Morning Service for Festivals

God—fill my mouth with laughter and my mouth with song.
Fulfill my wishes, bless me from Zion.
Hear, Adonai, the prayer of Your servant.

Let my heart not be proud, nor my eyes be arrogant.
Grant me, my God, that I should find understanding
Until I find a place for You, dwelling places for the Mighty One of Jacob.
For God commanded the blessing of eternal life.
There I shall open my hands.
I shall praise You, Adonai, for You judge Your people
And Your servants who accompany You.

Hear my cry in Your Sanctuary.

(From the oral tradition of crypto-Jewish women of 15th c. Portugal, this Old Spanish prayer is based on various verses of Psalms and was included in the testimony delivered by Isabelle de la Vega before the Inquisition of 1590.)
Shaharit Lيمו טוב

Morning Service
for Festivals

It is written: “You shall rejoice in your Festival, with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow in your communities” (Deuteronomy 16:14).

“Joy is the very purpose and goal of a holiday. The joy that is realized in the holiday of freedom, joy of deliverance from slavery, and of the divine call to become a kingdom of priests, is no deceptive joy. It is a truly historical joy that celebrates the revelation on Mount Sinai, the legislation of a moral world. . . . It is a miracle that, in spite of all the sufferings which have marked his history, the Jew has been able to preserve such equanimity, even humour, without which he could not have managed to rise out of the deepest humiliation to such proud heights. This miracle is due to the Festivals! On the Sabbath as on the holidays, there was joy in the ghetto, no matter what sufferings the week had brought. Joy in the Festival was a religious duty, and became an unshakable and vital force in Jewish consciousness.” (Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch)

Each Yom Tov has its own theme created by special scriptural readings and liturgical insertions. The rubrics of the service are the same as in all services, but the celebration is heightened with the joyful songs of the Hallel. On Sh’mini Atzeret, the last day of Pesach, and Shavuot, the Yizkor/Memorial Service is included as well, bringing the full range of emotions to these holy days.

Private morning prayers may be found on pages 147 and 148.

Here am I, ready to fulfill the commandments.
You are my God, and I will thank You;
You are my God, I will exalt You.

Our God has commanded us:
Three times a year our prayer
to devote, on Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

From Exodus 23:14–17

(“three Pilgrimage Festivals”)
Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot/Sh’mini Atzeret
are distinguished from all other holy days of the calendar. On these days, in biblical times, our ancestors made pilgrimage to offer sacrifices in Jerusalem’s Temple.
For the First Morning of Pesach

I
When in time to come, your child asks you, “What is the meaning of the decrees, laws, and precepts that Adonai our God has enjoined upon you?”, you shall say to your child: “We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and the Eternal God freed us from Egypt with a mighty hand. The Eternal wrought before our eyes marvellous and destructive signs and portents in Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household; and God freed us from there, that God might take us and give us the land promised on oath to our ancestors. Then the Eternal One commanded us to observe all these laws to show reverence to Adonai our God, for our lasting good and for our survival, which is now the case. It will be, therefore, to our merit, before Adonai our God, to faithfully observe this whole instruction, as God has commanded us.”

II
Not once but many times have we been delivered. Time and again we were drawn out from bondage to freedom, from darkness to light, from sorrow to joy. In this season of liberation we celebrate the freedom to live without fear, the freedom to earn our daily bread, the freedom to speak from conscience, the freedom to set another free.
And we celebrate this season which brings new life from the earth’s soil. As it is written: “For now the winter is past, flowers appear on earth. The time of singing has come.”
Praised be the Eternal God, Giver of freedom, Source of all life.

For the Seventh Morning of Pesach

I
The Israelites were encamped on the seashore. When they looked up, they saw the Egyptians advancing like clouds. There was no escape. They cried out to the Eternal God. Then the One who is ever-present appeared to them, rebuked the Sea of Reeds, and the seething waters dried up.

Deuteronomy 6:20–25

Rabbi Chaim Stern, adapted

Song of Songs 2:11–12

Rabbi Moses ben Kalonymus, 11th c., piyut for the seventh day of Pesach
Our ancestors walked through the depths as through cleared paths lined with fruit-laden trees. Within the depths God made fountains of sweet water flow and clouds of incense to perfume their way. Adonai led them, safe and serene, to their destination.

...When the Israelites witnessed these judgments, they shouted and sang songs of praise. "God is my refuge and my defence!" They offered up chants to honour the God Most High, who brings down the arrogant and raises up the oppressed. First came the singers, then the musicians; maidens played timbrels among them.

Only afterwards were the angels permitted to sing.

II

Not a privilege but a responsibility awaited them. Not so much as a reward for past good behaviour but as a prelude to their future destiny. This release from slavery, this bringing forth was inspired by a purpose and goal rather than a motivating cause.... The Exodus from Egypt, the liberation from an alien yoke, independence, and freedom are not ends in themselves. The return to the homeland, the transformation from dependence to sovereignty, slavery to freedom are but instruments, the means for achieving the ultimate goal—the service of God.... The Almighty did not release Israel from the burden of persecution in order to set them free from all burden or responsibility. The Almighty God wished them to become free to accept another burden—the Rule of Heaven, Torah and Mitzvot.

For the Morning of Shavuot

I

One event stands out above all others in the memory of our people: When God revealed the Torah, no bird chirped nor beat its wings, no ox bellowed, the angels did not sing, the sea did not stir, no creature uttered a sound. The world was silent and still when the Divine Voice spoke:

“I am Adonai your God.”
II
At Sinai, the voice of Moses came to bear the voice of God within it. We who believe that revelation is not a one-time event, but an ongoing process, must, with fear and trembling, with deep humility and “holy audacity,” allow our voices, too, to become bearers of that Voice. The sound of י-יה is the great voice that never ceased.

Today it needs us to be its trumpet.

III
Every generation since Sinai receives only an echo of what was once revealed. So it is told:

When the Baal Shem Tov had a challenge set before him, he would go to a certain place in the woods, light a fire, and meditate in prayer—and what he had set out to accomplish was completed.

When a generation later the Maggid of Mezritch was faced with a challenge, he would go to the same place in the woods and say: “We can no longer light the fire, but we can still offer the prayers”—and what he sought become a reality.

Again, a generation later, Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sassov faced a challenge. He, too, went into the woods and said: “We can no longer light a fire, nor do we know the secret meditations, but we do still know the place in the woods—and that must be sufficient”—and sufficient it was.

When another generation had passed and Rabbi Israel of Rishin was called upon to perform the task, he sat in his golden chair in his castle and said: “We cannot light the fire, we cannot speak the prayers, we do not even know the place in the forest, but we can tell the story of how it was once done.”

And the story he told had the same impact as the actions of his forebears.
For the First Morning of Sukkot

I

... The God who for forty years led our ancestors through the wilderness, sheltered them in booths and fed them with manna ... this same God is our God, who still accompanies us in our desert-wanderings.

... Not troubled and care-worn ... is the life which we lead in the dwelling built by the trust in God and covered by the love of God. Why should it worry us that it is only a transitory shelter, which one day will leave us or we will leave it? The walls may fall, the roof may wither in the storm, God may call us outside; but the sheltering love of God is everywhere and constantly with us, and where it brings us to dwell, there it protects, there we dwell ... as calmly and securely as if it were our home forever.

II

The Eternal has brought you into a good land, a land with streams and springs and lakes issuing from plain and hill, a land where you may eat your fill, where you will lack nothing.

Take care lest you forget the Eternal your God and abandon the mitzvot. When you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built fine houses to live in, and your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold have increased, and everything you own has prospered, take care lest your hearts grow haughty and you forget the Eternal your God, and you say to yourselves: “My own power and the might of my own hand have won all this for me.” Remember that it is the Eternal your God who enables you to prosper.

ברוך אַתָּה, יְי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָמִים, שֶׁהַכֹּל בָּרָא לִכְבוֹד בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ הָֽעָמִּֽרְךָ.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who created all things for Your glory.
For the Morning of Sh’mini Atzeret

I

Happy the eye that saw all this! We hear of it and our soul rejoices. Happy the eye that saw water pouring down from heaven and wind, sweeping over the earth as the righteous whispers to God, Maker of Lightning. The people stand and murmur sweet words.

*We hear of this and our soul rejoices.*

Happy the eye that saw the black, massed clouds, and the wind sweeping through with a downpour of blessings, as the righteous whispers to God, who rides over the desert plains. “Courage, My faithful ones, the clouds are pouring down water!”

*We hear of this and our soul rejoices.*

...Happy the eye that saw water in the streets and in the pathways, and the wind sweeping over to make the harvests great. The righteous stands there, with water streaming ever stronger down his face, washing away the wood-ashes, drenching his hair—such a torrent of rain that his locks curl into waves!

*We hear of this, too, and our soul rejoices.*

II

Hear my prayer, O God: I pray as my fathers prayed, I hope as my mothers hoped, when on the Festivals they turned their hearts to You. The Festivals once saw them go up to Jerusalem with sacrifices and song. Then the land was laid waste, her cities ruined, her people driven far from their homes. Now my people has returned to Zion. They have rebuilt her cities, restored her soil. Keep them safe from anguish and war; prosper their work; inspire them to love and serve You. And let there be peace in the four corners of the earth: as You show compassion for Zion, so let the homeless of every land and tribe find a home. Then shall all the world hold festival, and songs of praise shall ascend.
On weekdays include:

A Psalm of Thanksgiving.

