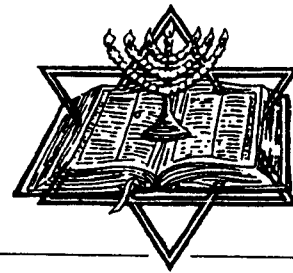


# MORIEL

## NEWS and PRAYER LETTER

מוריאל  
MORIEL - GOD IS MY TEACHER



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# Curses and Christians

**T**HE EARLY CHURCH had some thing that many of us today have lost. And when I say "us," I mean people like me: people who believe in the gifts of the Spirit.

### A 'guru' mentality

We have something in churches today that comes from the secular world and the false religious systems — a 'guru' mentality. Whatever the Brahman priest says, that is what his followers or devotees will believe. Whatever the guru says, his devotees will follow.

Roman Catholics believe the teachings of the Pope. Orthodox Jews will believe whatever the Rabbis tell them. Whatever the Rebbe or the Tzadik says, that is the word of God to them. Moslems go to the Imam. He goes to directly to Allah; you go through him.

This mentality has come into the body of Christ like an avalanche in the last thirty years, particularly in the last ten.

A mindset has developed among Christians whereby anyone who is plainly called and gifted of God now has their word treated as if it were the Word of God, without any sense of a need to check it out. If he said it, that's it!

### Rabbi Shaul of Tarsus

Paul did miracles, signs and wonders; he saw healings and tremendous conversions. Whole churches were planted. He wrote half of the New Testament. He was a Rabbi of the Rabbis, a Pharisee from the school of Hillel. He was a disciple of Rabbi Gamaliel.

Imagine if a famous Rabbi gave his life to Jesus and began doing miracles today; people would make him into a guru and whatever he said, that would be it.

But Paul never claimed to be a guru. What did he say? *But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed* (Galatians 1:8).

What made a man like Paul great was that he always realized that the real authority came from Jesus and God's word. He was a good steward of the authority vested in him.

There are people today whom God has called and blessed with gifts like miracles and healings, whom God uses and through whom many are saved, but a mentality has come into the church whereby whatever that person says becomes The Truth. Full stop.

We make them into gurus. It is not only Jews, Catholics, Hindus and Mormons, but Christians are doing so, particularly in Restorationism and the house churches.

### 'Party spirit'

The Greek word for *heresy* does not simply mean doctrinal error. The real meaning refers to someone who is hyper-schismatic, someone who forms a faction.

The book of Galatians speaks directly to the sin of 'party spirit.' Party spirit does not mean we are all going to a bar to have joints and a beer. Party spirit means you form a league, not of God's Spirit, which claims to have a corner on truth. Everyone outside the group is a second rate believer, or second rate Christian.

The only real basis of truth is the Bible. In the best churches you are going to find some wrong things and some wrong people and in the bad churches you are going to find some right things and some right people. Look at the seven churches in Revelation.

Party spirit, or a tendency to form factions, is a 'deed of the flesh' (Galatians 5:19-21). Denominations are one thing, but denominationalism is simply a euphemism for the sin of party spirit. I am not against forming an association as a practical mechanism to get churches working together in things like missions, evangelism, and helping the poor. But when people begin forming a league, cutting themselves off from the Body of Christ, that is different.

### Ecumenism

There are two kinds of division. The Bible says there will be factions among you to prove what is true. Ecumenism, of course, is a unity not of God's Spirit, a false unity.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. You can not build the unity of the Spirit on error. To unite with churches that teach salvation comes through 'sacraments,' instead of by being born again and that practice Transubstantiation and praying to the dead, is flagrantly immoral. That is not the unity of the Spirit. Bible believing Christians cannot unite with the false religious system of this world.

On the other hand, it is totally wrong for Christians to be inordinately divided from each other. I am not saying there should be some kind of a monolithic organisation, but there should be a unity of the Spirit, based on a common experience of God's grace and salvation in Jesus, and commitment to the authority of His word.

People tend to get hold of a doctrine, amplify that doctrinal truth, and make it into some kind of colossal issue and build a church around it. But truth becomes a lie when people make that truth the basis for all other truths.

Let me explain. The one biblical basis for all truth is Jesus. Christ died; Christ rose from the dead; Christ is coming again. The cross, the empty tomb, and the Mount of Olives — that is the basic truth upon which all other truths must be built. All other truths must be centrally predicated on the truth of Jesus.

