

Message Eight

Christ—the One Cursed and Hanged on a Tree

JL Hymns: 475

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

- Deut 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;
- Deut 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 Pet 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.
- Gal 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?
- Gal 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?
- Gal 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";
- Gal 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.

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:

- Deut 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;
- Deut 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 Pet 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.
- A. A criminal could be executed by being hanged on a tree; he who was hanged was accursed of God—Deut. 21:22-23.
- Deut 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;
- Deut 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.
- B. 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.
- Deut 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.
- C. 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.
- Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers has raised Jesus, whom you slew by hanging Him on a tree.
- Acts 10:39 And we are witnesses of all the things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom also they did away with by hanging Him on a tree.
- Acts 13:29 And when they had accomplished all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.
- John 19:31 Then the Jews, since it was the day of preparation and so that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath day was a great Sabbath), requested of Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.

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

- Gen 3:17b ... Cursed is the ground because of you; / In toil will you eat of it / All the days of your life.

- Rom 5:12 Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and thus death passed on to all men because all have sinned-
- A. God brought in the curse after Adam's sin, saying, "Cursed is the ground because of you"—Gen. 3:17b:
1. As descendants of Adam, all sinners are under the curse; Adam brought us all under the curse—v. 17b; Rom. 5:12, 17-18.

Gen 3:17b ... Cursed is the ground because of you; / In toil will you eat of it / All the days of your life.

Rom 5:12 Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and thus death passed on to all men because all have sinned-

Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:18 So then as it was through one offense unto condemnation to all men, so also it was through one righteous act unto justification of life to all men.
 2. Ultimately, the curse is death; death, including all other sufferings, is the consummation of the curse—vv. 12, 17; 6:16, 21, 23.

Rom 5:12 Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and thus death passed on to all men because all have sinned-

Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom 6:16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves as slaves for obedience, his slaves you are whom you obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness?

Rom 6:21 What fruit then did you have at that time? Things of which you are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- B. 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.
- Gen 3:18 And thorns and thistles will it bring forth for you, / And you will eat the herb of the field;
- Heb 6:8 But if it brings forth thorns and thistles, it is disapproved and near a curse, whose end is to be burned.

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

- Gal 3:10 For 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."
- A. 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.
- Rom 5:13 For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not charged to one's account when there is no law.
- B. The curse, therefore, is related to the law of God, and it is the demand of the righteousness of God upon sinners—3:19.
- Rom 3:19 Now we know that whatever things the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may fall under the judgment of God;
- C. 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:

A. 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.

Gal 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";

1 Pet 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.

B. Christ Himself “bore up our sins in His body on the tree”—v. 24:

1 Pet 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.

1. 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.

1 Pet 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.

Deut 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.

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers has raised Jesus, whom you slew by hanging Him on a tree.

Acts 10:39 And we are witnesses of all the things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom also they did away with by hanging Him on a tree.

Acts 13:29 And when they had accomplished all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.

2. 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.

Isa 53:6 We all like sheep have gone astray; / Each of us has turned to his own way, / And Jehovah has caused the iniquity of us all / To fall on Him.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

3. Christ died once to bear our sins, and He suffered the judgment for us on the cross—Heb. 9:28; Isa. 53:5, 11.

Heb 9:28 So Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time to those who eagerly await Him, apart from sin, unto salvation.

Isa 53:5 But He was wounded because of our transgressions; / He was crushed because of our iniquities; / The chastening for our peace was upon Him, / And by His stripes we have been healed.

Isa 53:11 He will see the fruit of the travail of His soul, / And He will be satisfied; / By the knowledge of Him, the righteous One, My Servant, will make the / many righteous, / And He will bear their iniquities.

4. 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.

Rom 6:8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him,

Rom 6:10 For the death which He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life which He lives, He lives to God.

Rom 6:11 So also you, reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but living to God in Christ Jesus.

Rom 6:18 And having been freed from sin, you were enslaved to righteousness.

