

Who Gives Sight to the Blind

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

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

—GENESIS RABBAH

Imitating God

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

—based on THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Blessings for a New Day

We rise.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who enables the bird to distinguish day from night, who made me in the divine image, who made me free, who made me a Jew, who gives sight to the blind, who clothes the naked,

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

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

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

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

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

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

בְּרָכוֹת הַשַּׁחַר

We rise.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְשִׁכְוֵי בֵינָה לְהִבְחִין בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לַיְלָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁעָשִׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שְׁעָשִׂנִי בְּנוֹבֶת הוֹרִין.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁעָשִׂנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, פּוֹקֵחַ עֵוְרִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, מְלַבֵּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—JAN UHRBACH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

spur in us the yearning to do good and to act with goodness.
 Bend our will and our desires to Your service.

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

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

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, מתיר אסורים.
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, זוקף כפופים.
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
רוקע הארץ על המים.
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
המכין מצעדי גבר.
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
שעשה לי כל־צרכי.
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
אוזר ישראל בגבורה.
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
עוטר ישראל בתפארה.
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
הנותן ליעף כח.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
המעביר שנה מעיני ותנומה מעפעפי.
ויהי רצון מלפניך, יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
[ואמותינו], שתרגילנו בתורתך, ודבקנו במצותיך,
ואל תביאנו לא לידי חטא, ולא לידי עברה ועון, ולא
לידי נסיון, ולא לידי בזיון, ואל תשלט־בנו יצר הרע,
והרחיקנו מאדם רע ומחבר רע. ודבקנו ביצר הטוב
ובמעשים טובים, וכוף את־יצרנו להשתעבד־לך.
◀ ותננו היום, ובכל־יום, לחן ולחסד ולרחמים בעיניך,
ובעיני כל־רואינו, ותגמלנו חסדים טובים.
ברוך אתה יהוה, גומל חסדים טובים לעמו ישראל.

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

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

WHO STRETCHES OUT THE EARTH OVER THE WATERS רוקע הארץ על המים. Psalm 136:6. Genesis depicts dry land being formed from the splitting of the primal waters.

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

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

INCLINATION TO EVIL יצר הרע. The ancient rabbis

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

*Psalm 150: An
Interpretive Translation*

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

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.
Praise God in the sanctuary.
Praise God in the heavens, the seat of God's power.
Praise God at the triumph of the Divine.
Praise God in accord with the greatness of God.
Praise God with the call of the shofar.
Praise God with the harp and the lyre.
Praise God with timbrel and dance.
Praise God with flute and strings.
Praise God with crashing cymbals.
Praise God with rousing cymbals.
► Let every breath be praise of God;
halleluyah, praise God.
Let every breath be praise of God;
praise God, *halleluyah!*
Hal'luyah.
Hal'lu El b'kodsho, hal'luhu birkia uzo.
Hal'luhu vi-g'vurotav, hal'luhu k'rov gudlo.
Hal'luhu b'teika shofar, hal'luhu b'nevel v'khinor.
Hal'luhu b'tof u-mahol, hal'luhu b'minim v'ugav.
Hal'luhu v'tziltz'lei shama, hal'luhu b'tziltz'lei t'ruah.
Kol ha-n'shamah t'hallel yah, hal'luyah.
Kol ha-n'shamah t'hallel yah, hal'luyah.

Psalm 150

CONCLUSION OF THE SELECTION OF PSALMS

Bless ADONAI, always, amen and amen.
From Zion, bless ADONAI who dwells in Jerusalem;
praise God, *halleluyah*.
Bless ADONAI, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
► Blessed be God's glorious name, always;
and may God's glory encompass the entire world.
Amen and amen.

Some congregations continue with Nishmat, page 145.

הַלְלוּיָהּ,
הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקֹדֶשׁוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקיעַ עֶזוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרֹתָיו, הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גְּדֻלוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֹף וּמַחֹל, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעֶגְב.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי שָׁמַע, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה.
◀ כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קג

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן, שֶׁכֵּן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, עֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבָדוֹ.
◀ וּבְרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם,
וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ,
אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.

Some congregations continue with נְשַׁמַּת, page 145.

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

BLESS ADONAI, ALWAYS בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם. The Book of Psalms is composed of five smaller “books”; each of the first four conclude with a blessing. Two of those blessings, Psalms 89:53 and 72:18–19, are quoted here, to conclude the morning recitation of the Davidic psalms. Between these two, another verse (Psalm 135:21) is added, specifying that Adonai is the God of Israel—much like a letter’s address on an envelope. The selected verses all begin with the word *barukh*, “blessed.”

Thus, just as we began P’sukei D’zimra with a multiple repetition of “blessed” in Barukh She-amar (page 122), so too, here, we repeat that word with multiple verses. The oldest versions of P’sukei D’zimra ended here, and so the opening and closing verses of this paragraph form a conclusion by repeating the affirmative response, “Amen.”

The Blessings of the Priests before the Sh'ma

The priests in the Temple would say the following *b'rakhah* before the Sh'ma: "May the one who dwells in this House always grant you love, harmony, peace, and friendship."

