

HEBREW EXEGESIS PAPER

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CONTEXT STUDY

General Context

Author. Although the authorship of Deuteronomy, like most every other book of the Bible, has been debated over the years, it is generally accepted in conservative circles that Moses was the author of Deuteronomy as well as of the entire Pentateuch. Two primary sources of evidence of Moses' authorship of Deuteronomy include internal evidence (cf. Deuteronomy 31:9,19,22,24) and Christ's own testimony (cf. Luke 24:44).

The beginning of Moses' life is recorded in a somewhat unusual way in Exodus 2. Moses' parents are simply identified as a "man of the house of Levi" and a "daughter of Levi" (Exodus 2:1, KJV). The passage goes on to record that his birth was during a turbulent time for the Hebrew people, while they were in captivity in Egypt. The Pharaoh of Egypt "who knew not Joseph" (Exodus 1:8), had ordered all Hebrew boys who were born to be killed. Exodus 2:2-9 tells of the events that took place soon after Moses' birth. His mother managed to hide him for three months. Then she decided to build a small boat to place him in the river so he would be safe from discovery, simply to have the daughter of Pharaoh find him. Through the workings of God's sovereignty and Moses' older sister (much later in Exodus 15:20 her name is given as Miriam), Moses' actual birth mother ends up being the one to raise him until he is (perhaps as long as three years) later presented back to Pharaoh's daughter. It is at this time that Pharaoh's daughter names him Moses, which is actually a Qal Active Participle of the verb מִשָּׁה meaning "draw". Therefore Moses means "the drawing one."

The next phase in Moses' life is equally as chaotic as the first. Exodus 2:10,11 record the fact that Moses grew up in Pharaoh's house, no doubt having all of the privileges (education, military training, leadership training, etc.) of a prince of Egypt (Acts 7:20-29). However, one day

he was out observing the oppression of the Hebrew people, as he probably had many times before, this time taking matters into his own hands and killing an Egyptian taskmaster (Exodus 2:12-4). He then fled to Midian to escape the wrath of Pharaoh. There in Midian he meets Jethro, not only tends Jethro's sheep but also eventually marries his daughter Zipporah, and has at least two sons.

It is during these shepherding days that God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and calls him to return to Egypt to be His instrument to free the Hebrew people. During this revelation God reveals Himself to Moses as the "I AM" (Exodus 3:14) and agrees to allow Aaron, Moses' elder brother, to be the spokesperson. Soon after this encounter with God, Moses in fact obeys God and returns to Egypt with his wife and sons.

Upon his return to Egypt, Moses acts as God's prophet in challenging Pharaoh and his gods to let the Hebrew people go free. After a series of plagues God finally kills the first born of all the Egyptians, thereby breaking Pharaoh and causing him to free the people. At this point Moses begins to lead the nation of Israel to their future. This future begins as he leads them through the Red Sea on dry ground seeing, first hand, the power of God at work.

Once Moses had led the people over the Red Sea and they had seen God destroy the Egyptian army behind them, the people of Israel almost immediately began to complain against Moses and God. Moses' leadership was challenged almost every step of this long journey. He leads the people to Mt. Sinai, where Moses gets to meet with God and receive God's instructions directly from Him for His people. After the apostasy of the people, of worshiping the golden calf, led by Aaron, Moses' brother, Moses leads the complaining people to the entrance of the Promise Land, only to have the people refuse to enter the land God had promised them.

At this point God sends the people on a near forty year wandering, so that the entire generation of those who refused to obey would die, except Moses, Joshua and Caleb. During this period of wandering, which was equally characterized by complaining, Moses disobeys God out of anger toward the people. At Kadesh-barnea he strikes the rock to draw water for the people, instead of speaking to it as God had commanded him. As a result of this disobedience God tells Moses he will not be allowed to enter the land which He has promised the people.

Moses is allowed, however, to lead the people to the brink of the land. The book of Deuteronomy is Moses' final address to the people just before he leaves them and they enter the Promise Land. It contains a life long leader's final words to a people he has led, interceded for, loved, corrected and instructed for some forty years. God allows Moses to see the land He is going to give to the people, as He promised, and then Moses dies on Mt. Nebo.

Book. As mentioned before, Deuteronomy is Moses' final words to the nation of Israel. The central setting of the book has Moses assembling the people on the Plains of Moab. The basic premise of the book is that Moses, in the first person and for the last time, speaks to the people. The setting affects the content of the entire book.

Not only are the elders present, but also the people, men, women, and children. Historically Deuteronomy has been understood as a second Torah. This however, is an unfortunate misunderstanding of the ancient name of the book, "copy of Torah". It is not a second Torah, but a "rehashing", or resetting of the Law of God as He is to be obeyed as they enter the land.

Fox states "Moses' addresses, which include an historical review, repeated appeals to observe God's laws and dire warnings against their violation, a reworking of previous laws and addition

of new ones, and a poem designed to keep the appeals and warnings in popular memory, have about them a deep rhetorical urgency.”¹

Deuteronomy’s structure can best be understood in light of a suzerain-vassal treaty similar to others in the Ancient Near East. It is intermixed with narrative, poetry, legal, and other genres, however overall it is a covenant document between God (the suzerain) and His people (the vassals), containing the promises God intends to fulfill for His people and the commands He expects them to obey, and how they are related. Moses is God’s prophet, God’s mouth piece to give the people the potential blessing that are theirs for obedience and the cursing for disobedience. Deuteronomy records these great messages.

Outline.²

- I. Historical Overview (1 – 4:43)
- II. Opening Exhortation: Looking Back to the Revelation at Sinai (4:44 – 11:36)
 - A. Introduction (4:44 - 49)
 - B. The Great Commandment (5:1 – 11:36)
 - 1. The Basic Rules (5:1 – 5:30)
 - 2. The Centrality of Education (6)
 - a. God’s Blessing on Your Life is a Result of Your Obedience to His Commands (6:1 – 2)
 - b. You are to Teach All of These Commandments to Your Children (6:4 – 9)
 - 3. Israel and the Canaanites (7)
 - 4. The Land (8)
 - 5. The Calf Incident (9-10:11)
 - 6. Concluding Exhortation (10:12 – 11:36)
- III. The Terms of the Covenant (12 – 28)
- IV. Concluding Exhortation (29 – 30)
- V. Final Matters (31 – 34)

Deuteronomy 6:7 falls in the section dealing with the covenant way of life and the blessings that come from obedience. A major shift in genre takes place in 4:44 from mainly

¹ Fox, Everett. *The Five Books of Moses*, (New York: Random House, 1997), 824.

