

Curses and Blessings

WHEN GOD CALLS HEAVEN AND EARTH TO WITNESS

BY VICTORIA SARVADI, TH.D.



Like two sides of a coin, blessing and cursing are central themes throughout the entire Bible. And just like when a coin is flipped and someone calls out, “Heads or tails?” a choice must be made. Which do we choose?

God puts forth a compelling appeal. “This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings, and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19, NIV).

He entreats everyone by “the witness of heaven and earth” to choose. This serious plea indicates a sobering state of impedance. Heads or Tails? Blessings or Curses?

THE WAY TO BLESSING

Did God have the destiny for the whole world in mind when he chose to bless Abraham? Emphatically, yes! He started with just one faithful man—and through that **one** man, he provided a way to bless the **whole world!**

Everyone wants to be blessed. Everyone desires for things to go their way. We all long for resources, finances, success, good kids, respect, a good name, a legacy, even eternal life. But is it possible that humankind has misappropriated the understanding of blessing? Could there be a disconnect in how one obtains it?

One might argue that everyone can't be

blessed—that it takes right opportunities, happenstance, or luck. Some folks think it’s about how much money you have and who you know, while others think that it’s being born into privilege that produces blessings.

It’s none of that—and the Bible is quite clear. There is a specific means by which one obtains blessing. There is a precise method—a pathway. Indeed, a hidden message lies within God’s instruction to Abraham:

“The LORD said to Abram: Leave your country, your family, and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you. I will bless you and make your descendants into a great nation. You will become famous and be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you, but I will put a curse on anyone who puts a curse on you. Everyone on earth will be blessed because of you” (Genesis 12:1–3, CEV).

There is a distinct dichotomy when it comes to understanding God. He is, no doubt, a loving and faithful God to those who have chosen to seek him and purpose to act according to his will. However, it is also true that God is a just God who despises evil and vindicates the just. So, the question becomes, Does God really put curses on people? God declares it to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, “I will put a **curse** [Hebrew—*a’or*] on anyone who puts a **curse** [Hebrew—*qalekkaal*] on you (Abraham). Everyone on earth [who blesses you] will be blessed *because of you*.”

So then, according to God’s declaration—as man chooses to bless or curse, God in his sovereignty *reacts*. And he bases *his reaction* on *our choice* to bless or curse Abraham and the solemn covenant that God made with him. He’s waiting to see which side of the coin we choose.

As we examine the text, it is accurate to assume most English Bible translations employ the same English word “curse” when translating the two different Hebrew words *a’or* and *qalekkaal*.

It is important to compare the two Hebrew words to bring this text into context.

1. *Qalekkaal*

The word used for cursing Abraham and his seed is *qalekkaal*, which is translated as and includes *dishonoring, insulting, despising, debasing, reviling, belittling, afflicting, or diminishing* the covenant people or the nation.

2. *A’or*

The word used to describe God’s reaction to a *qalekkaal* curse is “*a’or*,” which means to *bitterly curse* or better described as *execrating, denouncing, or condemning!* God reacts bitterly and drastically with those who demean, revile, or afflict his people.

God is not kidding when it comes to his legacy. He takes his covenant seriously concerning his covenant people. He calls the offspring of Abraham “a *holy* people.”¹ He calls the land he placed his name upon and gave to Abraham “a *holy* land.”² And he

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calls the promised sovereign nation of Israel, “a holy nation.”³

For the first time in Biblical history, God extended his covenant to an entire nation. He gave them the Holy Torah as instruction from his own mouth with explicit details on how to recognize and approach him and how to interact with each other. He gave them a fertile land for their inheritance and commanded them to protect it until he would arrive with His heavenly kingdom.

THE BIG PLAN

God’s intention was to “set these people apart” from the idolatrous nations in order to

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create, at the right time, a body for himself in which he would dwell and live among man as the Messiah. This Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah and would redeem all peoples who would receive Him. God chose Abraham and his seed to change the world. The Almighty set apart the people, the land, and the nation for the purpose of blessing the whole world in hopes that whoever would trust him with his whole heart, as Abraham did, would be delivered from the dark kingdom that covered the earth.

So then, we need to pay close attention to how we relate to what God has called holy. We need to consider this extraordinary covenant made with Abraham, his seed, and his land. Blessing Israel is the catalyst that creates blessings in our own lives. Conversely, cursing Israel results in a catastrophic reaction from God—the cause for God’s bitter cursing and condemnation.

COVENANTAL TERMS

God made a holy covenant with Abraham. One of the terms of the ancient biblical covenant is to receive and favor one another’s friends and take on as an enemy one another’s

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foes. Ancient terms also extend the benefits of covenant to all generations between the two parties. Therefore, because God was a friend to Abraham, he considers those on earth in every generation who blesses his covenant friend and the covenant land to be his friends—friends of such a degree that he would even lay his life down for them! But if anyone diminishes or afflicts the people or nation of the covenant, God promises to denounce and condemn that nation or person.

