# Galatians

A letter written to the congregation in Galatia, Asia Minor by the Apostle Paul, perhaps via a secretary, and probably in Aramaic. Thought to be from about 50 CE.

### Galatians

## Chapter 1

1From Paul, who was appointed an Apostle not by a man nor through a man, but through Jesus the Anointed One and by God the Father who raised [Jesus] from the dead, 2as well as from all the brothers that are with me, to the congregations of Galatia:  
  
3May you receive loving care and peace from God (our Father), and from the Lord Jesus the Anointed One!  
  
4The one who gave himself for our sins to save us from this wicked age because it was the will of our God and Father, 5to whom all glory belongs throughout the ages of ages…  
  
May it be so!  
  
  
6I’m amazed that you’re so quickly making the change from the One who called you (by the loving care of the Anointed One) to a different type of good news.  
  
7It really isn’t another [good news], it’s just that certain ones among you are causing problems, and have made changes to the good news about the Anointed One.  
  
8However, if we –or even a messenger from heaven– were to come preaching something to you as good news other than the good news that we’ve already preached to you... Let him be cursed!  
  
9Let me say that again:  
  
*Whoever preaches good news to you other than what you’ve already believed – let him be cursed!*  
  
  
10Indeed, whose approval do you think I’m seeking now?  
  
Do I wish to please God or men?  
  
Well, if [I was trying to please] men, I’d wouldn’t be a servant of the Anointed One! 11So I want you to understand this, brothers:  
  
The good news that I preached as good news, didn’t come from men – 12because I didn’t get it from men; nor did any man teach it [to me].  
  
[It came] through a revelation [directly] from Jesus the Anointed One!  
  
13You’ve heard about how I used to behave [while I was involved] in Judaism; I fanatically persecuted the congregation of God and I was destroying it.  
  
14[I did this because] I was more advanced in Judaism than many others of my own age and race, and I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.  
  
15But when The God who took me from my mother’s womb called [me] through His loving care, 16to reveal His Son through me – so that I could preach the good news about him to the gentiles...  
  
I didn’t seek advice from flesh and blood. 17Nor did I go to JeruSalem to visit those who’d become Apostles before I had.  
  
Instead, I went off to Arabia – and after that, I returned to Damascus.  
  
18In fact, I didn’t go up to JeruSalem until some three years later! [I only did] when I went to visit Cephas (Peter) and stayed with him for fifteen days, 19but I didn’t see any of the other Apostles (other than the Lord’s brother James).  
  
20Look! I’m not lying to you about anything I’m writing in the sight of God!  
  
21Then after that, I traveled to the provinces of Syria and Kilikia…  
  
22So those who were called by the Anointed One in Judea wouldn’t have even known what I looked like!  
  
23All they heard about me was:  
  
 ‘That man who used to persecute us – {look!} he’s now preaching the same good news that he once tried to destroy!’  
  
24So they ended up glorifying God because of me.

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## Chapter 2

1Then after 14 years, I finally went to JeruSalem again, taking BarNabas and Titus along with me. 2And the [only] reason why I went there then, was because of a [divine] revelation [that I’d received]!  
  
And while I was there, I explained to the prominent ones about how I’d been preaching to the gentiles… However I did this privately, for fear that somehow I’d been doing it all for nothing.  
  
3Yet, even though Titus (who was with me) was a Greek, they didn’t force him to get circumcised then.  
  
4However, they did bring in some false brothers who looked down on the freedom we have in the Anointed Jesus, and who wanted to make us their slaves.  
  
5But we didn’t give in to them, not even for an instant, so that the truth of the good news might continue among you!  
  
6And when it came to those who seemed to be important (whatever they used to be makes no difference to me, because God doesn’t go by what a man appears to be on the outside), they didn’t show me anything new.  
  
