



Deuteronomy 28:30-37

The Blessings and the Curses, Part III

November 21st, 2021

³⁰ "You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. ³¹ Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue them. ³² Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all day long; and there shall be no strength in your hand. ³³ A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. ³⁴ So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. ³⁵ The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

³⁶ "The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods—wood and stone. ³⁷ And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.

This is our third Deuteronomy 28 sermon, and the second involving the curses that would be laid upon Israel for their failure to heed the word of the Lord and to honor Him as He has set forth. These are words of tragedy, terror, loss, destruction, anguish, and horror.

And yet, if one looks at them in the proper light, they are words of victory and of the enormity of what God has done in Christ. They drip with the richness of His power, ability, and capability.

While typing the sermon you are now presented with, which was on 13 September 2021, I was so elated after typing the first verse that I did something I rarely do. I stopped and sent it to Sergio.

This is something I don't like doing, meaning sharing sermon content before the thing is presented. This is for several reasons, but one is simply that I want the presentation to not be spoiled for people by their own reading or hearing what I have to present.

You know I get excited by sermon content, and I often stop with the written notes and add in all kinds of comments off the top of my head during the sermon. That will not have the same force or impact if what is presented on Sunday has already been shared with someone.

Along with that, I can think of probably 3-5 reasons that I don't want to share content in advance. But with such a mournful passage, and yet with such a delightful anticipation of Christ presented, even in the very first verse, I felt like exploding with joy. And so, I shared it...

Text Verse: "*Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. ⁹⁸ You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; For they are ever with me. ⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation.*" Psalm 119:97-99

None of my instructors, meaning the commentators I read each week for sermon information, will normally make the connections to the Lord that are so obviously staring at us when the words are carefully considered.

At times, John Gill will come up with some Christological connection, but he will often take it down the wrong path, so you have to be careful with his thoughts. But they may be just right enough to send you down the correct avenue.

This is, although much less so, at times true with the others I refer to. They are very good at mechanical analyses of what is going on, and also of historical truths that relate to whatever is said. But more than anything, and I am certain of this, the Lord wants us to find how Scripture points to Christ directly, or how what He has done now includes us, or even Israel of the future.

In other words, the highest form of analyzing the Old Testament Scriptures is found in typology. Jesus and the apostles hint at this in Luke 24:27, John 5:39 and John 5:46, Acts 8:35, and so on. The epistles reveal this to us as well when the apostles take actual examples of Scripture and equate them directly to Christ, or spiritual truths relating to Christ.

Paul says the Rock in the wilderness was Christ. He says Christ is our Passover Lamb, a sentiment repeated through comparison by Peter and John, Paul equates Sarah and Hagar as the two covenants in Galatians 4, demonstrating how what Christ has done is superior to the Mosaic code.

On and on it goes. This is the heart of what God has placed into the living word. It is what causes the life to pulse through it and take form, and it is the Spirit that brings it to life! This is the highest form of interpretation, if we can accurately place it into words.

When Sergio received the comment from our first verse (verse 30), he said, “WOW. WHAT A PICTURE OF CHRIST and HIS BRIDE!” He then noted Rhoda’s excitement about it too. But not wanting to spoil the rest of the sermon, and yet keep them excited about wanting to know more when it is published, a few minutes later, I added in “More Christ in 31! What a treasure.”

Yes, great treasure is to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Oppressed and Crushed Continually (verses 30-34)

³⁰ “**You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her;**

The three clauses of this verse, though seemingly random thoughts, are actually part of one thought process. The first is that of the destruction of a coming marriage, one that has already gone through the betrothal process.

The Hebrew will, at times, have a written form, and then a form that is spoken audibly when the verse is read. The written form of these words is much more violent, saying, “You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall ravish her.”

It is a new word in Scripture, *shagel*, signifying “to violate,” or “to ravish.” Thus, the idea is of her being forcibly taken away and raped. The other three uses of the word are found in Isaiah 13:16, Jeremiah 3:2, and Zechariah 14:2.

The sentiment being conveyed is obvious. There will be horror for every betrothed couple. For the man, there will be no joy of marriage, and for the woman, there will be the terror of being violated, accompanied by all of the negatives associated with such treatment – captivity, sexual bondage, carrying the child of an invader, or even being raped, tortured, and killed.

The man had made plans and designs for this wife, but they are to be robbed from him. And more...

