

High Holidays 2022

Shaharit Rosh Hashanah



RECONSTRUCTING JUDAISM

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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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The following Introduction to the Amidah is recited when chanting part or all of the Amidah aloud. If both a Shaḥarit and Musaf Amidah will be chanted aloud, this introduction is used for Musaf.

The silent Amidah begins on the next page.

OHILAH LA'EL / INTRODUCTION TO THE AMIDAH

I yearn for God,
I seek God's face,
I ask of God the power of expression, so that
I might sing, amid my people, of God's power.
I express my joy in God's creative acts.
I know that thoughts are human, but that poetry belongs to
God.
I ask of you, my sovereign, open my lips—then shall
I tell your glory!
May my words of prayer, and my heart's meditation
be seen favorably, PRECIOUS ONE, my rock, my champion.

COMMENTARY. Our search for a Jewish way in which to speak about life as an ongoing religious quest inevitably brings us back to the psalmist, and especially to those passages where the author of the Psalms cries out to “seek My face,” “to behold the beauty of God,” or “to dwell in God’s courts.” We shudder, of course, at such a fully anthropomorphic concept of God. If God has a face, we tend to believe, surely it is a projection of the human face. It is we who take the mysterious and faceless One of the universe and make it into a humanlike deity. But I also do not believe the matter is quite that simple. *Our need to create God, I believe, comes out of the deepest recesses of ourselves, the place within us that also knows, in a way we cannot fully articulate, that God created us.* We are but an effulgence of the One, a ray of that light called Y-H-W-H. From deep within us, there wells up a need to testify to that truth, to construct a reality that will remind us of our hidden source. We are created in the image of God, if you will, and we are obliged to return the favor. *So the face is our gift to God. But the light that shines forth from that face and radiates with love—that surely is God’s gift to us.*

A.G. (Adapted)

The following Introduction to the Amidah is recited when chanting part or all of the Amidah aloud. If both a Shaḥarit and Musaf Amidah will be chanted aloud, this introduction is used for Musaf.

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אוֹחֵילָה לְאֵל

אוֹחֵילָה לְאֵל
אֶתְחַלָּה פָּנִי
אֲשַׁאֲלָה מִמֶּנּוּ מַעֲנֵה לְשׁוֹן:
אֲשֶׁר בִּקְהַל עַם אֲשִׁירָה עֲזֹ
אֲבִיעָה רִנָּנוֹת בְּעַד מִפְעָלָיו:
לְאָדָם מַעֲרִכִי-לֵב וּמִיָּהוּה מַעֲנֵה לְשׁוֹן:
אֲדַנִּי שְׁפָתִי תִפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:
יְהִי לְרִצּוֹן אֲמִרֵי-פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוּה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי:

KAVANAH. In the Hebrew original, all but two lines of this prayer commence with the letter *aleph*—the marker in future-tense verbs of the first-person subject, “I.” Even when the speaker of the Hebrew text is not referring directly to the self, the self persists, so to speak, as an echo—in a sense, as the necessary precondition of all prayer. Here, the worshipper struggles to make his or her private prayer *public*, knowing that even this public utterance will be stamped with the indelible marks of the self. But only when the prayer achieves true mutuality, only when it is completed and received by the One addressed, whose name is likewise *Aleph*, can the worshipper truly say: “I am.” J.R.

אֲדַנִּי...תְּהִלָּתְךָ / I ask of you...glory! (Psalms 51:17).

יְהִי לְרִצּוֹן...וְגֹאֲלִי / May...champion (Psalms 19:15).

This Amidah can be used for both Shaḥarit and Musaf, and can be read silently or chanted aloud. Rubrics guiding the reader for these choices are placed throughout the Amidah.

AMIDAH FOR ROSH HASHANAH MORNING

The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three steps forward and bowing, left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence. The traditional Amidah follows here. Directed Meditations begin on page 1, and an alternative Amidah can be found on page 383.

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; 

DERASH. Acknowledging our ancestors reminds us that what we are is shaped by who they were. Just as an acorn is shaped by the oak that preceded it and yet gives birth to a tree uniquely its own, so we are shaped by our ancestors yet give rise to a Judaism all our own. R.M.S.

KAVANAH. The opening of the Amidah calls to mind previous generations, near as well as distant. Take a few moments to think about your parents, your grandparents, and other relatives about whom you may have heard stories. What is your connection with them? L.G.B.

NOTE. The choreography of the Amidah is modeled on the approach of subjects before their sovereign. We take three steps forward, bow, offer praise, deliver our petition, offer thanks, and take three steps back. On Rosh Hashanah we are especially mindful of the metaphor of monarchy. R.H.

חדן...תהלת / Open...praise (Psalms 51:17).

This Amidah can be used for both Shaḥarit and Musaf, and can be read silently or chanted aloud. Rubrics guiding the reader for these choices are placed throughout the Amidah.

עֲמִידָה

The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three steps forward and bowing, left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence. The traditional Amidah follows here. Directed Meditations begin on page 1, and an alternative Amidah can be found on page 383.

אֲדֹנֵי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

אָבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת 

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ

אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה

אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם

אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק

אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל

אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב

וְאֱלֹהֵי יִלְאָה: ←

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu

elohey avraham

elohey sarah

elohey yitzḥak

elohey rivkah

elohey ya'akov

elohey raḥel

veylohey le'ah →

NOTE. The traditional liturgy evolved gradually. It contains thousands of variant or alternative versions. Reconstructionist liturgy has eliminated references to traditional beliefs that Jews are the chosen people, that there is individual reward and punishment, that the Temple should be rebuilt, that there will be a personal Messiah and that there will be bodily resurrection. The Reconstructionist commitment to equality for women has resulted in additional changes. Our liturgy reflects an understanding of God as the Source of goodness, the Life of nature, and the Power that makes for salvation.

D.A.T.

great, heroic, awesome God, supreme divinity,
imparting 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.

The lines that follow are chanted aloud by the service leader. They are omitted when praying silently.

By the counsel of the sages and the wise,
and by the knowledge of those learned in our ways,
I open up my mouth in prayer and supplication,
to entreat mercy from the sovereign of all Creation. ↪

COMMENTARY. Abraham Joshua Heschel used to teach that the reason graven images are forbidden by the Torah is not that God has no image, but because God has but one image: that of every living, breathing, human being. You may not fashion an image of God in any medium other than that of your entire life—that is the message of the Torah.

To be a religious Jew is to walk the tightrope between knowing the invisibility of God and seeing the face of God everywhere. YHWH is but a breath, utterly without form, the essence of abstraction itself. And yet that same abstraction is the face of God that “peers out from the windows, peeks through the lattice-work.” That face contains within it all the faces of humanity, and each of them contains the face of God. God is *ruah kol basar*, the spirit that resides in all flesh. That presence may be brought to consciousness in the mind of every human who is open to it, as it may be blocked out and negated entirely by the closing of the human heart, by cruelty, or by the denial of God’s image. The *Shehinah*, the divine presence in our world, does not dwell where she is not wanted. A.G. (Adapted)

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֵה
הַכֹּל וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאֵמוֹת וּמֵבִיא גְּאֻלָּה לְבְנֵי בְּנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן
שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה:

The lines that follow are chanted aloud by the service leader. They are omitted when praying silently.

מִסּוֹד חֲכָמִים וְנִבְּנִים וּמִלֵּמֶד יָצֵת מְבִינִים אֶפְתָּחָה פִּי בְּתַפְלָה
וּבְתַחֲנוּנִים לְחִלּוֹת וּלְחַנּוּן פָּנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים וְאֲדוֹנֵי
הָאֲדוֹנִים: ←

Ha'el hagadol hagibor vehanora el elyon gomel ḥasadim tovim
vekoney hakol vezoh'er ḥasdey avot ve'imot umevi ge'ulah livney
veneyhem lema'an shemo be'ahavah.

Misod ḥaḥamim unevonim umilemed da'at mevinim efteḥah fi
bitefilah uvetaḥanunim leḥalot uleḥanen peney meleḥ malḥey
hamelaḥim va'adoney ha'adonim.

MEDITATION. On this holy day, I come to this most personal prayer aware of my own imperfection, my difficulty in saying what is truly in my heart, my doubt that I can really bring myself to change so that the effort of this moment of prayer will be justified. At this moment, it takes *hutzpah* to begin to pray at all. And so, not yet having found the words of my heart, I fall back on words of the tradition. Thus does the Amidah always start with the reminder that we stand on the merit, insight and teaching of our ancestors. During the High Holy Days, however, even this seems to be not quite enough, and so beyond the invocation of the patriarchs and matriarchs, we have the invocation of the learned and the wise. I am reminded that I need not know yet what is in my heart. I can take the guidance of those who came before me, and begin in the Amidah to walk their path. In so doing, I put myself into their words, and let their words lead me to my own.

D.A.T.

Remember us for life,
our 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. ↩

KAVANAH. May our deeds be deeds of life. May our lives be lived for the sake of the God of life. Then our own hands will enter our names in the book of life. J.A.S.

וּכְתַבְנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים /and write us in the Book of Life. The persistence of mythic motifs such as a heavenly ledger suggest that for all our intellectual advances over our ancestors, we remain emotionally rooted in the language and images they created. We no longer believe that Someone is deciding today if we are entered in the Book of Life, yet no less than our ancestors do we desire that we be granted the gift of being here next Rosh Hashanah! R.H.

זָכְרָנוּ לְחַיִּים מֶלֶךְ חַפֵּץ בְּחַיִּים וְכַתִּבָּנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים לְמַעַנְךָ אֱלֹהִים
חַיִּים:

מֶלֶךְ עֶזְרָא וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶגֶן אַבְרָהָם וְעִזְרַת
שָׂרָה: ←

Zohrenu lehayim meleh hafetz bahayim vehotvenu besefer
hahayim lema'aneha elohim hayim.

Meleh ozer umoshi'a umagen. Baruh atah adonay magen
avraham ve'ezrat sarah. ↪

COMMENTARY. This version of the first *berahah* in the Amidah includes the matriarchs as well as the patriarchs. The phrase “help of Sarah,” *ezrat sarah*, comes from a Hebrew root (עזר) which can mean either “save” or “be strong.” This parallels the meaning of *magen*/shield. The biblical text says that Abraham experienced God as a shield and that Sarah experienced God as a helper. Their experience and the example of their lives can enrich our own. Just as Abraham and Sarah found the strength to face the unknown physical and spiritual dangers of their journey, so we seek to find the courage and inspiration to meet the challenges of our own time.

R.S.

2. GEVUROT / DIVINE POWER

You are forever powerful, ALMIGHTY ONE,
abundant in your saving acts. You send down the dew.

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?

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.

When reciting the Amidah silently, continue on the next page.

When chanting aloud with a minyan, continue with the Kedushah. The Kedushah on page 359 should be used in Shaḥarit if a Kedushah will be recited in both Shaḥarit and Musaf. If only one Kedushah will be recited, and for the Musaf Kedushah if both will be recited, continue on page 333.

