
סדור

לב שלם

Siddur

Lev Shalem

לשבת ויום טוב

FOR SHABBAT
& FESTIVALS



THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY

Siddur Lev Shalem for Shabbat and Festivals

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My Soul

On the day that I searched
for God—for I could not
see the Divine—

I turned to my heart and
my mind
and found Your throne
within,
a witness to You in me.

—YEHUDAH HALEVI

A Prayer to Be in God's Presence

יהי רצון שתשרה
שכינתך עלינו
ונזכה היום להתענג
באור פניך.

Spread Your wings over us
that we may delight in
Your Presence this day.

Intentions for the New Day

Master of all worlds,
may it be Your will
that the light of Your face
be reflected in mine.
May my mouth speak only
what is true,
may my eyes see the good
in all that I meet,
and may my ears be attentive
to the troubles of those
who address me.
May I breathe the awe of You,
so that I lovingly face all
I meet.

May the words I utter be
acceptable to You,
my rescuer and protector.

—based on a prayer of
NAHMAN OF BRATZLAV

Personal Prayers upon Arising

I thank You, living and eternal sovereign, for Your kindness
in restoring my soul. How great is Your faithfulness.

**Modeh/modah ani l'fanekha, melekh hai v'kayam, she-hehezarta
bi nishmati b'hemlah, rabah emunatekha.**

*Some recite the following prayers upon arising;
others recite them upon arriving at the synagogue:*

THE SOUL

My God, the soul that You have given me is pure.

Elohai, n'shamah she-natata bi t'horah hi.

You created it,

You formed it,

You breathed it into me;

You watch over it when it is in me.

In the future You will take it from me

but then restore it to me in the world that is coming.

As long as this soul is within me, I thank You,

ADONAI my God, God of my ancestors,

ruler of all creation, master of all souls.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who restores the soul to the lifeless form.

HAND WASHING

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space,
who has provided us with a path to holiness through the
observance of mitzvot and has instructed us to wash
our hands.

**Barukh atah Adonai, eloheinu melekh ha-olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al n'tilat yadayim.**

THE BODY

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space,
who crafted the human body with wisdom, creating within
it many openings and passageways. It is known and revealed
to You that should even a single passageway rupture, or a
single opening close up, it would no longer be possible to
exist and stand before You. **Barukh atah ADONAI**, healer of
all flesh, who creates wondrously.

מודה\מודה אני לפניך, מלך חי וקים,
שהחזרת בי נשמת ב' בחמלה,
רבה אמונתך.

*Some recite the following prayers upon arising;
others recite them upon arriving at the synagogue:*

אלהי, נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא.

אתה בראתה, אתה יצרתה, אתה נפתתה בי,

ואתה משמרה בקרבי, ואתה עתיד לטלה ממני,

ולהחזירה בי לעתיד לבוא.

כל־זמן שהנשמה בקרבי, מודה\מודה אני לפניך,

יהוה אלהי ואלהי אבותי [ואמותי],

רבון כל־המעשים, אדון כל־הנשמות.

ברוך אתה יהוה, המחזיר נשמות לפגרים מתים.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,

אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על נטילת ידים.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,

אשר יצר את־האדם בחכמה

וברא בו נקבים ונקבים חלולים חלולים.

גלוי וידוע לפני כסא כבודך

שאם יפתח אחד מהם או יסתם אחד מהם,

אי אפשר להתקיים ולעמוד לפניך.

ברוך אתה יהוה, רופא כל־בשר ומפליא לעשות.

MODEH ANI ("I thank You") is an Ashkenazic prayer composed in the late Middle Ages specifically to be recited upon opening one's eyes in the morning. Since it was to be said before getting out of bed and washing one's hands, it does not include the name of God. Eliezer Schweid, a contemporary Jewish philosopher, notes that this and other prayers in this section are phrased in the first-person singular, although most blessings are phrased in the first-person plural. At this initial moment of prayer we have not yet entered a community, but our prayers express our own personal feelings of waking to a new day.

SOUL Jewish mystics view the soul as an actual "part of God above"; that which God blows into Adam is the presence of God's own self. Nothing humans can do will eradicate this Divine Presence from the deepest recesses of each person's heart. (Arthur Green)

WHO RESTORES THE SOUL TO THE LIFELESS FORM המחזיר נשמות לפגרים

מתים. According to the rabbis, sleep is a taste of death; thus, when we arise in the morning we recognize the gift of a new day. Eliezer Schweid remarks: "How does God appear to a person in this hour? As the source of all existent and eternal life, flowing now into all creation. . . ." The last *b'rakhah* recited before going to sleep is "who lights up the entire world with Your glory." Waking in the morning, the *b'rakhah* is fulfilled.

WHO CRAFTED THE HUMAN BODY WITH WISDOM בחכמה. This *b'rakhah* is to be recited after taking care of one's bodily functions (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 60b). Upon waking in the morning, we are conscious, first of all, of the proper functioning of our bodies.

Shabbat is also dedicated to study. Even before the destruction of the Temple, the Torah reading and commentary had been a central part of Shabbat worship. To emphasize the place of study and the special qualities of the day, on Shabbat, as at no other time, seven people are called to the Torah—whereas even on the Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the year, only six may be called.

Finally, a service is added to Shabbat, Musaf, marking the day with its own special gift. Indeed, in Temple times an extra sacrifice—called a *musaf*—was brought on Shabbat and festivals; the liturgy not only recalls that special service, but also remarks on the special quality of the day.

And as with all the focal points of Shabbat—evening, morning, and afternoon—a meal follows the service, for the fullness of the day is not experienced through its soulfulness alone, but through the integration of soulfulness with physical pleasure.

Shabbat celebrates the seventh day of creation; it is a day for relishing the beauty and grandeur of the natural world, and for feeling a sense of fullness, satisfaction, and joy in being alive. Sometimes, merely ceasing our labors allows our souls to speak, to sing, and we turn to the Creator, filled with thankfulness, yearning to express those feelings. At other times, it is the joining with our community, singing with them, praying alongside them, celebrating with them, that awakens our own sense of gratitude.

Thus the ancient rabbis declared that one might taste the world of future promise on this day.

An Introduction to Prayer on Shabbat

For an introduction to prayer on the Festivals, see page 304.

ALONG WITH ITS OTHER GIFTS, Shabbat offers a singular opportunity for prayer. Weekday prayer is frequently burdened by our knowledge that there is work to do, that we are taking time out from other demands of the day. On Shabbat, relieved of the press of time, one can luxuriate in prayer.

For this reason, on Shabbat morning the liturgy is somewhat extended. In the preparatory P'sukei D'zimra, eight psalms are added in celebration of the day, many of which celebrate the relationship of God to the world, as well as that of God to the people Israel. These eight psalms culminate in the Song of the Day of Shabbat (Psalm 92).

However, the uniqueness of the gift of prayer on Shabbat is not greater length for its own sake, but greater depth. On Friday night, we empty our consciousness of its usual concerns. On Shabbat day, we allow our spirits to soar, expanding beyond the constraints of the burdens of the week. Today we have the leisure to allow our prayer to unfold slowly, carrying us on a spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and aesthetic journey; we are blessed with both the time and inner space to dwell on a word or a phrase, savoring its beauty as it stimulates and nourishes our being.

Thus, too, the focus and content of our prayer is different on Shabbat. The formal liturgy does not include the usual personal requests for physical sustenance. Rather, prayer on Shabbat centers on appreciation of life, of the gifts that we are given and in the spiritual fulfillment we seek. For example, the Amidah (the silent, standing prayer) is shortened to seven blessings, with the central and longest blessing speaking only of Shabbat itself, and its joys and yearnings. Similarly, creation is celebrated and the blessing of creation preceding the Sh'ma is expanded.

Six days of the week, we live and work in the world as it is; practicalities and needs press upon us, demanding our time and focus. On Shabbat, we envision a different reality, what Abraham Joshua Heschel calls “God’s dream for the world.” As our prayer progresses, we become ever more attuned to that dream.

Prayer

We enter the synagogue in conversation with ourselves. And as we engage in prayer, this conversation becomes one conducted with God.

Worship with Joy

A person does not experience the presence of God through sadness or laziness, but through joy, as is written regarding Elisha, the prophet: “[He said:] ‘Now bring a musician to me’—and when the musician played, the hand of God was upon him” (2 Kings 3:15).

—MIDRASH ON PSALMS

A Prayer When

Entering the Synagogue

May the offerings of my lips be acceptable to You. May my thoughts be clear, may I be instructed in Your ways, and may I be at peace with myself and my neighbors.

—based on THE ZOHAR

Prayers upon Entering the Synagogue

How lovely are your dwellings, Jacob; your sanctuaries, people of Israel! As for me, through Your great kindness I enter Your house; in awe of You, I bow toward Your holy sanctuary. ADONAI, I love Your house, the place where Your glory dwells. I will bow and prostrate myself, kneel before ADONAI my creator.

My prayers are to You, ADONAI, in the hope that this is a favorable time; God, in Your abundant love, respond to me with faithful deliverance.

Mah tovu ohalekha ya-akov, mishk'notekha yisrael. Va-ani b'rov hasd'kha avo veitekha, esh-tahaveh el heikhal kodsh'kha b'yiratekha. Adonai ahavti me'on beitekha, u-m'kom mishkan k'vodekha. Va-ani esh-tahaveh v'ekhrah, evr'khah lifnei Adonai osi. Va-ani t'filati l'kha, Adonai, eit ratzon. Elohim b'rov hasdekha, aneini be-emet yishekha.

A MEDITATION BEFORE PRAYER

At dawn I seek You, my refuge, my haven; morning and evening, to You I pray, though facing Your greatness, I am awed and confused, for You know already what I would think and say.

What might in thought and speech can there be? What power the spirit within me? Yet, You treasure the sound of human song; and so would I thank You, as long as Your soul is in me.

Shahar avakesh-kha tzuri u-misgabi erokh l'fanekha shahri v'gam arbi. Lifnei g'dulatakh emod v'ebahel ki ein'kha tireh kol mahsh'vot libi. Mah zeh asher yukhal ha-lev v'halashon la-asot u-mah ko-ah ruhi b'tokh kirbi. Hineih l'kha titav zimrat enosh al ken od'kha b'od tihyeh nishmat elo-ah bi.

מה טובו אהליך יעקב, משפנתיה ישראל. ואני ברב חסדך אבוא ביתך, אשתחוה אל היכל קדשך ביראתך. יהוה אהבתי מעון ביתך, ומקום משכן כבודך. ואני אשתחוה ואכרעה, אברכה לפני יהוה עשוי. ואני תפילתי לך יהוה, עת רצון, אלהים ברב חסדך, ענני באמת ישעך.

שחר אבקשך צורי ומשגבי אערך לפניך שחרי וגם ערבי. לפני גדלתך אעמד ואפהל כי עינך תראה כל מחשבות לבי. מה זה אשר יוכל הלב והלשון לעשות ומה כח רוחי בתוך קרבי. הנה לך תיטב זמרת אנוש על כן אודך בעוד תהיה נשמת אלוה בי.

HOW LOVELY מה טובו Numbers 24:5. These words were uttered by the gentile prophet Balaam, who had been hired to curse Israel but instead blessed them. Many rabbinic readings of this verse understood the “dwellings of Jacob” (literally, “tents of Jacob”) and the “sanctuaries of Israel” to refer to houses of study and prayer houses (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 105b, for instance). Interestingly, we enter the synagogue with the words of a non-Jew, here used to praise the synagogue. This verse was added to the service in the late Middle Ages, when European royal courts became more formal, which warranted a similarly formal introduction to our worship of the Sovereign of All.

AS FOR ME ואני. Three of

the verses quoted here begin with the word ani, “I.” The worshipper enters the synagogue as an individual and then joins the community. The first verse mentions bowing toward the sanctuary; some people bow in the direction of the ark upon entering the synagogue.

I ENTER YOUR HOUSE אבוא ביתך. Psalm 5:8. Although the verse originally referred to the Temple in Jerusalem, references describing the Temple came to be applied to the synagogue, which the sages called a mikdash me'at, “a minor sanctuary.” In this, they were interpreting the prophet Ezekiel, who assures the exiles in Babylonia that God is with them in the “small sanctuaries” of foreign lands (Ezekiel 11:16).

I LOVE YOUR HOUSE אהבתי מעון ביתך. Psalm 26:8. Here again, the original reference was to the Temple, but it was later understood to describe the synagogue.

I WILL BOW AND PROSTRATE MYSELF ואני אשתחוה ואכרעה. The liturgy recasts Psalm 95:6 from the plural to the singular, as all the passages opening the service are phrased in the singular. The ancient rabbis declared that the bowing performed during the Amidah fulfilled the function of kneeling and prostration. Today, prostration takes place in the synagogue only on the High Holy Days, though some medieval pietistic practices emphasized kneeling while praying at home.

RESPOND TO ME ענני. Psalm 69:14. Perhaps the most primal prayer: may our words be heard and responded to.

AT DAWN I SEEK YOU שחר אבקשך. This poem was written by Solomon ibn Gabirol (1021–1058, Spain) as a morning meditation to be recited by the prayer leader. It begins with a confession of human inadequacy, even to offer prayers, but ends by evoking the soul—the spirit of God in each human being, and the source of human inspiration.

Teach Me, God,
To Bless and To Pray

לְמַדְנִי אֱלֹהִי,
בְּרַךְ וְהִתְפַּלֵּל
עַל סוּד עֵלָה קָמַל,
עַל גְּנֵה פְרִי בְשֵׁל,
עַל הַחֲרוּת הַזֹּאת:
לְרֵאוֹת, לְחוּשׁ, לְנִשּׁוּם,
לְדַעַת, לְיַחַל, לְהַפְשִׁיל.
לְמַד אֶת־שִׁפְתוֹתַי
בְּרִכָּה וְשִׁיר הַלֵּל
בְּהִתְחַדֵּשׁ זְמַנְךָ עִם בְּקָר
וְעִם לַיִל,
לְבַל יִהְיֶה יוֹמֵי הַיּוֹם
כְּתִמוּל שֶׁלְשׁוּם,
לְבַל יִהְיֶה עֲלֵי יוֹמֵי הַרְגֵל.

Teach me, God,
to bless and to pray
for the secret within the
enfolded leaf,
the glow of a ripening fruit,
and this freedom:
to see,
to sense,
to breathe,
to know,
to celebrate,
to fail.

Teach my lips how
to bless and sing praises
as Your time is renewed
with the arrival of morning
and evening,
that my day today
be not like my yesterdays,
that my day not simply
be habit.

—LEA GOLDBERG

Our Relation to Others

Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa would say: One with whom people are pleased, the divine spirit is pleased; and one with whom people are displeased, the divine spirit is displeased.

—PIRKEI AVOT

Putting on the Tallit

While reciting the meditation and the b'rakhah, it is customary to hold the tallit. After saying the b'rakhah we enwrap ourselves with it. Some have the custom of first wrapping the tallit around their head and body, symbolically surrounding themselves with the Presence of God, and then draping it around their shoulders.

Let me praise ADONAI—
for You, ADONAI my God, are surely great;
clothed in glory and majesty,
wrapped in a cloak of light,
You stretch out the heavens like a sheet of cloth.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has provided us with a path to holiness through the observance of mitzvot and has instructed us to enwrap ourselves with *tzitzit*.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hitateif ba-tzitzit.

Just as I wrap my body in a *tallit*,
so may my soul wrap itself in the light of Your Presence.

How precious is Your kindly love, God,
that human beings are sheltered in the
shadow of Your wings!

They are sated with the abundance in Your house;
You give them drink from Your delightful streams.
You are the source of life; in Your light do we see light.

Ki im'kha m'kor hayim, b'or'kha nireh or.

Pour out Your love to those who would know You,
and Your righteousness to those whose hearts are true.

OUR RELATION TO OTHERS

I hereby accept the obligation
of fulfilling the Creator's mitzvah as written in the Torah:
Love your neighbor as yourself.

Hareini m'kabel/m'kabelet alai mitzvot ha-borei:
V'ahavta l'rei-akha kamokha.

עֲטִיפַת טָלִית

While reciting the meditation and the b'rakhah, it is customary to hold the tallit. After saying the b'rakhah we enwrap ourselves with it. Some have the custom of first wrapping the tallit around their head and body, symbolically surrounding themselves with the Presence of God, and then draping it around their shoulders.

בְּרִכְי נִפְשֵׁי אֶת־יְהוָה,
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גְדֻלַּת מְאֹד,
הוֹד וְהָדָר לְבִשְׁתָּ.
עֲטָה אֹר בְּשִׁלְמָה,
נוֹטָה שְׁמַיִם בִּירְעָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִתְעַטֵּף בְּצִיצֵת.

בְּשֵׁם שְׂגוּפֵי מִתְעַטֵּף בְּטָלִית,
כִּף תִּתְעַטֵּף נִשְׁמַתִּי בְּאֹר שְׂבִינְתָךְ.

מֵה יִקָּר חֲסִדְךָ, אֱלֹהִים,
וּבְנֵי אָדָם בְּצִל כְּנָפֶיךָ יִחְסִיּוּ.
יְרוּיִן מִדָּשֵׁן בֵּיתְךָ, וְנַחַל עֵדְנֶיךָ תִּשְׁקֶם.
כִּי עֲמֶךָ מְקוֹר חַיִּים, בְּאֹרְךָ נִרְאָה אֹר.
מִשֶׁן חֲסִדְךָ לִידְעֶיךָ, וְצִדְקֹתֶךָ לִישְׂרֵי לֵב.

הֲרִיגֵי מְקַבְּלִי מְקַבְּלַת עָלַי מִצְוֹת הַבוֹרָא:
וְאַהֲבַת לְרַעַךְ כְּמוֹךָ.

offered a physical offering, which, rising to heaven, has been returned to us as spiritual nourishment.

וְאַהֲבַת לְרַעַךְ
Leviticus 19:18. The mystic Isaac Luria (1534–1572, Safed) began each day with this reminder of the command to love, believing that this commitment to try to love others—even if we are as yet unable to fulfill it completely—is a necessary condition of our experiencing divine love.

PUTTING ON THE TALLIT.
As explained in Numbers 15:39–40, the *tzitzit*, the fringes of the *tallit*, serve to remind us of the Torah's mitzvot and of the ideal of holiness to which we are summoned.

LET ME PRAISE נִפְשֵׁי
Psalm 104:1–2.

HOW PRECIOUS מֵה יִקָּר
Psalm 36:8–11. These verses speak of God's protection. With their recitation, being enwrapped in the *tallit* becomes an embodiment of being enfolded in the wings of the Shekhinah. In Hebrew, the word for wing, *kanaf*, is the same as the word for corner (on which the *tzitzit* are tied). Thus, the corners of the *tallit* become symbolic of the wings of the Shekhinah, God's Presence.

ABUNDANCE מִדָּשֵׁן. This Hebrew word is primarily used in the Torah to describe the sacrificial elements burnt on the altar. Thus, to say that we are sated by God's *deshen*, abundance, suggests that God gives us back the gifts we have offered—though in the hands of God they have been transformed: we

Who Gives Sight to the Blind

When we thank God for giving sight to the blind, we express thankfulness not only for the literal gift of sight, but also for our capacity for insight, for our ability to be aware of the world around us, and for the capacity to understand ourselves and our world.

Rabbi Benjamin said: We are all blind until the Holy One enlightens our eyes, as the Bible records regarding Hagar, “And God opened her eyes and she saw a well” (Genesis 21:19).

—GENESIS RABBAH

Imitating God

Our prayers thanking God for the clothes we wear and for the ability to stand up and walk about are also a reminder of the imperative for us to provide clothing for the “naked,” to offer help to those who are in physical need, and to defend those who are unjustifiably “bound.” The ancient rabbis commented on the verse, “You shall follow Adonai your God...” (Deuteronomy 13:5)—just as God is kind and loving, so too you should be kind and loving; just as God performs acts of generosity, so should you; just as God is patient, so should you be, as it is written, “You shall make yourselves holy, for I, Adonai your God, am holy” (Leviticus 19:2).

—based on THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Blessings for a New Day

We rise.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space,

who enables the bird to distinguish day from night,

who made me in the divine image,

who made me free,

who made me a Jew,

who gives sight to the blind,

who clothes the naked,

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher natan la-sekhvi vinah l'havhin bein yom u-vein lailah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-asani b'tzalmo.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-asani ben/bat horin.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-asani yisrael.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, pokei-ah ivrim.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, malbish arumim.

בְּרִכּוֹת הַשָּׁחַר

We rise.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְשִׁכְוִי בִינָה לְהַבְחִין בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לַיְלָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

שֶׁעָשָׂנִי בֶן־בֵּית חוֹרִין.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, פּוֹקֵחַ עֵוְרִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים.

BLESSINGS FOR A NEW DAY בְּרִכּוֹת הַשָּׁחַר. As reported in the Babylonian Talmud, most of the *b'rakhot* in this collection were originally recited at home as one went through the daily acts of waking and rising (Berakhot 60b). Each passage extols God as we begin the day: on arising from sleep, on hearing the birds sing, on dressing, on taking one's first steps, and so on. Maimonides stated: “These *b'rakhot* are without a prescribed order; each is to be recited only on the appropriate occasion... and not as part of the synagogue service” (Mishneh Torah,

Hilkhot Tefillah 7:7, 9). Other authorities, however, beginning with the siddur of Rav Amram Gaon in the 9th century, recommended the public recitation of these *b'rakhot*. This has been the standard Ashkenazic practice to this day; the common Sephardic practice is to recite these *b'rakhot* privately and to begin the service with the morning psalms.

BARUKH בְּרוּךְ. Many commentators argue that the word *barukh* is not a passive verb meaning “blessed,” but rather an adjective descriptive of God: God is the wellspring of all blessings. (The similar-sounding Hebrew word *b'reikhah* means “pool of water.”) Thus the opening words of a *b'rakhah* are an acknowledgment that God is the source of all blessings (Meir ibn Gabbai).

WHO ENABLES THE BIRD TO DISTINGUISH אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְשִׁכְוִי בִינָה. We are a part of the natural world, responding to the morning sunlight as does all of nature. This first blessing attributes understanding to the animal realm and points to humans taking instruction from them.

The language is taken from the Book of Job (38:36), where God responds to Job out of the whirlwind, saying: “Who placed wisdom in the most hidden places? Who gave understanding to the bird? Who is wise enough to describe the heavens?” The word used for bird is *sekhvi*, and the Babylonian Talmud identifies it as a rooster (Rosh Hashanah 26a).

WHO MADE ME IN THE DIVINE IMAGE שֶׁעָשָׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ. This blessing and the next one (“who made me free”) are versions of blessings mentioned in the Tosefta (Berakhot 6:18) and in the Babylonian Talmud (Menahot 43b). They have been emended in Conservative prayer-books on the basis of manuscript fragments, found in the Cairo Genizah.

WHO MADE ME A JEW שֶׁעָשָׂנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל. This positive formulation is the wording in the Babylonian Talmud (Menahot 43b).

WHO GIVES SIGHT TO THE BLIND פּוֹקֵחַ עֵוְרִים. Said when opening the eyes. Many of these blessings are taken from the psalmist's descriptions of God's actions: “. . . sets prisoners free . . . restores sight to the blind . . . makes those who are bent stand straight . . .” (Psalm 146:7–8).

WHO CLOTHES THE NAKED מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים. God's clothing of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21) was an act of kindness exhibited to these first humans, even as they were exiled from the Garden.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who endows each and every living thing with unique capabilities and purpose, and creates me in the divine image; who grants me free will, and the ability to exercise it, and blesses me with the gift and responsibility of being a Jew; who opens my eyes to the world around and within me, blessing me with insight, awareness, and understanding, and protects me when I feel vulnerable, exposed, or ashamed; who frees me from all that limits or confines me, and restores my dignity when I feel bent or broken; who leads me back to solid ground when the world shifts beneath my feet, and guides me along my path when I am lost or confused; who creates me with needs, and the wherewithal to meet them, and strengthens the people Israel with the courage to embody our beliefs; who crowns the people Israel with a sense of mission and purpose, and renews me each night when I am weary, that I may awake to each new day with strength.

—JAN UHRBACH

who releases the bound,
 who straightens those who are bent,
 who stretches out the earth over the waters,
 who steadies our steps,
 who has provided for all my needs,
 who strengthens the people Israel with courage,
 who crowns the people Israel with glory,
 and who gives strength to the weary.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, matir asurim.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, zokef k'fufim.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, roka ha-aretz al ha-mayim.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ha-meikhin mitzadei gaver.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-asah li kol tzorki.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ozer yisrael bigvurah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, oter yisrael b'tifarah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ha-noten laya-eif ko-ah.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who removes sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids.

May it be Your will, our God and God of our ancestors, that You accustom us to study Your Torah and cling to Your mitzvot;

do not lead us into error, or transgression, or sin, nor subject us to trials or disgrace.

Do not let the inclination to evil control us, and distance us from people who would do us evil and from friends who commit evil;

spur in us the yearning to do good and to act with goodness.

Bend our will and our desires to Your service.

► Today and every day, may You look upon us, and may all who see us look upon us, with eyes filled with kindness, love, and compassion. Act toward us with kindly love.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who acts with kindly love to the people Israel.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, זוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, רוֹקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְכִין מִצְעָדֵי גִבּוֹר.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁעֵשָׂה לִי כָל־צָרָפִי.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִבּוּרָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, עוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִפְאָרָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַנוֹתֵן לַיַּעֲף כֹּחַ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְעֲבִיר שְׁנָה מֵעֵינַי וְתַנּוּמָה מֵעַפְעָפִי.

וְיִהְיֶה רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], שְׁתַּרְגְּלֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ, וְאַל תְּבִיאֵנוּ לֹא לַיָּדִי חֶטָּא, וְלֹא לַיָּדִי עֲבָרָה וְעוֹן, וְלֹא לַיָּדִי נִסְיוֹן, וְלֹא לַיָּדִי בְּזִיווֹן, וְאַל תִּשְׁלַט־בְּנוּ יַצָּר הָרָע, וְהִרְחִיקֵנוּ מֵאָדָם רָע וּמִחֶבֶר רָע. וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בַּיָּצָר הַטוֹב וּבְמַעֲשֵׂים טוֹבִים, וְכוּף אֶת־יִצְרָנוּ לְהַשְׁתַּעֲבֹד־לָךְ. ◀ וְתַנְּנוּ הַיּוֹם, וּבְכַל־יוֹם, לָחֵן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ, וּבְעֵינַי כָּל־רוֹאֵינוּ, וְתַגְּמַלְנוּ חֲסִדִים טוֹבִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, גּוֹמֵל חֲסִדִים טוֹבִים לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

believed that we are subject to impulses that lead us to do good or evil. For instance, competitiveness can spur us to exert greater energy but it can also lead to hurtful behavior. The yearning for fame and the approbation of others can influence us to perform acts of kindness and to exercise leadership roles, but it can also produce egos that are never satisfied. We yearn to do good, but we are often impeded by our jealousies, our self-concern, and our desire for mastery and conquest.

WHO RELEASES THE BOUND מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים. Releasing the fetters of wickedness, freeing the oppressed, feeding the hungry, and providing for the homeless are mentioned by the prophet Isaiah as acts that God desires of human beings (58:6).

WHO STRAIGHTENS THOSE WHO ARE BENT רוֹקֵעַ אֲסוּרִים. Literally, “making those who are bowed down stand upright.” This phrase, as found in Psalm 146:8, is the biblical warrant for standing up straight when God’s name is pronounced, after having bowed at the beginning of a blessing.

WHO STRETCHES OUT THE EARTH OVER THE WATERS רוֹקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם. Psalm 136:6. Genesis depicts dry land being formed from the splitting of the primal waters.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL וְיִהְיֶה רְצוֹן. A prayer recorded in the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 60b).

TRIALS נִסְיוֹן. The trials of life are many: confronting personal illness or tragic situations, difficult ethical dilemmas, temptations that may endanger us. In addition, because faith is often accompanied by doubt, and even the strongest faith may be vulnerable in trying times, we hope that today will affirm rather than challenge our faith.

INCLINATION TO EVIL יַצָּר הָרָע. The ancient rabbis

*Both in Private
and in Public*

The Torah directs that the ark, which was to contain the tablets, be overlaid with gold both inside and out (Exodus 25:11). The ancient rabbis asked: Why must it be golden on the inside, where, after all, no one will see it? To teach us that we are like the ark—our outer lives and our inner lives should be consistent.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Who We Are

The Hasidic master Simhah Bunam taught: Each person should carry in his or her pockets two notes. One should read, “The world was created for me.” The other should read, “I am but dust and ashes.”

*Descendants of
Abraham*

What is at stake in our lives is more than the fate of one generation. In this moment we, the living, are Israel. The tasks begun by the patriarchs and prophets, and carried out by countless Jews of the past, are now entrusted to us. No other group has superseded them. We are the only channel of Jewish tradition, those who must save Judaism from oblivion, those who must hand over the entire past to the generations to come. We are either the last, the dying, Jews or else we are those who will give new life to our tradition. Rarely in our history has so much been dependent upon one generation. We shall either forfeit or enrich the legacy of the ages.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

Living with Life’s Tensions

We are caught in the tension between our roles as unique beings capable of great accomplishment, and the knowledge that we are mortal and that our fate is to die and disappear. Prayer helps mediate this tension by impressing on us a sense of thankfulness for the gift of life, the gift of a single day.

A Penitential Prayer

Both in private and in public, a person should always be in awe of heaven, acknowledging the truth, speaking truth in one’s heart, and upon arising one should declare:

Master of all worlds! Not upon our merit do we rely in pleading before You, but upon Your great compassion.

What are we? What is our life?

Our goodness? Our righteousness?

Our achievement? Our power? Our victories?

What shall we say in Your presence,

ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors?

Heroes count as nothing in Your presence, the famous are as though they had never been,

the wise seem ignorant, the clever as lacking reason.

For the sum of our deeds is chaos;

in Your presence our lives seem futile.

Human beings have no superiority over beasts, for all is vanity.

Surely, though, we are Your people, partners to Your covenant: descendants of Abraham, who loved You, to whom You made a pledge on Mount Moriah; the seed of Isaac, his designated heir, who was bound upon the altar; the congregation of Jacob, Your firstborn son, whom You renamed Israel and Jeshurun because of the love You bore him, and the delight he gave You.

לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אָדָם יֵרָא שָׁמַיִם בְּסִתְרָם וּבְגָלוֹי,
וּמוֹדָה עַל הָאֱמֶת, וְדוֹבֵר אֱמֶת בְּלִבָּבוֹ, וַיִּשְׁפֹּם וַיֹּאמֶר:
רְבוֹן פְּלִי-הָעוֹלָמִים, לֹא עַל צְדָקוֹתֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מִפִּילִים
תַּחֲנוּגֵינוּ לְפָנֶיךָ, כִּי עַל רַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים.
מָה אֲנַחְנוּ, מָה חַיֵּינוּ,
מָה חֲסָדֵנוּ, מָה צְדָקָנוּ,
מָה יִשְׁעֵנוּ, מָה כֹּחֵנוּ, מָה גְבוּרָתֵנוּ.
מָה נֹאמֵר לְפָנֶיךָ,
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
הֲלֹא כָל-הַגְּבוּרִים כָּאִין לְפָנֶיךָ,
וְאֲנָשֵׁי הַשָּׁם כֹּלֵי הַיּוֹם,
וְחַכְמַיִם כְּבִלֵי מַדְעָה, וְנְבוֹנִים כְּבִלֵי הַשֶּׁפֶל.
כִּי כָל-מַעֲשֵׂינוּ תַהוֹ, וַיְמִי חַיֵּינוּ הֶבֶל לְפָנֶיךָ,
וּמוֹתֵר הָאָדָם מִן הַבְּהֵמָה אֵין, כִּי הֶבֶל הֶבֶל.
אֲבָל אֲנַחְנוּ עַמֶּךָ, בְּנֵי בְרִיתְךָ, בְּנֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱהָבָךָ
שֶׁנִּשְׁבַּעְתָּ לּוֹ בְּהַר הַמּוֹרִיָּה, זָרַע יִצְחָק יְחִידוֹ,
שֶׁנֶּעֱקַד עַל גְּבֵי הַמְּזֻבָּח, עֲדַת יַעֲקֹב בְּנוֹךְ בְּכוֹרָה,
שֶׁמֵּאֱהָבְתָךְ שָׂאֵהְבֵת אוֹתוֹ, וּמִשְׁמַחְתָּךְ שֶׁשְׂמַחְתָּ בּוֹ,
קָרָאתָ אֶת-שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁרוּן.

the same as used in the opening verses of Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) and variously translated there as “vanity,” “futility,” and “fleeting breath.”

ABRAHAM, WHO LOVED YOU אֱבְרָהָם אֱהָבָךָ. The phrase originates in 2 Chronicles 20:7.

TO WHOM YOU MADE A PLEDGE לּוֹ שֶׁנִּשְׁבַּעְתָּ. In some traditions, the biblical passage of the binding of Isaac is read before this prayer. After the binding of Isaac, the angel promises Abraham in God’s name, “I will bestow My blessing upon you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands on the seashore; and your descendants shall seize the gates of their foes. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants because you have obeyed My command” (Genesis 22:17–18).

WHOM YOU RENAMED ISRAEL אֱיִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל. Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob all had their names changed by God as a sign of God’s promise to them. In Jacob’s case this name change is recorded twice—once when he wrestles with the angel, and then again when God appears to him at Bethel as he is about to descend to Egypt and blesses him: “Be fertile and increase; a nation, yes, an assembly of nations, shall descend from you...” (Genesis 35:11–12). Isaac, though, was named by God in the womb (17:19) and so always kept his name (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Berakhot 1:4).

AND JESHURUN וַיִּשְׁרוּן. Another name for the people Israel (Deuteronomy 32:15, Isaiah 44:2). It is derived from the word meaning “upright.”

A PERSON SHOULD ALWAYS BE IN AWE OF HEAVEN לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אָדָם יֵרָא שָׁמַיִם. This passage is taken from the 1st-millennium midrash Seder Eliyahu Rabbah (chapter 19). The midrash is interpreting Isaiah 33:18, “Your heart shall murmur in awe.”

WHAT ARE WE? WHAT IS OUR LIFE? מָה אֲנַחְנוּ, מָה חַיֵּינוּ. The phrase is mentioned in the Babylonian Talmud as forming an essential formula of confession (Yoma 87b). Originally it was part of the Yom Kippur liturgy, but it was thought to be appropriate to be recited daily. Throughout the Middle Ages it was a custom of the pious to rise in the middle of the night to pray and study; this was thought to be a time when God’s mercy could especially be called upon. This prayer became part of that nightly ritual, which included a confession of sins and a plea for forgiveness. Its place in this part of the prayerbook is a remnant of this penitential custom.

VANITY הֶבֶל. The word is

Therefore it is our duty to thank You and glorify You,
to bless and sanctify and praise Your name.

► How blessed we are:
how goodly is our portion,
how delightful our lot,
how beautiful our inheritance!
How blessed are we that twice each day, morning and evening,
as we awaken and as we end our day, we say:

Hear, O Israel, ADONAI is our God, ADONAI is one.

Sh'ma yisrael, Adonai eloheinu Adonai ehad.

Recited quietly: Praised be the name of the one whose
glorious sovereignty is forever and ever.

Barukh shem k'vod malkhuto l'olam va-ed.

The Song of "You"

*Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev
used to sing a song, part of
which is as follows:*

Where I wander —You!
Where I ponder —You!
Only You, You again,
always You!
You! You! You!
When I am gladdened
—You!
When I am saddened
—You!
Only You, You again,
always You!
You! You! You!
Sky is You! Earth is You!
You above! You below!
In every trend,
at every end,
Only You, You again,
always You!
You! You! You!

(translated by Olga Marx)

You were before the world was created,
and You are since creation;
You are in this world,
and You will be in the world that is coming.
You are ADONAI our God, in the heavens and on earth,
even in the highest heavens.
Truly,
You are first and You are last,
and beside You, there is no other.
► Manifest Your holiness through those who hallow Your
name, and hallow Your name in this world;
as Your deliverance arrives, raise up our heads with pride.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who sanctifies Your name through
community.

לְפִיכֶם אֲנַחֲנוּ חַיִּים לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ וּלְשַׁבַּחְךָ וּלְפָאֲרְךָ
וּלְבָרְךָ וּלְקַדְּשׁ וְלִתַּת שְׂבַח וְהוֹדָיָה לְשִׁמְךָ.

◀ אֲשֶׁרֵינוּ, מֵה טוֹב חֻלְקֵנוּ,

וּמֵה נְעִים גּוֹרְלֵנוּ,

וּמֵה יָפֵה יְרֻשָׁתֵנוּ.

אֲשֶׁרֵינוּ, שְׂאֲנַחֲנוּ מִשְׂפִּימִים וּמַעֲרִיבִים,

עֶרֶב וּבִקְרָה, וְאוֹמְרִים פְּעַמִּים בְּכָל־יוֹם:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד.

Recited quietly: שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

אַתָּה הוּא עַד שְׁלֹא נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם,

אַתָּה הוּא מִשְׁנִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם,

אַתָּה הוּא בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה,

וְאַתָּה הוּא לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

אַתָּה הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ,

וּבְשָׁמַיִם הַשָּׁמַיִם הָעֲלִיוֹנִים.

אַמֵּת,

אַתָּה הוּא רִאשׁוֹן

וְאַתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן,

וּמִבְּלַעֲדֶיךָ אֵין אֱלֹהִים.

◀ קַדְּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ עַל מִקְדָּשֵׁי שִׁמְךָ,

וְקַדְּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּעוֹלָמְךָ,

וּבִישׁוּעַתְךָ תַּרְיִם וְתִגְבִּיָּה קִרְבָּנוּ.

כְּרוֹךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מִקְדָּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּרַבִּים.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל HEAR, O ISRAEL. Although the full Sh'ma will be recited later in the service, its first line was inserted here to fulfill the obligation of reciting the Sh'ma "when you rise up"; it was recited at home. Similarly in the evening, though the Sh'ma is recited as part of the evening service, the first paragraph is said again before retiring, in order to fulfill the scriptural obligation of reciting it "when you lie down" (Deuteronomy 6:7).

אַתָּה הוּא YOU WERE This emphatic phrase (literally, "You are the one who...") appears a total of seven times in this passage. Given that the number seven has mystical significance, this sevenfold refrain may have served as a meditational exercise.

BEFORE THE WORLD WAS CREATED עַד שְׁלֹא נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם. A credal statement to the effect that God is beyond time also follows the Sh'ma recited later in the morning service (see page 157). Both are perhaps intended as an interpretation of the meaning of God's uniqueness affirmed in the Sh'ma: the God who is one is eternal.

TRULY, YOU ARE FIRST אַמֵּת, אַתָּה הוּא רִאשׁוֹן. These words are adapted from

Isaiah 44:6, where God proclaims: "I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God but Me."

Blessings Before Study

כ

One should say the blessings on the Torah in the morning as if one were once again standing at Sinai receiving the Torah from God.

—JACOB BEN ASHER

ב

The purpose of saying blessings over the Torah is to remind us that study of Torah is not only an intellectual task but also a spiritual one—study of Torah should lead to deeper and deeper spiritual experience. Through Torah study we build the Temple where heaven and earth meet.

—JOEL SIRKES

And Bestow Upon You Kindness

Some say the meaning of the phrase in the Priestly Blessing is that God will look kindly on you and grant you that which you wish. Others interpret the phrase to mean that God will bless you so that you are treated with kindness by others.

—SIFREI NUMBERS

B'rakhot Before Studying Torah

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has provided us with a path to holiness through the observance of mitzvot and has instructed us to engage with the words of Torah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la-asok b'divrei torah.

May You make the words of Your Torah sweet in our mouths and in the mouths of the house of Israel, Your people, so that we, our children, and all the children of the house of Israel may come to know Your name and study Torah for its own sake.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who teaches Torah to Your people Israel.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has chosen us from among all peoples, giving us the Torah.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives the Torah.

Passages of Study

TORAH:

May ADONAI bless and protect you.

May ADONAI's countenance shine upon you and may ADONAI bestow kindness upon you.

May ADONAI's countenance be lifted toward you and may ADONAI grant you peace.

Numbers 6:24–26

MISHNAH:

These are the deeds for which there is no prescribed measure: leaving the produce at the corner of a field for the poor, offering the gift of first fruits to the Temple, pilgrimage offerings on the three festivals, deeds of kindness and love, and the study of Torah. *Mishnah Peah 1:1*

TALMUD:

These are the deeds that yield immediate fruit and continue to yield fruit in time to come: honoring parents; performing deeds of kindness and love; attending the house of study morning and evening; providing hospitality; visiting the sick; helping the needy bride; attending the dead; probing the meaning of prayer; making peace between one person and another, and between husband and wife. And the study of Torah is the most basic of them all. *based on Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 39b*

ברכות התורה

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה.
והערבנא יהוה אלהינו את דברי תורתך בפנינו ובפי
עמך בית ישראל, ונהיה אנחנו וצאצאינו וצאצאי עמך
בית ישראל בלנו יודעי שמך ולומדי תורתך לשמחה.
ברוך אתה יהוה, המלמד תורה לעמו ישראל.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר בחר בנו מכל העמים, ונתן לנו את תורתו.
ברוך אתה יהוה, נותן התורה.

TORAH:

יברכך יהוה וישמרך.

יאר יהוה פניו אליך ורחמיהו.

ישא יהוה פניו אליך וישם לך שלום. במדבר ו:כד-כו

MISHNAH:

אלו דברים שאין להם שעור: הפאה והפפורים והראיון
וגמילות הסדים ותלמוד תורה. משנה פאה א:א

TALMUD:

אלו דברים שאדם אוכל פרותיהם בעולם הזה והקרן
קיימת לו לעולם הבא, ואלו הן: כבוד אב ואם, וגמילות
הסדים, והשפמת בית המדרש שחרית וערבית,
והכנסת אורחים, ובקור חולים, והכנסת פלה, ולוית
המת, ועיון תפלה, והבאת שלום בין אדם לחברו ובין
איש לאשתו, ותלמוד תורה בנגד כלם.

תלמוד בבלי, קדושין לט ב, עם הוספות

TO ENGAGE WITH THE WORDS OF TORAH לעסוק בַּדְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה. The blessing is not phrased “to learn Torah,” as if Torah were something fixed that one could acquire. When we “engage” with Torah we become active participants: querying it, drawing out its implications, and incorporating its teachings into our lives.

TO KNOW YOUR NAME יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ. To know God's name is to act in a holy way—justly, compassionately, truthfully.

PASSAGES OF STUDY. The ancient rabbis categorized three types of study: biblical study (*mikra*); study of the oral tradition, which became codified in the Mishnah (circa 225 C.E.); and study of the elaboration of that tradition (called in Aramaic *g'mara* and in Hebrew *talmud*). Versions of that process constitute the Talmud of the Land of Israel (edited until the year 425 C.E.) and the Babylonian Talmud (edited in the 6th–7th centuries C.E.). Having recited the blessings over studying Torah, one should then proceed to engage in study—and the traditional liturgy immediately offers examples of these three kinds of study.

LEAVING THE PRODUCE AT

THE CORNER OF A FIELD FOR THE POOR הַפָּאָה. Leaving the corner of the field for the poor may be the simplest of acts: it is entirely passive and the Mishnah teaches that the amount one leaves for the poor is totally up to each individual. Maimonides elaborates all the laws of *tzedakah* in the section of his law code dealing with this mitzvah, as if to say that *tzedakah* begins with the simplest of acts.

THESE ARE THE DEEDS THAT YIELD IMMEDIATE FRUIT הֵזָה. This list from tractate Kiddushin was expanded through the Middle Ages (*Mishneh Torah*, *Hilkhot Matnot Ani'im*), and variations are extant in different prayerbooks; “peace between husband and wife” is one such addition.

through knowing one's place,
 through finding joy in one's lot,
 through making a fence about one's words,
 through not crediting one's own successes,
 through being beloved,
 through loving God,
 through loving humanity,
 through loving justice,
 through loving honesty,
 through welcoming criticism,
 through shunning honors,
 through not becoming arrogant
 because of one's studies,
 through not being joyful in decision-making,
 through sharing in another's burdens,
 through judging others favorably,
 through insisting on truth,
 through insisting on peace,
 through settling one's mind in study,
 through asking questions and
 responding to questions,
 through listening and adding to the
 conversation,
 through learning in order to teach,
 through learning in order to do,
 through bringing new understanding
 to one's teachers,
 through being precise in reporting
 what one has learned,
 through reporting sayings in
 the speaker's name.

Pirkei Avot 6:6

הַמְּבִיר אֶת־מְקוֹמוֹ,
 וְהַשְׂמֵחַ בְּחֻלְקוֹ,
 וְהַעוֹשֶׂה סִיג לְדַבְּרָיו,
 וְאִינוֹ מַחְזִיק טוֹבָה לְעַצְמוֹ,
 אֶהוֹב,
 אוֹהֵב אֶת־הַמְּקוֹם,
 אוֹהֵב אֶת־הַבְּרִיּוֹת,
 אוֹהֵב אֶת־הַצְּדָקוֹת,
 אוֹהֵב אֶת־הַמִּישָׁרִים,
 אוֹהֵב אֶת־הַתּוֹכַחּוֹת,
 וּמְתַרְחֵק מִן הַכְּבוֹד,
 וְלֹא מְגַיֵּס לְבוֹ בַּתְּלֻמוּדוֹ,
 וְאִינוֹ שׂוֹמֵחַ בְּהוֹרָאָה,
 נוֹשֵׂא בְעַל עִם הַבְּרוֹן,
 וּמְכַרְיעוֹ לְכַף זְכוּתוֹ,
 וּמְעַמִּידוֹ עַל הָאֱמֶת,
 וּמְעַמִּידוֹ עַל הַשְּׁלוֹם,
 וּמְתִישֵׁב לְבוֹ בַּתְּלֻמוּדוֹ,
 שׂוֹאֵל וּמְשִׁיב,
 שׂוֹמֵעַ וּמוֹסִיף,
 הַלּוֹמֵד עַל מְנַת לְלַמֵּד,
 וְהַלּוֹמֵד עַל מְנַת לַעֲשׂוֹת,
 הַמְּחַפֵּים אֶת־רֵבּוֹ,
 וְהַמְּכַוֵּן אֶת־שְׂמוֹעָתוֹ,
 וְהַאֹמֵר דָּבָר
 בְּשֵׁם אוֹמְרוֹ.

פרקי אבות ו:ו

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES OF STUDY

גְּדוּלַּת תּוֹרָה יוֹתֵר מִן הַכְּהֻנָּה וּמִן הַמְּלָכוּת, שֶׁהַמְּלָכוּת
 נִקְנִית בְּשָׁלְשִׁים מַעֲלוֹת, וְהַכְּהֻנָּה נִקְנִית בְּעֶשְׂרִים
 וְאַרְבָּעָה, וְהַתּוֹרָה נִקְנִית בְּאַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁמוֹנֶה דְּבָרִים.
 וְאֵלוֹ הֵן:

Torah is greater than the priesthood or royalty, for kingship is
 acquired through thirty qualities and the priesthood through
 twenty-four, but Torah is acquired through forty-eight:

בְּתֻלְמוּד,
 בְּשִׂמְיַעַת הָאָזֶן,
 בְּעֵרִיכַת שְׂפָתַיִם,
 בְּבִינַת הַלֵּב,
 בְּשִׁבְלוֹת הַלֵּב,
 בְּאִימָה,
 בְּיִרְאָה,
 בְּעִנְוָה,
 בְּשִׂמְחָה,
 בְּשִׂמּוּשׁ חֲכָמִים,
 בְּדִקְדוּקַת חֲבָרִים,
 בְּכַלְפוּל הַתְּלַמִּידִים,
 בְּיִשׁוּב,
 בְּמִקְרָא,
 בְּמִשְׁנָה,
 בְּמַעוֹט שְׁנָה,
 בְּמַעוֹט שִׁיחָה,
 בְּמַעוֹט תַּעֲנוּג,
 בְּמַעוֹט שְׁחֹק,
 בְּאַרְךָ אַפִּים,
 בְּלֵב טוֹב,
 בְּאַמוּנַת חֲכָמִים,
 בְּקַבְּלַת הַיְסוּרִין,
 through study,
 through a listening ear,
 through careful use of speech,
 through an understanding heart,
 through insight,
 through fear,
 through awe,
 through humility,
 through joy,
 through attending to scholars,
 through considered discussion
 with companions,
 through challenging exchanges
 with students,
 through equanimity,
 through biblical studies,
 through study of the Mishnah,
 through minimizing sleep,
 through minimizing idle conversation,
 through minimizing desires,
 through minimizing frivolity,
 through patience,
 through a good heart,
 through trust in scholars,
 through acceptance of suffering,

TORAH IS GREATER גְּדוּלַּת תּוֹרָה. The ancient rabbis
 said that there are three
 crowns: the crown of
 priesthood, the crown of
 kingship, and the crown of
 Torah (Pirkei Avot 4:17).

THIRTY QUALITIES בְּשָׁלְשִׁים מַעֲלוֹת. The thirty qualities
 recommended for a king
 are listed in the minor trac-
 tate Kallah Rabbati (5:6).

TWENTY-FOUR עֶשְׂרִים וָאַרְבָּעָה. There are twenty-
 four rituals that only priests
 can perform.

Finding Meaning

The students of Rabbi Ishmael interpreted the words of Jeremiah: “For My words are like fire,” Adonai says, ‘and as a hammer that splits a rock’” (Jeremiah 23:29)—just as a hammer splinters the rock into numerous fragments, so too are the words of Torah open to many meanings.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

The Act of Interpretation

The Ḥasidic master Elimelekh of Lizhensk connected these thirteen methods of interpretation to the Thirteen Attributes of God found in Exodus 34, which describe God as full of love, kindness, and forgiveness (see page 323); in fact, both of these texts are referred to in Hebrew as the *sh'losh esreih midot*, “the thirteen qualities.” Elimelekh points out that interpreters of Torah have the power to bring both blessing and pain to the Jewish people. If they strive to embody the love, kindness, and forgiveness of the Thirteen Attributes in their own lives, then when they interpret the Torah according to the Thirteen Principles of Rabbi Ishmael, their teaching will be a teaching of love.

ב

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETING TORAH

Rabbi Ishmael taught that the Torah is expounded by these thirteen rules of textual interpretation:

A restriction applicable in general circumstances certainly applies to a more limited circumstance.

A general rule may be inferred from a similar phrase in two different texts.

A general rule may be derived from a single text or from two related texts.

A rule stated in general terms, but followed by one or two particular examples, is limited to those particular circumstances.

When a particular circumstance is stated and is then followed by a general rule, the law is expanded to include all that is similar to the particular circumstance.

When a general rule is stated, followed by a specific application, and then the general rule is restated, the law must be interpreted in terms of the specific limitation.

If the specification is needed to clarify an ambiguity in the general rule, then the specification teaches something about the general rule.

But when a subject naturally included in a general rule is treated separately, it is meant to limit the rule.

When the text states a general rule and specifies a penalty and then follows it with a particular instance covered by the general rule but does not state a punishment for it, it is meant to ordain a lesser penalty for the latter circumstance.

However, when a penalty is specified for a violation of the general rule and then is followed by a dissimilar circumstance, either a lesser or greater penalty may be intended.

A circumstance logically falling within a general rule but treated separately in the Torah remains outside the rule, unless the text specifically states that it is part of the general rule.

An obscure text may be clarified by its context or by subsequent usage.

Finally, contradictions between two texts may be reconciled by means of a third text.

Sifra 1

ב

רבי ישמעאל אומר: בשלש עשרה מדות התורה נדרשת:

מקל וחמר.

ומגזרה שוה.

מבנין אב מפתוב אחד, ומבנין אב משני כתובים.

מכלל ופרט.

ומפרט וכלל.

כלל ופרט וכלל, אי אתה דן אלא פעין הפרט.

מכלל שהוא צריך לפרט, ומפרט שהוא צריך לכלל.

פלדבר שהיה בכלל ויצא מן הכלל ללמד, לא ללמד על עצמו יצא, אלא ללמד על הכלל בלו יצא.

פלדבר שהיה בכלל ויצא לטעון טען אחד שהוא בענינו, יצא להקל ולא להחמיר.

פלדבר שהיה בכלל, ויצא לטעון טען אחר שלא בענינו, יצא להקל ולהחמיר.

פלדבר שהיה בכלל ויצא לדון בדבר החדש, אי אתה יכול להחזירו לכללו עד שיחזירוהו הפתוב לכללו בפירושו.

דבר הלמד מענינו, ודבר הלמד מסופו.

וכן שני כתובים המכחישים זה את זה, עד שיבא הפתוב השלישי ויכריע ביניהם.

ספרא א

THE BARAITA/TEACHING OF RABBI ISHMAEL is ascribed to Rabbi Ishmael of the early 2nd century C.E., although it was probably written many centuries later. It was appended to the Sifra, the halakhic midrash on Leviticus, as an introductory first chapter to that work. The text attempts to codify the hermeneutic rules by which the early rabbis interpreted biblical law. Such interpretation was (and is) necessary in order to harmonize seemingly contradictory verses, and to expand the applicability of the law to circumstances not specifically mentioned in the Torah, or to newly arising situations and contexts. Some of these rules represent commonly accepted hermeneutic principles in the ancient world.

Studying these rules at the beginning of one’s day can be seen both as a fitting introduction to the expansive role of Torah learning, as well as an affirmation of both the role and limits of human interpretation in relation to divine revelation.

Talmud Torah

The talmudic method of argumentation, its citation of multiple sources, leads to the moderation of authority claims and the claims for truth in general. The play of alternatives in the Talmud—alternative interpretations, alternative rulings, alternative sources—is a sign of moderation. Even when the play of alternative interpretations gives preference to some claims over others, those that are denied will not be forgotten. The reader is always left with the impression that alternatives were available and that someone thought these alternatives to be reasoned and intelligent. Their echoes will always be a reminder that the conclusions, even when accepted, are not self-evident.

Thus, even when it renders decisions or favors particular interpretations, the Babylonian Talmud makes it clear that the process, and not the conclusion, is its utmost concern. It makes a mitzvah out of studying, *talmud torah*, and admits thereby that in the human encounter with the divine will, human understanding, and human interpretation—however imperfect—is in fact of equal value with the divine will itself.

—DAVID KRAEMER (adapted)

A CONCLUDING BIBLICAL PASSAGE

You shall be holy for I, ADONAI your God, am holy. You shall not insult the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind. You shall not render an unjust decision: do not be partial to the poor nor show deference to the rich. Judge your neighbor fairly. Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor. You shall not hate your brother in your heart. Love your neighbor as yourself; I am ADONAI.

from Leviticus 19:2, 14–18

Concluding Prayers

We conclude with one of the following meditations:



► May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, to grant our portion in Your Torah. May we be disciples of Aaron the priest, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving our fellow creatures and drawing them near to the Torah.



► May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, that the Temple be restored in our day, and grant us a portion among those devoted to Your Torah. May we be privileged to worship You there, as in ancient days.

קְדוּשִׁים תִּהְיוּ, כִּי קָדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. לֹא תִקְלַל חֵרֶשׁ, וְלִפְנֵי עֵוֶר לֹא תִתֵּן מִכְשָׁל. לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה עֹוֶל בְּמִשְׁפָּט, לֹא תִשָּׂא פָנֶי דָל וְלֹא תִהְדָּר פָּנֵי גָדוֹל, בְּצַדֵּק תִשְׁפֹּט עִמִּיתְךָ. לֹא תַעֲמֹד עַל דַּם רֵעֶךָ. לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־אָחִיךָ בְּלִבְבְּךָ. וְאַהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה.

ויקרא יט:ב, יד-יח

We conclude with one of the following meditations:



◀ יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], שֶׁתִּתֵּן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ, וְנִהְיֶה מִתְלַמְּדֵיךָ שֶׁל אֶהְרֵן הַכֹּהֵן, אוֹהֵב שְׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף שְׁלוֹם, אוֹהֵב אֶת־הַבְּרִיּוֹת וּמְקַרְבֵּן לַתּוֹרָה.



◀ יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], שֶׁיִּבְנֶה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ, וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ. וְשֵׁם נַעֲבֹדְךָ בִּירְאָה פִּימִי עוֹלָם וּבְשָׂנִים קִדְמוֹנִיּוֹת.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL יְהִי רָצוֹן. Both passages deal with Aaron's legacy, the first as peacemaker and the second as leader of the service in the Temple. The midrash records that Aaron would go from tent to tent and make peace between those Jews who were fighting among themselves (Avot D'Rabbi Natan, version A, chapter 12). The midrash thus sees the priestly role not only as ritualistic but also as embodying important qualities worthy of emulation. Similarly, the vision of the restored Temple is of a place not only of renewed ritual but of universal peace, as well.

Kaddish D'Rabbanan

Many congregations recite Kaddish D'Rabbanan here. Traditionally, Kaddish D'Rabbanan has been recited by mourners and those observing Yahrzeit, but it may be recited by anyone who has read or heard the teaching of a text based on Torah.

May God's great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God's wish. May God's sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel.

And we say: *Amen*.

May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b'rikh hu*, is truly [on Shabbat Shuvah we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: *Amen*.

Grant abundant peace to our people and their leaders, to our teachers and their disciples, and to all who engage in the study of Torah in this land and in all other lands. May you and they be blessed by our creator in heaven with great peace, grace and kindness, compassion and love, and long life, abundance, and deliverance. And we say: *Amen*.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: *Amen*.

May the one who creates peace on high mercifully bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen*.

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'meih raba, b'alma di v'ra, kiruteih,
v'yamlikh malkhuteih b'hayeikhon u-v'yomeikhon u-v'hayei d'khol beit yisrael,
ba-agala u-vizman kariv, v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

Yitbarakh v'yishtabah v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam v'yitnasei
v'yit-hadar v'yitaleh v'yit-halal sh'meih d'kudsha, b'rikh hu,
l'eila min kol [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: l'eila l'eila mikol]
birkhata v'shirata tushb'hata v'nehamata da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.

Al yisrael v'al rabanan v'al talmideihon, v'al kol talmidei talmideihon,
v'al kol man d'askin b'oraita, di v'atra hadein v'di v'khol atar va-atar,
y'hei l'hon u-l'khon sh'lama raba, hina v'hisda v'rahamin, v'hayin arikhin
u-m'zona r'viha, u-furkana min kodam avuhon di vi-sh'maya, v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya, v'hayim tovim aleinu v'al kol yisrael, v'imru amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu b'rahmav ya-aseh shalom
aleinu v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teveil], v'imru amen.

קדיש דרבנן

Many congregations recite Kaddish D'Rabbanan here. Traditionally, Kaddish D'Rabbanan has been recited by mourners and those observing Yahrzeit, but it may be recited by anyone who has read or heard the teaching of a text based on Torah.

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא,
בְּעֻלְמָא דֵּי בְרָא, בְּרַעוּתָהּ,
וְיִמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בְּעֻגְלָא וּבְזִמְנָן קָרִיב,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהִי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמֵיָא.

יְתַבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקַדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעָלְמָא מִן כָּל־ [לְעָלְמָא לְעָלְמָא מְכָל־
[on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנִחַמְתָּא דְּאִמְרוּן בְּעֻלְמָא,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.]

עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל רַבָּנָן, וְעַל תַּלְמִידֵיהוֹן וְעַל כָּל־תַּלְמִידֵי
תַּלְמִידֵיהוֹן, וְעַל כָּל־מְאָן דְּעִסְקִין בְּאוֹרֵיתָא, דֵּי בְּאַתְרָא
הָדִין וְדֵי בְּכָל־אַתְרָא וְאַתְרָא, יְהִי לְהוֹן וּלְכוּן שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא,
חֲנֻא וְחֻסְדָּא וְרַחֲמִין, וְחַיִּין אַרְיִכִין, וּמְזוּנָא רוּיָהּ,
וּפְרָקְנָא מִן קָדָם אַבוּהוֹן דֵּי בְּשְׁמֵיָא, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהִי שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמֵיָא וְחַיִּים טוֹבִים
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא בְּרַחֲמָיו יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יּוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל],
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

KADDISH D'RABBANAN. Kaddish D'Rabbanan, recited after the study of sacred texts, contains a special prayer for the well-being of teachers, their disciples, and all who study Torah.

Psalms for Shabbat, New Moon, and Festivals

Psalms from the following pages may be recited, as appropriate to the occasion. Additional psalms for weekdays may be found on pages 433–438.

ON SHABBAT: PSALM 92

Today is Shabbat, the day on which the Levites recited this psalm in the Temple:

A PSALM: THE SONG OF THE DAY OF SHABBAT

It is good to thank You, ADONAI, and sing to Your name, Most High; to proclaim Your love at daybreak, Your faithfulness each night.

Finger the lute, pluck the harp, let the sound of the lyre rise up.

You gladdened me with Your deeds, ADONAI, and I shall sing of Your handiwork.

*How wonderful are Your works, ADONAI,
how subtle Your designs!*

The arrogant do not understand, the fool does not comprehend this: the wicked flourish like grass and every evildoer blossoms, only to be destroyed forever—

but You, ADONAI, are exalted for all time.

Surely Your enemies, ADONAI, surely Your enemies will perish; all who commit evil will be scattered.

*As a wild bull raises up its horn,
You raised my head high, anointed it with fresh oil.*

As my enemies gather against me, my gaze remains steady, for my ears listen and hear:

*The righteous flourish like the date palm,
thrive like a cedar in Lebanon;
planted in the house of ADONAI,
they flourish in our God's courtyards.*

► In old age they remain fruitful, still fresh and bountiful, proclaiming: ADONAI is upright, my rock in whom there is no flaw.

Tzadik katamar yifrah, k'erez balvanon yisgeh.

Sh'tulim b'veit Adonai, b'hatzrot eloheinu yafrihu.

► Od y'nuvun b'seivah, d'sheinim v'ra-ananim yihyu.

L'hagid ki yashar Adonai, tzuri v'lo avlatah bo.

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

שיר של יום לשבת, ראש חודש, ורגלים

Psalms from the following pages may be recited, as appropriate to the occasion. Additional psalms for weekdays may be found on pages 433–438.

היום יום שבת קדש, שבו היו הלויים אומרים בבית המקדש:
מזמור שיר ליום השבת

טוב להדות ליהוה, ולזמר לשמך עליון,

להגיד בבקר חסדך, ואמונתך בלילות.

עלי עשור ועלי נבל, עלי הגיון בכנור.

כי שמחתני יהוה בפעלך, במעשי ידיך ארנן.

מה גדלו מעשיך יהוה, מאד עמקו מחשבתך.

איש בער לא ידע, וכסיל לא יבין את־זאת.

בפרח רשעים כמו עשב ויציצו כל־פעלי און,

להשמדם עדי עה,

ואתה מרום לעלם יהוה.

כי הנה איביך יהוה, כי הנה איביך יאבדו,

יתפרדו כל־פעלי און.

ותרם בראים קרני, בלתי בשמן רענן.

ותבט עיני בשורי, בקמים עלי מרעים תשמענה אזני,

צדיק פתמר יפרח, בארז בלבנון ישגה,

שתולים בבית יהוה, בחצרות אלהינו יפריחו.

◀ עוד ינובון בשיבה, דשנים ורעננים יהיו,

להגיד כי ישר יהוה, צורי, ולא עולתה בו.

תהלים צב

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

SHABBAT AND FESTIVAL PSALMS. Since the late Middle Ages, it has been customary to recite a special psalm for each day of the week, a custom based on the Mishnah's report that these psalms were recited in the Temple by the Levites (Tamid 7:4). Tractate Sofrim (18:3–4), a minor tractate of the Talmud, records that on festivals, other psalms appropriate to these occasions were recited. Accordingly, we include here the traditional psalm for Shabbat and the New Moon, as well as a psalm for each of the festivals.

PSALM 92 begins by contemplating the wonder of creation and ends with a vision of the righteous flourishing in God's house. It thus celebrates two themes of Shabbat: Shabbat as the day of appreciating creation and Shabbat as a taste of redemption.

ALL WHO COMMIT EVIL WILL BE SCATTERED יתפרדו כל־פעלי און. In this specific vision of the end-time, enemies are not destroyed, but simply made ineffective.

ANOIDED IT WITH FRESH OIL בלתי בשמן רענן. The Hebrew may be translated "You anointed me with fresh oil," but Radak (David Kimhi, 1160–1235, Provence) suggests that the object of the verb is the speaker's head mentioned in the first part of the verse; the anointing is ceremonial, giving the speaker a special divine function and blessing. The faithful thus become God's royal entourage.

One Thing I Ask

The Ḥasidic master Levi Yitzḥak said: I and my quest are one.

Elul

The psalmist begins with a sure and confident expression of faith, well-being, and personal strength, bordering on bravura. Little by little, however, doubts, fears, pains, and anxieties emerge. Similarly, as we move through the penitential season, we may find ourselves reaching beneath our masks of self-sufficiency and confidence, increasingly aware of our vulnerabilities, failings, and doubts.

God's Protection

The images used to describe God's sanctuary are fragile ones—God's *sukkah*, God's tent—hardly the words one would expect to describe a fortress. God's care, though, is the sturdiest thing on which one can depend. In this paradox lies the essential understanding of the faithful: the holy is diaphanous, thin, fragile, yet the spiritual is more significant than all of the heaviness and solidity of the material world. In the realm of the religious, that which cannot be seen grants the deepest strength; that which is hidden provides the greatest defense.

From the first day of the month of Elul until Yom Kippur (or in some communities through the seventh day of Sukkot, Hoshana Rabbah), we recite:

FOR THE SEASON OF REPENTANCE: PSALM 27

A PSALM OF DAVID

ADONAI is my light and my help. Whom shall I fear?
ADONAI is the stronghold of my life. Whom shall I dread?
When evil people assail me to devour my flesh,
my enemies and those who besiege me,
it is they who stumble and fall.
Should an armed camp be arrayed against me,
my heart would show no fear;
if they were to go to war against me, of this I would be sure.
One thing I ask of ADONAI—this is what I seek:
to dwell in the House of God all the days of my life,
to behold God's peacefulness and to pray in God's sanctuary.
Aḥat sha-alti mei-et Adonai, otah avakesh: shivti b'veit Adonai, kol y'mei ḥayai, la-ḥazot b'no-am Adonai u-l'vakeir b'heikhalo.
In a time of calamity, You would hide me in Your *sukkah*,
enfold me in the secret recesses of Your tent,
and You raise me up to a stronghold.
Now my head is raised high above my enemies round about,
and I come with offerings, amidst trumpet blasts, to God's tent,
chanting and singing praise to ADONAI.
ADONAI, hear my voice as I cry out;
be gracious to me, and answer me.
It is You of whom my heart said, "Seek my face!"
It is Your presence I seek, ADONAI.
Do not hide Your face from me; do not act with anger toward me.
You have always been my help; do not forsake me;
do not abandon me, my God, my deliverer.
Though my father and mother abandon me,
ADONAI will gather me in.
Show me Your way, ADONAI, and lead me on a straight path
despite those arrayed against me.
Do not hand me over to those who besiege me;
for false witnesses who breathe hatred have risen against me.
► If only I could trust that I would see God's goodness
in the land of the living . . .
Place your hope in ADONAI.
Be strong and take courage and place your hope in ADONAI.

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

From the first day of the month of Elul until Yom Kippur (or in some communities through the seventh day of Sukkot, Hoshana Rabbah), we recite:

לְדָוִד
יְהוָה אֹרֵי וַיִּשְׁעֵי מִמִּי אִירָא,
יְהוָה מְעוֹז חַיִּי מִמִּי אֶפְחָד.
בְּקָרֵב עָלַי מְרַעִים לֶאֱכֹל אֶת־בְּשָׂרִי,
צָרִי וְאִיבֵי לִי, הִמָּה כְּשָׁלוֹ וְנִפְלוּ.
אִם תַּחֲנֹה עָלַי מִחֲנֹה לֹא יִירָא לְבִי,
אִם תִּקְוֶם עָלַי מִלְחָמָה בְּזֹאת אָנֹכִי בּוֹטָח.
אֶחָת שְׂאֵלְתִּי מֵאֵת יְהוָה, אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ,
שְׁבֹתִי בְּבַיִת יְהוָה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי
לְחַזוֹת בְּנֹעַם יְהוָה וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהֵיכָלוֹ.
כִּי יִצְפְּנֵנִי בְּסֹכֶה בְּיוֹם רָעָה,
יִסְתַּרְנִי בְּסִתְרֵי אֱהָלוֹ, בְּצוּר יְרוּמָמָנִי.
וְעַתָּה יְרוּם רֹאשִׁי עַל אִיבֵי סְבִיבוֹתַי
וְאֶזְבְּחָה בְּאֱהָלוֹ זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה,
אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמַרְהָ לַיהוָה.
שְׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא, וְחַנּוּנִי וְעֲנֵנִי.
לֵךְ אָמַר לְבִי בְקִשׁוֹ פָּנָי, אֶת־פְּנֵיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ.
אֵל תִּסְתַּר פְּנֵיךָ מִמֶּנִּי,
אֵל תֵּט בְּאֶף עֲבֹדָה, עֲזַרְתִּי הִיָּיתִי,
אֵל תִּטְשֵׁנִי וְאֵל תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.
כִּי אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי, וַיְהוָה יִאֲסֹפֵנִי.
הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דְּרָכָה, וּנְחַנֵּנִי בְּאַרְחַ מִישׁוֹר, לְמַעַן שַׂרְרִי.
אֵל תִּתַּנְּנִי בְּגִפְשׁ צָרִי,
כִּי קָמוּ בִי עֲדֵי שֹׁקֵר וַיִּפַּח חָמָס.
◀ לֹלֵא הָאֱמֻנָתִי, לְרֹאוֹת בְּטוֹב יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים.
קִוְיָה אֵל יְהוָה, חֲזֹק וַיִּאֲמֹץ לְבָבְךָ וְקִוְיָה אֵל יְהוָה.

תהלים כז

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

As Alter further remarks, God's turning away results in the supplicant's being left unprotected.

IF ONLY I COULD TRUST הַאֱמֻנָתִי לֹלֵא. This is the only verse in the psalm that has no parallel or corresponding line. It seems to simply trail off and the speaker then hears an inner voice calling: *kaveih el Adonai*, "place your hope in Adonai." Or perhaps someone else, in turn, urges the despairing supplicant to continue trusting that God will respond, and asks that the person not lose faith.

PSALM 27 expresses two opposite feelings, each of which may be felt in the days leading up to and in the period immediately following the High Holy Days. From the very beginning, the psalmist expresses absolute faith in God, culminating in the striking sentence: "Though my father and mother abandon me, Adonai will gather me in..." But at the same time, the psalmist experiences God's absence—the speaker longs to "see God," yet receives no response to this longing. The poem's last line leaves us with a thin, consoling thread of hope—making us realize, perhaps, how much our lives depend on faith.

TO PRAY וּלְבַקֵּר. Commentators have disagreed about the meaning of the Hebrew. Some would translate it as "greet"—that is, "greet God"; others take it to mean "ponder" or "examine" a sign from God.

DO NOT HIDE YOUR FACE FROM ME אֵל תִּסְתַּר פְּנֵיךָ מִמֶּנִּי. The contemporary literary critic Robert Alter writes, "Face" suggests 'presence,' the concrete metaphor serving the poet more than the abstract sense behind it." When God is with us, we are protected, sheltered. Other psalmists similarly use concrete metaphors to the same effect, such as being cradled in God's wings.

ON ROSH HODESH: PSALM 104

Today is Rosh Hodesh, on which we say:

Let me praise ADONAI—for You, ADONAI my God, are surely great; clothed in glory and majesty, wrapped in a cloak of light, You stretch out the heavens like a sheet of cloth, set the rafters of the heights in the waters above, appoint clouds as Your chariot, and ride on the wings of wind, making the winds Your messengers, and lightning flashes Your sentries.

You laid the foundation of the earth that it never totter. You covered the watery deep as if it were clothed, and made waters stand atop the mountains. The waters fled from Your anger, trembled from Your thundering voice—went up mountains and down valleys, to the place You set for them. You fixed their boundaries lest they overflow, lest they return again to cover the earth.

You supply springs for the streams coursing through mountains, giving drink to each animal in the field, and quenching the thirst of wild beasts. Above them dwell birds in the sky, their voices resounding from within the foliage.

From the heavens, You provide drink to the mountains, earth is sated with the fruit of Your labor—wild grasses grow as feed for animals, plants for human husbandry that bread might come forth from the earth, wine to cheer people’s hearts, oil to brighten their faces, and food to sustain people’s lives. The trees God made are sated, too: the cedars of Lebanon that God planted, where birds nest, the cypresses, where the stork makes its home. Gazelles stride these high mountains where crags give cover to badgers.

continued

לְרֹאשׁ הַחֹדֶשׁ
הַיּוֹם רֹאשׁ הַחֹדֶשׁ, שָׁבוּ אוֹמְרִים:
בְּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה,
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גְדֻלַּת מְאֹד, הוֹד וְהָדָר לְבִשְׁתּוֹ.
עָטָה אוֹר בַּשְּׁלָמָה, נוֹטָה שָׁמַיִם בְּיַרְיָעָה.
הַמְקַרָּה בַּמַּיִם עֲלִיּוֹתָיו, הַשָּׁם עֲבִים רְכוּבוֹ,
הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל כַּנְּפֵי רוּחַ.
עָשָׂה מִלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת, מִשְׁרָתָיו אֵשׁ לְהֵט.

יָסַד אֶרֶץ עַל מְכוּנָיָהּ, בַּל תִּמּוּט עוֹלָם וָעֶד.
תַּהוֹם כָּלבוֹשׁ בְּסִיתוֹ, עַל הָרִים יַעֲמְדוּ מַיִם.
מִן גַּעְרָתְךָ יְנוֹסוּן, מִן קוֹל רַעְמֶךָ יִחְפְּזוּן.
יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יִרְדּוּ בְקַעוֹת, אֶל מְקוֹם זֶה יִסְדָּתָ לָהֶם.
גְּבוּל שְׁמֵתָ בַל יַעֲבְרוּן, בַּל יִשׁוּבוּן לְכַסּוֹת הָאָרֶץ.
הַמְשַׁלַּח מַעֲיָנִים בְּנַחְלִים, בֵּין הָרִים יִהְלֶכּוּן.
יִשְׁקוּ כָל־חַיְתוֹ שִׁדִּי, יִשְׁפְּרוּ פְּרָאִים צְמָאָם.
עֲלִיהֶם עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכּוּן, מִבֵּין עֶפְאִים יִתְנוּ קוֹל.
מִשְׁקָה הָרִים מַעֲלִיּוֹתָיו, מִפְּרֵי מַעֲשֵׂיךָ תִּשְׁבַּע הָאָרֶץ.
מִצְמִיחַ חֲצִיר לְבַהֲמָה, וְעֵשֶׂב לְעַבְדַּת הָאָדָם,
לְהוֹצִיא לָחֵם מִן הָאָרֶץ.
וַיֵּין יִשְׁמַח לִבֵּב אֲנוּשׁ, לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשְׁמֹן,
וְלָחֵם לִבֵּב אֲנוּשׁ יִסְעֵד.
יִשְׁבְּעוּ עֵצֵי יְהוָה, אֲרִזֵּי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָטַע.
אֲשֶׁר שָׁם צִפְרִים יִקְנְנוּ, חֲסִידָה בְּרוּשִׁים בֵּיתָה.
הָרִים הַגְּבוּהִים לִיַּעֲלִים, סִלְעִים מִחֶסֶה לְשִׁפְנָיִם.

continued

from the whirlwind in Job, the wild ass, resistant to all domestication, is an image of unfettered freedom. God’s sustenance of His creatures extends to the wild and the tame, to beast and man (again, as in Job).”

