

# נְשִׁמָע יִשְׂרָאֵל



A mindful moment with your child before bedtime

# THE SHEMA PROJECT

A 30 DAY CHALLENGE



For further details contact [education@theus.org.uk](mailto:education@theus.org.uk)

Dear Kids,

Thank you for accepting the 30 day Shema challenge! Using this booklet and the accompanying Shema card you'll have the chance to spend some special time with one of your grown-ups before saying the bedtime Shema together each night! You can choose from 30 different ideas... there are cartoons, stories, meaningful thoughts to discuss, interesting facts to learn about the Tefillah of Shema, lots of fun activities and you can enter our competition to win a prize!



Shema is a special prayer that Jewish people say to remind themselves of important beliefs, it's a way to express love and commitment to God. Saying the Shema each night is a way for people to come together share their thoughts and feelings and remember values that are important to them...can you show the booklet to your grown up now and ask them to read this next bit?

Dear Adults,

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, where time often slips through our fingers like grains of sand, the significance of dedicating moments to engage in "meaningful listening" with our children cannot be overstated. This intentional act goes beyond mere conversation; it delves into the essence of understanding, empathy and shared values. Drawing inspiration from the timeless practice of saying the nightly prayer, Shema, which calls for attentiveness and devotion, these moments of intentional listening become sacred bridges that span the generational gap, fostering a deep and lasting connection between adults and their children. As the Shema resonates with the call to listen, so too does the act of meaningful listening become a spiritual practice within the sanctum of familial relationships.

The past few months have been challenging in many ways for Jews across the world, dark days which have been filled with fear and anxiety, a sense of unknown for our future. Giving our children space for a nightly check-in brings a comfort and security we all long for during these times. We encourage you to join us as we embark on the 30 day 'Shema challenge', an opportunity to connect more closely with our children, rekindle a connection with God and reinforce the important values found within the prayer of the Shema.

**MM** MINDFUL MOMENT

**ST** STORY

**PM** POEM

**PG** PUZZLES & GAMES

**AC** ACTIVITY

**CP** COMPETITION

# DID YOU KNOW?



We say the Shema **TWICE** a day, morning and nighttime.

The 12 sons of Jacob were the first people to say the words **‘Shema Yisrael ...’**.

The Shema contains **three paragraphs**, all found in the Torah.

Inside every **Mezuzah** case which are put on our door posts, there is a small scroll with the **first two paragraphs of the Shema** written on it.



We **cover our eyes** with our right hand when we say the first line of the Shema.



The mitzva to wear **Tefillin**, which men do during weekday morning prayers, is found in the Shema. Tefillin contain the **first two paragraphs of the Shema**.

The Shema is one of the **first** prayers we learn as children and one of the **last** prayers people say before they die.



The night before a brit mila, many people have a custom to invite friends and family to **say the Shema with the baby**.

# WHERE IS GOD?

Adapted from a poem by Bracha Goetz, [www.chabad.org](http://www.chabad.org)

Where is God?  
Is He really there?  
It sure looks like  
He's not anywhere.

First I looked in the sky.  
Couldn't see God up there.  
Hurried past an old lady,  
On her folding chair.

I looked behind bushes -  
Never follow your nose!  
In one bush it got poked  
By the thorn on a rose!

I felt kind of silly -  
But I wanted to know.  
How can I believe  
In a God who won't show?

A manhole was uncovered,  
So I took a peek.  
Didn't think I'd find God -  
But this was Hide-and-Seek!

"What you looking for, sonny?  
Can I give you a hand?"  
THE OLD LADY! - I jumped!  
She'd never understand.

"I'm just looking..." I mumbled,  
And tried hard to smile.  
"I'm not busy," she said,  
"Can I join you awhile?"

"You know what, little fellow?  
You remind me - you do -  
Way back when I was young,  
I looked for God, like you."

But, how did she know?  
How much had she seen?  
"Where is God?" I asked.  
She whispered: "In between!"

