

Outline of Galatians Chapters 1-2

Section 1

Greeting – Galatians 1:1-5

The Torah breakers – Galatians 1:6-10

The Messiah sends Shaul (Paul) to the Gentiles – Galatians 1:11-16a

***Section 2 – This section**

Events after Shaul's encounter with Yeshua – Galatians 1:16b-2:10

An encounter with the Torah breakers – Galatians 2:11-13

Section 3

Don't live by extra laws and misapplied laws – Galatians 2:14-21

In section 1, we found out that Shaul (Paul) is a messenger for the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) and Shaul greets the Galatians with typical Jewish like prayer greetings. He immediately begins talking about the main purpose of the letter; the problem about changing the messianic message as to how it applies to the Gentiles. He talks about his encounter with Yeshua (Jesus) on the way to Damascus; Shaul receives revelation (information) from Yeshua. In Acts we find out that when Shaul was on his way to Damascus, Yeshua sends him to the Gentiles, "in order to turn them from darkness to light;" (see Acts 26:17-18 NKJV). Shaul identifies that as his purpose and it appears that his encounter and subsequent revelations from Yeshua are a catalyst for Shaul's work with the Gentiles.

In this next section, it will become clearer that Shaul is concerned about man-made rules that are putting stipulations on the Gentiles and perhaps even keeping them outside the circle of believers in the Messiah. Shaul continues talking about Jewish issues concerning the messianic message to the Gentiles. He talks about the events leading up to a meeting with the leadership in Jerusalem about his outreach to the Gentiles. They give Shaul their blessing to go to the Gentiles.

Shaul talks about an encounter with those who were adding extra stipulations on the Gentiles (about receiving the Messiah Yeshua). He shares how Kefa (Peter) and others reacted inappropriately when those adding laws to the Torah were present. Since these people were adding laws to the Torah they were Torah breakers. Deuteronomy 4:2 CJB says (mitzvot means commandments), " In order to obey the mitzvot of ADONAI your God which I am giving you, do not add to what I am saying, and do not subtract from it."

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

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.

context. **It could be helpful to follow along with the King James Version or the New King James Version.**

Here is a possible good way to use this resource:

Read the Explanation and Explanation Summaries (for example, Gal. 1:1-5)

Read the scriptures from the Bible for that part (for example, Gal. 1:1-5 ...)

Read the final Explanation Summary (in this case, Gal. 1:1 to 1:16a).

Answer the major points to remember (answers are provided).

Explanation

Events after Shaul's encounter with Yeshua – Galatians 1:16b-2:10

Galatians 1:16b

Shaul didn't initially talk to anyone about what Yeshua wanted him to do (go to the Gentiles), but he probably means that he kept it in his heart and talked to God about it.

Galatians 1:17-20

He didn't talk to other select messengers in Jerusalem, but went to Arabia and then back to Damascus; then after 3 years he went to Jerusalem, talked to Kefa (Peter) and stayed with him for 15 days. He didn't see any of the other select messengers when he was there except for Ya'akov (James) who is Yeshua's (half) brother and he says he is giving a truthful account in verse 20. Yeshua sends Shaul away from Jerusalem, "Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles;'" Acts 22:21 NKJV

Galatians 1:21-24

After he went to Jerusalem, he went up north to areas of Syria and Cilicia. He says that he was unknown to the assemblies to the south in Judea (again, church means assembly not buildings or denominations). The assemblies heard that the one that was persecuting them was now teaching people to believe in the Messiah Yeshua and they praised God.

Galatians 2:1-2

After 14 years, Shaul then goes back to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus. God told him to go (by revelation) and talk to the leadership of the messianic believers in Jerusalem about what Yeshua wanted him to do (Jerusalem was the center for the leadership of the Nazarene Messianic Jews; Acts 15.). He communicated to the leadership in Jerusalem about the messianic message that he teaches the Gentiles (gospel means messianic message). He did this to make sure that his work with the Gentiles would not be in vain.

Galatians 2:3

They didn't force Titus, his Gentile companion to be circumcised. In other words, they accepted him into the Jewish community without having to be circumcised. We need to discuss why they accepted this. This must have been part of the message Shaul was teaching the Gentiles (implied by context). The adult Gentiles were not required to be circumcised to receive the Messiah, probably because of the danger from infection.

Why were adult Gentiles being told they didn't have to be circumcised? In Jewish biblical understanding, we are supposed to take care of ourselves; also, saving lives circumvents keeping

other commands in the Torah. For example, if we are supposed to take medicine for our health or we will die, then it would be wrong not to do so (unless we are healed).

