

Blessings Or Cursings

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[0 : 00] All right, thank you very much. Take your Bibles, if you would, and turn with me to Deuteronomy chapter 27 and verse 1. Deuteronomy chapter 27 and verse 1. And before I share with you what the passage of Scripture talks about tonight, I would like to remind you that we're in the process of asking God to give us money for our...

...is what we needed to go ahead and get the building part done, and then we're going to need another couple hundred thousand dollars for furnishings and the sound and all that. But \$10,000 came in this morning, and that leaves us, I think it's 72,000 dollars short of our goal for the first 200,000.

And then we need another 200,000, and we've got just a few months. So thank you for whoever's giving and praying, and I thank you for that. Now Wednesday night's going to be a special night. Vision Baptist Church, Cobb County, will be organized as a church, and I have asked every missionary and every person I can to be there to honor them.

The Lord's blessed. The last two weeks have been their two best weeks. I think they had 35 last week, 36 this week, and today, Bo baptized the first person at the new church.

And so that's an exciting thing. And this Thursday night, we'll have an organizational service for their church, and I hope you'll be there. All of this is important stuff. I don't know if you know this. It's just like being on a mission field. I used to organize churches all the time.

[1 : 19] I just said, we'll organize the church over there. Let's all get over there and organize this church. And so we go organize churches, ordain young men to be in the gospel ministry, send missionaries out. It's exciting. Amen?

You'll see all that God's doing. I hope you're excited. So don't miss it. Thursday night, Cobb County. You've got to get to Smyrna, Georgia by 7 p.m. Some of the ladies have already talked about getting together some desserts and stuff.

I don't know. You can get with the ladies around here and find out, and we'll be a blessing to that church. Now, Deuteronomy chapter 27, blessing or cursing? You ever studied the book of Deuteronomy? It is a hard book of the Bible.

It is the second giving of the law, and it has wonderful truths in it. We're going to see three things out of two chapters. We're putting these two chapters together. And tonight, the Lord is about to send them in, and Moses is explaining that he is giving them law, and he's explaining what God's going to do about that law.

And in the middle of all that, he tells them, and you're also going to build an altar. So you need your Bible open, and you need to stay there in Deuteronomy and mark some things, and then maybe later on you'll read these two chapters as many times as I have.

[2 : 23] Deuteronomy 27.1 says, So underline, if you would, in verse 1, the first thing we want to look at.

They were to keep all the commandments. They were to keep all the commandments. That's what it says in verse 1. The commandments were clearly written. God wanted the people to clearly know what he expected.

So God made it real clear. You know, there's nothing fuzzy about our God. There's nothing like you can't be for sure what he's saying. He's just as clear as he can be. And these commandments, as they kept them, it would be a way that they recognized and that other people recognized that they were God's people.

Look at chapter 27 and verse 9. Deuteronomy chapter 27 and verse 9. And Moses and the priest, the Levite, spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, listen to me, hearken, pay attention, O Israel.

This day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. Underline that. God's making a big declaration. You are my people. You, Israel, are my people.

[3 : 29] Now, he said that many times before, but every generation needs to hear it because Abraham knew it and Isaac knew it and Jacob knew it and the 12 sons knew it and Joseph knew it. They got into Egypt and for 400 years, the voice of God was kind of quiet because they were all slaves and they were being severely mistreated by the end of the time.

And here it is, they're about to go in and things have looked pretty bad. Let's just remember, they've been wandering for like 38 years. And they're right at the door and they're just about to go into the promised land. 40 years all told that they were wandering around.

And God comes out and said, now let me make something clear. I'm going to give you the rules, but let me tell you up front, you're my people. That's pretty strong, amen? You ought to put a star beside that. You're my people. You are become my people.

By the way, I can show you that in the New Testament. If you're born again, you're his people, amen? And he marks you as that and he calls you that and he calls you saints. They would show that they were his if they would learn to obey his commandments.

Look at chapter 28 and verse 9. Chapter 28 and verse 9. The Lord shall establish to thee a holy people unto himself, as he has sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God and walk in his ways.

