The candles are now lit. After candle-lighting, the following blessing is recited:

Blessed are you, SOURCE OF LIGHT, our God, sovereign of all worlds, who has made us holy with your mitzvot, and commanded us to kindle the Shabbat light.

* * *

Blessed is the match that's consumed in kindling a flame.
Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret depths of the heart.

Hannah Stern (translator unknown)

Almighty God,
Grant me and all my loved ones
A chance truly to rest on this Shabbat.
May the light of the candles drive out from among us
The spirit of anger, the spirit of harm.
Send your blessings to my children,
That they may walk in the ways of your Torah, your light.

Shai Tziners (translator unknown)

YEDID NEFESH / SOUL BELOVED

Transliteration can be found on page 9.
This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

You who love my soul,
Sweet source of tenderness
Take my inner nature
And shape it to your will.
Like a darting deer
I will flee to you.
Before your glorious presence
Humbly do I bow.
Let your sweet love
Delight me with its thrill.
Because no other daintiness
Will my hunger still.

5 / HADLAKAT NEROT SHABBAT/LIGHTING SHABBAT
CANDLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Baruch atah adonay</th>
<th>Blessed are you Adonay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>berubah at yah</td>
<td>Blessed are you Yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nevareh et</td>
<td>Let us bless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| II | eloheynu           | our God               |
|    | hasheminah         | Shechinah             |
|    | eyn halayim        | Source of Life        |

| III | melah ha'olam      | Sovereign of all worlds |
|     | ley ha'olamim      | Life of all the worlds |
|     | nishah ha'olam     | Spirit of the world    |
How splendid is your light
Which worlds do reflect!
My soul is worn from craving
For your love's delight.
Please, good God, do heal her
And show to her your face,
So my soul can see you
And bathe in your grace.
There she will find strength
And healing in this sight.
Her joy will be complete then,
Eternal her delight.

What pity stirs in you
Since days of old, my God!
Be kind to me your own child
Begotten by your love.
For long and longing hours
I yearned for your embrace.

COMMENTARY. Yedid Nefesh was written by Rabbi Eleazar Azikri of Safed. A love song of the soul to God, it achieved great popularity in Sephardic communities, where it was included in the daily prayerbook. Hasidic custom adopted it for use as an introduction to Shabbat. The poet speaks to God in most intimate terms as lover and parent, but also as shining light of the universe. The longing for God is fulfilled for “the time has come” as God spreads over the world the great sukkat shalom, canopy of peace, which is Shabbat.

The traditional Hebrew text of Yedid Nefesh presented here differs in several places from Azikri’s original. Most notably, this version substitutes in the second verse “Eternal her delight” for “She shall be your handmaiden forever.” Here tradition seems to have improved on the author’s work!

A.G.
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To see my light in your light
Basking in your grace.
My heart's desire is
To harmonize with yours
Do not conceal your pity
Hide not that light of yours.
Help, my lover, spread
Your canopy of peace,
Enfold all human beings.
Give all pain succorance.
Your presence on this earth plane
Do make known to us
And we shall respond then
With song and with dance.
Rush, my love, be quick,
The time for love has come,
Let your gentle favor
Grace us as of old.

Elohim: Anihi (translated by Zelma Schacht-Shaham)


Yedid nefesh/ Soul Beloved

To see my light in your light
Basking in your grace.
My heart's desire is
To harmonize with yours
Do not conceal your pity
Hide not that light of yours.
Help, my lover, spread
Your canopy of peace,
Enfold all human beings.
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Grace us as of old.

Elohim: Anihi (translated by Zelma Schacht-Shaham)


Yedid nefesh/ Soul Beloved
SHALOM ALEYHEM

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

Welcome among us, messengers of shalem, angels of the Highest One, from deep within us. Majesty of majesties, the blessed Holy One.

Come, then, in shalom, blessing us with shalom, leaving us with holy shalom, from deep within us, Majesty of majesties, the blessed Holy One.

translated by Benz Jakobin

Angels are another name for feelings.
When we love and act with kindness we create angels of love and kindness;
when we hate and act with violence we create angels of hatred and violence.
It is our job to fill our world with angels of love: messengers of kindness that link people together as one family.

R.M.S.

COMMENTARY: Shalom Aleyhem is the best-known and most beloved of all the Sabbath hymns. Its simple words are a greeting to the angels of peace who come to dwell with us on Shabbat. The Hebrew word mal'achi actually means "messenger" and is used in the Bible for both heavenly and earthly emissaries. All of us on Shabbat can become mal'achi shalom or messengers of peace to one another as we share our inner quiet and joy in this day. We sing this welcome to introduce the Shabbat meal, a time of festive rejoicing in the fullness of rest and in our sharing with one another. A.C.
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COMMENTARY. It may be the concluding line of Psalm 95 that caused this entire group of psalms to be included in Kabbalat Shabbat. The psalmist speaks of the forty years in the wilderness, saying that the generation who came out of Egypt were not able "to enter God's place of rest," the Holy Land promised at the end of Israel's wanderings. But here in Kabbalat Shabbat "rest" has taken on a new meaning; it is in time rather than in place that rest is to be found. Shabbat has herself become a Holy Land, a time of rest in which we are called upon to cease our wandering.

A.G.

COMMENTARY. The five psalms of Kabbalat Shabbat, Psalms 95-99, are a literary unit within the Book of Psalms. Their spirit of joy and exultation calls on the worshipper to rejoice in the presence of God that fills the world. Nature itself joins in the symphony of praise as heaven and earth, field and forest, sea and rivers all seem to clap hands and enter the song and dance of joy. The coming of Shabbat fills us with a new vision, one that sees earth as freshly created and brimming with divine radiance. This vision is a universal one. It invites all nations to join in our celebration of divine presence.

A.G.
This is our God, and we, nurtured by God, a flock under God’s care
—today:
  if to the Voice
  you’ll listen—:
“Harden not your heart as it was done at Meribah,
as on a day of trial in the wilderness,
there your predecessors tested me,
they put to trial my patience, but they saw my power.
For forty years I argued with that generation,
till finally I said: ‘They are a people with a wandering heart,’
nor did they ever
  come to know
  my ways.
And as for them, I swore amid my wrath,
that they’ll not come into my place of rest.”

DERASH. The ancients deemed obedience to God’s will to be a prime virtue. Abraham had it; Adam lacked it. In our own day this virtue must mean the power to conform to the basic law of life. Obedience to that law brings salvation, defiance of it leads to disaster. M.M.K. (ADAPTED)
Sing out to THE REDEEMER a new song!
Sing to THE ETERNAL all the earth!

Sing to THE SUBLIME ONE—bless God’s name,
Bring news, day after day, of divine help.

Tell it among the nations, tell the glory,
among all the peoples, tell of miracles.

Yes, THE RADIANCE is great, subject of praise indeed,
the source of awe, above all image-gods!

For all the nation-gods are idols,
but THE LIVING ONE has made the heavens.

Grandeur and spendor belong to God,
Strength and beauty in the Holy Place.

Give praise to THE MAGNIFICENT, families of nations,
Honor and power devote to THE GREAT ONE.

Pay homage to MAJESTY for the glory of the name.
Bear offering, approach the Courtyards,
Bow down to THE INCOMPARABLE with holy adornment,
tremble in God’s presence, all the earth,

Declare among the nations that THE ETERNAL reigns:
the world is founded, none can topple it;

the peoples
shall be judged
unerringly.

---

25 / TEHILIM/PSALMS

---

Shiru ladonay shir ḥadash, shiru ladonay kol ha’aretz.
Shiru ladonay barchu shemo baseru miyom leyom yeshu’ato.
Sapea vagoyim kevodo, behol ha’amim nifle’otav.
Ki gadol adonay umhelel me’od, no-ra hu al kol elohim.
Ki kol elohey ha’amim elilim, vadoray shamayim asah.
Hod vechadar lefanov, oz vetiferet bemidaksho.
Havu ladonay mishpehot amim, havu ladonay kavod va’oz.
Havu ladonay kevod shemo, se’u minbah voo’u lehatzrotov.
Hishtahavu ladonay behadrat kodesh, hi’ul miyanav kol ha’aretz.
Imru vagoyim adonay malah, if tikon tevel bal timor.
Yadin amim bemysharim.

---

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 24
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Let the skies rejoice, the earth have glee.
Ocean resound, in all your fullness!

Let the fields rejoice, and all belonging there. And then, all forest trees exclaim ecstatically,

before The ONE who comes, who comes to rule the earth,
to rule over the settled world, over the peoples, faithfully.

DEBASIS. This psalm makes no explicit reference to Israel, Jew, or Judaism. All nations, all forces are controlled by God.
The psalmist shouts: נָבִיא is great—every day, always, everywhere, to everybody; come, join me in praising! The writer knows of the greatness of God from experience, not reason. The presence of God reaches beyond one person, beyond a nation, beyond human beings!