DERASH. In the *Gevurot*, I address the power that underlies all change when I say: *atah gibor/you—power!* Then I name the manifestations of change inherent in my observation of nature and humanity: the blowing wind and the falling rain, those who fall down and need support, the sick who are becoming well, the bound who become free. Though aware of loss, we shift our focus to the power of renewal. We call this power “Flowering of Hope”—*matzmiah yeshu’ah*. S.P.W.

אַתָּה גִּבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנֵי רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ: מוֹרִיד הַטֵּל:

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים
וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים וּמַקְיֵם אֱמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפֶר: מִי כְמוֹךְ
בְּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֶה לָךְ מְלֶכֶךְ מַמְיִת וּמְחַיֶּה וּמַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעָה:

מִי כְמוֹךְ אֵב הַרְחָמִים זוֹכֵר יְצוּרֵיוֹ לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים:

וְנֶאֱמַן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת כָּל חַי: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי: ←

Atah gibor le'olam adonay rav lehoshi'a. Morid hatal.

Mehalkel hayim behesed mehayey kol hay berahamim rabim
someh noflim verofey holim umatir asurim umekayem emunato
lisheney afar. Mi hamoha ba'al gevurot umi domeh lah meleh
memit umehayeh umatzmi'ah yeshu'ah.

Mi hamoha av harahamim zoher yetzurav lehayim berahamim.
Vene'eman atah lehayot kol hay. Baruh atah adonay mehayey
kol hay. ↪

When reciting the Amidah silently, continue on the next page.

When chanting aloud with a minyan, continue with the Kedushah. The Kedushah on page 360 should be used in Shaḥarit if a Kedushah will be recited in both Shaḥarit and Musaf. If only one Kedushah will be recited, and for the Musaf Kedushah if both will be recited, continue on page 334.

3. KEDUSHAT HASHEM / HALLOWING GOD'S NAME

Recited when praying silently:

Holy are you. Your name is holy.
And all holy beings hail you each day.

Continue on page 363.

KAVANAH. קדשת השם /Hallowing God's Name. The act of naming gives us power, for in naming that which is holy to us we draw the outlines of our relationship with the Divine. There are as many names and images for the Divine as there are imaginative human beings. Where do you find holiness?

L.G.B.

Recited when praying silently:

אַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קְדוֹשׁ וְקְדוּשִׁים בְּכָל יוֹם יְהִלָּלוּךָ שְׁלָה:

Continue on page 364.

KAVANAH. You are eternal, the life of all that lives, the love in all that loves. You animate lifeless matter. You are the courage of those who conquer adversity. You are in the health of those who overcome sickness. You are the hope of those who now sleep in the dust. Yet you are more than all these, O master of life and death and salvation. You are holy, and those who strive after holiness worship you. M.M.K. (Adapted)

GUIDED MEDITATION. Breathe in and out, feeling the purity of your breath coming into your body. Breathe out slowly, allowing all impurities to leave you. Experience the wholeness and completeness of each breath. Feel its circularity, its roundness, its holiness. God's Name is in each breath. Breathe deeply, allowing your breath to enter and soften all the sore, cramped places in your soul. As your breath fills you, an exaltation enters your being! You truly know your source in the One. Through *your* loving justice and compassion, God's *kedushah* / holiness enters the world. M.P.

Continue here during Musaf when the Kedushah is recited and during Shāharit when only one Kedushah will be recited.

May THE ETERNAL reign forever,
your God, O Zion, from one generation to the next.
Halleluyah!

For you, O God, are holy, you are enthroned amid the praises
sung by Israel.

The ark is opened.

All-Embracing One, You are our God,
Blessed in heaven, and upon earth,
Greatest in might, revered beyond worth,
Distinction surpassing, above all acclaim,
Who uttered a word, and all things became,
Who gave a command, and Creation arose—
So shall your name outlast all the worlds!
How all that has life is infused with your Being,
The clearest of sight, all-knowing, all-seeing!
You dwell beyond all, in mystery concealed,
Crown of salvation, redemption revealed.
Law is your garment, and justice your way,
Mighty your zeal—all creatures obey.
Now and forever is judgment your crown,
So hidden in honor, yet great in renown.
On all of Creation your faith radiates,
Perfect in deeds, in truth and in grace,
Stronghold of justice, upright without peer,
Creation calls out, and you are near—
Revered and adored by all of Creation,
Seated on high in your heavenly station.
The earth you suspended upon the abyss,
Forever you live, in awe and in holiness!

NOTE. This *piyut* is a Hebrew acrostic. Each line of the translation begins with the English sound closest to the Hebrew letter.

Continue here during Musaf when the Kedushah is recited and during Shāharit when only one Kedushah will be recited.

יִמְלֹךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם אֱלֹהֵינוּ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר הַלְלוּהָ:
וְאַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל:

The ark is opened.

אֵל נָא אַתָּה הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ
בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ גְּבוּר וְנִעְרָץ
דָּגוּל מִרְכָּבָה הָ וְאֵשׁ וַיִּהְיֶה
וְצִוָּה וְנִבְרָאוּ זְכוֹר לְנִצָּחַן
חַי עוֹלָמִים טְהוֹר וְעֵינַיִם:
יּוֹשֵׁב סֵתֶר פָּתוּר יְשׁוּעָה
לְבוּשׁוֹ צְדָקָה מַעֲטֵהוּ קִנְיָה
נֶאֱפֹד נִקְמָה סְתוּר יִשָּׁר
עֲצָתוֹ אֱמוּנָה פְּעֻלָּתוֹ אֱמֶת
צַדִּיק וְיִשָּׁר קָרוֹב לְקוֹרְאָיו בְּאֵמֶת
רַם וּמִתְנַשֵּׂא שׁוֹכֵן שְׁחָקִים
תּוֹלֵה אָרֶץ עַל בְּלִימָה:

חַי וְקַיִם נוֹרָא וּמְרוֹם וְקְדוֹשׁ: El na atah hu eloheynu
bashamayim uva'aretz gibor vena'aratz
dagul merevavah hu saḥ vayehi
vetzivah venivra'u zihro lanetzah
hay olamim tehor eynayim
yoshev seter kitro yeshu'ah
levusho tzedakah ma'atehu kinah
nepad nekamah sitro yosher
atzato emunah pe'ulato emet
tzadik veyashar karov lekorav be'emet
ram umitnasey shohen shehakim
toleh aretz al belimah
hay vekayam nora umarom vekadosh.

Awesomeness, truth absolute,
 the life of all the worlds.
Boundless knowledge, blessing all,
 the life of all the worlds.
Great in eminence, greatness itself,
 the life of all the worlds.
Divine in knowledge, speech divine,
 the life of all the worlds.
Heaven's splendor, beauty's height,
 the life of all the worlds.
Wisdom's summit, world's first being,
 the life of all the worlds.
Zeal of purity, zealous in light,
 the life of all the worlds.
Hand of power, holding might,
 the life of all the worlds.
Truth's array, absence of taint,
 the life of all the worlds.
Unity, and awesome yoke,
 the life of all the worlds. ↪

COMMENTARY. This hymn, which is a classic text of *Merkavah* mysticism, seems to depict the choruses of praise sung by the angels to God. The song is an alphabetical acrostic; in the translation, the initial letter or sound of each line corresponds to a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and is also echoed later in the line. J.R.

DERASH. What is the point of calling God by all these exalted names over and over again? Are we not invoking the best and the highest in our historical imagination in order to bring ourselves closer to those qualities? These hymns are incantations or affirmations. We hope that the words, recited with attention, will bring the spirit of strength, power, goodness, truth and compassion into our personal and collective lives. S.P.W.

לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הָאֲדֶרֶת וְהָאֱמוּנָה
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַבִּינָה וְהַבְּרָכָה
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַגָּאֻוָּה וְהַגְּדֻלָּה
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַיָּדְעָה וְהַדְּבֹר
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַחֹד וְהַחֲדָר
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַיָּעַד וְהַתִּיקוּת
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַיָּד וְהַיָּדָהָר
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַחֵיל וְהַחֲסָן
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַטָּכָס וְהַטָּהָר
← לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַיָּחֹד וְהַיָּרָאָה

Ha'aderet veba'emunah	lehay olamim.
Habina vehaberahah	lehay olamim.
Haga'avah vehagedulah	lehay olamim.
Hade'ah veadibur	lehay olamim.
Hahod vehahadar	lehay olamim.
Hava'ad vehavatikut	lehay olamim.
Hazoh vehazohar	lehay olamim.
Hahayil vehahosen	lehay olamim.
Hatehes vehatohar	lehay olamim.
Hayihud vehayirah	lehay olamim.

Crown of glory, light to come,
 the life of all the worlds.
Lesson, and enlivening,
 the life of all the worlds.
Majesty of rule and might,
 the life of all the worlds.
New in beauty, never-ending,
 the life of all the worlds.
Sublime, exalted, seated high,
 the life of all the worlds.
Overwhelming, one most humble,
 the life of all the worlds.
Power to save, in power proud,
 the life of all the worlds.
Splendor bright and steady justice,
 the life of all the worlds.
Quest and call, holy quintessence,
 the life of all the worlds.
Rejoicing song, subject revered,
 the life of all the worlds.
Song of the world, subject of praise,
 the life of all the worlds.
Theme of all talk, the one, sublime,
 the life of all the worlds.

COMMENTARY. This ancient hymn originated in the Rosh Hashanah morning service. It may be sung to any of several tunes used for *Adon Olam* or *El Adon*. This simple list of attributes for “the life of all the worlds” harks back to the most primitive forms of religious poetry. Following a double acrostic pattern—here repeated in the English translation—the author calls forth the qualities we associate with God.

“Do you want to know the One we worship?” the poet seems to say. “Then know all these qualities, for it is in them that God, ‘the life of all the worlds,’ may be said to dwell.” The poem may thus be seen as an early expression of predicate theology, a way of approaching a definition of God by listing the qualities we associate with divinity.

A.G.

לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַכֶּתֶר וְהַכְּבוֹד
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַלֵּקַח וְהַלְבוּב
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַמְלוּכָה וְהַמְמָשָׁלָה
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַנּוֹי וְהַנֶּצַח
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַסְּגוּי וְהַסֶּגֶב
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הָעֵז וְהָעֲנוּה
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַפְּדוּת וְהַפָּאָר
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַצִּבִּי וְהַצֶּדֶק
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַקְּרִיאָה וְהַקְדָּשָׁה
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הָרֵן וְהַרְוֵמֹת
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַשִּׁיר וְהַשֶּׁבַח
לְחֵי עוֹלָמִים :	הַתְּהִלָּה וְהַתְּפָאֶרֶת

Haketer vehakavod	lehay olamim
Halekah vehalibuv	lehay olamim
Hamelukah vehamemshalah	lehay olamim
Hanoy vehanetzah	lehay olamim
Hasiguwi vehasegev	lehay olamim
Ha'oz vеха'anavah	lehay olamim
Hapedut vehape'er	lehay olamim
Hatzevi vehatzedek	lehay olamim
Hakeri'ah vehakedushah	lehay olamim
Haron veharomemot	lehay olamim
Hashir vehashevah	lehay olamim
Hatehilah vehatiferet	lehay olamim

MELEH ELYON / A SOVEREIGN ON HIGH

And so, there was a sovereign in Yeshurun!

