

# The Crown of Thorns!



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**A brief excerpt of the study:** The main purpose of this study is to explore the full significance of the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ, by exploring the Curse of the Law from which He redeemed us having become a curse for us, so that we may understand all the consequences that came on the account of sin. For which reason, His blood was poured out onto death to purify our soul, His body scourged for our health and wellbeing, and the Crown of Thorns were put upon His head, so that we may be fruitful in the abundance of His blessing through the restoration of dominion. Now, the majority of the Church has a very good understanding of the reason His blood was poured out, yet, far less comprehend the reason for which His body endured scourging, and even far more less understand the merit of the Crown of Thorns He wore. So, in this study we aim to explore the significance of the Crown of Thorns, so that we may walk in the fullness of the inheritance we have in Him.

**We will begin with a prayer:** We thank you, Lord, for this opportunity, our prayer is for your word to go out in the power of your Spirit so that it might bring repentance to the knowledge of the truth to those who hear, we pray this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The main text of our study is from Matthew 27 verses 26 to 31, which reads, “Then he released Barabbas to them; and **having flogged Jesus, He delivered Him up that He might be crucified.** Then **the soldiers of the governor,** having taken Jesus into the Praetorium, **gathered the whole cohort before Him.** And having stripped Him, **they put a scarlet robe** around Him. **And having twisted together a Crown of Thorns, they put it on His head,** and **a reed in His right hand; and having bowed the knees before Him,** they mocked Him, saying, “**Hail, King of the Jews!**” And having spit upon Him, they took the reed and kept striking Him on His head. **And when they had mocked Him,** they took off Him the robe, and **they put His garments on Him and led away Him to crucify Him.”**

The events described by Matthew in the main text of our study paint a very specific picture as it relates to the Lord's rightful authority to rule as King over Israel. So, the scourging He received, being mocked by the hands of the soldiers that ruled the land, finally to be crucified by them unto death, His cross bearing the mark of the accusation that is laid against Him, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews," are all aspects that are meant to illustrate the curse of the Law. In that, the Scourging of His body, the Scarlet Robe that covered Him, the Crown of Thorns they place on His head, and the Reed in His right hand, all of which have a significant application. Paul wrote, "**For as many as are of works of the Law are under a curse**, for it has been written: '**Cursed is everyone who does not continue all things having been written in the book of the Law, to do them.**'" Then he says, "**Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us**—for it has been written: '**Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree.**'" Galatians 3 verses 10 & 13.

In saying, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law," Paul was making a specific statement that applies to Jews only, since the Law was never given for the Gentiles to observe. So, if one is not put under the Covenant of the Law, that person can neither be cursed or blessed by the Law. And it is within this frame of mind, that the main text of our study describes the Sacrifice of the Lord as it specifically relates to Israel. In which respect Paul wrote, "But when the fullness of the time had come, **God sent forth His Son, having been born of a woman, having been born under the Law, that He might redeem those under the Law**, so that we might receive the divine adoption as sons." Galatians 4 verses 4 to 5. And again, "And because of this, **He is the mediator of a new covenant**, so that, **death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant**, those **having been called** might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." Hebrews 9 verse 15. Please note, in both instances Paul makes it very clear that the death of the Lord had specific application, as to redeem those that were under the first covenant, which is to say the Law. The Lord Himself said, "**I was sent only to those being lost sheep of the house of Israel.**" Matthew 15 verse 24.

