





**Deuteronomy 28:62-68**  
**(The Blessings and the Curses, Part VII)**  
**December 19, 2021**

*<sup>62</sup> You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. <sup>63</sup> And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.*

*<sup>64</sup> “Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone. <sup>65</sup> And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. <sup>66</sup> Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. <sup>67</sup> In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.*

*<sup>68</sup> “And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, ‘You shall never see it again.’ And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.”*

In 2003, I went on a trip to Israel with mom. We went together with Zola Levitt ministries. Zola was a messianic Jew and had been on about 70 tour groups by the time we went with him. Because of this, he had things pretty tightened up as to how to make the trip enjoyable – what to see, what not to see, and so on.

We enjoyed everything from Dan to Beersheba, down to Eilat, and over to Petra in Jordan. While in Jerusalem, there were many nice sights to see. It was during the second Intifada, and people thought we were stupid for going. While in Jerusalem, we had lunch on a hill overlooking the city.

I fell asleep on the grass, and Zola took a photo of me napping with the city in the distance. That made the cover of his next month’s publication. It was a selling point for those who might have thought you could get shot while touring Israel. That just wasn’t likely.

While in Jerusalem, Zola took us to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial, on Mount Herzl (the Mount of Remembrance). It was certainly a moving place to be, and they made sure that all who went through it would feel that way. Israel wants the world to never forget what happened to them. But Israel has yet to acknowledge why those things happened to them...

**Text Verse:** *“Now therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, ‘It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: <sup>37</sup> Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely. <sup>38</sup> They shall be My people, and I will be their God; <sup>39</sup> then I will give them*

*one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. <sup>40</sup> And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. <sup>41</sup> Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.” Jeremiah 32:36-41*

A Jewish guy that a friend of mine knows watched some of the sermons I have done. Eventually, he told her, I will never watch one of his sermons again. He said that I blamed Israel for what happened to them in the Holocaust.

I have never directly said that, but I have implied it many times. They don't need my opinion on this, all they need to do is read Leviticus 26 (the Lord in the first person), or Deuteronomy 28 (Moses speaking of the Lord in the third person), to know that if they had been obedient to the Lord, none of the woes of their past would have come upon them, including the Holocaust.

When mom and I walked out of Yad Vashem, I turned to her and said, “The only thing that is missing in this place is a copy of Deuteronomy 28 posted in every language that the Jews were driven to. As sad as the Holocaust was, it was a self-inflicted wound for having rejected the Lord their God.

It is true, that man certainly took things too far, just as the Babylonians did millennia earlier, but there would have been no first exile, nor a second exile, along with the resulting punishments, if Israel had done what the Lord expected of them.

And, sadly, what happened to them in the Holocaust will be overshadowed by what the word says is still to come upon them. If you want to know what I mean, your next reading assignment is Zechariah 13:8. But good news immediately follows that coming tragedy in Zechariah 13:9.

The blessings and the curses. Israel was given the choice. It was carefully laid out for them, in advance. And everything that Moses prophesied has come to pass. And it is all because they failed to know the time of their visitation.

The terrible woes to come upon Israel, as prophesied in Deuteronomy 28, will be completed in our sermon today. But the terrible woes to come upon Israel will continue into the future until that day when they – as a nation – finally call out to Jesus, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”

Certain truths such as these 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. To Destroy You and Bring You to Nothing (verses 62 & 63)

**<sup>62</sup> You shall be left few in number,**

*v'nishartem bimte meat* – “And you (all: plural) shall remain in persons few.” With the exception of one instance in verse 14, Deuteronomy 28 has spoken to the people in the singular consistently until this point.

Now, and in the next clause of this verse, it goes to the plural – you all. As far as the content, the words are a close repeat of Deuteronomy 4:27 where Moses also uses the plural –

“And the Lord will scatter **you** among the peoples, and **you** will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive **you**.”