This great God makes demands on us; we are accountable for our actions. God judges; we must act justly.

KAVANAH. To affirm the sovereignty of God means to acknowledge a higher law and authority than one's own arbitrary will.
KAVANAH. The belief in the sovereignty of God should keep in our minds the prophetic teaching that God should be obeyed rather than worshiped, that obedience to God's laws is the highest form of worship. It is an error to believe that the main function of the spiritual is to afford us an escape from the turmoil and the temptations of life—a sort of ivory tower of detachment. The truth of the sovereignty of God should remind us that our task is to turn temptations into a means of serving God.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

The UNCREATED reign! O world, rejoice! Be happy, dwellers of all continents!

Clouds and thick darkness surround God, justice and judgment bear up the Throne, a fire goes before it, flames surround its back,

its lightning flashes light the world, the earth beholds and trembles,

mountains melt like wax before THE ONE before the First of all the earth, whose justice all the skies declare, whose glory all the nations see.

Let all who worship images be shamed, all those who boast amid their idols,

let all gods submit to God.

Zion has heard, and has rejoiced, the women of Judah sound their joy, because of justice, yours.

Yah.∞
For you are The Radiance
above all earth.

Powerfully, you have ascended
over all the image-gods.

And you who love The Great One hate the bad,
so that the Guardian of loving souls
might save them
from the power
of the wicked.

Lightbeams are seeded for the righteous,
Happiness for those steadfast of heart,
Rejoice, O righteous ones in The Unnameable
be thankful for its sacred Trace!

...爱你... The lover of God naturally fights evil. Ethics
and spirituality are closely linked.

資助 / God protects. Those who fight injustice are often in need of
protection.

されること / seeded. Light is like seeds because it needs to be nourished and
tended. It demands patience. Another reading is ywać / zarut'ah, a brilliant,
dazzling light (The Meirii).

דמשק / right-hearted, steadfast of heart—those with focused minds.

L.W.K.
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A psalm: Sing out to **The Truthful** a new song, to One who has wrought wonders in the world, whose right hand was of aid, as was the holy, saving arm, who made the divine might renowned, revealed God's justice to the eyes of many nations, and who made remembered divine love and faithfulness to the community of Israel.

To the farthest reaches of the earth, they saw our God's salvation!

Trumpet out in joy **The Awesome One**'s praise, burst forth and sing, and play your music, music for **The Omnipresent** on a violin, on strings, with voice and melody, with hornplaying and shofar blasts, trumpeter your praise before the sovereign to **The One Who Is**

Let the sea be in a tumult, and the settled world, and its inhabitants. And let the rivers clap their hands together, and the mountains sing in joy, to **The One who comes to rule the earth**, to rule the settled world with justice, and all peoples with unerring deeds!

---

**DERASH.** One of the fundamental implications of the sovereignty of God is that religion must be socialized. It must be translated into terms of social righteousness and not stop at the inward peace and serenity of the individual.

---

**Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi** has taught: 

If a man's heart is so filled with love that he cannot speak of it, but also, let him not be silent over it.

---

**L.W.K.**

---

**M.M.K. (ADAPTED)**
The One of Sinai reigns, as nations seethe, and sits between the cherubim, the earth is teetering.

The One Who Dwells in Zion is magnificent, high above all peoples; let them thank your name, so great and awesome, holy it is!

With royal strength, but loving justice, you have established equitable deeds.

Justice and righteousness on Jacob's behalf have you performed.

Exalt the One Who Sees our God, bow down before God's footstool,

God is holy!

Moses and Aaron are among God's priests, and Samuel among the ones who call God's name.

Calling to the Righteous One who will respond to them.

In a cloud pillar, God speaks to them, they keep God's precepts and God gives them rulings.

Great One you have answered them, you were a forgiving God for them, after you exacted penalty for things they did.

Exalt the name of the Ineffable One, bow down before the sacred divine mount; yes, holy is the Awesome One, our God!
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A psalm of David: Give to the One Who Is, you so-called gods, give to the Indivisible glory and strength!

Give to The Unseen One the glory of the divine Name, worship The Ancient Of Days with holy ornament.

The voice of The Unending on the waters, God in full Glory thundering,

The One Who Calls over many waters,

yes, voice of The Revealed One in full strength,

voice of The Truthful in full beauty,

voice of Eternal Law breaking the cedars,

The All-Knowing smashing cedar forests on Mt. Lebanon,

making them skip about like calves,

yes, Lebanon and Sirion, like offspring of the wild ox...

COMMENTARY. Psalm 29, one of the most ancient in the Book of Psalms, celebrates the presence of God in the midst of a great thunderstorm. The word kol, which appears seven times in the psalm, here translated “voice,” can also mean “thunderclap.” The psalmist concludes with mention of a great quiet that follows the storm, recalling the mythic quiet that followed God’s triumph over the forces of chaos in Creation. The placing of the psalm here reminds us that our weekly struggle in the world of achievement and battle is now at an end. We have repeated the struggles of creation and now we too are called upon to achieve that great inner quiet which is the secret of true rest.

J.R.

NOTE. In this psalm the divine name, ה' Elohim, appears eighteen times. The translator has rendered thirteen of these to recall thirteen divine attributes, and the remaining five to echo the themes of the Five Books of Moses.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 36
Kol Adonay ḥorzev laḥavoc esh.
Kol Adonay yahil midbar, yahil Adonay midbar Kadesh.
Kol Adonay yeholel ayalot, vayehesof ye’arot.
Uvheyhalo kulo omer kavod.
Adonay lamabal yashav, vayeshev Adonay melech le’olam.
Adonay oz le’amo yiten, Adonay yevarefh et amo vashalom.

The voice of THE JUST ONE hewing flames of fire,
the voice of THE ANOINTER making the desert writhe,
of ENERGY giving birth pangs to the wastelands of Kadesh.
the voice of THE MIGHTY ONE convulsing all the deer,
stripping the forests,
while amid God’s palace all declare: “The Glory!”

THE REDEEMER prevailing at the Sea,
THE PRESENCE presiding for the cosmos,

THE WANDERER imparting strength to Israel,
GIVER OF WORDS blessing the people in their peace.

NOTE. The psalm acknowledges the four directions, with Jerusalem as the peaceful center
שה / water. Like many storms in Israel, this one starts in the west, over the Mediterranean Sea.
ערן / cedars, a symbol of something solid and lasting. The storm breaks in the high north, towards Lebanon.
ש適用 / Siron—Mt. Hermon, towering on Israel’s northern border. Even these mountains quake!
מדבר / desert—the Jordan Valley and the Judean Desert, as the storm moves south-east.
שוד קadesh / wilds of Kadesh south of Jerusalem.
LEAH DODI / O, COME, MY FRIEND

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew:

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

"Keep" and "Remember" in a sole command
the solitary God did us command
"I AM!" is one, the Name is one,
in name, in splendor, and in praise.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

COMMENTARY. Six psalms, one for each weekday, open the traditional Kabbalat Shabbat service. The seventh element, the Shabbat psalm, is introduced by the song Leah Dodi, "Come, My Friend." As Shabbat eve drew near, the Safed Kabbalists used to walk into the fields at the edge of their mountain village in order to greet the day of rest. There they could survey the beauty of creation apparent in the panorama spread before them: mountain, valley, forest, sky, and sea. Through the preceding psalms they gave voice to their praise of creation, and they honored Shabbat with specially composed hymns sung as they escorted Shabbat to their homes.

Leah Dodi—a hymn to honor and escort Shabbat—was composed by Shelomo Halevi Akhabat, a member of the Safed Kabbalists. The initial letters of the poem’s first eight stanzas spell out his name: שלמה הראב.” The opening refrain and closing verse of the poem reflect the customs of R. Hanaia and R. Yanay. Their images of Shabbat as queen and bride combine to link the formal and intimate aspects of Shabbat, the source of all blessing and ultimate intention of creation.

The hymn draws heavily upon prophecies of Israel’s redemption and renewal in the messianic era—likened, in Jewish tradition, to a Shabbat without end. Shabbat stands in relation to the week as the messianic era stands in relation to the flow of world time. It is at once a celebration of the world’s beginning and a foretaste of the world to come, a reservoir of past and future held in a single moment.


NOTE. The first stanza of Leah Dodi attempts to reconcile two versions (in the Ten Commandments) of the mitzvah to observe Shabbat. The integrity of both—"remember the Sabbath day" (Exodus 20:8) and "keep the Sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:12)—is maintained when the song proclaims that God—in whom all things unite—uttered both simultaneously (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 20b).
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43 / LEHAH DODI / O COME MY FRIEND

KABBALAT SHABBAT / WELCOMING SHABBAT / 42
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Arouse yourself, arouse yourself,
your light has come, arise and shine,
awake, awake, pour forth your song,
on you now shines the Glorious One.

