



Deuteronomy 28:45-51
(The Blessings and the Curses, Part V)
December 5, 2021

⁴⁵ “Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. ⁴⁶ And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

⁴⁷ “Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, ⁴⁸ therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. ⁴⁹ The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, ⁵⁰ a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. ⁵¹ And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.

The word *shamad*, translated as “destroy,” will be used three times in today’s verses. In total, it is used seven times in this chapter. Every time it is used, it is in relation to Israel. But in the very last verse of the chapter, it says that Israel will be offered for sale to their enemies.

One cannot be sold off if he has been totally destroyed, and so the word “destroy” cannot mean utter destruction of the people. We’ll see that more fully expressed during the sermon when a promise from the Lord concerning Israel from Leviticus 26 is cited. That is the comparable “blessings and curses” passage to Chapter 28 of Deuteronomy.

We have to remember that if Israel was destroyed as a people, then God’s promises to the people would be of no value at all. What would be the point of going through all of redemptive history just to destroy the people that got the world through redemptive history until the time when the Redeemer would come?

Where is the glory for God in that? And more, where does the remnant that Paul refers to in Romans 9 (citing Isaiah) and Romans 11 then come from? If the church is now Israel, does that mean that only a remnant of the church is saved? That is a logical contradiction. Being a true member of Christ’s church means that one is saved.

So, Paul cannot be referring to the church, except as that remnant is a part of it. And if the remnant is from Israel, which is exactly what Paul says in Romans 11,

then that means that Israel – the nation – still exists. You can't have a remnant without a whole to have a remnant from!

Text Verse: *“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people;
For He will avenge the blood of His servants,
And render vengeance to His adversaries;
He will provide atonement for His land and His people.” Deuteronomy 32:43*

The words of the text verse tell the Gentiles to rejoice with His people. The implication is that the Gentiles are additional to “His people.” Paul cites that in the New Testament, in Romans 15, clearly indicating that the Jews (he refers them as “the circumcision”) are His people and that we, the Gentiles, are now a part of what He is doing.

So, we have a remnant from a whole, the remnant is not “from” the church, and that Gentiles are a part of what God is doing. It is rather clear that there has been, and there still is, a role for Israel the people today. As such, it means that Israel the people, who are in the land of Israel today, have a part in that role. It cannot be otherwise.

Their disobedience to the Lord's word doesn't negate God's faithfulness to it. Rather, it highlights the magnificence of God's faithfulness, despite man's unfaithfulness. Remember that when someone tells you that you can lose your salvation.

Transgression, violations of the law, faithlessness, and so on, will all be dealt with by God, but He will uphold His word to His people through every single one of our failings. Trust in that and be reassured that if you are in Christ, you are in the sweet spot – for all eternity.

Great things, such as the eternal and infinite grace of God towards His people are 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. A Sign and a Wonder (verses 45 & 46)

A distinct section of Deuteronomy 28 is seen with the coming of verse 45. As such, some scholars take these sections and divide them into epochs of Israel's history. For example, Joseph Benson says –

“Here some critics have made a division of these prophecies and have interpreted the preceding part as relating to the former captivity of the Jews, and the calamities which they suffered under the Chaldeans; and the remaining part as referring to their latter captivity, and the calamities which they suffered under the Romans. But “there is no need,” says Bishop Newton, “of any such distinction; there is no reason to think any such was intended by the author; several prophecies of the one part, as well as of the other, have been fulfilled at both periods; but they have all been more amply fulfilling during the latter period; and there cannot be a more lively picture than they exhibit of the state of the Jews at present.”

I agree. It is an oversimplification of what has occurred in Israel's history to say that verses 15-44 belong to one epoch of time and the next section (45-68) to another.

Further, this would dismiss the obvious division of the people between the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah and what occurred to each. Moses repeats and builds upon his previous words, but not necessarily to prophetically refer to separate epochs of time. Rather, it is to show that the Lord's judgment will lessen or increase according to Israel's return to Him, or departure from Him.

The second exile occurred after their rejection of Jesus. As such, the punishments would be great, lengthy, and almost ubiquitous among the people. But the judgments ultimately come from rejecting the Lord, Yehovah, regardless as to whether it is prior to His incarnation or not. Moses is continuing the same main thought now, even if this new section is clearly defined from the last.

⁴⁵ **“Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you,**

The thought has been expressed twice already in this Chapter –

Vs. 2 “And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you.”

