

Gal. 3:19-24

- I. The Law was a temporary restraint of transgressions until Christ (19-20)
- A. Q: What then is the Law? (Why does the Law exist?) (19a)
- B. A: It was added through a mediator because of transgressions until Christ (19b-20)
- Temporary, inferior stopgap because of transgressions
1. It was added because of transgressions until Christ comes (19b-c)
- It does not supplement or replace the promise, but it is added on
It is inferior because it was “added on” cf. v. 15
This cannot be done with a validated covenant
It was added through mediators and angels
It was not direct – though God is One
It was a two sided covenant, depending both on God and on us
The obvious problem with this is us and our inability
The Promise was one sided, depending on God alone
- a It was added because of transgressions (19b)
- The standard interpretation is that the Law protects people from murder, stealing, adultery, etc. getting as bad as they could be/would be without the Law
- b Time frame: until the ‘seed’ comes to whom it is promised (19c)
- The Law was temporary- it was only until the seed comes
When the Messiah Jesus comes, when it will no longer be valid
Jesus is the One who was promised
2. The manner by which the Law was added: God communicated it through a mediator (19d-20)
- a Being ordered through angels by the hand of a mediator (19d)
- b Explanation: (20)
- 1) The mediator is not one (20a)
- 2) But God is One (20b)
- II. The Law serves a small part of the overall fulfillment of the Promise (21-24)
- A. Q: Is the Law against/contrary to the Promise of God? (21a)
- B. A: The Law prepares for the fulfillment of the Promise (21b-24)
- The Law and Promise were given for different reasons/purposes
1. Certainly not! (21b)
2. Reason: The Law fulfilled its purpose (21c-24)
- a The Law was never intended to bring righteousness (21c-22)
- 1) Neg.: Righteousness cannot be from the Law because the Law cannot give life (21c-d)

- a) Condition: If a law which is able to give life was given (21c)
 - Which is isn't – the Law was never able to give life
 - Obvious implication: The Law could not give life,
 - Therefore it was never meant to bring righteousness
 - Never, not even in OT times
 - The Law was given AFTER the Passover, redemption/rescue from Egypt and making of the Covenant
 - It was never a means to salvation, but a temporary response to salvation
- b) Effect: Then righteousness would have been from Law (21d)
- 2) Pos.: Everyone is under sin so that the promise is by faith in Christ (22)
 - a) The Scripture confined/enclosed everything under sin (22a)
 - Cf. Rom. Ch. 7, the Law shows sin to be sin
 - The Law proves that we are lawbreakers
 - We cannot save ourselves, we never could
 - We desperately need to be saved
 - So that the promise from faith in Jesus Christ may be given to those who believe
 - God tears down self-sufficiency with the law, so that we will seek our sufficiency elsewhere
 - The Reformers spoke of the “accusing use of the Law”
 - This is still true today
 - The Law is useful for this purpose
 - The Law is a revelation of God, so it can be used for this purpose
 - Obedience to the Law can never make us a Christian
 - But the Law is a decent (with caution) standard of what a person who loves God and wants to please Him should do (when rightly understood)
 - One who loves God will not murder, steal, worship idols, etc.
 - b) Purpose: So that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ may be given to those who believe (22b)
- b The Law was a restraint, keeping us until the way of faith was revealed (23-24)
 - 1) The Law kept us constrained/restrained until faith in Christ (23-24a)
 - a) The Law constrained us until faith (23)
 - (1) Before faith came (23a)
 - (2) We were restrained/constrained under the Law until faith is revealed (23b-c)
 - (a) We were held under guard by the Law (23b)
 - This can have a positive connotation, i.e. protected, cf. 1 Pet 1:5, etc
 - (b) That is, we were locked up for the faith about to be revealed (23c)
 - Locked up, confined, cf. v. 22 confined under sin
 - Confined for a purpose – God's gracious discipline
 - b) So that the Law became a guardian/supervisor/babysitter to us toward Christ (24a)
 - 'Paidagogue' guardian, teacher, leader to teacher, constrainer toward teacher
 - The Law pushes us to Christ by cutting off other routes
 - 2) Purpose: So that we may be justified by faith (24b)