Understanding this can perhaps help us to understand why circumcision was not required for an adult Gentile because they could become infected and die. Circumcision was probably left up to the decision of adult individuals for that reason. Yeshua said in Luke 14:5 CJB, “Which of you, if a son or an ox falls into a well, will hesitate to haul him out on Shabbat?” Yeshua is referring to the command to help an ox (from the Torah) when it is in trouble (Deuteronomy 22:4). Taking care of ourselves, our animals, and others is a commandment of the Torah. Taking extreme chances with our health is against the Torah.

Yeshua said that the Torah says saving lives supersedes keeping Shabbat. How much more should we be looking out for the lives of Gentile believers who could die from circumcision?² Adult Gentiles were not being forced to be circumcised (in order to save lives).

That doesn't relinquish believers from circumcising their male children though. Even before Israel came into existence, Abraham was commanded to circumcise his male children on the 8th day. God tells Abraham in Genesis 17:10,12 CJB, “Here is my covenant ... generation after generation, every male among you who is eight days old is to be circumcised, including slaves born within your household and those bought from a foreigner not descended from you.” Shaul says that we have inherited Abraham's promise. Galatians 3:29 CJB: “Also, if you belong to the Messiah, you are seed of Avraham and heirs according to the promise.”

Since we are heirs of Abraham's promise, male children of believers should be circumcised. In fact, Shaul says he teaches circumcision. He says in Galatians 5:11 CJB, “Brothers, if I am still preaching that circumcision is necessary, why am I still being persecuted?” Shaul says that, “circumcision is necessary.” He is not contradicting himself. The problem must be concerned with adults having to be circumcised and the danger involved with doing that. Again, it is merely a problem in our understanding the Jewish biblical issue.

After Shaul goes to Jerusalem in Acts 15 which is a meeting about what to do about Gentile believers (Gentiles are to learn and observe the Torah according to Acts 15:21), Timothy gets circumcised in Acts 16:3. So, circumcision is still a sign of commitment and covenant.

A little about the messianic covenant. Circumcision is a sign of covenant; and, so is the Holy Spirit in this messianic age. Yochanan (John) said probably implying that through the Holy Spirit we are in a messianic covenant with God and the Messiah, “Those who have the Son have the life; those who do not have the Son of God do not have the life.” There then must be a way for us to know that we have the Holy Spirit; for example, some of the ways the Holy Spirit works in us are: word of wisdom, word of knowledge (these are not natural wisdom or knowledge, but information given by God; also known as revelation), faith, healings, miracles, prophecy,

² Some men may want to fulfill the commandment to be circumcised. In this day and time, it is a much more viable option to be circumcised if it can be afforded or if there are no emotional issues that could cause problems. It is not necessary for adult males to be circumcised.

discerning of spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of a tongue (these are all given by God and not natural abilities).³ 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.³

Shaul makes different lists with different ways the Holy Spirit works. It should always be remembered that lists are intended to be abbreviated lists. For example, instead of listing all the commandments in the Torah (which would be tedious), the Torah summarizes them with, “You are to love ADONAI your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources;” Deuteronomy 6:5 CJB. Also, Leviticus 19:18 CJB says, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Just like circumcision is a sign of covenant, the giving of the Holy Spirit is also a sign of covenant.

Galatians 2:4

Evidently there were some who were making an issue out of circumcision. They were trying to put adult males under requirements that are not required because the Torah implies we are to act to save lives. We should note that the Holy Spirit is not only a sign of covenant, but can teach us to apply the Torah correctly. They were no doubt doing this.

Kefa says about the Holy Spirit, “Turn from sin, return to God, and each of you be immersed on the authority of Yeshua the Messiah into forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Ruach HaKodesh! For the promise is for you, for your children, and for those far away - as many as ADONAI our God may call!” Acts 2:38-39 CJB. The passages here may suggest that the Holy Spirit will help us to return to God (and do the Torah). The promise of the Holy Spirit includes as many as God calls, that includes us. Also, Yeshua said, “But the Counselor, the Ruach HaKodesh, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything;” John 14:26 CJB. It stands to reason that they would have asked God for help about what to do about adult male Gentiles and circumcision.

False believers were present to spy on them Shaul says. They were probably part of the group of people who were Torah breakers who wanted to impose inappropriately applied laws. Note, there are extra added laws in the oral Torah (the Mishna and the Talmud) which was written down in the 3rd century.⁴ The oral Torah can help us to do the Torah, but it is a commentary and not the original commandments of the Bible. There are perhaps tens of thousands of books of commentary on the Bible. Some are helpful and some are not. Commentaries are not God’s words. The Bible is inspired by God, commentaries are comments by men. That’s why they are called “comment-aries.” The Mishna and the Talmud are not God’s words.

