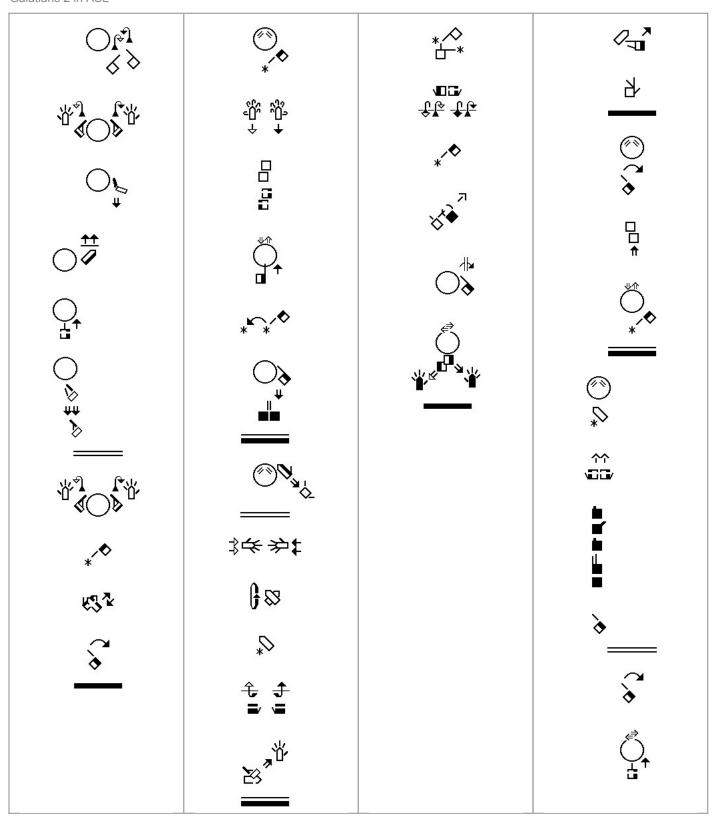
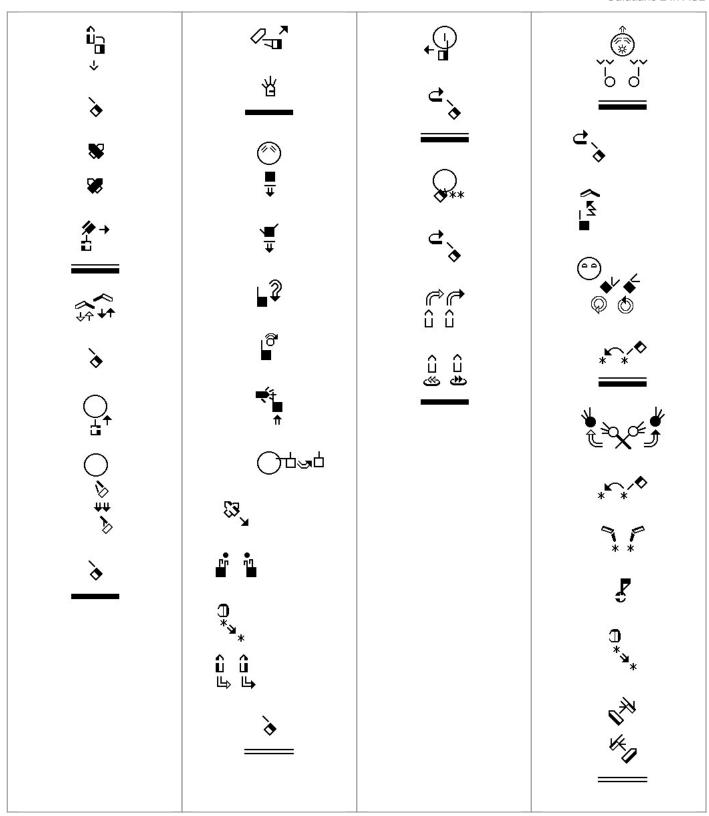


