

Excerpts of this book may be used in book reviews. Unless express permission is obtained in writing from the publisher, copies may be made for any other purpose only if payment of ten cents for each photocopy page is sent to the Reconstructionist Press. By partially defraying the high cost of publishing this liturgical material, the ongoing work of producing liturgy is made possible. For other copyright restrictions see acknowledgments.

Library of Congress Number: 93-87032

International Standard Book Number 0-935457-46-1



Art by Betsy Platkin Teutsch

Book Design by Alvin Schultzberg

Composition by El Ot Printing Enterprises Ltd. (Tel Aviv)

Printed in the United States of America

כל הנשמה

Kol Haneshamah

שבת וחגים

Shabbat Vehagim

THIRD EDITION

The Reconstructionist Press
Wyncote, Pennsylvania
2014

בְּרִחוֹת הַשָּׁחַר

מֵה טוֹב אֹהֲלֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁכְּנֹתֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְאֲנִי בְּרַב חֲסִדֶּךָ אָבוֹא
בֵּיתְךָ אֲשַׁתְּחֶה אֶל הַיְכָל קִדְשֶׁךָ בִּירְאָתְךָ: יְהוָה אֱהַבְתִּי מֵעוֹן בֵּיתְךָ
וּמְקוֹם מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדְךָ: וְאֲנִי אֲשַׁתְּחֶה וְאֶכְרַע אֶבְרַכָּה לְפָנַי יְהוָה
עֲשֵׂי וְאֲנִי תִפְלְתִי לְךָ יְהוָה עַת רְצוֹן אֱלֹהִים בְּרַב חֲסִדֶּךָ עֲנֵנִי בְּאֵמַת
יִשְׁעֶךָ:

Mah *tovu* ohaleha ya'akov mishkenoteha yisra'el. Va'ani berov
hasdeha avo veyteha eshtahaveh el heyhal kodsheha beyirateha.
Adonay ahavti me'on beyteha umkom mishkan kevodeha. Va'ani
eshtahaveh ve'ehra'ah evreha lifney adonay osi va'ani tefilati
leha adonay et ratzon elohim berov hasdeha aneni be'emet
yisheha.

KAVANAH. It is only a true and close community that develops associations, traditions and memories that go to make up its soul. To mingle one's personality with that soul becomes a natural longing. In such a community one experiences that mystic divine grace which, like radiant sunshine, illumines our lives when joyous and, like balm, heals them when wounded or stricken. Then all questions about saying this or that become trivial, for the real purpose is attained in having each one feel with the Psalmist: "One thing I ask of God that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of God all the days of my life, to behold the graciousness of God."

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

וְאֲנִי תִפְלְתִי / as for me, my prayer is for you. The Hebrew text has often been creatively misread to mean "I am my prayer." All I have to offer in prayer is myself. We begin our prayers with a feeling of humility, knowing that the vaunted words we are about to speak are no greater than the person who speaks them. Most of the prayers in our liturgy are phrased in the first person plural, in which *we* as a community stand before the Divine presence. But here they are introduced in the halting and somewhat unsure voice of the individual, expressing some of that inadequacy that each of us feels as we enter the place and hour of prayer. A.G.

BIRHOT HASHAḤAR / MORNING BLESSINGS

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

How lovely are your tents, O Ya'akov,
how fine your encampments, Yisrael!

And as for me, drawn by your love,
I come into your house.

I lay me down in a humble surrender,
before your holy shrine in awe.

GREAT ONE, how I love your house's site,
adore your Glory's dwelling place.

And as for me, I fall in prayer,
my body I bend down,

I greet, I bless, I bend the knee,
before THE ONE who fashions me.

And as for me, my prayer is for you, GENTLE ONE,
may it be for you a time of desire,

O God, in the abundance of your love,
respond to me in truth with your help.

NOTE. The *Mah Tovv* prayer is composed entirely of biblical verses: Numbers 24:5; Psalms 5:8, 95:6 [adapted] and 69:14.

COMMENTARY. *Mah Tovv* begins with a historical progression—the tents of our earliest ancestors, then the sanctuary of the years of wandering in the wilderness, then the Temple in Jerusalem. Each of these is linked to the synagogue, for it too is "your house." And I, the contemporary soul, seeking the right moment to encounter the divine there, am thus not alone. I am a link in the chain of tradition bearing the truth of your salvation. D.A.T.

עֲטִיפַת טַלִּית

It is customary to wrap oneself in the tallit before reciting the blessing that follows. After the blessing is recited, the tallit is placed across the shoulders. In some congregations the blessing is said in unison.

בְּרַכֵּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גְדֻלַּת מְאֹד הוֹד וְהָדָר לְבָשָׁתָּ: עֲטָה
 אֹר כְּשֵׁלֶמָה נוּטָה שָׁמַיִם כִּירִיעָה:
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
 וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִתְעַטֵּף בְּצִיצִית:

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu meleḥ ha'olam
 asher kideshanu bemitzvotav
 vetzivanu lehitatef batzitzit.

Many contemporary Jews are reciting *beraḥot*/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 *beraḥot*. 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 אַתָּה יְהוָה	Blessed are you Yah
	Nevarēḥ et	נְבָרְךְ אֶת	Let us bless
II	eloheynu	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	our God
	hasheḥinah	הַשְּׁכִינָה	Sheḥinah
	eyn haḥayim	עַיִן הַחַיִּים	Source of Life
III	meleḥ ha'olam	מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Sovereign of all worlds
	ḥey ha'olamim	חַי הָעוֹלָמִים	Life of all the worlds
	ruaḥ ha'olam	רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם	Spirit of the world

ATIFAT TALLIT / DONNING THE TALLIT

It is customary to wrap oneself in the tallit before reciting the blessing that follows. After the blessing is recited, the tallit is placed across the shoulders. In some congregations the blessing is said in unison.

Bless, O my soul, THE ONE!
 ABUNDANT ONE, my God, how great you grow!
 In majesty and beauty you are dressed,
 wrapping yourself in light as in a garment,
 stretching out the heavens like a shawl!
 (Psalm 104:1-2)

Blessed are You, VEILED ONE, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, who has made us holy with your mitzvot, and commanded us to wrap ourselves amid the fringed tallit.

COMMENTARY. According to rabbinic tradition, Psalm 104:1-2 describes how God, robed in splendor, wrapped in light, began to create the world. The radiance of God's light-robe (one source says that God donned a white tallit) illumined the world before the creation of sun, moon, and stars. This meditation invites the worshipper to consider the act of donning the tallit to be the first step in the daily renewal of the world. God's wrapping in light becomes Israel's enlightened wrapping at the outset of a new day. It encourages Israel to celebrate world renewing creativity as an unending sign of the divine presence within humankind. S.S.

DERASH. The tallit is a very personal ritual object. Usually I wrap it around myself when joining in a prayer community. For the tallit both creates a private space for me and links me with Jewish tradition. It emphasizes my connection to my people while also offering me spiritual privacy. I am alone and in community at the same time. L.B.

בְּרִחֹת הַשַּׁחַר

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הַעוֹלָמִים
הַמַּעֲבִיר שָׁנָה מֵעֵינַי וְתַנּוּמָה מֵעַפְעָפִי: ←

Baruh atah adonay eloheynu hey ha'olamim
hama'avir shenah me'eynay utnumah me'afapay

COMMENTARY. The familiar introductory formula for blessings including the phrase *meleh ha'olam* / sovereign of the world, was adopted by the rabbis during the talmudic era and universally accepted by later Jews. Substituting another rabbinic phrase, *hey ha'olamim* / life of all the worlds, expresses the idea that as Judaism continues to evolve, alternatives to the ancient metaphor of God as divine ruler should emerge. This alternative blessing formulation may be used throughout the siddur by those who prefer it, just as the traditional *meleh ha'olam* may be substituted here. A.G.

DERASH. The “worlds” to which *hey ha'olamim* refers may be the many universes that each of us inhabits, the vast spaces that surround our world, or the infinite depths that fill the human heart. We proclaim that God is the single flow of life that inhabits and unifies them all. A.G.

BIRHOT HASHAḤAR / MORNING BLESSINGS

Blessed are you, AWAKENER, our God, life of all the worlds, who removes sleep from my eyes, and slumber from my eyelids. ←

COMMENTARY. Various editions of the prayerbook offer different orders of the morning blessings. Here the first blessing is that on awakening. Then comes a blessing on the first sounds of dawn, followed by thanksgiving for the return of waking consciousness (“who establishes the dry land upon the waters”), and then the blessing on opening our eyes and seeing our world, freshly created with the dawn, around us. The cycle is completed with the final blessing “who gives strength to the weary” as we prepare to begin our day. A.G.

COMMENTARY. This sequence of blessings is the central portion of *Birhot Hashaḥar*. It was designed by the talmudic sages to celebrate such acts of awakening as focusing the eyes, sitting up, stretching, standing, etc. The transference of these blessings to the public worship service (ninth century) disengaged the blessing and the particular act of awakening with which it was joined. In their public setting the morning blessings took on a new level of meaning. Removed from the acts of awakening, individual activities became metaphors for godly action. The blessing “who clothes the naked” ceased to be a pointed acknowledgment of personal possessions and personal protection. Instead it became a celebration of God as the power that prompts the care and nurturance of humankind. The blessing “who raises the lowly” ceased to be a blessing over the renewal of physical mobility and became a blessing of the divine presence manifest in actions that raise the bodies and elevate the spirits of those who are low. S.S.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו חי העולמים
הנותן לשקוי בינה להבחין בין יום ובין לילה:

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו חי העולמים
רוקע הארץ על המים: ←

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
hanoten laseḥvi vinah lehavḥin beyn yom uveyn laylah.

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
roka ha'aretz al hamayim.

שקוי / bird of dawn has been variously rendered as “rooster,” “watchman,” “celestial appearance,” or “meteor.” In an urban setting, the earliest sound of life we are likely to hear at dawn is the chirping of sparrows. *Seḥvi* is thus rendered differently from *gever*, rooster, here to capture some of the ambiguity of the word. J.R.

Blessed are you, THE PROVIDENT, our God, life of all the worlds,
who gives the bird of dawn discernment to tell day from
night.

Blessed are you, THE FASHIONER, our God, life of all the worlds,
who stretches forth the earth upon the waters. ←

KAVANAH. We give thanks that we are restored whole and healthy to consciousness and to an orderly universe. That is why, in the second blessing, we give thanks that, when we stepped out of bed our feet encountered not the watery chaos which preceded creation, but the solid earth which God spread over the waters. The daily emergence from unconsciousness reminds us of our fragility as human creatures and our need for support and care. R.A.

DERASH. For whom do we recite blessings? If God is beyond blessing, then we must be reciting them for ourselves. Each *beraḥah* urges us to avoid taking the world for granted. Each contains a vision of the creative or redemptive power in the world. Jewish tradition teaches that living up to our heritage as beings created *betzelem elohim*, in the image of God, requires us to “imitate God.” Thus each *beraḥah* can teach us something about living our lives in consonance with the divine. Blessings tell us not so much about a God “out there somewhere,” they teach us how to make manifest the godly in ourselves. D.A.T.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו חי העולמים פולחן עורים:
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו חי העולמים מלביש ערמים:
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו חי העולמים מתיר אסורים:
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו חי העולמים זוקף כפופים: ←

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim poke'ah ivrim.
Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim malbish arumim.
Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim matir asurim.
Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim zokef kefufim.

Blessed are you, THE LAMP, our God, life of all the worlds, who makes the blind to see.

Blessed are you, THE COMPASSIONATE, our God, life of all the worlds, who clothes the naked.

Blessed are you, REDEEMING ONE, our God, life of all the worlds, who makes the captive free.

Blessed are you, THE HELPING HAND, our God, life of all the worlds, who raises up the humble. ↵

KAVANAH. Those of us who live in plenty are grateful for the clothing on our bodies, the warmth of a garment that shields us from the elements. We pray for a time when this blessing may be spoken by *all* people, a time when *all* humans are “clothed” with warmth and safety, enwrapped in God’s love. L.B.

זוקף כפופים / who raises up the humble: literally makes upright those bent down. The phrase could suggest either those suffering a physical deformity or those humbled by adverse circumstances. J.R.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים
הַמְכִּיז מִצְעָדֵי גְבוּרָה:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים
שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי כָּל צְרָכָי:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים
אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִבּוּרָה:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים
עוֹטֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִפְאַרֶת: ←

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
hameḥin mitzadey gaver.

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
she'asah li kol tzorki.

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
oter yisra'el bigvurah.

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
oter yisra'el betifarah.

Blessed are you, THE WAY, our God, life of all the worlds, who
makes firm a person's steps.

Blessed are you, THE GENEROUS, our God, life of all the worlds,
who acts for all my needs.

Blessed are you, THE MIGHTY ONE, our God, life of all the
worlds, who girds Israel with strength.

Blessed are you, THE BEAUTIFUL, our God, life of all the worlds,
who crowns Israel with splendor. ↵

DERASH. המכין מצעדי גבר / who makes firm a person's steps. An interpretive translation of Psalm 37:23-24: "When one's steps follow the divine path, they bring delight along the way." The Baal Shem Tov noted in this connection that wherever one goes and whatever one does each day should have a deeper spiritual significance that parallels the mundane reality of everyday existence. In bringing to our lives this deeper significance, we find new delight in the firmness of our steps. L.B.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הַעוֹלָמִים
שֶׁעָשִׂי בְּצַלְמוֹ:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הַעוֹלָמִים
שֶׁעָשִׂי בֶן/בַּת חוֹרִין:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הַעוֹלָמִים
שֶׁעָשִׂי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הַעוֹלָמִים
הַנוֹתֵן לַיָּצֵף כֹּחַ: ←

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
she'asani betzalmo.

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
she'asani ben/bat ḥorin.

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
she'asani yisra'el.

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu ḥey ha'olamim
hanoten laya'ef ko'ah.

NOTE. "THE IMAGELESS...who made me in your image." This paradoxical rendering enables us to understand that our being made "in the divine image" (Genesis 1:26-27) encompasses other than physical attributes: speech, will, reason, spirituality, kindness, freedom of action, moral sense. J.R.

שֶׁעָשִׂי בְּצַלְמוֹ / who made me in your image. When a human being is slain, the very image of God is shattered. We revere human life because it is a spark of the life that animates the universe. Only after we have acquired the principle of reverence for each person is it possible to love each other as we should love, not merely "as thyself" but as a reflection of the divine. "Beloved are human beings," said R. Akiba, "for they were made in the image of God." M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

Blessed are you, THE IMAGELESS, our God, life of all the worlds,
who made me in your image.

Blessed are you, THE FREE, our God, life of all the worlds, who
made me free.

Blessed are you, THE ANCIENT ONE, our God, life of all the
worlds, who made me of the people Israel.

Blessed are you, RENEWING ONE, our God, life of all the worlds,
who gives strength to the weary. ←

COMMENTARY. Once we are awake, we return to full consciousness of who we are. In the rigidly stratified society in which these prayers originated, people were less conscious of identity than of status. Thus, the original forms of these prayers expressed the thankfulness of the most privileged members of the community—free Jewish males—that they did not have the less privileged status of women, slaves, or non-Jews.

