

# The Most Terrifying Chapter in the Bible

By Jack Cascione [redeemerpress.org@earthlink.net](mailto:redeemerpress.org@earthlink.net)

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We tend to think of the Bible in terms of superlatives. Which accounts or chapters are the most memorable, intriguing, gracious, encouraging, or uplifting? The chapters on crossing the Red Sea, Abraham and Isaac, David and Goliath, the birth of Christ, or the resurrection of Christ and more may come to mind. On the other hand, which account or chapter might be just the opposite--the most terrifying, depressing, and horrific?

As far as we are concerned, the most terrifying chapter is Deuteronomy 28.

For the past 13 years this writer has been researching Hebraic Meter; words, phrases, events, people, etc., arranged in multiples of 7s, or 10s, or 12s in the Torah beginning at Genesis Chapter 1. The search also led simultaneously to our investigation of numerous locations outside the Torah. Prior to this, beginning in 1978, the search had been broader and led to the examination of many New and Old Testaments books, and then to the publication of *"In Search of the Biblical Order"* which was then followed by *"Repetition in the Bible."*

This week we arrived at Deuteronomy Chapter 28. On previous occasions we've read through it, but never with the same intensity. Throughout this study, no section of the Bible was more troubling or disturbing.

Deuteronomy 28 is twice the length of most chapters and employs a descriptive, broader, and detailed vocabulary. The entire chapter is arranged in complex Hebraic Meter which increases and compounds the horror. Clergy may refer to a verse here or there from Deuteronomy 28, but most go through their entire career without ever addressing the full contents of the chapter. A relatively literal translation of Deuteronomy 28 can be read in the New American Standard Bible (1975) or the Evangelical Standard Version.

Unlike previous articles about Hebraic Meter, this one offers only a summary of the disturbing contents in this text. God is unspeakably gracious, but He is at the same time unquestionably justified in His retribution. God is good and the fallen people in this world are evil, while the world claims it is good and God is evil.

Chapter 28 opens with seven promises of blessings from God if Israel obeys His commandments.

## Blessings 7 times Deuteronomy 28

..... And all these **blessings** shall come upon you (Deu 28:2)  
..... **Blessed** shall you *be* in the city.. (Deu 28:3 )  
..... **and blessed** shall you *be* in the country.. (Deu 28:3 )  
..... **Blessed** shall *be* the offspring of your body..(Deu 28:4 )  
..... **Blessed** shall *be* your basket.....(Deu 28:5 )  
..... **Blessed** shall you *be* when you come in.....(Deu 28:6 )  
..... **and blessed** shall you *be* when you go out.....(Deu 28:6 )

וְבָאוּ עִלְיֶיךָ כָּל־הַבְּרָכוֹת הָאֵלֶּה (Deu 28:2)  
בְּרִיחַ אֶתְּהָ בָּעִיר (Deu 28:3)

וּבְרִיחַ אֶתְּהָ בִשְׂדֵהָ	(Deu 28:3 )
בְּרִיחַ פְּרִי-בִטְנֶנָּה וּבְרִי	(Deu 28:4)
בְּרִיחַ טְנָאָה	(Deu 28:5)
בְּרִיחַ אֶתְּהָ בְּבִאָהּ	(Deu 28:6 )
וּבְרִיחַ אֶתְּהָ בְּצֵאתָהּ	(Deu 28:6 )

If Israel does not keep God's commandments, He threatens to send seven corresponding curses.

**Curses 7 times in Deuteronomy 28**

that all these <b>curses</b> shall come upon you	(Deu 28:15 NAS)
<b>Cursed</b> shall you <i>be</i> in the city,	(Deu 28:16 NAS)
and <b>cursed</b> shall you <i>be</i> in the country.	(Deu 28:16 NAS)
<b>Cursed</b> shall <i>be</i> your basket and your kneading bowl.	(Deu 28:17 NAS)
<b>Cursed</b> shall be the offspring of thy body	(Deu 28:18 LXE)
<b>Cursed</b> shall you <i>be</i> when you come in,	(Deu 28:19 NAS)
and <b>cursed</b> shall you <i>be</i> when you go out.	(Deu 28:19 NAS)

וּבָאוּ עָלֶיךָ כָּל-הַקְּלָלוֹת הָאֵלֶּה	(Deu 28:15)
אָרִיר אֶתְּהָ בְּעִיר	(Deu 28:16)
וְאָרִיר אֶתְּהָ בִשְׂדֵהָ	(Deu 28:16)
אָרִיר טְנָאָה וּמִשְׁאֲרֹתָיִךְ	(Deu 28:17)
אָרִיר פְּרִי-בִטְנֶנָּה וּבְרִי	(Deu 28:18)
אָרִיר אֶתְּהָ בְּבִאָהּ	(Deu 28:19)
וְאָרִיר אֶתְּהָ בְּצֵאתָהּ	(Deu 28:19)

After Deuteronomy 28:19, the next 50 verses elaborate in gruesome eloquence the seven curses mentioned above laid out in a matrix of complex Hebraic Meter. The lists of Hebraic Meter presented here are estimates based on the NASB translation. A thorough study of the Hebrew text was not conducted after verse 19.

