

THE CURSE OF THE LAW

What was “nailed to the cross?” (*Colossians 2:14*)

Compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, March 28, 2014

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Scripture is from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

Galatians 3:13 “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us:”

What was “the curse of the law?”

Was the law itself - a curse?

BLOOD COVENANT

To understand “the curse of the law” we must understand “blood covenant.”

In the Ancient Middle East, blood covenant as well known. Both parties to a “blood covenant” were sprinkled with the blood of a sacrifice. Alternatively, the sacrifice was divided into pieces and the parties to the covenant walked between the pieces (*Gen. 15*). If any party to the covenant thereafter violated the terms, he would forfeit his blood - his life. He would be “under the curse” of that covenant.

The Sinai Covenant *was* a blood covenant. Every Israelite understood this. Moses sprinkled the Book of the law and all the people with blood (*Hebrews 9:19, Exodus 24:6-8*). He made it very clear that henceforth they must choose between life or death (*Deut. 30:19*).

“The Blood Covenant” by H. Clay Trumbull, is a very good resource.

BLESSING OR CURSE

Here I'm going to present a long list of verses, each one of which addresses "**the Law**" and either the "blessing" or the "curse." Obedience of the Covenant Law brings blessing, and disobedience brings "the curse" - which is death.

Deuteronomy 11:26 "Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known."

Deuteronomy 27:26 "Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them. And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'"

Deuteronomy 28:15 "But it shall come to pass, **if you do not obey** the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:"

Deuteronomy 28:20 "The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me."

Deuteronomy 29:20-21 "The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and **the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven.** And the LORD would **separate him from all the tribes of Israel** for adversity, according to all **the curses of the covenant** that are written in this Book of the Law,"

NOTE: The LORD said that He would "separate" the one who broke His covenant (without repentance), from "the tribes of Israel." This parallels the words "cut off" and "broken off" in other passages. The names of persons regarded as "under the curse" of God, were stricken (blotted out) from the records of descent that were kept in the Temple at Jerusalem.

Deuteronomy 30:19 "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;"

Psalm 119:21 “You rebuke the proud-- the cursed, Who stray from Your commandments.”

Proverbs 3:33 “The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the home of the just.”

Jeremiah 11:3 “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant.”

Isaiah 24:6 “The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, And those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, And few men are left.”

Daniel 9:11 “Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.”

*The Hebrew word “**cherem**” (#02764) is translated as “cursed.” The word means “devoted to destruction,” or “doomed to destruction.” See our word study: “Cursed.”*

FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION

The “curse” was known, and is repeated in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. After Adam sinned the LORD pronounced a curse upon the serpent, the ground, and upon the woman. The Serpent’s head would be crushed. The ground would bring forth thorns and would take a lot of man’s sweat in exchange for food (*Gen 3:17*). The woman would be ruled by her husband, and would give birth in sorrow (*Gen. 3:16*). All this would be the result of disobedience.

Here I would mention a study I did years ago titled “[The Wrath of God - A Different View](#).” I do not believe that God directly punishes people, except in special circumstances. He withdraws His special blessing and protection, and allows the sinner to experience the natural consequences of his choices. God is the source of life. Sins separates us from Him. “Cut off” from His blessing - we die, unless we repent and return to Him.

Genesis 2:17 “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

*The Hebrew actually says “dying you will die.” Disobedience of God results in death. Those finally consigned to the lake of fire (which is “the second death”) are called by God, “you cursed” (*Matthew 25:41*).*

Matthew 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:'"

After all evil has been destroyed - at the very end of Revelation, we find "no more curse." Why? Because those who enter the New Jerusalem "do His commandments." The disobedient are gone, and with them "the curse." The blessed will inherit the earth and receive life eternal.

Revelation 22:3 "And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him."

Psalms 37:22 "Those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, But those cursed by Him shall be cut off."

UNDER THE LAW - UNDER THE CURSE

Galatians 3:10 "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.'"

Let me try to rephrase this verse by the Apostle Paul.