[4 : 36] Now we'll read verse 10 in just a minute, but I want you to understand something. Go back with me in verse 9 and put a circle around the word holy. Now the word holy means dedicated to, separated to.

And that's what we are. We're dedicated to God and we're separate. And you don't have to take that to mean something so horrible. In independent Baptist circles, that became a very harsh term, separation.

But the facts are, the day you married your wife, she separated from all the other women and became your wife. And she was dedicated unto you. She was holy to you. She was holy to you and nobody else.

And God says, y'all are my people. You're dedicated to me. I'm dedicating you to me. I'm separating you and I'm marking you as being my people. And look what he said in verse 10. You're in chapter 28 and verse 10. He said, and all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord and they shall be afraid of you.

Now that is a tremendously strong missionary statement. And I won't take the time to preach on that. But can you imagine that? God said to the people of Israel through Moses, everybody's going to know y'all are different.

[5 : 41] Everybody's going to know you're marked by my name. And everybody's going to be afraid of you. By the way, when they cross over the Jordan River and they get to the country, they get to the city of Jericho, they're already afraid. And every place they go, there wasn't internet and there wasn't Twitter.

And there wasn't Facebook. But everybody knew these are the people of God. These are the people of God coming this way. So people knew about our God. People knew how powerfully he was. People, how things could go well with them if they obeyed him.

He's given them rules about how they're going to live in this new country. He's saying, when y'all get into my country, you're not going to be like other people. You're my people. And my people are going to do things my way. And I've got rules and ways that nobody else does.

Their society would be much better and more ordered. Their people would be happier. God would bless them in every possible way. And their obedience would show that they were fearing and respecting God.

Look at chapter 28, verse 58. Chapter 28, verse 58. If thou, if you will not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou may, if thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou may fear this glorious and fearful name, respectful name, awesome name, mighty name, magnificent name, the Lord thy God.

[6 : 53] So y'all are going to go in there. You're going to do what I'm telling you because you're going to be saying, I do this because I know he's God. I do this because I love him. I do this because I respect him. I do this because he's the great God of heaven.

Now, before we go on any further, you know, no way is everybody to keep the law. And you know that these two chapters are going to be talking about blessing and cursing. And a lot of it's going to be to a nation, not to an individual.

Some of the first things we're going to look at is just flat out going to talk to individuals and say, you don't do what I'm saying here. You're going to mess your own life up. And we'll look at those in just a second. I think one of the most wonderful and interesting things is in the middle of all this blessing and cursing, go with me if you would to chapter 27 and verse 5.

You've got to get this. This is the chapters of blessing and cursing. Blessing and cursing. The fact is when they go marching in, they're going to have guys standing up on the mountain sides yelling at them. If you do right, you'll be blessed.

If you do wrong, you'll be cursed. If you do right, you'll be blessed. Do these rules and you'll be blessed. If you don't do these things, you'll be cursed. That's going on as they walk in. Read the chapter. That's what's going on. But in chapter 27 and verse 5, he throws in that wonderful place, the altar.

[7 : 58] That's Calvary for us. Look at chapter 27 and verse 5. Now, when you get into the promised land, I'm giving you a bunch of rules.

I'm going to tell you a blessing. I'm going to tell you a cursing. I've got an altar for you. Because when you mess up, there's somewhere you can go. Again, we do not meet God in the place of obedience or in having done certain things right.

We meet God in an altar. We don't meet God because we obeyed him. We don't meet God under the law. We meet God at an altar. We meet him in a place of worship and realizing our need for him and for his sacrifice.

When they built that altar, they weren't even to use tools. They were just bring the rocks so that it would be obvious. It's a God thing, not a man thing. Now, you need to understand something about God. You've got to understand this as you move through the Bible.

Man never looks for God. God always comes looking for us. It wasn't man that said, God, would you come live with us? It was God that said, I'm going to come live with you. It's God. It's a God thing.

[9 : 01] God loving us and God coming to us. And he was telling them to build an altar. And I want you to look at what he says about that altar in chapter 27 and verse 7. Guess what? That altar wasn't a place of, oh, no, I'm going to die.

