

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 259 – September 16th – Galatians 3:1-20

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Galatians

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Machen, J Gresham	<i>Notes on Galatians</i> , Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, 1973
Ramsay, WM	<i>Historical Commentary on the Galatians</i> , Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1899
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3:1-4:11

Longenecker considers this section to be "the most important argumentative section of Paul's letter, for here Paul moves beyond the negative arguments of the *narratio* of 1:11-2:14 to take the offensive by spelling out positive arguments in support of the *propositio* of 2:15-21... The first part, that of 3:1-18, sets out the experimental, scriptural, and theological arguments in support of the thesis that the law plays no positive role in becoming a Christian (contra 'legalism'), explicating the affirmations of 2:17-20 and the conclusion of 2:21. Appended to these two main parts are statements found in 4:8-11 expressing Paul's concern for his Galatian converts."

Verse 1

Ἦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἑσταυρωμένος;

ὦ Ο!

ἀνοητος, ον foolish, ignorant

Repeated in v3, highlighting the sharpness of Paul's address and expressing his deep concern, exasperation and perplexity (cf. 4:11,20).

Γαλατις, ου Galatian

ἐβάσκανεν Verb, aor act indic, 3s βασκανω bewitch, place under a spell

Here alone in the NT. A term commonly used in the Greek world: it was part of the rhetoric of the day for characterising opponents and their strategies. Here it is used figuratively to mean 'to pervert,' 'to confuse the mind'.

The Textus Receptus, following C D^c K L P Ψ most minuscules vg^{mss} syr^h goth eth al, adds τη ἀληθεια μη πειθεσθαι from 5:7.

κατ ὀφθαλμος 'before the eyes'

A reference to the power of the preaching which made real what was preached.

προεγράφη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s προγραφω write beforehand, put on public display

The sense here is 'clearly portray'. "It is best, therefore, to understand Paul here as describing his preaching to the Galatians under the figure of a public announcement or placarding of Jesus before them. What he had preached to them was so openly and clearly proclaimed that Paul is at a loss to know how his converts could ever have failed to see its significance or to appreciate its implications for the question at hand." Longenecker

ἑσταυρωμένος Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom s σταυρωω crucify

"The participle ἑσταυρωμενος, being in the perfect tense, lays emphasis on the crucifixion as an accomplished fact with present results, and so should be translated 'having been crucified.' The phrase 'Christ crucified' was on Paul's lips an abbreviated form of the gospel (cf. 1 Cor 1:23; 2:2; also 1 Cor 1:13; 2:8; 2 Cor 13:4)." Longenecker

Verse 2

τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

μονος, η, ον i) adj only, alone; ii) adv μονον only, alone

μαθεῖν Verb, aor act infin μαθθανω learn, find out

ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (cf. 2:16) "is Paul's catch phrase to signal the whole legalistic complex of ideas having to do with winning God's favour by merit-amassing observance of Torah." Longenecker

ἐλάβετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl λαμβανω

ἀκοῆς Noun, gen s ἀκοῆ, ης f report,
news, hearing

ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως the sense would seem to be
'by believing what you heard.'

Verse 3

οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε; ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι
νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε;

ἐναρχομαι (deponent) begin, make a
beginning

The aorist refers to the moment of conversion.
"It does not have in mind anything consequent
to the beginning of the believer's new life, but
rather takes it for granted that the beginning of
the Christian life and the reception of God's
Spirit are coterminous." Longenecker

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body, human
nature

ἐπιτελεῖσθε Verb, pres midd/pass indic, 2 pl
ἐπιτελεω complete, accomplish

"The present infinitive passive verb
ἐπιτελεῖσθε with the adverbial particle νῦν
stresses the Galatian Christians' present
orientation: 'now trying to attain perfection.' ...
What Paul wants his converts to see is that the
Christian life is one that starts, is maintained,
and comes to culmination only through
dependence on the activity of God's Spirit (cf.
5:25; also see Phil 1:6, where the same verbs
ἐναρχομαι and ἐπιτελεω appear and where the
point is made that completion of the Christian
life comes about on the same basis as its
inception, viz. by God's working."
Longenecker

Verse 4

τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῆ; εἶ γε καὶ εἰκῆ.