Shout joyfully to the Eternal, all the earth!
Serve the Eternal with gladness!

Come before God with singing!
Know that the Eternal is God.
God made us; we are God’s People, and God’s beloved flock.

Enter God’s gates with thanksgiving, God’s courts with praise!
Give thanks to the Eternal, praise The Name!

For the Eternal is good, God’s love is everlasting, God’s faithfulness is for all generations.

On Shabbat include:

A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath Day.

It is good to give thanks to the Eternal One, to sing to Your name, O Most High!

To tell of Your love in the morning, and Your faithfulness in the night;
to the sound of lute and harp, and to the music of the lyre.

Great as music is, it is neither the ultimate nor the supreme. The Ultimate is God, and the medium in which guidance has been conveyed to us is the word. All we have are words in the liturgy and reverence in our hearts. But even these two are often apart from each other. It is the task of music to bring them together. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)
For Your deeds, Adonai, fill me with gladness. The work of Your hands moves me to song.

How great are Your works, Adonai! How profound Your designing thoughts!

The fool will never learn, the dullard never grasp this:

the wicked may shoot up like weeds, all who do evil may flourish.

Yet they are doomed to destruction; while You, Adonai, are exalted for all time!

See how Your enemies, Adonai, see how Your enemies shall perish, how all who do evil shall be scattered.

You lift up my head in victory, I am anointed with freshening oil.

My eyes shall see the defeat of my foes, my ears shall hear of their fall.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm, grow tall as the cedar of Lebanon.

Those who are planted in the House of the Eternal shall blossom in the courtyards of our God.

They will still bear fruit in old age, they will be ever fresh and fertile,

proclaiming that the Eternal is just, my Rock, in whom there is no flaw.
For Torah Study

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has sanctified us with mitzvot, and has commanded us to engage in words of Torah.

Adonai our God, make the words of Your Torah sweet in our mouths, and in the mouths of Your People Israel, so that we and our children shall come to know Your name and study Torah for its own sake.

Praised are You, Adonai, Teacher of Torah to Your People Israel.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has chosen us from all peoples by giving us Your Torah.

Praised are You, Adonai, Giver of Torah.

Even though the People Israel is in exile among the nations of the world, when they occupy themselves with Torah, it is as though they were not in exile.

(Tanchuma D’Rabbi Eliezer, 148)
Priestly Benediction

May God bless you and protect you.
_May it be God’s will!_

May God’s Presence shine upon you and be gracious to you.
_May it be God’s will!_

May God’s favour turn to you and grant you peace.
_May it be God’s will!_

Obligations Without Measure

These are the obligations without measure, whose reward, too, is without measure, in this world and in the World to Come:

To honour father and mother,

to act responsibly—one to the other,
to hasten to the house of study both morning and evening,
to welcome the stranger,
to visit the sick,
to rejoice with bride and groom,
to accompany the dead to the grave,
to pray with sincerity,
to make peace between one and another;

but the study of Torah rivals them all.

For the Soul

My God, the soul You have given me is pure! You created and formed it. You breathed it into me and watch over it with care.

So long as my soul remains within me I shall give thanks to You, my God and God of my ancestors, Sovereign of all creation, Protector of every human spirit.

Praised are You, Adonai, in whose hand are the souls of all the living and the spirit of every human being.

Like a tree torn from the soil, like a river separated from its source, the human soul wanes when detached from that which is greater than itself. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)

אלהי נשמה

וּבִקּוּר חוֹלִים . . . וּלְוָיַת הַמֵּת

It seems to me that the duty of comforting mourners takes precedence over the duty of visiting the sick, because comforting mourners is an act of benevolence toward the living and the dead. (Rambam)

but one ray of Your light and I abound in light;
but one tremor of Your eternal life and I am reborn;
Morning Blessings

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has given the rooster the instinct to distinguish day from night.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has made me a Jew.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has made me free.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has made me according to Your will.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who opens the eyes of the blind.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who clothes the naked.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who frees the captive.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who lifts up the fallen.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who spreads out the land over the waters.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ כְוִי בִּינָה, הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר نָתַן לַשֶּׂיָּלָה. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ נִשְׂרָאֵל. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ בַּבַּת חוֹרִין. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ בַּבֶּן חוֹרִין. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ פּוֹקֵֽחַ עִוְרִים. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, זוֹקֵֽפָן כְּפוּפִים. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, רוֹקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמָּעוֹלָם, רוֹקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמָּעוֹלָם. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, שֶׁעָשַׂלֶּךָּ מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ, זוֹקֵֽפָן כְּפוּפִים. From Psalm 136:6

ברכות השחר ("morning blessings") This series of fifteen blessings acknowledges the many gifts of each new day and attributes them to God's goodness. Rabbi Meir taught: “A person should say one hundred blessings each day.” (Babylonian Talmud, Menachot 43b)
Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who provides for all my needs.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who makes firm our steps.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who girds Israel with strength.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who crowns Israel with glory.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who gives strength to the weary.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who removes sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids.

Sovereign of all the worlds, not in reliance upon the righteousness of our deeds do we lay down our longings before You; we look instead to Your abundant mercy.

From Psalm 37:23

From Isaiah 40:29

Babylonian Talmud
Yoma 87b

"who provides for all my needs"

Turn to us in compassion
For the sake of blameless Abraham.
Bestow compassion upon us from on high, Almighty, my Redeemer.
Hear me at dawn.

Have compassion for Your treasured people
For they are Your people, Your inheritance.

Speedily gather Your congregation

to the mountains of Galilee.

Hear me at dawn.

My God, hear my supplication.
Adon, who favours my song,
God, who is my shield, my portion,
my cup, my lot,

Hear me at dawn.

(Freiha, daughter of Rabbi Avraham, Morocco, 18th c.)
For what are we? What is our life, and what our faithfulness? What is our goodness, and what our vaunted strength? What shall we say in Your presence, Adonai our God and God of all ages?

Are not all the conquerors as nothing before You, and those of renown as though they had not been, the learned as if they had no knowledge, and the wise as if without understanding? Many of our works are vain, and our days pass away like a shadow. Since all our achievements are insubstantial as mist, how dare we look upon ourselves as higher than the beasts?

Yet, despite all our frailty, we are Your People, bound to Your covenant, and called to Your service. We therefore thank and praise You, and proclaim the holiness of Your name.

How fortunate we are!
How good is our portion!
How pleasant our destiny!
How beautiful our inheritance!

When can one experience God’s nearness? When one is suffused by “I don’t know,” when one knows that he does not know. (Panim Yafot, volume 1, 91f)

Ben Zoma taught: “Who is rich? The one who is content with his portion.” (Pirkei Avot 4:1)

“what are we?” The meaning of having been created in the image of God is veiled in mystery. Perhaps we may surmise the intention was for man to be a witness for God, a symbol of God. Looking at man, one should be able to sense the Presence of God. But instead of living as a witness, man, in so many ways, has become an imposter; instead of becoming a symbol, he became an idol. In man’s presumption he has developed a false sense of sovereignty which fills the world with terror. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)
P’sukei D’Zimrah

The first act of prayer is to put aside our private agendas and “set God before us” (Psalm 16:8). That, I take it, is the reason for the lavish praise of God at the start of our services. The Rabbis, knowing most people then, as now, come to services preoccupied with themselves, have tried to help us transcend it [with these poetic verses of praise].

(Rabbi Eugene Borowitz)

Praised is the One who spoke
and the world came into being.
Praised be God.
Praised is the Source of creation.
Praised is the One whose word
is deed, whose decree is fact.
Praised is the One whose compassion
covers the earth and all its creatures.
Praised is the One who rewards
the reverent.
Praised is the living and eternal God,
everlasting Sovereign of the Universe.
Praised is the Redeemer and Rescuer.
Praised is The Name.

With songs of praise we will glorify
You; we will speak Your name and
proclaim Your sovereignty,
for You are our Ruler, the only One,
the Life of the Universe.
Praised are You, Adonai, the Sovereign
God who is exalted with songs of praise.

בָּרוּךְ שֶׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם
בָּרוּךְ הוּא.
בָּרוּךְ עֹשֶׂה בְרֵאשִׁית,
בָּרוּךְ אוֹמֵר וְעֹשֶׂה.
בָּרוּךְ גוֹזֵר וּמְקַיֵּם,
בָּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל הָֽאָרֶץ,
בָּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל הַבְּרִיּוֹת,
בָּרוּךְ מְשַׁלֵּם שָׂכָר טוֹב לִירֵאָיו.
בָּרוּךְ חַי לָעַד וְקַיָּם לָנֶֽצַח,
בָּרוּךְ פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל,
בָּרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ.

