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Book 48 Galatians

001:001 Paul, an Apostle sent not from men nor by any man,
but by Jesus Christ and by God the Father, who raised Jesus
from among the dead--

001:002 and all the brethren who are with me: To the Churches of Galatia.

001:003 May grace and peace be granted to you from God the Father,
and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

001:004 who gave Himself to suffer for our sins in order to rescue
us from the present wicked age in accordance with the will

of our God and Father.

001:005 To Him be the glory to the Ages of the Ages! Amen.

001:006 I marvel that you are so readily leaving Him who called you by the grace of Christ, and are adhering to a different Good News.

001:007 For other "Good News" there is none; but there are some persons who are troubling you, and are seeking to distort the Good News concerning Christ.

001:008 But if even we or an angel from Heaven should bring you a Good News different from that which we have already brought you, let him be accursed.

001:009 What I have just said I repeat--if any one is preaching to you a Good News other than that which you originally received, let him be accursed.

001:010 For is it man's favour or God's that I aspire to?
Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still a man-pleaser, I should not be Christ's bondservant.

001:011 For I must tell you, brethren, that the Good News which was proclaimed by me is not such as man approves of.

001:012 For, in fact, it was not from man that I received or learnt it, but by a revelation from Jesus Christ.

001:013 For you have heard of my early career in Judaism--how I furiously persecuted the Church of God, and made havoc of it;

001:014 and how in devotion to Judaism I outstripped many men of my own age among my people, being far more zealous than they on behalf of the traditions of my forefathers.

001:015 But when He who set me apart even from my birth, and called me by His grace,

001:016 saw fit to reveal His Son within me in order that I might tell among the Gentiles the Good News concerning Him, at once I did not confer with any human being,

001:017 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were my seniors in the Apostleship, but I went away into Arabia, and afterwards came back to Damascus.

001:018 Then, three years later, I went up to Jerusalem to inquire for Peter, and I spent a fortnight with him.

001:019 I saw none of the other Apostles, except James, the Lord's brother.

001:020 In making these assertions I am speaking the truth, as in the sight of God.

001:021 Afterwards I visited Syria and Cilicia.

001:022 But to the Christian Churches in Judaea I was personally unknown.

001:023 They only heard it said, "He who was once our persecutor is now telling the Good News of the faith of which he formerly made havoc."

001:024 And they gave glory to God on my account.

002:001 Later still, after an interval of fourteen years, I again went up to Jerusalem in company with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me.

002:002 I went up in obedience to a revelation of God's will; and I explained to them the Good News which I proclaim among the Gentiles. To the leaders of the Church this explanation was made in private, lest by any means I should be running, or should already have run, in vain.

002:003 But although my companion Titus was a Greek they did not insist

upon even his being circumcised.

002:004 Yet there was danger of this through the false brethren secretly introduced into the Church, who had stolen in to spy out the freedom which is ours in Christ Jesus, in order to rob us of it.

002:005 But not for an hour did we give way and submit to them; in order that the Good News might continue with you in its integrity.

002:006 From those leaders I gained nothing new. Whether they were men of importance or not, matters nothing to me-- God recognizes no external distinctions. To me, at any rate, the leaders imparted nothing new.

002:007 Indeed, when they saw that I was entrusted with the preaching of the Good News to the Gentiles as Peter had been with that to the Jews--

002:008 for He who had been at work within Peter with a view to his Apostleship to the Jews had also been at work within me with a view to my Apostleship to the Gentiles--

002:009 and when they perceived the mission which was graciously entrusted to me, they (that is to say, James, Peter, and John, who were considered to be the pillars of the Church) welcomed Barnabas and me to their fellowship on the understanding that we were to go to the Gentiles and they to the Jews.

002:010 Only they urged that we should remember their poor--a thing which was uppermost in my own mind.

002:011 Now when Peter visited Antioch, I remonstrated with him to his face, because he had incurred just censure.

002:012 For until certain persons came from James he had been accustomed to eat with Gentiles; but as soon as these persons came, he withdrew and separated himself for fear of the Circumcision party.

002:013 And along with him the other Jews also concealed their real opinions, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their lack of straightforwardness.