The blessings we now use affirm that since we embody the divine image, we are all intrinsically valuable. To degrade or enslave others is to deface the image of God. We were created free just as our creator is free. We are capable of choice, of invention and of transformation in our lives and in our world. We also give thanks for our particular identity as Jews. God who creates our common humanity, also cherishes human diversity. Each person is unique and precious. R.A.

אֱלֹהֵי נְשָׁמָה שְׁנַתַּתָּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא:
אֶתָּה בְּרָאתָה אֶתָּה יִצְרָתָה אֶתָּה נִפְחָתָה בִּי וְאֶתָּה מְשַׁמְרָה בְּקִרְבִּי
וְאֶתָּה עֲתִיד לְטַלְּהָ מִמֶּנִּי לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם: ←

Elohay neshamah shenatata bi tehorah hi.

עולם / restoring [the soul] to everlasting life. The traditional Hebrew text says, “and restore it to me in the future to come.” The text in our siddur, rather than stressing the traditional notion of individual afterlife, or of personal resurrection in the messianic End of Days, reverses the emphasis: the soul, having sojourned in the physical life, is restored to the everlasting stream of life—to the continuum of being that is the sum-total of all transitory lives, when viewed from the perspective of eternity. J.R.

GUIDED MEDITATION. In the Hebrew of אלהי נשמה / My God, the soul, many of the words end with the sound “ah,” spelled “ה.” When this prayer is chanted slowly, you breathe these words. Thus this prayer suggests an opportunity, through breathing, to explore the connection between *neshamah* as breath and as soul:

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed, feet uncrossed, and hands loosely on your lap. Take a series of slow, relaxed breaths. Don't try to control them. Just let them come and go freely. Focus your concentration on your breath. Let the thoughts you have flow through you. Don't try to control them. Each time you end a thought, return your focus to your breath. Do this for several minutes. As you follow your breath, reflect on the divine energy it contains. L.W.K./D.B.

My God, the soul you gave to me is pure. You have created it, you shaped it, and you breathed it into me, and you preserve it deep inside of me. And someday you will take it from me, restoring it to everlasting life. ←

COMMENTARY. The word *neshamah*, which means both “breath” and “soul,” provides a linguistic connection between the blessings for body and soul. The blessing for the soul uses the vocabulary of the Creation story, especially Genesis 2:6, which describes how God created the human form and then animated it with the breath of life. Hence, the language of celebrating each awakening carries an echo of the primal joining of human form to life force. Every awakening is nothing less than a rehearsal of the mystery of creation.

The traditional version of the blessing for the soul acknowledges the daily renewal of life as a recollection of creation and also as a foretaste of resurrection. The current version concludes instead by acknowledging God as the power that renews life each day. S.S.

DERASH. This short and beautiful prayer starts each day and offers comfort in times of stress. Self-esteem is a precious gift. Even though we may lose it in the tragedies of the present, it will be restored to us in our future. God, the healer, returns our souls to us. E.M.

פְּסוּקֵי דְזִמְרָה

For an alternative Pesukey Dezimrah, see Perek Shirah, page 705. For additional readings, see pages 739-766.

בְּרוּךְ הוּא:	בְּרוּךְ שֶׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם
בְּרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ:	בְּרוּךְ עוֹשֶׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית
בְּרוּךְ הוּא:	בְּרוּךְ אוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה.
בְּרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ:	בְּרוּךְ גּוֹזֵר וּמְקַיֵּם
← בְּרוּךְ הוּא:	בְּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל הָאָרֶץ

Baruh she'amar vehayah ha'olam.
Baruh oseh vereyshit.
Baruh omer ve'oseh.
Baruh gozer umkayem.
Baruh merahem al ha'aretz.

Baruh hu.
Baruh shemo.
Baruh hu.
Baruh shemo.
Baruh hu. ←

Blessed is the one who spoke and the world became.
Blessed is the one.
Blessed is the one who in the beginning gave birth.
Blessed is the one who says and performs.
Blessed is the one who declares and fulfills.
Blessed is the one whose womb covers the earth.
Blessed is the one whose womb protects all creatures.
Blessed is the one who nourishes those who are in awe of Her.
Blessed is the one who lives forever, and exists eternally.
Blessed is the one who redeems and saves.
Blessed is God's name.

Naomi Janowitz and Margaret Moers Wenig

PESUKEY DEZIMRAH / VERSES OF PRAISE

For an alternative Pesukey Dezimrah, see Perek Shirah, page 704. For additional readings, see pages 739-766.

Blessed is the one who spoke and all things came to be!
Blessed are you!
Blessed, who created all in the beginning!
Blessed is your name!
Blessed is the one who speaks and acts!
Blessed are you!
Blessed, who determines and fulfills!
Blessed is your name!
Blessed, who deals kindly with the world!
Blessed are you! ←

COMMENTARY. *Baruh She'amar*. Our morning psalm service begins with the words "Blessed is the one who spoke." We begin to pray by proclaiming the divinity and great power of words themselves. The prayerbook conveys our sense of inadequacy of coming before God with human language. How can words ever be adequate vehicles for expressing our most inward thoughts? A.G.

COMMENTARY. The God affirmed in the words of *Baruh She'amar* may be understood in either concrete anthropomorphic terms or in a more abstract manner. It is the latter view with which we Reconstructionists are most comfortable. Our God is not a person who promises and fulfills as a human being would. In speaking of a God who fulfills promises, we express our basic trust in life and our affirmation that goodness and godliness have their own reward. A.G.

בְּרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ:	בְּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל-הַבְּרִיּוֹת
בְּרוּךְ הוּא:	בְּרוּךְ מְשַׁלֵּם שָׂכָר טוֹב לִירְאָיו
בְּרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ:	בְּרוּךְ מַעֲבִיר אֶפְלָה וּמְבִיא אוֹרָה
בְּרוּךְ הוּא:	בְּרוּךְ חַי לְעַד וְקַיָּים לְנֶצַח
בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ:	בְּרוּךְ פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל

Baruḥ meraḥem al haberiyot.	Baruḥ shemo.
Baruḥ meshalem saḥar tov lire'av.	Baruḥ hu.
Baruḥ ma'avir afelah umevi orah.	Baruḥ shemo.
Baruḥ ḥay la'ad vekayam lanetzah	Baruḥ hu.
Baruḥ podeh umatzil.	Baruḥ hu uvaruḥ shemo.

ברוך מרחם על הבריות / Blessed, who acts kindly toward all creatures.
As God nurtures and cares, so should we.

AVOT DE RABBI NATAN 11A (ADAPTED BY L.W.K.)

COMMENTARY. According to the Mishnah, some Jews regularly meditated for an hour before beginning public prayer. As the public prayer service expanded, this time of personal preparation became filled with a collection of psalms and other biblical selections that became known as *Pesukey Dezimrah*—"Verses of Song". Rabbinic literature records many variations of *Pesukey Dezimrah*, but common to all versions are selections from Psalms 146-150, known as the "Hallel Psalms" because they feature variations of that term as a praise of God. Another important Hallel psalm—136—is also a traditional part of this section. The central importance of these psalms indicates that the major theme of *Pesukey Dezimrah* is the praise (Hallel) of God. Indeed, the Talmud sometimes refers to *Pesukey Dezimrah* as the daily Hallel. S.S.

Blessed, who acts kindly toward all creatures!
Blessed is your name!
Blessed, who responds with good to those in awe!
Blessed are you!
Blessed, who removes the dark and brings the light!
Blessed is your name!
Blessed is the one who lives eternally and lasts forever!
Blessed are you!
Blessed, who delivers and redeems!
Blessed are you and your name!

COMMENTARY. *Baruḥ She'amar* is the rabbinic composition that introduces *Pesukey Dezimrah*/Verses of Praise, which traditionally is compiled from biblical passages, primarily from Psalms.

The focus of *Birhot Hashaḥar* is on physical awakening. In *Pesukey Dezimrah* the kaleidoscopic imagery awakens our emotions. Just as we find our own pace walking through art museums, so *Pesukey Dezimrah* invites each of us to wander amidst its visions. On different days, different imagery comes to life. *Pesukey Dezimrah* moves us toward prayerfulness, toward readiness to join in spiritual community. D.A.T.

DERASH. *Pesukey Dezimrah* begins with an apology for verbal prayer. It is only because God "spoke the world into being" that we dare to assume that words can serve as the vehicles for our deepest prayers. In participating in verbal prayer, we somehow partake of that same act of Divine word-power through which the world was created. A Ḥasidic comment on the opening line of *Baruḥ She'amar* translates it: "A *baruḥ* (blessing) that is said and creates a world—that's a *baruḥ*!" A.G.

מזמור שיר ליום השבת:

טוב להודות ליהוה	וְלִזְמֹר לְשִׁמְךָ עֲלֵיוֹן:
להגיד בפֶּקֶד חסְדֶּךָ	וְאֲמוֹנָתְךָ בְּלֵילוֹת:
על־יֶעֱשׂוֹר וְעַל־יִנְבֹּל	עַל־יִגְיוֹן בְּכִנּוֹר:
כִּי שִׁמְחַתְּנִי יְהוָה בְּפַעֲלֶךָ	בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יְדֶיךָ אֲרָנֹן:
מִה־גִּדְלוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה	מֵאֵד עֲמָקוֹ מִחֻשְׁבֹּתֶיךָ:
אִישׁ־צֹעֵר לֹא יֵדַע	וְכִסִּיל לֹא־יִבִּין אֶת־זוֹאת:
בְּפֶתַח רְשָׁעִים כְּמוֹ־עֵשֶׂב	וַיֵּצֵאוּ כָּל־פְּעָלֵי אֱוֹן
לְהַשְׁמָדָם עַד־יָעַד:	

וְאַתָּה מְרוֹם לְעֵלָם יְהוָה: ←

Mizmor shir leyom hashabbat.

Tov lehodot ladonay

Lehagid baboker ḥasdeḥa

Aley asor va'aley navel

ulzamer leshimeḥa elyon.

ve'emunateḥa baleylot.

aley higayon beḥinor.

COMMENTARY. Beautiful in many respects, this twice-recited (evening and morning) Sabbath psalm also contains affirmations which do not flow easily from our lips: the wicked, despite their apparent success, are destined to perish (verses 8-10), while the righteous are destined to flourish (verses 13-15). Who, observing the vast human traumas of this century, can say these words with full conviction?

Isn't this psalm facile, smug? At moments of harassment or discouragement, so it may seem; but during the composed times of quiet reflection, such as Shabbat, it appears closer to the truth than its cynical opposite. Historically, a good case can be made that evil eventually destroys itself; philosophically, it can be convincingly argued that evil contains its own self-destruction, its own internal contradiction.

Yet this vision is far from our present reality, especially when applied to individual cases. With reason Rashi construes the phrase *leyom hashabbat* for the Sabbath Day in the first verse of the psalm as referring to *olam shekulo Shabbat*, a world-in-the-making when all will be serene. E.G.

A psalm. A song for the day of Shabbat.

A good thing to give thanks to THE ETERNAL,
to sing out to your name supreme,

to tell about your kindness in the morning,
and your faithfulness at night,

on ten-stringed lyre and on flute,
with melodies conceived on harp,

for you, ALMIGHTY ONE, elate me with your deeds,
I'll sing about the actions of your hands.

How great your deeds have been, SUPERNAL ONE,
your thoughts exceedingly profound.

Of this the foolish person cannot know,
of this the shallow cannot understand.

For though the wicked multiply like weeds,
and evildoers sprout up all around,

it is for their destruction for all time,
but you, MAJESTIC ONE, are lifted high eternally, כֹּה

It is good to give thanks.

Why? Does God need our praise?

No.

We do.

To awaken to Wonder

to holiness

to God.

It is good to give thanks

for through thanksgiving comes awakening.

R.M.S.

כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֹיךָ יֹאבְדוּ	כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֹיךָ יֵהוּהוּ
וְתִפְרְדוּ כָּל־פְּעָלֵי אָוֶן:	וְתִפְרְדוּ כָּל־פְּעָלֵי אָוֶן:
בְּלִיתִי בְשִׂמּוֹן רַעֲנָן:	וְתִרְם כְּרֵאִים קִרְנֵי
בְּקָמִים עָלַי מְרַעִים	וְתִבֹט עֵינַי בְּשׁוֹרֵי
תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנֵי:	תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנֵי:
כְּאֲרוֹ בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשְׁגָּה:	צְדִיק כְּתִמְרֵי יִפְרַח
בְּתִצְרוֹת אֶלְהֵינוּ יִפְרִיחוּ:	שְׁתוּלִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה
דְּשָׁנִים וְרַעֲנָנִים יִהְיוּ:	עוֹד יִנּוּבוֹן בְּשִׂיבָה
צוּרֵי וְלֹא־עוֹלָתָהּ בּוֹ:	לְהַגִּיד כִּי־יֵשֶׁר יְהוָה

Tzadik katamar yifrah, ke'erez balvanon yisgeh.
 Shetulim beveyt adonay, behatzrot eloheyenu yafrihu.
 Od yenuvun beseyvah, deshenim vera'ananim yihyu.
 Lehagid ki yashar adonay, tzuri velo avlatah bo.

COMMENTARY. צדיק כתמר יפרח / the righteous flourish like the palm trees. Unlike other trees, the palm brings forth each new branch from its very heart. So, too, the *tzadik*: *tzadikim* reach outward from their very depths. There are no superficial branches on their trees. The righteous are as open as palms, as strong and straight as cedars. Such people remain fresh and fruitful even in their old age. A.G.

behold your enemies, RESPLENDENT ONE,
 behold, your enemies are lost,

all evildoers shall be scattered.

You raise my horn like that of the triumphant ox;
 I am anointed with fresh oil.

My eye shall gaze in victory on my enemies,
 on all who rise against me to do harm;

my ears shall hear of their demise.

The righteous flourish like the palm trees,
 like cedars of Lebanon they grow,

implanted in the house of THE ALL KNOWING ONE
 amid the courtyards of our God they bear fruit.

In their old age, they'll put forth seed,
 fleshy and fresh they'll ever be,

to tell the uprightness of ONE ALONE,
 my Rock, in whom no fault resides.

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשֶׁר עֵינֵי אֶל־הַהָרִים מֵאֵין יָבֵא עֲזָרִי:
 עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה שְׂמִימִם וְאָרְץ:
 אֶל־יָתֵן לְמוֹט רַגְלִי אֶל־יְנוּם שְׁמֹרֶה:
 הִנֵּה לֹא־יְנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 יְהוָה שְׁמֹרֶה יְהוָה צִלָּהּ עַל־יַד יְמִינָהּ:
 יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יַכְכָּה וַיִּרְחַב בְּלִילָהּ:
 יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶה מִכָּל־רָע יִשְׁמַר אֶת־נַפְשָׁהּ:
 יְהוָה יִשְׁמַר־צִאֲתָהּ וּבֹאֶה מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם:

Esa eynay el heharim me'ayin yavo ezri.
 Ezri me'im adonay oseh shamayim va'aretz.

