

Message #36

Deuteronomy 28:49-68

In Psalm 145:18 we read “The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.” This is an amazing grace statement and an amazing grace invitation. **“ALL,” that includes every kind of person and every kind of sinner may call upon Him and experience His grace and mercy IF they call upon Him in truth.** Right there is the problem.

The fact is many people call upon God especially when things go haywire. But very few deal honestly with God in truth. The fact is when it comes to religious people, most are fraudulent game players who think no matter who they are or what they do, they are right with God and loved by God.

That is what happened to Israel. When Israel got into that Promised Land, it didn't take long for her to stop being serious about God and His word. They got involved in horrible sins. Even in that, God gave them time to come to terms with it and face it and confess it and turn from it and turn to Him. She would not do it.

Moses had warned these people what God would do. In Deuteronomy 28, Moses told them of the blessings they could have if they obeyed God and the cursings they would receive if they didn't.

Here is the thing about God's chastising judgment. It usually does not come all at once. It comes in waves. When sin is not truthfully faced, God will patiently wait for the nation or person to resolve it. If they do, they will go on to blessings. If they don't, God will start causing negative things to hit. Problems will begin to hit.

There can be physical problems, emotional problems, financial problems, occupational problems, and certainly there will be spiritual problems. God has an arsenal of negative things He can and will use to get His people to turn back to Him. That was not only true for the nation Israel, but it is also true for the people in the Church.

Paul said in I Corinthians 11 that if people judged themselves right and truthfully, they would not be judged; but if they didn't, God would send weakness, sickness and even death. Jesus warned the church of Thyatira with the exact same warning. So this negative chastisement warning is not something only for Israel, it is also for us.

God cares about His family too much to let them wander off into sin without consequences. He wants them pursuing the kind of life that He can and will bless. That is what Deuteronomy 28 is all about. God can give blessings to a nation or individual and God can send cursings.

Any nation or state or city or church or individual, who does not want the blessings of God, is very foolish. They are not just missing out on wonderful things God would do for them, but they are actually prompting God to do negative, horrible things to them. There are things that God's own people can actually do that so angers God that He will punish them.

In Deuteronomy 28, Moses is in the process of telling Israel all the positive things God will do if she obeys Him and His word. Life and existence would be blessed. If His people would seek to seriously understand and obey His word, He would give them 15 amazing blessings that would overtake them all of their lives (Deut. 24:1-14).

But he also tells them the negative things God will do if she doesn't obey His word. **In graphic detail he emphasizes the horrible negatives God would unleash if they did not take His word seriously. There are at least two reasons why Moses reveals this in-depth look at the negative chastisements:**

1) It is the truth about what God will do.

2) If God's people see the negatives, the logical choice should be obey the Word of God and avoid them.

We saw a couple of weeks ago that there were wonderful blessings God promised to His people if they would obey Him. God promised His people that He would raise them up and shower them with blessings no matter where they lived. He would bless their businesses and give them victory over enemies. He would give them abounding prosperity and raise them up to a high level. All they had to do was to obey the word and walk in the ways of God.

But now Moses warns if they do not do that, God would curse them. Last time we saw 29 horrible curses God would send against His own people if they did not obey Him.

Now in this section, He is really developing that point and brings it to a conclusion. He saves the worst for last. God wants this point stressed to His people. They are prone to wander and if they don't get back to Him, their world will fall apart.

MOSES WARNS GOD'S PEOPLE THAT IF GOD'S PEOPLE DO NOT OBEY GOD AND HIS WORD, HE WILL SEND GODLESS PEOPLE AND POWERS TO THE PLACE WHERE THEY LIVE AND THEY WILL DOMINATE THEM, CONTROL THEM AND SCATTER THEM.

As we mentioned, God is a patient God and He gives His people plenty of time to come to terms with truth and sin. But if they anger Him to this point and they do not allow the other chastisements to cause them to get right with God, He will send this judgment and this is the worst.

This is a very serious and very real and very literal warning that Moses is giving. We know this is real and literal because God did exactly what He promised to do and to this very day, Israel is still not right with God.

