

Adult Bnei Mitzvah Class 5781
Rabbi Steven Morgen, Congregation Beth Yeshurun
SESSION 8 – PESUKEI D’ZIMRA

I. Getting into the right frame of mind to pray - meditations

- A. Pious ones would come an hour early to focus the mind (Berakhot 5:1)
- B. Praising God every day with “Hallel” = Pesukei D’Zimra (Shabbat 118b)
 - 1. Rashi: This means Psalms 148 and 150
 - 2. One who recites Psalm 145 three times a day is praiseworthy (Berakhot 4b)

II. Structure of Pesukei D’zimra

- A. Barukh She’amar (opening blessing)
- B. Biblical passages
 - 1. I Chronicles 16:8-36 (David brings the Ark to Zion)
 - 2. **Verses from Psalms regarding God’s mercy and protection of Israel**
 - 3. Psalm 100 (thanksgiving)
 - 4. **Verses from Bible regarding God’s kingship**
 - 5. **Psalm 145 (Ashrei)**
 - 6. **Psalms 146-150 (the lasts Psalms in the book)**
 - 7. Verses beginning “Barukh” – which introduces:
 - 8. I Chronicles 29:10-13 (David blessing God)
 - 9. Nehemiah 9:6-11 (history of Israel until Sea of Reeds)
 - 10. Exodus 14:30-15:18 (Song of the Sea)
 - 11. Verses regarding God’s kingship (again)
- C. Blessing following biblical passages of praise (Yishtabah)

III. Psalm 145 (“Ashrei”)

- A. Introduced by two verses (84:5, 144:15) and concluded with an extra verse (115:18).
- B. Alphabetic Psalm, includes “You open Your hand ...”
- C. The missing “י” verse (not what the Talmud claims it is ...)

IV. Psalm 146-150

- A. **Psalm 146 (last verse quoted in Kedushah)**
- B. **Psalm 148**
- C. **Psalm 150**

V. Song of the Sea

P'sukei D'zimra: Verses of Song

Thanking God

Rabbi Yohanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai: From the day that the Holy One created the world, there was no one who praised and thanked (*hadeh*) the Holy One, until Leah came and praised God. For she said: "This time will I praise and thank (*odeh*) Adonai" (Genesis 29:35), giving the name "Judah" (*y hudaith*) to her newborn son.

Thus, the name "Jew," derived from "Judah," means "thankful."

—BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Creating Through Speech

Just as divine speech created the world, so too with human speech: what we give voice to becomes more substantive, more real. Prayer, like all human speech, is a creative act. The prayers that we utter shape our inner lives. Our new consciousness causes us to relate differently to the world around us, and it thus prompts us to shape a different external reality.

It is customary to stand for the opening and closing brakhot of P'sukei D'zimra.

Introductory B'rakhah

Blessed is the one whose word called the world into being.

Barukh hu. Blessed be the One.

Blessed is the one who created the world.

Barukh sh'imo. Blessed be the divine name.

Blessed is the one who speaks and it is done.

Barukh hu.

Blessed is the one who decrees and fulfills.

Barukh sh'imo.

Blessed is the one who has compassion for the earth.

Barukh hu.

Blessed is the one who has compassion for all creatures.

Barukh sh'imo.

Blessed is the one who sends a just reward to those who revere the Divine.

Barukh hu.

Blessed is the one who is eternal, who exists forever.

Barukh sh'imo.

Blessed is the one who redeems and rescues.

Barukh hu u-varukh sh'imo.

Barukh atah Adonai, our God, sovereign of time and space, compassionate creator celebrated in Your people's voices, praised and glorified by the words of Your faithful servants and in Your servant David's songs.

We will celebrate You, *Adonai* our God, with praise and song; we will extol, acclaim, and glorify You, honoring Your name and declaring that You are our sovereign God.

► The singular one who gives life to the world—the sovereign, who is praised and glorified, forever and ever—this is Your great name.

Barukh atah Adonai, Sovereign, celebrated with songs of praise.

Some congregations select from among the psalms and biblical texts that follow.

פסוקי דזמרא

It is customary to stand for the opening and closing brakhot of P'sukei D'zimra.

ברוך הוא.

ברוך שאמר והיה העולם,

ברוך שמו.

ברוך עשה בראשית,

ברוך הוא.

ברוך אומר ועושה,

ברוך שמו.

ברוך גזר ומקים,

ברוך הוא.

ברוך מרחם על הארץ,

ברוך שמו.

ברוך מרחם על הפירות,

ברוך הוא.

ברוך משלם שכר טוב ליראי,

ברוך שמו.

ברוך חי לעד וקים לבצח,

ברוך הוא וברוך שמו.

ברוך פודה ומציל,

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם,
האל האב הרחמן, המהלל בפני עמו,

משבח ומפאר בלשון חסידיו ועבדיו,
ובשירי דוד עבדך. הלה יהוה אלהינו,

בשבחות ובזמירות, נגדלך ונשבחך ונפאריך
ונזכיר שמך ונמליכך מלפני אלהינו.

◀ **יהי ה' העולמים, מלך משבח ומפאר עדי עד**
שמו הנדול. ברוך אתה יהוה, מלך מהלל בנשבוחות.

Some congregations select from among the psalms and biblical texts that follow.

all of creation emanates from God's spoken fiat. For example, on the very first day, "God said, "Let there be light"—and there was light" (Genesis 1:3).

BARUKH HU, BLESSED BE THE ONE הוא ה' הברוך. The last line of the introductory call and response reads *barukh sh'mo*, "blessed be the divine name." Taken together, the first two words of response and the last two words of the series form the phrase *barukh hu u-varukh sh'mo*, "blessed be the One and blessed be the divine name," which is commonly used as a response to hearing the name of God. Practices differ as to the call and response during the recitation of this poem. A version that has recently become popular includes reciting the words printed here in gray.

COMPASSIONATE CREATOR הרחמן המהלל בפני עמו. The word translated here as "compassionate" comes from the root *rahm-n*, which also means "womb." Thus, this particular phrase can be understood as "the fatherly womb," and wonderfully captures the way that God transcends gender.

EXTOL, ACCLAIM, AND GLORIFY YOU נגדלך ונשבחך ונפאריך אתה. The blessing announces that the psalms to be recited in this section will be those that acclaim God, not those that express the personal plight of the psalmist. Repetition of similar sounding verbal synonyms in Hebrew is a means of creating a meditative atmosphere.

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For a transliteration of Ashrei, see page 181–182.

ASHREI

Joyous are they who dwell in Your house; they shall praise You forever.

Joyous the people who are so favored; joyous the people whose God is ADONAI.

A SONG OF PRAISE, OF DAVID

I exalt You, my God, my sovereign; I praise Your name, always.

Every day I praise You, glorifying Your name, always.

Great is ADONAI, greatly to be praised, though Your greatness is unfat homable.

One generation praises Your works to another, telling of Your mighty deeds.

I would speak of Your majestic glory and of Your wondrous acts.

Generations speak of Your awe-inspiring deeds;

I, too, shall recount Your greatness.

They recount Your great goodness, and sing of Your righteousness.

ADONAI is merciful and compassionate, patient, and abounding in love.

ADONAI is good to all, and God's mercy embraces all of creation.

All of creation acknowledges You, and the faithful bless You.

They speak of the glory of Your sovereignty and tell of Your might, proclaiming to humanity Your mighty deeds, and the glory of Your majestic sovereignty.

Your sovereignty is eternal; Your dominion endures in every generation.

ADONAI supports all who falter, and lifts up all who are bent down.

The eyes of all look hopefully to You,

and You provide them nourishment in its proper time.

Opening Your hand, You satisfy with contentment all that lives.

ADONAI is righteous in all that is done, faithful to all creation.

ADONAI is near to all who call, to all who call sincerely.

God fulfills the desire of those who are faithful, listening to their cries, rescuing them.

ADONAI watches over all who love the Holy One, but will destroy all the wicked.

▶ My mouth shall utter praise of ADONAI.

May all that is mortal praise God's name forever and ever.

Psalms 45

We shall praise ADONAI now and always. Halleluyah!

אֲשֶׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֶלָה.

אֲשֶׁרֵי הַעַם שֶׁבְּכַבָּה לָּךְ, אֲשֶׁרֵי הַעַם שִׂיְהוּדָה אֵלֶיךָ.

תְּהַלֵּל לְךָ

אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ אֵלֹהֵי הַמַּלְאָךְ, וְאֶבְרַכְךָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

בְּכִלְיֵי־יָם אֶבְרַכְךָ, וְאֶהַלֵּלְךָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

בְּדוֹל יִהְיֶה וּמֵהַלָּל מֵאֵד, וּלְגַדְלַחֲנוּ אִין תִּקְוֶה.

