

Section 6, Galatians 4:8-5:1

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Outline of Galatians Chapters 3-4

Section 4

The Gentiles can also believe – Galatians 3:1-3:9

We are delivered from the curse of the man-made laws – Galatians 3:10-14

The Whole World Will Be Blessed by Abraham – Galatians 3:15-18

Section 5

Life came through the law – Galatians 3:19-21

All need to believe in the Messiah – Galatians 3:22-28

We are heirs through the Messiah – Galatians 3:29-4:7

***Section 6 – This Section**

Observing man-made laws is idolatry – Galatians 4:8-12

Accept what I am teaching – Galatians 4:13-18

Our commandments come from God – 4:19-5:1

Let's begin with a little review. To skip the review, go to down to the explanations for section 6 on page 3 starting with Galatians 4:8.

Section 4, Galatians 3:1-3:18 Review

In chapter 3 of Galatians, Shaul (Paul) begins by making points about the extra misapplied laws.

Yeshua died for both Jew and Gentile and it wasn't the misapplied laws that gave us the Holy Spirit.

The misapplied laws don't perfect us, but the Holy Spirit can help us. One of the purposes the Messiah came was to get rid of the extra misapplied laws. Do those who lead you do miracles through a man-made religious system or by the Holy Spirit?

Abraham had faith and lived right (was righteous) before he was circumcised, so why can't the Gentiles live right? Our faith makes us children of Abraham and the faith of the Gentiles also makes them right with God when they live right. God prophesied to Abraham that the world would be blessed through him and that included the Gentiles. All believers in the true God are blessed through Abraham.

The scriptures say that those who don't keep the law (the Torah) are cursed. No one is made just by only doing laws without faith. A person who lives justly also must have faith. Doing laws doesn't require faith and those who do the law will receive its benefits.

But we are cursed for adding man-made laws. The Messiah has delivered us from being cursed because of our adherence to man-made laws. His death on a tree was a substitute death that released us from the religious system of man-made laws which caused us to be cursed. Since the man-made laws were keeping the Gentiles outside the community of believers, both Jew and Gentile can now realize the blessing of Abraham through Yeshua the Messiah and receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by our faith.

Legal agreements cannot be changed and a promise was made to Abraham that the whole world would be blessed through him – this blessing came through the Messiah Yeshua. Because it was an agreement made to Abraham it cannot be annulled and the Mt. Sinai law did not annul it. The promise has become in effect with the coming of the Messiah and cannot become voided. The promise given to Abraham didn't come from the law, but was given to Abraham.

Section 5, Galatians 3:19-4:7 Review

Then beginning in Galatians 3:19, Shaul (Paul) says we needed the law to keep us from sin until the Messiah came. The law is not against what God promised because the law can give life and right living can come through the law.

We have become free from slavery to sin and are now slaves of God. We were guarded by the Torah which kept us for faith in the Messiah. The law was our guide to help us live like the Messiah so we could live justly by faith. We believe and receive the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is our guide to help us apply the Torah. We are children of God because of our faith in the Messiah Yeshua. We have been immersed in the Holy Spirit so that we can follow the Messiah and imitate Him. All can believe in the Messiah, Jews, Greeks, slaves, or free people. We are a group of believers in the Messiah; all need to believe in the Messiah.

We are heirs through the Messiah, heirs of Abraham's promise, and helped by the Holy Spirit. We were under our guardian the law until a set time (from God the Father). We were slaves to the worldly man-made laws and not to our Father God. God sent His Son into the world born of a woman and into a system of law that included man-made laws. God purchased those under the slavery of the system of misapplied man-made laws and made us His adopted children. Through His adoption, God gave us the Holy Spirit and our hearts no longer call out as slaves to misapplied laws, but to our dear Father God.

Shaul says he labored so we can live like the Messiah lived. His labor brought about their rebirth so they could follow God's commandments with the help of the Holy Spirit. Shaul says he wonders about them; do they want to follow a system of man-made laws; do they want to give audience to those who teach these man-made laws?

Abraham had two sons; one was from a slave, Hagar, and the other was a from a free woman, Isaac. The one that was from the slave was not the child of promise, but the one from the free woman was the child of promise. Shaul says he is using symbolism. The one covenant has led to a system of man-made laws and to bondage which Shaul refers to as Hagar. Hagar corresponds to the religious system of man-made laws in Jerusalem which produces bondage in its followers.

