

## CHRIST MADE A CURSE FOR ISRAEL

IT HAS ESCAPED the attention of many Bible Students that, while the Israelites had many advantages every way under their Law Covenant (Rom. 3:1,2), yet each one who failed to meet all the requirements of that Law Covenant came under a curse, or sentence, not upon individuals of other nations. Thus it is written, "Cursed is every one [every Israelite] that continueth not in all the words of the Law [Covenant] to do them." – Gal. 3:10.

The Apostle shows that this curse was upon only those who were under that Covenant, saying, "What things soever the Law [Covenant] saith, it saith unto them who are *under the Law* [Covenant.]" (Rom. 3:19.) Moses also made the same statement – "The Lord our God made a Covenant with *us* in Horeb. The Lord made not this Covenant with our fathers, but with *us*, even *us who are all of us here alive* this day." (Deut. 5:2,3.) Indeed, no other arrangement would have been just, for the blessings of that Covenant and its promises of life were to the one nation. (Rom. 9:4.) How, then, *could* its *curse* extend beyond the nation which enjoyed its favors and privileges?

The blessings of that Law Covenant were earthly, and so also were its curses; with one exception, noted further along, neither blessings nor curses related to the everlasting future. The future had already been determined for them and for all the race of Adam, in the death sentence pronounced in Eden. Nothing short of the ransom price – the corresponding price – which our Lord gave long afterwards, could set aside that original sentence, and secure for mankind a complete release from the sentence of death. The sin-offerings of Israel's Day of Atonement were not of permanent value, but only for a year in advance, and were, therefore, repeated yearly.

## THE LAW COVENANT GUARANTEED LIFE TO ONLY ONE MAN

The blessings and curses of the Law Covenant were very particularly explained to Israel. (See Deut. 28, entire chapter.) This Covenant included every member of the nation of Israel, so that they shared in common the blessings or the curses. There was *one provision*, however, for an *individual*, namely, that *the man* who would fully obey all the requirements of the Law should *live* – be guaranteed lasting life. (Lev. 18:5.) Even if Israel may have imagined it possible for all or for many of the nation to thus gain life everlasting, we can see that God never had any such expectation concerning them. He knew from the beginning what He has taught us by experience, as well as by the inspired words of the Apostles, that "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh [i.e., none of the fallen race, needing justification] be justified in God's sight." – Rom. 3:20.

The Man Christ Jesus, who obeyed the Law absolutely, was the One in the Divine purpose for whom the provision was made, that "He that *doeth* these things shall *live*." [R5046 : page 196] Consequently, He had a right to life everlasting, and therefore might have asked for more than twelve legions of angels to defend Him from those who sought His life. Had He done so, He would have received them. (Matt. 26:53.) But He *laid down* His life. The one death, begun at Jordan and "finished" three and a half years later at Calvary, accomplished two things: one for Israel only, the other for the whole world.

Since the children of Israel, as well as the other nations, were Adam's posterity, they in common with others shared his sentence of death, and were redeemed by our Lord's offering of Himself a sin-offering and corresponding price for Adam and those who lost life in Adam. (Rom. 5:12,18.) But since Israel alone, and no other nation or family or people of earth, had been brought under the terms of the Law Covenant made with them at Mt. Sinai, therefore only Israelites needed to be "redeemed from the curse of the Law [Covenant]." – Gal. 3:13.

That the one Man, Christ Jesus, could justly redeem our race is stated by the Apostle, and is clearly evident when we see that all men were sentenced in the one man Adam; but how could *one man* redeem the multitudinous nation of Israel from the curse of their Law Covenant?

## MOSES THE TYPICAL FATHER OF ISRAEL

We answer that in connection with Israel's Covenant there is a point that few have noticed. It is that God dealt with only *one* man in connection with the making of that Law Covenant; and that man was Moses, who stood in the position of a father to the whole nation, the nation being regarded and treated as *children under age*.

See Moses' own words regarding the matter: "And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast Thou afflicted Thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favor in Thy sight that Thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? Have I begotten them, that Thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing *father* bearing the sucking *child*, unto the land which Thou swearest unto their fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if Thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray Thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in Thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness." – Num. 11:11-15.

The Lord talked with Moses in the Mount. The Lord gave the tables of the Law to Moses. And Moses spoke to the people, gave them the Law and bound them by the terms of the Law Covenant.

"Moses alone shall come near the Lord." – Exod. 24:2.

"As the Lord spoke unto Moses, so *did* the children of Israel." – Num. 5:4.

