

Deuteronomy 7 Commentary

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Moses on Mt Nebo (Deuteronomy 34:1+)
 Listen to **Mt Nebo** as you Ponder How Moses' **May Have Felt**

Deuteronomy by [Irving Jensen](#)- used by permission
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Source: Ryrie Study Bible

Deuteronomy

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ca. 2 Months Moses: Author (Except Dt 34)							

Remembrances of the Past

(Deuteronomy 1:1-4:43)

[Jensen's Survey of Deuteronomy](#) scroll to p311

Deuteronomy 7:1 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you,

- **The LORD your God** De 4:38 6:1,10,19,23 9:1,4 11:29 31:3,20 Ex 6:8 15:7 Nu 14:31 Ps 44:2,3 78:55
- **Hittites:** Ge 15:18-21 Ex 23:28 33:2
- **greater:** De 4:38 4:1-3 20:1
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- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

ISRAEL OUTMANNED & OUTGUNNED BUT GOD DELIVERS!

Israel is "[outmanned](#)" and "[outgunned](#)"! (But not "out-God-ed"!)

When - Not if, but when. God promised and God will fulfill it. This points to God's faithfulness to His covenant (Abrahamic) and His power to complete the good work He had begun in the nation of Israel (cf Php 1:6+).

The LORD your God - Moses continually emphasizes that Yahweh is Israel's God (279 times in 239 verses out of 396 times in the entire OT! More than 50% of uses in one book!). Uses in chapter 7 - Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:2; Deut. 7:6; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 7:16; Deut. 7:18; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 7:20; Deut. 7:21; Deut. 7:22; Deut. 7:23; Deut. 7:25;

Brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it- Past experiences with God fortify present trust in God. Moses has previously recorded Yahweh's personal testimony "'I am the LORD your God who **brought you out** of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.'" (Dt 5:6) Egypt was the most powerful nation in the world but was no obstacle for the omnipotence of God. So clearly neither will these 7 lesser powers in Canaan be any detriment to His divine directive to bring His chosen people **into the land**. Brings you in clearly indicates they will cross the Jordan into the land by His power, but they must still do the crossing and entering themselves. We see this juxtaposition of God's provision of power to His people to defeat their enemies and His people carrying out the conquest in His power. In the final analysis, it is not His people which get the glory but it is God Alone Who receives the glory. God promised to bring Israel into a promised land, but He promises NT believers to bring us into a promised life in Christ His Son, a life empowered by His Spirit, a life that is so ordained as to give glory to Him. As Jesus commanded "**Let** your light **shine** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify (give a proper opinion to others [lost and saved] of) your Father Who is in heaven (Your visible good works pointing to and giving evidence of the invisible God!)." (Mt 5:16+).

The land where you are entering to possess it - Israel had to enter into the land in order to possess the land. What did God

require of Israel in order for them to possess the land? In a word faith. One acronym for faith has "**Forsaking All I Trust Him.**" Israel had to believe Yahweh's promises and show they truly believed by acting on those promises. This sounds simple to us today with 20/20 hindsight. But for the men of war of Israel this meant they had to believe God would enable them to overcome their enemies. They had to put their lives in jeopardy (in their mind) and present themselves on the battlefield. That is easier said than done. But it is what they had to do to possess the land. To risk their life meant they had to trust implicitly in Yahweh's word to go before them and drive out their enemies (Dt 6:19+, cf Dt 9:3+). Recall that the reason the first generation of Israel was unable to enter into and possess the promised land was because of their **UNBELIEF**. When the first generation refused to enter the land promised by Yahweh, Yahweh said to Moses "How long will this people **spurn** ([naas](#) - reject, despise) Me? And how long will they not **believe** ([aman](#)) in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?" (Nu 14:11+). The principle is timeless - God's promises are possessed by faith that obeys.

Possess ([03423](#)) [yarash](#) to take possession of, inherit, dispossess, to drive out. Yarash is an especially important word in contexts dealing with Israel's conquest of and possession of the land of Canaan. Yahweh first promised possession of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Ge 15:7-21+). Note also that "possessing" implies "dispossessing" another nation. In a legal sense, the right of possession passed from one generation to the next and so constituted "inheritance." Note that possession of the promised land and/or the "inheritance" was directly connected to Israel's trust relationship with the Lord, so that breaking trust, and thus breaking the covenantal relationship with Yahweh led to dispossession. But even in exile, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land (Jer. 30:3+ - May 14, 1948 is when Israel was given statehood but this is not the final fulfillment - that awaits the Millennial Reign of their Messiah).

Yarash is a key word in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:8; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:39; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:12; Deut. 3:18; Deut. 3:20; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 4:22; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 4:38; Deut. 4:47; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:17; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 9:1; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:10; Deut. 11:11; Deut. 11:23; Deut. 11:29; Deut. 11:31; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:2; Deut. 12:29; Deut. 15:4; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 17:14; Deut. 18:12; Deut. 18:14; Deut. 19:1; Deut. 19:2; Deut. 19:14; Deut. 21:1; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:1; Deut. 28:21; Deut. 28:42; Deut. 28:63; Deut. 30:5; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:18; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 32:47; Deut. 33:23;

And clears away many nations before you - I picture Canaan as a plot of land overgrown with weeds and shrubs and rubbish and God taking a lawnmower and clearing away the useless rubbish and weeds to prepare the soil to bloom forth as "a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey." (Dt 8:8+) **Many nations** in context is actually seven nations. Exactly what this means that they are cleared away is not clear, because Israel still had to go in and conquer them. In any event, this clearly reflects God's sovereign power over these nations, however it was specifically manifested.

Clears away ([05394](#))([nashal](#)) means to fall away, to slip or drop off, to throw down, and in the Qal Stem means to loosen, to take off, remove (sandals because on holy ground - Ex 3:5, Josh 5:15), clear away (nations - Dt 7:1, 22; people - 2 Ki 16:6), axehead slips off (Dt 19:5), olives wasted because they drop off before they can be used (Dt 28:40). Hiph. cast off, let fall off, Niph. be cast off, fall off;

Nashal -7v - clear away(1), cleared(1), clears away(1), drop off(1), remove(2), slips off(1). Exod. 3:5; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:22; Deut. 19:5; Deut. 28:40; Jos. 5:15; 2 Ki. 16:6

The Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites - See [Related Resources](#) below. [See excellent summary of these pagan nations by Dr Bob Utley](#). Amalek is another group of people living in the land of Canaan (Ex 17:8-16; Nu 13:29) not mentioned in this list, so the list was not meant to be exhaustive.

Merrill - This list appears to be somewhat stylized, in this case including seven nations in all, the number seven perhaps indicating completeness—that is, all the inhabitants of the land. The same seven do not always occur in other lists describing the population of Canaan (Exod 3:8 lists six; Exod 13:5, five; Exod 23:23, six; Exod 23:28, three; Exod 33:2, six; Exod 34:11, six; Deut 20:17, six; Josh 3:10, all seven; Josh 9:1, six; Josh 24:11, all seven). Usually the Girgashites are lacking in the shorter lists. The Hittites are related to the great Hittite Empire of Anatolia (central Turkey) that flourished in the Late Bronze Age (c. 1500-1200 B.C.). The Girgashites cannot be ethnically identified. The Amorites were descendants of seminomadic immigrants to Canaan from Aram (Syria), who may have settled there in patriarchal times (c. 2200 B.C.; cf. 1:4, 7, 19, 27, 44; 3:2, 9; 4:46). The Canaanites were indigenous to Canaan, their existence there going back probably as early as 3000 B.C.. The Perizzites are linked with the Canaanites in ancient times (Gen 13:7; 34:30), probably being a Canaanite clan. The Hivites are usually identified with the famous Hurrians of ancient Near Eastern texts. Finally, the Jebusites were located, with Hittites and Amorites, in the hill country of Canaan (Num 13:29), especially in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Josh 15:8; cf. Josh 15:63; 18:16). In fact, by David's time Jerusalem was regarded as a Jebusite city (2 Sam 5:6; 24:16). The Table of Nations (Gen 10:15-19) adds the information that all of these nations

(except the Perizzites) were descendants of Canaan—that is, they were all linked sociologically and perhaps politically to the Canaanites. Clearly, the intent in Deuteronomy is not to suggest a variety of ethnically distinct people but to speak of tribes or clans in Canaan by these various terms (Ishida 1979:461-490). ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

NET Note:

1) Hittites. The center of Hittite power was in Anatolia (central modern Turkey). In the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 B.C.) they were at their zenith, establishing outposts and colonies near and far. Some elements were obviously in Canaan at the time of the Conquest (1400–1350 B.C.).

47v - Ge 15:20; Ge 23:10; Ge 25:9; Ge 26:34; Ge 36:2; Ge 49:29; Ge 49:30; Ge 50:13; Ex 3:8; Ex 3:17; Ex 13:5; Ex 23:23; Exod. 23:28; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Num. 13:29; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 1:4; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 1:26; Jdg. 3:5; 1 Sam. 26:6; 2 Sam. 11:3; 2 Sam. 11:6; 2 Sam. 11:17; 2 Sam. 11:21; 2 Sam. 11:24; 2 Sam. 12:9; 2 Sam. 12:10; 2 Sam. 23:39; 1 Ki. 9:20; 1 Ki. 10:29; 1 Ki. 11:1; 1 Ki. 15:5; 2 Ki. 7:6; 1 Chr. 11:41; 2 Chr. 1:17; 2 Chr. 8:7; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Ezek. 16:3; Ezek. 16:45

2) Gergashites. These cannot be ethnically identified and are unknown outside the OT. They usually appear in such lists only when the intention is to have seven groups in all (see also the note on the word “seven” later in this verse).

7v - Gen. 10:16; Gen. 15:21; Deut. 7:1; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 24:11; 1 Chr. 1:14; Neh. 9:8

3) Amorites. Originally from the upper Euphrates region (Amurru), the Amorites appear to have migrated into Canaan beginning in 2200 B.C. or thereabouts.

86v - Gen. 10:16; Gen. 14:7; Gen. 14:13; Gen. 15:16; Gen. 15:21; Gen. 48:22; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Num. 13:29; Num. 21:13; Num. 21:21; Num. 21:25; Num. 21:26; Num. 21:29; Num. 21:31; Num. 21:32; Num. 21:34; Num. 22:2; Num. 32:33; Num. 32:39; Deut. 1:4; Deut. 1:7; Deut. 1:19; Deut. 1:20; Deut. 1:27; Deut. 1:44; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:8; Deut. 3:9; Deut. 4:46; Deut. 4:47; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Deut. 31:4; Jos. 2:10; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 5:1; Jos. 7:7; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 9:10; Jos. 10:5; Jos. 10:6; Jos. 10:12; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:2; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 13:4; Jos. 13:10; Jos. 13:21; Jos. 24:8; Jos. 24:11; Jos. 24:12; Jos. 24:15; Jos. 24:18; Jdg. 1:34; Jdg. 1:35; Jdg. 1:36; Jdg. 3:5; Jdg. 6:10; Jdg. 10:8; Jdg. 10:11; Jdg. 11:19; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; 1 Sam. 7:14; 2 Sam. 21:2; 1 Ki. 4:19; 1 Ki. 9:20; 1 Ki. 21:26; 2 Ki. 21:11; 1 Chr. 1:14; 2 Chr. 8:7; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Ps. 135:11; Ps. 136:19; Ezek. 16:3; Ezek. 16:45; Amos 2:9; Amos 2:10

5) Canaanites. These were the indigenous peoples of the land, going back to the beginning of recorded history (ca. 3000 B.C.). The OT identifies them as descendants of Ham (Gen 10:6), the only Hamites to have settled north and east of Egypt.

69v - Gen. 10:18; Gen. 10:19; Gen. 12:6; Gen. 13:7; Gen. 15:21; Gen. 24:3; Gen. 24:37; Gen. 34:30; Gen. 38:2; Gen. 46:10; Gen. 50:11; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 6:15; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 13:11; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 23:28; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Num. 13:29; Num. 14:25; Num. 14:43; Num. 14:45; Num. 21:1; Num. 21:3; Num. 33:40; Deut. 1:7; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 11:30; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 5:1; Jos. 7:9; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 13:3; Jos. 13:4; Jos. 16:10; Jos. 17:12; Jos. 17:13; Jos. 17:16; Jos. 17:18; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 1:1; Jdg. 1:3; Jdg. 1:4; Jdg. 1:5; Jdg. 1:9; Jdg. 1:10; Jdg. 1:17; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; Jdg. 3:3; Jdg. 3:5; 2 Sam. 24:7; 1 Ki. 9:16; 1 Chr. 2:3; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Neh. 9:24; Ezek. 16:3; Obad. 1:20; Zech. 14:21

5) Perizzites. This is probably a subgroup of Canaanites (Gen 13:7; 34:30).

23v - Gen. 13:7; Gen. 15:20; Gen. 34:30; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 17:15; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 1:4; Jdg. 1:5; Jdg. 3:5; 1 Ki. 9:20; 2 Chr. 8:7; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8

6) Hivites. These are usually thought to be the same as the Hurrians, a people well-known in ancient Near Eastern texts. They are likely identical to the Horites (see note on the term “Horites” in Deut 2:12).

25v - Gen. 10:17; Gen. 34:2; Gen. 36:2; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 23:28; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 9:7; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 11:19; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 3:3; Jdg. 3:5; 2 Sam. 24:7; 1 Ki. 9:20; 1 Chr. 1:15; 2 Chr. 8:7

7) Jebusites. These inhabited the hill country, particularly in and about Jerusalem (cf. Num 13:29; Josh 15:8;

2 Sam 5:6; 24:16).

39v - Gen. 10:16; Gen. 15:21; Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 23:23; Exod. 33:2; Exod. 34:11; Num. 13:29; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 20:17; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 9:1; Jos. 11:3; Jos. 12:8; Jos. 15:8; Jos. 15:63; Jos. 18:16; Jos. 18:28; Jos. 24:11; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 3:5; Jdg. 19:11; 2 Sam. 5:6; 2 Sam. 5:8; 2 Sam. 24:16; 2 Sam. 24:18; 1 Ki. 9:20; 1 Chr. 1:14; 1 Chr. 11:4; 1 Chr. 11:6; 1 Chr. 21:15; 1 Chr. 21:18; 1 Chr. 21:28; 2 Chr. 3:1; 2 Chr. 8:7; Ezr. 9:1; Neh. 9:8; Zech. 9:7

Seven nations greater and stronger than you - **Utley** points out that there are other lists of these pagan nations and "The lists of nations vary from 10, 7, 5, 3, or 1 (i.e. Canaanite or Amorite)." **Seven** in Scripture often speaks of fullness, that which is complete ([biblical significance of seven](#)), so it is reasonable to see that God is using **seven nations** to emphasize the magnitude of the enemies aligned against Israel. And to add to this emphasis, Moses says that they are **greater and stronger** (greater in numbers, stronger in military capability and ability to defend against attack = Israel is "[outmanned](#)" and "[outgunned](#)"!) which is like slow pitching the omnipotent God a "softball!" He will [hit them out of the park](#) figuratively and literally, but Israel **must understand** that they are not to rely on their finite, weak arm of flesh, but on the infinite, all-powerful arm of Jehovah to defeat their enemies. Beloved don't pass over this principle without realizing that it is eminently applicable to progressive sanctification, the "war" that believers are to carry on until the day we are glorified! (see THOUGHT below for more on this vitally important principle for Christian growth in Christlikeness). We too must daily, yea, even moment by moment, wholly rely on the Holy Spirit to fight the good fight of faith, take hold of the eternal life to which we were called (1 Ti 6:12+) and win the victory for the glory of the LORD. Let it be so LORD for Thy Name. Amen.

As **Raymond Brown** says "The seven strong nations were larger and stronger than the Israelites and apart from God's mighty acts in vanquishing their foes, the Hebrews would have been entirely wiped out. Humanly speaking, they did not stand a chance of military success. They were decidedly inferior in numbers and skill and, above all, their opponents already had possession of the land. They knew its hills and valleys. It was strange and unfamiliar territory to the invading people. From a purely human point of view, it was an impossible assignment. God, however, worked and did for them something which they could not possibly have achieved for themselves. (Bible Speaks Today)

NET Note - Seven. This is an ideal number in the OT, one symbolizing fullness or completeness. Therefore, the intent of the text here is not to be precise and list all of Israel's enemies but simply to state that Israel will have a full complement of foes to deal with. For other lists of Canaanites, some with fewer than seven peoples, see Exod 3:8; 13:5; 23:23, 28; 33:2; 34:11; Deut 20:17; Josh 3:10; 9:1; 24:11. Moreover, the "Table of Nations" (Gen 10:15-19) suggests that all of these (possibly excepting the Perizzites) were offspring of Canaan and therefore Canaanites.

THOUGHT - There is a message for believers who have three adversaries the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#), which are **greater and stronger** than we are in our own natural strength (compare the declaration even by Michael the archangel against Satan in Jude 1:9+). Paul reminds us that "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." (2 Cor 10:3-5+, see also Eph 6:10-18+) We must learn to depend on the Lord's strength to "kill" our enemies. We see this clearly portrayed in Ro 8:13+ "if (SINCE) by the Spirit (LORD'S POWER) you are putting to death (OUR RESPONSIBILITY) the deeds of the body, you will live." See discussion of "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)"

Martin Luther said it well (he had tried for years to strive in his own strength to attain God's perfect righteousness)...

**Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing,
were not the right Man on our side,
the Man of God's own choosing.
You ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His Name,
from age to age the same;
and He must win the battle.**

Related Resources:

- [Who were the Hittites? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Amorites? | GotQuestions.org](#)

- [Who were the Canaanites? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Gergashites in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Perizzites in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Hivites](#)
- [Who were the Jebusites? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Deuteronomy 7:2 and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.

