

## ~CURSE (493)

- The **desiring, threatening, or pronouncing of evil upon someone or something** is the basic idea of a number of **Hebrew** and **Greek** words in the Bible that are translated by the word curse or similar expressions.
- The first curse employed was, logically, at the time of the Edenic rebellion and was directed by God against the instigator of the rebellion through the agent that one employed, the serpent.
- And Yehowah God proceeded to say to the serpent; Because you have done this thing, you are the **cursed** one out of all the domestic animals and out of all the wild beasts of the field. Upon your belly you will go and dust is what you will eat all the days of your life. (**Genesis 3:14**)
- And I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel. (**Genesis 3:15**)
- This **curse** was to end in his destruction. At the same time the ground was **cursed** on Adam's account, resulting in its producing thorns and thistles but not in its destruction.
- And to Adam he said; Because you listened to your wife's voice and took to eating from the tree concerning which I gave you this command, You must not eat from it, **cursed** is the ground on your account. In pain you will eat its produce all the days of your life. (**Genesis 3:17**)
- And thorns and thistles it will grow for you, and you must eat the vegetation of the field. (**Genesis 3:18**)
- And he proceeded to call his name Noah, saying; This one will bring us comfort from our work and from the pain of our hands resulting from the ground which Yehowah has **cursed**. (**Genesis 5:29**)
- The **curse** that Yehowah placed on Cain condemned him to a fugitive life.

- And now you are **cursed** in banishment from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brothers blood at your hand. (**Genesis 4:11**)
- When you cultivate the ground, it will not give you back its power. A wanderer and a fugitive you will become in the earth. (**Genesis 4:12**)
- Following the Flood, the first **curse** pronounced by a human was that which Noah directed against Canaan, son of Ham, condemning him to slave for Shem and Japheth, a **curse** that saw its major realization some eight centuries later with the conquest of Canaan by the Semite nation of Israel.
- At this he said; **Cursed** be Canaan. Let him become the lowest slave to his brothers. (**Genesis 9:25**)
- And he added; Blessed be Yehowah, Shem's God, and let Canaan become a slave to him. (**Genesis 9:26**)
- Let God grant ample space to Japheth, and let him reside in the tents of Shem. Let Canaan become a slave to him also. (**Genesis 9:27**)
- Thus the Gibeonites, descendants of Canaan, were told by Joshua that they were a **cursed people**, in view of which they were assigned to a slaves position.
- And now you are **cursed** people, and a slaves position and being gatherers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God will never be cut off from you. (**Joshua 9:23**)
- Such **cursing**, therefore, should not be confused with profanity, nor does it necessarily imply violent anger, as is evident from the case of the Gibeonites. In the above texts the **Hebrew** word '*a-rar*' is used. This word is found 18 times in the formal declaration of pronouncements at;
- **Cursed** is the man who makes a carved image or a molten statue, a thing detestable to Yehowah, the manufacture of the hands of a wood-and-metal worker, and who has put it in a hiding place. And all the people must answer and say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:15**)

- **Cursed** is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:16**)
- **Cursed** is the one who moves back the boundary mark of his fellowman. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:17**)
- **Cursed** is the one who causes the blind to go astray in the way. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:18**)
- **Cursed** is the one who perverts the judgment of an alien resident, a fatherless boy and a widow. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:19**)
- **Cursed** is the one who lies down with his father's wife, because he has uncovered the skirt of his father. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:20**)
- **Cursed** is the one who lies down with any beast. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:21**)
- **Cursed** is the one who lies down with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:22**)
- **Cursed** is the one who lies down with his mother-in-law. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:23**)
- **Cursed** is the one who fatally strikes his fellowman from a hiding place. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:24**)
- **Cursed** is the one who accepts a bribe to strike a soul fatally, when it is innocent blood. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:25**)
- **Cursed** is the one who will not put the words of this Law in force by doing them. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:26**)
- **Cursed** will you be in the city, and cursed will you be in the field. (**Deuteronomy 28:16**)
- **Cursed** will be your basket and your kneading trough.