τοσοῦτος, αὐτη, οὐτον correlative adj so
much, so great, so large; pl so many
ἐπάθετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl πασχω
suffer, experience

Elsewhere in NT the verb is always used in the
sense of 'experience suffering.' Longenecker
considers, however, that in this context the
sensu bono would appear more likely. "So
τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε ('have you experienced so
much') should probably be taken as a
recollection of the Galatian believers' past,
positive spiritual experiences – perhaps even
should be translated 'have you had such
remarkable experiences' ..., or at least
understood as 'the great experiences through
which the Galatians had already passed in their
life as Christians' (so Burton ...)." Longenecker

εἰκῆ adv. in vain, for nothing

"Paul's question is: Are all your past, positive
spiritual experiences of no significance to you
when faced with the option of going on with
the Spirit or turning to the Jewish law?"

Longenecker

γε enclitic particle adding emphasis to the
word with which it is associated

Verse 5

ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν
δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς
πίστεως;

ἐπιχορηγεω supply

ἐνεργεω work, be at work (in)

The question of v.2 repeated, though now with
reference to the experience of the Galatian
Christians subsequent to conversion spoken of
in v.4. The phrase ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν in
context most naturally refers to the Galatians
themselves working miracles rather than Paul
working miracles among them.

Verses 6-25

The Promise to Abraham fulfilled in Christ and the Gospel.

First circle of argument – vv.6-14

vv6-9 Statement of the covenant to Abraham
– he was blessed through faith and the
Gentiles are likewise blessed through faith.

vv10-12 The law, on the contrary, proves no
source of blessing.

vv13-14 Christ redeemed us (Jewish
believers) from the curse of the law in
order that the blessing of Abraham might
come to the Gentiles: Jew and Gentile both
receive the promise of the Spirit through
faith. This section thus links back to vv1-5,
returning to the theme of the gift of the
Spirit.

Second circle of argument – vv 15-29

vv15-17 The Abrahamic covenant, as a
binding covenant, could not be overthrown:
it is a covenant marked by *promise* and
inheritance; a covenant which finds its
fulfilment in Christ.

v18 Thus the law cannot have been the ground
of the inheritance promised to Abraham.

vv19-24 The function of the law:

a) given because of transgressions (vv19-
20);

b) directs to the promise (vv21-22)

vv23-25 Now that Christ has come, the
promise has been fulfilled and the law has
been brought to an end.

Verse 6

καθὼς Ἀβραὰμ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

Paul is undoubtedly picking up themes from the Judaisers who were arguing that without obedience to all of the law, these Gentile Christians were not sons of Abraham – not fully part of the family of God.

Longenecker suggests that καθὼς Ἀβραὰμ should be understood as 'take Abraham as an example.'

ἐλογίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s λογίζομαι reckon, count, calculate, credit, suppose

Verse 7

Γινώσκετε ἄρα ὅτι οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσιν Ἀβραάμ.

γινώσκετε could be either indicative or imperative. Most think it imperative, but Longenecker suggests that γινώσκετε ἄρα ὅτι is "a typical disclosure formula in ancient Hellenistic letters that serves to remind readers of what is known than to exhort."

ἐκ πίστεως 'those who rely on faith'

The expression υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ "is probably to be seen as polemically based. The Judaisers' message focused on being rightly related to Abraham and God's covenant with Israel." Longenecker. Cf. 'Abraham's seed' (3:16,29) and 'the Israel of God' (6:16).

Verse 8

προϊδοῦσα δὲ ἡ γραφή ὅτι ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοῖ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεὸς προεηγγελίσατο τῷ Ἀβραάμ ὅτι Ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.

προϊδοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s προοραω see ahead of time δικαιοῖ Verb, pres act indic, 3s, δικαιοω justify, declare righteous

A present tense functioning as a future.