THE PARABLE OF BLESSING AND CURSING

The Blessing:

Yeshua taught the very same message of blessing and cursing with a profound parable:

“Come, you whom my Father has **blessed**, take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you made me your guest, I needed clothes and you provided them, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ The King will say to them, ‘Yes! I tell you that whenever you did these things for one of the least important of *these [covenant] brothers of mine*, you did them for me!’” (Matthew 25:34–36, 40, CEV).

The Curse:

“Then he will also speak to those on his left, saying, ‘Get away from me, you who are *Curse!* Go off into the fire prepared for the Adversary and his angels! For I was hungry and you gave me no food, thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, a stranger and you did not welcome me, needing clothes and you did not give them to me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me’. . . ‘Yes! I tell you that whenever you refused to do it for the least important of *these [covenant] people*, you refused to do it for me!’ Mat. 25:34–45, CEV.

Yeshua brings home the same message in this notable parable. Blessing his brothers opens the gateways of heaven while cursing them brings eternal damnation!

ABRAHAM LEFT HIS TRIBE

In ancient times, one lived within a familial tribe and carried out obligations to the land of their birth and the lineage of their fathers. They worshipped the same gods, carried on the same tribal traditions, and earnestly taught the tribal ways to their children and grandchildren.

However, Abraham was commanded to leave his country, his tribe and life of idolatry. He was summoned to a new life in a new land by a powerful and personal God. God assured Abraham

that he would be his guiding voice, he would favor and protect him, multiply his seed, give him a new land, a new lineage, and one day a new national sovereignty.

God declared that everyone all over the world would be familiar with Abraham and know his children. Then he made the most inconceivable promise. God said that through Abraham and his seed, the whole dark and idolatrous world would also obtain blessing.

HOW DOES THIS WORK?

God started his holy legacy with Abraham. Apart from all the other nations with their false idols, functioning under the curses of the principalities and hierarchy of the dark kingdom, God began a new spiritual haplogroup. He chose this people to be the means by which he could bless the rest of the world.

THE CAVEAT

Even today (some may say *especially* today), God still expects us to befriend Abraham by trusting in his Word and his promises thereby showing the fruit of kindness to his children, his land and his nation. He still requires us to believe as Abraham believed—to leave behind our idols and our misplaced loyalty to evil traditions, to absolve ourselves of the distorted ideals of our lost earthly fathers. He commands us to come along side and receive a certificate of adoption, being grafted into a holy family tree enjoying the citizenship of his holy Zion. Yeshua said Abraham saw this day of blessing and was glad!⁴

God will bless and support *every nation and individual* who shows brotherly kindness, comfort, compassion, and support to Israel whom God said he would never forsake. Paul explains in Romans 11 that God treated the people of Israel with undeserved grace, even though only some of them found the promised Messiah. And because of their rejection, the rest of the people of the world were able to turn to him.

On the flipside, Paul warns about boasting against the branches of Israel that were broken off—boasting by belittling and looking down upon them in disdain, boasting by demeaning them in their blindness. He cautions about the terrifying severity of God if one fails to continue in kindness and mercy toward Israel.

GOD DEFENDS HIS LEGACY

It is hard not to proffer shame on those who attack God's land and his people—the very people of Israel that God promises in the end-times to pour out his Spirit and grace upon.⁵ It is the merciful and gracious God who vows to

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remove their blindness and give them a heart of flesh.⁶ Shouldn't we join the Lord as he continues in his love for the Jewish people because of their famous ancestors and the everlasting covenant he made with them for all generations?⁷

The most merciful Lord says: “Israel, I promise that someday all your tribes will again be my people, and I will be your God.”⁸

May we who were once disobedient not be blind to God's promise concerning disobedient Israel. He implores us to bless Abraham's children and show them the same mercy that God has shown us. For God has allowed all humankind to be disobedient in order that he might show mercy and be a blessing to us all.⁹

The coming end-time events will bring veritable healing and restoration for Israel. He will bring them back to their land and cause their land to abundantly produce. He will pour out godly sorrow that leads to repentance and they will call upon his Name.

May all who love and trust the Lord join him in blessing Israel in these last days. 

¹ Deuteronomy 7:6

² Zechariah 2:12

³ Exodus 19:6

⁴ John 8:56

⁵ Zechariah 12:9–10

⁶ Ezekiel 36:26

⁷ Romans 11:28

⁸ Jeremiah 31:1

⁹ Romans 11:31

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Learn more about Dr. Sarvadi's extensive library of inspirational, informative, and challenging materials that are posted at www.victoriasarvadi.com.