**The LORD will 7 times in Deuteronomy 28:20-28** (New American Standard Bible)

- 20 "The LORD will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me.
- 21 "The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land, where you are entering to possess it.
- 22 "The LORD will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they shall pursue you until you perish.
- 23 "And the heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron.
- 24 "The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.
- 25 "The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; *you shall* go out one way against them, but *you shall* flee seven ways before them, and *you shall* be an example of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth.
- 26 "And your carcasses shall be food to all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten *them* away.
- 27 "The LORD will smite you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.
- 28 "The LORD will smite you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment of heart;...

Verse 22 by itself has seven plagues listed in but one verse.

The LORD will smite you with **consumption** and with **fever** and with **inflammation** and with fiery **heat** and with the **sword** and with **blight** and with **mildew**, and they shall pursue you until you perish. (Deut. 28:22 NAS)

וְבִקְרָב וּבִשְׂדֵיכֶם וּבְיַרְקוֹן וּבְיַדְפְּוֹד עַד אֲבָדָה (Deu 28:22 WTT)

Verses 28b-34 provide additional commentary on these seven actions of *the LORD will*— twelve more statements about what will happen to them with the words *you* and *yours* in bold type. Within these twelve repetitions there appears to be 20 repetitions of verbs associated with *you* and *your* in this section; it includes a subset of twelve.

### ***You/your* (with verb) 20 times in Deuteronomy 28:28-24**

and **you shall** grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in darkness,  
and **you shall** not prosper in your ways;  
but **you shall** only be oppressed and robbed continually, with none to save you.  
**you shall** betroth a wife, **but** another man **shall** violate her;  
**you shall** build a house, **but you shall** not live in it;  
**you shall** plant a vineyard, **but you shall** not use its fruit.  
**your ox shall** be slaughtered before your eyes, **but you shall** not eat of it;  
**your donkey shall** be torn away from you, and **shall** not be restored **to you**;  
**your sheep shall** be given to your enemies, and **you shall** have none to save you.  
**your sons** and **your daughters shall** be given to another people,  
while **your eyes shall** look on and yearn for them continually;  
but there **shall** be nothing **you can do**.

A people whom **you do not know shall** eat up the produce of your ground and all your labors,  
and **you shall** never be anything but oppressed and crushed continually.  
and **you shall** be driven mad by the sight of what you see (Deu 28:28-34 NAS)

Verses 35-44 continue with three more repetitions of “*the LORD will*” for a total of ten, and 14 more repetitions of *you* connected with a verb.

### ***You shall* with verb 14 time in Deuteronomy 35-44**

<sup>35</sup> **The LORD will** strike you on the knees and legs with sore boils, from which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

<sup>36</sup> **The LORD will** bring you and your king,  
whom *you shall set* over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known,  
and there *you shall serve* other gods, wood and stone.

<sup>37</sup> *And you shall* become a horror, a proverb, and a taunt among all the people where  
**the LORD will** drive you.

<sup>38</sup> *You shall bring* out much seed to the field **but you shall** gather in little, for the locust shall consume it.

<sup>39</sup> *You shall plant* and cultivate vineyards, **but you shall** neither drink of the wine nor gather *the grapes*, for the worm shall devour them.

<sup>40</sup> *You shall have olive trees* throughout your territory **but you shall** not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off.

<sup>41</sup> *You shall have sons and daughters* **but they shall** not be yours, for they shall go into captivity.

<sup>42</sup> The cricket shall possess all your trees and the produce of your ground.

<sup>43</sup> The alien who is among you shall rise above you higher and higher, **but you shall** go down lower and lower.

<sup>44</sup> He shall lend to you, **but you shall** not lend to him; he shall be the head, *and you shall* be the tail.

In the last section God continues with what can be described as a relentless, grinding rant. There are seven more repetitions of “*the LORD will*” and 14 repetitions of “you shall” or “will” connected with verb.