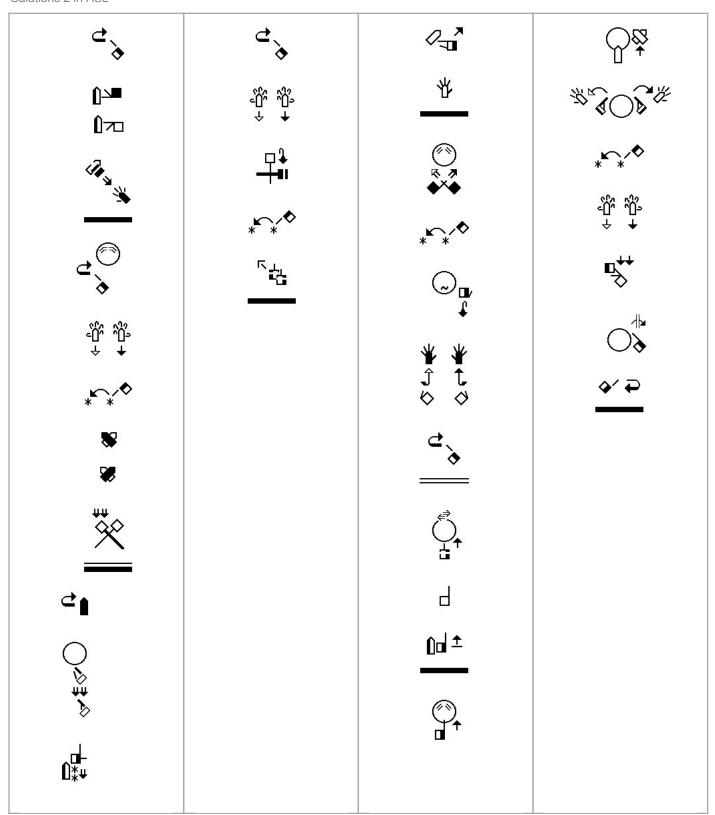
Chapter 2. Then fourteen years later I went back to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas; and Titus came along, too. Verse 2. I went there because God revealed to me that I should go. While I was there I met privately with those considered to be leaders of the church



and shared with them the message I had been preaching to the Gentiles. I wanted to make sure that we were in agreement, for fear that all my efforts had been wasted and I was running the race for nothing. Verse 3. And they supported me and did not NLT

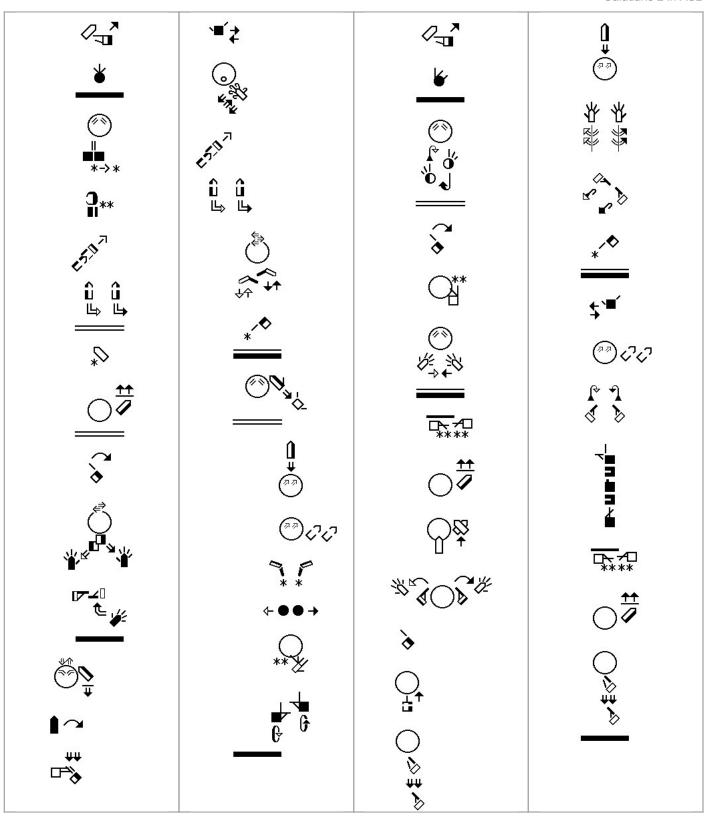


even demand that my companion Titus be circumcised, though he was a Gentile. Verse 4. Even that question came up only because of some so-called Christians there -- false ones, really -- who were secretly brought in. They sneaked in to spy on us and take away the freedom we have in Christ Jesus.