"The people cried unto Moses; and Moses prayed unto the Lord."  
– Num. 11:2.

God "sent Moses His servant." – Psa. 105:26.

"They envied Moses also in the camp." – Psa. 106:16.

"He [God] said that He would destroy them, had not Moses, His chosen, stood before Him in the breach." – Psa. 106:23.

"Remember ye the Law of Moses My servant." – Mal. 4:4.

"Moses...hath in every city them that preach him." – Acts 15:21.

"Did not Moses give you the Law?" – John 7:19.

"What did Moses command you?" – Mark 10:3.

"One accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." – John 5:45.

All Israel were "baptized unto [into] Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." – I Cor. 10:2.

"He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy." – Heb. 10:28.

"The Law was given by Moses, but grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ." – John 1:17.

So thoroughly was the *one man* Moses the representative and typical father of the nation of Israel that God could and did propose its destruction and the fulfilment of all His engagements with Moses' family instead. (Exod. 32:10,31,32.) It was thus, as God's representative on the one hand, and as Israel's representative on the other, that Moses could be and was the mediator of the Law Covenant between God and that nation.

## CHRIST THE "EVERLASTING FATHER"

When the Man Christ Jesus, by full obedience to the Law Covenant, became entitled to life everlasting under its provisions, He had attained the right to "Moses' seat," the right to supersede Moses as the Lawgiver and representative of the nation. Of Him Moses bore witness saying, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things." – Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:18,19.

By fulfilling the requirements of the Law Covenant and by His obedience even unto death, Christ became the heir of its promise of *life*, and the prospective Mediator of the prospective New Covenant, based upon that better and everlasting sacrifice for sins, which, therefore, needed not to be repeated yearly, and was effective, not for Israel only, but for all the families of the earth, for "this Man," "the Man Christ Jesus, *gave Himself* a Ransom for all." (I Tim. 2:6.) Hence this Gospel of the New Covenant was for the Jew first and also for the Greek (or Gentile). Thus the one sacrifice, finished at Calvary, did not only a special work for Israel, but also a general work of redemption for the world, including Israel, which suretied the New Covenant and in due time will make it **[R5047 : page 196]** operative for all mankind.

Thus seen, the expression, "Christ is the end [fulfilment] of the Law [Covenant] for righteousness [justification] to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4), can apply only to Jews who have by faith accepted Christ. It cannot apply to others – either to those who never were Jews and who consequently were never under that Covenant, or to those who still trust in Moses' Covenant and who are still vainly seeking *life* by obedience to its provisions, law, etc.

## ISRAEL NOW UNDER THE CURSES OF THE LAW

It is a common mistake to suppose the Scriptures to teach that the Law Covenant died, or was destroyed by our Lord. It became dead in the sense that its proffer of life ceased when our Lord Jesus fulfilled

the requirements of the Law Covenant, and inherited all of its blessings and life-rights; but it *lives* in the sense that its blessings and curses still cling to Israel, as so many assets and liabilities. Hence all the children of Jacob are still bound by this Law Covenant, *unless they have died to it*.

Only those who realize that they cannot gain everlasting life through their union with Moses (the Law Covenant) are ready to abandon all hope of saving their life by that union with Moses and to become dead to all such expectations, and to accept the death of Christ, the Ransom price for Adam and all his race, as the basis of a new hope of a new life. Hence, only those Israelites who by faith reckoned themselves as hopelessly dead under the Law Covenant, and as risen with Christ to a new life secured by His sacrifice, and who in *will* are [R5047 : page 197] *dead to sin* – only such could be united to Christ as members of the "Seed" of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Thus, according to the Apostle's reasoning, the idea of so *blending* the two Covenants that Christians are united to both Moses and Christ, is wholly out of the question. Gentiles, who never were under the Law Covenant, *could not*, of course, be *released* from it; and in order for a Jew to be released from that Covenant he must by faith recognize that Jesus Christ fulfilled the terms of the Law Covenant, and then must consecrate his flesh to death with Christ as reckonedly a member of Christ's flesh, that so doing he might be reckoned as a "New Creature," united to the Lord as a member of His spiritual Body.

The text, "Christ is the end [or fulfilment] of the Law [Covenant] for righteousness to every one [*under it*] that believeth" (Rom. 10:4), does not conflict with the above; for only *believers* are specified. Eph. 2:15, "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity of the Law of commandments contained in ordinances," and Col. 2:14, refer to Jewish believers, for whom the handwriting of ordinances is blotted out, while Col. 2:20 refers to the Gentile converts who must become dead to the "rudiments of the world," before entering upon the

Covenant of sacrifice, even as the Jews must become dead to the rudiments of their Law Covenant.

