

D. Curses, Vows, and Generational Sin Patterns

1. Curses

The Curse of the Law

Under the laws of the old covenant, man's obedience determined whether he would receive God's blessings or be under His curse. Health and blessing were the promises to the obedient. Sickness, poverty, and other curses were the result of disobedience. The blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience are spelled out in detail in Deuteronomy 28 and 29. The blessings listed include health, prosperity, victory over enemies, recognition, the ability to bring forth children, and God's favor. The curses for disobedience include mental weakness, physical infirmities, crop failures and other disasters resulting in poverty, oppression, breakdown of family relationships including the loss of children, inability to bear children, defeat at the hands of enemies, and God's disfavor.

We no longer have to be under the "old covenant," in which our position with God is based solely on our own behavior. Now, through Jesus, we can enter into the new covenant, in which His righteous actions can be transferred to our account, allowing the blessings of His actions to be given to us. When we acknowledge Jesus as our Savior and Lord, confessing our desire to serve Him and our need of His death and resurrection to atone for our sins, and rely on Him to give us new life, we can come under the new covenant.

Contrasting God's mercy under the new covenant of faith, with the old covenant based on our actions, Paul says,

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (Romans 1:17-18 KJV)

The new covenant promise is, "I will put my

law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jeremiah 31:33 KJV, italics added)

Under the old covenant, it was our actions that determined God's actions toward us. Under the new covenant, God has acted on our behalf, and we can receive His grace extended to us through faith. God still desires holiness and perfection. Now, however, our holiness comes as we receive His Holy Spirit into our being and learn to live in His power and direction. God's blessings are extended to us immediately, when we enter the new covenant; they are not based on the degree of holiness we attain.

Under the new covenant, God promises to do all in and for us to enable us to obey Him and live for Him. We enter the new covenant when we commit ourselves to serve Him, presenting our bodies as a living offering for Him to use (Romans 12:1). His Holy Spirit will then transform us through the life of Christ. This is the significance of the communion celebration when we receive the body and blood of Christ. The priests--those dedicated to serving God--received the body of the sacrificial lamb. Having received the body of Christ, we then receive the blood of the new covenant--the blood of Christ, the life of Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit this new life becomes real and active in us. When we enter into the new covenant, expressing our willingness to serve God, to be a priest in His kingdom, we can rest in His promises. His promises include the following:

He will write His ways on our heart and mind

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jeremiah 31:33 KJV)

He will cleanse us from our old sinful ways, and form a new heart and spirit within us

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 36:25-26 KJV)

We will be drawn close to God and will know Him intimately. We will realize that He no longer remembers our sins, and we need not fear His wrath.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jer. 31:34 KJV)

God will work in our heart, causing us to know and love Him more and more. We will want to serve and obey Him with an increasing fervor and zeal.

And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart. (Jeremiah 24:7 KJV)

God will bless us and will put a reverence for Him in our heart so that we will want to honor Him, to obey Him, and to follow Him.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. (Jer. 32:40 KJ)

God will indwell us through His Holy Spirit and we will know His will and have the desire and ability to walk in His ways.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. (Ezekiel 36:27 KJV)

As we live by the power of the Spirit of God, we will know that we are free from the curse of the law.

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. (Galatians 5:18 KJV)

The results will benefit us and our children.

And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them :(Jeremiah 32:39 KJV)

We will live by the power of His Spirit, living in the ways of Christ. Our acts of obedience will flow out of the work of His Spirit in us. By faith, we learn to walk in the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit. We will live in His power, His revelation, His health, His provision, and His wisdom.

We receive the blessings of the new covenant by faith--that is, by appropriating the promises extended to us. Peter says:

... Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:4 KJV)

Satan, our adversary, would still like to inflict the curses of the old covenant upon us. He wants to keep us oblivious to the blessings of God available to us, and He would like to render the curses of disobedience upon us, although we have given our lives to Jesus and escaped the curse of the law. Jesus paid the price of our sins; He redeemed us from the curse of the law. The Bible says

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: (Galatians 3:13 KJV)

When we see chronic patterns of failure, poverty, sickness, family breakups, barrenness, etc. we might see evidences that the curses of the old covenant need to be broken. We can confess any sins involved, and call for the breaking down of the strongholds established.

Scriptures for Meditation

See the promises cited above.

