Faith Matters



Daily Devotional - Wednesday, March 16, 2025 - Consequences, Consequences

MARCH 26TH 2025 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Ceremonies often mark important transitions in life. High school graduation marks a transition toward adulthood. Marriage celebrates the start of a lifelong union between a man and woman. In Deuteronomy 27, Moses looks forward to a significant transition for Israel—they would cease to wander in the desert and take up residence in the Promised Land.

To mark this occasion, Moses outlined a dramatic ceremony. After writing out the Law publicly on stones coated in plaster, half of the tribes would ascend Mount Ebal and half would ascend Mount Gerizim (vv. 12–13). From Mount Ebal, the tribes and Levites would recite the curses of the covenant if Israel was unfaithful. From Mount Gerizim, the tribes and Levites would pronounce the blessings of obedience. In Deuteronomy 27, the focus is on the curses.

Curses were pronounced against those who violated clear standards the Lord had established. The curse was not operated by magic. Rather, it was a

pronouncement with which God would judge. A common thread here is that these were all actions that could be done in secret: worshiping an idol in one's home (v. 15); moving boundary stones (v. 17); misleading a blind person (v. 18); oppressing the foreigner, widow, or orphan (v. 19); various sexual sins (vv. 20–23); murder (v. 24); and bribery (v. 25).

The Lord desires His people to live holy lives, not just in public when everyone notices but also in private when only the individual and the Lord might know about it. Ultimately, Israel failed to keep the covenant. As Scripture clearly teaches, "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:23). The message of the gospel is that what Israel could not do—and what we cannot do—the Lord has done for us: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13).

How does this passage demonstrate God's view of sin and disobedience? What challenge does this give us about so-called "private" sin?

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