

# Deuteronomy 6 Commentary

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[Moses on Mt Nebo \(Deuteronomy 34:1+\)](#)

Listen to [Mt Nebo](#) as you Ponder How Moses' [May Have Felt](#)

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Source: Ryrie Study Bible

## Deuteronomy

Dt 1:1-4:43	Dt 4:44-26:19	Dt 27:1-34:12	
Moses' First Discourse	Moses' Second Discourse	Moses' Third Discourse	
Historical Review	Legal Exposition	Prophetical Promises	
Looking Back 40 Years	Looking Up What God Expected of Israel	Looking Ahead What God Will Do for Israel	
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Take Heed Don't forget	Ten Commands	Related Commands			Two Choices Affecting the Future		Moses' Parting Words
Dt 1:1-4:43 Looking Back	Dt 4:44-11:32 Exposition of Decalogue	Dt 12:1-16:17 Ceremonial Laws	Dt 16:18-20:20 Civil Laws	Dt 21:1-26:19 Social Laws	Dt 27:1-28:68 Ratification of Covenant	Dt 29:1-30:20 Terms of Covenant	Dt 31:1-34:12 Moses' Song, Blessing, Death
<b>Plains of Moab</b>							
<b>ca. 2 Months</b> <b>Moses: Author</b> (Except Dt 34)							

**Deuteronomy 6:1** "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to **teach** you, that you might **do** them in the land where you are going over to **possess** it,

- **the commandment.** Dt 4:1, 5, 14, 45; 5:31; 12:1. Le. 27:34. Nu. 36:13. Eze. 37:24
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## HOW TO OBTAIN GOD'S BLESSING

**Deuteronomy 6 - The Summary of the Commandments—the Greatest Commandment of All: Love the Lord, 6:1-25.**

1. The primary charge of God given to Moses: to teach believers to obey His commandments (Dt 6:1-3).
2. The greatest commandment (Dt 6:4-5).
3. The duty of the believer (Dt 6:6-9).
4. The blessings of obedience: prosperity (Dt 6:10-11).
5. The danger of prosperity: comfort—ease—satisfaction (Dt 6:11-19).
6. The duty to teach the truth of salvation and of the commandments to children (Dt 6:20-25). (POSB)

**Another Outline - John Maxwell - ([Preacher's Commentary](#))**

1. Receive the Law Personally (Dt 6:1–5)
2. Teach the Law Continually (Dt 6:6–9)
3. Live the Law Completely (Dt 6:10–19)
4. Explain the Law Historically (Dt 6:20–25)

**How?** Commandment, et al (God's Word)...teach...do (obey)...possess (be blessed)

Introduction to Deuteronomy Deut. 4:44-11:32 Moses' Second Speech: General Covenant Stipulations. The first part of Moses' second speech largely consists of general covenant stipulations. More specific stipulations follow in chs. 12-16.

**Jack Deere** has an excellent background comment - Having reminded his audience of the basic foundation, the Ten Commandments, which they heard at Horeb, Moses turned to details of the Law which they did not hear because they were afraid of the voice of God (cf. Dt 5:25-27). Accordingly chapters 6-11, which may be called "the great commands and warnings," deal with the personal nature of the covenant relationship. Here the details relating to the total commitment of individuals to the Lord are discussed. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Kline** adds that "The commandments about to be given were the divinely dictated law for the theocratic kingdom as it was soon to

be erected in the new paradise land of milk and honey." (Wycliffe Bible Commentary)

**POSB** - The commandments were the very foundation of life, telling man exactly how to live. God is the great Creator, the Giver of all life; therefore, He knows exactly how life should be lived. This was the very reason He had given the commandments to man, to show man how to live a full and victorious life. If a person obeys God, he will experience the fullness of life and conquer all the enemies who oppose life, seeking to drag him down into the pit of death. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**John Trapp** - Moses having repeated the decalogue, begins here to explain it: and first, the first of the ten, in this present chapter: that first commandment being such, as that therein the keeping of all the other nine is enjoined,

**Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you** - This is [verbal plenary inspiration](#) first hand, in person. Yahweh communicated the truth to Moses, who taught the truth to the second generation of Israel in the plains of Moab. Note that Moses did not simply **SPEAK** the words but specifically **TEACHES** (Heb - [lamad](#); Septuagint - [didasko](#) - see [THOUGHT below](#)) the words of Yahweh. His teaching was not just that Israel might gain [information](#) (head knowledge) about Yahweh and His ways but to experience [transformation](#) (heart change) (isn't this always the goal of Spirit enabled, [Bibliocentric](#) preaching and teaching?). The Hebrew verb [lamad](#) implies acceptance of and submission to the content taught. Another major goal of Moses' teaching (and all teaching) is that the hearer would learn to fear (reverentially, be in awe of) Yahweh all the days of their life. The parents should then pass on this divine truth to their children. (cf Dt 4:10, Dt 6:2)

**THOUGHT** - Regarding the verb [didasko](#) used in the Septuagint to translate "teach," it is notable that [didasko](#) means to teach a student in such a way that the will of the student becomes conformed to the teaching taught. In other words, the teacher teaches in such a way that as the student is taught, he/she changes his/her mind saying in essence "I won't do it this way, but I will do it this way because I've learned this teaching." Doctrine determines direction of our behavior, behavior that is not "conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our mind, so that we may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." (cf Ro 12:2+) Teaching that Scripture finds significant is not that which gives [information](#) alone but which produces (Spirit enabled) [transformation](#) (see 2 Cor 3:18+), making disciples ([mathetes](#) = learners) who seek to live supernaturally (enabled by the Spirit - Eph 5:18+, Gal 5:16+- and guided by the Word - Col 3:16+) in loving obedience to the will of our Father Who art in Heaven.

**Commandment** ([04687](#)) [mitsvah](#) from [tsavah](#) = to lay charge upon, command, order) is that which is commanded, even human (esp a king, e.g. 2 Chr 9:14) or divine (most often) . In short it is not a suggestion. In the Pentateuch, [mitsvah](#) speaks only of God's commands to men, never of men's commands. Note that commandment is coupled with "keep" some 69 times in the NAS, clearly indicating that a major emphasis of this [mitsvah](#) is human obedience to God. [Mitsvah](#) refers to God's orders, the direction in which to go or not to go. Pr 6:23 says God's [mitsvah](#) is a lamp giving light to the eyes so we can see where to walk or not walk. It is notable that the greatest frequency of [mitsvah](#) is in the book of Deuteronomy, the "second giving of the law" (where it occurs some 43 times). There are 22 uses of [mitsvah](#) in Psalm 119 (see discussion below of the one from Ps 119:10). The term [Bar Mitsvah](#) ("Son of the Commandment" or [here](#)) marks the coming of age for a young Jewish male who accepts his duties relating to the Law of Moses. The Jews compiled a listing of what they interpreted as God's commands coming up with [613 mitzvot](#) ([see also](#)).

**Mitsvah in Deuteronomy** - used in 42 verses out of 177v total in the OT - Deut. 4:2; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:10; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:17; Deut. 6:25; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:11; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 10:13; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:13; Deut. 11:22; Deut. 11:27; Deut. 11:28; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 15:5; Deut. 17:20; Deut. 19:9; Deut. 26:13; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 26:18; Deut. 27:1; Deut. 27:10; Deut. 28:1; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:13; Deut. 28:15; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 30:8; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:11; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 31:5;

**NET Note** - **commandment** is singular - Heb "**commandment**." The word מִצְוָה (mitsvah) again is in the singular, serving as a comprehensive term for the whole stipulation section of the book. The [Masoretic Text](#) (the traditional rabbinical text of the Hebrew Bible) actually has the singular (הַמִּצְוָה, hammitsvah), suggesting perhaps that the following terms (מִקְוִיִּם [khuqqim] and מִשְׁפָּטִים [mishpatim]) are in [epexegetical](#) apposition to "commandment." That is, the phrase could be translated "the entire command, namely, the statutes and ordinances." This would essentially make מִצְוָה (mitsvah) synonymous with תּוֹרָה (torah), the usual term for the whole collection of law.

**Pulpit Commentary** - In the Hebrew it is, **This is the commandment**, i.e. the sum and substance of the Divine enactment; equivalent to "the Law" (Deuteronomy 4:44). "The statutes and judgments" (rights) are in apposition to "the commandment," and explain it.

**Merrill** - Having prepared the way for the announcement of the covenant stipulations, Moses employed a technical formula ("commands, decrees, and regulations," 6:1; cf. 5:31) to speak of them again and to urge Israel's compliance with them. Inculcation of these principles would instill a godly fear that encourages obedience. Obedience, in turn, would be prerequisite to long life in the land, both for the community and the individual (6:2). ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**The LORD your God** - Moses continually emphasizes that Yahweh is Israel's God (279 times in 239 verses out of 396 times in the entire OT! More than 50% of uses in one book!). Uses in chapter 6 - Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:5; Deut. 6:10; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:15; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 6:17;

**That** - Purpose clause.

**You might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it** - This is almost like the proverbial "[broken record](#)" (of course in a good sense) repeating the clear connection between taking in the Word of God (**teach you**), obeying the Word of God (**do them**) and possessing God's promised possessions (**possess**). This is the "divine formula" enabling one to possess divine promises.

**THOUGHT** - God's pattern in the Old Testament was hear and obey ("trust and obey") and it is still His "pattern" in the New Testament. In the NT of course believers do not possess a promised land but a promised life (cf 2 Pe 1:4+), a supernatural life in Christ in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Col 2:3+). Believers in Christ "have been made complete ([pleroo](#) in perfect tense = continuing effect)" (Col 2:10+). Now believers are commanded to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pe 3:18+) and the Spirit will transform us from one degree of glory to another into the image of God's Son, Christ Jesus, in Whom in Whom we can possess the "promised life." (cf 2 Cor 3:18+). Christ is our life (Col 3:4+, 1 Jn 5:11-12+). Christ alone is the Source of abundant ([perissos](#)) life (Jn 10:10).

**Possess** ([03423](#)) [yarash](#) to take possession of, inherit, dispossess, to drive out. Yarash is an especially important word in contexts dealing with Israel's conquest of and possession of the land of Canaan. Yahweh first promised possession of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Ge 15:7-21+). Note also that "possessing" implies "dispossessing" another nation. In a legal sense, the right of possession passed from one generation to the next and so constituted "inheritance." Note that possession of the promised land and/or the "inheritance" was directly connected to Israel's trust relationship with the Lord, so that breaking trust, and thus breaking the covenantal relationship with Yahweh led to dispossession. But even in exile, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land (Jer. 30:3+ - May 14, 1948 is when Israel was given statehood but this is not the final fulfillment - that awaits the Millennial Reign of their Messiah).

**Yarash** is a key word in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:8; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:39; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:12; Deut. 3:18; Deut. 3:20; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 4:22; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 4:38; Deut. 4:47; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:17; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 9:1; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:10; Deut. 11:11; Deut. 11:23; Deut. 11:29; Deut. 11:31; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:2; Deut. 12:29; Deut. 15:4; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 17:14; Deut. 18:12; Deut. 18:14; Deut. 19:1; Deut. 19:2; Deut. 19:14; Deut. 21:1; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:1; Deut. 28:21; Deut. 28:42; Deut. 28:63; Deut. 30:5; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:18; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 32:47; Deut. 33:23;

Moses functions here as the intermediary between Yahweh and the people (Dt 5:27-30), and teaches them what the Lord wanted them to do (**commandment, the statutes and the judgments**) in the land across the Jordan. Note that Moses gives them **moral** instructions, not **military** instructions to enable them to conquer the evil Canaanites.

**Grant** gives an excellent introduction to chapter 6 - In chapter five the Ten Commandments are brought before Israel as the foundation laws of the covenant. Now these are expounded to teach how they would be put into practice when the nation entered Canaan. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the commandments, statutes, and judgments had to be kept in the Land. They were not for the wilderness journey alone. Entrance into Canaan did not release them from their obligation to obey. Victories in possessing the Land would not change their relationship with the Lord, and they must never imagine that victory gave them the right to challenge the terms set out at Horeb.

There was always the danger that conquest would lead Israel to believe that they could enjoy the good things of God without submission to His word. If it was their victory, they could have argued, was it not achieved by their own strength? Did this not give them the right to "re-negotiate" the terms of the covenant? Such would be utter folly, ignoring the fact that victories are the Lord's and that dependence on Him is vital at all times.

There are recurring themes that run through Deuteronomy, one being **the fear of the Lord**. It has already been mentioned on two

occasions (Dt 4:10; Dt 5:29) and is found on three occasions in this chapter (Dt 6:2, 13, 24). It is, therefore, a vital basic element in the relationship between the Lord and Israel. The censure expressed by the Psalmist underlines the point: "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes" (Ps 36:1), and it is these latter words that are quoted by Paul in Romans 3:18. Although the Psalmist and Paul are writing of the ungodly, the fear of the Lord must also mark believers today. Note what is written regarding the early church: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied" (Acts 9:31). Paul confirmed this when he wrote of the necessity of "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor 7:1), and of "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Eph 5:21+).

Again emphasis was laid on the fact that "all the commandments" had to be kept. This had been stated previously (5:29) when the words of the Lord to Moses were repeated to the people. Now Moses presses this issue once again, driving home the point that these are "his statutes and his commandments" (v. 2), the statutes of the One who is spoken of as "the Lord your God". It is worth more than passing interest that the expression "the Lord your (or "thy") God" is found on more occasions in Deuteronomy than in all the other books of the Pentateuch. The great privilege of the nation is seen in the use of this expression. They can rest on the fact that in a very special way He is their God.

It has already been observed (see 5:1) that the call to Israel to hear is used on a number of occasions in Deuteronomy at vital times. The call was for all Israel and here, for the second time, the call is made. Again, the promise is that observing the Law will bring blessing. In v. 2 the promise was that their days would be prolonged as a consequence of obedience. Here the promise is that they will increase mightily in the land that flowed with milk and honey. Not only will there be enjoyment of all that the Lord had provided for them, but they will be given length of days to enjoy the Land to the full. The promise of a land capable of such abundance was made at the time of the promise of deliverance from Egypt (Ex 3:8, 17). He had remained faithful to that promise and now was about to honour it. ([What the Bible Teaches – Leviticus and Deuteronomy](#))

**Deuteronomy 6:2 so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.**

- **fear the LORD your God** Dt 4:10; 10:12, 13, 20; 13:4. Ge. 22:12. Ex. 20:20. Job 28:28. Ps. 111:10; 128:1. Pr. 16:6. Ec. 12:13. Lu. 12:5. 1 Pe. 1:17.
- **and your son.** Dt 6:7. Ge. 18:19. Ps. 78:4–8.
- **your days may be prolonged.** Dt 4:40; 5:16, 33; 22:7. Pr. 3:1, 2, 16. 1 Pe. 3:10, 11.
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 4:40; "So you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that (Purpose clause) it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that (Purpose clause) **you may live long on the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time.**"

Deuteronomy 5:16 'Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that (Purpose clause) **your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you.**

Deuteronomy 5:33 (NOTE THIS IS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING SECTION) "You shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, that (Purpose clause) you may live and that (Purpose clause) it may be well with you, and that (Purpose clause) **you may prolong your days in the land which you will possess.**

## **FEAR OF THE LORD A GOOD THING!**

**So that** (Purpose clause) Gives an additional purpose of the preceding instructions...that the people and their descendants should "fear" the Lord their God throughout their lifetime. The nuances of the Hebrew word for "fear" are "fuzzy" in many people's minds. The point is that this fear can include an element of being afraid. For example, consider the experience of the Israelites at Horeb (Sinai) with its loud thunder, lightning flashes, earthquake, and darkness resulting in "shaking fear!" More often in the Scripture, fear is depicted as standing in awe of God, holding Him in utmost reverence and respect.

**POSB** - The person who truly **fears God** surrenders his life to **serve** God, to **obey** God just as He commands. But the word means

more than just **reverence** and **honor**: it means to **respect** the justice and judgment of God, to **fear** what God can do to a person if he disobeys the commandments of God. **Thus the very purpose for teaching the commandments to God's people is just this: to teach the fear of God.** Believers are to fear God: **reverence and worship Him, surrendering their lives to Him, obeying His commandments and living exactly as He says and respect His holiness and justice, lest their disobedience arouse the judgment of God** ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**John Trapp** - Not to fear God is to slight him; as not to praise him is to wrong him, saith an ancient.

#### Related Resource:

- The Fear of the Lord

**Kalland** - In the wisdom literature the "**fear of the LORD**" becomes a distinctive expression for the totality of right and devout relationship to God. The same notion is here--though it may not be as developed as in the Psalms, Proverbs, et al. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**THOUGHT** - The phrase "**fear of the LORD**" is found in 25 verses (2 Chr 19:7, 9 Job 28:28 Ps 19:9 Ps 34:11 Ps 111:10 Pr 1:7 Pr 1:29 Pr 2:5 Pr 8:13 Pr 9:10 Pr 10:27 Pr 14:26, 27 Pr 15:16 Pr 15:33 Pr 16:6 Pr 19:23 Pr 22:4 Pr 23:17 Isa 11:2, 3 33:6 Acts 9:31 2 Co 5:11) This subject makes a nice teaching that can be charted out. Many evangelicals do not have a proper understanding of a holy fear because they are not as familiar with the OT and they equate it with an OT idea, which is a fallacious concept (cf Rev 19:5 and note where this scene takes place!) See fear in the New Testament...

- 2 Cor 7:1+ Therefore (CONTEXT = 2Cor 6:14-18), having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the **fear of God**.
- Phil 2:12+ So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) your salvation with **fear** and trembling; (see how this is even possible = Php 2:13NLT+)
- 1 Pe 1:17+ If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, **conduct** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;
- Rev 19:5+ And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, **you who fear Him**, the small and the great."

**Fear** is common in Deuteronomy. = Deut. 1:17; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:29; Deut. 2:25; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:22; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 11:25; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 17:19; Deut. 21:21; Deut. 25:18; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 31:8; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 31:13

**Fear** (Lxx in this verse = [phobeo](#) in present tense)([03372](#)) **yare** is a verb meaning to fear, to be afraid (Ge 3:10+), to respect, to reverence, to be terrified, to be awesome, to be feared, to make afraid, to frighten. "**Reverence** is the combination of admiration & fear, awe & dread, wonder & terror. It's an emotion that we were made to experience." (Piper) The word "**fear**" means to honor and reverence God to such a point that a person worships Him. The most common translations are to be afraid, to fear, to fear God. On one hand **yare** conveys the sense of threat to one's life, but on the other it can express the idea of reverence and deep respect (as in Ps 25:14). In the OT **fear of the Lord** involves a person's total response to the Lord. It is notable that more than 75% of the over 370 uses of yare are in the context of reverencing the Lord. In English our word **reverence** (Latin *reverentia* = "awe, respect," from *revereri* "to stand in awe of, respect, honor, fear, be afraid of; revere,") refers to a feeling of profound respect for someone or something, and with **yare** in the OT as noted this is most often to God. The classic use is Pr 1:7+ "The **fear** (yare) of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." Notice that a genuine holy fear of the Lord is often equated with believers (e.g. Mal 3:16+, Mal 4:2+, Eccl 8:12-13, cf the last worldwide proclamation of the Gospel which says "Fear God..." - Rev 14:6-7+)

**Yare** occurs in **36 verses in Deuteronomy** (out of a total of 306v in OT) - Deut. 1:19; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:29; Deut. 2:4; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:22; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 5:5; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 7:18; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 7:21; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:15; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:17; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 10:21; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:11; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 17:13; Deut. 17:19; Deut. 19:20; Deut. 20:1; Deut. 20:3; Deut. 20:8; Deut. 21:21; Deut. 25:18; Deut. 28:10; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 31:6; Deut. 31:8; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 31:13

**You and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God**- Reverential fear is conducive to a holy walk. In 1 Peter



1:17+ Peter commands "If (first class conditional - assumed true) you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, **conduct** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves **in fear** (see locative of sphere) during the time of your stay on earth."

**Utley** - This concept of family reverence and worship is emphasized in Deuteronomy (cf. Dt 4:9–10; 5:29; 6:13; 11:19; 32:46). It is the theological opposite of Deut. 5:9!

**To keep** ([shamar](#) - watch, guard; Lxx - [phulasso](#) - "post a sentry" so to speak - present tense) **all** (how many?) **His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all** (how long?) **the days of your life, and that** (another purpose clause) **your days may be prolonged** - Obedience will generally be blessed by a long life. I would add that even if it is shortened, it is still a blessed life, a life of spiritual prosperity (see short fruitful life of [David Brainerd](#)). By obeying the Lord and keeping His decrees, individual Israelites would enjoy long life in the land, and the nation as a whole would enjoy long existence in the land. Unfortunately they disobeyed and were spewed out of the land (Northern 10 tribes in 722 BC to Assyrian and the Southern 2 tribes in 586 BC).

**POSB on days may be prolonged** - God has established the very laws of life to make the truth of this statement a reality. A person who obeys God will experience far less guilt, pressure, and tension. These are things that eat away at life, that cause ulcers and all kinds of other emotional and physical problems. Guilt, pressure, and tension sap the strength out of life and shorten life. One of the wisest things a person can do is to obey God, eliminating the guilt, pressure, and tension that disobedience brings into his life. Not only will obeying God prolong your days, but also it will give you a more enjoyable or abundant life. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**NET Note on statutes and commandments** - Here the terms are not the usual מִקְוִיָּה (khuqqim) and מִשְׁפָּטִים (mishpatim; as in v. 1) but קְוִיָּה (khuqqot, "statutes") and מִצְוֹת (mitsot, "commandments"). It is clear that these terms are used interchangeably and that their technical precision ought not be overly stressed.

**Utley on all the days of your life** - Notice that this is an emphasis on lifestyle—daily obedience, not just particular worship periods or annual feasts. Biblical faith is initial faith and repentance followed by lifestyle faith and repentance (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16, 19; 20:21).

**Victor Hamilton on your days may be prolonged** (comment on [arak](#)) - It is in Deuteronomy that one finds the heaviest proliferation of the phrase, "**That you may prolong your days/your days may be prolonged**" (Dt. 4:26, 40; Dt. 5:33; Dt. 6:2; Dt. 11:9; Dt. 17:20; Dt. 22:7; Dt. 25:15; Dt. 30:18; Dt. 32:47). **In every instance the promise is prefixed by a moral contingency.** It is only as Israel keeps God's laws and commandments (Dt. 4:40) that she is guaranteed security in her land. ([Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

**Utley on your days may be prolonged** - This phrase has often been interpreted in connection with Deut. 5:16 as a promise of individual longevity to those who honor their parents. However, because of the repeated use of this phrase in Deut. 4:40; 5:16, 33; 6:2; 11:9, it is obviously an idiom for the promise of a stable society, not individual longevity. God's covenant is designed to promote a godly, stable, healthy, productive society

**Keep** (guard, observe, watch) ([08104](#)) [shamar](#) means to keep, watch, preserve, to guard, to be careful, to watch over, to watch carefully over, to be on one's guard. The first use of **shamar** in Ge 2:15 is instructive as Adam was placed in the garden (a perfect environment) and was commanded to "**keep**" it which in the [Septuagint](#) is translated with [phulasso](#) (which is used to translate many of the OT uses of **shamar**) which means to guard like a military sentinel would at his post. Clearly Adam did not do a good job at "keeping" the garden safe from intruders! And because of this failure he was cast out of the garden and angels stationed to "**guard** (Lxx = [phulasso](#)) the way to the tree of life" so that he would not eat of it (Ge 3:24). After Cain murdered Abel he answered God "Am I my brother's **keeper**?" (Ge 3:24)

**Shamar** in 65 verses in Deuteronomy (out of 441 v in the OT) **Note 5 uses in Deuteronomy 6** - Deut. 2:4; Deut. 4:2; Deut. 4:6; Deut. 4:9; Deut. 4:15; Deut. 4:23; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 5:10; Deut. 5:12; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:3; Deut. 6:12; Deut. 6:17; Deut. 6:25; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:11; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 10:13; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:16; Deut. 11:22; Deut. 11:32; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:13; Deut. 12:19; Deut. 12:28; Deut. 12:30; Deut. 12:32; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 15:9; Deut. 16:1; Deut. 16:12; Deut. 17:10; Deut. 19:9; Deut. 23:9; Deut. 23:23; Deut. 24:8; Deut. 26:16; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 26:18; Deut. 27:1; Deut. 28:1; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 29:9; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 33:9;

**Prolonged** ([0748](#))([arak](#)) means to be long, make long, prolong, draw out, postpone. Arak is found most frequently in Deuteronomy, eleven times, mostly in the formula, "That (it may be well with you and that) you may 'prolong' your days in the land." Most commonly in the Hiphil stem it conveys a causative sense such

as to prolong one's days (Dt. 5:16); to show continuance (Ex. 20:12); linger (Nu 9:19); elders who survived Joshua (Josh. 24:31); God delays His wrath (Isa. 48:9). Used literally, it describes the growth of branches (Ezek. 31:5); and as a command, to lengthen one's cords (Isa. 54:2).