002:014 As soon as I saw that they were not walking uprightly in the spirit of the Good News, I said to Peter, before them all, "If you, though you are a Jew, live as a Gentile does, and not as a Jew, how can you make the Gentiles follow Jewish customs?"

002:015 You and I, though we are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners,

002:016 know that it is not through obedience to Law that a man can be declared free from guilt, but only through faith in Jesus Christ. We have therefore believed in Christ Jesus, for the purpose of being declared free from guilt, through faith in Christ and not through obedience to Law.

For through obedience to Law no human being shall be declared free from guilt.

002:017 But if while we are seeking in Christ acquittal from guilt we ourselves are convicted of sin, Christ then encourages us to sin! No, indeed.

002:018 Why, if I am now rebuilding that structure of sin which I had demolished, I am thereby constituting myself a transgressor;

002:019 for it is by the Law that I have died to the Law, in order that I may live to God.

002:020 I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live,

but Christ that lives in me; and the life which I now live
in the body I live through faith in the Son of God who loved
me and gave Himself up to death on my behalf.

002:021 I do not nullify the grace of God; for if acquittal from guilt
is obtainable through the Law, then Christ has died in vain."

003:001 You foolish Galatians! Whose sophistry has bewitched you--
you to whom Jesus Christ has been vividly portrayed as
on the Cross?

003:002 Answer me this one question, "Is it on the ground of your obedience
to the Law that you received the Spirit, or is it because,
when you heard, you believed?"

003:003 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now
going to reach perfection through what is external?

003:004 Have you endured such sufferings to no purpose--if indeed it
has been to no purpose?

003:005 He who gives you His Spirit and works miracles among you--
does He do so on the ground of your obedience to the Law,
or is it the result of your having heard and believed:

003:006 even as Abraham believed God, and his faith was placed to his
account as righteousness?

003:007 Notice therefore that those who possess faith are true
sons of Abraham.

003:008 And the Scripture, foreseeing that in consequence of faith
God would declare the nations to be free from guilt,
sent beforehand the Good News to Abraham, saying, "In you
all the nations shall be blessed."

003:009 So we see that it is those who possess faith that are blessed
with believing Abraham.

003:010 All who are depending upon their own obedience to the Law
are under a curse, for it is written, "Cursed is every one
who does not remain faithful to all the precepts of the Law,
and practise them."

003:011 It is evident, too, that no one can find acceptance with God
simply by obeying the Law, because "the righteous shall
live by faith,"

003:012 and the Law has nothing to do with faith. It teaches that "he
who does these things shall live by doing them."

003:013 Christ has purchased our freedom from the curse of the Law
by becoming accursed for us--because "Cursed is every one
who is hanged upon a tree."

003:014 Our freedom has been thus purchased in order that in Christ Jesus
the blessing belonging to Abraham may come upon the nations,
so that through faith we may receive the promised Spirit.

003:015 Brethren, even a covenant made by a man--to borrow an illustration
from daily life--when once formally sanctioned is not liable
to be set aside or added to.

003:016 (Now the promises were given to Abraham and to his seed.
God did not say "and to seeds," as if speaking of many,
but "and to your seed," since He spoke of only one--
and this is Christ.)

003:017 I mean that the Covenant which God had already formally made
is not abrogated by the Law which was given four hundred
and thirty years later--so as to annul the promise.

003:018 For if the inheritance comes through obedience to Law, it no longer comes because of a promise. But, as a matter of fact, God has granted it to Abraham in fulfilment of a promise.

003:019 Why then was the Law given? It was imposed later on for the sake of defining sin, until the seed should come to whom God had made the promise; and its details were laid down by a mediator with the help of angels.

003:020 But there cannot be a mediator where only one individual is concerned.

003:021 God, however, is only one. Is the Law then opposed to the promises of God? No, indeed; for if a Law had been given which could have conferred Life, righteousness would certainly have come by the Law.

003:022 But Scripture has shown that all mankind are the prisoners of sin, in order that the promised blessing, which depends on faith in Jesus Christ, may be given to those who believe.