- **delivers:** De 7:23,24 3:3 23:14 Ge 14:20 Jos 10:24,25,30,32,42 21:44 Judges 1:4
- **utterly:** De 20:16,17 Lev 27:28,29 Nu 33:52 Jos 6:17-25 8:24 Josh 9:24 10:28,40 Jos 11:11,12
- **make no:** De 20:10,11 Ex 23:32,33 34:12-16 Jos 2:14 9:18-21 Judges 1:24 2:2 2Sa 21:2
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

DIVINE DELIVERY CALLS FOR TOTAL ANNIHILATION

(SOVEREIGNTY) And when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them - **DELIVERS** = give, present, offer, allow, permit, surrender, deliver, set, put, place. Moses does not say "IF" but "**WHEN**" indicating he is absolutely sure the deliverance and defeated orchestrated by Yahweh will be consummated. The repeated pattern is God's sovereign power and Israel's responsibility to finish the job so to speak.

One might ask why is God delivering these nations? Have they done anything to Israel (some may have in Numbers 14)? One clear reason is the fact that they had been given 400 years to repent and did not and now "the iniquity of the Amorite is....complete." (cf Ge 15:16). And lest you think God plays favorites read 1 Ki 14:16 "**He will give up Israel** on account of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed and with which he made Israel to sin." There it is -- the heart of the problem is the problem of the heart -- **SIN!**

The second generation had already experienced Yahweh's delivering an enemy into the hand of Israel, including Sihon and Og, In addition we read about the first deliverance experienced by the second generation in Numbers 21.

When the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim, then he fought against Israel and took some of them captive. 2 So Israel made a vow to the LORD and said, "**If You will indeed deliver this people** into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities." 3 The LORD heard the voice of Israel and **delivered up the Canaanites**; then they **utterly destroyed them and their cities**. Thus the name of the place was called Hormah (HERE IN SEPTUAGINT IS TRANSLATED "**ANATHEMA**". THE HEBREW WORD MEANS UTTER DESTRUCTION! IN BITTER IRONY HORMAH WAS THE VERY PLACE THE FIRST GENERATION HAD EXPERIENCED HUMILIATING DEFEAT - Nu 14:45+, Dt 1:44+). (Nu 21:1-3+)

Here's the point -

Remembrance of past divine deliverances energizes faith for present/future divine deliverance.

COROLLARY - We need to frequently rehearse God's supernatural, divine deliverances in our life, for it is good preparation when the strong enemies/temptations arise in the future (which they will)

Then - Time sequence. Defeat them means they surrender but they are still alive.

(COMMANDMENT) **you shall utterly destroy them** - In effect "put them under the ban," devote them to destruction! To dedicate to God for destruction. As we might say in war "**Take No Prisoners!**" Yahweh, the Commander in General, commands that the Israelites follow up their defeat of the idolatrous godless pagans with complete annihilation. While this sounds harsh and cruel to most in our modern world, God was clearly justified in making this command. In Ge 15:16 God had told Abram that "the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." But now 400 years had passed giving the pagans ample time to repent and they had not repented. This reminds of the [sword of Damocles](#), an allusion to the imminent and ever-present peril faced by those in positions of power. In this case the "sword" ([see depiction](#)) had been poised to fall for four centuries and the all knowing God determined that the time had come for it to fall (cf the "spider's web" in Jonathan Edwards' sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God") But God is not fickle but is to the contrary faithful to His covenant promise to Abraham. He knew that the pagan and idolatrous influence would be destructive to the Israelites. So in the next passages God gives specific reasons for annihilating the pagans. Inter-marriage with them would be followed by idolatry which would arouse the anger of the LORD against His own people.

Utterly destroy (devote to destruction, put under the ban)(02763) **charam**) means to destroy, to doom, to devote. This word is most commonly associated with the Israelites destroying the Canaanites upon their entry into the Promised Land (Deut. 7:2; Josh. 11:20). Surrendering something irrevocably to God = devoting to service of God, excluding it from use or abuse of man &/or putting it under a ban for utter destruction. [Dt 7:2, 20:17] Usually **haram** meant a ban for utter destruction, compulsory dedication of thing impeding or resisting God's work which is considered to be accursed before God. Thus the basic idea = setting something aside strictly for God's use. Whatever was set aside was considered most holy by God & could not be sold or redeemed by any substitutionary measure. Once invoked it was absolutely compulsory.

Utley (charam) - It is related to the idea of holiness or something being set apart for God's use. Since something was so holy it could not be used by human beings, the only way to assure its non-use was to destroy it. So, within the bounds of Israel, when cities were taken, the men, and sometimes women, children, and animals were also killed. To moderns this seems very cruel, but it was a common practice in that day. A good example of this would be Jericho in Joshua 6 or Lachish in Josh. 10:28, 35. Genesis 15:16; Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13 state the theological reason for the complete destruction of the Canaanites. ([Deuteronomy 7 Commentary](#))

The IVP Bible Background Commentary on utterly destroy - Just as there were some types of sacrifices that belonged entirely to the Lord, while others were shared by priest and offerer, so some plunder was set aside as belonging solely to the Lord. Just as the whole burnt offering was entirely consumed on the altar, so the ban mandated total destruction. Since the warfare was commanded by Yahweh and represented his judgment on the Canaanites, the Israelites were on a divine mission with Yahweh as their commander. Since it was his war, not theirs, and he was the victor, the spoil belonged to him. ([The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

THOUGHT - What are the "CANAANITES" in your life? God gave Israel a promised LAND, but He gives believers a promised LIFE in Christ Jesus, by His Spirit and [His Word](#). Are you living the abundant LIFE in Christ (Jn 10:10b)? If your answer "NO," could it be that you have refused to SLAY those SINS WHICH SO EASILY ENTANGLE YOU? (Hebrews 12:1+) (Are you entangled?) We think if we just pray, they'll go away. Yes, pray, but then take up the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD (Eph 6:17+) and slay them, kill them, have no mercy on those sins that come like raiders in the night (THAT'S OFTEN WHEN THEY ATTACK ME!) to steal, kill and destroy your promise of abundant LIFE in Christ. By the supernatural power of God's Holy Spirit and with the sword of the Spirit, slay every "AGAG" (See comments 1 Samuel 15:3ff, 1Sa 15:32-33+) that incessantly seeks to reign as "king" (Ro 6:12+) on the throne of your heart (MEMORIZE Romans 8:13+ so you can put that "SWORD" into daily practice -- and you will need to be alert daily, because these "KING AGAGS" are like cats with "9 lives"! Add the sharp sword of Colossians 3:5+ and use them daily!). Note very carefully the critical truth that killing the "Canaanites" and the "Agags" in your life is not "Let go, let God," but is more Biblically "Let God, let's go!" His part, your part. God's provision of power. Our practice utilizing His power. This is the Abundant Life Giving "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)" (100/100)

[David Guzik](#) makes a great point about destroying the Canaanites in the Promised Land

You shall conquer them and utterly destroy them: **Yet, God would not do it all for them.** The extent of the work would depend on their **faithful response to what God would do. Utterly destroy them ... nor show mercy to them:** This principle of battle until absolute victory is the key to victory as we take the Promised Land of blessing and peace God has for us in Jesus. We show no mercy to our enemies in the land, but we destroy them utterly. **Many of us, truth be told, simply do not want to completely destroy the sins which keep us from God's Promised Land of blessing and peace**—we want to weaken them, and have some control over them, but we do not want to utterly destroy them. Destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images: We are especially to destroy anything which would lead us into a false or foreign worship. This radical, complete destruction was important because of the depraved nature of the worship of the Canaanites, who worshipped male and female gods of sex (**ED: THINK OF THE MODERN PARALLEL OF THE SCOURGE OF "FREE" [A LIE FROM THE PIT OF HELL - SIN IS NEVER "FREE" - SEE COST IN Ro 6:23+, James 1:13-15+] INTERNET PORN AMONG CHRISTIAN MEN AND WHICH SLOWLY GROWS LIKE [KUDZU](#) KILLING THE SPIRITUAL VITALITY FROM GOD'S WARRIORS!**) and who practiced human sacrifice with their own children.

([COMMANDMENT](#)) **You shall make ([karath](#) - cut) no covenant ([berit/berith/beriyth](#)) with them** - Why not make a covenant? Israel was already in covenant with Yahweh (that covenant was reviewed in Dt 5:1-33). As Jesus say, you cannot serve two masters! (Mt 6:24+). Cutting a covenant with godless pagans would be a **snare** for Israel (Ex 34:12+). Recall that in the ancient world to **make a covenant** or "cut a covenant" was the most solemn and binding agreement that could be made between two opposing parties. Note it was binding and one would be motivated not to break it on fear of death.

Joshua must have been dozing when Moses declared Israel was to make no covenant with their enemies. The Gibeonites deceived Joshua and the text specifically says they "did not ask for the counsel of the LORD" (Josh 9:14) and as a result "Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation swore and oath to them." It becomes evident later that the Gibeonites were enemies who should have been utterly destroyed but who had deceived them (Josh 9:22). As a result of making a solemn, binding covenant the Israelites could not touch the Gibeonites! (read the full account in Joshua 9:1-27)

Moses repeats this command which was given to the first generation almost 40 years earlier...

Exodus 23:32+ "You shall **make no covenant** with them or with their gods. (INTERESTING THOUGHT -- WARNING AGAINST CUTTING A COVENANT WITH LIFELESS, POWERLESS GODS!)

Exodus 34:12+ "**Watch** yourself that you **make no covenant** with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a **snare** ([moqesh](#)) in your midst.

([COMMANDMENT](#)) and **show no favor to them** (see Dt 7:15+ - "your eye shall not pity them") - The Hebrew word **show favor** is [chanan](#) which means to show gracious kindness but in this case DON'T! In the Septuagint there is a **strong double negative** emphasizing Israel is absolutely NOT to show kindness (Greek = [eleeo](#) - have mercy or pity, help someone because of pity)! God commands Israel to destroy them and show absolutely no mercy. The pagans were analogous to a deadly cancer and as a pathologist I would tell the surgeons that their best chance of curing the cancer was radical surgery. God was calling for Israel to perform "radical surgery," lest the cancer of idolatry spread throughout the entire body and ultimately result in their destruction. In short, failure to totally destroy the pagans would result in Israel's destruction.

Gracious (supplication, pity) ([02603](#)) [chanan](#) is verb meaning to be gracious toward, to favor, to have mercy on. Generally implies extending "favor" neither expected nor deserved. It is the heartfelt response by someone who has something to give to one who has a need. It reflects the action from a superior to an inferior who has no real claim for gracious treatment. The verb is used in social or secular contexts as well as theological ones. It often has the sense of showing kindness to the poor and needy. First used in [Ge 33:5](#) "The children whom God has graciously given your servant."

(See also related note on 1Sa 27:9) **James Coakley** on **utterly destroy them** - God's call to exterminate all the people groups currently occupying the land has been thought of as unloving and severe. Several factors may help explain the reasons such a command was given.

First, all people are sinners and are under God's judgment. Only by God's mercy are any people groups allowed to live.

Second, the context (Dt 7:10) implies that these nations hated the Lord, so they were not neutral toward the God of Israel.

Third, Ge 15:13 states that God had been patient with these nations for hundreds of years and had delayed their punishment until this exact point in history. God was giving the Canaanites as much time as was needed to become as wildly corrupt as possible. God's command to annihilate them is tied to this circumstance alone and should not be used as justification for any genocide.

(**ED COMMENT** - The patience of the Lord reminds me of the days of Noah - In Genesis 6:3 God gave man 120 years before the judgment of the flood would fall and even provided Noah a **preacher** ([kerux](#)) **of righteousness** for them to hear the good news but none except his own family heeded his warnings of coming judgment (2Pe 2:5+, cf 1 Peter 3:20+ and 2 Pe 3:15+ speaking of the delay in the return of the Lord thus providing an opportunity for men to repent. God provided righteous, tormented Lot as a witness and warning to Sodom before He destroyed them - 2 Pe 2:7-9+)

Fourth, if Israel let these nations live in their land, their pagan practices would be propagated and emulated by the people of God (Dt 20:17-18).

Fifth, the command to exterminate the Canaanite nations is mitigated somewhat by God's allowing individual non-Jewish women like Rahab and Ruth to enter into the messianic line. God always had a plan that included the nations (Ge 12:2-3), but He promised Israel they would occupy this land as gift from Him. Israel was actually to offer peace with any nation outside her borders (Dt 20:10-18), but to exterminate any pagan nation within its borders.

Even though not specifically mentioned here, extending annihilation to Canaanite children is an affront to modern sensibilities. The totality of this destruction is connected in this text (Dt 7:3) to the prohibition of assimilation to other nations. If these children were allowed to live they would become a snare for Israel. The killing of all Canaanites, including the children, served as a preventative measure against assimilating with the Canaanite way of life and as a stark reminder that Israel was to be set apart exclusively for God. (See [The Moody Bible Commentary](#))

QUESTION - [Why did God command the extermination / genocide of the Canaanites, women and children included?](#)

ANSWER - In 1 Samuel 15:2-3, God commanded Saul and the Israelites, "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.'" God ordered similar things when the Israelites were invading the promised land (Deuteronomy 2:34; 3:6; 20:16-18). Why would God have the Israelites exterminate an entire group of people, women and children included?

This is a difficult issue. We do not fully understand why God would command such a thing, but we trust God that He is just – and we recognize that we are incapable of fully understanding a sovereign, infinite, and eternal God. As we look at difficult issues such as this one, we must remember that God's ways are higher than our ways and [His thoughts are higher than our thoughts \(Isaiah 55:9; Romans 11:33-36\)](#). We have to be willing to trust God and have faith in Him even when we do not understand His ways.

Unlike us, God knows the future. God knew what the results would be if Israel did not completely eradicate the Amalekites. If Israel did not carry out God's orders, the Amalekites would come back to trouble the Israelites in the future. Saul claimed to have killed everyone but the Amalekite king Agag (1 Samuel 15:20). Obviously, Saul was lying—just a couple of decades later, there were enough Amalekites to take David and his men's families captive (1 Samuel 30:1-2). After David and his men attacked the Amalekites and rescued their families, 400 Amalekites escaped. If Saul had fulfilled what God had commanded him, this never would have occurred. Several hundred years later, [a descendant of Agag, Haman](#) tried to have the entire Jewish people exterminated (see the book of Esther). So, Saul's incomplete obedience almost resulted in Israel's destruction. God knew this would occur, so He ordered the extermination of the Amalekites ahead of time.

In regard to the Canaanites, God commanded, "In the cities of the nations the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy them — the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites — as the LORD your God has commanded you. Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 20:16-18). The Israelites failed in this mission as well, and exactly what God said would happen occurred (Judges 2:1-3; 1 Kings 11:5; 14:24; 2 Kings 16:3-4). God did not order the extermination of these people to be cruel, but to prevent even greater evil from occurring in the future.

Probably the most difficult part of these commands from God is that God ordered the death of children and infants as well. Why would God order the death of innocent children?

- (1) Children are not innocent (Psalm 51:5; 58:3).
- (2) These children would have likely grown up as adherents to the evil religions and practices of their parents.
- (3) These children would naturally have grown up resentful of the Israelites and later sought to avenge the "unjust" treatment of their parents.

Again, this answer does not completely deal with all the issues. Our focus should be on trusting God even when we do not understand His ways. We also must remember that God looks at things from an eternal perspective and that His ways are higher than our ways. God is just, righteous, holy, loving, merciful, and gracious. How His attributes work together can be a mystery to us – but that does not mean that He is not who the Bible proclaims Him to be. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Doug McIntosh has an excellent discussion of this difficult topic - As Israel entered the land of promise, they were told, "When the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy" (Deut. 7:2). Few statements of Scripture have received harsher criticism than this one. It seems to conflict with repeated biblical commands to show mercy to others (see Zech. 7:9; Mic. 6:8; Mt. 23:23). What are we to make of this divinely announced policy of extermination?

In part, the policy represents God's own justice at work through Israel's weapons of war. God waited until this period of time to bring Israel into the land, at the moment Canaanite culture was at its most depraved (cp. Ge 15:16). The Canaanites needed to be judged, and Israel was God's instrument of judgment.

However, it should also be noted that extermination does not represent the standard policy that God commanded Israel to pursue. When describing Israel's behavior toward the inhabitants of Canaan, the normal imperative was not exterminate but drive out: "When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved images and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places" (Nu 33:51-52). Calls to expel or drive out far outnumber commands to kill the Canaanites.

The two commands are actually compatible when seen from God's perspective. He had two primary purposes in bringing Israel into

Canaan. First, he wanted to give the land to Israel and fulfill his promises to the patriarchs. Second, he desired to provide Israel a homeland that was free of the temptations to moral depravity that were part of Canaanite religion. As a result, the culture had to be destroyed—an action as easily accomplished by expulsion as by extermination.

Israel's slow approach over a period of forty years was closely observed by the native peoples (cp. Josh. 2:9-11). Many of them must have left voluntarily as Israel drew near, particularly after the dramatic and early victory at Jericho. Those who held out and remained behind the walls of Canaanite cities would have been the people who had the most to lose by leaving: the civic and religious leaders most committed to the blasphemous and degraded Canaanite cult. God knew that if they survived they would prove enthusiastic evangelists for the twisted cult—and so they did.

Israel's greatest danger would come after the fighting was over, when they saw the survivors of the battles they fought. Their natural inclination would have been to bring those devotees to paganism into their own homes and to adopt their guests' immoral and destructive religious practices. Their most profound danger, in effect, came in showing mercy toward those who posed a lethal danger to them.

Regrettably, that danger became a reality. Because Israel refused to exterminate that hard core of survivors, God's people became infected with idolatry so deeply that they themselves eventually had to be driven from the land. Israel exhibited an incomplete dedication to an important task. They thought so little of God's commands and their own spiritual lives that they permitted small pockets of wickedness to infect their nation.

