An Introductory Song Welcoming Shabbat

Y’DID NEFESH
Beloved of my soul, compassionate father, draw me, Your servant, to Your desire. Would that I could run like a gazelle, and bow before Your beauty, for I find Your love sweeter than honey or any delight.

Beautiful, splendid light of the world, my soul is sick with love. God, please heal her by bathing her in Your serene light—then she shall surely be strengthened and healed and be Your servant forever.

Ancient One, let Your compassion flow. Have pity on the child whom You love—for I have yearned for so long to see Your luminescent power. My God, my beloved, hurry, please, do not hide!

Please, my beloved, reveal Yourself. Spread the sukkah of Your love over me. May the whole world be illuminated with Your glory; then shall we be glad and rejoice with You. My lover—come quickly, for the time has come—have compassion for me as in days of old.

Y’id nefesh, av ha-rahaman, mishkhol avdakh el’r’zonakh, yarutz avdakh k’mo ayal, yishrafveh ve’hu midadakh, ki ye erav lo yididatkh, mi nofet tsuf v’khul ta’am.

Hadar, na eih, ziv ha-olam, nafshi holat ahavatkh, ana, El na, psa na lah, b’harot lah noma zivak, az tit’hazek v’etrapa, v’haicah lakh shifhat olam.

Vatik, yehemu rahamekha, v’his na al ben ohavak, ki zeh kamah nikhsof nikhsaf firot b’tifret uzak, ana, eil, mahmad lihi, husha na, val titalam.

Higalei na, u-fros haviv alai, et sukkat sh’lomak, ta ir eretz mi’kvedakh, nagilah v’nism’chah bakh, maher shuv, ki va moed, v’honeini kimei olam.

—SIVAN HAB-SHEFI

BELOVED OF MY SOUL

Y’id nefesh. Written by Eleazar Azikri (1535–1606), Yid Nefesh has become one of the favorite songs with which to introduce the Friday evening service. (Same Hasidim sing it every morning before services begin.) Yid Nefesh was characterized by its author as a love song directed to God. The poem is built out of an acrostic of the name of God: each stanza begins with one letter of the four-letter divine name, yad-kei-vay-heh, and each develops the metaphor of God as lover. When sung, both Sephardic and Ashkenazic musical traditions utilize haunting melodies evoking intense desire. The version here accords with the author’s handwritten manuscript, found in the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary. For example, many printed versions leave out the word ki (“for”) in the third line, though it is present in the original. Similarly, later versions substituted the word shivkah (“joyful”) for shifhat (“servant”) in the sixth line.

COMPASSIONATE FATHER

The Hebrew word for “compassionate” is derived from the same root as the word meaning “womb” (reihem). The combination of the two words thus creates a phrase that combines masculine and feminine images.

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

As the sun sets and the day’s light dims, our yearning for light—spiritual light, a sense of God’s presence—increases. Here, the poet longs for the spark (yiv) of divine light that animates all creation and nourishes our souls. By the last stanza of the poem, this spark no longer seems sufficient; we pray that the spark expand to a radiant glory, illuminating all.

NEFESH

The Hebrew word for soul (nefesh) is feminine. In addition, the aspect of God found in this world, within us, is thought of in mystical Jewish literature as the feminine aspect of the Divine, the Shekhinah.

ANCIENT ONE

In mystical literature, the “ancient of days” is one of the aspects of the Divine.
**Finding Our Way**

Prayer is no panacea, no substitute for action. It is, rather, like a beam thrown from a flashlight before we enter into the darkness. It is in this light that we who grope, stumble, and climb, discover where we stand, what surrounds us, and the course which we should choose.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL

**Pilgrimage**

We may understand our days to be a pilgrimage in time, from the six days of the week to the experience of a day of rest, holy time. The generation that left Egypt and wandered in the wilderness never reached their destination, the place of God’s “rest.” But every Friday evening, we have the opportunity to make the journey anew—this time with an openness that will enable us to truly enter “the land” and come close to the Divine.

**I Found Myself Yearning**

I found myself yearning yearning without any threshold
no threshold at which to stop
no threshold for peace
so I created within me thresholds, thresholds to stop and to see
I inscribed within myself stairs, stairs to see heaven
and a ray of peace touched me

—MIRIAM HARRI HALEP

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**Let us go and sing to Adonai, let us trumpet praise to our protector. Filled with thanks, let us greet God, raising our voice in song.**

Great is Adonai, a greater sovereign than all other deities.

God’s hands formed the earth’s deep, mountain crests, too, are God’s work; the sea is God’s, for God made it; dry land was fashioned by God’s hands.

Come, then, let us bow and kneel, let us bend our knees, in the presence of Adonai, who formed us.

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**Psalm 95.** We may visualize this psalm as a pilgrimage song. The leader calls upon the assembled to come on a pilgrimage, and participants join in a mood of joyous celebration. Observing the crowd, the leader then issues a warning to the participants: the generation that wandered in the wilderness had closed their hearts and covered their eyes—seeing only the difficulties, but not the majesty, of the enterprise—and so did not enter God’s “resting place.” The poet asks us to join this pilgrimage with the faith that, despite obstacles, we will greet the one who has fashioned heaven and earth.

**TRUMPET.** The root of the Hebrew word is the same as that describing the call of the shofar: t’shuah. Our voices, when raised in praise, become the trumpets announcing God’s arrival.

**PROTECTOR.** Literally “rock,” and sometimes translated that way. In many places in the Bible God is called by this name. Protecting fortresses and city walls were built on rocky high places. Thus, in addition to suggesting solidity and reliability, the metaphor implies protection and security. The following word, ysheinu, comes from a root that can denote victory, successful defense, or rescue; here, the likely reference is to the secure defense that God provides.

**A GREATER SOVEREIGN THAN ALL OTHER DEITIES.** Literally, “the sovereign greater than all divine beings (elohim)” The biblical reference may be either to forces in nature worshiped as gods, or to gods worshiped by other peoples.

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**L’khon n’ran’nah ladonai, nari-ah f’tzur ysheinu.**

N’kadmah fanav b’todah, bizmirot nari-ah lo.

Ki El gadol Adonai, u-melekh gadol al ko elohim.

Asher b’yado mehkrei aretz, v’t’sofet harim lo.

Asher lo hayam v’hu asahu, v’yabeshet yaday yatzar.

Bo-u nishthaveh v’nikhra ah, nivr’khah lifnei Adonai oseinu.
For Adonai is our God
and we are God’s flock, sheep in God’s caring hands.

If only you would listen today to God’s voice,
and not become hard-hearted like the people
at Merivah, like that time at Massah—in the desert,
when your ancestors tried Me, and tested Me,
though they had seen what I had wrought.

► For forty years I was troubled by that generation,
and I said, “These are a people whose hearts
have gone astray; they do not know My way,”
so, in anger, I swore they would not enter My rest.

Ki hu eloheinu va-anahnu am marito v’tzon yado,
hayom im b’kolo chishma-u.
Al takshu l’vavkhem kimrivah,
k’yom masah bamidbar.
Asher nissuni avoteikhem, b’hanuni gam ra-u fo-ali.
► Arba-im shanah akut b’dor,
va-omar am toi-el leiv hem,
v’hem lo yadu d’rahkai.
Asher nishbati v’api,
im y’va-un el m’n’huati.

Psalm 95

Despair of returning to Egypt.

If only you would listen
today to God’s voice.
The psalm suggests that we
have the opportunity to
hear God’s voice every day.

But in its context here,
“today” comes to refer
specifically to Shabbat—a
day on which the mystics
believed that we can
corporately feel God’s presence
and hear God’s call. As if in
fulfillment of this prospect,
the sixth psalm in this
Friday night series (page 31)
resounds with references to
the “voice of God.”

Merevah . . . Massah . . .
Tried me . . .
Cursed . . .
Dreaded . . .
While wandering in the desert,
the Israelites “tried” God,
complaining to Moses
that there was no water and seeking to return to Egypt. The place was
therefore called Massah/“test” and Merevah/“quarrel” (Exodus 17:7).

My rest . . .
In its biblical context, the reference is to the Land of
Israel, which the wilderness generation did not enter. But here, in
the service welcoming Shabbat, “rest” has a temporal rather than a
spatial sense and it refers to the Shabbat day itself. We might also hear
the overtones of an ultimate “rest”—an eternal state of being with God.

SONG OF SONGS 1:5-8 (opposite page, far left) expresses both love
and desire on the part of the lover, and also her distance from her
beloved—the difficulty in finding him. Similarly, Psalm 95 declares
the love of God yet describes the way in which the people Israel
distanced themselves from God’s will and desire. Underneath the awareness
of distance is the expression of deep yearning.
Sing to Adonai
A New Song

The Hasidic master Elimelekh of Lichtenau taught:
During the six days of the week, we reach toward the Divine through the work we do in the world, but on Shabbat we reach toward God through prayer and song.

Midrashic Interpretations
“"A new song”—to the one who makes everything new.
—MIDRASH ON PSALMS

“"A new song”—for the divine spirit has entered me anew.
—MIDRASH ON PSALMS

Hasidic Interpretations
At each stage of our religious development, as our sense of God’s wonder deepens, we sing differently to God—we sing a new song.

—LEVI TITZHAK OF SERDITCHEV

Each day is new and deserves a new song.

—LEVI TITZHAK OF SERDITCHEV

Shabbat moment
… What you have made, what you have spoiled let go.
Let twilight empty the crowded rooms, quiet the jostling colors to hues of swirling water pearls of fog.
This is the time for letting time go like a released balloon dwindling.
Tilt your neck and let your face open to the sky like a pond catching light drinking the darkness.
—MARIE PIERCY

PSALM 96 begins a series of four psalms that alternate between exultant song and the declaration of God as sovereign. Psalms 96 and 98 both commence with the words “Sing to Adonai a new song” and Psalms 97 and 99 with “Adonai reigns.” The two themes are intertwined on Shabbat, as Jewish mystics remark: Our songs are God’s crown.

Psalms 96 envisages a world in which God alone is worshipped, but its insistent particularism may disturb some modern ears. The poet, though pointedly associates God’s “greatness” with the establishment of justice throughout the world. This universal ethical vision is the new song that will be sung—a song that the poet exuberantly expresses.

SING TO ADONAI A NEW SONG

The prophet Isaiah expresses a similar thought: “Sing to Adonai a new song, God’s praise from the ends of the earth—from those who go down to the sea and from all that is in the sea, from the coastslands and their inhabitants. Let the desert and its towns cry aloud, the villages where Kedar dwells, let Selah’s inhabitants shout, let them call out from the peaks of the mountains. Let them do honor to Adonai and tell of God’s glory in the coastslands” (Isaiah 42:9–10). The psalmist may have reworked the prophetic message to create this poem.

