

“WHO HAS BEWITCHED YOU?”

Galatians 3:1-5

Let me begin tonight by giving a “disclaimer....”

It is GOOD to **understand** and **celebrate** your Jewish roots....for Christianity is **Jewish!**

It is GOOD to learn the **Jewish culture...** the **history** of God’s Covenant people... and their beliefs...

It is GOOD to be part of a **Messianic Fellowship** like this one..... where we see the “*Olive Tree*” from **Romans 11** manifested..... Jewish people and Gentile people **worshipping** the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob **in a Jewish way... just like the early church....** Jew and Gentile **together!**

It is GOOD to become **educated** in the richness of the **Jewish perspective** of God’s Word.....

It is GOOD to **understand** the “Feasts of Israel” and “Israel in Prophecy”

It is GOOD to see **God’s Holiness** in the teaching of the **Torah.**

All of this **IS GOOD** in order to become proficient and comfortable in understanding your faith and **sharing** your faith with your Jewish friends!!

But... the purpose of this teaching tonight is to address something that is **not GOOD !**

This message will deal with a **very serious problem** that is **prevalent** among many believers today.... both Jewish and Gentile.

Its an **issue** that the Rabbi Paul had to deal with.... **and** in many ways **still exists** today. It has taken a slightly different “twist”.....but the problem is still there:

Should the believer in Messiah be TORAH OBSERVANT?

Should the believer in Messiah keep the Law?

There are Jewish believers in the Messiah who feel that they must come back to the “Law”..... and in doing so will become **more** Jewish and **more pleasing** to God.

These Jewish believers are being **deceived!**

The Jewish believers who try to follow the “Law”.... or the part of the “Law” that they’re **able** to keep.... feel that in doing so, it will give them a **closer relationship** and a **closer walk** with God.

They feel that if they **study** and **try** to adhere to the teachings **Torah**..... God will **honor** their Jewishness and they it will have **more credibility** in His eyes.

There are also many **Gentile** believers in Messiah who feel **inferior** to Jewish believers.

They feel that they are “**second-class-citizens**”.....

They feel as though they take a “**back-seat**” to Jewish people....

So... in order to compensate for their **insecurities**... they try to become in **some form** or **another**..... **Jewish!**

It's been my experience that the **Gentile** believer who studies and tries to keep **Torah** is also being **deceived!**

To those Jewish and Gentile believers who have turned back to the **Law** and have become... **TORAH OBSERVANT...** ... **I ask the same question that the Rabbi asked:**

WHO HAS BEWITCHED YOU?

This was the **same** question that the Rabbi Paul had for the Galatian churches.

WHO HAS BEWITCHED YOU?

WHO HAS PUT YOU UNDER THEIR SPELL?

Turn with please to Galatians 3:1-5

READ PASSAGE:

- * When Paul called the Galatians “fools...”he was **not** violating Jesus’ words in the Sermon on the Mount....
....two **different** words are used... in **Galatians 3:1** it means “*spiritually dull*”.. while the word “fool” that Jesus used.... carries the idea of a “*godless person.*”

The **letter** by Paul to the churches in Galatia was written to **correct** a serious error.

Paul had taught that **salvation** was **by** the GRACE of God.....

.....and that we are also **kept** by the GRACE of God!

But certain false teachers had come to **deny** this Gospel of GRACE, or **minimized** its importance.

There are false teachers **today** who teach that we must come back to the TORAH... **study** it..... and **live by its standards**.

The false teachers of today are **teaching** their flocks that we must **become**:

TORAH OBSERVANT!

They teach their flocks that the **word** TORAH does **NOT** mean LAW but means **teachings**.

Teachings of what? **Teachings of the “LAW.”**

The **word** TORAH is **translated 5 times** LAW... **2 times** its translated to learn, and **only 1 time** is it translated teaching.

The false teachers that **Paul** was addressing **insisted** that while we are **saved** by GRACE... we are **kept** by our OWN WORKS.