Steps to Becoming Free from the Curse of the Law

1. Commit yourself to serve God through Jesus Christ
2. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit, to write His ways on your heart, and to help you to know Him better as you meditate on Him and His Word.
3. Thank God for the communion celebration, in which we renew our commitment to serve Him; when we, as priests, receive the body of the Lamb; and in which He reminds us of His commitment to writing His ways in our hearts through giving us Jesus' life through His blood
4. Meditate on and prayerfully receive the working of the blood of Jesus. Ask God to make the working of the blood of Jesus a reality in your life experiences.
 - * it contains His life (Leviticus 17:11)
 - * it cleanses our conscience so that we want to serve Him (Hebrews 9:14)
 - * it justifies us (Romans 5:9)
 - * it provides the way by which we are bought by God and forgiven (Eph 1:7)
 - * it brings us into God's peace (Col.1:20)
 - * it marks us as God's child, whom He'll provide for and protect (Heb.12:24)
 - * it cleanses us from the filth of our sin (1 John 1:7, 9)
 - * it is a means by which God will work His will and ways into us (Heb 13:20)
5. Continue to seek the fellowship, leading, comfort, and experience of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14)
6. Repent of the anger, disappointment, frustration, etc. you received when you tried to obey God in your own strength (your flesh), and kept yourself under the old covenant

7. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any curses of the law that Satan has tried to use to hold you in bondage. Be especially aware of repeated patterns in your family of mental or emotional breakdowns, continuing financial difficulties or failures, repeated or chronic sickness, history of "unusual" accidents, barrenness or a tendency to miscarry, family breakdowns.

8. Stand against the revealed curses you feel you are under. Confess out loud that you are a child of God redeemed by the blood of Christ, that you have given yourself to Him and are under the new covenant. Command the curse of ____ to be gone from you and your family. In Jesus' name, rebuke any spirit of ____ that has been assigned to you to inflict this curse.

9. Thank God for His plan for you and for His people. Thank Him that Jesus has redeemed you from the curse of the law and that you are free. Ask Him to heal you, to cleanse you and to bless you with the presence of His Spirit and the blessings of the new covenant.

A Sample Prayer for Freedom from the Curse of the Law:

Father, I come to You through Jesus Christ, My Lord and Savior. I confess that I have sinned against You, Father, and deserve to be under Your curse. I thank You that Jesus has died for me, and that through Him I can be freed from the curse of the Law. I confess Him to be my Savior and submit to Him as my Lord. Thank You that through Him I am made a partaker of the blessings of Abraham.

I stand against the curses of the Law and declare that they no longer have power over me. I declare that I am free in Christ. I pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal to me the blessings of my life in Christ, and that these blessings will be manifest in me and through me. I receive God's blessings so that I can live for Christ and bless others, so that they too can know Jesus. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.

Curses Spoken by Us or Others

The words we speak are powerful; they can bless, or they can bring a curse, according to James 3: 9-10. Jesus cursed the fig tree, and it no longer bore fruit; in fact it withered and died. (Mark 11:13-14, 21) A curse is a wish, statement, or judgment spoken over a person or a family or other group, often by one in authority. It is a negative statement about the person, calling for misfortune to come upon them.

Curses may originate with others. For example, they may come from those in contact with the realm of evil spirits; these practicing spiritists may assign a spirit to the person or family being cursed, to work out the desires of those affixing or speaking the curse. Curses of poverty, drunkenness, disease, death, and violence may be spoken by those moving in this realm and may affect families for generations. The Native Americans practiced such rites to curse their enemies; some have cursed the white man for attacking them or taking away their land. Those involved with voodoo and such religions also seek to put hexes and curses on others. The hex signs of the Pennsylvania Dutch are an attempt to secure protection of their home and family from hexes.

Especially those in positions of authority over us have the power to bless or to curse us. Teachers can have profound effects on their pupils because of their position of authority over them. Pastors can have similar effects on the members of their church because of their God-given places of authority and honor.

Fathers in particular have power to bless or to curse because of their position of headship in their home and especially over their children. Two Biblical instances of fathers blessing their children are the blessings of Jacob over each of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 49:1-28), and the story of Jacob and Esau pursuing their father's blessing. An example of the power of the head of a house-hold to curse is given in recounting the return of Jacob and his family to Canaan.

Laban pursued Jacob and accused him of stealing his household gods. Unaware that Rachel had done so, Jacob said, "The one with whom you find the gods shall not live" (Genesis 31:32 NAS). Although Rachel was able to hide the idols from her father, she died in childbirth a few years later, fulfilling Jacob's words.

