

Broken Vows or Covenants

Read Joshua 9:3-4; 15-16; 19:20. When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done in at Jericho, they went to him pretending to be sojourners and made a covenant with them so that they could live in peace. Three days later Joshua found out they were neighbors and were not able to hurt them because of the vow they made; they had to let them live amongst them. Vows are another way that Satan uses to gain entry into our lives.

Vows should never be taken lightly whether you make them with God or others, a broken vow will result in curses; God is a covenant God. Even though Joshua made this vow out of trickery, it still had to be upheld because of the seriousness of a vow. Sadly, the world today has little if any understanding of vows and covenants, the world is quick to promise and even quicker to break the promise.

This story does not end here, fast forward centuries later in 2 Samuel when a severe famine consumed the land for three years during the reign of King David. When King David inquired of the Lord *And the LORD Answered, "It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites."* So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. *Now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah (2 Samuel 21:1-2).* As a result of Saul's broken vow, his descendants paid the price. The price was blood, *seven men of Saul's descendants were delivered to the Gibeonites and they were hanged (Samuel 21:3-6, 14).*

The good news is, *Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree')* (Galatians 3:13). We simply have to appropriate the Blood of Jesus Christ to the sins and resulting curse. We repent of the sin, renounce the spirit enforcing it and break the power of the curse resulting in full freedom.

Generational Curses

We can suffer the consequences of generational or inherited curses as well. God tells us in His word that He visits the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations. He also assures us that He is gracious, merciful and longsuffering forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, keeping His mercy for thousands of generations! What good news is that for all of us!

And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,"⁷ "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation" (Exodus 34:6-7).

Having other gods before the One True God will result in a curse, it is a sin, and again, God has

foretold of the consequences of this sin. Many people respond to this verse by saying that they don't have any other gods, they worship God only. Unfortunately, people do not understand that the things they put before God become their gods. For example, the Sunday only Christian or the Christian that attends services only on special holidays usually have much more important and pressing things in their lives to do other than going to church. Connecting with others in a Bible study or serving and worshipping their Creator is not a priority. Things like the usual idols of this world prevent and distract many people from putting God first. Sunday football, chores, parties, sleeping in, and *weekends are meant for fun* mentality are some of the more common idols and distractions that keep many Christians from fellowship with Jesus. Things like money, fame, and power are huge idols of this world as well as people being infatuated with their bodies. We have no grounds for grumbling if we know what the word of God says and we choose to go against it.

The ten commandments states *'You shall have no other gods before Me.* ⁸*"You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below (Deuteronomy 5:7-8 NIV).*

"you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁵ *but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments"* (Exodus 20:5-6).

In the following Scriptures, God declares a warning that the people will perish; their enemies will destroy them. The people shall waste away in their iniquity and their father's iniquities which are with them. The sins of the fathers were with the children, just like children brought up in addictive families have a high risk of becoming an addict themselves. Look closely at verse 40 where God gives a *"but if"* they confess their iniquities; their moral evil and their fathers' iniquities, humble themselves and accept their guilt, *then* God will remember His covenant promises. For this reason, we remit and renounce the sins of our ancestors; God said to do so!

³⁸*You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.* ³⁹*And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.* ⁴⁰*'But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me,* ⁴¹ *and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt –* ⁴²*then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.* ⁴³*The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its Sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes.* ⁴⁴*Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.* ⁴⁵ *But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the LORD"* (Lev 26:38-45).

“for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ¹⁰ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments” (Deuteronomy 5:9-10 NIV).

¹⁸ “The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation” (Numbers 14:18 ESV).

For more supporting Scriptures on curses please read Isaiah 65:6-7 and Leviticus 26:39.

Many people like to take liberties with the Scriptures and use them to suit their needs such as insisting that the Old Testament is irrelevant. Of course, that’s absurd but let’s review what Jesus Christ Himself said in Matthew 5.

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished (Matt 5:17-18).

Now we do not live under the curse of the law, any longer, praise Jesus, we have His blood, God’s grace and mercy to speak for us. Even so, we saw that Jesus Christ said Himself that He didn’t come to do away with the *Law or the Prophets*. Therefore, there are still standards we as Christians are to live by and if we do we will be blessed, if we don’t there will be consequences. Many times our consequences come in the form of demonic oppression. The devil is given a foothold in our lives when we choose to continue in sin and live in disobedience to God.

If you are under the mindset that there are no longer curses because Jesus Christ’ crucified took them then I urge you to look at the world around you. Explain why all the death, destruction, sickness, mental illness, divorce, and numerous other problems in the world. I used to think there was no such thing as a curse, they were only for witches, but then the Holy Spirit opened the Scriptures up to me so that I could know the truth and be set free. I pray the same is true for you as you investigate for yourself the word of the Lord.