



Deuteronomy

A Call to Covenant Renewal

Guard Yourself from Idols

Deuteronomy 4:15-31

Deuteronomy 4:15-31

¹⁵ “Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, ¹⁶ beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, ¹⁷ the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, ¹⁸ the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth. ¹⁹ And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

Deuteronomy 4:15-31

²⁰ But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day. ²¹ Furthermore, the LORD was angry with me because of you, and he swore that I should not cross the Jordan, and that I should not enter the good land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance. ²² For I must die in this land; I must not go over the Jordan. But you shall go over and take possession of that good land. ²³ Take care, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make a carved image, the form of anything that the LORD your God has forbidden you. ²⁴ For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

Deuteronomy 4:15-31

²⁵ “When you father children and children’s children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, ²⁶ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. ²⁷ And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. ²⁸ And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Deuteronomy 4:15-31

²⁹ But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. ³⁰ When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice. ³¹ For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

Theme

Because idolatry is a temptation of the heart, we *must* be admonished; but because God is faithful to His promises, we *can* be assured.

Preliminary Comments:

What is “heart idolatry”?

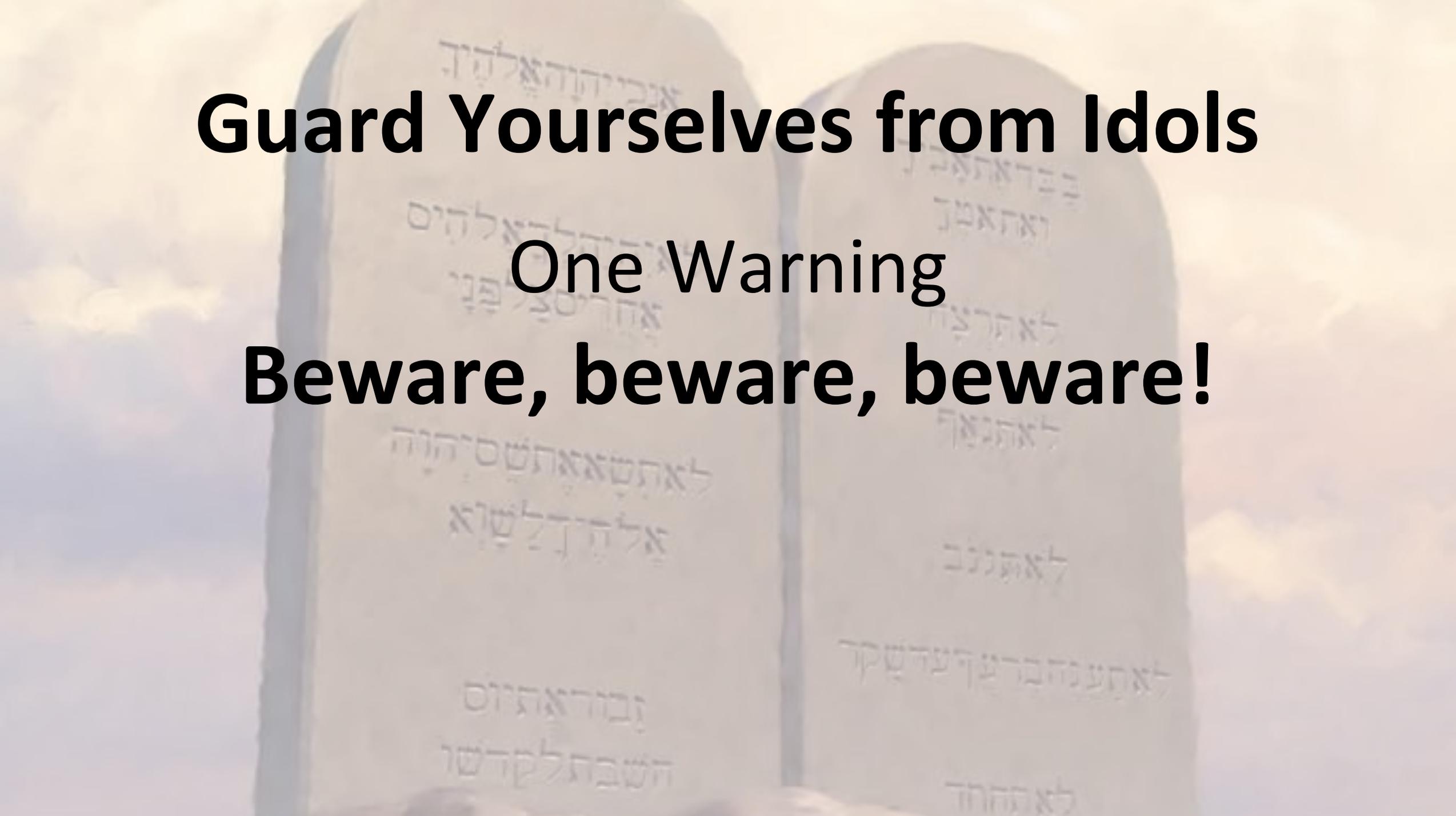
Ezekiel 14:4

Thus says the Lord God, “Any man of the house of Israel who sets up his **idols in his heart...**”

What about you and me?

