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Daily Devotional - Monday, April 8, 2024 - The Covenant Relationship

APRIL 08TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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In biblical times, the relationship between the idol and the worshiper seemed like a competition for control. People tried to manipulate the idol with gifts and flattery. In turn, the idol would keep people in line with perceived threats of punishment or disaster.

The covenant relationship between God and His people was much different. A central feature is God's lovingkindness, His "unfailing love." His people are to love Him in return. Alongside it, as a covenant obligation, is to fear the Lord, acting in service and obedience (vv. 12–13).

Fear the LORD your God and serve him.

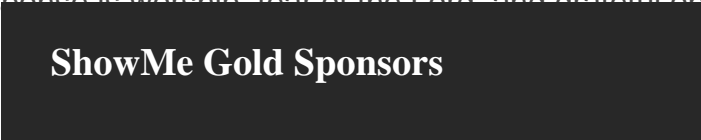
DEUTERONOMY 10:20

These are fitting responses both in terms of who God is—Creator and King—and in terms of Israel's being God's chosen people (vv. 14–15). The Lord is not a local god or idol. He doesn't really *need* anything from His people. They didn't deserve Him. They hadn't earned His favor. He freely willed to "set his affection" on them and chose them to be His own.

So they should act like it! Instead of being stubborn and "stiff-necked," they should circumcise their hearts (v. 16). Circumcision was a mark of the covenant identity and of consecration to the Lord. It thus carried the sense of purifying or rededicating themselves.

These arguments repeat in the rest of the passage. God is mighty, awesome, and just. There's no comparison with other "gods"—He alone is God Most High (v. 17). He's just and generous in that He upholds the cause of those with the lowest social status, such as orphans,

widows, and foreigners (v. 18). Since this is the case, being rebellious or prideful is absurd and childish. They must not take oaths in His name and then act in ways that dishonor Him. The only appropriate response is worship, fear of the Lord, and grateful obedience (vv. 19–21).



Go Deeper

To fear the Lord is the same as to put our hope in His unfailing love (Ps. 147:11). What is the meaning of hope in the Bible? How might it affect our lives in the present moment?

Pray with Us: Father, help me follow You all the days of my life in obedience, gratefulness, and service to others. Help me remember every day that You’ve already won the spiritual war, and I can live in light of Your victory, fully committed to You.

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