

Deuteronomy 4:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, for ever.

Analysis

Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee...

Moses draws the practical conclusion (veshamarta, ושמרת, 'you shall keep/guard') from the theological foundation: because Yahweh alone is God (vv. 35, 39), His chuqqim (חוקים, 'statutes') and mitsvotav (מצוותיו, 'commandments') demand obedience. Monotheism is not mere doctrine but lifestyle—acknowledging one God means following one Lord.

Obedience yields blessing: asher yitav lekha (אשר ייטב לך, 'that it may go well with you') and ulevanekha acharekha (ולבניך אחריך, 'and with your children after you'). Covenant faithfulness produces multigenerational flourishing. This is not mechanical prosperity gospel but covenantal consequence—the God who designed life also revealed how life works best. Obedience aligns us with reality; disobedience fights against the grain of the universe.

The phrase leha'arikh yamim (להאריך ימים, 'prolong your days') promises longevity in the land. Israel's tenure depends on covenant fidelity, not military power or political alliances. The land is given kol hayamim (כל הימים, 'forever/all days'), but

possession remains conditional on obedience. This tension between unconditional promise and conditional enjoyment pervades Deuteronomy and finds resolution only in Christ, who fulfilled the law's demands perfectly on our behalf.

Historical Context

Moses connects obedience to statutes and commandments with multigenerational blessing in the land they were about to possess. Speaking from the plains of Moab, Moses emphasizes that successful settlement in Canaan depended not on military might but on covenant faithfulness. This theme dominates Deuteronomy's theology.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the connection between obedience and blessing differ from a transactional 'prosperity gospel' approach to God?
2. What does it mean that your choices today affect not only you but 'your children after you'?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁמַרְתָּ	אֶת	חֻקֵּי יְיָ	וְאֵת	מִצְוֹת יְיָ	אֲשֶׁר
Thou shalt keep	H853	therefore his statutes	H853	and his commandments	H834
H8104		H2706		H4687	
אֲנִי	מֵצִוְךָ	הַיּוֹם	אֲשֶׁר	יִיטֵב	לָךְ
H595	which I command	thee this day	H834	that it may go well	H0
	H6680	H3117		H3190	
וְלִבְנֶיךָ	וְלִפְנֵי	אֲחֶיךָ	וְלִפְנֵי		
with thee and with thy children		after			
H1121		H310			
תִּפְאֶרֶךָ	הַיּוֹם	עַל	הָאֲדָמָה	אֲשֶׁר	
thee and that thou mayest prolong	thee this day	H5921	upon the earth	H834	
H748	H3117		H127		
יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	נָתַן	לָךְ	כָּל	הַיּוֹם
which the LORD	thy God	giveth	H0	H3605	thee this day
H3068	H430	H5414			H3117

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 6:3 (References God): Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

Deuteronomy 5:16 (References God): Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Ephesians 6:3 (Parallel theme): That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Deuteronomy 12:28 (Word): Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God.

Leviticus 22:31 (Word): Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.

Deuteronomy 12:25 (References Lord): Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 6:18 (References Lord): And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers,

Deuteronomy 22:7 (Parallel theme): But thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.

Jeremiah 11:4 (References God): Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God:

Deuteronomy 4:6 (Parallel theme): Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.