
Becoming Christlike – Learning How from Old Testament Kings and Prophets

Session 6 – Deuteronomy 27-28 Blessings and Curses

We have been laying a foundation for our study of Old Testament Kings and Prophets.

So far, we have looked at these foundational topics:

- 1 - Know and Do What Pleases God
- 2 - God's Word is Profitable, Be Careful to Live it Out
- 3 - Understanding God's Anger
- 4 – No Secrets
- 5 – Idolatry

You are encouraged to read Deuteronomy 12-26 on your own to become familiar with the contents of the Law. God had laid out for the Children of Israel how to live godly lives once they entered the promised land. How to lead holy lives.

We are going to delve into Deuteronomy 27 and following to get a sense of what God expected of his people. This is the recap or restatement of the Law that had been given to Moses originally. It is being restated now by Joshua in advance of the second generation of Children of Israel entering the promised land.

Deuteronomy 27:1-26

Deuteronomy 27

1 Now Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, “**Keep the whole commandment that I command you today.** **2** And on the day you cross over the Jordan to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and plaster them with plaster. **3** And you shall write on them all the words of this law, when you cross over to enter the land that the Lord your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you.

God, as always, is fulfilling His promises.

Joshua 23:14

14 “And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that **not one word has failed of all the good things^a that the Lord your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed.**

God keeps His promises. We too should keep the vows we make to Him.

4 And when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I command you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall plaster them with plaster. **5** And there **you shall build an altar to the Lord your God**, an altar of stones. You shall wield no iron tool on them; **6** you shall build an altar to the Lord your God of uncut^a stones. And you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the Lord your God, **7 and you shall sacrifice** peace offerings and shall eat there, and **you shall rejoice before the Lord your God.** **8** And you shall **write on the stones all the words of this law very plainly.**”

This section applies equally well to us today!

1. Keep the whole Word / We are to keep the whole Word, we have it written and it has been handed to us.
2. Giving land, why? So not consumed with survival. Have time and energy to worship and serve God. / We have been given the gift of salvation in Christ, the promise of eternal life in a new paradise with God. We don't have to work for righteousness we can focus on being in intimate relationship with God via holy spirit, manifestations, enablements to be faithful to Him
3. Time and wherewithal to make sacrifices on the altar to receive forgiveness for sins and restore righteousness before God. (Look up excavations at Mt Ebal, altar has been uncovered that may be this one.) / We are to be living sacrifices, renewing our minds and being transformed. We have holy spirit so we can worship God in spirit and in truth
4. Write on stones all the words of the law / we have the Word written on our hearts, we have Bibles readily available to us.
5. Section begins and ends with the words so they can know them, adhere to them, keep them in their hearts, talk of them, teach them to their children, constantly reminded of them. / We are to meditate on the Word, give ourselves wholly to it and profit from it.

Deuteronomy 27:9-26

9 Then Moses and the Levitical priests said to all Israel, "Keep silence and hear, O Israel: this day you have become the people of the Lord your God. **10** **You shall therefore obey the voice of the Lord your God, keeping his commandments and his statutes, which I command you today.**"

This is repeated so very often because humans need constant reminding!

11 That day Moses charged the people, saying, **12** "When you have crossed over the Jordan, **these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people:** Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. **13** **And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse:** Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. **14** And the Levites shall declare to all the men of Israel in a loud voice:

They were divided into two groups to stand on the two mountains and listen to the blessings and curses. All were to hear. All were to understand. There was to be no confusion. All were to be in complete agreement on what was expected of them.

15 "'Cursed be the man who makes a carved or cast metal image, an abomination to the Lord, a thing made by the hands of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen.'

This "curses section" begins with I D O L A T R Y !!!

16 "'Cursed be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

You step outside the umbrella of God's protection when you are disobedient.

17 “Cursed be anyone who moves his neighbor’s landmark.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

18 “Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind man on the road.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

19 “Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

So often God commands them to take care of the disadvantaged.

20 “Cursed be anyone who lies with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered his father’s nakedness.’^b And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

21 “Cursed be anyone who lies with any kind of animal.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

22 “Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

23 “Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

Sexual sin is covered in a lot of detail.