"God hides in the grass,  
Within each tiny blade.  
He hides under rocks,  
In the coolness of shade."

"God hides inside things  
That everyone sees.  
You can even find God  
While you're climbing trees!"

"This whole world's filled with God -  
Seen with wide-open eyes.  
God is out here right now,  
Tucked within His disguise!"

"You'd already found God  
By yourself here today.  
Right on your own street -  
God doesn't live far away!"

Do you know where God is?  
I think you do.  
And now that you know -  
You can find God too!

# THE TWO ELISHAS

**As told by Rebbetzen Naomi Lerer of Central Synagogue, aunt of (little) Elisha Goldstein**

Recently, Elisha Goldstein, a soldier in the IDF, took to social media to ask if anyone could help him track down a little boy who lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh. At the beginning of the war, lots of children across Israel sent treats and letters to soldiers who were fighting to encourage them and send them support.

Elisha had been on guard duty and was hungry. He went to the crate that contained all the treats that people had sent to the soldiers and spotted a chocolate bar he wanted. He reached in and noticed an envelope attached to it and read the note. But he got a big shock. The note was signed from a little boy who was also called Elisha Goldstein!



He really felt that was not a coincidence but a sign of how closely all the Jewish people are connected. He wanted to contact little Elisha to thank him.

A couple of months later, somebody saw big Elisha's post and called little Elisha's father to tell him about it. Big Elisha arranged to come and meet little Elisha and even gave him a special hat to thank him for the great feeling of support he felt from the letter. Little Elisha's family felt it was a hug from God!

The Shema prayer tells us to love God. One of the best ways to do this is to love other people, because God gets great happiness when we make others happy.



***Hamalach* is another of our bedtime prayers. What is your favourite *Hamalach* tune? Can you sing it?**

**See *Hamalach* prayer on the accompanying card.**

MM

Why do you think we use our right-hand to cover our eyes during the Shema?

AC

COLOUR  
THE  
PICTURE

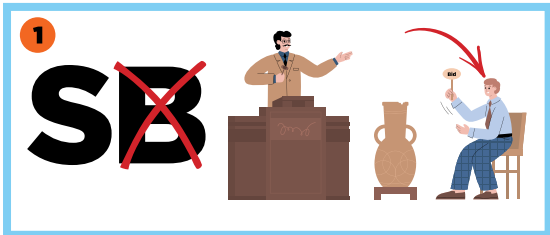


MM

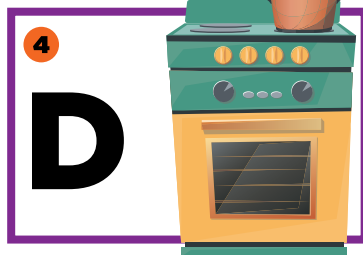
We say the Shema at the beginning and at the end of the day - do those two recitations feel different?

AC

# SHEMA DINGBATS



# N



# D

ANSWERS: 1. Sidur 2. Bedtime 3. Listen 4. Daven

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# LISTEN UP!

**Based on a story by Rabbi Dr Jay Goldmintz,  
from the Rabbi Sacks Legacy Covenant and Conversation  
Family Edition, Parashat Eikev 5783/2023**

A story is told of a man named Richard Bass who was a famous adventurer. He is best-known for becoming the first person to have ever climbed the tallest mountain on each of the seven continents of the world.

He was once on a flight and struck up a conversation with the stranger in the seat beside him. Bass, a man known for being very lively and chatty, proceeded to share stories of his various adventures, reportedly for the next three hours of the trip! He told the stranger about his climbing of Mount Denali, in Alaska. He shared stories of his dangerous experiences in the Himalayas, his ascent to Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa, his upcoming plan to re-climb Mount Everest and a variety of tales about his treacherous but exciting climbs and journeys.

