

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **PREPARATION STAGE THREE – RENOUNCING FALSE RELIGION AND THE OCCULT AND BREAKING CURSES**

#### **What is the difference between ‘renouncing’ and repenting?**

We have looked at repenting of our sins and forgiving other people for their sins against us. So what is this third task? What does ‘renounce’ mean and how does it differ from repenting? We need to get this really clear because it does tend to confuse people. That in turn is mainly because this is rarely, if ever, preached on and is a topic most people have never even heard of.

Likewise, with the issue of curses, we will need to look at what they are, where they come from, what they do, why they matter and how to break free of them. Therefore, we need to get clear right at the outset what we are dealing with here and how these things affect people.

The essential point is that although most preachers never mention this topic either, the Bible refers on very many occasions to something called a “curse”. These affect us and blight our lives. Therefore, what we are mainly looking at in this chapter is how do we break free of the influence and effect of any curses which may be impacting our life or the life of the person we are seeking to help.

Curses affect people in all sorts of ways but one of those ways is they have the same effect as sin and unforgiveness have in that they can open up ‘doors’ for demons to enter us such that the demon may acquire the right to be inside us and to remain until it is cast out. That does not always happen. But it does happen in some cases and the person you are helping may be one such case so you need to be aware of this.

So, in addition to all the other harmful things a curse can cause, it is yet another way in which demons can gain access to our lives, and even into our body. Therefore, we need to look at how we can break these curses, cancel their effect, and close the ‘doors’ through which the demons have entered.

Surprisingly, the most common source of curses is God Himself. He has made it clear that various forms of sin, but in particular idolatry, false religion and the occult, will cause Him to **send curses** upon all those who do those forbidden things. In that case a curse is a particular type of consequence, or you might call it a judgment, which comes upon us here and now, blighting us in this life, not after our death.

Moreover, there is no reason to suppose that these curses only affect unbelievers and not Christians. The Bible never says that they don’t affect Christians but it does give many reasons to suppose they do. I believe they come upon anybody who acts in such a way as to cause God to curse them or who becomes subject to a curse for any number of reasons.

It could be due to curses made by servants of Satan or by parents/teachers/pastors, saying foolish things they ought not to say. Or it can even be self imposed curses where people speak negative words over themselves, with faith, and thereby curse themselves. We need to consider all these possibilities. At any rate, let us remember that the Bible never says anything to suggest that a genuine Christian can’t be subject to a curse.

**Get the person you are helping to renounce and break all curses which have arisen from any involvement in the occult, false religions, idolatry or otherwise.**

In one sense, this is an aspect of repentance because it does involve repenting of the grievous sin of engaging in the occult in any of its forms and also of false religion or idolatry. All of these involve worshipping, acknowledging, respecting or honouring a false god or idol. Of course, all those things are sins in themselves and need to be repented of.

But the key point for our purposes in this chapter is that any of these activities can also *open a person up to being cursed in various ways*. And that in turn potentially opens the door for a demon to enter them. So, it could be God's own curse sent upon us as a result of idolatry, or engaging in the occult or false religion. Alternatively, it could be the curses of *another person* who speaks things over someone, as when engaging in tarot or fortune telling or using Ouija boards.

Or it could be the cursing words of a *parent, pastor or teacher* telling you that "*You'll never amount to anything*" or some other such negative words. So, it is these curses of whatever type or origin that we are seeking to break, no matter how they arose or what wrongful activity led to them being created.

It can even be *self imposed curses* that a person speaks over themselves. The most obvious example of that would be the terrible curses men speak over themselves when they join the Freemasons, an occultic organisation, which requires new members to make blood curdling oaths to keep the secrets of Freemasonry or else have their tongues cut out etc.

But there are also other ways in which a self imposed curse can happen, such as when Rebecca, the mother of Jacob, spoke a curse over herself in Genesis 27 when she was urging Jacob to deceive Isaac and to obtain the birthright by deception. Jacob rightly feared that this deception could bring a curse upon him instead of a blessing. But Rebecca brushed his concern aside and said "*Let your curse be upon me*". In saying this she opened herself up to receive that curse and it came upon her instead of Jacob and blighted the rest of her life.

