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The Doctrinal Argument: The Failure of Legalism 3:1 to 4:31

So, in the first two chapters of **Galatians**, **Paul** laid out the problem. What is the nature of the gospel, and what does one need to believe to be saved. **He** showed that the gospel he was preaching came from direct revelation from **God Himself**. **He** was independent of all other sources. Next, in the doctrinal argument, **Paul** will deal with **the Torah itself** and show **its** absolute failure in our justification and sanctification. **Paul** defends **his** doctrine of justification by **faith** alone without deeds, against that of **the Judaizers** who taught that deeds of an individual gave a person acceptance with **God**.

In these verses **Paul** deals with the failure of legalism, or substituting external ceremonies and rites, for the internal reality of a personal relationship with **Yeshua Messiah**. The principle of salvation equals **faith**-plus-nothing is difficult for humans to accept. The problem that the **Galatian** church encountered with legalism is not uncommon. Somehow it doesn't seem right that we should receive salvation without having to do anything for it or to suffer somewhat for our sins. Or if that doesn't seem to be the case with respect to ourselves, it certainly does seem to be the case with respect to others, especially those who are especially evil.

The gospel itself is a very simple **trust**. We have nothing to do to be saved except to accept what **Messiah** has already done. **Yeshua** died for our sins, was buried and rose again. And all we simply need to do is to **believe** that, accept it by **faith**, and come into a relationship with **ADONAI** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Bw – What God Does For Us at the Moment of Faith**). Because all other additions to the simple gospel are false gospels, counterfeit gospels, and they are, therefore, **cursed**. The simple gospel is salvation equals **faith**-plus-nothing. **Messiah died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and He was raised [to life] on the third day according to the Scriptures (First Corinthians 15:3).** Nothing can be added because the perfect sacrifice was slain, that perfect gift completely paid our sin

debt. For our trust in **Messiah's** death, and our choosing to follow **Him**, is like what **God** told **the Israelites** to do when they brought a burnt offering. **He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, so that it will be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf (Leviticus 1:4). Messiah died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and He was raised [to life] on the third day according to the Scriptures (First Corinthians 15:3).** Simply **trust** what **God** has already done for you.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). It finally comes down to this: each one of **us**, individually, is responsible for the death of **Messiah**. It was our sins that nailed **Him** to the cross. **For all have sinned** willfully, in greater or lesser degree, against the **God** of creation and holiness, and therefore, each of **us** deserved to die and spend eternity away from **His** presence in sh'ol **(Romans 6:23)**. But **the Lord Yeshua loved us** so much that **He** was willing – even anxious – to suffer the judgment that **we** deserved, and be our substitute, in order that **we** might be saved. **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Messiah died for us (Romans 5:8).**

God the Father was willing to offer **His one and only Son** as the sacrifice for **our sins**, in order to satisfy both the demands of perfect justice and the compulsions of perfect **love**. The forgiveness and **shalom**, both temporal and eternal, thus purchased for us by **Messiah** on **His** cross are now available freely and fully to anyone who will acknowledge and receive **Him** by simple **faith,** "**For if you confess with your mouth that Yeshua is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart it is believed for righteousness and with the mouth it is confessed for salvation. For everyone who calls upon the name of ADONAI shall be saved" (Romans 11:9-10** and **13).**

Therefore, having been made righteous by trusting, we have shalom with God through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah (Romans 5:1). *Dear Heavenly **Father**. How we praise **You**! **Your** offer of salvation is so great, so loving, so undeserved! We bow humbly before **You** in worship. We seek to live our lives to please **You**. We offer up to **You** our every thought, every action, and every intent of our heart to **Your** glory and honor. In **Your** holy **Son's** name and power of resurrection. Amen*

In **Chapters 3** and **4 Paul** gives a classic defense of the doctrine of **justification** by **faith**, a defense **he** had introduced earlier (see **Bd – Through the Law I Died**

to the Law). In **3:1-5 he** defends the doctrine from the standpoint of personal experience, and in **3:6** to **4:31** from the standpoint of scriptural revelation.