

# Deuteronomy 28 - Blessings & Cursings for Israel's Obedience

III. Third sermon: What God will do for Israel (Deut 27:1—34:12)

(1) Ratification of the covenant at Shechem: blessings and curses (Deut 27:1—28:68)

(B) Blessings and curses (28:1-68)

(a) Blessings (28:1-14)

(b) Curses (28:15-68)

## The Blessings and The Curses

In the corresponding section of the Book of the Covenant (Ex 23:20-33), the blessings predominated. Now, the 40 years' history of Israelite apostasy having intervened, Moses' emphasis falls heavily on the curses; thus, blessings (Deut 28:1-14) and curses (28:15-68). This emphasis was anticipated in the promises and threats of a similar section in Lev 26, written after Israel's earliest rebellion against the Sinaitic Covenant.

## Israel's Future Prophesied

As significant as Deut 4 is in establishing the Tribulation and its purpose, an expanded narrative of Israel's future history is provided in Deut 28-32. The last 7 chapters (28-34) are the matrix from which the great prophecies of the OT regarding Israel emerge.

## Breakdown of Israel's Future History

- Deut 26:3-13; 28:1-14: the conditions of blessing to follow obedience
- Deut 31:16-21: the coming apostasy
- Deut 28:15-60: the affliction that God would bring upon Israel, while still in the land, because of apostasy
- Deut 28:32-39,48-57: Israel will be taken captive
- Deut 27; 32: the enemies of Israel would possess the Land for a time
- Deut 28:38-42; 29:23: the Land itself will remain desolate
- Deut 28:63-67; 32:26: Israel will be scattered among the nations
- Deut 28:62: the time will come when Israel will be "few in number"
- Deut 28:44-45: though punished, Israel will not be destroyed if she repents
- Deut 28:40-41; 30:1-2: Israel will repent in her tribulation
- Deut 30:3-10: Israel will be gathered from the nations and brought back to her divinely given Land

Note: Ex 23 and Lev 26 present similar material

Ex 23 and Lev 26 present similar material as that found above. Lev 26 evidences a striking similarity with Deut 28-30 except Lev 26 present the cursings (26:14-39) within the framework of five progressive stages to the covenantal curse. Each stage was to increase by a factor of seven (26:18,21,24,28) resulting in the fifth stage, which would be devastation and deportation from the Land. The chapter ends with hope that if Israel repented, while in exile, they would return to the Land and receive blessing (26:40-46).

## **Deuteronomy 28**

### (a) Blessings (28:1-14)

**1** "Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I am commanding you today, that the LORD your God will put you high above all the nations of the earth.

**1** "Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

**1** "Indeed, if you diligently obey the LORD your God to carry out all his commands that I'm giving you today, then the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

**1** 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:

- Jewish rule over Gentiles (Deut 15:6; Is 14:2; 49:22-23; 61:6-7); this promise is reiterated in v13

— This has not happened throughout history, but will be the case during the Messianic Kingdom

**2** And all these blessings will come to you and reach you if you obey the LORD your God:

**2** All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God:

**2** Moreover, all these blessings will come upon you in abundance, if you obey the LORD your God:

**2** And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

- Although Israel's inheritance and continued enjoyment of the promises was not a matter of legal merit, there was a connection between the nation's corporate piety and her prosperity

- For the OT theocratic kingdom prefigured the consummate kingdom of God, in which righteousness and glory are to be united
- Since any righteousness that Israel possessed was a gift of grace from the God of her salvation, the principle which informs Deut 28 has no affinities with a religion of works-salvation

**3** "Blessed *will you be* in the city, and blessed *will you be* in the country.

**3** "Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the country.

**3** "Blessed will you be in the city and blessed will you be in the country.

**3** Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

**4** "Blessed *will be* the children of your womb, the produce of your ground, and the offspring of your animals: the newborn of your herd and the young of your flock.

**4** "Blessed *shall be* the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.

**4** "Blessed will your children be, as well as the produce of your land, the offspring of your beasts and cattle, and the offspring of your flock.

