Chapter 8
THE MOSAIC COVENANT

EXODUS 19
INTRODUCTION OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT

The Mosaic Covenant is set forth very clearly by God. This covenant is called the Old Covenant (the Law for short) by those of us who are in the New Covenant.

Exodus
19:4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and [how] I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.
19:5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine:
19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Moses, then, took those words from God to the Children of Israel and put them before the elders.

Exodus
19:8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

After all was said and done, the people were given a choice to accept or reject God’s offer. The Hebrew people answered together that they would do everything spoken by God. When Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD, the covenant was agreed upon. All that remained was the sealing of the covenant with blood, and that was taken care of in short order.

I frequently encounter people who are trying to re-establish the Old Covenant in our day as the basis of salvation in very much the same terms as we have here in Exodus 19. We need to learn the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

The Old Covenant is a paradigm of salvation based on works. Obeying the Words of God are the works that must be completed in their entirety.

Jesus is the only One who has completed the Old Covenant and by His works, has established the New Covenant. That New Covenant offers us the eternal life that is a part of the New Covenant as a wonderful gift to whomsoever will believe and receive it.

Now, if we try to earn eternal life by our own works, then we all have failed (Rom. 3:23) and will have to pay our own debt of death in hell (Rom. 6:23a). If we present the Gospel and couch it in Old Covenant terms, there is going to be the possibility that we will distort it in such a way that a person cannot get saved. That distinction must be made clear. “If, then” is a straight up and down condition. God says, “If you will obey me and keep my words, then I will make you My peculiar treasure, My Kingdom of priests and kings, and an holy nation.” 1 Peter 2:9 says,

1 Peter
2:9 But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Peter is telling Christians that we have received the blessings that were promised in the Old Covenant. These blessings are repeated in Revelation.
Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Jesus has given the promises of the Old Covenant to us as a free gift. Where every one of us has failed, Jesus alone has succeeded to fulfill the requirements of the Old Covenant. Because Jesus who owed no penalty of death died for our sins, then He will account that death to our credit if we but believe in Him.

The promises of blessings from the Old Covenant were earned by Jesus, not by us. Amazingly, He has transferred them to us so that we have all been blessed to receive the very things, the very words, even the titles that were stated in the Old Covenant.

Do you understand the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant?

Joe: The Children of Israel did not obey all of God’s commands. They sinned, they did not take His word on faith, and they did not enter the Promised Land when they were supposed to. God sent His only begotten Son to complete the Old Covenant. By completing it and shedding His blood for a debt that He did not owe, the payment is applied to any who believe and receive under the wonderful New Covenant. The shedding of sacrificial blood by the Hebrews under the Old Covenant was only a temporary covering, not an eternal cleansing as it is now under the New Covenant.

Bob: The shedding of blood under the Old Covenant was something that had to be done over and over. It was an act that they had to perform to show their faith and obedience to God. Today we have accepted Christ who was the ultimate once-and-for-all sacrifice for our sins. We are saved (justified) by grace through faith, not of works, but we are saved unto good works (sanctification).

V: Yes to both of you. In contrast to the repeated sacrifices under the Old Covenant, the New Covenant provides a perfect sacrifice to be done one time for all eternity.

Ted: The Hebrews failed to obey, but under the New Covenant, we still reap the Old Covenant’s blessings (Ex. 19:5, 1 Pet. 2:4-9, Rev. 1:5-6).

V: Amen. The Old Covenant was fulfilled how?

Joe: Jesus accomplished it by living the perfect life and shedding His blood in perfect obedience to the Father.

V: So if Jesus did the “if,” Jesus also gets the “then.” How do we get the “then” of being called the “kingdom of priests and a holy nation”?

Carl: When we accept Christ.

V: So, when we are in Him, then we, too, receive those blessings?

Pete: In effect, we do because we are in Jesus. God looks upon the righteousness of Christ when He looks at us.

V: Right. Christ fulfilled the Old Covenant, and the blessings that come from that fulfilling come to Him. Those who are in Christ inherit those blessings as the body of Christ.

What is required for an inheritance?

Sybil: Becoming children of God.