24 “Cursed be anyone who strikes down his neighbor in secret.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

25 “Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

26 “Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

The way the words of the law are confirmed is by doing them. The same is true for us today with the commandments of Christ. “If you love me, keep my commandments.” John 14:15

Deuteronomy 28:1-68

This very lengthy and mostly trying section is read in its entirety with many comments interspersed. The comments have been bolded as well as some of the key points in the text itself.

Wonderful Section of Blessings v. 1-14

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

1 “And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, **the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.**

What a promise is that? If they just obey God, He will set them above all the other nations on earth!

2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God. **3** Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. **4**

Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. **5** Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. **6** Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

The logical response should be a heartfelt, “Let’s Do It!!!”

7 “The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. **They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.** **8** The Lord will command the blessing on you in your barns and in all that you undertake. And he will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

All you undertake will be BLESSED!

9 The Lord will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in his ways.

A people holy to Himself!

10 And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you.

People will see the fruit. It is the same with us. People will see us reflecting the Christ in us. They will see his attributes in our words and actions.

11 And the Lord will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, within the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give you. **12** The Lord will open to you his good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. And you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

Prosperity will be evident. He will open His treasury.

13 And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail, and you shall only go up and not down, **if** you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, **14** and **if** you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

These are two big, huge IFS: obey, careful to do, don’t turn aside from the words, and go after other gods. There is the warning against I D O L A T R Y again!

Curses for Disobedience

If you walk outside the umbrella of God’s protection bad things happen. Sin brings consequences. People today are overtaken with issues, problems, sickness, despair, addiction, they are overwhelmed in their lives. They don’t understand or think they are sinning. They make no connection.

15 “But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. **16** Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field.

Everywhere you go, you are cursed.

[17](#) Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. [18](#) Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock.

[19](#) Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

Sounds absolutely miserable.

[20](#) “The Lord will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me.

People today are so confused they don’t even know what gender they are. They are making destructive choices.

[21](#) The Lord will make the pestilence stick to you until he has consumed you off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. [22](#) The Lord will strike you with wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with drought^a and with blight and with mildew. They shall pursue you until you perish. [23](#) And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron.

The bronze heavens mean that your prayers won’t be heard.

[24](#) The Lord will make the rain of your land powder. From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

This was written in 1500BC.

722 BC Assyria defeats Israel

600 BC First exile of Judah to Babylon

587 BC the temple is destroyed

If they had adhered to the Word, they could have avoided all those consequences.

Here we see defeat, confusion, pestilence, pandemic, fiery heat and drought...all due to sin and disobedience

[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 be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth.

This is the reverse of verse 1!

[26](#) And your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away.

This happens during the exile to Babylon. The Old Testament fits together. If one makes the investment of time into reading and studying, it eventually it all fits together. It is worth the investment of time to see this! Compare this with the time it takes to become a doctor.

[27](#) The Lord will strike you with the boils of Egypt, and with tumors and scabs and itch, of which you cannot be healed.

“The Lord who Strikes” is one of the names of God: Jehovah-Makkeh Ezekiel is the one who uses this name. After all the years of warning, the COI will finally see this side of the Lord. This is the last resort after trying to get through to them. Maybe they will finally wake up.

There are many diseases even today that cannot be healed. They can be treated but not healed.

28 The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind,

This perfectly describes our society in 2023, Ephesians and 2 Timothy 3 speak to the same thing, blindness and confusion lead to all manner of sin.

Ephesians 4:17-19

17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. **18** They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. **19** They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

2 Timothy 3:1-9

1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. **2** For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, **4** treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. **6** For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, **7** always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. **8** Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. **9** But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

Deuteronomy 28:29 – 68

29 and you shall grope at noonday, as the blind grope in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your ways.^b And you shall be only oppressed and robbed continually, and there shall be no one to help you. **30** You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall ravish her. You shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it. You shall plant a vineyard, but you shall not enjoy its fruit. **31** Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat any of it. Your donkey shall be seized before your face but shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, but there shall be no one to help you.