To prolong, or lengthen as in Dt. 4:40 = "that you may **live long** on the land." Dt. 4:26 = You shall not live long on it." Dt. 5:16 = "that your days **may be prolonged** Dt. 5:33 = that **you may prolong** your days in the land which you will possess. Dt. 6:2 that your days **may be prolonged**. Dt. 11:9 = **so that you may prolong your days** on the land Deut. 17:20 = "so that he and his sons **may continue long** in his kingdom Dt. 22:7 = and that you may prolong your days. Dt. 25:15 = that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you. Deut. 30:18 = You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it. Deut. 32:47 = by this word you will prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess." The **assurance of blessing**, as we see here and in Deuteronomy, is directly related to **obedience**. Only as God's people live in accordance with the Torah can they realize security and length of days.

**Arak** - 34v - continue(1), delay(1), endure\*(1), endures(1), lengthen(3), lengthened(1), lingered(2), live(2), long(5), long\*(3), makes him slow(1), prolong(8), prolonged(4), prolongs(1), stick(1), survived\*(2). -- Ge 26:8; Exod. 20:12; Num. 9:19; Num. 9:22; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:16; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 11:9; Deut. 17:20; Deut. 22:7; Deut. 25:15; Deut. 30:18; Deut. 32:47; Jos. 24:31; Jdg. 2:7; 1 Ki. 3:14; 1 Ki. 8:8; 2 Chr. 5:9; Job 6:11; Ps. 129:3; Prov. 19:11; Prov. 28:2; Prov. 28:16; Eccl. 7:15; Eccl. 8:12; Eccl. 8:13; Isa. 48:9; Isa. 53:10; Isa. 54:2; Isa. 57:4; Ezek. 12:22; Ezek. 31:5

**Deuteronomy 6:3 "O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.**

- **you should listen** Dt 4:6; 5:32. Ec. 8:12. Is. 3:10.
- **that it may be well with you.** Ge 12:2; Ge 13:16; Ge 15:5; Ge 22:17; Ge 26:4; Ge 28:14. Ex. 1:7. Ac. 7:17.
- **in a land.** Ex. 3:8
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Genesis 15:5 And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

Genesis 22:17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and **I will greatly multiply your seed** as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

Genesis 26:4 "**I will multiply your descendants** as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;

Genesis 28:14 "**Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth**, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

### HOW TO EXPERIENCE "DIVINE MULTIPLICATION"

**O Israel you should listen** ([shama](#)) - NET = "Pay attention, Israel." The verb [shama](#) conveys the sense not just to hear words, but to **hear with undivided attention with a goal to obey what is heard** (a negative example is when Adam "listened" to Eve - Ge 3:17 - he listened and then acted on what he heard!). In Dt 8:20 the context makes it clear that **listen** is far more than simply hear sound waves! In that passage to "not listen" results in on perishing! Clearly the implication of listening is obeying what is heard! Dt 8:20 is sadly in essence a prediction of what would happen to Israel because she would not listen to the voice of the LORD their God! Note also that the word "**obey**" in 1 Sa 15:22 is [shama](#)! Beloved, don't skim over this truth! Are you reading the Word of God daily, but not really "listening?" Don't deceive yourself! (James 1:22+ cf blessing of obedience in Jas 1:25+) The Septuagint renders [shama](#) in Dt 6:3 with [akouo](#) in the [aorist imperative](#) a command which can even convey a sense of urgency!

**And be careful to do it** - It may seem to be a simple, obvious point but if one does not listen attentively, it is difficult to obey [assiduously](#)! Again the emphasis is not just ON *hearing* the word but *heeding* the word heard! That is always God's pattern for



spiritual prosperity! **Be careful** is [shamar](#) rendered in the Septuagint with [phulasso](#) also in the [aorist imperative](#) calling for immediate response! To do is [asah](#) translated with [poieo](#) which means to do or accomplish and is in the present tense calling for this to be one's lifestyle.

**Merrill** says the idea is ""Pay attention and do it!" There are no options here, nor are there ever any in doing the will of God. It is always "his way or no way," for he is Lord. Full obedience to him brings fullness of blessing. In Israel's case, they would have a multiplied population in a land of unlimited natural resources ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT** - Obedience is not to be sputtering, on and off, only when we feel "spiritual," but is to be our pursuit and goal! "True obedience has no lead at its heels." (T Adams) To obey is always better than sacrifice! (1 Sa 15:22). Obedience is the way to blessing. As one has said obedience won't stop the decomposition of our physical lives but it will halt the decay of our spiritual lives. It is better to pay the price of obedience so that we may escape the cost of disobedience! Charles Colson was correct when he said "The Christian life begins with obedience, depends on obedience, and results in obedience." "Only in obedience can we discover the great joy of the will of God." (S.Ferguson) And remember obedience is not legalism for it is only by the grace of God one can obey the law of God (true in both the Old and New Testaments!)

**Listen** (hear, obey, understand)([08085](#)) **shama** means to hear (Adam and Eve hearing God = Ge 3:8, 10, Ge 18:10 = "overheard"), to listen (Ge 3:17, Ge 16:2 [= this was a big mistake and was the origin of Jews and Arabs!]) Ex 6:9,16:20, 18:19, Webster's 1828 on "listen" = to hearken; to give ear; to attend closely with a view to hear. To obey; to yield to advice; to follow admonition) and since hearing/listening are often closely linked to obedience, shama is translated obey (1 Sa 15:22, Ge 22:18, 26:5, 39:10, Ex 19:5, disobedience = Lev 26:14, 18, 21, 27) or to understand. KJV translates shama "hearken" (196x) a word which means to give respectful attention. Of God's hearing in general or hearing our prayers (Hab 1:2, Ps 66:18, click here for more in the Psalms, cf God's hearing in Zeph 2:8, Ge 16:11, 17:20, 30:17, 22, Ge 21:17, 29:33, 30:6, 17, 22; Ex 2:24, Ex 16:8, 9, 12, Nu 11:1, 12:2). Shama means "to hear intelligently and attentively and respond appropriately." In other words to hear does not convey the idea of "in one ear and out the other!"

The greatest significance of the use of **shama** is that of relation of man to God, especially where the context speaks of **obedience**. Obedience is the supreme test of faith and reverence for (fear of) God. The Old Testament conception of obedience was vital. It was the one important relationship which must not be broken. While sometimes this relation may have been formal and cold, it nevertheless was the one strong tie which held the people close to God. The significant spiritual relation is expressed by Samuel when he asks the question, "Hath Yahweh as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in **obeying** (shama) the voice of Yahweh? **Behold**, to **obey** (shama) is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sa 15:22). It was the condition without which no right relation might be sustained to Yahweh. This is most clearly stated in the relation between Abraham and Yahweh when he is assured "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast **obeyed** (shama) my voice" (Ge 22:18). In prophetic utterances, future blessing and prosperity were conditioned upon obedience: "If ye be willing and **obedient** (shama), ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa 1:19). After surveying the glories of the Messianic kingdom, the prophet assures the people that "this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently **obey** (shama) the voice of Yahweh your God" (Zec 6:15). On the other hand misfortune, calamity, distress and famine are due to their disobedience and distrust of Yahweh.

**Shama** - 82 verses - Clearly this is a **key word** in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:16; Deut. 1:17; Deut. 1:34; Deut. 1:43; Deut. 1:45; Deut. 2:25; Deut. 3:26; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:6; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 4:12; Deut. 4:28; Deut. 4:30; Deut. 4:32; Deut. 4:33; Deut. 4:36; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 5:23; Deut. 5:24; Deut. 5:25; Deut. 5:26; Deut. 5:27; Deut. 5:28; Deut. 6:3; Deut. 6:4; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 8:20; Deut. 9:1; Deut. 9:2; Deut. 9:19; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:10; Deut. 11:13; Deut. 11:27; Deut. 11:28; Deut. 12:28; Deut. 13:3; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:8; Deut. 13:11; Deut. 13:12; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 15:5; Deut. 17:4; Deut. 17:12; Deut. 17:13; Deut. 18:14; Deut. 18:15; Deut. 18:16; Deut. 18:19; Deut. 19:20; Deut. 20:3; Deut. 21:18; Deut. 21:20; Deut. 21:21; Deut. 23:5; Deut. 26:7; Deut. 26:14; Deut. 26:17; Deut. 27:9; Deut. 27:10; Deut. 28:1; Deut. 28:2; Deut. 28:13; Deut. 28:15; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 28:49; Deut. 28:62; Deut. 29:4; Deut. 29:19; Deut. 30:2; Deut. 30:8; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:12; Deut. 30:13; Deut. 30:17; Deut. 30:20; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 32:1; Deut. 33:7; Deut. 34:9;

**That** (Purpose clause) **it may be well with you and that** (Purpose clause) **you may multiply greatly Just as the LORD, the God of your fathers** (the patriarchs - Abraham, Issac, Jacob), **has promised you** - Moses mentions two blessings of obedience - prosperity and propagation. As **R C Sproul** said "The fundamental deception of Satan is the lie that obedience can never bring happiness." And so here we see obedience brings a realization of the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant of multiplication of the offspring. For example God promised in Genesis 13:16 "I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can

number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered." (see Related Passages above). **Your fathers** is a "key phrase" in chapter 6 also being found in Dt 6:10, 18, 23.

**Wiersbe** points out that "God's gracious promise to the patriarchs gave Israel ownership of the land (Ge 15:18+), but it was their own obedience to the Lord that guaranteed their possession and enjoyment of the land." ([Be Equipped](#)) **COMMENT** - In other words the Abrahamic Covenant's promise of land to Israel was unconditional in the sense that it would always belong to the nation of Israel. However, the possession of that land and prolongation in that land at any point in time was conditioned on the nation's obedience to God's commandments. Obey and stay. Disobey and be expelled (aka "exile" which is exactly what happened - the 10 Northern tribes were taken into exile by Assyria in 722 BC and the 2 Southern tribes - Judah and Benjamin - were taken into exile by Babylon in 586 BC

**POSB** - The commandments will cause all things to go well for you, give you a victorious life (Deut. 6:3). Just think for a moment: breaking the commandments of God causes all kinds of problems for a person. For example, lying, stealing, adultery, and murder cause all kinds of disturbed relationships and wreck human life. **Breaking any of the commandments of God causes all kinds of problems** -- broken relationships, wrecked lives, accidents, unemployment, disease, divorce, bankruptcy, poverty, homelessness, death! **The results of disobedience are terrible. The ravages of sin, of disobeying God, are seen within every community in the broken lives and families all around us.** But this is the glorious message of this point: obeying God will cause all things to go far better. If people obey the commandments, there will be no lying, stealing, adultery, or murder. There will be far fewer broken lives and families. Things will go well, and people will live a far more victorious life, conquering all the enemies and evil of this world. A life of conquest and victory is solely dependent upon obeying God. (**ED**: AND GOD HAS NOT LEFT US TO DO THIS ON OUR OWN BUT HAS GIVEN US HIS HOLY SPIRIT - see Php 2:13NLT+) This is the reason God gave His commandments, to show man how to live so that he could live a victorious life. **Obeying God simply makes things go better. In fact, all things will go well if a person obeys God.** The commandments will make you increase and assure a full, satisfying life (Deut. 6:3). This was a specific promise made to the Israelites, but it is also common sense for any people. As has already been seen, obeying the commandments extends life and improves the quality of that life. Just these facts alone would increase the population of a people, make them far more fruitful. Moreover, God blesses His people, assures them of a full, satisfying life. If a person obeys God, he walks throughout life conquering the temptation to lie, steal, commit adultery, and react in anger and violence when wronged by people. **The point is he lives a victorious life over the temptations and trials of life.** Therefore, God gives him a sense of confidence, assurance, satisfaction, and fulfillment in life. He grows in love for God and for people, experiencing the fullness of joy, peace, and strength of life. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**Utley - that it may be well with you**" This parallels the phrase, "that your days may be prolonged," of v. 2 Notice the phrase is also found in 5:33; 15:16; 19:13....It needs to be stated that YHWH's basic method of attracting the nations to Himself was to bless Israel in a unique way. However, Israel's disobedience never allowed this scenario to become effective. The cursing and blessing section of Deuteronomy 27–29 is pivotal in understanding the history of the children of Abraham. They were told specifically of the abundance that would accrue to them if they would follow God and the cursing that would accrue to them if they disobeyed. The history of Israel is one of disobedience.

**Trapp** alludes to the motivating aspect of the "rewards" (**be well...multiply greatly**) - Respect may be had to the recompense of reward. We may make it our scope, our aim, {σκοπουων, 2Co 4:18} though not our highest aim; Moses cast an eye when he was on his journey, {απεβλεπε, Heb 11:26} he stole a look from glory, and got fresh encouragement.

**In a land flowing with milk and honey** - And we see that the prosperity and propagation will take place in a promised land rich in resources and fertility. In Sinuhe's report of his travels (1920 B.C.), he depicted the fertility of Canaan, mentioning both milk and honey. Without doubt the description of the land would be an added incentive for the Second Generation to obey. The promises of Yahweh of **a land flowing with milk and honey** were sure, but they had to be laid hold of by faith that obeyed His Word. Remember this is exactly where the first generation failed - they refused to believe God's promised word, even "despite all the signs" He has performed in their midst (Nu 14:11+).

**Wiersbe** has an interesting note on milk and honey - When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against God and Moses, they called Egypt "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Nu. 16:13+), but God compared Egypt to an iron furnace (Dt. 4:20+; 1 Ki 8:51; Jer 11:4). Israel's bondage in Egypt helped to refine them ("an iron-smelting furnace," niv) and prepare them for their new life as a nation. However, all that the older generation seemed to remember about Egypt was the food they ate so freely (Ex. 16:1-3+; Nu 11:4-6+). The pain of their slavery in Egypt was overlooked or forgotten. ([Be Equipped](#))

**Milk and honey** - "This is shorthand for productivity in both domesticated and undomesticated endeavors (cf. Exod 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Lev 20:24; Num 13:27; 14:8; 16:13, 14)." (Merrill) The phrase, "**land flowing with milk and honey,**" is a technical phrase in both Ugaritic and Egyptian documents to denote Palestine. (Utley) It is used 20x, most often given BEFORE they entered the land (as an added incentive) - Ex 3:8;

## QUESTION - [Why was Israel called the land of milk and honey?](#)

**ANSWER** - Repeatedly in the Old Testament, God describes the [Promised Land](#) as “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:8; Numbers 14:8; Deuteronomy 31:20; Ezekiel 20:15). This poetic description of Israel’s land emphasizes the fertility of the soil and bounty that awaited God’s chosen people. The reference to “milk” suggests that many livestock could find pasture there; the mention of “honey” suggests the vast farmland available—the bees had plenty of plants to draw nectar from.

In Exodus 3:8, God says to [Moses](#), “I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.” A couple things to note about this verse:

First, before the [plagues](#), the land of Egypt supported Israel and the Egyptians quite well, yet God called the new land “good and spacious.” The Hebrew word translated “good” means “pleasant, beautiful, and fruitful, with economic benefits.”

Second, simultaneously with promoting the goodness of the land, God mentions the enemies in the land that must be overcome. The nations displaced by Israel from the land “flowing with milk and honey” were significant in number, and they valued that land enough to fight and die for it.

Later, we have the record of the ten faithless spies who were sent into the Promised Land by Moses. The ten spies disagreed that Israel was able to conquer the inhabitants of the land, but they did agree on this: it was a land of flowing with milk and honey. “They gave Moses this account: ‘We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit’” (Numbers 13:27). The “fruit” the spies showed Moses was a single cluster of grapes that had to be carried on a pole between two men (Nu 13:23). They also brought some [pomegranates](#) and the figs from Canaan.

It is true that there are areas of very arid land in Israel, but this does not negate the fact that, overall, it is a land flowing with milk and honey. There are many areas of Israel that are extremely fertile and produce many types of fruits and vegetables. The area north of present-day Israel is biblical Mesopotamia, also known as the “Fertile Crescent,” which is just that—fertile (and crescent-shaped). It is also true that the Bible records severe drought and famine in the land of Israel, but those times were connected to God’s judgment on the sinful people (Deuteronomy 11:16–17; 1 Kings 18:1–2, 18).

God’s description of the Promised Land as “a land flowing with milk and honey” is a beautifully graphic way of highlighting the agricultural richness of the land. God brought His people out of slavery in Egypt to a prosperous land of freedom and blessing and the knowledge of the Lord. [GotQuestions.org](#)

## Deuteronomy 6:4 **"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!"**

- **Hear, O Israel** Dt. 4:35, 36; 5:6. 1 Ki. 18:21. 2 Ki. 19:15. 1 Ch. 29:10. Is. 42:8; 44:6, 8; 45:5, 6. Je. 10:10, 11. Mar. 12:29–32. Jn 17:3. 1 Co. 8:4–6. 1 Ti. 2:5
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Matthew 22:37-39 And He said to him, “ ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ 38 “This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’”

**Comment** - Jesus used Dt 6:4 in combination with Lev. 19:18 (“you shall love your neighbor as yourself”) to affirm **the entire essence of the law**

Mark 12:29-31+ Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; 30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.’ 31 “The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Luke 10:27+ And he answered, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”

1 Cor 8:6+ yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.



[Are You Listening to the Master's Voice?](#)

### THE "SHEMA"

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

**Hear**, ([shama](#)) **O Israel** (means "God Strives")! **The LORD is our God, the LORD is one**- Note the Hebrew above - 6 Hebrew words - "**Hear Israel, Jehovah God one**"; so there is actually no verb "is" in this declaration. It is called the "[Shema](#)" based on the first Hebrew word (sema). Note this is not just a famous Jewish but a clear command to open your ears to truly hear and your heart to truly obey what is heard! **Hear** calls for immediate attention to the truth that follows - "to hear so as to do." This is the second summons for Israel to "hear" (Deut 5:1), to pay attention and to obey.

The Shema is direct refutation of the polytheistic pagan worship in all the nations that surrounded them, for in the Shema they affirmed that the is only ONE true and living God.

**Grant** - The significance of this statement (THE SHEMA) must be grasped and no better comment can be made than that of [Keil](#): "Hence what is predicated here of Jehovah (**Jehovah one**) does not relate to the unity of God, but simply states that it is to Him alone that the name Jehovah rightfully belongs, that He is the one absolute God, to whom no other Elohim can be compared. This is also the meaning of the same expression in Zechariah 14:9 where the words added, 'and His name one,' can only signify that in the future Jehovah would be acknowledged as the one absolute God, as King over all the earth. This clause not merely precludes polytheism [the worship of many gods], but also syncretism [the practice of seeking to unify different beliefs], which reduces the one absolute God to a national deity, a Baal (Hos 2:16), and in fact every form of theism and deism, which creates for itself a supreme God according to philosophical abstractions and ideas. For Jehovah, although the absolute One, is not an abstract notion like 'absolute being' or 'the absolute idea', but the absolutely living God, as He made Himself known in His deeds in Israel for the salvation of the whole world". These words, therefore, assert without apology that Jehovah is the absolute God and that there is no other deity. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**God** is the Hebrew name [Elohim](#) which was a noun that was used to refer to pagan gods and other entities, but in this context it clearly refers to the one true and living God. This divinely revealed truth (Moses is conveying the Words Yahweh had spoken to him) would be significant for the Second Generation to hear, understand and remember because the promised land had a plethora of "gods" including many "[Baals](#)" (a word which means lord, owner, possessor, husband - Yahweh was Israel's husband! Jer 31:32+, Isa 54:5). Moses is saying in essence that in contrast to the pagan gods of the Canaanites **our God, the LORD is one**. Note that Yahweh was Israel's God ("**our God**"), their very own (and only) God! This truth should have served to [preclude](#) pursuit of pagan "gods" which were not Israel's "gods," and in fact were not "gods" at all but were idols of wood, stone and metal that could not see, speak, hear or walk! (Ps 115:3-8+).

Sadly, it only took two generations for Israel to forget the true meaning of the [Shema](#) (time saps our memory banks) so that by the time of the **Judges** "the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals and **forsook** the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the LORD to anger." (Jdg 2:11-12+) They forsook because they forgot! Even sadder is that the time of the Judges lasted from about 1400-1100 BC, or almost 25% of Israel's entire national history in the Old Testament!

There is only one God Who created the universe and only one God Who is the God of all mankind.

There is only one God who created all things: "One God, the Father of whom are all things and we in Him" (1 Cor. 8:6+).

There is only one God who has made all men alike: "He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth," (Acts 17:26+).

There is only one God "in whom we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28+).

**POSB** - Note this fact: as the Lord, God is the *only* living and true God, the God of salvation, deliverance, and redemption. This means a most wonderful thing: as the Lord—the only living and true God—all people are saved, redeemed in the same way. God does not play favorites or show partiality. God does not make it more difficult for some to be saved. God is the Lord—the only One—therefore He treats all equally and justly. All people can approach God and be saved in the same way. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**Jack Deere** - The statement in this verse is the basic confession of faith in Judaism. The verse means that the Lord (Yahweh) is totally unique. He alone is God. The Israelites could therefore have a sense of security that was totally impossible for their polytheistic neighbors. The "gods" of the ancient Near East rarely were thought of as acting in harmony. Each god was unpredictable and morally capricious. So a pagan worshiper could never be sure that his loyalty to one god would serve to protect him from the capricious wrath of another. The 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. This confession of monotheism does not preclude the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. "God" is plural ('ēlohîm), possibly implying the Trinity, and one ('eḥād) may suggest a unity of the Persons in the Godhead (cf. Gen. 2:24, where the same word for "one" is used of Adam and Eve). ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Ryrie** - According to rabbinic tradition, the [Shema](#) originally consisted only of verse 4 but was later expanded to include Dt 6:5-9; 11:13-21; and Nu 15:37-41. According to rabbinic law, it was to be recited morning and night (cf. Dt 6:7). Dt 6:4 is subject to various translations, though the statement is likely stressing the uniqueness of Yahweh and should be translated, "The LORD is our God, the LORD alone." A secondary emphasis, His indivisibility, is apparent in most English translations. The Lord's uniqueness precludes the worship of any other and demands a total love commitment (Dt 6:5). This confession does not preclude [the later revelation of the Trinity](#), for the word God ([Elohim](#)) is a plural word, and the word one is also used of the union of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:24) to describe two persons in one flesh. (Ryrie Study Bible)

**Utley** adds regarding the [Shema](#) that "There is no VERB. This is the central pillar of the Jewish affirmation of monotheism (although it must be admitted that this central theological truth is not contextually highlighted). Israel was very distinct from the polytheism of her neighbors and especially the Canaanites' emphasis on the many local Ba'als. There has been much discussion whether this is full-blown philosophical monotheism (cf. 4:35, 39) or practical monotheism (cf. 5:7). It seems, because of the mention of other gods in v. 14, that this is really stating that as far as Israel is concerned, there is only one God. Full-blown, philosophical, ontological monotheism does not find full, unambiguous expression in the OT until the 8th century prophets (e.g., Isa. 43:9–11; 45:21–22; Jer. 2:11; 5:7, 10). The NT follows this understanding (e.g., Rom. 3:30; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; 1 Tim. 2:5; James 2:19).

