



וְבִטְלִיתָהּ הַיּוֹצֵת מִבֵּין רַגְלֶיהָ וּבִטְלִיתָהּ הַיּוֹצֵת מִבֵּין רַגְלֶיהָ  
כִּי תֵאָנֵס בְּחֶסֶד כִּי תֵאָנֵס בְּחֶסֶד  
וּבְנִצּוֹק אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא לָךְ אֵלֶיךָ לָדָר  
her placentae which comes from between  
her feet and she bears;  
her children whom she will EAT THEM  
secretly for lack of everything in  
the siege and desperate straits  
in which your enemy shall distress  
you eat all your GATES.

28:57

12 DEC 2021 YALLERSON

**Deuteronomy 28:52-61**  
**(The Blessings and the Curses, Part VI)**  
**December 12, 2021**

*<sup>52</sup> “They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you. <sup>53</sup> You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. <sup>54</sup> The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, <sup>55</sup> so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. <sup>56</sup> The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, <sup>57</sup> her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. <sup>58</sup> “If you do not carefully observe 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, <sup>59</sup> then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses. <sup>60</sup> Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. <sup>61</sup> Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed.*

In our first verse today, a word, *batakh*, will be introduced. As will be explained again when we get there, it means “to trust.” It is used in the psalms more than 45 times, almost always in connection with trusting in the Lord.

There are things we can trust in, and there are things that we are admonished to not put our trust in. The verses today contain some of the most horrifying words in all of Scripture. That is for certain.

To keep them in context with the people to whom they are directed, I will say, without giving too much personal information, that I have been to several Jewish funerals. Some friends, some family of friends.

At one of them, the rabbi who was doing the ceremony talked about his people and the struggles they had gone through. He even mentioned Leviticus 26 which is the parallel passage to Deuteronomy 28. There, it is in the first person. The Lord says, “I will do this,” and “I will do that.”

On the other hand, here in Deuteronomy 28, it is in the third person. Moses says, “the Lord will do this,” and “the Lord will do that.” Either way, they are words that are so obviously fulfilled in the history of the Jewish people that they simply cannot be dismissed. And yet, this is exactly what the rabbi did when he mentioned the plagues the Lord promised to come upon the people.

It was as if, “This great book established us, and it is our rule and guide for life, but the bad parts do not – no they cannot – apply to us.” I was shocked, but not surprised. We see it in

churches all the time. Let us get out our Exacto knife and cut out the things we don't like. It is not wise, nor is it helpful.

Who are we going to trust concerning the word, concerning the Lord, concerning our theology, and our doctrine? If God is competent, and he made trees so He is, then we should expect that He will get us a word that is suitable for the edification of all people, if they will simply check it out.

**Text Verse:** *"O Israel, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield. <sup>10</sup>O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield. <sup>11</sup>You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield." Psalm 115:9-11*

One thing that doesn't matter is "many." Too often, we look at "many" and we use that as our guide for making decisions. There are many people on the earth and so there must be many acceptable ways to express ourselves toward God.

There are many cultures on the earth and so there are many ways that people groups can express themselves toward God.

There are many religions, and so there must be many ways to have a relationship with God.

There are many denominations, and so it must be ok to worship God in any of them.

And so on.

The problem with that is that there is only one God. We don't set the rules, He does. That should be obvious on the surface. But it eludes most people, and it is a tragic flaw in our thinking. Once we can accept that God is God and that He sets the rules – and only then – can we then work to find out "how" He expects us to live.

If there is one God and He has actually only given one way for many to relate to Him, we need to find out what that way is. Is it Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, or what? Does He care at all? It is certainly worth finding out.

Does walking into a shopping mall and pulling a detonator cord, blowing yourself and all the people around you up, please God? Does that, as some are told, guarantee you a place in paradise?

If the Bible is God's word, and if we think dismissing parts of it are ok, then we only need to look at Israel. The tragic story is of a nation that has, and continues to receive, exactly what it

bargained for. God has given an example for the whole wide world to discover exactly what He expects and what happens when those expectations aren't met.

