution, to be loosed from offences, to bear gifts to God, or to propitiate Him according to the legal requirements.

And therefore, of course, they have fallen under Moses' curse, attempting to keep it in part, but breaking it in the whole, as Moses makes absolutely clear:

“Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.”
(Deuteronomy 27:26)

And they have come to this impasse, although Moses himself foresaw by the Holy Spirit, that, when the new covenant was revived by Christ and preached to all nations, his own legislation would become superfluous, he rightly confined its influence to one place, so that if they were ever deprived of it, and shut out of their

national freedom, it might not be possible for them to carry out the ordinances of his law in a foreign country, and as of necessity they would have to receive the new covenant announced by Christ. Moses had foretold this very thing, and in due course Christ sojourned in this life, and the teaching of the new covenant was borne to all nations, and at once the Romans besieged Jerusalem, and destroyed it and the Temple there. At once the whole of the Mosaic law was abolished, with all that remained of the old covenant, and the curse passed over to those who became lawbreakers, because they obeyed Moses' law, when its time had gone by, and still clung ardently to it, for at that very moment the perfect teaching of the new Law was introduced in its place. And, therefore, our Lord and Savior rightly says to those who suppose that God ought only to be worshipped in Jerusalem, or in certain mountains, or some definite places:

“the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:23–24)

So He said, and presently, not long after, Jerusalem was besieged, the holy place and the altar by it and the worship conducted according to Moses' ordinances were destroyed, and the archetypal holiness of the pre-Mosaic men of God reappeared. And the blessing assured thereby to all nations came, to lead those who came to it from the first step and from the first elements of the Mosaic worship to a better and more perfect life. Yes, the religion of those blessed and godly men, who did not worship in any one place



Fighting for the Faith

exclusively, neither by symbols nor types, but as our Lord and Savior requires “in spirit and in truth,” by our Savior’s appearance became the possession of all the nations, as the prophets of old foresaw. For Zephaniah says the very same thing:

“The LORD will be awesome against them; for he will famish all the gods of the earth, and to him shall bow down, each in its place, all the lands of the nations” (Zephaniah 2:11)

Malachi as well contends against those of the circumcision, and speaks on behalf of the Gentiles, when he says:

“I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand. For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 1:10–11)

By “the incense and offering to be offered to God in every place,” what else can he mean, but that no longer in Jerusalem nor exclusively in that (sacred) place, but in every land and among all nations they will offer to the Supreme God the, incense of prayer and the sacrifice called “pure,” because it is not a sacrifice of blood but of good works? And Isaiah literally shouts and cries his prophecy to the same effect:

“In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, ...he will send them a savior and defend-

er, and deliver them...and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform them. And the LORD will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them.” (Isaiah 19:19–22)

Do we not say truly then that the prophets were inspired to foretell a change of the Mosaic Law, nay its end and conclusion? Moses lays down that the altar and the sacrifices should be nowhere else on earth but in Judaea, and there only in one city. But this prophecy says that an altar to the Lord shall be set up in Egypt, and that Egyptians shall celebrate their sacrifices to the Lord of the prophets and no longer to their ancestral gods. It foretells that Moses shall not be the medium of their knowledge of God, nor any other of the prophets, but a man fresh and new sent from God. Now if the altar is changed contrary to the commandment of Moses, it is beyond doubt necessary that the Law of Moses should be changed also. Then, too, the Egyptians, if they “sacrifice to the Supreme God,” must be admittedly worthy of the priesthood. And if the Egyptians are priests Moses’ enactments about the Levites and the Aaronic succession would be useless to the Egyptians. The time, therefore, will have come when a new legislation will be needed for their support. What follows? Have I spoken at random? Or have I proved my contention? Behold how today, yes in our own times, our eyes see not only Egyptians, but every race of men who used to be idolaters, whom the prophet meant when he said “Egyptians,” released from the errors of polytheism and the daemons, and calling on the God of the prophets! They pray no longer



