

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Deuteronomy: Moses' Great Appeal For Israel To Obey God For Blessing Part IV: The General Call For Loyal Obedience, Deuteronomy 4:44-11:32 C. Holding To Scripture's God As God ALONE For SECURITY In Living (Deuteronomy 6:1-25)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Today's world fosters great insecurity in many people, a fact we can abundantly illustrate (as follows):

(1) Carl Bialik's article, "Will This Bridge Fall? It's Hard to Say," in The Wall Street Journal, June 1-2, 2013, p. A2 reported: "When it comes to measuring a bridge's safety, so-called sufficiency ratings aren't sufficient." He cited Mike Oliva, professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Wisconsin, Madison as saying, "In many ways, you might view our bridge-rating system like going to the doctor and receiving a thorough visual examination of the outside of your body . . . and predicting your chance of living for another five to 10 years.""

(2) Holman W. Jenkins, Jr.'s article, "The Chinese Pork Panic of 2013," p. A13 in the same paper noted: "China has been enveloped in food scandals this year and every year for a decade . . . The entire world has a stake in this . . . Small-farmer duck and pig production in China is the incubator of virtually every global flu pandemic . . ."

(3) The May 31st issue of the same paper ran Spencer Jakab's article, "Personal-Income Growth Is No Saving Grace," p. C1 that told of (a) the record low growth in Americans' "disposable personal income." Thereupon, the June 3, 2013 issue ran Michael A Pollock's story, "What Are You Afraid Of?", p. R1 about (b) worries many have on how to invest in today's volatile financial environment, and a section on p. R4 handled questions on investing from Wall Street experts. However, their *answers* were not at all settling: questions on whether the average investor should keep cash in his portfolio or buy gold were met with opposing comments by these experts, and to the question "What Is the Best Way to Invest on Your Own?", Tom Brakke, an expert investment adviser, replied, "(S)pend your time learning financial history . . . although you'll probably end up making the same mistakes that the rest of us make anyway."

(4) George Orwell's famous "big brother" threat in his novel 1984 about a government's spying on its citizens seemed to come true for many Americans last week when they learned "(t)he National Security Agency's monitoring of Americans includes customer records from the three major phone networks as well as emails and Web searches, and the agency also has cataloged credit-card transactions" according to "people familiar with the agency's activities," *Ibid.*, Siobhan Gorman, Evan Perez and Janet Hook, "U. S. Collects Vast Data Trove," *Ibid.*, June 7, 2013, p. A1.

Need: *We thus ask, "Is it possible to live with any real sense of security in today's world? If so, how?"*

- I. **Moses' general Deuteronomy 4:44-11:32 call for loyal obedience to God in the suzerain treaty format of Deuteronomy directs Israel in Deuteronomy 6:1-25 to hold to God ALONE as GOD for BLESSING.**
- II. **In the Ancient Near East's THEOLOGICAL context, the recipe for Ancient Israel's SECURITY in living as OPPOSED to PAGAN man's experience is therein explained, complete with practical applications:**
 - A. After calling Israel to heed God (Deut. 6:1-3), Moses gave Israel her great "Shema" (from the Hebrew word for "hear"), her *foundational* "statement of faith," Deut. 6:4; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Deut. 6:4.
 - B. In that *foundational* "statement of faith," in **sharp contrast** to the experience of her Ancient Near Eastern *pagan* Gentile *neighbors*, Israel was **mainly** to heed God as her *ONLY God* for **SECURITY in life**:
 1. The multiple (polytheism) pagan gods of the Ancient Near East "were rarely thought of as acting in harmony" as "(e)ach god was unpredictable and morally capricious"; thus, loyalty to one god in no way assured pagan man that he would not face the wrath of some other god, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 274.
 2. In contrast, "(t)he monotheistic doctrine of the Israelites lifted them out of this insecurity since they had to deal with only one God who dealt with them by a revealed consistent righteous standard," *Ibid.*
 3. [This belief in One God is not the Unitarian idea that God is One Person: the Deuteronomy 6:4 word for "One" in is '*ehad*' that is used of the **composite** unity of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:24 ("one [*ehad*] flesh"), *Ibid.*; Matthew 19:5-6. Also, Psalm 110:1 refers to more than one Person in the Godhead.]
 - C. Deuteronomy 6:5-25 then details **how** Israel was to hold to this **ONE** God of Scripture amid mass Ancient Near Eastern peer pressure toward polytheism, and this passage offers rich practical steps for **security in life**:
 1. Israel was to hold to Scripture's **ONE** God by *loving* Him with all her being, Deuteronomy 6:5: though Moses taught Israel to love God with all her heart, soul and might, in referring to this command, Jesus later added "with all thy mind" (Mark 12:30) to show that God's intention in Deuteronomy 6:5 was that His people love Him with every aspect of their beings! (*Ibid.*, Ryrie, fn. to Deuteronomy 6:5)

