

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, שֶׁעָשָׂנִי בְּצַלְמוֹ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁעָשָׂנִי בְּנוֹפֶת חוֹרִין.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, פּוֹקֵחַ עֵוְרִים.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, מַלְבִּישׁ 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 שֶׁעָשָׂנִי 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 (Menaḥot 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 שֶׁעָשָׂנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל. This positive formulation is the wording in the Babylonian Talmud (Menaḥot 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 מַלְבִּישׁ 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.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, זוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

רוֹקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

הַמְכִיֵן מִצְעָדֵי גִבּוֹר.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי כַל־צָרָפִי. ①

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִבּוּרָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

עוֹטֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתַפְאָרָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

הַנּוֹתֵן לַיַּעַף כֹּחַ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

הַמְעַבִּיר שָׁנָה מֵעֵינֵי וְתַנּוּמָה מֵעַפְעָפִי.

וְיֵהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

[וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], שֶׁתִּרְגְּלֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,

וְאֵל תְּבִיאֵנוּ לֹא לַיַּדִּי חֶטָּא, וְלֹא לַיַּדִּי עֲבָרָה וְעוֹן, וְלֹא

לַיַּדִּי נִסְיוֹן, וְלֹא לַיַּדִּי בְּזִיוֹן, וְאֵל תִּשְׁלַט־בְּנוּ יִצָּר הָרַע,

וְהִרְחִיקֵנוּ מֵאָדָם רָע וּמִחֵבֵר רָע. וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בְּיִצָּר הַטוֹב

וּבְמַעֲשֵׂים טוֹבִים, וְכוּף אֶת־יִצְרָנוּ לְהִשְׁתַּעֲבֹד־לָךְ.

◀ וְתַנְּנוּ הַיּוֹם, וּבְכַל־יּוֹם, לְחֵן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ,

וּבְעֵינֵי כָל־רוֹאֵינוּ, וְתַגְּמַלְנוּ חֶסְדִּים טוֹבִים. ②

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, גּוֹמֵל חֶסְדִּים טוֹבִים לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

WHO RELEASES THE BOUND
מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים. Releasing the
fetters of wickedness, free-
ing the oppressed, feeding
the hungry, and providing
for the homeless are men-
tioned by the prophet Isa-
iah as acts that God desires
of human beings (58:6).

WHO STRAIGHTENS THOSE
WHO ARE BENT זוֹקֵף
כְּפוּפִים. 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
רוֹקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם
Psalm 136:6. Genesis depicts dry
land being formed from
the splitting of the primal
waters.

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

TRIALS נִסְיוֹן. The trials of
life are many: confronting
personal illness or tragic
situations, difficult ethical
dilemmas, temptations that
may endanger us. In addi-
tion, 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 יִצָּר
הָרַע. 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.

מְזֹמֵר שִׁיר חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד
 אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ יְהוָה כִּי דָלִיתָנִי,
 וְלֹא שִׁמְחָתָ אִיבֵי לִי.
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי, שׁוּעָתִי אֱלֹהֵי וְתִרְפְּאֵנִי.
 יְהוָה הֶעֱלִיתָ מִן שְׂאוֹל נַפְשִׁי,
 חִייתָנִי מִיַּרְדֵּי בֹר.
 וַמְרוּ לִיהוָה חֲסִידָיו,
 וְהוֹדוּ לְזִכְרֵךְ קָדְשׁוֹ.
 כִּי רָגַע בְּאִפּוֹ חַיִּים בְּרִצּוֹנוֹ,
 בְּעָרֵב יַלִּין בְּכִי וְלִבְקָר רָנָה.
 וְאֲנִי אִמַּרְתִּי בְשִׁלּוֹי,
 בַּל אֲמוּט לְעוֹלָם.
 יְהוָה בְּרִצּוֹנְךָ הֶעֱמַדְתָּה לְהַרְרֵי עֵז,
 הִסְתַּרְתָּ פָנֶיךָ, הִיִּיתִי נִבְהָל.
 אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה אֶקְרָא, וְאֵל אֲדַנִּי אֶתְחַנֵּן.
 מִה בָּצַע בְּדַמִּי בְּרִדְתִּי אֵל שְׁחַת,
 הַיּוֹדֵךְ עֶפְרָה הַיְגִיד אֲמַתְךָ.
 שְׁמַע יְהוָה וְחַנּוּנִי, יְהוָה הֵיזָה עֵזֶר לִי.
 הֶפְכַּת מִסְפְּדֵי לְמַחֹל לִי,
 פִּתְחָתָ שְׁקִי וְתִאֲזַרְנִי שִׁמְחָה.
 לְמַעַן יִזְמְרֶךָ כְּבוֹד וְלֹא יִדָּם,
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לְעוֹלָם אֲוֹדְךָ.

תהלים ל

PSALM 30 precedes the section of psalms and songs called P'sukei D'zimra, "Verses of Song." In the context of the morning's prayers, its mention of being rescued from Sheol, the netherworld, might be seen as grateful acknowledgment of the blessing of awakening from sleep. In its biblical context, Psalm 30 may be viewed as a song of thanksgiving after overcoming disease and illness.

In a fashion that is true of many psalms, this poem moves between past and present, between intimations of illness and affirmations of health, and between fear and joy. Knowing how vulnerable we are and how unpredictable our fate, we can thank God that we are alive and able to pray as we wake to a new day.

Psalm 30 was added to the liturgy in the 17th century under the influence of Lurianic mysticism. It mentions the name of God ten times, and Jewish mystics saw in this a hint of the *s'frot*, the ten aspects of the Godhead.

FOR THE DEDICATION OF

THE HOUSE חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת. Perhaps this psalm was meant to be recited in honor of a donor for repairs or renovations of the Temple. In the later rabbinic reading, the inauguration of the "house" might be seen as the synagogue. The mystics who added this psalm to the liturgy thought that it alluded to the human resurrection of the body (that is, the house of the soul) in the morning, and to our entering the fully revealed divine house (that is, a new day). The midrash understood the psalm's superscription to be an expression of David's yearning to build the Temple, remarking that the Temple is called David's and not Solomon's (even though the latter built it)—because it was David who had yearned to build it (Numbers Rabbah 12:9).

YOU HAVE LIFTED ME UP דָּלִיתָנִי. The Hebrew verb is used for drawing water from a well and is consonant with the image in the following verses of being raised from the pit.

GOD'S ANGER בָּאִפּוֹ. The modern Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel points out that in the Bible, God's anger is always directed against moral corruption. The anthropomorphic image is intended to evoke the sense of violation and disruption of harmony caused by injustice and ethical lapses.

PSALM 92, the Song of the Day of Shabbat, begins with the praise of the faithful and concludes with it. It remarks on the wonder of creation and on the reward of the righteous, who will be planted in God's house. Appropriately, the psalm is a song for Shabbat—for Shabbat both celebrates creation and also provides the space in which to experience the peacefulness of one's soul. The disturbing quality of a world not at ease is put aside—in the words of the psalmist, enemies are “scattered”—and one hears God's reassurance ringing in one's ear. (For more detailed commentary on this psalm, see pages 27–28.)

PSALM 93. Having completed the seven psalms culminating in Psalm 92, the Song of the Day of Shabbat, we conclude the section with a psalm announcing God as the supreme monarch. Above nature are God's laws, moral and holy “testimonies.” In the Torah, the ark is sometimes called “the ark of testimony” because it contains the two tablets given on Mount Sinai.

When a Festival occurs on a weekday, some omit the following:

מְזֹמֵר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת
טוֹב לְהַדוֹת לַיהוָה, וּלְזַמֵּר לְשִׁמְךָ עֲלֵינוּ,
לְהַגִּיד בַּבֶּקֶר חֲסֵדְךָ, וְאַמוּנַתְךָ בְּלֵילוֹת.
עָלֵי עֲשׂוֹר וְעָלֵי נָבֵל, עָלֵי הַגִּיוֹן בְּכַנּוֹר.
כִּי שִׁמְחַתְּנִי יְהוָה בְּפַעֲלֶיךָ, בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יְדֶיךָ אֲרָנִי.
מֵה גָדְלוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה, מְאֹד עִמָּקוֹ מִחֻשְׁבֹּתֶיךָ.
אִישׁ בְּעַר לֹא יֵדַע, וּכְסִיל לֹא יִבִּין אֶת־זֹאת.
בְּפֶרֶחַ רְשָׁעִים כְּמוֹ עֵשֶׂב וַיִּצְיָצוּ כָּל־פְּעֻלֵי אָנוֹן,
לְהַשְׁמָדֵם עֲדֵי עַד, וְאַתָּה מְרוֹם לְעֵלָם יְהוָה.
כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֶיךָ יְהוָה, כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֶיךָ יֵאבְדוּ,
יִתְפָּרְדוּ כָּל־פְּעֻלֵי אָנוֹן.