Believers can make a similar mistake. We are to have no mercy on the sins that lie resident within us. We are persistently and without hesitation to drive them out of our lives, or they will become causes for spiritual stumbling. (See [Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))

[Walter Kaiser in Hard Sayings - scroll down to page 178](#)

Completely Destroy Them! - 1 Samuel 15:18

A chief objection to the view that the God of the Old Testament is a God of love and mercy is the divine command to exterminate all the men, women and children belonging to the seven or eight Canaanite nations. How could God approve of blanket destruction, of the genocide of an entire group of people?

Attempts to tone down the command or to mitigate its stark reality fail from the start. God's instructions are too clear, and too many texts speak of consigning whole populations to destruction: Exodus 23:32–33; 34:11–16; and Deuteronomy 7:1–5; 20:16–18.

In most of these situations, a distinctive Old Testament concept known as *herem* is present. It means “curse,” “that which stood under the ban” or “that which was dedicated to destruction.” The root idea of this term was “separation”; however, this situation was not the positive concept of sanctification in which someone or something was set aside for the service and glory of God. This was the opposite side of the same coin: to set aside or separate for destruction.

God dedicated these things or persons to destruction because they violently and steadfastly impeded or opposed his work over a long period of time. This “dedication to destruction” was not used frequently in the Old Testament. It was reserved for the spoils of southern Canaan (Num 21:2–3), Jericho (Josh 6:21), Ai (Josh 8:26), Makedah (Josh 10:28) and Hazor (Josh 11:11).

In a most amazing prediction, Abraham was told that his descendants would be exiled and mistreated for four hundred years (in round numbers for 430 years) before God would lead them out of that country. The reason for so long a delay, Genesis 15:13–16 explains, was that “the sin of the Amorites [the Canaanites] has not yet reached its full measure.” Thus, God waited for centuries while the Amalekites and those other Canaanite groups slowly filled up their own cups of condemnation by their sinful behavior. God never acted precipitously against them; his grace and mercy waited to see if they would repent and turn from their headlong plummet into self-destruction.

Not that the conquering Israelites were without sin. Deuteronomy 9:5 makes that clear to the Israelites: “It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations.”

These nations were cut off to prevent the corruption of Israel and the rest of the world (Deut 20:16–18). When a nation starts burning children as a gift to the gods (Lev 18:21) and practices sodomy, bestiality and all sorts of loathsome vices (Lev 18:25, 27–30), the day of God's grace and mercy has begun to run out.

Just as surgeons do not hesitate to amputate a gangrenous limb, even if they cannot help cutting off some healthy flesh, so God must do the same. This is not doing evil that good may come; it is removing the cancer that could infect all of society and eventually

destroy the remaining good.

God could have used pestilence, hurricanes, famine, diseases or anything else he wanted. In this case he chose to use Israel to reveal his power, but the charge of cruelty against God is no more deserved in this case than it is in the general order of things in the world where all of these same calamities happen.

In the providential acts of life, it is understood that individuals share in the life of their families and nations. As a result we as individuals participate both in our families' and nations' rewards and in their punishments. Naturally this will involve some so-called innocent people; however, even that argument involves us in a claim to omniscience which we do not possess. If the women and children had been spared in those profane Canaanite nations, how long would it have been before a fresh crop of adults would emerge just like their pagan predecessors?

Why was God so opposed to the Amalekites? When the Israelites were struggling through the desert toward Canaan, the Amalekites picked off the weak, sick and elderly at the end of the line of marchers and brutally murdered these stragglers. Warned Moses, "Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and cut off all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God" (Deut 25:17–18).

Some commentators note that the Amalekites were not merely plundering or disputing who owned what territories; they were attacking God's chosen people to discredit the living God. Some trace the Amalekites' adamant hostility all through the Old Testament, including the most savage butchery of all in Haman's proclamation that all Jews throughout the Persian Empire could be massacred on a certain day (Esther 3:8–11). Many make a case that Haman was an Amalekite. His actions then would ultimately reveal this nation's deep hatred for God, manifested toward the people through whom God had chosen to bless the whole world.

In Numbers 25:16–18 and 31:1–18 Israel was also told to conduct a war of extermination against all in Midian, with the exception of the prepubescent girls, because the Midianites had led them into idolatry and immorality. It was not contact with foreigners per se that was the problem, but the threat to Israel's relationship with the Lord. The divine command, therefore, was to break Midian's strength by killing all the male children and also the women who had slept with a man and who could still become mothers.

The texts of Deuteronomy 2:34; 3:6; 7:1–2 and Psalm 106:34 are further examples of the principle of *herem*, dedicating the residents of Canaan to total destruction as an involuntary offering to God.

See also comment on NUMBERS 25:7–13; 2 KINGS 6:21–23.

[Gleason Archer - Bible Difficulties - scroll to page 161 - Was Joshua justified in exterminating the population of Jericho?](#)

In Joshua 6:21 we read, "And they utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword" (NASB). Verses 22–23 go on to say that Rahab the harlot, who had risked her life in order to save the two Israelite spies who had come earlier in order to reconnoiter the city, was spared from death, along with her entire family—as the two spies had promised that she would be. But everything combustible in the city was put to the torch; and all articles of gold, silver, iron and bronze were devoted to the treasury of the tabernacle.

Such complete destruction might appear to be needlessly harsh, since it included infants who were too young to have committed overt sin, even though the older children and the adults may all have fallen into utter depravity. Should we not understand this severity to be the result of a savage Bedouin mentality on the part of the wilderness warriors rather than a punitive measure ordained of God?

In answer to this humanitarian objection, we need to recognize first of all that the biblical record indicates that Joshua was simply carrying out God's orders in this matter. In other words, the same account that tells of the massacre itself is the account that tells of God's commands to carry it out. Therefore we must recognize that our criticism cannot be leveled at Joshua or the Israelites but at the God whose bidding they obeyed. (Otherwise we must demonstrate our own special competence to correct the biblical record on the basis of our own notions of probability as to what God might or might not decide to do.) If criticism there be, we should not stop there, for the destruction of Jericho was far smaller an affair than the annihilation of the populations of Sodom and Gomorrah and their allies in Genesis 19:24–25. And then again this volcanic catastrophe was far less significant in the loss of life than Noah's Flood, which, except for Noah's family, wiped out the entire human race.

Back in Genesis 15:16 God had forewarned Abraham: "Then in the fourth generation [i.e., in four hundred years, after the migration to Egypt, since Abraham was one hundred before he became the father of Isaac] they [the Israelites] shall return here [to Canaan], for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete" (NASB). The implication of this last statement was that when the wickedness of the inhabitants of Canaan had reached a predetermined accumulation of guilt, then God would have them removed from the Land of Promise intended for Abraham and his seed.

The loss of innocent life in the demolition of Jericho was much to be regretted, but we must recognize that there are times when only radical surgery will save the life of a cancer-stricken body. The whole population of the antediluvian civilization had become hopelessly infected with the cancer of moral depravity (Gen. 6:5). Had any of them been permitted to live while still in rebellion against God, they might have infected Noah's family as well. The same was true of the detestable inhabitants of Sodom, wholly given over to the depravity of homosexuality and rape, in the days of Abraham and Lot. As with the Benjamites of Gibeah at a later period (Judg. 19:22–30; 20:43–48), the entire population had to be destroyed. So also it was with Jericho and Ai as well (Josh. 8:18–26); likewise with Makkedah (Josh. 10:28), Lachish (v.32), Eglon (v.35), Debir (v.39), and all the cities of the Negev and the Shephelah (v.40). In the northern campaign against Hazor, Madon, Shimron, and Achshaph, the same thorough destruction was meted out (Josh. 11:11–14).

In every case the baneful infection of degenerate idolatry and moral depravity had to be removed before Israel could safely settle down in these regions and set up a monotheistic, law-governed commonwealth as a testimony for the one true God. Much as we regret the terrible loss of life, we must remember that far greater mischief would have resulted if they had been permitted to live on in the midst of the Hebrew nation. These incorrigible degenerates of the Canaanite civilization were a sinister threat to the spiritual survival of Abraham's race. The failure to carry through completely the policy of the extermination of the heathen in the Land of Promise later led to the moral and religious downfall of the Twelve Tribes in the days of the Judges (Judg. 2:1–3, 10–15, 19–23). Not until the time of David, some centuries later, did the Israelites succeed in completing their conquest of all the land that had been promised to the descendants of Abraham (cf. Gen. 15:18–21). This triumph was only possible in a time of unprecedented religious vigor and purity of faith and practice such as prevailed under the leadership of King David, "a man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).

In our Christian dispensation true believers possess resources for resisting the corrupting influence of unconverted worldlings such as were hardly available to the people of the old covenant. As warriors of Christ who have yielded our members to Him as "weapons of righteousness" (Rom. 6:13) and whose bodies are indwelt and empowered by God the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), we are well able to lead our lives in the midst of a corrupt and degenerate non-Christian culture (whether in the Roman Empire or in modern secularized Europe or America) and still keep true to God. We have the example of the Cross and the victory of the Resurrection of Christ our Lord, and he goes with us everywhere and at all times as we carry out the Great Commission.

As New Testament believers, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual, "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4–5). These weapons, far mightier than those of Joshua, are able to capture men's hearts for God; and we have no occasion as ambassadors for Christ to resort to physical weapons to protect our faith and land (as the Israelites were compelled to do, if they were to survive spiritually). But on the contrary we carry on a life-saving offensive as fishers of men, and we go after the unsaved and unconverted wherever they are to be found. But we must recognize that our situation is far more advantageous than theirs, and our prospects of victory over the world are far brighter than theirs. For this we can thank God. But we must refrain from condemnation of those who lived in the very different situation that prevailed before the Cross and recognize that they acted in obedience and faith toward God when they carried out his orders concerning the Canaanites.

Deuteronomy 7:3 "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons.

- Ge 6:2,3 Ex 34:15,16 Jos 23:12,13 Jud 3:6,7 1Ki 11:2 Ezr 9:1,2 Ne 13:23-27 2Co 6:14-17
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Genesis 34:9 (cf Ge 34:1-8 - HAMOR THE HIVITE SPEAKS TO JACOB) "Intermarry with us; give your daughters to us and take our daughters for yourselves.

Numbers 33:55+ 'But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come about that **those whom you let remain of them will become as pricks in your eyes and as thorns in your sides, and they will trouble you in the land in which you live.**

Joshua 23:12 "For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and **intermarry with them**, so that you associate with them and they with you, 13 (PROPHETIC WARNING!) know with certainty that the LORD your God will not continue to drive these nations out from

before you; but they will be a **snare** and a **trap** to you, and a **whip** on your sides and **thorns** in your eyes, until (PROPHECY WAS FULFILLED - 722 BC TO ASSYRIA AND 586 BC TO BABYLON) you perish from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

Judges 3:6-7+ The sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; 6 and they took their daughters for themselves as wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and (DISOBEDIENCE HAS CONSEQUENCES = THEY) **served their gods**.

NO INTERMARRIAGE

([COMMANDMENT](#)) **Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them** (literally “not to be son-in-law”); **you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons** - King Solomon, the wisest man in the ancient world disobeyed this command with the result that the kingdom of Israel was split into 10 northern tribes and 2 southern tribes (read this unbelievably sad sordid saga in 1 Kings 11:1-15)

THOUGHT- The choice of a marriage partner for life is one of the most important decisions a man or woman will ever make in their life, because no other single individual has a greater influence on our spiritual lives. Chose wisely!

Utley - This has no racial overtones at all; it was for religious reasons (cf. Ex 34:12–17). The major passages regarding this are in Ezra 10:1-44 and Nehemiah 13:1-31. God did not want His people to marry the Canaanites because of their idolatry, which would pull their heart away from Him and corrupt His revelation of Himself to the world. ([Deuteronomy 7 Commentary](#))

The IVP Bible Background Commentary – In Hittite documents of this period certain cities are designated temple cities and accorded special privileges. In order to protect those privileges, the inhabitants are prohibited from marrying outside the community. In a similar way the entire land of Israel has been designated “God’s land,” and the Israelites are a kingdom of priests. The prohibition against intermarriage therefore protects the privileges of the covenant as well as the purity of their religious ideals. ([The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

Deuteronomy 7:4 "For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.

- **will:** De 6:15 32:16,17 Ex 20:5 Jud 2:11,20 3:7,8 10:6,7
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Nu 25:1-3+ While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot **with the daughters of Moab**.
2 For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.
3 So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the LORD was angry against Israel.

Deut 4:3+ “Your eyes have seen what the LORD has done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed Baal-peor, the LORD your God has destroyed them from among you.

HOW TO MAKE A LOVING GOD VERY ANGRY

For - Term of explanation. Explaining why absolutely no marriages were to take place between the Israelites and the idol worshipping pagans.

([ADMONITION](#)) **They will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you** - This warning should not have even been necessary to the second generation (cf Dt 4:3+) who had witnessed the corruption and destruction of 23,000 fellow Israelites (some might have been close relatives!) who **consorted** with **Baal-Peor** when Moabite women enticed the Israelite men into committing immorality and idolatry (see Idolatry & Immorality - the association & antidote)! As alluded to in the previous verse, one of the best commentaries/illustrations of the entangling effect of enticing women is seen in the life of Solomon

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of

Israel, "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your **HEART** away after their gods." Solomon held fast (HEBREW VERB MEANS "STICK LIKE GLUE!) to these in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his **HEART** away. 4 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his **HEART** away after other gods; and his **HEART** was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the **HEART** of David his father had been. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. 6 Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father had done. (1 Ki 11:1-6)

What makes the preceding illustration even more startling is the fact that it was Solomon who penned the powerful admonitions against immorality in Proverbs 5:1-23+, Proverbs 6:20-35+ and Proverbs 7:1-23+. He also wrote the powerful command in Pr 4:23+ "**Watch** (A COMMAND) over your **HEART** with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life." In addition King Solomon was to have written down and continually read a copy of the law on a scroll, Moses recording

When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' 15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to **multiply horses** (WHICH SOLOMON DID!), since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17 "**He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away** (WHICH HE DID AND PROVED THIS PROPHETIC WARNING TRUE!); nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. 18 "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, **he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.** 19 "**It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,** 20 **that his HEART may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment** (AND YET THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED TO SOLOMON - "For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his **HEART** away after other gods; and his **HEART** was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the **HEART** of David his father had been."), to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel. (Dt 17:14-20+)

Beloved the **HEART** of the problem is the problem of our **HEART** ! So beloved let us not be too hard on King Solomon but each morning carefully look at the mirror and remember we have the same "Adamic virus" in our **HEART** that King Solomon had in his heart. In fact we would all do well to store the following passage in our (Ps 119:9, 11)....

Therefore let him who thinks he stands (LOOK IN THE MIRROR!) **take heed** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) that he does not fall. (1 Cor 10:12+)

Question - [Is it right for a Christian to date or marry a non-Christian?](#)

ANSWER - For a Christian, dating a non-Christian is unwise, and marrying one is not an option. Second Corinthians 6:14 (KJV) tells us not to be "unequally yoked" with an unbeliever. The imagery is of two incompatible oxen sharing the same yoke. Instead of working together to pull the load, they would be working against each other. While this passage does not specifically mention marriage, it definitely has implications for marriage. The passage goes on to say that there is no harmony between Christ and Belial (Satan). There can be no spiritual harmony in a marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian. Paul goes on to remind believers that they are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, who inhabits their hearts at salvation (2 Corinthians 6:15-17). Because of that, they are to be separate from the world—in the world, but not of the world—and nowhere is that more important than in life's most intimate relationship—marriage.

The Bible also says, "Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character'" (1 Corinthians 15:33). Having any kind of intimate relationship with an unbeliever can quickly turn into something that is a hindrance to your walk with Christ. We are called to evangelize the lost, not be intimate with them. There is nothing wrong with building quality friendships with unbelievers, but that is as far as it should go. If you were dating an unbeliever, what would honestly be your priority, romance or winning a soul for Christ? If you were married to an unbeliever, how would the two of you cultivate a spiritual intimacy in your marriage? How could a quality marriage be built and maintained if you disagree on the most crucial issue in the universe—the Lord Jesus Christ? [GotQuestions.org](#)

Deuteronomy 7:5 "But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their *sacred* pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.

- **tear:** De 12:2,3 Ex 23:24 34:13 2Ki 23:6-14
- **pillars,** De 16:22 Lev 26:1
- **hew:** Judges 6:25,26
- **burn:** De 7:25 9:21 Ex 32:20
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 12:2-3+ **"You shall utterly destroy all the places** where the nations whom you shall dispossess serve their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. 3 "You shall tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and burn their Asherim with fire, and you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods and **obliterate their name from that place.**

Exodus 23:24; 33+ "You shall not worship their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their deeds; but you **shall utterly overthrow them and break their sacred pillars in pieces...**33 "They shall not live in your land, **because they will make you sin against Me;** for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you."

Judges 6:25-26+ (GOD TELLS GIDEON) Now on the same night the LORD said to him, "Take your father's bull and a second bull seven years old, and **pull down the altar of Baal** (CONSORT OF ASHERAH) which belongs to your father, and **cut down the Asherah that is beside it** 26 and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of this stronghold in an orderly manner, and take a second bull and offer a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah which you shall cut down."

2 Chronicles 14:3 for he (**GODLY KING ASA OF JUDAH**) removed the foreign altars and high places, tore down the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherim,

2 Chronicles 31:1 (**GODLY KING HEZEKIAH OF JUDAH**) Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah, broke the pillars in pieces, cut down the Asherim and pulled down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, as well as in Ephraim and Manasseh, **until they had destroyed them all.** Then all the sons of Israel returned to their cities, each to his possession.

2 Chronicles 34:4 (**UNDER GODLY KING JOSIAH**) They tore down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars that were high above them he chopped down; also the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images he broke in pieces and ground to powder and scattered it on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them.

