

SEVENTH DAY  BAPTIST®

***This Week in the Word***

*Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Ps 119:89.*



***Love and Devotion***  
**Study Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

**Lesson 1, December 1st, 2018.**

**Key Verse**

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:*

*Deut. 6:4 - 6*

**INTRODUCTION**

This Study Lesson is a particularly interesting one since it addresses people that were now free from many years of wandering in the wilderness and were now being prepared for a incredibly wonderful new land, called a land of milk and honey. So if you are now leaving a situation which was not very pleasant and were heading for new responsibilities, new challenges, and or a new approach to life, as well as a new way of life this Lesson is for you.

Note carefully that these people we now examine did not get the Promised Land when this instruction lesson was posed to them for they were not at this point ready for the land. They have to be prepared. They have to grow up. They had to become a completely different type of people. But of course we know that they would stumble around, learn to face challenges and grow and become the kind of nation God wanted them to be.

So think of yourself and how you need to be matured as well when you accept Christ and remember how you will have to work through difficult circumstances and learn to trust Him and lean on His Wisdom. Even if you are a Christian you have to realize that you are freed from particular habits or states of bondage that you are in and from time to time, maybe on a daily basis, you have to be prepared for the symbolically new “land” or new environment that you now face.

Before you are ready to leave on your new adventure and to an endearing environment which might not even be massively different from the one you're currently in, you would have to be made ready to leave. Your mindset would have to be altered, even if only a little bit. You will have to be changed.

So now, even if you are eager, or passionate and excited about making changes in your life, and you can't wait to see what God has in store for you, and you're ready to press forward, you can learn something about the right attitude to have, and you will have to learn how to look to God to fulfill His promises. Whether you like it or not you have to learn that you cannot move forward if God's presence does not go before you. You have enemies **outside of you** as well as inside you, for remember you face the world, the flesh, and the devil. Don't forget any of these enemies. So remember what one writer says:

**“This is the rhythm of a life that follows God; resting, acting, and expecting God to fulfill his promises”.**

You must face challenges and any changes in life with God.

Just before his death the mighty prophet and leader Moses wrote and spoke these words to the nation of Israel which by this time was comprised of a new generation of people. Their parents had died in the wilderness because of their sins. Numbers 14: 20-25 tells us that the people of Israel chose fear over faith and trust in God. They even tried to stone Caleb and Joshua for even suggesting that they should. So God became angry and Moses had to step in and plead to God to forgive them and not destroy them, for he knew the terror of the Lord. But with the intercession God forgave them but He made it clear that there would be still consequences to their disbelief and He sent them to turn back toward the Red Sea, and He explained that He would make them wander in the desert for 40 years. Everyone 20 years of age and over would die before He let them cross the border into the Promise Land. Only the children under age 20 at the time would be allowed to cross over into Canaan.

The children of those that left Egypt was now poised to enter the Promised Land and Moses gave them these last great words before he went up into Mount Nebo, looked into the Promised Land and died as God promised. He was prevented from going into the Land because his disobedience to God at Kadesh. There the people murmured against God because they lacked water and God instructed Moses to speak to a 'rock' nearby from which water would flow for the people. Moses instead struck the rock twice with his rod instead of speaking to the rock. We are later told that the rock was really Christ. It was obviously the symbol for Christ for only He had been keeping them, providing for them and would give them the water of life. Moses behaviour dishonoured God before the people.

Be careful what you do in the service of God. You're not to try to take the glory even in the slightest way for yourself and to pretend that you are bigger and more important than you really are. There are consequences for the behaviour of the servants of God.

Moses' task was now to recapitulate all the words of God and to show the people waiting to enter the land of Canaan what God required of them. They were only children when forty years earlier their parents stood at Kadesh Barnea on the border of Canaan and refused to enter the land. Once

again they were on the threshold of Canaan and as they prepared for entry Moses discharged his final responsibility. He reminded them how God cared for them during the wilderness years, watched over them with a loving hand, protected them with a pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day, brought water from the rock to quench their thirst, gave them manna which sustained them and protected them from their enemies.