003:023 Before this faith came, we Jews were perpetual prisoners under the Law, living under restraints and limitations in preparation for the faith which was soon to be revealed.

003:024 So that the Law has acted the part of a tutor-slave to lead us to Christ, in order that through faith we may be declared to be free from guilt.

003:025 But now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor-slave.

003:026 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus;

003:027 for all of you who have been baptized into Christ, have clothed yourselves with Christ.

003:028 In Him the distinctions between Jew and Gentile, slave and free man, male and female, disappear; you are all one in Christ Jesus.

003:029 And if you belong to Christ, then you are indeed true descendants of Abraham, and are heirs in fulfilment of the promise.

004:001 Now I say that so long as an heir is a child, he in no respect differs from a slave, although he is the owner of everything,

004:002 but he is under the control of guardians and trustees until the time his father has appointed.

004:003 So we also, when spiritually we were children, were subject to the world's rudimentary notions, and were enslaved.

004:004 But, when the time was fully come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born subject to Law,

004:005 in order to purchase the freedom of all who were subject to Law, so that we might receive recognition as sons.

004:006 And because you are sons, God has sent out the Spirit of His Son to enter your hearts and cry "Abba! our Father!"

004:007 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir also through God's own act.

004:008 But at one time, you Gentiles, having no knowledge of God, were slaves to gods which in reality do not exist.

004:009 Now, however, having come to know God--or rather to be known by Him--how is it you are again turning back to weak and worthless rudimentary notions to which you are once more willing to be enslaved?

004:010 You scrupulously observe days and months, special seasons, and years.

004:011 I am alarmed about you, and am afraid that I have perhaps

bestowed labour upon you to no purpose.

004:012 Brethren, become as I am, I beseech you; for I have also become like you. In no respect did you behave badly to me.

004:013 And you know that in those early days it was on account of bodily infirmity that I proclaimed the Good News to you,

004:014 and yet the bodily infirmity which was such a trial to you, you did not regard with contempt or loathing, but you received me as if I had been an angel of God or Christ Jesus Himself!

004:015 I ask you, then, what has become of your self-congratulations? For I bear you witness that had it been possible you would have torn out your own eyes and have given them to me.

004:016 Can it be that I have become your enemy through speaking the truth to you?

004:017 These men pay court to you, but not with honourable motives. They want to exclude you, so that you may pay court to them.

004:018 It is always an honourable thing to be courted in an honourable cause; always, and not only when I am with you, my children--

004:019 you for whom I am again, as it were, undergoing the pains of childbirth, until Christ is fully formed within you.

004:020 Would that I were with you and could change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

004:021 Tell me--you who want to continue to be subject to Law-- will you not listen to the Law?

004:022 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave-girl and one by the free woman.

004:023 But we see that the child of the slave-girl was born in the common course of nature; but the child of the free woman in fulfilment of the promise.

004:024 All this is allegorical; for the women represent two Covenants. One has its origin on Mount Sinai, and bears children destined for slavery.

004:025 This is Hagar; for the name Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, which is in bondage together with her children.

004:026 But the Jerusalem which is above is free, and *she* is *our* mother.

004:027 For it is written, "Rejoice, thou barren woman that bearest not, break forth into a joyful cry, thou that dost not travail with child. For the desolate woman has many children-- more indeed than she who has the husband."

004:028 But you, brethren, like Isaac, are children born in fulfilment of a promise.

004:029 Yet just as, at that time, the child born in the common course of nature persecuted the one whose birth was due to the power of the Spirit, so it is now.

004:030 But what says the Scripture? "Send away the slave-girl and her son, for never shall the slave-girl's son share the inheritance with the son of the free woman."

004:031 Therefore, brethren, since we are not the children of a slave-girl, but of the free woman--

005:001 Christ having made us gloriously free--stand fast and do not again be hampered with the yoke of slavery.

005:002 Remember that it is I Paul who tell you that if you receive circumcision Christ will avail you nothing.

005:003 I once more protest to every man who receives circumcision that he is under obligation to obey the whole Law of Moses.

005:004 Christ has become nothing to any of you who are seeking acceptance with God through the Law: you have fallen away from grace.