1 John 5:21

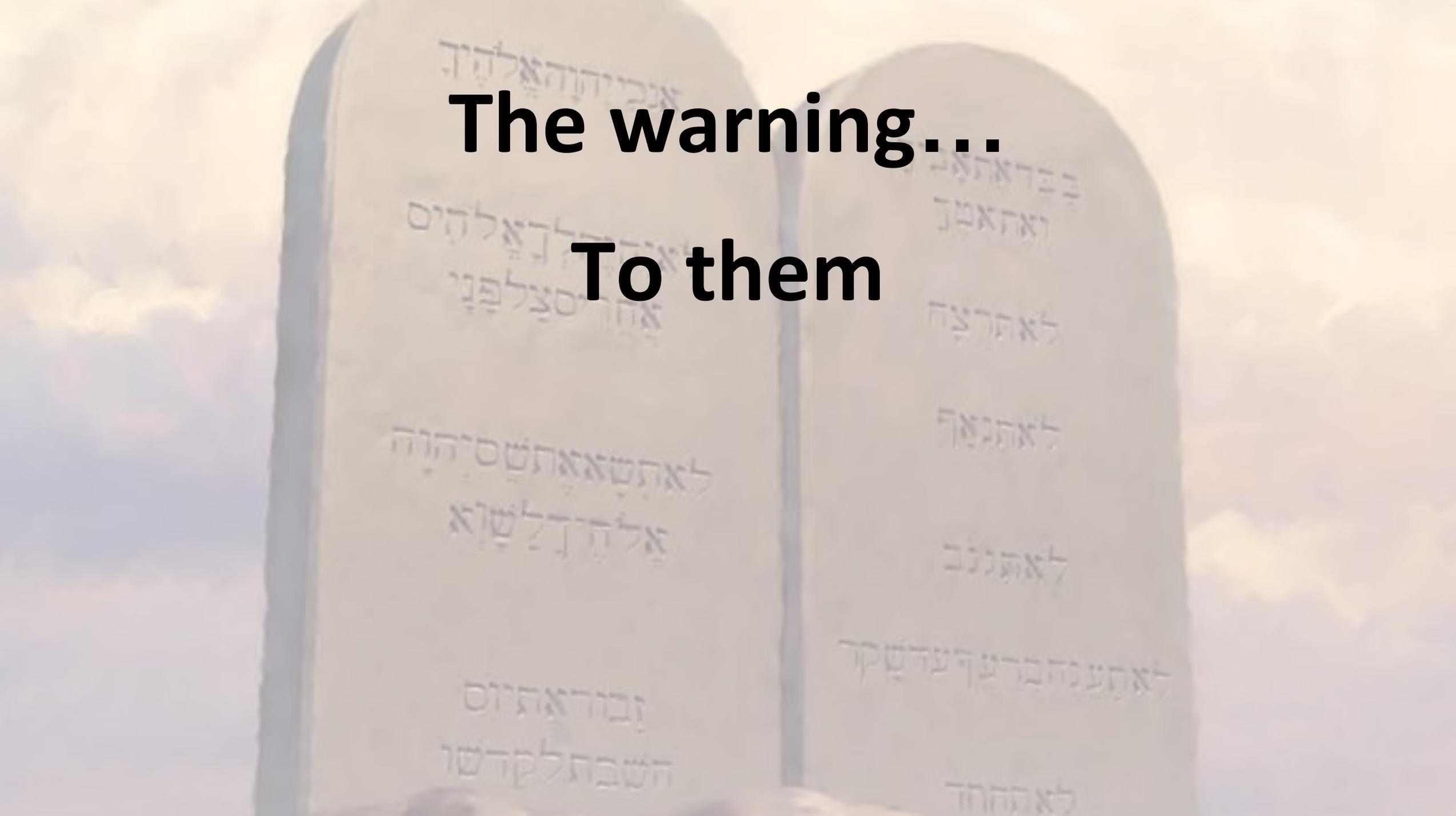
Little children, guard yourselves from idols.



Guard Yourself from Idols

One Warning

Beware, beware, beware!



The warning...

To them

The warning to them.

4:15 Therefore **watch yourselves** very carefully.

4:16 **Beware** lest you act corruptly...

4:19 **Beware** lest you raise your eyes to heaven...

4:23 **Take care**, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God...

