סדור
לב שלם
Siddur
Lev Shalem
לימי חול
FOR WEEKDAYS



THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY

Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

Whatever I want for myself, I want the same for that other person. And whatever I do not want for myself or my friends, I do not want for that other person. This is the meaning of the Most Sublime One's verse, "And you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18).

—MAIMONIDES

At Blue Dawn

A blue dawn enters slowly,
Sky grows blue. Roosters crow.
My bed is a blossom, white and blue,
And I am a fallen drop of dew.
My breath is still warm,
My body still tired.
Part of my last dream won't disappear.
I scrape the night's heat from my lips.
The day brings me a pure prayer.

—KADYA MOLODOWSKY
trans. by Kathryn Hellerstein

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 mitzvat ha-borei:
V'ahavta l'rei-akha kamokha.

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,
who releases the bound,
who straightens those who are bent,
who stretches out the earth over the waters,
who steadies our steps,

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.
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.

הֲרֵינִי מְקַבֵּל|מְקַבֶּלֶת עָלַי מִצְוַת הַבּוֹרֵא:
וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֲךָ כָּמוֹךָ.

בִּרְכוֹת הַשַּׁחַר

We rise.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לַשֶּׂכְוִי בִינָה לְהַבְחִין בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לָיְלָה.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשַׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁעָשַׂנִי בֶּן|בַּת חוֹרִין.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשַׂנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, פּוֹקֵחַ עִוְרִים.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, זוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
רוֹקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמָּיִם.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַמֵּכִין מִצְעֲדֵי גָבֶר.

BLESSINGS FOR A NEW DAY בִּרְכוֹת הַשַּׁחַר. In Talmudic times, these *b'rakhot* were recited as one awoke, rose from bed, and dressed oneself (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 60b). Ashkenazic Jewry moved them to public recitation in the synagogue. (In the main, Sephardic Jews continue to recite them at home, and even many Ashkenazic synagogues today begin the public service with P'sukei D'zimra, the morning psalms, page 18.) Each of these *b'rakhot* relates to the seemingly ordinary moments that sustain us each and every day. The expression of gratitude for even those things that seem regular and ordinary inculcates a sense of wonder in all existence.

WHO ENABLES THE BIRD אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לַשֶּׂכְוִי. Already in Talmudic times the translation of the Hebrew *sekhvi* was in doubt. The obvious choice was to identify it with the rooster. Some commentators understand this word as referring not to a bird but to the human heart, our own intelligence in being able to distinguish between day and night and the appropriate activities for these different moments (Tur, *Orah Hayim* 46).

WHO MADE ME IN THE DIVINE IMAGE שֶׁעָשַׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ. This *b'rakhah* begins a series of three *b'rakhot* that are phrased in the negative in older siddurim, but are phrased here in the positive based on a thousand-year-old prayer found in the Cairo Genizah. The first of these avoids any gender bias, instead affirming the humanity of each and every person. The last in the series, "who made me a Jew," celebrates being Jewish without denigrating those of other faiths. The phrasing "made me" can refer both to one who is born Jewish and to one who chooses Judaism later in life. In this way, we declare our gratitude each morning for the Jewish life that shapes our perspective on the world and sustains our souls.

WHO GIVES SIGHT TO THE BLIND פּוֹקֵחַ עִוְרִים. Many commentators interpret this *b'rakhah* metaphorically: we may go through life with intellectual and spiritual blinders, and so we thank God for the times we "see" clearly.

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,
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-aḥ.

We may be seated.

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.

A Rendering of the Morning B'rakhot

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;
who strengthens the people Israel with the courage to embody our beliefs,
and crowns the people Israel with a sense of mission and purpose;
who renews me each night when I am weary, that I may awake to each new day with strength.

—JAN UHRBACH

May All Who See Us, View Us with Kindness

May I greet those I see with warmth, patience, and kindness; may they see in me a friend, a neighbor, a companion. May every encounter I have today reveal the divine sparks within the world.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי כָּל־צָרְכִּי.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּגְבוּרָה.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
עוֹטֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִפְאָרָה.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַנּוֹתֵן לַיָּעֵף כֹּחַ.

We may be seated.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַמַּעֲבִיר שֵׁנָה מֵעֵינַי וּתְנוּמָה מֵעַפְעַפָּי.
וִיהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], שֶׁתַּרְגִּילֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ, וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
וְאַל תְּבִיאֵנוּ לֹא לִידֵי חֵטְא, וְלֹא לִידֵי עֲבֵרָה וְעָוֹן, וְלֹא
לִידֵי נִסָּיוֹן, וְלֹא לִידֵי בִזָּיוֹן, וְאַל תַּשְׁלֵט־בָּנוּ יֵצֶר הָרָע,
וְהַרְחִיקֵנוּ מֵאָדָם רָע וּמֵחָבֵר רָע. וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בְּיֵצֶר הַטּוֹב
וּבְמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים, וְכֹף אֶת־יִצְרֵנוּ לְהִשְׁתַּעְבֵּד־לָךְ.
► וּתְנֵנוּ הַיּוֹם, וּבְכָל־יוֹם, לְחֵן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ,
וּבְעֵינֵי כָל־רוֹאֵינוּ, וְתִגְמְלֵנוּ חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

WHO HAS PROVIDED FOR ALL MY NEEDS שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי כָּל־צָרְכִּי. The Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 60b) understands that this *b'rakhah* is to be recited after putting on one's shoes. In this interpretation it is a summary, expressing gratitude for all that has been provided so that, fully dressed, we can walk out of our homes into the wider world. We may also understand this *b'rakhah* as posing a spiritual challenge. All the other *b'rakhot* of the morning are stated in the abstract. This is the only one phrased in the first-person singular, as if to say: conscious of how much has been provided for me, why do I desire so much? This *b'rakhah* might remind us of our own privilege and the imperative to concern ourselves with those less privileged. In this regard, Rabbi Ḥama son of Rabbi Ḥanina taught: "One should follow the attributes of the Holy Blessed One. Just as God clothed the nakedness of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, so too we are obligated to provide clothes for those in need" (Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 14a).

WHO GIVES STRENGTH TO THE WEARY הַנּוֹתֵן לַיָּעֵף כֹּחַ. Interestingly, this *b'rakhah* does not come from the same Talmudic source as the other *b'rakhot* in Birkhot Ha-shaḥar; it was seemingly added in Ashkenazic communities in post-Talmudic times. Perhaps it was added in response to a felt need to recognize that all of us are at times weary, both physically and spiritually, and so each morning we proclaim that even in our weariness there is strength inside of us, a potential to find new energies from the spiritual resources of Torah and our connection with God.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL וִיהִי רָצוֹן. In the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 60b), this prayer follows the listing of the morning *b'rakhot*.

DO NOT LET THE INCLINATION TO EVIL CONTROL US וְאַל תַּשְׁלֵט־בָּנוּ יֵצֶר הָרָע. The authors of this prayer understood that we are filled with desires; indeed, without desire there is no life. But boundless desire is ruinous, and so along with desire is the need for constraint. Our desires are to be blessed; it is only the loss of a sense of limits, the inability to say "enough"—not the desire itself—that is a source of sin.

Truth

[There are moments when] we find ourselves unable to conduct daily affairs and, at least momentarily, have lost faith in our ability to act in the world. The pursuit of truth is an effort to recover that faith.

—PETER OCHS

Questions

Some questions yield definitive, or, at least, proximate answers. When was I born? Where did I grow up? Other questions are meant to be lived with, rather than answered. These questions confront us, make us stop in our tracks, haunt us. What does God want of me? What will make my life meaningful? How can I maintain the thankfulness of being alive I first felt upon waking? What will make my day redemptive? Each day may yield its own response. Always, the questions themselves are a source of renewal. Within these questions is the quest.

Pride and Humility

A Hasidic master taught: Each of us should carry two notes, one in the left-hand pocket, one in the right. One should read, "The world was created for me." The other should read, "I am but dust and ashes."

May it be Your will, Adonai my God and God of my ancestors, to save me today and every day from arrogant people and from my own arrogance. Protect me from evil people, bad friends, and bad neighbors. Guard me from misfortune and destructive powers. Protect me from being judged harshly, and from abusive and uncompromising opponents—whether fellow Jews or others.

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.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יהוה אֱלֹהַי וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי [וְאִמּוֹתַי],
שֶׁתַּצִּילֵנִי הַיּוֹם וּבְכָל־יוֹם מֵעַזֵּי פָנִים וּמֵעַזּוּת פָּנִים,
מֵאָדָם רָע, וּמֵחָבֵר רָע, וּמִשָּׁכֵן רָע, וּמִפֶּגַע רָע,
וּמִשָּׂטָן הַמַּשְׁחִית, מִדִּין קָשֶׁה, וּמִבַּעַל דִּין קָשֶׁה,
בֵּין שֶׁהוּא בֶן בְּרִית, וּבֵין שֶׁאֵינוֹ בֶן בְּרִית.

לְעוֹלָם יְהֵא אָדָם יָרֵא שָׁמַיִם בַּסֵּתֶר וּבַגָּלוּי,
וּמוֹדֶה עַל הָאֱמֶת, וְדוֹבֵר אֱמֶת בִּלְבָבוֹ, וְיַשְׁכֵּם וְיֹאמַר:

רִבּוֹן כָּל־הָעוֹלָמִים, לֹא עַל צִדְקוֹתֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מַפִּילִים
תַּחֲנוּנֵינוּ לְפָנֶיךָ, כִּי עַל רַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים.
מָה אֲנַחְנוּ,
מָה חַיֵּינוּ,
מָה חַסְדֵּנוּ,
מָה צִדְקֵנוּ,
מַה יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ,
מַה כֹּחֵנוּ,
מָה גְּבוּרָתֵנוּ.
מַה נֹּאמַר לְפָנֶיךָ,
יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
הֲלֹא כָּל־הַגִּבּוֹרִים כְּאַיִן לְפָנֶיךָ,
וְאַנְשֵׁי הַשֵּׁם כְּלֹא הָיוּ,
וַחֲכָמִים כִּבְלִי מַדָּע, וּנְבוֹנִים כִּבְלִי הַשְׂכֵּל.
כִּי כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂינוּ תֹהוּ, וִימֵי חַיֵּינוּ הֶבֶל לְפָנֶיךָ,
וּמוֹתַר הָאָדָם מִן הַבְּהֵמָה אַיִן, כִּי הַכֹּל הָבֶל.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ. The Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 16b) records this as the prayer Rabbi Judah would recite upon the completion of his private prayers, the Amidah. Over time, it found its place here in the liturgy.

DESTRUCTIVE POWERS וּמִשָּׂטָן הַמַּשְׁחִית. The Hebrew references Satan—that, is the angel or force charged by the Divine with testing us and opposing us.

ABUSIVE AND UNCOMPROMISING OPPONENTS וּמִבַּעַל דִּין קָשֶׁה. Most literally this refers to those who abuse the legal process, but by extension it may include anyone who insists on the full exercise of their rights, without compassion or compromise and without regard to the impact on others.

A PERSON SHOULD ALWAYS BE לְעוֹלָם יְהֵא אָדָם. This series of prayers, meant to be recited privately and originally intended to be said at home preceding public prayer, are penitential. Some would recite them in the middle of the night, since midnight was considered a particular moment in which heaven's gate opened to receive heartfelt prayer. The prayer is found in Seder Eliyahu Rabbah (chapter 21).

The passage that begins "Master of all worlds" is found in the Babylonian Talmud (Yoma 87b) in connection with the Yom Kippur liturgy. Each question strikes the same chord: so much of what we strive for, each of our acts of kindness and the successes we experience in our lives, are nothing when measured against the infinity and eternity of existence. The prayer, then, is a humbling recognition of human finitude.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE TRUTH וּמוֹדֶה עַל הָאֱמֶת. The pursuit of truth, whether of inner truth or of objective truth, may be among the hardest tasks. Nevertheless, the constant pursuit of truth is a central religious task; as the ancient rabbis taught, truth is the seal of God.

FOR ALL IS VANITY כִּי הֶבֶל הָבֶל. Ecclesiastes 2:17, 3:19. This prayer, which began with its call to acknowledge inner and outer truthfulness, concludes with a call for humility.

How Blessed

Spiritually we cannot live by merely reiterating borrowed or inherited knowledge . . . each thing [we encounter] is a surprise, being is unbelievable. We are amazed at seeing anything at all; amazed not only at particular values and things, but at the unexpectedness of being as such, at the fact that there is being at all.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

Thankful

Lord, my God,
I—your little garden—
Bring you the harvest of my soil—
My bounty
Ripe or not quite—
All the same your boon.
Accept it, my Lord, benignly
But without fire.

No fire, my God.
It cannot be true that you delight
In the smoke of the fat offering—
Not true!
And see how humble
The years have made me:
That for each drop of mercy
I am thankful.
Thankful.

—MALKA HEIFETZ TUSSMAN
trans. by Kathryn Hellerstein

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.

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.

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 besides You, there is no other divinity.
▶ Manifest Your holiness
through those who hallow Your name,
and hallow Your name in this world;
as Your deliverance arrives,
our heads will be raised up with pride.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who sanctifies Your name through community.

אֲבָל אֲנַחְנוּ עַמְּךָ, בְּנֵי בְרִיתֶךָ, בְּנֵי אַבְרָהָם אֹהַבְךָ
שֶׁנִּשְׁבַּעְתָּ לוֹ בְּהַר הַמּוֹרִיָּה, זֶרַע יִצְחָק יְחִידוֹ,
שֶׁנֶּעֱקַד עַל גַּבֵּי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, עֲדַת יַעֲקֹב בִּנְךָ בְּכוֹרֶךָ,
שֶׁמְּאַהֲבָתְךָ שֶׁאָהַבְתָּ אוֹתוֹ, וּמִשִּׂמְחָתְךָ שֶׁשָּׂמַחְתָּ בּוֹ,
קָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁרוּן.

לְפִיכָךְ אֲנַחְנוּ חַיָּבִים לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ וּלְשַׁבֵּחֲךָ וּלְפָאֶרְךָ
וּלְבָרֵךְ וּלְקַדֵּשׁ וְלָתֵת שֶׁבַח וְהוֹדָיָה לִשְׁמֶךָ.
◀ אַשְׁרֵינוּ,
מַה טּוֹב חֶלְקֵנוּ,
וּמַה נָּעִים גּוֹרָלֵנוּ,
וּמַה יָּפָה יְרֻשָּׁתֵנוּ.
אַשְׁרֵינוּ, שֶׁאֲנַחְנוּ מַשְׁכִּימִים וּמַעֲרִיבִים,
עֶרֶב וָבֹקֶר, וְאוֹמְרִים פַּעֲמַיִם בְּכָל־יוֹם:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יהוה אֶחָד.
Recited quietly: בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

אַתָּה הוּא עַד שֶׁלֹּא נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם,
אַתָּה הוּא מִשֶּׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם,
אַתָּה הוּא בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה,
וְאַתָּה הוּא לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא.
אַתָּה הוּא יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ,
וּבִשְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם הָעֶלְיוֹנִים.
אֱמֶת,
אַתָּה הוּא רִאשׁוֹן וְאַתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן,
וּמִבַּלְעָדֶיךָ אֵין אֱלֹהִים.
◀ קַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ עַל מְקַדִּישֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ,
וְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּעוֹלָמֶךָ,
וּבִישׁוּעָתְךָ תָּרִים וְתַגְבִּיהַּ קַרְנֵנוּ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, מְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בָּרַבִּים.

WHOM YOU RENAMED ISRAEL קָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל. The Torah explains that the name Israel/*Yisrael* was given to Jacob because he "strove [from the root *s-r-h*] with God and humans and triumphed" (Genesis 32:29). Jacob had a remarkable life, constantly maneuvering to survive and triumph. In contrast, the Torah gives no explanation of the name Jeshurun, which is also used (although less frequently) to refer to the people Israel. It is probably derived from the root *y-sh-r*, meaning "straight" or "honest."

THEREFORE IT IS OUR DUTY לְפִיכָךְ אֲנַחְנוּ חַיָּבִים. Life is a gift; the expression of our thanks is an acknowledgment of that. Judaism provides us with meaning, and so, similarly, we express our gratitude for its revelations.

HOW BLESSED WE ARE אַשְׁרֵינוּ. The blessing is that we can express our faith.

HEAR, O ISRAEL שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל. The recitation here contains only the first line; the full Sh'ma will be recited later in the formal liturgy (see page 38). Jacob ben Asher, in his influential compendium of Jewish law, Arba-ah Turim (early 14th century), remarks that we may delay the recitation of the full Sh'ma past the time recommended (the first three hours of the morning), since the recitation here fulfills the requirement for reciting the Sh'ma in the early morning hours.

WHO SANCTIFIES YOUR NAME THROUGH COMMUNITY מְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בָּרַבִּים. A congregation of souls—united by song, prayer, and purpose—can be an anticipation of the experience of redemption. The ancient rabbis (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 18a) explained that God loves prayers recited in community.

The Study of Torah

Hour after hour, words of Torah are loved by those who study them as much as when they first made their acquaintance with them.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

How do we know that a blessing is to be recited over the reading of the Torah? Rabbi Ishmael said: "By inference: if a blessing must be pronounced over an occasion that brings temporal life, how much the more so over Torah, which brings eternal life!"

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah would say: When one's wisdom exceeds one's good deeds, to what may one be compared? To a tree with many branches but few roots—a wind may blow, uproot it, and topple it over, as Jeremiah says: "like a desert scrub that never thrives but dwells unwatered in the wilderness, in a salty, solitary land" (17:6). But when one's good deeds exceed one's wisdom, to what may one be compared? To a tree with few branches but many roots; all the winds of the world may blow against it, yet they cannot move it from its place; as Jeremiah says: "like a tree planted by waters, spreading its roots by a stream. Untouched by scorching heat, its foliage remains luxurious. It will have no concern in a year of drought and will not cease to yield fruit" (17:8).

—PIRKEI AVOT

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.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher bahar banu mikol ha-amim, v'natan lanu et torato. Barukh atah Adonai, noten ha-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

בִּרְכוֹת הַתּוֹרָה

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לַעֲסֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה.
וְהַעֲרֶב־נָא יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־דִּבְרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ בְּפִינוּ,
וּבְפִי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְנִהְיֶה אֲנַחְנוּ וְצֶאֱצָאֵינוּ,
וְצֶאֱצָאֵי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, כֻּלָּנוּ יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ,
וְלוֹמְדֵי תוֹרָתְךָ לִשְׁמָהּ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַמְלַמֵּד תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

TORAH:

יְבָרֶכְךָ יהוה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ.
יָאֵר יהוה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וִיחֻנֶּךָּ.
יִשָּׂא יהוה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם. במדבר ו:כד-כו

MISHNAH:

אֵלּוּ דְבָרִים שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם שִׁעוּר: הַפֵּאָה וְהַבִּכּוּרִים וְהָרָאָיוֹן
וּגְמִילוּת חֲסָדִים וְתַלְמוּד תּוֹרָה. משנה פאה א:א

TALMUD:

אֵלּוּ דְבָרִים שֶׁאָדָם אוֹכֵל פֵּרוֹתֵיהֶם בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְהַקֶּרֶן
קַיֶּמֶת לוֹ לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, וְאֵלּוּ הֵן: כִּבּוּד אָב וָאֵם, וּגְמִילוּת
חֲסָדִים, וְהַשְׁכָּמַת בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ שַׁחֲרִית וְעַרְבִית,
וְהַכְנָסַת אוֹרְחִים, וּבִקּוּר חוֹלִים, וְהַכְנָסַת כַּלָּה, וּלְוָיַת
הַמֵּת, וְעִיּוּן תְּפִלָּה, וְהָבָאַת שָׁלוֹם בֵּין אָדָם לַחֲבֵרוֹ וּבֵין
אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ, וְתַלְמוּד תּוֹרָה כְּנֶגֶד כֻּלָּם.

תלמוד בבלי, קדושין לט ב, עם הוספות

TORAH BLESSINGS בִּרְכוֹת הַתּוֹרָה. The Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 11b) records the opinions of two sages, each of whom suggests different *b'rakhot* to be recited before studying Torah. One version is the *b'rakhah* that appears first here, "[who] has instructed us to engage with the words of Torah." The other is the second *b'rakhah* recorded here, "who has chosen us. . . ." In typical fashion, the liturgy records both—so as not to decide the question in favor of one sage or the other.

This liturgical response may say something about the very nature of Torah study. Frequently, it is studied *b'havruta*, in a group of two or more. The back-and-forth between two distinct individuals creates a fundamentally different experience of study than would a private reading of the material. The rabbis of the Talmud frequently say, "Each opinion is the word of the living God"—that is, truth is multifaceted. It is the back-and-forth of agreement and disagreement that "stamps out" the meaning of the text.

Following the recitation of the *b'rakhot*, we immediately engage in some Torah study. The traditional liturgy includes a passage taken from Torah, and then passages from the Mishnah and Talmud, thus including both Sinaitic revelation and also the later elaboration of sages in the understanding of Torah.

Interestingly, the passage chosen from the Torah is the Priestly Blessing—implying that Torah study evokes God's ultimate blessing, much as pilgrimages to the Temple once did. The second passage, taken from the Mishnah, implies the endless unfolding of Torah and its meaning. The final passage from the Talmud suggests the perpetuity of its reward.

Midrash

Abaye says: The biblical verse states, "God has spoken once, but twice have I heard this, for strength belongs to God" (Psalm 62:12). Though God spoke only one verse, yet several meanings emerge from it, and certainly only one common meaning does not emerge from several different verses.

The school of Rabbi Ishmael derived a similar explanation from an alternate verse: "Is not My word . . . like a hammer that breaks a rock into many pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29). Just as the hammer shatters a stone into many pieces, so too, many meanings emerge from a single verse of Torah.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

The Greater Meaning of Torah

In the heavenly realm all is pure spirit, but in order for the upper worlds to be manifest on earth they need to be dressed in earthly garments. So it is with Torah: if it did not clothe itself in the garments of this world, it could not be manifest. Whoever thinks that the garment is the real Torah is mistaken.

—ZOHAR

Principles of Interpreting Torah

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

A restriction applicable in a more general circumstance 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

רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל אוֹמֵר: בִּשְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה מִדּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה נִדְרֶשֶׁת:

מִקַּל וָחֹמֶר.

וּמִגְּזֵרָה שָׁוָה.

מִבִּנְיַן אָב מִכָּתוּב אֶחָד, וּמִבִּנְיַן אָב מִשְּׁנֵי כְתוּבִים.

מִכְּלָל וּפְרָט.

וּמִפְּרָט וּכְלָל.

כְּלָל וּפְרָט וּכְלָל, אִי אַתָּה דָן אֶלָּא כְּעֵין הַפְּרָט.

מִכְּלָל שֶׁהוּא צָרִיךְ לִפְרָט, וּמִפְּרָט שֶׁהוּא צָרִיךְ לִכְלָל.

כָּל־דָּבָר שֶׁהָיָה בִּכְלָל וְיָצָא מִן הַכְּלָל לְלַמֵּד, לֹא לְלַמֵּד עַל עַצְמוֹ יָצָא, אֶלָּא לְלַמֵּד עַל הַכְּלָל כֻּלּוֹ יָצָא.

כָּל־דָּבָר שֶׁהָיָה בִּכְלָל וְיָצָא לִטְעוֹן טְעַן אֶחָד שֶׁהוּא כְּעִנְיָנוֹ, יָצָא לְהָקֵל וְלֹא לְהַחֲמִיר.

כָּל־דָּבָר שֶׁהָיָה בִּכְלָל, וְיָצָא לִטְעוֹן טְעַן אַחֵר שֶׁלֹּא כְּעִנְיָנוֹ, יָצָא לְהָקֵל וּלְהַחֲמִיר.

כָּל־דָּבָר שֶׁהָיָה בִּכְלָל וְיָצָא לְדוֹן בְּדָבָר הֶחָדָשׁ, אִי אַתָּה יָכוֹל לְהַחֲזִירוֹ לִכְלָלוֹ עַד שֶׁיַּחֲזִירֶנּוּ הַכָּתוּב לִכְלָלוֹ בְּפֵרוּשׁ.

דִּבֶּר הַלָּמֵד מֵעִנְיָנוֹ, וְדִבֶּר הַלָּמֵד מִסּוֹפוֹ.

וְכֵן שְׁנֵי כְתוּבִים הַמַּכְחִישִׁים זֶה אֶת־זֶה, עַד שֶׁיָּבֹא הַכָּתוּב הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וְיַכְרִיעַ בֵּינֵיהֶם.

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 as a fitting introduction to the expansive role of Torah study: our task is an ongoing one of interpreting the meaning of Torah. Equally, we can understand this passage as both an affirmation of the role of human interpretation in relation to divine revelation and a setting of limits to that role.

Aaron the Peacemaker

The law of truth was in his mouth and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and did turn away many from iniquity (Malachi 2:6).

Rabbi Meir taught: When two men had quarreled with each other, Aaron would go and sit down with one of them and say to him, "My son, mark what your fellow is saying! He beats his breast and tears his clothing, saying, 'Woe unto me! How shall I lift my eyes and look upon my fellow! I am ashamed before him, for I it is who treated him foully.'"

He would sit with him until he had removed all rancor from his heart and then Aaron would go and sit with the other and say to him, "My son, mark what your fellow is saying! He beats his breast and tears his clothing saying, "Woe unto me! How shall I lift my eyes and look upon my fellow! I am ashamed before him, for I it is who treated him foully.'"

He would sit with him until he had removed all rancor from his heart. And when the two men met each other, they would embrace and kiss each other. That is why it is said [of Aaron's death], "they wept for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel" (Numbers 20:29).

Another interpretation: Why did all Israel weep for Aaron [while for Moses only the men wept]? Because Moses rendered judgment strictly according to the truth; but Aaron never said to a man, "You have acted offensively," or to a woman, "You have acted offensively." That is why is said, "and all the house of Israel wept for him" (Numbers 20:29). But of Moses, who reproved them with strong words, it is said, "and the men of Israel wept for Moses" (Deuteronomy 34:8).

—AVOT D'RABBI NATAN

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:

א

▸ 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.

ב

▸ 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.

קְדֹשִׁים תִּהְיוּ, כִּי קָדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יהוה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. לֹא תְקַלֵּל חֵרֵשׁ, וְלִפְנֵי עִוֵּר לֹא תִתֵּן מִכְשֹׁל. לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ עָוֶל בַּמִּשְׁפָּט, לֹא תִשָּׂא פְנֵי דָל וְלֹא תֶהְדַּר פְּנֵי גָדוֹל, בְּצֶדֶק תִּשְׁפֹּט עֲמִיתֶךָ. לֹא תֵלֵךְ רָכִיל בְּעַמֶּיךָ. לֹא תַעֲמֹד עַל דַּם רֵעֶךָ. לֹא תִשְׂנָא אֶת־אָחִיךָ בִּלְבָבֶךָ. וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֲךָ כָּמוֹךָ אֲנִי יהוה.

ויקרא יט:ב, יד-יח

YOU SHALL BE HOLY קְדֹשִׁים תִּהְיוּ. Some liberal prayerbooks have included this passage to be recited daily, with the understanding that it conveys a central message of Judaism.

CONCLUDING PRAYERS. The Torah study concludes with expressions of peace and messianic longing.

We conclude with one of the following:

א

◂ יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], שֶׁתִּתֵּן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ, וְנִהְיֶה מִתַּלְמִידָיו שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן, אוֹהֵב שָׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף שָׁלוֹם, אוֹהֵב אֶת־הַבְּרִיּוֹת וּמְקָרְבָן לַתּוֹרָה.

ב

◂ יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], שֶׁיִּבָּנֶה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ בִּמְהֵרָה בְיָמֵינוּ, וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ. וְשָׁם נַעַבְדְךָ בְּיִרְאָה כִּימֵי עוֹלָם וּכְשָׁנִים קַדְמוֹנִיּוֹת.

Three Crowns

The people Israel were crowned with three crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of sovereignty. The crown of priesthood was allotted to Aaron and his children… the crown of sovereignty to David… the crown of Torah stands ready to be worn by any one of the community of the people Israel… everyone who wishes can wear it. Lest you think that any of the other crowns is greater, it is said of Torah that she declares, 'It is through me that kings rule, and authorities legislate justly; through me do officers [i.e., priests] perform their duties'" (Proverbs 8:15–16a)—learn from that that Torah is greater than the other two.

—MAIMONIDES

Kaddish D'Rabbanan

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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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'ḥayeikhon u-v'yomeikhon u-v'ḥayei 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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* l'eila l'eila mikol] birkhata v'shirata tushb'ḥata v'neḥamata 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, ḥina v'ḥisda v'raḥamin, v'ḥayin arikhin u-m'zona r'viḥa, u-furkana min kodam avuhon di vi-sh'maya, v'imru amen.
Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya, v'ḥayim tovim aleinu v'al kol yisrael, v'imru amen.
Oseh shalom bimromav hu b'raḥamav ya-aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil], v'imru amen.

Those who recite the psalm of the day at this point in the service can turn to pages 80–91.

קַדִּישׁ דְּרַבָּנָן

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא,
בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כִּרְעוּתֵהּ,
וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאַר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדַּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל־

[*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* לְעֵלָּא לְעֵלָּא מִכָּל־]
בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא תֻּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנֶחֱמָתָא דַּאֲמִירָן בְּעָלְמָא,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל רַבָּנָן, וְעַל תַּלְמִידֵיהוֹן וְעַל כָּל־תַּלְמִידֵי
תַלְמִידֵיהוֹן, וְעַל כָּל־מָאן דְּעָסְקִין בְּאוֹרַיְתָא, דִּי בְאַתְרָא
הָדֵין וְדִי בְכָל־אֲתַר וַאֲתַר, יְהֵא לְהוֹן וּלְכוֹן שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא,
חִנָּא וְחִסְדָּא וְרַחֲמִין, וְחַיִּין אֲרִיכִין, וּמְזוֹנָא רְוִיחָא,
וּפֻרְקָנָא מִן קֳדָם אֲבוּהוֹן דִּי בִשְׁמַיָּא, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא,
וְחַיִּים טוֹבִים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא בְּרַחֲמָיו יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל],
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Those who recite the psalm of the day at this point in the service can turn to pages 80–91.

KADDISH D'RABBANAN derives its name from the passage included for the welfare of those who teach and study Torah. It is recited after the formal study of Torah. For that reason, many congregations recite it here. Kaddish D'Rabbanan is often 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.

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

You Raised Me Up from Sheol

To David, the burden of his sins felt as though he had descended into Sheol, the netherworld. But when God said that Solomon would build the Temple that David had wanted to construct, he was filled with joy and knew that his sins would ultimately be forgiven and his dream would be realized.

—SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

You Have Lifted Me Up

The experience of being rescued—whether from illness, external challenges or foes, or inner anguish—can be complicated; trauma leaves its mark. This psalm reminds us that while recovering can be a long and arduous process, prayerful expression of gratitude for the present may play an important role. For example, a midrash imagines Joseph, on the way back from burying his father, returning to the pit he had been cast into by his brothers so many years before. There, Joseph recites a blessing for his rescue: "How many wonders did the Almighty perform for me when God delivered me from this pit!"

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 at night crying,
but wake up in the morning singing.
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 took me from grieving to dancing,*
You undid my sackcloth and enwrapped me with joy—
that singing of Your glory never cease.
ADONAI my God, I thank You, always.

Eilekha Adonai ekra, v'el Adonai eṯḥanan . . .
Sh'ma Adonai v'ḥoneni, Adonai heyeih ozer li.

מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד
אֲרוֹמִמְךָ יהוה כִּי דִלִּיתָנִי,
וְלֹא שִׂמַּחְתָּ אֹיְבַי לִי.
יהוה אֱלֹהָי, שִׁוַּעְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ וַתִּרְפָּאֵנִי.
יהוה הֶעֱלִיתָ מִן שְׁאוֹל נַפְשִׁי,
חִיִּיתַנִי מִיָּרְדִי בוֹר.
זַמְּרוּ לַיהוה חֲסִידָיו,
וְהוֹדוּ לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ.
כִּי רֶגַע בְּאַפּוֹ חַיִּים בִּרְצוֹנוֹ,
בָּעֶרֶב יָלִין בֶּכִי וְלַבֹּקֶר רִנָּה.
וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְשַׁלְוִי,
בַּל אֶמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם.
יהוה בִּרְצוֹנְךָ הָעֱמַדְתָּה לְהַרְרִי עֹז,
הִסְתַּרְתָּ פָנֶיךָ, הָיִיתִי נִבְהָל.
אֵלֶיךָ יהוה אֶקְרָא, וְאֶל אֲדֹנָי אֶתְחַנָּן.
מַה בֶּצַע בְּדָמִי בְּרִדְתִּי אֶל שָׁחַת,
הֲיוֹדְךָ עָפָר, הֲיַגִּיד אֲמִתֶּךָ.
שְׁמַע יהוה וְחָנֵּנִי, יהוה הֱיֵה עֹזֵר לִי.
◀ הָפַכְתָּ מִסְפְּדִי לְמָחוֹל לִי,
פִּתַּחְתָּ שַׂקִּי וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי שִׂמְחָה.
לְמַעַן יְזַמֶּרְךָ כָבוֹד וְלֹא יִדֹּם,
יהוה אֱלֹהַי, לְעוֹלָם אוֹדֶךָּ. תהלים ל

PSALM 30 precedes the section of psalms and songs called P'sukei D'zimra, "Verses of Song." It was added to the liturgy in the 17th century under the influence of Lurianic mysticism. Psalm 30 mentions the name of God ten times, and Jewish mystics saw in this a hint of the *s'firot*, the ten aspects of the Godhead. But its themes were probably more significant for its adoption into the liturgy: in the context of the morning prayers, its mention of being rescued from Sheol, the netherworld, might be seen as grateful acknowledgment of the blessing of awakening from sleep.

In a fashion that is true of many psalms, this poem moves between past and present, between intimations of illness and death and affirmations of health, between fear and joy. Thus, we begin our day conscious of human vulnerability and at the same time thankful, even joyful, that we are alive and wake to a new day—and so we pray.

FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE HOUSE חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת. Superscriptions of psalms were added sometime after their composition, and it is hard to say what the import of this superscription is. The mystics who added this psalm to the liturgy thought that "the house" alluded to here was the body (that is, the house of the soul) renewed each morning. In an alternate interpretation, each day is seen as a divine house that we enter. 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). In its original biblical context, we might conjecture that the psalm was meant to be recited in honor of a donor who had recovered from an illness and who donated funds for the repair or renovation of the Temple. Reading the psalm as some later rabbis do, the "house" alluded to might be seen as the synagogue, in which we now pray.

YOU HAVE LIFTED ME UP דִּלִּיתָנִי. The Hebrew verb is frequently 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 בְּאַפּוֹ. One theme of biblical theology is that harm comes to us because of our own moral lapse, thus eliciting God's anger. In other moments in biblical thought, this outlook is questioned.