וּתְרַם כְּרָאִים קִרְנֵי, בְּלַתִּי בְּשִׁמְן רַעְנוֹ.
וּתְבִט עֵינַי בְּשׁוּרֵי, בְּקַמִּים עָלַי מְרַעִים תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אֲזִנֵּי,
צַדִּיק בְּתִמְרֵי יִפְרֹחַ, כְּאֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשְׁגָה,
שְׁתוּלִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה, בְּחֻצְרוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִפְרִיחוּ.
עוֹד יִנּוּבוֹן בְּשִׁיבָה, דְּשָׁנִים וְרַעַנְנִים יִהְיוּ,
לְהַגִּיד כִּי יֵשֶׁר יְהוָה, צוּרֵי, וְלֹא עוֹלָתָהּ בּוֹ.

תהלים צב

5

יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ גָּאוֹת לִבְשׁ לִבְשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הַתְּאֵזָר,
אִף תִּכּוֹן תִּבֵּל בַּל תִּמּוֹט.
נְכוֹן בְּסִטְאָךָ מְאֹד, מֵעוֹלָם אַתָּה.
נִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת יְהוָה,
נִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת קוֹלָם,
יִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת דְּכָפָם.
מִקְלוֹת מַיִם רַבִּים,
אֲדִירִים מִשְׁפָּרֵי יָם,
אֲדִיר בְּמְרוֹם יְהוָה.

עֲדֹתֶיךָ נֶאֱמַנּוּ מְאֹד
לְבֵיתְךָ נֶאֱוָה קִדְשׁ, יְהוָה, לְאַרְץ יָמִים.

תהלים צג

אֲשֶׁרִי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתָהּ, עוֹד יִהְלֹלוּךָ סֵלָה.
 אֲשֶׁרִי הָעַם שְׂפָכָה לוֹ, אֲשֶׁרִי הָעַם שִׁיהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.
 תְּהִלָּה לְדוֹד

אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְאֶבְרַכְּהָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
 בְּכָל־יּוֹם אֶבְרַכְּךָ, וְאֶהְלֹלֶה שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
 גְּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמִהֲלָל מְאֹד, וְלִגְדֹלְתוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר.
 דוֹר לְדוֹר יִשְׁבַח מִעַשְׂיָהּ, וּגְבוּרַתֶּיךָ יִגִּידוּ.
 הִדָּר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ, וְדַבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁיחָה.
 וְעֲזוֹז נוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ יֹאמְרוּ, וּגְדֹלְתֶךָ אֶסְפְּרֶנָּה.
 זָכַר רַב טוֹבֶךָ יִבְיָעוּ, וְצִדְקַתֶּךָ יִרְנְנוּ.
 חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה, אֲרוּךְ אַפַּיִם וּגְדֹל־חַסֵּד.
 טוֹב יְהוָה לְכֹל, וְרַחֲמָיו עַל כָּל־מַעַשְׂיוֹ.
 יוֹדוּךָ יְהוָה כָּל־מַעַשְׂיָהּ, וְחִסְדֵיךָ יִבְרַכּוּכָה.
 כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתֶךָ יֹאמְרוּ, וּגְבוּרַתֶךָ יִדְבְּרוּ.
 לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבַנְיֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרַתִּי, וּכְבוֹד הִדָּר מַלְכוּתוֹ.
 מַלְכוּתֶךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֲלָמִים, וּמִמְשַׁלְתֶּךָ בְּכָל־דוֹר וָדוֹר.
 סוֹמֵךְ יְהוָה לְכָל־הַנְּפֹלִים, וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכְּפוּפִים.
 עֵינַי כָּל אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁבְּרוּ, וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן לָהֶם אֶת־אֲכָלָם בְּעֵתוֹ.
 פּוֹתַח אֶת־יְדֶךָ, וּמִשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רִצּוֹן.
 צַדִּיק יְהוָה בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו, וְחֹסֵד בְּכָל־מַעַשְׂיוֹ.
 קְרוֹב יְהוָה לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו, לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵהוּ בְּאֵמֶת.
 רִצּוֹן יִרְאוּ יַעֲשֶׂה, וְאֶת־שׁוֹעֲתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם.
 שׁוֹמֵר יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־אֲהָבָיו, וְאֶת כָּל־הַרְשָׁעִים יִשְׁמִיד.

תְּהִלַּת יְהוָה יִדְבְּרֶנּוּ פִי,
 וַיְבָרֶךְ כָּל־בְּשָׂר שֵׁם קֹדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
 תהלים קמה

וְאֶנְחָנוּ נְבָרֶךְ יְהוָה, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. הִלְלוּיָהּ.

6 PSALM 145 (ASHREI). This psalm, which was treasured by the ancient rabbis, is recited thrice daily. It was in liturgical use during the Second Temple period, as attested by the Dead Sea Scrolls, where it appears with a congregational response attached to each verse: "Blessed is Adonai and blessed is God's name." Psalm 145 begins and ends with personal verses of praise. In between, the author affirms God's sovereignty and insists that God's rule is one of love and compassion.

Two additional verses (Psalm 84:5 and 144:15), both of which begin with the word *ashrei*, "joyous," were added to the opening, apparently in imitation of the Book of Psalms itself, which opens with that word. The reference to God's house evokes those praying in the synagogue. Psalm 115:18 was appended to the end, transforming the prayer from the first-person singular to the plural, and thus creating a bridge to the five "Halleluyah" psalms that follow.

Ashrei is an alphabetical acrostic—although it is missing a verse beginning with the letter *nun*—and thus easy to memorize, which may help to explain its popularity in Jewish liturgy. Many readers relate

to individual verses more than to the literary flow of the whole poem. It is the only psalm explicitly called a *t'hillah*, "a song of praise," though the entire Book of Psalms is called by the plural *Sefer T'hillim*.

JOYOUS אֲשֶׁרִי. The Hebrew word covers a spectrum of emotions: happy, blessed, contented.

ADONAI SUPPORTS ALL WHO FALTER סוֹמֵךְ יְהוָה לְכָל־הַנְּפֹלִים. This verse marks a turning point in the psalm. Until now, the poet has praised God's greatness and splendor; now, the focus shifts to God's concern for those in need. Here, God's sovereignty is primarily manifest in love and care.

ALL THAT IS MORTAL כָּל־בְּשָׂר. In Psalm 145, there are no references to the Temple, to Israel, or to historical events. God is here depicted as the sovereign of the world who cares for all creatures.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, הַלְלוּהוּ בַּמְרוֹמִים.
הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־מַלְאָכָיו, הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־צָבָאֵיו,
הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵשׁ וְיִרְחָ, הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵי אוֹר,
הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְהַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל הַשָּׁמַיִם.
יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה, כִּי הוּא צְוָה וְנִבְרָאוּ,
וַיַּעֲמִידֵם לְעֵד לְעוֹלָם, חֲקֻנְתָּן וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר.

הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן הָאָרֶץ, תַּנְיִינִים וְכָל־תְּהוֹמוֹת.
אֵשׁ וּבָרָד שֶׁלֵּג וְקִיטוֹר, רוּחַ סַעֲרָה עֹשֶׂה דְבָרוֹ.
הַהָרִים וְכָל־גְּבָעוֹת, עֵץ פְּרִי וְכָל־אֲרָזִים.
הַחַיָּה וְכָל־בְּהֵמָה, רֶמֶשׂ וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף.
מַלְכֵי אֲרֶץ וְכָל־לְאֻמִּים, שָׂרִים וְכָל־שֹׁפְטֵי אֲרֶץ.
בַּחֲוָרִים וְגַם בְּתוֹלוֹת, זְקֵנִים עִם נְעָרִים.
יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה, כִּי נִשְׁגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבָדוֹ,
הוֹדוּ עַל אֲרֶץ וּשְׁמַיִם.