2 Chronicles 34:7 (**GODLY KING JOSIAH**) also tore down the altars and beat the Asherim and the carved images into powder, and chopped down all the incense altars throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

Related Resources:

- Wikipedia - [Asherah](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Asherah](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Asherah](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Asherah](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Asherah](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Asherah](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Asherah](#)

But - Term of contrast. This conjunction marks a 180 degree turn (so to speak) away from any association with the pagans or pagan practices and pagan [paraphernalia](#).

Deere - Since the Canaanites were polluting the earth, and since they might endanger Israel's complete subordination to the will of the Lord, they either had to repent or be eliminated. And as stated (Ge 15:16), for 400 years they had refused to repent. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Thus you shall do to them: Here is God's "four part" pattern for eradicating the enticing idols

(**COMMAND**) **You shall tear down their altars-** **Altars** were for worship and the pagans performed abominable deeds of perversion all under the satanic guise of "worship."

Tear down (5422)(nathats) means to pull down, break down, tear down. Literally, for pulling down of a structure such as an altar, a house, a city wall, or a tower, but it lends itself well to figurative use also—for the breaking of the power of a nation or destruction of the life of an individual (Job 19:10). Nathats refers to breaking down of a structure so that it can no longer support its own weight. Most often the word signified the destruction of idolatrous religious structures such as the altars that Israel was commanded to tear down on entering the Promised Land (Dt. 7:5; 12:3; Jdg. 2:2; 2 Chr. 31:1). In the narrative sections of the OT, the word is often used when referring to the destruction of some man-made structure. In the poetic sections of the prophets and wisdom literature, the verb is also used for the destruction of nations and individuals.

([Complete Biblical Library](#) - Nāthats is often used in reference to the tearing down of cultic objects. God commanded Israel to tear down the altars of foreign gods (Exo. 34:13). Here the verb appears alongside of shāvar (HED #8132), "to break in pieces," andkārath (HED #3901), "to cut down" various cultic objects. Jehu and his followers tore down the pillar of Baal and his temple (2 Ki. 10:27). During the reforms of Josiah, the people tore down the houses of the male shrine prostitutes and the high places located at one of the gates of Jerusalem (2 Ki. 23:7f). Archeology has shown that cultic objects were often placed at city gates. The gate at Tel-Dan provides one example.

In a time of war, structures were often torn down. Gideon said he would tear down the tower in Penuel (Judg. 8:9). Abimelech tore down the city of Shechem (Judg. 9:45). The Babylonians broke down the wall of Jerusalem (2 Ki. 25:10). Nebuchadnezzar would break down the towers of Tyre with his axes (Ezek. 26:9).

According to the holiness code, a man was to tear his house down if it had a persistent mildew problem in its walls (Lev. 14:45). If an unclean animal touched an oven or stove, it was to be destroyed (Lev. 11:35).

Most lexicons identify the stem of this verb in Lev. 11:35 as a Hophal and then in parentheses suggest identifying it as a Qal passive. The vocalization and translation of the two forms is the same. Since this verb does not occur in the Hiphil (the active form of the Hophal), and it is very common in the Qal, it is now the general practice to identify the form as a Qal passive rather than a Hophal.

In the prophetic portions of the OT, the use of the verb extends from the realm of pulling down physical objects into the realm of pulling down nations. God appointed Jeremiah over the nations and kingdoms. Part of his ministry included tearing them down (Jer. 1:10). This work paralleled God's work of tearing down nations (18:7; 31:28).

In the poetic literature, the verb applies to the destruction of individuals. Job complained that God had broken him down so that he and his hope were gone (Job 19:10). David prayed that God would break down the wicked and remove them from the land of the living (Ps. 52:5). The title of the Psalm indicates that there was a specific reference to Doeg as the wicked man. (See 1 Sam. 22:9-23 for the account of Doeg.) Psalm 58:6 contains a prayer for God to tear out the fangs of the young lions. This is a metaphorical reference to the wicked.

Nathats - 41 v - break(1), broke down(15), broken(1), broken down(2), demolish(1), destroy(1), pull down(1), pulled down(2), razed(1), smashed(1), tear down(6), tore down(6), torn down(4) Exod. 34:13; Lev. 11:35; Lev. 14:45; Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:3; Jdg. 2:2; Jdg. 6:28; Jdg. 6:30; Jdg. 6:31; Jdg. 6:32; Jdg. 8:9; Jdg. 8:17; Jdg. 9:45; 2 Ki. 10:27; 2 Ki. 11:18; 2 Ki. 23:7; 2 Ki. 23:8; 2 Ki. 23:12; 2 Ki. 23:15; 2 Ki. 25:10; 2 Chr. 23:17; 2 Chr. 31:1; 2 Chr. 33:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; 2 Chr. 34:7; 2 Chr. 36:19; Job 19:10; Ps. 52:5; Ps. 58:6; Isa. 22:10; Jer. 1:10; Jer. 4:26; Jer. 18:7; Jer. 31:28; Jer. 33:4; Jer. 39:8; Jer. 52:14; Ezek. 16:39; Ezek. 26:9; Ezek. 26:12; Nah. 1:6

And smash their sacred pillars - This was another place where lewd pagan practices were carried out. The **pillars** were in effect [phallic](#) stone symbols of the male fertility god, **Ba'al!** ([ISBE](#)) That should tell you everything about why they had to be smashed! The pillars and the Asherah that follow were not actually images in the sense of idols but were used to represent the presence of pagan gods.

Merrill on pillars - was a stela erected at or near a shrine to memorialize some manifestation or act of a deity. [Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#)

Merrill - The "sacred stones" (**pillars**) represented the male procreative aspect of the Canaanite fertility religion; and the **Asherah**, the female. Asherah was also the name of the mother goddess of the Canaanite pantheon, the deity responsible for fertility and the productivity of soil, animals, and humankind. She was represented by either an evergreen tree or by a pole that also spoke of perpetual life. **The cult carried on in their name was of the most sensual and sordid type, one practiced in the temples and also under the open sky at high places and in groves of trees. Prominent in its services was sacred prostitution involving**

priests and priestesses who represented the male and female deities. There is no wonder that such a system had to be eliminated along with its devotees, for Israel was called to be a people entirely opposite in its life and faith. ([New American Commentary - Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

(**Gregory Lint** adds "Their sinfulness is described in Lev. 18:24-30. Archaeological artifacts and epic literature from the Syrian coast at Ras Shamra indicate that the Canaanites were guilty of child sacrifice, idolatry, sacred prostitution and divination in their polytheistic patterns of worship. They had become like a cancer within the human race. Did mercy precede judgment? Repeatedly, the Canaanites were warned about the coming of the Israelites (Josh. 2:8-13). During Israel's desert sojourn, God's mercy was extended for approximately four decades. Rahab, and those with her who exercised faith, were spared in the destruction of Jericho. The Gibeonite population in central Canaan likewise acknowledged "the fame of the Lord [their] God," and were spared destruction (Josh. 9:9-27). As woodcutters and water carriers they were privileged to worship the God of Israel.- CBL)

Smash (break) ([07665](#)) [shabar](#) means to break in pieces, to shatter, to smash, bursting or breaking.. The first biblical occurrence of shabar is in Ge 19:9, where the men of Sodom "pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door." In another use, God says "I will also break down your pride of power" (Lev 26:19). In Ezekiel 6:9 God describes how He has "been hurt (broken) by their adulterous hearts which turned away from" Him "and by their eyes which played the harlot after their idols" (describing faithless Judah now in captivity in Babylon). The Lxx translates **shabar** here with [suntribo](#) which means to cause destruction of something by making it come apart (by shattering, smashing or crushing - the alabaster vial in Mk 14:3+).

Pillars ([04676](#)) [matstsebah](#) from **natsab** = to take a stand) means something set upright, most often "a standing, unhewn block of stone utilized for religious and memorial purposes. After a powerful experience of the Lord in a dream, Jacob set up as a pillar the stone on which he had laid his head, in commemoration of the event (Ge 28:18, 22; cf. Ge 31:45; 35:20). Moses set up an altar and also twelve pillars at the base of Mount Sinai to represent the twelve tribes of Israel (Ex. 24:4). These pillars were erected as monuments to God (Hos. 3:4); or, more commonly, to pagan deities (1 Ki. 14:23, Mic. 5:13). Many times in 2 Kings, the term refers to a sacred pillar that aided people in their worship of pagan gods, especially the Canaanite god Baal. In most of these passages, the sacred columns were used by Israelites, contrary to the Lord's prohibition concerning the worship of any other god (2 Ki. 3:2; 10:26, 27; 18:4; 23:14; cf. Hos. 10:1, 2; Mic. 5:13)." (Baker) [Matstsebah](#) refers to the obelisks which stood at the entrance to the temple of the Sun in the Egyptian city of Heliopolis (Jer. 43:13). According to Heroclitus (II.3), two of these pillars were a hundred cubits high and eight cubits across, and each was a single stone. The word is also used of the statues of Baal ([2 Ki. 3:2](#)) which were erected in the innermost recess of the Temple. Uses in Deuteronomy Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:3; Deut. 16:22;

NET Note - Sacred pillars. The Hebrew word (מַצֵּבֹת, matsevot) denotes a standing pillar, usually made of stone. Its purpose was to mark the presence of a shrine or altar thought to have been visited by deity. Though sometimes associated with pure worship of the LORD (Ge 28:18, 22; 31:13; 35:14; Ex 24:4), these pillars were usually associated with pagan cults and rituals (Ex 23:24; 34:13; Dt 12:3; 1 Kgs 14:23; 2 Kgs 17:10; Hos 3:4; 10:1; Jer 43:13).

The IVP Bible Background Commentary – Standing stones (**pillars**) or *masseboth* were apparently a common feature of Canaanite religion and also appear as memorials in a number of Israelite covenantal contexts (see Ex 24:3-8; Josh 24:25-27). Their association with Asherah, Baal and other Canaanite deities is the basis for their being condemned as rivals and a threat to Yahweh worship. Archaeologists have discovered sacred stones at Gezer, Shechem, Hazor and Arad. In the latter three cases, they are clearly within a sacred precinct and part of the cultic practices at these sites. The Hazor stones include incised representations of upraised arms and a sun disk. ([The IVP Bible Background Commentary](#))

And hew down their Asherim- The refrain here is the same as the preceding passages. The **NASB** note says **Asherim** represents "wooden symbols of a female deity."

Merrill - The **Asherah poles** ('asherah) took their name from the Canaanite deity who was wife or sister of El and goddess of fertility (TDOT 1.441-443). She was commonly associated with clusters of evergreen trees or, in their scarcity, by a wooden pole representative of life and abundance. Her worship also was strongly proscribed, and the poles reminiscent of her powers were to be burned or cut down (Dt 12:3; 16:21; Judg 6:25, 28, 30; 2 Kgs 18:4; 23:6, 14, 15). ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

NET Note- Asherim . A leading deity of the Canaanite pantheon was **Asherah**, wife/sister of **El** and goddess of fertility. She was commonly worshiped at shrines in or near groves of evergreen trees, or, failing that, at places marked by wooden poles (Hebrew אֲשֵׁרִים [asherim], as here). They were to be burned or cut down (Dt 12:3; 16:21; Judg 6:25, 28, 30; 2 Kgs 18:4).

Asherim (0842) (**Asherah**) refers to "poles" representing and/or associated with the goddess Asherah - these poles could be cut down and burned (Judg. 6:25-26). They were made (1Ki 14:15) and set up (1Ki 14:23) after being carved (2Ki 21:7). In many cases, Asherah clearly refers to the deity and not to an image or symbol (Judg. 3:7, 1 Ki. 18:19 and 2 Ki. 23:4).

NIDOTTE - (a) wooden cult-object; pole (Asherah pole); (b) goddess (direct reference not accepted by NIV). Derivation unknown. **Ancient Near Eastern** - Asherah (Aṭīratu/Ašratu/Ašertu) in the second millennium was worshiped from Asia Minor to Mesopotamia. In Ugar. myths she (ʾtṛt) was wife of El and "mother of the gods." She was the goddess (Elat) of Tyre and Sidon. She is ʾtīrat ym: Asherah of the sea. Cf. Akk. ašratum, consort of Amurru (see Lipiński). In the first millennium references to her are found only on the fringes of the culture area, especially in Arabia. It is generally held that the Kuntillet ʾAjrud and Khirbet el-Qôm inscriptions refer to some cultic object associated with Yahweh, and not exclusively—as some still maintain—his consort. Outside of the possible references in the Bible, she is not well attested in the Syria/Palestine region. **OT** Most scholars accept that the word is used as the name of the goddess in 1 Kgs 15:13 (= 2 Chron 15:16); 1 Kgs 18:19; 2 Kgs 21:7; 23:4 (perhaps 7); and the textually doubtful Judg 3:7 (possibly Astarte). All references in the OT, whether to goddess or to the cult object, are uniformly antagonistic. The אֲשֵׁרָה (pole, Asherah) is also said to be used within the worship of Yahweh, but is never approved. The אֲשֵׁרָה was also at times described as being in the temple, either as a symbol in the worship or as the image of a "guest goddess" (2 Kgs 21:7; 23:6). If an image, she could only be the consort of Yahweh, even if Baal was also a "guest god" there. There is apparently no part of the Bible that accepts the poles (אֲשֵׁרָה) as legitimate cult objects, even though the pillars, מַצֵּבָה, are sometimes accepted (Gen 28:18; perhaps Hos 3:4). LXX translates this word as λσος, sacred grove, which is also the meaning as understood in Jewish literature (cf. Abodah Zarah). This association was unchallenged (cf. AV) until the Babylonian evidence was studied (cf. RV, BDB).

W E Vine - **ashērâ** refers to a cultic object representing the presence of the Canaanite goddess Asherah. When the people of Israel entered Palestine, they were to have nothing to do with the idolatrous religions of its inhabitants. Rather, God said, "But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves [ʾashērîm]..." (Exod. 34:13). This cult object was manufactured from wood (Judg. 6:26; 1 Kings 14:15) and it could be burned (Deut. 12:3). Some scholars conclude that it was a sacred pole set up near an altar to Baal. Since there was only one goddess with this name, the plural (ʾashērîm) probably represents her several "poles." ʾashērâ signifies the name of the goddess herself: "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves [ʾashērâ] four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table" (1 Kings 18:19). The Canaanites believed that ʾashērâ ruled the sea, was the mother of all the gods including Baal, and sometimes was his deadly enemy. Apparently, the mythology of Canaan maintained that ʾashērâ was the consort of Baal, who had displaced El as their highest god. Thus her sacred objects (poles) were immediately beside altars to Baal, and she was worshiped along with him. ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

Victor Hamilton - To turn to the OT, there is no actual description of an Asherah there. Was it a tree, a pole, some kind of tree symbol, an image? It apparently was not a natural object but one that was constructed by man, an artifact. It was "made": 1 Kings 16:33; 2 Kings 17:16; 2 Kings 21:3; it was "set up": 2 Kings 17:10; 2 Chron. 33:19; Isaiah 27:9; it was "built": 1 Kings 14:23. Only once is the verb "to plant" used, Deut. 16:21, and here the meaning is "implant." The conclusion then is that in the OT Asherah stands for the Canaanite goddess represented by a carved wooden image implanted into the ground, usually adjacent to an altar dedicated to the god Baal and located on a hilltop under a leafy tree (Patai). **It is in the period of the divided monarchy that the Asherah cult flourished both in Israel and Judah**, though its existence before is documented by the command in Exodus 34:13, the prohibition of Deut. 16:21, and the incident at the threshold of Gideon's life of service to God, Judges 6:25ff. Rehoboam's career marks the beginning of this in Judah (1 Kings 14:23). In the north the cult received its greatest momentum from the incentive of Jezebel who was responsible for the presence of "four hundred prophets of Asherah" (1 Kings 18:19). Even a reform-minded king such as Asa (1 Kings 15:13) or later Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4) was unable to liquidate the movement. It was knocked down, but not knocked out. There was an almost inevitable resurrection even in the wake of reform. Compare son Manasseh's policy (2 Kings 21:7, even to the point of placing the image in the temple) on the heels of father Hezekiah's reform (2 Kings 18:4). Apostasy and idolatry just behind revival! What one generation attempts to get rid of a subsequent generation may trot back in, however reprehensible it may be. All too frequently this has been the pattern in the human race. (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

Strong's - Ashera(h) = "groves (for idol worship)" 1) a Babylonian (Astarte)-Canaanite goddess (of fortune and happiness), the supposed consort of Baal, her images 1a) the goddess, goddesses 1b) her images 1c) sacred

trees or poles set up near an altar Note that all uses of Asherah in the King James Version translate it as **grove**. (NIV translates it by the name but adds "poles" after many of the uses).

Asherim - 40x in the OT - Asherah(18), Asherim(20), Asheroth(2). Ex 34:13; Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:3; Deut. 16:21; Jdg. 3:7; Jdg. 6:25; Jdg. 6:26; Jdg. 6:28; Jdg. 6:30; 1 Ki. 14:15; 1 Ki. 14:23; 1 Ki. 15:13; 1 Ki. 16:33; 1 Ki. 18:19; 2 Ki. 13:6; 2 Ki. 17:10; 2 Ki. 17:16; 2 Ki. 18:4; 2 Ki. 21:3; 2 Ki. 21:7; 2 Ki. 23:4; 2 Ki. 23:6; 2 Ki. 23:7; 2 Ki. 23:14; 2 Ki. 23:15; 2 Chr. 14:3; 2 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr. 17:6; 2 Chr. 19:3; 2 Chr. 24:18; 2 Chr. 31:1; 2 Chr. 33:3; 2 Chr. 33:19; 2 Chr. 34:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; 2 Chr. 34:7; Isa. 17:8; Isa. 27:9; Jer. 17:2; Mic. 5:14

Related Resources:

And burn their graven images with fire - (Repeated in Dt 7:25+) - The idols were only good for the fire! If left they would feed the sinful "fire" which smolders in everyone's heart because of the residual sin principle of Adam in believers and non-believers alike!

