

INTRODUCTION 引言

An instruction manual gives us some key information about a product. It is written by the designers of it. Follow the guidelines and you will enjoy its benefits. Very often, the opening section contains words of warning. If you misuse the item, it may cause you harm. God gives us an instruction manual for life called the Bible. Read it, follow it and you will be blessed. God includes a lot of warning passages in it too because He does not want us to follow bad examples. In Deuteronomy, Moses gave his people some final reminders as they were about to enter into Canaan. Their previous generation passed away in the wilderness because of their disobedience. Now Moses alerted them not to repeat the same painful history. The name Deuteronomy means the second Law. It is a recap of the Law. Moses reiterated to his people that they must trust God and obey His Law. The same principle applies to us. It is just like the song lyrics: “Trust and obey, for there’s no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.” God does not only bless us. He desires to bless our future generations too. Therefore, we must make God the Lord of our life and the Lord of our home.

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. Observe the Law 遵行律法

First, the Israelites must observe the Law. Why did God give them the Law in the first place? God spoke these words in Exodus 19:5 when He declared the Law through Moses – **“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.”** The Israelites were about to receive the blessings of Canaan. God separated them from other nations and made them His people. God’s covenant would be like their constitution. The Law would be a rule book for their lives. It tells them how to worship God and how to establish a fair society. God’s Law works in a similar way as the laws of the land. Many of you like me are immigrants to this country. When you became a citizen, you swore your allegiance to the U.S. From then on, you pay tax to this government, you obey all the laws here and you are supposed to serve in the military if you are drafted. Similarly, in Jesus we have a new identity as citizens of heaven. We live in the world but we do not belong to the world. We obey the laws of the society out of our love for God. Even though the Israelites would live in Canaan, they belonged to God. The Law set a boundary between them and the local people. The Israelites should not worship the idols of the Canaanites or marry their children. They would be blessed if they observed God’s truths. What should they do specifically? Let me give you three words that start with L. First, they must **listen**. Moses repeats the phrase **“Hear, O Israel”** in verses 3 and 4. By “hearing” it is more than just listening. They must also follow directions. It is like parents hoping their kids will listen and obey their advice. God’s Law was essential to their daily life. The second word is **love**. While listening pertains to the ears, love comes from the hearts. Verse 5 says: **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”** Many years later, Jesus quoted this verse when people asked Him which is the biggest Law. Heart, soul and might are not separate entities. They are interconnected to form our whole being. We will commit our whole person if we love

somebody. Just ask those who are single and dating. When there are emotions, there will be motions. I do not think any Christian will say that they do not love God. But do we love God with all our heart, soul and might? Very often we love ourselves more than anything and anyone else. How different will it be if we do everything out of love for God? We will be more diligent and dedicated. There will be less reluctance and fewer complaints. Besides listen and love, the third word is **labor**. The Israelites must intentionally do what God says. Moses told them in verse 2 to keep all of God's statutes and commandments. The word "keep" means to retain or to practice. "Statutes" are prescribed ordinances while "commandments" mean orders. Those two words have similar meanings to the Law. God gave the Israelites the Law for their benefits. As such, they should not look at God like a military officer in a boot camp. Instead, they should see Him as a wise Father in a family of love. God promised them that there would be blessings if they obeyed Him. First, God would give them good **health**. God said in verse 2 that their days would be long. It implies that God would protect them from harm. Otherwise, long life matters very little if they had to suffer from war, famine and disease. Other than health, God would bless them with **wealth** and **growth**. God said in verse 3 that things would go well for them and their numbers would increase. People in any culture love those three blessings. We all want to live well and live long. We desire a stable income. We love to establish a family, have children and grandchildren. You see, prosperity gospel is not a modern concept. God preached that message a few thousand years ago. But here is the key: we should pursue God's treasures, not earthly treasures. Many people are rich, but they are not content. They have a lot of stuff, but they also have a lot of worries. They hope to build their heaven on earth, but they make no preparation for heaven above. True blessing can only be found in God. It begins with an eternal relationship with God. We honor Him as the Master of our life. As such, we see ourselves as stewards rather than owners of what we have.