### The Holy Spirit distorted

After centuries in which the truth of the Holy Spirit was suppressed by both Catholics and Protestants, along came Charismatics and Pentecostals who got hold of this truth and made it into the basis for all other truth. They wound up with a very distorted, unbiblical picture of the Holy Spirit.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is pictured for us in Abraham sending his servant to get a bride for his son Isaac. Isaac the son corresponds to Jesus. Abraham corresponds to the Father. The servant is the Holy Spirit. The Father sent his Servant to prepare a bride for His Son, from amongst His own People. The Holy Spirit is always a servant who points people to Jesus.

When the Holy Spirit is amplified over Jesus, we see people singing "Come Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is never prayed to in the Bible. He is only worshipped in the context of the Triunity of the Godhead, as part of the Trinity, but he is never prayed to directly.

So a truth becomes a lie. Instead of Jesus being the central truth upon which all other truth is based, another truth is put in the place of Jesus. Even though it is a truth, it becomes virtually false. And with this false teaching comes all kinds of Charismatic excesses and crazy doctrine.

### Devil-centred Christianity

Another is the truth of curses: there is a biblical truth about curses, but I see people obsessed with it.

I have been in churches where the whole emphasis of the ministry is "casting demons out of Christians," and breaking curses. They talk more about the devil than they do about Jesus.

Every problem, supposedly, has something to do with a curse or a demon. Much of this is due to people not wanting to take personal responsibility for their own relationship with Jesus. Again, it is the guru mentality.

We live in a specialist society. If I have a legal problem, I phone my lawyer. If I have a medical problem, I phone my doctor. If I have a financial problem, I call my banker. If I have a spiritual problem, I phone the preacher.

He is the professional, he is the guru. What pill should I take doctor? What legal action should I take, lawyer? What should I do, preacher?

### Ignorance of God's Word

Among people like myself who believe in the gifts of the Spirit, there is a deficiency of scholarly people. We lack gifted teachers. Most of our preachers are ignorant of doctrine. Very few have any knowledge of academic theology or any real confidence in Greek or Hebrew.

The Bible says, "My people perish for a lack of knowledge," and people today are perishing for a lack of knowledge.

For that reason I have developed tremendous respect for Derek Prince. Derek Prince is one of the few Charismatic Bible teachers who really studies the Word, who will go to the trouble to look at the original languages, to become functionally competent in lexical exegesis.

He takes these things and uses them to meet people's practical needs. I have only spoken to him once, but I have always respected him and his ministry.

I would estimate that 90% of what Derek Prince teaches is very good to excellent. It would be a tremendous tragedy if people were ever to throw the baby out with the bath water.

There are two dangers. One danger is people will find something which they see is wrong, or God shows them it is wrong and they will reject the entire ministry on that basis. Unless there is something fundamentally wrong, affecting the gospel itself, such as Copeland, Kenyon, and Hagin saying that "Jesus died spiritually, it was not finished on the Cross." Unless it is something that is fundamentally wrong, you should be pretty hesitant to reject something someone says on the basis of one or two errors, or a small percentage of it. None of us are perfect. I certainly am not perfect.

### Rejecting false teachers

There are four criteria that give you authority to reject someone's ministry completely.

1. **Immorality:** Unconfessed sins, ongoing, irrepentant immorality — that is a reason to reject someone's ministry.

2. **The Gospel:** If someone replaces the gospel with another way of salvation — based on works, based on the Law, based on sacraments — they are to be rejected. The Bible teaches the priesthood of all believers. The Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Churches and Mormon Church all put back a special priesthood, denying the New Covenant as the New Testament teaches it.

3. **The Person of Christ.** What do they believe about Jesus? Is He the Way, the Truth and the Life? When someone believes and teaches something unorthodox about Jesus, reject it and them.

4. **The Authority of Scripture.** When they replace the authority of Scripture with some other basis of doctrinal authority, based on some other 'revelation,' reject it.

If there is immorality, rejection of the authority of Scripture or the person of Jesus, or another gospel, you can reject the whole thing.

### Let few of you be teachers

I believe the main problem is with us. We have lost the spirit of the Bereans. We will take on board something that somebody says, simply because they seem so right most of the time.

*Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment (James 3:1).*

I do not want to teach the Bible. I would rather be an evangelist and leave this kind of thing to others. I only do it because the Holy Spirit has shown me, largely through other people around the world, that this is what He wants me to concentrate on. If it was up to me, I would rather be out there reaching the lost.

