



# Love

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS DEFINED BY LOVE.

**Scripture Passage: Deuteronomy 6:1-9,20-25    Memory Verse: Deuteronomy 6:4-5**

My earliest memories are of my mother telling me about Jesus. Even as a young boy, I knew that Mom loved her Lord, my dad, and me. She taught me about God's love for me, and I gave my life to Christ at an early age due to my parents' influence. Mom and Dad regularly read me Bible stories that helped me understand God's love. Indeed, the Bible affirms that our relationship with God is defined by love. Our loving God ultimately displayed His love for humanity by sending His Son to cover the spiritual debt we could never pay.

In Deuteronomy, Moses assured the Israelites of God's loving commitment to them as they stood across the Jordan River from Canaan. God had established His covenant with Abraham centuries earlier, and He had brought the Israelites to the edge of the promised land. God was giving them the land because He had set His love on them (Deut. 7:7-8).

As you dig into the verses for this session, ask God to remind you just how much He loves you and accept that love for your life each day. Also, ask Him to give you the wisdom you need to help the adults in your Bible study understand that their relationship with God is not defined by their efforts. It's all about His love.



## **Weekly Podcast: Group Leader Training**

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Some decades ago, some parents began putting labels on items around their house. If you visited the home, you might see a label with the word “Curtain” pinned at the window. Or “Toybox” in the playroom. Or “Switch” beside the door. Labels were on many items in the house: “Chair,” “Table,” “Bathtub,” “Bed,” and “TV.” This is a type of passive information saturation. Studies showed that the system helps children incorporate reading into their lives without realizing they are learning. (PSG, p. 82)

**What’s an effective way to help a child learn?**

**Why is this method effective?**



## Understand the Context (Deuteronomy 4:44–11:32)

The closing verses of Deuteronomy 4 remind readers of the context of Moses’s words to Israel (Deut. 4:44–49). God had brought His people to the edge of the land that He had promised their ancestors centuries earlier.

Moses repeated the Ten Commandments for the people (5:1–21; see Ex. 20:1–17). These commands formed the foundation for all of God’s instruction. Moses reminded the Israelites how they had feared approaching the mountain when God gave His words (Deut. 5:22–33). Moses interceded for the people, and the Lord expressed His desire that they would always be faithful to Him.

The people needed to follow God’s commands as they settled the land (6:1–3). They were to love Him with all their heart, teach His words to their children, and let His words shape everything they did (6:4–9). He also warned Israel about the potential danger of prosperity (6:10–19). They needed to remember that the blessings of the land came from the Lord. Moses again emphasized telling their children about God’s great works (6:20–25).

God’s leader warned the people not to intermarry with the people of the land, who would lead their hearts astray (7:1–5). When Israel conquered Canaan, they were to rid the land of all remnants of idolatry. Moses also reminded the people of God’s love for them (7:6–26).

Moses challenged the people to remember God’s ever-present grace (8:1–10). The Lord had taught them to trust Him even in hard times.

Still, the people needed to beware lest they forget Him in good times (8:11–14). He had led them to the promised land, and He would continue to provide for them after they settled it (8:15–20).

The people also needed to remember the many times they had failed God (9:1–29). He would use them to drive out the wicked peoples of Canaan, but the Israelites often had not acted like His people (9:4–6). They had provoked God with a golden calf (9:7–21) and continued to test Him all the way to Kadesh-barnea (9:22–29). The Israelites’ disobedience deeply grieved and angered the Lord, yet He heard Moses’s cries for the people and spared them (10:1–11).

Moses called on Israel to fear the Lord and to follow Him (10:12–22). No idol was greater than He was, and He had made them a great people. In fact, they were eyewitnesses of all God’s works on their behalf from Egypt to the Plains of Moab (11:1–12). They would continue experiencing great blessing if they followed God faithfully (11:13–25).

Finally, Moses reminded the people to renew the covenant when they conquered the land (11:26–32). They were to gather at Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal and confirm their allegiance to God and His commands.

**As you read through Deuteronomy 6:1–9, 20–25, underscore the promises God made to those who kept His commands. (PSG, p. 83)**

# ENGAGE



**PREPARE:** On a focal wall, display **Pack Item 2** (Poster: *Outlines of Numbers, Deuteronomy*) and **Pack Item 5** (Poster: *Key Verse: Deuteronomy 6:4-5*). Make copies of **Pack Item 8** (Handout: *Praying Scripture in Numbers, Deuteronomy*).