² This outline is a combination of the outline given by: Fox, Everett. *The Five Books of Moses*, (New York: Random House, 1997), 845 and the outline in Arnold, Bill T. and Bryan E. Beyer. *Encountering the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 143. Plus my own additions.

narration to exhortation. The people are to not forget what God has done for them and they are to obey God in everything. More specifically this verse falls within the paragraph exhorting parents that they must teach their children to obey all that God has commanded them, in order for their children to have an opportunity to experience the blessing of God that comes from obedience.

Immediate Preceding Context

The immediate context of Deuteronomy 6:7 begins with verse 4, this is demonstrated by the following: (1) There is a change from the perfect tense verb in verses 1-3 to an imperative in verse 4. (2) Verses 5-9 contain a chain of 7 conversives converting the perfect verbs of the main clauses to the nuance of the imperative in verse 4. (3) The subject of the verbs changes from either God and/or Moses in verses 1-3 respectively to “you” in verses 4-9. (4) The theme or topic changes from what God has promised (vv. 3 “that you may become exceedingly many...”) to what “you” are to do (vv. 5 “you are to love...”). (5) The LXX begins the paragraph here in verse 3. (6) The MT begins a new discourse section at verse 4 with a **נ**. (7) In Jewish tradition verses 4-9 is considered the Shema. (8) There is no conjunction on verse 4, therefore it is not being directly tied back to anything previous.

Verse 4 is a declaration of God and Who He is. Verse 5 commands the people of Israel that they are to love their God with their whole being. Verse 6 is Moses’ plea with the people that they take the words he has given them seriously and hold them dear in their innermost being.

Immediate Following Context

Verse 8 is a challenge for personal memory and obedience. The people, individually were to take steps so as to remember and obey the words Moses had given them from God. Moses was giving the people of Israel practical steps to help them remember and obey the word that was given. Verse 9 shows that it is not only required of the individual to remember and obey, but that

these words should be remembered and obeyed within the household as well. The commands God gave the people by Moses were to have a daily presence in their homes.

The immediate context of Deuteronomy 6:7 ends with verse 9, this is demonstrated by the following: (1) The subject of the verb changes from “you” (vv. 7-9) back to God (vv. 10 “YHWH your God brings you into the land...”). (2) The ׀ conversive on יהי׀ is a major discourse marker, marking a temporal shift. (3) The theme or topic changes to what God will do (vv. 10) from what “you” are to do (vv. 4-9). (4) The tense of main verbs changes from perfect, converted to imperative, back to imperfect. (5) The LXX ends the paragraph here in verse 9. (6) The MT ends the paragraph at verse 9 with a ׀.

Internal Context

The internal context of Deuteronomy 6:7 is consists of the following elements: (1) There are five *waw* conjunctions. (2) Two appear to be conversives, three appear to be simple. (3) There are two perfect verbs. (4) There are four infinitive constructs. (5) All four infinitive constructs are prefixed with a ׀. (6) The ׀ prefixed to the infinitive construct appears to be functioning as a temporal marker in all four instances. (7) All the verb forms have a second masculine singular ending. (8) The first perfect verb has a third masculine plural pronominal suffix. (9) The noun ׀׀ has a second masculine singular pronominal suffix. (10) There is the preposition ׀ with a third masculine plural pronominal suffix.

Some foreseen difficulties with this passage are as follows: (1) What is the antecedent to the third masculine plural pronominal suffix on the first perfect verb of the verse? (2) Who is the subject indicated by the second masculine singular ending on all of the verb forms, and is he/she the same for all of them? (3) What is the meaning of the noun ׀׀ in this context? (4) Who is the

antecedent to the second masculine singular pronominal suffix on the noun **בנ**? (5) Is there an overall meaning in the structure of the four infinitive constructs prefixed by a **ב**? (6) What is the meaning of the initial *waw* in the verse? (7) What is the meaning of the **ל** on the noun **בנ** in this context? (8) What is the relationship between the **בנ** and the second masculine singular ending on **שנן**? (9) What is the relationship between **שנן** and **דבר**? (10) What is the meaning of the verb **שננ** in this context? (11) What is the meaning of the verb **דבר** in this context? (12) What is the meaning of the verb **שכב** in this context? (13) What is the meaning of the verb **קומ** in this context? (14) What is the meaning of the preposition **ב** and its third masculine plural pronominal suffix?

WORD POSSIBILITIES

- I. **וְשִׁנְנָתָם** -- *waw* Conjunction + Piel Perfect 2MS + 3MP Pronominal Suffix/ **שנן**
- A. **וְ** -- *waw* Conjunction
1. “and” (simple, coordinate; joins actions that are simultaneous or simply statements of fact) – Deuteronomy 17:18
 2. “even” (simple, explicative; joins actions that are simultaneous or simply statements of fact; gives further explanation to the preceding action) – Genesis 3:22
 3. “then” (conversive, chronological sequence to preceding independent clause) – Deuteronomy 17:18
 4. “then” (conversive, logical sequence to preceding independent clause) – Deuteronomy 17:19
 5. “then” (conversive, cause-effect, indicates the effect of the preceding independent clause) – Exodus 20:9

6. “and” (conversive, logical and/or chronological sequence to preceding independent clause) – Deuteronomy 17:14

B. שָׁנַן -- Piel Perfect 2nd Masculine Singular/ שָׁנַן

1. “to sharpen” (figuratively: to picture bitter or abusive speech) – Psalm 64:3
2. “to repeat” (to say something over and over again) – Deuteronomy 6:7
3. “to teach repeatedly” (to instruct content over and over again to pupils) – Deuteronomy 6:7
4. “to teach pointedly” (to inculcate anything to anyone; to teach using forceful, penetrating words and methods) – Deuteronomy 6:7

C. ָׁ – 3rd Masculine Plural Pronominal Suffix

1. “them” (➤ God’s Word) v. 6:1 because of the reference to commandments, statutes, and judgements.
2. “them” (➤ the Commands of the Law) v. 6:6 because of the reference to words and commands.
3. “them” (➤ children) v. 6:7 because of the masculine plural form of בָּנִים (children), i.e. “You must teach them, that is, your children...”

