

## Acts Chapters 13-15 **Question and Answers**

**Acts 13:39** “And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could **not** be justified by the law of Moses.”

**Acts 13:39** “and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could **not** be freed by the law of Moses.” **(ESV)**

1. What purpose did the “Law of Moses” serve and why was it not sufficient to “Justify”, give Scriptural proof?

The Mosaic law appointed sin-offerings to expiate smaller offences, so far, as that the offender who offered them should be free from all further prosecution on account of them; but this very view of them shews how absolutely necessary it was to the being of society, that they should not be admitted in cases of *murder, adultery, &c.*

These crimes therefore were made capital; nor was the dying criminal, however penitent, allowed to offer these sin-offerings, which would have been quite inconsistent with the temporal pardon connected with them:

But the expiatory sacrifice of Christ takes away the guilt of all sin: and though it by no means affects the manner in which offenders would stand in human courts, (which the Mosaic sacrifices did,) it delivers from the condemnation of God in the invisible world, with respect to which the others could have no efficacy at all; as it was a very supposable case, that an impenitent sinner might present them in all their exactest forms. Coke's Commentary on the Holy Bible

In biblical terms, expiatory has to do with taking away guilt through the payment of a penalty or the offering of an atonement. By contrast, propitiation has to do with the object of the expiation. The prefix pro means “for,” so propitiation brings about a change in God’s attitude, so that He moves from being at enmity with us to being for us. Through the process of propitiation, we are restored into fellowship and favor with Him. R.C. Sproul

Romans 8:3 “For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,” (ESV)

Galatians 2:16 “yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.” (ESV)

Hebrews 10:4 “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”(ESV)

Your law says, "Do this, and ye shall live;" and, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Ye have not done these things required; ye have not continued in any good thing; ye have not only not done all things commanded, but ye have done none, none as they ought to be done; and therefore ye are under the curse.

The Gospel says, Believe on the Lord Jesus; credit his Divine mission; consider his death an atonement (PAYMENT) for sin; believe in his resurrection, as a proof that the atonement is made, believe that he suffered, died, and rose again for your justification; and that for his sake God, though he be infinitely just, can be the justifier of all who believe in him.

By the law of Moses there is neither justification nor salvation: in Jesus Christ there are both, and all the sure mercies of David. Therefore, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible

Galatians 2:21 “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” **KJV**

Galatians 2:21 “I do not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought.” **ASV**

Galatians 2:21 “I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.” **(ESV)**

Romans 7:7 “What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”(ESV)

Galatians 3:24-25 “So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian,” (ESV)

2. Is all of James' statement found in the following verse applicable to "Gentile Believers" today, why or why not?

Acts 15:19-20 "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."

This passage, on which the critics have so much differed in sentiment, and written so much, may, I think, be thus paraphrased: “(Wherefore I cannot but determine in my own mind, and I doubt not but you will readily concur with me, that we ought not to disquiet those who from among the Gentiles are converted by divine grace to the knowledge and worship of the true God, and to obedience to the gospel, with such observances as those now in question; but only to write to them, that they abstain from things grossly scandalous, and such as would give the greatest offence to their brethren of the circumcision; particularly from the abominable pollutions of things sacrificed to idols, and fornication,

and from eating that which is strangled, and from blood. And though the latter of these have no moral and universal evil in them, yet it is necessary to join the prohibition of them to that of the former; for we know that Moses hath had from ancient generations, and still continues to have, those who preach him and his institutions in every city, being read in all the Jewish synagogues every Sabbath day; and these things are so expressly forbidden in his law, that while the Gentile Christians indulge themselves in any of them, it will be impossible there should be that communion and harmony between them and the Jewish converts, which the honor and edification of the church require.”)

In short, though neither things sacrificed to idols, nor the flesh of strangled animals, nor blood, have, or can have, any moral evil in them, which should make the eating of them absolutely and universally unlawful; (compare 1Co 1:8-9. Ro 14:14,23. 1Ti 4:4. Mt 15:11.)

Yet they were here forbidden to the Gentile converts, because the Jews had such an aversion to them, that they could not converse freely with any that used them.

This is plainly the reason which St. James assigns in ver. 21. and it is abundantly sufficient.

And were we in like circumstances with those converted Gentiles, Christian charity would surely require us to lay ourselves under the same restraints.

As to fornication, as the infamy of it was not so great among the Gentiles, as the nature of the crime deserved, it has been generally thought, that the church at Jerusalem chose to add this prohibition, though it might be a kind of digression from the immediate design of their letter. Thomas Coke (The Father of Methodist Missions).

Only the prohibition concerning  
(FORNICATION) (*πορνεία*) = (from  
4204 **Strong's Greek Dictionary**  
; to act the harlot, i.e. (literally) indulge  
unlawful lust (of either sex),  
pornography or (figuratively) practice  
idolatry:—commit (fornication).)  
would be applicable today.

# Prayer Time