2. Preserve the Law 傳承律法

Moses urged his people to observe God's Law. In addition, they must also preserve the Law. They had to pass it down to their descendants. It is the job of a dad in a Jewish home to preserve the Law to the next generation. Moses told them how to do it. First, a father must help his kids remember the Law. Look at verse 7: "**You shall teach them diligently to your children...**" Diligence means repetition until kids can remember the lessons. In the Biblical time, information was passed along via verbal means. People memorized things by heart after they learned it. Nowadays, we rely on internet search to look up information. But we should not overlook the value of memorizing Bible verses. I give credit to our children's coworkers for helping kids recite the Scriptures. The fact is, you recall things like passwords and phone numbers when you remember and use them. Similarly, God's truths will be retained in our hearts when we memorize them. Gradually, our values, decision-making and actions will be more like God's. Second, a father should seize teaching moments. The second half of verse 7 reads: "**...talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.**" The fathers should look for opportunities to talk about God. For example, in Exodus 13 God gave His people instructions on observing the Passover. In the passage, Moses said in the future their children would ask why they have to practice those customs. That would be a great time to share the spiritual meanings behind the rituals. Christian parents should seize opportunities to convey spiritual lessons too. My older son loves sports. Sometimes he saw in the news that certain players were dismissed from their teams because of serious offenses. I would

react: “Any team will want to win. But people see the character of athletes more important than their skills.” Current events like racial issues, the pandemic or the war in Ukraine are good discussion topics. Do not just share your personal opinions. But tell your kids what the Bible says. Then thirdly, Moses says that Israelites had to make God’s Law accessible. Look at verse 8-9: 8 “You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” God told His people to make His Law visible in their daily life. Jews take these two verses literally even to this day. They have small black leather-wrapped boxes called tefillin that contain four Old Testament passages, one of which is Deuteronomy 6:4-9. They tie the tefillin on their arms and foreheads with leather straps. They wear those boxes during weekdays morning prayer. Besides, Jews also have mezuzahs which are containers installed on doorposts. They have the same four passages of the Law inside. Those objects are good ideas. However, such practices may lead to legalism. Jesus convicted the Pharisees because they displayed God’s Law on the outside, but not inside their hearts. They wanted to receive people’s praises of how holy they were. Jesus told people to follow the instructions of their teachers but they should not imitate their examples. How ironic! That is a good reminder to Christian parents. We can look holy in the church. But our kids see the real us at home. I know a brother who is an excellent Bible teacher. Once his wife complained to me that her man was lazy at home. She said: “He is a completely different animal in the church.” Parents are a living Bible to their kids. You can put pictures of Bible stories on the wall, hang crosses everywhere and stick Bible verses on your fridge. But our children need to see that we practice godliness in life. Some years ago a telemarketer called during our dinner time. After I hang up, my older son said: “Dad, why are you so mad?” I can teach them many times that God asks us to treat people nicely. But one bad example will completely defeat what I say. Another time we were shopping at a grocery store. After we checked out I noticed that there was an item at the bottom of the cart. It did not belong to us and the cashier did not see it. I went back and returned it to the store. Our kids will not realize that honesty, patience, gentleness, etc. are important and practical until they see us living out those virtues. We need a lot of grace from God and even corrections from our kids so that we can walk the talk.

CONCLUSION 結論

We must make God the Lord of our life and the Lord of our home. Without a doubt, we are in constant tension between submitting to God’s truths or yielding to the customs of this fallen world. The world entices us with instant rewards. Only God promises us everlasting blessings if we obey Him. A godly generation begins from home. In closing, I would like to invite a sister to come forward to share her testimony about how she and her husband bring up their children in the Lord.

Good morning to you, brothers and sisters. My name is Hongying. Wenchao and I have two daughters. Esther is nine and Ruth is six. They attend the same elementary school.

Wenchao and I received Jesus and we were baptized at the First Baptist Church of Charlotte, North Carolina. When we first went to that church, we noticed that it does not only have Bible courses for adults, it also has children’s ministries and children’s Sunday school. The materials are designed specifically for their respective age groups. At that time I told Wenchao that when

we had our own children, we would definitely bring them to the church. Therefore, both of my daughters attended church since they were three months' old. They spent more than three hours in the church every Sunday. They had no separation anxiety when they went to school because they were used to spending time away from us. Thank the Lord for being so thoughtful. He helped take away our worries.

Perhaps because both of them began their church life since they were little, they see Bible verse memorization required by Sunday school teachers as important as homework assigned by school teachers. I feel ashamed whenever I see them work so hard. It will be good if I have half of their diligence and piety. I do not consider myself their teacher. It is them who are teaching me! It is just like what Jesus says in Matthew 18:3 – “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

My older daughter is in her third grade now. Thanks to the painstaking instructions of her Bible teachers, she is able to understand most of the Scriptures. She can also come to her discernment. Once she was reading a detective novel, in which the author quotes a Bible story. She remembered the account and so she knew the moral of it instantly. She even asked me to locate the passage so that she could read it again. God's Word is worthy of our effort to study it all lifelong. I am so grateful that she can receive spiritual nourishment and lessons from early on.