In this verse, however, the NKJV omits the word “And” that begins it. The words are actually a continuation of what has been said and they speak of the result of those previous verses –

“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. <sup>62</sup> [**And**] You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

It is the plagues, sicknesses, and diseases noted in the previous verses that will result in the diminution of their numbers. The use of the plural adds emphasis to the content. Instead of, “And you (Israel) shall be left few in number,” it says, “And you (all) shall be left few in number.” The plural continues with the words...

**<sup>62</sup> (con't) whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude,**

*takhat asher heyitem ke'kokve ha'shemayim la'rov* – “under which you (all: plural) were as stars the heavens to multitude.” Again, the plural adds emphasis. After the many, many verses of it being in the singular, Moses uses the plural to speak forth the magnitude of the resulting catastrophe that will come upon the people –

“And you (all) shall be left few in number.”

“Whereas you (all) were as the stars of heaven in multitude.”

With that noted, he again provides the exact reason that this will come about, saying...

<sup>62</sup> (con’t) ***because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.***

*ki lo shamata b’qol Yehovah elohekha* – “for no you (singular) would hear (meaning hearken to) in voice Yehovah your (singular) God.” In essence, Moses is calling down the collective curse upon the people – both as individuals and as a nation. The two are essentially inseparable.

If America is to be judged for its wrongdoing, all of the people will suffer. It is not as if the Lord will separate the faithful from the unfaithful when the nuke detonates over New York City, or when the plague falls upon the land. Rather, all will participate in the tragedy of the events.

With this stated, we cannot go far from the truth that Jesus came to take Israel’s punishment upon Himself. The nation transgressed, and yet the punishment of the sins of Israel could – ostensibly – have been carried by Him.

This would include the sins of each person, and the sins of the nation collectively. In relation to Him, each person who accepts him – Peter or Paul for example – is forgiven. But the guilt of the nation remains. Hence, exile and punishment came upon all.

The idea of being few in number is probably twofold in significance. First, it is that there will be but a few left in the land at any time, but also that the whole will be reduced to a few as well. As far as the first premise during the Babylonian exile, that is recorded in Jeremiah –

“But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah the poor people, who had nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.” Jeremiah 39:10

It is also true of the number who were exiled. The total of Israel was reduced to a tiny number compared to those who were, as it said in 1 Kings 4, at the time of Solomon –

“Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing. <sup>21</sup> So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.” 1 Kings 4:20, 21

Whether the term “stars of the heavens,” or the term “sand by the sea,” the number was immense. Eventually, through war, pestilence, and exile, the number was reduced to a paltry few souls.

The same is true at the time of the Roman exile. After the Babylonian exile, the people returned to the land and grew in number once again. However, John Gill notes the sad details of their reduction in number when the Romans came –

“...how much they were reduced by the Romans will appear by the accounts Josephus gives of those that were slain, and made prisoners by them: he says (i), ‘there were 1,100,000 slain at the siege of Jerusalem and by the war, and 97,000 made prisoners;’ and it is computed that 1,240,490 were destroyed in Jerusalem and other parts of the nation (k); and it is also said by their historian (l), that of those that were transported from Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine into Spain, scarce a thousandth part remained and that an infinite number were slain in France and Germany; and though their number equalled those that came out of Egypt, yet scarce five thousand of them were left.” John Gill

This is how it was, and this is how it continues to be, for Israel. The people belong to the whole, and the many will collectively be reduced within the nation. Until the nation collectively turns to Christ, this will remain unchanged. With that understood, Moses continues with the words of tragedy...

***63 And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you***

*v'hayah ka'asher sas Yehovah alekhem* – “And it shall be according to which has delighted over you (plural).” As you can see, the plural continues. Moses acknowledges that the Lord rejoices over each and every soul.

It is as if the Lord looks down from heaven and sees the masses and rejoices over them all together and individually at the same time. In this, Moses introduces a new word, *sus*. It means to be glad, rejoice, make mirth, and so on. There is the sense of gladness in the Lord that is being delightfully expressed, which is...

