

Foundation Building Blocks

FBB1-5-08: The Deity and Divine Nature of God – The Shema

The Shema

The Hebrew word SHEMA (shə-'mā, she-MA) means hear or listen. The prayer has three paragraphs, each paragraph is a short passage from the Torah. Here is the English translation of the first paragraph. Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Belief in the teachings of the Shema. The Shema Yisrael (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9, 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41) is the most ancient Jewish prayer (confession of faith) that can be found in the Torah. It affirms that there is only one God. The Shema says that God is personal and demands love from Jews with every aspect of their being.

Hear: (Hebrew 8085 - as used in *Deuteronomy 6:4*) shama` shaw-mah' a primitive root; **to hear intelligently** (often **with implication of attention, obedience**, etc.; causatively, to tell, etc.):--X attentively, call (gather) together, X carefully, X certainly, consent, consider, be content, declare, X diligently, discern, give ear, (cause to, let, make to) hear(-ken, tell), X indeed, listen, make (a) noise, (be) obedient, obey, perceive, (make a) proclaim(-ation), publish, regard, report, shew (forth), (make a) sound, X surely, tell, understand, whosoever (heareth), witness.

Deuteronomy 6:1-25 Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it: 2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. 3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it*; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. 4 **Hear**, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD: 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. 10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, 11 And houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; 12 *Then* beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.



13 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. 14 Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; 15 (For the LORD thy God *is* a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth. 16 Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted *him* in Massah. 17 Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee. 18 And thou shalt do *that which is* right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, 19 To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath spoken. 20 *And* when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *mean* the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you? 21 Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: 22 And the LORD shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: 23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers. 24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as *it is* at this day. 25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

Numbers 15:37-41 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: 39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: 40 That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. 41 *I am* the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: *I am* the LORD your God.

Shema Yisrael (Wikipedia.org) (or **Sh'ma Yisrael**; Hebrew: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל; "Hear, [O] Israel") is a prayer. It is also the first two words of a section of the Torah, and is the title (better known as **The Shema**) of a prayer that serves as a centerpiece of the morning and evening Jewish prayer services. The first verse encapsulates the monotheistic essence of Judaism: "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Hebrew: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד:), found in Deuteronomy 6:4. Observant Jews consider the Shema to be the most important part of the prayer service in Judaism, and its twice-daily recitation as a mitzvah (religious commandment). Also, it is traditional for Jews to say the Shema as their last words, and for parents to teach their children to say it before they go to sleep at night.^{[1][2]}

The verse is sometimes alternatively translated as "The LORD is our God; the LORD is one" or "The LORD is our God, the LORD alone." (Biblical Hebrew rarely used a copula in the present tense, so it has to be inferred; in the Shema, the syntax behind



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this inference is ambiguous.) The word used for "the LORD" is the tetragrammaton YHWH.

In terms of understanding God, the Shema is clear that God is one (and not are one). This is the predominate understanding throughout the Old Testament and in the underlying key to understanding who the Christ truly was.



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Question 1

As described in Deuteronomy 6:4, hear may also be defined as having:

Diligence.

Obedience.

Slothfulness.

Discernment.

Understanding.

Multiple choice (Multiple answers)

Question 2

As described in Deuteronomy 6:1-12, the teaching of Shema includes:

Worshiping familiar spirits.

The Lord our God is one Lord.

To love the Lord our God with all thy heart, soul and might.

To be obedient to God's word.

Multiple choice (Multiple answers)

Question 3

As described in Numbers 15:37-41, we must be holy unto our God.

True

False

True/False

Question 4

As described in Hebrews 13:8, the understanding that God is one does not change in the New Testament.

True

False

True/False