7In fact, it was just the opposite! When they saw that I’d been entrusted with the good news to the uncircumcised, as Peter was to those who are circumcised 8(since the one who gave Peter the powers of an Apostleship to the circumcised also gave me such powers for the gentiles)… 9Yes, when they came to know of the loving care that had been shown to me... James, Cephas, and John (the ones who seemed to be the pillars) gave BarNabas and I their approval to go to the nations, while they would [instead] go to the circumcised.  
  
10They just told me to remember the poor, and I’ve tried hard to do that.  
  
  
11Then when Cephas (Peter) came to AntiOch, I opposed him to his face, since I knew that he was in the wrong.  
  
12Because, before certain men who came from James arrived, he used to eat with the gentiles... But after they arrived, he stopped associating [with them] and [started acting like a Jew] in fear of those who were circumcised!  
  
13And because of this, all the rest of the Jews also joined in this ‘performance,’ even influencing BarNabas to join in with this hypocrisy!  
  
14So when I saw that they weren’t following the path of the truth of the good news, I said to Cephas there in front of everyone:  
  
 ‘If you’re a Jew who lives as the gentiles do, not as Jews do... Why are you forcing gentiles to act like Jews?  
  
 15‘For those of us who are natural Jews (not sinners from the nations) 16know that a man isn’t called righteous because of following the [Jewish] Law, but because of his faith in the Anointed Jesus!  
  
 ‘Even we had to put faith in the Anointed Jesus so we could be called righteous by our faith in him… But not by following the [Jewish] Law, for no flesh will be declared righteous by following the [Jewish] Law!  
  
 17‘Now, if we’re seeking to be called righteous through the Anointed One, and we’re still found to be sinners [under the Jewish Law]... Is the Anointed One just a servant to sin?  
  
 ‘May that never be so!  
  
 18‘But if I’m found rebuilding the things that I once tore down[, that is, the Jewish Law], this proves that I’m still a sinner!  
  
 19‘As for me, I ‘died’ to the [Jewish] Law so that I could become alive to God!  
  
 ‘20Yes, I was executed along with the Anointed One!  
  
 ‘Therefore, I’m no longer the one who’s alive… It’s the Anointed One who’s living within me. So the life that I’m now living in the flesh is being lived for the Son of God – [the one] who loved me and handed himself over for me.  
  
 21‘As a result, I’m not about to push aside the loving care of God!  
  
 ‘For if righteousness came through the [Jewish] Law, then the Anointed One died for nothing!’

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## Chapter 3

1O you foolish Galatians… Yes, you whose eyes have seen what was written about Jesus the Anointed One being impaled!  
  
Who has cast this evil spell over you?  
  
2I just want to ask you this one thing:  
  
Did you receive [God’s] Spirit because you were obeying the [Jewish] Law, or because you believed in the things that [you] heard?  
  
3Are you really so foolish?  
  
Did you start out in the Spirit just to end up in the flesh?  
  
4And did you go through so much suffering for no reason?  
  
Well, if there really wasn’t any reason for your doing that, 5then, did the One who gave you His Spirit, and performs powerful works through you, do this because you’re obeying the [Jewish] Law, or because you put faith in the things that you heard?  
  
6Remember that:  
  
 *‘AbraHam was considered righteous because he put his faith in God.’* [Genesis 15:6]  
  
7So, don’t you know that all who have such faith are the sons of AbraHam?  
  
8Now, the reason why God gave the good news to AbraHam was because He saw ahead of time that He’d be calling gentiles ‘righteous’ due to their faith.  
  
For He said:  
  
 *‘All the nations will be blest because of you.’* [Genesis 18:18]  
  
9Therefore, those who have such faith are being blest along with faithful AbraHam!  
  
10Now, everyone who’s under the [Jewish] Law is under a curse, because it’s written:  
  
 *‘Any man who doesn’t observe and obey all the words of this Law is cursed!’* [Deuteronomy 27:26, LXX]  
  
11So it’s obvious that nobody is called ‘righteous’ before God because of obeying the [Jewish] Law.  
  
