

UNDERTSANDING GALATIANS – AN OVERVIEW OF SHA’UL’S (PAUL’S) MESSAGE

Galatiyim/Galatians – a very misunderstood letter!

Blessed be יהוה our Elohim, who has given us abundant life in יהושע the Messiah, amën! Shabbat Shalom to you all and welcome. I am going to share with you tonight some great insight into understanding a book or letter that has, in many ways, often been misunderstood and has, in essence, left us at times confused. It is the letter to the Galatians by Sha’ul (Paul). In light of what we as a fellowship have been going through over the past few weeks and months – having spoken about Torah and Grace, living the Married life and reviewing the Marriage vows etc – it is very fitting to bring you great insight into Galatians, helping us understand what Sha’ul (Paul) is really saying. Galatians is a letter that is often very quickly turned to in order to seemingly defend the right ‘not to walk in the Torah or Law of Elohim’. My message tonight is called, “Understanding Galatians – an overview of Sha’ul’s/Paul’s message.” Let us pray...

Sha’ul/Paul, at times, wrote in a way that was often hard to understand; Kepha/Peter spoke of this in:

Kepha Bet/2 Peter 3:15-16 “and reckon the patience of our Master as deliverance, as also our beloved brother Sha’ul wrote to you, according to the wisdom given to him, 16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them concerning these matters, in which some are hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the other Scriptures.”

The heart of what I want to address tonight is the issue of ‘law’. What is Sha’ul/Paul teaching – did he keep it or didn’t he – did he teach it or didn’t he? Did his teachings go against what יהושע taught or was he teaching what יהושע taught?

יהושע said in **Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:18** that until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law or Torah until all has been accomplished! That is very straight forward – the new heaven and earth is not here yet, so nothing has disappeared! But on the outset, as many have so erroneously taught today, it appears that Paul is contradicting the very words of יהושע by saying it is all gone and is old – we do not need to follow it. But is that really what Sha’ul was saying, you must ask yourself, or was he simply a brilliant Torah teacher? One thing we must realise is that we must never give up studying the Scriptures, seeking the correct interpretation of any given passage. In Sha’ul’s writings there are terms such as ‘under the law, observance of the law, or ‘the works of the law’ etc and I want to shed some much needed light on these. Sha’ul, in fact, warned that in the last days a spiritual delusion will come over the saints of יהוה and many will fall away from Scripture and turn to a ‘Lawless’ or rather ‘Torahless’ gospel message referred to as the ‘mystery of iniquity’. Let us read **Tas’loniqim Bet/2 Thessalonians 2:1-12...**

“As to the coming of our Master יהושע Messiah and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, brothers, 2 not to become easily unsettled in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as if the day of יהוה has come. 3 Let no one deceive you in any way, because the falling away is to come first, and the man of lawlessness is to be revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called Elohim or that is worshipped, so that he sits as Elohim in the Dwelling Place of Elohim, showing himself that he is Elohim. 5 Do you not remember that I told you this while I was still with you? 6 And now you know what restrains, for him to be revealed in his time. 7 For the secret of lawlessness is already at work – only until he who now restrains comes out of the midst. 8 And then the lawless one shall be revealed, whom the Master shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth and bring to naught with the manifestation of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs and wonders of falsehood, 10 and with all deceit of unrighteousness in those perishing, because they did not receive the love of the truth, in order for them to be saved. 11 And for this reason Elohim sends them a working of delusion, for them to believe the falsehood, 12 in order that all should be judged who did not believe the truth, but have delighted in the unrighteousness.”

Yohanan/John tells us that if you love יהוה you will obey His commands – if you truly love Him you will not refuse to love the

TRUTH and OBEY His TRUTH – יהושע is the very Word made flesh – The Torah (instructions of Elohim) became flesh) Lawlessness or sin is the Greek word ‘*anomia*’ and simply put it means ‘without law’ or more specifically ‘without Torah’. Go and Google ‘Greek word ‘*anomia*’ and do some research! The word ‘iniquity’ or ‘sin’ is the Greek word ‘*anomia*’ and comes from the Greek word ‘*anomos*’ = ‘*a*’ comes from the negative participle in the Greek which means ‘without’ and ‘*nomos*’ means Law (Torah). Therefore the workers of *iniquity* are practicing ‘*anomia*’, which describes those who are **without Law or Torah**. Simply put, we cannot live without instruction or the Torah, else we are ‘lawless’!

