

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Deuteronomy: Moses' Great Appeal For Israel To Obey God For Blessing

Part VI: Treaty Blessings And Cursings, Deuteronomy 27-28

C. Learning From History's Unsettling Tragedies To Heed God For Blessing

(Deuteronomy 28:1-68)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

I have heard many people, including at times professing Christians, confess they struggle with feelings of depression over the seemingly endless flood of bad news they hear in the media, and there surely is a lot of it today:

(1) The Wall Street Journal, March 31, 2014, ran the story by Jake Maxwell Watts and Jeffrey Ng, "Malaysia Resets Investigation," p. A14, on the Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 that allegedly crashed into the South Indian Ocean. It noted that "investigators are redoubling efforts to determine who could have been involved in the 'deliberate act' officials believe took the plane off course." The uncertainty as to what occurred unnerves many would-be passengers!

(2) The mudslide that hit the quiet town of Oso, Washington following 8.7 inches of rainfall, killing at least 29 people (Ibid., April 3, 2014, "Washington State" Mudslide was caused by rains, scientist says," p. A6), stuns many, creating uncertainty as to where they should even build or buy a home.

(3) In the April 2, 2014 journal, the lead story by Jeff Bennet and Siobhan Hughes ("GM's Troubled Legacy Weighs On CEO in Capitol Hill Grilling," p. A1) told how "(l)awmakers here prodded Ms. Barra on why it took GM nearly a decade to recall defective vehicles . . . [due to] a flawed ignition switch . . . as family members of some of the 13 people killed in accidents blamed on the switches looked on." Buying a new GM car was once what confident buyers did, but now, due to questions about the company's integrity, some consumers are wary of new GM vehicles.

(4) Charlotte Allen's op-ed, "A 'Noah' for Our Secular Times" (Ibid., April 4, 2014, p. A11) reported on "director Darren Aronofsky's 'Noah'" movie, observing that its "Noah . . . isn't . . . the 'righteous man' from the Book of Genesis, who at God's command builds an ark that saves his family, along with the world's birds and beasts, from the flood that is God's punishment of a human race that has grown corrupt . . . This Noah ruthlessly abandons a young woman -- the girlfriend of his teenage son -- to be trampled to death by a mob. He then takes it upon himself to murder his newborn granddaughters in their mother's arms . . . The liberties that Mr. Aronofsky has taken . . . run counter to nearly every religious interpretation of Noah ever made," yet this movie is being promoted in the world.

(5) Holman W. Jenkins, Jr.'s column (Ibid., April 2, 2014, p. A15) ran his editorial, "What Putin Is Afraid Of" noting "photographic evidence has appeared on the Web to suggest Moscow-supplied snipers positioned on rooftops in Kiev were responsible for most of the bloodshed during the Ukrainian uprising" in accord with past reports by "respected journalists from Russia's *Muskovskaya Pravda* . . . that such a terror wave was coming." Anders Aslund, "the noted Swedish economist and Russia expert, once chided the West for ignoring 'the greatest corruption story in history'" in Putin's administration, Ibid. Yet, the West wants "him to keep a lid on Russia," so it works with him, Ibid.

Need: *Thus, we ask, "How does God want me constructively to respond to the endless flood of bad news I hear?!"*

I. The Deuteronomy 27-28 blessings and curses segment of Deuteronomy, typical of ancient Near Eastern suzerain treaty formats, includes a covenant section itemizing blessings and curses for respective obedience and disobedience on the part of the vassal in the treaty (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 311), but **BEYOND this TYPICAL itemizing, the Deuteronomy 28:15-68 segment in this section **EXTENSIVELY PREDICTED** Israel's **FUTURE SINS** and their **CATASTROPHIC RESULTS** in divine **JUDGMENT**:**

- A. Deuteronomy 28:32-34 predicted God would judge Israel's sin in giving her children to other people, that her eyes would look longingly after them and be driven mad by what she saw. This prophecy was fulfilled in the life of Judah's king Zedekiah in 586 B. C., 820 years after Moses' death in 1406 B. C., Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, fn. to Jer. 52:4-5; p. 2023: when captured by the Babylonians, Zedekiah saw them slay his sons before him before they put out his eyes that he might never forget the sight of his sons' slaughter, and he was taken in chains to Babylon, Jer. 39:6-7; J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible With J. Vernon McGee, 1981, vol. I, p. 598.
- B. Deuteronomy 28:35-37 predicted Israel and her king would be judged for sin in being taken captive to another land where they would serve other pagan gods of wood and stone. This was fulfilled in the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities that came more than 700 hundred years after Moses, Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Deut. 28:36.
- C. Deuteronomy 28:48-49 predicted Israel would be judged for sin in seeing God bring a nation from afar, as swift as an eagle, whose language she would not understand [unlike Babylon's Aramaic], a nation that would put a yoke of iron on Israel's neck. This prophecy was fulfilled in A. D. 70, 1476 years after Moses and 37

years after the life of Christ, with the arrival of Rome, its soldiers from nations like France, Spain and Britain, whose standard was "an eagle," the nation typified in Daniel 2:40 as a nation as tough as iron; Ibid., McGee, p. 599; Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, Commentary on the Whole Bible, 1977, p. 161.

