

Research Article

The Concept of "Shema" in Deuteronomy 6:4-5 as an Application of Educational Theology

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Abstract.

Educational theology provides the basis for religious education by integrating religious values into the curriculum and teaching methods. Through the authors' literature research, it was determined that the biblical concept of Christian religious education for children has significant value. This discipline is steeped in Bible teachings and aims to cultivate a personal relationship with God, which ultimately glorifies His name. Those who are responsible for teaching in the field of Christian religious education play an important role. The Israel Shema, or Jewish Creed, found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5, serves as the basis for teaching God's teachings to children. The authors provide a qualitative analysis of the text and its contextual background, which is closely related to Israeli beliefs and their relationship to educational theology. Shema, as a declaration of faith for the nation of Israel, is a manifestation of personal commitment and determination to the one true God and is used in the practice of teaching faith education in both the family and church circles.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The role of an educator goes beyond just dispensing knowledge and preparing teaching materials. In addition to these tasks, educators must have the ability to foster dynamic and imaginative learning experiences, as well as develop interesting and fun lessons. For a Christian religious educator, the responsibility is greater, because they must not only provide factual and conceptual knowledge, but also consider the most effective way for their students to receive and internalize the messages conveyed during the teaching and learning process. Educators may experience difficulties in the learning process due to the use of inappropriate teaching methods. Looking to the Great Teachers in the Bible, we see that various methods are used when teaching both students and the masses. Undoubtedly, the effectiveness of teaching methods plays an important role in facilitating the absorption of learning materials, especially in the realm of theology and

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Christian religious education. Thus, the proper application of educational theology and teaching methods is essential in developing a deeper understanding of God and his spiritual implications.

In the Old Testament, the book of Deuteronomy is traditionally associated with the authorship of Moses in Jewish circles. It serves as written testimony of a speech delivered by Moses to the Israelites during their encampment in the plains of Moab, located east of the Jordan River and across from the city of Jericho. At the beginning of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after their Exodus from Egypt, Moses began to enlighten the people with God's divine instructions. It is noteworthy that Moses was then in the later stages of his life, having reached the respectable age of 120 years (Bratcher & Hatton, 2000).

One of the key passages in Deuteronomy that Moses delivered to the Israelites relates to the Shema, as documented in chapter 6 of the book. This section is the second message from Moses to the Israelites, in which he expounds the Ten Commandments, especially the first. The Old Testament narratives underline God's redemptive work through the mandate to carry out missions in the lives of other nations. Strengthening God's presence in the life of the Israelites is one way to fulfill this mission, with the ultimate goal of involving God through the family. The most prominent feature in the history of the Old Testament is the appearance of YHWH (Adonay) as the LORD of Israel, so that Israel must always deal with God (MonoYahweism) (Boehlke, 1997).

God has saved the Israelites, His chosen people and entered into a covenant with the Israelites through God's commandments. This commandment is the Shema (Hebrew: listen). Shema's teaching aims to keep the Israelites believing and faithful to the Lord God who has chosen and saved the Israelites [1].

Israel's confession of faith is referred to as the Shema by Jews found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5 "Hear, O people of Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD is One! Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength". This verse explains that the words of the confession of faith must be recognized in the hearts of the people of Israel and must be taught to children. Verses 4-5 get rid of the concept of polytheism in the religion of Israel that God is one. God is the only God that must be worshiped by the nation of Israel. They know God from the experience of the liberation of Israel from Egypt. God is the only God that must be worshiped by the nation of Israel. They know God from the experience of the liberation of Israel from Egypt. There is also an opinion that the Shema Israel is used as the daily prayer of the

Jewish people. This prayer is a Confession of faith that declares the oneness of the God of Israel and specifically represents God's relationship with His people. The meaning of the word Shema represents the events at Mount Sinai that are remembered by the people of Israel from generation to generation. Jews from the age of eight have studied the Torah (Christenson, 1994). Parents have the role of repeatedly teaching children about the Torah Law. God's covenant with His people does not break from generation to generation. This interpretation creates the question of whether this involves the role of parents as God's representatives to guide the generations (Deut. 6:4-9). Or is it only aimed at the Ancient Israelite community that consists of the nuclear family. The method and application of educational theology is applied to the text of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, so that all Israelis know who GOD is and know what to do every day.

The Old Testament written in Hebrew contains the term "bet'ab", also known as "father's house", which refers to a household consisting of three or five generations. This household structure is led by a single patriarch who oversees the management of communal life. This is related to how generation after generation receives this teaching. This research will analyze the meaning of Israel's Shema theology which is an important factor in the application of educational theology, teaching that is carried out as a stimulus to hereditary regeneration for the growth of children's faith in the family and the Israeli people in general.

In this study, we review the meaning of Shema Israel in Christian families who face many very serious challenges and threats. The negative influence of technological, cultural and modern lifestyle developments hinders and undermines one's and family's faith. Many families experience problems in communication, partner intimacy, interpersonal relationships, love, harmony and happiness in the family. Parents leave the child's faith growth process to the church or pastor. They have problems communicating with their children because of busy work.