ἔθνη Noun, nom & acc pl ἔθνος, οὗς n nation, people; τα ἔθνη Gentiles

προεηγγελίσατο Verb, aor midd indic, 3s προεαγγελίζομαι proclaim the good news beforehand

ἐνευλογηθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl ἐνευλογεω bless

The Judaisers probably also quoted the texts which spoke of the blessings promised to Abraham. "Their emphasis undoubtedly was on being related to Abraham – i.e., on the synonymous expressions 'in you' (Gen 12:3), 'in your seed' (Gen 22:18; 26:4), 'in you ... even in your seed' (Gen 28:14), and 'in him [Abraham]' Gen 18:18. Paul's emphasis, however, is on the fact that 'all the nations of the earth' (Gen 18:18; 22:18; 26:4) or 'all the tribes of the earth' (Gen 12:3; 28:14) are included in that foundational blessing."

Longenecker

Paul found God's saving purpose to the Gentiles everywhere in the OT. Cf. Rom 15:9-12 where he cites Ps 18:49; 2 Sam 22:50; Deut 32:43; Ps 117:1; Isa 11:10.

Verse 9

ὥστε οἱ ἐκ πίστεως εὐλογοῦνται σὺν τῷ πιστῷ Ἀβραάμ.

ὥστε so that, with the result that

οἱ ἐκ πίστεως 'those who rely on faith', contrasted with ἐξ ἔργων νομοῦ of the next verse '[all who] rely on the works of the law'

εὐλογοῦνται Verb, pres pass indic, 3 pl εὐλογεω bless

σὺν "lays stress on the believer's vital connection with Abraham." Longenecker

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable, believing

'Abraham, the man of faith.'

Verse 10

Ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσιν ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσίν, γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι Ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά.

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as, how much, how far; pl. as many as, all

Those whose lives are governed by observance of the Mosaic law.

καταρα, ας f curse, something accursed

"Israel had willingly placed herself under the stipulations of the covenant (cf. Ex 24:3,7), and in so doing had accepted the threat of being cursed for non-fulfilment... Coming under a curse was therefore inextricably bound up with receiving the law, and Paul seeks to make that point explicit in his treatment of Deut 27:26." Longenecker

ἐπικατάρατος, ον under a curse

ἐμμενω remain faithful to, obey, stay

γεγραμμένοις Verb, perf pass ptc, m & n dat pl γραφω

"We may assume that the premise of the Judaisers' argument was that one who faithfully observes the Mosaic law will live a full and acceptable life before God which is what is stated as the principle of the law in v12 quoting Lev 18:5: 'The one who does these things shall live by them'... Paul's premise, however, though unstated, is that no one is capable of keeping the law." Longenecker

Verse 11

ὅτι δὲ ἐν νόμῳ οὐδεὶς δικαιοῦται παρὰ τῷ θεῷ δηλον, ὅτι Ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται,

δε ... δηλον 'clearly however'.

ἐν νομῷ is a shorthand way of expressing the same as ἐξ ἔργων νομοῦ

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν no one, nothing;
οὐδέν not at all

δικαιοῦται Verb, pres pass indic, 3s δικαιοῶ

The passive emphasises that righteousness is given by another.

τῷ θεῷ means 'in the sight of God'.

παρὰ preposition with dat with, in the presence of

δηλος, η, ον evident δηλον (ὅτι) it is evident (that)

δίκαιος, α, ον righteous, just, conforming to the standard, in a right relationship with God