DERASH. If we lift our eyes towards the mountains, be they rounded from weathering or jaggedly youthful, their connecting of the molten innards of earth with the luminous stretches of heaven arouses wonder at the dynamism and eruptive creativity amidst which we live. Depths become heights while hills are laid low, and the hardest of surfaces yields to the softness of water and wind. Change is ceaseless, and transformation knows no pause. The dynamism both exhilarates and exhausts the spirit; no wonder that we seek stability amidst this endless process.

Many of this psalm's readers may find such stability in the seemingly solid image of the Maker of heaven and earth. But those whose ears are attuned to mystical overtones may hear in the word מאין / me'ayin echoes of the Creative Nothingness, the Divine Void, the AYIN, the Mysterious and Ever Elusive Source from which all existence springs. The Name for that Source—four letters without consonantal substance, the stirrings of breath captured only in vowels—hints at stability amidst ceaseless process, a dizzying term of pure becoming. The paradox of this affirmation contributes to the spiritual vertigo which may, along with the heights of the highest peaks, help us sense that Source of our being that lies both above and beneath our furthest seeing. E.G.

A Song for the Ascents.
 I lift my eyes up to the hills.
 from where does my help come?

My help is from THE UNSEEN ONE,
 the maker of the heavens and the earth,
 who will not cause your foot to fail.
 Your protector never slumbers.

Behold the one who slumbers not, who never sleeps,
 the guardian of Israel.

THE ABUNDANT ONE preserves you,
 THE WATCHFUL ONE, your shelter, at your right hand a support.

By day, the sun will not afflict you,
 nor the moonlight by the night.

THE VIGILANT shall guard you from all evil,
 and will keep your lifebreath safe.

THE SHEPHERD guard your going out and coming in,
 from now unto eternity.

Psalm 121

KAVANAH. Often prayer seeks to turn our thoughts towards God; at other times it directs our attention towards ourselves, and sometimes these two poles are held in intimate relation, as in the opening outcry of the psalm: "I lift my eyes up to the hills: from where does my help come?" Had the life-sustaining force we call God not been with us, how could we possibly have survived calumny and contempt, pogroms and persecutions? Given the perils and pains of Jewish history, our continued existence as a people is not easy to account for in the usual reasoned terms of causal explanation.

Might we then succumb, if only for a moment, to the cry of the psalmist, and give voice to our astonished recognition that our existence is surely by the grace of God, a gift that surpasses explanation. E.G.

הַלְלוּיָהּ הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקִדְשׁוֹ הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרָקִיעַ צִוּ:
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרֹתָיו הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרֵב גְּדֻלוֹ:
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר:
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִף וּמְחוֹל הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעִנּוּב:
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי שְׁמַע הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה:
כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תִּהְלֵל יְיָ הַלְלוּיָהּ:
כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תִּהְלֵל יְיָ. הַלְלוּיָהּ

Halleluyah halelu el bekodsho. Haleluhu birki'a uzo.
Haleluhu vigvurotav. Haleluhu kerov gudlo.
Haleluhu beteka shofar.
Haleluhu benevel veḥinor.
Haleluhu betof umaḥol.
Haleluhu beminim ve'ugav.
Haleluhu betziltzeley shama.
Haleluhu betziltzeley teru'ah.
Kol haneshamah tehalel yah. Halleluyah.

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם אָמֵן וְאָמֵן: בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה מְצִיּוֹן שָׁכֵן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
הַלְלוּיָהּ: בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבָדוֹ:
* וּבְרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם וְיִמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:

and may God's glory fill all the earth. The meaning of the Hebrew phrase is rich in ambiguity. All earth is filled with divine glory, but divine glory itself is filled up with earthliness. It is the reality of this world that fills God's presence, as it is the presence that gives the world its glory. A.G.

Blessed...Amen! (Psalms 89:53, 135:21, 72:18-19).

Hallelu/Yah!
Call out to Yah in Heaven's holy place!
Boom out to Yah across the firmament!
Shout out for Yah, for all God's mighty deeds!
Cry out for Yah, as loud as God is great!
Blast out for Yah with piercing shofar note!
Pluck out for Yah with lute and violin!
Throb out for Yah with drum and writhing dance!
Sing out for Yah with strings and husky flute!
Ring out for Yah with cymbals that resound!
Clang out for Yah with cymbals that rebound!
Let every living thing Yah's praises sing, Hallelu/Yah!
Let every living thing Yah's praises sing, Hallelu/Yah!

Psalm 150

Blessed is THE ONE eternally.
Amen! Amen!
Blessed is THE OMNIPRESENT,
dwelling in Jerusalem, Halleluyah!
Blessed is THE MIGHTY ONE divine,
The God of Israel who alone works wonders,
and blessed is the glorious name forever,
and may God's glory fill the earth.
Amen! Amen!

COMMENTARY. Psalm 150 as it appears in the biblical text does not repeat its concluding line as it does in the liturgy. The repetition here makes this concluding verse parallel to all the preceding ones, allowing it to fit a variety of musical settings. The repetition also emphasizes the psalm's essential message. D.A.T.

נִשְׁמַת כָּל־חַי תְּבָרַךְ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְרוּחַ כָּל־בָּשָׂר תִּפְאֶרֶת
וּתְרוֹמָם וְזִכְרֶךָ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ תִּמְיֵד מִן־הָעוֹלָם וְעַד־הָעוֹלָם אֲתָה אֵל
וּמִבְּלַעַד־יָדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל וּמַפְרִיחַ וּמַרְחֵם
בְּכָל־עֵת צָרָה וְצוּקָה אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵי אֲתָה: —

Nishmat kol hay tevareh et shimeha adonay eloheynu.

DERASH. *Nefesh, ruah, neshamah*: these three Hebrew terms are often translated as soul or spirit. They were originally terms for breath. This relation between soul and breathing is found in other sacred languages as well: *atman* in Sanskrit, *pneuma* in Greek, *anima* and *spiritus* in Latin are all terms for soul. All in origin refer to breath and breathing. Literally, then, this prayer asserts that the breath of all living creatures proclaims God's blessing. In what sense might this be so?

Breath is the prerequisite of life and speech, of existence and communication, and it is a gift requiring no conscious attention except in cases of illness. If each inhalation required a direct order, each exhalation a conscious command, how should we find energy or attention for anything else? How should we sleep? In truth, we do not breathe; we are breathed. At this moment of my writing, at this moment of your reading, at succeeding moments of our praying, breath enters and leaves our lungs without our conscious intervention. Truly we are breathed. E.G.

נִשְׁמַת כָּל חַי / The soul of every living thing. This ancient and grand rabbinic closing to the morning psalms follows the biblical view that refuses to make any distinction between matter and spirit. God is the breath that resides in all of life, the spirit that animates all flesh. It is this corporeal world that is the locus of divinity. We need only develop the eyes to see it. A.G.

The soul of every living thing shall bless your name, ETERNAL ONE, our God, the spirit of all flesh shall glorify and hold in reverence continually the memory of you, our sovereign one. From one eternity to another, you alone are God. For without you, we have no ruler, no redeemer, none to champion our cause, none to rescue or to save, none to nourish or to nurture us, whatever be the hour, or the trouble, or the need. ↵

COMMENTARY. *Nishmat Kol Hay* consists of three sections. The first section presents God's unity as that unity is declared with every breath of creation. The second section gives thanks for timely rains and declares God to be beyond creation's collective ability to praise. Even if we could enlist nature's greatest capacities in the service of praising God, they would still fall short. Praise "as great as all outdoors" is still inadequate.

In the third section of *Nishmat Kol Hay*, Israel's unique praises reflect its historical experiences of God as the power that brings redemption. *Nishmat Kol Hay* begins with a universal chorus of praise, moves to the particular praise of Israel, and then speaks of the many ways that individual actions serve as praise. Praises arise from the universe *within* the self just as they fill the universe *without*. Verses from the Psalms illustrate aspects of body and breath/soul contributing praises that fill worlds.

Pesukey Dezimrah ends with this rabbinic composition reassembling individual voices into a chorus of adoration and thanksgiving. The final paragraphs are a reprise of the first blessing of *Pesukey Dezimrah* in *Baruh She'amar* (page 177). Thus, the entire collection beginning with *Baruh She'amar* and ending before the Kaddish (which separates *Pesukey Dezimrah* from *Shaharit*) becomes a well defined literary whole. S.S.

Nishmat is the song of the wave
awakening to the ocean,
seeing that the wave is the ocean and the ocean the wave,
recognizing the interdependence of all things and
discovering the awesome wonder that is our reality. R.M.S.

חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרְעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיד
מְלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָגְלָא וּבְזִמְנָא
קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִידָהּ הוּא
לְעֵלְא (לְעֵלְא) (On Shabbat Shuvah add: מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא
תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנִחַמְתָּא דְאָמִירוֹן בְּעֵלְמָא וְאָמְרוּ: 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 mevaraḥ le'alam ulalmey almaya.

Reader: Yitbaraḥ veyishtaḥ veyitpa'ar veyitromam veyitnasey
veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal shemey dekudsha beriḥ hu
le'ela (On Shabbat Shuvah add: le'ela) min kol birḥata veshirata
tushbeḥata veneḥemata da'amiran be'alma ve'imru amen.

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 (On Shabbat Shuvah add: by far) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world, And say: Amen.

COMMENTARY. Holiness is the quality or value that things or persons have when they help people to become fully human. M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע וּבְרָכוֹתֶיהָ

When a minyan is present, the Barehu is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow. The reader chants the first line, and the congregation responds with the second.

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ:
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Barehu et adonay hamvoraḥ.
Baruḥ adonay hamvoraḥ le'olam va'ed.

יוֹצֵר

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם יוֹצֵר אֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ עֹשֶׂה
שְׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת־הַכֹּל:

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu meleḥ ha'olam yotzer or uvorey
ḥosheḥ oseh shalom uvorey et hakol.

On Festivals that fall on weekdays, continue on page 263.

Many contemporary Jews are reciting *beraḥot*/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 *beraḥot*. 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 יָה	Blessed are you Yah
	Nevareḥ et	נְבַרְךָ אֶת	Let us bless
II	eloheynu	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	our God
	hashəḥinah	הַשְׁכִּינָה	Sheḥinah
	eyn haḥayim	עֵין הַחַיִּים	Source of Life
III	meleḥ ha'olam	מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Sovereign of all worlds
	ḥey ha'olamim	חַי הָעוֹלָמִים	Life of all the worlds
	ruaḥ ha'olam	רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם	Spirit of the world

THE SHEMA AND ITS BLESSINGS

When a minyan is present, the Barehu is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow. The reader chants the first line, and the congregation responds with the second.

Bless THE INFINITE, the blessed One!
Blessed is THE INFINITE, the blessed One, now and forever!

YOTZER / GOD IN NATURE

For additional readings see pages 733-739, 754-766, 798-799.

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, who fashions light and creates darkness, maker of peace and creator of all.

On Festivals that fall on weekdays, continue on page 262.

KAVANAH. As we bless the Source of Life, so we are blessed. And the blessing gives us strength and makes our visions clear. And the blessing gives us peace, and the courage to dare.
FAITH ROGOW

COMMENTARY. *Barehu* calls the congregation together for formal worship. The sections that precede it in the morning service, *Birhot Hashaḥar* and *Pesukei Dezimrah*, have brought individuals gradually closer together until they could reach the mutual connection needed for joining together in prayer. The emotional stirring and heightened awareness brought by these earlier sections now become focused in the tighter intellectual structure of the Shema and its blessings and the *Amidah*.
D.A.T.

COMMENTARY. The first major theme following *Barehu* is that of Creation. We wonder at the order, the complexity, the vastness of our world. Struck by our own smallness, we are nonetheless also caught up in the grace of having a home amidst the splendor that is nature. Our wonder and our sense of smallness give way to thankfulness for the gift of life in this world.
D.A.T.

לְאֵל בְּרוּךְ נְעִימוֹת יִתְּנוּ לְמִלְחָה אֵל חַי וְקַיִם זְמִירוֹת יֵאמְרוּ
וְתִשְׁבְּחוּת יִשְׁמְעוּ כִּי הוּא לְבָדוּ מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ פּוֹעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת עוֹשֶׂה
חֲדָשׁוֹת זוֹרֵעַ צְדָקוֹת מְצַמֵּיחַ יְשׁוּעוֹת בּוֹרֵא רְפוּאוֹת נוֹרָא תְהִלּוֹת
אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת הַמְחַדֵּשׁ בְּטוֹבוֹ בְּכָל יוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית
כְּאָמֹר: לְעֵשֶׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ:
* אוֹר חֲדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תֵּאִיר וְנִזְכָּה כְּלָנוּ בְּמַהֲרָה לְאוֹר: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְהוָה יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת:

Or ḥadash al tziyon ta'ir venizkeh ḥulanu bimherah le'oro.
Baruh atah adonay yotzer hame'orot.

לעשה...חסדו / The...everlasting (Psalm 136:7).

To blessed God they offer melodies. To the sovereign and enduring God they utter songs, and make their praises heard, for God alone is holy and revered, enactor of all mighty deeds, the fashioner of all new things, the seeder of all righteousness, the grower of all saving acts, creator of all healing, awesome in praises, source of every wonder, who renews each day, with constant good, Creation's work—as it is said: “The maker of the skies' great lights, whose love is everlasting!”

Let a new light shine forever upon Zion. Soon, may everyone of us be worthy of its light. Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, the shaper of the heavens' lights.

Every day, Creation is renewed.
Wake up and see unfolding
In the spreading light of dawn,
The world and all it contains
Coming into being, new, fresh,
Filled with divine goodness
And love.
Every day, Creation is renewed.
Reflected in the great lights
We see a new day,
One precious day,
Eternity.

S.P.W.

אהבה רבה

אהבה רבה אהבתנו יהוה אלהינו חמלה גדולה ויתרה חמלת עלינו: אבינו מלפניו בעבור אבותינו ואמותינו שבטחו בך ותלמדנו חקי חיים כן תחננו ותלמדנו: אבינו האב הרחמן המרחם רחם עלינו ותן בלבנו להבין ולהשכיל לשמע וללמוד וללמד לשמור ולעשות ולקיים את כל דברי תלמוד תורתך באהבה: ←

Ahavah rabah ahavtanu adonay eloheynu hēmlah gedolah viterah ḥamalta aleynu. Avinu malkenu ba'avur avoteynu ve'imoteynu shebatehu veḥa vatelamdem ḥukey ḥayim ken teḥonenu utelamdenu. Avinu ha'av haraḥaman hamraḥem raḥem aleynu veten belibenu lehavin ulhaskil lishmo'a lilmod ulelamed lishmor vela'asot ulkayem et kol divrey talmud torateḥa be'ahavah.