Graven images (06456)(**pasil** from **pasal** = to hew into shape) an image that was carved. An idol was most commonly shaped from wood or stone and represented the image of a pagan deity for the purpose of religious worship. The idols were to be burned (Dt. 7:5, 25); and cut down (Dt. 12:3); for they provoked God to anger (Ps. 78:58; Jer. 8:19); and incited Him to judgment (Jer. 51:47, 52; Micah 1:7; 5:13). The presence of these idols were indicative of the sin and rebellion of the people (2 Chr. 33:19, 22; Hos. 11:2); while the removal of such idols was a sign of repentance (2 Chr. 34:3, 4, 7; Isa. 30:22).

Pasil - carved images(6), engraved images(1), graven images(7), idols(8), images(1). Deut. 7:5; Deut. 7:25; Deut. 12:3; Jdg. 3:19; Jdg. 3:26; 2 Ki. 17:41; 2 Chr. 33:19; 2 Chr. 33:22; 2 Chr. 34:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; 2 Chr. 34:7; Ps. 78:58; Isa. 10:10; Isa. 21:9; Isa. 30:22; Isa. 42:8; Jer. 8:19; Jer. 50:38; Jer. 51:47; Jer. 51:52; Hos. 11:2; Mic. 1:7; Mic. 5:13

Deuteronomy 7:6 "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

- **holy**: De 14:2 26:19 28:9 Ex 19:5,6 Ps 50:5 Jer 2:3 Am 3:2 1Co 6:19,20 Titus 2:14 2Pe 2:5,9
- **His own possession** Mal 3:17 Titus 2:14
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 14:2+ "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for His own **possession** (Lxx = **periousios**) out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

Deuteronomy 26:18+ "The LORD has today declared you to be His people, a **treasured possession** (Lxx = **periousios**), as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments;

Psalms 135:4 For the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His own **possession**. (**periousiasmos** = wealth, treasure)

Deut 4:37+ "Because He loved your fathers, therefore **He chose their descendants after them**. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power,

ISRAEL WAS GOD'S TREASURED POSSESSION

For - Term of explanation. Explains why the Israelites were to completely destroy all the vestiges of pagan idolatry. Pagan influence pollutes that which is holy. I

McIntosh - Perhaps more than any other chapter of Scripture, Deuteronomy 7 flies in the face of the modern passion for political correctness. In this chapter Israel is given property at the expense of a group of resident ethnic groups and told to eradicate them from the land. It was not because of their moral superiority, however, that they were chosen for such elevation. Israel was simply regarded as a people holy or separate by virtue of their relationship with God. It was God's choice, and not their superior behavior, that made them special in his sight, his treasured possession. (Holman Old Testament Commentary)

You are a holy (Lxx = [hagios](#)) **people to the LORD your God**- Israel was set apart from the pagan world and unto God, for His special use. They were to be exclusively the LORD's and completely separated from the pagan practices of idolatry. Israel was holy in their position and thus were to be holy in their conduct. They were to behave differently than the godless, idolatrous pagans.

THOUGHT - The description of Israel recalls the words of Peter directed to those who had been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, **fix your hope** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, **be** ([aorist imperative](#)) holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY." 17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, **conduct** ([aorist imperative](#)) yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; 18 knowing **that you were not redeemed** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.(1 Peter 1:13-19+)

Another passage that provides an excellent commentary/application is found in 2 Corinthians 6

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 Do not be bound together with unbelievers (PICTURE 2 OXEN YOKED BUT PULLING DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS); for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? 16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. 17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. 18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty. 1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth - **ESV, NIV** = "treasured possession." **NET** = "prized above all others." **NLT** = "the LORD your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure" The fact that they were Yahweh's **treasured possession** gave them no basis for pride, but it did impose on them a solemn responsibility to give a proper opinion to the pagans of Yahweh's character and attributes.

Moses' charge to this second generation as **holy** and as Yahweh's (treasured) **possession** echoes the charge Yahweh instructed Moses to give to the first generation after they had arrived at Mt Sinai...

'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be **My own possession** (Lxx = [periousios](#)) among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and **a holy nation**.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." (Exodus 19:5-6+)

Merrill - To put these sublime theological ideas together more tightly, one could say: God chose Israel, setting them apart for divine service, thereby making them the special object of his affection ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

Utley makes an interesting statement that " OT election (i.e., "**chosen**"—Qal, PERFECT) was for service, which did not always involve salvation (cf. Cyrus in Isa. 44:28; 45:1)." "**Chosen**," like "holy," had more to do with their relationship to YHWH than personal piety...God chose Israel to choose a nation to choose a world (cf. Ex 19:5–6). He wants a "holy people" to show the world His character and desire to know Him. But, even within that nation, it was always an individual act of faith that made a person right with God, not simply being a part of the (CHOSEN) covenant community (cf. Ezekiel 18). ([Deuteronomy 7 Commentary](#))

Deere - The word translated **chosen** means "to be chosen for a task or a vocation." God had selected Israel as His means of sanctifying **the earth**. (**ED**: see POSB comment below) ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Raymond Brown adds that God "deliberately chose Israel, however, to be a special instrument of his purposes in the world...election is not simply to privilege but to service. Peter gave expression to this important aspect of the theme when he applied Israel's great names and titles to the church and said that believers are 'a chosen people . . . a holy nation, a people belonging to God' that they might 'declare the praises' of the Lord who has called them 'out of darkness into his wonderful light'.(1 Peter 2:9) **Biblical election has an evangelistic purpose**. God's plan for Israel was that she should be a blessing to others—"a light for the Gentiles", a 'kingdom of priests' serving as his representatives among the nations, a missionary people, a moral testimony, a model of God-centred community living, a reflection of his own holy, righteous and loving character. Those additional aspects of the 'chosen people' story are expounded elsewhere in the Old Testament, but it is important to mention them here to provide the necessary perspective. God's people received the truth of their election in stages; all was not revealed at a single

moment. At this particular moment in their history it was more important that the Hebrew people should possess the land than convert the nations. (The Bible Speaks Today – The Message of Deuteronomy: Not by bread alone)

Kalland comments that Israel was "His "treasured possession" (*segullah*), i.e., something of great value owned completely by him. These two ideas—personal ownership and treasured value—are evident in *segullah* ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

POSB adds that Israel was to "Go forth and conquer all the enemies of the promised land. This you are to do for a very special reason: you are holy, set apart to God. You are chosen to be His special people, His **special treasure**—the people who are totally committed to God, committed to love and obey Him. **You are chosen to be His witnesses to the immoral, lawless, and violent peoples of the earth—witnesses to the only living and true God**" (Isaiah 43:10). ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

THOUGHT - The Septuagint translates **possession** with the adjective **periousios** which describes property owned as a rich and distinctive possession (Used 5x in the Septuagint - Ex 19:5; Ex 23:22; Dt. 7:6; Dt 14:2; Dt. 26:18). It is used only in Titus 2:14+ to describe believers, Paul writing that Christ "gave Himself for us to **redeem** (**lutroo**) us from every lawless deed, and to purify (**katharizo**) for Himself a people for His own **possession** (**periousios**) zealous for **good deeds**." Given the fact that believers are not our own (but bought with a price 1 Cor 6:19-20+) and belong to Christ as His special treasure, the question we each need to ask is are we carrying out the mission of our Master? Are we being zealous for good ("God") deeds, especially the proclamation of the Gospel? **Peter** writes "But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, **so that** (EVERY BELIEVER'S PURPOSE - ARE YOU FULFILLING YOUR PURPOSE?) **you may proclaim the excellencies of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.**" (1 Peter 2:9+)

Possession (05459) **segullah** is related to an Akkadian cognate, sikiltu, means "private possessions." **Segullah** refers to a treasured possession, that which is valued personal property, that which is owned by someone and in which the owner has special affection or holds special value (Ex 19:5; Dt 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ps 135:4; Mal 3:17). **Segullah** most frequently occurs in reference to something God chooses, here referring to Israel, who God choose from all the nations of the world (Ex 19:5, Dt 7:6, 14:2). **Segullah** speaks of personal wealth in 1Ch 29:3, Eccl 2:8.

NET Note on **own possession** - Or "treasured" (so NIV, NRSV); NLT "his own special treasure." The Hebrew term סְגֻלָּה (séggullah) describes Israel as God's choice people, those whom he elected and who are most precious to him (cf. Exod 19:4–6; Deut 14:2; 26:18; 1 Chr 29:3; Ps 135:4; Eccl 2:8 Mal 3:17). See E. Carpenter, NIDOTTE 3:224.

Chosen (0977) (**bahar/bachar**) in most contexts means to choose or to select. To take a keen look at, to prove, to choose. It denotes a choice, which is based on a thorough examination of the situation and not an arbitrary whim. Lot choose Sodom (Ge 13:11). Moses chose able men (Ex 18:25). "Theologically, **bāchar** asserts the sovereignty of God in all of life. It affirms divine omnipotence and capacity for choice and in so doing declares that purpose and personality, expressing itself in agape love, lie at the heart of reality." (Gilbrant) TWOT adds that bahar/bachar is often "used to express that choosing which has ultimate and eternal significance." "Bāḥar is used 30 times in Deuteronomy, all but twice referring to God's "choice" of Israel or something in Israel's life." (Vine)

Vine - **Bāḥar** first occurs in the Bible in Ge. 6:2. It is often used with a man as the subject: Lot (Ge 13:11). In more than half of the occurrences, God is the subject of bāḥar, as in Nu 16:5: "even the one whom He will choose, He will bring near to Himself." Neh 9:7-8 describes God "chose Abram". Bāḥar is used 30 times in Deuteronomy, all but twice referring to God's "choice" of Israel or something in Israel's life. "He chose their descendants after them." (Dt. 4:37). Being "chosen" by God brings people into an intimate relationship with Him: " ... The children of the Lord your God: ... the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth" (Dt. 14:1-2). God's "choices" shaped the history of Israel; His "choice" led to their redemption from Egypt (Dt. 7:7-8), sent Moses and Aaron to work miracles in Egypt (Ps. 105:26-27), and gave them the Levites "to bless in the name of the Lord" (Dt. 21:5). He "chose" their inheritance (Ps 47:4), including Jerusalem, where He dwelt among them (Dt. 12:5; 2 Chr. 6:5, 21). But " they have **chosen** their own ways, And their soul delights in their abominations,4 So I will **choose** their punishments And will bring on them what they dread." (Isa. 66:3-4). The covenant called men to respond to God's election: " ... I have set before you life and death ...: therefore **choose** life ..." (Dt. 30:19; cf. Josh. 24:22). The Greek Septuagint version translated bāḥar chiefly by eklegein (**eklego**).

Uses of bahar/bachar in Deuteronomy - Deut. 4:37; Deut. 7:6; Deut. 7:7; Deut. 10:15; Deut. 12:5; Deut. 12:11; Deut. 12:14; Deut. 12:18; Deut. 12:21; Deut. 12:26; Deut. 14:2; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 14:24; Deut. 14:25; Deut. 15:20; Deut. 16:2; Deut. 16:6; Deut. 16:7; Deut. 16:11; Deut. 16:15; Deut. 16:16; Deut. 17:8; Deut. 17:10; Deut. 17:15; Deut. 18:5; Deut. 18:6; Deut. 21:5; Deut. 23:16; Deut. 26:2; Deut. 30:19; Deut. 31:11

Deuteronomy 7:6 - When pirates roamed the oceans stealing gold and valuables from ships, people lived in fear. Many pirates buried their treasure on deserted islands with the intention of going back for it later. Much of this treasure has never been recovered.

You are God's precious silver and gold (1Pe 2:9, Titus 2:14, 1Cor 6:20). He values you above anything else he has created. He doesn't bury you or hide you away where no one else can see you. Instead, he shows you off to the world. "Here's my wealth!" he shouts to the nations as he proudly holds you high in his hands. You are God's gift to the world.

Buried treasure can't make a difference; it can't buy food or clothing or heal the sick. God chooses to use you to show others the love of God.

How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver. Proverbs 16:16 NASB (from [Quiet Moments Alone with God](#))

Deuteronomy 7:7 "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples,

- **The Lord:** Ps 115:1 Ro 9:11-15,18,21 11:6 1Jn 3:1 4:10
- **were:** De 10:22 Isa 51:2 Mt 7:14 Lu 12:32 Ro 9:27-29
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)
-

GOD'S UNMERITED LOVE AND CHOOSING

([ADMONITION](#)) **The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose ([bahar/bachar](#)) you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples** - NET = "It is not because you were more numerous than all the other peoples that the LORD favored and chose you." The basis of his Covenant with Israel is not obligation springing from their merits, but simply His love that binds His heart to them. This truth would (should) do away with any tendency of Israel to be prideful. They had done nothing to merit God's election!

Utley - This verse accentuates the unmerited, undeserved mercy, grace, and love of God! As a matter of fact, Israel was difficult to love because of her stiffnecked stubbornness (cf. Dt 9:6, 13; Dt 31:27). God's grace is displayed even more clearly because of Israel's rebellion! ([Deuteronomy 7 Commentary](#))

Kline - In his sovereign love and faithfulness alone was to be found the explanation of Israel's election (Dt 4:37), certainly not in the nation's size. For God chose their father Abraham, being only one, and the family of Jacob, which descended into Egypt as only some seventy souls (Dt 7:7; cf. Dt 10:22). It followed from the sovereignty of God's grace that Israel had no claims upon Him that might encourage carelessness with respect to his covenant demands and sanctions ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

James Coakley - God's sovereign covenantal love was set in motion on one man Abraham (Gn 12:1-2), whose family then grew in size to 70 (Dt 10:22) and then ultimately to the size it was at this point in their history. ([Moody Bible Commentary](#))

Utley's SPECIAL TOPIC: [YHWH'S GRACE ACTS TO ISRAEL](#) - It must be stated clearly that the Exodus, the Wilderness Wandering, and the Conquest were grace acts on YHWH's part, not merited rewards due to Israel's actions:

1. It was YHWH's love for "the fathers"—Deut. 4:37-38; 7:8; 10:15
2. It was not Israel's number—Deut. 7:7
3. It was not Israel's strength and power—Deut. 8:17
4. It was not Israel's righteousness or uprightness—Deut. 9:5-6
5. YHWH continues to love Israel even amidst judgment—Jer. 31:3+

Deuteronomy 7:8 but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

- **because:** De 4:37 9:4,5 10:15 1Sa 12:22 2Sa 22:20 Ps 44:3 Isa 43:4 Jer 31:3 Zep 3:17 Mt 11:26 Eph 2:4,5 2Th 2:13,14 Titus 3:3-7 1Jn 4:19
- **swore:** Ge 22:16-18 Ex 32:13 Ps 105:8-10,42 Lu 1:55,72,73 Heb 6:13-17
- **Lord brought:** De 4:20,34 Ex 12:41,42 13:3,14 20:2
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Ex 6:6 Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. **I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.**

Ex 13:15' It came about, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore, I sacrifice to the LORD the males, the first offspring of every womb, but every firstborn of my sons I **redeem.**'

Exodus 15:13 "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom **You have redeemed**; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation.

THE LORD'S DELIVERANCE BASED ON LOVE AND COVENANT FAITHFULNESS

But - Term of contrast. He had just stated why God did not chose Israel. He now tells why He chose Israel.

Because the LORD loved ([ahab/ahab](#)) you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers- Two reasons are given for God's choosing of Israel. **First** He loved them, but it was love not motivated by merit. The fact is stated plainly He loved them because He chose to love them. There are some things we simply cannot explain which reminds me of Deut 29:29, "the secret things belong to the LORD." Merrill refers to it as "elective grace." The **second** reason was because of God's oath to keep the Abrahamic Covenant (**oath which He swore**). **Kept** ([shamar](#)) is translated in the Septuagint with the verb [diatero](#) (in present tense = continually) meaning to continually carefully remember words, even treasuring them (as in Lk 2:51). This is a key truth for it was because of God's unconditional covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that He had chosen Israel as a holy nation.

Thompson says "The ultimate cause for that choice (Dt 7:7) lay in the mystery of divine love. Yet the fact is that God did love Israel and did choose her, thereby honouring his promise to the fathers." (TOTC-Deuteronomy)

POSB - Long before—far, far back in antiquity—the whole earth lay in wickedness. Immorality, lawlessness, and violence swept the earth. Few persons, if any, obeyed God. There were no righteous persons upon earth. God had no choice but to start all over, and this He did by choosing one man, Abraham. God made several great promises to Abraham if he would just follow and obey God: the promise of the promised land, the promise of the promised seed, the coming Messiah and Savior of the world, the promise of a great nation of people. It was from Abraham that God's people had been born. The present generation of Israelites standing before Moses were the descendants of Abraham. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

Guzik on God's **love** for Israel - Their motivation for such a total obedience was to be that they knew they were loved by God. This is the great motivation for obedience: knowing and walking in the love of God. When we really believe God loves us, and live with that belief as a conscious fact, we find it so much easier to obey – and to utterly destroy anything that would damage that relationship of love.

NET Note on **love** -The verb אָהַב ('ahav, "to love") as a term of choice or election.The concept of love here is not primarily that of emotional affection but of commitment or devotion. This verse suggests that God chose Israel to be his special people because he loved the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) and had promised to bless their descendants.