^{30 (con't)} **you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it;**

The idea of building a house is that of preparing for married life. In a betrothal contract, the girl’s father will want her to be tended to in a proper fashion. As such, he may say, “Yes, you can have my daughter, but you need to have suitable accommodations for her before you receive her. It is the thought of Jesus’ words to his followers –

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know.” John 14:1-5

The Lord’s people are His betrothed, as Paul explicitly says in 2 Corinthians 11:2 –

“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

As such, Christ is preparing a place for His betrothed. When He is ready and when she is ready (Romans 11:25), Christ will return to consummate the marriage. For disobedient Israel, the hopes of such a time of joy will be taken from them by their foes. But more...

^{30 (con't)} **you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes.**

This must be paraphrased to understand what is being conveyed. It reads: *kerem tita v'lo tekhalenu* – “vineyard you shall plant, and no you shall eat as common.” The verb *khalal* signifies to bore or pierce, and thus to begin. But it is also frequently translated as “profane.” The idea here is that of the dedication of fruit to the Lord –

“When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. It shall not be eaten.²⁴ But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD.²⁵ And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I am the LORD your God.” Leviticus 19:23-25

The word is explicitly stated in Deuteronomy 20 –

“Also what man is there who has planted a vineyard and **has not eaten of it?** Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man eat of it.”

-Deuteronomy 20:6

The man cannot eat of the fruit until the set time, lest he profane it. Thus, he can begin to eat once that period is complete because the fruit has gone from holy to the Lord to common.

In this, the man has his wife picked out and the betrothal is arranged. He is building his house for their home. Further, he has arranged for income, food, and joy through the planting of a vineyard.

They anticipated having raisins, wine, and surplus to sell. But only after the fruit has gone through its dedication process. Until then, he will not partake of the “wine *that* makes glad the heart of man” (Psalm 104:15).

This process would have been followed by those, still under the law, at Jesus’ time. His parable of the vinedressers becomes clearer when taken in relation to this precept –

“A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time.¹⁰ Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed.¹¹ Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed.¹² And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast him out.

¹³ “Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son.

Probably they will respect him when they see him.’¹⁴ But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.’¹⁵ So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them?¹⁶ He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others.” Luke 20:9-17

This then helps make understandable the words of the Lord just prior to His crucifixion –

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves;¹⁸ for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” Luke 22:17, 18

The betrothed of the Lord is being prepared, the house is being built, and the vineyard is set apart as holy to the Lord. Someday, what Israel is denied because of disobedience, the Lord will receive in its fulness because of His obedience.

As for Israel, the verse conveys the utter futility of the situation. If the house is built, and if the vineyard has fruit that can be eaten, then he has gone through all of the time, expectation, and labors of starting out his life with his betrothed. And yet, all of it will be taken from him.

³¹Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it;

The literal truth of this is terrible. The ox is an animal that has productive value for work on the land. This would be robbed of disobedient Israel. The labors would be multiplied greatly in plowing the fields.

But oxen are also clean animals used for food, lots of it, and which are of a healthy nature. It is an animal that could be used for feeding a large party of friends at a festive gathering, like a feast day or a wedding. And this is what Jesus refers to in Matthew –

“And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: ²‘The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,³ and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.⁴ Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.”’” Matthew 22:1-4

What Israel will be denied because of disobedience, the Lord will share with others because of their faith in Him.

^{31 (con't)} **your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you;**

The donkey is an unclean animal, but it is one that provides a great deal of benefit. It is an easy mode of transportation, it is used for carrying heavy burdens, it can be used in plowing, and so on. To take the donkey is to deprive the man of the comforts of possessing a donkey.

In the case of Christ, apart from His crown of thorns, there are few things that convey the idea of Israel's humble King more poignantly than the donkey –

“Fear not, daughter of Zion;
Behold, your King is coming,
Sitting on a donkey’s colt.” John 12:15

In their disobedience, the symbol of Israel’s king would be stripped from them and not restored to them. When He returns to them, it will not be on a donkey, but on a white horse. The symbolism of Deuteronomy speaks forth the prophetic future.

^{31 (con't)} **your sheep shall be given to your enemies,**

Sheep are given to man for food, for clothing, for gaining capital wealth, and so on. In Israel’s disobedience, these will be ripped from them, depriving them of all the benefit they could have possessed, but which they squandered away.