COMMENTARY. In the preceding pages (246-270) we offered an extended blessing for Creation. We accepted our creatureliness, our place in nature. Now we shift to concern with what gives our creaturely lives transcendent meaning.

We learn of our own significance through the love that is freely offered to us first by parents and later by others as well. We learn our ultimate worth in this love, which is rooted in the divine love. This is truly essential teaching! This love teaches us what to do with our lives, how to serve others, how to do the divine bidding. Thus loving and learning are inseparable parts of our tie to the divine. D.A.T.

רחמן המרחם רחם / haraḥaman hamraḥem raḥem / loving...caring...be merciful. These three consecutive words are based on the same root which, which is related to the Hebrew word *reḥem* womb. J.R.

AHAVAH RABAH / LOVE AND TORAH

For additional readings see pages 780-784.

With an abounding love, you love us, NURTURER, our God; with great compassion do you care for us. Our source, our sovereign, just as our ancestors placed their trust in you, and you imparted to them laws of life, so be gracious to us, too, and teach us. Our fount, our loving parent, caring one, be merciful with us, and place into our hearts ability to understand, to see, to hear, to learn, to teach, to keep, to do, and to uphold with love all that we study of your Torah. ←

אהבה רבה / With an abounding love, you love us. *Ahavah Rabah* may be called the quintessentially Jewish prayer. In boundless love for Israel, God gives the greatest gift imaginable: teachings that will help us to live. What more could we want from the loving parent, combining attributes of both father and mother, who here becomes the compassionate teacher, sharing the gift of true knowledge with children who have become disciples? We pray that we may have the open and understanding heart to receive these teachings, to make them real by our deeds, and to pass them on to others. This is our response to God's love: a commitment to study, to live the life of Torah, and to carry it forward to future generations. A.G.

ותלמדנו חקי חיים / you imparted to them laws of life. This second *beraḥah* prior to the Shema moves us from the cosmic realm of God as experienced in nature to the particular Jewish experience of God, as transmitted through our culture. Our Torah records those laws of life that reflect our people's collective experience of God. R.S.A.

וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ וְדַבֵּק לִפְנֵינוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וַיַּחֲד לְכַבְּנוּ לְאַהֲבָה
וְלִירְאָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ וְלֹא נִבּוֹשׁ וְלֹא נִכְלָם וְלֹא נִפְשָׁל לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:
כִּי בְשֵׁם קִדְשֶׁךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּטַחְנוּ: נִגְיֵלָה וְנִשְׁמַחָה בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ:

*וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְּפוֹת הָאָרֶץ וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְאַרְצָנוּ:
כִּי אֵל פּוֹעֵל יִשׁוּעוֹת אַתָּה: וְקִרְבָּתֵנוּ לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל סֵלָה בְּאַמַּת:
לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ וּלְיִחְדָּךְ בְּאַהֲבָה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Veha'er eyneynu betorateha vedabek libenu bemitzvoteyha
veyahed levavenu le'ahavah ulyirah et shemeha. Velo nevosh
velo nikalem velo nikashel le'olam va'ed. Ki veshem kodsheha
hagadol vehanora batahnu. Nagilah venismehah bishu'ateha.

NOTE. Jews traditionally have gathered in the four *tzitziyot* at the corners of their tallitot when they reach *vehavi'enu* / reunite. The *tzitziyot* are then held throughout the Shema.

Enlighten us with your Torah, cause our hearts to cling to your mitzvot. Make our hearts one, to love your name and be in awe of it. Keep us from shame, and from humiliation, and from stumbling, today and always. For we have trusted in your holy, great, and awesome name. May we be glad, rejoicing in your saving power, and may you reunite our people from all corners of the earth, leading us proudly independent to our land. For you are the redeeming God and have brought us near to your great name, to offer thanks to you, and lovingly declare your unity. Blessed are you, ABUNDANT ONE, who lovingly cares for your people Israel.

KAVANAH. In gathering together the four corners of the tallit, we gather our scattered thoughts and focus on unity—uniting our people, uniting the disparate elements of our lives, uniting with the oneness that links all that is. This inner unity is the place out of which our hearts speak the Shema. D.A.T.

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד

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. ↵

שמע ישראל / Listen, Israel. The core of our worship is not a prayer at all, but a cry to our fellow-Jews and fellow-humans. In it we declare that God is one—which is also to say that humanity is one, that life is one, that joys and sufferings are all one—for God is the force that binds them all together. There is nothing obvious about this truth, for life as we experience it seems infinitely fragmented. Human beings seem isolated from one another, divided by all the fears and hatreds that make up human history. Even within a single life, one moment feels cut off from the next, memories of joy and fullness offering us little consolation when we are depressed or lonely. To assert that all is one in God is our supreme act of faith. No wonder that the Shema, the first “prayer” we learn in childhood, is also the last thing we are to say before we die. The memory of these words on the lips of martyrs deepens our faith as we call them out each day. A.G.

COMMENTARY. From recognition of our place in nature in the first blessing of this part of the service, we shifted to concern with our moral place in the second blessing. As creatures made conscious of our ultimate worth by love, we recite the Shema. We thereby enter into a partnership aimed at transforming the world and ourselves in the light of that vision of ultimate worth. D.A.T.

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 :
ושונתם לבניך ודברתם גם בשבתך בביתך ובלקחתך בדרך
ובשכבך ובקומך : וקשרתם לאות על ידך והיו לטפוח בין
עיניך : וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך :

Shema yisra'el adonay eloheynu adonay ehad.

Baruh shem kevod malhuto le'olam va'ed.

Ve'ahavta et adonay eloheha

behol levaveha uvhol nafsheha uvhol me'odeha.

Vehayu hadevarim ha'eleh asher anohi 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.

GUIDED MEDITATION: Think of someone who loves you. Feel his or her presence. Take a deep breath and open up to the love that is coming to you. Focus on that feeling of love. L.W.K.

ואהבת / And you must love. You shall love your God intellectually, emotionally and with all your deeds. Whatever you love most in these ways is your god. For the Jewish people, the deepest love should be for freedom, justice and peace. M.M.K./M.S.

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

For the second paragraph of the Shema, read either the version below or the biblical selection beginning on page 283, then continue with the third paragraph, page 285.

BIBLICAL SELECTION I

וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמַעַתְּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־
כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אֶנְכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם וַיִּתְּנֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עָלֶיךָ
עַל כָּל־גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ: וּבָאוּ עֲלֶיךָ כָּל־הַבְּרָכוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְהַשִּׁיגְךָ
כִּי תִשְׁמָע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּעִיר וּבְרוּךְ אַתָּה
בְּשָׂדֶה: בְּרוּךְ פְּרִי־בֶטֶן וּפְרִי אֲדָמָתְךָ וּפְרִי בְהֵמָתְךָ שֶׁגֵּר
אֶלְפֶיךָ וְעִשְׂתָּרוֹת צֹאנֶךָ: בְּרוּךְ טָנָאךָ וּמִשְׁאָרְתְּךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
בְּכֶאֱבֶד וּבְרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּצֵאתְךָ:

רְאֵה נִתְּמִי לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַטּוֹב וְאֶת־הַמָּוֶת וְאֶת־
הָרָע: אֲשֶׁר אֶנְכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְלַכֵּת
בְּדַרְכָּיו וְלִשְׁמֹר מִצְוֹתָיו וְחֻקֹּתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְחַיִּית וּרְבִית וּבְרָכָךָ
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בָּא־שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: ←

COMMENTARY. The traditional wording of 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 biblical selection 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. s.s.

DERASH. A person must acquire a religious faith, not by being reasoned to about God, but by experiencing God's power in making life worthwhile.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

For the second paragraph of the Shema, read either the version below or the biblical selection beginning on page 282, then continue with the third paragraph, page 284.

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. ↪

וְאִם־יִפְנֶה לְבַבְךָ וְלֹא תִשְׁמָע וְנִדְחַתָּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לְאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים
וְעִבַדְתָּם: הַגִּדְתִּי לָכֶם הַיּוֹם כִּי אֲבֹד תֵּאבְדוּן לֹא־תֵאָרִיכּוּ יָמִים
עַל־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹבֵר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לְכוּא שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ:
הַעֲדוֹתֵי בְכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַחַיִּים וְהַמְּוֹת נִתְּתִי
לְפָנֶיךָ הַבְּרָכָה וְהַקְּלָלָה וּבְחַרְתָּ בְּחַיִּים לְמַעַן תַּחֲיֶה אַתָּה וְזַרְעֶךָ:

Continue with ויאמר, page 285.

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 284.

BIBLICAL SELECTION II

וְהָיָה אִם-שָׁמַעַתְּ תִשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעֲבֹדוֹ בְּכֹל-לְבַבְכֶם וּבְכֹל-נַפְשְׁכֶם: וְנָתַתִּי מִטֶּר־אֲרָצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ וְאִסְפַּת דֶּגֶן וְחִירְשָׁן וַיִּצְהַרְךָ: וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב בְּשֹׂדֶךָ לְבַהֲמֹתֶיךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ: הַשְּׁמְרוּ לָכֵם פֶּן-יִפְתָּה לְבַבְכֶם וְסָרְתֶם וַעֲבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם: וְחָרָה אַף-יְהוָה בְּכֶם וְעִצְרָה אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה מִטֶּר וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת-יְבוּלָהּ וְאֶבְרַתָּם מִהַרְהֵרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה נָתַן לָכֶם: וְשָׂמַתְּ אֶת-דְּבַר־יְהוָה עַל-לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל-נַפְשְׁכֶם וְקִשְׁרֹתֶם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל-יְדֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם: וְלִמְדֹתֶם אֹתָם אֶת-בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַרְכֵי כֹּהֵן בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלַכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׂכְבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְכִתְבֹתָם עַל-מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֵיךָ: לְמַעַן יִרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם וַיְמִי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר לָתֵת לָהֶם כִּימֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

Continue with *ויאמר*, page 285.

COMMENTARY. What human action could result in the destruction of the rains, the onset of crop failure and famine? Abuse of the eco-system upon which our very lives depend. And how could such an event occur? When we lose sight of our place in the world and the wondrous gift in all that is. The traditional second paragraph of the Shema was replaced by another biblical selection in earlier Reconstructionist liturgy because the traditional paragraph was understood as literal reward and punishment. However, today in the light of our awareness of the human abuse of the environment, we recognize that often this reward and punishment rest in our own hands. This ancient and yet vital message of the Torah urges us to choose life.

D.A.T.

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.

Continue on page 284.

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.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ
אֲלֵהֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל־כַּנְּפֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנוּ עַל־
צִיצִית הַכֹּפֶן פֶּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ
וְזָכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא תִתּוּרוּ אַחֲרַי
לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי וְהֵייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם
לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: *יהוה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם **אִמְרָת:**

Vayomer adonay el moshe leymor. Daber el beney yisra'el
ve'amarta aleyhem ve'asu lahem tzitzit al kanfey vigdeyhem.
ledorotam venatenu al tzitzit hakanaf petil tehelet. Vehayah
lahem letzitzit uritem oto uzhartem et kol mitzvot adonay
va'asitem otam velo taturu aharey levavehem ve'aharey
eyneyhem asher atem zonim ahareyhem. Lema'an tizkeru
va'asitem et kol mitzvotay vihe-yitem kedoshim leyloheyhem.
Ani adonay eloheyhem asher hotzeyti ethem me'eretz mitzrayim
lihyot lahem leylohim ani adonay eloheyhem. Adonay
eloheyhem emet.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה . . . אֱלֹהֵיכֶם / THE BOUNDLESS ONE . . . God (Numbers 15:37-41)

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.

למען תזכרו / so that you remember. The *tzitzit*, like all the forms of religion, are there as reminders for us as we go about our daily lives. All of us have had moments when we most became ourselves, liberated from the bonds holding us back, or when we discovered those great inner truths that lend meaning to our lives. But such moments are forgotten, covered over by the petty angers and frustrations of daily living, by the hard shell we think we need about us to protect our most precious feelings.

Our tradition calls upon us to bring such moments back to mind and make them part of our worship. Our own innermost liberation is our “coming out of Egypt”; our own moment of deepest truth is our “standing before Sinai”. Let us remember these as we look at our *tzitzit*, and join them to the ancient memories of our people. A.G.

DERASH. The four *tzitziyot* represent the four corners of the world. The divine presence spans the entire area from one corner of the world to the other. So too are the inescapable moral obligations which extend throughout our lives no matter where we are. D.A.T.

*תְּהִלֹּת לְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּמְבוֹרָךְ מִשָּׁה וּמִרְיָם וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 לָךְ עָנּוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׂמְחָה רַבָּה וְאָמְרוּ כָלֵם:
 מִי־כִמְכָה בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה מִי כִמְכָה נְאֻדָּר בְּקִדְשׁ נֹרָא תְּהִלָּת
 עֲשֵׂה־פִלְאָ:
 *שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה שֶׁבָחוּ גְּאוּלִּים לְשִׁמְךָ עַל־שִׁפְתַי הַיָּם:
 יַחַד כָּלֵם הוֹדוּ וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ:
 יְהוָה יִמְלֵךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:
 *צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל קוּמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל: וּפְדֵה כְּנַאֲמֶךָ יְהוּדָה וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל:
 גְּאֻלֵּנוּ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה גְּאֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל:

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

Mi ḥamoḥah ba'elim adonay. Mi kamoḥah nedar bakodesh
 nora tehilot osey feleh.

Shirah ḥadashah shibeḥu ge'ulim leshimeḥa al sefat hayam.

Yahad kulam hodu vehimliḥu ve'ameru.

Adonay yimloḥ le'olam va'ed.

Tzur yisra'el kumah be'ezrat yisra'el. Ufdey ḥinumeha yehudah
 veyisrael. Go'aleynu adonay tzeva'ot shemo kedosh yisra'el.

Baruḥ atah adonay ga'al yisra'el.

*On Shabbat, continue with the Amidah on the next page.
 For the Festival Amidah turn to page 327.*

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

DERASH. Most congregations stand at *tzur yisra'el* rather than waiting for the blessing. Thus we are already on our feet when we request that God *קומה* / arise. We cannot ask God to rise up to help Israel unless we have done so ourselves. E.M.

Give praises
 to the highest God! Blessed is God, the one to bless!
 So Moses, Miriam, and the Israelites came forth with
 song to you,
 in boundless happiness, and they all cried:
 "Who among the mighty can compare
 to you, ETERNAL ONE?
 Who can compare to you,
 adorned in holiness,
 awesome in praises,
 acting wondrously!"

A new song did the redeemed ones sing out to your name,
 beside the Sea.
 Together, all of them gave thanks, declared your sovereignty,
 and said:
 "THE HOLY ONE will reign forever!"

Rock of Israel, rise up to the help of Israel,
 redeem, according to your word, Judah and Israel.
 Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, the champion of Israel.

