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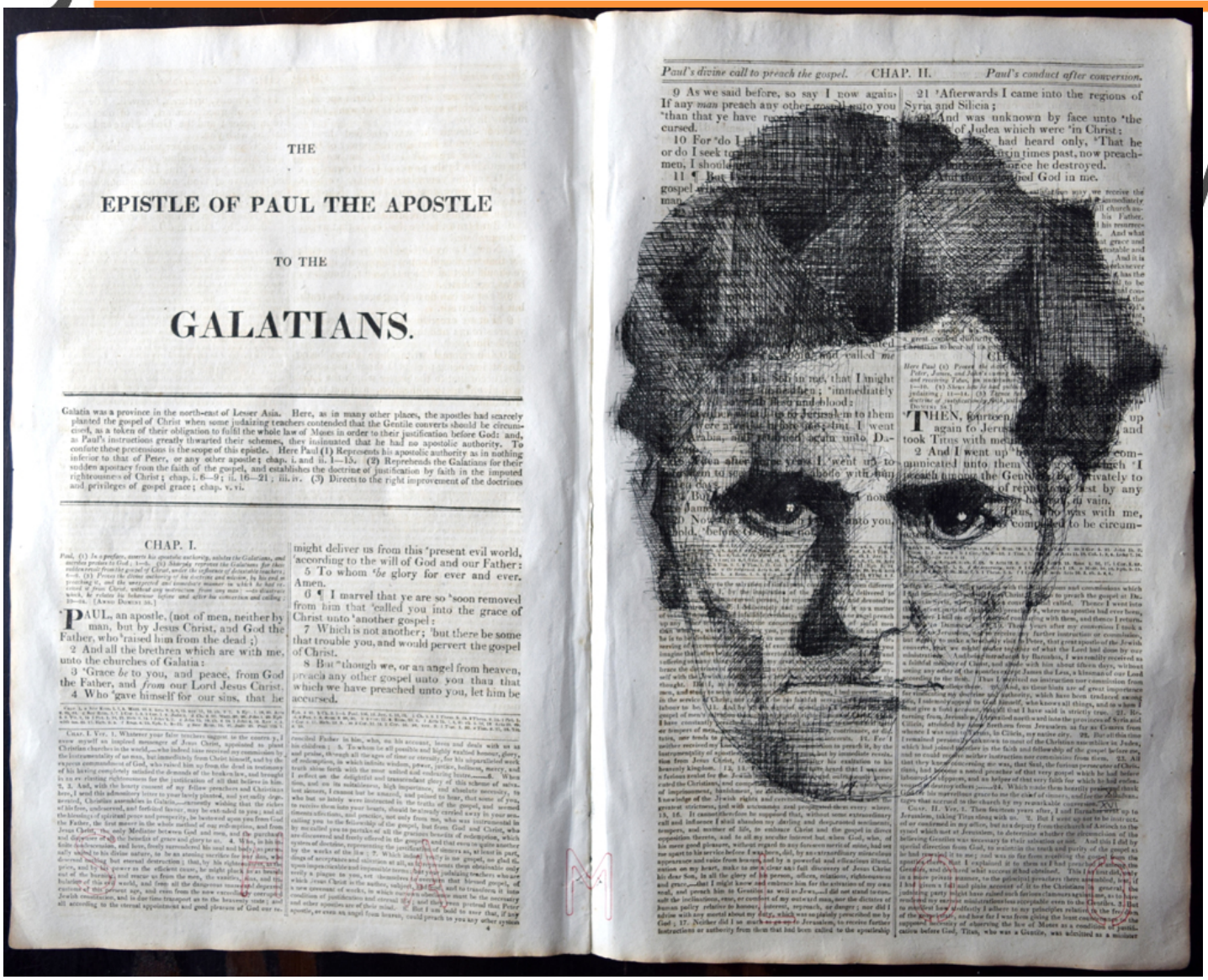

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

GALATIANS.

Galatia was a province in the north-east of Lesser Asia. Here, as in many other places, the apostles had scarcely planted the gospel of Christ when some judaizing teachers contended that the Gentile converts should be circumcised, as a token of their obligation to fulfil the whole law of Moses in order to their justification before God: and, as Paul's instructions greatly thwarted their schemes, they insinuated that he had no apostolic authority. To confute these pretensions is the scope of this epistle. Here Paul (1) Represents his apostolic authority as in nothing inferior to that of Peter, or any other apostle; chap. i. and ii. 1—15. (2) Reprehends the Galatians for their sudden apostacy from the faith of the gospel, and establishes the doctrine of justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ; chap. i. 6—9; ii. 16—21; iii. iv. (3) Directs to the right improvement of the doctrines and privileges of gospel grace; chap. v. vi.