**READ:**

Invite a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 82 of the PSG.

**ASK:**

**What's an effective way to help a child learn? Why is this method successful?** (PSG, p. 82)

**SUMMARIZE:**

Refer to the outline on **Pack Item 2** (Poster: *Outlines of Numbers, Deuteronomy*) and explain that Moses's second speech to the Israelites begins with Deuteronomy 5. Recap the information from Understand the Context to overview Deuteronomy 4:44–5:33.

*God had brought His people to the edge of the land that He had promised their ancestors centuries earlier. Moses repeated the Ten Commandments for the people (5:1-21; see Ex. 20:1-17). . . . Moses reminded the Israelites how they had feared approaching the mountain when God gave His words (Deut. 5:22-33). Moses interceded for the people, and the Lord expressed His desire that they would always be faithful to Him.*

**TRANSITION:**

As we study today's passage, notice how Moses's words challenged the Israelites not just to know and obey the commands of God, but also to teach them to their children. Consider what content from God's Word you should know and obey as you teach the next generation how to live to honor God.



## Group Activity Option

### Music

Guide adults to find “Love the Lord” (*Baptist Hymnal* 2008, No. 562). Read aloud Deuteronomy 6:5. Play a recording or video of this song by Lincoln Brewster and lead adults to sing along. Point out that this song is based on a verse from today's Bible study, but Jesus also quoted that verse when He was asked about the most important commandment (Mark 12:28-30). Ask: **How do you demonstrate your love for the Lord? How are fearing the Lord and loving the Lord connected?**

## Fear of the Lord (Deut. 6:1-3)

**1** “This is the command—the statutes and ordinances—the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, so that you may follow them in the land you are about to enter and possess. **2** Do this so that you may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life by keeping all his statutes and commands I am giving you, your son, and your grandson, and so that you may have a long life. **3** Listen, Israel, and be careful to follow them, so that you may prosper and multiply greatly, because the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you a land flowing with milk and honey.”

(v. 1) Deuteronomy 5:22-33 recalled the past as the people received God’s instruction at Mount Sinai. In Deuteronomy 6, Moses focused on the present and future as he challenged Israel to live out the covenant in the promised land.

Moses may have intended *this is the command* as a general expression for all God’s instruction that followed. Some interpreters have suggested this because “command” is singular in form, whereas *statutes* and *ordinances* are plural. “Statutes” means “to inscribe” and highlights how God’s commands were written down. “Ordinances” also can mean “judgments” and denotes the righteous decisions that God provided. These two words regularly occur together to describe God’s commands, which are righteous and reflect His character (Deut. 4:8). The Lord gave His people these commands as an expression of who He was and how they should live.

*The LORD your God* stressed Israel’s covenant relationship with Him. He had established His covenant with Abraham, and now He was affirming it with them. The word translated *follow* literally means “do.” The people were expected to show their commitment to God by consistently obeying His words.

(v. 2) The verb forms and pronouns in verse 2 switch back to the singular, suggesting that Moses had turned his attention to the nation as one unit. To *fear the LORD* meant demonstrating a holy reverence for Him. God is the almighty King of the universe, yet He had chosen Israel for His special possession. *All the days of your life* stressed the lasting commitment Moses challenged the people to make. The word *keeping* has the connotation of careful watching or guarding, so following God’s covenant was a serious matter.

Moses’s reference to *you, your son, and your grandson* indicated God’s desire for Israel’s faith to continue across the generations. Older generations needed to instill a deep commitment to God

and His commands into younger generations. Faithful obedience normally would lead to *a long life* as people embraced God’s ways.

Each generation needed to lay hold of the covenant for itself. The book of Joshua records how God’s people conquered the land of Canaan. Unfortunately, the book of Judges records how they soon compromised spiritually and fell into idolatry. The generational teaching did not take root, and the nation fell into a chaotic cycle of sin.

(v. 3) Moses’s command to *listen* again addressed the nation as a whole. The verb includes the concept of heeding and obeying. It touches on the motives of the heart, not just the functions of the ears. The challenge to *be careful to follow them* reinforces this idea. The word translated “be careful” is related to the word rendered “keeping” in verse 2, just as the Hebrew wording for *follow* means “do” as in verse 1.

