

Cover to Cover: Blessings and Curses

 *Leviticus 26*

Context: Leviticus has sought to answer how an unholy people could dwell in the presence of a holy God. Rituals, priests, purity laws and the Day of Atonement were central to the prescription. All of these point to Jesus and the Gospel.

In today’s chapter the Lord, through Moses, reminds the people of their covenantal responsibilities and calls them to covenant faithfulness. The chapter is one of blessings and curses, which are both wonderful and terrible. The blessings are the visible “fruit” of God’s presence (and the curses of their disobedience and His absence).

*Questions from this past Lord’s Day’s message by Pastor Peter on Lev 19: 2.*

1. What is holiness? What does it mean that God is holy?
2. If we are holy it shows we are…?
3. What did it look for the Israelites to live holy lives?
4. What does it look like for contemporary Christians to be holy?
5. Other thoughts from the sermon…

**Read:** Lev 26 (or a part of it)

*Questions*

1. *Every covenant has relational obligations (think for example of marriage vows). We see the commands of the covenant (Ex 20–Lev) echoed in the blessings and curses (vv. 1–2).*
2. Why is there never any worry about God breaking His side of the covenant? (Ps 93:5a; Prov 30:5) What should this foster in us?

Blessings

1. V. 3 begins with the conditions for blessings. How do we know they are conditional? What must Israel do to access these blessings? (People like the prospect of spiritual blessings but not the conditions. How is this so today?).
2. What are some of the promised blessings?
3. What picture do these give?
4. Are there any phrases or words that stand out? How do they help capture the blessings that comes from trusting and obeying the Lord?

Curses

1. *This section is about double that of the blessings!*
2. Vv. 14–15 again outlines the conditions of the covenant. From these verses or the chapter as a whole, what does it look like for them to break the covenant? (Do we, or people generally, like to face the bad news?)
3. What are some of the promised curses?
4. How do they intensify? How many stages can you identify? What does “sevenfold” mean?
5. What picture do these give?
6. Are there any phrases or words that stand out? How do they help capture the seriousness of crossing God?
7. What does it mean for God’s face to be against you?
8. What ultimate punishment would be upon Israel if they persisted in breaking the covenant?
	1. Spoiler: Would Israel keep the covenant? They were circumcised in the flesh but not in the \_\_\_\_\_\_.
9. What provision for forgiveness did God make? (v. 41)
10. What covenant would God then remember? (v.42)
11. What do you think the phrase “I am the Lord” means?
12. Why do both the blessings and curses refer to Egypt? (v. 13 and v. 45)
13. What do these blessings and curses teach us about God, His word, human nature?
14. Jeremiah spoke of a New Covenant (Jer 31), which Hebrews says is far better than the old (Heb 8:6). What is the heart issue here?
15. In Jn 3:16–18 we too read of blessings and curses. Even if we are in Christ are there any blessings and curses to the New Covenant in any sense?
16. Can you share a story of someone, like Israel, who just didn’t get it? What did God/they need to do before blessing was possible? Why does this prove the importance of prayer?