דוֹר לְדוֹר יִשְׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְגִבּוֹרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ:

הֲדָר בְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ, וְדִבְרֵי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשִׁירֶה.

וְיַעֲזוּ בְרוּךְ אֱוֹתֶיךָ יֵאמְרוּ, וְגִדְ לִתְּךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנּוּ.

זָכַר רַב טוֹבְךָ יִפְעִיעַ, וְאֶדְבַּרְתֶּךָ יִרְנְנוּ.

חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יִהְיֶה, אֲרַךְ אַפַּיִם וְגִדְל־חֶסֶד.

טוֹב יִהְיֶה לְכָל, וְרַחֲמֵינוּ עַל כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיךָ.

יְהוָה יִהְיֶה כְּלִמְעֵשֶׁיךָ, וְחֲסִידֶיךָ יִבְרַכְוָה.

כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֵאמְרוּ, וְגִבּוֹרֹתֶיךָ יִדְבִּירוּ.

לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבָבֵי הָאָדָם בְּבוֹרְחֵינוּ, וּבְכּוֹד הֲדָר מַלְכוּתְךָ.

מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כְּל־עֲלֵמִים, וּמִמְשַׁלְתֶּךָ כְּכָל־דוֹר וָדָר.

סוֹמְךָ יִהְיֶה לְכִלְהַנְפָּלִים, וְחוֹקְךָ לְכָל־הַנְּפֹסִים.

עֵינֵינוּ כָּל־אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁבְּרוּ, וְאִמְתָּה נוֹתֵן לָנוּ אֶת־אֲבָלְכֶם בְּעֵתְנוּ.

פּוֹתַח אֲתִידֶיךָ, וּמַשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רִצּוֹן.

צִדִּיק יִהְיֶה כְּכִלְרִבּוֹ, וְחֲסִיד בְּכִל־מַעֲשֵׂינוּ.

קְרוֹב יִהְיֶה לְכָל־קְרֹאֵינוּ, לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵנוּ בְּאֵמֶת.

רָצוֹן יִרְאֵנוּ יַעֲזוּשׁוּ, וְאֶת־שְׁנוֹעֲתָם יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה יִשְׁמָדֵם.

שׁוֹמְרֵי יִהְיֶה אֶת־כָּל־אֲהָבֵינוּ, וְאֵת כָּל־הַשְׁעִים יִשְׁמָדֵם.

תְּהַלֵּל יִהְיֶה יְדְבַרְיָךְ,

וְיִבְרַךְ כָּל־בְּשָׂר שֶׁם קִדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

הַלְלוּם קַמָּה

וְאֶבְרַחְנוּ בְּנִכְרְךָ, יְהִי מַעֲרֹתָ וְעֵד עוֹלָם. הַלְלוּהָ.

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

Two additional verses (Psalm 84:5 and 144:15), both of which begin with the word *ashrei*, "joyous," were added to the opening, apparently in imitation of the Book of Psalms itself, which opens with that word. The reference to God's house evokes those praying in the synagogue. Psalm 15:18 was appended to the end, transforming the prayer from the first-person singular to the plural, and thus creating a bridge to the five "Halleluyah" psalms that follow. Ashrei is an alphabetical acrostic—although it is missing a verse beginning with the letter *nun*—and thus easy to memorize, which may help to explain its popularity in Jewish liturgy. Many readers relate to individual verses more than to the literary flow of the whole poem. It is the only psalm explicitly called a *hillah*, "a song of praise," though the entire Book of Psalms is called by the plural *Sefer Tehillim*.

joyous. The Hebrew word covers a spectrum of emotions: happy, blessed, contented. ADONAI supports all who falter, and lifts up all who are bent down. Until now, the poet has praised God's greatness and splendor; now, the focus shifts to God's concern for those in need. Here, God's sovereignty is primarily manifest in love and care. ALL UPON HIS MOUNTAIN. In Psalm 145, there are no references to the Temple, to Israel, or to historical events. God is here depicted as the sovereign of the world who cares for all creatures.

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Adonai Secures Justice

Ethics is not the corollary of the vision of God; it is that very vision. Ethics is an optic, such that everything I know of God and everything I can hear of God's word and reasonably say to God must find an ethical expression. In the Holy Ark from which the voice of God is heard by Moses, there are only the tablets of the Law.... The knowledge of God comes to us like a commandment, like a mitzvah. To know God is to know what must be done.... The justice rendered to the Other, my neighbor, gives me an unsurpassable proximity to God.

—EMMANUEL LEVINAS

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

I will praise ADONAI.
I will praise ADONAI as long as I live,
sing to my God as long as I am here.
Do not put your trust in the high and mighty,
people who cannot save even themselves;
their breath will depart,
they will return to the earth from which they came,
and on that day, their schemes will come to naught.

Blessed is the person whose help is Jacob's God,
who looks with hope to ADONAI
who created heaven and earth,
the sea and all that is within it;
ADONAI keeps faith forever,
secures justice for the oppressed,
provides food for the hungry;
releases the bound from their chains,
gives sight to the blind,
straightens those bent low,
and loves those who act justly;
▶ ADONAI cares for the stranger,
sustains the orphan and the widow,
blocks the path of the wicked—
ADONAI shall reign forever;
your God, O Zion, from generation to generation.

Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalm 146

PSALMS 146–150 constitute a series of five psalms, each opening and closing with the compound word *hallelu-yah*, “praise God”; these psalms bring the Book of Psalms to an exuberant conclusion. Rabbi Yose (2nd century, the Land of Israel) considered it a meritorious practice to recite these psalms, along with Psalm 145, each day (Babylonian Talmud, *Shabbat* 18b).

These psalms constitute a celebratory way of preparing for the formal morning service, and by the end of the 1st millennium they had become a statutory part of the morning prayers, forming the core of P Sukei D Zimra, the “Verses of Song” (*Sofrim* 17:11).

The five psalms are interconnected. For example, God is described in Psalm 146 as ruling justly and teaching just laws to Israel; in Psalms 147 and 148, as

redeeming the people Israel; and in Psalm 149, as commissioning the people Israel to bring the corrupt rulers of the world to justice. Psalms 146–149 all touch on universal themes, but each ends by describing the special relation of God to Israel. The final psalm, 150, begins with Israel's praises of God and concludes with a universal chorus: “Let every breath be praise of God.”

PSALM 146 consists of two parts: the first exhorts against putting one's faith in human beings, even the most powerful, and the second contrasts God's justice and compassion with corrupt human institutions. This second section is set off by the same word so central to the previous prayer, *ashrei*, meaning happy, blessed, and contented.

THEY WILL RETURN TO THE EARTH. יָשֵׁב לָאָרֶץ תֵּיכֵן אֲדֹנָי. The imagery is from Genesis, where Adam is told that he “will return to the earth, for from it you were taken: for dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19).

JACOB'S GOD. אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב. This is the only time this phrase is used in the Bible, and it is hard to say why it is used here. Perhaps it is due to the fact that Jacob is a figure who suffered and died in a foreign land and yet kept faith and hope. The people Israel, suffering yet hopeful, are Jacob's descendants.

RELEASES THE BOUND. מַשְׁפֵּט לְעֹשִׂוִּים. God is portrayed as compassionate, seeking justice for the weak, unlike powerful human beings whose plans may be self-serving. The qualities attributed to God in this psalm form the basis of several of the morning *brakhot* (pages 103–104).

ADONAI CARES FOR THE STRANGER. יְגֹרֵם דָּוָם וְאַתְמָה יַעֲרֹךְ. In biblical society, these were the three groups least able to fend for themselves.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

הַלְלוּ נַפְשֵׁי אֲתֵיְהוָה.

אֲהַלְלֶה יְהוָה כַּיְדִיבִים, בְּבִרְאָתָם לְאֵלֹהֵי בְעוֹדֵי.

אֵל תִּבְטְחוּ כַּיְדִיבִים, בְּבִרְאָתָם לְאֵלֹהֵי שְׂאֵן לֹא תִשְׁעִיעַ.

תִּצְא רִחוּ וְיִשָּׁב לְאָדָמָתּוֹ,

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֲבָדוּ עֲשִׂוֹתֵיבָתָם.

אֲשֶׁרֵי שְׂאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעוֹרוֹ, שִׁבְרוּ עַל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁמִים וְאָרֶץ, אֲתֵיְהִים וְאַתְּכֹלֵי אֲשֶׁר בָּם,

הַשֹּׁמֵר אֶמְתָּ לְעוֹלָם.

עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפֵּט לְעֹשִׂוִּים, נִתְּנוּ לָחֵם לְרַעֲבִים,

יְהוָה מִתִּיר אֲסוּרִים, יְהוָה פִּקֹּחַ עוֹרִים,

יְהוָה זָקֹף כְּפוּפִים, יְהוָה אֹהֵב צְדִיקִים.

▶ יְהוָה שֹׁמֵר אֲתֵיְגָרִים,

יְתוֹם וְאַתְמָה יַעֲרֹךְ, וְדָרָךְ לְשֹׁעִים יַעֲוֶה.

יִמְלֹךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֵינוּ צִיּוֹן לְדוֹר וָדוֹר.

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

תהלים קמז

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HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

How good to sing to our God sweet and delightful words of praise.

ADONAI will rebuild Jerusalem, gather in the dispersed people of Israel;

**the one who heals the broken-hearted, and binds their wounds,
the one who counts the stars and names each and every one of them**

is our great sovereign, infinitely powerful.

God's designs are beyond recounting.

ADONAI gives heart to the humble and throws the wicked to the ground.

Call out to ADONAI in thanksgiving,

and with the music of the lyre sing to God

who covers the heavens with clouds providing rain for the earth,

that grass may flourish on the hillsides—

food for livestock and for the raven's crying nestlings.

Victorious chariots do not please God,

nor is it the warrior's strong arms that God desires.

ADONAI desires those who revere the Divine,

those who look to God's love and kindness.

O Jerusalem, sing the praises of ADONAI; Zion, celebrate your God.

For God has strengthened the posts of your gates,

blessed your children within, brought peace to your borders,

and satisfied you with the fat of the harvest.

God sends the divine word to earth;

how quickly these commands are obeyed:

snow piles up like fleece, frost spreads like ash,

hailstones are tossed like crumbs—

who could withstand the cold?—

then word is sent for the ice to melt;

winds cease blowing and water flows.

▶ God enunciates commands to Jacob, precepts and just decrees to the people Israel.

No other nation has been so provided;

they do not know of just decrees.

Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalms 147

הַלְלוּיָהּ.

בִּי טוֹב זַמְרָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בִּי נְעִים נֹאדָה תְהִלָּה.
בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם יְהוָה, גֹּדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִכְנָס.
הַרְוֵפֵא לְשִׁבְחֵי לֵב וּמְחַבֵּשׁ לְעֵצָבוֹתָם,
מוֹנֵה מִסְפֵּר לְכוֹכְבֵימ, לְקַלְמ שְׁמוֹת יְקָרָא.
גְּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ וְרַב כֹּחַ, לְתַבְּוֹנָתוֹ אִין מִסְפֵּה.
מַעוֹדֵד עֲבוּדִים יְהוָה, מַשְׁפִּיל רְשָׁעִים עַדֵי אָרְזֵי.
עֲנֵנו לַיהוָה בְּתוֹדָה, זַמְרֵנו לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּכִנּוֹר,
הַמְכַסֶּה שְׁמַיִם בְּעָנָבִים, הַמְכִינֵנו לְאָרְזֵי מִטָּה,
הַמְצַמֵּיחַ הַרִים חֲצִיר,

נוֹתֵן לְבָהֳמָה לְחֶמְדָּה, לְבָנֵי עֵרֵב אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאוּ.
לֹא בְּגִבּוֹרֹת הַסּוֹס יִחְפָּז, לֹא בְשׁוֹקֵי הָאֵישׁ יִרְצֶה,
רוֹצֵה יְהוָה אֲתִירָאֵי, אֲתִהְמִיחֵלִים לְחֶסֶדֶוּ.
שִׁבְחֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם אֲתִיהוּדֵה, הֲלָלֵי אֱלֹהֵי צִיּוֹן.
בִּי חוֹזֵק בְּרִיחֵי שְׁעָרֵהוּ, בְּרַחֵ בְּנֵינוּ בְּקוֹרְבֵנוּ.
הַשֵּׁם גְּבוּרָתוֹ שְׁלוֹמֵ, חֲלֵב חַפְזִים יִשְׁבִּיעֵנוּ.
הַשְׁלֵמֵ אַמְרָתוֹ אֲרֵזֵי, עַד מְהֵרָה יִרְוֵץ דְּרָגוֹ,
הַנִּתֵּן שֶׁלֶג בְּצִמְרוֹ כַּפּוֹר כַּאֲפֵר יִפְּזֹר,
מִשְׁלֵיחַ קוֹרָחוֹ כְּפוֹתִים, לִפְנֵי קָרְתוֹ מִי יַעֲמֵהוּ,
יִשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וַיִּמְסַם, יֵשֵׁב רוּחוֹ וַיִּזְלוּ מַיִם,
▶ מַנִּיד דְּבָרָיו לַיַּעֲקֹב, הִקְוִי וּמַשְׁפִּטִיו לַיִּשְׂרָאֵל.
לֹא עָשָׂה כּוֹ לְכָל־גּוֹי, וּמַשְׁפָּטִים בַּל יִדְעוּם.
הַלְלוּיָהּ.

הַלְלוּיָהּ

הַלְלוּיָהּ קָמוּ

PSALM 147 is a complex mix of a hymn to God's power, an assertion of God's moral behavior, and praise of the divine teaching given to Israel as its treasure. The psalm is composed of three parts. The psalm intermixes the promise of the restoration of Jerusalem with praise of God's love to come. Those who currently exercise dominion will be defeated, for in the mind of the psalmist, acting justly represents true power.

HEALS THE BROKEN-HEARTED
כִּבְּרָה לְשִׁבְחֵי לֵב. In the same breath, the psalmist exalts God's strength and God's compassion.

NAMES EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM
קָרָא. Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935, the Land of Israel) comments on God's ability to name each and every star and keep them all in place. From this, he derives a lesson about the people Israel, who are compared to the stars (Genesis 15:5); each person has an individual purpose and dream, but is also a part of the collective destiny of the people Israel; each adds something new and special to the collective.

WARRIOR'S STRONG ARMS
הַרְוֵפֵי הָאֵלֶּט. The Hebrew *shok* usually means "thigh," and thus it may refer here to the soldier's ability to run swiftly after the enemy. It can also sometimes refer to the shoulder, which seems more reasonable in this context: the warrior shoots arrows from his shoulder or throws spears with his powerful arms, while riding the horse or chariot.

GOD ENUNCIATES COMMANDS TO JACOB
מַנִּיד דְּבָרָיו לַיַּעֲקֹב. The same Hebrew word *d'varo*, literally "[God's] word," appeared above referring to the ice, which God melts with speech. The speech of God is "heard" both in nature and in the teachings of Torah.
NO OTHER NATION
אֵין מִלְּאֻמִּים יָדְעוּם. The psalmist argues that the people Israel's strength lies in its commitment to justice and its limitation of God's concern for the poor and the vulnerable. In contrast, other nations presume that strength lies in military might.

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The Wonders of Creation

Why is the sky blue? Among the wavelengths of light in the sun's spectrum, blue oscillates at the highest frequency and is, therefore, scattered effectively by molecules of air in our atmosphere. This turns the sky blue. To me, this seems more amazing than ancient Mesopotamian and biblical beliefs that the sky is blue because of all the water up there. What science shows us about the evolution of our universe and our selves is as awesome to me as Genesis or the Kabbalah.

—DANIEL MATT

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

From the heavens, offer praise to ADONAI, on high, offer praise:

all angels, offer praise to God, all the hosts of heaven, offer praise to God, sun and moon, offer praise to God, brightest stars offer praise to God, highest heavens and waters above, offer praise to God; may all praise the name ADONAI.

For God commanded they be born, set them in their places forever, and fixed the boundaries they never cross.

On earth, offer praise to ADONAI:

sea monsters and ocean's deep, lightning and hail, snow and sandstorms, raging winds obeying God's command, hills and high mountains, fruit trees and evergreens, beasts and every kind of cattle, crawling things and winged birds, sovereigns of the world and their peoples, powerful princes and judges in the land, innocent and adolescent boys and girls, elders and youths, offer up praise to the name ADONAI, for God's name alone is to be exalted, whose splendor extends over heaven and earth.

► May God raise the horn of our people in praise of the faithful, the children of Israel, beloved of the Divine. Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalms 148

הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.

הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִרוֹמָיִם.

הַלְלוּהוּ כְּלִי־מַאֲבָבוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּלִי־בָבְאִי,

הַלְלוּהוּ יְעֲמֹשׁ וְיִרְחָה, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּלִי־בֹכְבֵי אוֹר,

הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מַעַל הַשָּׁמַיִם.

