

Success or Failure?

Success (Blessings):

Thriving in the **family context** (children, provision, no food shortages, ...) and in any kind of **professional work**, always having **favorable economical circumstances** (seasonal rain, travels, protection from enemies, ...), leading to **abundant prosperity** (harvests, growth in livestock and herds, ...) **no matter where** (urban and rural areas), and the **ability to help** others (lend freely, no interest) instead of being enslaved by borrowing, thus becoming the one **in charge** (head) rather than being at the receiving end (tail). (Deuteronomy 28:1-14)

Failure (Curses):

Personal condition + circumstances (no remedies available!): wasting diseases - severe, lingering illnesses - fever - inflammation - boils - tumors - festering sores - itches - weariness - despair - anxiousness - madness - spiritual blindness - loss of compassion - envy - tremendous selfishness - insanity - hunger - thirst - nakedness - dire poverty - harsh, prolonged disasters - dreadful plagues - servitude - heavy yoke - nightmares becoming true - no repose - no resting place - constant suspense - filled with dread - never sure of life - terrorized - back to slavery - **Family context:** children cursed, abducted + taken into captivity of all sorts - women abducted + raped - building houses but no living in it - food shortages - no provision - oppressed - robbed - no rescuers - captivity - **Professional context + economical circumstances:** unsuccessful in all operations, no matter where - confusion - rebuke - disastrous travels - destruction - ruin - loosing everything - vulnerable to, defeat by, + flight from enemies - scorching heat - no rain - droughts - blight - mildew - plagues - cursed harvests + livestock + herds - planting in vain - livestock, herds slaughtered + stolen - exploitation of your hard work - oppression - serving idols - natural disasters + plagues destroy + rob everything - foreign nations steal everything - trust in materialism ends fatal - enslaved through borrowing - foreigners rule (head) you obey (tail); **General:** become a picture of horror, disgust, scorn + ridicule to the world. (Deuteronomy 28:15-68)

Well, that's an incomplete synopsis of results attached to both options Moses placed before Israel. They could choose to either experience God's blessing (= empowerment to succeed), which would only require their obedience to the Lord's instructions. Or they could opt for the never ending list of curses (= empowerment to fail). All they had to do for that was start worshipping idols and refuse to serve the Lord joyfully and gladly in times of prosperity.

Choosing God's way would not only lead to tremendous success but also make Israel distinctly God's holy people, a people other nations would learn to fear. In contrast, choosing to abandon and disobey God would result in oppression, slavery, terror, poverty, corruption, destruction, death. It's a clear, plain list, so the choice was obvious and easy, wasn't it?

- Well, the choice was certainly easy, but following through in action what was proclaimed with the mouth is a different story all together. Aren't we confronted with exactly the same options today? And which one do we choose? Of course, if presented like that we know which choice to make. But frankly, if we look at the condition the majority of people and nations are in today, option two with its long and sobering list of curses appears to be the result of what we are actually doing. Oppression, evil morals, loads of sicknesses, disasters, wars, unsuccessful businesses, enslaved by debt, you name it - it all looks like we are missing it big time. It seems a godless world never had to learn to "fear" God's people. Instead they are mocking and laughing at a powerless Christianity that is no force to reckon with. It's time to put action to our nice and holy talks, hold tight to the Lord, change to a life of obedience and start enjoying the blessings rather than putting up with the curses, don't you think? Let's choose and actively live the success story!