Oh, no, this is horrible. Oh, no, I've got to sacrifice. And come crying. Look what it was in chapter 27 and verse 7. Thou shalt offer peace offerings and thou shalt eat there and rejoice.

You need to circle that word rejoice. Rejoice before the Lord thy God. You're going to build an altar. You're going to come there. There's going to be peace made, a peace offering at that sacrifice.

A peace offering. And it's going to be a place of rejoicing. It's going to be a place of, man, isn't this good? Isn't our God good? Hadn't our God done great things? Great peace and great rejoicing.

When you understand why God had an altar, why God had a place of sacrifice. You need to remember this quote right here. Now, you know, it's not a quote from me or anything. It's everybody knows this. But everything we do is based on a substitute.

[10:00] All of our salvation is based on a substitute. I deserve death. I deserve hell. God provided a substitute. That substitute was Jesus, the very Lamb of God. And in the Old Testament, all through the Old Testament, whenever they sinned, something died.

Somebody died. And that dying was a lamb or a goat or a bull or a bird. But every time it was a substitute. And you're going to go to heaven because of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ.

He died in my place. He died in your place. I should have died, but he died in our place. God has provided a substitute for us. And so that altar in the middle of this cursing and blessing is a reminder that we need him.

And we need grace. We need God to do a work in our lives. Now, I could take the rest of the time, and we could go through chapters, we could go through these two chapters, 27 and 28.

But I'm going to sum them up for you, and then we'll bring an application. I would like to challenge you to read them. Because I'm going to bring them down to you in real short, simple sentences where he might have taken a whole paragraph and talked about it.

[11:03] But I want you to notice that what he starts off doing, he says, I'm going to give these warnings, and you're going to say amen. I'm going to give these warnings, and you're going to say amen. In verse 8, he said, you write these things very plainly so everybody can see them, and everybody's supposed to listen.

And then in verse 12, he said, 27, 12, he said, you're going to put some guys up on top of the mountains, and they're going to curse, and they're going to bless, and they're going to say these things into a loud voice. And then he says in verse 15, I want you to look at verse 15, because then I'm going to start summing it up from verse 15 on.

In verse 15, he said, verse 14, and the Levites shall speak and say to the men of Israel, the loud voice, curse it be the man that makes any graven or molten image, an abomination of the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsmen, and put it in a secret place, and after all, the people shall answer and say amen.

So let's get the picture, all right? The Levites, the men of God, are going to come out, and they're going to say, now listen to me, guys. We need to make sure everybody understands the rules. Basically, hold your right hand up and say, I understand.

I swear, I affirm, I got it. And he's going to say to you, if you make any gold, if you make any engraven image, you make any idols, I don't care if you hide them or what you do with them, you're going to be cursed. If you understood that, say amen.

[12:13] All right, you're held accountable for it. You just said you understood. Amen, men, I understand it. I accept it. I'm with you. And this whole chapter is about saying amen. Y'all wouldn't have any problem, because this church never does say amen.

Amen? So y'all are okay. I'm just teasing. You do say amen. I'm just picking on you. But the people were to hear the warnings and say amen. The amen meant they heard and they understood.

It's kind of like when you say, I do, in a wedding. The guy looks at you and said, do you this, this, this, this? I do. Do you this, this, this? I do. And then whenever you get through and you're having some little marital spat, the other one looks and says, you said I do.

So you did. So you're stuck. Amen. The ring is in your nose. Obey. It means I hear and I agree and I realize that if I disobey, there will be consequences. These were curses.

These first curses in chapter 27, in the first part, they are curses to individuals. Obeying would make for a great society and personal relationships. The curse would mean that God would discipline them.

[13 : 13] It's the opposite of bless them. It's judge them. So God's saying, if y'all do what I tell you, man, I got big blessings for you. If you don't do what I tell you, I got cursing for you.

You're going to get the opposite of a blessing. Basically, you're going to get a prize if you do right. You're going to get your rear end tore up if you do wrong. If you do right, I'm going to be good to you. And if you do wrong, I'm going to whip your backside. You say, I don't think God talked like that.