FOLIAGE יַעֲפְאִים. This is the only place in the Hebrew Bible where this word appears; thus, its meaning is conjectured.

BREAD . . . FOOD לָחֵם. The Hebrew repeats the word *lehem*, which literally means “bread.” Since all meals in the ancient world were accompanied by bread, which was the chief component of the meal, *lehem* became synonymous with “food.”

THAT BREAD MIGHT COME FORTH FROM THE EARTH מִן הָאָרֶץ לָחֵם. The language of this verse inspired the wording for the *b'rakhah* recited before eating bread.

PSALM 104 celebrates God as commanding the forces of nature and sees the whole of creation as a blessing. It was chosen for recitation on Rosh Hodesh because the new moon is a symbol of the renewal of creation.

ME נַפְשִׁי. The word *nefesh* literally means “the throat” and by extension refers to a person, since breath was identified with life. In later Judaism it came to denote the soul, the essence of a person.

IN THE WATERS בַּמַּיִם. The creation story in Genesis refers to upper waters in the heavens and lower waters on earth. The psalmist and other biblical authors imagined treasures above from which rain, dew, clouds, and fog descend, and subterranean depths from which oceans, rivers, and other bodies of water emerge.

THEIR BOUNDARIES גְּבוּל. The threat of water overflowing is a constant danger. The threat mentioned here is also a reminder of the almost totally destructive flood in the time of Noah.

WILD BEASTS פְּרָאִים. Literally, “wild asses.” Robert Alter remarks: “As in the voice

You created the moon marking the seasons;
 the sun knows when to set:
 darkness spreads, night falls,
 and the beasts of the forest stir;
 lions roar, hungry for flesh,
 begging for food from God.
 As the sun rises, they return home and lie down in their dens,
 while humans go to work and labor till evening.

How abundant is Your creation, ADONAI,
 You fashioned it all with wisdom;
 the earth is filled with Your riches.
 There is the sea, so vast and wide,
 full of countless crawling creatures—big and little living things.
 There the ships go,
 and there can be found the great Leviathan whom You created to play with.

They all look to You to give them their food at the proper time.
 If You give it, they gather it up;
 if You open Your hand, they are sated.
 If You hide Your face, they are terrified;
 if You cut off their breath, they die,
 returning to the dust from which they were made.
 But when Your breath blows in them, they are born,
 and the face of the earth is renewed.

May the glory of ADONAI endure forever.
 May God—who but looks upon the earth and it quakes,
 touches the mountains and they smoke—
 rejoice in what has been created.

Alive, I shall sing to ADONAI;
 as long as I am, I will make music in praise of my God.
 May my words be pleasing to ADONAI,
 that I may truly rejoice.
 May sinning cease from the earth,
 transgressions be no more.

- ▶ Let me praise ADONAI: *halleluyah*.
- Ashirah l'adonai b'ḥayai, azamrah leilohai b'odi.
- Ye-erav alav siḥi, anokhi esmah badonai.
- Yitami ḥata-im min ha-aretz, u-r'sha-im od einam.
- ▶ Bar'khi nafshi et Adonai halleluyah.

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

עָשָׂה יָרַח לְמוֹעֲדִים, שָׁמַשׁ יָדַע מְבוֹאוֹ.
 תִּשָּׁת חֶשֶׁךְ וַיְהִי לַיְלָה, בּוֹ תִרְמַשׁ פְּלִיחֵיתוּ יַעַר.
 הַכְּפִירִים שְׂאֲגִים לְטָרֶף, וּלְבִקֵּשׁ מֵאֵל אֲכָלָם.
 תִּזְרַח הַשָּׁמֶשׁ יֵאֲסֹפוֹן, וְאֵל מְעוֹנֹתָם יִרְבְּצוֹן.
 יֵצֵא אָדָם לְפַעֲלוֹ, וְלַעֲבֹדָתוֹ עֲדֵי עָרֵב.

מָה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה,
 כָּלֵם בְּחֻכְמָה עֲשִׂיתָ, מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ.
 זֶה הַיָּם גְּדוֹל וְרַחֵב יָדַיִם,
 שָׁם רָמַשׁ וְאֵין מִסְפָּר, חַיּוֹת קִטְנוֹת עִם גְּדֵלוֹת.
 שָׁם אֲנִיּוֹת יִהְלְכוּ, לְוִיתָן זֶה יִצְרֵת לְשִׁחְקֵבוֹ.

כָּלֵם אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁבְּרוּן, לְתַת אֲכָלָם בְּעֵתוֹ.
 תִּתֵּן לָהֶם יִלְקֻטוּן, תִּפְתַּח יָדְךָ יִשְׂבְּעוּן טוֹב.
 תִּסְתִּיר פְּנֶיךָ יִבְהַלּוּן,
 תִּסָּר רֹחַם יִגְוְעוּן, וְאֵל עַפְרָם יִשׁוּבוּן.
 תִּשְׁלַח רוּחְךָ יִבְרָאוּן, וּתְחַדֵּשׁ פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה.

יְהִי כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, יִשְׁמַח יְהוָה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו.
 הַמְבִיט לְאָרֶץ וְתִרְעַד, יִגַּע בְּהָרִים וַיַּעֲשֶׂנוּ.
 אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה בְּחַיִּי, אֲזַמְרָה לְאֱלֹהֵי בְּעוֹדֵי.
 יַעֲרֹב עָלָיו שִׁיחִי, אֲנֹכִי אֲשַׁמַּח בִּיהוָה.
 יִתְמוּ חַטָּאִים מִן הָאָרֶץ, וְרָשָׁעִים עוֹד אֵינָם.
 בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה הַלְלוּיָהּ. ◀

תהלים קד

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

LIONS הַכְּפִירִים. Even the mighty lion cries to God. In this image, the wild beasts reverse the human sense of time: they forage at night and lie down by day. Creation is a totality: what for us is a time of sleep, is a time of activity for others.

LEVIATHAN לְוִיתָן. A mythological giant of the sea. In some ancient mythologies, Leviathan is a divine or semi-divine being of the deep. Here Leviathan is turned into a plaything of God, rather than a powerful being challenging God's power.

YOUR BREATH BLOWS IN THEM תִּשְׁלַח רוּחְךָ. An allusion to Genesis 2:7, where Adam is created out of the dust of the earth, into which God blows the divine breath.

ON SHAVUOT: PSALM 119 (selected verses)

Today is the Festival of Shavuot, on which we say:

Happy are they whose way is integrity,
who walk in the path of God's Torah.

Praised are You, ADONAI; teach me Your laws.

Open my eyes that I may see the wonders of Your Torah;

*help me to understand the way of Your decrees,
that I may speak of Your wonders.*

How I wish that You would guide me in the path of Your mitzvot;

I would delight in Your mitzvot, for that is what I love.

Amidst my difficulties, this is my comfort: Your words have revived me;

the world is filled with Your love and kindness—teach me Your laws.

Give me insight and discernment, for I put my trust in Your mitzvot.

I am Your handiwork, You formed me;

grant me understanding, that I might study Your mitzvot.

With Your love and kindness renew my life,

that I may observe the testaments Your lips spoke;

I will never forget Your laws, for I have been revived through them.

All who taught me have increased my understanding;

and so Your testaments have become my constant conversation.

Your word is a lamp for my feet, light for my path.

You are my protector and shield; Your words provide me with hope.

The time to do ADONAI's work is when others violate Your teaching.

Streams of tears have flowed from my eyes, for I saw Your Torah neglected;

Your righteousness is forever and Your teaching is truthful.

You are close at hand, ADONAI, and all Your mitzvot ring true.

The essence of Your teaching is truth, and Your laws of justice are eternal.

▶ Those who love Your Torah find great peace;

they do not stumble.

May I live, and praise You,

and may Your teachings be my support.

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

לְשׁוּבוֹת

היום חג השבועות, שבו אומרים:

ההלכים בתורת יהוה.

למדני חקיה.

נפלאות מתורתך.

ואשיחה בנפלאותיה.

כי בו חפצתי.

אשר אהבתי.

כי אמרתך חיתני.

חקיה למדני.

כי במצותיה האמנתי.

הבינני ואלמדה מצותיה.

ואשמרה עדות פיה.

כי בם חיותני.

כי עדותיה שיהיה לי.

ואור לנתיבותי.

לדברך יחלתי.

הכרו תורתך.

על לא שמרו תורתך.

ותורתך אמת.

וכל מצותיה אמת.

ולעולם כל משפט צדקה.

ואין למו מכשול.

ומשפטך יעזרני.

מתהלים קיט

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

אשרי תמימי דרך

ברוך אתה יהוה

גל עיני ואביטה

דרך פקודיך הבינני

הדריבני בנתיב מצותיך

ואשתעשע במצותיך

זאת נחמתי בעיני

חסדך יהוה מלאה הארץ

טוב טעם ודעת למדני

ידיך עשונני ויכונננני

בחסדך חייני

לעולם לא אשפח פקודיך

מכל מלמדי השכלתי

נר לרגלי דברך

סתרי ומגני אתה

עת לעשות ליהוה

פלגי מים ירדו עיני

צדקתך צדק לעולם

קרוב אתה יהוה

ראש דברך אמת

◀ שלום רב לאהבי תורתך

תחי נפשי ותהללך

PSALM 119 is a paean to Torah. Substantively, all of its 176 verses describe the wonders of Torah and its reward. Structurally, it consists of twenty-two stanzas of eight verses each; the verses of each stanza begin with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet, thus forming an eight-fold acrostic from *alef* to *tav*. In addition, the first two words of the psalm, *ashrei t'mimei*, begin with *alef* and *tav*, further emphasizing the idea (represented by the complete alphabet) of the completeness and totality of the Torah. This selection of verses from the psalm form a complete alphabetical acrostic; it is thus appropriate for Shavuot, the festival celebrating the giving of Torah at Sinai. (We have included here verses 1, 12, 18, 27, 35, 47, 50, 64, 66, 73, 88, 93, 99, 105, 114, 126, 136, 142, 151, 160, 165, and 175.)

INTEGRITY דרך תמימי. The word *tamim* has a range of meanings, including simple, whole, and without blemish.

PRAISED ARE YOU, ADONAI ברוך אתה יהוה. This is one of two times that this phrase, which is central to Jewish prayer, appears in the Bible. (The other is in 1 Chronicles 29:10; see page 142 below.)

YOUR DECREES פקודיך. The medieval exegete Radak (David Kimḥi) comments on the meaning of this word: "These are the mitzvot that reason teaches and that are given to us to guard and are held in the secret places of the human heart"—in other words, our conscience.

Joy

You shall rejoice on your festival, and be exceedingly happy.

וְשִׂמְחַתְּ בַּחֲגֹךָ
וְהָיִיתָ אֶךָ שְׂמֵחַ.

V'samahta b'hagekha
v'hayita akh samei-ah.

—DEUTERONOMY 16:14-15

Psalm 67: An Interpretive Translation

Bless us, Lord, with your peace; make your light shine within us, so that your presence may be known and your love appear to all people. Let all earth's nations honor you and all people shout out your praise; Christian, Muslim, and Jew, idol-worshiper, agnostic, Buddhist, Taoist, scientist, brown-skinned, yellow and white. Let wisdom speak in their hearts and justice light up their eyes. Let all of them feel your presence and sing out in the fullness of joy.

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

ON SUKKOT: PSALM 67

Today is the Festival of Sukkot, on which we say:

FOR THE CONDUCTOR, A PSALM, A SONG,
SUNG WITH INSTRUMENTS

May God be kind to us and bless us;
may God's face shine upon us, selah,
that all on earth may know Your ways,
all lands see Your deliverance.

Nations shall acknowledge You;
every nation acknowledge You.
Peoples of all lands shall be glad and rejoice,
for You shall judge the nations with truth
and lead the peoples of the earth, selah.

Nations shall acknowledge You, God,
each and every nation acknowledge You.

Yodukha amim Elohim,
yodukha amim kulam.
Yism'hu viran'nu le'umim,
ki tishpot amim mishor,
u-le'umim ba-aretz t'nahem selah.

Yodukha amim Elohim,
yodukha amim kulam.

The earth has yielded its produce—
may God, our God, continue to bless us;
► may God bless us and may all revere You,
even to the far ends of the earth.

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

לְסִבּוֹת

הַיּוֹם חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת, שָׁבוּ אוֹמְרִים:

לְמַנְצַח בְּנִינַת מְזֻמּוֹר שִׁיר
אֱלֹהִים יִחַנְּנוּ וַיְבָרְכֵנוּ,
יָאֵר פָּנָיו אֶתְּנוּ סֵלָה.
לְדַעַת בְּאֶרֶץ יִדְרָכָה,
בְּכָל־גּוֹיִם יִשׁוּעַתָּךְ.
יִוְדוּךָ עַמִּים אֱלֹהִים,
יִוְדוּךָ עַמִּים כָּלֵם.
יִשְׂמְחוּ וַיִּרְנְנוּ לְאֲמִים,
כִּי תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל
וּלְאֲמִים בְּאֶרֶץ תִּנְחֵם סֵלָה.
יִוְדוּךָ עַמִּים אֱלֹהִים,
יִוְדוּךָ עַמִּים כָּלֵם.
אֶרֶץ נְתַנָּה יְבוּלָהּ,
יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ.
יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים,
וַיִּירָאוּ אוֹתוֹ
כָּל־אֶפְסֵי אֶרֶץ.

תהלים סז

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 121.

PSALM 67 centers on three themes associated with Sukkot. Sukkot is a harvest festival; the psalm celebrates the fruits of the harvest, and many modern Bible scholars believe that this psalm was recited at this season. The prophet Malachi imagines the peoples of the world coming up to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkot (read as the haftarah for Sukkot) and, in this vein, rabbinic tradition sees Sukkot as the time when the nations of the world will come to recognize that there is one God whom we all worship (Babylonian Talmud, Sukkah 3a). This universal theme is central to this psalm. Lastly, Sukkot is called z'man simhateinu, "the time of our joy," and this psalm is one of celebration, thankfulness, and joy.

FOR THE CONDUCTOR, A PSALM, A SONG, SONG WITH INSTRUMENTS בְּנִינַת מְזֻמּוֹר שִׁיר. We do not know the precise meaning of the musical instructions that introduce some psalms. Here, it appears that the

psalmist intended the psalm to be particularly joyful: sung aloud with instrumental accompaniment.

MAY GOD BE KIND TO US וַיִּחַנְּנוּ. The psalm begins with a reprise of the Priestly Blessing and concludes with the concept of blessing.

EARTH אֶרֶץ. The earth yields its produce and in turn the peoples of the earth thank God. The word "earth," repeated three times, forms a leitmotif through the psalm and is its concluding word, emphasizing the psalm's agricultural and universal themes.

Psalm 65: An Interpretive Translation

It is fitting to praise you, Lord, giver of all good things, to thank you for your boundless mercy, which renews us and makes us whole. Happy are those who find you and open themselves to your light.

Every day you appear to us and reveal your grandeur on the earth.

You create the hills and the mountains and set them immovably in place.

You silence the roaring of the seas;

you calm the turmoil of the nations.

People to the ends of the earth are overawed by your wonders; at the gates of morning and evening

they stand up and shout for joy.

You care for the earth and nourish her, filling her rivers with your rain.

You send down water to her furrows, making her ridges settle,

softening her with showers, and blessing her with new growth.

You make her soil rich and fertile

and ready to bring forth fruit.

You crown the year with abundance;

the earth overflows with your goodness.

The hills are covered with sheep; the valleys are clothed with grain. The pastures fill up with

lushness, and the meadows burst into bloom.

They shout their exhilaration; they sing; they are wild with joy.

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

ON SH’MINI ATZERET, THE EIGHTH DAY OF ASSEMBLY: PSALM 65

On Simhat Torah, some substitute Psalm 19, page 127.

Today is the eighth day, the Festival of Assembly, on which we say:

FOR THE CONDUCTOR A DAVIDIC PSALM: A SONG

Hope is praise to You, God in Zion—

vows to You shall be fulfilled.

Hearer of prayers, all flesh shall come to You.

When sinful thoughts overwhelm me,

You forgive our transgressions.

Blessed are they whom You choose to draw close,

to dwell in Your domain—

we shall be sated with the goodness of Your house,

Your holy sanctuary.

With wonders, You will respond justly, our rescuer, God.

Protector of the very ends of the earth

and the distant seas,

girded in strength—Your might formed mountains.

You calm the roar of the sea, the roaring of its waves, the tumult of nations.

Those who dwell at the ends of the earth

shall be in awe of Your signs;

those who come from where the sun rises or sets will sing for joy.

You care for the earth, giving her drink,

enormously enriching her:

God’s streams fill with water, producing grain,

for this is the way You ordered them.

Fill the canals, smooth their banks with soft rain, bless their yield.

You crown a year with Your goodness;

in Your footsteps abundance pours forth:

stretches of wilderness are watered,

the heights are encircled with joy.

► *Sheep dress the meadows, grain clothes the valleys, shouting with joy—Oh! how they sing.*

Some congregations recite Mourner’s Kaddish here; see page 121.

לְשִׁמְיִי עֲצֹרָת

On Simhat Torah, some substitute Psalm 19, page 127.

הַיּוֹם יוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי חַג הָעֲצֹרָת, שָׁבוּ אוֹמְרִים:

לְמַנְצַח מְזִמּוֹר לְדוֹד שִׁיר

לְךָ דְמִיָּה תַהֲלָה אֱלֹהִים בְּצִיּוֹן, וּלְךָ יִשְׁלַם נְדָר.

שָׁמַע תְּפִלָּה, עֲדִידְךָ כָּל־בָּשָׂר יִבְאוּ.

דְּבָרֵי עֲוֹנֹת גָּבְרוּ מִנִּי, פָּשַׁעֵינוּ אֶתָּה תִכְפֹּרֵם.

אֲשֶׁרֵי תִבְחַר וּתְקַרֵב, יִשְׁכֵּן הַצִּרְיָה,

נִשְׁבָּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ קֹדֶשׁ הַיְכָלְךָ.

נוֹרְאוֹת בְּצַדִּיק תַעֲנֶנּוּ. אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ,

מִבְּטָח כָּל־קִצּוֹי אֶרֶץ, וְיָם רַחֲקִים,

מִכֵּין הַרִים בְּכַחוֹ, נֶאֱזָר בְּגִבוּרָה,

מִשְׁפִּיחַ שָׁאוֹן יָמִים, שָׁאוֹן גְּלִיָּהֶם, וְהֵמוֹן לְאֲמִים.

וַיִּירָאוּ יִשְׁבֵּי קִצּוֹת מְאוֹתֶיךָ, מוֹצְאֵי בֶקֶר וְעֶרֶב תִּרְנִין.

פָּקְדֹת הָאֶרֶץ וְהַשְּׁקָקָה, רַבַּת תַעֲשֶׂרְנָה.

פָּלַג אֱלֹהִים מְלֵא מִים תִכּוֹן דְגָנָם, כִּי כֵן תִכְיֶנָּה.

תִלְמִיָּה רוּחַ, נַחַת גְּדוּדֶיךָ, בְּרִבִיבִים תִמְגַּנְנָה,

צְמַחָה תִבְרָךְ.

עֲטַרְתְּ שָׁנַת טוֹבְתְךָ, וּמַעֲנִילֶיךָ יִרְעִפוּ דָשׁוֹן.

יִרְעִפוּ נְאוֹת מְדָבָר, וְגִיל גְבָעוֹת תַחֲגֹרְנָה.

◀ לִבְשׁוֹ כְרִים הֲצֵאן, וְעַמְקִים יַעֲטִפוּ כָּר,

יִתְרוּעְעוּ אַף יִשְׁירוּ.

תהלים טז

Some congregations recite Mourner’s Kaddish here; see page 121.

ing of this word. Radak (David Kimhi, 1160–1235, Provence) and Meiri (Menahem Meiri, d. 1310, Provence) understand it as “hope,” and this is the approach reflected in this translation. Rashi (1040–1105, northern France), following the midrash, translates it as “silence” (thus: “To You, silence is praise”). The JPS translation, following in a long tradition of English translations, derives it from the root *d-m-h*, “resemble,” and translates it as “Praise befits You.”

FORMED MOUNTAINS מִכֵּין הַרִים. Literally, “set mountains on their foundations.”

THE HEIGHTS ARE ENCIRCLED WITH JOY וְגִיל גְבָעוֹת תַחֲגֹרְנָה. The snow-peaked mountains assure the people living in the valleys below that when the spring melt begins, water will rush down to the rivulets and aquifers, thus allowing the fields to be nourished.

ON SH’MINI ATZERET, the Eighth Day of Assembly, we recite the prayer for rain. In the Land of Israel, the produce of the coming year depends on the amount of rain that falls in the winter. In the Jewish mystical tradition, Sh’mini Atzeret also follows the final day of the season of judgment that began with the month of Elul and reached its peak on the High Holy Days. It is thus appropriate to recite Psalm 65, which speaks of the forgiveness of sin and is filled with a sense of blessing and thankfulness for the season’s harvest. It also includes a prayer for rain; the rains that are to come may bless the yield of a new year or their lack may spell disaster, and so we pray that the coming year may produce a good yield at harvest time.

SONG שִׁיר. Although we do not know the precise meaning of the opening instructions, the note that this psalm is a *shir*, a song, marks it as one of joy and praise. Likewise, the very last word in this psalm also speaks of song.

HOPE דְמִיָּה. There is much disagreement among medieval Jewish commentators, as well as modern biblical scholars, about the mean-

Psalm 30: An Interpretive Translation

... Sing to the Lord you who love God; thank God from the depths of your hearts. For though God may seem to be absent, in God's presence is eternal life. Tears may linger when night falls, but joy arrives with the dawn. Therefore my soul blesses God with every breath that I take. My song will thank God forever, and my silence will be filled with God's praise.

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

FOR THE MORNING: PSALM 30

A PSALM, A SONG FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE HOUSE, FOR DAVID

I raise my voice to praise You, ADONAI, for You have lifted me up and not allowed my enemies to rejoice over me.

ADONAI my God, I cried out to You and You healed me.

ADONAI, You raised me up from Sheol, You gave me life and did not let me descend into the pit.

Sing to ADONAI, faithful people; praise God, as you pronounce God's name.

Surely God's anger lasts but for a moment, and when God is pleased, life is granted.

One may lie down crying at night, but wake in the morning with joyful song.

I had said when I was tranquil, "I shall never be undone."

ADONAI, when it pleased You, You made me a mountain of strength, but when You hid Your face, I was terrified.

I called to You, ADONAI;

I pleaded before my Master:

"What would be the gain, were I to go down to the grave? Can dust praise You? Can it speak of Your truth?"

Hear me, ADONAI, and be kind to me; be my helper, ADONAI."

► *You turned my mourning into a dance for me, You undid my sackcloth and girded me with joy—that I might sing of Your glory and not be silent: ADONAI my God, I thank You, always.*

מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר הַנִּכְבֵּת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד
אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ יְהוָה כִּי דָלִיתָנִי,
וְלֹא שִׁמְחָתָ אֵיבֵי לִי.
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי, שׁוֹעֵתִי אֵלֶיךָ וַתִּרְפְּאֵנִי.
יְהוָה הֶעֱלִיתָ מִן שְׂאוֹל נַפְשִׁי,
חַיִּיתָנִי מִיַּרְדֵּי בּוֹר.
זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה חֲסִידָיו,
וְהוֹדוּ לְזָכֹר קִדְשׁוֹ.
כִּי רָגַע בְּאִפּוֹ חַיִּים בְּרָצוֹנוֹ,
בְּעָרֵב יַלְיָן בְּכִי וּלְבַקֵּר רָנָה.
וְאֲנִי אֲמַרְתִּי בְשִׁלּוֹי,
כֹּל אֲמוֹט לְעוֹלָם.
יְהוָה בְּרָצוֹנְךָ הֶעֱמַדְתָּה לְהַרְרֵי עוֹז,
הַסְתַּרְתָּ פָנֶיךָ, הֵייתִי נִבְהַל.
אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא, וְאֶל אֲדֹנָי אֶתְחַנֵּן.
מֵה בָצַע בְּדַמִּי בְרַדְתִּי אֶל שְׁחַת,
הַיּוֹדֵךְ עֶפְרָה, הַיְגִיד אֲמַתְךָ.
שָׁמַע יְהוָה וַחֲנִנִי, יְהוָה הֵיחָה עֵזֶר לִי.
◀ הִפְכַת מִסְפְּדֵי לְמַחֹל לִי,
פִתְחָתָ שְׁקִי וַתֵּאֲזָרְנִי שִׁמְחָה.
לְמַעַן יִזְמַרְךָ כְבוֹד וְלֹא יִדָּם,
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לְעוֹלָם אֲוֹדְךָ. תהלים ל

PSALM 30 precedes the section of psalms and songs called P'sukei D'zimra, "Verses of Song." In the context of the morning's prayers, its mention of being rescued from Sheol, the netherworld, might be seen as grateful acknowledgment of the blessing of awakening from sleep. In its biblical context, Psalm 30 may be viewed as a song of thanksgiving after overcoming disease and illness.

In a fashion that is true of many psalms, this poem moves between past and present, between intimations of illness and affirmations of health, and between fear and joy. Knowing how vulnerable we are and how unpredictable our fate, we can thank God that we are alive and able to pray as we wake to a new day.

Psalm 30 was added to the liturgy in the 17th century under the influence of Lurianic mysticism. It mentions the name of God ten times, and Jewish mystics saw in this a hint of the *s'frot*, the ten aspects of the Godhead.

FOR THE DEDICATION OF

THE HOUSE הַבַּיִת הַנִּכְבֵּת. Perhaps this psalm was meant to be recited in honor of a donor for repairs or renovations of the Temple. In the later rabbinic reading, the inauguration of the "house" might be seen as the synagogue. The mystics who added this psalm to the liturgy thought that it alluded to the human resurrection of the body (that is, the house of the soul) in the morning, and to our entering the fully revealed divine house (that is, a new day). The midrash understood the psalm's superscription to be an expression of David's yearning to build the Temple, remarking that the Temple is called David's and not Solomon's (even though the latter built it)—because it was David who had yearned to build it (Numbers Rabbah 12:9).

YOU HAVE LIFTED ME UP דָּלִיתָנִי. The Hebrew verb is used for drawing water from a well and is consonant with the image in the following verses of being raised from the pit.

GOD'S ANGER בָּאִפּוֹ. The modern Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel points out that in the Bible, God's anger is always directed against moral corruption. The anthropomorphic image is intended to evoke the sense of violation and disruption of harmony caused by injustice and ethical lapses.

Holding On and Letting Go

Hold on and let go.

On the surface of things contradictory counsel.

But one does not negate the other.

The two are complementary, dialectical two sides of one coin.

Hold on—death is not the final word

The grave no oblivion.

Hold on in *Kaddish*, *yahrzeit*, *Yizkor*.

No gesture, no kindness, no smile evaporates—

Every kindness, every embrace has its afterlife in our minds, our hearts, our hands.

Hold on

Not enslaving memory that sells the future

to the past nor recollection that makes us passive, listless, resigned.

But memory that releases us for a new life.

The flow of life—the divine process gives and takes retains and creates.

Return the dust to the earth

not to bury hope but to resurrect the will to live.

—HAROLD M. SCHULWEIS

Mourner's Kaddish

Many congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish after completing *Birkhot Ha-shahar*, the Morning Blessings.

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

May God's great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God's wish. May God's sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen*.

Congregation and mourners:

May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

Mourners:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b'rikh hu*, is truly [on *Shabbat Shuvah* we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: *Amen*.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: *Amen*.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth].

And we say: *Amen*.

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'meih raba, b'alma di v'ra, kiruteih, v'yamlikh malkhuteih b'hayekhon u-v'yomeikhon u-v'hayei d'khol beit yisrael, ba-agala u-vizman kariv, v'imru amen.

Congregation and mourners:

Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

Mourners:

Yitbarakh v'yishtabah v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam v'yitnasei v'yit-hadar v'yitaleh v'yit-halal sh'meih d'kudsha, b'rikh hu, l'eila min kol [on *Shabbat Shuvah* we substitute: l'eila l'eila mikol] birkhata v'shirata tushb'hata v'nehamata da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya v'hayim aleinu v'al kol yisrael, v'imru amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil], v'imru amen.

קדיש יתום

Many congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish after completing *Birkhot Ha-shahar*, the Morning Blessings.

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

יתגדל ויתקדש שמה רבא,
בעלמא די ברא, פרעותה,
וימליך מלכותה בחייכון
ובימיכון ובחיי דכלבית
ישראל, בעגלא ובזמן קריב,
ואמרו אמן.

Congregation and mourners:

יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם ולעלמי עלמיא.

Mourners:

יתברך וישתבח ויתפאר ויתרומם ויתנשא
ויתהדר ויתעלה ויתהלל שמה דקדשא, בריך הוא,
לעלא מן כל- [לעלא לעלא מכל-
[on *Shabbat Shuvah* we substitute:
ברכתא ושירתא תשפחתא ונחמתא דאמירן בעלמא,
ואמרו אמן.

יהא שלמא רבא מן שמיא וחיים
עלינו ועל כל-ישראל,
ואמרו אמן.

עשה שלום במרומיו הוא יעשה שלום
עלינו ועל כל-ישראל [ועל כל-יושבי תבל],
ואמרו אמן.

MOURNER'S KADDISH.

It is sometimes difficult for a mourner to reintegrate into a community after the loss of a close relation. Equally, it may be difficult for the community to know how to receive a mourner in its midst. In reciting the Kaddish, the mourner takes a formal role in relation to the community. The mourner is able to say: "I am here in your midst, praying alongside you"; and the congregation can respond: "Along with you, we all turn our eyes to God."

The prophet Ezekiel remarks that after great tragedy, God's name will become great throughout the world (38:23); with some grammatical changes, these are the first words of the Kaddish. By the end of the Mourner's Kaddish, whatever our loss, whatever tragedy we have suffered, we look to God in hope and we hold on to a vision of some moment when we all may be at peace.

Thanking God

Rabbi Yohanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai: From the day that the Holy One created the world, there was no one who praised and thanked (*hodeh*) the Holy One, until Leah came and praised God. For she said: "This time will I praise and thank (*odeh*) Adonai" (Genesis 29:35), giving the name "Judah" (*y'hudah*) to her newborn son.

Thus, the name "Jew," derived from "Judah," means "thankful."

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Creating Through Speech

Just as divine speech created the world, so too with human speech: what we give voice to becomes more substantive, more real. Prayer, like all human speech, is a creative act. The prayers that we utter shape our inner lives. Our new consciousness causes us to relate differently to the world around us, and it thus prompts us to shape a different external reality.

It is customary to stand for the opening and closing b'rakhot of P'sukei D'zimra.

Introductory B'rakhah

Blessed is the one whose word called the world into being. *Barukh hu. Blessed be the One.*

Blessed is the one who created the world. *Barukh sh'mo. Blessed be the divine name.*

Blessed is the one who speaks and it is done. *Barukh hu.*

Blessed is the one who decrees and fulfills. *Barukh sh'mo.*

Blessed is the one who has compassion for the earth. *Barukh hu.*

Blessed is the one who has compassion for all creatures. *Barukh sh'mo.*

Blessed is the one who sends a just reward to those who revere the Divine. *Barukh hu.*

Blessed is the one who is eternal, who exists forever. *Barukh sh'mo.*

Blessed is the one who redeems and rescues. *Barukh hu u-varukh sh'mo.*

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, compassionate creator celebrated in Your people's voices, praised and glorified by the words of Your faithful servants and in Your servant David's songs.

We will celebrate You, ADONAI our God, with praise and song; we will extol, acclaim, and glorify You, honoring Your name and declaring that You are our sovereign God.

► The singular one who gives life to the world—the sovereign, who is praised and glorified, forever and ever—this is Your great name.

Barukh atah ADONAI, Sovereign, celebrated with songs of praise.

Some congregations select from among the psalms and biblical texts that follow.

It is customary to stand for the opening and closing b'rakhot of P'sukei D'zimra.

ברוך שְׂאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם,

ברוך עוֹשֶׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית,

ברוך אוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה,

ברוך גּוֹזֵר וּמְקַיֵּם,

ברוך מְרַחֵם עַל הָאָרֶץ,

ברוך מְרַחֵם עַל הַבְּרִיּוֹת,

ברוך מְשַׁלֵּם שְׂכָר טוֹב לִירְאָיו,

ברוך חַי לְעַד וְקַיֵּם לְנֶצְחַת,

ברוך פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל,

ברוך הוּא וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ.

ברוך אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

הָאֵל הָאֵב הַרְחֵמוּ, הַמְהַלֵּל בְּפִי עַמּוֹ,

מְשַׁבַּח וּמְפָאֵר בְּלִשׁוֹן חֲסִידָיו וְעַבְדָּיו,

וּבְשִׁירֵי דָוִד עַבְדְּךָ. נְהַלְלֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,

בְּשִׁבְחוֹת וּבְזִמְרוֹת, נְגַדְלֶךָ וּנְשַׁבַּחְךָ וּנְפָאֲרֶךָ

וְנִזְכִּיר שִׁמְךָ וְנִמְלִיכְךָ מִלְּבַנּוֹ אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

◀ יְחִיד חַי הָעוֹלָמִים, מֶלֶךְ מְשַׁבַּח וּמְפָאֵר עַדֵי עַד

שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מֶלֶךְ מְהַלֵּל בְּתִשְׁבְּחוֹת.

Some congregations select from among the psalms and biblical texts that follow.

all of creation emanates from God's spoken fiat. For example, on the very first day, "God said, 'Let there be light'—and there was light" (Genesis 1:3).

BARUKH HU, BLESSED BE THE ONE הוּא בְרוּךְ הוּא. The last line of the introductory call and response reads *barukh sh'mo*, "blessed be the divine name." Taken together, the first two words of response and the last two words of the series form the phrase *barukh hu u-varukh sh'mo*, "blessed be the One and blessed be the divine name," which is commonly used as a response to hearing the name of God. Practices differ as to the call and response during the recitation of this poem. A version that has recently become popular includes reciting the words printed here in gray.

COMPASSIONATE CREATOR הָאֵב הַרְחֵמוּ. The word translated here as "compassionate" comes from the root *r-h-m*, which also means "womb." Thus, this particular phrase can be understood as "the fatherly womb," and wonderfully captures the way that God transcends gender.

EXTOL, ACCLAIM, AND GLORIFY YOU וּנְשַׁבַּחְךָ וּנְפָאֲרֶךָ. The blessing announces that the psalms to be recited in this section will be those that acclaim God, not those that express the personal plight of the psalmist. Repetition of similar sounding verbal synonyms in Hebrew is a means of creating a meditative atmosphere.

BARUKH SHE-AMAR. Once the inclusion of P'sukei D'zimra ("Verses of Song") was codified by the *geonim* (the rabbinic leaders of the influential Babylonian Jewish community in the latter half of the 1st millennium), they ordained that it be preceded and followed with formal blessings: the opening blessing recited here and the blessing at the section's conclusion (page 148). Most of the passages recited in this section are biblical and, therefore, this prayer calls them "the words of Your faithful servants." "David's songs" refers to the psalms, which constitute the bulk of this section; many scholars believe that Psalms 145–150 (pages 136–141) constituted the original core of P'sukei D'zimra.

CALLED THE WORLD INTO BEING וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם. God is often referred to by the sages as "the one whose word called the world into being." This is based on the story in Genesis 1, in which

Morning Praise

יה נותן בינה לשכוי
לומר לשמה הן תוי
שם בינה בעוף ירופך
אריך בקולות תעצומות
יחפמנו ממעופך
מלפנו מכהמות
לתת עוד ותעצומות
לשם נשמה תוף גוי
יה נותן בינה לשכוי
לומר לשמה הן תוי
אל שכוי יביט איש עצל
אשר יום יום לצורו שר
אין עיף בו ואין בושל
ולא אחד מסודו סר
כן איש משיר יטע אשל
יום ולילה לא יחסר
ומעוף יקבל מוסר
ויהיה שר בכני לוי
יה נותן בינה לשכוי
לומר לשמה הן תוי

You endow birds with the talent to sing
Your name; I, too, desire the same.

Birds wake the world chirping aloud,
a talent instilled in them by God.
Might I, too, learn from those who fly
and be instructed by this animal cry
to acclaim the one who created me
and who planted a soul within
my body.

You endow birds with the talent to sing
Your name; I, too, desire the same.

Tired people, look to the birds flying
in the sky
who daily sing to the creator on high.
None tires, none fails to do what the
maker asked;
none is diverted from the appointed
task.
Human beings too can plant seeds
with songs
and morning and evening for noth-
ing more need long.
Take instruction, sing to God,
bend your will,
and so a priestly role fulfill.

You endow birds with the talent to sing
Your name; I, too, desire the same.

—ISRAEL NAJARA

David's Prayer: The Dedication of the Ark

Give thanks to ADONAI, call out in God's name.

Let all peoples know of God's deeds.

Sing to God,

hymn to God,

describe all of God's wondrous acts,

exult in God's holy name.

May all who yearn for ADONAI find

rejoicing in their hearts.

Seek ADONAI, acclaim God,

constantly crave God's presence.

Remember the wonders God wrought,

God's marvelous deeds and judgment.

Seed of Israel, God's servant,

treasured children of Jacob,

ADONAI is our God:

all the earth is subject to God's law.

Always remember God's covenant—

words binding for a thousand generations—

made with Abraham,

promised to Isaac,

and affirmed in a decree to Jacob,

an everlasting covenant with Israel, saying:

I will give you the land of Canaan, as your

apportioned inheritance.

You were few in number then, hardly dwelling there.

As you wandered from people to people,

from one nation to another,

God did not let anyone oppress you,

but admonished rulers,

“Do not touch My anointed;

do not harm My prophets.”

הודו ליהוה, קראו בשמו, הודיעו בעמים עלילתיו.

שירו לו זמרו לו, שיחו בקל-נפלאותיו.

התהללו בשם קדשו, ישמח לב מבקשי יהוה.

דרשו יהוה ועזו, בקשו פניו תמיד.

זכרו נפלאותיו אשר עשה, מפתיו ומשפטי פיהו.

זרע ישראל עבדו, בני יעקב בחיריו.

הוא יהוה אלהינו, בכל-הארץ משפטינו.

זכרו לעולם בריתו, דבר צוה לאלה דוה,

אשר פרת את-אברהם, ושבועתו ליצחק,

ויעמידה ליעקב לחוק, לישראל ברית עולם,

לאמר: לך אתן ארץ נגעו, חבל נחלתכם.

בהיותכם מתי מספר, כמעט וגרים בה.

ויתהלכו מגוי אל גוי, ומממלכה אל עם אחר.

לא הניח לאיש לעשקם, ויזכח עליהם מלכים:

אל תגעו במשיחי, ובגביאי אל תרעו.

1 CHRONICLES 16:8-36. This first biblical text in P'sukei D'zimra is recited daily and is taken from 1 Chronicles. The Chronicler describes David bringing the ark to Jerusalem, accompanied by levitical singing commissioned by him. The song itself is a medley of verses found in the Book of Psalms and is an example of biblical texts quoting one another. The first fourteen verses are a near-quotation of Psalm 105:1-14, the next section is almost the complete text of Psalm 96, and what follows are quotations of verses from various other psalms. According to an early midrashic text, this passage was sung by the Levites when the tamid, the daily sacrifice, was offered (Seder Olam Rabbah, ch. 14). Similarly, our daily service, like that performed in the Temple, is

accompanied by this song. One contemporary liturgical scholar, Yisrael Ta-Shma, argues that P'sukei D'zimra, literally “Verses of Song,” derives its name from this prayer, which is an anthology of biblical verses, said to have been sung by the Levites.

ACCLAIM GOD וְעָזוּ. Some translate this word as “God's might”—that is: the ark, which is the manifestation of God's power.

TREASURED CHILDREN OF JACOB בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו B'h'hirav (from the root b-h-r) can mean “chosen.” Here we render it as “treasured” in light of its synonymous usage in Deuteronomy and elsewhere.

A THOUSAND GENERATIONS לְאֵלֶיךָ דָּוַר. This biblical expression conveys the idea of endless time.

*From the Psalmist:
A Song of Adoration*

My prayer can have no
other life
than in my songs.
I stand revealed
by all the songs I pray.
My songs implore,
insist,
that they be heard by You
who dwell in all the
distances
outside of time and space,
and yet,
within all things.

My songs and I,
my prayers and contem-
plations,
dream of penetrating
to the secrets of Your
name.
I search Your nomen-
clature
for my own identity
and seek my features
in the image that You
made.
I am choiceless in the
quest,
except I sing of sorrow,
praise, and exaltation.

You are before all things
and after them.
You bracket me within the
horns
of void and nothingness.
You enfold me in the
wings
of Your creation,
and then return me,
with the songs I pray,
to dust.

—PERETZ KAMINSKY

Sing to ADONAI, all the earth;
day after day tell of God's deliverance.
Tell the nations of God's glory,
speak of God's wonders among all peoples.
For ADONAI is great, surely to be praised,
more to be revered than other gods.
► For the gods of the nations are man-made idols,
but ADONAI fashioned the very heavens.

GRANDEUR AND GLORY are God's honor guard,
strength and joy where God is found.
Offer to ADONAI, peoples of the world:
offer to ADONAI honor and strength,
offer to ADONAI the honor due God's name;
bring a gift of thanksgiving and enter God's presence,
bow to ADONAI amidst the splendor of this holy place.
Tremble before God's presence, all who dwell on earth,
but the land shall remain firm and not shaken.

Let the heavens be glad
and the earth rejoice,
Yism'hu ha-shamayim v'tagel ha-aretz . . . yiram hayam u-m'lo-o.
as the peoples of the world declare, "ADONAI reigns."

Let the sea in its fullness roar,
let the meadow and all that grows in it exult;
let the trees of the forest sing at God's approach,
for ADONAI comes to judge the earth.

Give thanks to ADONAI, for God is good;
for God's love endures forever.
Say, "Rescue us, God of our deliverance;
gather us up and save us from amidst the nations,
that we may praise Your holy name and bow in praise of You.
Blessed be ADONAI, the God of Israel, forever and ever!"
Then all the people responded,
"Amen, may ADONAI be praised."

¹ Chronicles 16:8–36

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה פֶּלֶאֶרֶץ, בְּשָׂרוֹ מִיּוֹם אֶל יוֹם יִשְׁוּעָתוֹ.
סִפְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם אֶת־כְּבוֹדוֹ, בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים נִפְלְאוֹתָיו.
כִּי גְדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד, וְנוֹרָא הוּא עַל כָּל־אֱלֹהִים.
◀ כִּי כָל־אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים, וַיהוָה שָׁמַיִם עָשָׂה.

הוֹד וְהָדָר לְפָנָיו, עַז וְחֵדוֹה בְּמִקְמוֹ.
הָבוּ לַיהוָה מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עַמִּים, הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז.
הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ, שְׂאוּ מִנְחָה וּבְאוּ לְפָנָיו,
הַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת קֹדֶשׁ.
חִילוּ מִלְּפָנָיו פֶּלֶאֶרֶץ, אַף תִּבּוֹן תִּבֵּל בַּל תִּמוּט.

יִשְׁמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם יְהוָה מְלֹךְ.
יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמְלוֹאוֹ, יַעֲלֶץ הַשָּׂדֶה וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ.
אֲזוּ יִרְנְנוּ עַצֵּי הַיַּעַר,
מִלְּפָנָי יְהוָה כִּי בָא לְשָׁפוֹט אֶת־הָאָרֶץ.

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ.
וַאֲמְרוּ הוֹשִׁיעֵנו אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנו
וְקַבְּצֵנוּ וְהַצִּילֵנוּ מִן הַגּוֹיִם,
לְהַדוֹת לְשֵׁם קֹדֶשׁךָ לְהַשְׁתַּבַּח בְּתֵהֶלְתֶּךָ.
כִּי רַחוּם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם,
וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָל־הָעַם אָמֵן וְהִלֵּל לַיהוָה.

דברי הימים א, טז:ח-לו

FOR THE GODS OF THE
NATIONS ARE MAN-MADE
IDOLS אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים.
The biblical author is
describing the pagan world
surrounding Israel.

THEN ALL THE PEOPLE
RESPONDED וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָל־הָעַם.
The Chronicler concludes
David's prayer as he in-
stalled the ark in Jerusalem
with the people's assent:
their response, "Amen."

The People Israel

Israel exists not in order to be but in order to dream the dream of God. Our faith may be strained, but our destiny is anchored to the ultimate. Who can establish the outcome of our history? Out of the wonder we came and into the wonder we shall return.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

An Anthology of Verses from Psalms: The Redemption of the People Israel

Exalt ADONAI, our God;
bow down before God, the Holy One.

► *Exalt ADONAI, our God,
and bow down at God's holy mountain,
for ADONAI our God is holy.*

GOD, WHO IS COMPASSIONATE, will forgive sin
and not wreak destruction;
for again and again God acts with restraint,
refusing to let rage become all-consuming.

*You, ADONAI, will not withhold Your compassion from me,
Your kindly love and Your faithfulness shall always
be my protection.*

Remember Your compassion, ADONAI, and Your love,
for they are timeless.

With all your strength, greet God,
whose pride is the people Israel
and whose might is in the heavens.

*Awe of You, O God, fills Your holy places;
it is You, God of Israel, who gives strength and greatness
to this people.
May God be blessed.*

God of retribution, ADONAI,
God of retribution, reveal Yourself;
*judge of all the earth, pass sentence—
humble the haughty.*

רוֹמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַדָּם רַגְלָיו, קְדוֹשׁ הוּא.
◀ רוֹמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַר קְדִישׁוֹ,
כִּי קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

וְהוּא רַחוּם יִכַּפֵּר עוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית,
וְהִרְבָּה לְהִשְׁיב אָפוֹ וְלֹא יַעִיר כְּלַחֲמָתוֹ.
אַתָּה יְהוָה לֹא תִכְלֵא רַחֲמֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי,
חֶסֶדְךָ וְאַמְתָּךְ תִּמְיֵד יִצְרוּנִי.
זָכַר רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה וְחֶסֶדְךָ, כִּי מַעוֹלָם הָמָּה.
תָּנּוּ עַד לְאֱלֹהִים, עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל גְּאוֹתוֹ, וְעִזּוֹ בַּשְּׁחָקִים.
נִוְרָא אֱלֹהִים מִמְקַדְשֶׁיךָ,
אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא נִתֵּן עַד וְתַעֲצָמוֹת לָעַם,
כְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים.
אֵל נְקָמוֹת יְהוָה, אֵל נְקָמוֹת הוֹפִיעַ.
הַנִּשְׂא שִׁפְט הָאָרֶץ, הַשֵּׁב גְּמוּל עַל גְּאִים.

PSALMIC VERSES. The earliest form of poetic prayers composed after the destruction of the Second Temple contained associated biblical verses arranged in new patterns. Each verse is connected to the next through word repetition and thematic continuity. This prayer, which is an example of this form, centers on the redemption of the people Israel: it calls upon God to forgive sin—in rabbinic theology, sin was a cause of Israel's exile—and then calls for an end to the oppression of Israel by other nations. It concludes on the next page with the promised reconciliation of God and Israel.

The first two verses are taken from Psalm 99:5, 9. The italics in the translation are meant to emphasize

that the verses often have an antiphonal quality; they may have originally been recited responsively, though today they may not necessarily be read that way.

BOW DOWN BEFORE GOD וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַדָּם רַגְלָיו. Literally, “bow down at God's footstool.” In the ancient Near East, one prostrated oneself at the footstool of the king as a sign of obedience.

GOD, WHO IS COMPASSIONATE וְהוּא רַחוּם. Psalm 78:38. This is one of the most frequently quoted verses in the liturgy, perhaps because it is the clearest possible statement about God's mercy. Mercy, not punishment, is fundamental to God's nature. The entire verse has thirteen words, reminding us of the “Thirteen Attributes” of God's mercy disclosed in Exodus 34:6–7.

YOU, ADONAI יְהוָה אַתָּה. Psalm 40:12.

REMEMBER YOUR COMPASSION זָכַר רַחֲמֶיךָ. Psalm 25:6.

WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, GREET GOD תָּנּוּ עַד לְאֱלֹהִים. Psalm 68:35–36.

YOUR HOLY PLACES מִמְקַדְשֶׁיךָ. The Hebrew is plural. Before the reign of Hezekiah (late 7th century B.C.E.) there were multiple sanctuaries in the Land of Israel. In the liturgical context here, the reference may be to the synagogues throughout the world. Meiri (d. 1310, Provence) interprets the “holy places” to allude to the gatherings of the righteous and to their burial sites.

GOD OF RETRIBUTION אֵל נְקָמוֹת. Psalm 94:1–2. The context in the psalm makes clear that God's wrath is invoked against those who behave immorally—oppressing the poor, the widow, and the stranger.

DON YOUR ROBES הַנִּשְׂא. Literally, “rise up.” In the ancient Near East, the judge rose to pass sentence.

Deliverance

Why am I not a flower,
a human flower?

Bless me, bless my spirit
with tenderness instead of
might:

allow smiles instead of
words to unfurl in me,
giving light to this world
always,

gifting love and good luck,
my hair, orchids.

Indoors, let my steps be
fingers dancing on piano
keys.

Tenderness, name of
Divinity,
be the image of God in me.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA
HESCHEL

Deliverance is Yours, ADONAI;
may Your blessings be upon Your people forever.
ADONAI Tz'va'ot is with us.

The God of Jacob is our protection.

► ADONAI Tz'va'ot, blessed are those who trust in You.

ADONAI, deliver us!

Surely our sovereign will respond to us
in the hour of our calling.

DELIVER AND BLESS this people,
whom You have made Your own;
shepherd them and exalt them forever.

Hoshi-ah et amekha u-varekh et nahalatekha,
u-r'eim v'naseim ad ha-olam.

We await ADONAI,

our helper and protector.

Our hearts rejoice in God;

we have faith in God's holy name.

May Your love and kindness be with us, ADONAI,
for our hope is in You.

Show us Your love and kindness,
and extend Your deliverance to us.

Arise and come to our help;
redeem us through Your kindly love.

"I am ADONAI your God who brought you up
from the land of Egypt.

Open your mouth and I will satiate you."

Joyous the people who are so favored;
joyous the people whose God is ADONAI.

► I trust in Your love and kindness;
my heart rejoices in Your deliverance;

I sing to ADONAI for all that God has done for me.

ליהוה הישועה, על עמך ברכתך סלה.
יהוה צבאות עמנו, משגב לנו אלהי יעקב סלה.

◀ יהוה צבאות, אשרי אדם בטח בך.
יהוה הושיעה, המלך יעננו ביום קראנו.

הושיעה את-עמך וברך את-נחלתך,
ורעם ונשאים עד העולם.

נפשנו חפתה ליהוה, עזרנו ומגננו הוא.

כי בו ישמח לבנו, כי בשם קדשו בטחנו.

יהי חסדך יהוה עלינו כאשר יחלנו לך.

הראנו יהוה חסדך, וישעך תתן לנו.

קומה עזרתה לנו ופדנו למען חסדך.

אנכי יהוה אלהיך המעלך מארץ מצרים,
הרחב-פיק ואמלאהו.

אשרי העם שפכה לו,
אשרי העם שיהוה אלהיו.

◀ ואני בחסדך בטחתי, יגל לבי בישועתך,
אשירה ליהוה כי גמל עלי.

DELIVERANCE IS YOURS, ADONAI ליהוה הישועה. Psalm 3:9. Although the next three verses are taken from various psalms (46:8, 84:13, 20:10), each with its own subject, they are connected by similar words and phrases so that they create a new, coherent composition. The same verses are found in Havdalah, recited at the conclusion of Shabbat.

FOREVER סלה. Biblical scholars are not sure of the meaning of this word. It may simply be a musical notation. The ancient rabbis thought it meant "forever."

DELIVER . . . THIS PEOPLE הושיעה את-עמך. Psalm 28:9.

OUR LIVES DEPEND UPON ADONAI ליהוה חפתה נפשנו. Psalm 33:20–22.

SHOW US YOUR LOVE AND KINDNESS יהוה חסדך הראנו יהוה חסדך. Psalm 85:8. The key word *hesed*, here translated as

"love and kindness," is mentioned three times in this and the following verses. The biblical meaning of the word *hesed* is love freely given, manifested in action.

ARISE AND COME TO OUR HELP קומה עזרתה לנו. Psalm 44:27.

I AM ADONAI YOUR GOD אנכי יהוה אלהיך. Psalm 81:11. The phrase recalls the first words of the Decalogue, but here God's speech continues with a promise of abundance.

OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND I WILL SATIATE YOU והרחב פיק ואמלאהו. Literally, ". . . and I will fill it." In Psalm 81 this verse may refer to the manna that nourished Israel in the desert. In its liturgical context the manna takes on a spiritual meaning, as if God is saying: "If you open your mouths in prayer, I will provide you with appropriate words."

BLESSED IS THE PEOPLE אשרי העם. Psalm 144:15.

I SING אשירה. Psalm 13:6. The string of psalmic verses ends in song and an expression of thankfulness. There is also an intentional play of words: *ashrei*, "blessed," progresses to *ashirah*, "I sing."

The Words of My Mouth

When the words that I speak are the same as the promptings of my heart, then my voice is pleasing to God.

—JOSEPH ALBO

Nature's Speech

A prayer of Solomon—that I not understand the language of beasts and birds: not hear a snort as a lament, a yelp as a prayer, a chirp as a psalm; but let the melodies of the world pass by in simplicity and fill me with joy.

—SIVAN HAR-SHEFI

Redemption

God who creates nature, God who instructs us, is the same God who is capable of understanding the sincere, though sometimes misstated, plaint of the heart. Creation, now incomplete because of the rent in the human soul, can be made whole again, can be completed, as God faces the human, hears our speech, and forgives us. Prayer, the articulation of the human heart, has the power to effect this turning. It can initiate the reconciliation of God and creation—then I, in all my so very human self-contradictions, may be affirmed. God, who knows all and sees all, can understand my intent and find me, like the rest of creation, good.

✠

FOR THE LEADER, A SONG OF DAVID

The heavens tell of God's glory, and the sky proclaims God's handiwork.

One day addresses another, and one night informs the next.

There is no speech, there are no words that are not heard, their reverberation travel over the entire earth, their message reaches the very edges of the world. In heaven's midst, there is a tent for the sun who, like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, emerges joyously, a champion running the course, entering at heaven's edge, circling to the far side, nothing escaping its heat.

The teaching of ADONAI is perfect, reviving life; the covenant of ADONAI is enduring, making the foolish wise; the precepts of ADONAI are fitting, gladdening the heart; the command of ADONAI is clear, brightening the eyes; reverence of ADONAI is pure, forever right; the judgments of ADONAI are true, altogether just—

Torat Adonai t'mimah, m'shivat nafesh, eidut Adonai ne-emanah, mahkimat peti, pikudei Adonai y'sharim, m'samhei lev, mitzvat Adonai barah, me'irat einayim, yirat Adonai t'horah, omedet la-ad, mishp'tei Adonai emet, tzadku yahdav,

more precious than gold, than the finest gold, sweeter than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Truly, Your servant strives to be mindful of them—their observance is of such consequence.

Who can discern one's own errors? Cleanse me of those I am not even conscious, and restrain Your servant from willful sins—let them not rule me. Then shall I be innocent, untainted by grave transgression.

► May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

Psalm 19

✠

לְמַנְצַח מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד

הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהִים וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי מַגִּיד הַרְקִיעַ. יוֹם לְיוֹם יְבִיעַ אָמְרָה, וְלַיְלָה לְלַיְלָה יְחַוֶּה דְּעֵת. אֵין אָמְרָה וְאֵין דְּבָרִים, בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם. בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ יֵצֵא קוֹם וּבִקְצֵה תִּבֵּל מְלִיָּהֶם, לְשִׁמֵּשׁ שָׁם אֶהָל בְּהֶם.

וְהוּא כְּחֵתָן יֵצֵא מִחֻפְתּוֹ, יִשְׁיֵשׁ כְּגִבּוֹר לְרוּץ אֶרֶח, מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם מוֹצֵאוֹ, וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל קְצוֹתָם, וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִחֻפְתּוֹ.

תּוֹרַת יְהוָה תְּמִימָה, מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ, עֵדוּת יְהוָה נֶאֱמָנָה, מַחְפִּימַת פִּתִּי, פְּקוּדֵי יְהוָה יִשְׁרִים, מְשִׁמְחֵי לֵב, מְצוֹת יְהוָה בָּרָה, מְאִירַת עֵינָיִם, יִרְאֵת יְהוָה טְהוֹרָה, עוֹמְדַת לְעַד, מְשִׁפְטֵי יְהוָה אֱמֵת, צְדָקוֹ יִחְדּוּ, הַנְּחַמְדִּים מְזַהֵב וּמְפָז רַב, וּמְתוֹקִים מְדַבֵּשׁ וְנֹפֶת צוֹפִים. גַּם עֲבֹדָךְ נִזְהָר בְּהֶם, בְּשִׁמְרָם עֵקֵב רַב. שְׂגִיאוֹת מִי יִבִּין, מִנִּסְתָּרוֹת נִקְנִי. גַּם מְזִדִּים חֲשֵׁךְ עֲבֹדָךְ, אֵל יִמְשְׁלוּ בִי, אֲזוֹ אֵיתָם וְנִקְיִתִי מִפֶּשַׁע רַב. ◀ יְהִיו לְרָצוֹן אֲמָרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי.

תהלים יט

“instruction” and is frequently used for divine instruction. The first two verses in the series speak in general terms of God's teaching and covenant; the next two, of the specific precepts and laws; and finally, the last two speak of ritual observance and the administration of justice.

THE COVENANT OF ADONAI יהוה. The first Hebrew word is used in the Bible to identify the tablets, *luhot ha-aidut*, on which the Ten Commandments were written.

MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD הַנְּחַמְדִּים מִזָּהָב. The poet has used six phrases to describe God's teaching; this seventh phrase is climactic, describing the fullness and wonder of the totality.

WILLFUL SINS מִזִּדִּים. This is how later Jewish interpreters understood the verse: willful sins are here contrasted with unconscious ones, and the poem's entire focus is on internal states. But many modern scholars translate the word as “enemies,” in which case the verse would read: “Separate me from enemies, that they not rule over me; then I shall remain innocent, free of great transgression.” Enemies might tempt one to act out of anger, seek vengeance, destroy, or even kill.

PSALM 19. Psalm 19 is the first of seven psalms (here indicated with Hebrew letters *alef, bet*, etc.) added for Shabbat and festivals. This psalm is composed of three parts: the first celebrates the magnificence of creation, especially the light of the sun; the second is a hymn to Torah, God's teachings; and the third is a personal plea by the psalmist for God's tolerance of human shortcomings.

THE HEAVENS TELL הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים. The universe is pictured as alive, singing the praises of God and all that God has created. Many different verbs are used to describe speech: the heavens “tell,” the sky “proclaims,” one day “addresses” another, each night “informs” the next. Nature reflects God's speech, and Torah is God's direct speech. In contrast, our own human speech originates with us and therefore has the capacity to be sinful.

THE TEACHING OF ADONAI יהוה. The word *torah* literally means “teaching.” In later Judaism the word refers to the Five Books of Moses, but in biblical parlance it simply means

Judge That Adonai Is Good

More literally, the phrase can be translated as “taste and see that Adonai is good.” The Hasidic master Rabbi Joshua Heschel of Apt taught: “Through everything you encounter in this world, you can see sparks of God. Taste from this world in such a way that you will see the goodness of God, but do not eat of this world with no sense of the Divine—for then you will have nothing.”

Depart From Evil and Do Good

“Depart from evil” means to stop obsessing over all the wrongs you have committed; let go of your guilt, and just go out and do good.

—SIMḤAH BUNAM

A Broken Heart

Nothing is as whole as a broken heart.

—MENAḤEM MENDEL OF KOTZK

ר

A PSALM OF DAVID, WHO FEIGNED MADNESS BEFORE AVIMELEKH AND WAS FORCED TO FLEE

I bless ADONAI at all times, praise of God is ever on my lips;

I exult in ADONAI.

O humble people, listen and rejoice;

join me in glorifying ADONAI—let us together acclaim God’s name.

I sought ADONAI, who answered me and saved me from my worst fears.

Those who look to God become radiant, their faces will never be darkened with shame.

I, a poor person, cried out—and ADONAI heard, rescuing me from all troubles.

The angel of ADONAI encamps round those who revere God, protecting them.

Judge for yourself and see that ADONAI is good;

blessed is the one who finds shelter in God.

Revere ADONAI, holy people, for those who revere God experience no lack.

Starving lions may roar,

but those who seek ADONAI lack nothing that is good.

Come children, listen to me, I will teach You to revere ADONAI.

Who is the person who desires life, loving what is good all one’s days?

Guard your tongue from evil, your lips from speaking deceit,

depart from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it.

Mi ha-ish he-ḥafetz ḥayim, ohev yamim lirot tov.

N’tzor l’shon’kha mei-ra u-s’fatekha mi-dabeir mirmah.

Sur meira va-aseih tov, bakesh shalom v’rodfeihu.

The eyes of ADONAI are on the righteous; God’s ears are open to their cry.

ADONAI turns toward the evildoers, erasing their memory from the earth.

But if they cry out, ADONAI will hear them and deliver them from all their troubles,

for ADONAI is close to the broken-hearted, rescuing those who are downcast.

Many are the troubles the righteous suffer, but ADONAI will deliver them from all of these.

God protects their every limb, not one will be broken.

Evil will crush the evildoer;

those that despise the righteous will suffer their guilt.

► *ADONAI redeems the lives of those who serve God;*

those who turn to God for support shall not be found blameworthy.

Psalm 34

ר

לְדוֹד בְּשׁוֹנוֹתוֹ אֶת־טַעְמוֹ לִפְנֵי אַבִּימֶלֶךְ וַיִּגְרָשֶׁהוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ
אֶבְרָכָה אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־עֵת, תִּמְיֵד תִּהְלֶתוּ בְּפִי.
בִּיהוָה תִּתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי, יִשְׁמְעוּ עֲנוּבִים וַיִּשְׁמַחֻוּ.
גִּדְלוּ לַיהוָה אֹתִי, וַנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו.
דַּרְשָׁתִי אֶת־יְהוָה וְעַנְנִי, וּמִכָּל־מַגְרוֹתַי הֲצִילֵנִי.
הִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו וְנִהְרוּ, וּפְנִיָּהֶם אֵל יַחְפְּרוּ.
זֶה עָנִי קָרָא וַיהוָה שָׁמַע, וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתַי הוֹשִׁיעוּ.
חָנָה מִלְאָף יְהוָה סָבִיב לִירְאָיו וַיַּחֲלֹצֵם.
טַעְמוּ וּרְאוּ כִי טוֹב יְהוָה, אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה הַגִּבֹּר יַחְסֶה בּוֹ.
יֵרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה קְדוֹשֵׁיו, כִּי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו.
כְּפִירִים רָשׁוּ וְרַעֲבוּ, וְדִרְשֵׁי יְהוָה לֹא יַחְסְרוּ כָּל־טוֹב.
לָכוּ בָנִים שָׁמְעוּ לִי, יִרְאֵת יְהוָה אֲלַמְדְּכֶם.
מִי הָאִישׁ הֶחְפִּץ חַיִּים, אֲהִיב יָמִים לְרְאוֹת טוֹב.
נִצַּר לְשׁוֹנֵךְ מֵרָע, וּשְׁפָתֶיךָ מִדַּבֵּר מֵרָמָה.
סוֹר מֵרָע וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב, בְּקֶשׁ שְׁלוֹם וְרִדְפָהוּ.
עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֵל צַדִּיקִים, וְאֲזַנָּיו אֵל שׁוֹעֲתָם.
פְּנֵי יְהוָה בְּעֵשִׂי רַע, לְהִכְרִית מֵאָרֶץ וְזָכָרָם.
צָעֲקוּ וַיהוָה שָׁמַע, וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתֵם הֲצִילֵם.
קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְגִשְׁפְּרֵי לֵב, וְאֶת־דַּבְּאֵי רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ.
רְבוֹת רַעוֹת צַדִּיק, וּמִפְּלֵם יִצְלִנּוּ יְהוָה.
שִׁמְר כָּל־עֲצָמוֹתַי, אַחַת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבְּרָה.
תְּמוֹתֶת רָשָׁע רָעָה, וְשׁוֹנֵאֵי צַדִּיק יֵאֲשָׁמוּ.
◀ פּוֹדֵה יְהוָה נַפְשׁ עַבְדָּיו, וְלֹא יֵאֲשָׁמוּ כָּל־הַחֹסִים בּוֹ.

תהלים לד

lated as “taste” but here it means “discern” or “make judgments.” The noun derived from the same root occurs in the heading of this psalm, where David is described as having feigned madness (*shanoto et ta-amo*)—that is, having lost rational processes of thought.

HOLY PEOPLE קְדוֹשֵׁי. The term is applied to the entire congregation of Israel, which is called God’s holy nation (Exodus 19:6). We are enjoined to strive to become holy through our actions (Leviticus 19:2).

LIONS כְּפִירִים. Lions populated the wilderness areas in the ancient Land of Israel.

LACK NOTHING THAT IS GOOD לֹא יַחְסְרוּ כָּל־טוֹב. This astonishing claim—that the righteous never lack sustenance—is challenged elsewhere in the Bible. It might be understood spiritually, rather than physically.

GUARD YOUR TONGUE FROM EVIL נִצַּר לְשׁוֹנֵךְ מֵרָע. The first requirement for being God-fearing is being careful in one’s speech.

PSALM 34. This is an alphabetical psalm, except that the letter *vav* is missing. The poem expresses the supplicant’s yearning for God and God’s response to those who turn to God in prayer. Robert Alter writes that the poet succeeds “in articulating a moving vision of hope for the desperate. Part of the spiritual greatness of the Book of Psalms, part of the source of its enduring appeal through the ages, is that it profoundly recognizes the bleakness, the dark terrors, the long nights of despair that shadow most lives, and against all this, evokes the notion of a caring presence that can reach out to the broken-hearted.”

AND WAS FORCED TO FLEE וַיִּגְרָשֶׁהוּ. David fled from Saul to the city of Gath, where the Philistines ruled. Realizing that he might be arrested and killed, David acted as if he were insane. The Philistine leader, seeing David, declared: “Do I lack madmen that you have brought this fellow to rave for me?” (1 Samuel 21:16). Thus David escaped Saul’s wrath.

JUDGE טַעְמוּ. The Hebrew verb is frequently trans-

A Man of God

Some say: Why was Moses called a man of God? Because he was able to transform God's judgment into God's compassion.

—MIDRASH ON PSALMS

Our Refuge

God is the place in which the world is located. Therefore, one of God's names is *Hamakom*, "the place."

—MIDRASH ON PSALMS

Prayers

Don't let me fall
Like a stone that drops on
the hard ground.
And don't let my hands
become dry
As the twigs of a tree
When the wind beats
down the last leaves.
And when the storm rips
dust from the earth
Angry and howling,
Don't let me become the
last fly
Trembling terrified on a
windowpane.
Don't let me fall.
I have so much prayer,
But, as a blade of Your grass
in a distant, wild field
Loses a seed in the lap of
the earth
And dies away,
Sow in me Your living breath,
As You sow a seed in the earth.

—KADYA MOLODOWSKY
(translated by Kathryn Hellerstein)

ג

A PRAYER OF MOSES, MAN OF GOD

Lord, You have been our refuge in every generation:
before mountains were born, before You shaped earth and land;
from the very beginning to the end of time, You are God.

You return humans to dust, saying:
"Return, children of Adam."

In Your sight, a thousand years are but a yesterday
that has passed, a watch in the night.

People's lives flow by as in dreams:
fresh grass at daybreak; at daybreak newly sprouted,
dried up and withered in the night.

We are consumed by Your anger,
terrified by Your fury.
You set our sins before You,
our secrets before the light of Your face.

For all our days face Your wrath;
our years end like a sigh.
Seventy years are spent thus,
or if we are given strength, eighty.
Most of them filled with toil and fatigue;
the years rush by quickly and we disappear.
Who can realize the strength of Your anger?
The fear of You matches Your wrath.

Teach us to make our days count
and so acquire a heart that is wise.

Turn to us, ADONAI; how long the wait?
Comfort Your servants:
at daybreak satisfy us with Your love and kindness,
that we may sing with joy all of our days.
Grant us days of happiness equal to those we suffered,
the years we saw so much wrong.

May Your servants see Your deeds;
may Your glory be upon their children.

► May the peace of the Lord, our God, be with us;
may the work of our hands last beyond us,
and may the work of our hands be lasting.

Psalm 90

ג

תַּפְּלָה לְמֹשֶׁה אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים
אֲדַנִּי, מֵעוֹן אַתָּה הָיִיתָ לָנוּ בְּדֹר וָדֹר.
בְּטָרֶם הָרִים יִלְדוּ וְתַחֲוִלֵּל אֶרֶץ וְתַבֵּל
וּמֵעוֹלָם עַד עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל.

תָּשָׁב אָנוּשׁ עַד דִּפְא, וְתֹאמַר שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי אָדָם.
כִּי אֶלֶף שָׁנִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ כְּיוֹם אֶתְמוֹל כִּי יַעֲבֹר,
וְאֲשֵׁמוּרָה בְּלִילָה.
זְרַמְתָּם שָׁנָה יְהִיו, בִּבְקָר בְּחֻצֵיר יִחַלְף.
בִּבְקָר יִצִּיץ וְחַלְף לְעָרֵב יְמוּלֵל וַיִּבֶשׁ.
כִּי כָלִינוּ בְּאַפְּךָ, וּבַחֲמַתְךָ נִבְהַלְנוּ.
שִׁתָּה עֹונֹתֵינוּ לְנִגְדָּךָ, עֲלַמְנוּ לְמֹאזֵר פְּנִיָּךָ.
כִּי כָל־יְמֵינוּ פָּנוּ בְּעִבְרַתְךָ, כִּלְיָנוּ שָׁנִינוּ כְּמוֹ הַגָּה.
יְמֵי שָׁנוֹתֵינוּ כָּהֵם שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה,
וְאִם בְּגִבּוֹרֹת שְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה וְרַהֲבָם עֲמַל וְאָנָּן.
כִּי גֹז חִישׁ וּנְעַפָּה. מִי יוֹדֵעַ עֹז אַפְּךָ וּכְיִרְאַתְךָ עִבְרַתְךָ.

לְמַנּוֹת יְמֵינוּ כִּן הוֹדַע, וְנִבְא לְבַב חֲכָמָה.
שׁוֹבָה יְהוָה, עַד מָתִי, וְהִנָּחֵם עַל עֲבֹדֶיךָ.
שִׁבְעֵנוּ בִּבְקָר חֲסִדָּךָ, וּנְרַנְנָה וְנִשְׁמַחָה בְּכָל־יְמֵינוּ.
שִׁמְחָנוּ כִּימוֹת עֲנִיתָנוּ, שָׁנוֹת רְאִינוּ רַעָה.
יִרְאָה אֵל עֲבֹדֶיךָ פֶּעֱלָה, וְהִדְרֶךָ עַל בְּנֵיהֶם.
◀ וַיְהִי נָעַם אֲדַנִּי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עֲלֵינוּ,
וּמֵעֵשָׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנְנָה עֲלֵינוּ, וּמֵעֵשָׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנְנָהוּ.

תהלים צ

TURN TO US, ADONAI יהוה שובה יהוה. This is the only time in the psalm where the personal name of God is used. Earlier, the poet reminded us that humans must "return" to the earth; now, the poet, addressing God with God's personal name, calls upon God to turn to those who live on earth.

PEACE OF THE LORD נָעַם אֲדַנִּי. Instead of God's wrath, described at the beginning of the psalm, now we meet God's beneficence. The word *no-am* is associated with delight, beauty, grace, and peace. *No-am* reverses the spelling *ma-on*, "refuge," with which the psalm began.

MAY THE WORK OF OUR HANDS BE LASTING וּמֵעֵשָׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנְנָה עֲלֵינוּ. The final plea of the psalmist is that we might partner with God in creation—that our work, like God's, may last and that our lives may thus have enduring meaning. We may not be immortal but we may be touched by a measure of eternity. Our experience of Shabbat may be such a moment.

PSALM 90 contemplates human mortality and then arrives at a prayerful moment in which we ask that the accomplishments of our short lives have lasting value. Ultimately it is a prayer that the abyss between the human and the Divine be bridged. This is the only psalm ascribed to Moses.

LORD אֲדַנִּי. Both here and in the last verse of this psalm, the Hebrew does not spell out the personal name of God (*yod-hei-vav-hei*) but instead uses the substitute word *adonai*, meaning "my lord" or "my master."

REFUGE מָעוֹן. Just as in Psalm 104:22, where the same word is used to describe the lion's hidden lair deep in the forest, the term suggests hiddenness and protection.

YOU SHAPED וְתַחֲוִלֵּל. The Hebrew verb describes the emptying of the mother's womb in birthing. God's act of creation is seen as the birthing of the world.

CHILDREN OF ADAM בְּנֵי אָדָם. The Hebrew phrase means "human beings." The curse of Adam and Eve in their expulsion from the Garden was mortality: "And you shall return to the ground" (Genesis 3:19).

Love the Ruins

With one letter of your
many names
you broke in—
and now you live
your own hot life in me.

With one sound of your
many names
you pierced yourself in me—
and now you feed
on my heart's blood.

Soon you will shatter me
from within.

Then gather up the splinters
and love the ruins, my God.

—MALKA HEIFETZ TUSSMAN
(translated by Marcia Falk)

A Mother's Prayer for the Journey

In the spirit of the psalm,
which conveys a sense of
personal care by God, we
have translated the final
speech in the second person.
Literally, though, the final
speech in the psalm is in the
third person: "Because you
desired Me, I shall save him."
The midrash both responds
to the personal quality of
this prayer and the fact
that the response is in the
third person. It associates
the prayer with a particular
biblical figure, Rebecca, and
understands it as filled with
a mother's concern for the
safety of her son, Jacob, as
he leaves home. At times she
addresses Jacob with words
of assurance that God will
protect him: "God will save
you from the hidden snare..."
At other times she looks to
God and affirms her own
faithfulness: "I call Adonai...
my God, whom I trust." In
the end, the Divine answers
her: "Because you desired
Me, I shall save him."

ד

One who abides in the sheltering secret of the one on high,
lodges in the shadow of the Almighty—

I call ADONAI my protector, my fortress, my God, whom I trust.