Moses had to restate their Constitution document, namely, the Ten Commandments which covered God's laws on divorce, idolatry and sorcery and other sins, and the penalties for following the terrible and wicked practices of the tribes now living in the land of Canaan. In that Constitution God laid out all the principles, stating that He was the Sovereign Lord and God and they were His people

We must remember that the nation of Israel at this time consisted of a young population who were now going into a land where the people had given themselves over completely to lewd, obscene, and immoral practices. Canaan was a violent, evil and sex-saturated society and everyone indulged in the vilest of practices.

God expected that His people would enter this sex- mad and idolatry craved land and yet completely keep themselves from these horrible Canaanite practices while living as holy people.

It is important to note that the events and reactions, the trials and difficulties of the people of Israel as they traveled out of Egypt through the wilderness toward Canaan, are much like our problems and obstacles. We like Israel have the same types of enemies, the same types of difficulties, and the same types of victories as we journey in our spiritual life. Therefore the great lessons to be learned in the book of Deuteronomy have a direct relationship to our life.

One of the main themes in this book revolves around man's great weakness and ability, though he belongs to God. He cannot do anything in himself to please God. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, the mind of any man that is set on the flesh cannot please God and hence the recurring bad attitudes in Israel, and our recurring bad attitude and problems.

However we see the beautiful next accompanying theme of Deuteronomy, a theme which presents us with the fact that God will always abide with His people and has provided for us the answer to the demands of His laws. He lives in us and with us to provide the strength to meet the demands of His Law.

The instructions from God through Moses were critical for the young people about to enter Canaan. Likewise, it is also relevant to us, for our situation is quite desperate as we live in a society where there are major problems facing adults and children. Don't be surprised when people who claim to be Christians behave exactly like the world and show all kinds of prejudices, racism, greed, violent behaviour, sexual misconduct for this really reflects that professing believers can often be conformed to the world rather than to be completely conformed to God.

Gangs are proliferating, mind- altering and mind- destroying drugs are readily available and in wide use; there are unbelievable pressures to engage in illicit sex and vile and deviant sexual activities. The basic family structure is breaking down and under constant threat. Parents are confused about

what it means to be a parent, and children increasingly look for moral values and guidance from their peers instead of from their parents.

People who say that they are authorities in the society do not speak with one voice. Some advocate one way of behavior while others propose another. Given the conflicting schools of thought in psychology and psychiatry people are confused.

When Christians feel they are forced to set up institutions for Christian education and guard their children by keeping them in a protected environment, this doesn't seem to work at all, for the grown up Christian children resemble those in the world. In fact, the practices in the majority of Christian schools and organizations are not so different from those of secular institutions.

Clearly in our generation the plumb line is missing. It is a sign of the times.

Many have misinterpreted the Apostle Paul's words in the New Testament that we are "*dead to the law*" and so are ambivalent about the commands declared from Heaven and written on the Tables of stone on Mount Sinai many centuries ago. As a result of the desire to follow the ways of the world we have lost the foundational significance of the Commandments, the statutes, and the judgments of God declared by Moses. These Laws of God tell the nature of the world in which the people of Israel and we in our day live. It also reveals to us our nature.

It cannot be stated too often that The Ten Commandments are essential for human existence. In these Commandments we have all the great themes and issues that men and women must understand, for they deal with all the great issues of life and death, sex family, work, how to treat both our friends and neighbor and how to act and speak.

There is no other guide such as this for Christians, for it is our "tutor" to show us our sins, make us repent, be used by the Holy Spirit to change our way of thinking, so that the Holy Spirit will lead us to Christ, and bring us to acknowledge the love of our Heavenly Father.

We must never forget what we were created for, and who created us.

