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Blessings for Obedience

28: 1-14

Blessings for obedience DIG: What is the foundation for the blessings: God's grace or our obedience? What is the point behind the often repeated "if" clause? What six ways would Isra'el be blessed? What will ADONAI do to bring these about? How will YHVH be glorified? What status does God promise Isra'el? What does it mean to be holy? How is holiness attached to the promise?

REFLECT: Which of these tangible blessings have you seen in your life? Does this sound like the "health-and-wealth" gospel of some current preachers? What are the similarities? What are the differences? How would you put verses 3-6 in modern terms? How would you apply it to third-world believers? How is God glorified when He blesses you? What is your responsibility with the blessings and their conditions? How is obedience itself a blessing? Where do you find it difficult to obey?

The framework for which **the blessing and curse** can be seen in **the Torah** is as follows:

A. The blessing and curse in *the present* renewal of the covenant (**11:26-28**).

B. The blessing and curse in *the future* renewal of the covenant (**11:29-32**).

C. The Specific Stipulations of the Covenant (12:1 to 26:19).

B. The blessing and curse in *the future* renewal of the covenant (**27:1-26**).

A. The blessing and curse in *the present* renewal of the covenant (**28:1-69**).

If the people of Isra'el obeyed ADONAI then every aspect of their lives would be blessed; and in turn, all humanity would know the God of Isra'el in their midst.



Blessings conditional on obedience (28:1-2): Here, **Moshe** communicates the **blessings** **YHVH** promises that the **Bnei-Yisrael** will experience *if they* faithfully **obey His mitzvot** and do not worship **other gods**. Because of the covenantal relationship between **Isra'el** and **the LORD** (**to see link click Ah - Treaty of the Great King**), **He** expects certain kinds of conduct from **His chosen people**, and promises to **bless them** abundantly before the entire world for **their obedience**. **Now if you listen obediently to the voice of ADONAI your God, taking care to do all His mitzvot that I am commanding you today, ADONAI your God will set you on high - above all the nations of the earth. Then all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of ADONAI your God (28:1-2):**

Specific conditional blessings of ADONAI (28:3-6): In six brief and rhythmic statements, **Moses** declares that the one who faithfully **observes the LORD's mitzvot** will be **blessed** in every area of life. The **blessings** of **verses 3-6** and the **curses** of **verses 16-19** are concerned with the same issues but reflect opposite results, depending upon **Isra'el's obedience** or disobedience.

We don't read that **the people** were to say "**Amen**" to these **blessings** as they said "**Amen**" to **the curses**. **The curses** were not prophetic while this list of **blessings** is **God's** prophetic promise of what **He** would do for **His people** *if they* kept **their** commitment to **Him**. **YHVH's blessings** would lift **Isra'el** far above all **the other nations (26:19)** and make **Isra'el a light to the Gentiles (Isaiah 49:6)**. This would give **the Jews** opportunities to tell the pagan **nations** about the true and living **God (28:10)**.

We must keep in mind why **the LORD** promised these marvelous **blessings**. For one thing, the nation of **Isra'el** was still in **her** spiritual infancy (**Galatians 4:1-7**), and one way to teach children is by means of rewards and punishments.

Obedience brings **blessing**, but disobedience brings discipline. Gradually **God** taught **His people** that **their obedience** was a witness to **the pagan nations** around **them**, and brought glory to **His name**. **Obedience** also built godly character in **the people** so that **they** were indeed **a holy people** and a kingdom of priests.⁵⁸⁶

These “beatitudes,” with their recall of domestic life, and cover the fundamental conditions of life. **Verses 3** and **6** correspond to each other, polar opposites, conveying fullness in every aspect of life, in typical Hebrew style (**Psalm 121:8**). The intervening **blessings** relate to the fruitfulness of **the people, land, and animals**.⁵⁸⁷

Blessed will you be in the city, and blessed will you be in the field (28:3). As a predominantly agricultural society, **the Israelites** depended on fertility for **their** survival.

Blessed will be the fruit of your womb, the produce of your soil, and the offspring of your livestock - the increase of your herds and the young of your flock (28:4). **YHVH** promised to provide **them** with large families, abundant crops, and growing **flocks** and **herds**.

Blessed will be your basket and your kneading bowl (28:5). The vessels used to collect and work with the produce from **the fields** would all be filled.

