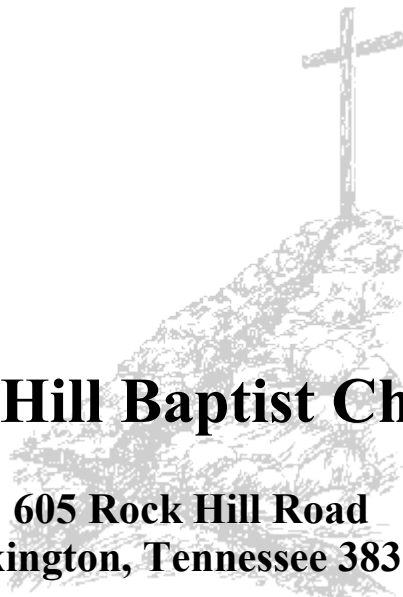


# The Shema, Part One

Deuteronomy 6:4-5



## Rock Hill Baptist Church

605 Rock Hill Road  
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Brother David Buffaloe  
731-845-6104

online at [bibleteacher.org](http://bibleteacher.org)

**FOCAL** Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (KJV) "Hear<sup>1</sup>, 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."

As we have discussed before, the Mosaic Law was introduced at Mount Horeb/ Sinai because of Israel's unbelief and loveless attitude toward God. Though God has introduced the Law to draw unbelieving Israel to a saving knowledge of God, the *foundation* of everything the Lord desires from mankind is contained in verses 4 and 5 in our focal text. These verses, *called the Shema*<sup>1</sup>, are the foundation on which Judaism and Christianity are built.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ (so named because of the Hebrew word we translate "hear") is the first scripture that every Jewish child commits to memory, and the Scripture used to open every Jewish worship service.

What should Israel have learned from the Shema? What can we learn from the Shema? Let's look at our text.

### 1. The Shema Teaches That God Is In Control

The first part of the Shema teaches us that **God is in control of all things**. Let's look at this verse in detail.

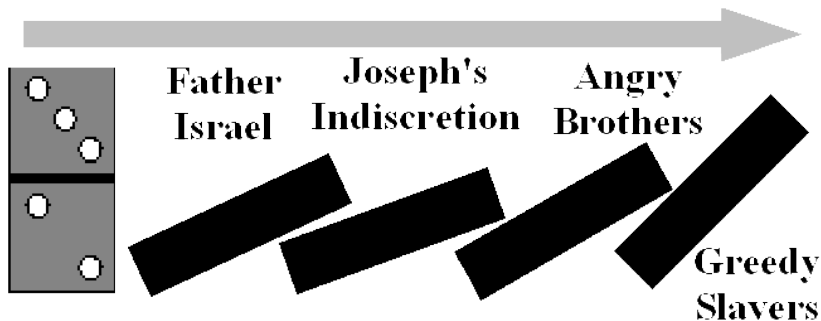
**FOCAL** Deuteronomy 6:4 (KJV) "Hear<sup>2</sup>, O Israel:

- 1 shama' {pronounced shaw-mah'}, Qal Imperative, Hear! Listen! Pay Attention To!
- 2 shama' {pronounced shaw-mah'}, Qal Imperative, Hear! Listen! Pay Attention To!

## The LORD<sup>3</sup> our God is one LORD<sup>3</sup> ..."

An improper understanding of God causes a great deal of problems in the believer's life - and, for that matter, in anyone's life. Remember that Israel first came to Egypt under Joseph (remember the coat of many colors? - see **Genesis 37:3**). Joseph's father made him his favorite, and this in turn led his brother's to jealousy. This jealousy blossomed until the brothers conspired to imprison their brother, sending him away from his family as no more than a common slave.

Who was in control when Joseph was cast into the pit, then later sold into slavery? The Shema answers this by telling us "**The LORD<sup>3</sup> our God<sup>4</sup> is one LORD<sup>3</sup>**". Joseph's brothers thought they were in control, but **YHWH Elohiym** or the "**Self Existent and Eternal God**" alone is in control. God is *always* in control!



If someone were to look at the events that led up to Joseph's imprisonment, they would wrongly believe that *man* controlled the domino effect that caused Joseph to

3 YHWH, the most holy Name of God, used to denote His self existence and eternity

4 Elohiym, a plural Hebrew word for which there is no proper English counterpart. This Name of God is used to show His Compound Unity or Triune Being.