God will save you from the hidden snare,
the threat of deadly plague,
God's wings will nestle you and protect you,
God's truth will be your shield and armor.

You shall not fear terror at night,
arrows flying in daylight,
pestilence stalking in the dark,
nor plague blackening the noon.
Though a thousand may fall at your side,
tens of thousands at your right hand,
nothing will reach you.
You have but to look with your own eyes,
and you shall see the recompense of evildoers.

Yes, You, ADONAI, are my protector.

You have made the one on high your refuge—
evil shall not befall you,
nor plague approach your tent,
for God will instruct angels to guard you wherever you go.
They will carry you in the palms of their hands,
lest your foot strike a stone;
you will tread on pythons and cubs,
trample on snakes and lions.

"Because you desired Me, I shall save you.
I shall raise you up, for you were conscious of My name.
► When you call upon Me, I shall answer you;
I shall be with you in times of trouble,
I shall strengthen you and honor you.
I shall satisfy you with the fullness of days
and show you My deliverance;
I shall satisfy you with the fullness of days
and show you My deliverance."

Orekh yamim asbi-eihu v'areihu bishuati.

Psalm 91

ד

יֵשֵׁב בְּסִתְרֵי עֲלִיוֹן, בְּצֵל שְׁדֵי יִתְלוֹנֵן.
אָמַר לַיהוָה מְחִסִּי וּמְצִוְדָתִי, אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתַי בּוֹ.
כִּי הוּא יִצִּילְךָ מִפֶּחַ יְקוּשׁ, מִדְּבַר הַוּוֹת.
בְּאַבְרָתוֹ יִסֹּף לָךְ וְתַחַת כַּנְּפֵי תַחְסֶה,
צָנָה וְסוֹחָרָה אֲמַתּוֹ.
לֹא תִירָא מִפֶּחַד לַיְלָה, מִחַיִץ יַעוֹף יוֹמָם.
מִדְּבַר בְּאִפְלֵ יְהִלֶּךָ, מִקְטָב יִשׁוּד צְהָרִים.
יִפֹּל מִצִּדְךָ אֵלֶיךָ וּרְבֵבָה מִימִינֶךָ, אֵלֶיךָ לֹא יִגַּשׁ.
רַק בְּעֵינֶיךָ תִּבְיֹט, וְשִׁלְמַת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה.
כִּי אֲנִי הַיְהוָה מְחִסִּי, עֲלִיוֹן שְׁמֹת מְעוֹנֶךָ.
לֹא תֵאָנֶה אֵלֶיךָ רָעָה וְנִגְעָה לֹא יִקְרַב בְּאַחֶךָ.
כִּי מִלְּאֲכִיו יִצְוֶה לָךְ לְשִׁמְרֶךָ בְּכָל־דַּרְכֶיךָ.
עַל פְּנִים יִשְׁאוּנֶךָ, פֶּן תִּגַּף בְּאֲבָן רִגְלֶךָ.
עַל שַׁחַל וְכַתָּן תִּדְרֹךְ, תִּרְמַס כְּפִיר וְתַנִּין.
כִּי בִי חֶשֶׁק וְאַפְלָטָהוּ, אֲשׁוּגְבָהוּ כִּי יִדַע שְׁמִי.
◀ יִקְרָאֵנִי וְאֶעֱנֶהוּ, עֲמוּ אֲנֹכִי בְצָרָה,
אֲחַלְצֶהוּ וְאֲכַבְּדֶהוּ.
אֲרֹךְ יָמִים אֲשַׁבֵּיעֶהוּ, וְאַרְאֶהוּ בִישׁוּעָתִי.
אֲרֹךְ יָמִים אֲשַׁבֵּיעֶהוּ, וְאַרְאֶהוּ בִישׁוּעָתִי.

תהלים צא

THE ALMIGHTY שְׁדֵי Shaddai is a name for God that appears many times throughout the Bible. Already by rabbinic times, its original meaning had been lost and the rabbis offered a poetic explanation of its etymology as *she-dai*, "the one who declared that the works of creation were sufficiently complete (*dai*)."

GOD'S WINGS כַּנְּפֵי. The image of God as a bird that shelters its young is an ancient metaphor that first appears in the Bible when God speaks to Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai, saying: "You have seen . . . how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me" (Exodus 19:4).

PLAGUE BLACKENING יִשׁוּד. Scholars identify this disease with one that blackens the fingers and is prevalent in modern-day Arabia, causing numerous deaths.

I SHALL BE WITH YOU IN TIMES OF TROUBLE עֲמוּ אֲנֹכִי בְצָרָה. The ancient rabbis gave a radical interpretation to this verse, saying that whenever an individual suffers, God suffers with that person (Mekhilta, *Pisha* 14).

I SHALL SATISFY YOU WITH THE FULLNESS OF DAYS אֲרֹךְ יָמִים אֲשַׁבֵּיעֶהוּ. God's ultimate gift is the gift of time. The biblical psalm does not repeat this last verse, but the thought is so important that medieval authorities recommended its repetition, and so whenever this psalm is recited liturgically, the final verse is repeated.

PSALM 91. The juxtaposition of Psalms 90 and 91 richly illuminates the human condition. The previous psalm emphasized life's brevity and fear of God's judgments, concluding that, at best, we can strive to make each day count. Here, the psalmist confidently describes God's protective care, and ends with God's promise of fullness of days. At different times in our lives, perhaps even at different times of the same day, one or the other perspective—a sense of distance from God, or a feeling of God's presence—may resonate more with us.

There are three voices in this poem. A speaker (perhaps a priest in the Temple), assuring God's protection; the worshipper, who affirms belief in God (indicated in the English translation with italics); and finally God's own declaration in response (at the very end of the psalm, indicated by quotation marks), promising the supplicant fullness of days.

A Prayer for All Rulers

Do not make my destiny,
Adonai Tz'va-ot,
the infamy of a victorious
hero!
But disgrace me, if my
embarrassment
can bring comfort to the
weak! . . .

My heart would more
easily
absorb the stab of loss and
defeat,
than the joy of victory.

Be the savior and guardian
of defeated justice.
Let me be found guilty
when joyfully triumphant.

Instead, let memories of
joys brought to other
hearts
be my splendid trophies.

Do not make my destiny,
Adonai Tz'va-ot,
the infamy of a victorious
hero!
But disgrace me, if my
embarrassment
can bring comfort to the
weak!

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA
HESCHEL

ה

Halleluyah! Praise God.

Praise the name ADONAI; offer praise, servants of ADONAI, standing in this house, in the courtyards of our God.

Halleluyah! Praise God, for ADONAI is good; sing to God's name, for such singing is delightful. For God has chosen Jacob, treasured the people Israel, and I know that ADONAI is great, our lord greater than any divine power.

Whatever God desires God does: in heaven and on earth, in the sea and the very deep. God raises up clouds from the ends of the earth—lightning flashes to bring rain—releasing stormy winds from the divine vaults.

God smote Egypt's firstborn, human and beast alike, and sent signs and wonders into Egypt against Pharaoh and all his servants; indeed, God defeated many nations, slaying mighty princes: Sihon, the king of the Amorites, Og, the king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan. God gave their land as an inheritance, an inheritance to Israel, God's people.

ADONAI, Your name is everlasting. ADONAI—renowned in each generation. ADONAI, when You judge Your people, You shall show compassion for those who serve You.

The idols of the nations are gold and silver, the work of human hands. They have mouths that do not speak, eyes that do not see; they have ears that do not hear; surely their mouths do not breathe. Those that made them, all who put their faith in them, shall be like them.

► House of Israel, bless ADONAI.

House of Aaron, bless ADONAI.

House of Levi, bless ADONAI.

You who revere ADONAI, bless ADONAI.

From Zion, bless ADONAI, who dwells in Jerusalem:

Halleluyah! Praise God.

Psalms 135

ה

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

הַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה, הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה, שְׁעַמְדִים בְּבַיִת יְהוָה, בְּחִצְרוֹת בַּיִת אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

הַלְלוּיָהּ בִּי טוֹב יְהוָה, זָמְרוּ לְשִׁמּוֹ בִּי נְעִים. בִּי יַעֲקֹב בָּחַר לוֹ יְהוָה, יִשְׂרָאֵל לְסִגְלָתוֹ. בִּי אֲנִי יִדְעַתִּי בִּי גְדוֹל יְהוָה, וְאֲדַגִּיבּוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים.

כָּל אֲשֶׁר חָפֵץ יְהוָה עָשָׂה, בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ בַּיָּמִים וּכְלִתְהִמוֹת. מֵעַלָּה נִשְׂאִים מְקֻצָּה הָאָרֶץ, בְּרָקִים לְמֹטֵר עָשָׂה, מוֹצֵא רוּחַ מֵאוֹצְרוֹתָיו.

שֶׁהִכָּה בְּכוֹרֵי מִצְרַיִם, מֵאָדָם עַד בְּהֵמָה, שָׁלַח אוֹתוֹת וּמִפְתֵּיִם בְּתוֹכֵכֵי מִצְרַיִם, בְּפָרְעָה וּבְכָל־עַבְדָּיו. שֶׁהִכָּה גוֹיִם רַבִּים, וְהָרַג מְלָכִים עֲצוּמִים. לְסִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֲמֹרִי וּלְעוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן, וְלִכְלֹל מַמְלָכוֹת כְּנָעַן. וְנָתַן אֶרְצָם נַחֲלָה, נַחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ.

יְהוָה שָׁמַךְ לְעוֹלָם, יְהוָה זָכָרְךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר. בִּי יָדִין יְהוָה עַמּוֹ, וְעַל עַבְדָּיו יִתְנַחֵם.

עֲצַבֵי הַגּוֹיִם כָּסַף וְזָהָב, מֵעֲשֵׂה יָדַי אָדָם. פֶּה לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ, עֵינֵיהֶם לָהֶם וְלֹא יֵרְאוּ. אָזְנֵיהֶם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ, אֵף אֵין יִשְׁרוּחַ בְּפִיהֶם. כְּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֲשִׂיהֶם, כָּל אֲשֶׁר בָּטַח בָּהֶם.

◀ בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה,

בַּיִת אַהֲרֹן בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה,

בַּיִת הַלְוִי בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה,

יִרְאֵי יְהוָה בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה.

כָּרוּךְ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן, שֶׁכֵּן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קלה

PSALM 135 begins with a call to those standing in the Temple to praise and bless God and ends by inviting everyone assembled in the various Temple precincts—priests, Israelites, non-Israelites—to join in. This psalm and the next are called by the ancient rabbis “The Great Hallel.” They recount the events of the exodus and the march toward the promised land. Psalm 135 builds toward the thundering congregational response *ki lolam hasdo*, “For God’s love endures forever,” that is at the heart of Psalm 136, which follows.

HALLELUYAH, PRAISE GOD הַלְלוּ יְהוָה. Literally, “Praise Yah.” Yah is a shortened form of the God’s four-letter name, *yod-hei-vav-hei*.

IN THE COURTYARDS OF OUR GOD בְּחִצְרוֹת בַּיִת אֱלֹהֵינוּ. The Temple consisted largely of open courts in which the people stood; sacrifices were offered on an upper platform.

SMOTE EGYPT’S FIRSTBORN שֶׁהִכָּה בְּכוֹרֵי מִצְרַיִם. This begins the recounting of God’s deeds in the history of Israel. Smiting the firstborn is singled out because it was the ultimate plague that broke the will of the Egyptians. (*Abraham ibn Ezra*)

SIHON, THE KING OF THE AMORITES לְסִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֲמֹרִי. Numbers 21:21–35. Israel offered to make peace with Sihon and Og, asking only permission to cross their land on the way to Canaan. These kings chose instead to fight, and they were defeated by the Israelites.

Sing

The Baal Shem Tov taught that the way to praise God is first to begin with words and then, as our souls rise, to give expression to the words with song. The music moves us to sing without words and, finally, our whole body wants to praise God, and we dance.

SING to ADONAI, O you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to offer praise.

Acclaim God on the lute, sing to ADONAI with the ten-stringed harp; play a new song to God, and let the shofar's call inspire the music.

For ADONAI's word is true and all God's deeds are faithful. God loves righteousness and justice, the world is filled with ADONAI's love and kindness.

The heavens were formed with God's speech, all their hosts with God's breath; the sea's waters were gathered together, the deep stored in treasure vaults.

May all the earth revere ADONAI; may all who dwell in its lands tremble before God—for it was God who spoke and they came into being; it was God who commanded that they exist.

ADONAI overturns peoples' designs, foils the plans of nations, but the designs of ADONAI endure forever; God's counsels, for each generation.

Blessed is the people whose god is ADONAI, the nation chosen as God's heritage.

From heaven ADONAI peers down, observing every human being; from where God dwells, God surveys all who live on earth: the one who formed all their hearts discerns all they do.

A ruler is not victorious because of a great army, a warrior is not saved through sheer might, horses do not offer a promise of victory, vast hosts do not ensure refuge.

For ADONAI's eyes are fixed on those who revere God, on those who look hopefully to God's love and kindness to save them from death, to sustain their lives amidst famine.

We await ADONAI, our helper and protector. ► We shall rejoice with God, as we have trusted in God's holy name. May Your love and kindness, ADONAI, be with us, for we have placed our hope in You.

Psalm 33

רָנְנוּ צְדִיקִים בַּיהוָה, לִישְׁרִים נְאוּה תְהִלָּה. הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר, בְּנִבְל עֲשׂוֹר וְזָמְרוּ לוֹ. שִׁירוּ לוֹ שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ, הִיטִיבוּ נֶגֶן בְּתִרְוּעָה.

בִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל דַּבֵּר יְהוָה, וְכָל־מַעֲשָׂהוּ בְּאִמּוֹנָה. אֲהַב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט, חֶסֶד יְהוָה מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ. בְּדַבַּר יְהוָה שָׁמַיִם נִעֲשׂוּ, וּבְרוּחַ פִּי כָל־צְבָאָם. כּוֹנֵס כַּיָּד מֵי הַיָּם, נֹתֵן בְּאוֹצְרוֹת תְּהוֹמוֹת.

יִירָאוּ מִיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, מִמֶּנּוּ יִגּוּרוּ כָל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל. כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי, הוּא צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֵד. יְהוָה הִפִּיר עֵצַת גּוֹיִם, הִנְיָא מַחֲשָׁבוֹת עַמִּים. עֵצַת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֵד, מַחֲשָׁבוֹת לְבוֹ לְדוֹר וָדוֹר.

אֲשֶׁרֵי הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו, הָעַם בָּחַר לְנַחֲלָה לוֹ. מִשְׁמַיִם הִבִּיט יְהוָה, רָאָה אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי הָאָדָם. מִמְּכוֹן שְׁבַתוֹ הִשְׁגִּיחַ, אֶל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ. הִיצֵר יָחַד לָבָם, הִמְבִּין אֶל כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם.

אֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹשָׁע בְּרִב־חַיִל, גְּבוּר לֹא יִנְצֵל בְּרִב־כֹּחַ. שָׁקַר הַסּוֹס לְתִשׁוּעָה, וּבָרַב חֵילוֹ לֹא יִמְלֹט. הִנֵּה עֵין יְהוָה אֶל יִרְאָיו, לְמַיְחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ. לְהַצִּיל מִמּוֹת נַפְשָׁם, וּלְחַיּוֹתָם בְּרַעַב.

◀ נַפְשָׁנוּ חִכְתָּה לַיהוָה, עֲזָרְנוּ וּמִגִּנְנוּ הוּא. כִּי בּוֹ יִשְׁמַח לְבַנּוּ, כִּי בְשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ בְּטָחֲנוּ. יְהִי חֶסֶדְךָ יְהוָה עָלֵינוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִחַלְנוּ לָךְ.

תהלים לג

dry land appears (Genesis 1:9). God's control of nature distinguished the biblical divinity from the other gods worshipped in the ancient Near East.

HORSES DO NOT OFFER A PROMISE OF VICTORY שָׁקַר הַסּוֹס לְתִשׁוּעָה. Chariots were a critical element of Egyptian military might. Psalms frequently contrast faith in God to belief in military might.

WE HAVE WAITED נַפְשָׁנוּ חִכְתָּה. The biblical word *nefesh* means "person," but in later Judaism it was understood as "soul." Thus the mystics who added this psalm to the liturgy would have understood the phrase as: "Our souls have waited for Adonai."

YOU לָךְ. This is the first time in the psalm that God is addressed directly in the second person. We now realize that the psalm is not simply a song of praise, but a prayer, perhaps in time of war. The mystics read this psalm as the soul's overcoming its worldly impediments and finally relating only to God. In this way, it is an appropriate introduction to the seventh psalm in the series: The Song of the Day of Shabbat.

PSALM 33 was inserted by Jewish mystics into the sequence of seven psalms culminating in Psalm 92, the Song of the Day of Shabbat. It was intended as a *kavanah*—a preparation for greeting Shabbat—beginning as it does with song and ending with heartfelt joy. There is a leitmotif of "seven" throughout the psalm: seven teachings about God, seven words indicating praise at the beginning of the psalm, and, in the last three lines, seven words ending in the suffix *-nu* (-נו), "we" or "us" or "out."

INSPIRE THE MUSIC הִיטִיבוּ נֶגֶן. Or: "play it well." Several psalms mention the accompaniment of musical instruments and even include instructions to the musicians.

LOVES RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE אֲהַב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט. Jewish mystics taught that when justice and righteousness are paired with love and kindness, then peace and wholeness reign in the heavens and on earth.

GATHERED TOGETHER כּוֹנֵס כַּיָּד. A reference to creation, when the waters are gathered together so that

שבת

When a Festival occurs on a weekday, some omit the following:

A PSALM: THE SONG OF THE DAY OF SHABBAT

It is good to thank You, ADONAI, and sing to Your name, Most High; to proclaim Your love at daybreak, Your faithfulness each night.

Tov l'hodot ladonai, u-l'zamer l'shimkha elyon, l'hagid ba-boker hasdekha ve-emunat'kha ba-leilot.

Finger the lute, pluck the harp, let the sound of the lyre rise up.

You gladdened me with Your deeds, ADONAI, and I shall sing of Your handiwork.

How wonderful are Your works, ADONAI, how subtle Your designs!

Mah gadlu ma-asekha Adonai, me'od amku mahsh'votekha. Ish ba-ar lo yeida, u-kh'sil lo yavin et zot.

The arrogant do not understand, the fool does not comprehend this: the wicked flourish like grass and every evildoer blossoms, only to be destroyed forever—

but You, ADONAI, are exalted for all time.

Surely Your enemies, ADONAI, surely Your enemies will perish; all who commit evil will be scattered.

As a wild bull raises up its horn, You raised my head high, anointed it with fresh oil.

As my enemies gather against me, my gaze remains steady, for my ears listen and hear:

► The righteous flourish like the date palm, thrive like a cedar in Lebanon; planted in the house of ADONAI, they flourish in our God's courtyards. In old age they remain fruitful, still fresh and bountiful, proclaiming: ADONAI is upright, my rock in whom there is no flaw.

► Tzadik katamar yifrah, k'erez balvanon yisgeh. Sh'tulim b'veit Adonai, b'hatzrot eloheinu yafrihu. Od y'nuvun b'seivah, d'sheinim v'ra-ananim yihyu. L'hagid ki yashar Adonai, tzuri v'lo avlatah bo.

Psalm 92

ADONAI is sovereign, robed in splendor, girded in strength; the earth stands firm, not to be dislodged. From earliest time You were enthroned; You are eternal.

The rivers rise up, ADONAI, the rivers raise up their roar, the rivers raise up their waves. Above the roar of the vast sea and the majestic breakers of the ocean, ADONAI stands supreme in the heavens.

► In Your house, beautiful in its holiness, Your testimonies endure, ADONAI, for all time.

Mi-kolot mayim rabim adirim mishb'rei yam, adir ba-marom Adonai. Eidotekha ne-emnu me'od, l'veit'kha na-avah kodesh, Adonai, l'orekh yamim.

Psalm 93

שבת

When a Festival occurs on a weekday, some omit the following:

מזמור שיר ליום השבת

טוב להודות ליהוה, ולזמר לשמך עליון, להגיד בבקר חסדך, ואמונתך בלילות. עלי עשור ועלי נבל, עלי הגיון בכנור.

כי שמחתני יהוה בפעלה, במעשי ידיך ארנן. מה גדלו מעשיך יהוה, מאד עמקו מחשבתך.

איש בער לא ידע, וכסיל לא יבין את-זאת.

כפרח רשעים כמו עשב ויצויו כל-פעלי און, להשמדם עדי עד, ואתה מרום לעלם יהוה.

כי הגה איביך, יהוה, כי הגה איביך יאבדו, יתפרדו כל-פעלי און.

ותרם פראים קרני, בלתי בשמן רענן.

ותבט עיני בשורי, בקמים עלי מרעים תשמענה אזני,

צדיק כתמר יפרח, בארז בלבנון ישגה,

שתולים בבית יהוה, בחצרות אלהינו יפריחו.

עוד ינובון בשיבה, דשנים ורעננים יהיו,

להגיד כי ישר יהוה, צורי, ולא עולתה בו.

תהלים צב

יהוה מלך גאות לבש יהוה עז התאזר,

אף תכון תבל כל תמוט.

נכון כסאך מאז, מעולם אתה.

נשאו נהרות יהוה,

נשאו נהרות קולם,

ישאו נהרות דכים.

מקלות מים רבים,

אדירים משברי ים,

אדיר במרום יהוה.

עדתך נאמנו מאד

לביתך נאזה קדש, יהוה, לארך ימים.

תהלים צג

PSALM 92, the Song of the Day of Shabbat, begins with the praise of the faithful and concludes with it. It remarks on the wonder of creation and on the reward of the righteous, who will be planted in God's house. Appropriately, the psalm is a song for Shabbat—for Shabbat both celebrates creation and also provides the space in which to experience the peacefulness of one's soul. The disturbing quality of a world not at ease is put aside—in the words of the psalmist, enemies are "scattered"—and one hears God's reassurance ringing in one's ear. (For more detailed commentary on this psalm, see pages 27–28.)

PSALM 93. Having completed the seven psalms culminating in Psalm 92, the Song of the Day of Shabbat, we conclude the section with a psalm announcing God as the supreme monarch. Above nature are God's laws, moral and holy "testimonies." In the Torah, the ark is sometimes called "the ark of testimony" because it contains the two tablets given on Mount Sinai.

The People Israel

Life appears dismal if not mirrored in what is more than life. Nothing can be regarded as valuable unless assessed in relation to something higher in value. Humanity's survival depends on the conviction that there is something that is worth the price of life. It depends upon a sense of the supremacy of what is lasting. That sense of conviction may be asleep, but it awakens when challenged. In some people it lives as a sporadic wish; in others it is a permanent concern.

What we have learned from Jewish history is that if a person is not more than human then he or she is less than human. Judaism is an attempt to prove that in order to be a human being, you have to be more than a single human, that in order to be a people we have to be more than a people. Israel was made to be a "holy people." This is the essence of its dignity and the essence of its merit.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA
HESCHEL

God's Sovereignty:

An Anthology of Biblical Verses

May the glory of ADONAI endure forever; may God rejoice in all that God created; may the name of ADONAI be blessed now and forever. From one end of the earth to the other, may ADONAI's name be acclaimed. God's glory is above the heavens, high above that of any people. ADONAI, Your name is eternal; ADONAI, You are known in every generation.

ADONAI established a throne in the heavens, ADONAI's dominion is over all. Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice, as the peoples of the world declare, "ADONAI reigns." ADONAI is sovereign, ADONAI has always been sovereign, ADONAI will be sovereign forever and ever. ADONAI is sovereign forever—even as peoples pass away from God's land.

ADONAI overturns peoples' designs and foils the schemes of nations. Human hearts devise many plans, but God's plans hold true for each generation. ADONAI's design endures forever; God's counsel is for each generation. It was God who spoke and brought everything into being; it was God who commanded that they exist.

ADONAI chose Zion, desiring it as a dwelling-place;

ADONAI chose Jacob, Israel as a treasured people.

ADONAI will not abandon this people, will not desert the inheritors of divine favor.

► God, who is compassionate, will forgive sin and not wreak destruction; for again and again God acts with restraint, refusing to let rage become all-consuming. ADONAI, help us; Sovereign, answer us when we call.

יְהִי כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, יִשְׁמַח יְהוָה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו.
יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבָרָךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.
מִמְזוּרַח שְׁמֵשׁ עַד מְבוֹאוֹ, מְהֵלֵל שֵׁם יְהוָה.
רַם עַל כָּל-גּוֹיִם יְהוָה, עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ.
יְהוָה שְׁמֵךְ לְעוֹלָם, יְהוָה זְכָרְךָ לְדֹר וָדָר.

יְהוָה בְּשָׁמַיִם הַכִּיָּן כְּסֹאוֹ, וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בְּכֹל מַשְׁלָח.
יִשְׁמַחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ, וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ.
יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.
יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם וָעֶד, אֲבָדוּ גוֹיִם מֵאֲרָצוֹ.

יְהוָה הַפִּיר עֲצַת גּוֹיִם, הִנִּיא מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים.
רַבּוֹת מַחְשְׁבוֹת בְּלִב־אִישׁ, וְעֲצַת יְהוָה הִיא תִקּוּם.
עֲצַת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תִּעֲמַד, מַחְשְׁבוֹת לְבוֹ לְדֹר וָדָר.
כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי, הוּא צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמַד.

כִּי בָחַר יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן, אֲנֹה לְמוֹשֵׁב לוֹ.
כִּי יַעֲקֹב בָּחַר לוֹ יְהוָה, יִשְׂרָאֵל לְסִגְלָתוֹ.
כִּי לֹא יִטָּשׁ יְהוָה עַמּוֹ, וְנִחַלְתּוּ לֹא יַעֲזֹב.

◀ וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית,
וְהִרְבֵּה לְהִשְׁיב אָפוֹ וְלֹא יַעִיר כָּל-חַמָּתוֹ.
יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּיוֹם קְרָאֵנוּ.

MAY THE GLORY OF ADONAI
ENDURE FOREVER כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם. The earliest poetic additions to the liturgy were collections of biblical verses, such as this prayer. It is recited daily and is included in all rites. A seemingly natural poetic flow from one verse to the next is created by the presence of similar words in consecutive verses. The contemplation of God's power becomes a setting for affirming the promise of the redemption of the people Israel and the defeat of the destructive designs of nations. The verses quoted here are: Psalm 104:31, Psalm 113:2-4, Psalm 135:13, Psalm 103:19, 1 Chronicles 16:31, Psalm 10:16, Psalm 93:1, Exodus 15:18, Psalm 10:16, Psalm 33:10, Proverbs 19:21, Psalm 33:11, Psalm 33:9, Psalm 132:13, Psalm 135:4, Psalm 94:14, Psalm 78:38, and Psalm 20:10.

ADONAI IS SOVEREIGN,
ADONAI HAS ALWAYS BEEN
SOVEREIGN, ADONAI WILL
BE SOVEREIGN FOREVER
AND EVER יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד. This verse is itself a collection of three phrases found

elsewhere in the Bible; the three phrases together are found nowhere in the Bible.

וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית. GOD, WHO IS COMPASSIONATE, WILL FORGIVE SIN The wiping away of sin makes redemption possible. These last two verses are found frequently in Jewish liturgy, in prayers that—like this one—date from the earliest centuries of the 1st millennium C.E. and are comprised of an anthology of biblical verses. (For example, see Kedushah D'sidra, page 216, and Tahanun, the weekday penitential prayers following the Amidah.) Similarly, these same verses precede the Bar'khu, the call to worship, in the weekday evening service (page 264). Knowing that God forgives our sins allows us to begin our prayers with a sense of purity.

For a transliteration of Ashrei, see page 181–182.

ASHREI

Joyous are they who dwell in Your house;
they shall praise You forever.

*Joyous the people who are so favored;
joyous the people whose God is ADONAI.*

A SONG OF PRAISE, OF DAVID

I exalt You, my God, my sovereign; I praise Your name, always.

Every day I praise You, glorifying Your name, always.

Great is ADONAI, greatly to be praised,
though Your greatness is unfathomable.

One generation praises Your works to another, telling of Your mighty deeds.

I would speak of Your majestic glory and of Your wondrous acts.

Generations speak of Your awe-inspiring deeds;

I, too, shall recount Your greatness.

They recount Your great goodness, and sing of Your righteousness.

ADONAI is merciful and compassionate, patient, and abounding in love.

ADONAI is good to all, and God's mercy embraces all of creation.

All of creation acknowledges You, and the faithful bless You.

They speak of the glory of Your sovereignty and tell of Your might,

*proclaiming to humanity Your mighty deeds,
and the glory of Your majestic sovereignty.*

Your sovereignty is eternal; Your dominion endures in every generation.

ADONAI supports all who falter, and lifts up all who are bent down.

The eyes of all look hopefully to You,

and You provide them nourishment in its proper time.

Opening Your hand, You satisfy with contentment all that lives.

ADONAI is righteous in all that is done, faithful to all creation.

ADONAI is near to all who call, to all who call sincerely.

God fulfills the desire of those who are faithful,

listening to their cries, rescuing them.

*ADONAI watches over all who love the Holy One,
but will destroy all the wicked.*

► My mouth shall utter praise of ADONAI.

May all that is mortal praise God's name forever and ever.

Psalm 145

We shall praise ADONAI now and always. Halleluyah!

אֲשֵׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה.
אֲשֵׁרֵי הָעַם שֶׁפָּכַח לּוֹ, אֲשֵׁרֵי הָעַם שֶׁיְהוּהוּ אֵלֵהֵינוּ.
תְּהִלָּה לְדוֹד
אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ אֱלוֹהֵי הַמַּלְאָךְ, וְאֶבְרַכְּךָ שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
בְּכָל־יוֹם אֶבְרַכְּךָ, וְאֶהְלֵלְךָ שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
גְּדוֹל יְהוּהוּ וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד, וְלִגְדֻלְתּוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר.
דוֹר לְדוֹר יִשְׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יִגְדֹדוּ.
הַדָּר כְּבוֹד הַוָּדָה, וְדַבְּרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה.
וְעוֹז נוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ יֹאמְרוּ, וּגְדֻלְתְּךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה.
זָכַר רַב טוֹבְךָ יִבְיַעוּ, וְצִדְקֹתֶיךָ יִרְנְנוּ.
חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוּהוּ, אֶרְךָ אַפַּיִם וּגְדֻלַּחֲסֵד.
טוֹב יְהוּהוּ לְכָל, וְרַחֲמָיו עַל כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו.
יִוְדוּךָ יְהוּהוּ כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְחִסְדֶּיךָ יִבְרַכְּוֶכָה.
כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמְרוּ, וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יִדְבְּרוּ.
לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבַנְיֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרֹתֶיךָ, וּכְבוֹד הַדָּר מַלְכוּתוֹ.
מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֲלָמִים, וּמִמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דוֹר וָדוֹר.
סוֹמֵךְ יְהוּהוּ לְכָל־הַנְּפֻלִים, וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכְּפוּפִים.
עֵינַי כָּל אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁבְּרוּ, וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן לָהֶם אֶת־אֲכָלָם בְּעֵתוֹ.
פּוֹתַח אֶת־יְדֶיךָ, וּמַשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רִצּוֹן.
צְדִיק יְהוּהוּ בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו, וְחֹסֵד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו.
קְרוֹב יְהוּהוּ לְכָל־קִרְאוֹ, לְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵהוּ בְּאַמֶּת.
רִצּוֹן יִרְאוּ יַעֲשֶׂה, וְאֶת־שׁוֹעֲתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם.
שׁוֹמֵר יְהוּהוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֲהַבָּיו, וְאֶת כָּל־הַרְשָׁעִים יִשְׁמִיד.
◀ תְּהִלַּת יְהוּהוּ יִדְבַר־פִּי,
וַיְבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר שֵׁם קְדֹשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
תהלים קמה

to individual verses more than to the literary flow of the whole poem. It is the only psalm explicitly called a *t'hillah*, "a song of praise," though the entire Book of Psalms is called by the plural *Sefer T'hillim*.

JOYOUS אֲשֵׁרֵי. The Hebrew word covers a spectrum of emotions: happy, blessed, contented.

ADONAI SUPPORTS ALL WHO FALTER סוֹמֵךְ יְהוּהוּ לְכָל־הַנְּפֻלִים. This verse marks a turning point in the psalm. Until now, the poet has praised God's greatness and splendor; now, the focus shifts to God's concern for those in need. Here, God's sovereignty is primarily manifest in love and care.

ALL THAT IS MORTAL כָּל־בָּשָׂר. In Psalm 145, there are no references to the Temple, to Israel, or to historical events. God is here depicted as the sovereign of the world who cares for all creatures.

PSALM 145 (ASHREI). This psalm, which was treasured by the ancient rabbis, is recited thrice daily. It was in liturgical use during the Second Temple period, as attested by the Dead Sea Scrolls, where it appears with a congregational response attached to each verse: "Blessed is Adonai and blessed is God's name." Psalm 145 begins and ends with personal verses of praise. In between, the author affirms God's sovereignty and insists that God's rule is one of love and compassion.

Two additional verses (Psalm 84:5 and 144:15), both of which begin with the word *ashrei*, "joyous," were added to the opening, apparently in imitation of the Book of Psalms itself, which opens with that word. The reference to God's house evokes those praying in the synagogue. Psalm 115:18 was appended to the end, transforming the prayer from the first-person singular to the plural, and thus creating a bridge to the five "Halleluyah" psalms that follow.

Ashrei is an alphabetical acrostic—although it is missing a verse beginning with the letter *nun*—and thus easy to memorize, which may help to explain its popularity in Jewish liturgy. Many readers relate

Adonai Secures Justice

Ethics is not the corollary of the vision of God; it is that very vision. Ethics is an optic, such that everything I know of God and everything I can hear of God's word and reasonably say to God must find an ethical expression. In the Holy Ark from which the voice of God is heard by Moses, there are only the tablets of the Law.... The knowledge of God comes to us like a commandment, like a mitzvah. To know God is to know what must be done.... The justice rendered to the Other, my neighbor, gives me an unsurpassable proximity to God.

—EMMANUEL LEVINAS

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

I will praise ADONAI.

I will praise ADONAI as long as I live, sing to my God as long as I am here.

Do not put your trust in the high and mighty, people who cannot save even themselves; their breath will depart, they will return to the earth from which they came, and on that day, their schemes will come to naught.

Blessed is the person whose help is Jacob's God, who looks with hope to ADONAI who created heaven and earth, the sea and all that is within it; ADONAI keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, provides food for the hungry; releases the bound from their chains, gives sight to the blind, straightens those bent low, and loves those who act justly; ► ADONAI cares for the stranger, sustains the orphan and the widow, blocks the path of the wicked— ADONAI shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalm 146

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

הַלְלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה.

אֶהְלֵלָה יְהוָה בְּחַיִּי, אֲזַמְרָה לֵאלֹהֵי בְעוֹדַי.

אֶל תִּבְטְחוּ בַּבְּדִיבִים, בְּכֹן־אָדָם שְׂאִין לוֹ תְשׁוּעָה.

תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יֵשֵׁב לְאֲדָמְתוֹ,

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֲבָדוּ עֲשָׂתֵנְתִּיו.

אֲשֶׁרִי שָׂאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעֶזְרוֹ, שָׁבְרוּ עַל יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו.

עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בָּם,

הַשֹּׁמֵר אֶמֶת לְעוֹלָם.

עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפָּט לְעֹשׂוֹקִים, נִתֵּן לָחֶם לְרַעֲבִים,

יְהוָה מִתִּיר אֲסוּרִים, יְהוָה פִּקְחַ עֲוֹרִים,

יְהוָה זָקַף כְּפוּפִים, יְהוָה אָהַב צְדִיקִים.

◀ יְהוָה שִׁמְר אֶת־גֵּרִים,

יְתוֹם וְאֶלְמָנָה יַעֲזֹדֶה וְדַרְךְ רַשְׁעִים יַעֲנֹת.

יְמַלֵּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֵינוּ צִיּוֹן לְדוֹר וָדוֹר.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמו

PSALMS 146–150 constitute a series of five psalms, each opening and closing with the compound word *hallelu-yah*, "praise God"; these psalms bring the Book of Psalms to an exuberant conclusion. Rabbi Yose (2nd century, the Land of Israel) considered it a meritorious practice to recite these psalms, along with Psalm 145, each day (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 118b). These psalms constitute a celebratory way of preparing for the formal morning service, and by the end of the 1st millennium they had become a statutory part of the morning prayers, forming the core of P'sukei D'zimra, the "Verses of Song" (Sofrim 17:11).

The five psalms are interconnected. For example, God is described in Psalm 146 as ruling justly and teaching just laws to Israel; in Psalms 147 and 148, as

redeeming the people Israel; and in Psalm 149, as commissioning the people Israel to bring the corrupt rulers of the world to justice. Psalms 146–149 all touch on universal themes, but each ends by describing the special relation of God to Israel. The final psalm, 150, begins with Israel's praises of God and concludes with a universal chorus: "Let every breath be praise of God."

PSALM 146 consists of two parts: the first exhorts against putting one's faith in human beings, even the most powerful, and the second contrasts God's justice and compassion with corrupt human institutions. This second section is set off by the same word so central to the previous prayer, *ashrei*, meaning happy, blessed, and contented.

THEY WILL RETURN TO THE EARTH יֵשֵׁב לְאֲדָמְתוֹ. The imagery is from Genesis, where Adam is told that he "will return to the earth, for from it you were taken: for dust you are, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19).

JACOB'S GOD אֶל יַעֲקֹב. This is the only time this phrase is used in the Bible, and it is hard to say why it is used here. Perhaps it is due to the fact that Jacob is a figure who suffered and died in a foreign land and yet kept faith and hope. The people Israel, suffering yet hopeful, are Jacob's descendants.

RELEASES THE BOUND יְהוָה מִתִּיר אֲסוּרִים. God is portrayed as compassionate, seeking justice for the weak, unlike powerful human beings whose plans may be self-serving. The qualities attributed to God in this psalm form the basis of several of the morning *brakhot* (pages 103–104).

ADONAI CARES FOR THE STRANGER, SUSTAINS THE ORPHAN AND THE WIDOW יְהוָה שִׁמְר אֶת־ גֵּרִים יְתוֹם וְאֶלְמָנָה יַעֲזֹדֶד. In biblical society, these were the three groups least able to fend for themselves.

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

How good to sing to our God sweet and delightful words of praise.

ADONAI will rebuild Jerusalem, gather in the dispersed people of Israel; the one who heals the broken-hearted, and binds their wounds, the one who counts the stars and names each and every one of them is our great sovereign, infinitely powerful.

God's designs are beyond recounting.

ADONAI gives heart to the humble and throws the wicked to the ground.

Call out to ADONAI in thanksgiving, and with the music of the lyre sing to God who covers the heavens with clouds providing rain for the earth, that grass may flourish on the hillsides— food for livestock and for the raven's crying nestlings.

Victorious chariots do not please God,

nor is it the warrior's strong arms that God desires.

ADONAI desires those who revere the Divine,

those who look to God's love and kindness.

O Jerusalem, sing the praises of ADONAI; Zion, celebrate your God.

For God has strengthened the posts of your gates, blessed your children within, brought peace to your borders, and satisfied you with the fat of the harvest.

God sends the divine word to earth; how quickly these commands are obeyed: snow piles up like fleece, frost spreads like ash, hailstones are tossed like crumbs— who could withstand the cold?— then word is sent for the ice to melt; winds cease blowing and water flows.

► God enunciates commands to Jacob, precepts and just decrees to the people Israel.

No other nation has been so provided; they do not know of just decrees.

Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalms 147

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

בִּי טוֹב זְמִירָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בִּי נְעִים נְאוּה תְהִלָּה.

בוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם יְהוָה, נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יְכַנְּס.

הַרֹפֵא לְשִׁבְרוֹי לֵב וּמַחְבֵּשׁ לְעֵצְבוֹתָם,

מוֹנֵה מְסַפֵּר לְפּוֹכְבֵימ, לְכֹלֵם שְׁמוֹת יְקָרָא.

גְּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ וְרַב כֹּחַ, לְתַבּוּנָתוֹ אֵין מְסַפֵּר.

מְעוֹדֵד עֲבוּרִים יְהוָה, מְשִׁפִּיל רְשָׁעִים עַדֵי אֶרֶץ.

עָנּוּ לִיהוָה בְּתוֹדָה, זְמָרוּ לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּכִנּוֹר,

הַמְכַסֶּה שָׁמַיִם בְּעָבִים, הַמְכִּין לְאֶרֶץ מָטָה,

הַמְצַמִּיחַ הָרִים חֲצִיר,

נוֹתֵן לְבִהמָה לַחֲמָה, לְבָנֵי עֵרֵב אֲשֶׁר יְקָרָאוּ.

לֹא בְגִבּוֹרַת הַסּוֹס יִחְפֹּץ, לֹא בְשׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ יִרְצֶה,

רוֹצֶה יְהוָה אֶת־יִרְאָיו, אֶת־הַמְיַחֲלִים לְחֶסֶדּוֹ.

שִׁבְחֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם אֶת־יְהוָה, הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהֵיךָ צִיּוֹן.

בִּי חֹזֵק בְּרִיחֵי שְׁעָרֶיךָ, בְּרַף בְּנֵיךָ בְּקִרְבֶּךָ.

הַשֵּׁם גְּבוּלֶךָ שְׁלוֹם, חֵלֶב חַטִּים יִשְׁבִּיעֶךָ,

הַשְׁלַח אֲמָרְתוֹ אֶרֶץ, עַד מֵהָרָה יְרוּץ דְבָרוֹ,

הַנִּתֵּן שְׁלֵג בַּצֶּמֶר, בְּפוֹר בְּאֶפֶר יִפּוֹר,

מִשְׁלֵיךְ קָרְחוֹ בְּפִתִּים, לְפָנֵי קָרְתוֹ מִי יַעֲמֵה,

יִשְׁלַח דְבָרוֹ וַיִּמָּסֵם, יִשָּׁב רוּחוֹ וַיִּזְלוּ מַיִם,

◀ מִגִּיד דְבָרוֹ לִיעֶקֶב, חֲקִיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל.

לֹא עָשָׂה כֵן לְכָל־גּוֹי, וּמִשְׁפָּטִים בַּל יִדְעוּם.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמד

PSALM 147 is a complex mix of a hymn to God's power, an assertion of God's moral behavior, and praise of the divine teaching given to Israel as its treasure. The psalm is composed of three parts. The psalm intermixes the promise of the restoration of Jerusalem with praise of God's love to come. Those who currently exercise dominion will be defeated, for in the mind of the psalmist, acting justly represents true power.

HEALS THE BROKEN-HEARTED
In the same breath, the psalmist exalts God's strength and God's compassion.

NAMES EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM
Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935, the Land of Israel) comments on God's ability to name each and every star and keep them all in place. From this, he derives a lesson about the people Israel, who are compared to the stars (Genesis 15:5): each person has an individual purpose and dream, but is also a part of the collective destiny of the people Israel; each adds something new and special to the collective.

WARRIOR'S STRONG ARMS
The Hebrew

shok usually means "thigh," and thus it may refer here to the soldier's ability to run swiftly after the enemy. It can also sometimes refer to the shoulder, which seems more reasonable in this context: the warrior shoots arrows from his shoulder or throws spears with his powerful arms, while riding the horse or chariot.

GOD ENUNCIATES COMMANDS TO JACOB
The same Hebrew word *d'varo*, literally "[God's] word," appeared above referring to the ice, which God melts with speech. The speech of God is "heard" both in nature and in the teachings of Torah.

NO OTHER NATION
The psalmist argues that the people Israel's strength lies in its commitment to justice, in its imitation of God's concern for the poor and the vulnerable. In contrast, other nations presume that strength lies in military might.

*The Wonders
of Creation*

Why is the sky blue?
Among the wavelengths of light in the sun's spectrum, blue oscillates at the highest frequency and is, therefore, scattered effectively by molecules of air in our atmosphere. This turns the sky blue. To me, this seems more amazing than ancient Mesopotamian and biblical beliefs that the sky is blue because of all the water up there. What science shows us about the evolution of our universe and our selves is as awesome to me as Genesis or the Kabbalah.

—DANIEL MATT

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

From the heavens, offer praise to ADONAI,
on high, offer praise:
all angels, offer praise to God,
all the hosts of heaven, offer praise to God,
sun and moon, offer praise to God,
bright stars offer praise to God,
highest heavens and waters above, offer praise to God;
may all praise the name ADONAI.
For God commanded they be born,
set them in their places forever,
and fixed the boundaries they never cross.

On earth, offer praise to ADONAI:
sea monsters and ocean's deep,
lightning and hail, snow and sandstorms,
raging winds obeying God's command,
hills and high mountains,
fruit trees and evergreens,
beasts and every kind of cattle,
crawling things and winged birds,
sovereigns of the world and their peoples,
powerful princes and judges in the land,
innocent and adolescent boys and girls,
elders and youths,
offer up praise to the name ADONAI,
for God's name alone is to be exalted,
whose splendor extends over heaven and earth.

► May God raise the horn of our people
in praise of the faithful,
the children of Israel,
beloved of the Divine.
Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalm 148

הַלְלוּיָהּ.
הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, הַלְלוּהוּ בַמְרוֹמִים.
הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־מַלְאָכָיו, הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־צְבָאָיו,
הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵשׁ וַיְרַח, הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵי אוֹר,
הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל הַשָּׁמַיִם.
יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה, כִּי הוּא צִוָּה וַנִּבְרָאוּ,
וַיַּעֲמִידֵם לְעֵד לְעוֹלָם, חֲקִנְתָּן וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר.
הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן הָאָרֶץ, תַּנְיִינִים וְכַל־תְּהוֹמוֹת.
אֵשׁ וּבָרָד שֶׁלֵּג וְקִיטּוֹר, רוּחַ סְעָרָה עֹשֶׂה דְבָרוֹ.
הַהָרִים וְכַל־גְּבְעוֹת, עֵץ פְּרִי וְכַל־אֲרָזִים.
הַחַיָּה וְכַל־בְּהֵמָה, רֶמֶשׂ וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף.
מַלְכֵי אֲרָץ וְכַל־לְאֻמִּים, שָׂרִים וְכַל־שֹׁפְטֵי אֲרָץ.
בַּחֳוֹרִים וְגַם בְּתוֹלוֹת, זְקֵנִים עִם נְעָרִים.
יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה, כִּי נִשְׁגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבָדוּ,
הוֹדוּ עַל אֲרָץ וְשָׁמַיִם.

◀ וַיְרֵם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ תְהִלָּה לְכָל־חַסִּידָיו,
לְבַנְיֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קְרֵבוֹ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמח

חֲקִנְתָּן תְּהוֹמוֹת THEY NEVER CROSS FIXED THE BOUNDARIES THEY NEVER CROSS. In this image, each sphere of heaven occupies a different level. Stars, for instance, can move within their own sphere but not above or below, lest they collide with other heavenly objects.

קִיטּוֹר SANDSTORMS. The Hebrew word describes a smokelike plume rising from earth to the sky, and the context implies some condition related to weather, though the specific referent is an educated guess.

אֲרָזִים EVERGREENS. Literally "cedars," the most sturdy evergreen in the Middle East. The contrast is critical here: fruit trees are seasonal but their produce is significant, while cedars are evergreens but produce no fruit. The idea of totality is expressed through a series of contrasts: wild and domesticated animals, rulers and subjects, young and old.

עִם קְרֵבוֹ BELOVED OF THE DIVINE. More literally, "those who are close to the Divine."

Other Peoples

To be a holy nation meant, in the first place, to be separated from the pollution of the nations. In biblical terms this pollution consisted of idolatry and its concomitant moral corruption—the two being indissolubly bound in biblical thought. [But equally,] the kinship of all people as the descendants of one father and the creatures of one Creator impressed itself upon the Hebrew imagination. How can I ignore the rightful claim of my servant, cries Job, “Did not he who made me in the belly make him? Did not One fashion us both in the womb?” (Job 31:15). This passage so worked upon the Palestinian sage, Rabbi Yoḥanan, that “Whatever food he partook of he shared with his servant” (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Ketubot 5:5).

The myth of one mankind under one God in primeval times—from Adam to the Tower-builders—pressed for a complementary vision of a reunited mankind under God at the end of time. The author of that vision was the prophet Isaiah [and that vision was taken up by the later prophets]. The promise of a glorious denouement to human history, in which Israel’s faith and steadfastness to its covenant would be vindicated and all men would join hands with it in subservience to their common Creator, were a beacon of hope in the vale of gloom and tears through which Israel walked for centuries.

—MOSHE GREENBERG

Double-Edged Sword

What is the double-edged sword the people Israel were given? This is the Torah—both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah. And what battles do they fight? These are the arguments over the meaning of Torah: how should we act? how should we exercise judgment?

—NUMBERS RABBAH

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

Sing to ADONAI a new song,
praise God amidst the congregation of the faithful.
Let Israel rejoice with its maker,
the children of Zion celebrate their sovereign.
Let them praise God’s name in dance
and sing to God with timbrel and lyre.
For ADONAI loves this people,
and will crown the humbled with deliverance.
Honored, the faithful shall rejoice,
exulting as they recline upon their couches.

With high praise of God on their lips
and a double-edged sword in their hands,
they shall exact retribution of the nations,
chastising the peoples of the world,
▶ locking their rulers in cuffs,
their princes in iron chains,
to carry out the decrees of justice.
Then shall all the faithful be glorified!
Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalm 149

הַלְלוּיָהּ.
שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ, תְּהַלְלוּ בְּקֹהַל חַסִּידָיִם.
יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֲשִׂיָּהּ, בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן יִגִּילוּ בְּמִלְכָּם.
יִהְלְלוּ שְׁמוֹ בְּמַחּוֹל, בְּתִפְףָּ וּכְנֹר יִזְמְרוּ לוֹ.
כִּי רוּצָה יְהוָה בְּעַמּוֹ, יִפְאַר עַנְוִים בִּישׁוּעָהּ.
יַעֲלִזוּ חַסִּידָיִם בְּכָבוֹד, יִרְנְנוּ עַל מִשְׁכָּבוֹתָם.
רוּמְמוֹת אֵל בְּגֵרוֹנָם, וְחָרְבַּ פִּיפְיוֹת בְּיָדָם.
לַעֲשׂוֹת נִקְמָה בְּגוֹיִם, תּוֹכַחוֹת בְּלֵאמִים.
▶ לְאַסֹּר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזֻקִים וְנִכְבְּדֵיהֶם בְּכַבְלֵי בְרוֹזַל.
לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּהֶם מִשְׁפָּט פֶּתוּב, הַדֶּרֶךְ הוּא לְכָל־חַסִּידָיו.
הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמט

PSALM 149. This psalm helps build toward the exultant crescendo of the final psalm. The first half of the poem is replete with synonyms for song and rejoicing. Then the poet enunciates a vision of an endtime when justice is executed and corruption is repaid with the appropriate punishment. Israel, the symbol of the oppressed, will wage this war for justice.

IN DANCE בְּמַחּוֹל. The accompaniment of instrumental music and dance represents the height of joyful expression. Famously, King David danced—leap-

ing and whirling—before the ark as it was brought to Jerusalem.

AS THEY RECLINE עַל מִשְׁכָּבוֹתָם. Festive meals were celebrated with the participants lounging on couches.

A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD IN THEIR HANDS וְחָרְבַּ פִּיפְיוֹת בְּיָדָם. The image of vengeance invoked in this psalm might be explained by its next-to-last line, where the poet evokes the promise of justice. Oppression is a product of injustice that must be fought.

LOCKING THEIR RULERS לְאַסֹּר מַלְכֵיהֶם. The midrash points out that it is the rulers of these nations who are to be punished, but not the peoples—because it is the rulers who have led these people astray (Midrash on Psalms).

Psalm 150: An Interpretive Translation

Praise God in the depths of the universe; praise God in the human heart. Praise God's power and beauty, for God's all-feeling, fathomless love. Praise God with drums and trumpets, with string quartets and guitars. Praise God in market and workplace, with computer, with hammer and nails. Praise God in bedroom and kitchen; praise God with pots and pans. Praise God in the temple of the present; let every breath be God's praise.

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

Praise God in the sanctuary.
Praise God in the heavens, the seat of God's power.
Praise God at the triumph of the Divine.
Praise God in accord with the greatness of God.
Praise God with the call of the shofar.
Praise God with the harp and the lyre.
Praise God with timbrel and dance.
Praise God with flute and strings.
Praise God with crashing cymbals.
Praise God with rousing cymbals.

▶ Let every breath be praise of God;
halleluyah, praise God.

Let every breath be praise of God;
praise God, *halleluyah!*

Hal'luyah.

Hal'lu El b'kodsho, hal'luhu birkia uzo.

Hal'luhu vi-g'vurotav, hal'luhu k'rov gudlo.

Hal'luhu b'teika shofar, hal'luhu b'nevel v'khinor.

Hal'luhu b'tof u-mahol, hal'luhu b'minim v'ugav.

Hal'luhu v'tziltz'lei shama, hal'luhu b'tziltz'lei t'ruah.

Kol ha-n'shamah t'hallel yah, hal'luyah.

Kol ha-n'shamah t'hallel yah, hal'luyah.

Psalm 150

CONCLUSION OF THE SELECTION OF PSALMS

Bless ADONAI, always, amen and amen.
From Zion, bless ADONAI who dwells in Jerusalem;
praise God, *halleluyah*.

Bless ADONAI, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

▶ Blessed be God's glorious name, always;
and may God's glory encompass the entire world.
Amen and amen.

Some congregations continue with Nishmat, page 145.

הַלְלוּיָהּ,
הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקֹדֶשׁוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקְיעַ עֲזוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרֹתָיו, הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרַב גְּדֻלוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנֵבֶל וּכְנֹר.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֶף וּמְחֹל, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעִגָּב.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי שָׁמַע, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה.
◀ כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קנ

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה מְצִיּוֹן, שִׁכֵּן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, עֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבָדוֹ.
◀ וּבְרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם,
וְיִמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ,
אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.

Some congregations continue with נְשִׁמַּת, page 145.

PSALM 150. This psalm brings the Book of Psalms to an exultant close. The Book of Psalms begins with the praise of the single righteous individual, "Blessed is the one who does not walk in the way of the wicked" (Psalm 1:1), and concludes with every living being praising God.

BLESS ADONAI, ALWAYS בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם. The Book of Psalms is composed of five smaller "books"; each of the first four conclude with a blessing. Two of those blessings, Psalms 89:53 and 72:18–19, are quoted here, to conclude the morning recitation of the Davidic psalms. Between these two, another verse (Psalm 135:21) is added, specifying that Adonai is the God of Israel—much like a letter's address on an envelope. The selected verses all begin with the word *barukh*, "blessed."

Thus, just as we began P'sukei D'zimra with a multiple repetition of "blessed" in Barukh She-amar (page 122), so too, here, we repeat that word with multiple verses. The oldest versions of P'sukei D'zimra ended here, and so the opening and closing verses of this paragraph form a conclusion by repeating the affirmative response, "Amen."

From Individual to Community

Awakening to a new day, we began by reciting *modeh/modah ani*, "I thank You," in the singular. Now, at the conclusion of P'sukei D'zimra, our collective awareness and connection to each other has been truly "awakened" and so we can say *modim anahnu lakh*, "we thank You," in the plural. We are thus ready for the formal call to prayer, Bar'khu (page 149), to which we respond as a community.

Changed His Name to Abraham

According to the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 13a), Abraham's name was changed because "in the beginning, he was a leader of Aram [i.e., av ram], and at the end, he was a leader of the whole world [avraham = av hamon, father of multitudes, Genesis 17:5]." The ancient rabbis taught that except when directly quoting Scripture, it is expressly forbidden to refer to Abraham by his former name.

This is the import of God's directive to change "Abram," which signifies leadership of the single nation of Aram, to "Abraham," father of a multitude of nations. God was saying to Abraham, "I have raised you beyond this norm of nationalism, which is but a convention and not true justice. Your heart should not be devoted exclusively to the benefit of Aram, but rather seek the peace of all God's creations. Seek out the well-being of all." Thus, "one who calls Abraham, 'Abram,' transgresses." By doing so, one causes Israel to regress to a state of nationalism, which is no more than a collective form of egoism, and thus a transgression.

It is customary to stand through the bottom of page 144.

DAVID'S FINAL PRAYER

David praised ADONAI in the presence of all the assembled, saying: From the beginning of time to the end of time, blessed are You ADONAI, God of our ancestor Israel. Yours, ADONAI, is the greatness, the strength and the glory, the triumph and the splendor—for everything in heaven and on earth is Yours. Sovereignty is Yours; You are raised up above all. Wealth and honor come from You; You rule over all. In Your hands are strength and deliverance; it is in Your power to give strength to all and to make everything flourish. Now we thank You, our God, and celebrate Your glorious name.

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

You, ADONAI alone, are the God who formed the sky, the heavens above and all their hosts, the earth and everything upon it, the seas and all within them. You grant existence to everything; even the hosts of heaven need bow to You.

You, ADONAI, are God; it was You who chose Abram, took him out of Ur of the Chaldees, changed his name to Abraham, and found him faithful.

You made a covenant with him, giving him the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to pass on to his descendants. You kept Your word, for You are righteous. You saw the suffering of our ancestors in Egypt and heard their cry at the Sea of Reeds. You confronted Pharaoh, his court, and the entire Egyptian nation with signs and wonders—for You knew how they had oppressed Your people, and in this way You are known to this day. ▶ You split the sea before our ancestors: they crossed on dry land, but their pursuers sank in the deep like stones in a raging sea.

Nehemiah 9:6-11

—ABRAHAM ISAAC KOOK

It is customary to stand through the bottom of page 144.

וַיְבָרֶךְ דָּוִד אֶת־יְהוָה לְעֵינָיו כָּל־הַקְּהָל וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִינוּ, מֵעוֹלָם וְעַד עוֹלָם. לָךְ יְהוָה הַגְּדֹלָה וְהַגְּבוּרָה וְהַתְּפָאֶרֶת וְהַנִּצְחָ וְהַהוֹד, כִּי כָל בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ, לָךְ יְהוָה הַמַּמְלָכָה וְהַמְתַּנְשָׂא לְכָל לְרֹאשׁ. וְהָעֶשֶׂר וְהַכְּבוֹד מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, וְאַתָּה מוֹשֵׁל בְּכָל, וּבִידְךָ פָּחַ וּגְבוּרָה, וּבִידְךָ לְגַדֵּל וּלְחַזֵּק לְכָל. וְעַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ, וּמְהַלְלִים לְשֵׁם תְּפָאֶרְתֶּךָ.

דברי הימים א, כט:י-יג

אַתָּה הוּא יְהוָה לְבַדְּךָ, אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם, שָׁמַיִ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־צְבָאָם, הָאָרֶץ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ, הַיָּמִים וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם, וְאַתָּה מְחַיֶּה אֶת־כָּל־הַיּוֹצֵא אֶת־הַיְהוּדִים מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיָּם. ◀ אַתָּה הוּא יְהוָה הַאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר פָּחַרְתָּ בְּאַבְרָם, וְהוֹצֵאתוֹ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים, וְשִׁמְתָּ שְׁמוֹ אַבְרָהָם, וּמְצַאתָ אֶת־לְבָבוֹ נֹאמֵן לְפָנֶיךָ.

וְכָרוֹת עִמּוֹ הַבְּרִית לְתַת אֶת־אָרֶץ הַפְּנִיעָנִי הַחֲתִי הַאֲמָרִי וְהַפְּרָזִי וְהַיְבוּסִי וְהַגְּרָגְשִׁי לְתַת לְזָרְעוֹ, וְתַקַּם אֶת־דְּבָרֶיךָ כִּי צִדִּיק אַתָּה. וְתִרָא אֶת־עֵנִי אֲבֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם, וְאַתָּה זְעַקְתָּם שָׁמַעְתָּ עַל יַם סוּף. וְתַתֵּן אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ וּמִפְתֵּיךָ בְּפָרְעוֹ, וּבְכָל־עֲבָדָיו וּבְכָל־עַם אֲרָצוֹ, כִּי יָדַעְתָּ כִּי הוֹיָדוּ עָלֶיךָ, וְתַעַשׂ לָךְ שֵׁם כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה. ◀ וְהִיָּם בְּקָעָתָ לְפָנֶיךָ וַיַּעֲבְרוּ בַתּוֹךְ הַיָּם בַּיַּבְשָׁה, וְאַתָּה רִדְפִיהֶם הַשְׁלַכְתָּ בַּמַּצּוֹלֹת, כְּמוֹ אֶבֶן בְּמַיִם עֲזִיָּם.

נחמיה ט:ו-יא

YOU, ADONAI ALONE הוּא יְהוָה לְבַדְּךָ. This prayer was recited in the Second Temple when the people, returning from exile, rededicated themselves under the guidance of Ezra and Nehemiah. With its recitation, each morning's prayer is an act of rededication.

CHANGED HIS NAME וְשִׁמְתָּ שְׁמוֹ. In Genesis 17:5 Abram's name is changed to Abraham, meaning the "father of many nations," as a sign of God's promise that Sarah will bear a child, Isaac. The original name "Abram" may mean "the father [meaning Terah] is exalted." A name change in the ancient world represented a change in status. (E. A. Speiser)

THE CANAANITES הַכְּנַעֲנִי. Listed here are six of the seven biblical nations that occupied the Land of Israel before the Israelite settlement.

DAVID'S FINAL PRAYER. Originally, P'sukei D'zimra consisted only of selections from the Book of Psalms; later, a series of biblical prayers, beginning here and culminating with the Song at the Sea, was added. In these additions we re-experience our collective history: Abram's leaving his home and setting out for an unknown destination, the exodus from Egypt, and the nation's arrival in the promised land.

DAVID PRAISED דָּוִד וַיְבָרֶךְ. This passage from 1 Chronicles forms part of David's last speech—his will and testament—as he hands his kingdom over to his son Solomon. Having just read selections from the psalms of David, we begin the closing section of P'sukei D'zimra, Verses of Song, with David's own concluding words.

BLESSED ARE YOU ADONAI בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה. This is one of only two times that this phrase, which became the formula for all Jewish *b'rakhot*, is found in the Bible. (The other is Psalm 119:12.)

WE THANK YOU מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ. These became the first words of the second-to-last *b'rakhah* of the Amidah, in which we thank God for the gifts of life.

I Will Sing

Sometimes we sing to ourselves—no one else hears the sound, yet our minds are singing. Sometimes we sing—our vocal chords voice a tune, and all can hear it and recognize it.

And sometimes we sing and every cell of our bodies contains the song. Such songs transform both the singer and the listener. That is the way that the people Israel sang as they were saved, in crossing the Sea.

—NETIVOT SHALOM

Moses and the People Israel Sang

Tradition understood Moses and the Israelites to have sung this song as call and response (antiphonal singing)—Moses would sing, and the people would respond. In some communities to this day, the verses are sung antiphonally. Call and response demands both inward and outward participation. We first participate inwardly, listening to the leader's voice as it interprets the words. We then respond outwardly, assenting to and building on what we've heard. But even as we raise our voices in song, we continue to listen, to hear the voices around us, so that our communal response is harmonious and the sound of the song is full. We hear and are heard, careful not to overwhelm one another, ensuring that even the smallest voice is not drowned out. As the leader evokes our song, so too do each of us affirm and amplify each other's voice.

—MICHAEL BOINO

On that day ADONAI saved the people Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore of the sea. ►When Israel saw the mighty arm that ADONAI had wielded against the Egyptians, the people revered ADONAI and had faith in ADONAI and in Moses, God's servant.

Exodus 14:30–31

THE SONG AT THE SEA

Then Moses and the people Israel sang this song to ADONAI:

I will sing to ADONAI, who has triumphed gloriously, who cast horse and rider into the sea. ADONAI is my strength and my might; God is my deliverance. This is my God, to whom I give glory—the God of my ancestors, whom I exalt.

ADONAI is a warrior; God's name is ADONAI. God has cast Pharaoh's chariots and army into the sea; Pharaoh's choicest captains have drowned in the Sea of Reeds. The depths covered them; they sank in the deep like a stone.

Your right hand, ADONAI, singular in strength— Your right hand, ADONAI, shatters the enemy. With Your majestic might You crush Your foes; You let loose Your fury, to consume them like straw. In the rush of Your rage the waters were raised; the sea stood motionless, the great deep congealed. The enemy said: "I will pursue, I will capture and plunder! I will devour them, I will draw my sword. With my bare hands will I dispatch them." You loosed the wind—the sea covered them. Like lead, they sank in the swelling waters.

Who is like You, ADONAI, among the mighty? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awe-inspiring in splendor, working wonders? You stretched out Your hand—the earth swallowed them. In Your love You lead the people You redeemed; with Your strength You guide them to Your holy habitation.

continued

וַיִּשְׁעַי יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל־שַׁפְּתַי הַיָּם: ◀ וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְהוָה הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֵּרְאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּיַמֵּינוּ בַּיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ:

שמות יד:ל-לא

אָז יִשְׁרַע־מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֵאמֹר אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאָה גָאָה סוֹס וּרְכָבוֹ רָמָה בַּיָּם: עֲזִי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה וַיִּהְיֶה־לִּי לִישׁוּעָה זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וַאֲנֹהוּ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאַרְמְמָנָהוּ: יְהוָה אֵישׁ מִלְחָמָה יְהוָה שְׁמוֹ: מִרְפָּבַת פָּרַעַה וְחִילוֹ יִרְהוּ בַיָּם וּמִבְחַר שְׁלֹשִׁיו טָבְעוּ בַיָּם־סוּף: תְּהַמֵּת יִכְסִּימוּ יָרְדוּ בַמַּצּוֹלֹת כְּמוֹ־אָבֹן: יְמִינֶךָ יְהוָה נֶאֱדָרִי בַכַּחַּץ יְמִינֶךָ יְהוָה תִּרְעֵץ אוֹיְבֵי: וּבְרַב גְּאוּנֶךָ תִּהְרַס קַמְיֶךָ תִּשְׁלַח חֲרֹנְךָ יֹאכְלֵמוּ כֶקֶשׁ: וּבְרוּחַ אַפְיֶךָ נִעְרַמוּ מַיִם נְזָלוּם קִפְאוּ תְהַמֵּת בְּלִבַּיָּם: אָמַר אוֹיְבֵי אֶרְדֶּף אֲשִׁיג נִכְשִׁי אָרִיק חֲרָבִי תוֹרִישְׁמוּ יָדַי: נִשְׁפָּת בְּרוּחֶךָ כִּסְמוּ יָם צָלְלוּ כַעֲפֹרֶת בְּמַיִם אֲדִירִים: מִי־כַמְכָה בַּאֲלֵם יְהוָה מִי כַמְכָה נֶאֱדָר בְּקִדְשׁ נִטִּיתָ יְמִינֶךָ תִּבְלַעְמוּ אֶרֶץ: נְחִיתָ כַחֲסִדְךָ עַם־זוֹ גְּאַלְתָּ בְּהַלֵּתָ בַעֲזָךָ אֶל־גְּוֹה

continued

miracle of the Sea a moment of divine manifestation greater than either the exodus itself or even the revelation at Sinai. "Even a maidservant at the Sea saw God more clearly than the greatest of the prophets!" (Mekhilta, Shirata 3).

ADONAI IS A WARRIOR; GOD'S NAME IS ADONAI יהוה איש מלחמה יהוה שמו. The entire poem emphasizes God's role as warrior, triumphing over Israel's enemies. On the phrase "God's name is Adonai," the ancient rabbis remarked that God appears in many different guises: here as a warrior, elsewhere as a sage. No matter how varied God's manifestations, "God's name is Adonai"—the one God is always the same (Mekhilta, Shirata 4). The deliverer from oppression, the warrior who fights injustice, is the God of compassion.

ON THAT DAY ADONAI SAVED וַיִּשְׁעַי. In Exodus, these verses form the introduction to the Song at the Sea and so they are quoted here.

THE SONG AT THE SEA שירת הים. The recitation of the Song at the Sea is a later addition to P'sukei D'zimra and is not found in 1st-millennium orders of prayer, which included only psalms. The experience of the long exile may have created the need to include this triumphant song in each morning's service. The midrash associates this song with the final redemption and interprets its first word, az ("then"), as Moses' prophetic pronouncement that it would be sung in the future—since the verb yashir, understood in rabbinic Hebrew as "sang," is actually a future tense (Mekhilta, Shirata 1).

THIS IS MY GOD זֶה אֱלֹהֵי. Rabbinic tradition saw in the

Nations hear and quake;
panic grips the dwellers of Philistia.
Edom's chieftains are seized with terror,
trembling grips the mighty of Moab,
all the citizens of Canaan are dismayed,
dread and fear descend upon them.
Your overwhelming power makes them silent as stone,
while Your people, ADONAI—the people
whom You have redeemed—pass through peacefully.
Lead them and bring them to Your lofty mountain;
the abode You fashioned, ADONAI,
the sanctuary Your hands established.
ADONAI shall reign forever and ever.

Exodus 15:1–18

Dancing with Timbrels

The righteous women of that generation had faith that the blessed Holy One would perform miracles for them, so they brought timbrels with them from Egypt, to be able to sing and dance at such a moment.

—RASHI

Some congregations include this passage:

Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand and went out, followed by all the women, with timbrels and dance. And Miriam led them in response: "Sing to ADONAI who has triumphed gloriously, who cast horse and rider into the sea."

Exodus 15:20–21

► For sovereignty belongs to ADONAI, who rules the nations. Deliverers shall rise on Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau, and dominion shall belong to ADONAI. ADONAI shall be sovereign over all the earth. On that day ADONAI shall be one, and the name of God, one.

קִדְשׁוֹ: שְׁמָעוּ עַמִּים יְרֻגְזוּן חֵיל
אֲחֹז יִשְׁבִי פְּלִשְׁתִּים: אֲזוּ נִבְהָלוּ אֱלֹפֵי
אָדוֹם אֵילֵי מוֹאָב יֵאָחֲזוּמוּ רַעַד נְמֻגוּ
כָּל יִשְׁבֵי כְנָעַן: תִּפְּל עֲלֵיהֶם אִימָתָה
וּפְחָד בְּגִדְל זְרוּעֶה יִדְמּוּ כְּאֶבֶן עֵד-
יַעֲבֹר עִמָּךְ יְהוָה עֲדִי-יַעֲבֹר עִמֶּנּוּ
קִנִּיתָ: תִּבְאָמוּ וְתִטְעֲמוּ בְּהַר נִחְלָתְךָ מְכוֹן
לְשִׁבְתְּךָ פְּעֻלַת יְהוָה מִקְדָּשׁ אֲדַנִּי בּוֹנְנוּ
יְדִיךָ: יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:

שמות טו:א-יה

Some congregations include this passage:

וְתִקַּח מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה אַחֹת אַהֲרֹן אֶת-הַתֵּף בַּיָּדָה
וַתִּצְאֵן כָּל-הַנָּשִׁים אַחֲרֶיהָ בְּתַפִּים וּבְמַחֲלֹת: וַתַּעַן לָהֶם
מִרְיָם שִׁירָו לַיהוָה כִּי-נִגְאָה גָּאָה סוֹס וְרִכְבּוֹ רָמָה בַּיָּם:

שמות טו:ב-כא

◀ כִּי לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה וּמִשָּׁל בְּגוֹיִם. וְעַלֹּ מוֹשְׁעִים בְּהַר צִיּוֹן
לְשִׁפְט אֶת-הַר עֵשָׂו, וְהִיְתָה לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה.
וְהִיָּה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל-הָאָרֶץ,
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָּה יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

inspiration, became a chorus singing hymns of thanksgiving to God—together with Moses “the prophet” leading the men, and Miriam “the prophet” leading the women. He may be reflecting the prayer practice of the Jewish community of 1st-century Egypt.

FOR SOVEREIGNTY BELONGS TO ADONAI כִּי לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה. Psalm 22:29. The biblical selections of P’sukei D’zimra conclude by framing the powerful climax of the Song at the Sea with verses from Psalms and the Prophets that emphasize God’s sovereignty—and the universal recognition of God that will mark the end of days.

TO JUDGE THE MOUNTAIN OF ESAU עֵשָׂו אֶת-הַר עֵשָׂו. Obadiah 1:21. The mountain referred to is perhaps Palmyra—the red rock, home of the “red” Esau (Genesis 25:25). Throughout Jewish history, oppressors were identified with Esau. Thus in ancient times, Rome was midrashically referred to as Esau, and in modern times Jews talked about their German oppressors using that name—throughout history, a safe way to reference a tyrannical regime. Obadiah, quoted here, predicted that though Israel and Judah were bent low in his time, redemption would come soon. Thus the victory described in the Song at the Sea is connected and turned into a vision of ever-renewed deliverance of the people Israel.

AND THE NAME OF GOD, ONE וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד. Zechariah 14:9. The Aleinu prayer also ends with this verse, representing a wish for universal justice and peace. In that time, religious ideals will be not only a hope and a dream but also an experienced reality. The exodus from Egypt and the Egyptians’ defeat foreshadows this future time.