**Kalland** - While the primary assertion of Dt 6:4 is that there is only one true God, it is also asserted that this true God is Israel's God. The Israelites should acknowledge no other god. The Lord, Israel's God, cannot be known or acknowledged in many forms like the Canaanite Baals could. There is no Lord of Sinai differentiated from a Lord of Mount Nebo or a Lord of Beersheba differentiated from a Lord of Reuben. Neither can the Lord be identified with any heathen god [syncretistically](#). There is only one Lord, and He alone is God. Furthermore, He is Israel's God, and they have entered into a covenant-treaty with Him (**ED: THE MOSAIC COVENANT THEY "CUT" AT SINAI - Ex 24:3-12+**). ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**NET Note** - Heb "the LORD, our God, the LORD, one." (1) One option is to translate: "The LORD is our God, the LORD alone" (cf. NAB, NRSV, NLT). This would be an affirmation that the Lord was the sole object of their devotion. This interpretation finds support from the appeals to loyalty that follow (vv. 5, 14). (2) Another option is to translate: "The LORD is our God, the LORD is unique." In this case the text would be affirming the people's allegiance to the Lord, as well as the Lord's superiority to all other gods. It would also imply that he is the only one worthy of their worship. Support for this view comes from parallel texts such as Deut 7:9 and 10:17, as well as the use of "one" in Song 6:8–9, where the starstruck lover declares that his beloved is unique (literally, "one," that is, "one of a kind") when compared to all other women. **Verses 4–5** constitute the so-called Shema (after the first word שְׁמָע, shéma', "hear"), widely regarded as the very heart of Jewish confession and faith. When Jesus was asked what was the greatest commandment of all, he quoted this text (Matt 22:37–38).

**James Coakley** - This verse is the core credo statement of Judaism. Yet it is challenging to translate because of the number of ways in which the Hebrew can be understood. The first words can be interpreted as either a predicated statement, The LORD is our God (supplying a helping verb), or as a nominal phrase ("The LORD our God"). The predicated statement is unlikely here since the clause "The Lord is our God" is not likely to be understood that way in any of the 21 uses in the book (cf. 1:6, 20; 6:20, 24). The real crux is whether the last word in the verse is to be translated as an adjective "one" (The LORD is one) or as an adverb "alone" ("the LORD alone"). Either translation is possible, and perhaps this is a rare instance of intentional ambiguity to allow for both notions. The wording, however it is translated, would imply monotheism, and other passages in Deuteronomy (e.g., 32:39) support that notion as well. If it is an adjective ("one"), then this would allow for the doctrine of the Trinity since elsewhere in the Pentateuch the Hebrew



word 'ehad can designate a compound unity as in the case of two people (Adam and Eve) being "one" ('ehad) flesh (Gn 2:24). In light of the immediate context in Dt 6, it may be better to take the last word as an adverb. The Ten Commandments clearly call for the worship of God alone ("no other gods before Me," 5:7), and verses in the immediate context (5:13–15) elaborate further on worshipping Him exclusively for His uniqueness. Although the doctrine of the Trinity is an important truth, it does not seem to be the focus in this verse. ([Moody Bible Commentary](#))

**One (0259)(echad)** "occurs 960 times as a noun, adjective, or adverb, as a cardinal or ordinal number, often used in a distributive sense. It is closely identified with yāḥad "to be united" and with rō'sh "first, head," especially in connection with the "first day" of the month (Genesis 8:13). It stresses unity while recognizing diversity within that oneness.

'ehad can refer to a certain individual (Judges 13:2) or a single blessing (Genesis 27:38). Solomon alone was chosen by the Lord (1 Chron. 29:1). The notion of uniqueness is also found in 2 Samuel 7:23 and Ezekiel 33:24 (for this verse with reference to God, see below). The phrase "in a single day" can refer to the suddenness of judgment (Isaiah 10:17; Isaiah 47:9) or blessing (Isaiah 66:8).

Adverbially, 'ehad means "once" or "one time" (2 Kings 6:10). God solemnly swore to David "one time" that his descendants and throne would last forever (Psalm 89:35 [H 36]). In Haggai 2:6 the Lord warned that he would shake heaven and earth "once more in a little while." Yet this prediction of the overthrow of nations probably included a near as well as a far fulfilment (cf. Hebrews 12:26). The expression "in one day" denotes the swiftness of the Lord's acts (Isaiah 9:14 [H 13]; Zech. 3:9).

Sometimes the phrase "as one man" can mean all at once" (Numbers 14:15), but when Gideon was told he would defeat Midian "as one man" it probably meant "as easily as a single man" (Judges 6:16). The phrase can also refer to a nation aroused to take united action against gross injustice (Judges 20:8; 1 Samuel 11:7). Zephaniah's mention of people serving God "with one shoulder" (Zeph. 3:9) likely means "shoulder to shoulder," solidly united. Likewise in Exodus 24:3 "with one voice" expresses that all Israel was involved in entering into the Covenant with Yahweh.

The concept of unity is related to the tabernacle, whose curtains are fastened together to form one unit (Exodus 26:6, 11; Exodus 36:13). Adam and Eve are described as "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24), which includes more than sexual unity. In Genesis 34:16 the men of Shechem suggest intermarriage with Jacob's children in order to become "one people."

Later, Ezekiel predicted that the fragmented nation of Israel would someday be reunited, as he symbolically joined two sticks (Ezekiel 37:17). Once again Judah and Ephraim would be one nation with one king (Ezekiel 37:22). Abraham was viewed as "the one" from whom all the people descended (Isaiah 51:2; Malachi 2:15), the one father of the nation.

Diversity within unity is also seen from the fact that 'ehad has a plural form, 'āḥādīm. It is translated "a few days" in Genesis 27:44; Genesis 29:20, and Daniel 11:20. In Genesis 11:1 the plural modifies "words": "the whole earth used the same language and the same words." Apparently it refers to the same vocabulary, the same set of words spoken by everyone at the tower of Babel. The first "same" in Genesis 11:1 is singular, analogous to "the same law" of the Passover applying to native-born and foreigner (Exodus 12:49; cf. Numbers 15:16), or to the "one law" of sure death for approaching the Persian king without invitation (Esther 4:11).

In the famous Shema of Deut. 6:4, "Hear, O Israel . . . the Lord is one," the question of diversity within unity has theological implications. Some scholars have felt that, though "one" is singular, the usage of the word allows for the doctrine of the Trinity. While it is true that this doctrine is foreshadowed in the OT, the verse concentrates on the fact that there is one God and that Israel owes its exclusive loyalty to him (Deut. 5:9; Deut. 6:5). The NT also is strictly monotheistic while at the same time teaching diversity within the unity (James 2:19; 1 Cor. 8:5-6).

[The lexical and syntactical difficulties of Deut. 6:4 can be seen in the many translations offered for it in the NIV. The option "the Lord is our God, the Lord alone" has in its favor both the broad context of the book and the immediate context. Deut. 6:4 serves as an introduction to motivate Israel to keep the command "to love (the Lord)" (Deut. 6:5). The notion that the Lord is Israel's only God suits this command admirably (cf. Song 6:8f). Moreover, these two notions, the Lord's unique relation to Israel and Israel's obligation to love him, are central to the concern of Moses' addresses in the book (cf. Deut. 5:9f.; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 10:14ff., Deut. 10:20f., Deut. 13:6; Deut. 30:20; Deut. 32:12). Finally Zechariah employs the text with this meaning and applies it universally with reference to the eschaton: "The Lord will be king over all the earth, in that day the Lord will be (the only) one, and His name (the only) one" (Zech. 14:9 NASB).



In Job 31:15 and Malachi 2:10 the word is used to denote that one and the same God created all men. The reference to the one Shepherd in Eccles. 12:11 probably indicates that God is the only source of wisdom. b.k.w.] ([Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

Echādh ("one") may be used as an adjective or as an adverb. It is also used in a variety of constructions. It may be used as an indefinite article, "a certain one," "a portion of a larger amount," "each," "few (in plurals)," "first," "one," plus a number of other usages.

There is a masculine form and a feminine form used adjectively. These forms normally follow the noun and agree in gender with the noun they modify.

In Genesis 27:38, 45 'echādh is used as an adjective, "one," to modify "day." In Exodus 12:49, it refers to "one law." Leviticus 4:27 speaks of "one" person.

This word is also used in adverbial expressions to indicate an indefinite period of time, eg. Ezra 10:13 "a work of a day or two." Other time expressions include "simultaneously," (Jer. 10:8) "daily," (1 Ki. 5:2) and "annually" (Exo. 30:10).

'echādh may be used as the subject of a sentence. Second Samuel 12:1 reads "The 'one' rich and the other ('one') poor." It can be used in a separative sense, e.g., "one of your brothers" Gen. 42:19.

In Gen. 40:5, "one night" means the same night. In Job 31:15, "... did not 'one' fashion us in the womb?" refers to the same fashioner. The "same" law appears in Num. 15:16 and Est. 4:11.

Ezekiel 37:17 says, "... and they shall become 'one' in thing hand," uses "one" to describe both Judah and Israel. In Judg. 20:8, the meaning of "all the people rose up as one" man means "together." In Exo. 24:3, the people rise "unanimously." In Isa. 65:25, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together...." "Together" in Hebrew is "as one."

In Gen. 11:1, the plural of "one" is used to say "few." The plural occasionally means a "few" days (e.g., Gen. 27:44). First Kings 4:19 reads, "... he was the "only" officer which was in the land."

'Echādh can mean "first." Genesis 2:11 "The name of the 'first' is Pison..." The "first" day appears in a number of date formulas (e.g., Gen. 8:13).

Compound idioms include: "one to another" (Job 41:8); "back and forth" (2 Ki. 4:35); "one after another" (Isa. 27:12); and "the one... the other" (Jer. 24:2).

Easily the most famous usage of the noun occurs in Deut. 6:4, as it is proclaimed in the Greek Shema, "Yahweh is one." ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

Echad - 712v - 151,450\*(1), 41,500\*(2), 61\*(1), 61,000\*(1), 621\*(2), 721\*(1), alike(1), all at once(1), alone(2), altogether(1), another(23), another into one(1), any(15), any one(2), any\*(1), anyone\*(1), apiece(1), certain(11), certain man(1), each(48), each one(4), each other(1), each\*(4), eleven\*(9), eleventh\*(4), every(1), everyone(1), few(3), first(38), forty-first\*(1), forty-one\*(4), numbered(1), once(14), once\*(4), one(586), one and on another(1), one and the other(2), one at the other(1), one can him who(1), one the other(1), one to another(1), one will to another(1), one another(4), one thing(2), one thing to another(1), one-tenth(1), one-tenth for each(1), only(2), other(27), other was one(1), outermost\*(1), same(25), same one(1), single(15), some(2), thirty-first\*(1), thirty-one\*(3), together(3), twenty-first\*(4), twenty-one\*(4), uniformly\*(2), unique(4), unison(1), unit(4), united(1), whom(1). Gen. 1:5; Gen. 1:9; Gen. 2:11; Gen. 2:21; Gen. 2:24; Gen. 3:22; Gen. 4:19; Gen. 8:5; Gen. 8:13; Gen. 10:25; Gen. 11:1; Gen. 11:6; Gen. 19:9; Gen. 21:15; Gen. 22:2; Gen. 26:10; Gen. 27:38; Gen. 27:44; Gen. 27:45; Gen. 29:20; Gen. 32:8; Gen. 32:22; Gen. 33:13; Gen. 34:16; Gen. 34:22; Gen. 37:9; Gen. 37:20; Gen. 40:5; Gen. 41:5; Gen. 41:11; Gen. 41:22; Gen. 41:25; Gen. 41:26; Gen. 42:11; Gen. 42:13; Gen. 42:16; Gen. 42:19; Gen. 42:27; Gen. 42:32; Gen. 42:33; Gen. 44:28; Gen. 48:22; Gen. 49:16; Exod. 1:15; Exod. 8:31; Exod. 9:6; Exod. 9:7; Exod. 10:19; Exod. 11:1; Exod. 12:18; Exod. 12:46; Exod. 12:49; Exod. 14:28; Exod. 16:22; Exod. 17:12; Exod. 18:3; Exod. 18:4; Exod. 23:29; Exod. 24:3; Exod. 25:12; Exod. 25:19; Exod. 25:32; Exod. 25:33; Exod. 25:36; Exod. 26:2; Exod. 26:3; Exod. 26:4; Exod. 26:5; Exod. 26:6; Exod. 26:8; Exod. 26:11; Exod. 26:16; Exod. 26:17; Exod. 26:19; Exod. 26:21; Exod. 26:24; Exod. 26:25; Exod. 26:26; Exod. 27:9; Exod. 28:10; Exod. 28:17; Exod. 29:1; Exod. 29:3; Exod. 29:15; Exod. 29:23; Exod. 29:39; Exod. 29:40; Exod. 30:10; Exod. 33:5; Exod. 36:9; Exod. 36:10; Exod. 36:11; Exod. 36:12; Exod. 36:13; Exod. 36:15; Exod. 36:18; Exod. 36:21; Exod. 36:22; Exod. 36:24; Exod. 36:26; Exod. 36:29; Exod. 36:30; Exod. 36:31; Exod. 37:3; Exod. 37:8; Exod. 37:18; Exod. 37:19; Exod. 37:22; Exod. 39:10; Exod. 40:2; Exod. 40:17; Lev. 4:2; Lev. 4:13; Lev. 4:22; Lev. 4:27; Lev. 5:4; Lev. 5:5; Lev. 5:7; Lev. 5:13; Lev. 5:17; Lev. 6:3; Lev. 6:7; Lev. 7:7; Lev. 7:14; Lev. 8:26; Lev. 12:8; Lev. 13:2; Lev. 14:5; Lev. 14:10; Lev. 14:12; Lev. 14:21; Lev. 14:22; Lev. 14:30; Lev. 14:31; Lev. 14:50; Lev. 15:15; Lev. 15:30; Lev. 16:5; Lev. 16:8; Lev. 16:34; Lev. 22:28; Lev. 23:19; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 24:5; Lev. 24:22; Lev. 25:48; Lev. 26:26; Num. 1:1; Num. 1:18; Num. 1:41; Num. 1:44; Num. 2:16; Num. 2:28; Num. 6:11; Num. 6:14; Num. 6:19; Num. 7:3; Num. 7:11; Num. 7:13; Num. 7:14; Num. 7:15; Num. 7:16; Num. 7:19; Num. 7:20; Num. 7:21; Num. 7:22; Num. 7:25; Num. 7:26; Num. 7:27; Num. 7:28; 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Num. 29:36; Num. 29:38; Num. 31:28; Num. 31:34; Num. 31:34; Num. 31:39; Num. 31:47; Num. 33:38; Num. 34:18; Num. 35:30; Num. 36:3; Num. 36:8; Deut. 1:2; Deut. 1:3; Deut. 1:23; Deut. 4:42; Deut. 6:4; Deut. 12:14; Deut. 13:12; Deut. 15:7; Deut. 16:5; Deut. 17:2; Deut. 17:6; Deut. 18:6; Deut. 19:5; Deut. 19:11; Deut. 19:15; Deut. 21:15; Deut. 23:16; Deut. 24:5; Deut. 25:5; Deut. 25:11; Deut. 28:7; Deut. 28:25; Deut. 28:55; Deut. 32:30; Jos. 3:12; Jos. 3:13; Jos. 3:16; Jos. 4:2; Jos. 4:4; Jos. 6:3; Jos. 6:11; Jos. 6:14; Jos. 9:2; Jos. 10:2; Jos. 10:42; Jos. 12:9; Jos. 12:10; Jos. 12:11; Jos. 12:12; Jos. 12:13; Jos. 12:14; Jos. 12:15; Jos. 12:16; Jos. 12:17; Jos. 12:18; Jos. 12:19; Jos. 12:20; Jos. 12:21; Jos. 12:22; Jos. 12:23; Jos. 12:24; Jos. 15:51; Jos. 17:14; Jos. 17:17; Jos. 20:4; Jos. 22:14; Jos. 22:20; Jos. 23:10; Jos. 23:14; Jdg. 4:16; Jdg. 6:16; Jdg. 8:18; Jdg. 9:2; Jdg. 9:5; Jdg. 9:18; Jdg. 9:37; Jdg. 9:53; Jdg. 13:2; Jdg. 15:4; Jdg. 16:7; Jdg. 16:11; Jdg. 16:13; Jdg. 16:28; Jdg. 16:29; Jdg. 17:5; Jdg. 17:11; Jdg. 18:19; Jdg. 19:13; Jdg. 20:1; Jdg. 20:8; Jdg. 20:11; Jdg. 20:31; Jdg. 21:3; Jdg. 21:6; Jdg. 21:8; Ruth 1:4; Ruth 2:13; 1 Sam. 1:1; 1 Sam. 1:2; 1 Sam. 1:24; 1 Sam. 1:24; 1 Sam. 2:36; 1 Sam. 6:4; 1 Sam. 6:17; 1 Sam. 9:3; 1 Sam. 10:3; 1 Sam. 11:7; 1 Sam. 13:17; 1 Sam. 13:18; 1 Sam. 14:4; 1 Sam. 14:5; 1 Sam. 14:40; 1 Sam. 16:18; 1 Sam. 17:36; 1 Sam. 22:20; 1 Sam. 24:14; 1 Sam. 25:14; 1 Sam. 26:8; 1 Sam. 26:15; 1 Sam. 26:20; 1 Sam. 26:22; 1 Sam. 27:1; 1 Sam. 27:5; 2 Sam. 1:15; 2 Sam. 2:1; 2 Sam. 2:18; 2 Sam. 2:21; 2 Sam. 2:25; 2 Sam. 3:13; 2 Sam. 4:2; 2 Sam. 6:19; 2 Sam. 6:20; 2 Sam. 7:2; 2 Sam. 7:23; 2 Sam. 9:11; 2 Sam. 12:1; 2 Sam. 12:3; 2 Sam. 13:13; 2 Sam. 13:30; 2 Sam. 14:6; 2 Sam. 14:27; 2 Sam. 15:2; 2 Sam. 17:9; 2 Sam. 17:12; 2 Sam. 17:22; 2 Sam. 18:10; 2 Sam. 19:14; 2 Sam. 23:8; 2 Sam. 24:12; 1 Ki. 2:16; 1 Ki. 2:20; 1 Ki. 3:17; 1 Ki. 3:25; 1 Ki. 4:7; 1 Ki. 4:19; 1 Ki. 4:22; 1 Ki. 6:24; 1 Ki. 6:25; 1 Ki. 6:26; 1 Ki. 6:27; 1 Ki. 6:34; 1 Ki. 6:38; 1 Ki. 7:15; 1 Ki. 7:16; 1 Ki. 7:17; 1 Ki. 7:18; 1 Ki. 7:27; 1 Ki. 7:30; 1 Ki. 7:34; 1 Ki. 7:37; 1 Ki. 7:38; 1 Ki. 7:42; 1 Ki. 7:44; 1 Ki. 8:56; 1 Ki. 10:14; 1 Ki. 10:16; 1 Ki. 10:17; 1 Ki. 10:22; 1 Ki. 11:13; 1 Ki. 11:32; 1 Ki. 11:36; 1 Ki. 12:29; 1 Ki. 12:30; 1 Ki. 14:21; 1 Ki. 15:10; 1 Ki. 16:23; 1 Ki. 18:6; 1 Ki. 18:23; 1 Ki. 18:25; 1 Ki. 19:2; 1 Ki. 20:29; 1 Ki.