And this is more than a literal occurrence. There is no better metaphor of God’s people in Scripture than that of sheep. It is used consistently in the Old and New Testaments as such. Having sheep implies being a shepherd. Israel’s sheep would be taken from the bad shepherds and would be given to their true Shepherd –

“I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. ¹⁵ As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.” John 10:14-16

^{31 (con't)} **and you shall have no one to rescue them.**

v’ain movoshia – “And no savior for you.” It is the same words as in verse 29 which closed out our verses last week. It is also the same word, in the same form, as is found in the prophetic verse of Isaiah 19 that anticipates the coming Messiah –

“And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of the oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them.” Isaiah 19:20

Israel would reject the Lord Yehovah, they would reject His incarnation in the Person of Jesus, and their sheep would be taken from them while leaving them with no Savior. Next...

³² Your sons and your daughters *shall be given to another people*,

The curses continue and multiply in tragedy with these words. The very fruit of the womb, and the continuance of the name, will be taken from Israel for their failure to uphold and perform the word of the Lord.

This idea of having one’s children taken from someone has been so foreign to us in our modern society that only in the very recent past has this started to be introduced into our thinking, with the exception of being for the gravest of reasons or the most serious of offenses.

With the introduction of the current “plague” surrounding us, lefties in the government, news media, judiciary, and academia are proposing children be robbed away from their parents if they are unwilling to be vaccinated. Against that, the outcry has been great due to the unthinkable nature of it.

However, these words have literally been fulfilled again and again in Israel’s history. Adam Clarke provides one example of it –

“In several countries, particularly in Spain and Portugal, the children of the Jews have been taken from them by order of government, and educated in the Popish faith. There have been some instances of Jewish children being taken from their parents even in Protestant countries.” Adam Clarke

In such an occurrence, Moses woefully says...

^{32 (con't)} and your eyes shall look and fail *with longing* for them all day long;

The idea of the people simply sitting and staring comes to mind. It is like the young man who waits and waits for the girlfriend who changed her mind and isn’t coming to a date at the movies, but it goes on from day to day.

The moments tick by, the eyes are lifted yet again, they scan the horizon, they peek into the wooded forest, they search through the wavering mirage hanging over the desert – whatever

the surroundings, there is no movement of son or daughter to catch the attention of the eyes. The anguish of loss continues on.

In what Moses says, there is a word found only once in the Bible, the adjective *kaleh*. Rather than, “your eyes shall look and fail,” it more precisely reads, “and your eyes look, and failingly, for them.” There is only pining and grief.

The sense is that of being utterly destitute of any hope. There is not even a glimpse of them except in the anguished memory of the mind. But the Lord, through Moses, told Israel in advance that this would be the case. They cannot blame Him. Even if these words were not recorded, they would have no case against Him. How much more is it so when they were warned ahead of time.

The words of Jeremiah refer to such an occasion which is then picked up by Matthew and applied to the time of Christ’s advent. But at the time of Jeremiah, it was both a reality and also a point upon which the Lord promised restoration –

“Thus says the LORD: ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted for her children, Because they are no more.’¹⁶ Thus says the LORD: ‘Refrain your voice from weeping, And your eyes from tears; For your work shall be rewarded, says the LORD, And they shall come back from the land of the enemy.¹⁷ There is hope in your future, says the LORD, That your children shall come back to their own border.’” Jeremiah 31:15-17

However, Moses speaks only of loss, not restoration. The mournful words would occur repeatedly in Israel’s history because of their failure to honor the Lord. In this despondent state, Moses says...

^{32 (con't)} **and there shall be no strength in your hand.**

vain l'el yadekha – “and no to God your hand.” It is a proverbial expression found also in Genesis 31:29, Proverbs 3:27, and Micah 2:1. Most translations express the word *el*, or God, as simply reflecting might, strength, or power. But that could be rendered in other ways.

Rather, this is a way of conveying that there is no ability to lift a hand to Him, and thus there is no help to be expected from Him. This devastating curse that will befall Israel because of disobedience is reversed in Christ. Where children will be removed from them, He will instead be given them –

“Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.” Hebrews 2:13

With this realized, the author immediately continues. Where there was no ability for Israel to lift a hand to God in the loss of their children, Christ possessed the power of God to secure release for His children –

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:14, 15

³³A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.

The words of this verse were taken and expanded upon by the Lord through Jeremiah –

“Behold, I will bring a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel,’ says the LORD. ‘It is a mighty nation, It is an ancient nation, A nation whose language you do not know, Nor can you understand what they say.¹⁶ Their quiver is like an open tomb; They are all mighty men.¹⁷ And they shall eat up your harvest and your bread, Which your sons and daughters should eat.