***63 (con't) to do you good and multiply you,***

*l'hetive etkhem u-l'harbot etkhem* – “to do good you (all) and to multiply you (all).” In the obedience of the nation, the Lord rejoices to do good to all of the people individually.

One can almost see Moses raising his hands and sweeping them across the people, and then pointing at individuals in rapid succession. “This is what the Lord did for you all. You, you, you, you, annnnnnd you over there as well.” However, in their disobedience, another course will be set for them...

***63 (con't) so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing;***

*ken yasis Yehovah alekhem l'haabid etkhem u-l'hashmid etkhem* – “Thus, will delight Yehovah over you (all) to cause to perish you (all) and to destroy you (all). The contrast is complete. “Yehovah delighted to do you good and to multiply you when you were faithful. Just so, Yehovah will delight over you to cause you to perish and to destroy you when you are faithless.” Of this verse, John Lange rightly says it... –

“...is a bold anthropomorphic figure, but spoken from the profoundest view of the truth, since righteousness on the basis of His holiness, as His mercy according to His love, is in full accordance with the nature of God. As He is glorious, so also He is fearful.” John Lange

This is now the seventh and final use of the word *shamad*, or destroy, in Deuteronomy 28. It will continue to be seen in Scripture, but repeating the word seven times brings its own sense of completeness and finality to the words.

As we have seen, and as is now repeated, this doesn't mean to destroy utterly. Israel continued to exist, and they continue to exist. But the people have been destroyed along the way.

Though using different words to express the thought, what is stated here is certainly reflective of what is said about Christ in Isaiah 53. The Lord delighted to bring His destruction upon Israel. But it also pleased the Lord to do so in Christ in their stead –

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.” Isaiah 53:10

God in Christ was willing to take what Israel rightly deserved upon Himself in order to redeem them from their transgressions committed under the law. However, as for Israel in their destruction, Moses next says...

<sup>63 (con't)</sup> ***and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.***

The words now go from the plural back to the singular – “and you (all, plural) shall be plucked from off the land which you (Israel, singular) go to possess.” Here, it more appropriately reads, “the ground.” Those who would come to Canaan would go in to possess their own plot, but like a tree being pulled up, so would those who once went to sink down their roots.

In this is a new word, *nasakh*. It means to destroy, pluck, or uproot, coming from a root meaning to tear away. It will be used once by David in Psalm 52 and then only two more times by Solomon in the proverbs. So literally was this fulfilled that John Gill records these words as a part of the historical record of the Jews –

“The Emperor Adrian, to prevent their insurrections and rebellions, which had given him a great deal of trouble, ordered by an edict that no Jew should come into Jerusalem, nor into the land of Judea, or be seen in it, which is observed by several writers (m); by which means the country was cleared of them. In later times some of them did get thither again, but they were but few. Benjamin of Tudela, a Jew of the twelfth century, travelled into several parts of the world in quest of his countrymen, and particularly into Judea, and his view was to magnify his people; and yet owns he found at Jerusalem only two hundred persons, whose employment was dyeing wool, and dwelt in a corner of the town under the tower of David; and but twelve at Bethlehem, three at Maresha, at Shunem indeed three hundred, none at Gilead, two at Nob, who were dyers, three at Ramah, one at Joppa, none at Jafne, where had been a famous academy, none at Ashdod, and at Tiberias about fifty (n). And our countryman Sandys (o), who travelled into Judea in the seventeenth century, says, ‘here be some Jews, yet inherit they no part of the land, but in their own country do live as aliens.’” John Gill

So, at any given time there were from no Jews at all to less than a thousand in the entire land, and even while there, they were counted as foreigners. This lowly state continued right up until the Zionist Movement began and the Jews, once again, started to fill the land.

As for a parallel in Christ, again, though the Hebrew words used are different, the same sentiment is spoken of concerning Him in Isaiah 53 –

“He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation?  
For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.”

Israel was to be removed from their land due to disobedience, but Christ was to be removed from another type of land in their place. The trade was offered, and to this day it still stands. Only when the exchange is accepted will there be surety for them.

