

106 – How do Fearing and Loving God go together?

The Lord required Moses to TEACH Israel his “commands, decrees, and laws” instructions. This teaching happened several times throughout Israel’s history:

- **Moses did it twice:** once when the law was given in the first place and again before he died.
- **Joshua** did it before Israel crossed Jordan into the Promised Land
- **Ezra** did it when he returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian exile
- **There are some other instances**

The point here is that God required the actual teaching – that is someone speaking His instructions directly to the people they concerned. As the law was given, it was recorded, so it was available to refer to all the time, FOR GENERATIONS. Still, the people forgot it and had to be reminded of it at critical times in their history.

Review with me, a section of scripture we looked at last week:

[Deuteronomy 6](#)

¹These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you

These are the orders, charges, instructions, directions, injunctions, prescriptions, enactments – in other words, “*These are what God has established; and He’s directing me to teach them to you. The Lord has directed me to impart His instructions, injunctions, orders, charges, prescriptions, and enactments to you on His behalf – I’m not doing this for my sake – trust me, if I’m teaching them to you, it’s because He’s embedded them in me! This is for your sake, so listen up! Certainly, you can learn them on your own; Yes, by all means study and seek Him out on your own; nevertheless, this knowledge is important to communicate and convey to you verbally.*”

I suspect that a word – God’s word in particular – does not contain or convey its full force, it doesn’t make its full impact on the lives of those to whom the word is addressed, until it is spoken. Its writing makes it accessible to future generations unaltered (hopefully, if it is faithfully translated and transcribed). But look at us now – we meet twice a week to *hear* the word of the Lord, not just to *read* it for ourselves. Christians worldwide gather at least one a week to hear God’s word heralded

Teaching requires speaking. It also requires listening and hearing. Notice that the Lord did not require Moses to pass around copies for everyone – there were no

handouts (that would have been awkward in a day of clay tablets, papyrus, parchment, or even paper, all of which had to be transcribed by hand, one at a time).

It appears to me that the Lord values sons and daughters who are teachable as much as He does the teacher. Notice that Moses says he was directed to teach the children of Israel.

Here's a principle: Our teachability determines our level of success in every area of life, spirit, soul and body -- spiritually, mentally, and physically – when the teaching is from God; we are what we have learned from Him and about Him, and then what we have done with what we have learned. If we have been taught by someone He has not directed to teach about Him and for His purpose, look out. Somewhere, I believe, you will find conflict, bondage, confusion, limitations, constraints, contention, and certainly error, none of which are from God. God and His word are as consistent as His name – As He is Himself.

What was the purpose for Moses being directed to teach God's orders, charges, instructions, directions, injunctions, prescriptions, and enactments; all that He had established?

Deuteronomy 6

¹ **to observe** in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,

Moses said, "I'm being directed to impart these instructions and rules for you to **not just to know about but to DO – to observe, as in keep, perform.**" Why is this important?

² **so that** you, your children and their children after them may **fear the LORD** your God as long as you live

The word, "fear," has in it the idea of being "*reverence, and struck with amazement*" ([Thayer](#)). The term, "**fear the Lord**" always bothered me. How do you love and fear at the same time? And yet, fearing and loving the Lord is found throughout the scriptures, Old and NT! **Proverbs** and **Psalms** both declare, "**Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.**" "**The beginning of wisdom.**" In other words, wisdom does NOT begin without first fearing the Lord, reverencing Him, being struck with amazement by Him; His majesty; His incomprehensible knowledge, wisdom, power, purpose, and presence. Fearing Him is totally appropriate! He holds your breath. Look at people in the scriptures, like Ezekiel's wife:

Ezekiel 24:15-24

¹⁵ The word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁶ "Son of man, with one blow I am about to take away from you the delight of your eyes. Yet do not lament or weep or

shed any tears. ¹⁷ Groan quietly; do not mourn for the dead. Keep your turban fastened and your sandals on your feet; do not cover your mustache and beard or eat the customary food of mourners. ”

¹⁸ So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded.