כִּשְׁבָחוֹת וּבִזְמִירוֹת נְגַדֶּלְךָ
וֹנְשַׁבֵּחֲךָ וּנְפָאֶרְךָ , וְנַזְכִּיר שִׁמְךָ
וְנַמְלִיכְךָ , מֶלֶךְ , אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ,
יָחִיד חֵי הָעוֹלָמִים, מֶֽלֶךְ ,
בִּשְׁבָחוֹת וּבִזְמִירוֹת נְגַדֶּלְךָ.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מֶֽלֶךְ מְהֻלָּל
בַּתִּשְׁבָּחוֹת.

בָּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל הָֽאָרֶץ
(“praised is the One
whose compassion covers the earth”) Our
Sages teach that God created and maintains
the world through a balance of justice and
compassion. A parable: A king had empty
vessels. The king said: “If I put hot water into
them, they will crack; if I put ice water into
them, they will contract.” So what did the king
do? He mixed the hot water with the cold and
poured the mixture into the vessels, and they
endured. So it is with the Holy One, blessed
be God, who said: “If I create the world only
with the attribute of compassion, sins will
multiply beyond all bound; if I create the world
only with the attribute of justice, how could
the world endure? Therefore, I will create it
with both attributes; so that it may endure!”

(Genesis Rabbah 12:15)
Give thanks to Adonai who is good.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

Give thanks to the God above all gods.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

Give thanks to the Power above all powers.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

To the only Maker of miracles and wonders.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

To the wise Creator of heaven.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

To the One who spread the land out over the waters.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

To the Maker of great luminaries.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

The sun to rule by day.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

And the moon and stars by night.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

To the One who defeated great kings.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

And gave their land as an inheritance.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

As a heritage to Israel, God’s servant.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

To the One who provides bread for every human being.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

O give thanks to God on High.  
*God’s love is everlasting.*

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It is possible to live without hope; perhaps even without truth—but not without prayer, which is the quest for both.  
(Elie Wiesel)
Ashrei

Happy are those who dwell in Your House; they will ever praise You. Selah! Happy is such a People; happy the People whose God is Adonai.

A Psalm of David.
I shall exalt You, my Sovereign God; I shall praise Your name forever. Every day shall I praise You; I shall extol Your name forever.

Great is the Eternal and most worthy of praise; God’s greatness is unfathomable. Generation upon generation will acclaim Your deeds and tell of Your mighty acts.

I shall speak of Your radiant glory and Your wondrous works. They will speak of Your awesome might, and I shall recount Your greatness.

They will tell of Your great goodness and sing joyously of Your righteousness. Gracious and compassionate is the Eternal, slow to anger, abounding in kindness.

The Eternal is good to all; God’s compassion extends to all creation. All Your works, Adonai, will thank You; Your faithful will praise You.

One thing I ask of the Eternal; only this do I seek; to dwell in the House of the Eternal, all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Eternal and to frequent God’s Temple. (Psalm 27:4)
They will tell of the glory of Your dominion, and speak of Your might: to make Your power and the glorious splendour of Your sovereignty known to humankind.

Your sovereignty is an everlasting sovereignty; Your rule is for every generation. The Eternal supports all who stumble, raises up all who are bent low.

The eyes of all look to You; You give them timely sustenance. You open Your hand and satisfy all the living.

The Eternal is just in all ways, gracious in all deeds. The Eternal is near to all who call out, to all who call out in truth.

God fulfills the will of the reverent, hears their cry and saves them. The Eternal watches over all who love God; but all the wicked, God will destroy.

Let my mouth praise Adonai; let every creature praise the Holy Name forever. We shall praise God now and forever. Halleluyah!

Praying at any place is like standing at the very foot of God’s throne of glory, for the gate of heaven is there and the door is open for prayer to be heard. (Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer 35)
Halleluyah!
Praise God in the sanctuary.
Praise God whose strength is in heaven.
Praise God for mighty acts.
Praise God for far-reaching power.
Praise God with shofar's blast.
Praise God with lute and lyre.
Praise God with drum and dance.
Praise God with strings and pipe.
Praise God with cymbals sounding.
Praise God with cymbals resounding.
Let all that breathes praise God.
Halleluyah!

Let every living soul praise Your name, Adonai our God, and let every breath glorify Your majesty, forever and ever. Across the reaches of time and space, You are God. We have no Ruler but You.

God of all that has been and all that is yet to be, God of all creation, Sovereign of all generations: all praise to You. You guide the world with steadfast love, Your creatures with tender mercy.
You neither slumber nor sleep. You awaken the sleeping and arouse the dormant. You give voice to the silenced and freedom to the captive.
You lift up the fallen and raise the oppressed.
To You alone we give thanks.

From Psalm 150
From Psalm 90:2
From Psalm 121:4
From Psalms 146:7, 145:14
Though our mouths should overflow with song as the sea, our tongues with melody as the roaring waves, our lips with praise as the heavens’ wide expanse; and though our eyes were to shine as the sun and the moon, our arms extend like eagles’ wings, our feet speed swiftly as deer—still we could not fully thank You, Adonai our God and God of all ages, or praise Your name enough, for the abounding goodness You have bestowed upon our ancestors and on us.

Tremendous is God’s power, great and glorious is God’s name, forever mighty and awesome are God’s works.

God is the Sovereign enthroned on a high and lofty throne.

God inhabits eternity; exalted and holy is God’s name. As it is written: “Rejoice in the Eternal One, all you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to offer praise.”

Through the mouths of the upright will You be praised; through the words of the righteous will You be blessed. Through the language of the faithful You will be exalted, and in the midst of the holy ones You will be sanctified.

From Isaiah 6:1

From Isaiah 57:15

Psalm 33:1
O Sovereign, in the assemblies of the multitudes of Your People, the House of Israel, with joyful song will Your name be glorified throughout the generations. Great and holy Sovereign, let Your name be revered forever in heaven and on earth. Praised are You, Adonai, Sovereign God, exalted in praises, God of our thanks, God of wonders, who delights in our poetic song, Life of the Universe.

Chatzi Kaddish

Magnified and sanctified be the great name of the One by whose will the world was created. Amen. May God’s sovereignty govern our lives, and the life of the whole House of Israel, and let us say: Amen.

May God’s great name be praised for all eternity.

Blessed and praised; glorified, exalted, and extolled; lauded, honoured, and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, who is ever to be praised, far above all the blessings and songs of praise and consolations which human lips can utter, and let us say: Amen.

From Psalm 113:2, Daniel 2:20

The psalmist wrote: “For singing to our God is good.” It is good if we can bring it about that God sings within us. (Chasidic teaching)
Sh’mah and Its Blessings

The three prayers surrounding the Sh’mah reflect the themes of the three Pilgrimage Festivals. God as Creator is praised each day with Yotzer Or and celebrated each year with the Festival of Sukkot. God as the Giver of Torah is blessed each day with Ahavah Rabbah and celebrated each year with the Festival of Shavuot. And God as the Redeemer from bondage is lauded each day with the Ge’ulah and celebrated each year with the Festival of Pesach. From the universal to the particular, Creation, Revelation, and Redemption are the meeting-places between God and humankind.

All rise.

Call to Worship

Praise the Eternal One who is praised.

Praised be the Eternal One who is praised forever and ever!

Creation

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who fashions light and creates darkness, who makes peace and creates all things.

With compassion God brings light to the earth and all who dwell there; with goodness God renews the work of creation continually, day by day.

To have found God is not an end, but in itself a beginning.

(Franz Rosenzweig)

הַמֵּאִיר לָאָֽרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶֽיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים, וּבְטוּבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ לְיַמִּים תָּמִיד בְּכָל יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.

יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ: בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

(From Isaiah 45:7)

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, הָאוֹלָם, יוֹצֵר אוֹר בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ נָבִיאָה תּוֹכֵל, יִשְׂרָאֵל נָבִיאָה יְיָ נָבִיאָה תּוֹכֵל, יִשְׂרָאֵל נָבִיאָה יְיָ נָבִיאָה תּוֹכֵל.

(From Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 11b)
On Shabbat include:

To God who rested from all acts of creation, and who on the seventh day ascended to the throne of glory.

God enrobed the day of rest in splendour and called the Sabbath day a delight. This is the praise of the seventh day, that on it God rested from all labour. The seventh day itself offers praise, saying, “A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath day. It is good to give thanks to the Eternal.”

Therefore, let every fashioned thing glorify and praise God. Let these give praise, honour, and grandeur to the Sovereign God, who gives everything form and in whose sanctity gave the heritage of rest, the holy Sabbath day, to the People Israel. May Your name, Adonai our God, be sanctified, Your renown, Our Sovereign, be glorified in the heavens above and on the earth below.

How varied are Your works, Adonai! With wisdom have You made them all. The earth is resplendent with Your creations.

Let all praise You, Adonai our God, for the excellence of Your handiwork; and for the radiant lights You have made, let them glorify You. Selah!

May You cause a new light to shine upon Zion; and let us all soon be worthy of its light.
Praised are You, Adonai, Creator of the luminaries.

From Psalm 92:1

Psalm 104:24

“All the stars of the morning sing to You, For from You it is that they send out their light. The sons of God glorify the mighty name, Standing at their stations, day and night. And the congregation of the holy re-echo them, Fastening to Your house, at dawn’s first light. (Yehudah HaLevi)
Revelation

Abounding is Your love, Adonai our God, and great is Your compassion. Avinu Malkeinu, our ancestors were secure in Your Presence and You taught them the laws of life. Be gracious now to us, and teach us.

