§ uJ FOR WHAT READERS, &. — [unrroptcrion.   
   
 Colossian Church. Thus they would be dependent on and attached to   
 the Apostle, many of them personally acquainted with him and with his   
 colleagues in the ministry. This may also have been the case with   
 them at Laodicea and them at Hierapolis, and thus Pauline Churches   
 sprung up here and there in Asia, while the Apostle confined himself   
 to his central post at Ephesus, where, owing to the concourse to the   
 temple, and the communication with Europe, he found so much and   
 worthy occupation.   
 8. I believe that this hypothesis will account for the otherwise strange   
 phenomena of our Epistle, on which Lardner and others have laid   
 stress, as implying that St. Paul had been among them: for their per-   
 sonal regard for him, and his expressions of love to them: for his using,   
 respecting Epaphras, language hardly seeming to fit the proximate   
 founder of their Church:—for the salutations and counter salutations.   
 9. The enquiry into the occasion and object of this Epistle will be   
 very nearly connected with that respecting the state of the Colossian   
 Church, as disclosed in it.   
 10. It will be evident to the most cursory reader, that there had   
 sprung up in that Church a system of erroneous teaching, whose ten-   
 dency it was to disturb the spiritual freedom and peace of the Colos-   
 sians by ascetic regulations: to divide their worship by inculeating   
 reverence to angels, and thus to detract from the supreme honour of   
 Christ.   
 11. We are not left to infer respecting the class of religionists to   
 which these teachers belonged: for the mention of new moons and sab-   
 baths in ch. ii. 16, at once characterizes them as Judaizers, and leads us   
 to the then prevalent forms of Jewish philosophy, to trace them. Not   
 that these teachers were merely Jews; they were Christians: but their   
 fault was, the attempt to mix with the free and spiritual Gospel of   
 Christ the theosophy and angelology of the Jews of their time, in which   
 they had probably been brought up. Of such theosophy and angelology   
 we find ample traces in the writings of Philo, and in the notices of the   
 Jewish sect of the Essenes given us by Josephus, who tells us, among   
 other things, that the Essenes took an oath to conceal the names of the   
 angels.   
 12. It does not seem necessary to mark out very strictly the position   
 of these persons as included within the limits of this or that sect known   
 among the Jews: they were infected with the ascetic and theosophic   
 notions of the Jews of their day, who were abundant in Phrygia\*: and   
 they were attempting to mix up these notions with the external holding   
 of Christianity.   
 2 Alexander the Great is related by Josephus to have sent, in consequence of the   
 disaffection of Lydia and Phrygia, two thousand Mesopotamian and Babylonian Jews   
 to garrison the towns.   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
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