

## Deuteronomy 6 - Thursday, June 9th, 2011

(1) "Now this *is* the commandment, *and these are* the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe *them* in the land which you are crossing over to possess, (2) that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

- Right out of the shoot, we're again reminded of how it is that an obedient life is a blessed life, and a disobedient life is not a blessed life.
- In other words, if we, like the Israelites, observe and obey that which God has commanded us to do, then He has permission to bless us.

(3) Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe *it*, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you— 'a land flowing with milk and honey.'

- It's very simple, if they're obedient, God promises to greatly multiply them, and it would go well for them, in the land that's giving to them.
- Often times I think we tend to blame God for that which we bring upon ourselves, namely, the consequences of our own disobedience.

(4) "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! (5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

- Notice this phrase now for the second time in just the first four verses; "Hear, O Israel." In Hebrew, it's Shema, in Arabic, it's Esma.
- It can be translated as "hear," or "listen," and from this, the Jews would recite what is called the "Shema," every morning and evening.
- I suppose for us it's better understood as; "Listen, O Christian: the Lord our God is one. Love Him with all your heart, soul, and strength.

- At first glance it almost seems that God is demanding, commanding, and even forcing us to love him with all our heart, soul and strength.
- I believe this is perhaps one of the most, if not the most, misunderstood principles in all the pages of scripture as it relates to loving God.
- We're all quick to say that we "love the Lord," however, I'm not so sure we really know what it means because we think love is a feeling.

- I think we would be grossly remiss to miss, what is woven into the fabric of what could be deemed as too technical related to the trinity.
- In the Jewish recitation of the Shema, there is the declaration of the Lord as one! In the Hebrew and Arabic language it's the word achid.
- Using the principle of first mention in Genesis 1:5 we see yom el achid in the first day of creation as a plurality of one, morning & evening.

- Another way to say it is; morning and evening are "one" day, yet they're a plurality of more than one having two, morning and evening.
- One day is still one day, yet with two parts. Now, this is where it gets interesting because in the "Shema" the Lord is the plural "Elohim."
- Herein, we once again, have the mention of the trinity in Elohim. If it was singular, it would only be "El." Add the "ohim," and it's plural.

- So now, we have the one God, yet in three persons, by virtue of the Elohim, first mentioned in Genesis; "let us create man in our image."
- The word "achid," means one, yet it's a plurality of one both in my native tongue of Arabic and the Hebrew like the one day with two parts.
- With "Elohim," as plural, and "El" as singular, so too is "achid," plural and "Yachid" singular, or in Arabic instead of "Yachid," it's "Wahid."

- Now, it's important we understand this, as it is germane to both knowing and loving God Who is one, achid, yet, He is three persons.
- Just as God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, so too are we created in His image by His love for us, as body, soul, and spirit.
- We are one yet three in the same way that God is one yet three. We are created in the triune image of God as one achid, yet we're three.

- I'm able to love God with all my heart soul and strength and my neighbor as myself, proportionate to my realizing of God's love for me.
- God so loves me that he both gave and forgave, and in as much as I have been forgiven of much, I then in turn am enabled to love much.
- If I love God that much, I will then obey much, which is why and how the one who loves God, will respond by being obedient to God.

1 John 5:1-4 NIV Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

(2) This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. (3) This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, (4) for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

(6) "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. (7) You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

- Once again we have the mention of how important it is to teach our children the things of God in every way we can, and anytime we can.
- What I'm learning in my parenting is the Lord presents teachable moments throughout the day, every day, both during the day and night.
- Not only are these teachable moments, they are also priceless opportunities to share with our children our own personal experiences.

(8) You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. (9) You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- This is why the Jews today have what they call phylacteries, which are boxes containing the Shema on their foreheads and doorposts.
- The ones on the doorposts or at the entrances are what they call a Mezuzah, and sadly, in taking this literally, they miss it personally.
- In reality, this was meant to be that which they would take to heart, have on their mind, teach to their children, and have in their home.

(10) "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, (11) houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full— (12) then beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

- Moses now rounds a corner and warns them of the danger that lies ahead when, not if, God brings them into the land and prospers them.
- This has been called; "the agony of affluence," or as another coined it; "the peril of prosperity," as it relates to its impact on us spiritually.
- This explains why it is that it's harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

(13) You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. (14) You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who *are* all around you (15) (for the LORD your God *is* a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.

- By the way, verse 13 is one of the verses that was quoted by Jesus when He was tempted by the devil to bow down and worship him.
- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that it fits within the context of what Moses is preaching in this sermon.
- Success can be serious and dangerous, in that it has the propensity to be our god. Jesus said you cannot serve both god and mammon.

(16) "You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted *Him* in Massah. (17) You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. (18) And you shall do *what is* right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the LORD swore to your fathers, (19) to cast out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken. (20) "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What *is the meaning of* the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?'

- Here again we have a verse that Jesus quotes when tempted this time is as it relates to tempting the Lord your God.
- I think it's vital we understand that the word "tempt" can also be translated "test," which sort of changes the complexion of the passage.
- By seeing it as testing instead of tempting, we are now able to see how it is that we can test the Lord like the Israelites did in Massah.

**Exodus 17:1-7 NKJV** Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but *there was* no water for the people to drink. (2) Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink." So Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?" (3) And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why *is* it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" (4) So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!" (5) And the LORD said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. (6) Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. (7) So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

- Here's what I'm thinking; like the children of Israel, so too are we prone to test the Lord when we doubt His love, kindness and goodness.
- Actually, this is the "why" behind the "what" of Jesus quoting this. It's when Satan tempted Jesus to prove that the Father loved Him.

- The reason Jesus quotes this is because first and foremost God doesn't have to prove Himself, and secondly, He actually already has.

**Matthew 4:5-7 NIV** Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. (6) "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" (7) Jesus answered him, "**It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'**"

(21) then you shall say to your son: 'We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; (22) and the LORD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. (23) Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. (24) And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as *it is* this day. (25) Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us.'

- There's something here that can be easily missed at first glance, and I want to point it out because it's germane in its application to us.
- I would suggest that woven into the fabric of these final verses in chapter six, is the answer to not forgetting, or turning away from God.
- It's when we remember what God has done for us in the past, and both tell it and teach it to the next generation so they won't forget God.