We frequently find children under the curses of their fathers. Fathers have used negative comments, spoken in anger, to try to shape or change their children. Words like, "You're a real dummy," or "You'll never amount to anything," or "You have the worst co-ordination on earth," or "There is always one black sheep in the family, and I guess you're it," can have long-lasting, devastating effects on children. There can be curses over families, like "German men are always hard-hearted," or "Boys in our family have never been any good in math." These pronouncements, often spoken in times of anger or in fits of rage, can have severe effects on families.

Steps for dealing with curses from others:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your memory any curses spoken against you or your family or your ethnic heritage.
2. Ask God to forgive those whom He brings to your mind.
3. In your mind's eye, see Jesus on the cross for their sins.
4. Forgive them. If necessary, ask God to give you willingness to forgive.
5. Ask God to bless those people.
6. Repent of any resentment, bitterness, anger, hatred, etc., that you have carried.
7. Ask God to forgive you for it and cleanse you of it.
8. In Jesus' Name, break the power of the curse over you. Cancel the assignments of any cursing spirits sent to torment you.

9. Ask God to remove from you and your family any effects of the curse upon you, and to bring you His blessings instead.

10. Speak God's truth to replace the curse you've been under.

Curses may also be self-imposed.

People might make seemingly innocent statements like, "Cross my heart and hope to die if I ever tell another white lie." People involved in freemasonry curse themselves with statements like, "May my tongue be cut out if I divulge the rituals of this order." People in AA curse themselves with statements like, "If I don't attend meetings I'll go back to drinking," or, "If I ever take another drink it will kill me."

People can also put themselves (as well as their family) under a curse by cursing God's people--both Jews and Christians. God covenanted with Abraham and his seed to bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him. (Genesis 12:1-3). Paul says the unbelieving Jews are still called beloved by God, because of their fathers (Romans 11:28). Therefore, if we curse the Jewish people, we are inviting God's curse upon ourselves.

This principle applies to cursing other Christians, as well, because in Christ all believers are Abraham's seed (Galatians 3:7-9). Christians are participants in the blessings of Abraham, according to Galatians 3:14, and are called descendents of Abraham through adoption. Therefore God's statement in Genesis 12:1-3, cited above, applies not only to the Jewish people but also to all who are in Christ. In addition, when we curse other Christians we are in effect cursing ourselves, since we are all part of the body of Christ, according to Romans 12:5. Paul says, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." (Romans 14:4 KJV) If we have been hostile toward other Christian denominations, we need to repent of those attitudes and instead bless them. Remember that in Jesus' account

of the last judgment, His basis for judgment was how the people treated "His brethren."

Christians have placed curses not only on other denominations, but also often on their own church or denomination by saying such things as, "We can never expect the Spirit to move while ___ is the pastor," or, "You can never expect the people of this body to really become alive; too many are set in their ways."

Not only individuals, but also families and nations can be under a curse because of the ways they have treated the Jews or the Church. We need to repent--both individually and corporately--for any curses spoken upon other Christians or the Jews.

Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). He can overcome the ways of men or the hardness of men, pastors, or denominations. God is bringing reconciliation between Christians and Jews, and between denominations. We need to trust Him to do His work in all of us, and we need to flow with the reconciliation the Lord is bringing about. We can reap great blessings by blessing those God has chosen to bless.

Yet another way we can in effect place a curse upon ourselves is by cursing our spouse. God considers husbands and wives to be "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Therefore when a man curses his wife, he is in effect cursing himself. The same is true of a woman who constantly belittles her husband. The marriage itself can be cursed through such behavior, as well. Praise God there is forgiveness, and through God's grace husbands and wives can bless each other and can be sources of great blessings to themselves, each other, their marriage, their children, and succeeding generations.

Yet another way people can inflict a curse upon themselves is to go to fortune tellers or to other "diviners" to find out what the future holds for them or to find out whom they should marry, etc... Those who do such things are literally opening themselves up for Satan's curses to come to themselves and their families. The words spoken by those attempting to "foretell" the future for us can be

under satanic influence and therefore can be a way for demonic spirits to be assigned to people to “work out” these demonic curses. This is why God is so adamantly opposed to His people seeking information from such sources. God wants to bless His people; Satan wants to curse the people of God, and will use the misguided ways of ill-informed people to accomplish this.