Avinu, Av HaRachaman, have compassion upon us. Inspire us to know and understand; to listen, learn, and teach; to observe and uphold with love all the teachings of Your Torah.

Enlighten our eyes with Your Torah, that we may cling to Your mitzvot. Unite our hearts to love and revere Your name. Then shall we never be shamed, for we place our trust in You, the great, holy, and awesome One. We shall rejoice in Your saving power, for You are the Source of our help. In love, You have chosen us and drawn us near to Your great name. In love, we now declare Your Oneness.

Praised are You, Adonai, who has chosen Your People Israel with love.

No one is lonely when doing a mitzvah, for a mitzvah is where God and man meet. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)

The Torah is eternal, because its explanation is to be made by the spiritual leaders of Judaism ... in accordance with every age. (The Baal Shem Tov)

From Psalm 86:11

The road of Judaism is embedded with jewels: Shabbat, honour your parents, be fair in business, do not gossip. There are 613 jewels, all of different shapes and weights. Some are easier to pick up, others more challenging. The stronger one grows, the more one can carry away. (Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf)
Hear, O Israel: the Eternal One is our God, the Eternal God is One!
Praised be God’s glorious majesty forever and ever!

All are seated.

You shall love the Eternal One, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your might. Set these words, which I command you this day, upon your heart. Impress them upon your children; speak of them in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when you rise up. Let them be a sign upon your hand, a symbol between your eyes. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates.

I am a Jew because, above the nations, Israel places one humanity.
I am a Jew because, above one humanity, Israel places One God.
(Edmond Fleg)
If you carefully obey My mitzvot which I give you this day, to love and serve Adonai your God with all your heart and soul, I will cause rain to fall on your land in season, the autumn rains and the spring rains, that you may gather in your grain, wine, and oil. And I will provide grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied. Beware lest your heart be deceived, and you turn and serve other gods and bow down to them; for then the anger of the Eternal One will blaze against you, and will shut up the skies so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no produce, and you will quickly vanish from the good land which the Eternal One gives you. You shall place these words of Mine in your heart and soul. Let them be a sign upon your hand, a symbol between your eyes. Impress them upon your children; speak of them in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when you rise up. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates—that your days and the days of your children may be prolonged in the land, which the Eternal One promised to give your ancestors for as long as the sky is laid out over the earth.

Learn to serve God not only with noble impulses, but also with the base, selfish desires of the heart. (Mishnah B’rachot 9:5)
The Eternal One spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to the children of Israel and instruct them to make for themselves tzitzit on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to include in the tzitzit on each corner a thread of blue. You shall have the tzitzit, so that when you look upon it you will remember to do all the mitzvot of the Eternal One and you will not follow the desires of your heart and eyes which lead you astray.”

Remember to do all My mitzvot, so shall you consecrate yourselves to your God. I am the Eternal, your God, who led you out of Egypt to be your God; I, Adonai, am your God.

Numbers 15:39-41

(Even a Jewish atheist knows full well what the God in whom he doesn’t believe expects of him.)

Leonard Fine
Redemption

True and enduring, beloved and precious, awesome and adorned, good and beautiful is this eternal truth: the God of the universe is our Sovereign, the Rock of Jacob our Protecting Shield!

From generation to generation, O God, You endure and Your name endures. Your throne is upright, Your faithfulness everlasting. Steadfast and precious, Your words are resplendent with life and sustaining power; they stand the test of time.

Adonai, You redeemed us from Egypt and set us free from the house of bondage. In turn, Your cherished ones offered songs of praise and melodies of thanks to You, the Sovereign, living God.

High and exalted, mighty and awesome, You humble the proud and raise the lowly. You free the captive and redeem the oppressed. You answer the moment we cry out.

Mishnah Tamid 5:1; Babylonian Talmud, Brachot 13a and P’sachim 116b

From Psalm 93:2

גאולה
(Amikha, Rzaahou ha-habim, no’ra’i, etzah, tafiyah)
derekh ha-atzor, alu le-yeshuah roshum
yulpan amit, ‘al filah
malkan, zoh, ‘yakub, mong, yishuah.
lar dor dor kedem,
shem kedem, kisai, bor.
memlakhoi, amimot ha-leir.
kanem, riberem, yizmim, ne’aminim vehemidim.
la’ah ve’alulalim, vealulmen.
memarem alを中心に, ve-‘alulmen.
mobim ha-erechim, ve-‘alulmen.
le’tam zemah, etzohim, rofim
al zemah shubhah, erahim, ‘alamot ve-hebreot, barok.
heraratem lamalek, al yeehime.
re bena, gorle, konah, mepiyal
‘azim, mozmid shulamim, mori‘a
assirim, popurim tamarim, zahor ri’im, zuhoz, leumot beit.
shuam akeli.

גאולה (“redemption”) At dawn Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta were walking in the valley beneath the Arbel Mountain by the Sea of Galilee. They saw the morning star’s light break through. That, said Rabbi Chiya, is like the process of redemption of Israel. First it emerges a little at a time, and the more it continues, the greater the light increases. (Jerusalem Talmud, Brachot 1:1)

ומגביה שפלים (“You raise the lowly”) Piety, especially Jewish piety, respects the little—the little person, the little matter, the little task, the little duty. Through the little, religion meets the greatness that lies behind. (Rabbi Leo Baack)
Praises to God Most High, who is praised and is praiseworthy! Moses, Miriam, and the Children of Israel answered You with this song of rejoicing:

“Who is like You, Adonai, among the gods? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praise, doing wonders?”

The redeemed sang a new song to Your name at the shore of the sea; in unison they gave thanks and proclaimed Your sovereignty, saying:

“The Eternal will reign forever and ever!”

Rock of Israel, come to Israel’s help. Fulfill Your promise to redeem Judah and Israel. The name of our Redeemer is Adonai Tz’va’ot, the Holy One of Israel. Praised are You, Adonai, who redeemed Israel.

Exodus 15:11

מִי־כָּמֹֽכָה בָּאֵלִם, יְהוָֹה? מִי כָּמֹֽכָה, נֶאְדָּר בַּקֹּֽדֶשׁ, פֶֽלֶא? עֹֽשֵׂה נוֹרָא תְהִלֹּת, שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה שִׁבְּחוּ גְאוּלִים לְשִׁמְךָ עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּם; יַֽחַדיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ: יְהוֹרָעֲלֵי עַל עָנָוּת יְהוָֹה יִמְלُוֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד! צְוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל, קֽוּמָה בְּעֶזְרַתךָ יְהוּדָה יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּפְדֵה כִנְאֻמֶּה יְהוָֹה צְבָאוֹת וְיִשְׂרָאֵל. גֹּאֲלֵי שְׁמוֹ, קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, גָּאַל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Exodus 15:18

זָרַר יִשְׂרָאֵל, קֹנְהוּ בְּעָבוֹר יְהוָֹה יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּפְדֵה כִּנְאֻמָּה יְהוָֹה יִשְׂרָאֵל, גָּאְלוּ יְהוָֹה צְבָאוֹת שִׁמְהוּ, קְרָוִים יִשְׂרָאֵל; בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, גָּאַל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Isaiah 47:4

גָּאַל יִשְׂרָאֵל (“who redeemed Israel”) Why were the Hebrews worthy of being redeemed from Egyptian slavery? Because they maintained their uniqueness by giving their children identifying names, teaching them God’s name, circumcising their sons, and speaking the Hebrew language. (Mechilta, Bo 5)

God is not happy at the downfall of the wicked…. For when the angels began to sing songs of praise to God at the Red Sea, God silenced them, saying: “My creatures are drowning in the sea and you want to sing a song of praise?” (Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 10b)
The previous section, the *Sh’ma* and its blessings, is primarily composed of praises, descriptions, and declarations about God. In contrast, the *Amidah*, the Standing Prayer, is a series of personal prayers addressed directly to God.

Rabbi Elazar taught: What is the meaning of the verse: “So will I bless Thee as long as I live; in Thy name will I lift up my hands” (Psalm 63:5)? The first part of the verse refers to the recitation of the *Sh’ma* and its blessings. The second part of the verse refers to the *Amidah*. Scripture describes the one who recites both collections of prayer as the one who can say with confidence: “My soul is satisfied” (Psalm 63:6). (Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 16b)

**All rise.**

Adonai, open my lips, so
my mouth may declare Your praise.

**Ancestors**

Praised are You, Adonai our God, and God of our ancestors:
God of Abraham, God of Isaac,
God of Jacob, God of Sarah,
God of Rebekah, God of Rachel, and God of Leah; great, mighty, and awesome God, God Most High.

You bestow loyal kindness upon all and You create all. You remember the loyalty of our ancestors, and lovingly bring redemption to their children’s children for the sake of Your name.

Know before whom you stand.  
(Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 28b)
Sovereign, Helper, Saviour and Shield! Praised are You, Adonai, who shields Abraham and attends to Sarah.