According to Samuel Ruddy's Seven Needs for Children, a lack of parental involvement in a child's spiritual development can produce three negative outcomes. First, if a father is physically or emotionally absent and fails to make a contribution to parenting, the child's drive to succeed may be reduced. Second, the child may experience a decreased sense of self-worth. Finally, without parental guidance, children can become vulnerable to negative influences or engage in delinquent behavior. In addition, parents may find it difficult to understand the nuances of fostering a child's Christian faith. So that makes parents not enthusiastic about being involved in educating and teaching children to introduce God (Drescher, 2009). A father is too busy with his own affairs to

neglect the children, a mother has to work to support the family so that the father's role as a spiritual force does not sustain the family. The significance of educational theology in the Christian home cannot be overstated, as the family unit serves as the primary source of religious instruction, beliefs, and ethical values for children. Considering that the family is the closest and strongest factor in shaping a child's growth and maturity, the application of educational theology in a family context can build a solid foundation for children to understand Christianity and grow a deep bond with God.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used is descriptive qualitative by exegesis the text of Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and applying the text according to the context in the application of educational theology.

3. DISCUSSION

Education is a comprehensive process designed to change the mindset and behavior of individuals or society, with the aim of encouraging human growth through pedagogical and instructional interventions which are systematic, structured and deliberate efforts (Sugono, 2011). On the other hand, Sahardjo argues that education requires the cultivation of individual talents, dispositions and behavior of society vis-à-vis their immediate environment. The main emphasis of teaching is on acquiring knowledge and skills, while the main focus on educating is on developing attitudes and behavior. The difference between teaching and educating is based on the desired outcome. Educating seeks to cultivate individuals who have a holistic perspective, attitude, and behavior that encompasses all aspects of their character, including their abilities. Instead, teaching aims to equip individuals with essential knowledge and abilities to carry out certain tasks (Boehlke, 1997).

The Old Testament is identical with the nation of Israel, which God has chosen as His holy people. This is evident from the statement, "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; you are the one whom the LORD your God has chosen out of all the nations on earth to be his favorite people." It is noteworthy that this divine election was based not on the numerical superiority of the Israelites, but on God's love for them and his faithfulness to the covenant he had made with their ancestors. So, he freed them from their slavery in Egypt, showing his strength and mercy. (Deuteronomy 7:6-8).

Israelis are dedicated adherents of the Jewish faith, which places a strong emphasis on strict adherence to religious laws that are diligently enforced and passed down from generation to generation. Merrill C. Tenney argues that education is a cornerstone of Jewish culture, as evidenced by the impressive efforts made to educate young people in all areas of culture, with the understanding that such efforts will have a significant impact in the future (Tenney, 1995). The main goal of Jewish education is centered on the rigorous study of the Law and the divine entity known as YHWH. Emphasis is placed on the study of the Law and the importance of YHWH. The Scriptures, or Torah, served as the only source of knowledge for Jewish children who wanted insight and guidance about God (Tenney, 1995). Education is a central component in everyday life, as evidenced by the education system of the Jewish people recorded in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. This system integrates theoretical knowledge with practical application in their way of life and religious practice. The Israel Shema, a profession of faith in Judaism, serves as the basis of education in the Old Testament. Even today, Shema continues to make a significant impact on the education of children around the world (Baucham Jr, 2010).

3.1. The context of the Israeli Shema

The book of Deuteronomy was delivered to the Israelites by God through their leader, Moses, with the aim of preparing the next generation of Israelites who will inherit the Land of Canaan, as promised to their ancestor, Abraham. Moses was commissioned by God to teach the second generation about His Torah and His character, as well as the actions required for their entry into the promised land, given that their parents, the first generation, had died in the desert. Since the Israelites were about to enter Canaan, understanding their history and receiving direction was of the utmost importance (Bratcher & Hatton, 2000).

After their liberation from slavery in Egypt, Israel's position was determined by YHWH's (Adonay) revelation through personal encounter, which enabled God to form a covenant with the nation. It represents a new beginning and identity as an independent nation (Herbert, 2004). God established Himself as the only god, separate from the gods worshiped by the Canaanites. His commandment in Exodus 20:2-3 explicitly affirms His supreme authority by stipulating "you shall have no other gods before me." God's extraordinary attributes and privileges ensured His election of Israel as a beloved

people, as confirmed in their proclamation of faith which professes the oneness and uniqueness of the Lord God (Knight, 2006).

Israel's Shema appears in Deuteronomy 6:4-5, as well as in Deuteronomy 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41. These three texts are closely related to Israelite beliefs and have significant educational value. The Shema serves as a statement of faith for the nation of Israel, representing their unwavering devotion and unwavering commitment to the one and only authentic God. (Bratcher & Hatton, 2000).

3.2. Fill Israeli Shema

This text of the Israeli Shema is found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5:

Verse 4 Hear, O people of Israel; God is our God, God is one!