Before we look at Galatians I would first like us to understand what Sha’ul’s view of the Torah was by looking at some of his writings:

Romiyim/Romans 7:12 “So that the Torah truly is set-apart, and the command set-apart, and righteous, and good.”

Romiyim/Romans 7:14 “For we know that the Torah is Spiritual,...”

Romiyim/Romans 7:22 “For I delight in the Torah of Elohim according to the inward man,”

Romiyim/Romans 3:31 “Do we then nullify the Torah through the belief? Let it not be! On the contrary, we establish the Torah.”

Timotiyos Aleph/1Timothy 1:8 “And we know that the Torah is good if one uses it legitimately”

In **Ma’asei/Acts** he states on two occasions that he did nothing against the law or Torah.

From these and many other passages we are able to see clearly that Sha'ul was for Torah and he taught Torah. So with that understanding how should one understand what seems to be contradictory teaching in Galatians? In order to understand any letter, one needs to clearly understand *who* the writer is writing to, *what* are the issues being addressed and what were the circumstances at that time! On the surface, this letter could seem to be an argument against יהוה's Torah obedience. The question in this letter in actual fact is NOT Torah obedience, but whether Torah obedience was a condition for a restored spiritual standing in Messiah or whether it was rather a natural outflow of that standing! In other words, does obeying torah earn you salvation, or is Torah obedience a natural outflow and response to salvation? The first point on trying to earn your salvation, Sha'ul argues, is just another example of human religion trying to earn points with יהוה, just as the pagans do to their 'gods'. Sha'ul teaches clearly in his letters that **the** Torah is a source of blessing, growth and maturity. **So Elohim's Torah observance was not in dispute**, but what was in dispute was the gaining of identity itself. In the Roman Empire at the time, only 'Jews' (those from the tribe of Yehudah/Judah) were exempted from the mandatory worship of civic deities (if you were not 'Jewish' you were forced to bow down to pagan worship of their deities – Emperor worship etc.)– So the non Jewish believers (Gentiles) may have wanted or were seeking greater recognition as members of the 'fearers of יהוה' – they wanted to be known as followers of the Way. Sha'ul had taught them that they had already received this status through faith in יהושע, while others in the broader 'Jewish' community who were actually responsible for shepherding these new converts were in effect 'lording it' over these new Gentile converts and in effect saying to them, ***"You guys have taken too high a seat at the banquet table too soon, step back down until you have required proper status!"*** And so they were told that through circumcision they could be sure that they would not be barred any longer from the privileges and exemptions that the Jews enjoyed. Just picture the scene – some Gentiles get saved, Sha'ul teaches them they are saved by grace through faith in יהושע – they have stepped out of the bondage of their pagan practices and into freedom in Messiah and the guys who should have been training them in righteousness were putting man's yoke on their necks and Sha'ul saw this as undermining his message he had brought for he knew that if the restoration of Israel to the Covenant could be obtained by any other means than by faith then יהושע's sacrifice was a waste. Sha'ul wrote this letter in around 50 AD and the major debate in these early years, as seen in **Ma'asei/Acts 15**, was whether all of the nations/gentiles needed to live out their obedience exactly as the 'Jews' (Tribe of Yehudah/Judah) did. Now too understand how the Jews (Yehudim) were living at the time, will help us understand what Sha'ul was writing about in terms of the law or law.

The central theme of Galatyiim/Galatians is justification by grace through faith! Sha'ul uses chapters 1&2 to defend the good news, 3&4 to define the good news and 5&6 he shows followers how to display the good news. False teachers had come in and brought a different message and Sha'ul wanted to expose their impure motives, trying to enforce circumcision as a means for salvation.

