

JCA

Weekday Ma'ariv

כל הנשמה

מַעֲרִיב

MA'ARIV/ EVENING SERVICE

God is compassionate,
forgiving human error
and refusing to destroy,
ready to refrain from anger
and unwilling to awaken wrath.
Extend your help, REDEEMING ONE!
Give answer, sovereign one,
whenever we may call.

When a minyan is present, the Barehu is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow.

Bless THE INFINITE, the blessed One!

Blessed is THE INFINITE, the blessed One, now and forever.

KAVANAH. Public worship aids us by liberating personality from the confining walls of the individual ego. Imprisoned in self, we easily fall prey to morbid brooding. Interference with career, personal disappointment and disillusionment, hurts to vanity, the fear of death—all these tend so to dominate our attention that our minds move in a fixed and narrow system of ideas, which we detest but from which we see no escape. With a whole wide world of boundless opportunities about us, we permit our minds, as it were, to pace up and down within the narrow cell of their ego-prisons. But participation in public worship breaks through the prison of the ego and lets in the light and air of the world. Instead of living but one small and petty life, we now share the multitudinous life of our people. Against the wider horizons that now open to our ken, personal cares do not loom so large. Life becomes infinitely more meaningful and worthwhile when we become aware, through our participation in public worship, of a common life that transcends our individual selves.

M.M.K. (Adapted)

מַעֲרִיב

וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עֲוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית וְהִרְבָּה
לְהָשִׁיב אָפּוֹ וְלֹא יַעִיר כָּל חַמְתּוֹ: יְהוּה הוֹשִׁיעָה
הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲזָרנוּ בְּיוֹם קִרְאָנוּ:

When a minyan is present, the Bareḥu is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow.

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְהוָה הַמְּבָרֵךְ:
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Bareḥu et adonay hamvoraḥ.

Baruḥ adonay hamvoraḥ le'olam va'ed.

KAVANAH. When we worship in public we know our life is part of a larger life, a wave of an ocean of being—the first-hand experience of that larger life which is God.

M.M.K.

COMMENTARY. The evening service begins with בְּרַכּוּ / *Bareḥu*, the call to prayer. It introduces the *Shema* and its blessings, which are then followed by the *Amidah* (Silent Prayer), and the *Aleynu*. The בְּרַכּוּ / *Bareḥu* calls us together for worship by asking that we return blessing to God, who is the source of all blessing. We become a community by sharing this acknowledgment.

D.A.T.

ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

For additional readings see pages 433-434.

TRADITIONAL VERSION

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, our God, sovereign of all worlds, by whose word the evenings fall. In wisdom you open heaven's gates. With divine discernment you make seasons change, causing the times to come and go, and ordering the stars on their appointed paths through heaven's dome, all according to your will. Creator of the day and night, who rolls back light before the dark, and dark before the light, who makes day pass away and brings on night, dividing between day and night: The Leader of the Multitudes of Heaven is your name! Living and enduring God, rule over us, now and always. Blessed are you, ALMIGHTY ONE, who makes the evenings fall.

DERASH. When we are about to say: "Blessed are you, our God, sovereign of all worlds," and prepare to utter the first word "blessed," we should do so with all our strength, so that we will have no strength left to say, "are you." And this is the meaning of the verse in the Scriptures: "But they that wait for God shall exchange their strength." What we are really saying is: "Source of life, I am giving you all the strength that is within me in that very first word; now will you, in exchange, give me an abundance of new strength, so that I can go on with my prayer." M.B. (Adapted)

אשר בדברו מעריב ערבים / by whose word the evenings fall. The word plays a central role in the Jewish imagination. Our liturgy fantasizes that God brings on evening each night by saying "Evening!" Thus we repeat each day the original act of Creation that took place by means of the divine word. It is only because we affirm a God who so values language that we feel ourselves able to use words in prayer. Our word, perhaps like God's, gives expression to a depth that goes beyond language, but that can be shared only through the symbolic power of speech. A.G.

אֲשֶׁר בְּדָבָרוֹ

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בְּדָבָרוֹ מְעַרֵּב עַרְבִים
בַּחֲכָמָה פּוֹתֵחַ שְׁעָרִים וּבִתְבוּנָה מְשַׁנֶּה עֵתִים וּמַחֲלִיף אֶת הַזְּמַנִּים
וּמְסַדֵּר אֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים בְּמִשְׁמְרוֹתֵיהֶם בְּרָקִיעַ כְּרָצוֹנוֹ: בּוֹרֵא יוֹם
וְלַיְלָה גּוֹלֵל אֹר מִפְּנֵי הַשֶּׁשׁ וְהַשֶּׁשׁ מִפְּנֵי אֹר: *וּמְעַבֵּיר יוֹם וּמְבִיא
לַיְלָה וּמְבַדִּיל בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לַיְלָה יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ: אֵל חַי וְקַיִם
תָּמִיד יְמַלֵּךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הַמְעַרֵּב עַרְבִים:

El hay vekayam tamid yimloh aleynu le'olam va'ed.

Baruh atah adonay hama'ariv aravim.

אור, חושך, אור / light, dark, light. The words roll into each other just as day rolls into night. They are not separate realms. They mix together. God rules both light and darkness. בין / *beyn*: between. Similar to בינה / *binah* and תבונה / *tevunah*: understanding. Wisdom is the ability to distinguish between things, to make sense out of confusion. L.W.K.

COMMENTARY. The two *beraḥot* which precede the Shema set the stage for its evening recitation. The first *beraḥah* praises God for the wonders of creation that are visible at twilight: the shifting pattern of the stars, the rhythm of the seasons, the regular passage from day to night. All of these are a nightly reminder of the unchanging plan of creation.

The second *beraḥah* praises God, whose instruction is a special token of love for Israel. Israel responds by meditating upon God's teaching "day and night," "when we lie down and when we rise." This phrasing recalls the preceding *beraḥah*, adding Israel's study of Torah to the natural order: The sun sets, the stars shine, and Israel studies—as regularly as day and night. The phrase "when we lie down and when we rise" anticipates the Shema, which follows. This interplay between the *beraḥot* and the Shema suggests that the Shema is Israel's morning and evening Torah study. At the same time, it is Israel's declaration of the oneness of the power that makes for the natural order and for learning, for creation and human creativity. S.S.

INTERPRETIVE VERSION: ASHER BIDVARO

Praised are you, God, ruler of the universe, who has ordained the rhythm of life. The day with its light calls to activity and exertion. But when the day wanes, when, with the setting of the sun, colors fade, we cease from our labors and welcome the tranquility of the night. The subdued light of the moon and stars, the darkness and the stillness about us invite rest and repose. Trustfully we yield to the quiet of sleep, for we know that, while we are unaware of what goes on within and around us, our powers of body and mind are renewed. Therefore, at this evening hour, we seek composure of spirit. We give thanks for the day and its tasks and for the night and its rest. Praised are you, God, who brings on the evening.

1945 Reconstructionist Prayer Book (Adapted)

KAVANAH. The שמע / Shema is wrapped in אהבה / *ahavah* / love. The blessing preceding the Shema concludes, “who loves your people Israel.” This prayer begins “ואהבת / *ve’ahavta*, And you must love יהוה!” First you are loved, then you respond with love. Love is central to Jewish life. Love means commitment and limitations—Torah and mitzvot. That is so both in our relationships with each other and in our relationship with God.

L.W.K.

INTERPRETIVE VERSION: AHAVAT OLAM

We are loved by an unending love.
We are embraced by arms that find us
even when we are hidden from ourselves.

We are touched by fingers that soothe us
even when we are too proud for soothing.
We are counseled by voices that guide us
even when we are too embittered to hear.
We are loved by an unending love.

We are supported by hands that uplift us
even in the midst of a fall.
We are urged on by eyes that meet us
even when we are too weak for meeting.
We are loved by an unending love.

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled...
ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;
ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;
We are loved by an unending love.

Blessed are you, BELOVED ONE, who loves your people Israel.

Rami M. Shapiro (Adapted)

AHAVAT OLAM / GOD'S LOVE IN TORAH

With everlasting love, you love the house of Israel. Torah and mitzvot, laws and justice you have taught us. And so, DEAR ONE, our God, when we lie down and when we rise, we reflect upon your laws; we take pleasure in your Torah's words and your mitzvot, now and always. Truly, they are our life, our length of days. On them we meditate by day and night. Your love will never depart from us as long as worlds endure. Blessed are you, BELOVED ONE, who loves your people Israel.

Many contemporary Jews are reciting *berahot*/blessings in ways that reflect their theological outlooks and ethical concerns. At any place where a blessing occurs in the liturgy, the following elements can be combined to create alternative formulas for *berahot*. This can be done by selecting one phrase from each group to form the introductory clause.

I	Baruḥ atah adonay	בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה	Blessed are you Adonay
	Beruḥah at yah	בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ יְיָ	Blessed are you Yah
	Nevareḥ et	נְבָרְךָ אֶת	Let us bless
II	elo <u>h</u> eynu	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	our God
	hasheḥinah	הַשְּׁכִינָה	Sheḥinah
	eyn haḥayim	עֵין הַחַיִּים	Source of Life
III	<u>m</u> eleḥ ha'olam	מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Sovereign of all worlds
	ḥey ha'olamim	חַי הָעוֹלָמִים	Life of all the worlds
	<u>r</u> uaḥ ha'olam	רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם	Spirit of the world

אַהֲבַת עוֹלָם

אַהֲבַת עוֹלָם בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ אֶהְבֶּתָּ: תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים
אוֹתָנוּ לְמַדְרָת: עַל כֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּשִׂכְכֵנוּ וּבְקוּיָנוּ נָשִׂיחַ בְּחֻקֶּיךָ
וְנִשְׁמַח בְּדַבְרֵי תּוֹרָתְךָ וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד כִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ וְאַרְךָ
יָמֵינוּ וּבָהֶם נִהְגָּה יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה: וְאַהֲבַתְךָ לֹא תִסּוּר מִמֶּנּוּ לְעוֹלָמִים:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אוֹהֵב עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Ahavat olam beyt yisra'el ameha ahavta.

Torah umitzvot hukim umishpatim otanu limadeta.

Al ken adonay eloheynu beshohvenu uvkumenu nasi'ah
behukehā

venismaḥ bedivrey torateha uvmitzvoteha le'olam va'ed

ki hem hayeynu ve'oreh yameynu

uvahem nehgeh yomam valaylah.

Ve'ahavateha lo tasur mimenu le'olamim.

Baruh atah adonay ohev amo yisra'el.

וראהבתך לא תסור. Our text follows the Sephardic version, in the declarative mode (“Your love will never depart from us.”) rather than the imperative (“Never remove your love from us!”). Divine love is unconditional. It is available to every one of us when we fashion our lives into channels to receive and share it. The Jewish people together experience that eternal love as reflected in our love for the study of Torah—a wisdom lovingly received, shared, and passed on enriched by each generation. A.G.

DERASH. The term Sheḥinah implies that God is not aloof from human life with all its defeats and triumphs. God is in the very midst of life. The rabbis say that when people suffer for their sins, the Sheḥinah cries out. The Sheḥinah thus moves from Israel to all humanity. M.M.K./M.S.

שְׁמַחַת יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

SHEMA

Listen, Israel: THE ETERNAL is our God,
THE ETERNAL ONE alone!

Blessed be the name and glory of God's realm, forever!

And you must love THE ONE, your God, with your whole heart, with every breath, with all you have. Take these words that I command you now to heart. Teach them intently to your children. Speak them when you sit inside your house or walk upon the road, when you lie down and when you rise. And bind them as a sign upon your hand, and keep them visible before your eyes. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. כּ

שמע...ובשעריך / Listen...gates (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

DERASH. The Shema is called *kabbalat ol malhut shamayim*. We “receive upon ourselves the yoke of the sovereignty of Heaven.” To proclaim God as ours and as one is to acknowledge fealty to the divine will—and the Shema is a time to listen. We listen in order to discover God's will.

D.A.T.

יהוה / love יהוה your God. Abbaye said, “Let the love of God be spread through your activities. If a person studies and helps others to do so, if one's business dealings are decent and trustworthy—what do people say? ‘Happy is the one who studied Torah, and the one who teaches Torah! Have you seen the one who studied Torah? How beautiful! What a fine person!’ Thus, the Torah says, ‘You are my servant Israel; I will be glorified by you’” (Isaiah 49:3).

TALMUD YOMA 86a

KAVANAH. The moment we transcend our own egos and identify ourselves with one other person we are on the way toward God. God is thus the reality experienced as we-consciousness, in the same way as the self or soul is the reality experienced as I- or self-consciousness.

M.M.K.

שמע

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד:

ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד:

ואהבת את יהוה אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך:
והיו הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוך היום על לבבך:
ושננתם לבניך ודברת בם בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך בדרך
ובשכבך ובקומך: וקשרתם לאות על ירך והיו לטטפת בין
עיניך: וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך:—

Shema yisra'el adonay eloheynu adonay ehad.

Baruh shem kevod malhuto le'olam va'ed.

Ve'avavta et adonay eloheha

behol levaveha uvhol nafsheha uvhol me'odeha.

Vehayu hadevarim ha'eleh asher ano'hi metzaveha hayom al
levaveha.

Veshinantam levaneha vedibarta bam

beshivteha beveyteha uvlechteha vadereh uvshohbeha
uvkumeha.

Ukshartam le'ot al yadeha vehayu letotafot beyn eyneha.

Uhtavtam al mezuzot beyteha uvishareha.

לבב / *levaveha* / your heart. The לב / *lev* / heart, was seen as the source of emotions and intellect. Feelings and reason are complementary partners, not conflicting parts, of the human psyche. The double ב of לבב teaches that a love of God must contain all dualities (e.g. the good and bad in you).
L.W.K.