<sup>12</sup> *Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be mocking him and bring a curse upon myself and not a blessing.*"<sup>13</sup> *His mother said to him, "Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, bring them to me."*

*Genesis 27:12-13 (ESV)*

We see an indication of the way Rebecca's life was subsequently blighted when she later expresses her unhappiness and even says "*I am tired of living*" or "*I loathe my life*" as the ESV puts it. That statement reflects her low mood which I suppose is at least partly due to how the curse has affected her. However, that very statement is also yet another self imposed curse in itself as she was effectively wishing to die and the demons do not need many invitations in order to bring that about.

<sup>46</sup> *Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I loathe my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?"*

*Genesis 27:46 (ESV)*

Let us look now at a different type of curse, *coming from God Himself*, but not on the basis of involvement in the occult, idolatry or false religion. This is a curse which God says He will send out "*like a flying scroll*" which is intended to pursue and punish *everyone who lies or steals*.

That potentially includes just about everyone so this is a curse we need to take very seriously indeed, not only for its importance in itself, but also for what it tells us in general about how curses operate when they come from God Himself, as this curse plainly does:

*<sup>1</sup>Then I raised my eyes again and looked, and behold, there was a flying scroll. <sup>2</sup>And he said to me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits." <sup>3</sup>Then he said to me, "This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the entire land; everyone who steals certainly will be purged away according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears falsely will be purged away according to the writing on the other side. <sup>4</sup>I will make it go forth," declares the Lord of armies, "and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and destroy it with its timber and stones."*

*Zechariah 5:1-4 (NASB)*

I suggest you reflect on this little known passage. It is hardly ever preached on, probably because it makes people feel uncomfortable, including preachers. Therefore, pause for a moment and reflect on this image of a curse *pursuing* everyone who lies and steals like a heat seeking missile following an aircraft. Imagine it going after a person, even entering their house, and bringing judgment upon them no matter where they go.

This passage from Zechariah prevents anyone saying curses don't exist or that God would never create them or direct them at anyone. He plainly does and it is undeniable. So, instead of denying it, ignoring it, or pretending it could never happen, we would be much better off if we faced up to this issue and reflected on what to do about it.

Moreover, there is no reason to suppose it is limited only to those who lie or steal. I fully expect the same consequences to occur in the case of those who commit any other types of sin. At the very least, I would see that in general as being part of the outworking of the wider law of sowing and reaping, whereby we all reap what we have sowed.

Therefore, even though God has not chosen to list all sorts of sins and specify what curses will follow from committing each of them, as He did within the Law of Moses (which has now ended) it is reasonable to suppose that He will react to other sins in the same or a similar way as with lying and stealing. Indeed, it would be strange if He didn't.

I have a section on curses and witchcraft at the end of my Book 6 on "*How to Identify and Handle Wicked People*". Rather than repeat all that material here, please refer to my Book 6. However, let us look briefly here at what curses are, how they operate, who creates them, and how they come into existence. There are actually many different forms and sources of curses so we will give some examples and seek to define them.

I would define a curse at its simplest, most basic level, as "***a word spoken in faith, whether by God, other people, servants of Satan, parents, pastors, teachers or the person themselves, which has power to bring about a negative result via the spiritual realm and which then impacts the life of the person***".

You may be familiar with how prayers or proclamations spoken in faith are powerful. I say quite a lot about it in chapter 8 of my Book 7, so please refer to that. Much is promised to those who speak positive, biblical, godly words into the heavenly places which are based on faith, just as it is promised to those who pray prayers of supplication which are filled with faith.

That said, although proclamation is a valid, authentic, biblical practice, and an essential one, every genuine thing can be counterfeited and perverted to create a false version of it. Therefore, there are people who twist this practice to create a false, unbiblical version of it.

