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סדור

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לב שלם

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Siddur

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Lev Shalem

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לימי חול

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FOR WEEKDAYS

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# ערבית לחול

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת  
הִנֵּה בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה,  
כָּל־עַבְדֵי יְהוָה הָעֹמְדִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה בַּלַּיְלוֹת.  
שָׂאוּ יְדֵיכֶם קֹדֶשׁ וּבָרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה.  
יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן עֹשֶׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ.  
תהלים קלד

וְהוּא רַחוּם יִכְפֹּר עֵוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית,  
וְהִרְבָּה לְהַשִּׁיב אָפּוֹ  
וְלֹא יַעִיר כָּל־חַמַּתּוֹ.  
יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה, הַמַּלְךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְיוֹם קָרְאֵנוּ.

*The following is recited when a minyan is present. We rise.*

*Leader:*

בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ.

*Congregation, then the leader repeats:*

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

*We are seated.*

**ARVIT, THE EVENING SERVICE**, consists of two central moments: the recitation of the Sh'ma (three paragraphs: Deuteronomy 6:5–9 and 11:12–21, and Numbers 15:37–41) and the Amidah, the moment of personal prayer. Although the Bible speaks of praying “when you lie down and when you rise up,” and the custom of reciting the Sh'ma in bed at night persisted through time, some of our earliest texts include the practice of reciting the evening Sh'ma in the synagogue. The ancient rabbis ordained that this recitation be preceded by two *b'rakhot*: the first remarking on God as the architect of this liminal time of day when light recedes and darkness descends, and the second celebrating the gift of God's teaching, Torah.

They also ordained that it is to be followed by two *b'rakhot*: one mentioning the exodus—the celebration of our freedom and redemption—and one asking for protection in the night. Over time, the personal meditative prayer, the Amidah, central to the morning and afternoon service, was added to the evening service as well, although since it originated as a matter of custom, it is not repeated aloud (as is the case at other times).

**PSALM 134.** In the Sephardic rite, this brief psalm opens the weekday evening service. The psalm seems to have been a “night-song” recited in the Temple. As the new watch arrived, the priests who were leaving would call out to those who were arriving, whose responsibility it was, in part, to keep the fire on the altar burning all night. The priests arriving for the evening would then assume their role and bless the congregation. As a call and response, we might think of this prayer as a substitute for Bar'khu, when no *minyan* is present.

**TOWARD THE HOLY קָדֹשׁ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.** The Hebrew is ambiguous: holiness might refer to those arriving (“Raise up your hands, holy people”) or it might refer to God (“Raise up your hands to the Holy One”). A third possibility is that it refers to the place of holiness, the sanctuary (“Raise up your hands in this holy place”).

**GOD IS COMPASSIONATE וְהוּא רַחוּם.** Two verses (Psalms 78:38 and 20:10) are combined to preface prayer with an assurance that God is compassionate and responds to our call. The descending darkness may make us feel more vulnerable to danger, and evening may call to mind regrets regarding our behavior during the day. Along with its message of mercy and compassion, strikingly, the first of these verses is also said to be the midpoint of the entire Book of Psalms (as noted in the Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 30a), suggesting perhaps that our faith in God's compassion is central to the entire enterprise of prayer and praise. It also may have been selected because it contains thirteen words, and thus alludes to the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy that God revealed to Moses (Exodus 34:6–7). In some communities, the congregation recites the second verse aloud in response to the reader. It is customary to omit these verses in a house of mourning.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
 אֲשֶׁר בְּדַבְּרוֹ מַעְרִיב עֶרְבִים,  
 בְּחִכְמָה פּוֹתַח שְׁעָרִים,  
 וּבְתַבּוּנָה מְשַׁנֶּה עֵתִים,  
 וּמַחְלִיף אֶת־הַיָּמִים,  
 וּמְסַדֵּר אֶת־הַפּוֹכְבִים בְּמִשְׁמְרוֹתֵיהֶם בְּרָקִיעַ כְּרֻצוֹנוֹ.  
 בּוֹרֵא יוֹם וְלַיְלָה,  
 גּוֹלֵל אוֹר מִפְּנֵי חֹשֶׁךְ,  
 וְחֹשֶׁךְ מִפְּנֵי אוֹר.  
 ◀ וּמַעְבִּיר יוֹם וּמְבִיא לַיְלָה,  
 וּמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לַיְלָה,  
 יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ.  
 אֵל חַי וְקַיִם, תָּמִיד יְמַלֵּךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.  
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמַּעְרִיב עֶרְבִים.

אֲהַבֵּת עוֹלָם בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ אֲהַבְתָּ,  
 תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת, חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים אוֹתָנוּ לְמִדָּת.  
 עַל כֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּשִׂכְבְּנוּ וּבְקוֹמָנוּ נִשְׁיַח בְּחֻקֶיךָ  
 וְנִשְׁמַח בְּדַבְּרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.  
 כִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ וְאֶרֶץ יְמִינוּ, וּבָהֶם נִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה,  
 ◀ וְאֲהַבְתָּךְ אֵל תְּסִיר מִמֶּנּוּ לְעוֹלָמִים.  
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אוֹהֵב עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

EVENING עֶרְבִים. Though darkness may be unsettling, we affirm that even in darkness there is light. In fact, only in the dark do the intricate patterns of the stars become visible to us. The alternating rhythm of sunlit days and dark nights teaches us to seek and appreciate not only the brightest lights, but also more distant and subtle sources of illumination.

WHO BRINGS EACH EVENING'S DUSK הַמַּעְרִיב הָעֶרְבִים. The word for evening, *erev*, evokes both the Hebrew verb "to mix" and the Hebrew adjective "sweet." Daylight is the time of clarity, of rationality, of work and task. In the murkiness of evening, the ambiguities and uncertainties of our inner lives may emerge. As fatigue lowers our defenses, what was suppressed during the day may haunt us: troubling thoughts, fears, internal conflicts, and battles fought. But evenings may also be especially sweet. The gentle blurring of the landscape may help soften harsh judgments of self

and others, bring needed perspective, allow us to loosen our grip on what was previously rigidly held. Dreams may signal a new awakening. The admixture of day and night reminds us that, like nature, we too comprise multiple, disparate elements. Multiplicity is the inherent wisdom of creation, an expression of the infinity of the Divine.

WITH TIMELESS LOVE אֲהַבֵּת עוֹלָם. "A long time ago, God appeared to me: 'With timeless love, I have loved you, therefore My kindness to you continues'" (Jeremiah 31:2).

THE FULLNESS OF OUR DAYS וְאֶרֶץ יְמִינוּ. Deuteronomy 32:47. Sometimes this Hebrew phrase is translated as "the length of our days." Certainly, study and observance of Torah are no guarantee of a longer life, but they can lead to a deeper, more fulfilling, and even joyful life—fullness of days.

ON THEM WE SHALL MEDITATE וּבָהֶם נִהְיֶה. The Hebrew verb *nehgeh* derives from *hegeh*, the pre-verbal rumble of the vocal cords. It therefore suggests not rigorous intellectual study but rumination, contemplation—something arising from deep within us trying to make itself known. In the night, the understanding of our behavior, how we have acted and what we are to do, our personal revelations, may emanate from our pre-verbal consciousness, as we let go of the mental control we exercised during the day.

## קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע

*In the absence of a minyan, we add: אֵל מֶלֶךְ נֹאמֵן.*

*Many have the custom of covering their eyes, looking inward, while reciting this verse:*

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד.

*Recited quietly: בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלָכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.*

וְאַהֲבַת אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ  
וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ  
הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָיִךְ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשַׁבְּתֶךָ  
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלֶכְתֶּךָ בְּדַרְךָ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶיךָ: וְקִשְׁרָתָם  
לְאוֹת עַל-יָדֶיךָ וְהָיוּ לְטַטְפֹּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וְכִתַּבְתָּם  
עַל-מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

דברים ו:ד-ט

**RECITATION OF THE SH'MA**  
קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע. The Sh'ma, consisting of neither praise, gratitude, nor petition, invites a different mode of prayer than most other liturgy. In reciting the Sh'ma, we seek a deeper grasp of a spiritual reality, and inwardly affirm our own religious commitments, symbolized by our covering our eyes during its recitation. In the morning, we may recite these words with intellectual acuity, probing with precision their range of meanings. In the evening, we may go beyond the specific meaning of the words, being inspired and comforted also by their ancientness, their sound, the way they resonate in our bodies. Tired from the

day, the recitation of these familiar words and sounds can become a kind of lullaby.

**YOU SHALL LOVE** וְאַהֲבַת. This is one of three commands to love found in the Torah: we are commanded to love God, to love our neighbor, and to love the stranger in our midst. It is not easy to define what love means in each of these contexts. In the case of the latter two, at a minimum, we are asked to act with care and forethought. The love of God may include gratitude for life itself, as well as the sense of responsibility that grows from our awareness of, and wonder at, this gift. It may also entail the other two loves: to love God is to love and care for God's creation and especially the people we encounter, friends and strangers.

**SPEAK OF THEM** וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם. Judaism is an ongoing conversation, a conversation about faith, personal responsibility, and the meaning of our lives.

**TEACH THEM AGAIN AND AGAIN TO YOUR CHILDREN** וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָיִךְ. Our responsibility to ensure the moral and practical education of each subsequent generation is brought home to us twice daily. This obligation extends beyond the children in our own families. The rabbis of old emphasized the community's obligation to see to quality education, especially including all the poor: "Be mindful of the children of the poor, for from them does the Torah go forth" (Babylonian Talmud, Nedarim 81a).

וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמַעַתְּ תִשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה  
אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעֲבֹדוֹ בְּכָל־  
לְבַבְכֶם וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁכֶם: וְנָתַתִּי מְטֵר־אֲרָצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה  
וּמִלְקוֹשׁ וְאֶסְפַּת דְּגַנְךָ וְתִירֹשְׁךָ וַיְצַהֲרֶךָ: וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב  
בְּשִׂדְךָ לְבַהֲמֹתֶךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ:

הִשְׁמְרוּ לָכֶם פְּנֵי־יִצְחָק לְבַבְכֶם וְסִרְתֶּם וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים  
אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם: וְחָרָה אַף־יְהוָה בְּכֶם וְעָצַר  
אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מָטָר וְהִאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת־  
יְבוּלָהּ וְאֲבַדְתֶּם מִהָרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטְּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה  
נָתַן לָכֶם:

וְשָׁמַתֶּם אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהַי עַל־לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל־נַפְשְׁכֶם  
וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל־יְדֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין  
עֵינֵיכֶם: וְלִמְדַתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ  
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וּכְתַבְתֶּם  
עַל־מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

לְמַעַן יִרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם וַיְמֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע  
יְהוָה לְאַבְתִּיכֶם לָתֵת לָהֶם פְּרִי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ:

דברים יא:ג-טא

THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF THE SH'MA. The seemingly one-to-one calculation of action and consequence implied in this paragraph may bring us up short. The contemporary theologian Elliot Dorff offers: "The calculus of reward and punishment articulated [here] may be too simple and ultimately inaccurate.... Nevertheless, I find this paragraph, with all its problems, central to my beliefs, for it insists starkly (even if too starkly) that... somehow, justice is an inherent part of the world and of God...." We might not be able to see the difference our behavior makes, but it is important that in our going out to the world, we understand that our behavior has consequences.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:  
 דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם  
 וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל־כַּפְּי בְּגִדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם  
 וְנִתְּנוּ עַל־צִיצִית הַכֹּהֵן פֶּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת:  
 וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ  
 וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם  
 וְלֹא תִתְּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם  
 אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם:  
 לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי  
 וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם:  
 אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם  
 לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

במדבר טו:לו-סא

## אָמֵת

*When there is a minyan, the leader adds:*

◀ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם – אָמֵת –

וְאֶמֶנָה כָּל־זֹאת, וְקִיָּם עָלֵינוּ, כִּי הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
 וְאֵין זוּלָתוֹ, וְאַנְחֵנוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ.  
 הַפּוֹדְנוּ מִיַּד מְלָכִים,  
 מְלַכְנוּ הַגּוֹאֲלֵנוּ מִכַּף כָּל־הָעָרִיצִים.  
 הָאֵל הַנִּפְרָע לָנוּ מִצְרַיִם,  
 וְהַמְשַׁלֵּם גְּמוּלָ לְכָל־אוֹיְבֵי נַפְשֵׁנוּ,  
 הָעֹשֶׂה גְדוּלוֹת עַד אֵין חֶקֶר,  
 וְנִפְלְאוֹת עַד אֵין מִסְפָּר.  
 הַשֵּׁם נִפְשָׁנוּ בַּחַיִּים,  
 וְלֹא נִתֵּן לְמוֹט רִגְלָנוּ.  
 הַמְדַרְיֵכְנוּ עַל כְּמוֹת אוֹיְבֵינוּ,  
 וַיֵּרָם קִרְנֵנוּ עַל כָּל־שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ.  
 הָעֹשֶׂה לָנוּ גְּסִים וְנִקְמָה בַּפְּרָעָה,  
 אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים בְּאֲדַמַּת בְּנֵי חָם.

THE THIRD PARAGRAPH OF THE SH'MA. One of the reasons the ancient sages offer for the addition of this paragraph to the recitation of the Sh'ma is its ending, "I... brought you out of the land of Egypt," an echo of the first words of the Decalogue where God announces, "I am the One who brought you out of the land of Egypt." The liberation from slavery is the defining historical Jewish experience. Freedom is God's gift to us. In turn, we may ask ourselves: Is there anything to which I am enslaved, from which I need to free myself? More, how do I want to use this gift of freedom?

וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים AND BE HOLY. The very center of the Torah is the Holiness Code, which begins with the words "You shall be holy because I, Adonai your God, am holy" and ends with the demand to love the other, the stranger (Leviticus 19:17-18, 33-34). Similarly, in a masterful example of rabbinic literary mirroring (chiasmus), the paragraphs of the Sh'ma start with the mandate to love God and conclude with the command to be holy. (Barry Kenter)

TRULY—THIS IS OUR ENDURING AFFIRMATION אָמֵת וְאֶמֶנָה. The Hebrew word *emunah*, here translated as "enduring affirmation," sometimes is translated as "faith," but is closer in meaning to "faithful." On the whole, the biblical notion of

*emunah* focuses not on what we "believe in" but on what we are "faithful to." Hope waxes and wanes, and belief may waver. The task of a religious person is to strive nevertheless to remain faithful to those moments—whether personal or historical (such as our redemption from Egypt and receiving the Torah at Sinai)—in which we have felt a saving Presence. Often it is faithful behavior, more than our belief, that restores our hope and faith.

הַמַּכָּה בְּעִבְרָתוֹ כְּלִבְכוּרֵי מִצְרַיִם,  
 וַיּוֹצֵא אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם לְחֵירוֹת עוֹלָם.  
 הַמַּעֲבִיר בְּנָיו בֵּין גְּזְרֵי יָם סוּף,  
 אֶת־רוֹדְפֵיהֶם וְאֶת־שׂוֹנְאֵיהֶם בְּתַהוֹמוֹת טַבַּע.  
 וְרָאוּ בְנָיו גְּבוּרָתוֹ, שִׁבְחוּ וְהוֹדוּ לְשִׁמּוֹ.  
 ◀ וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בְּרָצוֹן קָבְלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם,  
 מִשָּׁה וּמִרַיִם וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָהּ עָנּוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׂמְחָה רַבָּה,  
 וְאָמְרוּ כָלָם:

מִי כַמַּכָּה בְּאֵלֶם יְהוָה, מִי כַמַּכָּה נֶאֱדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ,  
 נוֹרָא תַהֲלֵת, עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא.

◀ מַלְכוּתְךָ רָאוּ בְנֵיךָ, בּוֹקֵעַ יָם לִפְנֵי מִשָּׁה,  
 זֶה אֵלֵינוּ וְאָמְרוּ:

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.

◀ וְנֹאמַר: כִּי פָדָה יְהוָה אֶת־יַעֲקֹב,  
 וּגְאָלוֹ מִיַּד חֲזָק מִמֶּנּוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, גֹּאֲלֵ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

הַשְּׂכִיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ לְחַיִּים,  
 וּפְרֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִפְתֵי שְׁלוֹמְךָ, וְתִקַּנְנוּ בְּעֲצָה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ,  
 וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ לְמַעַן שְׂמֶךָ. וְהִגֵּן בְּעַדֵּנוּ, וְהִסֵּר מֵעַלְיֵנוּ אוֹיֵב,  
 דָּבָר וְחָרָב וְרָעַב וְיָגוֹן, וְהִסֵּר שִׁטָּן מִלְּפָנֵינוּ וּמֵאַחֲרֵינוּ,  
 וּבְצֵל כְּנַפְיֶיךָ תִּסְתִּירֵנוּ, כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמְרָנוּ וּמְצִילָנוּ אַתָּה,  
 כִּי אֵל מְלֹךְ חַנוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה, ◀ וְשָׁמַר צִאתָנוּ וּבּוֹאֵנוּ,  
 לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, שׁוֹמֵר עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַד.

מִי כַמַּכָּה WHO IS LIKE YOU  
 Exodus 15:11.

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ ADONAI WILL REIGN  
 Exodus 15:18.

כִּי יִשְׁעָה ADONAI HAS RESCUED  
 Jeremiah 31:11.

PEACE IN THE NIGHT  
 השְׂכִיבֵנוּ. As night descends,  
 we may become conscious  
 of fears and anxieties that  
 we did not allow to come  
 to the fore during the  
 day. We may even feel a  
 certain loss of control as  
 we let go and let ourselves  
 rest for the evening. In  
 that context, we pray for  
 protection, that we might  
 feel safe in the night. We  
 ask, "Spread over us Your  
 canopy of peace," praying  
 that we be surrounded by  
 God's sheltering presence.

The Babylonian Talmud  
 (Berakhot 4b) considers  
 this *b'rakhah* for peace  
 and security an extension  
 of the prior prayer for  
 redemption. The move-  
 ment toward greater  
 justice and freedom almost  
 always involves dislocation,  
 upheaval, and at times even  
 violence, as did the exodus  
 from Egypt. In our personal  
 lives, even positive change  
 is often accompanied by  
 anxiety and fear. So we pray  
 that the process of redemp-  
 tion culminates in peace,  
 that we be held safely and  
 and that we blessed with  
 moments of genuine rest  
 along the way.

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

יְהִי כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, יִשְׂמַח יְהוָה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו.  
 יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.  
 כִּי לֹא יִטַּשׁ יְהוָה אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּעַבּוֹר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל,  
 כִּי הוֹאִיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶתְכֶם לֹו לְעַם.

וַיִּירָא כָּל־הָעָם וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל פְּנֵיהֶם,  
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ: יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים, יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים.  
 וַהֲיָה יְהוָה לְמִלְךָ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,  
 בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָּה יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד.  
 יְהִי חֲסִדְךָ יְהוָה עָלֵינוּ, כַּאֲשֶׁר יַחַלְנוּ לָךְ.

הוֹשִׁיעֵנו יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְקַבְּצֵנוּ מִן הַגּוֹיִם,  
 לְהוֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם קְדוֹשְׁךָ, לְהַשְׁתַּבַּח בְּתֵהֶלְתֶּךָ.  
 כָּל־גּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יָבֹאוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי,  
 וַיִּכְבְּדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ.  
 כִּי גָדוֹל אַתָּה וְעֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת, אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים לְבַדְּךָ.  
 וְאַנְחֵנוּ עִמָּךְ וְצֵאן מִרְעִיתְךָ, נוֹדֵה לָךְ לְעוֹלָם,  
 לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נְסִיפֵר תִּהְיֶהֲלֶתְךָ.

MAY ADONAI BE BLESSED  
 FOREVER AND EVER בְּרוּךְ  
 יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן  
 This final prayer before  
 the Amidah is filled with a  
 consciousness of the pres-  
 ence of God, everywhere  
 and throughout all time,  
 offering reassurance as we  
 enter into the darkness of  
 night and anticipate both  
 the peace and vulnerability  
 of sleep. In this vein, toward  
 the end of this prayer (on  
 the next page) we assert,  
 "Into Your hands I entrust  
 my spirit," or more literally  
 my "breath"— the breath  
 of life.

Stylistically, this prayer is  
 typical of much early litur-  
 gical writing. Until its last  
 paragraph, it is composed  
 entirely of verses from the  
 Bible—mostly Psalms, but  
 other biblical books as well,  
 especially passages that are  
 themselves prayers. Each  
 verse carries forward a  
 word or concept included  
 in the previous verse. The  
 prayer begins by praising  
 God, then moves on to  
 promises of messianic  
 times, and concludes with  
 a personal note of placing  
 one's own care in God's  
 hands.

According to the Baby-  
 lonian sages, the *geonim*

(latter half of the first millennium CE), this prayer was added to the evening liturgy so that all would have time to arrive in the synagogue and then leave together; walking together in a group would offer protection from marauders. Whether or not this is the historic reason behind its addition, since it is a supplementary prayer, many consider it optional. It is omitted in the Sephardic and Italian rites. The verses quoted here are: Psalms 89:53, 135:21, 72:18–19, 104:31, 113:2; 1 Samuel 12:22; 1 Kings 18:39; Zechariah 14:9; Psalms 33:22, 106:47, 86:9–10, 79:13.

WHEN ALL THE PEOPLE SAW וַיִּירָא כָּל־הָעָם 1 Kings 18:39. In the Bible, this verse describes the reaction of the people when Elijah's sacrificial offering brought storm clouds, thus ending the drought that had plagued Israel. Perhaps, though, the liturgist has deliberately placed the verse here devoid of context. What we see is not an event beyond natural circumstance (like the miraculous response to Elijah); rather, we see the everyday that is miraculous: going to sleep at night and waking in the morning.

