

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians

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Chapter Seven -

CHRIST HAS BORNE FOR US THE CURSE OF THE LAW, THAT WE IN HIM MIGHT HAVE THE BLESSING OF FAITH

Verse 13: "**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.**"

Paul is quoting from Deuteronomy: "**And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance**" (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).

In Deuteronomy 13:8-11 we learn that the Jewish method of executing criminals was not by hanging. They stoned the one condemned to die. However, if they cared to bring extra shame on the criminal they hung his body on a tree, and the criminals who were hung on a tree were cursed by the Law. (Read Acts 5:30 and Acts 10:39.)

Jehovah GOD brought it to pass that the death of JESUS would be on a tree. (The Cross is symbolic of a tree.) GOD allowed this in order to fulfill the prophecy of the curse JESUS became for us. JESUS came into the world to fulfill the Law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17), and He went all the way. He became "**obedient unto death**," but that is not all: "**EVEN THE DEATH OF THE CROSS!**" (Philippians 2:8). JESUS willingly laid down His life, He died voluntarily, He was not forced to die and there was no compulsion concerning His humiliation and suffering on a tree . . . it was of His own choosing, because He came to fulfill every demand of the holy GOD who was His Father.

During the days of JESUS, the Romans regarded crucifixion as entirely too shameful and disgraceful for a Roman citizen. They refused to allow a Roman citizen to be hanged. The Jews, too, looked upon crucifixion as very shameful - but they wanted to heap upon JESUS all the shame and disgrace possible. They referred to Him as "the Hanged One." In the early days of Christianity, the Jews called the Christians "worshippers of the Hanged One."

The Cross with its shame is a stumbling block to the flesh. Proud flesh recoils at the thought of a bloody salvation, purchased by the death of a man on a shameful Cross! But JESUS died a shameful death - even the death of the Cross - that you and I might be delivered from shame, disgrace and damnation. The natural man does not receive the Cross with all of its shame and suffering, simply because to the natural man it is foolishness. Please read I Corinthians 1:18.

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

May I ask the question: Whom did CHRIST redeem from the curse of the Law, and for whom did the Lord JESUS become so great a curse?

The first part of verse 13 reads, "**Christ hath redeemed US from the curse of the Law.**" Please note: "**US.**" Great Bible scholars agree that the "**US**" applies solely, entirely, and **ONLY** to the Jews. The Jews were under the curse of Galatians 3:10, the Jews were the people under the Law of Moses. "**When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His SON, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law . . .**" (Galatians 4:4-5a).

Gentiles have never been under Law. We are not under Law today, nor will we ever be. The Law was given by Jehovah GOD to the nation Israel, of which the tribe of Judah was a part (and the Jews came from Judah). So JESUS was made a curse for His brethren in the flesh, that they might become the sons of GOD by exercising faith. They could receive the blessing of Abraham (justification by faith) if they would only believe on the Lord JESUS CHRIST, but of course the greater part of the Jews refused to accept JESUS as the LAMB of GOD, the SAVIOUR of sinners. Rather, they looked upon Him as the despised Nazarene, born of fornication.

It is very clear in the New Testament that the Gentiles were never under Law. Read Romans 2:14. It is crystal clear that the Law was "**the middle wall of partition**" dividing the Jews from the Gentiles . . . and vice versa. Please read carefully Ephesians 2:13-18.

The ministers and religionists who would put us under Law, the ministers who would command their parishioners to keep the Law and practice the rituals of the Law, are wrongly dividing the Word of Truth . . . they are not rightly dividing GOD's precious Word and they will suffer severely for it in the day of judgment.

Verse 14: "**That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**"

By the grace of GOD, Paul is attempting to show to the Jews that they were being shut out from the blessing, by the very Law in which they gloried. If that be true, Gentiles certainly could not hope to obtain the blessing of GOD by putting themselves under the Law which could not bless the Jews! However, if the Jews could receive the blessing by faith in the death of JESUS CHRIST, by exercising faith in His finished work, then on the same grounds Gentiles also could receive the blessings provided by GOD - the blessings of faithful Abraham.

Writing to the believers at Corinth, Paul points out that CHRIST, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we in Him might be made the righteousness of GOD (II Corinthians 5:21). Certainly it is exceedingly precious and blessed to know that JESUS was made sin for us. He knew no sin, but He took our sin and nailed it to His Cross. It is also precious to learn here that He was also made a curse for us. I like to put it in these words: "What a holy GOD commands and demands, the same holy GOD provides in the finished work of the Lord JESUS."

JESUS satisfied every demand of GOD the Father, He fulfilled every minute detail of the Law and of the prophets. We are complete in JESUS, because JESUS lived completeness in the flesh, He lived pure holiness in the flesh . . . not one aught was ever brought against JESUS.