Even the best of things can be exaggerated or wrongly defined as with the “*word of faith*” movement and the “*prosperity gospel*” whereby people seek to ‘visualise’ money and “*name it and claim it*”. Let me be clear, I am *not advocating any of that* heretical, worldly teaching. I consider such teaching to be witchcraft, not Christianity. I therefore believe those prosperity type teachings with their unhealthy focus on money to be unbiblical and carnal.

Therefore, that sort of thing is *not what I am talking about here* when I speak of proclaiming God’s Word into the heavenly places with faith, i.e. genuine, biblically based, God given faith. I do not mean the sort of junk the ‘money preachers’ are teaching, i.e. men like Creflo Dollar. They should all be avoided like the plague, as should their money obsessed teaching.

My point is that although there is a perverted, unbiblical counterfeit, *there is also a genuine godly, biblical way* in which we can declare, proclaim and confess God’s Word with faith. I discuss this in my four audio talks on “Proclamation”. To ‘confess’ means “*to say the same as*”. Therefore, when we ‘confess’ God’s Word over a person or a situation we are seeking to say the same as God says about it.

That is why it has such power, because what you are saying is in line with God’s Word and therefore is *in accordance with His will*. That is crucially important because it is one of the qualifying conditions Jesus spoke of for getting our prayers answered, as well as being the basis for proclamation to be effective.

However, there is also another side to that coin, whereby *a curse can also be spoken in faith*, i.e. with a confident expectation of it coming to pass. It is that which I am warning against. I am also seeking to explain how to break such curses over your life and over the life of the person to whom you are ministering deliverance.

An example which immediately springs to mind of just one way in which a curse can arise is a young man I know who went on a missions trip to do evangelism on a remote Scottish island. The trip was organised by a Pentecostal group which, wrongly in my view, did not agree with the drinking of any alcohol. So that was prohibited for everyone on the trip.

Nevertheless, while on the trip this young man went out to the pub in the evenings in blatant defiance of the leaders. In my view, he thereby exposed himself to danger of demonic attack by taking himself outside the ‘umbrella’ of protection given by the leaders of the group. At any rate, later in that trip he came across a practising witch who strongly objected to the group being on the island.

So, she approached the group and then turned and spoke to this young man directly, singling him out, and speaking a curse over him. I suspect the demon within her told her that he was spiritually vulnerable and would be the best target. *Two days later* he had a severe epileptic fit and has had them ever since, and they do not respond to medication.

At any rate, medicine does not stop it happening. That itself is significant because epilepsy can be caused by organic, medical, physical factors, in which case it responds well to medical treatment. But some epilepsy never responds to any medicine and I believe such cases are highly likely to be of demonic origin.

That was certainly the view of the late Derek Prince and I think he was right on that point. At any rate, I believe this particular young man's epilepsy was undoubtedly of demonic origin and that it originated with the curse spoken over him by that witch. She wasn't playing games. She meant every word she said and she knew she had real power.

That young man, who is now a middle aged man, had his whole life and career blighted by epilepsy and he was never set free from it or delivered from the demon which was causing it. That is not because the ministry of deliverance failed or was ineffective. It was because *he never sought it*. He always treated it as a purely medical issue and would not address the spiritual dimension to it.

So, let's examine what happened and where he went wrong both before and afterwards:

- a) regardless of whether they were right or wrong, he defied the leaders of the mission trip by going out drinking, contrary to their wishes and in breach of his agreement with them on joining the trip
- b) even before that, he had also ignored the advice of his own church leader who had a very uneasy feeling about him going on this trip and had urged him not to go. So, he ignored his own pastor, who, in my view, had obviously received a warning from the LORD intended for his benefit.
- c) When the witch cursed him he just laughed it off and did not take it seriously. Neither did he reject it and revoke her words in Jesus' name or plead the protection of the blood of Jesus Christ over himself. He did not even seek advice and prayer from others on the trip.
- d) Subsequently, after the epileptic fits began, and even after they did not respond to any medication, he still never dealt with any of this, never repented, never revoked the curse, and never sought deliverance.