The heavenly Jerusalem does not teach a system of man-made laws, but laws from God and is our true mother. This is our true future inheritance. We are the family of Isaac and the true children of promise. The one who persecuted the believers of the past were those of the flesh. Just like it was back then, so it is today. Those who follow fleshy man-made laws persecute the true believers born again of the Spirit. The scriptures say to cast out the bondwoman with her son; don't be part of the system of man-made laws and don't listen to those who are trying to impose them on you.

We are not a Jewish family (brethren – Shaul was Jewish) from the slave, but of the free; so, don't be followers of man-made laws, but instead follow God's commandments. Be firm then not to follow misapplied man-made laws. The Messiah has made us free from the system that made us slaves, so don't be tangled up with the laws that enslave us.

The summaries at the end of each section **are not intended to be a translation**, but intended to integrate the correct understanding from the text. I used the New King James Version to study Galatians because I can see a corresponding English word translated from each Greek word used in the Greek text (the Greek

text is made by consensus from manuscripts and then translated into English).¹ This allows me to find the **ancient context which is immersed in a Jewish biblical context.**

Here is a possible good way to use this resource:

Read the scripture for that part

Read the Explanation

Answer the questions at the end (answers are provided).

*Some of us have learned Galatians without its context and don't understand it properly. Memorize some of the points of context so you can remember what the sections are really about. Be able to explain them to someone.

Observing man-made laws is idolatry – Galatians 4:8-12	
Explanation	New King James Version
Galatians 4:8 Before you knew God, you incorrectly served gods (made by man), not the true God. They didn't serve the true God in the true natural way. ² The believers include Jews, Gentiles, slaves, and free people (Galatians 3:28). Shaul is not just talking to Gentiles who used to practice idolatry. Galatians is to the Galatian assemblies ³ (believers) as a whole (Galatians 1:2). Shaul compares man-made laws to idols. The Jews would consider this section a stinging rebuke.	Galatians 4:8 But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods.
Galatians 4:9 Now that you know God or much better, are known by God, why are you going back to weak (human) principles (things made by man) . ⁴ Do you desire doing things which bring you into bondage? Weak principles and bondage must be man-made laws because they are not God's principles and the context is now about gods (made up by man).	Galatians 4:9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?
Galatians 4:10 They were observing man-made laws concerning days, months, seasons, and years (context).	Galatians 4:10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.
Galatians 4:11 He is alarmed ⁵ that he may have worked for them for no purpose (in vain).	Galatians 4:11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

¹ Of course, the translators also readjust the word order as the Greek text does not translate exactly as the English translation. Also, they try to make for an easy word flow by substituting repetitive words in the Greek to give the translation a better feel, but they don't tell us what the contextual issues were.

² g5449. φύσις physis; one of its meanings for the word nature in this verse is "native disposition;" [Enhanced Strong's Dictionary](#).

³ The word translated church just means an assembly. In Acts 19:32, there was a church (assembly) of unbelievers. It is the same word used for church in other places.

⁴ g4747. στοιχείον stoicheion; the word element can also be translated principle; [Enhanced Strong's Dictionary](#).

⁵ g5399. φοβέω phobeō; alarmed is also a meaning for the word translated afraid; [Enhanced Strong's Dictionary](#).

Galatians 4:12 Shaul says that the believers (particularly the Gentile believers) should become like him; he became like them. He no longer observes man-made laws. He wants them to know they haven't upset him.	Galatians 4:12 Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all.
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Explanation Summary of Galatians 4:8-12

Observing man-made laws is idolatry – Galatians 4:8-12

Galatians 4:8

Before you knew God, you incorrectly **served gods (made by man)**, not the true God. They didn't serve the true God in the true natural way.

Galatians 4:9

Now that you know God or much better, are known by God, why are you going back to weak (human) principles (**things made by man**). Do you desire doing things which bring you into bondage?

Galatians 4:10

You are **observing man-made laws** concerning days, months, seasons, and years (context).

Galatians 4:11

Shaul is alarmed that he may have worked for them for no purpose (in vain).

Galatians 4:12

Shaul says that the believers (particularly the Gentile believers) should become like him; he became like them. He no longer observes man-made laws.

Accept what I am teaching – Galatians 4:13-18	
Explanation	New King James Version
Galatians 4:13-14 They accepted Shaul even as a messenger of God though he had trouble seeing; reference verse 15. He taught them the messianic message. Gospel means messianic message because of its usage in the Old Testament portion. They didn't reject Shaul even though he had earthly trials (in his flesh). Instead they received his as a heavenly (like an angel) messenger; even as if he were the Messiah Himself.	Galatians 4:13-14 You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.
Galatians 4:15 They enjoyed a significant blessing by his presence so much so that they would have given their own eyes to him.	Galatians 4:15 What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.