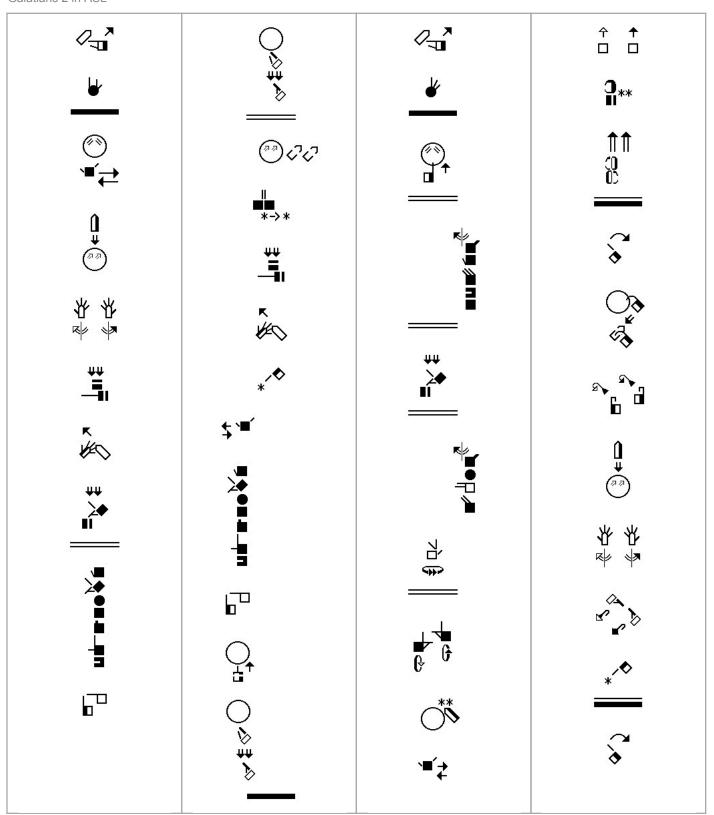


They wanted to enslave us and force us to follow their Jewish regulations. Verse 5. But we refused to give in to them for a single moment. We wanted to preserve the truth of the gospel message for you.

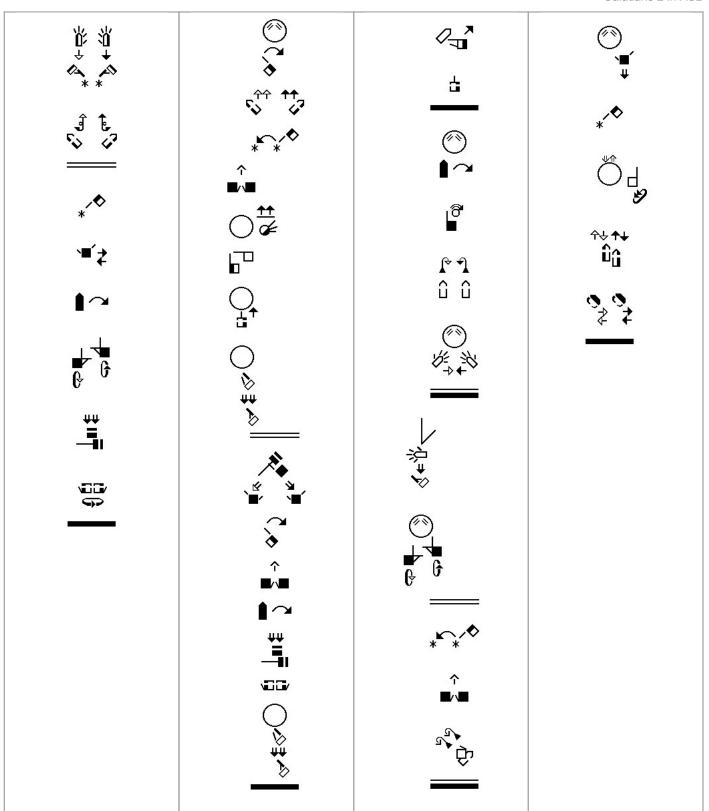
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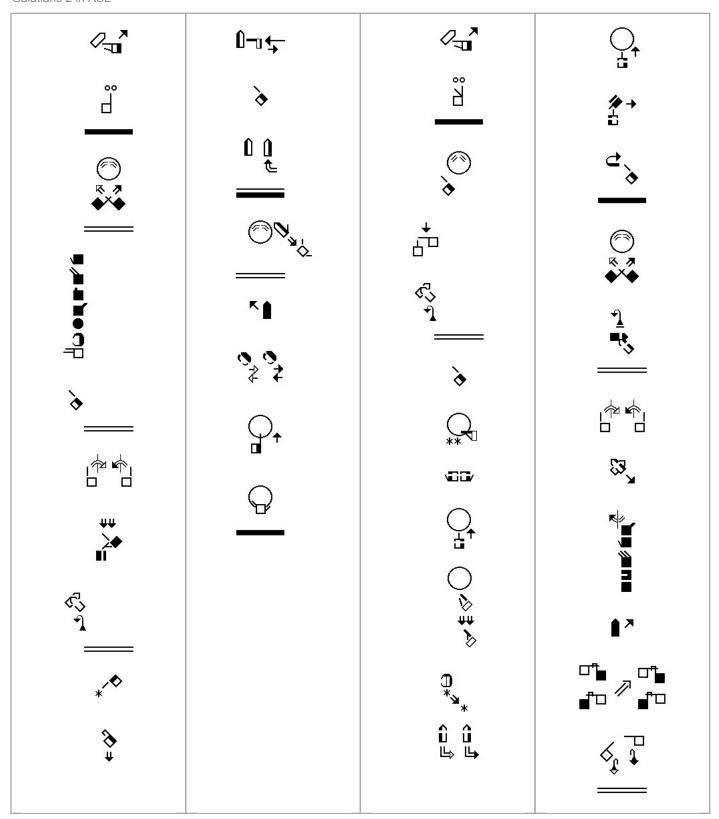
Verse 6. And the leaders of the church had nothing to add to what I was preaching. (By the way, their reputation as great leaders made no difference to me, for God has no favorites.) Verse 7. Instead, they saw that God had given me the responsibility of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as he had given Peter the responsibility of preaching to the Jews.



