

Outline of Galatians Chapters 1-2

***Section 1 – This Section**

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

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 our introduction to Galatians, we began by saying that Shaul (Paul)¹ was addressing Jewish issues in an area not too far from where he grew up. Translations do not tell us what the Jewish issues were that were being addressed. We have to find out what these are if we want the original intended meaning of what Shaul is sharing. Therefore, the Jewish biblical context is important.

There are problems associated with modern theology and Bible teaching. The biggest mistakes are to start with some preconceived idea about what the Bible is saying or to take the Bible out of its Jewish or Israelite context. Scholars and Bible teachers that do this try to make their philosophy fit what the Bible is saying. They read their non-biblical philosophy into the Bible.

For example, they will read a scripture and make up some excuse as to what the verse means to fit their philosophy. Shaul (Paul) said we should watch out for that, "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ," (Christ means Messiah); Colossians 2:8 NKJV.

Sometimes people use this verse in Colossians to mean that their religion is right and to watch out for anything else. Shaul says we need to watch out for what doctrines man makes up and what traditions are made up by man. They are not from God. It is a big mistake to take the Bible and its meaning out of its Jewish culture. The New Testament portion is often misunderstood because it is filled with Jewish issues and cannot be read correctly without its proper Jewish biblical context.

Shaul identifies man-made laws as a problem in Galatians. They were a problem in Yeshua's time and some of us do the same thing in our day and age. We often think that the way our denomination does things is the way God wants things done and we get stuck in those rituals or laws that are man-made. 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. Rituals are part of life, but they are not commandants of God even if they are useful. We need to understand this. Also, there are some rituals and laws that are contrary to what God wants practiced.

As I said in the introduction, I studied about ¾ of the New Testament portion verse by verse in the Greek. I never truly got back to the original intended meaning of what was written by studying the Greek. I found out that in order to get back to what was originally intended by the original writers of the Bible, we need to understand the Jewish cultural understanding and what the Jewish issues were, otherwise we will be

¹ Shaul, sometimes known as the Apostle Paul, would have been known by his Hebrew name; he was Jewish.

teaching and believing false doctrine. Remember, we are studying an ancient text and we need to understand how it was intended to be applied.

Again, the most important thing to understand are the Jewish issues that are being talked about in the New Testament portion. If we take the New Testament out of this context, we simply will not understand the Bible correctly. As we read the Bible, if we don't understand something we should be asking ourselves, "what are the Jewish issue here?" Sometimes we will have to wait to have a proper understanding of what is written.

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).² This allows us to find the ancient context which is immersed in a Jewish biblical context. **It could be helpful to follow along with the King James Version or the New King James Version.**

Although Dr. Stern's Complete Jewish Bible is a better translation, it is not a word for word translation. Dr. Stern correctly applies a Jewish biblical context to his translation, but we can't see where he applies that unless we work from the Greek text and a word for word translation like the New King James Version. I would like to thank Dr. Stern for his ground-breaking Complete Jewish Bible that has been such a great help in understanding the Bible and has been a pioneer work to help us understand the Bible correctly. It is my hope that we can come to understand the Bible as it was intended to be originally understood. I hope that more works like this will become available so that we can be God's true children of light and understanding, and that more studies will become available to help us live for God more the way He wants us to live for Him.

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

Greeting – Galatians 1:1-5

Galatians 1:1

Shaul (Paul) is a messenger for God (apostles are messengers) like the many previous messengers God sent out in the Old Testament portion. In the Gospels, Yeshua (Jesus) sends out 12, then 70, and also Shaul (Paul) says that he is "sent out," (an apostle). Also, Shaul says that being sent is a common gift ministry in Ephesians 4:11 NKJV: "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." There are many apostles and different types of ministries. Churches that claim authenticity through the apostles or have people who claim to be apostles are often trying to claim that they are special; they are proud. Proverbs 16:5 CJB says, "ADONAI detests all those with proud hearts; be assured that they will not go unpunished."

Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah (Christ³) whom God raised from the dead Shaul (Paul) says. Christ is not His last name, but describes who Yeshua is; He is the Messiah, the Anointed One. Yeshua is Jesus' real

² 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.