I know that God is going to hold me more accountable than he holds you. *The lamp of your body is your eye; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Then watch out that the light in you may not be darkness (Luke 11:34-35):* a midrash on human anatomy, with the human eye standing for the teacher.

Never take what I say on face value. I am going to be accountable to God for what I teach you.

## Problems in scholarship

The first mistake made by people who teach about blessings and cursings, and who say that Christians can be accursed, is that they do not look at the original Hebrew and Greek, or consider the context in which the words are used.

When you do this you can see the ways in which Christians can be cursed and the ways in which they cannot be cursed.

There are different words in Hebrew and Greek for curses, words that are not always interchangeable, but mostly used in specific ways.

One complication in scholarship is that the New Testament takes Hebrew concepts and translates them into Greek. We need to go to the ancient Septuagint and see how the Rabbis understood the Hebrew when they translated it into Greek.

Sometimes there are different Greek words for something in Hebrew where there is only one word. In Hebrew there is only one word for 'love,' *ahovah*, but in Greek there is no less than seven words for 'love' — three, possibly four, of which occur in the Bible (three are stated, and the fourth is implied without being stated).

When you begin looking at the different words in the original languages, trying to see the context in which they are used, various kinds of problems arise. Nonetheless, we can learn how people, even Christians, can in some ways be cursed, and also how they cannot.

## Understanding Hebrew

One of the best ways to understand what a word or a concept means in Hebraic or Jewish thought is to understand the word's opposite. If you know what 'cold' means, you can understand what 'hot,' its opposite, means. If you know what 'left' means, you will have an idea of what 'right' means. If you know what 'convex' means, you will have an idea of what 'concave' means.

Hebrew is like that, it is structured in terms of antithesis. If you understand the antithesis of something, that will help you understand what the word means.

### 1. *Kelolah*

The first word is *kelolah*, meaning "imprecation — praying evil or misfortune on someone." It is the opposite of being blessed. When good things happen it is *berakah*, a blessing.

The agricultural cycle in Israel is dependent upon the rain. When it rains, even though the rain might come very heavily, causing flash floods, the people say the rain is a blessing. Lack of rain is seen as a curse.

*For I will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants* (Isaiah 44:3).

The Bible refers to living water in Isaiah 44, and in Jeremiah. Jesus draws on it in John 7. This rain, this living water, represents the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The rain caused the harvest. If there was no rain, there would be no grain. It is the same today. If there is no rain, there is no grain, and there is no harvest. There is a famine for hearing the word of God. There is a potential harvest of souls that is not being reaped. There is no crop.

The main biblical emphasis of the concept of *kelolah* lies not with people, but with nations being accursed or blessed. It is less personal and has more to do with a corporate blessing or curse.

*And furthermore, I withheld the rain from you while there was still three months until harvest. Then I would send rain on one city and on another city I would not send rain; one part would be rained on, while the part not rained on would dry up* (Amos 4:7).

When an honest evangelist who preaches the honest gospel goes to Africa, literally tens of thousands of people will give their lives to Jesus in just one Crusade, even in just one meeting.

Why? Because the Holy Spirit is being outpoured in Africa. That same evangelist with the same gifting and same anointing can go to England or to some other European country and practically nothing in comparison will happen.

The gifting can be there. The anointing can be there. The rain is being withheld. This land is accursed, there is *kelolah*.

## The curse of no spiritual outpouring

The spiritual destitution you see in Britain today — the neo-paganism, the Church being a dead middle-class institution, the fundamental breakdown of the moral fabric of this society, the disintegration of family values, all of it — is due to this nation being accursed.

Great Britain is not being blessed, it is being cursed. In 1951 they had the third biggest economy in the world. Great Britain cannot even compete with Italy or France any more, let alone Germany or Japan. The economic and political decline of Great Britain is a reflection of its spiritual decline. It is accursed.

*But if you do not obey Me...those who hate you shall rule over you* (Leviticus 26:14-17).

In the year 2010 — and I am being careful to keep my political views separate from my biblical views — it is a fact that in the year 2010, more than 80% or at least 80% of Great Britain's laws will be made, not by their own elected Parliament, but by bankers and bureaucrats in Brussels, in Frankfurt at the Central Bank, and in Germany.

By 2010 Great Britain will be governed by people they did not vote for and who they cannot remove.

That is already happening in Britain and America is not far behind. There is a curse on Britain, and America is running close behind in the same direction.