Blessed will you be when you come in, and blessed will you be when you go out (28:6). The expression **come in . . . go out** is often used in the TaNaKh to symbolize mankind’s ability to **come** and **go** in the affairs of life (**Deuteronomy 31:2; Joshua 14:11; First Kings 3:7; Psalm 121:8; Isaiah 37:28**). The **blessings** of **YHVH** would touch every aspect of **their** lives.⁵⁸⁸

The divine, unconditional promises of ADONAI (28:7-14): In a more elaborate fashion, as part of **his** teaching of these covenantal **blessings**, **Moshe** describes the way in which **YHVH** will **bless the apple of His eye (32:10)** by giving **them** military victories, material abundance, an impressive reputation, and international prominence if **they** will only **obey His mitzvot**.

A. ADONAI will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be struck down before you. They will come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways (28:7). The **enemies** of **Isra’el**, whose attack would threaten

their shalom, would be defeated. **God** would make sure of that. This was a promise **Isra'el** could trust, for they had already experienced the victory **Ha'Shem** had provided against the military power of Egypt, and the kings of the Transjordan (see [At - Isra'el's Conquest of the Transjordan](#)).⁵⁸⁹

B. ADONAI will command the blessing on you in your barns and in every undertaking of your hand, and He will bless you in the Land ADONAI your God is giving you (28:8). YHVH would **bless** all that **Isra'el** had and all that **they** did. **Their** storage facilities would be full, and **their** efforts would prove to be productive. The expression **in the Land ADONAI your God is giving you** serves as a reminder to **the Israelites** that it was **YHVH** who was giving them all these **blessings**. All these potential **blessings** came from being faithful to **their** covenantal relationship with **the LORD**.⁵⁹⁰

C. ADONAI will establish you as a holy people for Himself, just as He swore to you - if you keep the mitzvot of ADONAI your God and walk in His ways. Echoes of the Abrahamic covenant (see [The commentary on Genesis Eg - I am the LORD, Who Brought You Out of Ur of the Chaldeans to Give You This Land](#)) are also heard in the universal thrust of this verse. Obedience would not only ensure the enjoyment of **God's** promised **blessing**, but also spread the knowledge of **God's** name. **Then all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of ADONAI and they will stand in awe of you (28:9-10).** Ultimately, all humanity would know **the name of God** through the obedience of **the people** of **Isra'el**.⁵⁹¹

B. ADONAI will make you overflow in prosperity - in the fruit of your womb, the offspring of your livestock and the produce of your soil - on the Land ADONAI swore to your fathers to give you. ADONAI will open for you His good storehouse - the heavens - to give rain for your Land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow (28:11-12). YHVH promised to **bless His people** with abundant prosperity in the fundamental areas of **their** lives: family, livestock, and once again, crops, in **the Land** that **He** had promised **them**. Not only that, **God** would **bless their** labors. The far-reaching result of this divine **blessing** would be economic supremacy. **God's chosen nation** would lend to other nations rather than borrow from them. Obedience to the covenant did not mean that **Isra'el** *deserved* **her blessings**, **ADONAI**

would bestow **His blessings** on **Isra'el** out of grace and mercy.⁵⁹²

A. ADONAI will make you the head and not the tail of the Gentile nations, **and you will be above and not below** them. Through **her** obedience, **Isra'el** would be a prince among the goyim, rich in produce and harvest, strong against **her enemies**, glorious in the presence of **ADONAI** in **her** midst – always providing that **His mitzvot** were obeyed. **If you listen to the mitzvot of ADONAI your God that I am commanding you today, careful to do them, and do not turn aside from any of the words** (Hebrew: *ha-d'varim*, meaning *matters, things, commandments, events or reasons*) **I am commanding you today, to the right or the left, to go after other gods in order to serve them (28:13-14)**. The promise of **blessing** is concluded by a further warning to obey **YHVH**, never deviating from the path marked out for **the people of God**, and steadfastly refusing to be drawn into the web of the worship of foreign **gods**.⁵⁹³

*May the leaders and people of all nations turn their eyes back to **You** and bend their knees in worship and honor for **You (Psalms 2:2-4, 10-12)**. Only then can any nation expect to be blessed by **You**. In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*