



WATERMARK
COMMUNITY CHURCH

God is [NOT] doing a new thing

Background

The Lord is ONE = in a world of multiple gods fragmented across multiple domains of life (different gods for fertility, war, healing etc), YHWH declares himself to be the one supreme being over all domains of life.

Love = we tend to think of love as affection for someone or something. A feeling. Whenever you read the word *love* in the Bible, it is better to substitute the word '*devote oneself to*' or '*devotion*'. Biblical love combines both intense affection and intense commitment and loyalty. It is both feeling and determined action.

Heart (lev) = your inner person (e.g. mind, will, emotions, spirit).

Soul (nephesh) = your entire being and life. In Biblical language, humans don't have a soul, they are a soul.

Might (meod) = all your resources.

Shema

This study is centred around the *Shema* (Dt 6:4-5). This is one of the most important verses in all Scripture prayed by practising Jews twice a day every day. The word 'shema' means 'hear' or 'listen' and is taken from the first word in v4.

Pause to Pray

Before you start your study, read a short Psalm to position your hearts ready to hear, receive and respond to God's Word. The point is not to discuss and study it, but to allow it to recentre your thoughts and mind on God.

One person read this Psalm aloud twice. The rest listen, even close your eyes.



Psalm 131:1-3

¹ *My heart is not proud, Lord,*

my eyes are not haughty;

I do not concern myself with great matters

or things too wonderful for me.

² *But I have calmed and quieted myself,*

I am like a weaned child with its mother;

like a weaned child I am content.

³ *Israel, put your hope in the Lord*

both now and forevermore.

Take 2-3 minutes individually to pray and give to God the matters that have been troubling you or have occupied your mind this week.

What do you need to surrender to him now so that you can be like a weaned child, contentedly lying in your heavenly Father's arms without needing to strive, fix or prove yourself?

Study the Word

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-5

1. Write your own modern version of these 2 verses which express what this command is saying in our context. Use the notes above to help you understand the language.

E.g. *Listen Oaks CG...*

(You might check out the Message Version afterwards for one idea).



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2. Now rewrite the 2 verses as if you had a pagan mindset where you wanted Jesus along with what the culture around you wants as well.

E.g. *Listen Bridge CG, Jesus is your God, the centre of your entire life and hope. Well, as well as your career, financial security and a husband of course.*

3. Which of these 2 versions reflects where your heart is right now? Pause for a minute individually to reflect. Then take 5 minutes to pray in groups of 2-3 for how God is calling you to 'hear' and respond to Him right now.

Read Deut 6:6-9

4. Loving God with all your heart, soul and might requires testifying to who he is to the next generation and calling them to do the same. This is disciple-making. Even if you don't have children, we are called to be those who invest our lives in teaching others of God's ways, his goodness and how to love him.

What strikes you about the commands in v6-9? Why are they so important? Honestly share, how great a conviction is this in your own life? What does it look like at the moment for you?

OPTIONAL QUESTIONS

Read Deut 6:10-15

What is the danger of comfort and blessing Moses' is warning about? How far is this a danger for you?

Read Deut 6:20-25

5. What is the motivation God gives for loving him and obeying him right now? (V21,24).



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6. “We were Pharaoh’s slaves...And the LORD brought us out” (v21) “The LORD commanded us to do all these statutes....for our good always, that he might preserve us alive” (V24).

Where have you seen God releasing you from slavery in your life? How have you seen the truth that obeying God’s commands is ‘for our good’? Especially at times, when human wisdom might say the opposite.

Reflection and Response

What has God been speaking to you through this study? How is God seeking to motivate you to love Him?