

# *Paul's Letter to the Church in Galatia*

## A TRANSLATION

### CHAPTER 1

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle appointed, not by men and not through men but by Jesus the Messiah and God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead, <sup>2</sup> and all the brothers who are with me, to the churches in Galatia: <sup>3</sup> grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus the Messiah, <sup>4</sup> who, in accordance with the will of God the Father, gave himself for our sins to bring us out of this present evil generation, <sup>5</sup> to whom the glory is due for age of the ages, Amen.

<sup>6</sup> I'm surprised that you so quickly leave him who called you by the grace of the Messiah to a different gospel, <sup>7</sup> which isn't a similar one, only that there are those who are unsettling you and who want to distort the Gospel of the Messiah. <sup>8</sup> but even if we or an angel from heaven would proclaim to you a Gospel contrary to that which we proclaimed, let him be cursed. <sup>9</sup> Like we said before I say again now: if anyone is proclaiming to you a Gospel contrary to the one we proclaimed to you, let him be cursed. <sup>10</sup> And now: Is it men's approval I am seeking or God's? Am I trying to please men or God? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of the Messiah.

<sup>11</sup> I inform you, brothers, that the Gospel proclaimed by me is contrary to man, <sup>12</sup> because I did not receive it from a man, nor did a human teach it to me, rather, I received it by way of a revelation of Jesus the Messiah. <sup>13</sup> You heard of the way I conducted myself previously in Judaism, that I was radically persecuting the church

of God and destroying it. <sup>14</sup> I advanced in Judaism beyond many countrymen of my age because I was all the more zealous for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup> But when he who chose me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace wanted <sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son in me to that I would proclaim him to the nations of the world, I immediately did not consult with flesh and blood. <sup>17</sup> Nor did I go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles who preceded me, but I went away, to Arabia and again returned to Damascus. <sup>18</sup> Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to make Cephas' acquaintance, and I remained with him 15 days, <sup>19</sup> but I did not see any other apostle, except James, the Lord's brother.

<sup>20</sup> Take note, I am writing to you, I write in the presence of God. I am not lying.

<sup>21</sup> Then I went to the areas of Syria and Cilicia. <sup>22</sup> I was personally unknown to the churches in Judea, <sup>23</sup> only that they heard again and again, "he who persecuted us in the past is now proclaiming the Faith he tried to destroy," <sup>24</sup> and they praised God for what he did in me.

## CHAPTER 2

<sup>1</sup> Then, after 14 years, I went up to Jerusalem again, with Barnabas. I also took Titus with me. <sup>2</sup> I went up in accordance with a revelation and I presented before them the Gospel that I proclaim among the nations of the world. I did this privately, in the presence of those respected among them, lest I be running or had been running to no end. <sup>3</sup> But even Titus, who was with me, who was a Greek, they did not force to be circumcised <sup>4</sup> because of false brothers who stole into the church undetected. They stole in to spy out our liberty, which we have in the Messiah, in order to enslave us. <sup>5</sup> Not even for an hour did we give in to them, and that so that the truth of the Gospel would continue with you. <sup>6</sup> And those who seemed to be respected (for whatever it was, I don't care. God does not differentiate between people), those "respected ones" added nothing to me. <sup>7</sup> To the contrary. They understood that I was entrusted with the proclamation of the Gospel to the uncircumcised just as Peter was entrusted with the proclamation of the Gospel to the

circumcised, <sup>8</sup> because he who worked through Peter in his mission to the circumcised worked through me in relation to the nations of the world.

<sup>9</sup> James, Cephas, and John recognized the grace that was given me. Therefore, those who are apparently considered to be pillars in the church in Jerusalem gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the nations of the world but they to the circumcised. <sup>10</sup> They only requested that we remember the poor, and I was eager to do the same thing.

<sup>11</sup> But when Cephas arrived in Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he was guilty. <sup>12</sup> For before certain people arrived from James, he ate with non-Jews. But upon their arrival he withdrew and was separating himself from them because he feared the circumcised. <sup>13</sup> The rest of the Jews also acted hypocritically, so that even Barnabas was swept away by their hypocrisy.

