

# Deliverance from the curse

Victor Hall

*Notes prepared for ministry at the agape meal, Brisbane, 30 May, 2021*

## The bride of Christ

The church is a kingdom. It is the bride of Christ on earth. By the shedding of His precious blood, Christ has redeemed us to God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 1Pe 1:18-19. Rev 5:9. In doing so, He has made us a kingdom, as well as priests to our God, and we are to reign on the earth. Rev 5:10.

As the bride of Christ, the motherhood of the church is seen in *every believing family*. The Lord is witness between a man and a woman when they, through marriage vows, make covenant with each other to be husband and wife. God then makes the man and woman *one flesh* by giving to them a remnant, or portion, of His Spirit. They do not make themselves to be one flesh. Gen 2:23-24. God does this because He seeks godly offspring from each marriage union. Mal 2:14-15.

God is the One who gives a person identity through conception in their mother's womb. Psa 139:13-14. He then preserves their spirit, keeping it alive. Jas 1:17. Heb 12:9. Children who are conceived within the New Covenant receive a portion of the Spirit of God before they are born. 1Co 7:14. They are named, known, and recorded in the book of life as sons of God. Psa 139:15-16. Their predestination, after they are brought forth through natural birth, is to serve God the Father as priests in His temple. They are trained and prepared for this work through the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Eph 6:4. 1Sa 2:18-19. They receive this ministry of grace from parents who are connected to the headship of Christ as heirs together of the grace of life. 1Pe 3:7.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of children who are born of God before they are brought forth through the natural labour of their mother. This birth belongs to those who are part of God's covenant people. Isaiah declared, 'Before she was in labour, she gave birth; before her pain [natural labour] came, she delivered a male child [a son of God]. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion [the mountain upon which Jerusalem was built] was in labour, she gave birth to her children.' Isa 66:7-8. Isaiah was referring figuratively to Jerusalem as the church, the bride of Christ, in the New Covenant.

Similarly, the apostle Paul described the bride of Christ as 'Jerusalem above', identifying her as 'the mother of us all'. Gal 4:26. He did so in reference to our birth as sons of God, noting that our spiritual birth is not the fruit of human travail, or labour. Making this point, Paul drew from prophetic writings of Isaiah, who declared, ' "Sing, O barren, you who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you who have not laboured with child! For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman," says the Lord.' Isa 54:1. Our birth is from above. We are born of water and of the Spirit, and immediately enter the kingdom of heaven and serve God as His priests in the heavenly temple. Joh 3:5-6.

As sons of God who have entered the kingdom of heaven, we have come to Mount Zion and are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. We are serving God the Father in His temple, as members of the body of Christ. Heb 12:22-24. This is what Paul meant when he said that we have been raised up together and are seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph 2:6. This is where we are to fulfil our service of worship. Rom 12:1-2. However, heavenly places is also the context of our warfare. This is because Satan is currently in heavenly places, accusing the brethren day and night. Rev 12:10.

With this in view, Paul explained that our wrestle is not with flesh and blood, but is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Eph 6:12. He exhorted us, therefore, to 'take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand'. Eph 6:13. To 'take up the armour of God' is to be an overcomer! We overcome the devil and the principle of the flesh, which he fathered in mankind, by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of our testimony, and because we do not love our lives to the death. Rev 12:11. In other words, we overcome principalities and powers in our lives and families by walking blameless before the Lord.

### Deliverance through the gospel

Inherent in the call to walk blameless before the Lord is His desire for the church, and for every family, to be delivered from familiar and unclean spirits. This deliverance is found as we avail ourselves of the remnant of the Spirit from the Father, through our submission to the headship of Christ. Mal 2:15.

The first word of the gospel through which this divine grace is ministered to us is, 'Do not fear. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward'. Gen 15:1. As we receive this message, we are delivered from the fear of death as the motivation of our life. Our deliverance from this fear is marked by a new motivation as the love of God is poured into our heart by the Holy Spirit. Rom 5:5. 1Jn 4:18.

