

GOD'S PERFECTION SHOWN IN HISTORY

December 22, 2013

Galatians 4:1-22

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Galatians 4:4, 5

This text is the core of the book of Galatians. It is also summit of history. In Galatians, everything preceding it leads toward it, describing God's working to bring about "the fulness of the time." When that time came, Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, fulfilling God's purposes.

Everything following the statement describes the difference made by Christ's birth; differences in man's understanding of God and standing before God, and differences resulting from this new standing.

Christ's coming fulfilled these purposes:

1:4 "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might **deliver us from this present evil world.**"

2:15, 16 "When it pleased God . . . to reveal his Son" unto the Gentiles, Christ came, in "the fulness of the time." This had been a mystery hidden from men and angels (Eph. 1:9, 10; 3:3-11; I Pet. 1:10-12). Paul knew that the timing of his own birth was determined by God to advance this purpose.

3:8 The Old Testament, "foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gen. 12:3).

3:19 The Law was "added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." This affirms a temporary role for the Law. It (1) could not make man righteous (3:21); (2) showed all to be sinners (3:22); and (3) was therefore a curse (3:13). These conditions bound men until Christ, whose coming would constitute "the fulness of the time."

3:24 "The law was our schoolmaster," literally, the servant who would bring mankind to his one and only instructor, Jesus Christ.

4:2 "The time appointed of the father" was "the fulness of the time." God had appointed this time, thus it had to come. All things served the coming of "the fulness of the time."

These purposes anticipated the coming of Christ and "the fullness of the time." That time had to come, for it was foreordained by God. It was the means to "redeem them that were under the law" and by which "we might receive the adoption of sons;" and receive the Holy Spirit to assure us that we are the children and heirs of God (4:5-7; Rom. 8:15-17).