**(Deuteronomy 28:17)**

- **Cursed** will be the fruit of your belly and the fruitage of your ground, the young of your cattle and the progeny of your flock. **(Deuteronomy 28:18)**
- **Cursed** will you be when you come in, and cursed will you be when you go out. **(Deuteronomy 28:19)**
- **And also in solemn pronouncements, such as those at;**
- **You must not call down evil upon God nor curse a chieftain among your people. (Exodus 22:28)**
- **And you must say to them; This is what Yehowah the God of Israel has said; Cursed is the man that does not listen to the words of this covenant. (Jeremiah 11:3)**
- **This is what Yehowah has said; Cursed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in earthling man and actually makes flesh his arm, and whose heart turns away from Yehowah himself. (Jeremiah 17:5)**
- **Cursed** be the one that is carrying out the mission of Yehowah neglectfully, and **cursed** be the one that is holding back his sword from blood! **(Jeremiah 48:10)**
- **The related Hebrew noun, *me 'e-rah'*, occurs five times.**
- **Yehowah will send upon you the curse, confusion and rebuke in every undertaking of yours that you try to carry out, until you have been annihilated and have perished in a hurry, because of the badness of your practices in that you have forsaken me. (Deuteronomy 28:20)**
- **The curse of Yehowah is on the house of the wicked one, but the abiding place of the righteous ones he blesses. (Proverbs 3:33)**
- **He that is giving to the one of little means will have no want, but he that is hiding his eyes will get many curses. (Proverbs 28:27)**
- **If you will not listen, and if you will not lay it to heart to give glory to my name, Yehowah of armies has said; I shall also certainly send upon you the curse, and I will curse your**

blessings. Yes, I have even **curse**d the blessing, because you are not laying it to heart. (**Malachi 2:2**)

- With the **curse** you are **cursing** me, and me you are robbing, the nation in its entirety. (**Malachi 3:9**)
- The Bible usage of these words indicates a solemn pronouncement or a prediction of evil and, when made by God or by an authorized person, has a prophetic value and force. Joshua's **curse** made against any man who, in the future, might rebuild devastated Jericho was fulfilled many centuries later.
- Then Joshua had an oath pronounced at that particular time, saying, **Cursed** may the man be before Yehowah who gets up and does build this city, even Jericho. At the forfeit of his firstborn let him lay the foundation of it, and at the forfeit of his youngest let him put up its doors. (**Joshua 6:26**)
- In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho. At the forfeit of Abiram his firstborn he laid the foundation of it, and at the forfeit of Segub his youngest he put up its doors, according to Yehowah's word that he spoke by means of Joshua the son of Nun. (**1 Kings 16:34**)
- King Balak's requests for Balaam to **curse** Israel, however, were disapproved by Yehowah, and He caused blessings to be pronounced instead.
- In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho. At the forfeit of Abiram his firstborn he laid the foundation of it, and at the forfeit of Segub his youngest he put up its doors, according to Yehowah's word that he spoke by means of Joshua the son of Nun. (**1 Kings 16:34**)

### See Also EXECRATION

- 'A-lah', another **Hebrew** word rendered **oath** as well as **curse**, implies an **oath** that carries with it a **curse** as its penalty for violation of the oath, or because of the oaths proving to be false.
- At that time you will be cleared of obligation to me by oath when you get to my family, and if they will not give her to you, then you shall become free of obligation to me by **oath**. (**Genesis 24:41**) Footnote

- The priest must now make the woman swear with an **oath** involving **cursing**, and the priest must say to the woman; May Yehowah set you for a **cursing** and an **oath** in the midst of your people by Yehowah's letting your thigh fall away, and your belly swell. (**Numbers 5:21**)
- And the priest must write these **cursings** in the book and must wipe them out into the bitter water. (**Numbers 5:23**)
- When he has made her drink the water, it must also occur that if she has defiled herself in that she committed an act of unfaithfulness toward her husband, the water that brings a **curse** must then enter into her as something bitter, and her belly must swell, and her thigh must fall away, and the woman must become a **cursing** in among her people. (**Numbers 5:27**)
- And it must occur that when someone has heard the words of this oath, and he has blessed himself in his heart, saying; I shall come to have peace, although I shall walk in the stubbornness of my heart, with the intention of sweeping away the well-watered one along with the thirsty ones. (**Deuteronomy 29:19**)
- Yehowah will not want to forgive him, but then Yehowah's anger and his ardor will smoke against that man, and all the oath written in this book will certainly settle down on him, and Yehowah will indeed wipe out his name from under the heavens. (**Deuteronomy 29:20**)
- So Yehowah will have to separate him for calamity from all the tribes of Israel in accord with all the oath of the covenant that is written in this book of the Law. (**Deuteronomy 29:21**)
- This is what Yehowah has said; Here I am bringing calamity upon this place and its inhabitants, all the **curse**s that are written in the book that they read before the king of Judah. (**2 Chronicles 34:24**)
- When a man sins against his fellowman, and he actually lays a cursing upon him to bring him under liability to the **curse**, and he actually comes within the **curse** before your altar in this house. (**1 Kings 8:31**)
- Then may you yourself hear from the heavens, and you must act