Then you will blame God and “play the victim” saying things like “How can God allow this if He is a loving God?” Meanwhile God is ever-present, He is all loving, He has provided a way out of every problem through Christ.

32 Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes look on and fail with longing for them all day long, but you shall be helpless. **33** A nation that you have not known shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labors, and you shall be

only oppressed and crushed continually, [34](#) so that you are driven mad by the sights that your eyes see.

[35](#) The Lord will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

Could it be any more graphic? Any more horrid? Perhaps they zoned out and only focused on the blessings because they were so excited to enter the promised land and assumed they would not do these things.

[36](#) “The Lord will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone.

What a king? They are not supposed to have a king! But God is introducing the the fact that they will demand a king. He knows they will disobey and want a king. He knows they will commit the very idolatry which He is warning them about.

[37](#) And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the Lord will lead you away.

Instead of being “high above all the nations of the earth” they will become a byword.

[38](#) You shall carry much seed into the field and shall gather in little, for the locust shall consume it. [39](#) You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm 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. [41](#) You shall father sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours, for they shall go into captivity. [42](#) The cricket^s shall possess all your trees and the fruit of your ground. [43](#) The sojourner who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. [44](#) He shall lend to you, and you shall not lend to him. He shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

[45](#) “All these curses shall come upon you and pursue you and overtake you till you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you.

“You are bringing this upon yourselves! It is not my fault. It is your fault.”, says God.

[46](#) They shall be a sign and a wonder against you and your offspring forever. [47](#) Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things, [48](#) therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you.

They will be lacking everything instead of blessed with everything!

[49](#) The Lord will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, [50](#) a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young. [51](#) It shall eat the offspring of your cattle and the fruit of your ground, until you are destroyed; it also shall not

leave you grain, wine, or oil, the increase of your herds or the young of your flock, until they have caused you to perish.

52 “They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land. And they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout all your land, which the Lord your God has given you.

How prophetic! This was written in 1500 BC and in 587 BC this is exactly what happened to Jerusalem.

53 And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the Lord your God has given you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemies shall distress you. **54** The man who is the most tender and refined among you will begrudge food to his brother, to the wife he embraces,^d and to the last of the children whom he has left, **55** so that he will not give to any of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because he has nothing else left, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in all your towns. **56** The most tender and refined woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because she is so delicate and tender, will begrudge to the husband she embraces,^e to her son and to her daughter, **57** her afterbirth that comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears, because lacking everything she will eat them secretly, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in your towns.

This actually happened. Cannibalism does occur when Babylon cuts off the city of Jerusalem and the Children of Israel actually do this. It is so grievous to read, so distressing to consider. It did not need to happen. They were warned so many many times and ways.

58 “If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God,

It is not a secret! God has told them exactly what to do to avoid all this pain and suffering.

59 then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. **60** And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. **61** Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, the Lord will bring upon you, until you are destroyed. **62** Whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God. **63** And as the Lord took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so the Lord will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

God has gone to great lengths to scare the pants off of them so that they will obey and choose blessings.

64 “And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. **65** And among these nations you shall find no respite, and there shall be no

resting place for the sole of your foot, but the Lord will give you there a trembling heart and failing eyes and a languishing soul.

Describes our world today. People are in despair, on drugs and anti-depressants, engaged in addictions of all kinds, not knowing where to turn.

66 Your life shall hang in doubt before you. Night and day you shall be in dread and have no assurance of your life. **67** In the morning you shall say, 'If only it were evening!' and at evening you shall say, 'If only it were morning!' because of the dread that your heart shall feel, and the sights that your eyes shall see. **68** And the Lord will bring you back in ships to Egypt, a journey that I promised that you should never make again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer."

How could anyone choose this? This was the choice they had clearly laid out before them. We also get to choose obedience or disobedience.

Deuteronomy 30:15,16

15 "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. **16** If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God^a that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules,^b then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

We have the opportunity ourselves to be obedient and to reach out to rescue people out of the fire, to help our neighbors who are languishing.