

Message #34

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

If we were to ask most people in the world would you like Almighty God to Personally bless you, I am sure the vast majority of people would say, “Yes, Absolutely.”

But if you were to say there is a simple formula spelled out in the Bible as to how to get God to give you His blessings, are you willing to follow the formula? Most, frankly, would probably say “yes,” but then later would say, “no way.”

God’s people need to understand this—**God is the sovereign God who delights to do good things for His people and God is the sovereign God who can do bad things to His people. The key to what God will do is response to the written word of God.**

This is why God wanted the nation to take a national moment and divide up into two groups and stand at the base of Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal (Deut. 27:12-13). He wanted them to visually grasp the fact that they can move into one of two directions—the way of blessing or the way of cursing. That is what that visual was designed to show.

Israel needed to see this and grasp this and so do we.

GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE HIS WRITTEN WORD AND IF HIS PEOPLE WILL OBEY IT, HE WILL BLESS THEM AND FILL THEIR LIVES WITH POSITIVES AND IF THEY DON’T OBEY IT, HE WILL CURSE THEM AND FILL THEIR LIVES WITH NEGATIVES.

S. R. Driver said Deuteronomy 28 “stands unrivaled in the O.T.” (*Deuteronomy*, p. 303). This is not a complicated chapter, but it is a most powerful chapter. This chapter is filled with admonitions and promises that come directly from God to His people.

God can make our lives happy and fulfilled and God can make our lives miserable and empty. The determining factor is this, how serious are we about knowing and obeying God’s word.

PART #1 – God writes of the obedience that will guarantee His blessings. **28:1, 9, 13, 14**

There are four blessing ingredients given in these verses, which all focus on carefully understanding and obeying the word of God:

(Blessing Ingredient #1) - Diligently obey the word of God. **28:1a, 9, 13, 14**

This point is driven home in every one of these ingredients. God places a high priority on His written word and what His people do with His written word. This idea is be willing to completely obey God’s word in every area of life to experience full blessings.

(Blessing Ingredient #2) - Be careful to obey all the commandments of God. **28:1b, 9, 13, 14**

God interjects here something that He will repeat and that is if one will take this word of God seriously and obey it, He will exalt these people by blessing them in every possible way.

These were not a perfect people and God knew that so He made provisions for how to respond even in those moments. God's people need to diligently apply His word in all aspects.

(Blessing Ingredient #3) - Be careful to walk in the ways of God. **28:9**

This must be the focus if one wants the ultimate of God's blessings. One must purpose to focus and walk in the ways of God.

(Blessing Ingredient #4) - Do not turn away from the "words" of God. **28:14**

Our direction must always be to the word of God and not away from the word of God. Turning away from the word of God is to put oneself on the path of disaster. Obviously the very words of God are to be taken seriously.

That is about as simple a formula as there is. If His people purpose to do that, God says here are the blessings I will give you:

PART #2 – God promises wonderful, positive blessings to people who obey Him. **28:1-14**

There are fifteen specific blessings that God promises His people that He will give them if they obey Him:

Blessing #1 - God will set His people high above all the nations. **28:1c**

What God is promising His people is an exaltation that comes directly from Him. The pronoun "you" in the Septuagint is an emphatic singular pronoun. So we understand this to have application specifically to the nation Israel, and also to specific individuals in the nation Israel, who obey God's word.

There is a national application to this and there is an individual application to this.

Blessing #2 - God will allow His blessings to overtake your life. **28:2**

God will allow His blessings to overtake them.

Blessing #3 - God will bless you if you live in the city or the country. **28:3**

When Israel first went into the Promised Land and took it over, it was basically an agricultural based economy. People needed food and drink and they got that from the land. They did take over cities and some would stay in the city and work and manage it, but for the most part this was an economy based on agriculture.

To have the blessings of God would mean that your fields and livestock were prospering.

Now God makes it clear here that it will not matter where you live. God promised that cities and farms and businesses will be successful and they will prosper. When God promises that He will bless them in the city or country, it covers every possibility of where people would live. If the people obeyed God, He would bless them no matter where they were, city or country.