Galatians 2:5-6

They didn’t listen to those who were pushing a wrong understanding of the messianic message (gospel means messianic message). The only intention of those present was the truth and not

³ 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 CJB: “Now there are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. Also there are different ways of serving, but it is the same Lord being served. And there are different modes of working, but it is the same God working them all in everyone. Moreover, to each person is given the particular manifestation of the Spirit that will be for the common good. To one, through the Spirit, is given a word of wisdom; to another, a word of knowledge, in accordance with the same Spirit; to another, faith, by the same Spirit; and to another, gifts of healing, by the one Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the ability to judge between spirits; to another, the ability to speak in different kinds of tongues; and to yet another, the ability to interpret tongues. One and the same Spirit is at work in all these things, distributing to each person as he chooses.” Also see Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:11 for other lists of the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mishnah>

man-made applications of the laws. Those present who made a show of themselves did not influence the decision by the leadership.

Galatians 2:7-8

They saw that the messianic message (gospel) for the Gentiles had been committed to Shaul just as the messianic message for the Jews had been committed to Kefa (Peter). God had sent out both Kefa and Shaul to give the messianic message (gospel) and God had worked in them both effectively to do that.

Galatians 2:9

Ya'akov (James), Kefa (Peter), and Yochanan (John) were the leaders of the early believers in Jerusalem (pillars). They recognized that God had given Shaul and Barnabas favor (grace) to go to the Gentiles. They gave them the right hand (their blessing)⁵ of fellowship. The leaders there in Jerusalem were to go to those already circumcised.

Galatians 2:10

The leadership in Jerusalem needed help with the poor and Shaul and Barnabas were eager to do that (see Romans 15:26).

Explanation Summary of Galatians 1:16b-2:10

1:16b Shaul didn't at first talk to any of the leadership about this, but to God.

1:17-20 Also, Shaul didn't talk to any of the select leaders at Jerusalem, but went to Arabia and then back to Damascus. After three years he went up to Jerusalem and stayed with Kefa (Peter) and only met Ya'akov (James) while he was there. He testifies before God that he is telling the truth.

1:21-24 He went to Syria and Cilicia and the believers in Jerusalem didn't know him; they had only heard that the person who was persecuting the believers now taught about the Messiah and they praised God for this.

2:1-2 After 14 years he went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus. God told him to do that so that the messianic message that he taught to the Gentiles wouldn't be for nothing (in vain).

2:3 They didn't force Titus to be circumcised – they accepted him into the community without circumcision because they weren't requiring adult male Gentiles to be circumcised. This probably had to do with the danger of infection. The Torah commands the superseding of God's commandments in order to save lives.

2:4 False Jewish believers were secretly in attendance. These Torah breakers that added inappropriate laws to the Torah were in attendance to see where the true messianic believers weren't applying the extra laws that the Torah breakers wanted enforced.

2:5-6 They didn't listen to them so that the truth about the messianic message to the Gentiles should stand. Those who seemed to be leaders (but just voiced opinions) didn't convince Shaul – God is over all (and God doesn't have favorites). They didn't add anything to the decision.

⁵ In antiquity, the right hand was the hand of blessing and favor because the left hand was used for the toilet.

2:7-8 Contrary to their opinions, they saw that evangelism of the messianic message had been given to Shaul. Evangelism of the messianic message to those already circumcised was given to Kefa (Peter).

2:9 Leaders of the messianic community, Ya'akov (James), Kefa (Peter), and Yochanan (John), perceived (were told by God) that God had given Shaul favor (grace as in God's continuing grace through the ages) to reach the Gentiles with the messianic message. They gave Shaul and Barnabas (Bar-Nabba) their blessing (right hand) to evangelize the Gentiles and they would evangelize those already circumcised.

2:10 The leadership of the Nazarene Jews (the messianic believers were called Nazarene Jews, a sect of Judaism) at Jerusalem asked Shaul and Bar-Nabba to help the poor in Jerusalem which of course they wanted to do.

Explanation

An encounter with the Torah breakers – Galatians 2:11-13

Galatians 2:11-13

Kefa (Peter) withdrew himself from eating with Gentile believers in Antioch and Shaul corrected him for leading others to do that. Kefa was acting appropriately when some men came from Ya'akov (James in Jerusalem). He withdrew himself when those who were misapplying the Torah (the Torah breakers) showed up. This caused others to act inappropriately.