V: That is true, but there is a prior requirement for inheritance. What is it?

Jill: God gives it to us.

V: That is true, but it is not getting to the necessary prerequisite.

Jack: When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we become adopted sons. We are adopted into that family.
V: That is true. We are adopted as sons. However, there is a prerequisite for becoming heirs? What is that essential event?

Beth: Death of the owner and a will.

V: Yes, the Testator has to die for the testament to be executed for the heirs’ inheritance!

Oscar: Not only did He pay the price for our sins, but also He had to die in order to pass on to us, his heirs, all of His possessions.

V: That is right! We could only inherit the blessings upon His death. Without His death there would have been no inheritance.

Steve: The Holy Spirit is our guarantor of our inheritance.

V: Yes, that is good. At the death of Jesus the Spirit came to guarantee that you already have a piece of the inheritance. The Spirit marks us as a child of God. As such, you are an heir of Jesus. Jesus is the Testator who died and sealed His will and testament.

Jesus is the only one who could be King, Priest, and the Peculiar Nation because the ones it was promised to under the Old Covenant failed to do the “if” part. Someone had to come along to do the “if” part in order for the “then” part to become effective. But for the “then” part to be transferred to you from the One who earned it, there had to be the New Testament, the designation of you as heirs, and the death of the Testator.

Just because Jesus did a perfect work, you would still be on the outside looking in if you were not an heir. Becoming an heir is still open to anyone who will believe in Jesus. To become an heir of salvation requires nothing but a turning from your own self-sufficiency, confessing that you are a sinner, and asking for God’s forgiveness in His Son Jesus.

Mary: The resurrection completed the ongoing requirement of the Old Covenant’s demand for a High Priest.

V: You bet! The doctrine of the Work of Christ extends back through the Old Covenant all the way to the Abrahamic Covenant and forward into the New Covenant. Understanding the basis for the New Covenant requires an understanding of the Abrahamic and Old Covenants.

Because of our tendency to reduce our doctrine of salvation to justification, the doctrine of salvation loses much of its power, and the church therein loses its power. There is much that goes undone, and adventure is cut short. Well, it is the same with the doctrine of the work of Christ. We must back up to the prior covenants that are still in effect in order to comprehend the New Covenant.

There are literally thousands of books, papers, and scholarly research done on the work of Christ. Yet, it has never been explored to its total depth. There is much work yet to be done on studying the New Covenant in the context of the Old Covenant and its predecessor, the Abrahamic Covenant.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Genesis
12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:
12:2 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:
12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.
12:4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram [was] seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.
12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give
this land: and there builded he an altar
unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Genesis
13:14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:
13:15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.
13:16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then] shall thy seed also be numbered.

Look at the beginning of this Covenant and tell me what the “if” is.

Henry: If you will leave your country, your people, and your father. Abraham had to obey God first in order to receive God’s blessings.

V: God said, “If you will, then I will.” But what if Abraham had chosen not to obey, would God have been obligated to bless Abraham and his seed?

Henry: No.

V: So the Abrahamic Covenant was a condition. What was the condition?

Carl: If Abraham would leave. . . .

Mary: He had to leave and follow God to a land that was chosen by God.

V: What difference is that from the Old Covenant?

Steve: One was based on trust and the other was based on works.

V: Good insight Steve.

So now, see if you can pick up on what Steve is saying here and make the distinction because one is an earned blessing by works, and the other is a trust-oriented gift.

Hebrews 11:8
11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

11:9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

The Abrahamic Covenant was not an open-ended lifetime of obedience. It was one of simple choice to believe with a faith activated by stepping out in trust.

Galatians
3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Now I want you to see the difference between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants. God told Abraham to get up out of his country and go to a place that God was going to show him. Abraham believed God. Abraham’s response was a belief response in which belief is prime. Belief is faith or trust. It is standing not in your own strength to merit the blessing but rather in God’s strength to give you the blessing. Abraham believed God and stepped out on his journey What Abraham did is what faith looks like.