They shall eat up your flocks and your herds; They shall eat up your vines and your fig trees; They shall destroy your fortified cities, In which you trust, with the sword.”

-Jeremiah 5:15-17

The labors of Israel would be taken from them and consumed by their enemies, and in the devastation from their hands, there would be oppression and crushing. This is the lot for Israel who failed to bear fruit for the Lord. Their fruit would be taken from them.

The words of this verse go beyond Jeremiah (tangible fruit), and the Babylonian exile though. Christ conveys the same thoughts found in this verse concerning the spiritual fruit Israel was to bear and how He would take it from them –

“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.⁴⁴ And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.” Matthew 21:43, 44

Everything in Israel’s physical existence, again and again, points to spiritual truth in their intended spiritual role. But the law stood against them. Only in Christ can that which is pleasing to God be found. For Israel, the woe continues from Moses’ words...

³⁴So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see.

This verse is to be given as a summary result based on the previous verses. In what happened to them, they would be driven mad.

In this is a new word, *shaga*. It is a verb signifying raving through insanity. What the eyes will behold will madden the mind. Only confusion, disorder, and an inability to grasp reality will be the result of what will come upon the people for simply failing to hold to the law set before them.

When things are going well, such a thought is inconceivable. But that is what makes it so terrible when such things do occur. In the past year, because of the things that have come upon the world through hyping of the current “plague,” this has literally come true in countless minds. Many people have completely lost control of their senses.

If this is true when there is only minimal danger in reality, imagine what it was like for Israel when true dangers suddenly swept over them. And as soon as they would become reestablished in a new land and with a new direction, the sword of the Lord would come out and sweep over them again.

Even for two millennia, this has come to pass. John Gill refers to a literal fulfillment of these exact words of Moses –

“In Germany, in their rage and madness, they burnt a city and themselves in it; and, in the same country, being summoned by an edict to change their religion, or to be burnt, they agreed to meet together in a certain house, and destroy one another; and first parents killed their children, and husbands their wives, and then killed themselves; leaving only one person to be their doorkeeper, who finished the tragedy by destroying himself, as their own historian relates.” John Gill

If only they heeded the words of Moses, all of this would have been avoided. But their eyes have been blinded and their minds have been brought to insanity. John Lange pithily sums up this verse, saying, “What it must see with the eye of the body, takes away the eye of the spirit.”

This is the result of a state of *no hope*. When all is crushed, destroyed, or taken away for a people with no hope, then only maddening hopelessness is left. They had abandoned the Lord, and so the Lord abandoned them.

But in Christ is the victory. And in Him, the eyes see what Israel could not see. No matter what state a grounded believer finds himself in, there is still the state of unshakeable faith, and thus nonremovable hope. Paul reveals this to us –

"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come." Ephesians 1:15-21

The terror of a life with no hope, one which leads only to madness in the eyes that behold such catastrophe, is perfectly replaced with hope leading to eyes of understanding that Christ has, in fact, triumphed over the law, over the curse, and over the state of death that man has faced since his first father.

The choice is yours what shall come upon you
You are told in advance how it can go well
If you follow My words and are faithful and true
You will find heaven and you will avoid hell

I offer you what is good; I offer you what is right
You are told in advance how it can go well
Be diligent by day, and be obedient at night
And you will find heaven instead of ending in hell

Be faithful to the word, learn from it what to do
I assure you in this, you will do well
Follow it and find My Son, given for you
In Him you will find heaven, without Him there is only hell

Oh, Israel! Come to the everlasting well
And drink of the Water that will keep you from hell

II. An Astonishment, a Proverb, and a Byword (verses 35-37)

³⁵ The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed,

Here, the *shekkin*, or “boil” is brought up again. It is the sixth plague to have fallen on Egypt. It was considered a leprous ailment as defined in Leviticus 13. It was also just mentioned in verse 27, last week. It would make such a person unclean and defiled. As such, he would be excluded from fellowship within the society.

As the words continue in the singular, you Israel, it is saying that Israel would “be cut off from covenant union with God” (Pulpit Commentary). This exact affliction, in this exact manner, is what Job was afflicted with –

“So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes.” Job 2:7, 8

Because it specifies the knees and legs, the idea being conveyed is an inability to bow, kneel, or prostrate oneself. Thus, it speaks of punishment upon Israel for failing to render to the Lord such obeisance. What they deprived Him of, He punishes them with in like manner. Further, Moses says...