O, come, my friend, let’s greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

Don’t be abashed, don’t be ashamed,
why be downcast, why do you sigh?
In you my people’s poor find shade,
a city rebuilt where her ruins lay.

O, come, my friend, let’s greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

Your robbers shall be robbed themselves,
all your devourers will be removed,
your God rejoices at your side,
the joy of a bridegroom with his bride.

O, come, my friend, let’s greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

**COMMENTARY.** Shabbat is here depicted in a glorious array of symbols that derive from the many terms Kabbalistic tradition has used to describe the Shechinah. She is the bride, the queen, Jerusalem the holy city too long prisoner in the vale of tears, the people Israel about to be crowned with the glory of God. All of these draw together in the single figure of Shabbat as we welcome her into our hearts.

**KAVANAH.** God should be so real to us that, in place of the fear and disquiet which overcloud our lives, we should be possessed of such peace, poise, and power as to render us free and joyful and give us a sense of dominion.
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We rise and face the entrance to welcome the Shabbat bride.

Yamin usmol tifrotzi
Ve'et adonay ta'arizri
Al yad ish ben parrzi
Venimehah venagilah.

Lebah dodi...

Bo'i veshalom ateret balah
Gam besimnab uetzolah
Toh enumey am segullah
Bo'i halah bo'i halah.

Lebah dodi...

DERASH. There is a Yiddish saying: "כ"ו תואמ בריול סتمثل דרי פרנסמא / Bay "bo'i veshalom" shirot der oremman oybn on. "During Shabbos prayers, when the entire congregation turns its back to the altar, the pauper standing at the back is suddenly in front." When the entire congregation turns to the back, inviting the Shabbos queen to come in peace, it is the poor, the shy, and the stranger in the back rows who are given the honor of welcoming her first. She comes in peace only where Jews act responsibly toward those who receive this honor.

E.M.

To right and left you shall burst forth, revering God, to south and north, by hand of one from Peretz's line, we shall rejoice and find delight.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride, the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

We rise and face the entrance to welcome the Shabbat bride.

O, come in peace, O divine crown, with joy, rejoicing, and with mirth, amid the faithful, loved by God, come in, O bride, come in, O bride!

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride, the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

Bo'i veshalom, the last verse of Lebah Dodi, should be recited outdoors. Where this is not possible, a turn toward the doorway is traditional. At Bo'i halah (Come in, O bride), we receive into ourselves the neshamah yetarah, an extra measure of soul, that is not present to us during the week. This extra Shabbat soul may be viewed as the greater sensitivity allowed us by the restful and unpressured pace of Shabbat. Indeed, that extra soul may be inside us all the time, and Lebah Dodi may be seen as a love song that coaxes our most sensitive self to come out of hiding, in the assurance that on Shabbat it will not be harmed or threatened.  

A.G.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 46
A psalm. A song for the day of Shabbat.

A good thing to give thanks to THE ETERNAL
to sing out to your name supreme,
to tell about your kindness in the morning,
and your faithfulness at night,
on ten-stringed lyre and on flute,
with melodies conceived on harp,
for you, ALMIGHTY ONE, cate me with your deeds,
I'll sing about the actions of your hands.

How great your deeds have been, SUPERNAL ONE.
your thoughts exceedingly profound.

Of this the foolish person cannot know,
of this the shallow cannot understand.

Mizmor: shir leyom hashabbat.
Tov lehadot ladonay ulzamer leshimecha elyon.
Lehagid baboker hashecha ve'emanatcha baleylot.
Aley asor va'aley navel aley higayon behinor.

*Midrash is a genre of interpretative commentary that derives its name
from the root שדר to search out. The activity of expounding midrash is
one of elucidation through creative expansion of words, verses, or whole
stories that are ambiguous in the biblical text. These provide fertile ground
for imaginative explanations. Midrashic literature dates back to the period
of the early Amoraic rabbis, ca. 400 C.E., and is still being created today.

M.P.
For though the wicked multiply like weeds, and evildoers sprout up all around,
it is for their destruction for all time,
but you, Majestic One, are lifted high eternally,
behold your enemies, Resplendent One,
behold, your enemies are lost,
all evildoers shall be scattered.

You raise my horn like that of the triumphant ox;
I am anointed with fresh oil.

My eye shall gaze in victory on my enemies,
on all who rise against me to do harm;
my ears shall hear of their demise.

The righteous flourish like the palm trees,
like cedars of Lebanon they grow,
implanted in the house of The All-Knowing One
amid the courtyards of our God they bear fruit.
In their old age, they'll put forth seed,
fleshy and fresh they'll ever be,
to tell the uprightness of The One Alone,
my Rock, in whom no fault resides.

Tzadik katamar yisrah, ke'reez balvanon yisgeh.
Shetulim beveys adonay, behatzrot eloheynu yaqirhu.
Od yenuvun beseyvah, deshenim vera'ananin yihyu.
Lehagid ki yashar adonay, tauri velo avlahah bo.
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COMMENTARY. Psalm 93 concludes Kabbalat Shabbat by retelling the ancient tale of Creation. The waters raised a great shout, showing their power to overwhelm the dry land as it first emerged. So do the forces of chaos and destruction threaten the islands of peace and security we manage to create in our lives. The psalmist assures us, however, that the voice of God is greater than that of even the fiercest storm tides of the ocean. With God’s throne firmly established, the peace of Shabbat is now triumphant.

A.G.

THE ETERNAL reigns, is clothed in majesty,
The INVISIBLE is clothed, is girded up with might.
The world is now established,
it cannot give way.
Your throne was long ago secured,
beyond eternity are you.
The rivers raise, O MIGHTY ONE,
the rivers raise a roaring sound,
the floods raise up torrential waves,
but louder than the sound of mighty waters,
more exalted than the breakers of the sea,
raised up on high are you, THE SOURCE.
Your precepts have retained their truth,
and holiness befits your house.
The ETERNAL ONE, forever and a day.

DERASHA. Why does this psalm (93) follow the psalm for Shabbat (92)? In it God watches the seas. The mishna notes that just as earth was created by parting the waters, so was Redemption created by parting the waters. In Creation land was redeemed from the waters. In Redemption human freedom is created. The creation of Shabbat planted the seed of human redemption. The experience of Shabbat nurtures that seed, giving us the strength to quell the floods in our time.

D.A.T./S.D.R.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 52
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**HATZI KADDISH / SHORT KADDISH**

**Reader**: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

**Congregation**: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

**Reader**: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher (On Shabbat Shuvah add: by far) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

**Reader**: Yitgadal veyiḳadash shemey rabah
be'ala'ma divra he'irutey veyamliḥ mahlutey
beḥayeyon uvoymeyehon uvḥayey deḥol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.

**Congregation**: Yeḥey shemey rabah mevarah le'alam
ulamey almaya.

**Reader**: Yitbarah veysiḥtabaḥ veyiṭpa'ar veysiromam
veyiṭnasey veysiḥ-hadaḥ veysiḥ-halal
shemey dekudsha beriḥ hu
le'ela (On Shabbat Shuvah add: le'ela) min kol birḥata veshirata
tushbeḥata veneḥemata da'amiran be'ala'ma ve'imru amen.
When a minyan is present, the Barèhu is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow.

Barecu et adonay hamvorah.
Baruḥ adonay hamvorah le'olam va'ed.

Kavanah. When we worship in public we know our life is part of a larger life, a wave of an ocean of being—the first-hand experience of that larger life which is God.

M.M.E.

Commentary. Ma'ariv is the heart of the Friday evening service. As on weekdays, it contains several parts: the Shema and its blessings, the Amidah (silent prayer), and the Alenu. On Shabbat there are several additions: Vehamaru (Exodus 31:16-17), a brief reprise of the Amidah, and Kiddush.

D.A.T.

Ma'ariv

The Shema and Its Blessings

When a minyan is present, the Barèhu is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow.

Bless The Infinite, the blessed One!
Blessed is The Infinite, the blessed One, now and forever

Kavanah. Public worship aids us by liberating personality from the confining walls of the individual ego. Imprisoned in self, we easily fall prey to morbid broodings. Interference with career, personal disappointment and disillusionment, hurts to vanity, the fear of death—all these tend to dominate our attention that our minds move in a fixed and narrow system of ideas, which we detest but from which we see no escape. With a whole wide world of boundless opportunities about us, we permit our minds, as it were, to pace up and down within the narrow cell of their ego-prisons. But participation in public worship breaks through the prison of the ego and lets in the light and air of the world. Instead of living but one small and petty life, we now share the multitudinous life of our people. Against the wider horizons that now open to our ken, personal cares do not loom so large. Life becomes infinitely more meaningful and worthwhile when we become aware, through our participation in public worship, of a common life that transcends our individual selves.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)
ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

For additional readings, see pages 732-739, 754-766, 798-799.