A sovereign on high, Almighty and revered,
raised up over all, respected and feared,
appointer of rulers on each nation's throne,
who reigns for eternity, one God alone.

A sovereign on high, Great power who reigns
who calls to each era, reveals hidden things,
the purest of speech, who discerns heaven's spheres,
who guides constellations, and seasons, and years.

A sovereign on high, Held in honor by all,
All-knowing, all-loving, giving life unto all,
though hidden from all, God surveys all as one,
and reigns for eternity, one God alone.

A sovereign on high, Seeing all that's concealed,
probes conscience and memory, the forgotten revealed.
with eyes ever open, declaring our thought,
the God of all lifebreath, whose wisdom is sought.

A sovereign on high, The purest above,
surpassing the angels, arousing their love,
setting boundaries for oceans, and quieting seas,
God's reign is forever, through all eternities.

A sovereign on high, Containing the deep,
who stirs mighty storms, then puts their raging to sleep,
who cries out "Enough!" lest a flood fill the world,
who banishes the waves the abyss has unfurled. ↻

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן אֲמִיץ הַמִּנְשָׂא לְכָל־רֹאשׁ מִתְנַשָּׂא אוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה מְעוֹז
וּמַחֲסֶה נֶשָׂא וְנוֹשָׂא מוֹשִׁיב מַלְכִּים לַכֶּסֶּא

לַעֲדִי־עַד יִמְלֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן גָּבוֹר בְּגִבּוֹרוֹת קוֹרֵא הַדּוֹרוֹת גּוֹלָה נִסְתָּרוֹת אֲמֵרוֹתָיו
טְהוֹרוֹת יוֹדֵעַ סְפוֹרוֹת לְתוֹצְאוֹת מַזְרוֹת

לַעֲדִי־עַד יִמְלֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן הַמִּפְאָר בְּפִי כָל וְהוּא כָל יָכוֹל הַמֵּרַחֵם אֶת כָּל וְנוֹתֵן
מַחִיָּה לְכָל וְנֹעֵלִם מַעֲיֵן כָּל וְעֵינָיו מְשׁוֹטְטוֹת בְּכָל

לַעֲדִי־עַד יִמְלֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן זוֹכֵר נִשְׁכָּחוֹת חוֹקֵר טוֹחוֹת עֵינָיו פְּקוּחוֹת מַגִּיד שְׁחוֹת
אֱלֹהֵי הַרוֹחוֹת אֲמֵרוֹתָיו נִכּוּחוֹת

לַעֲדִי־עַד יִמְלֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן טְהוֹר בְּזִבּוּלָיו אוֹת הוּא בְּאֶרְצָאֵלָיו אֵין עֲרוֹךְ אֵלָיו
לְפַעוֹל כְּמַפְעָלָיו חוֹל שֵׁם גְּבוּלָיו בְּהִמּוֹת יָם לְגִלְיוֹ

לַעֲדִי־עַד יִמְלֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן כּוֹנֵם מִי הֵיִם רוֹגַע גְּלִי יָם סוֹעֵר שָׂאוֹן דְּכָם מְלֵא
הָעוֹלָם דֵּיִם מְשַׁבִּיחֵם בְּעֵים וְשֹׁבִים אַחוֹר וְאַיִם

לַעֲדִי־עַד יִמְלֹךְ: ←

COMMENTARY. In the original form of this *piyut*, the structure consisted of alternating stanzas, one describing מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן / *meleḥ elyon* / sovereign on high and the next describing אֲבִיו מֶלֶךְ / *meleḥ evyon* / inconsequential earthly ruler. Over time, the disparaging comments about the limitedness, helplessness and weakness of earthly rulers came to be omitted. Our version is a lofty meditation on divine sovereignty without any negative comment on us who stand in awe of it. D.A.T.

מֶלֶךְ / *there was a sovereign in Yeshurun* (Deuteronomy 33:5).

A sovereign on high, whose Might does not fail,
whose road is the wind, whose path is the gale,
whose garment is light, making night like the day,
who reigns in dark mystery with luminous array.

A sovereign on high, Sequestered in cloud,
fiery angels and cherubs bear a Chariot proud,
the lightning and stars, and heavenly signs,
forever with praises, God's rule they enshrine.

A sovereign on high, Provider whose hand
is eternally open, raining wealth on the land,
while day after day expresses earth's praise
of the One who shall reign beyond all the days.

A sovereign on high, the Quintessence of awe,
whose holiness surpasses all natural law,
who spoke, and who measured the world's cornerstone,
who created all things for God's glory alone.

A sovereign on high, Showing kindness in need,
to prayer and supplication ever willing to heed,
abundant in kindness, and sparing of wrath,
may God reign forever, the first and the last!

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן מוֹשֵׁל בְּגְבוּרָה דִּרְכוֹ סוּפָה וּסְעָרָה עוֹטָה אוֹרָה לַיְלָה
כִּיּוֹם לְהָאִירָה עֲרֶפֶל לוֹ סִתְרָה וְעֵמָה שָׂרָא נְהוֹרָא

לְעֲדִי-עַד יִמְלוֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן סִתְרוּ עֵבִים סְבִיבּוֹ לְהֵבִים רְכוּבוֹ פְּרוּבִים מְשֻׁרְתִּיו
שְׂבִיבִים מְזֻלוֹת וְכוֹכָבִים הִלּוּלוֹ מְרַבִּים

לְעֲדִי-עַד יִמְלוֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן פּוֹתֵחַ יָד וּמְשַׁבֵּיעַ צוּרֵר מַיִם וּמַנְבִּיעַ יַכְשֵׁת לְהַטְבִּיעַ
לְשָׁלִישׁ וּלְרִבִּיעַ יוֹם לַיּוֹם יַבִּיעַ שְׂבָחוֹ לְהַבִּיעַ

לְעֲדִי-עַד יִמְלוֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא בְּמוֹפֵת וּבְמוֹרָא מְמַדִּי אֶרֶץ קָרָא וְאֶבֶן
פְּנִתָה יֵרָה וְכָל-הַנִּבְרָא לְכַבּוֹדוֹ בְּרָא

לְעֲדִי-עַד יִמְלוֹךְ:

מֶלֶךְ עֲלִיּוֹן שׁוֹמֵעַ אֶל אֲבִיוֹנִים וּמַאֲזִין חַנוּנִים מְאָרִיף רְצוֹנִים
וּמְקַצֵּר חֲרוֹנִים רֹאשׁוֹן לְרֹאשׁוֹנִים וְאַחֲרוֹן לְאַחֲרוֹנִים

לְעֲדִי-עַד יִמְלוֹךְ:

And so, let all proclaim the sovereignty
of God, who judges all with justice,
one who plumbs the heart upon the day of justice,
who reveals what is concealed, with justice;
one who speaks the truth upon the day of justice,
drawing out our inner thoughts with justice.
Ancient one, who has compassion on the day of justice,
and who calls to mind the covenant of justice;
one who spares Creation on the day of justice,
and who cleanses those who seek the God of justice;
one who knows all thoughts upon the day of justice,
who holds back from anger, though enacting justice;
who is clad in righteousness upon the day of justice,
and is merciful toward wrongdoing, with justice;
one awesome in praises on the day of justice,
and forgiving to those burdened with the weight of justice;
answering whoever calls upon the day of justice,
and acting mercifully in pursuit of justice;
one who searches out the hidden on the day of justice,
and who calls to service in enacting justice;
one who is loving to our people on the day of justice,
who keeps safe whoever loves the God of justice,
and supports whoever seeks perfection on the day of justice!

וּבְכֵן לֵךְ הַפֶּל יִכְתְּרוּ

לְגוֹלָה עֲמָקוֹת בְּדִין: לְהוֹגֶה דַּעוֹת בְּדִין: לְזוֹכֵר בְּרִיתוֹ בְּדִין: לְטַהֵר חוֹסֵי בְּדִין: לְכֹבֵשׁ כַּעֲסוֹ בְּדִין: לְמוֹחֵל עֲוֹנוֹת בְּדִין: לְסוֹלֵחַ לַעֲמוּסָיו בְּדִין: לְפוֹעֵל רַחֲמָיו בְּדִין: לְקוֹנֶה עֶבְדָּיו בְּדִין: לְשׁוֹמֵר אוֹהֲבָיו בְּדִין: לְתוֹמֵךְ תְּמִימָיו בְּיוֹם דִּין:	לְאֵל עוֹרֵךְ דִּין לְבוֹחֵן לְכָבוֹת בְּיוֹם דִּין לְדוֹבֵר מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל בְּיוֹם דִּין לְנֹתִיק וְעוֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד בְּיוֹם דִּין לְחוֹמֵל מַעֲשָׂיו בְּיוֹם דִּין לְיוֹדֵעַ מַחֲשָׁבוֹת בְּיוֹם דִּין לְלוֹבֵשׁ צְדָקוֹת בְּיוֹם דִּין לְנֹרָא תְהִלּוֹת בְּיוֹם דִּין לְעוֹנֶה לְקוֹרְאָיו בְּיוֹם דִּין לְצוֹפֶה נִסְתָּרוֹת בְּיוֹם דִּין לְרַחֵם עַמּוֹ בְּיוֹם דִּין
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COMMENTARY. Jewish liturgy has been formed over time by the layering of each era's experiences, hopes, fears, beliefs and aspirations. The language and literary form of each piece of liturgy casts light onto Jewish lives and visions obscured by their distance in time. The medieval *piyutim* are the liturgical poems that form the bulk of the traditional High Holiday liturgy. This *piyut*, composed by Shimon ben Yitzhak of Mayence in the eleventh century, reflects the experience of those who have been ruled by flawed mortal kings. He envisions the sovereign on high as the flawless and eternal ruler who knows the most hidden secrets of the human heart, guarantees justice throughout the world and provides for the needs of every creature. This grand vision of the divine monarch not only makes vivid the imagined re-enfranchisement of God at the mythic center of Rosh Hashanah; it also creates a guarantor of justice whose standard we can use to measure our conduct and explore our motivations. Internalizing this author's vision provides us with the challenge of measuring ourselves by those visionary standards. D.A.T.

INTERPRETIVE VERSION: UNETANEH TOKEF

When we really begin a new year it is decided,
And when we actually repent, it is determined;

Who shall be truly alive, and who shall merely exist;
Who shall be happy, and who miserable;

Who shall be tormented by the fire of ambition,
And whose hopes shall be quenched by the waters of failure;

Who shall be pierced by the sharp sword of envy,
And who shall be torn by the wild beast of resentment;

Who shall hunger for companionship,
And who shall thirst for approval;

Who shall be shattered by storms of change,
And who shall be plagued by the pressures of conformity;

Who shall be strangled by insecurity,
And who shall be beaten into submission;

Who shall be content with their lot,
And who shall wander in search of satisfaction;

Who shall be serene,
And who shall be distraught;

Who shall be at ease,
And who shall be afflicted with anxiety;

Who shall be poor in their own eyes,
And who shall be rich in tranquility.

But *teshuvah*, *tefilah* and *tzedakah*
Have the power to change the character of our lives.

May we resolve, then, to turn from our accustomed ways
And to behave righteously
So that we may truly begin a new year.