The sign of that curse is the fact that the Holy Spirit is not being rained upon those nations. There is no harvest taking place.

Even big events like Billy Graham Crusades — well organized, well financed meetings — do nothing to even turn the church around, let alone the country.

But if you go to Ghana, Brazil, Korea, people can't believe the growth. Why? Because it is raining — the Holy Spirit is being outpoured — in those countries.

### 2. *Me'airoh*

The next word is *me'airoh*, which means bitterness — not imprecation (an invoking of evil), but execration (a detesting, loathing, abhorrence), an expression of hatred. It is the opposite of "love."

To understand the Hebraic thought patterns and world view that God worked through to produce the Old Testament and the New Testament (partly), you have to understand the principle of opposites. To know what something means, you have to understand its opposite.

The idea here is that you curse someone by not loving them. Love will break this kind of curse.

Can Christians come under this kind of a curse? Yes, they can.

Jesus said, *If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you* (John 15:18-19).

I know Christian women who have unsaved husbands who hate them. I know Jewish people who got saved, their families hate them; their families do not love them, they hate them. Yes, Christians can be under this kind of a curse. We are all under this kind of a curse.

*The whole world lies in the power of the evil one* (1 John 5:19).

Jesus said the world hates you. In this sense, Christians can be under a curse.

### 3. Kalal

The next word is *kalal*.

*And it will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong* (Zechariah 8:13).

This word *kalal* comes from the Hebrew word *kal*, meaning 'light' (as in not heavy). The Hebrew word for 'heavy' is *kovaid*, it's the same word for 'liver' (the largest organ of a body of a human), or 'large mammal'.

The word for 'honour' in Hebrew is *kovad*, which is drawn from *kovaid*, 'heavy.' The Hebrew principle of opposites applies here. The opposite of 'to curse' is 'to honour.' If you honour someone or something, it has weight; it is heavy for you.

### Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother...

If something is dishonoured, it is cursed; it is of lightweight consideration to you. Something can be light or it can be heavy.

The Hebrew idea of 'honouring your parents' really means that they should be something heavy for you. If someone is heavy for you, it means something.

If a political figure made a comment in the newspaper that you did not like, that would be light for you. You don't have much respect for that person.

If you were reading the Bible, and the Holy Spirit convicted you of something, or showed you something in Scripture, that would be heavy for you.

The opposite of *kalal*, light, is *kovaid*, heavy, leading to *kovad*, practical honour and respect.

In this sense, Christians can be cursed and also curse others. If we are considered lightly by other people, instead of being seen as God's new creation, it is a form of being cursed. But if we do not let other believers and our parents, in particular, be heavy for us, we are cursing them.

In its practical outworking, this idea has to do with responsibility. We are held accountable in God's design for the welfare of our parents in their old age.

Maybe we are concerned for other older people, or elderly, or retired people. Our own parents should be heavy for us. If we are neglecting our responsibility for the financial well-being of our parents, we are cursing them.

The idea in the Bible of cursing your parents — which is worthy of death in the Old Testament and also a very serious sin in the New Testament — is letting them be light for you instead of heavy.

My family is a combination of Irish Catholic, and Jewish. I cannot be in the room with my mother for five minutes without arguing if we begin talking about the Bible. The woman drives me nuts. Having a mother like that prepared me for my wife.

I do not like my mother's ideas too much and we don't get along particularly well. But she is still heavy for me. Every time I think about her, I pray, "Lord Jesus, please save my mother. Don't let her die and go to hell, like my father did. Please, she is heavy for me."

My mother is reasonably well off financially. If she wasn't, it would be my responsibility to take care of her.

If I did not do that, I would be cursing her because she would be 'light' instead of 'heavy' for me. In this sense, Christians can be cursed.

### 4. Cherem

*Cherem* means that something has been devoted to a bad fate.

*And He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers* [speaking of the ministry of Elijah], *lest I come and smite the land with a curse* (Malachi 4:6).

This idea of smiting the land with a curse means devoting it to destruction; it

becomes a determined purpose of God to give something over to being ruined.

This world is fallen and under a *cherem*, under a curse. *For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now* (Romans 8:22).

Natural disasters — bushfires, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, famines, droughts — these things are all by-products of the fall of man.

God gave man dominion over creation. When man fell, the creation fell with him. There were certain changes in geology, physics, meteorology, biology, and so on.

We live in a cursed world. Not merely in a fallen world, but in a cursed one. In this sense, Christians can be cursed.

