



The Shema, Part 1

January 11, 2023

So, what is it? And why is it so important?

1. It is a series of scripture passages from two books in the Old Testament.
 - a. Deuteronomy 6:4-9
 - b. Deuteronomy 11:13-21
 - c. Numbers 15:37-41
2. Jews consider the first verse of the first passage to be the most important part of the Shema.

“Hear, O Israel, the LORD your God, the LORD is one.” (Deut. 6:4)
3. Why is this first line so important to the Jew?
 - a. Command with a promise
 - b. A personal God
 - c. A supreme God
 - d. The response is devotion
4. Reading of The Shema

So, what is this prayer saying? (overview – tefillin, mezuzah, tallit)

The words behind the words:

Shema
YHWH
Ahavah
Levav
Nephesh
Me’Od

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to you when someone says to listen? How do you listen to God? P Kim described three levels of listening. What level of listening are you usually doing in your walk with God?
2. Do you normally associate hearing with doing? In what ways have you heard but maybe not followed through on what you heard? Read Matt. 7:24. How do the words of Jesus reinforce the ideas from the Shema prayer? How can we become better doers of the Word and not just hearers?
3. What do you do to hallow God's name (treat it as holy) in a culture that does just the opposite? Are you careful in your speech to reverence the name of God and Jesus? What can you do as a reminder to treat His name with honor and respect?
4. While we may not put on a tallit (prayer shawl) and tie the scriptures to our arms and foreheads when we pray, what can we do to help us focus more on the Word of God and His commands to us? How might we change the way we pray and even our surroundings in an effort to rid ourselves of distractions and keep our hearts and minds on the Lord while we pray and throughout our day?
5. In light of the deeper Hebrew meaning of the words translated as heart, soul and strength in English, what does this tell you about how we are to love the Lord our God? We all have room to grow in this. Which of these is more challenging for you? Share ways that you love the Lord with your thoughts, intellect, emotions, and even our bodies and belongings?

Come join us next week for more on The Shema!!