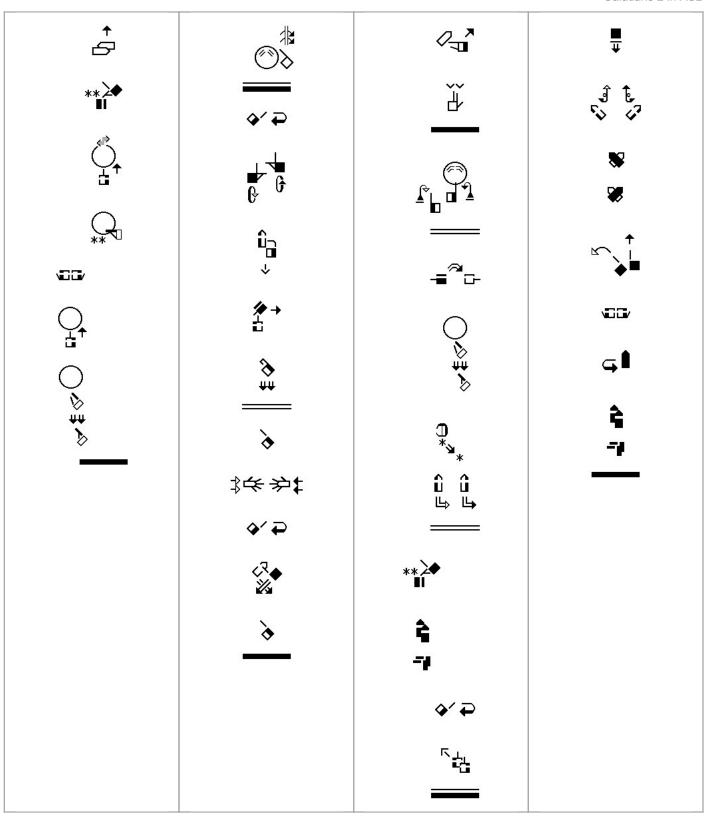
Verse 8. For the same God who worked through Peter as the apostle to the Jews also worked through me as the apostle to the Gentiles. Verse 9. In fact, James, Peter, and John, who were known as pillars of the church, recognized the gift God had given me, and they