II. לְבָנֵיךָ – לְ + Masculine Plural Noun בָּנִים + Second Masculine Singular Pronominal Suffix.

A. לְ – Particle Preposition.

1. “to” (indirect object; refers to a recipient that receives the indirect effect of an action) – Deuteronomy 1:11
2. “toward” (movement in the direction of) – Deuteronomy 12:31
3. “at” (near to) – Deuteronomy 3:28
4. “for” (indicates the recipient of some action; dative of advantage) – Exodus 34:16
5. “to” (logical direct object of the action) – Deuteronomy 1:8

B. בָּנֵיךָ – Masculine Plural Noun/בָּנִים

5. “to tell” (to express oneself emphatically) – Exodus 14:12

6. “to recite” (to repeat aloud publicly) – Deuteronomy 31:30

IV. **וַבְּשָׂכְבָּךְ** *waw* Conjunction + Preposition **ב** + Qal Inf Construct + 2MS Pronominal Suffix/**בְּשָׂכְבְּךָ**

A. **שָׁכַב** Qal Infinitive Construct

1. “to lodge” (staying the night somewhere other than one’s own home) – Joshua 2:1

2. “to lie down” (preparing to go to “bed” for the night) – Deuteronomy 24:13

3. “to rest” (to lie down for the purpose of resting, not necessarily sleeping; to be at peace) – Leviticus 26:6

4. “to lie down” (technical/literal; simply to have one’s body in a horizontal position) – Genesis 28:13

V. **וַבְּקוּמְךָ** *waw* Conjunction + Preposition **ב** + Qal Inf Construct + 2MS Pronominal Suffix/**בְּקוּמְךָ**

A. **קוּם** Qal Infinitive Construct

1. “to arise” (begin to do something) – Exodus 33:10

2. “to confirm” (to make official) – Leviticus 26:9

3. “to establish” (to make sure) – Genesis 23:17

4. “to stand” (to be firm, to be upheld) – Numbers 30:4

5. “to rise up” (wake up and get out of bed normally in the morning) – Genesis 24:54

WORD CHOICE

I. **וְשֵׁנְתֶם**

A. **וְ** “and” (conversive, logical and/or chronological sequence to preceding independent clause) because:

1. This ׀ is attached to a perfect verb, which is preceded by a non-perfect verb in vv. 4, which is the standard syntax of a *waw* conversive.
2. This ׀ is the third in a chain of *waw* conversives (vv. 5 – 9) which follows the imperative in vv. 4.
3. The genre of Deuteronomy is that of a covenant/treaty document. Within a document of this type, one would expect to find a section of commands from the suzerain to his vassal. Deuteronomy 6:7 falls within the command section of Deuteronomy (5 – 11), therefore the *waw* at the beginning of 6:7 is converting the perfect verb to an imperative to fit with the overall genre of this discourse section.
4. Grammatically all of the main verbs in 5 –9, including the perfect verb, which this *waw* is attached to, are in the second masculine singular. Therefore, making them the same gender and number as the imperative in verse 4.
5. Christ Himself, when asked by the Pharisee in Matthew 22:36 “what is the greatest **commandment** in the law” (emphasis mine), answered by quoting Deuteronomy 6:5. Therefore Christ took the *waw* at the beginning of 6:5 to be a conversive, converting the perfect verb to the same nuance as the imperative in 6:4. Given the *waw* in 6:7 is the same form as that in 6:5 and part of this chain of *waws* following the imperative in 6:4, it too must be a conversive.
6. In Deuteronomy 11:18-20 the order of the commands that parallel 6:4-9 is changed. Each of the commands in chapter 11 are perfect verbs following an imperative with a *waw* conversive attached. This change of order in the commands demonstrates that the logical and/or chronological order is not important nor is it possible to distinguish. Therefore the *waw* here in 6:7 must be functioning logically/chronologically.
7. This cannot be a simple *waw* joining actions that are simultaneous or simply statements of fact because of the chain of *waws* on the perfect verbs in vv. 5 – 9 are showing a logical/chronological order.
8. This cannot be a chronological *waw* conversive showing chronological sequence to preceding independent clause because the order of the *waw* conversives in the parallel passage (11:18-20) is changed. If the chronological order was important to the list of commands, the order would be the same in both passages.
9. This cannot be a logical *waw* conversive showing logical sequence to preceding independent clause because the order of the *waw* conversives in the parallel passage (11:18-20) is changed. If the logical order was important to the list of commands, the order would be the same in both passages.

10. This cannot be a *waw* conversive showing cause-effect, indicating the effect of the preceding independent clause because teaching the commands is not necessarily an effect of having them on one's heart (vv. 6).
11. This cannot be an explicative simple *waw* giving further explanation to the preceding action because, the concept of teaching does not explain, or elaborate on the idea of "have these commands on your heart" (vv. 6).
- B. שִׁנַּן "to teach repeatedly" (to instruct content over and over again to pupils) because:
1. The meaning of this verb must be one of instruction because:
 - a. God's stated purpose in giving the commands was that they be taught (לְמוֹד) – Deuteronomy 5:31.
 - b. God's pattern for communicating the commands included teaching (לְמוֹד) – Deuteronomy 6:1.
 - c. The need to teach (לְמוֹד) God's commands runs throughout the book of Deuteronomy; cf., 4:1, 5, 10, 14; 5:1, 31; 6:1; 11:19; 14:23; 17:19; 18:9; 20:18; 31:12, 13, 19, 22.
 - d. The restatement of Deuteronomy 6:7 in 11:19 clearly involves instruction as is evident by the substitution of the verb לְמוֹד for the verb שִׁנַּן.
 - e. Once Israel entered the Promise Land, the need to teach God's commands was repeated and practiced; cf., Joshua 8:30-36; Psalm 78; Proverbs 1-9.
 2. The meaning of this verb must be one of repetition because:
 - a. The intensive stress of the Piel verb stem allows for repetition.
 - b. The four-fold repetition of כּ + the infinitive construct in verse 7c demonstrates repetition. The parallel passage in Deuteronomy 11:19 also mentions such a repetition.
 - c. The commands were positioned (vv. 8-9) where they could be repeatedly seen.
 - d. The basic idea of the verb stem שִׁנַּן is to sharpen which is accomplished by repeated action of passing a stone or a file over the surface(s) of a tool or weapon.