Vs. 15 “that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.”

The words are the same as verse 15, except Moses adds in the word “pursue.” In this, he adds to the intensity of the thought. It is as if the curses are alive, like wild dogs, chasing their prey. No matter how fast Israel runs from them, they will catch up, and in their catching up, they will overwhelm like a flood.

In this state of being so overwhelmed, Moses next says...

⁴⁵ (con’t) **until you are destroyed,**

This is the third of seven times that Moses uses the word *shamad*, or “destroy” in this chapter. It means just that, to destroy, bring to naught, perish, and so on. However, it does not have to be taken in its absolute sense, nor should it be here. The Lord has already said as much in Leviticus 26, using another word, *kalah*, which signifies to bring to an end –

“Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.” Leviticus 26:44

As such, the word “destroyed” here simply means the destruction of the people without the annihilation of the nation. And there is a reason for this. Moses tells us in the Song of Moses –

“I would have said, ‘I will dash them in pieces, I will make the memory of them to cease from among men,’ ²⁷ Had I not feared the wrath of the enemy, Lest their adversaries should misunderstand, Lest they should say, ‘Our hand is high; And it is not the LORD who has done all this.’”

-Deuteronomy 32:26, 27

The Lord’s name is at stake in the preservation of Israel. He has given His word. To fail to keep it would demonstrate that He was incompetent and not worth

following. If He failed, none of His other covenant promises could be considered sure.

It is a note of absolute security for the believer. The preservation of Israel confirms the doctrine of eternal salvation. When the Lord speaks forth His guarantee, it is an eternal decree. This is exactly why the Song of Moses ends with a note concerning the Gentiles, as we saw in our text verse.

The Bible early on teaches us core doctrines concerning faith, hope, security, and so on, if we will simply pay heed to the template set before us. The template is disobedient Israel. How the Lord has faithfully treated them should give each of us a great deal of assurance when we also fail to measure up.

However, we are still in the curses section of Deuteronomy 28, and so we must continue with evaluating the bad news as well. It will come upon Israel...

⁴⁵ (con't) **because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God,**

ki lo shamata b'qol Yehovah elohekha – “for no you did hear in voice Yehovah your God.” To “hear” means to obey. This is what it all comes down to. The voice of the Lord speaks forth His words, and it is His words that His people are to obey.

On the day I typed this sermon, someone emailed concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage. “We aren’t under law, and so how can it hurt for a person to do this.” The answer is, “Because the Lord has spoken.” In Christ, we are not imputed sin, but we will still be judged for our actions concerning rewards and loss.

Eternal salvation does not mean “no consequences.” Some will come in this life. One divorce often leads to another, finances are ruined, children are destroyed in heart and in proper direction, people get shot over jealousy, and so on.

And some consequences follow later. Standing before the Lord hearing, “Yes, you willingly disobeyed me in this, and because of it you will not receive a full reward,” will be a point of true sadness.

What could have been, never will be. When we fail to hear the voice of the Lord our God – be it Israel under the Mosaic Covenant, or us now under the New Covenant, we will suffer consequences for our failure...

⁴⁵ (con't) **to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.**

The voice of the Lord is that which utters forth what He wills. When God said, “Let there be light,” the light came forth. But light is not an entity with free will. It simply obeys the command.

When the Lord says, “A wife is not to depart from *her* husband. ¹¹ But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce *his* wife” (1 Corinthians 7:10, 11), it is as a decree – “This is how it is to be.”

As surely as the light shines out of the darkness at the word of the Lord, so should we hold to our marriage because the voice of the Lord has so spoken. And this is true with each command set forth in the context of the covenant in which it is spoken.

For Israel, statutes and judgments were set forth by the Lord and they were to be heeded accordingly. Failure to hearken meant the promised curses would follow after, overtake, and consume.

However, there is the ongoing truth that though Israel was deserving of the curses, Christ took them upon Himself in their stead. Jesus, in His humanity, was destroyed. He obeyed the commandments and the statutes set forth, and yet all of the curses clearly came upon Him as well. In this, Moses says...

⁴⁶ **And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder,**

The words more literally say, “And they shall be in you to sign and to wonder.” The word “they” is speaking of the curses. What happens to Israel (in you) in fulfillment of the word, and as is displayed in the curses upon them, are what will be a sign and a wonder.