1 Pet 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.

C. When Christ bore our sins, He also took our curse—John 1:29; Gal. 3:13:

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Gal 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";

1. 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.
 John 19:2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they threw a purple garment around Him.
 John 19:5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the thorny crown and the purple garment. And he said to them, Behold, the man!
 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.
 Gal 3:10 For 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."
 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.
 Gal 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";
 4. The curse that came in through Adam's fall has been dealt with by Christ's redemption—v. 13.
 Gal 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";
- 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:
 Gal 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";
 Mark 15:33 And when the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.
 Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is interpreted, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?
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.
 Isa 53:10a But Jehovah was pleased to crush Him, to afflict Him with grief. ...
 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:
 Mark 15:33 And when the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.
 Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is interpreted, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?
 - 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.
 1 Pet 3:18 For Christ also has suffered once for sins, the Righteous on behalf of the unrighteous, that He might bring you to God, on the one hand being put to death in the flesh, but on the other, made alive in the spirit;
 1 Pet 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.
 Isa 53:6 We all like sheep have gone astray; / Each of us has turned to his own way, / And Jehovah has caused the iniquity of us all / To fall on Him.
 2 Cor 5:21 Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
 - 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.
 John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
 Rom 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
 - 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:
 Mark 15:33 And when the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.
 Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is interpreted, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?
- a. The Lord Jesus was born of the begetting Spirit as the divine essence, who never left Him essentially—Luke 1:35.
 Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.
- 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:
 Matt 1:18 Now the origin of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother, Mary, after she had been engaged to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.
 Matt 1:20 But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.
 Matt 27:46 And 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?
- 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.
 Matt 1:18 Now the origin of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother, Mary, after she had been engaged to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.
 Matt 1:20 But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.
- 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.
 Matt 3:16 And having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon Him.
 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.
- 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:
 Gal 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";
 Gal 3:29 And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.
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.
 Gen 22:17 I will surely bless you and will greatly multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens and like the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.

- Gen 22:18a And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, ...
- Gen 28:14 And your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.
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.
- Gal 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles out of faith, announced the gospel beforehand to Abraham: "In you shall all the nations be blessed."
- Gal 3:9 So then they who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.
- Gal 3:10 For 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 3:11 And that by law no one is justified before God is evident because, "The righteous one shall have life and live by faith";
- Gal 3:12 But the law is not of faith, yet, "He who does them shall live because of them."
- Gal 3:16 But to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He does not say, And to the seeds, as concerning many, but as concerning one: "And to your seed," who is Christ.
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.
- Gal 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.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

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.
- Gen 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, / And him who curses you I will curse; / And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.
- 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.
- Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly portrayed crucified?
- Gal 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";
- Gal 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.
- 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:
- Gal 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.
- Gal 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?
- Gal 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?
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.
- Gen 12:7 And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land. And there he built an altar to Jehovah who had appeared to him.

- Gen 13:15 For all the land that you see I will give to you and to your seed forever.
- Gen 17:8 And I will give to you and to your seed after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.
- Gen 26:3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you; for to you and to your seed I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.
- Gen 26:4 And I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and will give to your seed all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed,
- Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
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.
Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
 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.
1 Cor 15:45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
 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.
Gal 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.
 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.
Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.
John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.
John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.
 6. Today our Christian life is a life of receiving the Spirit through faith—Gal. 3:2, 5, 14.
Gal 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?
Gal 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?
Gal 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.

Study Questions

1. Show the relationship between sin, the curse, and the law.
2. When Christ redeemed us, what were we redeemed from? Why is this redemption legitimate?
3. What is the intrinsic significance of Christ, having become a curse on our behalf, redeeming us out of the curse of the law?
4. Describe how the Lord Jesus died on the cross under God's judgment as a God-man.
5. Explain how Christ as the seed of Abraham, being made a curse for us, brings us the blessing of Abraham so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.