

Jews, and with primary reference to certain wants of the age in which the writers lived, they are full of allusions, references, customs, and beliefs, which have long since passed away or have become greatly modified. There are also in the New Testament allusions to customs of which there is no knowledge whatever preserved.

But far more important is it to observe the habits of thought, the whole mental attitude of the Apostolic age, and the change which has since come upon the world. Truths remain the same ; but every age has its own style of thought. Although this difference is not so great as is the difference between one language and another, it is yet so great as to require restatement or, as it were, translation. The truth which Paul argues to the Romans is as important for us as it was for them. But we are not Jews.¹ We care nothing for circumcision. The Hebrew law has never entangled us. We have our prejudices and obstinacies, but they are not the same as those which the Apostle combated. The truth of the Epistle to the Romans, when separated from the stalk and ear on which it grew, is of universal nutriment. But in Paul's own day the stem and the husk also were green and succulent ; they were living and indispensable parts of his statement of the truth. Far less is this distinction applicable to the Gospels, and yet it is, in a measure, true of them.

Our age has developed wants no deeper, perhaps, nor more important, than those in the Apostolic age,

¹ Jews were dispersed through all the civilized world, and in general, both in Greek and Roman cities, there were synagogues, in which the Old Testament Scriptures were read, and in which the Apostles made known to their own countrymen the fulfilment of those Scriptures in the history of our Lord. See Acts 28 : 16 - 24.