GODS . . . MAN-MADE IDOLS
The Hebrew word elligim came to be understood in later Judaism as a word meaning “idols,” as reflected in this translation. However, the word is literally a diminutive form of the word for “gods,” and in its earlier usage probably meant actual deities. In his commentary to the Book of Psalms, Robert Alter remarks: “The language here harks back to a period when Adonai was thought of not as the one exclusive deity but as the most powerful of the gods, though it is unclear whether the formulation in this psalm reflects active belief or merely a linguistic survival.” As Alter notes, the psalm goes on to claim that God is the exclusive ruler over nature.

GRANDER AND GLORY

Grander and glory are depicted as a kind of advance guard before God’s appearance. Alternatively, the chorus of worshippers offering up praises may be understood to constitute the glorification of God.

WHERE GOD IS FOUND

Literally, “Temple.” Now we learn that the poet is standing in the Temple, turned inward toward God, yet imagining the whole world as present.
Bow to Adonai in the glory of this holy place; 
tremble before God’s presence, all who dwell on earth. 
Announce among the nations, “Adonai reigns”— 
the land is firm and will not be moved; 
peoples will be truthfully judged.

► The heavens shall be glad and the earth rejoice, 
the sea in its fullness roar; 
the meadows and all that grow in them exult. 
Even the trees of the forest shall sing praise— 
as Adonai comes, 
comes to judge the earth, 
judging lands with righteousness 
and peoples with divine truth.

Hishtha’ahu ladanon b’hadrat kodesh, 
hilu mi’panav kol ha-aretz. 
Imru va-goyim Adonai malakh, 
afl te’evel bal timot, 
yadin anim b’meisharim.

► Yism’hu ha-shamayim v’tagel ha-aretz, 
yiram hayam u-m’lo-o. 
Yisheq sadai v’kol ashur bo, 
az y’anhu kol atzei yarar. 
Lifnei Adonai ki va, 
ki va lishpot ha-aretz, 
yishpot te’evel b’zadek, 
v’anim be-emunatenu.

Psalm 96

You are beautiful, my beloved; 
you are beautiful, with eyes 
like doves.

You are handsome, my beloved, 
oh so graceful!

Our couch is a flourishing 
garden, 
the beams of our house, the 
cedars, 
the rafters, the cypresses.

I am a rose of Sharon, 
a lily of the valley.

Like a lily among the thorns, 
so is my beloved among 
the young women.

Like an apple tree in a vast 
forest, 
so is my beloved among 
the young men: 
in its shadow, desire grew in me 
and lingered, 
its fruit sweet on my tongue.

—SONG OF SONGS 1:25–2:1
Adonai reigns:
let the earth be glad,
the many distant lands rejoice.

Clouds and thick darkness surround the Divine;
righteousness and justice secure God’s throne.
Fire goes before God,
consuming besiegers round about.

Flashes of lightning illumine the land;
the earth watches and trembles—
mountains melt like wax
at the approach of Adonai,
at the approach of the master of all the earth.

The heavens tell of God’s righteousness
and all the nations see God’s glory.

Adonai malakh tagel ha-aretz,
yism’hu iyim rabim.
Anan va-arafel s’vivay,
 tzedek umishpat m’khon kiso.
Esh l’fanav telekhi,
ut’l’hatet saviv tzarav.
Hei-ru v’rakav tevei,
ra-atah va-tahel ha-aretz.
Harim ka-donag namosu mi-lifnei Adonai,
mi-lifnei adon kol ha-aretz.
Higidu ha-shamayim tzidko,
v’ra-u khel ha-amim kvode.

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PSALM 97 pictures an imagined future time in which God descends to the earth, righteousness reigns, and those who have kept faith during dark times are rewarded by seeing God’s light. The poet repeatedly speaks of rejoicing and gladness, beginning with universal celebration but becoming increasingly particularistic: first, the earth is gladdened at God’s appearance; then, Zion and Judah; and finally, the individuals who have remained faithful to God.

PSalm 97 is the first of two psalms in this series emphasizing God’s sovereignty. The mystics who compiled the Kabbalat Shabbat service experienced Shabbat as a moment when God is “crowned,” for creation is now complete and therefore God is truly sovereign. On Shabbat, when we rest and devote ourselves to spiritual activities, we come closest to experiencing the fullness of God’s creation and God’s presence. It is then, in our peacefulness and in our praise, that our songs, as it were, form God’s crown.

ILLUMINE. The switch in Hebrew from future tense to past tense does not necessarily mean that the reference is to an event in the historical past. Rather, the repeated shifting of tenses in this poem conveys the author’s assuredness that the events described here will surely take place—they are as real to the poet as any event in the past, and so we translate in the present tense.
Worshippers of idols be shamed for praising false gods; all that is deemed supreme bow before God. Zion hears it and rejoices, the cities of Judah exult, as You, Adonai, pass judgment.

You, Adonai, are above all that is earthly, exalted over all that is worshipped as divine.

- Those who love Adonai hate evil; God protects the lives of the faithful, saving them from the hands of the sinful.

Light is sown for the righteous and joy for the upright. Rejoice in Adonai, you righteous people, and thank God as you pronounce the divine holy name.


- Oha’ei Adonai sinu ra, shomer na’asim hasadav, miyad r’sha-im yatzeilem. Or zar’u la-tzadik, u-lyishre’i lev simhah. Simhu tzadikim b’donai, v’hodu fe’zikher kodsho.

-Psalm 97

Light is sown for the righteous.

The poet now utilizes a metaphor that unlocks the mystery of the confusion of tenses in the psalm, just as in some sense the planting of the seed anticipates the harvest, so too God’s creation anticipates a world of righteousness. The future promise is already present as an actuality, having been implanted there from the very beginning of time, but its presence has been hidden.

The divine holy name

Lekha kadosh. The Hebrew can have at least three different meanings. The word kadosh can refer to God’s sanctity, God’s holy place; the phrase would then be translated, “Thank God as one did in God’s sanctuary.” Alternatively, it can refer to an essential “quality” of God, holiness, and the phrase would be translated, “Thank God for the sake of God’s holiness.” Finally, as we chose to translate it here, it may mean God’s holy name. To pronounce God’s holy name is to both revere God and enter into a personal relationship with God. Each of these interpretations has had its advocates among translators of this passage.

Song of Songs 2:14-17 (opposite page, far left)

The lovers are hidden from each other, separated by a seemingly dangerous and threatening world. Each yearns to find the other while there is still time. So too, Psalm 97 speaks of the promise of experiencing God’s presence here on earth, despite periods of distance and the seeming hiddenness of the Divine.
From the Song of Songs

Moses and Aaron among God's priests,
and Samuel among those who called upon the divine name,
called to You and You answered them.
You spoke to them from amidst the cloud;
they kept Your covenant and the law You gave them.
You answered them, Adonai our God,
You were a forgiving God to them,
even as You punished them for their transgressions.

► Exalt Adonai, our God, and bow down at God's holy mountain, for Adonai our God is holy.

Moshe v’aharon b’khohanav u-shmuel b’korei sh’mo,
korn el Adonai v’yu ya-anem.
B’amud anan y’daber aishem,
shamru idotav v’chok natan lamo.
Adonai eloheinu atah anitam,
El nosel hayita lahem,
v’nochek al alliotam.
► Rom’mu Adonai eloheinu,
v’ishtahavu Har kodsho,
ki kadosh Adonai eloheinu.

Psalm 139

The voice of my beloved! Behold he comes,
leaping over mountains, bounding over hills.
My beloved is like a gazelle
or a young stag,
There he stands outside our walls,
gazing through the windows,
peering through the lattice.
My beloved spoke to me and said:
Rise up my dearest, my beauty, and come away.
For now the winter is past,
the rains are over and gone.
Fresh shoots have sprouted from the ground,
the time of singing is here,
and the voice of the dove is heard in our land.
The fig tree has opened its buds,
the blossoming vines are releasing their fragrance—
rise, my dearest, my beauty, and come away.

—Song of Songs 2:8-13

Moses and Aaron among God's priests,
and Samuel among those who called upon the divine name,
called to You and You answered them.
You spoke to them from amidst the cloud;
they kept Your covenant and the law You gave them.
You answered them, Adonai our God,
You were a forgiving God to them,
even as You punished them for their transgressions.

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rise, my dearest, my beauty, and come away.

—Song of Songs 2:8-13

And Samuel among those who called upon the divine name. Samuel served both as prophet and as an acolyte to the High Priest of his day. Eli, Moses and Aaron were of the tribe of Levi. Samuel represents the continuation of prophetic leadership unconnected to levitical lineage.

You spoke to them from amidst the cloud. An image borrowed from the revelation at Sinai, where God spoke to Israel the words of the Decalogue from amidst the cloud that descended on the mountain (Exodus 19:18).

Even as you punished them for their transgressions. God's administration of justice knows no favorites. When Moses and Aaron sinned, they were punished—Moses and Aaron died in the wilderness and did not enter the Land of Israel. Nevertheless, they and all the faithful are held close by God even as their sins may be punished, as justice demands. In an alternative understanding, the verb could be revocalized as bekah (b’kakham), which would mean "cleansed them"—that is, the phrase continues the thought begun in the first half of the verse, that God forgives the sins of righteous people. In this reading, justice includes forgiveness.

God's holy mountain. Literally, this refers to Zion, the Temple Mount, which is here identified with the sanctuary in the desert and the temporary sanctuary at the time of the judges. In the context of its placement here as part of the Friday night liturgy, the psalm suggests that our congregating together each Shabbat is a kind of sanctuary in time, when we too might experience a revelatory moment.

Song of Songs 2:8-13 (opposite page, far left). The time for the lovers to be together has arrived: they are, imminently, to go out to lie down in the field together. The lover calls for his beloved to join him with the phrase ‘I love you’—"come away"—a phrase that resonates liturgically with the words of the chorus we are about to sing to greet Shabbat, L’cha Dodi. In the phrase ‘I love you,’ we may hear an echo of God's call to Abraham, ‘Lech lecha’ (Genesis 12:1)—this time, formulated in the feminine. Similarly, the word ‘voice’ (kal) anticipates the seven-fold repetition of the same word in Psalm 29, which follows.

Moses and Aaron among God's priests. Here both Moses and Aaron are called priests. Rashi explains that Moses served as High Priest during the seven days of Aaron's ordination (see his comment to Leviticus 2:3). But a midrash offers a more radical interpretation: that even after Aaron's ordination, Moses continued to serve as a High Priest for the forty years in the desert (Midrash on Psalms). Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888, Germany) adds that someone who teaches or inspires another to be able to experience the Divine may be called a priest.
The Voice of Adonai

At times we hear the voice of God as thunderous and shattering, as at Sinai. At other times we hear the speaking of silence, as Elijah the prophet did when he returned to Sinai (Horev). The mystics ascribed specific emotions and feelings to the voices we may hear, in accord with the emunot of the Divine:

Adonai, the voice adorns the heavens; the voice of God opens the gates of compassion and love [Habad].