THEN MIRIAM THE PROPHET וְתִקַּח מִרְיָם. In the Torah, this passage immediately follows the Song at the Sea, emphasizing that all of Israel—men and women—celebrated together. That sense of inclusiveness is a fitting introduction to the following passage, Nishmat Kol Hai, “the breath of every living being,” which follows on the next page. Rashi (1040–1105, northern France), interpreting the Mekhilta (the 2nd-century commentary on Exodus), pictures Moses reciting the Song and the men repeating after him, and then Miriam reciting the Song and the women repeating after her. In commenting on Exodus 15:1, Midrash Sekhel Tov (12th century, Italy?) imagines Miriam reciting the first half of each verse and the women completing the verse. Philo (1st century C.E., Egypt) comments that the men and women, under the influence of divine

NISHMAT: THE SOUL OF ALL THAT LIVES

The soul of all that lives praises Your name, ADONAI our God; the spirit of all flesh exalts You, our sovereign, always. From the very beginning to the very end of time, You are God. Beside You, we have no sovereign who redeems and liberates us, rescues and saves us, shows us kindness and sustains us in every moment of anguish and distress; we have no sovereign but You: God of all ages, God of all creatures, master of all generations, extolled in endless praise, who guides the world with love and its creatures with compassion. ADONAI neither slumbers nor sleeps, but wakes those who sleep, rouses those who slumber, gives voice to those who cannot speak, frees those who are bound up, supports those who fall, straightens those who are bent over. It is You alone whom we thank. Were our mouths filled with song as the sea, our tongues to sing endlessly like countless waves, our lips to offer limitless praise like the sky, our eyes to shine like the sun and the moon, our arms to spread heavenward like eagles' wings, and our feet swift as deer, we would still be unable to fully express our gratitude to You, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, or to praise Your name for even one of the myriad moments of kindness with which You have blessed our ancestors and us.

continued

נִשְׁמַת כָּל־חַי תְּבָרַךְ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.
וְרוּחַ כָּל־בָּשָׂר תִּתְפָּאֵר וּתְרוֹמִם זְכוּרָה, מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, תָּמִיד.
מִן הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל,
וּמִבְּלַעֲדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ,
פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל, וּמַפְרִיֵס וּמְרַחֵם בְּכָל־עֵת צָרָה וְצוּקָה.
אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹה אַתָּה.
אֱלֹהֵי הָרְאשׁוֹנִים וְהָאַחֲרוֹנִים,
אֱלֹהֵי כָל־בְּרִיּוֹת,
אֲדוֹן כָּל־תּוֹלְדוֹת,
הַמְהַלֵּל בְּרַב הַתְּשַׁבְּחוֹת,
הַמְנַהֵג עוֹלָמוֹ בְּחַסֵּד, וּבְרִיּוֹתָיו בְּרַחֲמִים.
וַיְהוּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן,
הַמְעוֹרֵר יְשׁוּנִים,
וְהַמְקִיץ נֹרְדָמִים,
וְהַמְשִׁיחַ אֲלֵמִים,
וְהַמְתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,
וְהַסּוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים,
וְהַזּוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים.
לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים.
אֵלוֹ פִּינוּ מִלֵּא שִׁירָה בָּיָם,
וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה כְּהֶמוֹן גְּלִיגוֹ,
וְשִׁפְתוֹתֵינוּ שִׁבַּח כְּמִרְחַבֵי רְקִיעַ,
וְעֵינֵינוּ מְאִירוֹת כְּשִׁמְשׁ וְכִיָּרָח,
וַיִּדְּיֵנוּ פְרוֹשׁוֹת כְּנִשְׂרֵי שָׁמַיִם,
וְרַגְלֵינוּ קָלוֹת כְּאֵילוֹת,
אֵין אֲנַחְנוּ מְסַפְּיָקִים לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], וּלְבָרַךְ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ עַל אַחַת מֵאֲלָף
אֲלָפֵי אֲלָפִים וְרַבֵּי רַבּוֹת פְּעֻמִּים הַטּוֹבוֹת שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ עִם
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ] וְעַמָּנוּ.

continued

NISHMAT. Nishmat is a fitting conclusion to the psalms and biblical verses that we have just recited, as well as an introduction to the b'rakhot that we are about to recite. The last psalm we recited, Psalm 150, ends with the line "Let every breath be praise of God," a thought that is then taken up directly in the opening line of this prayer, "the soul (n'shamah, literally 'breath') of all that lives praises Your name." Following on the heels of the recitation of the Song at the Sea, Nishmat speaks of God's rescue of the people Israel from slavery in Egypt. Equally, Nishmat looks forward to the prayers that we are about to recite: in speaking of worshipping God with all of one's body and all of one's soul, it anticipates the Sh'ma, which talks of worshipping God with one's total being, and in its conclusion Nishmat includes language found in the first blessing of the Amidah. Nishmat repeatedly moves from prose statements to rhythmic poetic lines, as if each moment of prayer becomes an occasion for song. Though the poem emphasizes the limitation of words in describing or praising God, the poet suggests that the actions of our bodies, especially our breathing, can constitute a praise of God. Indeed, in this prayer our entire body is said to praise God. Some recite as an introduction to Nishmat the poem by Solomon ibn Gabirol on page 101.

From Egypt You redeemed us, ADONAI our God,
and from the house of bondage You liberated us.
In famine, You nourished us;
in prosperity, You sustained us;
from the sword, You saved us;
from pestilence, You spared us;
and from illness, bitter and long, You raised us up.
Your compassion has maintained us to this day,
Your love has not left us;
do not abandon us, ADONAI our God, ever.

And so the organs You formed within us,
the spirit and soul You breathed into our nostrils,
the tongue You placed in our mouths—
they will all thank and bless,
praise and acclaim,
exalt and honor,
sanctify and crown Your name, our sovereign.
Let every mouth thank You,
every tongue pledge loyalty,
every knee bend to You,
every body bow before You,
every heart be loyal to You,
and every fiber of our being chant Your name,
fulfilling the song of the psalmist:
“Every bone in my body cries out,
ADONAI, who is like You:
saving the poor from the powerful,
the afflicted and impoverished from those who prey on them?”
Who resembles You?
Who is equal to You?
Who compares to You?—
great, mighty, awe-inspiring, transcendent God,
to whom heaven and earth belong.
We will praise, acclaim, and honor You,
and bless Your sacred name, fulfilling David’s words:
“Let my soul bless ADONAI,
and every fiber of my being praise God’s sacred name.”

Bar'khi nafshi et Adonai, v'khol k'ravai et shem kodsho.

מִמִּצְרַיִם גָּאֲלָתָנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פְּדִיתָנוּ.
בְּרָעַב זִנְתָנוּ,
וּבְשָׂבַע כִּלְכַּלְתָּנוּ,
מִחֶרֶב הִצַּלְתָּנוּ,
וּמִדָּבָר מְלֹטְתָנוּ,
וּמִחַלְלִים רָעִים וּנְאֻמָּנִים דָּלִיתָנוּ.
עַד הַנְּהָ עֲזָרוּנוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ,
וְלֹא עֲזָבוּנוּ חֲסָדֶיךָ,
וְאַל תִּטְשֵׁנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לְנֶצַח.
עַל כֵּן אֲבָרִים שֹׁפְלֶגֶת בָּנוּ,
וְרוּחַ וּנְשָׁמָה שֹׁנֶפֶת בְּאַפֵּינוּ,
וְלִשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר שִׁמַּת בְּפִינוּ,
הֵן הֵם יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ וַיִּשְׁבְּחוּ וַיִּפְאָרוּ וַיְרוּמְמוּ
וַיַּעֲרִיצוּ וַיִּקְדִּישׁוּ וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ מִלְּכָנוּ.
כִּי כָל־פֶּה לְךָ יוֹדֶה,
וְכָל־לִשׁוֹן לְךָ תִּשָּׁבַע,
וְכָל־בֶּרֶךְ לְךָ תִּכְרַע,
וְכָל־קוֹמָה לְפָנֶיךָ תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה,
וְכָל־לִבְבוֹת יִירָאוּךָ,
וְכָל־קָרֵב וְכָל־זֵוֹת? זָמְרוּ לְשִׁמְךָ,
בְּדָבָר שֹׁפְתוֹב:
כָּל־עֲצָמוֹתַי תֹּאמְרֶנָּה, יְהוָה מִי כָמוֹךָ,
מִצִּיל עֲנִי מִחֶזֶק מִמֶּנּוּ, וְעֲנִי וְאֲבִיוֹן מִגְּדוּלוֹ.
מִי יִדְמָה לְךָ,
וּמִי יִשׁוּה לְךָ,
וּמִי יַעֲרֶךְ־לְךָ.
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיוֹן, קִנְיָ שָׁמַיִם וְאֶרֶץ.
נְהַלְלָךָ וְנִשְׁבַּחְךָ, וְנִפְאָרְךָ, וְנִבְרַךְ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ קְדוֹשׁ, כְּפָאֵמוֹר:
לְדוֹד, בְּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה
וְכָל־קָרְבִי אֶת־שִׁמְךָ קְדוֹשׁ.

EVERY TONGUE . . . EVERY
KNEE BOW . . . AND EVERY
Based on Isaiah 45:23.

EVERY BONE IN MY BODY
CRIES OUT . . . This
verse has been cited as the
basis in Jewish tradition for
bodily movement during
prayer. This is the seventh
occurrence in this passage
of the word *kol* (meaning
“all” or “every”).

GREAT, MIGHTY . . . GOD
The great and the mighty.
This phrase anticipates the first
blessing of the Amidah.

LET MY SOUL BLESS
MY LORD . . . Psalm 103:1.

Faith in God

This faith in oneself is not merely faith in one's ability to do things. The latter is necessary as a part of mental health, and is as important as bodily health. The faith in oneself which is not only a prerequisite of faith in God, but is in a sense faith in God, implies being able to identify in oneself a principle of life which is not a derivative from one's natural capacities, but which belongs to a different order of existence. In the yearning for salvation, for life's worthwhileness, for truth, goodness, and beauty for their own sake, for freedom, justice and peace in society, a human being experiences something supra-human or supra-natural. One who experiences that yearning in one's self cannot be so vain or unreasonable as to believe that he or she is alone in the possession of such yearning. The most difficult step in achieving faith in God is thus the first one of achieving faith in oneself.

—MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

Prayer

What begins with a person's request ends with God's presence;
what starts in the narrowness of the ego, emerges into the wide expanse of humanity;
what originates in concern for the self becomes a concern for others and concern for God's concern;
what commences in petition concludes as prayer.

—SAMUEL DRESNER

The Presence of God

The prayers that you pray are the very presence of God.

—PINHAS OF KORETZ

On Festivals, the leader begins here:

GOD, in the fullness of Your power,
Great, in accord with your glorious name,
Mighty, in all of time,
Awesome, in your awe-inspiring deeds,
Sovereign, enthroned on high,

On Shabbat, the leader begins here:

► dwelling forever, exalted and holy is Your name—
as the psalmist has written:
“Sing, O you righteous, to ADONAI;
praise offered by the upright is lovely.”

You are exalted in the speech of the upright;
You are blessed in the words of the righteous;
You are glorified in the language of the devoted;
You are sanctified in the midst of the holy congregation.

So the choruses of the thousands of Your people, the house of Israel, joyously glorify Your name in every generation.

► For it is the duty of all creation, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, to acknowledge and acclaim You, to bless and honor You, to exalt and glorify You, to praise, laud, and exalt You, adding our own tribute and songs to those of David, Jesse's son, Your anointed servant.

On Festivals, the leader begins here:

הָאֵל בְּתַעֲצוּמוֹת עֲזָה,
הַגָּדוֹל בְּכַבּוֹד שְׁמֵהּ,
הַגָּבוֹר לְנִצְחָה,
וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּנוֹרְאוֹתָיִךְ,
הַמְּלִיךְ הַיּוֹשֵׁב עַל פֶּסֶא רֵם וְנִשְׂא.

On Shabbat, the leader begins here:

◀ שׁוֹכֵן עַד, מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ.
וְכַתּוּב, רַנְנֵי צְדִיקִים בִּיהוָה, לְיִשְׂרָאֵל נְאֻה תִּהְיֶה.

בְּפִי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלֵּל,
וּבְדַבְרֵי צְדִיקִים תִּתְפַּרֵּךְ,
וּבְלִשׁוֹן חֲסִידִים תִּתְרוֹמֵם,
וּבְקִרְבַּי קְדוּשֵׁים תִּתְקַדֵּשׁ.

וּבְמִקְהֵלוֹת רַבּוֹת עִמָּךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּרִנָּה יִתְפָּאֵר שְׁמֵךְ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, בְּכָל־דּוֹר וְדוֹר.
◀ שְׁכֵן חוֹבֵת פְּלִי־הַיְצוּרִים לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵהֶי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], לְהוֹדוֹת, לְהַלֵּל לְשִׁבְחָךְ, לְפָאֵר,
לְרוֹמֵם, לְהַדִּיר, לְבָרֵךְ, לְעַלֵּה וּלְקַלֵּס, עַל פְּלִי־דַבְרֵי
שִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבְּחוֹת דָּוִד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל עַבְדְּךָ מְשִׁיחֶךָ.

הָאֵל. An anonymous early medieval poet created a short poem elaborating each of the adjectives associated with God at the beginning of the first paragraph of the Amidah (*ha-El ha-gadol ha-gibor v'ha-nora*, “Great, mighty, awe-inspiring God”), concluding with the description from the end of that Amidah blessing where God is called *melekh*, sovereign.

DWELLING FOREVER שׁוֹכֵן עַד. At this point there is a shift to the formal morning service, which is marked musically and in some cases by a change of prayer leader. On festivals, there is a more elaborate description of the relationship to God and so the shift occurs earlier at *ha-El* (“God,” at the top of this page).

SING רַנְנֵי. Psalm 33:1.

YOU ARE EXALTED IN THE SPEECH OF THE UPRIGHT בְּפִי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלֵּל. The vision of God seated in heaven pans out to the chorus of the faithful singing on earth. Note that the second word of each line is an acrostic spelling out the name “Isaac” (*yitzhak*).

Chorus of Song

The Ḥasidic master Simḥah Bunam once offered a play on the phrase *shirei zimrah*, “chorus of song.” He vocalized the letters differently—Hebrew written without vowels readily allows for this—and read it as *shayarei zimrah*, “that which is left over after the singing,” and suggested that God most delights in the inexpressible feelings that remain in the heart after the singing has ended.

The Duty to Praise

Maimonides, the great medieval Jewish philosopher and codifier, asserts that there is an obligation to pray. He enumerates this obligation in his list of 613 mitzvot. Other medieval authorities disagree and find no warrant for the obligation in the Torah. So why does Maimonides turn prayer into an obligation, when our common-sense view is that prayer is an offering of the heart which we choose to give?

Maimonides understands the entire system of mitzvot as fashioning human beings who are moral and who come to know God in deeper ways. Prayer inculcates a sense of appreciation and humility before the wonders of life—essential aspects of a religious path. Thus he sees prayer as an essential part of the process of religious formation.

Concluding B'rakhah

May Your name be praised, always and everywhere, our sovereign, God, great and holy. For it is fitting, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, to sing songs of praise to You, to ascribe strength and sovereignty, holiness and eternity to You, to praise and exalt You, to thank and bless You, now and forever. *Barukh atah ADONAI*, Sovereign God, to whom we offer thanks and ascribe wonders, who delights in the chorus of song—the sovereign God, giving life to all worlds.

Ḥatzi Kaddish

Leader: May God’s great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God’s wish. May God’s sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen*.

Congregation and Leader: May God’s great name be acknowledged forever and ever! *Y’hei sh’meih raba m’varakh l’alam u-l’almei almaya*.

Leader: May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b’rikh hu*, is truly [on *Shabbat Shuvah* we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: *Amen*.

יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמֶךָ לְעַד מְלַכְנּוּ, הָאֵל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְדוֹשׁ
בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ. כִּי לָךְ נָאָה, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ],
שִׁיר וּשְׁבַחָה, הִלֵּל וְזַמְרָה, עֵז וּמִמְשָׁלָה, נִצַּח,
גְּדֻלָּה וּגְבוּרָה, תְּהִלָּה וְתַפְאֶרֶת, קְדוּשָׁה וּמְלֻכוֹת.
◀ בְּרֻכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל בְּתַשְׁבּוּחוֹת, אֵל הַהוֹדָאוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת,
הַבוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זַמְרָה, מֶלֶךְ, אֵל, חַי הָעוֹלָמִים.

חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

Leader: יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵךָ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא, בְּרַעוּתָהּ,
וְיִמְלִיךְ מְלֻכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader: יְהֵא שְׁמֵךָ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמֵיָא.

Leader: יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵךָ דְקַדְשָׁא, בְּרִיף הוּא,
לְעֵלְמָא מִן כָּל־ [לְעֵלְמָא לְעֵלְמָא מְכָל־] [on *Shabbat Shuvah* we substitute:
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנִחַמְתָּא דְאֲמִירָן בְּעֵלְמָא,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

MAY YOUR NAME BE PRAISED יִשְׁתַּבַּח. This *b'rakhah* marks the completion of P'sukei D'zimra, which began with Barukh She-amar on page 122. The two *b'rakhot* are considered complementary and one is not recited without the other; the psalms and biblical passages of P'sukei D'zimra are preceded and followed by these formal blessings, just as the Torah reading itself is surrounded by blessings.

HATZI KADDISH. In Jewish liturgical usage, the Ḥatzi (or “partial”) Kaddish, calling us to praise the name of God, marks the end of a section of the service.

The Sh'ma and Its Blessings

The Effect of Prayer

Prayer is a way of sensitizing ourselves to the wonder of life, of expressing gratitude, and of praising and acknowledging the reality of God. One need not believe that God will interfere with the ongoing process of nature to feel that prayer is worthwhile. We may have different understandings of what God is. No definition we have is sufficient or answers all doubts and questions. To be aware that God exists—that there is more in the universe than physical matter, that a moral order is inherent in creation, that humans are responsible for their conduct and can help to bring about the perfection, or at least the improvement, of the world and of life—that is sufficient reason for prayer.

—REUVEN HAMMER

The Congregation

Tabernacle and Temple gave visible assurance of God's care and accessibility. But once that locus of divine indwelling was destroyed, what could possibly replace it? The destruction of God's house should have augured the demise of Judaism. The well-known answer, of course, is that the rabbis, who replaced the priests at the helm of the nation, came up with the institution of the synagogue. But what, exactly, constituted a synagogue? How would we have recognized one? The heart of this radically new institution was neither a building nor a book, but a number. Whereas, prior to the Temple's end, holiness was ascribed to a sacred place that could not be duplicated, after 70 C.E. holiness resided inconspicuously in the quorum of ten without which basic communal rituals could not be enacted. To conduct a worship service, to recite certain prayers, to chant from the Torah or Prophets, to perform a wedding or a funeral, all required a *minyan* (Mishnah Megillah 4:3). . . . The Talmud echoes the new salience of a *minyan*. Once, Rabbi Yitzhak asked his friend, Rav Nahman, why he had failed to come to the synagogue to pray. "I couldn't," he responded. "So you should have gathered ten men on your own to pray," chided Rabbi Yitzhak. "It was too troublesome." "Well, at least," needled Rabbi Yitzhak, "you should have had a synagogue official come to inform you when exactly the congregation would be praying [so that you might join them from afar]." At which point, Rav Nahman protested, "What's this all about?" "We have a tradition," asserted Rabbi Yitzhak, "that goes back to Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai that this is the intent of the verse, 'As for me, may my prayer come to You, O Lord, at a favorable moment' (Psalm 69:14). And what indeed constitutes that 'favorable moment'? It is when the congregation is absorbed in prayer" (Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 7b–8a).

—ISMAR SCHORSCH

A MEDITATION FOR BAR'KHU

Almighty no thing exists without You and none can be like You the source of all maker and creator

You have no image eyes observe but the soul lodged in the heart recognizes You and sees

Your glory's breadth encompassing all for in You all finds its place but You occupy no place

my soul seeing but unseen come thank the seeing but unseen and bless

Bar'khu: The Call to Worship Together

Bar'khu, the leader's invitation to prayer, is recited while standing. The leader bows when saying the word "bar'khu" (praise) and stands straight when reciting the name of God. Similarly, the congregation bows at the word "barukh" (praise) and straightens to full height at the recitation of God's name.

Leader:

Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed.

Congregation, then the leader repeats:

† Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed forever and ever.

Barukh Adonai ha-m'vorakh l'olam va-ed.

We are seated.

קריאת שמע וברכותיה

רְשׁוֹת לְבָרְכוּ
מִשְׁגִּיב בְּכַחוֹ מִי בְּלַתּוֹ וְכִמְהוּ?
כִּי הוּא מְקוֹר הַבַּל, יִצְרוּ וְעִשְׂהוּ.
כֵּן לוֹ דְמוּת עֵינַי לֹא רְאִיתָהּ, בְּלִתִּי
נִפְשׁ בְּלֵב תִּכְבִּיר אֹתוֹ וְתִצְפְּהוּ;
עֲצָם כְּבוֹדוֹ הִכִּיל כֹּל, וְכֵן נִקְרָא:
מְקוֹם לְכֹל כִּי לֹא מְקוֹם יִכִּילֶהוּ,
רְאָה וְלֹא נִרְאִיתָ, לְרְאָה וְלֹא נִרְאָה
בְּאֵי וְהוֹדִי אֶת־אֲדֹנָי וּבְרַכְהוּ.

Bar'khu, the leader's invitation to prayer, is recited while standing. The leader bows when saying the word בְּרַכְכוּ and stands straight when reciting the name of God. Similarly, the congregation bows at the word בְּרוּךְ and straightens to full height at the recitation of God's name.

Leader:

בְּרַכְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה הַמְּבַרְךְ.

Congregation, then the leader repeats:

† בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבַרְךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

We are seated.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RECITATION OF THE SH'MA. The call to worship marks the formal beginning of the Shāharit (morning) service. Shāharit always includes two central moments: the Recitation of the Sh'ma, and the Amidah (the silent prayer). *B'rakhot* surrounding the Sh'ma serve to interpret the themes of its biblical verses. Preceding the Sh'ma, in which we declare that God is one, are two *b'rakhot*. The first affirms that God is the creator of all, further remarking on the wonder of creation and the morning light. The first paragraph of the Sh'ma speaks of the love for God, and so the second *b'rakhah* acknowledges the inverse: God's love of the people Israel as manifest in the gifts of the teachings of Torah. A single *b'rakhah* follows the morn-

ing recitation of the Sh'ma; it speaks of redemption, reflecting the theme of the exodus from Egypt, which is introduced in the third paragraph of the Sh'ma.

ALMIGHTY מִשְׁגִּיב בְּכַחוֹ. A meditation for Bar'khu written by Yehudah Halevi (Spain, d. 1141).

BAR'KHU: THE CALL TO WORSHIP TOGETHER. The leader calls the congregation together as a *minyan*; the congregation, by responding, acknowledges its being assembled for prayer.

TO WHOM ALL PRAISE IS DIRECTED הַמְּבַרְךְ. The Talmud of the Land of Israel explains the word *ha-m'vorakh* to mean "whom all of us praise" (Berakhot 7:3).

All Thank You

It is not you alone, or we,
or those others who pray;
all things pray, all things
pour forth their souls.
The heavens pray,
the earth prays,
every creature and
every living thing prays.
In all life, there is longing.
Creation is itself but a
longing,
a kind of prayer of the
Almighty.

—MICHA JOSEPH
BERDYCZEWSKI

God of All

Everything you see en-
wraps holiness: take away
the outer shell and gaze at
the spiritual beauty.

—HILLEL ZEITLIN

First B'rakhah before the Sh'ma:
The Creation of Light

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space,
forming light and creating darkness, bringing harmony
while creating all.

On Festivals occurring on weekdays, we continue in the middle of page 152.

On Shabbat, we recite:

All thank You,
all praise You,
and all declare: "None is as holy as ADONAI."
All will praise You forever,
creator of all.

Each day, God, You raise the gates of the east,
open the windows of the sky,
bring forth the sun from its place
and the moon from where it sits,
illuminating the entire world and all its inhabitants
whom You created, with mercy.
With kindness You illumine the earth and all who dwell on it,
and in Your goodness, day after day, You renew creation.
Sovereign, You alone ruled on high from the very beginning,
praised, glorified, and exalted since earliest time.

Eternal One, in Your great mercy, have compassion on us.
Source of our strength, our protecting fortress,
our saving shield, our stronghold.
None is like You, none is beside You,
nothing exists without You,
and none can be compared to You:
none is like You, ADONAI our God, in this world,
none but You will be our sovereign in the world that is coming,
no one but You exists, who will redeem us
and usher in the messianic age,
and none can compare to You, our deliverer,
giving life to the dead.

Ein k'erk'kha v'ein zulatekha, efes bilt'kha u-mi domeh lakh.
Ein k'erk'kha . . . ba-olam hazeh v'ein zulat'kha . . . ba-olam haba.
Efes bilt'kha . . . limot ha-mashiah v'ein domeh l'kha lithiyat ha-meitim.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
יוצר אור ובורא חשך,
עשה שלום ובורא את-הכל.

On Festivals occurring on weekdays, we continue in the middle of page 152.

On Shabbat, we recite:

הכל יודוך
והכל ישבחוך,
והכל יאמרו אין קדוש ביהוה.
הכל ירוממוך סלה,
יוצר הכל.

האל הפותח בכל-יום דלתות שערי מזרח
ובוקע חלונֵי רקיע,
מוציא חמה ממקומה ולבנה ממכון שבתה,
ומאיר לעולם כלו וליושביו שברא במדת רחמים.
המאיר לארץ ולדרים עליה ברחמים
ובטובו מחדש בכל-יום תמיד מעשה בראשית.
המלך המרום לבדו מאז,
המשבח והמפאר והמתנשא מימות עולם.
אלהי עולם ברחמיך הרבים רחם עלינו,
אדון עזנו צור משגבנו.
מגן ישענו משגב בעדנו.
אין כְּעֶרְפֶּךָ ואין זולתך,
אֶפֶס בְּלָתְךָ ומי דומה לך.
אין כְּעֶרְפֶּךָ יהוה אלהינו בעולם הזה
ואין זולתך מלכנו לחיי העולם הבא.
אֶפֶס בְּלָתְךָ גואלנו לימות המשיח
ואין דומה לך מושיענו לתחית המתים.

NONE IS LIKE YOU אין כְּעֶרְפֶּךָ. The poet is playing with a variety of biblical verses: Isaiah 40:18, "what image can be ascribed to You"; 1 Samuel 2:2, "there is none beside You"; and Isaiah 40:25, "to whom can you compare God."

MESSIANIC AGE לימות המשיח. The poet progresses through stages of redemption from olam ha-ba, the world that is coming, to y'mot ha-mashiah, the messianic age, to t'hiyat ha-meitim, life given to the dead.

FORMING LIGHT יוצר אור. This opening b'rakhah before the Sh'ma acknowledges that we experience God, first of all, through witnessing the miracle of creation. Praying in the morning, we are asked to pay attention to the wonder of the dawn, of sunlight, and of a new day. In the liturgy, the break of dawn is then imagined as a chorus of song in which we join.

This b'rakhah is adapted from a verse in Isaiah (45:7), which reads oseh shalom u-vorei ra, "who makes peace and creates evil." The prophet insists that both good and evil come from the one God. But in the moment of prayer, we focus on all for which we can be thankful, beginning with the light that makes life possible; therefore, the ancient rabbis transformed this biblical verse and changed the ending to read "creating all."

ALL הכל. The word hakol, "all," occurs five times in quick succession and refers to the totality of humanity, all earthly creatures and forces, as well as the heavenly bodies and the most distant galaxies. It echoes the last word of the opening b'rakhah (borei et ha-kol, "creating all," at the top of this page) and anticipates the affirmation of the one God, who is God of all, and whom we are about to praise in the Sh'ma.

A Prayer for the World

Let the rain come and wash away the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds held and nurtured over generations. Let the rain wash away the memory of the hurt, the neglect. Then let the sun come out and fill the sky with rainbows. Let the warmth of the sun heal us wherever we are broken. Let it burn away the fog so that we can see each other clearly. Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our selfishness. So that we can share the joys and feel the sorrows of our neighbors. And let the light of the sun be so strong that we will see all people as our neighbors. Let the earth, nourished by rain, bring forth flowers to surround us with beauty. And let the mountains teach our hearts to reach upward to heaven. Amen.

—HAROLD KUSHNER

God, master of all existence, praised by all that breathes, the world is filled with Your greatness and glory; knowledge and understanding surround You.

Exalted above holy beings, resplendent in glory on Your chariot, integrity and mercy stand before Your throne, love and merit accompany Your presence.

How good are the lights that our God created—fashioned with understanding, intelligence, and insight; endowed with the strength and power to have dominion over earthly realms.

Fully luminous, they gleam brightly, radiating splendor throughout the world. Happy as they go forth, joyous on their return, they accomplish, with awe, the will of their creator.

They give glory and honor to the name of God, invoking God’s sovereignty with joyful song. God called forth the sun, and light dawned, then considered and set the cycles of the moon.

And so the array of heaven, *s’rafim*, *ofanim*, and holy beings, all the heavenly hosts, give praise, and glory, and honor to God—

El adon al kol hama-asim, barukh u-m’vorakh b’fi kol n’shamah. Godlo v’tuvo malei olam, da-at u-t’vunah sov’vim oto. Ha-mitga-eh al hayot ha-kodesh, v’nehdar b’khavod al ha-merkavah. Z’khut u-mishor lifnei khiso, hesed v’rahamim lifnei kh’vodo. Tovim me’orot she-bara eloheinu, y’tzaram b’da-at b’vinah u-v’haskel. Ko-ah u-g’vurah natan ba-hem, lihyot moshlim b’kerev teveil. M’lei-im ziv u-m’fikim nogah, na-eh zivam b’khol ha-olam. S’meiḥim b’tzeitam v’sasim b’vo-am, osim b’eimah r’tzon konam. Pe’eir v’khavod notnim lishmo, tzoholah v’rinah l’zeikher malkhuto. Kara la-shemesh va-yizrah or, ra-ah v’hitkin tzurat ha-l’vanah. Shevah notnim lo kol tz’va marom, Tiferet u-g’dulah, s’rafim v’ofanim v’hayot ha-kodesh.

אל אֲדוֹן עַל כָּל־הַמַּעֲשִׂים,
בְּרוּךְ וּמְבֹרָךְ בְּפִי כָּל־נְשָׁמָה,
גָּדְלוֹ וְטוּבוֹ מֵלֵא עוֹלָם,
דַּעַת וְתְבוּנָה סוֹכְבִים אוֹתוֹ.

הַמִּתְנַאֵה עַל חַיּוֹת הַקִּדְשׁ,
וְנִהְדָר בְּכְבוֹד עַל הַמְרַפְּבָה,
זְכוּת וּמִישׁוֹר לְפָנַי כְּסֹא,
חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים לְפָנַי כְּבוֹדוֹ.

טוֹבִים מְאֻרֹת שְׂפָרָא אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
יְצָרִם בְּדַעַת בְּבִינָה וּבְהַשְׁפֵּל,
בָּח וּגְבוּרָה נָתַן בָּהֶם,
לְחַיּוֹת מוֹשְׁלִים בְּקָרֵב תִּבְּל.

מְלֵאִים זִיו וּמְפִיקִים גְּבוּה,
נְאֻה זִיוִם בְּכַל־הָעוֹלָם,
שְׂמִיחִים בְּצִאתָם וְשִׁשִׁים בְּבוֹאָם,
עֲשִׂים בְּאֵימָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם.

פְּאֵר וְכְבוֹד נוֹתְנִים לְשָׁמוּ,
צָהָלָה וְרָנָה לְזָכֵר מְלֻכוֹתוֹ.
קָרָא לְשִׁמְשׁ וַיִּזְרַח אוֹר,
רָאָה וַיהִתְקִין צוּרַת הַלְבָנָה.

שָׁבַח נוֹתְנִים לוֹ כָּל־צִבְא מְרוֹם,
תַּפְאֶרֶת וּגְדֻלָּה, שְׂרָפִים וְאוֹפָנִים וְחַיּוֹת הַקִּדְשׁ.

GOD, MASTER אל אֲדוֹן. This piyyut, commonly attributed to mystics of the 1st millennium, uses imagery based on the visions of Ezekiel that describe a variety of heavenly hosts. It further develops the theme enunciated in the previous prayers that everything in creation praises God. Here that thought is extended to the heavenly hosts: even heavenly powers offer praise to God. The use of an alphabetical acrostic may suggest that God’s word is the primary constitutive element of all creation.

HAPPY שְׂמִיחִים. Not infrequently in alphabetical poetry, the letter *sin* (ש) is substituted for the similarly sounding *samekh* (ס), as it is here. Such substitutions are even found in biblical acrostics. Most, if not all, worshippers in ancient times did not have prayer-books, and this substitution is quite natural in an oral culture.

S’RAFIM . . . OFANIM שְׂרָפִים . . . אוֹפָנִים. Angelic songs figure prominently in ancient mystical texts. Descriptions of different groups of angels singing hymns to God surely mirrored the seekers’ own

mystical experiences. The angels pictured here are closest to God’s throne. In Jewish mystical thought, the *ofanim* are the wheels of God’s chariot, first mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel; the *s’rafim* are the fiery angels pictured as flaming serpents in Isaiah’s vision of heaven. The holy beings (*hayot ha-kodesh*) were thought of as the legs upholding God’s throne.

God Blessed
the Seventh Day

It is written, "God blessed the seventh day" (Genesis 2:3). In what way is the seventh day blessed? On Shabbat a person's face shines differently than it does during the week.

—GENESIS RABBAH

God, the World, and Us

A Hasidic master taught: It is written in many books that if one wants to enter the inner world of prayer, to present speech before God, one needs, at the time of prayer, to attach oneself to all that is living and all that exists in the world. The meaning of this is as it is written in the Book of Psalms, "You created all with wisdom" (104:24)—that is, there is nothing in this world which is, God forbid, extraneous.... When a person seeking inspiration pays attention to this—reaching for an understanding of that which is clothed by everything in this world, animal life, plant life, and sheer matter, everything that was created; and arouses one's heart with this wisdom, speaks of it before God with love and reverence—then that person fulfills the will of the creator, who created the world in all its fullness.

—ZEV WOLF OF ZHITOMIR

On Shabbat, we continue:

who ceased work on the seventh day and ascended the throne of praise, robed in majesty for the day of rest, calling Shabbat a delight.

Such is the distinction of the seventh day, that God ceased all work, and so the seventh day itself praises God and says, "A song of Shabbat: it is good to thank ADONAI." Let all creatures likewise celebrate and bless God, offering praise, honor, and glory to God—the ruler, creator of all, who, in holiness, grants peaceful rest to the people Israel on the holy Shabbat. May Your name, ADONAI our God, be hallowed and may the thought of You, our sovereign, be celebrated in the heavens above and on earth below, though the praise due You, our redeemer, is beyond any offered by Your handiwork or the lights You have made—may they continue always to sing Your glory.

Continue on the next page.

On Festivals occurring on weekdays, we recite:

With kindness, You illumine the earth and all who dwell on it; in Your goodness, You renew creation day after day. How varied are Your works, ADONAI, all fashioned with wisdom; the world in its entirety is Your dominion. You alone ruled on high from the very beginning, praised, glorified, and exalted since earliest time. God of the universe, with Your great kindness, have compassion on us. Source of our strength, our protecting fortress, our saving shield, our stronghold.

Almighty, blessed, creator of all who dwell on earth, the firmament and goodly heavens are illuminated with Your justice, kindness, and light; they make Your name an object of praise; quietly, resolutely, soulfully all tell in unified voice of Your wise, excellent, and zealous care.

You are to be praised, ADONAI our God, for the wondrous work of Your hands, and for the radiant lights that You fashioned, reflecting Your glory always.

On Shabbat, we continue:

לֹאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַת מְכַלְהֵמְעֵשִׂים, בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַתְּעַלָּה וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל כְּסֵא כְבוֹדוֹ, תִּפְאֶרֶת עֲטָה לְיוֹם הַמְּנוּחָה, עֲנֵג קִרְא לְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִת. זֶה שֶׁבַח שֶׁל יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי, שָׁבוּ שְׁבַת אֵל מְכַלְמֵלֵאכְתּוֹ. וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְשַׁבַּח וְאוֹמֵר: מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִת, טוֹב לְהַדוֹת לַיהוָה. לְפִיכָּךְ יִפְאָרוּ וַיִּבְרְכוּ לֹאֵל כָּל־יְצוּרָיו. שֶׁבַח יָקָר וּגְדֹלָה יִתְּנוּ לֹאֵל מְלֹךְ יוֹצֵר כָּל הַמְּנַחֵיל מְנוּחָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ בְּיוֹם שְׁבַת קֹדֶשׁ. שְׁמֵךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִתְקַדֵּשׁ, וְזִכְרֶךָ מְלַבְּנוּ יִתְפָּאֵר, בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת. ◀ תִּתְבָּרַךְ מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ, עַל שְׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יְדִיךָ, וְעַל מְאוּרֵי אוֹר שְׁעֵשִׂית, יִפְאָרוּךְ סְלָה.

Continue on the next page.

On Festivals occurring on weekdays, we recite:

הַמְּאִיר לְאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עֲלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים, וּבְטוֹבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל־יוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית. מָה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה, כָּלֵם בְּחֻכְמָה עֲשִׂית, מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנָךְ. הַמְּלַךְ הַמְּרוֹמָם לְבָדוֹ מֵאֵז, הַמְּשַׁבַּח וְהַמְּפָאֵר וְהַמְּתַנַּשֵּׂא מִימֹת עוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ, אֲדוֹן עֲזָנוּ, צוֹר מְשֻׁבְּבֵנוּ, מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ, מְשֻׁבָּב בְּעַדְנוּ.

אֵל בְּרוּךְ, גְּדוֹל דַּעְהָ, הַכִּין וּפָעַל זְהָרֵי חֲמָה. טוֹב יֵצֵר כְּבוֹד לְשִׁמוֹ. מְאֹרוֹת נִתְּנָן סְבִיבוֹת עֲזוֹ. פְּנוֹת צְבָאוֹ קְדוֹשִׁים, רוֹמְמֵי שְׂדֵי, תְּמִיד מְסֻפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֵל וּקְדוּשָׁתוֹ.

◀ תִּתְבָּרַךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל שְׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יְדִיךָ, וְעַל מְאוּרֵי אוֹר שְׁעֵשִׂית יִפְאָרוּךְ סְלָה.

GOD, WHO CEASED WORK לֹאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַת. This prayer forms a continuous narrative out of a disparate series of biblical verses and rabbinic comments. Already in the Bible, the seventh day is spoken of as affecting God's inner life: God was renewed (va-yinafash) on the seventh day (Exodus 31:17). The ancient rabbis pictured God as achieving full sovereignty only on Shabbat, and they personified the relationship in mutual terms: Shabbat itself praises God and chants Psalm 92, "A Song of Shabbat."

HOW VARIED ARE YOUR WORKS מָה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ. Psalm 104:24.

ALMIGHTY, BLESSED אֵל בְּרוּךְ. This early anonymous acrostic poem has four beats to the line and a rhyming pattern of aa, bb, cc, with a concluding b. Joel Hoffman, a contemporary scholar, writes: "The meaning of the individual words here was never the point. They were chosen for their meter and their initial letter." In this conception, the Hebrew alphabet itself is seen as an instrument of creation. Our translation here is impelled by this idea and is alphabetical, capturing the meaning of the text in a close, but not quite literal, translation.

ALWAYS סְלָה. The biblical meaning of this word, which occurs frequently in the Book of Psalms, is unknown. The ancient rabbis, interpreting the biblical text, thought that it meant "forever," and that is its liturgical meaning here.

In the Beginning

In the beginning God created the heavens that actually are not and the earth that wants to touch them. In the beginning God created threads stretching between them— between the heavens that actually are not and the earth that cries out for help. And God created humans, for each person is a prayer and a thread touching what is not with a tender and delicate touch.

—RIVKA MIRIAM
(translated by David C. Jacobson)

Angels

The Hebrew word for angel is *malakh*, which also means “messenger,” one who is sent. . . . Unsuspecting and unaware. Consumed by their own plans and itineraries. Busy at work on their own schemes . . . people chosen to be messengers of the Most High rarely even know that they are God’s messengers. . . . I do not know how many times in one’s life one is also a messenger. But for everyone it is at least once.

—LAWRENCE KUSHNER

All services continue here:

KEDUSHAH D’YOTZER: THE ANGELIC PRAISE OF GOD

You are to be praised, our protector, our sovereign, our redeemer, creator of celestial beings. Our sovereign, Your name is to be acclaimed forever; You fashion beings that serve You, and Your servants all stand at the edges of the universe, proclaiming reverently with one voice the words of the living God, the sovereign of the universe.

► All of them loved, all of them pure, all of them mighty, and all of them in reverence and awe carry out the will of the one who has dominion over them. In purity and in holiness, all of them raise their voices, in song and chant, to praise, bless, glorify, extol, hallow, and celebrate the name of God, the great, mighty, awe-inspiring sovereign, the Holy One.

et shem ha-El, ha-melekh ha-gadol, ha-gibor v’hanora kadosh hu.

► Each turns to another as they proclaim their loyalty to God, and each gives permission to the other to hallow their creator; in a clear voice and with sacred speech, together as one, they respond with awe, saying:

Holy, holy, holy is *ADONAI Tz’va-ot*, the whole world is filled with God’s glory.

Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai Tz’va-ot, m’lo khol ha-aretz k’vodo.

► With a deafening sound, the *ofanim* and other holy beings rise up opposite the *s’rafim* and proclaim their praise: Praised is *ADONAI*’s glory wherever God dwells.

Barukh k’vod Adonai mimkomo.

They offer adulation to God, whom they bless. They chant songs and voice their praise to the sovereign, the living and enduring God. For God alone achieves victory, creates anew, masters war, sows righteousness, cultivates deliverance, effects healing, is praised with reverence, and is the author of wonders. ► In God’s goodness, the work of creation is renewed each day, as the psalmist declared: “Thank the creator of the great lights, for God’s love is everlasting.” Cause a new light to shine on Zion, and may we all soon be worthy of its illumination.

Barukh atah ADONAI, creator of lights.

Or hadash al tziyon ta-ir v’nizkeh khulanu m’heirah l’oro.

All services continue here:

תְּתַבְּרֶךָ צוֹרְנוּ מַלְכֵנוּ וְגַאֲלָנוּ בּוֹרֵא קְדוּשִׁים.
יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמֶךָ לְעַד מַלְכֵנוּ, יוֹצֵר מְשֻׁרְתִים,
וְאֲשֶׁר מְשֻׁרְתָיו בְּלֶם עוֹמְדִים בְּרוּם עוֹלָם
וּמְשֻׁמִיעִים בְּיִרְאָה יָחַד בְּקוֹל,
דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמְלֶךְ עוֹלָם.

◀ בְּלֶם אֱהוּבִים, בְּלֶם בְּרוּרִים, בְּלֶם גְּבוּרִים,
וּכְלֶם עוֹשִׁים בְּאִימָה וּבְיִרְאָה רְצוֹן קוֹנֵם.
וּכְלֶם פּוֹתְחִים אֶת־פִּיהֶם בְּקִדְשָׁה וּבִטְהָרָה,
בְּשִׁירָה וּבְזִמְרָה, וּמְבָרְכִים וּמְשַׁבְּחִים,
וּמְפַאֲרִים וּמְעֲרִיצִים, וּמְקַדְּשִׁים וּמְמַלְכִים:

אֶת־שֵׁם הָאֵל, הַמְּלֶךְ, הַגָּדוֹל, הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא קְדוּשׁ הוּא.
◀ וְכֻלָּם מְקַבְּלִים עֲלֵיהֶם עַל מַלְכוּת שְׁמַיִם זֶה מִזָּה,
וְנוֹתְנִים רְשׁוּת זֶה לָזֶה, לְהַקְדִישׁ לְיוֹצְרֵם בְּנִחַת רוּחַ,
בְּשִׁפְהַ בְּרוּרָה וּבִנְעִימָה קְדוּשָׁה, בְּלֶם בְּאֶחָד
עוֹנִים וְאוֹמְרִים בְּיִרְאָה:

קְדוּשׁ, קְדוּשׁ, קְדוּשׁ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֵא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

◀ וְהַאוֹפָנִים וְחַיּוֹת הַקֶּדֶשׁ בְּרַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל מִתְנַשְּׂאִים
לְעַמַּת שְׂרָפִים, לְעַמַּת מְשַׁבְּחִים וְאוֹמְרִים:
בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְקוֹמוֹ.

לְאֵל בְּרוּךְ, נְעִימוֹת יִתְנוּ. לְמַלְךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיָּם,
זְמִירוֹת יֹאמְרוּ, וְתִשְׁבְּחוּת יִשְׁמִיעוּ. כִּי הוּא לְבָדוּ
פוֹעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת, עוֹשֶׂה חֲדָשׁוֹת,
בְּעַל מְלַחְמוֹת, זוֹרַע צְדָקוֹת,
מְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעוֹת, בּוֹרֵא רְפוּאוֹת,
נוֹרָא תְהִלּוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת,

◀ הַמְחַדֵּשׁ בְּטוֹבוֹ בְּכָל־יוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרִיאֲשִׁית.
בְּאִמּוֹר: לְעֵשֶׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ.
אוֹר חֲדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תֹּאִיר וְנִזְכֶּה כְּלָנוּ מִהֲרָה לְאוֹרוֹ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

KEDUSHAH D’YOTZER קְדוּשַׁה דְּיֹצֵר. This version of the Kedushah, recited in the first *b'rakhah* before the Sh'ma, blesses God for the creation of the morning light. Every Kedushah is based on the mystical visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Each prophet described an angelic chorus. Isaiah saw them singing *kadosh, kadosh, kadosh* (“holy, holy, holy,” 6:3); Ezekiel heard them reciting *barukh k’vod Adonai* (“praised is Adonai’s glory,” 3:12). The Kedushah is placed here, in the blessing of creation, as if to say that both heaven and earth offer praise to God. In the mind of the mystics, all of creation constitutes a praise of God; every created being, animate and inanimate, sings to God.

BEINGS THAT SERVE YOU . . . **SERVANTS** . . . מְשֻׁרְתִים . . . מְשֻׁרְתָיו. Rabbinic lore tells of two kinds of angelic creations: those who are part of God’s permanent court, like the angels Michael and Gabriel, and those who are created each day to be conveyers of that day’s message, and so the liturgist talks of both of them as “proclaiming . . . the words of the living sovereign” (Babylonian Talmud, Hagigah 14a).

THANK THE CREATOR OF THE GREAT LIGHTS לְעֵשֶׂה הַגְּדֹלִים. Psalm 136:7.

ZION צִיּוֹן. The prayer takes the motif of the light of creation and of the dawn, and ties it to an image of the Temple in Jerusalem as a source of ultimate illumination.

The Blessings of the Priests before the Sh'ma

The priests in the Temple would say the following *b'rakhah* before the Sh'ma: "May the one who dwells in this House always grant you love, harmony, peace, and friendship."

—TALMUD OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

You Have Loved Us Deeply

With a great love (*ahavah rabah*) You have loved us (*ahavtanu*). The love of God for the people Israel is declared here just before the Sh'ma. It prepares us for the Sh'ma. Now you might expect a listing of gifts to us—God's freeing us, feeding us, delivering us. Instead, we thank God for one gift: God's teaching, God's opening our minds and hearts to Torah.

What You've given us is the ability to listen to You, so we can thank and draw close to You. Your compassion is expressed in teaching our hearts to know compassion, to love You, giving us not personal freedoms but, in fact, boundaries bringing us close to the Unbounded, the One. By giving us Torah, You've shown us how to live. We can now offer thanks and say: "Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is one."

—JOHN J. CLAYTON

Second B'rakhah before the Sh'ma: God's Great Love

You have loved us deeply, ADONAI our God, and showered us with boundless compassion. *Avinu Malkeinu*, for the sake of our ancestors who trusted in You and to whom You taught the laws of life, so may You be gracious to us and instruct us. Kind creator, have compassion for us, open our hearts so that we may understand and discern, hear and study, observe, perform, and fulfill all the teachings of Your Torah with love. Enlighten our eyes with Your Torah; attach our hearts to Your mitzvot; unify our hearts to love and revere Your name so that we never lose hope. As we trust in Your great, holy, awe-inspiring name, we will delight and rejoice in Your deliverance.

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

► Bring us safely from the four corners of the earth, and lead us in dignity to our land, for You are the God who effects deliverance. You have chosen us from all other tongues and peoples, always drawing us nearer to Your name, that we may truly acknowledge You and lovingly proclaim Your oneness. *Barukh atah ADONAI*, who lovingly cares for the people Israel.

Ahavah rabah ahavtanu Adonai eloheinu, h'emlah g'dolah viteirah hamalta aleinu.

Avinu malkeinu, ba-avur avoteinu [v'imoteinu] she-bathu v'kha va-t'lamdeim hukei hayim, ken t'honeinu u-t'lamdeinu.

Avinu ha-av ha-rahaman, ha-m'raheim, raheim aleinu, v'ten b'libeinu l'havin u-l'haskil lishmo-a l'ilmod u-l'lamed lishmor v'la-asot u-l'kayem et kol divrei talmud toratekha b'ahavah.

V'ha-eir eineinu b'toratekha, v'dabeik libeinu b'mitzvotekha v'ya'hed l'vaveinu l'ahavah u-l'yirah et sh'mekha, v'lo neivosh l'olam va-ed. Ki v'shem kodsh'kha ha-gadol v'hanora batahnu, nagilah v'nism'hah bishuatekha.

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

► Va-havi-einu l'shalom mei-arba kanfot ha-aretz, v'tolikheinu kom'miyut l'artzeinu, ki el po-el y'shu-ot atah, u-vanu vaharta mikol am v'lashon, v'keiravtanu l'shimkha ha-gadol selah be-emet, l'hodot l'kha u-l'ya'hedkha b'ahavah. Barukh atah adonai, ha-boher b'amo yisrael b'ahavah.

אַהֲבָה רַבָּה אֲהַבְתָּנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
חַמְלָה גְדוֹלָה וַיְתַרָה חַמְלַתְ עָלֵינוּ.
אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵנוּ, בְּעֵבוֹר אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ]
שִׁבְטָחוּ בְךָ וַתִּלְמְדֵם חֻקֵי חַיִּים,
בֶּן תַּחֲנֹנֵנוּ וַתִּלְמְדֵנוּ.
אָבִינוּ, הָאֵב הַרְחֵמֵנוּ, הַמְרַחֵם,
רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְתֵן בְּלִבֵּנוּ לְהִבִּין וּלְהַשְׁפִּיל,
לְשִׁמְעַ, לְלַמֵּד וּלְלַמֵּד, לְשָׁמֵר וּלְעֲשׂוֹת
וּלְקַיֵּם אֶת־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי תִלְמוּד תּוֹרַתְךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.

וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ,
וְדַבַּק לִבֵּנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
וַיַּחַד לִבְבָּנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת־שִׁמְךָ,
וְלֹא יָבוֹשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
כִּי בְשֵׁם קִדְשְׁךָ הַגְּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּטַחֲנוּ,
נִגְלִיָּה וְנִשְׁמָחָה בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ.

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

◀ וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת הָאָרֶץ,
וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ,
כִּי אֵל פּוֹעֵל יְשׁוּעוֹת אַתָּה,
וּבָנוּ כַחֲרֵת מִכָּל־עַם וְלָשׁוֹן,
וְקִרְבָּתֵנוּ לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל סֵלָה בְּאַמַּת,
לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ וּלְיַחֲדֶךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַבּוֹחֵר בְּעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה.

YOU HAVE LOVED US DEEPLY אהבה רבה. The Hebrew root *alef-hei-vet*, meaning "love," appears six times in this passage (both as the noun and a verb). Reuven Hammer points out that three of them speak of our love for God and three speak of God's love for us. While reciting this *b'rakhah*, the worshipper can anticipate the seventh occurrence, which is found in the first paragraph of the Sh'ma: "You shall love Adonai your God."

AVINU MALKEINU אבינו מלכנו. Literally, "our father, our king." The pairing of the two words emphasizes that God is at once both intimate as a close relation and distant as a monarch. The word *av*, "father," suggests the image of God as source or progenitor, and therefore it may also be translated as "creator."

LAWS OF LIFE חקי חיים. The word "Torah" encompasses many different meanings. In its most limited usage, it refers to the Five Books of Moses. But in a larger sense it refers to all of Scripture, and even to all of later Jewish teaching. Thus, the rabbis of the Talmud spoke

of the "Written Torah" and the "Oral Torah," the latter referring to the teachings of the Midrash, Mishnah, and Talmud—and even to "whatever new teaching a student of wisdom might impart until the end of time" (Leviticus Rabbah 22:1). In this prayer, "Torah" embraces the widest meaning: the laws of life—all those teachings that instruct us concerning a full ethical and religious life.

TO UNDERSTAND AND DISCERN . . . OBSERVE, FULFILL, AND PERFORM לְהִבִּין וּלְהַשְׁפִּיל . . . לְשָׁמֵר וּלְעֲשׂוֹת וּלְקַיֵּם. This sequence implies that study is intimately linked with action—indeed, that study should lead to action.

GATHERING THE TZITZIT. Many observe the custom, originating in the late Middle Ages, of gathering the four *tzitziyot* (plural of *tzitzit*) of the *tallit* while reciting the words "bring us safely from the four corners of the earth," thus symbolizing Israel's unity and ingathering. The *tzitziyot* are then held through the third paragraph of the Sh'ma, and kissed when reciting the word *tzitzit* (which appears three times in that paragraph). By this practice, we indicate that we are lovingly undertaking to observe these words of Torah, and we hope that our commitment to strive for holiness will lead to greater unity. We are also gathering within us all our positive intentions.

Hear, O Israel

The core of our worship is not a prayer at all, but a cry to our fellow Jews and fellow humans. In it we declare that God is one—which is also to say that humanity is one, that life is one, that joys and sufferings are all one—for God is the force that binds them all together. There is nothing obvious about this truth, for life as we experience it seems infinitely fragmented. Human beings seem isolated from one another, divided by all the fears and hatreds that make up human history. Even within a single life, one moment feels cut off from the next, memories of joy and fullness offering us little consolation when we are depressed or lonely. To assert that all is one in God is our supreme act of faith. No wonder that the Sh'ma, the first “prayer” we learn in childhood, is also the last thing we are to say before we die.

—ARTHUR GREEN

The Challenge of Faith

The Israeli poet Yoram Nissonovitch remarks that religious questions may not constitute the subversion of our faith; rather, they may help us get past tired notions that narrow our vision, and it may open our souls to new and deeper understandings. His colleague Elhanan Nir adds: Doubts lead to a strong, surprising, and deep faith that cannot be compared with classical faith. This is a faith for which nothing is taken for granted.

Recitation of the Sh'ma

Some people may wish to pause here for a moment. Some may close their eyes; others may place a hand over their eyes. The intention is to concentrate on God's oneness.

The following words are added in the absence of a minyan:
God is a faithful sovereign.

Hear, O Israel, ADONAI is our God, ADONAI is one.

Sh'ma yisrael, Adonai eloheinu Adonai ehad.

Recited quietly: Praised be the name of the one whose glorious sovereignty is forever and ever.

You shall love ADONAI your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all that is yours.

These words that I command you this day shall be taken to heart.

Teach them again and again to your children; speak of them when you sit in your home, when you walk on your way,

when you lie down, and when you rise up.

Bind them as a sign upon your hand and as a symbol above your eyes;

inscribe them upon the doorposts of your home and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4–9

V'ahavta et Adonai elohekha b'khol l'avv'kha u-v'khol nafsh'kha u-v'khol me'odekha. V'hayu ha-d'varim ha-eileh asher anokhi m'tzav'kha ha-yom al l'avv'kha. V'shinantam l'vanekha v'dibarta bam, b'shivt'kha b'veitekha u-v'lekht'kha va-derekh u-v'shokhb'kha u-v'kumekha. U-k'shartam l'ot al yadekha v'hayu l'totafot bein einekha. U-kh'tavtam al m'zuzot beitekha u-visharekha.

קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע

Some people may wish to pause here for a moment. Some may close their eyes; others may place a hand over their eyes. The intention is to concentrate on God's oneness.

In the absence of a minyan, we add the following: אֱל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָר.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד.

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלֻכּוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. *Recited quietly.*

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-לְבָבְךָ: וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָם בְּשַׁבְּתֶךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלֻבְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְקִשַּׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדֶיךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וְכַתַּבְתָּם עַל-מְזוֹזֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

דברים ו:ד-ט

covering his eyes came to be seen as a sign of deep contemplation, and so it became the custom of many to cover the eyes while reciting the Sh'ma, as a moment to meditate on God's unity.

GOD IS A FAITHFUL SOVEREIGN אֱל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָר. These words form an acronym of *amen*. When we recite the Sh'ma with a *minyan*, the leader concludes with the words *Adonai eloheikhem emet*, “Your God truly”; when, in the absence of a *minyan*, that affirmation is not recited, we add this private affirmation at the beginning of the Sh'ma. The Kabbalists noted that the Sh'ma contained 245 words and so, by adding three additional words, we reach 248—the number of limbs in the body, according to the belief of the ancient rabbis. Thus we affirm, whether by adding words at the beginning or the end of the Sh'ma, that our entire being is dedicated to God.

SH'MA YISRAEL אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה. To whom are these words addressed? Certainly, we are speaking to ourselves, enjoining ourselves to truly hear what our lips are saying. We may also be speaking to each other—the collective people Israel—reminding each other that we are a people united by values, nurturing our own sense of peoplehood. A moving midrash imagines these words recited by Jacob's sons, addressed to their father Jacob/Israel, reassuring him on his deathbed that they remain true to his teachings, and that the God of Jacob is and will remain “their God” (Genesis Rabbah 98:3). And so, we too may be speaking to our forebears, reassuring our ancestors (all the way back to Jacob!) that their legacy continues in us.

ONE אֶחָד. The Hebrew word *ehad*, “one,” has been variously interpreted. It can mean that God is totally unified and not made up of parts, as is the case with everything else we encounter in the universe. It can mean unique, that God is different from all else we encounter. It can mean “only,” that there is no other being who is divine. Mystics interpret it as meaning that God is one with the universe—or in another formulation, present throughout the universe.

PRAISED BE THE NAME שֵׁם כְּבוֹד. This phrase is not part of the biblical text but was the customary response of those assembled to hearing the name of God as part of priestly prayers in the Temple. To differentiate it from the actual biblical text, it is recited silently. In the legend mentioned above, this sentence constituted Jacob's response to his children's affirmation, and so it is voiced differently.

INSCRIBE THEM UPON THE DOORPOSTS וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל מְזוֹזֹת. The observant Jew lives a life surrounded by the Sh'ma: reciting it in the morning upon arising and at night before going to sleep, walking past its inscription on the *mezuzah* when entering one's home, and even adorning oneself with the words on weekday mornings upon one's head and near one's heart when putting on *t'fillin*, phylacteries.

THE RECITATION OF THE SH'MA. Rabbinic literature refers to the Sh'ma as a *k'riah*, a reading aloud of a passage of the Torah. Later it became a meditation as well, a way to focus on God's “oneness”—so much so that for some it became a moment to experience a mystical union with God. The Babylonian Talmud reports: Rabbi Judah the Prince was teaching and needed to stop, since the hour for reciting the Sh'ma was passing, so he covered his eyes for a moment and then continued teaching (Berakhot 13b). In this story, reciting the Sh'ma was but a momentary interruption. Later, Rabbi Judah's act of

Other Gods

What is an idol? A thing, a force, a person, a group, an institution or an ideal, regarded as supreme. God alone is supreme.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

To Love and Revere God

When one contemplates the wonders of God's creation and sees in them God's infinite wisdom, one immediately loves, praises, and craves to know God's great name, as David sang, "I thirst for the living God" (Psalm 42:3). But as one contemplates these things one is immediately struck dumb and becomes fearful, for one knows that a person is only a tiny part of the vastness of creation—humble and ignorant, standing with little understanding before the fullness of knowledge, as David lamented, "When I gaze at Your heavens, Your handiwork, what are mortals that You care for them?" (Psalm 8:4-5).

—MAIMONIDES

If you will hear and obey the mitzvot that I command you this day, to love and serve ADONAI your God with all your heart and all your soul, then I will grant the rain for your land in season, rain in autumn and rain in spring. You shall gather in your grain and wine and oil; I will provide grass in your fields for your cattle and you shall eat and be satisfied. Take care lest your heart be tempted, and you stray and serve other gods and bow to them. Then ADONAI's anger will flare up against you, and God will close up the sky so that there will be no rain and the earth will not yield its produce. You will quickly disappear from the good land that ADONAI is giving you. Therefore, impress these words of mine upon your heart and upon your soul. Bind them as a sign upon your hand and as a symbol above your eyes; teach them to your children, by speaking of them when you sit in your home, when you walk on your way, when you lie down and when you rise up. Inscribe them upon the doorposts of your home and on your gates. Then your days and the days of your children, on the land that ADONAI swore to your ancestors to give them, will be as many as the days the heavens are above the earth.

Deuteronomy 11:13-21

ADONAI said to Moses: Speak to the people Israel, and instruct them that in every generation they shall put tzitzit on the corners of their garments, placing a thread of blue on the tzitzit, the fringe of each corner. That shall be your tzitzit; you shall look at it and remember all the mitzvot of ADONAI, and fulfill them, and not be seduced by your eyes and heart as they lead you astray. Then you will remember and fulfill all My mitzvot, and be holy before your God. I am ADONAI your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am ADONAI your God—

Numbers 15:37-41

Truly

When there is a minyan, the leader adds:

► ADONAI your God—truly—

this teaching is constant, well-founded and enduring, righteous and trustworthy, beloved and cherished, desirable and pleasing, awe-inspiring and majestic, well-ordered and established, good and beautiful, and so incumbent on us forever.

וְהָיָה אִם-שָׁמַעַתְּ שְׁמֵעוּ אֶל-מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעַבְדּוֹ בְּכָל-לְבַבְכֶם וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁכֶם: וְנָתַתִּי מִטְר-אֲרָצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ וְאִסְפַּת דְּגָנְךָ וְתִירְשָׁךָ וְיִצְהַרְךָ: וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב בְּשָׂדֶךָ לְבְהִמְתֶּךָ וְאֶכְלֵת וּשְׂבַעַת: הִשְׁמְרוּ לָכֶם פְּנֵי-יַפְתָּה לְבַבְכֶם וְסוּרְתֶם וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם: וְחָרָה אַפִּי-יְהוָה בְּכֶם וְעָצַר אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה מָטָר וְהִיאַדְמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת-יְבוּלָהּ וְאֶבַדְתֶּם מְהֵרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה נָתַן לָכֶם: וּשְׂמַתֶּם אֶת-דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהַ עַל-לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל-נַפְשְׁכֶם וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל-יְדֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם: וּלְמַדְתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת-בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בֵּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וּכְתַבְתֶּם עַל-מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ: לְמַעַן יִרְבּוּ יְמֵיכֶם וְיָמֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָשָׁעַ יְהוָה לְאַבְתֵּיכֶם לְתַת לָהֶם כִּימֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

דברים יא:יג-כא

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל-פְּנֵי בְגְדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל-צִיצִית הַפְּנֵף פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אוֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וְעִשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא תִתּוּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וְעִשִׂיתֶם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהִייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לְאֱלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהֵיוֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

במדבר טו:לו-מא

אמת

When there is a minyan, the leader adds:

◀ יהוה אלהיכם – אמת –

וַיִּצְיַב וְנָכוֹן וְקָיָם וַיִּשָּׂר וְנִאֱמָן וְאֶהוּב וְחָבִיב וְנִחְמָד וְנִעֵים וְנוֹרָא וְאֵדִיר וּמְתַקֵּן וּמְקַבֵּל וְטוֹב וְיָפֵה הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֵד.

IF YOU WILL HEAR אִם שָׁמַעַתְּ שְׁמֵעוּ. This paragraph suggests a direct relationship between the righteousness of our acts and our fate. If we are good, God will be good to us, and vice versa. That theology was questioned throughout the ages and even by biblical writers themselves, most sharply in the Book of Job. Nevertheless, it does speak to a deep human need to see a world as containing a moral balance between good and evil. What is expressed here in concrete terms may be understood more broadly: moral and immoral actions have consequences, both seen and unseen.

TZITZIT. The biblical scholar Israel Knohl, expanding a medieval Jewish comment, suggests that the word tzitzit may derive from tzitz, a headband worn by the High Priest and tied in back with a p'til t'khelet, a "thread of blue." On it were the words w'dsh קדש ליהוה (kodesh l'adonai), "holy before Adonai." Wearing the tzitzit (literally, the "little tzitz"), we are asked to serve God in a holy way, much as the High Priest did; thus the paragraph commands us to be "holy before your God." The act of wearing tzitzit turns us all, metaphorically, into High Priests.

TRULY. The tradition read the word emet, "truly," as referring both backward and forward: it is the first word of the following paragraph and is also recited as if it were the last word of the preceding paragraph.

continued

Redemption

What might redemption mean in our time? Gordon Tucker, a contemporary rabbi, points out that in the Bible, when an object is redeemed, it returns to its original state. Following a teaching of the Hasidic master Avraham Mordecai of Gur (*Imrei Emet, parashat Emor*), he remarks that there was a moment after leaving Egypt and crossing the Sea when we experienced freedom and the infinite possibility signalled by the limitless horizon of the desert. It was the time before the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, yet it was a special moment of being with God. Jeremiah records God saying, “I remember the generosity of your young days, the love you exhibited when we were first engaged, walking with Me in the desert” (2:2). We can hope that our religious life will lead us back to a moment of innocence, when we feel free and in unselfconscious relation to God.

Truly, the God of the universe, our sovereign, is the stronghold of Jacob and our protecting shield.

In every generation God is present, God’s name endures, God’s throne is established, and God’s sovereignty and faithfulness abide.

God’s teaching is living and enduring, truthful and beloved throughout all time.

As our ancestors accepted it as incumbent on them, we accept it as incumbent on us, and on our children, and all the future seed of the house of Israel who serve You. Both for our ancestors and our descendants, it is a goodly teaching, enduring forever, a constant truth, a never-changing principle.

► *Truly*, You are ADONAI our God and the God of our ancestors, our sovereign and our ancestors’ sovereign, our redeemer and our ancestors’ redeemer. You are our creator, and the rock of our deliverance, our redeemer and help. So You are known throughout time, for there is no God but You.

You were always the help of our ancestors, a shield and deliverer for their descendants in every generation.

You abide at the pinnacle of the universe—

Your judgment and Your righteousness extend to the ends of the earth.

Blessed are the ones who attend to Your mitzvot and place Your teaching and words on their hearts.

Truly, You are the ruler of Your people, a mighty sovereign, who takes up their cause.

Truly, You were at the beginning and You will be at the end—aside from You we have no ruler who can redeem and deliver.

אַמֶּת אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם מְלַכְנוּ, צוֹר יַעֲקֹב מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ.
◀ לְדוֹר וָדוֹר הוּא קַיָּם וְשִׁמוֹ קַיָּם, וְכִסְאוֹ נָכוֹן
וּמְלֻכוֹתוֹ וְאַמוּנָתוֹ לְעַד קַיָּמָת.

וּדְבָרָיו חַיִּים וְקַיָּמִים, נְאֻמֵּי וְנִחְמָדִים,
לְעַד וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים, עַל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאַמוּנָתֵנוּ]
וְעַלֵינוּ, עַל בְּנֵינוּ וְעַל דּוֹרוֹתֵינוּ, וְעַל כָּל־דּוֹרוֹת
זָרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדֶיךָ. עַל הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים וְעַל הָאַחֲרוֹנִים
דָּבָר טוֹב וְקַיָּם לְעוֹלָם וָעֵד,
אַמֶּת וְאַמוּנָה חֶק וְלֹא יַעֲבֹר.

◀ אַמֶּת שְׁאַתָּה הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאַמוּנָתֵנוּ], מְלַכְנוּ, מְלַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאַמוּנָתֵנוּ],
גְּאֻלָּנוּ גְּאֻל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאַמוּנָתֵנוּ], יוֹצְרֵנוּ, צוֹר יִשׁוּעָתֵנוּ,
פּוֹדְנוּ וּמְצִילָנוּ, מֵעוֹלָם שְׂמֶךָ אֵין אֱלֹהִים זוֹלָתְךָ.

עֲזַרְת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאַמוּנָתֵנוּ] אַתָּה הוּא מֵעוֹלָם,
מִגֵּן וּמוֹשִׁיעַ לְבְנֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדוֹר.
בְּרוּם עוֹלָם מוֹשְׁבֶךָ,

וּמְשַׁפְּטֶיךָ וְצִדְקָתְךָ עַד אַפְסֵי אֶרֶץ.

אֲשֶׁרִי אִישׁ שִׁישְׁמַע לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,

וְתוֹרָתְךָ וּדְבָרְךָ יִשִּׁים עַל לְבוֹ.

אַמֶּת אַתָּה הוּא אֲדוֹן לְעַמֶּךָ,

וּמְלַךְ גִּבּוֹר לְרִיב רֵיבֶם.

אַמֶּת אַתָּה הוּא רֵאשׁוֹן, וְאַתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן,

וּמְבַלְעֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ.

mandments as obligatory, as many Christians did. In its current context, the liturgical affirmation refers to the constancy of the entire Torah.

HELP OF OUR ANCESTORS [וְאַמוּנָתֵנוּ] עֲזַרְת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאַמוּנָתֵנוּ]. Two contrasting theological concepts are at work in this blessing. The first emphasizes the value of personal observance of Torah and mitzvot (“Blessed are the ones who attend to Your mitzvot . . .”); the second emphasizes communal redemption and the need for God to destroy oppression, with the exodus from Egypt serving as a paradigm for all future redemptions. The first is non-violent, speaking of personal practice and virtue through performing acts of love and care; the second insists that God must war against evil in order to root it out. These two views echo a talmudic argument as to whether the future redemption will be achieved peacefully or will come through war.

TRULY, YOU WERE AT THE BEGINNING AND YOU WILL BE AT THE END אַתָּה הוּא רֵאשׁוֹן, וְאַתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן. A similar expression, “I am the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end,” is quoted three times in the Christian testament. The wording of this prayer may have been deliberately polemical at the time it was written in antiquity, and intended to oppose Christian theological claims, which were emerging as a rival to Judaism.

continued

Read forward, the word affirms what follows: credal statements spelling out the implications of the Sh'ma; each statement is preceded by the word *emet*, thus articulating a kind of Jewish creed. Read backward, it refers to God, who is identified with truth.

The phrase is based on the words of Jeremiah, “Adonai is true (*Adonai emet*), is truly the living God, and the sovereign of time and the world” (10:10). Additionally, another biblical meaning of the word *emet* is steadfastness or faithfulness. In this interpretation, what is affirmed is that God will always be present for us.

TRULY THIS TEACHING IS CONSTANT וְאַמֶּת וְיָצִיב אַמֶּת וְיָצִיב. Reuven Kimelman, a contemporary liturgical scholar, contends that the “teaching” referred to in this assertion is the Decalogue, which originally preceded the recitation of the Sh'ma in the ancient synagogue. The recitation of the Decalogue was dropped from the liturgy because the rabbis were afraid that people would consider only those com-

The Violence at the Sea

The Ḥasidic master Shalom Shakhna taught: That which results in the good cannot take place without opposition.

Blessing of Redemption

Let us bless the source of life, source of faith and daring, wellspring of new song and the courage to mend.

—MARCIA FALK

ADONAI our God, You redeemed us from Egypt and freed us from the house of bondage. Their firstborn You slayed, Your firstborn You redeemed, You split the sea, You drowned the wicked, You rescued Your beloved. The waters engulfed their oppressors; not one of them survived. Then they sang in praise, acclaiming God for all that had occurred. The beloved people offered songs of thanksgiving, hymns of praise, and blessings to the sovereign ever-living God, who is transcendent, powerful, and awe-inspiring, humbling the haughty, raising up the lowly, freeing those in chains, redeeming the poor, helping the weak, and answering God’s people when they cry out.

► Our homage is to God on high, who is ever praised. Moses, Miriam, and the people Israel joyfully sang this song to You:

“Who is like You, ADONAI, among the mighty! Who is like You, adorned in holiness, revered in praise, working wonders!”

Mi khamokha ba-eilim Adonai, mi kamokha nedar bakodesh, nora t’hilot, oseh feleh.

► At the edge of the Sea, the rescued sang a new song of praise to Your name; together, as one, they thanked You and acclaimed Your sovereignty, saying:

“ADONAI will reign forever and ever.”

Adonai yimlokh l’olam va-ed.

Stronghold of the people Israel, arise and help the people Israel! Redeem, as You promised, Judah and the people Israel. Our redeemer is called *ADONAI Tz’va’ot*, the Holy One of the people Israel.

Tzur yisrael, kumah b’ezrat yisrael, u-f’deih khinumekha y’hudah v’yisrael. Go-aleinu Adonai Tz’va’ot sh’mo, k’dosh yisrael.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who liberated the people Israel.

The Amidah for Festivals is found on page 306.

מִמִּצְרַיִם גָּאֲלָתָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פָּדִיתָנוּ.
כָּל־בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם הִרְגָתָּ וּבְכוֹרְךָ גָאֲלָתָּ
יָם סוּף בְּקַעַתָּ וַיִּדְדִים הָעֵבֶרֶתָ

וַיִּכְסּוּ מִיָּם צָרִיָּהֶם, אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נוֹתַר.
עַל זֹאת שָׁבְחוּ אֱהוּבִים, וְרוֹמְמוֹ אֵל,
וְנִתְּנוּ יְדִידִים זְמִירוֹת שִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת,
בְּרִכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְמִלְךָ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם,
רָם וְנִשְׂאָ, גָדוֹל וְנוֹרָא,
מִשְׁפִּיל גְּאִים וּמַגְבִּיָּה שְׁפָלִים
מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים וּפּוֹדֵה עַנְוִים
וְעוֹזֵר דָּלִים

וְעוֹנֵה לְעַמּוֹ בְּעֵת שׁוֹעֵם אֱלֹיוּ.

◀ תְּהִלּוֹת לְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּמְבָרֵךְ.
מִשָּׁה וּמִרְיָם וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָךְ עָנּוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׂמְחָה רַבָּה,
וְאָמְרוּ כָלָם:

מִי כְמוֹכָה בָּאֵלִים יְהוָה, מִי כְמוֹכָה נֹאדָר בְּקִדְשׁוֹ,
נוֹרָא תְהִלָּתוֹ, עֹשֶׂה פִלָּא.

◀ שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה שָׁבְחוּ גְאוּלִים לְשִׁמְךָ עַל שְׁפַת הַיָּם,
יַחַד כָּלָם הוֹדוּ וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ:

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.

צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל,

קוּמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,

וּפְדֵה כְנָאֲמֶךָ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל.

גְּאֲלָנוּ, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ, קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, גָּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

The Amidah for Festivals is found on page 306.

from Egypt, to the personal prayers that now follow in the Amidah, and recommends that there be no verbal interruption at this point (Berakhot 9b). It is as if to say that the possibility of prayer flows out of our experience of God’s love as exhibited in freeing us from slavery.

MOSES, MIRIAM, AND THE PEOPLE ISRAEL מִשָּׁה וּמִרְיָם וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. The Torah is emphatic that Moses led the men and Miriam led the women, so that all the people Israel sang the Song at the Sea. (See page 144.)

WHO IS LIKE YOU מִי כְמוֹכָה. The Sh’ma was preceded by the song of the angels, “Holy, holy, holy . . .” and now is followed by our singing a praise of God from the Song at the Sea. Through the recitation of the Sh’ma, our song and the angels’ song become a common chorus.

ADONAI WILL REIGN יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ. Exodus 15:18.

ISRAEL יִשְׂרָאֵל. The name “Israel” is repeated four times before the conclusion of the *b'rakhah*, emphasizing the plea for the redemption of the people Israel.

OUR REDEEMER גְּאֲלָנוּ. Isaiah 47:4.

LIBERATED THE PEOPLE ISRAEL גָּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל. This *b'rakhah*, in contrast to most, concludes with a verb in the past tense. We can properly bless God for the redemptive acts that have already occurred—not those we still hope and pray for (Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 117b).

SH’MA AND THE AMIDAH. The Babylonian Talmud links this last *b'rakhah* of the Recitation of the Sh’ma, mentioning God’s redeeming the people Israel

God of Our Ancestors

The God we know seems so much greater, so much vaster, than the God of former generations. The universe we live in is so much more known and charted; we measure distances in light years and send persons and machines coursing through space. The lenses through which we see the small as well as the vast have forever changed our way of viewing the world; the pace at which we seek and find knowledge has changed our way of learning. To say “our God and God of our ancestors” is to assert that the One of whom we speak in such an age is the same One as the God of small-town Jewish scholars and shopkeepers of a hundred years ago. This is no small admission, no small act of humbling, for such as ourselves.

