

Message #11

Deuteronomy 6:1-25

I am not too sure as to whether or not we, who know the Lord, actually realize how important obedience actually is in our relationship with God. Obedience to God's word is the key to our relationship with God. Now it seems to me that when things are tough and look bleak, there is a tendency for God's people to want to run to God for help. They say things and promise things that they may or may not follow through with later.

But probably the greatest threat to obedience is not difficulties; it is success! When things are going good or are looking good for people, they can begin to relax and lose their sharp focus on knowing and obeying the word of God. When God's people have some victory and success, they can begin to forget about what it was that gave them that victory and success.

Moses never wanted that to happen to God's people. When they would get into the Promised Land, they certainly would be able to enjoy their lives as never before, but he did not want them to ever lose sight of the God who gave them the Land and gave them their blessings.

God specifically wanted Moses to teach the word of God to the people so when he was gone and they were in the Promised Land, they would obey the word so that they and their families would fear God and love God and be blessed by God.

THE KEY TO HAVING GOD CONSISTENTLY GIVE YOU BLESSINGS IN LIFE AND LONGEVITY IN LIFE IS TO FEAR GOD, LOVE GOD AND CAREFULLY OBEY GOD'S WORD.

There is the key to success. It is a very simple formula. Reverence God, love God and obey God's word. Now the principles set forth in this chapter are as relevant for us as they were for Israel. In fact, when Jesus Christ was here on earth, He said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

Now we may notice from **verse 1** that Moses once again shows the importance of knowing and obeying the commandments (mitzvah)-actual commands given by God, statutes (huqqim)-things written by God, and judgments (mishpatim)-righteous instruction as it relates to various relationships. This is a critical theme Moses wants to drive home-obey the word of God.

In **verse 2**, Moses says when you are in the land experiencing the blessings of God, it is critical that you purpose to do this **all the days of your life**. There is to be no easing up in these areas even when things are going great. If you will make this your focus, it will cause God to grant you a long and blessed life.

Moses says in **verse 3** that if they would listen to what he has to say and would carefully obey what he has to say, God would grant them increase and multiply them greatly and He would see to it that their land would flow with milk and honey, just like He promised to their fathers.

Now who would not want that? There is one sovereign, majestic God who promises that He will give all of His blessings to people who obey His word. Who would not want that? Who would not want God to do this for them? If someone said to you, would you like a long, happy, fulfilled blessed life, I don't know anyone in their right mind who would say no.

There are at least eighteen specific, very understandable teachings that Moses gives to God's people. They are not complicated and are simple and direct. Some of these things he has already stressed.

TEACHING #1 – God's people need to hear. **6:4a**

When Moses says they need to hear, he is not just referring to hearing audible sound or noise. He is talking about hearing with the goal of listening and understanding and applying. The implication of this is that God's people are going to hear a man of God proclaim the word of God with the goal of obeying it.

TEACHING #2 – God's people need to know the LORD is our God. **6:4b**

Israel needs to know Jehovah is our God. YHWH is our Elohim. The sovereign covenant I AM of Israel who can do whatever He wants to do and the Great Triune God who is the sovereign creator is **our God**.

TEACHING #3 – God's people need to know God is one God. **6:4c**

The noun "God" is plural and the noun LORD is singular. So there is singularity to God and plurality to God. God is a Trinity and God's people need to realize this and know this. God is one God in three distinct Persons and we who have believed in Jesus Christ have an intimate connection to this one, true God.

Now there is only one God. There are not multiple deities. There is one and only one God and it is the God of Israel and it is the God of the Bible.

TEACHING #4 – God's people are to love God with all their heart, soul and might. **6:5**

God wants His people to love Him and not in some half-hearted way. He wants His people to love Him in every area of all their heart (leb) - center of feelings, and every area of all their soul (nephesh) - the immaterial you, and with all their might (meod) - all the strength you have. Now the word "soul" (nephesh) is used in the Hebrew Bible over 750 times and it refers to the invisible you.

Now when Jesus was asked by the Pharisees what is the greatest commandment, He actually quoted this part of the book of Deuteronomy in Mark 12:28-31. He said, "love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength."

So Jesus says there is the heart of a person (center of emotions), a soul of a person (immaterial you), a mind of a person (center of thought) and a might or strength of the person. The entire person is to love God in his or her entirety and with everything he/she is.

Have we always done that? I haven't. So if this is the most important commandment, I haven't measured up.

TEACHING #5 – God's people should have God's words always on heart and mind. **6:6**

God wants His people thinking about His written "words" at all times. Now the "words" of God are to be deeply implanted in the hearts and minds of God's people.

God wants His people not only having His word, but knowing His word and thinking about His word in every situation of life.

TEACHING #6 – God's people need to teach God's word to their children in their homes. **6:7**

God wants parents and grandparents to diligently talk about the word of God to their children. God wants parents to talk to their children about God when sitting in the house, when walking outside and when lying down at night and getting up in the morning.

Now I want to point out something from this historical context. I think there is value to reading the word of God as a family, but that is not what Moses had in mind here. What Moses had in mind was that the people of God were so indoctrinated with the word of God that they could talk to their children about it and set forth its truth in various situations of life.

All throughout the day parents are to be teachers and theologians who always remind their children about God. Various things throughout the day become opportunities to talk about God and what His word says.

