The Meaning of the Name of God.

We are learning one of the most important verses of the Tora and Jewish prayers: Shema Israel, “Listen to Israel, HaShem is our God, HaShem is one.”
We already explained the first two words “shema” and “Israel” (see below). Today we are going to see the next word of this pasuq.
I must remind the reader unfamiliar with the study of Tora that it is normal to stop and delve into the meaning of every word of the Tora , since the Tora is not a common book, but a Divine book. And therefore, a deep analysis is always expected. However, the depth that I present here is limited to the semantic and literal understanding of the text (peshat), and I will not delve, for instance, into the allegorical or mystical interpretation of it.
The third word of the Shema Israel is nothing less than the name of God, which in Hebrew is written with the letters “Yod”, “He,” Vav “and” He “.
What is so special about this name of God?
1. THE MAIN NAME: There are several names by which we refer to the Creator. Maimonides mentions seven main names. For example: “Lord”, “Almighty”, “God”, etc. The first name he mentions is “Yod”, “He,” Vav “and “He” which is, so to speak, the proper name of God (in Hebrew we say: shem hameforash, the explicit (?) Name). We refer to this name in Hebrew as “HaShem” (meaning “the Name”). In English this name is known as tetragrammaton which means the name of “four letters”.
2. INEFFABLE: In Hebrew, as in English we have vowels and consonants. But unlike in English, in the original Hebrew the vowels are NOT written with the consonants. So when we read a word of the Tora we introduce the vowels “from memory” and based on tradition or mesora (which we already have in writing today). Now, Jewish tradition not only has not transmitted the vowels belonging to the Main Name of God but has deliberately kept them secret (if known, the name of HaShem would be exposed □”□ to abuse, dishonor, excess, etc. .) This Name was known to the Priests of Israel, who transmitted their

pronunciation from one to the other. And it was mentioned only in the Bet HaMiqdash, by the High Priest (kohen gadol) and only on the day of Yom Kippur.

3. PRONUNCIATION: The Main Name of HaShem is pronounced (nowadays without exceptions, since we do not have the Bet haMiqdash) in a different way. Let me explain: Maimonides mentions seven names of God in a specific order. The first is the Main Name. The second name Maimonides mentions is the name we pronounce with the following 3 syllables "A", "Do", and "Nay". Now, our tradition indicates that we pronounce the Main Name of God, i.e., "Yod", "He," Vav "and" He ", as if it were the second name of God: "A","Do","Nay".

4. MEANING: According to our Sages the letters of the Main Name of HaShem express the combination of the three tenses of the verb "to be" (in Hebrew: □□□□ ,□□□ ,□□□) and therefore the closest translation of the Main Name of HaShem would be: "Eternal", He who was, is and will be. In this sense it is said that this Name of HaShem is "ineffable". Ineffable means "that can not be said, or pronounced with words, because its qualities and characteristics are beyond our understanding. In the case of the Main Name, what is beyond our comprehension is the idea of □□eternity or infinity.

On the other hand, the second name of God, "A", "Do" and "Nay", which is the one we pronounce, means in Hebrew something within our intellectual reach: "The Lord" in the sense of "Master, Sovereign and Owner of all what exists "(□□□ □□□□).

5. KAVANA / THOUGHT What should we think then when we read and pronounce the Main Name of HaShem? According to our Sages (see shulhan arukh, 5: 1) when we say the Name of HaShem, and especially when reciting the Shema Israel, we should think about its meaning according to its writing, namely, God as Eternal and infinite; and we should also think about its meaning according to its pronunciation, that is, that HaShem is the Master and Sovereign of all that exists.