³ Messiah refers to the anointed one (with oil). The word Christ means this application of oil.

name as seen in the Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament portion (26 manuscripts of the Hebrew Matthew as of this writing; all the gospels and some of the letters of the New Testament were also written in Hebrew including the book of Revelation). Shaul would have been the name Shaul used in Israel (not Paul). We now know that the ancient records in Israel were written in Hebrew, so Hebrew was the major language of Israel and not something else as some say. Just because there are people who speak German in the United States, does not mean that the United States is a German speaking country.

Galatians 1:2

From the “brethren.” In other words, Galatians is from Shaul and he also sends greeting from their fellow Jewish believers. Some people think this is talking only about “brothers and sisters in Christ.” The word brethren is a familial term. When Shaul says that the Gentiles can be part of the “family,” he means that they can be part of the Jewish family of believers. Referring to the Gentiles 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. The Gentiles could be part of the Jewish family Shaul states; they are no longer foreigners.

He writes to the assemblies of Galatia. The Greek word for church means assembly. It is not referring to a building or to Christianity like some think. The Greek word is also used for assemblies of pagans in the Bible (for example, see Acts 19:32).

Galatians 1:3

God's favor (grace) and peace should be understood as a standard Jewish greeting/prayer. Shaul was Jewish, he said Jewish prayers. A typical Jewish prayer can come from sections of the Aaronic benediction – “The LORD⁴ bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.” Numbers 6:22-23 NKJV. We also see this with Boaz and the reapers. “When Bo'az arrived from Beit-Lechem. He said to the reapers, ‘ADONAI⁵ be with you’; and they answered him, "ADONAI bless you;” Ruth 2:4 CJB.

Galatians 1:4

Yeshua gave himself to deliver us from this evil world system; it is God's will. You cannot find true life apart from connecting to God and living to please Him. We need to be obedient to God; He has a design for how we are to live.

Galatians 1:5

“To whom be glory forever and ever, Amen.” NKJV. Shaul is making a typical Jewish prayer here from the second line of the Shema. Jewish prayers often include blessing God and a reference to His authority. For example, the typical Hebrew prayer to bless food is: Blessed are you, Lord God King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

⁴ The word LORD in capital letters refers to the exclusive name for God, Yud-hey-vav-hey is pronounced YeHoVáh. We should use the real name of God at times because that is the proper thing to do. YeHoVáh is the actual name for God as seen in the pointing of over 1,000 manuscripts to date. According to Nehemia Gordon, 26 rabbis throughout antiquity also attest to this pronunciation. One of the “church fathers” in early Christianity also says that is how it was pronounced (Nicetas, Bishop of Heraclea: 2nd century, from The Catena on the Pentateuch, published in Latin by Francis Zephyrus, p. 156.). When we address someone of importance we use their name and title out of respect.

⁵ The word ADONAI in all capital letters in this greeting is substituted for the exclusive name for God, Yud-Hey-Vav-Hey. Around 200 AD the rabbis outlawed speaking the name of God because of persecution with the intention of reversing that law in the future, but they never did. People before 200 A.D. greeted each other in the name of YeHoVáh. It is pronounced YěHoVáh (“a” as in ah with the accent on the last syllable; “y” as in yes) as pointed (the pointing shows the correct and full pronunciation) in over 1,000 manuscripts to date (also, see note #3).

Explanation Summary of Galatians 1:1-5

1:1 Shaul a messenger for God like the messengers of old through Yeshua the Messiah (anointed one) who was raised from the dead and from the Father God.

1:2 The fellow Jewish believers and myself greet you; to the messianic assemblies of Galatia.

1:3 I pray that our Father, God and our Lord Yeshua will give you favor and peace.

1:4 Yeshua sacrificed Himself to deliver us from this present evil world system by the will of our Father God.

1:5 I pray, may God be glorified forever and ever (from the Shema: Baruch shem k'vod malkhuto l'olam va'ed – Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever).

Explanation

The Torah breakers⁶ – Galatians 1:6-11

Galatians 1:6

Those that believe in the Messiah have been called⁷ by God for a purpose. That's what the word called means. It doesn't mean called to be a Christian, but something more specific. Just like in the Old Testament portion they were called to love God and others and be a light to the world; those that believe in the Messiah are called to do the same with the help of the Messiah through the Holy Spirit.