—ARTHUR GREEN

Life to the Dead

A Hasidic master taught: There are parts of ourselves that have become deadened. When we pray this blessing we should ask ourselves, “What part of myself needs to be awakened? What should I be concerned with, that I have forgotten?”

With Patriarchs:

You are the sovereign who helps and saves and shields.

פ *Barukh atah ADONAI*, Shield of Abraham.

Second B'rakhah: God's Saving Care

You are ever mighty, ADONAI—
You give life to the dead—
great is Your saving power:

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah:

You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall,

[*From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add:*

You cause the dew to fall,]

You sustain the living through kindness and love, and with great mercy give life to the dead,
You support the falling, heal the sick, loosen the chains of the bound, and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.

Who is like You, Almighty, and who can be compared to You?

The sovereign who brings death and life and causes redemption to flourish.

M'khalkel hayim b'hesed, m'hayeih meitim b'rahamim rabim, somekh noflim v'rofei holim u-matir asurim, u-m'kayem emunato lisheinei afar.

Mi khamokha ba-al g'vurot umi domeh lakh, melek meimit u-m'hayeh u-matzmiah y'shuah.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

Who is like You, source of compassion, who remembers with compassion Your creatures for life?

You are faithful in bringing life to the dead.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives life to the dead.

When the Amidah is recited silently, continue on page 162 with "Holy are You."

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

You are the sovereign who helps and guards, saves and shields.

פ *Barukh atah ADONAI*, Shield of Abraham and Guardian of Sarah.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

**מְלֶכֶךְ עֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן.
וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה.**

With Patriarchs:

**מְלֶכֶךְ עֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם.**

**אַתָּה גְּבוּר לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי,
מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים אַתָּה,
רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ.**

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah: מְשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם,
[*From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add:* מוֹרִיד הַטָּל,

**מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחַסְדָּה,
מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים,
סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמְתִיר אֲסוּרִים,
וּמְקַיֵּם אֲמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפֶר.
מִי כְמוֹךָ בְּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֵה לָךְ,
מְלֶכֶךְ מִמִּית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעָה.**

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים, זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים.

**וְנֹאֲמָן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְחַיֶּה הַמֵּתִים.**

When the Amidah is recited silently, continue on page 162 with קְדוּשָׁה.

SHIELD OF ABRAHAM מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם. This phrase is derived from Genesis 15:1, the first time we hear Abraham speak to God. There Abraham—the paragon of faith—expresses to God his fears, skepticism, and insecurity about the fulfillment of God's promises. Authentic prayer may encompass feelings of doubt as well as faith, challenge and frustration as well as praise and gratitude. Some who include the matriarchs at the beginning of this prayer conclude with this ending, so as not to change the received wording of the conclusion of a *b'rakhah*.

GUARDIAN OF SARAH וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה. Or: “the one who remembered Sarah” (after Genesis 21:1). We, who stand here today, are the fruit of God's promise to Abraham and Sarah.

SUPPORT THE FALLING סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים. After Psalm 145:4. For centuries, human rulers have defined “power” as the ability to exert control over others, often through the threat of physical injury. Quite differently, God's power is described here as manifested as *hesed*, love and generosity, especially to those who are most

vulnerable. The other attributes describing God in this paragraph are also taken from biblical texts: Exodus 15:26 (“heal the sick”), Psalm 146:7 (“loosen the chains of the bound”), and 1 Samuel 2:6 (“brings death and life”).

GIVES LIFE TO THE DEAD מְחַיֶּה הַמֵּתִים. Over the millennia, many Jewish perspectives on the afterlife have been proposed. Many sages (including Saadiah Gaon, 10th century, and Maimonides, 12th century) caution against speculation about the specific implications of the doctrine of bodily resurrection of the dead. They understand it to be an articulation of God's supreme power: God cares even for the dead. Some moderns understand that the lives of those who died before us are a part of the stream of life, continuing to affect us, though we can never know precisely how.

For We Await You

Is it really true that we only await You? Rather, the prayer is a plea: Give us the wisdom to learn to await You.

—SOLOMON HAKOHEN RABINOWITZ

Holiness

Rabbi Hama the son of Rabbi Hanina taught: What is the meaning of the verse, “Walk in the path of Adonai, your God” (Deuteronomy 13: 5)? Is it possible for a human being to behave like the Shekhinah? And hasn’t the Torah also taught us, “For Adonai your God is a consuming fire” (Deuteronomy 4:24)? Rather, the verse teaches you to imitate the virtues of the Holy One—

Just as the Holy One clothes the naked, as it is written, “And Adonai, God, made garments of leather, and clothed them [Adam and Eve when they were expelled from the Garden of Eden]” (Genesis 3:21), so too are you to clothe the naked.

Just as the Holy One visits the sick, as it is written, “Adonai appeared to him in the grove of Mamre [as Abraham was recovering from his circumcision]” (Genesis 18:1), so too are you to visit the sick.

Just as the Holy One comforts the mourners, as it is written, “And it came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed Isaac, his son” (Genesis 25:13), so too are you to comfort the mourner.

And the Holy One buried the dead as well, as it is written “And [God] buried him [Moses] in the valley” (Deuteronomy 34:6), so too are you to bury the dead.

Third B'rakhah: God's Holiness

THE KEDUSHAH

The Kedushah is recited only with a minyan.

We hallow Your name in this world as it is hallowed in the high heavens, as Your prophet Isaiah described:

Each cried out to the other:

“Holy, holy, holy is ADONAI Tz'va-ot, the whole world is filled with God's glory!”

Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai Tz'va-ot, m'lo khol ha-aretz k'vodo.

Then in thunderous voice, rising above the chorus of *serafim*, other heavenly beings call out words of blessing:

“Praised is ADONAI's glory wherever God dwells.”

Barukh k'vod Adonai mimkomo.

Our sovereign, manifest Yourself from wherever You dwell, and rule over us, for we await You. When shall You rule in Zion? Let it be soon, in our day, and throughout all time. May You be exalted and sanctified in Jerusalem, Your city, from one generation to another, forever and ever. May our eyes behold Your dominion, as described in the songs of praise offered to You by David, rightfully anointed:

“ADONAI will reign forever; your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Halleluyah!”

Yimlokh Adonai l'olam, elohayikh tziyon l'dor vador, hal'luyah.

From generation to generation we will declare Your greatness, and forever sanctify You with words of holiness.

Your praise will never leave our lips, for You are God and Sovereign, great and holy.

Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy God.

On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:

Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy Sovereign.

We continue on the next page with the Fourth B'rakhah, “Moses rejoiced.”

The Kedushah is recited only with a minyan.

נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּעוֹלָם,
בְּשֵׁם שְׁמִקְדִּישִׁים אוֹתוֹ בְּשִׁמֵי מְרוֹם,
בְּפִתּוֹב עַל יַד נְבִיאָךְ, וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר:
קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֵא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

אִזּוּ בְּקוֹל רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל אֲדִיר וְחִזְק מְשִׁמִּיעִים קוֹל,
מִתְנַשְּׂאִים לְעֵמֶת שָׁרְפִים, לְעֵמֶתָם בְּרוּךְ יֵאמְרוּ:
בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

מִמְּקוֹמָךְ מִלְּפָנֵינוּ תוֹפִיעַ, וְתִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ, כִּי מִחֲפִים אֲנַחְנוּ
לָךְ. מִתִּי תִמְלֹךְ בְּצִיּוֹן, בְּקָרוֹב בְּיָמֵינוּ, לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד תִּשְׁבּוּן.
תִּתְגַּדֵּל וְתִתְקַדֵּשׁ בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירָךְ.

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר וּלְנֹצֵחַ נְצָחִים. וְעֵינֵינוּ תִרְאִינָה מְלֻכּוֹתָךְ,
בְּדָבָר הָאָמוֹר בְּשִׁירֵי עֲזָךְ, עַל יְדֵי דָוִד מְשִׁיחַ צְדָקָךְ:
יְמִלֶךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדוֹר וָדוֹר, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִגִּיד גְּדֻלָּתְךָ, וּלְנֹצֵחַ נְצָחִים קְדֻשָׁתְךָ נְקַדִּישׁ.
וְשִׁבַּחְךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפִּינוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,
כִּי אֵל מְלֹךְ גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּלֹךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

We continue on the next page with the Fourth B'rakhah, “Moses rejoiced.”

KEDUSHAH קְדוּשָׁה. In this ancient prayer, composed by Jewish mystics, we imitate the angelic glorification of God. Although it appears in several versions, the Kedushah of the Amidah always contains three biblical quotations: “Holy, holy, holy” (Isaiah 6:3), “Praised is Adonai's glory wherever God dwells” (Ezekiel 3:12), and “Adonai will reign forever” (Psalm 146:10). The liturgy surrounding these verses varies, being more elaborate and expansive on Shabbat and festivals than on weekdays. Because the Kedushah is a call-and-response, it is appropriately recited only with a *minyan*. (adapted from Reuven Hammer)

HOLY קְדוּשָׁה. These are the words that Isaiah heard the angels utter during the profound experience that initiated his prophetic calling (6:3). Holiness is God's essential quality, a quality of which humans can partake when dedicated to God and when acting in imitation of God's mercy and love.

THE WHOLE WORLD IS FILLED WITH GOD'S GLORY מְלֵא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ. There

are two contrasting themes in the Kedushah: God is to be found everywhere, and God is hidden from us. The paradox of the religious life is that at times we feel a divine presence close at hand and at other times God's absence is terribly palpable.

SERAFIM שְׂרָפִים. On the variety of angelic forms, see page 153.

PRAISED IS ADONAI'S GLORY WHEREVER GOD DWELLS כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ. Ezekiel heard this cry as he was being carried away by a wind, which transported him to preach to his fellow exiles in Babylonia (3:12).

The Blessing of Shabbat

During the week we build, we fashion objects, we aim for mastery, we fulfill responsibilities, and in all the busyness we easily lose sight of ourselves. On Shabbat we may uncover what is hidden to us in our busyness—going for a walk we see a bird’s nest; the flowers in our neighbor’s garden refresh and delight us; we notice a tree planted in another century; rain is experienced as a blessing. On Shabbat we enter this world of gentleness, of appreciation, of welcome. We join in community, not of people striving with or against one another, but of people finding each other. In giving up striving, we can move away from self-judgment, no longer bound by an accounting of failure or assertions of great success and power. We can simply “be,” enjoy, “be with.” On Shabbat our souls can remember how to be open.

On weekdays we may be too distracted, too involved with our work and our responsibilities to see the holiness of everyday life. The gift of Shabbat is that all we experience, every meal, every meeting with another person, every joy can be seen as holy.

—SHALOM NOAH BERZOVSKY

The following paragraph is said only when the entire Amidah is recited silently:

Holy are You and holy is Your name;
holy ones praise You each day.

Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy God.

On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:

Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy Sovereign.

All continue here:

Fourth B'rakhah: The Holiness of Shabbat

Moses rejoiced in his portion,
for You called him a faithful servant.
You adorned his head with a brilliant crown
when he stood before You on Mount Sinai.
He carried down two tablets of stone,
inscribed with the instruction to observe Shabbat.

Yismah moshe b'matnat helko

ki eved ne-eman karata lo.

K'lil tiferet b'rosho natata,

b'omdo l'fanekha al har sinai.

U-shnei luhot avanim horid b'yado,

v'khatuv bahem sh'mirat shabbat,

v'khen katuv b'toratekha.

And it is written in Your Torah:

The people Israel shall observe Shabbat, to maintain it as an everlasting covenant throughout all generations. It is a sign between Me and the people Israel for all time, that in six days ADONAI made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day, ceased from work and rested.

V'shamru v'nei yisrael et ha-shabbat,

la-asot et ha-shabbat l'dorotam b'rit olam.

Beini u-vein b'nei yisrael ot hi l'olam,

ki sheishet yamim asah Adonai et ha-shamayim v'et ha-aretz,

u-vayom ha-sh'vi-i shavat vayinafash.

The following paragraph is said only when the entire Amidah is recited silently:

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ.
וְקָדוֹשִׁים בְּכָל־יוֹם יְהִלְלוּךָ סְלָה.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְלִיךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

All continue here:

יְשִׁמַּח מֹשֶׁה בְּמַתַּנַּת הַלְקוֹ,

כִּי עֶבֶד נְאֻמָּן קָרָאתָ לוֹ.

כְּלִיל תִּפְאָרֶת בְּרָאשׁוֹ נָתַתָּ,

בְּעַמְדוֹ לְפָנֶיךָ עַל הַר סִינַי.

וּשְׁנֵי לוחוֹת אֲבָנִים הוֹרִיד בְּיָדוֹ,

וְכָתוּב בָּהֶם שְׁמִירַת שַׁבָּת,

וְכֵן כְּתוּב בְּתוֹרַתְךָ:

וְשִׁמְרוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת,

לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתֵם בְּרִית עוֹלָם.

כִּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹת הִיא לְעוֹלָם,

כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ,

וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנְפַּשׁ.

Shabbat (Exodus Rabbah 1:28). Moses was happy that his suggestion became incorporated in the Decalogue. Medieval commentators add another interpretation: that Moses was overjoyed to be God’s servant, appointed to communicate the law of Shabbat to Israel. Others say that the prayer celebrates the giving of the Torah, which Moses was happy to receive. According to a midrashic source, the Torah was given on Shabbat and the Torah is called God’s gift, *matanah*—the same word used in this prayer to describe Moses’ “portion” in the afterworld, where his share is assured (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 10b). Some remark, regarding the future tense, that the future alluded to is not the world that is coming, but each generation in which Shabbat is observed and this prayer is recited: Moses’ joy stems from the fact that the descendants of the Israelites of his own generation (whom he instructed) continue to observe what he taught.

A FAITHFUL SERVANT עֶבֶד נְאֻמָּן. Based on Numbers 12:7, where God tells Miriam and Aaron that Moses is totally trusted (*ne-eman*) in God’s house. In Deuteronomy 34:5 Moses is referred to as “God’s servant.” And so yet another explanation of Moses’ joy is that he was happy to be called a “faithful servant.”

CROWN כְּלִיל. When Moses descended from the mountain, his face shone with God’s light (Exodus 34:29).

THE PEOPLE ISRAEL SHALL OBSERVE וְשִׁמְרוּ. Exodus 31:16–17.

MOSES REJOICED יְשִׁמַּח מֹשֶׁה. This passage is an addition to the Shabbat morning Amidah of unknown origin. These verses are a fragment of a larger alphabetical acrostic but only the *yod* through *lamed* lines survive. (The word *sh’nei* [“two”] was probably added later to the *luhot* [“tablets”] line.) This prayer is not found among the fragments of liturgical remains of the Land of Israel in the Cairo Genizah. The *geonim* of Babylonia recommended that it be said, but its inclusion was contested by Rashi (1040–1105, northern France), among others. Nevertheless, it was adopted soon afterward by all rites.

What caused Moses to be joyful? A midrash maintains that the very notion of Shabbat was first suggested by Moses: in Egypt, Moses argued that even slaves needed a day of rest in order to survive and Pharaoh granted them

Some omit:

But, ADONAI our God, You have not given it to the nations of the world, nor, our Sovereign, have You bestowed it on idol worshippers, nor do the uncircumcised find rest on this day, for

With love, You have given Shabbat to the people Israel, the descendants of Jacob, whom You have chosen. The people who sanctify the seventh day shall feel fulfilled and shall delight in Your goodness, for You Yourself were pleased with the seventh day and sanctified it, calling it the most beloved of days, a symbol of the work of creation.

Our God and God of our ancestors, embrace our rest.

Make us holy through Your mitzvot and let the Torah be our portion. Fill our lives with Your goodness and gladden us with Your deliverance. Purify our hearts to serve You truly.

ADONAI our God, lovingly and willingly grant that we inherit Your holy Shabbat, that the people Israel, who make Your name holy, may find rest on this day.

Kad'sheinu b'mitzvotekha v'ten helkeinu b'toratekha, sabeinu mi-tuvekha v'samheinu bishuatekha, v'taheir libeinu l'ovd'kha be-emet, v'hanhileinu Adonai eloheinu b'ahavah u-v'ratzon shabbat kodshekha, v'yanuhu vah yisrael m'kad'shei sh'mekha.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who makes Shabbat holy.

Fifth B'rakhah: The Restoration of Zion

ADONAI our God, embrace Your people Israel and their prayer. Restore worship to Your sanctuary. May the prayers of the people Israel be lovingly accepted by You, and may our service always be pleasing.

On Rosh Hodesh and Hol Ha-mo-ed we add:

Our God and God of our ancestors, may the thought of us rise up and reach You. Attend to us and accept us; hear us and respond to us. Keep us in mind, and keep in mind the thought of our ancestors, as well as the Messiah, the descendant of David; Jerusalem, Your holy city; and all Your people, the house of Israel. Respond to us with deliverance, goodness, compassion, love, life, and peace, on this

On Rosh Hodesh: On Pesah: On Sukkot:
Rosh Hodesh. Festival of Matzot. Festival of Sukkot.

Remember us for good; respond to us with blessing; redeem us with life. Show us compassion and care with words of kindness and deliverance; have mercy on us and redeem us. Our eyes are turned to You, for You are a compassionate and caring sovereign.

Some omit:

ולא נתתו יהוה אלהינו לגויי הארצות, ולא הנחלתו מלבנו לעובדי פסילים, וגם במנוחתו לא ישכנו ערלים,

פי לישראל עמך נתתו באהבה, לזרע יעקב אשר במ בחרת. עם מקדשי שביעי, כלם ישבעו ויתענגו מטובה, והשביעי רצית בו וקדשתו, חמדת ימים אותו קראת, וזכר למעשה בראשית.

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו], רצה במנוחתנו, קדשנו במצותיה, ותן חלקנו בתורתך, שבענו מטובה, ושמחנו בישועתך, וטהר לבנו לעבדך באמת, והנחילנו יהוה אלהינו באהבה וברצון שבת קדשה, וינחונו בה ישראל מקדשי שמה. ברוך אתה יהוה, מקדש השבת.

רצה, יהוה אלהינו, בעמך ישראל ובתפלתם, והשב אתה עבודה לדביר ביתך, ותפלתם באהבה תקבל ברצון, ותהי לרצון תמיד עבודת ישראל עמך.

On Rosh Hodesh and Hol Ha-mo-ed we add:

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו], יעלה ויבא, ויגיע ויראה, וירצה וישמע, ויפקד ויזכר וזכרנו ופקדוננו, וזכרון אבותינו [ואמותינו], וזכרון משיח בן דוד עבדך, וזכרון ירושלים עיר קדשה, וזכרון כל עמך בית ישראל לפניך, לפליטה, לטובה, לחן ולחסד ולרחמים, לחיים ולשלום, ביום ראש החודש הזה. חג המצות הזה. חג הספות הזה.

On Sukkot: On Pesah: On Rosh Hodesh:

זכרנו, יהוה אלהינו בו לטובה, ופקדנו בו לכרחה, והושיענו בו לחיים. ובדבר ישועה ורחמים, חוס וחסנו, ורחם עלינו והושיענו, כי אליך עינינו, כי אל מלך חנון ורחום אתה.

BUT . . . YOU HAVE NOT GIVEN IT נתתו. ולא נתתו. These phrases and the sentences that follow do not appear in early Ashkenazic liturgy. They were probably added in the High Middle Ages, due to the competition between Judaism and Christianity and the persecution in the time of the Crusades and after. A sharp distinction was thus drawn: we are the inheritors of God's wonderful gift, Shabbat, but our persecutors do not participate with us in this special moment. Our situation today is quite different, and we welcome non-Jews to join with us in celebrating Shabbat. As the prophet Isaiah declared, Judaism's gifts are not a secret treasure to be hoarded, but a divine blessing to be shared with all who would join in receiving them.

TO YOUR SANCTUARY לדביר ביתך. Literally, the "inner-chamber," as in 1 Kings 6:19, "within the Temple, on the inside." We pray for access to the innermost reaches of the divine realm; for the most intimate relationship with God. Yet this intimacy is not silence. The word d'vir connects to davar, "word." In the d'vir, God hears our voice, and we hear that of the Divine. (Jill Jacobs)

MAY THE THOUGHT OF US RISE UP AND REACH YOU יעלה ויבא. This paragraph, recited on every festival and New Moon, asks God—and by implication, us—to see the New Moon or the festival as a time to focus on renewal and redemption.

Gratitude

My instincts are from You,
my body was fashioned
by You,
the songs I sing reach up
to You,
and with offerings of
thanksgiving I greet You.

The air I breathe is Yours,
the light in my eyes reflects
Your glory,
my insights are formed
from Your mystery,
the guideposts of my life
are thoughts of You.

Whenever my love calls to
You, my heart finds You.
But my mind cannot con-
tain You.
And my thoughts and
conceptions can never
truly picture You,
or my errors and mistakes
ever diminish You.

—after YEHUDAH HALEVI

Thanking God

David prayed, “For all is
from You, and from Your
own hand I give to You”
(1 Chronicles 29:14).

May our eyes behold Your compassionate return to Zion.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who restores Your Divine Presence to Zion.

Sixth B'rakhah: Gratitude for Life and Its Blessings

*When the Amidah is recited silently, we read the following paragraph.
When the Amidah is chanted aloud, the leader reads this paragraph
as the congregation reads the next passage.*

¶ We thank You, for You are ever our God and the God of our
ancestors; You are the bedrock of our lives, the shield that
protects us in every generation. We thank You and sing Your
praises—for our lives that are in Your hands, for our souls that
are under Your care, for Your miracles that accompany us each
day, and for Your wonders and Your gifts that are with us each
moment—evening, morning, and noon.

► You are the one who is good, whose mercy is never-ending;
the one who is compassionate, whose love is unceasing. We
have always placed our hope in You.

*This paragraph is recited by the congregation when the full
Amidah is repeated by the leader, by custom remaining seated
and bowing slightly.*

¶ We thank You for the ability to acknowledge You. You are
our God and the God of our ancestors, the God of all flesh,
our creator, and the creator of all. We offer praise and blessing
to Your holy and great name, for granting us life and for
sustaining us. May You continue to grant us life and sus-
tenance. Gather our dispersed to Your holy courtyards, that
we may fulfill Your mitzvot and serve You wholeheartedly,
carrying out Your will. May God, the source of gratitude,
be praised.

On Hanukkah we add Al Hanissim on page 430.

For all these blessings may Your name be praised and exalted,
our sovereign, always and forever.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

And inscribe all the people of Your covenant for a good life.

May all that lives thank You always, and faithfully praise Your
name forever, God of our deliverance and help.

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI*, Your name is goodness and praise of
You is fitting.

וְתַחֲזִינָה עֵינֵינוּ בְּשׁוּבְךָ לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְחַזֵּיר שְׂכִינְתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.

*When the Amidah is recited silently, we read the following paragraph.
When the Amidah is chanted aloud, the leader reads this paragraph
as the congregation reads the next passage.*

¶ מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאֵתָה הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ] לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. צוּר חַיֵּינוּ, מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ,
אַתָּה הוּא לְדוֹר וָדוֹר. נוֹדָה לָךְ וְנִסְפָּר תְּהִלָּתְךָ, עַל חַיֵּינוּ
הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדְךָ וְעַל נְשְׁמוֹתֵינוּ הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ, וְעַל נַסְיָךְ
שֶׁבְּכָל־יּוֹם עִמָּנוּ וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל־עֵת,
עָרֵב וּבָקֵר וְצָהָרִים. ◀ הַטּוֹב, כִּי לֹא כָלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ,
וְהִמְרָחֵם, כִּי לֹא תָמוּ חֲסֵדֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם קוּיֵנוּ לָךְ.

*This paragraph is recited by the congregation when the full Amidah is
repeated by the leader, by custom remaining seated and bowing slightly.*

¶ מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאֵתָה הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ]. אֱלֹהֵי כָל־בְּשָׂרָה, יוֹצְרֵנוּ, יוֹצֵר
בְּרֵאשִׁית. בְּרִכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ,
עַל שֶׁהַחַיִּיתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָּנוּ. בֵּן תַּחֲזִינוּ וְתַקִּימָנוּ, וְתִאֶסְדֵּךְ
גְּלוּיֵנוּ לְחַצְרוֹת קִדְשֶׁךָ, לְשִׁמּוֹר חֻקֶיךָ וְלַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ,
וְלַעֲבֹדְךָ בְּלִבָּב שְׁלֵם, עַל שֶׁאֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ.
בְּרוּךְ אַל הַהוֹדָאוֹת.

On Hanukkah we add Al Hanissim on page 430.

וְעַל כָּלֵם יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִתְרוֹמַם שְׁמֶךָ מִלְּפָנֵינוּ תְּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

וּכְתוּב לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים כָּל־בְּנֵי בְרִיתְךָ.

וְכָל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ סֵלָה, וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּאֵמֶת,
הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתָנוּ וְעֲזָרָתָנוּ סֵלָה.

¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַטּוֹב שְׁמֶךָ וְלָךְ נֶאֱדָה לְהוֹדוֹת.

she-anahnu modim lakh, “we thank You for the ability to thank You.” The ability to express gratitude is seen as a special gift to humanity. The attitude of thankfulness connects us to the world with a sense of humility and a joyful spirit of openness.

MAY YOUR NAME BE PRAISED AND EXALTED שְׁמֶךָ יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִתְרוֹמַם. In the language of the Bible and the prayer-
book, “God’s name is exalted” when we acknowledge God, recognize God’s goodness in creation, and act to
enable God’s justice and compassion to be visible in the world.

AND INSCRIBE וּכְתוּב. This is the third of the four special insertions in the Amidah for the Ten Days of Repentance.

**WHO RESTORES YOUR
DIVINE PRESENCE TO ZION**
הַמְחַזֵּיר שְׂכִינְתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.
In the Land of Israel in
the 1st millennium, this
blessing ended with the
words שְׂאוֹתָךְ לְבִדָּךְ בִּירְאָה
(*she-ot'kha l'vad'kha*
b'yirah na-avod), “You
alone shall we worship
in awe.” The vision of the
return to Zion is a vision
of a religious life not yet
attained.

YOUR DIVINE PRESENCE
שְׂכִינְתוֹ. The Hebrew word
shekhinah has been used
for centuries to refer to
God’s immanence, the
presence of God that is
felt in the world. The word
shekhinah is grammatically
feminine. Accordingly,
Jewish mystical tradition
has tended to personify
the Divine Presence as
female.

WE THANK מוֹדִים (*the
congregational response*). A
second version of Modim,
the *b'rakhah* expressing
gratitude, was created by
the ancient rabbis to be
recited by the congrega-
tion individually while
the leader chanted the
official prayer (Babylonian
Talmud, Sotah 40a). In
this way, the leader and
the congregation simul-
taneously offer thanks-
giving to God. The central
idea expressed in this
congregational response is
modim anahnu lakh . . . al

Be Like the Students of Aaron

Hillel would teach: “Be like the students of Aaron: loving peace and pursuing peace, loving every living being and drawing them near to the Torah.” What would Aaron do? When two people were fighting with each other, he would go and sit near the first and say, “My child, you should only know how disturbed and embarrassed your friend is about having offended you,” and thus his anger would be quieted. Then Aaron would go to the second one, sit next to him and say, “My child, I’ve just spoken with your friend and you should realize how disturbed and embarrassed he is about having offended you.” And Aaron would sit with him until his anger had dissipated. When the two met, they would hug each other and kiss. That is why it is written that when Aaron died, the entire house of Israel mourned for thirty days (Numbers 20:29), but when Moses died it does not say the whole house of Israel mourned.

—AVOT D’RABBI NATAN

Peace

Hezekiah said in the name of Hori: Great is peace, for regarding all the journeys of the Israelites in the desert it is written that they journeyed in contention and encamped with contention. But when they came to Mount Sinai they encamped as one, as it is written, “And Israel encamped there” (Exodus 19:1). The Torah does not say “the children of Israel” but rather “Israel,” to teach you that there were no differences but they came there as one. The Holy One then said: “This is the hour that I can give the Torah to My children.”

—LEVITICUS RABBAH

Seventh B’rakhah: Prayer for Peace

During the silent Amidah, continue with “Grant peace” below.

During the repetition of the Amidah, the leader recites the Priestly Blessing.

Our God and God of our ancestors,
bless us with the threefold blessing of the Torah
written by Moses Your servant,
recited by Aaron and his descendants, the *kohanim*,
the consecrated priests of Your people:

May ADONAI bless and protect you.

So may it be God’s will. Ken y’hi ratzon.

May ADONAI’s countenance shine upon you

and may ADONAI bestow kindness upon you.

So may it be God’s will. Ken y’hi ratzon.

May ADONAI’s countenance be lifted toward you

and may ADONAI grant you peace.

So may it be God’s will. Ken y’hi ratzon.

Grant peace to the world, goodness and blessing, grace, love, and compassion, for us and for all the people Israel. Bless us, our creator, united as one with the light of Your presence; by that light, ADONAI our God, You have given us a guide to life, the love of kindness, righteousness, blessing, compassion, life, and peace. May it please You to bless Your people Israel at every season and at all times with Your gift of peace.

Sim shalom ba-olam, tovah u-v’rakhah, hen va-hesed v’rahamim aleinu v’al kol yisrael amekha. Bar’kheinu avinu kulanu k’ehad b’or panekha, ki v’or panekha natata lanu, Adonai eloheinu, torat hayim v’ahavat hesed, u-tzedakah u-v’rakhah v’rahamim v’hayim v’shalom. V’tov b’einekha l’varekh et am’kha yisrael, b’khol eit u-v’khol sha-ah bishlomekha.

On Shabbat Shuvah we recite the following paragraph, in place of the line that follows it:

May we and the entire house of Israel be called to mind and inscribed for life, blessing, sustenance, and peace in the Book of Life. *Barukh atah ADONAI*, who brings peace.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who blesses Your people Israel with peace.

During the silent Amidah, continue with *שִׁים שְׁלוֹם* below.

During the repetition of the Amidah, the leader recites *Birkat Kohanim*.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ],
בְּרַכְנוּ בְּבְרָכָה הַמְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
בַּתּוֹרָה הַכְּתוּבָה עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדְךָ,
הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי אֱהָרֹן וּבְנָיו, בְּהַגִּים, עִם קְדוּשָׁה, בְּאֲמוּר:
יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ.
יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וִיחַנֶּךָ.
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשָּׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.
כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.
כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.
כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם, טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה,
חֵן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים, עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמֶּךָ.
בְּרַכְנוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּלָנוּ בְּאֶחָד בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ,
כִּי בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ נִתְּתָ לָנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד,
וְיִצְדָּקָה וּבְרָכָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם.
וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֶךְ אֶת־עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּכָל־עֵת וּבְכָל־שָׁעָה בְּשְׁלוֹמָהּ.

On Shabbat Shuvah we recite the following paragraph, in place of the line that follows it:

בְּסִפּוֹר חַיִּים, בְּרָכָה, וְשְׁלוֹם, וּפְרִנְסָה טוֹבָה,
נִזְכָּר וְנִפְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ, אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל־עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְלְשְׁלוֹם.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, עוֹשֵׂה הַשְׁלוֹם.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשְׁלוֹם.

blessing, *Shalom Rav*, is recited in the Amidah on most afternoons and in the evening. In the words of the midrash, “Great is peace, for all prayers conclude with a plea for peace” (Leviticus Rabbah 9:9).

TO THE WORLD בְּעוֹלָם. In accord with the text of the 10th-century prayerbook of Saadia Gaon, Conservative Movement prayerbooks insert this word (*ba-olam*) to emphasize that Jewish prayers for peace are universalistic and encompass the entire world.

MAY ADONAI BLESS AND PROTECT YOU יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ. Numbers 6:24–26. This biblical blessing, known as *Birkat Kohanim* (the Priestly Blessing), is prescribed in the Torah to be recited by Aaron and his descendants, the *kohanim* (priests). Mishnah Tamid (5:1) reports that each day after the morning Sh’ma was recited, the prayers in the Temple concluded with the Priestly Blessing. On Shabbat an additional blessing was added for the *kohanim* who began their service in the Temple that week: “May the one who dwells in this house cause love, unity, and peace to dwell among you” (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 12a).

GRANT PEACE שִׁים שְׁלוֹם. The wording of this paragraph is related directly to the Priestly Blessing, both in its mention of the blessings of peace and in its reference to the light of God’s countenance. Thus, the *Sim Shalom b’rakhah* is traditionally recited at all services at which the Priestly Blessing occurs when the Amidah is recited in the Land of Israel. An alternative version of this

In This Stillness

In this expanse
of quiet, stillness,
I reach out and reach in,
seeking myself
and seeking You.
I am grateful
for the breath of life,
the unending miracles
of Your creation.

How may I best sustain
the light in this world?
How may I heal
my wounded heart,
soften and salve the pain
which is too often
my companion?

I beseech You to protect
and guard me,
I and my household,
all my loved ones,
the children of Israel,
all of Your children
everywhere.

Grant us life, health,
sustenance, peace.

May this Shabbat offer
sweet blessings,
and may it be a foretaste
of the week to come.

—MALKA ALIZA
BAT LEIBA

*The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer
or one of the following:*

א

My God, keep my tongue from evil, my lips from deceit.
Help me ignore those who would slander me.

Let me be humble before all.

Open my heart to Your Torah, that I may pursue Your mitzvot.
Frustrate the designs of those who plot evil against me;
nullify their schemes.

Act for the sake of Your name, act for the sake of Your triumph,
act for the sake of Your holiness, act for the sake of Your Torah.

Answer my prayer for the deliverance of Your people.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be
acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

*Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing
at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.*

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to
all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen*.

ב

Grant me the liberating joy of Shabbat, the ability to truly taste
its delights. May my heart not be weighed down by sorrow on
this holy Shabbat. Fill the soul of Your servant with gladness—
for to You, ADONAI, I offer my entire being. Help me to increase
the joys of Shabbat and to extend its joyful spirit to the other six
days of the week. Show me the path of life, that I may be filled
with the joy of being in Your presence, the delight of being close
to You forever.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be
acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

*Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing
at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.*

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to
all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen*.

Yihyu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi lfanekha Adonai tzuri v'go-ali.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu
v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil], v'imru amen.

*When the Amidah is to be repeated aloud, we turn back to page 159.
On Shabbat Hol Ha-mo-ed, Shabbat Rosh Hodesh, and Hanukkah,
we continue with Hallel on page 316.*

*The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer
or one of the following:*

א

אֱלֹהֵי, נִצּוֹר לְשׁוֹנֵי מִרְעֵ, וּשְׁפָתַי מִדְּבַר מִרְמָה, וְלִמְקַלְלֵי
נַפְשֵׁי תוֹדֵם, וְנִפְשֵׁי כְּעַפָּר לְכֹל תְּהִיָּה. פִּתַח לְבִי בְּתוֹרַתְךָ,
וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִרְדּוּף נַפְשִׁי. וְכָל־הַחוֹשְׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה,
מְהֵרָה הִפֵּר עֲצָתָם וְקִלְקַל מַחְשַׁבְתָּם. עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן שְׁמֶךָ,
עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן יְמִינְךָ, עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן קִדְשֶׁתָּךְ, עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן
תּוֹרַתְךָ. לִמְעַן יִחַלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וְעַנְנֵי.

יְהִיו לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוּה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי.

*Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing
at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.*

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל], וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

ב

זַכֵּנִי לְשִׂמְחָה וְחֵרוֹת שֶׁל שַׁבָּת, לְטַעַם טַעַם עֲנֹג שַׁבָּת
בְּאַמְתָּ. זַכֵּנִי שֶׁלֹּא יַעֲלֶה עַל לְבִי עֲצָבוֹת בְּיוֹם שַׁבָּת
קִדְשׁ. שִׂמַּח נַפְשׁ מְשֻׁרְתָּךְ, בִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי אֲשָׂא.
עֲזֵרְנִי לְהַרְבוֹת בְּתַעֲנוּגֵי שַׁבָּת, וּלְהַמְשִׁיךְ הַשְׂמֵחָה שֶׁל
שַׁבָּת לְשִׁשֶׁת יְמֵי הַחֹל. תּוֹדִיעֵנִי אֶרְחַ חַיִּים, שִׁבְעַ
שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ, נְעִימוֹת בְּיְמִינְךָ נִצַּח.

יְהִיו לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוּה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי.

*Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing
at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.*

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל], וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

*When the Amidah is to be repeated aloud, we turn back to page 159.
On Shabbat Hol Ha-mo-ed, Shabbat Rosh Hodesh, and Hanukkah,
we continue with Hallel on page 316.*

MY GOD אֱלֹהֵי. One opinion
voiced in the Babylonian
Talmud states that every
Amidah must be accompa-
nied by a personal prayer
(Berakhot 29b). The prayer
that is printed here is of-
fered by the Babylonian
Talmud (Berakhot 17a) as
an example of such a per-
sonal prayer; it is attributed
to Mar son of Ravina (4th
century).

MAY THE WORDS לְרָצוֹן
Psalm 19:15. Rabbi Yohanan
(3rd century, the Land of
Israel) recommended that
the Amidah conclude with
this verse (Talmud of the
Land of Israel, Berakhot
4:4).

GRANT זַכֵּנִי. A prayer
of Nahman of Bratzlav
(Ukraine, 1772–1810), trans-
lated by Jules Harlow.

Tilling the Soil

Why did Moses ask that his “teaching drip down like rain” (Deuteronomy 32:2)? A Hasidic master notes that rain is only beneficial for plants, enabling them to grow, if the earth has first been plowed and sowed; if the area has not been properly prepared, the rain will produce only mud. So too with Torah, which is most beneficial to those who are properly prepared to receive it.

As we conclude our Shahaarit service and turn to the public reading of the Torah, we hope that our prayers have done just that: tilled and plowed our consciousness, loosening our hearts and minds, so that the words of Torah might drip down deep within, nourishing the seeds our prayers have planted. As Louis Finkelstein once noted, “Our love for the Torah is only in part rationalistic; in the main, we need not be ashamed to confess it, it is emotional, intuitive and mystic.” Prayer prepares us for the words of Torah to penetrate deep within us.

Kaddish Shalem

Leader:

May God’s great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God’s wish. May God’s sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen*.

Congregation and Leader:

May God’s great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

Y’hei sh’meih raba m’varakh l’alam u-l’almei almaya.

Leader:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b’rikh hu*, is truly [on Shabbat Shuvah we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world.

And we say: *Amen*.

May the prayers and pleas of all Israel be accepted by their creator in heaven. And we say: *Amen*.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: *Amen*.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen*.

קדיש שלם

Leader:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דֵּי בְּרָא, בְּרַעוּתָהּ, וְיִמְלִיף מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיָמֵינוּ וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיף הוּא, לְעֵלְמָא מִן כָּל־ [לְעֵלְמָא לְעֵלְמָא מְכָל־] [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא וְנִשְׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחְמַתָּא דְאַמְרֵין בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תִּתְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתָהוֹן וּבְעוּתָהוֹן דְּכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל קָדָם אַבוּהוֹן דֵּי בְּשַׁמַּיָּא וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יְוֹשְׁבֵי תִבְלָה], וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

KADDISH SHALEM. Every service that features an Amidah is brought to a close with Kaddish Shalem, the complete Kaddish, so called because in addition to the words of the Kaddish recited at other times in the service, it adds a line asking God to accept our prayers: “May the prayers and pleas of all Israel be accepted by their creator in heaven.” Here, the placement of Kaddish Shalem marks the end of the morning Shahaarit prayers. The liturgy now moves on to the Torah service.

In a formal sense, though introduced and followed by *b'rakhot* and prayers, the reading of the Torah and the *haftarah* constitutes study, not prayer. For the ancient rabbis, prayer was quintessentially defined by the Amidah, which we have now completed.

The Shabbat Torah Service

Torah

Next to human life, that which is most sacred to Jews is the Torah (the Five Books of Moses). Written by hand on parchment with a quill and permanent ink, the words of these five books depict the formative narratives of Jewish identity and self-understanding and the fundamental regulations of Jewish practice, the 613 mitzvot. Later rabbinic teaching presents itself as but an elaboration of these words—midrash.

Because the Torah is written as a continuous scroll, only a part of the text of the Torah can be seen at any one time. Metaphorically, this reminds us that the meaning of Torah is always partially revealed and partially hidden, and its teaching is constantly unfolding; even so, it is one continuous, integrated whole.

To Whom Is the Torah Addressed?

Rabbi Levi taught that when God appeared on Mount Sinai, each person believed that God was speaking directly to him or her. That is why the Decalogue begins, “I am Adonai your God” (Exodus 20:2; “your” is singular).

Rabbi Yose the son of Hanina added: The divine word came to each person in accord with that individual’s own capacity.

—PESIKTA D’RAV KAHANA

Taking Out the Torah

None compares to You, ADONAI, and nothing is like Your creation.

Ein kamokha va-elohim Adonai, v’ein k’ma-asekha.

Your sovereignty is eternal;

Your dominion endures in every generation.

ADONAI is sovereign, ADONAI has always been sovereign,

ADONAI will be sovereign forever and ever.

ADONAI, give strength to Your people;

ADONAI, bless Your people with peace.

Malkhut’kha malkhut kol olamim, u-memshalt’kha b’khol dor vador.

Adonai melekh, Adonai malakh, Adonai yimlokh l’olam va-ed.

Adonai oz l’amo yitein, Adonai y’varekh et amo va-shalom.

Compassionate creator,

may it be Your will that Zion flourish;

build the walls of Jerusalem,

for in You alone do we put our trust,

transcendent sovereign—master of all time.

Av ha-rahamim,

heitivah virtzon’kha et tziyon, tivneh homot yerushalayim.

Ki v’kha l’vad batahnu, melekh El ram v’nisa, adon olamim.

We rise as the ark is opened.

As the ark was carried forward, Moses would say:

ADONAI, rise up and scatter Your foes,

so that Your enemies flee Your presence.

Va-y’hi binso-a ha-aron, va-yomer moshe:

Kumah Adonai v’yafutzu oyvekha,

v’yanusu m’sanekha mi-panekha.

Torah shall go forth from Zion,

and the word of ADONAI from Jerusalem.

Praised is the one who gave Torah to the people Israel

in holiness.

Ki mi-tziyon teitzei torah, u-dvar Adonai mirushalayim.

Barukh she-natan Torah l’amo yisrael bikdushato.

סדר קריאת התורה לשבת

הוצאת התורה

אין כְּמוֹךָ בְּאֱלֹהִים, אֲדֹנָי, וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ.

מְלֻכוֹתֶיךָ מְלֻכוֹת כָּל-עֲלָמִים,

וּמַמְשַׁלְתֶּיךָ בְּכָל-דּוֹר וָדוֹר.

יְהוָה מְלֶךְ, יְהוָה מְלֶךְ, יְהוָה יְמֻלְךָ לְעֵלָם וָעַד.

יְהוָה עֵז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.

אֵב הַרְחָמִים, הִיטִיבָה בְּרִצּוֹנְךָ אֶת-צִיּוֹן,

תְּבַנֶּה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָיִם, כִּי כָךְ לְבַד בְּטַחָנוּ,

מְלֶךְ אֵל רַם וְנֹשֵׂא, אֲדוֹן עוֹלָמִים.

We rise as the ark is opened.

וַיְהִי בְנִסְעֵ הָאָרֶץ וַיֵּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה:

קוּמָה יְהוָה וַיִּפְצוּ אֲיִבֶיךָ, וַיִּנָּסוּ מִשְׁנֵאֶיךָ מִפְּנֵיךָ.

כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלָיִם.

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ.

his presence). In short, how we treat the Torah scroll combines the three “crowns” about which the ancient rabbis spoke: the crown of sovereignty, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of Torah (Pirkei Avot 4:17).

NONE COMPARES TO YOU אֵין כְּמוֹךָ. Psalm 86:8. As etiquette in Europe’s royal courts became more elaborate (12th–14th centuries), the Ashkenazic Torah service incorporated verses emphasizing God’s sovereignty, as if to say that God alone—and no earthly ruler—is the ultimate sovereign. The next verse, “Your sovereignty,” is Psalm 145:13; “Adonai, give strength” is Psalm 29:11.

ADONAI IS SOVEREIGN יְהוָה מְלֶךְ. This sentence is a compilation of biblical phrases about God’s sovereignty stitched together to form a creed: God has ruled the world since before creation and will continue to rule eternally.

COMPASSIONATE CREATOR אֵב הַרְחָמִים. This address, followed by a verse that calls for Jerusalem’s reconstruction (Psalm 51:20), is all that remains from prayers for forgiveness that were recited during the Torah service in an earlier era.

AS THE ARK WAS CARRIED FORWARD וַיְהִי בְנִסְעֵ הָאָרֶץ. Numbers 10:35 depicts the ark as the seat of divine protection, leading the march and warding off the fledgling nation’s enemies. One interpretation is that upon realizing that it is God whom they are fighting, enemies will flee and warfare will become unnecessary (Abraham ibn Ezra).

TORAH SHALL GO FORTH FROM ZION תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה. From Isaiah 2:3: “And many peoples shall come and say, ‘Let us go up to the mountain of Adonai, to the House of the God of Jacob, for Adonai shall teach us God’s ways, that we may walk in that path; for Torah shall go forth . . .’” As the ark is opened, we express our belief that Torah contains ideals of ethics, politics, and wisdom that affect all humanity.

In some North African communities, members of the congregation add the following biblical verses privately:

גַּר לְרַגְלֵי דְכָרְךָ
וְאוֹר לְנִתְיָבְתִי.
גַּר יִהְיֶה נְשֻׁמַּת אָדָם
חֶפֶשׁ כָּל־חֲדָרָי בְּטָן.
כִּי גַר מִצְוֶה וְתוֹרָה אוֹר
וְדַרְךְךָ חַיִּים תּוֹכְחוֹת
מוֹסֵר.
כִּי אֲמָה תֵאִיר גַּרִי
יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֵי יְגִיָּה חֲשָׁבִי.
אוֹר זְרָע לְצַדִּיק
וּלְיִשְׂרָי לֵב שְׂמֻחָה.

Your word is a lamp for my feet, light for my path (Psalm 119:105).

A person's soul is ADONAI's lamp, searching one's innermost being (Proverbs 20:27).

Mitzvah is the lamp and Torah the light, for the path of life is the taking of instruction (Proverbs 6:23).

For You light my lamp; ADONAI my God, bring light even to my darkness (Psalm 18:29).

Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright (Psalm 97:11).

Personal Prayers Before the Open Ark

A PRAYER FOR THE DAY OF REST

I long to change the world, but I rarely appreciate things as they are.

I know how to give, but I don't always know how to be still.

I talk, but I don't often listen. I look, but I don't often see.

I yearn to succeed, but I often forget what is truly important.

Teach me, God, to slow down. May my resting revive me.

May it lead me to wisdom, to holiness, to peace, and to You.

Naomi Levy

SHALOM TO ALL

Avinu Malkeinu, master of peace, help us and strengthen us so that we always strive for peace. May there be harmony among all people, their companions, and friends. May there be no discord among the members of my family. You who establish peace above, extend peace upon us and the whole world. May we draw close to You and Your Torah in truth and may we all be bound together, carrying out Your will wholeheartedly. Master of peace, bless us with peace.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, Adonai, my rock and my redeemer.

Nathan Sternharz

T'FILAT HA-DEREKH—

A PRAYER FOR THE JOURNEY: TRANSITIONS IN LIFE

Our lives are always changing, and change brings with it fear of the unknown. The journey into the unknown is fraught with danger, yet rich with possibility. It has always been so—as Abraham and Sarah went forth, as Rebecca and then Jacob went forth. Our ancestors across time have looked to You for protection, from the wild beasts of the road, from the vagaries of weather. So too I, in this place, in this time, look to You. Help me to remember my strength and courage, help me to see clearly, to listen deeply, to act wisely. Help me to be my best self in this new place and time. Every journey leads into the unknown. May the unknown ahead of me offer blessing.

Merle Feld

Personal Prayers Before the Open Ark

A PRAYER FOR GOODNESS

Compassionate creator, teach me to appreciate the love of my family and friends. May I not be the source of pain or contention, jealousy or needless competitiveness, but may I learn to listen to the heartfelt stirrings of all whom I know and love—and may I help fulfill their needs. Grant health of body and spirit to all. May Your Torah fashion me into an instrument of Your will and of Your peace. *Amen.*

A PRAYER WHEN SAD

Master of the universe, see the sadness in my soul. Heal my grief and despair. I wish to do Your will but my sadness overwhelms me. Let Your instruction touch my being that I might find comfort in the world You have created, and that I might in turn be a comfort to others. May the soul You have given me give me the strength to turn sadness into joy and despair into song. Master of the Universe, send healing.

A PRAYER FOR ONE'S PERSONAL JOURNEY

Open my eyes, God. Help me to perceive what I have ignored, to uncover what I have forsaken, to find what I have been searching for.

Remind me that I don't have to journey far to discover something new, for miracles surround me, blessings and holiness abound.

And You are near.

Naomi Levy

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

I thank You, Adonai, for knowing me, for granting me a measure of fullness, a fulfillment of small hopes, and many yearnings. Thank You for the gift of this day. May the gratitude in my heart and the sense of fullness that I feel now continue to sustain me, taking root in my soul, even as I continue to dream and pray. "It is good to thank You, Adonai, and to sing to Your name, transcendent God" (Psalm 92:2). Give me strength to see the gift in each new day You grant.

PERSONAL PRAYERS BEFORE THE OPEN ARK. Throughout the generations, the moment when the ark was opened and the Torah scrolls were displayed was considered an especially favored time for personal meditation and prayers for the welfare of the community.

SHALOM TO ALL. This prayer by Nathan Sternharz (1780–1845), the chief recorder of the teachings of the Hasidic master Nahman of Bratzlav, has been adapted and translated by Jules Harlow.

T'FILAT HA-DEREKH. Traditionally, a prayer is said before embarking on a journey. While the context for that prayer is an actual journey, Merle Feld has expanded the notion to include the life journeys we undertake. The phrase "the wild beasts of the road" is taken from the traditional prayer for a journey.

*The Zohar's
Introduction to
B'rikh Sh'meih*

As soon as the Torah scroll is placed on the reading desk, the whole congregation below should assume an attitude of awe and fear, of trembling and quaking, as though they were at the moment of standing at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, and they should pay attention and listen carefully; for it is not permitted then to open one's mouth, even for discussing the Torah, still less other subjects. All must be in awe and fear, as though they were speechless, as it is written: "And when he [Ezra] opened it, all the people stood up," and also "And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Torah scroll" (Nehemiah 8:5 and 8:3). Rabbi Shimon said: "When the Torah scroll is taken out to be read before the congregation, the heavenly gates of mercy are opened, the attribute of love is stirred up, and each one should then recite the following prayer: 'Ruler of the universe, praised be Your name and Your sovereignty . . .'"

A Mystical Prayer Before the Open Ark

Ruler of the universe, praised be Your name and Your sovereignty. May You desire Your people Israel forever, and may Your liberating power be revealed to them in Your sanctuary. Extend to us the goodness of Your light and with compassion accept our prayers. May it be Your will to grant us long life and well-being; may I be counted among the righteous, and in Your compassion protect me, my family, and all the people Israel. You are the one who nourishes and sustains all life. You rule over all, You have dominion over rulers, for true sovereignty is Yours.

I am a servant of the Holy One, whom I revere and whose precious Torah I revere in every time and place. Not on mortals, nor on angels do I rely, but rather on the God of heaven, the God of truth, whose Torah is truth and whose prophets are true and who abounds in deeds of goodness and truth.

► It is in God that I put my trust, and it is to Your holy and precious name that I utter praise. May it be Your will that You open my heart to Your Torah, and that You fulfill the desires of my heart and the hearts of all Your people Israel, for goodness, for life, and for peace. *Amen.*

► *Beih ana raheitz,
v'lishmeih kadisha yakira ana eimar tushb'han.
Y'heih ra-ava kodamakh d'tiftah libi b'oraita,
v'tashlim mishalin d'libi v'liba d'khol amakh yisrael,
l'tav u-l'hayin v'lishlam. Amen.*

בְּרִיךְ שְׁמֵהּ דְּמַרְא עֲלֵמָא,
בְּרִיךְ בְּתַרְךָ וְאַתְרָךָ.
יְהִי רַעוּתְךָ עִם עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעֹלָם,
וּפְרָקוּן יְמִינְךָ אַחֲזִי לְעַמְּךָ בְּבֵית מִקְדָּשְׁךָ,
וּלְאַמְטוּי לְנָת מְטוּב נְהוּרָךָ,
וּלְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתֵנָא בְּרַחֲמִין.
יְהִי רַעוּא קְדָמְךָ דְּתוּרִיךָ לָן חַיִּין בְּטִיבוּתָא,
וְלַהּוּי אָנָּא פְּקִידָא בְּגוּ צְדִיקֵיָא,
לְמַרְחָם עָלֵי וּלְמַנְטֵר יְתִי וְיַת כָּל־דֵּי לִי וְדֵי לְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל.
אַנְתָּ הוּא זֶן לְכָלָא, וּמְפָרְס לְכָלָא.
אַנְתָּ הוּא שְׁלִיט עַל כָּלָא,
אַנְתָּ הוּא דְּשְׁלִיט עַל מַלְכֵיָא, וּמַלְכוּתָא דִּילָךְ הִיא.

אָנָּא עֲבָדָא דְּקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
דְּסִגִּידָנָא קַמְהָ, וּמְקַמֵּי דִּיקָר אֲוִרִיתָהּ בְּכָל־עֵדוּן וְעֵדוּן.
לֹא עַל אָנָּשׁ רַחֲמֵינָא, וְלֹא עַל בַּר אֱלֹהִין סְמִיכָנָא,
אַלֵּא בְּאַלְהָא דְּשַׁמַּיָא, דְּהוּא אֱלֹהָא קָשׁוּט,
וְאֲוִרִיתָהּ קָשׁוּט, וּנְבִיאָוּהִי קָשׁוּט,
וּמַסְגָּא לְמַעַבְד טַבּוֹן וּקָשׁוּט.

◀ בְּהָ אָנָּא רַחֵץ
וְלִשְׁמֵהּ קַדִּישָׁא יְקִירָא אָנָּא אִמֵּר תְּשַׁבְּחוּן.
יְהִי רַעוּא קְדָמְךָ דְּתַפְתַּח לְבִי בְּאֲוִרִיתָא,
וְתִשְׁלִים מִשְׁאַלִּין דְּלִבִּי, וְלִפְתָּ דְּכָל־עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל,
לְטַב וּלְחַיִּין וּלְשָׁלָם. אָמֵן.

PRAISED BE YOUR NAME
ברוך שְׁמֵהּ. The mystic Isaac Luria (1534–1574, Safed) recommended that this prayer be recited before the open ark. It appears in printed editions of the Zohar (II:206a), where the passage that appears in the left-hand column of the facing page serves as an introduction, but it is not found in earlier manuscripts. One manuscript attributes it to the writings of Moses Nahmanides (1194–1270, Spain). Although its provenance is disputed, it has been cherished by many rites.

Procession of the Torah

We remove the Torah scroll from the ark and the leader faces the congregation.
The following two lines are recited by the leader and we then repeat them:

Hear, O Israel, ADONAI is our God, ADONAI is one.
Sh'ma yisrael, Adonai eloheinu, Adonai ehad.

Our God is one; great is our sovereign; holy is God's name.
Ehad eloheinu, gadol adoneinu, kadosh sh'mo.

Leader, facing the ark:

Join me in glorifying ADONAI; let us together acclaim God's name.

The Torah is carried in a circuit around the congregation.

Yours, ADONAI, is the greatness, the strength, the glory,
the triumph, and the splendor—for everything in heaven
and on earth is Yours.

Yours, ADONAI, is the sovereignty and the majesty above all.

Exalt ADONAI, our God; bow down before God, the Holy One.

Exalt ADONAI, our God, and bow down at God's holy mountain,
for ADONAI our God is holy.

L'kha Adonai ha-g'dulah v'ha-g'vurah v'ha-tiferet v'ha-netzah v'hahod, ki khol
ba-shamayim uva-aretz. L'kha Adonai ha-mamlakhah v'ha-mitnasei l'khol l'rosh.
Rom'mu Adonai eloheinu v'hishtahavu la-hadom raglav, kadosh hu.
Rom'mu Adonai eloheinu v'hishtahavu l'har kodsho, ki kadosh Adonai eloheinu.

Reading from the Torah

The Torah is placed on the reading table.

A PRAYER FOR JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN DISTRESS

May the one who is the source of compassion recall the covenant with our ancestors
and have compassion on this people borne by God. May the Divine rescue us in
difficult times, remove the impulse to commit evil from those who bear it, and grant us
enduring relief. May our requests be met with favor, deliverance, and compassion.

BEFORE THE FIRST ALIYAH

Leader:

May You help, shield, and save all who trust in You, and let us say: Amen.

Let us all declare the greatness of God and give honor to the Torah as [the first
to be called to the Torah] comes forward. Praised is God, who gave Torah to the
people Israel in holiness.

Congregation and Leader:

You who cling to ADONAI your God have all been sustained to this day.

V'attem ha-d'veikim badonai eloheikhem hayim kul'khem hayom.

We remove the Torah scroll from the ark and the leader faces the congregation.
The following two lines are recited by the leader and we then repeat them:

שמע ישראל, יהוה אלהינו, יהוה אחד.

אחד אלהינו, גדול אדוננו, קדוש שמו.

Leader, facing the ark:

גדלו ליהוה אתי, ונרוממה שמו יחדו.

The Torah is carried in a circuit around the congregation.

לך יהוה הגדלה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד,
כי כל בשמים ובארץ, לך יהוה הממלכה והמתנשא
לכל לראש. רוממו יהוה אלהינו, והשתחוה להדם רגליו,
קדוש הוא. רוממו יהוה אלהינו, והשתחוה להר קדשו,
כי קדוש יהוה אלהינו.

The Torah is placed on the reading table.

אב הרחמים, הוא ירחם עם עמוסים, ויזכר ברית איתנים,
ויציל נפשותינו מן השעות הרעות, ויגער בייצר הרע מן
הנשואים, ויחן אותנו לפליטת עולמים, וימלא
משאלותינו במדה טובה ישועה ורחמים.

Leader:

יעזר ויגן וישוע לכל החוסים בו, ונאמר אמן.

הכל הבו גדל לאלהינו ותנו כבוד לתורה.

(בהן קרב, יעמד _____ בן _____ הפהו.)

(בת פהו קרבי, תעמד _____ בת _____ הפהו.)

(יעמד _____ בן _____ ראשוו.)

(תעמד _____ בת _____ ראשווה.)

ברוך שנתן תורה לעמו ישראל בקדשתו.

Congregation and Leader:

ואתם הדבקים ביהוה אלהיכם, חיים בלכם היום.

day, Yemenite Jews called to the Torah read their own aliyah.) The ancient rabbis instituted a practice of calling a kohen for the first aliyah and a levi for the second, in order to mitigate arguments about who deserved the opening honors. Some congregations retain this practice; others call congregants to aliyot without regard to status. It has become customary that each person called to the Torah uses either the corner of the tallit or the Torah binder to touch the scroll at the starting place (indicated by the reader) and then kisses the tallit or binder, reciting the b'rakhah while holding the wooden handles of the Torah rollers. When the reading is completed, this gesture is repeated.

YOU WHO CLING הדבקים ביהוה אלהיכם. Deuteronomy 4:4. From Moses' speech to Israel in the wilderness. In its context here, the verse is an assertion that it is through Torah that the fullness of life can be achieved.

ACCLAIM גדלו. Psalm 34:4. This verse, asking the congregation to acknowledge Adonai, and the following verses, which form the congregational response, mark the oldest section of the Torah service. Since Judaism avoids any iconic representations of God, the Torah represents the most concrete symbol of God's presence on earth. When we bow in the direction of the Torah, we are acknowledging God's presence among us. In this vein, the Torah procession concludes with verses that speak of bowing before God.

YOUR, ADONAI יהוה. 1 Chronicles 29:11. These verses are presented as part of David's last speech to the people Israel.

ALIYOT. A person called to the Torah is an *oleh/olah la-torah*, one who "goes up" to the Torah, since in the Middle Ages the reading table was on a raised platform. It is considered an honor to be called up to the Torah, to publicly recite the blessings over the reading. During the talmudic era, each person called to the Torah would chant the assigned passage directly from the scroll. Today, each person called to the Torah recites the *b'rakhot* and the Torah is chanted by a designated reader. (To this

From Sephardic Practice

Before reciting the Torah blessings, the honoree(s) turn(s) to the congregation with a word of blessing (in accord with the language of greeting found in Ruth 2:4), and the congregation then responds in recognition:

Honoree(s): יהוה עִמָּכֶם.

May God be with you. Adonai imakhem.

Congregation: בְּרַכְּךָ יְיָ בְּרַכְּךָ יְיָ בְּרַכְּךָ יְיָ יהוה.

May God bless you. Y'varekh-kha/y'var'kheikh/ y'var'kheim Adonai.

Shabbat: Resting-Place on Our Journey

Each Shabbat is its own revelation, but each leads us further on the road to eternity. Each Shabbat is a resting place, an oasis on the journey that is the life of Torah. Each Shabbat's Torah reading looks forward to yet another week—another revelation.

Studying Torah

Once a young man who wanted to become a Ḥasid arrived at the court of Isaac Meir, the rebbe of Gur. The rabbi asked him if he had learned Torah. The young man didn't know what to answer. He had studied Torah but didn't want to appear too bold and answer "Yes," as if he knew all of Torah; nor could he say "No," for he would then be lying. So he responded, "I know a little." The rabbi replied, "Can anyone know more than a little?"

Blessings Recited by Those Called Up to the Torah

The person who is honored with an aliyah recites the following before the Torah is read:

Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed.

Bar'khu et Adonai ha-m'vorakh.

The congregation responds:

Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed forever and ever.

Barukh Adonai ha-m'vorakh l'olam va-ed.

The person who is honored repeats the above response, then continues:

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has chosen us from among all peoples, giving us the Torah.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives the Torah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher baḥar banu mikol ha-amim, v'natan lanu et torato.

Barukh atah Adonai, noten ha-torah.

The person who is honored recites the following after the Torah is read:

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has given us a teaching of truth, planting eternal life in our midst.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives the Torah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher natan lanu torat emet, v'ḥayei olam nata b'tokheinu.

Barukh atah Adonai, noten ha-torah.

Mi Sheberakh:

Blessing for Those Called to the Torah

May the one who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, bless _____,

who has/have ascended today to honor God and the Torah and Shabbat.

May the blessed Holy One protect him/her/them and his/her/their entire family, bring blessing and success to all the works of his/her/their hands, together with all his/her/their fellow Jews, and let us say: Amen.

For additional Mi Sheberakh prayers for special occasions, see pages 439–445.

בְּרִכּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה

The person who is honored with an aliyah recites the following before the Torah is read:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה הַמְּבֹרָךְ.

The congregation responds:

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

The person who is honored repeats the above response, then continues:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

The person who is honored recites the following after the Torah is read:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נִטַּע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ לְעוֹלָה לַתּוֹרָה

For an individual:

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבִרְהֵם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רֵבֶקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה, הוּא יְבָרַךְ אֶת _____ שְׁעָלָה\שְׁעָלָתָה הַיּוֹם לְכַבוֹד הַמָּקוֹם וּלְכַבוֹד הַתּוֹרָה, וְלְכַבוֹד הַשַּׁבָּת. הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁמַר אוֹתוֹ\אוֹתָהּ וְאֶת־כָּל־מְשִׁפְחָתוֹ\מְשִׁפְחָתָהּ, וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה וְהַצְלָחָה בְּכָל־מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו\יָדֶיהָ, עִם פְּלִי־שִׂרְיָאֵל אַחִיו וְאַחִיוֹתָיו\אַחִיָּהּ וְאַחִיֹּתֶיהָ, וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.

For a group of people:

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבִרְהֵם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רֵבֶקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה, הוּא יְבָרַךְ אֶת כָּל־אֵלָה שְׁעוֹל הַיּוֹם לְכַבוֹד הַמָּקוֹם וּלְכַבוֹד הַתּוֹרָה, וְלְכַבוֹד הַשַּׁבָּת. הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁמַר אוֹתָם וְאֶת־כָּל־מְשִׁפְחוֹתֵיהֶם, וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה וְהַצְלָחָה בְּכָל־מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵיהֶם, עִם פְּלִי־שִׂרְיָאֵל אַחֵיהֶם וְאַחִיוֹתֵיהֶם, וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.

For additional Mi Sheberakh prayers for special occasions, see pages 439–445.

THE READING. In the Land of Israel in the 1st millennium, the Torah was read on a cycle of three-and-a-half years and divided into more than 150 portions. In Babylonia, the Torah was divided into larger portions, called parashiyot, which are read in sequence on Shabbat mornings throughout a single year. (The number of these portions was eventually fixed at 54.) Because some years are leap years and in some years festivals fall on Shabbat, certain parashiyot may be read together, so that the weekly readings remain coordinated with the calendar. Today, we follow the Babylonian custom, though some congregations read one-third of each parashah each week, thus completing a full Torah reading in three years.

The trope, the musical notation with which the Torah is chanted, is the oldest form of musical notation still in use; it dates at least to the end of the 1st millennium. Trope serve as syntactical signposts and provide interpretive meaning to the text.

WHO HAS CHOSEN US בָּחַר בָּנוּ. At the moment of approaching the Torah, one may feel especially chosen and may also experience the moment as being directly commanded.

HAS GIVEN US . . . WHO וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ . . . נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה. The Hebrew moves from the past tense to the present. The meaning of the words of Torah not only derive from the past, but each reading may offer a new revelation.

Prayers for Healing

Mi sheberakh avoteinu
m'kor ha-b'rakhah l'imoteinu,
May the Source of strength
who blessed the ones
before us
help us find the courage
to make our lives a blessing,
and let us say: *Amen.*

Mi sheberakh imoteinu
m'kor ha-b'rakhah la-avoteinu,
bless those in need of
healing
with *r'fuah sh'leimah:*
the renewal of body,
the renewal of spirit,
and let us say: *Amen.*

—DEBBIE FRIEDMAN
AND DRORAH SETEL

Moses' Prayer

אֵל נָא רַפֵּא נָא
לָהּ \ לוֹ \ לָהֶם.

God, please heal
her/him/them.

El na r'fa na lah/lo/lahem.

— based on NUMBERS 12:13

Meaning of Healing

Healing may be different than “cure.” Healing is a process that concerns not only the physical aspect of our reality, but our mental, emotional, and spiritual states as well. We pray, in part, for inner peace, calm, a cessation of torment and suffering. The gift is to be able to deal with our fate, remain whole, and be at peace. This realization is important not only for the person who is ill but for caregivers as well, for they should know that they can be a source not only of cure but more especially of healing.

Mi Sheberakh: Prayer for Healing

May the one who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, bring blessing and healing to _____. May the Holy One mercifully restore him/her/them to health and vigor, granting him/her/them spiritual and physical well-being, together with all others who are ill, and may God grant strength to those who tend to them. Though Shabbat is a time to refrain from crying out, we yet hope and pray that healing is at hand. And let us say: *Amen.*

On Joyous Occasions

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who is good and who bestows goodness.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, hatov v'hameitiv.

The congregation responds:

Offer thanks to ADONAI, for God is good; God's love endures forever.

Hodu l'adonai ki tov, ki l'olam hasdo.

Birkat Ha-Gomel: On Being Saved from Danger

This b'rakhah is recited by one who has recovered from a serious illness or survived a life-threatening crisis.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who bestows goodness on us despite our imperfections, and who has treated me so favorably.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ha-gomel l'hayavim tovo, she-g'malani kol tov.

We respond:

May the one who has shown such favor to you continue to bestow all that is good upon you, forever.

for a male: Mi she-g'mal'kha kol tov, hu yigmolkha kol tov, selah.

for a female: Mi she-g'maleikh kol tov, hu yigm'leikh kol tov, selah.

for a group: Mi she-g'malkhem kol tov, yigmolkhem kol tov, selah.

מִי שְׁבֵרַךְ לְחַוְלִים

מִי שְׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבָרְהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב,
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רַבֵּקָה רַחֵל וְלֵאָה,
הוּא יְבָרַךְ וְיַרְפֵּא אֶת- [הַחֻלָּה\הַחֻלָּה\הַחֻלָּה]

(names of loved ones and friends may be added here)

בְּנֵי בֵּית _____.

הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִמְלֵא רַחֲמִים

For a male:

עָלֶיךָ, לְהַחְזִיקוֹ וּלְרַפְּאוֹתוֹ, וְיִשְׁלַח לוֹ

For a female:

עָלֶיךָ, לְהַחְזִיקָהּ וּלְרַפְּאוֹתָהּ, וְיִשְׁלַח לָהּ

For a group:

עָלֵיהֶם, לְהַחְזִיקֵם וּלְרַפְּאוֹתָם, וְיִשְׁלַח לָהֶם

מִהֲרָה רַפּוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, רַפּוּאָת הַנֶּפֶשׁ
וּרְפוּאָת הַגּוּף, בְּתוֹךְ שְׂאֵר הַחֻלִּים, וְחִזֵּק אֶת יְדֵי
הָעוֹסְקִים בְּצָרְכֵיהֶם, שֶׁבֵּת הִיא מְלֻזְעוּק וּרְפוּאָה
קְרוּבָה לְבוֹא, הַשָּׂתָא בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְנֹאמַר אַמֵּן.

הַפְּרַת הַטוֹב

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַטוֹב וְהַמְּטִיב.

The congregation responds:

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ.

בְּרַפְּת הַגּוֹמֵל

This b'rakhah is recited by one who has recovered from a serious illness or survived a life-threatening crisis.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַגּוֹמֵל לְחַיִּיבִים טוֹבוֹת, שֶׁגָּמַלְנִי כָּל-טוֹב.

We respond for a male:

מִי שֶׁגָּמַלְךָ כָּל-טוֹב, הוּא יִגְמַלְךָ כָּל-טוֹב, סֵלָה.

for a female:

מִי שֶׁגָּמַלְךָ כָּל-טוֹב, הוּא יִגְמַלְךָ כָּל-טוֹב, סֵלָה.

for a group:

מִי שֶׁגָּמַלְכֶם כָּל-טוֹב, הוּא יִגְמַלְכֶם כָּל-טוֹב, סֵלָה.

PRAYER FOR HEALING.

Traditionally, the prayer for healing is said in synagogue when the Torah is read.

Ellen Frankel, a contemporary writer, remarks that through the recitation of this prayer, we summon support from all those who care about our welfare.

Some follow the tradition of using only the mother's name, suggesting God's Shekhinah/In-dwelling "Feminine" aspect, which, according to our tradition, hovers over the bed of one who is ill and represents protection, care, and nurturing. (*Simcha Weintraub*)

ON JOYOUS OCCASIONS.

The rabbis of the Talmud insisted that recognizing the good in our lives was an important aspect of our worship of God and our own self-understanding and spiritual growth; they called this religious obligation *hakarot hatov* and formulated this blessing to be recited on these occasions (Mishnah Berakhot 9). Abaye (late 3rd century, Babylonia) insisted that the *b'rakhah* be said in the presence of a *minyan*. In this spirit, we have included a line (from Psalm 136) to be recited as a congregational response.

BIRKAT HA-GOMEL בְּרַפְּת הַגּוֹמֵל. In thanking God for having been saved from danger and calamity, we are conscious of the fragility of our lives and the gratitude with which we should meet each day of our lives.

SELAH סֵלָה. The meaning of this biblical word is unclear. The ancient rabbis understood it to mean "forever."

Revealed and Concealed

The Torah may be compared to a beautiful maiden, beautiful in form and appearance, concealed secretly in her palace. She has a single lover unknown to anyone—except to her.... Knowing that her lover is constantly circling her gate, what does she do? She opens a little window in that secret palace where she resides, reveals her face to her lover, and quickly withdraws, concealing herself.... So it is with a word of Torah: she reveals herself only to her lover. Torah knows that one who is wise of heart circles her gate every day. What does she do? From the palace, she reveals her face to the one who longs for her and signals a hint, then swiftly withdraws to her place, hiding away.... Thus Torah reveals and conceals herself, approaching her lover, lovingly arousing her lover.

—ZOHAR

Hatzi Kaddish is recited before the maftir aliyah is called to the Torah.

Hatzi Kaddish

Leader:

May God's great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God's wish. May God's sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen*.

Congregation and Leader:

May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

Leader:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b'rikh hu*, is truly [on *Shabbat Shuvah* we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world.

And we say: *Amen*.

Lifting the Torah

Two individuals are called to raise and tie the Sefer Torah after it is read. As the Torah is lifted, we rise and recite:

This is the Torah, God's word by Moses' hand, which Moses set before the people Israel.

V'zot ha-torah asher sam moshe lifnei b'nei yisrael al pi Adonai b'yad moshe.

Hatzi Kaddish is recited before the maftir aliyah is called to the Torah.

חֲצִי קַדִּיִּשׁ

Leader:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, בְּרַעוּתָהּ, וְיִמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֵלָם וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמֵיָא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְעֵלְא מִן כָּל־ [לְעֵלְא לְעֵלְא מְכָל־] [on *Shabbat Shuvah* we substitute: בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תִּשְׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחַמְתָּא דְאִמִּירָן בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

הַגְּבָהַת הַתּוֹרָה

Two people are called up for Hagbah and Gelilah, lifting and tying the Sefer Torah. As the Torah is lifted, we rise and recite:

זֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׂם מֹשֶׁה לִפְנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל פִּי יְהוָה בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה.

is lifted here upon the conclusion of the reading. Out of respect, the congregation remains standing while the Torah is wrapped—a ceremony that imitates the practice of royalty.

THIS IS THE TORAH הַתּוֹרָה. The liturgists combined Deuteronomy 4:44 and Numbers 9:23 in this line, underscoring that our entire Torah came from Moses as dictated by God. This theological claim is not made in the Bible itself. Since this passage conflates two biblical verses, the 20th-century Orthodox Jewish thinker Joseph B. Soloveitchik, for instance, did not recite it.

When reciting this passage, some people hold up or kiss the *tzitzit* of their *tallit*, to affirm their own active fulfillment of the Torah.

HATZI KADDISH. A Kaddish is recited here to mark the completion of the required reading of the Torah; we now prepare for the reading of the *haftarah*, a reading taken from a different section of the Bible, the Prophets. So that the person called to chant the *haftarah* may also be honored with some words from the Torah scroll itself, another reading, called the *maftir* or “concluding reading,” is added. On Shabbat it is usually a simple repetition of the last few verses of the required reading.