Wonderful, blessed, and great things, along with tragic, terrible, and extraordinary things 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. The Siege and Desperate Straits (verses 52-57)**

<sup>52</sup> **“They shall besiege you at all your gates**

*v'hetsar lekha b'kal shearekha* – “and he shall besiege to you in all your gates.” As was noted in the verses last week, from verse 49, it speaks of a nation whom the Lord will bring against Israel. In referring to the actions of that nation, the words are in the singular, speaking of it as a united entity.

That continues now – “He shall besiege you,” rather than “They shall besiege you.” Understanding this, it will be...

<sup>52 (con't)</sup> **until your high and fortified walls,**

The words are prefixed by articles for effect. It says, “until come down your walls, the high and the fortified.” Obviously, one builds walls for protection.

To build them high is intended to make getting over them more difficult, and to give greater advantage to those inside when those outsides are trying to scale them. And more, from a higher elevation, there is an advantage for archers and the like over troops mustered below.

To fortify them obviously is intended to make breaching them more difficult. Having such notable defenses would lead to a feeling of security for those within. The walls are those things...

<sup>52 (con't)</sup> **in which you trust,**

With such strong fortifications, the inhabitants would feel secure. But to trust in such things while failing to trust the Lord can only lead to futility. To highlight this, a new word is introduced, *batakh*. It gives the sense of being bold, confident, placing one's hope, and so on.

Where is one's confidence? In 2 Kings 18 alone, the word is used eight times. The chapter refers to Hezekiah. Of him, it first says in verse 5 –

“He trusted in the LORD God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him.”

In verses 9-12, it notes the besieging of Samaria by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria. The city was taken, and the inhabitants were taken into exile “because they did not obey the voice of the Lord their God.” They had failed to put their trust in Him.

After that, starting in verse 13, it refers to the warfare of the cities of Judah by Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Then, from verse 17, it details the coming siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib. Until the end of the chapter, the word *batakh* is used seven more times in relation to where Hezekiah placed his trust, meaning in the Lord.

After that, the word is used again in Chapter 19 as the account of the siege continues. Despite the overwhelming force that stood outside threatening the city, Hezekiah refused to surrender, but continued to trust (*batakh*) in the Lord God. Because of this, the account of the siege concludes with these words –

“And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. <sup>36</sup> So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned home, and remained at Nineveh.” 2 Kings 19:35, 36

Here in Deuteronomy, Moses is laying down the law. Where will the people place their trust? Will it be in the Lord, following Him and being obedient to His law, or will it be in the walls of their cities, the work of their own hands? If that is their hope, he says that such strong fortifications will...

<sup>52</sup> (con't) **come down throughout all your land;**

If an army is prepared to besiege a city long enough, even the highest and strongest walls will not be able to endure forever. A city is comprised of people and people need food. Eventually, even the greatest and most protected city will run out of it.

In such a state, the soldiers within would be so famished that they would be unable to fend off those scaling the walls or the sappers beneath the walls. In this, the walls which had been the inhabitant's greatest trust will come down. One city after another would fall to the foe. But more...

<sup>52</sup> (con't) **and they shall besiege you at all your gates**

*v'hetsar lekha b'kal shearekha* – “and he shall besiege to you in all your gates.” Moses returns to the thought of the besieging of the gates of the first clause, exactly repeating those words again. Why would he do this? It is to set a contrast to what was said and what will next be said, which is...

<sup>52</sup> (con't) **throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you.**

Notice the difference between the two thoughts –

*\*at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust*

*\*at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you*

Where is your trust? There are gates and there are gates. There are walls and there are walls. Some are built by man, and some are of the Lord. The contrast to where Israel will place its trust, to its own destruction, and where the Lord Jesus placed His trust, to His own victory, is absolute.

In the 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm, a messianic psalm, the word *batakh*, or trust, is used three times. Twice it speaks of the trust of the fathers in the Lord –

“But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel. <sup>4</sup>Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them. <sup>5</sup>They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.” Psalm 22:3-5

The third time, it speaks of the faith of the Lord’s Messiah in the Lord –

“But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother’s breasts. <sup>10</sup>I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother’s womb You have been My God.” Psalm 22:9, 10

Christ placed His trust in the Lord, even from infancy. The Lord is the Gate of trust –

“Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, And I will praise the LORD. <sup>20</sup>This is the gate of the LORD, Through which the righteous shall enter.”

