

The Allegories of Galatians 4:21-31

In this study we will explore the relationship between the Abrahamic covenant period and the Sinai covenant period. We will explore the concept of the law being added to the Covenant of promise and show the ordination of the Sinai covenant hundreds of years before it actually existed.

We begin our discussion with the apostle Paul describing through “allegories” or analogies the origins and the relationship between the Old and New covenants through the person of Abraham.

(Gal 4:22) For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

(Gal 4:23) But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

(Gal 4:24) Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

(Gal 4:25) For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

(Gal 4:26) But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

(Gal 4:27) For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

(Gal 4:28) Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

So, we see through one man that the two covenants came into existence. Abraham is the father of the faithful and his covenant of promise through Sarah, the freewomen and Isaac the child of promise is aligned with the New Jerusalem or New Covenant. Conversely, Hagar, the bond or slave women of Abraham gave birth to Ishmael the child born after the flesh which is aligned with mount Sinai and in bondage with her children.

Paul also reveals that the Father planned the two covenants to exist long before they were a reality. This gives us insight into the mind of the Father to make his plan come to pass from beginning to end.

Continuing in our investigation of the prophetic nature of the covenants lets turn to In Hebrews 7:1 which is the story of Abraham and Melchisedec

(Heb 7:1) For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

(Heb 7:2) To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

(Heb 7:3) Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

(Heb 7:4) Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

What is interesting to note is that from verse 5 -10 the subject of Levi, receiving the office of priesthood out of the tribe begins in the loins of Abraham. Figuratively speaking, Levi, actually existed in the loins of Abraham before he was even born. In verse 9 He was figuratively paying tithes to Melchisedec through Abraham that same day. This also shows, figuratively speaking, that the Levitical priesthood, which was physical, was inferior to the spiritual priesthood of Melchisedec, which had no beginning or end.

(Heb 7:5) And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

(Heb 7:6) But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

(Heb 7:7) And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

(Heb 7:8) And here men that die receive tithes; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

(Heb 7:9) And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

(Heb 7:10) For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

So, we see clearly in this verse that Levi was already designed to be a priesthood

before he was even born. The establishment of a Levitical priesthood was predestined many years before it came into existence.

It was not just added to the book of the law because of transgresses as it says in Gal4:24. It came into existence, figuratively speaking, during the time of Abraham. It preceded its entrance into the 'Book of the law' We shall address the "Book of the law" in our discussion of what was added to the Abrahamic covenant.

We also must note that Israel was suppose to be, by design a "Kingdom of Priests". It was suppose to be an example to the surrounding Nations of the preeminence of the nation of Israel under the rule of almighty God. This was spoken to Israel before Moses went up to Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments.

(Exo 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.

So, to further iterate, the Father had planned all along to have a tabernacle, Priesthood, Sacrifices and the codified Law for Abraham's descendants before the covenant of Mt Sinai came into existence. To further illustrate the predestination of Abrahams descendants, In Genesis 15 where the maledictory sacrifice is performed; the cutting in half of the animals. The Father reveals a timeline of 430 yrs that they will Sojourn in the land of Canaan and living in Egypt. They will be in captivity then released in the fourth generation when they are in Egypt. This timeline of four hundred years is based on the iniquity of the Amorites not being full. The Amorites were the "giants" of old. They occupied the promised land before the Israelites entered it during Joshua's lifetime.

(Gen 15:13) And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

(Gen 15:14) And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

(Gen 15:15) And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

(Gen 15:16) But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full.

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To return to the law being “codified” at Mt Sinai I say “codified” because even though Abraham’s righteousness was based on Faith he knew and kept the laws of God and was blessed for doing so. They were not codified, as far as we know, but were orally decimated to Abraham and his descendants. Moses even says he knew of the ways and laws of God. This was before the Ten Commandments was given to him at Mt Sinai. Exodus 18:16

(Gen 26:4) And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

(Gen 26:5) Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

And of Moses;

(Exo 18:16) When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make *them* know the statutes of God, and his laws.

Continuing, we turn to an important statement made by Paul concerning the Sinai Covenant being attached to the Abrahamic covenant.

“Paul says the law was added because of transgressions”. It has been taught that this “Transgression” concerned Israel’s sins after the Exodus, which were egregious., and the Ten Commandments were added to the Abrahamic covenant to make Israel aware of their sins because of those transgressions at that time.

(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; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

There is confusion as to “what law” he is referring to being “added”

What identifies what Law is spoken of here is the last phrase; and it [referring to this law that was added] was “ordained” by “angels” The greek word “ordained” is defined as

G1299 Ordained

διατάσσω

diatassō

dee-at-as'-so

From G1223 and G5021; to *arrange thoroughly*, that is, (specifically) *institute, prescribe, etc.*: - appoint, command, give, (set in) order, ordain.

So, we see here that the angels not God instituted or thoroughly arranged this law.

The Ten commandments were not ordained by Angels it was given the finger of God himself.

Additionally, this “law” contained a mediator to help decide the cases that transgressed the many laws associated with it. This mediator was Moses who mediated between the Angels who would administer the death penalty, if necessary, and Israel. Conversely, God originally wanted to deal directly with the House of Israel they said no let us work through Moses.

The word “law” in this verse can only be describing the “book of the law” or covenant that the Israelites agreed upon by a ceremonial killing of an oxen and sprinkling of the blood on the people. That is what was added to the covenant of promise. And specifically the judgments’ that were associated with it.

