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.

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!

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.

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. OBEDIENT COMMANDMENTS
   - BLESSING FOR OBEDIENCE – Deut. 28:1-2, 6-7 (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 … 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!
• **CURSING FOR DISOBEDIENCE** – Deut. 28:15, 19-20 (NLT)

  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. 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 …

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**

• **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** 11 Israel 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. 12 Therefore 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. 13 Up, 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.

**Deuteronomy 23:2 (NKJV)** One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the
assembly of the Lord; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants
shall enter the assembly of the Lord.

**Genesis 38 – Pharez and Zarah are born – ILLEGITIMATE!**

**Matthew 1:3-6a** 3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara (1) of Thamar; and
Phares begat Esrom (2); and Esrom begat Aram (3); 4 And Aram begat
Aminadab (4); and Aminadab begat Naasson (5); and Naasson begat
Salmon (6); 5 And Salmon begat Booz (7) of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed
(8) of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse (9); 6 And Jesse begat David (10) the
king;

David was the first generation in his family that was free to enter the
house of the Lord without restriction! Is it any wonder he said:

**Psalm 122:1** I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house
of the Lord.

**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.”

**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.