יְהִלְלוּ אֶת־שְׁמֵי יְהוָה, כִּי הוּא יְהוָה וְגִבְרָהּ,

וַיַּעֲמִידֵם לְעֵד לְעוֹלָם, קִדְּמָתָן וְלֹא יַעֲבוּהוּ.

הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן הָאָרֶץ, תַּמְנוּנִים וְכָל־תְּהוֹמוֹת.

אֲשׁ וּבְכָרְד שְׁלֹג וְקִיסוּתוֹ, רוּחַ סַעֲרָה עֲשֵׂה דְבָרוֹ.

הַיְהוּדִים וְכָל־בְּבָעוֹת, עֵיץ פְּרִי וְכָל־אֲרָזִים.

הַחַיִּים וְכָל־בְּהֵמָה, רֹמֵשׁ וְאַפּוֹר בְּנֶגֶד.

מַלְכֵי אֲרָץ וְכָל־לְאֻמִּים, שָׁרִים וְכָל־שֹׁפְטֵי אֲרָץ.

בַּחוּרִים וְגַם בְּתוֹלוֹת, זְקֻנִים עִם נְעָרִים.

יְהִלְלוּ אֶת־שְׁמֵי יְהוָה, כִּי נִשְׁבַּח שְׁמוֹ לְבָדוֹ,

הוֹדוּ עַל אֲרָץ וְשָׁמַיִם.

◀ נִרְמָה קָרוֹן לְעַמּוֹ תְהִלָּה לְכָל־יְהוּדִי, לְבָבֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קְרֹבוֹ, הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.

הַדְּלִים קָמוּ

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

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

EVERGREENS אֲרָזִים. Literally "cedars," the most sturdy evergreen in the Middle East. The contrast is critical here: fruit trees are seasonal but their produce is significant, while cedars are evergreens but produce no fruit. The idea of totality is expressed through a series of **companes**: wild and domesticated animals, rulers and subjects, young and old. **BELOVED OF THE DIVINE** עַם קְרִיב וְשֹׁפְטֵי אֲרָץ. More literally, "those who are close to the Divine."

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Other Peoples

To be a holy nation meant, in the first place, to be separated from the pollution of the nations. In biblical terms this pollution consisted of idolatry and its concomitant moral corruption—the two being indissolubly bound in biblical thought. [But equally,] the kinship of all people as the descendants of one father and the creatures of one Creator impressed itself upon the Hebrew imagination. How can I ignore the rightful claim of my servant, cries Job, “Did not he who made me in the belly make him? Did not One fashion us both in the womb?” (Job 31:15). This passage so worked upon the Palestinian sage, Rabbi Yohanan, that “Whatever food he partook of he shared with his servant” (Talmud of the Land of Israel, Ketubot 5:5).

The myth of one mankind under one God in primeval times—from Adam to the

Tower-builders—pressed for a complementary vision of a reunited mankind under God at the end of time. The author of that vision was the prophet Isaiah [and that vision was taken up by the later prophets]. The promise of a glorious denouement to human history, in which Israel’s faith and steadfastness to its covenant would be vindicated and all men would join hands with it in subservience to their common Creator, were a beacon of hope in the vale of gloom and tears through which Israel walked for centuries.

—MOSHE GREENBERG

Double-Edged Sword

What is the double-edged sword the people Israel were given? This is the Torah—both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah. And what battles do they fight? These are the arguments over the meaning of Torah: how should we act? how should we exercise judgment?

—NUMBERS RABBAH

HALLELUYAH! Praise God.

Sing to ADONAI a new song, praise God amidst the congregation of the faithful. Let Israel rejoice with its maker, the children of Zion celebrate their sovereign. Let them praise God’s name in dance and sing to God with timbrel and lyre. For ADONAI loves this people, and will crown the humbled with deliverance. Honored, the faithful shall rejoice, exulting as they recline upon their couches.

With high praise of God on their lips and a double-edged sword in their hands, they shall exact retribution of the nations, chastising the peoples of the world, ▶ locking their rulers in cuffs, their princes in iron chains, to carry out the decrees of justice. Then shall all the faithful be glorified! Praise God, *halleluyah!*

Psalms 149

הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ, תְהַלְלוּ בְקוֹל תְּהִידִים.
 יִשְׂמְחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֲשִׂי, בְּגִי צִיּוֹן יִגִּילוּ בְּמִלְכָם.
 יְהַלְלוּ שְׁמוֹ בְּמַחֲוֹל בְּתוֹף וּבְנֹר זִמְרוּ לוֹ.
 בִּי רוּצָה יְהוָה בְּעַמּוֹ, יִפְאַר עַבְדֵי בִישׁוּעָה.
 יַעֲלוּ הַסִּידִים בְּכָבוֹד, יִרְנְנוּ עַל מַשְׁכְּבוֹתָם.
 רוֹמְמוֹת אֵל בְּגִרוֹנָם, וְהִרְבּוּת פִּיעִיּוֹת בְּיָדָם.
 לַעֲשׂוֹת נְקָמָה בְּנֹקְמֵי וְנִבְדִּיָּהֶם בְּכַבְלֵי בְרוֹץ.
 לַאֲסֵר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזֻקִים וְנִבְדִּיָּהֶם בְּכַבְלֵי בְרוֹץ.
 לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּהֶם מִלְשָׁפֵט פְּתוּב, הָדָר הוּא לְכַלְתֵּם סִידֵינוּ.

הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.

הדלים קמט

PSALM 149. This psalm helps build toward the exultant crescendo of the final psalm. The first half of the poem is replete with synonyms for song and rejoicing. Then the poet enunciates a vision of an endtime when justice is executed and corruption is repaid with the appropriate punishment. Israel, the symbol of the oppressed, will wage this war for justice.

IN DANCE בְּמַחֲוֹל The accompaniment of instrumental music and dance represents the height of joyful expression. Famously, King David danced—leaping and whirling—before the ark as it was brought to Jerusalem.

AS THEY RECLINE בְּנִבְדֵיהֶם Festive meals were celebrated with the participants lounging on couches.

A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD IN THEIR HANDS יְהוָה בְּיָדָם The image of vengeance invoked in this psalm might be explained by its next-to-last line, where the poet evokes the promise of justice. Oppression is a product of injustice that must be fought.

LOCKING THEIR RULERS מַלְכֵיהֶם לַאֲסֵר The midrash points out that it is the rulers of the nations who are to be punished, but not the peoples—because it is the rulers who have led these people astray (Midrash on Psalms).

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Psalms 150: An

Interpretive Translation

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

—STE MITCHELL

HALLELUYA ! Praise God.

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

Psalms 150

CONCLUSIO OF THE SELECTIO OF PSALMS

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

Some congregations continue with Nishmat, page 145.

הַלְלוּיָהּ,
הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹדְשׁוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקְיעַ עֲזוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּבִבְרוּתוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרַב גְּדֻלוֹ.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְוֵה שׁוֹפָר, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתוֹף וּמַחֹל, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִינִים וְעֻגָב.
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצִלֵי שָׁמַיִם, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצִלֵי תְרוּעָה.
כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

כל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

ההללם קד

ההללם קד

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה מְצִיּוֹן, שְׁבוֹן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, עֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבָדוּי.
וּבְרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם,
וְיִפְלְא כְבוֹדוֹ אֲתִכַּחַל הָאָרֶץ,
אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.

Some congregations continue with Nishmat, page 145.

PSALM 150. This psalm brings the Book of Psalms to an exultant close. The Book of Psalms begins with the praise of the single righteous individual. "Blessed is the one who does not walk in the way of the wicked" (Psalm 133), and concludes with every living being praising God.

BLESS ADONAI, ALWAYS בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם of Psalms is composed of five smaller "books"; each of the first four conclude with a blessing. Two of those blessings: Psalms 89:53 and 72:18–19, are quoted here, to conclude the morning recitation of the Davidic psalms. Between these two, another verse (Psalm 135:21) is added, specifying that Adonai is the God of Israel—much like a letter's address on an envelope. The selected verses all begin with the word *barukh*, "blessed." Thus, just as we began P'sukei D'zimra with a multiple repetition of "blessed" in Barukh She-amar (page 122), so too, here, we repeat that word with multiple verses. The oldest versions of P'sukei D'zimra ended here, and so the opening and closing verses of this paragraph form a conclusion by repeating the affirmative response, "Amen."

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

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From Individual to Community

Awakening to a new day, we began by reciting *moditi/modah ani*, “I thank You,” in the singular. Now, at the conclusion of P’sukei D’zimra, our collective awareness and connection to each other has been truly “awakened” and so we can say *modim anahnu l’bht*, “we thank You,” in the plural. We are thus ready for the formal call to prayer, Bar’khu (page 149), to which we respond as a community.