LIFTING AND WRAPPING THE TORAH. Tractate Sofrim (9th–10th century) instructs that the Torah be lifted, that three columns of text be unrolled, and that the writing be displayed to the entire congregation (14:8). In Sephardic practice this is done before the Torah reading begins; in Ashkenazic services the Torah

Priest and Prophet

Indeed, the sort of crimes and even the amount of delinquency that fill the prophets of Israel with dismay do not go beyond that which we regard as normal, as typical ingredients of social dynamics. To us a single act of injustice—cheating in business, exploitation of the poor—is slight; to the prophets, a disaster. To us injustice is injurious to the welfare of the people to the prophets it is a deathblow to existence: to us, an episode; to them, a catastrophe, a threat to the world.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

It is otherwise with the Priest. He appears on the scene at a time when prophecy has already succeeded in hewing out a path for its idea The Priest also fosters the idea and desires to perpetuate it; but he is not of the race of giants. He has not the strength to fight continually against necessity and actuality; his tendency is rather to bow to the one and come to terms with the other. . . . Not what ought to be, but what can be is what he seeks.

—AHAD HA-AM (translated by Leon Simon)

B'rakhah Before the Haftarah

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who chose worthy prophets and was pleased by their words, spoken in faithfulness.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who has chosen the Torah, Your servant Moses, Your people Israel, and the prophets of truth and justice.

B'rakhot After the Haftarah

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, eternal protector, righteous in all generations, the faithful God who fulfills what is promised, who accomplishes what is spoken, whose every word is true and just. Faithful are You, ADONAI, and Your words are trustworthy; not one of Your words will prove empty, for You are a faithful and compassionate sovereign.

Barukh atah ADONAI, God who faithfully fulfills all Your words.

Show compassion to Zion, our true home, and speedily, in our time, bring deliverance to those sad in spirit.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who makes Zion happy with her children.

Make us joyful, ADONAI our God, with Elijah the prophet, Your servant, and with the kingdom of David, Your anointed—may he soon come, making our hearts rejoice. May no stranger sit on his throne and may no other inherit his glory, for You have promised him, by Your holy name, that his light shall never be extinguished.

Barukh atah ADONAI, Shield of David.

For all this we thank You and praise You, ADONAI our God: for the Torah, for the ability to worship, for the prophets, for the Shabbat that You have given us, ADONAI our God, for holiness and for rest, for honor and for glory. May Your name be blessed by all that is living, always and forever, and may Your promise prove true and everlasting.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who makes Shabbat holy.

בְּרַכָּה לְפָנֵי הַהַפְטָרָה
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בְּנְבִיאִים טוֹבִים,
וְרָצָה בְּדַבְרֵיהֶם הַנְּאֻמִּים בְּאַמֶּת.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַבוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה וּבַמְשָׁה עֲבָדוֹ
וּבִישְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ וּבְנְבִיאֵי הָאַמֶּת וְצַדִּיק.

בְּרָכוֹת לְאַחַר הַהַפְטָרָה

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, צוּר כְּלֵי-הָעוֹלָמִים,
צַדִּיק בְּכָל-הַדּוֹרוֹת, הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן הָאוֹמֵר וְעָשָׂה, הַמְדַבֵּר
וּמְקַיֵּם, שֶׁפֶל-דְּבָרָיו אַמֶּת וְצַדִּיק. נְאֻמָּן אַתָּה הוּא יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְנְאֻמָּנִים דְּבָרֶיךָ, וְדָבַר אֶחָד מִדְּבָרֶיךָ אַחֲזוּר לֹא
יָשׁוּב רִיקָם, כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ נְאֻמָּן וְרַחֲמָן אַתָּה.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן בְּכָל-דְּבָרָיו.

רַחֵם עַל צִיּוֹן כִּי הִיא בֵּית חַיֵּינוּ, וְלַעֲלוּבַת נַפְשׁ תּוֹשִׁיעַ
בְּמַהְרָה בְּיַמֵּינוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְשַׁמַּח צִיּוֹן בְּבִנְיָהּ.

שְׂמַחְנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַלְיָהוּ הַנְּבִיא עֲבָדְךָ וּבְמַלְכוּת
בֵּית דָּוִד מְשִׁיחֶךָ, בְּמַהְרָה יָבֹא וְיִגַּל לְבָנָו. עַל כִּסְאוֹ לֹא
יָשׁוּב זָר וְלֹא יִנְחָלוּ עוֹד אַחֲרָיִם אֶת-כְּבוֹדוֹ, כִּי בְשֵׁם
קִדְשֶׁךָ נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לוֹ שְׁלֹא יִכָּבֵה נֵרוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מִגֵּן דָּוִד.

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת
הַזֶּה שִׁנַּתְתָּ לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְקִדְשָׁה וְלִמְנוּחָה, לְכַבוֹד
וְלִתְפָאֳרָתָה. עַל הַכֹּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ,
וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ. יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל-חַי תְּמִיד לְעוֹלָם
וָעֶד. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

and to the left is another one containing the five scrolls read on festivals, Tishah B'av, and Purim.

B'RAKHOT AFTER THE HAFTARAH. A series of b'rakhot concludes the reading from the Prophets. The earliest synagogue services probably centered on the public reading of biblical passages, and so the prayers concluding the haftarah reading may have constituted the core of the most ancient synagogue service. These prayers mention the sanctity of the day, express messianic longing, and speak of God's faithfulness in keeping the divine promise—themes also included in the Amidah for Shabbat.

HAFTARAH. The Hebrew Bible is composed of three divisions, in descending order of revelation: (1) the Five Books of Moses, known as the Torah; (2) the Prophets, both the historical books from Judges through Kings and the three major and twelve minor prophets; and (3) the Writings, including Psalms, the Five Megillot, Job, Proverbs, Daniel, and the late historical works of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. In the ancient synagogue in the Land of Israel, passages were read from all three sections on each Shabbat. Probably because of time constraints, the custom of a third reading died away, and today we read only from the Torah and the Prophets. The latter reading is called the haftarah, meaning "the parting" or "the conclusion," and it usually complements themes in the day's Torah reading. The custom of reading from the Writings remains on the festivals: on the intermediate Shabbat of Pesah we read the Song of Songs, on Shavuot we read the Scroll of Ruth, and on Sukkot we read Ecclesiastes.

The haftarah need not be read from a parchment scroll. Some older synagogues, though, have two smaller arks beside the main ark containing the Torah scrolls. To the right is a recess containing a scroll of the prophetic readings

An Alternate Prayer for the Community

May the one who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, bless this holy congregation, men and women, sons and daughters, and all that is ours. May it be Your will to bless us, to hear our voices raised in prayer, and to protect us from any trouble and difficulty. Spread over us the divine canopy of peace and plant within us love and unity, peace and friendship; banish all hate among us. May the words of Torah be fulfilled: "Do not wrong one another, but fear your God . . . that you may dwell upon the land securely" (Leviticus 25:17-18). And so may it be Your will, and let us say: *Amen*.

Community

The individual . . . and group must learn to overcome those tendencies toward selfishness and antagonism, and re-orient their minds to see life not as a hunt for pleasure, but as an engagement for service; not as a race involving victories and defeat, but as a pursuit of goals that transcend the interests of single nations and generations.

—LOUIS FINKELSTEIN

A Prayer for the Congregation

May heaven bestow deliverance on this holy congregation, the adults and their children: may kindness, love, and compassion, a long life, abundant provision, and sustenance from heaven, bodily health, and spiritual enlightenment be their lot. May their children thrive, never ceasing to speak words of Torah nor ever neglecting them. May the sovereign of the universe bless you, accord you a full life, add to your days, and grant you a long life. May you be freed of all distress and difficult circumstance, now and always. May the master in heaven sustain you at all times and seasons, and let us say: *Amen*.

A Prayer for Those Who Serve the Community

May the one who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, bless this entire congregation, together with all other holy congregations: they, their families, and all that is theirs; along with those who devote themselves to establish synagogues for prayer, as well as those who enter them to pray, and those who provide for their maintenance, wine for Kiddush and Havdalah, food for guests, bread for the hungry, tzedakah for the poor, and shelter for the homeless; ► and all who faithfully devote themselves to the needs of this community and the Land of Israel. May the Holy One reward them, remove sickness from them, heal them, and forgive their sins. May God bless them by making all their worthy endeavors prosper, as well as those of the entire people Israel, their brothers and sisters. And let us say: *Amen*.

יְקוּם פְּרָקוֹן מִן שְׁמַיָא, חֲנֹא וְחֶסֶדָא וְרַחֲמֵי וְחַיֵּי אַרְיֵי
וּמְזוּנֵי רְוִיחֵי וְסִיעָתָא דְשְׁמַיָא, וּבְרִיּוֹת גּוּפָא וּגְהוּרָא
מַעֲלֵיָא, וְרַעָא חַיָּא וְקִימָא, וְרַעָא דֵי לֹא יִפְסֹק, וְדֵי
לֹא יִבְטֹל, מִפְתַּגְמֵי אוּרִיחָא, לְכָל־קְהָלָא קְדִישָׁא הֵדִין,
רַבְרְבֵיָא עִם זְעֵרֵיָא. מְלַכָּא דְעֵלְמָא יְבָרַךְ יְתִכּוֹן, יִפְיֵשׁ
חַיִּיכוֹן, וְיִסְגָּא יוֹמֵיכוֹן וְיִתֵּן אַרְכָּא לְשִׁיכוֹן, וְתִתְפָּרְקוֹן
וְתִשְׁתַּזְבּוּן, מִן כָּל־עֲקָא, וּמִן כָּל־מַרְעִין בִּישׁוּין.
מָרְן דֵי בְשְׁמַיָא יְהֵא בְּסַעֲדֵיכוֹן, כָּל־זְמַן וְעַדְן,
וְנֹאמַר: אָמֵן.

מִי שְׁבָרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבָרְהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ
שָׂרָה רַבֵּקָה רַחֵל וְלֵאָה, הוּא יְבָרַךְ אֶת כָּל־הַקְּהָל
הַקְּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה, עִם כָּל־קְהָלוֹת הַקְּדוֹשׁ, הֵם וּמְשִׁפְחוֹתֵיהֶם
וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם, וּמִי שְׁמִיחֵדִים בְּתֵי כְּנִסְיוֹת לְתַפְלָה,
וּמִי שְׂבָאִים בְּתוֹכָם לְהַתְפַּלֵּל, וּמִי שְׁנוֹתְנִים גֵּר לְמֵאוּר
וְיִין לְקַדוּשׁ וְלַהֲבַדְלָה, וּפֶת לְאוֹרְחִים וְלָחֵם לְרַעֲבִים
וְצִדְקָה לְעִנְיָיִם וּמַכְסָּה לְחַיִּים בְּרַחוּב, ◀ וְכָל־מִי
שְׁעוֹסְקִים בְּצָרְכֵי צָבוּר וּבְבִגְנֵן אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֲמוּנָה.
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁלַם שְׂכָרָם, וְיִסִּיר מֵהֶם כָּל־מַחֲלָה,
וְיִרְפָּא לְכָל־גּוּפָם, וְיִסְלַח לְכָל־עוֹנָם, וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרַכָּה
וְהַצְלָחָה בְּכָל־מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם, עִם כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֵיהֶם
וְאַחֵיוֹתֵיהֶם, וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS. The Torah service became an occasion for expressing communal concerns. Y'kum Purkan is written in Aramaic, the common language of Jewish communities of the Eastern Mediterranean and Babylonia during much of the 1st millennium. It originated in Babylonia and the text has evolved over time. It petitions God on behalf of the local synagogue community, and is followed by a Hebrew prayer (Mi Sheberakh) of similar purpose. The first prayer expresses the hope that all may enjoy long, prosperous lives; the second singles out those who give of their means and time to support Jewish communal institutions and needy individuals.

Alternative Prayer for Our Country

Our God and God of our ancestors, grant to our country the will and wherewithal to fulfill its calling to justice, liberty, and equality.

May each of us fulfill our responsibilities of citizenship with care, generosity, and gratitude, ever conscious of the extraordinary blessing of freedom, ever mindful of our duties to one another. Bless those who volunteer to labor on behalf of us all; may they find the strength and courage to complete their tasks and fulfill their dreams.

May our judges, elected leaders, and all who hold public office exercise their responsibilities with wisdom, fairness, and justice for all. Fill them with love and kindness, and bless them that they may walk with integrity on the paths of peace and righteousness.

Creator and protector of all, watch over our armed forces and all those entrusted with our safety, as they daily put their lives at risk to protect us and our freedoms. Be with them in times of danger; give them courage to act with honor and dignity, as well as insight to do what is right in Your eyes.

Fill us all with the gifts of love and courage, that we may create a world that reflects Your glory. May we each respond to the charge of Your prophet, "For what does Adonai demand of You—but to act justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with Your God" (Micah 6:8). May the one who brings peace and high bring peace and prosperity to our world and keep us in safety. And let us say: *Amen*.

A Prayer for the Renewal of Creation

Master of the universe, in whose hand is the breath of all life and the soul of every person, grant us the gift of Shabbat, a day of rest from all our labors. With all of our senses may we perceive the glory of Your works. Fill us with Your goodness, that we may attest to Your great deeds. Strengthen us to become Your faithful partners, preserving the world for the sake of future generations. ► ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, may it be Your will to renew Your blessing of the world in our day, as You have done from the beginning of time.

A Prayer for Our Country

Our God and God of our ancestors, with mercy accept our prayer on behalf of our country and its government. Pour out Your blessing upon this land, upon its inhabitants, upon its leaders, its judges, officers, and officials, who faithfully devote themselves to the needs of the public. Help them understand the rules of justice You have decreed, so that peace and security, happiness and freedom, will never depart from our land.

ADONAI, God whose spirit is in all creatures, we pray that Your spirit be awakened within all the inhabitants of our land. Uproot from our hearts hatred and malice, jealousy and strife. Plant love and companionship, peace and friendship, among the many peoples and faiths who dwell in our nation. Grant us the knowledge to judge justly, the wisdom to act with compassion, and the understanding and courage to root out poverty from our land.

May it be Your will that our land be a blessing to all who dwell on earth, and may You cause all peoples to dwell in friendship and freedom. Speedily fulfill the vision of Your prophets: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." "For all of them, from the least of them to the greatest, shall know Me." And let us say: *Amen*.

תפלה לשלום הארץ

רבוננו של עולם, אשר בידך נפש כל־חי ורוח כל־בשר איש, הנחילנו שבת מנוחה, יום לשבות בו מכל־מלאכה. בכל־תחושה, נפיר ונדע את־הוד יצירתך. שבענו מטובך שנהיה עדים לגדל מעשיך. חזקנו להיות עמך שותפים נאמנים, לשמור על עולמך בעבור הדורות הבאים. ◀ יהי רצון מלפניך יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו, שתברך את־עולמך בימינו בימי קדם.

תפלה לשלום המדינה

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו, קבל נא ברחמים את־תפלתנו בעד ארצנו וממשלתה. הרק את־ברכתך על הארץ הזאת, על תושביה, על ראשה, שופטיה, ופקידיה העוסקים בצרכי צבור באמונה. הבינם משפטי צדקך למען לא יסורו מארצנו שלום ושלחה, אשר והפך כל־הימים.

אנא יהוה, אלהי הרוחות לכל־בשר, שלח רוחך על כל־תושבי ארצנו. עקר מלבנו שנאה ואיבה, קנאה ותחרות, וטע בין בני האמות והאמונות השונות השוכנים בה אהבה ואחווה, שלום ורעות. כי עד צדק ישוב משפט בבתי דיננו, וחננו מאתך דעה לשפט בצדק ובבינה, לפעל בחסד וברחמים, בשכל טוב ובאמץ לב, לעקור עניות מארצנו.

ובכן יהי רצון מלפניך שתהי ארצנו ברכה לכל־יושבי תבל, ותשרה ביניהם רעות וחרות, וקיים במהרה חזון נביאיך: לא ישא גוי אל גוי חרב ולא ילמדו עוד מלחמה. ונאמר: כי כולם ידעו אותי למקטנם ועד גדולם. ונאמר אמון.

Whereas earlier prayers asked that the monarch be compassionate to the Jewish people, this prayer expresses the hope that the leaders of the country will be fair and just to all, helping to bring the world closer to a vision of peace and justice. The prayer ends with two prophetic verses: Isaiah 2:4 ("Nation shall not lift up sword...") and Jeremiah 31:33 ("For all of them . . .").

PRAYER FOR THE RENEWAL OF CREATION. Concerns about our environment are as much a part of our consciousness as are the issues that were historically raised in this part of the service. This prayer, written by Daniel Nevins, expresses the hope that by ceasing to labor on Shabbat, by being able to appreciate and be grateful for life and its gifts, we will increase our awareness of the need to be responsible caretakers of the natural world.

PRAYER FOR OUR COUNTRY. It has been customary since medieval times to include in the liturgy a prayer for the welfare of the government. Secure governments were seen as providing safety for the Jewish community, and a biblical warrant for such prayers was found in Jeremiah's instruction to Israel to "seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to Adonai on its behalf; for in its prosperity you shall prosper" (29:7). Early versions of this prayer referred to God as "the one who gives dominion to kings" and reflected the anxiety that Jews felt as a beleaguered minority. The text here is based on a prayer composed in the 1920s by Professor Louis Ginzberg, which transforms what had formerly been "A Prayer for the Government" into "A Prayer for Our Country" and for its people, the source of authority in a democracy.

A Prayer for the State of Israel

רבונו של עולם, קבל
נא ברחמים וברצון
את תפלותינו בעד
מדינת ישראל.

Sovereign of the universe, accept in lovingkindness and with favor our prayers for the State of Israel, her government, and all who dwell within her boundaries and under her authority. Open our eyes and our hearts to the wonder of Israel, and strengthen our faith in Your power to work redemption in every human soul. Grant us also the fortitude to keep ever before us those ideals upon which the State of Israel was founded. Grant courage, wisdom, and strength to those entrusted with guiding Israel's destiny to do Your will. Be with those on whose shoulders Israel's safety depends and defend them from all harm. Spread over Israel and all the world Your shelter of peace, and may the vision of Your prophet soon be fulfilled: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4).

לא ישא גוי אל גוי חרב
ולא ילמדו עוד מלחמה.

A Prayer for the State of Israel

Avinu she-ba-shamayim, stronghold and redeemer of the people Israel: Bless the State of Israel, [that it may be] the beginning of our redemption. Shield it with Your love; spread over it the shelter of Your peace. Guide its leaders and advisors with Your light and Your truth. Help them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land. Deliver them; crown their efforts with triumph. Bless the land with peace and its inhabitants with lasting joy. And let us say: *Amen*.

Avinu she-ba-shamayim, tzur yisrael v'go-alo, bareikh et m'dinat yisrael [she-t'hei] reishit tz'miḥat ge'ulateinu. Hagen aleha b'evrat ḥasdekha u-f'ros aleha sukkat sh'lomekha, u-sh'lah or'kha va-amit'kha l'rasheha sareha v'yo-atzeḥa, v'takneim b'eitzah tovah milfanekha. Hazeik et y'dei m'ginei eretz kodsheinu, v'hanhileim eloheinu y'shu-ah, va-ateret nitzahon t'atreim. V'natata shalom ba-aretz v'simḥat olam l'yosh'veha, v'nomar: amen.

A Prayer for Peace

May we see the day when war and bloodshed cease, when a great peace will embrace the whole world.

*Then nation will not threaten nation,
and the human family will not again know war.*

For all who live on earth shall realize we have not come into being to hate or to destroy. We have come into being to praise, to labor, and to love.

*Compassionate God, bless the leaders of all nations
with the power of compassion.*

Fulfill the promise conveyed in Scripture:

I will bring peace to the land, and you shall lie down and no one shall terrify you.

*I will rid the land of vicious beasts
and it shall not be ravaged by war.*

Let justice and righteousness flow like a mighty stream. Let God's peace fill the earth as the waters fill the sea. And let us say: *Amen*.

תפלה לשלום מדינת ישראל

אבינו שבשמים, צור ישראל וגואלו, ברוך את מדינת
ישראל [שתהא] ראשית צמיחת גאולתנו. הגן עליה
באברת חסדך ופרש עליה סבת שלומך, ושלח אורך
ואמתך לראשיה שריה ויועציה, ותקנם בעצה טובה
מלפניה. חזק את ידי מגני ארץ קדשנו, והנחילם
אלהינו ישועה, ועטרת נצחון תעטרים. ונתת שלום
בארץ ושמחת עולם ליושביה, ונאמר: אמן.

תפלה לשלום

יהי רצון מלפניך יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו,
שתבטל מלחמות ושפיכות דמים מן העולם
ותשבין שלום בעולם,
ולא ישא גוי אל גוי חרב ולא ילמדו עוד מלחמה.

יבירו וידעו בליושבי תבל
שלא באנו לעולם בשביל ריב ומחלוקת,
ולא בשביל שנאה וקנאה וקנתור ושפיכות דמים.
רק באנו לעולם כדי להכיר אותך, תתברך לנצח.

ובכן תרחם עלינו ויקים בנו מקרא שפתוב:
ונתתי שלום בארץ ושכבתם ואין מחריה,
והשבתי חיה רעה מן הארץ וחרב לא תעבר בארצכם.
ויגל במים משפט, וצדקה בנחל איתן.
כי מלאה הארץ דעה אתיהוה במים לים מכסים.

PRAYER FOR THE STATE OF ISRAEL. Upon Israel's independence in 1948, many prayers were circulated for the well-being of the new state. This one was composed by Israel's chief rabbi and was then slightly edited by the writer S.Y. Agnon.

THAT IT MAY BE. This Hebrew word was added by the Chief Rabbi of England, Immanuel Jakobovits, turning the phrase "the beginning of the redemption" into an expression of hope, rather than a statement of fact.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE. Rabbi Nathan Sternharz, a student of the Hasidic master Nahman of Bratzlav (1772-1810, Ukraine), recorded this prayer. The version here has been adapted and translated by Jules Harlow.

NATION WILL NOT THREATEN. לא ישא גוי. Isaiah 2:4.

I WILL BRING PEACE. ונתתי שלום. Leviticus 26:6.

LET JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS FLOW. ויגל במים משפט. Amos 5:24.

FILL THE EARTH. כי מלאה הארץ. Isaiah 11:9.



TISHREI (30 days) almost always begins in September, at the time of the fall equinox. Although in one system of counting it is the seventh month, the Mishnah (Rosh Hashanah 1:1) indicates that Tishrei is the month that begins a new calendar year, and a new agricultural cycle; indeed its name derives from the Aramaic word meaning “to begin.” Therefore, Rosh Hashanah is observed on the 1st and 2nd of Tishrei; Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Sh’mini Atzeret and Simḥat Torah all follow in the same month. Tishrei’s symbol is that of a balance scale, *moznayim*.



ḤESHVAN or **MARḤESHVAN** almost always begins in October; it is one of two months whose length varies from year to year, either 29 or 30 days, to ensure that the holidays fall on certain days (e.g., Yom Kippur can never fall on Friday or Sunday, because that would interfere with the proper observance of Shabbat). It is the only month of the year without major holidays or fast days. Its symbol is the scorpion, *akrav*.



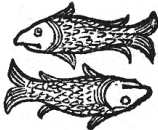
KISLEV usually begins during the month of November; like the previous month, the number of days varies between 29 and 30. Kislev is the darkest month of the year, but it is also the month in which we light the menorah in celebration of Hanukkah, beginning on the 25th of the month. Its symbol is the bow, *keshet*, perhaps evoking the rainbow (*keshet*) shown to Noah after the flood, which according to some commentators ended on the 28th of Kislev.



TEVET (29 days) almost always begins in December and usually extends into January, and usually includes the winter solstice. The tenth of the month commemorates the siege of Jerusalem begun by Nebuchadnezzar that eventually led to the capture of the city and the Babylonian exile of Judah. Its symbol is that of a goat, *g’di*.



SHEVAT (30 days) begins in January and most often extends into February, early spring in the Land of Israel. The Mishnah (Rosh Hashanah 1:1) indicates that Shevat is the new year for the trees. Therefore, during this month we observe Tu B’Shevat (“the fifteenth of Shevat”), a day to celebrate trees and the natural world. Its symbol is a bucket of water, *d’li*, perhaps indicating the abundance of water after the winter rains and the richness of the soil at this time.



ADAR occurs in February and March. Purim is celebrated on the 14th (in Jerusalem it is celebrated on the 15th), preceded by the Fast of Esther on the 13th. Rabbinic lore teaches that when Adar begins, joy increases. Because the lunar calendar of twelve months is slightly shorter than the solar year, the Hebrew calendar intercalates a full month seven times in a nineteen-year cycle; this ensures that Pesah will always occur in the spring. When a new month is added, there are two months of Adar—Adar I and Adar II. Purim is celebrated in Adar II. Adar’s symbol is fish, *dagim*. It normally consists of 29 days; in a leap year Adar I consists of 30 days.

The circuit of the months of the year is marked by the dominance of different constellations of the stars. Synagogues were often adorned with images of these constellations, as if in entering the synagogue one had ascended to heaven. This page illustrates the months of the year and their associated symbols, which have decorated synagogues through the ages.

The Months of the Year



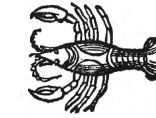
NISAN (30 days), the month in which the people Israel were redeemed from Egypt, is designated in Exodus (12:2) as the first month of the year and it is the starting point of the festival cycle. Because the Torah also calls it *ḥodesh ha-aviv*, the springtime month (Deuteronomy 16:1), the Hebrew calendar is adjusted to ensure that Nisan always falls in late March and April, around the time of the spring equinox (see *Adar* below). The Mishnah (Rosh Hashanah 1:1) indicates that Nisan is one of four “new years” in the calendar: Nisan is the new year for determining festivals, and also the month that marks the beginning of a king’s reign. Pesah begins on the 15th, and Yom HaShoah is observed on the 27th. It consists of 30 days, and its symbol is the ram, *taleh*.



IYAR (29 days) mostly coincides with the month of May. Iyar is especially associated with the State of Israel: Yom HaZikaron (Israeli Memorial Day), Yom HaAtzmaut (Israeli Independence Day) and Yom Yerushalayim are all observed in Iyar. In addition, Lag Ba-omer, the celebratory day in the midst of the counting of the *omer*, occurs on the 18th of Iyar. Iyar’s symbol is the bull, *shor*.



SIVAN (30 days) occurs during the months of May and June, already summer in the Land of Israel. The sixth of Sivan is celebrated as the Festival of Shavuot (and, outside the Land of Israel, the seventh as well) and marks an end to the counting of the *omer*. Sivan’s symbol is the twins, *te’omim*.



TAMMUZ (29 days) is most frequently the time of the summer solstice. The 17th of Tammuz marks the time of the breaching of the wall of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (587/586 B.C.E) and the second conquest by the Romans under Titus in 70 C.E., and begins a period of three weeks of mourning, marked by special *haftarot*. A midrashic tradition places on that same day Moses’ smashing of the first set of tablets in response to the golden calf. Tammuz’s symbol is a crustacean, *sartan*.



AV (30 days) occurs in mid-summer. The period of mourning that began on Tammuz 17 intensifies in Av, culminating in the fast of Tishah B’Av (“the ninth of Av”), commemorating the destruction of both Temples, the expulsion from Spain, and other times of Jewish persecution and martyrdom. This fast is the most severe in the Jewish calendar, save for Yom Kippur itself. The Shabbat following Tishah B’Av is called Shabbat Nahamu (the Shabbat of Consolation), and is the first of seven Shabbatot of comfort (each with a special *haftarah*) leading up to Rosh Hashanah. The month is therefore sometimes called Menaḥem Av (Av the Comforter). Its symbol is the lion, *aryeh*.



ELUL (29 days) most often begins in August and continues into September. A rabbinic tradition has it that Moses went up Mount Sinai a second time at the beginning of Elul to pray that God forgive the people for the sin of the golden calf; he came down forty days later on Yom Kippur, having attained atonement. The rabbis saw a hint of this reconciliation between God and the people in the name of the month, whose letters spell the acronym *ani l’dodi v’dodi li*, “I am for my beloved and my beloved is for me” (Song of Songs 6:3). Over time, Elul became a month of preparation for the High Holy Days, with the shofar sounded daily. Elul’s symbol is the virgin, *b’tulah*.

Prayer for the New Month

May the new month bring renewal to our lives: a renewal of wonder a renewal of freedom a renewal of love a renewal of justice a renewal of friendship a renewal of holiness. Amen.

Renewal

The midrash teaches that while the Israelites were still in Egypt, God showed Moses the new moon, saying, "When the moon renews itself like this, it will be the beginning of the month for you." The German Orthodox thinker Samson Raphael Hirsch understood this as a sign that the Jewish people would continually renew itself. Just as the rainbow was a sign to Noah that humanity would have a new future, in the same way, in Egypt, at the threshold of the new Jewish future, God called Moses and Aaron into the open, showed them the silver crescent of the new moon, and said, "The renewal of this moon is a sign of the call to continuous renewal."

Announcing the New Month

Recited on the Shabbat before Rosh Hodesh (except Tishrei). We rise.

May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, grant that this coming month bring us goodness and blessing, and bestow on us a long life, a life that is peaceful, a life that is good, a life that is blessed, a life with proper sustenance, a life with physical vitality, a life conscious of heaven's demands and wary of sin, a life free of shame and reproach, a life of abundance and honor, a life of love of Torah, conscious of heaven's demands, a life in which the worthy desires of our hearts are fulfilled. Amen.

The Sefer Torah is brought forward, and the leader holds it while announcing the new month:

May God who wrought miracles for our ancestors, redeeming them from slavery to freedom, redeem us soon and gather our dispersed from the four corners of the earth. May the entire people Israel be united in friendship, and let us say: Amen.

The new month of _____ will begin on _____. May it hold blessing for us and for all the people Israel.

Rosh Hodesh _____ yihyeh b'yom _____ haba aleinu v'al kol yisrael l'tovah.

The congregation repeats the announcement of the month, and the leader then continues:

May the Holy One bless this new month for us and for the entire people, the house of Israel, with life and peace, Amen joy and gladness, Amen deliverance and consolation. And let us say: Amen.

Y'hadsheihu ha-kadosh barukh hu aleinu v'al kol amo beit yisrael, l'hayim u-l'shalom, (amen,) l'sason u-l'simhah, (amen,) lishuah u-l'nehamah, v'nomar: amen.

ברכת החדש

Recited on the Shabbat before Rosh Hodesh (except Tishrei). We rise.

יהי רצון מלפניך, יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו], שתחדש עלינו את החדש הבא לטובה ולברכה, ותתן לנו חיים ארפים, חיים של שלום, חיים של טובה, חיים של ברכה, חיים של פרנסה, חיים של חלוץ עצמות, חיים שיש בהם יראת שמים ויראת חטא, חיים שאין בהם בושה ובלמה, חיים של עשר וכבוד, חיים שתהא בנו אהבת תורה ויראת שמים, חיים שימלאו משאלות לבנו לטובה, אמן סלה.

The Sefer Torah is brought forward, and the leader holds it while announcing the new month:

מי שעשה נסים לאבותינו [ולאמותינו], וגאל אותם מעבדות לחרות, הוא יגאל אותנו בקרוב, ויקבץ נדחינו מארבע פנות הארץ, חברים כלי ישראל, ונאמר: אמן.

ראש חדש _____ יהיה ביום _____ הבא עלינו ועל כלי ישראל לטובה.

The congregation repeats the announcement of the month, and the leader then continues:

יחדשהו הקדוש ברוך הוא עלינו ועל כל עמו בית ישראל, לחיים ולשלום, אמן, לששון ולשמחה, אמן, לישועה ולנחמה, ונאמר: אמן.

THE HEBREW CALENDAR. Since biblical times the Hebrew calendar has been based on the lunar year. Months were declared by the sighting of the new moon. The Mishnah describes an elaborate system of communication whereby the sighting of the new moon was announced from hilltop to hilltop by lighting signal fires (Rosh Hashanah 2:2-4). In the middle of the 1st millennium a perpetual calendar was instituted and the declaration of the month was no longer made on the basis of visual sighting. The time of the new month could then be announced in advance, in the synagogue. The Hebrew calendar runs on a nineteen-year cycle. Lunar months are actually 29½ days, so some months are 29 and others 30 days. The lunar year is 354 days, and in order to keep the lunar calendar in sync with the solar year, an extra lunar month—a second Adar—is added in the spring, seven times during the nineteen-year cycle.

BESTOW ON US שתחדש עלינו. The Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 16b) mentions that this prayer was recited by Rav (3rd century) as a conclusion to the Amidah. Later liturgists incorporated it as a prayer for the new moon.

CONSCIOUS OF HEAVEN'S DEMANDS יראת שמים. Literally, "the fear of heaven." This common rabbinic phrase has many shades of

meaning. It implies a consciousness of God's presence in one's life, so that one does that which is right in the eyes of God.

After reading the Torah, we recite the line “joyous are they who dwell in Your house,” inviting us to ponder what truly makes God—and us—feel at home.

Dreaming of Home

We want so much to be in that place where we are respected and cherished, protected, acknowledged, nurtured, encouraged, heard.

And seen, seen in all our loveliness, in all our fragile strength.

And safe, safe in all our trembling vulnerability. Where we are known and safe, safe and known—is it possible?

—MERLE FELD

ASHREI

Joyous are they who dwell in Your house; they shall praise You forever.

*Joyous the people who are so favored;
joyous the people whose God is ADONAI.*

A SONG OF PRAISE, OF DAVID

I exalt You, my God, my sovereign; I praise Your name, always.

Every day I praise You, glorifying Your name, always.

Great is ADONAI, greatly to be praised, though Your greatness is unfathomable.

*One generation praises Your works to the next,
telling of Your mighty deeds.*

I would speak of Your majestic glory and of Your wondrous acts.

*Generations speak of Your awe-inspiring deeds;
I, too, shall recount Your greatness.*

They recount Your great goodness, and sing of Your righteousness.

*ADONAI is merciful and compassionate,
patient, and abounding in love.*

ADONAI is good to all, and God’s mercy embraces all of creation.

*All of creation acknowledges You,
and the faithful bless You.*

continued

Ashrei yosh'vei veitekha, od y'hal'lukha selah.

Ashrei ha-am she-kakhah lo, ashrei ha-am she-Adonai elohav.

T'hilah l'david.

Aromim-kha elohai ha-melekh, va-avar'kha shimkha l'olam va-ed.

B'khol yom avar'kheka, va-ahal'lah shimkha l'olam va-ed.

Gadol Adonai u-m'hulal me'od, v'ligdulato ein heiker.

Dor l'dor y'shabah ma-asekha, u-g'vurotekha yagidu.

Hadar k'vod hodekha, v'divrei niflotekha asihah.

Ve-ezuz norotekha yomeiru, u-g'dulat'kha asaprenah.

Zeikher rav tuv'kha yabiu, v'tzidkat'kha y'raneinu.

Hanun v'rahum Adonai, erekh apayim u-g'dol hased.

Tov Adonai lakol, v'rahamav al kol ma-asav.

Yodukha Adonai kol ma-asekha, va-hasidekha y'var'khukha.

אֲשֵׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה.
אֲשֵׁרֵי הָעָם שְׁכַחָה לוֹ, אֲשֵׁרֵי הָעָם שִׁיהוּה אֱלֹהָיו.

תהלה לדוד

אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְאֶבְרַכְּךָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

בְּכָל־יּוֹם אֶבְרַכְּךָ, וְאֶהַלְלָה שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהַלָּל מְאֹד, וְלִגְדֻלְתּוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר.

דוֹר לְדוֹר יִשְׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וּגְבוּרַתֶיךָ יִגְיִדוּ.

הַדָּר כְּבוֹד הַזֵּדָה, וְדַבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה.

וְעִזּוֹז נוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ יֵאמְרוּ, וּגְדֻלְתְּךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה.

זָכַר רַב טוֹבְךָ יִבְיַעוּ, וְצִדְקוֹתֶיךָ יִרְפְּנוּ.

חֲנוּן וְרַחֲמוֹם יְהוָה, אֲרַךְ אַפַּיִם וּגְדֻלַּת־חֶסֶד.

טוֹב יְהוָה לְכָל, וְרַחֲמָיו עַל כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו.

יְדוּרְךָ יְהוָה כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְחַסִּידֶיךָ יִבְרַכּוּבָה.

continued

ASHREI. According to Rabbi Eleazar (3rd century, Land of Israel) speaking in the name of his teacher, Abina, the daily recitation of Psalm 145 opens a pathway to eternity. The Babylonian Talmud explains that it is an alphabetical acrostic (although it is missing one letter, *nun*) that symbolically encompasses the variety of praises of God, and that it contains an especially appropriate description of the thankfulness with which we are to approach God: “You open Your hand, satisfying all the living with contentment” (Berakhot 4b).

An additional reason for its frequent use in the liturgy is that the psalm expresses a dual posture of faithfulness. “I” express my faithfulness to God, and the

psalm then describes that God faithfully cares for those devoted to God. The two themes are interwoven throughout the psalm, which then concludes with a final assertion that not only “I” but “all that is mortal” will praise God. It is this expression of a covenantal relationship, in which God and humanity respond to each other, that makes Ashrei both an appropriate introduction to prayer (as it is in Minhah), and an appropriate conclusion to prayer (as it is in the weekday Shaḥarit service). Here, it serves in both of those roles: concluding Shaḥarit and the Torah service, and simultaneously introducing Musaf. For synagogue use, two verses were added to the beginning of Psalm 145, both of which begin with the word *ashrei*, “joyous” (Psalms 84:5 and 144:15), and it was these additional verses that gave the name “Ashrei” to this prayer. The first verse, which speaks of those who “dwell in Your house,” is especially appropriate in the context of synagogue prayer. Similarly, at the end, the verse “we shall praise Adonai now and always” was appended from Psalm 115:18.

God's Mystery

I called to You to reveal the
mysteries
never hidden from You,
instead, I uncovered the
deep within me
and did not depart empty-
handed
for in the songs I sang to
You, I saw
a vision of a ladder.
I offer thanks for Your
wonders
though I do not under-
stand them
but I will not forget what
You whispered to me
as my heart dreamed its
dream.

—SOLOMON IBN GABIROL

They speak of the glory of Your sovereignty
and tell of Your might,

proclaiming to humanity Your mighty deeds,
and the glory of Your majestic sovereignty.

Your sovereignty is eternal;

Your dominion endures in every generation.

ADONAI supports all who falter,
and lifts up all who are bent down.

The eyes of all look hopefully to You,

and You provide them nourishment in its proper time.

Opening Your hand, You satisfy with contentment all that lives.

ADONAI is righteous in all that is done, faithful to all creation.

ADONAI is near to all who call, to all who call sincerely.

God fulfills the desire of those who are faithful,

listening to their cries, rescuing them.

ADONAI watches over all who love the Holy One,
but will destroy all the wicked.

► My mouth shall utter praise of ADONAI.

May all that is mortal praise God's name forever and ever.

K'vod malkhut'kha yomeiru, u-g'vurat'kha y'dabeiru.
L'hodia livnei ha-adam g'vurotav, u-kh'vod hadar malkhuto.
Malkhut'kha malkhut kol olamim, u-memshalt'kha b'khol dor vador.
Somekh Adonai l'khol ha-noflim, v'zokef l'khol ha-k'fufim.
Einei khol elekha y'sabeiru, v'atah noten lahem et okhlam b'ito.
Potei-ah et yadekha, u-masbia l'khol hai ratzon.
Tzadik Adonai b'khol d'rakhav, v'hasid b'khol ma-asav.
Karov Adonai l'khol korav, l'khol asher yikra-uhu ve-emet.
R'tzon y'rei-av ya-aseh, v'et shavatam yishma v'yoshi-eim.
Shomer Adonai et kol ohavav, v'et kol ha-r'sha-im yashmid.

► T'hilat Adonai y'daber pi,

vi-vareikh kol basar shem kodsho l'olam va-ed.

Psalm 145

We shall praise ADONAI now and always. Halleluyah!

Va-anahnu n'varekh yah, mei-atah v'ad olam. Hal'luyah.

כבוד מלכותך יאמרו, וגבורתך ידברו.
להודיע לבני האדם גבורתך, וכבוד הדר מלכותך.
מלכותך מלכות כל-עלמים, וממשלתך בכל-דור ודור.
סומך יהוה לכל-הנפלים, וזוקף לכל-הכפופים.
עיני כל אליך ישברו, ואתה נותן להם את-אכלם בעתו.
פותח את-ידך, ומשביע לכל-חי רצון.
צדיק יהוה בכל-דרכיו, וחסיד בכל-מעשיו.
קרוב יהוה לכל-קראיו, לכל אשר יקראהו באמת.
רצון יראיו יעשה, ואת-שועתם ישמע ויושיעם.
שומר יהוה את-כל-אהביו, ואת כל-הרשעים ישמיד.
◀ תהלת יהוה ידבר-פי,

ויברך כל-בשר שם קדשו לעולם ועד.

תהלים קמה

ואנחנו נברך יה, מעתה ועד עולם. הללויה.

God's Voice

What would it mean for us to hear God's voice?

The Bible offers two different scenes of revelation. The people Israel hear God's voice on Sinai amidst thunder and lightning (Exodus 19). Yet, pointedly, Elijah, the only prophet (other than Moses) who also experiences a revelation at Sinai, comes to understand that God is not in the thunder and lightning, but in the "still small voice"—or, as in the current Jewish Publication Society translation, "a soft murmuring sound," or perhaps as an alternate translation would have it, in "the thin sound of silence" (1 Kings 19:12)—the profusion of translations indicating in themselves the plurality of ways we each may hear what impels us from within, or without.

The voice we hear may come to us as a surprise—in moments of distress, at times when we are still and alone, when we are on a journey. Or we may hear the voice when we have engaged in extensive preparations, meditating, thinking, praying, or fasting. We may hardly hear it, yet it can be shattering, thunderous—sending us on our way, impelling us, allowing us to see clearly what we had not seen before at all.

Returning the Torah

We rise as the ark is opened.

Leader:

Celebrate the name of ADONAI; God's name alone is exalted.

Congregation:

God's glory encompasses heaven and earth; God extols the faithful—raising up Israel, the people God keeps close. Halleluyah!

Hodo al eretz v'shamayim, va-yarem keren l'amo, t'hilah l'khol hasidav, livnei yisrael am k'rovo. Ha'l'luyah!

A PSALM OF DAVID

Acclaim ADONAI, children of the Divine; acclaim ADONAI, with honor and strength.

Acclaim ADONAI, with the honor due God's name; bow before ADONAI in the splendor of the sanctuary.

The voice of ADONAI thunders over the waters;

God, glorious, thunders—ADONAI, over the great sea.

The voice of ADONAI, with all its power; the voice of ADONAI, with all its majesty; the voice of ADONAI shatters the cedars.

ADONAI shatters the cedars of Lebanon—making the trees dance like calves, the mountains of Lebanon and Sirion like wild bulls.

The voice of ADONAI forms flames of fire; the voice of ADONAI convulses the wilderness, ADONAI convulses the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of ADONAI makes hinds calve and strips forests bare, and in God's sanctuary all acknowledge the glory of God.

ADONAI was enthroned above the flood waters: enthroned,

ADONAI is eternally sovereign.

ADONAI will grant strength to God's people; ADONAI will bless them with peace.

Mizmor l'david.

Havu ladonai b'nei eilim, havu ladonai kavod va-oz.

Havu ladonai k'vod sh'mo, hishtahavu ladonai b'hadrat kodesh.

Kol Adonai al ha-mayim, El ha-kavod hirim, Adonai al mayim rabim.

Kol Adonai ba-ko-ah, kol Adonai be-hadar, kol Adonai shover arazim, va-y'shabeir Adonai et arzei ha-l'vanon. Va-yarkidem k'mo eigel, l'vanon v'siryon k'mo ven re'eimim. Kol Adonai hotzev lahavot esh, kol Adonai yahil midbar, yahil Adonai midbar kadesh. Kol Adonai y'holel ayalot.

Va-yehesof y'arot u-v'heikhalo kulo omer kavod.

Adonai la-mabul yashav, va-yeishev Adonai melekh l'olam.

Adonai oz l'amo yiten, Adonai y'varekh et amo va-shalom.

הַכְנֵסֵת הַתּוֹרָה

We rise as the ark is opened.

Leader:

יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי נִשְׁעַב שְׁמוֹ לְבָדוֹ.

Congregation:

הוֹדוּ עַל אֲרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם. וַיִּרַם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ, תַּהֲלֶה לְכָל־חַסִּידָיו, לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קִרְבוֹ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד

הָבוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים, הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז,

הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ, הִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת קֹדֶשׁ, קוֹל יְהוָה עַל הַמַּיִם,

אֵל הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים, יְהוָה עַל מַיִם רַבִּים.

קוֹל יְהוָה בַּפֶּחַ,

קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדָּר, קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים,

וַיִּשְׁפֹּר יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן.

וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן וְשִׁרְיוֹן כְּמוֹ בְּנֵי־אֲמִים.

קוֹל יְהוָה חָצַב לְהַבּוֹת אֵשׁ,

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחִיל מִדְּבָר, יַחִיל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קֹדֶשׁ,

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלֵל אֵילוֹת.

וַיַּחֲשֹׁף יַעֲרוֹת, וּבָהִיכְלוּ כָּלוּ אִמֵּר כְּבוֹד.

יְהוָה לְמַבּוּל יִשָּׁב, וַיִּשָּׁב יְהוָה מִלְּךָ לְעוֹלָם.

יְהוָה עַז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְהוָה יְבַרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.

תהלים כט

EXTOL יהללו. Psalm 148:13–14. The practice of reciting these verses while returning the Torah to the ark is mentioned in the earliest prayerbooks.

PSALM 29. Psalm 29 was chosen to accompany the procession of the Torah as it is returned to the ark on Shabbat morning because of the predominant image of the voice of God. The phrase *kol Adonai* ("the voice of God")—which was identified by the ancient rabbis with the revelation of God's word on Sinai—is repeated seven times in this psalm. The thunder and lightning described here evoke the scene of the revelation at Sinai in Exodus 19; the Bible identifies Kadesh with the Sinai desert.

Biblical scholars see the psalm as a depiction of a storm coming in from the Mediterranean, passing over the mountains of Lebanon—cedars top those high mountains and are among the world's sturdiest and longest-lived trees—and moving over the fertile land and then through the desert.

The psalm begins with reference to the waters of the Mediterranean Sea and ends with God enthroned

above the primal waters of creation. It also begins with an angelic chorus praising God and toward the end mentions the human chorus praising God in the Temple. Thus earth and heaven, the human and the Divine, are joined.

We began the Torah service with verses marking a royal procession and now, as the Torah is returned to the ark after it has been read to the congregation, we end with verses depicting God as enthroned as the "eternal sovereign."

Returning the Torah

Returning the Torah to the ark may be a bittersweet moment. On the one hand, we may feel satisfaction that we have been instructed through the Torah service, that we have read its teaching and engaged with it; on the other hand, we may feel that we have not had enough, that a friend is leaving us, as if returning home after having spent just an hour with us. Perhaps that is why so many of the verses chosen for this moment are those of longing—longing for redemption, longing for a time gone by. Equally, there is the knowledge that the Torah is a scroll, that there are chapters now hidden that have yet to be unrolled. What we have glimpsed is only a partial view of the Teaching; more is yet to be revealed.

The Torah scroll is placed in the ark. Personal meditations, such as those found on page 169, may also be recited here.

Whenever the ark was set down, Moses would say:

ADONAI, may You dwell among the myriad families of the people Israel.

Return, ADONAI, to Your sanctuary, You and Your glorious ark.

Let Your priests be robed in righteousness,

and Your faithful sing for joy.

For the sake of David, Your servant,

do not turn away from Your anointed.

► I have given you a precious inheritance:
do not forsake My teaching.

It is a tree of life for those who grasp it,
and all who hold onto it are blessed.

Its ways are pleasant, and all its paths are peace.

Turn us toward You, ADONAI, and we will return to You;

make our days seem fresh, as they once were.

► *Ki lekah tov natati lakhem, torati al ta-azovu.*

Etz hayim hi la-mahazikim bah, v'tom'kheha me'ushar.

D'rakheha darkhei no-am, v'khol n'tivoteha shalom.

Hashiveinu Adonai eilekha v'nashuvah, hadesh yameinu k'kedem.

The ark is closed.

Hatzi Kaddish

Leader:

May God's great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God's wish. May God's sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen*.

Congregation and Leader:

May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

Leader:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b'rikh hu*, is truly [on *Shabbat Shuvah* we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world.

And we say: *Amen*.

The Torah scroll is placed in the ark. Personal meditations, such as those found on page 169, may also be recited here.

ובנחה יאמר: שובה יהוה רבבות אלפי ישראל.

קומה יהוה למנוחתך, אתה וארון עזך.

בהניך ילפשו צדק, וחסידיך ירננו.

בעבור דוד עבדך, אל תשב פני משיחך.

◀ כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם, תורתי אל תעזבו.

עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה, ותמכיה מאשר.

דרכיה דרכי נעם, וכל נתיבותיה שלום.

השיבנו יהוה אליך ונשובה, חדש ימינו בקדם.

The ark is closed.

חצי קדיש

Leader:

יתגדל ויתקדש שמה רבא, בעלמא די ברא, פרעותה,

וימליך מלכותה בחייכון וביומיכון ובחיי דכל בית

ישראל, בעגלא ובזמן קריב, ואמרו אמן.

Congregation and Leader:

יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם ולעלמי עלמיא.

Leader:

יתברך וישתבח ויתפאר ויתרומם ויתנשא

ויתגדר ויתעלה ויתהלל שמה דקדשא, בריך הוא,

לעלא מן כל- [לעלא לעלא מכל- *[on Shabbat Shuvah* we substitute:

ברכתא ושירתא תשפחתא ונחמתא דאמירן בעלמא,

ואמרו אמן.]

WHENEVER THE ARK WAS SET DOWN יאמר ובנחה Numbers 10:36. As the Torah completes its circuit through the synagogue, we recall Moses' words when the people finished a stage in their journey through the wilderness and came to rest in a new camp. This verse and the ones that follow (Psalm 132:8–10 and Proverbs 4:2) can also serve to refer to our own inner journey: we are accompanied now by Torah.

Only the first and last verse are recited in all rites; the others were added in many communities in the late Middle Ages.

IT IS A TREE OF LIFE FOR THOSE WHO GRASP IT עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה Proverbs 3:18. The Torah handles are called *atzei hayim*, "trees of life," and this verse is the source of the custom of holding on to them as we recite the *b'rakhot* over the Torah. Thus, by studying Torah and by physically holding on to it, we both figuratively and literally "grasp" the tree of life.

ITS WAYS ARE PLEASANT, AND ALL ITS PATHS ARE PEACE דרכיה דרכי נעם וכל נתיבותיה שלום Proverbs 3:17. In their context, these

two verses from Proverbs refer to wisdom, *hokhmah*. The ancient rabbis associated wisdom with Torah. As we put away the Torah, we pray that our study of Torah should provide us with the wisdom to promote a life characterized by pleasantness and the pursuit of peace.

TURN US TOWARD YOU, ADONAI יהוה אליך. Significantly, this final verse is taken from Lamentations (5:21), the book of mourning for the destruction of Jerusalem. We end the Torah service with a prayer for the reconciliation of God and Israel.

God of Our Ancestors

God can be perceived in almost infinite ways. Certainly each of our biblical ancestors experienced God differently, and the Kabbalists understood their personal stories as reflecting different understandings of the Divine. In their thinking, Abraham's kindly love and compassion, demonstrated by his welcoming of strangers and his defense of the righteous who may have been living in Sodom, came to personify God's love and kindness. Isaac's binding personifies the perception of God as awe-inspiring and as placing limits on existence. Jacob was able to achieve balance: he led a troubled life yet survived, and was able to experience joy and fulfillment at the end of his life. In Kabbalah, that balance was understood to be at the very center of the nature of the Divine.

Added to these, we might imagine other human traits that are also Godly. We can picture Sarah as someone who perseveres and then appreciates her blessing and guards it carefully—emulating the God who is a protector and redeemer; Rebecca as one who takes the lead, knowing what needs to be done—the mover of history; Leah as a woman who suffers in life yet sustains a family—symbolizing the God who is with us in our suffering; and Rachel as one who has a short but passionate life—reflecting the God who loves deeply. Each of us experiences the universe and the presence of God differently. Our biblical ancestors reflect different ways of walking with God—and provide us with different models for our own journeys.

A transliteration of the opening b'rakhot of the Amidah may be found on page 466. When a minyan is present, some communities repeat the Amidah after it is recited silently; in others, the leader recites the first three blessings (including the Kedushah) aloud and the Amidah is then recited silently (a practice called "heicha kedushah" in Yiddish). The sign ¶ indicates the places to bow. The Amidah concludes on page 192.

[Leader: As I proclaim the name ADONAI, give glory to our God.] ADONAI, open my lips that my mouth may speak Your praise.

First B'rakhah: Our Ancestors

With Patriarchs:

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI,*
our God and God of our
ancestors,
God of Abraham, God of
Isaac, and God of Jacob,
great, mighty, awe-inspiring,
transcendent God,
who acts with kindness
and love, and creates all,
who remembers the loving
deeds of our ancestors,
and who will lovingly bring a
redeemer to their children's
children for the sake of
divine honor.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

Remember us for life, Sovereign who delights in life,
and inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, God of life.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI,*
our God and God of our
ancestors,
God of Abraham, God of
Isaac, and God of Jacob,
God of Sarah, God of
Rebecca, God of Rachel,
and God of Leah,
great, mighty, awe-inspiring,
transcendent God,
who acts with kindness
and love, and creates all,
who remembers the loving
deeds of our ancestors,
and who will lovingly bring a
redeemer to their children's
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[Leader: כִּי שָׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא, הָבוּ גְדֹל לְאַלְהֵינוּ.
אֲדַנְי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ.]

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם,
אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וְאַלְהֵי יַעֲקֹב,
אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה,
אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל, וְאַלְהֵי לֵאָה,
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַפֶּלַח, וְזוֹכֵר
חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת [וְאִמּוֹת],
וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם
לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

With Patriarchs:

¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי
יִצְחָק, וְאַלְהֵי יַעֲקֹב, הָאֵל
הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַפֶּלַח,
וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת,
וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם
לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

זְכַרְנוּ לְחַיִּים, מְלַךְ הַפֶּץ בְּחַיִּים,
וְכַתְּבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים, לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים.

GREAT, MIGHTY, AWE-INSPIRING הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא. This phrase is a quotation from Deuteronomy 10:17–18, where God is described as impartial, not favoring anyone.

TRANSCENDENT GOD אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן. This name for God, *El Elyon*, is first used in the Torah (Genesis 14:18–19) by Melchizedek, the King of Salem, which classical Jewish commentators identified with Jerusalem. Including his words in our prayer thus hints at a vision of a restored Jerusalem, welcoming all who call upon God by whatever name.

LOVINGLY בְּאַהֲבָה. So much of this blessing has been about love: God's love and kindness for all, our ancestors' acts of love and kindness, and the redemption that will be achieved through love. To emphasize this idea, the Hebrew text places the word *ahavah*, "love," as the very last word of this opening sentence.

THE MUSAF AMIDAH. On Shabbat and festivals, an extra sacrifice was offered in the Temple. Since the destruction of the Temple, we offer a gift of prayer to mark the specialness of the day: an additional service called Musaf, which consists entirely of an Amidah, a personal moment of prayer. The Amidah always contains three introductory b'rakhot and three concluding b'rakhot. On Shabbat, a middle b'rakhah celebrates the specialness and sanctity of the day.

AS I PROCLAIM כִּי שָׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא. Deuteronomy 32:3. Most likely, this verse was originally inserted into the Amidah as an instructional phrase to be recited by the leader, asking the congregation to respond with "Amen" to the b'rakhot that follow. Thus it means: "When I proclaim God's name, 'Adonai,' you should respond by acknowledging God as well"—that is, by answering "Amen" to each b'rakhah and by responding when God's personal name (Adonai) is mentioned: *barukh hu u-varukh sh'mo* ("Blessed be God and blessed be God's name").

The First and Second B'rakhot

The 20th-century talmudist Joseph B. Soloveitchik notes that the first two blessings of the Amidah evoke distinctly different ways of relating to the Divine. In the first blessing (*Avot/Our Ancestors*), we see ourselves as heirs. We address God with the dignity and confidence—as well as responsibility—of a covenantal partner. God blessed our ancestors and will continue to bless us, for we inherit what they wrought. In the second blessing, our situation is radically altered: we experience our human vulnerability and our dependence on God; we call upon God for help. Our service to God emerges from both ways of deliberating on the human condition—our own inner sense of dignity and confidence, and the consciousness of our vulnerability and finitude—often experienced at the same time.

With Patriarchs:

You are the sovereign who helps and saves and shields.

† Barukh atah ADONAI,
Shield of Abraham.

Second B'rakhah: God's Saving Care

You are ever mighty, ADONAI—
You give life to the dead—
great is Your saving power:

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah:

You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall,

[From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add:

You cause the dew to fall,]

You sustain the living through kindness and love,
and with great mercy give life to the dead,
You support the falling, heal the sick,
loosen the chains of the bound,
and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.
Who is like You, Almighty,
and who can be compared to You?
The sovereign who brings death and life
and causes redemption to flourish.

*M'khalkel hayim b'hesed,
m'hayeih meitim b'rahimim rabim,
somekh noflim v'rofei holim u-matir asurim,
u-m'kayem emunato lisheinei afar.
Mi khamokha ba'al g'vurot umi domeh lakh,
melekh meimit u-m'hayeh u-matzmiah y'shuah.*

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

Who is like You, source of compassion,
who remembers with compassion Your creatures for life?

You are faithful in bringing life to the dead.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives life to the dead.

When the Amidah is recited silently, continue on page 188a with "Holy are You."

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

You are the sovereign who helps and guards, saves and shields.

† Barukh atah ADONAI,
Shield of Abraham and
Guardian of Sarah.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּפּוֹקֵד
וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן.
† בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מְגִן אַבְרָהָם וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה.

With Patriarchs:

מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן.
† בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מְגִן אַבְרָהָם.

אַתָּה גִבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי,
מַחִיָּה מֵתִים אַתָּה,
רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ.

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah: מוֹשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם,
[*From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add:* מוֹרִיד הַטֶּל,]

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחַסֵּד,
מַחִיָּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים,
סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,
וּמְקַיֵּם אֲמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפֶר.
מִי כְמוֹךָ בְּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֵה לָךְ,
מְלַךְ מֵמִית וּמַחֲיֶה וּמַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעָה.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים, זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים.
וְנֶאֱמָן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מַחֲיֶה הַמֵּתִים.

When the Amidah is recited silently, continue on page 188a with "אתה קדוש"

SHIELD OF ABRAHAM מְגִן אַבְרָהָם. After Genesis 15:1.

GUARDIAN OF SARAH וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה. After Genesis 21:1.

YOU ARE MIGHTY אַתָּה גִבּוֹר. This second *b'rakhah* describes God's presence and activity in the world, centering on God's kindness and care for the vulnerable and powerless. It first describes God as nurturing all of life, then more specifically as concerned with injustice. The *b'rakhah* concludes with mention of the dead, for even they—the most powerless—are in God's care.

GIVE LIFE TO THE DEAD מַחֲיֶה מֵתִים. To be sure, the primary use of this phrase was in reference to the afterlife, but the rabbis of the Talmud also understood it to refer to a spiritual revival in this world. Thus, the *b'rakhah* recited upon greeting a friend whom one has not seen for a year utilizes this phrase, "who gives life to the dead" (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 58b). Similarly, Hasidic texts speak of reviving the parts of ourselves that have lost their vitality, as bringing life to that which has been deadened.

SHABBAT SHUVAH. On the Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we add prayers asking that we may be granted a good and long life.

Where Is the Place of God's Glory?

Once, the Hasidic master Menaḥem Mendel of Kotzk startled his Hasidim by asking, "Where is God's dwelling place?" Some answered that it is in heaven. Some simply said that no human can know. Menaḥem Mendel then said, "It is wherever we will let God in."

Return, O My Soul

Return, O my soul, to your resting place, sit beside the divine throne, always, spurn earthly places, ascend on high, take what you can from there, bow to God, honor the Divine, supplant the angels giving praise.

—YEHUDAH HALEVI

Third B'rakhah: God's Holiness

THE KEDUSHAH

The Kedushah is recited standing. Indeed, since we imitate the song of the angels, the tradition recommends standing like angels, with feet together. It is recited only with a minyan.

We revere and sanctify You on earth as Your name is sanctified in heaven, as Your prophet Isaiah described:

Each cried out to the other:

"Holy, holy, holy is ADONAI Tz'va-ot, the whole world is filled with God's glory!"

Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai Tz'va-ot, m'lo khol ha-aretz k'vodo.

God's glory fills the universe. One angelic chorus asks, "Where is the place of God's glory?" Another responds:

"Praised is ADONAI's glory wherever God dwells."

Barukh k'vod Adonai mimkomo.

From where God dwells, may God turn with compassion toward the people who twice each day, evening and morning, lovingly proclaim God's oneness, reciting the Sh'ma:

"Hear, O Israel, ADONAI is our God, ADONAI is one."

Sh'ma yisrael, Adonai eloheinu, Adonai ehad.

The Holy One is our God, our creator, our sovereign, our redeemer. Yet again, God will in mercy proclaim to us before all that lives: "I, ADONAI, am your God."

Hu eloheinu, hu avinu, hu malkeinu, hu moshi-einu, v'hu yashmi-einu b'rahmav sheinit le'inei kol hai, lihyot lakhem leilohim. Ani Adonai eloheikhem.

As the psalmist sang: "ADONAI will reign forever; your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Halleluyah!"

Yimlokh Adonai l'olam, elohayikh tziyon l'dor vador, hal'luyah.

From generation to generation we will declare Your greatness, and forever sanctify You with words of holiness. Your praise will never leave our lips, for You are God and Sovereign, great and holy.

L'dor vador nagid godlekha, u-l'netzah n'tzahim k'dushat'kha nakdish, v'shivhakha eloheinu mi-pinu lo yamush l'olam va-ed, ki El melek gadol v'kadosh atah.

Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy God.

On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy Sovereign.

We continue on the next page with the Fourth B'rakhah, "You established Shabbat."

The Kedushah is recited standing. Indeed, since we imitate the song of the angels, the tradition recommends standing like angels, with feet together. It is recited only with a minyan.

נְעַרִיצְךָ וְנִקְדִישְׁךָ כְּסוּד שְׁיחַ שְׁרָפֵי קֹדֶשׁ הַמְקֻדְשִׁים
שְׁמֶךָ בְּקֹדֶשׁ, כְּפָתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאֶךָ, וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמְרוּ:

קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֵא כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

כְּבוֹדוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם, מְשָׁרְתָיו שׂוֹאֲלִים זֶה לְזֶה,

אִיִּה מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ, לְעַמְתָּם בְּרוּךְ יֵאמְרוּ:

בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְקוֹמוֹ.

מִמְקוֹמוֹ הוּא יִפֹּן בְּרַחֲמִים, וְיַחַן עִם הַמִּיחֲדִים שְׁמוֹ עֲרֹב

וְבִקֶּר בְּכָל־יוֹם תָּמִיד, פְּעַמִּים בְּאַהֲבָה שְׁמַע אוֹמְרִים:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְהוָה אֶחָד.

הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הוּא אָבִינוּ, הוּא מְלַכְנוּ, הוּא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ,

וְהוּא יִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ בְּרַחֲמָיו שְׁנִית לְעֵינֵי כָּל־חַי,

לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים.

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

וּבְדַבְרֵי קֹדֶשׁךָ פָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

יְמִלְךָ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדוֹר וָדוֹר, הַלְלוּ־הָ.

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִגִּיד גְּדֻלָּה, וּלְנִצְחַח נִצְחִים קֹדֶשְׁתֶּךָ נִקְדִישׁ,

וְשִׁבַּחְךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפִּינוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֵד,

כִּי אֵל מְלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקְדוֹשׁ אַתָּה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ.

On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּלֶךְ הַקְּדוֹשׁ.

We continue on the next page with the Fourth B'rakhah, תְּכַנֶּנֶת שַׁבָּת.

acknowledges both God's immanence, a palpable presence, and God's transcendence, the knowledge that the Divine is beyond our understanding. Thus, we say "The whole world is filled with God's glory," and we then immediately praise God "wherever God dwells."

WILL . . . PROCLAIM וְהוּא יִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ. The relationship of God and humanity is manifested by a reciprocal call and response. On the one hand, God calls to us and we respond to that calling. At the same time, we call to God and God responds by bringing redemption.

YET AGAIN שְׁנִית. Literally, "a second time." The first redemption was the exodus from Egypt. Much of Jewish theology maintains the perspective that we exist between the promise of freedom announced in the exodus and its eventual fulfillment in the messianic era.

THE KEDUSHAH is composed of an interweaving of two prophetic visions: that of Isaiah, who witnessed the angels singing "Holy, holy, holy," and that of Ezekiel, who heard the angels cry "Praised is Adonai's glory wherever God dwells." In heaven, one chorus of angels responds to another; on earth, leader and congregation respond to each other. Additionally, in the version of the Kedushah recited at each Musaf service, Israel's recitation of the Sh'ma is offered as a counterpoint to the angelic praise. Ultimately, our prayer brings heaven and earth into a momentary unity, when we recite the angelic prayer while proclaiming Israel's credo of one God. The quotation from Isaiah, remarking that "each cries out to the other," thus has a dual meaning in the liturgy: one chorus of angels responds to the other in agreement, and heaven and earth stand in agreement with each other, both acknowledging God's presence.

WHEREVER GOD DWELLS מִמְקוֹמוֹ. As noted above, the Kedushah combines two different prophetic visions: that of Isaiah and that of Ezekiel. By placing these biblical verses side by side, the Kedushah

A Meditation

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], יַעֲלֶה לְפָנֶיךָ
זְכוֹן אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ]
בְּיָמֵי קֹדֶם, בְּעִמְדָם לְפָנֶיךָ
בַּחֲצֹרֹת קָדְשֶׁךָ.
כִּי רָבָה אֲהַבְתָּם לָךְ, בְּהֵבִיאֵם
לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת־קִרְבָּנוֹתֵיהֶם מִדֵּי
שָׁבַת בְּשַׁבְתּוֹ.
אֲנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הֲאֵצֶל
עֲלֵינוּ מִרוּחָם רוּחַ דְּעֵת
וְיִרְאֵת יְהוָה.
כִּן נִזְכָּה לְמִלָּא חוֹבוֹתֵינוּ
לְבַנְיָן אֲרֻצֶּךָ וּלְחֹדוֹשׁ בֵּית
חַיֵּינוּ, וְיִתְפָּרְכוּ בְּנוֹ כָּל־
מִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה.

Our God and God of our ancestors, may You call to mind our ancestors as they appeared in Your holy Temple, in ancient times: how deep their love of You as they brought their offerings to You each Shabbat. Please, Adonai our God, grant us a similar spirit to be in relation to You and in awe of You. May we fulfill our duty toward the rebuilding of Your holy land, renewing the wellsprings of our lives, that we may ever be a blessing to all the peoples of the earth.

—ROBERT GORDIS

The Meaning of Sacrifices for the Contemporary Believer

Most contemporaries understand the demand for the return of sacrifice metaphorically. It may mean, as William James offered, “the sacrifice of the heart, the sacrifice of the inner ego.” Even traditionalists who believe in the efficacy of sacrifice might say that atonement for sin and the soul’s purification, the aim of sacrifice, can be achieved through the overcoming of arrogance and the diminution of the ego. As Martin Buber expressed it, “Truly there is no cosmos for the human being except when the totality is made home, a temple in which one offers one’s sacrifice.”

—ADMIEL KOSMAN

The following paragraph is said only when the entire Amidah is recited silently:

Holy are You and holy is Your name;
holy ones praise You each day.
Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy God.

*On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:
Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy Sovereign.*

Fourth B'rakhah: The Celebration of Shabbat

For an alternate version of this b'rakhah, not centered on sacrifices, continue on the next page.

SHABBAT AND THE TEMPLE SERVICE

You established Shabbat and desired its offerings. You prescribed the details of its service and the order of the libations. Those who take pleasure in Shabbat inherit eternal glory. Those who savor Shabbat truly merit life; those who love its teachings have chosen to join in its greatness. ADONAI our God, it was at Sinai that You commanded its observance and commanded our ancestors to offer an additional appropriate sacrifice on Shabbat.

May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, who restores their descendants to their land, to lead us there in joy and to plant us in our borders, where our ancestors once offered to You their sacrifices: the daily sacrifices in their proper order, as well as the additional offerings prescribed for holy days. Lovingly, the additional Shabbat sacrifices were offered there as You commanded, fulfilling the words spoken in revelation and written down by Moses, your servant, in Your Torah:

On Shabbat: two yearling lambs without blemish, together with two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in as a meal offering and with the proper libation—a burnt offering for every Shabbat, in addition to the daily burnt offering and its libation.

We continue on page 189.

The following paragraph is said only when the entire Amidah is recited silently:

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ,
וְקָדוֹשִׁים בְּכָל־יּוֹם יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

*On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְלִיךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.*

For an alternate version of this b'rakhah, not centered on sacrifices, continue on the next page.

תִּכְנַת שְׁבַת רְצִיתָ קִרְבָּנוֹתֶיהָ,
צִוִּיתָ פְּרוּשֶׁיהָ עִם סִדּוּרֵי נִסְכֶיהָ.
מְעַנְגֶיהָ לְעוֹלָם כְּבוֹד יִנְחֶלּוּ, טוֹעֲמֶיהָ חַיִּים זָכוּ,
וְגַם הָאוֹהֲבִים דְּבַרְיָהּ גְּדֹלָה בְּחָרוּ.
אֲזַ מְסִינֵי נִצְטוּוּ עֲלֶיהָ וְתִצְוּם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
לְהַקְרִיב בָּהּ קִרְבָּן מוֹסֵף שְׁבַת פְּרָאוֹי.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], הַמְּשִׁיב בְּנִים לְגִבּוֹלָם,
שֶׁתַּעֲלֵנוּ בְּשִׁמְחָה לְאַרְצֵנוּ וְתִטְעֵנוּ בְּגִבּוֹלָנוּ,
שְׁשֵׁם עָשׂוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ] לְפָנֶיךָ
אֶת־קִרְבָּנוֹתֶיהֶם, תְּמִידִים כְּסִדְרָם וּמוֹסְפִים כְּהִלְכָתָם.
וְאֶת־מוֹסֵף יוֹם הַשְּׁבַת הַזֶּה עָשׂוּ וְהַקְרִיבוּ
לְפָנֶיךָ בְּאַהֲבָה כְּמִצְוֹת רְצוֹנָה, כְּפִתּוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ,
עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה עַבְדְּךָ מִפִּי כְּבוֹדְךָ כְּאָמור:

וּבְיוֹם הַשְּׁבַת, שְׁנֵי כִבְשִׁים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם,
וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִינִים סֵלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן וְנִסְכּוֹ.
עַל שְׁבַת בְּשַׁבְתּוֹ, עַל עַלְת הַתְּמִיד וְנִסְכָּהּ.

We continue on page 189.

YOU ESTABLISHED SHABBAT תִּכְנַת שְׁבַת. A reverse alphabetical acrostic celebrating Shabbat. In one version it concludes with the words אֲזַ מְסִינֵי נִצְטוּוּ צוּרֵי פְּעִלֶיהָ פְּרָאוֹי, “it was at Sinai that You commanded its proper service”—thus incorporating into the acrostic not only the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, but also the five “final” letters—the ones that have a distinct shape when they appear as the last letter of a word.

DESIRED ITS OFFERINGS רְצִיתָ קִרְבָּנוֹתֶיהָ. Although slaughter and sacrifice would normally be considered a violation of the laws of Shabbat, God is pleased with this offering on Shabbat—for the sacrifices are offered in the service of God. (*Jacob Emden*)

THOSE WHO TAKE PLEASURE IN SHABBAT מְעַנְגֶיהָ. The language of this paragraph is based on midrashim interpreting the verse from Isaiah: “If you call Shabbat a delight (*oneg*), Adonai’s holy day honored . . . then you shall rejoice with Adonai . . .” (58:13–14).

SPOKEN IN REVELATION מִפִּי כְּבוֹדְךָ. More literally, “spoken by Your glory.” The Book of Exodus describes God’s “glory” (*kavod*), perhaps imagined as a dense cloud, descending on Mount Sinai. A voice is heard through the cloud but God is not seen. The liturgy follows the biblical text in putting a veil between God’s revelation and human understanding.

וּבְיוֹם הַשְּׁבַת **ON SHABBAT**
Numbers 28:9–10.

The Gift of Shabbat

A Hasidic teaching: On Shabbat, the hidden light of the world is revealed.

A Shabbat Meditation

בְּיוֹם שַׁבָּת קָדֵשׁ זֶה,
אַתָּה, אֱלֹהֵי, צְלִי,
צֶל חוּבֵק אֶת כּוֹלֵי
גּוּפֵי שֵׁט בְּמַעֲבֵה רִיחָךְ
וְיֵהִי רְצוֹן שְׂאֵקֶבֶץ
רִיחָךְ בְּקִרְבִּי
לְמַעַן תִּהְיֶה לִּי מִצְּפוֹ
וּתְכַוֵּן לִי דְרָכֵי
כִּי תִגְעַנֶּה רְגְלֵי עוֹד
עָלֵי אֲדָמוֹת
וְהִלָּאָה אֵלֶיךָ—

On this day of rest, the
holy Shabbat,
You are my shadow,
a shadow completely
enveloping me.
My body moves within
Your spirit.
May it be Your will that I
gather Your spirit within
me
so that You be my
compass
pointing my way,
as my feet again touch
ground
and I move on—

—EDWARD FELD

AN ALTERNATE

Fourth B'rakhah: The Celebration of Shabbat

THE DREAM OF REDEMPTION

You established Shabbat, exalted its holiness,
prescribed its observance, bestowed it as Your treasured
delight.

Those who take pleasure in Shabbat inherit eternal glory;
those who savor Shabbat truly merit life;
those who love its teaching have chosen to join in
its greatness.

For at Sinai the shoot of redemption was planted for us
and for the world.

May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors,
that we may be led to our land,
and planted within our borders, in wholeness and in peace,
singing joyfully with voices of gladness,
filled with love and friendship.

May we walk together by the light of Your countenance,
all of us living lives of righteousness and justice,
love and compassion,
as Your prophet Isaiah proclaimed:

“There shall not be evil or destruction on My holy mountain,
for the world shall be filled with the knowledge of God,
as the waters fill the sea.”

“Thus shall ADONAI be an eternal light for us, and your God
shall be your glory.”

AN ALTERNATE

תִּכְנַת שַׁבָּת, רוּמְמַת קִדְשָׁתָהּ, צְוִית פְּקוּדֶיהָ,
עֵדֶן סִגְלוֹתֶיךָ נִתְּתָה. מְעַנְגִּיָּה לְעוֹלָם כְּבוֹד יִגְחַלּוּ,
טוֹעֲמֵיהָ חַיִּים זָכוּ, וְגַם הָאוֹהֲבִים דְּבָרֶיהָ גְּדֻלָּה בְּחָרוּ.
אִזּוּ מְסִינֵי גִטֵּעַ צִיץ פְּדוּת לָנוּ וּלְעוֹלָמֵיךָ.