20:35; 1 Ki. 22:8; 1 Ki. 22:13; 2 Ki. 2:16; 2 Ki. 3:11; 2 Ki. 4:1; 2 Ki. 4:22; 2 Ki. 4:35; 2 Ki. 4:39; 2 Ki. 6:3; 2 Ki. 6:5; 2 Ki. 6:10; 2 Ki. 6:12; 2 Ki. 7:8; 2 Ki. 7:13; 2 Ki. 8:6; 2 Ki. 8:26; 2 Ki. 9:1; 2 Ki. 9:29; 2 Ki. 14:23; 2 Ki. 15:20; 2 Ki. 17:27; 2 Ki. 17:28; 2 Ki. 18:24; 2 Ki. 22:1; 2 Ki. 23:36; 2 Ki. 24:18; 2 Ki. 25:16; 2 Ki. 25:17; 2 Ki. 25:19; 1 Chr. 1:19; 1 Chr. 11:11; 1 Chr. 12:38; 1 Chr. 17:6; 1 Chr. 17:21; 1 Chr. 21:10; 1 Chr. 23:11; 1 Chr. 24:6; 1 Chr. 24:17; 1 Chr. 25:28; 1 Chr. 27:1; 1 Chr. 29:1; 2 Chr. 3:11; 2 Chr. 3:17; 2 Chr. 4:13; 2 Chr. 4:15; 2 Chr. 5:13; 2 Chr. 9:13; 2 Chr. 9:15; 2 Chr. 9:16; 2 Chr. 9:21; 2 Chr. 12:13; 2 Chr. 16:13; 2 Chr. 18:7; 2 Chr. 18:12; 2 Chr. 22:2; 2 Chr. 28:6; 2 Chr. 29:17; 2 Chr. 30:12; 2 Chr. 32:12; 2 Chr. 34:1; 2 Chr. 36:5; 2 Chr. 36:11; 2 Chr. 36:22; Ezr. 1:1; Ezr. 2:26; Ezr. 2:64; Ezr. 3:1; Ezr. 3:6; Ezr. 3:9; Ezr. 6:20; Ezr. 7:9; Ezr. 10:13; Ezr. 10:16; Ezr. 10:17; Neh. 1:2; Neh. 4:17; Neh. 5:18; Neh. 7:30; Neh. 7:37; Neh. 7:66; Neh. 8:1; Neh. 8:2; Neh. 11:1; Est. 3:8; Est. 3:13; Est. 4:11; Est. 7:9; Est. 8:12; Job 2:10; Job 9:3; Job 9:22; Job 14:4; Job 23:13; Job 31:15; Job 33:14; Job 33:23; Job 40:5; Job 41:16; Job 42:11; Job 42:14; Ps. 14:3; Ps. 27:4; Ps. 34:20; Ps. 53:3; Ps. 62:11; Ps. 82:7; Ps. 89:35; Ps. 106:11; Ps. 139:16; Prov. 1:14; Prov. 28:18; Eccl. 2:14; Eccl. 3:19; Eccl. 3:20; Eccl. 4:8; Eccl. 4:9; Eccl. 4:10; Eccl. 4:11; Eccl. 4:12; Eccl. 6:6; Eccl. 7:27; Eccl. 7:28; Eccl. 9:2; Eccl. 9:3; Eccl. 9:18; Eccl. 11:6; Eccl. 12:11; Cant. 4:9; Cant. 6:9; Isa. 4:1; Isa. 5:10; Isa. 6:2; Isa. 6:6; Isa. 9:14; Isa. 10:17; Isa. 19:18; Isa. 23:15; Isa. 27:12; Isa. 30:17; Isa. 34:16; Isa. 36:9; Isa. 47:9; Isa. 51:2; Isa. 65:25; Isa. 66:8; Isa. 66:17; Jer. 3:14; Jer. 10:8; Jer. 24:2; Jer. 32:39; Jer. 35:2; Jer. 51:60; Jer. 52:1; Jer. 52:20; Jer. 52:21; Jer. 52:22; Jer. 52:25; Ezek. 1:6; Ezek. 1:15; Ezek. 1:16; Ezek. 4:9; Ezek. 7:5; Ezek. 9:2; Ezek. 10:9; Ezek. 10:10; Ezek. 10:14; Ezek. 10:21; Ezek. 11:19; Ezek. 16:5; Ezek. 17:7; Ezek. 18:10; Ezek. 19:3; Ezek. 19:5; Ezek. 21:19; Ezek. 23:2; Ezek. 23:13; Ezek. 26:1; Ezek. 29:17; Ezek. 30:20; Ezek. 31:1; Ezek. 32:1; Ezek. 33:2; Ezek. 33:24; Ezek. 33:30; Ezek. 34:23; Ezek. 37:16; Ezek. 37:17; Ezek. 37:19; Ezek. 37:22; Ezek. 37:24; Ezek. 40:5; Ezek. 40:6; Ezek. 40:7; Ezek. 40:8; Ezek. 40:10; Ezek. 40:12; Ezek. 40:26; Ezek. 40:42; Ezek. 40:43; Ezek. 40:44; Ezek. 40:49; Ezek. 41:11; Ezek. 41:24; Ezek. 42:4; Ezek. 43:13; Ezek. 43:14; Ezek. 45:7; Ezek. 45:11; Ezek. 45:15; Ezek. 45:18; Ezek. 46:17; Ezek. 46:22; Ezek. 48:1; Ezek. 48:2; Ezek. 48:3; Ezek. 48:4; Ezek. 48:5; Ezek. 48:6; Ezek. 48:7; Ezek. 48:8; Ezek. 48:23; Ezek. 48:24; Ezek. 48:25; Ezek. 48:26; Ezek. 48:27; Ezek. 48:31; Ezek. 48:32; Ezek. 48:33; Ezek. 48:34; Dan. 8:3; Dan. 8:9; Dan. 8:13; Dan. 9:1; Dan. 9:2; Dan. 9:27; Dan. 10:5; Dan. 10:13; Dan. 10:21; Dan. 11:1; Dan. 11:20; Dan. 11:27; Dan. 12:5; Hos. 1:11; Amos 4:7; Amos 4:8; Amos 6:9; Obad. 1:11; Jon. 3:4; Hag. 1:1; Hag. 2:1; Hag. 2:6; Zech. 3:9; Zech. 4:3; Zech. 8:21; Zech. 11:7; Zech. 11:8; Zech. 14:7; Zech. 14:9; Mal. 2:10; Mal. 2:15

## Related Resources:

- [What is the Shema? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that the LORD is one \(Deuteronomy 6:4\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who is the one true God? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How can Jesus be God if Deuteronomy 6:4 says that God is one? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Can monotheism be proven? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Deuteronomy 6:5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."**

- **You shall love.** Dt. 10:12; 11:13; 30:6. Mat. 22:37. Mar. 12:30, 33. Lu. 10:27. 1 Jn 5:3.
- **God with all your heart .** Dt 4:29. 2 Ki. 23:25. Mat. 10:37. Jn 14:20, 21. 2 Co. 5:14, 15
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

1 John 5:3+ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

Deuteronomy 10:12 "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to **fear** the LORD your God, to **walk** in all His ways and **love Him**, and to **serve** the LORD your God **with all your heart and with all your soul**,

Deuteronomy 11:13 "It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, **to love the LORD your God** and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.

Deuteronomy 30:6 "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, **to love the LORD your God** with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

Matthew 22:37 And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' "

Luke 10:27+ And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Zechariah 14:9+ And the LORD will be King over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be [*the only*] one, and **His Name** [*the only*] one.

## THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

**Coakley** - The faith statement of the Shema is followed up by the charge to love the LORD your God, implying complete devotion to

Him and not just emotional attraction. Moses' sense of love is to express loyalty to Him with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. The whole person is to express this loyal devotion to God. ([Moody Bible Commentary](#))

Israel was in covenant with Yahweh (Ex 24:3-12+) and like any wife in covenant with her husband, Israel was charged by the "preacher" (Moses) to wholeheartedly, unreservedly love her Husband who in this case was Jehovah (Jer 31:32+, Isa 54:5, Hosea 2:2).

**You shall love the LORD your God**- Notice all the personal pronouns (**you...your...your...your**). This love is not emotional but relational = "YOUR" God (see 1 Cor 13:4-8+) It is not a suggestion but an command which should should not be a burden (cf 1 Jn 5:3+), but one that is to be willingly, lovingly obeyed. **Love** involves a choice and Israel was to choose be in an intimate relationship with Jehovah and it follows that because of that relationship they were to to be faithful to Yahweh and keep His commandments.

- Play [Keith Green's song Lord I'm Gonna Love You](#)

**Keil** - The demand "with all the heart" excludes all half-heartedness (**ED: PRAY Ps 86:11** - NIV = "give me an undivided heart" NET = "Make me wholeheartedly committed to You."), all division of the heart in its love. The heart is mentioned first, as the seat of the emotions generally and of love in particular; then follows the soul (nephesh) as the centre of personality in man, to depict the love as pervading the entire self-consciousness; and to this is added, "with all the strength," sc., of body and soul. Loving the Lord with all the heart and soul and strength is placed at the head, as the spiritual principle from which the observance of the commandments was to flow (see also Deuteronomy 11:1; Deuteronomy 30:6) (**ED: IN OTHER WORDS OUR OBEDIENCE IS TO FLOW FROM LOVE OF AND FOR GOD [see this in Dt 30:16] AND A HEART DESIRE TO PLEASE HIM AND NOT FROM A LEGALISTIC MOTIVATION WHICH BLUNTS THE FLOW OF HIS GRACE AND SPIRIT**). ([Commentary](#))

**Kalland** on the various term of love in this passage - (It is) a gathering of terms to indicate the totality of a person's commitment of self in the purest and noblest intentions of trust and obedience toward God. The verse does not invite analysis into ideas of intellectual, emotional, and physical parts. The words behind heart, soul, and strength basically relate to what a person is or how a person directs himself toward another person....The covenant-treaty itself, based on the love of God for his people, required their love for the Lord in return. The teaching on God's love and the love of the people toward God and toward one another permeates the OT in such a manner that it cannot be limited by the use of words for love in the Near Eastern treaties. It is nevertheless true that this was treaty language and so to some degree adds to the meaning of love in Deuteronomy. It ties love tightly together with the sense of obedience and loyalty. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

The charge to love Jehovah is frequent in Deuteronomy - Dt 6:5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20).

The **Shema** was part of Jesus' answer to the question when

"One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" (Mk 12:28). Jesus answered ""The foremost is, 'HEAR ([present imperative](#)), O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD (present tense - continually) IS ONE LORD; 30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE ([agapao](#)) THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH **ALL YOUR HEART** ( [kardia](#)), AND WITH **ALL YOUR SOUL** ([psuche](#)), AND WITH **ALL YOUR MIND** ([dianoia](#)), AND WITH **ALL YOUR STRENGTH** ( [ischus](#)).' 31 (QUOTING Lev 19:18+) "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE ([agapao](#)) YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF:' There is no other commandment greater than these."(Mk 12:29-31+)

Keil - (Note: In quoting this commandment, Matthew (Matthew 22:37) has substituted δαίνοια, "thy mind," for "thy strength," as being of especial importance to spiritual love, whereas in the lxx the mind (δαίνοια) is substituted for the heart. Mark (Mark 12:30) gives the triad of Deuteronomy (heart, soul, and strength); but he has inserted "mind" (δαίνοια) before strength (ισχύς), whilst in Mark 12:33 the understanding (σύνεσις) is mentioned between the heart and the soul. Lastly, Luke has given the three ideas of the original passage quite correctly, but has added at the end, "and with all thy mind" (δαίνοια). Although the term δαίνοια (mind) originated with the Septuagint, not one of the Evangelists has adhered strictly to this version.)

**POSB** - Love God as *your* very own God. This is a personal relationship, not a distant relationship. God is not impersonal, far out in space someplace, distant and removed. God is personal, ever so close, and we are to be personally involved with God on a face-to-face basis. The command is to "*love the Lord thy God*." Loving God is alive and active, not dead and inactive. Therefore, we are to maintain a personal relationship with God that is alive and active.. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**Augustine** gave interesting advice when he said, "Love God, then do as you please." He was not giving license for loose living. Just the opposite. The parallel thought is found in Ps 37:4 "Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart."

When we truly love God, we desire to do what is pleasing to Him not what pleases our fallen flesh.

**Grant** - Obedience to the Law must be based on love for the Lord. It is the foundation on which obedience to the Law had to be built. Any other basis reduced the keeping of the terms of the covenant to mere submission to rules of conduct. The lesson is plain. Keeping the terms of the covenant was to be based on devotion, not mere duty. The same principle holds good today. The Lord Jesus stated that those who love Him will display this by keeping His commandments (Jn 14:21). ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**NET Note** - The verb אָהַב ('ahav, "to love") in this setting communicates not so much an emotional idea as one of covenant commitment. To love the LORD is to be absolutely loyal and obedient to him in every respect, a truth Jesus himself taught (cf. John 14:15). See also the note on the word "loved" in Deut 4:37.

**Maxwell** points out that "This exhortation to love God is found ten times in Deuteronomy and nowhere else in the Pentateuch....There's an old saying, "Be careful what you set your heart on for it might come true!" History surely proves this true. Thomas Edison fell in love with invention, Henry Ford fell in love with motor cars, Kettering fell in love with research, and the Wright brothers fell in love with airplanes. Their "hearts" controlled their time, energy, direction, and output. And look at the results! Love is the most powerful force in the world: want power (the heart) is the strongest impetus for will power (the head). I once read about seventy-eight-year-old Aleida Huissen of Rotterdam, who had been smoking for fifty years. For most of that time she had been trying to give up the habit, and at last she succeeded. The secret? Seventy-nine-year-old Leo Jansen proposed marriage but refused to go through with the wedding until Aleida gave up smoking. Aleida said, "Will power never was enough to get me off the habit. Love made me do it." When this great commandment is cradled in our hearts, it will be obvious in our conversations and actions. St. Augustine was asked, "What does love look like?" He replied, "It has hands to help others. It has feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see the misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sonnets of men. That is what love looks like." Place truth in the heart and it will spring forth outwardly. Truth cannot be taught until it is first received by the teacher. " ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**McIntosh** - God should be loved supremely, exclusively, and earnestly. (Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy)

**Utley on love** - It is characteristic of Deuteronomy to link obedience to YHWH's covenant as evidence of one's love for Him (cf. Dt 5:10; 6:5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1, 13; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20).

**Love** (Lxx = [agapao](#))([0157](#)) [ahab/ahab](#) means to love and can convey the idea of liking things (like bribes - Isa 1:23, wisdom - Pr 4:6, wine - Pr 21:17, peace and truth - Zech 8:19, food - Ge 27:4, 9, 14). The most important uses in the OT are as an expression of God's love of people (Dt 4:37, Hosea 3:1), man's love for God (Ex 20:6, Ps 116:1) and man's love for his fellow man (Ge 29:32, Ru 4:15-note, 1 Kings 11:1 = a forbidden love by backslidden King Solomon!!!) The first use of ahab in the OT is instructive as it is found in Ge 22:2 where Yahweh instructed his servant Abraham to ""Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." Notice that at the outset, we see that an inherent quality of this love (in many contexts) is that it is costly. God wants us to love Him above EVERYTHING, even our own flesh and blood.

**Ahab/ahab** in Deuteronomy - Deut. 4:37; Deut. 5:10; Deut. 6:5; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:13; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:15; Deut. 10:18; Deut. 10:19; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:13; Deut. 11:22; Deut. 13:3; Deut. 15:16; Deut. 19:9; Deut. 21:15; Deut. 21:16; Deut. 23:5; Deut. 30:6; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:20

**With all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might** - **All...all...all!** **All** means the utmost possible and thus speaks of a "all out" total commitment which is to be undivided and complete, lacking nothing! [HOLISTIC](#) holy love! It reminds me of the **Oswald Chambers'** devotional title "My Utmost for His Highest!" Holding nothing back! Do you (I) love God this way?

**Love** God with your entire being, love Him as your greatest Treasure! Jesus said "where your treasure is, there your **heart** will be also." (Mt 6:21+) Where is your treasure, in Heaven or on Earth? The former endures forever, while the latter is even now passing away (1 Jn 2:17+)! See [Vertical Vision](#).

A good summation of this wholehearted love is found in Psalm 103:1 which says

A Psalm of David. Bless the LORD, O my soul, **And all that is within me**, bless His holy name.

That is the idea of all...heart...soul...might. It is in effect with all that is in us as David declared. By the way, Psalm 103:1-5 is great to memorize so that you can frequently speak it out anywhere you are as a blessing to the Most High God.

**POSB** - The "**heart**" (lebab) is the inner part, the *inner man* of a person. The heart is the seat of man's affection and will (devotion). The heart attaches and focuses our will and devotion. The heart causes us to give either good things or bad things. The heart causes us to devote ourselves to either good or bad. Therefore, Christ says we are to love God "with all our heart." We are to focus

our heart, our affection, and our will (devotion) upon God. We are to love God supremely. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**NET Note on heart** - Heb “heart.” In OT physiology the heart (לֵב, לֵבָב; levav, lev) was considered the seat of the mind or intellect, so that one could think with one’s heart.

**NET Note on soul** - Heb “soul”; “being.” Contrary to Hellenistic ideas of a soul that is discrete and separate from the body and spirit, OT anthropology equated the “soul” (נֶפֶשׁ, nefesh) with the person himself. It is therefore best in most cases to translate נֶפֶשׁ (nefesh) as “being” or the like. See H. W. Wolff, Anthropology of the Old Testament, 10–25; D. Fredericks, NIDOTTE 3:133–34.

**Heart and soul in Deuteronomy** - Dt 4:9 Dt 4:29 Dt 6:5 Dt 10:12 Dt 11:13 Dt 11:18 Dt 13:3 Dt 26:16 Dt 28:65  
Dt 30:2 Dt 30:6 Dt 30:10

**Utley on heart...soul...might** - The terms “heart” and “soul” are often used together to show the complete person (cf. Dt 4:29; 10:12; 11:13; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10). The term “soul” describes the life-force (i.e., breath) in both humans and animals (e.g., Gen. 1:20–30; 2:7, 19; 7:22; Job 34:14–15; Ps. 104:29, 30; 146:4; Eccl. 3:19–21). Here it refers to passionate desire. These three terms “heart,” “soul,” “might,” represent the complete person and is, therefore, parallel to the phrase, “with a whole heart.” Notice the PREPOSITION “all” is repeated three times for emphasis. We would all do well to emulate the example of godly King Josiah of whom it was said “Before him there was no king like him who turned to the LORD **with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might**, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.” (2 Ki 23:25).

**Heart** (03824)(**lebab**) sometimes refers to a literal heart (Ex 28:29, 1Sa 25:37, 2Ki 9:24), but most often is used figurative to refer to what I term the “control center” of our being. Think of an Air Traffic Controller and how dysfunctional, even destructive it is when the controllers fail to function as they should. Just as a healthy human heart is at the center of the body and absolutely essential for physical life and health, so too a healthy spiritual heart (intellect, emotion, will) is at the center of one’s inner being (soul) and is vital for a healthy soul, serving as the “fountain” of all moral attitudes and actions. Our spiritual heart thus controls out **actions** and our actions determine our **habits**, which in turn determine our **character**. When God measures the “worth” of a man’s life He puts the measuring tape around his heart, not around his head. Be a man after God’s Own heart (Acts 13:22) We must continually “post a guard” at the doorway of our heart, so that every avenue for sin’s entry is blocked. In Hebrew Scripture, one *thinks* with the heart: “Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor... says the Lord” (Zech. 8:17NKJV)

**Lebab in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 1:28; Deut. 2:30; Deut. 4:9; Deut. 4:29; Deut. 4:39; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:5; Deut. 6:6; Deut. 7:17; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:5; Deut. 8:14; Deut. 8:17; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:16; Deut. 11:13; Deut. 11:16; Deut. 11:18; Deut. 13:3; Deut. 15:7; Deut. 15:9; Deut. 15:10; Deut. 17:17; Deut. 17:20; Deut. 18:21; Deut. 19:6; Deut. 20:3; Deut. 20:8; Deut. 26:16; Deut. 28:28; Deut. 28:47; Deut. 28:67; Deut. 29:18; Deut. 30:1; Deut. 30:2; Deut. 30:6; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:14; Deut. 30:17; Deut. 32:46

**POSB on soul** - The “soul” (nephesh) is the seat of man’s breath and life or consciousness. The soul is the life of a man, the consciousness, the breath, the essence, the being of a man. The soul is the animal life of a man. The soul is the breath and consciousness that distinguishes man and other animals from vegetation. The world of vegetation lives and man and animals live, but there is a difference in their living. Man and animals are breathing and conscious beings. The essence of their being is breath and consciousness. They are living souls. This is clearly pointed out in the Hebrew language of Genesis 1:20: “Let the waters bring forth abundantly ‘living souls’ [nephesh] that hath life.” The “living souls” that God created were different from the vegetation He had just created. The “living souls” were creatures (fish) that breathed and possessed consciousness. Christ said we are to love God “with all our soul,” that is, with all our life, our breath, our consciousness. We are to love God with all the breath and consciousness, all the life and awareness we have. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

The word **might** is somewhat difficult to define but speaks less of one’s physical power and more about one’s intensity to love God. Do it with vigor and earnestness. **Might** means abundance (cf. 2 Ki. 23:25) and speaks of activity which is done “exceedingly” (literally “very, very much”) and thus describes doing it with the totality of one’s being and energy.

**Kalland** has an interesting somewhat technical note on the terms used to describe Israel’s love (heart, soul, might) and how these were quoted somewhat differently in the New Testament in the three places the Deuteronomy passage was quoted - The quotations of Dt 6:5 in the NT vary: Mt 22:37 has kardia “heart”, psyche “soul”, and dianoia “mind”. Mark 12:30 has the same series but adds ischyos “strength”. Luke 10:27, on the other hand, follows the order: kardia, psyche, ischy, dianoia --the last two words being a [conflate](#) (bringing together, fusing of the) rendering of the Hebrew מְעוֹד (**meod** “strength”). The Talmud (Sanhedrin 74a et al.) translates the last phrase: “and with all your money.” ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))



**John Maxwell** ([Preacher's Commentary](#)) - A number of years ago I read the following:

The sign said honk if you love Jesus; so I honked, and a policeman arrested me for disturbing the peace in a quiet hospital zone.  
The sign said smile if you love Jesus;  
so I smiled all day long,  
And people thought I was a staff worker  
for Jimmy Carter.  
The sign said wave if you love Jesus;  
so I waved with both hands,  
And lost control of my car,  
And crashed into the back of a Baptist bus.  
Oh God—  
If I cannot honk,  
or smile,  
or wave,  
How will Jesus know that I love him?  
Deuteronomy 6:5 gives us the answer.

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**Might** (03966) (meod/Me'ōdh) It is used mainly as an adverb = very, much, greatly, exceedingly, thoroughly (see the way it is translated below) A substantive, adverb, or adjective in function, very, greatly, great, abundance; might, power. It is used as a noun indicating might, power, will (Deut. 6:3; 2 Ki. 23:25).

Occurring about 300 times in the OT, m e'ōdh has cognates in Ugaritic and Akkadian, and is also attested in Middle Hebrew and the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is used twice as a substantive for "strength" or "power" (Deut. 6:5; 2 Ki. 23:25). However, **it is usually used as an adverb.** (and means "very" - Ge 1:31) Me'ōdh occurs in many combinations with adjectives and verbs to communicate the idea of "**exceeding**," thereby showing **an intensification of the word modified** (1 Sa 20:19; Obad. 2; Ps. 31:11; 46:1; 139:14). God called his creation "**exceedingly**" good (Gen. 1:31). Cain became "**very**" angry because God rejected his offering (Gen. 4:5). Me'ōdh also designates "**very great**" sinners (Gen. 13:13); waters that prevailed "**exceedingly**" (Gen. 7:18f); the "**very**" deep thoughts of God (Ps. 92:5); "**great**" strife (Jdg. 12:2); "**great**" favor (1 Kings 11:19); a "**great**" number of utensils for the Temple (1 Kings 7:47); "**great**" fear (2 Ki. 10:4); a "**great**" reward for Abraham (Gen. 15:1); an "**exceedingly great**" number of descendants for Abraham (Gen. 17:2); the "**exceeding**" anger of God (Lam. 5:22); and a "**very**" great fire (2 Chr. 16:14). The psalmist said that God is "highly" exalted (Ps. 47:9) and pleaded that truth not be taken "utterly" out of his mouth (Ps. 119:43). This word also gives the idea of something happening "to a great degree" (Gen. 27:33f; 1 Sam. 11:15; 2 Sam. 2:17). M e'ōdh can be repeated literally meaning "with much," "much" (Gen. 17:2, 6, 20; Exo. 1:7; Ezek. 9:9). This provides additional emphasis. (CBL)

#### W E Vine - Meod -

"exceedingly; very; greatly; highly." This word occurs about 300 times and in all periods of biblical Hebrew. A verb with a similar basic semantic range appears in Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Arabic. Me'ōd functions adverbially, meaning "very." The more superlative emphasis appears in Ge. 7:18, where the word is applied to the "amount (quantity)" of a thing: "And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth..." In Ps. 47:9, me'ōd is used of "magnifying" and "exaltation": "... For the shields of the earth belong unto God; he is greatly exalted." The doubling of the word is a means of emphasizing its basic meaning, which is "very much": "And the waters prevailed exceedingly (nasb, "more and more") upon the earth ..." (Ge 7:19).

#### Walter Kaiser - Meod -

This term is used three hundred times in the OT, mainly as an adverb. Infrequently, it is used as a substantive, e.g. Deut 6:5, "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with your whole strength." Thus it was said of King Josiah, the likes of whom Israel had never seen before, that he turned to the Lord with his whole heart, soul, and strength, according to the whole law of Moses (II Kgs 23:25). It is found in many combinations, all expressing the idea of exceeding (e.g. Gen 1:31, in which the Creator calls his creation exceeding good) or very greatly (e.g. Ex 1:7, where this term is used twice in describing the prolificacy of the Israelites under the hand of God). McBride observed: "The three parts of Deut 6:5: lēbāb (heart), nepeš (soul or life), and me'ōd (muchness) rather than signifying different spheres of Biblical



psychology seem to be semantically concentric. They were chosen to reinforce the absolute singularity of personal devotion to God. Thus *lēbāb* denotes the intention or will of the whole man; *nepeš* means the whole self, a unity of flesh, will, and vitality; and *mē'ōd* accents the superlative degree of total commitment to Yahweh." (See bibliography.) The NT struggles to express the depth of the word *mē'ōd* at this spot. In the quotation in Mk 12:30 it is rendered "mind and strength," in Lk 10:27 it is "strength and mind," in Mt 22:37 simply "mind." (TWOT)

**Meod** - about 300x in 273v - abundantly(1), all(1), almost(1), badly(3), carefully(1), closely(1), diligent(1), diligently(3), enough(1), especially(1), exceeding(1), **exceedingly**(14), exceedingly\*(3), excessive(1), extremely\*(1), far(1), firmly(1), fully(1), **great**(16), great abundance(1), **greatly**(52), greatly\*(1), hard(1), harder\*(1), highly(4), immense(1), louder(1), measure(2), might(2), more(2), more\*(1), most(1), much\*(1), quickly(1), richly(1), serious\*(1), severely(1), so(2), so much(1), sorely(1), strongly(1), swiftly(1), too(2), utterly(1), utterly\*(3), **very**(139), very well(1), very\*(2), violently(1), violently\*(1), well(2).