It says that some have turned away from the gospel (messianic message). The word gospel means messianic message. The word for gospel that is used in the Old Testament portion is used in the context of a messianic message and should be understood that way.⁸

We will find out that they were turning away toward another gospel because of extra inappropriate laws that were added to the Torah. The ancient Judaism that was practiced had added many unnecessary laws. The Torah says that they were not to add laws to the Torah. "Everything I am commanding you, you are to take care to do. Do not add to it or subtract from it;" Deuteronomy 13:1 CJB. By adding to the Torah (in Exodus 34:14-16) they were changing the messianic message about how Gentiles were to be included into the messianic family or whether they could be included at all.

Exodus 34:14-16 CJB says, "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!" When Gentiles become believers, they are no longer idol worshippers. Nowhere in this verse does it say that they couldn't eat with Gentiles who became believers. It also does not say that Gentiles could not become believers in the true God.

⁶ Torah breakers is a better description. Some incorrectly use the word Judaizers which sounds anti-Jewish. The Messiah was Jewish – if we follow Him aren't we Judaizers? Yeshua talked about incorrect applications of the Torah. Matthew 15:6-7 CJB, "By your tradition you make null and void the word of God! You hypocrites!" The "word of God" that Yeshua is referring to is the Old Testament portion. There was no New Testament portion at the time.

⁷ The word "called" does not mean called to be a Christian. It means to be called to do the good works of the Torah. The Torah teaches us to do good. Israel was called to love God and their neighbor and so are believers in the Messiah. Deuteronomy 6:5 CJB, "And you are to love ADONAI your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources." Leviticus 19:18 CJB, "Rather, love your neighbor as yourself; I am ADONAI."

⁸ See my article entitled, The Gospel – a Messianic Message.

There are some practical applications of the Torah (additions) and we even see practical additions to the Torah in Moses' time (Numbers 36:1-12), but the Rabbis (rabbi refers to Jewish teachers) had gone much farther than that. They were breaking the Torah by adding wrong applications of the Torah (God's instruction) and unnecessary laws.⁹

The word grace should always mean God's favor towards man throughout all the ages and continues into the present.¹⁰ We didn't deserve God's mercy in the Garden and we didn't deserve the Messiah, but thank you Lord for your grace. God gave Noah grace (Genesis 6:8). Some think God's favor only came with the Messiah. Yes, it's true that God's grace came with the Messiah, but God's grace has also come to man throughout human history.

Galatians 1:7

Again, we will see that Shaul is saying there are some that are teaching incorrect applications of the Torah (they were Torah breakers). They are causing trouble. There was tension among the early believers in Yeshua over Gentiles being added to the Jewish community. The Pharisees were okay with Gentiles being added, but the Sadducees were not okay with that. I will explain that more later.

Galatians 1:8

Shaul says that anyone who teaches them a different messianic message (gospel) is to be cursed. In the Torah, it tells us that those who don't follow the Torah right are cursed. Shaul is merely pronouncing what God has said in the Torah. Deuteronomy 11:26-28 CJB says: "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse - the blessing, if you listen to the mitzvot of ADONAI your God that I am giving you today; and the curse, if you don't listen to the mitzvot of ADONAI your God." Mitzvot means commandments. We will see that Shaul is talking about Torah breakers because they were adding laws inappropriately.¹¹ Deuteronomy 13:1 CJB says, "Everything I am commanding you, you are to take care to do. Do not add to it or subtract from it."

Galatians 1:9

Shaul repeats the curse of the Torah. This very strong language is intended to drive home the point to the Messianic Jewish communities in Galatia. We will see that inappropriate applications of the Torah are being applied to the Gentiles and keeping them from being fully accepted into the believing Jewish family. Shaul is saying that is very wrong and God sees it as very wrong too.

Galatians 1:10

Shaul is not concerned with following man-made rules (pleasing men), but doing what God says to do. Since the context will eventually be talking about not following the extra laws that are wrongly imposed, again here he is concerned with Torah breakers. He also says he is a volunteer slave for the Messiah.