God’s Power

Eternal is Your might, Adonai. You extend life after death. Great is Your power to save.

On Sh’mini Atzeret include:
You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.

On all other Festivals include:
You cause the dew to descend.

With loyal kindness You sustain the living; with great compassion You extend life to the dead. You support the fallen and heal the sick; You free the captive and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, Mighty One? Who can compare to You, Sovereign of life and death, Source of salvation? You are faithful in extending life after death. Praised are You, Adonai, who extends life after death.

Excerpts from Psalms 145:14, 146:7-8, Daniel 12:2, I Samuel 2:6

God says: “Just as I create worlds and bring the dead back to life, so are you, human beings, capable of doing the same.” (Midrash Tehilim 116:8)

Many of those who sleep in the dust shall awake to everlasting life. . . Then the knowledgeable shall shine like the brightness of the sky; those who justified the many, like the stars, forever and ever” (Daniel 12:2–3). Jewish views of life after death are many and varied. The one common belief is that the soul is eternal.

The rainy season is here.
Its showers will gather, then pour themselves, more and more, upon the earth.
Grain, wine, and oil will quickly flourish.
The clouds will send down rain, and urge the earth to bring forth grasses.
Seeds and buds will blossom in beauty.
Voices of thunder will herald:
Those who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy! (9th–11th c. piyut)
God’s Holiness

We sanctify Your name on earth, even as all things, to the high heavens, declare Your holiness; as it is written by Your prophet: “One called out to another and proclaimed:

‘Holy, holy, holy is Adonai Tz’va’ot, the fullness of all the earth is God’s glory.’”

How majestic is our Majesty! Adonai, our Ruler, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!

“How majestic is our Majesty! Adonai, our Ruler, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!”

Praised be God’s glory from God’s place.”

Psalm 146:10

The Eternal will reign forever; Your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Halleluyah!”

Psalm 146:10

 Thousands and myriads of angels, chariots of flame and bolts of fire circle and whirl about the throne, raised upon the seventh heaven. Three times they say “Holy!” and they listen to the low murmuring sound. And I, daughter of the three patriarchs—my prayers always please. (Rabbi Benjamin ben Zerach)

Declaring, “God’s glory is above the heavens,” while the heavenly beings think of God as being below, declaring, “God’s glory is all over the earth,” until they both, in heaven and on earth, concur in declaring: “Praised be the glory of Adonai from God’s place,” because God is unknowable and beyond true comprehension (The Zohar). This Kabbalistic teaching addresses the fear that God is remote and the desire that God be near.
From generation to generation we will declare Your greatness, and through all eternity proclaim the sanctity of Your holiness. Your praise, our God, will never be taken from our mouths; for God and Sovereign, great and holy are You. Praised are You, Adonai, the holy God.

The Sanctity of the Day

In love and favour, O God, You have chosen us from all the peoples, exalting us by sanctifying us with Your mitzvot. Our Sovereign, You have brought us near to Your service, that through us Your great and holy name may become known in all the earth. In Your love, Adonai our God, You have given us [Sabbaths of rest,] Festivals of gladness, holy days and seasons of joy: this [Sabbath day and this] Festival of — Pesach, season of our freedom, — Shavuot, season of revelation, — Sukkot, season of our joy, — Sh’mini Atzeret, season of our joy, to unite [in love and] in worship and to recall the Exodus from Egypt.

Holiness occurs when power and goodness co-exist in perfect harmony. (Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan) Kvodshah Yeim

ין אגדה בחורות-face הלעפים, לא ימשך עולמה או עיד, כי כל כרבתה במצורות, כקרבתה, מלכמה עלברחת, רשתה. הגדול ואדרת trần יראת. חתומ קי, יש אתיה, באהבה, לשמשה, ת胳 ומגשים. את ים [השבת בחות, יאת ים, ngoם בחות, ngoם מתא, ngoם מקים, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת, ngoם שמחת.

כבר הראות קדש, הזכraigרא מכאר_prog

“Take my prayer as an offering of incense, my upraised hands as an evening sacrifice” (Psalm 141:2).
Our God and God of our ancestors, be especially mindful of us and of all Your People, the House of Israel, for well-being and favour, for kindness and compassion, for life and for peace on this

— Festival of Pesach.
— Festival of Shavuot.
— Festival of Sukkot.
— Festival of Sh’mini Atzeret.

Adonai our God, this day remember us for well-being. Amen.

This day acknowledge us with blessing. Amen.

This day help us to a fuller life. Amen.

Bestow upon us, Adonai our God, the blessing of Your Festivals, and may we celebrate them as to be worthy of Your blessings of life and peace, joy and gladness.

— חַג הַמַּצּוֹת הַזֶּה.
— חַג הַשָּׁבוּעוֹת הַזֶּה.
— חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת הַזֶּה.
— הַשְּׁמִינִי חַג הָעֲצֶֽרֶת הַזֶּה.

ומקורה בּוֹ לְבָרְכָה. אָמֵן.

ורוֹשֵׁישְׁנָה בּוֹ לְהָלִיָּה. אָמֵן.

ורְשֵׁאָנוּ בּי אֱלֹהֵי. אָמֵן.

את בְּרָכַּת מוֹעֲדֶךָ לְהַלִיָּה.

לְהָלִיָּה, לְשָׁמָּהָה לְלֵשְׁנָה.

בְּאָשֶׁר רָצוּ, אָמְם לְלָרְבֹּנָה.

לְשָׁמָּהָה וְלְלֵשְׁנָה (“joy and gladness”)
The Torah does not impose asceticism upon us. It rather desires that we maintain a balance... between reverence, love, and joy, through any of which one may approach God. Your contrition on a fast day does not bring you closer to God than your joy on Shabbat and Festivals, if your joy is devoted and wholehearted.... You should rejoice in the mitzvot themselves out of love for the One who gave them, realizing how God has benefited you. It is as if you were a guest at His table. Thank your Host in thought and in word; and if this joy should lead you to melody and dance, this becomes worship and a deep bond of union with the Divine. (Yehudah HaLevi)
Our God and God of our ancestors, sanctify us by Your mitzvot, and let Your Torah be our way of life. [May our rest on this day be pleasing in Your sight.] Satisfy us with Your goodness, gladden us with Your salvation, and purify our hearts to serve You in truth. [In love and favour, Adonai our God, let Your holy Sabbath remain our heritage.] Let us celebrate Your holy Festivals with joy and gladness, that all Israel, sanctifying Your name, may have cause to rejoice. Praised are You, Adonai, who sanctifies [the Sabbath, the House of Israel, and the Festivals.]

Worship

Be gracious, Adonai our God, to Your People Israel, and receive our prayers with love. May our worship always be acceptable to You. Draw near to all who seek You; turn to all who serve You. Grace us with the presence of Your spirit. And may our eyes behold Your compassionate return to Zion. Praised are You, Adonai, who restores Your Divine Presence to Zion.

The Shechinah comes upon us neither in response to our sadness nor our raucous laughter but in response to our joy in the mitzvah. (Babylonian Talmud, Psachim 117a)

עֲבוֹדָה

Mishnah Rosh HaShanah 4:5, Mishnah Tamid 5:1

For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent; for the sake of Jerusalem I will speak out. (Isaiah 62:1)

Two great servants move through the ages: prayer and sacrifice. In prayer man pours himself out, dependent without reservation, knowing that, incomprehensibly, he acts on God, albeit without exacting anything from God; for when he no longer covets anything for himself, he beholds his effective activity burning in the supreme flame.

And those who sacrifice? I cannot despise the honest servants of the remote past who thought that God desired the smell of their burnt sacrifices: they knew in a foolish and vigorous way that one can and should give to God; and that is also known to him who offers his little will to God and encounters Him in a great will. “Let Your will be done”—is all he says, but truth goes on to say for him: “through me whom You need.” (Martin Buber)
Gratitude

We gratefully acknowledge that You are Adonai our God, the God of our People for all time. You are the Rock of our life, the Power that shields us in every age. We thank You and sing Your praises: for our lives, which are in Your hand; for our souls, which are in Your keeping; for the signs of Your presence we encounter every day; and for Your wondrous gifts at all times: morning, noon, and night. You are Goodness; Your mercies never end. You are Compassion; Your love has never failed. You have always been our Hope.

For all this, O Sovereign God, let Your name be forever praised and exalted. O God, our Redeemer and Helper, let all who live gratefully acknowledge You and praise Your name in truth. Selah! Praised are You, Adonai, whose name is Goodness. We give You thanks and praise.