Sha'ul told them not to frustrate the grace of Elohim for righteousness comes through faith and not through observance of the law. The Torah is not followed for salvation through performance – follow Torah for sanctification yes, but salvation – no!

Ok but that still doesn't settle the understanding of this letter does it – because when I read it I think that in am no longer '**under law**' – and yes you are right you are not **under law**. Now, is the Christian idea of being '**under law**' (which is a legalism or a works based system to earn favour with יהוה) a Jewish concept? Did the Jews of old view Torah obedience as a means to gain יהוה's favour, and hence earn their salvation and place in the world to come? Does Jewish tradition teach this? Does the Tenakh (OT) teach this? With these questions in mind, ask yourself "were the ancient Israelites '**under law**' or '**under grace**'?"

Well to put it plainly the ancient Israelites were **NEVER 'under'** Torah as we understand it today or as the 'west' describes it!!! You know that the word '**grace**' meaning unmerited favour and is often understood in the Hebrew as the חֶסֶד **hesed** – Strong's H2617 and means, '**goodness, kindness, deeds of devotion, faithfulness**' and appears 248 times in the Tanak (OT) – **5 times more than the Greek word translated as 'grace' in the Renewed Covenant (N.T.)!!!**

However what we must understand is that in the Tanak (O.T.) we see the link of 'grace and law' being used in terms of that which we have been favourably given and are now required, as a covenant people, to walk in.

Another word used in the Tanak (O.T.) which is often translated as 'grace' or 'favour, kindness' is the Hebrew word חֵן **hen** – Strong's H2580 meaning, '**grace, adornment, favour, gracious**' and comes from the primitive root חָנַן **hanan** – Strong's H2603 meaning, '**show favour, be gracious to, dealt graciously with, given to them voluntarily, shown favour**'. These two words are collectively used 141 times in the Tanak (O.T.).

In the Hebrew the concept of חֵן **hen** and חֶסֶד **hesed** go hand in hand in understanding our loving relationship with יהוה. חֵן **hen** can best be described as '**a gracious and favourable action passing from a superior to an inferior**' and is an action that cannot be forced upon or demanded! This in many ways carries the same concept of the 'Christian' idea or concept of 'grace' as understood through the Greek word χάρις **charis** – Strong's G5485 meaning, '**grace, kindness, blessing, favour**'. חֵן **hen** is poured out as a gift to a people who have no 'claim' to it as

it is given freely and so we see that this certainly is not a 'new' concept as it is a continuous theme right through the Scriptures in the Loving Kindness extended by יהוה to Yisra'el, His Covenanted people!

What we must understand though is that both חֵן **hen** and חֶסֶד **hesed** are uniquely related in terms of understanding the fullness of our relationship with our Creator. Although these two words are closely linked in relation to walking in a relationship with our Saviour, we note that חֶסֶד **hesed** is different to חֵן **hen**. We find both these words being used together in:

Berēshith/Genesis 39:21 “But יהוה was with Yosēph and extended kindness to him, and He gave him favour in the eyes of the prison warden.”

יהוה extended חֶסֶד **hesed** to Yosēph and gave him חֵן **hen** in the eyes of the prison warden.

What we find in Scripture is that חֶסֶד **hesed** is used only where there is a prior relationship bond, be it through family, marriage or kinship, and it is used in regards to a bond or relationship that produces in the bond itself a requirement or an obligation for action, where both parties share חֶסֶד **hesed** and can expect from each other and even demand in a sense reciprocal responsibilities, and so חֶסֶד **hesed** is not a free gift!

Now we see that over and over חֶסֶד **hesed** is used to describe a and express יהוה's relationship with Yisra'el, His Covenanted Bride and that includes all who are brought near and grafted in to these Covenants of promise by the Blood of Messiah!

We must understand therefore that חֶסֶד **hesed** is a word often associated with the understanding of obligation and commitment and not simply unmerited favour alone!

Yisra'el and יהוה are obligated to each other, in marriage, as a result of the Covenants made by יהוה with Abraham, Yitshaq and Ya'aqob!