*On Shabbat, continue with the Amidah on the next page.
 For the Festival Amidah turn to page 326.*

GUIDED MEDITATION. The astounding moment of awe and thanksgiving experienced by the Israelites upon the crossing of the Red Sea has parallels in all of our lives. We have all had difficult crossings, experiences that we struggled through in spite of the pain they caused us. Thus completion afforded us a sublime sense of inner joy and peace. Take a moment to recall one of those times. Allow the feelings of celebration to envelop you. Hold on to those feelings as you recite the *Mi Ḥamoḥah*. D.B.

עמידה

The traditional Amidah follows here. Directed meditations begin on page 725. A short Amidah can be found on page 730. 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.

אֲדַנִּי שִׁפְתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

אָבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת 

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ

אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם

אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק

אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב

וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה: ←

Baruh atah adonay eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu
 elohey avraham elohey sarah
 elohey yitzhak elohey rivkah
 elohey ya'akov elohey rahel
 veylohey le'ah →

KAVANAH. The opening of the *Amidah* calls to mind previous generations, near as well as distant. Take a few moments to think about your parents, your grandparents, other relatives about whom you may have heard stories. What is your connection with them? L.B.

אֲדַנִּי...תְּהִלָּתְךָ / Open...praise (Psalm 51:17).

AMIDAH FOR SHABBAT MORNING

The traditional Amidah follows here. Directed meditations begin on page 725. A short Amidah can be found on page 730. 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. For additional readings see pages 737-738, 740-748, 752-759.

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

1. AVOT VE'IMOT / ANCESTORS

Blessed are you, THE 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; →

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. 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 of the seven *berahot* which comprise the Shabbat *Amidah*. 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.

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיוֹן גּוֹמֵל חַסְדִּים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֵה
הַפֶּל וְזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאֵמוֹת וּמְבִיא גְּאֻלָּה לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן
שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה:

On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(וְזָכְרָנוּ לְחַיִּים מְלֶכֶד חַפְצֵי בַחַיִּים וְכַתְּבָנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים לְמַעַנְהָ אֱלֹהִים
חַיִּים:)

מְלֶכֶד עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמְגֹן: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְגֹן אַבְרָהָם וְעֹזֵר
שָׂרָה: ←

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

(Zohrenu lehayim meleḥ hafetz baḥayim veḥotvenu besefer
haḥayim lema'aneḥa elohim ḥayim.)

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

COMMENTARY. This version of the first *berahah* 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 time.

R.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.


On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(Remember us for life,
our 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. ←

חֲזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאֵמוֹת / mindful of the loyalty of Israel's ancestors. The Hebrew phrase can also be translated, “who remembers the love of parents.” The legacy each generation gives to its children inevitably contains within it pain and hurt, a sense of inadequacy and of task unfulfilled. Some children are hurt when parents are taken from them too early, others by parents who did not know how to show their love. We say that God “remembers the love of parents;” God is the one who sees to it that the love as well is remembered, even when parents are unable to transmit it.

DANIEL KAMESAR

גְבוּרוֹת 

אַתָּה גִבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם אֲדַנִּי רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ:

In summer: מוֹרִיד הַטֶּל:

In winter: מְשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם:

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים
וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים וּמְתִיר אֲסוּרִים וּמְקַיֵּם אֲמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עַפְרָי: מִי כְמוֹךָ
בְּעַל גְבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֵה לָךְ מְלַךְ מַמְיֵת וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמֵּיחַ יְשׁוּעָה:

Atah gibor le'olam adonay rav lehoshi'a.

In summer: Morid hatal.

In winter: Mashiv haru'ah umorid hagashem.

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.

On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים):

וּנְאֻמוֹ אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת כָּל חַי: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי: ←

(Mi ḥamoḥa av haraḥamim zoher yetzurav leḥayim
beraḥamim.)

Vene'eman atah lehaḥayot kol ḥay. Baruh atah adonay meḥayey
kol ḥay. ←

When chanting aloud in a minyan, continue with the Kedushah, page 303.

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 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?

On Shabbat Shuvah 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. ←

When chanting aloud in a minyan, continue with the Kedushah, page 302.

The following is chanted when the Amidah is recited aloud.

נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּעוֹלָם בְּשֵׁם שְׁמִקְדֵי־שָׁמַיִם אוֹתוֹ בְּשָׁמַיִ מְרוֹם: כְּכַתוּב
עַל־יַד נְבִיאָךְ וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל־זֶה וְאָמַר:

קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ

יהוה צְבָאוֹת מְלֵא כְּלֵהָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ:
אִזּוּ בְּקוֹל רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל אָדִיר וְחֹזֵק מְשִׁמֵּיעִים קוֹל מְתַנַּשְׂאִים לְעֲמַת
שְׂרָפִים לְעֲמַתָּם בְּרוּךְ יְאֻמְרוּ:

בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד־יהוה מִמְקוֹמוֹ: ←

Nekadesh et shimeha ba'olam keshem
shemakdishim oto bishmey marom
kakatuv al yad nevi'eha vekara zeh el zeh ve'amar:
Kadosh kadosh kadosh adonay tzeva'ot
melo hol ha'aretz kevodo.
Az bekol ra'ash gadol adir ve hazak
mashmi'im kol mitnasim le'umat
serafim le'umatam baruḥ yomeru:
Baruḥ kevod adonay mimekomo ↪

The following is chanted when the Amidah is recited aloud.

We sanctify your name throughout this world,
as it is sanctified in the heavens above,
as it is written by your prophet:
“And each celestial being calls to another, and exclaims
Holy, holy, holy is THE RULER of the Multitudes of Heaven!
All the world is filled with divine glory!”

And then, with quaking noises,
so overwhelming in their power,
they raise up their voices,
rise to face the seraphim,
and, facing them, they say:
“Blessed is the glory of THE HOLY ONE,
wherever God may dwell!” ↪

DERASH. Holiness is the manner in which we react to persons, objects,
places and events which we regard as indispensable to human welfare and
self-realization. M.M.K.

וקרא...כבודו / And...glory! (Isaiah 6:3).
ברוך...ממקומו / Blessed...dwell! (Ezekiel 3:12).

ממקומהּ מלפָנו תופיע ותמלוך עלינו כי מחכים אנחנו לך: מתי
 תמלוך בציון בקרוב בימינו לעולם ועד תשכון: תתגדל ותתקדש
 בתוך ירושלים עירך לדור ודור ולנצח נצחים: ועינינו תראינה
 מלכותך כדבר האמור בשירי עֲנֵה:
 ימלך יהוה לעולם אלהיך ציון לדור ודור הללויה:
 לדור ודור נגיד גדלך ולנצח נצחים קדשתך נקדיש ושבתך
 אלהינו מפנינו לא ימוש לעולם ועד כי אל מלך גדול וקדוש אתה:
 ברוך אתה יהוה האל הקדוש: ←

(On Shabbat Shuvah conclude: הַמְלִיךָ הַקָּדוֹשׁ:)

Mimekomeha malkenu tofi'a vetimloḥ alcyenu ki mehakim
 anahnu lah. Matay timloḥ betziyon bekarov beyameyenu le'olam
 va'ed tishkon. Titgadal vetitkadash betoh yerushalayim ireha
 ledor vador ulnetzah netzahim. Ve'eyneynu tirenah malhuteha
 kadavar ha'amur beshirey uzeha:
 Yimloḥ adonay le'olam elohayih tziyon ledor vador
 halleluyah.
 Ledor vador nagid godleha ulnetzah netzahim
 Kedushateha nakdish veshivhaḥa eloheynu mipinu lo yamush
 le'olam va'ed ki el meleḥ gadol vekadosh atah.
 Baruh atah adonay ha'el hakadosh.
 (Baruh atah adonay hameleḥ hakadosh.) ←

And from your dwelling-place,
 our sovereign appear,
 and reign among us,
 for we wait for you.
 When will you reign in Zion?
 Soon, and in our lifetime,
 may you come to dwell eternally!
 May your greatness and your holiness be realized
 in Jerusalem, your city,
 from one generation to the next,
 and throughout all eternities.
 And may our eyes behold your realm,
 as has been prophesied in songs about your power:
 “May THE ETERNAL reign forever,
 your God, O Zion, from one generation to the next.
 Halleluyah!”
 From one generation to the next may we declare your greatness,
 and for all eternities may we affirm your holiness,
 And may your praise, our God, never be absent from our
 mouths, now and forever.
 For you are a great and holy God.
 Blessed are you, THE AWESOME ONE, the holy God.
 (On Shabbat Shuvah conclude: the holy sovereign.) ←

ימלך...הללויה / May...Halleluyah! (Psalm 146:10).

DERASH. This prayer affirms that God will appear, “from your dwelling-
 place....” Where is God’s place? God is called *Makom*, Place itself. We
 affirm, then, the possibility of God’s emergence from God’s very self.
 Some of the rabbis also understood a spark of the divine to be present in
 everything. To appear “from your dwelling place” thus could also mean
 that we hope to see that which is godly within each thing. Together these
 interpretations suggest that we pray that God emerge out of the divine
 spark in each thing in order to manifest that this world is God’s Place.

S.P.W.

קְדוּשַׁת הַיּוֹם

אֲשֶׁר־יִגְוּ מִה טוֹב חֶלְקֵנוּ וּמִה נְעִים גּוֹרְלֵנוּ וּמִה יִפֶּה יְרֻשָׁתֵנוּ: אֲשֶׁר־יִגְוּ
שְׂאֵנֵנוּ שׁוֹבְתִים בְּשָׁבִיעִי: וְכֵן כָּתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ:
וְשָׁמְרוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשְּׁבֻט לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַשְּׁבֻט לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית
עוֹלָם: בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹת הִיא לְעוֹלָם כִּי־שָׁשַׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה
יְהוָה אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנְפַשׁ: ←

Ashreynu mah tov helkenu umah na'im goralenu umah yafah
yerushatenu.

Veshameru veney yisra'el et hashabbat la'asot et hashabbat
ledorotam berit olam. Beyni uveyn beney yisra'el ot hi le'olam
ki sheshet yamim asah adonay et hashamayim ve'et ha'aretz
uvayom hashevi'i shavat vayinafash. ←

שמרו...וינפש / Let...rest (Exodus 31:16-17).

The Sabbath is the signature of the Creator. The world is still being created—through billions of years of evolution, emerging differentiation, ascending complexities—and then a pause. In this rest, we, human beings experience our relation with the whole. The seventh day is a day of completion. We delight in the goodness of the universe and our belonging to it. How important in our world of manic work and scarce rest, to restore Shabbat to its centrality and to allow its holy message to permeate the other six days.

S.P.W

בריית עולם / everlasting covenant. The concept of covenant is the central, organizing relationship which binds the Jewish people to the Jewish faith and Jewish fate. The idea of covenant connotes that steadfast devotion (*hesed*) to all that God would want for us and demand of us. Shabbat is an eternal sign of this eternal covenantal relationship between us and God.

R.S.A.

4. KEDUSHAT HAYOM / THE DAY'S HOLINESS

Happy are we,
how fortunate our lot,
how pleasing is our destiny,
how lovely our inheritance!
Happy are we
to be at rest upon the seventh day,
and thus is written in your Torah:

Let Israel's descendants keep Shabbat,
enacting the Shabbat throughout their generations
as an everlasting covenant.
Between me and everyone of Israel
shall it be a sign eternally,
for in six days did THE CREATOR
make the heavens and the earth,
and on the seventh day God ceased,
and drew a breath of rest. ←

COMMENTARY. *Kedushat Hayom* in Shabbat *Shaharit* traditionally begins with *Yismah Moshe*, a paragraph describing Moses with head aglow bringing the Ten Commandments down from Mt. Sinai. It is omitted here because the sharpness of the imagery suggests a literal belief in the Sinai event rather than an affirmation of its mythic truth. In its place “*Ashreynu / Happy are we*” evokes the special nature of the joyous Jewish heritage of which Shabbat is so integral a part.

D.A.T.

KAVANAH. Consider your own creative power. Think about the work you have done in the week that has passed, and feel your own pride and pleasure in that work. Then, try to set your work aside. Try not to think about the work ahead next week. Rather, take a few long, deep breaths, slow down, and enjoy the chance for rest that Shabbat brings.

L.B.

שְׂמַחוּ בְּמַלְכוּתְךָ שׁוֹמְרֵי שַׁבַּת וְקוֹרְאֵי עֲנֵג: עִם מְקַדְּשֵׁי שְׁבִיעֵי כָּלֶם
יִשְׁבְּעוּ וַיִּתְעַנְּגוּ מִטוֹבְךָ: וְהַשְׁבִּיעֵי רְצִיתָ בּוֹ וְקִדְּשָׁתוּ: חֲמֻדַּת יָמִים
אוֹתוֹ קָרָאתָ אֶכְר לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית: ←

Yismehū bemalḥuteḥa shomrey shabbat vekorey oneg. Am
mekadeshey shevi'i kulam yisbe'u veyitanegu mituveḥa.
Vehashevi'i ratzita bo vekidashto. Hemdat yamim oto karata
zeḥer lema'asey vereyshit. ↪

NOTE. *Yismehū* was traditionally located in the Shabbat *Musaf Amidah*. This beloved song of Shabbat is placed here in the *Shaharit Amidah*, as this prayerbook does not contain a separate *Musaf* service. D.A.T.

עֲנֵג וְקוֹרְאֵי שַׁבַּת / Those who keep Shabbat enjoy your realm. In addition to “remembering” (Exodus 20:8) and “keeping” (Deuteronomy 5:12) the Shabbat, we are also told to “honor and rejoice” in it (Isaiah 58:13). It would be well if our observance of Shabbat led us to the experience of honor and delight. While the rabbis spoke of *oneg shabbat*, Sabbath delight, as referring to bodily pleasures such as eating well, Isaiah spoke of *oneg shabbat* in connection with his vision for a socially just world. There are spiritual as well as physical delights of Shabbat to be nurtured and enjoyed. R.S.A.

Those who keep Shabbat enjoy your realm,
they call Shabbat the summit of delight.
A people that observes the holy seventh day
enjoys abundant goodness and delight.

The seventh day you favored and made holy,
you have called it the most loved of days,
a sign you made of it eternally,
in memory of Creation's works and days. ↪

DERASH. To rest on Shabbat is to step back from the act of creation and thereby to gain perspective on it. For one day we stop building and polluting, using and wasting. This aspect of Shabbat, which emphasizes appreciation for the beauty of the world as it is, should encourage us to strengthen our commitment to preserve natural resources all the other days of the week. D.A.T.

NOTE. Our tradition tells us that the seventh day was ordained as Shabbat from the day of creation. Yet here it is we who make the seventh day “a delight.” The world has always been, but we transform it by the value we place on it. D.A.T.

On Shabbat Rosh Hodesh continue at the bottom of the page.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ רְצֵה בְּמִנוּחֵינוּ קְדֹשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ
וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ שְׂבַעֲנוּ מִטּוֹבֶיךָ וְשִׂמְחָנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ וְטַהַר לִבֵּנוּ
לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאַמְתּוֹ: וְהַנְחִילֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרִצּוֹן שֶׁבֶת קְדֹשֶׁךָ:
וְיָנוּחוּ בָּהּ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל מִקְדָּשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת:

Eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu
retzey vimnuhatenu.