Rachel's paraphrase of Galatians 3:10 :

You must obey the law in every point - or you are cursed. Anyone who thinks that obedience of "the law" will protect him from "the curse" is fooling himself. And "the blood of bulls and goats" cannot save you. No one has obeyed the Law perfectly, except God's Son.

Romans 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

Galatians 3:22 "But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe."

No one has ever earned salvation by keeping the Law - except Jesus Christ. He "was obedient unto death" (*Phil. 2:8*). God the Father put the curse of our disobedience - upon His own perfect Son. He became cursed - for us (*Gal. 3:13*). In this way - He redeemed us from the curse pronounced upon all who sin - all the descendants of Adam, with one exception.

This is not just about the Sinai Covenant. This is about the disobedience of man from the very beginning.

Psalm 14:2-3 “The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one.” (NAS)

NOT UNDER THE LAW

Galatians 5:18 “But if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law.”

Paul would presumably include himself as one “not under the law.”

So - what does it mean to be under the law?

The law said, “Do these things - or be cursed and die.” Right? You sin - you die!
If you are under the law - then you must obey perfectly or die.

Yeshua was “born under the law”(Gal. 4:4). Which means that IF Yeshua had sinned, He would have died eternally - and we would be lost. Praise God - He did not sin. “I have kept my Father’s commandments,” He said (John 15:10). Because He had no curse of His own, He could carry the curse of our disobedience, and we can be restored to the blessing of God.

Galatians 5:4 “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”

Paul is writing to the Galatians, who were being taken in by the circumcision party of believing Pharisees. This group did believe that Yeshua was Messiah because He rose from the dead, but they believed that all Gentile converts must be circumcised and then keep all the Laws of the Torah, including the trips to Jerusalem and the sacrifice of animals (Acts 15:5).

Galatians 4:21 “Tell me, you who desire to be under the law.”

*Let’s put these two together. Those who wanted to be “under the law,” wanted to be justified by law keeping. They studied with the Pharisees. They got circumcised. They made the trips to Jerusalem for the Feasts. They offered all the correct sacrifices. They attempted to be justified by the law. **Problem was - the law could not justify. It could only instruct. Without Christ, those people were left in their sins.***

*I see a new generation of Messianic and Hebrew Roots instructors, teaching that we can have it both ways. We can fully embrace the free gift of Christ’s death for us, and return to the system of sacrifices under the Aaronic priesthood at a future restored Temple. I don’t buy it. See our studies: “**The END of Sacrifices**” and “**The Change of the Priesthood**.”*

Galatians 5:18 “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

Those who are led by the Spirit of Christ, do not seek to be justified by law-keeping. As if they could demand that God declare them justified, because they bring all the correct sacrifices and participate in all the correct ceremonies. It doesn't work that way! “No one is justified by the law” (*Gal 3:11*). We are justified through God's grace, by faith in Jesus Christ. He then writes His Law on our heart.

THE LAW COULD NOT JUSTIFY.
IT COULD ONLY INSTRUCT.

Galatians 3:11 “no one is justified by the law in the sight of God”

Hebrews 10:4 “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”

Paul called the Sinai Covenant a “ministry of death, written and engraved on stones” (*2Cor. 3:7-8*). Why would he say this? Answer: Because **the law pronounced a curse of death upon the disobedient - and everyone was disobedient.** “All have sinned.” The law could not save. It could only instruct.

The Law is like a mirror - to show us our sin (*James 1:22-23*).

The law was our tutor to bring us to Christ - the One who can save (*Gal 3:24*).

LET'S BURN THE RULE-BOOK.

No Law - No Transgression - No Curse

Romans 5:13 “For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”

Is this a good idea? **Just get rid of the Law.** Answer: No. The Law also promised blessings too. We don't want to get rid of the blessings, especially the eternal life one. But how do we obtain the blessings, when we can't obey the Law? Answer: He promised to write His Law on our hearts. Ahhhhh - then we won't have to work at it so hard. We can trust Him to fulfill His promise, and then we can obtain the promised blessings.

Now you get it. The Law - **without** the Spirit of Christ, pronounces a death curse. The Law - **with** the Spirit of Christ to change us, pronounces life and blessing.