**4** Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

**5** "Blessed *will be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

**5** "Blessed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

**5** "Blessed will be your grain basket and your kneading bowl.

**5** Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

**6** "Blessed *will you be* when you come in, and blessed *will you be* when you go out.

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

**6** "Blessed will you be in your comings and goings."

**6** Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

- Verses 3-6 present six blessings which are paralleled by six curses in v16-19

**7** "The LORD will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated by you; they will go out against you one way and will flee at your presence seven ways.

**7** "The LORD shall cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they will come out against you one way and will flee before you seven ways.

**7** "The LORD will make your enemies, who rise against you and attack from one direction, to flee from you in seven directions.

7 The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

8 The LORD will command the blessing for you in your barns and in everything that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

8 The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

8 "The LORD will send blessings for you with regard to your barns and everything you undertake. Indeed, he will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is about to give you.

8 The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

- What was concisely presented in liturgical formulae in the six beatitudes is elaborated in v7-14

- The arrangement of the blessings is chiasmic:

— Foreign relations (v7,12b,13)

— Domestic affairs (v8,11-12)

— In the center position, relationship to the Lord (v9-10)

9 The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.

9 The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.

9 "The LORD will assign you to be a holy people for himself, just as he promised you, as long as you keep his commands and walk in his ways.

9 The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

10 So all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will be afraid of you.

10 So all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will be afraid of you.

10 "Then all the people of the earth will observe that the name of the LORD is proclaimed among you, and they will fear you.

10 And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.

- From the manifest tokens of God's favor to Israel, all the earth would recognize that the name of the Lord is called upon thee (v10)
- That is, it would be clear that God's covenant was established with Israel and that he, the Suzerain, was Israel's Owner and Defender (Cf. Is 63:19; Jer 7:10-11; 15:16)
- Once and again the prerequisite covenant loyalty is recalled (Deut 28:9b,13b,14)

11 And the LORD will give you more than enough prosperity, in the children of your womb, in the offspring of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.

11 The LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.

11 "The LORD will show his abundant goodness with respect to your children, the offspring of your animals, and the produce of your farmland that he promised your ancestors he would give you.

11 And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers to give thee.

12 The LORD will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless every work of your hand; and you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow.

12 The LORD will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

12 "The LORD will open his rich treasury, the heavens, to release rain upon your land in season and bless everything you undertake so that you'll lend to many nations but won't borrow.

12 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

13 And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you will only be above, and not be underneath, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God which I am commanding you today, to follow *them* carefully,

13 The LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you only will be above, and you will not be underneath, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I charge you today, to observe *them* carefully,

13 "The LORD your God will make you the head and not the tail—placing you above and not beneath—if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I'm giving you today to keep and observe.

13 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:

- Describes the prominence of Israel during the kingdom; no longer will Israel be trampled and ruled by Gentiles after the Second Coming...they will be the foremost nation on earth during the 1000-year reign of Christ (Cf. Is 14:1-2; 49:22-23; 60:10,12,14,16; Zech 8:23)

14 and do not turn aside from any of the words which I am commanding you today, to the right or the left, to pursue other gods to serve them.

14 and do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

14 Do not deviate from any of his commands that I'm giving you today—neither to the right nor the left—to follow and serve other gods."

14 And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

- Once and again the prerequisite covenant loyalty is recalled (Deut 28:9b,13b,14)

Israel doesn't *have* a future, Israel *is* the future.

#### (b) Curses (28:15-68)

**15** "But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to be careful to follow all His commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

**15** "But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

**15** "But if you don't obey the LORD your God and faithfully carry out all his commands and statutes that I'm giving you today, then all these curses will come upon you and overwhelm you.

**15** But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

**16** "Cursed *will* you *be* in the city, and cursed *will* you *be* in the country.

**16** "Cursed *shall* you *be* in the city, and cursed *shall* you *be* in the country.

16 "Cursed will you be in the city and cursed will you be in the country.

16 Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

17 "Cursed *will be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

17 "Cursed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

17 "Cursed will be your grain basket and your kneading bowl.

17 Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.

