

Rosh Hashanah Day 1 - *Minhah* (Shabbat)

Torah Service - Closing



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We are grateful for the efforts of Rabbi Amy Loewenthal for producing this excerpt in tandem with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association under the leadership of Rabbi Elyse Wechterman.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR • SHANAH TOVAH • שנה טובה

The Torah is lifted, and one of the following is recited:

This is the Torah.

It is a Tree of Life to those who hold fast to it.

Those who uphold it may be counted fortunate!



This is the Torah which Moses placed before the children of
Israel,
by the word of THE ALMIGHTY ONE, and by the hand of Moses.

The second reading takes place here. After that, the second scroll is lifted as indicated above.

COMMENTARY. The 1945 Reconstructionist Prayerbook put “*Etz hayim hi/* It is a tree of life” in place of “*asher sam mosheh lifney beney yisra’el/* which Moses placed before the children of Israel.” Earlier Reconstructionists were concerned that it be made clear that while affirming the holiness of Torah, they did not believe that it was given to Moses at Mount Sinai. Many current Reconstructionists believe the evolutionary nature of the Torah to be self-evident and have returned to the traditional line for the sake of its rich mythic imagery. Both options are included here. D.A.T.

עץ חיים היא / It is a Tree of Life. The book of Genesis tells us that the tree of life is in the garden of Eden. The Torah is our tree of life; it is our way back to the garden. D.E.

The Torah is lifted, and one of the following is recited:

וְזֹאת הַתּוֹרָה עֵץ־חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחֲזִיקִים בָּהּ וְתִמְכֶּיָּהּ מֵאֲשֶׁר:

Vezot hatorah etz hayim hi lamaḥazikim bah vetomḥeha me'ushar.



וְזֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם מֹשֶׁה לְפָנָי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־פִּי יְהוָה בְּיַד־
מֹשֶׁה:

Vezot hatorah asher sam mosheh lifney beney yisra'el al pi adonay beyad mosheh.

The second reading takes place here. After that, the second scroll is lifted as indicated above.

עץ...מאשר / It...fortunate! (Proverbs 3:18).

זאת...ישראל / This...Israel (Deuteronomy 4:44).

על...משה / by...Moses (Numbers 9:23).

HAḤNASAT SEFER TORAH /
RETURNING THE TORAH TO THE ARK

Let all bless the name of THE ETERNAL,
for it alone is to be exalted.

God's splendor dwells on earth and in the heavens,
God has lifted up our people's strength.
Praise to all God's fervent ones,
to the children of Israel, people near to God.
Halleluyah!

Traditionally the Torah is carried around the room, although some congregations immediately place it in the ark and continue with Etz Ḥayim Hi, page 605.

הַכְנֵסֵת סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה

יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי־נִשְׁגַב שְׁמוֹ לְבָדוֹ

הוֹדוּ עַל־אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם: וַיָּרֶם קֶרֶן לְעַמּוֹ תְהִלָּה לְכָל־חַסִּידָיו לְבְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קְרוֹבוֹ הַלְלוּיָהּ:

Yehalelu et shem adonay ki nisgav shemo levado

Hodo al eretz veshamayim vayarem keren le'amo tehilah lehōl
ḥasidav livney yisra'el am kerovo halleluyah.

Traditionally the Torah is carried around the room, although some congregations immediately place it in the ark and continue with Etz Hayim Hi, page 606.

יהללו...הללויה / Let...Halleluyah! (Psalms 148:13-14).

On Shabbat, substitute Psalm 29 (page 603).

The world belongs to GOD in all its fullness,
the earth, and all who dwell on it,
for God has founded it upon the waters,
on the torrents, God established it.

Who can ascend the mount of THE ETERNAL?

Who rises to the holy place of God?

The one whose hands are clean, whose heart is pure,
whose soul has not been vainly self-excusing,
the one who never swore deceitfully.

That person reaps a blessing from THE ALL-KNOWING ONE,
justice from the God of help.

For many generations now,
the family of Jacob has sought your presence.

You city gates, open your bolts,
eternal gates, be lifted up,
and let the sovereign of glory come! ↩

לא־נִשָּׂא לְשׁוּא נַפְשִׁי / Whose soul has not been vainly self-excusing. Literally, “who has not lifted up the soul in vain.” The psalm turns on repetitions of the key verb, “lift up,” playing on its many meanings. Compare: “That person reaps [literally, lifts up] a blessing....You city gates, open [literally, lift up] your gates, etc.” The pilgrim, ascending the steep slopes toward the Temple Mount, contemplates, through this interplay of associations, the fundamental act of pilgrimage: an offering-up to God. J.R.

NOTE. This psalm asks and answers several questions, suggesting that it was sung antiphonally in ancient times with the congregation singing the responses. D.A.T.

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד

תִּבֵּל וַיִּשְׁבֵי בָּהּ :	לִיהוּהָ הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ
וְעַל־נְהַרֹת יְכוֹנְנָהּ :	כִּי־הוּא עַל־יַמִּים יִסְדָּהּ
וּמִי־יָקוּם בְּמָקוֹם קִדְשׁוֹ :	מִי־יַעֲלֶה בְּהַר־יְהוּהָ
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נִשְׂא לַשָּׂא נַפְשִׁי	נְקִי כַפַּיִם וּבֶרֶךְ־לֵבָב
וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמִרְמָהּ :	
וְצַדִּיקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ :	יֵשׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יְהוּהָ
מִבְּקִשֵׁי פְּנֵידָ יַעֲקֹב סֶלְהָ :	זֶה דוֹר דּוֹרְשָׁיו
וְהַנִּשְׂאוֹ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם	שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רָאשֵׁיכֶם
וַיָּבֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד : ←	

Ledavid mizmor.