ζήσεται Verb, fut mid indic, 3s ζω live, be alive

The Hebrew of Hab 2:4 חַיִּים בְּאֵמוּנָה יִחְיֶה הַיָּשָׁרִים 'the righteous shall live by his faith' is ambiguous and the LXX translated it in two different ways: "either ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως μου ζήσεται ('the righteous shall live on the basis of my [God's] faithfulness,' so LXX^B) or ὁ δίκαιος μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται ('my righteous one shall live on the basis of faith/faithfulness,' so LXX^A)." Paul does not pick up the issue of the pronominal suffix. "The point he is making here is that righteousness in this pivotal text is associated with faith alone – not with the law! Paul himself may have read the text 'the one who is righteous by faith shall live' (as the close association of ὁ δίκαιος and ἐκ πίστεως in the word order might suggest) or 'the righteous one shall live by faith' (which is the more traditional reading, both then and today). Either way, however, in v 11 Paul sets up a sharp antithesis to v 10: righteousness is to be associated with faith alone; curse is the result of trying to observe the law in order to gain righteousness." Longenecker

Verse 12

ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ πίστεως, ἀλλ' Ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς.

'Law' and 'faith' are mutually exclusive as bases of righteousness. The quotation here is from Lev 18:5. The law has to do with *doing*.

Verse 13

Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρως τοῦ νόμου γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρως, ὅτι γέγραπται Ἐπικατάρως πᾶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου,

ἐξαγοραζῶ set free, release, redeem

The aorist points to a historic event.

κατάρως, ας f see v.10

γενόμενος Verb, aor ptc, m nom s γινομαι ἐπικατάρως see v.10

"Thou Christ art my sin and my curse, or rather, I am thy sin, thy curse, thy death, thy wrath of God, thy hell; and contrawise, thou art my righteousness, my blessing, my life, my grace of God and my heaven." Luther

κρεμάμενος Verb, pres midd ptc, m nom s κρεμαννυμι hang, midd intrans. hang ξυλον, ου n wood, tree, cross, stocks

Dt 21:23. "For Jews, the proclamation of a crucified Messiah was scandalous (cf. 1 Cor 1:23; Gal 5:11), 'a blasphemous contradiction in terms' (Bruce...). Undoubtedly the central problem for all Jewish Christians was how to understand Jesus as God's Messiah and yet as cursed by God, with the magnitude of the problem only heightened by the pronouncement of Deut 21:23. The process as to how early Christians came to understand Jesus as both Messiah and accursed may be obscure, but their conclusion is clear: the curse of the cross was 'an exchange curse' wherein Christ became a curse for us (cf. esp. 2 Cor 5:21). And it is just such an assertion that appears in 3:13a, which we believe is probably an early Christian confession used by Paul... In all likelihood, therefore, what Paul is doing here in v13 is citing a traditional confessional portion, presumably known to his Galatian converts (also to the Judaisers, though they may not have used it themselves), to show how Christ's bearing of mankind's curse nullifies all thoughts of legalism and to set up his conclusion regarding the blessing of Abraham and the promise of the Spirit in v14." Longenecker

Verse 14

ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραάμ γένηται ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως.

The two *ἵνα* clauses are coordinate rather than one being subordinate to the other.

εὐλογία, ας f blessing
γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ all that comes to us from God comes to us 'in Christ'. No blessing can be obtained from any other source.

ἐπαγγελία, ας f promise, what is promised

A few ancient MSS read εὐλογίαν rather than ἐπαγγελίαν.

λάβωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl λαμβανω

It is the Spirit, received by faith, who makes us part of the community of the people of God and thereby heirs of Abraham.

Verse 15

Ἀδελφοί, κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω· ὅμως ἀνθρώπου κεκυρωμένην διαθήκην οὐδεὶς ἀθετεῖ ἢ ἐπιδιατάσσεται.

ἀδελφοί "functions as an epistolatory convention signalling certain breaks in the letter structure of Galatians, as well as expressing Paul's sincere affection." Longenecker

κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω 'speaking in human terms'

Cf. Rom 3:5; 6:19; 1 Cor 9:8. The meaning here is 'let me take an example from everyday life.'

ὅμως even, nevertheless
κεκυρωμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
κυρωω put into effect (of a covenant)

The perfect reflects the fact that a covenant once set up is fixed – of permanent effect.