(Exo 24:7) And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.

(Exo 24:8) And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

So, we ask the question; were the Israelites in rebellion before the ten commandments and before the book of the law were given?

There was a judicial system established by Moses, prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mt Sinai. Moses knew of the commandments and statutes before he talked to Yahovah at Mt Sinai. and taught them the ways of Yahovah How did Moses know of the laws of God? We have stated that it was passed down through the lineage of Abraham to Moses, if not by God himself, when he was in Median. Moses says in Exodus 18:16;

(Exo 18:16) When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

It seems that Israel was obedient to the commands of Yahovah through Moses before the formal giving of the law. Exodus 18:21 seems to bear that out showing that there were righteousness individuals in the ranks of the tribes. Their rebellious activities took place during the time Moses was on the mountain . It was afterwards, not before.

(Exo 18:21) Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

(Exo 18:25) And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

So, based on the evidence we see that Israel was not in transgression to God, before the giving of the Ten Commandments. Moses through Jethrow had organized Israel into a judicial system with men that “feared God” and were “men of truth”. Israel’s transgressions occurred during the time when Moses was on Mt. Sinai.

In addition to the law being given to Israel, Paul states that the law, specifically the Ten Commandments, was given to convict the "World" of sin, Therefore, the commandments were not only for Israel but for mankind in general. Since mankind sins were not imputed to them because there was "no law" from Adam to Moses, the codified Law was given on Mt Sinai so “all the world could be convicted of sin”.

(Rom 3:19) Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

(Rom 5:13) (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Albert Barnes gives a thorough explanation of the phrase ‘Because of their transgressions’ concerning the purpose of the Law and specifically, the Ten Commandments.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible

Because of transgressions - On account of transgressions, or with reference to them. The meaning is, that the Law was given to show the true nature of transgressions, or to show what was sin. It was not to reveal a way of justification, but it was to disclose the true nature of sin; to deter people from committing it; to declare its penalty; to convince people of it, and thus to be “ancillary” to, and preparatory to the work of redemption through the Redeemer. This is the true account of the Law of God as given to apostate man, and this use of the Law still exists. This effect of the Law is accomplished:

(1)By showing us what God requires, and what is duty. It is the straight rule of what is right; and to depart from that is the measure of wrong.

(2)it shows us the nature and extent of transgression by showing us how far we have departed from it.

(3)it shows what is the just penalty of transgression, and is thus suited to reveal its true nature.

(4)it is suited to produce conviction for sin, and thus shows how evil and bitter a thing transgression is; see the notes at Romans 4:15; Romans 7:7-11.

(5)it thus shows its own inability to justify and save people, and is a preparatory arrangement to lead people to the cross of the Redeemer; see the note at Galatians 3:24. At the same time,

(6)The Law was given with reference to transgressions in order to keep men from transgression. It was designed to restrain and control them by its denunciations, and by the fear of its threatened penalties.

Note: I think point #2 is well taken; Mankind departed so far from the law that it was instituted to make man see what is right and wrong. However, there existed laws, like the code of Hammurabi, that contained laws that governed human behavior that were not as superior to the Ten Commandments but tried to restrain people from anarchy.

An excerpt from the code;

“Hammurabi, the exalted prince, who feared God, to bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil-doers; so that the strong should not harm the weak; so that I should rule over the black-headed people like Shamash, and enlighten the land, to further the well-being of mankind
“ ... ”

“So begins the Law Code of Hammurabi, a list of nearly 300 laws etched into a two and one-half meter high black diorite pillar, discovered in 1902 but dating back to the time of Hammurabi himself (1792-1750 B.C.E)”.

“Here are some of the more unusual laws that seem very foreign to a modern society:

If any one finds runaway male or female slaves in the open country and bring them to their masters, the master of the slaves shall pay him two shekels of silver.
If anyone is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death.

If a tavern-keeper (feminine) does not accept corn according to gross weight in payment of a drink, but takes money, and the price of the drink is less than that of the corn, she shall be convicted and thrown into the water.

If a son of a paramour or a prostitute say to his adoptive father or mother: "You are not my father, or my mother," his tongue shall be cut off.

If a son strike his father, his hands shall be hewn off.

If a man knock out the teeth of his equal, his teeth shall be knocked out.

If a man strike a free-born woman so that she lose her unborn child, he shall pay ten shekels for her loss.

In some cases, these rules are quite reasonable and fair: "If any one owe a debt for a loan, and a storm prostrates (kills) the grain, or the harvest fail, or the grain does not grow for lack of water, in that year he need not give his creditor any grain; he washes his debt-tablet in water and pays no rent for this year."

So, despite laws existing like Hammurabi`s the Father did not recognize sin legally for approximately 2500 years.

(Rom 5:12) Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

(Rom 5:13) (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

(Rom 5:14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

Concluding, we see that the Father set up a legal system in which to judge Israel as well as mankind. He turned sin into a legal entity by defining sin as the transgression of the Law and death as a result of that transgression. Christ had to pay the penalty of that sin so that we could have eternal life through belief in him.

The Sinai covenant had its purpose as well as the Abrahamic covenant each was designed to fulfill its objectives. We have seen that the Father and the Son worked out these designs many years before they came to pass.