Well, read the chapter. It's a pretty rough chapter. 27, 28 is pretty much like this. If you do what I tell you, blessings. So many blessings, y'all can't even keep up with them. You don't do it. As much as I'd love to give you blessings, I'm going to be just as excited about giving you cursing.

I'm either going to be loading you up a blessing or kicking your backside. One of the two when we get through these two chapters. That's literally what he says if you'll read these two chapters. They would be cursed if they made idols, even if they put them in a secret place.

That means they're going to get judged. They're going to be punished. If they didn't respect their parents, that would bring a curse on them. If they stole their neighbor's land, that would bring a curse on them.

[14 : 13] If they hurt or take advantage. He told them, he said, you do not hurt or take advantage of blind people, foreigners, orphans, widows, or your neighbor secretly.

So, you know, here comes a blind guy by and you think it's cute and you trip him. He said, all right, you're in for it. I'm not putting up with it. Here comes a little old widow lady and you steal from her.

Here comes a foreigner and because he's a foreigner, you mistreat him. That's right in the passage right here. He's a foreigner and you mistreat him. He's a stranger. He doesn't belong here and you mistreat him. Or, by the way, during the night you steal from your neighbor.

You know, you go get gas out of his car, put it in your car. Or you steal his lawnmower and don't tell him what happened or whatever you do. He said, you do something wrong to your neighbor, I'm coming after you. So, when you get into the land, you be careful about what you do.

Go read it and see if that's what it said. Go read it and see if that's what it says. Sex outside of marriage with anyone or an animal, God's going to curse you. He goes into the whole list.

[15 : 07] He said, you don't mess with your mama. You don't mess with your mother-in-law. You don't mess with your aunt. You don't mess with your sister. You don't mess with another man's wife. See, God likes sex one place. That's between a man and his wife.

A man and a woman that he's married to for all of his life. That's where God likes sex. Any other place that's wrong. You do realize that means he don't like porn. He don't like porn.

Because porn would be something outside of a man and his wife. So, if you're watching the junk, quit it. It's going to bring cursing on you. You say, what kind of cursing? Well, you're not going to go to hell, but it's going to mess up your marriage. It's going to mess up your life.

It's going to mess up your mind. It's going to mess up your heart. And lying and stealing and cheating and mistreating people is going to mess up your life. You're not going to go to hell, but you're not going to receive and enjoy the blessings. Murder would bring a curse.

Each person had to hear and confirm all the law and do them. So, God said, here's the first things, and these are to individuals. You see, you do understand God respects human life.

[16 : 06] Okay? I'm not going to make it any political statement, but let me explain something to you. God respects life in a womb. God respects life in an old folks' home. God respects life that's weak, and God respects life that's strong.

God says, you don't take people's lives. Not your job. Huh? Amen. So, you're not in a life-taking business. There's exceptions in the Bible, but God's against that. He doesn't want them doing it.

Now, go with me, if you would, to chapter 28 and verse 1. Then he's going to start talking to them about as a nation. Now, when you read the Bible, you've got to understand. Let's talk a second.

When we hear about cursing here, this isn't about losing your salvation. When we hear about cursing, and this verse says, it's not about losing your salvation. It's about not getting blessed. It's about consequences to sin.

So, let me just throw you a few things before I get around to the application in a minute. For example, if you commit sex outside of marriage, you won't go to hell for that. Nobody goes to hell for doing things, sex outside of marriage.

[17 : 02] But you're going to get hurt in the long run, big time. You're going to hurt your wife. You're going to hurt your children. You're going to hurt yourself. It's going to mess you up. And God's up in heaven saying, I told you not to do that. I like marriage.

I made a man. I made a woman. I put them together. Stay together forever. Don't mess with nobody else's. Amen. That's all through the Bible. And so, if you do, you see, you say, well, what about if I get drunk? Well, you're going to get cursed if you get drunk.

I'm just going to be honest. You're going to get cursed. You say, well, does that mean I'm going to go to hell? No, but it means you're going to get hurt. See, you get drunk. And then later on, after you have a head-on collision and kill somebody to put you in jail, and you're like, I can't believe God did this to me.