The *oth*, or sign, is something that points to something else. As such, the curses will be a sign of the surety of the word of the Lord. In seeing what happens to Israel, it confirms that the Lord has spoken and performed. Hence, the nations are as much without excuse in rejecting the Lord as is Israel. Both are guilty of failing to heed the sign of the curses.

The *mopheth*, or wonder, is the thing itself. It is the event that occurs. Together, they are a sign and a wonder. As such, those who are wise will see and understand-

“Because My people have forgotten Me, They have burned incense to worthless idols. And they have caused themselves to stumble in their ways, From the ancient paths, To walk in pathways and not on a highway, ¹⁶ To make their land desolate and a perpetual hissing; Everyone who passes by it will be astonished And shake his head.” Jeremiah 18:15, 16

Those who pass by will see the wonder that has been brought upon Israel. The wise among them will then understand the sign. The wonder is given and the sign – the surety of the word – is confirmed.

⁴⁶ (con’t) **and on your descendants forever.**

u-b’zarakha ad olam – “and in your seed until forever.” The words here are taken by scholars, in one degree or another, as referring to the effects upon Israel. In other words, Cambridge says –

“*Forever*. This, though it may imply the final and utter rejection of Israel as a nation, does not preclude the hope of restoration of a part of Israel as individuals, or as a remnant remaining in or returning to faith and obedience (cf. Isaiah 10:22; Isaiah 6:13; Romans 9:27; Romans 11:5).” Cambridge

Likewise, Lange argues about the scope of the effect upon Israel in contrast to what Keil had said –

“The term *forever* cannot, with KEIL, be limited “to the generation smitten with the curse.” It is rather to be limited by *thy seed* in distinction from the holy seed.

Thy seed, seed of evil doers, involving themselves in iniquities of their fathers— upon such the curse rests forever. There is a remnant here also according to the election of grace.—A. G.” John Lange Commentary

These analyses ignore the obvious subject of the verse – “And they [the curses] shall be upon you.” Israel is the object. As such, it is not referring at all to the people, but the curses. They are the sign and the wonder.

All Israel has to do, forever, is to look at their history, and what has occurred to them, and they can forever know that their own disobedience brought the calamities upon them. This exact thought is expressed by Daniel –

“Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. ¹² And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.” Daniel 9:11, 12

Despite the curses being for a sign and a wonder on Israel, even forever, Christ was willing to intervene and become His own sign and wonder to the people. Isaiah refers to this, using the same words –

“Bind up the testimony, Seal the law among my disciples. ¹⁷ And I will wait on the LORD, Who hides His face from the house of Jacob; And I will hope in Him. ¹⁸ Here am I and the children whom the LORD has given me! We are for signs and wonders in Israel From the LORD of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion.”
-Isaiah 8:16-18

Christ took the curses of the law upon Himself on behalf of His people, those who believe. They received what He had done to join to Him in this state. The curse of the law is lifted from them, and they have become signs and wonders in Israel.

The author of Hebrews cites Isaiah, demonstrating that this is exactly what is being referred to –

“And again:

‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.’

¹⁴ 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 2:13-15

As far as the curses upon Israel being a sign to them, Moses will continue to explain this in the verses ahead.

*The Lord has given His command, and it is what you are to do
It is that which you cannot see heaven without
He has spoken the word which is faithful and true
In doing that thing, He is pleased – have no doubt*

*Jesus spoke the word and it is exactly what He meant
When He said, “This is the work of God”
It is “that you believe in Him whom He sent”
With this gospel of peace, be sure that you are shod*

*Believe in Christ Jesus, that He died for your sins
Believe that He was buried after that
Believe that He rose the third day – Yes, over death Jesus wins!
In your belief, it is as an eternal feather in your hat*

*The law couldn’t save anyone, this much is true
But in Christ’s fulfillment of it, there is granted life anew*

II. Until You Are Destroyed (verses 47-51)

⁴⁷ “Because you did not serve the LORD your God

takhat asher lo avadta eth Yehovah elohekha – “Under which no you did serve Yehovah your God.” The word *takhat*, or under” signifies “in place of.” One can think of something coming up, like a son replacing his father.

Thus, the words here are not based on what was said, but what will be said in the next verse. In essence, the thought is, “Instead of this...” The word “serve” can also mean “worship.” The two thoughts are so closely connected that either is used at times.

The idea is that the people fail to express themselves positively toward the Lord. As such, Moses continues this thought saying...

