

# Jewish Traditional Prayers

## 🌀 The Shema

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**The Shema is a section of verses that is commanded to be recited twice a day, as it is stated explicitly in the Torah, "speak of them... when you retire and when you arise"**

*(Deuteronomy 6:5-9)*

Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Blessed be the Name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be in your heart.

And you shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall speak of them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up.

And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.

And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

## 🌀 Modeh Ani – A Morning Prayer:

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I am thankful before You,

Living and Sustaining Ruler,

Who returned my soul to me with mercy,

Your faithfulness is great.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🌀 Prayer Before a Meal:

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**On washing the hands before a meal:**

Blessed are you O God, our Lord, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with his Commandments, and has commanded us about the washing of hands.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🌀 Prayer Before Drinking Wine

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Blessed are you, O God, our Lord, King of the Universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🌀 Blessing Over Fruit:

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Blessed are you, O God, our Lord, King of the Universe, who creates of the fruit of the tree.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🕎 On Lighting Shabbat Candles:

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Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,  
Who has sanctified us with His commandments,  
and commanded us to kindle the light of the holy Shabbat.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🕎 Rosh Hashanah Prayer

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God is the incomparable King of the Universe. The destiny of humanity is to come to this realization. Whereas human kings rule in accordance with the principle of "might makes right," God is the Holy King, Who is, at the same time, beyond comparison in His power, "Vas er vil, Tut er" - "Whatever He wills, He can do," yet He is also the Father of the orphan and the Judge of the widow, Who is always on the side of the powerless.

He is the Incorruptible and Righteous Judge of the World, Who favors no one, and cannot be bribed.

He is the true God and His word, the Torah, is true and eternal.

*Source: From The Malchiyot (Kingliness) prayer in the High Holidays liturgy*

## 🕎 The Al-Chet, Yom Kippur Confession

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For the mistakes we committed before You under duress and willingly.

For the mistakes we committed before You through having a hard heart.

For the mistakes we committed before you through things we blurted out with our lips.

For the mistake we committed before You through harsh speech.

For the mistakes we committed before You through wronging a friend.

For the mistakes we committed before You by degrading parents and teachers.

For the mistakes we committed before You by exercising power.

For the Mistakes we committed before You against those who know, and those who do not know.

For the mistakes we have committed before You through bribery.

For the mistake we have committed before You through denial and false promises.

For the mistake we have committed before You through negative speech.

For the mistakes we have committed before You with food and drink.

For the mistakes we committed before You by being arrogant.

For the mistakes we committed before You with a strong forehead (brazenness).

For the mistakes we committed before You in throwing off the yoke (i.e. refusing to accept responsibility).

For the mistakes we committed before You through jealousy (lit: 'a begrudging eye').

For the mistakes we committed before You through baseless hatred.

For the mistakes we committed before You in extending the hand.

For the mistakes we committed before You through confusion of the heart.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🌀 Blessing for Sukkot

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Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has kept us in life, and has preserved us, and enabled us to reach this season.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🌀 Hanukkah Candle-Lighting Prayers

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Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who sanctified us by his commandments, and has commanded us to kindle the lights of Hanukkah.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who wrought miracles for our fathers in days of old, at this season.

## 🌀 On the first night only:

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Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has kept us alive, and has preserved us, and enabled us to reach this season.

*Source: Traditional*

## 🌀 Prayer for Passover

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This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.

Let all who are hungry come and eat.

Let all who are in need come and celebrate Passover.

This year we are here: Next year, in the land of Israel.

This year we are slaves: Next year may we all be free.

## 🌀 Vidui – Confession before Death

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May God and God of my ancestors,

Let my prayer come before you

Do not ignore my plea.

Forgive me for all the wrong

I have done in my lifetime.

My wicked deeds and sins embarrass me.

Please accept my pain and suffering as

Atonement and forgive my wrongdoings,

For against You alone have I sinned.

May it be your will, God of my ancestors,

That I sin no more.

With your great compassion cleanse me of my sins,

But not through suffering and disease.

Send a perfect healing to me and to all who are stricken.

My God and God of my ancestors,

I acknowledge that my life and recovery

Depend upon You.

May it be Your will to heal me.

Yet if You have decreed that I shall die of this affliction,

may my death atone for all the wrongdoings  
which I have committed before You.  
Shelter me in the shadow of Your wings;  
Grant me a share in the world to come.  
Into your hand I deposit my soul.  
You have redeemed me, God of truth.  
Shema Yisrael  
Adonai Elohenu  
Adonai Ekhad.  
Hear O Israel  
Our God is One  
Adonai Hu Ha Elohim  
Adonai is God.  
God the Judge, is God the compassionate.  
God the Judge, is God the compassionate.

*Source: <http://www.brightonmemorialchapel.com/TraditionsCustoms/PrayersMeditations/Vidui>*

**☞ The traditional prayer said on witnessing or hearing of a death is a statement of total acceptance:**

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“Holy One of Blessing Your Presence fills creation You are the True Judge.”

**☞ Prayer for those who have died:**

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God Filled with Compassion  
God who is full of compassion, dwelling on high  
Grant perfect peace to the soul of \_\_\_\_\_  
May s/he rest under the wings of Your Presence  
Holy and Pure, Who shines bright as the sky.  
And may his/her place of rest be as Eden  
We pledge *tzedakah* for the sake of her/his memory.  
We pray that You comfort her/his soul in eternal life, under the  
Protection of your wings.  
Adonai, You are our heritage.  
May s/he rest in peace.  
Amen.

*Source: Living A Jewish Life: Jewish Traditions, Customs and Values for Today's Families,  
Anita Diamant and Howard Cooper*

**☞ Saying:**

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“A baby enters the world with closed hands. A person leaves the world with open hands. The first says, “The world is mine.” The second says, “I can take nothing with me.”

*Midrash: Ecclesiastes Rabbah*