And this is with reason, for there are two terms by which the Lord was known; the first is, "**the Son of David**," as it relates to the house of Israel, which is in respect to those who are bound to the Covenant of the Law. The second is, "**the Son of Man**," and this is applicable to all of mankind, as the Last Adam. [1 Corinthians 15 verse 45.] In which regard, Pastor Joseph Prince pointed out that only Matthew and Luke recorded the genealogy of the Lord. In this respect, Matthew as a writer to the Jews, makes a point to trace the genealogy of the Lord to the point that is significant to Jews and says, "The book of **the genealogy of Jesus Christ, Son of David, Son of Abraham.**" Matthew 1 verse 1. So, by making reference to Abraham as the root of the Hebrews, and king David as one through whom the right of rule is passed, Matthew definitively identifies the Lord as the rightful King of the Jews. While Luke, a writer to the Gentiles, traces the genealogy of the Lord all the way back to the first man Adam, the son of God, through which he illustrates the Lord as the Last Adam, thereby applicable to all of mankind. So, Christ as the Son of David, died as the King of the Jews bearing all the consequences of the Curse of the Law. However, as the Son of Man He died bearing the sins of the world, undoing all the consequences that came on the account of the first man Adam. [John 3 verse 16.]

And this has significance because in addressing the consequences that came on the account of the Law, this in effect meant the Lord addressed the root for which the Law was given, that is Sin. [Galatians 3 verse 19.] And by addressing Sin, the Lord in effect redeemed the entire world by breaking the scepter through which the devil ruled the world. [Isaiah 14 verses 5 to 6.] So, it was incumbent on the Lord to primarily address the consequence of the Law, that is the curse to which

only Israel was subject. Paul said, “For until the Law, sin was in the world; **but sin is not imputed, there being no law.** Nevertheless **death reigned from Adam until Moses,** even over those **not having sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam,** who is a type of the coming One.” Romans 5 verses 13 to 14. And again, “And indeed, **I had not been conscious of covetousness** if the Law had not said, “You shall not covet.” **But sin, having taken an occasion by the commandment,** produced in me all covetousness; **for apart from the Law, sin is dead.**” Romans 7 verses 7 to 8. The overall concept being, the sins of the Gentiles were not imputed to them even though they were subject to the consequences of death on the account of the sin of Adam. The main concept being, in order for sin to be imputed one must first be made aware of the Law, and without the Law there can be no charge! For which reason Paul in Galatians, and in Hebrews, made a point to refer to the Sacrifice of the Lord in respect to answering sins that were imputed against those that were under the Law.

In that, Christ's obedience to God was illustrated in His perfect obedience to the Law, and as a perfect spotless Lamb of God, He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, bearing all the consequences of the curse of the Law. And it is His obedience unto death that is contrasted against the disobedience of the first man Adam, the result of which was that the Covenant of Death and Sheol that was established in the disobedience of Adam, is now annulled through the obedience of the sacrifice of Christ. As Isaiah says, “**And your covenant with death will be dissolved, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand.**” Isaiah 28 verse 18. So, through the Law, in the redemption of those that bore the curse of the Law, He in effect addressed the core issue of sin that had bound the entire world. In which regard Paul says, “**But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that which we were bound.**” Romans 7 verse 6. The point Paul was making was that it is through the body of the Lord Jesus Christ we are released from the covenant of the Law, because the issue of sin is addressed through His sacrifice, therefore the Law is annulled and made obsolete. [Hebrews 7 verse 18, & Hebrews 8 verse 13.] The far reaching implication of which is that, “**For as indeed in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.**” 1 Corinthians 15 verse 22.

So, with this in mind, we can attribute all that the Lord suffered to a specific judgment of the Law. Moses wrote, “**But if you do not obey Me and do not observe all these commandments,** and if you despise My statutes, and **if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to perform all My commandments** to your breaking My covenant, then I also will do this to you: I will appoint over you terror, **wasting disease, and fever,** which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart, and **you shall sow your seed in vain, and your enemies shall eat it.** And I will set My face against you, and **you shall be defeated by your enemies. And those who hate you shall reign over you,** and you shall flee when none pursues you.” Leviticus 26 verses 14 to 17. In this simple statement, Moses encapsulated the curse of the Law. Meaning, every curse of the Law is an elaboration of the core concepts of **sickness, poverty, and lack of dominion.** For instance there may be a variety of plagues and sickness of varying degrees, nonetheless it is the consequence of the same curse of being made subject to sickness. Or, it may be that the rain may be restrained, the crops given over to raiding bands of malicious people, and the land overrun with destructive locusts, yet it is the same curse of poverty. Or, it may be being under subjugation to a foreign ruler, and being taken captive to a foreign land, yet it is the same curse of loss of dominion in self governance.

