



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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## Deuteronomy 6:1-9 New Revised Standard Version December 2, 2018

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, December 2, 2018**, is from **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(Deuteronomy 6:1) Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the LORD your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy,**

The commandment of God includes all of the laws, rules, and regulations that God has given and revealed in the Bible. God is the King or Supreme Governor of the

universe. God rules over all things and people, and every rule that He has decreed as our Creator and King He has announced for our own good so no one with a Bible needs to be confused about how to obey and please God or how to live in ways that will bless them and bring them happiness. God commanded Moses to teach the Israelites all the laws that God expected them to obey when they entered the Promised Land. They could live happily and productively in the Promised Land if they obeyed God. When Jesus came, He fulfilled the Law of God; so, some laws, such as regulations about food or sacrifices (laws often called ceremonial laws) no longer need to be obeyed under the New Covenant in His blood. Jesus obeyed and commanded His followers to obey the moral law, the law of love, summed up in the Ten Commandments.

**(Deuteronomy 6:2) so that you and your children and your children's children may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long.**

One reason God gave to explain and to motivate His people why they should obey His laws was “so that your days may be long.” God has given us laws for our benefit; similarly, He sent His only begotten Son for our benefit. Obeying God’s law will prevent the spread of some diseases and help obedient people live a longer life. God’s law was not only for the first generation that entered the Promised Land, but also for all subsequent generations. To

fear the Lord includes awe and reverence for His glorious majesty, wisdom, power, love, mercy, and justice; and, an awareness that God can and will enforce obedience to His laws by discipline or punishment when necessary.

Sometimes the fear of God helps us do what is right.

**(Deuteronomy 6:3) Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.**

God gave additional reasons to obey Him, “so that it may go well with you.” Entering a land settled by those who worshiped many idols would place different demands and temptations on God’s people than wandering in the wilderness or entering a new and sparsely inhabited land where they would need to work hard just to survive because no other people were nearby. God’s laws would help them regulate their lives and society in a new situation where God ruled them as their Lord and King, but where they were surrounded by worshipers of false gods and idols. If they began to follow the evil example of their neighbors who worshiped idols, they would not “multiply greatly,” but they would spread diseases, begin to sacrifice their children to idols, reduce their population, be punished by God with drought, be defeated by their enemies, and suffer eventual deportation and exile so only a remnant would remain. All which happened, as God warned.

**(Deuteronomy 6:4) Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.**

In a land filled with those who worshiped idols, who would tempt the Israelites to become like them, God commanded that the LORD would be their God and only the LORD (the LORD alone). The gods of their neighbors often included male and female gods, but the LORD is one. The LORD is one, and three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (as the Old Testament points toward and the New Testament explicitly reveals). The LORD revealed himself to Moses as “I Am Who I Am” (Jehovah or Yahweh). God told them not recognize, obey, or worship as God any god but Yahweh. They were not to fear any god but the LORD, Who had led them out of Egypt and Who would lead them into the Promised Land; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of their ancestors, the God of the Bible, Who revealed the truth through Moses and Who would reveal the truth through the prophets, and later through Jesus and His Apostles.

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

After Yahweh rescued them from slavery in Egypt and provided for them during forty years of wilderness wandering, the Israelites had many good and sufficient reasons to love the LORD. God did not just command them to love Him; God loved them first and did all He

wisely could to show them how much He loved them by saving them from oppression and promising them a new land that flowed with milk and honey. God does not deserve or want a half-hearted love or a divided loyalty from His people. God deserves our wholehearted love and devotion. God deserves the total commitment of our minds, hearts, and bodies to His service and to doing His will—which is always to our daily, practical, and eternal benefit and the benefit of others.

**(Deuteronomy 6:6) Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart.**

The laws of God require more than intellectual evaluation and appreciation for their wisdom. The laws of God require people to either obey or disobey them in thought and/or action. To ignore the laws of God or disregard the Bible's teachings when a person learns about God and the Bible involves the choice to disobey God. The laws of God need to be understood so we can reasonably apply the laws of God in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. We need to commit our "heart," the center of our being or our will, to obeying God immediately when we understand our duty and responsibility.

**(Deuteronomy 6:7) Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.**

Making the laws of God a part of our total life so that we understand God and His commandments better each day includes teaching our children by our words and example. They need to see how a loyal subject of the LORD, the King of the universe, lives at home and away from home. Children and new believers need explanations of why a loyal subject of God lives a life of obedient faith. Parents explain God, God's laws, and God's ways by example and by words morning, afternoon, and evening each day. By doing this, children will learn that applying the Bible's teachings and obeying God is for every day and every situation, and not just for one day a week and special occasions.

**(Deuteronomy 6:8) Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead,**

The command relates to a phylactery, which the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines as: "Either of two small square leather boxes containing slips inscribed with scriptural passages and traditionally worn on the left arm and on the head by observant Jewish men and especially adherents of Orthodox Judaism during morning weekday prayers." In Matthew 23:5, Jesus spoke of the scribes and Pharisees who wore phylacteries with a wrong intention: "They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long," When their hearts are far from God, hypocrites might wear large, visible emblems that indicate they are believers, so they can receive undeserved praise from others. God intended

for true believers to wear things that would remind them to love and obey God in their hearts and by the way they lived as examples of faithfulness, not to impress others. Believing parents can give their children the reasons why true believers in God also love and obey God. They can also teach their children how to apply the laws of God in the Bible to everyday life situations. Parents can arrange things in their homes that will be visible reminders that they and their house serve the LORD. Today, believers can seek and find other ways to remind themselves to study and follow the Scriptures than those listed in this verse and commentary.

**(Deuteronomy 6:9) and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**

Verses 8 and 9 applied to the Israelites who would live securely in the Promised Land under the rule of their own kings; it would not apply in a land where believers might be identified, persecuted, or murdered for their faith in the LORD. In many countries today, the Church must remain underground and in hiding. Reading together and keeping a well-read Bible in a special place (even in a special hidden place) might serve as a reminder to a family that they have chosen to live out their faith in Jesus by their obedience to Him as He wisely leads them according to the Scriptures. There might be other ways for a family of faith to remind themselves of the love and promises of God in a land where Christians and Jews suffer unjust persecution.

## Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. When God gave the Law to Moses, what are some of the types of statutes and ordinances that no longer apply to those who follow Jesus as Lord?
2. What type of laws from the Law of Moses still apply today?
3. What might the followers of Jesus substitute for binding the Scriptures as a sign on their hand or fixing them as emblems on their forehead?
4. When are some times when you might not want to wear a visible sign that you are a Christian?
5. In what ways can Christian families help each member in the family live faithful and obedient to Jesus Christ as their Lord?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly  
*International Bible Lesson.*

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