^{35 (con't)} **and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.**

mi'kaph raglekha v'ad qadedodekha – “from sole your foot and until crown your head. The idea is that of authority (that which is below the sole of the foot) and honor (the crown of the head). That is seen, for example, in the blessing of Jacob upon Joseph, and which is substantially repeated by Moses later in Deuteronomy –

“The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.

They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.” Genesis 49:26

Israel is punished for their lack of honoring the Lord, they have been stripped of authority, and they have been deprived of honor. Exactly the opposite is said of Christ who prevailed where Israel failed –

“You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. ⁸ You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” Hebrews 2:7, 8

Christ always honored His Father (John 8:49), He submitted Himself to His will (Hebrews 10:7), and He was perfectly obedient to His law (Romans 10:4). In this, unlike Israel who was crowned with shame and the covenant curses, thus losing their right to kingdom authority, He was crowned with glory and honor and received authority over all of God’s kingdom.

³⁶ “The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you

Like in verses 8 and 21, the first word of the verse is a jussive: *yolek Yehovah otekha v'eth malkekha asher taqim alekha* – “May cause to walk Yehovah you and king whom you set over you.” A jussive is basically an indirect command. Moses is calling out for the Lord to do this in response to Israel’s rebellion.

The words continue in the singular. Moses is not saying, “If this guy doesn’t pay heed, then may this happen.” Individual transgressions were to be handled by the individual in personal repentance, or by the community concerning a serious infraction.

Rather, Moses is calling for the Lord to directly act when the nation turns from Him and does not turn back. “May the entire nation, inclusive of the king who has so grossly failed in his responsibilities, to be caused to walk...”

^{36 (con't)} to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known,

The meaning is exile. It is the gravest punishment national Israel could expect. However, this does not mean it is the final punishment they could expect. To be removed from the land signified a total rejection of them as a people fit for being in the presence of the Lord.

While in exile, they would continue to receive the covenant punishments detailed here and elsewhere in the law. They had become unclean, and they were to be removed from His presence.

However, it DOES NOT mean, as replacement theologians claim, a total rejection of the people – thus violating the covenant by the Lord. He has promised to keep them as a people forever. But in their state of disobedience, He has promised to do so apart from His land, and apart from a right covenant relationship.

This occurred at various points in Israel’s history, both to the northern tribes and to the southern tribes, such as at the time of Zedekiah the king –

“Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.¹⁹ He also did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.²⁰ For because of the anger of the LORD this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.” 2 Kings 24:18-20

& then...

"Then the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war fled at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were still encamped all around against the city. And the king went by way of the plain.⁵ But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him.⁶ So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they pronounced judgment on him.⁷ Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon." 2 Kings 25:4-7

In this state of exile...

^{36 (con't)} **and there you shall serve other gods—wood and stone.**

This was certainly voluntary for most, and it continues to be voluntary for many even to this day. Statues of Buddha and Krishna adorn Jewish homes throughout the world and in homes found in Israel. But it was also involuntary as well. Such an event is recorded in Daniel –

"To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages,⁵ that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up;⁶ and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Daniel 3:4-6

What happened to Israel, Yehovah's firstborn son (Exodus 4:22), who was exiled from their kingdom – inclusive of the king who sat over them – is set in complete contrast to Christ. Where they were sent to worship other gods, we see how Jesus, God's only begotten Son (John 3:16), prevailed and is granted a permanent kingship over all of the kings of the earth.

The entire 2nd Psalm refers to this –

Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing?² The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,³ "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."⁴ He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision.⁵ Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure:⁶ "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."⁷ "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'¹⁰ Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth.¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling.¹² Kiss the Son, lest He be

angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him. Psalm 2

While Israel and her failed kings served other kings and gods of wood and stone, Christ – the Lord God – is served by other kings. The contrast is complete between the two.

For Israel, in their state of exile, Moses is quite clear about how they would be considered by those nations they were exiled to or fled to...

³⁷ And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword

Here, the exact opposite of verse 10 is seen. If Israel obeys...

"Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you." Deuteronomy 28:10

However, in their disobedience and time of cursing, instead of being called by the name of the Lord, Moses speaks out three forms of derision by which they will be called:

Shamah. It is a new word, a noun ultimately coming from a root signifying "to stun." Thus, it speaks of an astonishment, a waste, a desolation, a horror, and so on. The vast number of uses will be found in the book of Jeremiah.

This is not speaking of the land, but of the people. They will be called this term, signifying that so pervasive is their state of horror that they will even be considered unclean among, and to, the Gentiles.