טטפת בין עיניך. *Totafot* might have been pendants or forehead markings. The Torah text sees *totafot* as reminders of the divine will. The English translation captures this figurative meaning of a visible reminder of the mitzvot.
D.A.T.

For the second paragraph of the Shema, read either the version below or the biblical selection beginning on page 274, then continue with the third paragraph, page 276.

BIBLICAL SELECTION I

It came to pass, and will again,
that if you truly listen
to the voice of THE ETERNAL ONE, your God,
being sure to do whatever has been asked of you today,
THE ONE, your God, will make of you a model
for all nations of the earth,
and there will come upon you all these blessings,
as you listen to the call of THE ABUNDANT ONE, your God:
Blessed be you in the city,
blessed be you upon the field.
Blessed be the fruit of your womb,
the fruit of your land, the fruit of your cattle,
the calving of your oxen, and the lambing of your sheep.
Blessed be your basket and your kneading-trough.
Blessed be you when you come home,
and blessed be you when you go forth.
See, I have placed in front of you today
both life and good, both death and ill,
commanding you today to love THE BOUNDLESS ONE, your God,
to walk in ways I have ordained,
keeping the commandments, laws, and judgments,
so that you survive and multiply.
THE BOUNTIFUL, your God, will bless you
on the land you are about to enter and inherit. ↪

For the second paragraph of the Shema, read either the version below or the biblical selection beginning on page 275 then continue with the third paragraph, page 277.

BIBLICAL SELECTION I

וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמַעַתְּ תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־
כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם וּנְתַנֶּנְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל־יוֹן
עַל כָּל־גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ: וּבָאוּ עֲלֶיךָ כָּל־הַבְּרָכוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְהַשִּׁיגְךָ
כִּי תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּעִיר וּבְרוּךְ אַתָּה
בַּשָּׂדֶה: בְּרוּךְ פְּרִי־בִטְנְךָ וּפְרִי אֲדָמָתְךָ וּפְרִי כְּהַמְתֵּךְ שֶׁגֵר
אֶלְפֶיךָ וְעִשְׂתֵּרוֹת צֹאנֶךָ: בְּרוּךְ טִנְאֶךָ וּמִשְׁאֲרֹתֶיךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
בְּבֹאֶךָ וּבְרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּצֵאתְךָ: ←

רְאֵה נִתְמַי לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַטּוֹב וְאֶת־הַמּוֹת וְאֶת־
הָרָע: אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְלַכֵּת
בְּדַרְכָּיו וּלְשַׁמֵּר מִצְוֹתָיו וְחַקְתָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְחַיִּית וּרְבִית וּבְרַכָּה
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בָּא־שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: וְאִם־יִפְנֶה ←

But if your heart should turn away,
and you not heed, and go astray,
and you submit to other gods and serve them,
I declare to you today that you shall be
destroyed completely; you shall not live out
a great expanse of days upon the land
that you now cross the Jordan to possess.

I call as witnesses concerning you
both heaven and earth, both life and death,
that I have placed in front of you
a blessing and a curse.
Choose life, that you may live,
you and your seed!

Continue on page 276

COMMENTARY. The traditional wording found in Biblical Selection II presents detailed bountiful or devastating consequences of Israel's collective relationship to the mitzvot. That biblical section (Deuteronomy 11:13-21) offers a supernatural theology that many contemporary Jews find difficult. The first part of the biblical section on this page (Deuteronomy 28:1-6, 30:15-19) was included in the 1945 Reconstructionist Siddur. It begins by encouraging observance in the same language, but concentrates on the positive ways in which observance of mitzvot focuses our attention on God's presence as perceived through productivity and the pursuit of abundant life. The second part was first used in the Israeli Progressive movement Siddur, *Ha-avodah Shebalev*. S.S.

KAVANAH. The doctrine of the unity of God calls for the integration of all life's purposes into a consistent pattern of thought and conduct. M.M.K.

DERASH. God is the assumption that there is enough in the world to meet our needs but not to meet our greed for power and pleasure.

M.M.K. (Adapted)

לְכַכֵּךְ וְלֹא תִשְׁמַע וְנִדְחָתָּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לְאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים
וְעַבַדְתָּם: הַגִּדְתִּי לָכֶם הַיּוֹם כִּי אֶכְדֹּר תִּאְכְּדוּן לֹא־תֵאָרִיכֶן יָמִים
עַל־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹבֵר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לָבוֹא שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ:
הַעֲדִיתִי בָכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַחַיִּים וְהַמּוֹת נִתְחִי
לְפָנֶיךָ הַבְּרָכָה וְהַקְּלָלָה וּבַחֲרַתְּ בַחַיִּים לְמַעַן תִּחְיֶה אַתָּה וְזִרְעֶךָ:

Continue on page 277.

COMMENTARY. The statement of God's oneness unifies not only the context of the Shema but the text as well—three scriptural paragraphs specified in the Mishnah (a second century codification of Jewish law). The powerful declaration of God's unity fuses the responsibility to love God and to study God's teachings (first paragraph) with the lesson that their fulfillment confirms God's presence (second and third paragraphs). Hence, the unity of God as idea and presence. S.S.

In the handwritten scroll of the Torah
The word "Shema" of "*Shema Yisra'el*"
Ends with an oversized *ayin*,
And the word "*Ehad*"
Ends with an oversized *dalet*.
Taken together
These two letters
Spell "*Ed*," meaning "witness."
Whenever we recite the Shema
We bear witness
To our awareness
Of God's presence.

H.M.

BIBLICAL SELECTION II

And if you truly listen to my bidding, as I bid you now—loving THE FOUNT OF LIFE, your God, and serving God with all your heart, with every breath—then I will give you rain upon your land in its appointed time, the early rain and later rain, so you may gather in your corn, your wine and oil. And I will give you grass upon your field to feed your animals, and you will eat and be content. Beware, then, lest your heart be led astray, and you go off and worship other gods, and you submit to them, so that the anger of THE MIGHTY ONE should burn against you, and seal up the heavens so no rain would fall, so that the ground would not give forth her produce, and you be forced to leave the good land I am giving you.

So place these words upon your heart, into your lifebreath. Bind them as a sign upon your hand, and let them rest before your eyes. Teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit at home, and when you walk upon the road, when you lie down, and when you rise, inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates—so that your days and your children's days be many on the land THE FAITHFUL ONE promised to give your ancestors, as long as heaven rests above the earth. ↵

DERASH. The traditional second paragraph of the Shema (Deuteronomy 11:13-21) offers an account of the natural process by which the blessings of God themselves lead to pride, self-satisfaction, and ingratitude on the part of those who receive them. Ironically, the more we are blessed, so it seems, the less grateful and aware of blessing we become. It is when we are most sated, Scripture warns us, that we should be most careful. Fullness can lead to ingratitude, and ingratitude to idolatry—primarily in the form of worship of our own accomplishments. Then, indeed, “the heavens might close up and no rain fall.” For, once we begin to worship our achievements, we will never find satisfaction.

A.G.

BIBLICAL SELECTION II

וְהָיָה אִם-שָׁמַע תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה
אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לֹאֲהַבָּה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעַבְדּוֹ כְּכֹל-לְבַבְכֶם
וּכְכֹל-נַפְשְׁכֶם: וְנָתַתִּי מְטֵר-אֲרָצְכֶם בְּעָתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ
וְאִסַּפְתִּי דַגְנְךָ וְתוֹרְשֶׁךָ וַיִּצְהַרְךָ: וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב כְּשֹׂדֵךְ לְבַהֲמֹתֶךָ
וְאָכַלְתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ: הַשְּׁמְרוּ לָכֶם פֶּן-יִפְתָּה לְבַבְכֶם וְסָרְתֶם
וַעֲבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם: וְחָרָה אַף-יְהוָה
בְּכֶם וְעִצָּר אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה מְטֵר וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת-
יְכוּלָּהּ וְאֲבַדְתֶּם מִהָרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטְּבֵה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה נָתַן לָכֶם:
וּשְׁמַתֶּם אֶת-דַּבְּרֵי אֱלֹהֵי עַל-לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל-נַפְשְׁכֶם וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם אֹתָם
לְאוֹת עַל-יְדֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם: וּלְמַדְתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת-
בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ כְּבִיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ
וּבְקוּמְךָ: וּכְתַבְתֶּם עַל-מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ: לְמַעַן יִרְבוּ
יְמֵיכֶם וַיְמֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאַבְרָהָם
לֵתֵת לָהֶם כִּימֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל-הָאָרֶץ: —

DERASH. This warning against idolatry has ecological significance. If we continue to pollute the environment—and thus display contempt for the integrity of God's creation—pure rain will cease to fall, and the ground will cease to give forth its produce. M.L.

THE BOUNDLESS ONE told Moses: Speak to the Israelites—tell them to make themselves *tzitzit* upon the corners of their clothes, throughout their generations. Have them place upon the corner *tzitzit* a twine of royal blue. This is your *tzitzit*. Look at it and remember all the mitzvot of the ETERNAL ONE. And do them, so you won't go off after the lusts of your heart or after what catches your eye, so that you remember to do all my mitzvot and be holy for your God. I am THE FAITHFUL ONE, your God, who brought you from Mitzrayim to be for you a God. I am THE INFINITE, your God.

ויאמר יהוה...אלהיכם / THE BOUNDLESS ONE...God (Numbers 15:37-41).

COMMENTARY. In the ancient Near East, free people wore fringes, or *tzitzit*, on the hems of their everyday clothes. Since only free people wore *tzitzit*, they were a form of identification. Business transactions were sealed by kissing the *tzitzit*.

The mitzvah of *tzitzit* is based on that ancient sign of freedom. The fringes remind us that we voluntarily follow the way of God, who freed us from Egyptian slavery. It is, literally, a string tied around our finger.

Today, many Jews who recite the Shema during the morning service gather the four corners of their *tallitot* (prayer shawls), hold the *tzitzit*, and kiss them at each mention of the word *צִיצִית* / *tzitzit*. This custom shows that we take these words seriously like a legal contract. L.W.K.

מצרים / *Mitzrayim* was the escaping Hebrews', not the Egyptians', name for the land of Egypt: perhaps a slave-term, and probably not of Semitic origin, it has associations with the root *צָרַר*, to be in distress, constricted, in anguish, or in dire straits. This word powerfully evokes the choking oppression of slavery. As the psalmist wrote: *מִן הַמַּצַּר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה* / From the depths I called to Yah. M.P.

Transliteration can be found on page 91.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ
אֲלֵהֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל-כַּנְּפֵי בְּגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וּנְתַנוּ עַל-
צִיצִית הַכֹּנֶף פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ
וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא תִטּוּרוּ אַחֲרַי
לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר-אֲתֶם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהֵייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם
לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: **אמת** יהוה אלהיכם:

יהוה מצות יהוה / all the mitzvot of THE ETERNAL ONE. כל, all, as many as possible. According to rabbinic tradition, there are 613 mitzvot in the Torah. A combination of gematria (Jewish numerology) and ritual macrame “proves” that ציצית / tzitzit equals all 613 mitzvot combined: צ = 90, י = 10, צ = 90, י = 10, ת = 400; all together = 600. Each tzitzit has 8 strands (per corner) and 5 knots; 8 + 5 = 13; 13 + 600 = 613. L.W.K.

אחרי עיניכם / after what catches your eye, that is, the physical and material temptations you see. The Baal Shem Tov had a method for dealing with distractions, especially sexual ones. If you can't get that person out of your thoughts, remember that beauty is a reflection of God's image. Redirect that energy towards God. L.W.K.

תכלת is Sidon blue, which is obtained from a shellfish. Sidon or royal blue is associated with majesty—even today the British queen wears a blue sash. The Jews were so oppressed at the time of Bar Kōḥbah that indigo, a vegetable dye, replaced Sidon blue on their tzitzit. The Romans banned the blue fringe because of its symbolism. During the nineteenth century the Radnizer *hasidim* reintroduced its use. Now other Jews have also begun to use it. The long *tehelet* thread intertwined with short white ones is a complex and powerful image that hints at the interplay between majesty and subject within our own hearts. E.M.

EMET VE'EMUNAH / REDEMPTION

Our faith and truth rest on all this, which is binding upon us:
That THE BOUNDLESS ONE alone is our divinity
and that no divinity exists but One;
that we are Israel, community of God;
that it is God who saves us from the hand
of governments, the very palm of tyrants;
who enacts great deeds without measure,
and wondrous deeds beyond all count;
who puts our souls amid the living,
and who keeps our feet from giving way;
who breaks apart the schemes of those who hate us,
confounds the thoughts of any bearing us ill-will;
that it is God who made miracles for us in Egypt,
signs and wonders in Ham's children's land.
From one generation to the next, God is our guarantor,
and even on a day that turned to night,
God stayed with us when death's deep shadow fell. ↩

COMMENTARY. Two beautiful *berahot* complete the liturgical framework of the Shema in the evening service. The first of these is called *Ge'ulah*—“Redemption.” Recalling the Exodus from Egypt, it thematically echoes the third paragraph of the Shema. Moreover, it identifies the sovereign God, named in the Shema's credo, as the power that freed Israel from slavery. Its vivid, here-and-now recollection of the escape from Egyptian bondage invites and challenges Israel to claim the redemption as a personal experience in each generation and to hear echoes of that ancient triumph over tyranny in each modern-day struggle for freedom, in every attempt to move toward the messianic future. S.S.