Today the Gardeners Are Sad

Today the gardeners are
sad,
but the farmers
bless the rain.
And we two
at a loss
hide from each other
our eyes.
Let's be wise: don't ask
what grew, what withered,
what was uprooted from
the heart.

This storm
will soon pass,
this question
will soon be forgotten.
See, there's a rainbow
already
above the tower.

Today the gardeners are
sad,
but the farmers
bless the rain.

—LEA GOLDBERG
trans. by Rachel Tzvia Back

Mourner's Kaddish

Many congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish after completing Birkhot Ha-shaḥar, 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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* 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'ḥayeikhon u-v'yomeikhon
u-v'ḥayei 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'yishtabaḥ 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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* l'eila
l'eila mikol] birkhata v'shirata tushb'ḥata v'neḥamata da·amiran b'alma,
v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya, v'ḥayim 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.

קַדִּישׁ יָתוֹם

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

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא,
בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כִּרְעוּתֵהּ,
וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and mourners:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Mourners:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאַר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדַּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל־

[*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* לְעֵלָּא לְעֵלָּא מִכָּל־]
בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא תֻּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנֶחֱמָתָא דַּאֲמִירָן בְּעָלְמָא,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא,
וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל],
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

KADDISH is a prayer formulated in Aramaic praising God, including a congregational response praising God's name. It appears in several forms and always marks the end of a service or of a section of a service.

Kaddish is recited only when a *minyan* is present. A prayer that mourners may recite when a *minyan* is not present in public worship may be found on page 135.

MOURNER'S KADDISH is recited here and at the end of the service. It concludes with a prayer for peace in both Aramaic and Hebrew. The Sephardic rite expands the Mourner's Kaddish with prayers for healing, redemption, and peace. The Sephardic Mourner's Kaddish appears at the end of this volume.

KADDISH SHALEM—the complete Kaddish—is recited by the leader at the end of a service that has included the Amidah. It includes a line asking that the prayers that have been recited may be received graciously by God, and it concludes with a prayer for peace, in both Aramaic and Hebrew.

ḤATZI KADDISH—Partial or Half Kaddish—is recited by the leader to mark the conclusion of an individual section of the service. It gets its name of "partial or half" since it lacks the additional endings that other forms of the Kaddish include.

KADDISH D'RABBANAN is a special form of Kaddish recited after Torah study. It includes a prayer for those who teach and study Torah, as well as the concluding prayers for peace.

Finally, there is a form of Kaddish that some recite at a burial, called KADDISH HAGADOL or KADDISH D'ITḤADTA, which adds to the Mourner's Kaddish a prayer expressing messianic hope and a future world of redemption. This Kaddish is also recited upon the conclusion, a *siyum*, of the study of a tractate of Talmud.

A Psalm of Thanksgiving (after Psalm 100)

I heard the world singing
praise to God.

Oh, I asked (hesitant, halting), may I join you?
I, whose prayer is
sometimes shallow or
scattered.
A burden I rush through,
distracted. Resentful,
even.
I—inadequate, ineffectual,
empty, false. May I sing
too?

Of course, dear one!
Enter with joy. Offer your
joy.
Don't you know that I
created you, exactly as
you are?
You belong here. You are
known here. You are
loved.

Just lift your voice and
sing.
Your gratitude will open
the gates,
your own joy will show
you in.

Thank you, I said.

You're welcome.

—JAN UHRBACH

Psalm 100 is omitted on erev Pesah, on all days of Pesah, and on erev Yom Kippur. It is customary to recite the psalm standing.

A PSALM OF THANKSGIVING

May all on earth acclaim ADONAI:
serve ADONAI with joy,
come into God's presence with song.
Know that ADONAI is the God who created us;
we are God's, God's people,
the sheep whom God tends.
Enter God's gates in thanksgiving,
God's courtyards with songs of praise.
Thank God and bless God's name.
For God is good, loving and kind always,
faithful to each generation.

Psalm 100

We may be seated.

Serving with Joy

It can be hard to summon joy, to approach life and its responsibilities with unbridled enthusiasm. How do we understand the injunction to serve God with joy when it is not always possible to summon that feeling?

The psalm suggests that we might bring into focus something for which we are grateful, and hold onto that attitude as long as we're able.

We might also remember that joy is one path among many; elsewhere, the psalmist reminds us that God is close to the broken-hearted. Whatever we may be feeling, if we bring the fullness of ourselves into our worship and service, we will be received with love exactly as we are. That knowledge itself may bring a kind of joy, the sense of God's presence even in the darkest of places.

Psalm 100 is omitted on erev Pesah, on all days of Pesah, and on erev Yom Kippur. It is customary to recite the psalm standing.

מִזְמוֹר לְתוֹדָה

הָרִיעוּ לַיהוה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,
עִבְדוּ אֶת־יהוה בְּשִׂמְחָה,
בֹּאוּ לְפָנָיו בִּרְנָנָה.
דְּעוּ כִּי יהוה הוּא אֱלֹהִים,
הוּא עָשָׂנוּ, וְלוֹ אֲנַחְנוּ,
עַמּוֹ וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתוֹ.
בֹּאוּ שְׁעָרָיו בְּתוֹדָה,
חֲצֵרֹתָיו בִּתְהִלָּה.
הוֹדוּ לוֹ בָּרְכוּ שְׁמוֹ,
כִּי טוֹב יהוה לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ,
וְעַד דֹּר וָדֹר אֱמוּנָתוֹ.

תהלים ק

We may be seated.

A PSALM OF THANKSGIVING. מִזְמוֹר לְתוֹדָה. The heading of this psalm, *mizmor l'todah* ("a psalm of thanksgiving"), suggests that it may have been adopted for recitation by those entering the Temple precincts bringing a *todah*, a thanksgiving offering. The heading, though, may have been appended later, after the psalm was identified for such use. Because of its association with Temple ritual, we rise as we recite it.

This psalm has a rich liturgical history. Because of its joyous expression of thanksgiving, Psalm 100 was initially included in the expanded recitation of psalms for Shabbat, first in Babylonia and then in Spain and Italy. However, later authorities omitted its recitation on Shabbat because individuals did not bring thanksgiving offerings on Shabbat (although to this day it is recited on Shabbat and not on weekdays in the Italian rite). Perhaps to redress this omission, it came to be included in daily prayer in 12th-century Germany and northern France. Today it is included on weekdays in both Ashkenazic and Sephardic rites, but omitted on Shabbat and festivals. It is also omitted on the intermediate days of Pesah, when the personal thanksgiving offering (*todah*) was not offered because it contained *hametz* (leaven). It is also omitted on erev Pesah and on erev Yom Kippur.

The psalm's five verses contain seven imperative verbs: הָרִיעוּ, עִבְדוּ, בֹּאוּ, דְּעוּ, בֹּאוּ, הוֹדוּ, בָּרְכוּ. The first and last two (acclaim, serve, thank, bless) invite us to celebrate, joyfully serve, thank, and praise God, emphasizing the accessible outer forms of relating to the Divine. These lead us to the three central verbs (come, know, come), the more elusive sense of entering God's presence and knowing God.

Is/Was/Will Be

If you experience God's presence here and now, then your sense of the past and your sense of the future are transformed.

—SHMUEL WEINBERG OF SLONIM

God . . . Will Forgive Sin

A midrash comments on the biblical account of the people of Israel standing at Mount Sinai, responding to God's commands, saying, "Everything that God has uttered, we will do" (Exodus 19:8). The midrash asserts that God knew that this was untrue: Israel would not fulfill the commandments and would sin. Nevertheless, God did not get angry, as a human does—for God understood that human beings are capable of repentance and in the end these sins would be forgiven, as it is written, "God, who is compassionate, will forgive sin." In this regard, another midrash adds: What did the Israelites see at Mount Sinai? They saw an old man, full of kindness.

—MEKHILTA D'RABBI ISHMAEL

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. The heavens will 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.
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; our sovereign will respond to us on the day we call out.

יְהִי כְבוֹד יהוה לְעוֹלָם, יִשְׂמַח יהוה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו.
יְהִי שֵׁם יהוה מְבֹרָךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.
מִמִּזְרַח שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד מְבוֹאוֹ, מְהֻלָּל שֵׁם יהוה.
רָם עַל כָּל־גּוֹיִם יהוה, עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ.
יהוה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם, יהוה זִכְרְךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר.

יהוה בַּשָּׁמַיִם הֵכִין כִּסְאוֹ, וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בַּכֹּל מָשָׁלָה.
יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתָגֵל הָאָרֶץ, וְיֹאמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם יהוה מָלָךְ.
יהוה מֶלֶךְ, יהוה מָלָךְ, יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.
יהוה מֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם וָעֶד, אָבְדוּ גוֹיִם מֵאַרְצוֹ.

יהוה הֵפִיר עֲצַת גּוֹיִם, הֵנִיא מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים.
רַבּוֹת מַחֲשָׁבוֹת בְּלֶב־אִישׁ, וַעֲצַת יהוה הִיא תָקוּם.
עֲצַת יהוה לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֹד, מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר.
כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיֶּהִי, הוּא צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֹד.

כִּי בָחַר יהוה בְּצִיּוֹן, אִוָּה לְמוֹשָׁב לוֹ.
כִּי יַעֲקֹב בָּחַר לוֹ יָהּ, יִשְׂרָאֵל לִסְגֻלָּתוֹ.
כִּי לֹא יִטֹּשׁ יהוה עַמּוֹ, וְנַחֲלָתוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב.

◄ וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עָוֹן וְלֹא יַשְׁחִית,
וְהִרְבָּה לְהָשִׁיב אַפּוֹ וְלֹא יָעִיר כָּל־חֲמָתוֹ.
יהוה הוֹשִׁיעָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְיוֹם קָרְאֵנוּ.

MAY THE GLORY OF ADONAI ENDURE FOREVER יְהִי כְבוֹד יהוה לְעוֹלָם. Some commentators argue that P'sukei D'zimra ("Verses of Song") acquired its name from this very prayer, which is a collection of verses rather than chapters of Psalms (see note on page 20). It is included in all rites, and in the Sephardic and Italian traditions is the first prayer after the opening *b'rakhah* of P'sukei D'zimra. The poem centers on God's majesty. Indeed, the personal name of God, *yod-hei-vav-hei*, is repeated some twenty times. A variety of themes run through the prayer: God as creator and therefore sovereign of the world; all of nature offering praise to God; nations, like the natural world, depending on God's grace; God, having chosen the people Israel, not abandoning them; and God's kindness assuring that our sins will be forgiven. The verses quoted 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.

THE HEAVENS WILL BE GLAD יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם. The two verses preceding this one, and the three that follow, each begin with God's personal name. In this verse, the first letters of the first four Hebrew words spell out an acrostic of God's name, *yod-hei-vav-hei*.

ADONAI IS...HAS ALWAYS BEEN...WILL BE SOVEREIGN FOREVER יהוה מֶלֶךְ, יהוה מָלָךְ, יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד. These three biblical phrases, strung together as a single verse, recur frequently in the siddur, but they are never found together in a single biblical verse. Though references to God as a royal sovereign are common in the Bible, especially in Psalms, they are quite rare in the Torah itself. Indeed, "God will be sovereign forever and ever" (יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד), from the Song at the Sea (Exodus 15:18), is one of only two times in the Torah that God is mentioned as a royal sovereign—both times in poems.

GOD, WHO IS COMPASSIONATE, WILL FORGIVE SIN וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עָוֹן. These same verses traditionally precede the Bar'khu (the call to worship) in the weekday evening service (page 116). In the 10th-century siddur of Saadiah Gaon they precede the recitation of the afternoon service as well. That may be why these two verses appear here, in what was originally the first prayer included in P'sukei D'zimra. Our knowledge that God forgives our sins and will receive us simply for who we are allows us to turn to God in prayer.

Your House

Where is God's house? In biblical Judaism, God's dwelling place was imagined first as the portable desert sanctuary, then as the fixed Temple. In Psalm 27 (page 87, recited during the High Holy Day season), God's house is described as the place for which we yearn. We can imagine God's house as the place where we might experience the promise of fullness of being; where we are affirmed, and loved; the place where we might be at peace with ourselves, and at peace with our surroundings.

Your Dominion

The affirmation of God's dominion is immediately followed by the assertion that God raises up the fallen and supports those who are bent over. God's majesty is always connected with protection of the vulnerable, healing the wounded, restoring hope to the despairing; this is the essence of God's power. The God we praise is characterized by love and care.

ASHREI

A transliteration of Ashrei may be found on page 72–73.

Blessed are they who dwell in Your house;
they shall praise You forever.
Blessed the people who are so favored;
Blessed 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.

אַשְׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתֶךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֶּלָה.
אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁכָּכָה לּוֹ, אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁיְּהוָה אֱלֹהָיו.

תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד

אֲרוֹמִמְךָ אֱלוֹהַי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וַאֲבָרְכָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
בְּכָל־יוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָּ, וַאֲהַלְלָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד, וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ אֵין חֵקֶר.
דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ.
הֲדַר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ, וְדִבְרֵי נִפְלְאֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה.
וֶעֱזוּז נוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ יֹאמֵרוּ, וּגְדֻלָּתְךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה.
זֵכֶר רַב טוּבְךָ יַבִּיעוּ, וְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ.
חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה, אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וּגְדָל־חָסֶד.
טוֹב יְהוָה לַכֹּל, וְרַחֲמָיו עַל כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו.
יוֹדוּךָ יְהוָה כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְבָרְכוּכָה.
כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמֵרוּ, וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יְדַבֵּרוּ.
לְהוֹדִיעַ לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרֹתָיו, וּכְבוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתוֹ.
מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֹלָמִים, וּמֶמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדֹר.
סוֹמֵךְ יְהוָה לְכָל־הַנֹּפְלִים, וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכְּפוּפִים.
עֵינֵי כֹל אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּ, וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן לָהֶם אֶת־אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ.

BLESSED ARE THEY אַשְׁרֵי. While the majority of this prayer comes from Psalm 145, recited here in its entirety, the first two verses come from other psalms (84:5 and 144:15), as does the last verse (115:18). The opening verses were chosen, in part, because of the repetition of the word *ashrei*, translated here as "blessed." *Ashrei* is one of many Hebrew words describing happiness. The verbal root of this word also means to advance, and is also related to *yashar*, meaning "straight." *Ashrei*, then, is the feeling of contentedness when our behavior and our thoughts look forward, when our path forward seems straight, assured. Often, we may achieve that feeling when we sense that what we accomplish in our lives is meaningful, and in accord with God's wish for us.

I EXALT YOU אֲרוֹמִמְךָ. Psalm 145 begins with this verse, enunciating the praise of God in the first person. It ends by affirming that the utterance of "my" mouth will be echoed by all that lives. This inclusiveness is reflected similarly in one of the prayer's most notable literary features: the diversity of words used for communication with God and about God (a total of thirteen different words). One teaching might be the recognition that people experience, express, and articulate their relationship to God in different ways. Indeed, even for a single individual, there are days when praise of God flows freely and easily, and others when mere recitation is all that is within reach. This emphasis on the expansive inclusion of diverse expressions is further reflected in the psalm's *alef*-to-*tav* acrostic structure.

You Satisfy with Contentment All That Lives

Every person's spiritual need is different, yet the One God is infinite, offering satisfaction to each in accord with each person's needs.

—YEHUDAH ARYEH LEIB ALTER OF GUR

Adonai Is Near

The two verses "You satisfy with contentment all that lives" and "Adonai is near to all who call, to all who call sincerely" are intimately connected. Knowing that God responds to our calling leads to our ability to live with contentment. In this reading, satisfaction and contentment depend not on getting everything we want, but rather on our assurance that when we call out, God listens.

—*based on* SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

Who Looks with Hope

Many commentators remark on the Hebrew word *tikvo*, meaning "hope," which when vocalized differently becomes *shivro*, "the things that break us." There are moments when we may feel shattered, defeated. At times, it is the very shattering of what was that paves the way for a hoped-for future of new possibility.

Releases the Bound from Their Chains

Among the chains that bind us are the habits of mind, our rehearsed response to the daily demands of life, keeping us from seeing the wonder of existence.

—*based on* SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

Opening Your hand, You satisfy with contentment all that lives.
ADONAI is righteous in all that God does,
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!

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 will reign forever;
your God, O Zion, from generation to generation.
Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalm 146

פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ, וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן.
צַדִּיק יהוה בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו, וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו.
קָרוֹב יהוה לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו, לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֻהוּ בֶאֱמֶת.
רְצוֹן יְרֵאָיו יַעֲשֶׂה, וְאֶת־שַׁוְעָתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם.
שׁוֹמֵר יהוה אֶת־כָּל־אֹהֲבָיו, וְאֵת כָּל־הָרְשָׁעִים יַשְׁמִיד.
◂ תְּהִלַּת יהוה יְדַבֶּר־פִּי,
וִיבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

תהלים קמה

וַאֲנַחְנוּ נְבָרֵךְ יָהּ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. הַלְלוּיָהּ.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.
הַלְלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה.
אֲהַלְלָה יהוה בְּחַיָּי, אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהַי בְּעוֹדִי.
אַל תִּבְטְחוּ בִנְדִיבִים, בְּבֶן־אָדָם שֶׁאֵין לוֹ תְּשׁוּעָה.
תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יָשֹׁב לְאַדְמָתוֹ,
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אָבְדוּ עֶשְׁתֹּנֹתָיו.

אַשְׁרֵי שֶׁאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעֶזְרוֹ, שִׂבְרוֹ עַל יהוה אֱלֹהָיו.
עֹשֶׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בָּם,
הַשֹּׁמֵר אֱמֶת לְעוֹלָם.
עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט לָעֲשׁוּקִים, נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לָרְעֵבִים,
יהוה מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים, יהוה פֹּקֵחַ עִוְרִים,
יהוה זֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים, יהוה אֹהֵב צַדִּיקִים.
◂ יהוה שֹׁמֵר אֶת־גֵּרִים,
יָתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה יְעוֹדֵד, וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים יְעַוֵּת.
יִמְלֹךְ יהוה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר.
הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמו

OPENING YOUR HAND פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ. According to the Babylonian Talmud, this verse is the primary reason that this psalm was chosen for its central place in our daily liturgy (Berakhot 4b). It is an expression of gratitude for what we have been given in life. Some have the custom of opening the palms of their hands when reciting this verse, as if to imitate God's generosity, and to inculcate this virtue of openness and generosity as part of their own lives.

PSALMS 146–150. Psalm 146 introduces a series of five interconnected psalms that begin and end with the compound word *halleluyah*, "praise God." These psalms have been described as forming "a single hymn to God" in which "the same chords are struck and reverberate in ever increasing force and intensity" (Elijah Munk). Psalm 146 begins in the first person, a single voice contemplating God's presence in the life of the individual. Psalm 147 praises God as protector of the Jewish people. Psalm 148 invites all peoples and all of creation to join together in celebrating God's providence. Psalm 149 sings of a future when the faithful rejoice and divine justice is rendered. And Psalm 150 exultantly concludes with the prayer that "every breath be praise of God."

PSALM 146. In this first psalm in the series, God is named as the one who cares for the oppressed, pursues justice, and frees those who are bound in chains. At the very outset, the God who is repeatedly praised in this series is described as the one whose very essence is ethical, concerned with equity and care for the vulnerable.

Psalm 147: An Interpretive Rendering

How sweet to sing to you, Lord,
and to thank you for all your blessings.
You rebuild what has been ruined
and recreate what was lost.
You heal the broken-hearted;
You are the medicine for their wounds.
You lift up the afflicted and give them the courage to endure . . .
But most, you rejoice in a pure heart
and in those who let you shine through them.
You give them joy in your joy
and you bless their loves with your love.
You bring your peace to their families
and grant them your infinite wealth.
You send your wisdom to their minds;
your light runs faster than a thought.
Above all others they are blessed
because they can hear you speak
(though your love speaks in all people,
in the silence of every heart).

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.
How delightful to utter sweet praise.

ADONAI will rebuild Jerusalem, gather in the dispersed people of Israel. The one who counts the stars and names each and every one of them, who heals the broken-hearted, and binds their wounds. Our great sovereign, infinitely powerful, the author of designs beyond recounting, ADONAI, heartens the humble, hurling 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 God's just decrees.
Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalm 147

הַלְלוּיָהּ.
כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, כִּי נָעִים נָאוָה תְהִלָּה.
בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם יהוה, נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יְכַנֵּס.
הָרוֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב וּמְחַבֵּשׁ לְעַצְּבוֹתָם,
מוֹנֶה מִסְפָּר לַכּוֹכָבִים, לְכֻלָּם שֵׁמוֹת יִקְרָא.
גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ וְרַב כֹּחַ, לִתְבוּנָתוֹ אֵין מִסְפָּר.
מְעוֹדֵד עֲנָוִים יהוה, מַשְׁפִּיל רְשָׁעִים עֲדֵי אָרֶץ.
עֱנוּ לַיהוה בְּתוֹדָה, זַמְּרוּ לֵאלֹהֵינוּ בְּכִנּוֹר,
הַמְכַסֶּה שָׁמַיִם בְּעָבִים, הַמֵּכִין לָאָרֶץ מָטָר,
הַמַּצְמִיחַ הָרִים חָצִיר,
נוֹתֵן לִבְהֵמָה לַחְמָהּ, לִבְנֵי עֹרֵב אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאוּ.
לֹא בִגְבוּרַת הַסּוּס יֶחְפָּץ, לֹא בְשׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ יִרְצֶה,
רוֹצֶה יהוה אֶת־יְרֵאָיו, אֶת־הַמְיַחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ.

שַׁבְּחִי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם אֶת־יהוה, הַלְלִי אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן.
כִּי חִזַּק בְּרִיחֵי שְׁעָרָיִךְ, בֵּרַךְ בָּנַיִךְ בְּקִרְבֵּךְ.
הַשָּׂם גְּבוּלֵךְ שָׁלוֹם, חֵלֶב חִטִּים יַשְׂבִּיעֵךְ,
הַשֹּׁלֵחַ אִמְרָתוֹ אָרֶץ, עַד מְהֵרָה יָרוּץ דְּבָרוֹ,
הַנֹּתֵן שֶׁלֶג כַּצָּמֶר, כְּפוֹר כָּאֵפֶר יְפַזֵּר,
מַשְׁלִיךְ קַרְחוֹ כְפִתִּים, לִפְנֵי קָרָתוֹ מִי יַעֲמֹד.
יִשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וְיַמְסֵם, יַשֵּׁב רוּחוֹ יִזְּלוּ מָיִם,
◄ מַגִּיד דְּבָרָיו לְיַעֲקֹב, חֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל.
לֹא עָשָׂה כֵן לְכָל־גּוֹי, וּמִשְׁפָּטִים בַּל יְדָעוּם.
הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמז

PSALM 147 achieves its literary power by weaving together two themes: Adonai our God is the protector of the people Israel, who will rebuild Jerusalem, and simultaneously the one who sustains all of creation, especially those who are poor and broken in spirit. The people Israel may be broken-hearted, but God will care for them, both because God cares for all who are vulnerable, but also because Zion is God's favored dwelling place.

HEALS THE BROKEN-HEARTED הָרוֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב. We would expect the phrase to read (as in other biblical contexts) "who heals the sick." Here, though, the psalmist talks of spiritual healing, of healing the soul. It is the people's faith that God repairs.

VICTORIOUS CHARIOTS DO NOT PLEASE GOD לֹא בִגְבוּרַת הַסּוּס יֶחְפָּץ. Ancient empires glorified themselves by conquest; military victory was a sign of greatness. The psalmist insists on a different standard of greatness: the rule of law, the maintenance of a just world.

GOD SENDS THE DIVINE WORD TO EARTH הַשֹּׁלֵחַ אִמְרָתוֹ אָרֶץ. Genesis describes God as creating the world through speech. Here the poet picks up on that image: the ice melts because God has spoken. The image of God's speech is then expanded, referring not only to natural law but also to Torah, thus linking the two. The Torah, or at least its primary teaching of justice and ethics, is here identified with natural law. Just as rainfall is a necessary aspect of earthly existence, without which there is no sustenance, so too it is with the ethical and religious life: belief in God and faith in the healing power of love and kindness are essential for life.

NO OTHER NATION HAS BEEN SO PROVIDED לֹא עָשָׂה כֵן לְכָל־גּוֹי. The previous psalm had a universal theme. Now Israel's particular place in the universal scheme is affirmed: the people Israel are to model the divine ideal.

Praise

The very word *hallelujah* is a rousing one, calling us both to be aware of God's presence and to praise the Holy One. But praise is often difficult for us: How can we praise God when there is much in God's world that is awful? Why should we praise any being when we ourselves get so little praise, even attention, during the day? The psalm addresses these questions. . . . [It] urges us to admire the beauty of the canvas which God has painted—a painting we can walk into as soon as we leave our homes in the morning. "Respond to Adonai: 'Thank You!'" And by giving yourself practice in praising God, use this newfound skill in praising other people as well. . . . [Y]ou may find that you awaken their long-lost praise skills, of which you may one day be a beneficiary.

—RICHARD LEVY

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,
shining 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־יהוה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם,
הַלְלוּהוּ בַּמְּרוֹמִים.
הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־מַלְאָכָיו,
הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־צְבָאָיו,
הַלְלוּהוּ שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ,
הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵי אוֹר,
הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם,
וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל הַשָּׁמָיִם.
יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יהוה,
כִּי הוּא צִוָּה וְנִבְרָאוּ,
וַיַּעֲמִידֵם לָעַד לְעוֹלָם,
חָק־נָתַן וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר.

הַלְלוּ אֶת־יהוה מִן הָאָרֶץ,
תַּנִּינִים וְכָל־תְּהֹמוֹת.
אֵשׁ וּבָרָד שֶׁלֶג וְקִיטוֹר,
רוּחַ סְעָרָה עֹשָׂה דְבָרוֹ.
הֶהָרִים וְכָל־גְּבָעוֹת,
עֵץ פְּרִי וְכָל־אֲרָזִים.
הַחַיָּה וְכָל־בְּהֵמָה,
רֶמֶשׂ וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף.
מַלְכֵי אֶרֶץ וְכָל־לְאֻמִּים,
שָׂרִים וְכָל־שֹׁפְטֵי אֶרֶץ.
בַּחוּרִים וְגַם בְּתוּלוֹת,
זְקֵנִים עִם נְעָרִים.
יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יהוה,
כִּי נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ,
הוֹדוֹ עַל אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם.

◂ וַיָּרֶם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ תְּהִלָּה לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו,
לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַם קְרֹבוֹ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמח

PSALM 148 describes the diverse elements of creation united in harmonious purpose in their praise of God, the source of all life. The psalm begins by describing the heavens, the sun and the moon, the stars, and the celestial waters all praising the name of Adonai, who fixed them in time and space. The middle of the psalm turns its attention to the animate and inanimate objects of God's earthly creation: the hail and the snow, the mountains and the trees, the beasts and the cattle, the bugs and the birds—all offering praise to Adonai, their creator. Lastly, the concluding verses of the psalm turn toward humanity and see the diversity of people as an expression of the splendor of existence and as praise of the creator.

Sing to Adonai a New Song

Singing can express a person's overflowing gratitude when words no longer suffice, serving as a channel to express the deepest aspects of our souls. The quality of one's voice matters less than the wholeness of one's intention. A contemporary rabbi, Shefa Gold, teaches that chanting may also serve as a means of channeling deep truths beyond the self: "With the power of my voice and the wholeheartedness of my intention, I call forth the beauty that is hidden within existence. As that beauty sings itself through me, I open myself as a channel, as a vessel, as a vehicle for the awareness of God's presence in the world."

With High Praise of God on Their Lips

It is possible to read this psalm—as many traditional commentaries do—as teaching that the kind of speech those devoted to God utter, "the praise of God on their lips," *is* the double-edged sword (literally "two-lipped") that is their weapon. It is their words that defeat oppressors, making of them people who themselves teach about justice (reading the Hebrew as *laasot bahem*, "making of them"). In this vision, it is the teaching of justice itself that is transformative.

—*based on* MARTIN S. COHEN

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 לַיהוה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ,
תְּהִלָּתוֹ בִּקְהַל חֲסִידִים.
יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֹשָׂיו,
בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן יָגִילוּ בְמַלְכָּם.
יְהַלְלוּ שְׁמוֹ בְמָחוֹל,
בְּתֹף וְכִנּוֹר יְזַמְּרוּ לוֹ.
כִּי רוֹצֶה יהוה בְּעַמּוֹ,
יְפָאֵר עֲנָוִים בִּישׁוּעָה.
יַעְלְזוּ חֲסִידִים בְּכָבוֹד,
יְרַנְּנוּ עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹתָם.
רוֹמְמוֹת אֵל בִּגְרוֹנָם,
וְחֶרֶב פִּיפִיּוֹת בְּיָדָם.
לַעֲשׂוֹת נְקָמָה בַּגּוֹיִם,
תוֹכֵחוֹת בַּלְאֻמִּים.
◂ לֶאְסֹר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזִקִים וְנִכְבְּדֵיהֶם בְּכַבְלֵי בַרְזֶל.
לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּהֶם מִשְׁפָּט כָּתוּב, הָדָר הוּא לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו.
הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמט

PSALM 149. The series of Halleluyah psalms alternates between the universal, all the world and all of humanity (146, 148, 150), and the particular, Jerusalem and the people Israel interacting with the world (147, 149). Here, the people Israel are seen as God's servants—God's agents in bringing an end to evil and oppression in the world. Psalm 146 spoke of God as protecting the lowly and the vulnerable. Now, as we approach the end of the series and the climax of praise of God, those who oppose God's order—those who are oppressors—are overthrown. The violence described in this psalm may be disquieting, but it is a battle fought to overcome evil. Interestingly, the ancient rabbis reinterpreted the double-edged sword to mean the teachings of Torah—that is, the defeat of evil will be accomplished through the teaching of God's law.

Praise God

The artist may give a concert for the sake of the promised remuneration, but, in the moment when he is passionately seeking with his fingertips the vast swarm of swift and secret sounds, the consideration of subsequent reward is far from his mind. His whole being is immersed in the music. The slightest shift of attention, the emergence of any ulterior motive, would break his intense concentration, and his single-minded devotion would collapse, his control of the instrument would fail. . . . Prayer, too, is primarily *kavanah*, the yielding of the entire being to one goal, the gathering of the soul into focus.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

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-maḥol, 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*.

הַלְלוּיָהּ,
הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקָדְשׁוֹ,
הַלְלוּהוּ בִּרְקִיעַ עֻזּוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בִּגְבוּרֹתָיו,
הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גֻּדְלוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֵקַע שׁוֹפָר,
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנֵבֶל וְכִנּוֹר.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֹף וּמָחוֹל,
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעֻגָב.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְצִלְצְלֵי שָׁמַע,
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה.
◂ כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהַלֵּל יָהּ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהַלֵּל יָהּ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קנ

PSALM 150. Just as Psalm 150 serves as the poetic finale of the Book of Psalms, so too in the morning's liturgy this psalm plays the role of concluding P'sukei D'zimra. The psalm describes a symphony of song and praise voiced by the musical instruments common in biblical times. In reciting the words of Psalm 150, we become members of an orchestra praising God. Finally, every breath shall be a praise of God.

Many commentators remark that in the first chapter of Genesis, God creates the world through ten statements, "God said..." (for example, "Let there be light"). The revelation on Mount Sinai similarly is called by the Torah *aseret ha-d'varim*, the "ten sayings," the Decalogue. Here, the series of Psalms 146–150 includes the word *halleluyah* ten times. Thus the concluding chorus in Psalm 150—in which all that lives ecstatically sings *halleluyah*—might be seen as the climax not only of the Book of Psalms, but as a glorious hymn to the God of creation and of Sinai.

בָּרוּךְ יהוה לָעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.
בָּרוּךְ יהוה מִצִּיּוֹן, שֹׁכֵן יְרוּשָׁלָיִם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
בָּרוּךְ יהוה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, עֹשֵׂה נִפְלָאוֹת לְבַדּוֹ.
◂ וּבָרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם,
וְיִמָּלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ,
אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.

BLESS בָּרוּךְ. The first verse of this paragraph (Psalm 89:53) concludes the third section of the Book of Psalms. The last two verses are the concluding lines of the second section of the Book of Psalms (72:18–19). Each verse begins with the word *barukh*, "bless." The liturgist has also included another verse beginning with *barukh* (135:21), affirming that the God we pray to as the God of Israel is the sole author of the wonders we experience in the world. The repetition of the word *barukh* in each verse reminds us of the opening of P'sukei D'zimra, which began with the multiple repetitions of the word *barukh*; these collective verses thus form an envelope around the psalms we have just recited. The service will move on to the recitation of Sh'ma and its blessings, which will begin with the call of *bar'khu*, to which we will likewise respond by saying *barukh*.

The oldest versions of P'sukei D'zimra ended here, and so the repetition of the affirmative response "Amen" formed an appropriate conclusion.

Blessed Are You

Rabbi Levi Yitzḥak of Berditchev used to sing a song, a 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!

—MARTIN BUBER
trans. by Olga Marx

It is customary to stand through the Bar'khu on page 34.

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

It is customary to stand through the Bar'khu on page 34.

וַיְבָרֶךְ דָּוִיד אֶת־יְהוָה לְעֵינֵי כָּל־הַקָּהָל וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִיד:
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִינוּ, מֵעוֹלָם וְעַד
עוֹלָם. לְךָ יהוה הַגְּדֻלָּה וְהַגְּבוּרָה וְהַתִּפְאֶרֶת וְהַנֵּצַח
וְהַהוֹד, כִּי כֹל בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ, לְךָ יהוה הַמַּמְלָכָה
וְהַמִּתְנַשֵּׂא לְכֹל לְרֹאשׁ. וְהָעֹשֶׁר וְהַכָּבוֹד מִלְּפָנֶיךָ,
וְאַתָּה מוֹשֵׁל בַּכֹּל, וּבְיָדְךָ כֹּחַ וּגְבוּרָה, וּבְיָדְךָ לְגַדֵּל
וּלְחַזֵּק לַכֹּל. וְעַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ,
וּמְהַלְלִים לְשֵׁם תִּפְאַרְתֶּךָ.

דברי הימים א, כט:י-יג

אַתָּה הוּא יהוה לְבַדֶּךָ, אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם,
שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־צְבָאָם, הָאָרֶץ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ,
הַיַּמִּים וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם, וְאַתָּה מְחַיֶּה אֶת־כֻּלָּם,
וּצְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם לְךָ מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים. ◂ אַתָּה הוּא יהוה
הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתָּ בְּאַבְרָם, וְהוֹצֵאתוֹ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים,
וַשַּׂמְתָּ שְׁמוֹ אַבְרָהָם, וּמָצָאתָ אֶת־לְבָבוֹ נֶאֱמָן לְפָנֶיךָ.