<p>Galatians 4:16 He is being straight forward with them. He begs for them to continue to accept him and what he has to say.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:16 Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?</p>
<p>Galatians 4:17 There are some who are eager for your acceptance, but they are not looking out for your good. They want to turn you away until you follow what they have to say.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:17 They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them.</p>
<p>Galatians 4:18 It is always good to be zealous to follow God's commandments ("a good thing" refers to God's commandments) and not only when I am there.</p> <p>They accepted what Shaul had to say when he was there; keep accepting what he has to say. He is purposely making them feel uneasy: They accepted him as a messenger of God. They received significant blessings from him. These other people are not looking out for their own good.</p> <p>Be zealous for God's commandments and not inappropriately made commandments of men. We also need to understand that some commandments can be applied appropriately to other things. Shaul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 in 1 Timothy 5:17-18 to say that spiritual leaders may need support. He is properly applying the Old Testament portion. That's why there are more commandments in the New Testament portion (about 1,050).⁶ They are applications of the Old Testament portion.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:18 But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.</p>

Explanation Summary of Galatians 4:13-18 **Accept what I am teaching – Galatians 4:13-18**

Galatians 4:13-14

They accepted Shaul (Paul) as a messenger of God and even as if he were Yeshua Himself although he had a physical infirmity with his eyes. He taught them the messianic message.

Galatians 4:15

They enjoyed a significant blessing by his presence so much so that they would have given their own eyes to him.

Galatians 4:16

He is being straight forward with them. He begs for them to continue to accept him and what he has to say.

Galatians 4:17

There are some who are eager for your acceptance, but they are not looking out for your good. They want to turn you away until you follow what they have to say.

⁶ <https://www.cai.org/bible-studies/1050-new-testament-commands>

Galatians 4:18

It is always good to be zealous to follow God's commandments ("a good thing" refers to God's commandments) and **not only when I am there**.

Our commandments come from God – 4:19-5:1	
Explanation	New King James Version
<p>Galatians 4:19 My children for whom I worked so that you can live like the Messiah lived. His labor brought about their rebirth.</p> <p>Rebirth is the Jewish concept of living a new life by following God's commandments. For the messianic believer, it means living a new life by following God's commandments with the help of the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:19 My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,</p>
<p>Galatians 4:20 I am telling you to hear what I have to say (sternly) because I am wondering about you.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:20 I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.</p>
<p>Galatians 4:21 Do you want to follow a system of man-made laws? Are you going to give audience (hear) to these man-made laws?</p>	<p>Galatians 4:21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?</p>
<p>Galatians 4:22 Abraham had two sons. One came from a slave (Hagar) and the other from a free woman (Isaac).</p>	<p>Galatians 4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.</p>
<p>Galatians 4:23 The one that was born from a slave was not a child of promise, but the one from the free woman was the child of promise.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise,</p>
<p>Galatians 4:24 I am using symbolism. The one covenant from Mount Sinai has led to a system of man-made laws and to bondage which I refer to as Hagar, the one who gives birth to bondage.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar —</p>
<p>Galatians 4:25 This Hagar which I correspond to Mount Sinai also corresponds to the religious system of man-made laws centered in Jerusalem which produces bondage in all of its followers.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children —</p>

<p>Galatians 4:26 The heavenly Jerusalem (that does not teach a system of man-made laws, but laws from God) is free and is our true mother.</p> <p>Our true mother is the free woman who is a child of promise who follows God's commandments and not commandments of men.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.</p>
<p>Galatians 4:27 This is our true future inheritance. Shaul quotes Isaiah, 54:1 NKJV: "Sing, O barren, You who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You who have not labored with child! For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman,' says the Lord."</p> <p>The context of Isaiah refers to the future inheritance of believers in the true God. Shaul sees us as being part of that.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:27 For it is written: " Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband."</p>
<p>Galatians 4:28 We are a family (brethren) as of Isaac and are the children of promise as it says in Isaiah.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.</p>
<p>Galatians 4:29 The one who was born of the flesh (Hagar) has persecuted those birthed by God; just as it has been back then, so the religious people who follow man-made laws persecute the true believers born again of the Spirit.</p> <p>Again, being born again means to live a new life by following God's commandments by the power of the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.</p>
<p>Galatians 4:30 Shaul asks us what the scriptures say: "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac;" Genesis 21:10 NKJV.</p> <p>Shaul therefore concludes with saying to get rid of the system of man-made laws. Do not be slaves to man-made laws, but expel this system and those (her son) who follow this system.</p> <p>Shaul means that they should not listen to these people who are trying to impose man-made laws on them.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."</p>
<p>Galatians 4:31 We are not to be a family (brethren) from the children of the slave, but of the free. So, don't be followers of the man-made laws, but rather follow God's commandments.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.</p>
<p>Galatians 5:1 Be firm then to not follow man-made laws. The Messiah has made us free from man-made laws (of the religious system that made us slaves) so don't be tangled up with the laws that enslave us.</p>	<p>Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be</p>