God the Father created us in His own 'image' and in many respects made us like Himself. He has given us directions as to what He is like and how we are to be, since we are made in His image. But we can only do this if we follow His owner's manual, for He, the manufacturer or Creator, has made us in a certain way, and we would work best if we follow the Creator's instruction. Every mechanic or appliance repair person certainly knows that wisdom requires that he or she must follow the manufacturers' manual.

Wisdom says we should do the same and follow God's Ten Commandments, for that is our Constitution. All the laws of God flow from that Constitution and are consistent with the ten Commandments. One writer in fact makes the very important point that we often miss:

**The Commandments are very much still a subject in 6:1-11:32. Are, as 6:1a puts it. Perhaps it is *the commandment* (singular!) that is the point of this larger unit since many commentators believe it to be an extended exhortation or someone based on the first commandment. Indeed, 6:5 can be seen as the positive (re) articulation of the prohibition against other gods... Note, first, that despite the singular "commandment" of 6:1a, Moses (who preaches Deuteronomy as**

his valedictory address) immediately glosses that singular with plural subjects “statutes and ordinances”. These many “statutes and ordinances” can nevertheless be glossed as a singular “commandment”, and the singular “commandment” can be understood as many and various “statutes and ordinances” which in Deuteronomy almost certainly refers to the detailed legislation in 12:1-26:15”.

Note therefore that the many laws are called Torah, “law” and we are later told that the many laws in Scripture can be put into one, called the “*first and greatest commandment*” with “*the second like unto it*”.

So when the Pharisees asked Jesus about divorce and how the marriage relationship should be, in Matthew 19:3-6 He went right back to the beginning, to creation, pointing out to the Pharisees that they should put themselves in line with what God intended for men.

But unfortunately in Israel then, as it is today, something was missing, and Moses told Israel and tells us to go back to basics.

One writer gives us some examples of how seriously we have deviated from wisdom and how we have lost the way to properly interact with neighbors and others. He states:

**“The idea that marriage and parenting go together is widely disclaimed today. For many, being a parent has nothing to do with being married, and hasn’t at any point in their lifetime. The notion of family consisting of a father, mother, and children is aggressively denied today by many. The definitions have changed: families consist of whatever an individual determines.**

**People do not look at life with agreement, let alone act on that agreement. Not long ago it was true in this country (the U.S) that abortions were performed in secret, away from public view. They were against the law, and were viewed in shame. Now, however, it is those who rescue babies from abortion that have to meet in secret. It is they who are hounded by the courts and the law for their behavior. The world does not look the same; there is no agreement to what is right.**

**A similar trend is observable among educational institutions. Great universities in this country were founded by people who loved the word of God, not only to extend their knowledge of Scripture, but their knowledge of everything in the worship of God. There was a recognition that God is the Creator and that all creation is good and should be studied. Unfortunately, we live in a world today where most organized educational institutions are terrified of biblical faith and view it as intellectual poison. For example, they see public prayer in an educational setting as a menace that must be rejected.”**

Our Study Scripture gives us a great model for all of life including a model of a godly family structure. Moses is exhorting this redeemed community where the people were committed to walk in the ways of God, and he wants to point them to God their Creator and encourage them to walk in obedience to the word of God. This is the only way to live.

He reminded them of who they were, and that the words of their Creator are words of life. Without them they would never succeed and be blessed and so he called for their obedience to the glory of God their Lord and Master.

We should remember that these Old Testament principles, warning, and exhortations were given to Israel to serve as examples for us. Romans 15:4 makes that abundantly clear and so we must be engaged with God's commandments.

In addition we know that non-Christians have many questions about the issues of life and desperately need to hear the biblical answers to these questions. They might misunderstand us and reject what we're saying but we need to present ourselves as a source of hope on these very difficult problems, including those of marriage and sexuality.