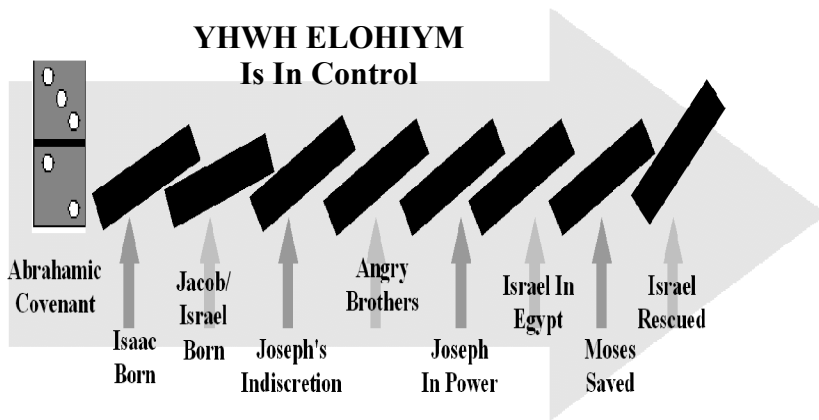
be sold to slave traders. We would imagine that father Israel's *preferential treatment* of Joseph started the dominoes falling. Joseph, we would say, didn't help matters by showing off his coat of many colors to his jealous brothers. We could then imagine that these brothers threw Joseph in the pit, and while plotting to kill him greedy slave traders just happened to come by. Yes, we could suppose this - yet it would not be true. Though each person had their part to play in Joseph's mistreatment - even Joseph himself - *God was in control all along*. Joseph recognized this when he as the right hand man of Pharaoh fed his brothers and saved his aged father. Joseph said to his brothers:

**Genesis 50:20 (KJV) "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."**

Man thinks evil and does evil, but God controls the outcome. What we see at *the end of Joseph's exaltation* is the culmination of the Mighty Hand of God controlling events. How do we know this?

Some 400 years *prior to Israel's release from Egyptian bondage* under Moses' leadership the Lord told Father Abraham:

**Genesis 15:13-14 (KJV) "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; {14} And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."**



I want you to follow this Beloved! Joseph's father Israel contributed to Joseph's imprisonment, but God controlled the event. When God established His Covenant with Abraham He promised him that the nation that would come from the child of promise (Isaac) would go and stay in bondage for 400 years. The *reason* that God allowed Israel to be in bondage for this long was to allow that nation to grow in number, so they could come

2. Israel went into bondage because God, always true to His Word, promised Abraham that he would have a mighty nation come from his lineage. The "**The LORD<sup>5</sup> our God<sup>6</sup> is one LORD<sup>3</sup>**", and He reigns over all things! There are \_\_\_\_\_, but there is only One God.

out of that bondage "**with great substance**". This is exactly what happened! **Israel went into bondage because God, always true to His Word, promised**

- 5 YHWH, the most holy Name of God, used to denote His self existence and eternity
- 6 Elohiym, a plural Hebrew word for which there is no proper English counterpart. This Name of God is used to show His Compound Unity or Triune Being.

Abraham that he would have a mighty nation come from his lineage. The "**The LORD<sup>7</sup> our God<sup>8</sup> is one LORD<sup>3</sup>**", and He reigns over all things! There are *no other gods or goddesses*, but there is only One God, and He is known to His people by that name **YHWH Elohiym!**



When Israel, 400 years in bondage, were released from Egypt they had allowed themselves to be perverted with the Egyptian mindset. Egypt *was a land of gods and goddesses*, a people who had fallen into worship of anything and anyone other than YHWH. I found an Internet site<sup>9</sup> that listed around **124 gods and**

**goddesses** that were worshiped by ancient Egypt. A *partial list* of these are:

<b>Anubis</b> God of Embalming	<b>Anuke</b> Goddess of War
<b>Aken</b> Ferryman of the Underworld	<b>Aker</b> Guardian and Gatekeeper of the Underworld
<b>Am-Heh</b> - Devourer of Millions	<b>Ament</b> Greeter of the Dead
<b>Ammit</b> Devourer of the Wicked	<b>Amun</b> and <b>Amun-Re</b> The King of the Gods

- 7 YHWH, the most holy Name of God, used to denote His self existence and eternity
- 8 Elohiym, a plural Hebrew word for which there is no proper English counterpart. This Name of God is used to show His Compound Unity or Triune Being.
- 9 <http://www.angelfire.com/wi/egypt/gods.html>

<b>Anubis</b> God of Embalming	<b>Anuke</b> Goddess of War
<b>Anat</b> Mother of Gods	<b>Anqet</b> The Embracer, Goddess of Fertility and the Nile at Aswan
<b>Baal</b> , God of Thunder	<b>Bast</b> Cat-Goddess

As you can see, these Egyptians worshiped just about anything! Israel had allowed itself to become *corrupted* by idolatry, so much so that Aaron and the people took the *riches that the One True God* had given them and melted these riches down to create an idol in the form of a golden calf or cow:

**Exodus 32:3-4 (KJV) "And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. {4} And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods<sup>10</sup>, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. "**

3. The golden calf at Sinai represented two of the Egyptian \_\_\_\_\_.

This golden calf at Sinai represented two of the Egyptian goddesses<sup>11</sup>. Israel, a people whom YHWH had saved with a mighty Hand, terribly mistreated the Creator. Rather than credit Him with their salvation, this terribly degenerated people assigned the *faithful deliverance of God* to the fairytale goddesses of Egypt - a nation that

<sup>10</sup> Elohiym - one of the names of God in the Shema of **Genesis 6:4**

<sup>11</sup> it could have represented either **Bat**, the ancient cow goddess or **Mehet-Weret**  
the cow goddess of the sky.

had enslaved them.

