

STUDY 11

Leviticus 19:14, 32

You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the Lord.

You shall rise before the gray-headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the Lord.

Read the context: Leviticus 19

What is the overarching command of this chapter given in verse 2? And what is the underlying or supporting reason behind the command (same verse)?

What is the repeated clause throughout the chapter that God keeps coming back to as the undergirding strength and motivation for each of the commands? (vss. 2, 3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 37)

Then in the 2 verses we're looking at in this study is added the phrase "fear your God." Why would that be added after these 2 verses? Think about the people God is directing our attention to in these verses. What are the 3 people groups? Could the deaf hear you or even know if you cursed them? Would the blind be able to see to defend themselves or circumvent a hazardous place if you put a stumbling block in their way? Could an old man demand or command your respect? All 3 of these people groups are weak and defenseless. A person could certainly curse the deaf, put a stumbling block in the path of the blind, and disrespect the elderly and no one else would ever know.

But then there's the phrase, "you shall fear your God." What does this tell you about the fear of the Lord? How would the fear of the Lord add strength to these commands (see again Proverbs 5:21 and 15:3)? According to those verses in Proverbs, what do we need to realize about every action of our lives? (See also Psalm 94:8-11.) We live in the Presence of God; He sees and knows all things. This awareness should act as reins or as a check for all we think, say, and do. Or like the banks of a river, the fear of the Lord should govern and provide parameters for our lives.

This parameter is not restrictive, but rather protective, giving freedom for our lives to flow in the peaceful course in which they were intended: the river of Love. How we treat people matters, even – or perhaps, especially – the treatment of people who are weak and defenseless. None of the people in those 3 groups chose the state they are in, yet they deserve our care and respect just like anyone else.

Sometimes we are tempted to vent on people who couldn't hurt in return, or play a joke on someone who could do nothing about it, or disregard people who we think have nothing more to offer us. The fear of the Lord stands as a guard against these natural, all-too-easy-to-fall-for, but evil, propensities.

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Heart Evaluation: Are there people whom you disregard or count as unnecessary or as having nothing to offer you? Do you have compassion, give special help, and go out of your way to convey respect for the handicapped and weak and elderly?

Pray:

1. for God to make you aware of any ways you may not be showing proper respect and deference to others.
 2. for God to expand your heart and your life toward these people groups, the handicapped and the elderly.
 3. for greater and continual awareness of living in the Presence of God.
- Add to your Fear of the Lord list any new things you learned from this lesson.