and judge your servants by pronouncing the wicked one wicked by putting his way upon his own head, and by pronouncing the righteous one righteous by giving to him according to his own righteousness. (**1 Kings 8:32**)

**See Also OATH**

- In the Greek Scriptures the two basic words translated **curse** are *a-ra'* and *a-na'the-ma*, along with related words such as *ka-ta'ra*, *e-pi-ka-ta'ra-tos*, *ka-ta-ra'o-mai*, *ka-ta'the-ma*, *ka-ta-the-ma-ti'zo*.
- The Greek word *a-ra'*, has the meaning of an imprecation or a prayer calling down evil from a divine source. John uses the related *e-pa'ra-tos* in writing that the Pharisees viewed the common people who listened to Jesus as **accursed people** who did not know the Law.
- But this crowd that does not know the Law are **accursed people**. (**John 7:49**)
- By contrast, Paul showed that **all** the Jews needed to be redeemed from the **curse** of the Law covenant by Christ's becoming a curse for them through his death on the torture stake.
- For all those who depend upon works of Law are under a **curse**, for it is written. **Cursed** is every one that does not continue in all the things written in the scroll of the Law in order to do them. (**Galatians 3:10**)
- Christ by purchase released us from the **curse** of the Law by becoming a curse instead of us, because it is written: **Accursed** is every man hanged upon a stake. (**Galatians 3:13**)
- For all those who depend upon works of Law are under a **curse**, for it is written. **Cursed** is every one that does not continue in all the things written in the scroll of the Law in order to do them. (**Galatians 3:10**)
- Paul used Greek *e-pi-ka-ta'ra-tos* to translate the Hebrew word, *'a-rar'* the first word considered in this article, as found at;
- **Cursed** is the one who will not put the words of this Law in force by doing them. And all the people must say; Amen! (**Deuteronomy 27:26**)

- In verse 13 he used the same word to translate the **Hebrew** word *qela-lah'* something **accursed, malediction**, as found at;
- His dead body should not stay all night on the stake, but you should by all means bury him on that day, because something **accursed** of God is the one hung up, and you must not defile your soil, which Yehowah your God is giving you as an inheritance. (**Deuteronomy 21:23**)

### See Also MALEDICTION

- A form of the **Greek** word *ka-ta-ra'o-mai* is used to describe Jesus action in **cursing** the goat class;
- Then he will say; in turn, to those on his left; Be on your way from me, you who have been **curse**d, into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels. (**Matthew 25:41**)
- And also in instructing his followers to bless those **cursing** you.
- To bless those **cursing** you, to pray for those who are insulting you. (**Luke 6:28**)
- Paul and James used forms of the same word in giving like counsel at;
- Keep on blessing those who persecute, be blessing and do not be **cursing**. (**Romans 12:14**)
- With it we bless Yehowah, even the Father, and yet with it we **curse** men who have come into existence in the likeness of God. (**James 3:9**)
- Paul used the word *ka-ta'ra* in likening Christians who fall away after having partaken of Holy Spirit to the ground that is unresponsive to rain and that produces only thorns and thistles
- For example, the ground that drinks in the rain which often comes upon it, and that then brings forth vegetation suitable to those for whom it is also cultivated, receives in return a blessing from God. (**Hebrews 6:7**)
- But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is rejected and is near to being **curse**d, and it ends up with being burned. (**Hebrews 6:8**)



