



Deuteronomy - Chapter Twenty Eight

IV. Deuteronomy 27:1-29:1 - Moses' Third Speech: Blessings and Curses (continues/concludes)

Summary of Chapter Twenty Eight

The focus shifts from the specific sins that warrant curses to the content of the curses, preceded by a shorter list of blessings. The blessings of vv.1-14 are the converse of the curses in vv.15-68. The greater length devoted to the curses (54 verses compared to 14 verses for blessings) is suggestive of Israel's future.

IV.c Deuteronomy 28:1-14 - Blessings for Obedience

The nation is told they will be overwhelmed with blessings if they keep God and his laws as their main focus in their lives.

¹ If you will only obey the Lord your God, by diligently observing all his commandments that I am commanding you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth; ² all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the Lord your God:

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

If you will only obey the Lord your God, by diligently observing all his commandments. The word if looms large. In this chapter, Moses exhorted the nation with choice. The covenant God made with Israel contained three major features: the law, the sacrifice, and the choice. The idea behind the choice is that God was determined to reveal himself to the world through Israel. He would do this either by making them so blessed that the world would know only God could have blessed them so; or by making them so cursed that only God could have cursed them and cause them to still survive. The choice was up to Israel. As a

literary form, this chapter is similar to ancient treaties between a king and his people; this is God the King, making a covenant with his people, Israel.

The Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

Therefore, if Israel would obey the Lord, he would set them high above all nations of the earth, and the blessings would be so powerful that they would **come upon you and overtake you**: <<*But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your ancestors? So they repented and said, 'The Lord of hosts has dealt with us according to our ways and deeds, just as he planned to do'*>> (Zechariah 1:6). They would not be able to escape the overwhelming blessings the Lord would bestow upon them generation after generation.

³ Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field.

⁴ Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, both the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock.

⁵ Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading-bowl.

⁶ Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

Deuteronomy 28:3-6

Blessed shall you be. An obedient Israel would be blessed everywhere: **in the city, in the field; when you come in, when you go out**, and they can rejoice in that: <<*Happy are the people to whom such blessings fall; happy are the people whose God is the Lord*>> (Psalm 144:15). The coupling of opposites implies comprehensiveness, as seen in: <<*Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise*>> (Deuteronomy 6:7). For parallel curses to the blessings in these verses refer to vv.16-19.

An obedient Israel would be blessed in their homes and in their farms, as well as in their kitchens: **the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground and the increase of your cattle, blessed shall be your basket and your kneading-bowl.**

The fruit of your womb. The emphasis on fertility challenges the Canaanite view that Baal was the fertility god.

⁷ The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. ⁸ The Lord will command the blessing upon you in your

barns, and in all that you undertake; he will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. ⁹ The Lord will establish you as his holy people, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in his ways. ¹⁰ All the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you. ¹¹ The Lord will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground in the land that the Lord swore to your ancestors to give you. ¹² The Lord will open for you his rich storehouse, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its season and to bless all your undertakings. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. ¹³ The Lord will make you the head, and not the tail; you shall be only at the top, and not at the bottom – if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today, by diligently observing them, ¹⁴ and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I am commanding you today, either to the right or to the left, following other gods to serve them.

Deuteronomy 28:7-14

They shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. An obedient Israel would be blessed in warfare. This degree of blessing speaks of a clearly divine blessing. The battle is the Lord's no matter who opposes him or how strong they are. His people will always prevail if they are obedient to his call.

The Lord will establish you as his holy people. Perhaps the best blessing had to do with Israel's own relationship with God. God would separate an obedient Israel unto himself, speaking of a special relationship. If not for this, all the material blessings described previously would be empty.

All the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord; the Lord will make you the head, and not the tail; you shall be only at the top. God's purpose in blessing Israel was greater than just enriching the nation for its own sake. He intended to glorify himself through blessing them, just as he intended through the death of Jesus: <<'Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say – "Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again'>> (John 12:27-28). When Israel walked after the Lord, these blessings were real; one example of this is when the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon and saw a nation so blessed, she knew it had to be of God (1 Kings 10:1-13).