Besides, they also learn from their teachers how to pray. Early last December, my older daughter was chosen to participate in a spelling-bee contest. Even though she worked very hard in her preparation, she was very nervous on the day of competition. I held her in my embrace and prayed for her before I sent her to school. After I finished, she said to me in teary eyes: “Mom, thank you for your prayer. I feel much better now. I am not that anxious anymore.” She received peace through my prayer, and I was encouraged by her compliment. That was a wonderful experience. Thanks to the Lord for allowing me to invest in such a precious heritage.

Once I read an article written by a pastor. He says: “Parents must lead by example. Don't be controlling and don't demand perfection. Learn to let go and submit your children to God.” We have a responsibility to spread seeds of faith into the lives of our children. But we are not sunshine and rain. That is God's work. We as parents should frequently bring our children to the church. Because: “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.” Thank you for listening to my sharing.

Thank you, sister. I am sure everyone is encouraged by your example. No matter how old your kids are, it is never too late to bring them to the Lord. Pray for yourself and pray for your children. Ask God to change you first, so that you will see the importance and urgency of building your kids up in the Lord.

INTRODUCTION 引言

說明書提供一件產品的重要信息。它是由產品的設計者編寫的。遵循指南，你便能享用它的好處。很多時候，手冊開頭部分包含警告的語句。如果你濫用那件東西，可能會對你造成傷害。神給了我們一本生活的指南，稱為聖經。閱讀它，遵循它，你會得到祝福。神在其中也包含了很多警告的內容，因為祂不希望我們學習壞的榜樣。在申命記中，摩西在他的子民快要進入迦南之前給他們一些最後的叮嚀。他們的上一代因為不順服而死在曠野。現在摩西警告他們不要重複同樣的痛苦歷史。申命記這個名字的意思是第二個律法。它是對法律的回顧。摩西向他的子民重申，他們必須信靠神並遵守祂的律法。同樣的原則也適用於我們。就像歌詞一樣：「信靠順服，因為除此以外，不能得耶穌喜愛，惟有信靠順服。」神不僅祝福我們。祂也渴望祝福我們的後代。因此，我們必須讓神成為我們生命的主和一家之主。

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. Observe the Law 遵行律法

首先，以色列人必須遵行律法。神為什麼賜給他們律法？神在出埃及記 19:5 透過摩西宣告律法時這樣說：「如今你們若實在聽從我的話，遵守我的約，就要在萬民中作屬我的子民，因為全地都是我的。」以色列人即將得到迦南的祝福。神將他們與其他國家分開，並接納他們成為子民。神的約就像他們的憲法一樣。律法將成為他們生活的守則。它告訴他們如何敬拜神，如何建立一個公平的社會。神的律法運作的方式類似社會的法律。我們中的一些人像我一樣是這個國家的移民。當你成為公民時，你宣誓效忠美國。從那時起，你納稅給這個政府，你遵守這裡的一切法律。如果你被徵召，你便有義務在軍隊服役。同樣，在耶穌裡，我們有了天國公民的身份。我們生活在世界中，但我們不屬於這個世界。我們是出於對神的愛而遵守社會的法律。縱使以色列人住在迦南，他們是屬於神的。律法把他們和當地的人劃分界線。以色列人不應該敬拜迦南人的偶像或與他們的後代結婚。如果他們遵守神的真理，他們就會蒙福。他們具體應該怎麼做？讓我給你三個以 L 開頭的用詞。首先，他們必須聽。摩西在第 3 節和第 4 節重複了「以色列啊，你請聽」這句話。「聽」不僅是聽見。他們也必須聽從指示。這就像父母希望小孩聽從他們的建議一樣。神的律法對他們的日常生活至關重要。第二個字是愛。聆聽是關乎耳朵，而愛是來自內心。第 5 節說：「你要盡心、盡性、盡力愛耶和華你的神。」許多年後，有人問耶穌哪一條是最大的律法，耶穌就是引用了這節經文。心、性和力不是獨立的個體。它們相互關聯，形成我們整個人。如果我們愛一個人，我們就會全人地投