-Psalm 118:19, 20

And the Lord is a Wall for those who trust Him –

“‘For I,’ says the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’” Zechariah 2:5

Moses' implied question for Israel is, "Where will you place your trust?" Israel failed and was punished and exiled. The Lord Jesus never swerved in His trust of the Lord His God. He prevailed where Israel failed. Because of their failures, Moses says...

**<sup>53</sup> You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters**

The words here, as tragic as they are, were given by Moses in advance. Therefore, when such events were to take place, and they did – in fact – take place, the people could go to his words and say, "This is our fault." The "fruit of your own body" is explained by the words, "the flesh of your sons and your daughters."

What is as horrifying as the act itself is the fact that before the act, the child would first have to be killed. And this is what the record of Israel details –

"Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, 'Help, my lord, O king!' <sup>27</sup> And he said, 'If the LORD does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?' <sup>28</sup> Then the king said to her, 'What is troubling you?' And she answered, 'This woman said to me, "Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow." <sup>29</sup> So we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, "Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son.'"" 2 Kings 6:26-29

This also is recorded as occurring in Judah –

"The hands of the compassionate women Have cooked their own children; They became food for them In the destruction of the daughter of my people."

-Lamentations 4:10

These and other such examples are given right in Scripture as fulfillment of the words of Moses now. Israel was told that they would eat their own children...

**<sup>53</sup> (con't) whom the LORD your God has given you,**

In the Bible, having children is considered a blessing from the Lord. However, in rejecting the Lord and shunning His law, the blessing of children would turn into a curse of horror. The unthinkable would become reality...

**<sup>53</sup> (con't) in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you.**

*b'matsor u-b'matsoq asher yatsiq lekha oyevekha* – “in siege and in desperate straits which shall distress to you your enemy.” The words are filled with horror – enemies without, complete lack within, and a state of total distress because of the siege of the enemy.

Moses introduces two new words. The first is *tsuq*. It is a verb signifying distress, being brought into dire straits, and so on. From that comes the other noun, *matsoq*, meaning dire straits, anguish, and so on. Moses says that the Lord will distress Israel in the sieges and straits that He brings upon the people.

It is in this terrible state that they would do the horrifying thing of eating their own children. This is not only recorded in the Bible, but it is also recorded concerning the siege of Jerusalem by Josephus. Joseph Benson says the following –

“This prediction was repeatedly fulfilled, especially when Vespasian and his son Titus begirt Jerusalem so closely that the besieged were reduced to a most grievous famine, which forced them, after they had eaten up their horses and other creatures, to eat even their own children, whom parents, who had used to live delicately, Moses here foretels, should themselves eat up privately, and let none share with them.” Joseph Benson

What Benson is referring to continues to be explained by Moses in the next words...

#### **<sup>54</sup> The sensitive and very refined man among you**

Moses uses two words to describe the man of this verse. The first is *rak*, or “sensitive.” It signifies tender, delicate, soft and the like. The second word is new and rare, *anog*. It is used only here, in verse 56, and in Isaiah 47:1. It speaks of that which is luxurious or delicate. He then modifies it with the word *meod*, or very.

The person being described is the kindest and most gentle sort of man. In normal circumstances, he would reach out to help anyone, and he would never dare to be rude or unkind. And yet, in the straits that Moses speaks of, he...

**<sup>54 (con't)</sup> will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind,**

The words translated as “will be hostile” are literally “will be evil his eye.” In his own anguish, he will look at his brother, his beloved wife, and even his own children with contempt and disdain rather than compassion.

In saying “the rest of his children,” it means that he has taken one to eat. In saying “whom he leaves behind,” it is speaking of the other children. More correctly, it reads, “the rest of his



children who remain.” One is taken, the others are not, but he will not give a bite of the meal he is preparing to anyone else.

In the siege of Jerusalem Josephus records –

“...in every house where there was any appearance of food (or anything that looked like it, that had the shadow of it) there was a battle; and the dearest friends fought with one another, snatching away from each other, the miserable supports of life.”

That is just what Moses says of this refined man now. He will take one of his own children and look at those around him with an evil eye...

**<sup>55</sup> so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat,**

The obvious thought that comes to mind is that his child is already skin and bones. To his demented mind, killing him would be an act of mercy at this point. But because he is nothing but skin and bones, to share him wouldn't leave enough even for himself. This is all there is, and it isn't much...