Whereas the Jews kept separate from and wouldn't eat or even associate with Gentiles (see Acts 10:28), in their dispersion, they would be considered so unclean that the Gentiles would not venture to eat or associate with them.

Mashal. This is a proverb or parable. It is a pithy saying, usually as a lesson of what to do or what not to do. Israel, in their exile would become a lesson to the nations of how not to act and how not to treat the Lord. Psalm 44 shows that exactly this occurred to Israel –

"You make us a reproach to our neighbors, A scorn and a derision to those all around us.

¹⁴ You make us a **byword** among the nations, A shaking of the head among the peoples.

¹⁵ My dishonor is continually before me, And the shame of my face has covered me."

-Psalm 44:13-15

Sheninah. It is also a new noun coming from a word signifying to sharpen or pierce. Thus, it is something pointed, and hence a taunt – as if a word that pokes at a person. One might think of the way people deride the Jews with a multitude of expletives that I can't repeat lest YouTube filters were to pick them up and ban the sermon for simply saying them.

One can see a Jew walking down the road and a group of people calling out all of these names, exactly as it continues to happen to this day. And, according to Moses, it is all a self-inflicted wound.

The ADL spends innumerable hours defending the Jewish people. But when they keep putting out heroes like Chuck Schumer; Jerry Nadler, and a continuous stream of really unlikeable people who have no care at all for the Lord who established them; when they continue to promote every perversion one can think of; when they jubilantly exult in the murder of the unborn; and so on; the prophetic words of the Lord, through Moses, are consistently and continuously vindicated.

Israel need only look in the mirror to discern why all of the calamities of their history have come upon them...

*^{37 (fin)} **among all nations where the LORD will drive you.**

They have sat, and many still sit, in synagogues in almost every nation of the world. They read the words of Moses which are fulfilled in their sitting, and they accept no responsibility for the lengthy and continuous times of trial that they have faced.

Until they search out and discover the “why” of their state, they will never stop facing the horrors that have plagued them for these past two thousand years. This is their sadness, this is their misery, and this is based upon the prophetic warning of Moses. “Israel, pay heed lest all this trouble and terror fall upon you.”

In contrast to them, being an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among the nations because of their disobedience, we see the complete and absolute contrast to them in the Lord Jesus who perfectly fulfilled what Israel so miserably failed at...

“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:9-11

His name alone is exalted because He alone accomplished what Israel was given opportunity to work out. But the lesson had to be brought forth, and Israel was chosen for it to be so. In their choosing, the offer was made, and in the offering, they also agreed.

Though the words and the sadness are highlighted in them, they are only a reflection of each and every one of us. Their life under the law is for our instruction and learning as well as for them. The law was given to lead us to the Door, but it is we who must open it and pass through.

As individuals, some of them have – along with many, many Gentiles. As a nation, they have yet to do so. Until they do, terrible times remain ahead for them. But God has covenanted with them, the Lord has stated that it will happen, and the word testifies to the truth of this.

For now, pray for Israel the nation as you would for any individual you care for. They carry a very heavy burden that they don't even seem to realize they are still obligated to. Yes, pray for Israel, and praise be to God for Jesus Christ our Lord who has made access to our heavenly Father available once again. Praise God for His grace that is found in Jesus Christ our Lord. And all of God's people say... Amen.

Closing Verse: *"And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."*
John 1:16-18

Next Week: Deuteronomy 28:38-44 *More curses to come in these verses, yes plenty more...*
(The Blessings and the Curses, **Part IV**) (80th Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Blessings and the Curses, Part III

"You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her
You shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it
You shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes
A dismal future, you must admit

Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall
-----not eat of it
Your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you
-----and shall not to you be restored

Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have

-----no one to rescue them

Because my words of law you have ignored

Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people

And your eyes shall look and fail, please understand

With longing for them all day long

And there shall be no strength in your hand

A nation whom you have not known

Shall eat the fruit of your land, so it will be

And the produce of your labor

And you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually

So you shall be driven mad, yes to insanity

Because of the sight which your eyes see

The LORD will strike you in the knees

And on the legs, something you will dread

With severe boils which cannot be healed

And from the sole of your foot to the top of your head

"The LORD will bring you, and the king whom you set over you

To a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known

And there you shall serve other gods

Yes, you shall serve other gods—wood and stone

And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword

-----a sad fate it is true

Among all nations where the LORD will drive you

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word

Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You

May we carefully heed each thing we have heard

Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone

We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise

Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown

Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...