



from the desk of

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## Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads, Pt. 4

*Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (NIV) 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.*

This week we'll be looking at the fourth of the Scripture sections that the Israelites were to display sections of scripture - Deuteronomy 11:18-21, in part below:

### *Deuteronomy 11:18-21 (NIV)*

*<sup>18</sup> Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds..... <sup>19</sup> Teach them to your children, .....<sup>20</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, <sup>21</sup> so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.*

The Egyptians (in whose land God's people had most recently lived) had a custom to write their own "sacred inscriptions" on their doorways and gates. They did so in an attempt to ward off evil.

*"Moses (under God's direction) designed to turn this ancient and favorite custom to a better account and ordered that, instead of the former superstitious inscriptions, there should be written the words of God, persuading, and enjoining the people to hold the laws in perpetual remembrance." (From the Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary on this verse).*

On the one hand, it is good to set the tone of what your household is centered on. It might not sound like much - a simple plaque or Christian symbol - yet it does make a statement of just Who is the center of your home.

Mere symbolism isn't enough, however. How many oversized family Bibles have sat on tables on display, but are never opened and read? Symbolism must be reflected in the attitude and practices of the home to be worth anything.

It is suggested that Moses made these inscriptions on the doorposts a substitute for an Egyptian practice. I'm afraid as our children get older we often make other substitutions, that is, on how we direct our children's time to be spent.

As children and youth get older their schedules get more crowded and complicated. School, athletic and other extracurricular activities can increasingly crowd out and replace the time that has otherwise has been or could be spent on strengthening their faith.

At just the time when challenges to their faith increase, our young people are often pulled away from time to deepen and strengthen this faith.

We need to be on guard and not wholly substitute time when we and our children can worship and study about God for time spent on other "stuff," no matter how otherwise good the activity is. These do nothing to fan the flames of faith.

The message this week is simple - that even your house can proclaim and in enforce your faith, *and* that we need to be watchful about not going too far in substituting out much of one's "faith time."

In the words of the old knight in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, "Choose wisely."

DCE Randy