Moses pointed this new generation of Israelites and us, as one writer states:

**“.. into a whole new subject: the need to become godly parents and grandparents. In doing that he will help generation after generation get a handle on some very foundational spiritual truth that all begins in the hearts of parents.**

**They are to fear, love, thank, and worship the Lord their God, and in so doing not only will they have wholesome lives, but they will leave a deep spiritual impression on their children and grandchildren.”**

### **THE TEXT**

**Verse 1.** Moses announces the Commandments which are to follow, telling Israel why he was announcing them and showing how Israel would benefit from following them. The words used describe everything that Jehovah commanded. Moses was not teaching his own words. This of course is an example for all the teachers of the word of God.

These commandments of course remind Israel that Yahweh was their only God, the only living God and the only righteous God.

The Commandments were spelled out in the books given to them by Moses; Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy. The Ten Commandments should be followed, and the decrees and laws showed the ways that these Ten Commandments were supposed to be applied in the society.

**Verse 2.** These words of God were given and communicated to them, so that they would fear God. This fear would show itself in their observance of every one of His Commandments. They should keep what they had been taught. The fear of God should be followed not only in the parents but in the sons and in every succeeding generation.

Note that the blessing of a long life was placed in front of them immediately. They were not being obedient simply for the sake of obedience. Personal blessings were promised not as an end in itself but because of the relationship with the Lord. They were in this covenant relationship of love with their God.

We must remember that in the minds of the people, God was an awesome and powerful God. He had come to them at Sinai with earthquakes, darkness, thunder and lightning which caused them great unease. But Moses was not speaking of terror but of the “fear of God” that evoked a feeling of reverence, awe, and respect, because they knew God was a loving God that offered them a beautiful land and a land flowing with milk and honey, joy, peace and eternal happiness.

God had before promised them life. They were asked by God to love Him and be thankful to Him.

**Verse 3.** They should be obedient, so that they could enjoy the good things in Canaan. They were in the Covenant and God promised those in covenant with Him that they would have prosperity. God promised the patriarchs that the nation would be increased. It would go well with them and they would have many children, and their livestock and possessions would increase.

Note the call to listen and heed the words of God. Hearing would protect them from a hardening heart.

This language is in the Hebrew imperative that we would probably say Listen Up! This of course means obey. In fact, what would happen to them, their destiny, would depend on obedience to these one great commandment. This commandment follows now.

Note also that the words were addressed to people obviously in the role of parent. This was done because these young people about to enter Canaan had the responsibility of parents. They would have to make sure that the faith would be instilled in the hearts of their children.

Obviously this would be one of the greatest priorities in their life, and in the lives of their children, who would have to learn that it would be important to listen, to hear, to know the word of God and to transmit it to their own children.

This teaching, this foundational truth would be a great comfort to the people, for they would continue to live in total dependence on their God, who had proved Himself as trustworthy and faithful on many previous occasion. It is with this in mind that Jesus stated in Matthew 26:25-33 *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear.*

*Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes. O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?”*

*For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.*

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

*Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”*

Fear of God produces respect. It produces worship.

**Verse 4.** These are the words of what is called the Shema, the classic Hebrew confession of faith. Moses presents an exposition of the first commandment. He shows that Yahweh is the one true God and because of this all must be completely devoted to Him. Yahweh is one absolute God.

It should be pointed out here that the scholars tell us that it is possible to understand this verse in several ways. One writer comments on this as follows:

**“Jehovah never denotes merely a mode in which the true God is revealed or appears, but God as the absolute, unconditioned, or God, according to the absolute independence and constancy of His actions. 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 also signify that in the future He will be acknowledged as the one absolute God, as King over all the earth.

This clause not merely precludes polytheism, but also syncretism, which reduces the one absolute God to a national deity, a Baal (Hosea 2:18), and in fact every form of theism or 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.”

There are other comments that might be useful to pay attention to such as this comment that follows by one writer:

“It is possible to understand verse 4 in several ways, but the most popular renderings of the final clause are:

- (1) The Lord our God, the Lord is one (so NIV), or
- (2) The Lord our God is one Lord.

The former stresses the uniqueness or exclusivity of Yahweh as Israel's God and so may be paraphrased

‘Yahweh our God is the one and only Yahweh’ or the like.