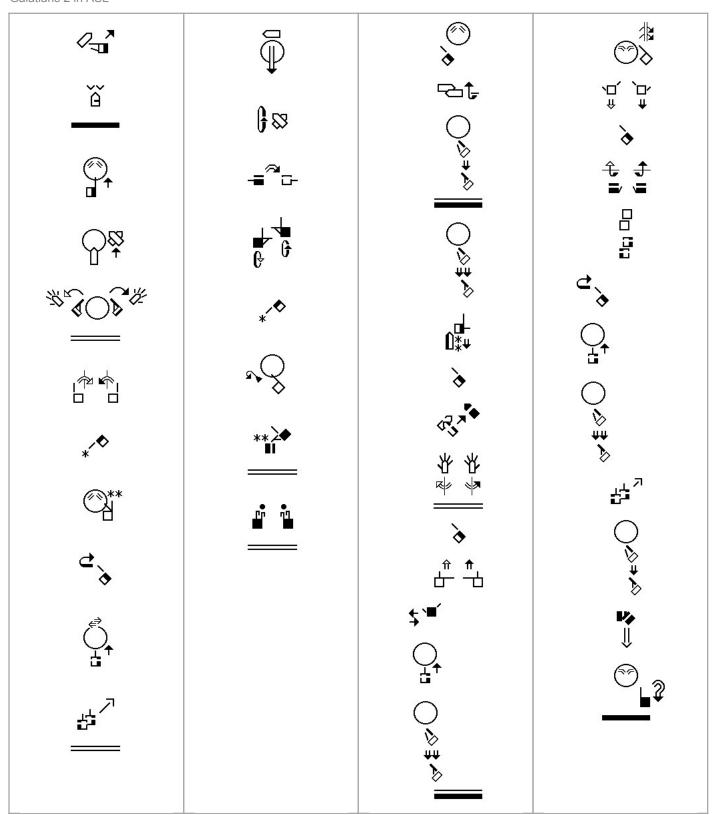
accepted Barnabas and me as their co-workers. They encouraged us to keep preaching to the Gentiles, while they continued their work with the Jews. Verse 10. Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do. NLT



Verse 11. But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very wrong. Verse 12. When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile Christians, who were not circumcised. But afterward, when some friends of James came, NLT

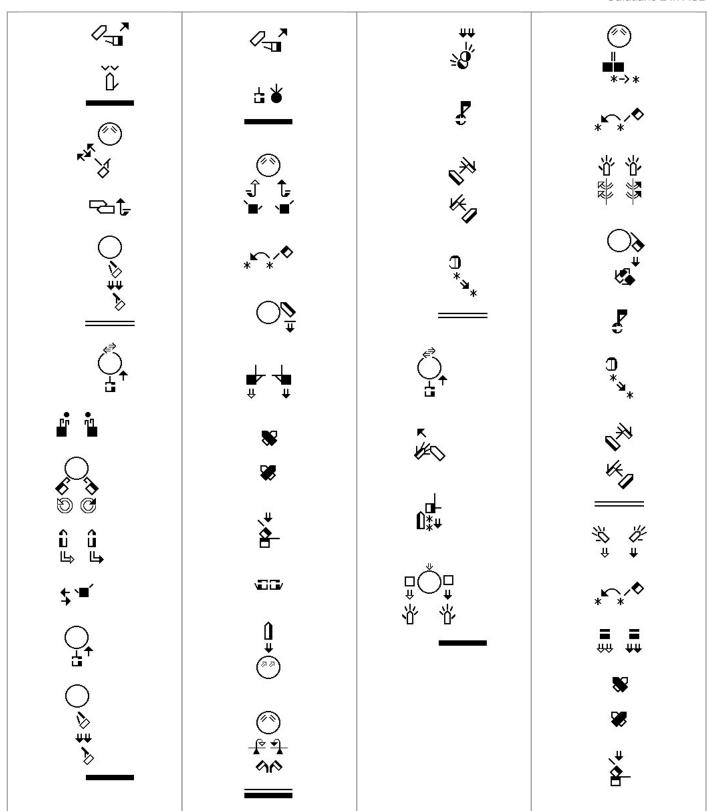


Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from these people who insisted on the necessity of circumcision. Verse 13. As a result, other Jewish Christians followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

