

THE PERSPECTIVE OF PAUL IN GALATIANS

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Abstract

An analysis of the structure of Galatians reveals pivotal statements in the argument within the letter, 1:4; 3:13-14, 25; 4:4-5; 5:1a, 13a; 6:14. These passages center around the redemptive work of Christ, more precisely his eschatological deliverance from the present age (or world) and its evil powers, the law, sin, the elemental spirits, and flesh. Such a view of salvation constitutes Paul's perspective in Galatians, from which we should try to follow his argument for the gospel of Christ over against the false gospel of the agitators.

1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to investigate Paul's perspective in Galatians on the basis of a structural analysis of the letter. In this way I shall attempt to make a contribution to the ongoing discussion about Galatians.

Paul characteristically draws many pairs of antitheses between the false gospel of the agitators and the gospel of Christ in Galatians: justification by the works of the law versus justification by faith in Christ (2:15-16; 3:1-14; cf 5:1-12), the curse of the law versus the blessing of Abraham (3:6-14), slavery under the law versus sonship in Christ (3:23-4:7; cf 2:18-21), children of Hagar versus children of Sarah (4:21-31), subjection to the flesh versus walking by the Spirit (5:13-6:10), the works of the flesh versus the fruit of the Spirit (5:19-23), circumcision versus the cross of Christ (6:12-16). Between these two different groups of contrasts Paul urges his readers, the Galatians, to repudiate the first group and to choose the second one. This is the main purpose of the letter (cf Hall 1987:279ff).

In order to penetrate the argument of Paul in the letter we now raise questions: from what perspective does Paul try to persuade the Galatians to make that choice? In other words, how does he understand the gospel of Christ in order to combat the gospel of his opponents? More specifically, how does he grasp the salvific meaning of the cross which is the kernel of the gospel of Christ (Gl 6:14)? To answer these

questions we need to look closely at the structure of Galatians. The body of the letter is composed of four parts: proposition (1:6-10), narration (1:11-2:21), argument (3:1-4:31), and exhortation (5:1-6:10) (cf Kennedy 1984:148-51; Hall 1987: 283-87). While the narrative section deals with the origin of the gospel of Christ (the majority of scholars agree that the passage 1:11-12 is the thesis of 1:13-2:21), the proposition that there is no other gospel than the gospel of Christ is fully discussed in the argumentative and exhortative sections. The argumentative section contains two basic arguments: justification by faith against justification by the works of the law (3:1-14) and sonship in Christ against slavery under the law (3:23-4:7). Pericope 3:15-22 which treats the salvation-historical purpose of the law in relation to the promise is a transitional excursus. Pericope 4:8-20 is an appeal, anticipating the exhortative section in 5:1-6:10, and 4:21-31 is the allegory of Sarah and Hagar which is, in its nature, a supplementary argument (Burton 1921:251; Longenecker 1975:127-28).

The two main arguments in 3:1-14 and 3:23-4:7 hinge upon the statements of Christ's redemption. The passage of 3:13-14 which speak of Christ's redeeming work from the curse of the law and its results functions as the pivot of the argument in 3:1-14. Verse 13 is the conclusion of verses 10-12, answering the problem of the curse of the law raised in verse 10. Verse 14a takes up the passage 3:6-9, showing that the promise of the Gentiles' participation in the blessing of Abraham which was occasioned by Abraham's believing response to God found fulfilment through Christ's redemption. Verse 14b indicates that the Galatians' reception of the Spirit in 3:1-5 is the outcome of the redemption.

The argument in 3:23-4:7 consists of two pericopae: 3:23-29 and 4:1-7. They employ different images but address the same thing, that is, the radical change of the believer's existence from the slavery under the law to sonship in Christ. This change has been brought about by the coming of Christ mentioned in 3:25 (the coming of faith=the coming of Christ) and in 4:4-5. This suggests the hinge function of these two statements in the pericopae 3:23-29 and 4:1-7 respectively.

This is also true of the paraenetic section. The statements of the liberation of Christ in 5:1a, 13a are the foundation of the two exhortations: to reject circumcision in 5:1-12 and to walk by the Spirit in 5:13-6:10 (I think that the general injunction of pericope 5:13-24 is specified in pericope 5:25-6:10).