As for being uprooted, Moses next tells what the consequences of that will be for them, as we will see in a minute...

*If only you will heed the voice of the Lord your God  
If only you will do what that voice calls out to you  
But like animals being conducted with a cattle prod  
So, you will be treated for what you failed to do*

*The Lord has given the word in advance  
And Moses has spoken the word out to you  
This word will not fail, of this there is no chance  
The Lord will set forth all He has promised to do*



*He will provide the blessing when you heed the word  
And surely will come the curses when you fail to heed  
So be diligent to do all that you have heard  
Or the Lord will destroy you, and He will do so with speed*

## **II. Your Life Shall Hang in Doubt Before You (verses 64-68)**

***64 “Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples,***

The words of this verse are all in the singular, you Israel. In this clause, it is more specific – “all the peoples.” In other words, the distinction is being made between Israel and “all the peoples.” They are completely set apart from them, even if they are dwelling among them.

And how true has that been, and how true it remains even to this day. They dwell throughout the US, even as citizens, but they remain Jews. Such is true wherever they have gone. They have stubbornly held onto their identity not only among all the people, but throughout the millennia among all the peoples, even...

***64 (con’t) from one end of the earth to the other,***

*miqtseh ha’arets v’ad qetseh ha’arets* – “from end the earth and as far as end the earth.” This has been literally fulfilled as Jews have been spread to every possible place where man dwells.

Synagogues exist in remote China and in Budapest. They are found on remote islands of Tunisia and in India. They are found as far north as Fairbanks, Alaska and Trondheim, Norway, and they are found as far south as Dunedin, New Zealand.

Jews have been dispersed like the dust blown off of the Sahara Desert, encompassing the world and just as easily removed once again and scattered further still. It is without controversy that the prophecy of Moses as he sat in the plains of Moab, near the Jordan River has been literally fulfilled.

Looking at it in this light, and considering that it was spoken concerning Israel’s disobedience, it is actually a mark of shame upon them, rather than something to be boasted of.

Consider the parallel noted in the previous verse. Like Israel being removed from the land which typifies life, Christ was removed from the land of the living. The parallel continues in that Israel was prophesied to be returned to their land, just as it was prophesied that Christ would return from that place where no one could have imagined anyone would ever return from again.

Moses, in just two more chapters, shows us that it would be the same for Israel –

“Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, <sup>2</sup> and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>3</sup> that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. <sup>4</sup> If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.” Deuteronomy 30:1-6

Likewise, Isaiah – in the same passage where he spoke of Christ’s death – also speaks of Christ’s return from death –

“After the anguish of His soul, He will see the light of life and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant will justify many, and He will bear their iniquities.”  
Isaiah 53:11 (BSB)

Even from the remotest parts of the world, the Lord has, and continues to, bring the people back to the land where they may live. And just so, Christ was brought back from the remotest place a human could imagine going, back to the land where He may live.

As for Israel in their land of exile, Moses tells them of their state in such places...

<sup>64</sup> (con’t) ***and there you shall serve other gods,***

Some scholars say this can’t be confirmed. They haven’t looked very closely. The words *elohim akherim*, or “gods other,” mean any god other than the Lord God. If they were serving the Lord God, they wouldn’t be in exile. Moses then further defines what he means by saying...

<sup>64</sup> (con’t) ***which neither you nor your fathers have known—***

This is obviously referring to serving the Lord God. Even though Israel in the land served innumerable gods other than the Lord, causing them to be exiled, this isn’t referring to them. It is referring to any gods out among the nations that the Jews have served.

Today, if you go into many Jewish homes, you'll find statues of Buddha, Krishna, and other gods. Of these, and many others, they are...

