

# WORDS OF WISDOM.

## Chapter Ten.

### From the Desk of Rabbi Yochanan Hammond

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Trying to bring people together for a common cause can be a very difficult task. Such a task often begins with enthusiasm and vitality only to end in bickering and destruction.

As a nation, Israel has often behaved in similar manner. This has happened to us because we have failed to shema the wisdom of HaShem. We have failed this because we have in actual fact failed to adhere to what is commonly known in Judaism as “The Shema”.

Let us take a look at the “Shema”.

*Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One.*

*Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom for all eternity.*

*You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your resources. Let these matters that I command you today be upon your heart. Teach them thoroughly to your children and speak of them while you sit in your home, while you walk on the way, when you retire and when you arise. Bind them as a sign upon your arm and let them be tefillin between your eyes. And write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your gates.*

*And it will come to pass that if you continually hearken to My mitzvot that I command you today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve Him, with all your heart and with all your soul – then I will provide rain for your land in its proper time, the early and late rains, that you may gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil. I will provide grass in your field for your cattle and you will eat and be satisfied.*

*Beware lest your heart be seduced and you turn astray and serve gods of others and bow to them. Then the wrath of God will blaze against you. He will restrain the heaven so there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its produce. And you will swiftly be banished from the goodly land which God gives you.*

*Place these words of Mine upon your heart and upon your soul; bind them for a sign upon your arm and let them be tefillin between your eyes. Teach them to your children, to discuss them, while you sit in your home, while you walk on your way, when you retire and when you arise. And write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your gates. In order to prolong your days and the days of your children upon the ground that God has sworn to your ancestors to give them, like the days of the heaven on the earth.*

*And God said to Moses saying: Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them that they are to make themselves tzitzit on the corners of their garments, throughout their generations. And they are to place upon the tzitzit of each corner a thread of blue (techelet). And it shall constitute tzitzit for you, that you may see it and remember all the mitzvot of God and perform them; and not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray. So that you may remember and perform all My mitzvot; and be holy to your God. I am God, your God, Who has removed you from the land of Egypt to be a God to you. I am God your God... it is true.*

How many of us walk the walk of “The Shema” as opposed to just talking the talk? How many of us actually believe in our hearts that HaShem is the One and only God? Notice that the “Shema” begins with the same commandment found in the opening of the “Ten Words”. We the people of Israel are commanded to worship and trust HaShem and only HaShem. HaShem is to be our only God. He and He alone is the One we are to seek for all our needs. HaShem is to be our only guidance as regards our life style and character. The Torah is to be our guiding Light, and the Torah made flesh is to be our guiding example.

Is it not sensible to listen to wise counsel? When the Maker of heaven and earth speaks, should we not listen with intent? Not sure about you but I am convinced that we should not only listen, but do our best to obey. I say this because not only does it show our love for HaShem but His counsel is the best available. Please remember Hashem is in complete control of “our world”. He causes and He allows.

What a tremendous challenge it is to love HaShem with all our heart, soul and resources. I encourage you to take a moment and reflect on what this actually entails. To understand this, let us remind ourselves what the word **love/ahab** means. Simply put, it means, “**to devote oneself completely to another**”. I suggest this is an almost if not impossible task for us in our “fallen” state. How many of us can honestly claim to **love/ahab** HaShem at all times with all our heart, soul and resources? None the less this shouldn't prevent us from trying our best to fulfil this wonderful commandment.

Yeshua Himself said we should strive [struggle, continue pushing, labour, fight for, try our hardest] to walk the straight and narrow path of Torah.

*“He answered, “Struggle to get in through the narrow door, because I am telling you; many will be demanding to get in and won’t be able to, once the owner of the house has gotten up and shut the door. You will stand outside, knocking at the door and saying, ‘Lord! Open up for us!’ But he will answer, ‘I don’t know you or where you’re come from!’ Then you will say, ‘We ate and drank with you! You taught in our streets!’ and he will tell you, I don’t where you’re from. Get away from me, all you workers of wickedness!” Luke 13:24-27 [CJB]*

All Children of Israel should be united in the common cause of keeping, guarding, promoting Torah and HaMoshiach. This should be a delight for us to do so, but sadly this is not the case. How many of us that claim to be Children of Israel actually unite for this cause? The “Orthodox” arms of Judaism try and unite in this cause, the “Liberal” arms of Judaism do not and Christianity does not. We have to conclude that majority of the “Children of Israel” are **NOT UNITED** in the cause of loving HaShem with all our heart, soul and resources. Imagine the difference within our communities if we were united in this wonderful cause. It would be wise to take the time to remind ourselves of the promises associated with listening to and obeying the Torah and thus HaMoshiach. It would also be wise to make the effort to remind ourselves of the promises associated with rejecting the Torah and HaMoshiach.

This “common cause” is to be a family tradition. The Torah and belief in Ha Moshiach is to be embedded in our very being. All our decisions and actions are to be influenced by the Torah and actions of HaMoshiach. How many of us who would label ourselves as “Children of Israel” open the bible and study Torah each and every day? How many of us encourage other “Children of Israel” to do such? I suggest precious few.

We are told to be very careful that we do not become seduced by other gods and serve them; wise words indeed; but words that we reject far too often. To help us achieve this commandment we are commanded to wear tzitzit on the four corners of our clothing, yet so few follow this commandment. We are told do this so we remember the commandments of

HaShem. Not only are we to remember them but we are perform them. This is the essence of “The Shema”.

Our common cause is to come together as a nation, learning and performing the Torah as best as we can. We are to be continually helping and encouraging each other to do the same, with compassion and the patience of HaShem. I can think of no better “cause” and I pray and hope that those reading this would find themselves agreeing, as after all it is the commandment of the Holy One of Israel.

May the grace, love and wisdom of HaShem and Yeshua HaMoshiach be with you!