

Leviticus 26 Blessing/Cursing

Jesus

Leviticus 24:55 ... the people of Israel...are My servants whom **I brought out from the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.**

I. Blessing c.f. Deut. 7:28

1 'You **shall not make idols for yourselves**; neither a **carved image** nor a **sacred pillar** shall you rear up **for yourselves**; nor shall you set up an **engraved stone** in your land, to bow down to it for **I am the LORD your God.**

Warning Against Idolatry Then and Now

1 John 5:21 Little children, **keep yourselves from idols.**

This is up to you...IOWs Don't follow your deceiving hearts
Don't make yourselves idols/Keep yourselves from them

Idol: Anything/Anyone that comes before Jesus in our lives
He alone is the LORD who delivered us from bondage

▪ Pagan worship in Canaan

1. **Idol:** Worthless. Insufficient/Inadequate
2. **Carved Image:** Shape of object/animal/person. Stone/clay/wood/metal
3. **Pillar:** Perverse fertility rituals
4. **Engraved Stones:** Uncertain. Rt/ to look. So called sacred texts?

2 You shall keep My **Sabbaths** and reverence My **sanctuary: I am the LORD.**

▪ Practical Displays of Obedience

1. **Keep My Sabbaths:** I am Provider
2. **Revere My Sanctuary:** Tabernacle/Temple. I am LORD alone

3 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, **4 then I will give** you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. **5** Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. **6** I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil [wild] beasts, and the sword will not go through your land. **7** You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. **8** Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.

If you walk in My laws....**Then I** will give

Things God desires to give us/Things we take for granted
Rain/Produce/Peace/Safety/Victory/Protection

Legal Agreement:

If you are obedient **Then I** will give you these things

God gives/God can take away
We don't know what we got till it's gone...

Psalm 4:8 [David] I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For **You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.**

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light and create darkness, **I make peace and create calamity; I, the Lord, do all these things.**

Yet God Desires to Bless Us...

9 'For **I will look on you favorably** and make you **fruitful**, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you. 10 You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new. 11 **I will set My tabernacle among you**, and **My soul shall not abhor you**. 12 I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

Old Covenant: Blessings for Obedience

Our obedience to God proclaims to the world that we believe He is good [NJC]

- **God's Heart for His People**

1. Bless w/Favor/Bless w/Family
2. Bless w/Food/Bless you **with His presence..**

God Delivers us *from Bondage and to Himself*

To be the people He created us to be. The people we are. To walk upright

13 I am the LORD your God, who **brought you out of the land of Egypt**, that you should **not be their slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke** and made **you walk upright.**

God Breaks the Bands of Sin's hold that we might Walk Upright
Rest and Restoration...

Matthew 11:28 Come to Me, all you who **labor and are heavy laden**, and **I will give you rest.** 29 **Take My yoke** upon you and **learn from Me**, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and **you will find rest for your souls...**

Psalm 23:1 The **Lord is my shepherd**; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. 3 **He restores my soul...**

God set Israel Free from Bondage *before* the Law was given
Jesus died for us before when we were at our worst...

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

After being set free Israel entered into a Legal Agreement
Keep My Law/Be Blessed...Disregard My law/Be Cursed...

II. Cursing c.f. Deut. 28

14 'But **if you do not obey Me**, and **do not observe** all these commandments, 15 and if you **despise** My statutes, or if your **soul abhors My judgments**, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, 16 I also will do this to you: I will even **appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever** which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain [without profit] , for your enemies shall eat it. 17 I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.

First Tier Judgments for Disobedience

- **Terror over you:** heb. beh-haw-law' Dismay, sudden ruin, alarm
- **Wasting Disease:** Of the lungs
- **Fever:** Burning Ague. High inflammatory fever. Intense, fiery fever accompanied by severe shivering chills and sweating. Historically, it was used to describe mosquito-borne malaria or other severe intermittent fevers that recurred in cycles.
 1. Consume your Eyes
 2. Sorrow of Heart
- **Work a Vain Effort:** Sowing/Reaping in vain/Enemies steal. E.g. Israel in time of Gideon...

