

# Galatians 3:19-22

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/gal/gal-3/galatians-319-22/>

*Since the Law had nothing to do with either the giving or receiving of the promise of God, Paul answers an obvious question: What is the Law for?*

Paul says that the law was given because of the sinfulness of man to guide them until Christ came, *until the seed* (Jesus) *would come to whom the promise was made*. The law is not life-giving like the promise of God acquired through faith.

The Law was given *by the agency of a mediator*. This appears to be a validation of the belief the Jews had that angels were messengers that gave the Law to the people of Israel. Hebrews 2:2 appears to make the same point. But a *mediator* is *not for one party only*. There has to be at least two parties for a mediator to function. The Law was given through a *mediator*, from God to man. But God gave His promise to Abraham directly. *God is only one*. So the promise of God to Abraham must be something completely different from the Law.

It is important to recall that the entire letter to the Galatians is to straighten out their understanding, which has been warped by competing Jewish “authorities” who claim it is necessary to keep religious rules in order to be completed in Christ (Galatians 3:3) and even to be justified in the presence of God (Galatians 2:2). The law does not save or complete anyone. It does however show our need for Jesus. *The Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.*

## Biblical Text

<sup>19</sup> **Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.** <sup>20</sup> **Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one.** <sup>21</sup> **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.** <sup>22</sup> **But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.**