◀ וַיָּרֶם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ תְהִלָּה לְכָל־חַסִּידָיו,
לְבַנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קִרְבוֹ, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמח

PSALM 148. As we approach the conclusion of the Book of Psalms and of the morning recitation of songs of praise, the rhythmic intensity increases. The key word *halleluyah*, "praise Yah," or some other form of the root *h-l-l*, "praise," appears twelve times in this psalm. Using short, rhythmic, staccato phrases, the psalmist calls upon all creatures and all parts of the universe to join in praise of the creator. The psalm is divided into two parts, which describe the fullness of praise offered in heaven and on earth. In the first part, the heavens and all that they contain are called upon to offer praise; then the earth and all its creatures are enjoined to do likewise. The psalm draws to a close with the entire human family praising God, and then ends with God's praise of the people Israel.

חֲקֻנְתָּן FIXED THE BOUNDARIES THEY NEVER CROSS וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר. In this image, each sphere of heaven occupies a different level. Stars, for instance, can move within their own sphere but not above or below, lest they collide with other heavenly objects.

קִיטוֹר SANDSTORMS. The Hebrew word describes a smokelike plume rising from earth to the sky, and the context implies some condition related to weather, though the specific referent is an educated guess.

אֲרָזִים EVERGREENS. Literally "cedars," the most sturdy evergreen in the Middle East. The contrast is critical here: fruit trees are seasonal but their produce is significant, while cedars are evergreens but produce no fruit. The idea of totality is expressed through a series of contrasts: wild and domesticated animals, rulers and subjects, young and old.

עִם קִרְבוֹ BELOVED OF THE DIVINE. More literally, "those who are close to the Divine."

9

הַלְלוּ יְהוָה,
הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקֹדֶשׁוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקְיעַ עֲזוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בַּגְּבוּרֹתָיו, הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גְּדֻלוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֶף וּמְחֹל, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעֶגְב.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי שִׁמְעַ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה.
◀ כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.
כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.

תהלים קג

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן, שֶׁכֵּן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים 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."

On Festivals, the leader begins here:

הָאֵל בְּתַעֲצֻמוֹת עֲזָרָה,
הַגָּדוֹל בְּכְבוֹד שְׁמָה,
הַגָּבוֹר לְנִצְחָה,
וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּנוֹרְאוֹתָיָה,
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיּוֹשֵׁב עַל פְּסָא רָם וְנִשְׂאָה.

On Shabbat, the leader begins here:

שׁוֹכֵן עַד, מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ.
וְכַתּוּב, רִנְנוּ צְדִיקִים בַּיהוָה, לְיִשְׂרָאֵל נְאוּה תְהִלָּה.

בְּפִי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלֵּל,
וּבְדַבְרֵי צְדִיקִים תִּתְבָּרַךְ,
וּבְלִשׁוֹן חֲסִידִים תִּתְרוֹמֵם,
וּבְקֶרֶב קְדוֹשִׁים תִּתְקַדָּשׁ.

וּבְמִקְהֵלוֹת רַבּוֹת עִמָּךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּרִנָּה יִתְפָּאֵר שְׁמֶךָ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, בְּכָל־דּוֹר וְדוֹר.
שִׁינְךָ חֹבֵת פְּלִי־הַיְצוּרִים לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], לְהוֹדוֹת, לְהִלָּל, לְשַׁבַּח, לְפָאֵר,
לְרוֹמֵם, לְהַדָּר, לְבָרַךְ, לְעִלָּה וּלְקַלֵּס, עַל כָּל־דַּבְרֵי
שִׁירוֹת וְתַשְׁבְּחוֹת דָּוִד בְּיַשִּׁי עַבְדְּךָ מְשִׁיחֶךָ.

הָאֵל סוֹד. An anonymous early medieval poet created a short poem elaborating each of the adjectives associated with God at the beginning of the first paragraph of the Amidah (*ha-El ha-gadol ha-gibor v'ha-nora*, "Great, mighty, awe-inspiring God"), concluding with the description from the end of that Amidah blessing where God is called *melekh*, sovereign.

שׁוֹכֵן עַד. At this point there is a shift to the formal morning service, which is marked musically and in some cases by a change of prayer leader. On festivals, there is a more elaborate description of the relationship to God and so the shift occurs earlier at *ha-El* ("God," at the top of this page).

SING רִנְנוּ. Psalm 33:1.

YOU ARE EXALTED IN THE SPEECH OF THE UPRIGHT בְּפִי יִשְׂרָאֵל. The vision of God seated in heaven pans out to the chorus of the faithful singing on earth. Note that the second word of each line is an acrostic spelling out the name "Isaac" (*yitzhak*).

יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמֶךָ לְעַד מְלַכְנוּ, הָאֵל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ
 בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ. כִּי לְךָ נִאֲחָה, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
 אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ],
 שִׁיר וּשְׁבַחָה, הַלֵּל וְזִמְרָה, עֵז וּמְשֻׁלָּה, נְצַח,
 גְּדֻלָּה וּגְבוּרָה, תְּהִלָּה וְתַפְאֲרָת, קְדוּשָׁה וּמְלֻכוֹת.
 בְּרֻכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
 אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל בְּתַשְׁבְּחוֹת, אֵל הַהוֹדָאוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת,
 הַבוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זִמְרָה, מְלֶכֶה אֵל, חַי הָעוֹלָמִים.

MAY YOUR NAME BE
 PRAISED שְׁתַּבַּח. This
b'rakhah marks the com-
 pletion of P'sukei D'zimra,
 which began with Barukh
 She-amar on page 122. The
 two *b'rakhot* are consid-
 ered complementary and
 one is not recited without
 the other; the psalms and
 biblical passages of P'sukei
 D'zimra are preceded and
 followed by these formal
 blessings, just as the Torah
 reading itself is surrounded
 by blessings.

חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

Leader:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֻלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא, בְּרַעוּתָהּ,
 וְיִמְלִיךָ מְלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוּן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוּן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
 יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזַמְן קָרִיב, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

HATZI KADDISH. In Jewish
 liturgical usage, the Hatzki
 (or "partial") Kaddish, call-
 ing us to praise the name
 of God, marks the end of a
 section of the service.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהִי אֵל שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמֵיָא.

Leader:

יְתַבְּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
 וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא, בְּרוּיָךְ הוּא,
 לְעֻלְמָא מִן כָּל־ [לְעֻלְמָא לְעֻלְמָא מְכָל־] *[on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:*
 בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תַּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא דְאִמְרוּן בְּעֻלְמָא,
 וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

10

קריאת שמע וברכותיה

רְשׁוֹת לְבָרְכוּ
מִשְׁגִּיב בְּכַחוּ מִי בְלָתוֹ וְכִמְהוּ?
כִּי הוּא מְקוֹר הַבַּל, יִצְרוּ וְעִשְׂהוּ.
כֵּן לוֹ דְמוֹת עֵינַי לֹא רְאִיתָהּ, בְּלָתִי
נִפְשׁ בְּלֵב תִּפְיֵר אֹתוֹ וְתִצְפֶּהוּ;
עֵצָם כְּבוֹדוֹ הַכִּיל כָּל, וְכֵן נִקְרָא:
מְקוֹם לְכָל כִּי לֹא מְקוֹם יִכְלֶהוּ,
רְאָה וְלֹא נִרְאִיתָ, לְרְאָה וְלֹא נִרְאָה
בְּאֵי וְהוֹדִי אֶת־אֲדֹנָי וּבְרַכְהוּ.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RECITATION OF THE SH'MA.
The call to worship marks the formal beginning of the Shaḥarit (morning) service. Shaḥarit always includes two central moments: the Recitation of the Sh'ma, and the Amidah (the silent prayer). *B'rakhot* surrounding the Sh'ma serve to interpret the themes of its biblical verses. Preceding the Sh'ma, in which we declare that God is one, are two *b'rakhot*. The first affirms that God is the creator of all, further remarking on the wonder of creation and the morning light. The first paragraph of the Sh'ma speaks of the love for God, and so the second *b'rakhah* acknowledges the inverse: God's love of the people Israel as manifest in the gifts of the teachings of Torah. A single *b'rakhah* follows the morn-

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

Leader:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה הַמְּבַרְךְ.