**MAY ADONAI BE BLESSED BY DAY** בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בְּיוֹם. The previous section of this prayer (top of previous page) opened with four verses, each beginning with the word *barukh*. This second section, too, opens with four shorter phrases all starting with *barukh*. The rhythmic repetition of this key word may function as a kind of calming meditation, focusing on blessing and gratitude at the end of the day. This final passage of the *b'rakhah* is no longer composed of biblical verses strung together to form a new prayer; instead, we now have thoughts expressed in post-biblical language using biblical verses as prooftexts: "the breath of every living being and the spirit of every person" (Job 12:10) and "into Your hands" (Psalm 31:6). It is an appropriate prayer for the evening: before I go to sleep, "into Your hands, I entrust my spirit... God."

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בְּיוֹם,  
 בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בְּלַיְלָה,  
 בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בְּשָׁכְבְּנוּ,  
 בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה בְּקוּמְנוּ,  
 כִּי בְיָדְךָ נַפְשׁוֹת הַחַיִּים וְהַמְּתִים,  
 אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ נַפֵּשׁ כָּל־חַי וְרוּחַ כָּל־בֶּשֶׂר אִישׁ.  
 בְּיָדְךָ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי, פְּדִיתָה אוֹתִי יְהוָה אֵל אֱמֶת.  
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם, יַחַד שְׁמָךְ, וְקַיִם מַלְכוּתְךָ תָּמִיד,  
 וּמֶלֶךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.  
 יִרְאוּ עֵינֵינוּ, וְיִשְׂמַח לִבֵּנוּ,  
 וְתִגַּל נַפְשֵׁנוּ בִישׁוּעָתְךָ בְּאֱמֶת,  
 בְּאִמּוֹר לְצִיּוֹן, מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ.  
 יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.  
 ◀ כִּי הַמְּלָכוֹת שְׁלֹךְ הִיא, וְלְעוֹלָמֵי עַד תִּמְלֹךְ בְּכָבוֹד,  
 כִּי אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֶלָּא אַתָּה.  
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּכָבוֹדוֹ תָּמִיד יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ  
 לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וְעַל כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו.

*We rise.*

### חֲצִי קָדִישׁ

*Leader:*

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֹלָמָא דִּי בְּרָא, פְּרַעוּתָהּ,  
 וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזָמַן קָרִיב, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

*Congregation and Leader:*

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֹלָם וְלְעֹלָמֵי עֹלָמֵיָא.

*Leader:*

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר  
 וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקָדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְעֹלָא מִן כָּל־  
 [לְעֹלָא לְעֹלָא מְכָל־] [between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:  
 בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תִּשְׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחַמְתָּא דְּאִמְרוּן בְּעֹלָמָא,  
 וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.]

mandate, the evening recitation of the Amidah was originally only a matter of custom.

# תפילת העמידה

Before the Amidah begins, it is customary to take three steps forward, as we approach God's presence. (If there is no room, we step backward first.) The sign  $\text{פ}$  indicates the places to bow. The Amidah concludes on page 132.

For an explanation of the Amidah and its b'rakhot, see commentary to the Amidah for Shacharit on page 43.

אֲדָנִי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

$\text{פ}$  בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ  
[וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ], אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם,  
אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב,  
אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רַבְקָה,  
אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל, וְאֱלֹהֵי לָאָה,  
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,  
אֵל עֲלִיוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים  
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,  
וְזוֹכֵר חֲסֵדֵי אֲבוֹת  
[וְאִמָּהוֹת], וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל  
לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן  
שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

With Patriarchs:

$\text{פ}$  בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,  
אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי  
יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, הָאֵל  
הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא,  
אֵל עֲלִיוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים  
טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,  
וְזוֹכֵר חֲסֵדֵי אֲבוֹת, וּמְבִיא  
גּוֹאֵל לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן  
שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we add:

זְכַרְנוּ לְחַיִּים, מְלַךְ חַפֵּץ בְּחַיִּים,  
וְכַתְּבָנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים, לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים.

**EVENING AMIDAH.** The talmudic sages understood the morning and afternoon prayers to be obligatory, but the evening prayer as voluntary. Yet they offered a biblical paradigm for evening prayer: Jacob stopping for the night during his flight from Esau. Jacob is alone, headed for a land he has never seen. Lying down in the open field, he dreams of a ladder connecting heaven and earth. The Torah uses an unusual phrase to describe the moment when Jacob stopped in his journey: וַיִּפְגַע בַּמָּקוֹם, "he came upon a place"—or, more literally, "he met the place" (Genesis 28:11). In rabbinic thought, one of the names of God is הַמָּקוֹם, "the Place," for all the places of the world are found in God. The question for us is: Can we find God in the place we are in? Can we imagine a connection

between our lives and heaven? Can we at least dream of the possibility? One of the challenges of this moment may be to think of "this place"—this moment—as one when we can come upon the Divine. Evening prayer addresses our trepidations and our hopes and confronts us with abiding mystery: "Surely God is in this place, though I did not know it" (Genesis 28:16).

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs.

מִלֶּךְ עֹזֵר וּפּוֹקֵד  
וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמְגִן.  
וְ בָרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,  
מְגִן אֲבֹתָהֶם וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה.

With Patriarchs:

מִלֶּךְ עֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמְגִן.  
וְ בָרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,  
מְגִן אֲבֹתָהֶם.

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

From Sh'mini Atzeret until Pesah: מְשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם,  
[From Pesah until Sh'mini Atzeret, some add: מוֹרִיד הַטֶּל]

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד,  
מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים,  
סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמְתִיר אֲסוּרִים,  
וּמְקַיֵּם אַמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עָפָר.  
מִי כְמוֹךָ בְּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֵה לָךְ,  
מִלֶּךְ מִמִּית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעָה.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we add:  
מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים, זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים.

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

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמּוֹךְ קָדוֹשׁ,  
וּקְדוּשִׁים בְּכָל־יוֹם יְהִלְלוּךָ סְלָה.  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּלִךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

**GOD'S SAVING CARE** גְּבוּרוֹת. Subverting secular conceptions of power, this prayer asserts that God's strength is most manifest in care for those who are suffering and vulnerable. God is described here as sustaining the weak and the vulnerable with love and kindness.

**GIVE LIFE TO THE DEAD** מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים. The ancient rabbis compare revival of the dead to rainfall that ends a drought (Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 7a). This *b'rakhah* too juxtaposes mention of rain with the phrase "gives life to the dead." In this context, death and resurrection maintain their literal meanings, but also carry metaphoric, spiritual implications. Despair and hope are cyclical. What is parched, apparently dead, in the dry season may be refreshed and nourished back to life when the rain and dew arrive. Our inner life is similarly cyclical. We may at times feel empty or joyless; but the touch of another human being, light streaming through the trees, or the peace of a quiet moment alone can transform the way we see the world. The spiritual master Nahman of Bratzlav taught that every moment of falling can lead to moments of greater rising.

**GOD'S HOLINESS** קְדוּשַׁת הַשֵּׁם. The first three *b'rakhot* of the Amidah constitute a progressive unfolding of the Jewish understanding of the Divine. The first *b'rakhah* emphasizes God's love, which accompanies us as it did our ancestors. The second describes some of the manifestations of that divine love: God's care for the fallen, the sick, and the vulnerable—and even the dead. To this affirmation of loving presence, the third *b'rakhah* now adds a sense of transcendence, the "beyondness" of the Divine. Our experience of the mystery of God includes a sense of awe at God's fearsome and formidable "Otherness," counterposed to the sense of presence and love we may feel.

A brief version of the cycles of B'rakhot of Request can be found on page 55.

אַתָּה חוֹנֵן לְאָדָם דְּעֵת,  
וּמְלַמֵּד לְאָנוּשׁ בֵּינָה.

At the conclusion of Shabbat or Festivals we add:

אַתָּה חוֹנֵנֵתָנוּ לְמַדְעַ תּוֹרָתְךָ, וְתַלְמִדְנוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת חֻקֵי רְצוֹנְךָ,  
וְתַבְדִּיל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל, בֵּין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין  
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשֵׁשֶׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה.  
אָבִינוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, הִחַל עֲלֵינוּ הַיָּמִים הַבָּאִים לְקִרְאתָנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם,  
חֲשׂוּכִים מִכָּל־חֶטָּא, וּמִנְּקִים מִכָּל־עוֹן, וּמִדְּבָקִים בִּירְאָתְךָ. וְ...

חַנּוּנוּ מֵאַתָּה דְּעָה בֵּינָה וְהַשְׁכִּיל.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, חוֹנֵן הַדְּעֵת.

הַשִּׁיבֵנו אָבִינוּ לְתוֹרָתְךָ,  
וְקַרְבָּנו מִלְּפָנֶיךָ לְעִבּוּדְךָ,  
וְהַחְזִירֵנוּ בְּתַשׁוּבָה שְׁלֵמָה לְפָנֶיךָ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַרוֹצֵה בְּתַשׁוּבָה.

סֵלַח לָנוּ, אָבִינוּ, כִּי חָטָאנוּ,  
מִחַל לָנוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, כִּי פָשַׁעְנוּ,  
כִּי מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ אַתָּה.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, חַנּוּן הַמְּרַבֵּה לְסֵלַח.

רְאֵה נָא בְּעֵינֵינוּ, וְרִיבָה רִיבָנוּ,  
וּגְאֹלֵנוּ מִהֲרָה לְמַעַן שְׁמֹךְ,  
כִּי גּוֹאֵל חֲזַק אַתָּה.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, גּוֹאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

our most cherished values and our sense of purpose. We may have felt “pulled apart” today, faced with many demands and obligations. Now, at evening, we can put aside those concerns so that by morning we may recover our core once again.

**FOR YOUR NATURE IS TO FORGIVE AND PARDON** אַתָּה וְסוֹלֵחַ אַתָּה. Each time we pray, we are asked to recognize our human fallibility: we “get it wrong,” and we are led into error by our own needs and desires, by our feelings of injury, by our jealousies and competitiveness. But even as this petition calls our attention to our mistakes, it simultaneously adds words of reassurance: forgiveness is at hand.

**LOOK UPON OUR SUFFERING** רְאֵה נָא בְּעֵינֵינוּ. The theme of this *b'rakhah* reflects the opening chapters of the Book of Exodus, where Moses sees the suffering of his “brothers” and God hears their cry. What we ask of God, we might do well to practice in our own lives. We might learn to see others’ suffering, empathize, speak on their behalf, and use our power to help them find release from their oppression.