Adonai, the voice of God opens the gates of courage [Ohr].

Adonai, the voice of God opens the gates of shining truth [Tiferet].

Adonai, the voice of God opens the gates of endurance and patience [Tishah].

Adonai, the voice of God opens the gates of splendid beauty [Hashad].

Adonai, the voice of God opens the gates of deepest connection [Yoed].

Adonai, the voice of God opens the gates of presence [Malchut].

The Voice of David

A Psalm of David

Acclaim Adonai, children of the Divine; acclaim Adonai, with honor and strength. Acclaim Adonai, with the honor due God’s name; bow before Adonai in the splendor of the sanctuary.

The voice of Adonai thunders over the waters; God, glorious, thunders—Adonai, over the great sea.

The voice of Adonai with all its power; the voice of Adonai, with all its majesty; the voice of Adonai shatters the cedars.

Adonai shatters the cedars of Lebanon—making the trees dance like calves, the mountains of Lebanon and Siron like wild bulls. The voice of Adonai forms flames of fire; the voice of Adonai convulses the wilderness, Adonai convulses the wilderness of Kadesh.

Adonai makes hinds calve and strips forests bare, and in God’s sanctuary all acknowledge the glory of God. Adonai was enthroned above the flood waters; enthroned, Adonai is eternally sovereign. Adonai will grant strength to God’s people; Adonai will bless them with peace.

Mizmor LeDovid:

Havu ladonai bnei elim, havu ladonai kavod va-oz.
Havu ladonai kved shmo, hishahavu ladonai b’hadrat kodesh.
Kol Adonai al ha-mayim, El ha-kavod hirim, Adonai al mayim rabim.
Kol Adonai ba-ko-ah, kol Adonai be-hadar.
Kol Adonai shover arazim, va-yasher Adonai et erze ha-evanon.
Va-yarkidem K’mo egel, I’vanon v’siryon K’mo ven’re’irim.
Kol Adonai botzev lahavot esh.
Kol Adonai yahal midbar, yahal Adonai midvar kadesh.
Kol Adonai y’holo ayalon, va-yehosof yerot, u-v’heikhalu kuloomer kavod.
Adonai lama’alu yashav, va-yeshuv Adonai melakh Yolam.
Adonai oz l’amoy yiten, Adonai y’varekh et amo yashalom.

The Flood Waters

An allusion either to the primal waters of creation or to the flood in the time of Noah. In the first understanding, this line continues the thought introduced at the beginning of the psalm that God is above the waters—that is, God has power over the waters that form the great mass of earth. In the second interpretation, the theme of God’s judgment of sin is now introduced in the psalm.

With Peace

This series of six psalms, recited on Friday night before the imagined entrance of Shabbat, began with the word Elijah; the call to set out together on a journey, and now ends with the word Shalom, the blessing of peace, Shabbat peace.
L’kha Dodi

Come, my beloved, to welcome the bride;
let us greet Shabbat as she arrives.

“Observe” and “remember” were uttered as one,
we heard it thus from the singular One.
God’s name is one and God is one,
renowned with honor and deserving of praise.

Come, my beloved . . .

Let us go out to greet Shabbat,
sacred wellspring of blessing,
conceived at the beginning of time,
finally formed at the end of days.

Come, my beloved . . .

Shrine of our sovereign, royal city,
rise up from destruction and fear no more.
End your dwelling in the tear-filled valley,
for with God’s compassion you will be upraised.

Come, my beloved . . .

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.
Shamor v’zakhor b’dibur ehad,
hishmi-anu El ha-m’yuhad.
Adonai ehad u-shme ehad,
Ishem u-fiferet v’ilchilah.

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.
Likrat shabbat l’khv v’neil’khah,
kii hi m’kor ha-b’rakhah.
Meirosh mi-kedem n’sukah,
Sof ma-asah b’mahashavah t’chilah.

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.
Mikdash melekh ir m’lukkah,
kumi tzei mitzok ha-hafeikkah.
Rav lakht shevet b’mek ha-ba’kha,
v’hu yahamol alayik hemelah.

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.

L’kha dodi became a favorite Friday night hymn almost as soon as it was written.
its author, Shlomo Hamev Shabatei (d. 1576), was a participant in the mystic circle in Safed, associated with the great master, Moses Cordovero. The poem is one of many written by Safed poets in which Shabbat, God, and Israel are intertwined and related through love. The depiction of Shabbat as bride and queen has a long history of ha-midrashic origin.
The stanzas form an acrostic spelling out the author’s name, Shlomo Hamev.
L’kha Dodi juxtaposes two simultaneous movements: reaching toward the Divine and the Divine reaching toward the human. Thus, we are invited to go and greet Shabbat as she comes to us.
The mystics added that this drawing close was not only between God and the human, but described an inner process of Divinity.
The poem serves as an introduction to Psalm 92, “The Song of the Day of Shabbat,” which was the start of the Friday evening service in many rites, before the introduction of Kabbalat Shabbat.

COME, MY BELOVED קראה מלכת
The “beloved” who is invited here may refer to the soul, to others within the community of Israel, or to an aspect of the Divine. The first half of this refrain contains fifteen letters and the second half contains eleven, which are respectively the numerical equivalents of yod-hey and vav-hey, spelling out the name of God.

“OBSERVE” AND “REMEMBER” שומר וזכור. The Decalogue appears twice in the Torah, with minor differences of wording. In Exodus (20:3), the fourth commandment opens with the verb zakhor, “remember” the Sabbath day; the Deuteronomy (5:12) version begins shamor, “observe” the Sabbath day. Harmonizing them, a midrash states that God uttered both words at once (Mekhiti, Beshoresh). Evoking that midrash here, the poet thus alludes to the unity established by Shabbat; for God, thought and action are one. And on Shabbat we, too, may feel as if we are who and how we behave are more unified.

LET US GO OUT TO GREET SHABBAT קראנו את נשמת השבת. This verse alludes to the practice of leaving the synagogue and going out into the fields to welcome Shabbat, the custom followed by the mystics of Safed, based on their interpretation of the Babylonian Talmud (Shabbat 12a).

SHINE OF OUR SOVEREIGN שמשה על התרבות. This verse and the next five all build on the theme of Israel’s exile and her promised redemption. Shabbat is seen as a manifestation of the Shekhinah (God’s presence in the world), which is in exile with Israel. At the same time, Shabbat is also a foretaste of the redemptive time.
Awake! Rise up from the dust!
Dress yourself in this people’s pride.
By the hand of Jesse’s son, of Bethlehem’s tribe
bring my redemption without further delays.

Come, my beloved, to welcome the bride;
let us greet Shabbat as she arrives.
Rouse yourself, rouse yourself,
for your lamp is lit, let the flame rise up and glow.
Awake awake, utter songs of praise,
for God’s glory is revealed to your gaze.

Come, my beloved . . .
Do not be embarrassed, do not be ashamed.
Why are you downcast? Why do you moan?
The poorest of your people, trust in this:
the city will be rebuilt as in ancient days.

Come, my beloved . . .

Hitna-ari, mei-afar kumi,
ivshi bigdei tiferet ami.
Al yad ben yishai beit ha-la-hmi,
korvah el nafshi ge’alah.

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.

Hitor’ri hitor’ri,
ki va orekh kumi ori.
Uri uri shir dabeiri,
k’vod Adoni alayikh niglah.

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.

Lo teivoshi v’lo tiklal,
mah tishubah u-mah tehemi.
Bakh yeheu aniyei ami,
v’nivn’nah ir al tla-h.

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.

This and the following stanzas use images found in the second part of the Book of Isaiah, where the prophet comforts the Babylonian exiles. He assures them that they will return to the Land of Israel, and that it will once again flourish. See Isaiah 52:2, 51:17, 54:4, and 62:5.

Jesse’s Son, of Bethlehem’s Tribe

The Messiah is said to be a descendant of David the son of Jesse, a citizen of Bethlehem.

Your lamp shall shine, “your light.” The modern scholar Jacob Bazar points out that this word is the exact midpoint of the poem: 65 words precede it and 65 follow it. The central moment of the poem, then, is the announcement that God’s light has come—Shabbat ushers in a moment that is a foretaste of messianic redemption. The stanzas that follow all speak of redemption. Along these lines, the Kabbalists of Safed customarily wore white on Shabbat, symbolizing the overcoming of sin and ultimate redemption.

Awake, Awake, in the kabbalistic tradition, awakening from sleep is a common metaphor for the process of developing spiritual sensitivity and insight. In this stanza and the previous one, the poet implores Shabbat to awaken and rouse herself. Equally, the poet addresses us, imploring us too to awaken. We may have been in a kind of spiritual slumber all week; now is the time to rouse ourselves from our spiritual oblivion and become attuned to the presence of the Divine in our world.
Your despoilers shall be despoiled, your tormentors removed far away, God and you will celebrate together, a bride and groom in joyful embrace.

Come, my beloved, to welcome the bride; let us greet Shabbat as she arrives.

You will spread out to the left and the right, acclaiming Adonai our God with delight. Redeemed by the scion of Peretz’s line, we shall joyously chant songs of praise.

Come, my beloved . . .

We rise and turn toward the entrance. Come in peace, crown of your spouse, surrounded by gladness and joyous shouts. Come to the faithful, the people You treasure with pride, come, my bride; come, my bride . . .

Come, my beloved . . .

V’hayu lim shishah shosayikh, vyrahkut kel m’valayikh. Yasis alayikh eloayikh, kimosos haytan al kalah.


L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah. Boi v’shalem steret balah, gam b’simah u-v’tzeholah, tokh emunei am s’gulah, boi khalah, boi khalah.

L’kha dodi likrat kalah, p’nei shabbat n’kab’lah.

You will spread out, נברת. The subject here is ambiguous: “you” can simultaneously refer both to the Shekinah and to the people Israel.

Scion of Peretz’s line, ירא בר פרץ. At the end of the Book of Ruth, David’s genealogy is traced back to Peretz, one of Judah’s sons. The verb p-nitz (which also appears in the word tfortzi, “spread out,” in the first line of this stanza) means “to break through,” and the use of this name, “son of Peretz,” for the Messiah has a dual meaning here. The human “fall” from the Garden of Eden came about by breaking God’s command, and the redemption will come by breaking through the world of sin.

Facing the entrance, שבבאת has been personified throughout this poem. At this point, it is as if that personification, the bridal queen, enters the synagogue. The congregation turns toward the entrance and bows to greet her. Then, as she moves to the forefront of the synagogue and takes her place on the bimah, the congregation turns toward the front and bows as she is enthroned next to the ark. Shabbat has arrived and the service proceeds with Psalm 92, “The Song of the Day of Shabbat.”
Comforting the Mourners

When mourners in the week of shivah are present, they now enter the synagogue and we greet them with one of the following:

May the Divine comfort you, along with all the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

May you find comfort from heaven.

