

ADDED BECAUSE OF TRANSGRESSIONS.

Please give an exposition of Gal. 3:19: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." What I want to know is – What law was added, what was it added to, and on account of what transgression was it added?

The context shows that the law referred to is the law given to Israel at Sinai. (Compare verse 12 with Lev. 18:5, Ezek. 20:11 and Rom. 10:5.) It was added to the Abrahamic covenant under which they had been placed four hundred and twenty years previously. (See verse 17.)

As originally created, man was in God's image and had his law written on his heart – to appreciate right and to do right were natural and easy to the first perfect man, until sin blighted, blurred and, to a great extent, effaced the law and likeness of God. Adam having passed his trial and, being found unworthy of life, was condemned to death, and all his posterity was involved with him. Since all his children have inherited an imperfect organism, both morally and physically, it follows that it would be useless for them to hope that if they, in their present imperfect condition, were placed on trial under God's law, they would be able, so to obey that law as to be faultless before it, and thus worthy of its blessing – life everlasting.

God foreseeing the impossibility of man's ever bringing himself to a position of worthiness of life, had provided a way for his relief in "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world" – "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" – and this, God's plan, was referred to in his covenant with Abraham. God, foreknowing his own plans that he would in due

time justify the heathen, made known beforehand the glad tidings to Abraham, saying: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Thus we see that, under the conditions of this covenant, Israel and all other men had promise of a blessing. But because of inherited sin, not only Israel was unfit to be the "seed" that should BLESS, but all the members of the Adamic race were unfit.

But while God knew of their unfitness, it was not so apparent to the fallen race, and God undertook to prove to Israel and, through their experience, to prove to all the world that man was unable [R683 : page 8] to recover himself, or to give a ransom for himself or his fellow, (Psa. 49:7), that thus all might recognize in Jesus and the ransom price he gave for all, the only hope of blessing, and that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved ("blessed") than the name of Jesus.

So, then, the law of Sinai was added to the promise to Abraham because of and to convince men of, their sinful condition, and thus point them forward in expectation of the real Seed which should be perfect and able to keep the law and be approved of it as perfect – Jesus.

It may be asked in this connection, Are not the saints of the Gospel age as well as Jesus counted to be of this "seed"? And if so, in what sense can they be approved of the law who, by nature, are as condemned and fallen as the Jew?

By birth, by nature, we were children of wrath and condemnation and disapproval, even as the Jew and others, but all who are of that seed have their sins "covered" – "washed away," "blotted out" by the precious sin-offering presented on their behalf – "by faith in his blood," who bought us with his own precious

blood. Their sins were imputed to Jesus, and he died as the unjust for them; his righteousness imputed to all who believe in him and accept of his sacrifice, constitutes "a propitiatory covering" for all those transgressions of God's law resulting from Adamic sin and weakness, so that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.
