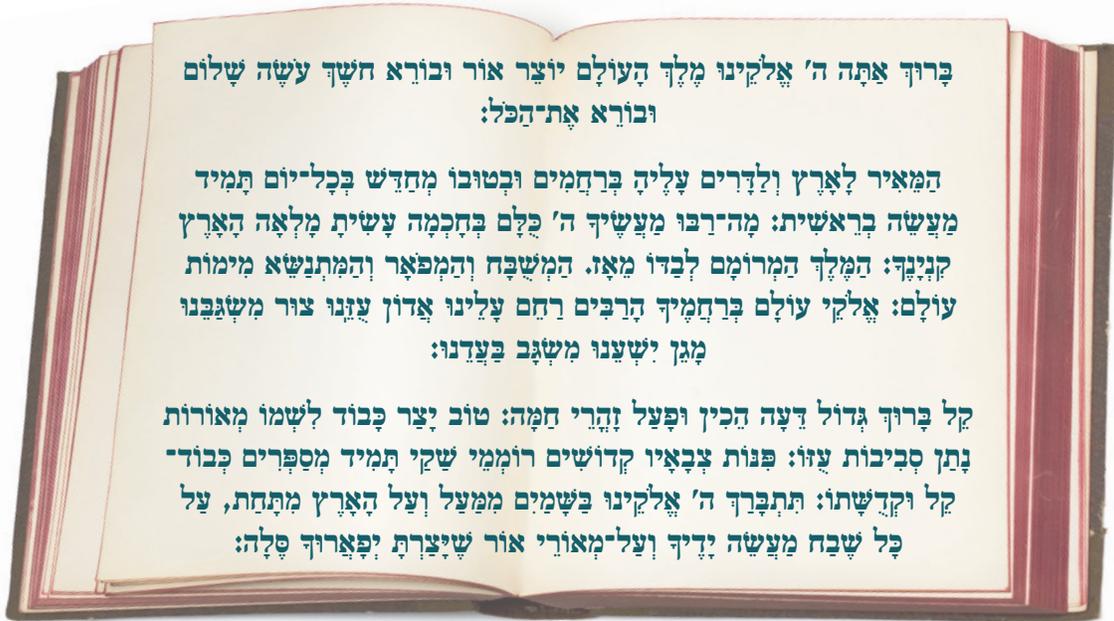




MAKING IT MEANINGFUL



If you were describing the creation of the world what would you include?
 What are the main things that 'ה created?

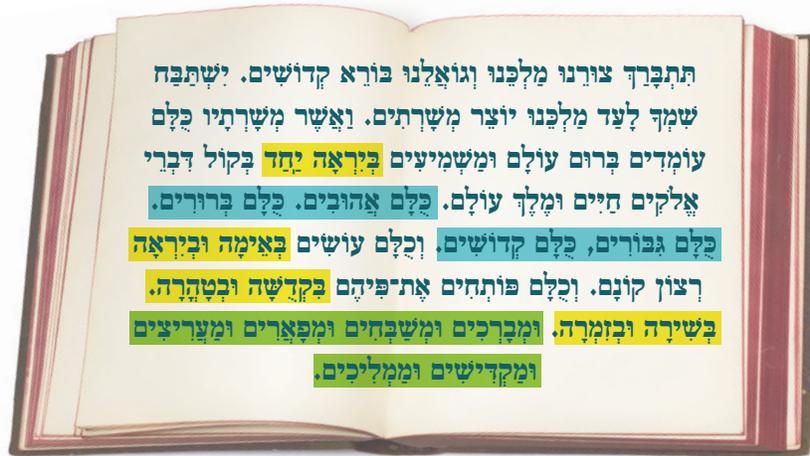


Look at the ברכה above. What creation of 'ה seems to be the focus?

Why do you think that is?