Imagine, therefore that you were ministering now to that man and you wanted to prepare him for deliverance. Can you see how, in addition to dealing with repentance, you would also need to advise him to deal now, albeit very belatedly, with what happened on that trip, what was spoken over him, and what he subsequently failed to do about it?

So, you would lead him in repenting of his defiance and rebellion against the group's alcohol rules, and also for ignoring his pastor's advice and warning. But then you would also need to address the curse itself. My advice would be to do that by getting him to speak a bold proclamation out loud, for himself, into the heavenly places, with a clear understanding of his objective, and a genuine faith in God's power to break the curse.

In making this proclamation, he would not be praying to God. He would be addressing "the heavenly places" which I discussed in Book 7 and which I likened to making a speech in the House of Commons, albeit that the 'audience' is made up of Jesus, all the angels and arch angels, the Church and all the demons too.

So, it is not a prayer of request. Indeed, it is not a prayer at all. It is a declaration or announcement made in a bold, assertive manner to the entire angelic and demonic realms within the "heavenly places". He could therefore say something along these lines:

*"In the name of Jesus Christ and by the authority vested in me as His disciple, and His ambassador, I hereby revoke and cancel the cursing words spoken over me that day by that witch and, by the power*

*of the blood of Jesus Christ, who became a curse for us on the cross, I now take authority in Jesus' name and break the power of those cursing words and all the effect they have had upon me".*

The point is it was the witch's curse that gave the demon the right to enter, and to do harm. Therefore, it makes sense that before you command the demon to depart, the person should first break and cancel the curse itself by making a declaration in those terms to the heavenly places. Then the demon's legal right to be there, or his "tenancy agreement" as we might put it, is revoked.

You might be wondering why I suggest the person himself should be the one to break the curse rather than you doing it for him, by making a proclamation on his behalf. My answer would be that it is more effective that way, unless you are dealing with a small child.

It was the person himself who allowed the curse to be made and it was his own actions and words or his own failure to act or speak, which allowed the curse to form, to attach and to take effect. But also, getting the person involved in acting on his own behalf in this way, rather than you doing it all for him, helps him to see the reality and gravity of what he did and to take it more seriously.

What about other types of curses? Probably the most common are the *curses that come from God Himself* where people engage in the occult, idolatry or false religion, or indeed lying and stealing as we saw earlier. God has made clear that anyone who does those things *will come under His curse*. That amounts to receiving His opposition, losing His protection, and even to demons being given permission to harass and afflict the person.

Therefore, get the person to think back carefully and make a list of every form of occultic activity, idolatry or false religion they have ever been involved in – even if it was decades ago, and even if it was done *to* them or *for* them, by their parents or others rather than done *by* them. Get them also to frankly address the issue of their own honesty, or lack of it.

So, the list could include things like tarot, Ouija boards, horoscopes, fortune telling, tea leaves, going to mediums or psychics, spiritualism, palm reading, voodoo, witchcraft, wicca, yoga, astrology, acupuncture, reiki and many more such things. But it could also involve false religions and cults such as the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Moonies, Scientology, Christian Science etc *but also Roman Catholicism*.

That last one, Roman Catholicism, may surprise you but it is actually a huge false religion based on a mixture of paganism with elements of Christianity. It is also heavily involved in various forms of idolatry such as the worship of Mary, praying to Mary, praying to saints, reliance on relics such as bones or pieces of wood alleged to be from the cross, and things like "holy water". It involves even the worship of the host i.e. the bread (but also the wine) which are regarded as being the real body and blood of Jesus Christ, which is plainly false and unbiblical.

There is also of course Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and so on. I would also add believing in the heresy of evolution. So, whatever cult, false religion or occult activity they were involved in, and however long ago it was, it is possible the person is still affected by the demons that gained entry to their life through the curses that came upon them by getting involved in the various things God has forbidden and which He has said will result in His curse.