—TALMUD OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

You Have Loved Us Deeply

With a great love (*ahavah rabah*) You have loved us (*ahavtanu*). The love of God for the people Israel is declared here just before the Sh'ma. It prepares us for the Sh'ma. Now you might expect a listing of gifts to us—God's freeing us, feeding us, delivering us. Instead, we thank God for one gift: God's teaching, God's opening our minds and hearts to Torah.

What You've given us is the ability to listen to You, so we can thank and draw close to You. Your compassion is expressed in teaching our hearts to know compassion, to love You, giving us not personal freedoms but, in fact, boundaries bringing us close to the Unbounded, the One. By giving us Torah, You've shown us how to live. We can now offer thanks and say: "Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is one."

—JOHN J. CLAYTON

Second B'rakhah before the Sh'ma: God's Great Love

You have loved us deeply, ADONAI our God, and showered us with boundless compassion. *Avinu Malkeinu*, for the sake of our ancestors who trusted in You and to whom You taught the laws of life, so may You be gracious to us and instruct us. Kind creator, have compassion for us, open our hearts so that we may understand and, with love, discern, hear and study, observe, perform, and fulfill all the teachings of Your Torah with love. Enlighten our eyes with Your Torah; attach our hearts to Your mitzvot; unify our hearts to love and revere Your name so that we never lose hope. As we trust in Your great, holy, awe-inspiring name, we will delight and rejoice in Your deliverance.

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

► Bring us safely from the four corners of the earth, and lead us in dignity to our land, for You are the God who effects deliverance. You have chosen us from all other tongues and peoples, always drawing us nearer to Your name, that we may truly acknowledge You and lovingly proclaim Your oneness. *Barukh atah ADONAI*, who lovingly cares for the people Israel.

*Ahavah rabah ahavtanu Adonai eloheinu,
hemlah g'dolah viteirah hamalta aleinu.*

*Avinu malkeinu, ba-avur avoteinu [v'imoteinu] she-bat'hu v'kha
va-t'lamdeim hukei hayim, ken t'honeinu u-t'lamdeinu.*

*Avinu ha-av ha-rahaman, ha-m'raheim, raheim aleinu, v'ten b'libeinu
l'havin u-l'haskil lishmo-a lilmod u-l'lamed lishmor v'la-asot u-l'kayem
et kol divrei talmud toratekha b'ahavah.*

*V'ha-eir eineinu b'toratekha, v'dabeik libeinu b'mitzvotekha
v'ya'hed l'vaveinu l'ahavah u-l'yirah et sh'mekha, v'lo neivosh l'olam va-ed.
Ki v'shem kodsh'kha ha-gadol v'hanora batahnu,
nagilah v'nism'hah bishuatekha.*

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

► *Va-havi-einu l'shalom mei-arba kanfot ha-aretz,
v'tolikheinu kom'miyut l'artzeinu,*

*ki el po-el y'shu-ot atah,
u-vanu vaharta mikol am v'lashon,
v'keiravtanu l'shimkha ha-gadol selah be-emet,
l'hodot l'kha u-l'ya'hedkha b'ahavah.*

Barukh atah adonai, ha-boher b'amo yisrael b'ahavah.

אֶהְבֶּה רַבָּה אֶהְבַּתְנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
 חֲמֵלָה גְדוּלָה וַיִּתְרָה חֲמֵלַת עָלֵינוּ.
 אָבִינוּ מִלְכֵנוּ, בְּעִבּוֹר אָבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ],
 שִׁפְטָחוּ בָּךְ וְתִלְמָדִים חֲקֵי חַיִּים,
 בֵּן תַּחֲפֵנוּ וְתִלְמָדֵנוּ.
 אָבִינוּ, הָאֵב הַרְחֵמֵנוּ, הַמְרַחֵם,
 רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְתֵן בְּלַבְּנוּ לְהַבִּין וּלְהַשְׁכִּיל,
 לְשִׁמְעַ, לְלַמֵּד וּלְלַמֵּד, לְשָׁמֵר וּלְעֲשׂוֹת
 וּלְקַיֵּם אֶת־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי תִלְמוּד תּוֹרַתְךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.

וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ,
 וְדַבֵּק לַבָּנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
 וַיַּחַד לְבַבְנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ,
 וְלֹא נִבּוֹשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
 כִּי בְשֵׁם קִדְשְׁךָ הַגְּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּטַחְנוּ,
 נִגְיָלָה וְנִשְׁמַחָה בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ.

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

◀ וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע פְּנּוֹת הָאָרֶץ,
 וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ,
 כִּי אֵל פּוֹעֵל יִשׁוּעוֹת אֲתָהּ,
 וּבָנוּ בְּחֵרֶת מְכַלְעִים וּלְשׁוֹן,
 וְקִרְבַּתְנוּ לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל סֵלָה בְּאֵמֶת,
 לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ וּלְיַחְדְּךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַבּוֹחֵר בְּעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה.

YOU HAVE LOVED US DEEPLY אֶהְבֶּה רַבָּה. The Hebrew root *alef-hei-vet*, meaning “love,” appears six times in this passage (both as the noun and a verb). Reuven Hammer points out that three of them speak of our love for God and three speak of God’s love for us. While reciting this *b'rakhah*, the worshipper can anticipate the seventh occurrence, which is found in the first paragraph of the Sh'ma: “You shall love Adonai your God.”