The fundamental ground of Paul's argument in Galatians, the redemption of Christ, is first introduced in 1:4 in the prescript and finally restated in 6:14 in the postscript, though expressed by means of different metaphors. Therefore it is our hope that a close study of the pivotal statements may lead to a clear understanding of the perspective of Paul.

2. Galatians 1:4

Galatians 1:1-5 is the epistolary prescript, separated from the body of the letter. It exhibits conventional elements: sender (1:1-2a), addressees (1:2b), and salutation (1:3-5). It is interesting to observe that the first and last elements are considerably expanded. What is particularly important here is that the Christological formula attached to the salutation in 1:4 uncovers the basic premise of the main line of argument in the body of the letter.

Galatians 1:4 speaks of the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ and its purpose. 1:4a describes the atoning death of Christ: [Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ] τοῦ δόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. The phrase δόντος ἑαυτὸν, which implies service on behalf of someone (Louw *et al* 1988:53.48), refers to Jesus' voluntary self-sacrifice of his life. In this connection it is noteworthy that instead of δίδωμι Paul uses παραδίδωμι in Galatians 2:20 (see also Rm 4:25; 8:32; 1Cor 11:23; cf 1Tm 2:6; Tt 2:14), which seems to indicate the influence of the early Christians' Christological understanding of the Septuagint of Isaiah 53:6, 12 where the term is used (Perrin 1970:207-12; Schlier 1971:32; cf Mussner 1974:51). The next phrase ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν explains why the self-giving of Jesus was necessitated. The preposition ὑπὲρ with the genitive is normally used in the sense 'on behalf of' or 'for the sake of'. This implies that a participant is benefited by an event (Louw *et al* 1988:90.36). So the ὑπὲρ here used with τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν naturally adopts the idea of deliverance (Bauer 1979, *sv*; Burton 1921:13; Guthrie 1973:59). Thus 1:4a means that Jesus Christ voluntarily sacrificed himself in order to deliver us from our sins. Attention should be drawn to the plural of the ἁμαρτιῶν. In his own theological language Paul almost always uses the word ἁμαρτία in the singular. The plural here indicates a pre-Pauline view of sins as individual transgressions of the law (cf 1Cor 15:3; Is 53:5, 11). But it must be read in conjunction with Paul's own concept of the demonic power of sin (cf Gl 3:22; Rm 5:12, 21; 6:6, 17; 7:9ff), as Betz (1979:42) maintains.

1:4b concerns the purpose of the redeeming death of Christ: ὅπως ἐξέλθῃ ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστῶτος πονηροῦ. This subordinate clause offers the idea of ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν from a different angle. The conjunction ὅπως which expresses the purpose of an event is interchangeable with ἵνα (Louw *et al* 1988:89.59 n 10). The expression ὁ αἰὼν ὁ ἐνεστῶς which appears only here in the New Testament is equivalent to the more usual ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος (Rm 12:2; 1Cor 1:20; 2:6, 8; 3:18; 2Cor 4:4; Eph 1:21; cf 1Tm 6:17; 2Tm 4:10; Tt 2:12). It is distinguished from and set in contrast with ὁ αἰὼν ὁ μέλλων (Eph 1:21; Heb 6:5; Mt 12:32; cf Eph 2:7). It is sometimes interchanged by ὁ κόσμος (1Cor 1:20; 3:18, 19). This present age is characterized by πονηρός (cf 1QpHab 5:7f), because it is dominated by evil powers which are, according to this letter, law (2:19; 3:13, 23ff), sin (3:22), the elemental spirits (4:3, 9) and flesh (5:16ff). On the cross Christ has conquered these powers (cf 2:19; 5:24; 6:14; Rm 8:3f, 31-39; 1Cor 15:24-28; Col 2:15), though not completely eliminated. He has already inaugurated the coming age by his resurrection. The coming age has broken into the present evil age. By virtue of the victory of the cross

the believers have been delivered from the control of the evil powers which rule this age. To be sure, the believers still live in this world; nevertheless, they no longer belong to it. In the indwelling Spirit they experience the life of the new age, looking forward to the final, eschatological consummation. For them the 'not yet' has become the 'already'. Thus Paul understands the death of Christ as the event of eschatological salvation (cf Cullmann 1957:81ff; Ladd 1974:38ff; 68-69; Vos 1982:1-41; Bruce 1982a:76; Coetzee 1985:323ff). This understanding forms the basic ground of his argument in the letter.