Gen. 1:31; 4:5; 7:18-19; 12:14; 13:2,13; 15:1; 17:2,6,20; 18:20; 19:3,9; 20:8; 21:11; 24:16,35; 26:13,16; 27:33-34; 30:43; 32:7; 34:7,12; 41:19,31,49; 47:13,27; 50:9-10; Exod. 1:7,20; 9:3,18,24; 10:14,19; 11:3; 12:38; 14:10; 19:16,18-19; Num. 11:10,33; 12:3; 13:28; 14:7,39; 16:15; 22:3,17; 32:1; Deut. 2:4; 3:5; 4:9,15; 6:3,5; 9:20; 17:17; 20:15; 24:8; 28:54; 30:14; Jos. 1:7; 3:16; 8:4; 9:9,13,22,24; 10:2,20; 11:4; 13:1; 22:5,8; 23:6,11; Jdg. 2:15; 3:17; 6:6; 10:9; 11:33; 12:2; 13:6; 15:18; 18:9; 19:11; Ruth 1:13,20; 1 Sam. 2:17,22; 4:10; 5:9,11; 11:6,15; 12:18; 14:20,31; 16:21; 17:11,24; 18:8,15,30; 19:1,4; 20:19; 21:12; 25:2,15,36; 26:21; 28:5,15,20; 30:6; 31:3-4; 2 Sam. 1:26; 2:17; 3:8; 8:8; 10:5; 11:2; 12:2,5,30; 13:3,15,21,36; 14:25; 18:17; 19:32; 24:10,14; 1 Ki. 1:4,6,15; 2:12; 4:29; 5:7; 7:47; 10:2,10-11; 11:19; 17:17; 18:3; 21:26; 2 Ki. 10:4; 14:26; 17:18; 21:16; 23:25; 1 Chr. 10:4; 16:25; 18:8; 19:5; 20:2; 21:8,13; 2 Chr. 4:18; 7:8; 9:1,9; 11:12; 14:13; 16:8,14; 24:24; 30:13; 32:27,29; 33:12,14; 35:23; Ezr. 10:1; Neh. 2:2; 4:7; 5:6; 13:8; Est. 1:12; 4:4; Job 1:3; 2:13; 8:7; 35:15; Ps. 6:3,10; 21:1; 31:11; 38:6,8; 46:1; 47:9; 48:1; 50:3; 78:29,59; 79:8; 92:5; 93:5; 96:4; 97:9; 104:1; 105:24; 107:38; 109:30; 112:1; 116:10; 119:4,8,43,51,96,107,138,140,167; 139:14; 142:6; 145:3; Isa. 16:6; 31:1; 47:6,9; 52:13; 56:12; 64:9,12; Jer. 2:10,12,36; 9:19; 14:17; 18:13; 20:11; 24:2-3; 40:12; 48:16,29; 50:12; Lam. 5:22; Ezek. 9:9; 16:13; 20:13; 27:25; 37:2,10; 40:2; 47:7,9-10; Dan. 8:8; 11:25; Joel 2:11; Obad. 1:2; Nah. 2:1; Zeph. 1:14; Zech. 9:2,5,9; 14:4,14

## Deuteronomy 6:6 "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart."

- **shall be:** De 11:18 32:46 Ps 37:31 40:8 Ps 119:11,98 Pr 2:10,11 3:1-3,5 7:3 Isa 51:7 Jer 31:33 Lu 2:51 8:15 2Co 3:3 Col 3:16 2Jn 1:2
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 11:18-20+ "You shall therefore impress these words of mine **on your heart and on your soul;** (DON'T JUST MEMORIZE THEM, BUT LET THEM ORDER YOUR STEPS) and you shall **bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.** 19 "You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. 20 "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,

## THE WORD OF GOD ON THE HEART OF MEN

The previous verse was about loving God and this verse is about remembering God and His commandments. The default mode of our fallen flesh is to forget God.

**THOUGHT** - How many times have you become so busy in the middle of the day that there is not even one second of thinking about Jehovah, the Lover and Redeemer of your soul? Do you listen to Him each day (in His Word). Do you with Him each day as if He were your best Friend (because He is)?

**These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart-** God's Words on one's heart will or should dictate one's behavior. Note he does not say the words were to be in their heads but on their heart. Head knowledge without a willingness to submit in one's heart is sheer hypocrisy and describes perfectly the Pharisees who knew the word in their head but hated Jesus, the divine manifestation of that Word (cf Jn 1:1+, Jn 1:14+, Rev 19:13+)! The **heart** is the "control center" of our being and is where God's Words need to be located for quick access and to allow the Spirit to bring them to our mind in times of temptations or trials. Clearly the best way to obey this instruction is to memorize God's Word. The classic passage Psalm 119:11 says "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee." Clearly when the Word is internalized in one's heart, it is available for guiding one's heart to provide a protection from sinning against God. Closely linked with [Memorization](#) is [Meditation](#) so that one is able to "chew on" a passage when it has been hidden in his heart.

This passage recalls Jehovah's words to Joshua 1:8+ "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."

In the context of the preceding passages that call for Israel's obedience to the Word of God, clearly when God's Word is on one's

heart, it will be far more like to guide one's steps and keep one from turning to the right or left.

In the New Covenant God's laws will be written on the hearts...

"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, **"I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it;** and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. (Jer 31:33+)

**Utley on on your heart** - The **heart**, in Hebrew, signifies the directing focus of an individual's life. The emphasis in the OT was also meant to be internal faithfulness, as in the NT (cf. Deut. 4:29; 6:5, 6; 10:12; 11:13, 18; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10; NT, "with all your mind," Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27). We sometimes make a false distinction between the Old Covenant being an external law and the New Covenant being internal faith. We probably get this fallacy from Jer. 31:31–34, which emphasizes "a new heart." However, even in the OT, the individual believer was expected to direct his entire person, actions and motives toward the Lord his God.

**John Trapp** - A Bible man should get stamped in their heads, and another in their hearts, as David had. {Psa 119:11} Knowledge that swims in the head only, and sinks not down into the heart, does no more good than rain in the middle region doth; or than the unicorn's horn in the unicorn's head.

Well known Bible teacher **Dr. Chuck Swindoll** has written:

I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture...No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified. (from [Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [Meditate](#)
- [Primer on Biblical Meditation](#)
- [Memorizing His Word](#)
- [Memory Verses by Topic](#)

**Deuteronomy 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.**

- **And thou shalt:** De 6:2 4:9,10 11:19 Ge 18:19 Ex 12:26,27 13:14,15 Ps 78:4-6 Eph 6:4
- **talk:** Ru 2:4,12 Ru 4:11 Ps 37:30 Ps 40:9,10 Ps 119:46 Ps 129:8 Pr 6:22 10:21 Pr 15:2,7 Mal 3:16 Mt 12:35 Lu 6:45 Eph 4:29 Col 4:6 1Pe 3:15
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 11:19+ "You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up.

### "DRILL HOME" THE DIVINE TEACHING

**You shall teach them diligently to your sons** - NLT = Repeat them again and again to your children." NRSV = "Recite them to your children." NAB = Drill them into your children." NIV = "Impress them upon your children." God's Word is to be passed down generationally. Here **teach diligently** is in the Piel stem, the intensive stem, and so means to be "teach incisively" drilling it home (so to speak)! **Baker** says "The idea here is that just as words are cut into a stone tablet with a sharp object, so the Law should be impressed on the hearts of the children of every generation." (Complete Word Study Dictionary) Children are born rebels who must be sharpened to be willing instruments for God. The **Septuagint** uses the verb **probibazo** which means to cause to come forward and figuratively (as here) to prompt, urge on or incite.

**POSB** - The commandments are not automatically taught to children. Educating children is an absolute necessity. And note: education is not just teaching facts and principles, not just passing along information. Teaching is experiencing the truth personally,

living out the truth before the children. It is applying the truth of the commandments to one's heart and experiencing the truths within one's own life. The children then see the truth of the commandments lived before their very eyes, and they absorb the truth, pick it up automatically. The truth becomes a part of their lives. This is exactly what Moses was preaching: the believer was constantly to talk about the commandments when he sat at home, when he walked along the road throughout the day, when he laid down, and when he got up. The whole thrust is that he was to live by the commandments, experience them, obey them, and set the dynamic example before his children. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**NET Note on teach diligently** - Heb "repeat" (so NLT). If from the root  $\text{לָּפַד}$  (shanan), the verb means essentially to "engrave," that is, "to teach incisively" (Piel).

**Merrill** writes, "The image is that of the engraver of a monument who takes hammer and chisel in hand and with painstaking care etches the text into the face of a solid slab of granite. The sheer labour of such a task is daunting indeed, but once done the message is there to stay. Thus it is that the generations of Israelites to come must receive and transmit the words of the Lord's everlasting covenant revelation" ([New American Commentary - Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**John Trapp** - Heb., Thou shalt whet or sharpen them, as one would sharpen a stake when he drives it into the ground: or as one would set an edge upon a knife, by oft going over the whetstone. A learned Hebrician observes a near affinity between the word here used and another word that signifies to repeat, and inculcate the same thing.

**Maxwell** - This commandment is not automatically transferred from one generation to another. Deuteronomy attaches the importance and responsibility of teaching to the family (Dt 4:9; 6:7, 20–25; 11:19). This educating must be done in a diligent manner. The home is to be the center for conserving and propagating truth. Home is where life makes up its mind. Moses understood that the greatness of the nation Israel depended upon the teaching of the commandments in the home. As a nation, we need desperately to apply this truth ourselves. A man who had served as a chaplain for many years at a state penitentiary said, "Out of seventeen hundred convicts, I found only one who had been brought up in a home where they had a family altar, and that man was later found innocent of the crime with which he had been charged." Socrates asked, "Fellow citizens, why do you turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth and take so little care of your children to whom one day you must relinquish it all?" The instruction from the parents to the children was not to be a "lesson," but a continual way of life. Truth was to be communicated when they sat, as they walked, after they lay down at night, and when they arose in the morning (v. 7). A variety of methods is given to help parents saturate their children with these important commandments. They were to experience them (v. 6); talk about them (v. 7); exhibit them (v. 8); write them (v. 9); and, most importantly, model them. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Utley** - The VERB (**shanan** Piel PERFECT) means "to sharpen" and in Piel this is the only usage. The term in Ugaritic means "to repeat." That seems to be the basic emphasis of this verse. The rabbis use this verse to assert that the Shema should be "repeated" morning and evening. We are to talk about God's will for our lives during the entire scope of daily activities. It is the responsibility of parents to pass on lifestyle faith (cf. Deut. 4:9; 6:20–25; 11:19; 32:46, see full note at 4:9). It is interesting that the flow of these different times for teaching falls into the same literary pattern as Ps. 139:2–6 and Prov. 6:20–22. This emphasis on parental responsibility is repeated in Prov. 22:6. Our modern day church school cannot take the place of parental training but it surely can supplement it!

**Teach diligently** ([08150](#))(**shanan**) means to sharpen, to point; to pierce; figurative to inculcate. "Sharpen My flashing sword" of divine judgment (Dt 32:41) Sharp arrows (Ps 45:5, Isa 5:28). "Sharp" words meant to hurt (Ps 64:3, Ps 140:3). Evildoers in Ps 64:3] are depicted as sharpening their tongues like a sword in preparation for attacking the innocent. Shānan is always employed metaphorically in the OT as a figure for judgment, Yahweh's defense of his people, sharp or insulting words or deep emotion. Impending judgment lay ahead because of Israel's apostasy. A nation from afar would be God's instrument: "whose arrows are sharp" (Isa. 5:28). Foremost, God was an advocate for his people. No god exists who is like Yahweh. None can stand before Him. He will "sharpen [his] flashing sword... and [his] hand grasps it in judgment" (Dt. 32:41NIV). The righteous king stands with God; his "arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies" (Ps. 45:5RSV). Overwhelmed by enemies, the psalmist's appeal to the Lord is answered with the "sharp arrows of the mighty" (Ps 120:4). The words of many adversaries are hurtful, "who whet their tongue like a sword" (Ps. 64:3). Evil men "sharpened their tongues like a serpent" (Ps 140:3). A false witness's words are like a "sharp arrow" (Pr. 25:18). Crushed by the guilt of his sin (literally "pierced in my kidneys," Ps. 73:21), the psalmist took comfort in God's abiding presence and faithfulness. The Hithpolel stem expresses the intense inner emotion of a righteous man. In Ps 73:21 it means figuratively to be pierced or wounded.

**Shanan** - 9v - pierced(1), sharp(4), sharpen(2), sharpened(1), teach them diligently(1). Deut. 6:7; Deut. 32:41; Ps. 45:5; Ps. 64:3; Ps. 73:21; Ps. 120:4; Ps. 140:3; Pr 25:18; Isa. 5:28

## GOD'S WORD - ALL PLACES, ALL TIMES

**And shall talk of them when you sit in your house**- So all the members of the house "eat" and "assimilate" the Word. One gets the picture of setting the dinner table with a "feast" of the pure milk (1 Pe 2:2) and meat (Heb 5:14KJV) of the Word of God!

- Play [Steve Green's Find Us Faithful](#)

**And when you walk by the way**- NAB "abroad." In everyday actions. In other words, everywhere. What better thing to talk about than the inspired Words from our Creator! The Word of God in the mind and heart is like a guide who leads us on the safe path and protects us from attacks. It's also like a friend who talks to us and counsels us along the way

**And when you lie down and when you rise up** - NAB = "Whether you are busy or at rest." Evening and morning. All the time.

**Solomon** alludes to this practice in Proverbs writing

My son, observe the commandment of your father And do not forsake the teaching of your mother; 21 Bind them continually on your heart (MEMORIZE!); Tie them around your neck. 22 **When you walk about, they will guide you; When you sleep, they will watch over you; And when you awake, they will talk to you.** (Pr 6:20-22 +)

**Deuteronomy 6:8 "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.**

- De 11:18 Ex 13:9,16 Nu 15:38,39 Pr 3:3 6:21 7:3 Mt 23:5 Heb 2:1
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Exodus 13:9 "And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt.

Exodus 13:16 "So it shall serve as a sign on your hand and as **phylacteries on your forehead**, for with a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

Deuteronomy 11:18-20+ "You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and **you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.**



### Phylactery on Forehead

**You shall bind them as a sign on your hand** - **NET Note** - Tie them as a sign on your forearm. Our hand is what we usually use to do things, so the idea would seem to be let God's words order your actions. Later Jewish tradition referred to the little leather containers tied to the forearms and foreheads as [tefillin](#). They were to contain the following passages from the Torah: Exod 13:1–10, 11–16; Deut 6:5–9; 11:13–21. The purpose was to serve as a "sign" of covenant relationship and obedience.

Note that it is far more important to put God's words on one's heart (Ps 119:11) than to put them in a box on one's hand or forehead or in a [mezuzah](#) on one's doorpost. These external effects are potentially pompous, pretentious and useless if they are not in the heart affecting the thinking, the will, the words and actions. Jesus emphasized the hypocrisy of phylacteries when He declared "But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they **broaden their phylacteries** and lengthen the tassels of their garments. (Mt 23:5)

**THOUGHT** - It is easy to exalt the externals of religion while paying little attention to the condition of our heart!

We all want others to be impressed with our spirituality, our "religion." James warned "If anyone thinks himself to be **religious**, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. **Pure and undefiled religion** in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.." (James 1:26-27+) We need to be reminded of Yahweh's words to Samuel in 1 Sa 16:7 "the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for **God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.**" So the take home message is **Watch** over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life." (Pr 4:23+).

**Utley** - Originally this phrase seems to be used as a metaphor (cf. LXX). The context is lifestyle teaching opportunities for God's word. However, the rabbis took this verse very literally and they began to wrap a leather strap around their left hand with a small box (tefillin) attached which contained selected Scriptures from the Torah. The same kind of box was also strapped to their forehead. These "phylacteries" or "frontals" (BDB 377) are also mentioned in Dt. 11:18+ and Mt. 23:5.

**Kalland** - Since in Exodus 13:9-16 the consecration of the firstborn is said to be "like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that the law of the Lord is to be on your lips" (Exod 13:9), it would seem that here also (Dt 6:8-9) the tying of these words as symbols on their hands and binding them on their foreheads and writing them on their doorframes and gateposts should be taken metaphorically or spiritually rather than physically. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**and they shall be as frontals on your forehead** - **Frontals** is [toptaphoth](#) (only in Ex 13:16, Dt 6:8, 11:16) and is also known as [phylacteries](#). While Jews interpret this literally, it is better interpreted spiritually. God does not look at our frontals but on our footsteps. The danger of frontals is they become ritual and/or formality but without internal or heart change. And they easily can be a source of pride - "Look how spiritual I am. I have a little box with Scriptures on my forehead." Pride and hypocrisy can easily be the result of taking these instructions literally.

**NET Note** - The Gemara interprets it as a band that goes from ear to ear. In the Targum to 2 Sam 1:10 it is an armlet worn by Saul. Fasten them as symbols on your forehead. These were also known later as tefillin (see previous note) or phylacteries (from the Greek term). These box-like containers, like those on the forearms, held the same scraps of the Torah. It was the hypocritical practice of wearing these without heartfelt sincerity that caused Jesus to speak scathingly about them (cf. Mt 23:5).

**Phylacteries** (frontlets) ([02903](#)) [toptaphoth](#) is used only in Ex 13:16, Dt 6:8 and Dt 11:18. The **toptaphoth** was a band, a sign or a mark that was placed on the forehead, "between the eyes" and was to serve as a reminder in Ex 13:16 and the dedication of the firstborn. In Dt. 6:8 and Dt 11:18 the phylacteries were to serve as reminders of the Lord's commandments. The instruction was to bind the phylactery between one's eyes and bind the Lord's command to one's hand as a symbol of the Law's involvement in every part of life of a Hebrew, including his actions (binding on hands), and his thoughts (binding on head). This symbol was to be a perpetual reminder but was taken literally by the Jews who began to wear real leather boxes on their arms and foreheads that contained portions of the Law. Jesus condemned those who made their phylacteries larger than usual in an attempt to appear more pious to others (Mt. 23:5). The wearing of phylacteries has continued as a practice among orthodox Jews to this day (especially with the [Shema](#) of Deut. 6:4). **TWOT** adds this note - A common means of identifying slaves in the ancient near east was to mark their hands and/or their foreheads. Perhaps these "frontlets" were marking Israelites as the Lord's servants who were to be identified by allowing the Law to permeate their thoughts and actions. The literal "marking" (whatever the form) had its primary sense in the figurative equation with God's commandments as the "frontlets"—the statutes of the feast of unleavened bread (Exodus 13:1-10), the regulations of the firstborn (Exodus 13:11-16), and the overall stipulations of the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 6:8; Deut. 11:18). These "frontlets" were to be "memorials" on the forehead (cf. the substitution of zikkārôn for ʔôṭâpôt in Exodus 13:9), reminding the Israelite to think upon the commandments of the Lord and to keep them. Later Jewry took these "frontlets" in a literal ostentatious way and were rebuked by Jesus (Matthew 23:5). They tied little boxes on their foreheads and wrists and placed scripture verses in them as a reminder. One of these phylacteries was found in the caves of Qumran. (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

**Kaiser on phylacteries** - Rawlinson (1:300) believes that Moses borrowed and reinterpreted the Egyptian practice of wearing as amulets "forms of words written on folds of papyrus tightly rolled up and sewn in linen." (EBC)

**Related Resource:**

- [What are phylacteries? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Mezuzah](#)

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**Question** - [How could the laws of God be written on door frames, gates, and foreheads?](#)

**Answer** - In Deuteronomy 6:8–9 the Lord speaks of His laws, saying, “Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” A related passage says, “Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates” (Deuteronomy 11:18–20). *Write them on the doorframes, tie them on your hands, and bind them on your foreheads.* Were the Jewish people to take these commands literally?

**Doors and Gates:** The Jewish tradition of placing a [mezuzah](#) on the doorpost is based on this passage of Scripture. The *mezuzah* (the Hebrew word for “doorpost”) is a small piece of parchment usually containing this line from Deuteronomy 6:4: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.” An extra-biblical Jewish tradition requires that these words be written by an approved Jewish scribe called a *sofer stam*. The parchment is folded or rolled, placed in a small case, and attached to the right side of the doorway of a home at shoulder height. Tradition dictates that it be placed within 30 days of moving into a new home.

**Foreheads/Hands:** Since ancient times, Jews have practiced the tradition of using [phylacteries](#) (also called “tefillin”). Phylacteries are small leather boxes that contain portions of the Law of Moses. The boxes are strapped to the wrist and to a sort of headband so that one literally carries the laws of God over his eyes and on his hands. Jesus mentions this practice in Matthew 23:5: “They make their phylacteries wide.”

Despite the literal application of these verses by traditional Jews, many Old Testament scholars believe the commands were meant to be figurative. Exodus 13:9 and Ex 13:16 also suggest God was using figurative language to emphasize the importance of obeying His laws. Later prophets argued that the emphasis of the Law was on matters of the heart rather than external ritual. Micah, for example, noted, “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

In summary, many Jews have taken the concept of putting God’s laws on doors, hands, and head literally, yet the emphasis in these passages is on the importance of the Law. The Law of the Lord is perfect, according to Psalm 19:7. Psalm 1 emphasizes the importance of meditating upon God’s Word both day and night. We should never forget it; it should be a part of our daily lives. The Word belongs in our hearts, not just on our foreheads. (Got Question)

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**Deuteronomy 6:9 "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."**

- De 11:20 Ex 12:7 Job 19:23-25 Isa 30:8 57:8 Hab 2:2
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:**

Deuteronomy 11:20+ “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,

Exodus 12:7+ “Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

**MEZUZAH ON THE DOORPOSTS**

**You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates-** They did not even have doorposts at this time as they were still in tents!

The modern [mezuzah](#) consists of “a piece of parchment called a klaf contained in a decorative case and inscribed with specific Hebrew verses from the Torah (Deuteronomy 6:4–9 and Dt 11:13–21[1]). These verses consist of the Jewish prayer Shema Yisrael,

**NET Note** - The Hebrew term מֵזוּזוֹת (mézuzot) refers both to the door frames and to small cases attached on them containing scripture texts (always Deut 6:4–9 and 11:13–21; and sometimes the decalogue; Exod 13:1–10, 11–16; and Num 10:35–36). See J. H. Tigay, Deuteronomy (JPSTC), 443–44.

**Utley** - **write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates**” This again is a symbolic gesture that God is to have a



part, not only in our home life, but in our social life (i.e., gate, cf. 21:19; 22:15, 24). As the threshold of the home was often seen as the place of the demonic in the Greek and Roman worlds, in the Jewish world it represented the presence of God (i.e., the place where the blood of the Passover was placed, cf. Ex. 12:7, 22, 23). "**Your gates**") may refer to the place of social meeting and justice (i.e., like the city gates). Usually, these small boxes and door markers (mezuzah) contained several set passages of Scripture: Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21 and Exod. 13:1–10, 11–16.

**John Trapp** - There was within a mile of Prague a famous monastery, in the walls whereof the whole Bible was most exquisitely written in letters of gold.

