

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS

Part Seven Doctrinal Section

V. Paul's Vindication of the Gospel Galatians 3:1 - 4:31

A. The Argument from the Experience of the Galatian Christians (Part Five)

B. The Argument from Scripture (Galatians 3:6-29)

1. Abraham and his true children - verses 6-9 (Part Six)

2. The curse removed - verses 10-14

a. the curse came through the Law

(1) the Law could only condemn (verse 10)

"Everyone, however, who is involved in trying to keep the Law's demands falls under a curse, for it is written: Cursed is everyone which continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them."
(from Letters to Young Churches by J. B. Phillips, p. 96)

Although it is true that anyone who could keep the Law perfectly could not be condemned, yet no such person exists except Jesus Christ. The Law was never intended to be a way of salvation. Its purpose is to reveal the lost condition of man before God. ("... for by the Law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20) Also, it is important to realize that even those who zealously endeavor to keep the Law are cursed along with those who care nothing about its demands.

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10

The Law demands perfect obedience. The fact that such obedience is beyond sinful man is indicated in Deuteronomy 5:29, immediately following the statement of the Law:

"O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever."

(2) the Law cannot save (verses 11,12)

(a) verse 11

It is made still plainer that no one is justified in God's sight by obeying the Law for: The righteous shall live by faith. And the Law is not a matter of faith at all, but of doing, as, for example, in the Scripture: He that doeth them shall live in them.

"The just shall live by faith," is quoted from Habakkuk 2:4 where the context reads: "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him, but the just shall live by faith."

The contrast is between the unrighteous person and the person made righteous by faith. Paul also uses it in Romans 1:17 where the context is also justification by faith. Some interpreters say that Habakkuk was referring to a person's walk and not just the justification. That this is not the case is evident from Paul's use of the reference. The Old Testament teaches that salvation comes through faith and not through the Law. This is important to recognize because some Bible teachers teach that people in the Old Testament were justified by the Law.