

Lesson 8 | April 24, 2022

Sin, Punishment, and Promised Restoration

Study Text: Jeremiah 8:4–17; 31:31–34

Central Truth: God calls all people to live in obedience to Him.

Key Verse: Jeremiah 31:33

This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people (KJV).

“This is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days,” says the Lord. “I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people” (NLT).

Learning Objectives

- Students will understand the consequences of covenant violation.
- Students will desire to live in obedience as God’s covenant people.
- Students will be called to renew their personal covenant with God.

Introducing the Lesson

Say: Today we will explore Jeremiah’s message of judgment against the nation of Judah for violating its covenant with the Lord. As we read today’s passages, notice how severe the judgments are, and how personal the tone is. This is because a covenant is rooted in bonds of personal loyalty and obligation. To break a covenant is not just to break the Law, but to violate a relationship.

Opening Activity—Today’s Covenants

Ask: What kinds of covenants do people enter into in today’s world? What are the consequences of breaking these covenants? Examples might include marriage, adoptions, home purchases, etc.

Say: Today, many people, including some Christians, do not regard covenantal commitments as binding. They might feel that they are free to do as they please, and that anything limiting their freedom can be ignored. Yet the Bible indicates that God takes covenantal commitments very seriously, and those who are called by God’s name should walk in covenant faithfulness to Him. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

What happens when a nation forgets God? [Jdg 2:10 KJV] 10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

The Old Testament is a record of human failure—including failure in the Garden of Eden, failure prior to the Flood, failure at the Tower of Babel, failure during the time of the Judges, and failure of the monarchy to lead the people in the ways of the Lord. The Book of Jeremiah records events near the end of the kingdom of Judah.

The prophet **confronted** the people with their sinful failure to obey God,

warned of judgment to come,

and also **looked forward** (Good News) to the establishment of a new covenant with a new covenant people whose hearts would be faithful to God.

Part 1—God’s Word Rejected They Follow a Self-Destructive Path

Jeremiah 8:4–6

[Jer 8:4-6 KJV] 4 Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return? 5 Why [then] is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. 6 I hearkened and heard, [but] they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

Say: Sometimes, no matter what we do, we are unable to save the ones we love from the consequences of their choices. Yet, in our hearts we know that we cannot give up on them, and we certainly find no joy in saying, “I told you so.” Jeremiah faced this kind of situation in the days leading up to the fall of the kingdom of Judah. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Nothing is more upsetting than watching someone you love follow a self-destructive path and being helpless to stop it. No matter how much you plead, warn, or reason with them, they stubbornly persist in behaviors and choices that lead to disaster. This may well be how Jeremiah felt when he warned Judah of the consequences of their sin repeatedly, only to find that his words of warning were rejected. Many scholars believe that this prophecy in chapter 8 came at a time late in

Jeremiah's decades-long ministry, after he had spent years pleading with Judah to turn back to God. **Note in verses 4–6 that, amid the Lord's poetic and vivid descriptions, Jeremiah certainly reflected sorrow over their stubbornness in following the way of sin.**

Later Jeremiah lamented, **"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved"** (Jeremiah 8:20, KJV). This is surely one of the saddest verses in the Bible. After years of warning and pleading with the people in passionate sermons marked by tears of compassion, nothing had changed. Now it was only a matter of time until judgment fell. Frustrated, the prophet cried out, **"Is anyone sorry for doing wrong? Does anyone say, 'What a terrible thing I have done?' No! All are running down the path of sin as swiftly as a horse galloping into battle!"** (Jeremiah 8:6, NLT).

Discuss

? How do you think Jeremiah felt watching the people stumble toward certain disaster after years of calling them to repent and not being able to stop it?

? Why do you think some people continue to go down self-destructive paths, knowing what is happening, yet seem unwilling to change course?

They Listen to False Teachers

Jeremiah 8:7–9

[Jer 8:7-9 KJV] 7 Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD. 8 How do ye say, We [are] wise, and the law of the LORD [is] with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he [it]; the pen of the scribes [is] in vain. 9 The wise [men] are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom [is] in them?

Say: An old proverb says, "There is none so blind as those who will not see." This applies to spiritual sight. God has made himself known to humanity, but will they choose to look to Him? (Share your highlights from the following text.)