**Deuteronomy 6:10** "Then it shall come about when the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build,

- **land:** Ge 13:15-17 15:18 26:3 28:13
- **great:** Jos 24:13 Ne 9:25 Ps 78:55 105:44
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Joshua 24:13 'I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them; you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'

### THE SUBTLE SNARE OF PROSPERITY & COMPLACENCY

**Complacency** describes a feeling of contentment or self-satisfaction (NOTE THAT PREFIX **'SELF!'**), especially when coupled with an unawareness of danger, trouble, or controversy.

Prosperity can be precarious!

**Then** - Identifies sequence or progression. The previous passages emphasized the importance of continual awareness of God's commandments which would serve as protection from sin (cf Ps 119:9, 11+). Now Moses moves on to a description of Israel's "INSTANT PROSPERITY," (Deere) the bountiful blessings of the promised land, blessings which might cause Israel to become complacent and make them vulnerable to temptation and sin against God.

**John Maxwell** notes that "Moses understood that Israel, once they settled in Canaan, would have difficulty living totally for God. Unfortunately, there often exists a negative correlation between God's favor and our gratitude." ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**It shall come about when the LORD your God brings you into the land-** Note note "if" but "**when**" - it will happen! Moses again emphasizes Jehovah is their personal God and their personal "Guide" (so to speak) bringing them into the Promised Land.

**Which He swore ([shaba](#)) to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob** - God's word (**He swore**) was immutable. The unconditional Abrahamic Covenant is the basis for the certainty that Israel would receive the promised land.

**Shaba** is a key word in this chapter - Dt 6:10, 13, 18, 23.

**To give you, great and splendid (good) cities which you did not build** - Israel was to destroy the pagan peoples not their cities. This seems a bit "tricky" to me as surely if they did not destroy the houses in the cities, some of those houses would have idol paraphernalia which which would be a potential snare and temptation. Of course all idol items were to be completely destroyed.

There is a similar statement by Yahweh in Joshua 24:13 "I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them; you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant."

**Merrill** explains the preservation of the **cities** - An advance over previous revelation concerning the land is that Israel would take intact already existing cities, houses with their contents, cisterns, and fruit trees (Dt 6:10-11). This presupposes a conquest in which there would be only minimal physical damage, though the populations themselves would largely be decimated. As it turns out, this was precisely the pattern and strategy that Joshua followed. In his farewell address to postconquest Israel he said, "I gave you land you had not worked on, and I gave you towns you did not build—the towns where you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them" (Josh 24:13). Close study of the conquest narratives reveals that only Jericho, Ai, and Hazor are said to have been destroyed, the rest of the cities having been left on their mounds, at least in the case of the northern campaign (Josh 11:13). ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**Utley** - This shows that Israel was going to possess the land of the Canaanites (cf. Gen. 15:16). She would take over their homes, fields and vineyards. Yet, v. 12 emphasizes that she was not to forget that it was the Lord who provided these and not her own resources (cf. 4:9; 8:11–20; Ps. 103:2). If they forgot YHWH the reverse would occur. They would lose their homes, fields, and vineyards (cf. 28:27–48). Divine love started the covenant relationship, but human obedience maintained it.

**Deuteronomy 6:11 and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied,**

- when thou: De 7:12-18 Dt 8:10-20 32:15 Judges 3:7 Pr 30:8,9 Jer 2:31,32 Eze 16:10-20 Mt 19:23,24
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passage:**

Deuteronomy 8:10-14+ “When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you. 11 “Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; 12 otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, 13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, 14 then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

**FULLNESS OFTEN BREEDS FORGETFULNESS**

**and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant** - Again note the conquest of the pagans did not involve utter destruction of the good things Israel would be able to use once in the land. They were to utterly destroy the evil pagan peoples and their enticing idolatry in all its forms. This seems to be the same practice described in Dt 2:34-35+ (defeat of Sihon) and Dt 3:6-7+ (defeat of Og). The repeated phrase **which you did not** emphasizes these things were God's gifts to Israel.

Merrill points out an interesting supernatural aspect of Israel's conquest of the promised land - "That this (**ED: DESTRUCTION OF PEOPLE BUT PRESERVATION OF PEOPLE'S PLACES**) could be done (and was; cf. Josh 24:13) is testimony to the Lord's power and goodness for conquest of this kind, which destroyed peoples but not properties, and is **without analogy in the history of warfare**. ([New American Commentary - Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

The repetitive pattern in vv10-11 is notable and serves to accentuate the fact that this was solely due to the blessing of God...

<b>great and splendid cities</b>	<b>you did not build</b>
<b>houses full of all good things</b>	<b>you did not fill</b>
<b>hewn cisterns</b>	<b>you did not dig</b>
<b>vineyards and olive trees</b>	<b>you did not plant,</b>

**And you eat and are satisfied** - Satisfaction is breeding grounds for forgetfulness. Self-satisfaction can be deadly to one's spirituality.

**John Trapp** has some pithy words - [Saturity](#) oft breeds security; fulness, forgetfulness. The best, when full fed, are apt to wax [wanton](#) and will be dipping their fingers sometimes in the devil's sauce. The moon never suffers eclipse but at the full, and that by the earth's interposition. The young mules, when they have sucked, turn up their heels and kick at the dam.

**Satisfied** (07646) ([saba](#) - שָׂבַע) means to be sated (implying sufficiency, though generally not speaking of excess-but see Vine's note below), to be filled or be full and so to be satisfied or have enough (or too much) of something, as when Israel had enough (too much) quail (Ex 16:8, 12). Yahweh is the ultimate Source of physical satiety (Ps. 104:28; satisfaction with His lovingkindness - Ps 90:14) and here in Micah 6:14 the Source of inability to eat enough! God would satisfy Israel in the promised land (Dt

6:11, 8:10, 12, 11:15, 14:29, 26:12). Boaz fed Ruth the Moabitess who "ate and was **satisfied** (Lxx = empiplēmi = to fill = Lk 1:53, be satisfied = Jn 6:12, figuratively enjoy something = Ro 15:24) and had some left." (Ru 2:12) As used here in Micah 6:14, one of the ways God judged people was to not provide enough to satisfy their need (or want) (Lev. 26:26; Hos. 4:10; Amos 4:8). Figuratively, **saba** describes reaching a **ripe** (Lxx = pleres = literally containing within all that it can hold - filled full) age (2Chr 24:15). In Job saba speaks of one "saturated" (Lxx = empiplēmi) with bitterness (Job 9:18). Habakkuk describes haughty men "like death, never satisfied (Lxx = empiplēmi)." (Hab 2:5) Moses warns of the ever present danger (for ALL of us!) of being "satisfied" (Dt 31:20) The sword will be sated with the blood of Yahweh's enemies on the Day of Yahweh (Jer. 46:10).

**Webster** (1828) defines **satisfy** - To gratify wants wishes or desires to the full extent; to supply possession or enjoyment till no more is desired The demands of hunger may be easily satisfied; but who can satisfy the passion for money or honor? To supply fully what is necessary and demanded by natural laws.

**Deuteronomy 6:12 then watch yourself, that you do not forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.**

- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages (on forgetfulness):** Deut. 26:13; Deut. 31:21; Deut. 32:18;

Deuteronomy 4:9+ "Only **give heed** to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that (PURPOSE)**you do not forget** the things which your eyes have seen (SECOND GENERATION HAD SEEN DESTRUCTION OF 23,000 AT BAAL-PEOR!) and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.

Deuteronomy 4:23+ "So **watch** yourselves, that (PURPOSE) **you do not forget** the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you (MOSAIC - Ex 24:3-8+), and make for yourselves a graven image (Ex 20:4, Dt 5:8) in the form of anything against which the LORD your God has commanded you.

Deuteronomy 4:31+ "For the LORD your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you **nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.**

Deuteronomy 8:11+ "Beware that you **do not forget the LORD your God** by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today;

Deuteronomy 8:14+ then your heart will become proud and **you will forget the LORD your God** who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

Deuteronomy 8:19+ "It shall come about **if you ever forget the LORD your God** and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish.

Deuteronomy 9:7+ "**Remember, do not forget** how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness; from the day that you left the land of Egypt until you arrived at this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD.

Deuteronomy 25:19 (Deut. 25:19) - [Copy][Go][to List]

(25:19) "Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; **you must not forget.**

Deuteronomy 32:18 "You neglected the Rock who begot you, And **forgot the God** who gave you birth.

## **PERILS OF PROSPERITY!**

Warnings like this regarding prosperity make me think that the phrase "[prosperity gospel](#)" is at best an [oxymorron](#) and at worst a deadly deception!

**Maxwell** wrote "Moses speaks effectively in this section on the tendency for abundance to beget arrogance. He expounds this truth several other times in Deuteronomy. In his song to the people, Moses said, "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; / You grew fat, you

grew thick, / You are obese! / Then he forsook God who made him, / And scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation" (Deut. 32:15). With our limited vision, we often fail to see our spiritual inadequacies when we have no other needs. Self-reliance replaces God-reliance." ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

With our limited vision,  
we often fail to see our spiritual inadequacies when we have no other needs.  
Self-reliance replaces God-reliance  
-- John Maxwell

**Then** - Sequence or progression. This warning follows satisfied which is a "set up" for subtly slipping into sin!

**Watch yourself** - Take heed. Be careful. Beware. This verb [shamar](#) is a key word in Deuteronomy. The Septuagint uses the verb [prosecho](#) (**pros** = before, toward + **echo** = hold) which literally means to hold toward and was originally followed by "the mind." **Prosecho** is not a call simply to notice or sense something, but to be on guard against it because it is so harmful. The [present imperative](#) calls for this to be their lifestyle.

Forgetfulness is the "default mode" of our fallen flesh  
and so it must to be constantly guarded against!

**Utley - watch yourself** The VERB ( Niphal IMPERATIVE) is used often in Deuteronomy, but usually in the Qal stem. The Niphal is found in 2:4; 4:9, 15, 23; 6:12; 8:6, 11; 11:16; 12:13, 19, 30; 15:9; 23:9; 24:8 and usually with the sense of "be careful"!

The writer of Proverbs alludes to the precarious nature of prosperity

Two things I asked of You, Do not refuse me before I die: 8 Keep deception and lies far from me, **Give me neither poverty nor riches**; Feed me with the food that is my portion, 9 That I not be full and deny You and say, "Who is the LORD?" Or that I not be in want and steal, And profane the name of my God. (Prov. 30:7-9)

It is worth remembering that David a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22+) fell into horrible sin with Bathsheba when his kingdom was at the height of prosperity. As the writer says "Then it happened in the spring, at the time **when kings go out to battle**, (DAVID WAS THE KING THAT DID NOT GO OUT!) that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem." (2 Sa 11:1)

**That you do not forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery** (Heb = ['ebed](#); Lxx = [douleia](#) - literal bondage) - Surrounded by all the bounty of the promised land, it would be easy to forget the bondage in Pharaoh's land! Don't do it! Of course don't focus on the negative aspects of the bondage but on the God Who liberated them from bondage. Don't forget your Deliverer! The fact that they were delivered from the despair and drudgery of slavery should have generated a generous attitude of gratitude.

**THOUGHT** - Do believers today ever forget the price that God paid to give His only Son that He might set us free forever? I'm afraid I do. In fact every time I chose pleasure of sin over pleasing Savior, I have a lapse of memory, an episode of spiritual amnesia regarding the "So great a salvation" (Heb 2:3) This is surely another reason we should frequently celebrate the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:23-26+ - "**do** this in remembrance of Me.")

**Kline** makes an excellent point - In Canaan the temptation to idolatry would be **fierce**, since the claim made for the gods of that region was that they were the bestowers of fertility and abundance in the land (ED: WHAT IRONY FOR YAHWEH HAD BESTOWED THE BOUNTY!). Such is human perversity that Israel, satisfied with the material plenty of a plundered culture, would be inclined to honor the claims of their victims' idols and **forget** the claims of the Lord who had saved from Egypt and given victory in Canaan ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**Utley - lest you forget** The VERB (Qal IMPERFECT) is a recurrent warning in Deuteronomy (cf. 4:9, 23, 31; 6:12; 8:11, 14, 19 [twice]; 9:7; 25:19). **out of the house of slavery** is the continuing emphasis of the book of Deuteronomy that God's grace came to Israel first (cf. Deut. 4:10; 5:29; 6:2). It is unfortunate to characterize the OT as law and the NT as grace (Martin Luther).

**Maxwell** - Forgetting the Lord is the first peril to which prosperity leads us. It was at the height of David's prosperity that he committed his greatest act of unfaithfulness (2 Sam. 11). Nothing dulls our sensitivity to God like independence. There is much truth in the thought that adversity has more benefits than prosperity. Adversity introduces a person to himself; prosperity intoxicates him. The story of the Prodigal Son is an excellent illustration of the effects of prosperity and adversity on a person. During his prosperity the son did not think of father and home; he was consumed with the pleasures of the flesh. When he lost all his wealth and friends, he "came to himself" and remembered what was important. Moses, knowing the perils of prosperity, warns the children of Israel not to forget God. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Forget** ([07911](#)) [shakach/shakah](#) means to forget, ignore, to cease to care, (Niphal) to be forgotten, (Piel) to

cause to forget, (Hiphil) to make or cause to forget, (Hithpael) to be forgotten. Shakach/shakah "indicates that something has been lost to memory, or a period of time has softened the memory of it...It is an especially important word with respect to God and His people: God never forgets them (Isa. 49:15); they are not to forget their God, His covenant, and His deeds (Deut. 4:9, 23, 31; 6:12; 8:11; 9:7; 25:19; 32:18). Deut 4:31 is a wonderful reminder that while we may forget God, He does not forget us!

In Deut 8:11 we see that forgetting God is integrally related to disobedience or "not keeping His commandments!" This is another reason we should always begin our day but not forgetting God, but instead by remembering God, reading about Him, meditating on His Word of Truth and speaking with Him. This daily exercise will have a radical impact on what transpires the rest of that day, "lest you forget the LORD your God!"

One of the great dangers in forgetting God is falling in love with the world or being more focused on our possessions than the One Who possesses us! (see Dt 25:19).

In Dt 32:18 we see forgetfulness of God is linked with neglect of God. Woe! Ponder these definitions of neglect - lack of attention and due care, the state of something that has been unused and neglected, willful lack of care and attention, the trait of neglecting responsibilities and lacking concern, failure to act with the prudence that a reasonable person would exercise under the same circumstances.

The most common usage of **shākhach** is in the sense of forgetting the Covenant with Yahweh. Such behavior was naturally a conscious choice, a morally evil one. Once this forgetting occurred, Yahweh then punished the people for violation of the Covenant (Jdg. 3:7). Indeed, this forgetting and punishing is the main focus of the Book of Judges and most of the prophetic Books, dominating the structure of these works. The absurdity of the circumstance is best expressed hyperbolically, akin to a woman forgetting her infant (Isa. 49:15) or a young woman who forgets her jewelry (Jer. 2:32).

**Shakach in Deuteronomy** - 13x in 13v (out of a total of 93 verses in OT) - Deut. 4:9; Deut. 4:23; Deut. 4:31; Deut. 6:12; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 8:14; Deut. 8:19; Deut. 9:7; Deut. 24:19; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:13; Deut. 31:21; Deut. 32:18;

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## HOW ARE WE "FORGETFUL"?:

Dt 8:11:"Beware lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping (shamar - watchman) His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes (so by implication to "not forget" is to remember which practically is manifest as OBEDIENCE or to "keeping"),

Dt 8:10 seems to convey both the cause and the "antidote" for FORGETFULNESS: "When you have eaten and are satisfied, (THE SNARE) you shall bless the LORD (THE SOLUTION) your God for the good land which He has given you." (Thus David begins Ps 103:1,v2: with the command to "Bless the LORD" on one hand and on the other to "forget none of His benefits". Good advice!

Dt 8:14 then your heart becomes proud, and you forget the LORD (so abundance in Dt 8:13 can lead to pride which is the fertile soil of forgetfulness of the goodness of God);

## BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU ARE "SATISFIED":

Dt 6:11-12 and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied,<sup>12</sup> then watch yourself, lest you forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

## CONSEQUENCES OF FORGETTING:

Dt 8:19 "if you ever forget the LORD your God, and (so remembering is manifest by our not doing the following things) go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you shall surely perish."

**Deuteronomy 6:13 "You shall fear *only* the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name.**

- **fear:** De 6:2 5:29 Dt 10:12,20 13:4 Mt 4:10 Lu 4:8
- **swear:** Lev 19:12 Jos 2:12 Ps 15:4 63:11 Isa 45:23 65:16 Jer 4:2 5:2,7 Jer 12:16



- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 10:12+ Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to **serve** (Heb - [abad](#); Lxx - [latreuo](#)) the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,

Deuteronomy 10:20+ "You shall fear the LORD your God; **you shall serve** (Heb - [abad](#); Lxx - [latreuo](#)) Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name.

Deuteronomy 4:10+ "*Remember* the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words **so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth**, and that they may teach their children.'

## FEAR, SERVE AND SWEAR

So watch yourself, remember your deliverance from slavery by Yahweh (previous passage) and now fear of Yahweh. Moses here gives a remedy to impede forgetfulness - fear...worship...swear.

**You shall fear** ([yare](#)) *only* the LORD your God and you shall worship Him. **Only** is added by translators. Jesus quotes this passage in fending off the temptations of the devil "Then Jesus \*said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" (Mt 4:10+; Lk 4:8+) The Hebrew word worship is abad which most often means to serve and and even convey the idea of becoming enslaved, not a bad thing when the Master is Yahweh! The Septuagint translates [abad](#) with [latreuo](#) which speaks of carrying out religious duties with a spirit of worship and in secular use even meant to be bound or enslaved to another.

**Maxwell** - Our independent nature causes us to stray from God, thus obstructing our worship of Him. To prevent this from happening, we need to have a reverent **fear** of God. This is not the kind of **fear** that intimidates, causing us to withdraw (**ED**: WHILE I BASICALLY AGREE WITH THAT, THERE SHOULD STILL BE A SENSE OF GOD'S AWESOME NATURE - cf "fear and trembling" in Php 2:12), but rather the kind that causes us to appreciate the power of God. It creates within us a desire to draw near for security and strength. It causes finite man to cleave to an infinite God. (2) "Serve Him." The visible evidence of our fearing the Lord will be our service to Him. One of the first signs of our forgetting God is our lack of service and ministry to God and others. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Worship** (serve, enslave) ([05647](#)) ([abad](#)) means "to serve, cultivate, enslave, work." To work (to cultivate, till - Ge 2:5, 15 - Lxx = ergazomai before the fall! Ge 3:23 after the fall, Lxx = ergazomai), to serve (be enslaved or hold in bondage - Ex 6:6 - Lxx = katadouloo = make a slave; Lev 25:38, 39 Lxx = [douleuo](#)) (Ge 14:4, 15:13, 14 - Lxx = [douleuo](#)), worship. Labor (as when Israel was in Egyptian bondage - Ex 1:13,14 but same word abad translated worship after redemption Ex 3:12, 7:16, 8:1, 8:20, 9:1, et al where Lxx = [latreuo](#)). **Ābad** is often used toward God: "you shall **worship** God at this mountain." (Ex. 3:12). The word is frequently used with another verb: ""You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall **worship** Him" (Deut. 6:13), or "It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to **serve** Him with all your heart and all your soul," (Dt. 11:13).

**Abad in Deuteronomy** - 35 verses -- Deut. 4:19 = "and **serve** them"; Deut. 4:28; Deut. 5:9; Deut. 5:13; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 7:4; Deut. 7:16; Deut. 8:19; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 11:13; Deut. 11:16; Deut. 12:2; Deut. 12:30; Deut. 13:2; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:6; Deut. 13:13; Deut. 15:12; Deut. 15:18; Deut. 15:19; Deut. 17:3; Deut. 20:11; Deut. 21:3; Deut. 21:4; Deut. 28:14; Deut. 28:36; Deut. 28:39; Deut. 28:47; Deut. 28:48; Deut. 28:64; Deut. 29:18; Deut. 29:26; Deut. 30:17; Deut. 31:20

**And swear** ([shaba](#)) **by His name** - NLT - "When you take an oath, you must use only His Name." This reminds me of Paul's words in 1 Cor 1:31 "just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."" Exalt the Name of the LORD.

**Kline on swear** - Such swearing constituted a renewal of the oath or allegiance which ratified the covenant and invoked God as the deity who avenged [perfidy](#) ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**Utley** This verse gives several things that Israel should do towards YHWH when they victoriously enter the Promised Land:

1. "fear only the LORD your God"—BDB 431, KB 432, Qal IMPERFECT

2. "worship Him"—BDB 712, "serve" KB 773, Qal IMPERFECT
3. "swear by His name"—BDB 989, KB 1396, Niphal IMPERFECT. See full note at 5:11.

All of these involve worship and are used often in Moses' writings.

Part of the cultic worship of Israel was to make statements in the name of YHWH. Jesus seems to quote this verse in Matt. 4:10 in His confrontation with the Evil One. He changes the word "fear" in v. 13 to the word "worship," which shows us that these two terms are basically synonymous. The name of God reflected His character and person. One of these confessional statements of faith that was sworn in God's name can be seen in Isa. 48:1.

Dt 6:14 adds a fourth requirement to the three above

4. "shall not follow other gods"—BDB 229, KB 246, Qal IMPERFECT Here the worship of Canaanite fertility gods is strictly forbidden.

### Deuteronomy 6:14 "You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you,

- **not follow:** De 8:19 Dt 11:28 Ex 34:14-16 Jer 25:6 1Jn 5:21
- **of the gods:** De 13:7
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 10:14+ Therefore, my beloved, **flee** ( [pheugo](#) - [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#). I like the sense of "escape" the entangling enticements) from idolatry.

1 John 5:21+ Little children, **guard** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves from idols.

## PROHIBITION OF IDOLATRY

When Israel enters the promised land Moses' warning in this verse implies that there will still be idols present, suggesting that Israel will not completely annihilate them (which they did not do!). In this seductive setting Israel would be tempted by these false gods. This is why the first commandment was so critical to keep in one's mind and heart and to remind the Shema (Dt 6:4).

**Deere** points out that "If they would forget God (Dt 6:12) they would almost certainly **follow other gods**, for God created people not only with the *capacity* to worship but with the *need* to worship. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you-** Note the prohibition **not follow** which is more literally "**follow after.**" **Follow after** clearly indicates they had to make the conscious choice to turn away from the true God, which is in effect "repentance in reverse" so to speak (contrast the true repentance of the pagans in 1 Th 1:9-10+)! Canaan was a veritable [smorgasborg](#) of gods with a little "g." The temptations to the Israelites would have been continually before their eyes, which is why God was so adamant that Israel utterly destroy all vestiges of the pagan practices of idolatry (Dt 7:5+).

**THOUGHT** - What "little g" gods are you refusing to utterly destroy? Do not be deceived and think you can enjoy God's full blessing in Christ if you are refusing to eradicate these "gods!" God is serious about this!

### Deuteronomy 6:15 for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.

- **jealous:** De 4:24 Ex 20:5 Am 3:2 1Co 10:22
- **otherwise:** De 7:4 11:17 Nu 32:10-15 2Ch 36:16 Ps 90:7,11
- **wipe you off:** Ge 7:4 Ex 32:12 1Ki 13:34 Am 9:8
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages: Jealous God

Deuteronomy 4:23-24+ So watch yourselves, that you **do not forget the covenant** of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which the

LORD your God has commanded you. 24 "For the **LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.**

Deuteronomy 5:9+ (cf Ex 20:5) 'You shall not worship them or serve them; for **I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,

Deuteronomy 32:16+ "**They made Him jealous with strange gods**; With abominations they provoked Him to anger.

