



The
BEST
We
CAN DO

*Celebrating Jewish Life
during the
COVID-19 Pandemic*

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Iyyar 5781

Dear Friends;

Who would have imagined a year ago that this year erev Shavuot would find us still under a stay-at-home order, with our beloved shul shuttered; still riding out the Covid-19 wave. Well here we are, tired, impatient; and still trying to do the Best we CAN DO. This pamphlet is intended to support all of us as we plan yet again to greet the holiday of Shavuot at home. Shavuot is the day when the entire Jewish people stood together at Mt Sinai to receive the Torah; in the eternal words of Rashi, “Like one person with one heart.” (commentary to Ex. 19:2) That’s what we’ll do again this year: we’ll stand together like one unified being with one heart; although we’ll do it from our homes.

This pamphlet is a new edition from last year’s version and has two purposes: *Part I* is to share some thoughts of hope as we continue to persevere through the Covid era and still find ourselves sheltering-at-home. *Part II* is a step-by-step guide to the siddur for those who are asking for the precise order of prayers for weekdays, Shabbat, and the holiday of Shavuot, May 16-18.

The era of Covid has changed the way we live our Jewish lives: the joy of yiddishkeit which is usually shared with friends and the community has become a very private thing, practiced only at home. Two years ago at Shavuot we davened in shul that we should soon be able to return to the Bais Hamikdash in Jerusalem; now again we daven at home that we should soon be able to return to shul!

In the meantime, we do what Jews have always done: we do the best we can. Part I is a few thoughts on how we do that; Part II is some very concrete direction. This is for you to consult or disregard as you see fit; and it's also part of a conversation. I welcome your thoughts and insights; what else is on your mind? Keep in touch and let me know.

Chag Sameach
Rabbi Joe Kanofsky

Part I: The Best We Can Do

As of this writing, we have now been in and out of quarantine, lockdown, stay-at-home, or some other form of disruption for going on fifteen months. We've seen each other if at all then maybe once or twice in that time, maybe for Kol Nidrei, maybe for one of the rare Shabbos mornings we were able to gather for a minyan; at least we have zoom!

Again this year words of the haggadah which we said at the beginning: "all those who are hungry, come and eat; all those who need, come and share the Passover with us" felt a little hollow, as we thought of the people we would have liked to invite to our seder table, and knowing that no one could really take us up on it. Now we're coming up to Shavuot, thinking of standing together at Sinai, and we're not together.

With few exceptions, notably Tisha B'Av; Jewish life is not about being sad over what we don't have and what we've lost. It's about hope, and being thankful, and gratitude for what we have. It's about making the best out of what we have. That's what this pamphlet is about.

Lord Jonathan Sacks writes in the last chapter of *Future Tense: Jews, Judaism and Israel the 21st century* that Judaism brought the gift of hope to the world. Hope is the opposite of fate; meaning that the future is by no means determined. We can hope for something better; and in the Jewish context specifically, things getting better depends on our positive actions right now.

So Judaism in the past 2000 years of exile has been an ongoing project of making the best out of less-than-optimal circumstances.

The Torah tells us that we should have a *mishkan*, later a Temple; a place where our priests offer sacrifices on behalf of our people to bring about a closeness between the Jews and G-d. In the absence of any such Temple over the past nineteen and a half centuries; we've been trying to do our best. We recall the service. We study its laws. We pray for its restoration. We hum tunes that were sung in its presence. We recall the story of how we got there. We remember the corruption and disintegration of Jewish society that preceded our diaspora. In foreign lands, we sing about the impossibility of singing our songs in foreign lands. And in the process we have built up a culture that thrives in the space between memory and hope. And in recent decades, we've even seen Jewish sovereignty restored to our ancestral homeland; although at no small cost.

Being part of that culture of remembrance and hope is complex. It's not for everyone—many Jews have decided to make it a very small part of their lives, if at all. Yet for those of us committed to the project, it gives us back much more than we contribute.

Is it demanding? Of course. Anything worthwhile takes effort, which is always worthwhile if we believe in the cause. Is it challenging? Yes, because it asks us to search within ourselves for commitment and dedication. There's nothing that we can't do; in fact, it's surprisingly quite accessible to us. Oftentimes the only thing standing in our way is ourselves. That's why the Torah promises, at the end of Devarim/Deuteronomy: "For that which I command you this day is not difficult for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you need to say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us, and bring it and teach us to do it?' Nor is it overseas, that you would say, 'who will travel overseas and bring it and teach us to do

it?’ Rather, it’s very close to you, in your heart and your mouth, to do it.” (30:11-14).

Jews live in many styles and fashions around the world and throughout history. We’re of course looking for a way life that brings fulfillment and meaning and satisfaction; one that connects us to what we are in our souls, and what we have been at our best as a people—and can be as a nation. We’re looking to be part of something larger than just ourselves. A large part of that is to educate and habituate ourselves to the rhythms of Jewish time; and to make those rhythms the same as the rhythms of our hearts and lips, as the verse above mentions. And to use our days and years for goodness and G-dliness; which sometimes meaning managing the tension between what G-d asks us and what we would rather be doing. Once we overcome the hurdles that every person encounters, we’ll find that although it may have seemed challenging at first, it was something that deep down we know we *can do* all along.