*64 (con't) wood and stone.*

Along with all of the other false gods the Jews have served around the world, John Gill tells of the false gods of Roman Catholicism that they have gone after –

“The author of the history of their calamities and sufferings owns this; “multitudes (he says (p)) in Spain and Portugal forsook the law of Moses, and joined the Papists, pretending at least to be of their religion.” He makes mention of sixteen thousand at one time (q), and some, he say (r), “that were driven out of Spain, came into Italy, where the young men pressed with famine could not bear it, and changed their religion, and began to worship images that they might have to satisfy their hunger; and the Papists used to go about with a crucifix in one hand, and a piece of bread in the other, promising the bread to those that would worship the crucifix; and so many famishing persons forsook the law of Moses, and mixed with them:” and to this day the convents of monks and nuns in Spain are full of them; and most of their canons, inquisitors, and bishops, are Jews (s).” John Gill

In this, there is a complete contrast to Jesus in His exile from the land of the living. The book of Jonah, while he was in the belly of the fish, prophetically refers to the time when Christ was in the tomb. In that state, it says –

“Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice. <sup>3</sup>For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. <sup>4</sup>Then I said, ‘I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.’ <sup>5</sup>The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head. <sup>6</sup>I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars closed behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God. <sup>7</sup>“When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the LORD; And my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple. <sup>8</sup>“Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy. <sup>9</sup>But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.” Jonah 2:2-9

In death and through death, in exile from the land of the living, Christ remained faithful to the Lord God. The wood and stone the Jews have served have no life. They cannot sense anything. As such, they cannot hear prayer and they cannot deliver from the place of distress. But the Lord God, whom Christ remained faithful to, can hear and He did deliver. The contrast is complete.

For Israel in exile, Moses continues...

**<sup>65</sup> And among those nations you shall find no rest,**

The words of this verse are all in the singular – “you Israel.” Despite this, it can just as easily refer to an individual who belongs to Israel. If he is the only “Israel” in the land, then he represents the nation to whom he belongs.

In this verse, Moses pulled out his lexicon in order to bestow upon us several new or rare words. The first is *raga*. It is a verb meaning to disturb. Thus, it is used figuratively to signify settling. Israel would remain unsettled anywhere they went. They would always be in a state of being upheaved and moved along.

When I was young, we used to go on vacation to a remote part of Massachusetts. There was a Jewish couple that lived there. When I was with my aunt one day, she said, “Twice, they had to get up and leave the food on the table and flee for their lives.” This is the idea of the words Moses now gives. It was literally fulfilled in that old couple on the mountain. Moses next says...

**<sup>65 (con't)</sup> nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place;**

Here Moses uses a word, *manoakh*, seen only once so far, in Genesis 8:9, where it says, “But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot.” It is exactly translated, resting place. Wherever Israel’s foot comes down, it will be as if there is a thorn or hot coals there, prodding it to move hurriedly on. Along with that, Moses says...

**<sup>65 (con't)</sup> but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul.**

Rather than “but,” the word simply says, “and.” There will be no resting place for the soul of the foot, and along with that would come added calamities. Of them, Moses introduces three very rare words. The first is *ragaz*. It is an adjective occurring only this once.

It comes from the verb *ragaz*, meaning to quake or tremble. Thus, “trembling heart” is correct. There would never cease to be a time when the heart wouldn’t feel as if it might simply explode from the fear of the moment or from the constant motion of the foot.

Next, he uses the word *kilayon*. It is a noun signifying pining or failing. It is found only here and in Isaiah 10:22. The idea is probably that the eyes would become weak from looking for a spot to rest or looking for the salvation of a messiah, not realizing that the Messiah had already come, and they had rejected Him.



Along with that, Moses uses the word *deavon*. It is a noun, found only here, meaning faintness or languishing. Combined with the word *nephesh*, or soul, it means that the very force which impels the person would be so worn out that there would be no desire to even continue on. It is the weariness of the person that would choose death, if it would just come and end the misery.

The words here are not unlike those that the Lord spoke forth in Leviticus 26 –

“As for those of you who are left, I will make their hearts so fearful in the lands of their enemies that the sound of a windblown leaf will put them to flight. They will run as though fleeing from the sword, and they will fall, even though no one is pursuing them.”  
Leviticus 26:36

Israel is the transgressor. It is he who failed to honor and serve the Lord, and his soul suffered because of his failings. But the Lord had come to take away their sin. While they were looking for a hero to exalt them among the nations, He came to restore them to the Father.