וְכָרוֹת עִמּוֹ הַבְּרִית לָתֵת אֶת־אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי הַחִתִּי הָאֱמֹרִי
וְהַפְּרִזִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי וְהַגִּרְגָּשִׁי לָתֵת לְזַרְעוֹ, וַתָּקֶם אֶת־דְּבָרֶיךָ
כִּי צַדִּיק אָתָּה. וַתֵּרֶא אֶת־עֳנִי אֲבֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרָיִם,
וְאֶת־זַעֲקָתָם שָׁמַעְתָּ עַל יַם סוּף. וַתִּתֵּן אֹתֹת
וּמֹפְתִים בְּפַרְעֹה, וּבְכָל־עֲבָדָיו וּבְכָל־עַם אַרְצוֹ,
כִּי יָדַעְתָּ כִּי הֵזִידוּ עֲלֵיהֶם, וַתַּעַשׂ לְךָ שֵׁם כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.
◂ וְהַיָּם בָּקַעְתָּ לִפְנֵיהֶם וַיַּעַבְרוּ בְתוֹךְ הַיָּם בַּיַּבָּשָׁה,
וְאֶת־רֹדְפֵיהֶם הִשְׁלַכְתָּ בִּמְצוֹלֹת, כְּמוֹ אֶבֶן בְּמַיִם עַזִּים.

נחמיה ט:ו-יא

DAVID PRAISED ADONAI וַיְבָרֶךְ דָּוִיד. Having just concluded the "Psalms of David," the liturgy now appends David's blessing of the people as the ark was brought up to Jerusalem. Only the first half of David's prayer is included; the section concerning David's dedication of the Temple that his son Solomon will build is left out. The theme of this paragraph is God's majesty and power, a proper conclusion to the words just recited in P'sukei D'zimra and, equally, a prayer serving as an introduction to the Song at the Sea. This is one of two times in the Bible that we find the phrase *Barukh atah Adonai*, which later became the rabbinic formula for a *b'rakhah*.

YOU, ADONAI ALONE אַתָּה הוּא יהוה לְבַדֶּךָ. This prayer, taken from the Book of Nehemiah, summarizes the Torah's tale from Genesis to Exodus, from creation to the crossing of the Sea of Reeds. As Reuven Kimelman, a contemporary liturgical scholar, points out, this late addition to the liturgy (probably 11th century, Germany) provides a perfect bridge between the previous paragraph, which speaks of God's singular rule, and the Song at the Sea that we are about to recite, which celebrates the central event of Jewish history: being freed from slavery.

Saw
The Hebrew word meaning "saw" (*vayar*) sounds similar to the word meaning "feared" (*vayira*). As we read the Song at the Sea, we may imagine the joy the people felt at being saved. But we can also imagine the shudder they experienced as they saw the dead. More, it may have induced in them a fear of their own future. Where would this all lead? Fear and liberation are not isolated experiences, but can be present in the same moment, the same breath, the same life. Might it be that allowing ourselves the experience and expression of both joy and fear serves as the starting point for faith?

This Is My God, to Whom I Give Glory
In the Babylonian Talmud, the rabbis disagree over what it means, practically, to glorify God. Rabbi Ishmael argues that it means, "I will be beautiful before God in the mitzvot that I perform—before God, I will prepare a beautiful *lulav*, a beautiful *sukkah*, beautiful *tzitziyot* (i.e., *tallit*), beautiful *tefillin*." Abba Shaul said (offering an alternative interpretation): "Let us make ourselves like God. Just as God is gracious and merciful, so too you should be gracious and merciful." For both Rabbi Ishmael and Abba Shaul, glorifying God is not a static, or even verbal, posture: it is an action we engage in.

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; ADONAI is God's name.
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

וַיּוֹשַׁע יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרָיִם וַיַּרְא
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל־שְׂפַת הַיָּם: ◂ וַיַּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֶת־הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירְאוּ הָעָם
אֶת־יְהוָה וַיַּאֲמִינוּ בַּיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ:

שמות יד:ל-לא

אָז יָשִׁיר־מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ
לֵאמֹר אָשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאֹה גָּאָה סוּס
וְרֹכְבוֹ רָמָה בַיָּם: עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ וַיְהִי־לִי
לִישׁוּעָה זֶה אֵלִי וְאַנְוֵהוּ אֱלֹהֵי
אָבִי וַאֲרֹמְמֶנְהוּ: יְהוָה אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה יְהוָה
שְׁמוֹ: מַרְכְּבֹת פַּרְעֹה וְחֵילוֹ יָרָה בַיָּם וּמִבְחַר
שָׁלִשָׁיו טֻבְּעוּ בְיַם־סוּף: תְּהֹמֹת יְכַסְיֻמוּ יָרְדוּ בִמְצוֹלֹת כָּמוֹ־
אָבֶן: יְמִינְךָ יְהוָה נֶאְדָּרִי בַכֹּחַ יְמִינְךָ
יְהוָה תִּרְעַץ אוֹיֵב: וּבְרֹב גְּאוֹנְךָ תַּהֲרֹס
קָמֶיךָ תְּשַׁלַּח חֲרֹנְךָ יֹאכְלֵמוֹ כַּקַּשׁ: וּבְרוּחַ
אַפֶּיךָ נֶעֶרְמוּ מַיִם נִצְּבוּ כְמוֹ־נֵד
נוֹזְלִים קָפְאוּ תְהֹמֹת בְּלֶב־יָם: אָמַר
אוֹיֵב אֶרְדֹּף אַשִּׂיג אֲחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תִּמְלָאֵמוֹ
נַפְשִׁי אָרִיק חַרְבִּי תּוֹרִישֵׁמוֹ יָדִי: נָשַׁפְתָּ
בְרוּחֲךָ כִּסָּמוֹ יָם צָלְלוּ כַּעוֹפֶרֶת בְּמַיִם
אַדִּירִים: מִי־כָמֹכָה בָּאֵלִם יְהוָה מִי
כָּמֹכָה נֶאְדָּר בַּקֹּדֶשׁ נוֹרָא תְהִלֹּת עֹשֵׂה
פֶלֶא: נָטִיתָ יְמִינְךָ תִּבְלָעֵמוֹ אָרֶץ: נָחִיתָ
בְחַסְדְּךָ עַם־זוּ גָּאָלְתָּ נֵהַלְתָּ בְעָזְּךָ אֶל־נְוֵה

continued

THE SONG AT THE SEA שִׁירַת הַיָּם. While clearly a song of victory, triumph, and celebration, the Song at the Sea includes moments of vindictive violence levied against the Egyptians. In a famous midrash (Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 10b), the ancient rabbis grapple with this tension: how to both revel in our own people's freedom, and also mourn its often inevitable human cost. In the midrash, God scolds the angels for "singing as the work of My hands are drowning," but notably does not extend that same critique to the Israelites themselves. The midrash thus recognizes both the divine quality of grieving the loss of every soul, and also the distinct and unassailable human need to revel in our own moments of liberation and redemption. Jewish tradition does not allow us to turn away from the suffering of anyone, including our enemies, but the Bible acknowledges the import of, and gives us space for, temporarily eschewing that discomfort to allow for a full-hearted and uncomplicated moment of ecstasy and joy.

THEN . . . MOSES SANG אָז יָשִׁיר־מֹשֶׁה. Rashi remarks that the grammatical juxtaposition of past (*az*, "then") and future (*yashir*, literally "will sing") form a novel tense he calls the "continual present." In this reading, Moses and the people Israel are still singing this song of freedom, as it were; the echoes of the song are ever-present. As we chant these words each morning, we are invited to join in an ongoing celebration of freedom and liberation. We can use this moment to experience our own sense of freedom and taste the joy of lusty singing. If the moment is not a moment of redemption, surely it can be a foretaste of redemption.

Took a Timbrel

A rabbinic midrash imagines that while yet in Egypt, Miriam knew that the Israelites would eventually be saved at the Sea. When packing their belongings, she urged the other women to bring their drums and musical instruments with them. Miriam understood that to leave Egypt would require not just food and physical sustenance, but the tools and the spiritual fortitude to sing, dance, celebrate, praise, and experience joy. One of the few female prophets identified by the tradition as such, Miriam's prophetic abilities seem to be anchored in hopeful activity even in the depths of oppression, preparing for a future yet to unfold.

Red Sea

We cannot cross until we
carry each other,
all of us refugees, all of us
prophets.
No more taking turns on
history's wheel,
trying to collect old debts
no-one can pay.
The sea will not open that
way.

This time that country
is what we promise each other,
our rage pressed cheek to cheek
until tears flood the space between,
until there are no enemies left,
because this time no one will be
left to drown
and all of us must be chosen.
This time it's all of us or none.

—AURORA LEVINS MORALES

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 will reign forever and ever.

Exodus 15:1–18

Some 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 singing responsively:
"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.

שָׁמְעוּ עַמִּים יִרְגָּזוּן חִיל
אָחַז יֹשְׁבֵי פְלֶשֶׁת: אָז נִבְהֲלוּ אַלּוּפֵי
אֱדוֹם אֵילֵי מוֹאָב יֹאחֲזֵמוֹ רָעַד נָמֹגוּ
כֹּל יֹשְׁבֵי כְנָעַן: תִּפֹּל עֲלֵיהֶם אֵימָתָה
וָפַחַד בִּגְדֹל זְרוֹעֲךָ יִדְמוּ כָּאָבֶן עַד־
יַעֲבֹר עַמְּךָ יהוה עַד־יַעֲבֹר עַם־זוּ
קָנִיתָ: תְּבִאֵמוֹ וְתִטָּעֵמוֹ בְּהַר נַחֲלָתְךָ מָכוֹן
לְשִׁבְתְּךָ פָּעַלְתָּ יהוה מִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כּוֹנְנוּ
יָדֶיךָ: יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:

שמות טו:א-יח

Some include this passage:

וַתִּקַּח מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה אֲחוֹת אַהֲרֹן אֶת־הַתֹּף בְּיָדָהּ
וַתֵּצֶאן כָּל־הַנָּשִׁים אַחֲרֶיהָ בְּתֻפִּים וּבְמָחֹלֹת: וַתַּעַן לָהֶם
מִרְיָם שִׁירוּ לַיהוה כִּי־גָאֹה גָּאָה סוּס וְרֹכְבוֹ רָמָה בַיָּם:

שמות טו:ב-כא

◄ כִּי לַיהוה הַמְּלוּכָה וּמֹשֵׁל בַּגּוֹיִם. וְעָלוּ מוֹשִׁעִים בְּהַר צִיּוֹן
לִשְׁפֹּט אֶת־הַר עֵשָׂו, וְהָיְתָה לַיהוה הַמְּלוּכָה.
וְהָיָה יהוה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה יהוה אֶחָד וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

LEAD THEM . . . TO YOUR LOFTY MOUNTAIN תְּבִאֵמוֹ . . . בְּהַר נַחֲלָתְךָ. In Jewish tradition, our freedom was not granted for its own sake. We were freed in order to serve God and be agents of the holy in the world. Importantly, the physical locale of God's "holy habitation" can be conceived of as more than just the Temple. More broadly, it extends to the world in which we now live, which has the similar potential—through our words, actions, and intentions—to be made a holy place.

THEN MIRIAM . . . TOOK וַתִּקַּח מִרְיָם. While the inclusion of Miriam's song in the liturgy is an innovation not universally adopted, some biblical scholars speculate that Miriam's song is in fact older than—and perhaps the original source for—the Song at the Sea that Moses sings. In the ancient world, victory songs were sung by women greeting soldiers as they came home from battle. As it is preserved now, Miriam's song is distinct from Moses's in two key ways. First, it is phrased as an imperative, capturing its role as an urgent and visceral expression of that moment's overwhelming emotional experience. Second, Miriam's song contains a physical component: a dance, bodily expressing the joy of the moment. In that vein, it is illuminating to consider how swaying and bowing function in traditional Jewish prayer.

FOR SOVEREIGNTY BELONGS TO ADONAI כִּי לַיהוה הַמְּלוּכָה. The song of Moses ends with the declaration of God's sovereignty, to which the liturgy now attaches 3 additional verses expanding on that theme. A verse from the Book of Psalms (22:29, "For sovereignty . . .") expresses the hope that God's sovereignty may be manifest in our time, thus transforming the story of the exodus from a one-time historical event to a paradigm of redemption for all time. This thought is developed further with the following verse from Obadiah, describing the return of Mount Zion to Jewish sovereignty (1:21, "Deliverers shall rise . . ."). The paragraph concludes with a verse from Zechariah about the vision of oneness, a final redemption (14:9, "On that day . . .")—the same verse with which we conclude Aleinu at the end of our service.

It Is Fitting . . .

The words "it is fitting . . . to sing songs of praise" should not be read as referring to our praise of God, but rather as extolling God's praise of human beings. Hearing our song, God is dressed in glorious robes whose luster, in turn, blesses us, praises us, for fulfilling God's mission on earth.

—*based on* THE MAHARAL OF PRAGUE

Before God, Without a Placeholder

. . . "If so, why am I"
Rebecca asked
and she went to inquire
of God.
When a person doubts
herself
and her doubts include
the "I,"
her attention turns to the
prayers
which have been resting at
her lips' gates.
Bewildered, she lets her
mouth speak
and the longings of her
soul are revealed.

—ELAZAR BENYOETZ

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.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, some recite Psalm 130 (top of page 62).

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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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 שִׁמְךָ לָעַד מַלְכֵּנוּ,
הָאֵל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.
כִּי לְךָ נָאֶה, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
שִׁיר וּשְׁבָחָה, הַלֵּל וְזִמְרָה, עֹז וּמֶמְשָׁלָה, נֶצַח,
גְּדֻלָּה וּגְבוּרָה, תְּהִלָּה וְתִפְאֶרֶת, קְדֻשָּׁה וּמַלְכוּת,
◂ בְּרָכוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה,
אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל בַּתִּשְׁבָּחוֹת, אֵל הַהוֹדָאוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלָאוֹת,
הַבּוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זִמְרָה, מֶלֶךְ, אֵל, חֵי הָעוֹלָמִים.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, some recite Psalm 130 (top of page 62).

חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

Leader:

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כִּרְעוּתֵהּ,
וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאַר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדַּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל־

[*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* לְעֵלָּא לְעֵלָּא מִכָּל־]
בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא תֻּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנֶחֱמָתָא דַּאֲמִירָן בְּעָלְמָא,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

CONCLUDING B'RAKHAH. The Spanish sage David Abudraham (14th century) remarked that this prayer utilizes 15 synonyms to describe song and praise of God. The number 15 evokes several associations. There were 15 steps leading up to the main area of the Temple in Jerusalem. At each step, the ancient rabbis imagined, the Levites would sing one of the 15 Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120–134). Additionally, Seligman Baer (19th century, Germany) points out in his siddur commentary that the Priestly Blessing contains 15 words; it is appropriate that we praise God with 15 words, just as we are blessed by God with 15 words.

WHO DELIGHTS IN THE CHORUS OF SONG הַבּוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זִמְרָה. The Hebrew word *boḥer,* translated here as "delights," literally means "chooses." Moshe Alshikh (16th century) explains that we marvel that God, accustomed to the praise offered by the perfect angels, prefers the praise of imperfect human beings.

GIVING LIFE TO ALL WORLDS חֵי הָעוֹלָמִים. Biblically the word *olam* refers to time, but in rabbinic usage it also can mean world (in the spatial sense). Thus the phrase may also be translated as "giving life to all time," which some translators understand as referring both to this world and the world that is coming. Our translation assumes that in the context of the morning prayer, the liturgist may have meant to emphasize that all life, everywhere, owes its existence to God.

ḤATZI KADDISH serves as a transition from one part of the service to another. We have ended our preparatory prayers and are about to begin the critical part of our service, the morning Sh'ma and its attendant *b'rakhot.* It is not only the service leader who plays a role in this "announcement"; the communal response that God's name be acknowledged forever and ever is vital. Here, that communal response also anticipates the Sh'ma, where the Hebrew version of this Aramaic phrase will be recited: *barukh shem k'vod malkhuto l'olam va-ed.*

The Sh'ma and Its Blessings

Minyan: Communal Prayer

Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Shimon ben Yoḥai: *As for me, may my prayer come to You, Adonai, at a favorable moment* (Psalm 69:14)—When is it a favorable moment? When the congregation is at prayer.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Theologically, human community may be characterized as the divinely initiated counterpoise to solitude, both for human beings and the Divine.

—EVERETT GENDLER

A congregation joining for the sake of heaven is like an ark that can save us from the flood.

—SHALOM NOAH BEREZOVSKY

Prayer in Place of Bar'khu: When a Minyan Is Not Present

שִׂמַּח נֶפֶשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ,
כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא.

Bring joy to Your servant,
for I look to You. (Psalm 86:4)

Response:

בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא הֵסִיר
תְּפִלָּתִי וְחַסְדּוֹ מֵאִתִּי.

Praised is God who has not turned away my prayer, or God's faithful care from me. (Psalm 66:8, 20)

Barukh elohim asher lo heisir t'filati v'hasdo meiti.

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:

f Praised be ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed forever and ever.

Barukh Adonai ha-m'vorakh l'olam va-ed.

We are seated.

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.

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.

God, the Sun, and Us

The light of the sun makes life on earth possible. The sun's heat creates the conditions for life; and plants, on which all animal life ultimately depends, would not live and grow without it. Yet for all its power, its rays are invisible to the eye. The sun and its effect may be a metaphor for God's presence. Though unseen, there are moments when we may feel the Divine suffusing the universe, the Divine Presence sharing love and care, nurturing all that lives. Dawn, in its fascinating, miraculous appearance, can especially evoke this experience of mystery and presence.

—NEIL GILLMAN

קריאת שמע וברכותיה

Bar'khu, the leader's invitation to prayer, is recited while standing. The leader bows when saying the word בָּרְכוּ and stands straight when reciting the name of God. Similarly, the congregation bows at the word בָּרוּךְ and straightens to full height at the recitation of God's name.

Leader:

בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יהוה הַמְבֹרָךְ.

Congregation, then the leader repeats:

f בָּרוּךְ יהוה הַמְבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

We are seated.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ,
עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת־הַכֹּל.

הַמֵּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים,
וּבְטוּבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל־יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית.
מָה רַבּוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ יהוה,
כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ,
מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ.

THE SH'MA AND ITS BLESSINGS. The recitation of the Sh'ma (Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21; Numbers 15:37–41) morning and evening was probably commonly practiced well before the destruction of the Second Temple. Over time, "Hear, O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is one" came to represent the quintessential statement of Jewish faith.

In the early years of the first millennium, other biblical passages were added to the recitation of the Sh'ma. After the destruction of the Temple, rabbinic sages added *b'rakhot* surrounding it, expounding on its themes: two before the recitation and one after. The first connects God to creation, the morning lights which mark the time for the recitation of the Sh'ma. The second talks of God's love in giving us "laws for life," counterposed to the love of God we express in the Sh'ma. The *b'rakhah* following the Sh'ma continues the theme of the third paragraph of the Sh'ma in talking of the exodus from Egypt as the quintessential depiction of God as redeemer. The commentary will explain each of these in turn.

BAR'KHU: THE CALL TO WORSHIP. The call to worship marks the formal beginning of the Shaḥarit (morning) service. The ancient rabbis called the service leader the *sh'liaḥ tzibbur*, the "messenger" of the congregation. As a member of the congregation, the leader both invites the community to worship and subsequently responds to the call as well.

Drawing on a talmudic debate about the *kohanim* (priests) in the Temple, Eliezer Diamond, a contemporary Talmud scholar, understands the term *sh'liaḥ tzibbur* as implying a dual role. The Babylonian Talmud (Yoma 19a–b) considers whether the *kohanim* should be considered *sh'luḥei d'raḥmana*, agents of God, or *sh'luḥei didan*, "our messengers"—that is, agents of the community of Israel. As with the *kohanim*, the contemporary *sh'liaḥ tzibbur* must function as both: elevating the concerns and pleas of the community nearer to the Divine, and also bringing an awareness of God's presence to the community.

TO WHOM ALL PRAISE IS DIRECTED הַמְבֹרָךְ. The Talmud of the Land of Israel explains the word *ha-m'vorakh* to mean "whom all of us praise" (Berakhot 7:3), and that interpretation forms the basis of the translation found here.

YOU ILLUMINE THE EARTH הַמֵּאִיר לָאָרֶץ. Two cognate themes preoccupy this prayer: God's timelessness amid the steady passage of time, the flow of one day after another; and the renewal of creation each day, the gift of a day. Our time is insignificant when measured against the endless flow of time, yet each day, each hour, may have enormous significance for us.

An Alternate B'rakhah

Saadiah Gaon (10th century) offers the following shortened version of this b'rakhah, for when an individual prays alone:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ,
עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא
אֶת־הַכֹּל.
הַמֵּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים
עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים,
וּבְטוּבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל־יוֹם
תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה,
יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, forming light and creating darkness, bringing harmony while creating all. With kindness, You illumine the earth and all who dwell on it; in Your goodness, You renew creation day after day. *Barukh atah* ADONAI, creator of lights.

A Contemporary Meditation

Some recite this piyyut as a meditation; others recite the opening line of the b'rakhah (page 34) followed by this piyyut and conclude with the last line of the b'rakhah (page 36) as a substitute for the traditional liturgy.

יוֹם לְיוֹם יַבִּיעַ אִמְרָתֶךָ,
בְּחִדּוּשׁ עוֹלָמְךָ בְּכָל־עֵת.
אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ הַמָּה יְצָרוּנִי,
וְיִתְחַדְּשׁוּ דְמִיוֹנְךָ בִּי.

One day whispers Your speech to the next, as You create the world anew each moment. Your light and Your truth formed me, and renew Your image within me.

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 shelter,
our saving shield our stronghold.

Almighty, **b**lessed, **c**reator of all who **d**well on **e**arth, the **f**irmament and **g**oodly **h**eavens are **i**lluminated with Your **j**ustice, **k**indness, and **l**ight; they **m**ake Your **n**ame an **o**bject of **p**raise; **q**uietly, **r**esolutely, **s**oulfully all **t**ell in **u**nified **v**oice of Your **w**ise, **x**traordinary, and **z**ealous care.
El barukh g'dol dei-ah, heikhin u-fa-al zohorei ḥamah. Tov yatzar kavod lishmo, me'orot natan s'vivot uzo. Pinot tz'va-av k'doshim rom'mei shadai, tamid m'saprim k'vod El u-k'dushato.

▸ 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.

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, may Your name be acclaimed forever; You fashion beings that serve You, servants, all standing at the edges of the universe, proclaiming reverently with one voice the words of the living God, the sovereign of the universe.

The Cosmic Secret

The many who search do not find
the cosmic secret,
beyond comprehension:
where God resides,
how the light of the Holy One shines
here, hidden throughout the world,
yet filling it with splendor.
The one of whom we are in awe
is the only one to be praised.

—SOLOMON IBN GABIROL

הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְרוֹמָם לְבַדּוֹ מֵאָז,
הַמְשֻׁבָּח וְהַמְפֹאָר וְהַמִּתְנַשֵּׂא מִימוֹת עוֹלָם,
אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ,
אֲדוֹן עֻזֵּנוּ, צוּר מִשְׂגַּבֵּנוּ,
מָגֵן יִשְׁעֵנוּ, מְשֻׂגָּב בַּעֲדֵנוּ.

אֵל בָּרוּךְ, גְּדוֹל דֵּעָה,
הֵכִין וּפָעַל זִוֵּי חַמָּה.
טוֹב יָצַר כָּבוֹד לִשְׁמוֹ,
מְאוֹרוֹת נָתַן סְבִיבוֹת עֻזּוֹ.
פִּנּוֹת צְבָאָיו קְדוֹשִׁים,
רוֹמְמֵי שַׁדַּי,
תָּמִיד מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֵל וְקְדֻשָּׁתוֹ.
◂ תִּתְבָּרַךְ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל שֶׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ,
וְעַל מְאוֹרֵי אוֹר שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ יְפָאֲרוּךָ סֶּלָה.

תִּתְבָּרַךְ צוּרֵנוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ וְגֹאֲלֵנוּ בּוֹרֵא קְדוֹשִׁים.
יִשְׁתַּבַּח שִׁמְךָ לָעַד מַלְכֵּנוּ, יוֹצֵר מְשָׁרְתִים,
וְאֲשֶׁר מְשָׁרְתָיו כֻּלָּם עוֹמְדִים בְּרוּם עוֹלָם
וּמַשְׁמִיעִים בְּיִרְאָה יַחַד בְּקוֹל,
דִּבְרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם.

IN YOUR GOODNESS וּבְטוּבוֹ *(bottom of previous page).* Along with the insistence that God is the creator of all that exists, the liturgy emphasizes God's kindness, God's goodness in sustaining life. We may experience today as a loving gift.

ALMIGHTY, BLESSED אֵל בָּרוּךְ. This early anonymous acrostic poem has a simple, almost story-book rhythm of four beats to the line. The acrostic and the meter move us to contemplate the Hebrew alphabet itself as an instrument of creation. Our translation, which is close but not literal, seeks to capture this intent by maintaining the acrostic in English.

KEDUSHAH D'YOTZER: THE ANGELIC PRAISE OF GOD. Every Kedushah (Song of Holiness) is based on the mystical visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, who each described witnessing 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 image of the hosts of angels reciting the praise of God symbolizes the song that all creation sings to God. But its placement here, as an introduction to the Sh'ma, opens us to another understanding, as well. Our recitation of the Sh'ma parallels the angelic chorus. Our earthly voices have the same intent as the angelic song. Indeed, the Babylonian Talmud (Ḥullin 91b) asserts that the angels on high cannot begin to sing until we on earth have begun our song, the Sh'ma. (Elijah Munk)

BEINGS THAT SERVE YOU, SERVANTS מְשָׁרְתִים . . . מְשָׁרְתָיו. Rabbinic lore tells of two kinds of angelic creations: those who are part of God's permanent court (like the well-known angelic figures Michael and Gabriel) and those who are created each day to be conveyers of that day's message. The liturgist speaks of both of them as "proclaiming . . . the words of the living God" (Babylonian Talmud, Ḥagigah 14a).

כֻּלָּם אֲהוּבִים, כֻּלָּם בְּרוּרִים, כֻּלָּם גִּבּוֹרִים,
וְכֻלָּם עוֹשִׂים בְּאֵימָה וּבִירְאָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם.
◂ וְכֻלָּם פּוֹתְחִים אֶת־פִּיהֶם בִּקְדֻשָּׁה וּבְטָהֳרָה,
בְּשִׁירָה וּבְזִמְרָה, וּמְבָרְכִים וּמְשַׁבְּחִים,
וּמְפָאֲרִים וּמַעֲרִיצִים, וּמַקְדִּישִׁים וּמַמְלִיכִים:

אֶת־שֵׁם הָאֵל, הַמֶּלֶךְ, הַגָּדוֹל, הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא קָדוֹשׁ הוּא.
וְכֻלָּם מְקַבְּלִים עֲלֵיהֶם עֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם זֶה מִזֶּה,
וְנוֹתְנִים רְשׁוּת זֶה לָזֶה, לְהַקְדִּישׁ לְיוֹצְרָם בְּנַחַת רוּחַ,
◂ בְּשָׂפָה בְרוּרָה וּבִנְעִימָה קְדוּשָׁה, כֻּלָּם כְּאֶחָד
עוֹנִים וְאוֹמְרִים בְּיִרְאָה:

קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ יהוה צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֹא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

◂ וְהָאוֹפַנִּים וְחַיּוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל מִתְנַשְּׂאִים
לְעֻמַּת שְׂרָפִים, לְעֻמָּתָם מְשַׁבְּחִים וְאוֹמְרִים:

בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יהוה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

לְאֵל בָּרוּךְ, נְעִימוֹת יִתֵּנוּ. לְמֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיָּם,
זְמִירוֹת יֹאמֵרוּ, וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת יַשְׁמִיעוּ. כִּי הוּא לְבַדּוֹ
פּוֹעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת, עוֹשֶׂה חֲדָשׁוֹת,
בַּעַל מִלְחָמוֹת, זוֹרֵעַ צְדָקוֹת,
מַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעוֹת, בּוֹרֵא רְפוּאוֹת,
נוֹרָא תְהִלּוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלָאוֹת,
הַמְחַדֵּשׁ בְּטוּבוֹ בְּכָל־יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית.
כָּאָמוּר: לְעֹשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.
◂ **אוֹר חָדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תָּאִיר וְנִזְכֶּה כֻלָּנוּ מְהֵרָה לְאוֹרוֹ.**
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

ALL OF THEM BELOVED כֻּלָּם אֲהוּבִים. The word "all" (*kullam*) is repeated seven times, a perfect number in biblical and rabbinic thinking. In this liturgical understanding, there is no concept of fallen angels, angels who stand in opposition to God—they are all beloved, they are all God's servants. (Elijah Munk)

EACH TURNS TO ANOTHER וְכֻלָּם מְקַבְּלִים . . . זֶה מִזֶּה. The prophet Isaiah says that the angels "turn" to one another (6:3), a phrase rendered by the Targum (the Aramaic translation) as "they receive permission" from each other. The behavior of the angelic chorus represents an ideal: they turn to each other, wait for one another, and speak *b'nahat ruah*, "gently," but *b'safah v'rurah*, "clearly."

THE CREATOR OF THE GREAT LIGHTS לְעֹשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים. Psalm 136:7.

ZION צִיּוֹן. This line picks up on the motif of the light of creation and of the dawn, tying it to an image of the renewal of Zion as a source of ultimate illumination. Its inclusion is controversial. Saadiah Gaon (10th century) is emphatic that this line should not be recited, since the *b'rakhah* centers on gratitude for what has and is occurring (namely, the morning lights), and not for a future event. In accord with this opinion, the line is not included in either the Sephardic or Italian rites.

Holiness

Angels are holy beings, but human beings are not angels, so what does God demand of us? What God asks is that each person strive to attain the level of holiness of which they are capable at that moment. Be holy: in whatever circumstances you find yourself . . .

—*based on* MENAḤEM MENDEL OF VORKA

All of them beloved, all of them pure, all of them mighty, and all of them carry out with reverence and awe the will of the one who has dominion over them. ▸ In purity and in holiness, all of them raise up 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.

Each turns to another as they proclaim their loyalty to God, and each gives permission to the other to hallow their creator. Gently, ▸ in a clear voice and with hallowed speech, together as one, they respond in 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 be the glory of Adonai wherever Adonai dwells.
Barukh k'vod Adonai mimkomo.

They offer sweet melodies to God, whom they bless. They chant hymns 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 ḥadash al tziyon ta-ir v'nizkeh khulanu m'heirah l'oro.

Extraordinary and Ordinary Angels

The notion of angels is a way of humanizing the presence of God. Danny Siegel, a contemporary poet, interprets this ancient Jewish belief as follows: "Jewish tradition teaches that there are two kinds of angels of whom we are to be aware. One kind is present at the extraordinary occasions in the cycle of living. The other, a pair of angels, is always with us . . ."

He understands this to mean that our talk of angels is symbolic of our experience of the spiritual life. The personification of angels is a means of expressing our experience of spiritual reality. Sometimes we find God in extraordinary moments—such times seem almost miraculous. At other times, we experience a sense of presence, of being accompanied on our journey in life, making our everyday experience seem touched by God.

A New Light

The prayer asking for "a new light to shine on Zion" is a prayer that all humanity walk in God's light, for it is based on Isaiah's vision: "And nations shall walk in your light" (Isaiah 60:3).

—JACOB BEN ASHER

An Alternate Meditation

Some recite this piyyut as a meditation; others substitute it for the traditional liturgy and conclude with the closing line at the end of the paragraph in the main column.

תָּאִיר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ,
וְתוּקַד לִבֵּנוּ אַהֲבָתֶךָ.
חָקֵּי חַיִּים תְּלַמְּדֵנוּ,
וְדַעְתְּךָ אֱלֹהִים תּוֹרֵנוּ.

Cause our eyes to shine
with Your teaching,
so that our hearts are
roused with love.
Teach us the laws of life,
and instruct us to know You.

Knowing and Doing

Many commentators have remarked on the progression of verbs in this prayer from learning to doing.

Gordon Tucker, a contemporary rabbi, teaches:

"Torah study is intended not as an intellectual exercise but rather as a guide to practice that will lead to a better, kinder, more refined and gracious life. It is not even enough to intend to teach the Torah that one learns; one must intend to practice it in one's life as well. Only then does it fulfill all of the purposes for which we were given the Torah in the first place."

Arnold Eisen, former chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, takes this thought a step further: "There is a kind of knowledge . . . that cannot be had from the outside. There are things we learn—and learn to love—only through disciplined practice. Love of God, of Torah and mitzvot, develops in this fashion."

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.

Ahavah rabah ahavtanu Adonai eloheinu,
ḥemlah g'dolah viteirah ḥamalta aleinu.
Avinu malkeinu, ba-avur avoteinu [v'imoteinu] she-batḥu v'kha
va-t'lamdeim ḥukei ḥayim, ken t'honeinu u-t'lamdeinu.
Avinu ha-av ha-raḥaman, ha-m'raḥeim, raḥeim aleinu, v'ten b'libeinu
l'havin u-l'haskil lishmo-a lilmod 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'yaḥed 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'ha-nora bataḥnu,
nagilah v'nism'ḥah bi-shuatekha.

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.

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 vaḥarta mikol am v'lashon,
► v'keiravtanu l'shimkha ha-gadol selah be-emet,
l'hodot l'kha u-l'yaḥedkha b'ahavah.
Barukh atah adonai, ha-boḥer b'amo yisrael b'ahavah.

אַהֲבָה רַבָּה אֲהַבְתָּנוּ, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
חֶמְלָה גְדוֹלָה וִיתֵרָה חָמַלְתָּ עָלֵינוּ.
אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ, בַּעֲבוּר אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ]
שֶׁבָּטְחוּ בְךָ וַתְּלַמְּדֵם חֻקֵּי חַיִּים,
כֵּן תְּחָנֵּנוּ וּתְלַמְּדֵנוּ.
אָבִינוּ, הָאָב הָרַחֲמָן, הַמְרַחֵם, רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ
וְתֵן בְּלִבֵּנוּ לְהָבִין וּלְהַשְׂכִּיל, לִשְׁמֹעַ,
לִלְמֹד וּלְלַמֵּד, לִשְׁמֹר וְלַעֲשׂוֹת וּלְקַיֵּם
אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי תַלְמוּד תּוֹרָתֶךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.

וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ, וְדַבֵּק לִבֵּנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
וְיַחֵד לְבָבֵנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ,
וְלֹא נֵבוֹשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
כִּי בְשֵׁם קָדְשְׁךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא בָּטָחְנוּ,
נָגִילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ.

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

וַהֲבִיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת הָאָרֶץ,
וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיוּת לְאַרְצֵנוּ,
כִּי אֵל פּוֹעֵל יְשׁוּעוֹת אָתָּה,
וּבָנוּ בָחַרְתָּ מִכָּל־עַם וְלָשׁוֹן,
► וְקֵרַבְתָּנוּ לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל סֶלָה בֶּאֱמֶת,
לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ וּלְיַחֶדְךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַבּוֹחֵר בְּעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה.