Congregation, then the leader repeats:

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבַרְךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

We are seated.

ing recitation of the Sh'ma; it speaks of redemption, reflecting the theme of the exodus from Egypt, which is introduced in the third paragraph of the Sh'ma.

ALMIGHTY מִשְׁגִּיב בְּכַחוּ. A meditation for Bar'khu written by Yehudah Halevi (Spain, d. 1141).

BAR'KHU: THE CALL TO WORSHIP TOGETHER. The leader calls the congregation together as a *minyan*; the congregation, by responding, acknowledges its being assembled for prayer.

TO WHOM ALL PRAISE IS DIRECTED הַמְּבַרְךְ. The Talmud of the Land of Israel explains the word *ha-m'vorakh* to mean "whom all of us praise" (Berakhot 7:3).

12

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ,
עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת־הַכֹּל.

On Festivals occurring on weekdays, we continue in the middle of page 152.

On Shabbat, we recite:

13

הַכֹּל יוֹדוּךָ
וְהַכֹּל יִשְׁבַּחְךָ,
וְהַכֹּל יֵאמְרוּ אֵין קְדוֹשׁ כִּיהוּה.
הַכֹּל יְרוֹמְמוּךָ סֵלָה,
יוֹצֵר הַכֹּל.

הָאֵל הַפּוֹתֵחַ בְּכָל־יּוֹם דְּלִתּוֹת שַׁעְרֵי מִזְרַח
וּבוֹקֵעַ חֲלוֹנֵי רִקִּיעַ,
מוֹצִיא חַמָּה מִמְּקוֹמָהּ וּלְבָנָה מִמְּכוֹן שְׁבִתָּהּ,
וּמְאִיר לְעוֹלָם כָּלוּ וּלְיוֹשְׁבֵי שְׁבָרָא בְּמִדַּת רַחֲמִים.
הַמְאִיר לְאָרֶץ וְלְדָרִים עֲלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְטוֹבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל־יּוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית.
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְרוֹמֵם לְבָדוֹ מְאֹד,
הַמְּשַׁבֵּחַ וְהַמְּפָאֵר וְהַמְּתַנַּשֵּׂא מִימּוֹת עוֹלָם.
אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ,

אֲדוֹן עֲזָנוּ צוּר מְשַׁגְּבָנוּ.
מִגֵּן יִשְׁעָנוּ מְשֻׁבָּב בְּעַדְדָנוּ.

14

אֵין כְּעֶרְכְּךָ וְאֵין זוֹלָתְךָ,
אֶפְס בְּלִתְךָ וּמִי דוֹמָה לָךְ.
אֵין כְּעֶרְכְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה
וְאֵין זוֹלָתְךָ מִלְּכָנוּ לְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא.
אֶפְס בְּלִתְךָ גּוֹאֲלָנוּ לִימּוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ
וְאֵין דוֹמָה לָךְ מוֹשִׁיעָנוּ לְתַחֲיִית הַמֵּתִים.

יוֹצֵר אוֹר FORMING LIGHT
This opening *b'rakhah* before the Sh'ma acknowledges that we experience God, first of all, through witnessing the miracle of creation. Praying in the morning, we are asked to pay attention to the wonder of the dawn, of sunlight, and of a new day. In the liturgy, the break of dawn is then imagined as a chorus of song in which we join.

This *b'rakhah* is adapted from a verse in Isaiah (45:7), which reads *oseh shalom u-vorei ra*, "who makes peace and creates evil." The prophet insists that both good and evil come from the one God. But in the moment of prayer, we focus on all for which we can be thankful, beginning with the light that makes life possible; therefore, the ancient rabbis transformed this biblical verse and changed the ending to read "creating all."

הַכֹּל ALL. The word *hakol*, "all," occurs five times in quick succession and refers to the totality of humanity, all earthly creatures and forces, as well as the heavenly bodies and the most distant galaxies. It echoes the last word of the opening *b'rakhah* (*borei et ha-kol*, "creating all," at the top of this page) and anticipates the affirmation of the one God, who is God of all, and whom we are about to praise in the Sh'ma.

NONE IS LIKE YOU אֵין כְּעֶרְכְּךָ. The poet is playing with a variety of biblical verses: Isaiah 40:18, "what image can be ascribed to You"; 1 Samuel 2:2, "there is none beside You"; and Isaiah 40:25, "to whom can you compare God."

MESSIANIC AGE לִימּוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ. The poet progresses through stages of redemption from *olam ha-ba*, the world that is coming, to *y'mot ha-mashiah*, the messianic age, to *t'hiyat ha-meitim*, life given to the dead.

אל אֲדוֹן עַל כָּל־הַמַּעֲשִׂים,
בְּרוּךְ וּמְבָרֵךְ בְּפִי כָּל־נְשָׁמָה,
גְּדֹלוֹ וְטוֹבוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם,
דַּעַת וְתְבוּנָה סוֹבְבִים אוֹתוֹ.

הַמְתַּנַּאֵה עַל חַיּוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ,
וְנִהְדָּר בְּכְבוֹד עַל הַמְרַכְּבָה,
זְכוּת וּמִישׁוֹר לְפָנַי כְּסֵאוֹ,
חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים לְפָנַי כְּבוֹדוֹ.

טוֹבִים מְאֹרֹת שְׁפָרָא אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
יְצָרָם בְּדַעַת בְּבִינָה וּבְהַשְׁפֵּל,
כַּח וּגְבוּרָה נָתַן בָּהֶם,
לְחַיּוֹת מוֹשְׁלִים בְּקָרֵב תֵּבֵל.

מְלֵאִים זֵיו וּמְפִיקִים נְגִיָּה,
נֶאֱדָה זֵיוֹם בְּכָל־הָעוֹלָם,
שְׂמֵחִים בְּצִאתָם וְשֹׁשְׁעִים בְּבוֹאָם,
עֹשִׂים בְּאֵימָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם.

פָּאֵר וְכְבוֹד נוֹתְנִים לְשֵׁמוֹ,
צָהֳלָה וְרִנָּה לְזִכְרֵךְ מְלִכּוֹתוֹ.
קָרָא לְשֵׁמֶשׁ וַיִּזְרַח אוֹר,
רָאָה וְהִתְקִין צוּרַת הַלְּבָנָה.

שְׁבַח נוֹתְנִים לוֹ כָּל־צְבָא מְרוֹם,
תְּפִאֶרֶת וּגְדֻלָּה, שְׂרָפִים וְאוֹפַנִּים וְחַיּוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ.

GOD, MASTER אֵל אֲדוֹן. This *piyyut*, commonly attributed to mystics of the 1st millennium, uses imagery based on the visions of Ezekiel that describe a variety of heavenly hosts. It further develops the theme enunciated in the previous prayers that everything in creation praises God. Here that thought is extended to the heavenly hosts: even heavenly powers offer praise to God. The use of an alphabetical acrostic may suggest that God's word is the primary constitutive element of all creation.

HAPPY שְׂמֵחִים. Not infrequently in alphabetical poetry, the letter *sin* (ש) is substituted for the similarly sounding *samekh* (ס), as it is here. Such substitutions are even found in biblical acrostics. Most, if not all, worshippers in ancient times did not have prayer-books, and this substitution is quite natural in an oral culture.

S'RAFIM . . . OFANIM שְׂרָפִים . . . אוֹפַנִּים. Angelic songs figure prominently in ancient mystical texts. Descriptions of different groups of angels singing hymns to God surely mirrored the seekers' own

mystical experiences. The angels pictured here are closest to God's throne. In Jewish mystical thought, the *ofanim* are the wheels of God's chariot, first mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel; the *s'rafim* are the fiery angels pictured as flaming serpents in Isaiah's vision of heaven. The holy beings (*hayot ha-kodesh*) were thought of as the legs upholding God's throne.