Just when we get things the way we’d like to have them, another challenge comes along. This year of quarantine and fear and anxiety while Covid-19 has claimed millions of lives around the world has shuttered our synagogues and closed our yeshiva doors. It has halted our minyanim in their tracks and grounded our traveling scholars-in-residence. It has stopped us from gathering as a community to celebrate live events, remember yortzeits, console the grief-stricken among us, and hear the Torah read and say L’chaim together on Shabbos.

To be sure, no one on earth has outlawed Torah study and mitzvah practice in private. To be sure, we have done the best we could to stay in touch by phone, email, Zoom; and said L’chaim together. To be sure, we have invented, discovered, committed to untold hours of

Torah study via the internet, which has proven a very rich resource to say the least. Yet many of us are still alone.

In the following pages, we hope to give some added contour and depth to Jewish life during whatever remains of the pandemic era of isolation and sheltering-in-place. We'll look at things on the scale of days, and weeks, and the festivals. The day will come when we're able to gather in shul again together to sing and smile and laugh and pray; but until we get there, we'll have to manage with a less than ideal world. We say we're giving it our best effort, that we're doing the *best we can do*. Keeping Shabbat and holidays, stretching our minds and imaginations with the infinity of Torah is really the way for a Jew to seek a life of fulfillment and meaning and purpose, even in the relative isolation that we have now. And that very same Torah promises us that the challenge will really ultimately show is that it's something that we *can do*, and will be the better for it.

One Day at a Time: Daily Prayer

It's said that life is not made of years; rather it's made of days or even moments. No doubt about it, sometimes the years can go by very speedily; but the days seem to drag on forever. The key in Jewish life is to make the most of each day. If there's nothing new on any day; then the days meld into one another and it becomes confusing and disorienting. If each day is full of possibility for learning and growing, then we learn to treasure each one.

Daily prayer is a habit to be cultivated--it doesn't come naturally to anyone. Some of us have been davening every morning for decades, some of us with less regularity. This isolation time, where we rarely have to "be anywhere" other than home with ourselves at any given time, presents the opportunity to look at the siddur thoughtfully and in-depth. Those prayers which are less familiar, we can now spend

a few moments going over them to understand them better and to practice them so they're more fluent on our lips. Those which are already familiar, we can slow down and discover new resonances in them for our lives today.

Maariv, the evening service, is mainly the Shema and its blessings, the Amidah, and Aleinu.

Shacharit, the morning service, is the longest of the weekday prayers; it includes verses of praise and request, of thanksgiving and penitence. Although we read the Binding of Isaac (Genesis 22) as our Torah reading on the second day of Rosh Hashana; it's in our morning prayers to contemplate daily. Although we read the story of and the Song at the Splitting of the Sea (Exodus 15) on the seventh day of Pesach, when it historically took place; it's in our morning prayers to contemplate daily. Although the final words of King David's Psalms are embroidered on our beautiful parochet, the curtain in front of our holy ark in our shul "Every living thing shall praise G-d, Hallelujah!" (Ps. 150:6); that verse is in our morning prayers to contemplate daily. If we go through it, or even through a portion of it daily with care and attention, more and more will look and become familiar.

Mincha is the shortest of the three daily prayers; with Ashrei (Psalm 145) the Amidah, and Aleinu, usually with tachanun, short penitential prayers right after Amidah.

Amidah is the central prayer of each service and the essence of all prayer. *Amidah* literally means "the standing" and is always recited standing, except by those who cannot stand. It's also referred to as "Shmoneh Esreh," or "the Eighteen-fold prayer," although it never has 18 blessings. It did once upon a time, until one more was added; it's been nineteen for about the past 1900 years or so. On Shabbat

and yom tov we omit the middle 13 prayers asking for specific requests, and replace them with just one longer bracha that mentions Shabbos or Yom tov itself. The only exception is the Musaf of Rosh Hashana, which has three separate brochos in the middle section.

As the Amidah is the basic building block of prayer, it's worthwhile to practice and understand and be comfortable with it. The first three and last three paragraphs are consistent every day of the year, it's only the middle section that changes between weekdays and Shabbat or holidays.

When praying without a minyan, as the current situation forces us to do, we must omit certain passages that are said only with a kehillah, in communal prayer. For the most part, these include kaddish, barchu, Torah reading, and repetition of the Amidah with kedushah. Kaddish is specifically the idea of sanctifying G-d's name in public; so because a minyan is what constitutes public worship, we omit kaddish in the absence of a minyan. We do have on our website a prayer (it's also in the Artscroll siddur, the first paragraph on page 436/437), that appears in Saadia Gaon's prayerbook as "the individual kaddish" which may be said even without a minyan. Barchu is the call to prayer, and even though we must ideally summon our full selves to prayer, we omit this formal call when we do not have a community gathered for davening. Public Torah reading usually takes place on Shabbat morning and afternoons, Monday mornings, Thursday mornings, Fast days, and holidays. You'll note that the Jewish people never go three days without hearing the Torah read publicly. Circumstances at the moment have compelled us to forego that public reading; but we can study and review daily with no hesitation.

