

Letter to the Galatians (4:1–5:1) By Rabbi Sha'ul a/k/a Apostle Paul

Gal 4:1 I say that so long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, though he is the legal owner of the estate; 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed by the father. 3 So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental principles of the world [namely, the Jewish religious system of Torah-related traditions]. 4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent out his Son, born to a woman, born under that Jewish religious system of traditions, 5 that he might redeem those who were under that Jewish religious system of traditions, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because you are children, God sent out the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, “Abba, Father!” 7 So you are no longer a slave [to man-made religious traditions], but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Messiah.

8 However at that time, not knowing God, you were in bondage to those [merely human religious leaders] who by nature are not gods. 9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, why do you turn back again to the weak and miserable elemental principles [of the Jewish religious system of Torah-related traditions], to which you desire to be in bondage all over again? 10 You painstakingly observe days, months, seasons, and years [according to Jewish traditions of men]. 11 I am afraid for you, that I might have wasted my labor which I invested in you.

12 Brothers, I beg of you, put yourselves in my place – after all, I put myself in your place. It isn't that you have done me any wrong - 13 but you know that through illness I preached the Good News to you the first time. 14 And even though my weakness due to illness may have tempted you to treat me with scorn, you did not despise nor reject me. On the contrary, you welcomed me as if I had been an angel of God, as if I had been the Messiah Yeshua himself! 15 Where now is that blessing you experienced? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. 16 After all that, have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?

17 True, these religionists are zealous for you, but their motives are not good. They want to separate you from us so that you will become zealous for them. 18 To be zealous is fine, provided always that the cause is good [- which theirs is not].

Indeed, whether I am present with you or not, 19 my dear children, I am suffering birth pains with you all over again – and this will go on until the Messiah is fully formed within you - 20 but I wish I could be present with you now, and could change my tone toward you, because I am frustrated and perplexed by your behavior. 21 Tell me, you that desire to be under the Jewish religious system of Torah-related traditions, don't you listen to the Torah itself?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman, and one by the free woman. 23 However, the son by the slave woman was born according to the ordinary manner of human flesh, but the son by the free woman was born through a promise [by a miracle of the Spirit]. 24 These events contain an allegory, for these are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, now bearing children to the bondage of man-made religion, which is Hagar. 25 For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the Jerusalem that exists right now, for she is in bondage of man-made religion with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our Mother. 27 For it is written,

Rejoice, you barren woman who did not bear. Break forth and shout, you that does not travail. For more are the children of the desolate than of her who has a husband. [Isa 54:1]

**** For context only - Isaiah 54 continues: ****

Isa 54:2 “Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of your habitations; don’t spare: lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes. 3 For you shall spread out on the right hand and on the left; and your seed shall possess the nations, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. 4 “Don’t be afraid; for you shall not be ashamed: neither be confounded; for you shall not be disappointed: for you shall forget the shame of your youth; and the reproach of your widowhood you shall remember no more. 5 For your Maker is your husband; YHWH of Hosts is his name: and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; the Elohim of the whole earth shall he be called. 6 For YHWH has called you as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even a wife of youth, when she is cast off,” says your Elohim. 7 “For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather you. 8 In overflowing wrath I hid my face from you for a moment; but with everlasting loving kindness will I have mercy on you,” says YHWH your Redeemer.

**** End of context verses ****

28 Now we, brothers, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But as then, he who was born according to the ordinary manner of human flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. 30 However what does the Scripture say?

Throw out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman will not inherit with the son of the free woman. [Gen 21:10]

31 So then, brothers, we are not children of a slave woman, but of the free woman. Gal 5:1 Stand firm therefore in the liberty by which Messiah has made us free, and don’t be entangled again by a yoke of bondage to man-made religion. [End of Translation]

Definitions of Key Greek Words in this Chapter

Law - G3551 - nomos

Thayer Definition:

1) anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command

1a) of any law whatsoever

1a1) a law or rule producing a state approved of God

1a1a) by the observance of which is approved of God

1a2) a precept or injunction

1a3) the rule of action prescribed by reason

1b) of the Mosaic law, and referring, acc. to the context. either to the volume of the law or to its contents

Observe - G3906 - paratēreō

Thayer Definition:

1) to stand beside and watch, to watch assiduously, observe carefully

1a) to watch, attend to with the eyes

1a) of auguries, to see what he is going to do

1b) in a bad sense, to watch insidiously

1c) to watch one’s self

1b) to observe, keep scrupulously

1b1) to neglect nothing requisite to the religious observance of

Part of Speech: verb

A Related Word by Thayer’s/Strong’s Number: from G3844 and G5083

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