διαθήκη, ης covenant, will, testament

The Greek term commonly meant a 'will' but is used to translate the Hebrew בְּרִית ('covenant') in 270 of 286 occurrences in the LXX. "It appears, therefore that in developing his *minori ad maius* type of argument, Paul has both secular and theological connotations for διαθήκη in mind and that he is working from that of 'testament' or 'will' to that of 'covenant.'" Longenecker

ἀθετεω reject, set aside, refuse
ἐπιδιατάσσομαι add to (a will)

Verse 16

τῷ δὲ Ἀβραάμ ἐρρέθησαν αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ· οὐ λέγει· Καὶ τοῖς σπέρμασιν, ὡς ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐφ' ἑνός· Καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου, ὅς ἐστιν Χριστός.

ἐρρέθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl λεγω
ἐπαγγελία, ας f promise, what is promised

Gen 12:3; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; 22:16-18 etc.

σπερμα, τος seed, offspring

Paul's argument based on the use of the singular term 'seed' is not artificial or false. Paul is well aware that seed, as much in Greek as in English, is a collective noun (see v.29). His point is that the promise, like the recipients, is *one*: neither the promise itself, nor the recipients is capable of division. That unity is evident from the fact that Christ is *the* promised seed (see also Gen 3:15), the one in whom all of the promises of God find their focus and to whom alone they rightfully belong (see 2 Cor 1:20). He is *the* son of God and heir to the promises; he is the true Israel of God. The promises are therefore possessed by the one seed which is Christ, and with him all who are found in him Jew and Gentile. "Paul is here invoking a corporate solidarity understanding of the promise to Abraham wherein the Messiah, as the true descendant of Abraham and the true representative of the nation, is seen as the true 'seed' of Abraham – as are, of course, also the Messiah's own, as v29 insists." Longenecker
Paul's argument refutes the Judaizers' advocacy of Christ plus ...: to possess Christ is to possess all of the promises of God – nothing else is needed and nothing more is possible. Equally, Paul's argument disallows any form of dispensationalism which would seek to establish two separate people of God and two separate bodies of promise.

Verse 17

τοῦτο δὲ λέγω· διαθήκην προκεκυρωμένην ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ μετὰ τετρακόσια καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη γεγονώς νόμος οὐκ ἀκυροῖ, εἰς τὸ καταργῆσαι τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν.

The conclusion to vv 15 and 16.

προκεκυρωμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
προκυρωω make previously

Cf. the perf pass ptc of κυρωω in v.15.

"After θεου the TR, following the late uncials and most minuscules ... continues with εἰς Χριστον... Apparently the interpretative gloss was added in order to introduce into the argument a reference to Χριστος of the preceding verse. The shorter text is strongly supported..." *UBS Textual Commentary*

τετρακοσιοι, αι, α four hundred
τριακοντα thirty

"The rabbis found the difference between Gen 15:13 ('400 years') and Ex 12:40 ('430 years') somewhat perplexing ... and there are many places in their writings where the matter is dealt with. Usually they solved the problem by taking 430 years as the time between God's covenant with Abraham and Moses' reception of the law and 400 years as the period Israel spent in Egypt... And so Paul here is probably not relying on Ex 12:40 versus Gen 15:13, but only repeating the traditionally accepted number of years for the time span between the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic law." Longenecker

ἔτη Noun, nom & acc pl ἔτος, ος n year
γεγονως Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s γινομαι
ἀκυρω cancel, disregard

εἰς with infinitive 'so as to be'

καταργεω render ineffective, cancel, do
away with; pass be cut off from, be
released from

Verse 18

εἰ γὰρ ἐκ νόμου ἢ κληρονομία, οὐκέτι ἐξ
ἐπαγγελίας· τῷ δὲ Ἀβραὰμ δι' ἐπαγγελίας
κεχάρισται ὁ θεός.