The result of faith becomes a journey. The Abrahamic Covenant gives us a picture of the Christian’s journey. The journey had to begin with faith followed up by work as the result of the faith. The covenant of faith demonstrates one’s personal inability to achieve God’s eternal blessings without God’s providing them as a gift. That is nothing that you can brag about.

Please see the difference. The Old Covenant establishes a condition of open-ended obedience of whatever God should say. He did not tell them what they would be required to obey, but the people agreed to the proposition of total obedience. They lined up for the journey, but they failed to keep their end of the condition.
Jill: Abraham’s act of obedience was completed, but the Hebrew’s act was merely vocal.

V: Yes!

We need to be careful, however, not to discount the honest and full commitment to the Mosaic Covenant by the Hebrews. They said, “All that the Lord has said, we will do.” That kind of commitment is real and open ended. Their commitment was real, but their achievement proved to be impossible for them.

Ted: Their commitment is to continuous obedience in action. Their faith was in themselves, in their being able to do whatever God said. Abraham’s faith was, “I believe God enough to leave home, and then He will show me where to go.”

V: That is a good distinction, Ted.

THE NEW COVENANT

The New Covenant is based on both the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants. The New Covenant builds upon both faith in the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant and also upon the complete obedience of the open ended Mosaic Covenant. Jesus is the only Man Who ever lived to have both been born under the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant and also to have lived in complete obedience of the Mosaic Covenant. Thus, Jesus succeeds as the only seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by which the promise may come through to whomever. Also Jesus is the only one to have earned the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant by completing all of its conditions.

Jesus then established a will and testament with God His Father that offers to provide all that He owns as an inheritance to whosoever will believe in Him. That will and testament is called the New Covenant.

The Gospel is God’s announcement of the good news of the New Covenant that a share of all of Jesus’ blessings as an inheritance to anyone who will believe in Him. The Gospel is couched in the promise given in the Abrahamic Covenant because the “if” is one of belief. But if we present the Gospel as a part of the Mosaic Covenant, then we can turn it into a Law presentation by making the “if” part a condition of total obedience. No one can be saved under the Law because we have all failed to completely obey.

Pete: Converting the Gospel into the Law is what the Galatians did when they were trying to add circumcision as a prerequisite for salvation. Abraham’s belief was counted for righteousness, and Abraham was not circumcised. His faith was counted to him as righteousness.

V: That is a good observation, Pete. The Gospel is of salvation by faith (belief in God’s promise) apart from works. However, for saving faith to be real, works must follow. If we wrongly take the works out of salvation altogether, then there arises a helpless, collapsing, do nothing, parasitical Christianity. We must keep good works of obedience in the doctrine of salvation, but we must keep them in the right spot, i.e. in the area of sanctification. If we get works in the wrong spot, i.e. in justification, then we have converted the Gospel into a Covenant of Law. There is no salvation in a works first justification.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

So there is no way you can even please God without faith first and then the works following. If your gateway into works is not faith, then your works cannot be through faith.
James
2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.
2:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

The failure of the Mosaic Covenant is that it cannot pass on its blessings to anyone who has failed in keeping any of its conditions. You cannot get the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant apart from being in Christ and thereby inheriting those blessings. Becoming kings and priests through the Old Covenant outside of our reach. The only way we can get them is by inheriting them. That inheritance comes through Christ’s fulfilling the Old Covenant, receiving its blessing, making a testament, and then dying so that His heirs could receive the inheritance from the testament.

Hebrews
8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, 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:
8:9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

So, Hebrews describes the failure of the Old Covenant (The Mosaic Covenant, the Covenant of Law). The failure is not in the covenant; it is in the Hebrews’ disobedience.

Whereas the Hebrews failed to obey God, Jesus did not fail. Jesus completed the whole covenant throughout His Life. Everyone else, including ourselves, failed in all parts of the Law, but Jesus did not fail. He went the distance even when every fiber of His being was in agony. He stayed with it; He went the whole route, all the way to the horrifying cross.

Jesus fulfilled the Law which has put under curse every other person that has ever been born. Through His obedience, Jesus received, then, all the promises of the Law. Through His death, He passed on all those promises from the Law to His heirs. His heirs are all who are born of His Gospel seed via faith in Jesus. Thus, we have become a peculiar nation. To be born of His seed is to be born again from faith’s germination of the Gospel seed of Jesus and its taking root in our souls. God offers salvation to everyone who will believe in His only begotten Son (Jn. 3:16).