חֵן **hen** may certainly and actually is the primary reason behind the establishment of the Covenants of Promise, however the moment the Covenants were made, obligation became attached to it by both parties. And while Yisra'el constantly broke their obligation to the Covenants we see how lovingly committed יהוה is by extending His favour to us, an undeserving people and by His חֵן **hen** (being gracious toward us and adorning us with favour in His eyes) He has extended to us His Kindness - חֶסֶד **hesed** – His loving-commitment to the Covenants which He remains faithful to in being obligated and fully committed to; and thus because of His חֵן **hen** which is freely given to us, we too are now by our acceptance of His free gift also required to express true commitment in understanding our obligation to guarding the Covenant!

How we do that is by walking 'in' His Torah (often translated as 'law'). The Torah (law) of יהוה is His instructions for us on how we walk in His חֶסֶד **hesed**, and so the Torah (instructions) of Elohim is the articulation of the obligation we have to the Covenants of Promise by which we are freely and graciously grafted in to by the Blood of Messiah! We did not earn the right to this Covenant – יהוה made the Covenant out of חֵן **hen**, and therefore we understand that the חֵן **hen** freely given entails חֶסֶד **hesed**, which now both parties are to be committed to and both have an obligation to keep its requirements. If we reject the obligations and requirements of the Covenant, we are in fact rejecting the Kindness - חֶסֶד **hesed** – and by doing so are rejecting יהוה bonds to us given freely by His own Blood!

חֵן **hen** is 'grace poured out' and not חֶסֶד **hesed**. Most of Scripture speaks clearly of חֶסֶד **hesed** as a result of חֵן **hen**; and even in the Renewed Writings (N.T.) we see a constant and continual thread of the understanding of the mutual obligations and requirements that are entailed in a 'bonded' relationship with ודיה by the Blood of יהושע Messiah. חֶסֶד **hesed** in the Hebraic mind-set characterises our identity as being a part of and walking 'in' the Kingdom of Elohim! So when understanding the concept of 'grace' and 'favour' we find that it is not a new concept, as we see that in the truest sense in the Hebraic understanding it entails giving the correct response of obedience in response to the free gift of life extended to us by the Hand of our Creator, and not just a receiving of the gift alone! The Torah gives us the clear instructions how we respond to His free gift and how we are to live in Him, as a people who are in Covenant with Him!

Sadly Sha'ul's writings have been twisted and misused. Sha'ul used '*under law*' in a negative sense to teach against legalism which is the **wrong use of Torah** and trying to pervert it into a list of do's and don'ts for the purpose of earning ones salvation, but as we have seen from the descriptions just mentioned we see that salvation and deliverance is a gift, and upon receiving that gift we are now obligated to guard the gift by walking in the prescribed instructions given to us. Let us look at what Sha'ul was writing about in Galatyiim in regards to an often misunderstood letter:

Law or 'the' Law

As you study Scriptures and dig in to the original texts and the translations thereof, one can often find some translational additions that were merely added based on the translators understanding. One of these, in this letter to the Galatians, is a simple little word, **'the'**. In most cases where the term **'the law'** is found in the N.T. the definite article **'the'** is not in the original Greek! You then have to ask yourself, 'does this make any difference?' **And boy yes it does!!!** It is like saying 'the car' or simply 'car'. With the definite article **'the'** it refers to a specific car and not just any car, well the same applies here to law.

The term **'law'** itself without the definite article **'the'** preceding it can simply refer to:

(a) any legal code of do's and don'ts without reference to faith, heart conviction or love; (b) legalism; (c) a perversion of the Torah into a system of do's and don'ts to earn, merit or keep Elohim's love and favour and thereby to receive salvation.

So if law could refer to any legal code of do's and don't and not directly refer to the Torah alone then one can begin to understand Sha'ul's writing a little better, and in order to do that one has to be familiar with what 'other' **'laws'** were there that he may have been referring to? First we must understand what יהוה tells us in his Word:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 4:2 "Do not add to the Word which I command you, and do not take away from it, so as to guard the commands of יהוה your Elohim which I am commanding you."