This takes the noun *echad* (‘one’) in the sense of ‘unique’ or ‘solitary’, a meaning that is certainly well attested.

The latter translation focuses on the unity or wholeness of the Lord. This is not in opposition to the later Christian doctrine of the Trinity but rather functions here as a witness to the self-consistency of Yahweh who is not ambivalent and who has a single purpose or objective for creation and history.

The ideas clearly overlap to provide an unmistakable basis for monotheistic faith. Yahweh is indeed a unity, but beyond that he is the only God. For this reason the exhortation of verse five has practical significance.”

It might be helpful to briefly recount here why the statement the **LORD is one** does not contradict the truth of the Trinity or the Tri-unity as some like to call it. One writer examines some of the proofs:

“The Hebrew word for *one* is *echad*, which speaks most literally of a compound unity, instead of using the Hebrew word *yacheed*, which speaks of an absolute unity or singularity (Genesis 22:2 and some 25: 16.

The very first use of *echad* in the Bible is in Genesis 1: 5; “So the evening and the morning were the first day”. Even here, we see a unity (one day) with the idea of plurality (made up of evening and morning).

Genesis 2: 24 uses *echad* in saying *the two shall become one flesh*. Again, the idea of a unity (one flesh), making a plurality (the two).

**In Exodus 26:6 and 11, the 50 gold clasps are used to hold the curtains together, so the tent would be *one (echad)*-- a unity (one) made up of a plurality (the many parts of the tabernacle). In Ezekiel 37:17 the LORD tells Ezekiel to join together two sticks (prophetically representing Ephraim and Judah) into *one (echad)* , speaking again of a unity (one stick) made up of a plurality (the two sticks).**

**There is no way that *echad* has the exclusive idea of an absolute singularity; the idea of One God in Three Persons fits just fine with the term *echad*.**

**The LORD our God: in addition, even the name of God in this line suggests the plurality of God. The Hebrew word is *Elohim* and grammatically, it is a plural word used as if it were singular-- the firms and pronouns used with it are generally in the plural”.**

The foundation of our faith therefore is that Yahweh is one God, that He's the only living God. The others who people claim to be gods are false gods. Yahweh will remain as God of Israel in the days ahead even when they are exposed to all these other false gods.

God is unique and when He promises no one can revoke that promise. When He warns nobody can provide any comfort or protection from that warning.

It is not that there are many gods and that God is simply first and the most powerful. This verse teaches us that God is the one and only God. He is therefore powerful and unique. This carries with it a profound meaning.

**Verse 5.** The response to this living, all powerful, unique God is laid out and it is with love coming from a pure heart, completely trusting and obedient. God is “*thy God*” and hence those in the covenant give complete and unrestrained love.

This command from the living God who is the Creator, and to whom we owe everything is actually an act of grace and condescension, for we should marvel that God who is so completely different from us would want us to love Him. We really have nothing else to offer Him, for we have nothing of ourselves that is valuable. Our value lies solely in the fact that He has declared that He regards us as sons and daughters who are precious to Him.

It is logical that we be taught to love the One that has given us everything and that cares for us, for in ourselves we do not even have this wisdom. One writer states:

**“We must highly esteem him, be well pleased that there is such a Being, well pleased in all his attributes, and relations to us: our desire must be toward him, our delight in him, our dependence upon him, and to him we must be entirely devoted. It must be a constant pleasure to us to think of him, hear from him, speak to him, and serve him. We must love him.**

- 1. As the Lord, the best of beings, most excellent and amiable in himself.**
- 2. As our God, a God in covenant with us, our Father, and the most kind and bountiful of friends and benefactors. We are also commanded to love God with all our heart, and soul, and might; that is, we must love him.**
- 3. With a sincere love, not in word and tongue only, saying we love him when our hearts are not with him, but inwardly, and in truth, solacing ourselves in him.**
- 4. With a strong love: the heart must be carried out toward him with great ardor and fervency of affection.**

5. **With a superlatives love; we must love God above any creature whatsoever, and love nothing beside him but what we love for him and insubordination to him.**
6. **With an intelligent love.”**

The **heart** was regarded as the seat of the intellect and was regarded as we regard the mind, and the rational part of man. This was the seat of the emotion and of love in particular.

