

Deut. 10:1 At that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood.

Deut. 10:2 And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.

Deut. 10:3 And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand.

Deut. 10:4 And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.

Deut. 10:5 And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.

As Moses continues to instruct the people, I get the impression he is caught up in his memories in the process. It's like he's on track, his mind takes a side road, and then he gets himself back on track and ends up repeating some things. In this instance he goes back to something he's already talked about but adds a bit more information.

I can really relate. I often find myself talking to the Lord in the early morning hours and find that after praying for something or someone, my mind will get off track and start composing a letter or thinking of a new project, etc. I end up apologizing to the Lord and trying to get focused again on intercessory prayer. It's a real struggle for me.

Moses takes the people back once again to the point when he had to return up the mountain to get the second set of commandments. He tells us that before returning up the mountain, he was instructed to have the ark of the covenant constructed from shittim wood and ready to store the tablets. He was then to cut two tablets from stone and bring them up the mountain for the Lord to once again write the words that were on the first pair of stone tablets that Moses broke in anger when he saw the people worshipping the golden calf. The core content of the covenant between God and His people consisted of the Ten Commandments. Moses then declares that he did exactly as the Lord had commanded.

Deut. 10:6 And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.

Moses next details the next portion of their journey—Beeroth to Mosera. According to Numbers 20, Mosera must be near Mount Hor (probably near Edom), where we are told that Aaron was buried. Moses, Aaron and Eleazar all ascended Mount Hor in view of all the people. Moses personally supervised the transfer of the high priestly garments from Aaron to his son Eleazar before coming back down the mountain after Aaron's burial. We know from the account in Numbers that all was done according to God's instruction.

Deut. 10:7 From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters.

The next leg of their journey is identified as traveling from Gudgodah to Jotbath. The Hebrew indicates that these are desert locations, but Jotbath must have been a big oasis in the desert to be described as having much water.

Deut. 10:8 At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day.

Deut. 10:9 Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.

Moses seems to be talking in generalities. He now references the time that the Levites were singled out to carry the ark of the covenant and serve as priests before the Lord. This was a great privilege. Their whole duty was to serve the Lord and have none of the distractions and responsibilities associated with land ownership. Their inheritance was in the Lord and their needs would be provided through the sacrifices and offerings made at the tabernacle.

I couldn't help but think of how the church is described as a "royal priesthood" and our duty to serve the Lord.

1Pet. 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Col. 3:23-24 And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

As we serve Him, our purpose is also to bless others in His name. (8/08) I'm looking forward to the time when I have nothing in this earthly realm to distract me from serving and worshipping the Lord.

Deut. 10:10 And I stayed in the mount, according to the first time, forty days and forty nights; and the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also, *and* the LORD would not destroy thee.

The two times on the mountain were understandably the highlight times of Moses' life on earth. He had 80 days and nights of personal fellowship with the LORD. Moses was thrilled to have been the instrument through whom his people were spared destruction. I just thought of this verse as I was trying to describe what I thought Moses was feeling.

Jer. 9:24 But **let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me**, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

Moses was proud to have a friendship with God and that he had some understanding of God's heart and could therefore pray effectively.

Deut. 10:11 And the LORD said unto me, Arise, take *thy* journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give unto them.

This verse basically emphasizes that Moses was leading the people as God's representative and as part of God's plan in bringing Israel into possession of the land.

Deut. 10:12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

Deut. 10:13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

These are two very key verses in this book of instruction. They basically summarize God's expectation of the people as detailed in the laws He had given them.

- ❖ To fear the LORD thy God – This is a reference to acting with reverence toward God in light of His sovereign might and power.
- ❖ To walk in all His ways – In looking at the Hebrew for *ways*, I see this as referencing following God's leadership and embracing His character traits as your own.
- ❖ To love Him – When I looked at Webster's definition, the phrase that stood out to me in connection with the Hebrew for *love* was "devoted attachment." This would be reflected in one's desire to please Him through obedience.
- ❖ To serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and soul – The Hebrew for serve makes reference to a bondsman, one who willingly chooses to labor/work towards accomplishing the desires of His master. "With all thy heart and soul" references total commitment with passion and physical ability.
- ❖ To keep the commandments and laws of God as had been revealed to them – This references living in obedience to everything God has revealed as His will for them.