AVINU MALKEINU אָבִינוּ מִלְכֵנוּ. Literally, “our father, our king.” The pairing of the two words emphasizes that God is at once both intimate as a close relation and distant as a monarch. The word *av*, “father,” suggests the image of God as source or progenitor, and therefore it may also be translated as “creator.”

LAWS OF LIFE חֲקֵי חַיִּים. The word “Torah” encompasses many different meanings. In its most limited usage, it refers to the Five Books of Moses. But in a larger sense it refers to all of Scripture, and even to all of later Jewish teaching. Thus, the rabbis of the Talmud spoke

of the “Written Torah” and the “Oral Torah,” the latter referring to the teachings of the Midrash, Mishnah, and Talmud—and even to “whatever new teaching a student of wisdom might impart until the end of time” (Leviticus Rabbah 22:1). In this prayer, “Torah” embraces the widest meaning: the laws of life—all those teachings that instruct us concerning a full ethical and religious life.

TO UNDERSTAND AND DISCERN . . . OBSERVE, FULFILL, AND PERFORM לְשָׁמֵר וּלְעֲשׂוֹת וּלְקַיֵּם. This sequence implies that study is intimately linked with action—indeed, that study should lead to action.

GATHERING THE TZITZIT. Many observe the custom, originating in the late Middle Ages, of gathering the four *tzitziyot* (plural of *tzitzit*) of the *tallit* while reciting the words “bring us safely from the four corners of the earth,” thus symbolizing Israel’s unity and ingathering. The *tzitziyot* are then held through the third paragraph of the Sh'ma, and kissed when reciting the word *tzitzit* (which appears three times in that paragraph). By this practice, we indicate that we are lovingly undertaking to observe these words of Torah, and we hope that our commitment to strive for holiness will lead to greater unity. We are also gathering within us all our positive intentions.

Hear, O Israel

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

—ARTHUR GREEN

The Challenge of Faith

The Israeli poet Yoram Nissonovitch remarks that religious questions may not constitute the subversion of our faith; rather, it may help us get past tired notions that narrow our vision, and it may open our souls to new and deeper understandings. And his colleague Elhanan Nir adds: Doubts lead to a strong, surprising, and deep faith that cannot be compared with classical faith. This is a faith for which nothing is taken for granted.

Recitation of the Sh'ma

Some people may wish to pause here for a moment. Some may close their eyes; others may place a hand over their eyes. The intention is to concentrate on God's oneness.

*The following words are added in the absence of a minyan:
God is a faithful sovereign.*

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

Sh'ma yisrael, Adonai eloheinu Adonai ehad.

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

You shall love ADONAI your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all that is yours.

These words that I command you this day shall be taken to heart.

Teach them again and again to your children; speak of them when you sit in your home, when you walk on your way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

Bind them as a sign upon your hand and as a symbol above your eyes; inscribe them upon the doorposts of your home and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4–9

V'ahavta et Adonai elohekha b'khol l'av'kha u-v'khol nafsh'kha u-v'khol me'odekha. V'hayu ha-d'varim ha-eileh asher anokhi m'tzav'kha ha-yom al l'av'ekha. V'shinantam l'vanekha v'dibarta bam, b'shivt'kha b'veitekha u-v'lekht'kha va-derekh u-v'shokhb'kha u-v'kumekha. U-k'shartam l'ot al yadekha v'hayu l'totafot bein einekha. U-kh'tavtam al m'zuzot beitekha u-visharekha.

קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע

Some people may wish to pause here for a moment. Some may close their eyes; others may place a hand over their eyes. The intention is to concentrate on God's oneness.

In the absence of a minyan, we add the following: אֵל מְלֶכֶךְ נֶאֱמָן.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד.

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלֻכּוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. *Recited quietly.*

וְאֶהְבֶּתְךָ אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ
וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ
הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשַׁבְּתֶךָ
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתֹּתֶךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ:
וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטַטְפֹּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ:
וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל-מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

דברים ו:ד-ט

THE RECITATION OF THE SH'MA. Rabbinic literature refers to the Sh'ma as a *k'riah*, a reading aloud of a passage of the Torah. Later it became a meditation as well, a way to focus on God's "oneness"—so much so that for some it became a moment to experience a mystical union with God. The Babylonian Talmud reports: Rabbi Judah the Prince was teaching and needed to stop, since the hour for reciting the Sh'ma was passing, so he covered his eyes for a moment and then continued teaching (Berakhot 13b). In this story, reciting the Sh'ma was but a momentary interruption. Later, Rabbi Judah's act of

covering his eyes came to be seen as a sign of deep contemplation, and so it became the custom of many to cover the eyes while reciting the Sh'ma, as a moment to meditate on God's unity.

GOD IS A FAITHFUL SOVEREIGN אֵל מְלֶכֶךְ נֶאֱמָן. These words form an acronym of *amen*. When we recite the Sh'ma with a *minyan*, the leader concludes with the words *Adonai eloheikhem emet*, "Your God truly"; when, in the absence of a *minyan*, that affirmation is not recited, we add this private affirmation at the beginning of the Sh'ma. The Kabbalists noted that the Sh'ma contained 245 words and so, by adding three additional words, we reach 248—the number of limbs in the body, according to the belief of the ancient rabbis. Thus we affirm, whether by adding words at the beginning or the end of the Sh'ma, that our entire being is dedicated to God.

