

## Galatians 3.15-19 : Earlie gracious promises of covenant are not changed by the later, subordinate law.

1. An argument from human practice

15a 15 Ἄδελφοί, κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω.

Brothers, according to man I am speaking [humanly speaking]

[a] A human will or covenant cannot be tampered with after it has been validated

15b ὅμως ἀνθρώπου κεκυρωμένην διαθήκην οὐδεὶς ἀθετεῖ ἢ ἐπιδιατάσσεται.

though it is of man, a covenant having been established no one annuls it or adds to it

[b] The promises Abraham received were to the benefit of his "seed". This can be taken as a collective noun, but

16a 16 τῷ δὲ Ἀβραάμ ἐρρέθησαν αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ.

To Abraham the promises were spoken 'and to his seed'

οὐ λέγει Καὶ τοῖς σπέρμασιν, ὡς ἐπὶ πολλῶν,

16b it does not say And to your seeds, as of [meaning] many

[c] Historically speaking, that seed is Christ - the apostle asserts

ἀλλ' ὡς ἐφ' ἐνός Καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου, ὅς ἐστιν Χριστός

but as of [meaning] one, And to your seed, which is Christ

2. Returning to 1a [v.15b] above, once God had established this covenant with Abraham; the law, [v.17b] coming much later, cannot change the covenanted promises., let alone annul them.

17a 17 τοῦτο δὲ λέγω διαθήκην προκεκυρωμένην ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ

I am saying this, a covenant, previously established by God

17b ὁ μετὰ τετρακόσια καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη γεγωνὸς νόμος οὐκ ἀκυροῖ

the law coming 450 years after cannot annul

εἰς τὸ καταργῆσαι τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν.

so as to make the promise in operative

3 The two principles are exclusive. There is no compromise. If the law effects the promise at all, it annuls it; it can't be added to it, it destroys it.

18a 18 εἰ γὰρ ἐκ νόμου ἢ κληρονομία, οὐκέτι ἐξ ἐπαγγελίας

for if the inheritance is of [issues from] law it is no longer of promise

τῷ δὲ Ἀβραάμ δι' ἐπαγγελίας κεχάρισται ὁ θεός.

18b but to Abraham God has granted it [the inheritance] through/by promise

[a] It was a gracious, still effective act of God that promised the inheritance

4. The preceding argument seems to leave the law with no purpose. An answer is now given.

19a 19 Τί οὖν ὁ νόμος;

Why therefore [is there] the law?

[a] "transgressions" become known once the law is given. Sin as I ready there is shown to be sin.

19b τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη,

for the sake of transgressions it was added

[b] The law is supplementary [and so is subordinate] to the covenant. In place for a time.

19c ἄχρις ἃν ἔλθῃ τὸ σπέρμα ᾧ ἐπήγγελται,

[to continue] until the seed should come to whom the promise [still in force] was made

[c] The law is not "directly" from God. It is enforced by angels and comes through the hands of Moses.

19d διαταγεῖς δι' ἀγγέλων, ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου.

being enacted through [the agency] of angels in the hand of a mediator

## **Galatians 3.20-22 : A new grounds for righteousness has historically arrived; the law was to prepare us for it.**

[d]By definition the use of a mediator implies non-direct exchange. The Law is conditional; the promise unconditional.

[e]Promises and law are not in conflict because they have different and distinct functions

[g] If, falsely, we give law the function of the promise [ which is contrary to the reality of things] then righteousness would come through law.

[h] A reminder of Deuteronomy 27.26 mentioned in verse 10.

[i] The purpose of this “shutting up” brings mention of Jesus Christ as the object of faith. And so therefore, the historic establishment of a new principle.

20 20 ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἑνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ θεὸς εἷς ἐστίν.  
 But a mediator is not of one, but God is one.

21 21 ὁ οὖν νόμος κατὰ τῶν ἐπαγγελιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ μη γένοιτο.  
 Is the law therefore [then], contrary to the promises of God, By no means!

εἰ γὰρ ἐδόθη νόμος ὁ δυνάμενος ζῶσθαι  
 for if there had been given a law that could give life  
 ὄντως ἐκ νόμου ἂν ἦν ἡ δικαιοσύνη  
 then righteousness would have really been by law

A supposition contrary to fact

22 22 ἀλλὰ συνέκλεισεν ἡ γραφή τὰ πάντα ὑπὸ ἁμαρτίαν  
 but the Scripture shut up all things under [the condemnation of] sin  
 ἵνα ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοθῇ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν.  
 in order that, on the ground of faith in Jesus Christ,  
 the promise might be given to all those who believe.

Clause of purpose