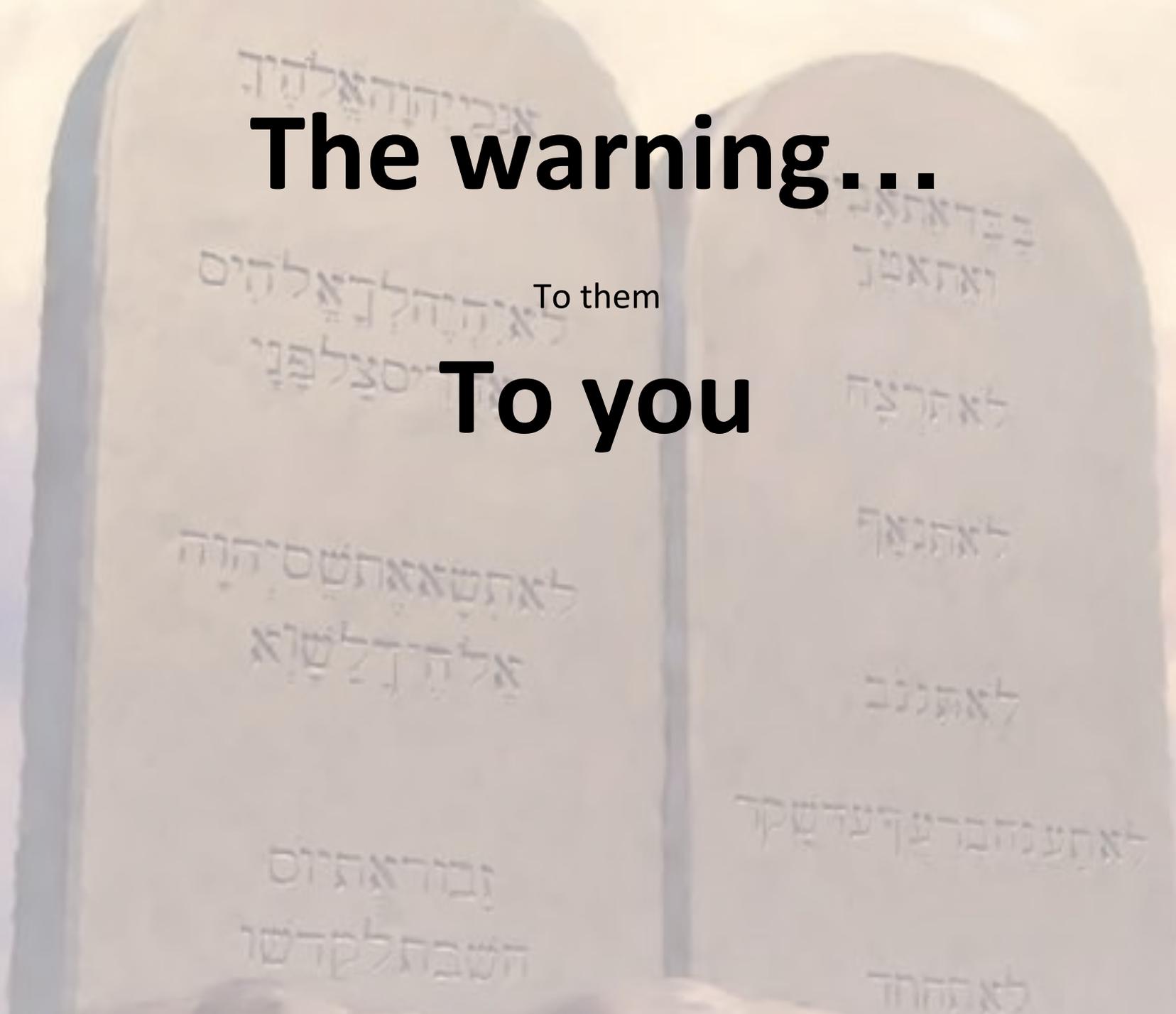
Warnings like this are repeated throughout the whole book.

These warnings were justified;
the people **did** fall away and were
eventually exiled and scattered.

The warning...

To them

To you



The warning to you.

Matthew 7:15 Beware of the false prophets...

Philippians 3:2 Beware of the dogs, **beware** of the evil workers,
beware of the false circumcision...

Acts 20:28 **Be on guard** for yourselves and
for all the flock...

1 John 5:21 Little children, **guard yourselves**
from idols.

1 Corinthians 10:6-12

Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved. And **do not be idolaters**, as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.” **Nor let us act immorally**, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. **Nor let us try the Lord**, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. **Nor grumble**, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

1 Corinthians 10:6-12

Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved. And do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play." Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

Now these things happened to them as an example,
and they were written for our instruction,
upon whom the ends of the ages have come.
Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

1 Corinthians 10:6-12

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Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Therefore let him who thinks he stands **take heed** lest he fall.