3. Galatians 3:13-14; 3:25; 4:4-5

It was noted above that Galatians 3:13-14, 3:25 and 4:4-5 undergird the arguments of pericopae 3:1-14, 3:23-29 and 4:1-7 respectively. They are, in spite of external differences, concerned with the same theme, Christ's redemption (cf Blank 1968:162-63; Hays 1983:86-92, 116-21; Donaldson 1986:95-98). So here we shall not treat them separately. However, 3:13-14 will enjoy most of our attention, while the other two passages will be taken as complements.

Galatians 3:13-14 is an extremely important statement to grasp Paul's perspective in this letter. But it is a puzzling problem to many commentators. Our interpretation of the passage will begin with the identification of ἡμεῖς twice mentioned in verse 13. Does the pronoun refer to Jewish Christians exclusively, or Jewish and Gentile Christians inclusively? Some argue that the 'we' in verse 13 is to be determined by the 'we' in verse 14b which is definitely used in an inclusive sense (Schlier 1971:137; Fung 1988:149). This argument is not telling, because it simply ignores the apparent contrast between the 'we' in verse 13 and τὰ ἔθνη in verse 14. It seems to me that the specific mention of τὰ ἔθνη in verse 14a in clear distinction from the 'we' in verse 13 creates a strong impression of the antithesis between two (Zahn 1907:156; Burton 1921:169; Donaldson 1986:97). This observation also leads us to reject the similar contention that the alteration of pronouns from 'we' to 'you' in 3:23-29 and 4:3-7 demonstrates the inclusive emphasis of Paul's wording and argument (Howard 1979:59; Bruce 1982a:196).

Many interpreters attempt to read Romans 2:12-15 into Galatians, arguing the universal dominion of the law (Oepke 1937:57; Büchsel 1964:450; Schlier 1971:132; Mussner 1974:224; Bruce 1982a:167; Fung 1988:148f; cf Klein 1969:206-7). But one must be very careful not to impose Romans on Galatians without qualifications. We should bear in mind that even in Romans 2:12, 14; 7:1; 9:4 (cf 1Cor 9:20) Paul makes a clear distinction between Jews who are under the law and Gentiles who do not have the law. As a matter of fact, the law was originally given to the Jews. They are the people who find their identity in the law (cf Gl 2:15).

Some scholars contend in support of the inclusive reading of the first person plural in Galatians 3:13 that in Galatians 4:1-11 being ὑπὸ νόμου is to be understood as equivalent to being ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου which is characteristic of both Jews

and Gentiles before Christ (Reicke 1951:259ff; Schlier 1971:136-37). To be sure, the existence ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου represents all human (Jewish and Gentile) existence apart from Christ. But this does not necessarily require the existence ὑπὸ νόμον to be understood in the same inclusive sense. Paul says to the Gentile Galatians in 4:9 that to surrender to Judaizing pressure is to turn back *not* to the law *but* to the elemental spirits! According to Donaldson (1986:97), slavery under the law is a particular way of bondage under the elemental spirits.

We may conclude, therefore, that the ἡμεῖς in 3:13 is to be taken in the exclusive sense. This is true of the 'we' of ἐσμεν in 3:25 and those who are ὑπὸ νόμον in 4:4-5 (Betz 1979:179; Donaldson 1986:95ff). This conclusion will be further substantiated by our following consideration of Galatians 3:13-14. If our conclusion is correct, one might immediately posit a question: how does Paul comprehend the redemption of Israel as the prerequisite for the blessing of the Gentiles (v 14)? Instead of answering this question directly, we shall first discuss the meaning of the curse of the law and Christ's redemption from it. In the course of the discussion we will gradually find an answer to the question.