Fighting for the Faith

to lords many, but to one Lord according to the sacred oracle; they have raised to Him an altar of unbloody and reasonable sacrifices according to the new mysteries of the fresh and new covenant throughout the whole of the inhabited world, and in Egypt itself and among the other nations, Egyptian in their superstitious errors. Yes, in our own time the knowledge of the Omnipotent God shines forth, and sets a seal of certainty on the forecasts of the prophets. You see this actually going on, you no longer only expect to hear of it, and if you ask the moment when the change began, for all your inquiry you will receive no other answer but the moment of the appearance of the Savior. For He it was, of Whom the prophet spoke, when he said that the Supreme God and Lord would send a man to the Egyptians, to save them, as also the Mosaic oracles taught in these words: "A man shall come forth from his seed, and shall rule over many nations"; among which nations the Egyptians would certainly be numbered. But a great deal could be said on these points, and with sufficient leisure one could deal with them more exhaustively. Suffice it to say now, that we must hold to the truth, that the prophecies have only been fulfilled after the coming of Jesus our Savior. For it is through Him that in our day that old system of Abraham, the most ancient and venerable form of religion, is followed by the Egyptians, the Persians, the Syrians and the Armenians. The Barbarians from the end of the earth, those of them who were of old the most uncivilized and wild, yea, they that inhabit the isles, for prophecy thought well even to mention them, follow it as well. And who would not be struck by the extraordinary change—that men who for ages have paid divine honor to wood and stone and daemons, wild beasts that

feed on human flesh, poisonous reptiles, animals of every kind, repulsive monsters, fire and earth, and the lifeless elements of the universe should after our Savior's coming pray to the Most High God, Creator of Heaven and earth, the actual Lord of the prophets, and the God of Abraham and his forefathers? That men a little while before involved in marriage with mothers and daughters, in unspeakable vice and all sorts of vileness, men who lived like wild beasts, now converted by the divine power of our Savior, and become like different beings, should crowd the public schools and learn lessons of virtue and purity. That not men only, but women, poor and rich, learned and simple, children even and slaves, should be taught in their daily occupation in town or country the loftiest ethics, which forbids to look with eyes unbridled, to be careless even in words, or to follow the path of custom and fashion. That they should learn the true ideal of worshipping the Supreme God, and serving Him in every place, according to the prophecy, which says: "And they shall worship Him each from his own place." Everyone, then, whether Greek or Barbarian, is worshipping the Supreme God, not running to Jerusalem, nor made holy with bloody sacrifices, but staying at home in his own land, and offering in spirit and in truth his pure and bloodless offering. And theirs is the new covenant, not according to the old. Do not allow the covenant of the pre-Mosaic Saints to be called "the old covenant," but that which was given to the Jews by the Law of Moses. For the text which says that the new will be quite unlike the old clearly implies which one was the old:

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new



covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt” (Jeremiah 31:31–32)

“Not according to the covenant of the Mosaic Law,” he says. For that was introduced to the Jews at the exodus from Egypt. It might have seemed that he was introducing a new covenant opposed to the religious ideals of the Abrahamic Saints, if he had not distinctly said:

“not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt” (Jeremiah 31:31–32)

He prophesied that the new covenant would not be according to the one enacted at the time of the Exodus and the wanderings in the wilderness, but according to the ancient one under which the pre-Mosaic saints flourished. And, therefore, for the future you may confidently classify the ideals of religions worshippers under three heads, not two: the completely idolatrous, who have fallen into the errors of polytheism; those of the circumcision, who by the aid of Moses have reached the first step of holiness; and thirdly, those who have ascended by the stair of Gospel teaching. If you regard this as a mean between the other two, you will no longer suppose that perverts from Judaism necessarily fall into Hellenism, nor that those that forsake Hellenism are, therefore, Jews. Recognizing the third division in the middle, you will see it standing up on high, as if it were set on a very lofty mountain ridge, with the others left below

on each side of the height. For as it has escaped Greek godlessness, error, superstition, unbridled lust and disorder, so it has left behind Jewish unprofitable observances, designed by Moses to meet the needs of those who were like infants and invalids. And as it stands on high, hear what it says as it proclaims the law, which suits not Jews alone, but Greeks and barbarians, and all nations under the sun:

“O man! and all the human race! the Law of Moses, beginning from one race of men, first called the whole race of the Jews, because of the promise given to their holy forefathers, to the knowledge of the one God, and released its servants from bitter slavery to the daemons. But I am the herald to all men and to the nations of the whole world of a loftier knowledge of God and holiness; I call them to live according to the ideals of those of Abraham’s day, and men still more ancient of pre-Mosaic date, with whom many of all races are recorded to have shone in holiness as lights in the world.

And again:

The Law of Moses required all who desired to be holy to speed from all directions to one definite place; but I, giving freedom to all, teach men not to look for God in a corner of the earth, nor in mountains, nor in temples made with hands, but that each should worship and adore Him at home.