IV.d Deuteronomy 28:15-29:1 - Warnings against Disobedience

If the children of Israel are disobedient, they will be cursed, smitten, and destroyed; diseases, plagues, and oppression will come upon them; they will serve false gods and become a byword among all nations; fierce nations will enslave them; and they will eat their own children and be scattered among all nations. The final curse is the ultimate disgrace for the people of God: *<<The Lord will bring you back in ships to Egypt, by a route that I promised you would never see again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer>> (v.68).*

¹⁵ But if you will not obey the Lord your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees, which I am commanding you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you:

Deuteronomy 28:15

But if you will not obey the Lord your God. The covenant's aspect of the choice was a sword with two edges. Obedience would carry great blessing, but disobedience would carry terrible curses: *<<If you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut Israel off from the land that I have given them; and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight; and Israel will become a proverb and a taunt among all peoples>> (1 Kings 9:6-7).*

Then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. Like the blessings for an obedient Israel, the curses for a disobedient Israel would be inevitable: *<<But just as all the good things that the Lord your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for you, so the Lord will bring upon you all the bad things, until he has destroyed you from this good land that the Lord your God has given you>> (Joshua 23:15), and: <<All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. So the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against you>> (Daniel 9:11).*

The rest of the chapter is almost overwhelming. Actually, a logical analysis of the chapter is almost impossible, since the final aim was not to be logical but to build up a vivid impression by presenting picture after picture until the hearer could see and feel the importance of Moses' words.

¹⁶ Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field.

¹⁷ Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading-bowl.

¹⁸ Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, the increase of your cattle, and the issue of your flock.

¹⁹ Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

Deuteronomy 28:16-19

Cursed shall you be. If the nation fails to keep the laws and commandments of God then the blessings promised in vv.3-6 will be reversed. A disobedient Israel would be cursed in their homes, their farms, and in their kitchens. In fact, a disobedient Israel would be cursed everywhere.

²⁰ The Lord will send upon you disaster, panic, and frustration in everything you attempt to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. ²¹ The Lord will make the pestilence cling to you until it has consumed you from the land that you are entering to possess. ²² The Lord will afflict you with consumption, fever, inflammation, with fiery heat and drought, and with blight and mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. ²³ The sky over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you iron. ²⁴ The Lord will change the rain of your land into powder, and only dust shall come down upon you from the sky until you are destroyed.

Deuteronomy 28:20-24

The Lord will send upon you disaster, panic, and frustration in everything you attempt to do. This describes just how intolerable life will become for the nation if they turn away from God after all he has done to bring them into this land.

The earth under you iron means that it would be impossible to plough and prepare for crops, even if there was water for the land.

The sky over your head shall be bronze, that is, it will not produce rain and drought will ensure, causing much suffering for the people under the resulting drought conditions: <<*If he withholds the waters, they dry up*>> (Job 12:15a), <<*And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the soil produces, on human beings and animals, and on all their labours*>> (Haggai 1:11).

Only dust shall come down upon you from the sky until you are destroyed. This will turn the lush farming land into a dust bowl and eventually into desert.

²⁵ The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out against them one way and flee before them seven ways. You shall become an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶ Your corpses shall be food for every bird of the air and animal of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away. ²⁷ The Lord will afflict you with the boils of Egypt, with ulcers, scurvy, and itch, of which you cannot be healed. ²⁸ The Lord will afflict you with madness, blindness, and confusion of mind; ²⁹ you shall grope about at noon as blind people grope in darkness, but you shall be unable to find your way; and you shall be continually abused and robbed, without anyone to help. ³⁰ You shall become engaged to a woman, but another man shall lie with her. You shall build a house, but not live in it. You shall plant a vineyard, but not enjoy its fruit. ³¹ Your ox shall be butchered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it. Your donkey shall be stolen in front of you, and shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, without anyone to help you. ³² Your sons and daughters shall be given to another people, while you look on; you will strain your eyes looking for them all day but be powerless to do anything. ³³ A people whom you do not know shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labours; you shall be continually abused and crushed, ³⁴ and driven mad by the sight that your eyes shall see. ³⁵ The Lord will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head. ³⁶ The Lord will bring you, and the king whom you set over you, to a nation that neither you nor your ancestors have known, where you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone. ³⁷ You shall become an object of horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the Lord will lead you.