Instead of being exalted among the nations, they were abased among them, and they remain in their sin. But Christ came to refresh their souls through the pouring out of His own for them—

“He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.” Isaiah 53:11, 12

***<sup>66</sup> Your life shall hang in doubt before you;***

*v'hayu khayekha teluim lekha mineged* – “And will become your life hang to you from before.” Again, Moses introduces a new word, *tala*. It is a verb meaning “to hang.” It is found only here and in Hosea 11:7. Figuratively it signifies uncertainty.

The words are obvious when considered. It will be as if nothing can be trusted from moment to moment. Each moment is one of doubt and the next will be as well. No matter what one attempts in order to provide a state of constancy, there will always be nothing but fear of life. This state will then continue twenty-four hours a day...

***<sup>66 (con't)</sup> you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life.***

*u-pakhadta laylah v'yomam v'lo taamin b'khayekha* – “and you shall fear night and day and no you have assurance in life.” Another new word is given, *pakhad*. It is a verb meaning “to dread.” These words further define the previous clause.

The life of Israel hangs before it in doubt. As such, there is dread at all times. Throughout the night, and throughout the day. There is never a time when life will seem secure.

It is as if the entire nation is a soldier on a battlefield with bombs falling nearby constantly. There is never a moment where the fear of the “next one maybe being it” is over. Life, its continuance, has no foothold of surety at all. The sword of Damocles is always present. Of this verse, Luther says –

“I have never seen a passage which describes more clearly the misery of a guilty conscience, in words and thoughts so fitting and appropriate. For this is just the way in which a man is affected, who knows that God is offended, i.e., who is harassed with the consciousness of sin.”  
Martin Luther

This is a right analogy, and it calls into focus the words of the first clause, “Your life shall hang in doubt before you.” Israel rejected Christ, the crucified Savior. The knowledge of this event is known to them, and somewhere in the back of their minds, they have pieced it together.

They understand the symbolism of their writings, and the thought of their sin before God lingers because their sin hung before them on the cross, if only they will acknowledge it. But in not believing Him, it is their life that hangs in doubt. And because of this...

**<sup>67</sup> In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’**

Properly translated, it reads, “In the morning you will say, ‘Who will give me evening?’ and in the evening you will say, ‘Who will give me morning?’” (CG). It is as if a petition to God, but the Lord is left out of the conversation.

In other words, instead of appealing to the Lord, Israel stubbornly asks for anyone to help, but the Lord. It is reflective of the words of Amos 6:10 –

“Hold your tongue! For we dare not mention the name of the Lord.”

The Lord hangs before them. Their consciences intuitively know this, and yet they will call out in any direction except His. And their cry is...

**67 (con't) because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.**

One can think of the most recent example set before the world, that of the holocaust. The Jews of Europe faced everything that has been presented in the verses today. They begged for day during the night, and they begged for night during the day.

The things they experienced brought them dread in their hearts, and what they saw brought terror to their eyes. Moses spoke out the words of terror and horror that would come upon the people. They are – meaning the law is – a mirror for them to behold. Its words direct their actions, and the resulting horrors, back upon themselves.

**68 “And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships,**

It is the highest disgrace of all. Not only is it exile from the land, but it is exile back to the very place from which they had been redeemed. They walked out of Egypt as a free people, led by the Lord. But the Lord Himself will take them back in ships, meaning as slaves, as a people cursed of the Lord. And this will be...

**68 (con't) by the way of which I said to you, ‘You shall never see it again.’**

It says, *ba’derek amarti lekha* – “in the way I said to you.” One could assume that this is referring to not returning to Egypt as was seen in Deuteronomy 17. There, it said –

“But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’”  
-Deuteronomy 17:16

However, I would argue that this is speaking of the state of slavery. Rather than, “You shall not return that way again,” meaning going back to Egypt. Moses now speaks of the way, saying, “You shall never see it again.” Israel is being returned to something by the Lord, and it is in ships. Thus, they are bound as slaves.

