

How to Recognize a Curse



From Curse to Blessing (Part 3)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again sharing on this week's vitally important theme: "From Curse to Blessing."

But first, let me say "Thank you" to those of you who have been writing to me. Before I finish this talk, we'll be giving you a mailing address to which you may write. Feel free to share with us your personal needs, your problems, your prayer requests. Each month our listeners write in to tell us of prayer requests that have been wonderfully answered.

Now, back to our theme, "From Curse to Blessing."

I'm sharing this week on one of the most important provisions made for us through the sacrificial death of Jesus. It's stated very clearly by the apostle Paul in Galatians 3:13–14:

> "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus..." (NKJ)

I pointed out that the essence of what took place when Jesus died on the cross was a divinely-ordained exchange. The evil due by justice to us came upon Jesus that the good due to the obedience of Jesus might be offered to us. Here is one clear aspect of this exchange—Jesus was made a curse that we might be redeemed from the curse and receive the blessing. Actually Paul lays great emphasis on the word "curse." In Galatians 3:13, it occurs three times. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree')." Then he goes on, "that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles." I find that most Christians wherever I go do not understand this particular provision made by God and therefore they have not availed themselves of it. I've pointed out previously that both blessings and curses are real. It's illogical to say that you believe in blessings but not in curses. That's like saying, "I believe in day but not in night," or, "I believe in heat but not in cold." Both of them are real; both are major themes of Scripture.

I've explained, too, that they are words charged with supernatural power for good or evil and, once released, they generally continue on from generation to generation until in some way they are revoked or canceled. Hence, there can be forces at work in our lives that were set in motion in previous generations, even many centuries previously. I gave two examples in my previous talk from Scottish history, of two Scottish clans that had curses pronounced on them and I met the descendants more than three centuries later who were still struggling against the effects of those curses.

Today I'm going to give you guidelines that will help you to recognize if there is a curse at work in your life and that's extremely important for you. It's very probable that you've been struggling against something which you never really were able to master. And the thing you're struggling against is a curse and if you only look in your own lifetime you may not find the cause of it, therefore, let me give you, first of all, a general picture of what a curse is like. I'll just use the best kind of descriptive language that I can and I trust that the Holy Spirit will quicken to you whatever you particularly need to understand.

A curse is something like a dark shadow or an evil hand from the past—oppressing, pressing you down, holding you back, tripping you up, and propelling you in a direction you do not really wish to take. I think I'm going to say that again: A dark shadow or an evil hand from the past—oppressing, pressing you down, holding you back, tripping you up, propelling you in a direction you really do not wish to take. Or, you could compare it to a negative atmosphere that surrounds which seems to be stronger at some times than others but you're never totally free from it.

If I were to choose one key word, it would be the word "frustration." For example, you reach a certain level of achievement or progress in your life, you seem to have all the needed qualifications for success, yet something goes wrong. So you start again, you reach the same level, then something goes wrong again. And this seems to be the pattern of your life and yet there's no obvious reason for it. I cannot tell you how many people I've dealt with who have told me a life story that has that pattern. There can be many different details, but the pattern is there. And then often they will say something like, "The same thing used to happen in my father's life," or, "I remember my grandfather telling me about this or that." And somehow they're vaguely aware that this thing didn't begin in their own lifetime.

This pattern may occur in various areas—in the area of business, personal relationships (especially marriage and family), a career, finance, or health. In all probability whatever area it may be, that dark shadow or evil hand is a curse over your life, perhaps going back many generations.

Now let me give you some specific forms that curses may take. If you want to study blessings and curses in the Bible there is one chapter above all others that you must turn to and study and that is Deuteronomy, chapter 28. This chapter contains sixty-eight verses. The first fourteen verses are blessings and the remaining fifty-four verses are curses. And I think anybody that has a problem in this area should take time to study and meditate on and pray over that chapter. I will give you a very brief summation, first of all, of the blessings and then of the curses. But I am not asking anybody to accept my summation. I would prefer that you go to the chapter for yourself and read it through carefully, but this is the summation that I have arrived at.

First of all, blessings: exaltation (being lifted up), health, reproductiveness in every area, prosperity, victory, and God's favor.

The curses essentially are the opposite: humiliation, failure to reproduce (and I want to say barrenness in almost any area is nearly always the outworking of a curse)… failure to reproduce, mental and physical sickness, family breakdown, poverty, defeat, oppression, failure, God's disfavor.

In the connection with the blessings, Moses said to Israel, "If God's blessing is on your life, you'll be the head and not the tail; you'll be above and not beneath." That's the difference. I ask people many times, "Are you living like a head or a tail? Are you taking the initiative, are you making the decisions, or are you just being dragged around like a tail by forces that you have no control over? Are you living above or are you living under?"