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יְהוּוֹה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], שֶׁתּוֹלִיכֵנוּ לְאַרְצֵנוּ וְתִטְעֵנוּ בְּגְבוּלֵנוּ,
בְּתַמִּימוֹת וּבְשָׁלוֹם בְּרִנָּה וּבְקוֹל שְׂמֵחָה,
מְלֵאִים אַחֲוָה וְאַהֲבָה.
גִּלְךָ יִחַד בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ,
וְנִחֲיָה כְּלָנוּ בְּצִדֵּק וּבְמִשְׁפָּט,
בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים,
וְכֵן כְּתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאֶיךָ:
לֹא יִרְעוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתוּ בְּכַל־הָר קִדְשֵׁי,
כִּי מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דְּעָה אֶת־יְהוּוֹה, כִּמְיָם לַיָּם מְכֻסִּים.
וְהָיָה לְךָ יְהוּוֹה לְאוֹר עוֹלָם וְאֱלֹהֶיךָ לְתַפְאֲרֹתֶיךָ.

The fullness of life is only experienced when we develop our spiritual capacities. It is on Shabbat that we come to understand what this fullness might contain, for on Shabbat we stand back to ponder, study, and pray; our community gathers; we meet with friends and family; and we feel rested and sated.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ. Musaf is recited at the height of the day, when we experience ourselves as fully encompassed by Shabbat. Classically this was a time that stirred messianic yearnings, for the peacefulness of this moment evoked dreams of a more permanent peace. Based on prophetic visions of the future, this alternate *b'rakhah* expresses our own yearnings for a time when justice and compassion will reign, when the people Israel will be reconciled with one another and with the world, and when peace will be established—a lasting peace that is not merely a cessation of war and armed conflict, but a peace that brings joy to every inhabitant of the world and reflects the light of God shining on earth. According to Rav (3rd century, Babylonia), one should include in the Musaf Amidah some thought that was not expressed earlier in the Arvit or Shaharit Amidah (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Berakhot 4:6).

SINGING JOYFULLY WITH VOICES OF GLADNESS וּבְקוֹל שְׂמֵחָה. The prophets announce that the return to Zion will be accompanied with song and shouts of joy. The language here resonates with Isaiah 51:3, “gladness and joy shall abide there . . . and the sound of music.”

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE וּבְמִשְׁפָּט. From Hosea 2:21. Hosea further declares (6:6): “For it is kindly love that I desire, not sacrifice; the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.”

THERE SHALL NOT BE EVIL לֹא יִרְעוּ. From Isaiah 11:9.

THUS SHALL ADONAI וְהָיָה לְךָ יְהוּוֹה. From Isaiah 60:19.

ALTERNATE BLESSING. Both the Rabbinical Assembly's *Siddur Sim Shalom* and the Israeli *Masorti Siddur Va'ani Tefillati* have offered revisions of this *b'rakhah* emphasizing elements of universal redemption rather than the restoration of Temple offerings. The accompanying prayers written by Simcha Roth and Ze'ev Kainan, under the direction of the editors of this volume, follow in that tradition.

This alternate rendering emphasizes Shabbat as a taste of redemption, and it sees the return to the land as an opportunity to fulfill the prophetic vision of redemption, in which the world will be characterized by peace and justice.

YOU ESTABLISHED SHABBAT תִּכְנַת שַׁבָּת. A reverse alphabetical acrostic celebrating Shabbat, which concludes with four of the five Hebrew letters that are written differently when they occur at the end of a word.

TRULY MERIT LIFE זָכוּ לְמֵרִיץ.

What We Strive For

The realm of mystery tells us, You live in a world full of light and life.

Know the great reality, the richness of existence that you always encounter. Contemplate its grandeur, its beauty, its precision and its harmony . . .

The perception that dawns on a person to see the world not as finished, but as in the process of continued becoming, ascending, developing—this changes him from being “under the sun” to being “above the sun,” from the place where there is nothing new to the place where there is nothing old, where everything takes on new form. The joy of heaven and earth abides in him as on the day they were created . . .

In every corner where you turn, you are dealing with realities that have life; you always perform consequential acts, abounding with meaning and with the preciousness of vibrant life. In everything you do, you encounter sparks full of life and light, aspiring to rise toward the heights. You help them and they help you . . .

The time that is an uninterrupted Sabbath on which eternal peace shines, is the day when, by the nature of its creation, there pulsates a continued thrust for newness. It needs no end, no termination. It is the choicest of days, an ornament of beauty, the source of all blessings.

—ABRAHAM ISAAC KOOK
(translated by Ben Zion Bokser)

All services continue here:

Those who observe Shabbat and call it a delight shall rejoice in Your sovereignty. The people who sanctify the seventh day shall all be fulfilled and shall delight in Your abundant goodness. You have loved the seventh day and sanctified it, calling it the most beloved of days, a symbol of the work of creation.

Yism'hu v'malkhut'kha shomrei shabbat v'korei oneg, am m'kadshei sh'vi-i, kulam yisbe'u v'yitangu mi-tuvekha, u-va-sh'vi-i ratzita bo v'kidashto, hemdat yamim oto karata, zeikher l'ma-aseih v'reishit.

Our God and God of our ancestors, embrace our rest. Make us holy through Your mitzvot and let the Torah be our portion. Fill our lives with Your goodness and gladden us with Your deliverance.

Kad'sheinu b'mitzvotekha v'ten helkeinu b'toratekha, sabeinu mi-tuvekha v'samheinu bishuatekha, v'taheir libeinu l'ovd'kha be-emet.

Purify our hearts to serve You truly. ADONAI our God, lovingly and willingly grant that we inherit Your holy Shabbat, that the people Israel, who make Your name holy, may find rest on this day. *Barukh atah ADONAI*, who makes Shabbat holy.

Fifth B'rakhah: The Restoration of Zion

ADONAI our God, embrace Your people Israel and their prayer. Restore worship to Your sanctuary. May the prayers of the people Israel be lovingly accepted by You, and may our service always be pleasing. May our eyes behold Your compassionate return to Zion.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who restores Your Divine Presence to Zion.

All services continue here:

יְשֻׁמְחוּ בְּמַלְכוּתְךָ שׁוֹמְרֵי שַׁבָּת וְקוֹרְאֵי עֲנֵג, עִם מְקַדְשֵׁי שְׁבִיעֵי, כָּלֵם יִשְׁבְּעוּ וְיִתְעַנְּגוּ מִטּוֹבְךָ, וְהַשְׁבִּיעֵי רְצִיתָ בּוֹ וְקִדְשָׁתוּ, חֲמֻדַּת יָמִים אוֹתוֹ קָרָאתָ, זָכָר לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], רְצֵה בְּמִנּוּחָתֵנוּ,

קִדְשֵׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ, וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, שְׂבַעֲנוּ מִטּוֹבְךָ, וְשִׂמְחֵנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ,

וְטַהַר לִבֵּנוּ לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאֵמֶת,

וְהִנְחֵלְנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן שַׁבָּת קִדְשָׁךָ, וְיִנּוּחוּ בָּהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְקַדְשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ.

כְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

רְצֵה, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְתַפְלָתָם, וְהִשֵּׁב אֶת־הָעֲבוּדָה לְדָבִיר בֵּיתְךָ,

וּתְפַלְתֵם בְּאַהֲבָה תִקְבַּל בְּרָצוֹן,

וְתִהְיֶה לְרָצוֹן תָּמִיד עֲבוּדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ.

וְתַחֲזִינָה עֵינֵינוּ בְּשׁוֹבְךָ לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים.

כְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְחַזִּיר שְׂכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.

THOSE WHO OBSERVE SHABBAT SHALL REJOICE יְשֻׁמְחוּ בְּמַלְכוּתְךָ. The Musaf liturgy here conceives of Shabbat as a symbol of the world we hope to achieve: a world at peace, in which we feel fulfilled and satiated with goodness.

OUR GOD AND GOD OF OUR ANCESTORS אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ]. The blessing culminates in a series of requests, all of a spiritual nature.

GLADDEN US WITH YOUR DELIVERANCE שִׂמְחֵנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ. In the Sephardic version of this prayer, we ask that God “gladden our soul” (וְשִׂמַח נַפְשֵׁנוּ). Similarly, Rav Amram’s siddur (9th century) has the word “heart.” God’s deliverance is seen as a spiritual victory.

GRANT THAT WE INHERIT וְהִנְחֵלְנוּ. Shabbat is seen as a gift.

EMBRACE רְצֵה. Intimacy with God, a sense of God’s closeness and embrace, an existential realization that we are not alone—these are the answers to our prayers, not the specific fulfillment of a verbal request. (Bradley Shavit Artson)

RESTORE WORSHIP TO YOUR SANCTUARY וְהִשֵּׁב אֶת־הָעֲבוּדָה לְדָבִיר בֵּיתְךָ. In exile, our relationship with God cannot be fulfilled. Yearning for the restoration of the Temple expresses the wish for a more direct relationship with God.

Thanksgiving

How great my joy that I dwell with You—and thinking of You, my troubles flee.
 For Your love and kindness I owe so much, but all I can offer are prayers recited thankfully.
 Heavens cannot contain You; how could my ideas? Teach me what may please You, that I may do what to You is dear.
 Take my praise as a rightful offering, consider it as sacrifices of old.
 Pure of Vision, open Your eyes to my suffering, let Your light illumine what I fail to see.
 Let Your kindness and love favor me.
 Let them cover my sins, that they not be seen.
 And as Your name is held in my heart, may my spirit in Your hands be.
 —SOLOMON IBN GABIROL

Thanksgiving

The older we get, the greater becomes our inclination to give thanks, especially heavenwards. We feel more strongly than we could possibly have ever felt before that life is a gift. . . .
 But we also feel, again and again, an urge to thank our fellow, even if he or she has not done anything special for us. For what, then? For being truly present when we are together; for opening his eyes, and not mistaking me for someone else; for opening her ears, and listening carefully to what I had to say to her; indeed, for opening up to me what I really wanted to address—a securely locked heart.

—MARTIN BUBER (adapted)

Sixth B'rakhah: Gratitude for Life and Its Blessings

*When the Amidah is recited silently, we read the following paragraph.
 When the Amidah is chanted aloud, the leader reads this paragraph as the congregation reads the next passage.*

† We thank You, for You are ever our God and the God of our ancestors; You are the bedrock of our lives, the shield that protects us in every generation. We thank You and sing Your praises—for our lives that are in Your hands, for our souls that are under Your care, for Your miracles that accompany us each day, and for Your wonders and Your gifts that are with us each moment—evening, morning, and noon.

▶ You are the one who is good, whose mercy is never-ending; the one who is compassionate, whose love is unceasing. We have always placed our hope in You.

This paragraph is recited by the congregation when the full Amidah is repeated by the service leader, by custom remaining seated and bowing slightly.

† We thank You for the ability to acknowledge You. You are our God and the God of our ancestors, the God of all flesh, our creator, and the creator of all. We offer praise and blessing to Your holy and great name, for granting us life and for sustaining us. May You continue to grant us life and sustenance. Gather our dispersed to Your holy courtyards, that we may fulfill Your mitzvot and serve You wholeheartedly, carrying out Your will. May God, the source of gratitude, be praised.

On Hanukkah we add Al Hanissim on page 430.

For all these blessings may Your name be praised and exalted, our sovereign, always and forever.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

And inscribe all the people of Your covenant for a good life.

May all that lives thank You always, and faithfully praise Your name forever, God of our deliverance and help.

† *Barukh atah ADONAI*, Your name is goodness and praise of You is fitting.

*When the Amidah is recited silently, we read the following paragraph.
 When the Amidah is chanted aloud, the leader reads this paragraph as the congregation reads the next passage.*

† מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ, שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאַמוֹתֵינוּ] לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. צוּר חַיֵּינוּ מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ אֶתָּה הוּא לְדוֹר וָדוֹר. נוֹדָה לְךָ וְנִסְפָּר תְּהִלָּתְךָ, עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדְךָ וְעַל נְשְׁמוֹתֵינוּ הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ, וְעַל נְסִיךְ שְׂבָכָל־יוֹם עִמָּנוּ, וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ שְׂבָכָל־עֵת, עֶרֶב וּבֹקֶר וְצַהֲרַיִם. ◀ הַטּוֹב, בִּי לֹא כָלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ, וְהִמְרָחֵם, בִּי לֹא תִמּוּ חֲסִדֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם קוּיֵנוּ לָךְ.

This paragraph is recited by the congregation when the full Amidah is repeated by the service leader, by custom remaining seated and bowing slightly.

† מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאַמוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי כָל־בֶּשֶׂר, יוֹצְרֵנוּ, יוֹצְרֵ בְּרֵאשִׁית. בְּרִכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ, עַל שְׂהַחַיֵּיתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָּנוּ. בֵּן תַּחֲנוּנוֹ וְתַקִּימָנוּ, וְתַאֲסוּף גְּלוּתֵנוּ לְחִצְרוֹת קִדְשֶׁךָ, לְשִׁמּוֹר חֲקִיךָ וְלַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ, וְלַעֲבֹדְךָ בְּלִבָּב שְׁלֵם, עַל שְׂאֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ. בְּרוּךְ אַל הַהוֹדָאוֹת.

On Hanukkah we add Al Hanissim on page 430.

וְעַל כָּלֵם יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִתְרוֹמַם שְׁמֶךָ מִלְּפָנֵינוּ תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

וְכָתוּב לַחַיִּים טוֹבִים כָּל־בְּנֵי בְרִיתֶךָ. *On Shabbat Shuvah we add:*

וְכָל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ סֵלָה,

וַיְהִלְלוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּאַמָּת,

הָאֵל יִשׁוּעֵתָנוּ וְעִזְרָתָנוּ סֵלָה.

† בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַטּוֹב שְׁמֶךָ וְלָךְ נֶאֱדָה לְהוֹדוֹת.

THE SIXTH B'RAKHAH. The penultimate b'rakhah of the Amidah has two versions. The first is recited during the silent Amidah, or by the leader when the Amidah is recited aloud by the leader. This version reflects on the miracles of daily life. When the Amidah is recited out loud, the congregation accompanies the leader with a different version of the blessing, one that remarks on the very ability to give thanks. The central idea it expresses is *modim anahnu lakh . . . al she-anahnu modim lakh*, “we thank You for the ability to thank You.” The prayer may be understood as an expression of appreciation for being part of a religious tradition that values gratitude. More radically, this prayer may be understood as expressing the thought that our prayers may be addressed to God, but God is the Source of All—even the prayers we speak. The very ability to thank is thus a manifestation of the presence of God within us.

WE THANK YOU מוֹדִים. Our gratitude is expressed in universal terms, without reference to Jewish particularity. Here we reflect on the very basis of life itself. God’s wonders are found in the cycles of the planets,

the rhythm of the seasons, the resurgence of life. We may come to realize that gratitude is a self-creating blessing: the more we cultivate gratitude, the more we are aware of all that we receive for which we may be grateful, the more we blossom as human beings. (*Bradley Shavit Artson*)

Peace

שָׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
יִשְׁלָיו אֲהַבְיָהּ.
יְהִי שְׁלוֹם בְּחֵילָהּ שְׁלוֹהַּ
בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ.
לְמַעַן אַחֵי וְרַעֵי אֲדַבְּרָהּ
בְּנֵא שְׁלוֹם בָּהּ.
לְמַעַן בֵּית יְהוָה אֲלַהֵינוּ
אֲבַקְשָׁה טוֹב לָהּ.

Pray for the peace of
Jerusalem.
May those who love her be
tranquil;
may there be peace on
your ramparts,
tranquility in your citadels.
For the sake of my friends
and my kin
I pray for peace.
For the sake of the house
of Adonai our God,
I seek your welfare.
Sha-alu sh'lo'om yerushalayim
yishlayu ohavayikh.
Y'hi shalom b'heilekh shalvah
b'arm'notayikh.
L'ma-an aḥai v'rei-ai adabrah na
shalom bakh.
L'ma-an beit Adonai eloheinu
avakshah tov lakh.

—PSALM 122:6–9

Seventh B'rakhah: Prayer for Peace

During the silent Amidah, we continue with "Grant Peace," below.
When the Amidah is repeated, the leader recites the Priestly Blessing.

Our God and God of our ancestors, bless us with the threefold blessing of the Torah written by Moses Your servant, recited by Aaron and his descendants, the *kohanim*, the consecrated priests of Your people:

May ADONAI bless and protect you.
So may it be God's will. Ken y'hi ratzon.
May ADONAI's countenance shine upon you
and may ADONAI bestow kindness upon you.
So may it be God's will. Ken y'hi ratzon.
May ADONAI's countenance be lifted toward you
and may ADONAI grant you peace.
So may it be God's will. Ken y'hi ratzon.

Grant peace to the world, goodness and blessing, grace, love, and compassion, for us and for all the people Israel. Bless us, our creator, united as one with the light of Your presence; by that light, ADONAI our God, You have given us a guide to life, the love of kindness, generosity, blessing, compassion, life, and peace. May it please You to bless Your people Israel at every season and at all times with Your gift of peace.

Sim shalom ba-olam tovah u-v'rakahah, ḥen va-ḥesed v'raḥamim, aleinu v'al kol yisrael amekha. Bar'kheinu avinu kulanu k'eḥad b'or panekha, ki v'or panekha natata lanu, Adonai eloheinu, torat ḥayim v'ahavat ḥesed, u-tzedakah u-v'rakhah v'raḥamim v'ḥayim v'shalom. V'tov b'einekha l'varekh et am'kha yisrael b'khol eit u-v'khol sha-ah bishlomekha.

On Shabbat Shuvah we recite the following paragraph, in place of the line that follows it:
May we and the entire house of Israel be called to mind and inscribed for life, blessing, sustenance, and peace in the Book of Life. *Barukh atah ADONAI*, who brings peace.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who blesses Your people Israel with peace.

When the Amidah is recited aloud by the leader, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

During the silent Amidah, we continue with שִׁים שְׁלוֹם below.
When the Amidah is repeated, the leader recites the Birkat Kohanim.

אֲלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
בְּרַכְנוּ בְּבִרְכַּהּ הַמְּשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
בַּתּוֹרָה הַכְּתוּבָה עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה עֶבְדְּךָ,
הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי אֲהֵרֶן וּבְנָיו, בְּהַגִּים, עִם קְדוּשָׁה, כְּאֲמֹר:
יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ.
יָאֵר יְהוָה פְּנֵינוּ אֲלֵיךָ וַיְחַנֶּךָ.
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵינוּ אֲלֵיךָ וְיִשֵּׁם לָךְ שְׁלוֹם.

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם טוֹבָה וּבִרְכָה,
חַן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמְּךָ.
בְּרַכְנוּ אֲבִינוּ כְּלָנוּ כְּאַחַד בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ,
כִּי בְאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ נִתְּתָ לָנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד,
וְצַדִּיקָה וּבִרְכָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם.
וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֶךְ אֶת־עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּכָל־עֵת וּבְכָל־שַׁעַה בְּשְׁלוֹמָהּ.

On Shabbat Shuvah we recite the following paragraph, in place of the line that follows it:
בְּסִפּוֹר חַיִּים, בְּרְכָה, וְשְׁלוֹם, וּפְרִינָסָה טוֹבָה,
נִבְרַח וְנִבְתַב לְפָנֶיךָ, אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל־עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשְׁלוֹם.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, עוֹשֵׂה הַשְׁלוֹם.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשְׁלוֹם.

When the Amidah is recited aloud by the leader, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

THE PRIESTLY BLESSING (Numbers 6:24–26) was recited by the priests at the conclusion of every Temple service at which the people assembled. In the Hebrew, it begins with the word for blessing (*y'varekh'kha*) and ends with the word for peace (*shalom*). The style of the blessing is expansive, spreading outward: the first line contains three words; the second line, five; and the last line, seven. The text of the Priestly Blessing has been found on silver amulets in Jerusalem that date from the 7th century B.C.E., the only known inscription of a biblical text predating the Babylonian exile.

וַיְחַנֶּךָ BESTOW KINDNESS. This phrase is open to at least two interpretations: that God be kind to you, or that God grant you the capacity for kindness. The latter interpretation is attested to by the midrash: "May God grant you the understanding to be kind to one another" (Numbers Rabbah 11:6).

GRANT PEACE שִׁים שְׁלוֹם. The final blessing of the Amidah is a prayer for peace. There are, however, two versions of this blessing; this particular version is recited only when the *kohanim* would have

traditionally ascended the *bimah* to bless the congregation. The words *sim shalom*, "grant peace," are related directly to the conclusion of Birkat Kohanim, the Priestly Blessing: "May God grant you peace." Additionally, the paragraph speaks of the light of God's face as bestowing blessing, a metaphor taken directly from the Priestly Blessing. The midrash says that God's name is peace (Sifrei Numbers 42), and the Priestly Blessing looks to God bestowing on us the almost-divine ability to extend peace and kindly love to others.

The Way to God

There are three starting points of contemplation about God; three trails that lead to God. The first is the way of sensing the presence of God in the world, in things; the second is the way of sensing God's presence in the Bible; the third is the way of sensing God's presence in sacred deeds. These three ways are intimated in three Biblical passages:

“Lift up your eyes on high and see, Who created these?” (Isaiah 40:26)

“I am the Lord thy God.” (Exodus 20:2)

“We shall do and we shall hear.” (Exodus 24:7)

These three ways correspond in our tradition to the main aspects of religious existence: worship, learning, and action. The three are one, and we must go all three ways to reach the one destination. For this is what Israel discovered: the God of nature is the God of history, and the way to know God is to do God's will.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA
HESCHEL

The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer or one of the following:

א

My God, keep my tongue from evil, my lips from deceit.

Help me ignore those who would slander me.

Let me be humble before all.

Open my heart to Your Torah, that I may pursue Your mitzvot.

Frustrate the designs of those who plot evil against me; nullify their schemes.

Act for the sake of Your name, act for the sake of Your triumph, act for the sake of Your holiness, act for the sake of Your Torah.

Answer my prayer for the deliverance of Your people.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen*.

ב

Grant me the liberating joy of Shabbat, the ability to truly taste its delights. May my heart not be weighed down by sorrow on this holy Shabbat. Fill the soul of Your servant with gladness—for to You, ADONAI, I offer my entire being. Help me to increase the joys of Shabbat and to extend its joyful spirit to the other six days of the week. Show me the path of life, that I may be filled with the joy of being in Your presence, the delight of being close to You forever.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen*.

Yihyu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi l'fanekha, Adonai tzuri v'go-ali.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu
v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil], v'imru amen.

When the Amidah is to be repeated aloud, we turn back to page 185.

Otherwise, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

An individual praying without a minyan may turn to Ein Keiloheinu, page 204.

The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer or one of the following:

א

אֱלֹהֵי, נְצוּר לְשׁוּנֵי מִרְעָה, וּשְׁפָתֵי מִדְּבַר מִרְמָה, וְלִמְקַלְלֵי
נַפְשֵׁי תְדוּם, וְנִפְשֵׁי בְּעַפָּר לְכָל תְּהִיָּה. פָּתַח לְבִי בְּתוֹרָתְךָ,
וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדּוּף נִפְשֵׁי. וְכָל־הַחֹשְׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה,

מִהָרָה הִפֵּר עֲצָתָם וְקִלְקַל מַחְשַׁבְתָּם. עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ,
עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן יְמִינֶךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן קִדְשֶׁךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן
תּוֹרָתְךָ. לְמַעַן יַחְלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ, הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינֶךָ וְעַנְנֵי.

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תִבְל], וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

ב

זַכְּנֵי לְשִׂמְחָה וְחֵרוֹת שֶׁל שַׁבָּת, לְטַעַם טַעַם עֲנֵג שַׁבָּת
בְּאַמְתָּ. זַכְּנֵי שְׂלֵא יַעֲלֶה עַל לְבִי עֲצָבוֹת בְּיוֹם שַׁבָּת
קִדְשׁ. שְׂמַח נִפְשׁ מְשָׁרְתְךָ, כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲדַנִּי נִפְשֵׁי אֲשָׂא.
עֲזֵרְנִי לְהַרְבוֹת בְּתַעֲנוּגֵי שַׁבָּת, וּלְהַמְשִׁיךְ הַשְׂמִיחָה שֶׁל
שַׁבָּת לְשִׁשָּׁת יְמֵי הַחֹל. תוֹדִיעֵנִי אֲרַח חַיִּים, שְׂבַע
שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ, נְעִימוֹת בְּיָמֶיךָ נִצַּח.

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תִבְל], וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

When the Amidah is to be repeated aloud, we turn back to page 185.

Otherwise, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

An individual praying without a minyan may turn to Ein Keiloheinu, page 204.

MY GOD אֱלֹהֵי. One opinion voiced in the Babylonian Talmud states that every Amidah must be accompanied by a personal prayer (Berakhot 29b). This prayer is offered by the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 17a) as an example; it is attributed to Mar son of Ravina (4th century).

MAY THE WORDS יְהִי לְרָצוֹן. Psalm 19:15. Rabbi Yohanan (3rd century, the Land of Israel) recommended that the Amidah conclude with this verse (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Berakhot 4:4).

GRANT יְכַנֵּי. A prayer of Nahman of Bratzlav, translated by Jules Harlow.

The Musaf Amidah for Shabbat Rosh Hodesh

A Prayer for Rosh Hodesh

Life is a mystery. How did we come to be, here and now? What is the meaning of our lives? What are we to make of the circumstances of our lives—our joys, our sadness? In prayer we try to penetrate that mystery, to find meaning, to rediscover how we ought to live out our days, how we may walk in the world directed on our path by God's light.

When we begin to pray, we first of all acknowledge that mystery. The metaphor of the new moon offers insight. For a moment the moon disappears, but it soon reappears as a sliver of light. Prayer, in talmudic thought, is quintessentially silent prayer. In prayer, we simultaneously plumb the unspoken depths of our lives and place ourselves before the silence of the universe. We speak into the void, which we hope is not sheer emptiness, and we listen for a response to the question of our existence.

We offer words passed down to us by the generations of supplicants who came before and we seek reassurance in the Amidah that God is with us, too.

continued

A transliteration of the opening b'rakhot of the Amidah may be found on page 466.

When a minyan is present, some communities repeat the Amidah after it is recited silently; in others, the leader recites the first three blessings (including the Kedushah) aloud and the Amidah is then recited silently. The sign ¶ indicates the places to bow. The Amidah concludes on page 202.

[Leader: As I proclaim the name ADONAI, give glory to our God.] ADONAI, open my lips that my mouth may speak Your praise.

First B'rakhah: Our Ancestors

With Patriarchs:

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI,*
our God and God of our
ancestors,
God of Abraham, God of
Isaac, and God of Jacob,
great, mighty, awe-inspiring,
transcendent God,
who acts with kindness
and love, and creates all,
who remembers the loving
deeds of our ancestors,
and who will lovingly bring a
redeemer to their children's
children for the sake of
divine honor.
You are the sovereign
who helps and saves
and shields.

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI,*
Shield of Abraham.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI,*
our God and God of our
ancestors,
God of Abraham, God of
Isaac, and God of Jacob,
God of Sarah, God of
Rebecca, God of Rachel,
and God of Leah,
great, mighty, awe-inspiring,
transcendent God,
who acts with kindness
and love, and creates all,
who remembers the loving
deeds of our ancestors,
and who will lovingly bring a
redeemer to their children's
children for the sake of
divine honor.
You are the sovereign
who helps and guards,
saves and shields.

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI,*
Shield of Abraham and
Guardian of Sarah.

מוסף לשבת ראש חודש: עמידה

A transliteration of the opening b'rakhot of the Amidah may be found on page 466.

When a minyan is present, some communities repeat the Amidah after it is recited silently; in others, the leader recites the first three blessings (including the Kedushah) aloud and the Amidah is then recited silently. The sign ¶ indicates the places to bow. The Amidah concludes on page 202.

[Leader: בְּי שֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא, הִבּו גְדֹל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ. אֲדַנִּי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ.]

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם,
אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב,
אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה,
אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל, וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה,
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַפֶּלַח, וְזוֹכֵר
חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת [וְאִמּוֹת],
וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם
לְמַעַן שְׂמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.
מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן.

¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מְגֵן אַבְרָהָם וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה.

With Patriarchs:

¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי
יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, הָאֵל
הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַפֶּלַח,
וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת,
וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם
לְמַעַן שְׂמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.
מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן.

¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מְגֵן אַבְרָהָם.

ROSH HODESH. Since biblical times, Rosh Hodesh has been celebrated as a holiday. The Book of Samuel notes it as a time of a celebratory meal (1 Samuel 20:18); the Book of Kings, as a time when people would visit the prophet (2 Kings 4:23); and the prophet Amos notes it as a day of rest, when businesses were closed (8:5). In some ways, the Torah gives it a status equal to the Pilgrimage Festivals and decrees extra sacrifices to be brought on Rosh Hodesh—the same as are brought on the festivals of Pesah and Shavuot—the sounding of trumpets, as on festivals (Numbers 10:10).

The Hebrew calendar was fixed by visual attestation of a new moon, and the Mishnah records the care, the rituals, and the ceremonies that took place in relation to the sighting of the new moon. Since the 4th century, though, the calendar has been fixed by a mathematical calculation.

In line with biblical practice, traditional communities celebrate the day with a festive meal. Although work is permitted on Rosh Hodesh, it was customary for women not to do work

that could be left for another day—a custom that continues in many communities down to our own time. In many cultures, the moon with its cycles is associated with the feminine, though the midrash (Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer, chapter 44) offers quite a different reason for this association: in the march through the desert, the women refused to contribute their jewelry to the manufacture of the golden calf and so they were rewarded with a holiday of their own. Today, women's study groups often meet on Rosh Hodesh.

continued

continued

The Amidah thus opens with a statement of hope—hope that, like our ancestors, we may find a response within the silence; hope that we and our children and our children’s children will find redemption, as our ancestors did.

As we pray, we recognize that God is present with the lowly, the fallen, those who are twisted and bound up by the difficulties of life. The waning of the moon, its fading into darkness, bears with it both a sense of passing, of dying, and also the promise of rebirth. The Divine is with us as we go from darkness into light. Indeed, God is with us even in the darkness when the light is not visible.

To live with this knowledge of presence and absence, of passing and renewal, is to have a sense of the holy, a hint of the possibility of redemption. It is to live with the belief that each encounter of our lives is open to the possibility of meaning.

And so the most powerful moments of prayer are when we go from emptiness to fullness, and for a moment that fullness is transcendent, our lives seem then resplendent with meaning—even as we know that its time, too, will end. But the glory of that fullness may remain with us even beyond its time.

Second B'rakhah: God's Saving Care

You are ever mighty, ADONAI—
You give life to the dead—
great is Your saving power:

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah:

You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall,

[From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add:

You cause the dew to fall,]

You sustain the living through kindness and love,
and with great mercy give life to the dead,
You support the falling, heal the sick,
loosen the chains of the bound,
and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.

Who is like You, Almighty,
and who can be compared to You?
The sovereign who brings death and life
and causes redemption to flourish.

*M'khalkel hayim b'hesed,
m'hayeih meitim b'rah'amim rabim,
somekh noflim v'rofei holim u-matir asurim,
u-m'kayem emunato lisheinei afar.
Mi khamokha ba-al g'vurot umi domeh lakh,
melekh meimit u-m'hayeh u-matzmiah y'shuah.*

You are faithful in bringing life to the dead.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives life to the dead.

When the Amidah is recited silently, continue on page 196 with "Holy are You."

אַתָּה גְבוּר לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי,
מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים אַתָּה,
רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ.

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah: מְשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם,
[From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add: מוֹרִיד הַטַּל,
]

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחַסֵּד,
מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים,
סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,
וּמְקַיֵּם אֱמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפְרָה.
מִי כְמוֹךָ בְּעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמָה לָךְ,
מֶלֶךְ מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעָה.

וְנֶאֱמַן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְחַיֶּה הַמֵּתִים.

When the Amidah is recited silently, continue on page 196 with אַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ.

continued

Because of its character as a holiday, one is not permitted to fast on this day; similarly, funeral ceremonies are curtailed. In kabbalistic circles, the day before Rosh Hodesh is characterized as a fast day—as if to enter the new month free of sin—and the day is called a “minor Yom Kippur.” In that vein, a midrash maintains that the sacrifice on Rosh Hodesh was brought as an atonement for impurity created by our acts that we do not even recognize as sins; we might think of them as the unconscious peccadillos that litter the world (see below, page 196). Thus Rosh Hodesh is thought of as a time when all the world is cleansed and we can all start anew.

In urban environments, we often lose sight of the

way the waxing and waning of the moon affects our environment. The oceans’ tides are regulated by the cycles of the moon. Other effects—physiological and psychological—have also been attributed to the phases of the moon. The celebration of Rosh Hodesh might lead us to reflect on the way the phases of the moon—differently than the circuit of the sun—make us conscious of both the passing nature of time and the possibility of renewal.

Where Is the Place of God's Glory?

Once, the Hasidic master Menaḥem Mendel of Kotzk startled his Hasidim by asking, "Where is God's dwelling place?" Some answered that it is in heaven. Some simply said that no human can know. Menaḥem Mendel then said, "It is wherever we will let God in."

Return, O My Soul

Return, O my soul, to your resting place, sit beside the divine throne, always, spurn earthly places, ascend on high, take what you can from there, bow to God, honor the Divine, supplant the angels giving praise.

—YEHUDAH HALEVI

Third B'rakhah: God's Holiness

THE KEDUSHAH

The Kedushah is recited standing. Indeed, since we imitate the song of the angels, the tradition recommends standing like angels, with feet together. It is recited only with a minyan.

We revere and sanctify You on earth as Your name is sanctified in heaven, as Your prophet Isaiah described:

Each cried out to the other:

"Holy, holy, holy is ADONAI Tz'va-ot, the whole world is filled with God's glory!"

Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai Tz'va-ot, m'lo khol ha-aretz k'vodo.

God's glory fills the universe. One angelic chorus asks, "Where is the place of God's glory?" Another responds:

"Praised is ADONAI's glory wherever God dwells."

Barukh k'vod Adonai mimkomo.

From where God dwells, may God turn with compassion toward the people who twice each day, evening and morning, lovingly proclaim God's oneness, reciting the Sh'ma:

"Hear, O Israel, ADONAI is our God, ADONAI is one."

Sh'ma yisrael, Adonai eloheinu, Adonai ehad.

The Holy One is our God, our creator, our sovereign, our redeemer. Yet again, God will in mercy proclaim to us before all that lives: "I, ADONAI, am your God."

Hu eloheinu, hu avinu, hu malkeinu, hu moshi-einu, v'hu yashmi-einu b'raḥamav sheinit l'einei kol hai, lihyot lakhem leilohim. Ani Adonai eloheikhem.

As the psalmist sang: "ADONAI will reign forever; your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Halleluyah!"

Yimlokḥ Adonai l'olam, elohayikh tziyon l'dor vador, hal'luyah.

From generation to generation we will declare Your greatness, and forever sanctify You with words of holiness. Your praise will never leave our lips, for You are God and Sovereign, great and holy.

L'dor vador nagid godlekha, u-l'netzah n'tzaḥim k'dushat'kha nakdish, v'shivḥakha eloheinu mi-pinu lo yamush l'olam va-ed, ki El melekh gadol v'kadosh atah.

Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy God.

We continue on the next page with the Fourth B'rakhah, "You formed," or the alternate on page 198

The Kedushah is recited standing. Indeed, since we imitate the song of the angels, the tradition recommends standing like angels, with feet together. It is recited only with a minyan.

נְעִרִיצְךָ וְנִקְדִישְׁךָ בְּסוּד שְׂיַח שְׂרָפֵי קֹדֶשׁ הַמְּקַדְּיִשִׁים שְׁמֶךָ בְּקֹדֶשׁ, בְּפָתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאֶךָ, וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר: קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, יְהוָה זָבָאוֹת, מְלֵא כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

כְּבוֹדוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם, מְשַׁרְתֵּיו שׁוֹאֲלִים זֶה לְזֶה, אֵיזָה מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ, לְעַמְתָּם בְּרוּךְ יְאִמְרוּ: בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

מִמְּקוֹמוֹ הוּא יִפֵּן בְּרַחֲמִים, וְיַחַן עִם הַמִּיחַדִּים שְׁמוֹ עֲרַב וְבִקֵּר בְּכָל־יוֹם תָּמִיד, פְּעַמִּים בְּאַהֲבָה שְׁמַע אוֹמְרִים: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְהוָה אֶחָד.

הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הוּא אָבִינוּ, הוּא מְלַכְנוּ, הוּא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ, וְהוּא יִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ בְּרַחֲמָיו שְׁנִית לְעֵינֵי כָּל־חַי, לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים. אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

וּבְדַבְרֵי קֹדֶשׁךָ בְּתוֹב לְאִמֹר:

יְמַלְךָ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדוֹר וָדוֹר, הַלְלוּהָ.

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִגִּיד גְּדֻלָּה, וּלְנִצָּחַ נִצְחִים קֹדֶשְׁתֶּךָ נִקְדִישׁ, וְשַׁבְּחֶךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפִּינוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, כִּי אֵל מְלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקְדוֹשׁ אַתָּה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ.

We continue on the next page with the Fourth B'rakhah, אַתָּה יִצְרַת, or the alternate on page 198.

acknowledges both God's immanence, a palpable presence, and God's transcendence, the knowledge that the Divine is beyond our understanding. Thus, we say "The whole world is filled with God's glory," and we then immediately praise God "wherever God dwells."

WILL . . . PROCLAIM וְהוּא יִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ. The relationship of God and humanity is manifested by a reciprocal call and response. On the one hand, God calls to us and we respond to that calling. At the same time, we call to God and God responds by bringing redemption.

YET AGAIN שְׁנִית. Literally, "a second time." The first redemption was the exodus from Egypt. Much of Jewish theology maintains the perspective that we exist between the promise of freedom announced in the exodus and its eventual fulfillment in the messianic era.

THE KEDUSHAH is composed of an interweaving of two prophetic visions: that of Isaiah, who witnessed the angels singing "Holy, holy, holy," and that of Ezekiel, who heard the angels cry "Praised is Adonai's glory wherever God dwells." In heaven, one chorus of angels responds to another; on earth, leader and congregation respond to each other. Additionally, in the version of the Kedushah recited at each Musaf service, Israel's recitation of the Sh'ma is offered as a counterpoint to the angelic praise. Ultimately, our prayer brings heaven and earth into a momentary unity, when we recite the angelic prayer while proclaiming Israel's credo of one God. The quotation from Isaiah, remarking that "each cries out to the other," thus has a dual meaning in the liturgy: one chorus of angels responds to the other in agreement, and heaven and earth stand in agreement with each other, both acknowledging God's presence.

WHEREVER GOD DWELLS. As noted above, the Kedushah combines two different prophetic visions: that of Isaiah and that of Ezekiel. By placing these biblical verses side by side, the Kedushah

The Sun and the Moon
With its waxing and waning, its fullness and its disappearance, the moon reminds us that life embraces both hope and disappointment, both joy and sadness. Indeed, the Talmud sees the moon as symbolic of the imperfections inherent in the fabric of creation: aspects of life and of ourselves that may be totally unavoidable, but nevertheless tragic in their consequence.

The Talmud remarks on an apparent contradiction in wording in the account of the creation of the sun and moon found in Genesis: the Torah first speaks of God creating the “two great lights” but then states that God fashioned “a great light and a lesser light.” Rabbi Simeon ben Pazi imagines a heavenly drama in which originally the moon is of equal size and power as the sun. God then takes responsibility for the diminishment of the moon, a symbol of the unavoidable imperfections in the universe.

THE MOON: Master of the universe, is it possible that two sovereigns can rule together?

GOD: Then you shall be smaller!

THE MOON: Because I raised a legitimate objection, therefore I should be diminished?!

GOD: Well, you may rise both at night and during the day.

THE MOON: What good is that? During the day, I will just be a torch in the daylight!

GOD: Then, I’ll do this. I shall honor you by commanding Israel to count their months and years according to your cycles.

THE MOON: How about the days of the year, too?

GOD: I cannot do this, since you don’t delineate seasons . . .

Rabbi Simeon adds: Seeing that the moon was still dissatisfied, God commanded Israel to bring a sin offering to atone for God’s having diminished the moon. This is what Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish taught: Why does the verse say “a sin offering for God” (Numbers 28:35)? God says: Bring the sin offering to atone for Me, since I diminished the moon.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

The following paragraph is said only when the entire Amidah is recited silently:

Holy are You and holy is Your name;
holy ones praise You each day.
Barukh atah ADONAI, the Holy God.

Fourth B’rakhah: The Celebration of Rosh Hodesh

For alternative prayers for Rosh Hodesh that focus on the significance of the lunar cycle, continue on page 198.

ROSH HODESH AND THE TEMPLE SERVICE

You formed Your world at the beginning, completing Your work on the seventh day.

You have loved us, desired us, exalted us amongst all the nations, made us holy through the performance of mitzvot, brought us near to serve You, and called us by Your great and holy name.

Lovingly, ADONAI our God, You have bestowed on us Shabbatot for rest and the time of the new moon for atonement.

But because we and our ancestors sinned, our city was laid waste, our sanctuary made desolate, our splendor taken away, the glory removed from the House that gave us life, and so, because of the hand that destroyed Your sanctuary, we are unable to fulfill our obligations in the place You chose, the great and holy House dedicated to Your name.

The following paragraph is said only when the entire Amidah is recited silently:

אתה קדוש וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ,
וְקְדוּשֵׁים בְּכָל־יּוֹם יְהִלְלוּךָ סֵלָה.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ.

For alternative prayers for Rosh Hodesh that focus on the significance of the lunar cycle, continue on page 198.

אתה יצרת עולמך מקדם,
כלית מלאכתך ביום השביעי.
אהבת אותנו ורצית בנו,
ורוממתנו מפלה לשונות,
וקדשתנו במצותיה,
וקרבתנו מלפנו לעבודתך,
ושמך הגדול והקדוש עלינו קראת.
ותתן לנו יהוה אלהינו באהבה,
שפלות למנוחה וראשי חדשים לכפרה.
ולפי שחטאנו לפניך אנחנו ואבותינו [ואמותינו],
חרבה עירנו ושמים בית מקדשנו וגלה יקרנו,
ונטל כבוד מבית חיינו,
ואין אנחנו יכולים לעשות חובותינו בבית בחרתך,
בבית הגדול והקדוש שנקרא שמך עליו,
מפני הַיָּד שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּלַּחַה בְּמִקְדָּשֶׁךָ.

THE TIME OF THE NEW MOON FOR ATONEMENT
וְרָאשֵׁי חֲדָשִׁים לְכַפֵּרָה. As quoted below, the Bible ordains that a “sin offering” (some call it a “purification offering”) be brought on the New Moon. Indeed, according to the one opinion in the Mishnah (Shevuot 1:4; see also the subsequent discussion in the Babylonian Talmud, beginning of chapter 1), the Rosh Hodesh offering brings atonement for sins of which we have no awareness, neither when we performed the act nor subsequently in recalling our past. Thus, the ancient rabbis envisioned that we would start the new month without the blemish of even unconscious sin.

BECAUSE WE AND OUR ANCESTORS SINNED
וְלִפֵּי שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנַחְנוּ וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ]. The prophets blamed the destruction of the First Temple on the religious and moral corruption of Jewish society. In rabbinic theology, the Second Temple was destroyed because of the hatred people had for each other. In a similar vein, the 1st-century historian Josephus reports that murderous factional disputes made Jerusalem ripe for conquest by the Romans.

Waxing and Waning

The image of the sliver of moon—reappearing in the darkness and growing nightly into a full sphere, only to wane again—has been interpreted by some rabbis (for example, Joseph B. Soloveitchik) as a metaphor for the history of the Jewish people. At times, the Jewish people suffers in darkness; we may even fear utter extinction. But just as the moon's light is continually renewed, so too do we draw reassurance that we will again have a future that shines. Similarly, the waning and waxing of the moon may be seen as symbolic of Jewish tradition and Jewish practice. The life of the spirit, communally and individually, similarly shrinks and expands, grows dull and routinized before being reignited and re-inspired. The observance of Rosh Hodesh itself is an example of the way Judaism is periodically renewed and revitalized. In many communities, this day has been reclaimed with great creativity and energy, especially by women. Each month presents an opportunity for us to contemplate the need for renewal and revitalization in our religious lives: as individuals, as communities, and as Jews. In this vein, we might well ask ourselves what it is that we need to reclaim and revitalize at this time.

May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, who restores their descendants to their land, to lead us there in joy and to plant us within our borders, where our ancestors once offered to You their sacrifices: the daily sacrifices in their proper order, as well as the additional ones required on Shabbat and festivals, as prescribed. Lovingly, the additional Shabbat and Rosh Hodesh sacrifices were offered there as You commanded, fulfilling the words spoken in revelation and written down by Moses, your servant, in Your Torah:

On Shabbat: two yearling lambs without blemish, together with two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in as a meal offering and with the proper libation—a burnt offering for every Shabbat, in addition to the daily burnt offering and its libation.

On your New Moon festivals you shall bring near an offering to ADONAI: two young bulls, one ram, and seven yearling lambs, without blemish.

And as it further states regarding the grain-gift and the libation: three-tenths of an *ephah* of choice flour with oil mixed in with each bull; two-tenths of an *ephah* of choice flour with oil mixed in for the ram; and one-tenth of an *ephah* of choice flour with oil mixed in for each lamb—along with the appropriate libation of wine. Also, a goat as atonement, and the two daily offerings, as ordained.

We continue on page 199.

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ], הַמְּשִׁיב פָּנִים לְגְבוּלָם, שֶׁתְּעַלְנֵנוּ בְּשִׂמְחָה
לְאַרְצֵנוּ וְתִטְעֵנוּ בְּגְבוּלָנוּ, שֶׁשָּׂם עָשׂוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ] לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת־קֶרְבָּנוֹתֵיהֶם, תְּמִידִים כְּסֻדְרָם
וּמוֹסָפִים כְּהַלְכָתָם. וְאַתְּמוֹסֵף יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה וְאַתְּ
מוֹסֵף יוֹם רֵאשִׁי הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה עָשׂוּ וְהִקְרִיבוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
בְּאַהֲבָה כְּמִצְוֹת רְצוֹנָךְ כְּפָתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה
עַבְדְּךָ מִפִּי כְּבוֹדְךָ כְּפָאָמוֹר:

וּבְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת, שְׁנֵי כִבְשִׁים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם,
וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן וְנִסְכּוֹ.
עַל־תְּ שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ, עַל־עַל־תְּ הַתְּמִיד וְנִסְכָּהּ.

וּבְרֵאשִׁי חֹדְשֵׁיכֶם תִּקְרִיבוּ עוֹלָה לַיהוָה,
פָּרִים בְּנֵי בָקָר שְׁנָיִם, וְאַיִל אֶחָד, כִּבְשִׁים
בְּנֵי שָׁנָה שְׁבַע, תְּמִימִם.

וּמִנְחָתָם וְנִסְכֵיהֶם כְּמִדְבָּר, שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרֹנִים לְפָר,
וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים לְאַיִל, וְעֶשְׂרוֹן לְכֶבֶשׂ, וַיִּזֵּן כְּנִסְכּוֹ,
וְשַׁעִיר לְכִפָּה, וּשְׁנֵי תְּמִידִים כְּהַלְכָתָם.

We continue on page 199.

וּבְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת
Numbers 28:9–10.

וּבְרֵאשִׁי חֹדְשֵׁיכֶם
FESTIVALS
Numbers 28:11.

At the New Moon:
Rosh Hodesh

We greet the moon that is
not gone
but only hidden,
unreflecting, turned
and introspective, gather-
ing strength to grow
as we greet the first slim
nail paring
of her returning light.
Don't we understand
the strength that wells out
of retreat?

Can we not learn to turn in
to our circle,
to sink into the caves of
our silence,
to drink lingering by those
deep cold wells,
to dive into the darkness of
the heart's storm
until under the crashing
surge of waves
it is still except for our
slow roaring breath?

—MARGE PIERCY

AN ALTERNATE

Fourth B'rakhah: The Celebration of Rosh Hodesh

THE NEW MOON AND PRAYERS FOR RENEWAL

Creator, with the arrival of a new month of Yours,
renew within us Your light and Your truthfulness.
You placed a sign at the edge of heaven,
a splinter of light that then grows into fullness.
Through Your light may we see light;
do for us as it is written by Your servant Micah:

“And it shall be though I sit in darkness,
God's light will shine for me.”

And as the prophet Isaiah said:

“Those who walk in darkness have seen light.”

For You shall raise up a shining light for me;
cause our joy to flourish,
as You lead us by the light of Your face.

Renew the light to its clear brilliance
that I might go from darkness to light.

Once, You told our ancestor: “Do not fear.”

I, too, seek to rest in Your shadow, awe-inspiring Creator.

Renew the moon so that its light may be bright;
may it grow each day and light our way.

As You remembered Sarah in Your wondrous way,
send to her children strength and healing.

May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ances-
tors, who restores their descendants to their land, to renew
our days as of old; lead us in joy back to our land and plant us
within our borders. May violence no longer be heard in our
land, nor destructiveness be found within its borders.

AN ALTERNATE

יוצר בראשית בתשובת הדשך
נא חדש בנו אורך ואמתך.
אות נתת בקצה השמים
שכב אור הולך ומתגדל, עד ישתלם.
אנא יהוה, אשר באורך נראה אור,
עשה לנו ככתוב לעבדך:
והיה גם פי איש בחושך יהוה אור לי.
ונאמר: ההולכים בחושך ראו אור.
פי אור נגה תעלה פי תגדיל לנו שמחה
ונפשנו באור פניך תהלה.

חדש אור ליפה וברה
איצא מחשיכה לאורה
אב נמת לו אל תירא
אתגונן בצלך איום ונורא.
חדש לבנה להאיר בנוגה
תתמלא ותאיר על הכל במלואה
באם שפקדת באורח פליאה
אנא שלח לבניה מזור ורפואה.

יהי רצון מלפניך יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
[ואמותינו], המשיב בנים לגבולם, שתחדש ימינו
בקדם ותעלנו בשמחה לארצנו ותטענו בגבולנו,
ולא ישמע עוד חמס בארצנו, שד ושקר בגבולנו.

the Land of Israel). The second stanza was composed for this siddur by Edward Feld and edited by Admiel Kosman.

DO NOT FEAR תירא אל. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are each told by God not to fear (Genesis 15:1, 26:24, and 46:3). The poet probably has in mind God's assurance to Abraham in a dream that his progeny will be like the stars and that the coming slavery in Egypt will eventually end in freedom.

WONDROUS WAY פליאה. God remembered Sarah who had longed for a child, and in old age she bore Isaac—a miraculous gift (Genesis 21:1).

MAY VIOLENCE NO LONGER BE HEARD IN OUR LAND בארצנו. Isaiah 60:18.

THE NEW MOON AND

PRAYERS FOR RENEWAL.

The sight of the new moon,
with its promise of increas-
ing light, urges us to attend
to our own renewal.

WITH THE ARRIVAL OF A
NEW MONTH OF YOURS

In Hebrew,
the word for month,
hodesh, derives from the
root meaning “new.” The
word t'shuvah, translated
here as “arrival,” also means
“turn” or “return” and is
frequently translated as
“repentance.” Thus, the
phrase captures the various
religious and psychological
aspects of Rosh Hodesh:
a time for renewal and
turning, a time open to
introspection and change.

YOUR LIGHT AND YOUR
TRUTHFULNESS

אורך ואמתך. The liturgy incorporates
parts of several biblical
verses. This phrase is taken
from Psalm 43:3; “Through
Your light . . .” comes from
Psalm 36:10; “though I sit in
darkness . . .” from Micah
7:8; “those who walk in
darkness,” from Isaiah 9:1.

FOR YOU SHALL RAISE UP
A SHINING LIGHT אור נגה
תעלה. Based on Isaiah 9:1.

RENEW חדש. This is the first
stanza of a piyyut for Rosh
Hodesh written by Pinhas
Hakohen (mid-8th century,

All continue here:

Those who observe Shabbat and call it a delight shall rejoice in Your sovereignty. The people who sanctify the seventh day shall all be fulfilled and shall delight in Your abundant goodness. You have loved the seventh day and sanctified it, calling it the most beloved of days, a symbol of the work of creation.

Yism'hu v'malkhut'kha shomrei shabbat v'korei oneg, am m'kadshei sh'vi-i, kulam yisbe'u v'yitangu mi-tuvekha, u-va-sh'vi-i ratzita bo v'kidashto, hemdat yamim oto karata, zeikher l'ma-aseih v'reishit.

When the Amidah is recited aloud, the congregation answers "Amen" after each pair of blessings in the following paragraph.

May it be Your will, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, to find favor in our rest. On this Shabbat, renew us in this new month with goodness and blessing, joy and gladness, deliverance and consolation, sustenance and support, life and peace, pardon of sin, and forgiveness of transgression [during a leap year we add: and atonement for wrongdoing].

For You have chosen the people Israel from among all nations, proclaiming Your holy Shabbat to them and ordaining for them the laws of the New Moon.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who makes Shabbat, the people Israel, and the New Moon festival holy.

Fifth B'rakhah: The Restoration of Zion

ADONAI our God, embrace Your people Israel and their prayer. Restore worship to Your sanctuary. May the prayers of the people Israel be lovingly accepted by You, and may our service always be pleasing.

May our eyes behold Your compassionate return to Zion.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who restores Your Divine Presence to Zion.

All continue here:

ישמחו במלכותך שומרי שבת וקוראי ענג, עם מקדשי שביעי, כלם ישבעו ויתענגו מטובך, והשביעי רצית בו וקדשתו, חמדת ימים אותו קראת, זכר למעשה בראשית.

When the Amidah is recited aloud, the congregation answers "Amen" after each pair of blessings in the following paragraph.

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו], רצה במנוחתנו, וחדש עלינו ביום השבת הזה את החדש הזה, לטובה ולברכה, לששון ולשמחה, לישועה ולנחמה, לפרנסה ולכלכלה, לחיים ולשלום, למחילת חטא ולסליחת עון [ולכפרת פשע].

כי בעמך ישראל בחרת מפל האמות, ושבת קדשך להם הודעת, וחקי ראשי חדשים להם קבעת. ברוך אתה יהוה, מקדש השבת וישראל וראשי חדשים.

רצה, יהוה אלהינו, בעמך ישראל ובתפלתם, והשב את העבודה לדביר ביתך, ותפלתם באהבה תקבל ברצון, ותהי לרצון תמיד עבודת ישראל עמך.

ותחזינה עינינו בשובך לציון ברחמים. ברוך אתה יהוה, המחזיר שכינתו לציון.

GOODNESS AND BLESSING לטובה ולברכה. The liturgy enumerates twelve positive traits, corresponding to the twelve months of the year.

AND ATONEMENT FOR WRONGDOING ולכפרת פשע. To keep the lunar year (354 days) in accord with the solar year (365 days), the Jewish calendar adds a "leap month" seven times every nineteen years. In those leap years, this thirteenth positive trait is added to the usual twelve.

FIFTH B'RAKHAH: THE RESTORATION OF ZION. As the Amidah moves to its conclusion, we pray that the words we have recited are accepted with love, even as they may have been offered imperfectly. Once, we could be assured that our imperfections would be forgiven and we could offer atonement for them. Now, though we cannot capture the awe and grandeur of the Temple, nor the sense of reverence and majesty conveyed by the High Priest entering the holy of holies, we simply pray that our offerings be acceptable because they are the gift of the heart.

The Miracles That Accompany Us

The prayer talks of the “miracles that accompany us each day.” Our lives are made up moments that are quite special, at which times it is easy to express gratitude: moments of great joy, the birth of a child, graduations, weddings, recovery from life-threatening illness. But there is also the miracle of the everyday—which, because it is commonplace, we often fail to recognize: the ability to use our limbs for what we desire, the warmth of the sun, the plants around us that sustain our breathing. When the moon is hidden, we can see the stars in heaven more clearly. When our lives are made up of “nothing special,” we might acknowledge how special our lives are.

But even more importantly: some of our greatest blessings initially present themselves to us concealed within disappointment, uncertainty, loss, or pain; the aspect of blessing within unfolds slowly, over time—and often only in retrospect. We might realize later that the job we didn’t get was not appropriate for us and we were saved from a disastrous misfit; a serious illness may become a turning point in our life when we appreciate what is important for us, or it may be a moment of discovery of how much we are cherished by others. In expressing our gratitude *al kulam* (“for all these blessings”), we approach our lives with humility and faith, recognizing that with the benefit of hindsight, what seems like darkness in our lives may contain with it a blessing only later to be revealed, only later becoming a shining light.

Sixth B’rakhah: Gratitude for Life and Its Blessings

When the Amidah is recited silently, we read the following paragraph. When the Amidah is chanted aloud, the leader reads this paragraph as the congregation reads the next passage.

¶ We thank You, for You are ever our God and the God of our ancestors; You are the bedrock of our lives, the shield that protects us in every generation. We thank You and sing Your praises—for our lives that are in Your hands, for our souls that are under Your care, for Your miracles that accompany us each day, and for Your wonders and Your gifts that are with us each moment—evening, morning, and noon. ► You are the one who is good, whose mercy is never-ending; the one who is compassionate, whose love is unceasing. We have always placed our hope in You.

This paragraph is recited by the congregation when the full Amidah is repeated by the service leader, by custom remaining seated and bowing slightly.

¶ We thank You for the ability to acknowledge You. You are our God and the God of our ancestors, the God of all flesh, our creator, and the creator of all. We offer praise and blessing to Your holy and great name, for granting us life and for sustaining us. May You continue to grant us life and sustenance. Gather our dispersed to Your holy courtyards, that we may fulfill Your mitzvot and serve You wholeheartedly, carrying out Your will. May God, the source of gratitude, be praised.

On Hanukkah we add Al Hanisim on page 430.

For all these blessings may Your name be praised and exalted, our sovereign, always and forever.

May all that lives thank You always, and faithfully praise Your name forever, God of our deliverance and help.

¶ *Barukh atah ADONAI*, Your name is goodness and praise of You is fitting.

When the Amidah is recited silently, we read the following paragraph. When the Amidah is chanted aloud, the leader reads this paragraph as the congregation reads the next passage.

¶ מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ, שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ] לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. צוּר חַיֵּינוּ מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ אַתָּה הוּא לְדוֹר וָדוֹר. נוֹדָה לָךְ וּנְסַפֵּר תְּהִלָּתְךָ, עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדְךָ וְעַל נְשְׁמוֹתֵינוּ הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ, וְעַל נְסִיךְ שְׂבָכְלֵי־יוֹם עִמָּנוּ, וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ שְׂבָכְלֵ־עֵת, עָרֵב וּבִקֵּר וְצָהָרִים. ◀ הַטּוֹב, כִּי לֹא כָלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ, וְהִמְרָחֵם, כִּי לֹא תָמוּ חֲסִדֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם קוּיֵנוּ לָךְ.

This paragraph is recited by the congregation when the full Amidah is repeated by the service leader, by custom remaining seated and bowing slightly.

¶ מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי כָל־בֶּשֶׂר, יוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית. בְּרִכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ, עַל שֶׁהַחַיִּיתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָּנוּ. בֵּן תְּחִינּוּ וְתַקִּימָנוּ, וְתִאֶסְוֶה גְלוּיֵינוּ לְחֻצְרוֹת קְדוֹשׁ, לְשִׁמּוֹר חֻקֶיךָ וְלַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ, וְלַעֲבֹדְךָ בְּלִבָּב שְׁלֵם, עַל שְׂאֵנָחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ. בְּרוּךְ אַל הַהוֹדָאוֹת.

On Hanukkah we add Al Hanisim on page 430.

וְעַל כָּלֶם יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִתְרוֹמַם שְׁמֶךָ מִלְּפָנֵינוּ תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

וְכָל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ סֵלָה,
וְיִהְיֶה לְךָ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּאַמֶּת,
הָאֵל יִשׁוּעֵתָנוּ וְעֲזָרְתָנוּ סֵלָה.
¶ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַטּוֹב שְׁמֶךָ וְלָךְ נֶאֱדָה לְהוֹדוֹת.

THE SIXTH B’RAKHAH. The penultimate b’rakhah of the Amidah has two versions. The first is recited during the silent Amidah, or by the leader when the Amidah is repeated aloud. This version reflects on the miracles of daily life. When the Amidah is recited aloud by the leader, the congregation accompanies the leader with a different version of the blessing, one that remarks on the very ability to give thanks. The central idea it expresses is *modim anahnu lakh . . . al she-anahnu modim lakh*, “we thank You for the ability to thank You.” The prayer may be understood as an expression of appreciation for being part of a religious tradition that values gratitude. More radically, this prayer may be understood as expressing the thought that our prayers may be addressed to God, but God is the Source of All—even the prayers we speak. The very ability to thank is thus a manifestation of the presence of God within us.

WE THANK YOU מוֹדִים. Our gratitude is expressed in universal terms, without reference to Jewish particularity. Here we reflect on the very basis of life itself. God’s wonders are found in the cycles of the planets,

the rhythm of the seasons, the resurgence of life. We may come to realize that gratitude is a self-creating blessing: the more we cultivate gratitude, the more we are aware of all that we receive for which we may be grateful, the more we blossom as human beings. (*Bradley Shavit Artson*)

Peace

שָׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
יִשְׁלָיו אֲהַבֶּינָהּ.
יְהִי שְׁלוֹם בְּחֵילָהּ שְׁלוֹהַּ
בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ.
לְמַעַן אַחֵי וְרַעֵי אֲדַבְּרָהּ
בְּנֵא שְׁלוֹם בָּהּ.
לְמַעַן בֵּית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
אֲבַקְשָׁה טוֹב לָהּ.

Pray for the peace of
Jerusalem.
May those who love her be
tranquil;
may there be peace on
your ramparts,
tranquility in your citadels.
For the sake of my friends
and my kin

I pray for peace.
For the sake of the house
of Adonai our God,
I seek your welfare.

Sha-alu sh'lom yerushalayim
yishlayu ohavayikh.
Y'hi shalom b'heilekh shalvah
b'arm'notayikh.
L'ma-an aḥai v'rei-ai adabrah na
shalom bakh.
L'ma-an beit Adonai eloheinu
avakshah tov lakh.

—PSALM 122:6–9

Seventh B'rakhah: Prayer for Peace

During the silent Amidah, we continue with "Grant Peace," below.
When the Amidah is repeated, the leader recites the Priestly Blessing.

Our God and God of our ancestors, bless us with the threefold blessing of the Torah written by Moses Your servant, recited by Aaron and his descendants, the *kohanim*, the consecrated priests of Your people:

May ADONAI bless and protect you.
So may it be God's will. Ken y'hi ratzon.

May ADONAI's countenance shine upon you
and may ADONAI bestow kindness upon you.
So may it be God's will. Ken y'hi ratzon.

May ADONAI's countenance be lifted toward you
and may ADONAI grant you peace.
So may it be God's will. Ken y'hi ratzon.

Grant peace to the world, goodness and blessing, grace, love, and compassion, for us and for all the people Israel. Bless us, our creator, united as one with the light of Your presence; by that light, ADONAI our God, You have given us a guide to life, the love of kindness, generosity, blessing, compassion, life, and peace. May it please You to bless Your people Israel at every season and at all times with Your gift of peace.

Sim shalom ba-olam tovah u-v'rakahah, hen va-hesed v'rah'amim, aleinu v'al kol yisrael amekha. Bar'khenu avinu kulanu k'eḥad b'or panekha, ki v'or panekha natata lanu, Adonai eloheinu, torat ḥayim v'ahavat hesed, u-tzedakah u-v'rakhah v'rah'amim v'ḥayim v'shalom. V'tov b'einekha l'varekh et am'kha yisrael b'khol eit u-v'khol sha:ah bishlomekhah.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who blesses Your people Israel with peace.

When the Amidah is recited aloud with a minyan, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

During the silent Amidah, we continue with שִׁים שְׁלוֹם below.
When the Amidah is repeated, the leader recites the Birkat Kohanim.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
בְּרַכְנוּ בְּבִרְכַּת הַמְּשַׁלְּשֵׁת
בַּתּוֹרָה הַכְּתוּבָה עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה עֶבְדְּךָ,
הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי אֶהְרֵן וּבְנָיו, בְּהַגִּים, עִם קְדוּשָׁה, כְּאָמור:
יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ.
יְאֵר יְהוָה פְּנֵינוּ אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנֶּךָ.
יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵינוּ אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשֵּׂם לָךְ שְׁלוֹם.

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם טוֹבָה וּבִרְכָה,
חַן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמֶּךָ.
בְּרַכְנוּ אֲבֵינוּ בְּלִבּוֹ כְּאֶחָד בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ,
כִּי בְאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ נִתְּתָ לָנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד,
וְאֶדְקָה וּבִרְכָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם.
וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרְךָ אֶת־עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּכָל־עֵת וּבְכָל־שָׁעָה בְּשְׁלוֹמָהּ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשְׁלוֹם.

When the Amidah is recited aloud with a minyan, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

THE PRIESTLY BLESSING. The Torah refers to God's "hiding the divine face" as a form of punishment, bringing disaster to the individual or to the world (see Deuteronomy 31:17 and 32:20). In later rabbinic and kabbalistic thought, this metaphor came to refer to times when God seems absent, and God's protection withdrawn: when we suffer from oppression or tragedy, when we feel desperately alone and vulnerable, or when we are unable to find meaning in life. Of such times, Martin Buber writes: "The space of history is then full of noise, but empty of the divine breath. For one who believes in the living God . . . it is a difficult time to live."

The Priestly Blessing asks for precisely the opposite: that God's face may shine upon us and be lifted toward us. To feel blessed is to feel accompanied as we walk through life: we experience the world that meets us as welcoming, our

days filled with vitality and meaning. It is then that we sense the presence of God in our lives. We leave the moment of prayer with the hope that such blessing may come to us—and perhaps, for a moment, we may have felt such blessing as we prayed.

GRANT PEACE שִׁים שְׁלוֹם. The final blessing of the Amidah is a prayer for peace. There are, however, two versions of this blessing; this particular version is recited only when the *kohanim* would have traditionally ascended the *bimah* to bless the congregation. The words *sim shalom*, "grant peace," are related directly to the conclusion of Birkat Kohanim, the Priestly Blessing: "May God grant you peace." Additionally, the paragraph speaks of the light of God's face as bestowing blessing, a metaphor taken directly from the Priestly Blessing. The midrash says that God's name is peace (Sifrei Numbers 42), and the Priestly Blessing looks to God to bestow on us the almost-divine ability to extend peace and kindly love to others.

Focusing on Prayer

Our prayers have spiritual meaning even when—or perhaps especially when—our mind wanders.

Once the Baal Shem Tov was asked: “If you realize that you have not focused on the prayer that you have just recited, should you go back and recite the prayer again—this time with proper intention?” He responded: “Is not God present in all things? In some way, God must have been present in the previous moment when your mind wandered; now, were you to go back and recite the prayer again, you would deny the presence of God in that original moment.”

The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer or one of the following:

א

My God, keep my tongue from evil, my lips from deceit.

Help me ignore those who would slander me.

Let me be humble before all.

Open my heart to Your Torah, that I may pursue Your mitzvot.

Frustrate the designs of those who plot evil against me;

nullify their schemes.

Act for the sake of Your name, act for the sake of Your triumph,

act for the sake of Your holiness, act for the sake of Your Torah.

Answer my prayer for the deliverance of Your people.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: Amen.

ב

May it be Your will that whatever our destiny, You might cause to dwell within it love and brotherhood, peace, and friendship.

May our land abound with disciples, and may our days conclude with hope in the future; may our share be in the Garden of Eden. May You afford us good friends and a good nature as we act in this world of Yours. May we awake in the morning and find that the desire of our hearts is to be in awe of You. And may all that occurs to us be considered by You as good.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: Amen.

Yihyu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi l'fanekha, Adonai tzuri v'go-ali.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu
v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil], v'imru amen.

When the Amidah is to be repeated aloud, we turn back to page 193.

Otherwise, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

An individual praying without a minyan may turn to Ein Keiloheinu, page 204.

The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer or one of the following:

א

אֱלֹהֵי, נְצוּר לְשׁוּנֵי מִרְעָה, וּשְׁפָתַי מִדְּבַר מִרְמָה, וְלִמְקַלְלֵי

נַפְשֵׁי תְדוּם, וְנִפְשֵׁי בְּעַפָּר לְכָל תְּהִיָּה. פָּתַח לְבִי בְּתוֹרָתְךָ,

וּבִמְצוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדּוּף נִפְשֵׁי. וְכָל־הַחוֹשְׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה,

מִהָרָה הִפֵּר עֲצָתָם וְקִלְקַל מַחְשַׁבְתָּם. עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ,

עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן יְמִינֶךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן קְדוּשָׁתְךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן

תּוֹרָתְךָ. לְמַעַן יַחְלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ, הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינֶךָ וְעַנְנֵךָ.

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוּה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ

וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵיבֵל], וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁתִּשְׁכַּח בְּפוּרֵינוּ אֶהְבָּה

וְאֶהְוָה וְשְׁלוֹם וְרַעוּת, וְתִרְבֶּה גְבוּלֵנוּ בְּתַלְמִידִים,

וְתִצְלַח סוּפְנוּ אַחֲרֵית וְתִקְוָה, וְתִשִּׁים חֲלָקֵנוּ בְּגוֹן עֵדוּן,

וְתִקְנֵנוּ בְּחֵבֶר טוֹב וְיִצֵּר טוֹב בְּעוֹלָמְךָ, וְנִשְׁפִּים וְנִמְצָא

יְחוּל לְבַבְנוּ לִירְאָה אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ, וְתִבָּא לְפָנֶיךָ קוֹרַת

נַפְשֵׁנוּ לְטוֹבָה.

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוּה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ

וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵיבֵל], וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

When the Amidah is to be repeated aloud, we turn back to page 193.

Otherwise, we continue with Kaddish Shalem on page 203.

An individual praying without a minyan may turn to Ein Keiloheinu, page 204.

MY GOD אֱלֹהֵי. One opinion voiced in the Babylonian Talmud states that every Amidah must be accompanied by a personal prayer (Berakhot 29b). This prayer is offered by the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 17a) as an example; it is attributed to Mar son of Ravina (4th century).

MAY THE WORDS יהִי לְרָצוֹן. Psalm 19:15. Rabbi Yohanan (3rd century, the Land of Israel) recommended that the Amidah conclude with this verse (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Berakhot 4:4).

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL יְהִי רָצוֹן. A prayer recited by Rabbi Eleazar, upon concluding the Amidah (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 16b).

*The Greatness of God
and the Greatness
of the Human Soul*

Just as the Divine suffuses
the entire world, so the
soul suffuses the entire
body.

Just as the Divine sees but
is not seen, so the soul
sees but is not seen.

Just as the Divine sustains
the whole world, so
the soul sustains our
existence.

Just as the Divine is pure,
so the soul is pure.

Just as Divinity dwells in
the innermost sanctu-
ary of the universe, so
the soul dwells in the
innermost sanctuary of
human beings.

Let that which has these
five qualities praise the
one who has these five
qualities.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Kaddish Shalem

Leader:

May God's great name be exalted and hallowed throughout
the created world, as is God's wish. May God's sovereignty
soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in
the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen*.

Congregation and Leader:

May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

Leader:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and
celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored,
extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed,
b'rikh hu, is truly [*on Shabbat Shuvah we add: far*] beyond all
acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of
gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world.

And we say: *Amen*.

May the prayers and pleas of all Israel be accepted by their
creator in heaven. And we say: *Amen*.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant
and lasting peace. And we say: *Amen*.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and
to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth].

And we say: *Amen*.

קדיש שלם

Leader:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דֵּי בְּרָא, בְּרַעֲוִיתָהּ,
וְיִמְלִיף מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיָמֵינוּ וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמֵיָא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיף הוּא,
[*on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: לְעֵלְמָא מְבָרַךְ*]
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא וְנִשְׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחְמַתָּא דְּאִמְרֵין בְּעֵלְמָא,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תִּתְקַבַּל צְלוֹתָהוֹן וּבְרַעֲוִיתָהוֹן דְּכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל קָדָם אַבּוּהוֹן
דֵּי בְּשַׁמַּיָּא וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יְשׁוּבֵי תֵבֵל], וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

KADDISH SHALEM. The Kad-
dish Shalem (literally, “Full
Kaddish”) ends the Musaf
service. It is called the “Full
Kaddish” because it in-
cludes a plea, omitted from
other forms of the Kaddish,
that the prayers we have
offered be acceptable.

Concluding Prayers

Ein Keiloheinu:
A Ladino Version

Ein keiloheinu,
ein kadoneinu,
ein k'malkeinu,
ein k'moshi-einu.
Non como nuestro dio,
non como nuestro señor,
non como nuestro re,
non como nuestro salvador.

Mi kheiloheinu,
mi khadoneinu,
mi kh'malkeinu,
mi kh'moshi-einu.
Ken como nuestro dio,
ken como nuestro señor,
ken como nuestro re,
ken como nuestro salvador.

Nodeh leiloheinu,
nodeh ladoneinu,
nodeh l'malkeinu,
nodeh l'moshi-einu.
Loaremos a nuestro dio,
loaremos a nuestro señor,
loaremos a nuestro re,
loaremos a nuestro salvador.

Barukh eloheinu,
barukh adoneinu,
barukh malkeinu,
barukh moshi-einu.
Bendicho nuestro dio,
bendicho nuestro señor,
bendicho nuestro re,
bendicho nuestro salvador.

Atah hu eloheinu,
atah hu adoneinu,
atah hu malkeinu,
atah hu moshi-einu.
Tu el nuestro dio,
tu el nuestro señor,
tu el nuestro re,
tu el nuestro salvador.

Ein Keiloheinu

None compares to our God. None compares to our master.
None compares to our sovereign. None compares to our deliverer.
Who compares to our God? Who compares to our master?
Who compares to our sovereign? Who compares to our deliverer?
Let us thank our God. Let us thank our master.
Let us thank our sovereign. Let us thank our deliverer.
Blessed is our God. Blessed is our master.
Blessed is our sovereign. Blessed is our deliverer.
You are our God. You are our master.
You are our sovereign. You are our deliverer.
You are the one to whom our ancestors offered fragrant incense.

Ein keiloheinu, ein kadoneinu, ein k'malkeinu, ein k'moshi-einu.
Mi kheiloheinu, mi khadoneinu,
mi kh'malkeinu, mi kh'moshi-einu.
Nodeh leiloheinu, nodeh ladoneinu,
nodeh l'malkeinu, nodeh l'moshi-einu.
Barukh eloheinu, barukh adoneinu,
barukh malkeinu, barukh moshi-einu.

Atah hu eloheinu, atah hu adoneinu,
atah hu malkeinu, atah hu moshi-einu.
Atah hu she-hiktiru avoteinu l'fanekha et k'toret ha-samim.