	entangled again with a yoke of bondage.
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Explanation Summary of Galatians 4:19-5:1

Our commandments come from God – 4:19-5:1

Galatians 4:19

My children for whom I worked so that you can live like the Messiah lived. His labor brought about their rebirth.; so, they could live a new life by following God's commandments with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 4:20

I am telling you to hear what I have to say (sternly) because I am wondering about you.

Galatians 4:21

Do you want to follow a system of man-made laws? Are you going to give audience (hear) to these man-made laws?

Galatians 4:22

Abraham had two sons. One came from a slave (Hagar) and the other from a free woman (Isaac).

Galatians 4:23

The one that was born from a slave was not a child of promise, but the one from the free woman was the child of promise.

Galatians 4:24

I am using symbolism. The one covenant from Mount Sinai has led to a system of man-made laws and to bondage which I refer to as Hagar, the one who gives birth to bondage.

Galatians 4:25

This Hagar which I correspond to Mount Sinai also corresponds to the religious system of man-made laws centered in Jerusalem which produces bondage in all of its followers.

Galatians 4:26

The heavenly Jerusalem (that does not teach a system of man-made laws, but laws from God) is free and is our true mother.

Galatians 4:27

Shaul quotes Isaiah, 54:1 NKJV referring to the future inheritance of believers:

"Sing, O barren, You who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You who have not labored with child! For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman,' says the Lord."

Galatians 4:28

We are a family (brethren) as of Isaac and are the children of promise as it says in Isaiah.

Galatians 4:29

The one who was born of the flesh (Hagar) has persecuted those birthed by God; just as it has been back then, so the religious people who follow man-made laws persecute the true believers born again of the Spirit to live a new life by following God's commandments by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 4:30

Shaul asks us what the scriptures say:

"Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac;" Genesis 21:10 NKJV. (Shaul therefore concludes with saying to get rid of the system of man-made laws. Do not be slaves to man-made laws, but expel this system.)

Galatians 4:31

We are not to be a family (brethren) from the children of the slave, but of the free. So, don't be followers of the man-made laws, but rather follow God's commandments.

Galatians 5:1

Be firm then to not follow man-made laws. The Messiah has made us free from man-made laws (of the religious system that made us slaves) so don't be tangled up with the laws that enslave us.

Major Points to Remember from this Section

What Jewish ideas does Shaul use in this section?

Man-made things are idols and that includes man-made laws.

We are to keep God's commandments and not man-made commandments.

There are a number of Messianic points to remember in this section. Can you name some?

The Galatians received the messianic message.

The Galatians had received significant blessing through Shaul and Yeshua.

They were born again by the Holy Spirit which helped them to live right.

The Messiah set us free from the system of man-made religious laws.

Questions

Shaul implies that man-made religious laws are idols. True or False.

True – Shaul talks about idols and then says they are turning back to idols by following man-made laws; Galatians 4:8-9.

The believers experienced the power of God through Shaul. True or False.

True – He says they received significant blessing through him; Galatians 4:15.

Shaul says he has birthed them. What is he talking about?

They received the Holy Spirit which is able to help them keep God's commandments and live right.

Why does Shaul say that those born of Hagar persecuted the true believers?

Because believers in the Messiah were being persecuted by those who were under a system of man-made laws at that time.

Why aren't we the children of slaves to religious laws?

Shaul refers to those who are under the system of man-made religious laws as slaves and we are not to get tangled up and put ourselves in bondage to a system of made up laws. We are not slaves to man-made laws, but to God's laws. Instead, we are to make ourselves slaves to God (doulos, see Exodus 21:6).