There are three unique warnings given in this section:

WARNING #1 – If God's people do not obey God, He will speedily send a godless foreign nation to dominate His own people. **28:49-58**

There are nine specific facts brought out about this judgment:

Fact #1 - The godless nation will come from a great distance. **28:49a**

Since God was the One who gave Israel her land, this would be the ultimate negative judgment. God would allow a foreign nation to come in and take them out of the land He gave them.

The implications of the sovereignty of God in this are staggering. God can sovereignly cause a foreign nation that is far away to actually come into an area where His people live and take it over.

Fact #2 - The godless nation will sweep in fast. **28:49b**

Once the process starts, it can happen fast. It won't take long for God to accomplish His purposes. In Jeremiah 48:40, Babylon was compared to an eagle 850 years later.

Fact #3 - The godless nation will speak a foreign language. **28:49c**

God would cause a nation to dominate His own people who could not even speak their language. The national language of Israel was Hebrew. God says I will bring a nation from afar who doesn't know Hebrew and they will take you and take your land.

Fact #4 - The godless nation will be fierce and show no respect for young or old. **28:50**

God says when I am judging a people; there is no respect for young or old. When you see a protest movement that is designed to publicly protest for the killing of innocent babies or you see some thug run up to a poor old woman and hit her in the head and knock her to the ground, you can absolutely know this is not a place being blessed by God.

Fact #5 - The godless nation will take everything you have and leave you with nothing. **28:51**

They would devour everything. Cattle, crops, grain, wine, oil would all be taken. God will cause His own people to have nothing and evil people to take everything.

Fact #6 - The godless nation will take over every single city in the land. **28:52**

One of the most significant cities in Israel's history is Bethlehem. It was the city of David and it was the city where Jesus Christ was born. Today, this city is under Palestinian authority and an Israelite cannot even visit it. Bethlehem is a city six miles from Jerusalem. As far as Jerusalem is concerned today, one half of it is controlled by Arab Palestinians. Two of the most important cities to Israel in the Bible and they don't even control them. This prediction certainly has been literally fulfilled concerning every city.

Fact #7 - The godless nation will cause you to starve to the point of cannibalism. **28:53**

What is described here is horrible. In Lamentations we learn that when the Babylonians came into Israel in 586 BC, mothers boiled their own children. We learn from Josephus that when Titus destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70, dead children were roasted.

Fact #8 - The godless nation will cause a family man to turn against his own family. **28:54-55**

Things will be so bad that even the upstanding men will turn against their own family and only look out for themselves. Even if they are eating their own children, they would not share it with other family members.

Fact #9 - The godless nation will cause a family woman to turn against her own family.
28:56-57

What is described here is so gross that a woman is not only involved in cannibalism, but even eating afterbirth placenta.

We believe that during the Great Tribulation, which we think is on the near horizon, that the ultimate fulfillment of these things will hit Israel.

The reason why God will do this is clearly revealed in verse 58:

- 1) God's people not careful about knowing and obeying the written words of God.
- 2) God's people did not fear God.
- 3) God's people did not honor God.
- 4) God's people did not fear and honor His awesome name: the LORD (Jehovah) your God (Elohim)

The written word of God is not a "take it or leave it" proposition in the mind and sight of God. God wants His people taking His word seriously and He wants His people to have a fear of Him and He wants them to honor Him. If His own people don't do this in this world, who will?

WARNING #2 – If God's people do not obey God, He will send plagues against His people.
28:59-62

There are five facts we learn about these plagues here:

Fact #1 - God will send extraordinary severe and lasting plagues on His people. **28:59a**

The word "extraordinary" means this is not your normal type of sickness or physical issue. The Corona Virus is not a normal type of sickness. There is no doubt from Scriptures that there is a sovereign God of the Bible who permitted this. Now I don't presumptuously pretend to know the mind of God in this, but what I do know is that this kind of thing should prompt people to think in terms of their relationship with God.