- Banishment from the promised inheritance was the extreme punishment

— It signified the loss of God's special presence and favor, loss of the appointed sacramental access to him on his holy hill of Zion, and loss of status as the people of God's kingdom

— In this long section of curses, therefore, siege and exile repeatedly appear as the climax of woe

— Verse 15 corresponds to v1-2 and v16-19 are the counterpart to v3-6

- The vengeance of the covenant (Cf. Lev 26:25) would overtake the oath-violating people even within the asylum of their inherited paradise land

18 "Cursed *will be* the children of your womb, the produce of your ground, the newborn of your herd, and the offspring of your flock.

18 "Cursed *shall be* the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.

18 "Cursed will your children be, as well as the produce of your land, the offspring of your beasts and cattle, and the offspring of your flock.

18 Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

19 "Cursed *will you be* when you come in, and cursed *will you be* when you go out.

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

19 "Cursed will you be in your comings and goings."

19 Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

20 "**The LORD will send** against you curses, panic, and rebuke, in everything you undertake to do, **until you are destroyed** and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because **you have abandoned Me**.

20 "The LORD will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me.

**20** "The LORD will send the curse among you, will confuse you, and will rebuke you in everything you undertake until you are destroyed and perish quickly because of your evil deeds, since you will have forsaken him.

**20** The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.

- "The LORD will send" - it was the right and duty of the forsaken Lord himself, the One to whom and by whom Israel swore the covenant oath, to avenge the oath

— Whatever the human or earthly origin of the several curses, the Lord was their ultimate Author

- "...until you are destroyed" - Cf. v24,45,51,61

- "...you have abandoned Me" - such was the essence of Israel's sin—violation of the first commandment of the covenant

— It is repeatedly stated here that the final issue of the various types of curses—epidemic (v21-22a), drought (v22b-24), and war (v25-26)—would be nothing short of Israel's destruction (v20-22,24,26)

- There is a series of parallel pictures of the disastrous future looming before this nation so prone to unfaithfulness (v20-26,27-37,38-48,49-57,58-68)

— The first three and the last of these pictures culminate in the doom of conquest by the enemy, with its dreadful sequel (v25,26; 36,37; 48; 63-68)

— The fourth is completely devoted to that accursed event (v49-57)

— This extended description of particular evils follows an introductory, ritualistic formulation of the covenant's curse sanctions (v15-19)

**21** The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has eliminated you from the land where you are entering to take possession of it.

**21** The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land where you are entering to possess it.

**21** The LORD will cause you to be ill with long-lasting diseases until you are wiped out from the land that you are entering to possess.

**21** The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.

**22** The LORD will strike you with consumption, inflammation, fever, feverish heat, and with the sword, with blight, and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish.

**22** The LORD will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish.

22 The LORD will afflict you with tuberculosis, fever, inflammation, high fever, drought, blight, and mildew. These will attack you until you are completely destroyed.

22 The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

23 The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron.

23 The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron.

23 The sky above your head will become bronze while the ground beneath you will become iron.

23 And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

24 The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

24 The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

24 The LORD will change the rain on your land to powder and dust. It will come down from the sky until you are exterminated."

24 The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

- The rain of thy land powder and dust. The sirocco would fill the air with sand and dust; v25 is the reversal of v7 (Cf. Lev 26:17)

**25** "The LORD will cause you to be defeated by your enemies; you will go out one way against them, but you will flee seven ways from their presence, and you will be *an example of terror* to all the kingdoms of the earth.

**25** "The LORD shall cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you will go out one way against them, but you will flee seven ways before them, and you will be *an example of terror* to all the kingdoms of the earth.

**25** "The LORD will cause you to be defeated by your enemies. You'll go out against them in one direction, but you'll flee from them in seven directions. Consequently, you'll be in a state of great terror throughout all the kingdoms of the earth.

**25** The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

26 Your dead bodies will serve as food for all birds of the sky and for the animals of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten *them away*.

26 Your carcasses will be food to all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten *them away*.

26 Your dead bodies will be food for the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the earth, with no one to chase them away.