**<sup>55 (con't)</sup> because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.**

Moses repeats the same words as in verse 53, thus forming its own stress on the state of things - “in siege and in desperate straits which shall distress to you your enemy.” Along with that, he adds in the words from verse 52, *b'kal shearekha* – “in all your gates.”

It isn't just a city that is besieged so that the residents of other cities could come and help. Rather, there is no help for anyone because invaders have come upon the whole land. None will be spared. No food will be smuggled in. No friendly armies will launch counterattacks.

In this terrible state, the unthinkable for this man has become reality. The horror and the revolting nature of the meal is all he can think of. But the man is not alone...

**<sup>56</sup> The tender and delicate woman among you,**

Moses uses the same two words he just used to describe the man to describe now this woman, *rak* and *anog*. She is “tender” and “delicate.” She is a woman of culture, she is refined, she is dainty. However you would describe the mildest and sweetest woman, this is who Moses now refers to. She is so cultured that she is one...

**<sup>56 (con't)</sup> who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground**

The word translated as “venture” is *nasah*. It signifies to test or prove a matter. She is so delicate and soft that she wouldn’t attempt to tread barefooted. Moses also uses the word *arets* (land) instead of *adamah* (ground).

Though they are almost synonymous, and are both translated as earth, land, and ground, it appears that he may have chosen *arets* to speak of any terrain – be it soft grass, the shores of the water, or anywhere else. She would never even attempt it...

**56 (con’t) because of her delicateness and sensitivity,**

Again, Moses repeats the word *anog* (delicate) and then he uses the noun form of *rak*, a word found only here in the Bible, *rok*, or “tenderness.” The repetition is once again a way of highlighting what is said. Such a completely polished and refined woman...

**56 (con’t) will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter,**

Again, like the description of the sensitive and refined man, Moses says that this sensitive and refined woman would have an evil eye toward her beloved husband and also toward her own children. The idea here is that of the strongest of possible bonds.

In saying “wife of his bosom,” or “husband of her bosom,” it is speaking of someone so close that the two are as close to one another as if they are one. And as the children have issued from them, they are one in the same stock. No human relationships could be any closer. And yet, for this once refine and tender woman, she will refuse them...

**57 her placenta which comes out from between her feet**

This is a word found only here in the Bible, *shilyah*. Some translations say “her young,” but this is unlikely. It is more likely referring to afterbirth. The word comes from *shalah* meaning to extract.

The woman is at the time of birth, and so she has withdrawn herself from being near anyone else in order that she will be alone to consume what passes from her. But knowing that the placenta would only lightly satisfy her, she plots to also add to it...

**57 (con’t) and her children whom she bears;**

The use of the plural, children, certainly means one, twins, or triplets. Her affection for the child or children to be born would be completely lacking. In her deranged thinking, she probably thought it a just and fair trade. “My body has been the vessel to produce the child, now the child will be the means of sustaining my body.

Such is the nature of the horror of being besieged and there being nothing left to eat. And so, to bear a child would be to set forth a meal...

**57 (con't) for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything**

*ki tokelem b'khoser kol ba'sather* – “for she will eat them [plural – probably meaning the afterbirth and the child] in lack all, in the secret.” The words of Moses are so direct, so personal, and so horrifying that surely none could believe they were possible. Who could even imagine it?

But in abandoning the Lord, there would be a time of dread that those who have never faced such a thing could not even think possible. And yet, he says that it would come...

**57 (con't) in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.**

The NKJV translators lazily copied the translation from verse 55 and restated it here. However, here it only says, “in your gates,” not “in **all** your gates” as it said in verse 55. Such lack of attention to detail is unacceptable for a translation committee.

Despite that, for the third time in a row, Moses returns to the same general words as were used in verses 53 and 55 – “in siege and in desperate straits which shall distress to you your enemy in your gates.” Thus, he is forming a very heavy stress on the state of what it will be like when the Lord turns His favor away from Israel.