SECOND B'RAKHAH BEFORE THE SH'MA אַהֲבָה רַבָּה אֲהַבְתָּנוּ. The first *b'rakhah* before the Sh'ma speaks of God as creator and sovereign of the world. This second *b'rakhah* shifts the images of God, speaking of God as a loving parent and teacher. In doing so, it transforms the meaning of the Sh'ma, to which it serves as an introduction.

While the Sh'ma commands us to love God, this *b'rakhah* affirms God's love for us. The Sh'ma asks us to affirm the love of God by embodying and spreading God's teaching; in this *b'rakhah*, God's love is expressed by giving us wisdom to understand and interpret the teaching. The words of Torah that God speaks, and our study of them, constitute a conversation, a kind of love-patter, between God and Israel.

GATHERING THE TZITZIT. The phrase "bring us safely from the four corners of the earth" evokes the four corners of the *tallit*. As we recite these words, some follow a practice, dating to the late Middle Ages, of gathering together the *tzitzit* (fringes) of the *tallit*, symbolizing Israel's unity and ingathering. The *tzitzit* are held through the third paragraph of the Sh'ma, where the word *tzitzit* is mentioned three times. Some kiss their *tzitzit* at each mention, indicating the preciousness of mitzvot and highlighting that the words of the Torah are acted upon even as they are being recited. The custom is to kiss them again at the word *emet* ("truly"), in the passage that follows the third paragraph.

Some hold the *tzitzit* at only one corner, and wrap that around their finger to see and feel it. The *tzitzit* are wrapped around the finger of the left hand, so that they are on the side closest to the heart, as the verse says: "impress [these words] upon your heart." These customs are an embodiment of our relation to mitzvot. The importance for us is to adopt a practice that helps us express ourselves, adding to our focus on the words and their meaning for us.

YOU HAVE CHOSEN US וּבָנוּ בָחַרְתָּ. The concept of "chosenness" is not intended to suggest some kind of inherent superiority, but rather the Torah's specific ways in which Jews are called to live in the presence of God. Nor is this particularity solely for Jews' own sake. Not only Jews, but humanity as a whole has a stake in the lives we lead in accord with the teachings of Torah: the absolute value we place on the worth of every human being, the demands we make for equal justice, the creation of a society of care and empathy, and our search for holiness.

Sh'ma/Hear
The first stage of the religious life is stopping to listen, to hear what is calling.

Meditation for the Sh'ma—A Dialogue on Oneness

Different people may have different intentions when they recite the Sh'ma. Here are two distinct voices interpreting the Sh'ma in conversation with each other:

VOICE 1: When I cover my eyes and recite the Sh'ma, I see each of us reaching inside ourselves to find our deepest wellsprings—if you will, touching our souls.

VOICE 2: When I recite the Sh'ma, my focus is on *Echad*/Oneness. I close my eyes and try to sense an all-inclusive Oneness, of which each of us is merely a part—like a wave in the ocean. I try to let go of my ego, my experience of having a separate self.

VOICE 1: That "all" can never be experienced by us; we live with ultimate mystery. We are not gods, but humans: vulnerable, limited, finite. Acceding to our limitation as individual beings is the beginning of ethics.

VOICE 2: Maybe it's not that the "all" can never be experienced, but that it can never be experienced for long. Both the finding and the losing of that connection—with God and with my neighbor—matter. Sensing that we are one builds generosity and responsibility—I grasp less, share more. That the sensation of oneness passes humbles me, makes me feel my limitations.

VOICE 1: The Sh'ma begins with "Hear O Israel . . ."; it is addressed to us and to our neighbors. When I recite the Sh'ma, I think of myself and others. We affirm that each of us has spiritual reserves, a depth of humanity, and so we pray that everyone find and constantly draw on those living waters.

VOICE 2: Yes, I and my neighbors each have a soul, but on a deeper level we all partake of the same Soul.

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.
In the absence of a minyan, we add:
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 arm
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'vav'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'vavekha. 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: אֵל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָן

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יהוה אֶחָד.

Recited quietly: בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יהוה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ
וּבְכָל־מְאֹדֶךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ
הַיּוֹם עַל־לְבָבֶךָ: וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ
בְּבֵיתֶךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשָׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ: וּקְשַׁרְתָּם
לְאוֹת עַל־יָדֶךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטָפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וּכְתַבְתָּם
עַל־מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתֶךָ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ:

דברים ו:ד-ט

INDIVIDUAL RECITATION. When there is no *minyan*, and therefore no official prayer leader, we add the three words *El melekh ne'eman*, "God is a faithful sovereign," the initial letters of which form an acrostic of the word *amen*. The Kabbalists noted that the Sh'ma contains 245 words. When there is a *minyan*, the service leader concludes with the three words *Adonai eloheikhem emet*, "Adonai, your God, Truly"—bringing the total number of words to 248, which the ancients thought to be the number of parts of the human body. When there is no *minyan* and the concluding three words are omitted, adding these three opening words allow for the same count of 248. In this way, it is as if our entire being affirms the Sh'ma.

ONE אֶחָד. The Hebrew word *ehad*, "one," has been variously interpreted. *Ehad* can mean "unique, singular," and thus it is an assertion that God is different from all else we meet. It can also mean that God is totally unified and not made up of parts, unlike everything else we encounter, which can be subdivided. Further, it can mean "only," which would mean there is no other being who is divine. Mystics interpret it as meaning that all of creation is a manifestation of the one God—that is, despite the seemingly separate and distinct diversity of existence, all is one.

ADONAI IS OUR GOD יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ. The meaning and even the pronunciation of יהוה is elusive. When Moses asks God for God's name, the reply is *ehyeh asher ehyeh*, which some translate as, "I shall be as I shall be" or "I am as I am," or as some commentators have it, "I will be there with you in the way that I am there."

PRAISED BE THE NAME בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד. According to the Mishnah, when God's name was pronounced by the High Priest the people would respond, "Praised be the name . . ." (Yoma 3:8). The Babylonian Talmud (Pesahim 56a) adds that this is also the proper congregational response to the Sh'ma. Since this is a response but not part of the biblical text, we differentiate it by reciting it in a whisper. Generations who recited these words, going back to Temple times, may resound in our mind in this whisper.

TEACH THEM AGAIN AND AGAIN TO YOUR CHILDREN וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ. This instruction that one generation is to teach the next was essential in keeping Judaism alive through the generations.

BIND THEM AS A SIGN וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת. The Sh'ma is insistent that our relation with the words of Torah be totally involving. We are asked to "speak of them" as we go out to the world, to transmit them intergenerationally, and to surround ourselves with them, reminded of them when we enter and leave our home. Finally, we even embody these words by wearing them on our arms near our heart, and above our eyes. As we read this instruction in this paragraph and the next, many have the custom of touching the *tefillin* to indicate that we have indeed adopted these instructions as our practice. Some then kiss the fingers that touched the *tefillin*, representing thereby that they are beloved. (For a description and explanation of *tefillin*, see page 6.)

V'ahavta

Say these words when you
lie down and when you
rise up,
when you go out and when
you return. In times of
mourning
and in times of joy. Inscribe
them on your doorposts,
embroider them on your
garments, imprint them
on your shoulders,
teach them to your children,
your neighbors, your
enemies,
recite them in your sleep,
here in the cruel shadow
of empire:
Another world is possible.
. . .
Don't waver. Don't let
despair sink its sharp teeth
Into the throat with which
you sing. Escalate your
dreams.
Make them burn so fiercely
that you can follow them
down
any dark alleyway of history
and not lose your way.
Make them burn clear as a
starry drinking gourd
Over the grim fog of
exhaustion, and keep
walking.

Hold hands. Share water.
Keep imagining.
So that we, and the children
of our children's children
may live

—AURORA LEVINS MORALES

This Day

Experience each day as a new revelation. See the wonders of creation afresh and see God's instruction in new ways. Do not see them as old letters, which no one takes to heart, but like new ones, which you are anxious to read.

—*based on*
SIFREI DEUTERONOMY

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

וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמֹעַ תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה
אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעָבְדוֹ בְּכָל־
לְבַבְכֶם וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁכֶם: וְנָתַתִּי מְטַר־אַרְצְכֶם בְּעִתּוֹ יוֹרֶה
וּמַלְקוֹשׁ וְאָסַפְתָּ דְגָנֶךָ וְתִירֹשְׁךָ וְיִצְהָרֶךָ: וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב
בְּשָׂדְךָ לִבְהֶמְתֶּךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבָעְתָּ:

הִשָּׁמְרוּ לָכֶם פֶּן־יִפְתֶּה לְבַבְכֶם וְסַרְתֶּם וַעֲבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים
אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם: וְחָרָה אַף־יְהוָה בָּכֶם וְעָצַר
אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מָטָר וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת־
יְבוּלָהּ וַאֲבַדְתֶּם מְהֵרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה
נֹתֵן לָכֶם:

וְשַׂמְתֶּם אֶת־דְּבָרַי אֵלֶּה עַל־לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל־נַפְשְׁכֶם
וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל־יֶדְכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטָפֹת בֵּין
עֵינֵיכֶם: וְלִמַּדְתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ
בְּבֵיתֶךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשָׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ: וּכְתַבְתָּם
עַל־מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתֶךָ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ:

לְמַעַן יִרְבּוּ יְמֵיכֶם וִימֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע
יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֵיכֶם לָתֵת לָהֶם כִּימֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ:

דברים יא:יג-כא

IF YOU WILL HEAR וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמֹעַ. Reward and punishment are described here in very concrete terms, but we can understand them as poetic metaphors for the general sense that our actions have consequences. Reuven Hammer, a modern siddur commentator, remarks: "One need not believe literally in physical reward and punishment to accept the doctrine of the second paragraph of the Sh'ma. Its importance is not in the specific way in which it was formulated and concretized, but in the very assertion that there is meaning in our actions, that there is responsibility for what we do."

As our understanding of the natural world evolves, we become ever more aware of the ways in which what we once thought were discrete, disconnected entities are in fact part of an interdependent, connected whole. So too with us: our character, our deeds, our words affect others and the world in ways we do not yet—and may never—fully understand.

Do Not Be Seduced by Your Eyes

The ancient rabbis praised those who look out at the world with *ayin tovah*, an eye that sees goodness. The Hebrew word for "eye," *ayin*, is also the word for "fountain." Entering the world, we can see an ever-flowing source of wonderful possibility, or view it only as a place of danger and threat, containing forces with which we need to compete or overpower. Similarly, some commentators note that we can denigrate ourselves, seeing ourselves as having nothing to really give the world, or we can see ourselves as blessed with gifts that we would share with others. We choose how we "see" the world and ourselves.

Redemption

Some recite this piyyut as a meditation; others substitute this piyyut for the traditional liturgy and conclude with the last paragraphs on page 42.

אֱמוּנָתֵנוּ תְּנַחֲלֵנוּ
וַחֲלוֹמוֹתֵינוּ יַדְרִיכֵנוּ
וּמַעֲשֵׂינוּ יְבִיאֵנוּ
לְהַר קָדְשֶׁךָ וּנְרַנְּנֶךָּ
כְּמֹשֶׁה וּמִרְיָם
עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּם:

Our faith shall guide us,
our dreams shall direct us,
and our deeds shall bring us
to Your holy mountain,
and we shall praise You
as Moses and Miriam did
on the banks of the Sea:

מִי כָמֹכָה בָּאֵלִם יהוה,
מִי כָּמֹכָה נֶאְדָּר בַּקֹּדֶשׁ,
נוֹרָא תְהִלֹּת עֹשֵׂה פֶלֶא.

Mi khamokha ba-eilim Adonai,
mi kamokha nedar bakodesh,
nora t'hilot, oseh feleh.

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

Vayomer Adonai el moshe leimor. Dabber el b'nei yisrael v'amarta aleihem v'asu lahem tzitzit al kanfei vigdeihem l'dorotam v'nat'nu al tzitzit ha-kanaf p'til t'khelet. V'hayah lakhem l'tzitzit u-r'item oto u-z'khartem et kol mitzvot Adonai va-asitem otam v'lo taturu aḥarei l'vavkhem v'aḥarei eineikhem asher atem zonim aḥareihem. L'ma-an tizk'ru va-asitem et kol mitzvotai vi-h'yitem k'doshim leiloheikhem. Ani Adonai eloheikhem asher hotzeiti etkhem mei-eretz mitzrayim liyot lakhem leilohim ani Adonai eloheikhem.

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.

Some drop their tzitzit at this point.

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.

וַיֹּאמֶר יהוה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:
דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וְעָשׂוּ לָהֶם **צִיצִת**
עַל־כַּנְפֵי בִגְדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתְנוּ עַל־**צִיצִת** הַכָּנָף פְּתִיל
תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְ**צִיצִת** וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־
מִצְוֹת יהוה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא תָתוּרוּ אַחֲרֵי לְבַבְכֶם
וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתָי וִהְיִיתֶם קְדֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם:
אֲנִי יהוה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יהוה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

במדבר טו:לז-מא

אֱמֶת

When there is a minyan, the leader adds:

◂ יהוה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם – אֱמֶת –

וְיַצִּיב וְנָכוֹן וְקַיָּם וְיָשָׁר וְנֶאֱמָן וְאָהוּב וְחָבִיב וְנֶחְמָד
וְנָעִים וְנוֹרָא וְאַדִּיר וּמְתֻקָּן וּמְקֻבָּל וְטוֹב וְיָפֶה הַדָּבָר
הַזֶּה עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Some drop their tzitzit at this point.

אֱמֶת אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם מַלְכֵּנוּ, צוּר יַעֲקֹב מָגֵן יִשְׁעֵנוּ.
◂ לְדוֹר וָדוֹר הוּא קַיָּם וּשְׁמוֹ קַיָּם,
וְכִסְאוֹ נָכוֹן וּמַלְכוּתוֹ וֶאֱמוּנָתוֹ לָעַד קַיֶּמֶת.

וּדְבָרָיו חַיִּים וְקַיָּמִים, נֶאֱמָנִים וְנֶחֱמָדִים,
לָעַד וּלְעוֹלְמֵי עוֹלָמִים, עַל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ] וְעָלֵינוּ,
עַל בָּנֵינוּ וְעַל דּוֹרוֹתֵינוּ,
וְעַל כָּל־דּוֹרוֹת זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדֶיךָ.

ADONAI SAID זר. The ancient rabbis saw this paragraph as a crucial element of the liturgy because of its mention of the liberation from Egypt. Equally important, it instructs us to strive to be holy, by asking us to place certain limits upon desire. In Jewish thought the two ideas of freedom and limitation go hand in hand. In this regard, Rabbi Isaac Hutner points out that God put limits on divine activity, stopping creation on the Sabbath. Similarly, we discover a need to limit our impulses in order to devote ourselves to a life of meaning.

HOLDING THE TZITZIT. Some hold the *tzitzit* and look at them, especially at the words "and you shall see them and remember." Some kiss the *tzitzit* at each mention of the word, as well as at the end of the paragraph when reciting the word *emet*, "truly," and then again in the following paragraph at the words *l'olam va-ed*, "forever."

Customs abound as to when to drop the *tzitzit*. For instance, some hold on to them until the mention of ". . . responding to Your people when they cry out."

TRULY אֱמֶת. The tradition read the word *emet*, "truly," as referring both to what precedes it and what follows. It constitutes the first word of the next paragraph but is recited as if it were the last word of the preceding paragraph. This siddur's physical placement of the word highlights that tradition. Read together with what precedes, it echoes the words of Jeremiah, "Adonai is true, is indeed the living God, and the sovereign of time and the world" (10:10). Read together with what follows, it introduces a creed to which we assent: that God is the sovereign of the world and we are God's people. Taken simply as a statement on its own, *emet* can be read as a description of God's essence, truth: absolute truth may be elusive to us, but God is the ultimate knower of truth. Alternatively, *emet* may be understand as "steadfast, faithful"; in this reading, we affirm that God is always present for us.

The Exodus from Egypt

Leon Kass, a political scientist commenting on the Exodus, remarks that structuring our lives and communities on three pillars—the memory of overcoming oppression; learning the meaning of freedom and constraint; and entering the Tabernacle, seeking God—we learn the meaning of redemption. Redemption is always being on the way, marching through the desert, having a vision of a promised land but not having arrived, yet.

Justice and Violence

The question of violence in the service of justice is highly fraught. While we wish to deal with the world in a generous loving way, there is real evil, which sometimes requires harshness in response. In this regard, the Ḥasidic master Menaḥem Mendel of Kotzk taught that, on the Day of Atonement, we ask for forgiveness for the evil we committed in the process of doing good.

Pharaoh

We each have a Pharaoh within us, with which we need to contend.

— YAAKOV YOSEF OF POLNOYE

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.

ADONAI our God, You redeemed us from Egypt,
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.
Waters engulfed their oppressors; not one of them survived—
the beloved people sang praise, acclaiming God for all that had occurred.

עַל הָרִאשׁוֹנִים וְעַל הָאַחֲרוֹנִים דָּבָר טוֹב וְקַיָּם לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,
אֱמֶת וֶאֱמוּנָה חֹק וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר.

אֱמֶת שֶׁאַתָּה הוּא יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], מַלְכֵּנוּ, מֶלֶךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
◀ גּוֹאֲלֵנוּ גּוֹאֵל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
יוֹצְרֵנוּ, צוּר יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ,
פּוֹדֵנוּ וּמַצִּילֵנוּ, מֵעוֹלָם שְׁמֶךָ אֵין אֱלֹהִים זוּלָתֶךָ.

עֶזְרַת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ] אַתָּה הוּא מֵעוֹלָם,
מָגֵן וּמוֹשִׁיעַ לִבְנֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדוֹר.
בְּרוּם עוֹלָם מוֹשָׁבֶךָ,
וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ וְצִדְקָתְךָ עַד אַפְסֵי אָרֶץ.
אַשְׁרֵי אִישׁ שֶׁיִּשְׁמַע לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
וְתוֹרָתְךָ וּדְבָרְךָ יָשִׂים עַל לִבּוֹ.
אֱמֶת אַתָּה הוּא אָדוֹן לְעַמֶּךָ,
וּמֶלֶךְ גִּבּוֹר לָרִיב רִיבָם.

אֱמֶת אַתָּה הוּא רִאשׁוֹן, וְאַתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן,
וּמִבַּלְעָדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ.

מִמִּצְרַיִם גְּאַלְתָּנוּ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פְּדִיתָנוּ.
כָּל־בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם הָרָגְתָּ וּבְכוֹרְךָ גָּאָלְתָּ
וְיַם סוּף בָּקַעְתָּ וְזֵדִים טִבַּעְתָּ
וִידִידִים הֶעֱבַרְתָּ
וַיְכַסּוּ מַיִם צָרֵיהֶם, אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נוֹתָר.
עַל זֹאת שִׁבְּחוּ אֲהוּבִים, וְרוֹמְמוּ אֵל,

SO YOU ARE KNOWN THROUGHOUT TIME מֵעוֹלָם שְׁמֶךָ. God is named here not only as sovereign and creator (as was affirmed in the first *b'rakhah* before the Sh'ma), but also as redeemer and deliverer. God delivered us from Egypt—which, in turn, evokes our hope that we can be freed of injustice, and also freed from the entanglements that stifle our souls and sense of being.

YOU REDEEMED US FROM EGYPT מִמִּצְרַיִם גְּאַלְתָּנוּ. The exodus from Egypt is the signal event of Jewish history and of Jewish self-understanding. Indeed, the Decalogue begins with God's self-identification as the one who freed us from Egypt, "from the house of slavery."

YOU DROWNED THE WICKED וְזֵדִים טִבַּעְתָּ. The Torah envisions redemption as a multi-step process, which begins but does not end with the exodus from Egypt. Notably, at first the Israelites' redemption comes through violence and the loss of Egyptian life, including innocent life. But our vision of redemption grows and ultimately is much more expansive and universal: all peoples—indeed, all creation—living in safety, freedom, harmony, and peace. Our prayers for redemption include both. We pray for the slow step-by-step movements toward justice and betterment of the human condition—partial, messy, and at times requiring moral compromise, though they be. And we also pray for the ultimate redemption, which will be whole and universal. Some people express this duality by omitting in their Shabbat prayers references to the violence at the Sea. During the week we struggle with the realities of bringing justice into this world, but on Shabbat we envision the possibility of an ultimate, non-violent redemption.

The Meaning of Redemption

Redemption occurs on the grandest scale and in the smallest of ways. The heart of the notion of redemption expressed here is God's concern for the vulnerable: God is described as caring for the poor, the weak, the powerless, and the oppressed. Freeing the people Israel—slaves—is symbolic of that concern. When we respond to those in need, we imitate the Divine. Caring acts are redemptive acts; they build on each other, and bring into existence a new world. It is then that the "crying out" of those suffering gives way to joyful song, like Moses and Miriam at the Sea.

Redemption—A Rebbe's Proverb

If you always assume
the person sitting next to you
is the Messiah
waiting for some simple human kindness—
You will soon come to weigh your words
and watch your hands.
And if that person so chooses
not to be revealed
in your time—
It will not matter.

—DANNY SIEGEL

They offered songs and hymns of praise, blessing and thanksgiving, to the sovereign ever-living God, transcendent, powerful, and awe-inspiring, humbling the haughty, raising up the lowly, freeing those in chains, redeeming the poor, helping the weak, responding to Your people when they cry out.

▸ In homage to God on high, who is ever to be 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, majestic 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.

We rise before reciting this final paragraph preceding the Amidah; some have the custom of rising before reciting the biblical passages earlier on this page.

▸ 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, the prayer recited while standing, follows; it concludes on page 54.

וְנָתְנוּ יְדִידִים זְמִירוֹת שִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת,
בְּרָכוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְמֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיָּם,
רָם וְנִשָּׂא, גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא,
מַשְׁפִּיל גֵּאִים וּמַגְבִּיהַּ שְׁפָלִים
מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים וּפוֹדֶה עֲנָוִים
וְעוֹזֵר דַּלִּים
וְעוֹנֶה לְעַמּוֹ בְּעֵת שַׁוְּעָם אֵלָיו.

◂ תְּהִלּוֹת לְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן בָּרוּךְ הוּא וּמְבֹרָךְ.
מֹשֶׁה וּמִרְיָם וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְךָ עָנוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׂמְחָה רַבָּה,
וְאָמְרוּ כֻלָּם:

**מִי כָמֹכָה בָּאֵלִם יהוה, מִי כָּמֹכָה נֶאְדָּר בַּקֹּדֶשׁ,
נוֹרָא תְהִלֹּת, עֹשֵׂה פֶלֶא.**

◂ שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה שִׁבְּחוּ גְאוּלִים לְשִׁמְךָ עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּם,
יַחַד כֻּלָּם הוֹדוּ וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ:

יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.

We rise before reciting this final paragraph preceding the Amidah; some have the custom of rising before reciting the biblical passages earlier on this page.

◂ צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל,
קוּמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וּפְדֵה כִנְאֻמֶךָ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל.
גֹּאֲלֵנוּ, יהוה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ, קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, גָּאַל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

The Amidah, the prayer recited while standing, follows; it concludes on page 54.

MOSES AND MIRIAM מֹשֶׁה וּמִרְיָם. In the ancient world, women greeted their warrior husbands returning home with victory songs. According to the midrash (Mekhilta, *Shirata* 10), even while in Egypt, Miriam prepared the Israelite women to sing of the Egyptian defeat, and she asked them to bring their drums with them as they fled Egypt.

WHO IS LIKE YOU מִי כָמֹכָה. Exodus 15:11. This line and the one below are taken from the Song at the Sea. Joseph Heinemann, a liturgical scholar, points out that before the Sh'ma, we quoted the angels' heavenly song; following the Sh'ma, we now quote the Israelites' songs, led by Moses and Miriam. Through the recitation of the Sh'ma, the human chorus has come to equal the angelic one.

ADONAI WILL REIGN יהוה יִמְלֹךְ. Exodus 15:18.

ISRAEL יִשְׂרָאֵל. The name "Israel" is repeated five times at the conclusion of the *b'rakhah*, emphasizing the plea for the redemption of the people Israel. Our own redemption is seen as paradigmatic of the redemption of the world.

OUR REDEEMER גֹּאֲלֵנוּ. Isaiah 47:4.

LIBERATED THE PEOPLE ISRAEL גָּאַל יִשְׂרָאֵל. This *b'rakhah*, in contrast to the *b'rakhot* introducing the Sh'ma, concludes with what most consider a verb in the past tense. In the morning, we may experience our having awoken to a new day as a kind of redemption. But we know that we face a world sorely in need of redemption.

TRANSITIONING FROM THE SH'MA TO THE AMIDAH. Rabbi Yoḥanan (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 4b) taught that the Amidah, our personal and communal requests, should follow upon the last blessing of the Sh'ma, the prayer mentioning the exodus and God's response to the suffering of the oppressed. While Rabbi Yoḥanan may have been articulating the order of prayers, later commentators took his admonition to mean there should be no interruption between the two. Indeed, some even argued that one should not answer "*amen*" after the *b'rakhah*. To accommodate this opinion, some service leaders recite the *b'rakhah* in a whisper so that no one listening be required to respond.

The Amidah

The Amidah

The Mishnah announces, "One should stand and pray with a sense of "gravity" (*koved rosh*). Maimonides explains the term to mean "seriously and with preparation."

Praying the Amidah

Now Hannah was praying in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard. So Eli thought she was drunk (1 Samuel 1:13).

Rav Hamnuna said: How many significant behaviors can be learned from the biblical description of Hannah's prayer!

"Now Hannah was praying in her heart"—a person who prays should make their prayer heartfelt;

"Only her lips moved"—a person who prays should enunciate each word;

"But her voice could not be heard"—a person who prays should not speak the words aloud.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

A transliteration of the opening b'rakhot of the Amidah may be found on pages 96–97. Before the Amidah begins, it is customary to take three steps forward, as we approach God's presence. (If there is no room, we step backward first.) The sign ℸ indicates the places to bow. The Amidah concludes on page 54.

ADONAI, open my lips that my mouth may speak Your praise.

Three Introductory B'rakhot

OUR ANCESTORS

With Patriarchs:

ℸ *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.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

ℸ *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.

The God of Our Ancestors

The term "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob . . ." is semantically different from a term such as "the God of truth, goodness, and beauty." Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [and Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah] do not signify ideas, principles, or abstract values. Nor do they stand for teachers or thinkers. . . . [They] are not principles to be comprehended, but lives to be continued. . . . Abraham endures forever. We are Abraham . . .

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

To pray to the God of Abraham and Sarah is to pray not to an abstract figure, but to the One who accompanies people in their lives.

—*based on* ELIJAH MUNK

תפילת העמידה

Before the Amidah begins, it is customary to take three steps forward, as we approach God's presence. (If there is no room, we step backward first.) The sign ℸ indicates the places to bow. The Amidah concludes on page 54.

אֲדֹנָי שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ.

With Patriarchs:

ℸ בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי
יִצְחָק, וֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, הָאֵל
הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֶלְיוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,
וְזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אָבוֹת, וּמֵבִיא
גּוֹאֵל לִבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן
שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

ℸ בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם,
אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב,
אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה,
אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל, וֵאלֹהֵי לֵאָה,
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֶלְיוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,
וְזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אָבוֹת
[וְאִמָּהוֹת], וּמֵבִיא גּוֹאֵל
לִבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ
בְּאַהֲבָה.

THE AMIDAH. Along with the Sh'ma and its *b'rakhot*, the Amidah constitutes the core of Jewish prayer (*Ha-t'fillah*, "the prayer," in rabbinic literature refers to the Amidah). It is traditionally recited standing quietly (the word *amidah* means "standing"), a posture reflecting its purpose as a time for "face to face" conversation with God and for personal meditation (*avodah shebalev*, "service of the heart"). Originally, the Amidah comprised eighteen (*sh'moneh esreih*) blessings, but one was added later in Babylonia and has become part of the standard prayer. The first three and last three *b'rakhot* are recited on all days. The first three describe our relationship to the Divine; the last three express the hope that our prayer is acceptable, our gratitude for the gift of life, and a prayer for peace. On weekdays, there are thirteen intermediate *b'rakhot* expressing our needs and requests; within these *b'rakhot*, some add personal requests related to the subject of that *b'rakhah*. It is traditional to bend the knees and bow at four points: at the beginning and end of both the first *b'rakhah* and the penultimate *b'rakhah*.

ADONAI, OPEN MY LIPS אֲדֹנָי שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח. The third-century sage Rabbi Yohanan directed that this verse (Psalm 51:17) be recited before beginning the Amidah. The message of that psalm is that God wants our hearts, not our sacrifices—which accords with the interpretation of the Amidah as a substitute for the daily Temple sacrifice. We pray for the ability to pray, as it is a gift from God when the motivation to pray is awakened within us.

GOD OF ABRAHAM, GOD OF ISAAC, AND GOD OF JACOB אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב. This phrase echoes God's call to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:6).

GOD OF SARAH, GOD OF REBECCA, GOD OF RACHEL, AND GOD OF LEAH אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה, אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל, וֵאלֹהֵי לֵאָה. Recognizing that the matriarchs too were God's covenantal partners, we include their names in this *b'rakhah*. We and our tradition are the product of all of our ancestors, and Judaism is enlarged when we recognize the ways in which all of us share in shaping the Judaism we transmit to our descendants.

GREAT, MIGHTY, AWE-INSPIRING הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא. Deuteronomy 10:17.

TRANSCENDENT GOD . . . CREATES ALL אֵל עֶלְיוֹן . . . וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל. Echoing Genesis 14:19, 22.

FOR THE SAKE OF DIVINE HONOR לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ. This phrase appears in Psalms 23:3 and 106:8, but the addition of "with love" is unique to the liturgy of the Amidah.

Shield of Abraham

The use of the word "shield" (*magen*) at the end of this blessing connects our own theological doubts and fears with those of Abraham. As contemporary rabbi and liturgical commentator Elie Kaunfer notes, God appears as *magen* in a moment when Abraham—often seen as a paragon of faith—doubts whether God's promises to him will ever be fulfilled, and fears for the continuity of the covenant (Genesis 15:1). There, God tells Abraham "not to fear." Referencing that moment here in the Amidah may comfort us about our own religious doubts, reminding us that any religious life is likely to include moments of questioning and fear.

You Sustain Life

In my experience, life can change abruptly and end without warning, but life is not fragile. There is a difference between impermanence and fragility. Even on the physiological level, the body is an intricate design of checks and balances, elegant strategies of survival layered on strategies of survival, balances and rebalances.... There is a tenacity toward life which is present at the intracellular level without which even the most sophisticated of medical interventions would not succeed. The drive to live is strong even in the most tiny of human beings. I remember as a medical student seeing one of my teachers put a finger in the mouth of a newborn and, once the baby took hold, gently lift him partway off the bed by the strength of that suck. That tenacity toward life endures in all of us.

—RACHEL NAOMI REMEN

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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:

You are the sovereign
who helps and saves
and shields.
ך *Barukh atah* ADONAI,
Shield of Abraham.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

You are the sovereign
who helps and guards,
saves and shields.
ך *Barukh atah* ADONAI,
Shield of Abraham and
Guardian of Sarah.

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.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we add:

זָכְרֵנוּ לְחַיִּים, מֶלֶךְ חָפֵץ בַּחַיִּים,
וְכָתְבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים, לְמַעַנְךָ אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים.

With Patriarchs:

מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמָגֵן.
ך בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה,
מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּפוֹקֵד
וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמָגֵן.
ך בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה,
מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם וּפוֹקֵד שָׂרָה.

אַתָּה גִּבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי, מְחַיֵּה מֵתִים אַתָּה,
רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ.

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah: מַשִּׁיב הָרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם,
[From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add: מוֹרִיד הַטָּל,]

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד,
מְחַיֵּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים,
סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,
וּמְקַיֵּם אֱמוּנָתוֹ לִישֵׁנֵי עָפָר.
מִי כָמוֹךָ בַּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דּוֹמֶה לָּךְ,
מֶלֶךְ מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעָה.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we add:

מִי כָמוֹךָ אַב הָרַחֲמִים, זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים.

וְנֶאֱמָן אַתָּה לְהַחֲיוֹת מֵתִים.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, מְחַיֵּה הַמֵּתִים.

REMEMBER US זָכְרֵנוּ לְחַיִּים. This is the first of four poetic insertions in the Amidah for the Ten Days of Repentance; these additions to the liturgy reinforce the plea for life in this season of judgment.

GUARDIAN OF SARAH פּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה. The verb *pakad*, meaning "guard" or "remember," is used in Genesis 21:1. Its use here in the liturgy recognizes God's independent relationship with Sarah.

GIVES LIFE TO THE DEAD מְחַיֵּה מֵתִים. In many Jewish sources this passage is understood literally, as a reference to the belief in bodily resurrection at the end of days. Other texts, however, speak of the revival of the dead metaphorically: as the renewal of nature in the springtime, as awakening after sleep (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Berakhot 7d), as the revival of the Jewish people after exile and enslavement (Ezekiel 37), as the perpetuation of teachings and ideals of those who are deceased (Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 97a), and even as the revival of a friendship after not having seen a friend in thirty days (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 58b). The 14th-century commentator Abudraham takes the essence of the *b'rakhah* as speaking of the inevitable periods of deadening of spirit and subsequent feelings of being renewed, revived, and re-inspired. Dessication, revival, and renewal are implanted within every aspect of creation.

The Kedushah

The ancient rabbis spoke of two sets of angels: those who surround the heavenly throne, forming an honor guard for the Divine, and those who are created to descend to earth and perform a specific task. When we recite the Kedushah and enunciate the same words the angels are said to speak, which angelic host do we have in mind? Do we feel we are ascending on high, experiencing for a moment a sense of transcendence, a feeling of going beyond everyday earthly existence? Or are we in touch with a sense of the sacred that impels us forward into the world, seeking to spread a measure of the holiness we glimpse at this moment?

HOLINESS

When the Amidah is recited quietly, we continue with the last paragraph on this page, "Holy are You." The Kedushah is recited only with a minyan and while standing.

THE KEDUSHAH

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.

Others respond with praise:
"Praised is Adonai's glory wherever God dwells."

Barukh k'vod Adonai mimkomo.

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.
Barukh atah Adonai, the Holy God.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:
Barukh atah Adonai, the Holy Sovereign.

Following the Kedushah, we continue with the Fourth B'rakhah ("Knowledge") at the top of the next page.

When the Amidah is recited quietly and the Kedushah is not recited, we recite the following paragraph:

Holy are You, holy is Your name;
and holy ones praise You each day, always.
Barukh atah Adonai, the Holy God.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:
Barukh atah Adonai, the Holy Sovereign.

When the Amidah is recited quietly, we continue with the last paragraph on this page, אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ. The Kedushah is recited only with a minyan and while standing.

נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בָּעוֹלָם,
כְּשֵׁם שֶׁמַּקְדִּישִׁים אוֹתוֹ בִּשְׁמֵי מָרוֹם,
כַּכָּתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאֶךָ, וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר:
קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, יהוה צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֹא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

לְעֻמָּתָם בָּרוּךְ יֹאמֵרוּ:
בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יהוה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

וּבְדִבְרֵי קָדְשְׁךָ כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:
יִמְלֹךְ יהוה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נַגִּיד גָּדְלֶךָ,
וּלְנֵצַח נְצָחִים קְדֻשָּׁתְךָ נַקְדִּישׁ.
וְשִׁבְחֲךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפִּינוּ לֹא יָמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,
כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ אָתָּה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

Following the Kedushah, we continue with the Fourth B'rakhah (אַתָּה חוֹנֵן) at the top of the next page.

When the Amidah is recited quietly and the Kedushah is not recited, we recite the following paragraph:

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ,
וּקְדוֹשִׁים בְּכָל־יוֹם יְהַלְלוּךָ סֶּלָה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

THE KEDUSHAH, recited only in the presence of a *minyan*, is an alternate version of the third *b'rakhah* of the Amidah (the version recited by individuals is at the bottom of the page). The Kedushah is built around two central verses: "Holy, holy, holy . . ." (Isaiah 6:3) and "Praised is Adonai's glory" (Ezekiel 3:12). Both prophets experienced the heavens opening up and an angelic chorus singing to God. In chanting the same words the angelic choirs sing, we strive to bring heaven down to earth and raise earth up to heaven.

Traditionally, in imitation of the description of the angels in Ezekiel's vision ("and their feet were as one rigid foot," 1:7), the Amidah is recited with our feet together (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 10b). Many rise onto the balls of their feet with each word of the three-fold *kadosh, kadosh, kadosh*, bowing slightly to the left, to the right, and to the center, enacting the angels' greeting of each other.

In imitation of the heavenly choir, the Kedushah is sung antiphonally, as call and response, though traditions differ as to how. Each biblical verse is introduced with a medieval *piyyut*; in some customs only the prayer leader recites, and in others the congregation recites it first and the prayer leader then repeats it.

The Kedushah is recited only as part of the public recitation of the Amidah. The Amidah is at times repeated in full by the prayer leader after being recited quietly and individually (a practice known as *ḥazarat ha-shatz*, the repetition of the prayer leader). Alternatively, the community may begin together through the Kedushah, with individuals continuing privately afterward. This practice is known as *heikhe kedushah*, the Yiddish word attesting to its late Ashkenazic origin.

A brief version of the cycles of B'rakhot of Request can be found on page 55.

First Cycle of B'rakhot of Request: Our Spiritual Reality

KNOWLEDGE

You graciously endow human beings with knowledge,
and teach understanding to humanity.
Grant us knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who graciously bestows knowledge.

T'SHUVAH/TURNING

Return us, *Avinu*, to Your teaching,
and bring us closer, *Malkeinu*, to Your service,
turn us wholeheartedly to You.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who desires our return.

FORGIVENESS

Forgive us, *Avinu*, our Creator, for we have sinned;
pardon us, *Malkeinu*, our Sovereign,
for we have transgressed—
for Your nature is to forgive and pardon.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who is gracious,
exceedingly forgiving.

DELIVERANCE

Look upon our suffering, take up our cause;
redeem us soon for the sake of Your name—
You who are a mighty redeemer.
Barukh atah ADONAI, Redeemer of Israel.

On fast days, the leader adds:

Answer us, ADONAI; answer us on our fast day, for we are in great distress. Overlook our faults; turn not away from us. Be mindful of our plea and receptive to our supplication. Your love is our comfort; answer us before we call. This is the promise uttered by Your prophet: "I shall answer before they call; I shall respond while they yet deliberate." You, ADONAI, respond in time of trouble; You rescue and redeem in a time of dire distress. *Barukh atah* ADONAI, who answers in a time of trouble.

Wisdom

Rabbi Yose the son of Rabbi Ḥaninah reinterpreted the words of Solomon, "I, wisdom, dwell with cunning (*ormah*)" (Proverbs 8:12): do not construe *ormah* as "cunning," but as "nakedness." It is only when you present yourself as naked—that is when you remove the masks that hide who you are, when you are honest with yourself, and vulnerable—that you can begin to acquire wisdom.

—based on the BABYLONIAN TALMUD

T'shuvah/Turning

What is *t'shuvah* compared to? It is like two people who had their backs to each other and then turn, full of wonder at seeing each other's face.

—SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

One of the meanings of *t'shuvah* is "return." Take the energy that caused you to sin and return it to divine purpose.

—TZADOK HAKOHEN OF LUBLIN

Forgiveness

God's capacity to forgive is also the foundation that enables God to be in relation to us. And we—in relation to others we meet? Yes, there are some acts that are "unforgivable," but mostly we would be better served by quieting our anger and forgiving the "fallibility" of the other, knowing how fallible we ourselves are.

Deliverance

The prayer for deliverance follows on the heels of our asking for forgiveness for our sins and errors. We need healing for the damage to ourselves, others, and our world that our sins have caused. In this way, this *b'rakhah* expresses aspects of the wholeness, the *t'shuvah sh'leimah* for which we earlier prayed: wholeness with those around us.

A brief version of the cycles of B'rakhot of Request can be found on page 55.

אַתָּה חוֹנֵן לְאָדָם דֵּעַת.
וּמְלַמֵּד לֶאֱנוֹשׁ בִּינָה.
חָנֵּנוּ מֵאִתְּךָ דֵּעָה בִּינָה וְהַשְׂכֵּל.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, חוֹנֵן הַדָּעַת.

הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ אָבִינוּ לְתוֹרָתֶךָ,
וְקָרְבֵנוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ לַעֲבוֹדָתֶךָ,
וְהַחֲזִירֵנוּ בִּתְשׁוּבָה שְׁלֵמָה לְפָנֶיךָ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הָרוֹצֶה בִּתְשׁוּבָה.

סְלַח לָנוּ אָבִינוּ, כִּי חָטָאנוּ,
מְחַל לָנוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ, כִּי פָשָׁעְנוּ,
כִּי מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ אָתָּה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, חַנּוּן הַמַּרְבֶּה לִסְלֹחַ.

רְאֵה נָא בְעָנְיֵנוּ, וְרִיבָה רִיבֵנוּ,
וּגְאָלֵנוּ מְהֵרָה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ,
כִּי גּוֹאֵל חָזָק אָתָּה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, גּוֹאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

On fast days, the leader adds:

עֲנֵנוּ, יהוה, עֲנֵנוּ, בְּיוֹם צוֹם תַּעֲנִיתֵנוּ, כִּי בְצָרָה גְדוֹלָה אֲנָחְנוּ: אַל תֵּפֶן אֶל רִשְׁעֵנוּ, וְאַל תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנּוּ, וְאַל תִּתְעַלַּם מִתְּחִנָּתֵנוּ. הֱיֵה נָא קָרוֹב לְשַׁוְעָתֵנוּ, יְהִי נָא חַסְדְּךָ לְנַחֲמֵנוּ, טֶרֶם נִקְרָא אֵלֶיךָ עֲנֵנוּ, כִּדְבָר שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְהָיָה טֶרֶם יִקְרָאוּ וְאֲנִי אֶעֱנֶה, עוֹד הֵם מְדַבְּרִים וַאֲנִי אֶשְׁמָע. כִּי אַתָּה, יהוה, הָעוֹנֶה בְּעֵת צָרָה, פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל בְּכָל־עֵת צָרָה וְצוּקָה. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הָעוֹנֶה בְּעֵת צָרָה.

THE MIDDLE BLESSINGS. Reflecting the sense of incompletion that constitutes our everyday world, the weekday Amidah includes thirteen (originally twelve) intermediate *b'rakhot*. They are all petitionary, expressing individual and communal needs. Three cycles of concern unfold here: our spiritual lives, our physical needs, and our hopes for society.

KNOWLEDGE. Notably, this *b'rakhah* does not explicitly mention Torah, which is referenced in the next *b'rakhah*. As Pirkei Avot 3:17 teaches, אִם אֵין דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ אֵין תּוֹרָה ("If you are not attuned to the world, you cannot acquire Torah"). We pray first for an expansive, wise, and understanding heart and mind, that we may obtain the understanding of ourselves and our world upon which acquiring Torah depends. The act of prayer itself may assist in attaining such understanding.

T'SHUVAH/TURNING. The root of the word *t'shuvah* can mean both "turn" and "return." We are asked to "turn": to change our perspective, to see the world and our place in it in new ways. And we are asked to "return": to find again our truest selves, to hear once again the call of our souls, which we may have lost sight of in grappling with our world. Finding our way is the task we hope to accomplish in immersing ourselves in Torah.

FORGIVENESS. This *b'rakhah* expresses a religious perspective that understands forgiveness as a critical divine quality. As in the previous *b'rakhah*, the opening phrase here speaks of God as a parent (*avinu*), someone who remains with us even as we err. Its closing describes God as "gracious" and "exceedingly forgiving." Many have the practice of striking their hearts when reciting the words *s'lah* ("forgive") and *m'hal* ("pardon").

DELIVERANCE. The word גּוֹאֵל ("redeemer") is usually connected to Jewish eschatology, picturing God instituting an ultimate redemption of the world. Reuven Kimelman, a contemporary liturgical scholar, suggests that this *b'rakhah*, which precedes and follows *b'rakhot* that focus on the temporal and individual needs of the worshipper, should be similarly understood as a personal plea for God to save us from the inner and outer demons that afflict us.

Healing

What does it mean to speak of healing? Simply to ask the question, to struggle with the question, is to step beyond the curing of disease or undoing of incapacity. Suppose the self that prays simply for healing of flesh finds something different, more important: an opportunity for deepening. A wholeness. May it be so with me.

Open my lips and my mouth will declare Your praise.

—JOHN CLAYTON

Prosperity

THE PEAR TREE

Spring's hand entraps—
someone wakes
sees through the window
a flowering pear tree
at that moment
the mountain burdening
the heart
splits apart and disappears.
So you can understand,
one cannot in one's grief
hold on to
the flower that withered
in the autumnal wind
when spring consoles you
makes you smile
by offering a bouquet
at your window.

—RACHEL

Ingathering of Exiles

There are two kinds of exile: the suffering of the people Israel, and the suffering an individual experiences that exiles one from one's own soul.

—MENAḤEM NAḤUM OF CHERNOBYL

Second Cycle of B'rakhot of Request: Our Physical Reality

HEALING

Heal us, ADONAI, so that we may be truly healed;
save us, that we may be truly saved.
You are the one deserving of praise.
Bring complete healing to all our suffering;

On behalf of one who is ill:
our God and God of our ancestors, may it be Your will to send speedy and complete healing of soul and body to _____, along with all others who are ill;
strengthen as well the hands of those concerned with their care,

for You are God and sovereign,
a faithful and compassionate healer.
Barukh atah ADONAI, Healer of the ill among
Your people Israel.

PROSPERITY

ADONAI our God, make this a blessed year for us;
may its varied harvest yield prosperity.
May the earth be blessed
From December 5 (or December 6 if preceding a solar leap year) until Pesaḥ: with dew and rain
and satisfy us with its goodness.
Bless this year, that it be like the best of years.
Barukh atah ADONAI, the source of blessing
of each year.

INGATHERING OF EXILES

Sound the great shofar announcing our freedom,
raise the banner signalling the ingathering of our exiles,
and bring us together from the four corners of the earth.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who gathers the dispersed of
Your people Israel.

רְפָאֵנוּ יהוה, וְנֵרָפֵא,
הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה, כִּי תְהִלָּתֵנוּ אָתָּה,
וְהַעֲלֵה רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה לְכָל־מַכּוֹתֵינוּ.

On behalf of one who is ill:

וִיהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
שֶׁתִּשְׁלַח מְהֵרָה רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם,
רְפוּאַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ וּרְפוּאַת הַגּוּף,
לְ_____ בְּתוֹךְ שְׁאָר הַחוֹלִים,
וְחַזֵּק אֶת־יְדֵי הָעוֹסְקִים בְּצָרְכֵיהֶם,
כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ רוֹפֵא נֶאֱמָן וְרַחֲמָן אָתָּה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, רוֹפֵא חוֹלֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בָּרֵךְ עָלֵינוּ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת
וְאֶת־כָּל־מִינֵי תְבוּאָתָהּ לְטוֹבָה, וְתֵן

From Pesaḥ until December 4 (or December 5 if preceding a solar leap year): בְּרָכָה

From December 5 (or December 6 if preceding a solar leap year) until Pesaḥ: טַל וּמָטָר לִבְרָכָה

עַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה,
וְשַׂבְּעֵנוּ מִטּוּבָהּ,
וּבָרֵךְ שְׁנָתֵנוּ כַּשָּׁנִים הַטּוֹבוֹת.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, מְבָרֵךְ הַשָּׁנִים.

תְּקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל לְחֵרוּתֵנוּ,
וְשָׂא נֵס לְקַבֵּץ גָּלֻיּוֹתֵינוּ,
וְקַבְּצֵנוּ יַחַד מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת הָאָרֶץ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, מְקַבֵּץ נִדְחֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

HEALING. The opening lines of this *b'rakhah* are based on Jeremiah 17:14. Though the verse in Jeremiah is phrased in the singular, the liturgy changes it to the plural. In times of health, we pray compassionately and empathically for others. And in times of illness, we may place our own suffering alongside theirs.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL וִיהִי רָצוֹן. The physical condition of others may be so pressing that we may need to include prayers for them at this point, before we can proceed with our formal prayers (Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah 8a). Similarly, our own health may be at the forefront of our minds.

PROSPERITY. This prayer is especially resonant today, as climate change imperils the earth's natural ability to provide sustenance. The psalmist refers to God as "the one who provides food to all flesh" (Psalm 136:25), but provision of food to those who need it has always depended also on human sensitivity, generosity, and prudence.

DEW AND RAIN וְתֵן טַל וּמָטָר לִבְרָכָה. Jews around the world are liturgically tied to the agricultural realities of the Land of Israel. The Babylonian Talmud (Taanit 11a) specifies that this prayer for rain should be offered only during the part of the year when rainfall in the Land of Israel is hoped to be prolific. The specified date for this petition for rain to begin is 60 days after the autumnal equinox (conventionally, the date of December 5 is used, or December 6th when preceding a solar leap year). Though the *b'rakhah* is especially conscious of the need for rain in the Land of Israel, it is an expression of hope for the entire earth. A Sephardic version of this prayer even includes the word *kol* ("all") before the phrase "the earth."

INGATHERING OF EXILES. This prayer combines three prophetic visions enunciated at the time of the Babylonian Exile, expressing the hope and vision of return. Isaiah describes the sounding of the great shofar as the exiles journey back to the holy mountain of Jerusalem (27:13). Jeremiah declares that a shofar will be sounded and a banner raised, as the nation that destroyed Judah will, in turn, be conquered (51:27). And finally, Isaiah tells of the ingathering of the exiles of Israel and Judah from the four corners of the world (11:12).

Third Cycle of B'rakhot of Request: Our Communal Hope

JUSTICE

Restore judges to us as in the early days,
and wise counselors as of old.
Remove from us sorrow and anguish.
With kindness and compassion, ADONAI, may You alone rule over us.
May You find our cause just.
Barukh atah ADONAI, Sovereign who loves righteousness and justice.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:
Barukh atah ADONAI, Sovereign of judgment.

DEFEATING EVIL

May the hopes of those who would defame us be dashed,
may all wickedness be instantly frustrated,
and may all Your enemies be quickly cut off.
Root out, subdue, break, and humble those who act with evil intent, speedily, in our day.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who defeats enemies and humbles those who act with evil intent.

THE RIGHTEOUS

May Your compassion, ADONAI our God,
flow to the righteous, the pious,
the leaders of the people Israel,
the remnant of the sages,
the righteous converts,
and us all.
May all those who faithfully trust in Your name be rewarded,
and may our share be among them.
May we never despair—we have faith in You.
Barukh atah ADONAI, the promise and support of the righteous.

Justice

"Justice, justice shall you pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20)—even the pursuit of justice needs to be just.

—SIMḤAH BUNIM

The work of judging—both by judges and all of us—is the kind of routine, ordinary task that must be done every day. The most significant legal judgments are the many thousands of decisions made by judges and juries trying to do justice, ideally with kindness and compassion. For us, too, our most impactful work for justice may not be the rare grand gesture, but the minor wrongs we regularly make the effort to right, the daily discernments we make between right and wrong.

—ROBERTA KAPLAN

Defeating Evil

The Ḥasidic master Mordechai of Lechowitz would teach: when we pray that evil be wiped out, we should meditate on what in our own behavior is sinful.

Good and Evil

Although we pray for the end of wickedness and the flourishing of righteousness in two separate blessings, good and evil do not always appear as distinct. Rather, they often manifest as an admixture within the human heart and in the choices we have to make. Motives are mixed; situations are complex; moral choices are frequently difficult. For this reason, one blessing follows immediately upon the other, emphasizing that wickedness and righteousness are often intertwined. We began by praying for wisdom; now we know we need it to distinguish the two within ourselves.

הָשִׁיבָה שׁוֹפְטֵינוּ כְּבָרִאשׁוֹנָה וְיוֹעֲצֵינוּ כְּבַתְּחִלָּה,
וְהָסֵר מִמֶּנּוּ יָגוֹן וַאֲנָחָה, וּמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ אַתָּה יהוה
לְבַדְּךָ בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים, וְצַדְּקֵנוּ בַּמִּשְׁפָּט.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, מֶלֶךְ אוֹהֵב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמִּשְׁפָּט.

וְלַמַּלְשִׁינִים אַל תְּהִי תִקְוָה,
וְכָל־הָרִשְׁעָה כְּרֶגַע תֹּאבֵד,
וְכָל־אוֹיְבֶיךָ מְהֵרָה יִכָּרֵתוּ,
וְהַזֵּדִים מְהֵרָה תְעַקֵּר וּתְשַׁבֵּר וּתְמַגֵּר וְתַכְנִיעַ
בִּמְהֵרָה בְיָמֵינוּ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, שׁוֹבֵר אוֹיְבִים וּמַכְנִיעַ זֵדִים.

עַל הַצַּדִּיקִים וְעַל הַחֲסִידִים
וְעַל זִקְנֵי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְעַל פְּלֵיטַת סוֹפְרֵיהֶם,
וְעַל גֵּרֵי הַצֶּדֶק
וְעָלֵינוּ,
יֶהֱמוּ נָא רַחֲמֶיךָ, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
וְתֵן שָׂכָר טוֹב לְכָל־הַבּוֹטְחִים בְּשִׁמְךָ בֶּאֱמֶת,
וְשִׂים חֶלְקֵנוּ עִמָּהֶם,
וּלְעוֹלָם לֹא נֵבוֹשׁ
כִּי בְךָ בָּטָחְנוּ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, מִשְׁעָן וּמִבְטָח לַצַּדִּיקִים.

JUSTICE. The beginning of this *b'rakhah* references the first chapter of Isaiah, which describes Jerusalem as a wayward city, led astray by its corrupt leadership. God promises to restore judges as in the early days, and wise counselors as of old (1:26). The end of the *b'rakhah* incorporates the language of the next verse in Isaiah, "Zion shall be redeemed with justice (*mishpat*) and those who return with righteousness (*tzedakah*)." The opening of the *b'rakhah* seemingly recalls an earlier time, when justice ruled. Perhaps it idealizes the period of wandering in the desert and the leadership of Moses, or perhaps the rule of David and Solomon. The lack of definitiveness reveals this plea as a vision, an imagined future retrojected onto a mythic past. But the dream is, of course, our dream as well: a wish to see a just world, and the hope that, as a society, we might do right.

DEFEATING EVIL. This *b'rakhah* has a more tumultuous history than any other *b'rakhah* in the Amidah. Originally a prayer against sectarians and heretics who might betray the Jewish community to sovereign authorities, it eventually became a catch-all prayer against all enemies. An early version, instead of referring to *zedim*, "the arrogant" (as does this version), refers to *malkhut zadon*, "the kingdom of arrogance," making this *b'rakhah* into a protest against the unjust use of power by governments and rulers (and also resulting in the censorship of this passage in many European communities). In every era, we become conscious of those who use power in destructive ways.

THE RIGHTEOUS. Notable in this *b'rakhah* are the categories of those who are singled out for special commendation. Each plays a unique role in making the Jewish community more blessed and holy: those who consistently do what is right (*tzadikim*), those who extend themselves in love and generosity to others (*hasidim*), those who lead and study and teach (*z'kenim, sofrim*), and Jews by choice (*gerei tzedek*) whose presence and gifts enrich the Jewish community.

Jerusalem

I love the doves
of Jerusalem
which sail and squabble
over the Temple Mount
and nest
impartially
in the Western Wall
and the Dome of the Rock
the Yeshiva Porat Yosef
and the museum of Al-Aksa
these doves
they are lovers of Jerusalem
as she is
in her messiness
and her frenzy
no doubt they pray
these doves
daily
three times
and five
for the peace
of Jerusalem

—STANLEY CHYET

Jerusalem

The Hasidic master Naftali of Ropshitz asked, "Why is the blessing in the present tense?" And he answered: "Because each day we rebuild Jerusalem."

JERUSALEM

In Your mercy, return to Your city, Jerusalem,
dwell there as You have promised;
rebuild it permanently, speedily, in our day.
May You soon establish the throne of David in its midst.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who rebuilds Jerusalem.

MESSIANIC HOPE

Cause the shoot of Your servant David to flourish;
may the honor of the house of David be raised up
with the coming of Your deliverance,
for each day we await Your deliverance.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who causes salvation to flourish.

SUMMATION OF REQUESTS: HEAR OUR VOICE

Hear our voice, ADONAI our God;
be kind and have compassion for us.
Willingly and lovingly accept our prayer,
for You, God, hear prayers and listen to pleas.
Do not send us away empty-handed—
for, with kindness, You listen to the prayers
of Your people Israel.
[*Some substitute:* for You listen to the prayers each person utters.]
Barukh atah ADONAI, who listens to prayer.

Messianic Hope

The contemporary theologian Ira Stone suggests that the Jewish notion of redemption is, by definition, aspirational: it is always a hope for a future toward which we look. But, importantly, he adds, "The idea of redemption . . . is grounded in the conviction that the world to come can, and ought, to form a dimension of this world, of the world-we're-in. . . . [It is] a future that informs and inspires our present but not a future that can be made present."

וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ בְּרַחֲמִים תָּשׁוּב,
וְתִשְׁכֹּן בְּתוֹכָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ,
וּבְנֵה אוֹתָהּ בְּקָרוֹב בְּיָמֵינוּ בִּנְיַן עוֹלָם,
וְכִסֵּא דָוִד מְהֵרָה לְתוֹכָהּ תָּכִין.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלָיִם.

אֶת־צֶמַח דָּוִד עַבְדְּךָ מְהֵרָה תַצְמִיחַ,
וְקַרְנוֹ תָּרוּם בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ,
כִּי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קִוִּינוּ כָּל־הַיּוֹם.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, מַצְמִיחַ קֶרֶן יְשׁוּעָה.

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ,
וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת־תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ,
כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלּוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אָתָּה,
וּמִלְּפָנֶיךָ, מַלְכֵּנוּ, רֵיקָם אַל תְּשִׁיבֵנוּ.
כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמִים.
[*Some substitute:* כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת כָּל־פֶּה.]
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה.

DWELL THERE AS YOU HAVE PROMISED וְתִשְׁכֹּן בְּתוֹכָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ. These words echo Zechariah 8:3: "Thus said Adonai: I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in Jerusalem." Zechariah preached shortly after the Persians permitted the rebuilding of an altar in Jerusalem in 520 B.C.E., following the destruction of the Temple in 587/586 B.C.E. Zechariah adds that God's return is conditional on people "speaking truthfully to one another and establishing justice and peace" (8:16).

MESSIANIC HOPE. Most liturgical scholars view this as the "19th *b'rakhah*"—in essence, a later addition to the Amidah. Originally, its theme of the flourishing of salvation was subsumed within the preceding "Jerusalem" *b'rakhah*. For reasons that are not understood, the Babylonian community began to recite it as a separate *b'rakhah* (perhaps connected to the tradition that the leader of Babylonian Jewry, the *resh galuta*, was descended from the Davidic line). Traditionally, the restoration of the Davidic Kingdom is intimately connected to the prayers we have enunciated in this series: the restoration of just governance and judicial fairness. For instance, Maimonides understands the messianic age as a time of peace and the end of oppression (Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Melakhim 11:2, 5). This cycle of hope for deliverance describes stages of redemption: the reestablishment of justice makes possible the defeat of evil, and the work of the righteous leads to the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Messianic times arrive as a result of this work.

HEAR OUR VOICE. While individual prayers may be appropriately inserted at any point in the Amidah's intermediate *b'rakhot*, the sages considered this *b'rakhah* as the most appropriate place to add individual petitions, before the words כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ . . . בְּרַחֲמִים, "For, with kindness . . . Your people Israel" (Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah 7b–8a). On Yom HaShoah, one may add here the prayer found on page 214.

THE PRAYERS EACH PERSON UTTERS תְּפִלַּת כָּל־פֶּה. Siddurim of Conservative Judaism, beginning with the Israeli Masorti siddur *Va'ani Tefilati*, have incorporated the explicitly universalist Sephardic conclusion of this *b'rakhah*—כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת כָּל־פֶּה, "for You hear the prayer of every mouth"—found here.

Embrace… Our Prayer

What do we mean by God "embracing" our prayer? As our Amidah comes to a close, we may have an intuition that the words our lips have offered have come not solely from our own heart but have been a gift, transporting us beyond the self with which we began. Perhaps, having striven to draw near to God, we might suddenly sense God pulling us close all along.

This Day of:

Rosh Ḥodesh: a time to awaken to change and renewal.
Pesaḥ: a time to strive for liberation within ourselves and in the world.
Sukkot: a time to consider what to take with us on to the journey ahead.

May Our Eyes Behold Your Compassionate Return

It is our prayers that can restore the Divine Presence.

—SOLOMON HAKOHEN RABINOWITZ

Three Concluding B'rakhot

THE SERVICE THAT WE OFFER

Embrace Your people Israel and their prayers, ADONAI our God. Restore worship to Your sanctuary. May You lovingly accept the prayers of the people Israel, and may our service always be pleasing to You.

On Rosh Ḥodesh and Ḥol Ha-mo-ed we add:
Our God and God of our ancestors,
may the remembrance of us rise up and come before You,
may it reach You, be seen by You, and find favor with You,
may it be heard and called to mind by You,
along with the remembrance of our ancestors,
the remembrance of the Messiah the son of David, Your servant,
the remembrance of Jerusalem, Your holy city,
and the remembrance of all Your people, the house of Israel,
for deliverance,
for good,
with grace, and kindly love and compassion,
for life and peace,
on this day of

On Rosh Ḥodesh: Rosh Ḥodesh. *rosh ha-ḥodesh hazeh.*
On Pesaḥ: the Festival of Matzot. *ḥag ha-matzot hazeh.*
On Sukkot: the Festival of Sukkot. *ḥag ha-sukkot hazeh.*

When the Amidah is recited aloud the congregation responds amen to each of these phrases:
Remember us for good—*Amen*;
respond to us with blessing—*Amen*;
redeem us with life—*Amen*.
Zokhreinu, Adonai eloheinu, bo l'tovah—amen,
u-fokdeinu vo livrakhah—amen,
v'hoshi-einu vo l'ḥayim—amen.
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.

May our eyes behold Your compassionate return to Zion.
Barukh atah ADONAI, who restores Your Divine Presence to Zion.

רְצֵה, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבִתְפִלָּתָם,
וְהָשֵׁב אֶת־הָעֲבוֹדָה לִדְבִיר בֵּיתֶךָ,
וְתִפִלָּתָם בְּאַהֲבָה תְקַבֵּל בְּרָצוֹן,
וּתְהִי לְרָצוֹן תָּמִיד עֲבוֹדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמֶּךָ.

On Rosh Ḥodesh and Ḥol Ha-mo-ed we add:
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], יַעֲלֶה וְיָבֹא, וְיִגִּיעַ וְיֵרָאֶה,
וְיֵרָצֶה וְיִשָּׁמַע, וְיִפָּקֵד וְיִזָּכֵר זִכְרוֹנֵנוּ וּפִקְדוֹנֵנוּ, וְזִכְרוֹן
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], וְזִכְרוֹן מָשִׁיחַ בֶּן־דָּוִד עַבְדֶּךָ, וְזִכְרוֹן
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קָדְשֶׁךָ, וְזִכְרוֹן כָּל־עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֶיךָ,
לִפְלֵיטָה, לְטוֹבָה, לְחֵן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים, לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם, בְּיוֹם

On Sukkot: חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת הַזֶּה. *On Pesaḥ:* חַג הַמַּצּוֹת הַזֶּה. *On Rosh Ḥodesh:* רֹאשׁ הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה.

When the Amidah is recited aloud the congregation responds אָמֵן *to each of these phrases:*
זָכְרֵנוּ, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה. אָמֵן.
וּפָקְדֵנוּ בּוֹ לִבְרָכָה. אָמֵן.
וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בּוֹ לְחַיִּים. אָמֵן.
וּבִדְבַר יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים, חוּס וְחָנֵּנוּ, וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ,
כִּי אֵלֶיךָ עֵינֵינוּ, כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אָתָּה.

וְתֶחֱזֶינָה עֵינֵינוּ בְּשׁוּבְךָ לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַמַּחֲזִיר שְׁכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.

TO YOUR SANCTUARY לִדְבִיר בֵּיתֶךָ. Whereas this *b'rakhah* is usually regarded as a petition for the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem and the restoration of the sacrificial system, a close reading of the text brings other themes to the surface. The word *d'vir* (translated here as "sanctuary") is a reference to the innermost area of the Temple, the holy of holies. No altar was located there, but the High Priest entered there once a year and prayed for forgiveness of sins (see 1 Kings 6:19). We understand that our prayer life is imperfect, yet we hope that it will be accepted—as was the High Priest's service in the holy of holies. At the same time, we pray that our worship may become ever more genuine, ever closer to true *avodah*, "service" to God. In this regard we might recall that the ark, which was located within the holy of holies, contained both the broken and the whole tablets of the Decalogue (Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 14b).

RISE UP AND COME BEFORE YOU יַעֲלֶה וְיָבֹא. This paragraph, known as *ya-aleh v'yavo*, is inserted in the Amidah on festivals (including Ḥol Ha-mo-ed) and on Rosh Ḥodesh. It is included within the *b'rakhah* focused on the restoration of Temple worship, and several of the verbs in this passage are resonant with the Temple service. The Torah uses verb *yeira-eh*, "attend to us," which could also be translated as "let us be seen," to describe the pilgrimage to the Temple on the three festivals (Deuteronomy 16:16). The verbal root of *yeiratzeh*, "accept us," is used repeatedly in the Torah to describe God's acceptance of sacrificial offerings (for example, Leviticus 7:18, 22:27). At the same time, the liturgy expressly asks that our present practice of prayer be accepted as fully equal to the service in the Temple.

Giving Thanks

In the time to come all prayers will cease, but the prayer of thanksgiving will not cease.

—LEVITICUS RABBAH

The Miracle That Is with Us Each Day

The world around us is an ever-present miracle.

—TZADOK HAKOHEN OF LUBLIN

The Gift of a New Day

Day dawns,
Night fades.
Against shifting horizons
We move.
Bodies awakening to the gift
And tension
Of motion.
Lost.
Found.
Soon, surely,
Lost again.
Settle us enough
To rise and bend and thank You
In whom we have placed our hope.

—AARON WEININGER

GRATITUDE

When the Amidah is recited quietly, 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 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. For the gift of being able to express our gratitude, may God, the source of gratitude, be praised.

When the Amidah is recited quietly, 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, שְׁאַתָּה הוּא יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ] לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
צוּר חַיֵּינוּ, מָגֵן יִשְׁעֵנוּ, אַתָּה הוּא לְדוֹר וָדוֹר.
נוֹדֶה לְּךָ וּנְסַפֵּר תְּהִלָּתֶךָ,
עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדֶךָ,
וְעַל נִשְׁמוֹתֵינוּ הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ,
וְעַל נִסֶּיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל־יוֹם עִמָּנוּ,
וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל־עֵת,
עֶרֶב וָבֹקֶר וְצָהֳרָיִם.
הַטּוֹב, כִּי לֹא כָלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ,
וְהַמְרַחֵם, כִּי לֹא תַמּוּ חֲסָדֶיךָ,
מֵעוֹלָם קִוִּינוּ 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 שְׁאַתָּה הוּא יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי כָל־בָּשָׂר, יוֹצְרֵנוּ, יוֹצַר
בְּרֵאשִׁית. בְּרָכוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ,
עַל שֶׁהֶחֱיִיתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָּנוּ. כֵּן תְּחַיֵּנוּ וּתְקַיְּמֵנוּ, וְתֶאֱסֹף
גָּלְיוֹתֵינוּ לְחַצְרוֹת קָדְשֶׁךָ, לִשְׁמֹר חֻקֶּיךָ וְלַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנֶךָ,
וּלְעָבְדְּךָ בְּלֵבָב שָׁלֵם. עַל שֶׁאֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ, בָּרוּךְ אֵל
הַהוֹדָאוֹת.

GRATITUDE הוֹדָאָה. We bow at the beginning and end of this *b'rakhah*, as we do at the beginning and end of the first *b'rakhah* of the Amidah. Our minds may not have fully concentrated as we recited the rest of the Amidah, but the movement of our bodies brings us once again to attention.

The Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 34b) recognizes that it may not be possible to concentrate for the entire Amidah, but recommends that one should at least concentrate during the first *b'rakhah* (Avot, "Our Ancestors"). Medieval commentators added that since we bow here, as we do in the first *b'rakhah*, one should try to concentrate here as well.

YOUR MIRACLES THAT ACCOMPANY US EACH DAY נִסֶּיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל־יוֹם עִמָּנוּ. Some religious traditions define a miracle as something discontinuous with the laws of nature, but this passage uses the words *nisekha* ("Your miracles") and *nifle'otekha* ("Your wonders") to refer to blessings that are ever-present, *she-b'khol yom imanu*, that are with us each day.

THE CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER מוֹדִים דְּרַבָּנָן. The Talmud instructs that when the Amidah is repeated aloud, while the prayer leader is reciting the *b'rakhah* of gratitude, members of the congregation quietly recite this passage. Its essence is gratitude to God even for the sensation of gratitude itself, and for the opportunity to express it. This passage is called Modim D'rabbanan, "The Gratitude Prayer of the Rabbis," because different parts of it were composed by various sages, with a later sage suggesting the recitation of all of the versions together (Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 40a). Perhaps the composite nature of this prayer highlights that every person expresses their gratitude differently: God is truly *El ha-hodaot*, translated here as "the source of gratitude," but which might be read as "God of gratitudes"—that is, the one who delights in the many ways gratitude is expressed.