26 And thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.

- The curse principle is essentially the prostration of man under the sub-human realms over which God appointed him in the beginning as king

- Hence, the Scripture depicts the doom of rebel mankind as an eschatological feast in which slain men are devoured by birds and beasts (Cf. Ps 79:2; Ezek 39:4,17ff.; Rev 19:17-18)

**27** "The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors, the festering rash, and with scabies, from which you cannot be healed.

**27** "The LORD will smite you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.

27 "The LORD will afflict you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, skin disease, and festering rashes, and none of them will be curable.

27 The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.

28 The LORD will strike you with insanity, blindness, and with confusion of mind;

28 The LORD will smite you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment of heart;

28 The LORD will afflict you with insanity, blindness, and mental confusion.

28 The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart:

- Vexation and frustration characterize the curses of this section

- Observe the references in almost every verse either to the utter impotence of the Israelites to cope with their afflictions or to their helplessness in the face of oppression  
- God created man as one who, entering into the program of His kingdom, might rejoice to follow the divine sabbatic pattern of labor crowned with the joy and satisfaction of consummation

— But accursed Israel's undertakings in the areas of marriage and labor would be rewarded always and only with failure

— Instead of attaining to the sabbath joy of accomplishment, the people of Israel would be driven mad with the vanity and frustration of their exertions (v28,34)

29 and you will be groping about at noon, just as a person who is blind gropes in the darkness, and you will not be successful in your ways; but you will only be oppressed and robbed all the time, with no one to save you.

29 and you will grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in darkness, and you will not prosper in your ways; but you shall only be oppressed and robbed continually, with none to save you.

29 As a result, you'll wander aimlessly in broad daylight just as a blind person wanders in darkness. You won't prosper in life. Instead you'll be oppressed and plundered all day long, with no deliverer."

29 And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.

30 You will betroth a woman, but another man will violate her; you will build a house, but you will not live in it; you will plant a vineyard, but you will not make use of its fruit.

30 You shall betroth a wife, but another man will violate her; you shall build a house, but you will not live in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but you will not use its fruit.

30 You'll be engaged to a woman, but another man will rape her. You'll build a house but you won't live in it. You'll plant a vineyard but you won't harvest it.

**30** Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.

31 Your ox *will be* slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat of it; your donkey *will be* snatched away from you, and will not be restored to you; your sheep *will be* given to your enemies, and you will have no one to save you.

31 Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat of it; your donkey shall be torn away from you, and will not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you will have none to save you.

31 Your ox will be slaughtered in front of you, and you won't be able to eat it. Your donkey will be stolen from you while you watch and won't be returned to you. Your flock of sheep will be handed to your enemies and there will be no deliverer.

31 Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.

32 Your sons and your daughters *will be* given to another people, while your eyes look on and long for them constantly; but there will be nothing you can do.

32 Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes look on and yearn for them continually; but there will be nothing you can do.

32 Your sons and daughters will be given to another people while you watch, and you won't be able to approach them at all, and you'll be powerless to help.

32 Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand.

### **Prophecy of Israel's History "in the Land"**

Now we come to one of the most remarkable passages of Scripture. It is the history of Israel in the land, pre-written. Scripture prophesied concerning Israel's being dispossessed out of the land three times and regathered into the land three times. There are to be three dispossessions and three regatherings of Israel.

The first of these was prophesied by God to Abraham. "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.... But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again... (Gen 15:13,16).

They went down into Egypt for 430 years; then God brought them out of Egypt. That is what we are following now in Deuteronomy. They are on the east bank of the Jordan River, and God is bringing them back to the land for the first regathering.

In the Book of Joshua, we will find them entering into the land, and in the Book of Judges we will find them settled in the land, which is a complete and literal fulfillment. Now, before they have even entered the land, the second time they are to be put out of the land is mentioned here.

33 A people whom you do not know will eat the produce of your ground and every product of your labor, and you will never be anything but oppressed and mistreated continually.

33 A people whom you do not know shall eat up the produce of your ground and all your labors, and you will never be anything but oppressed and crushed continually.

