

Deuteronomy 26:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

Analysis

This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments—Moses transitions from specific laws to summary exhortation. Ha-yom hazeh (הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, 'this day') emphasizes immediacy and urgency—the covenant is now, requiring present decision. **Thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul**—obedience must be wholehearted, not external compliance. The phrase echoes the Shema (6:5): 'Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.'

This verse establishes that covenant obedience isn't mere legal conformity but heart devotion. The distinction between **keep** (Hebrew shamar, שָׁמַר—guard, observe, give heed) and **do** (Hebrew asah, עָשָׂה—perform, accomplish) suggests both careful attention and active practice. Jesus cited Deuteronomy 6:5 as the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37), showing that wholehearted devotion to God was always the law's intent, not self-righteous rule-keeping.

Historical Context

Delivered circa 1406 BC on the plains of Moab as Moses prepared Israel for covenant renewal before entering Canaan. The phrase 'this day' occurs frequently in Deuteronomy (4:40, 5:1, 6:6, 7:11, 8:1, etc.), creating rhetorical urgency: each generation must personally embrace the covenant, not merely inherit it. The wilderness generation that left Egypt had died; their children now faced the same

choice—obey or rebel. Covenant relationship required continual, conscious recommitment, not passive tradition.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to obey God's commands 'with all your heart and soul' versus external compliance?
2. Why does Moses emphasize 'this day'—what's the danger of postponing wholehearted commitment?
3. How does Jesus's citation of the Shema reveal the continuity between Old and New Testament spiritual demands?

Interlinear Text

אֶת	וַעֲשֵׂה	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	הַזֶּה	הַיּוֹם
and do	H853	H6213	H6680	H430	H3068	H3117
וְשָׁמַרְתָּ	הַמִּצְוֹת	אֵלֶּיךָ	וְאֵת	הַחֻקִּים	אֲשֶׁר	יְהוָה
H8104	H4941	H853	H428	H2706	H2088	H3117
וְשָׁמַרְתָּ	אֶת	אֲשֶׁר	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	הַזֶּה
H5315	H3605	H3824	H3605	H853	H3117	H3117

Additional Cross-References

John 14:15 (Parallel theme): If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Deuteronomy 12:1 (Judgment): These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org