For example, we see from Paul's letter to the Romans that people who deny God as Creator and believe instead in evolution, or attribute the universe to some "cosmic power" or even treat the universe as if it

had a mind and purposes of its own, will be “*handed over*” by God. That basically means that God removes His ‘umbrella’ of protection and abandons the person to face demonic attack on their own, without His help. That in itself is a curse and Paul specifies that one of the things it will lead to is *homosexuality*.

Does that ring any bells for you? Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century virtually everyone accepted that God created everything. They believed that even if they were not Christians as they could see that it was completely obvious. However, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century billions of people began to believe in evolution. Therefore now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is an epidemic of homosexuality, transgenderism, paedophilia and gender confusion.

There is also the blind alley of feminism with women resenting and even hating men while simultaneously trying to look like them, plus various other forms of rebellion and perversion, including covering the body with tattoos. Here Paul sets out the root cause of the problem which is worshipping the *creation* instead of the *Creator*. And this applies today just as much as it did when Paul said it:

***<sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, that is, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, being understood by what has been made, so that they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their reasonings, and their senseless hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible mankind, of birds, four-footed animals, and crawling creatures.***

***Romans 1:20-23 (NASB)***

Then Paul shows the main consequences of that idolatry and of the rejection of God as Creator, i.e. a curse in the form of an increase in homosexuality, which is exactly what we have seen:

***<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them up to vile impurity in the lusts of their hearts, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. <sup>25</sup> For they exchanged the truth of God for falsehood, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.***

***<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged natural relations for that which is contrary to nature <sup>27</sup> and likewise the men, too, abandoned natural relations with women and burned in their desire toward one another, males with males committing shameful acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.***

***Romans 1:24-27 (NASB)***

Paul then explains how God “*hands them over*” as the RSV says, or “*gave them over*” as the NASB puts it. It means He withdraws His protection and allows the person to sink ever deeper into ignorance, deception, sin and foolishness such that they are eventually lost and destroyed. What else would you call that but a curse? And whom else could you say is doing it other than God Himself?

***<sup>28</sup> And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a depraved mind, to do those things that are not proper, <sup>29</sup> people having been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, and evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice; they are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> without understanding, untrustworthy, unfeeling, and unmerciful; <sup>32</sup> and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also approve of those who practice them.***

Accordingly, whatever it is that they have done, or been involved in, or that has been done to them by others, you now need to get the person you are helping to see the real meaning and significance of it, and why it matters. Then show them how to pray a *prayer of confession of sin* whereby they repent of having done those things or having been involved in those forbidden activities.

Remember, when they do this it is not a proclamation and they are not addressing the heavenly places. This is a prayer and *they are addressing God the Father, not the heavenly places*. So, when they later switch into proclamation, remind them who it is they are now speaking to and what mode of speech they need to be in.

In addition to their proclamation, they should also ask God to forgive them and *ask Him* to cancel any curses that came as a result of those things. That is a prayer of *supplication* which means *asking God to do things*, and that too is perfectly valid as a *part* of what needs to be done. But it is not *all* of what needs to be done.

Having made those supplicatory prayers, they also need to make a *proclamation or declaration* of their own, into the heavenly places, based on exercising their own authority as a Christian. That means they themselves need to speak out loud, addressing the heavenly places, to renounce what they did or said or got involved in or what was done to them or spoken over them by someone else.

In addition, they must also *revoke* all unbiblical or sinful promises, agreements or oaths they made and any foolish or occultic words they uttered while they were involved in that cult, false religion or occult practice.

This announcement whereby they revoke all such promises, oaths, agreements etc is a proclamation and is addressed to the heavenly places. So, in saying those things they need to switch to proclamation mode as if they were addressing the House of Commons or the US House of Representatives.