It has been noted that God reveals himself in "two books:" the book of creation, and the book of Scripture. Theologians refer to the book of creation as "general revelation." Someone has said that God left His fingerprints on the world that He made. Certainly, the ancient sages of Israel believed that one could learn about God by observing creation. They saw that the principles of wisdom were built into the world that God made. "By wisdom the Lord founded the earth; by understanding he created the heavens" (Proverbs 3:19, NLT). **Since the world was founded on wisdom, people can**

observe God’s creation and gain wisdom and understanding from it. Psalm 19:1 declares, “The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship” (NLT). In the New Testament, Paul wrote, **“For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature”** (Romans 1:20, NLT).

Jeremiah pointed to a variety of birds as examples of wise behavior, which the people of God should have recognized, but had not (Jeremiah 8:7). **The birds Jeremiah mentioned know when it is time to migrate and when it is time to return from migration. God has planted it in them. Similarly, Isaiah wrote, “Even an ox knows its owner, and a donkey recognizes its master’s care—but Israel doesn’t know its master. My people don’t recognize my care for them”** (Isaiah 1:3, NLT).

Likewise, the people of Judah needed to open their eyes, see their desperate situation, and know that the only wise thing to do would be to return to God. But sin was blinding them, keeping them from seeing the danger of their situation. Still today, sin blinds people and keeps them going in the wrong direction.

Jeremiah accused the people of Judah of not only ignoring creation, but also rejecting the clear Word of God: **“They do not know the Lord’s laws. How can you say, ‘We are wise because we have the word of the Lord,’ when your teachers have twisted it by writing lies?”** (Jeremiah 8:7–8, NLT). He went on to say, “They have rejected the word of the Lord. Are they so wise after all?” (verse 9, NLT). The word of the Lord that Jeremiah spoke of here is the sacred Torah, the book of the covenant God made with Israel. That book is filled with blessings and curses—blessings if Israel kept the covenant, curses if they did not (Deuteronomy 28). **Jeremiah saw clearly that Israel was on the pathway to covenant curses, but the people were ignorant, content to follow the way of sin without regard to consequences. They had rejected the Word of the Lord, and now, trapped in their rebellious state, and could no longer hear the Word of the Lord.**

Discuss

? Why do people who have known the truth about God sometimes willfully reject it, even while admitting that it is true?

? Someone once said that “while the truth about God is convincing, it is not coercive.” What do you think that means? Do you agree? Explain.

Part 2—Consequences of Rejecting God’s Word Misled With False Hope (Cheap Grace)

Jeremiah 8:10–14

[Jer 8:10-14 KJV] 10 Therefore will I give their wives unto others, [and] their fields to them that shall inherit [them]: for every one from the

least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. 11 For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when [there is] no peace. 12 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. 13 I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: [there shall be] no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and [the things that] I have given them shall pass away from them. 14 Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

Say: Sadly, there have always been people who were willing to compromise the Word of God for personal gain, popularity, or other motivations. This makes the task of those who are preaching the truth that much harder—and that much more important. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Jeremiah's contemporaries persisted in their sins despite his warnings. They were even encouraged to do so by the prophets and priests of Judah (Jeremiah 8:10). Jeremiah confronted these men for leading the people astray, thus preventing repentance by promising them “peace when there is no peace” (verse 11, NLT). **Their false teaching was like a drug that deadened them to the reality of the symptoms without removing the underlying illness. So, that sickness of sin grew worse while the “patient” was unaware that the medicine he thought would help him was, in truth, a cup of deadly poison (verse 14).**

There are many similarities between the problems of Jeremiah's day and the problems of ours. Today there are individuals who are willing to ease people's consciences for a price. **Instead of preaching a message designed to lead people to repentance, they preach a gospel of personal improvement designed to make people feel better about themselves. When they should be exhorting people to repent and “flee from the wrath to come” (Matthew 3:7, KJV), they soothe consciences by telling people that they are fine just as they are. They preach a kind of “cheap grace”; that is, grace without the Cross and without repentance. Because false teachers do not preach the whole gospel, people adopt the attitude that they are entitled to God's forgiveness without any response on their part. This is a deadly delusion!**

Discuss

? How can we distinguish between those who are preaching the Word of God faithfully and those who are not?