¹⁹ Then the people asked me, “Won’t you tell us what these things have to do with us? Why are you acting like this?”

²⁰ So I said to them, “The word of the LORD came to me: ²¹ Say to the people of Israel, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am about to desecrate my sanctuary —the stronghold in which you take pride, the delight of your eyes, the object of your affection. The sons and daughters you left behind will fall by the sword. ²² And you will do as I have done. You will not cover your mustache and beard or eat the customary food of mourners. ²³ You will keep your turbans on your heads and your sandals on your feet. You will not mourn or weep but will waste away because of your sins and groan among yourselves. ²⁴ Ezekiel will be a sign to you; you will do just as he has done. When this happens, you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD.’

As far as we know, Ezekiel’s wife was a perfectly innocent woman, whom the Lord decided to remove...just like that...and told Ezekiel, “this is what I’m going to do and I don’t want you mourning or groaning over it!” That is fearful.

Look at Esau: “**Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated**” (Romans 9:13). Look at Bathsheeba’s first son, by David, whom the Lord struck dead. The baby was innocent – had no choice in the matter of his birth, much less His death.

For that matter, look at everyone throughout All the scriptures and ask yourself, “Why them?” Never mind the person, whether great or small, and never mind the story, whether short or long; rather, look at God Who is to be feared **and** loved. And Why? Because “**He is the Lord and there is no other.**” That’s the only explanation we need, really, although the Apostle Paul gives us more:

[Romans 9:](#)

11 For, not as yet being born, nor putting into practice anything good or bad, **that the purpose of God may be remaining as a choice, not out of acts, but of Him Who is calling,**

Whose choice is the purpose of God?

12 it was declared to her **[Rachael]** that "The greater shall be slaving for the inferior,"

13 According as it is written, "Jacob I love, yet Esau I hate."

14 What, then, shall we be declaring? Not that there is injustice with God? May it not be coming to that!

15 For to Moses He is saying, "I shall be merciful to whomever I may be merciful, and I shall be pitying whomever I may be pitying."

16 Consequently, then, it is not of him who is willing, nor of him who is racing, but of God, the Merciful.

17 For the scripture is saying to Pharaoh that "For this selfsame thing I rouse you up, so that I should be displaying in you My power, and so that My name should be published in the entire earth."

18 Consequently, then, to whom He will, He is merciful, yet whom He will, He is hardening.

19 You will be protesting to me, then, "Why, then, is He still blaming? for who has withstood His intention?"

20 O man! who are you, to be sure, who are answering again to God? That which is molded will not protest to the molder, "Why do you make me thus?"

21 Or has not the potter the right over the clay, out of the same kneading to make one vessel, indeed, for honor, yet one for dishonor?

22 Now if God, wanting to display His indignation and to make His powerful doings known, carries, with much patience, the vessels of indignation, adapted for destruction,

23 it is that He should also be making known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He makes ready before for glory --

24 us, whom He calls also, not only out of the Jews, but out of the nations also.

25 As He is saying in Hosea also: I shall be calling those who are not My people "My people," And she who is not beloved "Beloved,"

26 "And it shall be, in the place where it was declared to them, 'Not My people are you,'" There "they shall be called 'sons of the living God.'"

There is no place to run from God's sovereignty. It is everywhere because He is everywhere. Look at all that is going on in your life today, and Give thanks to God for all of it. Look at all WHO are in your life today, and give thanks to God for all of them. If you

are still breathing, give Him thanks and praise. IF you awaken tomorrow, give Him thanks and praise. If you screw something up royally, give Him thanks and praise. Also fear Him and obey Him – Not because He is playing some kind of game with you and your life...no, but because you don't exist apart from His purpose, and it is His purpose that takes priority to even individual lives. So, your life right now; the fact that you are listening to this right now, serves His purpose. The truth is that if He decides, or His purpose requires you or me to die right now, that's how it is. He isn't mean, and you'll meet Him, but we're here to serve His purpose; indeed, we are here in the first place precisely *because* of His purpose!

