

REMEMBERING

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Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



Deuteronomy 6:4-12

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. 6 Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. 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. 8 Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, 9 and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

10 When the Lord your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—a land with fine, large cities that you did not build, 11 houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill,

hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you have eaten your fill, 12 take care that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. Are you forgetful in any way? What things do you tend to lose/forget? How do you help yourself remember things, like important items, dates, or names?
3. Will you be remembering or honoring anyone this Memorial Day weekend? Take a moment to pause and pray for this person, or think of someone else important to you and do the same.
4. Verse 4 is known as the *shema*, which is the Hebrew word for listen/hear/obey. The Hebrew word translated “alone” can also be translated “one.” How does the translation of this word impact the verse’s meaning?
5. Jesus knew his scriptures, and when asked what “the greatest commandment” was, he quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5. How has

South Elkhorn Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

4343 Harrodsburg Road, Lexington KY 40513

859-223-1433 southelkhorncc.org

this verse impacted or shaped your faith?

6. Following verses 6-9, some observant Jews have the *shema* written on parchment and encased in a *mezuzot* (small boxes on the doorposts of Jewish homes) and in *tefillin* (small boxes for the arms and forehead worn during morning prayer services). Do you have a scripture verse that is tattooed, or written on something special, or memorized? What is it, and why did you choose to engage with the verse in that way?
7. Verses 10-12 remind the Israelite people, and all of us, that the land, bounty, and blessings we may enjoy now are not the result of our own achievements. Why does this matter? Why is this important to keep in mind about the land we live on now?
8. Verse 12 is about memory—namely, not forgetting the God who liberated the once captive Hebrew people. This isn't just about "remembering to pray." It's about remembering that God takes the side of those who are enslaved, oppressed, and suffering.
 - a. Why might that be forgotten?
 - b. Why does remembering God as the one who delivers from bondage matter?
 - c. What difference does remembering who God is—the God who sets captive

and suffering people free—make for people of faith now, in the 21st century? How might remembering the God who delivers suffering people impact your faith?