47 (con’t) with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,

b’simkhah u-b’tuv l’vav me’rov kol – “in joyfulness and in gladness to heart from abundance all.” The preposition is *b’*, meaning “in,” and it should be translated as such. It is the same preposition rightly translated repeatedly in the next verse.

The Lord is showing a contrast in the two states. The Lord promised the blessings. In receiving them and being grateful for them, and in serving the Lord in joy, in gladness, and the like, Israel would prosper.

If one looks at the record of Christ, He did exactly what was expected of Israel here. He served the Lord with joy and gladness of heart for all of the Lord’s blessings. The record of Israel, however, shows that they were not found serving in this way. As such...

48 therefore you shall serve your enemies,

Instead of serving (worshipping) the Lord in joy and gladness, Moses says Israel would serve (it is the same word) his enemies. It is one or the other, and the choice was solely up to the people, but the response would be at the hand of the Lord. As Moses says...

48 (con’t) whom the LORD will send against you,

This can come about in various ways. In times of prosperity, the people would be well fed and well defended. In such a state, because of the Lord’s blessing, the enemy couldn’t prevail. The blessing would result in further blessing.

However, in a state of prosperity mixed with overindulgence and neglect towards the Lord, the people would be unprepared. Thus, the blessing would result in receiving the curses and the enemy could prevail.

Or, in a state of lack because of no rains, high heat, or other adverse weather conditions, the people would lack food, wealth, the capability to defend themselves, and so on. Thus, the curse would lead to further curses and the enemy prevailing.

However, such a state of lack could result in the people turning back to the Lord. As such, the curse could lead to renewed blessing. The assumption of this verse, though, is that the Lord is not served, and the people have not turned to Him. In this, He has withheld the blessing. Therefore, Israel will serve his enemies...

48 (con't) in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything;

As seen in the examples just noted, the hunger, thirst, nakedness and need could come directly from the Lord prior to the coming of the enemy, or it could come as a result of the enemy coming against them. It doesn't matter which way it comes, in failing to serve the Lord, the result is lack, want, and need of everything.

In such a state, and with the enemy over the people, they will serve man rather than the Lord whom they failed to serve. In this state...

48 (con't) and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.

The question here is, "Who the subject of the action?" The NKJV capitalized "He," indicating they feel it is the Lord. Other translations recognize it as the enemy –

"They'll set a yoke of iron upon your neck until they have exterminated you."
(ISV)

The ISV is clearly wrong as the Hebrew is in the singular, "he," but their intent is to indicate that it is the enemy and to not confuse the translation by simply saying "he." Other versions, like the ESV, don't capitalize the pronoun, even when speaking of the Lord, and so one has no idea which they think is meant.

In the Hebrew, the Lord is the nearest antecedent. That makes it probable it is the Lord. But, letting Scripture interpret Scripture, we can confirm that it is most surely the Lord being referred to –

“For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him. I have given him the beasts of the field also.’” Jeremiah 28:14

What is seen in this verse is the continued contrast of Israel to the Lord. He faithfully served the Lord, and yet, He received the deprivation Israel deserved and the weight of the unyielding yoke of the enemy upon Himself, meaning the law.

This doesn’t mean that the law is from the enemy. Rather, it is from God. But the enemy uses the law against the people because of their inability to perform it. This is exactly referred to by Peter in Acts 15 –

“Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.” Acts 15:10, 11

In exchange for His work, including bearing the impossible burden of the law upon the people, Jesus offered them a happier state –

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

But for disobedient Israel while under the law and under its curse...

⁴⁹ The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar,

The words of this verse are closely followed in Jeremiah 5 –

“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.”

-Jeremiah 5:15

At that time, Jeremiah was referring to the Chaldeans of Babylon. The point is that Israel wouldn't just be targeted by her neighbors, but from any country the Lord determined would be the rod of His anger and vengeance. As such, distance was of little matter, even...

49 (con't) **from the end of the earth,**

miqtseh ha'arets – “from extremity the earth.” The word *erets*, or “earth” can speak of the land of Israel, or it can extend to mean the earth itself. In this case, it is referring to the furthest parts of the earth. Despite the distance, they will come...

49 (con't) **as swift as the eagle flies,**

ka'asher yideh ha'neshar – “according to which darts the eagle.” It is a new word, *daah*, meaning to fly swiftly, or to dart through the air. It will be seen just four times, in Psalm 18:10 and in Jeremiah 48:40 and 49:22. The point of these words is that the nation will be unaffected by the distance, obstacles, or difficulty of the journey.

