

The Ineluctable¹ Shema !

Not to be Avoided, Resisted, or Changed... or Split

Joe Martin, Theological Conference 4/2016

Read a Prologomena

Read: **Ecclesiastes 5:1-7**

Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and **draw near to listen** rather than to offer the **sacrifice of fools**; for they do not know they are doing evil.

² **Do not be hasty in word** or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore **let your words be few**.

³ For the dream comes through much effort and **the voice of a fool through many words**.

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for *He takes* no delight in fools.

Pay what you vow!

⁵ It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.

⁶ **Do not let your speech cause you to sin** and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry **on account of your voice** and destroy the work of your hands?

⁷ For in **many dreams** and in **many words** there is emptiness [vanity]. Rather, fear God.

(Ecc 5:1-7 NASB)

Simplicity is a virtue and a discipline. In Richard Foster's popular the Celebration of Discipline, it is one of the twelve. Ecclesiastes 7:29, in the old Jerusalem Bible says, "God made man simple, his complex problems are of his own devising." Ecclesiastes goes on to say "For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there is* also vanity. But fear God." (Ecc 5:7 NKJ) "Many words" looks like this:

In Hebrew: **וְדַבָּרִים הַרְבֵּה** And Words Many

Or in Greek: **ὁ ἰ** Words Many

A few more verses, "**The more the words, the less the meaning, and how does that profit anyone?**" (Ecc 6:11 NIV) Also "In the multitude of words sin is not lacking [running away], But he who restrains his lips *is* wise." (Pro 10:19 NKJ) Jesus talked about many words in Matthew, "When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For, they think that they will be heard for their many words." (Mat 6:7 NKJ) The Greek is... **ἐ ἦ ἰα**, combining many and words. There are 613 Jewish laws according to the rabbis. Jesus summarized them in two. (Mk 12, etc.)

Lincoln spoke 272 words at the Gettysburg address. Secretary of State, Edward Everett gave a two hour speech, Lincoln spoke only about two minutes. The Apostle's creed is kind of short, the Nicene creed a little longer, and the Chalcedon creed is long also. How long is my/your statement of faith?

Proverbs 30:6 says, "Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar." (NIV) I Corinthians 4:6 says "... learn from us the meaning of the saying, 'Do not go beyond what is written.'" (NIV) Revelation 22: 18,19 says, "...to everyone who hears the prophetic words of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book."¹⁹ And if anyone takes away from the

¹ *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, G. Kittel, ed., Eerdmans, Vol. 3, p. 1063.

words of this prophetic book, God will take away his share of the tree of life and the holy city, written in this book.” (CSB)

Creation has been studied from time immemorial. “In the beginning God created” is only three words in Hebrew. It seems basic things do not need a lot of words. Scientists continue to argue cosmology in volumes of works and in the multitude of words. From my Old Testament Survey class, after discussing the notion of the “big bang,” the REAL question is “Who pulled the trigger?”

When we come to theology, the Shema, in Hebrew is six simple words:

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד (Deut 6:4 WTT)²

Left to right: **SHEMA YISRAEL YHWH ELOHINU YHWH ECHAD.**

Though the Jews say, “Shema Yisrael Adonai Elohinu Adonai Echad” please note that is NOT the Hebrew. In deference to the third commandment, or whatever reason, the name of YHWH is not pronounced. (note previous papers)

Several translations are:

KJV	Deuteronomy 6:4	Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God <i>is</i> one LORD:
NKJ	Deuteronomy 6:4	Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD <i>is</i> one!
NASB	Deuteronomy 6:4	Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!
NIV	Deuteronomy 6:4	Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
NJB	Deuteronomy 6:4	Listen, Israel: Yahweh our God is the one, the only Yahweh.

In Mark 12 after Jesus had given some great answers, “One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, “What commandment is the foremost of all?” (Mar 12:28 NASB) Foremost is “**protos**”, first in time or place, first in rank. The Greek, **π ρ ο τ ο ς**, means first or most important of ALL !

Since Mark is written in Greek, note the Greek of Mark 12:29, and compare it to the Septuagint Greek of Deut. 6:4:

12:29	π ρ ο τ ο ς	κ υ ρ ι ο ς	ο	ο	η μ ω ν	κ υ ρ ι ο ς	ε	Mark
6:4 LXT	π ρ ο τ ο ς	κ υ ρ ι ο ς	ο	ο	η μ ω ν	κ υ ρ ι ο ς	ε	Deut

Notice anything? Correct, they are exactly the same Greek.

