



# World Christian Fellowship

[www.wcflondon.com](http://www.wcflondon.com)  
[wcflondon@gmail.com](mailto:wcflondon@gmail.com)

## Galatians

### Lesson 16 Why God gave law?

**Galatians 3:1-3**, *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? <sup>2</sup>This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? <sup>3</sup>Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?*

Salvation is by faith alone.

It is not by

- ✓ works,
- ✓ ceremonies,
- ✓ moral deeds,
- ✓ moral goodness,
- ✓ religious activities,
- ✓ service of the church, and
- ✓ carrying out religious ceremonies.

Salvation is by faith alone.

It is simply by faith, whether it is Abraham or any Old Testament Saints or anyone in Christ today.

Salvation is and has always been by faith alone only.

**Habakkuk 2:4**, it says, "*The just shall live by faith*," clear in the Old Testament.

**Romans 4:6**, *just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:*

Abraham was saved by faith. Abraham was blessed because of his faith.

God imputed righteousness to the account of Abraham because he believed God. Salvation has always been by faith alone apart from any works.

If it is true that salvation is by faith, not works, not keeping the law, then **why did God give the law?**

**Galatians 3:19**, *What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.*

If salvation was by faith and Abraham had faith. God, therefore, imputed to him righteousness, that is removed his sin and gave him righteousness. If that all happened by faith at the time of Abraham, why didn't Christ just come at the time of Abraham?

Abraham already had faith. Christ could've come then and offered the sacrifice then.

Why did the law have to come?

Why 1,500 years from the time of giving of the law till the coming of Christ?

If salvation is by faith, if righteousness is imputed to those who believe, and you can't get saved by the law, then why the law?

As we know that Abraham had an inward faith then why did he need an outward law?

Abraham had very simple faith inward.

The law was outwardly complex.

Why make life difficult?

Abraham's true sons are of faith we could see from **Galatians 3:19**.

Why the law?

God gave the law solemnly and very seriously.

He gave the law purposely.

God gave the law very visible way with an immense and shocking circumstances that will create such remark in the minds of the people forever.

Remember when God gave the law on Mount Sinai,

- there was thunder,
- there was lightning,
- there was earth quake and
- there was a trumpet blast.

The angels of God brought the law down. The people could see that the mountain burning with fire, smoke and shaking that were told not even to go near lest they die.

Abrahamic Covenant which was 430 years was a very private meeting. No one knew since it was not a public thing.

Abraham believed God.

God came to Abraham.

God made a promise to Abraham

Private meeting between God and Abraham. (**Genesis 12**)

Later when God wanted to make this covenant.

God put Abraham to deep sleep.

Abraham was sleeping.

God walked through the blood of the animals and made it a covenant.

God who sealed the unconditional covenant.

From this we can see very clearly that it's not an afterthought.

### **Why then the law?**

#### **V 19, "Why did God give the law?"**

To Show the Holiness of God.

To develop a great expectation and necessity for the Redeemer.

This can be done only by revealing human sinfulness. When the man understands the sinfulness to the degree that it would

create the desperation in men that would drive them to the Saviour.

The law was very important. Abraham had faith, but Abraham was only one man and few others in OT who had faith, but there was no group of people or society who could influence and stress the need for a saviour.

Abraham had faith in God because it was direct intervention from the part of God.

Noah had faith in God because God intervened with him personally.

What was missing in that time was there was no greater force that could drive the people towards God and seeking a saviour.

Remember Noah preached for 120 years but none could come into faith in God.

So, there was a need for law so that it could go beyond that God need to encounter each individual.

## **The misunderstanding of the Law**

The word "law" in the New Testament has at least three different meanings when used in different contexts.

**Romans 3:19**, *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

It can refer to the whole Old Testament here the preceding quotations come from the psalms and prophets.

**Matthew 5:17**, *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*

It can refer to part of the Old Testament.

**Luke 24:44**, *Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”*

It can refer to that part of the Old Testament written by Moses, the first five books, called the Torah.

Turning the commandments into a job description for how to earn the wages of salvation is called legalism.

But there is no Greek word for legalism, so when Paul wanted to refer to this distortion of the Mosaic law, he often used the phrase, "works of law" (**Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16, 3:2, 5**). Sometimes he simply used the word "law," as when he said, "You are not under law but under grace" (**Romans 6:14**).

This does not mean that you don't have to keep the law. It means you are not burdened by it as a job description of how

to earn the wages of salvation. So, whenever you read the word "law" in the New Testament, ask yourself: is this the OT, or the writings of Moses, or the legalistic misrepresentation of Moses' teaching?

None can say that God saved people differently in the OT than he does today. But many Bible teachers/ believers say that the law of Moses offers a way of salvation different than the way offered in the gospel. That is everyone agrees that anybody that was justified in the OT was justified by grace through faith and it was a gift of God. But many will still say that the law did not call men to be justified this way, it called them to earn God's blessings through works, and in doing this it showed men their total inability and drove them to the Saviour.

