

Lesson 63

Tonight we're going to be on the last part of chapter 28 of Deuteronomy. This finishes that third exposition so we're on the home stretch now as far as finishing up the book. There will be some important other chapters to come. However this two-chapter section (chapters 27 and 28) represents a portion of the Word of God that is a graphic and somewhat sobering. In one way the passage is almost depressing to read because of its obvious parallels throughout history.

The big idea to carry away from this is that we're seeing what history is doing, that history has a purpose. There's an ethical cause behind history. So let's open with a brief word of prayer looking to the Lord for His illumination.

(Opening prayer)

Just to review again, we're talking about a covenant renewal that's going to be happening in Joshua 8 so that's a future point. It's happening at a place and time. This is the place. That's the place where Abraham first built an altar when he came into the land. Therefore it's a sacred place. For those who are so ignorant in our press and media who are arguing that the Arabs own this territory forget the Arabs are Johnny come lately. They were not the original occupants of this; the Canaanites were. The Jews came in 2000 B. C. So is it settled who was there first. We want to think about the fact that Moses isn't going to be there; he's handing off the baton.

On your outline you'll see that we're talking about - turn to Galatians 3 because it's so important that we understand that Paul picks up this chapter (chapter 27 actually) and he makes a big deal out of it in Galatians 3. If you are a typical New Testament Christian and haven't read the Old Testament; you miss the thrust of what Paul's getting at here. Galatians 3 is on this business of faith and works, the theme of that book. If you look at verse 5, he raises the question.

NKJ Galatians 3:5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? --

...fundamentally different things. It's got to be one or the other. If it's by works of the law it's counted as a reward for obedience. However if it's by the hearing of faith; then it's a proposition God places toward us and we are to respond to that in faith. Paul builds up the case and talks about justification by faith.

Then in verse 10 that's where He zeros in picking up the narrative that we've been studying the last couple of weeks.

NKJ Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

That's the last verse of chapter 27 in Deuteronomy. In context when you read chapter 27 really understanding it; remember we kept saying that the

cursings have some nuances to them. One is they're oaths of self-malediction. An oath of self-malediction is the idea that you damn yourself.

You're basically saying to God, "Damn me if I don't obey this rule."

To make the point careful again and again and again in chapter 27, they were all private sins. No public sins there. They're all private sins in Deuteronomy 27. Private sins by definition can't be enforced by the state. So this is not a state run thing, which is very important, as I'll bring up later.

Chapter 27 is talking about private, hidden sins. Therefore it is not addressed to the state or the government. That's important because that shows you that a society's lifeblood has to do with the inner heart attitude. That can't be monitored by government policies. That is an attitude of the heart. This is why the gospel is so important. So what happens is that then he says if that's the case and we know all the oaths of malediction are bringing curses. This is a strong word in the Hebrew. That cursing as I said in a vernacular way of saying those malediction oaths would be to say, "To hell with me if boom, boom, boom if I do this." That's how it would come across in our street language today. That's pretty serious stuff. That's the depth of commitment that's going on in chapter 27.

Obviously by the time get down to chapter 27 and they says this:

NKJ Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

It's very obvious you're reading Deuteronomy 27 nobody could do that. Paul knows that. He picks that up.

NKJ Galatians 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

Then he says in verse 13 and here's where the gospel comes in. If everyone is cursed because they can't keep the private sin part (Deuteronomy 27) if they can't keep that and everybody is oathed before God to be damned if they don't; then it follows that everybody is damned under that principle.

Then something has to happen. So then Paul also quoting from the book of Deuteronomy - this is why Deuteronomy is so important to the New Testament.

NKJ Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),

So now we have substitution. There's the substitutionary atonement of Jesus. This section back here in the Old Testament has implications for the new. But it even has more serious implications.

If you'll look on your outline tonight under where I have this thing called lesson on works throughout the pagan world...

Works, improvement by works, is endemic to the entire globe, every people group, every culture group. Grace is only evident where the Bible has had an influence. Otherwise it's all this.

So what I've done is I've given you three instances that cover the globe. Everywhere you go in the globe, everywhere you go in human civilization; you have a salvation by works theme going.

Look at number one. In Asia you have the idea of karma, the idea that because I sin, I fail, I build up debt and the debt has to be paid off. So karma is a works system so I have to then go through reincarnation after reincarnation to work off my debt. When I am finally working off my debt, I reach nirvana. That is the Asian concept of life. That is the Asian concept of what we're supposed to be doing. That's the purpose of life. That's the Asian view. That's the pagan view common to Asiatics. That's karma. It's a work system.

Number 2, you come into the West and it's got a different version of the same sort of thing. In the West we also have a works system; but in the West it's probably been contaminated by the idea of progress in the Bible. So in the West you have the idea of an utopian revolution that somehow we collectively and corporately through operation boot strap will create some sort of wonderful kingdom that'll relieve the suffering in the world by a revolution, a socio-political movement. The West has spawned socio-political movements. It started the modern ones, in France with the French Revolution. Liberty, equality, and fraternity was the slogan of the French Revolution. You can't have liberty and equality. Those two don't go together. So right there in the three nouns of the French Revolution you have a conflict, a logical conflict. They couldn't engineer it; and it never worked.

Then you come down to the Russian Revolution - of course the Marxist effect - the Russian Revolution in 1917. Then after '17 you have the Fabians in England that started the Labor Party of England and the London School of Economics which is very widely known now. People all over the world that are world leaders have graduated from the London School of Economics. The London School of Economics was started by the Fabians; and the Fabians were socialists. Not that everybody that goes there is a socialist; but that's the history.