So, we can see the suffering of the Lord described in the main text of our study following these concepts. He was Scourged first, then was covered with a Scarlet Robe, then a Crown of Thorns was put on His head, and a Reed placed in His Right hand, before He was led to be crucified to death hanging naked on the cross. The main point being, Christ in being the Curse of the Law has made a way for us to come to full knowledge of all that is won through Him. So, by breaking down every

aspect of the Curse of the Law, as it relates to sickness, poverty, and dominion, we may have grounds to contend to take possession of the inheritance we have in Him by faith. Faith is based on hope, meaning we must have grounds for our expectation in truth. [Hebrews 11 verse 1.] And it is very important for us to bear in mind, the Curse of the Law is a consequence of the original curse that came through Adam, since without the fall of Adam, there would have been no need for the Law. So in essence, the curse of the Law is a definition of the curse that supersedes it through which the world was made subject to the kingdom of darkness. As Paul pointed out, he would not have known covetousness if it was not for the Law. The Law did not invent covetousness, it simply brought to light what was already at work in the heart of mankind, which all have practiced without knowledge. Likewise, the Curse of the Law brought to light all the consequences that came upon the world on the account of the fall of Adam.

So, the Lord was first scourged in order to address the curse of the Law that specified every sort of plague, and every sort of sickness, that comes on the body on the account of failing to uphold the Law. [Deuteronomy 28 verses 58 to 61.] And it is because the Lord having carried the full weight of this judgment that Peter quoting Isaiah said, **“Who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that, having been dead to sins, we might live to righteousness. “By whose scourge marks you have been healed.”** 1 Peter 2 verse 24. In that, the blows that marred His face beyond recognition, the scourges that ripped His flesh from His bones, all of which were meant to address the suffering that comes upon our body through plagues and sickness as a consequence of being subject to the kingdom of darkness through sin. In regard to which Peter preaching said, **“Jesus from Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all those being oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him.”** Acts 10 verse 38. In this statement, Sickness and Disease are described as the oppression of the devil, which he exercised on the account of sin. That is to say, it is through sin that the devil had authority to subject our body to destruction in sickness and disease so that he may bring forth death. [Hebrews 2 verse 14.] Meaning, Christ became the curse of the Law on the cross in a body that was torn, in order to meet the judgment of every plague and every sickness. As a result the devil has absolutely no right to subject our body to his oppression, but we must be willing to contend for it in faith, through the knowledge of the truth.

Now, in the categories that define the curse of the Law, the Scarlet Robe has a different significance, because it is addressing the effect of a condemned conscience, that is to say the Soul. In which regard Paul said, **“For sin, having taken an occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it put me to death.”** Romans 7 verse 11. This in effect meant, the Law served to condemn a conscience that might perhaps not have been condemned on the account of ignorance, as Paul says, **“I once was alive apart from Law.”** Romans 7 verse 9. For which reason Paul calls the Law, a ministry of Death & Condemnation. [2 Corinthians 3 verses 7 & 9.] This in effect meant Christ being covered with the Scarlet Garment is meant to illustrate the guilt of condemnation of conscience that came on the account of the Law, as Isaiah says, **“Though your sins may be like scarlet, they will be white like snow; though they are red like crimson, they will become like wool.”** Isaiah 1 verse 18. Which in effect is a reference to the root, that is Adam and Eve, who having transgressed the commandment of God, sought to hide themselves from God, on the account of their conscience being defiled. Now, having said this, in the Law there is no provision that is made to address the conscience of the one that transgressed. Paul wrote, **“For the Law, having a shadow of the good things coming, not the form of the things themselves, never is able each year, with the same sacrifices which they offer continually, to perfect those drawing near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, because of those serving having been cleansed once, no longer having conscience of sins?”**

Hebrews 10 verses 1 to 2. Meaning, the sacrifices of the Law absolutely does nothing to address the fundamental issue of sin, which is a defiled conscience.