You know the first person to add to His Word was Eve or Hāwawah in Hebrew: they were told not to eat of the tree... when the instructions of יהוה got twisted by the serpent (*surely he didn't mean...*)... she said they may not eat or touch... she added to his instruction! Look what happened – Listen, when you stay in His Word without addition or subtraction you will be kept safe in Him – it is when we add or subtract that things get all fuzzy and messed up, we become confused and make wrong choices based on twisted truth!

Why did I tell you this? Well because adding is exactly what happened to the Torah of יהוה and it was this very addition that made an impossible yoke to bear that יהושע came to destroy – He came to destroy man's addition to law that brings legalism and bondage into slavery and He came to set the captives free to walk in Him, taking His yoke, His Torah which is easy and light!!! So by the time Sha'ul was writing this there had been so much addition to the Torah that the Torah was not even a third of the 'whole law' that was being taught! The Greek word for *law* is νόμος **nomos** – **Strong's G3551** which gives reference to **'anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command or any law whatsoever'**, and so this in **no way** gives reference **only** to the Torah but in many cases to other laws in addition to the Torah.

There were precedents and interpretations that were set as law, for example:

'Halachat' – Pharisaic interpretations of the Torah, made law through what is known as **'midrash'**.

'Takanot' – New laws added to the written Torah with no Scriptural justification

'Minhagim' – Traditional customs that became law

'Ma'asim' – Rabbinical precedents that led to **Takanot**

Now as you can well imagine, with all these additions to the Torah – the yoke that is easy, had become heavily burdened by man's laws, and this is what Sha'ul was taking a stand against. Sha'ul was making a stand against any form of legalism, or rather man made system of works. So in the text the proper phrase should be rendered, **'under law'** and not **'under the law'**. The addition to the English translation of **'the'** to law where it was not in the original Greek certainly has steered the meaning of the word **'law'** toward *the Torah* of יהוה. Another phrase which we find in Galatians is **'observance of the law'** or in some translations **'the works of the law'** should be rendered **'the works of law'**, as it is not referring to the Torah, but is a phrase referring to any man-made system of works which has performance based acceptance as a core belief. These *works of law* in Galatians are better referred to as the **'ma'asim'** – those rabbinical precedents that led to laws being added to Torah without Scriptural authority. Sha'ul in his letter to the Galatians is, in other words, referring to a misuse or perversion of the Torah by adding to it a turning it into a works based, legalistic system which the Torah was never and is never intended to be.

This perversion of works based laws was mans way of trying to earn salvation as given through the example of Hagar and Ishmael – Ishmael was born in the natural way – through Abraham's **'works'** trying to enter into the promises, as opposed to יהוה's way – Yitshaq (Isaac) – the son of the promise that is from above and not of man's works. יהוה's way, the way of Sarah and proper use of Torah teaches that *salvation is by grace through faith* that leads to a producing of 'good works' with the help of the Spirit of Elohim living in us – and not through our own human efforts)

The Tenakh (O.T.) teaches that no one's works are sufficient to earn him being declared righteous by יהוה – it is only by his grace through faith in Messiah יהושע that He died for our sins and was raised to life on the third day by the Father.

The Greek word for **'under'** as used in the phrase **'under law'** is ὑπό **hupo** – **Strong's G5259** which means **'under'** and further means to be controlled by or in subjection to. So **under law** would mean controlled by or in subjection to **law/legalism**. Understanding this, then how is one **'under'** grace?

Controlled by or in subjection to 'grace'! In the same sense then we have accepted יהושע's yoke, which is easy and light to be 'ὑπό hupo' or *under* and makes perfect sense from a Hebraic mind-set as we understand הֵן *hen* and חֶסֶד *hesed*, in total contrast to the **yoke of legalism** which is not easy and is a burden. Stern in his commentary contends that יהודה's people are living: ἐν *en* – **Strong's G1722** (within – the framework of the Torah), but not to be 'ὑπό hupo' (subjection to) legalism.