As already seen, this came to pass in various degrees in 2 Kings 6 and in Lamentations 4. This is also noted in Ezekiel 5. Moses had warned, the law was given, and Israel shunned both the Lord and His word. Because of this, the prophet confirmed what lay ahead –

“Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. <sup>6</sup>She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that are all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.’ <sup>7</sup>Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Because you have multiplied disobedience more than the nations that are all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that are all around you’ — <sup>8</sup>therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Indeed I, even I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. <sup>9</sup>And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations. <sup>10</sup>Therefore fathers shall

eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds.”

-Ezekiel 5:5-10

Ezekiel was referring to the tragedy that would come upon the people in the first exile, which had already begun. Eventually, the city was destroyed as prophesied, including the resulting horrors he conveyed to the people.

However, in failing to heed after that, the same tragedy came upon them again as recorded by Josephus and as relayed on Wikipedia. It is a story that occurred during the Roman siege that so closely matches Moses' words that it can be considered nothing but a fulfillment of these verses here in Deuteronomy –

“Josephus relates that there was a Mary, daughter of Eleazar originally from the village of Bethzuba in the district of Perea, east of the Jordan River, who had previously fled to Jerusalem. Distinguished in family and fortune, her property, treasures and food had been plundered by the Jewish defenders of the city during the siege. Famine was “eating her heart out, and rage consuming her still faster”. Maddened by hunger she took the infant at her breast and said to him: ‘Poor little mite! In war, famine, and civil strife why should I keep you alive? With the Romans there is only slavery and that only if alive when they come; but famine is forestalling slavery, and the partisans are crueller than either. Come you must be food for me, to the partisans an avenging spirit, and to the world a tale, the only thing left to fill up the measure of Jewish misery.’ And in ‘defiance to all natural feeling’ she killed her son, then roasted him and ate one half, hiding the rest.

Almost immediately the rebels appeared (‘sniffing the unholy smell’) and threatened to kill her on the spot unless she revealed what she had prepared. As she uncovered what was left of the child she offered them a share. They left her in horror and the ‘entire city could not stop thinking of this crime and abomination.’ When the news reached the Romans, ‘some refused to believe, some were distressed but on most the effect was to add enormously to their detestation’ of the enemy at hand. Titus disclaimed all responsibility as he had repeatedly offered peace and amnesty for surrender.”

Though not in the Bible itself, and though Josephus – at times – contradicts or misunderstands some of the things found in Scripture, his eyewitness writings of the time in which he lived serve as a witness to what occurred in Israel after their rejection of Christ Jesus.

On the one hand, there is disobedience leading to the horror spoken of in these verses concerning the offspring of the people. On the other hand, there is the note of the blessing for Christ who perfectly obeyed the will of His Father by accomplishing everything set forth for Him to do –

“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup> For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, <sup>12</sup> saying: ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.’ <sup>13</sup> And again: ‘I will put My trust in Him.’ And again: ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.’ <sup>14</sup> 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, <sup>15</sup> and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. <sup>16</sup> For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”

-Hebrews 2:10-18

Instead of those in Israel rejecting brother, wife, or offspring, and consuming their own children, Christ was willing to come to save His brethren, die for His bride (Ephesians 5:25), and to suffer for the children God has given Him. The contrast between the two is complete.

As for Israel, it has been a heavy burden laid upon them, but the law came by their own agreement to be under it, and it came with advanced warnings of what it meant to reject what it says. Moses will again confirm this thought in the next verse...

He was so gentle and such a loving soul  
He never harmed a thing in his whole life  
But something has come over him that he cannot control  
And it has separated any love he had, even for his wife

She was the epitome of tenderness and sensitivity  
Never did she dare to put the sole of her foot to the ground  
But she has destroyed her own child in the siege of the city  
And has hidden his body to eat when none are around

How could such a thing happen? It is a world full of woe  
There is only horror and disaster to be found  
Where will it end? No one can know  
But look at what has happened with the terror all around

Oh God, may our trust be in You alone  
You are our God, our only Helping Stone

## II. Until You Are Destroyed (verses 58-61)

<sup>58</sup> **“If you do not carefully observe**

This is somewhat of a paraphrase. The words are more precise, saying, “If not you keep to do.” There is the keeping and the doing as has been mentioned in earlier sermons. One can keep and not do, and one can do without keeping. But what is expected is that the people will both keep and also do...