[Deuteronomy 28:25-37](#)

[The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies.](#) When the Lord goes before Israel they will win any battle but once he withdraws his support because of their disobedience then they will be doomed to defeat. Their lack of success will then make them [an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth](#): <<*I will make them a horror, an evil thing, to all the kingdoms of the earth – a disgrace, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places where I shall drive them*>> (Jeremiah 24:9).

The Lord will afflict you. Plague, boils, fever, the boils of Egypt, scurvy, the itch, madness, blindness, and confusion of mind. A disobedient Israel would be cursed in their health and become disoriented in their lives: you shall be unable to find your way.

You shall be continually abused and robbed, without anyone to help. From the period of the Judges and then throughout history, Israel has often been persecuted and defeated by its enemies. Only during the time of David would they know true military success and in the time of Solomon real peace. When Jerusalem finally fell people could only look on with scorn: *<<All who pass along the way clap their hands at you; they hiss and wag their heads at daughter Jerusalem; 'Is this the city that was called the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the earth?''>>* (Lamentations 2:15). Even today Israel has few friends and lives in a constant state of duress from the peoples around them.

You shall become engaged to a woman, but another man shall lie with her; your ox shall be butchered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your sons and daughters shall be given to another people, while you look on; A disobedient Israel would be cursed by simple, terrible injustices and tragedies. All of these tragedies would bring a terrible result: you will strain your eyes looking for them all day but be powerless to do anything.

The Lord will bring you, and the king whom you set over you, to a nation that neither you nor your ancestors have known, where you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone. This is a clear threat of the devastating periods of exile that the people would suffer in a time yet to come. The later northern kingdom of Israel would fall prey to the Assyrians and be scattered among many nations, with most of their descendants never returning to the Promised Land. Those of the southern kingdom would be taken by the Babylonians, although a remnant would be allowed to return and live again in the land.

The king whom you set over you. God was their King but he knew they would want to set up their own human king to be like the other nations: *<<Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, 'You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations.' But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, 'Give us a king to govern us.' Samuel prayed to the Lord, and the Lord said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them>>* (1 Samuel 8:4-7). Several of the kings were faithful to God and ruled well but the majority did not and were part of the cause of the exiles.

³⁸ You shall carry much seed into the field but shall gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. ³⁹ You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink the wine nor gather the grapes, for

the worm shall eat them. ⁴⁰ You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off. ⁴¹ You shall have sons and daughters, but they shall not remain yours, for they shall go into captivity. ⁴² All your trees and the fruit of your ground the cicada shall take over. ⁴³ Aliens residing among you shall ascend above you higher and higher, while you shall descend lower and lower. ⁴⁴ They shall lend to you but you shall not lend to them; they shall be the head and you shall be the tail.

Deuteronomy 28:38-44

You shall carry much seed into the field but shall gather little in. The people will work hard to produce food but their crops will fail. This is a theme taken up by the prophets: <<*For ten acres of vineyard shall yield but one bath, and a homer of seed shall yield a mere ephah*>> (Isaiah 5:10), <<*They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns, they have tired themselves out but profit nothing. They shall be ashamed of their harvests because of the fierce anger of the Lord*>> (Jeremiah 12:13), <<*For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads, it shall yield no meal; if it were to yield, foreigners would devour it*>> (Hosea 8:7), and: <<*You shall sow, but not reap; you shall tread olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil; you shall tread grapes, but not drink wine*>> (Micah 6:15).

The locust shall consume it. Even when the people are successful in growing their food, they will not benefit from it for it will be taken from them, either eaten by the locusts or stolen by the marauding peoples who would constantly attack them.