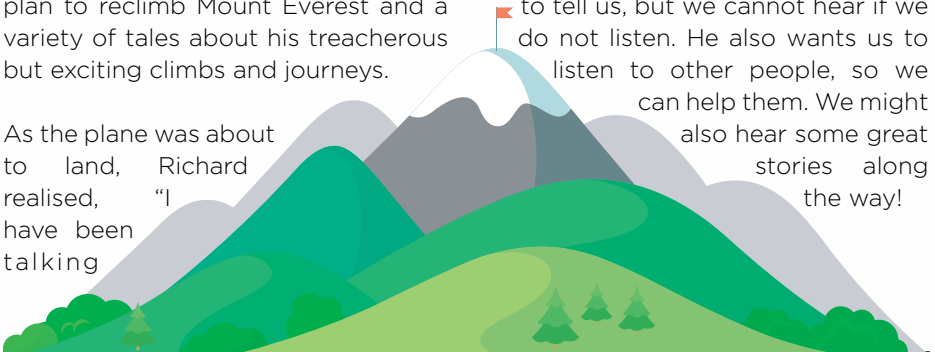
As the plane was about to land, Richard realised, “I have been talking

about myself the whole flight and I haven’t asked you anything about yourself, not even your name!”

“Oh, that’s okay,” responded his quiet companion, “I’m Neil Armstrong.” Neil Armstrong was first person to ever walk on the moon.

If only Richard had given Neil a chance to speak too, he would have heard the most amazing stories about space, from someone who had really been there!

What this story, like the Shema, is teaching us, is that listening is even more important than speaking. When we listen, we learn. God has so much to tell us, but we cannot hear if we do not listen. He also wants us to listen to other people, so we can help them. We might also hear some great stories along the way!





# SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

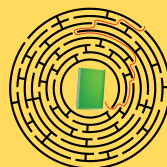
Can you spot the 10 differences between these two seemingly identical pictures of people saying the Shema?



**SPOT THE DIFFERENCE ANSWERS**

1. The little boy's freckles are missing.
2. A button has appeared on the blonde woman's dress collar.
3. The medieval man's hat has changed from purple to pink.
4. The baby has a dummy in its mouth.
5. A blue stripe is missing from the boy's shirt.
6. The writing is missing from a page of the Victorian man's Siddur.
7. The medieval woman's belt has changed colour.
8. The Hassidic man's kippah has a pattern on it.
9. The missing from old woman's scarf.

# HELP SAMMY FIND HIS SIDDUR



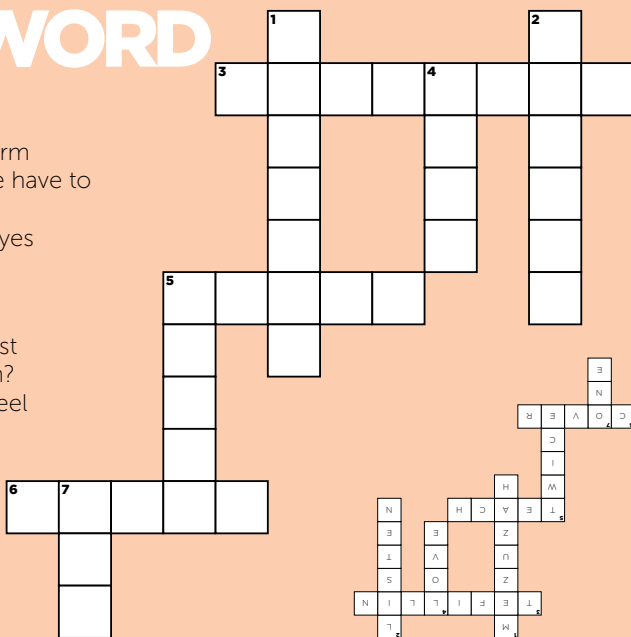
# CROSSWORD

**Across**

- [3] We wrap it around our arm
- [5] According to Shema, we have to \_\_\_\_\_ children.
- [6] What do we do to our eyes during Shema?