2. Israel was to hold to Scripture's **ONE** God by *habitually giving attention to God's Word*, Deut. 6:6-9: the people of Israel were to have God's words in their heart (Deut. 6:6), they were to teach them diligently to their children (Deut. 6:7a) and to do so habitually in every realm of their daily lives, Deut. 6:7b,c,d,e, 8, 9.
3. Israel was to hold to Scripture's **ONE** God by *avoiding wayward tendencies*, Deuteronomy 6:10-19:
 - a. Israel was to *avoid* the waywardness of *materialism*, Deuteronomy 6:10-12: (1) Moses noted that God was about to give Israel a land that had already been developed by the Canaanites, a land of abundance, Deut. 6:10-11. (2) Thus, Israel stood in danger of getting so comfortable in that abundance that she might shift her allegiance from God to that abundance, the idolatry of materialism ("covetousness," Colossians 3:5), Deut. 6:12. (3) Israel was thus to recall that were it not for God, she would not have any abundance.
 - b. Israel was to *avoid* the waywardness of trusting in pagan gods, Deuteronomy 6:13-15: (1) The Hebrew verb for "round about you" (Deut. 6:14 KJV), *sabab*, means "to surround" (B. D. B., *A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 685-687), emphasizing the **great peer pressure** Israel would face toward polytheism from the Gentiles. (2) Nevertheless, Israel was to revere, serve and make her oaths by the Name of Scripture's **sole GOD** out of **reverence** for **HIM** Who was **JEALOUS** of Israel's **UNDIVIDED devotion**, meaning she was to *avoid* the **polytheistic peer pressures surrounding** her in **allegiance to God alone**, Deut. 6:13-15.
 - c. Israel was to *avoid* the waywardness of *unbelief in God* that leads to *idolatry*, Deut. 6:16-19: Moses recalled Israel's sin of putting God to the test in unbelief at Massah in Exodus 17:1-7, a sin that opens the door to shift one from trust in God to trust in idols. **Unbelief in God** was to be **avoided** to **hold to Him**.
4. Israel was to hold to Scripture's **ONE** God by *preserving reverence* for *Him* in *future generations* in Israel through older generations testifying of God's gracious provisions for them, Deuteronomy 6:20-25: Moses charged the people of Israel to testify to their children that God's laws were to be obeyed since they came from the One true God Who in great power had delivered them from Egypt through great signs and wonders against Egypt and its gods (cf. Exodus 12:12), that this God was thus to be revered and heeded.

III. Since 1 John 5:14-15, 21 calls believers TODAY to avoid idolatry much as He called Israel under the Law in Deuteronomy 6, we TODAY can apply the practical principles of Deuteronomy 6:1-25 for blessing.

Lesson: *Similar to Israel under the Law, God wants believers today to live securely by adhering to Him alone versus looking to false, capricious crutches, or "gods," 1 John 5:14-15, 21. To aid us in this effort in practical terms, we must by faith in God's power (Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:3-4) (1) love Him fully, (2) pay heed to His Word in every realm of life, (3) avoid false "gods" that anger Him Who is jealous of our devotion, (4) avoid unbelief in Him that leads to "idolatry" and (5) foster allegiance to Him alone in our children by telling them of His aid to us.*

Application: *May we (1) trust in Christ to become a child of God (John 1:11-12 and (2) by the Holy Spirit's power by faith (Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:3-4) (3) apply in principle Deuteronomy 6:1-25 for security in living today.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The insecurity needs in our introduction are each met if we focus on Scripture as Deuteronomy 6:6-9 instructs:

(1) On the threat of a major highway bridge failing under us, we can claim Psalm 121:8: "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore." As long as God wants us to live and serve Him, and we are obeying Him, no highway bridge collapse will keep us from fulfilling the Lord's will.

(2) On the threat of a flu pandemic from Chinese ducks or pigs, we can claim Psalm 103:1, 3: "Bless the Lord, O my soul . . . Who healeth all thy diseases." As long as God wants us to serve Him, no such diseases can stop us.

(3) On (a) the threat of low income, Philippians 4:19 promises godly believers: "But my God shall supply all your (material) need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." On (b) the threat of investing in uncertain markets, Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 tells us to invest (i) **aggressively** ("cast thy bread upon the waters," v. 1a), (ii) **long-term** ("thou shalt find it after many days," v. 1b), (iii) in **full diversification** to minimize risk and maximize gain *especially* in view of investing in **uncertain** markets ("give a portion to seven and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth . . ." v. 2-5), (iv) and **regularly add** to our investments ("in the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand," v. 6) which *happens* to take advantage of the "dollar-cost averaging" principle.

(4) On the threat of "big brother" government intrusion into our private phone, e-mail and credit card actions, we can apply Psalm 127:1b-2 ESV: "Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early and go late to rest . . . for he gives to his beloved sleep." God is our only real Guardian, so we should trust Him for protection to sleep well at night well versus staying awake and fretting about our concerns.

May we live in security, relying on God ALONE and focusing on His Word versus turning to vain idols.