In which respect Paul preaching to the Jews said, “Therefore be it known to you, men, brothers, that through this One, **forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.** And in Him **everyone believing is justified from all things from which you were not able to be justified in the Law of Moses.**” Acts 13 verses 38 to 39. So, the illustration of the Scarlet Garment that covered the Lord, is to express the means by which our condemned conscience is washed by His blood. In which regard Isaiah said, “The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes there is healing for us. We all like sheep have gone astray, we have turned, each man to his own way; and the LORD has placed on him the iniquity of us all.” Isaiah 53 verses 5 to 6. Now, by saying the stripe of His body, Isaiah is making reference to the healing of our body as mentioned above. Likewise, by saying “the chastisement of our peace was upon Him,” Isaiah is making reference to the condition of our Soul, which was at enmity with God through an evil conscience. [Romans 5 verse 1, & 10.] The outcome of which John illustrates through an analogy of a garment and says, “They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7 verse 14. And Paul describing the offering of the Lord, in contrast to the offerings of the Law that served to purify the flesh, says, “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, purify our conscience from dead works, in order to serve the living God!” Hebrews 9 verse 14.

Now, before we go any further we will explore the significance of His body that was scourged, and the Scarlet Garment that covered Him, as it relates to the Communion of the Lord. For which many of the servants of the Lord have earnestly contended for the truth that are represented in the Communion of the Lord. In that, when taking the Bread of Communion, we are exhorted to remember not only the suffering of the Lord when His body was broken, but the reason why it was broken. Through which, in an exercise of faith we take the bread of communion in the representation of His body that endured scourging, so that we may possess a body that is whole, and full of health. Likewise, we take the Cup of the Communion in a representation of a purified conscience. In which regard Matthew said, “For this is My blood of the [New] Covenant, being poured out for many, for forgiveness of sins.” Matthew 26 verse 28. Now, Mark, Luke, and Paul, all describe the communion cup, but only Matthew speaks of it as for the forgiveness of sins. As we have said above, Matthew as a writer for the Jews have a reason to do this, because only through the Law of Moses were sins imputed. For the rest the communion cup is described as, “the New Covenant in My blood.” This is not to say, sins are not forgiven for the rest, since the Lord in respect to the Gentiles said to Paul, “they may receive forgiveness of sins.” Acts 26 verse 18. But in order to differentiate between imputed sins which is through the law, and a general condemned state which is according to Adam. Either way, a condemned conscience that came on the account of sin, be it through knowledge of the Law or without, must be addressed. That is to say, the prerequisite for taking part in the New Covenant, which is of a New Nature, is dependent on a purified conscience, be it to Jew or Gentile. [Acts 15 verses 8 to 11.]

In regard to which, Paul, after bringing to remembrance the words of the Lord in respect to the Bread and the Cup said, “For as often as you may eat this bread and may drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He should come. Therefore whoever should eat the bread or should drink the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 11 verses 25 to 26. Please note, these two verses are joined with the word “therefore.” That is to say, the person who partakes of the Communion of the Lord in an unworthy manner, is one that has not

given due consideration to the proclamation of the Lord's Death that is represented in the bread and the cup. In that, the Lord's death is a declaration of redemption from the conditions that came through the kingdom of darkness, for which His Body and Blood have a specific application. So, Paul follows this with, "**But let a man examine himself, and in this manner let him eat of the bread, and let him drink of the cup.** For the one eating and drinking **not discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.** Because of this, **many are weak and sick among you, and many are fallen asleep.**" 1 Corinthians 11 verses 28 to 30. By saying, "let a man examine himself," Paul is making a reference to our faith as it relates to our knowledge of the Lord's Death. [2 Corinthians 13 verse 5.] For which reason he points to the failure of those that have not discerned the body of the Lord, and says, "**many are weak and sick among you, and many are fallen asleep.**" That is to say, because we have not fully grasped the reason why His body was subject to such torment unto death, we are made subject to the elements that are brought forth by the kingdom of darkness.