The **soul** was the “being”, the essential person. It was the invisible part of the individual including the will and the sensibilities.

The **strength** was of course the physical side of man with its functions and capacities.

This therefore was a call for unreserved, wholehearted commitment. There could be no hardheartedness, a splitting of love in the heart between this thing and that. Love of God should as one writer puts it, “**pervade the entire self-consciousness**”.

Jesus quoted this verse in Matthew 22:37-38, Mark 12: 28-30, and Luke 10:27 as the first and greatest of all God's Commandments, and the commandment on which hung all the law the prophets. One writer comments on this as follows:

**“Even the gospel knows no higher commandment than this. The distinction between the new covenant and the old consist simply in this, that the love of God which the gospel demands of its professors, is more intensive and cordial than that which the law of Moses demanded of the Israelites according to the gradual unfolding of the love of God Himself, which was displayed in a much grander and more glorious form in the gift of His only begotten Son for our redemption, than in the redemption of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt”.**

**Verse 6.** Deuteronomy now forces Israel as well as believers today to face the fact that there is no substitute for the home. As important as the secular schools, Sabbath school, Sunday school, church organizations, Christian youth clubs, or any other activities are, the home is the place where the Scriptures need to be taught, where children are to be taught how to interpret, understand, and face the problems of life.

What are parents to teach children? What is the curriculum?

It is simply stated in verses 4 and 5. That is the basis of the curriculum and it centers on the fact that God is the Creator, the beginning of life, and that men are to have a relationship of love and trustful obedience to God.

The young adults now poised on the border of Canaan, and the children they would have, are the ones that would now face choices. They would have to look around them at the place in which they lived and the divine instruction would confront them.

So what is the difference between a godly or Christian home and a secular home? You might have good understanding in the secular home about ‘good’ parenting techniques, there might be constant teaching, a recognition of the need for the development of good personal relationships there, and so on. The children there might be well adjusted, quite moral, and able to cope with life.

But the Christian home must be better for it teaches about God and man's relationship to God. This is the beginning of wisdom according to Proverbs 9:10 and Psalm 110:10. This places the children in this home on the path to joyful eternity. The Christian home teaches about this great, perfectly intelligent Being who sits at the center of all things and who is in perfect control. He is coming one day to judge the *quicks and the dead*. We have a responsibility to Him and we must obey and trust Him in all the affairs of life.

Unfortunately however Christian homes fall far short of what this book instructs.

A Christian home according to Scripture will teach children that God defines and reveals reality. Man cannot differentiate between illusion and the real thing without wisdom and knowledge of God. He is the only one who can show us truth so that we can understand what is real and what is not.

The truth of God therefore as revealed in verses four and five must first be in the heart of the parents. The place to start is with the parents. One writer puts this unpleasant truth for parents bluntly:

**“Therefore take good heed to yourselves!” That is the place to start-- not with your children, with you.**

**That is saying a tremendous amount. And right at this very point many Christian homes go astray. The moment a child appears in their family a lot of parents succumb to the natural temptation to live for their children.**

**But this passage tells us that we must not do that. Marriage is not brought about in order to raise children. Marriage occurs in order that two people might learn how to relate to one another and to be persons as God intended persons to be.**

**The key to marriage and to a successful home is that parents must realize that children are only there temporarily, that after they are gone the father and mother remain calm and that the factor which heals and holds that home together is that they themselves become what God wants, that they learn to enjoy the privileges of being whole persons, and thus that they see to it that they are not robbed of these privileges by a mistaken enslavement to their own children. There is great wisdom in this passage. It is teaching us that parents do not exist for their children; they exist to be people before God, first of all....**