TRADITIONAL VERSION

Blessed are you, Eternal One, our God, sovereign of all worlds, by whose word the evenings fall. In wisdom you open heaven’s gates. With divine discernment you make seasons change, causing the times to come and go, and ordering the stars on their appointed paths through heaven’s dome, all according to your will. Creator of the day and night, who rolls back light before the dark, and dark before the light, who makes day pass away and brings on night, dividing between day and night: the Leader of the Thrones of Heaven is your name! Living and enduring God, rule over us, now and always. Blessed are you, Almighty One, who makes the evenings fall.

DERASH. When we are about to say: “Blessed are you, our God, sovereign of all worlds,” and prepare to utter the first word “blessed,” we should do so with all our strength, so that we will have no strength left to say, “are you.” And this is the meaning of the verse in the Scriptures: “But they that wait for God shall exchange their strength.” What we are really saying is: “Source of life, I am giving you all the strength that is within me in this very first word; now will you, in exchange, give me an abundance of new strength, so that I can go on with my prayer.”

M.B. (ADAPTED)

dark. The words roll into each other just as day rolls into night. They are not separate realms. They mix together. God rules both light and darkness. מבר: between. Related to בּית: bethah and הָעֵין: tenuah: understanding. Wisdom is the ability to distinguish between things, to make sense out of confusion.

L.W.K.

59 / ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

El Ḥay vekevam tamid yimloĥ aleynu le'olam va'ed.
Bari'ah atah adonay ha'ma'ariv aravim.

ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

59 / ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

El Ḥay vekevam tamid yimloĥ aleynu le'olam va'ed.
Bari'ah atah adonay ha'ma'ariv aravim.

ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

For additional readings, see pages 732-739, 754-766, 798-799.

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M.B. (ADAPTED)

dark. The words roll into each other just as day rolls into night. They are not separate realms. They mix together. God rules both light and darkness. מבר: between. Related to הבית: bethah and הָעֵין: tenuah: understanding. Wisdom is the ability to distinguish between things, to make sense out of confusion.

L.W.K.

59 / ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

El Ḥay vekevam tamid yimloĥ aleynu le'olam va'ed.
Bari'ah atah adonay ha'ma'ariv aravim.
INTERPRETIVE VERSION: AHAVAT OLAM

We are loved by an unending love.
We are embraced by arms that find us even when we are hidden from ourselves.
We are touched by fingers that soothe us even when we are too proud for soothing.
We are counseled by voices that guide us even when we are too embittered to hear.
We are loved by an unending love.
We are supported by hands that uplift us even in the midst of a fall.
We are urged on by eyes that meet us even when we are too weak for meeting.
We are loved by an unending love.

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled . . .
ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;
ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;
We are loved by an unending love.

Blessed are you, BELOVED ONE, who loves your people Israel.

Rav K. Shapiro (adapted)

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INTERPRETIVE VERSION: ASHER BIDVARO

Praised are you, God, ruler of the universe, who has ordained the rhythm of life. The day with its light calls to activity and exertion. But when the day wanes, when, with the setting of the sun, colors fade, we cease from our labors and welcome the tranquility of the night. The subdued light of the moon and stars, the darkness and the stillness about us invite rest and repose. Trustfully we yield to the quiet of sleep, for we know that, while we are unaware of what goes on within and around us, our powers of body and mind are renewed. Therefore, at this evening hour, we seek composure of spirit. We give thanks for the day and its tasks and for the night and its rest. Praised are you, God, who brings on the evening.

1965 Reconstructive Prayer Book (adapted)
AHAVAT OLAM / GOD'S LOVE IN TORAH

For additional readings see pages 740-755, 775-778.

TRADITIONAL VERSION

With everlasting love, you love the house of Israel. Torah and mitzvot, laws and justice you have taught us. And so, DEAR ONE our God, when we lie down and when we rise, we reflect upon your laws; we take pleasure in your Torah’s words and your mitzvot, now and always. Truly, they are our life, our length of days. On them we meditate by day and night. Your love will never depart from us as long as worlds endure. Blessed are you, BELOVED ONE, who loves your people Israel.

KAVANAH. The шema / Shema is wrapped in נא / na‘ahav / love. The blessing preceding the Shema concludes, “who loves your people Israel.” This prayer begins יְהֹוָה / yhwh, And you must love הָיוֹ וָהָא / ywhw First you are loved, then you respond with love. Love is central to Jewish life. Love means commitment and limitations—Torah and mitzvot. That is to both in our relationships with each other and in our relationship with God.

L.W.K.

DERASH. The term She’chinah implies that God is not aloof from human life with all its defeats and triumphs. God is in the very midst of life. The rabbis say that when people suffer for their sins, the She’chinah cries out. The She’chinah thus moves from Israel to all humanity. MAX (ADAPTED)

63 / AHAVAT OLAM / GOD'S LOVE IN TORAH

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 62
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Job Name: *#& \$%&'() 

Listen, Israel: THE ETERNAL is our God, THE ETERNAL ONE alone!

Blessed be the name and glory of God’s realm, forever!

And you must love THE ONE, your God, with your whole heart, with every breath, with all you have. Take these words that I command you now to heart. Teach them intently to your children. Speak them when you sit inside your house or walk upon the road, when you lie down and when you rise. And bind them as a sign upon your hand, and keep them visible before your eyes. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

**SHABBAT MA’ARIV** / 64
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BIBLICAL SELECTION I

It came to pass, and will again, that if you truly listen to the voice of The Eternal One, your God, being sure to do whatever has been asked of you today, The One, your God, will make of you a model for all nations of the earth, and there will come upon you all these blessings, as you listen to the call of The Abundant One, your God:

Blessed be you in the city,
blessed be you upon the field.
Blessed be the fruit of your womb,
the fruit of your land, the fruit of your cattle,
the calving of your oxen, and the lambing of your sheep.
Blessed be your basket and your kneading-trough.
Blessed be you when you come home, and blessed be you when you go forth.

See, I have placed in front of you today both life and good, both death and ill, commanding you today to love The Boundless One, your God, to walk in ways I have ordained, keeping the commandments, laws, and judgments, so that you survive and multiply.

The Bountiful, your God, will bless you on the land you are about to enter and inherit.

COMMENTARY. The traditional wording of Biblical Selection II presents detailed bountiful or devastating consequences of Israel's collective relationship to the mitzvot. That biblical section (Deuteronomy 11:13-21) offers a supernatural theology that many contemporary Jews find difficult. The biblical section on this page (Deuteronomy 28:1-6, 30:15-19) was included in the 1945 Reconstructionist siddur. It begins by encouraging observance in the same language, but concentrates on the positive ways in which observance of mitzvot focuses our attention on God's presence as perceived through productivity and the pursuit of abundant life.

KAVANAH. The doctrine of the unity of God calls for the integration of all life's purposes into a consistent pattern of thought and conduct. M.M.K.
But if your heart should turn away, and you not heed, and go astray, and you submit to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall be destroyed completely; you shall not live out a great expanse of days upon the land that you now cross the Jordan to possess.

I call as witnesses concerning you both heaven and earth, both life and death, that I have placed in front of you a blessing and a curse.

Choose life, that you may live, you and your seed!

BIBLICAL SELECTION II

And if you truly listen to my bidding, as I bid you now—loving THE FOUNT OF LIFE, your God, and serving God with all your heart, with every breath—then I will give you rain upon your land in its appointed time, the early rain and later rain, so you may gather in your corn, your wine and oil. And I will give you grass upon your field to feed your animals, and you will eat and be content. Beware, then, lest your heart be led astray, and you go off and worship other gods, and you submit to them, so that the anger of THE MIGHTY ONE should burn against you, and seal up the heavens so no rain would fall, so that the ground would not give forth her produce, and you be forced to leave the good land I am giving you.

DERASH. This warning against idolatry has ecological significance. If we continue to pollute the environment—and thus display contempt for the integrity of God’s creation—pure rain will cease to fall, and the ground will cease to give forth its produce.

M.L.
So place these words upon your heart, into your lifebreath. Bind them as a sign upon your hand, and let them rest before your eyes. Teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit at home, and when you walk upon the road, when you lie down, and when you rise. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates—so that your days and your children’s days be many on the land The FAITHFUL ONE promised to give your ancestors, as long as heaven rests above the earth.

Continue on page 72.

COMMENTARY. The statement of God's oneness unifies not only the context of Shema but the text as well—three scriptural paragraphs specified in the Mishnah (a second century codification of Jewish law). The powerful declaration of God’s unity fuses the responsibility to love God and to study God’s teachings (first paragraph) with the lesson that their fulfillment confirms God’s presence (second and third paragraphs). Hence, the unity of God as idea and presence.