Fact #2 - God will send miserable and chronic sicknesses to His people. **28:59b**

God says if My people don't honor Me and obey My word, I can give them chronic sicknesses that will not go away. The words "sickness" and "plagues" are both plural. That means God can send all kinds of chronic things to plague His own people.

Fact #3 - God will bring back to you all the known diseases of Egypt. **28:60**

When Israel was in Egypt, she lived in constant fear of getting some disease. The word “disease” (madweh) carries with it the idea of physical weaknesses and ailments.

Fact #4 - God will bring unknown sicknesses and plagues to destroy His people. **28:61**

God would bring killer sicknesses and diseases to kill people that Moses didn't know a thing about. Moses says you know about the diseases in Egypt, but you don't know about all the diseases God sovereignly has at His disposal.

Fact #5 - God will decrease the numbers of His people. **28:62**

God says instead of multiplying and blessing My people, I will start decreasing them and eliminating them. The numbers will go down as a direct judgment from Me. Just as increase is a sign of blessings, so decrease is a sign of cursing.

WARNING #3 – If God's people do not obey God, He will delight in destroying them.
28:63-68

Verse 63 is scary. God delights in blessing His people. But His people can so anger God by their pursuit of godless evil that He can delight in destroying them.

When God promised to destroy Israel, it does not mean He will obliterate all of them, although He was mad enough to do that. There will always be a remnant who will survive. But when Jesus was here on earth, He said concerning the Great Tribulation “unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved” (Matthew 24:21-22).

It is possible for the people of God to so anger God that instead of Him delighting to do wonderful things to His people, He will delight in doing horrible things to His people.

There are seven facts He stresses:

Fact #1 - God will tear you out of the land. **28:63b**

God can literally remove people from the place where they live as a judgment. If God removed and destroyed nations who were given to idolatry and immorality, He can and will do the same thing to His own people.

Fact #2 - God will scatter His people. **28:64a**

God says I will scatter My people to other places all over the world. Here are some statistics that tell exactly this story of Israel:

- 1) 6.9 million Jews live in Israel.
- 2) 6 million Jews live in the United States.
- 3) 446,000 Jews live in France.

- 4) 392,000 Jews live in Canada.
- 5) 292,000 Jews live in the United Kingdom.
- 6) 180,000 Jews live in Argentina.
- 7) 165,000 Jews live in Russia.
- 8) 118,000 Jews live in Germany.
- 9) 118,000 Jews live in Australia.
- 10) 92,600 Jews live in Brazil.

Now nations that have Jews in them and treat Jewish people well will in fact be blessed of God. But here is the question. What in the world are these Jews doing scattered all over the world when they are supposed to be in their Promised Land experiencing the blessings of God? Why are they living in other nations? Disobedience and judgment.

Fact #3 - God will permit His own people to serve other gods. **28:64c**

Frankly, I think this is happening today in most churches. Most churches are serving a god they have invented in their own minds. They worship a love God or a tolerant God or a grace God and that's it. This is their concept of God. They are not interested in the fact that He is a Holy God and is to be a Reverenced God. They have invented their own god and they serve him.

Fact #4 - God will cause His people to have no rest. **28:65a**

God can take away peace from a person and make them restless. They have no stability. They are reactionaries who cannot settle down. They cannot sleep. They are not content.

Fact #5 - God will give His people a trembling heart. **28:65b**

God can cause a person's heart and mind to live in constant fear.

Fact #6 - God will give His people a fear of losing their life. **28:66-67**

Every day, whether morning or evening, there will be no assurance of life. Assurance of life, assurance of salvation comes by obedience to the Word of God.

Fact #7 - God will bring you back to Egypt as slaves. **28:68**

How sad when you see someone who was saved out of sin and years later they are right back where they started. That is a judgment of God.

Where did God's people go wrong? What caused this? They would not take God's written word seriously. They did not seek to accurately know it and obey it.

God gives His people plenty of opportunities to come to terms with truth. But if they refuse to face the word and face themselves honestly, He can reach a point where He says that is enough. When that happens, life will not be blessed.