- e. The basic idea of related cognate Semitic stems is one of repeating.³
- f. The book of Deuteronomy itself is (at least in part) a repetition (see Context Study, pg. 3).
3. The meaning cannot be “to say something over and over again” because, the idea of speaking is already contained in context (v. 7) in the verb **דָּבַר**.
 4. The meaning cannot be “to figuratively sharpen (to picture bitter or abusive speech)” because the attitude or tone of the context is one of love and not sternness (v. 5).
 5. The meaning cannot be “to inculcate anything to anyone; to teach using forceful, penetrating words and methods.” Because the basic idea of the verb involves repeated action. This results in being piercing or cutting. The piercing or cutting nature is subsequent to and separate from the activity of sharpening.
- C. **אֹתָם** “them” (➤ all God’s Word) because:
1. The 3rd masculine plural pronominal suffix **אֹתָם** is functioning as the direct object of **לְלַמְּדָם** indicating the curriculum that the parents are to teach. The antecedent is the plural noun **דְּבָרַי** in v. 6 which actually points back to v.1 (commands, statutes, and judgments – forming a *merism* to represent the whole of God’s Word), therefore the curriculum that the parents were to be teaching is all God’s Word.
 2. Moses had been teaching the parents God’s Word and now he was commanding them to do the same (Deuteronomy 5:31; 6:1). The purpose of these commands, including the one in 6:7, was for the people to obey them, and to pass them on to the next generation, who would then pass them on to the next generation, and so on.
 3. It was God’s Word that was taught by faithful parents in following generations (cf. Joshua 8:30-36; Psalm 78; Proverb 1-9).
 4. The LXX translates the direct object **אֹתָם** in 6:7 and the parallel passage 11:19 as an accusative neuter plural pronoun, clearly pointing back to the neuter plural noun **דְּבָרַי** (words) in 6:6 and 11:18 respectively. Therefore in both passages the curriculum that is to be taught by the parents is God’s Word.
 5. In Deuteronomy 11:19 rather than **לְלַמְּדָם** having a 3rd masculine plural pronominal suffix the direct object marker (**אֹתָם**) is used with a 3rd masculine plural

³ NIDOTTE 4:196; Dahood, *Ugaritic Parallels*, p. 74

pronominal suffix, clearly showing that there is a curriculum to be taught and referring back to all of God's Word (11:18) as that curriculum.

II. לְבָנִיךָ

A. לְ “to” (indirect object; refers to a recipient that receives the indirect effect of an action) because:

1. According to standard rules of syntax לְ functions as the marker of an indirect object.
2. The Piel stem of the verb שָׁנַן, which is a transitive verb of speaking, is followed by an indirect object.
3. For every occurrence of a verb involving speaking/teaching followed by the preposition לְ not connected to an infinitive construct in Deuteronomy, the לְ is attached to the indirect object of the verb (cf. Deuteronomy 1:11, 21; 10:9; 11:25; 18:2).⁴
4. Deuteronomy 4:9 is a parallel syntactical structure with the verb יָדַע in the Hiphil stem (to make known) with a 3rd masculine plural pronominal suffix followed by a לְ on בָּן with a 2nd masculine singular suffix, making בָּן the indirect object in 4:9, therefore it is also the indirect object in 6:7.
5. In Deuteronomy 6:7 מֵ־עַל on the verb שִׁנְנֵתֶם is referring back to the “these commandments” (6:6) and forward to those things that will be “frontlets between your eyes” and should be “written on the door posts of your house”, making “them” the direct object of the verb, therefore the לְ functioning as a marker indicating that בָּן is filling the slot of an indirect object.
6. In the parallel passage (Deuteronomy 11:19), rather than the preposition לְ, the preposition אֶת is used with בָּן joined by a *maqef*. In Deuteronomy, the preposition אֶת is joined to a noun by a *maqef* following a transitive verb 11 times, always indicating the indirect object (Deuteronomy 5:3, 24; 11:2; 15:3; 16:16; 19:5; 28:69; 29:14, 18; 31:7, 11). Therefore the לְ in 6:7 is also functioning as an indirect object marker.

⁴ Bible Works 5.0 word search of the verbs לָמַד and דָּבַר followed by לְ not attached to an infinitive construct.

7. The meaning cannot be the logical direct object of the verb because, that sentence slot has already been filled by the 3rd masculine plural pronominal suffix ַׁ on the verb שׁנַּתֵּם.
 8. The immediate context does not allow the meaning to be “movement in the direction of.” The emphasis of this passage is not the physical movement of the teacher but the instruction of content.
 9. The immediate context does not allow the meaning “to be near to.” The emphasis of this passage is not the physical location of the teacher in relation to the student but the instruction of content.
 10. The emphasis of the verb is not to teach for the advantage of the student, dative of advantage, but rather to teach the content to the student in obedience to the command. Therefore, the meaning cannot be that of a dative of advantage.
- B. בְּנֵי “children” (Designates all begotten children male or female of the 2nd generation; family relationship) because:
1. The commands in Deuteronomy were given to “all of Israel”, including sons and daughters (Deuteronomy 5:1; 31:12).
 2. The basic lexical meaning of בֵּן is 2nd generation descendant.
 3. In the book of Deuteronomy when Moses wants to differentiate between male and female children he uses the specific words (בֵּן and בַּת, respectively) (5:14, 12:12, 12:31, 23:17, 28:32, 28:53). Consequently, in Deuteronomy 6:7 בֵּן is being used by itself to refer to both male and female children.
 4. Of the 62 occurrences of the masculine plural form of בֵּן without a form of בַּת in Deuteronomy, all refer to both male and female children.
 5. The LXX translates בֵּן as παιδία in 6:7. παιδία also carries a range of meaning with includes both male and female children (Deuteronomy 1:3; 4:9; 31:19; Matthew 27:9; Luke 1:16).
 6. Of the 7 occurrences of the masculine plural form of בֵּן in Deuteronomy 5:1 – 11:32 (the major discourse within which 6:7 is found), that are not in a construct relationship with a proper noun (i.e. Israel), all of them refer to children (cf. Deuteronomy 5:9, 29; 6:7; 11:2; 11:6, 19, 21).
 7. The instruction was to take place in the home (“when you sit in your house”, when you lie down”, “when you get up”) and out of the home (“when you walk

along the way”). The home was the realm of the mother, outside of the home was the realm of the father. This places the context of the instruction within the family environment.

