

# Malachi 3:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

## Analysis

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**Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.**

This verse pronounces covenant curse upon Israel for robbing God through withheld tithes (v. 8). The Hebrew emphasizes severity: **cursed with a curse** (בָּמְאָה אָתָּם נִאָרִים, bam-me'erah atem ne'arim)—literally "with the curse you are cursed," using repetition for intensity. This recalls Deuteronomy 28's covenant curses for disobedience: drought, crop failure, frustration in labor, economic futility.

The phrase **even this whole nation** (וְאַתֶּה אָתָּם קָבְעִים בְּגֹויָה כָּלָה), ve'oti atem qov'im hagoy kullo) indicates the problem was systemic, not isolated—corporate sin bringing corporate judgment. When the entire nation withholds tithes, the entire worship infrastructure collapses: no support for Levites and priests, no temple maintenance, declining spiritual leadership, increasing apostasy. God's use of **גֹוי** (goy, "nation") rather than **עַם** (am, "people") is striking—goy typically refers to Gentile nations. Perhaps God implies that by acting like pagan nations rather than covenant people, Israel has forfeited its distinctive status.

Yet even in pronouncing curse, God provides remedy: verse 10 invites Israel to test Him by bringing full tithes, promising blessing beyond measure. The curse isn't final or arbitrary but corrective, designed to drive Israel to repentance. Christ became a curse for us (Galatians 3:13), bearing the covenant curse we deserved, so that through faith we receive blessing instead of curse. Believers no longer live under Deuteronomy 28's curses but under the new covenant's blessings in Christ.

## Historical Context

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Deuteronomy 28 laid out covenant blessings for obedience (vv. 1-14) and curses for disobedience (vv. 15-68). Malachi's generation experienced these curses: their hard labor produced little (Haggai 1:6), drought afflicted the land (Malachi 3:11), and economic hardship prevailed. Rather than recognizing this as covenant curse prompting repentance, they blamed God and complained about serving Him (3:14-15). The irony is profound: they withheld tithes hoping to preserve resources, but this very disobedience triggered curses that ensured scarcity. Obedience would have brought the abundance they desperately needed. This pattern appears throughout Israel's history—disobedience brings judgment, which should prompt repentance, leading to restoration. But often pride and spiritual blindness prevent the people from seeing the connection between their sin and their suffering. The same dynamic appears in church history: spiritual decline and worldliness often correlate with decreased giving and weakened ministry support.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How do we discern whether difficulties we face are simply trials to endure or consequences of disobedience requiring repentance?
2. What does it mean that Christ became a curse for us, and how does this free us from covenant curse?
3. How might corporate sin in a church or nation bring corporate consequences, and what is our responsibility in such situations?

## Interlinear Text

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לְכַטְתָּם וְאַתָּה בְּמִזְבֵּחַ  
with a curse H859 Ye are cursed H853 H859 for ye have robbed H6906

בָּנָה וְאַתָּה בְּנָה  
me even this whole nation H3605 H1471

## Additional Cross-References

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**Malachi 2:2** (Curse): 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.

**Joshua 22:20** (Curse): 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.

**Isaiah 43:28** (Curse): Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

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