<sup>14</sup> But when I saw that they were not behaving in strict accordance with the truth of the Gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of everyone: "If you, a Jew, live like a non-Jew and not like a Jew, why do you force the non-Jews to Judaize?" <sup>15</sup> We, by nature, are Jews and not "Gentile sinners," <sup>16</sup> and we know that men are not justified by keeping a law but only through faith in the Messiah, Jesus. We too have believed in the Messiah Jesus, so that we would be justified through faith in the Messiah and not by law-keeping, because by law-keeping no one is justified.

<sup>17</sup> "But if, by seeking to be justified in the Messiah, it turns out that we also are sinners, is the Messiah serving sin? It can never be!

<sup>18</sup> But, if I reestablish what I have torn down, I make myself out to be a sinner!

<sup>19</sup> "For I, through a law, died to law in order that I should live for God. <sup>20</sup> I was crucified with the Messiah, alongside him, and it is not me who is now living but the Messiah living in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh I live through faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup> I do not make the death of the Messiah into nothing—because if righteousness is by way of law, then there was no need for the Messiah to die."

## CHAPTER 3

<sup>1</sup> Stupid Galatians! Who bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus the Messiah was pictured crucified? <sup>2</sup> This is the only thing I want to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit by keeping some law or by hearing the Gospel in faith? <sup>3</sup> Are you so stupid? — You’ve begun in the Spirit and now you achieve perfection by the flesh?! <sup>4</sup> Have you suffered so many things for nothing—if it was in fact for nothing? <sup>5</sup> He who gives you the Spirit and works miracles among you, does he do it because a law is kept or through a hearing with faith?

<sup>6</sup> Abraham also “believed and it was attributed to him as righteousness.” <sup>7</sup> So you should know that those who have faith are the sons of Abraham. <sup>8</sup> And the scripture, having seen in advance that God would justify the nations of the world through faith, announced the Gospel to Abraham: you will be a blessing to all the nations of the world. <sup>9</sup> So then, those who believe are blessed with Abraham, the believer, <sup>10</sup> and law-keepers are subject to a curse because it was written: “whoever does not continue in all the matters written in the scroll of the Law and do them is cursed.”

<sup>11</sup> Well then, it is clear that no one is justified before God by a law because “by faith do the righteous live,” <sup>12</sup> and the Law is not of faith, but whoever fulfills its commandments live by them. <sup>13-14</sup> The Messiah redeemed us from the curse that the Law imposes by becoming a curse for us (because it was written, “everyone who is hanged on a tree is cursed”), so that the blessing, that blessing promised Abraham, will reach the nations of the world through Jesus the Messiah and we would receive by faith the promised Spirit.

<sup>15</sup> Brothers, I speak in human terms: once a will, even a human one, is confirmed, no one cancels it or adds to it, <sup>16</sup> and the promises were given to Abraham and his seed. It was not written “seeds,” referring to many, but to one, “and to your seed,” who is the Messiah. <sup>17</sup> In other words, after God confirmed the will in the Messiah, the Law which came 430 years later cannot cancel it. If the Law had, in fact, cancelled it, it would have also cancelled the promise <sup>18</sup> because, if the inheritance is conditioned on law, the inheritance is no longer a promise. But God gave Abraham a promise.

<sup>19</sup> Well then, what was the Law for? It was added because of trespasses, until the seed for whom the promise was intended should come. It was given by means of angels and thorough a mediator (<sup>20</sup> and a mediator is not for one person, but God is one).

<sup>21</sup> So then, is the Law contrary to God's promises? It could never be! If there was a law that was capable of giving life, then righteousness would indeed come from law. <sup>22</sup> But the scripture imprisoned everything to sin so that, in Jesus the Messiah, the promise by faith would be given to those who believe.

<sup>23</sup> Before the coming of Faith we were held in custody, imprisoned for the Faith that was about to be revealed, <sup>24</sup> so that the Law was our mentor until the Messiah came, so that we would, by faith, receive righteousness. <sup>25</sup> But since the Faith has come, we are no longer subject to a mentor <sup>26</sup> because you are all sons of God through faith in the Messiah Jesus, <sup>27</sup> because every one of you who was baptized into the Messiah has clothed himself with the Messiah. <sup>28</sup> It is not possible that there still would be a Jew, nor a Greek. It is not possible that there still would be a slave, nor a freeman. It is not possible that still there would be male or female because you are all one in the Messiah Jesus, <sup>29</sup> and if you belong to the Messiah, you are the seed of Abraham, inheritors in accordance with the promise.