Changed His Name to Abraham

According to the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 91a), Abraham’s name was changed because “in the beginning he was a leader of Aram [i.e., av ram], and at the end, he was a leader of the whole world [avraham = av hamon, father of multitudes, Genesis 17:5]. The ancient rabbis taught that except when directly quoting Scripture, it is expressly forbidden to refer to Abraham by his former name.

This is the import of God’s directive to change “Abram,” which signifies leadership of the single nation of Aram, to “Abraham,” father of a multitude of nations. God was saying to Abraham, “I have raised you beyond this norm of nationalism, which is but a convention and not true justice. Your heart should not be devoted exclusively to the benefit of Aram, but rather seek the peace of all God’s creations. Seek out the well-being of all.” Thus, “one who calls Abraham, ‘Abram,’ transgresses.” By doing so, one causes Israel to regress to a state of nationalism, which is no more than a collective form of egoism, and thus a transgression.

—ABRAHAM ISAAC KOOK

It is customary to stand through the bottom of page 144.

DAVID’S FINAL PRAYER

David praised ADONAI in the presence of all the assembled, saying: From the beginning of time to the end of time, blessed are You ADONAI, God of our ancestor Israel. Yours, ADONAI, is the greatness, the strength and the glory, the triumph and the splendor—for everything in heaven and on earth is Yours. Sovereignty is Yours; You are raised up above all. Wealth and honor come from You; You rule over all. In Your hands are strength and deliverance; it is in Your power to give strength to all and to make everything flourish. Now we thank You, our God, and celebrate Your glorious name.

¹Chronicles 29:10–13

You, ADONAI alone, are the God who formed the sky, the heavens above and all their hosts, the earth and everything upon it, the seas and all within them. You grant existence to everything; even the hosts of heaven need bow to You.

You, ADONAI, are God; it was You who chose Abram, took him out of Ur of the Chaldees, changed his name to Abraham, and found him faithful.

You made a covenant with him, giving him the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to pass on to his descendants. You kept Your word, for You are righteous. You saw the suffering of our ancestors in Egypt and heard their cry at the Sea of Reeds. You confronted Pharaoh, his court, and the entire Egyptian nation with signs and wonders—for You knew how they had oppressed Your people, and in this way You are known to this day. ▶ You split the sea before our ancestors: they crossed on dry land, but their pursuers sank in the deep like stones in a raging sea.

Nehemiah 9:6–11

Your heart should not be devoted exclusively to the benefit of Aram, but rather seek the peace of all God’s creations. Seek out the well-being of all.” Thus, “one who calls Abraham, ‘Abram,’ transgresses.” By doing so, one causes Israel to regress to a state of nationalism, which is no more than a collective form of egoism, and thus a transgression.

It is customary to stand through the bottom of page 144.

ויִבְרַךְ דוֹד אֲתֵיחִידוֹה לְעֵינַי פְּלִיְהֻקְהָל וַיֹּאמֶר דּוֹד: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִינִי, מֵעוֹלָם וְעַד עוֹלָם. לֵךְ יְיָהוָה הַגְּדֵלָה וְהַגְּבֹרָה וְהַמְּפָאֶרֶת הַגְּבֹחַ וְהַהוֹד, כִּי כָל בְּשָׂמִים וּבְאָרְזִי, לֵךְ יְיָהוָה הַמְּלַכְבָּה וְהַמְּנַשֵּׂא לְכָל לְרֹאשׁ. וְהַעֲשֵׂר וְהַפְּבוֹד מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹשֶׁל בְּכָל וּבְיָדְךָ פֶּתַח וּבְיָדְךָ לַעֲדָל וּלְחֻזֵק לַכָּל. וְעַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מוֹדִים אֲנִיחוּנו לָךְ וּמַהֲלִילִים לְשֵׁם תְּפָאֲרֶיךָ.

דברי הימים א, כט: ו-יג

אַתָּה הוּא יְיָהוָה לְבַדְּךָ, אַתָּה עֲשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם, שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־צְבָאָם, הַאָרֶץ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ, הַיָּמִים וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם, וְאַתָּה מְהִיָּה אֶת־כַּלְבֵּם, וְצָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם לֵךְ מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיָּם. ▶ אַתָּה הוּא יְיָהוָה הַאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתָּ בְּאַבְרָם, וְהוֹצֵאתוּ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים, וְשָׂמְתָ שְׁמוֹ אַבְרָהָם, וּמִצֵּאתָ אֶת־לְבָבוֹ נֹאמֵן לְפָנֶיךָ.

וְכֹרֹת עִמּוֹ הַבְּרִית לְתֵת אֶת־אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי הַחֲתִי הָאֲמֹרִי הַחִיטִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי וְהַגִּירָשִׁי לְתֵת לְזָרְעוֹ, וְתַקַּם אֶת־דְּבַרְךָ כִּי צִדִּיק אַתָּה. וְתִרְאֵהוּ אֶת־עֵינֵי אַבְרָהָם, וְאַתָּה צִעַקְתָּם שְׁמַעְתָּ עַל יָם סוּף. וְתִתֵּן אוֹתוֹ, וּמְפָאִתִּים בְּפָרְעוֹ, וּבְכַלְעֵבְדֵי וּבְכַלְעֵם אֶרֶצוֹ, כִּי יִדְעֵתָ כִּי הוֹדִדוּ עֲלֵיךָ, וְתַעַשׂ לֵךְ שֵׁם פְּהַיִם הַיָּם. ▶ וְהִים בְּקַעַת לְפָנֶיךָ וַיַּעֲבְרוּ כְתוּף הַיָּם בְּיַבְשָׁה, וְאַתָּה הִפְּתִיתָם הַעֲלֵכֶם בְּמִצְוֹלֹתַי, כְּמוֹ אֲבֹן בְּמַיִם עֲזִיָּם.

דברי הימים א: כ"ט

YOU, ADONAI ALONE, are the God who formed the sky, the heavens above and all their hosts, the earth and everything upon it, the seas and all within them. You grant existence to everything; even the hosts of heaven need bow to You.

CHANGED HIS NAME TO ABRAHAM. In Genesis 17:5, Abraham’s name is changed to Abraham, meaning the “father of many nations,” as a sign of God’s promise that Sarah will bear a child, Isaac. The original name “Abram” may mean “the father (meaning Terah) is exalted.” A name change in the ancient world represented a change in status. (E. W. Speiser)
THE CANAANITES. Listed here are six of the seven biblical nations that occupied the Land of Israel before the Israelite settlement.

DAVID’S FINAL PRAYER. Originally, P’sukei D’zimra consisted only of selections from the Book of Psalms; later, a series of biblical prayers, beginning here and culminating with the Song at the Sea, was added. In these additions we re-experience our collective history: Abram’s leaving his home and setting out for an unknown destination, the exodus from Egypt, and the nation’s arrival in the promised land.

DAVID PRAISED YHWH. This passage from 1 Chronicles forms part of David’s last speech—his will and testament—as he hands his kingdom over to his son Solomon. Having just read selections from the psalms of David, we begin the closing section of P’sukei D’zimra, Verses of Song, with David’s own concluding words.

BLESSED ARE YOU ADONAI. Blessed are you, God, only two times that this phrase, which became the formula for all Jewish Brakhot, is found in the Bible. (The other is Psalm 119:12.)

WE THANK YOU ADONAI. These became the first words of the second-to-last Brakhot of the Amidah, in which we thank God for the gifts of life.

YOU, ADONAI ALONE. This prayer was recited in the Second Temple when the people, returning from exile, rededicated themselves under the guidance of Ezra and Nehemiah. With its recitation, each morning’s prayer is an act of rededication.

CHANGED HIS NAME TO ABRAHAM. In Genesis 17:5, Abraham’s name is changed to Abraham, meaning the “father of many nations,” as a sign of God’s promise that Sarah will bear a child, Isaac. The original name “Abram” may mean “the father (meaning Terah) is exalted.” A name change in the ancient world represented a change in status. (E. W. Speiser)
THE CANAANITES. Listed here are six of the seven biblical nations that occupied the Land of Israel before the Israelite settlement.

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I Will Sing

Sometimes we sing to ourselves—no one else hears the sound, yet our minds are singing. Sometimes we sing—our vocal chords voice a tune, and all can hear it and recognize it.

And sometimes we sing and every cell of our bodies contains the song. Such songs transform both the singer and the listener.

That is the way that the people Israel sang as they were saved, in crossing the Sea.