However, Egypt was devoted to God's judgment because Egypt would not let God's people go. But when these judgments were poured out on Egypt — events which we commemorate in Passover — God's people were preserved in them and through them. We are preserved in and through the curse, but we are still under the curse. In all of these senses, a Christian can be cursed.

### 5. Katara

Hebrews is an important book for understanding the Jewish thought of the early church because it was written to Jewish Christians.

*For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God* (Hebrews 6: 7).

Do you see how the New Testament in verse 7 recycles the teaching of Isaiah 44 and Amos 4 about the rain being a blessing? It uses the physical agriculture, physical meteorology, to teach us about the outpouring of the Spirit.

*But if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned* (Hebrews 6:8).

That is what happens in a fallen world. The New Testament recycles this concept in the word *katara*, 'cursed.' In the same way that the creation is under a curse, this curse can come upon Christians, just because they are in a fallen world.

*But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.*

*For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown towards His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints (Hebrews 6:9-10).*

Even though creation is cursed and we are subject to the curse, God will see us through it and deliver us out of it. However, see what precedes this word *katara*.

*For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come [ These are people who were saved ],*

*And then have fallen away [ In the Greek there is no present tense, but a present continual tense — those who are actively backsliding to the point that they are not going to come back ], it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.*

*For [ a connective ] the ground... and it goes on to talk about the rain and the curse on the land (Hebrews 6:4-7).*

**Backsliders who do not repent put themselves back under the curse.**

It is only in Jesus that we can be saved from the curse and ultimately delivered out of it. When you fall away from Jesus, you put yourself back under the curse in its fullest sense. You go back and, instead of harvesting vegetables, you are going to harvest thorns. In that sense a backslidden Christian can be cursed.

*Then He will also say to those on his left, "Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).*

The same Greek word, *katara*, is used here. Backsliders put themselves back under the curse of hell.

## 6. Katal

We have another Hebrew word, *katal*, which means 'to call down evil.' A Christian can have evil called down upon them.

The blood of Jesus can protect us, but to say that we are going to be immune from it is unscriptural.

The pagan Roman emperors called down a curse on the church and persecuted Christians, who went to their deaths as martyrs.

We can certainly be cursed in this sense. However, God says, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee." During the Second World War the Nazis built a wall around the Jewish ghetto. Any Jew trying to escape the ghetto by climbing over the wall was machine gunned.

A few years later, a wall went up around the once glorious capital of the Reich, Berlin, and any German caught climbing over the wall was machine gunned. This continued for almost fifty years, until that generation of German leaders was dead. "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee."

Countries like Denmark and Holland have a staggering level of immorality. The pornography in Denmark and the drugs and sexual sin in Holland is horrible. One of the reasons, possibly the main reason, that God has not judged those countries so far is that when the Nazis said all the Jews had to come out and wear a yellow star, many of the people of Denmark and Holland came out and said, "Jesus was a Jew, and so am I. Here's my star."

In the Roman Catholic countries, like Poland and France, the people helped the Nazis to kill the Jews.

In the Protestant countries with the high Evangelical population, like Denmark and Holland, the people protected the Jews, sometimes at the expense of their own lives. Think of people like Corrie Ten Boom.

God said, "I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee." This is a dynamic and active principle.

## 7. Anathematizo

*But he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this man you are talking about!" (Mark 14:71).*

The Greek word *anathematizo* means to say bad things in anger. Can Christians be cursed in this sense? Of course they can.

## 8. Katanathematizo

Closely related to *anathematizo* is the word *katanathematizo*, which means 'to betray a loved one.'

*Brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death (Matthew 10:21).*

Christians will betray one another, particularly in the last days; Jesus said so. And, yes, we can also be cursed in this manner in times of persecution.

## No longer under the curse of the Law

We have looked at all the ways that the Bible says believers can be cursed. Now let's look at how they cannot be cursed.

*For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them."*

*Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith."*

*However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them" (Galatians 3:10-12).*

The main purpose of the law was to teach the Jews that they could not keep the Law, that they could never reach up to God's standard. They needed a Messiah to save them. It is only in Jesus that we can keep the law, because He has fulfilled it for us.

When you have a religion that puts you back under the Law, it sets up a standard you could never live up to. Jesus said, "I say to you, among those born of women, there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 7:28).

Why?