The chazzan usually repeats the Amidah after the kehillah has recited that prayer standing silently, each of us speaking directly to the Master of the Universe. Once upon a time, many people did not know the prayers by heart, and in the times before printing when manuscripts were too expensive for most people to own, we came up with the notion of a chazzan or prayer leader who knew the prayers by heart and could recite them out loud. The rest of us could listen intently and answer “amen” at the end of each bracha, and fulfill our obligation to pray in that way. Thankfully in our times, we are able to use a printed siddur with translation into any language we could want; so really there is no “need” as such for the chazzan to say the prayers out loud for those who can’t pray individually. Just about everyone can pray individually. Nevertheless, we have retained the custom of the chazzan’s repetition, when we can pray with a minyan. The repetition also gives us the chance to answer responsively to the lines of Kedushah: “Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh,” using the words of Isaiah. Also some beautiful and stirring poems are inserted into the chazzan’s repetition on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and in some congregations on other special days of the year. These add length to the service, but beauty and emotion too. One of the advantages of davening alone is that the service goes more quickly without a repetition; one of the disadvantages of davening alone is that we miss the emotion and engagement that the chazzan brings; and the chance to reflect on the words of the Amidah when the chazzan is repeating them.

Daily goals are important, whether we’re talking about exercise, diet, work, or anything else that we’re trying to accomplish. Torah study is no different. Having a daily goal that we stick to even if we have to miss something less important that seems more fun is ultimately rewarding and fulfilling. Do you have a daily request that you ask of yourself every day without fail? If so, strengthen it. If

not, start. Maybe one chapter of Psalms. Maybe one chapter of Tanach, or one aliyah of the week's reading. Maybe one page or one paragraph of a Jewish thinker that you have wondered about but not studied their works. Maybe one 20-minute Torah talk on one of the many worthwhile websites. Maybe making and following a list of topics that you've heard about and always meant to google and learn more in depth to understand Jewish life more fully. Whatever it is, it's worthwhile and fulfilling to have a daily promise to yourself to study, and to dedicate some time each day to that goal. No one ever became a great scholar or even a dedicated Jew with one day of study, or even one month. It takes commitment over time, learning and growing a bit every day.

One Week at a Time: Shabbat

Kabbalat Shabbat, welcoming the Shabbos, is among our newest prayers; it's only been around since the 1500's. It consists of six psalms, representing the workweek that's now closing; and the beautiful and stirring poem "Lecha Dodi," "come my beloved" that invites Shabbat into our homes and lives with very emotional language. You can find a number of tunes for this poem on YouTube, and learn to sing it yourself. Lecha Dodi is a composition of R' Shlomo Alkabetz, who was born in Salonika and made aliyah to Tzfat in Israel as a young man, attracted by the circle of mystical seekers who gathered there.

The Friday night prayers are when we first substitute the Shabbat version of the Amidah for the weekday one. While many Jews make Friday night prayer an integral part of their lives; many do not; in any case, the main celebration and observance of Shabbat is in the home. Singing "Shalom Aleichem" and "Eishes Chayil" at the Shabbat table, making Kiddush, eating a meal that is a bit more formal and celebratory than a regular weekday meal; has always

been the hallmark of Jewish life. The poorest of Jews found the wherewithal to make Friday night dinner special with at least challah if not wine for Kiddush--old siddurim can still be found that still have the option to make Kiddush over challah, because sometimes Jews could not afford wine for the meal. In the worst of times, in the concentration camps, Jews who could only dream of challah and wine would still gather and sing the *zemirot*, the special songs for the Shabbat table. When we sit at our Friday night table and bask in the glow of the spiritual light of Shabbos, we join our lives to the lives of all those in the past, around the world today, and those to come in the future who will keep the flame of Judaism burning brightly even in darkest times.

Shabbat day is long in the summer, and ends in Toronto only around 10pm in June. If you are an early riser, that makes for quite a long Shabbos day, even with a nice nap in the middle. Shabbos is a day of rest; and that is a very difficult and elusive commodity in our world. Most of the time, we're rushing off to somewhere, to do something, to be somewhere, get something, do something. Even in the Covid19 era, many of us have a series of zoom appointments throughout the day which drain us of energy even though we're sitting on one place. Shabbos is a priceless gift of cultivating the ability to rest, which is a positive mitzvah in the Torah. To simply be, without going anywhere, buying anything, writing anything, or responding to anything other than G-d's call to be content with what we have and what we are, is a skill to be cultivated and practiced and developed.

