

THE RESULTS OF OBEYING THE COVENANT: THE BLESSINGS OF GOD DEUTERONOMY 28:01–14

Introduction

The blessings of God are not automatically poured out upon people. God is not a robot, not a mechanical being that acts impulsively, on the spur of the moment without thought or purpose. The blessings of God are not the result of a reflex emotion that arouses God to bless this and that person. The blessings of God are not poured out indiscriminately, at random, in a chaotic manner. God demands something of a person before He blesses that person. God's blessings are conditional. A person has to do something in order to receive God's blessings. The blessings of God are the subject of the present passage.

Remember, the children of Israel were camped in the plains of Moab close by the river Jordan, right across from the great city of Jericho. They were poised to cross the river and enter the promised land. But before they entered, Moses felt the need to preach a series of messages to the people. He needed to make sure that the people understood exactly how they were to live in the promised land of God. His messages were later compiled into the book of Deuteronomy. In essence, Deuteronomy is the preaching of Moses during the days when the Israelites were camped beside the Jordan River, preparing to enter the promised land. At this point, the messages are nearing completion. Moses has almost accomplished his purpose. The people are prepared, as much so as Moses is capable of preparing them. Only one more thing remains: the people need to renew their covenant with God. They need to make a rededication, a recommitment to God, before actually entering the promised land. The present passage deals with the blessings and curses of the covenant. The people were to be blessed if they obeyed God, but cursed if they disobeyed Him. First, the blessings of God are to be preached; then next, the curses of God will be preached. This is the subject of this great passage of Scripture: *The Results of Obeying the Covenant: The Blessings of God*, Deuteronomy 28:1-14.

- I. The blessings of God are conditional (vv. 1-3).
 - II. The blessing of fruitfulness (vv. 4-5).
 - III. The blessing of all daily activities (v. 6).
 - IV. The blessing of victory over all enemies (v. 7).
 - V. The blessing of labour, work, employment (v. 8).
 - VI. The blessing of spiritual growth (vv. 9-10).
 - VII. The blessing of prosperity, an excess of good things (vv. 11-12).
 - VIII. The blessing of exaltation (v. 13).
 - IX. The strong charge: must not turn away from any of the commandments to follow false gods or false worship (v. 14).
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I. Deuteronomy 28:01–03 The Blessings of God are Conditional

The blessings of God are conditional. Being a human being does not automatically qualify a person for God's blessings. God does not mechanically or impulsively pour out His blessings upon people. He is not a robot who is ordered or programmed to help people when they cry out to Him. Certain conditions have to be met before a person can receive the blessings of God. Note what the Scripture says:

1. A person must obey the LORD: fully, diligently obey the LORD, carefully observe and follow all His commandments. Obedience is the one condition that has to be met to receive the blessings of God.
2. Note the results of obedience declared by Moses:
 - => If the people obeyed God, God would exalt them above all the nations on earth (v. 1). They would be a great nation, a great people to whom all other nations and peoples would look.
 - => If the people obeyed God, they would experience all the blessings of God (v. 2). No blessing would be withheld from them. They would walk in all the fullness and victory of life.
 - => If the people obeyed God, they would be continually blessed, no matter where they were (v. 3). If they lived in the city they would be blessed, and if they lived in the country they would be blessed. The blessings of God would flow from heaven no matter where they lived.

Thought 1. The blessings of God are conditional. Promise after promise is given to the believer, but the believer has to believe God to receive the promises. He has to stay focused upon God and His promises, keep his mind upon them. Only if he stays focused upon God will he obey God and receive the promises. Obedience is an absolute essential to receive the blessings of God.

Think about this: if a person is not obeying God, he is not staying focused upon the blessings or promises given by God. Consequently, it is only a *natural outcome* that he will not receive the blessings of God. But if the person is obeying God, he is focused upon the promises of God's blessings. Walking throughout the day, he is honouring God by staying focused upon Him and His blessings. Therefore, God is bound to bless him, for it is the honour, worship and obedience of man that God wants. This is the very purpose for which God created man.

