

- 1 Every child of the Jewish faith learns the words of a prayer called the “*Shema*”. Its opening words are these:

*“Hear, Israel, and listen:
the Lord our God is the only God.
You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
and with all your strength.”*

- 2 Each morning and evening Jews recite these and some other words from the Bible that together make up the “*Shema*”, which is Hebrew for “*hear*” or “*listen*”, the first word of the prayer. The same passage continues:

*“Let these words today
be written in your heart.
Write them, too,
on the doorposts of your house.”*

- 3 And so Jewish families have a small, thin container made of wood or metal attached to the right-hand doorpost of their homes. This prayer box, called a “*Mezuzah*” is a few centimetres long and maybe a centimetre wide. It contains some parchment on which is written the words of the “*Shema*”. As family members enter the house, they touch the “*Mezuzah*” as a sign of respect for God and for what he has told them to do. It also serves as a reminder of God’s presence.
- 4 The opening words - “*the Lord our God is the only God*” - were first spoken to the people of Israel when they were led out from slavery in Egypt and guided towards the Promised Land. Down the ages Jews have held firmly to their belief in one God, giving priority in their lives only to him.

- 5 *Let us pray:*

**Lord, inspire me
to get my priorities right
and make my choices wisely.
Amen.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org