

Amidah Brachot 1 & 2
G-d in History and Nature

THE AMIDAH

- Together with the Shema and its accompanying blessings, the Amidah makes up the core of every morning and evening service. It also constitutes the basis for the afternoon service.

Three Paces

- When saying “Tehillot L’Eil Elyon,” before the Amidah, we walk three paces backward and recite the opening line.
- Then we walk three paces forward.
 - This reflects the normal etiquette of one appearing before a king.

Feet Together

- One should place one’s feet together as if they were but one.
 - This is done to indicate that we have no desire to “lift our feet” to run elsewhere.
- One should lower one’s head slightly, closing the eyes so as not to look at anything; and if one reads from the siddur, one should not take the eyes off the book.

Facing Jerusalem

- The Amidah is said while facing in the direction of the land of Israel.
- Worshippers in Israel face towards Jerusalem.
- Worshippers in Jerusalem face towards the Temple mount.
- The Aron Kodesh is generally located so that when one faces the Ark, one is also standing in the proper direction, vis-à-vis Israel. This is minhag, not halacha.
- There is an alternate Talmudic opinion that, instead of facing east, one must face southeast because by facing due east it might appear as if we were worshipping the rising sun.

Saying the Words

- The Amidah should be said quietly to oneself, based on the example set by Hannah, whose praying is described in these words:
 - *“Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard.”* (Samuel I 1:13)
- One must not permit oneself to be interrupted at any time during the recitation of the Amidah.
- Should an important person pass by and greet you while you are saying the Amidah, you must not interrupt the prayer to return his/her greeting or even to acknowledge the greeting with a nod.
- Only the gravest emergency justifies the interruption of one’s conversation with God. (Berachot 5:1)

Avot – Blessing #1

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה הִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה,
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָה, אֵל עֲלִיוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֵה
הַכֹּל, וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ
בְּאַהֲבָה. מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּפּוֹקֵד וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה הִי מֶגֶן אַבְרָהָם
וּפּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה.

Praised are You, Adonai, our God and God of our ancestors, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, **Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah**, great, mighty, awesome, exalted God who bestows lovingkindness, Creator of all. You remember the pious deeds of our ancestors and will send a redeemer to their children’s children because of Your loving nature. You are the Sovereign who helps **and guards**, saves and shields, Praised are You, Adonai, Shield of Abraham **and Guardian of Sarah.**

Reading #1

“If you destroy Your people, what will the Egyptians and the other nations of the world say? They will say that You were strong enough to conquer the powers of Egyptian exile but You were not strong enough to conquer the future kinds of the land of Israel. That is why You destroyed Your people in the desert.”

Gevurot – Amidah Blessing #2

אַתָּה גְבוּר לְעוֹלָם הִי, מְחִיָּה מֵתִים אַתָּה, רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ.

מְשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם

מְכַלְכֵּל הַיָּיִם בְּחֶסֶד. מְחִיָּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמֵים רַבִּים, סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים
וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים וּמְתִיר אֲסוּרִים, וּמְקַיֵּם אֲמוּנָתוֹ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַד עַד. מִי
כְמוֹךָ בְּעַל גְבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמָה לָךְ, מְלֶכֶךְ מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמֵּחַ
וְשׁוֹעֵה. וְנֶאֱמַן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה הִי מְחִיָּה הַמֵּתִים.

Your might, Adonai, is boundless. You give life to the dead; great is Your saving power.

You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.

Your love sustains the living, Your great mercies give life to the dead. You support the falling, heal the ailing, free the fettered. You keep Your faith with those who sleep in the dust. Whose power can compare with Yours? You are Master of life and death and deliverance. Faithful are You in giving life to the dead. Praised are You, Hashem, Master of life and death.

Reading #2

“...O mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone, we are doomed.’ Prophesy therefore and say to them: Thus, says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and life you out of the graves, O my people, and bring you to the land of Israel.” (Ezekial 37:11-12)