He told you not to be stupid. Say amen. I mean, in other words, in the Bible, God said, hey, boys, don't be messing around with sex outside of marriage. So here's a guy looking at porn, and he can't figure out why his marriage isn't working right because he got messed up in that junk.

See, so God said, hey, if you'll do what I say, like, find a woman and love her for the rest of your life, you're going to be blessed. And those of us that have done that would say, yeah, he's right, man. Man, having a woman that loves you and having a husband that loves you and having a family that stays together for all their life and don't mess around with nobody else, that's pretty good stuff.

[18 : 09] And by the way, if you talk to anybody who's ever been through a divorce, I don't care what the reason was they got a divorce, it hurt. It hurt. It hurt, and it hurt this. I'm not saying we don't love them, but let's understand, whenever you disobey God, it hurts.

Can you understand that? Basically, can I put this in? If I tell my child, do not stick that paper clip in that electrical socket, if you do, you're going to get hurt.

And then my child sticks it in and just makes it, wow, would you do that to me before? I'm going to say, I didn't do anything to you. I told you not to do that. I told you you'd get hurt. That's what God's doing. So individuals don't do it. Now he moves to the nation.

When you read this passage of Scripture, you've got to make sure who he's talking to. Now he's up talking to the president and the Congress. He's got the senators and the congressmen and the president. He's got the justice of the peace. This is like when the president gives a stay-of-the-union message, except this time the preacher's doing the talking.

And the preacher's not saying what he wants to say. He's not giving a political speech. He's giving a God speech. And look what he says in chapter 28 and verse 1. And it shall come to pass, if you will hearken diligently, if you'll listen carefully, under the voice of the Lord your God, to observe, to obey, and do all his commandments, which I command thee to say, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth.

[19 : 32] Now your next question is how you know he's talking about nations because he used the word nations. I'm smart. You've got to be smart to be as good as me. I saw the word nations, and I said he must be talking about nations. Amen?

See, he said nations. So that took a lot of scholarly work on my part to figure that out. Now notice what he said. The blessings will rain down on them if they will simply obey.

If you read the passages following, they'll be blessed everywhere they go if they'll simply hearken diligently to observe and do, and he will set them on high above all the nations.

He says in his passage of Scripture, your families and your crops and your animals will be blessed. You'll be blessed everywhere you go, he says. And by the way, when anybody attacks you, you'll win the battle because you're mine.

And you do what I want, and I'm on your side. The fact is, when they come out to you to attack you, they'll run away in seven different directions. That means they'll just be scattered. You're going to win and big time. Go with me, if you would, to chapter 28 and verse 8.

[20 : 30] Everything they do is going to be blessed. He's just going to pour it out on them. In chapter 28, verse 8, The Lord shall command the blessings upon thee in thy storehouse. That means in your, when I was a kid, we had a granary.

You know what a granary is? It's a place where you put the grain. Amen? In your silos, boys. Your silos are going to be prospering, and your grain bins are going to be prospering, and your deep freezer is going to be full, and your smokehouse is going to be full.

He said, I'm going to command the blessings on you. And look what he says in this verse in verse 8. He said, in everything you set your hand to do, whatever you do, I'm blessing you. That's pretty strong stuff. Amen? Well, I'm going to bless you.

I'm going to work in your life. Anything you set your hand to do. And he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God gives you. So he starts with me. He said, now look, guys. He said, recognize I'm God. Recognize I made these rules. Recognize I'm giving you this land.

And recognize today, as long as you recognize me and obey me and honor me, I'm going to bless you big time. I've got big blessings for you. He promised to make them rich. Go read the passage. He promised that he gave them land.

[21 : 26] He even said this to them. He said, you guys won't be borrowing money. Everybody will be coming to you to borrow money from you. You'll be leaders in everything you do. And following God's instructions will bring great blessings on them.

So now it went from, if you kill a guy, you're in trouble. If you sleep with somebody that ain't your wife, you're in trouble. Then it went to nation of Israel. Can you just imagine President Obama and the Congress and the Senate and the judges are all in the room and the guy walks in and says, the God of heaven said this, if you'll just obey him, he's going to bless you all.