Then the Frankfurt movement, that's the Germans. The Fabians were England. The Frankfurt Group was in Germany. They were all atheist Jews. So in 1933 when Hitler came to power they had to go somewhere so they were given safe campus at Columbia University in New York City. Of course they were the people who wrote the books the hippies read in the 1960's- Eric Fromm Eros in Civilization. They were all part of the Frankfurt Group.

There is a consistency here of revolution, Utopian revolution. Occupy Wall Street people - same kind of thing.

Now the third example of salvation by works (social salvation) is of course Sharia, the Islamic Sharia.

So everywhere you go whether it's the Middle East, whether it's the West whether it's Asia it the same story over and over and over again. The sad part about these movements is if they had thought about the Jewish experiment from 1450 to 500-600 B. C. that 900-year period; they wouldn't be doing this because they would realize you can't do it by works. Israel's 900-year experience as a theocracy proved in actual life laboratory that you can't do it by works. The problem of evil, the problem of sin is so deeply rooted inside the human heart that it requires an act of God to come from the outside of a person to the inside. That's the lesson of the 900 years. That's the lesson Paul picks up in the New Testament.

But we have the movements in Asia, Western civilization, the Middle East. All are repeating the same stuff. They are making the same mistake. It's the same bilge all over again - different brands of it.

So now we have been looking at chapter 28; and we looked at verses 15 through 19 with the cursing section. Now we're on the mountain. We are standing. The people at the bottom - in Joshua 8 you see this. A bunch of guys will be down here, Mt. Gerizim. I was standing on Mt. Gerizim when I took the picture. Then across the little valley there, there is Mt Ebal. The people would come half way up the mountain. In between would be the Levites. That's the place where this happened. This is the service.

Some people the ones at Mt. Gerizim are reciting 28:1-14. If you go back to Deuteronomy and look at those; that's all those blessing passages. Then the group that was here at Mt Ebal, they are going to start the cursings. It's a formal ceremony that's going on here. This is the signing of the covenant.

What happened here is like if we had a Constitution convention in which we reaffirmed as a nation our loyalty to the United States Constitution and went through some formal thing. If you were there looking at this and participating in such a ceremony it would be obvious that what you are doing is signing on. You're signing on to a contract. So that's what's going on here. Moses is preparing the nation for this and he's preparing them for a point.

Down at the bottom of page one of your hand where it says chapter 28 blessings and cursings; you'll see that I point out suzerain vassal treaties which were treaties in the secular world somewhat like the Mosaic treaty when the suzerain (that's the big king, powerful king like the pharaoh) and the vassal king would be the little Canaanite kings - an arrangement like this. When the suzerain (the great king) got an agreement or a treaty with these lesser kings; there would be sanctions associated with that treaty.

The sanctions would be if the Canaanite king suddenly saw an enemy coming and he was in a relationship with Pharaoh, he could say, "Hey Pharaoh, you know I'm getting invaded here. I need your help."

Pharaoh would come to his aid. Pharaoh would help him. That would be the blessing.

But on the other hand if this Canaanite king in some city decided to thumb his nose at Pharaoh and not pay him the revenue that was due Pharaoh; then Pharaoh would come after him with a military force. So there were sanctions in these treaties.

The interesting thing is point #2 there under 28, the threats from Yahweh over a 900 year theocracy are not limited to what a human leader can do. See these other treaties it's whatever the pharaoh could do. Well, what could he do? He could send an army or something. The difference in chapter 28 here is that this is a total threat - a total threat. That's the blank. A total threat from every part of reality - that's what you want to observe as you look through chapter 28. These sanctions have more dimensions to them than any human sanctions.

By the way the first blank there, all have a false view of reality. Man is in constant relationship with God; but it's in enmity or harmony. There is no such thing as an atheist living in a neutral universe. An atheist is ethically suppressing God consciousness. That's Romans 1. An atheist is in constant touch with God. The very fact he's in constant touch with God makes him an atheist. That's why he's an atheist.

So in chapter 28 we have this overall threat situation. What we back out of that, what we realize when we look at the total threat environment that God is giving this nation is out of that we learn something about the nature of history. That is that God is in control of the minutia of history. It's not just that God is in control of the minutia; but that God is in control of the minutia in response to our response to Him. There is an ethical thing driving history.

That is a totally different view of history than you get in secular education. In secular education it's economic issues; it's sociological issues; it's racial issues. It's some issue that we can sit down with statistics and measure and so forth. Now those things are true secondary cause-effects; but they're not primary cause-effect of history. The primary cause-effect of history is the human race and its relationship with God. This is why the Tribulation is going to happen someday. It's going to be global; and it's going to be geophysically catastrophic. That's because God is cursing the human race because of what the human race has responded to Him. This is cause-effect.

So we've looked at verse 15 to 19. That's the first part of the cursings that are socio-economic, climate and military.

Now tonight we're going to go from verse 20 all through the end of the chapter and finish this off. This is a very depressing, scary section of Scripture. I felt very depressed as I went through this in the sense that we have how serious God takes the responses to His Word.

For this 900 years, we're looking inside a fishbowl; and we're seeing how God worked this particular nation, a nation that He had chosen, a nation that He had done many miracles with; but He is also going to whip their butt. It's very severe discipline that goes into this.