Or to put it another way, many Bible teachers will argue that the Mosaic covenant is fundamentally different from the covenant with Abraham and the New Covenant under which we live.

The difference what they say is this:

In the Abrahamic covenant and New Covenant salvation is promised freely to be received by faith apart from works of law. But under the Mosaic covenant salvation (or God's blessing) is not offered freely to faith, but instead is offered as a reward for the works of the law.

Since only perfect works could merit salvation from a perfectly holy God and nobody can achieve that, the law simply makes us aware of our sin and misery and pronounces our condemnation.

This is probably the most popular view of the Mosaic law in the church today, and it is wrong.

It makes a legalistic Pharisee out of Moses, turns the Torah into the very heresy Paul condemned at Galatia, and worst of all it makes God into his own enemy.

## **Law: Past, Present and Future**

### **Past**

**V19**, "Why the law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator."

The key word "added".

In relation to the past the law as addition.

Please do understand that in no sense did the Mosaic law, the Mosaic Covenant, set aside the covenant with Abraham. It simply was added to it. Thus, it completed it.

**V 19** say, "added."

**V 17**, says it was, "added 430 years later."

**Galatians 3:17**, *And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that*

*was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.*

The Abrahamic Covenant comes in Genesis 12 and when we come to Exodus chapter 20, and here comes the Mosaic Covenant 430 years later.

Does that eliminate the Abrahamic Covenant?

Does it invalidate it?

No.

Now there are two covenants in place.

- The covenant with Abraham was fundamental.
- The covenant with Abraham is that God promised to bless.
- God said, "I'll bless you, I'll bless your seed and through them, I'll bless the nations of the earth."
- It was a covenant of blessing.

It's a promise of salvation that God would bring salvation blessing to Abraham, to his seed, and through his seed, the Messiah to the nations of the world.

It was the promise of salvation and it was the promise of blessing.

That's why when Paul was teaching the doctrine of justification, whenever he taught about justification or salvation, he never

went back to the Mosaic Covenant, he always went back to the Abrahamic Covenant.

He always went back not to Moses, but to Abraham.

**Galatians 3:6-9**, *just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*<sup>7</sup> *Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.*<sup>8</sup> *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."*<sup>9</sup> *So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

**V6**, *"Abraham believed God. It was reckoned to him as righteousness."*

**V7**, *"Therefore, be sure that it is those who are faith who are sons of Abraham."* When we're justified by faith, we come as spiritually in the line of Abraham who was saved also by faith.

**V9**, *"So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham."*

Nobody in the Bible anywhere is blessed with Moses.

- ✓ Abraham brought blessing.
- ✓ Moses brought cursing.
  
- The Abrahamic Covenant said, "I will bless."
- The Mosaic Covenant said, "I will curse."

Here is my law and you can't keep it and I'll curse you for that. The addition of the Mosaic Covenant then does not void the Abrahamic Covenant in any way.

It doesn't alter it or change it.

**V14** says, that *"those who are in Christ Jesus receive the blessing of Abraham."*

When you're coming in Christ to receive salvation, you are receiving the very thing God was promising to Abraham.

In the redemptive history, God promised salvation, and He promised it to Abraham through his seed because born to Abraham would be a Saviour.

That's why in the genealogy of Jesus, in Matthew 1, it says son of Abraham. *"Through the loins of Abraham would come a Saviour through whom salvation would come to Abraham and to all of Abraham's seed who believe and to all in all the nations who believe."*

That's the promise of salvation made to Abraham. So, when you are in Christ then participate in the salvation promise originally given to Abraham.

That promise was not set aside by the Mosaic Covenant.

Then why did God give the Mosaic Covenant?

Simply because the Abrahamic Covenant lacked a sufficient universal emphasis on man's sinfulness.

When God made the promise to Abraham certainly, he was motivated by the blessing but really there was not anything to motivate people.

Abraham was motivated because of God's direct involvement in his life.

But where is that universal law that calls the whole world to the reality of the fact that they are cursed by the violation of God's law and desperately in need of a Redeemer and of salvation?

In the Abrahamic Covenant, God says, "I will bless."

In the Mosaic Covenant, God says, "I will curse."

In the Abrahamic Covenant, God says, "I will."

In the Mosaic Covenant, God says, "You better."

In the Abrahamic Covenant, you have promise.

In the Mosaic Covenant, you have threat.

There was nothing in the Abrahamic Covenant to unfold

- man's lost condition,
- incapacity for self-redemption, and
- essential knowledge for understanding and the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ.

In order to understand the curse first we must grasp the significance of Christ bearing the curse for the sinner and giving the sinner His righteousness.