S.S.

In the handwritten scroll of the Torah
The word “Shema” of “Shema Yir’eh”
Ends with an oversized ayin,
And the word “Ekhod”
Ends with an oversized dalet.
Taken together
These two letters
Spell “Eh,” meaning “witness.”

Whenever we recite the Shema
We bear witness
To our awareness
Of God’s presence.

H.M.

71 / SHEMA

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 70
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The Boundless One told Moses: Speak to the Israelites—tell them to make themselves tzitzit upon the corners of their clothes, throughout their generations. Have them place upon the corner tzitzit a twine of royal blue. This is your tzitzit. Look at it and remember all the mitzvot of the Eternal One. And do them, so you won’t go off after the lusts of your heart or after what catches your eye, so that you remember to do all my mitzvot and be holy for your God. I am the Faithful One, your God, who brought you from Mitrayim to be for you a God. I am the Infinite, your God.

... This is all the mitzvot of the Eternal One, all as many as possible. According to rabbinic tradition, there are 613 mitzvot in the Torah. A combination of gematria (Jewish numerology) and ritual macrana "proves" that=log / tetei equals all 613 mitzvot combined: x = 90, y = 10, z = 90, r = 10, n = 400; all together = 600. Each tetei has 8 strands (per corner) and 5 knots; 8 + 5 = 13; 13 + 600 = 613.

... after what catches your eye, that is, the physical and material temptations you see. The Baal Shem Tov had a method for dealing with distractions, especially sexual ones. If you can’t get the person out of your thoughts, remember that beauty is a reflection of God’s image. Redirect that energy towards God.

... is Sidon blue, which is obtained from a shellfish. Sidon or royal blue is associated with majesty—even today the British queen wears a blue sash. The Jews were so oppressed at the time of Bar Kochbah that indigo, a vegetable dye, replaced Sidon blue on their tetei. The Romans banned the blue fringe because of its symbolism. During the nineteenth century the Radmierz Hasidim reintroduced its use. Now other Jews have also begun to use it. The long tekel thread intertwined with short white ones is a complex and powerful image that hints at the interplay between majesty and subject within our own hearts.

The Boundless One... God (Numbers 15:37-41)

Commentary. In the ancient Near East, free people wore fringes, or tzitzit, on the hems of their everyday clothes. Since only free people wore tzitzit, they were a form of identification. Business transactions were sealed by kissing the tzitzit.

The mitzvah of tzitzit is based on that ancient sign of freedom. The fringes remind us that we voluntarily follow the way of God, who freed us from Egyptian slavery. It is, literally, a string tied around our finger.

Today, many Jews who recite the Shema gather the four corners of their tallitot (prayer shawls), hold the tzitzit, and kiss them at each mention of the word log / tetei. This custom shows that we take these words seriously, like a legal contract.

... Mitrayim was the escaping Hebrews', not the Egyptians', name for the land of Egypt: perhaps a slave-term, and probably not of Semitic origin, it has associations with the root log, to be in distress, constricted, in anguish, or in dire strain. This word powerfully evokes the choking oppression of slavery. As the psalmist wrote: נא ישה ישה ישה / From the depths I called to Yah.
EMET VE'EMUNAH / REDEMPTION

The traditional Ge’ulah is on this page; an interpretive version begins on page 76. For additional readings see pages 748, 767-771, 800.

Our faith and truth rest on all this, which is binding upon us: That THE BOUNDLESS ONE alone is our divinity and that no divinity exists but One; that we are Israel, community of God; that it is God who saves us from the hand of governments, the very palm of tyrants; who enacts great deeds without measure, and wondrous deeds beyond all count; who puts our souls amid the living, and who keeps our feet from giving way; who breaks apart the schemes of those who hate us, confounds the thoughts of any bearing us ill-will; that it is God who made miracles for us in Egypt, signs and wonders in Ham’s children’s land. From one generation to the next, God is our guarantor, and even on a day that turned to night, God stayed with us when death’s deep shadow fell. And even in our age of orphans and survivors, God’s loving acts have not abandoned us, and God has brought together our scattered kin from the distant corners of the earth.

As then, so now,

God brings the people Israel forth from every place of menace, to a lasting freedom. God is the one who brought the Israelites through a divided Sea of Reeds. There, they beheld divine might; they praised and thanked the Name, and willingly accepted for themselves God’s rule. (Continue on page 78)

COMMENTARY: The blessing immediately following the Shema deals with the theme of divine redemption. The present text, a rewritten version, includes references to the Holocaust, from which there was no redemption, and the return to Zion, a fulfillment of Israel’s ancient dream. The same divine spirit that gave Israel the courage to seek freedom from Egypt in ancient times inspired those who fought for Israel’s freedom in our own day. At the same time, this version omits those portions of the text that glory in the enemy’s fall or see in God a force for vengeance. All humans are God’s beloved children, as were the Egyptians who drowned at the sea.

A.G.
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Derash. Rabbi Judah said: [At the sea] each tribe said to the other, “You go into the sea first!” As they stood there bickering, Naboth ben Aminadav jumped into the water. Meanwhile Moses was praying. God said to him, “My friend is drowning—and you pray!” “What can I do?” Moses asked. [God responded as it says in the text.] “Speak to the people of Israel and tell them to go! Raise your staff…”

Talmud Sotah 30a


**Interpretive Version**

We acknowledge as true and trustworthy that there is but one universal God, and that to God’s service Israel stands eternally committed.

We recognize in God the power that has enabled us to triumph over defeat, persecution and oppression.

It was God who redeemed us from Egyptian bondage, and delivered us from the despotism of the pharaohs.

For God wills that we be free to use our powers in holy service, and be not bound to the arbitrary rule of any mortal.

Whenever human rulers usurp divine authority, and exploit the people, those tyrants’ hearts are hardened, their own arrogance writes their doom.

Therefore we will never be discouraged nor dismayed when unrighteous powers rise up to destroy us.

Though enemy hosts pursue us, we shall remember how our ancestors were saved at the Sea of Reeds.

We therefore repeat the words of triumph with which they gave thanks for their deliverance:

(Congregation sings ליב רד, page 79)

**Commentary.** Two beautiful berashit complete the liturgical framework of the Shema in the evening service. The first of these is called Ge'ulah—“Redemption.” Recalling the Exodus from Egypt, it thematically echoes the third paragraph of the Shema. Moreover, it identifies the sovereign God, named in the Shema’s credo, as the power that freed Israel from slavery. Its vivid, here-and-now recollection of the escape from Egyptian bondage invites and challenges Israel to claim the redemption as a personal experience in each generation and to hear echoes of that ancient triumph over tyranny in each modern-day struggle for freedom, in every attempt to move toward the messianic future.
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Job Name:

Moses, Miriam, and all the Israelites broke out in song, abundant in their joy, and, all as one, they said:

"Who among the mighty can compare to you, WISE ONE?
Who can compare to you, adorned in holiness,
awesome in praises,
acting wondrously!"

Your children saw you in your majesty,
splitting the sea in front of Moses.
"This is my God" they cried, and said:

"THE HOLY ONE will reign forever!"

And it was said:

"Yes, THE REDEEMING ONE has rescued Jacob,
saved him
from a power
stronger than his own!"

Blessed are you, THE GUARDIAN, Israel's redeeming power!

COMMENTS: This siddur reinstates reference to the splitting of the sea as a sign of God's redeeming power. The earlier Reconstructionist prayerbook omitted that reference because of its emphasis on supernatural intervention. As myth, however, the ancient tale of wonder underscores the sense of daily miracle in our lives. Even those of us who cannot affirm a God who intervenes in the natural process, and thus cannot accept the literal meaning of the tale, can appreciate its human message. According to the midrash, the sea did not split until one Israelite, Nahshon ben Aminadav, had the courage to walk upright into the water. Perhaps it was the divine spirit in Nahshon, rather than the magic of Moses's wand, that caused the sea to split.

A.G.

NOTE: Biblical references include Exodus 15:11, 18 and Jeremiah 31:11.

When our ancestors beheld these truths they proclaimed:
Among all the gods we can name, who can compare to the One Beyond Naming?
Among all the quantities we can label, number, mark and measure, which compares to the Mystery at the Heart of Reality?

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 78
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Hashkivenu adonay eloheynu leshalom veha'amidenu malgenu leha'iyim ufros aleynu sukkat shelomecha. Vetakenenu ve'etzah tovah milofo'necha veyoshi'gu lema'an shelomecha. Uvrzel kenafo'necha tasfirenu ki el shomrenu umatzilenu atah ki el melech hanun verahum atah. Ushmor tzeygenu uvo'gu leha'yim ulshalom me'atam ve'ad olam. Ufros aleynu sukkat shelomecha. Baru' atah adonay haporem sukkat shalom aleynu ve'al kol amo yistra'el ve'al yerushalayim.