Those of you who remember the Fiddler on the Roof movie, can remember one of the points in that movie, the lead character I forget his name, the little Jewish guy. He is going along.

He says, "Can't you chose someone else once in a while?" because as a Jew he's being persecuted.

He is being persecuted because of his identity with God.

So let's look at some of these and see what falls out of this. Let's look at 20 to 24 first.

In verse 20:

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:20 " The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed

We went through that last time and got down to 24.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:24 "The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

So there you have this total environmental cursing. We're talking about climate here, not just politics.

Tonight we're in verse 25. We're going to talk about the destruction from foreign nations and a reverse exodus. We covered some of this last time; but I want to connect this with some other passages in the Old Testament because of the language used here. Notice the result of that is this reverse exodus so to speak where you're slaughtered.

In verse 34 one of the affects nationally to the entire community of Jews - and this has affected them historically. The Jewish people still live with this. It's still in their psyche - their Jewish psyche.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:34 "So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see.

That's the psychological destruction that has happened in the Jewish psyche because of the experience of these cursings. Anger - this is why often times they are very angry at God because the more modern Jews have experienced the rejection in Europe

So in verse 36:

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:36 "The LORD will bring you and the 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.

I made a point about that last time that there's a sarcastic image here.

The idea is that you have forsaken - God is saying, "You have forsaken Me. I am the living God of history. I am the one that told you. I am the one who led you out of Egypt. I am the one who gave you this freedom. I am

the one who gave you these statutes and judgments. And so what have you done? You go ahead and you worship idols that are so non-living they're made of wood and stone."

The idea of being made of wood and stone means that somebody had to craft them. Do you see the theology in this little threat? The idols that God is talking about are all products of what? Man. That's the insult that man has created the idols. They've made them out of wood and stone. They've made them out of their own speculations.

One of these of course we've studied before was Baal. Baal you remember was dealing with climate because it's an agriculture economy. This is a picture of what they thought Baal looked like. This is from archeological digs. So they have these little statuettes. This is one. You'll see it here and you'll see it in two pieces; they didn't come from the same place. You see there is a consistency in how they depict Baal. They depicted him with his right hand up. Here the statue has been damaged so he's not holding anything. Here he has a sword with lightning. That's the idea that Baal controls the storms and weather that brings the crop and blessings of the crop. He is the blessing of rain, fertility, grain and herbs.

We won't go into this; but that's why if you look at the miracles that Elijah and Elisha do in 1 and 2 Kings; what do all the miracles have to do with? Those blessings! What you have in those narratives is an apologetic against Baal.

Elijah - remember - he goes to feed the woman who's starving.

Bio-commentators sometimes don't get this together - but where is the woman living? In Sidon. Ooo.... where's Sidon? It's outside the land. In what nation is Sidon? Phoenicia. And what was the home of Baalism? Phoenicia. So it's a tremendously sarcastic assault on the whole Baal faith.

In other words what the narrative is saying is, "Look at this. Here's the homeland of your God; and He can't even feed the widow. It takes a Jew to come up and give her some food."

That's the nature of those Old Testament texts. They're powerful arguments; but you have to have the background to appreciate their crispness and their confrontive nature.

So anyway I give you some verses there - Jeremiah 16, 2 Samuel 26, Jeremiah 39. Those are all passages where if you look them up in the concordance it says the Jews are serving other gods. That phrase "serving other gods" is a reference having to live inside a pagan society. That's the tension the church of Jesus Christ still lives with because if we live in total conformity to our society and our society is basically polytheism; we are serving other gods.

The reason this happens is because every society is driven with some sort of underlying value system. That value system is usually religious. So serving other gods is the Old Testament way of saying you're going along with society. You busy with your business and your promotions but the

money you are earning is basically to build a society that is not a theocracy. You are serving other gods.

So that's verses come to 25 through 37.

Now we come tonight to verses 38 to 46. One of the themes you want to notice here. Let's look at verse 38 and see if you can pick out the repetition. We're not looking at the chiastic structure of the blessings; but you're looking at another way Moses has of getting his point across. Follow me as I read a few verses to kind of get the flavor.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:38 "You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it.

39 "You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.

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

41 "You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity.

42 "Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

43 "The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower.

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

Kind of depressing, isn't it? If you look at every one of these verses it's a total environment affect. There is no escape from this stuff. Look at where it's going - 38, 39, and 40 - those 3 verses deal with business. Those were the industries that drove this society economically. As you read verses 38, 39, and 40, what do you think about the balance sheets and their income statements? See the economic destruction here?

And notice what's causing it. Armies aren't causing the problem in verse 38. Aliens aren't causing the problem in verse 39 or 40. It's the bugs; it's the insects. It's the cursed sections of nature that are causing this. Then you've beget sons and daughters. Yes, they're going to be carried off. Now you've got foreigners involved.

Then as an added kind of insult here, you have in verse 43 the economic prosperity of the alien. Remember we dealt with that alien, the gere? The gere is one who's a Gentile who comes into Israel, lives in Israel as a resident voluntarily because they agree to Yahwehism. They like the area. They do not have the full rights of an Israelite citizen. That's clear in the Mosaic Law. Nevertheless they were welcomed; but they couldn't participate in some of the worship etc. They would economically not be competitive in most areas with the Israelite full citizen.