Comforing the Mourners

The Torah relates that after the sudden death of two sons, “Aaron was silent,” saidom sharon (Leviticus 10:3). The moment is shocking, and also profound. Aaron was the spokesperson, the one whose words slowed it; it was Moses who had difficulty with words. But in the immediacy of loss, sometimes the most authentic, appropriate response is silence—not because we cannot find the right words, but because there are no “right” words to find. In its raw honesty and refusal to paper over pain and confusion, this silence can be comforting.

Similarly, just as Aaron later tells Moses that it would be blasphemy to eat of the communal sacrifices on the day of his mourning (Leviticus 10:12), mourners are not expected to join in the congregational singing of Kabbalat Shabbat; they remain outside. Yet, it is just at the time of loss that our continued relation to the mourner is most important; we want to say or do something, to acknowledge that we—all mourner and comforter—are in the realm of the living, and mourners need to know that they are not alone. Thus, immediately following L’cha Dodi—when the congregation and unity of Shabbat enter the sanctuary—so too do the mourners re-enter our midst.

We welcome them with words—a formula that is not intended to be formulaic, but rather to be offered in the stead of all that can never be said, offered as a kind of spoken silence.

May the One Who Dwells in This House Comfort You

Visitors to the Temple would circle its courtyard clockwise. Mourners would circumnavigate it counterclockwise. Passing the mourner, the visitor would say, “May the one who dwells in this house comfort you.”

—TRACTATE SEMAJOT
From the Book of Psalms

A PSALM: THE SONG OF THE DAY OF SHABBAT

It is good to thank You, Adonai,
and sing to Your name, Most High;
to proclaim Your love at daybreak,
Your faithfulness each night.

Finger the lute, pluck the harp,
let the sound of the lyre rise up.

You gladdened me with Your deeds, Adonai,
and I shall sing of Your handiwork.

How wonderful are Your works, Adonai,
how subtle Your designs!

The arrogant do not understand,
the fool does not comprehend this:
the wicked flourish like grass
and every evildoer blossoms,
only to be destroyed forever—
but You, Adonai, are exalted for all time.

—MIDRASH ON PSALMS
(translated by William G. Braude)

PSALM 92 begins by contemplating the wonder of creation and ends with a vision of the righteous flourishing in God’s house. It thus celebrates two themes of Shabbat: Shabbat as the day of appreciating creation and Shabbat as a taste of the time of redemption.

IT IS GOOD TO THANK YOU, ADONAI. Appropriately, the song of Shabbat begins with a reminder of the human need to express gratitude. As Abraham Joshua Heschel taught, “The soul is endowed with a sense of indebtedness, which we ‘unlock’ through our sense of wonder and awe. Thus, as the psalmist asks us to heighten our appreciation of the wonders of creation, we may feel how ‘good’ it is to have the opportunity to express gratitude.

FINGER THE LUTE, PLUCK THE HARPS, LET THE SOUND OF THE LYRE RISE UP. Rather than an actual line in the poem, some scholars maintain that this is an instruction to the orchestra, and that the conductor’s notes—originally written in the margin—were copied into the body of the text.

THE ARROGANT דַעַ הַפָּנִים, in the Book of Proverbs (16:1), this term is used for one who does not accept anyone else’s instruction or criticism.
In Old Age They Remain Fruitful

One who lives with a sense for the Presence knows that to get older does not mean to lose time but rather to gain time. And, also, that in all of one’s deeds, a person’s chief task is to sanctify time. All it takes to sanctify time is God, a soul, and a moment. And the three are always here.

—ABRAHAM JOSUJA HERSCHEL (adapted)

Surely Your enemies, ADONAI, surely Your enemies will perish; all who commit evil will be scattered.

As a wild bull raises up its horn,
You raised my head high,
Anointed it with fresh oil.

As my enemies gather against me,
My gaze remains steady,
For my ears listen and hear:

▶ The righteous flourish like the date palm,
Thrive like a cedar in Lebanon;
Planted in the house of ADONAI,
They flourish in our God’s courtyards.

In old age they remain fruitful,
Still fresh and bountiful,
Proclaiming: ADONAI is upright,
My rock in whom there is no flaw.

Ki hineih oyvkeh Adonai,
Ki hineih oyvkeh yoveidu,
Yitpardu kei po alei aven.
Va-tarem kirem kimari,
Balom b’shemen ra-anan.
Va-tabeir ein b’shurai,
Bakamim alai my’eirim olshmanah oznai.
▶ Tsadik katamar yifrah,
K’erei balvanon yischel.
Sh’tulim b’vetei Adonai,
B’hatzot elohenu yafirhu.
Od y’nunv b’sevah,
D’sheinim Yra-ananim yihyu.
L’hagid ki yashar Adonai,
Tzuri v’lo avlatah bo.

Psalm 92

ALL WHO COMMIT EVIL
WILL BE SCATTERED
In this pacific vision of the end-time, those who commit evil are not destroyed, but simply made ineffective.

WILD BULL
Throughout the Bible, the raising up of the horn of this animal is a metaphor for strength and honor. Scholars, though, have had difficulty identifying the animal intended in the Hebrew. Because the psalm refers to a single horn, early translators identified it with the mythical unicorn. Some modern commentators maintain that the animal referred to is the aurochs, a wild bovine considered to be the ancestor of all cattle. The aurochs had elongated horns and long legs. It was both more agile and more dangerous than modern bovines. The last aurochs was seen in Europe in the 17th century.

ANOINTED IT WITH FRESH OIL
The Hebrew may be translated “You anointed me with fresh oil,” but Radak (David Kimhi, 1160–1235, Provence) suggests that the object of the verb is specifically the speaker’s head mentioned in the first part of the verse; the anointing is ceremonial, giving the speaker a divinely ordained function and blessing.

STEADY
From the root meaning “row” or “straight.” Thus, some understand this word as a noun and translate it as the phalanx of an army, row upon row of soldiers. Others see it, as we do here, as a modifier of the verb, meaning that the gaze is focused straight ahead.

DATE PALM . . . CEDAR
The righteous are compared to both date palms and cedars. Palm trees grow in the Jericho Valley, one of the lowest places on earth; cedars grow on the mountaintops of Lebanon, the highest peaks in the Middle East. Palm trees grow straight up, losing their leaves each year; cedars grow wide and are evergreens. Palms yield dates, one of the most nutritious fruits, but their fibrous wood is almost useless. Cedars bear no fruit, though their wood is precious; Solomon built the Temple out of the cedars of Lebanon. Both will be planted in God’s house, for all difference is united in the one God. Righteousness manifests itself in many forms.
Adonai is sovereign, robed in splendor, girded in strength; the earth stands firm, not to be dislodged.
From earliest time You were enthroned; You are eternal.

The rivers rise up, Adonai, the rivers raise up their roar, the rivers raise up their waves.

Above the roar of the vast sea and the majestic breakers of the ocean, Adonai stands supreme in the heavens.

In Your house, beautiful in its holiness, Your testimonies endure, Adonai, for all time.

Adonai malakh gei’ut lavesh lavesh Adonai oz hitazar, af tikon teivel bal timot.
Nakhon kisakha mei-az, mei-olam atah.
Nasu n’harot Adonai, nasu n’harot kolam, yisu n’harot dekh yam.
Mi-kolot mahim rabim adirim misho’ei yam, adir ba-marom Adonai.
Eidotekha ne-emu me’od, l’veitkha na-avah kodesh, Adonai, l’orekh yamim.

To conclude Kabbalat Shabbat, some congregations recite Mourners’ Kaddish (page 30). Others continue with a study text (pages 31–37), while others continue with Arvit on page 39.

PSalm 93: Having entered Shabbat with the recitation of Psalm 93, creation is now seen as complete. It is with rest, peace, and this sense of completion that God can be seen as sovereign.

The earth stands firm. In biblical poetry, God’s supremacy over the elements of creation, especially the primal waters that preceded the formation of land, is an expression of God’s ultimate rule.

Your testimonies endure. The reference is ambiguous. It may refer to the works of creation mentioned previously in the poem. More generally in the Bible, the reference is to the tablets of the covenant, contained in the ark. Indeed, sometimes the sanctuary itself is called the “sanctuary of testimony,” mishkan ha-eidut. In this reading, just as God’s sovereignty is eternal, so too are God’s teaching and God’s relationship with those gathered in the Temple.
Evening Service: The Sh’ma and Its Blessings

Bar’khu: The Call to Worship Together

We rise as we are called by the leader’s words of invitation to prayer. The leader bows when saying the word “Bar’khu” (“praise”) and stands up straight when pronouncing “Adonai.” Similarly, the congregation bows at the word “barukh” (“praise”) and straightens to full height at “Adonai.”

An alternate version of this Brakhah may be found on the following page.

Leader:
"Praise Adonai, to whom all praise is directed.
Congregation, then the leader repeats:
Praise Adonai, to whom all praise is directed forever and ever.
Barukh Adonai ha-m’vorakh l’olam va-ed.
We are seated.

First Brakhah before the Sh’ma: The Coming of Evening Light

Barukh atah Adonai, our God, sovereign of time and space, whose word brings the evening dusk, whose wisdom opens the gates of dawn, whose understanding changes the day’s division, whose will sets the succession of seasons and arranges the stars in their places in the sky, who creates day and night, who rolls light before darkness and darkness from light, who makes day pass into night, who distinguishes day from night; Adonai Ty’v’rot is Your name. Living and ever-present God, may Your rule be with us, forever and ever.

Barukh atah Adonai, who brings each evening’s dusk.

We continue with the Second Brakhah on page 40.

THE SH’MA AND ITS BLESSINGS
The Shma: The Prayer of Affirmation
Every evening service (Ar-vic) includes two climactic moments: the Sh’ma (page 40) and the Amidah (page 41). The Sh’ma, the affirmation of faith in the one God, has often been called Judaism’s essential creed.

Two Brakhos precede the Sh’ma: the first reflects God’s presence in the passage of time, while the second acknowledges God’s love, represented by the gift of Torah, divine instruction as to how we should live. Two Brakhos also follow the Sh’ma: the first acknowledges the exodus from Egypt, the signal event that has formed us as a people and set us on the path of freedom and responsibility; the second speaks to our concrete concerns for safety in the darkness of night. The Amidah, the silent personal prayer, then follows.

PRAISE TO YOU: The formal synagogue evening service begins with the leader’s call, signifying to the congregation that the moment of communal prayer has arrived. The congregation’s response is their indication that they are ready to follow the service leader and participate in the service.

