

# Obedience

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Deuteronomy 28

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**Proverbs 20:6**, *Many a man proclaims his own steadfast love, but a faithful man who can find?*

Our trouble with God is that we want Him on our own terms. Most definitely, we want a god that will punish evildoers, but who will also make exceptions for us. We want a god who will accept half-hearted commitments and occasional fits of participation and service. We want a god who will accept token efforts, uncostly living, half-hearted discipleship, and unsacrificial service. We want a god who does not mind our “side” gods. In short, we want God on our terms.

Deuteronomy leaves no room for such an approach to life lived in relationship to God. There are no exceptions. Obedience (loyalty) leads to blessings, while disobedience leads to curses unspeakable, and these words are promises for us, as much as any other portion of Scripture.

## I. Obedience Leads to Blessings

**A. The Condition of Obedience (Deuteronomy 28:1–2, “And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. 2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God.”)**

1. God is calling us to intentional, careful, and faithful obedience.
2. Notice the word “overtake” – meaning hunting or pursuing successfully.
3. **Deuteronomy 28:13–14**, *And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail, and you shall only go up and not down, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, 14 and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.*
4. Obey – in Hebrew, is related to the word hear. To “hear” is not simply to hear, but to heed or do what God says. (see **Deut 5:1; 6:4; 9:1**)
  - a) **James 1:22**, *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*
  - b) **Romans 2:13**, *For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.*
  - c) **Matthew 7:21–25**, *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ 24 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.”*
  - d) See also: **James 2:14–20; Luke 8:21; John 13:17**

## **B. The Blessings of Obedience**

1. Exaltation - **Deuteronomy 28:1**, *“the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.”*
2. Fruitfulness - **Deuteronomy 28:3–4**, *Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. 4 Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock.*
3. Abundance - **Deuteronomy 28:5**, *Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*
4. Victory - **Deuteronomy 28:6–7**, *Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. 7 “The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.*

## **C. The Cause of the Blessing (Deuteronomy 7:7–13) – the seven “the Lord will”**

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## II. Disobedience Leads to Unspeakable Curses

- A. **The Condition of Disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15,** *“But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.”*) As much joy and hope that verses 1 and 2 put within our hearts, verse 15 should create a fear and dread of God’s disciplinary judgments on His people.
- B. **The Curses of Disobedience.**
  - 1. Humiliation & Indebtedness (**Deuteronomy 28:43–44,** *The sojourner who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. 44 He shall lend to you, and you shall not lend to him. He shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.*)
  - 2. Barrenness (**Deuteronomy 28:18,** *Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock.*)
  - 3. Disease (**Deuteronomy 28:21-22**)
  - 4. Futility (**Deuteronomy 28:31-34, 67-68**)
  - 5. Lack (**Deuteronomy 28:53-57; 47-48**)
  - 6. Exile (**Deuteronomy 28:64-68**)
- C. **The Cause of the Curses (Deuteronomy 28:15, 63)**
  - 1. **Proverbs 1:26,** *I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when terror strikes you,*
  - 2. **Psalm 2:4,** *He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.*
  - 3. **Psalm 37:13,** *But the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming.*

## III. The Cure for the Curse

- A. Consider that not every hardship is God’s discipline (**Job 1-2; 2 Corinthians 11:16-30**)
- B. God has made provision for the forgiveness of the disobedient.
- C. The New Testament is as serious about obedience as the Old Testament (**Heb 3:12-14**)
  - 1. See our Lord’s parables:
    - a) The Wedding Banquet (**Matthew 22:1-14**)
    - b) The Great Banquet (**Luke 14:16-24**)
  - 2. See the warnings of Hebrews:
    - a) Neglecting wisdom and salvation (**Hebrews 2:1-4**)
    - b) Warning against unbelief (**Hebrews 3:12-14**)
    - c) Rejecting God’s offer (**Hebrews 10:26-31**)
  - 3. See the unbeliever’s final end (**Revelation 20:11-15**)
- D. The Blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience remain in effect.
  - 1. Christ took the curse (**Galatians 3:13-14**)
    - a) **Galatians 3:10–14,** *For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” 11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” 12 But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.” 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— 14 so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.*
  - 2. But the discipline of God is in effect (**1 Cor 11:27-30; Heb 12:5-11**)