Guard Yourself from Idols

One Warning

Two Temptations



Two Temptations?

The temptation to *misrepresent* God.



Temptation #1

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire...

...**beware** lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure...

What IS the nature of God?

Deuteronomy 4:12

Then the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire.
You heard the sound of words, but saw no form;
there was only a voice.

John 1:18

No man has seen God at any time;
the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father,
He has explained Him.

John 4:24

God is spirit, and those who worship Him
must worship in spirit and truth.

What's the temptation?

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you
at Horeb out of the midst of the fire

beware lest **you act corruptly by making a carved image**
for yourselves, **in the form of any figure,**
the likeness of male or female,
the likeness of any animal that is on the earth,
the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air,
the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground,
the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth.

To represent God by created things!

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

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at Horeb out of the midst of the fire
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**the likeness of any winged bird that
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the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground,
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on the ground,**

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To represent God by created things!

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the likeness of male or female,
the likeness of any animal that is on the earth,
the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air,
the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground,

**the likeness of any fish that is in the
water under the earth.**

What about you?

How are you tempted to form
God into your conceptions of
what
you think He should be like?

How was God BEST represented?

Deuteronomy 4:12

Then the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire.
You heard the sound of words, but saw no form;
there was only a voice.

John 1:18

No man has seen God at any time;
the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father,
He has explained Him.

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we
beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the
Father.

Two Temptations?

The temptation to misrepresent God.

The temptation to *misidentify* God.



What's the temptation?

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you
at Horeb out of the midst of the fire