As a result these Galatians had **lost their assurance** and had gone back to the bondage of the LAW....

This is the very same thing that these false teachers are teaching today!

Paul's tone was **direct** and **to the point** as he protested to the **Galatians** who were **adding** “WORKS” to FAITH.....they were keeping the Mosiac LAW **..in addition** to their FAITH,
.....as the grounds of **acceptance** before God.

The **Judaizers** of Paul's day **urged** the Galatian believers to **OBEY** the LAW in order to

receive a more complete salvation.... and a greater sanctification....
.... **not unlike** the Judaizers of today.

To this the Rabbi asks: **“WHO HAS BEWITCHED YOU?”**

Paul had **visibly** and **graphically** proclaimed the “**crucified**” Messiah to the Galatians.....
.....**yet** their eyes had been **diverted** from the **Cross** to the **LAW**.

.....**The were without excuse!!**

In order to demonstrate **convincingly** that faith ALONE is God’s method of dealing with man.....

.....the Rabbi Paul asked **four** questions beginning in verse:2 :

The **first** question he asks: ***“How did you receive the Holy Spirit?”***

Paul **wasn’t** questioning their salvation....

.....but **challenged** them to consider **that when** they were saved, did they receive the Holy Spirit by FAITH or on the **basis** of WORKS.

It was of course by FAITH..... they were SAVED **when** they heard Paul preach the gospel.

Turn to Galatians 4:6: READ VERSE:

When they heard the “good news” and received our Messiah Jesus by **FAITH**... they received the ***Ruach Kodesh***..... the Holy Spirit.... and **not** by the WORKS of the LAW!

And its **ironic** too.... the churches in Galatia **did not possess** the Mosaic LAW...

the LAW was **given** to God's Covenant People..... the Jewish people.... and **not** the Gentiles!

Paul's **second** question is given to us in verse:3:

"How will you be perfected or sanctified?"

Paul asks if they're so "**foolish**" to think they could **begin** the Christian **life** by FAITH andthen move on to **spiritual maturity** by WORKS.

Because this is **exactly** what Judaizers taught and **still teach!!**

Judaizers **promote the idea** that Justification and Sanctification **were** and **are** the same!

In their teaching..... they make **no provision** under the LAW for the Holy Sprit to do a **work** of Sanctification.

The **Galatians** were taught that **keeping the LAW** would help them in their spiritual lives.... **but** it could not and **would not!**

The **next** question that Paul asks in our text is found in verse:4:

"Did you suffer so many things in vain?"

This question looked back on the **persecution** new believers **had** experienced in the region of Galatia.

At the end of Paul and **Barnabas's** first missionary journey..... they **warned** the new Galatian believers of the **persecution** they would **suffer** for their beliefs.

Turn to Acts 14:21-22: READ PASSAGE:

And persecution soon followed.

Paul reminded them that **if** they turned from GRACE to LAW they would they would be saying that GRACE was in error....

..... and they would have suffered for **nothing**!

Paul's **fourth** question is asked in verse:5:

"On what basis did God perform miracles among you?"

The **miracles** that were **performed** among the Galatians **by divine power** is recorded for us in the Book of Acts.

Turn with me to: Acts 14:3; 8-11: READ PASSAGE:

Paul's **question** makes it **clear**, that God's supernatural works were **not the works** of the LAW.....

.....but from the hearing that leads to faith.

Once again.... the **Galatians** did **not** know the LAW..... and Paul's message was **Justification by faith**.

The LAW is a CURSE.....

In Deuteronomy 27:26 we hear this: READ VERSE

“Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them. And all the people will say Amen.”

We see **Paul** quoting this verse from **Deuteronomy 27:26** in his letter to the “foolish” Galatians.

Please turn with me to: Galatians 3:10 READ VERSE

These words are **unmistakenably** the words of the **Holy Spirit!**

There are **613** statutes and ordinances of God that **comprise** the Mosaic LAW.