? Why do you think deception succeeds? What can we do to ensure that we stay faithful to God and are not led astray by those who distort the truth?

A Grim Future

Jeremiah 8:15–17

[Jer 8:15-17 KJV] 15 We looked for peace, but no good [came; and] for a time of health, and behold trouble! 16 The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein. 17 For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which [will] not [be] charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.

Say: The fall of the kingdom of Judah was not a sudden collapse. Rather, it was the culmination of generations of spiritual apathy and rebellion. The Bible is clear that God gave His people ample opportunity to repent, but they refused. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Resource Packet Item 1: Discerning the Truth

Distribute the work sheet and divide your class into small groups. Read the opening paragraph, then assign each small group one of the Scripture passages. After 3–5 minutes, bring the class back together to share their comparisons.

What brought God’s chosen people to this place, where judgment was imminent (Jeremiah 8:15–17)? The answer can be found in Deuteronomy. When God formalized His covenant with Israel, He included blessings and curses—blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. Among those curses was the threat of exile if Israel refused to repent. God foresaw that His people would not live up to its covenant obligations and would someday go into exile. “In the future, when you experience all these blessings and curses I have listed for you, and when you are living among the nations to which the Lord your God has exiled you, take to heart all these instructions” (Deuteronomy 30:1, NLT).

[Deu 30:1 KJV] 1 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call [them] to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,

One of the hard truths of Scripture is that, **from a human standpoint, the Old Testament comes to a close on a kind of spiritual failure.** God had chosen a people

for himself, established a covenant with them, given them a land, a kingdom, and a chosen dynasty. **He had also given them sacred texts with truths and revelations granted to no other people on earth. Yet, as the Old Testament draws to a close, we see God's people with no kingdom, no king, and no empire. Even after they returned from Babylonian captivity they were desperately in need of renewal and hope.**

Resource Packet Item 2: The Message of the Prophets

Distribute the information sheet. Explain that Jeremiah was among what are called the “Classical Prophets”; the central message of these prophets was “transformation beyond judgment.” After the students have had a chance to read through the information, see if they have any questions concerning the judgment, exile, or new remnant after the exile.

Jeremiah was a messenger of what was coming. Like many prophets before him, he had warned the people of the consequences of covenant violations. His descriptions of the coming reckoning were graphic. He did not mince words. If the people had paid attention they would have recognized the coming of the “enemies’ warhorses” and the “neighing of their stallions” (Jeremiah 8:16, NLT). In a prophecy reminiscent of the fiery serpents God sent against Israel during one of their rebellions in the desert (Numbers 21:4–9), Jeremiah warned his hearers that they would be bitten by venomous “snakes you cannot charm” (verse 17, NLT).

Discuss

? What parallels do you see between the situation Jeremiah faced in his day, and the situation of our world today?

? Hosea wrote, “They have planted the wind and will harvest the whirlwind” (Hosea 8:7, NLT). How does this apply Jeremiah’s hearers?

Part 3—New Covenant Promised

A New Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31–32

[Jer 31:31-32 KJV] 31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

Say: It is not an overstatement to say that the Book of Jeremiah contains much sadness, and the prophet delivered the news of God's impending judgment. However, Jeremiah's prophecy also included words of promise for the future. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

While the Old Testament ended on a sad note of spiritual failure, that would not be the end of the story. Jeremiah proclaimed that God would establish a new covenant, which will succeed where the first one fell short. He wrote that the new covenant "will not be like the one I made with their ancestors" (Jeremiah 31:32, NLT). In the New Testament, Paul distinguished the new covenant from the Mosaic covenant, likening it to God's covenants with Abraham and David. Paul cited Abraham as an example of salvation bestowed, not as wages earned, but as a free gift (Romans 4:4). Paul also cited David, who "also spoke ... of those who are declared righteous without working for it" (verse 6, NLT; see Psalm 32:1–2).

