

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

לִּמְעַן	תִּירָא	אֶת	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	לְשָׁמֹר	אֶת
H4616	That thou mightest fear	H853	the LORD	thy God	to keep	H853
	H3372		H3068	H430	H8104	
כָּל	חֻקֵּי יוֹ	וּמִצְוֹתָיו	אֲשֶׁר	אֶנֶכָּ י	מֵצַו	
H3605	all his statutes	and his commandments	H834	H595	which I command	
	H2708	H4687			H6680	
אֶתָּה	בְּנֶךָ	בְּנֶךָ	בְּנֶךָ	כָּל	יָמֶיךָ:	חַיֶּיךָ
H859	and thy son's	and thy son's	and thy son's	H3605	all the days	of thy life
	H1121	H1121	H1121		H3117	H2416
וְלִמְעַן	יִאָּרְךָ	יָמֶיךָ:				
H4616	may be prolonged	all the days				
	H748	H3117				

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.