

(אל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָן)

שְׁמַע | יִשְׂרָאֵל, הִיא אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הִיא אֶחָד.  
בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

God is a faithful sovereign

Hear, O Israel: Adonai is our God, Adonai alone.

Praised be God's glorious sovereignty throughout all time.

*“When he covered his face with his hands, he would affirm the yoke of Divine rule” (Brachot 13b)*

We are commanded  
“*Shema*” – Hear!  
How can we best fulfill  
this commandment to  
hear? Where can God’s  
voice best be heard?

The text of the Shema is  
recited prior  
to going to sleep. What do  
you think  
is the logic in so doing?

The same Shema text has  
become the  
cry of martyrs for  
generations. Why?

How might this text also  
serve as a  
wedding vow?

If you look closely, you  
will see that the  
“*ayin*” of the word  
“*shema*” and the “*dalet*” of  
the word “*echad*” are  
enlarged. The same thing  
is true where this text is  
written in the Torah. Can  
you postulate reasons for  
such?

As the Shema is recited,  
you will notice  
that many people cover  
their eyes? Why  
do you think this done?

Is the Shema really a  
prayer? What is  
prayer? How might we  
consider the role  
of the Shema in service as  
a dialogue  
with God?

How is it possible to be  
commanded to love? Can  
it be real love? How can  
one love God with all  
one’s heart, soul, and  
might?

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה'  
אֶחָד: וְאַהֲבַת אֵת ה'  
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לֵבְבְךָ וּבְכָל־  
נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ  
הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי  
מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם עַל־לֵבְבְךָ:  
וּשְׁנַנְתָּם לְבְנֶיךָ וּדְבַרְתָּ בָם  
בְּשַׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ  
בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכֶבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ:  
וְקִשְׂרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל־יָדְךָ:  
וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ:  
וְכִתְבָתָם עַל־מְזוֹזֹת בֵּיתְךָ  
וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

***You shall love Adonai  
your God with all your  
heart, With all your  
soul, and with all your  
might. And these  
words, which I  
command you this day,  
you shall take to heart.  
Teach them diligently,  
to your children, and  
recite them at home  
and away, night and  
day. Bind them as a  
sign upon your hand,  
and as a reminder  
between your eyes.  
Write them upon the  
doorposts of your house  
and upon your gates.***

You will often hear  
Christians speaking of a  
personal relationship with  
God? Is this an un-Jewish  
idea? Why or why not?

We are told to speak of  
Torah when we lie down  
and when we rise up. This  
is an example of a merism  
(when two polar opposites  
are cited, it is meant to  
include everything in  
between as well.

How can we live Torah at  
all times? Are there  
situations in our lives in  
which Torah doesn’t  
apply?

We are commanded  
“*v’shinantem*” – you shall  
teach (literally “drill into”)  
your children. Why is  
there such a strong  
focus on education among  
Jews? Ultimately, whose  
responsibility is this?

We are commanded to  
wear Tefillin. How is the  
purpose of the Tefillin  
similar to the recent  
Christian trend of the  
WWJD bracelets?  
Why don’t we wear  
Tefillin on Shabbat?  
What is the symbolism of  
the placement of the  
Tefillin in putting them  
on? Should women wear  
Tefillin?

We are commanded to put  
up Mezzuzot. How can one  
truly dedicate a home to  
God? Why are Mezzuzot  
usually decorative? Are  
there buildings or rooms  
on which we don’t put  
mezzuzot.

## **SOURCES ON “STUDY”**

“Say not: when I have leisure I will study, lest you may not have it!”  
(Avot 2:4)

“If you have studied Torah a great deal, hold it not as a merit in yourself.”  
(Avot 2:9)

“If you forsake study for one day, it will forsake you for two.”  
(Talmud, Berachot)

“What a difference between one who studies a lesson a hundred times and one that studies it just once more!”  
(Talmud, Chagigah)

“A teacher must repeat the lesson until the pupil has learnt it.”  
(Talmud Eruvin)

“If you do not suffer the toil of study, you will suffer the toil of ignorance.”  
(Ibn Ezra)

“When I ask a man, ‘Why do you not study Torah?’ and he answers ‘I do not want to’, I leave him...But when the answer is ‘I do not have time,’ I say he is a liar, because if there is a will there is a way.”  
  
(Midor Ledor)

## Tefillin as Betrothal (Wedding Ring)

- *“I will betroth you to Me forever.”*
- *“I will betroth you to Me with righteousness, with justice, with love, and with compassion.”*
- *“I will betroth you to Me with faithfulness and you shall love the Lord.”*

## From the Shulchan Aruch

- It is a divine command to affix a Mezuzah to every door of the house.
  - Even if one has many rooms, and in every room there are many doors, one must affix a Mezuzah to each one of the doors, even though only one of the doors is ordinarily used.
- The Mezuzah must be affixed to the right hand side as one enters.
- The Mezuzah must be affixed within the upper third of the doorpost, at least one hand-breadth from the lintel.
- The Mezuzah should be fastened with nails to the doorpost diagonally, having the top line of the Shema towards the house.
  - If the doorpost is not wide enough, we may fasten the Mezuzah vertically.
- If we simply suspend the Mezuzah, it is not valid. It must be fastened at top and bottom so as not to be suspended.

- A house used as a temporary residence needs no Mezuzah. Therefore, the Sukkah requires no Mezuzah.
- Stores which are permanently occupied with merchandise (as opposed to a temporary bazaar) do require a Mezuzah.
- If a person moves from a house and it is to be occupied by another Jew, we must not remove the Mezuzah, but leave them there, and the new occupant is to pay for them.
  
- The occupant of a new house has 30 days to affix a Mezuzah.
- Because the purpose of the Mezuzah is to remind us of God's name, we should kiss the Mezuzah upon leaving the house and upon entering it.
- **Alshech**: What need is there to affix the Mezuzah to the doorposts of rooms within rooms?
  - This is necessary so that one should not think that only in public must one avoid wrongdoing.
  - The Mezuzah is a reminder that, even in the innermost rooms where one imagines being isolated and alone, we must refrain from sin.