

HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF DEUTORONOMY, Week 7**Christ—the One Cursed and Hanged on a Tree**

Scripture Reading: Deut. 21:22-23; 1 Pet. 2:24; Gal. 3:2, 5, 13-14

- Deuteronomy 21:22 And if in a man there is a **sin**, a cause worthy of death, and he is put to death, and you **hang him on a tree**;
- Deuteronomy 21:23 His corpse shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you must bury him on that day. For **he who is hanged is accursed of God**, and you shall not defile your land, which Jehovah your God gives you as an inheritance.
- 1 Peter 2:24 **Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.**
- Galatians 3:2 This only I wish to learn from you, Did you receive the **Spirit** out of the works of law or out of the hearing of **faith**?
- Galatians 3:5 He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit and does works of power among you, does He do it out of the works of law or out of the hearing of **faith**?
- Galatians 3:13 **Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, “Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree”;**
- Galatians 3:14 In order that the **blessing of Abraham** might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might **receive the promise of the Spirit through faith**.

Day 1 & Day 2**I. In Deuteronomy 21:22-23 there is a prophecy that Christ would be the cursed One hanging on a tree; here we have a **type of the crucified Christ as the One who was hanged on a tree**— 1 Pet. 2:24:**

- A criminal could be executed by being hanged on a tree; **he who was hanged was accursed of God**—Deut. 21:22-23.
- If in a man there was a sin, a cause worthy of death, and he was put to death and was hanged on a tree, **his corpse was not to remain overnight on the tree but had to be buried that day**, for he who was hanged on a tree was **accursed of God**—v. 23.
- The Lord Jesus was killed by **being crucified**, that is, by being **hanged on a tree**, **the cross**, and He was **buried on the day of His crucifixion**—Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; John 19:31.

II. The **origin of the curse is man’s sin—Gen. 3:17b; Rom. 5:12:**

- God brought in the **curse after Adam’s sin**, saying, “Cursed is the ground because of you”—Gen. 3:17b:
 - As descendants of Adam, **all sinners are under the curse**; Adam brought us all under the curse—v. 17b; Rom. 5:12, 17-18.
 - Ultimately, the **curse is death**; death, **including all other sufferings**, is the consummation of the curse—vv. 12, 17; 6:16, 21, 23.
- After Adam sinned, the earth brought forth **thorns** because of the curse, so **thorns are a sign of being cursed**—Gen. 3:18; Heb. 6:8.

III. The curse is carried out through the law, for the **law administers the curse—Gal. 3:10:**

- The **curse was not altogether official until the law was given**; the law now declares that all the descendants of Adam are under the curse—Rom. 5:13.
- The **curse**, therefore, is related to the law of God, and it is the **demand of the righteousness of God upon sinners**—3:19.
- If we try to keep the law, we will be in the flesh and automatically come under the curse**: “As many as are of the works of law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the things written in the book of the law to do them’”—Gal. 3:10.

IV. “Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, **having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree’”—v. 13:**

- On the cross Christ accomplished the great work of bringing us out from the curse of the law, **working to bear our sins and to remove the curse**—v. 13; 1 Pet. 2:24.

Day 3

- Christ Himself “bore up our sins in His body on the tree”—v. 24:
 - The word tree in 1 Peter 2:24 is the cross made of wood, a Roman instrument of capital punishment used for the execution of malefactors, as prophesied in Deuteronomy 21:23; elsewhere in **the New Testament the cross is called a tree**— Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29.
 - When Christ was on the cross, **God took all our sins and put them on the Lamb of God**—Isa. 53:6; John 1:29.
 - Christ died **once** to bear our sins, and **He suffered the judgment for us on the cross**—Heb. 9:28; Isa. 53:5, 11.
 - In the **death of Christ** we have died to sins **so that we might live to righteousness**—Rom. 6:8, 10-11, 18; 1 Pet. 2:24.
- When Christ **bore our sins**, He also **took our curse**— John 1:29; Gal. 3:13:
 - The crown of thorns indicates this; since thorns are a sign of the curse, **Christ’s wearing a crown of thorns indicates that He took our curse on the cross**— John 19:2, 5.