Kadeshenu bemitzvoteyha
veten helkenu betorateha.

Sabe'enu mituveha
vesamehenu bishu'ateha

vetaher libenu le'ovdeha be'emet.

Vehanhilenu adonay eloheynu

be'ahavah uvratzon shabbat kodsheha.

veyanuhu vah kol yisra'el mekadeshey shemeha.

Baruh atah adonay mekadesh hashabbat.

On Shabbat Rosh Hodesh substitute:

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ רְצֵה בְּמִנוּחֵינוּ: וְחַדֵּשׁ עֲלֵינוּ בְּיוֹם
הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה אֶת־הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לְטוֹבָה וְלְבְרָכָה לְשָׂשׂוֹן וְלִשְׂמֻחָה
לִישׁוּעָה וְלִנְחֻמָּה לְפָרְנֶסָה וְלְכִלְכֻלָּה לְחַיִּים וְלְשָׁלוֹם לְמַחִילַת חַטָּא
וְלְסְלִיחַת עֲוֹן וְלְכַפֵּרַת פְּשָׁע: כִּי אֶת־עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל קָרַבְתָּ לְעִבּוֹדְתֶךָ
וְשִׁבֶת קְדֹשֶׁךָ לָהֶם הוֹדַעְתָּ וְחָקִי רָאִשִׁי תְּדַשִּׁים לָהֶם קִבְּעָתָּ: בְּרוּךְ
אַתָּה יְהוָה מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְרָאִשִׁי חֲדָשִׁים: —

On Shabbat Rosh Hodesh continue in the middle of the page.

Our God, our ancients' God,
take pleasure in our rest.
Enable us to realize holiness through your mitzvot,
give us our portion in your Torah,
let us enjoy the good things of your world,
and gladden us with your salvation.
Refine our hearts to serve you honestly.

DEAR ONE, our God, help us to perpetuate
your holy Shabbat with love and joy.

Let all Israel, and all who treat your name as holy,
rest upon this day.

Blessed are you, SACRED ONE,
source of the holiness of Shabbat.

On Shabbat Rosh Hodesh substitute:

Our God, our ancients' God,
take pleasure in our rest
and bring renewal to us
on this day of Shabbat,

with this coming of the New Moon.

May it be for goodness and for blessing,
for joy and for happiness, for healing and for rest,
for sustenance and for support, for life and for peace,
for forgiveness, pardon, and atonement
between us and any we have wronged.

For you have brought your people Israel close to your service,
and made known to them the holiness of your Shabbat,
and fixed their practice of celebrating Rosh Hodesh.

Blessed are you, WISE ONE,
who sanctifies Shabbat,

Israel, and the renewal of the moon. —

עבודת

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

When Shabbat coincides with a Rosh Hodesh or Festival, add:

(אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו יעלה ויבוא ויגיע ויראה וירצה
וישמע ויפקד ויזכר וזכרוננו ופקדוננו וזכרון אבותינו ואמותינו
וזכרון ימות המשיח וזכרון רישולי'ם עיר קדשה וזכרון כל עמך
בית ישראל לפניך לפליטה ולטובה לחן ולהסוד ולרחמים לחיים
ולשלום ביום)

On Rosh Hodesh: ראש החודש הזה
On Pesah: חג המצות הזה
On Sukkot: חג הסוכות הזה

זכרנו יהוה אלהינו בו לטובה: ופקדנו לברכה והושיענו בו לחיים:
ובדבר ישועה ורחמים חוס ותננו ורחם עלינו והושיענו כי אליה
עינינו כי אל מלך חנון ורחום אתה: ←

5. 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.

(When Shabbat coincides with a Rosh Hodesh 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.

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.) ←

וְתַחֲזִינָה עֵינֵינוּ בְּשׂוֹבְךָ לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמַּחְזִיר
שְׂכִינְתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן:

הַדָּאָה

מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵהִי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד צוּר חַיֵּינוּ מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ אַתָּה הוּא לְדוֹר וָדוֹר:
נוֹדָה לָךְ וְנִסְפָּר תְּהִלָּתְךָ עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדְךָ וְעַל נְשֻׁמוֹתֵינוּ
הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ וְעַל נְסִיָּה שְׂבַכְל יוֹם עִמָּנוּ וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ
שְׂבַכְל־עֵת עָרַב וּבֹקֶר וְצַהֲרָיִם: הַטוֹב כִּי לֹא כָלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ וְהַמְּרַחֵם
כִּי לֹא תָמוּ חַסְדֶּיךָ מֵעוֹלָם קוֹיֵנוּ לָךְ: ←

DERASH. 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.

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.

6. 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. ←

On Hanukah add:

ועל הנסים ועל הפרקו ועל הגבורות ועל התשועות ועל הנחמות
שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה: בימי מתתיהו בן יוחנן
כהן גדול חשמונאי ובניו כשעמדה מלכות יון הרשעה על עמך
ישראל להשפיתם תורתך ולהעבירם מחקי רצונך ואתה ברחמיך
הרבים עמדת להם בעת צרתם רבת את ריבם דנת את דינם מסרת
גבורים ביד חלשים ורבים ביד מעטים ורשעים ביד צדיקים וזרים
ביד עוסקי תורתך: ולי עשית שם גדול וקדוש בעולמך ולעמך
ישראל עשית תשועה גדולה ופרקו כהיום הזה: ואחר כן באו
בנייה לדביר ביתך ופנו את היכלך וטהרו את מקדשך והדליקו
נרות בחצרות קדשך וקבעו שמונת ימי חנכה אלו להודות ולהלל
לשמך הגדול:

ועל כלם יתברך ויתרומם שמך מלכנו תמיד לעולם ועד:

(On Shabbat Shuvah add: ברייתך:)

וכל החיים יודוה סלה ויהללו את שמך באמת האל ישועתנו
ועזרתנו סלה: ברוך אתה יהוה הטוב שמך ולי נאה להודות: —

*(On Hanukah 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 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 Hanukah,
for giving thanks and praise to your great name.)*

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

*(On Shabbat Shuvah 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, and to whom all thanks are due. —

בְּרַכַּת הַשְּׁלוֹם

The following paragraph is said only when the congregation recites aloud together.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ בְּרַכְנוּ בְּבִרְכַּת הַמְּשַׁלֶּשֶׁת הָאֲמוּרָה
מִפִּי אַהֲרֹן וּבְנָיו כְּאֲמֹר:

יְבָרְכֶךָ יי וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:

כִּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

יֵאֵר יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנְדֶּךָ:

כִּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

יִשָּׂא יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ

שְׁלוֹם:

כִּן יְהִי רָצוֹן: ←

Eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu
barehenu baberahah hamshuleshet
ha'amurah mipi aharon uvanav ka'amur:
Yevareheha adonay veyishmereha. Ken yehi ratzon.
Ya'er adonay panav eleha vihuneka. Ken yehi ratzon.
Yisa adonay panav eleha veyasem leha shalom. Ken yehi ratzon. ↵

7. BIRKAT HASHALOM / BLESSING FOR PEACE

The following paragraph is said only when the congregation recites aloud together.

Our God, our ancients' God,
bless us with the threefold blessing
spoken from the mouth of Aaron and his sons, as is said:

May THE ETERNAL bless you
and protect you.

Let it be God's will!

May THE ETERNAL'S face give light
to you, and show you favor.

Let it be God's will!

May THE ETERNAL'S face be lifted
toward you, and bestow upon you
peace.

Let it be God's will! ↵

COMMENTARY. Traditionally the Priestly Blessing was done by the male descendants of the *kohanim*. In some congregations the *shelihah tzibur* (service leader) recites the blessing, and the congregation responds with "*Ken yehi ratzon*." In other communities all the members of the congregation wrap arms and tallitot around each other and recite the blessing together. Another way to enact the Priestly Blessing is for each congregant to turn to a neighbor and recite the first half of each blessing, while the neighbor responds with the second half of the blessing. MICHAEL M. COHEN

COMMENTARY. Rabbi Lavy Becker of Montreal noticed that when this blessing was pronounced in the synagogue of Pisa, all the children gathered under the sheltering wings of their fathers' tallitot to receive it. He recognized this "as a reconstruction of the ancient priestly ceremony." He modified that custom so that those wearing a tallit share it with their neighbors and all are under the sheltering wings of the Shehina as we bless each other. It is now an established part of Canadian Reconstructionist practice. E.M.

יברכך...שלום / May...peace. (Numbers 6:24-26).

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה בְּעוֹלָם חַן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל
כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמָּךְ: בְּרַכְנוּ אֲבֵינוּ כְּלָנוּ בְּאֶחָד בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךְ: כִּי בְּאוֹר
פְּנֵיךְ נִתְּתָ לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וּצְדָקָה וּבְרָכָה
וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם: וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת
כָּל הָעַמִּים בְּרַב עוֹז וְשְׁלוֹם:

On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים בְּרָכָה וְשְׁלוֹם וּפְרֻנָּסָה טוֹבָה גְּזָכָר וְנִפְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנַחְנוּ
וְכָל־עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְלְשְׁלוֹם):
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה עוֹשֵׂה הַשְׁלוֹם:

Sim shalom tovah uvrahah ba'olam hen vahesed verahamim
aleynu ve'al kol yisrael ameha. Barehenu avinu kulanu ke'ehad
be'or paneha. Ki ve'or paneha natata lanu adonay eloheynu torat
hayim ve'ahavat hesed utzedakah uvrahah verahamim vehayim
veshalom. Vetov be'eyneha levareh et ameha yisra'el ve'et kol
ha'amim berov oz veshalom.

On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(Besefer hayim berahah veshalom ufarnasah tovah nizahev
venikatev lefaneha anahnu vehol ameha beyt yisra'el lehayim
tovim ulshalom.)
Baruh atah adonay osev hashalom.

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

Grant peace, goodness and blessing in the world,
grace, love, and mercy
over us and over all your people Israel.
Bless us, source of being, all of us, as one
amid your light,
for by your light,
WISE ONE, our God, you give to us
Torah of life, and love of kindness,
justice, blessing, mercy, life, and peace.
So may it be a good thing in your eyes,
to bless your people Israel, and all peoples,
with abundant strength and peace.

(On Shabbat Shuvah add:

In the book of life, blessing, and 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.

KAVANAH. Try to imagine a time of true peace and tranquility, and think
about your part in helping this time to come about. What can you do?
What can you commit to? How will you be a peacemaker? L.B.

רְבוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם

רְבוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם מְלֵא מְשָׁלוֹת לְבִי לְטוֹבָה וְזַכָּי לְעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנֶךָ
בְּלִבְךָ שָׁלֵם: מְלִטְנִי מִיֶּצֶר הָרָע וְתֵן חֶלְקִי בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ: זַכָּי עִם כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ שֶׁתִּשְׂרָה שְׂכִינְתְּךָ עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹפֵעַ עָלֵינוּ רוּחַ חַכְמָה
וּבְיָנָה רוּחַ עֲצָה וּגְבוּרָה רוּחַ דָּעַת וְיִרְאַת יְהוָה:
וְהַבּוֹטָח בִּיהוָה חֶסֶד יְסוּכְכֵנוּ.
יְהִי לְרְצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי:
עוֹשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

*On Rosh Hodesh, Hānukah and Hōl Hamo'ed continue with Hallel, page 357.
Otherwise turn to page 381.*

שְׂכִינָה / *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 Shehīnah dwells with them. (*Pirkey Avot* 3:3).

J.R.
יהוּ...גאלי / May...champion (Psalm 19:15).

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 Rosh Hodesh, Hānukah and Hōl Hamo'ed continue with Hallel, page 356.
Otherwise turn to page 380.*

הוצאת סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה

אֵין כְּמוֹהָ בְּאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֵׂיהָ:
מְלִכּוּתָהּ מְלִכּוּת כָּל־עֲלָמִים וּמְשַׁלְּתָהּ בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר:
יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:
יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יְתֵן יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:

אֵב הַרְחָמִים הַטִּיבָה בְּרִצּוֹנָהּ אֶת־צִיּוֹן תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָּיִם:
כִּי בָּהּ לְבַד בְּטַחְנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֵל רַם וְנִשְׂא אֲדוֹן עוֹלָמִים:

Eyn kamoḥa va'elohim adonay ve'eyn kema'aseha.
Malḥuteḥa malḥut kol olamim umemshalteḥa beḥol dor vador.
Adonay meleḥ adonay malaḥ adonay yimloḥ le'olam va'ed.
Adonay oz le'amo yiten adonay yevareḥ et amo vashalom.
Av haraḥamim hetivah virtzoneḥa et tziyon tivneh ḥomot
yerushalayim.
Ki veḥa levad bataḥnu meleḥ el ram venisa adon olamim.

אין...ירושלים / There is none...Jerusalem. This section of the service is composed of sections from Psalms 86, 145, 29, and 51.

יהוה מלך...ימלך לעולם ועד / THE ETERNAL ONE reigns...shall reign beyond all time. The assertion of God's sovereignty is a challenge to human beings—it is we who are called upon to crown God. In declaring God's sovereignty, we dedicate the daily deeds of our lives to making the earth a divine realm.

D.E.

תבנה חומות ירושלים / Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. How different these words must have sounded before there was a sovereign living state of Israel! No longer do we merely dream of a distant rebuilding. The walls are rising before our eyes. Like our ancestors, we must now be concerned with building both the earthly Jerusalem and the heavenly Jerusalem.

D.E.

HOTZA'AT SEFER TORAH / THE TORAH SERVICE

There is none like you among the powerful, ETERNAL ONE,
and there are no deeds like your deeds.
Your realm embraces all the worlds,
your reign encompasses all generations.
THE ETERNAL ONE reigns!
THE ETERNAL ONE has always reigned!
THE ETERNAL ONE shall reign beyond all time.
THE ETERNAL ONE gives strength to our people.
May THE ETERNAL ONE bless our people with enduring peace.

Source of all mercy,
deal kindly and in good will with Zion.
Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,
For in you alone we place our trust,
God, sovereign, high and revered,
the life of all the worlds.

COMMENTARY. We approach the Torah slowly. First we open the ark so that the Torah is visible. We look at the Torah but refrain from touching. Next, the Torah is removed from the ark and held by the service leader. Later the Torah is carried through the congregation, and everyone can touch the Torah. This demonstrates that the Torah is not the property of those leading the services; the Torah belongs to the Jewish community. Finally, the coverings of the Torah scroll are removed, allowing us a privileged intimacy with the words we hear.

In the words of the Torah we hear our ancestors' experience of the divine. We communicate with generations past and, perhaps on occasion, we hear Torah as the voice of God refracted through human speech. D.E.