אַמֶּת וְאַמוּנָה

אַמֶּת: וְאַמוּנָה כָּל זֹאת וְקִים עָלֵינוּ

כִּי הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאִין זְוֵלָתוֹ

וְאַנְחֵנוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹ:

הַפּוֹדֵנוּ מִיַּד מְלָכִים

הַגּוֹאֲלֵנוּ מִכַּף עָרִיצִים

הָעוֹשֶׂה גְדוּלוֹת אִין חֶקֶר

וְנִפְלְאוֹת אִין מִסְפָּר:

הַשֵּׁם נִפְשָׁנוּ בַחַיִּים

וְלֹא נָתַן לְמוֹט רַגְלֵנוּ:

הַמִּפְרַע עֲצַת אוֹיְבֵינוּ

וְהַמְקַלְקֵל מַחֲשָׁבוֹת שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ:

הָעוֹשֶׂה לָנוּ נִסִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם

אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים בְּאֶדְמַת בְּנֵי חָם:

מִדּוֹר לְדוֹר הוּא גּוֹאֲלֵנוּ:

וּבֵינֵם שֶׁהִפְךָ לְלֵילָה

עֲמָנוּ הָיָה בְּגִיא צְלָמוֹת: ←

COMMENTARY. The blessing immediately following the Shema deals with the theme of divine redemption. The present text, a rewritten version, includes reference to the Holocaust, from which there was no redemption, and the return to Zion, a fulfillment of Israel's ancient dream. The same divine spirit that gave Israel the courage to seek freedom from Egypt in ancient times inspired those who fought for Israel's freedom in our own day. At the same time, this version omits those portions of the text that glory in the enemy's fall or see in God a force for vengeance. All humans are God's beloved children, as were the Egyptians who drowned at the sea.

A.G.

And even in our age of orphans and survivors,
God's loving acts have not abandoned us,
and God has brought together our scattered kin
from the distant corners of the earth.

As then, so now,
God brings the people Israel forth
from every place of menace, to a lasting freedom.
God is the one who brought the Israelites
through a divided Sea of Reeds.
There, they beheld divine might;
they praised and thanked the Name,
and willingly accepted for themselves
God's rule.

Moses, Miriam, and all the Israelites
broke out in song, abundant in their joy,
and, all as one, they said: ↵

DERASH. Rabbi Judah said: [At the sea] each tribe said to the other, "You go into the sea first!" As they stood there bickering, Nahshon ben Aminadav jumped into the water. Meanwhile Moses was praying. God said to him, "My friend is drowning—and you pray!" "What can I do?" Moses asked. [God responded as it says in the text,] "Speak to the people of Israel and tell them to go! Raise your staff..." TALMUD SOTAH 37a

NOTE. Biblical references include Job 9:10, Psalm 66:9.

גַּם בְּדוֹר יְתוּמִים
לֹא עֲזָבוּנוּ חַסְדֵי
וַיִּקַּפְּצוּ נִדְחֵינוּ מִמְּקוֹצוֹת תַּבֵּל:
כָּאֵז גַּם עָתָה
מוֹצִיא אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִכַּף כָּל אוֹיְבָיו
לְחֵירוֹת עוֹלָם:
הַמַּעֲבִיר בְּנָיו בֵּין גְּזֵרֵי יַם סוּף
שֶׁם רָאוּ אֶת גְּבוּרָתוֹ
שִׁבְחוּ וְהוֹדוּ לְשֵׁמוֹ
וּמִלְכוּתוֹ בְּרִצּוֹן קִבְּלוּ עָלֵיהֶם:

מֹשֶׁה וּמְרִים וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָהּ עָנוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׂמְחָה רַבָּה וְאָמְרוּ כָלֵם: ←

Mosheh umiriam uvney yisra'el leha anu shirah besimḥah rabah
ve'ameru ḥulam.

“Who among the mighty can compare
to you, WISE ONE?

Who can compare to you,
adorned in holiness,
awesome in praises,
acting wondrously!”

Your children saw you in your majesty,
splitting the sea in front of Moses.
“This is my God!” they cried, and said:

“THE HOLY ONE will reign forever!”
And it was said:

“Yes, THE REDEEMING ONE has rescued Jacob,
saved him
from a power
stronger than his own!”

Blessed are you, THE GUARDIAN, Israel’s redeeming power!

When our ancestors
beheld these truths
they proclaimed:
Among all the gods
we can name,
who can compare to the
One Beyond Naming?
Among all the quantities
we can label, number,
mark and measure,
which compares to the
Mystery
at the Heart of Reality?

R.M.S.

מִי־כַמְכָּה בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה מִי כַמְכָּה נֶאֱדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ
 נוֹרָא תְהִלַּת עֲשֵׂה פֶלְאָ:
 מְלִכּוּתָךְ רָאוּ בְנֵיךְ בּוֹקֵעַ יָם לְפָנַי מֹשֶׁה זֶה אֵלַי עָנוּ וְאָמְרוּ:
 יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:
 וְנֶאֱמַר: כִּי פָדָה יְהוָה אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיִּגְאֹלוּ מִיַּד חֲזָק מִמֶּנּוּ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
 יְהוָה גְּאֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Mi ḥamohah ba'elim adonay.
 Mi kamohah nedar bakodesh
 nora tehilot osey feleh.
 Malhuteha ra'u vaneha boke'a yam lifney mosheh.
 Zeh eli anu ve'ameru.
 Adonay yimloḥ le'olam va'ed.
 Vene'emar ki fadah adonay et ya'akov ugalo miyad hazak
 mimenu.
 Baruh atah adonay ga'al yisra'el.

משה. בוקע ים לפני משה. This siddur reinstates reference to the splitting of the sea as a sign of God's redeeming power. The earlier Reconstructionist prayerbook omitted that reference because of its emphasis on supernatural intervention. As myth, however, the ancient tale of wonder underscores the sense of daily miracle in our lives. Even those of us who cannot affirm a God who intervenes in the natural process, and thus cannot accept the literal meaning of the tale, can appreciate its human message. According to the midrash, the sea did not split until one Israelite, Nahshon ben Aminadav, had the courage to walk upright into the water. Perhaps it was the divine spirit in Nahshon, rather than the magic of Moses's wand, that caused the sea to split.

A.G.

NOTE. Biblical references include Exodus 15:11, 18 and Jeremiah 31:11.



who ever guards the people Israel
and all who dwell on earth.

HASHKIVENU / DIVINE HELP

For commentary, see pages 286-287.

Help us to lie down, DEAR ONE, our God, in peace, and let us rise again, our sovereign, to life. Spread over us the shelter of your peace. Decree for us a worthy daily lot, and redeem us for the sake of your great name. Protect us and keep from us enemies, illness, sword, famine, and sorrow. Enfold us in the wings of your protection, for you are our redeeming guardian. Truly, a sovereign, gracious and compassionate God are you. Guard our going forth each day for life and peace, now and always. Spread over us the shelter of your peace.

Blessed are you, COMPASSIONATE ONE, who ever guards the people Israel, and all who dwell on earth.

עם ישראל וכל יושבי תבל



Blessed are you,
Compassionate One,

הַשְּׂכִיבֵנוּ

Transliteration and commentary follow on pages 286-287.

הַשְּׂכִיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ לְחַיִּים וּפְרוֹשׁ
עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ: וְתִקַּנְנוּ בְּעֶצֶה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ לְמַעַן
שְׁמֹךָ: וְהִגֵּן בְּעַרְוֵנוּ וְהִסֵּר מֵעָלֵינוּ אוֹיֵב דָּבָר וְחָרֵב וְרָעַב וְיָגוֹן: וּבְצֵל
כְּנָפֶיךָ תִּסְתִּירֵנוּ כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמְרָנוּ וּמְצִילֵנוּ אַתָּה כִּי אֵל מְלֹךְ חַנּוּן
וְרַחוּם אַתָּה: וּשְׁמֵר צַאֲתָנוּ וּבּוֹאֵנוּ לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם:
וּפְרֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ:

ברוך אתה יהוה שומר עם ישראל וכל יושבי תבל לעד:



COMMENTARY. *Hashkivenu*—“Help us to lie down [in peace]”—is the final prescribed part of the Shema. It recalls the Shema by expressing the hope that we will “lie down...in peace” and “rise again...to life.” An extension of *Emet Ve’emunah*, *Hashkivenu* joins the vivid recollection of past redemption to a prayer for present protection and future peace. By calling God “guardian” and “protector” but also “redeemer,” Israel recognizes new dimensions of the power that makes for freedom. This blessing is unique to the evening service. Perhaps responding to the cold, dark uncertainty of night, we invoke God’s dwelling of peace. S.S.

KAVANAH. Enable us, God, to behold meaning in the chaos of life about us and purpose in the chaos of life within us. Deliver us from the sense of futility in our strivings toward the light and the truth. Give us strength to ride safely through the maelstrom of petty cares and anxieties. May we behold things in their proper proportions and see life in its wholeness and its holiness. M.M.K./M.S.

COMMENTARY. The traditional text of this prayer includes the phrase, *haser satan milfanenu ume-aḥarenu*. Some commentators interpret *satan* as “spiritual harmony,” but the phrase is omitted here because of its literal reference to a prosecuting angel. The blessing at the end of *Hashkivenu* has been expanded to include our hope that divine protection will be extended to all peoples. D.A.T.

KAVANAH. As we enter the dark of evening, we face the unknown. Earlier, in *Asher Bidvaro* (the Creation section immediately following *Barehu*), we affirmed the power that transforms night into day and day into night. Now we call for protection from the shadows that lengthen around us—shadows of fear and guilt, the uncharted future, the ever pursuing past. We ask that the shadows of God’s wings envelop us with love and mercy. The unknown night, like the unknown tomorrow, can only be met with faith in the power of infinite compassion to care for us. S.P.W.



Hashkivenu adonay eloheynu leshalom veba'amidenu malkenu
lehayim ufros aleynu sukkat shelomeha. Vetakenenu ve'etzah
tovah milefaneha vehoshi'enu lema'an shemeha. Vehagen
ba'adeynu vehaser me'aleynu oyev dever veherav vera'av
veyagon. Uvetzel kenafeha tastirenu ki el shomrenu umatzilenu
atah ki el melech hanun verahum atah. Ushmor tzeytenu uvo'enu
lehayim ulshalom me'atah ve'ad olam. Ufros aleynu sukkat
shelomeha. Baruch atah adonay shomer am yisra'el vehol yoshvey
tevel la'ad.

When fears multiply
And danger threatens;
When sickness comes,
When death confronts us—
It is God's blessing of shalom
That sustains us
And upholds us.

Lightening our burden,
Dispelling our worry,
Restoring our strength,
Renewing our hope—
Reviving us.

H.M.

ALL SOULS ARE IN GOD'S KEEPING

Blessed is THE ANCIENT ONE by day,
and blessed is THE LIVING ONE by night.
Blessed is THE GUARDIAN when we lie down,
and blessed is THE FOUNT OF LIFE when we arise.
For in your hands are placed the souls of all the living
and the dead,
in divine hands, the soul of every living thing,
the spirit of each being's flesh.
In your hands I entrust my spirit,
you who have redeemed me, FAITHFUL ONE,
the God of truth.
Our God on high,
make one your name,
sustain your realm continually,
and rule over us, forever and eternally.
Let our eyes behold, our hearts rejoice,
our spirits be uplifted by your redemptive power.
Let the promise told to Zion be made real:
"Your God is sovereign!
THE ETERNAL ONE has reigned,
THE ETERNAL ONE now reigns,
THE ETERNAL ONE shall reign
forever and eternally!"
For all of the created realm is yours,
throughout all worlds, across all time,
for we have no sovereign but you.
Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
you who reign in glory,
may you rule forever over us,
and over all that you have made.

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם: בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בְּקִיְלָה: בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בְּשִׁכְבָּנו: בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה
בְּקוּמָנו: כִּי בִידָךְ נַפְשׁוֹת הַחַיִּים וְהַמֵּתִים: אֲשֶׁר בִּידְךָ נִפְשׁ כָּל־חַי
וְרוּחַ כָּל־בֶּשֶׂר־אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה: בִּידָךְ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי פְדִיתָה אוֹתִי יְהוָה
אֵל אֱמֶת: אֵלֵהֵינוּ שְׁבִשְׁמַיִם יַחַד שְׁמֶךָ וְקִיָּם מִלְכוּתְךָ תָּמִיד וּמְלוּךְ
עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

יְרֵאוּ עֵינֵינוּ וְיִשְׁמַח לְבָנוּ וְתִגַּל נַפְשָׁנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ בְּאֱמֶת בְּאִמּוֹר
לְצִיּוֹן מִלֶּךָ אֱלֹהֵיךָ: יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה יְמִלֶּךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:
כִּי הַמְּלָכוֹת שָׁלָה הִיא וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עַד תִּמְלֹךְ בְּכַבוֹד כִּי אֵין לָנוּ מִלֶּךָ
אֶלָּא אֹתָהּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּכַבוֹדוֹ תָּמִיד יְמִלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד וְעַל כָּל מַעֲשָׂיו:

ḤATZI KADDISH / SHORT KADDISH

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher (*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: by far*) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי כְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיךְ
מְלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוּן וּבְיִמְיִכוּן וּבְחַיִּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְנָא
קָרִיב וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא

לְעֵלָא (לְעֵלָא) (Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא
וְשִׁירָתָא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא דְאִמְרוּ בְּעֵלְמָא וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Reader: Yitgadal veyitkadash shemey raba
be'alma di vera ħirutey veyamliĥ malĥutey
beĥayeyĥon uvyomeyĥon uvĥayey deĥol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam ulalmey almayā.

Reader: Yitbarah veyishtabah veyitpa'ar veyitromam
veyitnasey veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal
shemey dekudsha beriĥ hu
le'ela (Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: le'ela) min kol birĥata
veshirata tushbeĥata veneĥemata da'amiran be'alma
ve'imru amen.