人。你可以問問那些單身並在談戀愛的人便知道。有情感，就會有行動。大概不會有任何基督徒會說他們不愛神。但是我們是否全心全意地愛神呢？很多時候，我們愛自己勝過愛其他事情和人。如果我們做每一件事都是出於對神的愛，結果肯定會不一樣。我們一定會更加勤奮和投入。我們也不會勉為其難或抱怨。除了聽和愛，第三個字是行動。以色列人必須主動地按照神所說的去做。摩西在第 2 節告訴他們要謹守神所有的律例和誡命。「謹守」的意思是保存或實踐。「律例」是規定的條文，而「誡命」就是命令。這兩個用詞與律法有類似的含義。神賜給以色列人律法是為了他們的好處。因此，他們不應該將神視為訓練營的軍官。他們應該把祂看作充滿愛的家庭中有智慧的父親。神應許他們，如果他們順服祂，就會得到各樣祝福。首先，神會賜給他們健康。神在第 2 節說他們的日子會長久。這意味著神會保護他們免受災害。否則，如果他們遭受戰爭、飢荒和疾病的威脅，那麼長壽便不會是一件好事了。除了健康，神還會賜予他們財富和人數增長。神在第 3 節中說，他們會事情順利，而且人數會增加。任何文化中的人都喜歡這三種祝福。我們都想活得好，活得長久。我們渴望穩定的收入。我們喜歡建立家庭，有孩子和孫子。因此，成功神學不是一個現代的觀念。神在幾千年前就宣講這個信息。但關鍵是：我們應該追求神眼中的財富，而不是地上的財富。很多人有錢，但不滿足。他們有很多東西，但他們也有很多煩惱。他們希望在地上建造他們的天堂，但他們沒有為上面的天堂做任何準備。真正的祝福只能在神那裡找到。它是從與神建立永恆關係開始。我們要尊祂為我們生命的主宰。如此，我們將自己視為管家，而不是我們所擁有東西的主人。

2. Preserve the Law 傳承律法

摩西敦促他的子民要遵行神的律法。此外，他們還必須傳承律法。他們要把它傳給他們的後代。傳承律法給下一代是猶太家庭中父親的責任。摩西告訴他們該怎麼做。首先，父親必須幫助孩子記住律法。請看第 7 節：「也要殷勤教訓你的兒女……。」殷勤意味著重複，直到孩子能記住一些教訓。在聖經時代，信息是通過口頭方式傳遞的。人們學了一樣東西之後便會把它記住。如今，我們依靠網路的搜索工具來尋找信息。但我們不應忽略背誦經文的價值。我感謝兒童事工的同工們幫助孩子背誦聖經。事實是，你必須記住並重複使用比如密碼和電話號碼之類的資訊，你才能把它記住。同樣，當我們背誦神的真理時，它們便會留在我們的心中。漸漸地，我們的價值觀、做決定和行為便更合神的心意。其次，父親應該抓住教導時刻。第 7 節的後半部分寫道：「…無論你坐在家裡，行在路上，躺下，起來，都要談論。」父親們應該尋找機會談論神。例如，在出埃及記 13 章中，神指示祂的子民遵守逾越節。摩西在經文中說，日後他們的孩子會問他們為什麼要繼續這些習俗。那將是分享儀式背後的屬靈意義的好時機。基督徒父母也應該抓住機會傳達屬靈的教訓。我的大兒子喜歡體育。有時他在新聞中看到某些球員因違規而被球隊開除。我的反應是：「任何球隊都想贏。但人們認為運動員的品格比他們的技術更重要。」

種族問題、疫情或烏克蘭的戰爭等時事都是很好的討論話題。不要只是分享你的個人意見，也要告訴孩子聖經怎麼說。第三，摩西說以色列人必須使神的律法顯而易見。請看第 8-9 節：8 「也要繫在手上為記號，戴在額上為經文；8 又要寫在你房屋的門框上，並你的城門上。」神告訴祂的子民要在日常生活中看到祂的律法。直到今天，傳統的猶太人仍按字面意思理解這兩節經文。他們做一些叫特菲林 (tefillin) 的黑色皮革包裹的小盒子，裡面有四段舊約經文，其中之一是申命記 6:4-9。他們用皮帶將特菲林綁在手臂和額頭上。他們在平日的晨禱中佩戴這些盒子。此外，猶太人也有梅祖紗 (mezuzahs)，裝在門的旁邊，裡面有同樣的四段律法。這些擺設是好主意。然而，這種做法會容易導致律法主義。耶穌責備法利賽人，因為他們在外面展示神的律法，而律法並沒有在他們的內心。他們只想別人讚賞他們很聖潔。耶穌告訴人們要聽從這些律法師的教導，但不要效法他們的榜樣。多諷刺！這對基督徒父母來說是一個很好的提醒。我們可以在教會裡顯得聖潔，只有孩子在家中看到我們的真面目。我認識一位弟兄，他是一位出色的聖經老師。有一次他的太太向我抱怨說她的丈夫在家裡很懶惰。她說：「他在教會像是另一個人。」父母對孩子來說是一本活生生的聖經。你可以把聖經故事的圖片貼在牆上，到處掛十字架，把經文貼在冰箱上。但是我們的孩子需要看到我們在生活中實踐敬虔。幾年前，一個電話推銷員在吃飯的時候打電話來。掛電話後，大兒子說：「爸爸，你為什麼那樣的生氣？」我可以不斷告訴他們，神要求我們要善待別人。但是一個錯誤的例子會完全推翻我所說的。還有一次我們在超市購物。在結賬後，我發現購物車下面有一樣不屬於我們的東西，收銀員也沒有注意到。於是我回去把它還給商店。除非孩子看到我們實踐真理，否則他們不會認為誠實、耐心、溫柔等美德是重要和管用的。我們需要更多神的恩典，甚至孩子們的糾正，這樣我們才能言出必行。