And the Rabbi Paul asserts..... **that any man..... at any time..... or in any measure** who has **ever** broken **even one** of the LAWS is **under the curse** and the **penalty** of the LAW ...and is **forever lost**.

So I ask you. **“Are you putting yourself under the LAW?”**

For if you have **not kept** the **entire** LAW without a single interruption.... you are than under the **curse** of the LAW and must suffer the penalty of eternal death and separation from our **Creator**.

The BIBLE **emphatically** teaches that **no man** who has ever lived... other than Jesus... has been able to keep the LAW perfectly.

Consider this.... If you’ve ever had **one single UNclean thought**.....

....if you ever uttered **one hasty word**..... if you’ve ever told **one little “white” lie**.....

.... if you've ever had one moment in life where you **failed** to love God with all your might and heart and strength..... you are **guilty** of breaking God's LAW.

Even Solomon says, "**The thought of foolishness is sin!**"

I submit to you, that **everyone of us here tonight** is GUILTY of breaking God's LAW!

That's exactly why God tells us in **Romans 3:23**: "**All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**"

Turn to **Psalm 14:2-3**: **READ PASSAGE:**

In **Psalm 14:2-3**, David tells us this:

"The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.

They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Again I submit to you that God's LAW **condemns each and every one** of us!

We are guilty... and the LAW which is **Holy**... and therefore **it cannot lie**.... MUST condemn the sinner with **eternal death**.

But its here that God enters in with His wonderful message of GRACE.

The LAW **cannot save**... justify.... or sanctify the **sinner**.

The LAW **cannot** change the heart.....

The LAW **cannot** teach us to live better..... it **cannot help us out** of our predicament in **any way whatsoever**.

All the LAW **can do** is demand punishment and justice.

All the LAW **can do** is pronounce our sentence.... reveal our filthiness and unworthiness..... AND **curse our disobedience** with eternal death.

That is the only ministry of the LAW.

The LAW was **never** intended to save!

And...God knew that when He gave the LAW it **could never save anyone**!

God knew **that** His LAW would **never make anyone better**!

God knew that the **very people** that He gave the LAW to could **not in themselves keep it**!

So, I **ask** those of you WHO are "**TORAH OBSERVANT**"... those of you WHO have gone back to the **Torah**.... the LAW:

"Who has Bewitched you?"

Maybe your asking, "*is the LAW completely powerless?*"

"Can't it do anything at all?"

NO the LAW is **not powerless**.

Its power is to **reveal** how sinful we are.... **and its power** is to curse us for our sins.

So YES... the LAW is **extremely powerful!**

But again, the LAW is **utterly powerless** to save a sinner or to sanctify a believer!

THAT **never** was the **purpose** of the LAW.

IF the LAW **could** save the sinner or sanctify the believer... than the **Messiah** would **never have had** to die at all!

The Rabbi Paul addresses this in: **Romans 8:3**

READ VERSE:

Please notice the beginning of this verse: **“For what the LAW could not do...”**

There are some things that the LAW **cannot do**

The LAW could not **justify**....

The LAW could not **save** or **pardon** or **redeem**.....

The LAW could not **forgive** or **change** the heart of man...

This is **not** a fault or weakness of the LAW..... **but, on the contrary**...

..... **its because of the** STRENGTH of the LAW that we see the **weakness** of the human flesh and heart.

We were told in Romans 8:3.... **“For what the LAW could not do, weak as it was through the flesh....”**

It was **the weakness of the flesh** that **prevented** the LAW from doing anything **but** curse the sinner.

The **sinner's** flesh is **corrupt**.....*by the way.... when we speak of the flesh... we're speaking of man's corrupt nature...* **PAUSE**

.....even the **believer's** flesh is **filthy** and **corrupt**.....

...and **because** the LAW is Holy... and perfect... and just... it can only **condemn** those who **have not kept** the LAW.

BUT NOW... we come to a **glorious revelation**!!