Again, the man who is obeying God stays focused upon God. Consequently, God blesses him, pours out blessing after blessing upon him. All because the man walks obediently before Him. The declaration of Scripture is forceful:

Mat 7:21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

Mat 7:24-27 *“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”*

John 14:21 *“Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”*

John 14:23 *Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”*

John 15:10 *“If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love.”*

John 15:14 *“You are my friends, if you do what I command.”*

James 1:25 *But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does.*

Rev 22:14 *Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.*

Exo 19:5 *Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine.*

Deut 5:29 *Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!*

Josh 1:8 *Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*

II. Deuteronomy 28:04–05 The Blessing of Fruitfulness

The blessing of fruitfulness is promised to the obedient person. Keep in mind that Moses was addressing the Israelites as a whole, but the nation was made up of individuals. Therefore, the blessings are applicable to the individual as well as to the nation, the nation is blessed by the citizens being blessed. If the people obeyed God...

- their population would grow, overflow with fruitfulness
- their livestock would grow and increase
- their crops would grow and increase
- their daily food would always be provided

The point is striking: the people of God would always have an abundance of everything. Everything they owned would be fruitful and increase in value. They would grow as a people and as a nation. Moreover, their livestock would increase more and more, and their crops would produce an abundant harvest. They would develop a strong economy, be financially secure. And note the blessing of daily food: the very basic necessities of human life — food and water — would always be provided for them. Just keep in mind, there was one condition to receive this blessing of fruitfulness: obedience.

Thought 1. The blessing of fruitfulness, of plenty, is ours. But there is a condition: obedience. If we obey God, truly keep His commandments and follow Him, then God promises always to provide the necessities of life for us. We will always have the blessing of plenty.

Mat 6:33 *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

Phil 4:19 *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*

Lev 26:3-5 *If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit. Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land.*

Deut 30:8-9 *You will again obey the LORD, and follow all his commands I am giving you today. Then the LORD your God will make you most prosperous in all the work of your hands and in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your land. The LORD will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your ancestors.*

Psa 132:15 *I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor I will satisfy with food*

III. **Deuteronomy 28:06** *The Blessing of All Daily Activities*

The blessing of all daily activities is promised to the obedient person. No matter where a person is — coming into or going out of the home — God will bless him. The only condition is obedience. If the person is walking with God, following God with all his heart, then God blesses him. Where the believer is, at home or away, does not matter. What matters is obedience. If the believer is walking after God, obeying Him, then God blesses his daily activities — all of them.

Thought 1. There is a strong lesson in this point for believers. If we walk day after day, obeying God wholeheartedly, then God will bless us richly in Himself. He will bless all our daily activities. He promises to grant us His presence and guidance as we walk throughout the day.

Mat 28:20 *“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Luke 1:78-79 “Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun [Christ] will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

John 16:13 “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”

Gen 28:15 I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

Exo 33:14 The LORD replied, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

Isa 43:2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

Psa 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters.

Psa 48:14 For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.

Psa 73:24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.

Isa 30:21 Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”

IV. Deuteronomy 28:07 The Blessing of Victory Over All Enemies

The blessing of victory over all enemies is promised to the obedient person. Protection or security is a most wonderful promise given by God to the believer.

Note exactly what is said to the Israelites about this wonderful promise: if an enemy rises up against you, that enemy will be defeated before your very presence. No matter who the enemy is nor how strong and numerous, the enemy will be defeated. Note the graphic description: the enemy will come at you from one direction, but he will flee from you in seven directions, flee as a defeated, scattered foe.

Thought 1. The enemies who confronted the Israelites were a symbol of the spiritual enemies that confront the believer. As the believer marches to the promised land of heaven, enemy after enemy confronts him, enemies such as...