Stanley Rabinowitz (Adapted)

INTERPRETIVE VERSION: UNETANEH TOKEF

Let us ask ourselves hard questions

For this is the time for truth.

How much time did we waste

In the year that is now gone?

Did we fill our days with life

Or were they dull and empty?

Was there love inside our home

Or was the affectionate word left unsaid?

Was there a real companionship with our children

Or was there a living together and a growing apart?

Were we a help to our mates

Or did we take them for granted?

How was it with our friends:

Were we there when they needed us or not?

The kind deed: did we perform it or postpone it?

The unnecessary gibe: did we say it or hold it back?

Did we live by false values?

Did we deceive others?

Did we deceive ourselves?

Were we sensitive to the rights and feelings

Of those who worked for us?

Did we acquire only possessions

Or did we acquire new insights as well?

Did we fear what the crowd would say

And keep quiet when we should have spoken out?

Did we mind only our own business

Or did we feel the heartbreak of others?

Did we live right,

And if not,

Then have we learned, and will we change?

Jack Riemer

UNETANEH TOKEF/NOW, WE DECLARE...

And so, let holiness arise to you,
for you, God, are our sovereign,

The ark is opened.

Now, we declare the sacred power of this day,
which is the most awesome and solemn of days,
when your rule is established over all,
and your throne set in place by the power of love,
and you come forth to govern in truth.

True it is that you are our judge,
you alone can reprove, you alone can know,
you alone are witness to all deeds.

It is you who shall write,
you who shall seal what is written,
you who shall read,
and you who shall number all souls.
You alone can remember what we have forgotten;
it is you who shall open the Book of Remembrance,
but its contents shall speak for themselves,
for it bears the imprint of us all,
which our deeds and our lives have inscribed.

And when the great shofar is sounded,
a small, quiet voice can be heard,
and the heavenly beings are thrown into fright,
and, seized by a terrible dread, they declare:

“Behold, the Day of Judgment has arrived,
when even those in heaven’s court are judged,
for none can be exempt from justice’s eyes!” ↩

וּבְכֹן לְךָ תַעֲלֶה קְדָשָׁה כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ:

The ark is opened.

וּנְתַנָּה תִקְוָה קְדֻשָּׁת הַיּוֹם כִּי הוּא נִזְרָא וְאִים: וְכֹן תִּנְשָׂא מִלְכוּתְךָ
וַיִּכּוֹן בְּחֶסֶד כְּסָאֲךָ וַתֵּשֶׁב עָלָיו בְּאַמָּת: אָמֵת כִּי אַתָּה הוּא דִין
וּמוֹכִיחַ וַיּוֹדֵעַ וְעַד וְכוּתִּיב וְחוּתִּיב וְסוֹפֵר וּמוֹנֶה וְתִזְכֹּר כָּל־
הַנִּשְׁפָּחוֹת וְתִפְתַּח אֶת־סֵפֶר הַזִּכְרוֹנוֹת וַיִּמְאֲלֵנוּ וַיִּקְרָא וְחוּתִּיב יָד כָּל־
אָדָם בּוֹ:

וּבְשׁוֹפֵר גָּדוֹל יִתְקַע וְקוֹל דְּמָמָה דְּקָה יִשְׁמַע. וּמִלְאָכִים יִחְפְּזוּן
וְחֵיל וְרַעְדָּה יֵאָחֲזוּן וַיִּאֲמְרוּ הִנֵּה יוֹם הַדִּין: לְפָקֵד עַל צָבָא מָרוֹם
בְּדִין כִּי לֹא יִזְכּוּ בְּעֵינֶיךָ בְּדִין ←

KAVANAH. *Unetaneh tokef* refers to the awesome and threatening power of this day. Our ancestors saw themselves as if exposed to divine retribution for their sins. They pictured punishment from God mainly in terms of natural disasters to life and livelihood—plagues, wars and other woes that can swoop down on us, physically maiming us, ruining our stores and crops, starving our families. While that feeling—the sense that life’s tragedies are largely externally imposed—may linger, another way of understanding this prayer, and the whole of these “days of awe,” is to recognize how small and hidden from sight is the nature of so much misfortune that we experience. The splitting of an atom, which we cannot see, unleashes terrors of dreadful, almost unimaginable proportions. Similarly, we should not regard lightly the little wounds to the spirit which happen daily. Every insult uttered, every belittling gesture, every lie or rejection or unfair accusation is a punishment to a society that does not value the spirit of respect, the necessity of truth, or the power of love. If we pay better attention to each other’s feelings, the small cruelties and hidden meannesses that are tearing us apart from within will no longer threaten. Let us resolve to heal the environment of suspicion, in which promises are broken, wills are broken and hearts are broken. Let us no longer make excuses for selfishness that causes such injuries to the human spirit, made in God’s image.

S.D.R.

And all who come into the world
pass before you like sheep for the shepherd—
for, just as a shepherd numbers the flock,
passing the herd by the staff,
so do you make us pass by before you,
and number, and count, and determine the life,
one by one, of all who have lifebreath within.
You decide for each creature its cycles of life,
and you write down its destined decree.

On Rosh Hashanah, all is written and revealed,
and on Yom Kippur, the course of every life is sealed!

—how many pass on, how many shall thrive,
who shall live on, and who shall die,
whose death is timely, and whose is not,
who dies by fire, and who shall be drowned,
who by the sword, and who by the beast,
who by hunger, and who by thirst,
who by an earthquake, who by a plague,
who shall be strangled, and who shall be stoned,
who dwells in peace, and who is uprooted,
who shall live safely, and who shall be harmed,
whose life is tranquil, and whose is tormented,
who shall be poor, and who shall be rich,
who shall be humbled, and who is raised up! ↪

וְכָל-בָּאֵי עוֹלָם יַעֲבִירוּ לְפָנָיִךְ כְּבִנֵּי מָרוֹן: כְּבִקְרַת רוּעָה עֶדְרוֹ
מַעֲבִיר צֹאנוּ תַּחַת שְׁבִטוֹ כֵּן תַּעֲבִיר וְתִסְפֹּר וְתִמְנֶה וְתִפְקֹד נַפְשׁ
כָּל-חַי וְתַחֲתֹךְ קִצְפָּה לְכָל-בְּרִיָּה וְתִכְתֹּב אֶת-גְּזֹר דִּינָם:

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יִכְתְּבוּן וּבִיּוֹם צוֹם כְּפוּר יִחַתְמוּן

Kevakarat ro'eh edro ma'avir tzono taḥat shivto ken ta'avir
vetispor vetimneh vetifkod nefesh kol ḥay vetaḥtoḥ kitzbah
leḥol beriyah vetihtov et gezar dinam.

Berosh hashanah yikatevun uveyom tzom kipur yehatemun

כָּמָה יַעֲבִירוּ וְכָמָה יִבְרָאוּן מִי יִחְיֶה וּמִי יָמוּת
מִי בִקְצוֹ וּמִי לֹא בִקְצוֹ מִי בָאֵשׁ וּמִי בַמַּיִם
מִי בַחֲרִב וּמִי בַחַיָּה מִי בָרָעַב וּמִי בַצָּמָא
מִי בָרָעַשׁ וּמִי בַמַּגָּפָה מִי בַחֲנִיקָה וּמִי בַסְּקִילָה
מִי גָנוּחַ וּמִי גָנוּעַ מִי יִשְׁקֹט וּמִי יִטְרֹף
מִי יִשְׁלֹוּ וּמִי יִתִּיֶסֶר מִי יַעֲנִי וּמִי יַעֲשֶׂה
מִי יִשְׁפֹּל וּמִי יָרוּם: —

The glory and agony of being human rousing us
entreating us to wake up!

To know that we who have no power
can be filled with power.

When we wake up to our transparent nature,
divine forgiveness shines through us.

When we forget our names,
we become part of God's name.

When we learn to act and yield, act and yield,
we smash the contradiction of existence.

S.P.W.

But *teshuvah*, and *tefilah*, and *tzedakah*
make easier what God may decree,
make easier what life holds in store,
make easier facing the world,
make easier facing ourselves.

For, as is your name, so is your praise—
slow to be angry, quick to forgive;
you do not desire a person to die,
but only to change and to live.
Down to a person's last day of life,
the person is given the chance to return,
and all who return, and resolve to be just,
are welcomed by you straight-away.

For truly you are their creator,
and you know their innermost nature,
and they know they are flesh and blood. ↩

COMMENTARY. But *teshuvah*, and *tefilah*, and *tzedakah*.... These meritorious acts, says the original Hebrew text, “cause the evil of the decree to pass away” (*ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah*). The English rendition seeks to encompass several ways that we are likely to feel ourselves facing a decree on the Day of Judgment: by God, by the events of our lives, by the world around us, and, of course, by ourselves. The power of repentance, prayer, and acts of giving to turn “judgment,” in all its forms, from an alien and arbitrary event to a shaping force of our life and our identity is the subject of these lines. We cannot will away either what happens to us or what happens around us, but we may have it in our power to turn it into something quite other than “evil.” J.R.

מעבירין את רע הגזרה / make easier what God may decree. We cannot change the decree. But sometimes our *tzedakah*, by providing food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless, or peace for the embattled, reduces רע הגזרה / the severe effects of the decree. We can make easier what “God may decree” by living lives of meaning in the face of apparently meaningless events.

J.A.S.

וְתִשְׁבּוּבָה וְתִפְלָה וְצְדָקָה

מַעֲבִירִין אֶת רַע הַגְּזֵרָה:

כִּי כְשֶׁמֶד בֵּן תְּהִלָּתְךָ קָשָׁה לְכַעַס וְנוֹחַ לְרִצּוֹת כִּי לֹא תִחַפֵּץ בְּמוֹת
הַמֵּת כִּי אִם בְּשׁוּבוֹ מִדְּרָכּוֹ וְחִיָּה: וְעַד יוֹם מוֹתוֹ תִּחַפֶּה-לוֹ אִם
יָשׁוּב מִיַּד תִּקְבְּלוּ: אֲמַת כִּי אַתָּה הוּא יוֹצֵרם וְאַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ יִצְרָם כִּי
הֵם בְּשׁוּר וְדָם: ←

Uteshuvah utefilah utzedakah
ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah.

Ki ḥeshimeḥa ken tehilateḥa kasheh liḥos venoaḥ lirtzot. Ki lo
taḥpotz bemot hamet ki im beshuvo midarko veḥayah. Ve'ad
yom moto teḥakeh lo im yashuv miyad tekabelo. Emet ki atah
hu yotzram ve'atah yode'a yitzram ki hem basar vadam. ↪

But *teshuvah*, and *tefilah*, and *tzedakah* make easier what God may decree. After the fierce determinism of the first half of *Unetaneh Tokef*—suggesting that nothing is within our control, and all is decreed—we are suddenly presented with a note of encouragement: How we act can, in some way, affect how we live.

Reconstructionism rejects the superstitious dimensions of prayer, and we do not believe either that “all is decreed” or that “*teshuvah*, and *tefilah*, and *tzedakah*” can magically mitigate what may happen. But we do accept, as this prayer suggests, that though there are things beyond our control, we do retain control over how we react to those things.