**PETITIONS.** Thirteen *b'rakhot* of petition form the core of the weekday Amidah. Some days, these *b'rakhot* may call our attention to that which we lack, that which is missing in our lives, and we ask God to repair what is broken. At other times, these *b'rakhot* remind us to be grateful for the gifts we experience, and challenge us to broaden our focus.

**HAVDALAH: CONCLUDING SHABBAT OR FESTIVALS.** We began Shabbat and festivals with a blessing; now, as we leave them, we bless what follows. There is some disagreement in the Mishnah (Berakhot 5:2) over where in the Amidah one should place the prayer that concludes Shabbat or a festival: at the beginning of the petitionary prayers, or at the end? Having placed it at the beginning, the liturgists then fashioned a prayer that accorded with the themes of this *b'rakhah*, knowledge: the ability to note distinctions.

**RETURN** הַשִּׁיבֵנו. To what do we seek to return? The liturgy talks of God’s teaching and our service to the Divine; we may understand this as our commitment to

רְפָאנוּ יְהוּה, וְנִרְפָּא,  
הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ וְנוֹשְׁעָה, כִּי תִהְלֹתֵנוּ אִתָּהּ,  
וְהַעֲלֵה רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה לְכָל־מִכּוֹתֵינוּ.

*On behalf of one who is ill:*

וְיִהי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי  
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ],  
שֶׁתִּשְׁלַח מְהֵרָה רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם,  
רְפוּאָת הַנֶּפֶשׁ וְרְפוּאָת הַגּוּף,  
לְ\_\_\_\_\_ בְּתוֹךְ שְׁאֵר הַחוֹלִים,  
וְחֹזֵק אֶת־יְדֵי הָעוֹסְקִים בְּצַרְכֵיהֶם,  
כִּי אַל מֶלֶךְ רוֹפֵא נֶאֱמָן וְרַחֲמָן אִתָּהּ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוּה, רוֹפֵא חוֹלֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּרַךְ עָלֵינוּ יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת  
וְאֶת־כָּל־מִיָּנֵי תְבוּאַתָּה לְטוֹבָה, וְתֵן

*From Pesah until December 3 (or December 4  
if preceding a solar leap year): בְּרָכָה*

*From December 4 (or December 5 if preceding  
a solar leap year) until Pesah: טַל וּמָטָר לְבִרְכָה*

עַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה,  
וְשִׁבְעֵנוּ מִטוֹבָה,  
וּבְרַךְ שְׁנֵתֵנוּ בְּשָׁנִים הַטּוֹבוֹת.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוּה, מְבָרֵךְ הַשָּׁנִים.  
תִּקַּע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל לְחֵירוּתֵנוּ,  
וְשֵׂא נֶס לְקַבֵּץ גְּלוּתֵינוּ,  
וְקַבְּצֵנוּ יַחַד מֵאַרְבַּע פְּנֵפוֹת הָאָרֶץ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוּה, מְקַבֵּץ נִדְחֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

רְפוּאָה COMPLETE HEALING Along with prayers for bodily healing, we pray for diminished suffering, and for peace of mind and heart, for those who are ill. Interestingly, in a 10th-century manuscript found in the Cairo Genizah, the text of this *b'rakhah* asks for healing ממִּכְאוֹב לְבָנוּ "from the aches of our hearts." Even when a cure or complete healing of body is unattainable, healing and wholeness of the spirit may remain possible.

הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת THIS . . . YEAR Although abundance is no guarantee that we will live well, it is a necessary first step. The Torah repeatedly defines blessing in physical, material terms: enough rain for an abundant harvest, plenty to sustain us, freedom from want. Material abundance does not only fulfill our own needs and wants, but constitutes an obligation toward others who are in need. The contemporary philosopher Emmanuel Levinas highlighted a Jewish proverb that another's physical need is my spiritual task.

THE INGATHERING OF OUR EXILES גְּלוּתֵינוּ. That exiles might return from far-away lands to

reconstitute a dispersed people is not a foregone conclusion. Many peoples scattered by conquest melt into their new lands mere generations after displacement. Prayers like this one helped maintain the integrity of the Jewish people during its 2000-year exile, and set the stage for a return to its homeland in Israel in the twentieth century. The persistence of the Jewish people may be thought of as nothing short of miraculous.

OUR EXILES גְּלוּתֵינוּ. "Our exiles" is a plural noun. The plurality may refer not only to the numbers of exiled in different lands, but to the different kinds of exile: not only geographic displacement, but inner spiritual alienation as well. The latter can sometimes be caused by personal circumstance, and sometimes by bitter divisions within the Jewish people. On a personal level, there are times when we may find ourselves distant from the Jewish people, its traditions, its texts, or even with the Jewish people themselves. In time, we hope that all our experiences of exile may be overcome.

הַשִּׁיבָה שׁוֹפְטֵינוּ כְּבָרָאשׁוּנָה וְיִוָּעֲצִינוּ כְּבַתְּחִלָּה,  
וְהִסֵּר מִמֶּנּוּ יָגוֹן וְאַנְחָה,  
וּמֶלֶךְ עָלֵינוּ אַתָּה יְהוָה לְבִדְךָ  
בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים, וְצַדִּיקֵנוּ בְּמִשְׁפָּט.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מֶלֶךְ אוֹהֵב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט.

*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute:*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמִּשְׁפָּט.

וּלְמַלְשִׁינִים אַל תְּהִי תִקְוָה,  
וְכָל־הַרְשָׁעָה פָּרְגַע תֵּאבֵד,  
וְכָל־אוֹיְבֶיךָ מְהֵרָה יִפְרָתוּ,  
וְהַיּוֹדִים מְהֵרָה תַעֲקֹר וְתִשְׁבֵּר וְתִמְגַּר וְתִכְנִיעַ  
בְּמֵהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, שׁוֹבֵר אוֹיְבִים וּמְכַנְיַע זָדִים.

עַל הַצְּדִיקִים וְעַל הַחֲסִידִים וְעַל זִקְנֵי עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְעַל פְּלִיטַת סוֹפְרֵיהֶם, וְעַל גְּרֵי הַצֶּדֶק וְעָלֵינוּ,  
יְהִמוּ נָא רַחֲמֶיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,  
וְתֵן שָׂכָר טוֹב לְכָל־הַבוֹטְחִים בְּשִׁמְךָ בְּאַמְתָּ,  
וְשִׁים חֶלְקֵנוּ עִמָּהֶם, וְלַעוֹלָם לֹא נִבּוֹשׁ כִּי בְךָ בְּטַחְנוּ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מִשְׁעֵן וּמִבְטָח לְצְדִיקִים.

**JUDGES** שׁוֹפְטֵינוּ. The prayer not only speaks of the need for honest and equitable judgment, but also of the need for righteousness and integrity on the part of all counselors and leaders, those entrusted with making and enforcing law. This prayer blends concepts of divine justice and human justice: one of the ways in which God's justice becomes manifest on earth is through fair and honest rulings made by human judges.

**WITH KINDNESS** בְּחֶסֶד. The vision of justice imagined here is not of cold and dispassionate rulings, but instead of judgments infused with love, compassion, and mercy—justice that removes sorrow and anguish, and recognizes the humanity of those who stand before the law.

**THOSE WHO WOULD DEFAME US** וְלְמַלְשִׁינִים. A *malshin* is a talebearer or slanderer, one who stokes prejudices and hatreds. The origin of this *b'rakhah* may

have been the betrayal by fellow Jews who reported on Jewish activity to unfriendly authorities, resulting in severe consequences for the Jewish community. The wording of the *b'rakhah*, as well as Jews' relationship to it, has changed many times over the centuries. This prayer reflects the scars of censorship from inside and outside the Jewish community. Numerous editors weighed in on whether the *b'rakhah* should condemn evildoers or evil deeds, wicked regimes or wickedness, enemies outside or foes within. Today, some worshippers recite it in an undertone, while others embrace it fully as sadly still relevant to our contemporary circumstance.

**ALL WICKEDNESS** וְכָל־הַרְשָׁעָה. The prayer recognizes the reality of selfish people with exploitative goals, and protests the power they often hold. But in protesting evil, selfishness, and arrogance, we must take care not to become destructive, self-centered, or arrogant ourselves. And so we ask not for the defeat of "our" enemies, but of God's enemies. Who are God's enemies? Those who have lost a moral compass.

**THE RIGHTEOUS** הַצְּדִיקִים. This *b'rakhah* expresses gratitude for the outstanding individuals of each generation and invokes God's blessing upon them. The list includes spiritual leaders, pious and righteous individuals who are exemplars of religious ideals, and righteous converts who have made a decisive choice regarding the nature of their religious lives.

**RIGHTEOUS CONVERTS** גְּרֵי הַצֶּדֶק. The formula of this *b'rakhah* in the versions popular in the first millennium in the Land of Israel particularly emphasized the righteous converts. In their willingness to transform their very identity, they exemplify of a vision of righteousness.

וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ בְּרַחֲמִים תָּשׁוּב,  
וְתִשְׁכַּן בְּתוֹכָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ,  
וּבָנָה אוֹתָהּ בְּקִרְוּב בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּנֵין עוֹלָם,  
וְכִסָּא דָּוִד מְהֵרָה לְתוֹכָהּ תִּכְיֶין.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.

אֶת־צֶמַח דָּוִד עֲבָדְךָ מְהֵרָה תִצְמַיֵחַ,  
וְקִרְנֵנו תִּרְוֵם בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ,  
כִּי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קִוִּינוּ כָּל־הַיּוֹם.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מְצַמֵּיחַ קֶרֶן יִשׁוּעָה.

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, חוֹס וְרוֹחַם עָלֵינוּ,  
וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת־תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ,  
כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה,  
וּמְלַפְנֵיךָ, מְלַכְנוּ, רִיקָם אֵל תִּשְׁיַבֵּנוּ.  
כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמִים.  
[Some substitute: כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלַּת כָּל־פֶּה.]

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה.

**IN YOUR MERCY** בְּרַחֲמִים. God's return to Jerusalem is not characterized by power or strength, but rather by mercy, *rahamim*. Derived from the same Hebrew root as the word *rehem*, "womb," *rahamim* connotes the boundless love and compassion of a mother for a child. We might even say that love and compassion are the building-blocks of God's return to Jerusalem.

**THE SHOOT OF YOUR SERVANT DAVID** אֶת־צֶמַח דָּוִד. The previous *b'rakhah* imagines God returning to Jerusalem, rebuilding and restoring the glory of the city. This *b'rakhah* envisions the human character on which redemption depends. Together, they portray redemption as the joining together of divine and human agency.

**HEAR OUR VOICE** שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ. Since the Amidah is said quietly, the voice

referred to here is the stirring of one's heart. We ask that God attend to our deepest selves, listening to the pleas and cries within, even if we ourselves are not fully conscious of them.

**IN YOUR KINDNESS** בְּרַחֲמִים. Perhaps the ultimate purpose of prayer is for us to experience God's love and kindness and for us to then go out to the world with kindness. When we feel listened to, we can go out into the world with a listening ear.

