



When All the World Was Cursed

346

1 When all the world was cursed By Mo-ses' con-dem-na-tion,
 2 Be-fore he yet was born, He leaped in joy-ful meet-ing,
 3 Be-hold the Lamb of God That bears the world's trans-gres-sion,
 4 O grant, dear Lord of love, That we re-ceive, re-joic-ing,

Saint John the Bap-tist came With words of con-so-la-tion.
 Con-fess-ing Him as Lord Whose moth-er he was greet-ing.
 Whose sac-ri-fice re-moves The dev-il's dread op-pres-sion.
 The word pro-claimed by John, Our true re-pen-tance voic-ing,

With true fore-run-ner's zeal The great-er One he named,
 By Jor-dan's roll-ing stream, A new E-li-jah bold,
 Be-hold the Lamb of God, Who takes a-way our sin,
 That glad-ly we may walk Up-on our Sav-ior's way

And Him, as yet un-known, As Sav-ior he pro-claimed.
 He tes-ti-fied of Him Of whom the proph-ets told:
 Who for our peace and joy Will full a-tone-ment win.
 Un-til we live with Him In His e-ter-nal day.

Tune: Public domain. Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110001611

“When All the World Was Cursed”

The opening words of this hymn reflect John 1:17, which states: “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” Living under the Law could only mean eternal condemnation, but Jesus would change all that.

At this point in verse 1, John the Baptist is introduced. He had a direct, divine commission. The later part of verse 1 reflects John 1:7-8: “He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.” The evangelist makes certain that we understand that the Baptist did not use his office for self-aggrandizement.

In verse 2 John explains that Christ’s preexistence establishes his preeminence over John himself. Before Jesus’ birth, Mary traveled to Elizabeth, her cousin and the soon-to-be mother of John the Baptist. When Mary greeted her, Elizabeth recognized that Mary was carrying a child who was the “Lord.” This was knowledge that only the Holy Spirit could reveal. Even more remarkably, John reacted from within her womb as well!

Verse 2 goes on to say that John, like a new Elijah, gave such bold testimony that the religious rulers from Jerusalem came to check him out.

Verse 3 reflects John 1:29: “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’” John also points out how Jesus does this.

Verse 4 could be seen as a prayer that we might not only rejoice in Christ but also live in a way that reflects Jesus’ presence in our lives. As several other hymns do, this hymn, too, looks forward to living with Christ in Heaven.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for putting together a plan that used John to point to Jesus as the Savior of the world even before both were born. Help us to be such bold witnesses to all that Christ has done for us and for the whole world. Amen.