What is ἡ κατάρα τοῦ νόμου from which Christ redeemed Israel? We think that it is the curse pronounced by the law, regarding the genitive as a subjective genitive. Then, why does the law curse? What is the exact nature of the curse of the law? These questions are to be answered in context. Now we turn to 3:10, because for the first time it raises the problem of the curse of the law. Verse 10 speaks of who are under the curse and *why*. So we hope that a close scrutiny of these issues will lead us to grasp the real meaning of the curse of the law. Verse 10a reads: ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσὶν ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσὶν. I think that a satisfactory understanding of the verse demands a correct interpretation of the expression of ἔργα νόμου which occurs six times in Galatians, three times in 2:16 and three times in the pericope of 3:1-14. A number of scholars think that the ἔργα νόμου express a legalistic misunderstanding of the law (eg, Burton 1921:120; Bring 1961:120ff; 1966:21ff; Cosgrove 1978-79:146-48; Fuller 1980:93ff). On the other hand, Dunn considers the 'works of the law' as particular observances of the law such as circumcision, food laws, special feast days which function as Jewish 'identity markers' (1983:107-11; 1985:527-32; cf Lohmeyer 1929:177-207; Tyson 1973:423-31; Heiligenthal 1984:38-53; Lambrecht 1986:114-15). But I am of the opinion that the phrase refers to works done in conformity with the demand of the law, as understood traditionally (eg, Moo 1983:92ff; Räisänen 1983:177; Fung 1988:113; Westerholm 1988:116-21). Thus we understand verse 10a to mean that all who set their trust in works done in obedience to the law are under a curse.

Why this is the case is explained by the quotation of Deuteronomy 27:26: ἑπικατάρατος πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά. This quotation of Paul does not fully agree to the Septuagint or the Masoretic text.

The Masoretic text reads:

אָרֹר אִשָּׁר לֹא־יִקְיִם אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה־זֶה אֲחַלְעָלָהּ
 (Cursed is he who does not keep the words of this law to do them).

The Septuagint adds an emphasis to it by inserting πᾶς before ἄνθρωπος and πᾶσι before τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ νόμου : ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἐμμένει ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ νόμου τούτου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτούς. Paul replaces the Septuagint phrase πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ νόμου τούτου by πᾶσι τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου (cf Edwards 1972:194-200).

In spite of these variations, in order to comprehend properly Paul's purport of the quotation of Deuteronomy 27:26, I think that it is essential to examine it in its original context. Deuteronomy 27:15-26 is concerned with a series of twelve curses, the so-called 'Dodecalogue of Schechem.' The first eleven curses deal with transgressions committed in secret (Alt 1953:314; Von Rad 1966:168). The last curse of 27:26 which Paul cites in Galatians 3:10b is the generalizing summary of them without mentioning any particular crime. But, by substituting 'the book of the law' in Galatians for 'this law' in both the Masoretic text and the Septuagint, as we observed above, Paul extends the application of Deuteronomy 27:26 to the whole Old Testament law (Noth 1966:119; Edwards 1972:198-200; Bruce 1982b:28). For him the failure to obey any precept of the Torah incurs a curse.

What is important to note is that the Dodecalogue was addressed, probably at a ceremony of the renewal of the Sinai covenant (Eichrodt 1961:85; Von Rad 1975a:192), to the community of Israel who had *already* become the people of God (Dt 27:9). They were the special community who had a *covenant* relationship with God. They declared Yahweh to be their God and Yahweh declared them to be His people (Dt 26:17-18) -- this formula often appears in the Old Testament (e.g., Ex 6:7; Jr 31:33; Ezk 36:28) and is called as the 'formula of the Sinai Covenant' (Von Rad 1966:161; cf Smend 1986:11-39). Here we see that the law is closely related to the covenant. To understand the distinct character of the curse of the law requires a discussion of the peculiar relationship between law and covenant. In this regard the most important thing to bear in mind is: the law is *not* the pre-condition of Israel's covenant relationship with God; on the contrary, it is the *result* of the relationship. Von Rad, in his influential work, states: Israel was elected by Jahweh before she was given the commandments. As a result of this election she became Jahweh's chosen people, and this, in fact, happened before she had had any opportunity of proving her obedience (1975b:391; cf 1975a:194).