OK, back to **Deuteronomy 6: 2** – Here's HOW we fear the Lord our God: this is how simple it is...and how exacting:

by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you,

Thank GOD for His Holy Spirit, which actually makes this possible! AMEN? The Holy Spirit of the Living God making its home in you and me gives us the ability to be like Jesus right now, and His grace, through Jesus Christ's faith and His shed blood, redeems us and justifies us when we aren't being like Jesus right now. God did this in us and for us. He is worthy of all worship, praise, honor and glory, and righteous, reverence, amazement-struck fear.

What's the result of fearing God? The last part of **Deuteronomy 6:2** –

...so that you may **enjoy** long life.

Not only can you live LONG, but you can **enjoy** it. What's not said here, but is implicit is that NOT fearing God results in rebellion which leads to a shortened life that one does NOT enjoy ultimately. How many people do you know right now who lead lives that are purpose-filled, and ones they know are God-fearing, and God-pleasing, versus the alternative?

Jump down to **Deuteronomy 6:4**

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Now Moses gets to loving God. Note the order: Fear is first, then love. Fear apparently orients us rightly, perhaps because humans have a prideful, rebellious streak running through them. **Fear First, then love. God does more for us that is good and wonderful than He ever does for us that is painful.** The key there is that both are FOR us; that is, for our good, for our advancement and the fulfillment of His purpose for our lives.

Notice that fearing Him had no qualifiers, no special effort is required; it's just a necessary precursor to loving Him. I would propose that loving God CANNOT occur until the right orientation toward Him has been established; by that I mean fearing Him. The order of the instruction leads me to the potentially alarming perspective that loving God is impossible for anyone who does not firstly and properly fear Him. Furthermore, loving God must be undistracted and all consuming. Once the right orientation is established by fearing Him, our hearts, souls and strength can be marshaled to love Him, because it is in the loving Him, with all that we are and have, that we enjoy the long life He promised.

Deuteronomy 6:6

⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

Not in your head; not in a book on a shelf that you read once and keep so others can see what you've read. These orders, charges, instructions, directions, injunctions, prescriptions, and enactments; all that God has established, are to be on your heart. When we say, "*something is weighing heavily on my heart*," let it be the Lord's instructions. Let's also remember what Jesus said:

Matthew 11:29-30

Lift My yoke upon you and be learning from Me, for meek am I and humble in heart, and you shall be finding rest in your souls,
30 for My yoke is kindly and My load is light.

Feeling, which happens in the heart, is far more powerful than thinking.

Deuteronomy 6:7

⁷ **Impress** them on your children.

Adults say something like this all the time: he or she is at that impressionable age. Do you realize that a Hebrew child was not reckoned as an adult until he or she was 30 years old? They were eligible for military service by 20 yoa. Bar-mitzvah, and Bat-mitzvah for girls, happens at age 12, but they are still considered children.

Here the scripture says, "***impress these things on your children***": i.e., "teach them incisively. Sharpen them with these things." ([Gesenius](#)). Don't have children? SK God to send someone to you who needs to know Him, and impart to them as He leads you by His Spirit.

Deuteronomy 6:7

Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Barbara was once advised by her sister to talk about the weather, or something else, quote, non-threatening, unquote. She replied, "I don't have relationships like that." Barbara and I have neither time for nor interest in conversations that don't glorify God or serve His purpose.

