

Galatians 3:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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. Paul now contrasts the blessing of faith (v. 9) with the curse of Law-works. 'As many as are of the works of the law' (hosoi gar ex ergōn nomou, ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου)—those whose identity is grounded in Law-performance—'are under the curse' (hypo kataran eisin, ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσιν): under the realm of cursing. The quote from Deuteronomy 27:26 is devastating: cursed is 'every one' (pas, πᾶς) who does not continue (emmenei, ἐμμένει, present tense: keep on persisting) in 'all things' (pasin, πᾶσιν) written in the Law to do them (poiēsai, ποιῆσαι, infinitive of purpose).

The Law demands perfect, perpetual obedience to every command—'all things...do them.' Partial obedience equals total failure. One transgression invokes the curse. James 2:10 echoes this: 'whosoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, is guilty of all.' Therefore, relying on Law-works for justification guarantees condemnation, because no one perfectly keeps the whole Law. The Law pronounces curse, not blessing, on all who fail—which is everyone.

Paul's logic is airtight: Faith brings blessing (v. 9); Law brings curse (v. 10). The Judaizers claimed Law-keeping secured blessing; Paul proves it secures curse,

because the Law itself curses everyone who fails perfect obedience. To seek justification by Law is to place yourself under the very curse the Law pronounces.

Historical Context

Deuteronomy 27:26 concludes the covenant curses at Mount Ebal (Deuteronomy 27-28)—Israel's solemn oath to obey the whole Law on pain of curse. The Israelites said 'Amen' to this curse, binding themselves to perfect obedience or judgment. No Israelite ever achieved this; thus, all were under the curse. The prophets lamented Israel's curse-state due to disobedience (Jeremiah 11:3-8, Daniel 9:11). Paul universalizes this: not only Israel but 'as many as are of works of the law' (Jew or Gentile) are under curse. Only Christ's curse-bearing (v. 13) liberates from this judgment.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Deuteronomy 27:26's demand for perfect obedience to 'all things' in the Law demolish any hope of justification by works?
2. Why is partial obedience to the Law not commendable but damnable? What does this reveal about God's holiness and justice?
3. In what subtle ways might you be placing yourself 'under the curse' by relying on your moral performance rather than Christ's perfect obedience?

Interlinear Text

ὅσοι	γὰρ	ἐξ	ἔργων	νόμου	εἰσίν·	ὑπὸ	κατάραν
as many as	For	of	the works	of the law	are	under	the curse
G3745	G1063	G1537	G2041	G3551	G1526	G5259	G2671
εἰσίν·	γεγραμμένοις	γὰρ	Ἐπικατάρατος	πᾶσιν	ὃς	οὐκ	
are	are written	For	Cursed	all things	that	not	
G1526	G1125	G1063	G1944	G3956	G3739	G3756	
ἐμμένει	ἐν	πᾶσιν	τοῦ	γεγραμμένοις	ἐν	τοῦ	βιβλίῳ
continueth	in	all things	which	are written	in	which	the book
G1696	G1722	G3956	G3588	G1125	G1722	G3588	G975
τοῦ	νόμου	τοῦ	ποιῆσαι	αὐτά			
which	of the law	which	to do	them			
G3588	G3551	G3588	G4160	G846			

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 27:26 (Word): Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.

Romans 8:7 (Word): Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Jeremiah 11:3 (Word): And say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant,

Romans 6:23 (Parallel theme): For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 4:15 (Word): Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

Galatians 2:16 (Word): Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Ezekiel 18:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Deuteronomy 29:20 (Curse): The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven.

Matthew 25:41 (Curse): Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Isaiah 43:28 (Curse): Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

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