From Psalm
79:13

From Lamentations
3:22

The moon itself among the clouds, 
Like a ship sailing under its banners; 
The clouds like a girl in her garden 
Moving, and watering the myrtle-trees; 
The dew-mist—a woman shaking 
Drops from her hair to the ground. 
The inhabitants turn, like animals, to rest, 
(Their palaces are their stables); 
And all fleeing from the fear of death, 
Like a dove pursued by the falcon. 
And these are compared at the end to a plate 
Which is smashed into innumerable sherds. 
(Rabbi Shmuel HaNagid, Spain, 10th c.)
Priestly Benediction

Our God and God of our ancestors, bless us with the threefold benediction of the Torah:

May God bless you and protect you. *May it be God’s will!*

May God’s Presence shine upon you and be gracious to you. *May it be God’s will!*

May God’s favour turn to you and grant you peace. *May it be God’s will!*

*Numbers 6:24–26*

**Priestly Benediction** ("priestly benediction") This prayer is a remnant of the ancient Israelite practice, called duchanen in Yiddish. When the Temple stood, the Kohanim would ascend a platform, called a duchan. Today, the Priestly Benediction, said daily in Jerusalem, but only on the High Holy Days and Festivals in the Diaspora, invites God’s blessing to be bestowed upon the People. Reform Jewish practice does not distinguish the ritual responsibilities of Kohanim. Any leader of the service may fulfill this important role.

Rabbi Nathan taught: “Bless you” means “with physical possessions,” and “keep you” means “protect you from physical harm.” Rabbi Isaac taught: “Keep you” means “keep you from the evil inclination within you.” Other interpretations are: “Keep you” means “from being dominated by others”; or “God will faithfully keep the covenant with you”; or “God will keep your soul when you die.” (Numbers Rabbah, 11:5)
Peace

Grant us peace, Your most precious gift, O Eternal Source of peace, and give us the will to proclaim its message to all the peoples of the earth. Bless our country, that it may ever be a stronghold of peace, and its advocate among the nations. May contentment reign within its borders, health and happiness within its homes. Strengthen the bonds of friendship among the inhabitants of all lands, and may the love of Your name hallow every home and every heart. Praised are You, Adonai, who blesses Your People Israel with peace.

ברכת שלום

ברכת שלום. טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה, חֵן וָחֶֽסֶד וְרַחֲמִים, עָלֵֽינוּ ל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמֶּֽךָ .

וְעַל כּ בָּרְכֵֽנוּ אָבִֽינוּ, כֻּלָּֽנוּ כְּאֶחָד, בְּאוֹר פָּנֶֽיךָ , כִּי בְאוֹר פָּנֶֽיךָ נָתַֽתָּ לָּֽנוּ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, תּוֹרַת חַיִּים, וְאַהֲבַת חֶֽסֶד, וּצְדָקָה, וּבְרָכָה, וְרַחֲמִים, וְחַיִּים, וְשָׁלוֹם. וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶֽיךָ לְבָרֵךְ ל עֵת אֶת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכ ל שָׁעָה בִּשְׁלוֹמֶֽךָ .

וּבְכ בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּשָּׁלוֹם.

בִּרְכַּת שָׁלוֹם

“Peace” The English here is not a direct translation of the Hebrew. It is a beloved interpretive prayer found in The Union Prayer Book, first published for Reform congregations of North America in 1940.

בַּכּ • בַּכּ (“at every time, every hour”) It is written: “Seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:15). In general, Torah doesn’t require us to pursue or chase after the commandments. When the occasion arises to fulfill a mitzvah, we do so. However, the religious duty to make peace is different. We must urgently “seek out” peace in our own place, and “pursue” peace in every other place. (Numbers Rabbah, Chukkat 19:27)
Private Meditation

My God, keep my tongue from evil and my lips from deceit. Help me to keep silent in the face of derision, humble in the presence of all. Open my heart to Your Torah, and let my soul pursue Your mitzvot. Concerning those who plan evil against me, swiftly annul their counsel and frustrate their intentions. Act for the sake of Your name. Act for the sake of Your right hand. Act for the sake of Your holiness. Act for the sake of Your Torah. In order that Your loved ones be delivered, save with Your right hand and answer me.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, Adonai, my Rock and my Redeemer.

May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens let peace descend on us, on all Israel, and on all the world. And let us say: Amen.

All are seated.

Praised be God who has not rejected my prayer.
(Psalm 66:20)
On Sukkot, for the lulav and etrog:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has sanctified us with mitzvot, and has commanded us concerning the taking up of the lulav.

Because we are taking up the lulav for the first time this season:

For Life

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

עַל נְטִילַת לוּלָב ("the taking up of the lulav") How to raise the lulav and etrog:
1. The lulav consists of one palm branch (lulav), two willow (aravah), and three myrtle (hadas). It is held in the right hand, so that the spine is turned toward you. The willows are to the left of the spine, myrtles to the right.
2. The etrog has a stem (oketz) on one end and a dried blossom (pitam) on the other. Pressed tightly against the lulav, the etrog is held in the left hand with the pitam pointed downward while reciting the blessing Al netilat lulav (and also Shehecheyanu when shaking the lulav for the first time this year).
3. Then turn the etrog so that the pitam points upward for the shaking.
4. Hold both hands tightly together and shake the lulav and etrog three times in six directions: to the east, south, west, and north, up and downward.

Rabbi Yochanan explained: “One waves the four species in acknowledgment of the One to whom all directions, and heaven and earth, belong.” (Babylonian Talmud, Sukkah 37b)

Just as one cannot fulfill one’s obligation of the Festival of Sukkot unless all four species are bound together, so too can Israel only be redeemed when all the People of Israel are held together. (Yalkut Shimoni 188a)
There is one who sings the song of his own self, and in himself finds everything.

There is one who sings the song of his People and cleaves with a tender love to Israel.

There is one whose spirit is in all worlds, and with all of them does he join in his song.

And then there is the one who ascends with all these songs merging within him continually—the song of the self, the song of one’s people, the song of humanity, the song of the universe.

This is the song, which in its resounding fullness, rises up to become the joyful sound of holiness.

(Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook)
It is written: “This I remember as I pour out my soul: going with the festive crowd to the House of God, to the sounds of song and thanksgiving” (Psalm 42:5).

In the Temple on Mount Moriah, the Levites sang psalms every morning and evening as part of the sacrificial ritual. After the destruction of the Temple, some songs of the Levites were transferred to the synagogue services, but a specific collection of praising psalms (Psalms 113–118) became known as the Hallel. It is offered in celebration of all three Pilgrimage Festivals—Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot/Sh’mini Atzeret—and in celebration of Rosh Chodesh, that is, the New Moon (Babylonian Talmud, Ta’anit 28b). According to tradition, Hallel was sung at every historic occasion of deliverance for the Jewish People beginning with the Exodus from Egypt (Babylonian Talmud, P’sachim 117a). As a result, Hallel is also sung to celebrate the victory of Chanukah and, more recently, Yom HaAtzma’ut, Israel’s Independence Day. However, Hallel is not sung on Purim, because its miraculous tale of rescue is considered to have been incomplete: our People was not brought back into the Land of Israel at that time.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has sanctified us with mitzvot, and has commanded us to recite the Hallel.

ברוך אתה, שדód צרכם, מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו
במצוותיו, ואחינו לברך, את ההלל.

(to recite the Hallel)

Rabbi Yose ben Chalafta prayed: “May my lot be like that of those who recite the Psalms of Hallel every day.” (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 118b; Sofrim 17:11)
Halleluyah!

Sing praises, you servants of the Eternal, praise the name of God.

Praised be the name of the Eternal, now and forever.

Let God’s name be praised from sunrise to sunset.

The Eternal is supreme above the nations, more glorious than the heavens.

Who is like our Eternal God dwelling on high,

who is yet so near in heaven and on earth?

God raises the poor from the dust, lifts the wretched from the dirt,

so that they sit with princes, with the princes of our People. Halleluyah!

From Psalm 113

Slaves of time are the slaves of a slave; but a servant of Adonai is free. Therefore, while others seek their portion, my soul declares Adonai is my portion.

(Yehudah HaLevi)

יְהִי שֵׁם יְهוָֹה מְבֹרָךְ , מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם׃

מִמִּזְרַח־שֶֽׁמֶשׁ עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ.

לְהוֹשִֽׁיבִי עִם־נְדִיבִים,

לְהוֹשִֽׁיבִי עִם־נְדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ׃

ותַעֲלִי בוֹ לְגָדוֹלִי לְיָדֶנִי.

יהי שם יוהו מברך,

-now and forever.

The Eternal is supreme above the nations,

more glorious than the heavens.

Who is like our Eternal God dwelling on high,

who is yet so near in heaven and on earth?

God raises the poor from the dust, lifts the wretched from the dirt,

so that they sit with princes, with the princes of our People. Halleluyah!

I know You by a name, high and renowned.

I see You in Your acts but not by sight.

The secrets of Your knowledge have wearied sages.

Your supreme knowing is above our state.

I search You out, and, among my thoughts, I find You, I see You, within my own heart.

You have breathed in me a soul, linked to Your throne, Living in a body, low and contrite. A man who is seen and cannot see, can he grasp The glory of the unseen, seeing Great?

(Rabbi Yitzchak ibn Ghayyat, Spain, 11th c.)
When Israel went forth from Egypt, the house of Jacob from an alien people, Judah became God’s sanctuary, Israel, God’s dominion.

The sea saw it and fled, the Jordan turned back. The mountains skipped like rams, hills like young lambs.


Dance, O earth, before the Eternal; before the God of Jacob, who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a flowing stream.

Trust in Adonai, for God is your Help and your Shield. The Eternal is mindful of us, and will bless us.

