

OBEDIENCE

This topic aims to address - obedience as a behaviour intended to please God. Obedience is not only observing the Ten Commandments, it is also doing what God, men of God and our god-fearing parents say. We must also obey authorities.

A MATTER OF CHOICE!

With regards to God's commands and instructions, he gave us a choice: *"If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;"* Isaiah 1:19. In Deuteronomy 30:19-20, the issue of choice regarding obedience is even made clearer: *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰ loving the LORD your God, **obeying his voice**, and cleaving to him; for that means life to you and length of days, that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."*

Before giving the Ten Commandments, God told Moses: *"If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon you which I put upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD, your healer."* Exodus 15:26-27

Again, the use of the word 'if' shows that God gave a choice regarding his commandments.

If you believe that you were created by God, then make the right choice; obey him.

WHO DO YOU OBEY?

Men of God

There is no doubt on whether we should obey the instructions of God, we are also to obey the instruction of God passed on by men of God. See 2 Chronicles 20:20 and Deuteronomy 18:21-22. We must also understand that men of God have the authority of God vested in them. But if a man of God should persuade you to follow other gods, do not listen. Read Deuteronomy 13:1-3.

Parents/Parents in the Lord

The scriptures instruct we listen to and heed the instructions of our parents. Read Proverbs 4:1, 7:1-2. It also says: Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honour your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ "that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth." Ephesians 6:1-3. See Colossians 3:20.

There is no exclusion; it is **from infancy to adulthood**. Solomon obeyed his father but he applied wisdom – 1 Kings 2 especially verses 8-9 and 36-46. Solomon may not have lasted long had he disregarded his father's instructions.

From Obedience to the Palace : Saul also became king as he went looking for his father's lost donkeys. If he had refused to go searching for the missing donkeys, he would not have met Samuel who anointed him king. 1 Samuel 9:3-27.

David got to know about Goliath when he took supplies to his brothers in the war front. Had he refused his father's instruction, he would have missed the opportunity to fight with and defeat Goliath on whose life there was a great reward. 1 Samuel 17:17-18, 25.

Whilst in danger, Jacob obeyed his father and mother – See Genesis 27:43-45, 28:7. On the other hand, Esau, his brother deliberately disobeyed his parents. How? See Genesis 26:34-35 and Genesis 27:46.

Authorities

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment- Romans 13:1-2. Read also Titus 3:1 and Ephesians 6:5-8.

With regards to obeying authorities, let the action of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego guide you. Daniel 3:12 – *“There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no heed to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up.”*

Read also Acts 5:25-29. You cannot obey man to disobey God.

Obey your husband

If it were not necessary, the scripture will not instruct women to do this. *“Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.”*- Ephesians 5:22-23.

THE BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE

Assured blessing: See verses under “A Matter of Choice” above.

Deuteronomy 11:27 - A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day:

Exodus 19:5 - Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

Read Leviticus 26:3-13 and Deuteronomy 28:1-14.

Enemy to your enemy - Exodus 23:22 – ‘But if you hearken attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.’ That is, God will fight for you.

Inherited blessings- God blessed Isaac because of Abraham. The same can apply to your children if you obey God.

Genesis 26:4-5- And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; ⁵ Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

PUNISHMENTS FOR DISOBEDIENCE

There are several examples of disobedience in the bible and the consequences too numerous to list. See Leviticus 26:14-35.

The case of the prophet from Judah stands out. Initially instructed by God on what to do in Bethel but disobeyed by being persuaded to do otherwise by another prophet. 1 Kings 13.

When Saul disobeyed the instruction of Samuel (1 Samuel 13:8-14), he lost the kingdom. The Lord did not answer Saul when he inquired, neither by dreams nor through prophets- 1 Samuel 27:6

Lot's wife looked back; she disobeyed the instruction of the angel of the Lord – Genesis 19:17, 26.

OBEY NOT SACRIFICE

1 Samuel 15:22 - And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

Remember, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Romans 5: 19.

Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, the ground was cursed and women will bear children in pain to say a few. See Genesis 3:16-19. For the obedience of Abraham, those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. Read Galatians 3:7-9. Indeed, through Abraham all the nations on earth are blessed with Jesus Christ.

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Genesis 22:18