Hence the Abrahamic Covenant had to be supplemented with the Mosaic Covenant in order that men might understand, that there is combination of things that operate in salvation namely faith and repentance.

We have many people saying, "I believe in God." We have a lot of Jewish who believe in God and they would even affirm that they believe in the God of the Old Testament. The question is whether they have repented of their sin or not. That's the balancing element of true saving faith. Repentance is connected with an understanding of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Old Testament revelation of salvation divides into two sections namely,

- ✓ the Covenant of Promise with Abraham and
- ✓ the Covenant of Law with Moses.

The whole Old Testament is blessing and cursing.  
It's positive and negative.

When you come to Christ, you come with faith in Him as Lord and God and Redeemer and Saviour then it's positive.  
You come to God with a terrible brokenness and a contrite heart and a sense of guilt, wickedness and sin in repentance then its negative.

With the Covenant of Abraham, there is life.

With the Covenant of Moses, there is death.

**V 21**, says that "*The law can't impart life.*"

**2 Corinthians 3:6-7**, "*The law kills.*"

Paul calls it the ministry of death in letters engraved on stones. The Mosaic Covenant then reaches its peak in the crucifixion.

**V13**, Christ becomes a curse for us!

Jesus goes to the cross and takes the full fury of God's wrath on our sin. The pinnacle of the Mosaic Covenant is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ as He becomes a curse for us, dying on the cross, feeling the wrath of God for our sin.

The summit of the Abrahamic Covenant comes in the resurrection! Because the promise of the resurrection was that we would be blessed and receive life.

We received death, dying in Christ on the cross.

We received life, rising to walk with Him in newness of life.

- The Mosaic Covenant then reaches its summit in the execution of Jesus Christ, and
- the Abrahamic Covenant reaches its summit in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
  
- ✓ Faith is emphasized in Abraham and
- ✓ Repentance is emphasized in Moses.

Mark begins the Gospel as

**Mark 1:15**, "*Repent and believe.*"

We can conclude that the law in the past, is seen as an addition. It doesn't eliminate that Abrahamic Covenant. It is added to it that there might be a full understanding of blessing and cursing to drive one to the God who will receive our faith and repentance and save us.

Future:

**V19**, *What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.*

Notice this phrase "till" or some translation says "until"

The word "until" means it has a time limit.

- It's not permanent.
- It is not forever.
- It is temporary.

**V16**, the seed is Christ.

The whole Mosaic Law with all its  
Ceremonies,  
Rituals,  
Priesthood,  
sacrifices and  
rest of the ceremonies  
had a set time limit.

Paul calls it a "shadow and Christ is the substance.

**Colossians 2:17**, *which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

The law looks toward Jesus and it points toward Him and its fulfilment is in Him.

When we are talking about this specific law we are talking about the ceremonial aspects of the law,

- ✓ all the sacrificial systems,
- ✓ all the priesthood,
- ✓ all the Sabbaths,
- ✓ all the new moons,
- ✓ all the feasts,
- ✓ all the festivals, and
- ✓ all those things pointed toward Christ.

Jesus was the fulfilment of all those pictures and types and symbols.

**Romans 10:4**, *"Christ is the end of the law."*

Christ is the end of the law. Jesus came to fulfil it all!

At the time of the Old Covenant, even when the Law of Moses was still in place, Jeremiah said there would be a New Covenant, and the New Covenant replaces that old Mosaic Covenant with its externals. (Read **Jeremiah 31**)

David the prophet foretold an eternal priesthood for the Messiah!

**Psalm 110:4**, *The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."*

The Old Testament saw a coming New Covenant that would end the old Mosaic Covenant of law and saw a new priesthood.

The priesthood had already literally been transferred from the tribe of Levi to Judah, according to 1 Chronicles Chapter 5. The priesthood had transferred from Aaron to the Levites to Judah, and there would come in the end a complete transfer of the priesthood to One who would come who was a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Lord Jesus Christ, He would bring in a brand-new priesthood.

**Hebrews 7:12**, *For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.*

So, the whole external ceremonial system including the priesthood, and everything was over when Christ came and died.

- That's why at the death of Christ, the veil in the temple is ripped from the top to the bottom.
- The Holy of Holies is thrown wide open.
- The sacrificial system is over.
- Access to God is readily available for anyone.
- No more Day of Atonement is necessary.
- No more Passover celebrations are necessary.

- You can transform that into the Lord's Table in remembrance of the cross.
- The old priesthood is gone.

Christ is the priest of a new priesthood.

And the law is gone as to its ceremonial aspects, its external aspects.

With the changing of the priesthood came the changing of the law.

So, the law then, the Mosaic Law, as to the past is addition. As to the future, it is temporary until Christ.