A Reconstructionist interpretation of the Hebrew might yield: “Direction (*teshuvah*), Reflection (*tefilah*) and Connection (*tzedakah*) make it possible to live within boundaries not of our making and beyond our control.” *Teshuvah*, or turning-to-God/liness, is the process of deciding the *direction* of our lives. *Tefilah*, or prayer, can be a *reflection* on who we are, where we are, and where we are going. *Tzedakah*, both charity and acts of justice, *connect* us to others, reminding us that our own salvation or self-fulfillment cannot exist apart from those with whom we share past, present and future.

R.H.

All of humanity is founded on dust—
of dust they are made, and to dust they return;
as long as they live, they strive for their bread.
Like vessels of clay, they can break.
Like grass they can wither, like flowers they fade,
like shadows they pass, like clouds they are emptied,
like wind their strength is exhausted,

like dust they are scattered about,
like a dream they shall vanish from sight.
But you, holy one, your reign is eternal,
the God who lives and endures!

No limit exists to the years of your life,
no end is assigned to the length of your days,
no measure contains the array of your glory,
your name is beyond all translation.

Your name is the perfect expression of you,
and you have, in turn, embodied your name,
and have called us, as well, by your name.

The ark is closed, and we remain standing.

אדם יסודו מעֶפֶר וְסוֹפוֹ לְעֶפֶר: בְּנַפְשׁוֹ יָבִיא לְחֶמוֹ: מְשׁוּל בְּחָרֶם
הַנִּשְׁבֵּר בְּחֶצִיר יִבֵּשׁ וּכְצִיץ נוֹבֵל כְּצֵל עוֹבֵר וּכְעָנָן כְּלָה וּכְרוּחַ
נוֹשֶׁבֶת וּכְאָבֶק פּוֹרֵחַ וּכְחֵלוֹם יְעוּף:

וְאַתָּה הוּא מֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם:

Adam yesodo me'afar vesofu le'afar. Benafsho yavi lahmo.
Mashul kaheres hanishbar kehatzir yavesh uhetzitz novel
ketzel over uhe'anan kaleh uheruah noshavet uhe'avak pore'ah
vehahalom ya'uf.

Ve'atah hu meleh el hay vekayam.

אֵין קִצְבָּה לְשִׁנוּתֵיךְ וְאֵין קֶץ לְאַרְךָ יְמֶיךָ וְאֵין שְׁעוֹר לְמִרְכָּבוֹת
כְּבוֹדְךָ וְאֵין פִּרוּשׁ לְעֵילוֹם שְׁמֶךָ: שְׁמֶךָ נֶאֱדָה לְךָ וְאַתָּה נֶאֱדָה לְשְׁמֶךָ
וּשְׁמִנּוּ קִרְאתְ בְּשִׁמְךָ:

The ark is closed, and we remain standing.

וּשְׁמִנּוּ קִרְאתְ בְּשִׁמְךָ / and have called us, as well, by your name. This refers to the godly quality that is inherent in all people. If our name and God's name are intertwined, then our calling to God and God's calling to us are reciprocal actions. We speak God's voice as well as listen for it. God is within each of us. As we call out to God, God calls out to us. M.B.K.

Act for the sake of your name,
and make your name holy
over all who now declare
the holiness of your great name.
Act for the glory of your name,
which is uplifted and made holy
by the hidden utterance of holy seraphim,
who, bathed in holiness, proclaim the holiness
of your great name,
joining those who dwell above
with those who dwell on earth,
as it is written by your prophet's hand:
"And they call out, one to another, and declare:

Holy, holy, holy is THE CREATOR of the Multitudes of Heaven!
All the world is filled with divine glory!"

God's glory fills the world,
as the ministering angels ask, one to another,
"What place could contain God's holiness?"
And they are answered with a blessing:
"Blessed is the glory of THE OMNIPRESENT,
wherever God may dwell!"

And from God's place, God mercifully turns
bestowing graciousness upon the people
who declare the oneness of the divine name
evening and morning, each day continually,
as twice a day they say with love: "Shema!"
"Listen, Israel: THE ETERNAL is our God,
THE ETERNAL ONE alone!" ↩

וְקָרָא...כְבוֹדוֹ / And...glory! (Isaiah 6:3).

מְבֹרָכָה...בְרוּךְ / Blessed...dwell! (Ezekiel 3:12).

שְׁמַע...אֶחָד / Listen...alone! (Deuteronomy 6:4).

עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ וְקִדַּשׁ אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ עַל מִקְדְּשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ בְּעִבּוֹר כְּבוֹד
שְׁמֶךָ הַנֶּעֱרָץ וְהַנִּקְדָּשׁ כְּסוּד שְׁיַח שְׂרָפֵי־קִדְשׁ הַמִּקְדְּשִׁים שְׁמֶךָ
בְּקִדְשׁ דָּרִי מַעְלָה עִם דָּרִי מַטָּה כְּפָתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאֶךָ: וְקִרָא זֶה
אֶל זֶה וְאֶמַּר

קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ

יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת מְלֵא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ:
כְּבוֹדוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם מִשְׁרָתוֹ שׂוֹאֲלִים זֶה לָזֶה אֵי־הָ מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ
לְעַמְתָּם בְּרוּךְ יֵאמְרוּ:
בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְקוֹמוֹ:
מִמְקוֹמוֹ הוּא יִפֵּן בְּרַחֲמִים וַיַּחַן עִם הַמִּיחֲדִים שְׁמוֹ לָרֹב וּבִקְרָב כָּל
יוֹם תְּמִיד פְּעֻמֹּת בְּאַהֲבָה שְׁמַע אוֹמְרִים:
שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד: —

Asey lema'an shemeḥa vekadesh et shimeḥa al makdishey shem^uch^a
ba'avur kevod shimeḥa hana'aratz vehanikdash kesod siah sarfey
kodesh hamakdishim shimeḥa bakodesh darey malah im darey
matah kakatuv al yad nevi'eḥa vekarah zeh el zeh ve'amar:

Kadosh kadosh kadosh adonay tzeva'ot melo ḥol ha'aretz kevodo.
Kevodo maley olam mesharetav sho'alim zeh lazeh ayey mekom
kevodo le'umatam baruh yomeru:

Baruh kevod adonay mimekomo.

Mimekomo hu yifen beraḥamim veyahon am hamyahadim
shemo erev vavoker beḥol yom tamid pa'amayim be'ahavah
shema omrim:

Shema yisra'el adonay eloheynu adonay eḥad. ↪

COMMENTARY. The structure of the *Kedushah* rests upon myths in Jewish tradition about angelic choruses praising God. By standing at attention and singing words ascribed to the angelic chorus, we become imitators of the heavenly chorus. Jews traditionally rock upward on their toes each time the word קדוש/*kadosh*/holy is chanted here. It is as if we were straining upward to join the heavenly choir in praise.

D.A.T.

This is our God.
This is our source.
This is our sovereign.
This is our saving power.
And this one, mercifully,
shall declare a second time,
for every living being to hear,
confirming God's divinity for you:
"I am the OMNIPRESENT ONE, your God!"

O, mighty one, our mighty one,
THE SOVEREIGN who watches over us,
how mighty is your name throughout the earth!
The time shall come that GOD will reign
throughout the earth. On that day
shall THE FOUNT OF LIFE be one,
the divine name be one.
And as is written in your sacred words of psalm:
"May THE ETERNAL reign forever,
your God, O Zion, from one generation to the next. Halleluyah!"

From one generation to the next
may we declare your greatness,
and for all eternities may we affirm your holiness,
And may your praise, our God,
never be absent from our mouths
now and forever.
For you are a great and holy God.

Continue on page 363.

אני...אלהיכם / I...God! (Numbers 15:41).
יהוה אדנינו...הארץ / The SOVEREIGN...earth! (Psalms 8:10).
והיה יהוה אחד / The time...be one (Zechariah 14:9).
ימלך...הללויה / May...Halleluyah! (Psalms 146:10).

הוא אֱלֹהֵינוּ הוא אָבִינוּ הוא מַלְכֵנוּ הוא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ והוא יִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ
בְּרַחֲמָיו שְׁנִית לְעֵינֵי כָל חַי: לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים:
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

אֲדִיר אֲדִירֵנוּ יְהוָה אֲדִירֵנוּ מֶה-אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ: וְהָיָה יְהוָה
לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהָיָה יְהוָה אֶחָד וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד:
וּבְדַבְּרֵי קִדְשְׁךָ כְּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

יִמְלֹךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם אֱלֹהֵיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר הַלְלוּיָהּ:
לְדֹר וָדֹר נָגִיד גְּדֹלָךְ וּלְנִצָּח נִצָּחִים קִדְשָׁתְךָ נִקְדִּישׁ וּשְׁבַחְךָ
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפְּנֵי לֹא יָמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וְעַד כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה:

Continue on page 364.

Hu eloheynu hu avinu hu malkeynu hu moshi'eynu vehu
yashmi'enu berahamav shenit le'eyney kol hay lihyot lahem
leylohim ani adonay eloheyhem.

Adir adirenu adonay adoneynu mah adir shimeha behol ha'arets.
Vehayah adonay lemeleh al kol ha'arets bayom hahu yihyeh
adonay ehad ushemo ehad.

Uvedivrey kodsheha katurv lemor.

Yimloh adonay le'olam elohayih tziyon ledor vador halleluyah.
Ledor vador nagid godleha ulenetzah netzachim kedushateha
nakdish veshivaha eloheynu mipinu lo yamush le'olam va'ed ki
el meleh gadol vekadosh atah.

COMMENTARY. On the pilgrimage festivals and Days of Awe, the paragraph
אֲדִיר אֲדִירֵנוּ / *adir adireynu!* / O mighty one is added to the *Kedushah*. This
provides an additional opportunity to emphasize not only divine
sovereignty, but the hope that God's rule will become permanently
manifest throughout the earth. Its placement here in the middle of the
Kedushah stands as a reminder that holiness is only complete when human
beings live lives that bring them into harmony with the divine. Thus the
prayer for divine sovereignty is a prayer we are meant to take personally as
we strive to be holy.

D.A.T.

This version of the Kedushah should be used for Shaḥarit when a Kedushah will be recited in both Shaḥarit and Musaf

We sanctify your name throughout this world,
as it is sanctified in the heavens above,
as it is written by your prophet:
“And each celestial being calls to another, and exclaims
Holy, holy, holy is THE RULER of the Multitudes of Heaven!
All the world is filled with divine glory!”

And then, with quaking noises,
so overwhelming in their power,
they raise up their voices,
rise to face the seraphim,
and, facing them, they say:
“Blessed is the glory of THE HOLY ONE,
wherever God may dwell!” ↩

DERASH. Holiness is the manner in which we react to persons, objects, places and events which we regard as indispensable to human welfare and self-realization.

M.M.K.

כבודו...וקרא / And...glory! (Isaiah 6:3).
ממקומו...ברוך / Blessed...dwell! (Ezekiel 3:12).

This version of the Kedushah should be used for Shaḥarit when a Kedushah will be recited in both Shaḥarit and Musaf.

נִקְדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בְּעוֹלָם כְּשֵׁם שְׁמִקְדִּישִׁים אוֹתוֹ בְּשָׁמַי מְרוֹם:
כְּכָתוּב עַל־יַד נְבִיאֶךָ: וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל־זֶה וְאָמַר
קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ
יְהוָה זָבָאוֹת מְלֵא כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ:
אֲזַ בְּקוֹל רָעֵשׁ גָּדוֹל אֲדִיר וְחֹזֶק מְשִׁמִּיעִים קוֹל מִתְנַשְּׂאִים לְעֲמַת
שְׂרָפִים לְעַמָּתָם בְּרוּךְ יֵאמְרוּ:

בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ: ←

Nekadesh et shimeḥa ba'olam keshem
shemakdishim oto bishmey marom
kakatuv al yad nevi'eḥa vekara zeh el zeh ve'amar:
Kadosh kadosh kadosh adonay tzeva'ot
melo ḥol ha'are^utz kevodo.
Az bekol ra'ash gadol adir veḥazak
mashmi'im kol mitnasim le'umat
serafim le'umatam baruḥ yome^uru:
Baruḥ kevod adonay mimekomo →

And from your dwelling-place,
 our sovereign, appear
 and reign among us,
 for we wait for you.
 When will you reign in Zion?
 Soon, and in our lifetime,
 may you come to dwell eternally!
 May your greatness and your holiness be realized
 in Jerusalem, your city,
 from one generation to the next,
 and throughout all eternities.
 And may our eyes behold your realm,
 as has been prophesied in songs about your power:
 "May THE ETERNAL reign forever,
 your God, O Zion, from one generation to the next. Halleluyah!"
 From one generation to the next may we declare your greatness,
 and for all eternities may we affirm your holiness,
 And may your praise, our God, never be absent from our
 mouths, now and forever.
 For you are a great and holy God. ↩

ימלך...הלליה / May...Halleluyah! (Psalms 146:10).

DERASH. This prayer affirms that God will appear "from your dwelling-place...." Where is God's place? God is called *Makom*, Place itself. We affirm, then, the possibility of God's emergence from God's very self. Some of the rabbis understood a spark of the divine to be present in everything. To appear "from your dwelling place" thus could also mean that we hope to see that which is godly within each thing. Together these interpretations suggest that we pray that God emerge out of the divine spark in each thing in order to manifest that this world is God's Place.

S.P.W.

מִמְקוֹמָהּ מַלְכֵנוּ תוֹפִיעַ וְתַמְלִיךְ עָלֵינוּ כִּי מַחֲכִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ: מְתִי
 תַמְלוֹךְ בְּצִיּוֹן בְּקֶרֶב בְּיָמֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד תִּשְׁכֹּן: תִּתְגַּדַּל וְתִתְקַדַּשׁ
 בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ לְדוֹר וָדוֹר וּלְנֶצַח נְצָחִים: וְעֵינֵינוּ תִרְאֶינָה
 מַלְכוּתְךָ כְּדָבָר הָאֱמוּנָה בְּשִׁירֵי עֲזָרְךָ:

יְמַלֵּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם אֱלֹהֵינוּ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר הַלְלוּיָהּ:

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נָגִיד גּוֹדְלֶךָ וּלְנֶצַח נְצָחִים קְדוּשָׁתְךָ נִקְדִּישׁ וְשִׁבְחֶךָ
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפְּנֵינוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד כִּי אֵל מְלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה: ←

Mimekomeha malkenu tofi'a vetimloḥ aleynu ki meḥakim
 anahnu laḥ. Matay timloḥ betziyon bekarov beyameynu
 le'olam va'ed tishkon. Titgadal vetitkadesh betoḥ yerushalayim
 ireḥa ledor vador ulenetzah netzahim. Ve'eyneynu tirenah
 malḥuteha kadavar ha'amur beshirey uzeha:

Yimloḥ adonay le'olam elohayih tziyon ledor vador halleluyah.

Ledor vador nagid godleha ulenetzah netzahim kedushateha
 nakdish veshivḥaha eloheynu mipinu lo yamush le'olam va'ed ki
 el meleḥ gadol vekadosh atah. ←

The Amidah continues here.

If the remainder of the Amidah is being read silently, it is customary to remain standing. If the remainder of the Amidah is being chanted aloud (חזרת הש"ץ / reader's repetition), it is customary to be seated here.

And therefore, HOLY ONE, let awe of you
infuse the whole of your Creation,
and let knowledge of your presence
dwell in all your creatures.

And let every being worship you,
and each created life pay homage to your rule.
Let all of them, as one, enact your bidding
with a whole and peaceful heart.

For we have always known, ALMIGHTY ONE,
that all authority to rule belongs to you,
all strength is rooted in your arm,
all mighty deeds have emanated from your hand.
Your name alone is the source of awe
that surges through all life.

And therefore, HOLY ONE, let awe of you
infuse your people, let the praise of you
ring out from all who worship you.

Let hope enliven all who seek you,
and let all who look to you with hope
find strength to speak.

Grant joy throughout your Land,
let happiness resound throughout your holy city,
soon, and in our days. ↩

The Amidah continues here.

If the remainder of the Amidah is being read silently, it is customary to remain standing. If the remainder of the Amidah is being chanted aloud (חזרת הש"ץ / reader's repetition), it is customary to be seated here.

וּבְכֵן תֵּן פְּחָדֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל כָּל-מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וְאִמְתָּךְ עַל
כָּל-מַה-שִּׁבְרָאתָ וְיִירָאוֹךְ כָּל-הַמַּעֲשִׂים וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְפָנֶיךָ כָּל-
הַבְּרוּאִים וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כָל־אֶגְרָה אַחַת לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ בְּלִבָּב שְׁלָם כְּמוֹ
שֶׁיִּדְעֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁהַשְּׁלֵטוֹן לְפָנֶיךָ עוֹ בְּיָדְךָ וּגְבוּרָה בְּיָמֶיךָ
וְשִׁמְךָ נוֹרָא עַל כָּל-מַה-שִּׁבְרָאתָ:

וּבְכֵן תֵּן כְּבוֹדֶךָ יְהוָה לְעַמֶּךָ תְּהִלָּה לִירְאֶיךָ וְתִקְוָה לְדוֹרְשֶׁיךָ
וּפְתֻחוֹן פֶּה לְמִיַּחֲלִים לָךְ שִׁמְחָה לְאַרְצֶךָ וְשִׁשׁוֹן לְעִירְךָ בְּמַהֲרָה
בְּיָמֵינוּ: ←

COMMENTARY. *Uvehen*/And therefore is repeated three times. Each repetition alludes to one of the three sections we will encounter later in the service, *Malhuyot*, *Zihronot* and *Shofarot*. The first *Uvehen*, corresponding to *Malhuyot*/Sovereignty, calls us to acknowledge ourselves as created beings living in a world where we are not completely in charge. It is terrifying, and we acknowledge our fear at the absence of control in our lives. We also share our awareness with each other. The second *Uvehen*, corresponding to *Zihronot*/Memory, confirms and reminds us that we have a group (human/Jewish/God-seeker) identity and relationship with the source of all. We have been created in such a way that we can enter into relationship with our creator. We can be God's people. In the third *Uvehen*, corresponding to *Shofarot*/Redemption, we envision our future and the great happiness that will accompany our waking up to who we really are.

S.P.W.

And therefore, let the just behold your peace,
let them rejoice and celebrate,
let all who follow in your path sing out with glee,
let all who love you dance with joy,
and may your power overwhelm all treachery,
so that it vanish wholly from the earth like smoke.
Then shall the power of injustice pass away!

May you alone be sovereign over all of your Creation,
and Mt. Zion be the seat and symbol of your glory,
and Jerusalem, your holy city—
as is written in your holy scriptures:
“THE ETERNAL ONE shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, through all generations!
Halleluyah!”

Holy are you,
and awe-inspiring is your name,
and there is no God apart from you,
as it is written: “THE CREATOR of the hosts of heaven
shall be exalted through the rule of law,
and God, the Holy One, made holy by the reign of justice.”
Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
the holy sovereign power. ↪

ובכן צדיקים

יִרְאוּ וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ וַיִּשְׁרִים יַעֲלִזוּ וַחֲסִידִים בְּרִנָּה
יִגִּילוּ וְעוֹלָתָהּ תִּקְפֹּץ-פִּיהָ וְכָל-הַרְשָׁעָה כָּלָה כַּעֲשֹׁן תִּכְלָה כִּי
תַעֲבִיר מִמִּשְׁלַת זָדוֹן מִן הָאָרֶץ:

וְתִמְלֹךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה לְבָרְךָ עַל כָּל-מַעֲשֶׂיךָ בְּהַר צִיּוֹן מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדְךָ
וּבִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קֹדֶשׁ: כִּכְתוּב בְּדִבְרֵי קֹדֶשׁ: יְמִלֶךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם
אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר הַלְלוּיָהּ:

קְדוּשׁ אַתָּה וְנוֹרָא שְׁמֶךָ וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים מִבְּלַעְדֶּיךָ: כִּכְתוּב: וַיִּגְבֶּה יְהוָה
צָבָאוֹת בְּמִשְׁפָּט וְהָאֵל הַקְדוּשׁ נִקְדַּשׁ בַּצְּדָקָה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקְדוּשׁ: ←

COMMENTARY. The liturgy for the *Yamim Nora'im* is characterized by the insertion of special prayer units, often in groups of three. The smallest tripartite unit for these days occurs here in the third blessing of the Amidah, in the section known as *Uvehen*/And therefore. These three paragraphs articulate a perennial polarity of Judaism: universalism and particularism. The first paragraph involves "the whole of your creation," the second asks that the awe of God "infuse your people," and the final paragraph speaks of "the just." Our prayer, *uvehen*, illuminates the dual dimension of Rosh Hashanah as "*Harat Olam*/The Birthday of the Entire World" as well as "*Yom Hazikaron*/A Day of Remembrance" of the particular actions of the Jewish people. R.H.

יְמִלֶךְ...הַלְלוּיָהּ / THE ETERNAL...Halleluyah (Psalms 146:10).

וַיִּגְבֶּה...בַּצְּדָקָה / THE CREATOR...justice (Isaiah 5:16).

4. KEDUSHAT HAYOM / THE DAY'S HOLINESS

On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.

You have loved us, and have taken pleasure in us,
and have made us holy with your mitzvot,
and you have brought us, sovereign one,
near to your service,
and have called us to the shelter of your great and holy name.

And you have given us, ALMIGHTY ONE, our God
in love this Day of (Shabbat and of) Remembrance,
a day to heed the (the memory of) shofar blast,
(with love,) a holy convocation,
A remembrance of the going out from Egypt. ↪

For Shaḥarit, continue on the following page. For Musaf, continue on page 371.

KAVANAH. The traditional *Kedushat Hayom* states that the people Israel were exiled “because of our sins.” But what exile is meant? Exile from Jerusalem? From the Temple? Because of what sin that we in this generation have committed? Perhaps our sin is our exile from ourselves. The end of our exile would consist not in the rebuilding of a physical Temple, but in the rebuilding of an inner reserve of spiritual integrity. An end to denying who we are demands that we face the dangers and challenges ahead as Jews with courage and creativity, that we join our fellow Jews in affirming the importance, vitality and guiding vision of our Jewish heritage.