SH'MA YISRAEL יִשְׂרָאֵל. To whom are these words addressed? Certainly, we are speaking to ourselves, enjoining ourselves to truly hear what our lips are saying. We may also be speaking to each other—the collective people Israel—reminding each other that we are a people united by values, nurturing our own sense of peoplehood. A moving midrash imagines these words recited by Jacob's sons, addressed to their father Jacob/Israel, reassuring him on his deathbed that they remain true to his teachings, and that the God of Jacob is and will remain "their God" (Genesis Rabbah 98:3). And so, we too may be speaking to our forebears, reassuring our ancestors (all the way back to Jacob!) that their legacy continues in us.

ONE אֶחָד. The Hebrew word *ehad*, "one," has been variously interpreted. It can mean that God is totally unified and not made up of parts, as is the case with everything else we encounter in the universe. It can mean unique, that God is different from all else we encounter. It can mean "only," that there is no other being who is divine. Mystics interpret it as meaning that God is one with the universe—or in another formulation, present throughout the universe.

PRaised BE THE NAME שֵׁם כְּבוֹד. This phrase is not part of the biblical text but was the customary response of those assembled to hearing the name of God as part of priestly prayers in the Temple. To differentiate it from the actual biblical text, it is recited silently. In the legend mentioned above, this sentence constituted Jacob's response to his children's affirmation, and so it is voiced differently.

INSCRIBE THEM UPON THE DOORPOSTS עַל מְזוֹזוֹת. The observant Jew lives a life surrounded by the Sh'ma: reciting it in the morning upon arising and at night before going to sleep, walking past its inscription on the *mezuzah* when entering one's home, and even adorning oneself with the words on weekday mornings upon one's head and near one's heart when putting on *t'fillin*, phylacteries.

Some omit:

But, ADONAI our God, You have not given it to the nations of the world,
nor, our Sovereign, have You bestowed it on idol worshippers,
nor do the uncircumcised find rest on this day, for

With love, You have given Shabbat to the people Israel, the descendants of
Jacob, whom You have chosen. The people who sanctify the seventh day shall
feel fulfilled and shall delight in Your goodness, for You Yourself were pleased
with the seventh day and sanctified it, calling it the most beloved of days,
a symbol of the work of creation.

Our God and God of our ancestors, embrace our rest.

Make us holy through Your mitzvot and let the Torah be our portion.

Fill our lives with Your goodness and gladden us with Your deliverance.

Purify our hearts to serve You truly.

ADONAI our God, lovingly and willingly grant that we inherit Your holy Shabbat,
that the people Israel, who make Your name holy, may find rest on this day.

*Kad'sheinu b'mitzvotekha v'ten ḥelkeinu b'toratekha,
sabeinu mi-tuvekha v'samḥeinu bishuatekha,
v'taheir libeinu l'ovd'kha be-emet,
v'hanḥileinu Adonai eloheinu b'ahavah u-v'ratzon shabbat kodshekha,
v'yanuḥu vah yisrael m'kad'shei sh'mekha.*

Barukh atah ADONAI, who makes Shabbat holy.

Fifth B'rakhah: The Restoration of Zion

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

On Rosh Ḥodesh and Ḥol Ha-mo-ed we add:

Our God and God of our ancestors, may the thought of us rise up and reach You.
Attend to us and accept us; hear us and respond to us. Keep us in mind, and keep in
mind the thought of our ancestors, as well as the Messiah, the descendant of David;
Jerusalem, Your holy city; and all Your people, the house of Israel. Respond to us with
deliverance, goodness, compassion, love, life, and peace, on this

<i>On Rosh Ḥodesh:</i>	<i>On Pesah:</i>	<i>On Sukkot:</i>
Rosh Ḥodesh.	Festival of Matzot.	Festival of Sukkot.

Remember us for good;
respond to us with blessing;
redeem us with life.

Show us compassion and care with words of kindness and deliverance;
have mercy on us and redeem us. Our eyes are turned to You,
for You are a compassionate and caring sovereign.

Some omit:

ולא נתתו יהוה אלהינו לגויי הארצות,
ולא הנחלתו מלכנו לעובדי פסילים,
וגם במנוחתו לא ישפנו ערלים,

כי לישראל עמך נתתו באהבה, לזרע יעקב אשר בם
בחרת. עם מקדשי שביעי, כלם ישבעו ויתענגו מטובה,
והשביעי רצית בו וקדשתו, חמדת ימים אותו קראת,
זכר למעשה בראשית.

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו], רצה במנוחתנו,
קדשנו במצותיה, ותן חלקנו בתורתך,
שבענו מטובה, ושמחנו בישועתך,
וטהר לבנו לעבדך באמת,
והנחילנו יהוה אלהינו באהבה וברצון שבת קדשה,
וינוחו בה ישראל מקדשי שמה.
ברוך אתה יהוה, מקדש השבת.

רצה, יהוה אלהינו, בעמך ישראל ובתפלתם,
והשב את העבודה לדביר ביתך,
ותפלתם באהבה תקבל ברצון,
ותהי לרצון תמיד עבודת ישראל עמך.