- ✓ The ceremonies were over.
- ✓ The rituals were over.
- ✓ The priesthood was over.
- ✓ The whole thing was over.

70 A.D., the Gentiles came in and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and there has never since been a sacrificial system or a priesthood in Israel.

## **Present**

- In the past, it is addition.
- As to the future, it is temporary.
- As to the present, it is instruction.

God's moral standards haven't changed.

They were true before Abraham, they were true in the four hundred and thirty years between Abraham and Moses, and they're still true.

We have the benefit of all of them being written down for us, in the pages of the Old Testament where God's moral law is clearly indicated and repeated over on the pages of the New Testament. And the law is now given to us for some very important reasons.

**V 21**, *Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.*

The law couldn't impart life. All it could do is kill and curse. But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin.

The first thing the law does is that it teaches us that we are sinful.

It is very vital that men understand their condition. While the ceremonial aspect of the law has been set aside because it was uniquely identified with Israel.

People do not understand that when God gave the Old Testament law, He gave it to Israel.

**Psalm 147:19-20**, *He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel. <sup>20</sup>He has not dealt thus with any*

*nation; and as for His judgments, they have not known them.  
Praise the Lord!*

When God gave the whole Mosaic economy, He gave it to Israel to act as a border, to separate them from the nations and the world around them. To restrain and control their behaviour, to act as a barrier to keep them from easy interaction with the world around them.

But the moral aspect of His law was given to show them and us, it acts as a mirror.

**James 1:23**, *For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;*

When we read the Word of God, we find that there is a standard there and when we look at the standard and our life, we recognize we fall short.

**Romans 3:19**, *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

The ceremonial part of the law has gone.

The moral part, which is the revelation of the character of God which has always been true, in all eras of redemptive history, is still in place and it is now clearly given to us on the pages of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

We know God's moral and religious and spiritual standards. Knowing those standards, we become guilty before them. The law as we face it becomes a mirror. Galatians 3:10 says that we realize we have broken it and we are cursed.

We have missed the mark.

The New Testament says we can't hit it because we're blind. How could you hit a target if you were blind?

- You can't hit God's standard because you can't see it.
- Your mind is blinded.
- You are ignorant.
- You can't know the things of God.
- They are spiritually discerned.
- You're spiritually dead.
- Your ignorance is both an unaware error and a wilful rebellion. You are a sinner.

**V19**, says that's why the law came. It was added because of transgressions.

The law describes the ideal!

Then prescribes the ideal.

This is God's standard!

Just not the standard of God but it also says that, "You must obey it."

When we come to this place what happens to us?

Two things!

**1. Aggravates sin.**

Like a little kid walking in the park and goes by the lawn and reads the sign that says, "Don't step on the Lawn." He never had the thought, but once he saw the sign, he walks over.

By suggesting what is evil, it excites our wicked, fallen nature. Therefore, we do things we might not have thought to do had we not known they were wrong.

Paul in **Romans 7** says, "When I got into the law of God, it just excited sin in me." It just revived sin in me. It just stirred sin up.

**2. Makes us feel guilty.**

That's its purpose. Intensify our sinfulness and then to make us feel the weight of shame and sin because of our condition. That's the function of the law.

**V 24**, says that it becomes for us "a tutor" to lead us Christ.

**Galatians 3:24**, *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith*

- When you study the law, you see God's perfect standard.
- You see that God has prescribed that you maintain that perfect standard.

- Instead of keeping that perfect standard, you are excited to a greater and greater violation of it.
- You then feel loads of guilt upon yourself and shame for such a violation.
- You feel conviction.

Result you realise that through the law comes only cursing, therefore, you are driven to Christ that you might be justified faith and faith alone.

Sin is clearly defined.

Sin is excited or encouraged and guilt is produced.

We can conclude that we are exceedingly sinful.

The Spirit of God working on can turn into conviction and repentance and drive us to the Saviour! The tutor!

**V13**, says, "*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us.*"

God put Him on the cross on Christ.

Christ was cursed for your sins and my sins.

That's the Christian gospel!

**V 29**, *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

The Abrahamic Covenant has never been set aside.

It was the promise of salvation.

When we come to Christ, we enter the promise of salvation blessing God gave to Abraham.

There are rules clearly given to us on the pages of Scripture for those who break them. There is judgment by the all-seeing, all-knowing Judge and that judgment has eternal consequence defined as eternal torment, eternal punishment in hell.

Either you can bear your own judgment if you choose, or you can acknowledge with repentance and faith the sacrifice of Christ for you and ask God to forgive your sins on the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and never be judged!

That's the message we preach.

In the promise to Abraham, there is blessing fulfilled by the death of Jesus Christ.

In the curse of Moses, there is judgment and damnation fulfilled by you forever.

That's the choice.

You take your own punishment or you acknowledge Christ as Saviour and Lord, and He takes it for you.