

Deuteronomy 6:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

Analysis

The purpose of the law is relational: 'That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God.' Biblical 'fear' (Hebrew *yirah*) isn't terror but reverential awe that shapes conduct. The threefold audience—'thou, thy son, and thy son's son'—emphasizes intergenerational covenant transmission. The promise of prolonged days (longevity) connects obedience to blessing, a repeated theme in Deuteronomy. The 'fear of the LORD' produces life, contrasting with modern autonomy that promises freedom but delivers death.

Historical Context

Longevity in the Promised Land was both individual (personal blessing for obedience) and national (Israel's continued existence in Canaan). Israel's later exile to Babylon fulfilled the negative—disobedience led to expulsion from the land. The intergenerational emphasis shows God's design for covenant faithfulness to be preserved through family structures, not merely institutional religion.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the 'fear of the LORD' differ from the world's concept of freedom and autonomy?
2. What practical steps can you take to ensure biblical faith is transmitted to the next generation?

Interlinear Text

לֹמַעַת	תִּירְאֶת	אֱלֹהִים	לְשָׁמֹר	אַתָּה
H4616	That thou mightest fear	H853	the LORD	thy God
H3372		H3068	H430	H8104
כָּל	מִצְוֹתָיו	רְשָׁקֶת יְהוָה	מִצְבָּה	אֲשֶׁר
H3605	all his statutes	and his commandments	H834	H595
H2708		H4687		H6680
אַתָּה	בְּתָךְ	בְּתָךְ	כִּי	יְמִינָה:
H859	and thy son's	and thy son's	L	יְמִינָה:
H1121		H1121	C	of thy life
וְלֹמַעַת	יְמִינָה:	כִּי יְמִינָה:	יְמִינָה:	אֲרֹךְ
H4616	may be prolonged	H3117	H3117	all the days
	H748			

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 4:40 (Word): 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.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 (Word): Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

Deuteronomy 13:4 (Word): Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

Exodus 20:20 (References God): And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

Psalms 128:1 (References Lord): Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

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.

Job 28:28 (References Lord): And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Proverbs 3:16 (Parallel theme): Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

Psalms 111:10 (Word): The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

Deuteronomy 10:20 (References God): Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.