Judges 6:3 So it was, whenever Israel had sown, Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. 4 Then they would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and **leave no sustenance for Israel.**

- **Defeated in Battles:** Not a good look
- **Disregarded by God:** Treated as His enemy
- **Manipulated** by those who hate you

Disobedience brings Fear and Paranoia...

Proverbs 28:1 The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion.

18 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will **punish you seven times** more for your sins. 19 I will **break the pride of your power**; I will make your **heavens like iron and your earth like bronze**. 20 And your

strength shall be **spent in vain**; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the **land yield their fruit**.

Second Tier Judgments for Disobedience 7X worse...

- **Break the Pride** you find in your own power. Pride the cause of disobedience.
- **Heavens Iron/Earth Bronze:** No rain. No growth
- **Strength Spent w/no Result**
- **No Fruit:** No growth

If God does not bless...Then all our endeavors are in vain

Psalms 127:1 Unless the Lord builds the house, They **labor in vain who build it**; Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.

Isaiah 17:10 Because **you have forgotten the God of your salvation**, And have not been mindful of the **Rock of your stronghold**, **Therefore** you will plant pleasant plants And set out foreign seedlings; 11 In the day you will make your plant to grow, And in the morning you will make your seed to flourish; But the harvest will be a **heap of ruins...**

Seek first the Kingdom vs Godless Self-Effort?
Laboring in vain leading to regret and unnecessary pain

21 **'Then, if you walk contrary to Me**, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you **seven times more plagues**, according to your sins. 22 I will also send **wild beasts** among you, which shall **rob you of your children**, destroy your livestock, and make you **few in number**; and your highways shall be desolate.

Third Tier Judgments for Disobedience

- **7X More Plagues** corresponding to your sins. Judgment not Mercy
- Wild Beasts Stealing/Mauling/Eating your children
- **Desolation** of Livestock/Depletion of Population

Tells: Man-made Heaps over desolated cities in Israel. 4000+. E.g. Tel Aviv

23 **'And if by these things you are not reformed** by Me, but walk contrary to Me, 24 then **I also will walk contrary to you**, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins. 25 And **I will bring a sword** against you that will **execute the vengeance** of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will **send pestilence** among you; and you shall be **delivered into the hand of the enemy**. 26 When I have **cut off your supply of bread**, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

Fourth Tier Judgments for Disobedience

- God walking **contrary** to you. heb. *ker-ee'* Opposing sinners by hostile encounter

- **Punished 7X** worse by Sword/Pestilence/Financial Reversals/Famine

Ezekiel 5:16 I [will] send against them the **terrible arrows of famine...**

- **Not yet Reformed:** Humility/Repentance/Accountability

27 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, 28 then I also will walk **contrary to you in fury**; and I, even I, will **chastise you seven times for your sins**. 29 You shall **eat the flesh of your sons**, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters.

Fifth Tier Judgments for Disobedience

- Siege/Famine/**Cannibalism...** 9 passages in OT

Deuteronomy 28:53 [Warning] 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.

Jeremiah 19:9 [Warning] And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, 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."

2 Kings 6:28 [Fulfillment] Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' 29 So we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son."

Lamentations 2:20 [Aftermath] "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?

Lamentations 4:10 [Thoughtful Sober Reflection] The hands of the compassionate women Have cooked their own children; They became food for them In the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Cannibalism: Gory Consequence of Pride/Refusal to obey the LORD
Result of God giving them over to the desire of their hearts

Galatians 5:14 ...all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you **bite and devour one another**, beware lest you be consumed by one another! I say then: **Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**

We will end up Biting/Devouring one another when we **make ourselves an idol**

Philippians 2:3 Let **nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit**, but in **lowliness of mind** let each esteem others **better than himself**. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the **interests of others**. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but **made Himself** of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself** and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the Name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Idolatry led to Cannibalism: Pride led to Idolatry
I know more than God. I need more than God. Ill seek more than God

30 I will **destroy your high places**, cut down your **incense altars**, and **cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols**; and **My soul shall abhor you**. 31 I will lay your **cities waste** and bring your **sanctuaries to desolation**, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. 32 I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. 33 I will **scatter you among the nations** and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. 34 Then **the land shall enjoy its sabbaths** as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths. 35 As long as it lies desolate it shall rest—for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it.

