

4 Bewitched?

Galatians 3:1-14

Bewitched! Fools! Hypocrites! Paul uses strong words to describe what's happening to the Galatians. He's passionate about the gospel he preached to them, and he's in despair that they're in danger of getting things so badly wrong.

1. Carefully read through Galatians 3:1-14 (below), and then try to create a heading for each paragraph. Write your **headings in the spaces provided**. Then work your way down the points in the right hand column.

3:1 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. 2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by **believing what you heard**? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? 4 Have you suffered so much for nothing--if it really was for nothing? 5 Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?

6 Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." 7 Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. 8 The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." 9 So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." 11 Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith." 12 The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, "The man who does these things will live by them."

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." 14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

A thought - Is Paul implying here that "the law is like a Bee... once the sting of the long promised curse has been inflicted, the law dies - in other words, is no longer in effect?"

One thing was made very clear from the start. What?

Answer the question Paul asks...

How does trying to reach the goal by human effort overturn what was once clear to them?

Answer the question...

"or by believing what you heard..."

What was the message they heard and believed? Look back at the background study (Study 1) if you're not sure. (It's also the thing that was "clearly portrayed before their eyes!")

Consider Abraham...

Turn to the next page *

back to here

What does the future hold for anyone who relies on keeping God's Old Testament law?

Circle the key word in Paul's quote from Deuteronomy 27:26 that identifies the problem.

Trusting... or doing? Paul quotes two other OT verses here. What point is he making?

For Israel, disobedience to God's law carried the threat of God's curse. Whoever did not continue to do **all** the law was under the threat of God's judgement. But there's another option... How would you define REDEEMED?

What has Jesus done for those under the curse of the law?

What is the outcome of Jesus absorbing the curse of the law?

How is God's Spirit received? Are there any special techniques involved?

Why would it be foolish for **Gentiles** to put themselves "under the law" in the light of verse 14?

What does it mean for YOU as a Gentile that you can share the blessing given to Abraham? Are we in any danger of being bewitched by a different message?



*Consider Abraham



The Jews were exceedingly proud of their heritage. They considered themselves especially privileged - after all, they were the descendants of Abraham, and the heirs of God's great promises. But it seems like their picture of the promises isn't quite as big as it should be. Read these verses from Galatians 3 again, then investigate the background (below)...

Consider *Abraham*: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Understand, then, that those who believe are children of *Abraham*. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to *Abraham*: "All nations will be blessed through you." So those who have faith are blessed along with *Abraham*, the man of faith.

Background Briefing

Back to the Beginning

In Genesis 1 and 2, God created everything... and it was good.

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve decided they could run things for themselves, without God. They chose to "know (decide) good and evil" for themselves, and so be like God. As a consequence, the good world is placed under God's curse.

In Genesis 4 to 11, things go from bad to worse. Life outside the garden of Eden is a bleak cycle of sin and death. Sin rules.

In Genesis 12, God chooses **Abraham** (then called Abram) as the one through who he will reverse the curse.. Read the promises God makes to Abraham in **Genesis 12:1-7** and fill in the blanks below...

Leave and go to

I will make you into a

I will you (reverse the curse)

I will make your name great and you will be a

I will those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse...

and will be through you!

Blessed to be a blessing



Sure, God was going to make Israel great - but he's doing it for a reason. Why?

Read God's words of reassurance in **Genesis 15:1-6**. How does Abraham respond to God's promise?

How does that make him a model for us?

What is God's ultimate plan for the world?

How do we become part of the plan? (Is "keeping the law" a part of this?)

Turn back and pick up
at verse 10