John the Baptist represents the ultimate standard or level of righteousness, capable of being achieved by good works. He was the ultimate; no religious person was any better or more religious in their standard of behaviour than John. He was a unique man, filled with the Holy Spirit from his mothers womb (Luke 1:15).

What the ancient Jewish heresy of Ebionism falsely believed about Jesus — that he was a uniquely inspired man — was in fact true about John the Baptist. John is the most unique man who ever lived, apart from Jesus, with the possible exception of Adam.

Yet he who is least in the kingdom of God, is greater than John. Why?

Anybody who is born again, who has the righteousness of Jesus — who fulfilled the Law — is greater than any righteousness we are capable of attaining by our own good works.

John represents the highest that any one can achieve; but the righteousness of Jesus is vastly superior.

## Religion is the opposite of Christianity

Look at people who are under the law, such as Roman Catholics — little old ladies crawling up the stairs of the Vatican on their arthritic knees, with their prayers and their beads, in the hope that they will escape from going to Purgatory. Jesus came to set people free from that kind of guilt and oppression. It puts them back under the curse of the law.

Mormonism — 70 % of people in Utah are Mormons. Utah has by far the highest suicide rate. Why? They are under the law. The guilt that comes from their inability to live up to the standard. Jesus came to set people free from that.

Orthodox Jews — many of them are neurotic. Religion makes people nuts. Make no mistake, religion is a form of mental illness. How can sinful man possibly measure up the standards of a perfect and holy God? That is why God had to become a man to do something for us that we could never do.

Religion defeats the the gospel. Religion is the fundamental opposite of Christianity. People who are into religion are under the curse of the law. It doesn't matter if they are Jew or Gentile, but we are going to focus on Jews.

*For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law, to perform them."*

*Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith." (Galatians 3:10-12).*

## My chosen ones...

"Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law." This has a specific meaning for the Jews, but it applies to all fallen mankind. Just look at the terrible curses of Leviticus 26 or Deuteronomy 28.

*I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask for Me [the Gentiles]; I permitted myself to be found by those who did not seek Me. I said, "Here am I, here am I," to a nation [the Gentiles] which did not call on My name.*

*I spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people [the Jews], who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts... (Isaiah 65:1-2).*

*Therefore, thus says the Lord God, behold My servants shall eat, but you [the Jews] shall be hungry. Behold, My servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty. Behold, My servants shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame.*

*Behold, My servants shall shout joyfully with a glad heart, but you shall cry out with a heavy heart, and you shall wail with a broken spirit.*

*And you will leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones, and the Lord God will slay you. But my servants will be called by another name [Christians] (Isaiah 65:13-15).*

God has an end times purpose for Israel and the Jews, but they are under the curse. Unsaved Jewish people are accursed; they are under the curse of the law. All of fallen mankind is under the curse of the Law, but especially the Jews because they had it in print.

Let me explain what 'the Law' means. The Law is like a balloon. Without helium in it, the law of gravity is always going to make the balloon fall to the ground. If you pump helium, which is lighter than air, into the balloon, the law of buoyancy is stronger than the law of gravity and the balloon will float.

Helium is like the Holy Spirit. Only if you come under the law of grace and have God's Spirit dwelling in you, producing the righteousness of Jesus, can you lead a life pleasing to God. You are never going to keep that balloon floating with air. It takes something better than air; it takes a law stronger than gravity.

That stronger law is grace. It is the New Covenant, which is stronger than the Old Covenant. All of mankind is under the curse of the Old Covenant.

The Jews had the Law in print and, consequently, are more accountable. Judgment comes to the Jews first.

*The gospel...is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile.*

*There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile, but glory and honour and peace to every man who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile (Romans 1:16; 2:9-10).*

Because salvation is available to them first, the consequence of rejecting the gospel comes upon them first — the Holocaust, the Spanish Inquisition, the Crusades, the terrible sufferings of the Jewish people.

What did God say? "I will give you into the hands of your enemies." This is in no way to justify anti-Semitism or the persecution of the Jews. It is to say that they will only be safe in the will of God. Once they go outside of it, because of the curse of the Law, they have cursed themselves.

## No provision for sin

Unsaved Jews are accursed. Actually, they are doubly accursed, because under the Law there was a provision for sin.

With the sacrifices brought to the Temple, offered by the proper priesthood, under the proper circumstances, if accompanied by faith and repentance, they had a sacrificial atonement.

The blood of these animals would cover the sin until Messiah came and took it away.