Yet here the economics has changed. Now you think about verses 43-44. The alien is living in their cities. He's living with the Jews. It's not like they're over in another city and the Jews are in this city. They're all mixed together. Now this shows you how surgically precise God's cursing is. He can look down on an urban economic culture and He can go in there and make sure alien is blessed in his business and his Jewish neighbor isn't.

Now you talk about God's sovereign control. It's not like the whole city economy is this way. Doggonit, the Jews work just as hard as the aliens and the alien businesses thrive and the Jewish business goes into the ground. Why is this happening? It should waken. See that's what the prophets are talking about in the rest of the Old Testament.

"Don't you see this?" they are saying. "Look! Look at your balance sheets. You don't have to do a spiritual naval check. You can just see the overt economic blessings. Something's wrong when this is happening."

Then he continues. Now we have this repetition.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:45 "Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

46 "And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever."

There's a destiny. This is one of the hard things that we probably don't appreciate. Theologian after theologian in the church down through the centuries, we call this replacement theology. They always want to make the church somehow replace Israel.

But as my Jewish friend that I went to seminary with Arnold Fruchtenbaum always says, "Isn't it funny? The church replaces Israel and inherits all of her blessings but none of her cursings."

Striking isn't it? None of the replacement theologians have the courage to really make the church the new Israel because if they did, they would have to include the cursings too.

So the cursings are equal weight here with the blessings. It's fierce language.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:45 ...and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed,

There will be a finality to this cursing. Israel will be destroyed. It doesn't mean they're not going to come back; but it's going to be destroyed.

Then verse 47.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:47 " Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart,

See it starts in the heart.

for the abundance of everything,

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:48 "therefore you shall serve your enemies,

Do you detect the sarcasm here?

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:47 " Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,

That's His blessing.

We had a passage, remember back when we were doing Deuteronomy 8. That was the passage that says:

NKJ Deuteronomy 8:3 ... man shall not live by bread alone;

Do you remember how God made the point historically and visually so that the second generation would understand from the first generation's experience what God meant by saying that:

NKJ Deuteronomy 8:3 ... man shall not live by bread alone;

What was going on there? Where did that lesson start? The wilderness. What happened in the wilderness? How did that drama of 40 years in the wilderness - how did that drama teach them that man does not live by bread alone? The logistics. Where did they get their food from every 24 hours? Manna, supernatural. Where did they get their water from? Supernatural. Where did they get the shoes that did not wear out traipsing across the rocky, sandy desert mile after mile after mile? What did that 38-year curriculum teach them about cause-effect? That God can supply my need through many strange ways. What I need to know is that when I do normal business, normal things, clothing, do my business to produce things. Yes, God blesses that; but my work is necessary but not sufficient. When I start thinking my efforts are sufficient not only are they necessary but they are sufficient I got a big spiritual problem. That is why God said:

NKJ Deuteronomy 8:3 ... man shall not live by bread alone;

If you think you live by bread only, you are saying that human effort is sufficient to bless me.

God is saying, "No, it isn't sufficient for blessing. I want you to work; I want you to labor. But your labor is not sufficient to bring you these blessings."

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:47 " Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:48 "therefore you shall serve your enemies...

See the verb serve occurs twice. The first noun "you will serve" object of the first noun verse 47 - the first verb serve has as its object Yahweh. And, it's with gladness of heart. The second time in verse 48 serve has as an object of the verb your enemies. It's not going to be pleasant.

So God makes the contrast clear.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:48 ... whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.

See the contrast?

God said, "You can serve Me or you can serve your enemies. It's up to you; but let Me tell you what happens if you want to serve your enemies."

The yoke of iron - most yokes in the farming community then were wood. The idea of a yoke of iron is that it's very heavy.

Does this remind you of a passage in the New Testament where Jesus said:

NKJ Matthew 11:30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

It comes out of Deuteronomy. This imagery is all set up for the New Testament centuries and centuries before.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:49 "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar...

So now we have something else happen. This gets even more destructive and more depressing. In verse 49 through 57 (point d) you have destruction by military siege and exile. In these verses you have some of the greatest suffering in history that Jewish people have had to endure. So much suffering that nations that have seen this cannot believe that this nation has been singled out for this kind of suffering.

"What kind of a God do you people worship that did this to you?"

So let's look, verse 49.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:49 "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,
50 "a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.

51 "And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.

52 "They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates

That's all the cities.

throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you.

Then it goes on here. We'll get into that. The thing of it is verse 58-59 sets it up. Verse 49 once again shows the contingent nature. He brings the nation from afar which now tells you that the God of the Old Testament is not a local deity. Now they should have known this back when God dealt with Egypt. The ancient Near East is full of this. The idea that deities were collocated in a geographic areas. You go to another area you'd better make friends with the god of that area. The gods were local deities. But here you have Yahweh is transcendent. Yahweh is going to

bring a nation whose language you don't even understand - totally different culture - has its own little gods and goddesses. But those little gods and goddesses of that nation (Babylon and Syria), they're not the ones that are moving that nation.

"I," God says, "I am the one that's moving, not their gods and goddesses. So I am going to bring that to you."

The language will be totally different. It won't even be a Semitic language. It will be one you don't understand.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:50 "a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.

The idea of this kind of thing is that in the Mosaic Law Code statutes and judgments we've seen compassion. We've seen Yahweh's compassion protecting the orphan, protecting the widow.

What God is saying is, "Those are My laws. That's My character. You didn't like Me. You didn't want My character so you're going to get another god - those gods - and you're going to live with their character."

