

CHRISTIANITY LITE

Malachi 2:2 (KJV) If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a **curse** upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

Malachi 2:2 (NLT) Listen to me and take it to heart. Honor my name," says the LORD Almighty, "or I will bring a terrible **curse** against you. I will curse even the blessings you receive. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you have not taken my warning seriously.

- *(From a tongue-in-cheek online article) **FOOD** – you can't live without it, and according to a lot of people you can't live with it. Back in the good old days when food was cool, they taught children to eat from the four basic food groups. But now the authorities tell us this has changed.*
 - *MEAT – red meat is a no-no, fish is contaminated with all the bad things we've dumped in the water, chicken is okay (baked, white meat only).*
 - *VEGETABLES/FRUIT – okay other than all the bugs, germs, and sprayed-on pesticides that will kill you, home-grown only is best.*
 - *BREAD – okay only if baked with a non-white flour that has the consistency of small rocks.*
 - *DAIRY – skim products only, the no-no list is a mile long including cheese, whole milk, ice cream and eggs, to name a few.*

So basically, every meal you eat should consist of: baked chicken breast, home-grown veggies, with an apple for dessert – and don't forget skim milk to wash it down. Oh, and if it happens to taste good, it's absolutely got to be bad for you. Make healthy choices – think tofu! Really, one has to wonder how the human race has survived so long.

- Because everyone is now so calorie-conscious, manufacturers have taken to using the word "lite" on everything edible. Due to so many misleading claims, the FDA, USDA and FSIS in the United States published stringent guidelines during the 1990's (Canada has adopted similar policies) to spell out which nutrient claims are allowed and under what circumstances they can be used. The regulations specifically addressed the terms free, low, lean, extra lean, high, good source, reduced, less, fewer, more, and of course, the infamous "light/lite."
- "LITE" officially means that a nutritionally-altered product contains **LESS** of something (specifically, 1/3 fewer calories, 1/2 the fat, or 1/2 the sodium). It may also be used to describe color or texture in certain circumstances, providing qualifying information is included on the label.

- The Biblical term "**CURSE**" means something vastly different than the way we use it in modern speech. We tend to use the word as a synonym for swearing, and occasionally to describe some kind of witchcraft or magic spell. But the Bible has a different definition!
- The concept of cursing begins in the Old Testament with three Hebrew words; they show us the progression that takes place when God curses an individual. (DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN BE CURSED BY GOD BECAUSE OF CERTAIN ACTIONS YOU TAKE?)

1. ALAH – "WARNING"

- This word means "to vow a solemn vow" and is used of testimony that people give in court.
- It is also used in passages that describe the covenant that exists between God and His people.
- A divine warning ("curse") made God's people aware ahead of time of the judgments that would follow should they break their covenant obligations.

2. ARAR – "BINDING"

- This word goes beyond warning of the consequences of disobedience to include the concept of "binding." It expresses the idea of reducing ability or power.
- For example, when God announced that because of sin He was placing a "curse" on the earth, he declared that the earth's original fertility had been stunted; it was no longer able to produce to its earlier capacity, and much more labor was required to achieve the same result.
- A person or thing that is cursed by God is in some significant way bound; they are unable to do what they were once able to do easily.
- Cursing is not a magical term, but a moral term. (In fact, God repeatedly tells us in His word that curses brought against His children will be returned to those uttering them! – Genesis 12:3, Numbers 24:9, Deuteronomy 23:5, Nehemiah 13:2) Scripturally, a curse is simply a consequence of violating one's relationship with God in some way.
- In other words, no evil force can place a curse on you, but your own actions can leave God no other option but to pronounce His curse upon you! We need to fear our own flesh more than we fear what the devil can do to us!

3. QALAL – “LESSENING”

- This final stage of a “curse” means that the one being cursed by God experiences “reduced circumstances, lack, lessening, loss, diminishing or absence of the state of blessing.”
- In other words, **a person cursed by God is doomed to a life that is LESS than the state of blessing God yearns for them to enjoy.** Because of the actions they take and the choices they make, they unwittingly force God to carry out the consequences of His WARNING, by unleashing His BINDING and LESSENING process in their life.
- The concept of “cursing” continues in the New Testament with the Greek word “**ANATHEMA**,” which means “devoted to destruction.” It expresses the thought that a person cursed by God is literally given up to divine judgment. This word is generally translated “**ACCURSED**.”
- **BEING CURSED BY GOD IS SERIOUS BUSINESS!** We must avoid His divine displeasure at all costs! How do we do that? What actions does the Bible specifically condemn that would result in a **CURSE**?