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| • backbiters | • mockers | • haters |
| • despisers | • persecutors | • disease |
| • accident | • loss of loved ones | • financial difficulties |
| • immorality | • loss of job | • doubt and unbelief |
| • temptation | • lying | • stealing |
| • stormy or continuous trials | | |

The enemies that attempt to overthrow and conquer the believer are innumerable. But the promise of God is strong: if the believer will obey God, keep His holy commandments, God will give him victory over the enemies that oppose him. Victory is assured, assured if the believer will just obey God.

Rom 8:35, 37-39 *Who shall separate us from the love [compassion] of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?.... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

1 Cor 10:13 *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

Eph 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*

Eph 6:12-13 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.*

Heb 2:17-18 *For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

James 4:7 *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

1 John 5:4 *For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.*

Rev 3:21 *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.*

Psa 44:5 *Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes.*

V. Deuteronomy 28:08 The Blessing of Labour, Work, Employment

The blessing of labour, work and employment is promised to the obedient person. Note that God will bless not only what a believer has in his barns, but He will bless everything the believer puts his hand to. This means that God will bless all his labour and work, all his employment. And the result will be the experience of purpose, achievement, accomplishment and fulfilment in the promised land.

Note this fact: meaningful work stirs a sense of purpose within a person. Work produces a sense of achievement and success, a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction. This means a most wonderful thing: if God blesses our work and labour, then we will have the deepest sense of purpose, significance and meaning in life. We will achieve and be successful. This is the wonderful promise of God that was first given to the Israelites but is applicable to every believer of all generations. If God's people will simply obey Him, He will bless all that they put their hands to.

John 15:10-11 *"If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."*

Eph 6:7 *Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.*

Col 3:17 *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Col 3:22-24 *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favour, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

Heb 12:28 *Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.*

Exo 23:25 *Worship the LORD your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you.*

Deut 10:12 *And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Psa 2:11 *Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling.*

Psa 16:11 *You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

Psa 126:5-6 *Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.*

VI. Deuteronomy 28:09–10 The Blessing of Spiritual Growth

The blessing of spiritual growth is promised to the obedient person. The promise is phenomenal: God would establish the Israelites as His holy people, as the people who followed the only living and true God, the LORD Himself (Jehovah, Yahweh). But note: this blessing of spiritual growth was conditional. Spiritual growth — being set apart as God's holy people — was to be a reality only if the people obeyed God. They had to keep His commandments and walk in His ways in order to grow spiritually. If they would

just obey God, then they would bear a strong testimony and witness for the LORD before all the peoples of the earth. Obedience would exalt the name of the LORD. If a believer obeyed God, his neighbours would see that he lived a holy life, a life that was totally set apart to God. He would bear a testimony of holiness to his immoral and lawless neighbours, bear a strong witness of holiness for God.

Thought 1. God is holy; therefore, we must be holy. Holiness simply means *being set apart to God*. If a person is set apart to God, he is following and obeying God. He is keeping the commandments of God, doing all that God says. Since God is holy, we must be holy. We must be set apart to obey God in all that He says. This is the witness, the strong testimony that we are to have for God: the witness and testimony of holiness. It is holiness that will cause us to grow spiritually. Spiritual growth is a direct result of holy living. Holiness bears the fruit of spiritual growth.

Luke 1:74-75 *To rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.*

2 Cor 7:1 *Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.*

Heb 12:14 *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*

1 Pet 1:15-16 *But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*

2 Pet 3:11-14 *Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

Lev 11:45 *I am the LORD, who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.*

VII. Deuteronomy 28: 11–12 The Blessing of Prosperity, an Excess of Good Things

The blessing of prosperity, an excess of good things, is promised to the obedient person.