CONCLUSION 結論

我們必須讓神成為我們生命的主和一家之主。毫無疑問，我們一直在順服神的真理和屈服於這個墮落世界的風俗之間不斷爭戰。這個世界以立時的回報吸引我們。只有神應許我們永遠的祝福，條件是我們要順服祂。敬虔的世代是從家庭開始。最後，我想請一位姐妹來分享她和她的先生如何按照主的心意養育小孩。

各位兄弟姊妹，大家早上好！我是洪英。我和文超育有兩個女兒，老大叫 Esther，今年九歲了；老二叫 Ruth，今年六歲了。她們在同一所小學上學。

我和文超是在 2012 年於北卡夏洛特華人第一浸信會信主並受洗。我們最初到教會的時候，看到不僅有大人學習聖經的課程，竟然還有兒童事工和兒童主日學，而且學習資料都是根據他們的年齡段精心設計的。那時候我就經常跟文超說，以後我們有了孩子，我們也把他們帶到教會來。所以老大和老二都在兩三個月大的時候就來

到了教會，每次主日有三個多小時的時間。以後到了上學的年齡，她們倆都沒有任何的分離焦慮，因為她們早已在教會習慣了和父母分開。感謝主！為我們做了這麼精心的考慮，免我們後顧之憂。

可能是因為從小就在教會的緣故，她們對於主日學老師留的經文背誦跟學校老師留的作業一樣非常重視。每當看到她們認真努力的樣子，我時常覺得慚愧，我如果有她們一半的虔誠和努力，那麼就好了。這哪裏是我教導她們啊？是她們來教導我啊！正如耶穌在馬太福音 18 章 3 節講的那樣：『我實在告訴你們，你們若不回轉，變成小孩子的樣式，斷不得進天國。』

我家老大現在三年級了，在教會老師的認真教導下，她能讀懂大部分的經文，而且也有自己的見解。有一次她看偵探小說，作者引用了《聖經》中的一個故事。她記得經文的情節，於是立刻就明白了其中寓意。她還要求我把經文找出來，好好讀一遍。主的話真的是夠我們一輩子好好研讀啊！我們很慶幸能在孩子這麼小的時候就讓她從中得到滋養和訓誡。

另外，她們跟老師學會了常常禱告。去年 12 月初的時候，老大被班級選拔參加 **spelling bee** 的比賽。她雖然很努力地準備，但是到了比賽那天，她仍舊很緊張。在送她去學校的之前，我把她摟在懷裏為她禱告。我禱告完，她滿眼淚水地對我說：「媽媽，謝謝你為我禱告！我真的覺得好多了，沒那麼緊張了。」她在我的禱告裏得到了平安，我在她的讚美裏得到了鼓勵。這種養育體驗太美妙了。感謝主！給了我這麼好的產業讓我經營。

以前看過一位牧師的文章，他說過：做家長的要以身作則，不要力求控制、力求完美，而是要放棄控制，把掌控權交給神。我們有責任把信仰的種子撒在兒女的生命裏，但我們不是陽光雨水，那是神的工作。那我們做家長的就把孩子多帶到教會來吧！因為「神為愛他的人所預備的，是眼睛未曾看見，耳朵未曾聽見，人心也未曾想到的。」謝謝大家願意來聽我的分享！

謝謝姐妹。我相信大家都被妳的榜樣所鼓舞。不管你的孩子多大，永遠都不會太晚，把他們帶到主面前吧！你可以先為自己禱告，再為你的孩子禱告。求神先改變你，這樣你就會看到在主裡培育小孩的重要性和緊迫性。