INTRODUCTIONS TO THE AMIDAH

Standing here in Abraham's desert
Affirming: one God.

Moving in the old spaces
Warmed by our ancestors' embrace.

Standing here in Sarah's tent
Laughing: new life.

Moving in the old spaces
Renewed by our ancestors' hope.

Standing here in my place
Listening to our voices: yearning.

Moving in my own spaces
Translating the silence.

Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

* *

Dear God,
Open the blocked passageways to you,
The congealed places.

Roll away the heavy stone from the well as your servant
Jacob did when he beheld his beloved Rachel.

Help us open the doors of trust that have been jammed with
hurt and rejection.

As you open the blossoms in spring,
Even as you open the heavens in storm,
Open us—to feel your great, awesome, wonderful presence.

Sheila Peltz Weinberg

KAVANAH. Prayer is communion. To commune with God is to put oneself
in touch with the source of cosmic energy.

M.M.K.

redeemer I will be ever aware of the SOURCE OF LIFE'S presence. In

May my words of prayer and my heart's meditation be seen favorably, God, my rock and my

יהוה לרצון אמרו פי והגוון לבב לפניך יהוה. צור וגואל.

ברוך אתה בכל יום

יהוה

לנגדי תמיד

שייני

together with you and sustain the living, until, through your intercession, the life of the universe is upheld, those who have healing the sick.

ברוך אתה בכל יום



ברוך אתה יהוה מלכי כל הימים
 'Blessed are you, THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE, who gives and renews life.

כי עמך נראה אור
 For with you is the Fountain of all life; in your Light do we behold all light.

להיים

על מי מנוחות ינהלני נפשי ישוב

You are with me, God, your power and support are there to comfort me.

כי אתה עמדי שבתך ומשענתך המה ינחמני

For it is a tree of life למוחיקים ברה. עץ חיים ריה למוחיקים ברה.

AMIDAH

The traditional Amidah follows here. The Sheviti meditation begins on page 132. A guided meditation begins on page 128. The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three short steps forward and bowing, left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence.

Open my lips, BELOVED ONE,
and let my mouth declare your praise.

1. AVOT VE'IMOT / ANCESTORS

Blessed are you, ANCIENT ONE, our God, God of our ancestors,
God of Abraham God of Sarah
God of Isaac God of Rebekah
God of Jacob God of Rachel
and God of Leah; ַו

DERASH. Acknowledging our ancestors reminds us that what we are is shaped by who they were. Just as an acorn is shaped by the oak that preceded it and yet gives birth to a tree uniquely its own, so we are shaped by our ancestors yet give rise to a Judaism all our own. R.M.S.

COMMENTARY. The *Amidah* or “standing prayer” is also called “*Hatefilah* / The Prayer,” because of its centrality in every one of the daily services. The *Amidah* in its weekday form is also known as the “*Shemoneh Esrey* / The Eighteen (benedictions).” This name dates from a very early period; nineteen blessings have been included for the last 2000 years. Most liturgy scholars agree that the weekday *Amidah* is structured as a prayer for the arrival of messianic times. The thirteen middle blessings of the weekday *Amidah* are petitions for success and wellbeing that reflect the concerns that occupy our daily circumstances. The *Amidah* always concludes with a prayer for completeness and peace, uniting workday concerns with messianic hope. D.A.T. / R.S.

אָרוֹן...תְּהִלַּתְךָ / Open...praise (Psalm 51:17).

עֲמִידָה

The traditional Amidah follows here. The Sheviti meditation begins on page 132. A guided meditation begins on page 128. The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three short steps forward and bowing, left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence.

אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

אָבוֹת וְאֵמוֹת



בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֵמוֹתֵינוּ

אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה

אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם

אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק

אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל

אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב

וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה: ←

Adonay sefatay tiftah ufi yagid tehilateha.

Baruh atah adonay eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu

elohey avraham

elohey sarah

elohey yitzhak

elohey rivkah

elohey ya'akov

elohey rahel

veylohey le'ah →

COMMENTARY. Throughout the centuries the pursuit of meaningful communal prayer has led to variations in the *Amidah*. These variations reflect the attitudes and beliefs of different prayer communities. In the ongoing pursuit of meaningful prayer for a Reconstructionist prayer community, changes have been introduced into this *Amidah*, most notably in the first two *berahot*. The first *berahah* has been expanded to include the matriarchs along with the patriarchs as exemplars of God's presence in human lives. By concentrating on examples of healing forces and life-sustaining rains, the second *berahah* acknowledges God as the power that sustains life. The traditional emphasis on God's ability to resurrect the dead has been replaced here by a celebration of God as the power that sustains all life.

S.S.

great, heroic, awesome God, supreme divinity,
imparting deeds of kindness, begetter of all;
mindful of the loyalty of Israel's ancestors,
bringing, with love, redemption to their children's children
for the sake of the divine name.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add:

(Remember us for life,
sovereign, who wishes us to live,
and write us in the Book of Life,
for your sake, ever-living God.)

Regal One, our help, salvation, and protector:
Blessed are you, KIND ONE,
the shield of Abraham and help of Sarah. ִּ

NOTE. The Amidah is made up of three sections. The first and last remain the same for all services, but the central portion differs, containing thirteen blessings on weekdays, and only one on Shabbat and Festivals. The central section on weekdays contains petitions or requests. These workday concerns are set aside on Shabbat and Festivals, when the focus shifts to the joy and holiness of the day. J.B.

COMMENTARY. This version of the first *beraḥah* in the Amidah includes the matriarchs as well as the patriarchs. The phrase “help of Sarah,” *ezrat Sarah*, comes from a Hebrew root (עזר) which can mean either “save” or “be strong.” This parallels the meaning of *magen* / shield. The biblical text says that Abraham experienced God as a shield and that Sarah experienced God as a helper. Their experience and the example of their lives can enrich our own. Just as Abraham and Sarah found the strength to face the unknown physical and spiritual dangers of their journey, so we seek to find the courage and inspiration to meet the challenges of our own time.

R.S.

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן גּוֹמֵל חַסְדִּים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֵה
הַכֹּל וְזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאֵמוֹת וּמֵבִיא גְאֻלָּה לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן
שְׁמוּ בְּאֵהָבָה:

Ha'el hagadol hagibor vehanora el elyon gomel ḥasadim tovim
vekoney hakol vezohēr ḥasdey avot ve'imot umevi ge'ulah livney
veneyhem lema'an shemo be'ahavah.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add:

(וְזָכְרָנוּ לְחַיִּים מְלֶךְ חַפֵּץ בַּחַיִּים וְכַתְּבָנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים
(חַיִּים:))

(Zoh_{re}nu leḥayim meleḥ ḥafetz baḥayim veḥotvenu besefer
haḥayim lema'aneḥa elohim ḥayim.)

מְלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשֵׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹיָה מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם וְעִזְרַת
שָׂרָה: ←

Meleḥ ozer umoshi'a umagen. Baruh atah adonay magen
avraham ve'ezrat sarah. ↵

KAVANAH. God is experienced as עוֹזֵר / helper, every time our thought of God furnishes us an escape from the sense of frustration and supplies us with a feeling of permanence in the midst of universal flux.

M.M.K./M.S.

COMMENTARY. A.J. Heschel has said, "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 do not signify ideas, principles or abstract values. Nor do they stand for teachers or thinkers, and the term is not to be understood like that of 'the God of Kant, Hegel, and Schelling.' Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not principles to be comprehended but lives to be continued. The life of one who joins the covenant of Abraham continues the life of Abraham. For the present is not apart from the past. 'Abraham is still standing before God' (Genesis 18:22). Abraham endures forever. We are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." In this same spirit, we are also Sarah and Rebekah, Rachel and Leah. L.W.K.

2. GEVUROT / DIVINE POWER

You are forever powerful, ALMIGHTY ONE,
abundant in your saving acts.

In summer: You send down the dew.

In winter: You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.

In loyalty you sustain the living, nurturing the life of every living thing, upholding those who fall, healing the sick, freeing the captive, and remaining faithful to all life held dormant in the earth. Who can compare to you, almighty God, who can resemble you, the source of life and death, who makes salvation grow?

(Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: Who can compare to you, source of all mercy, remembering all creatures mercifully, decreeing life!)

Faithful are you in giving life to every living thing. Blessed are you, THE FOUNT OF LIFE, who gives and renews life. ↵

מוריר הטל/משיב הרוח. We acknowledge the presence of God in the natural rhythms of passing seasons. Our awareness of wind, rain, and dew as daily miracles also serves to remind us that the purity of these gifts, so vital for our survival, must be maintained by human watchfulness. In thanking God for air and water, we assert our commitment to preserving them as sources of life and protecting them from life-destroying pollution. The mention of rain or dew follows the two-season climate of *Eretz Yisra'el*; summer extends from the first day of Pesaḥ until Shemeni Atzeret, and winter until the following Pesaḥ. A.G.

כל חי / every living thing, gives and renews life. The traditional siddur affirms מְחִיָּה הַמֵּתִים / revival of the dead. We substitute כל חי, demonstrating an understanding that all of life is rooted in the world's divine order and avoiding affirmation of life after death. We cannot know what happens to us after we die, but we can, by our thought and action, affirm the possibility of this-worldly salvation. D.A.T.

ב גבורות

אתה גבור לעולם אדני רב להושיע:

In summer:

מוריד הטל:

In winter:

משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם:

Atah gibor le'olam adonay rav lehoshi'a.

In summer: Morid hatal.

In winter: Mashiv haru'ah umorid hagashem.

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים סוּמָה נוֹפְלִים
וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים וּמְתִיר אֲסוּרִים וּמְקַיֵּם אֲמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפְרָי: מִי כְמוֹהוּ
בַעַל גְּבוּרֹת וּמִי דוֹמֵה לוֹ מֶלֶךְ מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמֵּחַ יְשׁוּעָה:

Meḥalkel ḥayim beḥesed meḥayey kol ḥay beraḥamim rabim
someḥ noflim verofey ḥolim umatir asurim umkayem emunato
lisheney afar. Mi ḥamoḥa ba'al gevurot umi domeh laḥ meleḥ
memit umḥayeh umatzmi'ah yeshu'ah.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add:

(מִי כְמוֹהוּ אֵב הַרְחָמִים זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים:)

(Mi ḥamoḥa av haraḥamim zoher yetzurav leḥayim
beraḥamim.)

וְנִאֲמַן אֶתְּהָ לְהַחְיֹת כָּל חַי: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי: ←

Vene'eman atah lehaḥayot kol ḥay. Baruch atah adonay meḥayey
kol ḥay. ↵

3. KEDUSHAT HASHEM / HALLOWING GOD'S NAME

Holy are you. Your name is holy. And all holy beings hail you each day. Blessed are you, THE AWESOME ONE, the holy God.

(Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, conclude: the holy sovereign.)

For the abbreviated Amidah, continue on page 106.

4. BINAH / INSIGHT

You graciously endow the human being
with the power to know;

At the conclusion of Shabbat or a festival say:

(You have given us knowledge of your Torah and taught us to do your will. HOLY ONE, our God, you have divided between the holy and the ordinary, between daylight and dark, between the seventh day and the first six days of Creation. Our creator, our sovereign, grant that the coming days bring us peace. Free us from all wrongdoing, and purify us from all moral flaw that we may cling to you in awe.)

you teach a person understanding.

So may you provide us now

with knowledge, understanding, and intelligence.

Blessed are you, THE FOUNT OF WISDOM

who graciously bestows all knowledge. ↩

DERASH. We ask God to remove the impurities that have collected in our minds so that we might be truthful enough to serve God. What are these impurities, these false coverings? They are the myth of isolation, the denial of interrelatedness, the prideful pretense that we are alone and abandoned in the cosmos.

S.P.W.

DERASH. The creation of the world is not completed so long as we have not fulfilled our creative function in it.

M.M.K.

קְדוּשַׁת הַשֵּׁם



אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ וּקְדוּשִׁים בְּכָל יוֹם יְהִלְלוּךָ סְלָה: בְּרוּךְ
אַתָּה יְהוָה הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ:

(Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, conclude: הַמְלִיךָ הַקָּדוֹשׁ)

For the abbreviated Amidah, continue on page 107.

בִּינָה



אַתָּה חוֹנֵן לְאָדָם דַּעַת וּמְלַמֵּד לְאָנוֹשׁ בִּינָה:

At the conclusion of Shabbat or a festival say:

(אַתָּה חוֹנֵנֵתָנוּ לְמַדְעַת תּוֹרָתְךָ וּתְלַמְדֵנוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת חֻקֵי רְצוֹנְךָ וּתְבַדֵּל
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל בֵּין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׂבִיעִי לְשֵׁשֶׁת
יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה: אֲבִינוּ מְלַכְנוּ הַחַל עָלֵינוּ הַיָּמִים הַבָּאִים לְקִרְאָתָנוּ
לְשֵׁלוֹם חֲשׂוֹכִים מִכָּל־חֹטָא וּמְנַקִּים מִכָּל־עוֹן וּמְדַבְּקִים בִּירְאָתְךָ.)

חֲנֹנֵי מֵאֲתָךְ דַּעָה בִּינָה וְהַשְׁפֵּל: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה חוֹנֵן הַדַּעַת: ←

COMMENTARY. One of the most distinguished words in the Bible is the word *kadosh*, a word which more than any other is representative of the mystery and the majesty of the divine. Now what was the first holy object in the history of the world? Was it a mountain? Was it an altar?

