

## **Galatians Final Written Out Summary**

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The following is all of the written summaries put together and not the summaries from the end of each segment. I thought it would be helpful to see the context in written format. The verse by verse summaries are available at the end of each section.

In our introduction to Galatians, we began by identifying some of the problems associated with modern theology. One of the biggest mistakes in theology is to start with some preconceived idea about what the Bible is saying or to take the Bible out of its Jewish or Israelite context. It is important to understand that the Bible contains Jewish issues, especially the letters written by Shaul (Paul). If we take the New Testament out its original ancient context, we simply will not understand the Bible in the way it was originally intended.

As we read the Bible, we should be asking ourselves, “what is the Jewish issue here?” When we don't understand something, we have to wait until we are able to understand what the Jewish issue was. Remember, Yeshua (Jesus) was Jewish and so were all the early believers in the Messiah Yeshua.

We talked about what the word gospel meant in Galatians – namely, messianic message. Some words meant something specific to the believers back then like the words; apostle, brethren, or set apart. We have to understand what the listeners would have understood. Shaul says he is a messenger (apostle means God's messengers; there are many both in the Old Testament portion and New Testament portion<sup>1</sup>), and he begins by telling them in Galatians that some have turned away from the gospel (messianic message) that he has been proclaiming.

### **Sections 1-3, Galatians 1:1-2:21 Review**

In Galatians chapter 1, he tells us he received revelation from Yeshua (Jesus). Some people believe this is talking about everything he has written. I'm sure Shaul shared what God wanted him to share in his letters. The question is, could he have been referring to a specific revelation? He immediately begins talking about when he persecuted the believers in the Messiah. Shaul did that before he had an encounter with Yeshua on the way to Damascus. In Acts, Shaul tells the story about his encounter with Yeshua. Yeshua told Shaul on the way to Damascus, "But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you;" Acts 26;16-18 NKJV.

We found out that the whole first two chapters of Galatians is about accepting the Gentiles as true believers in the Messiah. Yeshua sent Shaul to the Gentiles it says. And, the revelation he is talking about in Galatians chapter 1 is his encounter with Yeshua on his way to Damascus. Shaul and Barnabas were given the right hand of blessing to go to the Gentiles in Galatians chapter 2. Shaul talks about Kefa (Peter) withdrawing himself from eating with the Gentile believers and then others doing the same when some of the circumcision (actually, they are Torah breakers) came in. Torah breakers are those who subtract or add to the Torah inappropriately – they are breaking the Torah (Deuteronomy 4:2). Kefa should not have withdrawn himself from the Gentile believers; they were not idolaters.

There were those in Yeshua's time that held a hard line towards allowing Gentiles to believe in the Jewish Messiah. We see this in the Jewish writings. The great Jewish teacher Hillel (who died at the beginning of

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<sup>1</sup> Not only did God send out His messengers in the Old Testament portion, but Yeshua sent out 12 and then 70. Shaul was also an apostle (messenger) and he said that God gave apostles, pastor, teachers, evangelists etc. to help the believers in the Messiah grow. So, there are many messengers/apostles not just a select few.

the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD) thought it was okay for a Gentile to become Jewish, but the great Jewish teacher Shammai would chase them away with a stick. So, there were mixed beliefs about the Gentiles being allowed to become Jewish.

There is a commandment in the Torah not to form close relationships with unbelieving idolatrous Gentiles and not to eat with them. The command is to not form a relationship so that you and your family doesn't also become idolaters. "Do not make a covenant with the people living in the land ... then they will invite you to join them in eating their sacrifices;" Exodus 34:15 CJB. Not associating at all with Gentiles is an extra non-biblical law. The Gentile believers in Yeshua were not idolaters. Those of the "circumcision" were those who were following the extra misapplied laws at that time. Moshe said, "In order to obey the mitzvot" (commandments) "of ADONAI your God which I am giving you, do not add to what I am saying, and do not subtract from it;" Deuteronomy 4:2 CJB. These Torah breakers were keeping the Gentiles from believing in the Messiah Yeshua.