In our days when we routinely talk with people around the globe, it's sometimes challenging to have a meaningful conversation and be fully present with the people sitting next to us. When we often have to be several places at once or in quick succession one after the

other, it's a rare talent to be happy and content being in one place all day. We take walks to stretch our legs, when we're able to go back to shul we'll enjoy communal prayer and learning; yet the main focus of Shabbos has been and will be slowing down the pace of our lives for one day a week and practicing contentment.

THE HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS

When shul resumes, we'll have that happy chance to gather for prayer, singing, and learning. Shul itself is an act of imagination; in one sense, we are imaging ourselves in the Temple in Jerusalem seeing the Levi'im sing and play instruments there while the Kohanim performed the complex and colourful service. It's been 1,950 years since any of us have seen the temple—the Romans destroyed it in the year 70 and our people has been in a long exile ever since. But all that time, we have not stopped praying for and hoping for a return to Zion—to Israel, to Jerusalem, and to the Temple service.

Over those years, we've developed a sort of culture of remembrance. In every one of our prayers, every day, one of the things we pray for is that G-d “restore the service of the Holy of Holies of Your Temple.” (Artscroll siddur, p. 111). We do so many things that keep the memory fresh and immediate in our minds: we give the Kohen honours like a first aliyah. We build a shul with the bimah in the middle to remind us of the altar that was in the middle of the Temple courtyard. We build a platform in the front of the shul called a “duchan” to remember the place where the kohanim stood to bless the people, and in our times on Yom Tov we have the kohanim stand on that platform for “duchening;” blessing the people just as their forefathers did in the Temple. (In Israel duchenning is done every day). When we study Talmud, we enter into the time and world of sages who still remembered stories of what happened in the times of

the Temple, how it looked, how people behaved; and we make their memory part of ours. So shul itself is a part of our national memory, and for these past months when we've been away from shul, hopefully the memory of that has given us something to look forward to in the future.

Whenever you want to connect yourself to Jewish life in the way of prayer, the siddur is the way to do it. We can always add our own prayers to the words in the siddur; we always say that your words from the heart asking G-d for whatever is lacking from your world are valuable and important. We don't want to forget anything though; and we also like to be "on the same page" with the rest of the Jewish world. It's a comfort to know that when we are davening musaf for Rosh Chodesh, Jews in Vancouver and Caracas and Miami and Cape Town and Tel Aviv and Paris and Dnieperopetrovsk and Casablanca and Edinburgh are davening the very same musaf for Rosh Chodesh. And wherever we are on the planet, we are turned towards Jerusalem, the eternal and undivided capital of Israel.

Of course, daily prayer and Torah learning take up only part of our day; even on Shabbat and holidays. What to do with the rest of the day? Shabbat and yom tov are meant to be enjoyable, relaxing delights. Usually, it's a marked contrast from our very busy week. But since for the past 8 weeks or so we've been isolating at home, how is this day different than all other days?

That's up to us. What we study, what we think, how we talk, how we play, how we rest, how we view the world should be different on this day—we want to summon up in ourselves the tranquility of Shabbat that's not just the absence of the internet; but real tranquility in our souls. Read, study, discuss things that you don't have time or

frame of mind to talk about during the week: what it all means to you, how you are enduring these challenging times; what you anticipate will be different, what poems or songs you remember by heart or would like to look up and read or sing out loud, what questions have always puzzled you. If you are by yourself, with one other person, or with several people in your “bubble,” this is prime time for sharing of ourselves and delighting in the special peace of Shabbat. And there’s always a nap and a walk!

Hopefully you will find some interesting and useful material in these pages. My hope was to answer some of the questions that people have been asking while we’ve been on quarantine, and also to give a little bit of insight into how to do things and why we do them, especially under our extraordinary conditions.

Please let me know what was helpful, and what you would like to hear more about, and what oversights I may have made in leaving things out or not explaining properly. I’m always eager to hear your feedback.

Mainly, I’m praying for everyone’s good health, and looking forward to a time when we can daven, sing, and learn together as we like to, live and in person! Until then, guard your health carefully, and your mental and spiritual health just as carefully!

Part II: Practical Guide to the Siddur, for Daily, Shabbat, and Shavuot prayers.

Here is a guide to daily, Shabbat, and yom tov prayers that are said in shul, with notes of how they are to be said at home in the absence of a minyan. Please note that page references are to the RCA version of the *Artscroll Siddur*, nusach Ashkenaz, as we use it at KST. If you need help getting a copy, please be in touch with the office.

This is a perfect time to make friends with your siddur. If you don't have one, let me know and I can help. Some of it is probably familiar from shul; some of it is no doubt pages you've never seen. Take a look through the table of contents and look at the passages that strike your curiosity. There are some good footnotes that explain things. We have had a study group in shul for many years on Friday mornings, "Breakfast learning," that has examined the siddur one prayer at a time, trying to understand better what it is we are saying.