It is indeed a unique occasion at which the word *kadosh* is used for the first time: in the book of Genesis, at the end of the story of creation. How extremely significant is the fact that it is applied to time. "And God blessed the seventh day and made it *kadosh*." There is no reference in the record of creation to any object in space that would be endowed with the quality of *kedushah*, holiness.

A.J.H.

5. TESHUVAH / REPENTANCE

Return us, divine source, to your Torah,
bring us nearer, our sovereign, to your service.
And restore us, in complete return, into your presence.
Blessed are you, RECEPTIVE ONE,
who takes joy in our return.

6. SELIḤAH / FORGIVENESS

Forgive us, our Creator, for we have done wrong.
Deal mercifully with us, our protector, though we have rebelled.
you are truly kind and merciful.
Blessed are you, ALL-MERCIFUL,
who graciously abounds in power to forgive.

7. GE'ULAH / REDEMPTION

Behold our need, and plead our cause,
and speedily redeem us, as your name demands,
for you are called a powerful redeemer.
Blessed are you, ALMIGHTY ONE,
redeemer of the people Israel. ↵

The truth is that our belief in God is not based upon God's self-revelation but on our discovery of God. According to the modern way of thinking and speaking, it is more correct to say that we discover God than to say that God reveals the divine self to us.

M.M.K. (Adapted)

תְּשׁוּבָה

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ מְקוֹרְנוּ לְתוֹרָתְךָ: וְקַרְבָּנוּ עֲטֻרָתְנוּ לְעִבּוֹדָתְךָ. וְהַחְזִירֵנוּ
בְּתְשׁוּבָה שְׁלֵמָה לְפָנֶיךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַרוֹצֵה בְּתְשׁוּבָה:

סְלִיחָה

סְלַח-לָנוּ אֲבִינוּ כִּי חָטָאנוּ: מַחֲל-לָנוּ מַלְכָנוּ כִּי פָשַׁעְנוּ: כִּי מוֹחֵל
וְסוֹלֵחַ אַתָּה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה: חַנוּן הַמְרַבֵּה לְסְלוּחַ:

גְּאֻלָּה

רֵאֵה בְּעֵינֵינוּ וּרְיֵבָה רֵיבָנוּ וּגְאֻלָּנוּ מִהַרְרָה לְמַעַן שְׂמָךְ: כִּי גּוֹאֵל חֶזֶק
אַתָּה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה גּוֹאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל: ←

NOTE. The fifth blessing of the weekday *Amidah* focuses on the call to *teshuvah* – return to the path of Torah and the divine presence. Like the High Holy Day liturgy, this blessing invokes the imagery of kingship. This imagery is male and hierarchical, which is problematical for many contemporary Jews. Even more difficult for some is the image of an external God pronouncing individual judgments. This contradicts our sense of the divinity within ourselves that we strive to keep in our awareness and to bring into harmony with our lives. These difficulties have led to emendation of the traditional wording. אבִינוּ / Our father has been replaced by מְקוֹרנוּ / divine source, and מַלְכָנוּ / our king has been replaced by עֲטֻרָתנוּ / our crown, here translated figuratively as “our sovereign.” Compare the alternative and interpretive versions of *Avinu Malkenu*, pages 136-143.

D.A.T./J.B.

8. REFU'AH / HEALING

Heal us, NURTURING ONE, so that we may be healed,
help us to restore ourselves to a state of health,
and bring upon us complete cure of all our ailments.

Optional prayer for one who is ill:

(May it be your will, COMPASSIONATE ONE, our God,
God of our ancestors,
that you quickly send forth thorough healing,
a healing of the body and a healing of the spirit,
to the one who ails,

for a female:

to _____ daughter of _____

for a male:

to _____ son of _____

among all others of the people Israel who are ailing.)
And remove from us all suffering and grief.
For you are a sovereign divine power
and a faithful and compassionate healer.
Blessed are you, RESTORER OF ALL LIFE,
who heals the sick among the people Israel.

9. BIRKAT HASHANIM / BLESSING FOR ABUNDANCE

Grant blessing over us, ABUNDANT ONE,
upon this year, and all its forms of produce;
let it be a year of good.

From December 4th till Pesah say:

And grant us dew and rain,
for blessing

on earth, and satisfy us with your goodness,
and give blessing to this year
as in the good years of the past.

Blessed are you, ALL BOUNTIFUL,
who gives blessing to the years. ↵

From Pesah till December 4th say:

And give blessing

רְפָאֵנוּ יְהוָה וְנִרְפָּא הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ וְנִשְׁעָה וְהַעֲלֵה רְפוּאָה שְׁלָמָה לְכָל מְכוֹתֵינוּ:

Optional prayer for one who is ill:

(יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁתְּשַׁלַּח מְהֵרָה רְפוּאָה שְׁלָמָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם רְפוּאָת הַנְּפֶשׁ וְרְפוּאָת הַגּוּף

לְחוֹלָה _____ בֵּת _____

לְחוֹלָה _____ בֶּן _____

בְּתוֹךְ שָׂאֵר חוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

וְהִסַּר מִמֶּנּוּ יְגוֹן וְאִנְחָה כִּי אֵל מִלֶּךְ רוֹפֵא נֶאֱמָן וְרַחֲמָן אַתָּה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה רוֹפֵא חוֹלֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

בְּרִכַּת הַשָּׁנִים



בְּרַךְ עֲלֵינוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת וְאֶת כָּל מִיְיָ תְבוֹאָתָהּ לְטוֹבָה:

From December 4th till Pesah say:

וְתוֹן טַל וּמָטָר לְבִרְכָּה

From Pesah till December 4th say:

וְתוֹן בְּרִכָּה

עַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה וְשִׁבְעֵנוּ מְטוֹבָךָ וּבְרַךְ שְׁנֵיתָנוּ כְּשָׁנִים הַטּוֹבוֹת: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְבָרַךְ הַשָּׁנִים: ←

COMMENTARY. As a God of lovingkindness, God not only teaches us how to conduct ourselves so as to elicit the best in each other, but also calls upon the transgressor to repent. When human beings repent, God forgives, and by forgiveness enables individuals to use their own powers as God would have them do. M.M.K./M.S.

NOTE. Our hope for rain in its season, which sustains crops throughout the year, is expressed in a subtle change of words. "Provide blessing," which is used most of the year becomes "provide dew and rain for a blessing." Pesah marks the beginning of the spring grain planting season in Israel. The rabbis used the sun calendar date of December 4 for this prayer for rain to adjust to agricultural conditions in Babylonia. In following their lead, we recognize the need to adjust Jewish practice in response to local climactic, cultural, and political conditions. D.A.T.

10. KIBUTZ GALUYOT / INGATHERING OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Sound the great shofar for our freedom,
raise up the banner for the gathering-in of those in exile,
and gather us together from the earth's four corners.
Blessed are you, REDEEMING ONE,
who gathers Israel's dispossessed.

11. DIN / RESTORING JUSTICE

Restore our judges, as of old,
our counselors, as in the beginning,
and remove from us all suffering and grief.
Rule over us, OUR SOVEREIGN, you alone,
with love and with compassion.
Help us achieve justice through the rule of law.
Blessed are you, WISE ONE,
the sovereign who loves righteousness and justice.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, conclude:

(Blessed are you, ENTHRONED IN MAJESTY,
the sovereign, the source of all just law.)

12. BIRKAT HAMINIM / OVERCOMING DIVISIONS

Let all who speak and act unjustly
find no hope for ill intentions.
Let all wickedness be lost.
Blessed are you, JUST ONE,
who subdues the evildoers. ↪

טו קבוץ גליות

תִּקַּע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל לְחִירוֹתֵנוּ וְשֵׂא נֶס לְקַבֵּץ גְּלוֹתֵינוּ וְקַבְּצֵנוּ יַחַד
מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת הָאָרֶץ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְקַבֵּץ נִדְחֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

היו"ד דיין

הַשִּׁיבָה שׁוֹפְטֵינוּ כְּבְרָאשׁוֹנָה וְיִוְעֲצֵינוּ כְּבִתְחִלָּה וְהִסֵּר מִמֶּנּוּ יְגוֹן
וְאַנְחָה וּמְלוֹךְ עָלֵינוּ אַתָּה יְהוָה לְבִדְךָ בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים וְצַדִּיקֵנוּ
בְּמִשְׁפָּט: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ אוֹהֵב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט:

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, conclude:

(בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמִּשְׁפָּט:)

יב בְּרַכַּת הַמֵּיִנים

וְלַמְלָשִׁינִים אֵל תְּהִי תְקוּהָה וְכָל הַרְשָׁעָה כְּרָגַע תֵּאָבֵד: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְהוָה מְכַנְיַע זְרִים: ←

13. TZADIKIM / COMPASSION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

For the righteous, and for the pious,
and for the elders of your people, the house of Israel,
and for the remnant of their scholars,
and for the righteous who have chosen to be Jews,
let your compassion be aroused, DEAR ONE, our God,
and give proper recompense to all
who truly have found shelter in your name,
and give us a portion in their midst,
that we may never be ashamed,
for in you we place our trust.
Blessed are you, THE SOURCE OF TRUST,
support and stronghold for the righteous.

14. BINYAN YERUSHALAYIM / REBUILDING JERUSALEM

And to Jerusalem, your city,
may you turn with mercy,
and come home to dwell there,
as you have promised.
And rebuild the city, soon and in our days,
with everlasting peace.
Blessed are you, THE GOD OF ZION,
builder of Jerusalem.

15. YESHU'AH / SALVATION

May you speedily redeem your people Israel,
and raise their stronghold with your help,
for we await with hope throughout our days
the coming of your help.
Blessed are you, THE GOD OF ISRAEL,
who plants the stronghold of your help. ←

צְדִיקִים 13

עַל הַצְדִיקִים וְעַל הַחֲסִידִים וְעַל זְקֵנֵי עַמּוֹת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל פְּלִיטַת
 סוֹפְרֵיהֶם וְעַל גְּרֵי הַצָּדֵק וְעַל־יָנוּ יְהִמוּ נָא רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְתֵן
 שָׂכָר טוֹב לְכָל הַבוֹטְחִים בְּשִׁמְךָ בְּאַמֶּת וְשִׁים חֲלֻקְנוּ עִמָּהֶם וְלַעוֹלָם
 לֹא נִבּוֹשׁ כִּי כָּה בְטָחָנוּ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְשַׁעַן וּמִבְטָח לַצְדִיקִים:

בְּנֵין יְרוּשָׁלַיִם 14

וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירָךְ בְּרַחֲמִים תָּשׁוּב וְתִשְׁכּוֹן בְּתוֹכָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ וּבִנְיָה
 אוֹתָהּ בְּקִרְוֹב בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּנֵין שְׁלוֹם: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם:

יְשׁוּעָה 15

אֵת עַמּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל מְהֵרָה תִּגְאָל וְקִרְנוּ תְרוּם בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ כִּי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ
 קָרִינוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְצַמֵּיחַ קָרָן יְשׁוּעָה:

NOTE. The fourteenth blessing of the *Amidah* focuses on the rebuilding of Jerusalem. For centuries the rebuilding of Jerusalem has stood for an end to Jewish suffering and a return to Jewish sovereignty, as well as for the mythic end of days in which Jerusalem would become all that generations of longing Jews could imagine. For us, the rebuilding of Jerusalem signifies a world at peace and in which all human need is fulfilled. D.A.T.

16. KABBALAT TEFILAH / ACCEPTING PRAYER

Hear our voice, ATTENTIVE ONE, our God,
have mercy and compassion for us,
and accept our prayer
with kindness and with favor,
for you are the God who harkens
to the words of prayer and supplication.
Do not turn us from your presence empty-handed.
For you are one who listens
to the prayer of your people Israel
with compassion.

Blessed are you, COMPASSIONATE ONE, who listens to the words
of prayer. ׀

At this point in the Amidah it is customary to add personal petitions for healing or safety, for successfully earning a living, and for other hopes and needs. For Tefilat Hadereh / The Travelers' prayer, see page 174. For Parnasah / Sustenance and well being, see page 234.

שמע קולנו / Hear our voice. After all these specific requests and petitions why do we still ask God to hear our prayers? Don't we assume God has been listening to our voice all along? All prayer is about opening. The *Shema Kolenu* / Hear our voice indicates how wide and expansive we have become. No longer is content expressed. It is pure compassion—pure opening alone that we seek. Our innermost hopes have been expressed through the specific litany of needs—now our voice rises from the tender core of our beings. We are one with all Israel whose cries have been heard in love. We cannot return empty. The opening itself is the filling. S.P.W.

טז קַבֵּלַת תְּפִלָּה

שָׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן
אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה: וּמִלְפָּנֶיךָ מְלַכְנוּ
רִיקָם אֵל תְּשִׁיבֵנוּ כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמִים:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה: ←

At this point in the Amidah it is customary to add personal petitions for healing or safety, for successfully earning a living, and for other hopes and needs. For Tefilat Hadereh / The Travelers' prayer, see page 175. For Parnasah / Sustenance and well being, see page 235.

COMMENTARY. This may be the most poignant of all the benedictions of the Amidah. It occurs after we have prayed about so many important things: health, wisdom, community...Yet only here do we finally ask whether or not God hears our prayer. We ask, by way of stating, that God graciously listen to us. What is God that such hearing is possible? If we have moved beyond a simplistic notion of a giant-figure with omniscient ears, what do we have left that hears? Whatever it is, we affirm it! Somehow the injection of our impassioned words and thoughts into the vast process of existence does something. That something is not merely self-clarification and introspection. Something hears. The cosmos bends towards us and takes cognizance. The particulars are wrapped in mystery; the direction and the flow are known. w.s.

פּוֹתֵחַ...רִצוֹן / Providing with...of all life (Psalm 145:16).

