

Outline*



The Law Had Definite Purpose 3:19-24

- a. The Anticipated Question – Why the Law v19a
- b. Paul's Answer v19a
- c. The Law's Character v19b-20
- d. An Incorrect Conclusion 3:21
- e. The Success of the Law 3:22-24

The Law Is Successful As a Jailer 3:22-23

The Law Is Successful As a Tutor 3:24

Review from Gal 3:19a



Why the Law?

the Law was added or better “placed along side”
for the sake of the transgressions (not because of)
transgressions – lit: to step over a limit
to provide an external standard (God’s standard)
to show man how badly he needed a Savior
reveal the sinfulness of the sin nature
the placing along side of the Law is out from God’s
grace!

Review from Gal 3:19b



The character of the Law:

ordained through angels -10,000 holy ones in Deut 33:2

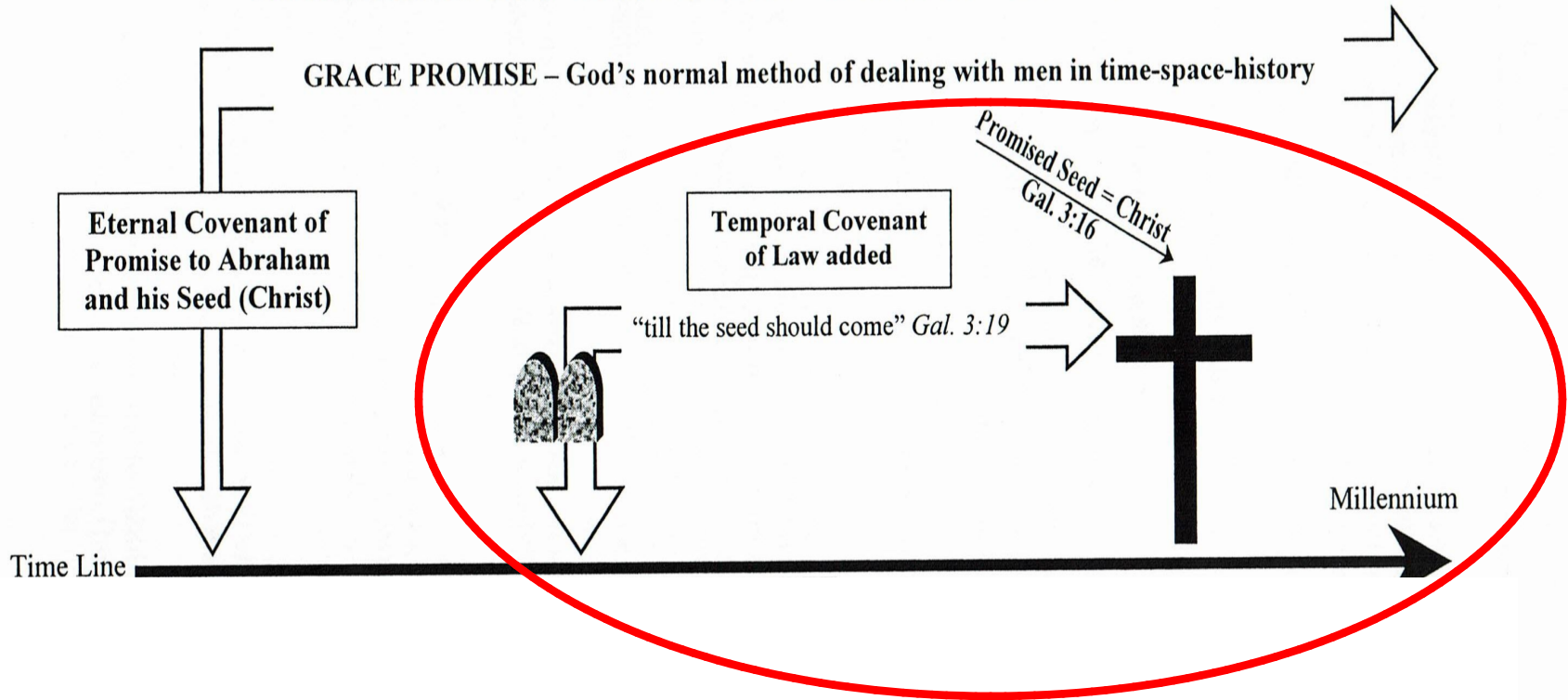
the mediator was Moses at the giving of the Law

the time period would be until the seed (Christ) would come

this was God's promise to Abraham – Gal 3:16

Rom 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

PROMISE AND LAW CONTRASTED – GALATIANS 3:19 CONTEXT



The parallel nature of the Abrahamic Covenant and the Law

²⁰ Now a mediator is not for one *party only*;
whereas God is *only* one.



The idea in part a of this verse is that a mediator is not a mediator for one party only. A mediator is a go-between two parties. In this context Moses represented God to Israel in the giving of the Law.

whereas – but – in contrast to

The idea in part b is that God alone acted when He promised Abraham a land, a seed and a blessing.

Gal 3:20 – What is it saying*



What the verse says:

- a mediator is not for one party only
- whereas God is only one

Who is being addressed in this verse:

- speaks of the Law to Israel with Moses as the mediator
- in contrast to God's Promise to Abraham

How many parties?

- two parties have an obligation (God and Israel)
- only one party has an obligation (God alone)

Was a mediator required?

- Yes, the mediator was Moses
- No, a mediator was not required

Gal 3:20 – What is it saying* (cont.)



What type of covenant?

- It was Conditional and Temporal with Israel
- It was Unconditional and Eternal with Abraham

What are the obligations of the parties?

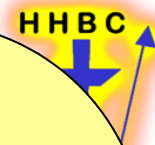
- Israel to keep the Covenant and to God bless or curse
- God fulfills the Promise of righteousness/life via the seed

How is man to respond?

- Works are required for the covenant of the Law
- Faith is the only requirement for the Promise

What is God's purpose?

- To reveal man's sin and God's righteousness
- To reveal God's grace



Ma
w
it

Paul will now in this next
verse propose a question
for the sake of argument
on what “the Law” is not!

²¹ Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God?
May it never be! For if a law had been given which
was able to impart life, then righteousness would
indeed have been based on law.



is the Law then contrary to the promises of God?

contrary – or against

The promises of God in this context is God's covenant
with Abraham (a land, a seed and a blessing)

May it never be! – lit: God forbid or it can never be

Rom 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment
is holy and righteous and good.

21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.



The answer is that the law and the promises are not in conflict because each has a distinct function.*

- The law is a ministry of condemnation.
- The promises are a ministry of salvation.
- The law judges a person on the basis of obedience or disobedience.
- The promises judge man on a basis of faith.
- The law, whose ministry is one of condemnation, was not intended to express God's attitude towards man.
- God's attitude towards man is one of grace.
- The law is not the basis of God's judgment of man.

* Wuest

21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.



For if a law had been given

Paul is proposing an impossible situation!

note: it says “a law” not “the Law”

was able to impart life – lit: being able to give life

can keeping the Law give life?

but Scripture says:

John 6:63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.



then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

again this cannot be the case!

Gal 2:21 "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness *comes* through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

The whole idea of conflict between the two is abhorrent because it suggests a conflict within the character of God who was author of both the Law and the promise. The Law, however, is unable to impart life—it cannot save.

McCalley