Yada, yada, yada, (“know” in Hebrew ☺) so what is important in this simple verse. Number one is LISTEN! Both **Shema**, and **Akoue** (compare our word acoustics), are in the imperative. Shema is a verb, qal imperative. **LISTEN!** Akoue, is a present active second person singular imperative verb, literally, **YOU LISTEN!** Deut. 6:1ff: “...the **LORD your God has commanded me to teach you...** ² so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God... ³ “O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do *it*, that it may be well with you and that you may

² Using Bibleworks 9 and 10 for word studies

multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you (Deut. 6:1-3 NASB)

Number two, though Israel is addressed, this is for humanity as well. In the south we constantly confuse people with the slangs “Y’all,” or “you all,” or even worse, “all y’all.” Y’all can be singular or plural. Not to be too trite, but this is not just a command for Israel, but us ALL, all y’all. The definition of YHWH by YHWH in Exodus 34:6,7 flows into the new testament as well. In the same way, this God, the GOD, is the God of all.

Third, YHWH, is the way God chose to name himself. Compare “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The LORD (YHWH / YHVH), the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.” (Ex 3:15 NASB) Most think the name is associated with the Hebrew verb “to be” (@vqc היה). Some clarity is found in Revelation 1:4, the God “...who is , who was and who is to come.” Further clarity is found in the Daniel 7:13 and 22 name: “Ancient of Days.” Space does not allow me to clarify YHWH as I have tried to before in “YHWH the Ineluctable God” except... 6,828 times the name is used, it is in one of every four verses (25%) in the O.T. It is the most dominant name in the Bible and the most abused translation in the Bible, going from YHWH, to LORD, to LORD, to Lord, to... “hey you” it seems like sometimes. I try to gently and patiently tell PowerPoint presentors to at least try to keep the notion of capitalizing LORD, as is the initial “rule” in most of our obscure English translations. It is a tough sell. **I rest in 77 perfect times in the Bible, Yahweh says they “...shall know that I am YHWH.”**

Fourth, this God, our God, their God whether they realize it or not, is ONE. Whether **ECHAD**, Hebrew, or **EIS**, Greek, one is one. A summary from TDOT³ volume one, pages 193 ff.:

1. General Observations: The numeral, **echadh**, begins the series of ordinary numbers. It is an adjective.
2. One God: On this basis [Dt. 6:4] it affirms that Yahweh is the **one** and **only** God for Israel. ... Yahweh is Israel’s **only one** and **unique one**. After the eschatological battle, Yahweh will be enthroned in Jerusalem as king of creation, and then ‘Yahweh will be one and his name one.’
[Zech 14]
3. The Expression “Other Gods.” ...Yahweh delivered Israel out of Egypt and by making the covenant with them made them a people for his own possession and a people holy to him (Ex. 19:5f; Dt. 7:6). When Israel serves other gods, they break this covenant

There has been a substantial, yet I feel unwarranted, debate in recent theology and Christology about Paul splitting the Shema with reference to I Cor. 8:6. In Gordon Fee’s **[Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study](#)**, page 90, he says, “What Paul has done seems plain enough. He has kept the ‘one’ intact, but he has divided the Shema into two parts, with (God) now referring to the Father, and

³ *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Botterweck and Ringgren, eds., John Willis, trans., Vol. 1, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1974, pp 193ff.

(*Lord*) referring to Jesus Christ the Son.” N.T. Wright in his essay “Monotheism, Christology and Ethics: 1 Corinthians 8” [*The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*](#) , 129, says, “There can be no mistake: just as in Philippians 2 and Colossians 1, Paul has placed Jesus *within* an explicit statement, drawn from the old Testament’s quarry of emphatically monotheistic texts... .”

However, notice these verses:

KJV Isaiah 43:10 Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD... I *am* he: ***before me there was no God*** formed, neither shall there be after me.

KJV Isaiah 44:6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and ***beside me there is no God.***

KJV Isaiah 44:8 Fear ye not... ye *are* even my witnesses. ***Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God;*** I know not *any*.

KJV Isaiah 45:5 I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, ***there is no God beside me...***

KJV Isaiah 45:14 Thus saith the LORD... they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, Surely God *is* in thee; and ***there is none else, there is no God.***

KJV Isaiah 45:21 Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *Who* hath told it from that time? *Have* not I the LORD? and ***there is no God else beside me;*** a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.