The first generation of Israel died in the wilderness, wandering aimlessly for forty years until all but Joshua, Caleb, and the second generation of Israel remained.

## 2. The Shema Teaches That There Is Only ONE God, And He Is NOT Man Made

Now here's an interesting thing the Lord impressed on my heart. When God gave Israel the *Shema*:

**FOCAL Deuteronomy 6:4 (KJV) "Hear<sup>12</sup>, O Israel: The LORD<sup>3</sup> our God is one LORD<sup>3</sup> ..."**

He used *two names* to describe Himself: **YHWH** (translated LORD) and **Elohiym** (translated God). God uses these two descriptive names for a reason. When Israel sinned and created the golden calf idol, these deceived people said:

**Exodus 32:4-5 (KJV) "... These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. {5} And .... Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD."**

What was literally said about that false cow idol was:

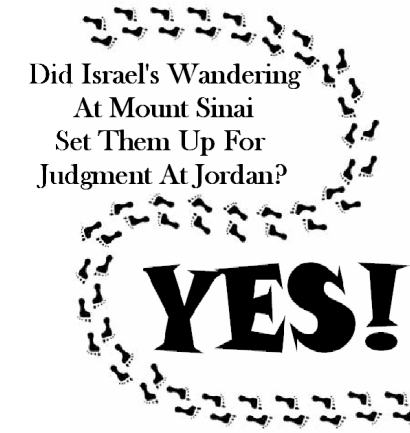
**This is Elohiym, O Israel,  
Who brought you from Egypt!  
Tomorrow we honor YHWH with a feast!**

<sup>12</sup> shama´ {pronounced shaw-mah´}, Qal Imperative, Hear! Listen! Pay Attention To!



The idol of the golden calf took credit for what YHWH Elohiym had accomplished. Israel had allowed the idolatry of Egypt to permeate their minds until, sad to say, it caused them to assign the works of the Infinite Creator to a man-made statue of a cow! When a believer walks away from God long

enough they might still belong to God, but their behavior will mimic that of the world. "The LORD our God is One LORD". He is YHWH, Eternal, and never ending. He is always in control. Further, He is Elohiym, One God in Three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the



Holy Spirit. We serve a Risen Savior by serving the Son.

4. Israel had allowed the \_\_\_\_\_ of Egypt to permeate their minds until, sad to say, it caused them to assign the works of the Infinite Creator to a man-made statue of a cow!

We are indwelt with the Spirit of God. We have one Heavenly Father Who oversees our lives. We have One YHWH Elohiym, and He is the *only God there is*. Our Triune God is complete, One, and controls all that there is and all that there will ever be in my and your history. He is YHWH Elohiym!

**3. The Shema Teaches That Our God Is "Triune":  
The Trinity of God**

**FOCAL Deuteronomy 6:4 (KJV) "The LORD<sup>3</sup> our God is one LORD<sup>3</sup> ..."**

The *United Pentecostal Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other cultic groups* teach a belief that the early Church called **modalism**. This false doctrine entered the early Church around the *second and third century*.

Modalism teaches that there is only one Person in the Godhead Who has represented Himself in *three modes or forms* over mankind's history. Modalism can trace its roots to three people called **Noetus<sup>13</sup>, Praxeas<sup>14</sup> and Sabellius<sup>15</sup>**. These men, like most Modalists today,

13 Hippolytus traces the origin of the Patripassian heresy at Rome to Noetus, who in his opinion derived it from the philosophy of Heraclitus (Refutation, lib. ix. cc. 3-5, cf. x. 23). Noetus came to Rome, where he converted Epigonus and Cleomenes. He was summoned before the council of Roman presbyters, and interrogated about his doctrines. He denied at first that he had taught that "Christ was the Father, and that the Father was born and suffered and died," but his adherents increasing in number, he acknowledged before the same council, when summoned a second time, that he had taught the views attributed to him. "The blessed presbyters called him again before them and examined him. But he stood out against them, saying, 'What evil am I doing in glorifying one God?' And the presbyters replied to him, 'We too know in truth one God, we know Christ, we know that the Son suffered even as He suffered, and died even as He died, and rose again on the third day, and is at the right hand of the Father, and cometh to judge the living and the dead, and these things which we have learned we allege.' Then after examining him they expelled him from the church. (A Dictionary of Christian Biography and Literature to the End of the Sixth Century A.D., with an Account of the Principal Sects and Heresies by Henry Wace, pg 761)

