

Shema & Aaronic Blessings

Shema in English:

Hear, O Israel, YHVH Our God, YHVH is One.

Blessed be His glorious Name Whose kingdom is forever and ever!

And you shall love YHVH your God with all your heart & with all your soul and with all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be in your heart.

And you shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall speak of them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up.

And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.

And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deut 6:4-9, ESV)

And you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Amen. (Lev 19:18b, ESV)

Shema in Hebrew:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד:
כְּרוֹךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד
וְאַהֲבַת אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל לְבָבְךָ וּבְכֹל
גַּפְּשֶׁךָ וּבְכֹל מְאֹדְךָ:
וְאַהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ: (אָמֵן)

Aaronic Blessing (Birkat Kohanim) in English:

YHVH bless you and keep you;

YHVH make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

YHVH lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. Num 6:24-26, ESV)

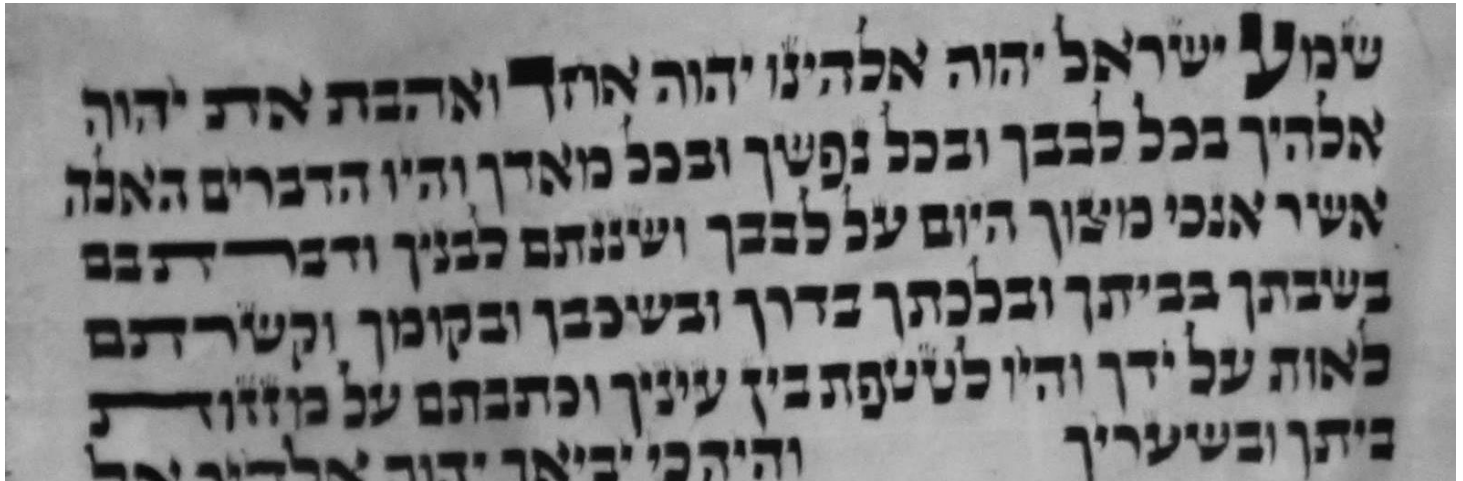
Aaronic Blessings in Hebrew:

יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:
יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנֶּךָ
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ
וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם: (אָמֵן)

The Shema (שְׁמַע)

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (the Shema).

It is very important to note that the word *shema* is an imperative verb, which means to “hear” and “obey.” *Shema* can be likened to when we have given instruction to children, and we ask, “Did you hear me?” We are not questioning their physical ability to hear; we are asking if they are going to obey.



Notice the 2 enlarged letters on the first line ע & ד

Below the Shema is written with vowels, for ease of pronunciation.

שְׁמַע * יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד * :

* The Hebrew letters ayin ע and dalet ד are super-sized in the Torah Scroll.

Two explanations as to why these letters are enlarged:

- Some say these 2 letters form the word עֵד, which means *witness* (also, *testimony* & *evidence*) (as in Gen 31:48,50,52; Ex 20:16, 22:13, 23:1; Lev 5:1; Dt 5:20,17:6; etc), the Shema is a witness to the sovereignty of God and that our primary duty is to obey and to love God with our whole heart and whole being.
- Another thought since there are no vowel markings on the Scroll, עֵד could be עֶד which is *forever, eternity* (Is 57:15, etc.). God’s Word stands forever!

Did you know that the Shema is the Confession of our faith?

Yeshua, all His Disciples, the Apostles, as well as Paul and James all recited the Shema (Deut. 6:4-5)! It is the confession of our faith.

²⁸Yeshua was asked a profound question: “What commandment is the foremost of all?” (Mk 12:28)

²⁹Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! YHVH OUR GOD IS ONE YHVH; ³⁰AND YOU SHALL LOVE YHVH YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.’ ³¹ (Mark 12:29-30; Yeshua quotes Deut 6:4).

“The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ (Yeshua quotes Lev 19:18).

There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:28-31a quotes Deut.6:4-5 and Lev 19:18).

Shouldn’t we, as believers, understand and confess what Yeshua Himself stated was the most important commandment!” As we recite this creed, we are declaring allegiance to the Father & proclaiming our faith in Him.

If our desire is to ‘do what Jesus did,’ shouldn’t also regularly recite the Shema?

As we read the Shema, let us meditate on our Messiah’s creed and remember that “Yeshua is the Word (Torah) made flesh”

What did Yeshua say about the Shema?

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“The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ (Yeshua quotes Lev 19:18 NASB). There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:31).

Yeshua, all His Jewish disciples, Apostles, as well as Paul and James all recited the Shema! If our desire is to ‘do what Jesus did,’ why don’t all Believers regularly recite the Shema today?

The Shema needs to be understood in its entirety, based on the context of the Torah. The Shema is comprised of three parts found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41. Let us remember that we, as followers of Yeshua, are required follow in His footsteps, and to declare our allegiance.

Since the Shema points to the Father and Yeshua, everyone who repeats this creed is declaring allegiance to the Father and proclaiming their personal faith.

As you read the Shema, meditate on what our Messiah’s creed declares!

And remember “Yeshua is the Word (Torah) made flesh”

The Shema is the Confession of our faith:

The Shema (Deut. 6:4-5) is the confession of our faith & said by those in covenant with YHVH. When Yeshua was asked “of all the commandments which is the most important? ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus [Yeshua], ‘is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, YHVH our God, YHVH is One. Love YHVH your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Mark 12:28-31a NIV quotes Deut.6:4-5 NIV and Lev 19:18 NIV).

The Shema is the first prayer a Jewish child learns and the last prayer a dying person says. How much more should we, as believers, understand and confess that which Yeshua Himself stated was the most important commandment!”

Why did Daniel and why do we face east when saying the Shema?

When reciting the Shema, we face east toward God’s holy mountain, Zion, and the Temple.
(Dan 6:10; Ps 5:7; 1Ki 8:29)

Shema, (Hebrew: “Hear”), the Jewish confession of faith made up of three scriptural texts (**Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21; Numbers 15:37–41**), which, together with appropriate prayers, forms an integral part of the evening and morning services.

The Shema is similar the U.S Pledge of Allegiance. In that, the words of each represent more than the meaning of the individual words.