You shall have sons and daughters, but they shall not remain yours, for they shall go into captivity. Again, there is the warning of the exiles that will befall the nation, taking them away from their land and from the presence of God.

They shall be the head and you shall be the tail. From the time of the Babylonian exile until 1947, Israel never ruled in the land except for the brief period under the Maccabees (164-63BC). Although they resettled in the land after the Babylonian exile they remained under the dominion of Persia. Then came Alexandra the Great, the Romans, the Ottomans, the British, etc.

⁴⁵ All these curses shall come upon you, pursuing and overtaking you until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the Lord your God, by observing the commandments and the decrees that he commanded you. ⁴⁶ They shall be among you and your descendants as a sign and a portent for ever.

Deuteronomy 28:45-46

They shall be among you and your descendants as a sign and a portent for ever. Signs and a portent or wonders usually refer to Israel's salvation. Here the terms are heavily ironic. Instead of Israel being the free nation because of the signs and wonders of God, they will be held up as the sign of what befalls a people who reject the Lord God and go their own way: <<*You shall be a mockery and a taunt, a warning and a horror, to the nations around you, when I execute judgements on you in anger and fury, and with furious punishments – I, the Lord, have spoken*>> (Ezekiel 5:15).

⁴⁷ Because you did not serve the Lord your God joyfully and with gladness of heart for the abundance of everything, ⁴⁸ therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and lack of everything. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you. ⁴⁹ The Lord will bring a nation from far away, from the end of the earth, to swoop down on you like an eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, ⁵⁰ a grim-faced nation showing no respect to the old or favour to the young. ⁵¹ It shall consume the fruit of your livestock and the fruit of your ground until you are destroyed, leaving you neither grain, wine, and oil, nor the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock, until it has made you perish. ⁵² It shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout your land; it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout the land that the Lord your God has given you. ⁵³ In the desperate straits to which the enemy siege reduces you, you will eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your own sons and daughters whom the Lord your God has given you. ⁵⁴ Even the most refined and gentle of men among you will begrudge food to his own brother, to the wife whom he embraces, and to the last of his remaining children, ⁵⁵ giving to none of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because nothing else remains to him, in the desperate straits to which the enemy siege will reduce you in all your towns. ⁵⁶ She who is the most refined and gentle among you, so gentle and refined that she does not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground, will begrudge food to the husband whom she embraces, to her own son, and to her own daughter, ⁵⁷ begrudging even the afterbirth that comes out from between her thighs, and the children that she bears, because

she is eating them in secret for lack of anything else, in the desperate straits to which the enemy siege will reduce you in your towns.

Deuteronomy 28:47-57

He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you. This suggests a return to slavery, refer also to v.68, and a reversal of Israel's redemption, when God brought them out of Egypt: <<*I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery*>> (Deuteronomy 5:6). This became a reality under the Babylonians: <<*For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put an iron yoke on the neck of all these nations so that they may serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and they shall indeed serve him; I have even given him the wild animals*>> (Jeremiah 28:14).

The Lord will bring a nation from far away. A disobedient Israel would be attacked and conquered by a nation of fierce countenance or a grim-faced nation, and they would fight until the entire people are destroyed.

You will eat the fruit of your womb. The siege from the future enemy will be so dire that Israelites will resort to cannibalism in order to stay alive. This became horribly true in the days of the later kingdom. Second Kings 6:24-30 describes a famine so severe in the besieged Israelite city of Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kings 16:24), that there was a fight between two women over eating their children! A terrible fulfilment of the promise: giving to none of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating. Lamentations 4:1-11 vividly describes the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem.