And again:

The old law commanded that God should be worshipped by the sacrifice of slain beasts, of incense and fire and divers other similar external purifications. But I, introducing the rites of the soul, command that God should be glorified with a clean heart and a pure mind, in purity and a life of virtue, and by true and holy teaching.

And again:

Moses forbade the men of his time who were defiled with blood to kill; but I lay down a more perfect law for those who have him for a schoolmaster and have kept the earlier commandment—when I ordain that men must not be slaves to anger.

And once more:

The Law of Moses enacted to adulterers and the impure that they must not commit adultery, or indulge in vice, or pursue unnatural pleasures, and made death the penalty of transgression; but I do not wish my disciples even to look upon a woman with lustful desire.

And again, it said:

Thou shall not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you, Swear not at all, but let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

And again, it commanded resistance against the unjust, and reprisal, when it said:

An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And he who will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

And again, it exhorts to love your friend, and to hate your enemies; but I in my excess of goodwill and forbearance lay down the law:

Pray for persecutors, that you may be children of your Father in heaven, who letteth his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.

And, moreover, the Mosaic Law was suited to the hardness of heart of the vulgar, gave ordinances corresponding to those under the rule of sense, and provided a form of religion, reduced and inferior to the old. But I summon all to the holy and godly life of the holy men of the earlier days. And in fine, it promises, as to children, a land flowing with milk and honey, while I make citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven those who are worthy to enter therein.

Such was the message to all nations given by the word of the new covenant by the teaching of Christ. And the Christ of God bade His disciples teach them to all nations, saying:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19–20)

And in giving them to all men both Greeks and barbarians to keep He clearly revealed the nature of Christianity, the nature of Christians, and the nature of the Teacher of the words and instruction, our Lord and Saviour the Christ of God Himself. He set up this new and perfect system throughout the whole world, that such teaching and such wisdom might be the food, not only of men but of women, of rich and poor alike, and of slaves with their masters. And yet the introducer of this new law is represented as having lived in all ways according to the Law of Moses. And this is a wonderful fact, that though He was going to come forward as the legislator of a new polity, according to the Gospel of His new covenant, He did not revolt from Moses as opposed to him and contrary. If He had thought good to command things opposed to Moses, He would have afforded to godless sectaries against Moses and the prophets material for much scandal, and to those of the circumcision a specious handle for attacking Him, particularly in view of the fact that they actually contrived their plot against His life as a transgressor and breaker of the law.

CHAPTER 7

How Christ, having first fulfilled the Law of Moses, became the Introducer of a New and Fresh System.

AND now having lived in all ways according to the Law of Moses, He made use of His Apostles as ministers of the new legislation, on the one hand teaching them that they must not consider the Law of Moses either foreign or unfriendly to their own religion, on the other as being the author and introducer of a legislation new

and salutary for all men, so that He did not in any way break Moses' enactments, but rather crowned them, and was their fulfillment, and then passed on to the institution of the Gospel Law. Hear Him speaking in this strain:

"I have not come to destroy the law but to fulfil it." (Matt 5:17)

For if He had been a transgressor of the Law of Moses, He would reasonably have been considered to have rescinded it and given a contrary law: and if He had been wicked and a law-breaker He could not have been believed to be the Christ. And if He had rescinded Moses' Law, He could never have been considered to be One foretold by Moses and the prophets. Nor would His new Law have had any authority. For He would have had to embark on a new Law, in order to escape the penalty of breaking the old. But as a matter of fact He has rescinded nothing whatever in the Law, but fulfilled it. It is, as one might say, Mosaically perfect. Yet since it was no longer possible for the causes I have stated already to accommodate the Law of Moses to the needs of the other nations, and it was necessary, thanks to the love of God the All-good, "that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth," He laid down a law suitable and possible for all. Nor did He forbid His Apostles to preach Moses' Law to all men, except when it was likely to be a stumbling-block to them, as the apostle says:

"For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do," etc.
(Romans 8:3)



And it was “impossible” for all the nations to go up thrice a year to Jerusalem as the Law of Moses required, for a woman after childbirth to hasten there from the ends of the earth to pay the fees of her purification, and in many other ways, which you can arrive at for yourselves at your leisure. Since then it was not possible for the nations living outside Judaea to keep these things even if they wished, our Lord and Saviour could hardly be said to have rescinded them, but was the fulfillment of the Law, and gave a proof to those who could see, that He was indeed the Christ of God foretold by the old Jewish prophets. This He did, when He gave to all nations through His own disciples enactments that suited them. And, therefore, we reject Jewish customs, on the ground that they were not laid down for us, and that it is impossible to accommodate them to the needs of the Gentiles, while we gladly accept the Jewish prophecies as containing predictions about ourselves. Thus the Savior on the one side is our teacher, and on the other the fulfillment of the Law of Moses, and of the prophets who followed him.