Dealing with self-imposed curses:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:
 - a. Any curses you have pronounced upon yourself-- i.e. “I can never...,” “I’m so...,” “I always...,” etc.
 - b. Any curses you have put upon the Jewish people or the body of Christ
 - c. Any curses you have put upon your spouse
 - d. Any instances of consulting fortune tellers, ouija boards, horoscopes, etc.
2. Repent specifically of each thing the Lord shows you.
3. Ask Him to forgive you and to cleanse you from its effects, washing you in Jesus’ blood.
4. In Jesus’ Name, break the power of the curses you have spoken. Ask the Lord to free you and any others you have spoken against, from any spirits assigned to carry out the curse.
5. Ask God’s blessing upon those you have cursed.
6. Speak the truth of God to replace the curses you have spoken.

There can also be curses on the land- and thus on the people living on it--due to sins previously committed there. The Bible tells the story of David when there had been a severe famine in the land for three years:

Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David inquired of the

LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.) Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?” (2 Samuel 21:1-3 KJV)

The subject of curses on the land is too complex to deal with in depth in this document. Suffice it to say here that they can influence the people living in an area, and they are dealt with in much the same way as other curses.

When the Holy Spirit reveals curses, we can break them. The Bible says that Jesus bore all curses for us, through dying the accursed death of crucifixion. (Galatians 3:13)

Jesus tells us to bless those who curse us (Matthew 5:44). The Bible also says that the curse without a cause shall not come to us (Proverbs 26:2). When we bless those who have cursed us, we are giving God a chance to act in the other person’s life. When we curse back, or speak ill toward those who have cursed us--be they parents, friends, enemies, or those involved in witchcraft or other branches of the occult--we are giving ground for the curse to come to us. When we forgive, bless, and pray for those who would curse us, we are removing the ground the curse might have had to effect us.

We need to keep a **proper balance** regarding curses. They are real and they can have devastating effects. However, living under the new covenant, covered by the blood of Jesus, we need not live in fear. Even in the Old Testament, the “sorcerer” Baalam could not curse the children of Israel when he was hired to do so. He said, “Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel. How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied? (Numbers 23:7-8 KJV)

We can trust God to reveal things we have done that would allow a curse to come upon us--so that we can repent and be free of it. We can trust God to keep us pure through His gifts of repentance and forgiveness, so that we do not give ground for curses to come. We can trust God to cover us with the blood of Jesus to remind those spirits who would curse us that Jesus was made a curse for us, and that His blood sprinkled on us and our household is our protection.

The Word of God is our source of truth--about us, our families and our generations. We need to know it, meditate on it, and speak it to ourselves and others. Remember that God has promised to write His ways on our hearts and minds (Jeremiah 31:33-34). Remember David's testimony of hiding God's Word in his heart so he would not sin against God (Psalm 119:11).

Through His Word and the power of His Holy Spirit, God will reveal the curses against us, so we can enter into all His blessings for us and our families. As we live in and speak His Word to those around us, we are declaring the blessings of God. The blessings we sow will bring blessings to us and to those around us. We are God's people, called to be blessed by Him so that we can be a blessing to others (Genesis 12:1-3).

A Sample Prayer:

Father, I thank You that You have brought me into the kingdom of Your Son. I acknowledge Jesus as my Lord and as my Savior. Thank You that through Him You desire to bless me.

I pray that you would remove any and all curses that have been placed over me or my family. Help me to be aware of any such curse. [Allow time for the Lord to reveal any curses.]

In Jesus' Name I now break the power of any curse and cancel the assignments of any cursing spirits.

I receive Your blessings so that I can bless others. I forgive those who have cursed me [be specific if possible] and ask You, God, to bless them and turn them to Your ways and

to Your kingdom.

Forgive me for any curses I have spoken to others; I ask for Your grace so that I may bless them in Your name. Amen

2. Vows and Judgments

Vows- A vow is a promise or pledge. We often make vows to ourselves, binding ourselves to a particular course of action. These vows, or self-fulfilling prophecies, then hold us in bondage. We might say, "I guess I'll never lose weight," or, "I'll never forget what you did to me," or, "I will always be an alcoholic," or, "I'll get back at you if it's the last thing I do," or, "I'll never treat my children that way." Vows we make, bind our soul, our attitudes and desires. The Bible states in Numbers 30:2-6 that we are bound by our vows. Even if the vow we are making is intended to be positive (for example, vowing not to abuse one's children), if it is made in judgment of someone else, motivated by bitterness or resentment, it will be a source of bondage to us.