The character goes with the deity. So they're going to learn that lesson that the character of compassion is unique to Yahweh. It's unique to the God of Israel. The elderly will be slaughtered like everyone else.

Then he goes on to describe...

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:51 "... until they have destroyed you."

See the finality of this - until you are destroyed.

This happened historically. I want to show you places where this happened. Let's look at Jeremiah 19: 9. We're going to go forward in history a moment. Hold the place there and turn passed the Psalms over into the prophets. Look at Jeremiah 19:9. Jeremiah is working at the other end of the theocracy when it was collapsing. That's why he's called the weeping prophet. You see why Jeremiah is weeping? Because he knows Deuteronomy 28. He is weeping because people you don't know what you're going to suffer here. This is big stuff. So in verse 9 of 19, look at what he says is going to happen in these sieges.

NKJ Jeremiah 19:9 "And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, '

Cannibalism.

and everyone shall eat the flesh of his friend in the siege and in the desperation with which their enemies and those who seek their lives shall drive them to despair."

In other words life becomes so survival centered in the middle of these sieges that cannibalism will break out.

This is not unique to this passage. If you look in the next book, let's go over to Lamentations and look at 2:20.

NKJ Lamentations 2:20 " See, O LORD, and consider! To whom have You done this? Should the women eat their offspring, The children they have cuddled? Should the priest and prophet be slain In the sanctuary of the Lord?

See the desperation to which these people were thrust.

Now let me - that happened the end of the theocracy. It didn't just happen then; it also happened in A. D. 70 when the Roman legions came against Jerusalem. They put the walls up. They put the barricade up. Here's Josephus. Here's a guy, a Jewish man, who is writing the wars of the Jews. He is recounting what he himself saw. He tells about those who perished by famine in the city.

The number was prodigious. The miseries they underwent were unspeakable. For so much as the shadow of any kind of food did anywhere appear a war was commenced presently and the dearest friends fell fighting one to another about it snatching from each other the most miserable supports of life. Nor would men believe that those who were dying had no food, but the robbers would search them when they were expiring lest one should have concealed food in their bosoms while dying.

He goes on. There is a whole paragraph here he is describing the behavior of the people during that great siege against Jerusalem.

Then he gets down to this. He says:

I had indeed willingly omitted this calamity of ours but I might not seem to deliver what was so pretentious to posterity but that I have innumerable witnesses to it in my own age. And besides, my country would have had little reason to thank me for suppressing the miseries that she underwent at this time.

There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan. Her name was Mary. Her father was Eliezer of the village of (?). She was imminent for her family and her wealth and had fled away to Jerusalem because Romans were conquering.

So she felt she would be safe in the city of Jerusalem.

The other effects of this woman had already been seized upon.

That means they had taken all of her wealth, all of her possessions.

She had brought with her out of Perea and moved to the city what she had treasured up besides and also what food she had contrived to save had also been carried off by the rapacious guards who came every day, running into her house for that purpose. This put the woman in very great passion. And by frequent reproaches and (?) she cast at the rapacious villains she had provoked them to anger against her but none of them either out of indignation she had raised against herself or out of the commiseration of her case would take away her life. If she found any food she perceived

her labors were for others and not for herself. It was now becoming impossible for her in any way to find any more food while the famine pierced through her very bowels and marrow when also her passion was fired to the degree beyond the famine itself nor did she consult with anyone but her passion and the necessity she was in.

Then she attempted a most unnatural thing. In snatching up her son who was a child sucking at her breasts she said, "Oh miserable infant for whom I shall preserve thee this war this famine and this sedition. As to war with Romans if they preserve our lives we must be slaves."

It goes on to describe how she ate him. So we're talking real history here. This isn't just some little Bible story that's involved.

So when we read now in this passage in Deuteronomy about sieges, that's the background. So let's look now at verse 53.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:53 "You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. 54 "The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom h

This is what happens when you have a survival situation. People become a mob, an uncontrollable mob. Civilization disappears.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:55 "so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

That means every single city in the Promised Land.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:56 "The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, 57 "her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

This is God speaking. You see, this is tough stuff. This is a bloody, gory awful chapter. And this is what God is doing to His chosen people.

You say, "Why does He do this? Why is He so severe?"

Because these people have been called to a certain life; God holds them responsible to that life and He disciplines.

I think we make light in the Church Age of the disciplinary passages in Hebrews 12. We have the letters to the churches in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation. God is just as hard on the church as He is on Israel - in a sort of different way. We can't play footsie here with our Lord. He

doesn't act this way. This is the Lord Himself that's writing this stuff. Like I said, this is not pleasant stuff to read.

Now we come to the end of it, verses 58 to 68. We're coming down to the end. Now it's looking at the end state of discipline. This is the termination. This is the purpose discipline was designed.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:58 " If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD,

59 "then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues -- great and prolonged plagues -- and serious and prolonged sicknesses.

60 "Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid,

This by the way gives you an idea of life in Egypt.

and they shall cling to you.

61 "Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed.

62 "You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

63 "And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.

Now we have the prediction of the Diaspora.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:64 " Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known

See the sarcasm.

-- wood and stone.

Little creations of man you are going to be forced to hold to. No freedom. You're going to have religious domination by apostates.

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:65 "And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul.