The ark is opened.
One of the following can be sung:

(1)

וַיְהִי בְנִסְעַת הָאָרוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה יְהוָה וַיִּפְצוּ אֹיְבֵיךָ וַיִּנָּסוּ
מִשְׁנֵאָיִךְ מִפְּנֵיךָ:
כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וּדְבַר יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַיִם:
בְּרוּךְ שְׁנָתוֹ תוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ:

Vayhi binso'a ha'aron vayomer mosheh kumah adonay veyafutzu
oyveha veyanusu mesaneha mipaneha.
Ki mitziyon tetzey torah udvar adonay mirushalayim.
Baruh shenatan torah le'amo yisra'el bikdushato.

(2)

פְּתוּחֵי שַׁעְרֵי צְדָק אָבֹא בָם אוֹדָה יְהוָה:
זֶה הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה צְדִיקִים יָבֹאוּ בוֹ:

Pithu li sha'aray tzedek avo vam odeh yah.
Zeh hashar ladonay tzadikim yavo'u vo.

וידי...מפניך / And...might! (Numbers 10:35).
כי...ירושלים / Behold...Jerusalem's heights (Isaiah 2:3).

The ark is opened.
One of the following can be sung:

(1)

And it happened, when the Ark began its journey,
that Moses said: Arise, ASCENDANT ONE,
and may your enemies be scattered,
May the ones who oppose you
Be afraid of your might!
Behold, out of Zion emerges our Torah,
and the word of THE WISE ONE from Jerusalem's heights.
Blessed is God who has given us Torah,
to Israel, our people, with holy intent.

(2)

Open to me, O you gateways of justice,
Yes, let me come in, and give thanks unto Yah!
This is the gateway to ONE EVERLASTING,
let all who are righteous come in.

The leader takes out the Torah and recites each line, followed by the congregation:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד:

Shema yisra'el adonay eloheynu adonay ehad.

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ גָדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ קְדוֹשׁ (וְנוֹרָא) שְׁמוֹ:

Ehad eloheynu gadol adoneynu kadosh (venora) shemo.

The leader faces the ark, bows and says:

גָּדְלוֹ לַיהוָה אֲתִי וְנִרְמַמָּה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו:

Gadalu ladonay iti unromemah shemo yahdav.

On Sukkot the Hoshanot, page 647, may be recited here.

The leader carries the Torah around the room as the leader and congregation sing:

לֵךְ יְהוָה הַגְדֵּלָהּ וְהַגְבוּרָהּ וְהַתְפָּאָרְתָּ וְהַנְּצַחַת וְהַהוֹדוּ כִּי כָל בְּשָׂמַיִם

וּבְאָרֶץ לֵךְ יְהוָה הַמְּמַלְכָה וְהַמְתַּנְשֵׂא לְכָל לְרֵאשׁ:

וְרַמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְהֵרֵם רַגְלָיו קְדוֹשׁ הוּא:

וְרַמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְהֵרֵם קְדוֹשׁ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

Leha adonay hagedulah vehagevurah vevatiferet vevanetzah
vehahod ki hol bashamayim uva'aretz leha adonay hamamlaḥah
vehamitnasey lehol lerosh.

Romemu adonay eloheynu vehishtaḥavu lahadom raglav kadosh
hu.

Romemu adonay eloheynu vehishtaḥavu lehar kodsho ki kadosh
adonay eloheynu.

The leader takes out the Torah and recites each line, followed by the congregation:

Listen, Israel: THE ETERNAL is our God, THE ETERNAL is one!

One is our God, great is our sovereign,
holy (On Shabbat Shuvah add: and awesome) is God's name.

The leader faces the ark, bows and says:

Declare with me the greatness of THE INFINITE,
together let us raise God's name.

On Sukkot the Hoshanot, page 646, may be recited here.

The leader carries the Torah around the room as the leader and congregation sing:

To you, ETERNAL ONE, is all majesty,
and might and splendor, and eternity, and power!
For everything that is, in the heavens and the earth,
is yours, ALMIGHTY ONE, as is all sovereignty,
and highest eminence above all beings.

Exalt THE MIGHTY ONE our God

Bow down before God's footstool

God is holy!

Exalt the name of THE INEFFABLE

Bow down before God's holy mount

For holy is THE AWESOME ONE, our God!

גדלו...יחוד / Declare...name (Psalm 34:4).

לך...לראש / To you...beings (I Chronicles 29:11).

רוממו...אלהינו / Exalt...our God! (Psalm 99:5 and 9).

להרם רגליו / before God's footstool. According to tradition, in the Jerusalem Temple there were two cherubim whose wings joined to form a seat. In other ancient Near Eastern temples, an idol was seated in such a chair. In Jerusalem, the chair remained empty with the ark below. The ark was seen as God's footstool, and the Temple as God's entry point into the world. We hope our worship brings God into the world. D.E.

The Torah is placed on the reading table and opened. The gabay says:

וַיִּצְוֶה וַיִּגַּן וַיִּשְׁעֶה לְכָל הַחוֹסִים בּוֹ וַנֹּאמֶר אָמֵן:
הַפֶּל הָבֹה גְדֹל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ וְתִגְדֹל כְּבוֹד לְתוֹרָה:

יְעֲמֹד/תְּעֲמֹד/יְעֲמֹדוּ _____ בֶּן/בַּת _____ לְעֲלִיָּה/לְמַפְטִיר
[הָרִאשׁוֹנָה, הַשְּׁנִיָּתָה, הַשְּׁלִישִׁית, הָרְבִיעִית, הַחֲמִישִׁית, הַשִּׁשִּׁית,
הַשְּׁבִיעִית, הוֹסְפָה]
בְּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ: ←

The Torah is placed on the reading table and opened. The gabay says:

May God help, protect, and save
all who seek refuge in God's shelter,
and let us say: Amen.
Let everyone declare the greatness of our God,
let all give honor to the Torah.

May _____ arise,
as first (second, third, ...seventh) one called up to the Torah.
Blessed is the one who has given Torah to the people Israel! ←

COMMENTARY. The public reading of the Torah is a form of ritualized study designed to actively engage the participants. During the Torah reading, one person reads from the scroll. There are also two *gabayim*. One *gabay* assigns the Torah honors, calls people up to the Torah, and recites additional prayers, including the *mishheberah* prayers. The second *gabay* follows the Torah reading closely and corrects errors. Traditionally, seven adult Jews were called on Shabbat morning, six on Yom Kippur, five on Pilgrimage Festivals and Rosh Hashanah, four on Rosh Hodesh and three on weekdays, Hanukah and Shabbat afternoon. On days when the *Haftarah* is chanted, an additional *aliyah*, known as the *maftir*, is given to the person who reads the *Haftarah*. In many contemporary synagogues, there are fewer *aliyot* on Shabbat and holidays. D.A.T.

Congregation and gabay continue:

וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבֻקִים בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם תִּימִים כְּלַכֶּם הַיּוֹם:

Ve'atem hadevekim badonay eloheyhem hayim kulehem hayom.

The last part of the blessing preceding the Torah reading has been the subject of considerable discussion. Below are several current variants. You can use these by selecting one from section I, one from II, and then III:

I.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֶכֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
Baruh atah adonay eloheyenu melech
ha'olam

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים
Baruh atah adonay eloheyenu hey
ha'olamim

נְבַרְךָ אֵת עַיִן הַחַיִּים
Nevareh et eyn ha'hayim

II.

אֲשֶׁר קָרַבְנוּ לְעַבְדוֹתָו וְנָתַן-לָנוּ
אֶת-תּוֹרָתוֹ.
asher kervanu la'avodato venatan
lanu et torato.

אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנוּ
אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ
asher bahar banu mikol ha'amim
venatan lanu et torato.

III.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה
Baruh atah adonay noten hatorah

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
our God, sovereign of all worlds
Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
our God, life of all the worlds
Let us bless the source of life
who has drawn us to your service,
and given us your Torah.
who has singled us out from all
the peoples and given us your
Torah.
giver of the Torah.

Congregation and gabay continue:

And you who cling to THE ETERNAL ONE your God,
are all alive today!

COMMENTARY. The *aliyah* is the public enactment of an individual's commitment to Judaism, reiterated in the words of the hallowed formula. It is an enactment of belonging and an enactment of belief.

The *aliyah* is always a numinous moment when the experience of divinity is strong. Even though this numinous quality often is dimmed by repetition or by our increased informality, we still experience the power of standing on the *bimah* before the Torah ark, *ner tamid* (eternal light), Jewish officiants, and fellow Jews. The act links us in the living moment to the mythic event of God's calling the Jewish people at Sinai, as well as to all other moments of calling in Jewish and human experience. When we chant new words, rather than the words of the tradition, we are doing more than merely changing a formula of words; we are enacting our own calling to a new and no longer traditional way of being Jewish. Whereas saying *asher bahar banu* links us to the biblical drama at Sinai, chanting *asher kervanu* links us both to that drama and to the Reconstructionist movement's root metaphor of Judaism as an evolving religious civilization.

ROBIN GOLDBERG

וְאַתֶּם הַדְּבֻקִים...הַיּוֹם / And you who cling...today. The people to whom this verse was originally spoken (Deuteronomy 4:4) live on through their place in the chain of tradition. We touch the past by bringing the ancient words to life. And when future generations recite this verse, we, who have kept the chain alive, will be present. You who cleave to Adonay your God, you are *all* alive today.

D.E.

COMMENTARY. The 1945 Reconstructionist Prayerbook eliminated all references to Jewish chosenness for both ideological and moral reasons. Chosenness posits a God who chooses, and it supports claims of national superiority. Thus, that prayerbook's Torah blessings replace *bahar banu mikol ha'amim* / who has chosen us from all the peoples, with *asher kervanu la'avodato* / who has drawn us to your service. This prayerbook follows the 1945 version but provides alternatives in the commentary on the facing page.

D.A.T.

בְּרָכוֹת הַתּוֹרָה

Those who receive an aliyah to the Torah say the following blessing:

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְהוָה הַמְּבֹרָךְ:

Bareḥu et adonay hamvoraḥ.

Congregation:

בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Baruḥ adonay hamvoraḥ le'olam va'ed.

*The response of the congregation is repeated, and the blessing continued as follows
(for alternative versions, see page 397):*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִרְבָּנוּ לְעִבּוֹדְתוֹ
וְנִתְּנוּ-לָנוּ אֶת-תּוֹרָתוֹ: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu meleḥ ha'olam asher kervanu
la'avodato venatan lanu et torato.

Baruḥ atah adonay noten hatorah.

After the section of the Torah is read, the following blessing is recited:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַתְּ-לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת
וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נְטִיעַ בְּתוֹכֵנוּ: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu meleḥ ha'olam asher natan lanu
torat emet veḥayey olam nata betoheynu.

Baruḥ atah adonay noten hatorah.

COMMENTARY. The blessing over the Torah recalls the *Bareḥu*, the call to worship, the beginning of the morning service recited only in the presence of the minyan, ten adult Jews. The blessing encircles the Torah reading in a familiar liturgical pattern of blessing and study. Through blessing, study, and community we manifest God, Torah and Israel. S.P.W.

BIRHOT HATORAH / TORAH BLESSINGS

Those who receive an aliyah to the Torah say the following blessing:

Bless THE INFINITE, the blessed One!

Congregation:

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

The response of the congregation is repeated, and the blessing continued as follows:

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, who has drawn us to your service, and has given us your Torah. Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, who gives the Torah.

After the section of the Torah is read, the following blessing is recited:

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, who has given us a Torah of truth, and planted in our midst eternal life. Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, who gives the Torah.

DERASH. *Aliyah* is ascent.

We ascend to the Torah to acknowledge that we choose to live under its laws and principles.

We ascend to the Torah to affirm that we are part of a people and a story that is much greater than ourselves.

We ascend to the Torah to represent those who remain below.

We ascend to the Torah to risk receiving an honor, to risk being known and seen, to risk being at Sinai again.

We ascend to the Torah with slow steps, or in haste, with enthusiasm or reluctance, in awe or in fear, in hope and in love. S.P.W.

The Torah is lifted, and one of the following is recited:

וְזוֹת הַתּוֹרָה עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמְחַזְקִים בָּהּ וְתַמְכִּיָּהּ מֵאֲשֶׁר:

Vezot hatorah etz hayim hi lamaḥazikim bah vetomḥeha
me'ushar.



וְזוֹת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׂם מֹשֶׁה לְפָנָי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל פִּי יְהוָה בְּיַד
מֹשֶׁה:

Vezot hatorah asher sam mosheh lifney beney yisra'el al pi
adonay beyad mosheh.

*On days when portions from two Torah scrolls are read, the second reading takes place here.
After that, the second scroll is lifted as indicated above.*

עַץ...מֵאֲשֶׁר / It...fortunate! (Proverbs 3:18).
וְזוֹת...יִשְׂרָאֵל / This...Israel (Deuteronomy 4:44).
עַל...מֹשֶׁה / by...Moses (Numbers 9:23).

The Torah is lifted, and one of the following is recited:

This is the Torah.
It is a Tree of Life to those who hold fast to it.
Those who uphold it may be counted fortunate!



This is the Torah which Moses placed before the children of
Israel,
by the word of THE ALMIGHTY ONE, and by the hand of Moses.

*On days when portions from two Torah scrolls are read, the second reading takes place here.
After that, the second scroll is lifted as indicated above.*

COMMENTARY. The 1945 Reconstructionist Prayerbook puts *Etz hayim hi* / It is a tree of life in place of *asher sam moshe lifney beney yisra'el* / which Moses placed before the children of Israel. Earlier Reconstructionists were concerned that it be made clear that while affirming the holiness of Torah, they did not believe that it was given to Moses at Mount Sinai. Many current Reconstructionists believe the evolutionary nature of the Torah to be self-evident and have returned to the traditional line for the sake of its rich mythic imagery. Both options are included here. D.A.T.

עַץ חַיִּים הִיא / It is a Tree of Life. The book of Genesis tells us that the tree of life is in the garden of Eden. The Torah is our tree of life; it is our way back to the garden. D.E.

בְּרִחוֹת הַפְּטָרָה

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בְּנְבִיאִים טוֹבִים
וְרָצָה בְּדִבְרֵיהֶם הַנְּאֻמִּים בְּאַמְתּוֹ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַבוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה
וּבַמִּשָּׁה עֲבָדוֹ וּבְנְבִיאֵי הָאֲמֶת וְצִדִּיק:

The Haftarah is chanted and then the following blessings are said:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם צוּר כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים צְדִיק בְּכָל
הַדּוֹרוֹת הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן הַאֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה הַמְדַבֵּר וּמְקַיֵּם שְׂכָל דְּבָרָיו
אֲמֶת וְצִדִּיק:

נְאֻמָּן אַתָּה הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנְאֻמָּנִים דְּבָרֶיךָ וְדָבָר אֶחָד מִדְּבָרֶיךָ
אֶחָד לֹא יֵשׁוּב רִיקָם כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ נְאֻמָּן וְרַחֲמָן אַתָּה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְהוָה הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן בְּכָל דְּבָרָיו:

רַחֵם עַל צִיּוֹן כִּי הִיא בֵּית חַיֵּינוּ וּלְעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל תּוֹשִׁיעַ בְּמַהֲרָה
בְּיָמֵינוּ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְשַׁמַּח צִיּוֹן בְּבִנְיָהּ: —

COMMENTARY. Most liturgists agree that the practice of reciting a *Haftarah*, generally a selection from the prophets, probably developed during a time when public reading of the Torah was banned. A selection roughly paralleling a major theme from the week's Torah portion was therefore selected. When public reading of the Torah became possible again, the popular custom of chanting the *Haftarah* continued. The *Haftarah* is usually chanted, utilizing a *trop* or cantillation system that has numerous variations. In modern times the bar/bat mitzvah has often taken on this responsibility as a sign of committed membership in the adult community. D.A.T.