The verb *prosper* connotes a life generally filled with blessing as people lived by God’s ways. God also promised the Israelites would *multiply greatly*, a blessing that would help them maintain control of the land.

Moses pointed the people toward the *God of your ancestors*, another reminder of God’s long-term relationship with Israel. God had promised that Abraham’s descendants would one day occupy Canaan (Gen. 12:6-7). The fulfillment of that promise now was at hand.

The Bible often describes Canaan as a region filled *with milk and honey*. Many scholars believe the reference to “honey” denotes date honey, whereas “milk” describes the milk obtained from goats. Thus, the description signifies Canaan as a land where both farmers and shepherds could thrive.





## READ:

**APPLICATION POINT:** Believers demonstrate their love for God by obeying His commands.

**Invite a volunteer to read aloud Deuteronomy 6:1-3** while adults listen for the guidance Moses gave the people and the promise God gave if they followed His words.

## DISCUSS:

Direct adults to share Moses's directive and God's promise that followed. Summarize this content from page 84 of the PSG and lead a brief discussion on what it means to "fear of the LORD."

"To fear the LORD means to revere Him. The external evidence of that reverence would be the keeping of God's statutes and commands. Jesus taught this principle. He told His disciples, 'If you love me, you will keep my commands' (John 14:15)."

## ASK:

**What are some practical ways to "fear the LORD" each day?**

## PARAPHRASE:

Distribute a sheet of paper to each adult. Guide them to describe the promise God made Israel by paraphrasing Deuteronomy 6:3. After a few moments, call on volunteers to share what they have written.

## ASK:

**In what way(s) has God lavished His blessings in your life? When have you been particularly aware of those blessings?** (PSG, p. 85)

## Group Activity Option

### Object Lesson: Monsters

Prior to the session, print pictures of several classic monsters from the internet. You also can include some real-life scary things, such as snakes, spiders, and so forth. During the session, show adults the pictures and talk about why each might create fear. Point out Moses's command to fear the Lord in Deuteronomy 6:2. Lead a brief discussion about how fear of monsters or spiders is different from fearing the Lord.

## Devoted (Deut. 6:4-9)

**4** “Listen, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. **5** Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. **6** These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. **7** Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **8** Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. **9** Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.”

(v. 4) Verses 4-9 also are known as the *Shema* (sheh-MAH), the foundational confession of Jewish faith. The Hebrew word *shema* is the first word of verse 4 and means *listen* or “hear.” Verses 4-9 exhorted Israel to live out its faith intentionally. As in earlier verses, the verbs and pronouns are in the singular, addressing all of Israel.

Scholars have generally interpreted *the LORD is one* as stressing monotheism. Israel’s belief in one God sharply contrasted with the Canaanites, who worshiped many gods. It also affirmed Israel’s distinct relationship with their God.

(v. 5) Moses called Israel to *love the LORD your God*. The term “love” signifies wholehearted covenant commitment. The phrases *with all your heart* and *with all your soul* encompassed Israel’s intellect, emotion, and volition. The people’s conscious choice to love God should move them emotionally as well. The phrase *with all your strength* emphasizes that a commitment to God requires an act of the whole person.

(v. 6) Moses stressed that his *words* needed to take root in Israel’s *heart*. Their complete commitment to God (v. 5) included reflecting on and internalizing His decrees and letting those laws shape their lives. Indeed, God’s statutes and ordinances comprised a firm foundation for them as they settled the land and became a nation.

(v. 7) Moses encouraged the people to *repeat them to your children*. Parents should take intentional steps to pass their faith to the next generation. The times *when you sit in your house* or *walk along the road* provide a natural context to talk to children about God and His ways. Likewise, parents can use occasions *when you lie down* and *get up* to teach their children how to begin and end each day with God. They needed to engage with their sons and daughters spiritually whenever the situation presented itself.

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### Key Doctrine

#### Family

Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. (See Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5.)

(v. 8) Moses instructed Israel to treat God’s words like *a sign on your hand* and *a symbol on your forehead*. Most interpreters believe Moses used figurative language here in urging Israel to keep God’s commands before them, just as their hands typically were in front of them and their foreheads would determine their direction.

