COVENANT UNDERSTANDING

Once again, the covenant structure gives the purpose for Deuteronomy 28 and the covenant curses. Taken out of context, the curses seem antithetical to God’s grace and character of mercy. But, throughout this week, we will consider multiple reasons that the curses are actually at the center of His grace and love!

First of all, people living in the ancient near East (those lands surrounding and including Israel), would expect curses in a covenant or treaty. For instance, in Assyrian and Hittite treaties, the curses are often much worse than here in Deuteronomy. While these sound harsh to us today, it was simply a way of encouraging loyalty in relationship at that time.

In addition, unlike most other ancient treaties, the one that God created starts with the blessings before the curses in Deuteronomy 28. God does not want to bring the curses on the people, rather He wants to bless them. This is the whole message and theme of Deuteronomy. However, the people had a choice between the two ways. God desired them to be happy and joyful and blessed, but the people often chose the way of the curses because of their stubbornness and rebellion.

Yet, even the curses are redemptive. God did not bring all of them at once but over time, seeking to bring the people back to Him through a reminder of the covenant and their commitment to Him. The prophets also used this strategy to inspire the people to return to God, warning them about the worsening curses to come if they did not repent of their evil ways.
Write out Deuteronomy 28:1–24, 47–51 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out Deuteronomy 28:1, 2, 15. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw **Arrows** to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse in Deuteronomy 28:1–24, 47–51. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

When did you make the choice to fully surrender to God? Or have you?

Where is your heart right now with God?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/deut10-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

Can you think of times when you have known why you suffered? How about times when you didn’t know why?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/deut10-4
What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Galatians 3:5–14
Isaiah 53:3–11
Deuteronomy 29:14–19
Deuteronomy 9:6–26
Deuteronomy 17:14–20
Job 1:6–22
Deuteronomy 31:10–13

What other verses come to mind in connection with Deuteronomy 28?
Meditate on Deuteronomy 28:1–24, 47–51 again and look for where Jesus is.

How can you praise Jesus today for taking the curses for you?

What is He saying to you through these texts?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the chapter, how is God speaking to you about you?

How is He speaking to you about others?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/deut10-7
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Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

How have you seen God bring blessings to your life despite your sin and rebellion against Him?

Where have you seen consequences of your sins in your own life?

What are some of the reasons that you have experienced suffering in the past?

How has God used difficult times in your life to draw you back to Him?

Have you had a time when you have had to choose between God’s way and running away from God?

In what areas/ways have you struggled to give God your whole heart?

In what way can you make the sacrifice of Jesus in taking your curses on Himself, more real to your heart this week?

In what ways can you share the good news about Christ in the covenant curses with someone this week?

Christ in the Covenant Curses