S.D.R.

קְדֻשַּׁת הַיּוֹם



On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.


אַתָּה אֶהְבְּתָנוּ וְרָצִיתָ בָּנוּ וְקִדְשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְקִרְבָּתָנוּ מִלִּפְנֵי
לַעֲבוּדְךָ וְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ קִרְאתָ: וְתַתֵּן לָנוּ יְיָ
אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה אֶת־יוֹם (הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה וְאֶת־יוֹם) הַזִּכְרוֹן הַזֶּה יוֹם
(זִכְרוֹן) תְּרוּעָה (בְּאַהֲבָה) מִקְרָא קָדֵשׁ זָכֹר לִיציאת מצרים: ←

Atah ahavtanu veratzita banu vekidashtanu bemitzvoteyha
vekeravtanu malkenu la'avodateha veshimeha hagadol
vehakadosh aleynu karata. Vatiten lanu adonay eloheynu
be'ahavah et yom (hashabbat hazeh ve'et yom) hazikaron
hazeh yom (zikhron) teruah (be'ahavah) mikra kodesh zeh
litzi'at mitzrayim. ↪

For Shoharim continue on the following page. For Musaf, continue on page 372.

To be recited during Shaḥarit only:

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 Remembrance.

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. 

To be recited during Shaharit only:

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ יַעֲלֶה וְיָבֹא וְיַגִּיעַ וְיִרְאֶה וְיִרְצֶה
וְיִשְׁמַע וְיִפְקֹד וְיִזְכֹּר זְכוּרָנוּ וּפְקֻדּוֹתֵנוּ וְזִכְרוֹן אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ
וְזִכְרוֹן יְמוֹת הַמַּשְׁיִיחַ וְזִכְרוֹן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קֹדֶשׁ וְזִכְרוֹן כָּל עַמּוּךְ
בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֶיךָ לְפִלִּיטָה וּלְטוֹבָה לְחֵן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים לְחַיִּים
וּלְשָׁלוֹם בְּיוֹם הַזְכָּרוֹן הַזֶּה:


זְכוּרָנוּ יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה: וּפְקֻדָּנוּ לְבִרְכָּה וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בּוֹ
לְחַיִּים: וּבִדְבַר יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים חוּס וְחַיֵּנוּ וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ
כִּי אֵלֶיךָ עֵינֵינוּ כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ חַנוּן וְרַחוּם אָתָּה: ←

Our God, our ancients' God,
may it be your will that a heavenly inspiration
be awakened in us on this holy day
to renew the Land of Israel,
and to make it holy for your service,
and may peace prevail there
as well as freedom, justice, and the rule of Law,
as it is written by your prophet:
"Truly, Torah shall go forth from Zion,
and the word of the ETERNAL from Jerusalem!"
And it is said: "Let none do harm,
let none destroy, throughout my holy mountain,
for the earth is filled with knowledge of the OMNIPRESENT,
as the waters fill the sea."

Our God, our ancients' God,
have mercy for our kindred of the House of Israel
who are dwelling in distress. Please bring them forth
from darkness into light,
and accept with mercy and compassion
the prayers of your people Israel,
wherever they may dwell,
as they pour out their hearts before you
(on this Shabbat, and) on this Day of Remembrance.

When Rosh Hashanah coincides with Shabbat, add:

(Those who keep Shabbat enjoy your realm,
they call Shabbat the summit of delight.
A people that observes the holy seventh day
enjoys abundant goodness and delight.

The seventh day you favored and made holy,
you have called it the most loved of days,
a sign you made of it eternally,
in memory of Creation's works and days.) 

During Shaḥarit continue on the next page. During Musaf continue on page 611.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שְׂעֶרָה עָלֵינוּ
 רוּחַ מְמָרוֹם בַּיּוֹם הַקָּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה לְכוֹנֵן אֶת-אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַדֵּשׁ
 וּלְקַדֵּשׁ אוֹתָהּ לַעֲבוּדָתְךָ וְשָׁכֵן בְּאֶרֶץ שְׁלוֹם חָפֵשׁ צָדֵק וּמִשְׁפָּט
 בְּכָתוּב עַל-יַד נְבִיאָךְ: כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וּדְבַר-יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַיִם:
 וְנֹאמַר לֹא-יָרָעוּ וְלֹא-יִשְׁחִיתוּ בְּכָל-הָרָקָדָשִׁי כִּי-מִלֵּאָה הָאֶרֶץ יֵדְעָה
 אֶת-יְהוָה כַּמַּיִם לַיָּם מְכַסִּים:

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ רַחֵם עַל אֲחֵינוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
 הַנִּתְּנוּנִים בְּצָרָה וְהוֹצִיאֵם מֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹרָה וּקְבֵל בְּרַחֲמִים אֶת-תְּפִלַּת
 עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל-מְקוֹמוֹת מוֹשְׁבוֹתֵיהֶם הַשּׁוֹפְכִים אֶת-לִבָּם לְפָנֶיךָ
 (בַּיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה ו) בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּכֶר הַזֶּה:

When Rosh Hashanah coincides with Shabbat, add:

(יִשְׁמְחוּ בְּמַלְכוּתְךָ שׁוֹמְרֵי שַׁבָּת וְקוֹרְאֵי עֲנָג: עִם מְקַדְּשֵׁי שְׁבִיעִי
 כָּלֶם יִשְׁבְּעוּ וְיִתְעַנְּגוּ מִטוֹבְךָ: וְהַשְׁבִּיעִי רָצִיתָ בּוֹ וְקִדְּשָׁתוּ: חֲמִדַּת
 יָמִים אוֹתוֹ קָרָאתָ וְזָכַר לְמַעֲשֶׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית:) —

(Yismehu vemalhuteha shomrey shabbat vekorey oneg. Am mekadeshey shevi'i kulam yisbe'u veyitanegu mituveha. Vahashevi'i ratzita bo vekidashto. Hemdat yamim oto karata zeher lema'asey vereyshit.)

During Shaḥarit continue on the next page. During Musaf, continue on page 612.

COMMENTARY. The weekday Amidah consists of nineteen blessings. On Shabbat and holidays, the middle thirteen of these are omitted because they consist of workaday petitions, and a single blessing about the day is substituted except on Rosh Hashanah. Traditionally during *Musaf*, in the place of the single middle blessing are three blessings—*Malḥuyot*/Sovereignty, *Ziḥronot*/Remembrance, and *Shofarot*/Redemption. These themes, which with the shofar blasts, define the Rosh Hashanah liturgy, are often moved either into *Shaḥarit* or into the Shofar service in contemporary communities.

D.A.T.

לִירוּשָׁלַיִם / Truly...Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3).

לֵא...מְכַסִּים / Let...sea (Isaiah 11:9).

Our God, our ancients' God,
rule over all the world in its entirety,
by showing forth your glory,
and be raised up over all the earth
in your beloved presence.
And let the wondrous aura of your reign
be manifest in all who dwell upon the earth—
let every creature know that you are its creator,
let every living thing discern that you have fashioned it,
let everyone who draws the breath of life declare
that you, THE ANCIENT ONE, reign supreme,
and that your sovereignty embraces all.

On Shabbat, add the words in parenthesis.

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.
(And help us to perpetuate, ETERNAL ONE, our God,
with love and with desire,
your holy Shabbat,
and may all your people Israel,
all who treat your name as holy,
find rest and peace upon this day.)
Refine our hearts to serve you truthfully,
for you are a God of truth,
and your word is truthful
and endures forever.
Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
the sovereign power over all the earth,
who raises up to holiness (Shabbat,)
the people Israel
and the Day of Memory. ➤

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָעוֹלָם כֻּלּוֹ בִּכְבוֹדָךְ
וְהַנָּשָׂא עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ בִּיקָרְךָ וְהוֹפֵעַ בְּהַדָּר גָּאוֹן עֲזָךְ עַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי
תְּבֵל אֲרָצְךָ וַיַּדַּע כָּל־פֶּעוּל כִּי אַתָּה פֹּעֵלָתוֹ וַיְבִין כָּל־יִצְוֹר כִּי אַתָּה
יִצְרָתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמָה בְּאֶפֶס: יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בְּכָל
מְשָׁלָה:

On Shabbat, add the words in parenthesis.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ (רִצָּה בְּמִנוּחֵינוּ) קִדְשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצּוֹתֶיךָ וְתָן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ שְׂבָעָנוּ מִטּוֹבְךָ וְשִׂמְחָנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ
(וְהִנְחִילֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן שְׂבַת קִדְשֶׁךָ וַיְנַחֲחוּ בָּהּ
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִקִּדְשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ) וְטָהַר לִבָּנוּ לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאַמֶּת כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים
אַמֶּת וְדְבָרְךָ אַמֶּת וְקִיָּם לְעַד: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
מִקִּדְשׁ (הַשְּׁבַת וְ) יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן: —

meleḥ al kol ha'arets mekadesh (hashabbat ve) yisrael veyom
hazikaron.

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.

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.

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

עבודה

רצה יהוה אלהינו בעמך ישראל ולהב תפלתם באהבה תקבל
ברצון ותהי לרצון תמיד עבודת ישראל עמך:

ותחזיקנה עינינו בשוכך לציון ברחמים: ברוך אתה יהוה המחזיר
שכינתו לציון:

הודאה

מודים אנחנו לך שאתה הוא יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
ואמותינו לעולם ועד צור חיינו מגן ישענו אתה הוא לדור ודור:
גודה לך ונספר תהלתך על חיינו המסורים בידך ועל נשמותינו
הפקודות לך ועל נפישך שבכל יום עמנו ועל נפלאותיך וטובותיך
שבכל-עת ערב ובקר וצהריים: הטוב כי לא כלו רחמיך והמרחם
כי לא תמו חסדיך מעולם קיינו לך:

ועל כלם יתברך ויתרומם שמך מלפנינו תמיד לעולם ועד:
וכתב לחיים טובים כל-בני ברייתך:

וכל החיים יודוך סלה ויהללו את שמך באמת האל ישועתנו
ועזרתנו סלה: ברוך אתה יהוה הטוב שמך ולך נאה להודות: —

KAVANAH. So often we use our spare moments to reflect on the unpleasant places in our lives, our resentments, vindictiveness, pain, victimization. We need to create a litany of our blessings. Take a minute. Close your eyes. Think of seven blessings in your life. Create this menorah of thankfulness. Whenever you say *modim anahnu lah* or light the Sabbath candles or have a spare moment, recite the blessings on your menorah of thankfulness.


Z.S.S.

7. BIRKAT HASHALOM / BLESSING FOR PEACE

The following paragraph is said only when the Amidah is recited aloud.

Our God, our ancients' God,
bless us with the threefold blessing
spoken from the mouth of Aaron and his sons, as is said:
May THE ETERNAL bless you
and protect you. Let it be God's will!

May THE ETERNAL'S face give light
to you, and show you favor. Let it be God's will!

May THE ETERNAL'S face be lifted
toward you, and bestow upon you
peace. Let it be God's will! 