**The relationship taught by the Scriptures is reflected in this passage in Deuteronomy and many other places. It is God first (or Jesus first, if you like), your self next, and others third. You cannot relate to others until you have learned how to relate to God yourself. How you act toward God is the way you will act toward others. Or, to put it another way, you will treat others exactly the way you regard yourself. You can't treat them any differently. Therefore, if you don't have any respect for yourself, if you haven't learned to be a person and to understand the responsibilities and privileges of personhood before God yourself, you cannot treat anybody else as a person-- including your own children. That is why it must start with you.”**

**Verse 7.** Parents must understand who God is, and then they are to grow in the knowledge of God and continue to learn. This is quite normal and applies to everybody who are to present themselves as good models for the children to follow.

When parents are good models and treat children as gifts from God and regard young people as persons who are to become adults, being trained to move into and to live in the adult world, the children will have a good chance at success.

We are warned that children will live with us in exactly the same way we live with them. If we don't pay attention to our own development, if the relationship between parents are not regarded as important by the parents, and if parents do not develop their own mind and emotions in the way that God wants, and fulfill their talents, the children who see us perform in that way are not very likely to do anything great either.

We are warned thereby that children follow models and not words. We can talk and tell them to do this or to do that, but if the parents do not do what God requires the child won't either.

These principles outlined in Deuteronomy are what will defend the home from the destruction being wreaked upon it. The reality is that the children must be taught that there is one God, one Lord, and the only response to him is to love Him with all our being, for man by nature was made to love. If the children are not taught to love God they will come to love other things and become a slave to those false gods.

The central reason for the living is for human beings to learn of God and it is a tragedy when men and woman begin to love themselves and other things in the place of the Living God. As a result of this truth one writer says:

**“In the gospel we learn for the first time that it is possible for man to love God. This is the central reason for living, the answer to why human beings are on earth-- to learn to love God. Daniel Webster was once asked “What is the greatest thought that ever entered your mind?” And he answered immediately, “My accountability to God!” This is the great thing. If this is true, then it follows that the man or woman who knows how to love God will never go astray in life. And the child who learns to love God will be kept through every testing, every trial, every danger.”**

**Verse 8** continues to reveal the steps which the Holy Spirit has taught parents, so that they can teach children the mighty secret of how to love God.

We are told that first the parent or parents are to make their hearts right with God and to bend their will so that they love God with all their hearts.

Then parents are told to diligently, not belatedly, impart information about God to their children. This is personal instruction. This clearly means that **you, not they**, have a job to do. It is not the job of the church primarily, for this is your task. The church cannot be anything else but a very partial substitute, a supplement.

This responsibility of parents is not transferable.

The entire Scripture must be opened to the children, for children can learn the revelation of God.

Then the Spirit said that we must always be on the lookout for what writers called “**teachable moments**”. This must not mean we must moralize all day long but we are to see life as a living visual aid for teaching.

Jesus himself would draw illustrations for His teachings from the birds, the trees, the flowers, the process of sowing and reaping, the weather, the animals, the children who crowded around him, the timid woman who wanted to be healed but was afraid, the man who climbed up a tree to see him, and more. So we do not have to use verses of Scripture at all times to teach the lessons of Scripture and about God. God has revealed Himself in every area of life and in nature. We talk all the time, when we walk, when we sit, when we lay down. When children are ready for bed we can discuss all kinds of things with them to settle their fears, and increase their expectations about the coming blessings of God.

**Verse 8-9.** We are advised that everything we do must reflect God’s word. We do not have to take this literally as some Jews did by making little boxes in which they put Scripture verses and tied these on their hands and put them on their forehead between their eyes, also tying them to their gates and the door posts.

The language is best interpreted as figurative for God really intends by this to instruct that there must be visible signs of who you are, for you must practice what you preach. Your hands, the things you do, must reflect the fact that you love God and are in His service. Your eyes, your thought life, are to display the fact that your thoughts and attitudes are determined by the love of God. When we are in contact with the world “*your door posts and your gates*”, you’re watching neighbors will see the love of God displayed.