Many Jews take these commands literally and strap prayer boxes (called “phylacteries” or “tefillin”) on their hands and between their eyes. But the main idea is that God’s people should let His Word function as the lens that lets them see the world as God sees it.



### Prayer Boxes

Learn more about how God’s people have taken His instruction to Deuteronomy 6:8 to heart.

(v. 9) Moses told the Israelites to inscribe God’s words on their *doorposts* as a reminder of their obligation to Him. The Hebrew word used here is *mezuzah* (meh-zoo-ZAH), which Jewish people use to describe fixtures on their doors that contain a small scroll with the words of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 on it. Writing God’s words on *city gates* also reminded its citizens and travelers that the town’s inhabitants lived by God’s decrees.



**APPLICATION POINT:** We are to be intentional about putting God at the center of our lives, making everything else revolve around Him.

**READ:**

**Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9** as adults highlight words that stick out to them. Allow a few volunteers to share what they marked.

**SAY:**

Verses 4-9 are known as the Shema (sheh-MAH), the foundational Jewish statement of faith. The Hebrew word shema is the first word of verse 4 and means listen.

**MEMORIZE:**

Direct attention to **Pack Item 5** (Poster: Key Verse: Deuteronomy 6:4-5). Share that these are this session's memory verses. Challenge adults to memorize them this week.

**EXPLAIN:**

Share this content from pages 86-87 of the PSG and discuss why Jews might take the commands of Deuteronomy 6 literally:

*An orthodox Jewish man will use leather straps to attach a small leather box to his forehead and another to his arm. In the box is a small piece of parchment. On it are the words of Exodus 13:1-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; and 11:13-21. The boxes are called tefillin (also called phylacteries). . . . Jews often attach a small cylinder container to the doorposts of their homes or the city gates. The container is called a mezuzah, Hebrew for "doorpost." Inside the container is a small rolled-up scroll; on it are the full texts of the tefillin verses.*

**ASK:**

**What is a practical way we can keep God's Word and commandments at the forefront of our lives?** (PSG, p. 87)



## Group Activity Option

### Bible Skill

Direct adults to work in pairs to complete the Bible Skill (PSG, p. 89). After a few minutes, lead a brief discussion about the similarities and differences between Deuteronomy 6 and Mark 12. Lead adults to discuss the questions included in the Bible Skill activity.

## Righteous (Deut. 6:20-25)

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**20** “When your son asks you in the future, ‘What is the meaning of the decrees, statutes, and ordinances that the LORD our God has commanded you?’ **21** tell him, ‘We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand. **22** Before our eyes the LORD inflicted great and devastating signs and wonders on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his household, **23** but he brought us from there in order to lead us in and give us the land that he swore to our ancestors. **24** The LORD commanded us to follow all these statutes and to fear the LORD our God for our prosperity always and for our preservation, as it is today. **25** Righteousness will be ours if we are careful to follow every one of these commands before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us.”

**(v. 20)** Verses 20-25 focus on passing along the principles of faith to the next generation. *When your son asks you* assumed that teachable moments would occur. At some level, the Israelites’ children should have experienced God’s *decrees, statutes, and ordinances*. But they may have wondered about their significance. The reference *the LORD our God* suggests that the children saw themselves as part of the covenant even at an early age.

**(v. 21)** The parent’s answer took story form, recounting how God’s people *were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt*. The people had suffered long under Egyptian domination; however, God rescued them *with a strong hand*. The Lord’s victory was complete when He drowned Pharaoh’s army in the Red Sea (Ex. 14:15-31).

**(v. 22)** *Before our eyes* stresses the parents’ role as eyewitnesses. Earlier generations had firsthand knowledge of God’s *signs and wonders* in the form of various plagues (Ex. 7-12). These sweeping judgments came *on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his household*. The Bible also mentions how God shielded the Israelites from the impact of these plagues, thereby demonstrating His relationship with them (Ex. 8:21-22; 9:4-7,25-26; 10:22-23). Just as their parents had told them about Egypt, these parents could teach their children about God’s mighty acts for Israel.

**(vv. 23-24)** The parents had to emphasize that the inheritance of Canaan came with personal responsibility. God did provide *the land that he swore to our ancestors*. He also expected them to *follow all these statutes* as a sign of their covenant with Him. The Lord didn’t merely rescue His people from Egypt. He also led them personally

to the place He had promised Israel’s ancestors more than six centuries prior. And the statutes demonstrated a wisdom they would need in the promised land that the surrounding peoples did not have and could not share.