Kept (guard, observe, watch) (08104) [shamar](#) means to keep, watch, preserve, to guard, to be careful, to watch over, to watch carefully over, to be on one's guard. The first use of **shamar** in Ge 2:15 is instructive as Adam was placed in the garden (a perfect environment) and was commanded to "**keep**" it which in the [Septuagint](#) is translated with [phulasso](#) (which is used to translate many of the OT uses of **shamar**) which means to guard like a military sentinel would at his post. Clearly Adam did not do a good job at "keeping" the garden safe from intruders! And because of this failure he was cast out of the garden and angels stationed to

"guard (Lxx = [phulasso](#)) the way to the tree of life" so that he would not eat of it (Ge 3:24). After Cain murdered Abel he answered God "Am I my brother's **keeper**?" (Ge 3:24)

Shamar in 65 verses in Deuteronomy (out of 441 v in the OT) **Note 5 uses in Deuteronomy 6** - Deut. 2:4; Deut. 4:2; Deut. 4:6; Deut. 4:9; Deut. 4:15; Deut. 4:23; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 5:10; Deut. 5:12; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:3; Deut. 6:12; Deut. 6:17; Deut. 6:25; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:11; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 10:13; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:16; Deut. 11:22; Deut. 11:32; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:13; Deut. 12:19; Deut. 12:28; Deut. 12:30; Deut. 12:32; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 15:9; Deut. 16:1; Deut. 16:12; Deut. 17:10; Deut. 19:9; Deut. 23:9; Deut. 23:23; Deut. 24:8; Deut. 26:16; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 26:18; Deut. 27:1; Deut. 28:1; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 29:9; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 33:9;

([REMEMBRANCE](#)) **The LORD brought you out by a mighty hand**(power) - God's love of Israel and His faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant, led Him to **Mighty hand** is literally in Hebrew "by a strong hand," the idea of **hand** speaking of power, in God's case omnipotent power!

Deere - The Lord had promised the patriarchs (ABRAHAMIC COVENANT) that their descendants would become a mighty nation and inherit the land of Canaan (Gen. 17:7-8; 26:3-5, 24; 28:13-15), and He would always be faithful to His Word (cf. Heb. 6:13-18). For that reason He brought Israel out... from the land of slavery (cf. Ex. 13:3, 14; 20:2; Deut. 5:6; 6:12; 8:14; 13:5, 10).([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Mighty hand - Exod. 32:11; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 6:21; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 9:26; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 26:8; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34; Dan. 9:15; 1 Pet. 5:6

([REMEMBRANCE](#)) **And redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand**(power) **of Pharaoh king of Egypt - Redeemed** by the blood of a Passover lamb which pointed to eternal redemption provided by the blood of the Passover Lamb of God. God had chosen and redeemed Israel from slavery and they needed to obey God and totally destroy the idolatrous pagans lest they become slaves again, but this time spiritual slaves to the idols of the pagans!

NET Note on **redeemed** - Redeeming you from the place of slavery. The Hebrew verb translated "**redeemed**" (from the root **פָּדָה**, **padah**) has the idea of redemption by the payment of a ransom. The initial symbol of this was the Passover lamb, offered by Israel to the LORD as ransom in exchange for deliverance from bondage and death (Ex 12:1–14+). Later, the firstborn sons of Israel, represented by the Levites, became the ransom (Nu 3:11–13). These were all types of the redemption effected by the death of Christ who described His atoning work as "**a ransom for many**" (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45+, cf. 1 Pe 1:18+).

Redeemed (06299) **padah** means to redeem, ransom, buy and so to cause the freedom or release of a person from bondage or ownership, often implying a delivering or rescue of a person in distress. The basic meaning of the Hebrew root is to achieve the transfer of ownership from one to another through payment of a price or an equivalent substitute. **Padah** is used to depict God's act of redeeming; He **redeemed** His people with a mighty hand from Pharaoh and the slavery they were under in Egypt (Dt. 7:8; Mic. 6:4). Egypt was literally the house of slavery and became the symbol of slavery and oppression from which Israel was delivered (Dt. 9:26; 24:18). **Padah** is translated in the Septuagint with **lutroo** (from **luo** = to loosen that which is bound, especially freeing those in prison) refers to the releasing of someone held captive (e.g., a prisoner or a slave) on receipt of the ransom payment.

So while **Yahweh redeemed Israel in the past**, there is a **future redemption predicted** in Psalm 130:7-8

O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD there is lovingkindness, And with Him is abundant redemption.

And **He will redeem** (Heb = [padah](#); Lxx = [lutroo](#)) **Israel From all his iniquities.**

Comment: I agree with the [Moody Bible Commentary](#) - In response to the forgiveness of God, Israel is reminded to hope in the LORD (cf. Ps 130:5). This hope is linked to the lovingkindness (cf. Ps 5:7). While this exhortation certainly includes the general desire to see His people blessed spiritually (i.e., "saved" in the sense typically intended in the NT, as in Ro 10:9) in every age and generation, **the psalmist's primary reference in this last section is to that day when God will redeem Israel from all his iniquities, that same day of which Zechariah and Paul wrote** (Zech 12:10–14+, Zech 13:1+; Ro 11:25–27+; see comments there).

Uses of Padah in Deuteronomy - Deut. 7:8; Deut. 9:26; Deut. 13:5; Deut. 15:15; Deut. 21:8; Deut. 24:18;

Deuteronomy 7:9 "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

- **the faithful:** Ex 34:6,7 Ps 119:75 146:6 Isa 49:7 La 3:23 1Co 1:9 10:3 2Co 1:18 1Th 5:24 2Th 3:3 2Ti 2:13 Titus 1:2 Heb 6:18 10:23 Heb 11:11 1Jn 1:9
- **keep:** De 5:10 Ge 17:7 Ex 20:6 Ne 1:5 Da 9:4 Ro 8:28 1Co 8:3 Jas 1:12
- **a thousand:** 1Ch 16:15
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

TAKE THIS TRUTH TO HEART

(**EXHORTATION**) **Know** ([yada](#) - perfect tense - lasting knowledge) **therefore that the LORD your God, He is God** ("He is the true God" - NET) - **Therefore** is a conclusion based on the fact that Yahweh's hand was stronger than Pharaoh's hand and He delivered Israel, something only He could have accomplished. In other words they are to **know** that Yahweh is the only true God and He is their God ("your God") Note that "know" speaks of knowing intimately (cf Adam "knowing" Eve - Ge 4:1) and the Lxx uses [ginosko](#) which speaks of experiential knowledge.

This thought that Israel was to know Yahweh was the only God was described earlier

Deuteronomy 4:35 "To you it was shown **that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him.**

Deuteronomy 4:39 "**Know** therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD, **He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.**

Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel! **The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!**

(**PROMISE**) **The faithful God, Who keeps** ([shamar](#); Lxx = [phulasso](#)) **His covenant - Know** also that Yahweh is absolutely dependable to fulfill His covenant promises.

Faithful (0539) [aman](#) conveys the basic idea of providing stability and confidence. To be steady, firm and thus trustworthy. Aman speaks of certainty and thus can mean to confirm or to affirm. Lxx translates with [pistos](#) meaning trustworthy, dependable, inspiring trust or faith.

And His lovingkindness ([hesed/chesed/heced](#)) - Most commentators link **lovingkindness** with covenant, so that God is loyal to His covenant.

Merrill explains that "Parties to a bilateral covenant express their mutual commitment by pledging their *hesed*, and so here the Lord speaks of himself as one who is covenantally loyal to those who love (*'āhēb*) him and keep his commands (*mišwōt*), that is, his covenant and all its terms.

(New American Commentary - Volume 4: Deuteronomy)

Lovingkindness (02617) ([hesed/chesed/heced](#)) is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [cp Hos 2:18-20-see [note](#), Is 54:5, Je 31:32+] = His "loyalty to covenant"). God's **hesed** denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man with love and mercy (cp God immediately seeking man Ge 3:9+, who was immediately hiding Ge 3:8+ trying to cover their shame Ge 3:7 - contrast God's lovingkindness manifest by spilling blood to provide skins to cover their shame! Ge 3:21+). **Hesed** expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people along with a faithfulness to keep His promises. The **Septuagint (LXX)** usually translates **hesed** with the Greek word [eleos](#) (or the related verb [eleeo](#)) while the Latin Vulgate uses the word *miser cordia* (mercy + heart).

Vine adds that "In general, one may identify three basic meanings of **hesed**, and these 3 meanings always interact -- **strength**, **steadfastness**, and **love**. Any understanding of **hesed** that fails to suggest all three inevitably loses some of its richness. **Love** by itself easily becomes sentimentalized or universalized apart from the covenant. Yet **strength** or **steadfastness** suggests only the fulfillment of a legal (or similar) obligation. **Hesed** refers primarily to mutual and reciprocal rights and obligations between the parties of a relationship (especially Jehovah and Israel). But **hesed** is not only a matter of obligation but is also of generosity. It is not only a matter of loyalty, but also of mercy. **Hesed** implies personal involvement and commitment in a relationship beyond the rule of law.

To a thousandth generation - The idea is endlessly or forever.

With those who love Him and keep ([shamar](#); Lxx = [phulasso](#) - present tense - continually keep) **His commandments** - If you love Him, you will show by obedience. Our actions speak louder than our words. Jesus said ""If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." (Jn 14:15)

Love (0157)([ahab/ahab](#)) means to love and can convey the idea of liking things (like bribes - Isa 1:23, wisdom - Pr 4:6, wine - Pr 21:17, peace and truth - Zech 8:19, food - Ge 27:4, 9, 14). The most important uses in the OT are as an expression of God's love of people (Dt 4:37, Hosea 3:1), man's love for God (Ex 20:6, Ps 116:1) and man's love for his fellow man (Ge 29:32, Ru 4:15-[note](#), 1 Kings 11:1 = a *forbidden* love by backslidden King Solomon!!!) The first use of aheb in the OT is instructive as it is found in Ge 22:2 where Yahweh instructed his servant Abraham to ""Take now your son, your only son, whom you **love**, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." Notice that at the outset, we see that an inherent quality of this love (in many contexts) is that it is costly. God wants us to love Him above EVERYTHING, even our own flesh and blood. Aheb/ahab is translated in Septuagint with [agapao](#) (present tense - continually).

Deuteronomy 7:10 but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face.

- **repays:** De 7:9 32:35,41 Ps 21:8,9 Pr 11:31 Isa 59:18 Na 1:2 Ro 12:19
- **delay:** De 32:25 2Pe 3:9,10
- **hate:** Ex 20:5 Joh 15:23-24
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Exodus 20:5 "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of **those who hate Me**,

Psalms 68:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. A Song. Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, And let those who hate Him flee before Him.

Ps 81:15 "Those who hate the LORD would pretend obedience to Him, And their time of punishment would be forever.

Ps 83:2 For behold, Your enemies make an uproar, And those who hate You have exalted themselves.

Ps 139:21 Do I not hate those who hate You, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You

DIVINE RETRIBUTION

([PROMISE](#)) **But repays** (recompenses, requites) **those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them**- The point is that Yahweh will judge rebellious persons in Israel for their sin.

Grant - The term "**hate**" in this context indicates those who refuse to acknowledge, or to be faithful, to the covenant. [What the Bible Teaches](#))

He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face- This is a frightening picture because the judgment will be swift and "in your face" (so to speak)

Kline - Alluding to the sanction formulae which are affixed to the second commandment, Moses declared that though unmerited grace would be continued to the thousandth generation (Dt 5:10), apostate despisers of grace and holiness would discover that the covenant curses were not idle threats (Dt 7:9-11). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

Deuteronomy 7:11 "Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them.

- De 4:1 5:32 Joh 14:15
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

THE CONCLUSION IS KEEP AND DO THEM

Therefore - Based on the preceding truths of His faithfulness to those who love Him and His rapid retribution of those who hate Him we have the following conclusion.

([EXHORTATION](#))([COMMAND](#)) **You shall keep** ([shamar](#); Lxx = [phulasso](#)) **the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them** - **Keep** them (guard them) and **do** (obey) them.

Uses in Deuteronomy: commandment...statutes...judgments...

Commandments - [mitsvah](#) - Deut. 4:2; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:10; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:17; Deut. 6:25; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:11; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 10:13; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:13; Deut. 11:22; Deut. 11:27; Deut. 11:28; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 15:5; Deut. 17:20; Deut. 19:9; Deut. 26:13; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 26:18; Deut. 27:1; Deut. 27:10; Deut. 28:1; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:13; Deut. 28:15; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 30:8; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:11; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 31:5;

Statutes - [hoq/choq](#) - Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:6; Deut. 4:8; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 4:45; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:17; Deut. 6:20; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 7:11; Deut. 11:32; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 16:12; Deut. 17:19; Deut. 26:16; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 27:10;

Judgments - [mishpat/mispat](#) - Deut. 1:17; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:8; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 4:45; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:20; Deut. 7:11; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 10:18; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:32; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 16:18; Deut. 16:19; Deut. 17:8; Deut. 17:9; Deut. 17:11; Deut. 18:3; Deut. 19:6; Deut. 21:17; Deut. 21:22; Deut. 24:17; Deut. 25:1; Deut. 26:16; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 27:19; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 32:4; Deut. 32:41; Deut. 33:10; Deut. 33:21;

Deuteronomy 7:12 "Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers."

- **because**, De 28:1 Lev 26:3
- **LORD your God**: De 7:9 Ps 105:8-10 Mic 7:20 Lu 1:55,72,73
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

LISTEN, KEEP AND DO!

Then - Marker of sequence or progression in a narrative.

NIV presents it as a conditional sentence (NET, NLT, KJV, NRSV, CSB also have **IF**) = "If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, **then** the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your forefathers."

([PROMISE](#)) **it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep** ([shamar](#); Lxx = [phulasso](#)) **and do them, that the LORD your God will keep** ([shamar](#); Lxx = [diaphulasso](#)) **with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers** - Note the reciprocal relation - **You listen...and keep and do** <> **LORD...will keep**. In short if Israel keeps judgments, God keeps Abrahamic Covenant! In other words even though the Abrahamic Covenant is often referred to as an unconditional covenant, it does not provide "[carte blanche](#)" so to speak. The blessings of the covenant are still related to obedience. The blessings of the New Covenant similarly are linked to loving (not legalistic) obedience.

As **Deere** points out "Though God will not abandon the covenant because of His promises to the patriarchs (forefathers; cf. Dt 7:8, 13; Dt 1:35) the people could forfeit the blessings of the covenant through their own disobedience. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Coakley - "When the Israelites would give attention to and obey these laws, the Lord would honor His side of the covenant and bestow His lovingkindness on them." . ([Moody Bible Commentary](#))

ESV Study Bible - Though the **covenant** God made with Abraham had few conditions, Israel is obligated to keep the Sinai

covenant laws for the Abrahamic covenant to remain in force.

Deuteronomy 7:13 "He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you.

- **he will love:** De 7:7 28:4 Ex 23:25 Ps 1:3 11:7 144:12-15 Joh 14:21 15:10 16:27
- **he will also:** De 28:3-5,11,15-18 Job 42:12 Pr 10:22 Mal 3:10,11 Mt 6:33
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

DIVINE BLESSINGS AROUND BASED ON ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

([PROMISE](#))([SOVEREIGNTY](#)) This passage shows tangibly how God will keep His covenant with Israel. **He will love (ahab/ahab) you and bless you and multiply you** - God's **love** is not just emotional but accompanied by positive acts to **bless** and **multiply**.

He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock - **Bless** and **multiply** applies to all aspects of Israel's life. This in part is fulfillment of His promise to Abraham "I will make you a great nation" (Ge 12:2+) and ""Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." (Ge 15:5+).

In the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you- Once again we see the foundation or basis of His blessing is the **Abrahamic Covenant**, which is repeated 3 times in chapter 7 for emphasis - Dt 7:8, Dt 7:12, 13.

Utley - 7:13–15 Notice the covenantal blessings of YHWH:

1. love you
2. bless you
3. multiply you
4. bless your children
5. bless your crops
 - a. grain
 - b. new wine
 - c. oil
6. bless your herds
7. no barrenness (cf. Exod. 23:26)
 - a. human (cf. Gen. 11:30; 16:1; 25:21; 29:31)
 - b. cattle (cf. 28:4; 30:9)
8. no sickness (rare term used only here and 28:10)
9. defeat your enemies

These abundant blessings (cf. Exod. 23:25–26) are also clearly set out in Deuteronomy 28, but they are surrounded by the consequences of disobedience (cf. Deuteronomy 27 and 28:15–58). The conditional nature of Moses' covenant is clear. The rest of Israel's history can be understood in light of Deuteronomy 27–29. God's promises and blessings are only available to a faithful, trusting, obedient Israel. Israel was never able to sustain this level of performance, thus the need for a new covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31–34; Ezek. 36:22–38; Galatians 3), which is based on YHWH's actions.

Deuteronomy 7:14 "You shall be blessed above all peoples; there will be no male or female barren among you or among your cattle.

- **blessed:** De 33:29 Ps 115:15 147:19,20
- **male or:** De 28:4,11 Ex 23:26-33 Lev 26:9 Ps 127:3
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

SUPERIOR SUPERNATURAL

BLESSING

([PROMISE](#))([SOVEREIGNTY](#)) **You shall be blessed above all peoples** - God's supernatural blessing will be abundant and not like the surrounding pagan nations. While obedience does convey blessing, Israel did not merit this superabundance of blessing. One effect would be that the pagans would see the results of Yahweh's hand on Israel, so the blessing would have an "evangelistic" effect.

There will be no male or female barren among you or among your cattle- Yahweh is sovereign over life in the womb and here declares Israel will be fertile, both humans and animals. Both of these aspects, many children and many cattle, were taken as signs of Yahweh's hand of blessing.

Deuteronomy 7:15 "The LORD will remove from you all sickness; and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known, but He will lay them on all who hate you.

- **The LORD will remove from you all sickness:** Lev 26:3,4
- **He will not put on you:** De 28:27,60 Ex 9:11 Ex 15:26 Ps 105:36-37
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Exodus 15:26+ (SAME PROMISE SPOKEN TO FIRST GENERATION) And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer."