So I'm telling you, the crops are going to grow. You're going to have, Wall Street's going to go crazy. All of you are going to be rich. You're not going to be borrowing from China. China's going to be borrowing from you. You're going to, man, you're going to be blessed every way you turn.

And then those guys had to make a choice. So he said blessings. Then when you get down to chapter 28 and verse 14, he said, now let's look at the other side of this coin. I'm offering you blessings.

I'm offering you blessings. But if you don't, I'm offering you cursings. Now, before I read the passage, I want you to listen to me carefully as you read it. At the time he's writing this, we have a budding nation.

[22 : 35] There's a couple of million people about to cross the Jordan River, go into the promised land, and they're going to take over, and they will become like the greatest nation you can imagine. They'll go from Saul to David, a great king, Solomon, a great temple, the wisest man in the world.

It is great times for Israel. He said, but you cross me as a nation, and I'll pull my blessings. You cross me as a nation, and I will let you be scattered out all over the world.

You cross me, and you won't be the head, you'll be the tail. You cross me, and by the way, check out where Israel is today. Made fun of, mocked, six million of them murdered by one guy and his henchmen.

Everything I'm about to read to you, and I won't read all the chapters, but you need to read it. It's already happened in history, and it's going to happen again. It's the whole story of the Bible. Chapter 28, verse 14, you have the Bible there?

And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee to say to the right hand or to the left to go after other gods to serve them. Look at this. Now, boys, get the import.

[23 : 36] Get the sense. Get the all. He goes, God said he's going to pour it out on us, boys. It's going to be stinking good around here. When are we going to have it?

I mean, our corn ain't going to be six foot tall. It's going to be 12 foot tall. Daniel Boone claimed when he discovered Kentucky, he went back to the North Carolina and South Carolina area. He said, if y'all have come across the mountains on the other side, he said, you ain't never seen land like that over there.

He said, you can take your toe and scratch the ground, drop a piece of corn, spit on it, you better jerk it out of the way. A stalk of corn's coming right back up. Hit you an eye on its way up. Now, he was slightly exaggerating, but Moses ain't exaggerating.

Moses said, God's going to pour blessings on you like you ain't never in your life believed. But it shall come to pass if, if you will not listen, hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God to observe and do all his commandments and his statutes which I command you this day, that all these curses shall be upon you and overtake you.

Okay. I'd like to do some really good stuff with you people. That's what God's telling Moses to tell him. He said, as long as you'll recognize me for who I am and honor me for who I am, this is for the nation, it's sitting for our church, it's sitting for you as an individual.

[24 : 46] But it works for our country and it works for us on an individual basis that we can bring it down. But it says, he said, I'll turn the curses, I'll turn the curses to be the opposite of the blessings. From now on out, the rest of the chapter he's going to say, you know, I said all that good stuff, I'm going to do just the opposite.

I said you'd be the head, now you'll be the tail. I said you'll be loaning, now you'll be going out to get loans. You'll be cursed in everything you do if you turn from me.

Israel, you didn't make you, I'm God and I made you. That's what he's saying to them. And look at chapter 28 and verse 20. The Lord shall send upon you cursing, vexation, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do until you be destroyed, until thou perish quickly because of the wickedness of thy doings whereby thou hast forsaken me.

It's all right, Israel. You've got to understand. Please understand the picture. He brought them out of Egypt where they were slaves. He got them across the desert. He got them across the, or he's fixing it. He's going to get them across the Red Sea.

He's going to get them to land he gives them. He's going to give them houses they didn't build and fields they didn't plant. He is going to pour out on them an abundant life beyond anything you can imagine. They're going to go from slaves to kings.

[25 : 57] And he said, but you better understand something. I'm the one doing this, not you. So that's pretty tough. He said, if you don't, then trouble's on your way. Sickness will come on you instead of health.

There'll be no rain and your ground won't bring forth fruit. The heavens will turn to brass and the ground will turn to iron. Nothing will grow for you and the rains won't come. The enemies would defeat them and destroy their nation.

The bad stuff that happened to Egypt was going to happen to them. They would lose their wife, their house, their fields, their animals, their children, and everything else. You go read the passage. He would say, you've got an animal that's like getting your brand new car.