Those who are of the "circumcision" (incorrectly called Judaizers) are those who were pushing the extra laws that some of the Jews were following in the time of Yeshua. They should more correctly be called people who were disobedient to the Torah and followed man-made commandments (or **Torah breakers**). Remember, that Isaiah said that their man-made worship is useless (Isaiah 29:13). It only makes sense doesn't it; man can make up lots of things, but it is God's words that count. It is incorrect to think of these people as keepers of the law.

The Gentiles that Kefa was eating with were believers who were learning the Torah. They were not idolaters. In the context of the Gentiles accepting the Jewish Messiah in Acts, "For from the earliest times, Moshe has had in every city those who proclaim him, with his words being read in the synagogues every Shabbat;" Acts 15:21 CJB. The Gentiles were to learn and practice the Torah and Kefa should have been okay eating with them.

Galatians 2:14-21 refers to not living by the extra misapplied laws. This is what they would have understood Shaul as saying. In the last verse of Galatians chapter 2, the Complete Jewish Bible translates Galatians 2:21 CJB as, "For if the way in which one attains righteousness is through legalism, then the Messiah's death was pointless." Legalism in this case refers to the extra non-biblical laws we are not required to keep. And, like I've said previously, some of them should not be kept and are sinful because they break the Torah. Yeshua said the same thing in Matthew 15.

If you read the context of Matthew 15, Yeshua said that those who make up laws that supersede the Torah are wrong. "Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition;" Matthew 15:6 NKJV. Those that say all the law is done away with will be judged someday. "These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. ... While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage;" 2 Peter 2:17, 19 NKJV. Some say we are set free from the law of righteousness. Noah was a righteous man; he did what was right and the world that lived without God's laws was destroyed.

#### **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 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 bondswoman 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.

### **Section 6, Galatians 4:8-5:1 Review**

Before the Gentiles believed, they served man-made idols (He writes not just to Gentiles here, but to all the believers in Galatia. Galatians 1:2, 3:28). They know better so how come they are returning to things made by man, the misapplied man-made laws that are bringing them into bondage. Now that they know God better, why are they desiring to do things that bring them into bondage again? They were observing man-made laws regarding days, months, seasons, and years. He wonders if his work has been in vain. They should be like him; he no longer observes man-made laws.

They accepted Shaul as a messenger of God even though he had trouble seeing (Galatians 4:15) and they received significant blessings from him. Continue to accept me he says. We should always be zealous to keep God's commandments, but there are some who want you to accept them (and their man-made laws). He is being stern with them. Do they want to follow a system of man-made laws?

Shaul begins using symbolism. Abraham had two sons, one from a slave and the other free. The slave was not the child of promise, but the free one was. The Mount Sinai covenant has led to a system of misapplied man-made laws centered in Jerusalem which is after Hagar, the son of the slave. The heavenly Jerusalem which doesn't teach a system of man-made laws is our true mother and the child of promise. We have our future inheritance in the mother of the free woman and are a Jewish family of believers (brethren refers to his Jewish family; Shaul was Jewish) as from Isaac, the son of promise.

Those who are sons of the slave persecuted the true believers and it is still true today, the followers of man-made laws persecute those who follow God's commandments by the power of the Holy Spirit. Shaul says cast out the son of the bondswoman. We are not to be Jewish believers from the slave, but from the free which don't follow misapplied man-made laws, but God's commandments. Be firm, the Messiah has freed us from the extra commandments of men; don't be tangled up with the misapplied laws that enslave us.

### **Section 7, Galatians 5:2-5:15 Review**

Shaul begins by saying that there is nothing to be profited by adult male circumcision – because of the extreme danger involved. If we think about it, those who were pushing circumcision were causing the deaths of sincere believers who listened to their misapplied application of the Torah. We know that the

Torah teaches us to save lives. Those who don't listen to the Torah and get circumcised transgress the Torah. The Messiah does not want us to live by misapplied laws. Instead, faith working by benevolent love strengthens us.

They started out well when they first believed in the Messiah Yeshua. Who hindered them from keeping the Torah the way it was supposed to be understood? Those who persuaded them not to obey the Torah have not been sent by the Messiah Yeshua. Listening to those who don't obey the Torah will only expand this wrong teaching. Shaul urges them to be faithful to the Torah; God will judge those who don't keep the Torah no matter who they are.