- While Peter uses the same word to describe as **accursed** those who are covetous, who have eyes full of adultery and entice unsteady souls.
- They have eyes full of adultery and unable to desist from sin, and they entice unsteady souls. They have a heart trained in covetousness. They are **accursed** children. (**2 Peter 2:14**)
- The **Greek** word *a-na'the-ma* literally means that which is laid up and originally applied to votive offerings laid up or set apart as sacred in a temple.
- Later, as certain ones were speaking concerning the temple, how it was adorned with fine stones and dedicated things. (**Luke 21:5**)
- Where a related word is used. In the Greek Scriptures the Bible writers use *a-na'the-ma* to apply to that which is **accursed** or subject to becoming **accursed** and, therefore, set apart as evil or execrated. Thus Paul wrote to the
  - However, even if we or an angel out of heaven were to declare to you as Good News something beyond what we declared to you as Good News, let him be **accursed**. (**Galatians 1:8**)
  - That they should consider as **accursed** anyone, even angels, who declared to them as Good News something contrary to that which they had received. Those who had no affection for the Lord were due to come under a similar designation.
  - If anyone has no affection for the Lord, let him be **accursed**. O our Lord, come! (**1 Corinthians 16:22**)
  - In his anguish over his fellow Israelites who had not accepted Christ, Paul said that he could even wish that he himself were separated as the **cursed** one from the Christ in their behalf.
  - For I could wish that I myself were separated as the **cursed** one from the Christ in behalf of my brothers, my relatives according to the flesh. (**Romans 9:3**)
  - In other cases *a-na'the-ma* is evidently used to refer to the declaring of an oath that, if not carried out or if proved false, was

intended to result in a **curse**, as in the case of the 40 men who formed the oath-bound conspiracy to kill Paul.

- Now when it became day, the Jews formed a **conspiracy** and bound themselves with a **curse**, saying they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. (**Acts of Apostles 23:12**)
- There were more than forty men that formed this **oath-bound conspiracy**. (**Acts of Apostles 23:13**)
- And they went to the chief priests and the older men and said, We have solemnly bound ourselves with a **curse** not to take a bite of food until we have killed Paul. (**Acts of Apostles 23:14**)
- Now, therefore, you together with the Sanhedrin make it clear to the military commander why he should bring him down to you as though you intended to determine more accurately the matters involving him. But before he gets near we will be ready to do away with him. (**Acts of Apostles 23:15**)
- Above all things, do not let them persuade you, for more than forty men of theirs are lying in wait for him, and they have bound themselves with a **curse** neither to eat nor to drink until they have done away with him, and they are now ready, waiting for the promise from you. (**Acts of Apostles 23:21**)
- The words *ka-ta-the-ma-ti'zo* and *a-na-the-ma-ti'zo* are used in connection with Peter's denial of Christ.
- Then he started to **curse** and swear; I do not know the man! And immediately a cock crowed. (**Matthew 26:74**)
- But he commenced to **curse** and swear: I do not know this man of whom you speak. (**Mark 14:71**)
- In effect, Peter was here saying that he wished he might be **cursed** or set apart as evil, if he knew the man.
- And no more will there be any **curse**. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his slaves will render him sacred service. (**Revelation 22:3**)

- The promise is made concerning the New Jerusalem that no more will there be any **curse** Greek, *ka-ta'the-ma* This appears to serve as a contrast with earthly Jerusalem, which did come under God's **curse**.
- It is likewise in sharp contrast to the **cursed** condition that results to the symbolic city Babylon the Great as a result of God's judicial decree against her. The **anathema** pronounced against her is evident from the command given at;
  - And I heard another voice out of heaven say; Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. (**Revelation 18:4**)
  - For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind. (**Revelation 18:5**)
  - Render to her even as she herself rendered, and do to her twice as much, yes, twice the number of the things she did. In the cup in which she put a mixture put twice as much of the mixture for her. (**Revelation 18:6**)
  - To the extent that she glorified herself and lived in shameless luxury, to that extent give her torment and mourning. For in her heart she keeps saying; I sit a queen, and I am no widow, and I shall never see mourning. (**Revelation 18:7**)
  - That is why in one day her plagues will come, death and mourning and famine, and she will be completely burned with fire, because Yehowah God, who judged her, is strong. (**Revelation 18:8**)
  - Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves, says Yehowah, and quit touching the unclean thing, and I will take you in. (**2 Corinthians 6:17**)
- In the **Greek Septuagint** the translators generally used *a-na'the-ma* to render the **Hebrew** *che'rem*.

**See Also DEVOTED THING**