



**Deut. 28:15-40**

**“The Curses of Disobedience”**

**15 " But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:**

**16 "Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country.**

**17 "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.**

**18 "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.**

**19 "Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.**

**20 " The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.**

**21 "The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess.**

**22 "The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish.**

**23 "And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron.**

**24 "The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.**

**25 "The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth.**

**26 "Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten them away.**

**27 "The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.**

**28 "The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart.**

**29 "And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you.**

**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.

38 "You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it.

39 "You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.

40 "You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil; for your olives shall drop off.

This section starts off paralleling the earlier section on blessings, so as to remind them that while faith in God and obedience to Him will be the source of blessings, so unfaithfulness and disobedience and not merely "bad luck" will be the cause of curses.

These curses are severe, in fact there are five times as many curses as blessings, but it serves to let them know that disobedience is not simply a little thing, but a breaking of the covenant and a turning of their back on God. It also sets before them that obedience and disobedience to the covenant have exactly opposite consequences!

"Having viewed the bright side of the cloud, which is towards the obedient, we have now presented to us the dark side, which is towards the disobedient. If we do not keep God's commandments, we not only come short of the blessing promised, but we lay ourselves under the curse, which is as comprehensive of all misery as the blessing is of all happiness." – *Matthew Henry*

Gradually the curses get worse, starting with diseases and ending with exile. The blessings of the promises to the patriarchs are gradually reversed.

**Curses in Battle:** While no one could prevail against them in battle while the Lord was with them, if the Lord was against them, it did not matter how large their armies were, they would not prevail – in verse 25 we see a reversal of the prior situation – they would be routed, not their enemies. Not only will they be defeated, their carcasses will go unburied. They will become food for the birds. Something that the bible uses as a sign of Reprobation. As the bodies of the Lord's people should be buried respectfully, for they shall be made perfect and incorruptible in the resurrection, so the bodies of the reprobate are food for animals for they will inherit eternal corruption –

*Rev. 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,*

*18 "that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great."*

*21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.*

**Incurable Diseases:** The same kind of plagues that had fallen on Egypt would fall upon them and could not be cured by normal means. Just as these curses fell on Egypt for her disobedience to the Lord's commands, so the diseases would all on Israel. It's NOT the nation you are in that makes for blessings or cursings, not your forebears, but your faith in God or lack thereof.

These Diseases would be direct from God and through their sins:

"It is true, indeed, that diseases are contracted in various ways, and especially by intemperance; still, this does not prevent God from smiting the transgressors of the Law with them, although no natural cause may be apparent." – Calvin

When you hear again and again about how this disease must have been manufactured by the gov't I'm always tempted to answer, *the source is not a human government, but rather the Divine.*

**Blindness and Madness:** Their blindness would not be physical, but psychological, they would "grope at noonday" and their plans would come to nothing. All of their pragmatism would get them nowhere, and their plans would be mad – "Insanity is doing the same thing in the same way and expecting a different outcome"

**Continual Oppression:** The surrounding nations would be able to plunder them at will, the Lord will remove His Restraining Hand.

**Failed Harvests:** The Skies shall be as bronze, burning. The Earth shall be as hard as iron. The Lord gives rain he can take it away. The insects themselves will impoverish them, blights, locust plagues will be common amongst them.

**Slavery and Exile:** Just as the Lord had carried them into the promised land, so he would transport them out again. First their children would be carried into slavery, and then they themselves would taken as exiles into a nation of idolatry.

### ***THE EXODUS WILL BE REVERSED***

Now these curses did not fall on them all at once, and they were not FATED or inevitable. They brought them on themselves.

God sent them messenger after messenger warning them: *2 Chron 36:14 Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people transgressed more and more, according to all the abominations of the nations, and defiled the house of the LORD which He had consecrated in Jerusalem.*

*15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place.*

*16 But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.*

*17 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."*

The capstone of their disobedience was not merely their rejection of the prophets, but of God's Son. A fact Jesus Himself summarizes:

*Matt. 21:33 " Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.*

34 *"Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit.*

35 *"And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another.*

36 *"Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them.*

37 *"Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'*

38 *"But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.'*

39 *"So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.*

40 *"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"*

41 *They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."*

42 *Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?"*

43 *"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."*

## Applications

1): God's people are looking not just for an earthly homeland, but a heavenly country – They were looking for blessings HERE and HEREAFTER

The Promised Land they obtained by faith was a symbol of the Heavenly Country that they hoped to have by faith:

*Heb. 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

*14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.*

*15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.*

*16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

But their disobedience and unbelief will lead to the reverse – EXILE and being cast back to the pagan lands, they will return to the slavery and idolatry he delivered them out of. And they will gain not a heavenly country, but **Judgment and HELL** so the question before them, and the question before you is what will you choose?

The Heavenly Country or the Hellish Exile?

## 2) National:

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people.

They made themselves slaves to sin, and he warned them of the results. Nations do not fall while obeying the commands of the Lord. I know of NONE. Nations fall, while living like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Every great empire was doomed as soon as they gave themselves over to doing that which the Lord called an abomination.

We all dream of recovery, but we are inheriting the very curses that God spoke of, and sacrifices to false gods like Gaia will not save us.

*A British Journalist wrote: "Suddenly Britain has become a more alarmed and depressed nation than at any time in recent memory. An increasingly important cause is crime. We can and do blame the Government and the economy. But has something gone wrong with us?"*

*After listing all the things that had been tried both on the left and right he concluded:*

*"If we feel utter despair, it is because we see no new promise." His last line "All our gods have failed."*

Like the ancient Israelites we seek deliverance from the false gods of the surrounding nations. But we will not "recover" until and unless there is a national repentance, and that can only happen if there is a national revival and reformation.

And that includes the church:

*Jer. 6:16a Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls.*

*6:16b But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'"*

### **3) Personal:**

In the end though, knowing how the curses fell on Israel, there does seem almost an inevitability to it. And we must remember that the people of Israel were not exceptionally wicked, they were men and women with the same nature as we have. Their national downfall was the result of personal sins, freely entered into.

God, as one commentator puts it means business here, personally, we have all broken the commands of the Lord, and those curses will pursue and cling to us. They will find every lawbreaker and bring about his death and destruction, no matter what his status or station

*Romans 6:16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?*

*Therefore – our only help has to come from Christ taking the penalty of law upon himself!*

*2 Cor. 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

*Romans 6: 17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.*

*18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

...

*23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*