God made Israel His own people by delivering her from the bondage of Egypt and asked her to respond to His saving grace by keeping His law. This relationship between the covenant and the law is a kind of *indicative-imperative* relationship (Dt 27:9-10) --there is no legalism implied here! In this respect it is to be noted that the

imperative to keep the statutes and ordinances, by doing which a man shall live (Lv 18:5; cf Gl 3:12), is based on the indicative that Jahweh is Israel's saving God (Lv 18:2-5; cf Ex 20:2ff). The obedience to the law was Israel's covenant obligation, enabling her to remain in the covenant relationship and to enjoy all the blessings of God (cf Noth 1966:125ff; Edwards 1972:206-9). But the transgression of the law incurs the curse of the law, because it demonstrates the disloyalty to God and the unworthiness of the relationship with Him. The curse is also the curse of God, because the law is His law (cf Rm 7:22, 25; 8:7). It means to be cut off from God, bringing punishment and death upon unfaithful breakers of the law of covenant. This is quite evident in the messages of prophets (cf Fensham 1963:155-75; 1966: 220-21; 1967:316-17; 1971:89; Clements 1965:passim). Now we arrive at the point where we are able to comprehend Galatians 3:10 as a whole in a better light: all the Jews as the covenant people who rely on obedience to the law in order to maintain their covenant relationship with God are under the curse of the law, because they fail to keep all the prescripts of the law of covenant -- here the assumption is the idea of general non-fulfilment of the law. It is clear that what brings about the curse is the disobedience of the law, not its legalistic observance.

It is noteworthy that in 3:13 the curse of the law is depicted as *bondage under the law*. The word ἐξαγοράζω means 'to cause the release or freedom of someone' (Louw *et al* 1988:131), and thus implies deliverance from slavery. So redemption from the curse of the law refers to release from the bondage under the law. This becomes more apparent when we turn to 4:5. Here the same Greek word is used again to describe the liberation from the slavery under the law. The phrase ὑπὸ νόμον does not mean 'under obligation to abide by the regulations of the law' (Louw *et al* 1988:37.7), but *under the enslaving power of the law*, in view of the fact that the effect of Christ's redemption is the radical change of the status of believer from a slave of the law (and also of the elemental spirits of the world in 4:3, 9) to a son of God (4:5-7) (cf Byrne 1979:181f; Van deventer 1986:123ff). Thus it is obvious that the curse of the law is equivalent to the bondage of the law. To be under the curse of the law means to be under its tyranny. With regard to this it is very interesting to see that the law is described as a jailer who keeps prisoners in a jail in 3:23. This enslaving power of the law is derived from its new function stated in 3:19 which Paul has radically reinterpreted in the light of the Christ event: τῶν παραβάσεων χάρις προσετέθη. Many interpreters take χάρις to denote purpose. So the sentence means: the law was added 'for the purpose of transgressions' (Ridderbos 1953:137f; Schlier 1971:152; Betz 1979:165; Bruce 1982:175; Donaldson 1986:104; cf Burton 1921:188; Mussner 1974:245f). It was given not to check or prevent transgressions, but to produce them. The law provokes men to break its prescripts, and brings them under its curse (cf Rm 7:5,8,11,13). For Paul this strange function of the law was somehow added to its original function as covenant stipulation.

It is very significant that Paul relates Israel's plight under the law to the universal plight ὑπὸ ἁμαρτίας and ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. These two different existences are put side by side: in 3:22-23 'under sin' and 'under the law' (τὰ πάντα in front of