33 "A people whom you don't know will devour what your land and labor produces. You'll be only oppressed and discouraged continuously

33 The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed away:

34 You will also be driven insane by the sight of what you see.

34 You shall be driven mad by the sight of what you see.

34 until you are driven insane from what your eyes will see.

34 So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

- This verse was accurately fulfilled in Judah's last king, Zedekiah, whose sons were slain before him; then his eyes were put out

— Blind and helpless, he was carried away into Babylonian captivity:

Jer 34:4-5:

4 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword:

5 But thou shalt die in peace: and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they burn odours for thee; and they will lament thee, saying, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the LORD.

- Jeremiah indicates that he shall not die by the sword, but in peace.

Ezek 12:13: My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

- Ezekiel seems to contradict himself, indicating that Zedekiah will never see the Babylonian captivity...

2 Kings 25:6-7:

6 So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.

7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

***The precision of prophecy is chilling. God says what He means and means what He says.***

35 The LORD will strike you on the knees and thighs with severe boils from which you cannot be healed, *and strike you* from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

35 The LORD will strike you on the knees and legs with sore boils, from which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

35 "The LORD will inflict you with incurable boils on your knees and legs, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

35 The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.

36 The LORD will bring you and your king, whom you appoint over you, to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods, *made of wood and stone*.

36 The LORD will bring you and your king, whom you set over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone.

36 "The LORD will banish you and your king whom you will appoint over you to go to a nation that neither you nor your ancestors have known, and there you'll serve other gods of wood and stone.

**36** The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.

37 And you will become an *object of horror*, a song of mockery, and an object of taunting among all the peoples where the LORD drives you.

37 You shall become a horror, a proverb, and a taunt among all the people where the LORD drives you.

37 You'll become a desolation and a proverb, and you'll be mocked among the people where the LORD will drive you."

37 And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.

- The section ends (v36-37) with the curse of conquest by a foreign nation—which neither thou nor thy fathers have known—which was anticipated in v32-33

- Israel was regathered from the Babylonian Captivity. Their return to the land is recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah. The prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi tell of their return to the land

— So then, this is the second prophecy concerning their return to the land. This has been literally fulfilled

- The third scattering of Israel was the result of being conquered by Rome

**38** "You will bring out a great amount of seed to the field, but you will gather in little, because the locust will devour it.

**38** "You shall bring out much seed to the field but you will gather in little, for the locust will consume it.

**38** "You'll plant many seeds in a field, but your harvest will be small because the locust will consume it.

**38** Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it.

- Cf. the locust plague described by Joel in Joel 1

39 You will plant and cultivate vineyards, but you will neither drink of the wine nor bring in *the harvest*, because the worm will eat it.

39 You shall plant and cultivate vineyards, but you will neither drink of the wine nor gather *the grapes*, for the worm will devour them.

39 You'll plant a vineyard, but you won't drink wine or harvest any grapes, because worms will consume it.

39 Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.

40 You will have olive trees throughout your territory but you will not anoint yourself with the oil, because your olives will drop off *prematurely*.

40 You shall have olive trees throughout your territory but you will not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives will drop off.

40 You'll have olive trees throughout your territory, but you won't be able to anoint yourself with oil, because the olives will drop off the trees.

40 Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit.

- The curses of 28:38-42 are the opposite of the blessings of v8,11ff,38...the locust...worms

- The crop pests, another sector of man's erstwhile total dominion (Cf. Gen 1:26), in effect would make the Israelites their servants, who must labor to feed them

41 You will father sons and daughters but they will not remain yours, because they will go into captivity.

41 You shall have sons and daughters but they will not be yours, for they will go into captivity.

41 You'll bear sons and daughters, but they won't belong to you, because they'll go into captivity.

41 Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.