8. The meaning cannot be a 2nd generation male child actually begotten by the parents because, the masculine plural form of בן is only used in Deuteronomy to refer exclusively to male children when it is used in conjunction with a form of בת (cf. Deuteronomy 12:12, 31; 28:32, 41, 53; 32:19).
9. The meaning cannot be a 3rd generation child because, in Deuteronomy בן is only used to refer to grandchildren when it is used in a construct relationship with another form of בן literally meaning “son’s sons” or “children’s’ children” (cf. Deuteronomy 4:9, 25; 6:2).
10. The meaning cannot be membership to a people group, nation or inhabitants because, in Deuteronomy every occurrence of בן with this meaning is found in a construct relationship with a proper noun (i.e. Israel) (cf. Deuteronomy 1:3; 2:19; 3:11; 4:44; 9:2; 23:17; 29:1; 32:8).
11. The meaning cannot be all progeny throughout future generations because, it would make the remainder of 6:7 impossible to obey. One will not be with every future generation in “your house”, “walking on the road”, “lying down” and “rising up”.
12. The meaning cannot be all members of a household (i.e. children and servants) because, in Deuteronomy when servants are being included in the reference to members of a household a form of the noun עבד (servant/slave) or אמה (female servant) is used (cf. Deuteronomy 5:14, 21; 12:12, 18; 15:17; 16:11, 14).

III. דִּבְרַת

A. דִּבְרַת “to speak” (basic form of verbal communication) because:

1. Throughout the Old Testament the primary lexical meaning of the Piel stem of דבר is to speak.
2. In Deuteronomy out of the 37 occurrences of דבר all but 11 (where it has the meaning “to promise” (Deuteronomy 1:11; 6:3; 9:28; 12:20; 13:6; 15:6; 18:2; 19:8; 23:23; 26:18; 27:3) have the meaning “to speak”.
3. Syntactically in Deuteronomy 6:7 דבר is prefixed with a simple *waw* functioning explicatively. Therefore דבר is adding further explanation to the

previous verb, שָׁנַן, which has already been shown to mean “teach repeatedly”. Therefore דָּבַר is explaining that this process should be accomplished by speaking.

4. The LXX translates דָּבַר in 6:7 and the parallel passage Deuteronomy 11:19 with λέγει, which has the basic meaning of “to speak”. Therefore the LXX sees דָּבַר as having its basic meaning “to speak”.
5. Syntactically דָּבַר is followed by the preposition בְּ, which when used with דָּבַר it indicates the object which is being spoken about. Therefore דָּבַר has the meaning to speak.
6. The meaning cannot be to make a vow. There is nothing in the immediate context that is related to a promise.
7. The meaning cannot be to make one’s case. The immediate context is that of a home (6:9) setting where instruction is taking place between parent and child, not a legal setting, where one would be making a legal case before another.
8. The meaning cannot be informal, intimate communication. Although the setting is the home (6:9) and somewhat informal, the verb שָׁנַן sets a setting of explicit teaching from a teacher (in this case the parents) to the student (children), not an intimate conversation.
9. The meaning cannot be to express oneself emphatically. The preceding main verb שָׁנַן meaning to teach repeatedly, sets the tone of the conversation. דָּבַר is simply explaining how this is to take place, not adding to the emphasis of the preceding verb.
10. The meaning cannot be to recite aloud publicly because, the setting is that of the home (6:9), not public.

IV. וּבְשֹׁכְבָךָ

A. שָׁכַב “to lie down” (preparing to go to “bed” for the night) because:

1. The basic lexical meaning of שָׁכַב is to lie down.
2. Every occurrence of שָׁכַב with קוֹם within the Old Testament (Genesis 19:33,35; Numbers 24:9; Deuteronomy 6:7; 11:19; Judges 16:3; Ruth 3:14; 2 Samuel 7:12;

1 Kings 19:5; Job 7:4; Job 14:12; Psalm 41:9; Proverbs 6:9; Isaiah 43:17)⁵, **שָׁכַב** has the meaning to lie down.

3. **בְּ** + an infinitive construct, which **שָׁכַב** is in this context, is used as a temporal marker. Therefore **וַיִּשְׁכַּב** is being used to establish a point in time when one would lie down.
4. **בְּ** + **שָׁכַב** is being used with **בְּ** + **קוּם** to form a *merism* (a polar word pair) of two parts of a day picturing the entire day.
5. The LXX has translated **שָׁכַב** in Deuteronomy 6:7 and its parallel passage 11:19 with _____ which has as its basic meaning to put to bed, to go to bed, to go to sleep.
6. The meaning cannot be to stay the night somewhere other than one's home, because the context of Deuteronomy 6:7 is in one's home (6:4-9).
7. The meaning cannot be to lie down for the purpose of resting, not necessarily sleeping, to be at peace; because it would not complete the *merism* that is formed in Deuteronomy 6:7 between **שָׁכַב** and **קוּם** to show the entire day.
8. The meaning cannot be a technical term, simply to have one's body in a horizontal position; because it would not complete the *merism* that is formed in Deuteronomy 6:7 between **שָׁכַב** and **קוּם** to show the entire day.

V. **וַיִּקְוֶה**

A. **קוּם** “to rise up” (wake up and get out of bed normally in the morning) because:

1. The basic lexical meaning of **קוּם** is to rise up.
2. Every occurrence of **קוּם** with **שָׁכַב** within the Old Testament (Genesis 19:33,35; Numbers 24:9; Deuteronomy 6:7; 11:19; Judges 16:3; Ruth 3:14; 2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Kings 19:5; Job 7:4; Job 14:12; Psalm 41:9; Proverbs 6:9; Isaiah 43:17)⁶, **קוּם** has the meaning to rise up.

⁵ Bible Works 5.0 search of any verbal form of **שָׁכַב** within 50 words of any verbal form of **קוּם** resulted in 14 verses.

⁶ Bible Works 5.0 search of any verbal form of **שָׁכַב** within 50 words of any verbal form of **קוּם** resulted in 14 verses.