beware lest **you act corruptly by making a carved image.**

What's the temptation?

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you
at Horeb out of the midst of the fire
beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image.

Deuteronomy 4:19

And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven,
and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars,
all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down
to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God
has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

You look up for God...

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you
at Horeb out of the midst of the fire
beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image.

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And beware lest **you raise your eyes to heaven,**

and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars,
all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down
to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God
has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

You see what appears to have power...

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at Horeb out of the midst of the fire
beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image.

Deuteronomy 4:19

And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven,

and when **you see the sun and the moon
and the stars, all the host of heaven,**

you be drawn away and bow down
to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God
has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

You identify them as your gods...

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you
at Horeb out of the midst of the fire
beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image.

Deuteronomy 4:19

And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven,
and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars,

all the host of heaven, **you** be drawn away and **bow down**
to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God
has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

Things that benefit everyone!

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

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at Horeb out of the midst of the fire
beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image.

Deuteronomy 4:19

And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven,
and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars,
all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down

to them and serve them, **things that the LORD your God
has allotted to all the peoples under
the whole heaven.**

What about you?

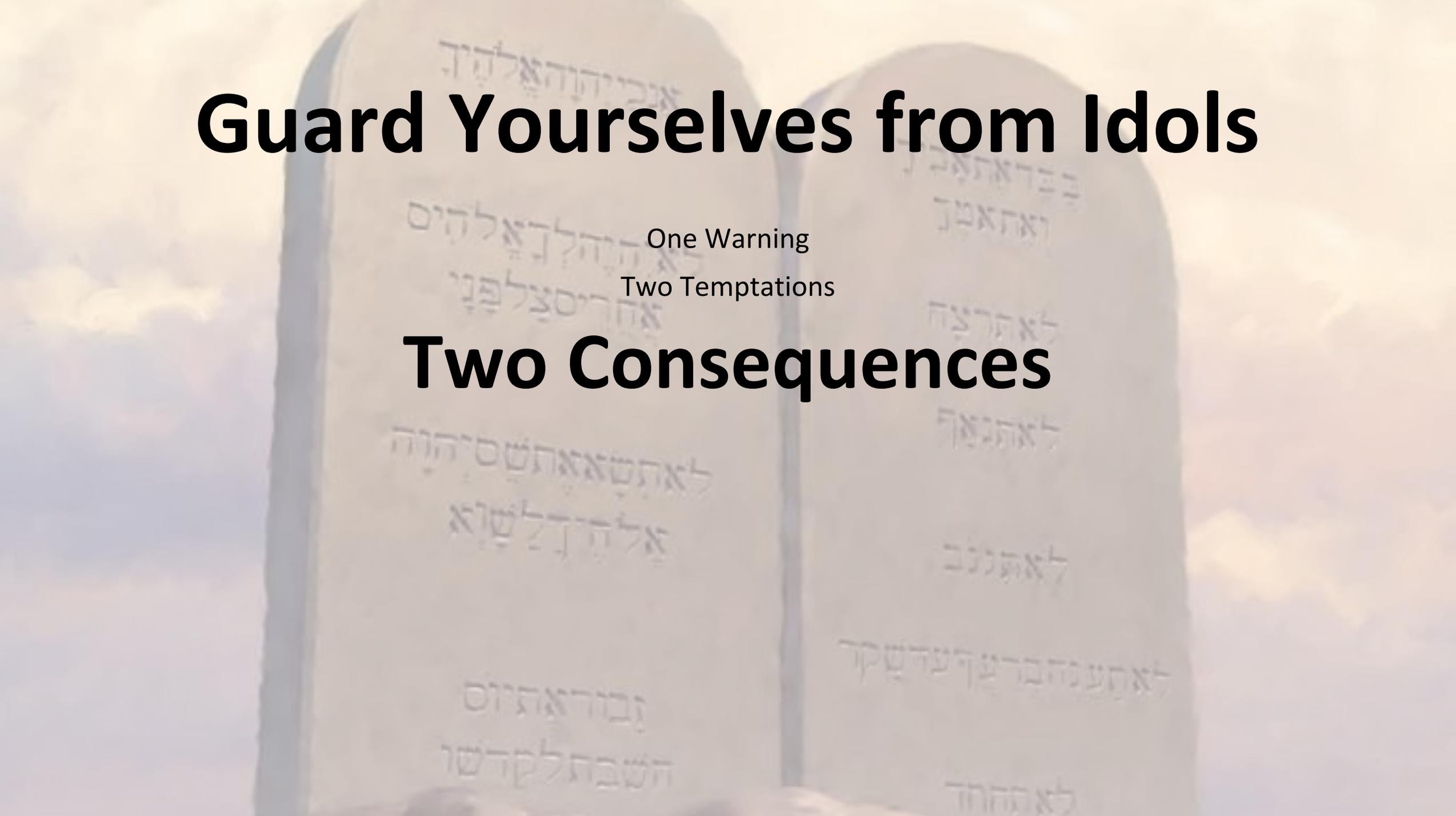
What good provisions of God
are you tempted to look to as
your functional gods?