So, to take the Bread and the Cup in an unworthy manner is to say, to take it without full knowledge of the truth. Paul said, "**You may be filled with the knowledge of His will** in all spiritual wisdom and understanding **to walk worthily of the Lord: pleasing in all.**" Colossians 1 verses 9 to 10. To walk worthy of the Lord requires the knowledge of His will, therefore to take part of the Bread and the Cup in a worthy manner, we have to come to the knowledge of what is represented in this act. So, how we hold our body in the sustenance of truth, in the midst of a world that is ruled in sin, requires the constant and vigilant application of faith, which we get to exercise through the Lord's communion. Paul said, "**Fight the good fight of the faith.**" 1 Timothy 6 verse 12. By saying that, Paul illustrated faith is never meant to be idle, but active. The Lord said, "The thief comes only that **he might steal and might kill and might destroy.**" John 10 verse 10. The first thing the enemy does is to steal the word, as the Lord said, "**the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart.**" Luke 8 verse 12. So, he obscures the truth of the inheritance we have in Christ, so that we may not engage our faith to contend against him, as a result in our ignorance he is able to kill and destroy us. [Hosea 4 verse 6.]

So, Paul by associating the Bread and the Cup of Communion to the Lord's death, he is declaring to us the means by which we overcome the kingdom of darkness. John said, "**And they have overcome [the devil] by reason of the blood of the Lamb, and by reason of the word of their testimony;**" Revelation 12 verse 11. Paul also says, "[God] has **delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**" Colossians 1 verse 13 to 14. That is to say, we are taken out of the kingdom of darkness that was ruled in sin on the account of the Blood. Therefore, the enemy has no right to condemn or oppress us, since we are no longer children of sin, but of righteousness, having been qualified to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. And it is this truth we enforce through the practice of faith by partaking of the communion of the Lord, as it relates to our Soul and Body. So, when taking part in the Communion of the Lord, it is imperative for us to discern the purpose the Body and Blood of the Lord served.

This brings us to the main concept of our study which is **the Crown of Thorns**, which has to do with the curse to which the land is made subject that is to say Creation. In that, the essential point that is addressed in the crown of Thorns is the concept of poverty. A Crown in effect is meant to represent a dominion over a specific territory, in which regard Paul said, "**And God made from one man every nation of men, to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined the appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation.**" Acts 17 verse 26. All of whom have an appointed ruler as the Lord said, "When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and say, "**I will set over myself a king like all the nations that are around me,**" you

shall surely set over yourself a king whom the LORD your God chooses; **by Him from among your brothers you shall set over yourself a king.**” Deuteronomy 17 verses 14 to 15. And in regards to the Thorns Paul said, **“For land having drunk in the rain coming often upon it and producing vegetation useful for those for the sake of whom also it is tilled, partakes of blessing from God. But that bringing forth Thorns and Thistles is worthless and near to a curse, of which the end is unto burning.”** Hebrews 6 verses 7 to 8. Please note, the land is meant to bring forth vegetation useful for whom it is tilled. Meaning, it is an expression by which the people of the Land are meant to be sustained. As a result a land bringing forth Thorns and Thistles is an expression of a land which is cursed. To this we must include, the Reed they placed in His right hand, which is meant to be the expression of rule, as the Lord said, **“I will give to him authority over the nations, and he will shepherd them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken in pieces—just as I also have received from My Father.”** Revelation 2 verses 26 to 27. So, by putting the Reed in His right hand, by those who occupy and rule the land it is to illustrate the lack of authority to which the nation was subjected. So, Christ wearing the Crown of Thorns as the King of Jews, and holding the scepter of Reed in His right hand is meant to express the various ways by which those under the Law were impoverished on the account of the Curse of the Law.