WHOSE WISDOM OPENS THE GATES OF DAWN: Some liturgical texts, such as this one, reflect ancient understandings of how the heavenly bodies operate—for instance, this depiction of the sun exiting the sky through gates in the west. Although contemporary science provides us with different understandings, we can still feel an underlying sense of wonder and awe as we too gaze at the setting sun and the star-filled sky. These liturgical images, then, become metaphors for our own understanding of the passage of time, reminding us of the uniqueness of each moment.
**AN ALTERNATE**

**Bar’khu: The Call to Worship Together**

We rise as we are called by the leader’s words of invitation to prayer. The leader bows when saying the word “Bar’khu” (“praise”) and stands up straight when pronouncing “Adonai.” Similarly, the congregation bows at the word “Bar’khu” (“praise”) and straightens to full height at “Adonai.”

**Leader:**
Praise Adonai, to whom all praise is directed.

**Congregation, then the leader repeats:**

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

Barukh Adonai ha-m’vorakh Yolam va-ed.

We are seated.

**Alternate First B’rakhah before the Sh’mi according to the Ancient Rite of the Land of Israel**

Barukh atah Adonai, our God, sovereign of time and space. You completed Your work of creation on the seventh day. You rest— from one evening to the next—the Holy Shabbat, and gave this day of rest in all its holiness to Your people Israel.

Creator of day and night, rolling light before darkness and darkness from light, making day pass, and bringing on the evening, distinguishing day from night, Adonai Ts’va’ot is Your name.

Living and ever-present God, may Your rule be with us, forever and ever.

Barukh atah Adonai, who brings each evening’s dusk.

**AN ALTERNATE**

**Alternate Blessing.** The Italian rite preserves a version of Arvit that reflects the practice of the Land of Israel during the 1st millennium. It is a version also found in one of the earliest authoritative prayerbooks that of Saadia Gaon (tenth century). This liturgy changes the wording of the weekday prayer to reflect themes of Shabbat. For example, the remark on the changing time that evening brings intros a meditation on the beginning of Shabbat and the restfulness ushered in by this particular sunset. Later Ashkenazic authorities worried that worshippers might confuse the Shabbat and weekday liturgies, and therefore they instituted the recitation of the weekday version of the prayer even on Shabbat.

**Leader:**

K’vod atah Adonai me’ravim.

**Congregation, then the leader repeats:**

K’vod Adonai me’ravim.

We are seated.

**We are seated.**

Barukh Adonai ha-m’vorakh Yolam va-ed.

We are seated.

**Alternate First B’rakhah before the Sh’mi according to the Ancient Rite of the Land of Israel**

Barukh atah Adonai, our God, sovereign of time and space. You completed Your work of creation on the seventh day, calling this day—from one evening to the next—the Holy Shabbat, and gave this day of rest in all its holiness to Your people Israel.

Creator of day and night, rolling light before darkness and darkness from light, making day pass, and bringing on the evening, distinguishing day from night, Adonai Ts’va’ot is Your name. Living and ever-present God, may Your rule be with us, forever and ever.

Barukh atah Adonai, who brings each evening’s dusk.
Loving Humanity
Before reciting the Sh’ma, we may choose to think about how we need to prepare ourselves to make room for the listening that the Sh’ma demands.

Teach me, Lord, teach me how to deal with people to show them how to convert the evil within the good.
And if human beings are only wild animals, may I be able to turn them toward mildness and humility.
At the circus, I saw a man tame a tiger, defang a snake; would You make me so skilled?
Bless me with patience, make me strong as steel, that I might demonstrate to humanity the same such wonders.

—ABRAHAM REIZEN

To Love the World
When we act with love, Franz Rosenzweig remarks, “the neighbor represents all the world and thus distorts the eye’s view. Prayer, however, pleads for enlightenment and thereby, without overlooking the neighbor, sees beyond the neighbor, sees the whole world . . . .”

Second Br’akhah before the Sh’ma:
Torah and God’s Love
With timeless love, You have loved Your people, the house of Israel:
You have taught us Torah and mitzvot, statutes and laws.
Therefore, Adonai our God, as we lie down and as we rise up, we shall speak of Your laws, rejoicing in the words of Your Torah and in Your mitzvot forever and ever.
For they are our life and the fullness of our days, and on them we shall meditate day and night.

Do not ever withdraw Your love from us.
Barukh atah Adonai, who loves the people Israel.

Aha’vat olam beit yisrael am’mika aha’vta,
Torah u-mitzvot, hukim u-mishpatim otanu limadta.
Al ken Adonai eloheinu, b’shokhveinu u-v’kumeinu
nasi-ah b’bukekha,
v’nismah b’divrei toratekha u-v’mitzvotekha olam va-ed.
Ki hem hayeinu vorekh yameinu,
u-vahem nehgeh yomam va-la’ilah.
V’ahavatikha al tasir mimenu olamim.
Barukh atah Adonai, ohev amo yisrael.

TORAH AND GOD’S LOVE.
The second verse of the Sh’ma, which we are about to recite, speaks of our love of God: “You shall love Adonai your God . . . .” The ancient rabbis chose to precede that statement with a Br’akhah that emphasizes God’s love for us. The rabbis understood love as the essential quality of the divine-human relationship, and they understood love to be primarily defined by behavior. God’s love is expressed in giving the Torah, instruction on how to live; our love is expressed in the performance of mitzvos, our behavior in the world.

In this way, the human and the Divine are bound together.

As We Lie Down and as
We Rise Up, We Shall Speak of Our Laws
This phrase anticipates the instruction in the Sh’ma to “speak of [these words] . . . when you lie down and when you rise up.” This prayer expands the biblical command and speaks of the need to integrate Torah into our lives throughout the day.

For They Are Our Life
By living a life in accord with divine teaching (Torah), we elevate our days from mere existence to a life filled with meaning.
Recitation of the Sh’ma

Some people may wish to pause here for a moment. Some may close their eyes; others may place a hand over their eyes. The intention is to concentrate on our relationship with God’s oneness. In the absence of a minyan, we add the following: God is a faithful sovereign.

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

Sh’mi yira’el, Adonai eloheinu, Adonai ehad.

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

You shall love Adonai your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all that is yours. These words that I command you this day shall be written on your hearts.

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

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

You Shall Love

"You shall love Adonai your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all that is yours." You shall love—what a paradox this embraces! Can love then be commanded?... Yes of course, love cannot be commanded. No third party can command it or extort it. No third party can, but the One can. The commandment to love can only proceed from the mouth of the lover.

—FRANZ ROSENZWEIG
If you will hear and obey the mitzvot that I command you this day, to love and serve Adonai your God with all your heart and all your soul, then I will grant the rain for your land in season, rain in autumn and rain in spring. You shall gather in your grain and wine and oil; I will provide grass in your fields for your cattle and you shall eat and be satisfied. Take care lest your heart be tempted, and you stray and serve other gods and bow to them. Then Adonai’s anger will flare up against you, and God will close up the sky so that there will be no rain and the earth will not yield its produce. You will quickly disappear from the good land that Adonai is giving you. Therefore, impress these words of mine upon your heart and upon your soul. Bind them as a sign upon your hand and as a symbol above your eyes; teach them to your children, by speaking of them when you sit in your home, when you walk on your way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. Inscribe them upon the doorposts of your home and on your gates. Then your days and the days of your children, on the land that Adonai swore to your ancestors to give them, will be as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.

Deuteronomy 11:13–1

Adonai said to Moses: Speak to the people Israel, and instruct them that in every generation they shall put tititit on the corners of their garments, placing a thread of blue on the tititit, the fringe of each corner. That shall be your tititit; you shall look at it and remember all the mitzvot of Adonai, and fulfill them, and not be seduced by your eyes and heart as they lead you astray. Then you will remember and fulfill all My mitzvot, and be holy before your God. I am Adonai your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am Adonai your God—

Numbers 15:37–41

Truly

When there is a minyan, the leader adds:

Adonai your God—truly—

AThread of Blue

A thread of blue—blue like the sea, blue like the sky, blue like the color of the divine throne.

—SIFREI NUMBERS

Truly

When there is a minyan, the leader adds:

When there is a minyan, the leader adds:

Adonai your God—truly—

The ancient rabbis emphasized that the last words of this paragraph, about remembering the exodus from Egypt, are the prime reason for its inclusion in the Sh’ma. In Jewish theology, the exodus anticipates the redemption in the future: true freedom. The means of achieving redemption, we are taught here, is remembering our responsibility to live lives that are holy.

NOT BE SEDUCED BY YOUR EYES AND HEART

The sages comment that it is the heart that directs the eyes. What we see depends on our perspective, our point of view.

BE HOLY EIN KEM

This is the essence of the Torah: to lead a holy life.
An alternate version of this brakha may be found on page 43b.

**First Br’akhah after the Sh’ma**

This is our enduring affirmation, binding on us: that ADONAI is our God and there is none other, and we, Israel, are God’s people. God is our sovereign, redeeming us from earthly rulers, delivering us from the hand of all tyrants, bringing judgment upon our oppressors and just retribution upon all our mortal enemies, performing wonders beyond understanding and marvels beyond all reckoning. God places us among the living, not allowing our steps to falter, and leads us past the false altars of our enemies, exalting us above all those who hate us. ADONAI avenged us with miracles before Pharaoh, offered signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. God brought Israel from its midst to lasting freedom, and led them through the divided water of the Sea of Reeds. As their pursuers and enemies drowned in the depths, God’s children beheld the power of the Divine; they praised and acknowledged God’s name.

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**We continue on page 44.**

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This is our enduring affirmation. So closely was the Sh’ma linked with this brakha, the blessing of redemption, that the rabbis insisted that its first word——“truly”—be recited along with the very last words of the Sh’ma, so the leader reads them together upon completion of the Sh’ma: ADONAI eloheikhem emet. Thus we affirm that God is true, or truth itself.

**GOD SMOTE (כָּזָה).** As the biblical account of the exodus from Egypt exemplifies, it is an unfortunate reality that sometimes freedom from oppression is only attained through violence. While we nevertheless celebrate the liberation from oppression, the very violence of the process is a reminder that the world is still in need of healing, and that the redemption we celebrate is yet incomplete. Since Shabbat is a vision of a world at peace, some omit this phrase on Shabbat and reserve it only for the weekday liturgy.

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**We continue on page 44.**
The Gift of Shabbat

Sovereign of all creation, God Most High,
Your power is manifest in
the destiny of peoples and nations.
You delivered Israel from
bondage in Egypt,
for it is Your will that we
should be free.
You have given us Shabbat
to commemorate that freedom,
to teach us that no one shall
be master and no one a slave.
Help us to break every shackle
and stand the day when the
strong will be just
and the weak will no longer
know fear.
You, our creator, are mindful
of Your handwork;
Your ordinances are all
conceived in wisdom.
You commanded us to cease
from our labor,
that we may find joy and peace
in Shabbat.
For we were not made only
to labor;
we must rest and reflect, that
we may sense Your presence.
We thank You, our creator,
for the gift of Shabbat,
Your gift to Israel that blesses
all of humanity.