A Final Teaching

Rabbi Eleazar said in the name of Rabbi Hanina: Students of Torah increase peace in the world, as the prophet Isaiah said: "All your children shall be taught by ADONAI, and your children shall increase peace." Do not read the word as *banayikh*, "your children," but rather as *bonayikh*, "your builders."
May those who love your Torah find great peace; may they not stumble.
May there be peace within your walls, tranquility in your citadels.
For the sake of my brothers and friends, pray for peace in your midst.
For the sake of the house of ADONAI our God, I seek your welfare.
May God grant strength to God's people; may God grant God's people peace.

In some congregations, the service continues with Kaddish D'Rabbanan, page 111.

אין פֿאלהיננו, אין פֿאדונינו,
אין פֿמלפֿנו, אין פֿמושיענו.
מי כֿאלהינו, מי כֿאדונינו,
מי כֿמלפֿנו, מי כֿמושיענו.
נוֹדָה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ, נוֹדָה לֵאדוֹנֵינוּ,
נוֹדָה לְמַלְפָּנוּ, נוֹדָה לְמוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ.
בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּרוּךְ אֲדוֹנֵינוּ,
בְּרוּךְ מַלְפָּנוּ, בְּרוּךְ מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ.
אַתָּה הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אַתָּה הוּא אֲדוֹנֵינוּ,
אַתָּה הוּא מַלְפָּנוּ, אַתָּה הוּא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ.
אַתָּה הוּא שְׁהַקְטִירוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת־קִטְרֵת הַסַּמִּים.

אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר אָמַר רַבִּי חַנִּינָא: תַּלְמִידֵי חֻכְמַיִם
מְרַבִּים שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם, שְׁנַאֲמַר: וְכַל־בְּנֵיךָ לְמוֹדֵי יְהוָה,
וְרַב שְׁלוֹם בְּנֵיךָ. אֵל תִּקְרָא בְּנֵיךָ אֶלָּא בּוֹנֵיךָ.
שְׁלוֹם רַב לְאַהֲבֵי תוֹרָתְךָ, וְאִין לְמוֹ מְכַשׁוֹל.
יְהִי שְׁלוֹם בְּחֵילְךָ, שְׁלוֹה בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיךָ.
◀ לְמַעַן אַחֵי וְרַעֲי, אֲדַבְּרָה נָא שְׁלוֹם בָּךְ.
לְמַעַן בֵּית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֲבַקֶּשׂה טוֹב לָךְ.
יְהוָה עֵז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְהוָה יְבָרֶךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשְׁלוֹם.

In some congregations, the service continues with Kaddish D'Rabbanan, page 111.

ALL YOUR CHILDREN SHALL BE TAUGHT BY ADONAI יהוה למודי יהוה. Isaiah 54:13. The rabbis see the teachers of Torah as "builders" and their disciples as their children.
MAY THOSE WHO LOVE YOUR TORAH FIND GREAT PEACE שלום רב לאהבי תורתך. Psalm 119:165. This verse begins a series of verses, all of which contain a prayer for peace—thus offering for study a fitting conclusion to the service.
MAY THERE BE PEACE WITHIN YOUR WALLS יהי שלום בחילך. Psalm 122:7.
FOR THE SAKE OF MY BROTHERS . . . FOR THE SAKE OF THE HOUSE OF ADONAI יהוה למען בית יהוה. Psalm 122:8–9. These verses seek the peace and welfare of Jerusalem.
MAY GOD GRANT STRENGTH TO GOD'S PEOPLE יהוה עז לעמו יתן. Psalm 29:11.

NONE COMPARES TO OUR GOD אין פֿאלהיננו. This 1st-millennium prayer was originally composed as a mystical meditation: the repetitions served to bring the devotee to an ecstatic visionary state. Because of its simplicity and ease of recall, it became a favorite prayer with which to conclude a service and, in the Sephardic liturgy, it forms part of the conclusion of every morning service. The first three stanzas spell out the acrostic *amen* and the next two begin with the first two words of every blessing: *barukh atah*.

RABBI ELEAZAR SAID אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר. In the ancient synagogue, prayer services concluded with Torah study. This passage is a remnant of that tradition; it is a passage quoted extensively in the Talmud. In reciting it, we express the hope that the teaching and learning we have experienced today will help create a world of peace. It is through the teaching of the values that Torah represents that we ultimately achieve security.

*I Spread Out God's
Names in Front of Me*

I spread out God's names
in front of me
on the floor of my chilly
room.

The name by which I
called him when his
spirit breathed in me.

And the name by which I
called him when I was a
young girl.

The name by which I
called him when I was
given to a man.

And the name when I was
again permitted to all.

The name by which I
called him when my
parents were a roof over
me. And the name when
I had no ceiling.

The name by which I
called him so that I
would fear him. And the
name by which I called
him so that I would not
be afraid.

The name by which I
called him so that he
would remember me.
And the name so that
he would refrain from
remembering.

In the heat of day I will
prostrate myself
on the floor of my chilly
room.

—RIVKA MIRIAM
(translated by
Linda Stern Zisquit)

Aleinu

We rise:

It is for us to praise the ruler of all,
to acclaim the Creator,
who has not made us merely a nation,
nor formed us as all earthly families,
nor given us an ordinary destiny.
† And so we bow, acknowledging the supreme sovereign,
the Holy One, who is praised—
who spreads out the heavens and establishes the earth,
whose glory abides in the highest heavens,
and whose powerful presence resides in the highest heights.
This is our God, none else; ours is the true sovereign,
there is no other.

As it is written in the Torah:
“Know this day and take it to heart,
that ADONAI is God in heaven above and on earth below;
there is no other.”

*Aleinu l'shabei-ah la-adon hakol,
lateit g'dulah l'yotzer b'reishit,
shelo asanu k'goyei ha-aratzot,
v'lo samanu k'mishp'hot ha-adamah,
shelo sam helkeinu kahem,
v'goraleinu k'khol hamonam.
† Va-anahnu korim u-mishta'avim u-modim,
lifnei melekh malkhei ha-m'lakhim, ha-kadosh barukh hu.
Shehu noteh shamayim v'yosed aretz,
u-moshav y'karo ba-shamayim mima-al,
u-sh'khinat uzo b'govhei m'romim,
hu eloheinu ein od.
Emet malkeinu efes zulato,
ka-katuv b'torato:
v'yadata ha-yom vahashevota el l'vavekha, ki Adonai hu ha-elohim
bashamayim mima-al, v'al ha-aretz mitahat, ein od.*

We rise:

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל,
לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית,
שֶׁלֹא עָשָׂנוּ בְּגוֹיֵי הָאָרְצוֹת,
וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ בְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה,
שֶׁלֹא שָׁם חֻלְקָנוּ בָהֶם,
וְגִרְלָנוּ בְּכָל־הַמוֹנָם.
† וְאַנְחֵנוּ בּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים,
לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֵה שָׁמַיִם וְיִסַּד אֶרֶץ,
וּמוֹשֵׁב יְקָרוֹ בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמֶּעַל,
וּשְׁכִינַת עֲזוֹ בְּגִבְהֵי מְרוֹמִים,
הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד.
אַמֶּת מְלַפְּנוּ אָפֶס זוֹלָתוֹ,
בְּפִתּוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ:
וְיִדְעַתָּה הַיּוֹם וְהַשַּׁבָּת אֶל לְבָבְךָ,
כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמֶּעַל
וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת, אֵין עוֹד.

עֲלֵינוּ. Since the
12th or 13th century, the
Aleinu prayer has acquired
a special pride of place in
Ashkenazic liturgy and is
recited at the conclusion
of every service; it does not
play the same role in the
Sephardic liturgy.

The origin of this
popular prayer is a matter
of debate. Some medieval
sources (e.g. Rokeah, early
13th century, Germany)
ascribed it to Joshua. The
liturgical scholar Joseph
Heinemann thought that
it dates back to the time of
the Temple service. Other
scholars have argued that
it originated in 2nd- or
3rd-century mystical circles.
Its first known use in the
formal liturgy is as an intro-
duction to the Malkhuyot
("Sovereignty") section of
the Rosh Hashanah Musaf
service.

Aleinu articulates a pro-
gression of ideas. In the first
paragraph, we are asked to

express our gratitude for the special fate and role of the Jewish people in history.
In the second, we look forward to the day when differences among peoples will
be harmonized and there will be a common recognition that all of humanity is
embraced by God. This vision recognizes that God is not exclusively the God of
Israel, but that God rules over all of us. On that day, when justice, morality, and
common spiritual affinity will reign on earth, God's name will truly be one.

Some have objected to what may sound like exclusivist language in this prayer,
in particular the phrases describing the uniqueness of the people Israel: "who has
not made us merely a nation, nor formed us as all earthly families, nor given us
an ordinary destiny." The Israeli Masorti Movement offers an alternative formula-
tion quoting Micah 4:5: "For the people of every nation shall walk in the name of
their god, but we shall walk in the name of Adonai, our God, forever." Whether
articulated with this wording or the standard text, Aleinu both asserts a pride
in Jewish destiny and challenges us to go out to the world committed to Jewish
spiritual values.

AND SO WE BOW וְאַנְחֵנוּ בּוֹרְעִים. The prayer mentions a variety of forms of bow-
ing. In ancient times, *korim* meant touching the floor with one's knees, and
mishtahavim meant bending at the waist. However, the ancient rabbis minimized
the bowing that takes place in the service, and so today it is customary to simply
bow one's head or slightly bend one's body at this point in the prayer.

KNOW THIS DAY וְיִדְעַתָּה הַיּוֹם. Deuteronomy 4:39.

In the Days to Come

In the days to come,
the Mount of Adonai's
house shall stand firm
above the mountains,
and it shall tower over the
hills.
The peoples shall gaze on
it with joy,
and many nations shall go
and shall say,
"Come, let us go up to the
Mount of Adonai,
to the House of the God
of Jacob;
that God may instruct us in
God's ways, and that we
may walk in God's paths."
For instruction shall come
forth from Zion,
and the word of Adonai
from Jerusalem.
Thus God will judge
among the many peoples,
and arbitrate for the multi-
tude of nations, however
distant.
They shall beat their
swords into plowshares
and their spears into prun-
ing hooks.
Nation shall not lift up
sword against nation,
neither shall they learn
war anymore;
but everyone shall sit
under their grapevine or
fig tree
with no one to disturb
them.
For it was Adonai of Hosts
who has spoken.
For the people of every
nation shall walk in the
name of their god, but
we shall walk in the
name of Adonai, our
God, forever.

—MICAH 4:1-5

And so, ADONAI our God, we await You,
that soon we may behold Your strength revealed in full glory,
sweeping away the abominations of the earth,
obliterating idols,
establishing in the world the sovereignty of the Almighty.
All flesh will call out Your name—
even the wicked will turn toward You.
Then all who live on earth will understand and know
that to You alone every knee must bend,
all allegiance be sworn.
They will bow down and prostrate themselves before You,
ADONAI our God,
treasure Your glorious name,
and accept the obligation of Your sovereignty.
May You soon rule over them forever and ever,
for true dominion is Yours;
and You will rule in glory until the end of time.

► As is written in Your Torah:
"ADONAI will reign forever and ever."
And as the prophet said:
"ADONAI shall be acknowledged sovereign of all the earth.
On that day ADONAI shall be one, and the name of God, one."
V'ne-emar: v'hayah Adonai l'melekh al kol ha-aretz,
bayom hahu yihyeh Adonai ehad, u-sh'mo ehad.
We are seated.

עַל כֵּן נִקְוָה לָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
לְרֵאוֹת מְהֵרָה בְּתַפְאֲרַת עֲזֹךְ,
לְהַעֲבִיר גְּלוּלִים מִן הָאָרֶץ,
וְהַאֲלִילִים כְּרוֹת יַפְרֹתוֹן,
לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׂדֵי,
וְכַל־בְּנֵי בָשָׂר יִקְרְאוּ בְשִׁמְךָ,
לְהַפְנוֹת אֵלֶיךָ כָּל־רִשְׁעֵי אָרֶץ.
יִפְּיֵרוּ וַיִּדְעוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל,
כִּי לָךְ תִּכְרַע כָּל־בָּרָךְ,
תִּשָׁבַע כָּל־לִשׁוֹן.
לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִכְרְעוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ,
וְלִכְבוֹד שִׁמְךָ יִקָּר יִתְבַּנּוּ,
וַיִּקְבְּלוּ כָּלֶם אֶת־עַל מַלְכוּתֶךָ.
וְתִמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם מְהֵרָה לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,
כִּי הַמַּלְכוּת שְׁלֹךְ הִיא,
וּלְעוֹלָמִי עַד תִּמְלֹךְ בְּכָבוֹד.

◀ כַּפְתּוֹב בְּתוֹרַתְךָ: יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.
וְנֹאמַר: וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָּה יְהוָה אֶחָד, וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

We are seated.

ESTABLISHING IN THE
WORLD THE SOVEREIGNTY
OF THE ALMIGHTY לְתַקֵּן
עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׂדֵי. Begin-
ning in the 19th century,
this phrase came to be
seen as similar to Isaiah's
call to be a "light unto the
nations," and it was thus
interpreted as a call to uni-
versal justice. In this vein,
the phrase *l'takken olam*
was understood to mean
"to repair the world"—that
is, to be partners with God
in achieving a time of peace
and righteousness. Even
earlier, Maimonides (12th
century) had argued that
the single most important
characteristic of messianic
times would be an end to
one people dominating
another (Mishneh Torah,
Hilkhot Melakhim 12:2).

ADONAI WILL REIGN FOR-
EVER AND EVER יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. Exodus 15:18.

ON THAT DAY ADONAI
SHALL BE ONE הַיּוֹם הַהוּא
יְהִיָּה יְהוָה אֶחָד. Zechariah
14:9. In reciting the Sh'ma,
we declare that God is
one. Through our prayer,
we hope to make God one
with the world. As this
prayer marks the conclu-
sion of the service, it ends
with a vision of the future.

Kaddish: The Year

Loss steals language; you have nothing to say.

A loving community buttresses you, feeding you, telling you when to stand and sit, thrusting into your slack hand the prayer book containing the chanted words that, until now, only other people knew by heart.

—NESSA RAPOPORT

Yahrzeit: The Years

To my astonishment, my father returns, sometimes daily, with a power that is revelatory. In the immediacy of grief, the idea that he would be “only a thought away” or “always with me” seemed a not-believable comfort. Now, four years later, my sisters and I are amazed by his presence. We use his expressions; we laugh at his voice in our heads, for we can hear exactly what he would say.

—NESSA RAPOPORT

Mourner's Kaddish

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

May God's great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God's wish. May God's sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen*.

Congregation and mourners:

May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

Mourners:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b'rikh hu*, is truly [on Shabbat Shuvah we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: *Amen*.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: *Amen*.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen*.

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'meih raba, b'alma di v'ra, kiruteih, v'yamlikh malkhuteih b'hayekhona u-v'yomeikhona u-v'hayei d'khol beit yisrael, ba-agala u-vizman kariv, v'imru amen.

Congregation and mourners:

Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

Mourners:

Yitbarakh v'yishtabah v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam v'yitnasei v'yit-hadar v'yitaleh v'yit-halal sh'meih d'kudsha, b'rikh hu, l'eila min kol [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: l'eila l'eila mikol] birkhata v'shirata tushb'hatata v'nehamata da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya v'hayim aleinu v'al kol yisrael, v'imru amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil], v'imru amen.

Some congregations recite Anim Z'mirot here; see page 208.

Some congregations conclude with Adon Olam on page 211;

others conclude with other Shabbat songs (see pages 212 and 82–85).

קדיש יתום

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

יתגדל ויתקדש שמה רבא,
בעלמא די ברא, ברעותיה,
וימליך מלכותיה בחייכון ובומיכון
ובחיי דכל בית ישראל,
בעגלא ובזמן קריב,
ואמרו אמן.

Congregation and mourners:

יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם ולעלמי עלמיא.

Mourners:

יתברך וישתבח ויתפאר ויתרומם ויתנשא
ויתהדר ויתעלה ויתהלל שמה דקדשא, בריך הוא,
לעלא מן כל- [לעלא לעלא מכל- [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:
ברכתא ושירתא תשפחתא ונחמתא דאמירן בעלמא,
ואמרו אמן.

יהא שלמא רבא מן שמיא וחיים
עלינו ועל כל ישראל,
ואמרו אמן.

עשה שלום במרומיו הוא יעשה שלום
עלינו ועל כל ישראל [ועל כל יושבי תבל],
ואמרו אמן.

Some congregations recite Anim Z'mirot here; see page 208.

Some congregations conclude with Adon Olam on page 211;

others conclude with other Shabbat songs (see pages 212 and 82–85).

Some congregations recite this song at the conclusion of the service.

A Song of Glory: Anim Z'mirot

I shall chant melodies and weave together verses,
for my soul thirsts for You.

*My soul longs to live in the shadow of Your hand,
that I might learn the secrets of Your mysterious being.*

Even before speaking any words describing Your glory,
already my heart sings of Your love.

*I would, therefore, ever glorify You,
and honor Your name with songs of love.*

Though I have never seen You, I would tell of Your glory:
I imagine You, I describe You, but I know You not.

*In the words of Your prophets and mysteries revealed to the faithful,
You provided images of glorious majesty.*

Your greatness and Your power
were pictured in accord with Your deeds.

*They portrayed You not as You truly are,
but imagined You from what You had created.*

In endless visions and countless metaphors they described You,
but through it all, You are the singular one.

*They represented You as old and as young,
with graying hair and in the prime of youth:*

as an elder on the Day of Judgment, and as a youth in time of war,
as a soldier who was fully armed,

*and with a victory helmet on Your head,
having won battles with Your right hand and holy arm—*

continued

Anim z'mirot v'shirim e-erog, ki eilekha nafshi ta-arog.

Nafshi ḥamdah b'tzel yadekha, lada-at kol raz sodekha.

Midei dabri bikhvodekha, homeh libi el dodekha.

Al ken adabeir b'kha nikhbadot, v'shimkha akhabeid b'shinei y'didot.

Asaprah kh'vodkha v'lo re'itikha, adam'kha akhankha v'lo y'datikha.

B'yad n'vi-ekha b'sod avadekha, dimita hadar k'vod hodekha.

G'dulat'kha u-g'vuratekha, kinu l'tokef pe'ulatekha.

Dimu ot'kha v'lo kh'fi yeshkha, v'yashvukha l'fi ma-asekha.

Himshilukha b'rov ḥezyonot, hin'kha eḥad b'khol dimyonot.

Va-yeḥezu v'kha ziknah u-vaḥarut, u-sar rosh'kha b'seivah v'shaḥarut.

Ziknah b'yom din u-vaḥarut b'yom krav,

k'ish milḥamot yadav lo rav.

Ḥavash kova y'shu-ah b'rosho, hoshi-ah lo y'mino u-zro-a kodsho.

Some congregations recite this song at the conclusion of the service.

שִׁיר הַכְּבוֹד: אַנְעִים זְמִירוֹת

אַנְעִים זְמִירוֹת וְשִׁירִים אֶאְרַג, כִּי אֵלַיךָ נַפְשִׁי תֵעָרַג.

נַפְשִׁי חֲמֵדָה בְּצֵל יָדְךָ, לְדַעַת כְּלָרוֹ סוּדְךָ.

מִדֵּי דַבְרֵי בְּכְבוֹדְךָ, הוֹמָה לְבִי אֶל דּוֹדְךָ.

עַל כֵּן אֲדַבֵּר בְּךָ נִכְבְּדוֹת, וְשִׁמְךָ אֲכַבֵּד בְּשִׁירֵי יְדִידוֹת.

אֲסַפְּרָה כְבוֹדְךָ וְלֹא רְאִיתִיךָ, אֲדַמְּךָ אֲכַנְּךָ וְלֹא יִדְעֶתִיךָ.

בְּיַד נְבִיאֶיךָ בְּסוּד עֲבָדֶיךָ, דְּמִית הַדָּר כְּבוֹד הוֹדְךָ.

גִּדְלֶתְךָ וּגְבוּרֶתְךָ כִּנּוּ לְתַקְּךָ פְּעֻלֶתְךָ.

דַּמּוּ אוֹתְךָ וְלֹא כָפִי יִשָּׂה, וַיִּשְׁוֹף לְפִי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ.

הַמְשִׁילוֹךָ בְּרוֹב הַזְיוֹנוֹת, הִנֵּךְ אֶחָד בְּכָל־דְּמִיוֹנוֹת.

וַיַּחְזוּ בְךָ זְקֵנָה וּבַחֲרוֹת, וְשִׁעַר רֹאשְׁךָ בְּשִׁיבָה וְשַׁחֲרוֹת.

זְקֵנָה בְּיוֹם דִּין וּבַחֲרוֹת בְּיוֹם קָרֵב,

כְּאִישׁ מְלַחְמוֹת יָדִיו לֹא רָב.

חֲבֵשׁ כּוֹבֵעַ יִשׁוּעָה בְּרֹאשׁוֹ,

הוֹשִׁיעָה לוֹ יְמִינוֹ וְזָרוּעַ קִדְשׁוֹ.

continued

by an enumeration of images in verses arranged in an alphabetic acrostic. The concluding verses of the poem are a personal plea that God hear our prayers. Some recite Shir Hakavod on each Shabbat; others include it only on festivals. Some recite it here, others at the conclusion of Shaḥarit, and many others at the beginning of the entire service.

YOUR GLORY בְּכְבוֹדְךָ. As noted above, God's "glory" frequently has a technical meaning in medieval Jewish mystical thought: it is that aspect of God which is accessible to humans. The Bible reports that at Sinai God's "glory" descended on the mountain (Exodus 24:15), and similarly Moses asks to see God's "glory" (Exodus 33:18).

YOUR PROPHETS נְבִיאֶיךָ. The poet will use only metaphors previously offered by prophets and sages—that is, those that were adduced by divine inspiration.

IN ACCORD WITH YOUR DEEDS כִּנּוּ לְתַקְּךָ פְּעֻלֶתְךָ. No human being can have a direct encounter with God's essence (God's "face"), but we can experience God's impact in the world (God's "back").

YOU ARE THE SINGULAR ONE אֶחָד. The word *eḥad* (literally "one") references the Sh'ma. Jewish mystics, while eloquently describing the myriad manifestations of God, insist that God is ultimately "one."

AS OLD AND AS YOUNG זְקֵנָה וּבַחֲרוֹת. In commenting on the first words of the Decalogue, "I am Adonai, your God, who took you out of the land of Egypt," Rashi (1040–1105, northern France), reprising the midrash, writes: "Do not think that because I appear to you in different guises—at Sinai as an elder and at the Sea as a young warrior—there are multiple deities; it is I who took you out."

THE PRIME OF YOUTH וְשַׁחֲרוֹת. As vocalized, the Hebrew means "youthful." However, the word also contains the same letters as the word for "black" (*shahor*), as opposed to gray hair as a sign of age.

A VICTORY HELMET כּוֹבֵעַ יִשׁוּעָה. The image is taken from the language of Isaiah: "God donned righteousness like a coat of mail, with a helmet of victory on God's head" (59:17).

A SONG OF GLORY שִׁיר הַכְּבוֹד. Sometimes called by its first two words, Anim Z'mirot is ascribed to Judah the Pious of Regensburg (d. 1217), one of the most important figures of *Hasidei Ashkenaz*, the 13th-century German pietist movement. The poem asserts that human beings cannot grasp God's mysterious nature, but that prophetic metaphors and rabbinic allusions allow us to imagine God's glory, *kavod*, and to see a "shadow" of the Divine. Many of these images were significant for the spiritual vocabulary of *Hasidei Ashkenaz*. For instance, the light emanating from God's head and God's crown were important images of mystic contemplation.

The first four verses of the poem constitute an introduction. This is followed

Your curls are full of drops of light,
Your locks wet with the dew of the night.
*God will have pride in me, for God delights in me,
and will be for me a crown of glory.*

The image of God's face is pure shining gold,
the forehead inscribed with the divine holy name.
*In love, in honor, to express the height of glory,
this people fashioned God's kingly crown.*

The locks on God's head are
a youth's long black curls.
*May the abode of righteousness, the height of God's glory,
be God's greatest delight.*

God's treasured people shall be held as a garland in God's hand,
a royal wreath of beauty and glory,
*carried on high, adorned with a crown,
honored with what is most precious in Divinity's eyes.*

God's splendor shall be mine and mine shall be God's;
for God is near to me as I cry out.
*God is radiant and ruddy, dressed in red,
having come from Edom, treading the winepress.*

Humble Moses viewed the knot of God's tefillin
as he beheld God's very image.
*God delights in this humble people and will raise them up in glory;
God shall dwell amidst their praises, glorified through them.*

continued

Tal'lei orot rosho nimla, k'vutzotav r'sisei lailah.
Yitpa-eir bi ki hafetz bi, v'hu yihyeh li la-ateret tz'vi.
Ketem tahor paz d'mut rosho, v'hak al metzah k'vod shem kodsho.
L'hen u-l'khavod tz'vi tifarah, umato lo itrah atarah.
Mah'fot rosho k'vimei v'hurot, k'vutzotav taltalim shehorot.
N'vei ha-tzedek tz'vi tifarto, ya-aleh na al rosh simhato.
S'gulato t'hi v'yado ateret, u-tz'nif m'lukah tz'vi tiferet.
Amusim n'sa-am ateret indam, mei-asher yakru v'ainav kibdam.
Pe'eiro alai u-fe'eiri alav, v'karov eilai b'kori eilav.
Tzah v'adom lilvusho adom, purah v'dorkho b'vo-o mei-edom.
Keshet t'filin herah le-anav, t'munat Adonai l'neged einav.
Rotzeh v'amo anavim y'fa-eir, yoshev t'hilot bam l'hitpa-eir.

טללי אורות ראשו נמלא, קוצותיו רסיסי לילה.
יתפאר בי כי חפץ בי, והוא יהיה לי לעטרת צבי.
פתם טהור פז דמות ראשו,
וחק על מצח כבוד שם קדשו.
לחן ולכבוד צבי תפארה, אמתו לו עטרה עטרה.
מחלפות ראשו כבימי בחרות,
קוצותיו תלתלים שחורות.
נוה הצדק צבי תפארתו, יעלה נא על ראש שמחתו.
סגלתו תהי בידו עטרת, וצניף מלוכה צבי תפארת.
עמוסים נשאם עטרת ענדם, מאשר יקרו בעיניו כבדם.
פארו עלי ופארי עליו, וקרוב אלי בקראי אליו.
צח ואדום ללבשו אדום, פורה בדרךכו בבואו מאדום.
קשר תפלין הראה לענו, תמונת יהוה לנגד עיניו.
רוצה בעמו ענוים יפאר, יושב תהלות בם להתפאר.

continued

WITH LONG BLACK CURLS תלתלים שחורות. This is the way the male lover is depicted in the Song of Songs (5:11).

THE ABODE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS נוה הצדק. In this section the poet moves to ideas of redemption, and emphasizes Israel's loyalty to God as a manifestation of God's glory. The midrash declares that in the end of days, the tribe of Levi will no longer bless Israel, but rather God alone will, as it is written: "Adonai, the abode of righteousness, will bless you..." (Midrash Tanhuma, Lekh L'kha 5, quoting Jeremiah 31:22).

GOD'S SPLENDOR פארו. T'fillin are called by the rabbis *pe'eir*, "splendor." Thus "God's splendor is on me" can be read as: "I am adorned with God's t'fillin." According to the rabbinic imagination, God too wears t'fillin—which, in turn, glorify Israel. The verse inscribed inside God's t'fillin is: "Is there a single nation like you in the world, O Israel?" (2 Samuel 7:23). In this view, when Moses saw God's back (but not God's face), he saw the t'fillin knot on the back of God's head—that is, God's splendor (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 6a).

DRESSED IN RED ללבשו אדום. The poet draws on the imagery of Isaiah: "Who is this coming from Edom? . . . It is I who speak of righteousness, surely triumphant. Why is Your clothing so red? Your garments like someone who treads grapes? I trod out a vintage alone . . . there was no one with Me. I trod them down in My anger . . . their life-force bespattered My garments, and all My clothing was stained" (63:1–3). Isaiah's imagery is a play on the name "Edom," derived from the Hebrew word for "red." In Jewish tradition, Edom became the name for all those empires that would oppress Israel. Thus, the Talmud refers to Rome as Edom, and refugees from Germany in the 1930s reported that they were sustained by preachers who referred to the downfall of Edom.

TREADING THE WINEPRESS פורה בדרךכו. Meaning to stomp on the Edomites, the oppressors of the people Israel.

HUMBLE MOSES לענו. Moses is said to be the most humble of all human beings (Numbers 12:3).

DROPS OF LIGHT טללי אורות. Here the poet changes imagery and begins talking of God's head and God's crown.

CROWN OF GLORY לעטרת צבי. The phrase refers to a deer's antlers (see Isaiah 28:5). The deer raising its antlers is a graceful demonstration of strength and readiness. In this and in two verses below (*tifarah*, "the height of glory"), the poet articulates a mutuality: God crowns Israel with glory and Israel crowns God with glory.

FOREHEAD INSCRIBED וחק על מצח. The High Priest wore a gold band on his forehead on which the words "Holy unto Adonai" were engraved. The ancient rabbis imagined God inscribed with a corresponding insignia.

As you called the world into being, You uttered truth from the first;
in each generation You seek the people who seek You.

*Place my many songs before You
and let my prayers reach You.*

May my songs be a crown on Your head,
and accept my prayers as a savory offering.

*May the song of one without merit
be to You like those sung over the sacrifices You received.*

Take account of my praise, Sustainer,
Creator, Life-giver, Supremely Righteous One.

*Nod agreement to my blessings;
receive them as choice perfume upon Your head.*

May my words please You,
for my soul thirsts for You.

Yours, ADONAI, is the greatness, the strength and the glory,
the triumph and the splendor—for everything in heaven and
on earth is Yours.

Yours, ADONAI, is the sovereignty and the majesty above all.

► Who can tell of ADONAI's power?
Who can proclaim all of God's praises?

Rosh d'varkha emet korei mei-rosh,
dor vador am doresh'kha d'rosh.

Sheet hamon shirai na alekha, v'rinati tikrav eilekha.

T'hilati t'hi l'rosh'kha ateret, u-t'filati tikon k'toret.

Tikar shirat rash b'einekha, ka-shir yushar al korbanekha.

Birkhati ta-aleh l'rosh mashbir, m'holeil u-molid tzadik kabir.

**U-v'virkhati t'na-ana li rosh, v'otah kah l'kha
ki-v'samim rosh.**

Ye-erav na sihi alekha, ki nafshi ta-arog eilekha.

*Read quietly: L'kha Adonai ha-g'dulah v'ha-g'vurah v'ha-tiferet
v'ha-netzah v'ha-hod, ki khol ba-shamayim uva-aretz,
l'kha Adonai ha-mamlakhah v'ha-mitnasei l'khol l'rosh.*

► *All together: Mi y'maleil g'vurot Adonai, yashmi-a kol t'hilato.*

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 207.

ראש דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת קוֹרָא מְרֵאשׁ,
דוֹר וָדוֹר עִם דּוֹרְשֶׁךָ דְּרוֹשׁ.

שִׁית הַמּוֹן שִׁירֵי נָא עֲלֶיךָ, וְרִנָּתִי תִקְרַב אֵלֶיךָ.
תְּהַלֵּתִי תְהִי לְרֵאשֶׁךָ עֲטוּרָת, וּתְפִלָּתִי תִכּוֹן קְטוּרָת.
תִּיקַר שִׁירְתִּי רֵשׁ בְּעֵינֶיךָ, בְּשִׁיר יוֹשָׁר עַל קִרְבְּנֶיךָ.
בְּרִכְתִּי תַעֲלֶה לְרֵאשׁ מְשֻׁבֵּר, מְחוֹלֵל וּמוֹלִיד צְדִיק בְּבִיר.
וּבְבְרִכְתִּי תִנְעֲנַע לִי רֵאשׁ, וְאוֹתָהּ קַח לְךָ בְּבִשְׂמִים רֵאשׁ.
יַעֲרַב נָא שִׁיחֵי עֲלֶיךָ, כִּי נִפְשֵׁי תַעֲרֹג אֵלֶיךָ.

לְךָ יְהוָה הַגְּדֹלָה וְהַגְּבוּרָה וְהַתְּפָאֶרֶת וְהַנִּצְחָ וְהַהוֹד,
כִּי כָל בְּשָׂמִים וּבְאַרְצֵי, לְךָ יְהוָה הַמְּמַלְכָה,
וְהַמְתַּנְשֵׂא לְכָל לְרֵאשׁ.
◀ מִי יִמְלֵל גְּבוּרוֹת יְהוָה, יִשְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתוֹ.

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 207.

YOU UTTERED TRUTH FROM THE FIRST ראש דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת. The poet is quoting Psalm 119:160, sometimes translated as: "The essence of Your teaching is truth." (See above, page 117, at the psalm for Shavuot.) The poet may mean that God's promise to redeem Israel holds true in every generation. Also, the last letters of the first three words of Genesis (בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים) are *alef, mem, and tav*, which spell the word *emet* (*emet*), "truth."

Since this verse repeats the letter *reish* and seems to introduce a thought not otherwise developed in the poem, there are some scholars who think that it is a later interpolation.

A SAVORY OFFERING תִּכּוֹן קְטוּרָת. Psalm 141:2: "Take my prayer as an incense offering . . ."

NOD AGREEMENT ראש דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת. A reference to an anthropomorphic story from the Babylonian Talmud, in which God responds to a sage's blessing with a nod of God's head (Berakhot 7a). The same word, *rosh*, is used to indicate the "choice perfume" that was used for anointing in the sanctuary.

MY SOUL THIRSTS תַּעֲרֹג. The poet draws on the language of Psalm 42:2, concluding the poem with the same image of yearning with which it began.

YOURS, ADONAI, IS THE GREATNESS לְךָ יְהוָה הַגְּדֹלָה. 1 Chronicles 29:11. This verse inspired the mystics who developed the system of the *s'firot*, aspects of God that human beings perceive. Many of the names of the *s'firot* are drawn from this verse, including *G'vurah* (triumph), *Tiferet* (glory), *Netzah* (eternity), and *Hod* (splendor). Similarly, to evoke the variety of the aspects of God, this verse is chanted when the Torah scroll is removed from the ark and carried in a procession around the sanctuary.

WHO CAN TELL מִי יִמְלֵל. Psalm 106:2.

The service concludes with a song. Two choices are given here, but other songs may be selected, such as those on pages 82–85.

א

ADON OLAM

Before creation shaped the world,
eternally God reigned alone;
but only with creation done
could God as Sovereign be known.
When all is ended, God alone
will reign in wondrous majesty.
God was, God is, always will be
glorious in eternity.
God is unique and without peer,
with none at all to be compared.
Without beginning, endlessly,
God's vast dominion is not shared.
But still—my God, my only hope,
my one true refuge in distress,
My shelter sure, my cup of life,
with goodness real and limitless.
I place my spirit in God's care;
my body too can feel God near.
When I sleep, as when I wake,
God is with me, I have no fear.

Adon olam asher malakh	b'terem kol y'tzir nivra.
L'et na-asah v'heftzo kol	azai melekh sh'mo nikra.
V'aharei ki-kh'lot ha-kol	l'vado yimlokh nora.
V'hu hayah v'hu hoveh	v'hu yihyeh b'tifarah.
V'hu ehad v'ein sheni	l'hamshil lo l'haḥbirah.
B'li reishit b'li takhlit	v'lo ha-oz v'ha-misrah.
V'hu eli v'hai go-ali	v'tzur hevli b'et tzarah.
V'hu nisi u-manos li	m'nat kosi b'yom ekra.
B'yado afkid ruḥi	b'eit ishan v'a-irah.
V'im ruḥi g'viyati	Adonai li v'lo ira.

The service concludes with a song. Two choices are given here, but other songs may be selected, such as those on pages 82–85.

א

בְּטֶרֶם כָּל־יִצִיר נִבְרָא.	אָדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ,
אֲזֵי מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא.	לְעֵת נַעֲשֶׂה בְּחִפְצוֹ כֹּל,
לְבַדּוֹ יִמְלֹךְ נוֹרָא.	וְאַחֲרֵי כְּבִלּוֹת הַכֹּל,
וְהוּא יְהִיָּה בְּתַפְאָרָה.	וְהוּא הָיָה וְהוּא הֵנָּה,
לְהַמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחְבִּירָה.	וְהוּא אֶחָד וְאֵין שֵׁנִי,
וְלוֹ הָעֵז וְהַמְשָׁרָה.	בְּלִי רֵאשִׁית בְּלִי תַכְלִית,
וְצוּר חֲבָלִי בְּעֵת צָרָה.	וְהוּא אֵלֵי וְחֵי גֹאֲלִי,
מִנְתַּת כּוֹסֵי בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא.	וְהוּא נְסִי וּמְנוֹס לִי,
בְּעֵת אִישָׁן וְאַעִירָה.	בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי,
יְהוּה לִי וְלֹא אִירָא.	וְעַם רוּחֵי גְוִיָּתִי,

ADON OLAM אָדוֹן עוֹלָם. It is unclear who authored this thousand-year-old poem, but it appears in the beginning of the morning service, at the conclusion of the Musaf (additional) service, and also at the end of evening services, in both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic liturgies. (The latter version, however, contains several more verses than are found in the former.) The poem is composed of two parts. The first half of the poem is a series of philosophic or credal statements about God. But as it moves toward its conclusion, the poem changes in mood and becomes a personal statement of faith and even of intimacy with God. This idea is expressed in the penultimate line with the words *b'yado afkid ruhi*, "I place my spirit in God's care."

FORGET NOT SHABBAT

Forget not Shabbat;
inhale it like sweet-smelling incense.

*The dove found rest on Shabbat,
as can anyone who is tired.*

This day is honored by those faithful to the covenant,
a day of which parents and children are carefully observant.
It was engraved as law on the two tablets of stone
by the great, mighty, and powerful Holy One.

The dove . . .

As they entered the covenant, Israel stood together as one.
“We will do and we will obey,” they then said as one.

“God is one,” they answered clearly;
blessed is God who gives strength to the weary.

The dove . . .

In holiness, on the Mount of Myrrh, God did say:
“Remember and keep the seventh day.”

So gather together, study its precepts at length:
gird up your loins and apply all your strength.

The dove . . .

The people who like lost sheep wander
shall God’s covenant and their own promise remember.
May no evil circumstance obstruct their way,
as You swore upon the retreating waters in Noah’s day.

The dove . . .

Yom shabbaton ein lishko-ah,
zikhro k’rei-ah ha-niḥo-ah,
Yonah matzah vo mano-ah,
v’sham yanuḥu y’gi-ei kho-ah.

Ha-yom nikhbad livnei emunim,
z’hirim l’shomro avot uvanim,
ḥakuk bishnei luḥot avanim,
mei-rov onim v’amitz ko-ah.
Yonah matzah . . .

U-va-u khulam bivrit yaḥad,
na-aseh v’nishma amru k’eḥad,
u-faṭḥu v’anu Adonai eḥad,

barukh ha-noten laya-eif ko-ah.
Yonah matzah . . .

Dibber b’kodsho b’har hamor,
Yom hash’vi-i zakhor v’shamor,
V’khol pikudav yaḥad ligmor,
Ḥazek motnayim v’ametz ko-ah.
Yonah matzah . . .

Ha-am asher na katzon ta-ah,
yizkor l’fokdo b’rit u-shvu-ah,
l’val ya-avor bam mikreh ra-ah,
Ka-asher nishbata al mei no-ah
Yonah matzah . . .

יום שַׁבָּתוֹן אֵין לְשָׁכּוֹחַ,
זָכְרוּ כְּרִיחַ הַנִּיחּוֹחַ,
יוֹנָה מְצָאָה בּוֹ מְנוּחַ,
וְשֵׁם יְנוּחוֹ יִגְיַעֵי כָּח.

הַיּוֹם נִכְבָּד לְבְנֵי אַמּוּנִים,
זְהִירִים לְשִׁמְרוֹ אַבוֹת וּבְנִים,
חֻקוֹק בְּשֵׁנֵי לְחוֹת אַבְנִים,
מֵרֵב אוֹנִים וְאַמִּיץ כֹּחַ.
יוֹנָה מְצָאָה בּוֹ מְנוּחַ,
וְשֵׁם יְנוּחוֹ יִגְיַעֵי כָּח.

וּבָאוּ כָּלֶם בְּבְרִית יְחֵד,
נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע אָמְרוּ כְּאַחַד,
וּפְתָחוּ וְעָנּוּ יְהוָה אַחַד,
כְּרוּף הַנִּתֵּן לִיעֶף כֹּחַ.

יוֹנָה מְצָאָה בּוֹ מְנוּחַ,
וְשֵׁם יְנוּחוֹ יִגְיַעֵי כָּח.

דִּבֶּר בְּקִדְשׁוֹ בְּהַר הַמּוֹר,
יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי זָכוֹר וְשִׁמּוֹר,
וְכָל־פְּקֻדָּיו יְחֵד לְגִמּוֹר,
חֻזֵק מְתַנִּים וְאַמִּץ כֹּחַ.
יוֹנָה מְצָאָה בּוֹ מְנוּחַ,
וְשֵׁם יְנוּחוֹ יִגְיַעֵי כָּח.

הָעַם אֲשֶׁר נָע בְּצֹאן תַּעֲהָ,
זִכּוֹר לְפָקְדוֹ בְּרִית וּשְׁבוּעָה,
לְבַל יַעֲבֹרְבֶם מִקְרָה רַעָה,
כְּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ עַל מֵי נַחַ.
יוֹנָה מְצָאָה בּוֹ מְנוּחַ,
וְשֵׁם יְנוּחוֹ יִגְיַעֵי כָּח.

FORGET NOT SHABBAT יוֹם שַׁבָּתוֹן. This song focuses on Shabbat as a covenant between God and Israel. The chorus references the dove that was sent out by Noah after the flood. Back and forth it flew, until finally it returned to the ark with an olive branch, on Shabbat. Having performed its task, it was then able to rest. When Noah left the ark, God made a covenant with him and his family that there would never again be a flood. Thus, the dove became a sign for the first covenant: God would not destroy the earth. The poet connects this covenant with the one later made with Israel at Mount Sinai, thus pointing to both Israel’s attachment to the covenant and to the universal significance of the observance of Shabbat. In this way, the poet asserts the special place that the people of Israel hold in the scheme of creation and redemption.

The poem was written by Yehudah Halevi (Spain, 1075?–1141). His name is spelled in the acrostic of the initial letters of each stanza.

GOD IS ONE יְהוָה אֶחָד. Referencing the Sh’ma, where all of Israel announces, “God is one.” The poet has the people Israel reciting the Sh’ma in response to the revelation at Sinai.

MOUNT OF MYRRH. This is a pun on the name Mount Moriah, identified by the rabbis with the site of the Temple in Jerusalem (Genesis Rabbah 55:7).

APPLY ALL YOUR STRENGTH כָּח וְאַמִּץ כֹּחַ. These words, *ameitz ko-ah*, are a pun on a classic reference to God as being Almighty, *amitz ko-ah* (Isaiah 40:26). Most of the poem has emphasized a covenantal relation with God; this line hints at a deep connection between human achievement and divine attributes.

UPON THE . . . WATERS IN NOAH’S DAY עַל מֵי נַחַ. Reaching the end of the poem, Halevi completes his identification of the fate of the people Israel with the fate of humanity, as noted above. When the flood waters had receded, God promised Noah that never again would there be such devastation. Halevi understands that equally as a promise to the people Israel, that they will not be destroyed.

Hallel is recited while standing. The leader recites the following b'rakhah, which is then repeated by the congregation:

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has provided us with a path to holiness through the observance of mitzvot and instructed us to recite the psalms of joyful praise, the Hallel.

Barukh atah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu likro et ha-hallel.

HALLELUYAH—joyfully praise God!

Celebrate, O faithful servants of ADONAI; celebrate ADONAI's name.

May the name of ADONAI be blessed, now and forever.

From the east, where the sun rises, to where the sun sets, may the name of ADONAI be acclaimed.

High above every nation is ADONAI, beyond the heavens is God's glory.

Who is like ADONAI our God?—enthroned on high,

stooping down to look upon earth and sky,

▶ raising the poor from the dust,

m'kimi mei-afar dal

the impoverished from the dung heap,

seating them with nobles, the nobility of God's people,

installing the barren woman of the house as a joyful mother of children.

Halleluyah—joyfully praise God!

Psalm 113

WHEN THE PEOPLE Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a foreign nation, Judah became God's holy place, the people Israel became God's dominion.

Seeing them, the sea took flight, the Jordan flowed backward; mountains pranced like rams, hills like new-born lambs.

▶ O sea, why run away? Jordan, why flow backward?

Mountains, why prance like rams? Hills, why dance like lambs?

Earth, shake before your Master's presence, tremble before the God of Jacob, who turns mountain peaks to pools, flint to fountains.

B'tzeit yisrael mi-mitzrayim, beit yaakov mei-am lo-eiz. Haitah yehudah l'kodsho, yisrael mamsh'lotav. Hayam ra-ah va-yanos, ha-yarden yisov l'ahor. He-harim rakdu kh'eilim, g'va-ot kivnei tzon.

▶ Mah l'kha hayam ki tanus, ha-yarden tisov l'ahor. He-harim tirk'du kh'eilim, g'va-ot kivnei tzon.

Mi-lifnei adon huli aretz, mi-lifnei elo-ah yaakov, hahof-khi ha-tzur agam mayim, h'alamish l'maino mayim.

Psalm 114

Hallel is recited while standing. The leader recites the following b'rakhah, which is then repeated by the congregation:

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו לקרא את ההלל.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

הָלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה, הָלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה.

יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

מִמְזֶרַח שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד מְבוֹאוֹ, מִהַלָּל שֵׁם יְהוָה.

רָם עַל כָּל־גּוֹיִם יְהוָה, עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ.

מִי בִיהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הַמְגַבִּיהִי לְשִׁבְתָּ.

הַמְשַׁפִּילִי לְרְאוֹת, בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

◀ *מְקִימֵי מַעַפְרֵי דָל, מְאַשְׁפֵּת יְרִים אֲבִיוֹן.*

לְהוֹשִׁיבֵי עַם נְדִיבִים, עַם נְדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ.

מוֹשִׁיבֵי עֵקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת, אִם הַבְּנִים שְׂמִיחָה. הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קיג

בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לַעֲזוֹ.

הִיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקֹדֶשׁוֹ, יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְשָׁלוֹתָיו.

הֵיִם רָאָה וַיִּנָּס, הִירְדֵן יִסֹּב לְאַחוֹר.

הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים, גְּבַעוֹת כְּבָנֵי צֹאן.

◀ *מָה לָךְ הֵיִם כִּי תִנּוּס, הִירְדֵן תִּסֹּב לְאַחוֹר.*

הַהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים, גְּבַעוֹת כְּבָנֵי צֹאן.

מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן חוֹלֵי אֶרֶץ, מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.

הַהִפְכֵי הַצּוֹר אֲגַם מַיִם, חֲלָמִישׁ לְמַעַיְנו מַיִם.

תהלים קיד

PSALM 113 praises God as caring for the downtrodden. The midrash takes it as a psalm recited in Egypt on the night of the plague of the killing of the firstborn. It was, said the ancient rabbis, the first instance since creation in which anyone had praised God. Who did so? The long-enslaved Israelites praised God when they ceased being slaves to Pharaoh and became servants of God. (*Reuven Hammer, based on Midrash Psalms*)

CELEBRATE הַלְלוּ. The Hebrew word implies something akin to the praise offered an honoree or host at a festivity.

PSALM 114. Here, all of creation participates in the exodus from Egypt. The miraculous events attached to the exodus and the march in the desert are seen as cosmically reflecting God's relation to the people Israel.

A FOREIGN NATION לַעֲזוֹ. Literally, "a people speaking a foreign tongue."

The following paragraph is omitted on Rosh Hodesh and the last six days of Pesah.

NOT TO US ADONAI, not to us, but to Your own name give glory, that You may be known as faithful and kind. Why should nations say, “Where is their God?” You are in heaven, doing whatever You will. Their idols are made of silver and gold—the work of human hands—with mouths that cannot speak, eyes that cannot see, ears that cannot hear, a nose that cannot smell, hands that cannot touch, feet that cannot walk, throats that utter no sound.

Their creators shall suffer that fate—all who have faith in them. ▶ People of Israel, trust in ADONAI, Israel’s protector and shield; house of Aaron, trust in ADONAI, Aaron’s protector and shield; all who revere ADONAI, trust in ADONAI, your protector and shield.

Atzabehem kesef v’zahav, ma-aseih y’dei adam.
Peh lahem v’lo y’dabeiru, einayim lahem v’lo yiru.
Oznayim lahem v’lo yishma-u, af lahem v’lo y’rihun.
Y’deihem v’lo y’mishun, ragleihem v’lo y’haleikhu, lo yehgu bigronam.
K’mohem yihyu oseihem, kol asher botei-ah bahem.
▶ Yisrael b’tah badonai, ezram u-maginam hu.
Beit aharon bit-ihu vadonai, ezram u-maginam hu.
Yirei Adonai bit-ihu vadonai, ezram u-maginam hu.

ADONAI, REMEMBERING US, will bless: will bless the house of Israel, will bless the house of Aaron, will bless those who revere ADONAI, the lowly and the great. ADONAI will add to your blessings—yours and your children. For you are blessed by ADONAI, who formed heaven and earth: ▶ the heavens are God’s, the earth is given to human beings. The dead do not celebrate God, nor any who go down to the grave, but we shall bless God, now and always.

Halleluyah—joyfully praise ADONAI!
Adonai zekharanu y’varekh,
y’varekh et beit yisrael, y’varekh et beit aharon.
Y’varekh yirei Adonai, ha-k’tanim im ha-g’dolim.
Yosef Adonai aleikhem, aleikhem v’al b’neikhem.
B’rukhim atem ladonai, oseh shamayim va-aretz.
▶ Ha-shamayim shamayim ladonai, v’ha-aretz natan livnei adam.
Lo ha-meitim y’hal’lu yah v’lo kol yordei dumah.
Va-anahnu n’varekh yah mei-atah v’ad olam. Halleluyah.

Psalm 115

The following paragraph is omitted on Rosh Hodesh and the last six days of Pesah.

לֹא לָנוּ יְהוָה, לֹא לָנוּ, כִּי לְשִׁמְךָ יְתֵן כְּבוֹד,
עַל חֲסִדֶיךָ עַל אֲמֹתֶיךָ.
לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם, אֵיךָ נָא אֱלֹהֵיהֶם.
וְאֵלֵהֵינוּ בְּשָׁמַיִם, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר הִפְיָךְ עָשָׂה.
עֲצִבְיָהֶם כְּסֹף וְזָהָב, מִעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם.
כָּהֵן לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ, עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ.
אָזְנוֹתֵיהֶם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ, אֵף לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְחִיחוּ.
יְדֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִמְשִׁיחוּ, רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִהְיוּ בְּרֹגְלֵיהֶם.
כְּמוֹתֵיהֶם יִהְיוּ עֲשִׂיהֶם, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר בְּטַח בָּהֶם.
▶ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בֵּיהוָה, עֲזָרָם וּמַגְנָם הוּא,
בֵּית אֶהְרֹן בְּטַחוּ בֵּיהוָה, עֲזָרָם וּמַגְנָם הוּא,
יִרְאִי יְהוָה בְּטַחוּ בֵּיהוָה, עֲזָרָם וּמַגְנָם הוּא.

יְהוָה זָכְרָנוּ יְבָרֵךְ,
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית אֶהְרֹן.
יְבָרֵךְ יִרְאֵי יְהוָה, הַקְטָנִים עִם הַגְּדֹלִים.
יִסַּף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם, עֲלֵיכֶם וְעַל בְּנֵיכֶם.
כְּרוּכִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה, עָשָׂה שָׁמַיִם וְאָרֶץ,
▶ הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם לַיהוָה, וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לְבָנֵי אָדָם.
לֹא הִמְתִּיתִם יְהַלְלוּ יָהּ וְלֹא כָּל־יְרֵדֵי דוֹמָה,
וְאַנְחֵנוּ נִבְרָךְ יָהּ מִעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קטו

HATZI HALLEL. On Rosh Hodesh and the last six days of Pesah, a shorter version of Hallel, called Hatzi Hallel or “Partial Hallel,” is recited. Originally Hallel was recited only on the three festivals (Pesah, Shavuot, and Sukkot) and Hanukkah (which was patterned after Sukkot). Hallel was not recited on the last six days of Pesah, because there were no unique Temple ceremonies on those days, as there were on each of the days of Sukkot. The Partial Hallel is a creation of the Jews of Babylonia, who expanded the liturgy in this way on festive days when Hallel was not recited in the Temple. In order to signify the difference between these days and the others, the first half of Psalms 115 and 116 was omitted (Babylonian Talmud, Ta-anit 28b). Later, midrashic reasons were given for this practice—for example, noting that because the miracle of the exodus was achieved through violence (with the drowning of the Egyptians in the sea), our joy in this moment is diminished and we therefore do not recite the full Hallel. (Reuven Hammer, adapted)

PSALM 115. Beginning with

Psalm 115, Hallel introduces a plea for God’s continuing role in our lives. This psalm has two distinct stanzas, which in the recitation in the synagogue become almost separate poems. The first is an extended argument on the uselessness of idols, ending with a call to both priests and laypeople to trust in God. The second offers assurance of God’s continued blessing of the people. The psalm concludes with the affirmation that God will indeed bless all who are alive. God’s deliverance during the exodus from Egypt becomes a model for God’s deliverance in any time of trouble.

THOSE WHO REVERE ADONAI יִרְאֵי יְהוָה. Commentators have offered two ways of understanding this phrase. It may refer to the collectivity of the assemblage: first the priests are addressed and then the laypeople; and finally, with this phrase, the group as a whole. Some see the term as referring to those who were not Israelites but were “God-fearing” and who joined in the celebration. In this understanding, the Temple service addressed non-Jews who joined in Jewish worship, blessed them, and asked that they too respond to the priests’ call.

The following paragraph is omitted on Rosh Hodesh and the last six days of Pesah.

I AM FILLED with love, for indeed, ADONAI heard my pleading voice, turned an ear to me, in the days I called out. Though the pangs of death embraced me, and the earth's deep sought me out, though I met trouble and pain, I called upon the name of ADONAI: "Please, ADONAI, save my life!" ADONAI is kind and righteous; our God is compassionate, guarding even the foolhardy. Though I was brought low, God saved me. "Be at ease," I said to myself, "for ADONAI has done this for you." You have saved me from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling; ▶ I shall walk in God's presence in the land of the living. I had faith in God and declared it, even as I suffered greatly and called out in my delirium: "Everyone deceives."

How CAN I REPAY ADONAI for all that has been done for me? I raise up the cup of deliverance, and call out the name: ADONAI. I shall fulfill my vows to ADONAI in front of all of God's people. How grave in ADONAI's sight is the death of the faithful! Surely, ADONAI, I am Your servant, I am the servant born of Your maidservant— You have untied the bonds that bound me.

Anah Adonai ki ani avdekha, ani avd'kha ben amatekha, pitahta l'moseirai.

▶ It is to You that I sacrifice a thanksgiving offering, and call upon the name of ADONAI. I shall fulfill my vows to ADONAI in the presence of the entire people of God, in the courtyards of ADONAI's house, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Halleluyah—joyfully praise God!

▶ L'kha ezbah zevah todah u-v'shem Adonai ekra. N'darai ladonai ashalem negdah na l'khol amo. B'hatzrot beit Adonai, b'tokheikhi yerushalayim, halleluyah.

Psalm 116

The following paragraph is omitted on Rosh Hodesh and the last six days of Pesah.

אֶהְבֵּתִי כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלִי תַחֲנוּנָי.
כִּי הָטָה אָזְנוֹ לִי וּבִימֵי אֶקְרָא.
אֶפְפוּנֵי חֶבְלֵי מוֹת וּמִצָּרֵי שְׂאוֹל מִצְּאוּנָי,
צָרָה וְיָגוֹן אֶמְצָא, וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא,
אֲנִה יְהוָה מִלְטָה נַפְשִׁי.
חַנוּן יְהוָה וְצַדִּיק, וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ מְרַחֵם,
שׁוֹמֵר פְּתָאִים יְהוָה.
דַּלּוֹתַי וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ,
שׁוּבֵי נַפְשִׁי לְמִנוּחַיִכִּי, כִּי יְהוָה גָּמַל עַלְיָכִי.
כִּי חִלַּצְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת,
אֶת־עֵינַי מִן דְּמָעָה, אֶת־רַגְלֵי מִדְּחֵי.
▶ אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים.
הָאֲמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר, אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי מְאֹד.
אֲנִי אֶמְרֵתִי בְּחַפְזִי, כָּל־הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב.

מָה אָשִׁיב לַיהוָה, כָּל־תַּגְמוּלוֹהִי עָלַי.
בּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא, וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא.
נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם נְגִדָה נָא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ.
יִקָּר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה הַמּוֹתָה לְחַסִּידָיו.
אֲנִה יְהוָה כִּי אֲנִי עֲבַדְךָ, אֲנִי עֲבַדְךָ בְּיָדֶיךָ בְּיָדֶיךָ.
▶ לָךְ אֶזְבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא.
נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם, נְגִדָה נָא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ.
בְּחִצְרוֹת בַּיִת יְהוָה, בְּתוֹכֵכִי יְרוּשָׁלָּיִם. הִלְלוּהָ.

תהלים קטז

PSALM 116. The previous psalm told of God's rescue of the people Israel and the exodus from Egypt; now, Psalm 116 tells the story of rescue from the point of view of a single individual who has suffered and has returned to health. The psalm is also the story of faithfulness, even under the worst of circumstances.

When Hallel is shortened, the first eleven verses of Psalm 116—verses mentioning illness and distress—are left out; only the second half of the psalm—words offering thanksgiving—is recited.

I SHALL WALK IN GOD'S PRESENCE לִפְנֵי אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה. The language here may echo the command to Abraham, "walk in My presence and be wholehearted" (Genesis 17:1). Just as Abraham received God's blessing, so too does the psalmist, who has been faithful to God.

I AM YOUR SERVANT אֲנִי עֲבַדְךָ. The ancient rabbis imagine God remarking: "You are My servants, and not the servants of servants" (Yalkut Shimoni, commenting on Leviticus 25:55). In saying that we are the servants of God and not of other human beings, the rabbis emphasized the dignity of each Jewish

person. For instance, they viewed as a sinner the Hebrew slave who insisted on remaining in his master's possession even after his term of indenture was up. Similarly, the morning blessings include thanksgiving to God "who made me free."

BONDS לְמוֹסָרִי. Or "harness." The Hebrew word refers to the straps that tie down the burden an animal carries on its back.

JOYFULLY PRAISE ADONAI, all you nations,
 extol God all you peoples;
 for God has overwhelmed us with kindness and love,
 and ADONAI's faithfulness endures forever.
 Halleluyah—joyfully praise God!
 Hallelu et Adonai kol goyim, shabḥuhu kol ha-umim.
 Ki gavar aleinu ḥasdo, ve-emet Adonai l'olam. Halleluyah.

Psalm 117

Each of the following four verses is chanted first by the leader and then repeated by the congregation, verse by verse. Some follow the practice of the congregation repeating the entire first line ("Give thanks...") after each verse recited by the leader.

- ✦ Give thanks to ADONAI who is good; God's love and kindness endure forever.
- ✦ Let the house of Israel declare: God's love and kindness endure forever.
- Let the house of Aaron declare: God's love and kindness endure forever.
- Let those who revere ADONAI declare: God's love and kindness endure forever.
- ✦ Hodu ladonai ki tov, ki l'olam ḥasdo.
- ✦ Yomar na yisrael, ki l'olam ḥasdo.
- Yomru na veit aharon, ki l'olam ḥasdo.
- Yomru na yirei Adonai, ki l'olam ḥasdo.

TORMENTED, I cried to ADONAI,
 God answered me with open arms.
 Min ha-meitzar karati yah, anani va-merḥav yah.

ADONAI is with me, I do not fear;
 what can anyone do to me?
 With ADONAI as my help, I face my enemies.
 Better to depend on ADONAI than on human beings;
 better to depend on ADONAI than on the prominent and powerful.
 If any nation surrounds me, with God's name I shall cut them down.
 Though they surround and encircle me, with God's name
 I shall cut them down.
 Though they swarm round me like bees,
 they shall be stamped down like thorns on fire,
 for with God's name, I shall cut them down.
 Though I be pushed and stagger, ADONAI shall be my help.

continued

הָלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה, כָּל־גּוֹיִם, שִׁבְּחוּהוּ, כָּל־הָאֲמִיּוֹת.
 בִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חַסְדּוֹ, וְאֵמֶת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, הָלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קיז

Each of the following four verses is chanted first by the leader and then repeated by the congregation, verse by verse. Some follow the practice of the congregation repeating the entire first line (הודו) after each verse recited by the leader.

✦ הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה בִּי טוֹב, בִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.
 ✦ יֹאמְרוּ נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל, בִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.
 יֹאמְרוּ נָא בֵּית אַהֲרֹן, בִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.
 יֹאמְרוּ נָא יִרְאֵי יְהוָה, בִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.

מִן הַמֵּצָר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, עֲנֵנִי בְמִרְחֹב יָהּ.
 יְהוָה לִי לֹא אִירָא, מִה יַעֲשֶׂה לִי אָדָם.
 יְהוָה לִי בְעֲזָרִי, וְאֲנִי אֲרָאָה בְשִׁנְאֵי.
 טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בַּיהוָה, מִבְּטָח בְּאָדָם.
 טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בַּיהוָה, מִבְּטָח בְּגֵדִיבַיִם.
 כָּל־גּוֹיִם סָבְבוּנִי, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה בִּי אֲמִילָם.
 סְבוּנִי גַם סָבְבוּנִי, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה בִּי אֲמִילָם.
 סְבוּנִי כְדַבְרִים דַּעְכוּ בְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים,
 בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה בִּי אֲמִילָם.
 דַּחַה דְחִיתַנִּי לְנֶפֶל, וַיְהוֶה עֲזָרִנִּי.

continued

antiphonal recitation of Hallel (Sukkah 3:11). It is preferable to follow the earlier rabbinic preference, in which the congregation repeats each line after the leader, verse by verse. However, according to an alternative medieval practice, the congregation responds with the first line—*Hodu ladonai* ("Give thanks to Adonai")—after each verse recited by the leader. Local custom determines how these lines should be chanted.

TORMENTED . . . OPEN ARMS מִן הַמֵּצָר . . . בְּמִרְחֹב יָהּ. The Hebrew play on words is difficult to capture in English. *Meitzar*, translated here as "tormented" and by some as "distress," literally means "a narrow or tight place." *Merhav*, its antonym, translated here as "open arms," might literally be translated as "expansiveness." The experience of rescue and redemption is a journey from narrowness and constriction—a feeling of being tied in knots—to wide expanse—being untied and allowed to stretch out fully. The Hebrew is ambiguous about whether it is God who answers "expansively" or whether the supplicant is now able to have an open heart.

I SHALL CUT THEM DOWN אֲמִילָם. The Hebrew root is uncertain. It may derive from the preposition *mul* (that is: those who stand over against me). Our translation takes it from the verbal root *mul*, "cut off," as in its use in connection with circumcision, *b'rit milah*. Alternatively, it may also derive from *millel*, "speak"; it would then have the meaning "I quieted them" (literally, "I shut them up").

THORNS ON FIRE בְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים. The fire will be put out quickly and easily, for it is fed only by thin needles. The image of thorns is apt, since the line begins with an image of being surrounded by bees.

PSALM 118 is composed of several sections. It begins with an opening call and response, proclaiming God's enduring love. In the next section, the poet praises God after having recovered from the depths of despair or a life-threatening event—an illness, or perhaps an attack by an enemy. A section filled with expressions of thanks follows. The devotee then enters God's Temple, calling on God for further help, and ends by expressing thankfulness. In the formal synagogue recitation of Hallel, each of these sections is experienced separately; in many medieval manuscripts of the Book of Psalms, the different sections appear as separate psalms.

GIVE THANKS TO ADONAI הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה. There are a variety of traditions for how exactly the interplay between leader and congregation is to proceed; already in the Mishnah, there is an acknowledgment that different communities have different traditions for the

ADONAI is my strength—I sing to God who rescued me.
 In the tents of the righteous, voices resound with song and triumph.
 God's right arm is like an army,
 God's right arm is upraised, God's right arm is like an army.

Ozi v'zimrat yah, va-y'hi li lishuah.
 Kol rinah vishuah b'oholei tzadikim, y'min Adonai osah hayil.
 Y'min Adonai romeimah, y'min Adonai osah hayil.

I shall not die, but live to tell of ADONAI's deeds.
 Though ADONAI chastened me, God did not hand me over to death.

► Open for me the gates of righteousness,
 that I may enter through them, to thank ADONAI.
 This is the gateway to ADONAI; through it the righteous shall enter.

► Pit-ḥu li sha-arei tzedek, avo vam, odeh yah. Zeh ha-sha-ar ladonai, tzadikim yavo-u vo.

Psalms 118:1–20

Each of the following four verses is recited twice:

I will offer thanks to You, for You answered me, and You were my rescuer.
 The stone the builders rejected is now the keystone.
 This is ADONAI's doing; how wondrous it is in our sight.
 This is the day that ADONAI has made; we shall celebrate and rejoice in it.

Od'kha ki anitani va-t'hi li lishuah.
 Even ma-asu ha-bonim haitah l'rosh pinah.
 Mei-eit Adonai haitah zot, hi niflat b'eineinu.
 Zeh hayom asah Adonai, nagilah v'nism'hah vo.

The leader chants each of the next four lines, which are in turn repeated by the congregation:

☞ ADONAI, we implore You: deliver us. ☞ ADONAI, we implore You: deliver us.
 ADONAI, we implore You: grant us success. ADONAI, we implore You: grant us success.
 ☞ Ana Adonai hoshi-ah na. ☞ Ana Adonai hoshi-ah na.
 Ana Adonai hatzliḥah na. Ana Adonai hatzliḥah na.

Each of the following four verses is recited twice:

Blessed are you who come in the name of ADONAI;
 may the blessings of the house of ADONAI be upon you.
 ADONAI is our God, lighting our path. *Dress the horns of the altar with branches of myrtle
 in celebration of the festival.*

You are my God and I offer thanks to You; My God, I exalt You.
 ☞ Give thanks to ADONAI who is good; God's love and kindness endure forever.

Barukh haba b'sheim Adonai, beirakh-nukhem mi-beit Adonai.
 El Adonai vaya-er lanu, isru ḥag ba-avotim ad karnot ha-mizbei-ah.
 Eili atah v'odeka, elohai arom'meka.
 ☞ Hodu ladonai ki tov, ki l'olam ḥasdo.

Psalms 118:21–29

עָזִי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה, וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה.
 קוֹל רִנָּה וּישׁוּעָה בְּאֹהֲלֵי צַדִּיקִים,
 יָמִין יְהוָה עֲשָׂה חַיִּל.

יָמִין יְהוָה רוֹמְמָה, יָמִין יְהוָה עֲשָׂה חַיִּל.
 לֹא אָמוֹת בִּי אַחֲיָה, וְאֶסְפֹּר מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה.
 יִסֹּר יִסְרָנִי יְהוָה, וְלִמּוֹת לֹא נִתְנַגְנִי.

◀ פְּתַחוּ לִי שַׁעֲרֵי צֶדֶק, אָבֹא בָם אֲוֹדָה יְהוָה.
 זֶה הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה, צַדִּיקִים יִבְאוּ בוֹ.

תהלים קיח:א–ב

Each of the following four verses is recited twice:

אֲוֹדָךְ בִּי עֲנִיתָנִי, וַתְּהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה.
 אֲבֹן מָאֲסוֹ הַבּוֹנִים, הִיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פְּנֵה.
 מֵאֵת יְהוָה הִיְתָה זְאֵת, הִיא נִפְלְאֹת בְּעֵינַיִנוּ.
 זֶה הַיּוֹם עֲשָׂה יְהוָה, נִגְיְלָה וְנִשְׁמְחָה בוֹ.

*The leader chants each of the next four lines,
 which are in turn repeated by the congregation:*

אֲנָא יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא.
 אֲנָא יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא.
 אֲנָא יְהוָה הַצְּלִיחָה נָא.
 אֲנָא יְהוָה הַצְּלִיחָה נָא.

Each of the following four verses is recited twice:

בְּרוּךְ הָבֵא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה, בְּרַכְנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה.
 אֵל יְהוָה וַיֵּאָר לָנוּ, אֶסְרוּ חַג בְּעַבְתֵּימֶם עַד קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ.
 אֵלֵי אֲתָה וְאֲוֹדָךְ, אֱלֹהֵי אֲרוֹמְמָךְ.
 הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה בִּי טוֹב, בִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ.

תהלים קיח:כא–כט

meaning of the Hebrew verb. Some scholars suggest that it is related to the Akkadian verb meaning “to surround,” which would then mean: “Surround the horns of the altar.” Others take it to mean “bind the festal offering to the horns of the altar with cords.” Our translation here attempts to convey nuances of both of these interpretations. The ancient rabbis interpreted the phrase *isru ḥag* as the day after the festival.

MYRTLE עֲבֹתִים (*avotim*). In Leviticus 23:40, which mentions the *lulav* and *etrog* in connection with Sukkot, the myrtle is called the “thick tree” (*eitz avot*). Perhaps the entire phrase was an instruction that this is the moment the myrtle is tied to the altar, and that the instruction, originally noted in the margin of the psalm, eventually became incorporated into the body of the psalm; we have therefore put the phrase in italics.

ADONAI IS MY STRENGTH עָזִי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה. The psalmist quotes the Song at the Sea (Exodus 15:2), as if to say that each experience of rescue is a re-experience of the exodus from Egypt, and thus an occasion for similarly exultant song.

I WILL OFFER THANKS אֲוֹדָךְ. The psalms of Hallel move back and forth between expressions of gratitude and pleas for help. These four verses represent the height of personal and communal celebration in Hallel, out of which arises an especially terse and intense plea for deliverance and success in our lives.

KEYSTONE לְרֹאשׁ פְּנֵה. The keystone tops the arch. It is a small stone which is specially selected but which when in place holds the whole structure in balance. In this image, the people Israel have been specially selected to be the height of creation, the key to its being able to stand firm. (*Benjamin Sommer*)

MAY THE BLESSINGS OF THE HOUSE OF ADONAI BE UPON YOU בְּרַכְנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה. Literally, “We bless you from the house of Adonai.” In its biblical context, this was probably a priestly statement of blessing.

DRESS אֶסְרוּ חַג. There is some dispute as to the

Kaddish: Beauty of the World

הִלְלוּ אֶת הַתְּבַל,
הִלְלוּ אֶת מְלוֹאָה.
הִלְלוּ אֶת כְּסוּפֵיהָ,
אֶת יָפִיָּהּ וּיְגוֹנָהּ.
הִלְלוּ אֲבוֹן וְאֵשׁ,
נְהַר וְלֵילָף
וְצִפּוֹר בּוֹדְדָה
בְּחֵלוֹן.
הִלְלוּ אֶת רִגְעַ
פְּרִיצַת הַשָּׁלָם
וְאֶת רִגְעַ פְּרִיצַת
הַשָּׁלָם בְּרִנָּה.
הִלְלוּ בְּכֹל מְאוֹדְכֶם
אֶת הַיָּפִי הַדוֹעֵף—וּרְאוּ
כִּי יִפְעַת הַתְּבַל
הִיא לְכֶם.

Praise the world—
praise its fullness
and its longing,
its beauty and its grief.
Praise stone and fire,
lilac and river,
and the solitary bird
at the window.
Praise the moment
when the whole
bursts through pain
and the moment
when the whole
bursts forth in joy.
Praise the dying beauty
with all your breath,
and praising, see
the beauty of the world
is your own.

—MARCIA FALK
(Hebrew and English)

MAY ALL that You have created praise You, ADONAI our God. Your faithful, the righteous who do Your will, and all of Your people, the house of Israel, shall joyfully glorify and thank, exalt and extol, sanctify and celebrate Your name, our Sovereign.

► It is good to offer You thanks, fitting to sing to Your name, for You are God from the beginning to the end of time. *Barukh atah ADONAI, Sovereign, celebrated through words of praise.*

On Sukkot, congregations that include Hoshanot here continue on page 383.

Kaddish Shalem

Leader:

May God’s great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God’s wish. May God’s sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: *Amen.*

Congregation and Leader:

May God’s great name be acknowledged forever and ever!
Y’hei sh’meih raba m’varakh l’alam u-l’almei almaya.

Leader:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, *b’rikh hu*, is truly beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: *Amen.*

May the prayers and pleas of all Israel be accepted by their creator in heaven. And we say: *Amen.*

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: *Amen.*

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: *Amen.*

On Shabbat Hol Ha-mo-ed, Shabbat Rosh Hodesh, and Shabbat Hanukkah, we continue with the Shabbat Torah Service on page 168. On Festivals, we continue with the Festival Torah Service on the next page.

יְהִלְלוּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְחִסְדֵיךָ צְדִיקִים
עוֹשֵׂי רְצוֹנְךָ, וְכָל־עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִנָּה יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ
וַיִּשְׂבְּחוּ וַיְפָאֲרוּ וַיְרַמְּמוּ וַיַּעֲרִיצוּ וַיְקַדְּשׁוּ וַיְמַלִּיכוּ
אֶת־שִׁמְךָ מְלַכְנוּ.

◀ כִּי לָךְ טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְשַׁמֵּךְ נָאָה לְזַמְּרָה
כִּי מַעֲוֹלָם וְעַד עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל.
כִּי אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְלַךְ מְהֻלָּל בַּתְּשׁוּבָחוֹת.

On Sukkot, congregations that include Hoshanot here continue on page 383.

קַדִּישׁ שָׁלָם

Leader:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וַיִּתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא, בְּרַעוּתָהּ,
וַיְמַלִּיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיָמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזַמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּתְפָּאֵר וַיִּתְרַוַּם וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא
וַיִּתְהַדָּר וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא, בְּרִיף הוּא,
לְעֵלְמָא מִן כָּל־בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחְמָתָא
דְאָמִירָן בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תִּתְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתָהוֹן וּבְרַעוּתָהוֹן דְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל קְדָם אַבּוּהוֹן
דִּי בְשַׁמְיָא וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יְשׁוּבֵי תְבִלָּה],
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

On Shabbat Hol Ha-mo-ed, Shabbat Rosh Hodesh, and Shabbat Hanukkah, we continue with the Shabbat Torah Service on page 168. On Festivals, we continue with the Festival Torah Service on the next page.

MAY ALL THAT YOU HAVE CREATED הִלְלוּךָ. *B'rakhot* form a frame around the recitation of the psalms that constitute Hallel. Having begun with a *b'rakhah*, Hallel now concludes with a *b'rakhah*.