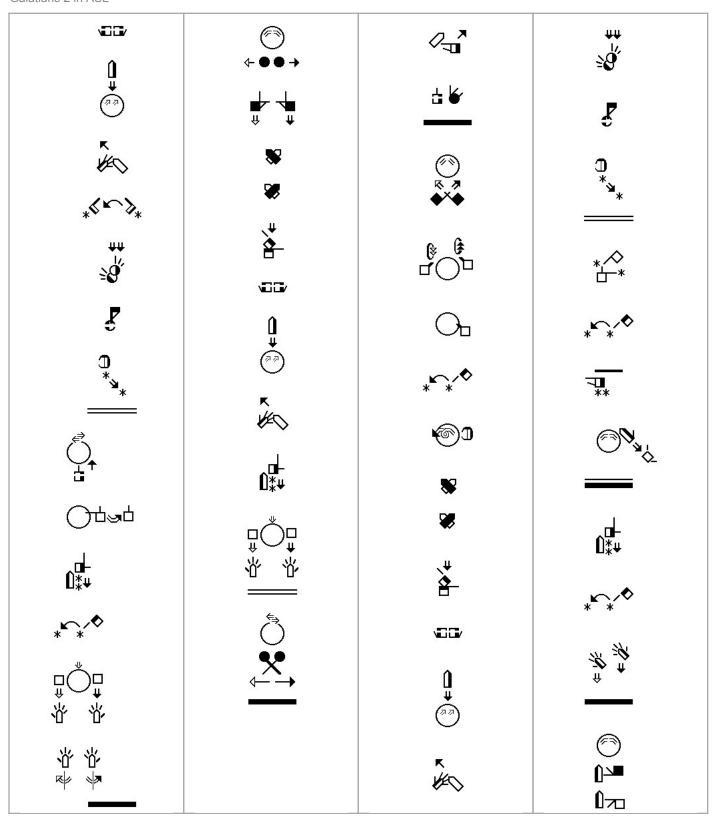


Verse 14. When I saw that they were not following the truth of the gospel message, I said to Peter in front of all the others, "Since you, a Jew by birth, have discarded the Jewish laws and are living like a Gentile, why are you now trying to make these Gentiles follow the Jewish traditions?

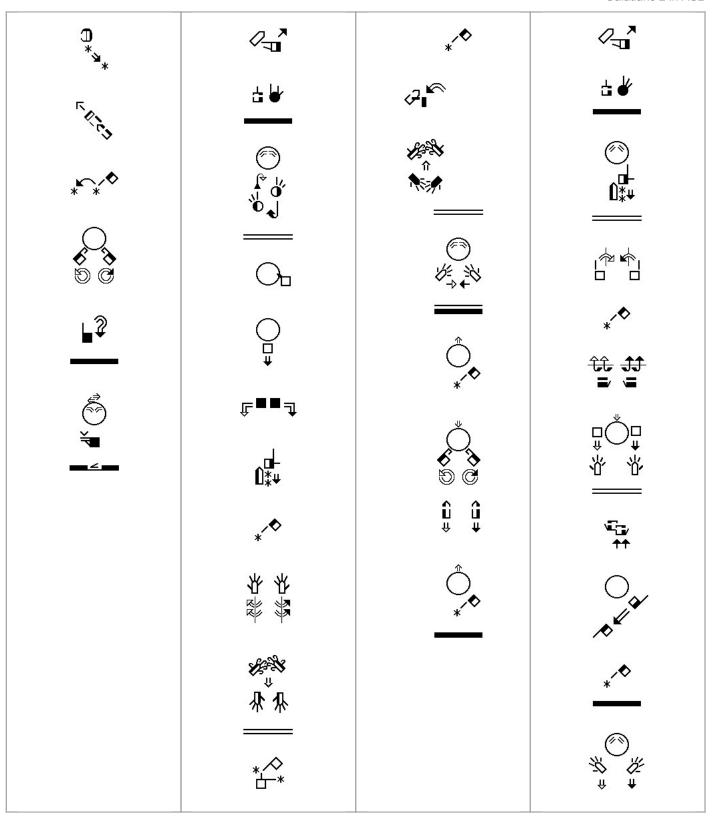
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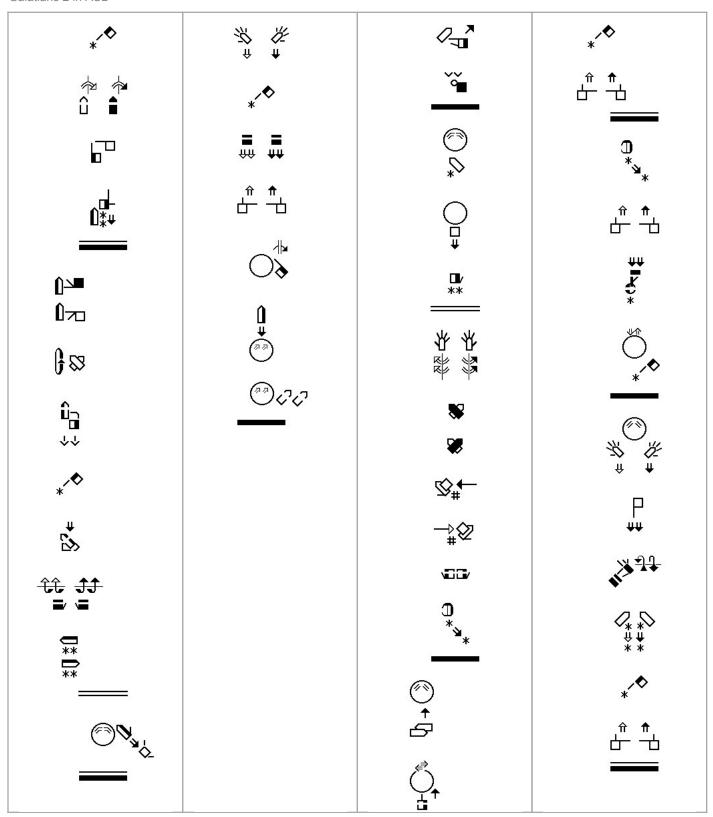
Verse 15. "You and I are Jews by birth, not 'sinners' like the Gentiles. Verse 16. Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law. And we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be made right NLT