## **ISRAEL'S PRESENT EXPERIENCE A PART OF THEIR COVENANT**

That the Law Covenant with Israel is still binding upon that nation is further evident from the fact that upon their national rejection of Christ they were nationally blinded until the end of the Gospel Age (Rom. 11:7,25), and that God declares that He has not cast away His people of that Covenant, but that under the New Covenant He will open their eyes to see Christ as the only Door of hope, that of a new life purchased with His own blood. – Rom. 11:27,29; compare Deut. 30:1-9.

Meanwhile, we have the evidence that their Covenant continues in force in the fact that, as a nation, they have for centuries been receiving the very "curses" specified under their Covenant. (See Deut. 28:15-67.) Verses 49-53 describe the Roman siege, etc.; verses 64-67 describe the condition of Israel since. As shown in previous writings the Lord (Lev. 26:18-45) declared the symbolical "seven times," 2,520 years, of Israel's subjection to the Gentiles, and their deliverance – A.D. 1914. Thus their present experience was foretold as a part of their Covenant.

Israel as a nation is still bound by that Covenant which they at first supposed would bring *life*, but which experience proved could bring them only *death*, because of the weakness of their flesh and their inability to fulfil its requirements expressed in its Law of Ten Commandments. There is only one door of escape from it, viz., Christ, and the New [Law] Covenant which is soon to be made with Israel. God shut them up to this one and only hope (Gal. 3:23), and He promises that by and by, when the Gospel Church, the Body of Christ, has been selected, He will open their blind eyes and cause them to see Christ in His true character – as their Redeemer from sin and their Deliverer from death and their Covenant of death. – Rom. 11:25-29.

## **CHRIST MADE A CURSE FOR ISRAEL ONLY**

As to the significance of the statement, "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" (Gal. 3:13), the Apostle in this text is speaking, not to Christians in general, but to those Christians who had passed from Moses into Christ – out of the Law Covenant into the Covenant of sacrifice with Christ, as members of His Body. It would not be true to say that Christ redeemed us Gentiles from the curse of the Law, for we were never under the Law. Those, therefore, who were under the curse of the Law were Jews. The Apostle classifies himself with Israel, some of whom were in Galatia, some in Palestine, etc. "Christ hath been made a curse for *us*; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

The particular sense in which Christ redeemed the Jews was as a nation and not as individuals. The whole nation was involved in the contract made at Sinai. Consequently, in order to meet all the requirements of the people as a whole, the One who would redeem Israel from the baneful effects of the Law Covenant must suffer the extreme penalty imposed by that Covenant. Therefore to redeem Israel from that condemnation our Lord had to be crucified.

As for the remainder of mankind, they suffer from the sentence of death that came upon Adam, but no particular form of death was implied. The Jews alone needed this particular form of death for their release. The whole nation was under this Law Covenant because the contract was made with them as a nation and through one mediator, Moses. Our Lord will redeem the whole nation from their failure to keep that Law, from the condemnation of that Law, by instituting the New Covenant, by taking over into the New Covenant all those who were under the old Law Covenant.

That New Covenant will go into operation in due time. Christ has already redeemed the Jews and all mankind in the sense that He has laid down the Ransom price; but He has not yet redeemed them in the



sense of recovering them nor even in the sense of applying that price. At the end of this Age He will apply the price for Israel and the world; and then the New Covenant arrangements will go into effect for the blessing of all who come under its regulations.

-----

[R5050 : page 197]

### **BEYOND THE VEIL**

These stammering lips, that now  
So vainly strive to speak Thy praise –  
Beyond the veil  
Shall make the heaven of heavens resound  
Through endless days.

These yearning eyes, that strain  
To catch by faith a glimpse of Thee –  
Beyond the veil  
Shall see Thee as Thou art through all  
Eternity.

These trembling hands, these feet,  
That seek to serve so earnestly –  
Beyond the veil  
Shall for Thy Kingdom's glorious work  
Empowered be.

And this poor, throbbing heart,  
That cannot now unfold its love –  
Beyond the veil  
Shall bloom and shower its fragrance through  
The heaven above.

My soul, that neither seeks

Nor findeth here its perfect rest –  
Beyond the veil  
Shall in Thy likeness wake and be  
Forever blest!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