Anthony Buzzard has two YouTube discussions on the notion of “Splitting the Shema.”

N.T. Wright on "splitting Shema" - YouTube Dec. 8, 2014
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fF94iaXWBcg>

N.T. Wright and "splitting the Shema". - YouTube Dec. 26, 2015
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GttmEsznz8>

I went to the recent SBL in Atlanta last November. My nephew was in town and staying with us and his friend, Rance Darity. I went to the session on Mark and there was a major discussion. Rance and I were there. The question came out as Dr. Hurtado was standing making comments, “Did Jesus ever think he was God?” Hurtado burst out in exclamation ***“Hell no!”*** (my mother wouldn’t like me talking like that... at least in public) But there it is “Hell no!”

I have listened to the discussion of Bart Ehrman on early Christianity (about six times now), he would say the same, but that if one believed John, and he historically doesn’t, Jesus did claim to be God in John, but never in the synoptics.

Here is an excerpt from a post regarding James Dunn and Larry Hurtado:

“During a lively dialogue with Larry Hurtado at the British New Testament Society conference this morning, Jimmy Dunn put forward his well known view that there is a significant functional differentiation—even subordination—between Jesus and God in the New Testament that should not be obscured in our efforts to safeguard a high Christology. He was responding to Hurtado’s

basic argument that the worship of the earliest churches exhibited a dyadic pattern—that is, in their prayer, acclamation, confession, hymns, and such practices as the Lord’s meal and baptism, they effectively ‘worshipped’ Jesus in the same terms as they worshipped God. One particular comment stuck out. Dunn remarked that he used to favour the view that in [1 Corinthians 8:6](#) Paul incorporates Jesus as Lord into the *shema*, effectively identifying Jesus with God or making him equal to God....yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. ([1 Cor. 8:6](#)) Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ([Deut. 6:4](#)) **He has since changed his mind.** He thinks now that while the first part of Paul’s statement is a reference to the *shema* and, therefore, a classic affirmation of Jewish monotheism, the second part—‘for us there is... one Lord, Jesus Christ’—brings into focus [Psalm 110:1](#): ‘The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”’⁴

Though the scholarship waffles from a good understanding of first century Christianity to ... “Oh well... but now we have the tradition... .”

Moses’ Six words: **Shema Yisrael YHWH Elohinu YHWH Echad (A chant?)
YHWH OUR GOD, YHWH IS ONE..**

David’s Ten Psalm 110:1 :

נְאֻם יְהוָה | לְאֹדְנִי שֶׁב לְיְמִינִי עַד־אֲשִׁית אֵיבֶיךָ הַדָּם לְרִגְלֶיךָ (Psa 110:1 WTT)

Yahweh declared to my Lord, ‘Take your seat at my right hand, till I have made your enemies your footstool.’ (Psa 110:1 NJB)

Jesus’ Six: “Since I said, I am the Son of God” ὁ ἴ · ἰὸ ὦ ὦ ἰμ (Jn 10:36)

ὶὸ ὦ ὦ ἰμ (A Jesus chant?) I AM the Son of God...

How about a Kingdom cheer: **Seek First the Kingdom of God...**

Peter’s Ten: You are the Messiah/Christ the Son of the Living God (Mt 16:16)

Paul’s nine: “...for us there is only one God, the Father...” (1Co 8:6 NJB)

John’s Words: “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3 NASB)

ἀ ὕμῃ ἰ ἰ ἦ ἄ ὀ ὀ ὦ ἰ ὀ ἦ ἰ ὀ ἔ ὀ μ (Rev 1:4 BGT)

“Grace and peace to you from Him who IS and WAS and who IS TO COME.”(Rv 1:4)
Let’s Keep It Simple Saints, KISS it! IT IS OBVIOUS.

²⁴ Then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when He abolishes all rule and all authority and power.

²⁵ For He must reign until He puts all His enemies under His feet.

²⁶ The last enemy to be abolished is death.

²⁷ For God has put everything under His feet. But when it says " everything " is put under Him, **it is obvious** that He who puts everything under Him is the exception.

⁴ <http://www.postost.net/2015/11/jimmy-dunn-one-god-one-lord-shema>

²⁸ And when everything is subject to Christ, then the Son Himself will also be subject to the One who subjected everything to Him, so that God may be all in all.
(1Co 15:24-28 CSB)