

The Law was Given to Lead us to Christ.

Galatians 3:22-29 and 4:1-7

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I. Historical Background and Biblical Context

A. Historical Background

As it is with each of us, Abram's **faith journey** began when God called him out of a life of wickedness and ignorance, that is, a life filled with idol worship, oppression, exploitation, hopelessness and aimless wild living. In Genesis chapter 12, God **promised** Abram that He will *completely transform his life* including all of those connected to him by turning him into "a great nation" so that he and his descendants will become a "blessing to others" (verses 1-3). Abram **believed** God and he immediately left his country, his community, family members and friends he had known for the past 75 years. It is worth noticing that God didn't tell **Abram** neither in *which direction* he must travel nor what the *final destination* is going to be. *It was a journey of faith!* Because Abram **trusted** God, he *somehow knew* in which direction he must travel. And the Bible says, *God appeared to Abram* from time to time to affirm and confirm that he was traveling in the right direction. When God appeared to Abram the first time, the Bible says, "**there he built an altar to the LORD and called the name of the LORD. ...**" *As Abram and Sarah continued in their journey of faith, God's promises became fulfilled in their lives.* In that faith journey, God **changed their names**, entered into a **Covenant Relationship** with them, all the males in Abraham's household had to be circumcised, and Isaac – the Promised Seed – was born whom God **multiplied** into the 12 Tribes of Israel. The descendants of Abraham and Sarah became the Nation of Israel just as God promised! **God didn't bless Abraham and Sarah because they were perfect.** *Abraham was blessed because God credited his faith as righteousness.* Clearly, the *trigger* for the release and fulfilment of God's promises was **faith**. That is why the Bible says in Hebrews 11:6, "**and without faith, it is impossible to please God,** because anyone who comes to Him must **believe** He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."

Regarding **the Law**, we must always remember that it was given to Abraham's descendants 430 years later. **In other words, the fulfilment of God's Promises didn't depend on the Law, but on faith.** However, that doesn't mean that the Law is not necessary or important for the believers. The Law was given not only to show what is wrong with us, but also to show us how we can do better. The Law was given to *restrain* our appetite for sin, to *regulate* our social behavior, and lead us to a life of faithfulness and obedience to God.

B. Biblical Context

So, the Law was given to *show* us:

a) What is **Wrong** with Us:

- how *sinful* we are: because the Law lists numerous kinds of sins, it makes us aware of the magnitude of our wickedness;
- how *cursed* we are: because the Law states that anyone who commits any of the sins listed is cursed, we become aware of the unbearable weight and dire consequences of our sins;
- how *helpless* we are in overcoming our own sinfulness;
- how hopeless our situation is under the Law which condemns us in this life as well as in the next!

And

b) How we can be made **Right**:

- Why we must Love and trust God;
- Why and How to be *faithful* to God;
- Why and How to be *obedient* to God's Word;
- The "**Dos**" and "**Don't Dos**" of the Law – *The Moral and Ethical Guidelines*.
- Divine Principles for *Enduring Fruitfulness* and *Prosperity* in this life.
- Divine Patterns and Paths of *Righteous Living*.

II. The Lesson: The Law was given to Lead us to Christ.

So, what is the divine purpose of God in giving the Law? (Gal.3:19). In general, the divine purpose of the Law was, still is, to show us (a) *what is wrong with us* and (b) *how we can get it right*. *The Law doesn't just tell us how sinful we are, but it also provides us with a lasting solution as to how we can overcome sin.* The Law doesn't just show us how far we can drown in our own sins, but also tells us how we can be delivered from the certainty of death! *The Law gives us a **clear choice** between The Way to Hell and The Way to Heaven.*

1. **vv. 22. The Whole World is Prisoner to Sin.**

The Bible says, the Law was given not only to expose the extent of our transgressions, but also to condemn humanity for all the sins committed generation after generation. The Bible says, the Law declared that "**the whole world is prisoner to Sin.**" There is a Divine Revelation in verse 22 when we raise the following question: **Will God bless Abraham's descendants by fulfilling His Promises even as the Israelites/Christians continue to sin against Him?** As we read and study Genesis and Exodus, we know that the

Israelites weren't always faithful and obedient since they were stubborn in their wicked ways! Someone might say, God continued to be gracious to them because they didn't have **the Law**. *That is true because the Israelites didn't know what the Law required of them until He gave it to Moses.* **What about after the Law was given?** *For the same reason that we didn't stop sinning, the Israelites didn't stop sinning just because God gave them the Law.*

Nevertheless, the LORD continued to bless the Israelites because the fulfilment of God's Promises was not dependent on the Law, but on faith. *The same is true today.* That is why God continued to unfold His Plan of Salvation through time because there were always **few remnants of the faithful** in every generation! Thank God for the few remnants of the faith!

