

Sunday, February 14, 2010—Grace Life School of Theology—Understanding Galatians and the Law—Galatians 4:1-7

Galatians 4:1

- *“Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;”*
- Paul opens chapter four by using a well-known human illustration to depict Israel’s subjection to the Mosaic Law in time past.
- Regardless of whom the person might be, whether born free or slave, all children were subject to the same rules and regulations while they were children. There was no difference between them.
- The word “child” in this verse is different from the word “child” used in Galatians 3:26. Here the word means not speaking or infant.
- While the heir is still a child he is no different from a servant.

Galatians 4:2

- *“But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.”*
- The heir while he is still a child is under tutors and governors.
- Tutors—one who has the care and tutelage of children, either where the father is dead (a guardian of minors), or where the father is still alive
 - a commissioner, a domestic manager, a guardian
- Governors--the manager of household or of household affairs
 - esp. a steward, manager, superintendent (whether free-born or as was usually the case, a freed-man or a slave) to whom the head of the house or proprietor has intrusted the management of his affairs, the care of receipts and expenditures, and the duty of dealing out the proper portion to every servant and even to the children not yet of age
- The time when the heir would be released from tutors and governors was at the discretion of the father.
- Genesis 15:2—Eliezer was the steward of Abraham’s house even though Isaac would be the heir.
- Following Paul’s illustration, the tutors and governors in this verse are clearly the Mosaic Law.

Galatians 4:3

- *“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.”*
- “Even So”—this phrase connects this verse with the illustration of verses one and two.
- Also notice once again that Paul uses the word “we.” Remember that when Paul uses the word “we” in this epistles he is referring to Israel.
- The Greek word for children is that same word translated child in verse one.
- Notice Paul’s use to the phrase “elements of the world” to refer to the Mosaic Law. The Greek word translated “elements” carries the idea of first principles or foundational premises. Paul is obviously referring to the elementary principles of the Mosaic Law.
- Colossians 2:20-22—the elementary things are touch not, taste not, and handle not. All of these elementary things are all associated with the physical world like Paul says in Galatians 4:3.
- So Israel as children were in bondage to the foundational elements of the law.

Galatians 4:4

- *“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,”*
- The phrase, “the fullness of time” corresponds with the time appointed of the father from verse 2. The basic idea here is when the time was right. This ought not be confused with the dispensation of the fullness of time in Ephesians 1:10.
- Made of a women is clearly talking about the virgin birth of Christ.
 - Matthew 1:20
 - Luke 1:35
- Jesus Christ was born a Jew, therefore he was subject to the law of Moses
 - Luke 2:21, 39
 - Matthew 5:17—Christ said he came to fulfill the law
 - Luke 24:44—even after his death, burial, and resurrection he is still aware of his relationship with the law.
- WWJD—Jesus would follow the law

Galatians 4:5

- *“To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”*
- Christ was made under the law in verse four so that he could redeem them that were under the law in verse five.
- Notice the limited nature of this redemption. In this verse Christ is only redeeming those who were under the law. In time past were the Gentiles under the law? No they were suffered to walk in their own way.
- Does this passage teach the limited atonement of Calvinism? Yes, if you don't rightly divide.
 - Matthew 20:26
 - Matthew 26:26-28
 - Mark 10:45—in his earthly ministry Jesus Christ came to redeem Israel from the curse of the law.
- It is not until you get to Paul that you find out the Christ shed his blood for all men without distinction.
 - I Timothy 2:3-6
 - Romans 3:22
- Galatians 4:5—notice again the use of the word “we.” It was through the work of Christ that Israel was going to receive the adoption of sons.
- Adoption means the placing as a grown-up son. Biblical adoption, according to Paul, is not speaking about taking in a bringing up other people's children as your own. Biblical adoption deals with the placing as sons those who were already children. Therefore adoption does not simply acceptance into the family but a declaration of full sonship, with all its rights and privileges.
- Israel and the Adoption
 - Exodus 4:22—this does not signify that Israel was a full grown son while in Egypt. It was in Egypt that the nation had been born.
 - Hosea 11:1
 - Jeremiah 31:32
 - Until Israel came to the place where she could be given full sonship, God placed the nation under the tutors and governors of the law and its requirements.
 - Israel left to herself, would never have reached the place of adoption. Thank God that adoption does not depend primarily upon the son's attainments, but upon the father's will.
 - Acts 3:19-20—these things were offered to the nation which subsequently refused.
 - Romans 11:7—Israel had become a rebellious son and even to this remains out of God's favor.

Galatians 4:6-7

- *“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7) Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”*
- Again Paul switches from using the word “we” and starts using “ye.” His not once again talking to the entire Body of Christ both Jews and Gentiles.
- The Body of Christ has already received the adoption of sons that Israel as a nation is still waiting for.
 - Romans 8:13-16
 - Ephesians 1:6-9, 11