'under sin' in 3:22 refers to all men); in 4:3-9 'under the elemental spirits of the world' and 'under the law' (4:3 speaks of the Jews under the elemental spirits, while 4:9 of the Gentiles under them). This arrangement suggests that the two different predicaments are closely related. In this regard, Donaldson says: 'Israel's plight is a special form of the universal plight' (1986:103). In order to understand this, we once again return to 3:19b: τῶν παραβάσεων χάρις προσετέθη. The παράβασις is a technical term, denoting 'sin in its relation to law' (Schneider 1967:739). More precisely, it means the concrete breach of a specific commandment. Before the introduction of the law there was sin (ἁμαρτία) but no transgression (παράβασις). Romans 4:15 says: 'Where there is no law, there is no transgression'. This absence of the definite form of violation of the divine will keeps men from realizing fully their imprisonment under the power of sin. But the law was given in order to produce or even to increase transgressions (cf Rm 5:20), and thereby has revealed that all men without exception are confined under sin (cf Gl 3:22; Rm 3:20). In fact, the coming of the law is to shed light on the universal human plight under sin.

It can be said, therefore, that Israel, the people of the law, serves as a kind of *representative sample* for the whole mankind. Donaldson (1986:105-6) states: "Within Israel's experience, the nature of the universal human plight -- bondage to sin and to the powers of this age -- is thrown into sharp relief through the functioning of the law." If Israel's plight is related to the universal plight in this way, then the particular redemption of Israel from the curse of the law can bring about universal consequences.

Thus far, it has been argued that Christ redeemed Israel from the curse of the law, and that the slavery under the law is representative of universal slavery under sin and the elemental spirits of the world. Galatians 3:13 goes on to say how Christ accomplished Israel's redemption from the curse of the law: γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα. The participle γενόμενος expresses means. So the phrase means: by becoming a curse for 'us'. When and how did Christ become a curse for Israel? Does the phrase speak of the crucifixion or the incarnation? Both the immediate context, namely the following citation of Deuteronomy 21:23, and the larger context (2:20-21; 3:1; 6:12, 14; cf 5:24) might suggest that the death of Christ on the cross is in view. At this point, however, Hooker wisely gives a word of caution that we should be careful of driving a wedge between the incarnation and the crucifixion in Paul's thought (1971:351). Interestingly enough, Galatians 4:4 which corresponds to 3:13 (cf Schweizer 1972:383) says that Christ was 'born under the law'. If we are right, as argued above, in viewing 'under the law' here to be identical with 'under the curse of the law', not with 'under the obligation to observe the law', the expression 'born under the law' can be understood this way: by his deep humiliation of the incarnation Christ voluntarily took upon himself the curse which the Jews had incurred because of their violation of the covenant law (cf Whiteley 1957:246; Berkouwer 1965:323; Kertelge 1967:211; Hooker 1971:351f; Käsemann 1971:43; Bruce 1982a:196; 1982b:34). This condescension led him to undergo temptation, misunderstanding, contempt and rejection for his accursed people during his earthly life (cf Whiteley 1957:244f).

Finally, through his identification with them on the cross Christ completely removed the curse of the law from them -- it was the culmination of his redemptive work (cf Gaston 1979:66). Here we reject the misleading contention that Jesus was killed for his alleged criticism against the law (cf Edwards 1972:266ff).