רָצָה, יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּעֶמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבִתְפִלָּתָם,  
וְהִשָּׁב אֶת־הָעֲבוּדָה לְדָבִיר בֵּיתְךָ,  
וּתְפִלָּתָם בְּאַהֲבָה תִקְבַּל בְּרָצוֹן,  
וּתְהִי לְרָצוֹן תָּמִיד עֲבוּדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ.

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

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], יַעֲלֵה וַיְבֵא, וַיַּפִּיעַ וַיִּרְאֵה,  
וַיִּרְצֵה וַיִּשְׁמַע, וַיִּפְקֹד וַיִּזְכֹּר זְכוֹרֵנוּ וּפְקֻדוֹנֵנוּ, וְזָכְרוֹן  
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ], וְזָכְרוֹן מְשִׁיחַ בְּוָדוֹד עֲבָדָה, וְזָכְרוֹן  
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קְדוֹשָׁה, וְזָכְרוֹן כָּל־עֲמָךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֶיךָ,  
לְפָלִיטָה, לְטוֹבָה, לְחַן וּלְחַסֵּד וּלְרַחֲמִים, לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם, בְּיוֹם

*On Sukkot:*

חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת

*On Pesah:*

חַג הַמִּצּוֹת

*On Rosh Hodesh:*

רֵאשִׁית הַחֹדֶשׁ

הַזֶּה. וְזָכְרָנוּ, יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה, וּפְקֻדָנוּ בּוֹ לְבִרְכָה,  
וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בּוֹ לְחַיִּים. וּבְדָבָר יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים, חוּס וְחַנּוּן, וְרַחֲמִים  
עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ, כִּי אֵלֶיךָ עֵינֵינוּ, כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה.

וְתַחֲזִינָה עֵינֵינוּ בְּשׁוֹבְךָ לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוּה, הַמַּחֲזִיר שְׂכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.

† מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ שְׂאֵתָה הוּא יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי  
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ] לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. צוּר חַיֵּינוּ, מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ,  
אַתָּה הוּא. לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נוֹדָה לָךְ וּנְסַפֵּר תְּהִלָּתְךָ,  
עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדְךָ,  
וְעַל גְּשׁוּמוֹתֵינוּ הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ,  
וְעַל גְּסִיף שְׂבָכְלֵי־יוֹם עִמָּנוּ,  
וְעַל גְּפִלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ שְׂבָכְל־עֵת,  
עָרַב וּבָקֵר וְצָהָרִים.  
הַטּוֹב, כִּי לֹא כָלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ,  
וְהִמְרַחֵם, כִּי לֹא תָמוּ חֲסָדֶיךָ מֵעוֹלָם קוֹיָנוּ לָךְ.

**PRAYER AND SACRIFICE.**  
One of the Talmud's explanations of the origins of the Amidah connects it to the daily offerings in the Temple. The morning and afternoon prayers substitute for the twice-daily sacrifices. There was no evening sacrifice in the Temple, but the remainders of the daytime sacrifices burned through the night. Just as the evening represented the completion of the sacrifices of the day, our prayer expresses the hope that all we have done today be considered an acceptable service. (Based on Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 26b.)

**RISE UP AND COME** יַעֲלֵה וַיְבֵא. This passage is added on festivals (including Hol Ha-mo-ed) and on Rosh Hodesh, when additional sacrifices were offered in the Temple (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 24a). It asks that our celebration be not only joyous in this special time, but also a precursor of a redemptive future.

**OUR EYES** עֵינֵינוּ. Earlier, we prayed for God's return to Jerusalem. Now, that prayer includes a more profound plea: we ask for the opportunity to witness God's presence in our midst. Frequently, we are conscious of God's absence, the silence of the universe.

To enter into the Temple is to feel a sense of presence. This vision of the Temple becomes a metaphor for prayer, through which we may seek the presence of God in our lives.

**WE THANK YOU** מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ. Especially at night, as we reflect on the day that has passed, this passage may prompt a personal sense of gratitude, allowing us to pause and appreciate the ordinary that is extraordinary—the miracles that accompany us each day.

On Hanukkah, we recite the prayer below.  
On Purim, we add Al Hanissim on page 203.  
On Yom Ha-Atzmaut, we add Al Hanissim on page 222.

## לחנכה

עַל הַנְּסִים וְעַל הַפְּרָקָן, וְעַל הַגְּבוּרוֹת, וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת,  
וְעַל הַמְּלַחְמוֹת שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ [וּלְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ] בְּיָמֵם  
הֵהָם וּבְזִמַּן הַזֶּה.

בְּיָמֵי מַתְתִּיָּהוּ בֶן־יֹחָנָן כִּהֵן גְּדוֹל חַשְׁמוֹנָאִי וּבְנָיו,  
בְּשַׁעֲמֻדָּה מַלְכוּת יוֹן הִרְשָׁעָה עַל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
לְהַשְׁכִּיחַם תּוֹרַתְךָ וּלְהַעֲבִירָם מִחֻקֵּי רְצוֹנָךְ,  
וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים עֲמַדְתָּ לָהֶם בְּעֵת צָרָתָם,  
רַבַּת אֶת־זִרְיָכָם, דָּגַת אֶת־דִּינָם, נִקְמַת אֶת־נַקְמָתָם,  
מִסָּרַת גְּבוּרִים בְּיַד חֲלָשִׁים, וְרַבִּים בְּיַד מְעֻטִּים,  
וּטְמָאִים בְּיַד טְהוּרִים, וּרְשָׁעִים בְּיַד צַדִּיקִים,  
וְזָדִים בְּיַד עוֹסְקֵי תוֹרַתְךָ,  
וּלְךָ עָשִׂיתָ שֵׁם גְּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ בְּעוֹלָמְךָ,  
וּלְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל עָשִׂיתָ תְּשׁוּעָה גְּדוֹלָה וּפְרָקוֹן כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.  
וְאַחַר כֵּן בָּאוּ בְנֵיךָ לְדַבֵּר בֵּיתְךָ,  
וּפָנּוּ אֶת־הַיְכָלְךָ,  
וְטָהְרוּ אֶת־מִקְדָּשְׁךָ,  
וְהִדְלִיקוּ נְרוֹת בְּחֻצוֹת קִדְשֶׁךָ,  
וְקִבְּעוּ שְׁמוֹנֶת יָמֵי חֲנֻכָּה אֵלֶינוּ,  
לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלְלֵל לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל.

AL HANISSIM is a prayer added during the eight days of Hanukkah to the penultimate *b'rakhah* in the Amidah and to the Grace After Meals, which offers thanks to God. It thus begins midsentence, continuing the list of matters for which we offer thanks to God. The Babylonian Talmud (Shabbat 24a) prescribes an additional prayer for Hanukkah, although it does not specify its language, and the minor tractate Sofrim (8th century) has a considerably shorter version of this prayer: "As You performed miracles for Your priests in the time of Mattathias and his sons, do so for us, that we may acknowledge Your name forever" (20:6).

In 167 B.C.E. the Syrian Greeks, who ruled the Land of Israel, spurred on by many members of the Jewish aristocracy, began a policy of Hellenization, including outlawing certain Jewish practices, thus sparking a revolt led by the Hasmonean family. The revolutionaries came to be called "Maccabees," which is traditionally explained as an acronym of the

Hebrew *mi khamokha ba-eilim Adonai*, "Who is like You, Adonai, among the mighty?" The revolt was eventually successful and the Hasmoneans took on the roles of both High Priests and sovereigns in the Land of Israel, expanding its geographic reach and initiating a period of economic prosperity (though eventually, royal infighting resulted in the Land of Israel's becoming a Roman province). Throughout Jewish history, the Maccabean revolt has served as an exemplar of the struggle for Jewish autonomy, of liberation from oppression, and of rededication to a religious vision.

וְעַל כָּל־מִי שֶׁיֵּשֶׁתּוֹבֵב לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we add:*

וּכְתוּב לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים כָּל־בְּנֵי בְרִיתְךָ.

וְכָל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ סְלָה, וַיְהִלְלוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּאֵמֶת,  
הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתָנוּ וְעֲזָרָתָנוּ סְלָה.  
וְבָרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַטּוֹב שִׁמְךָ וְלִךָ נָאֵה לְהוֹדוֹת.

שְׁלוֹם רַב עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ  
וְעַל כָּל־יְשׁוּבֵי תֵבֶל תְּשִׁים לְעוֹלָם,  
כִּי אַתָּה הוּא מֶלֶךְ אֲדוֹן לְכָל־הַשְּׁלוֹם.  
וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּכָל־עֵת וּבְכָל־שָׁעָה בְּשָׁלוֹמְךָ.

*Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we recite the following paragraph, in place of the line that follows it:*

בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים, בְּרָכָה וְשְׁלוֹם, וּפְרָנְסָה טוֹבָה, נִזְכָּר וְנִכְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ  
אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל־עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשְׁלוֹם.  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, עוֹשֵׂה הַשְּׁלוֹם.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשְׁלוֹם.

*The quiet recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer or the following:*

אֱלֹהֵי, נִצַּר לְשׁוֹנֵי מָרַע, וּשְׁפָתֵי מִדְּבַר מְרָמָה, וְלִמְקַלְלֵי  
נַפְשֵׁי תוֹדִים, וְנַפְשֵׁי כְּעָפָר לְכָל תְּהִיָּה. פָּתַח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרָתְךָ,  
וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדֹּף נַפְשִׁי. וְכָל־הַחוֹשְׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה,  
מִהֲרָה הֲפֹר עֲצָתָם וְקַלְקַל מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם. עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן שִׁמְךָ  
עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן יְמִינְךָ, עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן קִדְשֹׁתְךָ, עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן  
תּוֹרָתְךָ. לִמְעַן יִחַלְצוּן יִדְיָדֶיךָ, הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וְעַנְנֵי.

יְהִיו לְרִצּוֹן אֲמִרֵי־פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי.

*It is customary to take three steps backward and bow to the left, to the right, and to the center at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.*

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

*On Saturday night, we turn to page 144.*

MAY ALL THAT LIVES וְכָל הַחַיִּים. The wording of this *b'rakhah* in Temple times was "It is good to thank You" (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Yoma 7:1). It is the very act of giving thanks for the gift of life, the gifts of a day, that transforms us and gives us eyes to see the good.

GRANT ABUNDANT AND LASTING PEACE שְׁלוֹם רַב. The morning version of this *b'rakhah* centers on the Priestly Blessing; this version is a more general prayer for peace. Since the priests did not bless the congregation at the evening service, Maimonides and other medieval commentators recommended that we recite this version of the prayer on weekday evenings. The prayer calls for blessing to descend "at all times"—that is, even when the formal Priestly Blessing is not uttered. As darkness descends, we may find consolation in the expression of hope for peace. The opening words are taken from Psalm 119:165, "Those who love Your teaching enjoy abundant peace; they encounter no adversity."