Here, it is important to point out the agreement that is put to effect between the children of Israel and the land of Israel through the Covenant of the Law. It is evident the Land of Israel is a fruitful land, which we have from the testimony of the 12 spies, saying, **“We went to the land where you sent us, and truly it is flowing with milk and honey; and this is its fruit!”** Numbers 13 verse 27. Nonetheless, when Israel came to possess the land, they did so in agreement with God, according to the Covenant of the Law. In regard to which God says, **“And the land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine, for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.”** Leviticus 25 verse 23. This in effect meant, the effectiveness of the land to meet the requirement of the residents was bound to their obedience to God through the Law. And this can be illustrated in the command God gave to Moses saying, **“When you come into the land that I am giving to you, then the land shall keep a Sabbath to the LORD. Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather its fruit. And in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land, a Sabbath to the LORD. Your field you shall not sow, and your vineyard you shall not prune.”** Leviticus 25 verses 2 to 4. So, we can see the illustration of the Law in the Sabbath rest commanded in the Law for the people, which is also extended to the land. That is to say, just as Israel are people that are taken out of the nations to be His people, likewise, the land of Israel is also taken out of all the earth to be His land. And the people and the land are bound to each other through the Covenant of the Law.

So, their disobedience to the Law was expressed in the land withholding its bounty. And this may come in a variety of forms, it may be that the rains may be restricted, as the Lord specified in the Law saying, **“I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. And your power shall be spent in vain, and your land shall not yield its produce, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.”** Leviticus 26 verses 19 to 20. Or, it may take the form of being subject to the rule of those who clamour to rob and steal, as the Law says, **“A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and of all your toil, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed all the days.”** Or, it may be that the produce of the land is given over to plagues, as the Law says, **“The locust shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.”** Deuteronomy 28 verses 33, & 42. Which are all in effect the outcome of the working of the devourer, as the Lord said in Malachi, **“And I will rebuke for you the devourer, and it will not destroy for you the fruit of the ground, and the vine in the field will not be barren for you,”** says the LORD of Hosts.” Malachi 3 verse 11. This is to say,

the devourer in effect gained authority through the Law to bring to effect the curse of the Law, through which he may impoverish those that are bound to it. [Romans 7 verse 11.] So, Christ as the Son of David, King of the Jews, wore the Crown of Thorns in order to address the Curse of the Law to which the Land was made subject, resulting in poverty.

Now, this concept has to be addressed as it relates to the rest of the world, which we find in the narration of Luke in respect to the Lord's hour of temptation in the garden of Gethsemane. In that, from all the gospel writers, only Luke, a writer to the Gentiles, recorded the detail of the agony of the Lord saying, "**And having been in agony**, He was praying more earnestly. And **His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.**" Luke 22 verse 44. The fact that only Luke captured this detail is of great significance, because it is meant to portray the Lord as the Son of Man in relation to all of mankind. In that, the agreement between the Children of Israel and the Land in respect to their sustenance, which was according to the Law, was first illustrated in our first father Adam. So, when Mankind was first created, it was with the mandate that they are to rule over all the earth and everything in it. [Genesis 1 verses 26.] And the first time God gave this charge to Adam, Genesis states, "And the Lord God took the man and **He caused him to rest in the garden of Eden, to work it and to keep it.** And the **LORD God placed a command upon the man**, saying, "From every tree of the garden you may surely eat. **And from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, from it you shall not eat.** For in the day of your eating from it, **you shall surely die!**" Genesis 2 verses 15 to 17. Please note, the very first moment Adam is introduced to the garden he is meant to work and keep, and to all the trees that are meant to be food for him, he is also given a commandment not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The significance of which is that, his obedience to this one commandment determined his ability to keep the garden, thereby determining the very source of his sustenance. So, Adam's relationship with the ground beneath his feet was bound to this one commandment.