**Down**

- [1] We put it on our doorpost
- [2] What does Shema mean?
- [4] Which emotion do we feel about Hashem?
- [5] How many times a day do we say Shema?
- [7] How many Hashems are there?



NOIINTOS

# WORD SEARCH

N	J	Z	C	F	I	Z	H	Z	D	P	T
R	T	V	A	A	A	S	V	H	C	E	L
U	S	W	X	Z	U	A	U	F	F	K	I
D	W	M	C	O	Q	H	R	I	U	P	S
D	Z	J	I	R	A	I	L	E	I	Z	N
I	M	G	G	Z	P	L	B	N	S	X	V
S	P	D	U	O	I	P	R	P	K	R	U
H	B	Z	L	N	D	E	F	V	S	Y	Z
E	E	Q	K	H	Y	V	A	P	G	O	Z
M	F	D	A	A	X	P	K	J	K	P	Z
A	B	P	R	V	U	J	V	Z	K	F	Z
N	J	P	V	R	H	Y	I	N	Q	B	Y

Can you find these six Shema-related words in the grid on the left. They can go up, down, diagonally and even backwards. So look carefully!

**GOD, MEZUZAH, PRAYER, SHEMA, SIDDIR, TEFILLIN**

Y	B	O	N	I	A	H	A	P	r	N
Z	F	K	Z	V	r	U	V	R	B	V
Z	d	K	r	K	p	A	V	d	d	M
Z	O	G	p	V	A	A	H	K	O	E
Z	Y	S	V	E	E	d	N	L	Z	B
U	R	K	p	r	I	O	U	d	d	S
A	X	S	N	B	T	p	Z	G	G	I
N	Z	I	E	T	I	V	I	r	Z	d
S	d	I	I	R	H	O	O	C	W	d
I	I	K	F	U	U	O	X	C	M	U
L	E	C	H	V	A	V	A	V	T	R
P	T	D	P	Z	H	Z	Z	I	C	F

NOIINTOS



# THE TRIBE SCRIBE

SHEMA SPECIAL

YOU'VE HEARD OF SUPERHEROES, (US, DUH!) BUT HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A SUPERPRAYER? SHEMA IS A SUPERPRAYER AND THAT'S WHY IT'S MY FAVOURITE! WANNA HEAR WHY?



THE SHEMA IS THE OLDEST AND GREATEST OF OUR PRAYERS. JEWS HAVE BEEN SAYING SHEMA TWICE A DAY FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.



BUT IT'S NOT JUST THAT WE'VE BEEN SAYING IT FOR A GAZILLION YEARS THAT MAKES IT EPIC! SHEMA IS THE ANTHEM OF THE JEWISH JOURNEY. CHECK OUT HOW...

We say **Shema** early in the morning...



And it's the last thing we say at night.



**Shema** is one of the first words we teach to a Jewish child.



Does that sound like the circle of life? It certainly does! **Shema** is also recited right at the end of a person's life - when we embark on our final journey.



If you choose to join **Judaism**, you'd say **Shema** at the time of conversion, as a declaration of faith, as you begin your Jewish journey.



WHEN WE SAY **SHEMA**, WE ARE SAYING LOUD AND PROUD THAT WE BELIEVE IN **HASHEM** AND THAT HE IS THE ONLY **GOD**. NOW THAT'S **SUPER!**

Page Editor: Rabbi Nicky Goldmeier Writer: Shira Chalk Cartoonist: Paul Solomon

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**tribe**  
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Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.