The Solstice

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: לְפִי שָׁרָאָה
אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן יוֹם
שֶׁמִּתְמַעֵט וְהוֹלֵךְ, אָמַר:
אוֹי לִי! שָׁמָא בִּשְׁבִיל
שֶׁסָּרַחְתִּי עוֹלָם חָשׁוּךְ
בְּעֲדִי וְחוֹזֵר לְתוֹהוּ
וְבוֹהוּ, זוֹ הִיא מִיתָה
שֶׁנִּגְזְרָה עָלַי מִן
הַשָּׁמַיִם. עָמַד וְיָשַׁב
שְׁמוֹנָה יָמִים בְּתַעֲנִית.
כֵּיוָן שֶׁרָאָה תְּקוּפַת
טֵבֵת, וְרָאָה יוֹם שֶׁמַּאֲרִיךְ
וְהוֹלֵךְ, אָמַר: מִנְהָגוֹ שֶׁל
עוֹלָם הוּא. הָלַךְ וְעָשָׂה
שְׁמוֹנָה יָמִים טוֹבִים.
לְשָׁנָה הָאַחֶרֶת עָשָׂאָן
לְאַלּוֹ וּלְאַלּוֹ יָמִים טוֹבִים.

Our sages taught: As Adam saw the days diminishing, he said to himself, "Woe is me! This may be due to my sin—the world is now becoming dark because of me and shall return to its original state of chaos. This is the deathly fate that heaven has decreed for me." He then betook himself and fasted for eight days. But when the winter equinox arrived and he saw the days increasing in length, he realized that this was the way nature behaved, and so he celebrated festively for eight days.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

On Ḥanukkah, we recite the prayer below.
On Purim, we add Al Hanissim on page 203.
On Yom Ha-Atzmaut, we add Al Hanissim on page 222.

FOR ḤANUKKAH: AL HANISSIM

For the miracles, for the deliverance, for the victories, for the triumphs, and for the battles You fought for our ancestors in those days and at this time.

Al ha-nisim v'al ha-purkan, v'al ha-g'vurot, v'al ha-t'shuot, v'al ha-milḥamot she-asita la-avoteinu [u-l'imoteinu] ba-yamim hahem u-vazman hazeh.

In the days of Mattathias son of Yoḥanan, a Hasmonean, the High Priest, and in the days of his sons, when the cruel Greek kingdom rose to rule over Your people Israel, demanding that they forget Your Torah and violate the way of life You desired for them, You in Your great mercy stood by Your people in their time of trouble. You fought their battles, championed their cause, avenged their wrongs. You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the evildoers into the hands of the righteous, the arrogant into the hands of those engaged with Your Torah. Thus Your name was glorified and made holy in Your world; and Israel, Your people, achieved deliverance and a great victory—as is our wish for our own day. Afterward, Your children entered the Holy of Holies, emptied Your house of idols, purified Your sanctuary, kindled lights in Your sacred courts, and set aside these eight days of rededication, to give thanks and to celebrate Your great name.

On Ḥanukkah, we recite the prayer below.
On Purim, we add Al Hanissim on page 203.
On Yom Ha-Atzmaut, we add Al Hanissim on page 222.

לְחַנֻּכָּה

עַל הַנִּסִּים וְעַל הַפֻּרְקָן, וְעַל הַגְּבוּרוֹת, וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת,
וְעַל הַמִּלְחָמוֹת שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ לַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וּלְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ] בַּיָּמִים
הָהֵם וּבַזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

בִּימֵי מַתִּתְיָהוּ בֶּן־יוֹחָנָן כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל חַשְׁמוֹנַאי וּבָנָיו,
כְּשֶׁעָמְדָה מַלְכוּת יָוָן הָרְשָׁעָה עַל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְהַשְׁכִּיחָם תּוֹרָתֶךָ וּלְהַעֲבִירָם מֵחֻקֵּי רְצוֹנֶךָ,
וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים עָמַדְתָּ לָהֶם בְּעֵת צָרָתָם,
רַבְתָּ אֶת־רִיבָם,
דַּנְתָּ אֶת־דִּינָם,
נָקַמְתָּ אֶת־נִקְמָתָם,
מָסַרְתָּ גִּבּוֹרִים בְּיַד חַלָּשִׁים, וְרַבִּים בְּיַד מְעַטִּים,
וּטְמֵאִים בְּיַד טְהוֹרִים, וּרְשָׁעִים בְּיַד צַדִּיקִים,
וְזֵדִים בְּיַד עוֹסְקֵי תוֹרָתֶךָ,
וּלְךָ עָשִׂיתָ שֵׁם גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ בְּעוֹלָמֶךָ,
וּלְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל עָשִׂיתָ תְּשׁוּעָה גְדוֹלָה וּפֻרְקָן כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.
וְאַחַר כֵּן בָּאוּ בָנֶיךָ לִדְבִיר בֵּיתֶךָ,
וּפִנּוּ אֶת־הֵיכָלֶךָ,
וְטִהֲרוּ אֶת־מִקְדָּשֶׁךָ,
וְהִדְלִיקוּ נֵרוֹת בְּחַצְרוֹת קָדְשֶׁךָ,
וְקָבְעוּ שְׁמוֹנַת יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה אֵלּוּ,
לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל.

AL HANISSIM is a prayer added during the eight days of Ḥanukkah to the penultimate *b'rakhah* in the Amidah and to the Grace After Meals, which offers thanks to God. It thus begins midsentence, continuing the list of matters for which we offer thanks to God. The Babylonian Talmud (Shabbat 24a) prescribes an additional prayer for Ḥanukkah although it does not specify its language, and the minor tractate Sofrim (8th century) has a considerably shorter version of this prayer: "As You performed miracles for Your priests in the time of Mattathias and his sons, do so for us, that we may acknowledge Your name forever" (20:6).

In 167 B.C.E. the Syrian Greeks, who ruled the Land of Israel, spurred on by many members of the Jewish aristocracy, began a policy of Hellenization, which included outlawing certain Jewish practices, thus sparking a revolt led by the Hasmonean family. The revolutionaries came to be called "Maccabees," which is traditionally explained as an acronym of the Hebrew *mi khamokha ba-eilim Adonai*, "who is like You, Adonai, among the mighty?" The revolt was eventually successful and the Hasmoneans took on the roles of both High Priests and sovereigns in the Land of Israel, expanding its geographic reach and initiating a period of economic prosperity (though eventually, royal infighting resulted in the Land of Israel's becoming a Roman province). Throughout Jewish history, the Maccabean revolt has served as an exemplar of the struggle for Jewish autonomy, of liberation from oppression, and of rededication to a religious vision.

Bestowing Blessing

Thus far, the prayer leader has represented the congregation before God. Now, in the Amidah's last *b'rakhah*, the leader represents God before the congregation, conveying not our requests to God but God's blessing to us. God is the source of all blessing, yet humans play a critical role. Like the prayer leader, each of us can turn from our own needs and become messengers of God, blessing someone in need, someone we love, the stranger we meet.

As the contemporary rabbi Sarah Krinsky writes: "The words of Birkat Kohanim powerfully evoke memories of my receiving or bestowing blessing. I am transported to Shabbat tables where I wiggled as an impatient child under my parents' hands, to my bat mitzvah, my wedding. I hear my own voice offering blessing at the joyous chuppah of my closest friends, and now blessing my own child. These words are like a portal, opening to times beyond time—each moment profound in its own right, and intimately connected to other dining rooms, bimahs, and loving arms that are part of this self-same web."

The Search for Peace

Peace is dependent on a sense of wonder and awe and on humility. We step back and take in everything with our gaze, including all that is other—so different from us, so indifferent to us. We recognize how little control we have, how vulnerable we are, how limited our time here. Simultaneously, we may see that we are part of a whole, rooted in the interconnectedness of all.

For all these blessings may Your name be praised and exalted, our sovereign, always and forever.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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.
ℬ *Barukh atah* ADONAI, Your name is goodness and praise of You is fitting.

PEACE

During the quiet 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.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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.

וְעַל כֻּלָּם יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִתְרוֹמַם שִׁמְךָ מַלְכֵּנוּ תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we add:
וּכְתוֹב לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים כָּל־בְּנֵי בְרִיתֶךָ.

וְכֹל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ סֶלָה, וִיהַלְלוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בֶּאֱמֶת,
הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ וְעֶזְרָתֵנוּ סֶלָה.
ℬ בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַטּוֹב שִׁמְךָ וּלְךָ נָאֶה לְהוֹדוֹת.

During the quiet Amidah, continue with שִׂים שָׁלוֹם below.
During the repetition of the Amidah, the leader recites Birkat Kohanim.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
בָּרְכֵנוּ בַּבְּרָכָה הַמְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
בַּתּוֹרָה הַכְּתוּבָה עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה עַבְדֶּךָ,
הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי אַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו, כֹּהֲנִים, עַם קְדוֹשֶׁיךָ, כָּאֲמוּר:

יְבָרֶכְךָ יהוה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ. כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.
יָאֵר יהוה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וִיחֻנֶּךָּ. כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.
יִשָּׂא יהוה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם. כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.

שִׂים שָׁלוֹם בָּעוֹלָם, טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה,
חֵן וָחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים, עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמֶּךָ.
בָּרְכֵנוּ אָבִינוּ כֻּלָּנוּ כְּאֶחָד בְּאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ,
כִּי בְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ נָתַתָּ לָּנוּ, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד,
וּצְדָקָה וּבְרָכָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם.
וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּכָל־עֵת וּבְכָל־שָׁעָה בִּשְׁלוֹמֶךָ.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we recite the following paragraph, in place of the line that follows it:
בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים, בְּרָכָה וְשָׁלוֹם, וּפַרְנָסָה טוֹבָה,
נִזָּכֵר וְנִכָּתֵב לְפָנֶיךָ, אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל־עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשָׁלוֹם.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, עוֹשֵׂה הַשָּׁלוֹם.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה, הַמְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּשָּׁלוֹם.

THE PRIESTLY BLESSING בִּרְכַּת כֹּהֲנִים. The Priestly Blessing is the only Torah fragment found in First Temple era remains, testifying to its early popularity and use. Its structure—lines of three words, then five, then seven—signals ongoing expansiveness, a form fitting its message of blessing as we go out to the world.

PEACE שָׁלוֹם. Ashkenazic prayerbooks include two parallel versions of this *b'rakhah* for peace, one for the morning and the other for the afternoon and evening. Because this version, Sim Shalom ("Grant peace"), closely echoes the concluding words of the Priestly Blessing, it is used only at times when it immediately follows the public recitation of that prayer, as here. Verbal parallels between Birkat Kohanim and Sim Shalom include *v'yasem l'kha shalom*, "and grant you peace," as well as *ḥen*, "kindness" (occurring here as a noun and in the Priestly Blessing as a verb) and *or panekha*, "the light of Your presence."

Conservative prayerbooks since the 1940s have added in the first line the word *ba-olam*, "in the world" (echoing the 10th-century prayerbook of Saadiah Gaon), to amplify our universalistic prayers for peace and our understanding that peace is not achieved in isolation.

A GUIDE TO LIFE תּוֹרַת חַיִּים. Earlier, before the Sh'ma, we thanked God for teaching us "the laws of life"; now, we pray to enter our day keeping God's teaching as a guide to life and a path on which to walk. As stated here, that path is paved with the love of kindness and compassion directing us to peace—in the world and within ourselves—which is the ultimate blessing of the religious life.

How Peace Grows

I have never had the luxury of drawing clear lines on whom to engage with. For me, life is complicated, and doing good is no exception.

Relationships can change mindsets. Mindsets can change cultures. I wouldn't know how to do it any other way than in complex relationships and community and in deep self-reflection. I feel the grace of taking chances on people for the greater good, and even being open to changing myself.

—JOSHUA LESSER

The Amidah: A Piyyut

פְּקַח עֵינַי לִרְאוֹת
בְּטוּב יְצִירָתֶךָ,

וְתֵן דֵּעָתִי לְדַעָתֶךָ,
וּרְצוֹנִי לִרְצוֹנֶךָ.

יִהְיוּ כָל־מַעֲשַׂי בְּקִרְבָּן
רָצוּי לְפָנֶיךָ, וְתִסְלַח
לְכָל־פְּשָׁעַי.

תֵּן לִי לִרְאוֹת אוֹרְךָ
בְּכָל־פְּגִישׁוֹתַי.
וּרְפָא נָא מְכְאוֹבוֹת,
כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת
כָּל־פֶּה.

Enlighten my eyes to see
the goodness of Your
creation.
Make my thoughts,
thoughts of You;
my will, Yours.
May all my deeds be
considered as a gift that
You desire, and may You
forgive my errors.
May I see Your light in all
that I meet.
Heal the pain of my heart,
for You hear the prayers
of anyone who utters
prayer.

ADDITIONAL PERSONAL PRAYER

The quiet recitation of the Amidah closes with a personal prayer or one of the following, before concluding at the bottom of the page.

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 pleasing to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

ב

May it be your will, ADONAI my God and God of my ancestors, that Your compassion prevail over Your anger, and that You turn to us with love. Look kindly upon me and upon all the members of my family; help us avoid heartlessness.
Lead me along a straight path. Keep me from deceitfulness and from false perceptions. Open my eyes to see wonders in Your Torah. Enlighten me with Your wisdom so that I may merit kindness, love, and compassion in Your eyes and in the eyes of all whom I meet. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

It is customary to take three steps backward and bow to the left, to the right, and to the center, 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.*
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 43.
On Mondays and Thursdays when Taḥanun is recited, we turn to page 56.
On other days when when Taḥanun is recited, we turn to page 60.
On festivals and holidays when Hallel is said (including Rosh Ḥodesh), we turn to page 155.
On fast days, we turn to Avinu Malkeinu on page 206 or 208.
On other days when Taḥanun is not recited, we continue with Ḥatzi Kaddish on page 63.

The quiet recitation of the Amidah closes with a personal prayer or one of the following, before concluding at the bottom of the page.

א

אֱלֹהַי, נְצֹר לְשׁוֹנִי מֵרָע, וּשְׂפָתַי מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה, וְלִמְקַלְלַי
נַפְשִׁי תִדֹּם, וְנַפְשִׁי כֶּעָפָר לַכֹּל תִּהְיֶה. פְּתַח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ,
וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדֹּף נַפְשִׁי. וְכָל־הַחוֹשְׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה, מְהֵרָה
הָפֵר עֲצָתָם וְקַלְקֵל מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם. עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ,
עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן יְמִינֶךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן קְדֻשָּׁתֶךָ, עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן
תּוֹרָתֶךָ. לְמַעַן יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ, הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי.
יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי־פִי וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יהוה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי.

ב

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יהוה אֱלֹהַי וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי, שֶׁיִּכְבְּשׁוּ
רַחֲמֶיךָ אֶת־כַּעַסְךָ וְשֶׁתִּכָּנֵא אַלֵּינוּ בְּמִדַּת חֶסֶד. רַחֵם
עָלַי וְעַל כָּל־נַפְשׁוֹת בֵּיתִי, וְתֶחֱנֵן עָלֵינוּ מִכָּל־אַבְזָרִיּוּת.
נָחֵנִי בְּאֹרַח מִישׁוֹר.
דֶּרֶךְ שֶׁקֶר הָסֵר מִמֶּנִּי, וְהָעֲבֵר עֵינַי מֵרְאוֹת שָׁוְא. גֵּל עֵינַי
וְאַבִּיטָה נִפְלָאוֹת מִתּוֹרָתֶךָ. תַּשְׂכִּילֵנִי שֵׂכֶל טוֹב מִלְּפָנֶיךָ
וְאֶמְצָא חֵן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְעֵינֵי כָל־רוֹאָי.
יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי־פִי וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יהוה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי.

It is customary to take three steps backward and bow to the left, to the right, and to the center, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל], וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

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On other days when Taḥanun is not recited, we continue with Ḥatzi Kaddish on page 63.

LET ME BE HUMBLE BEFORE ALL וְנַפְשִׁי כֶּעָפָר לַכֹּל תִּהְיֶה. Literally, "may my soul be as dust to all." Whereas this image may sound jarringly self-effacing, some medieval commentators understand it as a metaphor for generosity of spirit: just as the dust of the earth is the necessary medium for all plants to thrive, so too may we freely offer of ourselves to help all people to flourish.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL יְהִי רָצוֹן. This prayer, composed for *Siddur Sim Shalom for Weekdays*, is based on a passage from the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 7a) and several passages from Psalms (27:11; 119:29, 37, 18; 19:15).

BOWING AT THE CONCLUSION. The Babylonian Talmud (Yoma 53a) remarks that the priests departing from their service in the Temple would nod to their right and to the left, and that we too should depart from our prayers in this manner.

Torah Service

Rise Up and Scatter Your Foes

Who are the foes that are defeated as the Torah is brought out? Perhaps they are the inner forces at war within us that cause chaos, immobilize us, or lead us down pathways that are dead ends. As we allow the Torah to lead us on our journey, we pray that we may find inspiration, direction, and wisdom to recognize the road we need to walk on.

—*based on* ḤAYIM OF TCHERNOVITZ

Torah Precedes Creation

The Book of Proverbs quotes *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom) as saying: "Adonai created me first (*reishit*), at the beginning of God's creative process, before any other works. I was enthroned from the beginning, before earth's creation. . . . I was God's *amon*, I was God's delight each day, delighting God always" (8:22–23, 30). Understanding *amon* as an artisan's tool and *ḥokhmah* as Torah, Rabbi Hoshaya interprets:

The Torah speaks and says, "I was the artisan's tool." To build a castle, an earthly king depends on the professional knowledge of an architect; in turn, the architect consults scrolls and books in order to learn how to build properly. So too, God gazed into the Torah and created the world. Therefore the Torah says, *b'reishit bara elohim*, "with the first thing, God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1, rather than the traditional understanding of *b'reishit* as "in the beginning"). Torah is the "first thing," with which God created the world, as in "Adonai created me first (*reishit*)."

—GENESIS RABBAH

Taking Out the Torah

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.

The Torah scroll is removed from the ark.
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-neitzaḥ v'hahod,
ki khol ba-shamayim u-va-aretz.
L'kha Adonai ha-mamlakhah v'ha-mitnasei l'khol l'rosh.
Rom'mu Adonai eloheinu, v'hishtaḥavu la-hadom raglav, kadosh hu.
Rom'mu Adonai eloheinu, v'hishtaḥavu l'har kodsho,
ki kadosh Adonai eloheinu.

When the Torah comes to a rest, we are seated.

סדר קריאת התורה

הוֹצָאַת הַתּוֹרָה

We rise as the ark is opened.

וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה:
קוּמָה יהוה וְיָפֻצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ, וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ.

כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר יהוה מִירוּשָׁלָיִם.
בָּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּקְדֻשָּׁתוֹ.

The Torah scroll is removed from the ark.
Leader, facing the ark:

גַּדְּלוּ לַיהוה אִתִּי, וּנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו.

The Torah is carried in a circuit around the congregation.

לְךָ יהוה הַגְּדֻלָּה וְהַגְּבוּרָה וְהַתִּפְאֶרֶת וְהַנֵּצַח וְהַהוֹד,
כִּי כֹל בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ,
לְךָ יהוה הַמַּמְלָכָה וְהַמִּתְנַשֵּׂא לְכֹל לְרֹאשׁ.
רוֹמְמוּ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו, קָדוֹשׁ הוּא.
רוֹמְמוּ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַר קָדְשׁוֹ,
כִּי קָדוֹשׁ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

When the Torah comes to a rest, we are seated.

AS THE ARK WAS CARRIED FORWARD וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ. Numbers 10:35. This verse is taken from the biblical description of the journey in the desert. The ark preceded the people as they moved from one encampment to another, providing guidance on the path and offering divine protection from enemies and other external threats. In our time, we might think of this prayer as a plea that Torah guide us in our journey forward, past any pitfalls.

TORAH SHALL GO FORTH FROM ZION כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן. Isaiah 2:3. Isaiah's vision is that divine teaching ought to both impact our lives and also affect the world around us and beyond us.

PRAISED IS THE ONE WHO GAVE TORAH בָּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה. This congegational response is not a quotation of a biblical verse, but is a liturgical creation, an expression of our own feelings. In praising God's holiness we also hint that a measure of holiness is given to us when we immerse ourselves in Torah.

JOIN ME IN GLORIFYING גַּדְּלוּ לַיהוה אִתִּי. Psalm 34:4. This verse (asking the congregation to acknowledge God) and the congregational response that follows (acknowledging divine sovereignty) mark the oldest section of the Torah service (Sofrim 14:11). The Torah scroll is the most concrete representation we have of God's presence on earth, symbolizing not an image of God but the record of the divine-human relationship. Bowing in the direction of the Torah, we acknowledge the power these words have to continue to address us and to invoke God's present-day call to us.

THE TORAH PROCESSIONAL. Much as a sovereign parades among the people, the Torah is paraded through the congregation. As it passes, its hem is kissed, either directly or symbolically (by kissing a siddur or a corner of a *tallit* that has touched the skirt of the Torah scroll). Some Sephardim have the custom of reciting the verse from the Song of Songs as they do so, יִשָּׁקֵנִי מִנְּשִׁיקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי טוֹבִים דֹּדֶיךָ מִיָּיִן ("May I be kissed by the kisses of your mouth, for your love is sweeter than wine," 1:2).

YOURS, ADONAI לְךָ יהוה. 1 Chronicles 29:11. The Chronicler records David's purported last words, in which he ascribes all the glory of his kingdom not to the work of his own hands but to God, to whom all greatness belongs. In the context of the liturgy, the verse takes on new meaning: the "You" addressed here is God as made present in the Torah. In the language of Kabbalah, God and Torah are one.

Closing or Opening the Gates

A midrash imagines King Solomon reciting parts of this psalm when he built the Temple. He tried to bring the ark into the Holy of Holies, but the gates refused to open. He sang twenty-four songs of joy and recited twenty-four verses, but he was not answered. He said, "Open up, O gates; open the entryway to eternity," and again "Open up, O gates; open the entryway to eternity" (Psalm 24:7, 9), but he was not answered. Why did the gates remain shut before him? Because he was filled with pride, claiming "I have surely built You a house to dwell in…" (1 Kings 8:13). Finally, Solomon asked that God remember not his own deeds but those of his father, and the gates opened immediately. That is why this psalm is dedicated to David, though he did not see the Temple built in his own lifetime.

David was no saint, but he had laid the groundwork for the building of the Temple, and had brought the ark up to Jerusalem. Perhaps the teaching is that as long as we believe our accomplishments are solely our own, we are barred from accessing deep wisdom and holiness. When we understand ourselves to be interconnected, building on the achievements of those who preceded us and those who surround us, the gates of eternity may open before us.

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 ḥasidav, livnei yisrael am k'rovo. Hal'luyah!

A SONG OF DAVID

The earth is ADONAI's in all its fullness,
the land and all who dwell on it.
It was God who founded it upon the seas,
and set it firm upon the flowing streams.
Who may ascend the mount of ADONAI?
Who may stand in God's sanctuary?
One who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who has not taken God's name in vain, nor sworn deceitfully,
will receive ADONAI's blessing, a just reward from God,
the deliverer.
This generation seeks You;
the descendants of Jacob long for Your presence, selah.
Open up, O gates—open up the entryway to eternity;
let the exalted sovereign come.
Who is the sovereign who is exalted?
ADONAI, mighty and triumphant, ADONAI triumphant in battle.
Open up, O gates—open up the entryway to eternity;
let the exalted sovereign come.
▸ Who is the sovereign who is exalted?
ADONAI Tz'va·ot is the sovereign who is exalted, selah.

Psalm 24

Ladonai ha-aretz u-m'lo-ah, teiveil v'yosh'vei vah.
Ki hu al yamim y'sadah, v'al n'harot y'khon'neha.
Mi ya-aleh v'har Adonai, u-mi yakum bimkom kodsho.
N'ki khapayim u-var levav, asher lo nasa lashav nafshi, v'lo nishba l'mirmah.
Yisa v'rakhah mei-eit Adonai, u-tzedakah mei-elohei yisho.
Zeh dor dorshav m'vakshei fanekha yaakov, selah.
Se'u she'arim rasheikhem, v'hinasu pitḥei olam, v'yavo melekh ha-kavod.
Mi zeh melekh ha-kavod, Adonai izuz v'gibor, Adonai gibor milḥamah.
Se'u she'arim rasheikhem, u-se'u pitḥei olam, v'yavo melekh ha-kavod.
Mi hu zeh melekh ha-kavod, Adonai Tz'va-ot hu melekh ha-kavod, selah.

הַכְנָסַת הַתּוֹרָה

We rise as the ark is opened.

Leader:

יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יהוה כִּי נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ.

Congregation:

הוֹדוֹ עַל אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם. וַיָּרֶם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ,
תְּהִלָּה לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו, לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַם קְרֹבוֹ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר

לַיהוה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ, תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ.
כִּי הוּא עַל יַמִּים יְסָדָהּ, וְעַל נְהָרוֹת יְכוֹנְנֶהָ.
מִי יַעֲלֶה בְהַר יהוה, וּמִי יָקוּם בִּמְקוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ.
נְקִי כַפַּיִם וּבַר לֵבָב, אֲשֶׁר לֹא נָשָׂא לַשָּׁוְא נַפְשִׁי,
וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמִרְמָה.
יִשָּׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יהוה, וּצְדָקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ.
זֶה דּוֹר דּוֹרְשָׁיו, מְבַקְשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב, סֶלָה.
שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רָאשֵׁיכֶם, וְהִנָּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם,
וְיָבוֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד.
מִי זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד, יהוה עִזּוּז וְגִבּוֹר,
יהוה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה.
שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רָאשֵׁיכֶם, וּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם,
וְיָבֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד.
◂ מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד,
יהוה צְבָאוֹת, הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד סֶלָה.

תהלים כד

CELEBRATE יְהַלְלוּ. Psalm 148:13–14. The practice of reciting these verses while returning the Torah to the ark is mentioned in the earliest prayerbooks.

PSALM 24 combines two themes: God as the creator and ultimate sovereign, and the need for those who would enter God's sanctuary to exhibit moral behavior. In fact, one may think of these two as cause and effect: as God is kind and just, so our world should reflect the qualities of its creator—anyone who would come close to the supreme sovereign should exhibit these traits. As we open the ark to return the Torah to its place, we emphasize that we would like to be among those who go up to "God's holy mountain"; as we proclaim "this generation seeks You…" we realize that to approach God, to seek God's presence, we need to commit our own lives to acting with justice and kindness.

THE EARTH IS ADONAI'S לַיהוה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ. Every place on earth can become a gateway to heaven, for all the earth is God's.

SELAH סֶלָה. The use of the word *selah* is common in the Book of Psalms, yet its meaning has been lost. The ancient sages thought that it meant "forever," but contemporary scholars think that it may have been a musical term, perhaps related to the word *sal* ("drum"): that is, it was a signal for the drums to enter.

The Torah scroll is placed in the ark.

Whenever the ark was set down, Moses would say:
Return, ADONAI, to the myriad families of the people Israel.
Come into Your sanctuary, ADONAI, You and Your mighty 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 lekaḥ tov natati lakhem, torati al ta-azovu.
Etz ḥayim hi la-maḥazikim bah, v'tom'kheha me'ushar.
D'rakheha darkhei no-am, v'khol n'tivoteha shalom.
Hashiveinu Adonai eilekha v'nashuvah, ḥadesh yameinu k'kedem.

We are seated as the ark is closed.
In the afternoon service on fast days, we remain standing and turn to page 95.

Its Ways Are Pleasant and All Its Paths Are Peace

Each noun in this verse finds a companion: "ways" and "paths," "pleasantness" and "peace." Its "ways" are the ways opened by ancestors who dug in the sea [of Torah] and entered into it, and those become paths that open up [for us] on every side and in every direction. The "pleasantness" is the pleasantness that derives from tasting of the world that is coming, for from the world that is coming all lights and lamps of this world are lit . . . and so we derive peace, which is the peace we feel from being at home.

—*a rendering of the* ZOHAR

Unending Meaning

The Bible is not an end but a beginning; a precedent, not a story. It is not an epic about the life of heroes but the story of every human being in all climates and all ages. Its topic is the world, the whole of history. It continues to scatter seeds of justice and compassion, to echo God's cry to the world and to pierce humanity's armor of callousness. . . . Though its words seem plain and its idiom translucent, unnoticed meanings, undreamed-of intimations break forth constantly. More than two thousand years of reading and research have not succeeded in exploring its full meaning.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL (*adapted*)

The Torah scroll is placed in the ark.

וּבְנֻחֹה יֹאמַר: שׁוּבָה יהוה רִבְבוֹת אַלְפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.
קוּמָה יהוה לִמְנוּחָתֶךָ, אַתָּה וַאֲרוֹן עֻזֶּךָ.
כֹּהֲנֶיךָ יִלְבְּשׁוּ צֶדֶק, וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ.
בַּעֲבוּר דָּוִד עַבְדֶּךָ, אַל תָּשֵׁב פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ.
◀ כִּי לֶקַח טוֹב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם, תּוֹרָתִי אַל תַּעֲזֹבוּ.
עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחֲזִיקִים בָּהּ, וְתֹמְכֶיהָ מְאֻשָּׁר.
דְּרָכֶיהָ דַרְכֵי־נֹעַם, וְכָל־נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שָׁלוֹם.
הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ יהוה אֵלֶיךָ וְנָשׁוּבָה, חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם.

We are seated as the ark is closed.
In the afternoon service on fast days, we remain standing and turn to page 95.

WHENEVER THE ARK WAS SET DOWN וּבְנֻחֹה יֹאמַר. Numbers 10:36. The Torah teaches that Moses recited these words at the conclusion of each stage of the wilderness journey, marking the beginning of an encampment in a new place; we recite them as the Torah scroll completes its circuit around the sanctuary and is returned to the ark. As we bid goodbye to the physical presence of the scroll, we pray that those who lead us will be guided by its teachings, and that we and they may create a kind and peaceful society.

The verses quoted in this paragraph are taken from Psalm 132:8–10; Proverbs 4:2, 3:18, 3:17; and Lamentations 5:21.

IT IS A TREE OF LIFE FOR THOSE WHO GRASP IT עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחֲזִיקִים בָּהּ. Proverbs 3:18. The wooden Torah staves are called *atzei ḥayim*, "trees of life," and this verse is the source of the custom of literally grasping their handles as we recite the *b'rakhot* over the Torah. Figuratively, as we close the ark and prepare to conclude our prayer, we pray that we have "grasped" something of the Torah, and that the insights and ethical teachings of Torah will maintain their hold on us throughout our day.

TURN US TOWARD YOU, ADONAI הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ יהוה אֵלֶיךָ. Lamentations 5:21. This paragraph began with Moses's prayer that God return to us once again; now, as the ark is closed, we pray for God's help in returning ourselves to God. Interestingly, it is a quotation from Lamentations, the lament of exile: the very last words recited before the ark is closed constitute a plea that exile might end.

Concluding Prayers

Ashrei

Blessed are they who dwell in Your house;
they shall praise You forever.
Blessed the people who are so favored;
Blessed 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.

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 ḥeiker.
Dor l'dor y'shabaḥ ma-asekha, u-g'vurotekha yagidu.
Hadar k'vod hodekha, v'divrei niflotekha asiḥah.
Ve-ezuz norotekha yomeiru, u-g'dulat'kha asaprenah.
Zeikher rav tuv'kha yabiu, v'tzidkat'kha y'raneinu.
Ḥanun v'raḥum Adonai, erekh apayim u-g'dol ḥased.
Tov Adonai lakol, v'raḥamav al kol ma-asav.
Yodukha Adonai kol ma-asekha, va-ḥasidekha y'var'khukha.
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.

continued

סיום התפילה

אַשְׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתֶךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֶּלָה.
אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁכָּכָה לּוֹ, אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁיהוה אֱלֹהָיו.

תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד

אֲרוֹמִמְךָ אֱלוֹהַי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וַאֲבָרְכָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
בְּכָל־יוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָּ, וַאֲהַלְלָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
גָּדוֹל יהוה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד, וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ אֵין חֵקֶר.
דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ.
הֲדַר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ, וְדִבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה.
וֶעֱזוּז נוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ יֹאמֵרוּ, וּגְדֻלָּתְךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה.
זֵכֶר רַב טוּבְךָ יַבִּיעוּ, וְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ.
חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם יהוה, אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וּגְדָל־חָסֶד.
טוֹב יהוה לַכֹּל, וְרַחֲמָיו עַל כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו.
יוֹדוּךָ יהוה כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְבָרְכוּכָה.
כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמֵרוּ, וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יְדַבֵּרוּ.
לְהוֹדִיעַ לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרֹתָיו, וּכְבוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתוֹ.
מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֹלָמִים, וּמֶמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדֹר.
סוֹמֵךְ יהוה לְכָל־הַנֹּפְלִים, וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכְּפוּפִים.

continued

ASHREI אַשְׁרֵי. The arc of the morning service moves us from the communal prayers of P'sukei d'Zimra and Sh'ma and its *b'rakhot*, into our private meditations in the Amidah and Taḥanun (and on Mondays and Thursdays to Torah study), and then back to a communal prayer experience to close the service together. In doing so, we return to Psalm 145 (Ashrei), which was central to the opening of our service (P'sukei D'Zimra). Thus, we can feel that we are completing the circle of prayer. We began in anticipation, as Ashrei set the mood for prayer. Now, as we look to the conclusion of the service, we may have a sense of hope, perhaps even fullness, characterized by Ashrei's announcement: "Opening Your hand, You satisfy with contentment all that lives."

Whenever Psalm 145 is quoted in the liturgy, it is preceded by two verses beginning with the word *ashrei*, taken from Psalm 84:5 and Psalm 144:15, and is concluded with a verse from Psalm 115:18.

Now I Know

Who is speaking and who is addressed in Psalm 20? In the first stanza the psalmist addresses another, "May Adonai respond to you," and in the second stanza the psalmist talks about himself, "Now I know..."

One way to pray the psalm is to read the opening section as though someone else (perhaps the psalmist) is addressing me personally: blessing me, acknowledging my hopes and praying for their fulfillment. We might see it as a reassuring response to our prayers this morning. After a morning of praying, I sense—in some mysterious way—that my prayers are heard, and that I am indeed blessed ("Now I know").

In an alternate reading, perhaps I myself am the speaker of the first half of the psalm, offering my words of blessing to those around me, as we prepare to part company and each go about our own day. In this reading, in offering blessings to others, I experience blessing and reassurance myself: "Now I know."

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 God does, 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. Psalm 145
May all that is mortal praise God's name forever and ever.
We shall praise ADONAI now and always. Halleluyah!