Guard Yourself from Idols

One Warning

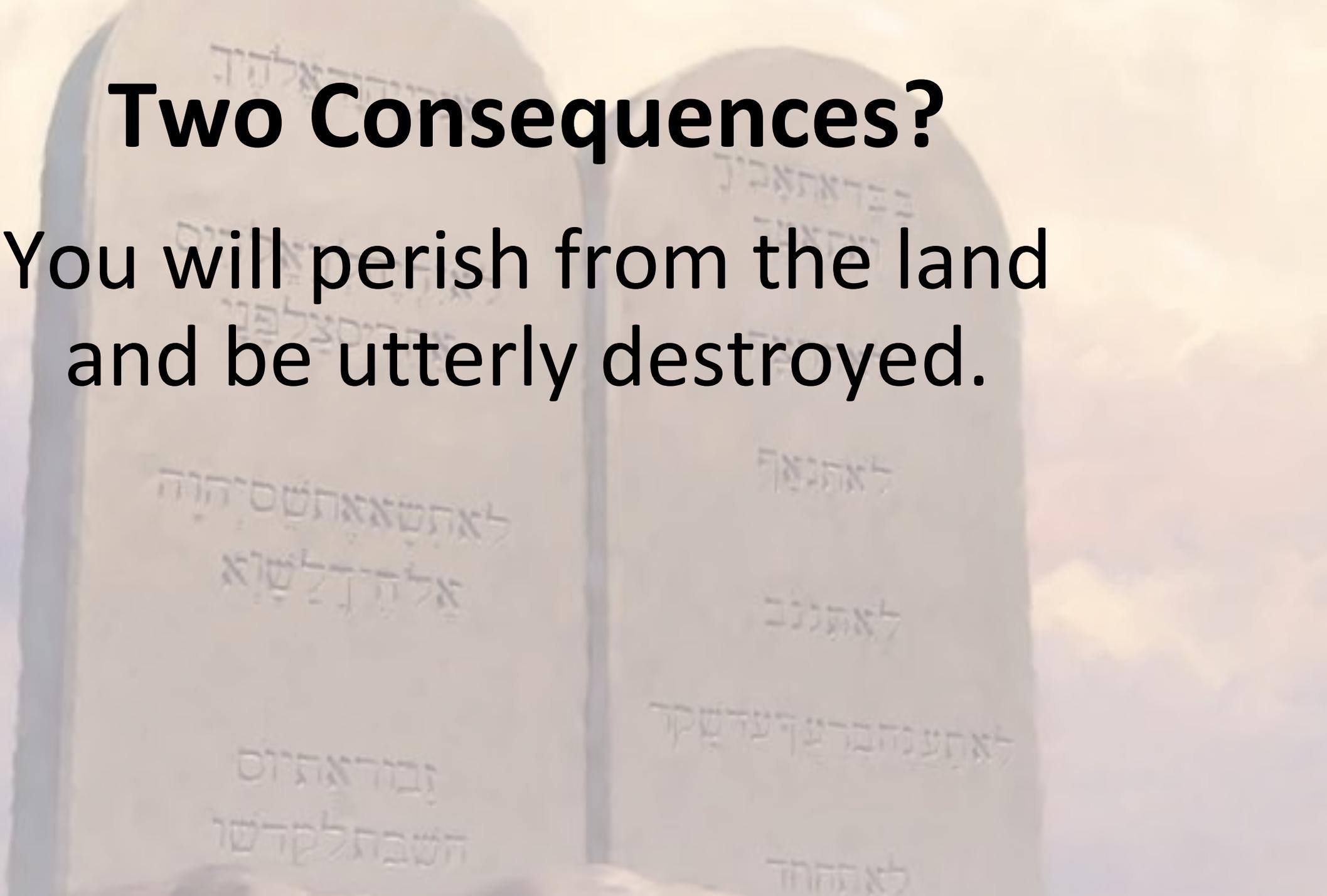
Two Temptations

Two Consequences



Two Consequences?

You will perish from the land
and be utterly destroyed.



What's the consequence?

Deuteronomy 4:25-26

When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.

When you've gotten settled!

Deuteronomy 4:25-26

When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land

, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.

If you practice idolatry!

Deuteronomy 4:25-26

When you father children and children's children, and have

grown old in the land, **if you act corruptly** by making a carved

image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger,

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.

You will be kicked out of the land.

Deuteronomy 4:25-26

When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger,

**I call heaven and earth to witness
against you today,
that you will soon utterly perish
from the land**

that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.

Your nation will be destroyed.

Deuteronomy 4:25-26

When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are

going over the Jordan to possess.

You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.

Two Consequences?

You will perish from the land and be utterly destroyed.

You will be scattered to the nations
and given over to worthless gods.

What's the consequence?

Deuteronomy 4:27-28

And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Dispersed!

Deuteronomy 4:27-28

And **the LORD will scatter you
among the peoples,**

and you will be left few in number among the nations where
the LORD will drive you. And there you will serve gods of wood
and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see,
nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Reduced!

Deuteronomy 4:27-28

And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples,

and **you will be left few in number**

among the nations where

the LORD will drive you. And there you will serve gods of wood

and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see,
nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Given over!

Deuteronomy 4:27-28

And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples,
and you will be left few in number among the nations where

the LORD will drive you. **And there you will serve gods
of wood and stone, the work of
human hands, that neither see,
nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.**

How do these things apply to us?
Even the Church has had a history
of expansion which gives way to
complacency which gives way to
decline and dispersion.

But there is a promise!