We can also be under sin's power because of unfulfilled vows made to God. Some have bargained with God, vowing to serve Him in some special way if He would grant a particular request. God expects us to keep these vows and calls it sin if we fail to do so. (Deuteronomy 23:21)

Dealing with vows:

A. Sinful vows: (i.e. "I'll never forgive...")

1. Confess them as sin
2. Confess and bring to Jesus any negative emotions involved in your decision to make the vows
3. Ask & receive God's healing & forgiveness
4. Renounce the vows in Jesus' Name
5. Ask God to break the power of the vows
6. Speak freedom, for yourself and others, from their effects

B. Vows intended for good, made in the flesh: (i.e. “I’ll never treat my children the way my parents treated me.”)

1. Bring to Jesus the pain, etc., that caused you to make the vow
2. Confess as sin any sinful reactions and/or critical judgments you have made of the other people involved
3. Confess your pride in thinking you could keep the vow in your own strength.
4. Repent of the vow.
5. Renounce the vow.
6. Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to do God’s will, free from striving.

C. Dealing with unkept vows made to God

1. Confess as sin the failure to keep any vows made to God.
2. If the vow can still be kept:
Repent of thinking you could do so in your own power.
Ask for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to keep the vow.
3. If it is no longer possible to keep the vow:
Repent of having made it,
 Ask God’s forgiveness, and
 Ask Him to release you from it.

In all cases, ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse you and to guard your lips.

A sample general prayer:

Father, I thank You for Your gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. Forgive me for any vows I have made which have bound my spirit and soul. I choose to live for You and according to Your ways. Please reveal to me any vows that I have made. [Allow time for the Lord to reveal vows.] In Jesus’ name I renounce these vows and release myself to be free to be led by Your Spirit in doing Your will. Thank You, Father. In Jesus’ name I pray.

Judgments - Judgments are ideas or expectations we have formed. These judgments are good when they line up with

God’s Word, the standard upon which all our judgments should be based. Statements like, “My family will always be angry,” or “You can never trust a ___” or “I’ll never be loved,” or “All men are jerks,” etc., are not true because they do not line up with the revealed judgments of God as expressed in His Word, the Bible. God CAN and WILL change us. **He loves us as we are; because He loves us, He is committed to forming His nature and character in us.**

God’s judgments for His people are good and are to be sought. David said:

..the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. (Psalm 19: 9-10 KJV)

We are told not to judge with our judgments (Matthew 7:1-2), but we are also told to speak and declare God’s judgments (John 7:24; Jeremiah 4:12; 5:1). For example, Paul spoke to Felix the Emperor of righteousness, self control and the judgment to come, (Acts 24:25) Some of God’s judgments follow:

- He wants to bless those who come to Him through accepting the sacrifice of His Son. (John 3:16)
- He will give us His righteousness--that is the desire and the ability for us to know, love and do His will. (Romans 5:17)
- He wants the best for us, and that is for the character and nature of Jesus to be developed in us. (Romans 8:28-29)
- He wants us to know and utilize the resources and gifts He has given us for the spread of His kingdom. (Matthew 6:33)
- He will deal with the people who wrong us. He wants us to forgive them and to pray that they will repent. He will punish those who hurt us if they do not bring their sin to Jesus. (Romans 12:19)

- He will cast Satan, the evil spirits that followed his rebellion, the demons who have afflicted us, and those who have not accepted His Son, into everlasting torment in the fires of hell. (Matthew 25:41)

The “plaguing thoughts”-- the recurring patterns of thinking--that people have might be based on judgments they have received and still carry. Paul says:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds ;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and *bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

(2 Corinthians 10:3-6 KJV, italics added)

When people are being held or troubled by “ungodly judgments,” we need to speak the truth of God’s Word into their heart. We need to help them to renounce the “ungodly judgment,” and to forgive those who have placed this on them. We should then pray for the Holy Spirit to bring life to the truth of God’s Word so that the person will know truth in their in-ward being. The passages cited on the previous page are good to receive and meditate upon. David, speaking through the Holy Spirit says,

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. (Psalm 51:6 KJV)

Dealing with judgments from others:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any judgments you have received that do not agree with His Word.
2. Forgive those who have put these judgments upon you.
3. In Jesus’ Name, break the power of the judgments upon your life.
4. Receive and speak the truth of God’s Word as it relates to these judgments.