Shaul teaches that male babies are to be circumcised. He wonders why he is still being persecuted and snidely remarks that perhaps circumcision has now replaced the offense of Yeshua dying on a stake. He wished those who were teaching this wrong doctrine concerning circumcision would cut off their own. They (the Nazarene Jews) have been freed from the misapplied laws, don't sin, and lovingly serve each other.

We finish this section with Shaul saying they should not wound each other by fighting over misapplied man-made laws. Shaul does not want them hurting their relationships over misapplied man-made laws. Shaul quotes Leviticus 19:18 NKJV and says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

### **Section 8, Galatians 5:16-6:5 Review**

Instead of arguing over man-made laws, be led by the Holy Spirit. Misapplied Man-made laws are a desire of the flesh; they are not from God. These misapplied man-made laws keep us from following the Torah the way we are supposed to. If we are being led by the Holy Spirit, we are not the agency for misapplied man-made laws.

Shaul lists a number of sinful acts. He had just equated the misapplied man-made laws as works of the flesh. He lists more works of the flesh and says that those who do those things will not be part of the future kingdom of God. We could speculate that those who are causing the death of others by telling them to be circumcised are in danger of also being sent to the lake of fire. Shaul said previously as well as in Galatians that those who do these works of the flesh will not be part of the future kingdom of God: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like;" Galatians 5:19-21a NKJV.

In contrast, the working of the Holy Spirit produces (fruit), "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." Galatians 5:22-23a. There is no law against the work of the Holy Spirit. Those who belong to the Messiah have put away (put to death) the fleshy sinful things that you once longed for. The Holy Spirit gives us life (Just as God's commandments gives us life, "Fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good;" Deuteronomy 10 12-13 NKJV; also see Deuteronomy 6:2).

We should not have a high opinion of ourselves which can irritate others and cause jealousy. My fellow Jewish (Nazarene)<sup>2</sup> believers, if you see a person getting into any sinful behavior, you the (godly) spiritual

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<sup>2</sup> Those who were in the line of David left Bethlehem for their safety (to get away from Herod) and settled in Nazareth. Netzer refers to a shoot that comes from a plant that creates a new plant. The descendants of David who lived in Nazareth were a netzer of the line of David. This prophetic verse refers to the Messiah and the word branch is this Hebrew word netzer. "There

person should try to restore the other person in a gentle and mild manner. Look to yourself so that you avoid also being tested. Carry one another's loads, doing what the Messiah would have done. If anyone thinks themselves to be something they are not, they mislead themselves. Let everyone inspect their own efforts and labors so that they can be satisfied in what they have accomplished and not in what others do. Everyone shall carry their own obligations.

### **Section 9, Galatians 6:6-6-18 Review**

Those who understand the Torah and know how to apply the Torah benefit together with the teaching of those that teach them. Don't be deceived or go astray; God will not be fooled. God knows whether we serve our fleshy nature or the things of God. Those that serve the things of God will result in eternal life. Don't become weary in keeping God's commandments, and then at God's timing it will result in eternal life. So, let us apply God's commandments properly and let us be concerned with doing what is right, especially towards our fellow Jewish believers (they considered themselves Jewish).

Shaul wrote this letter himself. The lettering was large due to the problem with his eyesight (Galatians 4:15). Some want to look good in the fleshy things and say that adult circumcision is necessary. They don't want to be persecuted for the stake that the Messiah died on. The adult men that get circumcised don't guard the Torah. Those that are pushing circumcision just want to boast about those who they get circumcised.

God forbid that I should boast about anything except for the execution stake of our God, Yeshua the Messiah. Through Yeshua, the worldly things have been put to death to me. In the Messiah, circumcision or no circumcision is not our aim, but a new person – one who keeps God's commandments by the power of the Holy Spirit. We should live by this rule, renewing our minds.

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shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots;" Isaiah 11:1 NKJV. Nazarene Judaism was considered a branch of Judaism at the time of Shaul. They considered Shaul a Jewish leader in Acts 23:6-7. They didn't argue over whether or not he was Jewish, but about the resurrection.