DIVINE PREVENTIVE "HEALTHCARE"

([PROMISE](#))([SOVEREIGNTY](#)) **The LORD will remove from you all sickness and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known** - Yahweh is the Great Physician and here provides divine "preventative care!" Contrast the promise if they disobey in Dt 28:27+ "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." And "He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they will cling to you." (Dt 28:60+)

MacArthur - Some virulent and malignant diseases such as elephantiasis, ophthalmia, and dysentery were common in Egypt. (MacArthur Study Bible)

But He will lay them on all who hate you - The pagan nations would pay a price for hatred of God's chosen people. While this promise was wonderful when Israel was obeying, it was not so wonderful when they were in disobedience, for then God would lay these illnesses on Israel. Later in this book Moses gives a prophetic promise that "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." (De 28:27) And again "He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they will cling to you." (Dt 28:60)

TSK - The Israelites, if obedient, would have been subject to no maladies but those common to fallen man, and generally very healthy and long lived; being exempted from pestilential diseases, which have often most tremendously scourged guilty nations; and from such maladies in particular, as they had witnessed in Egypt, by which God afflicted their cruel oppressors, (Ex 15:26.) This must be referred to the national covenant; for though godliness often secures the most solid temporal advantages, yet temporal blessings were not, even among them, uniformly dispensed to individuals according to their obedience; but they were to the nation, with an exactness which is not observed towards any other people.

Deuteronomy 7:16 "You shall consume all the peoples whom the LORD your God will deliver to you; your eye shall not pity them, nor shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

- **consume:** De 7:2
- **your eye shall not pity them:** De 13:8 19:13,21 25:12 Jer 21:7
- **for that would be a snare to you.** De 12:30,31 Ex 23:33 34:12-16 Nu 33:55 Jos 23:13-16 Judges 2:3,12 Judges 3:6 8:27 Ps

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- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Exodus 23:33+ "They shall not live in your land, because they will make you sin against Me; for if you serve their gods, **it will surely be a snare to you.**"

Exodus 34:12-14+ "**Watch** yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst. 13 "But rather, you are to tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their Asherim 14 –for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God–

Numbers 33:55+ But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come about that those whom you let remain of them will become as pricks in your eyes and as thorns in your sides, and they will trouble you in the land in which you live.

Joshua 23:13 know with certainty that the LORD your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but **they will be a snare and a trap to you**, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

Judges 2:3+ "Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they will become as thorns in your sides and their gods will **be a snare to you.**'"

Judges 8:27+ Gideon made it into an ephod, and placed it in his city, Ophrah, and all Israel played the harlot with it there, so that **it became a snare to Gideon and his household.**

Psalms 106:36 And served their idols, **Which became a snare to them.**

COMPLETE CONSUMPTION COMMANDED

([EXHORTATION](#))([COMMAND](#)) Moses repeats the charge in Dt 7:1-2 of utter destruction. **You shall consume** (NIV, NET, CSB = "must destroy") **all the peoples whom the LORD your God will deliver to**(hands over to) **you** - NET = "You must destroy all the people whom the LORD your God is about to deliver over to you."

your eye shall not pity them - Similar to Dt 7:2 - "You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor (mercy) to them." The point is to show no mercy! (See explanation from [Coakley](#)) This sounds harsh but with these people come their pagan gods which is the real problem as explained below - snare!

Spare (have compassion, show pity)([02347](#)) (**chus**) to pity, look upon with compassion, have compassion, spare. The idea is to show mercy, have compassion, with a focus on sparing or delivering one from a great punishment.

nor shall you serve ([abad](#); Lxx - [latreuo](#)) **their gods, for that would be a snare to you**- Israel was not to become enslaved to the pagan gods. He explains that if they did, they would fall into a spiritual trap, like a baited animal trap! The implication is that instead of the pagans being "consumed" Israel would end up being "consumed" by the abominable idolatry of the pagans. **Snare** in the Lxx is translated with the Greek noun **skolon** (not in NT) which means thorn, hindrance, obstacle (used in Ex 10:7, Jdg 8:27, 2 Chr 28:23 = "downfall")

Snare ([4170](#))([moqesh](#) from [yaqosh](#)) is a masculine noun meaning a snare, a trap, bait. The picture is of the lure or bait being placed in the hunter's trap, which gives rise to moqesh referring to the snare itself. Traps were used to capture birds or beasts (Amos 3:5). As used in Judges 8:27 moqesh refers to a moral pitfall (Pr. 18:7; Pr 20:25). **Moqesh** can be anything that lures one to ruin and disaster (Jdg. 2:3; Pr 29:6). **Moqesh** in Dt 7:16 in the Septuagint is skolon which means thorn, prickle, sharpened stake (driven into ground), and metaphorically hindrance, obstacle, stumbling-block (cf use in Ex 10:7).

THOUGHT- Kindness that allows barriers to one's relationship with God to spring up is self-destructive. (McIntosh)

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- **If you should say in your heart**, De 8:17 15:9 18:21 Isa 14:13 47:8 49:21 Jer 13:22 Lu 9:47
 - **These nations**: Nu 13:32 33:53 Jos 17:16-18
 - [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

ISRAEL, IF YOU ARE DOUBTING

Jack Deere summarizes Dt 7:17-26 - Moses knew the hearts of his fellow Israelites. He remembered how 40 years earlier the Anakites had made their hearts melt (Dt 1:26-28). So he concluded this part of his speech (on holy war) by setting the battles in proper perspective. The Israelites were to concentrate not on the strength of their enemies but on the greatness of the Lord. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

McIntosh - In spite of his multiple encouragements that Israel would conquer, God knew that many of the soldiers lacked confidence that they could win such a war against a superior and well-entrenched group of foes. Even as Moses spoke, people in the ranks were wondering how they could overcome and drive out an enemy who was stronger than they were. (Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy)

If you should say in your heart - Moses is like God's "physician" on the scene and he knew the condition of the hearts of the second generation of Israelites. So in this context this phrase is a Hebrew idiomatic way of saying "if you are doubting" (your ability to defeat the nations). The heart of Israel's problems was the problem in their heart! Moses has not forgotten the declaration of the first generation and seeks to provide some preventive care lest they say the same thing

Yet you (FIRST GENERATION) were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; 27 and you grumbled in your tents and said, 'Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us. 28' Where can we go up? Our brethren have made our **HEARTS MELT** (HERE'S THE PROBLEM = THEIR HEARTS), saying, "The people are bigger and taller than we; the cities are large and fortified to heaven. And besides, we saw the sons of the Anakim there." (Dt 1:26-28+)

ESV Study note - Israel is warned three times (Dt 7:17, Dt 8:17, Dt 9:4) not to say in your **heart** certain things that express fear (Dt 7:17) or pride (Dt 8:17; 9:4). The state of Israel's **heart** is a key issue in Deuteronomy (see Dt 4:39; Dt 6:6). The answer to each warning is "**remember**" (Dt 7:18; Dt 8:18; Dt 9:7). The antidote to wrong fear is to **remember** what the Lord your God did. Right fear means fearing God (see Dt 5:29+).

These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess ([yarash](#)) them - God knew that doubt would enter the minds of the Israelites in spite of all the evidence of His power and exhortations to take the land. They would still doubt that they could truly be victorious. This is somewhat surprising, in view of the fact that they had utterly destroyed two strong Amorite kings, Sihon and Og. So he reminds them of God's deliverance from Egypt the most powerful nation in the world at that time.

Dispossess ([03423](#)) **yarash** to take possession of, inherit, dispossess, to drive out. Yarash is an especially important word in contexts dealing with Israel's conquest of and possession of the land of Canaan. Yahweh first promised possession of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Ge 15:7-21+). Note also that "possessing" implies "dispossessing" another nation. In a legal sense, the right of possession passed from one generation to the next and so constituted "inheritance." Note that possession of the promised land and/or the "inheritance" was directly connected to Israel's trust relationship with the Lord, so that breaking trust, and thus breaking the covenantal relationship with Yahweh led to dispossession. But even in exile, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land (Jer. 30:3+ - May 14, 1948 is when Israel was given statehood but this is not the final fulfillment - that awaits the Millennial Reign of their Messiah).

Yarash is a key word in Deuteronomy - DISPOSS, POSSESS - Deut. 1:8; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:39; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:12; Deut. 3:18; Deut. 3:20; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 4:22; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 4:38; Deut. 4:47; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:17; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 9:1; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:10; Deut. 11:11; Deut. 11:23; Deut. 11:29; Deut. 11:31; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:2; Deut. 12:29; Deut. 15:4; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 17:14; Deut. 18:12; Deut. 18:14; Deut. 19:1; Deut. 19:2; Deut. 19:14; Deut. 21:1; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:1; Deut. 28:21; Deut. 28:42; Deut. 28:63; Deut. 30:5; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:18; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 32:47; Deut. 33:23;

Deuteronomy 7:18 you shall not be afraid of them; you shall well remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt:

- **you shall not be afraid** De 1:29 3:6 31:6 Ps 27:1,2 46:1,2 Isa 41:10-14
- **you shall well remember** : Ex 7:1-14:31 Judges 6:13 Ps 77:11 Ps 78:11,42-51 Ps 105:5,26-36 Ps 135:8-10 Ps 136:10-15 Isa 51:9,10 63:11-15
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Psalms 78:11 (**THE PROBLEM OF THE FIRST GENERATION**) They **forgot** His deeds And His miracles that He had shown them.

Ps 78:42-51 **They did not remember His power**, The day when He redeemed them from the adversary, 43 When He performed His signs in Egypt And His marvels in the field of Zoan, 44 And turned their rivers to blood, And their streams, they could not drink. 45 He sent among them swarms of flies which devoured them, And frogs which destroyed them. 46 He gave also their crops to the grasshopper And the product of their labor to the locust. 47 He destroyed their vines with hailstones And their sycamore trees with frost. 48 He gave over their cattle also to the hailstones And their herds to bolts of lightning. 49 He sent upon them His burning anger, Fury and indignation and trouble, A band of destroying angels. 50 He leveled a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, But gave over their life to the plague, 51 And smote all the firstborn in Egypt, The first issue of their virility in the tents of Ham.

**REMEMBERING IS GOOD
WHEN YOU ARE DOUBTING.**

([EXHORTATION](#))([COMMAND](#)) **you shall not be afraid of them** - The frequent exhortation/command in this book (Dt 1:21, Dt 3:2, Dt 3:22, Dt 7:18, Dt 20:1, Dt 20:3, Dt 31:6, 8). The exhortation not to fear is founded on having a good memory of Yahweh's past power, especially in Egypt.

You shall well remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt- Egypt was much larger and stronger than Israel who was in bondage! Memory of manifestations of past power of God should fuel present courage. A look back to God's work in one's life is good encouragement for what He will do in the present. **Deere** adds that "The Israelites were to concentrate not on the strength of their enemies but on the greatness of the LORD." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)) Instead of focusing on the size of an obstacle, we should focus on the size of our God.

Remember (record, mention) ([02142](#)) **zakar** means to recall, call to mind or to be brought to remembrance. The first use of **zakar** is wonderful for it says "God **remembered** Noah" remembering His covenant (Ge 6:18), declaring later "I will **remember** My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. Zakar in Deuteronomy - Deut. 5:15; Deut. 7:18; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:18; Deut. 9:7; Deut. 9:27; Deut. 15:15; Deut. 16:3; Deut. 16:12; Deut. 24:9; Deut. 24:18; Deut. 24:22; Deut. 25:17; Deut. 32:7;

Deuteronomy 5:15 "You shall **remember** that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and **the LORD your God** brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.

Deuteronomy 8:2 "You shall **remember** all the way which **the LORD your God** has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

Deuteronomy 8:18 "But you shall **remember the LORD your God**, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 15:15 "You shall **remember** that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today.

Deuteronomy 16:12 "You shall **remember** that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Deuteronomy 24:18 "But you shall **remember** that you were a slave in Egypt, and that the LORD your

God redeemed you from there; therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.

Deuteronomy 24:22 "You shall **remember** that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.

THOUGHT - Beloved, remembering the great acts of God in our lives is important to energize our present and future behavior. One way to help you remember is to keep a journal of God's great and mighty deeds (but be sure to read over it from time to time to stir your memory -- at age 75 my memory needs to be "stirred" frequently!)

Deuteronomy 7:19 the great trials which your eyes saw and the signs and the wonders and the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out. So shall the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid.

- **great:** De 4:34 11:2-4 29:3 Ne 9:10,11 Jer 32:20,21 Eze 20:6-9
- **so shall:** Jos 3:10
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

LOOKING BACK TO REMEMBER GOD'S POWER

([REMEMBRANCE](#)) the great trials which your eyes saw and the signs and the wonders and the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out - God's ten plaques and His destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea brought Israel safely out of Egypt. God's hand was still mighty and His arm still capable of being outstretched! And it still true today in the lives of His beloved children (1 Jn 3:1+).

Mighty hand - Exod. 32:11; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 6:21; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 9:26; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 26:8; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34; Dan. 9:15; 1 Pet. 5:6

Outstretched arm - Exod. 6:6; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 9:29; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 26:8; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Ki. 17:36; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ps. 136:12; Jer. 27:5; Jer. 32:17; Jer. 32:21; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34

([PROMISE](#))([SOVEREIGNTY](#)) **So shall the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid**- Yahweh had not changed. His power had not diminished. His power would be sufficient to do to the pagan nations what He had done to Egypt.

Utley - Notice the words to describe YHWH's redemptive acts in Egypt:

1. "the great trials" BDB 152 and 650 II, cf. Dt 4:34; 29:3 (this same root [III] is used for Israel "testing" YHWH during the wilderness wandering period, cf. 6:16, 9:22)
2. "the signs" BDB 16, cf. Dt 4:34; 7:19; 26:8; 29:2; 34:11; Ps. 78:43; 105:27; 135:9
3. "the wonders" BDB 68, cf. Dt 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 26:8; 34:11; Ps. 78:43; 105:27; 135:9
4. "the mighty hand" BDB 305 and 388, cf. Dt 4:34; 5:15; 6:21; 7:8, 19; 9:26; 11:2; 26:8; 34:12, see note at 4:34
5. "the outstretched arm" BDB 283 and 639 (Qal PASSIVE PARTICIPLE), cf. Dt 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 9:29; 11:2; 26:8

I have just shown the parallels in Deuteronomy. They also appear in Exodus. The redemptive acts of YHWH are Israel's great hope! They are the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (cf. Ge. 15:12-21). They are the inauguration of the national covenant.

Deuteronomy 7:20 "Moreover, the LORD your God will send the hornet against them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you perish.

- **hornet:** Ex 23:28-30 Jos 24:12
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

PROPHETIC PROMISE OF "DIVINE HORNETS"

([PROMISE](#))([SOVEREIGNTY](#)) **Moreover, the LORD your God will send the hornet against them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you perish** - Israel was not to flee but watch their enemies flee! That's the picture of men chased by

hornets! This promise is reiteration of His promise to the first generation as they camped around Mt Sinai where Yahweh declared “**I will send hornets** ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you. 29 “I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. 30 “I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.” (Ex 23:28-30) MacArthur comments that “In anticipation of the conquest of their Land, Israel was being given another reminder that victory depended on God and not their own efforts alone. Fear and panic did play a strategic role in the victories in Transjordan and Canaan (Nu 22:3; Jos 2:9, 11; 5:1; 9:24). An alternative non-figurative view is based upon the bee or wasp being a heraldic symbol of Egyptian pharaohs whose steady succession of military strikes into Canaan year after year God providentially used to weaken Canaan prior to the invasion by Israel.” (MacArthur Study Bible)

From Joshua’s account we see that the first generation had actually experienced Yahweh’s “**hornet**” effect for Joshua recorded “I sent the **hornet** before you and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites (SIHON AND OG) from before you, but not by your sword or your bow.” (Jos 24:12) Note the phrase “not by your sword or your bow” indicating that the “**hornet**” maneuver was completely supernatural and not related to anything Israel did. Were they literal or figurative hornets? We can state with certainty, but either way they had the effect of hornets attacking and stinging men.

Jack Deere - God would cause Israel’s enemies to run from her in battle as if they were attacked by swarms of **hornets** (cf. Ex. 23:28; Josh. 24:12). (Some say the reference to the hornet is to be taken literally; others say it refers to the Egyptian army.) The enemies were in fact fearful of Israel (Ex. 15:15; Num. 22:3; Josh. 2:9-11, 24; 5:1; 9:24). ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Doug McIntosh - The exact nature of this threat is unspecified. God could have been describing an actual attack of large numbers of insects, but the likelihood is that the hornet serves as a figure of speech for some unnamed terror, possibly the Lord himself. (See [Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))

Deuteronomy 7:21 "You shall not dread them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God.

- **the LORD your God** Nu 9:20 14:9,14,42 16:3 23:21 Jos 3:10 2Ch 32:8 Ps 46:5,7,11 Isa 8:9,10 Zec 2:10,11 1Co 14:25
- **a great and awesome God.:** De 10:17 25:8 1Sa 4:8 Ne 1:5 4:14 9:32 Zec 12:2-5
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Psalms 46:5; 7; 11 God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. (46:7) The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. (46:11) The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah.

NO REASON TO DREAD WHEN GOD IS PRESENT

([EXHORTATION](#))([COMMAND](#)) **You shall not dread them** - **Them** presumably is the strong and mighty seven of Dt 7:1. Moses repeats the exhortation to not be fearful. Yes, these 7 nations were mighty, but Israel was to fight not by sight but by faith in their faithful covenant keeping God. The Hebrew word (arat) in the charge to not dread was also given to the first generation in Dt 1:29 “Do not be shocked, nor fear them.” The first generation failed to heed the exhortation and encouragement of Moses. Moses uses the same verb (arat) in Dt 20:3 “Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble (arats) before them,([EXPLAINING WHY THEY WERE NOT TO FEAR OR TREMBLE](#)) for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.” And a third time Moses encouraged Israel calling for them to “Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble (arats) at them, ([AGAIN EXPLAINING WHY THEY DID NOT NEED TO BE AFRAID OR TREMBLE](#)) for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.” (Dt 31:6)

For - Term of explanation. This explains why Israel is not to **dread** the pagan military might.

the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God- A strong and mighty seven are no obstacle for **the great and awesome** God Who would go to war in the midst of Israel. The nations would be fearful of Israel when they understood that God was in the midst of Israel. One is reminded of the words of Hezekiah when threatened by mighty enemies...