On Rosh Hodesh and Hol Ha-mo-ed we add:

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו], יעלה ויבא, ויגיע ויראה,
וירצה וישמע, ויפקד ויזכר זכרוננו ופקדוננו, וזכרון
אבותינו [ואמותינו], וזכרון משיח בן דוד עבדך, וזכרון
ירושלים עיר קדשה, וזכרון כל עמך בית ישראל לפניה,
לפליטה, לטובה, לחן ולחסד ולרחמים, לחיים ולשלום, ביום

On Sukkot:

On Pesah:

On Rosh Hodesh:

ראש החודש הזה. חג המצות הזה. חג הסוכות הזה.

זכרנו, יהוה אלהינו בו לטובה,
ופקדנו בו לברכה,
והושיענו בו לחיים.

ובדבר ישועה ורחמים, חוס וחסנו, ורחם עלינו והושיענו,
כי אליך עינינו, כי אל מלך חנון ורחום אתה.

BUT . . . YOU HAVE NOT

GIVEN IT ולא נתתו. These phrases and the sentences that follow do not appear in early Ashkenazic liturgy. They were probably added in the High Middle Ages, due to the competition between Judaism and Christianity and the persecution in the time of the Crusades and after. A sharp distinction was thus drawn: we are the inheritors of God's wonderful gift, Shabbat, but our persecutors do not participate with us in this special moment. Our situation today is quite different, and we welcome non-Jews to join with us in celebrating Shabbat. As the prophet Isaiah declared, Judaism's gifts are not a secret treasure to be hoarded, but a divine blessing to be shared with all who would join in receiving them.

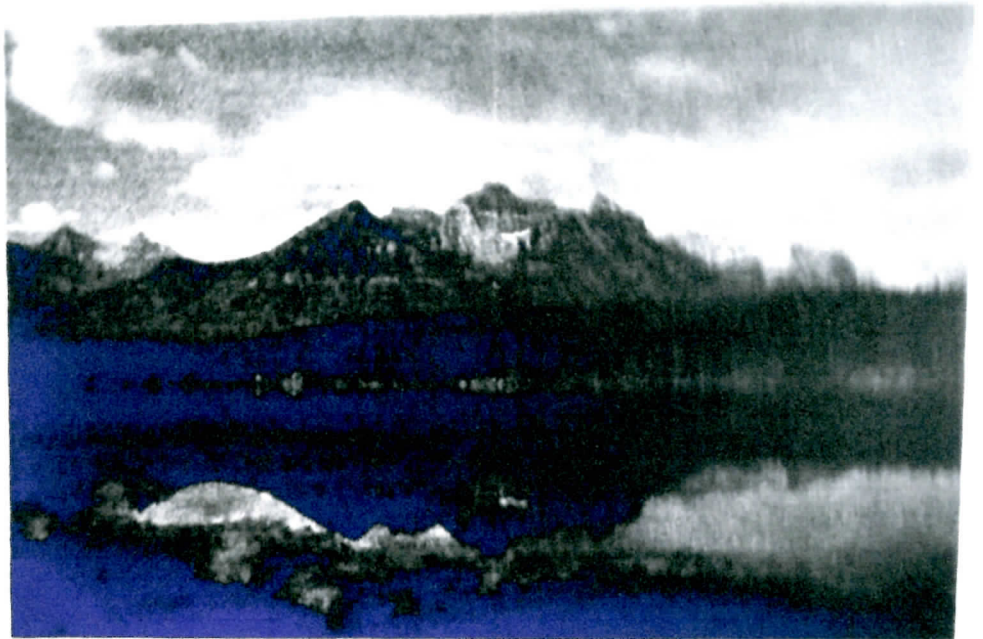
TO YOUR SANCTUARY לדביר ביתך. Literally, the "inner-chamber," as in 1 Kings 6:19, "within the Temple, on the inside." We pray for access to the innermost reaches of the divine realm; for the most intimate relationship with God. Yet this intimacy is not silence. The word *d'vir* connects to *davar*, "word." In the *d'vir*, God hears our voice, and we hear that of the Divine. (Jill Jacobs)

MAY THE THOUGHT OF US RISE UP AND REACH YOU יעלה ויבא. This paragraph, recited on every festival and New Moon, asks God—and by implication, us—to see the New Moon or the festival as a time to focus on renewal and redemption.

SERVICE FOR THE READING OF THE TORAH

ISAIAH 60:1

In the days to come,
The Mount of the
Lord's House
Shall stand firm above the
mountains
And tower above the hills;
And all the nations
Shall gaze on it with joy.
And the many peoples shall
go and say:
"Come,
Let us go up to the Mount
of the Lord,
to the House of the God of
Jacob;
that He may instruct us in His ways,
And that we may walk in His paths."



For Instruction shall come forth from Zion,
The word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וּדְבַר ה' מִירוּשָׁלַיִם

(KEE MEE TZEE YAWN TAY TZAY TAWRAH
U'D'VAHR AH DAW NAI MEE Y'RU SHAH LAH YEEM)

He will judge among the nations
And arbitrate for the many peoples,
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares
And their spears into pruning hooks:

Nation shall not take up
Sword against nation;
they shall never learn to make war
again .