For since as yet the prophecies lacked the fulfillment of their conclusions and of their words, He must necessarily fulfill them. As for example the prophecy in Moses says:

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen” (Deuteronomy 18:15)

He fulfilled what remained to be fulfilled in this prophecy, appearing as the second Lawgiver after Moses, giving to men the Law of the

Supreme God’s true holiness. For Moses does not say simply “a prophet,” but adds “like me”: (“For a prophet,” he says, “will the Lord your God raise up among you, like me — it is to him you shall listen”), and this can only mean that He who was foretold would be equal to Moses. And Moses was the giver of the Law of holiness of the Supreme God. So He that was foretold, to be like Moses, would probably be like him in being a Lawgiver. And though there were many prophets in later days, none of them is recorded to have been “like Moses.”

For they all referred their hearers to him. Even Scripture bears witness that “a prophet has not arisen like Moses”: neither Jeremiah, nor Isaiah, nor any other of the prophets was like him, because not one of them was a Lawgiver. When the expectation was that a prophet who was also a Lawgiver like Moses should arise, Jesus Christ came giving a Law to all nations, and accomplishing what the Law could not. As He said:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27–28) And, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment” (Matthew 5:21–22) And, “No more in Jerusalem, but in every place must you worship.” (John 4:21) And, “Worship not with incense and sacrifices, but in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24) And all such things that are recorded of His teaching are surely the laws of a Lawgiver very wise and very perfect.

Wherefore Holy Scripture says His hearers were “astounded,” because He taught them “as one having authority, and not as the Scribes and the Pharisees”—an oracle which supplied what was lacking to the fulfillment of the prophecy of Moses. And the same can be said of the other prophecies about Him, and the calling of the Gentiles. He was, therefore, the fulfiller of the Law and the prophets since He brought the predictions referring to Himself to a conclusion.

He ordained that the former Law should stand till He came, and He was revealed as the originator of the second Law of the new covenant preached to all nations, as being responsible for the Law and influence of the two religions, I mean Judaism and Christianity. And it is wonderful that divine prophecy should accord:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” (Isaiah 28:16 cf. Romans 9:33)

Who could be the cornerstone but He, the living and precious stone Who supports by His teaching two buildings and makes them one? For He set up the Mosaic building, which was to last till His day, and then fitted on to one side of it our building of the Gospel. Hence He is called the cornerstone. And it is said in the Psalms:

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes” (Psalms 118:22–23)

This oracle too indubitably indicates the Jewish conspiracy against the subject of the prophecy,

how He has been set at naught by the builders of the old wall, meaning the Scribes and Pharisees, the High-Priests and all the rulers of the Jews. And it prophesied that though He should be despised and cast out He would become the head of the corner, regarding Him as the originator of the new covenant, according to the above proofs.

So then we are not apostates from Hellenism who have embraced Judaism, nor are we at fault in accepting the law of Moses and the Hebrew Prophets, and we do not live as Jews, but according to the system of the men of God who lived before Moses. Nay, we claim that in this we authenticate Moses and the succeeding prophets, in that we accept the Christ foretold by them, and obey His laws, and endeavor prayerfully to tread in the steps of His teaching, for so we do what Moses himself would approve. For he says, in foretelling that God will raise up a prophet like himself, “And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy 18:19) Therefore the Jews, because they rejected the prophet, and did not hearken to His holy words, have suffered extreme ruin according to the prediction. For they neither received the law of Christ of the new covenant, nor were they able to keep the commands of Moses without some breach of his law; and so they fell under the curse of Moses, in not being able to carry out what was ordained by him, being exiled as they were from their mother-city, which was destroyed, where alone it was allowed to celebrate the Mosaic worship. Whereas we, who accept Him that was foretold by Moses and the prophets, and endeavor to obey Him prayerfully, must surely be fulfilling the prophecy of Moses, where he said: “And whoever will



Fighting for the Faith

not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy 18:19) And we heard just now what the ordinances of the prophet were, which we must obey, their wisdom, perfection and heavenliness, which he thought fit to inscribe, not on tables of stone like Moses, nor yet with ink and parchment, but on the hearts of his pupils, purified and open to reason. On them he wrote the laws of the new covenant, and actually fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah.

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new

covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (Jeremiah 31:31–33)