5. Ask God to write His ways on your heart.
6. Ask God to cleanse your mind from the wrong judgments you have received.
7. Pray for His Spirit to renew your mind.

Sample Prayer for Receiving the Judgments of God:

Father, I thank You that You have revealed Your judgments to us. I choose to live by Your judgments and in Your truth. Thank You that Your Word is truth, that Your Spirit brings us into all truth, and that Jesus is THE Truth and also MY Truth.

Thank You that in Christ I can want to be what You desire me to be. Thank you that You are writing Your ways into my very being through the working of Your Holy Spirit within me. I confess I have received other judgments. I confess I have made wrong judgments about myself and others. I renounce all wrong judgments that I have made and received about myself, and I receive Your judgments and Your ways.

Forgive me for the wrong judgments I have formed about and spoken to others. Help them to be free and to know Your truth. Use me in this process of bringing and declaring Your judgments into the world.

Not only the judgments we have *received from* others, but also those we have *made of* others are potential sources of trouble.

We *are* to declare the judgments of God against sin, but the Bible is clear that we are not to have a critical attitude of judgment against others. We must recognize first of all that in our old nature, we are no better than they are. Romans 14:10 says:

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (Romans 14:10KJV)

In fact, the sin for which we are judging another is very likely *at its root* the same as one we entertain. For example, we may not

have murdered anyone, but instead have slaughtered someone's reputation in gossip, or are harboring hatred for him. We may not be addicted to pornography but do entertain lustful thoughts. We may be in bondage to over-eating instead of to alcohol or drugs. Jesus makes it clear in Matthew 5:28 that sins within are just as wrong as the obvious ones. And St. Paul says:

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? (Romans 2:1-3 KJV)

The Lord has made it plain that we will be judged in the same way we have judged others. He says:

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. (Matthew 7:1-2KJV)

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: (Luke 6:37 KJV)

If we judge another for something, we will find ourselves either in bondage to similar behavior or to its opposite, or we will marry someone with that trait or habit. This is especially likely to occur if we have judged our parents for something. For example, the son who judged his father's level of provision for the family will have financial problems in his own life. He may have trouble maintaining a job, or he may become a workaholic; he may become very miserly or wildly extravagant; or he may marry someone who keeps the family finances in shambles.

Child abuse is another example of this principle. It is a well-known fact that most abusive parents were themselves abused in childhood; very often they are mystified by

their own abusiveness, because they were determined not to be that way.

The importance of God's commandment to honor our parents (instead of judging them) becomes apparent when we recognize the reality and the implications of this principle.

Steps for dealing with judgments against others:

1. Confess as sin, your having judged the other person.
2. Receive God's forgiveness and cleansing
3. If the person hurt you, bring the pain to Jesus and receive His healing.
4. Confess any resentment, bitterness, or other sinful emotions you have harbored.
5. Ask the Lord to forgive you, and to cleanse you from these.
6. Forgive the person, and ask the Lord to forgive him/her also. (If necessary, pray for willingness to forgive, or willingness to be made willing.)
7. Pray for the Lord's blessings in the life of that person.
8. Pray for cleansing from the effects of this judgment in your life.
9. Ask the Holy Spirit to enable you to establish new behavior patterns in this area of your life.

3. Generational sin patterns.

When God gave the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel, He included a section indicating that the sins of the fathers can be visited upon the children for three or four generations. He said,

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; (Exodus 20:5 KJV)

Notice that He did not say He would *punish* the children for the sins of the fathers, nor did He say that they would *have to follow* after the sins of their fathers. He did say, however, that the sins of the fathers would be “visited” upon the children for three or four generations.

Sinful tendencies can be visited upon families. These might be called iniquities, or inherited weaknesses, or there might be demonic spirits assigned to work out the same sin for succeeding generations. These repeated patterns of sinful behavior often are the seat of satanic strongholds in people. These unwelcome iniquities can be resisted; however, because of their presence in parents they are so familiar that the child often gives in to them before he realizes what is happening. The child might condone and desire the behavior of the parent and receive it into himself. On the other hand, the child might condemn and judge the parent, vowing never to be like that, thereby reaping the consequence of his self-righteous judgment and following in the same behavior pattern, even though he hates it. There are various ways in which these iniquities are visited upon and received by succeeding generations in families.