—Morris and Althea Silverman (adapted)

First B’rakahh after the Sh’mah
according to the Ancient Rite of the Land of Israel

You proclaimed the covenant on the seventh day;
You declared it and decreed it, we listened and heard it.
You loved this day we inherited, delighting in its
remembrance,
and began its command with the word “remember, zakhor.”
From the time You bestowed it, joy filled
the hearts of Jeshurun, the people You redeemed.
Securing the cause of righteousness,
You exalted Shabbat as a sign between us forever.
In six days Your world was formed, on the seventh day
You rested,
and on this day Israel, Your people, rest.
To honor Your name, they sing songs of praise to the
one deserving of praise,
Olamakh tikanta uva-sh’vi-nahta
I’m-an she-tani-a b’am-kha yisrael,
v’likhod shimkha shibhu v’zimru barukh hu,

We continue on page 44.

An Alternate Blessing

This poetic version of the blessing following the Sh’mah is recited
to day in the Italian rite.
It is found in the 19th-century
siddur of Saadiah Gaon and
reflects the practice of the
Land of Israel in the 1st mil-
leennium (as does page 39b).
Instead of emphasizing the
fight against the Egyptians,
as the weekday prayer does,
it talks of the gift of Shabbat
and the rest that the day af-
fores. Shabbat itself becomes
a harbinger of redemption,
the subject of this br’rakah.

You proclaimed the
covenant on the seventh
day. Shabbat, the seventh day.
According to the Babylonian
Talmud, the revelation on
Mount Sina took place on
Shabbat (Shabbat 86b).
The opening lines of this prayer
allude to the fourth com-
mandment of the Decalogue.
Shabbat, which in the version
in Exodus begins with the
word “Remember.”

Jeshurun, ye’shu’r ah. This name is sometimes used in
the Bible as an appellation of the people Israel. It
is a noun formed from the root y-sh-r, meaning
“straight” or “upright.”

Securing the cause of righteousness. The
overthrow of the Egyptian system
of slavery and the institution of a day of rest was
a signal act of righteousness. Deuteronomy
emphasizes that Shabbat was instituted “so that
your manservant and your maidservant may rest
as you do” (5:14).

We continue on page 44.
willingly accepting God’s sovereignty.
Then Moses, Miriam, and the people Israel joyfully sang to You:

U-malkhuto bratzon kiblu aleihem, moshe u-miryam u-v’nei israel l’kha anu shirah, b’simah rabah v’amru khulam.

“Who is like You, ADONAI, among the mighty!
Who is like You, adorned in holiness, revered in praise, working wonders!”

Mi khamokha ba-eilim Adonai, mi kamokha nedar bakodesh, nora ch’holo, oseh feileh.

Your children recognized Your sovereignty, as You split the sea before Moses. “This is my God,” they responded, and said:

“ADONAI will reign forever and ever.”

Malkhut’ka ra’u vanekha, bokei-a yam lifnei moshe, zeh eli anu v’amru: Adonai yimalakh Yolam va-ed.

And so it is written: “ADONAI has rescued Jacob and redeemed him from the hand of those more powerful than he.”

Barukh atah ADONAI, who redeemed the people Israel.
Second B’rak’ah after the Sh’ma: Peace in the Night

Allow us, Adonai our God, to sleep peacefully; awaken us to life, O sovereign. Spread over us Your canopy of peace, restore us with Your good counsel, and save us for the sake of Your name. Shield us.

Some omit on Shabbat:
Remove from us enemies, pestilence, sword, starvation, and sorrow; remove the evil forces that surround us.

Shelter us in the shadow of Your wings, for You, God, watch over and deliver us, and You, God, are sovereign, merciful, and compassionate.
▶ Ensure our going and coming for life and peace, now and forever.

May You spread over us Your canopy of peace. Barukh atah Adonai, who spreads the canopy of peace over us, over all the people Israel, and over Jerusalem.

Hashkiveinu Adonai eloheinu l’shalom,
V’ha-amdeinu malkeinu l’hayim.
U-fros aleinu sukkat sh’lomekha,
V’takenu b’tei zah tovah mishmenekha,
V’hosheinu I’maan sh’mekeka.
V’hagien ba-adeneinu.

Some omit on Shabbat:
V’hasirer mei-aleinu ovev, devar, v’horev, v’ra-av, v’yagon,
V’hasirer satan mi-l’tei neven u-mei-abareinu,
U-v’yzeil k’nafekha tashereinu,
Ki El shomeinu u-matzileinu ata,
Ki El melekh hanun v’rahum ata,
▶ U-sh’ma’er teze’teinu u-ve-einu l’hayim u-l’shalom,
Mei-atah v’ad olam.
U-fros aleinu sukkat sh’lomekha.
Barukh atah Adonai, ha-poreis sukkat shalom aleinu v’ai kol amo yisrael, v’ai yerushalayim.

Some omit on Shabbat:

Some obviate Shabbat:
Askem she-almeneinu ma’tekheinu,
B’mulam k’dinu mishpatenu.
Ba’al A’retz l’Deneinu,
Mid’lam v’Deneinu.
May the Holy One, blessed be He, grant us that those things are accomplished for us.

The Canopy of Peace, the Sukkah of Peace

Peace comes to us in the recognition that when we allow ourselves to be vulnerable, when we recognize that we cannot control everything, redemption can be achieved. The central image in this prayer is the “sukkah of peace.” The sukkah is a fragile structure, open to the elements. Peace is pictured not as a temple, solidly built, gilded, perhaps ornate, but rather as created out of the most fragmentary of materials, leaving us vulnerable and at risk.

Shabbat and Festivals: Evening Service • Sh’ma and Its Blessings

Siddur Lev Shalem for Shabbat and Festivals

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Biblical Sanctification of the Day

We recite the following biblical passages while standing.

On Shabbat:

The people Israel shall observe Shabbat, maintaining it as an everlasting covenant throughout all generations. It is a sign between Me and the people Israel for all time, that in six days ADONAI made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day, ceased from work and rested. [Exodus 31:16–17]

On Festivals:

We are refreshed; we are refreshed, and refreshed, refreshed.

On Shabbat:

And Moses proclaimed the festivals of ADONAI to the people Israel.

N’shamah Y’tetrah

Our tradition speaks of a very interesting phenomenon concerning Shabbat. During the week everyone has a n’shamah, a soul. But on Shabbat we receive a n’shamah y’tetrah, an “additional soul.” This suggests that there is some kind of undeveloped facet of personality, a spiritual dimension, of which we remain unaware in the normal course of events. On Shabbat we are given the time to enrich ourselves by developing or creating this extra spiritual dimension.

—PINCHAS FELI

Hatzi Kaddish

Leader:

May God’s great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God’s wish. May God’s sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: Amen.

Congregation and Leader:

May God’s great name be acknowledged forever and ever! Y’hei sh’meh rabah m’varah l’alam u-’laimei almaya.

Leader:

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, b’rikh ha’ is, is truly [on Shabbat Shuvah we add: far] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: Amen.

On Shabbat, we continue with the Amidah on the next page.
On Festivals, we continue with the Amidah on page 306.
The Friday Night Amidah

Before the Amidah begins, it is customary to take three steps forward, symbolic of approaching God's presence. If there is no room, we first take three steps backward. The sign ʻ indicates the places to bow.

The Amidah concludes on page 53.

ADONAI, open my lips that my mouth may speak Your praise.

First B’rakhot: Our Ancestors

With Patriarchs:

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God and God of our ancestors, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, great, mighty, awe-inspiring, transcendent God, who acts with kindness and love, and creates all, who remembers the loving deeds of our ancestors, and who will lovingly bring a redeemer to their children's children for the sake of divine honor.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God and God of our ancestors, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, God of Sarah, God of Rebecca, God of Rachel, and God of Leah, great, mighty, awe-inspiring, transcendent God, who acts with kindness and love, and creates all, who remembers the loving deeds of our ancestors, and who will lovingly bring a redeemer to their children's children for the sake of divine honor.

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 brakhot. The first recalls the ancestors and their relationship to God and God’s continuing relationship to us, their descendants. The second describes God’s presence in the world, emphasizing God’s caring relationship. The third speaks of God’s uniqueness and the path to God’s holiness. Similarly, every Amidah ends with three brakhot. The first asks that our prayers be accepted and looks toward the restoration of God’s presence in Zion, when we will stand in an ideal relationship with God. The next thanks God for the gifts we experience in life. The concluding blessing of the Amidah ends with a prayer for peace. On Shabbat and festivals, the middle brakhot focuses on distinctive themes of the day. While the Amidah in the morning and afternoon is repeated aloud by the service leader, the evening Amidah is only recited silently—a practice originating in ancient times, perhaps so that congregants would not be unduly delayed in getting home after dark.

ADONAI, open my lips that my mouth may speak Your praise. The Amidah begins with a personal prayer taken from Psalm 51:17, where prayer is exalted over sacrifice.

SINNING THE KNEES AND BOWING. The Babylonian Talmud confined bowing to the beginning and end of this first brakhot, as well as to the beginning and end of the next-to-last brakhot, which thanks God for the gift of life (Berakhot 33a). We stand up straight when we reach God’s name. In bowing, we recognize God’s majesty; when we address God directly, we do so face to face (Berakhot 12a).

OUR GOD AND OUR GOD OF OUR ANCESTORS. Most blessings refer to God as melakah ha-olam, “sovereign of time and space.” The Amidah, the “service of the heart,” is an exception, thereby setting the stage for personal prayer. Here, God is not “sovereign of time and space,” a being transcendent, abstract, or remote, but rather utterly immanent, intimate, particular, and proximate, relating to individuals. And with this opening, we pray, imply, and perhaps quite brazenly demand, that just as God was for our patriarchs and matriarchs—comforting, caring, and close—so will God be for us. (Michelle Dardashti)
On Shabbat Shuvah we add:  
Remember us for life, Sovereign who delights in life, and inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, God of life.

With Patriarchs:  
You are the sovereign who helps and saves and shields.  
Barukh atah Adonai, Shield of Abraham.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:  
You are the sovereign who helps and guards, saves and shields.  
Barukh atah Adonai, Shield of Abraham and Guardian of Sarah.

Second B’rakhah: God’s Saving Care  
You are ever mighty, Adonai—  
You give life to the dead— great is Your saving power.

From Sh’mini Atzeret until Pesah:  
You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall,

[From Pesah until Sh’mini Atzeret, some add:]  
You cause the dew to fall,

You sustain the living through kindness and love,  
and with great mercy give life to the dead,  
You support the falling, heal the sick,  
loosen the chains of the bound, and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.  
Who is like You, Almighty,  
and who can be compared to You?  
The sovereign who brings death and life  
and causes redemption to flourish.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:  
Who is like You, source of compassion,  
who remembers with compassion Your creatures for life?