As real slaves, according to Josephus, this was fulfilled under Titus. But without the law and without Christ, this has also spiritually been fulfilled in Israel. The law gave them the Day of Atonement. Christ is the fulfillment of that. Outside of the land, and without Christ, there is no atonement, and thus the people are, literally, slaves to sin –

“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’

<sup>33</sup> They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in

bondage to anyone. How can You say, “You will be made free’?”<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.<sup>35</sup> And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.<sup>36</sup> Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’” John 8:31-36

This is what is being conveyed. Egypt is only a type of the true bondage that man suffers under. As for the literal fulfillment of this, Moses next says...

**\*68 (fin) And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.”**

The translation is incorrect. It says, “And you shall sell yourselves there.” It is in the plural, and it is the action of the people themselves. In other words, it is a petition to be sold into bondage just so that they could have a master over them in order to eat and have a place to sleep.

But it says that for Israel, *v’ein qoneh* – “and no buying.” For their physical bodies, none would be interested. And for their spiritual selves, there is none to redeem. They had rejected the Lord and because of their sin, the devil is their owner.

With these words, one of the most mournful passages of all of Scripture comes to a close. What makes it so much the case is that it explains everything in advance. There is nothing that was hidden from them. The choice for obedience and blessing, or disobedience and cursing, rested solely with Israel.

The Lord set the two before them through Moses, and whatever resulted is solely the responsibility of Israel. But let none of us be smug in what has come upon them. They are simply a template of what will come upon each of us.

We can come to the Lord and be saved, or we will remain in the bonds of sin and death that He came to destroy. And just as the Lord has faithfully kept Israel, even through their destruction, so He will keep any whom He redeems.

Thank God for His faithfulness to unfaithful Israel. And thank God for His faithfulness to us. He is a great and wonderful God who has set us free from our bonds. Yes. Thank God for His tender mercies. Yes, thank God for JESUS!

I came to You with nothing,  
Only buckets of my sins.  
You stretched your arms  
Around me  
And you said, "welcome in."



I cried for forgiveness.  
You wiped my tears away.  
You emptied all the buckets  
When I called upon your name.

You told me that, "I'm loved,"  
You told me, "this's my home."  
You told me, "I'm forgiven!"  
"No longer I'm alone"  
You told me, "live in peace."  
You told me, "I'm the Christ."  
"I'm the price for your sins  
and your everlasting life

I carried now the buckets  
No longer full of sins.  
But full of living water,  
Of mercies flowing in.  
I see other people  
caring buckets of despair.  
But mine are full of forgiveness,  
And good news to be shared.

*Izabela Bednara*

**Closing Verse:** *"What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!"* <sup>16</sup> *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?* <sup>17</sup> *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.* <sup>18</sup> *And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."* Romans 6:15-18

**Next Week:** Luke 1:26-38 *A marvelous thing God will do...* (The Power of the Highest Will Overshadow You) (2021 Christmas 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

You shall be left few in number  
Whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude  
Because you would not obey  
The voice of the LORD your God, such was your attitude

And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you  
To do you good and multiply you, so to you I address  
So the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you  
-----and bring you to nothing  
And you shall be plucked from off the land  
-----which you go to possess

“Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples  
From one end of the earth to the other, so you will dwell alone  
And there you shall serve other gods  
Which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone

And among those nations you shall find no rest  
Nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place  
But there the LORD will give you a trembling heart  
Failing eyes, and anguish of soul – there in your disgrace

Your life shall hang in doubt before you  
You shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life  
-----so I give you this warning  
In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!  
And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!

Because of the fear which terrifies your heart, so shall it be  
And because of the sight which your eyes see

And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships  
By the way of which I said to you, ‘You shall never see it again  
-----thus, it is true  
And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies  
As male and female slaves, but no one will buy 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...