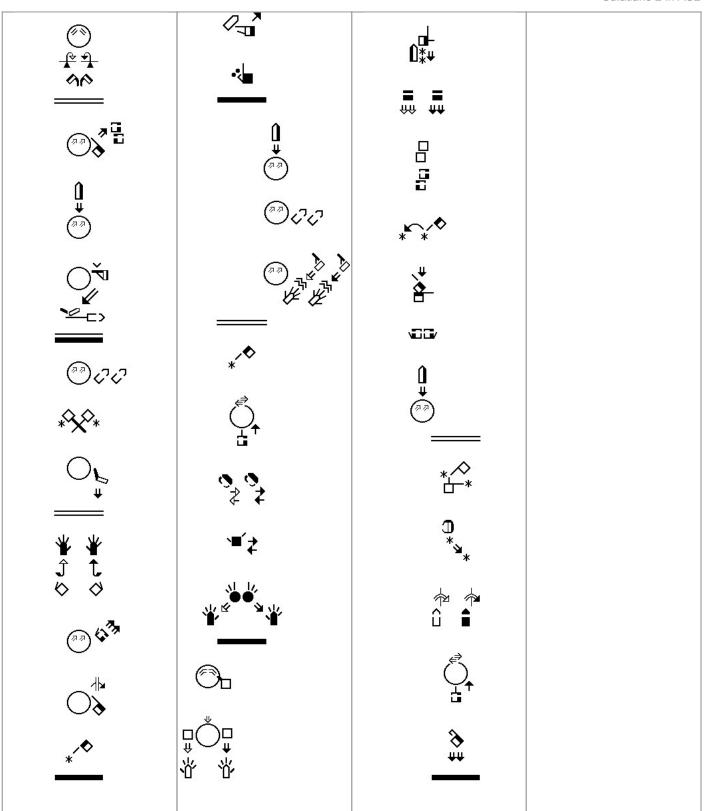
with God because of our faith in Christ, not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be made right with God by obeying the law." Verse 17. But suppose we seek to be made right with God through faith in Christ and then we are found guilty because we have abandoned the law. Would that mean



Christ has led us into sin? Absolutely not! Verse 18. Rather, I am a sinner if I rebuild the old system of law I already tore down. Verse 19. For when I tried to keep the law, it condemned me. So



I died to the law -- I stopped trying to meet all its requirements -- so that I might live for God. Verse 20. My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body NLT



by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Verse 21. I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.