—NETIVOT SHALOM

Moses and the People Israel Sang

Tradition understood Moses and the Israelites to have sung this song as call and response (antiphonal singing)—Moses would sing, and the people would respond. In some communities to this day, the verses are sung antiphonally. Call and response demands both inward and outward participation. We first participate inwardly, listening to the leader's voice as it assents to and building then respond outwardly, on what we've heard. But even as we raise our voices in song, we continue to listen, to hear the voices around us, so that our communal response is harmonious and the sound of the song is full. We hear and are heard, careful not to overwhelm one another, ensuring that even the smallest voice is not drowned out. As the leader evokes our song, so too do each of us affirm and amplify each other's voice.

—MICHAEL BOINO

On that day ADONAI saved the people Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore of the sea. ▶ When Israel saw the mighty arm that ADONAI had wielded against the Egyptians, the people revered ADONAI and had faith in ADONAI and in Moses, God's servant.

Exodus 14:30–31

THE SONG AT THE SEA

Then Moses and the people Israel sang this song to ADONAI:

I will sing to ADONAI, who has triumphed gloriously, who cast horse and rider into the sea.

ADONAI is my strength and my might; God is my deliverance. This is my God, to whom I give glory—the God of my ancestors, whom I exalt.

ADONAI is a warrior; God's name is ADONAI.

God has cast Pharaoh's chariots and army into the sea; Pharaoh's choicest captains have drowned in the Sea of Reeds. The depths covered them; they sank in the deep like a stone.

Your right hand, ADONAI, singular in strength— Your right hand, ADONAI, shatters the enemy.

With Your majestic might You crush Your foes; You let loose Your fury, to consume them like straw.

In the rush of Your rage the waters were raised; the sea stood motionless, the great deep congealed.

The enemy said: "I will pursue, I will capture and plunder! I will devour them, I will draw my sword."

With my bare hands will I dispatch them." You loosed the wind—the sea covered them.

Like lead, they sank in the swelling waters.

Who is like You, ADONAI, among the mighty?

Who is like You, majestic in holiness,

awe-inspiring in splendor, working wonders?

You stretched out Your hand—the earth swallowed them.

In Your love You lead the people You redeemed;

with Your strength You guide them to Your holy habitation.

continued

וַיִּוָּשַׁע יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-מַצְרַיִם מֵת עַל-שַׁפְּתוֹת הַיָּם: ◀ וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-יְהוָה הַגּוֹדֵל אֶשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה לְמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת-יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ בַיהוָה גַּבְמַלְשָׁה עֲבָדָיו:

שמות יד:ל-לא

אֲזַי וַיִּשְׂרַמְּשֵׁהוּ וּבְכִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְאָמְרוּ

וַרְכִּבוֹ וְרִמָּה בַיָּם: אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי-נָאָה נָאָה סוֹס לַיְשׁוּעָה

וְיָהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְחָמָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי

שָׁמָיו: מַרְפַּבְת פְּרַעַה וְחִילָו יָרָה בַיָּם וַיִּמְבָּחֶר עַל-לִשְׁוֵי טַבְעֵנוּ בַיַּסְסוּנוֹ: תַּהֲמַת וַיִּכְסִּימוּ יָרְדוּ בַמְצוֹלֹת כְּמֹר

אֲבָן: יְמִינוֹהָ יְהוָה נֹאדָרֵי בַפֶּה וַיִּמְנוֹהָ וַיִּבְרַב נְאוֹנֶיהָ תַהֲרַס

יְהוָה תַרְעֵצוּ אוֹיְבָי: תִּשְׁלַח הַרְגָה יֶאֱכַלְמוּ פִקֹּשׁ: וַיְבַרוּחַ קַמְרֵי

אֶפְרָיִם גַּעַרְמוּ מֵיָם אֶחָדָה שָׁלַל תַּמְלָאָמוּ נְשָׁבְתָה

נְקִלְוֵי אוֹיְבֵי אֶרְדֹף אֶשְׁוֶה אֶרְיוֹק הַרְבֵּי תוֹרִישְׁמוּ יָדֵי: נִשְׁבְּתָה

כְּרוּחֶהָ פִּסְמֹי יָם מִי-בְּמַכָּה בְּאֵלֵם יְהוָה מִי

אֶדְרִינֵם: מִי-בְּמַכָּה בְּאֵלֵם יְהוָה מִי

כְּמַכָּה נֹאדָר כְּפָדָשׁ גְּלוּיָהּ יְמִינוֹהָ תַבְּלַעְמוּ אֶרְצוֹ: נְחִיתָה

כְּחֵסֵדָה עַסְוֹן וְאֵלֶיָהּ תַהֲלֹת כַּעֲוֹהָ אֶלְיָהּ

continued

ON THAT DAY ADONAI SAVED Israel. In Exodus, these verses form the introduction to the Song at the Sea and so they are quoted here.

THE SONG AT THE SEA שִׁירַת הַיָּם The recitation of the Song at the Sea is a later addition to Psukei D'zimra and is not found in 1st-millennium orders of prayer, which included only psalms. The expense of the long exile may have created the need to include this triumphant song in each morning's service. The midrash associates this song with the final redemption and interprets its first word, az ("then"), as Moses' prophetic pronouncement that it would be sung in the future—since the verb yashir, understood in rabbinic Hebrew as "sang," is actually a future tense (Mekhilta, Shirata 1).

THIS IS MY GOD מִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל Rabbinic tradition saw in the miracle of the Sea a moment of divine manifestation greater than either the exodus itself or even the revelation at Sinai. "Even a maidservant at the Sea saw God more clearly than the greatest of the prophets!" (Mekhilta, Shirata 3).

ADONAI IS A WARRIOR: GOD'S NAME IS ADONAI. The poem emphasizes God's role as warrior, triumphing over Israel's enemies. On the phrases, "God's name is Adonai," the ancient rabbis remarked that God appears in many different guises: here as a warrior, elsewhere as a sage. No matter how varied God's manifestations, "God's name is Adonai"—the one God is always the same (Mekhilta, Shirata 4). The deliverer from oppression, the warrior who fights injustice, is the God of compassion.

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Nations hear and quake;
 panic grips the dwellers of Philistia.
 Edom's chieftains are seized with terror,
 trembling grips the mighty of Moab,
 all the citizens of Canaan are dismayed,
 dread and fear descend upon them.
 Your overwhelming power makes them silent as stone,
 while Your people, ADONAI—the people
 whom You have redeemed—pass through peacefully.
 Lead them and bring them to Your lofty mountain;
 the abode You fashioned, ADONAI,
 the sanctuary Your hands established.
 ADONAI shall reign forever and ever.

Exodus 15:1–18

Dancing with Timbrels

The righteous women of that generation had faith that the blessed Holy One would perform miracles for them, so they brought timbrels with them from Egypt, to be able to sing and dance at such a moment.

—RASHI

Some congregations include this passage:

Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand and went out, followed by all the women, with timbrels and dance. And Miriam led them in response: “Sing to ADONAI who has triumphed gloriously, who cast horse and rider into the sea.”

Exodus 15:20–21

► For sovereignty belongs to ADONAI, who rules the nations. Deliverers shall rise on Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau, and dominion shall belong to ADONAI. ADONAI shall be sovereign over all the earth. On that day ADONAI shall be one, and the name of God, one.

חִיל קִדְשֶׁךָ: שְׁמַעְנוּ עַמִּים וְרַעְיוֹן
 אֶזְזוּ נְבִהֵי אֱלֹפִי
 אִיזוּ יִשְׁבֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים: אֶזְזוּ נְבִהֵי אֱלֹפִי
 אִיזוּ מוֹאֵב יִחְזָמוּ רַעַד
 כָּל יִשְׁבֵי כְנָעַן: תִּפְּל עַלֵיהֶם אִימָתָה
 וְנִפְחָד בְּגִדְל זָרוּעָה יִדְמוּ כְּאֶבֶן
 עַד-יִעֲבֹר עִבְדֶיךָ
 קִנְיֶיךָ: תְּבַאֲמוּ וְתִטְעֲמוּ בְּהַר נִחְלָתְךָ
 לְשִׁבְחֶיךָ פְעֻלֹת יְהוָה
 יְהוָה יִמְלֵךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:

שמורת טוהוב-יח

Some congregations include this passage:

וְתִקְחִי מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה אֶחָיוֹת אֶת־הַתִּבְּרִית בְּיָדָהּ
 וְהִצְאֵן כְּלֵי־נְשִׂים אַחֲרֶיהָ בְּהַתְּקָתָן: וַתַּעַן לָהֶם
 מִרְיָם שִׁיר לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאָה סוֹס וְרִכְבּוֹ רָמָה כִּי־ם:

שמורת טוהוב-יח

◀ כִּי לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה וּמַלְשׁ בְּנוֹם. וְעַל מוֹשְׁעִים בְּהַר צִיּוֹן
 לְשׁוֹפֵט אֶת־הָרֶעַר וְהִיתָה לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה.
 וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־אֲרָצוֹת.
 בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָה יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשִׁמּוֹ אֶחָד.