κληρονομια, ας f inheritance, what is
promised

"'Inheritance' is introduced by Paul into the discussion here for the first time, though subsequently it plays a major role (κληρονομια, 'inheritance,' here; κληρονομος, 'heir,' at 3:29; 4:1,7; κληρονομεω, 'inherit,' at 4:30; 5:21; with the idea being prominent in the illustration of 4:1-7, the allegory of 4:21-31, and the blessing of 6:16). It stems, of course, from references to the promise(s) contained in the Abrahamic covenant of vv 16-17." Longenecker

οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more
κεχάρισται Verb, perf indic, 3s χαριζομαι
grant, give, bestow

"The verb χαριζομαι ('graciously give') lays stress on the character of the inheritance given – that is, it was an expression of God's grace and not a commercial transaction. The perfect tense (κεχαρισται) identifies the inheritance as still being in force, so bringing to the fore Paul's underlying argument throughout vv 15-17." Longenecker

3:19-4:7

Many treat these verses as a digression, but Longenecker says that they are vital to Paul's argument. "If, as we have argued ..., the Judaizers of Galatia were not presenting themselves as opposing Paul's message of faith in Christ (i.e., not overtly advocating 'legalism'), but rather claiming to be complementing his proclamation so as to bring his converts to perfection (i.e., advocating Jewish 'nomism'), then Paul's treatments of (1) the purpose and function of the law (3:19-25, particularly as a *paidagogos* in the supervision of one's life of faith), (2) the new relationship established by God of being 'in Christ' (3:26-29), and (3) how relationships under the supervision of the law and being 'in Christ' are to be seen (4:1-7) are directly related to issues in the churches of Galatia."

Verse 19

Τί οὖν ὁ νόμος; τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν
προσετέθη, ἄχρις οὗ ἔλθῃ τὸ σπέρμα ᾧ
ἐπήγγελται, διαταγεῖς δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ
μεσίτου·

παραβασις, εως f overstepping,
transgression, disobedience, sin

The word bears the sense of overstepping a mark. In adding the law, the boundaries for human conduct were clearly marked out and transgression exposed. The law was added to bring about a knowledge of sin (cf. Rom 3:20).

χαριν prep with gen, for the sake of,
because of

Though referred to as a preposition, *χαριν* generally occurs after the noun to which it belongs.

προσετέθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s
προστιημι add, add to, increase,
proceed

"Suggests that the law was not of the essence of God's redemptive activity with humankind." Longenecker

ἄχρι (and ἄχρις): i) prep with gen until, as
far as; ii) conj until; ἄχρι οὗ until, as,
when, as long as

ἐπαγγελλομαι promise, profess, claim

I.e. it had a shelf life which expired with the coming of Christ. "Thus the covenant of promise is presented to the mind as of permanent validity, both beginning before and continuing through the period of the law and afterwards, the law on the other hand as temporary, added to the permanent covenant for a period limited in both directions." Burton

διαταγεῖς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s
διατασσω command, give instructions
χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

μεσίτης, ου m mediator, intermediary

The argument of the latter part of verse 19 and of verse 20 is difficult partly because of lack of any explicit mention in the OT of angels being involved in the giving of the law (though cf. Deut 33:2; Ps 68 (LXX 67):18 which were elaborated in later Jewish tradition). It raises the question of whether ἀγγελων might here be used in the more general sense of messenger (WD Davis suggests that the reference is to prophets or priests).

Longenecker suggests that, "the Judaisers were citing the angels' presence at Sinai as evidence of the law's glory and God's approval. Paul, however, turns this tradition in *ad hominem* fashion against them."

Whatever the intent of the words, the meaning is clear. In giving the law, God acted through intermediaries and the recipients were left with the task of fulfilling the law's demands. In contrast, in bringing redemption, God has acted alone, acting in Christ.

Paul's argument here underlines the superiority of the gospel to the giving of the law and is similar to the argument at the beginning of the letter to the Hebrews.

Verse 20

ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἑνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ θεὸς εἷς ἔστιν.

This is a difficult verse but would seem to mean 'a mediator, however, does not just represent one party; but God is one!' The point is that "the process of divine redemption requires conformity to the oneness of God!" Betz. It must be unilateral.