

LESSON 6



FEAR AND REVERENCE

Scripture Texts: Psalm 99:1-9; Exodus 3:5-6

We must reverence God because of who and what He is. He is supreme, eternal, and all-powerful with all authority. God is the Creator, the Savior. Blasphemy is the opposite of reverence. Blasphemy is a great sin. The word *reverence* means "profound respect mingled with fear and affection; highest respect mingled with awe." We are living in a day when people from all walks of life have lost (if they ever had it) the reverential fear of God from their lives. When one loses respect for God, he also loses respect for God's house of worship and for other people.

MEMORY VERSE: *He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.*

—Psalm 111:9

Reverence the Holy God

Psalm 99:1-3. **The LORD reigneth.** The Bible repeatedly commands the fear of God. This is not the kind of fear as one would fear a cruel one of authority, but fear of failing to give the proper respect and reverence due Him. Why should He be feared? Because **the LORD reigneth.** He is supreme in power and authority. He is the Creator. It is His right to command, and He punishes disobedience. **Let the people tremble.** Fear His authority, rejoice in His love. This combination breeds reverence. Psalm 89:7 speaks of greatly fearing God "in the assembly of the saints." God is to "be had in reverence of all." We see a great lack of reverence in our worship services! It is said by some, "There is more reverence shown to God in denominational church worship than in some Church of God services." A serious charge but a true one. How is it at your place of worship? Name some ways how a greater reverence to God can be shown in and during worship. Sinners and saints alike are gathered reverence. Read Leviticus 19:30. Never allow the spirit of disrespect that is prevalent in our age to cause a lack in your life along this line.

He sitteth between the cherubims. These two cherubims faced each other from the ends of the mercy seat covering the ark of testimony in the tabernacle (see Exodus 25:10-22). From there God spoke commands to the people. **Let the earth be moved.** Let all come to attention and obey. **The LORD is great in Zion.** Zion is His people, His church. He is the head of the church, **is high above all.** Only He has the right to rule the church. Only He has power to take in or put out a member. His name is **great**; therefore, praise Him. If one will truly praise God, there will be little place for irreverence. His name is **terrible**; fear and obey Him. His name is **holy**; love and adore and trust and worship Him in Spirit and in truth.

God Is Greater Than All Others

Psalm 99:4-5. **The king's strength also loveth judgment.** The king loved justice, equity, and righteousness. He could see these in perfection in the Lord. The Lord is all this and more, **for he is holy.** These words, repeated in verses 3 and 5 and again in verse 9, seem to carry a special message to be remembered.

Because of His character, we must **exalt** the Lord to the highest position; we must take the lowest. **Worship at his footstool.** Various things are called God's footstool—Jerusalem, the temple, the tabernacle, the ark, and the earth. Any humble, low position before the Lord is His footstool. We worship Him in humble reverence, **for he is holy.** Read Hebrews 12:9 and 28.

God Deals With People

Psalm 99:6-9. **They called . . . he answered them.** Although God is so high and holy, yet He stoops to visit man because He loves him. Moses and Aaron, priests, and Samuel, a prophet, **called** and the Lord **answered**. The "pillar of a cloud" and the "pillar of fire" (Exodus 13:21-22) were the visible tokens by which God led the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. From them He spoke directions and commands. These men obeyed His commands, and He heard their prayers to forgive a sinful and rebellious people. Read about the golden calf, Exodus 32; the faithless spies, Numbers 13 and 14; and the fiery serpents, Numbers 21. These accounts show both God's forgiveness at repentance and His vengeance at rebellion. His vengeance can be as severe as His forgiveness is merciful. We must be reverent and rejoice before Him. **Our God is holy.** Holiness is the nature of God. Reverence is the honor we give Him.

Our Response

Exodus 3:5-6. **Draw not nigh hither.** Moses was in the Presence of God. Although God had revealed Himself and dealt with Moses in a loving way, He still demanded the reverence of Moses. This was not only a spot in the desert where Moses had been before, but God's presence there made a difference; it demanded something more in respect from Moses. **Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place . . . is holy ground.** This appearance was not the revelation of something new, but a reminder to Moses and his people and to us of something that has always existed: the fact that He demands reverence. We are heirs of the good things of God and of a great disclosure of His nature, which has come down to us across the centuries and through the lives of consecrated servants of God. Jesus used the passage regarding the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to prove the existence of life after death. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32).

When we have put off our shoes from our feet, and have drawn near to the burning bush out of which God speaks, then we are ready to be sent on great errands for God. Moses was ready to face Pharaoh, not as an equal but as a superior. One man, with a staff in his hand and the memory of God's Words fresh in his mind, was more than sufficient to overwhelm Pharaoh and his armies. Here is another case of one man and God being a majority. Read Psalm 33:8.

JUST A THOUGHT

**Good resolutions are like crying babies in church—
both should be carried out immediately.**