(LAW YEE-SAH GOY EHL GOY KHEH-REHV
V'LAW YIL-M'DU AWD MIL-KHAH-MAH)

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יֵשֶׁעַ אֶת-גּוֹי חָרָב
וְיִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה

Blessed is the ONE WHO has given Torah to His People Israel with His Holiness

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדּוּשָׁתוֹ

(BAH-RUKH SHEH-NAH-TAHN TAW-RAH
L'AH-MAW YIS-RAH-EHL BIK-DU-SHAH-TAW)

בְּרִיךְ שֵׁמָּה דְמֵרָא עֲלֵמָא

Blessed be the Name of the Master of the universe .

(congregation together)

May Your partnership with Your People of Israel last forever .

May the goodness of Your light reach out to us in Your sacred place to receive our prayers with mercy .

May it be Your will to lengthen our lives with goodness .

You are the provider of sustenance and support for all people .

You are the true Ruler over all .

We are the servants of the Holy Source of Blessing , before Whom and before Whose Torah we bow at all times . It is not in human beings that we rely, nor upon any divine being that we depend, rather upon the God of the heavens Who is the God of truth, Whose Torah is true , and Whose prophets are teachers of truth , and Who is great in bringing about Goodness and Truth .

In God we trust , and to the sacred and precious reality of God's existence we sing praises .

בְּה אֲנָה רַחֵץ וּלְשֵׁמָה קְדִישָׁא קְדִישָׁא יְקִירָא

BAY AH-NAH RAH-KHETZ V'LISH-MAY KAH-DEE-SHAH KAH-DEE-SHAH YAH-KEE-RAH

אֲנָה אָמַר תּוֹשְׁבָחוֹן

AH-NAH AH-MAHR TU'U-SH'B'KHAWN

May it be Your will that You open our hearts with Your Torah , and that You will bring to completion the wishes of our hearts and of the hearts of all Your people Israel - FOR GOOD , and for LIFE , and for PEACE . Amen

יְהֵא רְעוּא קְדָמְךָ דְתַפְתַּח לְבִי בְּאוּרֵיתָא

Y'HAY RAH-AH-VAH KAH-DAH-MAHKH D'TIF'TAHKH LEE-BEE B'AW-RAI'TAH

וְתַשְׁלִים מִשְׁאַלִין דְלְבִי וּלְבָא דְכָל עַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל

V'TAHSH-LEEM MISH'AH-LIN D'LEE-BEE V'LEE-BAH D'KHAWL AH-MAHKH YIS-RAH-EHL

לְטַב וּלְחַיִּין וּלְשָׁלָם . אָמֵן

L'TAHV U'L'KHAH-YEEN V'LISH'LAHM . AMEN

*I Spread Out God's
Names in Front of Me*

I spread out God's names
in front of me
on the floor of my chilly
room.

The name by which I
called him when his
spirit breathed in me.

And the name by which I
called him when I was a
young girl.

The name by which I
called him when I was
given to a man.

And the name when I was
again permitted to all.

The name by which I
called him when my
parents were a roof over
me. And the name when
I had no ceiling.

The name by which I
called him so that I
would fear him. And the
name by which I called
him so that I would not
be afraid.

The name by which I
called him so that he
would remember me.
And the name so that
he would refrain from
remembering.

In the heat of day I will
prostrate myself
on the floor of my chilly
room.

—RIVKA MIRIAM
(translated by
Linda Stern Zisquit)

Aleinu

We rise:

It is for us to praise the ruler of all,
to acclaim the Creator,
who has not made us merely a nation,
nor formed us as all earthly families,
nor given us an ordinary destiny.

† And so we bow, acknowledging the supreme sovereign
the Holy One, who is praised—
who spreads out the heavens and establishes the earth,
whose glory abides in the highest heavens,
and whose powerful presence resides in the highest heights.
This is our God, none else; ours is the true sovereign,
there is no other.

As it is written in the Torah:

“Know this day and take it to heart,
that ADONAI is God in heaven above and on earth below
there is no other.”

*Aleinu l'shabei-ah la-adon hakol,
lateit g'dulah l'yotzer b'reishit,
shelo asanu k'goyei ha-aratzot,
v'lo samanu k'mishp'hot ha-adamah,
shelo sam helkeinu kahem,
v'goraleinu k'khol hamonam.*

† *Va-anahnu korim u-mishta'avim u-modim,
lifnei melekh malkhei ha-m'lakhim, ha-kadosh barukh hu.*

*Shehu noteh shamayim v'yosed aretz,
u-moshav y'karo ba-shamayim mima-al,
u-sh'khinat uzo b'govhei m'romim,
hu eloheinu ein od.*

*Emet malkeinu efes zulato,
ka-katuv b'torato:*

*v'yadata ha-yom vahashevota el l'vavekha, ki Adonai hu ha-eloh
bashamayim mima-al, v'al ha-aretz mitahat, ein od.*

We rise:

עֲלֵינוּ לְשִׁבַח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל,
לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית,
שֶׁלֹּא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי הָאָרְצוֹת,
וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה,
שֶׁלֹּא שָׁם חָלַקְנוּ כָּהֵם,
וְגִרְלָנוּ בְּכָל־הַמּוֹנָם.
וְאֵנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמְשַׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים,
לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֵה שָׁמַיִם וְיִסַּד אֶרֶץ,
וּמוֹשֵׁב יְקָרוֹ בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל,
וְשָׁכִינַת עֲזוֹ בְּגִבְהֵי מְרוֹמִים,
הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד.
אָמֵת מְלַכְנוּ אָפֶס זוֹלָתוֹ,
כְּפָתוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ:
וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם וְהַשַּׁבָּת אֶל לְבַבָּהּ,
כִּי יְהוּה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל,
וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת, אֵין עוֹד.