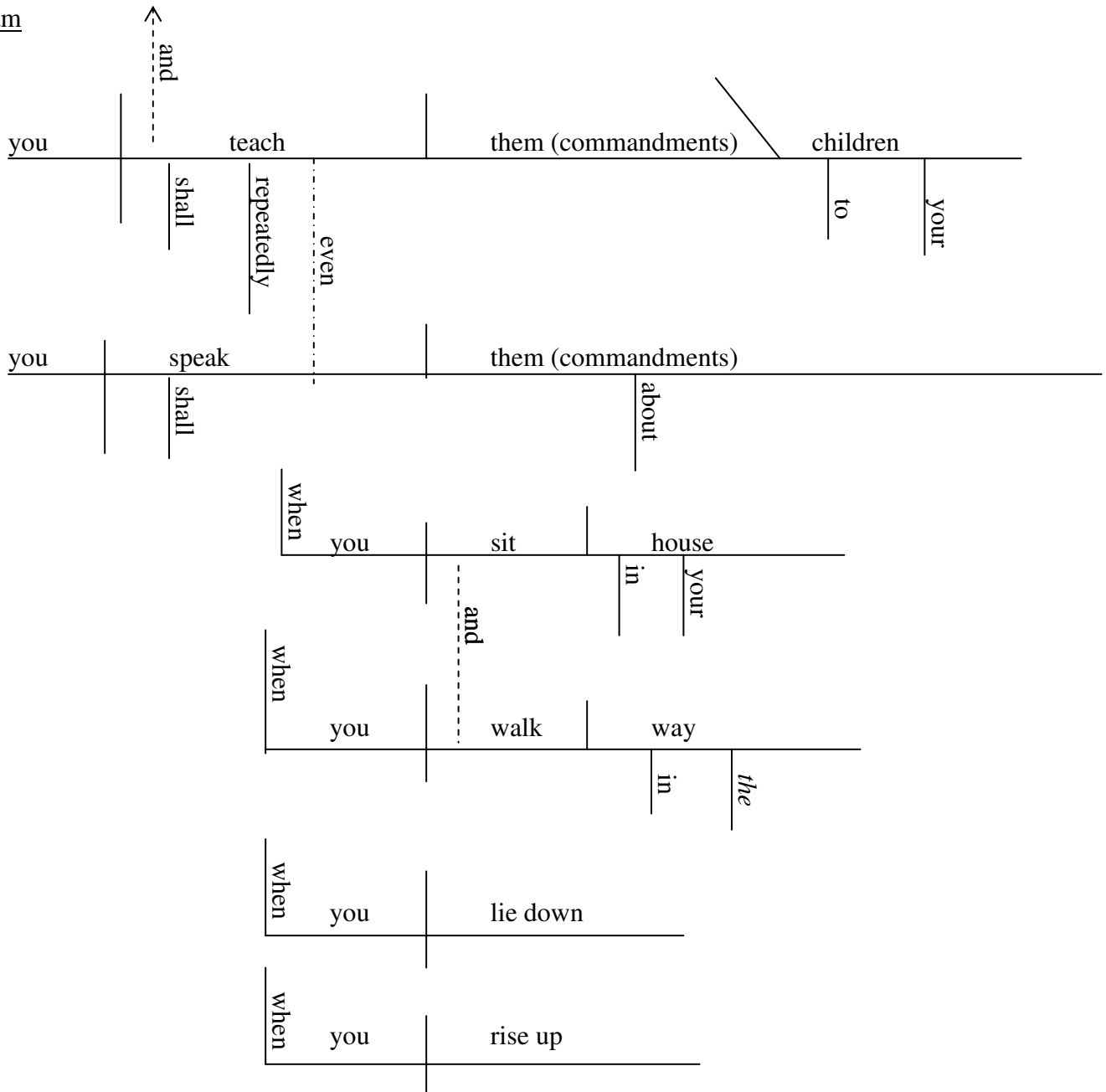
3. $\text{בְּ} + \text{an infinitive construct}$, which קָוִים is in this context, is used as a temporal marker. Therefore וּבְקִוְיָוֶה is being used to establish a point in time when one would rise up.
4. $\text{בְּ} + \text{קָוִים}$ is being used with $\text{בְּ} + \text{שָׁכַב}$ to form a *merism* (a polar word pair) of two parts of a day picturing the entire day.
5. The LXX has translated קָוִים in Deuteronomy 6:7 and its parallel passage 11:19 with _____ which has as its basic meaning to rise up.
6. The meaning cannot be to begin to do something, because within the context of Deuteronomy 6:7, קָוִים is being used with שָׁכַב to form a *merism* picturing the entirety of a day. Therefore the meaning to begin to do something would not complete that *merism*.
7. The meaning cannot be to make official, because within the context of Deuteronomy 6:7, קָוִים is being used with שָׁכַב to form a *merism* picturing the entirety of a day. Therefore the meaning to make official would not complete that *merism*.
8. The meaning cannot be to be firm, to be upheld; because within the context of Deuteronomy 6:7, קָוִים is being used with שָׁכַב to form a *merism* picturing the entirety of a day. Therefore the meaning to be firm, to be upheld would not complete that *merism*.

TRANSLATION AND DIAGRAM

Translation

And you shall repeatedly teach them to your children
 even you shall speak about them
 when you sit in your house
 and when you walk in *{the}* way
 and when you lie down
 and when you rise up.

Diagram



SIGNIFICANCE

- I. “And you shall repeatedly teach them to your children ...”
- A. This signifies the following clause is next in chronological/logical sequence to the previous independent clause.
1. This *waw* is functioning as a *waw* conversive (וַ + a perfect verb preceded by a non-perfect verb), which primarily functions to show sequence between independent clauses.
 2. The order of the perfect verbs prefixed with *waw* conversives in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is different than the order of the *waw* conversives on perfect verbs in the parallel passage, Deuteronomy 11:18-20, therefore the sequence cannot be exclusively chronological or logical.
 3. The *waw* conversive prefixed to the verb שִׁנְנָהּ is showing a logical/chronological sequence to the imperative in vv. 4 (שִׁמְעוּ) because you cannot teach what you have not heard.
- B. This signifies the action of this clause is imperative.
1. The perfect verb form שִׁנְנָהּ is prefixed by a *waw* conversive which is preceded in v. 4 by an imperative. Consequently, שִׁנְנָהּ is being converted to function as an imperative.
 2. Christ took the perfect verb form אָהַב (to love) prefixed by a *waw* conversive from Deuteronomy 6:5 as a command in Matthew 22:36. שִׁנְנָהּ being in the same paragraph and also prefixed by a *waw* conversive must be functioning as an imperative as well.
 3. The genre of Deuteronomy is that of a covenant/treaty document. Within a document of this type, one would expect to find a section of commands from the suzerain to his vassal. Deuteronomy 6:7 falls within the command section of Deuteronomy (5 – 11), therefore the *waw* at the beginning of 6:7 is converting the perfect verb to an imperative to fit with the overall genre of this discourse section.
 4. Grammatically all of the main verbs in 5 –9, including the perfect verb, which this *waw* is attached to, are in the second masculine singular. Therefore, making them the same gender and number as the imperative in verse 4.
- C. This signifies that the parents must carry out the action of the verb.