Deuteronomy 32:21+ '**They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation,**

## **DIVINE JEALOUSY PROMPTS RIGHTEOUS ANGER**

**for** - Term of explanation as to why they were not to follow pagan "gods."

**The LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God**- Jealous and zealous. Zealous to protect what belongs to Him alone. Think of a husband who will be zealous to protect his wife who is in covenant with him. Yahweh in fact is in covenant with Israel which was cut at Sinai and sealed with the blood of the covenant (cf Ex 24:3-12+ - where they said "we will do" [Ex 24:3, 7] which was tantamount to a wife saying "I do" to her husband) (cf Jer 31:32+, Isa 54:5)

**Deere** - Jealousy in this sense is ethically right. Jealousy in the sense of envy for another's possessions or privileges is, of course, wrong. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Uteley on jealous God** - This Hebrew term can mean "zealous" or "jealous" (BDB 888, cf. Deut. 4:24; 5:9; see note at 4:24). Jealousy is a love word. We are only jealous of those for whom we have a deep, abiding love. This is another affirmation of the love of God anthropomorphically stated in human, family terms. See

**Jealous (07067) qanna** is an adjective that combines the ideas of zeal and jealousy. It expresses a very strong emotion whereby some quality or possession of the object is desired by the subject. All 5 OT uses describe this attribute of Jehovah, His attribute which reflects zero tolerance for the worship of other so-called gods. In the 5 uses note the associated with "consuming fire," (Dt 4:24) and "anger...kindled (also pictures a fire) against" those who violate this prohibition (Dt 6:15) In other words the consequences of bowing down to false gods gives us a clear sense of His hatred of them. How foolish it is for us as finite humans to pursue false gods when we have access to the true and living God! Forgive us O LORD. Amen. **Qanna** is translated in the Septuagint of Ex 20:5 with the noun **zelotes** which depicts one stirred to action by a strong emotion. It describes one "burning with zeal" (the root of zelotes is **zeo** = to boil, be hot or glow!). Zelotes describes Yahweh as earnestly committed to defend His honor!

Qanna - 6x in 5v - Exod. 20:5; Exod. 34:14; Deut. 4:24; Deut. 5:9; Deut. 6:15

**Otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth** This is a vivid picture of God's jealousy suddenly flaring up like a forest fire struck by lightning. **Anger** in the Septuagint is the verb **orgizo** which means to become enraged, a frightening thought when it is the Omnipotent God Who is angry! The verb for wipe off (shamad) is translated in the Septuagint with **exolethreuo** which can mean to root out, which is a good description because Israel was "rooted out" when they were taken into exile, so clearly they were not completely exterminated. Compare Dt 28:63 where "the LORD will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and **you will be torn from the land** where you are entering to possess it." So God's warning of wiping them off the face of the earth would be realized by His uprooting or plucking them out of the promised land.

**NET Note** - Heb "lest the anger of the LORD your God be kindled against you and destroy you from upon the surface of the ground."

**Uteley - the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you and He will wipe you off the face of the earth** - As revelatory as the love of God is, the same book reveals the wrath of God. The same book that overwhelms us with His love shocks us with His anger ("kindled" BDB 354, KB 351, Qal IMPERFECT, cf. 11:16-17; 31:16-17; Jdgs. 2:14; 6:13, and "wipe off" or "exterminate" BDB 1029, KB 1552, Hiphil PERFECT, cf. 1:27; 2:22; 9:20; Josh. 9:24). A good way to understand the relationship between God's love and His wrath is to compare Deut. 5:9 with 7:9. As God does visit lifestyle, priority sins from father to son to the third and fourth generations, He visits the blessing of faith to the thousandth generations of those who love Him. God's love spurned is God's wrath. Isaiah calls God's wrath "His strange work" (cf. Isa. 28:21).

**Anger** (nose, nostril, wrath) (0639) **aph** from **anaph** = to breathe hard, to be angry) is a masculine noun meaning nose, nostril, snout (pigs - Pr 11:22), face (2Sa 25:23) and anger. Both senses are found in Proverbs 30:22 - "For the churning of milk produces butter, and pressing the nose (aph) brings forth blood; so the churning of anger (aph) produces strife." In the first use God "breathed into (man's) nostrils the breath of life." (Ge 2:7) Aph sometimes refers to the entire e whole face (Ge 3:19), especially in the expression, to bow one's face to the ground (Ge 19:1; 1Sa 24:8). To have length of nose is to be slow to wrath (Pr 14:29, 16:32). To have shortness of nose is to be quick tempered (Pr. 14:17; Jer. 15:14, 15). Aph is used in a phrase (goba aph) which means pride, arrogance, formally, high of nose, an improper haughtiness and self-confidence (Ps 10:4). Often speaks of divine anger or wrath (Ps 2:5, 2:12, 6:1, 30:5, 74:1, 77:9, 78:21) and thankfully is "Slow to anger." (Ps 103:8; 145:8, both Lxx = makrothumos = long-suffering)

**Wipe** (demolish, exterminate) (08045) **shamad** is a verb meaning "be destroyed, decimated, perished, overthrown, exterminated, i.e., pertaining to being in a totally ruined state, which can include death of a person or extinction of an entity." (Swanson) The destruction depicted by **shamad** usually involves a rather sudden catastrophe such as warfare or a mass killing.

**Shamad** is found most frequently in the OT in the book of Deuteronomy (in 28v out of total of 87v) -Deut. 1:27; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:23; Deut. 4:3; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 6:15; Deut. 7:4; Deut. 7:23; Deut. 7:24; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:8; Deut. 9:14; Deut. 9:19; Deut. 9:20; Deut. 9:25; Deut. 12:30; Deut. 28:20; Deut. 28:24; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 28:48; Deut. 28:51; Deut. 28:61; Deut. 28:63; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:4; Deut. 33:27

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#### QUESTION - [Why is God a jealous God?](#)

**ANSWER** - It is important to understand how the word "jealous" is used. Its use in Exodus 20:5 to describe God is different from how it is used to describe the sin of jealousy (Galatians 5:20). When we use the word "jealous," we use it in the sense of being envious of someone who has something we do not have. A person might be jealous or envious of another person because he or she has a nice car or home (possessions). Or a person might be jealous or envious of another person because of some ability or skill that other person has (such as athletic ability). Another example would be that one person might be jealous or envious of another because of his or her beauty.

In Exodus 20:5, it is not that God is jealous or envious because someone has something He wants or needs. Exodus 20:4-5 says, "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God..." Notice that God is jealous when someone gives to another something that rightly belongs to Him.

In these verses, God is speaking of people making idols and bowing down and worshiping those idols instead of giving God the worship that belongs to Him alone. God is possessive of the worship and service that belong to Him. It is a sin (as God points out in this commandment) to worship or serve anything other than God. It is a sin when we desire, or we are envious, or we are jealous of someone because he has something that we do not have. It is a different use of the word "jealous" when God says He is jealous. What He is jealous of belongs to Him; worship and service belong to Him alone, and are to be given to Him alone.

Perhaps a practical example will help us understand the difference. If a husband sees another man flirting with his wife, he is right to be jealous, for only he has the right to flirt with his wife. This type of jealousy is not sinful. Rather, it is entirely appropriate. Being jealous for something that God declares to belong to you is good and appropriate. Jealousy is a sin when it is a desire for something that does not belong to you. Worship, praise, honor, and adoration belong to God alone, for only He is truly worthy of it. Therefore, God is rightly jealous when worship, praise, honor, or adoration is given to idols. This is precisely the jealousy the apostle Paul described in 2 Corinthians 11:2, "I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy..." [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

#### Deuteronomy 6:16 "You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.

- **You shall not put the LORD your God to the test** Mt 4:7 Lu 4:12
- **as you tested Him at Massah:** Ex 17:2,7 Nu 20:3-4,13 Nu 21:4-5 Ps 95:8-9 1Co 10:9 Heb 3:8,9
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

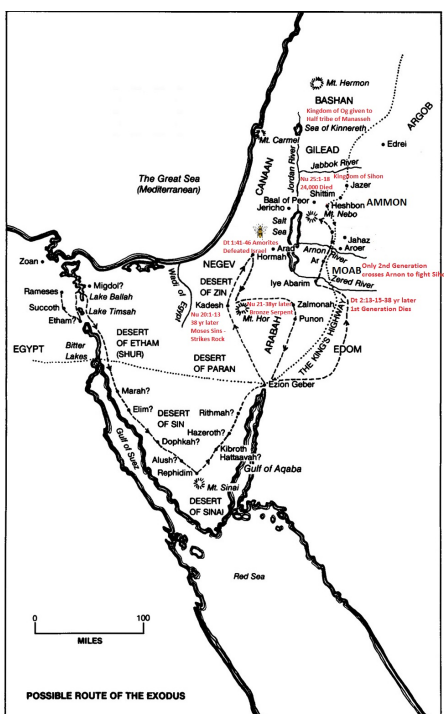
Deuteronomy 9:22 "Again at Taberah and at **Massah** and at Kibroth-hattaavah you provoked the LORD to

wrath.

Deuteronomy 33:8 Of Levi he said, "Let Your Thummim and Your Urim belong to Your godly man, Whom You proved at **Massah**, With whom You contended at the waters of Meribah;

Psalms 95:8 Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, As in the day of **Massah** in the wilderness,

Exodus 17:1-7+ Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim (SEE ON MAP BELOW) and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people **quarreled** with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you **quarrel** with me? **Why do you test the LORD?**" 3 But the people thirsted there for water; and they **grumbled** against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me." 5 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6 "Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 He named the place **Massah** and **Meribah** because of the **quarrel** of the sons of Israel, and because they **tested** the LORD, saying, "**Is the LORD among us, or not?**"



CLICK TO ENLARGE  
(Source: Bible Knowledge Commentary)

## DO NOT TEST GOD

**You shall not put the LORD your God to the test**- Quoted by Jesus in Mt 4:7+ in deflecting the devil's misquotation of Scripture to tempt Him - "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT'" (Mt 4:6+)..

**Deere** explains how this might happen in the future based on why it happened in the past (at Massah) - **This implies that at times the people would face hardship as they did at Massah** (cf. Ex. 17:1-7) where they lacked water and thought they would die of thirst. Rather than trusting God in this trial they tested Him by complaining and quarreling. In the future the Israelites were to remember this embarrassing incident. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Wiersbe** - We tempt the Lord when we openly and unbelievably question His ability or defy His authority by what we say or do. After He delivered Israel from Egypt, the Lord deliberately led them through difficulties so He could teach them to trust Him (HE WAS TESTING THEM - cf Dt 8:2-3+)...The Lord tests our faith, not just in the great crises of life, but even more in the small unexpected events, such as a travel delay, an irritating interruption, a sudden sickness, or a lost wallet. (**ED: I CALL THESE "DIVINE POP TESTS"** BECAUSE THEY USUALLY COME WHEN WHEN LEAST EXPECT THEM, BUT THE LORD KNOWS WE MOST NEED THEM.) The way we respond in these situations will indicate what's in our hearts, because what life does to us depends on what life finds in us. If we love and trust the Lord, we'll leave the matter with Him and do what He tells us; but if we question the Lord and



rebel because we're not getting our own way, then we're in danger of tempting Him. One of the best protections against tempting the Lord is a grateful heart (ED: 1 Th 5:17+). If we're in the habit of thanking the Lord in everything, **including the painful experiences of life**, then the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with love and praise instead of Satan (ED: I THINK MORE LIKELY IS OUR OWN FALLEN FLESH) filling us with bitter venom. How many "Massahs" and "Meribahs" are marked on the map of our journey of faith? ([Be Equipped](#))

**Merrill** on **test** the LORD -To test God is to make upon him demands or requirements that are inappropriate either to his nature and character or to the circumstances.

**THOUGHT** - Another way to test the LORD is to **grumble** against Him in some way (cf Ex 17:3+ where grumbling against Moses was tantamount to grumbling against God). This begs the question "Do you (I) ever grumble against the circumstances (etc) which the sovereign Lord has allowed (or sent) in our lives?" That is almost a rhetorical question. We need to realize that grumbling against God is no small sin! (remember 1 Cor 10:10+)

**Utley** - **You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah** The place was named "test," massah (BDB 650). This is a reference to an event that happened in Ex 17:1–7 ("tested" BDB 650, KB 702, Piel PERFECT), where the people grumbled against God's provision and presence (cf. Dt. 9:22; 33:8). They showed lack of faith (cf. Ps. 95:8; Hebrews 3–4). Do not do it again ("test" Piel IMPERFECT)! This verse is also used by Jesus in His temptation experience with Satan (cf. Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12).

**As you tested Him at Massah** -Exodus 17:2+ "Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?"...:7 He named the place **Massah** and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us, or not?"

**Massah** - 5v - Exod. 17:7; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 9:22; Deut. 33:8; Ps. 95:8

**NET Note** - The place name **Massah** (מַסָּה, massah) derives from a root (נָסָה, nasah) meaning "to test; to try." The reference here is to the experience in the Sinai desert when Moses struck the rock to obtain water (Ex 17:1–2). The complaining Israelites had, thus, "tested" the LORD, a wickedness that gave rise to the naming of the place (Ex 17:7; cf. Dt 9:22; 33:8).

**Kline** - Israel must not, therefore, presume to put God on trial, as at Massah (cf. Ex 17:7), seeking proof of his presence and his power to visit on them the covenant sanctions, whether blessing or curse. Let Israel rather be faithful, and God would faithfully fulfill his good promises (Dt 6:17-19; cf. v. 10). ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

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#### **QUESTION** - [What is the significance of Meribah \(Massah\) in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - **Meribah** was a site that the Israelites passed through in their desert wanderings. Being a place of testing for the Israelites, it also had a major impact in the lives of Moses and Aaron. Apparently, based on the biblical text, **there are two sites named Meribah** (W. A. Elwell and B. J. Beitzel, "Meribah," *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, volume 2, Baker, 1988, p. 1,442). One of the sites called Meribah was located near Rephidim in the Desert of Sin (Exodus 17:1). At this location it was also called **Massah**, which differentiates it from the other Meribah mentioned in Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:16; Dt 9:22; Dt 33:8; Psalm 95:8). The other site named Meribah was located in Kadesh Barnea, and therefore was referred to as Meribah Kadesh (Numbers 27:14; Deuteronomy 32:51; Ezekiel 47:19; 48:28).

Central to both locations is a miracle of water coming from a rock. At **Meribah/Massah**, the Israelites were extremely thirsty and quarreled with Moses about the lack of water (Exodus 17:2). Because of their thirst, they grumbled against Moses and asked, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" (Exodus 17:3). Moses brought this problem to the Lord, and the Lord enabled Moses to strike the rock so that the Israelites would have water and know that God was with them (Exodus 17:4–7). Because of their grumbling and testing of God, Moses called the place **Meribah**, which means "testing," and **Massah**, which means "quarrelling" (John Hannah, "Exodus," *Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, John Walvoord and Roy Zuck, ed., Victor, 1983, p. 135). Not only did the Israelites demonstrate doubt in God's provision, but they also tested Him because of their complaints and distrust.

Toward the end of the Israelites' forty years of wandering, a similar situation occurred at **Meribah Kadesh**. Complaining about a lack of water for their livestock and themselves, the "people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. They quarreled with Moses and said, 'If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the Lord! Why did you bring the Lord's community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!'" (Numbers 20:2–5). Appealing to the Lord at the tent of meeting, Aaron and Moses were told by God to speak to the rock, which would bring forth water (Numbers 20:6–7). Instead of demonstrating God's glory and provision in speaking to the rock as the Lord had instructed, Moses struck the rock and claimed he and Aaron would

bring forth water for the Israelites (Numbers 20:10–11). The Lord still kept His promise in providing water but told Aaron and Moses that they would not enter the Promised Land because of their failure to obey Him (Numbers 20:12). It is clear from the rest of Scripture that God tested the Israelites, including Aaron and Moses, at Meribah Kadesh to gauge their obedience and faithfulness (Psalm 81:7; 106:32).

Another place Meribah is directly mentioned in the Bible is in the book of Ezekiel. In the future allotment of the land of Israel in the millennial kingdom, Meribah Kadesh will serve as a border for the section allotted to the tribe of Gad (Ezekiel 47:19; 48:28). As Meribah served to remind the Israelites following Moses of their lack of trust in the Lord, so also will it in the millennial reign of Christ.

Being a place of strife and testing, Meribah is worthy of remembrance. As Psalm 95:8 warns, "Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness" (cf. Hebrews 3:4). The Israelites' disbelief at Kadesh Barnea resulted in their inability to enter the Promised Land for another generation, and Aaron's and Moses' disobedience at Meribah Kadesh kept them from entering the Promised Land as well. Disobedience and unbelief have enduring consequences that can affect the rest of one's life. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Deuteronomy 6:17 "You should diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you.**

- De 6:1-2 Dt 11:13,22 Ex 15:26 Ps 119:4 1Co 15:58 Tit 3:8 Heb 6:11 2Pe 1:5-10 3:14
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE KEY TO POSSESSING THE PROMISED LAND

The condition for possessing and keeping possession of the promised land is summarized beginning in this passage and continuing in Dt 6:18. Notice that it closely parallels how the chapter began.

Deuteronomy 6:1-2 "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, 2 so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to **keep all His statutes and His commandments** which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

**You should diligently keep ([shamar](#)) the commandments of the LORD your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you - NET** = "Keep his commandments very carefully, as well as the stipulations and statutes he commanded you to observe." Keeping the Words of God is the best preventative to sinning against the God of the Word. Diligently keep is [shamar](#) the thought being to guard and protect God's Word. The **Septuagint** uses [phulasso](#) in present tense (continually, as your lifestyle) continually watching, protecting, defending, guarding.

**Utley** - This continual emphasis on obedience (see Dt 5:1) is overwhelming and sets the stage for the covenant relationship. All of God's covenants with mankind are initiated by Him unconditionally, but they must respond conditionally (cf. Dt 5:32, 33; 6:1, 2, 3, 17, 24, 25).

**Deuteronomy 6:18 "You shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you and that you may go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore to give your fathers,**

- **shall**: De 8:11 12:25,28 13:18 Ex 15:26 Ps 19:11 Isa 3:10 Eze 18:5,19,21 Eze 18:27 33:14,16,19 Ho 14:9 Joh 8:29 Ro 12:2
- **that it may**: De 4:40 5:29,33
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:** (Do what is right)

Deuteronomy 12:28 "Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for **you will be doing what is good and right ([yashar](#)) in the sight of the LORD your God.**

Deuteronomy 13:18 if you will listen to the voice of the LORD your God, keeping all His commandments which I am commanding you today, and **doing what is right in the sight of the LORD your God.**

Deuteronomy 21:9 "So you shall remove the guilt of innocent blood from your midst, when **you do what is right in the eyes of the LORD.**

## DOING RIGHT IN GOD'S SIGHT

**You shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD-** **Right** is the Hebrew word [yashar](#) the root verb meaning to be straight, characterized by an uprightness as one's manner of life which **in the sight of the LORD** is pleasing to Him. It is translated in the Septuagint with the adjective [arestos](#) which describes that which is acceptable, pleasing, satisfying, agreeable, that which elicits an agreeable response. The idea is walking in a manner pleasing to the LORD. To reiterate, doing what is right is pleasing to the LORD. **Good** ([tob](#)) is translated in the Septuagint with [kalos](#) describes that which is inherently excellent or intrinsically good, providing some special or superior benefit.

**Merrill** - Put succinctly, they must **do what is right and good** according to God's standard. **Right** connotes the idea of measuring up to something that is straight—something construed as a norm of proper behavior. In context, this suggests adherence to the divine standard of Torah. If and when this is done, blessing inevitably follows. They would conquer and occupy the Land of Promise. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

We see a similar idea of being pleasing **in the sight of the LORD** in Paul's prayer for the Colossians (certainly a prayer that would be good to pray for others that they might do what is right)...

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that (PURPOSE CLAUSE) **you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects** bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; (Col 1:9-10+)

**Right** (upright) (adjective) ([03477](#)) [yashar](#) from the verb **yashar** = to be smooth, straight or right) is an adjective that means straight; reliable, level, pleasing; upright; righteous. It is fitting that God is the standard of **yashar** (what is "straight") (Ps 92:15, called the "Upright One" - Isa 26:7). God's Word is described as upright (right) (Ps 19:7) as are His judgments (Ps 119:137) and His way (Ps 107:7). "God made men upright (Ge 1:27), but they have sought out many devices." (Eccl 7:29)

**Yashar** in Deuteronomy - Deut. 6:18; Deut. 12:8; Deut. 12:25; Deut. 12:28; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 21:9; Deut. 32:4;

**That** (purpose clause) **it may be well with you** - The first of two reason for walking uprightly and doing good is things will go well, that you would be prosperous (in the OT this would include material and spiritual prosperity).

**Utley** - If Israel keeps the covenant requirements, YHWH will bring prosperity and longevity!

**And that you may go in and possess** ([yarash](#)) **the good land which the LORD swore to give your fathers-** The second reason was walking uprightly and doing good is that it will enable one to possess their possessions. Once again obedience is seen as the doorway into the possession of the promised land.

**The good land which the LORD swore** ([shaba](#)) **to give your fathers** - This refers to the original land promise to Abram in Genesis 15:18 "On that day (WHEN GOD CUT THIS UNCONDITIONAL COVENANT) the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates." Notice that while the promises of the covenant were given in one sense unconditionally for they were not granted based on any meritorious effects of Abram, the actual possession of the land was "conditioned" on the obedience of the Israelites. Clearly the first generation out of Egypt totally disobeyed and were totally cut out of inheriting the land promised to Abram. So while the Abrahamic Covenant is often described as "unconditional" God's fulfillment of the promises of the covenant did not divorce the recipients of the promise from their responsibility.

**Merrill** says it this way "Failure to meet the conditions would result in judgment and even defeat and deportation, but it could never cancel out the eternal purposes of God for his chosen nation (cf. Lev 26:27–45; Jer 31:31–37; 32:36–40; Ezek 36:22–31; 37:1–14). ([New American Commentary - Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**Deuteronomy 6:19 by driving out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken.**

- Ex 23:28-30 Nu 33:52-53 Jdg 2:1-3 Jdg 3:1-4
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Exodus 23:28-30 "I will send hornets ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you. 29 "I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. 30 "I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.

Numbers 33:52-53 then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their figured stones, and destroy all their molten images and demolish all their high places; 53 and you shall take possession of the land and live in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it.

Judges 2:1-3 Now the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you, 2and as for you, you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed Me; what is this you have done? 3"Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they will become as thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you.'"

Judges 3:1-4 Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to test Israel by them (that is, all who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan; 2only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it formerly). 3These nations are: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites who lived in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. 4They were for testing Israel, to find out if they would obey the commandments of the LORD, which He had commanded their fathers through Moses.

**by driving out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken** - The possession of the land was not just "let go, let God," for Israel had the responsibility of actively **driving out** their enemies. The **Septuagint** translate driving out with the rare verb **ekdioko** which means to literally to chase away, drive away or banish (1 Th 2:15, Lk 11:49). **Ekdioko** is using tactics that cause the departure of someone from a place. God's "tactics" are not described, but only the fact that He would drive out Israel's enemies from the promised land. Once again God's sovereign power in **driving out** their **enemies** did not relieve Israel of responsibility to fight against them and conquer them. In fact we see in the book of Judges that while some tribes (e.g. Judah did utterly destroy the Canaanites - Jdg 1:17-19+. Caleb in Jdg 1:20+), other tribes failed to drive out the pagan residents in their inheritance (read the repeated refrain "did not drive out" in Jdg 1:21, 27-28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34-35+)

**Driving out (01920)(hadaph)** means to thrust, drive, push, push away, push down, cast away, expel, depose. Hadaph was used of literally pushing someone resulting in a fatality (Nu 35:20, 22) Of literally shoving one away (2 Ki 4:27). Yahweh drives out Israel's enemies (Dt 6:19, Dt 9:4, Josh 23:5) so that they could possess their covenant land inheritance. In Pr 10:3, the verb conveys the figurative nuance of thwarting something. Hadaph is used to refer to the cruel treatment the Israelites experienced at the hands of their wicked leaders (Ezek 34:21).