But now there is no provision for them. There is no Temple, and there is no high priesthood. The only Temple now is the Body of Christ. In seven places the New Testament says that the church is the tabernacle.

My family and I celebrate Passover with lamb. Unsaved Jews eat the Passover with poultry, instead of lamb, because they have no Temple and no priesthood. Jewish believers have a Temple and a priest. The new high priest is Jesus. We have a high priest, so we can partake of Passover with lamb.

Printed on every Orthodox Synagogue is the Hebrew term *Ichabod*, "the glory has departed," in recognition of the fact that the Temple was destroyed.

The religion of the Jews today is not the religion of Moses. Much the same as Roman Catholicism, Liberal Protestantism, Greek Orthodoxy, Mormonism and Jehovah Witnesses are not the Christianity of the New Testament, so Rabbinic Judaism is in no sense the Judaism of the Old Testament. Rabbinic Judaism is a different religion begun by Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zacchai.

They will not admit it, but their liturgy and festivals prove it. If it were the same thing, how come they do not eat the Passover as the Torah decrees?



## Once for all

The Jews are accursed. Only Jesus could break that curse and He did. In three places the book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus died once and for all.

*For it is fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did ONCE FOR ALL when He offered up Himself (Hebrews 7:26-27).*

*But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the Holy Place ONCE FOR ALL, having obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11-12).*

*By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE FOR ALL (Hebrews 10:10).*

Every false version of Christianity denies the Cross of Jesus in some way. Roman Catholicism, Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, Copeland and Hagin — teaching that Jesus died spiritually and became a satanic being — all of these things deny the Cross.

But Jesus was the perfect sacrifice, once and for all. He has broken forever the curse of the Law from the lives of His people. All things are new to those who are in Christ Jesus. But when you begin to say that something is not new, it becomes a subtle way of denying the sufficiency of Jesus' work on the Cross.

## Unbinding Lazarus

When Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb, He told the apostles, "You roll away the stone." Then Jesus commanded Lazarus to come out of the tomb.

When Lazarus came forth, Jesus said to the apostles, "You unbind him."

This is a midrashic picture of evangelism. The tomb is this fallen world. Rolling away the stone occurs when we witness to someone. The only thing we are doing is making it possible for them to hear the voice of Jesus. Only the Son of Man can call that which is dead unto life.

Some people say that if he did not say "Lazarus, come forth", every dead person in the world would have gotten up.

Rolling away the stone is evangelism. People can only come out of the tomb if they hear the voice of Jesus. Unless the Holy Spirit convicts them, unless the Father draws them and they hear Jesus' voice, they will not get saved.

When they come out, Jesus says to us, "You unbind them." I do not deny the need for prayer, counselling, and discipleship. I do not deny all the other ways that Christians can be cursed that we have listed above. **But Christians cannot be under the curse of the Law unless they put themselves back under it by wilfully backsliding.**

## Granny was a witch?

I used to go to a witch and she read my Tarot cards. I could meet someone I didn't know and tell them their Zodiac sign and I was usually right. But the person who did those things is dead. The Jacob Prasch who was involved in witchcraft is dead.

The devil will always try to get you to deny the Cross. He wants to get people caught up in saying things like: "Because my grandfather was a warlock, or because my granny was a witch, or whatever... therefore I am under a curse and everything is going wrong in my life."

The devil is a liar. Jesus said, "It is finished." When Jesus was crucified, I died with Him and so did you.

Now it is true that we die daily. Take up your cross and follow Him. The old creation is always there; we are living in the same old house. But spiritually we are new creations; that person is dead.

The Devil will always try to get us to live in the old creation, and pretend we are not a new creation. He will always try to get us to live in the flesh.

## You are a new creation

When you begin saying, "Because of this and that and the other, I am cursed," you are putting yourself back under the Law.

You are not cursed. You are a new creation in Christ Jesus. That curse was broken at the Cross. Do not allow the devil to lie to you and tell you otherwise.

Unbinding? Yes. Prayer? Yes. Counselling? Yes. Discipleship? Of course.

But this "breaking of curses" process taught in so many churches today is simply rejecting the work of the Cross and placing yourself back under the curse of the Law. If there is some unconfessed sin in your life, repent of the sin. That is the solution. But forget about this "breaking the curse" nonsense.

If you are being persecuted for your faith and people are calling down evil upon you, yes, you are accursed. We are all cursed in that sense. Jesus will see us through it and — in His way and in His time — out of it.