1. The masculine singular ending on a Hebrew verb allows for a group to be involved (cf. Deuteronomy 2:19; 4:9; 4:19; 5:15; 7:16; 13:14; 20:14; 26:13; 31:3), therefore the masculine singular ending on שִׁנַּנְתָּ is referring to both parents.
2. In Deuteronomy 11:19, the parallel passage to 6:7, the ending on the converted perfect verb is 2nd masculine plural, pointing to the fact that both parents are being address with this command.
3. This command is to be obeyed בְּבֵיתְךָ (in your home, which was the realm of the mother) and בַּדֶּרֶךְ (in the way/outside the home, which was the realm of the father), therefore both parents are being addressed.
4. Both parents would have been present when this command was given by Moses (Deuteronomy 5:1).
5. In Deuteronomy 5:16, children are commanded to obey both parents, mothers and fathers, individually and collectively.
6. It was expected that in a faithful Israelite family both parents, mothers (Genesis 27:13; Exodus 2:8; 20:12; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 21:18; Proverbs 1:8; 6:20; 15:20; 19:26; 23:22; 23:24-26; 29:15; 30:17; Ephesians 6:2; 2 Timothy 1:5) and fathers, would be involved in the instruction of their children.

D. This signifies that the parents must teach.

1. The restatement of Deuteronomy 6:7 in 11:19 clearly involves instruction as is evident by the substitution of the verb לְמוֹד for the verb שִׁנַּנְתָּ.
2. The LXX translates שִׁנַּנְתָּ with διδάσκω which has a basic lexical meaning of to teach. This idea is reinforced by the LXX translation of לְמוֹד, in Deuteronomy 11:19, as διδάσκω which is the primary Greek word for teach.
3. God's stated purpose in giving the commands was that they be taught (לְמוֹד) – Deuteronomy 5:31.
4. God's pattern for communicating the commands included teaching (לְמוֹד) – Deuteronomy 6:1.
5. The need to teach (לְמוֹד) God's commands runs throughout the book of Deuteronomy; cf., 4:1, 5, 10, 14; 5:1, 31; 6:1; 11:19; 14:23; 17:19; 18:9; 20:18; 31:12, 13, 19, 22.

E. This signifies that parents must teach repeatedly.

1. The intensive stress of the Piel verb stem allows for repetition.
 2. The four-fold repetition of כּ + the infinitive construct in verse 7c demonstrates repetition. The parallel passage in Deuteronomy 11:19 also mentions such a repetition.
 3. The commands were positioned (vv. 8-9) where they could be repeatedly seen.
 4. The basic idea of the verb stem שׁנַּן is to sharpen which is accomplished by repeated action of passing a stone or a file over the surface(s) of a tool or weapon.
 5. The book of Deuteronomy itself is (at least in part) a repetition (see Context Study, pg. 3).
- F. This signifies that the parents must repeatedly teach God's Word.
6. The 3rd masculine plural pronominal suffix ׁ is functioning as the direct object of שׁנַּן indicating the curriculum that the parents are to teach. The antecedent is

2. The basic lexical meaning of בן is 2nd generation descendant.
 3. The LXX translates בן as in 6:7. also carries a range of meaning with includes both male and female children (Deuteronomy 1:3; 4:9; 31:19; Matthew 27:9; Luke 1:16), therefore parents must teach God’s Word to children, male and female.
 4. In Deuteronomy 6:7 the masculine plural form of בן is used. Of the 62 occurrences of the masculine plural form of בן without a form of בת in Deuteronomy, all refer to both male and female children, therefore parents must teach God’s Word to children, male and female.
 5. Children were present at the giving of the Law (God’s Word) in Exodus (19:3 – the first giving) Deuteronomy (5:1; 31:12 – the second giving), and Joshua (8:35 – the third giving), therefore all children were to be taught God’s Word.
- H. This signifies that parents must repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children.
1. In Deuteronomy 5:16 children are commanded to obey their own father and mother individually and collectively, therefore the teaching of God’s Word is to take place within the family context with parents teaching their own children.
 2. This teaching is to take place בביתך (in your home, which was the realm of the mother) and בדרךך (in the way/outside the home, which was the realm of the father), therefore within the context of the family with parents instructing their own children.
 3. Throughout scripture instruction was to take place from parents to their own children (cf. Proverbs 1:8; 4:1; Joshua 8:30-36; Psalm 78; Ephesians 6:4).
 4. The 2nd person singular pronominal suffix ך on בני is referring to the same person as the 2nd masculine singular ending on שונות, therefore showing possession of these children by the parents being commanded to teach.
 5. The LXX uses the genitive pronoun showing possession of the children by the parents being commanded to teach.
- II. “...even you shall speak about them when you sit in your house and when you walk in *{the}* way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”
- A. This signifies that parents must repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking.