**Hadaph** - 11v - depose(1), driven(2), driving(1), push(1), push her away(1), pushed(2), reject(1), thrust(2), thrust them down(1).

Num. 35:20; Num. 35:22; Deut. 6:19; Deut. 9:4; Jos. 23:5; 2 Ki. 4:27; Job 18:18; Prov. 10:3; Isa. 22:19; Jer. 46:15; Ezek. 34:21

**Deuteronomy 6:20 "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which the LORD our God commanded you?'**

- **when** De 6:7 Ex 12:26 Ex 13:14 Jos 4:6,7,21-24 Pr 22:6
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## TRANSMISSION OF DIVINE INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTERITY

**Merrill** - It is crucial with the passing of time that descendants of people who have participated in or witnessed events that have

been fundamental to their origin and that explain their unique destiny should be continually reminded of those events lest they lose their sense of history and meaning. This is all the more true of ancient Israel, for no other people had been called to such a significant mission, one that enveloped within it the very salvation of humankind. Israel must therefore recall its history and pass along its facts and value to generations yet to come. The way this was to be done was through the recitation of God's saving deeds in the past ([New American Commentary - Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**When your son asks you in time to come - When** (not IF) indicates the sons would ask. The children will ask their parents in the future. When you tell a child he or she must do something, their natural reaction is "Why?" In context these are God's rules and flesh does not like to submit to God's rules, so the children interrogate the parents.

**Saying, 'What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which the LORD our God commanded you**  
Note that what they ask about is the laws **God commanded**.

**Utley** - This is the continuing emphasis on the spiritual, covenantal training of the children (see Dt 4:10). **The unusual aspect of this context** (i.e., Dt 6:20–33) is that the eyewitnesses were dead and their descendants were telling the story. Therefore, this may have become a liturgical formula (i.e., “when your children ask ... you shall say ...,” Ex. 12:26, 27; 13:14–15; Deut. 6:20–25; Josh. 4:6–7, 21–24).

**Deuteronomy 6:21 then you shall say to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us from Egypt with a mighty hand.**

- Ex 20:2 Ne 9:9,10 Ps 136:10-12 Isa 51:1 Jer 32:20,21 Ro 6:17,18 Eph 2:11,12
- **We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt:** De 5:6,15 15:15 26:5-9
- **LORD brought us from Egypt with a mighty hand:** Ex 3:19 Ex 13:3
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 13:3 Moses said to the people, “Remember this day in which you went out from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand the LORD brought you out from this place. And nothing leavened shall be eaten

## GOD'S MIGHTY HAND OF OMNIPOTENT POWER

**Then - Then** is an expression of time which helps mark sequence and can be especially useful in prophetic passages. In this specific case the sequence is very clear, for the children question their parents. **Then** the parents are to answer.

**You shall say to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us from Egypt with a mighty hand-**  
The parents answer is to begin by taking the child back to the birth of Israel as nation when Yahweh delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt. Thus the parent is to begin by emphasizing the power of God over the pagan nations and His care and concern for His chosen people Israel.

**Wiersbe** - When our children are ignorant of the past, they will have no hope for the future. [Be Equipped](#)

**NET Note** - Heb “by a strong hand.” The image is that of a warrior who, with weapon in hand, overcomes his enemies. The LORD is commonly depicted as a divine warrior in the Book of Deuteronomy (cf. 5:15; 7:8; 9:26; 26:8).

**Mighty hand** - Most uses (8) are found in Deuteronomy - Exod. 32:11; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 6:21; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 9:26; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 26:8; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34; Dan. 9:15; 1 Pet. 5:6

**Mighty hand and outstretched arm** = Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 26:8; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34; Dan. 9:15

**NIDOTT note** - In a number of places there is a reference to God's **outstretched** hand. The phrase in Exod 6:6, בְּיָדוֹ הַמְּרִוּצָה וּבְעֲשָׂוֹת שֹׁפֵטִים גְּדוּלִים (“with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment”) should be distinguished from the phrase בְּיָדוֹ הַמְּרִוּצָה וּבְעֲשָׂוֹת שֹׁפֵטִים (“by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm”) in Deut 4:34. This latter phrase also occurs in Dt 5:15; 7:19; 11:2; 26:8, and in the literature influenced by Deuteronomy (1 Kgs 8:42; Ps 136:12; Jer 32:21; Ezek 20:33, 34; cf. also 2 Chr 6:32).



“**Mighty hand**” may appear alone (Deut 3:24; 6:21; 7:8; 9:26; Josh 4:24), as may “outstretched arm” (Ex 6:6; Deut 9:29). Both expressions have their counterpart in Egyptian royal typology. Thus, in the Amarna texts there is reference to the Egyptian king’s “strong arm” (zuruḥ dannu; in EA 286:12; 287:27; 288:14, 34) by Abdi-hepa, king of Jerusalem. For the phrase “outstretched arm” (cf. Egyptian pꜣ ḏrt, or pꜣꜥ, or pꜣ ꜥimnt) and the representations of the outstretched arm of kings and gods in Egyptian iconography, see Keel, 158–60.

**Deuteronomy 6:22 'Moreover, the LORD showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household;**

- **showed:** De 4:34 Ex 7:1-12:51 Ex 14:1-31 Ps 135:9
- **before:** De 1:30 Dt 3:21 Dt 4:3 7:19 Ps 58:10,11 Ps 91:8
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Psalms 135:9 He sent signs and wonders into your midst, O Egypt, Upon Pharaoh and all his servants.

Deuteronomy 3:21 “I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, ‘Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so the LORD shall do to all the kingdoms into which you are about to cross.

Exodus 12:12+ ‘For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD.

Exodus 12:29+ Now it came about at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle.

## THE 10 PLAGUES AGAINST EGYPT

**Moreover, the LORD showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household** - The **great and distressing signs and wonders** is clearly a reference to the Ten Plagues (Ex 7:1-12:51 Ex 14:1-31). These plagues were a manifestation of the **mighty hand** (Dt 6:21) of Jehovah against the Egyptians. The tenth and final plague was against the first born sons of the Egyptians and thus was directly against the household of Pharaoh as his oldest son died (Ex 12:12+, Ex 12:29+).

**Utley** - Each one of the plagues was a judgment against one of the Egyptian gods. Apparently these plagues spanned a period of about eighteen months,

#### Related Resources:

- [What was the meaning and purpose of the ten plagues of Egypt? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is there extra-biblical evidence of the ten plagues in Egypt? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Deuteronomy 6:23 He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers.'**

- Ex 13:5
- **to give us:** De 6:10,18 Dt 1:8,35
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 1:8+ ‘See, I have placed the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to them and their descendants after them.’

Deuteronomy 4:30-31 :30) “**When** (NOT IF BUT WHEN = A PROPHETIC PROMISE) you are in **distress** and

all these things have come upon you, in **the latter days** you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice. 31 For the LORD your God is a compassionate God; **He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore ([shaba](#)) to them.**

**Comment** - Yahweh's actions on behalf of the literal nation of Israel at the end of the "**distress**" (the Great Tribulation)

## BROUGHT OUT TO BRING IN

**He brought us out from there in order to bring us in- He brought** Israel **out** of Egyptian bondage, **the iron furnace** (Dt 4:20+), that He might **bring** them into the promised land of milk and honey (see Dt 6:10+). God's sovereign power brought Israel out and this same divine power would bring Israel into the land. Past divine faithfulness should "energize" present human obedience.

**To give us the land which He had sworn ([shaba](#)) to our fathers** - The reason God delivered them and gave the land was because He was faithful to His covenant.

**Shaba** is a key word in this chapter - Dt 6:10, 13, 18, 23.

**Had sworn** (07650) **shaba** from **sheba** = seven) to swear, to take an oath, to make or swear an oath, swearing to someone, thus putting oneself under obligation to someone. In general, **shaba** is employed in contexts such as covenant making, where the parties involved made vows, oaths or promises to one another, in the present case of the Abrahamic Covenant, the vow was made by Yahweh with not contribution by Abraham. Sometimes Yahweh swearing an oath is a bad thing - Dt 1:34-35, Dt 2:14 when Israel refused to enter the Promised Land and when Moses struck the rock (Dt 4:21).

**Uses of shaba in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 1:8; Deut. 1:34; Deut. 1:35; Deut. 2:14; Deut. 4:21; Deut. 4:31; Deut. 6:10; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 6:23; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 7:13; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:18; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 11:9; Deut. 11:21; Deut. 13:17; Deut. 19:8; Deut. 26:3; Deut. 26:15; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:11; Deut. 29:13; Deut. 30:20; Deut. 31:7; Deut. 31:20; Deut. 31:21; Deut. 31:23; Deut. 34:4;

**Deuteronomy 6:24** "So the LORD commanded us to **observe** all these statutes, to **fear** the LORD our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today.

- **to fear:** De 6:2
- **for our good:** De 10:13 Job 35:7,8 Pr 9:12 Isa 3:10 Jer 32:39 Mt 6:33 Ro 6:21,22
- **might:** Dt 4:1,4 8:1,3 Ps 41:2 Ps 66:9 Pr 22:4 Ro 10:5
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FEAR OF GOD IS GOOD

**So-** This is a continuation of the explanation to children's question about why the commands from the LORD? (Dt 6:20+).

**The LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes to fear ([yare](#)) the LORD our God** - NET = "The LORD commanded us to obey all these statutes and to revere Him." Here is the reason God gave them His commands. As the NET version reads there are two reasons, the first is that they would obey them and the second that they would reverentially fear Him.

**For (NAS)** - explains the obedience. **NET** = "**so that**" - gives the purpose for obedience to God and fear of God.

**Our good always and for our survival, as it is today** - Obey the Word and fear the LORD are the keys to enjoying God's goodness and His life preserving hand. **Always** is a combination of Hebrew words for "all" (kol) and "days" (yom) which is used to convey the idea of permanence (cf Dt 5:29; Dt 28:33; Ge. 6:5; Ps. 52:1). **For our good** is similar to the thought already stated twice in Dt 6:3, 18 ("that it may be well with you"). **For our survival** is translated in **NET** as "He may preserve us" (**ESV** = "might preserve us alive." **NLT** - "preserve our lives"). The Hebrew verb is **chayah** to continue in a state of living which is linked with one's obedience to the LORD (cf Lev. 18:5). The Septuagint translates **chayah** with **zao** which means to (present tense - continually) live and in this context speaks of continuing natural physical life. In other words obedience to Yahweh's commands is linked to continuation of one's life.

**Utley** - This verse expresses the benefits to Israel for obedience to God's commandments (1) for their good (cf. Dt 6:18) always and (2) for their survival (Piel INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT) as a people (e.g., Dt 4:1; 8:1; 30:16, 19).

**Survival** (preserve or keep alive) ([02421](#)) (**chayah**) means to have life, to live, to be alive, to keep alive. Causative to *revive* :- keep alive. Physical life originally came from God (Ge 2:7) but sin brought physical death as every man's experience. The fruit of the tree of life would have endowed man with immortality (Ge 3:22). God continues to be the source of life (Ps 36:9; Ps 139:13ff.) and the Lord of life and death (Nu 27:16; Dt. 32:39; Job 12:10). Psalm 119 employs this word to say that God's Word preserves life (all the following have the "prayer" from the psalmist to "revive me" Ps. 119:25, Ps 119:37, Ps 119:40, Ps 119:88, cf Ezek 37:5, Isa 57:15 = "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to **revive** the spirit of the lowly And to **revive** the heart of the contrite."). Genesis often uses the word when people and animals are kept alive that otherwise would perish (Ge 6:19, 20; Ge 19:19; 47:25) Joseph declares " "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to **preserve** many people **alive**. (specifically in context the predecessors of the nation of Israel)" (Ge 50:20). Chaya is used in the genealogies of Genesis (Gen. 5:3-30; 11:11-26). **chayah** to instructs hearers to obey a command in order to live - "“Let your heart hold fast my words; Keep my commandments and live;”(Pr. 4:4).

In the Qal (simple) form, the verb occurs some 120 times with the meaning "to remain alive" (Ex 1:16; Pr 4:4; Isa. 55:3). The imperative form functions as an optative in the construction "Long live the king!" (1 Sa 10:24). Life is sustained by one's relationship to Yahweh. Those who live before Yahweh or by his laws will remain alive (Lev. 18:5). Finally, one may be revived, as a corpse was revived by coming into contact with Elisha's bones (2 Ki. 13:21). The same nuances are attested in the Piel (intensive) form, as one can be preserved (Ex 1:17) or revived (Hos. 6:2). A special nuance of the Piel is "to grow grain" (Hos. 14:7). The phrase is parallel to "blossom like a vine," and both expressions are similes that describe how the righteous will flourish in the protective shade of Yahweh. The Hiphil (causative) form appears in the same two prime nuances, "to preserve" or "to keep alive" (Josh. 2:13) and "to revive" (Isa. 57:15).

**Chayah in Deuteronomy (13 verses)** - Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:33; Deut. 4:42; Deut. 5:24; Deut. 5:26; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:3; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 19:4; Deut. 19:5; Deut. 20:16; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:19; Deut. 32:39; Deut. 33:6;

Chayah - 257v - alive(3), alive should not live(1), came to life(1), come to life(3), come alive(1), give life(2), gives me life(1), healed(1), keep(1), keep him alive(1), keep his alive(1), keep the alive(1), keep them alive(4), keep you alive(1), keep alive(3), keep...alive(2), kept me alive(1), kept alive(1), leave(2), leave alive(1), live(120), lived(42), lives(5), make alive(1), makes alive(1), nourished(1), preserve(3), preserve his life(1), preserve...alive(1), preserves the lives(1), raise(1), recover(4), recovered(1), recovery(1), remained alive(1), repaired(1), restored to life(4), revive(20), revived(6), save(2), save his life(1), saved(1), saved our lives(1), saving(1), spare(3), spared(2), stay alive(1), surely live(9), surely recover(2), survival(1), survive(2), survived(1). Gen. 3:22; Gen. 5:3; Gen. 5:5; Gen. 5:6; Gen. 5:7; Gen. 5:9; Gen. 5:10; Gen. 5:12; Gen. 5:13; Gen. 5:15; Gen. 5:16; Gen. 5:18; Gen. 5:19; Gen. 5:21; Gen. 5:25; Gen. 5:26; Gen. 5:28; Gen. 5:30; Gen. 6:19; Gen. 6:20; Gen. 7:3; Gen. 9:28; Gen. 11:11; Gen. 11:12; Gen. 11:13; Gen. 11:14; Gen. 11:15; Gen. 11:16; Gen. 11:17; Gen. 11:18; Gen. 11:19; Gen. 11:20; Gen. 11:21; Gen. 11:22; Gen. 11:23; Gen. 11:24; Gen. 11:25; Gen. 11:26; Gen. 12:12; Gen. 12:13; Gen. 17:18; Gen. 19:19; Gen. 19:20; Gen. 19:32; Gen. 19:34; Gen. 20:7; Gen. 25:7; Gen. 27:40; Gen. 31:32; Gen. 42:2; Gen. 42:18; Gen. 43:8; Gen. 45:7; Gen. 45:27; Gen. 47:19; Gen. 47:25; Gen. 47:28; Gen. 50:20; Gen. 50:22; Exod. 1:16; Exod. 1:17; Exod. 1:18; Exod. 1:22; Exod. 19:13; Exod. 22:18; Exod. 33:20; Lev. 18:5; Lev. 25:35; Lev. 25:36; Num. 4:19; Num. 14:38; Num. 21:8; Num. 21:9; Num. 22:33; Num. 24:23; Num. 31:15; Num. 31:18; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:33; Deut. 4:42; Deut. 5:24; Deut. 5:26; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:3; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 19:4; Deut. 19:5; Deut. 20:16; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:19; Deut. 32:39; Deut. 33:6; Jos. 2:13; Jos. 5:8; Jos. 6:17; Jos. 6:25; Jos. 9:15; Jos. 9:20; Jos. 9:21; Jos. 14:10; Jdg. 8:19; Jdg. 15:19; Jdg. 21:14; 1 Sam. 2:6; 1 Sam. 10:24; 1 Sam. 20:31; 1 Sam. 27:9; 1 Sam. 27:11; 2 Sam. 1:10; 2 Sam. 8:2; 2 Sam. 12:3; 2 Sam. 16:16; 1 Ki. 1:25; 1 Ki. 1:31; 1 Ki. 1:34; 1 Ki. 1:39; 1 Ki. 17:22; 1 Ki. 18:5; 1 Ki. 20:31; 1 Ki. 20:32; 2 Ki. 1:2; 2 Ki. 4:7; 2 Ki. 5:7; 2 Ki. 7:4; 2 Ki. 8:1; 2 Ki. 8:5; 2 Ki. 8:8; 2 Ki. 8:9; 2 Ki. 8:10; 2 Ki. 8:14; 2 Ki. 10:19; 2 Ki. 11:12; 2 Ki. 13:21; 2 Ki. 14:17; 2 Ki. 18:32; 2 Ki. 20:1; 2 Ki. 20:7; 1 Chr. 11:8; 2 Chr. 23:11; 2 Chr. 25:25; Neh. 2:3; Neh. 4:2; Neh. 5:2; Neh. 6:11; Neh. 9:6; Neh. 9:29; Est. 4:11; Job 7:16; Job 14:14; Job 21:7; Job 33:4; Job 36:6; Job 42:16; Ps. 22:26; Ps. 22:29; Ps. 30:3; Ps. 33:19; Ps. 41:2; Ps. 49:9; Ps. 69:32; Ps. 71:20; Ps. 72:15; Ps. 80:18; Ps. 85:6; Ps. 89:48; Ps. 118:17; Ps. 119:17; Ps. 119:25; Ps. 119:37; Ps. 119:40; Ps. 119:50; Ps. 119:77; Ps. 119:88; Ps. 119:93; Ps. 119:107; Ps. 119:116; Ps. 119:144; Ps. 119:149; Ps. 119:154; Ps. 119:156; Ps. 119:159; Ps. 119:175; Ps. 138:7; Ps. 143:11; Prov. 4:4; Prov. 7:2; Prov. 9:6; Prov. 15:27; Eccl. 6:3; Eccl. 6:6; Eccl. 7:12; Eccl. 11:8; Isa. 7:21; Isa. 26:14; Isa. 26:19; Isa. 38:1; Isa. 38:9; Isa. 38:16; Isa. 38:21; Isa. 55:3; Isa. 57:15; Jer. 21:9; Jer. 27:12; Jer. 27:17; Jer. 35:7; Jer. 38:2; Jer. 38:17; Jer. 38:20; Jer. 49:11; Lam. 4:20; Ezek. 3:18; Ezek. 3:21; Ezek. 13:18; Ezek. 13:19; Ezek. 13:22; Ezek. 16:6; Ezek. 18:9; Ezek. 18:13; Ezek. 18:17; Ezek. 18:19; Ezek. 18:21; Ezek. 18:22; Ezek. 18:23; Ezek. 18:24; Ezek. 18:27; Ezek. 18:28; Ezek. 18:32; Ezek. 20:11; Ezek. 20:13; Ezek. 20:21; Ezek. 20:25; Ezek. 33:10; Ezek. 33:11; Ezek. 33:12; Ezek. 33:13; Ezek. 33:15; Ezek. 33:16; Ezek. 33:19; Ezek. 37:3; Ezek. 37:5; Ezek. 37:6; Ezek. 37:9; Ezek. 37:10; Ezek. 37:14; Ezek. 47:9; Hos. 6:2; Hos. 14:7; Amos 5:4; Amos 5:6; Amos 5:14; Hab. 2:4; Hab. 3:2; Zech. 1:5; Zech. 10:9; Zech. 13:3

**Deuteronomy 6:25 "It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us.**

- De 24:13 Lev 18:5 Ps 106:30-31 119:6 Pr 12:28 Eze 20:11 Lu 10:28,29 Ro 10:3,5,6 Ga 3:12 Jas 2:10
- [Deuteronomy 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Resources:

Genesis 15:6 Then he **believed** in the LORD; and He **reckoned it to him as righteousness**.

Deuteronomy 24:13 "When the sun goes down you shall surely return the pledge to him, that he may sleep in his cloak and bless you; and it will be **righteousness for you before the LORD your God**.

Leviticus 18:5 'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the LORD.

Psalms 106:30-31 Then Phinehas stood up and interposed, And so the plague was stayed. 31 And **it was reckoned to him for righteousness**, To all generations forever.

Ezekiel 20:11 "I gave them My statutes and informed them of My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he will live.

James 2:10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.

**It will be righteousness for us if we are careful**([shamar](#) -watch, guard; Lxx - [phulasso](#) - "post a sentry"-present tense - continually) **to observe** ([asah](#) - to do; Lxx = [poieo](#) in present tense - continually) **all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us** - NET = "We will be innocent if we carefully keep all these commandments before the LORD our God, just as he demands." The way to attain **righteousness** was taking care to **observe all His commandment**. Righteousness was linked with obedience. Of course when compared with the NT this righteousness linked with obedience does not equate with the righteousness Yahweh imputes to a sinner who places their faith in Messiah.

**MacArthur** - A true and personal relationship with God that would be manifest in the lives of the people of God. There was no place for legalism or concern about the external since the compelling motive for this righteousness was to be love for God (v. 5). (MacArthur Study Bible)

**ESB Study Bible** - This need not mean "righteousness as merited legal status," which would clash with God's gracious initiative (Dt 6:20-24; cf. 7:6-8). In context, the words mean "righteousness as the right response of obedience to God's covenant."

**Kline** - This verse does not present a works principle of salvation. The stress falls on the function of law as disclosing the standard of conduct which is righteous in God's sight, a love for which is prerequisite to beatitude but not the meritorious ground of such a state. (Wycliffe Bible Commentary)

**Guzik** - If one will obtain true righteousness through the law, it is simple (though not easy): observe all the commandments. But if you are lacking in observing any commandment, then you need the atonement of a Perfect Sacrifice – Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

**Merrill** - Then in strongly evangelical terms Moses equated faithful compliance with the covenant to righteousness (v. 25). The word used here is *šēdāqâ*, the very one applied to Abraham as a result of his having believed in the Lord (Gen 15:6). Later Judaism wrongly concluded that covenant keeping was the basis for righteousness rather than an expression of faithful devotion. But true covenant keeping in the final analysis is a matter of faith, not merely of works and ritual. Thus the central feature of the covenant stipulations is their providing a vehicle by which genuine saving faith might be displayed (cf. Deut 24:13; Hab 2:4; Rom 1:17; 4:1–5; Gal 3:6–7). ([New American Commentary - Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**Utley on if we are careful to observe** - Notice the repeated conditional nature of these promises -- (1) **"if we are careful"**— cf Dt 4:6, 9, 40; 5:1, 10, 12, 29, 32; 6:2, 3, 17 (twice) (2) **"to observe"**—cf. Dt 4:6; 5:1, 15, 27, 32; 6:1, 3, 18, 24, 25.

**NET Note** - The term "commandment" (*מִצְוָה*, *mitsvah*), here in the singular, refers to the entire body of covenant stipulations.

**Righteousness** ([06666](#)) [tsedaqah](#) from **tsedeq** = rightness, righteousness) conveys the idea of that which is straight and so one who is upright or righteous is one who walks a straight path. The root thought is that which conforms to an ethical or moral standard. **Tsedaqah in Genesis 15:6** - right standing in the sight of God was imputed or placed on Abraham's spiritual account.

**Uses of tsedaqah in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 6:25; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 24:13; Deut. 33:21;