MINYAN: A minyan is the minimum of ten adult men that's required for public prayer. For both men and women, it's advantageous to pray with a minyan if it's at all possible. Unfortunately for these past months it hasn't been possible, and that may continue to be the case for some time to come; based on health and safety considerations. We know in our heart of hearts that G-d hears our prayers wherever we are, under any and all conditions. The idea of a minyan and public prayer is important, because with a minyan we are able to say Kaddish and Barchu, read the Torah portion of the week from a Sefer Torah, a kosher handwritten scroll, and have our chazzan repeat the Amidah with the responsive prayer of "kedusha" when we respond "kadosh kadosh kadosh," etc.

Without a minyan, we don't say those parts of the siddur; but most of the rest we do say, including all the psalms and verses of praise, thanksgiving, request, and others that bring our minds and hearts close to Hashem. In addition to omitting Kaddish, Barchu, and repeating of the Amidah, here is how the prayer service works on a daily basis.

WEEKDAY MORNING

p.2/3: immediately upon waking, we say "modeh ani," the first two lines of the siddur, even before washing our hands. Then we follow the pages, putting on tefillin and talis/tzitzis when applicable.

p. 12/13 this is the beginning of the prayers in shul, so imagine yourself coming into shul when you say "Mah tovu," "Adon Olam," and "YiG-dal."

p. 16/17: prayers over the Torah are said every day. We say the 2 brachos at the top of page 16/17, which are for learning Torah; then we actually learn some: the 3 verses of the Priestly Blessing, "duchening;" a line from the mishna, and a short passage from the Talmud. That way we've studied some of the written Torah and the Oral Torah to start our day; and the blessings continue throughout the day for any Torah you study.

P. 18/19 begins the morning blessings. Usually in shul we skip some of the passages that follow, and we only say the ones on page 26/27 and continue on p. 48/49. But when we have the luxury of time under quarantine, there's no need to skip. So in particular, we can study the binding of Isaac (p. 22-25) and all the procedures of the Temple (pp. 30-49) and imagine ourselves there at the Temple in Jerusalem, actually seeing all this happen in front of our eyes.

pp. 54-83 are recited every weekday.

P. 84/85 we omit 'barchu' without a minyan and continue with the brachos of Shema.

p. 98/99 we stand with our feet together facing east toward Yerushalayim. Before the Amidah, take three small steps back, and three small steps forward, because we are entering into the presence of the King of All Kings, the Holy and Blessed One. During the whole Amidah, we are to keep our minds on being servants standing before our Master.

p. 100-101 the 'kedushah' at the bottom of the page is omitted when there is no minyan.

p. 118/119 the conclusion of the Amidah; before "oseh shalom"/"He who makes peace" we take three steps back and bow left right and centre.

p. 124 Tachanun: Tachanun is extra prayers of penitence and closeness to G-d. We do not say these prayers on Shabbat, erev Shabbat; holidays, or erev yom tov; because the closeness to G-d is already accomplished by the day itself, even without these extra prayers. We also omit tachanun on Rosh Chodesh. The custom in our shul is to omit tachanun from Rosh Chodesh Sivan (this year May 12) through 12 Sivan (May 23). Tachanun resumes the morning of May 24.

p. 124/125: the longer version of tachanun is said on Mondays and Thursdays.

p. 132/133/Nefilas Apayim/putting down the head. This shorter version of Tachanun begins here on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday. It is said seated, and we put our forehead down on the left arm, or the the right arm if the left has tefillin on it.

p. 138/139: Torah service. We are omitting this for now in the absence of a minyan. However, we can certainly read the brief Torah portions in the back of the siddur if we like.

P. 144/145: Prayer for a sick person: Normally we say this prayer in the presence of a Torah scroll. In these days when we are sadly without public Torah reading, you can say this prayer, inserting the person's Hebrew name and mothers' Hebrew name if you know them. If you don't know those names, say the names that you do know, and surely G-d will know whom you are talking about.

p. 144/145 Kel Moleh Rachamim/G-d full of mercy: this prayer is said on or before a yortzeit. It is not said at times when Tachanun is omitted, like the first 12 days of Sivan, or Shabbat or Yom Tov morning.

P. 150-157 Ashrei-Uva letziyon are said every weekday.

p. 158-161-Aleinu is said daily, standing; and we customarily bow where it says "we bend our knees, bow, bow and acknowledge our thanks"

p. 162-169: there is a different "Psalm of the day" for each weekday. We add Psalm 27 (p. 170-171) from Rosh Chodesh Elul (August 8 this year) through Shmini Atzeres (Sept 28, 2021)

p. 172/173 Psalm 104 is said on Rosh Chodesh.

p. 176-181j are extra optional prayers you may say if you find them meaningful; you can pick and choose from these.

WEEKDAY MINCHA

Mincha, the afternoon prayer, is recited in the afternoon, while it is still daylight.