PERSONAL PRAYER. It was customary for the ancient rabbis to add personal prayers after the recitation of the liturgy. The Babylonian Talmud offers examples of personal prayers, many of which have entered the liturgy in a variety of places, and one of which concludes the text of the Amidah here.

## קִדְיֵשׁ שְׁלָם

*Leader:*

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כְּרַעוּתָהּ,  
וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזָמַן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

*Congregation and Leader:*

יְהִי אֱלֹהֵי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֵלְמֵיָא.

*Leader:*

יְתַבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא  
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,  
לְעֵלְא מִן כָּל-

[between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute: לְעֵלְא לְעֵלְא מְכַל-

בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא דְאִמְרוּן בְּעֵלְמָא,  
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תְּתַקַּבַּל צְלוֹתָהוֹן וּבְרַעוּתָהוֹן דְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל קָדָם אַבוּהוֹן דִּי  
בְּשַׁמְיָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהִי אֱלֹהֵי שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמֵיָא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ  
וְעַל כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל-יְשׁוּבֵי תַבְּלַ], וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

**KADDISH SHALEM.** The Talmud of the Land of Israel, describing the Temple service, reports that the assembled congregation responded to the priestly prayer, "May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever" (Berakhot 9:5), and so we, too, conclude each service with that congregational response, here offered in Aramaic. Additionally, this Kaddish is distinguished from other forms of the Kaddish with its request that our prayers be accepted. We have concluded our prayers and we now express the hope they have an effect—on God, on us, on the world we live in.

# סיום התפילה

*We rise.*

עלינו לשבח לאדון הכל, לתת גדלה ליוצר בראשית  
שלא עשנו כגויי הארצות, ולא שמנו כמשפחות  
האדמה, שלא שם חלקנו בהם, וגרלנו ככל המונם.  
וְאִנְחָנוּ בּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים, לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ  
מְלִכֵי הַמְּלָכִים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

שהוא נוטה שמים ויוסד ארץ, ומושב יקרו בשמים  
ממעל, ושכינת עזו בגבהי מרומים, הוא אלהינו  
אין עוד. אמת מלבנו, אפס זולתו, כפתוב בתורתו:  
וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם וְהַשַּׁבָּת אֵל לְבַבְךָ, כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים  
בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל, וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת, אֵין עוֹד.

על כן נקווה לך יהוה אלהינו, לראות מהרה בתפארת  
עזה, להעביר גלולים מן הארץ, והאלילים פרות יפרתו,  
לתקן עולם במלכות שדי, וכלבני בשר יקראו בשמך,  
להפנות אליך כל רשעי ארץ.  
יכירו וידעו כל יושבי תבל, כי לך תכרע כל ברך,  
תשבע כל לשון. לפניך יהוה אלהינו יכרעו ויפלו,  
ולכבוד שמך יקר יתנו, ויקבלו כלם את על מלכותך.  
ותמלך עליהם מהרה לעולם ועד, כי המלכות שלך  
היא, ולעולמי עד תמלך בכבוד.

◀ כפתוב בתורתך: יהוה ימלך לעלם ועד.  
ונאמר: והיה יהוה למלך על כל הארץ,  
ביום ההוא יהיה יהוה אחד, ושמו אחד.

*We are seated.*

ALEINU was originally composed as an introduction to the *Malkhuyot*/sovereignty section of the Rosh Hashanah Musaf service. It is not surprising then that its central theme is God's sovereignty. But it is important to note that when we declare in the second paragraph our wish that the world be ruled by God's law, לתקן עולם ב"מלכות שדי" ("establishing in the world the sovereignty of the Almighty"), God's rule is viewed as the ultimate triumph of justice; thus, we are affirming our hope for a world in which those who are bowed down are raised up, those who are in fetters, are freed, and those who oppress are vanquished. The expression of this hope, that justice will triumph, is the final prayer, the wish with which we conclude the service. Aleinu ends with the expression of hope that our ideals, our beliefs, all for which we have prayed, be embodied on earth. That is the meaning of the conclusion: "On that day Adonai shall be one, and the name of God, one."

There is a second motif, intimately tied to the first: in coming to the end of our service, we express our pride in being members of the people who originated the message that justice, uprightness, the ethical, are essential to Divinity and we align ourselves with those who maintained loyalty to it throughout the millennia.

## קְדִישׁ יְתוֹם

*Mourners and those observing Yahrzeit:*

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא,  
בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כְּרַעוּתָהּ,  
וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ  
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְנֵי קָרִיב,  
וְאָמְרוּ אַמֵּן.

*Congregation and mourners:*

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמֵיָא.

*Mourners:*

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא  
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,  
לְעָלְמָא מִן כָּל־

[between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we substitute: לְעָלְמָא מְכָל־]

בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְאִמְרֵינוּ בְּעֵלְמָא,  
וְאָמְרוּ אַמֵּן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמֵיָא,  
וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
וְאָמְרוּ אַמֵּן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמֵרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם  
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יְשׁוּבֵי תִבְלַת],  
וְאָמְרוּ אַמֵּן.

## MOURNER'S KADDISH.

It is sometimes difficult for a mourner to reintegrate into a community after the loss of a close relation. Equally, it may be difficult for the community to know how to receive a mourner in its midst. In reciting the Kaddish, the mourner takes a formal role in relation to the community. The mourner is able to say: "I am here in your midst, praying alongside you"; and the congregation can respond: "Along with you, we all turn our eyes to God."

The prophet Ezekiel remarks that after great tragedy, God will become manifest throughout the world (38:23); the first words of the Kaddish evoke that claim and express the wish that it come to pass in our time. By the end of the Mourner's Kaddish, whatever our loss, whatever tragedy we have suffered, we look to God in hope and we hold on to a vision of some moment when we all may be at peace.

The Sephardic version of the Mourner's Kaddish can be found at the end of this volume.

Recited during the month leading up to and including the Days of Awe (see note to the right):

לְדוֹד  
יְהוָה אֲוִרִי וַיִּשְׁעֵי, מִמִּי אִירָא,  
יְהוָה מְעוֹז חַיִּי, מִמִּי אֶפְחָד.  
בְּקִרְבִּי עָלִי מִרְעִים לֶאֱכֹל אֶת־בְּשָׂרִי,  
צָרִי וְאִיבִי לִי,  
הִמָּה כְּשָׁלוֹ וְנִפְלוּ.  
אִם תִּחַנֶּה עָלַי מַחְנָה, לֹא יִירָא לְבִי,  
אִם תִּקּוּם עָלַי מִלְחָמָה, בְּזֹאת אֲנִי בּוֹטָח.  
אֶחַת שְׂאֵלֹתַי מֵאֵת יְהוָה, אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ,  
שִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית יְהוָה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי  
לְחַזוֹת בְּנִעַם יְהוָה, וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהִיכָלוֹ.  
כִּי יִצְפְּנֵנִי בְּסֹפֶה בְּיוֹם רָעָה,  
יִסְתַּרְנִי בְּסִתְרֵי אֱהָלוֹ, בְּצוּר יְרוּמָמַי.  
וְעֵתָה יְרוּם רֹאשִׁי עַל אִיבֵי סְבִיבוֹתַי,  
וְאֶזְבְּחָה בְּאֱהָלוֹ זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה,  
אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמְרָה לַיהוָה.  
שָׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא, וְחִנְנֵנִי וְעַנְנֵנִי.  
לֵךְ אָמַר לְבִי בְּקִשׁוֹ פָּנָי, אֶת־פְּנֵיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ.  
אֵל תִּסְתַּר פְּנֵיךָ מִמֶּנִּי,  
אֵל תֵּט בְּאָף עַבְדֶּךָ,  
עֲזַרְתִּי הִיָּיתִי,  
אֵל תִּטְשֵׁנִי וְאֵל תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.  
כִּי אָבִי וְאֲמִי עֲזָבוּנִי, וַיהוָה יֶאֱסַפְנֵנִי.  
הוֹרְנֵנִי יְהוָה דְּרַפְּךָ וּנְחֵנִי בְּאֲרַח מִישׁוֹר, לְמַעַן שִׁרְרֵי.  
אֵל תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנַפְשׁ צָרִי, כִּי קָמוּ בִי עֲדֵי שֶׁקֶר וַיִּפַּח חָמָס.  
◀ לֹוֹלָא הָאֲמַנְתִּי לְרֵאוֹת בְּטוֹב יְהוָה בְּאֲרָץ חַיִּים.  
קִוְיָה אֵל יְהוָה, חֲזֹק וַיֵּאֱמַץ לְבָבְךָ וְקִוְיָה אֵל יְהוָה.

תהלים כו

**PSALM 27.** The psalm expresses two opposing feelings, each of which may be felt in the days circling the High Holy Days. From the very beginning, the psalmist expresses absolute faith in God, culminating toward the end of the psalm with the striking sentence: "Though my father and mother abandon me, Adonai will gather me in..." But at the same time, the psalmist experiences God's absence—the longing to "see God" receives no response. The poem's last line leaves us with a thin, consoling thread of hope—making us realize how much we depend on faith.

In light of its themes, the psalm is added to the service beginning on Rosh Hodesh Elul and during part of the month of Tishrei. Some begin reciting it on the second day of Rosh Hodesh, marking a 40-day period culminating on Yom Kippur, corresponding to the 40 days Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the second set of tablets, according to Midrash Tanhuma, Ki Tissa 31:1. Many continue reciting the psalm throughout the fall holiday season, until either Hoshana Rabbah (the last day of Sukkot) or Sh'mini Atzeret. Outside of the Land of Israel, it is not recited on Simhat Torah. Ashkenazic communities recite it morning and evening, while Sephardic communities typically recite it morning and afternoon.

**TO PRAY** ולבקר. Commenta-

tors have disagreed about the meaning of the Hebrew. Some would translate it as "greet" (that is, "greet God"); others take it to mean "ponder" or "examine" the presence of God.

**DO NOT HIDE YOUR FACE FROM ME** מִמֶּנִּי פָּנֶיךָ פָּנֵיךָ מִמֶּנִּי. The contemporary literary critic Robert Alter writes, "Face' suggests 'presence,'" the concrete metaphor serving the poet more than the abstract sense behind it.

# שיר של יום

## ליום ראשון

היום יום ראשון בשבת, שבו היו  
הלויים אומרים בבית המקדש:

### לדוד מזמור

ליהוה הארץ ומלוואה, תבל וישבי בה.  
כי הוא על ימים יסדה, ועל נהרות יכוננה.  
מי יעלה בהר יהוה, ומי יקום במקום קדשו.  
נקי כפיים ובר לבב, אשר לא נשא לשוא נפשי,  
ולא נשבע למרמה,

ישא ברכה מאת יהוה, וצדקה מאלהי ישעו.  
זה דור דורשיו, מבקשי פניך יעקב, סלה.  
שאו שערים ראשיכם, והנשאו פתחי עולם,  
ויבוא מלך הכבוד.

