

Transforming Daily

“. . . showing mercy to thousands . . .”
Deuteronomy 5:10

This is an interesting concept. Why is it that one receives mercy from God if only by means of one's obedience? Wouldn't that be earning a reward to have God's blessing if it requires one's obedience to His commands? There are at least two considerations to ponder. The first consideration is that God's commandment(s) (and Word) is mercy. The second consideration is that the mercy to be experienced spoken of here in this text is the benefit of the following generation(s) with respect to the obedient acts of the previous generation(s).

Understand that mercy isn't the absence of pain or hardship. Mercy is not receiving the wrath, judgment and condemnation of God that every sinner deserves. Mercy's twin sister, grace, is receiving from the hand of God blessing that would have been otherwise forfeited by sin (thanks be to Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior!) and certainly not deserved by the sinner. God's grace and mercy are demonstrated toward us by and through His Word. Believe it or not, the Law of God is an expression of God's grace.

Moses wrote this passage to the children of Israel. It is an historic writing for a specific people, for a specific purpose. However, there are general and perhaps universal truths to be applied to all nations everywhere. Certainly one of which is God's mercy. Israel was a disobedient people to the Word, will and work of God. They rejected Him and His ways both by commission and omission. That is to say that many deliberately chose against Him and others just went along with the crowd. Just the same there was always a faithful remnant of followers. As a matter of fact, it is in part due to these faithful followers that God did not totally wipe the Israelites off the face of the earth (and for that matter, every other nations as well).

The faithful fathers that followed were the key to the mercy of God, and they still are. That isn't to say that faithful mothers weren't and aren't important. But the Bible is clearly based on a patriarch order. In other words, no matter how well or poorly men do what they do or how much better women can do what men do, men are charged with the assignment to lead and will be held accountable for that privilege. It is not a matter of male/female essence. It is a matter of design and order (governance, not priority of significance).

The general dynamic that I would like to underscore here is that just as it was for historic Israel, as a family unit and nation, so it is for us. Our nation is in the shape that it is in (and it isn't in good shape, it's in a deplorable condition – and I'm not comparing it to other nations just to itself) is in direct proportion to the number of men who have and are shirking and abdicating their God given role and responsibility (women manipulating the order is for another article). As this applies to fathers, the ramifications and consequences are dreadfully staggering.

Dads, what legacy are you preparing to leave for your children and grandchildren? What obedient acts of yours to God can be or will be directly attributed to the mercy your children and my children will receive for generations to come? Is the shrinking presence of God's mercy on our country alarming to you? Are you training your children to live justly, love mercy and live humbly before God? Remember, God will also visit the iniquity of the fathers on the third and fourth generation of the children, if there is no reason for showing mercy to thousands.