 *‘For it’s by their faith that the righteous will live.’* [Habakkuk 2:4]  
  
12However, the Law really doesn’t have anything to do with faith; rather:  
  
 *‘The man doing these things will live by them.’* [Leviticus 18:5]  
  
13And the Anointed One bought our freedom from the [Jewish] Law’s curse by becoming a curse on our behalf.  
  
For it’s written:  
  
 *‘Anyone who’s hung on timber is cursed before God.’* [Deuteronomy 21:23, LXX]  
  
14Therefore, the reason why this happened to him was so that the blessing of AbraHam could come through Jesus the Anointed One, and so that the other races could receive the promised Spirit… Which [we’ve received] because of our faith!  
  
  
15Brothers, allow me to explain this in human terms:  
  
Nobody can change or destroy a valid agreement between men.  
  
16And notice that the promise was given to ‘AbraHam and his descendant.’ It doesn’t say, ‘to his descendants,’ like there were many of them, but only to one, ‘his descendant’ – who is the Anointed One! [Genesis 12:7 or Genesis 13:15]  
  
17Moreover, I tell you that the Sacred Agreement which was confirmed by The God some 430 years earlier, which the [Jewish] Law came from, didn’t overwrite the promise that He gave [to AbraHam].  
  
18So if we could only receive the inheritance by [following] the [Jewish] Law, it couldn’t have come from the promise [to AbraHam]!  
  
[Yet, notice how] God granted this favor to AbraHam *as a promise*.  
  
19So, why [do we have] the [Jewish] Law?  
  
It was added to show us what sin was before the descendant (the one about whom the promise was given) would arrive!  
  
And this was entrusted to the hands of a mediator by [angelic] messengers.  
  
20However, there’s no need for a mediator when only one person is involved… And God is just one.  
  
[Therefore, it was just a promise].  
  
21Then did the [Jewish] Law override God’s promise [to AbraHam]?  
  
May that never be so!  
  
For if the [Jewish] Law had been provided to give [people] life, then the result of following the [Jewish] Law would be righteousness.  
  
22However, following these scriptures just locked everyone up in sin, so that the promise might be given to those who believe through their faith in Jesus the Anointed One.  
  
23Yes, before faith arrived, we were all locked up and prisoners to the [Jewish] Law until the things about faith were revealed.  
  
24So the Law was just the guide that led us to the Anointed One and [to the promise] that we could be counted as righteous by our faith... 25And now that the faith has arrived, we don’t need the guide anymore!  
  
26The fact is, you’ve all become sons of God through your faith in the Anointed Jesus.  
  
27Indeed, everyone who’s immersed into the Anointed One has put on the Anointed One.  
  
28So there’s no [difference] between Jew and Syrian, nor slave and freeman, nor male and female... Because you’re all in the Anointed Jesus!  
  
29And if you belong to the Anointed One –as the promise told us– you’re AbraHam’s descendant and his heirs!

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## Chapter 4

1Now, let me say this:  
  
As long as the heir is [still just] a baby, he isn’t any different from a slave. Yes, even though he’s [technically] the master of everything, 2he’s still under guides and house managers – until a day arrives set by his father.  
  
3Well, that’s how it used to be with us!  
  
Back when we were [spiritual] babies, we were slaves to the simple things of this world.  
  
4But when the time arrived, God sent his Son (who was under the [Jewish] Law and born from a woman) 5so he could buy those who were under the [Jewish] Law and adopt them as His sons.  
  
6And now that you’re [His] sons, God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, where it calls out, ‘Papa… Father!’  
  
7So – you’re no longer slaves, but sons. And as sons, you’re also heirs of God via the Anointed One!  
  
8Therefore, back when you didn’t know God, you were slaves to those who really aren’t gods. 9But now that you’ve come to know God (or rather, now that God has come to know you), why are you turning back to those weak and sorry [Jewish] rules… Why do you want to become slaves to them once again?  
  
10For you’ve [gone back to] the observance of days, months, seasons, and years… 11So I’m afraid that all the work I’ve done on your behalf has been wasted!  
  
  
12Brothers, I beg you to become like me, because I used to be just like you!  
  