⁵⁸ If you do not diligently observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, fearing this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God, ⁵⁹ then the Lord will overwhelm both you and your offspring with severe and lasting afflictions and grievous and lasting maladies. ⁶⁰ He will bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were in dread, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹ Every other malady and affliction, even though not recorded in the book of this law, the Lord will inflict on you until you are destroyed. ⁶² Although once you were as numerous as the stars in heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the Lord your God. ⁶³ And just as the Lord took delight in making you prosperous and numerous, so the Lord will take delight in bringing you to ruin and destruction; you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to possess. ⁶⁴ The Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other; and there you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone, which neither

you nor your ancestors have known. ⁶⁵ Among those nations you shall find no ease, no resting-place for the sole of your foot. There the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and a languishing spirit. ⁶⁶ Your life shall hang in doubt before you; night and day you shall be in dread, with no assurance of your life. ⁶⁷ In the morning you shall say, 'If only it were evening!' and at evening you shall say, 'If only it were morning!' – because of the dread that your heart shall feel and the sights that your eyes shall see. ⁶⁸ The Lord will bring you back in ships to Egypt, by a route that I promised you would never see again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.

Deuteronomy 28:58-68

Fearing this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God. The name is *Yahweh*, revealed to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3:14; refer to the associated comments made there.

He will bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt. This may refer to the plagues against Egypt in Exodus Chapters 7-14, or more generally the diseases that were common afflictions in Egypt. The latter seems more likely as the former were part of the signs and wonders that would see Israel set free, whereas the latter were those which they had no doubt succumbed to in their poor living conditions, supported by the statement: of which you were in dread.

The book of this law refers to Deuteronomy Chapters 1-30.

Although once you were as numerous as the stars in heaven, you shall be left few in number. This shows both the fulfilment and the reversal of the promise made to Abraham: <<*He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.'* Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be'>> (Genesis 15:5).

The Lord will take delight in bringing you to ruin and destruction. This may seem like a shocking statement and it is certain that God takes no real delight in dismissing his people in this way. However, it does show that God is rightly passionate about his name and the honour that he is due, and he will certainly remove such people from his eternal presence. This is clearly demonstrated by the description of what will happen at the end of days when the world is finally judged: <<*Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt*>> (Daniel 12:2), <<*Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the*

resurrection of condemnation>> (John 5:28-29), and: <<Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; and anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire>> (Revelation 20:14-15).

The Lord will scatter you among all peoples. The curse of exile eventually comes for the northern kingdom under Assyria (2 Kings Chapter 17) and for the southern kingdom of Judah under Babylon (2 Kings Chapter 25). These curses finally become the history of Israel.

One of the most devastating yet interesting fulfilments of these curses came shortly after the time of Jesus. Around 68 AD the Romans had finally had enough of the rebellious Jews in their province of Judæa, so they laid siege to Jerusalem. At the time, the Jews fervently expected the coming of the Messiah to save them and conquer the Romans, based on God's promise to destroy the armies laying siege to Jerusalem in Zechariah 12:1-9. Sadly, the Jews of that time refused to fulfil Zechariah 12:10 which described their humble, repentant embrace of a pierced Messiah. Nevertheless the Jews of that day were so confident of Messiah's coming that their factions actually fought each other and burned each other's food, trying to be the most powerful group when the Messiah came. According to Josephus, it was "as though they were purposely serving the Romans by destroying what the city had provided against a siege and severing the sinews of their own strength" (Jewish Wars 5:24); and "Through famine certainly the city fell, a fate which would have been practically impossible, had they not prepared the way for it themselves." (Jewish Wars 5:26). When the Roman general Vespasian came to Jerusalem, the Jewish factions were busy fighting each other. His staff urged him to attack immediately, but he knew that an attack would instantly unite the Jews. So he held back and let them destroy each other for as long as possible. He said that God was a better general than he, and that he was delivering the Jews into the hands of the Romans. Before Jerusalem was attacked, Vespasian became emperor, and he put his son Titus in charge of the attack. In contrast, Christians in Jerusalem heeded the words of Jesus in Luke 21:20-24, in which he told people to flee Jerusalem when it was surrounded by armies, because the days of vengeance were at hand. Estimates of Jewish fatalities during the war range from one to two million, with many more taken as slaves. The early church records that no Christians were known to have died in the siege!