15

On Shabbat, we continue:

לְאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַת מִכָּל-הַמַּעֲשִׂים, בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַתְּעַלָּה
 וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל פְּסָא כְבוֹדוֹ, תִּפְאָרַת עֶטָה לְיוֹם הַמְּנוּחָה, עֲנִג
 קָרָא לְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיט. זֶה שְׁבִיחַ שֶׁל יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי, שָׁבוּ שְׁבִיחַ
 אֵל מִכָּל-מְלֵאכֶתוֹ. וַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִשְׁבַּח וְאוֹמֵר: מְזֻמּוֹר
 שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיחַ, טוֹב לְהַדוֹת לַיהוָה. לְפִיכֶן יִפְאָרוּ
 וַיְבָרְכוּ לְאֵל כָּל-יִצְוֵרָיו. שְׁבִיחַ יִקָּר וַיִּגְדֹּלָה יִתְנֹו לְאֵל מְלֶכֶךְ
 יוֹצֵר כָּל, הַמְּנַחֵיל מְנוּחָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ בְּיוֹם
 שְׁבִיחַ קִדְשׁ. שְׁמֵךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִתְקַדֵּשׁ, וְזִכְרֶךָ מִלִּפְנֵינוּ
 יִתְפָּאֵר, בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת.
 ◀ תִּתְבָּרֵךְ מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ, עַל שְׁבִיחַ מַעֲשֵׂה יְדִיךָ,
 וְעַל מְאֹרֵי אוֹר שְׁעֵשִׂית, יִפְאָרוּךְ סֵלָה.

Continue on the next page.

GOD, WHO CEASED WORK
 לְאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַת. This prayer forms a continuous narrative out of a disparate series of biblical verses and rabbinic comments. Already in the Bible, the seventh day is spoken of as affecting God's inner life: God was renewed (*va-yinafash*) on the seventh day (Exodus 31:17). The ancient rabbis pictured God as achieving full sovereignty only on Shabbat, and they personified the relationship in mutual terms: Shabbat itself praises God and chants Psalm 92, "A Song of Shabbat."

On Festivals occurring on weekdays, we recite:

הַמְּאִיר לְאָרֶץ וְלְדָרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים,
 וּבְטוֹבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל-יוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.
 מָה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה, כָּלֵם בְּחֻכְמָה עֲשִׂית,
 מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ.
 הַמְּלֶכֶךְ הַמְּרוֹמֵם לְבָדוֹ מְאֹד,
 הַמְּשַׁבַּח וְהַמְּפָאֵר וְהַמְּתַנַּשֵּׂא מִימֹת עוֹלָם,
 אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ,
 אֲדוֹן עֲזָנוּ, צוֹר מְשַׁבְּבֵנוּ, מְגַן יִשְׁעֵנוּ, מְשַׁבֵּב בְּעַדְנוּ.

HOW VARIED ARE YOUR WORKS
 מָה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ
 Psalm 104:24.

ALMIGHTY, BLESSED אֵל וְבָרוּךְ. This early anonymous acrostic poem has four beats to the line and a rhyming pattern of *aa, bb, cc*, with a concluding *b*. Joel Hoffman, a contemporary scholar, writes: "The meaning of the individual words here was never the point. They were chosen for their meter and their initial letter." In this conception, the Hebrew alphabet itself is seen as an instrument of creation. Our translation here is impelled by this idea and is alphabetical, capturing the meaning of the text in a close, but not quite literal, translation.

אֵל בְּרוּךְ, גְּדוֹל יְדָעָה,
 הַכִּין וּפָעַל זֶהָרִי חֲמָה.
 טוֹב יֵצֵר כְּבוֹד לְשִׁמוֹ.
 מְאֹרוֹת נָתַן סְבִיבוֹת עֲזוֹ.
 פְּנוֹת צָבָאוֹ קְדוֹשִׁים,
 רוֹמְמֵי שְׁדֵי, תְּמִיד מְסַפְּרִים
 כְּבוֹד אֵל וּקְדוּשָׁתוֹ.
 ◀ תִּתְבָּרֵךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל שְׁבִיחַ מַעֲשֵׂה יְדִיךָ,
 וְעַל מְאֹרֵי אוֹר שְׁעֵשִׂית יִפְאָרוּךְ סֵלָה.

ALWAYS סֵלָה. The biblical meaning of this word, which occurs frequently in the Book of Psalms, is unknown. The ancient rabbis, interpreting the biblical text, thought that it meant "forever," and that is its liturgical meaning here.

תְּתַבְרַךְ צוּרֵנוּ מַלְכֵנוּ וְגֹאֲלֵנוּ בּוֹרֵא קְדוּשִׁים.
יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמֶךָ לְעַד מַלְכֵנוּ, יוֹצֵר מְשֻׁרְתִים,
וְאֲשֶׁר מְשֻׁרְתֵיו כָּלֶם עוֹמְדִים בְּרוּם עוֹלָם
וּמְשֻׁמֵיעִים בְּיִרְאָה יַחַד בְּקוֹל,
דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמְלַךְ עוֹלָם.

◀ כָּלֶם אֱהוּבִים, כָּלֶם בְּרוּרִים, כָּלֶם גְּבוּרִים,
וְכָלֶם עוֹשִׂים בְּאֵימָה וּבְיִרְאָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם.
וְכָלֶם פּוֹתְחִים אֶת־פִּיהֶם בְּקִדְשָׁה וּבְטָהֳרָה,
בְּשִׁירָה וּבְזִמְרָה, וּמְבָרְכִים וּמְשַׁבְּחִים,
וּמְפָאֲרִים וּמְעֲרִיצִים, וּמְקַדִּישִׁים וּמְמַלְכִים:

אֶת־שֵׁם הָאֵל, הַמְּלַךְ הַגָּדוֹל, הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא קְדוּשׁ הוּא.
◀ וְכָלֶם מְקַבְּלִים עֲלֵיהֶם עַל מַלְכוּת שְׁמִים זֶה מְזֶה,
וְנוֹתְנִים רְשׁוֹת זֶה לְזֶה, לְהַקְדִּישׁ לְיוֹצְרָם בְּנִחְת רוּחַ,
בְּשִׁפָּה בְּרוּרָה וּבִנְעִימָה קְדוּשָׁה, כָּלֶם בְּאֶחָד
עוֹנִים וְאוֹמְרִים בְּיִרְאָה:

קְדוּשׁ, קְדוּשׁ, קְדוּשׁ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֵא כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

◀ וְהַאֹפְנָיִם וְחַיּוֹת הַקִּדָּשׁ בְּרַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל מִתְנַשְּׂאִים
לְעִמַּת שְׂרָפִים, לְעִמַּתֶּם מְשַׁבְּחִים וְאוֹמְרִים:
בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

לְאֵל בְּרוּךְ, נְעִימוֹת יִתְנֶנּוּ. לְמַלְךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם,
זְמִירוֹת יֵאמְרוּ, וְתִשְׁבְּחוּת יִשְׁמִיעוּ. כִּי הוּא לְבָדוּ
פּוֹעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת, עוֹשֶׂה חֲדָשׁוֹת,
בַּעַל מַלְחָמוֹת, זוֹרֵעַ צְדָקוֹת,
מְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעוֹת, בּוֹרֵא רְפוּאוֹת,
נוֹרָא תְהִלּוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת,

◀ הַמְּחַדֵּשׁ בְּטוּבוֹ בְּכָל־יוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֶׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.
בְּאִמּוֹר: לַעֲשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ.
אוֹר חֲדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תֵּאִיר וְנוֹצֵפָה כְּלָנוּ מְהֵרָה לְאוּרוֹ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

KEDUSHAH D'YOTZER קְדוּשַׁת דְּיוֹצֵר. This version of the Kedushah, recited in the first *b'rakhah* before the Sh'ma, blesses God for the creation of the morning light. Every Kedushah is based on the mystical visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Each prophet described an angelic chorus. Isaiah saw them singing *kadosh, kadosh* ("holy, holy, holy," 6:3); Ezekiel heard them reciting *barukh k'vod Adonai* ("praised is Adonai's glory," 3:12). The Kedushah is placed here, in the blessing of creation, as if to say that both heaven and earth offer praise to God. In the mind of the mystics, all of creation constitutes a praise of God; every created being, animate and inanimate, sings to God.