הַשֵּׁךְ עַל...יְכַלְכֵלְךָ / Cast yourself...our sustenance (Psalm 55:23).

Both the full Amidah and the abbreviated Amidah continue here.

17. AVODAH / WORSHIP

Take pleasure, GRACIOUS ONE, our God, in Israel your people; lovingly accept their fervent prayer. May Israel's worship always be acceptable to you.

On a Rosh Hodesh / New Moon or Festival add:

(Our God, our ancients' God, may our prayer arise and come to you, and be beheld, and be acceptable. Let it be heard, acted upon, remembered—the memory of us and all our needs, the memory of our ancestors, the memory of messianic hopes, the memory of Jerusalem your holy city, and the memory of all your kin, the house of Israel, all surviving in your presence. Act for goodness and grace, for love and care, for life, well-being, and peace, on this day of

On Rosh Hodesh: the new moon.

On Pesah: the festival of matzot.

On Sukkot: the festival of sukkot. ↩

KAVANAH. Prayer itself is the divinity.

Pinhas of Koretz

וזכרון ימות המשיח. We assert our faith in the coming of a messianic age, a time when justice will reign and all humanity will be united in recognition of the one God. Even in our people's darkest hour, this vision of the future strengthened us as we faced both life and death. However distanced we may be from the more naive aspects of belief in the person of the messiah, the vision of a transformed future remains our guide, just as we know that the vision will become reality only if our deeds reflect it. A.G.

Both the full Amidah and the abbreviated Amidah continue here.

עבודה

רצה יהוה אלהינו בעמך ישראל ולהב תפלתם באהבה תקבל
ברצון ותהי לרצון תמיד עבודת ישראל עמך:

On a Rosh Hodesh / New Moon or Festival, add:

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו יעלה ויבוא ויגיע ויראה וירצה
וישמע ויפקד ויזכר וזכרוננו ופקדוננו וזכרון אבותינו ואמותינו
וזכרון ימות המשיח וזכרון ירושלים עיר קדשך וזכרון כל עמך
בית ישראל לפניך לפליטה ולטובה לחן ולחסד ולרחמים לחיים
ולשלום ביום

On Rosh Hodesh:

ראש החודש הזה

On Pesah

חג המצות הזה

← On Sukkot:

חג הסוכות הזה

ולהב תפלתם. The external mouthing of words alone cannot move us. It is the inward flame of devotion that brings our prayer close to God. Indeed, as the Hebrew phrasing vividly conveys, a passionate longing for godliness can exist among those unable to express that feeling in words. The phrase *lahav tefilatam*, “the flame of Israel’s prayer,” recalls that feeling of *hitlahavut*: the “in-burning” flame of passionate devotion. To attain *hitlahavut* in prayer is to soar with the rapturous ecstasy of divine communion, to access the infinite and be aflame with the nearness of God.

A.G. / M.P.

Remember us this day, ALL-KNOWING ONE, our God, for goodness. Favor us this day with blessing. Preserve us this day for life. With your redeeming, nurturing word, be kind and generous. Act tenderly on our behalf, and grant us victory over all our trials. Truly, our eyes are turned toward you, for you are a providing God, gracious and merciful are you.)

And may our eyes behold your homecoming, with merciful intent, to Zion. Blessed are you, THE FAITHFUL ONE, who brings your presence home to Zion.

18. HODA'AH / THANKS

We give thanks to you that you are THE ALL-MERCIFUL, our God, God of our ancestors, today and always. A firm, enduring source of life, a shield to us in time of trial, you are ever there, from age to age. We acknowledge you, declare your praise, and thank you for our lives entrusted to your hand, our souls placed in your care, for your miracles that greet us every day, and for your wonders and the good things that are with us every hour, morning, noon, and night. Good One, whose kindness never stops, Kind One, whose loving acts have never failed—always have we placed our hope in you. ۞

KAVANAH. Gratitude is the overwhelming experience of the person of faith. Faith stimulates gratitude, and the practice of gratitude expands faith. We experience thankfulness when we know that our lives are safe within God's protection. We trust that the future is assured. We need not consume our days in fear and anxiety. We are released. We can marvel at the daily wonders. S.P.W.

זְכָרְנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה: וּפְקַדְנוּ לְבַרְכָּהּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנו בּוֹ לְחַיִּים:
וּבְדָבָר יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים חוּס וְחַגְּנוּ וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנו כִּי אֱלֹהֵי
עֵינָינוּ כִּי אֵל מְלֶךְ חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה:)

וְתַחֲזִינָה עֵינָינוּ בְּשׂוֹכֵה לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמְּחַזֵּר
שְׂכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן:

לֵאחֲרָיִךְ הוֹדָאָה

מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאֵתָה הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד צוּר חַיֵּינוּ מִגֵּן יִשְׁעָנוּ אַתָּה הוּא לְדוֹר וָדוֹר:
נוֹדָה לָךְ וְנִסְפָּר תְּהַלְתָּה עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדֶךָ וְעַל נְשׂוֹמֹתֵינוּ
הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ וְעַל נִסְיָה שְׂבַכְל יוֹם עִמָּנוּ וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ
שְׂבַכְל-עֵת עָרַב וּבִקֵּר וְצַהֲרָיִם: הַטוֹב כִּי לֹא כָלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ וְהִמְרַחֵם
כִּי לֹא תָמוּ חַסְדֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם קַיֵּינוּ לָךְ: ←

KAVANAH. So long as the Jewish people is linked in communion with the eternal, it can look forward to an eternal life for itself. M.M.K. (Adapted)

DERASH. The insights of wonder must be constantly kept alive. Since there is a need for daily wonder, there is a need for daily worship. The sense of the "miracles which are daily with us," the sense of the "continual marvels," is the source of prayer. There is no worship, no music, no love, if we take for granted the blessings or defeats of living....The profound and perpetual awareness of the wonder of being has become a part of the religious consciousness of the Jew. A.J.H.

(*On Ḥanukah add:* For the miracles, for the redemption, for heroic acts, for saving deeds, for consolations, all of which you have enacted for our ancestors at this time of year in days gone by—as in the days of Matthew, son of Yoḥanan, Hasmonean High Priest, and Matthew’s sons: a wicked Hellenistic government arose against your people Israel, forcing them to shun your Torah and to leave off from the laws your will ordained. And you, in your abundant mercy, stood up for Israel in their hour of distress. You pressed their claim, exacted justice for them. You delivered armed might to the weak, the many to the power of the few, the wicked to the power of the just, the vicious to the power of those occupied with your Torah. You made known your name that day, and made it holy in your world. And for your people Israel you enacted great deliverance, as in our own time. Afterward, your children came into your Temple’s inner room. They cleared your sanctuary, purified your holy place, kindled lights inside your holy courtyards, and established these eight days of Ḥanukah, for giving thanks and praise to your great name.) ۞

On Hanukah add:

עַל הַנְּסִים וְעַל הַפְּרָקוֹן וְעַל הַגְּבוּרוֹת וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת וְעַל הַנְּחֻמוֹת
שְׁעָשִׂיתָ לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם בְּזְמַן הַזֶּה: בְּיָמֵי מַתְתִּיָּהוּ
בֶּן יוֹחָנָן כִּהֵן גְּדוֹל חֲשׂוֹמוֹנָאֵי וּבְנָיו כְּשֶׁעָמְדָה מַלְכוּת יוֹן הַרְשָׁעָה
עַל עַמָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַשְׁכִּיחַם תּוֹרְתָךְ וּלְהַעֲבִירָם מִחֻקֵּי רְצוֹנָךְ וְאַתָּה
בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים עָמַדְתָּ לָהֶם בְּעַת צָרָתָם רַבָּתָּ אֶת רִיבָם דָּנַתְּ אֶת
דִּינָם מִסֵּרְתָּ גְבוּרִים בְּיַד חֲלָשִׁים וְרַבִּים בְּיַד מְעֻשִׂים וְרַשָּׁעִים בְּיַד
צְדִיקִים וְזָדִים בְּיַד עוֹסְקֵי תּוֹרְתָךְ: וְלֵךְ עֲשִׂיתָ שֵׁם גְּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ
בְּעוֹלָמְךָ וּלְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲשִׂיתָ תְּשׁוּעָה גְּדוֹלָה וּפְרָקוֹן כִּהְיוּם הַזֶּה:
וְאַחַר כֵּן בָּאוּ בְנֵיךָ לְדַבֵּיר בֵּיתְךָ וּפְנּוּ אֶת הַיְכָלְךָ וְטָהְרוּ אֶת מִקְדָּשְׁךָ
וְהִדְלִיקוּ נְרוֹת בְּחֻצְרוֹת קִדְשֶׁךָ וְקִבְּעוּ שְׂמוֹנֶת יָמֵי חֲנֻכָּה אֵלּוֹ
לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל: ←

(*On Purim, add: For the miracles, and for deliverance,
and for the mighty deeds, and for the saving acts,
and for the consolations
you enacted for our ancestors
in ancient times, and in our own time.*

In the days of Mordechai and Esther
in Shushan, the mighty capital [of Persia],
when the wicked Haman rose against them,
seeking to destroy, to kill, and to eradicate
all Jews, the young and old alike,
in a single day,
the thirteenth of the twelfth month,
that is, the month of Adar,
and take as plunder all they owned.

But you, in your abundant mercies,
thwarted his conspiracy, destroyed his plan.
And to the Jews came light and happiness,
and joy and glory.)

For all these things, let your name be blessed and raised in honor
always, sovereign of ours, forever.

(*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: And write down for a good
life all the people of your covenant.*)

Let all of life acknowledge you! May all beings praise your name
in truth, O God, our rescue and our aid. Blessed are you, THE
GRACIOUS ONE, whose name is good, to whom all thanks are
due. ←

ליהודים...ויקר / to the Jews...glory (Esther 8:16).

On Purim add:

עַל הַנְּסִים וְעַל הַפְּרָקוֹן וְעַל הַגְּבוּרוֹת וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת וְעַל הַנְּחֻמּוֹת
שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזְמַן הַזֶּה:

בַּיָּמִי מְרַדְכִי וְאֶסְתֵּר בְּשׁוֹשׁן הַבִּירָה בְּשַׁעֲמֹד עֲלֵיהֶם הַזֶּמֶן הַרְשָׁע:
בְּקִשׁ לְהַשְׁמִיד לְהַרוֹג וּלְאַבֵּד אֶת כָּל הַיְּהוּדִים מִנְּעֵר וְעַד זָקֵן בְּיוֹם
אֶחָד בְּשִׁלּוּשֵׁי עֶשֶׂר לְחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר הוּא חֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר וּשְׁלָלָם לְבוֹז:
וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים הִפְרַת אֶת עֲצַתוֹ וְקִלְקַלְתָּ אֶת מַחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ
לַיְּהוּדִים הַיְּתֵה אֹרֶה וְשִׁמְחָה וְשִׁשׁוֹן וְיִקָּר:

וְעַל כָּלֵם יִתְבַּרַךְ וְיִתְרוֹמֵם שְׁמֶךָ מִלְּפָנֵינוּ תַּמִּיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add:

(וּכְתַב לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים כָּל־בְּנֵי בְרִיתְךָ:)

וְכַל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ סֵלָה וְיִהְלְלוּ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ בְּאַמַּת הָאֵל יִשׁוּעָתָנוּ
וְעִזְרוֹתָנוּ סֵלָה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הַטּוֹב שְׁמֶךָ וְיָהּ נָאָה לְהוֹדוֹת: ←

KAVANAH. This prayer helps us to get in touch with our gratitude for the extraordinary yet often overlooked daily workings of the world, and through them to recognize the insignificance of our own roles, to feel humble. In becoming aware of our smallness, we become able to grasp our relatedness to the All. This in turn makes it possible to overcome the loneliness of claiming we have all the answers and the anxiety of always needing to be in control. At these moments the pain of our unfulfilled needs is swept away in the wondrous goodness we feel in the world about us. We give thanks. S.P.W.

19. BIRKAT HASHALOM / BLESSING FOR PEACE

Grant abundant peace eternally for Israel, your people. For you are the sovereign source of all peace. So, may it be a good thing in your eyes to bless your people Israel, and all who dwell on earth, in every time and hour, with your peace.

(*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: In the book of life, blessing, peace, and proper sustenance, may we be remembered and inscribed, we and all your people, the house of Israel, for a good life and for peace.*)

Blessed are you, COMPASSIONATE ONE, maker of peace.

The Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.

ראת כל יושבי תבל. According to the sages, every *Amidah* must conclude with a prayer for peace and an acknowledgment of God as the power that makes for peace. Inclusion of the words “and all who dwell on earth” proclaims that Israel desires the blessing of peace, not for itself alone, but for all humanity. S.S.

עושה השלום / Maker of peace. This ancient version of the prayer for peace in its most universal form was assigned in the traditional liturgy to the ten days of *teshuvah*. During the year the text read, “who blesses your people Israel with peace.” In our time, when life has been transformed by the constant threat of global destruction, the need of the hour calls for the more universal form of the prayer throughout the year. A.G.

KAVANAH. God is shalom. God’s name is shalom, everything is held together by shalom. Zohar

My God, you are *salam* peace.
Peace comes from you, goes back to you.
Let us live in peace and with peace.
You are great and generous.