THEN MIRIAM THE
 PROPHET מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה
 the Torah, this passage
 immediately follows the
 Song at the Sea, empha-
 sizing that all of Israel—
 men and women—cel-
 ebrated together. That
 sense of inclusiveness is
 a fitting introduction to
 the following passage,
 Nishmat Koi Hai, “the
 breath of every living
 being,” which follows
 on the next page. Rashi
 (1040–1105, northern
 France), interpreting
 the Mekhilta (the 2nd-
 century commentary on
 Exodus), pictures Moses
 reciting the Song and
 the men repeating after
 him, and then Miriam
 reciting the Song and
 the women repeating
 after her. In comment-
 ing on Exodus 15:1, Mi-
 drash Sekhel Tov (12th
 century, Italy) imagines
 Miriam reciting the first
 half of each verse and
 the women complet-
 ing the verse. Philo (1st
 century c.e., Egypt)

comments that the
 men and women, under
 the influence of divine
 inspiration, became a chorus singing hymns of thanksgiving to God—together with Moses “the prophet” lead-
 ing the men, and Miriam “the prophet” leading the women. He may be reflecting the prayer practice of the
 Jewish community of 1st-century Egypt.

FOR SOVEREIGNTY BELONGS TO ADONAI the mountain referred to is perhaps
 Palmyra—the red rock, home of the “red” Esau (Genesis 25:25). Throughout Jewish history, oppressors were
 identified with Esau. Thus in ancient times, Rome was midrashically referred to as Esau, and in modern times
 Jews talked about their German oppressors using that name—throughout history, a safe way to reference a
 tyrannical regime. Obadiah, ignored here, predicted that though Israel and Judah were benighted in his time,
 redemption would come soon. Thus the victory described in the Song at the Sea is connected and turned into
 a vision of ever-renewed deliverance of the people Israel.

AND THEN NAME OF GOD, ONE יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשִׁמּוֹ אֶחָד. The Mount prayer also ends with this verse, represent-
 ing a wish for universal justice and peace. In that time, elgious deeds will be not only a hope and a dream but
 also an experienced reality. The exodus from Egypt and the Egyptians’ defeat foreshadows this future time.

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NISHMAT : THE SOUL OF ALL THAT LIVES

The soul of all that lives praises Your name, ADONAI our God; the spirit of all flesh exalts You, our sovereign, always. From the very beginning to the very end of time, You are God. Beside You, we have no sovereign who redeems and liberates us, rescues and saves us, shows us kindness and sustains us in every moment of anguish and distress; we have no sovereign but You:

God of all ages, God of all creatures, master of all generations, extolled in endless praise, who guides the world with love and its creatures with compassion.

ADONAI neither slumbers nor sleeps, but wakes those who sleep, rouses those who slumber, gives voice to those who cannot speak, frees those who are bound up, supports those who fall, straightens those who are bent over. It is You alone whom we thank.

Were our mouths filled with song as the sea, our tongues to sing endlessly like countless waves, our lips to offer limitless praise like the sky, our eyes to shine like the sun and the moon, our arms to spread heavenward like eagles' wings, and our feet swift as deer,

we would still be unable to fully express our gratitude to You, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, or to praise Your name for even one of the myriad moments of kindness with which You have blessed our ancestors and us.

continued

נִשְׁמַת כָּל־חַי תִּבְרַךְ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

רוּחַ כָּל־בָּשָׂר תִּפְאֵר וּתְרַמֵּם זְכָרְךָ מְלִכְנוּ, תָּמִיד. מִן הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל, וּמִבְרַחְדֵיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ, פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל, וּמַפְרִיט וּמְרַחֵם בְּכֻלְיֵית צָרָה וְצוּקָה. אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֵלָּא אַתָּה. אֱלֹהֵי הָרְאשׁוֹנוֹת וְהָאַחֲרוֹנוֹת, אֱלֹהֵי כָל־דְּבוּרוֹת, אֲדוֹן כָּל־תְּהִלָּדוֹת, הַמְהַלֵּל בְּרַב הַתְּשׁוּבָהוֹת, הַמְבַהֵג עוֹלָמוֹ בְּחַסֵּד, וּבְרִיּוֹתָיו בְּרַחֲמִים. יְהוָה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן, הַמְעוֹרֵר יְשׁוּנוֹת, הַמְפַקֵּן יַיִן נְרִדְמִים, הַמְשִׁיעַ אֲלָמִים, הַמְמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים, הַמְסוּמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, הַהוֹדֵק בְּפוֹפִים. לֵךְ לְבָרֵךְ אֲנָחְנוּ מִדָּוִים.

Following on the heels of the recitation of the Song at the Sea, Nishmat speaks of God's rescue of the people Israel from slavery in Egypt. Equally, Nishmat looks forward to the prayers that we are about to recite: in speaking of worshipping God with all of one's body and all of one's soul, it anticipates the Shi'ma, which talks of worshipping God with one's total being, and in its conclusion Nishmat includes language found in the first blessing of the Amidah.

Nishmat repeatedly moves from prose statements to rhythmic poetic lines, as if each moment of prayer becomes an occasion for song. Though the poem emphasizes the limitation of words in describing or praising God, the poet suggests that the actions of our bodies, especially our breathing, can constitute a praise of God. Indeed, in this prayer our entire body is said to praise God. Some recite as an introduction to Nishmat the poem by Solomon ibn Gabirol on page 101.

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From Egypt You redeemed us, ADONAI our God,
and from the house of bondage You liberated us.
In famine, You nourished us;
in prosperity, You sustained us;
from the sword, You saved us;
from pestilence, You spared us;
and from illness, bitter and long, You raised us up.
Your compassion has maintained us to this day,
Your love has not left us;
do not abandon us, ADONAI our God, ever.

And so the organs You formed within us,
the spirit and soul You breathed into our nostrils,
the tongue You placed in our mouths—
they will all thank and bless,
praise and acclaim,
exalt and honor,
sanctify and crown Your name, our sovereign.
Let every mouth thank You,
every tongue pledge loyalty,
every knee bend to You,
every body bow before You,
every heart be loyal to You,
and every fiber of our being chant Your name,
fulfilling the song of the psalmist:
“Every bone in my body cries out,
ADONAI, who is like You:
saving the poor from the powerful,
the afflicted and impoverished from those who prey on them?”

Who resembles You?

Who is equal to You?

Who compares to You?—

great, mighty, awe-inspiring, transcendent God,
to whom heaven and earth belong.

We will praise, acclaim, and honor You,

and bless Your sacred name, fulfilling David's words:

“Let my soul bless ADONAI,

and every fiber of my being praise God's sacred name.”

Bar'khi nafshi et Adonai, v'khol k'ravai et shem kodsho.

ממצרים גאלתֵנו, יהוה אֱלֹהֵינו,
וּמִבַּיִת עֲבָדִים פָּדִיתֵנוּ.

בְּרָעָב זָתַנְנוּ,

וּבִשְׂבַע פִּלְקֵתֵנוּ,

מִחֶרֶב הִצַּלְתֵנוּ,

וּמִדָּבָר מִלְטָתֵנוּ,

וּמִחֲלָים רַעִים וְנֹאמְנִים דִּילֵתֵנוּ.

עַד הַיּוֹם עֲזָרוּנוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ,

וְלֹא עֲזָבוּנוּ חֲסְדֶיךָ,

וְאֵל תִּפְלְעֵנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לִנְצַח.

עַל פִּי אֲבָרִים שׁוֹפְלוֹת בְּנוּ,

וְרוּחַ וְנִשְׁמָה שׁוֹנְפוֹת פְּאֵפֵינוּ,

וְלִשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַת בְּפִינוּ,

הֵן הֵם יוֹדוּ וְיִבְרְכוּ וְיִשְׁבְּחוּ וְיִפְאֲרוּ וְיִרְוֹמּוּ

וְיִשְׂרִיצוּ וְיִקְדוּ יֵשׁוּ וְיִמְלִיכוּ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ מִלְכּוּ:

כִּי כָל־פֶּה לֵךְ יוֹדֶה,

וְכָל־לִשׁוֹן לֵךְ תִּשְׁבַּע,

וְכָל־בָּרָךְ לֵךְ תִּכְרַע,

וְכָל־קוֹמָה לְפָנֶיךָ תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה,

וְכָל־לְבָבוֹת יִירְאוּךָ,

וְכָל־קָרֹב וּפְלִיאוֹת יִזְמְרוּ לְשִׁמְךָ,

כִּדְבַר שְׁפֹתֶיךָ:

כָּל־עֲצֻמוֹתַי תִּאמְרָנָה, יְהוָה מִי כָמוֹךָ,

מֵאֵיל עֲבִי מִחֹזֶק מַצְּנוֹ, וְעַבִּי וְאֲבִיו מֵזוּלִי.