Guard Yourself from Idols

One Warning

Two Temptations

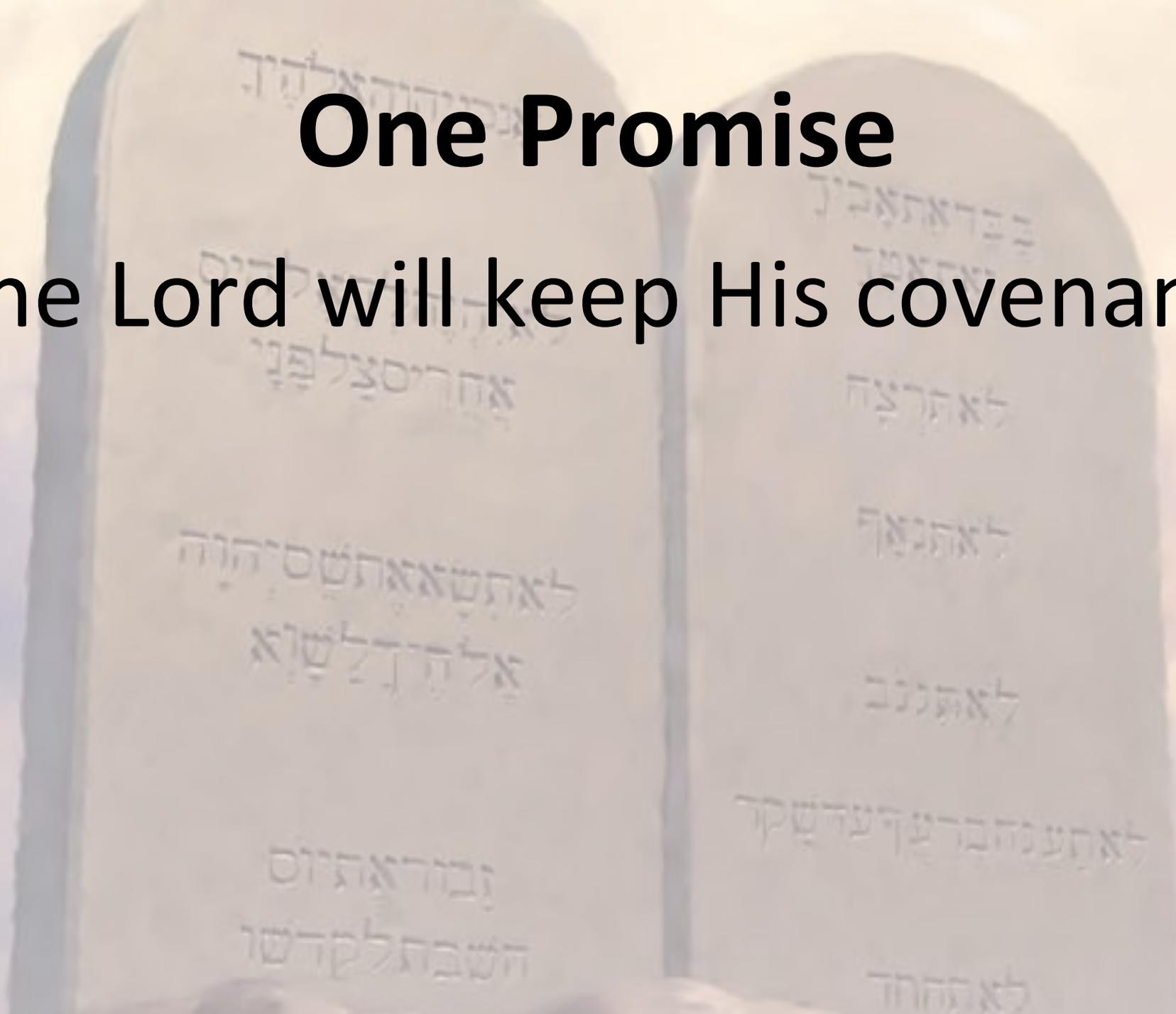
Two Consequences

One Promise



One Promise

The Lord will keep His covenant.



The LORD's Promise to His People

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice.

For the LORD your God is a merciful God.

He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

The LORD will keep covenant

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice. For the LORD your God is a merciful God.

He will not leave you or destroy you or **forget**
the covenant with your fathers
that he swore to them.

God's character always serves
as the foundation for our faith
in His faithfulness.

The LORD will keep covenant

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

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He will not leave you or destroy you or **forget**
the covenant with your fathers
that he swore to them.

Because of who He is!

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice.

For the LORD your God is a merciful God.

He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

Consider connections to His character...

Psalm 111:1-5

Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart, In the company of the upright and in the assembly. Great are the works of the LORD; They are studied by all who delight in them. Splendid and majestic is His work; And His righteousness endures forever. He has made His wonders to be remembered; The LORD is gracious and compassionate. He has given food to those who fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever.

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And **His righteousness endures forever.**

He has made His wonders to be remembered;

The LORD is gracious and compassionate.

He has given food to those who fear Him;

He will remember His covenant forever.

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Faithfulness and steadfast love
are His qualities most commonly
connected to covenant
commitment.

Deuteronomy 7:9

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God,
the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love
with those who love him and keep his commandments,
to a thousand generations.

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Know therefore that the LORD your God is God,
the faithful God who keeps covenant and **steadfast love**
with those who love him and keep his commandments,
to a thousand generations.

But how is it that Scripture can so clearly hold out to us the assurance that God will keep His promises while at the same time tying those promises to obedience?