It consists of:

p. 232/233 Ashrei

p. 234-249 Amidah, said while standing as noted above for p.98

p. 250-253 Tachanun, on days when it is not omitted. We omit tachanun on erev Shabbat, so every Friday afternoon; and erev yom tov.

p. 252-255 Aleinu

WEEKDAY MA'ARIV

p. 256/257 begins Ma'ariv. Skip Barchu.

p. 264-267 Blessed is Hashem etc. can be omitted when davening without a minyan.

p. 266-279 Amidah said standing, as noted above for p. 98.

p. 280 Aleinu standing, as noted above for p. 158

p. 282-287 Counting the omer up to Shavuot—also see the daily counting explanation video on our website.

p. 288-295 Shema before going to sleep. Say as much as you feel comfortable, and try adding something once you get comfortable with the rest of it, so that you're working towards saying more.

KABBALAT SHABBAT

At KST, we begin Kabbalat Shabbat with Yedid Nefesh, bottom half of page 590.

p. 308-313, and then p. 314/315 standing; we recite six psalms corresponding to the six days of the week that are now begun completed by welcoming in Shabbat.

p. 316-319 Lecha Dodi, “Come, my beloved” is a very emotional poem that welcomes in Shabbat. The last stanza (“Enter in peace/Bo’i v’shalom”) is said standing, and we turn to the back of the shul/door of the house as a sign of welcoming the Shabbat queen who is now entering. There are many different tunes that can be used for lecha dodi; you can use a different one every week or one that you like; sometimes we switch tunes in the middle, too to keep it lively.

p. 320/31 we sit down and accept Shabbat with the saying of psalm 92, “a psalm for Shabbat day.”

p. 322-329 is a chapter of mishna tractate *Shabbat*. It can be omitted when davening without a minyan, or you can study it—it never hurts to study a chapter of mishna.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV

p. 330/331 Omit barchu, continue with the blessings of shema and Shema Yisrael.

p. 336/337 rise and say “veshameru” continue with Amidah for Friday night on 338/339.

p. 346/347 second paragraph “Thus the heaven,” Vayechulu hashamayim” is said standing, in pairs if possible, as we are giving testimony to Shabbat here.

The bottom half of p. 346/347 is omitted when davening privately. We also omit the Kiddush at the bottom of page 348/349.

p. 350/351 Aleinu

p. 12-14 Yigdal concludes the Friday night service.

Then at the Shabbat table, we bless the children (if that is your custom) p. 354/355,

Sing Shalom Aleichem on the same page, Eishes Chayil p. 358/359—everyone says this, not just married people.

p. 360-361 Kiddush.

Then we wash our hands and make hamotzi over two loaves of bread, and enjoy a Shabbat meal.

There are zmirot, songs to sing at the table on pp. 362-367.

Birkat hamazon, the grace after meals, begins with Shir Hamaalot, psalm 126 on p. 182/183 and includes the paragraph for Shabbat on p. 188/189.

SHABBAT MORNING

pp. 2-53 as any weekday morning, omitting the supplicatory paragraphs on pgs. 22,24,32, and 40. After p. 52/53, we continue on p. 368 through 430/431. For the Amidah beginning on 420/421, we stand with our feet together facing east toward Yerushalayim. Before the Amidah, take three small steps back, and three small

steps forward, because we are entering into the presence of the King of All Kings, the Holy and Blessed One. During the whole Amidah, we are to keep our minds on being servants standing before our Master.

p. 422/423 the 'kedushah' at the bottom of the page is omitted when there is no minyan.

p. 430/431 the conclusion of the Amidah; before "oseh shalom"/"He who makes peace" we take three steps back and bow left right and centre.

p. 432 Eyn Kamocha, Av Harachamim, and Vay'hi bin'soa. p. 436 omit Brich Shmey and the responsive Shma, Echad, and Gadlu. Continue Lecha Hashem Hagedula.

p.438, Al Hakol, is a text from the oldest siddur we have, from R' Amram Gaon in Babylon (lived 810-875 CE.). In his siddur, he puts it at the beginning of shacharit, and calls it "kaddish yachid," the individual's kaddish. It's good at this point to read the Torah portion and Haftorah for yourself or study it with someone else, if you can.

p.444, say the prayer for soldiers and the first Yekum Purkan only on 448 (leave out the other two on 449a).p. 450-prayers for the government. Most shabbatot we say Av Harachamim on 454, and always Ashrei on 456.

We can say Mizmor Ledovid on 458, even though we're not holding a Torah.

Continue on p. 462/463 with Musaf for Shabbat, and we do not repeat nor do we say kedusha on p. 464/465. It ends on 474/475, and we conclude the service with pp. 476-483. P. 484-487 is

considered something we need a minyan for, so we omit it when we're without a minyan.

P 488-489 psalm of the day; p 12/13 Adon Olam.

Kiddush for Shabbat day: P. 492/493; you can say the top half quietly if you like, and start out loud with “therefore/Al Kayn” in the middle of the page. Bracha borei pri hagafen. Hamotzi over two loaves/rolls. Zmirot for Shabbat pp. 494-501. Birkat hamazon for Shabbat as mentioned above.