005:005 *We* have not, for through the Spirit we wait with longing hope for an acceptance with God which is to come through faith.

005:006 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any importance; but only faith working through love.

005:007 You were running the race nobly! Who has interfered and caused you to swerve from the truth?

005:008 No such teaching ever proceeded from Him who is calling you.

005:009 A little yeast corrupts the whole of the dough.

005:010 For my part I have strong confidence in you in the Lord that you will adopt my view of the matter. But the man-- be he who he may--who is troubling you, will have to bear the full weight of the judgement to be pronounced on him.

005:011 As for me, brethren, if I am still a preacher of circumcision, how is it that I am still suffering persecution?
In that case the Cross has ceased to be a stumbling-block!

005:012 Would to God that those who are unsettling your faith would even mutilate themselves.

005:013 You however, brethren, were called to freedom. Only do not turn your freedom into an excuse for giving way to your lower natures; but become bondservants to one another in a spirit of love.

005:014 For the entire Law has been obeyed when you have kept the single precept, which says, "You are to love your fellow man equally with yourself."

005:015 But if you are perpetually snarling and snapping at one another, beware lest you are destroyed by one another.

005:016 This then is what I mean. Let your lives be guided by the Spirit, and then you will certainly not indulge the cravings of your lower natures.

005:017 For the cravings of the lower nature are opposed to those of the Spirit, and the cravings of the Spirit are opposed to those of the lower nature; because these are antagonistic to each other, so that you cannot do everything to which you are inclined.

005:018 But if the Spirit is leading you, you are not subject to Law.

005:019 Now you know full well the doings of our lower natures.
Fornication, impurity, indecency, idol-worship, sorcery;

005:020 enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of passion, intrigues, dissensions, factions, envyings;

005:021 hard drinking, riotous feasting, and the like. And as to these I forewarn you, as I have already forewarned you, that those who are guilty of such things will have no share in the Kingdom of God.

005:022 The Spirit, on the other hand, brings a harvest of love, joy, peace; patience towards others, kindness, benevolence;

005:023 good faith, meekness, self-restraint.

005:024 Against such things as these there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their lower nature with its passions and appetites.

005:025 If we are living by the Spirit's power, let our conduct also be governed by the Spirit's power.

005:026 Let us not become vain-glorious, challenging one another,
envying one another.

006:001 Brethren, if anybody be detected in any misconduct, you who are
spiritual should restore such a one in a spirit of meekness.
And let each of you keep watch over himself, lest he also
fall into temptation.

006:002 Always carry one another's burdens, and so obey the whole
of Christ's Law.

006:003 For if there is any one who thinks himself to be somebody
when he is nobody, he is deluding himself.

006:004 But let every man scrutinize his own conduct, and then he will
find out, not with reference to another but with reference
to himself, what he has to boast of.

006:005 For every man will have to carry his own load.

006:006 But let those who receive instruction in Christian truth share
with their instructors all temporal blessings.

006:007 Do not deceive yourselves. God is not to be scoffed at.
For whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

006:008 He who sows in the field of his lower nature, will from that
nature reap destruction; but he who sows to serve the Spirit
will from the Spirit reap the Life of the Ages.

006:009 Let us not abate our courage in doing what is right;
for in due time we shall reap a reward, if we do not faint.

006:010 So then, as we have opportunity, let us labour for the good
of all, and especially of those who belong to the household
of the faith.

006:011 See in what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

006:012 All who desire to display their zeal for external observances try
to compel you to receive circumcision, but their real object
is simply to escape being persecuted for the Cross of Christ.

006:013 For these very men do not really keep the Law of Moses,
but they would have you receive circumcision in order that they
may glory in *your* bodies.

006:014 But as for me, God forbid that I should glory in anything except
the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, upon which the world
is crucified to me, and I am crucified to the world.

006:015 For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any importance;
but only a renewed nature.

006:016 And all who shall regulate their lives by this principle--
may peace and mercy be given to them--and to the true
Israel of God.

006:017 From this time onward let no one trouble me; for, as for me,
I bear, branded on my body, the scars of Jesus as my Master.

006:018 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your
spirits, brethren. Amen.

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