Einei khol elekha y'sabeiru, v'atah noten lahem et okhlam b'ito.
Potei-aḥ et yadekha, u-masbia l'khol ḥai ratzon.
Tzadik Adonai b'khol d'rakhav, v'ḥasid 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.
Va-anaḥnu n'varekh yah, mei-atah v'ad olam. Hal'luyah.

The following psalm is not recited on festive days or days of mourning.

FOR THE CONDUCTOR, A DAVIDIC SONG
May ADONAI respond to you in a time of trouble;
may the name of the God of Jacob strengthen you.
May God send help to you from the divine abode of holiness,
and from Zion may you find help.
May God remember all your offerings,
and gratefully receive all your sacrifices.
May your heart's desire be fulfilled,
and may all your plans come to fruition.
We shall sing of Your triumph and acclaim the name of our God,
as all that you ask is fulfilled.

Now I know that God will aid ADONAI's anointed,
responding from God's holy heights,
assuring victory with the strength of God's right hand.
Though some come in chariots and others on horse,
we call out in the name of ADONAI, our God.
They falter and fall, but we rise up with renewed strength.
ADONAI will save us; the Sovereign will respond the day we call out.
Psalm 20

עֵינֵי כֹל אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּ, וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן לָהֶם אֶת־אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ.
פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ, וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן.
צַדִּיק יהוה בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו, וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו.
קָרוֹב יהוה לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו, לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֻהוּ בֶאֱמֶת.
רְצוֹן יְרֵאָיו יַעֲשֶׂה, וְאֶת־שַׁוְעָתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם.
שׁוֹמֵר יהוה אֶת־כָּל־אֹהֲבָיו, וְאֵת כָּל־הָרְשָׁעִים יַשְׁמִיד.
◂ תְּהִלַּת יהוה יְדַבֶּר־פִּי,
וִיבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
תהלים קמה

וַאֲנַחְנוּ נְבָרֵךְ יָהּ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. הַלְלוּיָהּ.

The following psalm is not recited on festive days or days of mourning.

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד
יַעַנְךָ יהוה בְּיוֹם צָרָה, יְשַׂגֶּבְךָ שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
יִשְׁלַח עֶזְרְךָ מִקֹּדֶשׁ, וּמִצִּיּוֹן יִסְעָדֶךָּ.
יִזְכֹּר כָּל־מִנְחֹתֶיךָ, וְעוֹלָתְךָ יְדַשְּׁנֶה סֶלָה.
יִתֶּן־לְךָ כִלְבָבֶךָ, וְכָל־עֲצָתְךָ יְמַלֵּא.
נְרַנְּנָה בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ, וּבְשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִדְגֹּל,
יְמַלֵּא יהוה כָּל־מִשְׁאֲלוֹתֶיךָ.

עַתָּה יָדַעְתִּי, כִּי הוֹשִׁיעַ יהוה מְשִׁיחוֹ,
יַעֲנֵהוּ מִשְּׁמֵי קָדְשׁוֹ, בִּגְבוּרוֹת יֵשַׁע יְמִינוֹ.
אֵלֶּה בָרֶכֶב, וְאֵלֶּה בַסּוּסִים,
וַאֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נַזְכִּיר.
הֵמָּה כָּרְעוּ וְנָפָלוּ, וַאֲנַחְנוּ קַמְנוּ וַנִּתְעוֹדָד.
יהוה הוֹשִׁיעָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְיוֹם קָרְאֵנוּ.
תהלים כ

PSALM 20 is a late addition to the liturgy and is not recited in all rites. Its assurance that our "heart's desire be fulfilled" offers a hopeful, even joyous, conclusion to our prayers. Biblically, the "divine abode of holiness" refers to the Temple—thus, the "offerings" referred to are the grain offerings, the simple sacrifices brought to the altar, and the "sacrifices" are the whole burnt offerings. But including this passage here in the morning service transforms its meaning: our prayers may be seen as substitutes for these Temple rituals. The assurance of God's response is emphasized by the use of verbs, rather than nouns, in introducing phrases referring to God: *ya-ankha, y'sagevkha, yishlaḥ, yizkor, yitein, y'malei* (respond, strengthen, send, remember, fulfill, come to fruition).

The Talmud of the Land of Israel (Berakhot 4:3) speaks of Psalm 20 as following the first 18 poems of the Book of Psalms (originally, Psalms 1 and 2 were considered a single psalm)—parallel to the Amidah, which originally had 18 *b'rakhot*. Despite this teaching, Psalm 20 was not included in the earliest prayerbooks. When some came to include it in the late Middle Ages, they did not pick up on this early teaching, but instead emphasized the reference to "God's anointed," and saw the psalm as a call for redemption, a messianic prayer.

Because it begins with mention of "a time of trouble," literally a "day" of trouble, this psalm is omitted on festive occasions: Rosh Hodesh, Ḥol Ha-mo-ed, Purim, Hanukkah, and erev Pesaḥ and erev Yom Kippur (which are considered partial holidays), as well as on Yom HaZikaron and Yom Ha-Atzmaut. It is also omitted in a house of mourning, on Tishah B'Av, and Yom HaShoah. Sephardim omit it whenever Taḥanun is not recited.

ACCLAIM נִדְגֹּל. Perhaps a more literal understanding of the Hebrew phrase is: We will march behind a flag (*degel*) inscribed with God's name.

Redemption

Once, when I was just a girl,
not yet fully grown, but
a veteran in the battle
with despair, I sat by a lake,
the sky filled with stars.
The sky, the lake, the stars
were silent, still. And I, I,
had no words, no tears, empty.
Alone alone with the stars
and the waves gently lapping
the shore. Crickets,
my breathing,
the waves gently lapping.
Absolutely nothing happened,
just a calming of breath,
a slowing of breath.
Nothing happened
but it was enough.

—MERLE FELD

God's Spirit

What is the meaning of
"My spirit shall remain with
you and . . . My words shall
be upon your lips"? God's
spirit is with us, to constantly
interpret the words of Torah
anew. Each person immersing
themselves in Torah brings
a new perspective, adds a
new meaning, and is, in turn,
renewed.

—AARON OF KARLIN

Kedushah D'Sidra: Kedushah for Torah Study

"A redeemer shall come to Zion, and to those of the house of Jacob who turn back from sin," declares ADONAI.
"This is My covenant with them," says ADONAI, "My spirit shall remain with you and with your descendants. My words shall be upon your lips and upon the lips of your children and your children's children," ADONAI declares, "now and forever."

▸ And You, O Holy One, are enthroned amidst the praises of the people Israel. They call out, one to another: "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.

They call to one another, saying: "Holy in the highest heavens, holy on the earth, and holy forever, throughout all time is *ADONAI Tz'va·ot*. The radiance of God's glory fills the whole world."

▸ Then a wind lifted me up and I heard a loud tumultuous voice behind me, "Praised is ADONAI's glory wherever God dwells."

Barukh k'vod Adonai mimkomo.

▸ ADONAI will reign forever and ever.

Adonai yimlokh l'olam va-ed.

וּבָא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל, וּלְשָׁבֵי פֶשַׁע בְּיַעֲקֹב, נְאֻם יהוה.
וַאֲנִי זֹאת בְּרִיתִי אֹתָם, אָמַר יהוה,
רוּחִי אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיךָ, וּדְבָרַי אֲשֶׁר שַׂמְתִּי בְּפִיךָ,
לֹא יָמוּשׁוּ מִפִּיךָ וּמִפִּי זַרְעֲךָ וּמִפִּי זֶרַע זַרְעֲךָ, אָמַר יהוה,
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

◂ וְאַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ, יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל.
וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר:
קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ יהוה צְבָאוֹת, מְלֹא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.
וּמְקַבְּלִין דֵּין מִן דֵּין וְאָמְרִין: קַדִּישׁ בִּשְׁמֵי מְרוֹמָא
עִלָּאָה בֵּית שְׁכִינְתֵּהּ, קַדִּישׁ עַל אַרְעָא עוֹבַד גְּבוּרְתֵּהּ,
קַדִּישׁ לָעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא, יהוה צְבָאוֹת, מַלְיָא
כָל־אַרְעָא זִיו יְקָרֵהּ.

◂ וְתִשָּׂאֵנִי רוּחַ, וָאֶשְׁמַע אַחֲרַי קוֹל רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל:
בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יהוה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.
וּנְטָלַתְנִי רוּחָא, וְשָׁמְעַת בַּתְרַי קָל זְיַע סַגִּיא,
דְּמְשַׁבְּחִין וְאָמְרִין:
בְּרִיךְ יְקָרָא דַיהוה מֵאֲתַר בֵּית שְׁכִינְתֵּהּ.

◂ **יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לָעֹלָם וָעֶד.**
יהוה מַלְכוּתֵהּ קָאֵם לָעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

KEDUSHAH D'SIDRA. This collection of biblical verses is known as the *kedushah d'sidra*, most likely because it was originally recited after Torah study. (The word *sidra* refers to the daily portions of Bible study.) The opening quotation, "This is my covenant . . . ," is an especially appropriate accompaniment to Torah study, since it speaks of "My words" being forever on the lips of every Jewish generation. Because public teaching was conducted in the vernacular of its day (Aramaic), this prayer includes both Hebrew verses and an Aramaic translation of its central passage, the Kedushah. The Aramaic (here indicated in gray) is not only a translation, but offers an interpretation of the threefold repetition of the word *kadosh* (holy): God is declared holy on high, God is declared holy on earth, and God is declared holy throughout time.

As in any Kedushah, Isaiah's vision of the heavens opening up and Ezekiel's vision of the heavenly throne are recited. Unlike other versions of the Kedushah, the Kedushah D'sidra emphasizes the personal experience of God. In that regard, the introductory verse talks of God's spirit never departing from us. Uniquely, the Kedushah D'sidra includes Ezekiel's first-person description of his being spiritually transported, prior to his vision of the angelic host.

The introductory verses are taken from Isaiah 59:20–21 and Psalm 22:4. The verses following the Kedushah D'sidra (on the next page) emphasize redemption and the hope for deliverance, an expression of our wish that our study of Torah will lead to the fulfillment of the vision of an ideal world.

You Will Keep Faith with Jacob

Just as Jacob, fleeing alone,
discovered God in his
dream of a ladder reach-
ing heaven, and declared
"Surely there is God in
this place," we too can find
God in every place we are.

—*based on* MOSHE ḤAYIM
EFRAIM OF SUDLIKOV

Praise God Each Day

God—ultimate joy—if not
for You,
what is there for me?
My captain, my guide,
will You remember me
today with the promise
of redemption?
"Do not despair now, stand
up, exalt My name . . ."
For songs can crumble
walls, make them fall,
and the One on high
can raise you up—
yitgadal—with teachings
of love.

—*based on* YEHUDAH
HALEVI

ADONAI, God of our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Israel,
impress this always upon Your people, and direct their hearts
toward You.
God is compassionate, will forgive sin and not wreak destruc-
tion; for again and again God acts with restraint, refusing to
let rage become all-consuming.
You, ADONAI, are kind and forgiving, loving to all who call
upon You.
Your righteousness is everlasting; Your Torah is truth.
You will keep faith with Jacob and be compassionate to
Abraham, fulfilling the promise You made to our ancestors.
Praised is ADONAI, the God of our deliverance, who
sustains us day after day.
ADONAI Tz'va·ot is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.
ADONAI Tz'va·ot, blessed is the one who trusts in You.
ADONAI, help us; Sovereign, answer us when we call.

Praised is our God, who created us for the divine glory,
setting us apart from those who go astray,
giving us a teaching of truth,
and planting within us eternal life.
May God open our hearts to the Torah—
inspiring us to love, revere, and wholeheartedly serve God.
Thus shall we not labor in vain,
nor shall our children suffer confusion.
ADONAI, our God and God of our ancestors,
may we fulfill Your precepts in this world,
and be worthy of happiness and blessing in the messianic era
and in the world that is coming,
that we may sing Your praise unceasingly;
I shall exalt You, ADONAI my God, always.
Blessed is the one who trusts in ADONAI,
for ADONAI will be their stronghold.
Trust in ADONAI forever and ever;
ADONAI is an unfailing fortress.
▸ Those who love You trust in You;
You never forsake those who seek You, ADONAI.
ADONAI desires the vindication of the righteous,
that Torah be magnified and glorified.

Musaf is recited on Rosh Ḥodesh and Ḥol Ha-mo·ed.
On Rosh Ḥodesh, we continue with Ḥatzi Kaddish on page 163;
tefillin are removed either before or after Ḥatzi Kaddish.
On Ḥol Ha-mo·ed, we continue with Ḥatzi Kaddish on p. 173.

יהוה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שָׁמְרָה זֹּאת לְעוֹלָם לְיֵצֶר מַחְשָׁבוֹת לְבַב עַמֶּךָ,
וְהָכֵן לְבָבָם אֵלֶיךָ.
וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עָוֹן וְלֹא יַשְׁחִית, וְהִרְבָּה לְהָשִׁיב אַפּוֹ,
וְלֹא יָעִיר כָּל־חֲמָתוֹ.
כִּי אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי טוֹב וְסַלָּח, וְרַב חֶסֶד לְכָל־קֹרְאֶיךָ.
צִדְקָתְךָ צֶדֶק לָעוֹלָם, וְתוֹרָתְךָ אֱמֶת.
תִּתֵּן אֱמֶת לְיַעֲקֹב, חֶסֶד לְאַבְרָהָם,
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִימֵי קֶדֶם.
בָּרוּךְ אֲדֹנָי, יוֹם יוֹם יַעֲמָס־לָנוּ, הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ סֶלָה.
יהוה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ, מִשְׂגָּב לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה.
יהוה צְבָאוֹת, אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם בֹּטֵחַ בָּךְ.
יהוה הוֹשִׁיעָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְיוֹם קָרְאֵנוּ.

בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ, שֶׁבְּרָאָנוּ לִכְבוֹדוֹ,
וְהִבְדִּילָנוּ מִן הַתּוֹעִים, וְנָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת,
וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ.
הוּא יִפְתַּח לִבֵּנוּ בְּתוֹרָתוֹ,
וְיָשֵׂם בְּלִבֵּנוּ אַהֲבָתוֹ וְיִרְאָתוֹ,
וְלַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנוֹ, וּלְעָבְדוֹ בְּלֵבָב שָׁלֵם,
לְמַעַן לֹא נִיגַע לָרִיק, וְלֹא נֵלַד לַבֶּהָלָה.
יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ,
יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ],
שֶׁנִּשְׁמֹר חֻקֶּיךָ בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וְנִזְכֶּה וְנִחְיֶה וְנִרְאֶה,
וְנִירַשׁ טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה, לִשְׁנֵי יְמוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ,
וּלְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, לְמַעַן יְזַמֶּרְךָ כָּבוֹד וְלֹא יִדֹּם,
יהוה אֱלֹהַי לְעוֹלָם אוֹדֶךָּ.
בָּרוּךְ הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בַּיהוה, וְהָיָה יהוה מִבְטַחוֹ.
בִּטְחוּ בַיהוה עֲדֵי עַד, כִּי בְיָהּ יהוה צוּר עוֹלָמִים.
◂ וְיִבְטְחוּ בְךָ יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ, כִּי לֹא עָזַבְתָּ דֹּרְשֶׁיךָ יהוה.
יהוה חָפֵץ לְמַעַן צִדְקוֹ, יַגְדִּיל תּוֹרָה וְיַאְדִּיר.

Musaf is recited on Rosh Ḥodesh and Ḥol Ha-mo·ed.
On Rosh Ḥodesh, we continue with Ḥatzi Kaddish on page 163;
tefillin are removed either before or after Ḥatzi Kaddish.
On Ḥol Ha-mo·ed, we continue with Ḥatzi Kaddish on p. 173.

ADONAI, GOD OF OUR ANCESTORS יהוה אֱלֹהֵי... אֲבוֹתֵינוּ. This paragraph, which talks of God's compassion and God's care of the people Israel, is composed of a string of biblical verses taken from: 1 Chronicles 29:18, Psalms 78:38, 86:5, 119:142, Micah 7:20, Psalms 68:20, 46:8, 84:13, and 20:10.

IMPRESS THIS ALWAYS שָׁמְרָה זֹּאת לְעוֹלָם. In its biblical context (1 Chronicles 29:18), David prays that God always remember the people's generosity in joyously making freewill offerings toward the building of the Temple. And further, when the people forget this moment, that God always remind them to be generous.

PRAISED IS OUR GOD בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ. This paragraph is a liturgical construction unlike the preceding and following paragraphs, which are composed of strung-together biblical verses. The phrase "we shall not labor in vain, nor shall our children suffer confusion" is taken from Isaiah 65:23, and in its context here refers to Torah study as well as to our work in the world. (The original verse from Isaiah is in the singular, but it has been changed to the plural in the liturgy.)

THUS I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE לְמַעַן יְזַמֶּרְךָ כָּבוֹד. This concluding paragraph is a collection of verses taken from Psalm 30:13, Jeremiah 17:7, Isaiah 26:4, Psalm 9:11, and Isaiah 42:21.

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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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.*

קַדִּישׁ שָׁלֵם

Leader:

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כִּרְעוּתֵהּ,
וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאַר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדַּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל־

[*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* לְעֵלָּא לְעֵלָּא מִכָּל־]

בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא תֻּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנֶחֱמָתָא דַּאֲמִירָן בְּעָלְמָא,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תִּתְקַבַּל צְלוֹתְהוֹן וּבָעוּתְהוֹן דְּכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל קֳדָם אֲבוּהוֹן
דִּי בִשְׁמַיָּא **וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.**

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל], וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

KADDISH SHALEM is recited at the end of every worship service that includes an Amidah. It is distinguished from other forms of the Kaddish by its inclusion of the line *titkabel tz'lot'hon,* "May the prayers . . . of all Israel be accepted." Thus it forms an appropriate conclusion to the prayer service.

PEACE . . . PEACE . . . שְׁלָמָא שָׁלוֹם. Since this Kaddish is said at the conclusion of the service (Aleinu, which follows, was added later), it ends with a prayer for peace—much as the last word of the Priestly Blessing is *shalom,* peace.

Why We Pray

To pray is to take notice of the wonder, to regain the sense of the mystery that animates all beings, the divine margin in all attainments. Prayer is our humble answer to the inconceivable surprise of living. It is all we can offer in return for the mystery by which we live. . . . Only one response can maintain us: gratefulness for witnessing the wonder, for the gift of our unearned right to serve, to adore and to fulfill, it is gratefulness which makes the soul great.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

In Little Ways

You save your soul in little ways
through memories you recall when everyone else forgets, through injuries you suffer while everyone else
is happy, through silences you keep when everyone else
laughs, through smiles that cross your face when everyone else
is silent, through holes you stop up when everyone else
moves on, through proofs you hold on to when everyone else
tosses them away, through openings you uncover when everyone else
hides them, through your forgetting when everyone else
remembers, you save your soul
in little ways.

—ALMOG BEHAR

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.
ℱ 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 resides in the highest heavens,
and whose powerful presence abides 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-aḥ la-adon hakol,
lateit g'dulah l'yotzer b'reishit,
shelo asanu k'goyei ha-aratzot,
v'lo samanu k'mish-p'ḥot ha-adamah,
shelo sam ḥelkeinu kahem,
v'goraleinu k'khol hamonam.
ℱ Va-anaḥnu korim u-mishtaḥavim u-modim,
lifnei melekh malkhei ha-m'lakhim, ha-kadosh barukh hu.
Shehu noteh shamayim v'yosed aretz,
u-moshav y'karo ba-shamayim mi-ma-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 vahasheivota el l'vavekha, ki Adonai hu ha-elohim
bashamayim mi-ma-al, v'al ha-aretz mi-taḥat, ein od.

We rise.

עָלֵינוּ לְשַׁבֵּחַ לַאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל,
לָתֵת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית,
שֶׁלֹּא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת,
וְלֹא שָׂמָנוּ כְּמִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה,
שֶׁלֹּא שָׂם חֶלְקֵנוּ כָּהֶם,
וְגוֹרָלֵנוּ כְּכָל־הֲמוֹנָם.
ℱ וַאֲנַחְנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים,
לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.
שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם וְיוֹסֵד אָרֶץ,
וּמוֹשַׁב יְקָרוֹ בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל,
וּשְׁכִינַת עֻזּוֹ בְּגָבְהֵי מְרוֹמִים,
הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד.
אֱמֶת מַלְכֵּנוּ, אֶפֶס זוּלָתוֹ,
כַּכָּתוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ:
וְיָדַעְתָּ הַיּוֹם וַהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל לְבָבֶךָ,
כִּי יהוה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל,
וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת, אֵין עוֹד.

ALEINU was originally written for the High Holy Day liturgy. It was adopted as a concluding prayer for weekday services throughout the year by Ashkenazic Jewry following the Crusades. It first talks of the people Israel's unique role and fate, and quickly moves on to universal themes. Its second paragraph is a vision of the triumph of monotheism, when God's rule will be recognized by all people. Thus, in its historical context, it is a statement of faith in the face of martyrdom. A sentence denigrating others' worship was thought by Christian censors to be an allusion to Christianity and was removed by them.

Aleinu enunciates the belief that evil will be demolished and the Kingdom of God, a rule of justice, and peace, will reign—a theme that rises above any historical context. In this vein, it concludes with the words of the prophet Zechariah (14:9): "On that day Adonai shall be one and the name of God, one." The "name of God" is understood to be the way God is perceived in the world; in other words, the world will recognize that one God is sovereign over all of us.

Caring for Creation

רִבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם,
כָּל־מָה שֶׁבָּרָאתָ,
לֹא בְּרָאתָ דָּבָר אֶחָד
לְבַטָּלָה.
אָוִיר לִנְשִׁימָה,
מַיִם לִשְׁתִיָּה וּלְרָחְצָה,
אֲדָמָה לְמִחְיָה וּלְכַלְכָּלָה,
צֲמָחִים וְחַיּוֹת לְרָוְחָה,
וְאָדָם לְעָבְדָהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ.
תֵּן בְּלִבֵּנוּ כָּל־יוֹם לַעֲסֹק
בְּאוֹצָרְךָ בֶּאֱמוּנָה,
וְכֵן נָקִים רְצוֹנְךָ,
כְּדִבְרֵי נְבִיאֶךָ:
לֹא תֹהוּ בְרָאָהּ,
לָשֶׁבֶת יְצָרָהּ.

God, everything You have made
has a purpose:
air for breathing,
water for drinking and bathing,
land for living and growing,
plants and animals in gracious abundance,
and humanity to work and care for Your earth.
Inspire us every day to care faithfully
for Your treasure,
so that we may fulfill Your vision:
"Not as a wasteland did God create the earth, but as a home where we may live" (Isaiah 45:18).

—NINA BETH CARDIN and AVRAM ISRAEL REISNER

And so, ADONAI our God, we await You,
that soon we may behold Your wondrous power
sweeping away that which fouls the earth,
destroying idols,
securing the world with the sovereignty of the Almighty.
All flesh will invoke Your name—
all earth's wicked will turn toward You—
and 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.

Al ken n'kaveh l'kha Adonai eloheinu,
lirot m'heirah b'tiferet uzekha,
l'ha-avir gilulim min ha-aretz,
v'ha-elilim karot yikareitun,
l'takein olam b'malkhut shaddai,
v'kol b'nei vasar yikre'u vishmekha,
l'hafnot eilekha kol rishei aretz.
Yakiru v'yeidu kol yosh'vei teiveil,
ki l'kha tikhra kol berekh, tishava kol lashon.
L'fanekha Adonai eloheinu yikhre'u v'yipolu,
v'likhvod shimkha y'kar yiteinu,
vikablu khulam et ol malkhutekha.
V'timlokh aleihem m'heirah l'olam va-ed,
ki ha-malkhut shelkha hi,
u-l'olmei ad timlokh b'khavod.

▶ 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."

Ka-katuv b'toratekha: Adonai yimlokh l'olam va-ed.
V'ne-emar: v'hayah Adonai l'melekh al kol ha-aretz,
bayom hahu yihyeh Adonai eḥad, u-sh'mo eḥad.

We are seated.
Some communities recite the psalm of the day here (starting on page 80), followed by Mourner's Kaddish.

עַל כֵּן נְקַוֶּה לְךָ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
לִרְאוֹת מְהֵרָה בְּתִפְאֶרֶת עֻזֶּךָ,
לְהַעֲבִיר גִּלּוּלִים מִן הָאָרֶץ,
וְהָאֱלִילִים כָּרוֹת יִכָּרֵתוּן,
לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שַׁדַּי,
וְכָל־בְּנֵי בָשָׂר יִקְרְאוּ בִשְׁמֶךָ,
לְהַפְנוֹת אֵלֶיךָ כָּל־רִשְׁעֵי אֶרֶץ.
יַכִּירוּ וְיֵדְעוּ כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל,
כִּי לְךָ תִּכְרַע כָּל־בֶּרֶךְ,
תִּשָּׁבַע כָּל־לָשׁוֹן.
לְפָנֶיךָ יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִכְרְעוּ וְיִפֹּלוּ,
וְלִכְבוֹד שִׁמְךָ יָקָר יִתֵּנוּ,
וְיקַבְּלוּ כֻלָּם אֶת־עֹל מַלְכוּתֶךָ.
וְתִמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם מְהֵרָה לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,
כִּי הַמַּלְכוּת שֶׁלְּךָ הִיא,
וּלְעוֹלְמֵי עַד תִּמְלֹךְ בְּכָבוֹד.

◀ כַּכָּתוּב בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ: יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.
וְנֶאֱמַר: וְהָיָה יהוה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה יהוה אֶחָד, וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

We are seated.
Some communities recite the psalm of the day here (starting on page 80), followed by Mourner's Kaddish.

ESTABLISHING IN THE WORLD THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ALMIGHTY לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שַׁדַּי. The Hebrew word *l'takein*, here translated as "establishing," also has the meaning "to fix" or "to repair." This was a favorite meaning of the Safed mystics of the 16th century. For these rabbis, fasting, acts of penance, and good deeds were necessary acts to "repair" the rend that had occurred in both the spiritual and earthly realms through the commission of evil or the tragedy attendant on creation itself. The sages of the Mishnah used the phrase *"mi-p'nei* (for the sake of) *tikkun olam"* as a legal principle, meaning that even though certain actions are mandated, the law may sometimes be bent, so that just and peaceful outcomes can be obtained. In our own time, the phrase has been adopted to describe our obligation to perform deeds that are redemptive.

ADONAI WILL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER יהוה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד. From the Song at the Sea, Exodus 15:18.

SOVEREIGN OF ALL THE EARTH לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ. Zechariah 14:9. The verse concludes our service with a vision of oneness—the divine and the earthly united as one.

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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 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'ḥayeikhon u-v'yomeikhon u-v'ḥayei 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'yishtabaḥ 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 [*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* l'eila l'eila mikol] birkhata v'shirata tushb'ḥata v'neḥamata da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya, v'ḥayim 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.

Mourner's Kaddish

Though mourners recite the Kaddish at times of loss, the meaning of this prayer differs from person to person, and may even differ from day to day.

Some days, affirming and praising God as we grieve may strengthen our hope, helping us access our own resilience and courage. Other days, not the meaning of the words but simply their ancientness and rhythm may afford us a moment to contemplate our loss.

Perhaps what offers comfort is the knowledge that in saying Kaddish we're honoring our loved ones, continuing a legacy, fulfilling a mitzvah, doing right by them. At times, the comfort may come not from the Kaddish at all, but from being present with other people, part of a community where others are also grieving, understanding each other's pain without needing to explain— the words of the Kaddish creating a shared communication of loss and pain, when our own words are too difficult to find.

Some days, the time we set aside to say Kaddish might be a container in which to be fully present to our feelings of grief, sadness, anger—an island of honest emotion in the midst of an otherwise busy week. Or we may find that the Mourner's Kaddish sometimes evokes particularly vivid memories, making us smile with bittersweet gratitude as we recall our loved one, even occasionally feeling their presence with us.

The days, the weeks, the months pass, and, strangely, the routine has the power to awaken us to life. And from year to year, as we move on, the meaning of Kaddish on a *yahrzeit* changes, but the routine of its recitation continues to evoke significant memory and meaning.

קַדִּישׁ יָתוֹם

Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא,
בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כִּרְעוּתֵהּ,
וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and mourners:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Mourners:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאַר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדַּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל־

[*between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:* לְעֵלָּא לְעֵלָּא מִכָּל־]

בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא תֻּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנֶחֱמָתָא דַּאֲמִירָן בְּעָלְמָא,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא,
וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל],
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

MOURNER'S KADDISH (KADDISH YATOM). Remarkably, the Mourner's Kaddish contains no reference to death or to grief. Indeed, its only affirmation is of God's presence. Mourners, experiencing the loss of a beloved or of an intimate relative, are asked to lead the congregation in this affirmation. It is as if to say that even in the most grievous of circumstances, we yet affirm that life has meaning, that goodness continues to exist, and that even in this moment we recognize the need for gratitude. Some who recite this prayer will focus less on the words and their meaning, to find comfort in simply having a ritual of mourning—the very performance of that ritual providing a bridge back to life.

A prayer that may be recited when a *minyan* is not present at public worship can be found on page 135. The Sephardic version of the Mourner's Kaddish can be found at the end of this volume.

Love of the Land

And the land is divided
into regions of memory
and districts of hope,
and its people are all
mixed together,
like those returning from
a wedding and from a
funeral.

And the land is not divided
into war zones and peace
zones,
and he who digs a foxhole
against shelling
will return to lie in it with
his girl,
if he survives for peace.

And the land is lovely.
Even enemies all around
adorn it
with weapons shining in
the sun
like a necklace around the
throat.

And the land is a package:
it is neatly tied up and
everything's in it,
and it's tied up tightly
and the cords sometimes
hurt.

And the land is very small,
and I can hold it within
me.
The ground's erosion
erodes my rest, too,
and the water level of the
Kinneret is always on my
mind.

Thus I can feel the whole
land
when I close my eyes:
sea-valley-mountain.
Thus I can remember what
happened there
all at once, as a man
remembers his whole life
at the moment of his
death.

—YEHUDAH AMICHAI
trans. by Robert Alter

THE PSALM FOR MONDAY

Today is the second day of the week, the day on which the Levites recited this psalm in the Temple:

A SONG, A PSALM OF THE CLAN OF KORAḤ

ADONAI is great
and much praised in God's city,
on the holy mount,
beautiful to behold, the joy of all the earth,
Mount Zion—
on the northern flank of the great city of the King.

In its palaces, God is known as the true protector.
Behold, when kings conspire together
and come upon her,
they gaze at her and are astounded;
they are confused and frightened.
Gripped with panic,
they tremble like a woman giving birth;
shattered, as when an easterly wind
smashes against ships sailing for Tarsus.

As we heard, so we have seen of the city of ADONAI Tz'va·ot,
the city of our God—
may God preserve her till the end of time. *Selah.*
In Your sacred precincts, God,
we have grasped Your love and kindness.
Like Your name,
so Your praise reaches to the far ends of the earth.
Your right hand clasps justice.
Mount Zion rejoices, the cities of Judah exult,
because of Your judgments.

Circle Zion, go round her,
count her towers.
Note her battlements,
pass by her palaces,
that it may be said in the next generation:
▶ "This is the work of the eternal God,
our God,
who will lead us beyond death."

Psalm 48

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

לְיוֹם שֵׁנִי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם שֵׁנִי בַּשַּׁבָּת, שֶׁבּוֹ הָיוּ
הַלְוִיִּם אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לִבְנֵי קֹרַח
גָּדוֹל יהוה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד,
בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַר קָדְשׁוֹ.
יְפֵה נוֹף מְשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,
הַר צִיּוֹן, יַרְכְּתֵי צָפוֹן,
קִרְיַת מֶלֶךְ רָב.

אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ נוֹדַע לְמִשְׂגָּב.
כִּי הִנֵּה הַמְּלָכִים נוֹעֲדוּ עָבְרוּ יַחְדָּו,
הֵמָּה רָאוּ כֵּן תָּמֵהוּ,
נִבְהֲלוּ נָחְפְּזוּ,
רְעָדָה אֲחָזַתַם שָׁם,
חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה,
בְּרוּחַ קָדִים תְּשַׁבֵּר אֳנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ.

כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ כֵּן רָאִינוּ בְּעִיר יהוה צְבָאוֹת,
בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנְנֶהָ עַד עוֹלָם, סֶלָה.

דִּמִּינוּ אֱלֹהִים חַסְדֶּךָ, בְּקֶרֶב הֵיכָלֶךָ.
כְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כֵּן תְּהִלָּתְךָ עַל קַצְוֵי אֶרֶץ,
צֶדֶק מָלְאָה יְמִינֶךָ.
יִשְׂמַח הַר צִיּוֹן, תָּגֵלְנָה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה,
לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ.

סֹבּוּ צִיּוֹן וְהַקִּיפוּהָ, סִפְרוּ מִגְדָּלֶיהָ.
שִׁיתוּ לִבְּכֶם לְחֵילָהּ פַּסְגוּ אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ,
לְמַעַן תְּסַפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן.
◀ כִּי זֶה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם וָעֶד,
הוּא יְנַהֲגֵנוּ עַל מוּת.

תהלים מח

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

PSALM 48. The psalm for Sunday praised God as the creator of the whole world; now, the psalm for Monday focuses on God and Jerusalem. The entire psalm is a paean to the city, called here "the joy of all the earth," and God is seen as its protector. Here, too, as on Sunday, greatness is described not only in external terms—the beautiful city—but in ethical language as well: "Your right hand clasps justice." The praise of the city is intertwined with the praise of God offered by its citizens.

Some have suggested that the psalm refers to a historic event: the city's being besieged and saved. Rashi (11th century, northern France), quoting the midrash, thinks that the psalm is an ode to a rebuilt Jerusalem in a messianic future.

THE CLAN OF KORAḤ לִבְנֵי קֹרַח. The Torah declares that the children of Koraḥ did not die when their father was punished in the rebellion (Numbers 26:11), and the Book of Chronicles enumerates Koraḥ as a functioning levitical clan (1 Chronicles 9:19).

GRASPED דִּמִּינוּ. The Hebrew word has a range of meaning: to imagine, consider, or compare.

BEYOND DEATH עַל מוּת. Some construe the term as one word and argue that it is a musical instruction—that after "the eternal God, our God, who will lead us," there was originally a musical notation, as in the superscription of Psalm 41:1, *alamot*. Others understand it to mean "forever." Menahem Meiri (1249–1316) suggests that it may mean "beyond death"—that is, God will lead us eternally.