KAVANAH. As we enter the dark of evening, we face the unknown. Earlier, in Ascher Bishavu (the Creation section immediately following Baru'ah), we affirmed the power that transforms night into day and day into night. Now we call for protection from the shadows that lengthen around us—shadows of fear and guilt, the uncharted future, the ever-pursuing past. We ask that the shadows of God's wings envelop us with love and mercy. The unknown night, like the unknown tomorrow, can only be met with faith in the power of infinite compassion to care for us.

When fears multiply
And danger threatens;
When sickness comes,
When death confronts us—
It is God's blessing of shalom
That sustains us
And upholds us.
Lightening our burden,
Dispelling our worry,
Restoring our strength,
Renewing our hope—
Reviving us.

COMMENTARY. Hashkivenu / Help us lie down [in peace]—is the final prescribed part of the Shema. It recalls the Shema by expressing the hope that we will “lie down...in peace” and “rise again...to life.” An extension of Ema V'hemarnah, Hashkivenu joins the vivid recollection of past redemption to a prayer for present protection and future peace. By calling God “guardian” and “protector” but also “redeemer,” Israel recognizes new dimensions of the power that makes for freedom. The final acknowledgment of God as the one who “spreads the sukkah of peace over us, over Israel, and over Jerusalem” conjures up the now-familiar image of Shabbat as a foretaste of that future time when Israel, its people, and its holy city will dwell in peace. The blessing is unique to the evening service. Perhaps responding to the cold, dark uncertainty of night, we invoke God's dwelling of peace.

S.S

KAVANAH. Enable us, God, to behold meaning in the chaos of life about us and purpose in the chaos of life within us. Deliver us from the sense of futility in our strivings toward the light and the truth. Give us strength to ride safely through the maelstrom of petty cares and anxieties. May we behold things in their proper proportions and see life in its wholeness and its holiness.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

NOTE. For our ancestors, the future of Jerusalem was not just about the future of the Jewish people. Jerusalem, in its biblical vision, will become the capital of the whole world. Praying for the peace of Jerusalem is the same as praying for the unity of all humanity and peace throughout the world.

D.A.T

COMMENTARY. The version presented here follows certain Sephardic versions by deleting the series of petitions for protection. Such petition is considered inappropriate on Shabbat, a day of fulfillment and appreciation for the many blessings we have. Shabbat itself is a sukkah of peace. We pray that real and complete peace be the lot of Israel and Jerusalem, so torn by strife in recent memory. Our tradition sees Jerusalem as the center of the world. Creation began there, according to the rabbis. So may the peace that begins there radiate forth and bless all earth's peoples. The peace of Jerusalem, the “heart of the world,” is also the peace of every human heart.

A.G

83 / HASHKIVENU/DIVINE HELP

82 / SHABBAT MA'ARIV
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**VESHAMERU / OBSERVING SHABBAT**

Let Israel's descendants keep Shabbat, making Shabbat throughout all their generations, as an eternal bond. Between me and Israel's descendants shall it be a sign eternally. For in six days THE FASHIONER OF ALL made skies and earth, and on the seventh day God ceased and drew a breath of rest.

*(When Shabbat coincides with a festival, add:)*

Moses proclaimed the Festivals of THE ENDURING ONE to the children of Israel.

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**NOTE.** *Vesham eru* (Exodus 31:16-17) serves as the introduction to the *Amidah* (silent prayer) of Shabbat eve. In places where prayerbooks were scarce, this prologue served as a reminder to include the Shabbat berakah in the silent prayer which follows.

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**SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 84**
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**HATZI KADDISH / SHORT KADDISH**

**Reader:** Let God’s name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

**Congregation:** May God’s great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

**Reader:** May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher (On Shabbat Shu'rah add: by far) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

On the opening and closing days of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot, turn to the Amidah for Pilgrimage Festivals, page 594.
INTRODUCTIONS TO THE AMIDAH

Standing here in Abraham’s desert
Affirming: one God.

Moving in the old spaces
Warmed by our ancestors’ embrace.

Standing here in Sarah’s tent
Laughing: new life.

Moving in the old spaces
Renewed by our ancestors’ hope.

Standing here in my place
Listening to our voices: yearning.

Moving in my own spaces
Translating the silence.

Dear God,
Open the blocked passageways to you,
The congealed places.

Roll away the heavy stone from the well as your servant
Jacob did when he beheld his beloved Rachel.

Help us open the doors of trust that have been jammed with
hurt and rejection.

As you open the blossoms in spring,
Even as you open the heavens in storm,
Open us—to feel your great, awesome, wonderful presence.

Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

KAVANAH. Prayer is communion. To commune with God is to put oneself
in touch with the source of cosmic energy.

Shlomo Pinter-Wendberg

M.M.K.

89 / AMIDAH

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 88
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AMIDAH

The traditional Amidah follows here. Directed meditations begin on page 725. A short Amidah can be found on page 730. The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three short steps forward and bowing left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence. For additional readings see pages 737-738, 740-748, 752-759.

Open my lips, BELOVED ONE, and let my mouth declare your praise.

1. AVOT VE’IMOT / ANCESTORS

Blessed are you, THE ANCIENT ONE, our God, God of our ancestors,

God of Abraham  God of Sarah
God of Isaac    God of Rebekah
God of Jacob   God of Rachel
and God of Leah;

COMMENTARY. Hatafotot / The Prayer, is the central prayer of the worship service. The language and manner of reciting the Tefillah offer insights into the place of the individual in communal prayer. When the Tefillah is recited privately, each individual stands (hence the same Amidah, “standing”) and addresses God in a sustained conversational way. Calling God “you” indicates intimacy and immediacy. Nevertheless, the individual prays with the communal voice: “We acknowledge you,” “Bless us,” “Grant us peace.” The Mishnah provides the structure within which additional prayers and petitions are placed. Even an individual’s private needs have importance within the communal context.

Throughout the centuries the pursuit of meaningful communal prayer has led to variations in the Amidah. These variations reflect the attitudes and beliefs of different prayer communities. In the ongoing pursuit of meaningful prayer for a Reconstructionist prayer community, changes have been introduced into this Amidah, most notably in the first two of the seven berachot which comprise the Shabbat Amidah. The first berachot has been expanded to include the patriarchs along with the patriarchs as exemplars of God’s presence in human lives. By concentrating on examples of healing forces and life-sustaining rains, the second berachot acknowledges God as the power that sustains life. The traditional emphasis on God’s ability to resurrect the dead has been replaced here by a celebration of God as the power that sustains all life.

COMMENTARY. A. J. Heschel has said, “The term, ‘God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob’ is semantically different from a term such as ‘the God of truth, goodness, and beauty.’ Abraham, Isaac and Jacob do not signify ideas, principles or abstract values. Nor do they stand for teachers or thinkers, and the term is not to be understood like that of ‘the God of Kant, Hegel, and Schelling.’ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not principles to be comprehended but lives to be continued. The life of one who joins the covenant of Abraham continues the life of Abraham. For the present is not apart from the past. ‘Abraham is still standing before God’ (Genesis 18:22). Abraham endures forever. We are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” In this same spirit, we are also Sarah and Rebekah, Rachel and Leah.

L.W.K.

Kavanah. The introductory words (Psalm 51:17) of the Amidah contain a paradox of divine and human power. Our ability to be whole, upright, free, and fully alive grows as we acknowledge and appreciate an infinitely higher source of power in the universe. This allows us to be receptive. By acknowledging our human vulnerability, we open our hearts to the support, compassion, and faithfulness available around us.

S.F.W.
In each age
we receive and transmit
Torah.
At each moment
we are addressed by the
World.
In each age
we are challenged
by our ancient teaching.
At each moment
we stand face to face with
Truth.
In each age
we add our wisdom
to that which has gone before.
At each moment
the knowing heart
is filled with wonder.
In each age
the children of Torah
become its builders
and seek to set the world firm
on a foundation of Truth.

---

great, heroic, awesome God, supreme divinity,
impacting deeds of kindness, begetter of all;
mindful of the loyalty of Israel’s ancestors,
bringing, with love, redemption to their children’s children
for the sake of the divine name.

On Shabbat Shavuoth add:
(Remember us for life,
sovereign who wishes us to live,
and write us in the Book of Life,
for your sake, ever-living God.)

Regal One, our help, salvation and protector:
Blessed are you, Kind One,
the shield of Abraham and help of Sarah.