We are in a faith relationship with Him and His people have always been '*under*' grace and in effect '*under*' the Torah which is a gracious subjection, but never under legalism, which is a harsh subjection. We are '*under*' the Father's Torah or instruction as we walk *in* His grace, but through Messiah יהושע, in His death for our sins and taking upon Himself the curse of Torah, *we are no longer under the condemnation of the Law or the Torah – this is His grace for us, amen!* Messiah came not so we could get away with sin, but so we could get away FROM sin! His work and walk was an example for us, not an excuse for us not to walk as He did!

When we read Sha'ul's letter understanding what he was referring to as *law* or the *whole law*, it clearly makes sense how against man's works to earn salvation and position he was. So against it he expressed his anger in saying that if they want to keep all their man made laws and trying to impose circumcision on the new believers then those agitators should rather just go and emasculate themselves!!! Another thing for us to realise is that Sha'ul never spoke against the teachings of the Torah, or rather the teachings of יהושע, who is the living Word, the living Torah. **Yeshayahu/Isaiah 40:8** tells us that **the Word of Elohim stands forever!** Sadly many today have done the exact opposite of adding to the Torah – they have taken away from the Torah in a desperate response to walking out from the *works of laws* or *works of man made laws*. The Torah was given as a way of life and Sha'ul in Galatians calls us to follow it this manner:

Galatyiym/Galatians 5:13-14 **"For you, brothers, have been called to freedom, only do not use freedom as an occasion for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the entire Torah is completed in one word, in this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."**

Sha'ul continually stressed that love is esteemed as the way to follow Torah and he stresses this point in:

Galatyiym/Galatians 6:2 **"Bear one another's burdens, and so complete the Torah of Messiah."**

The word complete here is the same word used when Messiah declares to us that He did not come to destroy the Torah but 'fulfil' or 'complete it! In other words He came to fully meet its requirements and provide for us the Way to walk in His Torah as we remain in Him in order that we too may 'complete/fulfil' the Torah. Just think about it – if He fulfilled' it in the erroneous way that is taught by many that declares it is now null and void – then how would Sha'ul tell us to fulfil something already fulfilled!!! Yes I know it sounds crazy – and guess what – it is! Because the Torah has not been made null and void – it is there for us to hear, guard and do and we have the ability in Messiah to walk in it!

So we bear each other's burdens and fulfil the Torah! He was referring to **Wayyiqra/Leviticus 19:18** when speaking here – he always referred back to Torah – יהודה's ways – not man's!

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 19:18 **"Do not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the children of your people. And you shall love your neighbour as yourself. I am יהודה."**

The freedom that he speaks of in **Galatyiym/Galatians** is in reference to the freedom that man has been given to walk out the Torah without the bondage of man's traditions. **Galatyiym/Galatians 3:13** tells us that that יהושע has freed us from the curse spoken of in 3:10. The curse that He took upon Himself enables us to work out the commands of the entire Word of Elohim without the fear of being cursed or condemned. יהושע did not bring the Torah to an end, he was the end of it – in other words the completion of what Torah is, He fully filled it – that we may understand and live it, amen! As

Galatyiym/Galatians 6:2 (quoted above) says – by carrying each others burdens we '**fulfil**' the Law (Torah) of Messiah! So we too can walk in the fullness of it as we have been given the way by יהושע Messiah. He fully filled it bringing it in its fullness that we too can walk in the fullness of it, as we walk in Him, having been saved by Grace through faith and now by His Spirit equipped to walk in Him 'fully'!

These false teachers in Galatia were trying to enslave the new converts all over again – they had been set free from death and slavery to their previous way of life by grace through faith in יהושע, and Sha'ul in chapter 4:21 was basically saying, listen you who want to be *under law*, **not 'the law'**, in other words, '*under legalism*' – do you not realise what '*the*' which is there in the Greek – '*the Law*' referring to the Torah of Elohim. He was saying listen you who want to or are trying to be under man's laws – are you not aware what Elohim's Law or His Torah says – salvation is by grace through faith – not of works!

The key to understanding Galatians rests in the knowledge of the letters purpose – the purpose of the letter was to show that justification or right standing in יהודה's eyes comes through faith alone and not through perverting the Torah into legalism by the addition of man made rules or works. The just shall live by faith! And in walking out our faith we walk in His instructions or Torah.

