

Promises Made to Abraham in Galatians 3

Let's examine Galatians 3:6-9, 14, 16, 18-19, 21-26, and 28-29 (KJV) and provide a detailed commentary on these verses, as they deal with the relationship between faith, the law, and the promises of God.

Galatians 3:6-9

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.

Commentary: Paul is establishing that Abraham's righteousness came by faith, not by the works of the law. He quotes Genesis 15:6 to show that Abraham's belief was "accounted" to him as righteousness. This means that the true children of Abraham are those who live by faith, not just his physical descendants. Paul extends this promise to the Gentiles (heathen), emphasizing that all nations are blessed through Abraham's seed by faith. The key takeaway is that faith, not ethnicity or adherence to the Mosaic Law, is what qualifies one as part of God's family.

Galatians 3:14

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.

Commentary: Here, Paul emphasizes that the blessing promised to Abraham extends to the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. This blessing is not only about the inheritance of land but, more importantly, the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is received through faith in Christ. This echoes the new covenant, where believers receive the Spirit as the fulfillment of God's promises, irrespective of their adherence to the law.

Galatians 3:16

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.

Commentary: Paul makes a crucial point about the word "seed" used in the promises made to Abraham. He notes that "seed" is singular, referring to Christ, not to many descendants (plural seeds). This shows that the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham was in Christ, not in the many offspring of Abraham. This interpretation places Christ at the center of the Abrahamic covenant, showing that the promise to bless all nations is fulfilled through Him.

Galatians 3:18-19

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.

Commentary: In verse 18, Paul clarifies that the inheritance promised to Abraham was not based on the law but was given by God's promise. The law came after the promise and was temporary. In verse 19, Paul explains that the law was added "because of transgressions," meaning it served to reveal sin and show humanity's need for a savior. The law was meant to be in place "until the seed" (Christ) came, highlighting its temporary role in God's redemptive plan. The law's function was preparatory, not permanent.

Galatians 3:21-26

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 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.

Commentary: In this passage, Paul assures that the law is not

contrary to God's promises but served a specific purpose. If righteousness could come through the law, then it would have, but it didn't—the law couldn't give life. Instead, the law revealed humanity's sinful state, pointing them to their need for salvation in Christ.

Verses 24 and 25 describe the law as a “schoolmaster” or tutor. The Greek term used here (“paidagōgos”) refers to a guardian or guide for children, showing that the law's purpose was to lead people to Christ. Now that Christ has come, believers are no longer under the tutor (the law) but are justified by faith in Him. Verse 26 sums up the theological point: through faith in Christ, all believers (Jews and Gentiles) are children of God.

Galatians 3:28-29

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.

Commentary: Paul concludes this chapter by breaking down all social and ethnic divisions in Christ. Whether Jew or Greek (ethnic/national identity), slave or free (social status), male or female (gender distinction), all are equal in Christ. Being “in Christ” makes believers part of Abraham's seed, meaning they inherit the promises made to him. This affirms that faith in Christ transcends all distinctions, and those in Christ are the true heirs of the promises God made to Abraham, not by physical descent but by faith.

Summary:

Paul's argument in these verses centers on faith versus the law. He stresses that the promises made to Abraham, including justification and the inheritance of the Holy Spirit, are fulfilled in Christ and received through faith, not through the works of the law. The law had a temporary, preparatory role, pointing people to Christ, and now that faith has come, believers are no longer under the law but are united in Christ as children of God. This includes all who believe, regardless of their ethnic, social, or gender distinctions. Through faith in Christ, believers are part of Abraham's seed and heirs to the promises.