Therefore, they have not only *asked God to break these curses* in response to supplicatory prayer. They are also renouncing and revoking the things they said or did and also breaking the curses that came upon them as a result. And they are doing this part of it *for themselves* by the power of proclamation, using the authority which is granted to every genuine disciple of Jesus Christ.

But it isn't just about the renouncing or revoking of *words or oaths*. They may also need to renounce and revoke *actions and deeds*, such as their getting baptised into the Mormon cult or joining the Freemasons, or playing Ouija or going to see a medium, or allowing themselves to be hypnotised, and so on. Again, once they have repented of this to God the father, they then need to switch over to proclamation mode to declare into the heavenly places their renunciation and revocation of all those actions or deeds and to cancel their effect.

Alternatively, in the case of past involvement in Roman Catholicism, the person's *prayer, whereby they confess their sin and then the prayer of supplication* whereby they ask God to help them, might be something like what is set out below. I am using Catholicism as an example because it is one of the biggest false religions you are likely to come across. But the prayers and proclamations below can be adjusted to suit any other cult or false religion a person might have been involved in:



### **An example of a prayer of confession of sin and supplication**

*“LORD, I admit to you now that I have sinned against you by being involved in the Catholic church and I confess that I sinned by worshipping Mary, praying to her, and praying to the saints when I should only ever have prayed to you. I also confess that I have worshipped the bread and the wine as well as getting involved in pagan activities and beliefs, such as where I recognised “priests” who are based on pagan priests and do not appear in the New Testament. Please forgive me for all these things and anything else I did while a Catholic that was false and unbiblical. Also, please cleanse me from the consequences of it and break any curses that came upon me as a result.”*

Then, having made their prayer of confession of sin and supplication, the person can proceed to make their own *proclamation or declaration*, which is also needed. This involves them changing their mode of speech and speaking into the heavenly places using the authority vested in every genuine Christian. It might be along these lines:

### **An example of a proclamation renouncing past involvement in Roman Catholicism**

*“By the authority vested in me as a Christian and as an ambassador of Christ, and in reliance upon the blood of Jesus Christ and in His holy name, I hereby renounce all my past involvement in Roman Catholicism (or whatever other thing it was) and I revoke all oaths I made and all promises and statements I made which were unbiblical, occultic, false or pagan. (Ideally make a list and specify them if you can.) I also renounce the worship of Mary or saints, or the bread or the wine and any reliance on relics, holy water, scapulars, rosary beads or any other false and unbiblical practices. In the name of Jesus, and using the authority He has given to me as a disciple, a fellow heir and an adopted son, I break the power of all those occultic things in my life and cancel their effect and also any curses that came upon me as a result of what I did and said”.*

As you can see, I like to be as thorough as possible and to cover everything the person can think of. It is important for the person to confess what they did and ask God to break the curses and set them free. That is supplication and is perfectly valid, but I believe we should also *tackle it ourselves as well, i.e. by proclamation*.

In the series of four audio talks I did on proclamation I explain in detail what it is, how it differs from supplicatory prayer, and why it is needed *in addition to praying to God*, not as an alternative. The point is that a prayer of supplication involves *you asking God to do something*. Therefore, it involves you *speaking to God*.

Proclamation is different. It is about you taking up *your position of authority* as a Christian, as an ambassador of Christ and as a warrior in His service, clad in the Ephesians 6 armour of God. You then *say these things boldly for yourself*, with faith and power as an announcement which you are making to the heavenly places.

In proclaiming you are not speaking to God. *You are speaking to the whole spiritual realm, and also to your circumstances and even to yourself*. So, while engaged in proclamation, you are *not asking but telling*. *You are not making requests but making announcements and even giving commands*.

By the way, please see what I say about how and when we can even give commands on God’s behalf. I speak of this in chapter 8 of my Book 7 and I would urge you to look at it and at the examples I give

from my own life. Both supplicatory prayer to God and proclamation using your own authority are valid and both are needed. Sadly, very few Christians know what proclamation is or how it differs from supplicatory prayer and even fewer engage in it. Let that not be true of you.