I encourage you all to start seeing the wonder and beauty of this great letter – Sha’ul was an excellent Torah teacher – he never undermined the very Word of Elohim – he upheld it passionately and so should we. We are in a time where we are truly realising just how the opposite has been done, by taking away from the very yoke that leads us in peace and joy. Living without law is sin, lawlessness is ‘*anomia*’ in Greek (*a – nomos*) – without instruction – without Torah – we cannot afford to live without the Torah – we cannot afford to live without **the** very Living Word giving us direction and guidance for every step we take.

Let us not make the same mistake, although in reverse, by not walking in His ways – He has given us His Word for our benefit, that we may know Him and declare His glory right here right now as we lovingly obey Him.

Praise יהוה that through יהושע he has broken the yoke of slavery – that man made system of works that only enslaves you. Yahshua modelled for us how we should live and we are to walk as He walked, living and obedient life, not enslaved by traditions and rules of men. Just as we can see how today many have taken away from His Torah which is lawlessness, using grace as a license to sin – sin is to miss the mark – whereas the torah is the mark. Through grace we can fix our eyes on the mark – יהושע – The very Word – and run unhindered the race set before us, amen!

In the same breath we have inherited traditions of man that has pagan roots and taken them on as acceptable modes of worship unto יהוה – how different then are we in today’s times compared to that of Sha’ul’s. In effect in today’s accepted mode of worship we can easily see how man has ‘taken away’ from the Torah and ‘added’ man’s own laws. One of these is the Sabbath. Man has taken away from the Torah and added his own Sabbath law, as we discussed a few weeks ago. Another interesting note on the Sabbath – According to the Torah there are basically only 7 commands or instructions regarding the Sabbath – and by the time יהושע had come in the flesh there were well over 1000 additional ‘Sabbath’ laws that man had added, placing huge burdens and unbearable yokes on man!!! The Catholic Church took away from the Torah by stripping the observance of Sabbath according to the Torah of Elohim and added a Sun-day law that has become man’s addition to their self-imposed worship unto יהוה. Let us strip away the rules of men, disguised as freedom, and let us embrace truly the heart of the Torah of Elohim, living it out expressed in loving obedience to our wonderful Maker.

Have you misunderstood Sha’ul’s message? Embrace the truth of the letter that is total harmony with the teachings of Yahshua.

I could go on and on, however I encourage you all to go and further dig into the TRUTH of the Word and discover for yourself the wonder and joy of walking in Him in love expressed through total obedient living.

Let me leave you with some of the verses in Galatians where the word ‘**the**’ should be or shouldn’t be there. This you can easily check by going to an interlinear Bible where the English and Greek are together and enjoy discovering the Truth, amen!

Galatians 2: 15-16 term ‘observance of the law’ or ‘works of the law’ should be properly rendered ‘observance of law’ or ‘works of law’. The definite article ‘the’ is not present in the original Greek before ‘law’!

“We, Yehudim by nature, and not of the gentiles, sinners, 16 knowing that a man is not declared right by works of Torah, but through belief in יהושע Messiah, even we have believed in Messiah יהושע, in order to be declared right by belief in Messiah and not by works of Torah, because by works of Torah no flesh shall be declared right.”

Galatians 2:19 – ‘**the**’ is not present in the original Greek text:

“For through Torah I died to Torah, in order to live to Elohim.”

Galatians 3:2 – ‘**the**’ as the definite article for law is not present:

“This only I wish to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by works of Torah, or by the hearing of belief?”

Observing law or rather works of law gives reference to ‘*ma’asim*’ –remember – those rabbinical precedents that led to ‘*Takkanot*’. Sha’ul is asking whether they received the Ruach HaQodesh (Set-Apart Spirit) through works of law – those oral ‘laws’ instituted by man!!!

Galatians 3:10-11 – definite article ‘**the**’ is found only once in reference to law in these two verses

“For as many as are of works of Torah are under the curse, for it has been written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all that has been written in the book of the Torah, to do them.”¹¹ And that no one is declared right by Torah before Elohim is clear, for “The righteous shall live by belief.””