The thrust of this point is entirely different from that mentioned earlier (see v. 4). In the ancient world, prosperity depended primarily upon one thing: rain. Rain is the focus of this promise. Without rain, nothing could survive: not children, livestock or crops. But with an abundance of rain, in particular at the right time, there would be an

abundance of crops and plenty to eat for the children and the livestock. This is the promise of the blessing: the LORD promised to open the heavens and pour out abundant rain, the storehouse of His bounty, that would nourish the crops, livestock and His children. In fact, He would pour out so much rain and the people would prosper so much that they would have a wealthy economy throughout the whole nation. The economy of the Israelites would be healthy, strong and prosperous. They would have so much as a nation that two things would happen economically: they would lend to many nations and have to borrow from none.

Thought 1. The needs of the believer will be met. This is the sure promise of God. There is only one condition: we must obey God. If we obey God, then He meets all our needs. We never suffer a need, not a true need, that is not met. God promises to meet our needs and to meet them abundantly.

Mat 6:33 *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

John 10:10 *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*

Phil 4:19 *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*

Rev 22:14 *Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.*

Exo 23:25 *Worship the LORD your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you.*

Deut 29:9 *Carefully follow the terms of this covenant, so that you may prosper in everything you do.*

1 Chr 22:13 *Then you will have success if you are careful to observe the decrees and laws that the LORD gave Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged.*

Psa 1:1-3 *Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.*

Psa 65:9 *You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.*

Psa 68:19 *Praise be to the LORD, to God our Saviour, who daily bears our burdens.*

Isa 30:23 *He will also send you rain for the seed you sow in the ground, and the food that comes from the land will be rich and plentiful. In that day your cattle will graze in broad meadows.*

VIII. Deuteronomy 28:13 The Blessing of Exaltation

The blessing of being exalted is promised to the obedient person. This is a confidence-building promise: the people of God would become the head or leader, not the tail. They would always be on top, have the upper hand, and never be on bottom. God's people would be exalted, become a prince among the nations of the world. But note: the promise of the blessing is qualified once again. There is a stinging condition: the blessing of being exalted is not to be given automatically. Obedience is the condition. The people of God must obey God to become a prince among the nations and peoples of the earth. Obedience to God is an absolute essential to be exalted by God.

Thought 1. One of the great promises of God to the believer is just this: the believer will be exalted by God. If a person has truly trusted Christ — honestly following and obeying God — then he will be greatly rewarded by God. God will exalt the genuine believer beyond the highest of the high. The exaltation of the believer is assured. This is the promise of God.

Mat 25:23 *“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’”*

Luke 19:17 *“‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’”*

John 14:2-3 *“In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*

Rom 2:10 *But glory, honour and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

1 Cor 6:2 *Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?*

1 Cor 9:25 *Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.*

2 Tim 4:8 *Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

2 Tim 2:12 *If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us.*

Heb 11:26 *He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he [Moses] was looking ahead to his reward.*

1 Pet 5:4 *And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.*

James 1:12 *Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.*

Rev 3:11 *I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.*

Rev 3:21 *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.*

Rev 4:10 *The twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:*

Rev 5:10 *You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.*

Rev 11:12 *Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.*

Psa 91:14 *"Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name."*

Dan 12:3 *Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.*

IX. Deuteronomy 28:14 The Strong Charge: Do Not Disobey the Commandments to Follow False Gods

The wonderful blessings of God conclude with a strong charge. Moses declared that God's people must not turn away from any of the commandments. They must not turn to the right nor to the left. They must obey God, in particular by refusing to follow false gods and false worship. Above all other evils, following false gods and false worship were the most horrible evils that a person could commit. The believer must never deviate from the path of God's commandments. He must follow the LORD God and Him alone, never straying toward false gods and false worship.

Rom 1:18-23 *The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness. Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.*

1 Cor 6:9-10 *Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.*

Gal 5:19-21 *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

1 Jn 5:21 *Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.*

Exo 20:4 *You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.*

Lev 26:1 *Do not make idols or set up an image or a sacred stone for yourselves, and do not place a carved stone in your land to bow down before it. I am the LORD your God.*

Deut 11:16 *Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them.*

Psa 81:9 *You shall have no foreign god among you; you shall not worship any god other than me.*

Isa 42:8 *"I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols." ■*