The assertion that Christ became a curse is confirmed by the quotation of Deuteronomy 21:23b in Galatians 3:13b: 'Επικατάρατος πῶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου. It does not fully correspond to the Septuagint or the Masoretic text. The Masoretic text reads: קָלַלְתָּ אֱלֹהִים בְּלִיָּהוּ (he who is hanged is a curse of God). This Hebrew text is ambiguous, because the phrase אֱלֹהִים בְּלִיָּהוּ can be taken as an objective or subjective genitive. According to Billerbeck (1926:544f), the rabbinical literature generally understands the expression as an objective genitive. But the Septuagint decidedly opts for the alternative of a subjective genitive and renders the text: κεκατεράμενος ὑπὸ θεοῦ πῶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου. Paul adopts the decision of the Septuagint. But he changes the perfect, passive participle κεκατεράμενος for the adjective ἐπικατάρατος, probably to make the wording agree to that of his quotation of Deuteronomy 27:26 in 3:10 (Edwards 1972:262; Wilcox 1977:87; Bruce 1982a:165). Consequently he omits ὑπὸ θεοῦ, because the grammatical construction of the adjective ἐπικατάρατος with the words ὑπὸ θεοῦ would be extremely awkward (Edwards 1972:263). Some interpreters contend, however, that the reason for the omission is because Christ was not cursed by God but by the law. It is absurd to think that God cursed Christ who died in obedience to His will (Denney 1905:160; Mussner 1974:233; Bruce 1982a:165; 1982b:32; cf Burton 1921: 168). This idea is untenable. I believe that Christ was indeed cursed by God, though in a substitutional manner (cf Mk 15:34). The curse of the law is the curse of God, because the law is the covenant law of God. If not, what else? At any rate, in spite of the changes of his rendering Paul does not misuse Deuteronomy 21:23b. Deuteronomy 21:22-23 speaks of the regulation of hanging a criminal on a tree. If a man had broken certain laws of the covenant community (Craigie 1976:285), he was executed and hung on a tree in order to show that he was cursed by God. Then the corpse was removed and buried at sunset in order not to defile the land. What is important to note is the relationship between cursing and hanging: the criminal was not cursed because he had been hung on a tree; however, he was hung because he was already cursed on account of his heinous offence (Lindars 1961:233; Craigie 1976:285). In other words, hanging was to show a curse, not to make a curse. Paul applies the Old Testament text to the crucifixion of Christ. That Christ was crucified indicates that he was *already* cursed by God. The crucifixion is a strong evidence of his curse. But his curse was not for his own sin but for the sins of his people (cf 2Cor 5:21). In brief, what Paul wants us to realize by quoting Deuteronomy 21:23b is that Christ *indeed* became a curse on behalf of his people (cf 1Pt 2:24). This curse was turned into a source of blessing.

Now it becomes clear that Paul comprehends the Christ event as the eschatological redemption of the Jews who were brought under the curse of the covenant because of their breaking the law (cf Fensham 1966:222f; 1967:320; 1971:92). Christ redeemed

them by becoming a curse for them. This redemption of the Jews is *at the same time* and *on equal terms* the redemption of the Gentiles, because the Jews serve as the representative of all the nations. In his suffering and death Christ fully identified himself not only with Israel under the curse of the law but also with the Gentiles under sin and the demonic forces. On the cross Christ substituted for all the sinners as their representative (cf Kim 1981:276 n 3). In fact, he is the substitute and representative of all mankind! Thus 'in Christ' the Gentiles, along with the Jews, can receive the blessing of Abraham, that is, justification by faith (3:8-9, 14), sonship (3:26; 4:5), and the Spirit (3:14; 4:6). 'In Christ' the old distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles that existed under the Sinai covenant administration is demolished (3:26-29; cf Eph 2:14-16). Through him the new covenant between God and all humankind is now established (cf 4:21-31; 6:15).

4. Galatians 5:1a, 13a

The redemption of Christ furnishes the ground for the exhortation in 5:1-6:10. This paraenetical section is subdivided into two basic parts: 5:1-12 and 5:13-6:10, and each of them begins with the restatement of Christ's redemption. 5:1a says: τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμῶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν. The dative τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ seems to be a dative of purpose (Ridderbos 1953:186; Mussner 1974:342-43; Betz 1979:255). The freedom is the result of Christ's redemptive work which we have discussed above, but this result is stated as a goal, purpose, and direction for the life of the Christian (Betz 1979:256). Thus, on the basis of the redemption of Christ Paul urges the Galatians not to accept circumcision which leads to the slavery of the law (5:1-12). In Paul's mind any Gentile who becomes a Jew by receiving circumcision is also under the law like the Jews (cf 5:3).