מי זה מלך הכבוד, יהוה עזוז וגבור,  
יהוה גבור מלחמה.

שאו שערים ראשיכם, ושאו פתחי עולם,  
ויבא מלך הכבוד.

מי הוא זה מלך הכבוד,

יהוה צבאות, הוא מלך הכבוד סלה.

תהלים כד

*Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.*

week we have traveled through an understanding of history—the world has moved away from the ideal of creation, but, in the end, evil can be conquered; the people Israel can play a crucial role in this historic process. Finally, the Sabbath ushers in a foretaste of the world that is coming.

**PSALM 24.** The first of the daily psalms opens with the story of creation and invites God to join with, and enter into, the world that God has created. The psalmist asserts that the earthly can ascend to the divine realm through righteousness, and in turn, the Divine will enter into the earthly realm when a moral society is maintained. For additional commentary on Psalm 24, see page 70.

**OPEN UP, O GATES** שְׂעָרִים רְאִשֵׁיכֶם. A more literal translation would read, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates" (see, for example, the 1917 JPS translation). The reference seems to be to the gates of the Temple, which are lifted upward to create an opening, much like a portcullis, the gate of a medieval fortress.

### PSALMS OF THE DAY.

Although the Mishnah (Tamid 7:4) reports that each day of the week the Levites would recite an appropriate psalm, the custom of reciting a particular psalm to mark individual days did not enter the formal liturgy until the 14th or 15th century.

These daily psalms form an arc for the week. The psalm for Sunday praises God as creator upholding a moral universe. The psalm for Monday centers on the people Israel and the city of Jerusalem. Tuesday ushers in the first disquieting note, in which we learn that heaven is disturbed by the lack of justice on earth. On Wednesday it is an earthly voice that denounces evil. On Thursday God instructs the people Israel that if they turn and listen to God's word, redemption will be at hand. With this promise of redemption we are ready to receive God as sovereign in the Friday psalm, and in that way enter Shabbat. Through the

## לְיוֹם שְׁנִי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם שְׁנֵי בַשָּׁבָת, שְׁבוּ הַיּוֹם  
הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר לְבְנֵי קֹרַח  
גְּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהַלֵּל מְאֹד,  
בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַר קֹדֶשׁוֹ.  
יִפָּה נוֹף מְשׁוֹשׁ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,  
הַר צִיּוֹן, יִרְכָּתֵי צְפוֹן,  
קִרְיַת מֶלֶךְ רַב.

אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ נוֹדַע לְמִשְׁגָּב.  
כִּי הִנֵּה הַמְּלָכִים נוֹעְדוּ עֲבָרוּ יַחְדָּו,  
הִמָּה רָאוּ כֵּן תִּמְהוּ,  
נִבְהָלוּ נַחֲפָזוּ,  
רָעְדָה אַחֲזוֹתֶם שָׁם,  
חֵיל כִּיּוֹלְדָה,  
בְּרוּחַ קָדִים תִּשְׁבֵּר אַנְיוֹת תִּרְשִׁישׁ.

כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְעָנוּ כֵּן רָאִינוּ בְּעִיר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,  
בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ,  
אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנְנָה עַד עוֹלָם, סֵלָה.

דָּמִינוּ אֱלֹהִים חֲסֵדָהּ, בְּקֶרֶב הַיְכָלָהּ.  
בְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כֵּן תִּהְלֹתְךָ עַל קִצְוֵי אָרֶץ,  
צֶדֶק מְלֵאָה יְמִינֶךָ.  
יִשְׁמַח הַר צִיּוֹן, תִּגְלָלָהּ בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה,  
לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ.

סְבוּ צִיּוֹן וְהִקִּיפוּהָ, סִפְרוּ מְגִדְלֶיהָ.  
שִׁיתוּ לְבַבְכֶם לְחִילָהּ פִּסְגוּ אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ,  
לְמַעַן תִּסְפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן.  
◀ כִּי זֶה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם וָעֶד,  
הוּא יְנַהַגְנוּ עַל מוֹת.

תהלים מח

**PSALM 48.** The psalm for Sunday praised God as the creator of the whole world; now, the psalm for Monday focuses on God and Jerusalem. The entire psalm is a paean to the city, called here “the joy of all the earth,” and God is seen as its protector. Here, too, as on Sunday, greatness is described not only in external terms—the beautiful city—but in ethical language as well: “Your right hand clasps justice.” The praise of the city is intertwined with the praise of God offered by its citizens.

Some have suggested that the psalm refers to a historic event: the city’s being besieged and saved. Rashi (11th century, northern France), quoting the midrash, thinks that the psalm is an ode to a rebuilt Jerusalem in a messianic future.

**THE CLAN OF KORAH** לְבְנֵי קֹרַח. The Torah declares that the children of Korah did not die when their father was punished in the rebellion (Numbers 26:11), and the Book of Chronicles enumerates Korah as a functioning levitical clan (1 Chronicles 9:19).

**GRASPED** דָּמִינוּ. The Hebrew word has a range of meaning: to imagine, consider, or compare.

**BEYOND DEATH** עַל מוֹת. Some construe the term as one word and argue that it is a musical instruction—that after “the eternal God, our God, who will lead us,” there was originally a musical notation, as in the superscription of Psalm 41:1, *alamot*. Others understand it to mean “forever.” Menaḥem Meiri (1249–1316) suggests that it may mean “beyond death”—that is, God will lead us eternally.

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

לְיוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי  
הַיּוֹם יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי בַשַּׁבָּת, שָׁבוּ הָיוּ  
הַלְלוֹים אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף  
אֱלֹהִים נֹצֵב בַּעֲדַת אֵל,  
בְּקָרֵב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט.

עַד מָתִי תִשְׁפָּטוּ עוֹלָם,  
וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ, סִלָּה.  
שְׁפָטוּ דָל וְיִתּוֹם,  
עֲנֵי וְרֵשׁ הַצְּדִיקוֹ.  
פְּלֹטוּ דָל וְאֲבִיוֹן,  
מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצֵּילוּ.

לֹא יִדְעוּ וְלֹא יִבִּינּוּ,  
בְּחִשְׁבָּה יִתְהַלְכוּ,  
יִמּוּטוּ כָּל־מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ.

אֲנִי אֶמְרָתִי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם,  
וּבְנֵי עֲלִיוֹן כְּלֶכֶם.  
אֲכִן כְּאָדָם תִּמּוּתוֹן,  
וּכְאֶחָד הַשָּׁרִים תִּפְלוּ.

◀ קוֹמָה אֱלֹהִים שְׁפָטָה הָאָרֶץ,  
כִּי אַתָּה תִּנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם.

תהלים פב

*Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.*

PSALM 82. Sunday's psalm talked about the goodness of creation and Monday's portrayed an idealized Jerusalem. In Tuesday's psalm, we are now presented with the perceived fault on earth, the gap between God's vision for creation and the reality in which we live: justice does not reign, the poor are ill treated, the weak have no recourse. We are witnesses to a scene in heaven where the celestial beings who personify the nations of the world are judged, and God upbraids them for what has occurred.

Martin Buber brilliantly analyzes this poem as a drama narrating a scene in heaven. The narrator sets the stage: a convention in heaven in which God is upbraiding the angels responsible for the nations of the world for allowing injustice to reign. The angels cannot defend themselves and the narrator describes their inability to offer a credible account of their work. We then hear God pronouncing judgment on them—throwing them out of heaven, as it were. The poem ends with the narrator's—and our—call to God to in fact effectuate this judgment and end the earthly rule of injustice.

ASAPH לְאַסָּף. There are twelve psalms attributed to Asaph. Both Ezra and Nehemiah mention Asaph as a levitical clan serving as musicians in the Temple (Ezra 2:41, 3:10; Nehemiah 7:44).

## לְיוֹם רְבִיעִי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם רְבִיעִי בַשַּׁבָּת, שָׁבוּ הַיּוֹ  
הַלּוֹיִם אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

אַל נִקְמוֹת יְהוָה, אַל נִקְמוֹת הוֹפִיעַ.  
הַנָּשֵׂא שִׁפְט הָאָרֶץ, הָשֵׁב גָּמוּל עַל גָּאִים.  
עַד מָתִי רְשָׁעִים, יְהוָה, עַד מָתִי רְשָׁעִים יַעֲלוּ.  
יִבְיְעוּ יִדְבְּרוּ עִתְקוֹ, יִתְאָמְרוּ כָּל־פִּעְלֵי אָוֶן.  
עֲמֹךָ יְהוָה יִדְבָּאוּ, וְנִחַלְתָּךְ יַעֲנוּ,  
אֲלֻמָּנָה וְגַר יִהְרְגוּ, וִיתוּמִים יִרְצָחוּ.  
וַיֵּאמְרוּ, לֹא יִרְאֶה יְהוָה, וְלֹא יִבִּין אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.  
בֵּינֵנוּ בְעֵרִים בָּעַם, וּכְסִילִים מָתִי תִשְׁכִּילוּ.  
הַנֹּטֵעַ אֲזֵן הֵלֵא יִשְׁמַע, אִם יֵצֵר עֵינַי הֵלֵא יִבִּיט,  
הַיֹּסֵר גּוֹיִם הֵלֵא יוֹכִיחַ. הַמְלַמֵּד אָדָם דַּעַת,  
יְהוָה יִדְעֵ מַחְשְׁבוֹת אָדָם, כִּי הֵמָּה הַבָּל.  
אֲשֶׁרֵי הַגִּבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר תִּיַסְרֵנוּ יְהוָה, וּמִתּוֹרַתְךָ תִּלְמָדְנוּ,  
לְהַשְׁקִיט לוֹ מִימֵי רָע, עַד יִפְרָה לְרָשָׁע שַׁחַת.  
כִּי לֹא יִטֹּשׁ יְהוָה עַמּוֹ, וְנִחַלְתוּ לֹא יַעֲזֹב.  
כִּי עַד צֶדֶק יִשׁוּב מִשִּׁפְטוֹ, וְאַחֲרָיו כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵב.

continued

PSALM 94. The psalm for Tuesday spoke of God's rising in the heavenly court, acknowledging the evil committed in the world. Now, in the psalm for Wednesday, the pace quickens and the plea for the appearance of God to wipe evil off the face of the earth becomes insistent. The psalm expresses one of the characteristic biblical themes: that law can be perverted and become unjust, and that the rule of law is legitimate insofar as it approximates justice. Then as now, rulers and dictators were able to achieve destructive ends through the rule of law, and so a recurring biblical demand is for societies to create a just system of law.

The language of this psalm is full of anger and can often feel harsh. One should keep in mind that the anger is vented against immoral behavior, oppression of the weak and vul-

nerable, and abuse of power. In that sense, it is a prophetic prayer: the perversion of justice is an attack on the Divine.

הַיֹּסֵר . . . תִּיַסְרֵנוּ INSTRUCTED . . . CHASTISES.  
The Hebrew verb means "to instruct," "to admonish," or "to discipline." In later usage, the noun *musar*, derived from this verb's root (*yod-samekh-resh*), came to mean specifically "ethical instruction." The poet here imagines God as a teacher who educates and refines human consciousness, and who also disciplines recalcitrant students.

