

nations and that leads to slavery and bondage, *“The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.”* **Proverbs 22:7.**

9. Humiliation, verse 37, *“And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.”* The rebellious nation is looked on by others with disgust (**vs. 46**).

10. War. The following verses describe the rebellious nation as being defeated by their enemies, **verses 22, 25, 33, 36, 48-57, and 68.** The Israelites (God’s people) were over-run by the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Romans. The last verse of this chapter, (68), was fulfilled over 1500 years later by Titus and the Roman army in A.D. 70, *“And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.”* When they destroyed Jerusalem, many prisoners were carried captive to Egypt by ships to be sold into slavery.

CONCLUSION

The way to God’s blessings is faith and obedience. The salvation of any nation is through religion and not by politics. The religious beliefs of a nation determine its culture, that is, its customs, manners, or patterns. One definition given to the word culture is “religion externalized.” It is impossible to have a change in culture without a change in theology. Israel of old is our example, which will we follow as a nation? Amen.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

II Chronicles 7:14



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*“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”*
Acts 16:31

The RICHIES

OF GRACE

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“hath appeared to all men.” Titus 2:11

Blessings and Curses

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.”

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

+ Obedience versus Disobedience +

The Bible speaks of blessings and curses upon individuals and nations. Blessings come from God by obedience and curses come by disobedience. The **book of Deuteronomy**, written by Moses, reveals the history of the nation of Israel as they prepare to enter into the promise land. In **chapter twenty-eight** we have a pre-written history of God’s people before they ever enter into the land. The entire chapter focuses upon two words: blessings and curses. These blessings and curses actually follow the footsteps of a nation and overtake it (**verses 2, 15, 22**). Without any doubt, our earthly destiny and welfare are in our own hands to some degree. Any nation that follows God’s Word will be blessed and any nation that rebels against God’s Word will be cursed, Amen .

*“Righteousness exalteth a nation:
but sin is a reproach to any people.”*

Proverbs 14:34

The blessings are described in **verses 1-14** and the curses in **verses 15-68**. The curses cover far more of the chapter than the blessings. For there is a total of fourteen verses pertaining to blessings and fifty-three verses pertaining to curses. All nations and people can learn from Israel's history about God's blessings and curses (**Romans 15:4, I Corinthians 10:11**). Without any doubt, there is a moral link between blessings and curses. Israel's security and prosperity was connected to her corporate piety.

THE BLESSINGS

The blessings of God are placed first, probably to show His love and grace to His people. God is slow to anger and would rather show favor than wrath. There are at least six blessings mentioned in **verses 1-14** that extend to every sphere of life. The blessings of safety is in **verse 3**, fruitfulness in **verses 4 and 5**, and protection in **verse 6**. The blessings of God extend to victories in warfare according to **verse 7** and prosperity in **verse 8**. Time and space will not allow detailed description of each wonderful blessing mentioned. Remember, these blessings are based upon obedience (**verse 1**) and these blessings are definite promises (**verse 2**). God says in **verse 2** that they shall come on thee and overtake thee.

In **verse 10**, God's people are called by His name, that is, God dwelling among them and causing them to be exalted above other nations, "*And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them.*" **verse 13**. God promises the nation that obeys Him that they would not be indebted to others (enslaved) but would be lenders only. Again, the nation that faithfully follows God's law shall not experience the curses mentioned in the following verses.

THE CURSES

The remaining fifty-three **verses (15-68)** of this chapter focus on the curses that come upon a nation when they rebel against God. A detailed account cannot be given because of space, so a brief description will be given. I will list at least ten curses mentioned in the text. This entire section is characterized by vexation, frustration, hardship, uneasiness and hopelessness (**verse 20**). As one author so plainly stated, "**Verses 20-46** describe internal calamities (death, disease, despair) and **verses 47-57** describe external judgments (defeated by enemies)."

Please note, **verses, 16-19**, are the opposite of **verses 3-8**. In other words, the lack of security, prosperity, and peace, etc.

THE VARIOUS TYPES OF CURSES

1. Pestilence in verse 21. A pestilence is a plague, something that brings death, like an infectious or contagious disease. Pestilences are usually the result of something else, for example, war causes famine, and famine causes pestilence. The word pestilence is usually listed with the sword and famine and usually in that order, **Ezekiel 6:11**, "*Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.*"

2. Bodily Diseases That Are Incurable and Mortal. These are mentioned in **verses 22, 27, 35, 59, 60, and 61**. Various diseases are mentioned such as: consumption, fever, inflammation, mildew, botch, emerods, scab, the itch, sore sickness, plague, etc.

3. Crop Disease, verses 22 and 59. This disease attacks the grain. The words mildew, blasting, and plague are used in association with seeds. Mildew and blasting usually appears together and both are caused by drought conditions.

4. Destroying Insects, verses 38-42. The locust and worm are mentioned. The Israelites became servants to these pests for it seemed that most of their labor was spent feeding them.

5. The Weather, verses 23-24. Father God controls our weather and not mother nature. These natural disasters as they are called are nothing more than the curses of God. Our disobedience brings droughts, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc...

6. Mental Disease in verses 28-29, and 34. According to these verses, God sends madness, insanity, and confusion of mind upon the rebellious. The farther we move away from God, the more insane we become (**Ephesians 4:17-18**).

7. Family Life. According to **verses 30-32, and 41**, it affects all the things that we hold dear and precious (wife, children, houses, and vineyards). In our society, families are torn apart, separated, and divided because of disobedience to God's Holy Word.

8. Economics, verses 38-45. One area of the economic curse is debt. According to **verse 44**, a rebellious nation becomes indebted to other