AC

# RECIPE

## STAR COOKIES

### Ingredients

0.5lb margarine

0.75lb self raising flour

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla essence

1 egg

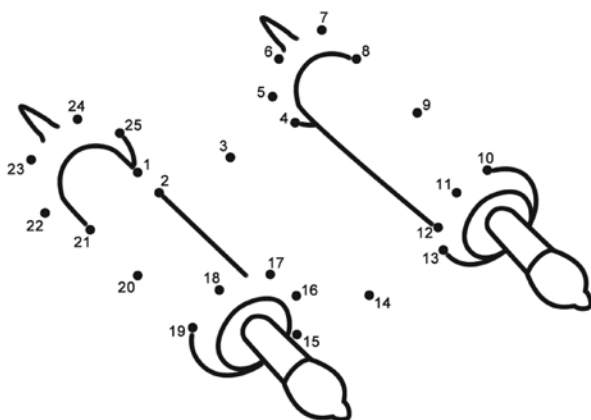
### Method

1. Cream the sugar and margarine
2. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix to form a dough
3. Roll it out and cut star shapes
4. Bake at 180 degrees for 10 mins



AC

# DO TO DOT



MM

There is a saying “count your blessings” - can you count 5 things that happened today that made you smile?

**AC**

Can you read the Shema in English?

Which is your favourite line and why?

**AC**

Can you find the following phrase in the Shema, "And you shall love God your God with all your heart" Who are the people you love and what do you love about them? What do you love about God?

**MM**

**Shema is said at a time of day when you might be yawning a lot. Yawning is catchy but so is being kind - can you share one act of kindness you did today?**

**AC**

Can you find this phrase in the Shema "You should love God... with all of your possessions"? What's your favourite toy? Can you think of anything you'd give it away for?

**AC**

Can you find this phrase in the Shema "You should love God... with all your soul?" What does the word soul mean to you?

**AC**

Now find another phrase in the Shema "sitting at home, when going out together, when you go to bed and when you wake up" This is a list of ideas of when parents and children can chat... When is your favourite time to talk?

**AC**

**Where can you find the Mitzva of Mezuzah in the Shema? Why do you think we put a mezuzah on every door? Why do we kiss it?**

**AC**

Can you also find in the Shema the word "Hayom" which means today. It means we should always be as excited about learning as if we just learned it today for the first time. What's your favourite thing you ever learned? Do you remember when/where you learned it?

# THE SHEMA QUIZ

**Q1.** What does the word Shema mean?

**Q2.** What do you think "*Hadevarim Ha'eleh*" ("these words") are referring to?

**Q3.** What are the 3 ways someone should love God?

**Q4.** In how many places does the Shema suggest that grown ups should teach their children about God's Mitzvot?

**Q5.** Why do you think it's important for grown ups to teach children about Mitzvot?

**Q6.** How many Mitzvot can you find hidden in the first paragraph of Shema. What are they?

**MM** Find some noisy objects from round the house. Shut your eyes and see if you can identify them just by listening. How can covering your eyes help you to concentrate?

**MM** When we sing *Hamalach*, one of our bedtime prayers, we talk about an angel looking after us... can you think of a time when you felt God was looking after you or your family?

See *Hamalach* prayer on the accompanying card.

## ANSWERS:

A1. Hear/Listen/Understand

A2. God's Mitzvot

A3. With all your heart, all your soul and all your might/possessions.

A4. When you sit in your house, when you go on a journey, when you lie down to sleep and when you get up again.

A5. To pass on Jewish beliefs, traditions and practise to the next generation.

A6. Belief in one God, Love God, Teaching/learning Torah, reciting Shema at night and in the morning, Tefillin on the hand and head, Mezuzah

# COMPETITION TIME

**Answer the following four questions. Scan the QR code to submit your answers, with the chance of winning a £40 restaurant\* voucher!**

**Who said  
"Shema Yisrael"  
first?**

**How many times  
a day should we  
say the Shema?**

**Which Mitzva  
mentioned in the  
Shema is an object  
you might find in a  
Jewish home?**

**What did you  
discover in this  
booklet that you  
didn't yet know?**

Scan the QR code to submit your answers, with the chance of winning a prize!



**Entry deadline  
Friday 15th March  
12pm**

\*The restaurant voucher will be for a KLBD establishment

# SHEMA CHALLENGE!

Say the Shema every night for 30 days, tick your chart and submit by entering our competition



**We hope you have enjoyed the Shema challenge and will continue this meaningful Mitzva!!**