Ultimately, God wanted the nations to be drawn to Him through Israel’s obedience (Deut. 4:5-8). But obedience also would bring God’s people *prosperity* and *preservation*. They would experience life as God designed it.

**(v. 25)** The assertion *righteousness will be ours* highlights the blessed life God’s people would live through obedience to Him. As they were *careful to follow* all of God’s instructions, His blessing would come to them.

As the Israelites pleased God through their faithfulness, they also would experience the fullness of all He offered them. Future generations needed to embrace God’s covenant for themselves, and God’s blessing would follow.

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### Praying Scripture

#### Deuteronomy 6:24-25

Spend time praying Scripture using Deuteronomy 6:24-25. Read the verses, then respond to these questions:

- How does God reveal Himself in these verses?
- How should I respond to what He reveals?

*Example:* Ask God to help you remain loyal to Him and obedient to His ways. Seek ways to fear the Lord and to express gratitude for His blessings.

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READ:

**APPLICATION POINT:** Remembering God’s past faithfulness helps us to follow God’s commands today.

**Read aloud Deuteronomy 6:20-25** as half the adults listen for what God had previously done for Israel and the other half listen for why God desired Israel to follow His commands.

LIST:

Guide adults to share what they heard and write their responses on the board.

EXPLAIN:

Use the following information from verses 20-23 (PSG, p. 88) to explain why God was preparing Israel to teach their children:

*The parents would tell about the signs and wonders, meaning the plagues God brought on Egypt. These acts bore witness to His mighty power. They showed the Lord was greater and mightier than even the most powerful nation and ruler on earth. God’s actions proved that He alone is God.*

READ:

Invite a volunteer to read aloud Deuteronomy 6:24-25. Encourage adults to define “righteousness” in their own words. Discuss how the Israelites were to claim righteousness for themselves.

PRAY:

Distribute copies of **Pack Item 8** (*Handout: Praying Scripture in Numbers, Deuteronomy*). Encourage adults to pray Deuteronomy 6:24-25 using the prompts on page 106 of the Leader Guide.

ASK:

**What does walking in righteousness look like in the life of a believer today?** (PSG, p. 89)



# CHALLENGE

## SUMMARIZE:

Call attention to the following points from Apply the Text on page 90 in the *Personal Study Guide*:

- *Believers demonstrate their love for God by obeying His commands.*
- *We are to be intentional about putting God at the center of our lives, making everything else revolve around Him.*
- *Remembering God's past faithfulness helps us to follow God's commands today.*

## IDENTIFY:

Call on volunteers to share how they have observed someone demonstrate love for God by obeying His commands. Ask adults to share a memory of God's past faithfulness that encourages them still today.

## DEMONSTRATE:

Guide adults to review the first set of questions on page 90 of the PSG. Direct them to form groups of two or three and to spend a few moments sharing how they would explain their faith to their children or grandchildren.

## PRAY:

Close the session by leading adults in prayer, asking God to help them recall specific times when He has demonstrated faithfulness to them. Urge them to continue using **Pack Item 8** (*Handout: Praying Scripture in Numbers, Deuteronomy*) to pray through Deuteronomy 6:24-25 during the week.



## AFTER THE SESSION

Email or text the group, encouraging them to continue memorizing and reflecting on Deuteronomy 6:4-5. Suggest that they invite a child or grandchild to join them in memorizing these verses. Challenge them to look for “teachable moments” when they can share spiritual truth with this younger generation.

## LEADER BLOG



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EXPLORE  THE BIBLE.

# The Shema

Francis X. Kimmitt



## THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE SHEMA

Israel had camped in the Plains of Moab and was poised to enter Canaan. After they had wandered for forty years in the wilderness, all that separated them from the patriarchal promise was the Jordan River. Now Moses exhorted Israel to heed and obey the Lord their God's covenant requirements.

Immediately following his reiteration of the Ten Commandments (Deut. 5:6-21), Moses charged Israel to keep the statutes God had given them. If they obeyed, the Lord would give them prosperity in the land He promised: a land flowing with milk and honey (6:1-3).