COMMENTARY. Traditionally the Priestly Blessing was done by the male descendants of the *kohanim*. In some congregations the *sheliach tzibur* (service leader) recites the blessing, and the congregation responds with “*Ken yehi ratzon*.” In other communities all the members of the congregation wrap arms and tallitot around each other and recite the blessing together. Another way to enact the Priestly Blessing is for each congregant to turn to a neighbor and recite the first half of each blessing, while the neighbor responds with the second half of the blessing.

Michael M. Cohen

COMMENTARY. Rabbi Lavy Becker of Montreal noticed that when this blessing was pronounced in the synagogue of Pisa, all the children gathered under the sheltering wings of their fathers' tallitot to receive it. He recognized this “as a reconstruction of the ancient priestly ceremony.” He modified that custom so that those wearing a tallit share it with their neighbors and all are under the sheltering wings of the Sheḥinah as we bless each other. It is now an established part of Canadian Reconstructionist practice.

E.M.

יברכך...שלום / May...peace (Numbers 6:24-26).

בְּרֵכַת הַשְּׁלוֹם

The following paragraph is said only when the Amidah is recited aloud.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ בְּרַכְנוּ בְּבִרְכָּה הַמְּשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי אַהֲרֹן וּבְנָיו כָּאֲמֹר:

בְּרַכְךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:
כִּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

יְאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ
וְיַחַנֶּד:

כִּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

יֵשָׁא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ
וְיִשֶּׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:

כִּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

Eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu
barehenu baberahah hamshuleshet
ha'amurah mipi aharon uvanav ka'amur:

Yevareheha adonay veyishmereha.

Ken yehi ratzon.

Ya'er adonay panav eleha vihuneka.

Ken yehi ratzon.

Yisa adonay panav eleha veyasem leha shalom.

Ken yehi ratzon. →

Grant peace, goodness and blessing in the world,
grace, love, and mercy
over us and over all your people Israel.
Bless us, source of being, all of us, as one
amid your light,
for by your light,
WISE ONE, our God, you give to us
Torah of life, and love of kindness,
justice, blessing, mercy, life, and peace.
So may it be a good thing in your eyes,
to bless your people Israel, and all peoples,
with abundant strength and peace.

In the book of life, blessing, and 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 silent Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.
When chanting aloud, continue with Avinu Malkenu, page 451, except on Shabbat, when
the service continues on page 461.*

KAVANAH. Try to imagine a time of true peace and tranquility, and think
about your part in helping this time to come about. What can you do?
What can you commit to? How will *you* be a peacemaker? L.G.B.

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה בְּעוֹלָם חַן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־
 יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמָּךְ: בְּרַכְנוּ אֲבִינוּ כָּלֵנוּ כְּאֶחָד בְּאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ: כִּי בְּאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ
 נִתְּתָה לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְצַדִּיקָה וּבְרָכָה
 וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם: וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֶךְ אֶת־עַמָּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־
 כָּל־הָעַמִּים בְּרַב־עוֹ וְשְׁלוֹם:

בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים בְּרָכָה וְשְׁלוֹם וּפְרִיָּסָה טוֹבָה נִזְכֵּר וְנִכְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנַחְנוּ
 וְכָל־עַמָּךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְלִשְׁלוֹם:
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה עוֹשֵׂה הַשְׁלוֹם:

Sim shalom tovah uverahah ba'olam hen vahesed verahamim
 aleynu ve'al kol yisra'el ameha. Barehenu avinu kulanu ke'ehad
 be'or paneha. Ki ve'or paneha natata lanu adonay eloheynu torat
 hayim ve'ahavat hesed utzedakah uverahah verahamim vehayim
 veshalom. Vetov be'eyneyha levareh et ameha yisra'el ve'et kol
 ha'amim berov oz veshalom.

Besefer hayim berahah veshalom ufarnasah tovah nizaher
 venikatev lefaneha anahnu vehol ameha beyt yisra'el lehayim
 tovim uleshalom.

Baruh atah adonay osey hashalom.

*The silent Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.
 When chanting aloud, continue with Avinu Malkenu, page 452, except on Shabbat, when
 the service continues on page 462.*

RIBONO SHEL OLAM / CONCLUDING MEDITATION

Sovereign of the universe,
fulfill my heart's petitions for the good.
Let me be worthy to perform your will with a whole heart.
Deliver me from the inclination to do evil,
and give me my portion in your Torah.
May I merit, with all Israel, your people,
that your Presence dwell upon us.
Make evident among us
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and strength,
the spirit of knowledge and the awe of THE CREATOR.
May divine love surround the one
who trusts in THE ETERNAL.

May my words of prayer, and my heart's meditation
be seen favorably, PRECIOUS ONE,
my rock, my champion.

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.

רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם

רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם מֵלֵא מְשָׁלוֹת לְבִי לְטוֹבָה וְזַנְגִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ
בְּלִבְבִּי שָׁלֵם: מִלְטָנִי מִיָּצָר הָרַע וְתַן חֶלְקִי בְּתוֹרָתְךָ: וְזַנְגִּי עִם כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ שְׁתַּשְׁרֶה שְׁכִינְתְּךָ עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹפֵעַ עָלֵינוּ רוּחַ חַכְמָה
וּבִינָה רוּחַ עֲצָה וּגְבוּרָה רוּחַ יִצְעַת וְיִרְאַת יְהוָה:
וְהַבּוֹטָח בִּיהוָה חֶסֶד יְסוּבְכֵנוּ.

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אֲמִרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי:

עוֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוּמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵּבֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

שְׁכִינָתְךָ / *shehinateha* / your Presence. This term is one of the most frequent ways of speaking of God in rabbinic and mystical tradition. The term derives from Exodus 25:8: "And I shall dwell in their midst (*veshahanti betoham*).” God’s Presence coming to dwell in the Tabernacle was believed to be the normal outcome of the priestly sacrificial labors. When Israel’s Second Temple was destroyed, the belief arose that God continues to dwell among Israelites during study and prayer. “If two sit and there are words of Torah between them, the Shehinah dwells with them” (Pirkey Avot 3:3).

J.R.



MEDITATIONS / AMIDAH ALTERNATIVES

In the time of your life, live—so that in that good time there shall be no ugliness or death for yourself or for any life your life touches.

Seek goodness everywhere, and when it is found, bring it out of its hiding place and let it be free and unashamed.

Place in matter and in flesh the least of the values, for these are the things that hold death and must pass away.

Discover in all things that which shines and is beyond corruption.

Encourage virtue in whatever heart it may have been driven into secrecy and sorrow by the shame and terror of the world.

Ignore the obvious, for it is unworthy of the clear eye and the kindly heart.

Be the inferior of no one, nor of anyone be the superior. Remember that everyone is a variation of yourself. No one's guilt is not yours, nor is anyone's innocence a thing apart...

In the time of your life, live—so that in that wondrous time you shall not add to the misery and sorrow of the world, but shall smile to the infinite delight and mystery of it.

William Saroyan

A man went from village to village, everywhere asking the same question, "Where can I find God?" He journeyed from rabbi to rabbi, and nowhere was he satisfied with the answers he received, so he would pack his bags, and hurry on to the next village. Some of the rabbis replied, "Pray, and you will find God." But the man had tried to pray, and knew that he could not. And some replied, "Study and you will find God." But the more he read, the more confused he became, and the further he seemed from God. Others replied, "Forget your quest. God is within you." But the man had tried to find God within himself and failed. ↪

One day, the man arrived wearily at a very small village set in the middle of a forest. He approached a woman who was tending some chickens. She asked whom he could be looking for in such a small place, and she did not seem surprised when he told her that he was looking for God. She showed him to the rabbi's house.

When he went in, the rabbi was studying. He waited a moment, but impatient to be off to the next village if he could not be satisfied, he interrupted. "Rabbi—how do I find God?" The rabbi paused, and the man wondered which of the many answers he had already received he would be told this time. But the rabbi simply said, "You have come to the right place. God is in this village. Why don't you stay a few days; you might find God here."

The man was puzzled. He did not understand what the rabbi could mean. But the answer was unusual, and so he stayed. For several days, he strode round and round, asking all the villagers where God was that morning, but they would only smile and ask him to have a meal with them. Gradually, he got to know them and even helped with some of the village work. Every now and then he would see the rabbi by chance, and the rabbi would ask him, "Have you met God yet?" The man would smile, and sometimes he understood and sometimes he did not understand. For months he stayed in the village, and then for years. He became part of the village and shared in all its life. He went to *shul* with the villagers every Friday night. Sometimes he knew why he prayed, and sometimes he didn't. And sometimes he really said prayers, and sometimes only words. And then he would return with one of them for a *Shabbos* meal, and when they talked about God, he was always assured that God was in the village, though he wasn't quite sure where or when God could be found. Gradually, he too began to believe that God was in the village, though he wasn't quite sure where. He knew, however, that sometimes he had encountered God. ↪

Time passed and the rabbi came to him and said, "You have met God now, have you not?" And the man responded, "I think that I have. But I am not sure why I met God, or how, or when. And why is God in this village only?"

So the rabbi replied, "God is not a person or a thing. You cannot meet God in that way. When you came to our village, you were so absorbed in your question that you could not recognize an answer when you heard it. Nor could you recognize God when you met God, because you were not really looking for God. Now that you have stopped pursuing God, you have found God. Now you can return to your town if you wish."

So, the man went back to his town, and God went with him. And the man knew that God was within himself and within other people. And other people knew it too, and sometimes they would ask him, "Where can we find God?" And the man would always answer, "You have come to the right spot. God is in this place."

Jeffrey Newman

If you have no past you have no future either, you are a foundling in this world, with no father or mother, without tradition, without duties to what comes after you, the future, the eternal. If you serve only yourself, you measure and weigh everything against yourself—there is nothing for you to strive towards. You have moods, but no character; desires, but no will—no great love, no great hate—you [merely] flirt with life....

I. L. Peretz

Our commitment to the redeeming deed applies, in the first place, to life within the human community. We take it as our task to enhance each person's potential for realizing the divine image, remembering that each of us bears a portrait unique and vital to the wholeness of God. But how clear can that portrait be when its bearer is suffering from hunger? Or from political oppression? Or from domestic bondage? Or when the person is hurting self and others, due to a compulsion from which it seems impossible to break free? If we are going to enhance the divine image in this world, we must work to maximize human freedom, always remembering that it was only after we came out of bondage that we were able to look toward God's mountain.

That commitment to freedom also includes helping people to create the sorts of lives and social structures to allow that freedom a lasting and secure home. Our Judaism lives in those two essential moments when we discover God. *We celebrate (and guard) our freedom, knowing God at the Sea, and we build a community that lives in God's presence, knowing God at the mountain...* Religious humanism, as I understand it, means a realization that the task is ours to do; we no longer wait for the divine hand, separate from our own, to come and save. This acceptance of responsibility is itself a sacred act for us. We seek to accept, with deeply humbling gratitude, the role of actor for divine compassion in the world of physical reality. The voice of God *does* speak to us at Sinai, but it is none other than the voice of Moses. The hands and feet of God *do* bring redemption, but they are none other than our own limbs, offered by us to our Maker in order to fulfill their true purpose.

Arthur Green

Additional meditations can be found on pages 1-20.

Avinu Malkenu is on page 451, Kaddish Titkabal is on page 461.