

# Sh'ma שְׁמָע

Introductory Prayers	<b>Sh'ma &amp; Her Blessings</b>	Amidah	Torah Service	Concluding Prayers
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## To-Do List:

- ☐ Answer the **Ready...Set...Prep!** questions on Page 2 with a *chevruta* partner
- ☐ Read the prayer in Hebrew (Page 3) with your *chevruta* partner
- ☐ Answer the **First Read** questions (Page 3) together
- ☐ Finish the prayer's translation (Page 4) alone or together
- ☐ Answer the **Break It Down** questions (Pages 5-7) with your *chevruta* partner
- ☐ **Now Practice!** Read & sing the prayer together, alone, and/or online (see Page 7)
- ☐ Do the **Get Creative!** activity on Page 8
- ☐ Read and sing the prayer to a teacher to sign off

*chevruta*

חֵבְרוּתָא

*n.* study companion.  
Shares a root with the word "friend" (חֵבֵר).

# Sh'ma שמע

Introductory Prayers

**Sh'ma & Her Blessings**

Amidah

Torah Service

Concluding Prayers

Ready... Set... Prep!

This symbol means to use your tablet, computer, or smartphone to go online to find the answers!



The Sh'ma is a very important prayer – so important that it's nicknamed

## "The Watchword of the Jewish Faith."

Work with a *chevruta* partner to answer the following questions!

1. What is a "Watchword"?

- In Google, type in "**define:watchword**" (without any spaces)
- What's the **first** definition of "watchword" it gives? \_\_\_\_\_
- What does that mean, **in your own words**? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is "Faith," in this context?

- Use the same "define:\_\_\_\_\_" feature on Google for the word "faith."
- What's the **second** definition of "faith" it gives? \_\_\_\_\_
- Circle all the words below that would be **synonyms** for "faith":

**Religion****Law****Belief****Teachings****Rules**

**Synonyms** are words that mean the same thing as each other – like "cold" and "chilly."

3. Why do you think a faith like Judaism would need or want a watchword?

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4. This prayer uses a symbol-word, **יהוה**, to stand for a name that is *so holy* in Judaism that we usually don't write the word out *just in case* that piece of paper is ever thrown away, so that *super-duper-holy* name doesn't ever accidentally end up in the trash. Whose name does the word stand for?

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Now read the whole prayer below out loud – it's a short one!

1 שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד.

2 בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Judaism has a very uncreative method of naming most of our Hebrew prayers: we pick the first word of the prayer and make that the name of it.

So, knowing that, write out the name of this prayer in Hebrew: \_\_\_\_\_

### First-Read Questions

1. What words do you already recognize?

Hebrew Word	I think that it means...

2. At first glance, what do you think this prayer is about? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Translation

Fill in the blanks of the prayer's translation  
using the Word Bank at the bottom!

Prefix	Suffix	Noun	Verb	Conjunction	Adjective / Adverb
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שְׁמַע	יְיָ	יְיָ	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	יְיָ	אֶחָד.	1
Hear (or listen)		Adonai	is <b>our</b>	Adonai	is _____.	

בְּרוּךְ	שֵׁם כְּבוֹד	מַלְכוּתוֹ	לְעוֹלָם	וְעַד.	2
(is the)	glorious name	of <b>God's</b> kingdom,		_____ ever.	

## Word Bank

וְ-	אֶחָד	אֱלֹהֵי	בְּרוּךְ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	לְעוֹלָם
and (prefix)	one	God (not God's name, the concept in general)	blessed (adjective)	Israel (the people of)	forever (adverb)

The translations above go **right-to-left** with the Hebrew text. Now write out the English translations for both lines from **left-to-right**. The first one has been started for you! (Check your work on the next page!)

1. Hear,
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Sh'ma: Color-Coded for Meaning

1 שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד.

1. Hear (or listen), Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One!

2 בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

2. Blessed is the Great Name of God's Kingdom forever and ever!

Break it Down

1. Underline at least two key Hebrew words in the prayer. Why did you choose them? \_\_\_\_\_

The Sh'ma in Jewish Tradition

The *Sh'ma* is one of only two prayers that are specifically commanded in Torah (the other is *Birkat Ha-Mazon* -- grace after meals). It is the oldest fixed daily prayer in Judaism, recited morning and night since ancient times. [The *Sh'ma* and *V'ahavta*] consists of three biblical passages, two of which specifically say to speak of these things "when you lie down and when you rise up." This commandment is fulfilled by including the *Sh'ma* in the [prayers] for *Ma'ariv* (evening services) and *Shacharit* (morning services). Traditional prayerbooks also include a Bedtime *Sh'ma*, a series of passages including the *Sh'ma* to be read at home before going to bed at night.

Source: [www.jewfaq.org/shemaref.htm](http://www.jewfaq.org/shemaref.htm)

2. According to the information above, when do we say the Sh'ma? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Almost all prayers fit into one of three types: **gratitude** ("THANK YOU, GOD!!"), **praise** ("WOW, GOD, YOU'RE AMAZING!!") or **petition** ("HELP!!!"). Which kind do you think this prayer is? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think so? (Use evidence from the translation & your own opinions!) \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL** prayers are said because they address the INDIVIDUAL's needs. Personal prayers can still be said with a community; the **subject matter** and **purpose** makes a prayer personal, not the way we say it.

**COMMUNAL** prayers are said to address the COMMUNITY's needs. Some communal prayers can still be said alone; the **subject matter** and **purpose within the service** makes a prayer communal more than anything else.

This prayer could probably be argued to be a little of both. But if you had to pick one direction to call it...

4. Do you think this more a personal or a communal prayer? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why do you think so? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The word **יְהוָה** in the Sh'ma means "\_\_\_\_\_." Why is that important to us as Jews? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Early Jews lived among people like the Ancient Greeks who worshipped many gods and goddesses – the god of rain, the god of war, the goddess of love, etc. Why would the Sh'ma be an important prayer to say twice a day (or more) for Jews who lived among pagans (people who worshipped many gods)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. When you think of "One God," what do you imagine? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Can God be One, yet inside all of us? **How**, or **why not**? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Why do you think the Sh'ma is traditionally the last words out of a person's mouth before they go to sleep? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Two letters in Line 1 are often written bigger. Which two letters are they?

WORD	LETTER	SOUND
First		
Last		



11. When these two letters are put together, they make a word עֵד, which means “**witness**.” What does it mean to “**witness**” something? (Use the Google “define:\_\_\_\_\_” feature for this if you’re not sure!)

12. Why do you think the people typing up the prayer would want to remind us that being a **witness** is important when saying the Sh'ma?

Practice, Practice, Practice!

1 שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד .  
2 בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד .



### Practice Online:

In **ShalomLearning**, practice with the JiTap soundboard directly in your browser!

Or open the **JiTap app** and search for “**Sh'ma**” to find the Tap-and-Hear soundboard to practice.

Or search **YouTube** for “**Sh'ma Prayer Karaoke**” – the videos should have a white background and black→blue letters.

*Note: The Sh'ma has a **lot** of different tunes! There are only Jltaps & videos for a few of the most common tunes, but if you can read the words really well, you can follow any tune your community uses!*

## Sh'ma: Get Creative!

Create a drawing or sculpture (ask the teacher for supplies) that represents your idea of witnessing God being **יְהוָה**, “one” or “oneness,” as it’s meant in the Sh’mā. (Remember that it was *weird* at first to worship only one God – most people had tons!)