Sidi Sheikh Muhammad Al Jamal

ר (19) בְּרַכַּת הַשְּׁלוֹם

שְׁלוֹם רַב עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ תְּשִׂים לְעוֹלָם: כִּי אַתָּה הוּא מֶלֶךְ אֲדוֹן
לְכָל הַשְּׁלוֹם: וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֶךְ אֶת עַמָּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת כָּל-יְשׁוּבֵי
תֵּבֵל בְּכָל עֵת וּבְכָל שָׁעָה בְּשִׁלּוּמֶךָ:

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add:

(בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים בְּרַכָּה וְשְׁלוֹם וּפְרִנָּסָה טוֹבָה נִזְכָּר וְנִפְתָּח לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנַחְנוּ
וְכָל עַמָּךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשְׁלוֹם):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה עוֹשֵׂה הַשְּׁלוֹם:

Shalom rav al yisra'el ameha tasim le'olam.

Ki atah hu meleḥ adon leḥol hashalom.

Vetov be'eynecha levareḥ et ameha yisra'el

ve'et kol yoshvey tevel

beḥol et uvḥol sha'ah bishlomeha.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add:

(Besefer ḥayim beraḥah veshalom ufarnasah tovah nizaḥer
venikatev lefanecha

anahnu veḥol ameha beyt yisra'el

leḥayim tovim ulshalom.)

Baruḥ atah adonay osey hashalom.

The Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.

RIBONO SHEL OLAM / CONCLUDING MEDITATION

Sovereign of the universe,
fulfill my heart's petitions for the good.
Let me be worthy to perform your will with a whole heart.
Deliver me from the inclination to do evil,
and give me my portion in your Torah.
May I merit, with all Israel, your people,
that your Presence dwell upon us.
Make evident among us
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and strength,
the spirit of knowledge and the awe of THE CREATOR.
May divine love surround the one
who trusts in THE ETERNAL.

May my words of prayer, and my heart's meditation
be seen favorably, PRECIOUS ONE,
my rock, my champion.

May the one who creates harmony above
make peace for us and for all Israel,
and for all who dwell on earth.
And say: Amen.

*On fast days and during the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, continue with
Avinu Malkenu, pages 136-143.*

רְבוּנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם

רְבוּנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם מְלֵא מְשָׁלוֹת לְבִי לְטוֹבָה וְזַכָּנִי לְעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנָה
בְּלִבְבִי שְׁלֵם: מְלִטָּנִי מֵיֵצֵר הָרַע וְתַן חֶלְקִי בְּתוֹרָתָהּ: זַכָּנִי עִם כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ שְׂתַשְׁרֶה שְׂכִינְתָּךְ עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹפֵעַ עָלֵינוּ רוּחַ חַכְמָה
וּבִינָה רוּחַ עֲצָה וּגְבוּרָה רוּחַ דָּעַת וְיִרְאֵת יְהוָה:
וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בְּיְהוָה חֶסֶד יִסּוּבְכֵנוּ.

יְהִי לְרְצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגּוֹאֲלִי:
עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

On fast days and during the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, continue with Avinu Malkenu, pages 136-143.

שְׂכִינְתָךְ / *shehinateha* / your Presence. This term is one of the most frequent ways of speaking of God in rabbinic and mystical tradition. The term derives from Exodus 25:8: "And I shall dwell in their midst" (*veshahanti betoham*). God's Presence coming to dwell in the Tabernacle was believed to be the normal outcome of the priestly sacrificial labors. When Israel's Second Temple was destroyed, the belief arose that God continues to dwell among Israelites during study and prayer. "If two sit and there are words of Torah between them, the Shehinah dwells with them. (*Pirkey Avot* 3:3).
J.R.

יְהִי...וְגּוֹאֲלִי / *May...champion* (Psalm 19:15).

KADDISH TITKABAL / KADDISH FOR THE COMPLETION OF PRAYER

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher (*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: by far*) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

And may the prayer and supplication of the whole house of Israel be acceptable to their creator in the heavens. And say: Amen.

May Heaven grant a universal peace, and life for us, and for all Israel. And say: Amen.

May the one who creates harmony above make peace for us and for all Israel, and for all who dwell on earth. And say: Amen.

NOTE. Kaddish Titkabal concludes the section of the service containing an *Amidah* / silent prayer. It therefore contains a request for the acceptance of prayer, which is omitted in the Mourners' Kaddish that follows *Aleynu*.

D.A.T.

קדיש תתקבל

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרַא כְּרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיךָ
מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוּן וּבְיִמְיִכוּן וּבְחַיִּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן
קָרִיב וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלֵּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא

לְעֵלְא (לְעֵלְא) *(Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: מן כל ברכתא*
וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְאִמְרוּ בְּעֵלְמָא וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

תִּתְקַבַּל צְלוֹתְהוֹן וּבְרַעוּתְהוֹן דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל קָדָם אֲבוּהוֹן דִּי
בְּשַׁמַּיָּא וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:
עוֹשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam ulalmey almay.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom aleynu ve'al kol
yisra'el ve'al kol yoshvey tevel ve'imru amen.

KAVANAH. Adding the rabbinic phrase “*ve'al kol yoshvey tevel*” (and for all who dwell on earth) logically completes the concentric circles of our aspirations—our care starts with our minyan, extends to the entire Jewish people, and radiates outward from there to all who share our planet.

D.A.T.

From the second day of Pesah until Shavuot the counting of the Omer, pages 414-423, is inserted here. On Saturday evening, in public worship, Havdalah, pages 350-357, is recited here. On Purim, turn to page 388 for the blessings preceding the Megillah reading. On Tisha Be'Av the book of איכה / Eyr̥ah/Lamentations and other readings are added here. For readings see pages 472-477.

ALEYNU

We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow at "bend the knee." For an alternative version see page 332. Choose one of the following:

It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all,
to declare the greatness of the author of Creation,
who gave to us teachings of truth
and planted eternal life within us.



It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all,
to declare the greatness of the author of Creation,
who created heaven's heights and spread out its expanse,
who laid the earth's foundation and brought forth its offspring,
giving life to all its peoples,
the breath of life to all who walk about.

COMMENTARY. This siddur offers several versions of the *Aleynu*. The first, which appeared in the 1945 Reconstructionist siddur, emphasizes that the gift of God's Torah or teaching demands our committed response. The second version, based on Isaiah 42:5 and fit into the *Aleynu* by Rabbi Max D. Klein, emphasizes that our obligation to God flows from our role as part of Creation. The traditional *Aleynu* that appears below the line has troubled Reconstructionist Jews because it implies the inferiority of other faiths and peoples. D.A.T.

COMMENTARY. The theme of *Aleynu* is the anticipation of God's universal rulership. Originally, this glorious hymn introduced the "Rulership" section of the Rosh Hashanah liturgy. Because of its lofty language and message, *Aleynu* was soon added to every worship service. The Reconstructionist version of *Aleynu* shifts the focus from a concern with the specialness of the Jewish people to an emphasis on the unique Torah perspective that enables Israel to help spread God's presence through the universe. This shift eliminates an opportunity for Jewish triumphalism, in favor of stressing the importance of Torah in Jewish living. S.S.

From the second day of Pesah until Shavuot the counting of the Omer, pages 414-423, is inserted here. In public worship on Saturday evening, Havdalah, pages 350-357, is recited here. On Purim, turn to page 389 for the blessings preceding the Megillah reading. On Tisha Be'Av the book of איכה / Eychah/Lamentations and other readings are added here. For readings see pages 472-477.

עֲלֵינוּ

We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow at korim. Choose one of the following.

Aleynu leshabe'ah la'adon hakol
latet gedulah leyotzer bereyshit
shenatan lanu torat emet
vehayey olam nata beto'henu.

Continue on page 329.

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל
לְתֵת גְּדוּלָה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
שֶׁנָּתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת
וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נִטַּע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ: ←



Aleynu leshabe'ah la'adon hakol
latet gedulah leyotzer bereyshit.
bore hashamayim venoteyhem
roka ha'aretz vetze'etza'eha
noten neshamah la'am aleha
veru'ah laholehim ba.

Continue on page 329.

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל
לְתֵת גְּדוּלָה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
בוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנוֹטִיָּהֶם
רִקַּע הָאָרֶץ וְצִאֲצָאֶיהָ
נָתַן נְשָׁמָה לְעַם עֲלֵיהָ
וְרוּחַ לְהַלְכִים בָּהּ: ←

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל לְתֵת גְּדוּלָה
לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית שְׁלֵא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי
הָאֲרָצוֹת וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה
שְׁלֵא שָׁם חִלְקֵנוּ כְּהֵם וְגוֹרְלֵנוּ כְּכָל
הַמוֹנִם:

It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all, to declare the greatness of the author of Creation, who has made us different from the other nations of the earth, and situated us in quite a different spot, and made our daily lot another kind from theirs, and given us a destiny uncommon in his world.

And so, we bend the knee and bow,
acknowledging the sovereign who rules
above all those who rule, the blessed Holy One,
who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth,
whose realm embraces heaven's heights,
whose mighty presence stalks celestial ramparts.
This is our God; there is none else besides,
as it is written in the Torah:
"You shall know this day, and bring it home
inside your heart, that THE SUPREME ONE is God
in the heavens above and on the earth below.
There is no other God." ←

DERASH. Every person and people that feel they have something to live for, and that are bent on living that life in righteousness, are true witnesses of God. M.M.K.

KAVANAH. As the hand held before the eye hides the tallest mountain, so this small earthly life hides from our gaze the vast radiance and secrets of which the world is full, and if we can take life from before our eyes, as one takes away one's hand, we will see the great radiance within the world. M.B. (Adapted)

וידעת...עוד / You...other God (Deuteronomy 4:39).

וְאַנְחֵנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנַי מִלְּךָ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא:
שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֵה שְׁמַיִם וְיוֹסֵד אֶרֶץ וּמוֹשֵׁב יְקָרוֹ בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וּשְׂכִינַת
עֵזוֹ בְּגִבְהֵי מְרוֹמַיִם: הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד: אָמֵת מְלִכְנוּ אָפֶס זוּלָּתוֹ
כִּפְתוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ: וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם וְהִשְׁבַּת אֶל לְבַבָּךְ כִּי יְהוּה הוּא
הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת אֵין עוֹד: ←

Va'anaḥnu korim umishtaḥavim umodim
lifney meleḥ malḥey hamelaḥim hakadosh baruḥ hu.
Shehu noteh shamayim veyosed aretz umoshav yekaro
bashamayim mima'al
ush-ḥinat uzo begovhey meromim.
Hu eloheynu eyn od.
Emet malkenu efes zulato kakatuv betorato.
Veyadata hayom vahashevota el levaveḥa
ki adonay hu ha'elohim bashamayim mima'al ve'al ha'aretz
mitaḥat eyn od.

And so, we put our hope in you,
THE EMINENCE, our God,
that soon we may behold
the full splendor of your might,
and see idolatry vanish from the earth,
and all material gods be swept away,
and the power of your rule repair the world,
and all creatures of flesh call on your name,
and all the wicked of the earth turn back to you.
Let all who dwell upon the globe perceive and know
that to you each knee must bend, each tongue swear oath,
and let them give the glory of your name its precious due.
Let all of them take upon themselves your rule.
Reign over them, soon and for always.
For this is all your realm, throughout all worlds, across all
time—
as it is written in your Torah:
“THE ETERNAL ONE will reign now and forever.”
And it is written:
“THE EVERLASTING ONE will reign
as sovereign over all the earth.
On that day shall THE MANY-NAMED be one,
God’s name be one!”

KAVANAH. A world of God callers is a world of truth and peace, a world where lust for power, greed, and envy—the idols of pride—is uprooted from the individual and group psyche. S.P.W.

על כֵּן נִקְוָה לָּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְרֹאוֹת מִהֵרָה בְּתַפְאֵרַת צִדְקָה לְהַעֲבִיר
גְּלוּלִים מִן הָאָרֶץ וְהֶאֱלִילִים פְּרוֹת יִפְרֹתוֹן לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת
שְׁדֵי: וְכָל בְּנֵי בָשָׂר יִקְרְאוּ בְשִׁמָּה: לְהַפְנוֹת אֵלֶיךָ כָּל רֹשְׁעֵי אֶרֶץ:
יִבְיְרוּ וַיִּדְעוּ כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל כִּי לָּךְ תִּכְרַע כָּל בָּרָךְ תִּשָּׁבַע כָּל־לִשׁוֹן:
לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִכְרְעוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ וְלִכְבוֹד שִׁמָּה יִקָּר יִתְנֶנּוּ וַיִּקְבְּלוּ
כָּל־אֶת עַל מַלְכוּתְךָ וְתִמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם מִהֵרָה לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: כִּי
הַמַּלְכוּת שְׁלֹךְ הִיא וְלְעוֹלָמִי עַד תִּמְלֹךְ בְּכַבוֹד בְּפִתּוּב בְּתוֹרַתְךָ:
יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: וְנֹאמַר: וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֹלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ
בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד:

Kakativ betorateḥa: Adonay yimloḥ le'olam va'ed.
Vene'emar: Vehayah adonay lemeleḥ al kol ha'aretz.
Bayom hahu yihyeh adonay eḥad ushmo eḥad.

DERASH. When senseless hatred reigns on earth and people hide their faces from one another, then heaven is forced to hide its face. But when love comes to rule the earth and people reveal their faces to one another, then the splendor of God will be revealed. M.B. (Adapted)

DERASH. It is not the seeking after God that divides but the claim to have found God and to have discovered the only proper way of obeying God and communing with God. M.M.K./M.S.

יעד...יהוה / THE ETERNAL ONE...forever (Exodus 15:18).

אחד...והיה / THE EVERLASTING ONE...one (Zechariah 14:9).

ALEYNU / ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS

It is up to us
to hallow Creation,
to respond to Life
with the fullness of our lives.

It is up to us
to meet the World,
to embrace the Whole
even as we wrestle
with its parts.

It is up to us
to repair the World
and to bind our lives to the Truth.