The **Word**... comes to **dwell** with man! The **incarnation** of Jesus the Messiah!

What the LAW could **NOT** do..... the Messiah Jesus **DID** do!

He came to **deliver us** from the **curse** of the LAW.

That's right! He came to deliver us **from** the LAW **itself**!

The LAW was a **slave-driver**.... **an executioner**..... **seeking to kill us** because of our sins.

But then, Jesus comes on the scene and does **two** things:

He lives a **perfect**... **Holy**... **sinless life** for thirty-three and a-half years.....

.....He lives in **full**.... **complete**.... and **perfect obedience** to the LAW in every detail.

He **provided** the **positive righteousness** of the LAW.

Than He did the **second** thing..... He paid the **death penalty** of the LAW **for us**.

He than proved that He paid the penalty of sin for us by **RISING** from the **grave** after three days.

The **penalty** of the LAW was **paid** at Calvary **and**.... **in addition**....

....He has **provided** a perfect righteousness by His **sinless life**.... which is imputed to those that **believe** on Him.

The Messiah Jesus offers both of these by **GRACE**....His **free gift**... to **any sinner** who will turn from LAW to GRACE.....

.....from his or her **own** works.... to the **finished work** of Messiah Jesus..

Salvation and Justification before God is offered to **any sinner** who will admit that he or she **cannot keep** the LAW and **receives** Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

To those who receive our Lord by **faith**... our Messiah does **two** things:

First... He **imputes**.. or **credits**.... to the forgiven sinner.... **His perfect**.... **sinless righteousness**.... which He proved and **provided** by His own sinless life.

By the **death** of our Messiah.... the believer has HAD paid for him the **penalty** of the LAW **which he owed**.

By the **life** of the Lord Jesus... the believer is **now clothed** with the **perfect**.... **sinless righteousness** of JESUS **Himself**.....

Because of the **life** of the Lord Jesus.... the believer **can stand** BEFORE God the Father **as though** he's **never committed** a **single** sin....

Because of the **life** of the Lord Jesus.... the believer **can stand** BEFORE God the Father **as though** he's **never once broken** the Holy LAW of God!

THIS ... my friends is Justification..... a truth that so very few understand!

Believers are not pardoned sinners..... for the LAW knows no pardon.....

The LAW knows no mercy! It knows ONLY punishment!

And that is why Paul says in Romans 8:3-4:

**“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh,
God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and
as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh.
In order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us,
who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”**

Please **NOTICE** this statement: **“In order that the requirement of the Law might be
fulfilled in us,”**

It does NOT say that *“the requirement of the LAW might be fulfilled **BY** us”*
.....*but rather “**IN** us.”*.....and Jesus our Messiah **does that!**

The **“righteousness”** or the **“requirement”** of the LAW that we couldn’t achieve...
...and the **“righteousness”** or the **“requirement”** of the LAW that could NOT be
fulfilled **BY** us

....is provided by the ONE who bore our sins at Calvary... the Messiah Jesus!

Which brings us back to Galatians 3:10:

**“For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse;
for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERY ONE WHO DOES NOT
ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE**

LAW, TO PERFORM THEM.”

Each of us stands guilty before God!

BUT... **what** the LAW could NOT do Jesus DID!

We read this is in **Galatians 3:13:**

**“Messiah redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become
a curse for us - for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERY ONE WHO
HANGS ON A TREE”-**

And those of us here tonight who are trusting in Jesus ONLY for our salvation...
..... we are **now delivered**..... we have been **discharged from** the LAW!

For **Romans 7:6** tells us:

**“But now we have been released from the LAW, having died to
that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of
the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.”**

Please understand this..... The person who receives Jesus as their Messiah... Lord, and
Savior..... **is THROUGH with the LAW.... FOREVER!**

If you are trusting in Jesus as your Messiah for your salvation.....

.....you are **delivered** from the LAW....

.....you are **dead** to the LAW....

.....and you are **free** from the LAW.

