

## Theological Background

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As Moses approached the presence of God in the burning bush, God said to him: 'Do not come any closer. Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' This scene captures something of the essence of 'reverence.'

Reverence is the proper human response to what is holy and sacred. It is related to awe and respect. It is this profound respect that is expressed in the Biblical phrase 'the fear of the Lord'. This is not fear in the sense of terror or abject grovelling but a reverent acknowledgment of God's greatness and our complete dependence.

Such reverence is the proper response to the mystery of life and death, or to the created world in which we live.

This profound respect for God is the spring from which true worship flows.

Although only God is truly worthy of reverence and worship, the Bible also contains the related concept of 'honouring'. We are asked to honour one another and one of the ten commandments instructs us to honour our father and mother.

## Theological Background

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### Biblical References

Exodus 3:5-6

'Do not come any closer,' God said. 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' Then he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

Exodus 20:12

Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Psalms 29:2

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendour of his holiness.

Psalms 111:10

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.

Proverbs 19:23

The fear of the LORD leads to life: then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Romans 12:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.

Hebrews 12:28-29

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire.'