BIRHOT HAFTARAH / HAFTARAH BLESSINGS

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, who has called upon the righteous prophets and desired their words, spoken in truth. Blessed are you, WISE ONE, who takes pleasure in the Torah, and in Moses, servant of God, and in the prophets of truth and justice.

The Haftarah is chanted and then the following blessings are said:

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, the rock of all the worlds, the righteous one throughout all generations, the faithful God, whose word is deed, who speaks and fulfills, whose words are truth and justice.

Faithful are you, ETERNAL ONE, our God, and faithful are your words; not a single word of yours is unfulfilled, for you are a sovereign God, faithful and merciful. Blessed are you ETERNAL ONE, the God faithful in all your words.

Be merciful to Zion, which is the house of life to us, and be a help to Israel, your people, soon and in our days. Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, who gives joy to Zion through her children. —

ולעמך ישראל תושיע / be a help to Israel your people. The traditional phrase here, *aluvat nefesh* / cast down soul, reflected the Jewish people's exile from their land. With the establishment of the State of Israel, we are no longer "cast down". This fundamental change in Jewish life is reflected in the revised language here. D.A.T.

שְׂמַחֲנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַלְיָהוּ הַנְּבִיא עֵבְרֶה בְּמַהְרָה יָבֹא וְיַגִּיל לְפָנָיו:
וְהָשִׁיב לָב אָבוֹת עַל בְּנִים וְלֵב בְּנִים עַל אָבוֹתָם וּבֵיתָהּ בֵּית תְּפִלָּה
יִקְרָא לְכָל הָעַמִּים: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְבִיא שְׁלוֹם לְעַד:

On Festivals continue on page 413.

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה שְׁנֵאתָ
לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְקִדְשָׁהּ וְלִמְנוּחָהּ לְכַבֹּד וְלִתְפָאֶרֶת: עַל הַכֹּל
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ: יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי
כָּל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת:

שמחנו / Give us joy. The traditional *Haftarah* blessing contains references to the reestablishment of the rule of the Davidic dynasty. This understanding of a messianic reappearance of hereditary kingship has been rejected by Reconstructionist thought on both moral and theological grounds. Nonetheless the messianic hope for a world redeemed remains in our thoughts as the ultimate achievement towards which humanity should strive.

The version of the *Haftarah* blessing included here eliminates the Davidic references and the hopes for a literal messiah that they invoke. In their place are Malachi 3:24 and a slightly altered version of Isaiah 56:7. The vision in Malachi, which is the *Haftarah* for Shabbat Hagadol, sees Elijah coming to herald messianic days, turning the hearts of parents and children toward each other. The task of redemption can be completed when all of us open our hearts to our families, to our communities, and to all the inhabitants of our world. Then our world will truly have become a house of prayer for all peoples, bringing the peace for which we all hope.

D.A.T.

Give us joy ETERNAL ONE, our God, in Elijah, your prophet and your servant. Soon may redemption come and give joy to our hearts. May God turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents. And may your house be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, who brings an everlasting peace.

On Festivals continue on page 412.

For the Torah, and for worship, and for the prophets, and for this day of Shabbat, which you have given us, ETERNAL ONE, our God, for holiness and for rest, for honor and for splendor—for everything, WISE ONE, our God, we offer thanks to you, and bless you. May your name be blessed continually by every living being, forever and eternally. Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, source of the holiness of Shabbat.

The ark is opened and the Torah placed inside.

וּבְנַחָה יֹאמֵר שׁוֹבָה יְהוָה רַבּוֹת אֵלַי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
כִּי לָקַח טוֹב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם תּוֹרַתִי אֶל־תַּעֲזֹבוּ:
עֵץ־חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ וְתִמְכֶינָה מֵאֲשֶׁר:
דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי־נֶעֱמִם וְכָל־נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם:
הַשִּׁיבֵנו יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשׁוּבָה חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ בְּקֶדֶם:

Etz hayim hi lamaḥazikim bah vetomḥeha me'ushar.
Deraḥeha darḥey no'am veḥol netivoteha shalom.
Hashivenu adonay eleyḥa venashuva ḥadesh yameynu
kekedem.

The ark is closed.

ובנחה...ישראל / And...Israel (Numbers 10:36).
כי...תעזבו / For...it (Proverbs 4:2).
עץ...מאשר / It...fortunate (Proverbs 3:18).
דרכיה...שלום / Its...peace (Proverbs 3:17).
השיבנו...בקדם / Return...old (Lamentations 5:21).

עץ חיים היא / It is a Tree of Life. At the end of the Garden story, Adam and Eve are forbidden access to the mysterious Tree of Life, whose fruit confers immortality. Yet over the generations to follow, humankind itself *becomes* a Tree of Life. The Torah is handed on from one generation to another, binding the generations in a commonwealth of time and conferring the norms on which the survival of civilization depends. Thus the Torah is compared to the Tree of Life. J.R.

The ark is opened and the Torah placed inside.

And when the Ark was set at rest, they would proclaim:
Restore, ETERNAL ONE, the many thousand troops of Israel!

For it is a precious teaching I have given you,
my Torah: Don't abandon it!

It is a Tree of Life to those that hold fast to it,
all who uphold it may be counted fortunate.

Its ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all its paths are peace.

Return us, PRECIOUS ONE, let us return!
Renew our days, as you have done of old!

The ark is closed.

COMMENTARY. Renew our days as you have done of old.

We may read:

Renew our days as when we were young.
Revive us with the wonder of your world,
with the enthusiasm of our youth.
Help us to recover something of the child within
that knew you in the desert
and trembled at the foot of the mountain.
Grant us, once again, the sacred vision
and the courage of new beginnings.
Do not return us to days past:
Renew our days as when we were young.

S.E.S.

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 betohenu.

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל
לְתַת גְּדוּלָה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
שֶׁנָּתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת
וַחַי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ:

Continue on page 447.

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

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל
לְתַת גְּדוּלָה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
בוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנוֹטֵיהֶם
רֹקַע הָאָרֶץ וְצֹאֵאֵיהָ
נֹתֵן נְשָׁמָה לְעַם עֲלֵיהָ
וְרוּחַ לְהֹלְכֵים בָּהּ:

Continue on page 447.

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל לְתַת גְּדוּלָה
לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית שֶׁלֹּא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי
הָאֲרָצוֹת וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאֲרָמָה
שֶׁלֹּא שָׂם חֶלְקֵנוּ כְּהֵם וְגוֹרְלֵנוּ כְּכָל
הַמּוֹנִים:

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 this world.

ALEYNNU

We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow at "bend the knee." For an alternative version see page 126. For additional readings see pages 737-739, 748, 772-774, 776-777, 803-804.

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 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.

וּאֲנַחְנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא:
שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֵה שָׁמַיִם וַיּוֹסֵד אֶרֶץ וּמוֹשֵׁב יְקָרוֹ בְּשָׁמַיִם מְמַעַל וּשְׂכִינַת
עֵזוֹ בְּגִבְהַי מְרוֹמִים: הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד: אָמֵת מְלַכְנוּ אָפֶס זִוְלָתוֹ
כְּכַתוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ: וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם וְהִשְׁכַּת אֶל לְבָבָהּ כִּי יְהוָה הוּא
הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מְמַעַל וְעַל הָאֶרֶץ מִתַּחַת אֵין עוֹד: ←

Va'anahnu korim umishtahavim umodim
lifney meleḥ malḥey hamelaḥim hakadosh baruh 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 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)

עוֹד / You...other God (Deuteronomy 4:39).

על כן נקווה לך יהוה אלהינו לראות מהרה בתפארת עזך להעביר
גלולים מן הארץ והאלילים כרות יפרתו לתקן עולם במלכות
שדי: וכל בני בשר יקראו בשמך: להפנות אליך כל רשעי ארץ:
יפירו וידעו כל יושבי תבל כי לך תכרע כל בךר תשבע כל לשון:
לפניך יהוה אלהינו יכרעו ויפלו ולכבוד שמך יקר יתנו ויקבלו
כלם את על מלכותך ותמלך עליהם מהרה לעולם ועד: כי
המלכות שלך היא ולעולמי עד תמלך בכבוד כפונב בתורתך:
יהוה ימלך לעולם ועד: ונאמר: והיה יהוה למלך על כל הארץ
ביום ההוא יהיה יהוה אחד ושמו אחד:

Kakatuḅ betorateḅa: Adonay yimloh le'olam va'ed.
Vene'emar: Vehayah adonay lemeleḅ al kol ha'aretz.
Bayom hahu yihyeh adonay eḅad ushmo eḅad.

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. (ADAPTED)

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

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

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.

קְדִישׁ יְתוּם

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

יְתַגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיךָ
מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן
קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֵלְמָא וְלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמֵיָא:
יְתַבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקָדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא

לְעֵלְא (לְעֵלְא) (On Shabbat Shuvah add: מִן כָּל בְּרַכָּתָא וְשִׁירָתָא
תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנִחַמְתָּא דְאִמְרִין בְּעֵלְמָא וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Reader: Yitgadal veyitkadesh shemey raba
be'alma divra hirutey veyamliḥ mallḥutey
beḥayeyḥon uvyomeyḥon uvḥayey deḥol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.

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

Reader: Yitbarah veyishtabāh veyitpa'ar veyitromam veyitnasey
veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal shemey dekudsha berih hu
le'ela (On Shabbat Shuvah 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.

During the month of Elul, many congregations sing Aḥat Sha'alti, page 832.

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.

THE MOURNERS' KADDISH

It is customary for mourners, and those observing Yahrzeit, to stand for Kaddish. In some congregations everyone rises. For additional readings see pages 787-796.

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 (On Shabbat Shuvah 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.

NOTE. Congregations usually mention the names of congregants and their relatives who have died in the previous week before reciting the Mourner's Kaddish. In many congregations a *Yahrzeit* list is read as well. In more informal settings the leader sometimes invites those present to speak the names of those they wish to be remembered.

D.A.T.

אָדוֹן עוֹלָם

בְּטָרֵם כָּל יִצִיר נִבְרָא:	אָדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ
אִזִּי מָלַךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא:	לְעֵת נַעֲשֶׂה בְּחַפְצוֹ כָּל
לְבַדּוֹ יְמִלֹךְ נוֹרָא:	וְאַחֲרֵי כִכְלוֹת הַכֹּל
וְהוּא יִהְיֶה בְּתַפְאֵרָה:	וְהוּא הָיָה וְהוּא הוֹנֵה
לְהַמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחְבִּירָה:	וְהוּא אֶחָד וְאִין שְׁנַי
וְלוֹ הָעוֹ וְהַמְשָׁרָה:	בְּלִי רֵאשִׁית בְּלִי תַכְלִית
וְצוּר חֲכָלִי בְּעַת צָרָה:	וְהוּא אֵלִי וְחֵי גּוֹאֲלִי
מִנֵּת כּוֹסֵי בַיּוֹם אֶקְרָא:	וְהוּא נְסִי וּמְנוֹס לִי
בְּעַת אִישׁוֹן וְאַעִירָה:	בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
יְהוּה לִי וְלֹא אִירָא:	וְעַם רוּחִי גּוֹיְתִי

Adon olam asher malah, bet^{er}em kol yetzir nivra.
 Le'et na'asah veheftzo kol, azay mele^h shemo nikra.
 Ve'aharey kihlot hakol, levado yimloh nora.
 Vehu hayah vehu hoveh, vehu yihyeh betifarah.
 Vehu ehad ve'eyn sheni, lehamshil lo leha^hbirah.
 Beli reshit beli tahlit, velo ha'oz vehamisrah.
 Vehu eli vehay go'ali, vetzur hevli be'et tzarah.
 Vehu nisi umanos li, menat kosi beyom ekra.
 Beyado afkid ruhi, be'et ishan ve'a'irah.
 Ve'im ruhi geviyati, adonay li velo ira.

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.

KAVANAH. 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.



קדוש רבֵּה לְשַׁבַּת וּלְיוֹם טוֹב

This version of Kiddush is recited between the end of the morning service and the beginning of lunch.

On every Shabbat begin here:

וּשְׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם
בְּרִית עוֹלָם: בְּיָמֵינוּ וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹת הִיא לְעוֹלָם כִּי־שִׁשָּׁה
יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַח
וַיִּנְפָשׁ:

עַל כֵּן בְּרַךְ יְהוָה אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְּשֶׁהוּ.

Veshameru veney yisra'el et hashabbat
la'asot et hashabbat ledorotam berit olam.
Beyni uveyn beney yisra'el ot hi le'olam.
Ki sheshet yamim asah adonay et hashamayim ve'et ha'aretz
uveyom hashevi'i shavat vayinafash.
Al ken beraḥ adonay et yom hashabbat vaykadeshehu.

On Pesah, Shavuot, and Sukkot say:

וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מִעְדֵי יְהוָה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Vaydaber mosheh et mo'adey adonay el beney yisra'el.

When Shabbat coincides with a festival, recite the sections for both. Morning Kiddush always concludes with the following blessing:

סְבָרֵי חֲבָרִי:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן:

Savrey ḥaveray.
Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu meleḥ ha'olam borey peri hagafen.



KIDDUSH RABAH LESHABBAT ULYOM TOV / KIDDUSH FOR SHABBAT AND FESTIVAL MORNINGS

This version of Kiddush is recited between the end of the morning service and the beginning of lunch.

On every Shabbat begin here:

Let Israel's descendants keep Shabbat, making Shabbat throughout all their generations, as an eternal bond. Between me and Israel's descendants shall it be a sign eternally. For in six days THE VOICE made skies and earth, and on the seventh day God ceased and drew a breath of rest. And so THE EMINENCE blessed the day of Shabbat and made it holy.

On Pesah, Shavuot, and Sukkot say:

Moses proclaimed the Festivals of THE ENDURING ONE to the children of Israel.

When Shabbat coincides with a festival, recite the sections for both. Morning Kiddush always concludes with the following blessing:

With the permission of this company:

Blessed are you, THE BOUNDLESS ONE, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, who creates the fruit of the vine.

וּשְׁמְרוּ...וינפש / Let...rest (Exodus 31:16-17).
עַל כֵּן...ויקדשו / And...holy (Exodus 20:11).
וַיְדַבֵּר...ישראל / Moses...Israel (Leviticus 23:44).