SHABBAT MINCHA: pp. 502-507. Omit the torah service, from the bottom of 506 through 514. Continue with Amidah p. 514-523. Tzikdatcha/Your Righteousness on p. 534/525; Aleinu 526-529. From the Shabbat after Shavuot, some people study a chapter of Pirkei Avot all summer long, beginning on p. 544: June 6 chapter 1; June 13 chapter 2, etc.

SEUDA SHLISHIT: toward the end of Shabbat, before dusk, we wash and eat some bread and a small meal, to honour the Shabbat with an extra meal and song. At KST, we usually sing the songs on pp. 588-591. Birkat hamazon for Shabbat as the two previous meals mentioned above.

MAARIV AT THE CONCLUSION OF SHABBAT

p. 256 weekday Ma'ariv, as mentioned above, with two additions:

- 1) We add “ata chonantanu/you have graced us,” the Havdallah paragraph in the gray box on p. 268/269.
- 2) After finishing the Amidah on p. 278/279, we turn to the bottom half of p. 594/595, “May the pleasantness/Viyhi noam” through 598/599 if there are no holidays in the coming week. Then conclude Ma'ariv with Aleinu, p. 280.

HAVDALLAH: we say Havdallah with spices, a candle, and wine or grape juice on p. 618-620.

If you listen in to Havdallah at our house via Zoom, you'll hear us singing just the chorus of "Eliyahu hanavi" on p. 626-627; then "Hamavdil" on 622/623; then "Amar Hashem L'Yaakov, bottom of 624/625-626/627, which follows the alef-bet with different verses.

SHAVUOT 5781/2021 Here is the order of prayers for Shavuot this year:

Sunday Evening, May 16 - Erev Yom Tov

Candlelighting: The bracha is on p. 296/297: "lehadlik ner shel yom tov" and the bracha of "shehecheyanu." Someone who says "shehecheyanu" at candlelighting does not repeat it at Kiddush.

YOM TOV MA'ARIV-SHAVUOT

Begin on p. 330. Continue to middle of page 336/337, and omit "veshamru/And the children of Israel shall keep; substitute the grey box "And Moshe declared/vayidaber moshe" instead. Right after that, turn to p. 660/661 for Amidah. Omit kedusha on 662. On 664 and 666, choose the passage for Shavuos. After Amidah, conclude with Aleinu on 350 and Yigdal on p. 12."

Kiddush for Shavuot evening is on page 658/659. Then wash and make hamotzi over two loaves.

Birkat hamazon begins with shir hamaalot and includes "Yaaleh veyavo" for Shavuot on p. 190/191.

TIKKUN LEYL SHAVUOT—it’s a custom in many parts of the Jewish world to stay up all night studying Torah on the first night of Shavuot; in anticipation of receiving the Torah on Shavuot morning. So at least stay up a few minutes past your usual bedtime and try to study some Torah, to show our enthusiasm.

YOM TOV MORNING Monday, May 17

Begin on p. 2 through p. 53. Omit the supplicatory passages as on Shabbat.

Then pp. 368-407.

On p. 408/409, omit the top half of the page; continue in the grey box. Skip p. 410/411; continue p. 412/413 “May You be blessed/Tisbarach” through the top lines of 420/421. At this point, turn to p. 660/661, Amidah for Festivals, choosing the passages for Shavuot.

Full Hallel-p. 632. Even an individual makes the bracha at the beginning and at the end on p. 642/643.

After that, back to the Torah Reading section on p. 432, same instructions as Shabbat above. On p. 434/435, we do not say “Hashem Hashem” unless we have a minyan. We can say the “Ribono Shel Olam/Master of the universe” praying without a minyan.

The main part of Shavuot is receiving the Torah—hearing the Ten Commandments read from Exodus. You can find the Torah reading on pp. 966-968 in the siddur, or in any Chumash; it’s Exodus 19:1-

20:23. Ideally, we'd read this out loud on Shavuot morning, standing, and imagine ourselves standing together with the whole Jewish people—past, present, and future—and receiving the Torah with one heart. That's a tall order—but we believe that Hashem doesn't ask of us anything that we don't have the ability to do!

Prayers for the government and soldiers as on Shabbat, but omit Yekum Purkan and av harachamim. Ashrei, p. 456/457. Don't forget to sing "Se'u She'arim with an enthusiastic march as we do in shul, Psalm 24, top of page 460/461 in the gray box.

p. 674/675 is Musaf for the Festivals. Omit Kedusha on 676/677, as we do not repeat the Amidah. On. 678/679 say the paragraph for "On Shavuot." 680/681 "this day of the festival of Shavuot/Chag Hashavuot hazeh." Skip to top of page 682/683 and say the paragraph for Shavuot. Then skip to 686/687, and continue at the bottom half of the page. There is no 'duchenen,' priestly blessing, without a minyan.

After concluding on p. 692/693, we turn back to 476-483. We omit Anim zmirot without a minyan. After that, p. 162/163 psalm of the day for Sunday.