Turn with me please to: Romans 8:2: READ VERSE:

The LAW **condemns**.... BUT the believer in the Messiah Jesus has a **new relationship** to the LAW.... and therefore he **CANNOT be condemned!**

We have been made free from the LAW of **sin and death**.

We now have life in the Spirit.....

The LAW **no longer** has ANY **Jurisdiction over us**..... we are **dead** to the LAW.... and as we just read.... we are now **FREE** from the LAW.

The **Judaizers** and the **Legalists** of today **try to obey God in their own strength**....
... **but**, they **fail to measure up** to the righteousness that **God demands**.

BUT... the Spirit-led believer.... as he yields to the Lord.... experiences the **sanctifying work** of the **Holy Spirit** in his life.

We're told in **Phillipians 2:13**:

"...for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

I have **two very definite appeals** tonight.

First... to those of you who are putting yourselves under the LAW **by becoming**

TORAH OBSERVANT....

... I beseech you to **come back** to the **TRUE TORAH....** the Messiah Jesus
.....**come back** to **His** teachings.

Rather than putting yourselves under the yoke of the LAW with its **613 commands....**
...the commands **that can never be kept....**

... **rather than putting yourselves under the CURSE** of the LAW that could **never save**
anyone...

...**rather than putting yourselves under the curse** of the LAW that **cannot** make **anyone**
a better person.....

.... **rather than putting yourselves under the LAW** that has already been fulfilled....

Submit yourself to our Lord's TEACHINGS of the NEW Covenant!

... **come back** to the Covenant of Grace that gives life.... **life everlasting...**

... **come back** to the Covenant of Grace that sanctifies and satisfies the soul.

IF its commands that you need... **than submit yourself** to the "*Brit Ha dasha*" the
New Covenant...

Its been **estimated** that there are well over 2,000 commands by our God in the New
Covenant.... the Covenant of Grace.... **keep THOSE commands!**

The **SECOND** appeal I have tonight, are to those who are trying to attain to Heaven and eternal life without the Messiah Jesus.

There are so many today who believe that **if** they live a **good** life....

....or if they join a **synagogue** or **church**...

... or if they go through **all the rituals** of **religion** or **spiritualism**....

...or if they **behave** themselves...

...or make an honest effort to **keep** the LAW..... **THEN GOD WILL SAVE THEM.**

The BIBLE knows **nothing** of this kind of salvation!

God says: **“There is none that does good, no not one.”**

As God’s Word tells us.... **“all have gone astray.”**

Its for this **very** reason the Messiah Jesus **had to die** on the Cross at Calvary....

.....**Jesus** died on the Cross to **provide** that which we were **absolutely** unable to attain.

As I stated earlier..... the LAW was **never** intended to save....

..... BUT **rather** to show us our **need** for salvation.

According to the Rabbi Paul..... the LAW is a **“schoolmaster.”**

The LAW was given to **teach us** our **own** inability....

.....the LAW was **given to** make us **READY** to **receive** the **“free gift”** of God by His **own** wonderful GRACE.

The LAW is like a **mirror**..... it shows us **how soiled** our face is....

.... but it has **NO** power to **cleanse**.....

After we **view** our **filthy condition**... we can **turn** from that "mirror"... the LAW....
.....to **Him** who **shed His precious blood** and **redeemed us** and **washed us** from our
sins.

When you **receive** the Jesus as your Messiah..... you have God's **assurance** that the
LAW has been **fulfilled in HIM**.

You have the **assurance** that His righteousness is imputed to you.....

You have the **assurance** that He has **paid** the PENALTY of your sin in full.... and you
can **sing along** with the hymnist:

Free from the LAW, Oh, happy condition!

Jesus has died and there is remission.

Cursed by the LAW, and ruined by the fall,

Messiah has redeemed us, once for all.

Once for all, oh, doubter believe it,

Once for all, oh, sinner, receive it.

Come to the Cross, your burden will fall,

Messiah has redeemed us, once for all.

....