Since Jesus fulfilled the Law and imputed His righteousness to us, He is to be glorified by us who have received that righteousness. We do that by being His disciples: denying ourselves, taking up our crosses, and following Him (Mt. 16:24). In our discipleship, we begin to obey Jesus with the rest of our lives, living with the mind of Christ (Php. 2:5-11). When your body says, “I cannot run any more,” you must keep on running. When you look death in the face, you must not turn and hide, but you will go on. When the pain and the loneliness hit you, you do not stop; you press on. You can bring honor and glory back to the One who did it all. You are going to build upon the foundation that He has laid. By doing so, we demonstrate how grateful we are for what He has done.

Certainly, our intentions will be like that of the Hebrews. They said, “all that the Lord has said, we will do.” But like them, we too fail. However unlike them, our failure has been paid for, and our victory has already been won by the Lord Jesus Who has credited His victory to our accounts. Since He has already died, we have already inherited His eternal blessings.

The Hebrews of Exodus fully intended to obey God, but they fell flat on their faces. I think that we should not discount their intentions. They fully intended to do all that God
said, but they just never understood the depth of evil in man’s carnal nature. We too have not fathomed how deeply evil we are in our old sin natures. The Hebrews were thinking that they were committing to something that they were able to do. We too think that we can do it, but we cannot. There is only One who can do it! He is the One who has done it. He is Jesus!

If you are going to keep the Law during your life of sanctification, you can only do so with Jesus’ power. By submitting your will to Jesus, He is going to do it through you. That submission is when you bring honor to Him because giving up your own will is the hardest thing that you will ever have to do.

Now if it is Jesus Who is doing His ministry through you, guess how far He runs. Guess how long He runs. Guess how much He hurts. Guess how lonely He is. You do it right along with Jesus because you are in yoke with Him. You get to suffer the pain right along with Him, you see. You do not have to guess about the suffering because you will know it first hand.

Please notice the descriptions from the book of Hebrews.

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**Chart 8.1**

Hebrews 7:19 says that the Law made nothing perfect. Jesus was already perfect before He completed the Law. The Law, however, does have the purpose of showing imperfection. Therefore by the Law, we can see that we have already failed and must have a Messiah, a Champion to do it for us.

If we refuse to acknowledge that we have sinned and come short of the glory of God and that we have earned the wages of sin, then we will stay lost.

Carnal Christians lose sight of our inability to obey the Law in our own power. In our carnality, we keep trying and keep failing, which is what has been happening to some of us. After years of beating our heads against the wall, we hopefully come to the conclusion that, “Hey, this is not going to work.”

Galatians

3:1 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?

3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

The hearing of faith is to hear and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God asks the Galatians how they got saved: by works of the Law or by the hearing of faith? The Galatians had been toying with the getting saved by the works of the Law, i.e. circumcision. Paul confronted them with the question: “How did you get saved, by circumcision or by hearing and believing?”

We must beware of couching an invitation for salvation in works. I have heard of sinners told to quit sinning if they want to get saved. No, asking for obedience as a condition rather than as a result of being saved is putting the Mosaic Covenant before the Abrahamic Covenant. When the candidate agrees to this conditional proposition to earn justification, then he has been led down the wrong path!

Repentance at the justification stage is not a change of behavior. It is a change of belief! However, after justification, come the works of sanctification which are changes of behavior. Repentance during one’s life of sanctification is of necessity a change of actions. Repentance in the works stage of salvation is in works. Repentance in the belief stage of salvation is in belief.
We pervert the Gospel when we demand that a sinner quit sinning in order to be saved. Until we are born again, Jesus will not indwell us. Without His indwelling, we will not have His divine power. Divine power is necessary to break the bondage of sin. Therefore the power to turn from our wicked ways is a work of Jesus in us.