You’ve never done me any wrong, 13and you surely recognized that I had a severe fleshly weakness when I preached the good news to you the first time.  
  
14But even though this problem must have created difficulties for you, you didn’t treat it with contempt or spit on it in disgust.  
  
Rather, you received me like an [angelic] messenger from God… Like the Anointed Jesus.  
  
  
15So where is all the joy that you [once] had?  
  
I swear that if it were possible, you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me! 16But am I now your enemy because I’m telling you the truth?  
  
17However, [there are those who are now] zealously chasing after you for the wrong reasons… For they want to snip you off and make you their own zealous followers!  
  
18And it’s good for you to always be zealously chased after (and not just when I’m with you), as long as it’s for a good purpose.  
  
  
19O my little children,  
  
I’m enduring ‘childbirth pains’ again until the Anointed One becomes strong in you. 20I wish that I could be there with you right now and talk to you in a different tone of voice… But I just don’t know how to help you!  
  
21So tell me this, O you who wants to be under the Law:  
  
Don’t you hear what the Law says?  
  
22It was written that AbraHam had two sons, one by the slave girl and the other by the free woman... 23The one [born] through the slave girl was born in the flesh, but the other ([born] through the free woman) [arrived] *through a promise*.  
  
24So, understand that this story is symbolic. For the two [women] symbolize two sacred agreements.  
  
[The first] one (Hagar) came from Mount SinAi and bore children into slavery. 25So this Hagar means SinAi (a mountain in Arabia), and she symbolizes JeruSalem today, which is in slavery with her children.  
  
26But the JeruSalem above is free, and she is our mother.  
  
27For it is written:  
  
 *‘So be glad, all you who are sterile,*  
 *And yell, O you who didn’t give birth…*  
 *O you, the one without birth pains!*  
 *For the children of the barren will be many…*  
 *Yes, more than those who have [their own] husband!’*  
 [Isaiah 54:1]  
  
28Therefore, brothers, we’re now children of *the promise* in the same way IsaAc was!  
  
29And just as the one who was born in the flesh started persecuting the one who was born through the Spirit… That’s what’s happening now!  
  
30What do the Scriptures say?  
  
 *‘Drive out the slave girl and her son, because the slave girl’s son will never be an heir with the free woman’s son!’* [Genesis 21:10]  
  
31So brothers:  
  
We aren’t the children of a slave girl, but of the free woman!

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## Chapter 5

1Understand that the Anointed One set us free so we can truly be free!  
  
Therefore, we should be standing up straight, and not allowing ourselves to be put under the yoke of slavery [to the Jewish Law] again!  
  
  
2Look! I (Paul) am telling you that if you get circumcised, the Anointed One won’t be of any use to you!  
  
3And I again testify to every man who gets circumcised, that he’s thereafter obligated to obey the whole [Jewish] Law!  
  
4So those of you who are trying to be called ‘righteous’ by the [Jewish] Law have voided the Anointed One, and have fallen away from his loving care.  
  
5Indeed, it’s by the spirit of faith that we’re eagerly awaiting the hope of [being counted as] righteous!  
  
6As a result, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision have any value to the Anointed Jesus… Just faith that’s motivated by love!  
  
  
7Now, since you’ve been running ‘so well,’ who is it that’s trying to keep you from obeying the truth?  
  
8Ideas like this aren’t coming from the One who’s calling you! 9Rather, it’s coming from a little bit of ‘yeast’ that’s started fermenting the whole ‘ball [of dough]!’  
  
10For I’m confident that you who are in the Lord wouldn’t have even thought of such a thing. So the one who’s causing all this agitation will have to face judgment, no matter who he may be!  
  
11Brothers – if I were preaching circumcision, why am I being persecuted? [In that case], the upright [execution stake] wouldn’t be a snare [to the Jews] anymore!  
  
12Oh, I wish that those who are stirring you up would get lost!  
  
13You were called to be free, brothers!  
  
So don’t use this freedom to serve your flesh; rather, use it to slave for each other in love!  
  