“With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah. (2Ch 32:8)

Utley - This is a marvelous truth. The transcendent God, the Holy One, dwells with His people (cf. Exod. 29:45; Num. 5:3; 35:34). This is what Emmanuel (**SEE Immanuel-Emmanuel**) means (cf. Isa. 7:14; 8:8, 10). ([Deuteronomy 7 Commentary](#))

Deuteronomy 7:22 "The LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to put an end to them quickly, for the wild beasts would grow too numerous for you.

- **you will not be able** Ex 23:29,30 Jos 15:63
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

([PROMISE](#))([SOVEREIGNTY](#)) **The LORD your God will clear away** (see [nashal](#)) **these nations before you little by little** - Step by step. God would send the hornets and God would clear out the nations. If the land were depopulated too quickly, it would be overrun by wild animals (we forget these wild animals were originally indigenous to Israel - cf 1 Sa 17:34, 36 = lion, bear - The Syrian bear was said to be especially ferocious, and appears to have been more dreaded than the lion).

[Wikipedia](#) - Various animal species have become extinct (IN ISRAEL) due to unchecked hunting under Ottoman rule and to a lesser extent under British Mandate rule, due to a non-enforcement of hunting laws. By the early 20th century, the white oryx, Syrian brown bear, Asiatic lion, Asiatic cheetah, and Syrian wild ass had become extinct in the region.

Guzik on little by little - Sometimes to our frustration, this is the way God often works in our life. He clears things away little by little even though we might prefer it all at once. But God wanted Israel to grow spiritually in the process of taking the Promised Land. Doing it all at once might seem easier and better to us, but will have consequences we cannot see or appreciate. God cares that we grow, and so He grows us little by little.

([ADMONITION](#)) **You will not be able to put an end to them quickly**- This indicates that Israel would be responsible to fight. God's power and their responsibility.

MacArthur points out that "Even though the Lord promised that the defeat of the people of the land would be quick (Dt 4:26; 9:3), the process of settlement would be more gradual to avoid the danger of the land returning to a primitive state of natural anarchy. (MacArthur Study Bible)

For the wild beasts would grow too numerous for you- **TSK** As the Israelites were not yet sufficiently numerous to fill the whole land occupied by these nations; and as wild and ferocious animals might be expected to multiply where the place was but thinly peopled, therefore God informs them that their extermination from before them should be gradual. Haynes says, "The approaching to Cana, at the close of the day, as we did, is at once terrifying and dangerous. The surrounding country **swarms with wild beasts, such as tigers, leopards, jackals**, etc., whose cries and howling, I doubt not, would strike the boldest traveler, who had not been frequently in a like situation, with the deepest sense of horror."

Deuteronomy 7:23 "But the LORD your God will deliver them before you, and will throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed.

- **But the LORD your God**: De 7:2
- **will deliver them before you**, De 9:3
- **until they are destroyed**. De 2:15 8:20 Isa 13:6 Jer 17:18 Joe 1:15 2Th 1:9
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Exodus 14:24 At the morning watch, the LORD looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians **into confusion**.

Deuteronomy 28:20 "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.

Joshua 10:10 And the LORD **confounded them before Israel**, and He slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and

Makkedah.

1 Samuel 5:9; 11 After they had brought it around, the hand of the **LORD was against the city with very great confusion**; and He smote the men of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them.....11 They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its own place, so that it will not kill us and our people." For there was a deadly confusion throughout the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.

1 Samuel 14:20 Then Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and came to the battle; and behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and **there was very great confusion**.

(PROMISE) But the LORD your God will deliver them before you, and will throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed - Again Moses encourages Israel with the power of Yahweh fighting for them, in this case sending divine panic that would make their enemies helpless in battle.

THOUGHT - The war that Christians must fight bears many similarities to the divine design for occupying the Holy Land. Christians must go to war every day, putting to death the deeds of the body so they can live victorious lives (cp. Ro 6:13; Ro 8:13; Col. 3:5; 1 Pet. 2:11). Although the greatest victory is already won (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 5:24), a life still waits to be carved out for each soldier, and progress generally comes little by little. Come it will, however, to the one who fights, just as it would for Israel. The Lord promised to deliver their enemies over if his people would fight faithfully. (Doug McIntosh - see [Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))

ESV Study Bible - Confusion is a common feature of holy war (see Deut. 28:20; also Ex. 14:24; Josh. 10:10; 1 Sa. 5:9, 11; 14:20).
ESV Study Bible, The: English Standard Version.

Utley - God's actions are described as:

1. "the LORD your God will send the hornet against them," v. 20
2. "the LORD your God ... will throw them into great confusion, v. 23 (NOUN and VERB from same root), v. 23, cf. Exod. 23:27 (this is the vocabulary of holy war)
3. "He will deliver their kings into your hand," v. 24

Deuteronomy 7:24 "He will deliver their kings into your hand so that you will make their name perish from under heaven; no man will be able to stand before you until you have destroyed them.

- **He will deliver** Jos 10:24,25,42 Josh 12:1-6
- **make their name perish** De 9:14 25:19 29:20 Ex 17:14 Ps 9:5 Pr 10:7 Jer 10:11 Zep 1:4
- **no man will be able to stand before you** De 11:25 Jos 1:5 10:8 23:9 Isa 54:17 Ro 8:37 1Co 15:57
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Joshua 10:24-25, 42 When they brought these kings out to Joshua, Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." So they came near and put their feet on their necks. 25 Joshua then said to them, "Do not fear or be dismayed! Be strong and courageous, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies with whom you fight"...42 Joshua captured all these kings and their lands at one time, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

Romans 8:37+ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

1 Corinthians 15:57+ but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(PROMISE) He will deliver (Heb - [nathan](#); Lxx - [paradidomi](#) - give over into one's power) **their kings into your hand so that you will make their name perish from under heaven** - NRSV = "blot out their name from under heaven." NLT = "will erase their names from the face of the earth" This speaks of complete and total destruction and death so that there are no royal descendants.

No man will be able to stand before you until you have destroyed them - Note **you have destroyed them** emphasizes Israel's role. **Until** is a critical expression of time for here it functions essentially like a prophetic promise indicating that they will destroy them. After that none of their enemies will be able to stand against them. There is also a final fulfillment of this promise in Zech

12:9± (see "Destroy" below) **Destroyed** in the Septuagint is [exolethreuo](#) which speaks of rooting out (think of a weed - you must pull up the roots to eradicate it!), utterly destroying, completely cutting off.

McIntosh - The strength of Israel's enemies was only apparent. Although they might possess some power, in the end they would not be able to stand against the army of God. (Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy)

Utley on no man will be able - This is a Hebrew idiom for military confrontation (i.e., two armies, cf. Dt 11:25; Josh. 1:5; 10:8; 23:9 ([Deuteronomy 7 Commentary](#)))

Destroy (demolish, exterminate) ([08045](#)) **shamad**) is a verb meaning "be destroyed, decimated, perished, overthrown, exterminated, i.e., pertaining to being in a totally ruined state, which can include death of a person or extinction of an entity." (Swanson) The destruction depicted by **shamad** usually involves a rather sudden catastrophe such as warfare or a mass killing. For example in Dt 6:15 God says He will "**wipe**" Israel off the face of the earth, so great was His anger against them! It is worth noting that the last OT use of **shamad** is one of the greatest for the nation of Israel, the prophet **Zechariah** recording "And in that day (WHAT DAY - Read Zechariah 12:1-14±) I (JEHOVAH/YAHWEH HIMSELF) will set about to destroy all (HOW MANY?) the nations that come against Jerusalem." (Zechariah 12:9±) [Anti-Semitism](#) will be obliterated! Many of the uses of **shamad** have God as the subject rendering the destruction, sometimes against Israel's enemies, sometimes threatening Israel herself. In Esther 3:6 Haman sought to **destroy** all the Jews!

Deuteronomy 7:25 "The graven images of their gods you are to burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, or you will be snared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God.

- **The graven images of their gods:** De 7:5 12:3 Ex 32:20 1Ch 14:12 Isa 30:22
- **you shall not covet the silver:** Jos 7:1,21
- **you will be snared by it;** Judges 8:24-27 Zep 1:3 1Ti 6:9,10
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

Related Passages:

Joshua 7:1; 21 But the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully in regard to the things under the ban, for [Achan, the son of Carmi](#), the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some of the things under the ban, therefore the anger of the LORD burned against the sons of Israel....21 (ACHAN'S CONFESSION) when I **saw** among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I **coveted** them and **took** them; and behold, they are **concealed** in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it."



ENSNARED BY "IDOL BAIT"

BATTLES OVER BUT WORK HAD JUST BEGUN

([COMMAND](#)) ([ADMONITION](#)) **The graven images** (see [pasil](#)) **of their gods you are to burn with fire**- Israel was to destroy not just the people but all the pagan paraphernalia that had survived Israel's invasion. The objects left may have been inanimate but they had intrinsic, deadly power to ensnare and entangle hearts of the Israelites. Imagine walking into a tent and there is a mother lode of silver and gold in a stack of idols in the corner of the tent! Burn with fire is interesting because most likely the silver and gold plating of the idols would be melted down and no longer in the image of idol. But God still considers the precious metal and absolutely detestable.

Deere - The Israelites could be assured of this glorious victory if only they had the faith to begin the battle and afterward the discipline to destroy the idols left behind with the silver and gold. Otherwise the Israelites would find themselves trapped by idolatry and they would become the objects of the **Lord's holy war**. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

([ADMONITION](#)) **You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on**(covers) **them, nor take it for yourselves** - This was **strictly off limits** for the Israelites! The pagan idols were often made with silver or gold, which would be a temptation to every man's fallen nature, which is to covet what he does not possess. It would be seen as a quick way to get rich. The related passages above illustrate how one Israelite (Achan) failed to heed this warning and it ended up costing his life and his family's life!

([ADMONITION](#)) **Or you will be snared by it**- "Idol bait" is not "idle" but will stir up our fallen flesh (and fast!) The penalty for Achan may have seemed harsh in view of the fact that he "confessed" his crime. But clearly God wanted this to be an unforgettable lesson, because He knew that if others coveted the idol spoils they would succumb to the subtle snare. **Be snared** (see [yaqosh](#)) in the Lxx is [ptaio](#) which means to lose one's footing or to stumble against something and figuratively speaks of failing to do God's will stumble, thus to err or sin.

For it is an abomination to the LORD your God- It is the silver or gold that covered the idols. It was spiritually or more accurately "cultically contaminated" and God hated the effect this **abomination** had on men.

Abomination (detestable, loathsome) ([08441](#)) [toebah](#) refers to an abominable custom or thing. Abomination. Loathsome. Detestable thing. Something or someone who is loathsome and abhorrent. The word is primarily used of things, persons or practices that are either ritually or morally offensive to the Lord. The laws of the Pentateuch taught Israel what was abominable to the Lord. In general, these consisted of Canaanite customs including a wide range of sexual offenses.

Toebah in Deuteronomy - Deut. 7:25; Deut. 7:26; Deut. 12:31; Deut. 13:14; Deut. 14:3; Deut. 17:1; Deut. 17:4; Deut. 18:9; Deut. 18:12; Deut. 20:18; Deut. 22:5; Deut. 23:18; Deut. 24:4; Deut. 25:16; Deut. 27:15; Deut. 32:16

The Lxx translates **toebah** with [bdelugma](#) (from [bdelusso](#) = emit foul odor, turn away from something or someone on account of the "stench". A loathing or disgust, abhor in turn derived from [bdeo](#) = to stink;cf [bdekluktos](#)) which describes something foul, that which is extremely hated, disgusted, detested or abhorred. The first NT use of [bdelugma](#) is in Mt 24:15+ which is fitting as it describes the "**Abomination** ([bdelugma](#)) of desolation" (the Antichrist) (cp Mk 13:14+). The other 4 uses of **bdelugma** are - Lk 16:15+, Rev 17:4, 5+, Rev 21:27+.

Deuteronomy 7:26 "You shall not bring an abomination into your house, and like it come under the ban; you shall utterly detest it and you shall utterly abhor it, for it is something banned.

- **an abomination:** De 17:1 23:18 Rev 17:5
- **You shall not bring an abomination:** De 13:17 Lev 27:28,29 Jos 6:17-24 7:1-25,11-26 Eze 14:7 Hab 2:9-11 Zec 5:4
- **you shall utterly detest it:** Isa 2:20 30:22 Eze 11:18 Ho 14:8 Ro 2:22
- [Deuteronomy 7 Resources](#)

A STRONG WARNING AGAINST COVETING IDOL SILVER OR GOLD

([COMMAND](#)) ([ADMONITION](#)) **You shall not bring an abomination**([toebah](#); Lxx = [bdelugma](#)) **into your house, and like it come under the ban** - Here the word **abomination** ([toebah](#); Lxx = [bdelugma](#)) seems to refer not just the to silver or gold on the idol, but the actual idol itself. To bring it into one's house was to bring the house under the ban or devoted to destruction! Woe!

THOUGHT - Can we bring idols into our house today? What is pornography but the worship of an "idol"? Just a thought to consider in a world which is losing all sense of morality and has gone mad sexually speaking!

Doug McIntosh on the importance of **under the ban** - God asked Israel to ignore the apparent beauty of the idols they would encounter and commanded that they offer them up to him in an irretrievable act of worship. The penalty for ignoring this command would be severe: the disobedient Israelites themselves would become herem, and their own lives would be in danger of destruction. (See [Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))

You shall utterly detest it and you shall utterly abhor it, for it is something banned- It is under the ban. Any secular use of an object under the ban would be to profane it, therefore, it was to be totally destroyed.

Utterly detest ([08262](#))([shaqats](#) from [sheqets/seqes](#) = detestable) is always in the Piel (intensive) means to be filthy, abhorrent, and thus to make or consider something odious - idol (Dt 7:26), non-kosher food (Lev

11:11, 13). Shaqats in the causative "make abominable," "contaminate" (Leviticus 11:43; Leviticus 20:25) which describe the one eating the abominable foods as making himself abominable in God's sight. On the other hand Yahweh would never have this attitude toward the affliction of the afflicted (Ps 22:24).

Shaqats - 7v - abhorred(1), detest(2), make...detestable(1), render...detestable(1), utterly detest(1). Lev. 11:11; Lev. 11:13; Lev. 11:43; Lev. 20:25; Deut. 7:26; Ps. 22:24

Banned (devoted, destruction, utterly destroy) (02764) **herem** it is something devoted unto divine service, and is under a ban. It is something that God has asked to be destroyed as an act of devotion to him. It generally appears in contexts of war or violent conflict. In some context as the present use, it describes a curse or extermination which implies total destruction (see Dt 7:26; 1Sa 15:18; Zech 14:11). MacKay says "The 'curse' is the ban, the utter devotion to destruction (Isa. 43:28 — and NIV footnote; Jer. 25:9) of what is an abomination in the LORD's sight." **Herem** "conveys the "basic meaning is the exclusion of an object from the use or abuse of man and its irrevocable surrender to God. The word "harem," meaning the special quarters for Muslim wives, comes from it. In Dt 7:2–6, the command for this manner of destruction is given, with the explanation following that, otherwise, these cities would lure the Israelites away from the Lord (cf. Dt 20:17–18). Any Israelite city that harbored idolaters was to be "utterly destroyed" (Deut 13:12–15; cf. Ex 22:19).

Herem - 21v - accursed(2), ban(2), curse(2), devoted(2), devoted to destruction(1), devoted thing(2), set apart(1), something banned(1), things devoted(1), things devoted to destruction(1), things under(10), things under the ban(10), under the ban(3), which is put under(1). Lev. 27:21; Lev. 27:28; Num. 18:14; Deut. 7:26; Deut. 13:17; Jos. 6:17; Jos. 6:18; Jos. 7:1; Jos. 7:11; Jos. 7:12; Jos. 7:13; Jos. 7:15; Jos. 22:20; 1 Sam. 15:21; 1 Ki. 20:42; 1 Chr. 2:7; Isa. 34:5; Isa. 43:28; Ezek. 44:29; Zech. 14:11; Mal. 4:6

Doug McIntosh - Life Application. War Is No Picnic

In 1861, as the Civil War began, the northern press was impatient to punish the impudent Confederates and to put a quick end to the war. Editors from Chicago to Boston urged fast action and encouraged moving against the rebel army entrenched southwest of Washington, D.C.

Union General Irvin McDowell decided to move against the Confederate lines around Manassas on Sunday afternoon, July 21. Unfortunately, the timing of the army's movement was no secret in the area around Washington. Thousands of curious people decided that watching the coming battle might prove an interesting way to spend a summer afternoon. They packed picnic baskets, donned their best clothes, and drove carriages into the Virginia countryside to have lunch and watch the battle.

They soon discovered, however, that armed conflict makes a poor spectator sport. Their heroes in blue were repelled by the Confederate army and began a frantic retreat into the District of Columbia. Soon the only road heading east was crowded with fleeing soldiers and panicked civilians attempting to dodge the exploding shells of Confederate artillery.

The attitude of those civilians contains some disturbing parallels with the viewpoint of many modern Christians. People do not always take seriously the intensity of the spiritual war that constitutes Christian living. Being a Christian carries with it immense challenges as well as profound joys. Recognizing the first is required for a full experience of the second. (See [Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))