We see these behavior patterns in the stories of men in the Bible. Abraham told the Egyptian Pharaoh that his wife Sarah was his sister, because he feared that the Pharaoh would kill him in order to take Sarah if he knew the truth (Genesis 12:10-14). In verses 1-7 of Genesis 26, we find Isaac doing the same thing. This pattern of deception continued, as Isaac was later deceived by his own son, Jacob (Genesis 27:21-35). Jacob, in turn, was deceived by his uncle, who gave him Leah instead of Rachel to marry, and by his sons concerning the status of their brother Joseph (Genesis 37:31-33). Thus the sinful

pattern of deception was repeated for four generations.

Likewise, the kings of Israel followed in the sins of their fathers.

Omri followed in the sinful ways of his predecessor Jeroboam, the first king of the divided kingdom of Israel:

But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him. For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities. (1 Kings 16:25-26 KJV)

Ahab, Omri's son, followed in those ways, even marrying Jezebel, the pagan.

And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

(1 Kings 16:29-31 KJV)

Ahaziah, Ahab's son, continued in the sinful ways of Ahab and of Jeroboam years later.

Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done. (1 Kings 22:51-53 KJV)

As we have seen, the iniquities of the fathers can be visited upon the children. This is God's judgment of sin; our children are exposed to our ways and they too can become involved with and overtaken by them. BUT IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS AND REPENT OF THEM, AND IF WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE SINFUL WAYS OF OUR FORE-FATHERS,

GOD CAN CLEANSE US, OUR LAND, AND OUR GENERATIONS.

If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. (Leviticus 26:40-42 KJV)

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV)

Our fathers' sins can be visited upon us; yet if we do not give in to them we will not bear their punishment.

The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin. (Deuteronomy 24:16 KJV)

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. (Ezekiel 18:20 KJV)

The Bible recounts instances of men confessing the sins of their forefathers. Daniel did this when he interceded for the nation of Israel:

... We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: (Daniel 9:5 KJV)

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain:

because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

(Daniel 9:16 KJV)

See also Nehemiah's prayer in Nehemiah 1:4-11; and Ezra's prayer in Ezra 9:5-12. Both these men, like Daniel, confessed their sin and acknowledged their ancestors' sinful ways.

Confessing the sinful ways of our forefathers does not free them; they must personally repent in order to gain right standing with God. The spiritual strongholds over families and generations can be removed, however, through our confession and our standing in the righteousness of Christ, praying God's blessing upon our families and our generations. God also said when He gave the Law, "[I am] showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

(Exodus 20:6 NKJ, brackets added)

If we find ourselves in a stronghold of sin, it is a good idea to examine our generations to see if this sin pattern is something only in us or if it is also apparent in our forefathers. Sins like alcoholism, sexual immorality, divorce, and the like can be passed on to succeeding generations; the guilt and shame of these sins can be passed on as well, if they are not brought to Christ. We have seen many cases in which people and their children have been under a weight of guilt, because of the sin of a grandparent. They have tried to make themselves right with God and have searched for any sin in their own life, to no avail. But when the sin of the grandparent was brought to Christ, the guilt the family had carried was released. Dealing with these generational strongholds can free not only the person praying, but their children as well, as they will no longer feel the burden of the weight of the guilt and shame of their ancestors' sins.

Sins such as involvement in the occult, false religions, secret organizations (fraternities, masonic organizations, etc.), addictions, sexual immorality, and prejudice are particularly damaging and are often passed from generation to generation. The curse of

the illegitimate child is passed on for 10 generations, according to Deuteronomy 23:2. The guilt and shame accompanying this sin pattern is often a root of addictions, self-rejection, etc.

Recognize that *God* is not holding His people in bondage for the sins of their ancestors. Satan, misusing the authority given in Exodus 20:5, does this. We need to stand against his forces who would hold God's people in bondage. The Bible says:

All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.
(Jeremiah 50:7 KJV)

God can reveal Satan's strongholds; we can rebuke the spiritual powers. God's promised freedom can come forth.

Scriptures for Meditation

See these passages cited above: Exodus 20:5; 1 Kings 22:51-3; Deuteronomy 24: 16; Ezekiel 18:20; Leviticus 26:40-2; Daniel 9:5, 16.

