

THE LAW, A SCHOOLMASTER
BIBLE TEXT : Galatians 3:1-29.
LESSON 398 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Galatians 3:1-29

¹ O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?
² This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?
³ Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?
⁴ Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain.
⁵ He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?
⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.
⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.
⁸ And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.
⁹ So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.
¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.
¹¹ But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith.
¹² And the law is not of faith: but,

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Paul's Defence of Justification by Faith

1. The Galatians originally had received an experience of salvation by faith, Galatians 3:1-4;
Galatians 1:6
⁶ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:
2. Miracles were wrought by faith, Galatians 3:5; Hebrews 11.
3. Abraham was justified by faith, Galatians 3:6-9;
Romans 4:1-5
¹ What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?
² For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.
³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.
⁴ Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.
⁵ But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

II The Curse Which the Law Brings upon Man

1. Cursed is everyone who does not keep the whole Law, Galatians 3:10;
Deuteronomy 27:26
²⁶ Cursed *be* he that confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.
2. The "curse" is sin brought upon men by the transgression of the Law,
1 John 3:4
⁴ Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.
Romans 7:9
⁹ For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.
3. No man without salvation can keep all the Law, Galatians 3:11, 12;
Romans 3:23
²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

III Freed by Christ from the Curse

1. Christ paid the price of redemption by hanging on the tree, Galatians 3:13;
Deuteronomy 21:23
²³ His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.
2. The blessing promised Abraham is conferred upon the Gentiles in Christ, Galatians 3:14;
Genesis 12:2
² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
Genesis 12:3
³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be

The man that doeth them shall live in them.

¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

¹⁵ Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

¹⁷ And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

¹⁸ For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

¹⁹ Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

²⁰ Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.

²¹ *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

²² But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that

blessed.

3. The covenant with Abraham was not affected by the Law, Galatians 3:15-18; Jeremiah 31:31-33.

IV The Purpose of the Law: to Bring Men to Christ

1. The Law is added to convict men of sin until Christ should come, Galatians 3:19, 20.

2. All are concluded under sin that the promise given believers might be realized, Galatians 3:21-23.

3. Thus the Law is "our schoolmaster" to bring to Christ all who are shut up under sin, Galatians 3:24-29.

NOTES:

It was with strong feeling that Paul wrote his Epistle to the Galatians. He has preached to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and they had accepted it wholeheartedly, but in his absence false teachers of the Jews had come along saying that they should keep the Law of Moses. Jesus said, "The law and the prophets were until John" (Luke 16:16).

An Apostolic Decision

There are those even in our day who would bring us under the bondage of the Law, especially the law of the Sabbath. The Apostles and elders came together at Jerusalem to consider the matter of whether or not the Gentiles should keep the Law. Their conclusion stated by James was, "that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God" (Acts 15:19). A letter to the Gentiles was written by the church at Jerusalem stating: "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: . . . For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well" (Acts 15:24, 28, 29).

Satanic Deception

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" The hypnotic powers of Satan are so great that one under his spell can be made to believe a lie. Christ's crucifixion and atonement had been preached to them, then why should they go back to the Law for atonement? The blessings they received from Christ with the witness of the Spirit came by faith and not by works of the Law. Then why now return to the Law for the perfection of the faith? Paul asks the question: "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Galatians 3:5).

Abraham

Further to strengthen the support for the "hearing of faith" instead of the "works of the law," Paul calls attention to the fact that Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Thus Abraham, who lived before the Law of Moses, was justified by faith. The promise of God to Abraham that "in thee shall all nations be blessed" included the Gentiles who were to be saved through faith in Christ, the seed of Abraham. The Law, which was given 430 years after the promise to Abraham did not annul or make of no effect the promise.

The Purpose of the Law

Why then was the Law given? What purpose did it serve? It was added because of transgressions, or sins, until Christ came. It could not give life, but it revealed how wrong it was to do those things that were sinful. "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not

believe.

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵ But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

²⁶ For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

²⁷ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

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

covet" (Romans 7:7). "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Galatians 3:21). It took the death of Christ to redeem a sinner and give life.