What was “the curse of the Law?” Answer: Death.

Galatians 3:13 “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.”

The Law is not the curse. The law was the Covenant.
The Covenant promised **both** curses and blessings.

Romans 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

Yeshua took “the curse of the Law” upon Himself. He died as one “cursed of God.” Because He was actually without sin, God His Father raised Him from death. He ascended to Heaven and then His divine powers were restored to Him. He now writes His Law of love, on the hearts of all who are willing. We begin to walk in His ways - which brings the blessing.

Every human being must hear His law, and hear His Gospel, and have time to choose, before the LORD will judge. This is why I believe that those who lived in ignorance will be resurrected at “The 8th Day” - to learn the ways of the LORD.

NEW COVENANT LAW

Paul wrote that we are to “fulfill the law of Christ” (*Gal. 6:2*). Where is that law found?

Jesus said “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (*Matt 22:37*). He also said, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (*Matt 22:37*). “On these commandments two hang all the Law and *everything* the prophets *have written*” (*Matt 22:40*).

The prohibitions of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament writings. Paul lists the works of the flesh and says “those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God” (*Gal. 5:21, 1Cor. 6:9*). There’s your curse of death again.

Under the New Covenant, the law is actually expanded. “A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you” (*Jn 13:34*). Yikes!! How could I ever love another person that much? Answer: If Christ “in me” is loving that person through me.

“Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (*Matt 5:44*). The teachings of Yeshua went beyond the original Ten to address motive, and commanded much greater love, yet nothing He taught abrogated those first Ten Covenant Commands.

Romans 3:31 “Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.”

How do we establish it? In what way do we establish it? Answer: Through faith in Jesus, the law of God is established in us, when it is written on our hearts.

The promise of the New Covenant is the indwelling spirit!

Jeremiah 31:33 [The LORD says] “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.”

Hebrews 8:10 “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts;”

The law without the Spirit - led to inevitable disobedience - which brought the curse - death.

The law with the Spirit - brings obedience - which brings the blessing, which is life.

The law is the same. The Spirit makes the difference.

THE PRIESTHOOD HAS BEEN CHANGED

I do believe the law has been “changed” under the New Covenant. I see one - and only one, specific “change.” The exclusive Aaronic priesthood has been changed - to the Melchizedek priesthood of “the firstborn,” under Christ our High Priest (*Heb. 7:12*). With the Aaronic priesthood goes the system of animal sacrifice, because the law mandated that every sacrifice be brought to an Aaronic priest. And physical circumcision (also a blood offering) is no longer required.

Under the “first covenant” the offering of animal sacrifices expressed faith that the LORD would hear and forgive and bless. The sacrifices and the priesthood were an acted prophecy of what Messiah would do. The Children of Israel did not understand this, but they were forgiven and blessed just the same, when they brought a sacrifice with humility and repentance.

THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

Romans 8:2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”

Romans 7:6 "We have been released from the law that once bound us."

The Law of Life (in Jesus Christ) has released us from The Law of Death (resulting from our rebellion). THE LAW IS THE SAME. The end is determined by "the Spirit" - which is individually accepted or rejected.

THE LAW

"LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE"

received by grace - thru faith

written on the heart

Obedience leading to blessing

Eternal Life

"LAW OF SIN AND DEATH"

self efforts alone

old selfish heart

Continued slavery
of addiction to sin

Inevitable Death

We have no power within ourselves to love unselfishly, but when we are filled with "the Spirit of Christ" (*Rom. 8:9, Col. 1:27*) - when we become "partakers of the divine nature" (*2 Pet. 1:4*) - then we become channels for God's love. No longer slaves of Satan or our own desires, we have "power to become the sons of God" (*Gal. 4:7, Gal 5:17, Rom. 6:16, John 1:12*).

FORGIVENESS TODAY

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

True confession of sin, always involves repentance or "turning away from" sin, and is possible only as the Spirit of Christ is poured into our hearts.

DO I PAY A PENALTY WHEN I BREAK GOD'S LAW,
EVEN IF GOD HAS FORGIVEN ME?