⁹ For example, the rabbis say that we are to put on our right shoe on first. What does that have to do with God? The multitude of extra laws keep people from God. The Torah was intended to be a blessing. "When they hear of all these laws, they will say, 'This great nation is surely a wise and understanding people;'" Deuteronomy 4:6 CJB. Obviously, the extra laws have done the opposite and it has also been a problem among New Testament believers.

¹⁰ See my article entitled, Grace Through the Ages.

¹¹ Some laws naturally follow what is taught in the Torah. Most people don't have oxen to return to the owner (Deuteronomy 22:1), but if they find something of value, they should appropriately apply returning the valuable item to the owner. The Torah teaches us to do good works; it's not about mundane ritual and practice.

Explanation Summary of Galatians 1:6-1:10

1:6 Shaul is surprised that they have changed God's purpose and the favor through the Messiah to a different messianic message – we will find that some exclude the Gentiles and make unfounded stipulations that are not based on the Torah correctly.

1:7 There is no different messianic message, but some have troubled them with a wrong messianic message about the Messiah concerning the Gentiles.

1:8-9 Don't listen to them or to anyone who wants to change the messianic message (by adding inappropriate laws to the Torah). The Torah says those who are changing the Torah and are not teaching the Torah appropriately and are cursed (Deuteronomy 13:1; 27:26); they are not keeping the Torah. He repeats this.

1:10 Shaul is not concerned with what men say, man-made rules. He wants to please God and to be a volunteer slave for the Messiah.

Explanation

The Messiah sends Shaul (Paul) to the Gentiles – Galatians 1:12-16a

Galatians 1:11-13

Shaul received direct revelation from Yeshua. We will see by the context that he is referring to his direct experience with Yeshua on the way to Damascus. Yeshua said to Shaul in Acts 26:17-18 NKJV, "I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." Then at Damascus, Ananias told gave him revelation from Yeshua and said, "You will be His witness to all men;" Acts 22:15 NKJV. When Shaul was in Jerusalem, Yeshua told him that He would send him to the Gentiles. Acts 22:21 CJB says, "Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.'"

These verses in Galatians are often taken out of context to mean that everything Shaul wrote is inspired by God. I believe Shaul wrote what God told him to write in his letters, but in this case, the context clearly points to Shaul's Damascus encounter and Yeshua speaking to Shaul while he was in Jerusalem (Notice that when Shaul receives revelation he receives it from Yeshua; also Ananias was given revelation from Yeshua for Shaul.).

He was going to Damascus to persecute the believers in the Messiah. That is exactly what Shaul then begins to say in verse 13. The context here in Galatians confirms what revelation he is talking about. He is talking about his experience with Yeshua on the way to Damascus, in Damascus, and at subsequently in Jerusalem. He is clearly addressing the issue of Gentiles being added to the Jewish community.

Brethren refers to the Jewish believers he is writing to. They are brethren, relatives. He persecuted the "assembly" of God. He is not referring to buildings or to denominations.

Galatians 1:14

Shaul was an extremely zealous leader in Judaism.

Galatians 1:15

God "called" (him for a purpose – the meaning of "called") Shaul through God's favor (it is God's nature to be good and give favor – He gave favor to all of mankind over all of time in various ways).

Galatians 1:16a

God revealed the Messiah (Christ) in Shaul probably means that he is becoming like the Messiah through the Holy Spirit. He is becoming like the Messiah (doing the Messiah's will) to reach the Gentiles. Shaul's purpose is to teach about the Messiah to the Gentiles (The issue is about the Gentiles being accepted as part of the believing community.).

Explanation Summary of Galatians 1:12-16a

1:11-13 Shaul tells his fellow Jews that the messianic message that he taught them was not a man-made message. God sent him to the Gentiles (Acts 26:17-18). He received His message directly from Yeshua the Messiah at his Damascus encounter (context – that is the revelation Shaul is talking about). He says he was persecuting the assemblies of believers.

1:14 Shaul was a very zealous leader in Jerusalem, even more than many of the other leaders there.

1:15 It pleased God (who foreordained him) to favor him and give him a purpose (to reach the Gentiles).

1:16a Shaul intends to be like the Messiah (and do what the Messiah wants done) and teach about the Messiah to the Gentiles.