ALEINU עֲלֵינוּ. Since the 12th or 13th century, the Aleinu prayer has acquired a special pride of place in Ashkenazic liturgy and is recited at the conclusion of every service; it does not play the same role in the Sephardic liturgy.

The origin of this popular prayer is a matter of debate. Some medieval sources (e.g. Rokeah, early 13th century, Germany) ascribed it to Joshua. The liturgical scholar Joseph Heinemann thought that it dates back to the time of the Temple service. Other scholars have argued that it originated in 2nd- or 3rd-century mystical circles. Its first known use in the formal liturgy is as an introduction to the Malkhuyot (“Sovereignty”) section of the Rosh Hashanah Musaf service.

Aleinu articulates a progression of ideas. In the first paragraph, we are asked to

express our gratitude for the special fate and role of the Jewish people in history. In the second, we look forward to the day when differences among peoples will be harmonized and there will be a common recognition that all of humanity is embraced by God. This vision recognizes that God is not exclusively the God of Israel, but that God rules over all of us. On that day, when justice, morality, and common spiritual affinity will reign on earth, God’s name will truly be one.

Some have objected to what may sound like exclusivist language in this prayer, in particular the phrases describing the uniqueness of the people Israel: “who has not made us merely a nation, nor formed us as all earthly families, nor given us an ordinary destiny.” The Israeli Masorti Movement offers an alternative formulation quoting Micah 4:5: “For the people of every nation shall walk in the name of their god, but we shall walk in the name of Adonai, our God, forever.” Whether articulated with this wording or the standard text, Aleinu both asserts a pride in Jewish destiny and challenges us to go out to the world committed to Jewish spiritual values.

AND SO WE BOW וְאֵנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים. The prayer mentions a variety of forms of bowing. In ancient times, *korim* meant touching the floor with one’s knees, and *mishtahavim* meant bending at the waist. However, the ancient rabbis minimized the bowing that takes place in the service, and so today it is customary to simply bow one’s head or slightly bend one’s body at this point in the prayer.

KNOW THIS DAY וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם. Deuteronomy 4:39.

In the Days to Come

In the days to come,
the Mount of Adonai's
house shall stand firm
above the mountains,
and it shall tower over the
hills.
The peoples shall gaze on
it with joy,
and many nations shall go
and shall say,
"Come, let us go up to the
Mount of Adonai,
to the House of the God
of Jacob;
that God may instruct us in
God's ways, and that we
may walk in God's paths."
For instruction shall come
forth from Zion,
and the word of Adonai
from Jerusalem.
Thus God will judge
among the many peoples,
and arbitrate for the multi-
tude of nations, however
distant.
They shall beat their
swords into plowshares
and their spears into prun-
ing hooks.
Nation shall not lift up
sword against nation,
neither shall they learn
war anymore;
but everyone shall sit
under their grapevine or
fig tree
with no one to disturb
them.
For it was Adonai of Hosts
who has spoken.
For the people of every
nation shall walk in the
name of their god, but
we shall walk in the
name of Adonai, our
God, forever.

—MICAH 4:1-5

And so, ADONAI our God, we await You,
that soon we may behold Your strength revealed in full glory,
sweeping away the abominations of the earth,
obliterating idols,
establishing in the world the sovereignty of the Almighty.
All flesh will call out Your name—
even the wicked will turn toward You.
Then all who live on earth will understand and know
that to You alone every knee must bend,
all allegiance be sworn.
They will bow down and prostrate themselves before You,
ADONAI our God,
treasure Your glorious name,
and accept the obligation of Your sovereignty.
May You soon rule over them forever and ever,
for true dominion is Yours;
and You will rule in glory until the end of time.

► As is written in Your Torah:

"ADONAI will reign forever and ever."

And as the prophet said:

"ADONAI shall be acknowledged sovereign of all the earth.

On that day ADONAI shall be one, and the name of God, one."

*V'ne-emar: v'hayah Adonai l'melekh al kol ha-aretz,
bayom hahu yihyeh Adonai ehad, u-sh'mo ehad.*

We are seated.

עַל כֵּן נִקְוָה לָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
 לְרֵאוֹת מְהֵרָה בְּתַפְאֶרֶת עֲזֹרָה,
 לְהַעֲבִיר גְּלוּלִים מִן הָאָרֶץ,
 וְהַאֲלִילִים כָּרוֹת יִבְרָתוּן,
 לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׁדֵי,
 וְכַל־בְּנֵי בָשָׂר יִקְרְאוּ בְּשִׁמְךָ,
 לְהַפְנוֹת אֵלֶיךָ כָּל־דְּשָׁעֵי אֶרֶץ.
 יִבְיְרוּ וַיִּדְעוּ כָּל־יְשׁוּבֵי תֵבֶל,
 כִּי לָךְ תִּכְרַע כָּל־בְּרִיהַ,
 תִּשָּׁבַע כָּל־לְשׁוֹן.
 לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִכְרְעוּ וַיִּפְלוּ,
 וְלִכְבוֹד שִׁמְךָ יִקְרְאוּ יִתְנוּ,
 וַיִּקְבְּלוּ בְּלֶם אֶת־עַל מַלְכוּתְךָ.
 וְתִמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם מְהֵרָה לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,
 כִּי הַמַּלְכוּת שְׁלֹךְ הִיא,
 וְלְעוֹלָמִי עַד תִּמְלֹךְ בְּכָבוֹד.