In II Corinthians 5:21, Paul puts himself with all believers. He is not contrasting between believers and Jews, nor between Gentiles and Jews. Consequently the "we" in that verse includes ALL - everyone. But in Galatians 3:13 the "US" refers exclusively to the Jews. The reason I am so dogmatic in this statement is because a bit later Paul refers particularly and distinctly to the Gentiles: ". . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ."

Immediately following, Paul puts all believers in one group: "**THAT WE MIGHT RECEIVE THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT THROUGH FAITH.**"

In Galatians 3:13, the "US" is very emphatic! In verse 14, the "WE" is not at all emphatic, but is used by Paul in a general way, referring to all believers, whether in that day or in our day.

I wonder why some ministers who put their parishioners under Law do not speak from the text, "**AS MANY AS ARE OF THE WORKS OF THE LAW ARE UNDER THE CURSE!**" If you will carefully read Deuteronomy 27 and 28, you will see the promised blessings of Jehovah upon Israel if they obeyed GOD. The blessings were conditioned upon Israel's obedience: "**If thou shalt . . . do all His commandments . . . all these blessings shall come on thee**" (Deuteronomy 28:1-2). Of course, we are on this side of the command, and these dear people have long since gone on to their reward; but we know they did not obey.

They did everything BUT obey, and the judgment of GOD fell heavily upon them. Any person or nation who takes the Legal ground for receiving blessings from Almighty GOD will receive only curses, because the blessings of GOD come by faith - not by works, not by Law - but by faith in the finished work of the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

The person who will acknowledge the Law's curse because of sin, and the fact that the Law was not given to save us from the curse (but to make us AWARE OF it), can then by grace through faith become a child of GOD. "**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.**" JESUS was not just "accursed," He was made "A CURSE." JESUS fully identified Himself with the curse. He took the curse . . . took our sin . . . and nailed it to His Cross; therefore those of us who have accepted the grace of GOD are completely delivered from the curse - yea, we are delivered from the Law, and we live by faith! It was imperative for GOD to move the curse out of the way, in order that the blessing might come to Jews and Gentiles alike.

The Gospel was first to the Jew and then to the Gentile. The cup of grace was first presented to the Jew - but the cup overflowed and the blessings spilled over onto the Gentiles. Thank GOD, today there is no "**middle wall of partition**" - but JESUS CHRIST saves to the uttermost ALL who will come to GOD by Him! JESUS was made a curse for us: "**It is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree . . . that the BLESSING OF ABRAHAM MIGHT COME ON THE GENTILES THROUGH JESUS CHRIST!**"

I thank GOD for the marvelous blessing GOD purchased for the Gentiles through the death of JESUS, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. I thank GOD that it is not by might, it is not by power, it is not by works, it is not by "doing," it is not by giving - nor is it by living; it is by faith. GOD honors faith - childlike faith - in the finished work of the Lord JESUS. JESUS said, "**Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven**" (Matthew 18:3).

Before leaving this section, let me emphasize (I cannot overemphasize) the fact that we are not under Law.

Salvation is totally and entirely apart from Law:

"For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:3-4). It is one thing to read the Scripture - it is another to study. So - shall we stop for a moment and study? Please notice: "**THAT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW MIGHT BE FULFILLED IN US.**" The Scripture does not say, "That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled BY us." The Scripture says, "**That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled IN us.**"

Certainly the Lord JESUS in our heart is the One who fulfills the righteousness of the Law, because He came "**not to destroy the Law... but to fulfil**" (Matthew 5:17). Therefore, it is "**Christ in you, the hope of glory**"; and if JESUS is not in you, if you have not been born into the family of GOD by the power of the Word and the Spirit (John 3:1-7), then you cannot and will not fulfill the righteousness of the Law. It is absolutely impossible for the natural man to live the righteousness of the Law; but CHRIST lives in us. So we could not fulfill the Law, we could not keep the Law (no man save JESUS ever kept it), but . . . thank GOD, the righteousness of the Law which we could not attain is ours when we possess the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

Let me again remind you:

"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" (Galatians 3:10). Here we see what the Law demands: It demands that one continue "**in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them!**" Therefore, we are hopeless, helpless, hell-bound and condemned unless we can find One who is greater, One who is holier, One who is mightier than we. That One is JESUS.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). JESUS took our place, He died for us. Therefore we are delivered from the Law (Romans 7:6). The Law cannot condemn us twice. We were condemned - but JESUS took our condemnation; and when we receive JESUS we are through with the Law forever. The Law has no power over a believer.

CHRIST is our Head, our SAVIOUR, our Keeper, and our salvation . . . JESUS fulfilled every

jot and every tittle of the Law. Therefore the believer is through with the Law forever when he abides in CHRIST by faith. The believer is dead to the Law (Galatians 2:19). The believer is free from the Law (Romans 8:2). What a wonderful position!

Believers are positionally righteous in CHRIST before GOD!

~ end of chapter 7 ~

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