God will bless the House of Israel, will bless the House of Aaron.

The Eternal will bless all who are reverent, the small together with the great.

Psalm 114

The Exodus from Egypt occurs in every human being, in every era, in every year, and even on every day. (Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav)

Psalm 115:9–18

Every day miracles are worked for us as for those who went out of Egypt. Every day we are fed on the breasts of our mother. Every day we are chastised for our deeds, like a child by a teacher. (Seder Eliyahu Rabbah)
You will be blessed by the Eternal, the Maker of heaven and earth.

The heavens belong to the Eternal, but the earth is given to mortals.

It is not the dead who praise the Eternal; not those who go down to silence.

But we shall bless the Eternal God now and forever. Halleluyah!

How can I repay You for all the gifts given me? I will lift up the cup of deliverance and glorify the name of the Eternal. I will make an offer of thanksgiving, and glorify Your name, Adonai.

Praise the Eternal, all you nations! Extol God, all you peoples!

For great is God’s love for us, everlasting is God’s faithfulness. Halleluyah!

Psalm 116:12–13,17

Psalm 117

לא המתיים יהללויה ("it is not the dead who praise the Eternal") The problem of religious thinking is not only whether God is dead or alive, but also whether we are dead or alive to His realness. A search for God involves a search of our own measure, a test of our own spiritual potential. In moments when we carry the load of radical amazement we know that to say God is alive is an understatement. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)
O give thanks to Adonai who is good;
"God's love is everlasting."

Let Israel now say:
"God's love is everlasting."

Let the House of Aaron now say:
"God's love is everlasting."

Let all who revere the Eternal now say:
"God's love is everlasting."

In distress I cried out to God, who answered me by setting me free.

With the Eternal at my side, I am not afraid: what can mere mortals do to me?

It is better to trust in the Eternal than to rely on mortals.

It is better to trust in the Eternal than to rely on princes.

Though all the nations surround me, in God’s name I will overcome them!

Though they surround me and blockade me, in God’s name I will overcome them!

God does not play dice with the world. God is subtle, but He is not malicious. (Albert Einstein)
Though they swarm about me like bees, and blaze like a fire among thorns, in the name of God I will overcome them!

God is my strength and my shield. Hear! Glad sounds of triumph in the tents of the just:

**The power of Adonai is triumphant!**

The power of Adonai is supreme!

**The power of Adonai is triumphant!**

I shall not die but live and tell the deeds of the Eternal.

**Open for me the gates of righteousness; let me enter and give thanks to God.**

This is the gateway to the Eternal One; the righteous shall enter it.

**I thank You, for You have answered me; You have become my deliverance.**

(From “The Poet’s Commandments to God,” anonymous, 9th–11th c.)

You shall not frustrate or put to shame the hope placed in You by the people of Israel, who draw near to You. You shall not abhor my complaint when I come to stand before You like a pauper. You shall not be far from me, my God, my Rock, in whom I take refuge. You shall not forget the troubles that have swept over me, for who can measure my humiliation? You shall not hide Yourself when I beseech You: let my sighs come before You!

(From “The Poet’s Commandments to God,” anonymous, 9th–11th c.)
When is prayer heard? When the soul is not resigned. (Rabbi Yehudah Alcharizi)

The stone the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the work of the Eternal; it is wondrous in our eyes.

This is the day that God has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Eternal God, be our help!

Eternal God, sustain us!

Praised is the one who comes in the name of Adonai; we bless you from the House of Adonai.

You are my God and I will thank You; You are my God; I will exalt You.

O give thanks to Adonai, who is good; God’s love is everlasting.

אֱלֹהַי אֲרוֹמְמֶךָּ ("You are my God and I will exalt You") Rabbi Ishmael asks: “Is it possible for a human being of flesh and blood to add glory to his Creator? It simply means: ‘I shall be beautiful before God in how I fulfill the mitzvot. For example, I shall prepare before God a beautiful lulav, a beautiful sukkah, beautiful tzitzit, and beautiful tefillin.”’ (Mechilta D’Rabbi Ishmael, Shirata 3)
Torah Service
for Festivals

Torah study is an act of worship. The public reading of Torah, instituted by Ezra the Scribe in the early years of the Second Temple era (fifth century B.C.E.), is placed in the context of the worship service to emphasize Torah’s centrality to the covenantal relationship between God and the Jewish People.

What is Torah? It is what God has revealed to us, and what we have yet to learn. It is the ideas and ideals, the laws and commandments that make up our religious inheritance. It is the experience of Abraham, the legislation of Moses, the vision of the Prophets, the commentary of the Rabbis, the insight of the Mystics. It is the questions we ask, and the answers we receive when we seek to understand.... It is the design for a better world. (Rabbi John Rayner’s retelling of Exodus Rabbah 29:9 on Exodus 20:2, adapted)

There is none like You, Adonai, among the gods, and there are no deeds like Yours. Your dominion is an everlasting dominion. Your governance endures throughout the generations.

Adonai is the Sovereign Ruler. Adonai rules. Adonai will rule forever.

May the Eternal One give strength to God’s People; may the Eternal One bless God’s People with peace.

Av HaRachamim, let Your will favour Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem.

In You alone do we trust, Sovereign God, high and exalted, Sovereign of worlds.

Psalm 86:8, 145:13

From Psalms 10:16, 93:1, Exodus 15:18

Psalm 29:11

From Psalm 51:20
Whenever the Ark would set out on its journey, Moses would proclaim: “Arise, Adonai, and let Your enemies be scattered; let those who hate You flee from before You.”

For Torah shall emanate from Zion, the word of the Eternal from Jerusalem.

Praised is the One who in holiness has given Torah to the People of Israel.

The Eternal, the Eternal, God is merciful and gracious, endlessly patient, loving, and true, showing mercy to thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and granting pardon.

Numbers 10:35

Isaiah 2:3

Exodus 34:6,7a

This summary of God’s compassionate qualities is first offered by God when Moses pleads: “Please, let me behold Your glory!” (Exodus 33:18).

Our Sages teach that the name יְהוָֹה ("the Eternal, the Eternal") discloses God’s attribute of mercy, in contrast to אֱלֹהִים, which discloses God’s attribute of justice. Rashi comments that the repetition of the name יְהוָֹה here is taken to mean that God is merciful both before and after a person sins and repents; it is the person who changes, not God (Babylonian Talmud, Rosh HaShanah 17b).

While these attributes of forgiveness and mercy have given hope to our people throughout the ages, Rabbi Bachya ibn Pekuda warns against such attribution of human emotions to God. In his Duties of the Heart, he teaches: “We must not take the divine attributes literally; they are metaphors. Any representation of God forming itself in our minds applies to something other than God.”
The Torah is taken from the Ark.

I offer my prayer to You, Adonai, at this time of favour.

O God, in Your gracious love, answer me with the truth of Your deliverance.

Hear, O Israel: the Eternal One is our God, the Eternal God is One!

Our God is one; Our Sovereign is great; holy is God’s name.

O magnify the Eternal with me, and together let us exalt God’s name.

The Ark is closed. The Torah is honoured in procession.

Yours, Adonai, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, the majesty. All that is in heaven and earth is Yours. Yours is the dominion, Adonai; You rise above every height.

Let us exalt Adonai our God and worship at God’s holy mountain, for holy is the Eternal our God.

“(hear, O Israel) If the words of the Sh’ma are spoken with intention, our Sages taught, they thrill the very soul of the worshipper, and bring a realization of communion with the Most High.

When people at prayer declare the unity of the Holy Name with love and reverence, the walls of earth’s darkness are cleft, and the countenance of the Heavenly Ruler is revealed, illuminating the universe. (The Zohar)

“You rise above every height” God’s thoughts are not our thoughts, God’s ways are not our ways; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God’s ways higher than our ways, and God’s thoughts loftier than our thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8–9)
On Shavuot before the Torah is read:

Akdamut

Before speaking the awesome words,
I first ask permission of the congregation
to begin with two or three introductory
expressions
in awe of the One who ever
sustains Creation—

though God’s endless might
is beyond all words.
Were all the skies made of parchment,
were all the reeds quills,
and all the oceans with ink filled;
were everyone a scribe of skill,

God’s glory would yet remain untold.
The majestic Master of heaven and earth,
alone, formed the world veiled
in mystery.

Without effort did God perfect it,
by the merest sign,
with only a word....

Akdamut (“before”) This masterful poem was composed by the acclaimed liturgical poet Rabbi Meir ben Yitzchak, the Precentor of Worms, when Rashi lived there (11th c.). The original alphabetical acrostic of ninety verses is written in Aramaic to make it seem older than it is. It praises the Creator-Lawgiver as the Friend of Israel, who promises a redemption of earthly and heavenly joys.

The darker the times in medieval Germany, the more colourful were the descriptions of the Messianic Age, to give hope to the martyrs of Ashkenaz. (Rabbi Ismar Elbogen)

מקלן (“words”) Akdamut introduces the Ten Commandments, which are read on Shavuot, the sixth of Sivan, when, according to tradition, Torah was given at Mount Sinai.
... God desired, longed, and craved
that they would toil in Torah study;
that their prayers would be accepted,
that their pleas be answered.

