

## **Shame or the Shema?**

**Isaiah 44:6-20**

*Phil de Martimprey*

11/19/23

The truth that there is only one God has been part of Israel's history since its very beginning. The Hebrew prayer known as the "Shema" was taken from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and recited daily by devout Jews, and its first line clearly expresses that monotheistic truth, "Hear Oh Israel, the LORD is our God, the LORD is one." There is and has ever been only one God, yet there were times when Israel would doubt their God's strength, sovereignty, and singularity. The inevitable fruit of these doubts was idolatry. At the time of Isaiah, Israel had allowed the culture around them to influence and infiltrate their strict monotheism, and God would have none of it. In our section of study today, God will prove that He is the only God, He will show the pure folly of worshipping anything other than Him, and He will show the heartbreaking result of idolatry. God would teach those who have eyes to see and ears to hear

**Worshipping anything other than God,**  
**always results in shame.**

### **The One God and His People (vv. 6-8)**

Once again, we see God use various names to identify Himself. LORD, King of Israel, Redeemer, LORD of hosts, the first and the last, the only God. There are, at minimum, two truths that God wanted to reiterate to His chosen people. First, He was and is the only God, and to prove this, He issued another courtroom challenge to anyone who would counter this claim. Let them come forward and prove their divinity. The proof would be that they would "declare what is to come and what will happen." The test for any god would be that they could tell precisely what would happen in the future. Something that Yahweh had repeatedly shown His ability to do, even just in the book of Isaiah. He had prophesied about Assyria, Babylon, and, most recently, the exile and return. All things that happened just as He said. God was and is able to do this because He is, indeed, "the beginning and the end."

Secondly, Yahweh is reminding Israel of His unique relationship with them. He is their King and Redeemer, the One who appointed them as a people and their Rock. With these realities in mind, Israel has no reason to be afraid! God has made covenants with them and will keep His covenants. God can do these things because He alone is God, and no one is like Him. The surrounding nations rejected this strict monotheism, and Israel was being drawn into their idolatry. In the next section, God will show just how ridiculous and foolish it is to worship anything other than the One True God of Israel.

### **A Fool and His Idol (vv. 9-20)**

This section gives a satirical depiction of idolatry. It makes it so very clear how foolish and ridiculous it is to worship something that was manmade. The end result of worshipping anything other than the one true God of Israel is shame. The phrase "put to shame" is used three times in verses 9-11, showing the strong emphasis and clear result

of idolatry. Following the laughable depiction of making an idol, is a description of what the “shame” looks like. In verse 17, the comedic language stops, and the horrific, shameful result is described as the man falls down to worship the thing he just made, calling out to it for deliverance. The man has become like the idol without knowledge, sight, or understanding. He is unable to see the utter foolishness he is partaking in. It’s as if he is attempting to satisfy his hunger by eating ashes. Psalm 115:4-8 gives another sharp picture of the shame, foolishness, and dangers of worshipping anything other than the one true God of Israel.

“Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands.  
They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see.  
They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell.  
They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk;  
and they do not make a sound in their throat.  
Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.”

In our “cultured” Western world, we don’t typically make and worship idols in the same way that polytheistic nations do. We are much more sophisticated about our Idolatry. But we ought not to be deceived; paganism and idolatry are rampant in our culture and even have a strong foothold in our churches. We are tempted to worship money, power, pleasure, our public image, being accepting, and any number of other things. The anecdote is simple but not easy. We must put the one true God in His rightful place and, in the words of our savior, “seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33).

### *Grace News and Needs*

---

#### **Grace Family Cookies and Carols Event Dec 17th @ 6 - 7:30 pm.**

- A night of carols to kick off the Christmas season! Bring some cookies to share!

#### **Men's Ministry:**

- Servers needed for Gala nights. Sign up on the patio.

**Pregnancy Care Clinic:** Adopt-A-Mom Tree will be on the. Provide for a new or expecting mother this holiday season!

**OCC Shoe Boxes: The last day to drop off boxes is tomorrow by 10 am!**

**VOM Needs for November:** Bath towels, washcloths, antiseptic wipes

**ON SUNDAY, CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES WILL BE USUAL MORNING TIMES:  
NO EVENING SERVICES.**

Helping Hands is here to serve the body! If you have a need, grab a form from the foyer and drop it in one of the gray boxes. For more information on our events and ministries, visit [www.gccramona.com](http://www.gccramona.com)