Praise be to יהושע our Messiah who redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us so that the blessing given to Abraham may come to us through faith in Messiah and that by faith we may receive the promise of the Spirit – which is salvation.

Galatians 3:19 – ‘**the**’ is present:

“Why, then, the Torah? It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. And it was ordained through messengers in the hand of a mediator.”

Galatians 3:21 – ‘**the**’ is present in the first law and not in the next 2:

“Is the Torah then against the promises of Elohim? Let it not be! For if a law had been given that was able to make alive, truly righteousness would have been by Torah.

Galatians 3:23 - ‘**the**’ is not present with law:

“But before belief came, we were being guarded under Torah, having been shut up for the belief being about to be revealed.”

‘Prisoners’ by law’ can also be rendered ‘under law’. Before faith they were held captive by laws – heavy burdens – laws of man that was imposing a works based system for salvation, and as we know salvation is by grace through faith.

Galatians 3:24 – ‘*the* is present’

“Therefore the Torah became our trainer unto Messiah, in order to be declared right by belief.”

The law was a tutor or schoolmaster that led us to Messiah that we may be justified by faith. The terminology used here gives reference to those who were put in charge of young boys and the boys were in effect not allowed to even put a step out of the house without permission. By faith we are no longer under the supervision of a schoolmaster, we are now as verse 26 tells us, sons of Elohim through faith in Messiah יהושע, for we who have been baptised into Messiah have clothed ourselves with Him, and we are therefore heirs according to the promise.

Chapter 4:4 tells us that when the time had fully come – יהושע was born ‘under law’ to redeem those ‘under law’, that we might receive the full rights as sons!!! Because we are sons, Elohim sent the Spirit of יהושע into our hearts and we are no longer slaves but sons. What does Scriptures say – He has written His renewed covenant on our hearts – His Torah is now written on our hearts and is in our mouths that we may obey Him.

Galatians 4:21 – ‘*the*’ is not used in the first law, but is used in the second!

“Say to me, you who wish to be under Torah, do you not hear the Torah?”

In other words – you who want to be under legalism, under all these yokes of man – do you not know what **the** Law or rather **the** Torah says? – You are not saved by observing law – saved by Grace through faith

Galatians 5:4 – there is no ‘*the*’ in the original text:

“You who are declared right by Torah have severed yourselves from Messiah, you have fallen from favour.”

5:6 tells us that the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love! What is love for Elohim? That you obey His commands – that you obey His Torah! We obey His Torah out of love because we are saved, not to get saved!

Sha’ul carries on and tells us that the entire law (The Torah – not with mans laws included!) is summed up in a single command – love your neighbour as yourself – where he was in act referencing the Torah from **Wayyiqra/Leviticus 19:18!!!** He was addressing the heart of what was going on – those agitators were trying to impose stuff on the new converts that was never to be imposed on them – they should have loved them Elohim’s way!

We are led by the Spirit. 5:18 says that if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law (notice no ‘the’)

Galatians 6:2 (quoted above) – we fulfil the law as we carry each others burdens – LOVE

These are just some of the verses that when translated correctly brings greater clarity as to what Sha’ul is saying. Sha’ul was a great teacher of the Torah of Elohim, and he stood against that yoke that man had added to the Torah of Elohim. He himself was one of those who persecuted early believers when he embraced the ‘whole law’ including man’s additions until יהושע met him and stripped away the lies and traditions of men that was putting a burden on peoples shoulders that was too hard to carry. יהושע says – those who are heavy laden should come to him and take His yoke – His Torah, His instructions for His yoke is easy. May we be a people who do not simply throw off יהושע’s yoke in error by turning grace into lawlessness, but rather take up His yoke and so be led by His Spirit as true sons of Elohim.

Galatians is really a great letter and a great empowering letter that helps us see how Sha’ul loved the Torah and stood against anything that was added or taken away. May we too do the same as we live for יהוה in obedience to His Word which stands forever!