

**"A LISTENING PRAYER"**  
**Date:** September 27, 2020  
**Speaker:** Danny Clinton

**GOD IT'S ME**  
 a teaching series at Kessid

**"People desire improvement, not transformation."**

- And yet, we are called to transform...
- I shared that this is the space I'm going to try and drag us into over the next few weeks.

**"A Transformational Space"**

- I shared that as we sit together with children in the room, we have a really special opportunity to learn from them.
- Because children are the clearest example of transforming human beings...

**I was a chatty kid...**

- I spent a significant part of my childhood being asked to "just listen..."
- I was told that, "Nobody wants to hear a person rattle on for 30 min straight!" Lol!
- Only once I had a few chatty children of my own did I fully understand what I had put my parents through!

**This Week - "The Transformational Space of Listening."**

- There's a small collection of speeches in the opening section of Deuteronomy. They are attributed to Moses, who was giving them to that next generation of Israel just before they were about to enter into the Promised Land.
- Moses was their Spiritual Father... They were, "The Children of Israel"
- These speeches signify that they are about to move out on their own.

**Deep within these speeches sits something called, "The Shema."**

- The Shema would become a daily prayer in Ancient Israelite tradition.
- It's the Old Testament equivalent of the New Testament "Lord's Prayer" ("Our Father in Heaven...")

*(Vs) Deuteronomy 6:4 NLT - "Listen, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord alone."*

**The Shema gets its name from the first Hebrew word of the prayer...**

- The English word “listen” renders the Hebrew word “Shema.”
- This Emphasizes that the opening line, “Listen, O Israel,” does not simply mean to let the sound waves enter our ears.
- Rather, the word “listen” here means, ‘allow the words to sink in, provide understanding, and generate a response.’

**“In Hebrew, ‘hearing’ and ‘doing’ are basically the same thing.”**

- Moses is saying, “In order for you to actively follow... You must stop and listen!”

*(Vs) Proverbs 3:6,7 MSG – “Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume that you know it all. Run to God! Run from evil!”*

**Question: What if some of you aren’t transforming because you refuse to enter into a listening space?**

- God keeps saying, “Pick up your cup!” “What?”
- This is what reciting ‘The Shema’ was meant to do...

**“The Shema was a Listening Prayer.”**

- ... Reminding them, day and night, To Transform!

**The Shema was so widely practiced in the second-temple period, Jesus Himself would have grown up praying it...**

- It would have been formative for Him, and He would even draw upon it in his own teachings.
- You hear this when He was once asked which command in the Torah was the greatest: Jesus answered, (Vs) Mark 12:29 MSG – “The first of all the commandments is, ‘Listen, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord...”

***There’s the Shema!***

- Look closely at what Christ adds next...

*(Vs) Mark 12:30 NASB – “...and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.”*

**Christ knows that God is the ultimate parent, and like all good parents, He never asks His children for anything He wouldn’t do first Himself.**

- In this moment, He’s not only sharing what it is God wants from us... LOVE, but also, what it is God is offering to us... LOVE!
- And not simply the warm, fuzzy, emotional energy we feel when we like someone...

**“In scripture, love is always action.”**

- ... It teaches that you are loving someone when you act in loyalty and faithfulness toward that person...

**Jesus is revealing what “The Shema” has been teaching them all along: to Listen for Love, and so always find their way.**

- Likewise, ... When you and I Listen to God and Lovingly follow His commands, we are participating in this way of love.
- Jesus would soon add to this, (Vs) John 15:13 ESV – “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”
- Knowing His very Love for us would soon be called to action on a Cross, becoming the greatest example of a life that Listens to have ever existed.

**My hope is that we start talking to our Children more about having lives that Listen for the Love of God.**

- We talk with them about being productive members of society...
- About speaking their truth and sharing what they’ve learned, and so on...
- However, I haven’t found we talk to them much about listening for the Love of God...
- I’d surmise this is because we ourselves don’t pray many ‘Listening Prayers’ within our own lives... But it’s never too late to start... ‘A Listening Prayer’