Ladonay ha'aretz umlo'ah tevel veyoshvey vah.

Ki hu al yamim yesadah ve'al neharot yehoneneha.

Mi ya'aleh behar adonay umi yakum bimkom kodsho.

Neki hapayim uvar levav asher lo nasa lashav nafshi velo nishba lemirmah.

Yisa verahah me'et adonay utzedakah me'elohey yisho.

Zeh dor dorshav mevakshey faneha ya'akov selah.

Se'u she'arim rasheyhem vehinasu pithey olam veyavo meleh hakavod. ↪

Who is the sovereign of glory?
THE MAGNIFICENT, so powerful and mighty!
THE ETERNAL ONE, a champion in battle!
You city gates, open your bolts;
eternal gates, be lifted up,
and let the sovereign of glory come!
Who is this one, the sovereign of glory?
THE RULER of the Multitudes of Heaven,
the sovereign of glory.

Psalm 24

Continue on page 605.

מי זה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד יהוה עֲזוּז וְגִבּוֹר
יהוה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה:
שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רְאֵשֵׁיכֶם וּשְׂאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם
וַיָּבֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד:
מי הוא זה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד יהוה צְבָאוֹת הוּא
מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד סֵלָה:

Mi zeh meleḥ hakavod adonay izuz vegibor adonay gibor
milḥamah.

Se'u she'arim rasheyhem use'u pitḥey olam veyavo meleḥ
hakavod.

Mi hu zeh meleḥ hakavod adonay tzeva'ot hu meleḥ hakavod
selah.

Continue on page 606.

The ark is opened and the Torah placed inside.

And when the Ark was set at rest, they would proclaim:
Restore, ETERNAL ONE, the many thousand troops of Israel!

For it is a precious teaching I have given you,
my Torah: Don't abandon it!

It is a Tree of Life to those that hold fast to it,
all who uphold it may be counted fortunate.

Its ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all its paths are peace.

Return us, PRECIOUS ONE, let us return!
Renew our days, as you have done of old!

The ark is closed.

COMMENTARY. "Renew our days as you have done of old."

We may read:

Renew our days as when we were young.

Revive us with the wonder of your world,
with the enthusiasm of our youth.

Help us to recover something of the child within
that knew you in the desert
and trembled at the foot of the mountain.

Grant us, once again, the sacred vision
and the courage of new beginnings.

Do not return us to days past:

Renew our days as when we were young.

S.E.S.

The ark is opened and the Torah placed inside.

ובנחה יאמר שובה יהוה רבבות אלפי ישראל:
כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם תורתִי אל־תִּעֲזֹבוּ:
עץ־חיים היא למחזיקים בה ותמכִּיהָ מאֲשֶׁר:
דַּרְכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי־נְעָם וְכָל־נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם:
הַשִּׁבְנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְנָשׁוּבָה חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:

Etz hayim hi lamahazikim bah vetomheha me'ushar.
Deraheha darhey no'am vehol netivoteha shalom.
Hashivenu adonay eleha venashuvah hadesh yameynu
kekedem.

The ark is closed.

ובנחה...ישראל / And...Israel (Numbers 10:36).
כי...תעזבו / For...it (Proverbs 4:2).
עץ...מאשר / It...fortunate (Proverbs 3:18).
דרכיה...שלום / Its...peace (Proverbs 3:17).
השיבנו...כקדם / Return...old (Lamentations 5:21).

אֵץ חַיִּים הִיא / It is a Tree of Life. At the end of the Garden story, Adam and Eve are forbidden access to the mysterious Tree of Life, whose fruit confers immortality. Yet over the generations to follow, humankind itself becomes a Tree of Life. The Torah is handed on from one generation to another, binding the generations in a commonwealth of time and conferring the norms on which the survival of civilization depends. Thus the Torah is compared to the Tree of Life.

J.R.

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 by far than all the blessings, songs, praises and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

COMMENTARY. Holiness is the quality or value that things or persons have when they help people to become fully human. M.M.K. (Adapted)

COMMENTARY. During this season of the year, we struggle with images of God as judge and sovereign even as we see God as source of forgiveness and return. The repetition at this time of year of the word לעלא/higher by far reminds us on the one hand that only true change on our part can reach through the many intervening layers to reconnect us with the divine in ourselves and in our world. The liturgical repetition also reminds us how important, powerful, and redeeming that reconnection can be. "Go higher!" "Settle for nothing less!" It beckons us not to quit during the strenuous climb. True change is not easy, but saving our lives depends on it. D.A.T.

חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיף
מְלֻכוּתָהּ בְּתַיִּכּוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכּוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן
קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמֵיָא:
יְתְּבָרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדַּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלֵּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא
לְעֵלָא לְעֵלָא מְפַל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְאִמְרִין
בְּעֵלְמָא וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Reader: Yitgadal veyitkadesh shemey raba
be'alma divra hirutey veyamliḥ malḥutey
beḥayeyḥon uvyomeyḥon uvḥayey deḥol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam
ulalmey almayā.

Reader: Yitbarah veyishtabah veyitpa'ar veyitromam
veyitnasey veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal
shemey dekudsha beriḥ hu
le'ela le'ela mikol birḥata veshirata
tushbeḥata veneḥemata da'amiran be'alma ve'imru amen.

You do not have to leave the room.
Remain standing in your place and listen.
Do not even listen, simply wait.
Do not even wait.
Be quiet, still and solitary.
The world will freely offer itself to you.
To be unmasked.
It has no choice.
It will roll in ecstasy at your feet.

Franz Kafka