MAKING IT MEANINGFUL



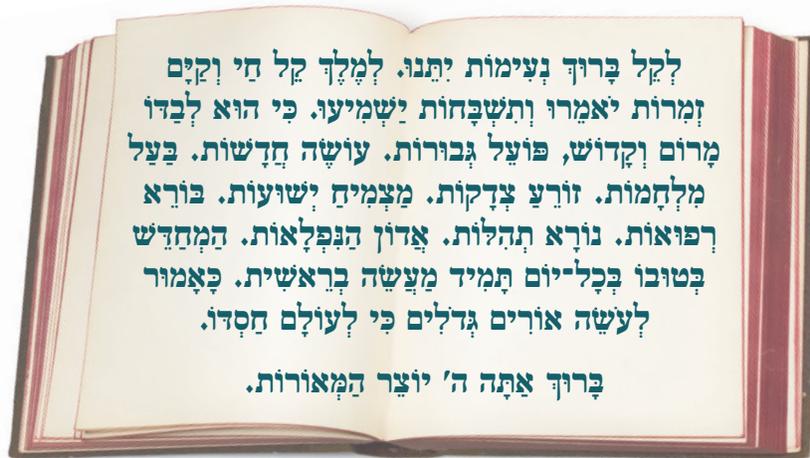
In this paragraph we describe the מלאכים who are משרתים, servants of 'ה, who praise Him. We can't really comprehend the holiness of the מלאכים but let's use the description in this paragraph to try to imagine what is taking place.

The words highlighted in yellow describe how the מלאכים praise 'ה. What adjectives are used to describe the feeling and manner with which they do so? Write some of the words below.

The words highlighted in blue are descriptions of the מלאכים themselves. How are they described? Write the words below.

The words highlighted in green describe the praise which they offer. What do they do to 'ה? Write the words below.

How the מלאכים Praise	Descriptions of the מלאכים	Descriptions of Praise
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



The מלאכים describe 'ה as, on the one hand, קדוש- beyond our comprehension. On the other hand, 'ה's כבוד- glory fills the world. In fact, as the words describe above, we praise 'ה because of 'ה's actions in this world which demonstrate that glory to us. Often, we think that these things are the product of man. This ברכה remind us that 'ה alone that gives man the ability and allows these things to happen.

Below, give an example of the actions of 'ה described in this ברכה. It is הוא alone that is: לבדו;

פועל גבורות

“ה' performs mighty deeds”; all mighty actions of man come from 'ה.

Example: _____

עושה חדשות

“ה' creates new things”; all advances in technology and science come from 'ה.

Example: _____

בעל מלחמות

“ה' is master of wars”; military might comes from 'ה.

Example: _____

זורע צדקות

“ה' is planter of righteousness”; 'ה plants goodness in people.

Example: _____



THINK ABOUT IT

Who are people you trust?

Why do you trust them?

Think about how the reasons you offered apply even more to 'ה! How can you practice having more trust in 'ה?

ותן בלבנו בינה להבין ולהשפיל לשמע ללמד וללמד לשמור ולעשות ולקיים
את-כל-דברי תלמוד תורתך באהבה והאר עינינו בתורתך

Here we ask 'ה to help us to do eight things. Some seem similar. Can you try to define each one?

- _____ להבין
- _____ ולהשפיל
- _____ לשמע
- _____ ללמד
- _____ וללמד
- _____ לשמור
- _____ ולעשות
- _____ ולקיים

How?

▶ ACTIONS THAT INSPIRE THE HEART

As mentioned above one must have כוונה when reciting שמע. קריאת שמע כוונה. The שולחן ערוך (ס:ה) says that one who did not say the first פסוק of שמע with כוונה must repeat it. In order to have כוונה the שולחן ערוך (סא:ד) says that it is customary to say the first פסוק out loud.



It is also customary to cover our eyes when saying the first פסוק of שמע. Can you think of a reason why?

The שולחן ערוך (סא:ה) says that it is so that we don't get distracted by something we may see.

Others suggest that we cover our eyes to show that sometimes ה' does things that we don't understand. We say שמע and recognize that everything comes from ה' and has a just reason, but we "can't see it" because we are "blind". Sometimes we also lack the perspective to fully see the complete picture that ה' can see.

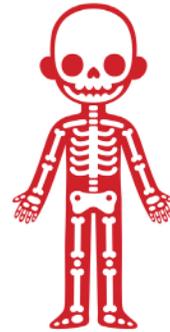
Have you ever faced a challenge or experience that you didn't understand? Did you ever see something happen that made you wonder why it needed to happen? Write it below.

Try thinking about this experience next time you cover your eyes during שמע.



DID YOU KNOW?