- D. Deuteronomy 28:50-53 predicted Israel would be judged for sin in seeing this [Roman] army's invasion create such hardship for her that Israel would eat her own children to survive, a prediction fulfilled according to Jewish secular historian Josephus when "mothers were forced to give up their babies" for food, Ibid., McGee.
 - E. Deuteronomy 28:63-64 predicted Israel's people for sin would be "plucked from off the land" and "scattered among all people," a prediction fulfilled when Rome's Emperor Hadrian due to the A. D. 130-135 Jewish war "issued a proclamation, forbidding any Jews to reside in Judea, or even to approach its confines," and "(t)here is, perhaps, not a country in the world where Jews are not to be found" today, Ibid., Jamieson, Fausset & Brown; The Cambridge Ancient History: Vol. XI: The Imperial Peace, A. D. 70-192, 1969, p. 305.
 - F. Deuteronomy 28:68 predicted that Israel would be judged for sin by being brought by ships under God's direction back to Egypt for bondage from whence He had initially freed her in the Exodus. This prophecy was fulfilled when, "according to Josephus, multitudes of Jews were transported in ships to the land of the Nile, and sold as slaves," Ibid., Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, p. 162; Ibid., The Cambridge Ancient History.
- II. Of note, such CALAMITOUS JUDGMENTS ISRAEL has SINCE faced are like the CALAMITOUS TRAGEDIES we see in TODAY'S world, for SIN is INTENSIFYING worldwide, and GOD is INCREASINGLY JUDGING it, cf. 2 Timothy 3:1-5a, 13 with Romans 1:18-32, et al.**
- III. Applying all this to us as believers, Romans 15:4 ESV claims all Old Testament Scriptures such as Deuteronomy 28 were written for OUR "instruction," that by "endurance" and "encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." Thus, from His EXTENSIVE JUDGMENT of ISRAEL for SIN in her HISTORY, an IMPARTIAL, HOLY GOD calls US to view WORLD WOES today as signals of HIS JUDGMENT, that we might HEED HIM for BLESSING lest WE ALSO face His DISCIPLINE!**

Lesson: Just as God extensively warned Israel about His overwhelming judgment for sin in Moses' era, which extensive predictions have all come true with astounding force, so God impresses US TODAY by great and many unsettling events He allows to occur in today's world that WE should HEED HIM LEST WE ALSO face His DISCIPLINE that is increasingly being expressed upon a godless world that is spiraling downward into apostasy!

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ to be saved from sin and hell, John 3:16. (2) Then, may we realize that OUR CHRISTIAN God is a "Consuming Fire," willing and able to judge (Hebrews 12:28-29), so that in reliance upon the indwelling Holy Spirit for living (Galatians 5:16), WE TURN from SIN to LIVE UPRIGHT LIVES!

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The theme of God's "consuming fire" judgment was echoed in our Wednesday Prayer Meeting service following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on America! Accordingly, the message that evening was out of Luke 13 where Jesus responded to news of an atrocity Pontius Pilate had committed in slaying Galilean Jews when they were sacrificing so that their blood had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices! Jesus said these Galileans were no more evil than any other Jews, but that if the rest of the nation did not repent, they would likewise perish!

Jesus there also said that the tragic loss of life when the tower of Siloam fell on 18 folk did not occur because those 18 were more sinful than any other people, but that this tragedy served as a wake-up for Israel to repent!

We know from Deuteronomy 28:48-68 that Jesus was warning in Luke 13 of the impending fall of Israel to Rome in A. D. 70 with all of the atrocities involved in that invasion as described in our sermon notes above!

Similarly, the unsettling array of news items we are facing today as illustrated in our introduction are God's permissive wake up calls to a world that is complacently ignoring the Gospel of Christ and practicing ever greater and greater vices. When we as believers in Christ see these unsettling events, **GOD** wants **US** to heed and cleave all the **more** to **Him** and to **depart** from **sin** in our **own** walk! Yes, **our Christian GOD** is a "**Consuming Fire**" Whom **WE** must **unreservedly revere** and **obey!**

If troubled at news of world events, or if we are concerned over even unsettling events we face in our own personal lives, (1) may we trust in Christ to be saved and escape hell, John 3:16. (2) Then, as believers, may we DEEPLY REVERE the LORD, realizing we are ACCOUNTABLE to Him Who is a CONSUMING FIRE, and (3) DEPART from SIN to LIVE UPRIGHTLY in the power of the Holy Spirit!