מִי יִדְמֶה לָּךְ,

וּמִי יִשׁוּה לָּךְ,

וּמִי יַעֲרֶךְ לָּךְ.

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיוֹ, קִנְה שְׁמִים וְאֲרִיזֵן.

נְהַלְקֶךָ וְנִשְׁבַּחֶךָ, וְנִפְאֶרֶךָ וְנִבְרַךְ אֶת־שֵׁם קְדוֹשְׁךָ בְּאִמְרוֹ:

לְיוֹה, בְּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה

וְכָל־קוֹדְבֵי אֶת־יִשְׁם קְדוֹשְׁךָ.

EVERY TONGUE . . . EVERY
KNEE . . . EVERY
Based on Isaiah 45:23.

EVERY BONE IN MY BODY
CRIES OUT.
תאמרה, Psalm 35:10. This
verse has been cited as the
basis in Jewish tradition for
bodily movement during
prayer. This is the seventh
occurrence in this passage
of the word *kol* (meaning
“all” or “every”).

GREAT, MIGHTY . . . GOD
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר
phrase anticipates the first
blessing of the Amidah.

LET MY SOUL BLESS
נַפְשִׁי
Psalm 103:1.

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Faith in God

This faith in oneself is not merely faith in one's ability to do things. The latter is necessary as a part of mental health, and is as important as bodily health. The faith in oneself which is not only a prerequisite of faith in God, but is in a sense faith in God, implies being able to identify in oneself a principle of life which is not a derivative from one's natural capacities, but which belongs to a different order of existence. In the yearning for salvation, for life's worthwholeness, for truth, goodness, and beauty for their own sake, for freedom, justice and peace in society, a human being experiences something supra-human or supra-natural. One who experiences that yearning in one's self cannot be so vain or unreasonable as to believe that he or she is alone in the possession of such yearning. The most difficult step in achieving faith in God is thus the first one of achieving faith in oneself.

— MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

Prayer

What begins with a person's request ends with God's presence; what starts in the narrowness of the ego, emerges into the wide expanse of humanity; what originates in concern for the self becomes a concern for others and concern for God's concern; what commences in petition concludes as prayer.

—SAMUEL DRESN

The Presence of God

The prayers that you pray are the very presence of God.
— PINHAS OF KORET

On Festivals, the leader begins here:

GOD, in the fullness of Your power,
Great, in accord with your glorious name,
Mighty, in all of time,
Awesome, in your awe-inspiring deeds,
Sovereign, enthroned on high,

On Shabbat, the leader begins here:

▶ dwelling forever, exalted and holy is Your name—
as the psalmist has written:
“Sing, O you righteous, to ADONAI;
praise offered by the upright is lovely.”

You are exalted in the speech of the upright;
You are blessed in the words of the righteous;
You are glorified in the language of the devoted;
You are sanctified in the midst of the holy congregation.
So the choruses of the thousands of Your people, the house of Israel, joyously glorify Your name in every generation.
▶ For it is the duty of all creation, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, to acknowledge and acclaim You, to bless and honor You, to exalt and glorify You, to praise, laud, and exalt You, adding our own tribute and songs to those of David, Jesse's son, Your anointed servant.

On Festivals, the leader begins here:

הָאֵל בְּתַעֲצֻמוֹת עֲוֹהַּ
הַגְּדוֹל בְּכְבוֹד שְׁמֹהוּ,
הַגָּבוֹר לְנֶצַח,
הַנּוֹרָא בְּנוֹרְאוֹתָיו,
הַמְּלֶכֶה הַיּוֹשֵׁב עַל פְּסַא רָם וְנִשְׂאָא.

On Shabbat, the leader begins here:

שׁוֹכֵן עַד, מְרוֹם וְקַדוֹשׁ יְשׁוּמוּ.
וְכַתוּב, רַגְנוּ צְדִיקִים בַּיהוָה, לַיְשָׁרִים נְאוֹה תְהִלָּה.

בְּפִי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלֵּל,
וּבְדַבְרֵי צְדִיקִים תִּתְפָּרֵךְ,
וּבְלִשׁוֹן חֲסִידִים תִּתְרוֹמֵם,
וּבְקֶרֶב קְדוֹשִׁים תִּתְקַדֵּשׁ.

וּבְמִקְוֵהוֹלוֹת רַבּוֹת עֲמָךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

בְּרַחֵם יִתְפָּאֵר שְׁמֶךְ מַלְכֵנוּ בְּכַל־דּוֹר וְדוֹר.
שֶׁפֶן חוֹבֵת פְּלִיגְרוֹרִים לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלֵּהֵינוּ
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [נְאֻמוֹתֵינוּ], לְהוֹדוֹת, לְהַלֵּל לְשִׁבְחָת, לְפָאֵר,
לְרוֹמֵם, לְהַדִּיר, לְקַבֵּל, לְעֵלֶה וּלְקַלֵּס, עַל כָּל־דְּבָרֵי
שִׁירוֹת וְתַשְׁבּוּחוֹת דָּוִד בְּרִישֵׁי עֲבָדֶיךָ מְשִׁיבֵי.

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

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

SING זַמְּנוּ. Psalm 33:1. YOU ARE EXALTED IN THE SPEECH OF THE UPRIGHT בְּפִי יִשְׂרָאֵל. The vision of God seated in heaven pans out to the chorus of the faithful singing on earth. Note that the second word of each line is an acrostic spelling out the name "Isaac" (*yitzhak*).

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Chorus of Song

The Hasidic master Simhah Bunam once offered a play on the phrase *shirai zimrah*, “chorus of song.” He vocalized the letters differently—Hebrew written without vowels readily allows for this—and read it as *shiyarei zimrah*, “that which is left over after the singing,” and suggested that God most delights in the inexpressible feelings that remain in the heart after the singing has ended.

The Duty to Praise

Maimonides, the great medieval Jewish philosopher and codifier, asserts that there is an obligation to pray. He enumerates this obligation in his list of 613 mitzvot. Other medieval authorities disagree and find no warrant for the obligation in the Torah. So why does Maimonides turn prayer into an obligation, when our common-sense view is that prayer is an offering of the heart which we choose to give?

Maimonides understands the entire system of mitzvot as fashioning human beings who are moral and who come to know God in deeper ways. Prayer inculcates a sense of appreciation and humility before the wonders of life—essential aspects of a religious path. Thus he sees prayer as an essential part of the process of religious formation.

Concluding B'rakhah

May Your name be praised, always and everywhere, our sovereign, God, great and holy.

For it is fitting, ADONAI our God and God of our ancestors, to sing songs of praise to You, to ascribe strength and sovereignty, holiness and eternity to You, to praise and exalt You, to thank and bless You, now and forever.

Barukh atah ADONAI, Sovereign God, to whom we offer thanks and ascribe wonders, who delights in the chorus of song—the sovereign God, giving life to all worlds.

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'mei raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei 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 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*.

ישתבח שמו לעד מלפניו, האל המלך הגדול והקדוש

בשמים ובארץ. כי לך נאה, יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו],

שיר ושבחה, הלל ומרה, עז וממשלה, נצח, גדלה וגבורה, תהלה ותפארת, קדשה ומלכות.

ברכות והודאות מעמה ועד עולם. ברוך אתה יהוה, אל מלך גדול בתשפוחות, אל ההודאות, אדון הנפלאות, הבורח בשירי זמרה, מלך, אל, הי העולמים.

הצי קדיש

Leader:

תגדל ותקדש שמה רבא, בעלמא די ברא, ברעיותה, ומלך מלכותה בחייכון וביומייכון ובחיי דכל בית ישראל, בעלמא ובזמן קריב, ואמרו אמן.

Congregation and Leader:

יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם ולעלמי עלמיא.

Leader:

תברך וישתבח ויתפאר ויתרומם ויתנשא ויתהדר ויתעלה ויתהלל שמה דקדשא, ברך הוא לעלא מן כל [לעלא לעלא מפל: *On Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:* ברכתא ושירתא השפוחתא ונתמתא דאמירו בעלמא, ואמרו אמן.

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

HATZI KADDISH. In Jewish liturgical usage, the Hatzi (or “partial”) Kaddish, calling us to praise the name of God, marks the end of a section of the service.

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