42 The cricket will take possession of all your trees and the produce of your ground.

42 The cricket shall possess all your trees and the produce of your ground.

42 Whirling locusts will consume every tree and the produce of your land.

42 All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.

- Cf. the locust plague described by Joel in Joel 1

43 The stranger who is among you will rise above you higher and higher, and you will go down lower and lower.

43 The alien who is among you shall rise above you higher and higher, but you will go down lower and lower.

43 The foreigner in your midst will be elevated higher and higher over you, while you are brought low little by little.

**43** The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.

44 He will lend to you, but you will not lend to him; he will be the head, and you will be the tail.

44 He shall lend to you, but you will not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you will be the tail.

44 He will lend to you, but you won't lend to him. He'll be the head, but you'll be the tail.

44 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

**45** "So all these curses shall come upon you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the LORD your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

**45** "So all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the LORD your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

**45** All these curses will come upon you and will overwhelm you until you are exterminated, because you didn't obey the LORD your God to keep his commands and statutes, which he had commanded you.

**45** Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:

46 And they will become a sign and a wonder against you and your descendants forever.

46 They shall become a sign and a wonder on you and your descendants forever.

46 These curses will serve as a sign and wonder for you and your descendants as long as you live."

46 And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

- In v45-48 there is a summation of the preceding threats of curse, both as to cause (Cf. v20) and as to result. The cause would be Israel's breaking of the covenant oath; the result would be that Israel would suffer the full vengeance of the covenant to the extremity of exile's devastation.

**47** "Since you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a cheerful heart, *in gratitude* for the abundance of all *things*,

**47** "Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things;

**47** "Because you didn't serve the LORD your God joyfully and wholeheartedly, despite the abundance of everything you have,

**47** Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;

48 you will serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, thirst, nakedness, and devoid of all *things*; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

48 you'll serve your enemies whom the LORD your God will send against you. You will serve in famine and in drought, in nakedness, and in lack of everything. They'll set a yoke of iron upon your neck until they have exterminated you.

48 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

- The punishment was to fit the crime (v47)

- Israel's curse yoke (v48) would amount to a return to the status from which God had called her in covenant love (Cf. Lev 26:13)

- The two volumes of Flavius Josephus' history tells about the coming of the Romans under Titus

— Rome, known as the iron kingdom, fulfilled the prediction, "He shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck."

— Though Moses does not at this point detract from the impressiveness of these curses by any qualifications, elsewhere he proclaims the triumph of covenant grace through the restoration of an elect, repentant remnant (Deut 4:29ff; 30:1ff)

**49** "The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down; a nation whose language you will not understand,

**49** “The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand,

49 “The LORD will raise a distant nation against you from the other side of the earth.

Swooping down like a vulture,

49 The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

- At the height of Israel’s disobedience, God predicted what would happen...

— God would bring a pagan power, speaking a foreign language, against the nation of Israel, as an instrument of disobedience. This foreign power would push Israel out of her land.

— 700 years later, 722 BC, Assyria did just that to Israel (northern kingdom)

-- ~850 years later, culminating in 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did just that to Judah (southern kingdom)

50 a nation with a defiant attitude, who will have no respect for the old, nor show favor to the young.

50 a nation of fierce countenance who will have no respect for the old, nor show favor to the young.

50 it will be a nation whose language you don’t understand, whose stern appearance neither shows regard nor extends grace to anyone whether old or young.

50 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:

51 Furthermore, it will eat the offspring of your herd and the produce of your ground until you are destroyed; *a nation* that will leave you no grain, new wine, or oil, nor the newborn of your cattle or the young of your flock, until they have eliminated you.

51 Moreover, it shall eat the offspring of your herd and the produce of your ground until you are destroyed, who also leaves you no grain, new wine, or oil, nor the increase of your herd or the young of your flock until they have caused you to perish.

51 Its army will consume the offspring of your animals and the produce of your soil until you are exterminated. They will leave you without your grain, wine, oil, the increase of your cattle, and the lamb of your flock, until you are completely destroyed.

51 And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.

- It is repeatedly stated here that the final issue of the various types of curses—epidemic (v21-22a), drought (v22b-24), and war (v25-26)—would be nothing short of Israel’s destruction (v20-22,24,26).

52 And it will besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and it will besiege you in all your towns throughout your land which the LORD your God has given you.