Blessing #4 - God will bless your offspring. **28:4a**

God promises that they will have many children and those children will be blessed by Him. There would not just be an increase in the crops, but also in the family.

Blessing #5 - God will bless your livestock. **28:4b**

Animals are God's animals. He determines who prospers in raising those animals. God says one who obeys Him will discover that there will be increase in the herds. God will bless the cattle and the herds. **28:4b**

Blessing #6 - God will bless your food supply. **28:5**

Harvest baskets and kneading bowls would overflow with God's blessings. It is absolutely amazing to see that God actually takes a Personal interest in loaves of bread being made. In fact, the Hebrew word "kneading bowl" (misheret) actually refers to a large, shallow bowl or stone that was used to knead dough to make bread.

God is actually stating that He oversees the preparation and the prosperity of the food supply.

Having plenty to eat is a blessing of God. Not having plenty to eat is a curse from God. God says if you obey Me, I will see to it that you have plenty of food to eat.

When we see a lack of food, such as a lack of baby formula and lack of other food things, it is not an indication that we are being blessed by God.

Blessing #7 - God will bless you in all locations and directions. **28:6**

God promises that He will bless everything His people do no matter where they do it. Their work will always prosper and succeed.

Blessing #8 - God will bless you by defeating all enemies. **28:7**

God will cause His people to be victorious over all enemies. They may come out at His people, but they will run away from His people. God will not permit enemies to overtake His people.

Blessing #9 - God will bless you by commanding His blessings on you. **28:8**

God will actually bless property and land. Earl Kalland, in his commentary on Deuteronomy, said what God is promising here is a “utopian prosperity in the land” (*Deuteronomy*, p. 167).

The pronoun “you” is very personal to the individual. In fact, in both the Septuagint and the Hebrew text, the specific pronoun used in this context is a singular pronoun, and not plural. So the emphasis here is on a single individual and family.

So God is actually promising individuals that He will specifically bless them, their property and land if they purpose to obey Him and His word. Now the neighbor next door may not do this, but God promises everyone who does that He will bless those who do.

Blessing #10 - God will bless you by establishing you as His holy people. **28:9**

Notice the “if” clause—keep God’s commandments and walk in His ways and God will establish His people as holy people. When God does this, all people realize God’s hand is on that nation or that individual.

Blessing #11 - God will bless you over all peoples of the earth. **28:10**

All people of the earth will realize that these are the people of God and they have the blessings of God on them and we need to be afraid to tamper with them.

Blessing #12 - God will bless you with abounding prosperity. **28:11**

God says you will not only prosper, but I will see to it that you abound in prosperity in every way.

Blessing #13 - God will send His rain from His heavens at the right times. **28:12a**

Many people do not realize that having rain is a blessing of God. Seasonal rain that fills the land and the ponds and the aquifers is an amazing blessing of God that comes directly from Him and His heavenly water reservoirs. The rain we have been receiving is truly a blessing and when God does not send the rain to an area, it is a very serious problem.

Blessing #14 - God will bless you so you are those who lend, not borrow. **28:12b**

God says if you will obey Me, I will see to it that you have plenty of money to be able to lend to others and help others.

Blessing #15 - God will bless you by making you head above all. **28:13**

When God was saying this to Israel, she had just come from slavery and didn't as yet have a homeland. So God is promising an amazing blessing here. What God is saying is that I will take you from your present lowly status and raise you up to be the most dominant people in the world.

God says that He will make this nation a leader among the nations. One who is committed to God and His word will be raised up by God. This one will have the highest rank and not a subordinate rank.

C. I. Scofield said it this way, if God's people would obey Him, they would be "wealthy and powerful" (New Scofield Reference Bible, *NASV*, p. 292).

Notice the "if" clause—listen to the commandments of God and carefully observe them.

Verse 14 reiterates do not turn aside from any of the "words" and go after other gods.

Some do not think the "words" of the Bible are important. They think the concepts are, but not the words. Moses says pay attention to the words.

This is why we believe the proper way to study the Bible is systematically, book by book and paragraph by paragraph and line upon line.