So, when Luke says, "His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground," this is meant to be a direct reference to the curse that was pronounced against the first man Adam in the Garden of Eden on the account of his disobedience. In which regard the Lord God said to Adam, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and **ate from the tree of which I commanded you**, saying, 'you shall not eat from it,' **cursed is the ground on your account, in toil you shall eat of it** all the days of your life, **and thorn and thistle it will cause to grow for you**, and you shall eat the vegetation of the field. **By the sweat of your nose you shall eat bread**, until your returning to the ground, for from it you were taken. **For dust you are, and to dust you shall return.**" Genesis 3 verses 17 to 19. Pastor Joseph Prince teaches on the Law of first mention, the objective of which is that the first time a subject is mentioned in the Bible holds significance in defining its subsequent applications. And the first time Thorns and Thistles were mentioned was in respect to the toil mankind was subjected to on account of the ground being cursed.

Now, this curse has significance because it is according to the nature of him, who acquired dominion over the world. [Luke 4 verses 5 to 6.] In which regard, God said to the serpent that deceived Adam and Eve, "**Because you have done this, cursed are you** above all the livestock and above every beast of the field. **On your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat, all the days of your life.**" Genesis 3 verse 14. In saying, dust will be the food of the serpent, this in effect means since the devil had acquired the power of death through sin, the objective of his existence became to bring forth the destruction of mankind through the charge of sin, thereby, he is called the accuser of the brethren. That is to say, just as our body is subject to aging, to be weak and sickly, ravished by all manner of sickness and diseases on the account of being subject to the dominion of sin, creation itself was also

subject to the same curse of decay. As Paul says, “**For the creation was subjected to futility**, not willingly, but **because of the One having subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay**, into the freedom of **the glory of the children of God.**” Romans 8 verses 20 to 21. So, even though creation itself longs to be set free so that it may yield all that it was created to bring forth, but on account of the dominion of the evil one it is bound to the state of decay.

This in effect meant, on account of sin creation was made subject to the wicked one, as a consequence the earth withheld the abundant bounty it was meant to yield, resulting in mankind having to struggle in toil of labour to bring forth sustenance by the sweat of his nose. So the earth whose sole purpose was to yield fruits and seeds in service of mankind, now began to yield thorns and thistles having come under the dominion of the evil one. As Isaiah says of the devil, “**Is this the man who made tremble the earth**, the one shaking kingdoms, **setting the world as a wilderness**; its cities he has broken down; his captives he has not released to their house?” Isaiah 14 verses 16 to 17. So, Adam was removed from keeping the garden God planted, in order to toil in the labour of tilling the ground against an earth determined to give him thorns and thistles.

And this point is further established in the story of Cain and Abel. When Cain rose up and killed his brother having been enticed by sin, God said, “And now, **cursed are you from the ground**, which has opened its mouth to receive the bloods of your brother from your hand. **When you work the ground, it shall not continue to give its strength to you.** You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.” Genesis 4 verses 11 to 12. Please note, the curse the Lord spoke to Cain was not a new curse, but the same one as Adam. So, like his father Adam, his action determined the means of his sustenance. The point of significance is that even though the serpent had become the ruler of the world, the earth's reaction to us is bound to our action. In that, we know it is the devil that wanted to kill Abel, since God said to Cain, “**Sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you**, and you must rule over it.” Genesis 4 verse 6. However, when Cain consented to act and kill his brother, on the account of his action in spilling innocent blood, the devil now had ground to afflict Cain himself. That is to say, Cain, on account of his sin, was forced out of his profession, since he was a tiller of the ground. As a consequence, Cain became a fugitive and vagabond, subject to clawing his sustenance by any other means, meaning, he became a tool for the enemy! The point is, the earth reacts in mourns and groans on the account of the abundance of wickedness that is committed in her, as Isaiah says, “**The earth like a drunkard will stagger greatly**, and it will totter like a hut; and **transgression will be heavy upon it**, and it will fall and never again rise.” Isaiah 24 verse 20. So, the earth breaks out in destruction, unrest, and tumult, and the more we move away from the hope of the truth of the gospel, the more we are subject to the wiles of the enemy to bring destruction.