You are faithful in bringing life to the dead.  
Barukh atah Adonai, who gives life to the dead.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:  
ברוך אתה ה’ שמחת חיים, שמה המלים אדם חיות.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:  
ברוך אתה ה’ שמחת חיים, שמה המלים אדם חיות.

Guardian of Sarah:  
’ברוך אתה ה’ שמחת חיים, שמה המלים אדם חיות.

On Shabbat Shuvah we add:  
ברוך אתה ה’ שמחת חיים, שמה המלים אדם חיות.

Remember us, this brief prayer is the first of four additions to the Amidah during the Ten Days of Repentance.

The prayer is connected to the climate of the Land of Israel, which depends on winter rainfall since summer is an entirely dry season.

Support the falling:  
מפריע להם עד פסח. This paragraph, called G’vurah (God’s strength or God’s victory), emphasizes God’s compassion and goodness. Unlike secular conceptions of “might,” strength is here characterized by concern and support for the weakest and most vulnerable members of society, even the weakest of all the dead. Each of these characteristics of God is based on biblical verses: “support the falling,” Psalm 145:14; “heal the sick,” Exodus 15:28; “loosen the chains of the bound,” Psalm 146:7; “brings death and life,” 1 Samuel 2:6 (Hannah’s prayer).

The ancient rabbis who composed this liturgy certainly believed in bodily resurrection in the end-time. But they also understood this phrase spiritually: that which we thought dead inside us can come to life again. Hannah’s prayer, quoted in part in this paragraph, reads in full: “God causes death and life, brings down and raises up.” Hannah thinks of her childlessness before Samuel’s birth as a kind of death in-life, and her giving birth as her own coming into a life. This can be a model of prayer for the healing or revitalization of any aspect of ourselves that has become lifeless. We all have spiritual needs: realizing them—even in part—can give energy and meaning to our lives.
Third B’rakha: God’s Holiness

Holy are You and holy is Your name; holy ones praise You each day.

Barukh atah Adonai, the Holy God.

On Shabbat Shovah we substitute:

Barukh atah Adonai, the Holy Sovereign.

Fourth B’rakha: The Holiness of Shabbat

You dedicated the seventh day to Your name, the culmination of the creation of heaven and earth, blessing it above all other days, sanctifying it beyond other times, as it is written in Your Torah:

The heavens and the earth, and all they contain, were completed.

On the seventh day God finished the work, ceasing from all work on the seventh day. Then God blessed the seventh day, making it holy—for it, God ceased from all the work of creation.

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

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

Fill our lives with Your goodness and gladden us with Your deliverance. Purify our hearts to serve You truly.

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

Barukh atah Adonai, who makes Shabbat holy.
Fifth Brakah: The Restoration of Zion

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

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

On Rosh Hodesh: On Pesah: On Sukkot:
Rosh Hodesh. Festival of Matzot. Festival of Sukkot.

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

May our eyes behold Your compassionate return to Zion.
Barukh atah Adonai, who restores Your Divine Presence to Zion.

Sixth Brakah:
Gratitude for Life and Its Blessings

We thank You, for You are ever our God and the God of our ancestors;
You are the bedrock of our lives, the shield that protects us in every generation.
We thank You and sing Your praises—
for our lives that are in Your hands,
for our souls that are under Your care,
for Your miracles that accompany us each day,
and for Your wonders and Your gifts that are with us each moment— evening, morning, and noon.
You are the one who is good, whose mercy is never-ending; the one who is compassionate, whose love is unceasing. We have always placed our hope in You.

On Hanukkah we add Al Hanissim on page 430.
Pursing Peace

Hezekiah taught: Great is peace, for all other mitzvot of the Torah are conditional: “If you see...” (Exodus 23:5), “If you meet...” (Exodus 23:4), “If you happen upon...” (Deuteronomy 12:6). If the circumstance comes your way then you must perform the mitzvah, but if not, there is no obligation to fulfill it. But regarding peace it is written, “Seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:15). Seek peace wherever you find yourself, and pursue it in other places, as well.

—TAMARA COHEN

Seventh Br’akhah: Prayer for Peace

Grant abundant and lasting peace to Your people Israel and all who dwell on earth, for You are the sovereign master of all the ways of peace. May it please You to bless Your people Israel at all times with Your gift of peace.

Shalom rav al yisrael am'kha v'al kol yoshi'ei teiv'eil tasim l'olam, ki atah hu melekh adon l'khol ha-shalom.
V'tov b'renekeha l'varekhet et am'kha yisrael b'khol et u-v'khol sha'ah biishlomeka.

On Shabbat Shuvah we recite the following paragraph, in place of the line that follows it, and then continue on the next page:

May we and the entire house of Israel be called to mind and inscribed for life, blessing, sustenance, and peace in the Book of Life.

Barukh atah Adonai, who brings peace.

Barukh atah Adonai, who blesses Your people Israel with peace.

May your name be praised and exalted

In the worldview of the Bible and the liturgy, when we say “God’s name is exalted,” we are acknowledging God’s goodness in creation; and acting to enable God’s justice and compassion to be visible in the world.

WHO BLESSES YOUR PEOPLE

Israel with peace

The midrash notes, “Great is peace, for all prayers conclude with pleas for peace” (Leviticus Rabbah 9:9). Just as the Amidah concludes with a prayer for peace, so too do the Grace After Meals, the Priestly Blessing, Kaddish Shalem, the Mourner’s Kaddish, and the evening Sh’ma and Its Blessings. Similarly, the entire Mishnah concludes with the word shalom, noting that God “could not find any vessel that could contain Israel, except that of peace” (Uktzin 3:15). Peace enables all blessings to be fully appreciated and enjoyed.
The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer or one of the following:

