

One

Scripture Reading — Deuteronomy 6:4-9

*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
Deuteronomy 6:4 —*

When our family prepared to leave for Japan, I walked across the hall of my parents' apartment building in New York and asked their Jewish neighbor, a friend of many years, if she could give us a mezuzah (a little brass box, containing a Scripture verse, that can be attached to a doorpost). I explained that we were going to a country known for its many gods so that we could tell people about the one true God. She gladly gave me one. Inside are the words of Deuteronomy 6:4 hand-written in Hebrew on sheepskin: "Shema yisrael, Elohim elohenu, Elohim echad."

The oneness of God is an offense in Japan. The people there like the flexibility of being able to add another god to their list. They don't generally believe in the gods, but they like the principle of tolerance in this practice.

Why is it so important to believe in only one God? The Greek philosopher Socrates pointed out that if you believe in the many gods of mythology, you can never tell what is good. For example, Athena fought against Poseidon; Zeus was unfaithful to his wife, Hera. Right and wrong are lost in a welter of brawling deities.

Let's thank the one true God today that we can depend on him, knowing that his love for us is true. Throughout history God has shown that he is faithful, and with his help we can be faithful to him too.

Prayer

Thank you, Lord, that you are One. Thank you for forgiving us when we were still sinners, unfaithful to you. Help us to honor you first in our lives. In Jesus's name, Amen.

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