Justice and the Just Society

צֶדֶק צֶדֶק תִּרְדֹּף
Justice, justice shall you pursue.
—DEUTERONOMY 16:20

וְאָשִׁיבָה שֹׁפְטַיִךְ כְּבָרִאשֹׁנָה
וְיֹעֲצַיִךְ כְּבַתְּחִלָּה,
אַחֲרֵי־כֵן יִקָּרֵא לָךְ
עִיר הַצֶּדֶק קִרְיָה נֶאֱמָנָה.
צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט תִּפָּדֶה,
וְשָׁבֶיהָ בִּצְדָקָה.
I will restore your judges as of old,
and your counselors as of yore.
After that you shall be called
Righteous City, Trustworthy Town.
Zion shall be shall be saved through justice,
and those who return to her by righteousness.
—ISAIAH 1:26–27

עַד יֵעָרֶה עָלֵינוּ רוּחַ
מִמָּרוֹם . . .
וְשָׁכַן בַּמִּדְבָּר מִשְׁפָּט
וּצְדָקָה בַּכַּרְמֶל תֵּשֵׁב.
וְהָיָה מַעֲשֵׂה הַצְּדָקָה
שָׁלוֹם,
וַעֲבֹדַת הַצְּדָקָה
הַשְׁקֵט וָבֶטַח עַד עוֹלָם.
Then a spirit from on high shall pour down on us . . .
Justice shall reside even in the wilderness
and righteousness shall dwell in the most fertile lands,
for the work of righteousness shall be peace
and the effect of righteousness
serenity and security till the end of time.
—ISAIAH 32:15–17

THE PSALM FOR TUESDAY

Today is the third day of the week, the day on which the Levites recited this psalm in the Temple:

A PSALM OF ASAPH

God rises in the council of divine beings,
rendering judgment in the celestial assembly.

"How long will you pervert justice,
favoring the wicked?" Selah.

"Grant justice to the lowly and the orphan,
uphold the cause of the poor and the powerless.
Rescue the lowly and the poor,
save them from the hand of those who would do evil."

They do not comprehend, they do not understand,
they go about in darkness;
they would shake the very foundations of the earth.

"I said that you were divine beings,
all of you, children of the Most High,
but you shall die like mortals
and fall like any prince."

► *Arise, O God and judge the earth,*
for You shall have dominion over all peoples.

Psalm 82

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

לְיוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי בַּשַּׁבָּת, שֶׁבּוֹ הָיוּ הַלְוִיִּם אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף

אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בַּעֲדַת אֵל,
בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט.

עַד מָתַי תִּשְׁפְּטוּ עָוֶל,
וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ, סֶלָה.
שִׁפְטוּ דַל וְיָתוֹם,
עָנִי וָרָשׁ הַצְדִּיקוּ.
פַּלְּטוּ דַל וְאֶבְיוֹן,
מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ.

לֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ,
בַּחֲשֵׁכָה יִתְהַלָּכוּ,
יִמּוֹטוּ כָּל־מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ.

אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם,
וּבְנֵי עֶלְיוֹן כֻּלְּכֶם.
אָכֵן כְּאָדָם תְּמוּתוּן,
וּכְאַחַד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפֹּלוּ.

◄ קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ,
כִּי אַתָּה תִנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם.

תהלים פב

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

PSALM 82. Sunday's psalm talked about the goodness of creation and Monday's portrayed an idealized Jerusalem. In Tuesday's psalm, we are now presented with the perceived fault on earth, the gap between God's vision for creation and the reality in which we live: justice does not reign, the poor are ill treated, the weak have no recourse. We are witnesses to a scene in heaven where the celestial beings who personify the nations of the world are judged, and God upbraids them for what has occurred.

Martin Buber brilliantly analyzes this poem as a drama narrating a scene in heaven. The narrator sets the stage: a convention in heaven in which God is upbraiding the angels responsible for the nations of the world for allowing injustice to reign. The angels cannot defend themselves and the narrator describes their inability to offer a credible account of their work. We then hear God pronouncing judgment on them—throwing them out of heaven, as it were. The poem ends with the narrator's—and our—call to God to in fact effectuate this judgment and end the earthly rule of injustice.

ASAPH לְאָסָף. There are twelve psalms attributed to Asaph. Both Ezra and Nehemiah mention Asaph as a levitical clan serving as musicians in the Temple (Ezra 2:41, 3:10; Nehemiah 7:44).

Reading Psalm 94

The psalmist tells us that the horrible crimes perpetrated by the wicked oppressors are grounded in the conviction that there is no accountability. . . . People act wickedly because they do not believe in divine supervision over human society. . . . If God is not the center of their religious life, if God is not the source of their value system and the upholder of the moral order, then the imperatives of the moral law are ineffective. Sordid self-interest becomes the sole motivating force in human behavior; restraint is dispelled, inhibition discarded, and evil given free reign. . . .

In the face of a seemingly hopeless situation, when monstrous evil appears to be all powerful and hideous brutalities are the order of the day, our psalmist continues to place faith in God and affirms again and again abiding optimism that the moral order that has been disturbed will be set right and the wicked will be destroyed.

—NAHUM SARNA

THE PSALM FOR WEDNESDAY

Today is the fourth day of the week, the day on which the Levites recited this psalm in the Temple:

ADONAI, God of retribution,
God of retribution, reveal Yourself.
Rise up, O judge of the world,
pay back the haughty!
ADONAI, how long will those who do evil,
how long will the wicked continue to rejoice,
pouring forth their foolish speech,
praising those who commit evil?
ADONAI, they oppress Your people;
they afflict Your very own:
they murder widows and strangers,
they kill orphans.
And they say: ADONAI does not see it;
the God of Jacob does not pay heed.
Think about it, you brutes—
fools, when will you learn?
Will the one who formed ears not hear?
Will the one who created eyes not see?
Shall the one who chastises nations not punish them?
The one who grants knowledge to human beings,
ADONAI, is aware of human scheming and knows its futility.
Blessed is the person who is instructed by ADONAI,
who learns from Your teaching
to be patient during evil times,
till a pit is dug for the wicked.
For ADONAI will not abandon God's people;
not forsake God's very own.
For justice shall return to the rule of law
and all who are upright will rally to it.

continued

לְיוֹם רְבִיעִי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם רְבִיעִי בַּשַּׁבָּת, שֶׁבּוֹ הָיוּ הַלְוִיִּם אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

אֵל נְקָמוֹת יהוה, אֵל נְקָמוֹת הוֹפִיעַ.
הִנָּשֵׂא שֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ, הָשֵׁב גְּמוּל עַל גֵּאִים.
עַד מָתַי רְשָׁעִים, יהוה, עַד מָתַי רְשָׁעִים יַעֲלֹזוּ.
יַבִּיעוּ יְדַבְּרוּ עָתָק, יִתְאַמְּרוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן.
עַמְּךָ יהוה יְדַכְּאוּ, וְנַחֲלָתְךָ יְעַנּוּ.
אַלְמָנָה וְגֵר יַהֲרֹגוּ, וְיתוֹמִים יְרַצֵּחוּ.
וַיֹּאמְרוּ, לֹא יִרְאֶה יָהּ, וְלֹא יָבִין אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
בִּינוּ בֹעֲרִים בָּעָם, וּכְסִילִים מָתַי תַּשְׂכִּילוּ.
הֲנֹטַע אֹזֶן הֲלֹא יִשְׁמָע, אִם יֹצֵר עַיִן הֲלֹא יַבִּיט,
הַיִּסַּר גּוֹיִם הֲלֹא יוֹכִיחַ. הַמְלַמֵּד אָדָם דָּעַת,
יהוה יֹדֵעַ מַחְשְׁבוֹת אָדָם, כִּי הֵמָּה הֶבֶל.
אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר תְּיַסְּרֶנּוּ יָהּ, וּמִתּוֹרָתְךָ תְלַמְּדֶנּוּ,
לְהַשְׁקִיט לוֹ מִימֵי רָע, עַד יִכָּרֶה לָרָשָׁע שָׁחַת.
כִּי לֹא יִטֹּשׁ יהוה עַמּוֹ, וְנַחֲלָתוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב.
כִּי עַד צֶדֶק יָשׁוּב מִשְׁפָּט, וְאַחֲרָיו כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי לֵב.

continued

PSALM 94. The psalm for Tuesday spoke of God's rising in the heavenly court, acknowledging the evil committed in the world. Now, in the psalm for Wednesday, the pace quickens and the plea for the appearance of God to wipe evil off the face of the earth becomes insistent. The psalm expresses one of the characteristic biblical themes: that law can be perverted and become unjust, and that the rule of law is legitimate insofar as it approximates justice. Then as now, rulers and dictators were able to achieve destructive ends through the rule of law, and so a recurring biblical demand is for societies to create a just system of law.

The language of this psalm is full of anger and can often feel harsh. One should keep in mind that the anger is vented against immoral behavior, oppression of the weak and vulnerable, and abuse of power. In that sense, it is a prophetic prayer: the perversion of justice is an attack on the Divine.

CHASTISES . . . INSTRUCTED הַיִּסַּר . . . תְּיַסְּרֶנּוּ. The Hebrew verb means "to instruct," "to admonish," or "to discipline." In later usage, the noun *musar*, derived from this verb's root (*yod-samekh-resh*), came to mean specifically "ethical instruction." The poet here imagines God as a teacher who educates and refines human consciousness, and who also disciplines recalcitrant students.

Who Is Responsible?

The poet confronts the seeming triumph of evil. The vulnerable are oppressed while their oppressors luxuriate. Where is the moral universe that God has vouchsafed? There is a moment when the author questions God, "Would You befriend those ensconced with evil?"—but the poet ultimately expresses a faith that God will act. And we? As the twenty-first century commentator Richard Levy writes, "For the poet, the trust in God's vengeance is part of faith in God. Is it for us? What does it mean to have faith in God's existence but to feel that injustice is not always punished? The poet is willing to wait—even beyond a lifetime . . . are we?"

One might hope that our affirmation that justice and ethics are central to our understanding of the Divine might impel us to act, might be the source of our own opposition to injustice. Might the appeal to God to act expressed in this psalm embarrass us to feel that we have not expressed the fervor we ascribe to God? Might religious faith then become the source of our own vigorous fight for a moral order? That will be the instruction of Thursday's psalm.

Who will stand up for me against the evildoers?
Who will stand with me against the sinners?
Were not ADONAI *my help,*
I would have surely died.
When I say I can no longer stand,
Your kindness and love, ADONAI, hold me up.
When I am filled with worry,
Your comforting cheers me.
Would You befriend those ensconced in wickedness?
Would You allow evil to create the law?
They conspire against the life of the righteous;
they find the innocent guilty.
ADONAI shall be my refuge,
My God, my protecting fortress.
You shall repay them with what they have wrought,
You shall crush them because of their evil.
Crush them, ADONAI, our God.

Psalm 94

▶ *Let us go and sing to* ADONAI,
let us trumpet praise to our protector.
Filled with thanks, let us greet God,
raising our voice in song.
Great is ADONAI,
a greater sovereign than all other powers.

Psalm 95:1–3

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

Criticizing Evil Behavior

Anyone who is in a position to protest the behavior of the members of one's own household and does not protest, is considered their co-conspirator. Similarly, regarding the behavior of the people of one's town, one is considered a co-conspirator with the people of one's town when one is silent. If one is in a position to protest the behavior of the whole world, and doesn't, one is considered a co-conspirator in the wrongful behavior of the whole world.

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

מִי יָקוּם לִי עִם מְרֵעִים, מִי יִתְיַצֵּב לִי עִם פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן.
לוּלֵי יהוה עֶזְרָתָה לִּי, כִּמְעַט שָׁכְנָה דוּמָה נַפְשִׁי.
אִם אָמַרְתִּי מָטָה רַגְלִי, חַסְדְּךָ יהוה יִסְעָדֵנִי,
בְּרֹב שַׂרְעַפַּי בְּקִרְבִּי, תַּנְחוּמֶיךָ יְשַׁעֲשְׁעוּ נַפְשִׁי.
הֲיִחָבְרְךָ כִּסֵּא הַוּוֹת, יוֹצֵר עָמָל עָלַי חֹק.
יָגוֹדּוּ עַל נֶפֶשׁ צַדִּיק, וְדָם נָקִי יַרְשִׁיעוּ.
וַיְהִי יהוה לִי לְמִשְׂגָּב, וֵאלֹהַי לְצוּר מַחְסִי,
וַיָּשֶׁב עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת־אוֹנָם,
וּבְרָעָתָם יַצְמִיתֵם,
יַצְמִיתֵם יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

תהלים צד

◀ לְכוּ נְרַנְּנָה לַיהוה, נָרִיעָה לְצוּר יִשְׁעֵנוּ.
נְקַדְּמָה פָנָיו בְּתוֹדָה, בִּזְמִרוֹת נָרִיעַ לוֹ.
כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל יהוה, וּמֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל כָּל־אֱלֹהִים.

תהלים צה:א-ג

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

WOULD YOU BEFRIEND . . . CREATE הֲיִחָבְרְךָ . . . יוֹצֵר. This is a turning point in the psalm, in which the author questions God: could Your delay in acting allow the evildoers to think that You are really their friend? Note that these evildoers are now called "creators"—that is, creators of evil laws, as if to say that the divine Creator has been displaced.

YOU SHALL REPAY THEM WITH WHAT THEY HAVE WROUGHT וַיָּשֶׁב עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת־אוֹנָם. The evil system they have instituted will be their own downfall. One might call to mind the Book of Esther, in which Haman was impaled on the very stake he built to impale Mordecai.

CRUSH THEM יַצְמִיתֵם. An example of biblical anger at immoral rule in society, expressed in extremely harsh language.

LET US GO AND SING לְכוּ נְרַנְּנָה. Psalm 95:1–3. Not wanting to end on a note of destruction, the liturgy adds the positive opening lines of the very next psalm in the Book of Psalms.

THAN ALL OTHER POWERS עַל כָּל־אֱלֹהִים. Literally, all other divinities. Post-biblical Jewish commentators understood the word *elohim*, when contrasted with God, to refer to earthly judges. In the context of the liturgy here, it may refer to the forces of evil that have been decried throughout Psalm 94.

The Decalogue

Psalm 81 is remarkable in that, at its high point, we hear God's direct speech, "People of Israel, would that you listen to Me!" The words that follow are a paraphrase of the Decalogue, which God spoke directly to the people at Sinai and which begins with "I" and proceeds to address "you." After having commented on the directness of this speech, Martin Buber then remarks on the unique quality of the Decalogue, and how different it is than other biblical expressions of "law":

There is no punishment enunciated for violating any of the commandments; there is no enforcement mechanism, no "executive power" expressed. Certainly, Buber points out, the creator of heaven and earth has that power; but "the 'I' who addresses us has renounced this power sufficiently to let every individual actually decide whether one wants to open or close one's ears to the voice, [meaning] whether one wants to choose or reject the I of 'I am.' Rejecting, one is not struck down by lightning; and choosing to affirm, one does not find hidden treasures [i.e., wealth]."

In this vein, a central message of the revelation at Sinai—echoed here in Psalm 81—is that relationship with God cannot be compelled or instilled against our will; rather, the life of faith is a choice we make to live in the presence of God and to suffer in God's absence.

THE PSALM FOR THURSDAY

Today is the fifth day of the week, the day on which the Levites recited this psalm in the Temple:

FOR THE LEADER, UPON THE GITTIT: A PSALM OF ASAPH

Let us sing to God, who is our strength:
raise your voices and greet the God of Jacob.
Strike up a song, tap the timbrel,
gently pluck the lyre and the harp.
Blow the shofar on the New Moon,
the festival day when the moon is hidden.
For it is the rule of the people Israel,
the law of the God of Jacob.
God ordained it as a remembrance for the tribes of Joseph
as they went out from Egypt,
where I heard a language I didn't understand.
I removed the burden they bore on their shoulders;
their hands were freed from bearing baskets.
In your distress you cried out and I rescued you;
I responded thunderously, though hidden.
Then I tested your faith by the waters of Merivah. Selah.

Listen, My people, for I would admonish you—
people of Israel, would that you listen to Me:
You shall not worship a foreign god
or bow down to a strange god.
I am ADONAI your God, who brought you up from the land
of Egypt. Open your mouth that I may fill it.
But My people did not listen to Me,
Israel did not desire Me.
So I sent them away because of their willfulness,
I let them follow their own devices.
Would that My people listen to Me,
would that Israel walk in My path!
Then I would surely defeat their enemies,
raise My hand against their besiegers.
Those who hate Adonai will be humbled,
their doom shall be eternal.
▶ And I shall feed you the choicest wheat
and sate you with honey from the rock.

Psalm 81

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

לְיוֹם חֲמִישִׁי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם חֲמִישִׁי בַּשַּׁבָּת, שֶׁבּוֹ הָיוּ
הַלְוִיִּם אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל הַגִּתִּית לְאָסָף

הַרְנִינוּ לֵאלֹהִים עוּזֵּנוּ, הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
שְׂאוּ זִמְרָה וּתְנוּ תֹף, כִּנּוֹר נָעִים עִם נָבֶל.
תִּקְעוּ בַחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר, בַּכֶּסֶה לְיוֹם חַגֵּנוּ.
כִּי חֹק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא, מִשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
עֵדוּת בִּיהוֹסֵף שָׂמוֹ בְּצֵאתוֹ עַל אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם,
שְׂפַת לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֶשְׁמָע.
הֲסִירוֹתִי מִסֶּבֶל שִׁכְמוֹ, כַּפָּיו מִדּוּד תַּעֲבֹרְנָה.
בַּצָּרָה קָרָאת וָאֲחַלְּצֶךָּ, אֶעֱנְךָ בְּסֵתֶר רַעַם,
אֶבְחָנְךָ עַל מֵי מְרִיבָה, סֶלָה.

שְׁמַע עַמִּי וְאָעִידָה בָּךְ, יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם תִּשְׁמַע לִי:
לֹא יִהְיֶה בְךָ אֵל זָר, וְלֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְאֵל נֵכָר.
אָנֹכִי יהוה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, הַמַּעַלְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם,
הַרְחֶב־פִּיךָ וַאֲמַלְאֵהוּ.
וְלֹא שָׁמַע עַמִּי לְקוֹלִי, וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא אָבָה לִי.
וָאֲשַׁלְּחֵהוּ בִּשְׁרִירוּת לִבָּם, יֵלְכוּ בְּמוֹעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם.
לוּ עַמִּי שֹׁמֵעַ לִי, יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּדְרָכַי יְהַלֵּכוּ.
כִּמְעַט אוֹיְבֵיהֶם אַכְנִיעַ, וְעַל צָרֵיהֶם אָשִׁיב יָדִי.
◀ מְשַׂנְאֵי יהוה יְכַחֲשׁוּ לוֹ, וְיִהְיֶה עִתָּם לְעוֹלָם.
וַיַּאֲכִילֵהוּ מֵחֶלֶב חִטָּה, וּמִצּוּר דְּבַשׁ אַשְׂבִּיעֶךָּ.

תהלים פא

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

PSALM 81. Whereas Tuesday and Wednesday's psalms concentrated on the evil in the world, the psalm for Thursday focuses on the people Israel's repairing their relation with God, the opening stage in the world's reconciliation with God. (*The translation of this psalm builds on the insights of Leonard Cahan.*)

UPON THE GITTIT עַל הַגִּתִּית. The term may refer to a musical instrument. An alternative suggestion is that it refers to the winepress (*gat*), and the psalm may be a harvest song.

TRIBES OF JOSEPH בִּיהוֹסֵף. In this psalm and others, Joseph and Jacob become synonymous as names of the people Israel.

WHERE I HEARD A LANGUAGE I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND שְׂפַת לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֶשְׁמָע. A remark on the strangeness of Egypt; or possibly referring to God's voice, which was not immediately recognized because of the oppression of slavery.

ON THEIR SHOULDERS שִׁכְמוֹ. God's speech begins by referring to the people Israel in the third person, as if God is facing inward, thinking; the speech then becomes direct address in the second person.

I RESPONDED THUNDEROUSLY אֶעֱנְךָ בְּסֵתֶר רַעַם. The thunderous reply refers either to the thunder at the crossing of the Sea or to the thunder at Mount Sinai.

MERIVAH מְרִיבָה. A reference to the Israelites' complaints about the lack of water in the desert shortly after the exodus (Exodus 17:7).

OPEN YOUR MOUTH הַרְחֶב־פִּיךָ. The reference may be to the manna in the desert, the food from heaven that fed the people. More likely, God asks of us that we fill our mouths with praise of the Divine.

WOULD THAT MY PEOPLE LISTEN TO ME לוּ עַמִּי שֹׁמֵעַ לִי. What follows is a liturgical enunciation of the opening of the Decalogue (Exodus 20:2–3)—it is this that the people Israel has not listened to.

HONEY FROM THE ROCK וּמִצּוּר דְּבַשׁ. In ancient Israel people collected honey that wild bees had deposited in the crevices of rocks. Though it refers to a common experience, nevertheless the image of a rock being the source of nourishment and sweetness is striking.

Adonai Is Sovereign

This psalm will be sung in the world that is coming.

—RASHI

Psalm 93: An Interpretive Translation

God acts within every moment
and creates the world with
each breath . . . [God] speaks
from the
center of the universe, in the
silence beyond all thought.
Mightier than the crash of a
thunderstorm mightier than
the roar of the sea,
is God's voice silently speaking
in the depths of the listening
heart.

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

"Kingdom's Crown"

yours [is] the Name that eludes the wise,
and the might to bear the world in its void,
and the craft to bring what's hidden to light.

Yours is the kindness that infuses creation,
and the goodness veiled
for those who hold you in awe.

Yours is the secret no notion contains,
and life that destruction will not bring down,
and the throne raised higher than height's idea,
and the hidden hall in the heavenly mansion;

yours is the real which becomes existence
in light's reflection

and in whose shadow we live . . .

—SOLOMON IBN GABIROL
trans. by Peter Cole

THE PSALM FOR FRIDAY

Today is the sixth day of the week, the day on which the Levites recited this psalm in the Temple:

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.
▸ More majestic than the crashing breakers of the great sea,
ADONAI is resplendent in the heavenly heights.
In Your house, beautiful in its holiness,
Your testimonies endure, ADONAI,
for all time.

Psalm 93

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

לְיוֹם שִׁשִּׁי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם שִׁשִּׁי בַּשַּׁבָּת, שֶׁבּוֹ הָיוּ
הַלְוִיִּם אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

יהוה מָלָךְ גֵּאוּת לָבֵשׁ
לָבֵשׁ יהוה עֹז הִתְאַזָּר,
אַף תִּכּוֹן תֵּבֵל בַּל תִּמּוֹט.
נָכוֹן כִּסְאֲךָ מֵאָז, מֵעוֹלָם אָתָּה.
נָשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת יהוה,
נָשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת קוֹלָם,
יִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת דָּכְיָם.
◂ מִקֹּלוֹת מַיִם רַבִּים,
אַדִּירִים מִשְׁבְּרֵי יָם,
אַדִּיר בַּמָּרוֹם יהוה.
עֵדֹתֶיךָ נֶאֶמְנוּ מְאֹד
לְבֵיתְךָ נָאֲוָה קֹדֶשׁ,
יהוה, לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים.

תהלים צג

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

PSALM 93. The week coming to completion, the liturgy now asserts the full sovereignty of God. In a similar vein, in the story of creation in the first chapter of Genesis, the sixth day is described as "very good"—as if now creation is complete. In fact, Psalm 93 has many allusions to creation, not least the line, "From earliest time You were enthroned . . ." In this regard, there may also be a pointed refutation of ancient Near Eastern mythology. In some Near Eastern versions of creation, the world emerges from the primal waters with which the earliest gods are identified; here, God is high above those waters.

MORE MAJESTIC THAN THE CRASHING BREAKERS OF THE GREAT SEA מִקֹּלוֹת מַיִם רַבִּים, אַדִּירִים מִשְׁבְּרֵי יָם. What are the waters referred to here? One can think of it as the ocean's waters (or in the case of the biblical poet, the waters of the Mediterranean). Biblical Israel thought that the world rested on the waters of the deep, and perhaps that image is referred to here. The medieval commentator Meiri (Provence, 1246–1316) thought that it referred to the upper and lower waters, which God separated in the primal act of creation.

YOUR TESTIMONIES ENDURE עֵדֹתֶיךָ נֶאֶמְנוּ מְאֹד. Commentators disagree as to what exactly is meant by this phrase. Rashi (11th century, northern France) offers that "testimonies" are the totality of prophetic utterances. Abraham ibn Ezra (12th century, Spain and Italy) explains that the word should be understood as "witnesses," and that heaven and earth are witnesses to God as creator.

IN YOUR HOUSE לְבֵיתְךָ. This psalm was probably meant to be recited in the Temple. A pilgrim might hear the Levites singing of God's sovereignty and of God's presence being felt here "in Your house." Once the Temple was destroyed, the phrase took on different meaning. Some commentators see it as referring to God's abode in heaven; others, reflecting the messianic interpretation of the psalm, see it as a reference to the third Temple, which will never be destroyed. Meiri (1249–1316) understands it to be the spiritual home that people of faith find.

This I Ask

My love—have you
forgotten to lie on my
breast?
Have you sent me away for
all time?

Did I not pursue you in the
desert in earlier times?
Are not Paran, Seir, Sinai,
and Sin witnesses you
trust?

For was it not there that I
gave you my love
and made your will
mine?...

Save for you, there is no
redeemer of my life, and
no one more needy than
this prisoner of hope—
Give me strength, that I
might give you my love.

—YEHUDAH HALEVI

Recited during the month leading up to and including the Days of Awe (see note on page 136), after the shofar is sounded.

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,
lift me up to a stronghold.
Now my head is lifted high above my enemies round about,
and I come with offerings, and 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 the one who would serve You.
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 79.

Recited during the month leading up to and including the Days of Awe (see note on page 136), after the shofar is sounded.

לְדָוִד
יְהוָה אוֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי, מִמִּי אִירָא,
יְהוָה מָעוֹז חַיַּי, מִמִּי אֶפְחָד.
בִּקְרֹב עָלַי מְרֵעִים לֶאֱכֹל אֶת־בְּשָׂרִי,
צָרַי וְאֹיְבַי לִי,
הֵמָּה כָשְׁלוּ וְנָפָלוּ.
אִם תַּחֲנֶה עָלַי מַחֲנֶה, לֹא יִירָא לִבִּי,
אִם תָּקוּם עָלַי מִלְחָמָה, בְּזֹאת אֲנִי בוֹטֵחַ.
אַחַת שָׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת יְהוָה, אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ,
שִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית יְהוָה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיַּי
לַחֲזוֹת בְּנֹעַם יְהוָה, וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהֵיכָלוֹ.
כִּי יִצְפְּנֵנִי בְּסֻכֹּה בְּיוֹם רָעָה,
יַסְתִּרֵנִי בְּסֵתֶר אָהֳלוֹ, בְּצוּר יְרוֹמְמֵנִי.
וְעַתָּה יָרוּם רֹאשִׁי עַל אֹיְבַי סְבִיבוֹתַי,
וְאֶזְבְּחָה בְאָהֳלוֹ זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה,
אָשִׁירָה וַאֲזַמְּרָה לַיהוָה.
שְׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא, וְחָנֵּנִי וַעֲנֵנִי.
לְךָ אָמַר לִבִּי בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָי, אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ.
אַל תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי,
אַל תַּט בְּאַף עַבְדֶּךָ,
עֶזְרָתִי הָיִיתָ,
אַל תִּטְּשֵׁנִי וְאַל תַּעַזְבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי.
כִּי אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי, וַיהוָה יַאַסְפֵנִי.
הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דַּרְכֶּךָ וּנְחֵנִי בְּאֹרַח מִישׁוֹר, לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרָי.
אַל תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרָי, כִּי קָמוּ בִי עֵדֵי שֶׁקֶר וְיִפַּח חָמָס.
◀ לוּלֵא הֶאֱמַנְתִּי לִרְאוֹת בְּטוּב יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים.
קַוֵּה אֶל יְהוָה, חֲזַק וְיַאֲמֵץ לִבֶּךָ וְקַוֵּה אֶל יְהוָה.

תהלים כז

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

PSALM 27 expresses two opposing feelings, each of which may be felt in the High Holy Days season. 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 longing to "see God" receives no response. The poem's last line leaves us with a thin, consoling thread of hope—making us realize how much we depend on faith.

It is not until the 18th century that we find mention of the recitation of Psalm 27 in connection with the High Holy Day season, but clearly it has fulfilled a deep need, one that has been recognized almost universally in traditional communities. Some recite it in the morning and afternoon services, others in the morning and evening.

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

DO NOT HIDE YOUR FACE FROM ME אַל תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי. The contemporary literary critic Robert Alter writes, "'Face' suggests 'presence,'" the concrete metaphor serving the poet more than the abstract sense behind it.

IF ONLY I COULD TRUST לוּלֵא הֶאֱמַנְתִּי. 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 it is the voice of someone else, in turn, urging the despairing supplicant to continue trusting that God will respond, encouraging the supplicant not to lose faith.

ON ROSH ḤODESH: PSALM 104

Today is Rosh Ḥodesh, 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 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 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 חֹדֶשׁ

הַיּוֹם רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ, שֶׁבּוֹ אוֹמְרִים:

בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה,
יהוה אֱלֹהַי גָּדַלְתָּ מְאֹד, הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ.
עֹטֶה אוֹר כַּשַּׂלְמָה, נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם כַּיְרִיעָה.
הַמְקָרֶה בַמַּיִם עֲלִיּוֹתָיו, הַשָּׂם עָבִים רְכוּבוֹ,
הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל כַּנְפֵי רוּחַ.
עֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת, מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לוֹהֵט.

יָסַד אֶרֶץ עַל מְכוֹנֶיהָ, בַּל תִּמּוֹט עוֹלָם וָעֶד.
תְּהוֹם כַּלְּבוּשׁ כִּסִּיתוֹ, עַל הָרִים יַעַמְדוּ מָיִם.
מִן גַּעֲרָתְךָ יְנוּסוּן, מִן קוֹל רַעַמְךָ יֵחָפֵזוּן.
יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יֵרְדוּ בְקָעוֹת, אֶל מְקוֹם זֶה יָסַדְתָּ לָהֶם.
גְּבוּל שַׂמְתָּ בַּל יַעֲבֹרוּן, בַּל יְשׁוּבוּן לְכַסּוֹת הָאָרֶץ.

הַמְשַׁלֵּחַ מַעְיָנִים בַּנְּחָלִים, בֵּין הָרִים יְהַלֵּכוּן.
יַשְׁקוּ כָּל־חַיְתוֹ שָׂדָי, יִשְׁבְּרוּ פְרָאִים צְמָאָם.
עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכּוֹן, מִבֵּין עֳפָאִים יִתְּנוּ קוֹל.

מַשְׁקֶה הָרִים מֵעֲלִיּוֹתָיו, מִפְּרִי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ תִּשְׂבַּע הָאָרֶץ.
מַצְמִיחַ חָצִיר לַבְּהֵמָה, וְעֵשֶׂב לַעֲבֹדַת הָאָדָם,
לְהוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.
וְיַיִן יְשַׂמַּח לְבַב אֱנוֹשׁ, לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשָּׁמֶן,
וְלֶחֶם לְבַב אֱנוֹשׁ יִסְעָד.
יִשְׂבְּעוּ עֲצֵי יהוה, אַרְזֵי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָטָע.
אֲשֶׁר שָׁם צִפֳּרִים יְקַנֵּנוּ, חֲסִידָה בְּרוֹשִׁים בֵּיתָהּ.
הָרִים הַגְּבֹהִים לַיְעֵלִים, סְלָעִים מַחְסֶה לַשְּׁפַנִּים.

continued

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 Ḥodesh because the new moon is a symbol of the renewal of creation.

ME נַפְשִׁי. In the Hebrew Bible, the word *nefesh* has a range of meanings. Probably its most common one is "breath," as in *nefesh ḥayah* ("breath of life," Genesis 2:7); by extension it can mean a living person, or the vitality that keeps any being alive. Originally it may have referred to the throat, through which we breathe (Jonah 2:6, Psalm 69:2). Especially in later Judaism it came to denote the soul, the spiritual 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 treasuries 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 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 עֳפָאִים. This is the only place in the Hebrew Bible where this word appears; thus, its meaning is conjectured.

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

BREAD . . . FOOD לֶחֶם. The Hebrew repeats the word *leḥem*, which basically means "food." Since the main meal in the ancient world was centered around bread, *leḥem* became synonymous with "bread."

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 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,
and evil be no more.

▸ Let me praise ADONAI: *halleluyah.*

Ashirah ladonai b'ḥayai, azamrah leilohai b'odi.
Ye-erav alav siḥi, anokhi esmaḥ badonai.
Yitamu 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 79.

עָשָׂה יָרֵחַ לְמוֹעֲדִים, שֶׁמֶשׁ יָדַע מְבוֹאוֹ.
תָּשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ וִיהִי לָיְלָה, בּוֹ תִרְמֹשׂ כָּל־חַיְתוֹ יָעַר.
הַכְּפִירִים שֹׁאֲגִים לַטָּרֶף, וּלְבַקֵּשׁ מֵאֵל אָכְלָם.
תִּזָּרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יֵאָסֵפוּן, וְאֶל מְעוֹנֹתָם יִרְבָּצוּן.
יֵצֵא אָדָם לְפָעֳלוֹ, וְלַעֲבֹדָתוֹ עַד־עֶרֶב.

מָה רַבּוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ יהוה,
כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ, מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ.
זֶה הַיָּם גָּדוֹל וּרְחַב יָדָיִם,
שָׁם רֶמֶשׂ וְאֵין מִסְפָּר, חַיּוֹת קְטַנּוֹת עִם גְּדֹלוֹת.
שָׁם אֳנִיּוֹת יְהַלֵּכוּן, לִוְיָתָן זֶה יָצַרְתָּ לְשַׂחֶק־בּוֹ.

כֻּלָּם אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּן, לָתֵת אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ.
תִּתֵּן לָהֶם יִלְקֹטוּן, תִּפְתַּח יָדְךָ יִשְׂבְּעוּן טוֹב.
תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ יִבָּהֲלוּן,
תֹּסֵף רוּחָם יִגְוָעוּן, וְאֶל עֲפָרָם יְשׁוּבוּן.
תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ יִבָּרֵאוּן, וּתְחַדֵּשׁ פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה.

יְהִי כְבוֹד יהוה לְעוֹלָם, יִשְׂמַח יהוה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו.
הַמַּבִּיט לָאָרֶץ וַתִּרְעָד, יִגַּע בָּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ.
אָשִׁירָה לַיהוה בְּחַיָּי, אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהַי בְּעוֹדִי.
יֶעֱרַב עָלָיו שִׂיחִי, אָנֹכִי אֶשְׂמַח בַּיהוה.
יִתַּמּוּ חַטָּאִים מִן הָאָרֶץ, וּרְשָׁעִים עוֹד אֵינָם.
◂ בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יהוה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קד

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

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 לִוְיָתָן. 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 תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ. An allusion to Genesis 2:7, where Adam is created out of the dust of the earth, into which God blows the divine breath.

SINNING חַטָּאִים. The word *ḥata-im* is translated here as "sinning," rather than "sinners." The Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 10a) reports that this was the way Beruriah, Rabbi Meir's wife, understood the verse.