\[ \text{The silent recitation of the Amidah concludes with a personal prayer or one of the following:} \]

```
My God, keep my tongue from evil, my lips from deceit. Help me ignore those who would slander me. Let me be humble before all. Open my heart to Your Torah, that I may perceive Your mitzvot. Frustrate the designs of those who plot evil against me; nullify their schemes. Act for the sake of Your name; act for the sake of Your triumph; act for the sake of Your holiness; act for the sake of Your Torah. Answer my prayer for the deliverance of Your people. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, Adonai, my rock and my redeemer.
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Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

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May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: Amen.
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Grant me the liberating joy of Shabbat, the ability to truly taste its delights. May my heart not be weighed down by sorrow on this holy Shabbat. Fill the soul of Your servant with gladness— for to You, Adonai, I offer my entire being. Help me to increase the joys of Shabbat and to extend its joyful spirit to the other six days of the week. Show me the path of life, that I may be filled with the joy of being in Your presence, the delight of being close to You forever.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, Adonai, my rock and my redeemer.

Some have the custom of taking three steps backward and bowing at the conclusion of the Amidah, as if exiting the court of a sovereign.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: Amen.

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Yihyu t'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi l'tanekha, Adonai tzuri v'go'ali.
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Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'ei teivv], v'imru amen.
Symbolic Repetition of the Amidah

The following biblical passage is recited while standing:

The heavens and the earth, and all they contain, were completed. On the seventh day God finished the work, ceasing from all work on the seventh day. Then God blessed the seventh day, making it holy—for on it, God ceased from all the work of creation.

Ya-y'khu vu ha-shamayim vu ha-aretz vu ha-kol vu ta-avor. Va-y'khal Elohim bayom ha-sh'vii m'latkho asher asah, vayishbot bayom ha-sh'vii mikol m'latkho asher asah. Va-y'reeh Elohim et yom ha-sh'vii vu y'kadsho oto, ki vo shavat mikol m'latkho, asher bara Elohim la-asot.

The following passages are recited only with a minyan.

With Patriarchs and Matriarchs:

Barukh atah Adonai, our God and God of our ancestors, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, great, mighty, awe-inspiring, transcendent God, creator of heaven and earth.

God, who promised protection to our ancestors and assures life to the dead, the incomparable holy God [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: holy Sovereign], desired to give rest to the people Israel and so provided them with the holy Shabbat. We worship in awe and reverence in God's presence and offer thanks to God's name, each day, always. The source of blessings, the master of peace, God, to whom all thanks are due, sanctifies Shabbat and blesses the seventh day, providing sacred rest to a people filled with joy, celebrating it as a symbol of the work of creation.

Magen avot bidvaro, me'ayeh meimeiti b'ma-amare, ha-EI [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: ha-melekh] ha-kadosh she-ein kamoshu, ha-meini-ah fa'am yom shabbat kadosho, ki vam ratzah. Ha-amen ha-amen, v'fich v'kikar b'khol yom tamid.

Me'on ha-b'ra'hot, El ha-hoda-ot, adon ha-shalom, me-kadosh ha-shabbat u-m'varekh sh'y'vii, u-meini-ah bikkudushah lamidushnei oneg, zeiker l'ma-aseih v'reishit.
Two Kinds of Peace

The Hasidic master Nahman of Bratslav distinguished between two kinds of peace. The first is peace within one’s self, which arises out of a sense of awe and humility. The second kind of peace derives from prayer—a vision of universal peace, when there shall be peace in all the world.

The Song

On your journey you will come to a time of waking. The others may be asleep. Or you may be alone. Immediacy of song moving the titles. Vision of children and the linking stars. You will begin then to remember. You hear the voice relating after late listening. You remember even falling asleep, or a dream of sleep. For now the song is given and you remember. At every clear waking you have known this song. The cities of this music identified. By the white springs of singing, and their fountains. Reflected in windows, in all the human eyes. The wishes, the need growing. The song growing.

—MURIEL KURETSKY

Our God and God of our ancestors, embrace our rest. Make us holy through Your mizvot and let the Torah be our portion. Fill our lives with Your goodness and gladden us with Your deliverance. Purify our hearts to serve You truly. ADONAI our God, lovingly and willingly grant that we inherit Your holy Shabbat, that the people Israel, who make Your name holy, may find rest on this day. Barukh atah ADONAI, who makes Shabbat holy.

Kaddish Shelem

Leader:
May God’s great name be exalted and bellowed throughout the created world, as is God’s wish. May God’s sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: Amen.

Congregation and Leader:
May God’s great name be acknowledged forever and ever! Y’hei sh’méi raba m’varakah l’alum u-la’amei almaya.

Leader:
May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, b’rikh hu, is truly [on Shabbat Shavuah we add: Efr] beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: Amen.

May the prayers and pleas of all Israel be accepted by their creator in heaven. And we say: Amen.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: Amen.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: Amen.

On Shabbat and Festivals, Kiddush is recited, page 79.

KADDISH SHELEM in the ancient synagogue, Kaddish Shelem marked the conclusion of the service. The congregation responded to the leader’s invitation to praise God’s name at the beginning of the service, and it does so here as well, at the conclusion of the service.

The request that the prayers of all Israel be received favorably and that peace reign is an appropriate conclusion of the service. In the late Middle Ages, a more elaborate ending to the service was considered fitting and so the songs and prayers that follow were appended; to this day, some rites conclude here.

AND TO ALL WHO DWELL ON EARTH, קדיש שילה, קדייש שילה. The inclusion of these words follows the liturgical practice of many Conservative prayerbooks and congregations of including a universal dimension to certain prayers for peace, which would otherwise mention only Israel. The prayer thus prompts us to envision an expanding peace, beginning with ourselves and radiating outward: first to all the people Israel, and then to all created beings.

The 20th-century philosopher Emmanuel Levinas asserts that the designation “Israel” includes most broadly all human beings who are committed to the ethical care of the stranger.

In our prayers, we may move among various understandings of “Israel”: Israel as Jewish community, Israel as national home, and Israel as emblematic of all those who uphold an ethical universe.
On Festivals, Kiddush is recited on page 79.

Kiddush for Shabbat Evening

We rise.

With the assent of my friends:

**Barukh atah Adonai,** our God, sovereign of time and space, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, borei pri ha-gafen.

**Barukh atah Adonai,** our God, sovereign of time and space, who has desired us and has provided us with a path to holiness through the observance of mitzvot, and who lovingly and willingly has bestowed on us Shabbat, a measure of God’s holiness, a symbol of the work of creation. For it is the first of sacred times, a symbol of the exodus from Egypt.

You have chosen us, and sanctified us among all peoples by lovingly and willingly bestowing on us Your holy Shabbat.

**Barukh atah Adonai,** who makes Shabbat holy.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher kidshanei b’shlecha b’v’ratzon hinhilana

v’shabbat kodasha b’hadasha v’v’ratzon hinhilana

zikaron l’ma-asheh v’rei’ehin,

ki hu yom t’hillah ’imikra eil kodesh,

zeiker lietzat mitzrayim,

ki vanu vaharta v’otanu kidasha mikol ha-amim,

v’shabbat kodasha b’hadasha v’v’ratzon hinhilana.

Barukh atah Adonai, m’kadeish ha-shabbat.

Between Pesah and Shavuot, we turn to page 63 for the Counting of the Omer.

Kiddush. Just as one might recognize the hosts and acknowledge the occasion before partaking of a celebratory meal, Kiddush acknowledges the day of Shabbat as a celebration of creation and of freedom, and recognizes the Divine as the bestower of the remarkable gifts of which we partake. Kiddush is recited at the dinner table at home and marks the beginning of the meal. Wine was one of the elements offered on the altar in the Temple along with sacrifices, and the Shabbat and festival tables are considered as an altar. Also, in the ancient world, festive meals began with wine and so this blessing, recited at the beginning of the meal, is said over wine. At a later time, Kiddush came to be recited in the synagogue, since some of those present might not have had the opportunity to properly celebrate Shabbat at home. As we have just recited the biblical passage about God resting on Shabbat (Genesis 2:1–3, Ve-yikra), the synagogue Kiddush does not include it, although the home ritual does (see page 76). If everyone is participating in a home or synagogue meal, then Kiddush is not recited at the service, but only at the dinner table.

Lovingly... Lovingly... וְלָוֵֽיהּ... וְלָוֵֽיהּ. The words of Kiddush emphasize that Shabbat represents a loving relationship between God and Israel.

**First of Sacred Times** מְזוֹלָהּ. In the enumeration of holidays in Leviticus, Shabbat is listed first and then the festivals follow. Also, Shabbat was the first ritual to be ordained after the exodus from Egypt. In fact, instructions and exhortations regarding the observance of Shabbat preceded the revelation at Sinai. When Israel was told about the manna that was to feed them in the desert, they were instructed to collect a double share on Friday so that they would not go out and collect food on Shabbat.

A Symbol of the Exodus from Egypt פֶּרֶס. In the version of the Decalogue in Exodus (20:10), Shabbat is said to be a commemoration of the creation of the world, but in the version in Deuteronomy (5:12), Shabbat is said to symbolize the exodus from Egypt. The liturgy combines both thoughts.
Concluding Prayers

Aleinu

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

And so we bow, acknowledging the supreme sovereign,
the Holy One, who is praised—
who spreads out the heavens and establishes the earth,
whose glory abides in the highest heavens,
and whose powerful presence resides in the highest heights.

This is our God, none else;
ours is the true sovereign, there is no other.

As it is written in the Torah:
"Know this day and take it to heart,
that Adonai is God in heaven above and on earth below;
there is no other."

Aleinu l’shabei ha-adon hakol,
latei’g’dolah l’yotzer b’shirit,
shelo asanu k’goey ha-aratzot,
v’lo samanu k’mishp’hot ha-adamah,
shelo sam helkeinu kahem,
v’goraleinu k’khol hamonan.

Va-anahnu korim u-mishahavim u-modim,
lifnei melekh maalkei ha-m’lakham, ha-kadosh barukh hu.
Shehu noteh shamayim v’yosed aretz,
u-moshav y’kare b’shamayim mima-al,
u-sh’khinat uzo b’govhei m’tromim,
hu elohinei ein od.
Emet malkeinu efes zulato,
ka-katur b’torato:
v’yadat hayom v’hashivvota el l’vavekh, ki Adonai hu ha-elowim
ba-shamayim mima-al v’al ha-aretz mitahat, ein od.

We rise.

This prayer was originally composed for the Makkiyot ("Sovereignty") section of the Rosh Hashanah Musaf service.
Since the late Middle Ages, it has acquired a special pride of place in Ashkenazic liturgy (but not in most Sephardic rites) and is recited as part of the conclusion of every service.

It is customary to physically bow from the waist when we recite the line va-anahnu korim, "And so we bow.”

Know this day and take it to heart,
that Adonai is God in heaven above and on earth below;
there is no other."
And so, Adonai our God, we await You, that soon we may behold Your strength revealed in full glory, sweeping away the abominations of the earth, obliterating idols,
establishing in the world the sovereignty of the Almighty.
All flesh will call out Your name—
even the wicked will turn toward You.
Then all who live on earth will understand and know
that to You alone every knee must bend,
all allegiance be sworn.
They will bow down and prostrate themselves before You,
Adonai our God,
treasure Your glorious name,
and accept the obligation of Your sovereignty.
May You soon rule over them forever and ever,
for true dominion is Yours;
and You will rule in glory until the end of time.

As is written in Your Torah:
“Adonai will reign forever and ever.”
And as the prophet said:
“Adonai shall be acknowledged sovereign of all the earth.
On that day Adonai shall be one, and the name of God, one.”
V’ne-emar: v’hayah Adonai ‘melekh al kol ha-aretz,
bayom hahu yiyyeh Adonai ehad, u-shimo ehad.
We are seated.
Mourners' Kaddish

In the season when Psalm 27 is recited, some congregations wait to say Kaddish until the completion of Psalm 27 (on page 59).

Mourners and those observing Yahrtzeit:
May God’s great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God’s wish. May God’s sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel. And we say: Amen.

Congregation and mourners:
May God’s great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

Mourners:
May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, b’rikh hu, is truly [on Shabbat Shuvah we add: far beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: Amen.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: Amen.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth]. And we say: Amen.

—Chaim Stern

Kaddish Ϝױד. The custom for mourners to recite Kaddish began sometime after the 11th century. Though its origin is obscure, it has become an essential element of Jewish prayer. The Kaddish is not a private prayer; rather, it is recited in community with a minyan present. In that context, the mourner affirms that tragedy has not separated him or her from God or the Jewish people, and, in turn, the communal response then constitutes an acknowledgment of the mourner.

Mourners:

Yitgadal v’yitkadash sh’mei raba, b’alma di v’ra, kirutei, v’yamlich Malkhutei b’heyeikho u-v’yomeikho u-v’haiy e’kol beit yisra’el, ba-agalai u-vizman kariv, v’imru amen.

Congregation and mourners:
Yhei sh’mei raba m’varakh l’alam u-l’aimi almaya.

Mourners:
Yitbarekh v’yishtabah v’yitspar v’yitromam v’yitnasei v’yitchador v’yitelev v’yichalal sh’mei d’Kudsha, b’rikh hu, leila min kol [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: leila feila mikol] birkhata v’shirata tushb’hata v’nehemata da’amirin b’alma, v’imru amen.

Yhei sh’loma raba min sh’maya v’bayem aleinu v’al kol yisra’el, v’imru amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu v’al kol yisra’el [v’al kol yosh’vi teivell], v’imru amen.
The service concludes with a song. Two choices are given here, but other songs may be selected, such as those on pages 82–85.

ADON OLAM

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

Adon olam asher malakh
L'ta na-asah v'hefzo kol
V'aharei ki-kh'lot ha-kol
V'hu hayah v'hu hoveh
V'hu yad v'hu sheni
B'li reishit b'li takhlit
V'hu eli v'hu go-ali
V'hu nisi u-manos li
Byado afkid ruhi
V'im ruhi g'viyati
b'terem kol y'tzir nivra.
azai melekh sh'mo nikra.
ivado yimlokh norah.
v'hu yiyyeh b'tifarah.
hamshli lo l'habbirah.
v'lo ha-oz v'ha-misrah.
v'tzor hevli b'tzarah.
m'nat kosi b'yom ekra.
b'eit ishan v'araah.
Adonai li v'lo ira.

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

I thank You, God, for all the good You have provided for me and for all of creation. May it be Your will, Master of peace, that You bless me and keep me in mind, that I may find favor in my own eyes and in the eyes of all whom I meet. May I receive Your Shabbat with great joy. May we be spared illness and pain on this day and may we not be the instruments of sin. May Your angels of peace accompany me and may they bring blessings of life and peace to me, my family, and to us all.

YIGDAL

Glorify and praise the living God who exists, but not in time—singular and unique, hidden and unbounded, having no body, not a physical being: we cannot describe God’s distinctness.

God existed before every thing; first of all—but with no beginning.

This is the master of the world; all of creation points to God’s greatness and sovereignty.

Prophetic inspiration was bestowed upon the people God treasured and honored. There never arose in Israel another like Moses, a prophet able to see the very likeness of the Divine. By the hand of this prophet, trusted in God’s house, Torah, a truthful teaching, was given to God’s people. God will never alter the divine law, nor change it for another.

God knows our innermost thoughts, and foresees their consequence from the start.

God repays the righteous for their deeds; punishing evildoers in accord with their transgressions.

The Divine will send us our Messiah at the end of days, redeeming those who wait for the time of God’s triumph. God, with great mercy, will give life to the dead—may God’s name be praised forever.