Kiddush is just three lines at the bottom of p. 492/493: These are the appointed times/And Moses Declared/Borei pri hagafen. Then wash and make hamotzi on two loaves, birkat hamazon with Ya'aleh veyavo as last night.

Many people have the custom to eat some dairy foods, like cheesecake on Shavuot day, then take a break, wash their hands and rinse their mouths to remove traces of dairy, and then enjoy a meat meal in honour of the Yom Tov.

YOM TOV MINCHA

p. 502-507 Ashrei/Uva Letziyon.

No Torah reading on yom tov afternoon

p. 660-671 Amidah for Yom tov—insert the passages for Shavuot.

p. 526-529 Aleinu

SECOND DAY YOM TOV: Monday Evening, May 18

All candles should be lit from a pre-existing flame. Candlelighting time is 8:20pm; not earlier than 7:06pm. The bracha is on p. 296/297: “lehadlik ner shel yom tov” and the bracha of “shehecheyanu.” We light Yizkor candles for family members we’ll be saying Yizkor for tomorrow.

Maariv: begin p. 330, Omit Barchu without a minyan; say the blessings of the Shema

Through p. 336/337 omit Veshameru/The Children of Israel and substitute: Vayidaber Moshe/And Moses declared... then turn to page 660/661 Amidah for Yom Tov. Omit Kedushah on 662/663.

p. 664/665 choose the phrase for Shavuot.

p. 666/667 choose “chag hashavuot/This day of the festival of Shavuot.” In the bottom paragraph.

p. 668/669 conclude on 670/671.

Aleinu, p. 350.

Yigdal, p. 12

Kiddush for Shavuot is on p. 658/658. Choose the middle phrase for Shavuot. The concluding bracha is “mekadeish veyisrael v’hazmanim.” And we say shehecheyanu again as last night. Someone who lit candles and already said shehecheyanu does not repeat shehecheyanu here.

Then wash and make hamotzi over two loaves.

Birkat hamazon begins with shir hamaalot and includes “Yaaleh veyavo” for Shavuot on p. 190/191.

SECOND DAY YOM TOV MORNING

Begin on p. 2 through p. 53.

Then pp. 368-407. On 408/409 skip “hakol yoducha/All will thank You” and substitute “Hame’ir la’aretz/He Who illuminates” in the grey box. Skip 410/411 and continue 412/413 “Tisbarach/May You be blessed...” through to top of 420/421. Then turn to page 660 for the Yom Tov Amidah, omitting kedusha on 662/662, and on 664/665 including the phrase for Shavuos. P.666/667, phrase for Shavuos. Conclude on 670/671.

Full Hallel-p. 632. Even an individual makes the bracha at the beginning and at the end on p. 642/643.

Following Hallel, we read the Book of Ruth (found in any Tanach and also on p. 1269 of the Stone Chumash).

After Ruth, back to the Torah Reading section on p. 432, same instructions as Shabbat above. Omit p.434/435. Read the Torah portion and Haftarah at leisure.

After the Haftarah, we say Yizkor, either from the KST booklet, or from the siddur p. 810-815. We make pledges to tzedaka and fulfill them as soon as possible after Yom Tov concludes.

p.444, say the prayer for soldiers omit Yekum Purkan. p. 450-prayer for the government. Say Av Harachamim on 454, and Ashrei on 456.

We can sing Se'u She'arim on 460/461 in the grey box heartily as we do in shul even though we're not holding a Torah.

p. 674/675 is Musaf for the Festivals. Omit Kedusha on 676/677, as we do not repeat the Amidah. On. 678/679 say the paragraph for "On Shavuot." 680/681 "this day of the festival of Shavuot/Chag Hashavuot hazeh." Skip to top of page 682/683 and say the paragraph for Shavuot. Then skip to 686/687, and continue at the bottom half of the page. After concluding on p. 692/693, we conclude the service with pp. 476-483. P. 484-487 is considered something we need a minyan for, so we omit it when we're without a minyan.

P 164/165 psalm of the day for Tuesday; p 12/13 Adon Olam.

Kiddush is on p. 492, the grey box for festivals and borei pri hagafen. Then wash and make hamotzi over two loaves. You're welcome to repeat the cheesecake course today as yesterday if you like.

Birkat hamazon begins with shir hamaalot and includes "Yaaleh veyavo" for Shavuot on p. 190/191.

YOM TOV MINCHA

p. 502-507 Ashrei/Uva Letziyon.

p. 660-671 Amidah for Yom tov—insert the passages for Shavuot as before.

p. 526-529 Aleinu

MAARIV AT THE CONCLUSION OF YOM TOV

As usual for Ma'ariv p. 256, as mentioned above, with the addition of “ata chonantanu/you have graced us,” the Havdallah paragraph in the gray box on p. 268/269.

HAVDALLAH: we say Havdallah with only wine or grape juice, no spices or candle like at the end of Shabbos, on p. 618-620.

Shavua Tov! May the coming week and all weeks bring us and our kehillah and all of Israel good health, peace, and well-being.