So, Christ being under great stress, His sweat becoming as great drops of blood falling to the ground, is meant to express the redemption of the ground from the curse it was made subject, on the account of the sin of Adam. In this regard, Pastor Joseph Prince teaching on the Mount of Transfiguration, which was in respect to seeing the kingdom of God, pointed out the hidden revelation that is contained in the names of the disciples the Lord took with Him up on the mountain. In that, Peter, James, and John, are meant to represent the Law being replaced by the Grace of God. That is to say, Peter whose name means stone is a representation of the Law, James whose name in Hebrew is Jacob means surplanter, and John means the Grace of God. [Luke 9 verse 32.] Now, the same concept can also be extended in regards to the Garden of Gethsemane, which the Lord once more took with Him the same three disciples, Peter, James, and John. Only this time the implication has to do with the sweat of the nose by which we are meant to eat bread. The point being, the Law, as in Peter the stone, in a representation of the effort of the flesh in the labour of our own self struggle, is now in effect replaced

by the working of Grace, that is the favour of God. Meaning, we take delight in the work the Lord puts our hand to work, and He will give us great success on the account of His grace towards us, which we by our own effort in the flesh could never obtain. Paul said, “**I toiled more abundantly than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.**” 1 Corinthians 15 verse 10. The point is, when we are engaged in the task for which the Lord prepared us, it never seems like work. And God in His grace will abound the success of the works of our hand.

The implication of which is that the Sacrifice of the Lord has directly addressed the consequence of poverty that came on the account of sin, so that there may be no lack. In which regard Paul says, “For you know **the grace our Lord Jesus Christ**, that being rich, for the sake of you **He became poor, so that you through His poverty might be enriched.**” 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9. And again, “**The one sowing sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one sowing upon blessings will also reap upon blessings**, each as he purposes in the heart, not out of regret or of necessity. For God loves a cheerful giver. And **God is able to make all grace abound to you**, so that in every way, **always, having all sufficiency, you may abound in every good work.**” 2 Corinthians 9 verses 6 to 8. God, through the Communion of the Lord, gave us a means by which we may exercise our faith according to the Body and the Blood of the Lord, through which we are able to hold the wiles of the kingdom of darkness to bring condemnation and oppression at bay. Likewise, through the means of giving tithe and offering in an illustration of sowing seed, He has given a means by which the works of our hand may be blessed, and the earth may give its increase. In effect, the devourer is held at bay so that what we have obtained is not scattered by the maliciousness of the wicked one. As Pastor Joseph Prince teaches, by giving the first portion of your increase to God in tithe, all you have is made holy. [Malachi 3 verses 10 to 11.]

The final point we will address is the significance of His naked body hanging on the Cross. This might seem like an expression of total destitution as an expression of the dire poverty He was subjected to, but it was meant to address the first instant of shame that came to effect at the fall of Adam and Eve, on the account of which they sought to hide themselves from God. So, just as they were naked in the Garden of Eden at the tree when they sinned, so He hanged on the tree naked bearing that shame, so that we may have the boldness to come before God. So, through the Curse of the Law, in being a curse for us, His body was subjected to Scourging, and was mocked with the Scarlet Robe that covered Him, a Crown of Thorns upon His head, and a Reed in His right hand, finally He was crucified unto death hanging naked on the cross. So that, through the knowledge of the truth we may exercise our faith to contend for the inheritance He has won for us, through what we eat, what we drink, and what we sow.

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