◀ כְּפִתּוּב בְּתוֹרַתְךָ: יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעַלְמֵם וָעֶד.
 וּנְאֻמָּר: וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,
 בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה יְהוָה אֶחָד, וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

We are seated.

ESTABLISHING IN THE WORLD THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ALMIGHTY לתקן עולם במלכות שדי. Beginning in the 19th century, this phrase came to be seen as similar to Isaiah's call to be a "light unto the nations," and it was thus interpreted as a call to universal justice. In this vein, the phrase *l'takken olam* was understood to mean "to repair the world"—that is, to be partners with God in achieving a time of peace and righteousness. Even earlier, Maimonides (12th century) had argued that the single most important characteristic of messianic times would be an end to one people dominating another (Mishneh Torah, Hilkhoh Melakhim 12:2).

ADONAI WILL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER יהוה ימלך לעולם ועד. Exodus 15:18.

ON THAT DAY ADONAI SHALL BE ONE ביום ההוא יהיה אֶחָד. Zechariah 14:9. In reciting the Sh'ma, we declare that God is one. Through our prayer, we hope to make God one with the world. As this prayer marks the conclusion of the service, it ends with a vision of the future.

The service concludes with a song. Two choices are given here, but other songs may be selected, such as those on pages 82–85.



ADON OLAM

Before creation shaped the world,
eternally God reigned alone;
but only with creation done
could God as Sovereign be known.
When all is ended, God alone
will reign in wondrous majesty.
God was, God is, always will be
glorious in eternity.
God is unique and without peer,
with none at all to be compared.
Without beginning, endlessly,
God's vast dominion is not shared.
But still—my God, my only hope,
my one true refuge in distress,
My shelter sure, my cup of life,
with goodness real and limitless.
I place my spirit in God's care;
my body too can feel God near.
When I sleep, as when I wake,
God is with me, I have no fear.

Adon olam asher malakh	b'terem kol y'tzir nivra.
L'et na-asah v'heftzo kol	azai melekh sh'mo nikra.
V'aharei ki-kh'lot ha-kol	l'vado yimlokh nora.
V'hu hayah v'hu hoveh	v'hu yihyeh b'tifarah.
V'hu ehad v'ei sheni	l'hamshil lo l'haḥbirah.
B'li reishit b'li takhlit	v'lo ha-oz v'ha-misrah.
V'hu eli v'hai go-ali	v'tzur hevli b'et tzarah.
V'hu nisi u-manos li	m'nat kosi b'yom ekra.
B'yado afkid ruḥi	b'eit ishan v'a-irah
V'im ruḥi g'viyati	Adonai li v'lo ira.

The service concludes with a song. Two choices are given here, but other songs may be selected, such as those on pages 82–85.

אָדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מְלֶךְ,
לַעֲת נַעֲשֶׂה בְּחַפְצוֹ בֵּל,
וְאַחֲרֵי בְּכָלוֹת הַפֶּל,
וְהוּא הֵיךְ וְהוּא הוֹה,
וְהוּא אֶחָד וְאֵין שְׁנַי,
בְּלִי רֵאשִׁית בְּלִי תְּכָלִית,
וְהוּא אֵלֵי וְחֵי גְּאֵלֵי,
וְהוּא נְסִי וּמְנוֹס לִי,
בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי,
וְעַם רוּחִי גְּוִיָּתִי,
בְּטָרָם כָּל־יִצִּיר נִבְרָא.
אֲזִי מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא.
לְבַדּוֹ יִמְלֹךְ נוֹרָא.
וְהוּא יִהְיֶה בְּתַפְאָרָה.
לְהַמְשִׁיל לּוֹ לְהַחְבִּירָה.
וְלוֹ הָעֵז וְהַמְשָׁרָה.
וְצוּר חֲבֵלֵי בְּעַת צָרָה.
מִנַּת פּוֹסֵי בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא.
בְּעַת אִישָׁן וְאַעִירָה.
יְהוּה לִי וְלֹא אִירָא.

א

ADON OLAM אָדוֹן עוֹלָם. It is unclear who authored this thousand-year-old poem, but it appears in the beginning of the morning service, at the conclusion of the Musaf (additional) service, and also at the end of evening services, in both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic liturgies. (The latter version, however, contains several more verses than are found in the former.) The poem is composed of two parts. The first half of the poem is a series of philosophic or credal statements about God. But as it moves toward its conclusion, the poem changes in mood and becomes a personal statement of faith and even of intimacy with God. This idea is expressed in the penultimate line with the words *b'yado afkid ruhi*, "I place my spirit in God's care."