2. Because Christ was cursed in our place, the demand of the law was fulfilled, and **He could redeem us out of the curse of the law**—Gal. 3:10.
 3. Whereas the law condemns us and makes the curse official, **Christ through His crucifixion has redeemed us out of the curse of the law**—v. 13.
 4. The curse that came in through Adam's fall has been dealt with by **Christ's redemption**—v. 13.
- D. Not only did Christ redeem us out of the curse; He even became a curse on our behalf; this indicates that **He was absolutely abandoned by God**—v. 13; Mark 15:33-34:
1. The **Lord Jesus was judged by God** for the accomplishment of redemption, and **God counted Him as our suffering Substitute for sin**—Isa. 53:10a.
 2. Our sin and sins and all negative things were dealt with on the cross, and **God forsook the Slave-Savior because of our sin**—Mark 15:33-34:
 - a. **God forsook Christ on the cross because He took the place of sinners**, bearing our sins and being made sin for us—1 Pet. 3:18; 2:24; Isa. 53:6; 2 Cor. 5:21.
 - b. **In the sight of God, Christ became a great sinner, and God judged Him as our Substitute for our sins**—John 3:14; Rom. 8:3.
 - c. Christ was our **Substitute** and was even **sin in the sight of God**; therefore, **God judged Him and even forsook Him**.
 3. Because Christ bore our sins and was made sin for us, God, in judging Him as our Substitute, **forsook Him economically**—Mark 15:33-34:
 - a. The Lord Jesus was born of the begetting Spirit as the divine essence, who **never left Him essentially**—Luke 1:35.
 - b. When the Lord Jesus, the God-man, died on the cross under God's judgment, **He had God within Him essentially as His divine being**; nevertheless, **He was forsaken by the righteous and judging God economically**—Matt. 1:18, 20; 27:46:
 - (1) Because the Lord Jesus was **conceived of the Holy Spirit and was born of God and with God**, He had the Holy Spirit as the intrinsic essence of His divine being; thus, **it was not possible for God to forsake Him essentially**—1:18, 20.
 - (2) Christ was forsaken by God economically when the Spirit, who had descended upon Him as the economical power for the carrying out of His ministry (3:16), left Him; however, **the essence of God remained in His being**, and He therefore died on the cross as the **God-man**—1 John 1:7.

The One Forsaken by God

Psalm 22:1 prophesies concerning Christ as the One forsaken by God: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The fulfillment of this prophecy is in Matthew 27:46: "About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" The Lord was crucified at the third hour, and suffered on the cross for six hours. In the first three hours He was persecuted by men for doing God's will; **in the last three hours He was judged by God for the accomplishment of our redemption. It was during this time that God counted Him as our Substitute for sin.** Because our sin and sins and all negative things were dealt with, darkness came upon all the land (Matt. 27:45), and God forsook Him because of our sin. **God forsook Christ on the cross because He took the place of sinners** (1 Pet. 3:18), bearing our sins and being made sin for us. In the sight of God, Christ became a great sinner. Because Christ was our Substitute and was even made sin for us, God judged Him and forsook Him.

According to Matthew 1 and Luke 1, the Lord Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit. Later, for His ministry, He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, who descended upon Him (Luke 3:22). Before the anointing Spirit descended upon the Lord Jesus economically, **He already had, essentially, the begetting Spirit as the divine essence within Him as one of the two essences of His being.** The begetting Spirit as the divine essence never left Christ essentially. Even when He was crying out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" **He still had the begetting Spirit as the divine essence.** Then who left Him? **It was the anointing Spirit through whom He presented Himself to God (Heb. 9:14) who left Him economically.** After God accepted Christ as the all-inclusive offering, the anointing Spirit left Him. But although the anointing Spirit left Him economically, He still had the begetting Spirit essentially. When the Lord Jesus, the God-man, died on the cross under God's judgment, He had God within Him essentially as His divine being. Nevertheless, He was forsaken by the righteous and the judging God economically.

(The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 37, section 1)

Day 4

- E. In His humanity as the seed of Abraham, **Christ was crucified and became a curse on our behalf to redeem us out of the curse of the law**—Gal. 3:13, 29:
 1. Genesis 22:17-18a and 28:14 are a prophecy that **Abraham's seed** would be a **great blessing to all mankind**, for all nations would be blessed through his seed.
 2. **Christ, the seed of Abraham**, has brought God to us and us to God for **our enjoyment of God's blessing**—Gal. 3:8-12, 16.
 3. The **promise** given to Abraham was that **God Himself would come to be the seed of Abraham**, and this seed would be a blessing to all the nations by becoming the all-inclusive Spirit for mankind to receive—v. 14; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

Day 5 & Day 6

V. As the seed of Abraham, Christ was made a curse for us “in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith”—Gal. 3:14:

- A. The **blessing of Abraham** is the **blessing promised by God** to him for all the nations of the earth—Gen. 12:3.
- B. This **promise** was fulfilled and this blessing has come to the nations in **Christ through His redemption by the cross**—Gal. 3:1, 13-14.
- C. The context of Galatians 3:14 indicates that the **Spirit is the blessing that God promised to Abraham** for all the nations and that has been received by the believers through faith in Christ—vv. 2, 5:
 1. The **physical aspect** of the blessing that God promised to Abraham was the **good land**, which was a type of the **all-inclusive Christ**—Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 17:8; 26:3-4; Col. 1:12.
 2. The **Spirit** is the compound Spirit, who is God Himself processed in His Trinity through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and descension **for us to receive as our life and our everything**—Phil. 1:19.
 3. Since Christ is realized as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17), **the blessing of the promised Spirit equals the blessing of the good land**; actually, the Spirit as the realization of Christ in our experience is the good land.
 4. Our **spiritual blessing for eternity** will be to **inherit the Spirit**, the consummation of the processed Triune God as our inheritance—Gal. 3:14.
 5. In the new heaven and the new earth in the New Jerusalem, we will enjoy the **processed Triune God**, who is the all-inclusive, consummated, life-giving Spirit—Rev. 22:1; John 7:37-39.
 6. Today our **Christian life is a life of receiving the Spirit through faith**—Gal. 3:2, 5, 14.

Being Crucified and Becoming a Curse on Our Behalf to Redeem Us out of the Curse of the Law

As the **seed of Abraham, Christ** in His humanity was crucified and became a curse on our behalf to redeem us out of the curse of the law. Galatians 3:1 mentions that Jesus Christ was crucified. Verse 13 goes on to say, “*Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree.’*” **Christ as our Substitute on the cross not only bore the curse for us but also became a curse for us.** The curse of the law issued from the sin of man (Gen. 3:17). **When Christ took away our sin on the cross, He redeemed us out of the curse of the law.**

Through his fall, **Adam brought us all under the curse; as fallen descendants of Adam, we the sinners were under the curse.** The origin of the curse is man’s sin. God brought in the curse after Adam’s sin, saying, “*Cursed is the ground because of you*” (v. 17). The sign of the curse is thorns (v. 18). For this reason, after Adam’s sin, the earth brought forth thorns.

However, **the curse was not altogether official until the law was given.** The law now declares that all the fallen descendants of Adam are under the curse. In other words, the curse is carried out through the law. This means that the **law administers the curse.** Therefore, the curse is related to the law of God; it is the demand of the righteous God upon sinners.

Whereas the law condemns us and makes the curse official, Christ through His **crucifixion has redeemed us out of the curse of the law. On the cross He was even made a curse for us.** Therefore, the curse that came in through Adam’s fall has been dealt with by Christ’s redemption.

When Christ bore our sins, He also took our curse. The **crown of thorns** indicates this (John 19:2, 5). Since thorns are a sign of the curse, Christ’s **wearing a crown of thorns indicates that He took our curse on the cross.** Because Christ was cursed in our place, the demand of the law was fulfilled, and He could redeem us from the curse of the law.

Not only did Christ redeem us out from the curse; **He even became a curse on our behalf.** This indicates that He was absolutely abandoned by God. **God forsook Christ economically and also considered Him a curse.** On the cross Christ accomplished the great work of bringing us out from the curse of the law, working to bear our sins and to remove the curse.

In His creation of man, God intended that man might enjoy God as his blessing. But through the fall of Adam, man lost God as his blessing and enjoyment. Not only so, since man did not know that he was totally fallen, incurable, and hopeless, he tried to please God by his own effort. **This forced God to decree the law in order to expose man’s fallen condition.** Knowing that man could not keep the law, God gave man the law, not for him to keep it but for man to realize that he is utterly fallen and hopeless.

Here we need to see that before decreeing the law, **God promised Abraham a blessing:** Out of him would come a seed who would be a blessing not only to his own house, his race, but also to all the nations, all the Gentiles. With Adam we have sin and the curse, but **with Abraham we have God’s promise.** The background of this promise was the curse upon mankind. Because mankind was under a curse, man’s direction was downward. But God came in, called Abraham, and promised that in his seed, all the nations—mankind under a curse—would be blessed.

Yet the children of Israel did not realize that God’s **intention was not for them to try to keep the law but to bring them back to the promise given to their forefather, Abraham, through the law.** Because the children of Israel did not see that the function of the law was to expose their fallen condition and to restore them to the promised blessing, they tried to keep the law, thereby coming under the curse of the law (Deut. 27:15-26). The children of Israel, being fallen in nature, surely did not measure up to the law; thus, they were cursed under the law.

Through His incarnation Christ came as the seed of Abraham, and through His crucifixion Christ died on the cross to be a curse on our behalf. In doing so, Christ removed the curse from all those who believe in Him. Through His work on the cross, Christ became a curse on our behalf and redeemed us out of the curse of the law so that **the blessing God promised to Abraham would be bestowed on all those who believe in Christ.**

In Galatians 3:10 Paul says, “*As many as are of the works of law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the things written in the book of the law to do them.’*” If we try to keep the law, we will be in the flesh and automatically come under the curse, for those who are of the works of the law are under the curse. Instead of trying to keep the law, we should thank the law for exposing us and then bid it farewell. **We should leave the law and go to Christ and to the cross.**

(The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 327, section 1)