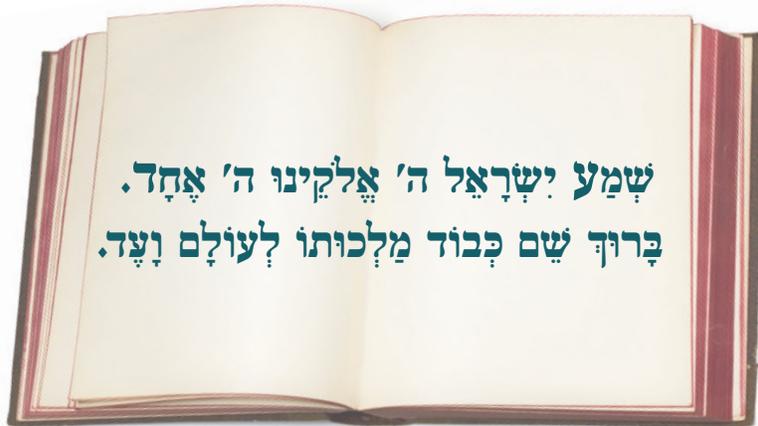
There are 245 words in שמע קריאת. The חזן repeats the words ה' אלקיכם אמת so that it equals the 248 limbs of a person, as the תורה is a רפואה for our body and each word can heal another limb in our body. (See שלחן ערוך קריאת שמע alone and not with the צבור should therefore say קל before שמע to total 248 words, since they will miss the חזן's repetition of ה' אלקיכם אמת. (רמ"א ס"א:ג.)



Try imagining each word of שמע קריאת positively impacting the health of your body. How can that impact your concentration while saying the words?



MAKING IT MEANINGFUL



We all know that שמע means ה' is One. But, what do we mean when we say that ה' is One? What are we obligated to believe?





THINK ABOUT IT

How does someone demonstrate that they love someone? An easy start is to do the things that the person they love wants him to do.

Can you think of a person you love and something that you could do that would make them happy? What is it?

When did ה' command us to keep the מצוות _____

If so, do you see a word in the פסוק above that raises a difficulty? _____

Why does the פסוק say to keep the מצוות that He commanded "today" if they weren't commanded today?



רש"י דברים ו:ו

אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה הַיּוֹם: לֹא יִהְיוּ בְּעֵינֶיךָ כְּדִיוֹטְגָמָא יְשְׁנָה שְׂאִין אָדָם סוֹפְנָה, אֶלָּא כַּחֲדָשָׁה שֶׁהַכֹּל רָצִין לְקַרְאָתָהּ; דִּיוֹטְגָמָא מְצֻוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ הַבָּאָה בְּמִכְתָּב.

That I command today: they should not be in your eyes as an ancient decree which no one cares about, but rather as a new one, which everyone runs to read. The word דִּיוֹטְגָמָא means: a commandment of the king which comes in writing.

According to רש"י, why does the פסוק say "היום"? How should we view the מצוות?



PUTTING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

The last paragraph of שמע קריאת שמע is not really part of the מצוה to recite שמע קריאת שמע that we learned from the פסוק of ודברת במ... בשכבך ובקומך. Rather, this paragraph contains another מצוה דאורייתא – to remember leaving Egypt every day.

Why was it established to say this paragraph in connection to the rest of שמע קריאת שמע?



Photo Credit: Simcha Even Chaim: www.simcha-art.co.il

Read the last paragraph of שמע קריאת שמע on page page 156. Can you think of why we fulfill the מצוה of remembering יציאת מצרים here together with the מצוה of שמע קריאת שמע?

1 This paragraph says that we left Egypt – לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים – so that ה' would be our G-d. This is very much related to the theme of קריאת שמע of קבלת עול מלכות שמים – accepting ה' as our King.

2 יציאת מצרים demonstrated that all is from ה' and relates to the theme of ה' as אחד.

What is the final ברכה of the morning about?

It is clear from the Gemara (ברכות כא.) that this ברכה is part of our fulfillment of the daily מצוה to remember יציאת מצרים that we began in the third paragraph of שמע קריאת שמע.



THINK ABOUT IT

If we already said the third paragraph of קריאת שמע to fulfill this מצוה, why do we need this ברכה to fulfill that מצוה as well? Think about this question as we learn the words of the ברכה. Then compare the words in שמע קריאת שמע to the words in the ברכה. Perhaps this can help us come up with the answer.