HOW TO AVOID GOD’S CURSE ON YOUR LIFE:

1. OBEY GOD’S COMMANDMENTS

- **BLESSING FOR OBEDIENCE - Deuteronomy 28:1-14 (NLT)**
If you fully obey the LORD your God by keeping all the commands I am giving you today, the LORD your God will exalt you above all the nations of the world. ² You will experience all these blessings if you obey the LORD your God: ³ You will be blessed in your towns and in the country. ⁴ You will be blessed with many children and productive fields. You will be blessed with fertile herds and flocks. ⁵ You will be blessed with baskets overflowing with fruit, and with kneading bowls filled with bread. ⁶ You will be blessed wherever you go, both in coming and in going. ⁷ “The LORD will conquer your enemies when they attack you. They will attack you from one direction, but they will scatter from you in seven! ⁸ “The LORD will bless everything you do and will fill your storehouses with grain. The LORD your God will bless you in the land he is giving you. ⁹ If you obey the commands of the LORD your God and walk in his ways, the LORD will establish you as his holy people as he solemnly promised to do. ¹⁰ Then all the nations of the world will see that you are a people claimed by the LORD, and they will stand in awe of you. ¹¹ “The LORD will give you an abundance of good things in the land he swore to give your ancestors—many children, numerous livestock, and

abundant crops. ¹² The LORD will send rain at the proper time from his rich treasury in the heavens to bless all the work you do. You will lend to many nations, but you will never need to borrow from them. ¹³ If you listen to these commands of the LORD your God and carefully obey them, the LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you will always have the upper hand. ¹⁴ You must not turn away from any of the commands I am giving you today to follow after other gods and worship them.

- **CURSING FOR DISOBEDIENCE - Deuteronomy 28:15-20, 44-48 (NLT)** ¹⁵ But if you refuse to listen to the LORD your God and do not obey all the commands and laws I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overwhelm you: ¹⁶ You will be cursed in your towns and in the country. ¹⁷ You will be cursed with baskets empty of fruit, and with kneading bowls empty of bread. ¹⁸ You will be cursed with few children and barren fields. You will be cursed with infertile herds and flocks. ¹⁹ You will be cursed wherever you go, both in coming and in going. ²⁰ The LORD himself will send against you curses, confusion, and disillusionment in everything you do, until at last you are completely destroyed for doing evil and forsaking me ... ⁴³ The foreigners living among you will become stronger and stronger, while you become weaker and weaker. ⁴⁴ They will lend money to you, not you to them. They will be the head, and you will be the tail! ⁴⁵ If you refuse to listen to the LORD your God and to obey the commands and laws he has given you, all these curses will pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed. ⁴⁶ These horrors will serve as a sign and warning among you and your descendants forever. ⁴⁷ Because you have not served the LORD your God with joy and enthusiasm for the abundant benefits you have received, ⁴⁸ you will serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you. You will be left hungry, thirsty, naked, and lacking in everything. They will oppress you harshly until you are destroyed.

2. DON’T ROB GOD IN YOUR GIVING

- **Malachi 3:8-10 (NLT)** ⁸ Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! But you ask, ‘What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?’ You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. ⁹ You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me. ¹⁰ Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do, says the LORD Almighty, I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Let me prove it to you!

3. DON'T RELY ON HUMAN STRENGTH

- **Galatians 3:10 (NLT)** But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, "Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all these commands that are written in God's Book of the Law."
- **Jeremiah 17:5-8 (NLT)** ⁵ This is what the LORD says: "Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans and turn their hearts away from the LORD. ⁶ They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in the barren wilderness, on the salty flats where no one lives. ⁷ "But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. ⁸ They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they go right on producing delicious fruit."

4. BE DILIGENT IN SERVING GOD

- **Jeremiah 48:10** Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully (NEGLIGENTLY), and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

ONE CURSED PERSON "LESSENS" A WHOLE CHURCH!

- **Joshua 6:18** And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.
- **Joshua 7:11-13** ¹¹Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. ¹²Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. ¹³Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.
- **Joshua 22:20** Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

JESUS TOOK OUR CURSE – WHY TAKE IT BACK?

Galatians 3:13 (NLT) But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20a (NLT) ¹⁹ Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, that you and your descendants might live! ²⁰ Choose to love the LORD your God and to obey him and commit yourself to him, for he is your life.