

Sh'ma Written On My Heart

“*A*nd these words which I command thee this day shall be upon thy heart.”
The Sh'ma is recited morning and evening.

Six words from the Torah
Six words first taught to a child.

Six words the last recited on the deathbed
Six words inscribed on the doorpost of my house
Six words hidden in the tefillin on my forehead.

The keen-eyed Rabbi of Kotzk, Menachem Mendel, noted:
“The verse following the Sh'ma does not say, to set the words ‘In thy heart,’
but rather ‘Upon thy heart.’”

To teach us that at times the heart is shut
I must not therefore cease praying
For the words will lie upon my closed heart, but when my heart opens again
they will descend into its depths
Even when I am asleep and my limbs grow still, my mind and heart do not slumber
Even when I lose awareness, the words of the day spoken and seemingly forgotten
Come to life
Penetrate the mind's heart and in memories unsuspected
Reveal hidden meanings, significance unimagined
The words upon my heart do not disappear
They accompany me in the evening and in the morning
The words upon my heart are my life and the length of my days.