<sup>58 (con’t)</sup> **all the words of this law that are written in this book,**

The English gives the sense for us to understand, but in the original Moses is very specific, leaving out any possibility of ambiguity – “all words, the law the this, these written in the book the this.” One can only see that absolute perfect adherence to what is stated is the expectation.

For Israel, there was the sacrificial system for failure to meet this perfect standard, but the intent is not to fail and then seek forgiveness. It is, instead, to perform and not need to seek it. In keeping and doing, there is a demonstration of the attitude of the people...

<sup>58 (con’t)</sup> **that you may fear**

The words, “that you may fear” are not correct. Rather, it says “to fear.” Using “that” implies one clause gives the purpose for the other. Rather the second clause explains the first. In observing and doing, the people are showing reverential fear.

Taken together, it says, *“If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, to fear...”*

<sup>58 (con’t)</sup> **this glorious and awesome name,**

*ha’shem ha’nikbad v’ha’nora* – “the Name, the heavying, and the feared.” The verb *kavad* means heavy, weighty, or abounding with. Thus, “the glorying” is a good way to understand the meaning. The word *nora* is a verb meaning to fear. Being prefixed by the article, it thus means “the feared,” and so “the awestriking” may get the point across as well. And that superlative name is...

<sup>58 (con’t)</sup> **THE LORD YOUR GOD,**

*YEHOVAH ELOHEKHA* – YEHOVAH YOUR GOD. It is a term used many times in Deuteronomy when speaking of the Lord in general, but because of how Moses has preceded it with the

previous clause that is filled with superlatives, the full cap title is a sweet touch to offset the words.

By stating it the way he has, it appears that Moses has shown that the name Yehovah that was explained to him at the burning bush in Exodus 3:14 (I AM THAT I AM), is now more fully developed to Israel. It is not just that He is “Yehovah, who is your God,” but that he is “YEHOVAH YOUR GOD.”

The name, and the people to whom the name has been presented, are united in a new revelation of Himself. God is progressively revealing who He is and what His relationship with Israel is. Therefore, if they fail to keep and to do the words of the law and to fear the Name, the heavying, and the feared (YEHOVAH YOUR GOD) ...

**<sup>59</sup> then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues**

The nature of the plagues is stated first – “And will make extraordinary, Yehovah, your plagues and plagues your descendants.” Also, the word “plagues” is the same word that was used to describe the beating a person was to receive for violating the law – up to forty stripes – seen in Deuteronomy 25:3.

Therefore, this is certainly more than just plagues of pestilence, but plagues, hazards, social afflictions against the people, and dare we even say of events such as the pogroms and the holocaust. It is the stripes of punishment for rejecting the law and the Lord from whom the law came. These will be...

**<sup>59</sup> (con’t) —great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses.**

This seems to show that the idea of “stripes” is more suited. There are both great and prolonged stripes and great and prolonged sicknesses. The two work hand in hand. In being afflicted, such as when the Jews were all clustered into the ghettos (a stripe), the sicknesses would then accompany the stripes.

**<sup>60</sup> Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt,**

Here, the word “disease” is singular. It reads, “And he will return in you every infirmity Egypt.” The word translated as “disease” is used now for the second and last time, *madveh*.” In both Deuteronomy 7:15 and here, it is referring to disease found in Egypt.

It comes from a word signifying infirmity and it was something that they should have forever left behind, but the Lord promises to bring them back upon the people when they fail to heed.

These may or may not be the diseases that afflicted the Egyptians during the plagues upon Egypt. The reason is that a different word is used when describing those in Exodus 15 –

“There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, <sup>26</sup> and said, ‘If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.’” Exodus 15:25, 26

Either way, whether those particular plagues, or whether it was general diseases that were found in Egypt that the Israelites personally experienced, of them, he specifically notes...

<sup>60 (con't)</sup> **of which you were afraid,**

The words are more personal, “which you were afraid of their presence.” In other words, like AIDS or some other debilitating disease that people are fearful of even being around, they shall return to the people of Israel, but more...

<sup>60 (con't)</sup> **and they shall cling to you.**

They will reappear among the people and there will be no way to shake them off. Where one person goes, it will follow. And when it does, it will cling to whoever is near him, sticking like glue. But more than these, the Lord promises extra that the people had not even considered...