Tier 5 Judgments continued *during Israel's exile...*

- **Removing** all that is false
- **Abhorring** the souls of His creation
- **Destroying** Cities/Sanctuary: Both Solomon in S/Jeroboam in N
- **Rejecting** the peoples sacrifices. Too late. Given over

Vv 30-35 Reveals a Rejection of vv 1-2

They will make High Places/They will bow to Idols/ They will forsake the Sabbath

Curse of Scattering

Scatter: heb. *zrh* Agricultural term. Winnowing process

Zechariah 7:14 "But **I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations** which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they **made the pleasant land desolate.**" [C.f. Deut, 4:27 Ps 44:11, Ez 12:15 Ez 20:23]

36 'And as for **those of you who are left**, I will send **faintness [fear]** into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee; they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues. 37 They shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when no one pursues; and you shall have no power to stand before your enemies. 38 You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. 39 And those of you who are left shall **waste away** [rot away] in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall **waste away**.

For those left alive in exile after 5 Tiers of God's Judgment

- **Faintness:** lit. Fear in hearts of the exiles

- **Paranoia/Confusion/Weakness**
- Killed by the enemy or...**Rotting away in sin**

God is not Mocked

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you **reap whatever you sow**. 8 If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

We were Redeemed from the Curse; i.e. The *If/Then* Law we could never keep
Yet the debt of our sin still had to be paid

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'— 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Therefore under the New Covenant we are blessed not because of our obedience, but because we are in Christ Jesus; and there is no more curse for us from God because all the curse was borne by Jesus. [Guzik]

- What you do vs What Jesus has done
- We have a better if then promise available every day

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, [then] He who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Before Israel went to the Point of No Return; i.e. Given Over by God
They were offered a way back...

III. Confession/Restoration The Way Back is Humility

40 'But **if they confess their iniquity** and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me, 41 and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised **hearts are humbled**, and they **accept their guilt**— 42 **then I will remember** My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.

- **But if they...**
 1. Confess/Humble themselves
 2. Accept guilt/Take responsibility

Luke 15:18 [Prodigal son] I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, **I have sinned** against heaven and before you,

1 Peter 5:5b ...be clothed with **humility**, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 6 Therefore **humble yourselves** under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

Psalm 51:3 For I **acknowledge my transgressions**, And my sin is always before me. 4 Against You, **You only, have I sinned**, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

*Then I will remember My Promise based on their Active Renewed Obedience
But I know they will not...So I will have to scatter them...*

43 The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will **accept their guilt**, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes.

After Judgment they will Accept their Guilt/Punishment was Deserved

44 **Yet for all that**, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God. 45 But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom **I brought out of the land of Egypt** in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: **I am the LORD.** 46 These are the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between **Himself and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.**

Only after Judgment **did Israel** Accept their Guilt: OT
Only after Judgment **will Israel** Accept their Guilt: Tribulation

Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, But **now I keep Your word.**

5 Tier Incrementally Severe Judgments
Began w/following their Hearts by Embracing Idols

James 1:14 ... tempted by one's own desire, being lured and enticed by it...

Idol: Anything/Anyone that comes before Jesus in our lives
People/Desire to be liked/Work/Success/Money/Sex/Self/Children/Relationships

1 John 5:21 Little children, **keep yourselves from idols.** [This is on us]

The moment we follow our hearts rather than God's Word we begin a spiraling decent into a **cycle of sin.** [NJC]

1. **Freedom:** Serve the LORD w/Joy
2. **Idolatry:** Follow our hearts/feelings
3. **Slavery:** Bondage to sin/We've been duped
4. **Desperation:** Crying uncle to the Lord. Repentance
5. **Intervention:** God hears/acts on our behalf
6. **Deliverance:** God forgives/restores/refreshes
7. **Freedom:** Serve the LORD with Joy...begin again?