BEINGS THAT SERVE YOU . . . SERVANTS . . . מְשֻׁרְתִים . . . מְשֻׁרְתֵיו. Rabbinic lore tells of two kinds of angelic creations: those who are part of God's permanent court, like the angels Michael and Gabriel, and those who are created each day to be conveyers of that day's message, and so the liturgist talks of both of them as "proclaiming . . . the words of the living sovereign" (Babylonian Talmud, Hagigah 14a).

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

ZION צִיּוֹן. The prayer takes the motif of the light of creation and of the dawn, and ties it to an image of the Temple in Jerusalem as a source of ultimate illumination.

אֶהְבֶּה רַבָּה אֶהְבַּתְנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
 חַמְלָה גְדוּלָה וַיִּתְרָה חַמְלַת עֲלֵינוּ.
 אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵנוּ, בְּעֵבוּר אָבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ]
 שֶׁבִטְחוּ בְךָ וַתִּלְמַדְם חֻקֵי חַיִּים,
 בֶּן תַּחֲנֹנֵנוּ וַתִּלְמַדְנוּ.
 אָבִינוּ, הָאֵב הַרְחֵמֵנוּ, הַמְרַחֵם,
 רַחֵם עֲלֵינוּ וְתֵן בְּלִבֵּנוּ לְהִבִּין וּלְהַשְׁכִּיל,
 לְשִׁמְעַ, לְלַמֵּד וּלְלַמֵּד, לְשָׁמֵר וּלְעֲשׂוֹת
 וּלְקַיֵּם אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי תִלְמוּד תּוֹרָתְךָ 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."

וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ,
 18 וְדִבְק לִבֵּנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
 וַיַּחַד לְבַבְנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת־שִׁמְךָ,
 וְלֹא נִבּוֹשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
 כִּי בְשֵׁם קֹדֶשְׁךָ הַגְּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא בִּטְחָנוּ,
 נְגִילָה וְנִשְׁמַחָה בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ.

AVINU MALKEINU אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵנוּ. 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."

Some gather their tzitzit before reciting this line:

◀ וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת הָאָרֶץ,
 וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ,
 19 כִּי אֵל פּוֹעֵל יִשׁוּעוֹת אֲתָהּ,
 וּבָנוּ בְּחֵרֶת מְכַלְעִים וְלִשׁוֹן,
 וְקִרְבָּתְנוּ לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל סִלָּה בְּאֵמֶת,
 לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ וּלְיַחַדְךָ בְּאַהֲבָה.
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַבּוֹחֵר בְּעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה.

LAWS OF LIFE חֻקֵי 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 לְהִבִּין וּלְהַשְׁכִּיל . . . 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.

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 נְאֻמָּן.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

Recited quietly: בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלָכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

וְאֶהְבֶּתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ
וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ
הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָיִךְ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשַׁבְּתֶךָ
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתּוֹתֶיךָ בְּדֶרֶךְךָ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶיךָ:
וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאָזְנוֹת עַל-יָדֶיךָ 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 נְאֻמָּן. 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 שְׁמַע. 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 בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם. 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 וּכְתַבְתָּם 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.

וְהָיָה אִם-שָׁמַעַתְּ תִשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֶנְכִּי מְצַוֶּה
 אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעֲבֹדוֹ בְּכָל-
 לְבַבְכֶם וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁכֶם: וְנָתַתִּי מִטֶּר-אֲרָצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה
 וּמִלְקוֹשׁ וְאִסְפַּת דְּגָנְךָ וְתִירֶשֶׁךָ וְיִצְהַרְךָ: וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב
 בְּשִׂדְךָ לְבַהֲמֹתֶךָ וְאֶכְלֹת וּשְׂבַעְתָּ: הַשְׁמֵרוּ לָכֶם פֶּן-יִפְתָּה
 לְבַבְכֶם וְסָרְתֶם וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם
 לָהֶם: וְחָרָה אַף-יְהוָה בְּכֶם וְעָצַר אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְאִי-הֵיחָה
 מִטֶּר וְהִאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת-יְבוּלָהּ וְאֶבַדְתֶּם מִהָרָה מֵעַל
 הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה נָתַן לָכֶם: וּשְׁמַתֶּם אֶת-דִּבְרֵי
 אֱלֹהַ עַל-לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל-נַפְשְׁכֶם וּקְשֹׁרְתֶם אֹתָם לְאוֹת
 עַל-יְדֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם: וּלְמַדְתֶּם אֹתָם
 אֶת-בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ
 וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וּכְתַבְתֶּם עַל-מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:
 לְמַעַן יִרְבּוּ יְמֵיכֶם וְיָמֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע
 יְהוָה לְאַבְתֵּיכֶם לֵתֵת לָהֶם כִּימֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

דברים יא: יג-טז

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל-כַּנְּפֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם
 לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל-צִיצִית הַכֶּנֶף פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה
 לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה
 וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא תִתּוּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם
 אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם
 אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם מִצְרַיִם לְהִיּוֹת
 לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

במדבר טו: לז-מא

אֵמֶת

When there is a minyan, the leader adds:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם - אֵמֶת -

וַיִּצִיב וְנִכּוֹן וְקָיָם וַיִּשָּׂר וְנִאֶמַן וְאֶהוּב וְחָבִיב וְנִחְמָד
 וְנִעֵים וְנוֹרָא וְאֶדִיר וְמִתְקַן וְמִקְבָּל וְטוֹב וְיָפֵה הַדָּבָר
 הַזֶּה עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

IF YOU WILL HEAR אִם וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמַעַתְּ. This paragraph suggests a direct relationship between the righteousness of our acts and our fate. If we are good, God will be good to us, and vice versa. That theology was questioned throughout the ages and even by biblical writers themselves, most sharply in the Book of Job. Nevertheless, it does speak to a deep human need to see a world as containing a moral balance between good and evil. What is expressed here in concrete terms may be understood more broadly: moral and immoral actions have consequences, both seen and unseen.

צִיצִית. The biblical scholar Israel Knohl, expanding a medieval Jewish comment, suggests that the word *tzitzit* may derive from *tzitz*, a headband worn by the High Priest and tied in back with a *p'til t'khelet*, a "thread of blue." On it were the words קדש קדש ליהוה (*kodesh ladonai*), "holy before Adonai." Wearing the *tzitzit* (literally, the "little *tzitz*"), we are asked to serve God in a holy way, much as the High Priest did; thus the paragraph commands us to be "holy before your God." The act of wearing *tzitzit* turns us all, metaphorically, into High Priests.

TRULY אֵמֶת. The tradition read the word *emet*, "truly," as referring both backward and forward: it is the first word of the following paragraph and is also recited as if it were the last word of the preceding paragraph.

continued

אֱמֶת אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם מִלְפָּנֶינוּ, צוֹר יַעֲקֹב מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ.

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לְדוֹר וָדוֹר הוּא קָיָם וּשְׁמוֹ קָיָם, וְכִסָּאוֹ נָכוֹן
וּמְלָכוּתוֹ וְאֱמוּנָתוֹ לְעַד קַיָּמָת.

וּדְבָרָיו חַיִּים וְקַיָּמִים, נְאֻמָּנִים וְנִחְמָדִים,
לְעַד וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים, עַל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ]
וְעַלֵינוּ, עַל בְּנֵינוּ וְעַל דּוֹרוֹתֵינוּ, וְעַל כָּל־דּוֹרוֹת
זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל עַבְדֶּיךָ. עַל הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים וְעַל הָאַחֲרוֹנִים
דְּבַר טוֹב וְקָיָם לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,

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אֱמֶת שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ], מִלְפָּנֶינוּ, מִלְפָּנֶי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ],
גִּבּוֹר גָּאֵל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ], יוֹצֵרֵנוּ, צוֹר יִשׁוּעָתֵנוּ,
פוֹדֵנוּ וּמְצִילֵנוּ מֵעוֹלָם שְׁמֵךְ, אֵין אֱלֹהִים זוֹלָתֶךָ.

עֲזַרְתָּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ] אֶתָּה הוּא מֵעוֹלָם,
מִגֵּן וּמוֹשִׁיעַ לְבְנֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדוֹר.
בְּרוּם עוֹלָם מוֹשֶׁבֶךָ,
וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ וְצִדְקָתְךָ עַד אֶפְסֵי אֶרֶץ.
אֲשֶׁרִי אִישׁ שִׁשְׁמַע לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ,
וְתוֹרָתְךָ וּדְבָרְךָ יִשִּׁים עַל לְבוֹ.
אֱמֶת אֶתָּה הוּא אֲדוֹן לְעַמֶּךָ,
וּמִלְכֶךָ גִּבּוֹר לְרִיב רִיבָם.
אֱמֶת אֶתָּה הוּא רֵאשׁוֹן, וְאֶתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן,
וּמִבְּלַעֲדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מִלְכֶךָ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ.

continued
Read forward, the word affirms what follows: credal statements spelling out the implications of the Sh'ma; each statement is preceded by the word *emet*, thus articulating a kind of Jewish creed. Read backward, it refers to God, who is identified with truth.

The phrase is based on the words of Jeremiah, "Adonai is true (*Adonai emet*), is truly the living God, and the sovereign of time and the world" (10:10). Additionally, another biblical meaning of the word *emet* is steadfastness or faithfulness. In this interpretation, what is affirmed is that God will always be present for us.

TRULY THIS TEACHING IS CONSTANT וַיֵּצִיב אֱמֶת. Reuven Kimelman, a contemporary liturgical scholar, contends that the "teaching" referred to in this assertion is the Decalogue, which originally preceded the recitation of the Sh'ma in the ancient synagogue. The recitation of the Decalogue was dropped from the liturgy because the rabbis were afraid that people would consider only those com-

mandments as obligatory, as many Christians did. In its current context, the liturgical affirmation refers to the constancy of the entire Torah.

HELP OF OUR ANCESTORS [וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ] עֲזַרְתָּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ]. Two contrasting theological concepts are at work in this blessing. The first emphasizes the value of personal observance of Torah and mitzvot ("Blessed are the ones who attend to Your mitzvot . . ."); the second emphasizes communal redemption and the need for God to destroy oppression, with the exodus from Egypt serving as a paradigm for all future redemptions. The first is non-violent, speaking of personal practice and virtue through performing acts of love and care; the second insists that God must war against evil in order to root it out. These two views echo a talmudic argument as to whether the future redemption will be achieved peacefully or will come through war.

TRULY, YOU WERE AT THE BEGINNING AND YOU WILL BE AT THE END וְאֶתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן. A similar expression, "I am the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end," is quoted three times in the Christian testament. The wording of this prayer may have been deliberately polemical at the time it was written in antiquity, and intended to oppose Christian theological claims, which were emerging as a rival to Judaism.

מִמְצָרִים גָּאֲלָתָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פְּדִיתָנוּ.
 כָּל־בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם הֲרַגְתָּ וּבְכוֹרְךָ גָּאֲלָתָּ.
 וַיִּזְדִּים טַבַּעַת וַיִּזְדִּים הָעֶבְרֶת

וַיִּכְסּוּ מַיִם צָרִיחָם, אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נֹתַר.
 עַל זֹאת שִׁבְחוּ אֱהוֹבִים, וְרוֹמְמוּ אֵל,
 וְנָתַנוּ יְדִידִים וְזִמְרוֹת שִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת,
 בְּרִכּוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לַמֶּלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם.

רָם וְנִשְׂא, גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא,
 מִשְׁפִּיל גְּאִים וּמְגַבִּיָּה שְׁפָלִים
 מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים וּפּוֹדֵה עַנּוּיִם
 וְעוֹזֵר דָּלִים

וְעוֹנֶה לְעַמּוֹ בַּעֲת שְׁוֹעַם אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

◀ תְּהִלּוֹת לְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּמְבָרָךְ.
 מִשָּׁה וּמִרִים וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָךְ עָנּוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׁמְחָה רַבָּה,
 וְאָמְרוּ כֻלָּם:

מִי כִמְכָה בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה, מִי כִמְכָה נְאֻדָּר בְּקֹדֶשׁ,
 נוֹרָא תְּהִלָּת, עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא.

◀ שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה שִׁבְחוּ גְּאוּלִּים לְשִׁמְךָ עַל שִׁפְתֵי הַיָּם,
 יַחַד כֻּלָּם הוֹדוּ וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ:

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.

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צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל,

קוֹמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,

וּפְדֵה כְּנַאֲמֶךָ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל.

גְּאֲלֵנוּ, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ, קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, גְּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

The Amidah for Festivals is found on page 306.

from Egypt, to the personal prayers that now follow in the Amidah, and recommends that there be no verbal interruption at this point (Berakhot 9b). It is as if to say that the possibility of prayer flows out of our experience of God's love as exhibited in freeing us from slavery.

MOSES, MIRIAM, AND THE PEOPLE ISRAEL. The Torah is emphatic that Moses led the men and Miriam led the women, so that all the people Israel sang the Song at the Sea. (See page 144.)

WHO IS LIKE YOU. The Sh'ma was preceded by the song of the angels, "Holy, holy, holy . . ." and now is followed by our singing a praise of God from the Song at the Sea. Through the recitation of the Sh'ma, our song and the angels' song become a common chorus.

ADONAI WILL REIGN. Exodus 15:18.

ISRAEL. The name "Israel" is repeated four times before the conclusion of the *b'rakhah*, emphasizing the plea for the redemption of the people Israel.

OUR REDEEMER. Isaiah 47:4.

LIBERATED THE PEOPLE ISRAEL. This *b'rakhah*, in contrast to most, concludes with a verb in the past tense. We can properly bless God for the redemptive acts that have already occurred—not those we still hope and pray for (Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 117b).

SH'MA AND THE AMIDAH. The Babylonian Talmud links this last *b'rakhah* of the Recitation of the Sh'ma, mentioning God's redeeming the people Israel

תפילת העמידה לשחרית לשבת

A transliteration of the opening b'rakhot of the Amidah may be found on page 466. When a minyan is present, some communities repeat the Amidah after it is recited silently; others recite the first three blessings (including the Kedushah on page 161) aloud and the rest of the Amidah silently. The Amidah concludes on page 166.

אֲדַנִּי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

יְיָ בְרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם,
אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב,
אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רַבְקָה,
אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל, וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה,
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל, וְזוֹכֵר
חֲסֵדֵי אֲבוֹת [וְאִמּוֹת],
וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבָנָי בְּנֵיָהֶם
לְמַעַן שְׂמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

24

With Patriarchs:

יְיָ בְרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי
יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, הָאֵל
הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,
אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל, וְזוֹכֵר
חֲסֵדֵי אֲבוֹת, וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל
לְבָנָי בְּנֵיָהֶם לְמַעַן שְׂמוֹ
בְּאַהֲבָה.

AMIDAH. The Amidah, literally “the prayer said while standing,” is a moment of personal meditation and is also known as the “Silent Prayer.” It always contains three introductory b'rakhot and three concluding b'rakhot. On Shabbat and festivals, a middle b'rakhah focuses on distinctive themes of the day. Before the Amidah begins we take three steps forward, approaching God's presence. (If there is no room, we first take three steps backward.)

ADONAI, OPEN MY LIPS אֲדַנִּי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח. Psalm 51:17, where prayer is exalted over sacrifice. Rabbi Yohanan (3rd century) recommended that this verse precede the Amidah (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Berakhot 4:4).

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

זְכַרְנוּ לַחַיִּים, מְלֶכֶךְ חַפְּץ בַּחַיִּים,
וְכָתַבְנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים, לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים.

BENDING THE KNEES AND BOWING. Bowing is both a symbolic acknowledgment that our prayers are to God and also a sign of humility on our part. We stand up

straight when we reach God's name, however, for we speak to God face to face (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 12a). The Talmud records disagreement about how deeply one should bow: some say that one should fully bend over, some that one should feel one's spine bending, and others that one should bow only one's head (Berakhot 28b). The Talmud confined bowing to the beginning and end of this first b'rakhah, as well as to the beginning and end of the next-to-last b'rakhah, which thanks God for the gift of life (Berakhot 34a). The sign י indicates the place to bow.

