

**From Sephardic Practice**

Before reciting the Torah blessings, the honoree(s) turn(s) to the congregation with a word of blessing (in accord with the language of greeting found in Ruth 2:4), and the congregation then responds in recognition:

Honoree(s): יהוה עִמָּכֶם.

May God be with you. Adonai imakhem.

Congregation: יְבָרְכֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְיִשְׂמְרוּנוּ וְיַצִּילֵנוּ מִכָּל־מַדְבָּחַיִם וְיִשְׁמְרוּנוּ וְיַצִּילֵנוּ מִכָּל־מַדְבָּחַיִם יְיָ הוֹדוּ.

May God bless you. Y'varekh-kha/y'var'kheikh/y'var'kheim Adonai.

**Shabbat: Resting-Place on Our Journey**

Each Shabbat is its own revelation, but each leads us further on the road to eternity. Each Shabbat is a resting place, an oasis on the journey that is the life of Torah. Each Shabbat's Torah reading looks forward to yet another week—another revelation.

**Studying Torah**

Once a young man who wanted to become a Hasid arrived at the court of Isaac Meir, the rebbe of Gur. The rabbi asked him if he had learned Torah. The young man didn't know what to answer. He had studied Torah but didn't want to appear too bold and answer "Yes," as if he knew all of Torah; nor could he say "No," for he would then be lying. So he responded, "I know a little." The rabbi replied, "Can anyone know more than a little?"

**Blessings Recited by Those Called Up to the Torah**

The person who is honored with an aliyah recites the following before the Torah is read:

Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed.

Bar'khu et Adonai ha-m'vorakh.

The congregation responds:

Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed forever and ever.

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

The person who is honored repeats the above response, then continues:

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

Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives the Torah.

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

The person who is honored recites the following after the Torah is read:

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has given us a teaching of truth, planting eternal life in our midst.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives the Torah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher natan lanu torat emet, v'haye'olam nata b'tokheinu. Barukh atah Adonai, noten ha-torah.

**Mi Sheberakh:**

**Blessing for Those Called to the Torah**

May the one who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, bless \_\_\_\_\_,

who has/have ascended today to honor God and the Torah and Shabbat.

May the blessed Holy One protect him/her/they and his/her/their entire family, bring blessing and success to all the works of his/her/their hands, together with all his/her/their fellow Jews, and let us say: Amen.

For additional Mi Sheberakh prayers for special occasions, see pages 439–445.

**ברכות התורה**

The person who is honored with an aliyah recites the following before the Torah is read:

ברכו את־יהוה המברך.

The congregation responds:

ברוך יהוה המברך לעולם ועד.

The person who is honored repeats the above response, then continues:

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

The person who is honored recites the following after the Torah is read:

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר נתן לנו תורת אמת, וחי עולם נטע בתוכנו. ברוך אתה יהוה, בניתן התורה.

**מי שברך לעולה לתורה**

For an individual:

מי שברך אבותינו אברהם יצחק ויעקב, ואמותינו שרה רבקה רחל ולאה, הוא יברך את \_\_\_\_\_ שעלה/שעלתה היום לכבוד המקום ולכבוד התורה, ולכבוד השבת. הקדוש ברוך הוא ישמר אותנו/אותה ואת־כל־משפחתנו/משפחתה, וישלח ברכה והצלחה בכל־מעשה ידיו/איה, עם כל־ישראל אחיו ואחיותיו/אחיה ואחיותיה, ונאמר אמן.

For a group of people:

מי שברך אבותינו אברהם יצחק ויעקב, ואמותינו שרה רבקה רחל ולאה, הוא יברך את כל־אלה שעלו היום לכבוד המקום ולכבוד התורה, ולכבוד השבת. הקדוש ברוך הוא ישמר אותם ואת־כל־משפחותיהם, וישלח ברכה והצלחה בכל־מעשה ידיהם, עם כל־ישראל אחיהם ואחיותיהם, ונאמר אמן.

For additional Mi Sheberakh prayers for special occasions, see pages 439–445.

**THE READING.** In the Land of Israel in the 1st millennium, the Torah was read on a cycle of three-and-a-half years and divided into more than 150 portions. In Babylonia, the Torah was divided into larger portions, called *parashiyot*, which are read in sequence on Shabbat mornings throughout a single year. (The number of these portions was eventually fixed at 54.) Because some years are leap years and in some years festivals fall on Shabbat, certain *parashiyot* may be read together, so that the weekly readings remain coordinated with the calendar. Today, we follow the Babylonian custom, though some congregations read one-third of each *parashah* each week, thus completing a full Torah reading in three years.

The trope, the musical notation with which the Torah is chanted, is the oldest form of musical notation still in use; it dates at least to the end of the 1st millennium. Trope serve as syntactical signposts and provide interpretive meaning to the text.

**WHO HAS CHOSEN US** בחר בנו. At the moment of approaching the Torah, one may feel especially chosen and may also experience the moment as being directly commanded.

**HAS GIVEN US** ... **WHO GIVES THE TORAH** ונתן לנו התורה... בניתן התורה. The Hebrew moves from the past tense to the present. The meaning of the words of Torah not only derive from the past, but each reading may offer a new revelation.

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