They will dart on the land as easily as an eagle does in the sky. As such, they would retain their strength, order, and discipline when they arrived at the borders of Israel. The prophets use such terminology when referring to Babylon, such as –

“Our pursuers were swifter Than the eagles of the heavens. They pursued us on the mountains And lay in wait for us in the wilderness.”

-Lamentations 4:19

Despite this theme being repeated concerning Babylon, it is certainly not limited to them. Rather, the eagle was the symbol found on all Roman standards as well.

Thus, the symbolic nature of the eagle representing Babylon becomes a literal symbol of Rome, even if the symbolism continues in regard to the Roman armies. That continues to be true for both nations in the next words...

49 (con't) a nation whose language you will not understand,

go asher lo tishma leshono – “Nation which no shall hear tongue.” Again, this is in accord with what Jeremiah 5:15 said a moment ago, “A nation whose language you do not know.” Though Aramaic and Hebrew are cognate languages, the variations in them made it beyond the ability of the nation, meaning Israel as whole, to understand.

This is seen, for example, in 2 Kings 18. Though this is referring to the Assyrians and not the Babylonians, it is the same Chaldee (Aramaic) spoken by both –

“Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, ‘Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; and do not speak to us in Hebrew in the hearing of the people who are on the wall.’”

-2 Kings 18:26

Here, it does not say “Hebrew.” Rather, it says Yehudith, meaning “the language of Judah.” At no time does the Old Testament use the term “Hebrew” when referring to the language of Israel.

Despite that, those trained in diplomacy would have learned the language of Assyria, but the common people would not have understood it. Hence, these men petitioned for the Rabshakeh to speak to them in Aramaic.

However, his response, though crude, showed that he wanted all of the people to be warned, hoping they would rebel and surrender without a fight. And so, he continued in Yehudith –

But the Rabshakeh said to them, “Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall, who will eat and drink their own waste with you?” 2 Kings 18:27

From there, the Rabshakeh continued warning the people and promising them peace if they would come out and surrender. As this was the case with a cognate language, how much more is it the case with the Roman language, Latin. The structure and idiomatic expressions would have been completely foreign to Israel.

And further, both the Babylonians and the Romans can easily be associated with the next words...

⁵⁰ a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.

The description is well reflected in that of the Chaldeans of Babylon as seen in 2 Chronicles –

“Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave them all into his hand.” 2 Chronicles 36:17

Jeremiah, in the Lamentations, speaks in similar words –

“Our skin is hot as an oven, Because of the fever of famine. ¹¹ They ravished the women in Zion, The maidens in the cities of Judah. ¹² Princes were hung up by their hands, And elders were not respected. ¹³ Young men ground at the millstones; Boys staggered under loads of wood. ¹⁴ The elders have ceased gathering at the gate, And the young men from their music.”

-Lamentations 5:10-14

It is evident based on the words of Jesus in Luke 21 that the Romans would be equally hard on the people, something confirmed by later secular historians –

“For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ²³ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. ²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations.” Luke 21:22-24

It is not hard to see the comparison to Christ in this. Israel is the disobedient, and Israel deserved the curse. And yet, Christ – who perfectly submitted to His Father’s will, and who served Him with joy and gladness – had the terror of the Roman nation brought against Him. The penalties of the curse came upon Him in place of the people.

The nation of fierce countenance that did not respect the elderly, nor show favor to the young, treated the One more innocent than any other with the cruelest of tortures. As for disobedient Israel, Moses continues telling them what they deserve because of their failure to serve the Lord...

⁵¹ And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land,

This is still speaking of the nation of fierce countenance. As such, and despite most translations repeatedly saying “they” in this verse, the Hebrew is in the singular. “He [or it] shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land.”

Concerning these things, verse 4 and verse 18 made a contrast between them –

“Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.” Deuteronomy 28:4

“Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.” Deuteronomy 28:18

Now, it states that whether blessed in increase or not, whatever they have – be it much or little – will simply be taken from them and consumed. The one with much will see much taken from him. The one with little will see what little he has taken from him. All of the efforts of the land will be taken away by the invading forces...