See this is the agony of the Jew historically. Remember the Arabs like to give this propaganda that the Jews came back and took away Arab lands. Well the Zionist movement, the movement of Jews back to the land of Israel ...the Jews were already there by the way. They had been there for centuries. But the movement out of Europe toward what is now the State of Israel largely was motivated by their failure to assimilate.

There was a famous case. You can look it up on the Intranet called the Dryfuss case. This was a French army officer who was a Jew and the Jews in France thought they could just be French.

"Forget about me being Jewish. I just want to be French. I just want to live here and blend with my society."

It turned out through anti-Semitism that somehow (I forgot the exact details) he was brought to trial. It was obvious that this Jewish French officer was being discriminated against because he was Jewish. It was French anti-Semitism.

So sitting in the backroom of the trial was a guy by the name of Theodore Hertzl.

He was the guy that started Zionism because he looked at that trial and said, "We Jews will never be able to assimilate in Europe. We need a homeland where can go and live our lives as Jews. There is no rest for the Jew in Europe."

That was Zionism. That is exactly what this is saying. It's saying:

NKJ Deuteronomy 28:65 "And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul.

66 "Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life.

67 "In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

68 "And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you."

So as I said this is a very, very depressing and kind of shocking section of the Old Testament. It underlies the entire rest of the prophets. This is the theology of the prophets. When you read Isaiah, when you read Jeremiah, when you read Ezekiel, when you read Micah, when you read those Old Testament prophets; think Deuteronomy 28. That is it. You will see language of those things in the prophets. We'll get into that in future lessons. I'll show you the language in the prophetic writings that are literal quotes from this book of Deuteronomy.

This is the key to show you the theology of the Old Testament. So the chapter in the English Bible ends there with verse 68. In the Hebrew Bible it doesn't. In the Hebrew Bible, it is verse 69 which is translated in our English Bibles as 29:1. So 29:1 actually continues and is the end of chapter 28. There is a reason for that. I put it under Roman 3 in the handout.

There is an argument that exegetes have had about this verse and the meaning of it. Some would argue and they have a point. Let's read verse 1 first.

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:1 These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb.

So clearly verse 1 is teaching two covenants. One is Sinai; one he is doing it in Moab but he's doing it because of this, the ceremony that's going to be over in Shechem. So we've got these two covenants. The issue is what are the two covenants. What's that second covenant? English commentators have made the point that verse 1 chapter 29 isn't talking about 28, 27, 26 all the way back to 5. It's not talking about that. It's talking about what they call the Palestinian Covenant and the covenant of the land. Now there's going to be a promise of the return to the land. That's not under discussion. Everybody that's conservative believes that. Everyone who is pre-mill believes that. So you have that return to the land prophesied. But rather passages in the coming passages, 30,31, 32 actually being a covenant per se and not just an amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant. By putting verse 1 as part of chapter 28, we are identifying that second covenant to be this covenant renewal happening in Joshua 8, happening at Ebal and Gerizim. I think that fits better for the reason that the text, the way the text is designed from chapter 5 to chapter 28 - it's obviously a treaty kind of thing. It's obviously law. But when you come into the next few chapters, the style (the genre) of the structure isn't like it was before. It doesn't look like a covenant. It looks like promises. It looks like a prophecy - granted - but it doesn't have that sharp structure as a covenant. So I go along with the guys that make verse 1 of chapter 29 to refer to this second covenant, the one that they're going to do in the land at Shechem.

So verse one of chapter 29 should be verse 69 of chapter 28.

Now we want to conclude with some points about history. If you look at the outline, what I'm trying to do here is summarize what we as Christians walk away with having our eyes opened to that theocratic period of history. What did theocratic period of history teach us about history? All of us here have probably come out of secular history courses so we have zero exposure to a biblical view of history. The biblical view of history is totally different than anything we've ever learned in our secular education. So this is a kind of mind adjustment here that's going on with history.

Looking under Roman 4, conclusion.

The contract and administration of the contract at Sinai and its recontract at Shechem yields revelation of the true picture of how history works which in turn sets up a conflict with modern historiography.

As so many times happens in the Bible, you read the Bible with a sincere heart. You read it with comprehension and get the ideas in your head and all of a sudden it collides with the world we live in. Obviously the world we live in is under the evil one. I tried to summarize the conflict of point one and point two here.

Under point one this is what we learn in school. This is what we've been trained in. This is how we are trained to think. This is this is the way the media thinks. This is the way historians generally think. That is a

naturalist secular history, which I call the neo-pagan view. It's a view that goes back to nothing more than ancient paganism. It has 3 points. It has probably more but there are 3 basic ideas that nature is all there is. There is no supernatural reality responsible for it. Nature is it. There is nothing outside of nature, just the material, physical universe. So if you are going to explain history, you have to explain it within nature.

Secondly there is no meaning and purpose to nature. There can't be any meaning and purpose to nature because meaning and purpose come out of a mind. If there's no mind in back of nature there's no meaning or purpose in back of nature. And people who thought - remember I showed you Burke and Russell - thoughtful unbelievers say this - these little sidewalk excuses of intellects. They don't really understand their own position. On a non-Christian basis there is no meaning and purpose. So where do they get their purpose from? They have to have it of some sort. So it's up to man to give it meaning and purpose. Nobody can live without meaning and purpose. An atheist needs meaning and purpose. The question is where is the meaning and purpose coming from. Is it coming from his own speculations or is it coming from the revealed Word of God? That's a conflict.