Yes, I pay a penalty.

Galatians 6:7 "Do not be deceived. God is not mocked;
for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."

My relationships in this world, my health, perhaps my finances may suffer. God does not change the law of cause and effect. It is the "second death" penalty - the final end of the wicked. This sentence is commuted for those who give their hearts to Christ.

WHY AM I STILL SINNING ?

He promised to write His law on my heart. I thought I gave Him my heart. I asked Him to save me. So what happened? Why am I not perfect? I still trip up. I still miss the mark. I don't love like Yeshua. You're in good company. Even Paul said, "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on" (*Phil. 3:12*).

We are justified in a moment (*Titus 3:7, 1Cor. 6:11, Rom. 5:1, Acts 13:39*). The blood of Christ has covered every past sin (*Rom. 3:25*). We stand justified before God. Now we must learn to "walk by the Spirit." That is a process. I believe the healing will take many, many years, even beyond this life. We will need a lot of recovery.

Colossians 2:6 "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him."

Romans 6:4 "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Galatians 5:16 "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

The LORD has never used His divine power to manipulate human minds. If He was going to use this "easy button" then He should have used it before Eve ate the fruit - and skipped all this mess.

The long struggle, tells us the LORD will not cross that line. Instead He patiently woos and teaches. We learn from our mistakes, and we learn from history - that His ways are better. We are justified in a moment, but rehabilitation is a slow process. Personally, I do not believe the process of rehabilitation will be complete for the entire family of God, until we are finally returned to the earth made new. Look at the context of Ezekiel 36.

Why not make it easy? (Now - this is Rachel's opinion.) I think that Jesus wants us experience the pain that comes with sin. He wants us to be so tired of sin - and the resulting pain - that we will NEVER be tempted to rebel against Him - ever again for all eternity. This is the only way He can leave our free will intact, and still guarantee (short of mind control) that sin will never raise its ugly head again.

**PHONY GRACE
THE COUNTERFEIT GOSPEL**

TRUE GRACE	COUNTERFEIT GRACE
Gives power to keep the LAW.	Says it's not necessary to keep the LAW.
Saves you <i>from</i> sinning, not just from sins past	Results in no change of behavior.
I am cleansed from the inside out. He writes His law on my heart.	No change. Jesus just covers me with his righteousness, but I <u>stay</u> the same on the inside.
"I can do all things through Christ" (<i>Phil. 4:13</i>). Real power to change.	No change of behaviors. I just keep saying I'm sorry. Confession without repentance.
Those who continue to practice the works of the flesh will NOT inherit the Kingdom of God" (<i>Gal. 5:21</i>).	Jesus loves me too much to ever let me be lost - no matter what I do. I can continue to do what I want now, because Jesus will magically transform me later, after His coming. Presumption is the counterfeit of faith.
Salvation is not heaven. (That's just the home of the saved). Salvation is <u>freedom from the power and the presence of sin</u> - in my own life, and in the home of all God's children.	Salvation is going to heaven and living forever - and avoiding the "lake of fire."

VICTORY OVER SIN IS PROMISED

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Luke 1:37 "For with God, nothing is impossible."

Jude 24 "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless"

1Corinthians 10:13 "No temptation has overtaken you but God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

1Thessalonians 5:23 “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly . . .”
“He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”

THE LAW IS PERFECT

*I hope I have convinced you.
“The curse” (for disobedience) was nailed to the cross - not the law itself.*

Psalm 19:7 “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:”

Psalm 19:8 “The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”

Psalm 19:9 “The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is they servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.” (KJV)

Psalm 40:8 “I delight to do thy will . . . yea, they law is written within my heart.”

Psalm 119:165 “Great peace have those who love Your law.”

Romans 7:12 “Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.”

Romans 7:14 “the law is spiritual”

Romans 7:16 “I agree with the law that it is good.”

Romans 7:22 “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.”

Conclusion next page

IN THE KINGDOM OF MESSIAH'S REIGN

Micah 4:1-2 "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills;

And peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.'

For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.
Prophecy Viewpoint*

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