TEACHING #7 – God's people should think about God's word when they are working with their hands, thinking with their minds, living privately in their homes and when publicly at the gates. **6:8-9**

God wanted His people to think about Him and His word in every aspect of daily life. God's word was to be in their thinking when working with their hands, when thinking with their minds and when living privately in their homes. The written word of God is to be taken very seriously at all times.

God says if you will do this and if you will apply these things, there will be three results:

Result #1 - God will give you the land and all cities in the land. **6:10**

The nation was on the east side of the Jordan when Moses told them this and if they would take His word seriously, they would receive all the land and the cities God promised. They would receive cities they did not build. God would just give them things.

Result #2 - God will fill your houses full of good things. **6:11a**

They would receive houses they did not build filled with all kinds of things they did not earn or buy.

Result #3 - God will completely satisfy and bless you in every area of life. **6:11b**

They would receive cisterns and wells filled with water, and vineyards and olive trees and they would have a wonderful, full, satisfying life.

Who would not want the sovereign, majestic God to do this for them?

TEACHING #8 – God’s people must not ever forget about what God has done for them when He is blessing them. **6:12**

God never wanted Israel to forget that I am the One who chose you and saved you out of slavery to the Egyptians. This is the threat. When someone is being blessed, the danger is forgetting God. It is more likely to forget about God in moments of prosperity than it is in moments of poverty.

There is nothing wrong with enjoying what God has given, but God’s people never want to forget about the fact that it is God who has given it.

We must never forget about the fact that God saved us when we were enslaved to sin. He chose us and He saved us and we must always remember that.

TEACHING #9 – God’s people should only fear God. **6:13a**

This is so important. The one Person you want to fear and reverence is God. Most people fear things they don’t need to fear and they don’t fear the One they do need to fear. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.

TEACHING #10 – God’s people must only worship God. **6:13b**

God will not share His glory and majesty with anyone. He is the only true God and He is the God who is to be worshipped.

TEACHING #11 – God’s people must only swear by His name. **6:13c**

God’s people were to take oaths in His name only.

TEACHING #12 – God’s people must not ever follow any other God. **6:14**

People in this world dedicate themselves to all kinds of things. God’s people are to be totally dedicated to God. They are not to follow after the same things this world follows which are contrary to God and His word.

TEACHING #13 – God’s people need to realize God is a jealous God. **6:15a**

God is a jealous God for His people. Moses has stressed this several times. People who believe that God is just this “tolerant love God” are making a fatal mistake. God is a God who has a righteous jealousy and when His people turn away from His word, and they start putting something ahead of Him, it angers Him.

When God gets angry with His people many negative things will happen.

TEACHING #14 – God’s people need to realize they can anger God to the point that He eliminates and kills them. **6:15b**

Most people do not want to hear or know about this side of God. God can and does kill people. Now many apply this to the O.T. law which certainly shows we are all condemned and deserve God’s wrath. But I don’t think that is what this is teaching. God says I want you to realize this about Me; if I get angry, I can wipe a person or nation completely out of existence.

There are warnings in the New Testament that God can be angered to the point where He kills people. Jesus Christ warned the church of Thyatira of that very point (Rev. 2:23). Paul warned the Corinthian church of this very point (I Cor. 11:30). The Apostle John said there is a sin unto death (I John 5:16). James, the half-brother of the Lord, said if a brother or sister strays from the truth, it can lead to death (James 5:20).

Understand this about God: He loves His people but if any of His people cause Him to reach a point of anger, He can eliminate them from this world, just as He saved them out of the world.

TEACHING #15 – God’s people must not ever test God. **6:16**

The word “test” carries with it the idea of making some demand on God that is not consistent with His character, word or circumstances.

Moses reminds them that they did that at Massah. When Israel was on the way to Sinai, after parting the Red Sea they started questioning whether or not God was really with them (Ex. 17:7). They demanded that God show them by giving them a miraculous supply of water (Ex. 17:2). God did in fact give them water, but He was not pleased with them for what they did.

Moses says do not test God like that.

TEACHING #16 – God’s people must diligently guard, obey and apply God’s word. **6:17**

Moses keeps bringing up this theme because it is the word of God that is critical to not angering God and gaining the blessings of God.

TEACHING #17 – God’s people must do what is right in God’s sight. **6:18-19**

God’s people need to seek to do what is good and right in every context of life and if His people will do this, there are three guarantees:

(Guarantee #1) - Life will be well with them. **6:18a**

(Guarantee #2) - God will fulfill all promises. **6:18b**

(Guarantee #3) - All enemies will be eliminated. **6:18c**

TEACHING #18 – God’s people must communicate the importance of obeying God to their children. **6:20-25**

For Israel, the future prosperity of the nation depended upon one generation teaching another generation the importance of knowing God’s word and obeying it.

The assumption of **verse 20** is that as children are growing up, they have questions and it is the responsibility of the parents and grandparents to answer those questions in light of the word of God.

Now I believe churches have been negligent to give the parents and grandparents the understanding of the word of God that they need to be able to do this.

When people go to church, they need to be carefully and accurately taught the very “words” of the Scriptures. They need to be equipped to give answers to serious questions of life.

Let’s sum it up here. If you want the ultimate of God’s blessings in this life—fear God, love God and obey God and He will give you an abundant life filled with His blessings.