

STUDY 12

Leviticus 25:17

Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the Lord your God.

Read the context: Leviticus 25:8-17

What 2 commands are contrasted in this verse? One is negative, “you shall not;” and one is positive, “you shall.” How are they related? How is the fear of the Lord to affect our relationships or treatment of others?

We see from this that the fear of the Lord is not just a vertical command; that is, it’s not only to govern or affect our relationship with God. Rather, it is a whole way of seeing life that is to affect every area of our lives; it is a worldview, a paradigm or lens through which we view the world; and because of this new way of seeing, our actions and responses toward others are not just adjusted or tweaked, but wholly changed. We see differently. The world is different. We see rightly and begin to think and act rightly.

What statement does God make at the end of the verse? Why does He make this statement? Spend a few minutes meditating on each of the 3 words: Lord, your, God. Write out your thoughts.

God was claiming them as His people, and He wanted them to claim Him as their God. He is distinctly different from all other gods of all other peoples. His rule is also distinctly different. And if we call ourselves His people, claiming Him as our God, He wants us to know that it will affect the way we treat others. What we do and the way we relate to others matters and reflects what we think of God.

In the context of this verse, in what ways might they be tempted to oppress one another?

We come back again to Jesus’ words in Matthew 6:24. Read also Luke 16:10-13. What things are being contrasted in these verses?

How we use our finances is an indicator of our treatment of others and our love for God. If you love money, you will end up oppressing others; if you love God, you’ll be sensitive to the needs of others and won’t oppress them for personal gain.

Putting this Leviticus verse together with the verses in Matthew and Luke reveals that the fear of the Lord and love for the Lord are bonded together. That fear-love connection has been seen in several of the fear of the Lord verses so far.

Take a look at your finances. What do they reveal about your heart and your fear-love relationship toward God? Pray over your finances; ask God to make them a clear indicator of your fear of the Lord.

Add to your list of what the fear of the Lord is and what effects it has in our lives.