Doing anything with Gentiles at the time was forbidden by some because they were considered idolaters. This was an incorrectly applied law. Shaul said that they would have to come in contact with idolaters, but not to keep their company. Shaul says in 1 Corinthians 5:9-10 CJB, "I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. I didn't mean the sexually immoral people outside your community, or the greedy, or the thieves or the idol-worshippers - for then you would have to leave the world altogether!" Shaul is teaching the correct application of the Torah; don't form close relationships with idolaters. The Torah says not to form close relationships (covenant) with idolaters and sin. The Gentile believers referred to in these passages of course would not be idolaters! That is what was going on. Shaul said that Gentiles could also join the family of Israel (Ephesians 2:19).

If we look at the scriptures in Exodus 34:14-16, we see the command not to eat with Gentiles. "Because you are not to bow down to any other god; since ADONAI—whose very name is Jealous—is a jealous God. Do not make a covenant with the people living in the land. It will cause you to go astray after their gods and sacrifice to their gods. Then they will invite you to join them in eating their sacrifices, and you will take their daughters as wives for your sons. Their daughters will prostitute themselves to their own gods and make your sons do the same!"

The Torah tells us not to form relationships with Gentiles that could lead to idolatry. So, when Shaul was talking to Gentiles he was being judged by a harsher man-made law to not engage with any Gentiles. This was being taught by those who were misapplying the Torah. When Kefa and others removed themselves from eating with the Gentile believers they were following a

man-made law not to associate with any Gentiles or eat with them. The Bible doesn't say not to associate or eat with any believing Gentiles in Exodus.

Remember that Eve added and subtracted from God's commands. **Eve said**, ^A“We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, ^Bnor shall you touch it, ^Clest you die.” Genesis 3:2-3 NKJV. Adding and subtracting from God's commandments would lead to Adam and Eve's downfall. First, she subtracts from God's command. Instead of “freely eat” she says “eat;” then she adds “nor shall you touch it;” and then she subtracts from the commandment by saying “lest” (perhaps) “you die.” Genesis 2:16-17 NKJV, “And the Lord **God commanded the man**, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may ^Afreely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ^Byou shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall ^Csurely die.’”

We are commanded not to add irrelevant laws to the Torah or subtract from the Torah. That's what the Rabbis had done and they made lots of extra commands that added to the Torah and that negated the Torah at times. That's why Yeshua quoted Isaiah and said, “Their worship of me is useless, because they teach man-made rules as if they were doctrines.” Matthew 15:9 CJB. Also, in Yeshua's time, when people ate together they were said to form a covenant with each other.⁶ That is not true in our culture. Remember, the passage in Exodus is about forming close relationships (covenant) with people who could lead us to sin. Use good judgement with this.

Now we can clearly see what was happening. Gentiles were being refused full status into the Messianic Jewish community because of inappropriate applications of the Torah. Were these Gentile idolaters? **No**, they were believers in the true God and should have been given full recognition into the Nazarene Jewish family of believers. Shaul says, "So then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers. On the contrary, you are fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's family;" Ephesians 2:19 CJB. They were no longer foreigners, but became part of the family (family is a familial term; the Jews were related). We read that the exclusion of the Gentiles was a grievous sin and a misapplication of the Torah according to Shaul in Galatians chapter 1.

Explanation Summary of Galatians 2:11-13

2:11-13 While at Antioch, Kefa (Peter) withdrew himself from eating with the Gentile believers who were not idolaters. He set a bad example. At first Kefa was okay with eating with these Gentiles believers, but when the Torah breakers (those who broke the Torah by adding inappropriate laws to the Torah and shunned Gentile believers) showed up, he withdrew himself fearing them. The rest of the messianic Jews also withdrew themselves (to please the Torah breakers), even Bar-Nabba (Barnabas).

⁶ When people ate together it was said they formed a salt covenant. Also, the sacrifices to God were to contain salt. “You are to season every grain offering of yours with salt - do not omit from your grain offering the salt of the covenant with your God, but offer salt with all your offerings;” Leviticus 21:13 CJB. Freeman writes, “The partaking of salt by different persons together is regarded among the Arabs as a pledge of friendship. It is equivalent to a most solemn covenant.” – James Freeman, Manners and Customs of the Bible, Plainfield, New Jersey, Logos International, reprinted 1972, p. 86.

Final Summary of this section

This is not a translation, but I have integrated the Jewish biblical understanding with the translation to help us understand what is going on.

We want the original intended meaning of the scriptures.