Verse 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

3.3. The Theological Meaning of the Israeli Shema

Reading the Shema serves as testimony to the singular existence of YHWH (Adonay) as the one and only god, acknowledged as the God of the forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Saying the six word formula in this Shema is: Shema Yisrael, Adonai elohaynu Adonai ehad, which has a literal meaning for each word, namely:

Shema - "Listen" and "act"; *Yisrael* - Israel, in the sense of a nation or congregation.

Adonai - often translated as "lord"; *Eloheinu* - "Our God", the word "El" or "Elohei" signifies God.

(Elohim), and the plural "nu" or "einu" means "we" ; *Ehad* - Hebrew for "one"

In the Indonesian version of the Bible, there is a formula consisting of six words which forms the basis for a verse found in Deuteronomy 6:4. This verse, known as the "Shema Israel", emphasizes the concept of oneness in God and the affirmation that there is only one God. The expression also shows the belief that every event experienced by Israel as a chosen nation is associated with this single god. Furthermore, the verse encourages individuals to love God with all their being, as expressed in Deuteronomy 6:5. (Jakarta: Yayasan Komunikasi Bina Kasih, 2006).

3.4. The Application of the Israeli Shema

Mark 12:29-30 quotes the Shema, which emphasizes the oneness of God as the Father and Jesus Christ as the only Lord. This aspect is also present in the teachings of Christ and the writings of the apostle Paul, which emphasize Christ's role as a mediator between God and humans for salvation. The injunction in Deuteronomy 6:7 to repeatedly teach children God's word highlights the importance of Jewish education in the family. According to prominent Jewish scholar Schneur Zalman, reading the Shema not only serves as a means of giving praise to God, but also seeks to inculcate awareness of the Israelites believed that the whole of creation depended on a divine presence, which brought everything into being from nothing. [2] Thus, for the Israelites the idea of creation from nothing into existence is very strong today. He is the One God and his name is LORD YHWH (Adonay).

It can be said that the Shema of Israel is inseparable from the action of their God, who represents eternal existence and the One who proclaims Israel's emancipation from the slavery of the Egyptians. This historical event became the foundation for Israel's survival to this day. Their faith in God, who has shown His love and chosen them as His chosen people, has positioned them as a nation with true monotheistic beliefs (Vriezen & Cairns, 2001).

The Bible emphasizes the importance of instructing children in God's teachings. Deuteronomy 6:7 mandates that parents repeatedly teach their children about God in all settings, including at home, while traveling, before going to bed, and after waking up. It was the responsibility of the head of the household to teach the children about God, but according to Moses in Deuteronomy 6:4-9, both parents were responsible for this task. Timothy, who has a strong faith, was taught diligently by his mother and grandmother since childhood. These two women followed God's commands and Jewish custom to educate Timothy in the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul also mentions Timothy's early education in Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:15. Lois and Eunice took every opportunity to introduce Timothy to the Scriptures from when he was a child and demonstrated the importance of faith through their actions in the family.

3.5. Educational Theology in the Family

The main aim of the Christian family is to bring glory and honor to God rather than serving their own interests. However, parents often pass responsibility for their children's

spiritual growth to the church or religious leaders, neglecting their own vital role in this. The duties and responsibilities of parents towards their children are outlined by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6:4, where he advises fathers not to disappoint their children, but to instruct them in God's teachings and guidance. Therefore, parents should avoid constantly criticizing and angering their children, but educate them well and lovingly according to God's Word. Christian parents must ensure that their children receive an education that is in harmony with God's teachings and reflects their obedience and love for Him. This requires parents to put their children's spiritual welfare first, dedicate time to religious activities, and inculcate reverence for God in daily life. The foundation for teaching children about religion must start with family worship, where children can learn and memorize verses from the holy book (Homrighausen & Enklaar, 1974).

During Mary Slessor's childhood, her mother consistently read her articles on missionary work from the Missionary Records of the United Presbyterian Church, a practice consistent with the Mumford family's Christian religious education. Catherine Mumford, a member of the Mumford family, began reading the Bible at the age of five and received a comprehensive Christian education from her mother, so that she completed the Bible eight times by the age of 12 (Groome, 1980).

The family unit provides a divine environment for children, and it is the responsibility of parents to nurture their spiritual development. The Bible emphasizes the importance of teaching children about God's teachings, as stated in Deuteronomy 6:7, which emphasizes the need for continuous teaching during various activities. This task fell on both parents, as Deuteronomy 6:4-9 specifies. Christian parents are called to raise their children according to the teachings of God, put the Bible first and create a positive spiritual atmosphere in the family (Kristianto, 2006). Christian parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children are educated in the authentic principles of the faith as described in the scriptures. It is not lawful to allow unbelievers to instruct children that are contrary to Bible doctrine.

4. CONCLUSION

A literature review reveals that Educational Theology for Children has significant value in teaching the Bible. This field of study aims to investigate the Bible scientifically as a means of building a spiritual relationship with God and glorifying His name. The responsibility for imparting religious education to children rests with the family, church and school. Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Israel Shema, serves as the basis for teaching children

God's word in the Bible. Moses, who was educated both by his parents and at the Pharaoh's court, studied the word of God in his youth. His spiritual education was linked to his life, and as a result, he became the liberator of the Israelites.

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