

Pass It On

Deuteronomy 6:1-3

Pierre Cannings

I. Do v. 1

- a. **Lord Your God** - The actual experience of God often shatters the inadequacy of our views to impress us with the awesomeness of “the living God” (5:26). That living God has now entrusted to us his commandments in order that we may keep them, and that we may teach them to our children. In so doing we will prosper
 - i. **Commanded Me**
 - ii. **Teach You – Formal instruction**
 1. The formula “commands, decrees and laws” as an expression of the covenant document as a whole appears here as a response to the command already given by the Lord to Moses that he should teach it to the nation
 2. Commandments- Of itself “commandment” denotes that which is commanded by an authority, hence, an authoritative prescription, order, decree, or by extension a directive or instruction.
 3. is used eleven times to emphasize that both the Ten Commandments, which are now concluded, and the “great commandment,” which follows immediately (6:5), are indeed the word of God. Though one cannot look on the face of God and live, one can hear God’s voice speaking “from the midst of the fire ... and he may still live” (5:24).
 - a. The commandment is the expression of God’s will for his people. Rather than suggesting arbitrary demand or constraint, the terminology evokes God’s moral authority.
 - b. The proper response to a commandment is not merely external compliance, but a total personal response (“from the heart,” *leb*). The virtual interchangeability between *mišwâ-entolē* and *dābār-logos/rhēma*, i.e. “word,” (e.g., Deut 5:22; 30:14; Esth 9:32) highlights the personal quality of the commandment. The ultimate significance of the commandments is to relate people to God.
 - c. However, in the Deuteronomic paraenesis of Deut 8:1–20, *mišwâ-entolē* is used comprehensively for the whole law (Deut 8:1; cf. 5:31; 11:22; 19:9; 30:11–14). This is in keeping with the Deuteronomist’s holistic view of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. The

commandment, which also has a revelatory function, is intended to make of Israel a holy people. Israel's prosperity is dependent upon its obedience to the commandment. Keeping the commandments indicates a pattern of life, i.e., one of human fidelity to the covenant.

4. Statutes - what is stipulated, determined (in writing), **prescription, rule**, For Israel, everything required by the covenant was a matter of life and blessing, if properly observed, or of death and cursing, if ignored or forsaken.
5. Judgments - Concept in Scripture closely related to the concept of God's justice. In all his relationships God acts justly and morally. Human beings, created by God, are morally structured so that they may positively respond to God's righteous demands in their lives.

b. Do Them

- i. Land
- ii. Possess

II. Fear v. 2

- a. Fear - fear of God" in Deuteronomy as "covenantal loyalty,"
 - i. 10:12–13—to fear God is “to love him and to serve [him] with all your heart.”
 - ii. **Fear-** to honor, Godly characterized by total allegiance to the one true God.
 - iii. The Samaritans, in attempting to serve Yahweh and their idols simultaneously, were rejected by God (2 Kgs 17:33, 41).
 - iv. Those who love God learn of wholesome fear by searching the Scriptures (Prv 2:3–5), the Word of God, which the ancient Israelites were commanded to cleave to and obey as evidence of their reverence for God (Dt 6:2).
 - v. In Acts 10:2 Cornelius and his family were called “God-fearers” because of their high regard for the God of Israel and because they stood in awe of his person.
 - vi. True reverence for God must invariably express itself in good works and holy living (2 Cor 7:1). To truly revere the Lord entails avoiding sin (Ex 20:20) and translating the directives of the Word of God into everyday experience (Eccl 12:13).
 - vii. This holy fear is actually a source of joy (Ps 2:11) and a veritable fountain of life (Prv 14:27). The fear of the Lord is more valuable than the greatest material riches (15:16) because the Lord takes pleasure in those who hold him in such high regard (Ps 147:11).

- viii. The Law was given so that the people could express their reverence (**fear**; cf. comments on 4:10) for an obedience to **the LORD** in a concrete manner. (The need to **obey** Him is stressed repeatedly in Deut.) By fearing and obeying Him they would find prosperity
 - 1. You
 - 2. Your Son
 - 3. Grandson
- b. Keep- meaning to do something carefully
 - i. Statutes
 - ii. Commandments
- c. Days
 - i. All Days of Your Life
 - ii. Days will be Prolonged
 - 1. Prolonged – to make long
 - 2. The command to walk in the ways of the Lord (5:33) is also restated, this time in the appeal to hear and obey (6:3). In both cases it is with the end in view that God’s people might live (5:33) and do so with success, prosperity, and for many years.

III. Listen Carefully v. 3

- a. Listen – to just hear
- b. Careful to do – to do something carefully
- c. Prosperity
 - i. Well – it goes well
 - ii. Multiply – to become numerous
 - 1. Promised You
 - 2. In the Land of Milk and Honey
 - a. The phrase “milk and honey” is a hyperbolic way of describing the richness of the land of promise. These two commodities, the one the product of human labor, or agriculture, and the other the product of nature, represent the fullness of blessing associated with the fulfillment of God’s promises.