Final Explanation Summary of Galatians 1:16b-2:13

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1:17-20 Also, Shaul didn't talk to any of the select leaders at Jerusalem, but went to Arabia and then back to Damascus. After three years he went up to Jerusalem and stayed with Kefa (Peter) and only met Ya'akov (James) while he was there. He testifies before God that he is telling the truth.

1:21-24 He went to Syria and Cilicia and the believers in Jerusalem didn't know him; they had only heard that the person who was persecuting the believers now taught about the Messiah and they praised God for this.

2:1-2 After 14 years he went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus. God told him to do that so that the messianic message that he taught to the Gentiles wouldn't be for nothing (in vain).

2:3 They didn't force Titus to be circumcised – they accepted him into the community without circumcision because they weren't requiring adult male Gentiles to be circumcised. This probably had to do with the danger of infection. The Torah commands the superseding of commandments in order to save lives.

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2:7-8 Contrary to their opinions, they saw that evangelism of the messianic message had been given to Shaul. Evangelism of the messianic message to those already circumcised was given to Kefa (Peter).

2:9 Leaders of the messianic community, Ya'akov (James), Kefa (Peter), and Yochanan (John), perceived (were told by God) that God had given Shaul favor (grace as in God's continuing grace through the ages) to reach the Gentiles with the messianic message. They gave Shaul and Barnabas (Bar-Nabba) their blessing (right hand) to evangelize the Gentiles and they would evangelize those already circumcised.

2:10 The leadership of the Nazarene Jews (the messianic believers were called Nazarene Jews, a sect of Judaism) at Jerusalem asked Shaul and Bar-Nabba to help the poor in Jerusalem which of course they wanted to do.

2:11-13 While at Antioch, Kefa (Peter) withdrew himself from eating with the Gentile believers who were not idolaters. He set a bad example. At first Kefa was okay with eating with these Gentiles believers, but when the Torah breakers (those who broke the Torah by adding inappropriate laws to the Torah and shunned the Gentile believers) showed up, he withdrew himself fearing them. The rest of the messianic Jews also withdrew themselves (to please the Torah breakers), even Bar-Nabba (Barnabas).

How to find the major points

What were the Jewish issues?

Is there just one issue or several issues?

How are they explained?

Is there a change in the issue or how the issue(s) are explained?

Major Points to Remember from this Section

Why do you think Shaul took his time to think about going to the Gentiles?

Because he probably wanted to be sure about how God was leading him. Some observed a hard line against any contact with Gentiles and also believed that Gentiles could not become Jewish (house of Shamai). The house of Hillel believed it was okay for Gentiles to become Jewish and so did Yeshua (Jesus) and Shaul (Paul).

Why did Shaul go to the leadership in Jerusalem about the issue of Gentiles being accepted as messianic believers?

It says so his efforts would not be in vain.

Why didn't they force Titus to be circumcised?

Because the Torah commands superseding of the Torah to save lives; circumcision could cause infection and they could die back then.

Did Shaul teach male babies should be circumcised?

Yes (Gal. 5:11).

Why were Torah breakers in attendance at the meeting in Jerusalem?

Most likely to see if their extra inappropriate laws could be enforced.

Why was Shaul given the okay to give the messianic message to the Gentiles?

The leadership of the messianic believers in Jerusalem understood Yeshua called him to do that.

Why was Kefa setting a bad example by removing himself from eating with Gentiles?

Because he did that when the Torah breakers that had added extra stipulations on the Gentiles came. The Torah breakers were teaching man-made commandments. The Gentiles Kefa was eating with were believers and not idolaters (ref. Ex. 34:14-16).

What points does Shaul make in this section?

- * Shaul made sure he was hearing from God correctly before going to the Gentiles. He took his time.
- * The leadership of messianic Judaism determined that the Gentiles could accept the Jewish messiah.
- * Adult Gentiles didn't need to be circumcised because the Torah commands it to be superseded to save lives (understood and implied). They knew what the Torah taught and they kept the Torah.
- * Torah breakers were showing up and Kefa and others wanted to appease them, but Shaul said their efforts to appease wasn't right.

What is this section about?

- * The Gentiles could become messianic believers in Yeshua.
- * Some sub-issues:
 - Gentiles were being opposed from accepting Yeshua.
 - Circumcision had become an issue with the Torah breakers.
 - Shaul identifies the true leadership in Jerusalem.
 - Torah breakers were trying to spread their man-made doctrines about the Gentiles.
 - One of the main sub-issues to come is Yeshua taught that some of the extra laws were wrong to keep. Keeping the Gentiles from believing in the Messiah is definitely one of those.