The Law Fulfilled

In Romans 7, Paul gives the example of a woman being bound by the Law to her husband so long as her husband lives, but if her husband be dead she is no longer bound to him but is free to marry again. Through the death of Christ we are free from the Law of Moses, "that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit" (Romans 7:6).

In the Book of Hebrews, Paul goes to great length to proclaim the priesthood of Christ, and states, "The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Hebrews 7:12). He further proceeds to quote the promise of a new covenant, or a new law. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:8, 13).

The "Law" Means the Whole Law Given by Moses

Lest some might say that it was only the ceremonial Law but not the whole Law as given by Moses that was done away with, let us see what is the heart of the Law. Is it not the Ten Commandments, which were written on tables of stone? In II Corinthians 3:7 it is stated: "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, . . . which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?" Thus we see that the Law written in stone was not intended to be binding after a new covenant was ushered in. Even in our land when new laws are made, it is often necessary to repeal an old law to make room for a new and more comprehensive law. When Christ ushered in a new dispensation it was necessary that the Mosaic Law be repealed that the law of Christ might be in force. This does not mean that much of the same principles of the Mosaic Law are not incorporated in the new covenant or that we cannot learn from the Old Testament, for it is still the Word of God; but the coming of Christ brought in a more complete, comprehensive law which included the moral principles of God which have not changed since the foundation of the world.

The Duties of a Schoolmaster

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." The word "schoolmaster" used here is from the original "pedagogue" who was the entrusted servant to watch over a boy until he was grown. The pedagogue's duty was to protect the boy in all his activities. When the boy comes to maturity he no longer has need of this care. A schoolmaster held an important place and it was well that the child be thus guarded and trained by him, but it was not intended that the schoolmaster be retained after the young man came to maturity. Thus it was with the Law of Moses. It was given by God and was good; it was needful for Israel until Christ came; but when Christ came the days of the schoolmaster were over. Now the Jews and Gentiles alike could enjoy the fullness of the Gospel dispensation.

Christ Our Substitute

Although the Law itself could not save a man, those who were obedient to it could by faith believe God and be saved. The Law through its many sacrifices and rites drew pictures of Christ and His atonement on Calvary. When a man sinned under the Law, he was to bring a lamb as a trespass offering to the priest. He was to confess his sins. The lamb was slain to show that the

wages of sin was death. The sinner was worthy of death, but the lamb was slain instead. The lamb became a substitute, and the sinner who came in faith and true repentance was saved from his sins. In the same way, Christ became our substitute. He died in our stead. If we come in faith confessing and forsaking our sins, He saves us.

Salvation has always been by faith. During the period of the Law many people went through the ritual of the Law without true repentance in their hearts. The lambs were slain, the offerings were made, but without true faith it availed nothing.

The Lord's Day

Some false teachers today would like to have us attempt to be saved by the keeping of the Law of Moses. Especially do they stress the Fourth Commandment — the keeping of the Sabbath. Concerning the Sabbath the Word of God tells us: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days" (Colossians 2:16).

The "first day of the week" was the day on which Jesus rose; it was the day he made His several appearances before His disciples after His resurrection; it was the day on which the power fell (Acts 2), at which time Christ's Church was founded; it was the day on which the disciples met to break bread in commemoration of the Lord's Supper, and brought their offering unto the Lord. It also continued to be the day, which the early Church observed from 100 A.D. to 324 A. D. according to the universal testimony of the fathers from Ignatius to Eusebius.

The first day of the week, therefore, was not instituted as the "Lord's Day" by Constantine, by the Catholic Pope, or any other prelate. It became accepted as the day of worship immediately after Jesus' resurrection, and has been observed by all true Christians from that time down to the present day.

QUESTIONS

1. For what did Paul reprove the Galatians?
2. By what was Abraham saved?
3. Under what curse are those who try to keep the Law?
4. How are we free from the curse of the Law?
5. What are the duties of a schoolmaster?
6. Compare a schoolmaster with the Law?
7. Why was the Law given?
8. How many years was it from the giving of the promise unto Abraham until the Law was given?
9. Why do we not need the Law or a schoolmaster today?
10. Give reasons why we worship on Sunday instead of Saturday.