I heard about two Christians once who met one another and one said to the other, "Brother, how are you doing?" The other one answered, "Well, under the circumstances, I'm not doing too badly." And the first one said, "Well, brother, what are you doing under the circumstances?" You shouldn't be under the circumstances. If the blessing of God is in your life, you'll be above the circumstances, not under them.

Now all these apply more often to a family, a community or a nation than an individual. In other words, both blessings and curses are not limited normally to a single individual but they are related to a family or a community or a nation or sometimes a whole civilization.

Now, in dealing with people in this area—and I've had pretty extensive experience, and I tell you what I'm teaching today is out of experience, not theory—I made my own list of curses or indications of curses that I have found in the lives of

people. This was done purely on the basis of experience and observation but I'll just give you my own personal list. It's amazing how close it is to Deuteronomy, chapter 28. So I have here seven common indications that there's a curse over a person's life.

Number 1. Mental and/or emotional breakdown.

Number 2. Repeated or chronic sicknesses, especially if they're hereditary or without clear medical diagnosis.

Number 3. Repeated miscarriages or related female problems.

Number 4. The breakdown of marriage and family alienation, where a family falls apart.

Number 5. Continuing financial insufficiency, especially where the income appears to be sufficient. You see, a little with God's blessing does more than a lot with a curse on it.

Number 6. Being accident prone. Oh, how common this is!

Number 7. In a family, a history of suicides or unnatural deaths.

Now, let me just tell you in closing a little incident that awakened me to this. I had been teaching in a church, I'd come to the end of my preaching, I was standing behind the pulpit just wondering what to do next. I saw a family—father, mother and teen-aged daughter—on the front row on my left. God seemed to say to me, "There's a curse over that family." So I walked up to the father and said, "Sir, God has shown me there's a curse over your family. Would you like me to release you from it in the name of Jesus?" He immediately said, "Yes." I stepped back behind the pulpit, said a short prayer, saw a visible physical reaction in each one as I released them from the curse. Then I noticed that the girl, about 18 years old, had her left leg in a cast from the thigh down to the bottom of the foot. So I stepped back and said to the father, "Would you like me to pray for your daughter's leg?" He said, "Yes, but you need to know she's broken the same leg three times in eighteen months and that doctors say it will not heal." Now if I heard that today, I'd know immediately: a curse. That's unnatural to break the same leg three times in eighteen months. So I prayed for the leg and to cut a story short, the next time she went back to the hospital, the leg was healed. But as I meditated on it, I realized that God had shown me there was a curse in that family because, if the curse had not been revoked the leg would not have been healed. The curse was the barrier to the healing of the leg. And many, many times a curse is a barrier to people receiving healing.

Well, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. Tomorrow I'll be sharing with you the kinds of things that cause either blessings or curses in a person's life.

Radio Program

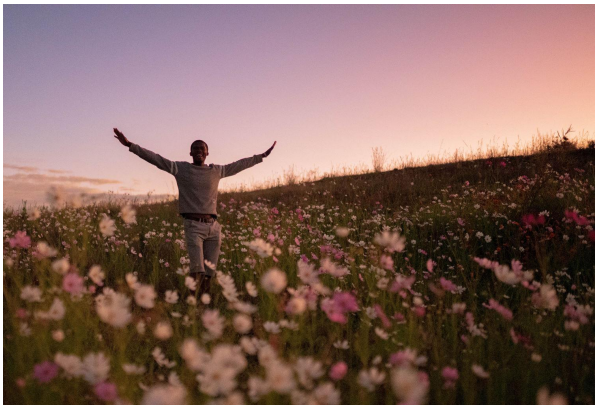
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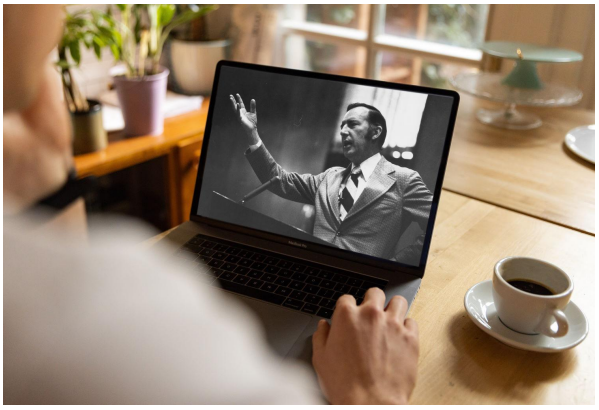
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