I'm always intrigued by the order of things that are listed in scripture and in trying to understand overlapping truths. I think it is significant that "fearing God" is first on the list because it is the foundation necessary to compliance with the following instructions. The next four items in the list are an outgrowth of a profound respect for God and recognition of Who He Is. It seems to me that the first four as I have defined them go hand-in-hand with one another. The reason that I single out the last one is because it is the one that I think can be practiced independent of the preceding three. One would obviously not choose to obey God without recognizing Who He Is, but one can respond to that truth by obedience through self-discipline or observance of ritual without heart involvement. Based on the following verses I think that is what Moses is getting at.

I almost missed the last little phrase. To submit to and serve God in obedience is always for our good.

(8/08) I couldn't help but be reminded of Micah 6:8 as I was reading through this section again.

Mic. 6:8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Though the words are different, the intent is the same. To do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God would show fear/reverence of God, love of God and a desire to serve Him in obedience.

Deut. 10:14 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth *also*, with all that therein is.

Moses reminds the people that every part of creation is a possession of YHWH, the God of Israel. Maybe this reminder is given in recognition of the freedom of will that God has given man and that so many have chosen to reject Him that they might have lost sight of that truth.

Deut. 10:15 Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, *even you above all people, as it is this day.*

As I read this verse, I hear a declaration of God's love for all people, but that the people of Israel should rejoice in the fact that YHWH had singled them out "above all people" as His favorites so to speak. Is it wrong for God to have favorites? No; He is Sovereign; He can do anything He chooses. He is also righteous and holy; therefore, anything He chooses to do will be right. It's also interesting to note that Moses emphasizes that the LORD took delight in their fathers, and it was His love for their fathers that was the basis for the place of blessing their descendants would enjoy.

Deut. 10:16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.

Moses is basically saying that based on Who God Is and His choice of you as His favorite among all peoples, you should humble yourself and quit being stubborn and willfully disobedient. Circumcision is a cutting away of the flesh. It is through the flesh that we experience the effects of our inherited sin nature through pride and temptation. To cut away the foreskin of the heart is a picture of humbling oneself before God and submitting to His will. (2/09) It's a choice to deny the flesh and feed the spirit.

Deut. 10:17 For the LORD your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

Deut. 10:18 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

Deut. 10:19 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Again, Moses stresses the truth that should be their primary motivation. YHWH, the God of Israel is THE God. He stands apart from the "gods" of the heathen nations in that He is mighty and possesses the ability to back up what He says and He can't be bribed. Everyone is on equal footing before His throne of justice. He cares about providing for those that are orphaned and widowed or are

strangers among His people. Moses reminds them that (though this generation might not remember the harsh realities represented by that truth) they were strangers in the land of Egypt. If God loves the stranger, they should love him/her too.

I got to thinking about being a stranger. A stranger is out of place; he doesn't belong. The Hebrew indicates that there is fear associated with such status, and that would be the natural response of anyone who finds himself in another culture with people of another language. In fact, it's the natural response of being among those who are different from you. God's people are to example God before the world. Those who wander into "His kingdom" among His people should experience His love in action. I couldn't help but make application to the church today. We represent the kingdom of God on earth today. "Strangers" who find themselves in contact with God's people should experience His love in action.

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

Again, Moses declares that based on all He has taught them, they should reverence, worship and serve YHWH, the God of Israel. When I looked at the Hebrew for cleave, the phrase that stood out was "to catch by pursuit." In other words, they were to be diligent in their effort to maintain their relationship with Him and ensure His presence among them. YHWH is also the only authority worthy of attesting to the surety of an oath, since He alone has the power to enforce it.

Deut. 10:21 He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.

I think a combination of the NLT and the NIV state it best...

NLT - He is your God, the one who is worthy of your praise, the one...

NIV - who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes.

I thought it was interesting to note that the Hebrew for *terrible* made reference to things that cause fear. And frankly, the miracles that God had performed for the people of Israel up to this point should have produced a godly fear toward the source of such awesome power and ability.

Deut. 10:22 Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

The chapter ends with Moses reminding them how the seeds of their nation had been sown in Egypt with 70 people. Now, some 400 years later they had multiplied to the point that they seemed to number as many as the stars in heaven as they saw it. This is obviously a statement of contrast and perspective.