<sup>61</sup> **Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law,**

Here again, Moses uses the same word translated elsewhere as “stripe” that he used in verse 59, “Also, every sickness and every stripe, which is not written in this Book of the Law.”

Things that would be completely unknown, more terrible, more enduring, more terrifying, and so on – all of these would come upon Israel for their failure to heed. All of these and more...

<sup>\*61 (fin)</sup> **will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed.**

This is the sixth of seven times that Moses uses the word *shamad*, or “destroy” in this chapter. As we have already seen, 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.

Moses knows that Israel will be destroyed. They will be so crushed that there appears to be no hope for them at all. And yet, he knows that the Lord has promised to preserve them through



their destruction and to never utterly annihilate them. But that will not ease the pains they are sure to face while they are facing them.

In Jeremiah 6, the prophet uses the same two words that Moses now uses (sickness and stripe) to describe what had befallen the people as an attempted corrective measure –

“For thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Cut down her trees; cast up a siege mound against Jerusalem. This is the city that must be punished; there is nothing but oppression within her. **7**As a well keeps its water fresh, so she keeps fresh her evil; violence and destruction are heard within her; **sickness** and **wounds** are ever before me. **8** Be warned, O Jerusalem, lest I turn from you in disgust, lest I make you a desolation, an uninhabited land.’”

Jeremiah probably read the words after penning them and said, “Yes, the Lord is true to His word.” He may have wondered what the end of it all would be. But it wasn’t for him to know. He simply wrote what the Spirit-inspired, and he waited to see where things would head.

To this day, people in Israel still don’t know where things will go, because – for the most part – they are wholly ignorant of His word. And of those who have studied it, almost none of them have done so with the thought of Christ Jesus being the One to whom the words point.

Think of that rabbi I mentioned at the beginning of our word today. There he is, telling his people about how unreliable the word is, when it told – in the minutest detail – exactly what would come to pass. But unless one wants to admit that he is (or his people are) in the wrong, there will be no understanding.

Let us not make this error. God is God and we must let Him be so in our lives. Think clearly, think soberly, and think about Israel. If nothing else on this planet explains what is right and what is not concerning who God is (and there many things that do), Israel surely does.

We cannot ignore this word, which tells us of such things, and go unscathed. And the fact is that above all else, this word tells us of Jesus. Therefore, to reject what it says about Him is to find only condemnation.

Pay heed to the word, accept it as it is given (and in its proper context), and you will do well. Of this, I am absolutely certain. If you do not, things will not go well. And of this, I am absolutely certain. Come to Christ and find God’s favor. Amen.

**Closing Verse:** *“Vengeance is Mine, and recompense; Their foot shall slip in due time; For the day of their calamity is at hand, And the things to come hasten upon them.” Deuteronomy 32:35*

**Next Week:** Deuteronomy 28:62-68 *Some will find hell by ignoring these verses, and yet they think they will find heaven...* (The Blessings and the Curses, **Part VII**) (83<sup>rd</sup> 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**

“They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and  
-----fortified walls  
Those in which you trust  
Come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you  
-----at all your gates  
Throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you  
-----as is right and just

You shall eat the fruit of your own body  
The flesh of your sons and your daughters – yes, this is true  
Whom the LORD your God has given you  
In the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy  
-----shall distress you

The sensitive and very refined man among you  
Will be hostile toward his brother, acting so unkind  
Toward the wife of his bosom  
And toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind

So that he will not give any of them the flesh; their meat  
Of his children whom he will eat

Because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits  
In which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates

The tender and delicate woman among you  
Who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground  
Because of her delicateness and sensitivity  
Will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son  
-----and her daughter, if they be found

Her placenta which comes out from between her feet  
And her children whom she bears, so she will them treat

For she will eat them secretly for lack of everything  
-----in the siege and desperate straits  
In which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates

“If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law  
That are written in this book by which you should be awed  
That you may fear this glorious and awesome name  
THE LORD YOUR GOD

Then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants  
Extraordinary plagues; a life full of messes  
Great and prolonged plagues—  
And serious and prolonged sicknesses

Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt  
Of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you  
-----they shall from you not be stripped

Also every sickness and every plague  
Which is not written in this Book of the Law  
Will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed  
Because you did not show Him respect and awe

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...