---

рош ח Assy / ezer sarah. The biblical term ezer has two meanings, "rescue" and "be strong." It is commonly translated as "aid" or "help." It also has the sense of power and strength. In Deuteronomy 33:29, ezer is parallel to מְאֹד, majesty. Eve is described as Adam’s ezer kenegdo, a power equal to him, a strength and majesty to match his. Thus ma’amot avraham (shield of Abraham) and ezer sarah (help of Sarah) are parallel images of power and protection.

R.S.A.

Kavanah: God is experienced as רוש, helper, every time our thought of God furnishes us an escape from the sense of frustration and supplies us with a feeling of permanence in the midst of universal flux.

M.M.K. (ADAPTID)

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 92
2. GEVUROT / DIVINE POWER

You are forever powerful, ALMIGHTY ONE, abundant in your saving acts.

*In summer:* You send down the dew.

*In winter:* You cause the wind to blow and rain to fall.

In loyalty you sustain the living, nurturing the life of every living thing, upholding those who fall, healing the sick, freeing the captive, and remaining faithful to all life held dormant in the earth. Who can compare to you, almighty God, who can resemble you, the source of life and death, who makes salvation grow?

*(On Shabbat Shorah add:)* Who can compare to you, source of all mercy, remembering all creatures mercifully, decreeing life?

Faithful are you in giving life to every living thing. Blessed are you, THE FOUNT OF LIFE, who gives and renews life.

3. KEDUSHAT HASHEM / NAMING THE HOLY

Holy are you. Your name is holy. And all holy beings hail you each day. Blessed are you, AWESOME ONE, the holy God.

*(On Shabbat Shorah conclude:)* the holy sovereign.

---

**COMMENTARY.** We acknowledge the presence of God in the natural rhythms of passing seasons. Our awareness of wind, rain, and dew as daily miracles also serves to remind us that the purity of these gifts, so vital for our survival, must be maintained by human watchfulness. In thanking God for air and water, we assert our commitment to preserving them as sources of life and protecting them from life-destroying pollution. The mention of rain or dew follows the two-season climate of Erets Yisrael; summer extends from the first day of Pesah until Shemini Atzeret, and winter until the following Pesah.

A.G.
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4. KEDUSHAT HAYOM / THE DAY'S HOLINESS

You sanctified the seventh day, your signature upon completion of the heavens and the earth. You made it most blessed of all days, declared it holiest of times. Thus is it written in your Torah:

Heaven, earth, and all their beings were finished. God completed on the seventh day the work that had been done, and ceased upon the seventh day from all the work that had been done. God blessed the seventh day and set it apart. For on it God had ceased from all the work that had been done in carrying out Creation.

Our God, our ancients' God, take pleasure in our rest. Enable us to realize holiness through your mitzvot, give us our portion in your Torah, let us enjoy the good things of your world, and gladden us with your salvation. Refine our hearts to serve you honestly. Help us to perpetuate, DEAR ONE our God, your holy Shabbat, with love and joy. Let all Israel, and all who treat your name as holy, rest upon this day. Blessed are you, SACRED ONE, source of the holiness of Shabbat.

KAVANAH. Through our observance of Shabbat, we shall come to know God as the source of salvation. In that state of being, our powers are harmoniously employed in the achievement of worthwhile aims.

COMMENTARY. One of the most distinguished words in the Bible is the word kadosh, a word which more than any other is representative of the mystery and the majesty of the divine. Now what was the first holy object in the history of the world? Was it a mountain? Was it an altar?

It is indeed a unique occasion at which the word kadosh is used for the first time: in the book of Genesis, at the end of the story of creation. How extremely significant is the fact that it is applied to time. “And God blessed the seventh day and made it kadosh.” There is no reference in the record of creation to any object in space that would be endowed with the quality of kadosh, holiness.

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DERASH. We ask God to remove the impurities that have collected in our minds so that we might be truthful enough to serve God. What are these impurities, these false coverings? They are the myth of isolation, the denial of interconnectedness, the prideful pretense that we are alone and abandoned in the cosmos.

DERASH. The creation of the world is not completed so long as we have not fulfilled our creative function in it.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 96
5. AVODAH / WORSHIP

Take pleasure, Gracious One, our God, in Israel your people; lovingly accept their fervent prayer. May Israel's worship always be acceptable to you.

(When Shabbat coincides with a Rosh Hodesh or Festival, add: Our God, our ancients' God, may our prayer arise and come to you, and be beheld, and be acceptable. Let it be heard, acted upon, remembered—the memory of us and all our needs, the memory of our ancestors, the memory of messianic hopes, the memory of Jerusalem your holy city, and the memory of all your kin, the house of Israel, all surviving in your presence. Act for goodness and grace, for love and care, for life, well-being and peace, on this day of

On Rosh Hodesh: the new moon.
On Pesach: the festival of matzor.
On Sukkot: the festival of sukkot.

KAVANAH. Prayer itself is the divinity.

PINHAS OF KORETZ

The memory of messianic hopes. We assert our faith in the coming of a messianic age, a time when justice will reign and all humanity will be united in recognition of the one God. Even in our people's darkest hour, this vision of the future strengthened us as we faced both life and death. However distanced we may be from the more naive aspects of belief in the person of messiah, the vision of a transformed future remains our guide, just as we know that the vision will become reality only if our deeds reflect it.)
Remember us this day, ALL-KNOWING ONE, our God, for goodness. Favor us this day with blessing. Preserve us this day for life. With your redeeming, nurturing word, be kind and generous. Act tenderly on our behalf, and grant us victory over all our trials. Truly, our eyes turn toward you, for you are a providing God; gracious and merciful are you.

And may our eyes behold your homecoming, with merciful intent, to Zion. Blessed are you, THE FAITHFUL ONE, who brings your presence home to Zion.

6. HODA’AH / THANKS

We give thanks to you that you are THE ALL-MERCIFUL, our God, God of our ancestors, today and always. A firm, enduring source of life, a shield to us in time of trial, you are ever there, from age to age. We acknowledge you, declare your praise, and thank you for our lives entrusted to your hand, our souls placed in your care, for your miracles that greet us every day, and for your wonders and the good things that are with us every hour, morning, noon, and night. Good One, whose kindness never stops, Kind One, whose loving acts have never failed—always have we placed our hope in you.

DERASH. The insights of wonder must be constantly kept alive. Since there is a need for daily wonder, there is a need for daily worship. The sense of the "miracles which are daily with us," the sense of the "continual marvels," is the source of prayer. There is no worship, no music, no love, if we take for granted the blessings or defeats of living . . . The profound and perpetual awareness of the wonder of being has become a part of the religious consciousness of the Jew.

A.J.H.

KAVANAH. So long as the Jewish people is linked in communion with the eternal, it can look forward to an eternal life for itself. M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

KAVANAH. Gratitude is the overwhelming experience of the person of faith. Faith stimulates gratitude, and the practice of gratitude expands faith. We experience thankfulness when we know that our lives are safe within God’s protection. We trust that the future is assured. We need not consume our days in fear and anxiety. We are released. We can marvel at the daily wonders.

S.P.W.
On Hanukah add:

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(On Hanukah add: For the miracles, for the redemption, for heroic acts, for saving deeds, for consolations, all of which you have enacted for our ancestors at this time of year in days gone by—as in the days of Matthew, son of Yochaanan, Hasmonoe High Priest, and Matthew’s sons: a wicked Hellenistic government arose against your people Israel, forcing them to shun your Torah and to leave off from the laws your will ordained. And you, in your abundant mercy, stood up for Israel in their hour of distress. You pressed their claim, exacted justice for them. You delivered armed might to the weak, the many to the power of the few, the wicked to the power of the just, the vicious to the power of those occupied with Torah. You made known your name that day, and made it holy in your world. And for your people Israel you enacted great deliverance, as in our own time. Afterward, your children came into your Temple’s inner room. They cleared your sanctuary, purified your holy place, kindled lights inside your holy courtyards, and established these eight days of Hanukah, for giving thanks and praise to your great name.)

For all these things, may your name be blessed and raised in honor always, sovereign of ours, forever.

(On Shabbat Shu’rah add: And write down for a good life all the people of your covenant.)

Let all of life acknowledge you! May all beings praise your name in truth, O God, our rescue and our aid. Blessed are you, The Gracious One, whose name is good, to whom all thanks are due._5

103 / AMIDAH

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 102
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Shalom rav al yisra’el ameha tasim le’olam.
Ki atah hu meleh adon lechol hashalom.
Vetov be’eyneha levareh et ameha yisra’el ve’et kol yoshvey tevel behol et uvhol sha’ah bishlomeha.

On Shabbat Shuwh add:

(Besefer hayim berahah veshalom ufarasah tovah
nizaher venikatev lefanah
anahnu vehol ameha beyt yisra’el
lehayim tovim ulshalom.)

Baruh atah adonay osey hashalom.

The Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.

7. BIRKAT HASHALOM / BLESSING FOR PEACE

Grant abundant peace eternally for Israel, your people. For you are the sovereign source of all peace. So, may it be a good thing in your eyes to bless your people Israel, and all who dwell on earth, in every time and hour, with your peace.

(On Shabbat Shuwh add: In the book of life, blessing, peace, and proper sustenance, may we be remembered and inscribed, we and all your people, the house of Israel, for a good life and for peace.)

Blessed are you, Compassionate One, maker of peace.

The Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.

My God, you are salam peace.
Peace comes from you goes back to you.
Let us live in peace and with peace.
You are great and generous.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 104
ELOHAY NETZOR/A CONCLUDING MEDITATION

Dear God, protect my tongue from evil, and my lips from telling lies. May I turn away from evil and do what is good in your sight. Let me be counseled among those who seek peace. May my words of prayer and my heart’s meditation be seen favorably, Beloved One, my rock and my redeemer. May the one who creates harmony above make peace for us and for all Israel, and for all who dwell on earth. And say: Amen.

COMMENTARY. The Talmud lists examples of twelve personal meditations that could follow the Amidah. If this one does not speak to you, compose your own, or stand or sit in silent meditation.

NOTE. Like the opening verse of the Amidah, this prayer employs the singular and deals with the power of words. But here the concern is for words between people, not for those directed to God. Some people find it easier to talk to God than to talk to others.

Kavanah. Sin is the failure to live up to the best that is in us. It means that our souls are not attuned to the divine—that we have betrayed God.

May... redeemer (Psalm 19:15).

Yihyu leratzon imrey fi vehegyon l’ibi lefaneha adonay tzuri vego’ali.
Oseh shalom bmimov hu ya’aseh shalom aleyav ve’al kol yisra’el ve’al kol yoshvev tevel ve’imru amen.

107 / ELOHAY NETZOR/A CONCLUDING MEDITATION

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 106
We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow at "kotim." Choose one of the following:

Aleynu leshabe'ah la'adon hakol
later gedulah leyotzer bereyshit
shenatan lanu torat emet
vehaye'olam nata betohenu.

Aleynu leshabe'ah la'adon hakol
later gedulah leyotzer bereyshit
bore hashamayim venoteiyhem
roka ha'retz vetze'etza'eha
noten neshamah la'am aicha
verush laholehim bah

It is up to us to offer praises to the
Source of all, to declare the greatness
of the author of Creation, who
has made us different from the
other nations of the earth, and situ-
ated us in quite a different spot, and
made our daily lot another kind
from theirs, and given us a destiny
uncommon in this world.
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And so, we bend the knee and bow, acknowledging the sovereign who rules above all those who rule, the blessed Holy One, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth, whose realm embraces heaven’s heights, whose mighty presence stalks celestial ramparts. This is our God; there is none else besides, as it is written in the Torah:

“You shall know this day, and bring it home inside your heart, that THE SUPREME ONE is God in the heavens above and on the earth below. There is no other God.”

DERASHA: Every person and people that feel they have something to live for, and that are bent on living that life in righteousness, are true witnesses of God.

KAHNANAH: As the hand held before the eye hides the tallest mountain, so this small earthly life hides from our gaze the vast radiance and secrets of which the world is full, and if we can take life from before our eyes, as one takes away one’s hand, we will see the great radiance within the world.

דִּיָּהוּ קַדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הָיָה בָּרוּךָ וַעֲזֵי חֶגֵדָיו # other God (Deuteronomy 4:39).
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And so, we put our hope in you,
The EMINENCE, our God,
that soon we may behold
the full splendor of your might,
and see idolatry vanish from the earth,
and all material gods be swept away,
and the power of your rule repair the world,
and all creatures of flesh call on your name,
and all the wicked of the earth turn back to you.
Let all who dwell upon the globe perceive and know
that to you each knee must bend, each tongue swear oath,
and let them give the glory of your name its precious due.
Let all of them take upon themselves your rule.
Reiga over them, soon and for always.
For this is all your realm, throughout all worlds, across all time—
as it is written in your Torah:
"THE ETERNAL ONE will reign now and forever."

And it is written:
"THE EVERLASTING ONE will reign
as sovereign over all the earth.
On that day shall THE MANY NAMED be one,
God's name be one!"

Kavanah. A world of God callers is a world of truth and peace, a world where the lust for power, greed, and envy—the idols of pride—is uprooted from the individual and group psyche.

125 / ALEYNU

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 124
* * *

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another’s will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth’s abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life’s creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

* * *

ALTERNATIVE VERSION

It is up to us
to hallow Creation,
to respond to Life
with the fullness of our lives.
It is up to us
to meet the World,
to embrace the Whole
even as we wrestle
with its parts.
It is up to us
to repair the World
and to bind our lives to Truth.
Therefore we bend the knee
and shake off the stiffness that keeps us
from the subtle
gaces of Life
and the supple
gestures of Love.
With reverence
and thanksgiving
we accept our destiny
and set for ourselves
the task of redemption.

Judy Chicago

Rami M. Shapiro
THE MOURNERS' KADDESH

It is customary for mourners, and those observing Yahrzeit, to sorrow for Kaddish. In some congregations everyone rises. For additional readings see pages 787-796.

Reader: Let God’s name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God’s name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hallowed, though it be higher (On Shabbat Shaveh odd: be far) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

May Heaven grant a universal peace, and life for us, and for all Israel. And say: Amen.

May the one who creates harmony above, make peace for us and for all Israel, and for all who dwell on earth. And say: Amen.

During the month of Elul many congregations sing Aḥat Sha’a’ali, page 832.

It is customary to acknowledge mourners on the Shabbat during shivah, traditionally their first return to the synagogue following the death of their loved one. They are welcomed with the words:

כַּפֵלָה יִנְחֶם פָּנָיו שֶׁאֶלֶף קָרָן יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם יִנְחֶם

May God console you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MOURNERS’ KADDESH

In reciting the Kaddish we affirm our awareness of holiness in our world. Much of our experience of divine goodness, grace and love has come to us through those whose lives have touched our own. (Today we remember...) We invoke the transcendent power of love and caring as we sanctify God’s name.

Love is not changed by Death, and nothing is lost and all in the end is harvest.

Edith Stowell

NOTE. Congregations usually mention the names of congregants and their relatives who have died in the previous week before reciting the Mourners’ Kaddish. In many congregations a Yahrzeit list is read as well. In more informal settings the leader sometimes invites those present to speak the names of those they wish to be remembered.

D.A.T.
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KADDISH YATOM

Reader: Yitgadal veyitkaddash shemey raba
be’alma divra hiruyey veyamlah malhuotey
behaycyon uvromeyon uvehayey dehol beyt yisra’el
ba’agala uvezman kariv ve’imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le’adam ulalmey almaya.

Reader: Yitbaraz veyishhashah veyiyta’ar veyiytromam veyiymasey
veiyt-hadir veyitaleh veyiy-halal shemey dekuddsha berih hu
le’ela (On Shabbat Shuvah add: le’ela) min kol birhata veshirata
lishha’ata venuhymata da’amiran be’alma ve’imru amen.

Yehey shelama raba min shemaya veshayim aleynu ve’al kol
yisra’el ve’imru amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya’aseh shalom aleynu ve’al kol
yisra’el ve’al kol yoshvey tevel ve’imru amen.

During the month of Elul many congregations sing Ahat Shu’ali, page 832.

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ADON OLAM / CROWN OF ALL TIME

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

Crown of all time, the one who reigned before all mortal shape was made, and when God's will brought forth all things then was the name supreme proclaimed.

And after everything is gone, yet One alone, awesome, will reign.

God was, and is, and will remain, in splendid balance, over all.

And God is One, no second is, none can compare, or share God's place.

Without beginning, without end, God's is all might and royal grace.

This is my God, my help who lives, refuge from pain in time of trial, my banner, and my place to fly, my cup's portion when, dry, I cry.

To God's kind hand I pledge my soul each time I sleep, again to wake, and with my soul, this body, here.

YAH'S love is mine; I shall not fear.

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Adon olam asher malah, beterem kol yetzir nivra.
Le'et na'asah vehetzto kol, azay melech shemo nikra.
Ve'asher yielhet hakol, levado yimloh nora.
Vehu hayah vehu hoveh, vehu yihye betifarah.
Vehu chad ve'eyn sheni, lehameishlo lo lehalahir.
Beli reshit beli tahlit, belo ha'oz vehamisrah.
Vehu eli veshay go'ali, vezuzi yevli be'et tzarah.
Vehu nasi umanos li, menat kosi beyom ekr.
Beyada safkid ruhi, be'et ishan ve'atsah.
Ve'im ruhi gevityati, adonay li velo ira.