⁵¹ (con’t) until you are destroyed;

It is the third time in our few verses today where the word *shamad*, or destroyed, is used. Israel’s efforts will be brought to nothing, and in turn, Israel will be brought to nothing. The words speak of futility of effort leading to futility of life.

This futility will include all of the things that are accounted as necessary for a normal life. In other words, the next two clauses are set in parallel to the first clause. The “produce of your land” is explained by the words...

51 (con't) they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil,

The grain, new wine, and oil are the commodities of the soil. They are used for consumption, storing up, and for selling. But none of this will come to pass for disobedient Israel. Instead, all of the efforts of their labors will be taken from them by the nation of fierce countenance, leaving them nothing except empty hands and empty stomachs.

Next, Moses explains the meaning of the words, “the increase [fruit] of your livestock,” saying...

51 (con't) or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks,

Two words here are seen for the last time in Scripture, *sheger*, or increase, and *ashtaroth*, or offspring. Both words were used in the same four verses in Deuteronomy and are now retired from Scripture together. What issued from the cattle and from the flock together make up the fruit of the livestock.

Again, like the previous clause, that which Israel worked for will be taken from them and consumed, leaving nothing left for them to eat. It elicits the thought of complete futility and a state of absolute destitution. This will be wrought upon them by this nation...

***51 (fin) until they have destroyed you.**

It is a poor translation. Three times in our verses, the word *shamad* has been used. Now, it uses the word *abad*. It signifies to “perish.” Thus, the words should say, “until he (it is singular) has caused you to perish.”

The idea is that Israel will be destroyed until they are caused to perish. Everything will be against them, every burden will be upon them, and everything will be taken from them until they simply wither away from the strain of it all.

One can see the contrast between Israel and Christ in this. Both suffered under the law. One for its own sins. Everything was taken from them, and they were destroyed until they perished. Those that remained were exiled from their home.

Only because of the Lord's faithfulness to them because of the covenant were they not utterly destroyed. Their time of exile is over, even if their time of destruction is not. Their future is set only because the Lord has preserved them to bring them into the New Covenant.

Christ also suffered under the law, but it was for the sins of His people. Everything was taken from Him, and He was destroyed until He perished. He was exiled from the land of the living. But He was restored because of His faithfulness to the covenant.

Because of Him, Israel's future is set. It is His faithfulness under the Old Covenant that will, in fact, bring them into the New Covenant. With each step of both the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy, the work of Christ is highlighted.

He is the basis of any true blessing, and He is the bearer of and remover of the curses. We can see that where they failed, He was able to pick up and continue forward. It is the lesson of the law. What man is incapable of doing, Christ was willing to do in our place. In Him is the victory, and in Him is restoration and renewal for the human soul.

For any who will come to Him now, simply trusting by faith that He is capable of saving us from our sins, such will be saved. And for Israel as a nation, they too will someday be saved and they will receive the wonderful covenant promises made to them under the Old Covenant, but which speak of their favor under the New Covenant.

Jesus Christ is the hope set forth for mankind, and He is the covenant-keeping Lord who will fulfill every promise He has made. Nothing will fail because He is our God who cannot fail. Thank God for Jesus Christ.

Closing Verse: *"The LORD has sworn by His right hand And by the arm of His strength: 'Surely I will no longer give your grain*

As food for your enemies; And the sons of the foreigner shall not drink your new wine, For which you have labored. ⁹ But those who have gathered it shall eat it, And praise the LORD; Those who have brought it together shall drink it in My holy courts.” Isaiah 62:8, 9

Next Week: Deuteronomy 28:52-61 *Another dose, as if vaccines from nurses, in order to help you get your Deuteronomy 28 fix... (The Blessings and the Curses, Part VI) (82nd 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 V

“Moreover all these curses shall come upon you
and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed
-----this fate to you will be handed
Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God
To keep His commandments and His statutes which He
-----to you commanded

And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder too
And on your descendants forever, such He shall do to you

“Because you did not serve
The LORD your God, and praises you did not sing
With joy and gladness of heart
For the abundance of everything

Therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD
-----will send against you
In hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything
And He will put a yoke of iron on your neck
Until He has destroyed you, such catastrophe He will bring

The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar
From the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies
-----yes, He will have brought
A nation whose language you will not understand
A nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly
-----nor show favor to the young

And they shall eat the increase of your livestock
And the produce of your land, until you are destroyed
-----so He will do
They shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil
Or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks
-----until they have destroyed 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...