This distinction fits with what scholars have noted about the difference between the Mosaic, Abrahamic, and Davidic covenants. The Mosaic covenant fits into the mold of the ancient Hittite suzerainty covenant, which is conditional and is predicated on ongoing loyalty and obedience of the king's vassal. The Abrahamic and Davidic covenants fit into the category of the "covenant of grant," which is an unconditional gift bestowed by the vassal's lord, and is based on the lord's goodwill going forward. Likewise, **the new covenant is predicated on what God has done, not what people will do. The gospel focuses on what Jesus did for humanity.**

Jesus made this clear at the Last Supper (Luke 22:20) when He declared that the new covenant between the greater (God) and the lesser (His people) was confirmed through His sacrificial death.

Discuss

? How would you describe what it is like to have a relationship with God under the new covenant?

? Read Hebrews 8:6. In what way or ways is the new covenant, mediated by Jesus, based on better promises than the old covenant?

A New People

Jeremiah 31:33–34

[Jer 31:33-34 KJV 33 But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no

more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Say: As sinful people, we are incapable of living up to God's perfect standard. Any covenant that depends on the faithfulness of sinners is doomed to fail. This is part of why we rejoice in the new covenant. According to 2 Corinthians 3:6, it is a covenant of the Spirit. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

The fault with the old covenant was not with the covenant itself, but with the sinful nature of the people to whom it was given. In the words of Paul, "So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin" (Romans 7:14, NLT). Jeremiah prophesied that, under the new covenant, the law of God would be written on human hearts, not on tablets of stone (Jeremiah 31:33). **Because of Christ's sacrifice, the Holy Spirit resides in our hearts, making God's Law a part of our very being. Note that Paul wrote that the just requirements of God's Law are "fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit" (Romans 8:4, NLT).** When believers walk in the Spirit, they naturally are drawn to seek, obey and please God. The fact that the new covenant is not based on works or human achievement does not mean that it is lawless or unholy. **New covenant believers seek to obey the greatest command of Scripture: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength"** (Deuteronomy 6:5, NLT; see also Mark 12:30). In doing so we fulfill the true intent of the Law.

Resource Packet Item 3: What's New About the New Covenant?

Distribute the work sheet and divide the class into small groups. Assign a section to each group and give them time to answer, then report to the class.

Discuss

? What are some ways in which new covenant believers might behave as though they are living under the old covenant?

? How does the promise that "anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NLT) fit with the promise of the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:33–34?

What Is God Saying to Us?

Say: God's plan of redemption focuses on redeeming a covenant people who will do His will and bring Him glory. Tragically, God's people of Jeremiah's day were not faithful to keep God's covenant. They rebelled and suffered catastrophic judgment as a result. Nevertheless, God provided for a new covenant, which was designed to succeed where the previous one had fallen short. As people of the new covenant, we have been given the presence of the Holy Spirit to enable us to be faithful to our covenant Lord.

Living It Out

Ministry in Action

- Take time this week to give thanks to God for the grace He offers in bringing you into His family.
- Take inventory of the areas in your life where you may be ignoring God's correction.
- Pray for those in your family and community who do not know Jesus as Savior.

Daily Bible Readings

Monday:

Expelled From the Garden.
Genesis 3:14–24

[Gen 3:14-24 KJV] 14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou [art] cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed [is] the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat [of] it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return. 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Tuesday:

Excluded From the Promised Land.
Numbers 20:2–13

[Num 20:2-13 KJV] 2 And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. 3 And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! 4 And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there? 5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it [is] no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of

pomegranates; neither [is] there any water to drink. 6 And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them. 7 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 8 Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. 9 And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. 10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? 11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts [also]. 12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. 13 This [is] the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them.

Wednesday:

Rejected as King.

1 Samuel 15:1–3,10–11,24–29

[1Sa 15:1-3, 10-11, 24-29 KJV] 1 Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee [to be] king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD. 2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember [that] which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid [wait] for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. 3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. ... 10 Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, 11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul [to be] king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night. ... 24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. 25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD. 26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. 27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. 28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, [that is] better than thou. 29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he [is] not a man, that he should repent.

Thursday:

Escape From Death.

John 8:48–51

[Jhn 8:48-51 KJV] 48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? 49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. 50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. 51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

Friday:

Loved by God.
John 14:15–24

[Jhn 14:15-24 KJV] 15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 [Even] the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20 At that day ye shall know that I [am] in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. 21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. 22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

Saturday:

Persevere in the Faith.
Galatians 5:1–6

[Gal 5:1-6 KJV] 1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. 2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.