

July 1, 2023

Jewish Mindset – Sh'ma

I was recently asked during our Bible Study, how is this actionable...in other words how are we to put what we learned into practice?

If the Tanakh and the New Covenant writings are applicable, that is to be applied to our lives then they must be actionable. How are we to act upon what is written.

First and foremost we must first discern what is actionable and what is not. There are verses that emphasize teaching of Adonai ways, yet do not imply an actionable response.

An eye for an eye is one such example.

Lev 24:17 " 'Anyone who strikes another person and kills him must be put to death.

Lev 24:18 Anyone who strikes an animal and kills it is to make restitution, life for life.

Lev 24:19 If someone injures his neighbor, what he did is to be done to him—

Lev 24:20 break for break, eye for eye, tooth for tooth—whatever injury he has caused the other person is to be rendered to him in return.

Lev 24:21 He who kills an animal is to make restitution, but he who kills another person is to be put to death.

Lev 24:22 You are to apply the same standard of judgment to the foreigner as to the citizen, because I am Adonai your God."

Lev 24:23 So Moshe spoke to the people of Isra'el, and they took the man who had cursed outside the camp and stoned him to death. Thus the people of Isra'el did as Adonai had ordered Moshe.

Where this entire passage focuses on equal measure, not in the literal sense but in the restorative sense. Yeshua expands our understanding of this passage...

Mat 5:38 "You have heard that our fathers were told, 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.'

Mat 5:39 But I tell you not to stand up against someone who does you wrong. On the contrary, if someone hits you on the right cheek, let him hit you on the left cheek too!

Mat 5:40 If someone wants to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well!

Mat 5:41 And if a soldier forces you to carry his pack for one mile, carry it for two!

Mat 5:42 When someone asks you for something, give it to him; when someone wants to borrow something from you, lend it to him.

There is a pattern I have noticed when we have studied Psalm 91 and most recently Psalm 113 and that pattern can be found in the Sh'ma as well.

Psa 91:1 You who live in the shelter of `Elyon, who spend your nights in the shadow of Shaddai,

Psa 91:2 who say to Adonai, "My refuge! My fortress! My God, in whom I trust!"—

Psa 113:1 Halleluyah! Servants of Adonai, give praise! Give praise to the name of Adonai!

Psa 113:2 Blessed be the name of Adonai from this moment on and forever!

Psa 113:3 From sunrise until sunset Adonai's name is to be praised.

Here is Deuteronomy 6:4...

Deu 6:4 "Sh'ma, Yisra'el! Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad [*Hear, Isra'el! Adonai our God, Adonai is one*];

I have talked a great deal on the oneness of Adonai and what Yeshua had shared as recounted in Yochanan 14. This is something that many of you should already have embraced and thus minimized if not eliminated the confusion of who Yeshua is in relation to Adonai.

All are statements pertaining to who Adonai is.

Are these verses actionable? Is there anything we can do?

First and foremost...

You can't worship if you don't know who He is.

You can't follow Him if you don't know who He is.

Ultimately our first action is to know Him. Without knowing Him, acknowledging Him, embracing Him, everything else is moot.

Unless you know who it is you are following...

Once He conveys who He is, who Adonai is...He then reveals more of Himself through what is actionable, what is doable for us.

Deu 6:5 and you are to love Adonai your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources.

To know Him is one thing but to embrace Him fully is something deeper.

This is a Mitzvah...a commandment, for which Yeshua was asked...

Mat 22:34 but when the P'rushim learned that he had silenced the Tz'dukim, they got together,

Mat 22:35 and one of them who was a Torah expert asked a sh'eilah to trap him:

Mat 22:36 "Rabbi, which of the mitzvot in the Torah is the most important?"

Mat 22:37 He told him, " 'You are to love Adonai your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.'

Mat 22:38 This is the greatest and most important mitzvah.

Mat 22:39 And a second is similar to it, 'You are to love your neighbor as yourself.'

Mat 22:40 All of the Torah and the Prophets are dependent on these two mitzvot."

These two verses not only identify who Adonai is but express the foundation the predominant commandment there is. In so doing this everything else falls into place, where even Yeshua conveys the essence of the Mitzvot...

Joh 14:12 Yes, indeed! I tell you that whoever trusts in me will also do the works I do! Indeed, he will do greater ones, because I am going to the Father.

Joh 14:13 In fact, whatever you ask for in my name, I will do; so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

Joh 14:14 If you ask me for something in my name, I will do it.

Joh 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commands;

Joh 14:16 and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another comforting Counselor like me, the Spirit of Truth, to be with you forever.

Your whole heart as conveyed in Deuteronomy 6:5

Yeshua has talked about divided loyalties with this being one aspect...

Mar 3:22 The Torah-teachers who came down from Yerushalayim said, "He has Ba`al-Zibbul in him," and "It is by the ruler of the demons that he expels the demons."

Mar 3:23 But he called them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan expel Satan?"

Mar 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom can't survive;

Mar 3:25 and if a household is divided against itself, that household can't survive.

Thus His words, are to reside in our heart as well.

Deu 6:6 These words, which I am ordering you today, are to be on your heart;

We first see this in the people's response at Sinai...