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 1:1-1:16a

Summary of Galatians 1:1-5

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1:2 The fellow Jewish believers and myself greet you; to the messianic assemblies of Galatia.

1:3 I pray that our Father, God and our Lord Yeshua will give you favor and peace.

1:4 Yeshua sacrificed Himself to deliver us from this present evil world system by the will of our Father God.

1:5 I pray, may God be glorified forever and ever (from the Shema: Baruch shem k'vod malkhuto l'olam va'ed – Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever).

Summary of Galatians 1:6-1:10

1:6 Shaul is surprised that they have changed God's purpose and the favor through the Messiah to a different messianic message – we will find that some exclude the Gentiles and make unfounded stipulations that are not based on the Torah correctly.

1:7 There is no different messianic message, but some have troubled them with a wrong messianic message about the Messiah concerning the Gentiles.

1:8-9 Don't listen to them or to anyone who wants to change the messianic message (by adding inappropriate laws to the Torah). The Torah says that those who are changing the Torah and are not teaching from the Torah appropriately are cursed (Deuteronomy 13:1; 27:26); they are not keeping the Torah. He repeats this.

1:10 Shaul is not concerned with what men say, man-made rules. He wants to please God and to be a volunteer slave for the Messiah.

Summary of Galatians 1:11-16a

1:11-13 Shaul tells his fellow Jews that the messianic message that he taught them was not a man-made message. God sent him to the Gentiles (Acts 26:17-18). He received His message directly from Yeshua the Messiah at his Damascus encounter (context – that is the revelation Shaul is talking about). He says he was persecuting the assemblies of believers.

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1:16a Shaul intends to be like the Messiah (and do what the Messiah wants done) and teach about the Messiah to the Gentiles.

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

What Jewish ideas does Shaul use in his introduction?

*Apostle – is a messenger; it was common to Judaism and among the early believers (for example, Jeremiah, Isaiah; Ephesians 4:11 says apostles (messengers) among others were a common "sacrificial offerings" (Psalm 68:18 NKJV) to help believers). There are not just 12 apostles.

*Christ – means to be anointed with oil in the Greek; it refers to the Messiah.

*Brethren – refers to fellow Jews who believe; it's a familial word.

*Church – is not buildings or a denomination, but merely refers to assemblies. There are also assemblies of idolaters in the Bible (Acts 19:28-32, the word assembly here is the word also translated church)

*Grace – God gave grace (favor) to all believers for all of time. God gave grace to Noah, to Israel, and to the messianic believers in Yeshua.

*Typical Jewish prayers – are in the letter's introduction

What was the different messianic message Shaul is talking about in Galatians? (*Gospel was used in the Old Testament portion in messianic verses so gospel refers to the messianic message. 1 Cor. 15:1-8 is the beginning of the message and then learn to follow God's commandments and keep them; Acts 15:21).

We will find out that misapplied laws are being made to the Torah concerning Exodus 34:14-16. These misapplied laws could exclude Gentiles from receiving the Messiah Yeshua.

Why does Shaul say they are cursed?

The Bible says that anyone who changes the Torah inappropriately is cursed (Deut. 11:26-28). Shaul uses the Torah like it still applies. In this case, excluding the Gentiles would be a serious inappropriate law.

What is Shaul not concerned with?

Man-made rules because he wants to please God (It is man-made rules that are excluding the Gentiles.).

What was the revelation that Shaul is talking about in Galatians 1?

Direct revelation from Yeshua that Shaul is to go to the Gentiles with the messianic message. 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 (called) and it appears that his encounter and subsequent revelations from Yeshua are a catalyst for Shaul's work with the Gentiles. Since this is the Messiah's will, the Gentiles are to be accepted into the messianic Jewish community (Ephesians 2:19) – that's the point being made.

*Called means to be called for a purpose. I thought I was called to be a Christian; but that is not the correct meaning. Israel was called to be holy and a light to the nations. Believers in the Messiah are called to be holy and a light to others. Shaul says he was called in Galatians 1 to go to the Gentiles with the messianic message.

What is the main issue so far?

It is about Gentiles being accepted as part of the believing community.

Why is understanding what we learned important?

The Bible is God's word. If we misinterpret what is written, we will not have God's word. Often people who read Galatians take it out of context and have no idea what it is about.