**But to say that the Old Testament curses are on you is a denial of the cross.** You are a new creation. You may be bound; there may be things oppressing you psychologically and emotionally. You may need prayer and counselling. I do not deny that. I do not deny the idea of the strongholds of Satan in our lives, which are actually weaknesses in our old nature which the devil can exploit. They are not strongholds so much as weaknesses.

## An 'instamatic' society

The more we live in the new creation, the more we will overcome the flesh. But people look for an instant solution. In other words, the flesh does not want to take up its cross and follow Jesus.

We live in an 'instamatic' society. Instead of taking up their cross and asking Jesus for the grace and persevering in faith and in prayer to live a holy life, people want to go and get the demons cast out.

Instead of focusing on your problems, say, "Lord, why do I have these problems? What are you trying to teach me? How are you trying to use this thing to make me more like Jesus? How are you going to use these problems to bring good into my life? How are you going to bless me through this suffering?"

When God lets a bad thing happen to us, it is only to do good to us in the end. It is usually only in retrospect that you understand what He was doing. We walk by faith, not by sight (unless, of course, you follow Kenneth Hagin).

## Recontextualising the gospel

It is perfectly valid to recontextualize the gospel for our world view. Paul said, *I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some* (1 Corinthians 9:22).

My family and I do not eat pork or shellfish because it would be bad for my testimony to Jewish people. It is better for us not to do it, so we don't.

All things are lawful, but not all things are helpful. It would not be right for me, but for you, go ahead; what do I care?

In this country, I am perfectly happy to take the Lord's Supper with either wine or with grape juice. I will do whatever your Church does; it does not matter.

But when I go to Ireland, where alcoholism is such a problem, I do not want to be seen touching alcohol in any kind of public format. Not because I have a problem taking the Lord's Supper with wine, but in that context it is not good for my testimony.

In our instamatic society people reinterpret the Gospel in light of instant gratification. Recontextualization is right, but reinterpretation and redefinition is wrong.

We live in a world of consumerism. Everything is consumption-oriented. The advertising industry is constantly urging people to consume. Prosperity theology is the gospel being redefined and reinterpreted in light of Western consumerism.

We live in a high-tech society. "Get the right software for your hardware and your computer will do what you want it to do." So people think that the only thing we have to do is get the right Church Growth program and our church will grow.

I am not against people being saved. I am simply saying that "getting the right program" will not bring revival.

We want things instantly. Taking up your cross and following Jesus is not easy. I do not care how many times you get the curses broken, that is not going to solve your problems. Any curse you were under was broken at the Cross. It has nothing to do with what you did or your grandfather did before you were saved.

All things are new to those who are in Christ Jesus. The devil wants you to deny that truth and deny the Cross.

Now we die daily, that is true. It is through being identified with Jesus and his death and resurrection that we obtain freedom. It is not by getting curses broken. Live a crucified, resurrected life in the power of the Spirit and you will find freedom.

Maybe the crucified life for you requires struggling in relationships or in finance or in health. Maybe that is your cross.

All things will work together for good. God will set you free in His way and in His time, using the method He knows is best for you.

The cross is a curse, but it is a necessary evil. Without it there is no resurrection. Through the Cross, Jesus sets you free.

### In what ways can Christians be cursed?

We can be taken lightly instead of being respected; we can be cursed in that way. Evil can be called down upon our nation; that is happening in the Western European nations. People can say bad things about us and curse us in anger.

But the only way we can be placed back under the curse of the Law is if we backslide into it. The only way a Christian can be cursed in that way is by putting himself under it, by rejecting Jesus.

Apart from that, the devil is getting people to misdiagnose their problems, so that they do not look for the biblical solutions.

All things are new to those who are in Christ Jesus. His Cross is sufficient once and for all. The only time you are going to be cursed is when you throw the Cross away!

**Do you want to be a Christian under a curse? Throw the cross away.**

**Do you want to be a Christian free from the curse? Take up your cross and follow Jesus.**

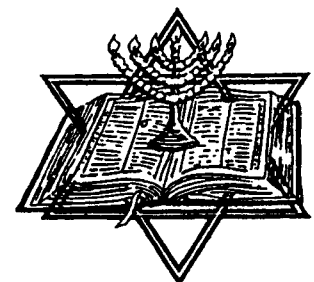
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MORIEL - GOD IS MY TEACHER



Next issue:

*House of David/House of Saul*

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