Exo 19:1 In the third month after the people of Isra'el had left the land of Egypt, the same day they came to the Sinai Desert.

Exo 19:2 After setting out from Refidim and arriving at the Sinai Desert, they set up camp in the desert; there in front of the mountain, Isra'el set up camp.

Exo 19:3 Moshe went up to God, and Adonai called to him from the mountain: "Here is what you are to say to the household of Ya`akov, to tell the people of Isra'el:

Exo 19:4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

Exo 19:5 Now if you will pay careful attention to what I say and keep my covenant, then you will be my own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine;

Exo 19:6 and you will be a kingdom of cohanim for me, a nation set apart.' These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra'el."

Exo 19:7 Moshe came, summoned the leaders of the people and presented them

with all these words which Adonai had ordered him to say.

Exo 19:8 All the people answered as one, "Everything Adonai has said, we will do." Moshe reported the words of the people to Adonai.

Embracing Adonai is actionable through following His Mitzvot. By acknowledging Him and following His ways are actionable, doable.

In so doing, we are to be an example because we have been given the responsibility of raising our children.

How are we to do so?

In the ways we have embraced and have placed upon our heart.

Recognizing there is only one God and His ways are the way of righteousness, we are...

Deu 6:7 and you are to teach them carefully to your children. You are to talk about them when you sit at home, when you are traveling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Not only are we to teach them to our children, we are to live them through and through.

Deu 6:8 Tie them on your hand as a sign, put them at the front of a headband around your forehead,

On your hand = your actions

On your forehead = your thoughts.

The Orthodox take this verse literally and have created something called phylacteries where these very verses are encased in a leather box and attached to leather straps to be wrapped around their arm and forehead.

Deu 6:9 and write them on the door-frames of your house and on your gates.

Another means that this verse is acted upon is through the Mezuzah where Deuteronomy 6:4 – 9 and 11:13 – 21...

Deu 11:13 "So if you listen carefully to my mitzvot which I am giving you today, to love Adonai your God and serve him with all your heart and all your being;

Deu 11:14 then, [*says Adonai,*] 'I will give your land its rain at the right seasons, including the early fall rains and the late spring rains; so that you can gather in your wheat, new wine and olive oil;

Deu 11:15 and I will give your fields grass for your livestock; with the result that you will eat and be satisfied.'

Deu 11:16 But be careful not to let yourselves be seduced, so that you turn aside, serving other gods and worshipping them.

Deu 11:17 If you do, the anger of Adonai will blaze up against you. He will shut up the sky, so that there will be no rain. The ground will not yield its produce, and you will quickly pass away from the good land Adonai is giving you.

Deu 11:18 Therefore, you are to store up these words of mine in your heart and in all your being; tie them on your hand as a sign; put them at the front of a headband around your forehead;

Deu 11:19 teach them carefully to your children, talking about them when you sit at home, when you are traveling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up;

Deu 11:20 and write them on the door-frames of your house and on your gates —

Deu 11:21 so that you and your children will live long on the land Adonai swore to your ancestors that he would give them for as long as there is sky above the earth.

Yet in doing all this, what does Adonai promise to those who have embraced Him?

What He will do for the people He has established His covenant with?

He will give you a new heart...

Eze 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you; I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 I will put my Spirit inside you and cause you to live by my laws, respect my rulings and obey them.

Eze 36:28 You will live in the land I gave to your ancestors. You will be my people, and I will be your God.

And he will write upon that heart...

Jer 31:30 "Here, the days are coming," says Adonai, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah.

Jer 31:31 It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because

they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says Adonai.

Jer 31:32 "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says Adonai: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

He will write His Mitzvot on our hearts

Yet the fallacy among believers is that what is actionable is impossible to do because no one can do it which is the reason we need someone to save us.

Yet is Adonai lying to Moshe and thus the nation when He says this...

Deu 30:11 For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you, it is not beyond your reach.

Deu 30:12 It isn't in the sky, so that you need to ask, 'Who will go up into the sky for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?'

Deu 30:13 Likewise, it isn't beyond the sea, so that you need to ask, 'Who will cross the sea for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?'

Deu 30:14 On the contrary, the word is very close to you—in your mouth, even in your heart; therefore, you can do it!

Deu 30:15 "Look! I am presenting you today with, on the one hand, life and good; and on the other, death and evil—

Deu 30:16 in that I am ordering you today to love Adonai your God, to follow his ways, and to obey his mitzvot, regulations and rulings ; for if you do, you will live and increase your numbers; and Adonai your God will bless you in the land you are entering in order to take possession of it.

Is Yeshua lying when He says...

Joh 5:43 I have come in my Father's name, and you don't accept me; if someone else comes in his own name, him you will accept.

Joh 5:44 How can you trust? You're busy collecting praise from each other, instead of seeking praise from God only.

Joh 5:45 "But don't think that it is I who will be your accuser before the Father. Do you know who will accuse you? Moshe, the very one you have counted on!

Joh 5:46 For if you really believed Moshe, you would believe me; because it was about me that he wrote.

Joh 5:47 But if you don't believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe

what I say?"