And just about the time you're ready to get your brand new car, I'm going to take it away from you. You're going to get married, I'm going to take your wife away from you because you don't honor me. And by the way, your enemies will come take over your nation.

Chapter 28, verse 33. Got your Bible open? Look at it. Chapter 28, verse 33. The fruit of thy land and all thy labor shall a nation which you do not even know will eat them up and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed away.

[27 : 03] You'll be conquered by other nations and you will resort to idolatry. Those who worship only one God. Chapter 28, verse 36. The Lord shall bring thee and thy king which thou shalt set over thee.

They didn't even have a king but he told them you're going to have a king. You're going to make a king unto a nation. We're talking nations. Which neither thou nor thy fathers have known and there shalt thou serve other gods made out of wood and stone.

He said, y'all are going to become the blunt end of jokes. And every bit of work you do and all the investments you make you're going to lose them and your children are going to be sold into slavery and your country is going to be totally destroyed.

You know that they're going to be taken over by one country after another country until you get to Jesus' day and Rome is ruling over them. Their temple will be destroyed. Chapter 28, verse 45.

Moreover, all these curses shall come on thee and shall pursue thee and overtake thee until you be destroyed because you hearken not to the voice of the Lord. You didn't listen to God and so it's come. All this will happen to you because you won't serve God and you won't recognize that it's God who's doing all this.

[28 : 08] Chapter 28, verse 47. You serve not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things. You see, nations are going to conquer them. The conquerors are going to eat their goods.

They're going to build walls and try to protect themselves but it won't do any good. And they should have been saying, boy God, you're good. God, we recognize that the house I have, you gave me, the land I have, you gave me, the wife I have, you gave me, I worship you and I praise you.

But they're going to get to thinking, I made myself. I'm smart. I graduated from Georgia Tech. I'm the big stuff around here. And God said, okay, okay. You'll be totally destroyed.

It's all going to happen because you won't serve God. He tells them in this passage, you're going to end up eating your children. By the way, they do that later on in the Bible. As we go through it, you'll find out.

They are locked behind their walls trying to defend themselves and they can't get out and they start eating their children and they eat dove poop. Just like he said. Mothers won't even care about their children.

[29 : 08] God who had promised to multiply them will reduce them. Look at chapter 28, verse 62. And you shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven for multitude, but you wouldn't obey the voice of your Lord.

Chapter 28, verse 64. I'll scatter you among all people. You'll serve other gods. You'll live among other nations, verse 65. And you'll have trembling heart and failing eyes and sorrow of mind.

I'm going to give you an application. I've got one minute and I'm not going to make it, but watch this. Now listen to me quickly. You say, why did he put this in the Bible? Can I tell you why he put it in the Bible? Because he's God.

Because you need to get off your high horse and quit thinking that the president makes you or the Congress makes you or you make me and catch on to this or you make you and catch on to this. It's God. This goes hand in hand with what we heard this morning out of Matthew.

Now this was to a nation, but individually, some of us get so proud and haughty, we act just like them. We're like, man, I'm smarter than everybody else and I can work hard and I've got more education than everybody else.

[30 : 10] And listen, the second you raise up something over God, you're asking for him to quit blessing you. The second he quits blessing you, it's going to hurt your kids. Godly people lose their kids.

Their families are split and broken, their marriages are split and broken, they may have money but their hearts are destroyed. Learn, this was for Israel, it was for a nation, but there's a strong application. So let me... Clear instructions about what he wanted.

Let's just be honest, we pretty well know what God wants. Now you can say, I don't like what God says. You can say that, but you do know what he says. Everything he said would make a better life for them.

And their obedience would show that they love him and respect him and honor him. Did you know when you love and honor and respect somebody, you do what they want you to do. And you can say you love God all you want to say, but if it doesn't affect the way you're living all week long, you're just lying.

You're fooling yourself and fooling everybody else. You're tricking yourself and tricking everybody else. I mean, he's God. And it's... I'll be honest, it works in your life. Their worship should have been gratitude and joy and recognizing God as God.