The faith of the Son of God, which we receive by hearing His word, works by love. Gal 5:6. It is demonstrated by our obedience to Christ's word within the relational context that the Father has set for us. Evidently, to love is to obey the commands of the Lord. Joh 10:17-18. This 'faith in action' is our protection from the fiery darts of the wicked one. Eph 6:16. The apostle John described the wicked one as 'the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan'. Rev 20:2.

The ministry of Elijah is a specific initiative of the Lord to restore families to the order of headship so that in 'the day of the Lord' they are protected from the curse with which He comes to strike the earth. Highlighting this ministry, the Lord declared, 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, *lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.*' Mal 4:5-6.

The curse that the Lord nominated through the ministry of Malachi is the same curse that Zechariah observed as 'a flying scroll'. Zechariah recorded, 'Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits." Then he said to me, "*This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth:* 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it. I will send out the curse, says the Lord of hosts; it shall enter

the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house and consume it, with its timber and stones.” ’ Zec 5:1-4.

According to Malachi, there are several cultural issues which render our houses susceptible to this curse. For example, the Lord curses those whose offerings are defiled because of their contrary attitude towards the *agape* meal. They profane the Lord’s name when they express, through their speech and manner, that ‘The table of the Lord is defiled; and its fruit, its food, is contemptible’. They also say, ‘Oh, what a weariness!’ and sneer at the fellowship of the Lord’s table, presuming that they are acceptable to God even though they are thieves, lame and sick. Mal 1:12-14.

Furthermore, the Lord curses the messengers in His house who ‘depart from the way’ and ‘cause many to stumble at the Law’. Mal 2:2-9. Notably, the Lord declared that individuals and households will also be subject to the curse because they rob God by withholding their tithes and offerings from Him. Mal 3:9.

Households that fail to sanctify themselves to right relational order in response to the word are also cursed. In this regard, the Lord specifically addresses husbands who deal treacherously with their wives through their adulteries.

The Lord is particularly displeased with those who advance a false gospel that claims, ‘Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delights in them’. In the same way, the Lord is wearied by those who maintain the mindset of a victim, asking, ‘Where is the God of justice?’ Mal 2:17. Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord declared that ‘woe’ would befall those who hold to, and proclaim, this false doctrine. This is the ‘woe’ that befalls those who ‘seek mixed wine’. Pro 23:29-33.

Specifically, the Lord said, ‘Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away justice from the righteous man! Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, so their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom will ascend like dust; because they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.’ Isa 5:20-24.

Isaiah prophesied that God’s people would be delivered from these woes when they were drawn to a banner that He would lift up to the nations. He wrote, ‘*He will lift up a banner to the nations from afar, and will whistle to them from the end of the earth; surely they shall come with speed, swiftly. No-one will be weary or stumble among them, no one will slumber or sleep; nor will the belt on their loins be loosed, nor the strap of their sandals be broken.*’ Isa 5:26-27. It is notable that those who are drawn to this banner are not weary, lame, or spiritually asleep. To be drawn to this banner is fundamental to eating and drinking the *agape* meal in a worthy manner.

The banner to which Isaiah referred was planted when Christ was lifted up and crucified on the cross. Jesus Himself testified, saying, ‘And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will *draw all peoples to Myself.*’ Joh 12:32. As we are drawn, by the Spirit, to look on Jesus, we see how we have rejected His headship through our mixed speech and our relational dysfunction. By grace and supplication, we are able to mourn with godly sorrow. In this regard, each person must mourn alone, and every family must also mourn. Zec 12:12-14.

Those who mourn with godly sorrow receive the cleansing that comes from the fountain for sin and uncleanness, which flowed as blood and water from the pierced heart of Christ. Zec 13:1. Joh 19:34-37. As they draw near to Christ in full assurance of faith, He causes the unclean spirits to depart from the ground of their household. He takes dominion over them, and they are cut off from our houses as we journey with Him in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. Heb 10:22. Rom 6:14. Zec 13:2.

This is the blessing that belongs to the poor in spirit who do not turn their face away from Christ when He comes to meet them through the gospel of sonship. Mat 5:3. As King David testified, 'I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and *delivered me from all my fears*. They looked to Him and were radiant, and *their faces were not ashamed*. This *poor man* cried out, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them. Oh, *taste and see* that the Lord is good; *blessed* is the man who trusts in Him!' Psa 34:4-8.