14 Praxeas thought that the Father and the Son were so much the same that we could say that God the Father suffered on the cross. Tertullian points out that this isn't how scripture talks about God, and goes on to summarise the teaching of scripture on the persons of the trinity, and their relationship, thereby being the first to explicitly recognise the doctrine of the Trinity. The identity of Praxeas is unknown. Some have suggested 'Praxeas' may be a pseudonym for someone better known, perhaps even Irenaeus, although this suggestion is not generally accepted. (Tertullian Against Praxus)

15 in 220 [AD]. Opposing the orthodox teaching of "essential Trinity,"

misunderstand the Hebrew *word for one*.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ teaches that there is only one Person in the Godhead Who has represented Himself in *three modes or forms* over mankind's history.

There are *two different words in the Hebrew language* that mean "one". There is the Hebrew *yachiyd* {pronounced yaw-kheed'}, which *means an absolute one*. You see this word used in Scriptures like:

**Genesis 22:2 (KJV)** "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only<sup>{yachiyd}</sup> son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

**Judges 11:34 (KJV)** "And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only<sup>{yachiyd}</sup> child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter."

and so on. You can see by its context that **yachiyd** emphasizes *only* or *uniquely one*. This is *not* the word that God uses for Himself in the *Shema*. When God says:

**FOCAL** Deuteronomy 6:4 (KJV) "The LORD<sup>3</sup> our God is one LORD<sup>3</sup> ..."

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Sabellius advanced the doctrine of the "economic Trinity." God, he held, was one indivisible substance, but with three fundamental activities, or modes, appearing successively as the Father (the creator and lawgiver), as the Son (the redeemer), and as the Holy Spirit (the maker of life and the divine presence within men). (Columbia Encyclopedia, sixth edition, 2001).

The word for *one* in the *Shema* is the Hebrew 'echad {pronounced ekh-awd'} which refers to a *compound unity*. We see 'echad used in:

**Genesis 1:5 (KJV)** "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first<sup>'echad</sup> day."

where the two conditions of *day and night* are considered "one" or 'echad day. When a husband and wife are joined together to become *one flesh* the Bible says:

**Genesis 2:24 (KJV)** "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one<sup>echad</sup> flesh."

Two *persons* but they are 'echad flesh. In the same way God uses *echad* of Himself in the *Shema*:

**FOCAL** Deuteronomy 6:4 (KJV) "The LORD<sup>3</sup> our God is one<sup>echad</sup> LORD<sup>3</sup> ..."

To use the *Shema* to support modalism is foolish! The fact that God is One in *three Holy and Distinct Persons* is clearly represented in Scripture. We see this doctrine taught in Isaiah:

**Isaiah 48:12-16** "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. All ye,

**assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The LORD hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous. Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: .... "**

Only the foolish would fail to see that this is *YHWH* speaking. This couldn't be anyone else *but* God. Look at His titles: The First and The Last; I Am He; and so on. God is clearly speaking here, but in last part of the text our God says:

**Isaiah 48:16b " .. and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me .."**

The Scripture *distinctly* declares Jesus to be God:

**Matthew 1:21-23 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from<sup>16</sup> their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet<sup>17</sup>, saying, Behold, a virgin<sup>18</sup> shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. "**

<sup>16</sup>APO, from the ultimate source of

<sup>17</sup>This was one of the three great warnings Isaiah would give to the Jews living between 63 and 70 AD. He warned of the Virgin birth [Isaiah 7.14], of the unique crucifixion of the Savior [Isaiah 53.9], and of the outpouring of Tongues and the Gifts [Isaiah 28.11]

<sup>18</sup>PARTHENOS, one specifically a virgin, having had no sexual expression. The Hebrew parallel, HA ELMA, is found in Isaiah 7.14

The Holy Spirit, as a *Distinct and Holy Person*, is clearly given the title of God:

**1 Corinthians 3:16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? "**

**Acts 5:3 "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? "**

Who did Ananias lie to? He lied to, the text plainly states, the Holy Ghost. Now I want you to note the rest of the context:

**Acts 5:4 "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."**

The Father is declared to be God:

**Revelation 21:4-7 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall**

**inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. "**

Do we fully understand this doctrine? No, we don't - but I do not need to rationalize nor idolize reason to the point where I reject Scripture. Let God be true and every man a liar! He is God in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Spirit - blessed be His Holy Name forever!

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Lexington, TN 38351

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