## BIBLICAL AND RABBINIC TIMES

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 comprises the text known in Jewish tradition as the Shema. The name comes from the verb that begins verse 4. *Shema* carries the idea of “hearing” or “listening,” but with the implicit intent that the hearer will obey. An Israelite who hears without obedience has not “heard” at all.

The Shema has been called “the fundamental truth of Israel’s religion” and “the fundamental duty founded upon it.”<sup>1</sup> The fundamental truth is that God is one. His followers response of total love to God is the fundamental duty.<sup>2</sup>

The historical and theological implications for biblical Israel were profound. Yahweh had proven

that He was more powerful than the Egyptian pantheon through the plagues and the Red Sea crossing. Unlike Israel's neighbors who worshiped many gods, Yahweh is the Sovereign Lord. He is one. He alone is God, and He alone is to be worshiped. With biblical monotheism established for Israel, no other theological views would be acceptable.<sup>3</sup>

Beginning in the post-biblical rabbinic period (about AD 70–95), the Shema became a central element of Judaism. Jews were required to pray three times daily with the Shema being part of the morning and evening prayers. The rabbis, whose intent was to sanctify all human actions, began to interpret the metaphors of verses 8-9 literally. Prayer boxes (Hebrew: *tefillin*; Greek: *phylacteries*) bound to the arm and forehead “symbolize the notion that a man's actions and thoughts should all be harnessed to do the will of his Creator.”<sup>4</sup> The *tefillin* contain four Scripture passages (Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Ex. 13:1-10, and vv. 11-16).<sup>5</sup> Archaeologists have discovered several frontlets at Qumran, the home of the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>6</sup> Literally interpreting verse 9, Jews would attach a small container holding the same four verses to the doorpost (Hebrew: *mezuzah*) of their homes.<sup>7</sup> Many Jews still observe this practice.

The significance of Shema rests in its association with God's kingdom.<sup>8</sup> The Shema also excluded the worship of idols or any other human agent. None exist but God. Loving God with one's total being serves as the essence of a Jew's relationship with God. Complete, selfless love of God can be expressed by the following: “Say not, I will study the Torah with the purpose of being called Sage or Rabbi, or to acquire fortune, or to be rewarded for it in the world to come; but do it for the sake of thy love to God.”<sup>9</sup>

## NEW TESTAMENT ERA

The Synoptic Gospels recount Jesus's use of the Shema (Matt. 22:37-38; Mark 12:29-30; Luke 10:27).<sup>10</sup> In Mark's account, Jesus responded to a scribe's question about the greatest commandment. Jesus replied by citing Deuteronomy 6:4-5. In this, He affirmed two aspects of faith in God: (1) the Shema is the heart of the Deuteronomic covenant between God and His people; and

(2) the Shema is God's commentary on the first commandment: “Do not have other gods besides me” (Ex. 20:3; Deut. 5:7). For Israel, and all of God's people, Yahweh is unique. He is exclusive, sovereign, and Savior. Israel's response to their confession with absolute obedience is the measure of their love of God.<sup>11</sup>

## BLESSINGS AND WARNINGS

Promises and warnings accompany the Shema. The Lord promised Israel blessings, which they did nothing to earn or accomplish (6:10-11): cities, houses, cisterns, and crops. The warnings follow directly on the heels of the blessings. Immediately, Moses warned Israel against forgetting the Lord who brought them out of slavery in Egypt and led them to the promised land. God is a jealous God. He will not stand for false deities to stand in His place. Idolatry leads to His wrath and, for Israel, removal from the land (vv. 12-15).

The warning echoes through the ages to this day. Do not forget the Lord your God. He alone is God, and there is no other. Love Him with all that you are.

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1. S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1978), 89.

2. Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 168.

3. J. A. Thompson, *Deuteronomy: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1974), 121-22.

4. Lawrence H. Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1991), 244-46.

5. Eugene H. Merrill, “Deuteronomy,” vol. 4 in *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 168.

6. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 171.

7. Thompson, *Deuteronomy*, 123.

8. Solomon Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (New York: Schocken Books, 1909), 66-67.

9. *Ibid.*, 68.

10. Luke 10:25-37 records Jesus's conversation with an expert in the law. In this conversation the gentleman quoted the Shema, and Jesus affirmed his understanding of its importance. The conversation ended with Jesus teaching the gentleman who his neighbor was by telling the story of the good Samaritan.

11. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 164.