The Lord will bring you back in ships to Egypt, by a route that I promised you would never see again. Out of all the curses that would befall disobedient Israel was a complete reversal of the exodus. This would remove everything that God had done for his people. In this siege of Jerusalem hunger became so great that many tried to escape the walls and forage for food. Five hundred or more were captured and crucified daily. Josephus wrote, "The soldiers out of rage and hatred amused

themselves by nailing their prisoners in different postures; and so great was their numbers, that space could not be found for the crosses nor crosses for the bodies.” (Jewish Wars 5:451). More than 600,000 died from starvation, and their dead bodies were dumped over the walls of the city. In total of between one and two million died and 97,000 were captured, with most of the captives being shipped as slaves to Egypt.

The promise of v.68 was tragically fulfilled: you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer. This happened as too many Jewish slaves glutted the Egyptian slave market, and no one could buy all the available slaves. After the conquest the Jews still living in Judæa were continually subjugated and humiliated by the Romans. The Romans continued to collect the temple tax from the Jews, even though their temple had been completely destroyed. So the Romans took the temple tax and used it to support their pagan temples.

After some years of this, the Jews of Judæa rebelled against the Romans again in 132 AD with a man named bar-Kochoba leading the fight. He was proclaimed messiah by the rabbis who supported the revolt. However, after the bar-Kochoba rebellion, Rome finally and utterly crushed the Jewish population of Judæa. Josephus said that as a result of the many battles, the once beautiful land was destroyed, and that it could not even be recognised. But the curse for Israel had not ended. Now, tragically, the church and Christians turned on the Jews. It was as if the branches of the tree attacked their own root. As the church gained in political power and became the official religion of the Roman Empire, they decided to attack the Jews. They did this in part as retribution for the distant early years of Jewish persecution of the Christians. It was also because the current Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah was thought so offensive. However, the greatest motivation was a bizarre evangelistic strategy. Christians thought, “The Jews are cursed because they have killed their Messiah. The curses are meant to turn the heart of the nation back to God. We will help God by being his instrument to curse the Jewish people.”

For centuries, the worst enemies Jews ever had were the Christians who thought they could help God by cursing the Jewish people. At one time in Medieval Rome, the Pope commanded a procession of the Jews through the city, where they presented a scroll of the OT to the Pope. He received the scroll and said, “Beautiful law; wretched people.” The shameful history of the Church against the Jews is recorded in the story of the Crusades, the slaughters, and the ghettos. This helps to explain the great corruption and lack of spiritual power in the church through the Dark Ages. God promised to Abraham and his covenant descendants, the Jewish people: *<<I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed>>* (Genesis 12:3). Satan’s clever, and

powerful strategy to curse the church was effective: Curse the church by inspiring them to curse the Jewish people. Just as God judged Assyria, Babylon, Rome, and Germany for their mistreatment of the Jewish people, so the church was cursed as long as it persecuted the Jews. The church ignorantly disregarded the words of Jesus: *<<Woe to the world because of stumbling-blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling-block comes!>>* (Matthew 18:7). If the Jewish people were to be cursed, it was God's business, not the Church's business! Gloriously, the curse was not and is not the end of God's plan for the Jewish people. As Ezekiel Chapter 37 describes, God will, and has begun to, revive the Jewish people as back from the dead, and prepare them to be used in these last days. God is not finished with Israel and the curse will not be their final legacy.

^{29:1} These are the words of the covenant that the Lord commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.

Deuteronomy 29:1

Deuteronomy 29:1 is 28:69 in the Hebrew

These are the words of the covenant. Some 40 years before this, at Horeb, that is Mount Sinai, Israel made a covenant with God: *<<Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.' Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, 'See the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words'>>* (Exodus 24:7-8).

The covenant in the land of Moab is a reiteration of the covenant at Horeb, i.e. Sinai, and the laws are the same as were given to Israel through Moses at Horeb. The Moab covenant constitutes all the spoken words of Moses in Deuteronomy.

In addition to the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb. For the most part, the people who had the blood of the covenant sprinkled upon them had died in the wilderness. The generation of unbelief had died, now it was an opportunity for the generation of faith. So, Moses will reconfirm the covenant with the new generation.