CHAP. I.

Paul, (1) *In a preface, asserts his apostolic authority, salutes the Galatians, and ascribes praises to God.* 3—5. (2) *Sharply reproves the Galatians for their rashness in revolt from the gospel of Christ, under the influence of detestable teachers.* 6—9. (3) *Proves the divine authority of his doctrine and mission, by his end in preaching it, and the unexpected and immediate manner in which he had received it from Christ, without any instruction from any man: with divers things, by relation to behaviour before and after his conversion and calling.* 10—24. (ANNO DOMINI 58.)

PAUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who 'raised him from the dead;)

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

3 'Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who 'gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this 'present evil world, 'according to the will of God and our Father:

5 To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

6 ¶ I marvel that ye are so 'soon removed from him that 'called you into the grace of Christ unto 'another gospel:

7 Which is not another; 'but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

CHAP. I. VER. 1. Whatever your false teachers suggest in the contrary, I avow myself an inspired messenger of Jesus Christ, appointed to plant Christian churches in the world,—who indeed have received my commission by the instrumentality of no men, but immediately from Christ himself, and by the express commandment of God, who raised him up from the dead in testimony of his having completely satisfied the demands of the broken law, and brought to us an eternal righteousness for the justification of all that believe in him. 2, 3. And, with the hearty consent of my fellow preachers and Christians here, I send this admonitory letter to your lately planted, and yet sadly degenerated, Christian assemblies in Galatia,—earnestly wishing that the riches of his free, undeserved, and forfeited favour, may be ever ended to you; and all the blessings of spiritual peace and prosperity, be bestowed upon you from God the Father, the first mover in the whole method of our redemption, and from Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and men, and the purchaser and dispenser of all the benefits of grace and glory to us. 4. Who, in his infinite condescension, and love, freely surrendered his soul and body, as a sacrifice fully adapted to his divine nature, to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins, who deserved nothing but eternal destruction; that, by his righteous sufferings, as the price, and by his power as the efficient cause, he might pluck us as brands out of the burning, and rescue us from the woes, the vanities, sins, and the behaviour of this evil world, and from all the dangerous consequences of degenerate customs of the present age, and even from the new excesses of the corrupted Jewish constitution, and in due time transport us to the heavenly state; and all according to the eternal appointment and good pleasure of God our reconciled Father in him, who, on his account, loves and deals with us as his children: 5. To whom be all possible and highly exalted honour, glory, and praise, through all the ages of time or eternity, for his unparalleled work of redemption, in which infinite wisdom, power, justice, holiness, mercy, and truth shine forth with the most united and endearing lustre.—6. When I reflect on the delightful and transcendent glory of this scheme of salvation, and on its suitableness, high importance, and absolute necessity, to who but so lately were instructed in the truths of the gospel, and seemed to receive them into your hearts, should be already carried away to your own delusive effusions, and practice, not only from me, who was instrumental in calling you to the fellowship of the gospel, but from God and Christ, who are discovered and freely offered in the gospel, and that even to quite another system of doctrine, representing the justification of sinners as, at least in part, by the works of the law: 7. Which indeed really is not gospel, no glad tidings of acceptance and salvation at all, as it never omits those blessed gospel, upon impracticable and impossible terms; but your judaizing teachers who are really a plague to you, set themselves for even now that blessed gospel, which Jesus Christ is the author, subject, and sum, and to transform it into a new covenant of works, in which sinners elsewhere must be the necessary conditions of justification and eternal life; and they even pretend that Peter apostle, or even an angel from heaven, could preach to you any other system

9 As we said before, so say I now again: If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you 'than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For 'do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

11 ¶ But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

21 'Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Silicia;

22 And was unknown by face unto 'the churches of Judea which were 'in Christ:

23 But they had heard only, 'That he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

CHAP. II. VER. 1. Then fourteen years after, I and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem, taking Titus along with us. 2. But I went up not to be instructed or confirmed in my office, but as deputy from the church of Antioch to the synod which met at Jerusalem, to determine whether the circumcision of the believing Gentiles was necessary to their salvation or not. And this I did by special direction from God, to maintain the truth and purity of the gospel as he had revealed it to me; and was so far from examining the gospel from the apostles, that I explained it to them as I had preached it among the Gentiles, and declared what success it had obtained. This I set down, that, in a more private manner, to the principal preachers there assembled, how, if I had given a full and plain account of it to the Christians in general, the judaizing party might have raised such furious clamours against me, as to have rendered my service misunderstood or acceptable even to the Churches. 3. That so mankind how steadfastly I adhere to my principles related in the former part of the epistle, and how far I was from giving the least countenance to the supposed necessity of observing the law of Moses as a condition of justification before God, Titus, who was a Gentile, was admitted as a member