Therefore we bend the knee
and shake off the stiffness that keeps us
from the subtle
graces of Life
and the supple
gestures of Love.

With reverence
and thanksgiving
we accept our destiny
and set for ourselves
the task of redemption.

Rami M. Shapiro

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

Judy Chicago

Readings appropriate to a house of mourning may be added at this point. For a selection of readings, see pages 490 to 532.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MOURNERS' KADDISH

In reciting the Kaddish we affirm our awareness of holiness in our world. Much of our experience of divine goodness, grace and love has come to us through those whose lives have touched our own. (Today we remember...) We invoke the transcendent power of love and caring as we sanctify God's name.

It is customary for mourners, and those observing Yahrzeit, to stand for Kaddish. In some congregations everyone rises.

THE MOURNERS' KADDISH

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher (*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: by far*) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

May Heaven grant a universal peace, and life for us, and for all Israel. And say: Amen.

May the one who creates harmony above, make peace for us and for all Israel, and for all who dwell on earth. And say: Amen.

Love is not changed by Death,
And nothing is lost and all in the end is harvest.

Edith Sitwell

Readings appropriate to a house of mourning may be added at this point. For a selection of readings, see pages 431 to 532.

קדיש יתום

It is customary for mourners, and those observing Yahrzeit, to stand for Kaddish. In some congregations everyone rises.

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעַלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתֵיהּ וְיִמְלִיךְ
מַלְכוּתֵיהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעַגְלָא וּבִזְמַן
קָרִיב וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהִי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלָם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא

לְעֵלָא (לְעֵלָא) (Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא
וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְאִמְרִין בְּעַלְמָא וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:
יְהִי שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:
עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוֵמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵיבֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Reader: Yitgadal veyitkadash shemey raba
be'alma di vera hirutey veyamliḥ malḥutey
beḥayeyḥon uvyomeyḥon uvḥayey deḥol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam ulalmey almaya.

Reader: Yitbarah veyishtabah veyitpa'ar veyitromam
veyitnasey veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal
shemey dekudsha berih hu
le'ela (Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, add: le'ela) min kol birḥata
veshirata tushbeḥata veneḥemata da'amiran be'alma
ve'imru amen.

Yehey shelama raba min shemaya veḥayim aleynu ve'al kol
yisra'el ve'imru amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom aleynu ve'al kol
yisra'el ve'al kol yoshvey tevel ve'imru amen.

The following psalm is traditionally recited at this point each morning and evening from Rosh Hodesh Elul through Hoshanah Rabah.

[A psalm] of David.

THE ETERNAL is my light and my salvation; whom, then, should I fear?

THE ALMIGHTY is my living source of strength; before whom should I tremble?

When evildoers approach to eat my flesh, when tormenters and enemies come after me, see how they stumble; see how they tumble down!

Should a force encamp against me, my heart shall have no fear; should a war arise against me, in one thing I shall trust,

one thing have I asked of GOD, one goal do I pursue: to dwell in THE ETERNAL's house throughout my days, to know the bliss of THE SUBLIME, to visit in God's temple.

Truly, in a day of trouble, I am nestled in God's shelter, hidden in the recess of God's tent.

God sets me high upon a rock. ↩

KAVANAH. Throughout history it has been true that sometimes good people suffer through no fault of their own. The psalmist is not so naive as to be unaware of this reality. How can there be shelter in the midst of swarming enemies? With physical protection unlikely, the shelter invoked here provides not physical but spiritual succor. The psalmist seeks the calm and bliss that come from an awareness of the divine made manifest in the workings of the human heart. With this sense of a greatness that transcends physical peril, enemies' violence causes no fear, and slanderers can do little damage. Living directed to the divine gives us the power not to avoid mortal danger, but to transcend our fear of it. D.A.T.

The following psalm is traditionally recited at this point each morning and evening from Rosh Hodesh Elul through Hoshanah Rabah.

לְדָוִד

יהוה אורי וישעי ממי אירא:
יהוה מעוזי חיי ממי אפחד:
בקרוב עלי מרעים לאכל את בשרי
צרי ואיבי לי המה בשלדו ונפלו:
אם תחנה עלי מחנה לא ירא לבי
אם תקום עלי מלחמה בזאת אני בוטח:
אחת שאלתי מאת יהוה אותה אבקש שבתי בבית יהוה כל ימי
חיי לחיות בנעם יהוה ולבקר בהיכלו:
כי יצפני בסכּוּ ביום רעה יסתירני בסתר אהלו בצור ירומני: ←

Ahat sha'alti me'et adonay otah avakesh shivti beveyt adonay kol yemey hayay la hazot beno'am adonay ulevaker beheyhalo.

COMMENTARY. We say this psalm every day from the first of *Elul* through *Hoshanah Rabah*. The rabbis doubtless chose it to accompany us through every phase of the fall holiday season because it encompasses such a range of powerful emotions. Identifying with the experience of the speaker can help us to be in touch with our fears of abandonment, our need for security, our yearning for joyful religious experience, our need for guidance from God, or our steady commitment to never lose hope. Above all, we experience the psalmist's vulnerability. Feeling that it is possible to be hidden and secure within God's presence, the speaker also knows, by contrast, the terrible fear that God can hide the divine countenance and seem utterly unavailable. The psalm delicately balances these two kinds of hiddenness, as it tries to find a metaphoric "level path," the right way of walking in a difficult, dangerous world. The psalm ends by urging that we seek our God, clinging to hope in the return of God's presence. H.L.

And now, my head is raised in triumph on my foes around me,
and I offer sacrifice in celebration in God's tent.
I offer song and melody to MY REDEEMER.

Hear me, PRECIOUS ONE, I call aloud;
be gracious to me, answer me!

To you my heart cries out, to you my face is turned,
your presence, GRACIOUS ONE, I seek.

Hide not your face from me: do not, in anger, turn away your
servant.

You have been my help, don't shun me now; do not abandon
me, my God who saves!

For my father and my mother have abandoned me,
but THE LIVING ONE shall take me in.

Teach me your way, WISE ONE, and guide me in a just path as
I meet my foes.

Don't place me at the mercy of my enemies, for slanderers arise
against me, and they fume in violence.

Were it not for my belief that I'll behold GOD's goodness in the
Land of Life...

Hope, then, for THE ETERNAL ONE; strengthen your heart with
courage, and have hope in THE ETERNAL.

Psalm 27

וְעַתָּה יְרוּם רֹאשִׁי עַל אֵיבֵי סְבִיבוֹתַי וְאֶזְכְּרָה בְּאֵהָלוֹ זְבַחַי תְּרוּעָה
אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמְרָה לַיהוָה:
שְׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא וְתַגְּנֵנִי וְעֲנֵנִי:
לֵךְ אָמַר לְבִי בְקִשׁוּ פָנַי אֶת פְּנֵיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ:
אֵל תִּסְתַּר פְּנֵיךָ מִמֶּנִּי אֵל תֵּט בְּאֵף עֲבָדֶךָ עֲזַרְתִּי הָיִיתָ אֵל תִּטְשֵׁנִי
וְאֵל תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
כִּי אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי וַיהוָה יֶאֱסָפֵנִי:
הוֹרְגֵנִי יְהוָה דְּרִכֶּךָ וּנְחַנֵּנִי בְּאַרְחַ מִישׁוּר לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרֵי:
אֵל תִּתְנֵנִי בְּנַפְשׁ צָרִי כִּי קָמוּ בִי עֲדֵי שֶׁקֶר וַיִּפַּח חָמָס:
* לֹא הָאֲמַנְתִּי לְרֹאוֹת בְּטוֹב יְהוָה בְּאַרְצֵ חַיִּים:
קִנְיָ אֵל יְהוָה חֹזֵק וַיֵּאֱמֹץ לְבָבָהּ וְקִנְיָ אֵל יְהוָה:

KAVANAH. This psalm speaks of evildoers, but also refers to our illness, pain, the trials and tribulations we all suffer, and our concerns and worries with living. The plane on which we focus our everyday consciousness keeps us in touch with all the things that go wrong in our lives—both small and large. This psalm urges an awareness of a different plane, one where we focus on the eternal instead of the everyday. Here we are nurtured by spiritual connection. Here we gain perspective on the whirl of activity that dominates our everyday lives. Here we find the strength and goodness that can sustain us in our daily tasks.

D.A.T.

This psalm is often read by mourners.

A Psalm of David

THE ETERNAL is my shepherd; I shall never be in need.
Amid the choicest grasses does God set me down.
God leads me by the calmest waters,
and restores my soul.
God takes me along paths of righteousness,
in keeping with the honor of God's name.
Even should I wander in a valley of the darkest shadows,
I will fear no evil.
You are with me, God. Your power and support
are there to comfort me.
You set in front of me a table
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup is overflowing.
Surely, good and loving-kindness will pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I shall come to dwell inside the house
of THE ETERNAL for a length of days.

Psalm 23

COMMENTARY. This psalm offers comfort to mourners, but not to them alone. Its images of pastoral quiet and abundant nourishment speak to all who seek a spiritual oasis in the midst of daily struggle. The psalm's speaker is fully reconciled with the divine; therefore, with the calmest of voices, the psalmist can lead us gently but firmly along the path toward faithfulness.

H.L.

This psalm is often read by mourners.

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד

יְהוָה רָעִי לֹא אֶחָסֵר: בְּנֵאוֹת דָּשָׂא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי
עַל־מֵי מְנַחוֹת יִנְהַלְנִי: נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב
יִנְהַנֵּי בְּמַעְגְלֵי צְדָק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ:
גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶּךָ בְּגִיא צַלְמֹת לֹא־אִירָא רָע
כִּי־אַתָּה עֲמַדֵי שְׁבֻטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתֶּךָ הִמָּה יִנְחַמְנִי:
תַּעֲרֹךְ לְפָנַי שְׁלַחַן נֶגֶד צָרְרִי
דֹשְׁנֵת בְּשֹׁמֵן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסֵי רוּיָה:
אֶךְ טוֹב וְחָסֵד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי
וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה לְאָרְךָ יָמִים:

Mizmor ledavid

adonay ro'i lo ehsar. Binot deshe yarbitzeni
al mey menuhot yenhaleni. Nafshi yeshovev
yanheni vemageley tzedek lema'an shemo.
Gam ki eleh begey tzalmavet lo ira ra
ki atah imadi shivteha umishanteha hemah
yenahamuni.

Ta'aroh lefanay shulhan neged tzoreray
dishanta vashemen roshi kosi revayah.
Ah tov vahesed yirdefuni kol yemey hayay
veshavti beveyt adonay le'oreh yamim.

The psalm is often sung at the third meal of Shabbat. This meal is associated with the messianic transformation from a world of injustice and suffering to righteousness and peace. The melodies to which it is sung at this time evoke both joyous anticipation and soulful yearning. H.L.

Yigdal / Great is...can be found on page 206.

ADON OLAM / CROWN OF ALL TIME

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

Crown of all time, the one who reigned
before all mortal shape was made,
and when God's will brought forth all things
then was the name supreme proclaimed.

And after everything is gone,
yet One alone, awesome, will reign.
God was, and is, and will remain,
in splendid balance, over all.

And God is One, no second is,
none can compare, or share God's place.
Without beginning, without end,
God's is all might and royal grace.

This is my God, my help who lives,
refuge from pain in time of trial,
my banner, and my place to fly,
my cup's portion when, dry, I cry.

To God's kind hand I pledge my soul
each time I sleep, again to wake,
and with my soul, this body, here.
Yah's love is mine; I shall not fear.

KAVANAHA. God is that aspect of reality which elicits from us the best that is in us and enables us to bear the worst that can befall us. M.M.K.

אָדוֹן עוֹלָם

בְּטָרֵם כֹּל יִצִיר נִבְרָא:	אָדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ
אֲזַי מְלֶכֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא:	לְעֵת נִעְשָׂה בְּחִפְצוֹ כֹּל
לְבַדּוֹ יְמַלֵּךְ נוֹרָא:	וְאַחֲרַי בְּכָלוֹת הַכֹּל
וְהוּא יְהִי בְּתַפְאָרָה:	וְהוּא יְהִי וְהוּא הוּוּה
לְהַמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחֲבִירָה:	וְהוּא אַחַד וְאֵין שְׁנַי
וְלוֹ הָעֵז וְהַמְשָׁרָה:	בְּלִי רֵאשִׁית בְּלִי תַכְלִית
וְצוּר חֲבֵלִי בְּעֵת צָרָה:	וְהוּא אֵלִי וְחִי גּוֹאֲלִי
מִנַּת כּוֹסֵי בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא:	וְהוּא נְסִי וּמְנוֹס לִי
בְּעֵת אִישָׁן וְאַעִירָה:	בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
יְהוּה לִי וְלֹא אִירָא:	וְעַם רוּחִי גְּוִיָתִי

Adon olam asher malah, beterem kol yetzir nivra.
Le'et na'asah veheftzo kol, azay meleh shemo nikra.
Ve'aharey kihlot hakol, levado yimloḥ nora.
Vehu hayah vehu hoveh, vehu yihyeh betifarah.
Vehu eḥad ve'eyn sheni, lehamshil lo lehaḥ**birah**.
Beli reshit beli taḥlit, velo ha'oz vehamisrah.
Vehu eli vehay go'ali, vetzur ḥevli be'et tzarah.
Vehu nisi umanos li, menat kosi beyom ekra.
Beyado afkid ruḥi, be'et ishan ve'a'irah.
Ve'im ruḥi geviyati, adonay li velo ira.

NOTE. *Adon Olam*, like *Yigdal*, states principles of Jewish faith. It is frequently attributed to Solomon ibn Gabirol, a medieval Sephardic poet.

J.B.