14Understand that the entire [Jewish] Law is fulfilled in the words:  
  
 *‘You must love your neighbor as yourself.’* [Leviticus 19:18]  
  
15However, if you keep on snapping at each other, and chewing each other up... Be careful that you don’t swallow each other down!  
  
16I tell you this:  
  
If you’re walking by Spirit, you won’t do any of the things that your flesh desires!  
  
17For what the flesh wants is at odds with what the Spirit wants, and the Spirit is at odds with the flesh… They’re in opposition to each other, keeping you from doing the things that you may wish to do.  
  
18And if you’re being led by Spirit, you aren’t under the [Jewish] Law!  
  
19Now, we know what the flesh does...  
  
They include:  
  
 • Sexual immorality,  
 • Uncleanness,  
 • Lewdness,  
 • 20Idol worshiping,  
 • Involvement in the occult,  
 • Hatreds,  
 • Quarreling,  
 • Jealousy,  
 • Anger,  
 • Selfishness,  
 • Divisions,  
 • Sects,  
 • 21Envying,  
 • Getting drunk,  
 • Wild partying,  
  
...and things like that.  
  
I’m warning you now (as I’ve warned you before), that those who do such things won’t inherit God’s Kingdom.  
  
22On the other hand, the fruitage of the Spirit is:  
  
 • Love,  
 • Joy,  
 • Peace,  
 • Patience,  
 • Being caring,  
 • Goodness,  
 • Faith,  
 • 23Reasonableness, and  
 • Self-control,  
  
...and there are no laws against such things!  
  
24So those who belong to the Anointed Jesus have hung their flesh on the elevated [execution stake] along with its passions and desires.  
  
25And if we’re living by Spirit, we need to walk in [the ways of the] Spirit… 26We shouldn’t be conceited, or challenging or envying each other!

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## Chapter 6

1Brothers, if someone ever gets caught up in doing bad things, those of you who are spiritual should try to restore the person in a reasonable way – as you keep an eye on yourselves, so that you aren’t tempted too.  
  
2And if you’ll carry each other’s burdens, you’ll fulfill the law of the Anointed One.  
  
3However, if anyone thinks he’s something when he’s nothing, he’s just fooling himself.  
  
4Therefore, let us each prove [the value] of what we’re doing to ourselves first, and perhaps this will give us grounds for boasting to ourselves… But not to other people.  
  
5For each of us has to carry our own load.  
  
6Also, may those who are being taught the Word share the good things they have with those who are teaching [them].  
  
  
7Now, don’t make any mistake when it comes to this, for you can’t mock God!  
  
Whatever a person is planting is what he’s going to harvest.  
  
8So if he’s planting [the desires] of his own flesh, he will harvest decay from the flesh... But if he’s planting things of [God’s] Breath, he will harvest age-long life.  
  
9Therefore, let’s not misbehave… Let’s keep on doing what’s right until that time arrives, because we’ll harvest what we deserve if we don’t tire out. 10And until then, we should be doing good things for everyone – but especially for those who are related to us in the Faith!  
  
  
11Look at these large letters that I’ve written with my own hand!  
  
  
12Now, those who are urging you to get circumcised are appealing to your fleshly nature. [And the reason they’re doing this] is so that they won’t be persecuted over the elevated [execution stake] of the Anointed Jesus!  
  
13So while they fail to obey the [Jewish] Law themselves, they want you to get circumcised so they can have reasons to boast over your flesh!  
  
14However, may I never find myself boasting over anything other than the upright [execution stake] of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One! For to me, the whole world has been lifted up [to be executed] through him… As I’ve been to this world.  
  
15Understand that circumcision isn’t anything, nor is uncircumcision.  
Rather, [what matters is becoming] a new creation!  
  
  
16May peace and mercy be on all those who walk in line with this rule, and upon the IsraEl of God.  
  
17Finally, don’t let anybody undermine my work — because I’ve got the brand of Jesus on my body!  
  
18May the loving care of our Lord Jesus the Anointed One be with you, my brothers.  
  
May it be so!