## CHAPTER 4

<sup>1</sup> But, I say, for as long as the heir is a small child, he is no different in any way from a servant although he is the owner of everything, <sup>2</sup> rather, he is subject to a guardian and to house managers up to the time that the father determined in advance. <sup>3</sup> So too we. When we were little children we were subject to the most basic things of the world, <sup>4</sup> but when the fullness of time arrived, God sent his Son, who came into the world through a woman and was subject to law, <sup>5</sup> in order to redeem those who are subject to law so that we would be adopted as sons. <sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup> so that you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then, through God, an Heir.

<sup>8</sup> In the past, when you did not know God, you served those who by nature are not gods. <sup>9</sup> But now, when you know God, or rather, now that you are known by God, how is it that you are turning again to the fundamental, weak and empty basics? Is it to these that you want to be enslaved again? <sup>10</sup> You take note of days and months and seasons and years! <sup>11</sup> I'm afraid for you, lest I exerted myself among you for nothing.

<sup>12</sup> Be like me because I am like you, brothers, I plead with you. You have not wronged me in any way. <sup>13</sup> And you know that because of a weakness in the flesh I proclaimed the Gospel to you in the past, <sup>14</sup> and you did not make light of the test to which you were put because of my flesh, nor did you despise me, but you received me as a messenger of God, like Jesus the Messiah. <sup>15</sup> Well then, where has your happiness gone? I testify concerning you that, if it were possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me— <sup>16</sup> and now, in telling you the truth, have I become your enemy? <sup>17</sup> They are zealous for you, but not for a good purpose. They want to separate you, <sup>18</sup> so that you would be zealous for them. It is always good to be zealous for a good thing, and not only when I am there with you.

<sup>19</sup> My children, for whom I experience the pains of childbirth again until Messiah is formed in you! <sup>20</sup> I want to be with you right now and to speak to you in a different way because I'm confused about you.

<sup>21</sup> Tell me, you who want to be subject to law, don't you listen to the Law? <sup>22</sup> It was written that Abraham had two sons, one was born from the slave woman and the other from the free one. <sup>23</sup> But he who was born from the slave woman was born according to the flesh, and the one who was born from the free, through the promise.

<sup>24</sup> These things are an illustration, because there are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai who gives birth to the enslaved, and who is Hagar, <sup>25</sup> and this Hagar is Mount Sinai, which is in Arabia, equal to the Jerusalem of today because she and her children are enslaved. <sup>26</sup> But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is the mother of all of us, <sup>27</sup> because it was written, "rejoice, barren one who did not

give birth, break out in songs, you who have not experienced the pains of childbirth, because the children of the desolate woman are more than those of the one who has a husband.”

<sup>28</sup> And you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of the promise, <sup>29</sup> and exactly as he who was born according to the flesh persecuted the one who was born according to the Spirit, so too now. <sup>30</sup> And what does the scripture say? “Send this slave woman and her son away, because the son of this slave woman will not take part in the inheritance alongside the son of the free woman.” <sup>31</sup> For that reason, brothers, we are not from the slave woman but from the free.

## CHAPTER 5

<sup>1</sup> In the freedom to which the Messiah freed us stand firm and don’t get entangled again in a yoke of slavery. <sup>2</sup> Here, I, Paul, tell you that if you become circumcised, you will gain nothing at all from the Messiah. <sup>3</sup> I testify to every circumcised person that he is obliged to keep the whole of the Law. <sup>4</sup> You, who are justified by law-keeping, have been cut off from the Messiah, you have fallen from grace. <sup>5</sup> We, in spirit, through faith, enthusiastically await the hope of righteousness. <sup>6</sup> Because, in the Messiah Jesus, circumcision affects nothing, nor does uncircumcision, only faith acting through love.

<sup>7</sup> You were running well, who hindered from obeying the truth?

<sup>8</sup> This conviction is not from him who called you.

<sup>9</sup> A little bit of yeast causes the whole lump to rise.

<sup>10</sup> I have confidence with regard to you in the Lord that you will not think differently, and that whoever is bothering you will bear the punishment he deserves, whoever he may be. <sup>11</sup> But I, brothers, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I persecuted? In such a case the offense of the cross would be abolished. <sup>12</sup> I really wish that those who are unsettling you would cut themselves [off], <sup>13</sup> because you were called to freedom, brothers, only not to a freedom that becomes an opportunity for the flesh. Instead, serve one another in love, <sup>14</sup> because the whole of the Law is summarized in