There is not necessarily anything wrong with outward spiritual symbols, but one should be cautious that these do not replace the “doing” of the word. History has shown that the temptation to replace the real with the symbol is ever present and will destroy real spiritual life.

## **CONCLUSION** **THOUGHTS TO LIVE BY**

God has made many great and precious promises to His people.

God promised the fathers many great blessings for the nation of Israel. The treaty between God and the fathers demanded loyalty and prohibited allegiance to other gods. The nation would be put to the test for they would certainly have prosperity, but adversity would come if they forgot God when abundance came.

They were warned that they should always fear the Lord their God and serve Him and not go off to the gods of the pagans. God would then become angry with them and punish them if they ever behaved presumptuously and tempted Him as their fathers had done in the wilderness.

They should **always** be diligent in keeping the commandments, the testimonies and the statutes of the Lord *their* God.

Here is a pointed warning against loving the world. It is true that when men begin to live among people who are more culturally and materially advanced than that to which they are accustomed, they invariably experience profoundly the influence of those cultures. They begin to think in a different way, accept the new philosophical ideas, and especially the religious beliefs and practices despite the fact that these would bring great harm. One writer admits:

**“There is a spiritual principle here: in prosperity people tend to forget God and instead put their trust in material things. This in itself is bad enough, but another probably always results-- we absorb the viewpoints and attitudes of the world around us.**

**This is a warning against losing sight of godly goals, a warning against failing to live purposefully for God.**

**We must never lose sight of why we are here. We are not simply here as earth dwellers to pursue our own selfish goals. Rather we are pilgrims. The minute we lose sight of the ‘pilgrim’ mentality, we are in danger of becoming absorbed with the world.**

**The result is that we fail as parents, because we have first failed as God's children ourselves.”**

To avoid apostasy in the children they are to be told of all the great and mighty miracles and acts that God had done in order to free them from bondage in Egypt and take them into the Promised land.

When the parents constantly worked as instructed to teach the children, the interest of the children into the things of God would be awakened and they themselves would ask why God had given them the commandments, testimonies, and judgments. The children would want to know more. They would inquire what these religious observances meant.

The parents would then have the opportunity to fully explain that they were grateful for God's favors and His mighty deliverance. They would tell the children how the conditions that their ancestors lived in were terrible beyond belief, and that they cried to God to preserve them. God had done them a great favor and had lived up to His promises to the fathers.

God therefore commanded them to do the things that they were doing, for in so doing, God would preserve them. The observances would keep the mighty acts of God before them and these reminders would strengthen them as they faced the hostile pagan world.

This address to the redeemed community stresses the powerful acts of God. When we obey God's commandments we are really marking ourselves out as members of that redeemed community.

We aren't nearly great in ourselves. We have only received the wonderful grace of God. We must therefore realize our responsibility to act appropriately, become the men and women God wants us to be, so that we will be in a position to teach our children the ways of God, so that their character will be formed in a way to please God.

We have been told that we should ourselves love God and be good models for our children. We should as Psalm 1 instructs delight in the Law of the Lord. We have been called out of the world to demonstrate what the law of God teaches. Because we have the Holy Spirit within us we will by the strength of God and His guidance do what His law requires.

## Called to Choose Life

We must recount to ourselves the mighty acts of God in our lives and His great salvation given to us. We must tell our children of the bondage we were in, and of how God rescued us. We must not be ashamed, but must use our experiences to warn our children.

The parents in Israel were told to tell the children of their sad past, and tell them how God in His mercy and grace saved them. Should we or can we do any less?

Let us learn from the Words of Scripture. God told Israel the best way to live and to preserve succeeding generations.

The answers to the problems of life have already been revealed. Our task is to impart the good news to our children and to the rest of the world. God grant us the opportunity to correct our failures and never to repeat our mistakes with our children and grandchildren.