Traditional communities recite the Sh'ma while seated, and say the line beginning “Baruch Shein – Blessed is” silently.

Some communities rise to recite the Sh'ma and say the line standing “Baruch Shein” aloud.

When praying in private, say first: “El m'lech nes e-m-n – You are a faithful ruler.”

Many people cover their eyes when reciting the first line of the Sh'ma.

After this page is charted aloud, we read silently to the bottom of page 53.

Sh'ma,
Yis-re-eh,
Adonai E-lo-he-ru,
Adonai E-chad.

Baruch shein Kvod malchuto
l'v'tam va-ed.

V'shavta et Adonai E-lo-ne-cha, b'chol Iv-v'cha,
u'v'chol nef-sh'cha, u'v'chol mo-de-cha.

V'chayu ha-v'im ha-re-'il, asher Anochi miz-tav-cha ha-yom, al Iv-v'cha.

V'Shin-nantam Iv-v'cha,
v'Dib-bar ta b'am,
be'havcha b've-tena-cha, u've-tena-cha va-da-re-cha,
u've-tena-cha, u've-tena-cha.

U'Shan-tam l'ot al ya-de-cha,
V'chayu ha-lot b'en ei-ne-cha.

U'n-tam al m'zorot be-li-ne-cha,
u'v'sh'cha.

The Sh'ma – Six Words. These six Hebrew words are a high point of the service. They contain two important spiritual affirmations: that Adonai is our God, not simply remote and abstract, and that Adonai is one, not simply one of a multiplicity of gods. These two affirmations interact, as in the meditation on p. 50: all of the images we have of God are one, and God is available to us in all the ways we can imagine.

The Sh'ma also represents the ultimate affirmation of commitment: generations of martyrs have gone to their deaths with these words on their lips.

The Sh'ma – Three Paragraphs. In the prayer service, the phrase “the Sh'ma” also refers to the six words of the Sh'ma together with three extended passages from the Torah. The first, on this page, focuses on our making the divine presence and commandments central to our lives. The second (pp. 51-52) describes the consequences of rejecting the path prescribed in the Torah. Together, they address the notions of living and fearing God (see p. 49). The third passage (pp. 53) gives us a practical way of remembering these messages.

First Paragraph of the Sh'ma. This passage exhorts us to love God as intensely as God loves us, to convey our love and understanding of God to others, and to keep God in our consciousness at all times. This message is underscored by the placement of “Asher Rabbah” immediately before the Sh'ma (pp. 49-50).

Comments
1 The two large letters – י of א-ל (Sh'ma) and י of א-ד (echad) – together spell the word יִד (yid)—witness. These letters are written large in the Torah, as if to say that when we recite these words as an affirmation, we are also testifying to God’s presence and significance.
2 See comment 2 on p. 17 for a discussion of this verse.
3 “These words” refers to the six words of the Sh'ma and to the commandment to love God that follows them.
V'Shamru lachem pen yiseh Ivavchem, v'samtem va'avadam et-lo lavdecha achein vish'ta cha vatem la hem.

Vcharah af Adonai bachem, v'tzar et hashamayim, vlo yihye matar, v'hadarah lo tibein et y'surah. Va'avadam m'heirah meir ha-rez ha-tovah asher Adonai norein lachem.

V'samtem et d'veiot elitah al Ivavchem va'el ha'sh'm'chem. U'k'sh'arei o-tam lot al yedchem, v'hayu h'to-polet bein ein'ichem. V'im madtem o-tam et b'rechem, l'dab'arei bam b'sh'ta'cha b'veitecha, v'vkdecha vaderech, v'shochechi'cha uv'kumha'cha. U'chahav um la m'zuzot beitecha uvishner'cha.

Vehavey am hersheshen al ha'meir: kam'zhe kefalla el ha'miz mamaltah, kefalla el ha'miz mamaltah. Kamevare blown in b'chanuk, b'chanuk. Kamevare blown in b'chanuk, b'chanuk. Kamevare blown in b'chanuk, b'chanuk. Kamevare blown in b'chanuk, b'chanuk.

If you pay close attention to My commandments...
In the morning service, it is customary to look at and kiss the Torah each time the word "sh'met" is read, and also at the word "emet."

Alternatively, one may hold the Torah and "look at them," as indicated in the text.

Yayômer Adonai el Moshe leimon:
Dabbeir el bnei Yisrael Y'marta alehem
Yasv la hem tattit
al kanfei v'yikrihem l'dorotam,
v'natnu el tattit ha'aretz p'ti' rchellet.

"Wohah lachem lattit,
ur'them oto,
u'dchatem et kol mitzvot Adonai,
va'sveshem otem,
va'tattitu akhesek Iva'hem
va'charei einchem,
ascher atten zo nim achareihem.

L'meshen ta'kru vaasatem
et kol mitzvotai,
vyhiatem l'doshim liRoheichem,
Adonai Eloheichem
asher bo'tzedu etchem me'revetz Mitzrayim,
ilhot lachem lelo him.

Adonai Eloheichem.

The leader recites:
Adonai Eloheichem... emet!

Kavanot

Doorposts of the Soul. For new insight into the last verse of p. 52, recite the kavanot (by Ian Proops):

The ears are doorposts of the soul and the mouth is one of its gates. Let us inscribe God's name there, so that when we hear the words of others and speak words of our own, we do not lose sight of the holiness that belongs to all people, as children of the One.

Guideposts

Third paragraph of the Sh'ma. This passage prescribes a simple device to help remind us of God's expectations. If we attach tzitzit (strands) at the four corners of our garments, we will notice them at critical moments, and they will remind us not to follow our own hearts and eyes. Our senses, our feelings, our thoughts all play significant roles in our lives, but each can lead us to inappropriate behavior. We need an anchor that will remind us to consider God's will as well as our own.

Comments

1 The Hebrew words פסוקים (tawwah) and סודים (sowdowim) allude to the story of the spies (Numbers 13-14) that occurs in the Bible just before this paragraph. In scouting רדום (rut), see 13:11 the promised land, the spies whored פסוקים (sowdowim) after their eyes and made a false report. This term פסוקים (sowdowim) (after atten sowdowim) or פסוקים (sowdowim) is usually rendered "they will lead you astray" or "they will seduce you to misbehave.

2 In Hebrew, the phrase נפשי (no'asso) is repeated by the leader without the initial word "an," so that the phrase becomes a declaration: "Adonai is your God." The added exclamation "emet!" may have originated as the congregation's response.

3 The last phrase of Numbers 15:41, which means "I am Adonai your God" or "I, Adonai, am your God," is now repeated by the leader without the initial word "an," so that the phrase becomes a declaration: "Adonai is your God." The added exclamation "emet!" may have originated as the congregation's response.