52 It shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout your land which the LORD your God has given you.

52 They'll besiege all your cities until your high and fortified walls in which you have trusted collapse throughout the land. Indeed, they will besiege all your cities, which the LORD your God gave you."

**52** And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

53 Then you will eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, during the siege and the hardship by which your enemy will oppress you.

53 Then you shall eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy will oppress you.

53 "You'll eat your own children—the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the Lord your God gave you—on account of the siege and the distress with which your enemy will oppress you.

53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

- But the inhumanity of the enemy warrior would pale beside that of even the tenderest Israelite mother, turned cannibalistic in the horror of the siege (v52-57; Cf. Lev 26:29; Lam 4:1-10)

- "the fruit of thy land (v51) ... the fruit of thine own body (v53)": The passage

contrasts the natural appetite of the barbarian and the unnatural lust of the Israelites

- There would be no refuge from the siege anywhere in the land (v52,55,57) for those who had put their trust in human defenses rather than in God, their true Refuge

- Josephus tells in his history how mothers were forced to give up their babies, and the flesh of the babies was eaten

— The people died, and their corpses collected inside the city. They had to throw them over the wall.

— This prophecy was literally fulfilled. OT history witnessed successive executions of this curse, until the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

54 The man who is refined and very delicate among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife he cherishes, and toward the rest of his children who are left,

54 The man who is refined and very delicate among you shall be hostile toward his brother and toward the wife he cherishes and toward the rest of his children who remain,

54 Even the compassionate man among you—the very sensitive one—will look with evil in his eyes toward his brother, his beloved wife, and his surviving sons, whom he spared.

54 So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave:

55 so that he will not give *even* one of them any of the flesh of his children which he will eat, since he has nothing *else* left, during the siege and the hardship by which your enemy will oppress you in all your towns.

55 so that he will not give *even* one of them any of the flesh of his children which he will eat, since he has nothing *else* left, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy will oppress you in all your towns.

55 He will withhold from each of them the flesh of his sons that he is eating—since there will be nothing left—on account of the siege and distress with which your enemy will oppress you in all your cities.

55 So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.

56 The refined and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and tenderness, will be hostile toward the husband she cherishes and toward her son and daughter,

56 The refined and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground for delicateness and refinement, shall be hostile toward the husband she cherishes and toward her son and daughter,

56 The most tender and sensitive lady among you, who doesn't venture to touch the soles of her feet to the ground on account of her daintiness, will look with hostility in her eyes against her beloved husband, her sons, and her daughters.

56 The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,

57 and toward her afterbirth that comes from between her legs, and toward her children to whom she gives birth, because she will eat them secretly for lack of anything *e/se*, during the siege and the hardship with which your enemy will oppress you in your towns.

57 and toward her afterbirth which issues from between her legs and toward her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of anything *e/se*, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy will oppress you in your towns.

57 She will eat her afterbirth and her newborn children secretly—since there will be nothing left—on account of the siege and distress with which your enemy will oppress you in your cities."

57 And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.

**58** "If you are not careful to follow all the words of this Law that are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the LORD your God,

**58** "If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the LORD your God,

**58** "If you aren't careful to observe all the words of this Law that have been written in this book, instructing you to fear this glorious and awesome name of the LORD your God,

**58** If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;

- Not the Book of Deuteronomy, which was not then written, but the Book of the Law, the Torah, delivered by Moses to Israel from God; and of which he had been, in his addresses to the people, recapitulating some of the principal points (Cf. v60-61)

In this closing paragraph Moses harks back to the conditional form with which the pronouncing of the curses began (Cf. v15), for in the day of assembly in Moab the decision between the curses and the blessings was still to be made by Israel. To avoid the curses the people of Israel must obey the stipulations of this covenant document out of true reverence for the Lord who had revealed his glory and fearful works in saving them from Egypt.

59 then the LORD will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.

59 then the LORD will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.

59 then he will inflict extraordinary plagues on you and your children, great and lasting plagues, and severe and lasting illnesses.

59 Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

60 And He will bring back on you every disease of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they will cling to you.

60 He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they will cling to you.

60 He will inflict on you all the diseases of Egypt that you dreaded, and they won't be curable.

60 Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.