Since every person is enslaved to sin, as the Hebrews were enslaved to Egypt, a redeemer is necessary. That redeemer is God’s Son. No one can redeem himself from sin’s enslavement. Only God has enough power to do so. Thus, never demand a sinner to stop sinning in order to get saved because no one other than God has that much power. To do so is to set up a whole condition of the Law all over again. However, once the person is justified, then a demand to stop sinning is certainly in order because he now has the power to do it. All that he needs to contribute is his will.

If we do not return to the power of faith in God which results in works of sanctification, then we will continue in this dead kind of faith that is hindering the Christians’ being the salt and light of the world. We need to make sure that our preaching content is rightly oriented within the great doctrine of salvation. Calling for lifestyle changes in order to be saved is salvation by the works of the Law.

Joe: When God proposed the Old Covenant, He wanted the Hebrews to agree?

V: Yes! He wanted the Hebrews to agree to His plan in order to show them and all the world that it was impossible to obey God in all that He says. It prepared the Hebrews for the Messiah. The Law did what it was supposed to do, i.e. it was to tutor all men into knowing that they cannot save themselves. We are without hope unless God redeems us from our predicament.

Sam: Later on, there were people living under the Law who accepted the fact that a Messiah was promised, and they were justified through their faith in God’s promise.

V: Yes.

Joe: The Law is like a mirror. You can see yourself, but it cannot help you.

V: Yes.

Steve: Were any of these people before Christ saved?

V: No. The only way you can be saved is by the death of the Testator.

Steve: Everybody before Christ are still lost?

V: No, because they were still under Abraham’s Covenant (Gal. 3:6-10). But even though they lived and died before Christ, their faith in God’s promise of a Messiah kept them safe until the promise was fulfilled. Salvation had to be completed by the perfect life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Their belief in God’s promise of the Messiah, which was manifested in their sacrifices under the Law, made them heirs with us under the New Covenant.

The Old Testament saints who believed God were given the righteousness of Jesus as a credit to their accounts, but their rescue from the paradise side of hades was not accomplished until the death of the Testator. So, they were in a safe holding position until the champion came, ran the race, completed the Law, then paid the penalty for all their sins. Then through the New Covenant, the inheritance came to them and to us after them.

Joe: Is that purgatory?

V: No, purgatory is a papal invention of the sixth century. It has nothing to do with the Old Testament saints. It deals with holding the partially saved New Testament Christians. Roman Catholics think that only saints of the Church’s definition go directly to
heaven. All the rest of us go to purgatory until our measure of saving grace equals the amount of our sins. During this novel, so-called purgatory period, we reduce our sin debt by suffering and increase our measure of grace by receiving grace from the indulgences earned or purchased for our accounts by our loved ones still alive. When the accounts are balanced, then the Christian gets out of purgatory and finally goes to heaven. Purgatory follows a works-oriented salvation which is contrary to the Gospel and Galatians.

Galatians
3:3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

He is saying to them that salvation is by believing and that it cannot be improved upon by our carnal works.

Galatians
3:4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if [it be] yet in vain.
3:5 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?
3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.
3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

So, you see, salvation is by faith alone. It is a trust. You must believe the words of God. If you believe the words of God, then that belief is the hearing of faith and not the works of the Law. There is a complete difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant in the way that you get started.

Galatians
3:8 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.
3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse:

Being under the curse is caused by seeking one’s salvation by one’s own efforts. That is the very thing that repentance is to be about. A member of the church could be working and persevering in doing his works of righteousness by obeying all biblical mandates but still be under the curse because no one except Jesus has perfectly obeyed the Law.

Galatians
3:10 . . . 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.

Please note that if you start your salvation via works, then you are cursed because there is no one who can run the full race. God said, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” That means that every one of us has fallen; there are no exceptions, not one of us. Anybody, then, that gets up off the ground and gets back in the blocks and starts running, no matter how good a Christian he may seem to be, is under the curse. That is why we are going to see a lot of really good people going into the lake of fire. It is going to be a terrible dawning of revelation at the Great White Throne Judgment because there are so many people that are depending upon their religion, their church attendance, their continued labor, their helping in society, and all their good works. When they parade those good works before the Lord, He is going to say, “Depart from me, I never knew you.”