There is also a reference to Christian freedom at the beginning of the second part 5:13-6:10: 'Ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐπὶ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἐκλήθητε, ἀδελφοί (5:13a). This sentence is reminiscent of 5:1a. Like 5:1a it is also a summary of the whole preceding argument of Christ's redemption, though focusing on God's salvation in Christ (the subject of the "calling" is God) (Burton 1921:291; Betz 1979:271f; cf Schlier 1971:242; Mussner 1974:366f). The preposition ἐπὶ with the dative ἐλευθερίᾳ expresses purpose (Blass, Debrunner & Funk 1961:235.4; Moule 1963:50; Bauer 1979, sv II,1,b,e). The *indicative* statement 5:13a is the foundation of Paul's exhortation in 5:13-6:10 that the Galatians should not walk after the flesh but the Spirit. The flesh here appears to be a personified power that works against the Spirit (5:16-17). As a subject of action it carries out its 'deeds' in opposition to the working of the Spirit (5:19-23). It has its own 'passions and desires' (5:24), which are stimulated by the commandment of the law (cf 3:19; Rm 7:5). For Paul, existence under the flesh is compatible with existence under the law (5:16-18). For subjection to the flesh causes one to break the law and thereby brings him under the bondage of the law. The flesh like the law is an evil power of the old age (1:4). But the believers who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh by their participation in Christ's crucifixion (5:24; cf 2:19-20), and thus should live by the Spirit, the power of the new age. Here it is interesting to see another

aspect of Christ's redemption: the liberation from the dominion of the flesh.

5. Galatians 6:14

In the postscript, the keynote of which is the recapitulation of the major points in Galatians (Betz 1979:313), Paul restates his own theological stand advocated throughout the letter. After attacking sharply the opponents who have compelled the Galatians to be circumcised (6:12-13), Paul speaks of the ground and object of his boasting, the cross of Christ, through which the world has been crucified to him and he to the world in 6:14: ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ κόσμῳ. Here we find three different crucifixions: the crucifixion of Christ, the crucifixion of the world for the believer and the crucifixion of the believer for the world. The latter two crucifixions are dependent upon the first one. This means that in the cross of Christ the world has been condemned for the believer and that the believer therefore no longer exists or lives for the world (cf 2:19). By virtue of the cross of Christ the believer has been completely separated from the world. The key to understanding this is the term 'world'.

The cosmos in 6:14 is a difficult word to define, because it is used in so many different ways in Scripture. But the context of 6:14 is decisive in determining its precise meaning. 6:15 says: 'For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation'. The statement can be seen as the consequence of verse 14, though the former motivates the latter as the γὰρ indicates (Betz 1979:319 n 76). From this relation it becomes apparent that the crucifixion of the world is an event that has made the distinction between circumcision and uncircumcision totally irrelevant. This suggests that the cosmos is a domain in which people put their trust in circumcision for relationship with God (cf Minear 1979:397). It is with the crucifixion of the world that *καὶνὴ κτίσις* comes up. This implies that the world stands in opposition to the new creation. This nature of the world is further reflected in verses 12-13. The people who belong to the world still hold to the earlier significance of circumcision as the sign of the old covenant (cf Gn 17:11), and therefore glory in the circumcised flesh, not in the cross of Christ. For Paul it is they who are under the slavery of the law, flesh, sin and the demonic spirits. Thus we agree with Ridderbos that the world means the 'life-context before and outside Christ', (1975:91), that is, the domain dominated by the old powers. Although it is a space-concept, the world essentially corresponds to the idea of 'this age' (1:4). These two ideas are interchangeable (1Cor 1:20; 3:18-19) -- so the world like this age is an eschatological concept (Bultmann 1951:256). From this world the believer has been liberated by his participation in Christ's crucifixion, and transferred to the kingdom of the Lord.

6. Conclusion

Thus far, we have seen that Paul's whole argument in Galatians is undergirded by his understanding of the cross of Christ in terms of eschatological redemption.

According to Paul, there are two logical (not temporal!) steps in achieving the redemption: first, by becoming a curse for Israel Christ redeemed Israel from the curse of the law; then, the redemption was at the same time and on equal terms extended to the Gentiles, because Israel represented all the nations. Actually the suffering and death of Christ was for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Indeed he is the substitute and representative of all humankind! In him, therefore, the Gentiles can participate in the blessing of Abraham, namely justification by faith. This is confirmed by the fact that the Gentiles received the Spirit of the new age on the basis of faith, not the works of the law (3:1-5). But the people who still place trust in circumcision are under the bondage of the law and all the evil forces of this age. It is my conviction, therefore, that we should adopt this perspective in following Paul's argument in the letter.

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