### Galatians

## Chapter 4

1Now, let me say this:  
  
As long as the heir is [still just] a baby, he isn’t any different from a slave. Yes, even though he’s [technically] the master of everything, 2he’s still under guides and house managers – until a day arrives set by his father.  
  
3Well, that’s how it used to be with us!  
  
Back when we were [spiritual] babies, we were slaves to the simple things of this world.  
  
4But when the time arrived, God sent his Son (who was under the [Jewish] Law and born from a woman) 5so he could buy those who were under the [Jewish] Law and adopt them as His sons.  
  
6And now that you’re [His] sons, God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, where it calls out, ‘Papa… Father!’  
  
7So – you’re no longer slaves, but sons. And as sons, you’re also heirs of God via the Anointed One!  
  
8Therefore, back when you didn’t know God, you were slaves to those who really aren’t gods. 9But now that you’ve come to know God (or rather, now that God has come to know you), why are you turning back to those weak and sorry [Jewish] rules… Why do you want to become slaves to them once again?  
  
10For you’ve [gone back to] the observance of days, months, seasons, and years… 11So I’m afraid that all the work I’ve done on your behalf has been wasted!  
  
  
12Brothers, I beg you to become like me, because I used to be just like you!  
  
You’ve never done me any wrong, 13and you surely recognized that I had a severe fleshly weakness when I preached the good news to you the first time.  
  
14But even though this problem must have created difficulties for you, you didn’t treat it with contempt or spit on it in disgust.  
  
Rather, you received me like an [angelic] messenger from God… Like the Anointed Jesus.  
  
  
15So where is all the joy that you [once] had?  
  
I swear that if it were possible, you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me! 16But am I now your enemy because I’m telling you the truth?  
  
17However, [there are those who are now] zealously chasing after you for the wrong reasons… For they want to snip you off and make you their own zealous followers!  
  
18And it’s good for you to always be zealously chased after (and not just when I’m with you), as long as it’s for a good purpose.  
  
  
19O my little children,  
  
I’m enduring ‘childbirth pains’ again until the Anointed One becomes strong in you. 20I wish that I could be there with you right now and talk to you in a different tone of voice… But I just don’t know how to help you!  
  
21So tell me this, O you who wants to be under the Law:  
  
Don’t you hear what the Law says?  
  
22It was written that AbraHam had two sons, one by the slave girl and the other by the free woman... 23The one [born] through the slave girl was born in the flesh, but the other ([born] through the free woman) [arrived] through a promise.  
  
24So, understand that this story is symbolic. For the two [women] symbolize two sacred agreements.  
  
[The first] one (Hagar) came from Mount SinAi and bore children into slavery. 25So this Hagar means SinAi (a mountain in Arabia), and she symbolizes JeruSalem today, which is in slavery with her children.  
  
26But the JeruSalem above is free, and she is our mother.  
  
27For it is written:  
  
 ‘So be glad, all you who are sterile,  
 And yell, O you who didn’t give birth…  
 O you, the one without birth pains!  
 For the children of the barren will be many…  
 Yes, more than those who have [their own] husband!’  
 [Isaiah 54:1]  
  
28Therefore, brothers, we’re now children of the promise in the same way IsaAc was!  
  
29And just as the one who was born in the flesh started persecuting the one who was born through the Spirit… That’s what’s happening now!  
  
30What do the Scriptures say?  
  
 ‘Drive out the slave girl and her son, because the slave girl’s son will never be an heir with the free woman’s son!’ [Genesis 21:10]  
  
31So brothers:  
  
We aren’t the children of a slave girl, but of the free woman!