61 Also every sickness and every plague, which are not written in the book of this Law, the LORD will bring on you **until you are destroyed**.

61 Also every sickness and every plague which, not written in the book of this law, the LORD will bring on you until you are destroyed.

61 Moreover, the LORD will inflict you with illnesses and plagues that were not written in this Book of the Law, until you are exterminated.

61 Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

- "...until you are destroyed" - Cf. v24,45,51,61

— It is repeatedly stated here that the final issue of the various types of curses—epidemic (21-22a), drought (v22b-24), and war (v25-26)—would be nothing short of Israel's destruction (v20-22,24,26)

62 Then you will be left few in number, whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, because you did not obey the LORD your God.

62 Then you shall be left few in number, whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, because you did not obey the LORD your God.

62 Because you will not have obeyed the LORD your God, very few of you will be left—instead of you being as numerous as the stars in the heavens.

62 And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

63 And it will come about that, just as the LORD rejoiced over you to be good to you, and make you numerous, so will the LORD rejoice over you to wipe you out and destroy you; and you will be torn away from the land which you are entering to possess.

63 It shall come about that as the LORD delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the Lord will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you will be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it.

63 Just as the LORD delighted to prosper and increase you, so now the LORD will delight to destroy, exterminate, and banish you from the land that you are about to enter to possess."

63 And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

- Disobedience would bring loss of the blessings promised in the Abrahamic Covenant, namely, the multiplication of the people and the possession of a homeland

- In place of the blessings would be every possible extraordinary and persistent affliction (v59-61)

64 Furthermore, the LORD will **scatter you among all the peoples**, from *one* end of the earth to the other; and there you will serve other gods, *made of* wood and stone, which you and your fathers have not known.

64 Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known.

64 "He'll scatter you among the nations from one end of the earth to the other, and there you'll serve other gods made of wood and stones, which neither you nor your ancestors have known.

**64** And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

- "...scatter you among all the peoples" - this is *diaspora* language, fulfilled fully with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD

— "among all the peoples" - not among a single people (Babylon), but among all peoples, implying throughout the entire world (see NASB, ISV translations) (Cf. 4:27)

— The language and plural forms here can only refer to the global dispersion that occurred in 70 AD

65 Among those nations you will find no peace, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul.

65 Among those nations you shall find no rest, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul.

65 Among those nations you'll have no rest. There'll be no resting place for the soles of your feet. Instead, the LORD will give you an anxious heart, failing eyesight, and a despairing spirit.

65 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:

- Prophetically following the besieged and conquered people into their exile (v64-67), Moses catches with a few strokes all the pathos of unbelieving, homeless Israel down through the centuries—once the people of God, but become in their exile like unto the heathen, without Christ, having no hope, without God in the world (Eph 2:12)

- By repudiating their election and covenant calling, in virtue of which they had been delivered from Egyptian slavery to become God's theocratic sons, the people of Israel were doomed to fall back into a worse Egyptian bondage (v68), into bondage to Satan and sin, death and Hell

66 So your lives will be hanging in doubt before you; and you will be terrified night and day, and have no assurance of your life.

66 So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you will be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life.

66 You'll cling to life, being fearful by both night and day, with no assurance of survival.

66 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:

67 In the morning you will say, 'If only it were evening!' And at evening you will say, 'If only it were morning!' because of the terror of your heart which you fear, and the sight of your eyes which you will see.

67 In the morning you shall say, 'Would that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Would that it were morning!' because of the dread of your heart which you dread, and for the sight of your eyes which you will see.

67 In the morning you'll say, 'I wish it were evening.' Yet in the evening you'll say, "I wish it were morning," on account of what you'll dread and what you'll see.

67 In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

68 And the LORD will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I said to you, 'You will never see it again!' And there you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer."

68 The LORD will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I spoke to you, 'You will never see it again!' And there you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer."

68 Finally, the LORD will bring you back to Egypt by ship, a place that I said you'll never see again. There you'll try to sell yourselves to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you."

**68** 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.