Mary: There are many who are deceived like that.

V: You are right. Satan is deceiving the people, and then he is keeping them busy and distracted from looking at the Law and how they have already failed. Just as I start to look at the Law, Satan says, “No, do not look at the Law; look at Jerry.” I look back at Jerry, and I think, “Yeah, I am doing a lot better than
Jerry. I must be okay.” If he can get us to look at the imperfect as a measure for our own selves, then we will be easily able to justify our selves rather than ask Jesus for the free gift of justification.

Only when looking at yourself in the mirror of God’s Law can you see your real reflection. The first time I ever heard the Gospel message, I got saved because I heard the Gospel juxtaposed with the Law. I saw myself as someone who was going to hell because I was a Lawbreaker. In my desperation to prevent my spending eternity in hell, I recognized the Gospel message immediately. I grabbed hold of the gift of life that was offered by Jesus. After knowing one’s fate under the Law, only a blooming idiot, i.e. a fool, would not go to Jesus. Even today, it still shocks me when someone who is lost does not respond to the Gospel. It does not make good sense to refuse God’s gift of salvation.

Galatians
3:10 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.

“Continueth not” means that once you start, you must go the whole distance. You cannot be imperfect anywhere.

Galatians
3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, [it is] evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

Galatians 3:11 is a restatement of Romans 1:17 by which Luther was saved. “The just shall live by faith.”

Galatians
3:12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

In the Law is where Jesus was. He ran the whole race perfectly. If you are in Him, not only is His victory accounted to your credit, but also you are expected to continue running the same race for the rest of your life.

Galatians
3:13 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:
3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
3:15 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.
3:16 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.

So we have One Seed, only One. If Jesus had not completed the Law’s course, there would have been no other Champion for us. That One Seed had to be planted, and from it came forth a huge plant bearing much fruit.

Galatians
3:17 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.
3:18 For if the inheritance [be] of the law, [it is] no more of promise: but God gave [it] to Abraham by promise.
3:19 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.
3:20 Now a mediator is not [a mediator] of one, but God is one.
3:21 [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.

This passage speaks to the necessity of Christ’s death. By implication this verse is
saying that if Jesus was not required to die and if the Law could have saved us, then we should have been saved by the Law, and Jesus should not have had to die. If God could save you without the death of the Testator, and all you had to do was to perform the Law or do something else, then requiring the crucifixion of Jesus would be a cruel thing for a father to do to a beloved son.

Jack: It would have made Jesus a liar because He said, “No one comes to the Father but by Me.”

V: Jesus is the only way, period, final, no more discussion. Anyone who begins to start talking about alternative ways and that God could have chosen another way does not understand love, sacrifice, and the New Testament requirements of inheritance.

Jack: Jesus prayed, “God is there any other way?”

V: The argument by people who claim that God could have chosen another way because of His sovereignty falls because of that prayer by Jesus.

Steve: Jesus would not have been a beloved Son if there were another way.

V: Right, there was no other way!

Ted: Pharaoh hardened his own heart and God hardened Pharaoh’s heart. God gave choices to Pharaoh, and because of those choices, all of the other things happened. God’s giving of free will to us to make choices does not take away from His sovereignty and His order of things. Jesus had that choice, too, when He said that He would obey God.

V: Yes.

My thesis at the beginning was to compare the Old Covenant of Law as over against the New Covenant of Grace, and to see that there is an “if, then” in both covenants. If you couch your “if, then” of the Law in your Gospel presentation, there will be no salvation. But if you go too far on the issue of grace, then there is a loss of sanctification. Salvation is by grace through faith. Faith must be alive for salvation. Thus, the scope of salvation includes works as a product of justification in the ongoing sanctification. Justification does not include works as its foundation. There is a very precarious balance that you must maintain in your teaching, preaching, and witnessing.

Chapter Questions

1. Describe the “if” and the “then” of the Mosaic Covenant.
2. Describe the “if” and the “then” of the Abrahamic Covenant.
3. Describe the difference in fulfillment between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants.
4. When Jesus completed the Law, He gained all of its blessings. How did He pass on those blessings to us?