[31 : 16] You should come to church and be like, woo, had a good week because God's a good God. I got some money because God's a good God. I'm still healthy because God's a good God. You don't go and say, I got the best health care in the world, that's why I'm in good shape.

I'm in good shape because I exercise. Don't do that. He exercised. Yes, do the exercise. But don't you take credit for it. Don't take credit for it because there's a God in heaven and he wants credit for it.

There's a God in heaven saying, I'm in charge here. You're not. Their blessings were offered but curses were also offered and they were free to choose. Y'all do what you want.

You do what you want. Now listen to this. Even though you're saved by grace and even though you can do nothing to make God love you more and nothing to make God love you less, don't you dare leave Vision Baptist Church thinking that's a license to sin.

It is not because you will get hurt. You see, you might say, well, I don't think the Bible has that much to say about drinking alcohol. I'm not that certain that the Bible has that much to say about having sex outside of marriage.

[32 : 19] I'm just not sure that Austin ain't stretching that and twisting that so I'm not sure I agree with that. Here's what he said. You better respect me and you better respect what I say because I'm saying what I'm saying for your good and you mess with it, you're the one that's going to get hurt.

You'll bear the consequences of your sin. We can see from Bible history itself that these things did come true in Israel just like God said. And I will tell you that our health and well-being have much to do with our honoring and obeying God just like it did in Israel.

Sin takes a toll on you. Lying and cheating and hiding stuff will catch up with you eventually. Living the self-life will catch up with you eventually.

We should hear what God says and we should say amen. We should say, okay, he said and I say amen. That's what our heart ought to say. Though we are under grace and not law, we are not free to sin.

We're under grace and not law. Some people take that to mean, okay, man, we're under grace. Rules don't matter to us. That's true. But nobody who knows, listen to me, there are no rules for this woman.

[33 : 29] I've been married to her for 42 years. There are no rules. We do not have one rule that says she has to be in my bed tonight. See, she does it out of her heart. Not out of a list of rules written on a plaque somewhere. Her heart.

And if you love God, you're going to want to do stuff out of your heart. True salvation doesn't mean you're free to not obey God. It means you're free to obey God. It means, man, I love him. I just want to do what he likes.

Grace is not freedom. Grace is freedom to serve, not a license to sin. So I challenge you as you read the book of Deuteronomy to realize this. He said, as clear as day, I'll give you blessings, I'll give you cursings, you guys choose.

That's not eternal life. Do you want to hear a wild one? You can get to heaven before your time. You can play the fool and do stupid stuff and die before you're supposed to die. If I go out here and get drunk and stand on a railroad track and a train goes by and kills me, I can't exactly blame God on that.

God would say, well, if you're stupid enough to get drunk and stand on a railroad track, don't look at me. Amen. And so get a hold of something. We love God. Amen.

[34 : 31] Amen. And we want to serve Him. And it is, somebody asked me the other day, he said, he said, so if I become a Christian, I got to do all that stuff? I said, you ain't got to do nothing if you become a Christian, but you are going to want to do it.

He said, oh, you mean I'm going to want to do it? I said, yep. He goes, I'm not sure I get that. I said, oh, you will if you get it. See, when you get saved, something happens and you say amen.

And I hope you realize that. Please, don't take grace and twist it into some perverted thing that says, I'll live like a stinking devil. It's one of the reasons I almost hate the thought of once saved, always saved.

See, I love salvation by grace and security of salvation, but somewhere along the way, people in America took that to mean once saved, always saved, which is true. Once you're saved, you're always saved, but they took that to mean well, once you're saved, you're always saved so you can go get drunk and fornicate, commit adultery and do anything you want to do.

Because since you're saved, you can do anything you want, that is not what that means. Because when you're saved, you love Jesus. You're ready to kill me, ain't you? You should have read the chapters. I made them easier.

[35 : 35] I thought about just reading them and going, curse, curse, because that's every verse starts up. Curse, curse, curse, curse. I made it really easy on you tonight. I mean, I thought about having a whole message on the curses.

I just said, tonight's a message of cursing. We'll get to blessing next week. But I put it all together so you can see it. You choose. You want God's blessings?