Point 3 under that, an unending mix of good and evil. You'll notice I put parenthesis - pleasant and unpleasant because from a non-Christian point of view that's all you can say. You can't say that something is evil by some transidental standard because you don't have any trasidental standard. All you can say is unpleasant and you call that evil. because But that's different from what we Bible believing Christians are calling good and evil. We mean something different. We don't mean just pleasant and unpleasant. It's an unending mix. It's never going to go away. At least give the Asians credit. They understand karma keeps on going until you can go into a metaphysical suicide in nirvana. At least the Asians understand this that there's no hope within history. Good and evil are always going to be there. So it's up to man and his works to suppress the unpleasant. That's the religious zeal and drive of utopianism. That is what Karl Marx is arguing about when he sees the suffering of the worker and he's angry at that. He wants to do something about it. But because his framework won't permit him to understand what good and evil are really like, he's got to resort to some good works system.

Now the biblical view of history (point 2) also has some ideas. It has more than this; I just picked out three for the contrast. The creator distinction means that nature and man are derivative and dependent realities responsible to God. So contrast that idea with the first one that nature is all there is. It's got to be one or the other. Is nature all there is or is there a Creator outside of nature under which nature is derived and dependent upon? Fundamental idea here.

Second whereas under No 1 above no meaning or purpose to nature - it's up to man to give it meaning and purpose because it requires a person (a person mind) to give this; we have a personal trinity. Now think about this. Sometimes we get ancy about the trinity, and it is. I mean it is incomprehensible. The trinity is what gives us a personal God because in the trinity God has a personal relationship between the Father and the Son, the Son and the Father, the Father and the Holy Spirit, the Holy

Spirit and the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son and the Son with the Holy Spirit. You have six personal relationships going on in the trinity. The idea there is that doesn't depend on a universe external to God, does it? Do they need the universe to have a personal relationship? Does the Father need the universe to have a personal relationship with the Son? No. The trinity is what protects the personality of God.

In Islam and monotheist Judaism (post biblical Judaism) where you have a solitary monotheism, you've got a problem here. You've got a real problem. How can God love if He has no object to love? Are you then making Him have to create in order to get an object external to himself in order that He exercises a love relationship? See the problem? Everybody thinks the trinity is the problem. No, it's the other way around. The trinity is not the problem. The problem is if you deny the trinity. That's when you've got the problem.

So the personal trinity prior to creation is a source of meaning and purpose and eternal life. That's our source. That's why our view of history is so important. That's why secular education misses the point completely about life itself. Then we wonder why the second leading cause of death in young people is suicide.

The last idea to finish up - the genuine good and evil exist now. Now we are not talking pleasant and unpleasant. We are talking genuine good and genuine evil. That is things that violate the transcendent standard of God - not that they violate what I don't like. We're not talking about likes and dislikes. We are talking about something that violates the standard of good and evil, God's character. Good and evil (genuine good and evil), exist now but evil is bounded in the Christian position. One day they will be eternally separated forever - fundamentally different. I don't see how you can mix points one and two. I don't see how you can teach history and be neutral. Absolutely impossible!

If you are trying to do that and learn history in a neutral fashion, all you are going to do is collect marbles, little data points. In the end you have a big table; and you've got 45 marbles rolling all over. That's how I learned history. History frustrated me because when I was learning history in high school I was a non-Christian. Nobody pointed out to me that history has a story, that history is going anywhere. So what did I do? I memorized all the dates, burped them up on Monday, forget them and go for the test next week. That's all. That was history course for me. Memorize a bunch of dates. Where is history going? I haven't got a clue. What's it all about? Haven't got a clue. The teacher doesn't have a clue either. The textbook doesn't have a clue. See the difference?

This is why we Christians have got to master these basic ideas and discuss them with people. We live in a world that's blind out there and doesn't have an ounce of understanding of these issues.

(Closing prayer)

Any questions?

Question

She is asking an interesting question about what happened in the days of Elijah with the prophets of Baal. You notice in the narrative in order to get the Baal's attention, they cut themselves. They mutilated themselves. Earlier in the Deuteronomy series, I think it was Deuteronomy 14 when we were dealing with funerals, I pointed out that cutting was a thing that pagans did because remember the Jews - of all the things done at a funeral. you're not supposed to cut yourself. What the heck is that all about? What's that statute and judgment? Obviously Moses is talking about that because it was being done. He had to say, "Don't do this." It was a sign of mourning. Apparently yeah it was almost like the Roman Catholics in Latin America (the Old Roman Catholics in Latin America) would get on their knees and flagellate themselves. I guess they do sometimes still in Italy to get God's attention. In one sense what it is is a form of human works. It's you or me using a technique to get God's attention. Historically that was done. In Baal cases it was probably not just Baal incidentally doing that. It was throughout the Middle East. Otherwise why do we have Moses prohibiting it? So you're right it was a form a works and a form of manipulation.

Question

He asked a very good question. He's saying with Job remember at the end - Job never learns the details of why he suffers. What he learns is who God is and then he rests in that. It's a brutal, a really brutal suffering thing Job goes through "just" to figure out who God is and appreciate who He is. What David is asking is there an element of this in Deuteronomy 28? I think there is. I think one of the elements is the fact of irony.

You notice when you read Deuteronomy 28, the ironic choice of words where He says, "You serve Me and I gave you plenty. Now you are going to serve them and you're going to serve them in hunger, thirst, and in depravation. Are you learning?"