GOD OF ABRAHAM אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם. God uses this language when first addressing Moses, at the burning bush (Exodus 3:5–6). Its inclusion here at the beginning of the Amidah may remind us of the focus and attentiveness that we need to sense God's presence.

REDEEMER גּוֹאֵל. Judaism's messianic impulse reminds us that the world, as broken as it sometimes appears, is ultimately perfectible; God's teachings, carried out by us, will help the world achieve such perfection. Some liberal prayerbooks use the word *ge'ullah*, “redemption,” in place of “redeemer,” to de-emphasize the role of any single individual in facilitating the world's healing.

REMEMBER US זְכַרְנוּ. This brief prayer is the first of four additions to the Amidah during the Ten Days of Repentance. Each of the four phrases of this short addition ends with the word *hayim*, “life.”

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

מֶלֶךְ עֹזֵר וּפּוֹקֵד
וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן.
וְבָרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מֶגֶן אַבְרָהָם וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה.

With Patriarchs:

מֶלֶךְ עֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן.
וְבָרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
מֶגֶן אַבְרָהָם.

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

מְשִׁיב הָרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם, From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah;

[From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add: מוֹרִיד הַטָּל, 24]

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד,
מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים,
סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,
וּמְקַיֵּם אַמּוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפְרַי.
מִי כְמוֹךָ בַּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֵה לָךְ,
מֶלֶךְ יִמְמִית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעָה.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:

מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים, זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים.

וּבְאַמֵּן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְחַיֶּה הַמֵּתִים.

When the Amidah is recited silently, continue on page 162 with אַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ.

SHIELD OF ABRAHAM מֶגֶן

אַבְרָהָם. This phrase is derived from Genesis 15:1, the first time we hear Abraham speak to God. There Abraham—the paragon of faith—expresses to God his fears, skepticism, and insecurity about the fulfillment of God's promises. Authentic prayer may encompass feelings of doubt as well as faith, challenge and frustration as well as praise and gratitude. Some who include the matriarchs at the beginning of this prayer conclude with this ending, so as not to change the received wording of the conclusion of a *b'rakhah*.

GUARDIAN OF SARAH וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה. Or: "the one who remembered Sarah" (after Genesis 21:1). We, who stand here today, are the fruit of God's promise to Abraham and Sarah.

SUPPORT THE FALLING סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים. After Psalm 145:14.

For centuries, human rulers have defined "power" as the ability to exert control over others, often through the threat of physical injury. Quite differently, God's power is described here as manifested as *hesed*, love and generosity, especially to those who are most

vulnerable. The other attributes describing God in this paragraph are also taken from biblical texts: Exodus 15:26 ("heal the sick"), Psalm 146:7 ("loosen the chains of the bound"), and 1 Samuel 2:6 ("brings death and life").

GIVES LIFE TO THE DEAD מְחַיֶּה הַמֵּתִים. Over the millennia, many Jewish perspectives on the afterlife have been proposed. Many sages (including Saadiah Gaon, 10th century, and Maimonides, 12th century) caution against speculation about the specific implications of the doctrine of bodily resurrection of the dead. They understand it to be an articulation of God's supreme power: God cares even for the dead. Some moderns understand that the lives of those who died before us are a part of the stream of life, continuing to affect us, though we can never know precisely how.

The Kedushah is recited only with a minyan.

נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּעוֹלָם,
בְּשֵׁם שְׁמֵקִדְיָשִׁים אוֹתוֹ בְּשָׁמַי מְרוֹם,
בְּכַתּוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאָךְ, וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר:
קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֵא כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

אֲז בְּקוֹל רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל אֲדִיר וְחֹזֵק מִשְׁמַיְעִים קוֹל,
מִתְנַשְׂאִים לְעֵמֶת שְׂרָפִים, לְעֵמֶתְם בְּרוּךְ יֵאמְרוּ:
בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

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מִמְּקוֹמָךְ מִלְּבָבוֹ תוֹפִיעַ, וְתִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ, כִּי מְחַכְּבִים אֲנִיחֵנוּ
לָךְ. מְתִי תִמְלֹךְ בְּצִיּוֹן, בְּקִרְוֹב בְּיָמֵינוּ, לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד תִּשְׁכֹּן.
תִּתְגַּדֵּל וְתִתְקַדֵּשׁ בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירָךְ,
לְדוֹר וָדוֹר וּלְנֶצַח נְצָחִים. וְעֵינֵינוּ תִרְאִינָה מַלְכוּתָךְ,
בְּדִבְרֵי הָאֱמוּנָה בְּשִׁירֵי עֲזָךְ, עַל יְדֵי דָוִד מְשִׁיחַ צְדָקָךְ:
יְמֹלֶךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֵיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדוֹר וָדוֹר, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִגִּיד גְּדֻלָּתְךָ, וּלְנֶצַח נְצָחִים קְדֻשָׁתְךָ בְּקִדְיָשׁ.
וְשִׁבַּחְךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפִּינוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד,
כִּי אֵל מְלֹךְ גָּדוֹל וְקְדוֹשׁ אַתָּה.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ.

On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּלֹךְ הַקְּדוֹשׁ.

We continue on the next page with the Fourth B'rakhah, מְשֶׁה מִשָּׁה.

KEDUSHAH קְדוּשָׁה. In this ancient prayer, composed by Jewish mystics, we imitate the angelic glorification of God. Although it appears in several versions, the Kedushah of the Amidah always contains three biblical quotations: "Holy, holy, holy" (Isaiah 6:3), "Praised is Adonai's glory wherever God dwells" (Ezekiel 3:12), and "Adonai will reign forever" (Psalm 146:10). The liturgy surrounding these verses varies, being more elaborate and expansive on Shabbat and festivals than on weekdays. Because the Kedushah is a call-and-response, it is appropriately recited only with a *minyan*. (adapted from Reuven Hammer)

HOLY קְדוֹשׁ. These are the words that Isaiah heard the angels utter during the profound experience that initiated his prophetic calling (6:3). Holiness is God's essential quality, a quality of which humans can partake when dedicated to God and when acting in imitation of God's mercy and love.

THE WHOLE WORLD IS FILLED WITH GOD'S GLORY מְלֵא כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ. There

are two contrasting themes in the Kedushah: God is to be found everywhere, and God is hidden from us. The paradox of the religious life is that at times we feel a divine presence close at hand and at other times God's absence is terribly palpable.

SERAFIM שְׂרָפִים. On the variety of angelic forms, see page 153.

PRaised IS Adonai's GLORY WHEREVER God DWELLS כְּבוֹד כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ. Ezekiel heard this cry as he was being carried away by a wind, which transported him to preach to his fellow exiles in Babylonia (3:12).

קדיש שלם

26

Leader:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא, פְּרַעוּתָהּ,
וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְנָא קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיף הוּא,
[on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: לְעֵלְא מִן כָּל־ לְעֵלְא לְעֵלְא מְכַל־
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא דְאַמְיָרָן בְּעֵלְמָא,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.]

יִתְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתָהּ וּבְעוֹתָהּ וּדְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל קָדָם אַבוּהוֹן
דִּי בְשִׁמְיָא וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

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

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יְשׁוּבֵי תַבְּלָא],
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

KADDISH SHALEM. Every service that features an Amidah is brought to a close with Kaddish Shalem, the complete Kaddish, so called because in addition to the words of the Kaddish recited at other times in the service, it adds a line asking God to accept our prayers: "May the prayers and pleas of all Israel be accepted by their creator in heaven." Here, the placement of Kaddish Shalem marks the end of the morning Shabbat prayers. The liturgy now moves on to the Torah service.

In a formal sense, though introduced and followed by *b'rakhot* and prayers, the reading of the Torah and the *haftarah* constitutes study, not prayer. For the ancient rabbis, prayer was quintessentially defined by the Amidah, which we have now completed.