Deuteronomy 6:8-9

⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

We kind of skated through these two verses last time, but I suspected there was something to this that we today, especially a Gentiles, might not recognize but could learn from: Here's what one commentator wrote:

"...many writers suppose that a reference was made to a superstitious custom borrowed from the Egyptians, who wore jewels and ornamental trinkets on the forehead and arm, inscribed with certain words and sentences, as amulets to protect them from danger. These, it has been conjectured, Moses intended to supersede by substituting sentences of the law; and so the Hebrews understood him, for they have always considered the wearing of the *Tephilim*, or frontlets, a permanent obligation. The form was as follows: Four pieces of parchment, inscribed, the first with [Exodus 13:2-10](#) ; the second with [Exodus 13:11-16](#) ; the third with [Deuteronomy 6:1-8](#) ; and the fourth with [Deuteronomy 11:18-21](#), were enclosed in a square case or box of tough skin, on the side of which was placed the Hebrew letter (*shin*), and bound round the forehead with a thong or ribbon. When designed for the arms, those four texts were written on one slip of parchment, which, as well as the ink, was carefully prepared for the purpose.

I witnessed something like this in Topeka, Kansas, when, as a new doctor, the office I worked in had a lot of devout catholic patients from St. Mary's, Kansas, where there was a college and a convent. The whole town was founded by and mostly populated by Catholics. One woman had several strands of what looked like yarn tied around her neck, and I asked her about them, being the heathen I was. She drew out half a dozen "scapulars." She wore these waking and sleeping, each to protect from or provide for something by some saint or other.

That's what Deuteronomy 6:8 makes me think of. Deut. 6:9 makes me think of the mazzuza that many Jews have set on the doorframes of their homes, businesses, and offices today.

The point of all these measures prescribed so far is found in **Deuteronomy 6:12**...

¹² **be careful that you do not forget the LORD**, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

The only for this word of caution is because it is possible and the Lord knew it would happen. I know, firsthand, about forgetting the Lord, and if not about forgetting about Him actually, then treating Him and His word with such carelessness and flippancy that it's as good as forgetting about Him. You've heard a bit about this, but I believe it's important to share it with you in a bit more detail:

When the ministry folded, of which I had been apart for 14 years, and had even left a career position to help publish the results of our studies, I lost the only vision I had. The scriptures says that "***without vision the people cast off restraint.***" That's exactly what happened between 1984 and 2008, when Barbara and I got together by God's sovereign operation. I spent – some may say wasted – 24 years not worshipping God, not studying – not even reading – the word; not praying. Few would have known that I knew anything about the scriptures, much less about God. A colleague said, in 2009, "I never knew that you were so Christ-centered." I answered honestly, "You never *would* have known because I wasn't." That I am centered in Him now, and have been, at least since early February, 2008, and that Barbara came into my life and married me is totally evidence of His love and mercy and kindness operating. The point is, it is entirely possible to forget the Lord.

Deuteronomy 6:24

²⁴ The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, **so that** we might always **prosper** and **be kept alive**, as is the case today.

One more time, review with me the definition of faith, or "TRUST" in Hebrew:

Hebrews 11:1

1 Now faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed

What we expect we rely on as certain, and we assuming that what we expect will happen. We are not merely hoping; this is not an iffy, maybe, maybe not, proposition. We are assuming our certainty. Can you see how that might appear foolish or even crazy to outsiders? Remember that God deliberately chooses the foolish to disgrace the wise. No wonder it's so important for us to remind ourselves, day in and day out, of what we know to be true. Because we know it through the eyes of faith – total trust in a God we cannot see.

If Jesus Christ could believe God when the Father went silent as He left the Garden of Gethsemane, not to be heard from the whole time He was being mocked, beaten, scourged, nailed to a cross and hung out in the scorching sun to die, with nothing but vinegar to drink, can't we also believe God?

2 Timothy 2:13

if we are disbelieving, He is remaining faithful -- He cannot disown Himself

Father, we come trusting You. Trusting Your word, and trusting all that you have said and done that is written in Your word. Your word is truth, Jesus said, and we believe you. We take You at Your word. Father, it's all that makes sense really, in this life and in the wicked eon,

Challenge: B.I.B.L.E. What are they and where are they? I have it on my heart to put together the B.I.B.L.E. – but you have to help, and it'll be a wonderful exercise for us all. We'll publish it and you'll each be credited for you contributions.