I think we all have to admit that the best lessons we learned as Christians is usually because we screwed up and we suffered. For some reason those lessons are more deeply embedded in us. We'll get into the good side of this in a few more chapters. There's a bright light at the end of the tunnel to history for the Jew. He doesn't understand that now. It's a very depressing thing. Jewish people tend to - that's why they get involved in business. I think part of it is just therapy to get their mind off the suffering that they've put through history. I've often said that the Jewish sense of humor is the lubricant they have used to survive over the years - not a pleasant scene. And today, I mean look at the Jews in Israel right now faced with nuclear war with Iran. So they can't even live in Israel without becoming the target of somebody. You've got to be a target all the time. You know you get tired of walking around with a target on your back. This is where they come from.

We have to be careful in our Jewish evangelism that we empathize with them and understand their history because they don't know the Old Testament, the modern Jew. So all they know is they don't have any home kind of thing.

So this fellow that I know so well, Arnold points to me and says, "You know, most Jews are won to Christ through Gentiles. The Messianic Jew doesn't usually win another Jew."

The Jews are won through Gentiles. That itself is prophetic too.

Question

He brings up a good point. You see the analogy with the spirituality in the New Testament where the analogy isn't socio-political; but it's between our new nature in Christ and our sin nature. When we get out of fellowship we're serving our flesh. It's not pleasant. That's the Egypt from which we should have been delivered. Right here you see, where are they going to go? They're going to take you right back to Egypt. That's the battle we face. So in one sense, this whole history is need (?) not just for the Jew but it gives you the principles of how God works in our lives.

Question

What he's pointing out here point is an interesting point that if we look at Old Testament history this drama unfolded over a long time period. I said 900 years. This country is only 200 years old. So we're talking here something at least over 4 times as long as our national existence so it's kind of hard for us to think about. But in the Old Testament it came on, and it came on in sequence. You see the droughts. You see the plagues - David's plague. You see elements of Deuteronomy 28 cursings.

Question

That's right.

Question

What does that show? That Jeremiah's generation didn't see it coming. Now let's think about that. It's a good observation because they didn't. They thought Jeremiah was a nut. So why do you think in that generation that was just a 100 years or 50 years removed from the collapse of the country - the final collapse. They've already seen the Northern Kingdom got to pot. That went to pot early.

By the way here's another way you can trace this blessing and cursing. Read all the passages that have to do with the kings of the south, the Judean kings. Write them on a chart. Check the dynasty. The dynasty is one. Check the duration of their reigns. Their reigns are pretty long and stable.

Now take all the kings in the north in Israel and plot them in a chart and connect the individual dynasties. The dynasties are changing. There's not one dynasty that dominates. Some of them only rule for a year or so. What is the difference?

People, we can look back and say, "Oh yeah! We can see it."

Well maybe if we lived in those days we might not have seen it either because you get so used to it. It happens so slowly. This is why Americans - we're finally waking up to the fact that something is wrong here. Why has it taken the complete foolishness that we're seeing now - why does it take that extreme before somebody says there's something wrong? It's because we are blind people. We're not alert.

Question

But see that's why the Bible keeps using this words blindness and sight. What is the difference between somebody who can see and somebody who has a sight problem? Literally, they're not seeing something. It's not that the blind and the sightful have two interpretations of the data. It's literally that the blind person doesn't even see the data. That's the problem. This gets back to our frustration as Christians is that every time (and I've gone through this circle myself) you get boiled down to the thing it comes right back to the basic gospel message. The only answer to this thing is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit regenerating and giving sight. It seems like so slick God.

"We need more. We need a revival right now."

It may not come, but God saves people one at a time. That's just the way He does it.

Good questions tonight about the prophets. I'm glad these questions have been raised because when you do read that you clearly see that the nation never saw it coming - never saw it coming.

In fact the man who taught me Old Testament at Dallas Seminary pointed out one day when we were discussing archeology; he said, "You know men, we sit here in our Hebrew class looking at the Old Testament text. We have this picture of what Israel looked like. If we could take a time machine and go back to that 900 year theocracy, we would be shocked at how pagan it really was because the Bible is written by the prophets."

The narrator of Judges for example is probably Samuel. Some people think that Samuel the prophet wrote that. He took all the history of that 300-year period and he did an analysis. That's why he ends his analysis with "every man did what was right in his own eyes and this is why we're getting a monarchy now because of the screwed up anarchy we had."

We read Sampson's story; we read all those guys - Judges and stuff.

"Oh wow! They were losers. Gee, what's wrong with them?"

But that was the whole nation. What we're getting is we are seeing it through the eyes of the prophets so we see more "good stuff" than probably we would have seen if we lived there. That little thing I brought in - remember when I started the Deuteronomy series. Remember I brought that little thing of a calf, the little god of a calf. That was found in a Jewish home. In an archeological dig of a Jewish home so obviously there was a home that didn't think anything about idols. They had it right in their house.

Question

That's a good point he's making. We have to understand that we are reading real history in the Bible, in the Old Testament. You have to think about the fact that we're reading a condensation but if we were stringing out day after day after day it moved a lot slower. What we saw tonight with these cursings was the ultimate end. In other words it's not that that was threatened that it would be instant in Moses day.

What God is saying is, "I am going to give you a chance to serve Me, but if you keep rejecting Me then I'm going to start turning the screws on you. And I'm going to keep doing it until I destroy you."

Well our time is up folks. Next week we'll get into a little bit less depressing Scripture.