2. **vv. 23-25**. **God Put the Law in Charge of the Prisoners of Sin.**

According to the Law, everyone of should be locked up until Judgement Day because **God's Righteousness** demands that we should be punished. According to the Law, all of us are "Prisoners of Sin" without any chance of being released either by bail or parole. ***But the Love, Grace and Mercy of God intervened, and the LORD found a way to set us Free through Jesus Christ by Faith!*** That is why the Bible says, "Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the Law, locked up until faith should be revealed. **So, the Law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.** Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the Law" (vv. 23-25). If Jesus didn't show up, we would have remained cursed and locked up by the Law until Judgement Day! "But God so loved the world that He gave His One and Only Son, that whoever believed in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

3. **vv. 26-29**. **Believers are Heirs According to the Promise, Not the Law.**

Every person owes his or her existence to God who created him or her. Every person on earth, man or woman, belonging to any geographic location, race, ethnicity and nationality is created in "the image of God." *We are all God's children because He created us.* However, Sin *disrupted* our relationship with our Heavenly Father and *disqualified us* from being **heirs** to His Kingdom. **And the Law was given to remind us not only how wretched we are, but our own sinfulness has disbarred us from being heirs to the God's Kingdom!** ***Yet, the Loving, Gracious and Merciful God found a way to reinstate our relationship with Him through Jesus Christ by faith!*** But in too many churches, Christians continue to deny people access to the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of race, ethnicity, social status, custom, etc. just as the Jewish priests and Pharisees did! God's Promises belong to everyone who accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior by faith! **Regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or station in life, those who believe in Jesus and are baptized in**

Christ are also heirs to God's Kingdom! *The Bible says, Believers are Heirs according to the Promise, Not the Law. God made Salvation in Christ Jesus simple! We don't need to make it complicated for those who are seeking Redemption in the Blood of Christ! There is plenty of room in God's Kingdom!*

4. vv. 4:1-5. Jesus Died on the Cross to Restore our Status as God's Children

Jesus came and died at **The Appointed Time** to Redeem us of our sins thereby making a way for us to be **released** from the **“Prison of Sin”** to which **the Law condemned us**. When we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, not only “the supervision of the Law” ended, but all **our rights** to have access to God's Kingdom were **restored!** No matter what we did, where we come from, what other people labeled us, or forced to become has been destroyed on the Cross and washed by His Blood! Because Jesus paid the full prize the Law demanded on the Cross for all the sins you and I have committed, we were set free! **And because we are covered by the Blood of Christ, His Righteousness is credited to us on that day we put our faith in Him!** Because Jesus Christ fulfilled all that the Law required of us, *our inheritance in heaven* is secured by His Blood shed on the Cross at Calvary! Our status as God's children and heirs has been restored in Jesus Christ!

5. vv. 6-7. Our Inheritance is Sealed by the Holy Spirit when we Believed

The Bible teaches and affirms that when each of us gave our lives to Christ by faith, we received the Holy Spirit as God promised would happen. It is one of those intangibles, but manifested in real time experience, that happens when Jesus comes into our lives. We all know that the way to heaven is filled with trials and tribulations. But our inheritance is guaranteed in the Blood of the Lamb! As it is written in Ephesians 1:13-14: “... Having believed you were marked in Him with a seal, the Promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of His Glory!” AMEN!

III. Conclusion/Application

1. That **all sinners**, Jews and Gentiles should “know that a man is not justified by observing the Law, but by faith in Jesus Christ” (Gal. 2:15-16).
2. “**Cursed** is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law. Clearly, no one is **justified** before God by the Law, because **the righteous will live by faith.** ...” (Gal.3:10-12).
3. “... **The Law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.** ...” (Gal. 3:23-25).