### ***You shall* or *will* 14 times Deuteronomy 28:47-68**

#### ***The LORD will* 7 times**

<sup>45</sup> “So all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed,

**because** you would not obey the LORD your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

<sup>46</sup> "And they shall become a sign and a wonder on you and your descendants forever.

<sup>47</sup> "**Because** you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things;

<sup>48</sup> therefore *you shall* serve your enemies whom the LORD shall send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

<sup>49</sup> "**The LORD will bring** a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language *you shall* not understand,

<sup>50</sup> a nation of fierce countenance who shall have no respect for the old, nor show favor to the young.

<sup>51</sup> "Moreover, **it shall eat** the offspring of your herd and the produce of your ground until you are destroyed, who also leaves you no grain, new wine, or oil, nor the increase of your herd or the young of your flock until they have caused you to perish.

<sup>52</sup> "And **it shall besiege** you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and **it shall besiege** you in all your towns throughout your land which the LORD your God has given you.

<sup>53</sup> "Then *you shall* eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you.

<sup>54</sup> "The man who is refined and very delicate among *you shall* be hostile toward his brother and toward the wife he cherishes and toward the rest of his children who remain,

<sup>55</sup> so that he will not give *even* one of them any of the flesh of his children which he shall eat, since he has nothing *else* left, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you in all your towns.

<sup>56</sup> "The refined and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground for delicateness and refinement, shall be hostile toward the husband she cherishes and toward her son and daughter,

<sup>57</sup> and toward her afterbirth which issues from between her legs and toward her children whom she bears; for she shall eat them secretly for lack of anything *else*, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you in your towns.

<sup>58</sup> "If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the LORD your God,

<sup>59</sup> **then the LORD will bring** extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.

<sup>60</sup> "And He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you.

<sup>61</sup> "Also every sickness and every plague which, not written in the book of this law,

**the LORD will bring** on you until you are destroyed.

<sup>62</sup> "Then *you shall* be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven for multitude, because you did not obey the LORD your God.

<sup>63</sup> "And it shall come about that as the LORD delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so **the LORD will delight** over you to make you perish and destroy you; and *you shall* be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it.

<sup>64</sup> "Moreover, **the LORD will** scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there *you shall* serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known.

<sup>65</sup> "And among those nations *you shall* find no rest, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there **the LORD will** give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul.

<sup>66</sup> "So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and *you shall* be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life.

<sup>67</sup> "In the morning *you shall* say, 'Would that it were evening!' And at evening *you shall* say, 'Would that it were morning!' because of the dread of your heart which you dread, and for the sight of your eyes which *you shall* see.

<sup>68</sup> "**And the LORD will** bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I spoke to you, '*You will* never see it again!' And there *you shall* offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.'" (Deu 28:20-69 NAS)

Notice that there are seven more curses on their food supply in but one verse.

<sup>51</sup> "Moreover, it shall eat the offspring of your **herd** and the **produce** of your ground until you are destroyed, who also leaves you no **grain**, **new wine**, or **oil**, nor the increase of your **herd** or the young of your **flock** until they have caused you to perish.

Individuals are saved by faith while nations are preserved by obedience to the God's Law. Nations are only judged based on adherence to the Law. Chapter 28 is a warning of what will happen to the nation of Israel if they violate God's Law. Israel continued to worship a god who was an image of their own beliefs. At the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century BC Israel was judged guilty of violating God's Law so that God brought all these curses upon them in the Babylonian Captivity.

Every nation which challenges God's Law will be judged in a similar fashion as they rise and fall throughout history. Fists that rise to condemn God's righteous judgements become dust and ashes. For deluded masses religion is a form of self-love which deifies community standards and lifestyle.

Objections to God's wrath and vengeance assumes God and religion are a matter of multiple choice. Freedom of religion is reinterpreted as freedom from the tyranny of a God who permits slavery, encourages xenophobia and bigotry, suppresses a woman's right over her body, causes suffering, represses sexual freedom outside of marriage, and teaches homophobia and malicious misgendering. This is the response from a self-righteous culture which murders millions of the unborn and lives in luxury on the backs of billions trapped in slave labor.

Muted response from religious denominations is perceived as tacit acceptance. In addition to manufactured definitions of God, the Gallop poll states that the number of those who claim there is no God has increased to 19%, an increase of 8% over the last 7 years.

At the June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, *Ru Paul Drag Race*, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi told the men in drag, "[It is] My honor to be here, to say to all of you how proud we are of you. Thank you for the joy and beauty you bring to the world"... "Your freedom of expression of yourselves in drag is what America is all about.... May God bless America. Can I get an Amen?" [The drag queens responded] "Amen!"