1. Syntactically in Deuteronomy 6:7 דָּבַר is prefixed with a simple *waw* functioning explicatively. Therefore דָּבַר is adding further explanation to the previous verb, שָׁנַן, which has already been shown to mean “teach repeatedly”. Therefore דָּבַר is explaining that this process of the parents repeatedly teaching their own children should be accomplished by speaking.
 2. The primary lexical meaning of דָּבַר is to speak, therefore parents are to repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking.
 3. The LXX translates דָּבַר in 6:7 and the parallel passage Deuteronomy 11:19 with λέγειν, which has the basic meaning of “to speak”. Therefore the LXX sees the parents repeatedly teaching God’s Word to their own children by speaking.
 4. In Deuteronomy out of the 37 occurrences of דָּבַר all but 11 (Deuteronomy 1:11; 6:3; 9:28; 12:20; 13:6; 15:6; 18:2; 19:8; 23:23; 26:18; 27:3) have the meaning “to speak”, therefore parents are to repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking.
 5. One of the methods God intended the parents to repeatedly teach their own children His Word was by speaking (basic verbal communication), Proverbs 1:8; 4:1; 4:10; 5:7; 19:27; 23:19.
- B. This signifies that parents must repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking about God’s Word.
1. Syntactically דָּבַר is followed by the preposition בְּ, which when used with דָּבַר it indicates the object which is being spoken about.
 2. The pronominal suffix ׀־ refers back to God’s Word, see – I., F.
- C. This signifies that parents must repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking about God’s Word during all the activities of their day.
1. The בְּ attached to an infinitive construct, functions as a temporal marker indicating the time during which the action of the infinitive takes place.
 2. The infinitive construct שֹׁבֵת has the basic meaning of to sit, to be at rest or inactivity. Alone this shows that parents must repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking about God’s Word during times of inactivity.
 3. The infinitive construct לִלְכֹת has the basic lexical meaning to walk, to go along and move about by foot. Alone this shows that parents must repeatedly teach

God's Word to their own children by speaking about God's Word during times of activity.

4. Together these infinitive constructs form a *mersim* picturing all of the activities of the day that a parent could find themselves in with their children, consequently showing that all activities of the day are teaching opportunities.
 5. The principle of parents teaching their children God's Word during all the activities of their day is found throughout Scripture (Exodus 12:26; Joshua 4:6; 4:21; Proverb 6:6; 7:6; Ephesians 6:4).
- D. This signifies that parents must repeatedly teach God's Word to their own children by speaking about God's Word during all the activities of their day wherever they might be.
1. The **בְּ** attached to the nouns **בֵּית** and **לְכַת** is a locative usage of the preposition showing where parents are to teach their children God's Word.
 2. Alone **בֵּית** means the structure in which a family lives, therefore specifying that parents must be actively teaching their children God's Word at home.
 3. Alone **לְכַת** means a path leading from a point of origin to a destination, therefore specifying that parents must be actively teaching their children God's Word outside the home.
 4. Together **בֵּית** and **לְכַת** are forming a *merism* indicating that parents must repeatedly teach God's Word to their own children by speaking about God's Word wherever they might be.
 5. The principle of parents teaching their children God's Word in a variety of locations is found throughout Scripture (Exodus 12:26; Joshua 4:6; 4:21; Proverbs 6:6; 7:6; Ephesians 6:4).
- E. This signifies that parents must repeatedly teach God's Word to their own children by speaking about God's Word during all the activities of their day wherever they might be whenever they might be there.
1. The **בְּ** attached to an infinitive construct, functions as a temporal marker indicating the time during which the action of the infinitive takes place.
 2. The infinitive construct **שָׁכַב** has the basic lexical meaning of preparing to go to bed at night. Alone this show that parents must repeatedly teach God's Word to their own children by speaking about God's Word at night when they are preparing to go to bed.

3. The infinitive construct קוּמַנְי has the basic lexical meaning of to get up, to wake up in the morning. Alone this show that parents must repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking about God’s Word when they wake up in the morning.
4. Together וּבְשִׁכְבְּךָ and וּבְקוּמָךָ form a *mersim* indicating that parents must repeatedly teach God’s Word to their own children by speaking about God’s Word at all times throughout the day (Genesis 19:33,35; Numbers 24:9; Deuteronomy 6:7; 11:19; Judges 16:3; Ruth 3:14; 2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Kings 19:5; Job 7:4; Job 14:12; Psalm 41:9; Proverbs 6:9; Isaiah 43:17) .
5. The principle of parents teaching their children God’s Word in at various times during the day is found throughout Scripture (Exodus 12:26; Joshua 4:6; 4:21; Proverbs 6:6; 7:6; Ephesians 6:4).

SYNTHESIS

The book of Deuteronomy contains Moses’ final statements to the people of Israel before he dies and they enter the Promise Land. The book is structured consistent with the genre of a covenant treaty document, within which a suzerain (God in this case) would outline the commands he expects his vassals (the people of Israel as they enter the Land) to obey, the blessings that come from obedience and the curses that come from disobedience. Deuteronomy 6:7 falls within the section of commands (5-11) that God is outlining for the people to obey as they enter the Land. More narrowly this verse is located in a paragraph dealing with the home (6:4-9).

The first clause in Deuteronomy 6:7 states “And you shall repeatedly teach them to your children...” This clause is a command to the parents to repeatedly teach the Word of God their own children. As can be seen from Deuteronomy 5:1, all of Israel was present at the giving of this command. Deuteronomy 5:16 states that children are to obey both their father and their mother. Therefore, consistent with the teaching of the rest of Scripture, this passage is placing

the primary responsibility of teaching God's Word to their children on the parents (Joshua 8:30-36; 24:15; Psalm 78; Proverb 1-9; Ephesians 6:4).

The second clause in Deuteronomy 6:7 states "...even you shall speak about them when you sit in your house and when you walk in *{the}* way and when you lie down and when you rise up." This clause is functioning as an explanation as to how and when the parents are to repeatedly teach of God's Word to their own children. The first phrase in this clause is explaining that the repeated teaching is to primarily be accomplished by the parents speaking about God's Word with their children. This most basic form of verbal communication must take place in order for parents to obey this command and effectively teach their children. A simple perusal of Proverbs will note all the occurrences of "hear my son". How can they hear if they are not being spoken to?

The three phrases beginning with the word "when" in this clause are adding further explanation to the command for parents to repeatedly teach their own children God's Word. The parents are to speak about God's Word with their children while sitting and walking, in other words during all activities. The parents are to speak about God's Word with their children while in the house, or outside the house, illustrating anywhere they might find themselves. Finally, the parents are to speak about God's Word with their children when they lie down and when they rise up, showing the two extremes of the entire day.

The clear teaching of this passage is that God has specifically commanded parents to repeatedly teach their own children God's Word by speaking about God's Word during all the activities of their day wherever they might be whenever they might be there.