

Did Adonai Really Say...?

"²No one with crushed or cut-off genitals is to enter the community of Adonai. ³No one born of forbidden relations is to enter the community of Adonai—even to the tenth generation none of his descendants are to enter the community of Adonai. ⁴No Ammonite or Moabite is to enter the community of Adonai—even to the tenth generation none belonging to them is to enter the community of Adonai forever— ⁵because they did not meet you with bread and water on the way when you came out from Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam son of Beor from Petor of Aram-naharaim to curse you. ⁶But Adonai your God refused to listen to Balaam, and Adonai your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because He loves you. ⁷You are never to seek their shalom or welfare all your days" (Deut. 23:2-6).

This week's *Parasha* is *Ki Tetze* or *Tetzei* (*When You go out*). **Seventy-four** of the *Torah's* 613 *Commandments* (*mitzvot*) are in this *Par'sha*. These include the laws of the beautiful captive, the inheritance rights of the firstborn, the wayward and rebellious son, burial, and dignity of the dead, returning a lost object, sending away the mother bird before taking her young, the duty to erect a safety fence around the roof of one's home, and the various forms of forbidden plants and animal hybrids.

Do you realize that when Daniel was turned into a eunuch as a young man in Babylonian captivity he was emasculated? So according to Deut. 23:2 he was forbidden to enter the *community of Adonai*. Yet in his deprived state and in the midst of such unfavorable circumstances he remained true to his faith and became one of the greatest diaspora prophets in the history of Israel. He did not become bitter, and even as an outcast, served *Adonai his Elohim* and had mighty exploits for *Adonai*. Instead, *Adonai your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because He loves you!*

The Apostle Paul reminds us of what *Yeshua* our Messiah (in like manner) did for us when it states: *"¹³Messiah liberated us from Torah's curse, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" (Galatians 3:13)). In today's Torah reading Scripture states: "...for anyone hanged is a curse of God..." (Deut. 21:23) in case you did not know where Paul got it from. Evidently, having a dead body placed on public display, even if only during daylight hours, was the highest form of disgrace in Bible days. This is true because the person who sinned was made a public spectacle. In addition, they were cursed of God because their sin could no longer be hidden – they died in their sin.*

Therefore, we can unequivocally say *Yeshua* is our curse bearer. We too were once sinners and our sin separated us from God. But God cannot look upon sin as Isaiah stated: *"Rather, your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God. Your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).* As sinners we were deserving of death, and we deserved to be **accursed of God**. But God did not want to leave us that way: *"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he has committed, and keep all My statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ez. 18:21).* *Yeshua* bore the curse of our sin upon Himself. He became accursed for us that we might live.

Further, the context of this Scripture in Deuteronomy 21:23 is a very significant for us as believers in the sacrifice of *Yeshua HaMashiach* (*Yeshua* the Messiah): *"²²Suppose a man is guilty of a sin with a death sentence and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree. ²³His body is not to remain all night on the tree—instead you must certainly bury him the same day, for anyone hanged is a curse of God. You must not defile your land that Adonai your God is giving you as an inheritance" (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).*

In fulfillment of this mitzvah Joseph of Arimathea asked for the body of *Yeshua* the Messiah so that he may bury Him prior to sundown. As we know he laid Him to rest in his own sepulcher: *"³¹It was the Day of Preparation, and the next day was a festival Shabbat. So that the bodies should not remain on the execution stake during Shabbat, the Judean leaders asked Pilate to have the legs broken and to have the bodies taken away..."³⁸After these things, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate if he could take Yeshua's body away. Joseph was a*

disciple of Yeshua, but secretly for fear of the Judean leaders. Pilate gave permission, so Joseph came and took the body away. ³⁹Nicodemus, who had first visited Yeshua at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰Then they took the body of Yeshua and wrapped it in linen with the spices, as is the Jewish burial custom. ⁴¹Now in the place where He was executed, there was a garden. In the garden was a new tomb where no one had yet been buried. ⁴²Because it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was nearby, they laid Yeshua there.” (John 19:31, 38-42)

Hanging by the neck was not a form of capital punishment in Israel or in the Near East at that time. Criminals worthy of capital punishment were usually stoned to death. Their bodies were then hung on a tree, usually just a plank of wood, as a deterrent and a warning to other would-be criminals. Although the bodies of criminals were displayed like this, they were not to be further disgraced by remaining on public display overnight, as practiced by other nations. Criminal or no criminal *Adonai* has respect for the human body. A timely and proper burial was a way of showing that respect. BTW, did you notice that Nicodemus covered *Yeshua's* body with spices in the tomb. It was a male who actually did this, and Myriam and the other women were not the first attempting to do so, albeit unsuccessfully. The fact is that Nicodemus, the man who got the revelation of becoming born-again, with Joseph of Arimathea anointed *Yeshua's* body!

People often think that they are good to go (to heaven) because they attend church services or because of morally good works. After all you may be saying to yourself, *I never killed anyone, I do not sell drugs, and I am basically a good moral person.* However, *Adonai* tells us: *"For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteousness is like a filthy garment, and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities carry us away, like the wind" (Isaiah 64:6) & ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).*

There is nothing you can do to save yourself or to remove your sins from yourself. Because of your sin you are worthy of death and destined to be accursed. There is only one way for your sins to be paid for: *³He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, One from whom people hide their faces. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our pains. Yet we esteemed Him stricken, struck by God, and afflicted. ⁵But He was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities. The chastisement for our shalom was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. ⁶We all like sheep have gone astray. Each of us turned to his own way. So Adonai has laid on Him (Yeshua) the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:3-6).*

Adonai our Elohim has always warned His people before He proclaims judgment. He warned the people before the flood, and He warned Nineveh before it was ruined. He does not ever want anyone to receive the wrath of His judgment, so He pre-warns us. That means YOU who are listening to me today! *“♪ Can you hear it thunder in the distance ♪ (Paul Wilbur - The Shout of el Shaddai).”* We need an awakening from the sleep induced by sin, so the power of the Holy Spirit is allowed to work in the heart of a believer who trusts in God's Salvation (the person of *Messiah Yeshua*). This is the kind of believer *who asks for forgiveness both from God and man. T'shuvah* is God's gift. Do you want it? Receive *Yeshua* as your personal savior. Invite Him into your life today. He is *HaGoel Yisrael (The Redeemer of Israel)*, and He is also your redeemer! *Shabbat Shalom!*