Steps for Freedom from Generational Sin Patterns

1. Confess your own sinful actions and desires in regard to the stronghold under siege.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any ways you have judged those in your generations for similar patterns of this sin. Be particularly aware of any vows you have made not to be like this or that person who has lived in the same sin. We must recognize that we cannot, by ourself, overcome our old nature, and that by judging others we are reaping judgment upon ourselves.
3. If you become aware of such vows, repent of them and ask the Lord to free you from them in Jesus' name.
4. Go through the generations-- parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc., -- identifying and confessing the sinful ways that

have come through your bloodlines. Confess the sin, the sinful desires, and also any guilt, shame, anger, or resentment that has come into the generations because of the sin.

5. Stand against the spiritual powers that have tried to hold you and your generations in bondage. Command them in the name of Jesus to leave, and believe that those things you bind on earth are also bound in heaven.

6. Confess the truth. State aloud the truth that you are no longer subject to the sins of your fathers,
Jesus has paid for them and
He has translated you into His kingdom.

7. Thank Him that you are righteous by His blood.

8. See the old patterns going from you onto Jesus at the cross, and the new ways of living coming from Jesus into you.

9. Pray that Jesus will cleanse your bloodlines with His blood, and that He will impart His ways into you. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you new power to live in the ways of Christ.

10. Thank your Heavenly Father for allowing you to be a part of your natural family, and for His ability to use you to bring healing and freedom to your parents and other family members. Thank Him that these generational strongholds are being broken and that now a new life is coming into your generations.

11. Pray that your children will be filled with all the fullness of Christ, having been freed from these generational curses.

12. If there are Christians in your ancestry, thank God for the blessings you have received through them. Thank Him for your ancestors who have blessed their descendents, including you. Thank God that He shows mercy unto thousands who love Him and keep His commandments...

Steps for dealing with ancestors' sins of involvement with foreign gods and religions:

1. Confess the family's sin of involvement with other gods or religions or the occult. Identify the ancestor(s) and name the gods, groups, or religions specifically.
2. Renounce all false gods and non-Christian groups or religions your ancestors have been involved with.
3. Ask the Lord to reveal to you the wrong beliefs you and your family have received through these groups or religions.
4. Renounce wrong beliefs you are aware of.
5. Ask the Lord to cleanse and free you and your family from all influences of these things.
6. Ask the Holy Spirit to replace the wrong beliefs with His truth.
7. In Jesus' Name, command all spirits associated with the false religions to leave.
8. Thank God for forgiving, cleansing, and freeing you.
9. Ask the Father, in Jesus' Name, to fill you with His Holy Spirit.
10. If you are in possession of any objects related to these false gods or religions (i.e. statues, jewelry, pictures, amulets, books, masonic rings or aprons, etc.), destroy them. Render them incapable of being picked up and used by someone else.

A sample prayer for renunciation of ancestors' involvement with false gods, etc.:

Father, I come to You through Jesus Christ Your Son. I believe that He has died

for me, to pay for my sins and to provide forgiveness and cleansing for me through His shed blood. I acknowledge Him as my Savior and choose to live for Him as my only Lord. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me with His blood. Send Your Holy Spirit to live within me to empower me.

I confess the sins of my parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents in their being involved with the occult and/or with false religions. In particular I confess the sins of _____ (mention the person—grandmother, father, etc.), who was involved with _____ (mention by name each group, sect or activity). I renounce the spirits that are behind such activity. In particular I renounce the spirits of _____ (mention by name the group or sect or false doctrine).

I confess and renounce all beliefs of these groups that do not agree with the Word of God. Holy Spirit, please reveal to me any specific misbeliefs my family or I have received through (name of group). [Allow time to receive revelation from the Lord, then renounce these beliefs specifically.] I ask You to replace these misbeliefs with Your truth.

I ask you to cleanse me and my generations (living parents and grandparents, and children and grandchildren—those living and those yet to be) from these activities and to free us from the influence of the demonic spirits associated with them.

Thank You that Your Word says that if we confess our sins, You are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Thank You that Your Word says that no longer shall the sins of the fathers be visited upon the children if the children are righteous, and that through Jesus You make me righteous. (Ezekiel. 18:20)

I take authority over all demonic spirits that I have renounced, and I command them in Jesus' name to leave. I say to the spirits of _____ (mention each by name): 'I command you in the name of Jesus to be gone.' (This last phrase of taking authority over the evil spirits may be done by the person involved or by another Christian.)

Father, I pray that Your Spirit would fill me and that You would write Your ways on my heart so that I can live for You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.