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the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love
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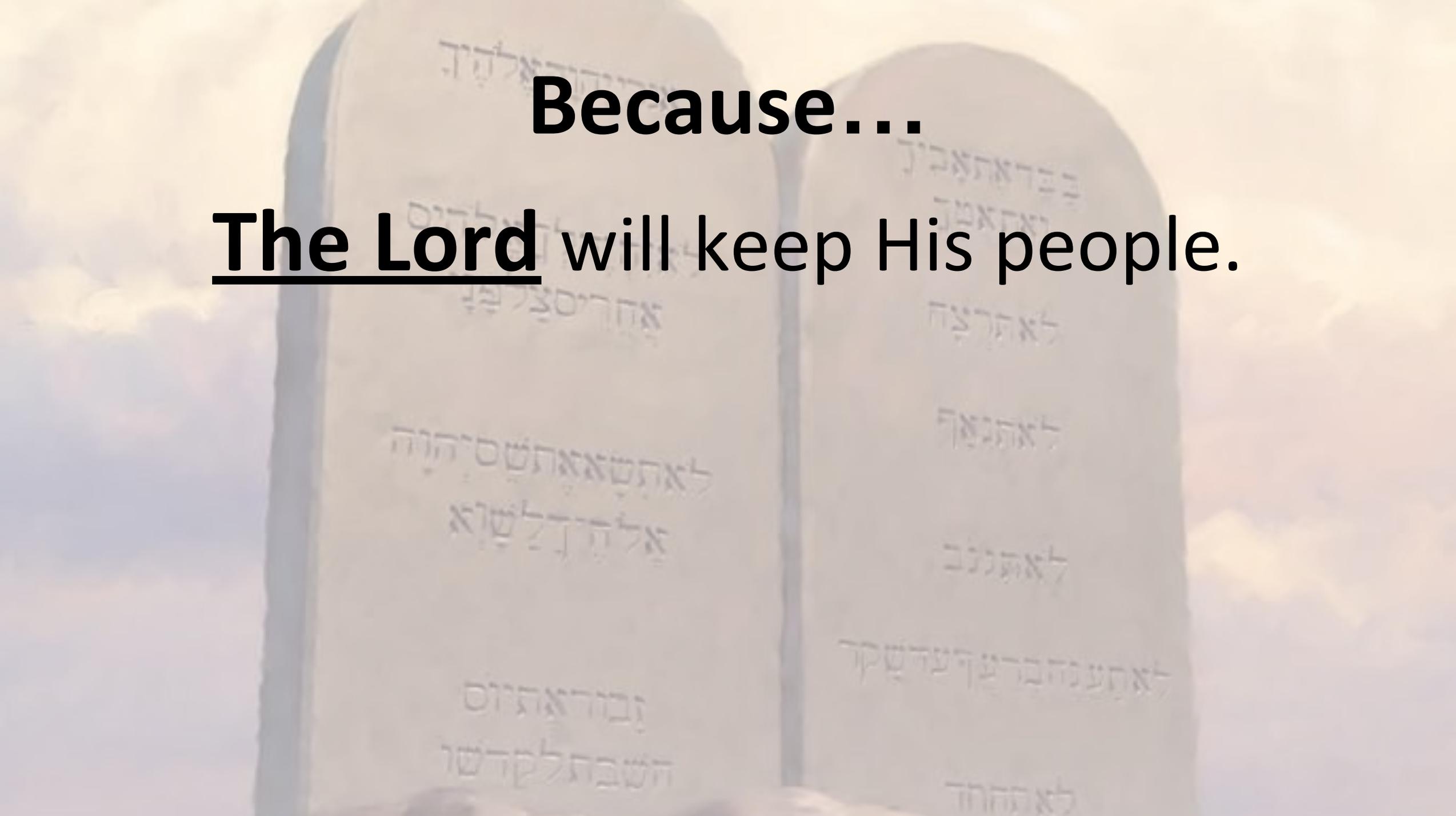
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Deuteronomy 7:9

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God,
the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love

**with those who love him and keep
his commandments,**

to a thousand generations.



Because...

The Lord will keep His people.

The LORD has a people!

Deuteronomy 4:20

But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.

The LORD is faithful to His people!

Jeremiah 32:37-39

Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety. And they shall be My people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me always, for their own good, and for the good of their children after them.

The LORD is faithful to His people!

Jeremiah 32:37-39

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The LORD is faithful to His people!

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The LORD can promise to keep
His promise to His people...
because it is He who promises
to keep His people *in His promise*.

Look at the people's disobedience!

Deuteronomy 4:25-28

When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Look at the people's disobedience!

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When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, ²⁶ I call heaven and

earth to witness against you today, that **you will soon utterly perish from the land** that you are going over the Jordan to possess.

You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.

²⁷ And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. ²⁸

And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Look at the people's disobedience!

Deuteronomy 4:25-28

When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, ²⁶ I call heaven and

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But look at God's promise!

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice.

For the LORD your God is a merciful God.

He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

But look at God's promise!

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For the LORD your God is a merciful God.

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The LORD keeps His people in His promises by keeping His promise of loving and effective discipline to His people.

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When God disciplines you!

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

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and all these things come upon you in
the latter days,**

you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice.

For the LORD your God is a merciful God.

He will not leave you or destroy you or forget
the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

Then you will return!

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days,

**you will return to the LORD your
God and obey his voice.**

For the LORD your God is a merciful God.
He will not leave you or destroy you or forget
the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

Hebrews 12:6-7

For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines,
And He scourges every son whom He receives.
It is for discipline that you endure;
God deals with you as with sons.

John 6:39

And this is the will of Him who sent Me,
that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing,
but raise it up on the last day.

The Lord keeps His own!

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but raise it up on the last day.

Conclusion:

Beware and keep yourself from idols!
But remember it is God who saves
you and who keeps you...

Keep trusting in Him!