

Comparable Statements in Deuteronomy 28 and VTE			
23	And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron.	§63 May they make your ground like iron (so that) nothing can sprout from it.	528
24	YHWH will make the rain of your land powder. From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed.	§64 Just as rain does not fall from a brazen heaven so may rain and dew not come upon your fields and your meadows; instead of dew may burning coals rain on your land.	530
26	And your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away.	§41 May Ninurta, the foremost among the gods, fell you with his fierce arrow; may he fill the plain with your blood and feed your flesh to the eagle and the vulture.	425
27	YHWH will strike you with the boils of Egypt, and with tumors and scabs and itch, of which you cannot be healed.	§39 May Sin, the brightness of heaven and earth, clothe you with leprosy and forbid your entering into the presence of the gods or king.	419
28–29a	YHWH will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind, and you shall grope at noonday, as the blind grope in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your ways.	§40 May Šamaš, the light of heaven and earth, not judge you justly. May he remove your eyesight. Walk about in darkness!	422
30	You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall ravish her. You shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it. You shall plant a vineyard, but you shall not enjoy its fruit.	§42 May Venus, the brightest of the stars, before your eyes make your wives lie in the lap of your enemy;	428
33	A nation that you have not known shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labors, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually,	§42 May your sons not take possession of your house, but a strange enemy divide your goods.	430
35	YHWH will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.	§39 May Sin, the brightness of heaven and earth, clothe you with leprosy and forbid your entering into the presence of the gods or king. §52 May Gula, the great physician, put sickness and weariness [in your hearts] and an unhealing wound in your body. Bathe in [blood and pus] as if in water!	419 461
53–57	<sup>53</sup> And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom YHWH your God has given you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemies shall distress you. <sup>54</sup> The man who is the most tender and refined among you will begrudge food to his brother, to the wife he embraces, and to the last of the children whom he has left, <sup>55</sup> so that he will not give to any of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because he has nothing else left, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in all your towns. <sup>56</sup> The most tender and refined woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because she is so delicate and tender, will begrudge to the husband she embraces, to her son and to her daughter, <sup>57</sup> her afterbirth that comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears, because lacking everything she will eat them secretly, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in your towns.	§47 May a mother [bar the door] to her daughter. In your hunger eat the flesh of your sons! In want and famine may one man eat the flesh of another; may one man clothe himself in another's skin; may dogs and swine eat your flesh; may your ghost have nobody to take care of the pouring of libations to him. §75 Just as honey is sweet, so may the blood of your women, your sons and your daughters be sweet in your mouth.	448–450 568
58–63	<sup>58</sup> "If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, YHWH your God, <sup>59</sup> then YHWH will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. <sup>60</sup> And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. <sup>61</sup> Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, YHWH will bring upon you, until you are destroyed.	§38A May Anu, king of the gods, let disease, exhaustion, malaria, sleeplessness, worries and ill health rain upon all your houses.	418A
66–67	<sup>66</sup> Your life shall hang in doubt before you. Night and day you shall be in dread and have no assurance of your life. <sup>67</sup> In the morning you shall say, 'If only it were evening!' and at evening you shall say, 'If only it were morning!' because of the dread that your heart shall feel, and the sights that your eyes shall see.	§97 Just as the noise of (these) doves is persistent, so may you, your women, your sons and your daughters have no rest or sleep and may your bones never come together. §97 May your days be dark and your years dim, may darkness which is not to be brightened be declared as your fate. May your life end in exha[ustion and slee]plessness.	637 485



**Into the Depths of Mordor**  
**The Curses of the Covenant**  
**(Deuteronomy 28:1–69 [English 28:1–29:1])**  
**Veritas Class**  
**October 2, 2016**

**Introduction to Deuteronomy 28:15–69[ET 29:12]**

**A. How should we interpret troubling texts like this?**

- 1. Recognize that they would not have troubled ancient audiences.**
  - a. They were part of all ancient treaty documents.
  - b. The specific terms recall the Esarhaddon Succession Treaty Texts.
  - c. The non-Israelite Job utters similar curses against himself (Job 31).
- 2. Recognize that they come after unbelievably profuse blessings (vv. 1–14).**
- 3. Recognize that YHWH acts directly against his people.**
  - a. Unlike other ANE texts, Israel’s demise involves no other deities.
  - b. Moses clearly declares YHWH’s intentions.
  - c. Moses highlights Israel’s hopelessness.
  - d. Moses lists a shuddering list of secondary agents.
  - e. Moses reminds the people repeatedly of the causes of YHWH’s fury.
- 4. Recognize the pastoral function of this text.**
  - a. It is driven by YHWH’s passion (קנָאָה) for his people.
  - b. Its goal is to keep the Israelites on the divinely intended spiritual course for the cause of the mission.
  - c. Its ultimate goal is redemptive.
- 5. Recognize that this divine fury does not end with the First Testament (Jesus’ woes)**
- 6. Recognize the clear structure of the text: it consists of three literary panels—three volleys of doom: vv. 20–46; 47–57; 58–68**

**B. The Dark Road to Mordor: Exposition**

1. The First Volley (vv. 20–46)
  - a. The Frame (vv. 20; 45–56)
  - b. The Three Alarm Warning
    - (1) The First Alarm (vv. 21–26)
    - (2) The Second Alarm (vv. 27–34)
    - (3) The Third Alarm (vv. 35–44)