מי יקום לי עם מרעים, מי יתיצב לי עם פּעֵלֵי אֵוֶן.  
 לוֹלֵי יְהוָה עֲזַרְתָּהּ לִי, כִּמְעַט שָׁכְנָה דוֹמָה נַפְשִׁי.  
 אִם אֲמַרְתִּי מָטָה רַגְלִי, חֲסַדְךָ יְהוָה יִסְעֶדְנִי,  
 בָּרַב שָׂרְעֵפֵי בְּקִרְבִּי, תִּנְחַוּמִיךָ יִשְׁעִשְׂעוּ נַפְשִׁי.  
 הִיחַבְּרֶךְ כִּסֵּא הַוּוֹת, יוֹצֵר עֲמַל עָלַי חֶק.  
 יְגוֹדוּ עַל נַפְשׁ צְדִיק, וְדָם נָקִי יִרְשִׁיעוּ.  
 וַיְהִי יְהוָה לִי לְמִשְׁגָּב, וְאֱלֹהֵי לְצוּר מַחְסֵי,  
 וַיִּשָּׁב עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת־אוֹנָם,  
 וּבִרְעֵתָם יִצְמִיתָם,  
 וַיִּצְמִיתָם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

תהלים צד

◀ לְכוּ נִרְנְנָה לַיהוָה, נִרְיַעָה לְצוּר יִשְׁעֵנוּ.  
 נִקְדְּמָה פָּנָיו בְּתוֹדָה, בְּזִמְרוֹת נִרְיַע לוֹ.  
 כִּי אֵל גְּדוֹל יְהוָה, וּמַמְלֶךְ גְּדוֹל עַל כָּל־אֱלֹהִים.

תהלים צה:א-ג

*Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.*

**WOULD YOU BEFRIEND . . .**

**הִיחַבְּרֶךְ . . . יוֹצֵר**  
 This is a turning point in the psalm, in which the author questions God: could Your delay in acting allow the evildoers to think that You are really their friend? Note that these evildoers are now called "creators"—that is, creators of evil laws, as if to say that the divine Creator has been displaced.

**YOU SHALL REPAY THEM WITH WHAT THEY HAVE**

**וַיִּשָּׁב עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת־אוֹנָם**  
 The evil system they have instituted will be their own downfall. One might call to mind the Book of Esther, in which Haman was impaled on the very stake he built to impale Mordecai.

**CRUSH THEM**

**וַיִּצְמִיתָם** An example of biblical anger at immoral rule in society, expressed in extremely harsh language.

**LET US GO AND SING**

**לְכוּ נִרְנְנָה**  
 Psalm 95:1-3. Not wanting to end on a note of destruction, the liturgy adds the positive opening lines of the very next psalm in the Book of Psalms.

**THAN ALL OTHER POWERS**

**עַל כָּל־אֱלֹהִים** Literally, all other divinities. Post-biblical Jewish commentators understood the word *elohim*, when contrasted with God, to refer to earthly judges. In the context of the liturgy here, it may refer to the forces of evil that have been decried throughout Psalm 94.

## לְיוֹם חֲמִישִׁי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם חֲמִישִׁי בַשָּׁבֶת, שָׁבוּ הָיוּ  
הַלְלוּיִם אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

לְמַנְצַח עַל הַגִּתִּית לְאַסָּף

הֲרַנִּינוּ לְאֱלֹהִים עוֹזְנוֹ, הֲרִיעוּ לְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.

שָׂאוּ זְמֶרָה וּתְנוּ תָהּ, כְּנֹר נְעִים עִם גָּבֵל.

תִּקְעוּ בַחֲדָשׁ שׁוֹפָר, בַּכֶּסֶה לְיוֹם חַגְנוֹ.

כִּי חֶק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא, מִשְׁפָּט לְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.

עֵדוּת בִּיהוֹסֵף שָׁמוּ בְּצֵאתוֹ עַל אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם,

שִׁפְתַּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֲשַׁמַּע.

הַסִּירוֹתַי מִסָּבֵל שְׁכֵמוֹ, כִּפְיוֹ מִדוּד תִּעֲבֹרְנָה.

בְּצֶרֶה קָרָאתָ וְאַחֲלָצָהּ, אָעֲנֶךָ בְּסִתְרֵי רַעַם,

אֲבַחֲנֶךָ עַל מִי מְרִיבָה, סִלָּה.

שָׁמַע עַמִּי וְאַעֲיֶדָה בָּהּ, יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם תִּשְׁמַע לִי:

לֹא יִהְיֶה בָּךְ אֵל זֶה, וְלֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְאֵל נֹכַח.

אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, הִמְעַלְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם,

הֲרַחֲב־פִּיךָ וְאַמְלֵאָהּ.

וְלֹא שָׁמַע עַמִּי לְקוֹלִי, וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא אָבָה לִי.

וְאַשְׁלַחְהוּ בְּשִׁירוֹת לִבָּם, יִלְכוּ בְּמוֹעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם.

לוֹ עַמִּי שָׁמַע לִי, יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדַרְכֵי יְהִלְכוּ.

כְּמַעַט אוֹיְבֵיהֶם אֲכַנֶּיֶ, וְעַל צְרִיחֵם אָשִׁיב יָדַי.

◀ מִשְׁנֵאֵי יְהוָה יִכְחָשׁוּ לוֹ, וְיִהְיֶה עֲתָם לְעוֹלָם.

וְיִאֲכִילְהוּ מִחֶלֶב חֹטָה, וּמִצּוֹר דָּבַשׁ אֲשַׁבִּיעֶנָּה.

תהלים פא

Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.

the Israelites' complaints about the lack of water in the desert shortly after the exodus (Exodus 17:7).

**OPEN YOUR MOUTH** הֲרַחֲב־פִּיךָ. The reference may be to the manna in the desert, the food from heaven that fed the people. More likely, God asks of us that we fill our mouths with praise of the Divine.

**WOULD THAT MY PEOPLE LISTEN TO ME** לוֹ עַמִּי שָׁמַע לִי. What follows is a liturgical enunciation of the opening of the Decalogue (Exodus 20:2–3)—it is this that the people Israel has not listened to.

**HONEY FROM THE ROCK** וּמִצּוֹר דָּבַשׁ. In ancient Israel people collected honey that wild bees had deposited in the crevices of rocks. Though it refers to a common experience, nevertheless the image of a rock being the source of nourishment and sweetness is striking.

**PSALM 81.** Whereas Tuesday and Wednesday's psalms concentrated on the evil in the world, the psalm for Thursday focuses on the people Israel's repairing their relation with God, the opening stage in the world's reconciliation with God. (*The translation of this psalm builds on the insights of Leonard Cahan.*)

**UPON THE GITTIT** עַל הַגִּתִּית. The term may refer to a musical instrument. An alternative suggestion is that it refers to the winepress (*gat*), and the psalm may be a harvest song.

**TRIBES OF JOSEPH** בִּיהוֹסֵף. In this psalm and others, Joseph and Jacob become synonymous as names of the people Israel.

**WHERE I HEARD A LANGUAGE I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND** שִׁפְתַּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֲשַׁמַּע. A remark on the strangeness of Egypt; or possibly referring to God's voice, which was not immediately recognized because of the oppression of slavery.

**ON THEIR SHOULDERS** שְׁכֵמוֹ. God's speech begins by referring to the people Israel in the third person, as if God is facing inward, thinking; the speech then becomes direct address in the second person.

**I RESPONDED THUNDEROUSLY** אָעֲנֶךָ בְּסִתְרֵי רַעַם. The thunderous reply refers either to the thunder at the crossing of the Sea or to the thunder at Mount Sinai.

**MERIVAH** מְרִיבָה. A reference to

## לְיוֹם שְׁשִׁי

הַיּוֹם יוֹם שְׁשִׁי בַשָּׁבֹת, שָׁבוּ הַיּוֹ  
הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים אוֹמְרִים בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:

יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ גְּאוֹת לְבָשׁ  
לְבָשׁ יְהוָה עַז הַתְּאֵזֶר,  
אֵף תִּכּוֹן תִּבְל בֶּל תִּמּוֹט.  
נִכּוֹן בְּסֶאֱף מְאֹז, מֵעוֹלָם אֲתָה.  
נִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת יְהוָה,  
נִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת קוֹלָם,  
יִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת דְּכָיִים.  
◀ מִקְלוֹת מַיִם רַבִּים,  
אֲדִירִים מִשְׁבְּרֵי יָם,  
אֲדִיר בְּמָרוֹם יְהוָה.  
עֲדֹתֶיךָ נֶאֱמְנוּ מְאֹד  
לְבֵיתְךָ נֶאֱזָה קֹדֶשׁ,  
יְהוָה, לְאַרְץ יָמִים.

תהלים צג

*Some congregations recite Mourner's Kaddish here; see page 79.*

**PSALM 93.** The week coming to completion, the liturgy now asserts the full sovereignty of God. In a similar vein, in the story of creation in the first chapter of Genesis, the sixth day is described as "very good"—as if now creation is complete. In fact, Psalm 93 has many allusions to creation, not least the line, "From earliest time You were enthroned . . ." In this regard, there may also be a pointed refutation of ancient Near Eastern mythology. In some Near Eastern versions of creation, the world emerges from the primal waters with which the earliest gods are identified; here, God is high above those waters.

**MORE MAJESTIC THAN THE CRASHING BREAKERS OF THE GREAT SEA,** מִקְלוֹת מַיִם רַבִּים, אֲדִירִים מִשְׁבְּרֵי יָם. What are the waters referred to here? One can think of it as the ocean's waters (or in the case of the biblical poet, the waters of the Mediterranean). Biblical Israel thought that the world

rested on the waters of the deep, and perhaps that image is referred to here. The medieval commentator Meiri (Provence, 1246–1316) thought that it referred to the upper and lower waters, which God separated in the primal act of creation.

**YOUR TESTIMONIES ENDURE** עֲדֹתֶיךָ נֶאֱמְנוּ מְאֹד. Commentators disagree as to what exactly is meant by this phrase. Rashi (11th century, northern France) offers that "testimonies" are the totality of prophetic utterances. Abraham ibn Ezra (12th century, Spain and Italy) explains that the word should be understood as "witnesses," and that heaven and earth are witnesses to God as creator.

**IN YOUR HOUSE** לְבֵיתְךָ. This psalm was probably meant to be recited in the Temple. A pilgrim might hear the Levites singing of God's sovereignty and of God's presence being felt here "in Your house." Once the Temple was destroyed, the phrase took on different meaning. Some commentators see it as referring to God's abode in heaven; others, reflecting the messianic interpretation of the psalm, see it as a reference to the third Temple, which will never be destroyed. Meiri (1249–1316) understands it to be the spiritual home that people of faith find.