Bound up for the Life of the Ages
as a crown of commitment;
like God's precious Tefillin
it is set with reliability.

This is inscribed within it,
with wisdom and knowledge:
“The greatness of Israel is that they
proclaim God's Oneness.”

Praise of the timeless Master
is a pure speech,
a beautiful thing to declare
in the presence of royalty.

The people of the world
come and gather,
appearing like waves;
with wonder they inquire concerning
the signs of the covenant.

... זֵכַר וְחַמֵּיד וְרָגֵג
בִּי וְחַמֵּיד וְרָגֵג
בְּתָגָא לְשָׁבוּעֲתָא
בֵל יְקַר טוֹטֶפְתָּא
שִׁימָא הִיא גוּפָא
בְּחָכְמְתָא וּבְדַעְתָּא,
בוּתְהוֹן דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל,
בַח רִבּוֹן עָלְמָא,
שְׁאֲמִירָא דַּכְוָתָא,
שְׁבָּה רָבָּה עֲלֵיהּ,
אֲמִירָא דְּבָעוּתָא,
שְׁבָּר עֲלֵיה לְחַוּוּיֵהּ,
בְאֵפֵי מַלְכְּוָתָא.

[Some Jews begin their study by kissing the book. Then they open it with a sense of awe and reverence. Once they begin learning they often beat on top of the book with their fists in the fervor of their arguments with their study partners. At the end of the learning they close the book which aroused such hot debate, and kiss it farewell. (Rabbi Adin Steinsalz)]

[“speech”) Even though we may feel we cannot concentrate adequately upon the themes of our meditations, we should nevertheless continue to express our thoughts in words. Words are like water which falls continuously upon a rock until it breaks through. In similar fashion, words will eventually break through a man’s flinty heart. (Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav)
Torah Blessings

Before the Torah is read:

Praise the Eternal One who is praised.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ, מֶֽלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָֽתַן לָֽנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵֽנוּ.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has chosen us from among all the peoples by giving us Your Torah.

Praised are You, Adonai, Giver of the Torah.

After the Torah is read:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has given us the Torah of truth, and thereby has implanted everlasting life within us.

Praised are You, Adonai, Giver of the Torah.

(“has implanted everlasting life within us”) When Israel stood at Sinai and received the Torah, The Holy One Praised be God said to the Angel of Death: “You have no power over this people, for they are My portion” (Leviticus Rabbah 18:3). So long as the Jewish People are devoted to learning and living Torah, they are, by definition, an eternal people.
For One Rescued from Danger

One who has survived danger recites:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who bestows goodness upon those in need, and has shown me every kindness.

Congregation responds:

May the One who has shown you great kindness continue to bestow such goodness upon you. Selah!

For Life

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this moment.

But He was revealed in deed before the eyes of thought.
In my body He has kindled a lamp from His glory:
It tells me of the paths of the wise.
It is the light which shines in the days of youth, and grows brighter in old age.
Were it not derived from the mystery of His light
It would fail with my strength and my years.
With it I search out the chamber of wisdom, And I climb with no ladder to the garden of delights.

(Rabbi Moses ibn Ezra)
Prayers for Healing

May the One who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, now bring healing to those who are ill. May the Holy One show them compassion and graciously restore their health and strength. Grant each of our loved ones refuah sh’leimah, complete healing: healing of the body and healing of the soul. May good health come speedily to all the ailing together with the People of Israel. And let us say: Amen.

One may offer this personal prayer for a loved one in need of healing.

May it be Your will, Adonai, my God and God of my ancestors, that You quickly send a complete healing from heaven, healing for the soul, and healing for the body, for the ailing, _____ son/daughter of _____, together with the ailing of Israel.

For more prayers of healing see page 476.
All rise. The Torah is lifted.

This is the Torah that Moses placed before the People of Israel; the word of the Eternal through the hand of Moses.

Haftarah Blessings

Haftarah means “completion.” Excerpts from the biblical books of Prophets are thematically linked to complement the Torah readings for Shabbat and Holy Days.

Why could the people not hear their prophets?… See only what you want to see, hear only what you choose to hear, learn only what you know already, reject what makes you uneasy, forget what upsets you…. [And yet] in spite of the forces that might well have silenced the Hebrew prophets, in spite of the overpowering temptation to ignore their needling words, there must have been those who heard. Otherwise we could not now after twenty-five centuries simply open a Bible and read the message…. Together with their prophets ancient Israel wrote a proud chapter in the history of tolerance…. They found the words menacing, but they let them be heard. And more than this, they preserved them and passed them on as a cherished tradition. (Sheldon Blank)

Before the Haftarah is read:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has chosen good prophets and has been pleased with their words, for they were spoken in truth.

Praised are You, Adonai, who has chosen the Torah, Your servant Moses, Your People Israel, and the prophets of truth and righteousness.

פָּרָשַׁת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׂם לִפְנֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, עַל פִּי יְהוָֹה בְּיַד מֹשֶה:

All rise. The Torah is lifted.

This is the Torah that Moses placed before the People of Israel; the word of the Eternal through the hand of Moses.

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בֶּאֱמֶת "(in truth”) The men and women in the Bible are sinners like ourselves, but here is one sin they do not commit, our arch-sin: they do not dare confine God to a circumscribed space or division of life, “religion.” They have not the insolence to draw boundaries around God’s commandments and say: Up to this point You are Sovereign, but beyond these bounds begins the sovereignty of science or society or the state. (Martin Buber)
After the Haftarah is read:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, Rock of all the worlds, Righteous in all generations, the Almighty, the Faithful One who says and does, who speaks and fulfills, all of whose words are true and just.

For the Torah, for worship, for the prophets, [and for this Shabbat day,] and for this

— Festival of Pesach,
— Festival of Shavuot,
— Festival of Sukkot,
— Festival of Sh’mimi Atzeret,

which You have given us, Adonai our God, [for holiness and rest,] for joy and gladness, for glory and beauty—for all this, Adonai our God, we thank You and praise You.

May the mouth of every living being praise Your name continually and forever.

Praised are You, Adonai, who sanctifies [the Sabbath and] the People Israel, and the seasons.

הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן ("the Faithful One")

The love of the princely daughter [of Zion] has been most sweet and pleasant to Me.

... .

Until your time comes, I shall shield you from the clamour of those who seek to betray you. By My life, I shall not fail you nor speak in vain.

... .

And I say to the prophets: “Have you seen how the maiden, though battered by storm, kept her troth to her Beloved?” And they answer: “This love is a wonder surpassing all love.”

(Anonymous Hebrew poem, Yemen, 14th–17th c.)
Song of Songs is an anthology of songs about romance and nature, shepherds and princesses. According to the Talmud it was written by King Solomon as an allegory for the love affair between God and the Jewish People, but modern scholarship dates the final text much later, at 400 B.C.E.

Because there is no mention of God in this scroll, some early Rabbinic authorities wanted to ban this secular book from the biblical canon altogether. Rabbi Akiva won the debate, arguing that “the entire universe was never as worthy as the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel, for all the Writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies” (Mishnah Yadayim 3:5). Its poetry remained an irresistible source of entertainment for the masses. The Sages warned: “He who gives his voice a flourish in reading the Song of Songs in banquet halls and makes it a secular song has no share in the World to Come” (Tosefta Sanhedrin 12:10). Ultimately, this love song was made sacred at the bridal canopy, the Shabbat table, and the synagogue, when the Rabbis secured its place in the liturgy for weddings, Shabbat, and the Festival of Pesach.

2) 1 I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. 2 As a lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. 3 As an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under its shadow with great delight, and its fruit was sweet to my taste. 4 He brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love. 5 Strengthen me with dainties, comfort me with apples, for I am faint with love.

6 His left hand was under my head, and his right hand embraces me.

7 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the hinds of the field—lest you stir up or arouse my love—until it please!
8 Hark! The voice of my beloved! Behold! He comes leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.
9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. See where he stands behind our wall, looking in through the windows, gazing through the lattice. 10 My beloved answered and said to me: “Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away! 11 For lo, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone.

12 The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. 13 The fig tree sweetens her green figs, and the vines are in blossom, giving their fragrance. Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away! 14 My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet and your face is lovely.” 15 Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil our vineyards; for our vineyards are in blossom. 16 My beloved is mine, and I am his who feeds among the lilies. 17 Before the dawn wind rises, before the shadows flee, turn my love, be like a gazelle or a young stag, upon the mountain of spices!
On Shavuot  
The Scroll of Ruth, Chapter 1

Rabbi Ze’ira taught: “This scroll is not concerned with either purity or defilement, either prohibition or permission. Why, then, was it written? To teach of a magnificent reward which comes to those who practise and dispense chesed (loyalty).” (Ruth Rabbah 2:15)

An eighth century Palestinian text (Sofrim 14, 3ff) links the Scroll of Ruth to the Festival of Shavuot. Both refer to the season of the barley harvest. More significant, however, is the common theme of the Giving of Torah. At Mount Sinai, Torah was received by the whole of Israel; in the Scroll of Ruth, Torah is received by an individual, a poor Moabite woman who becomes the quintessential model for conversion. Ruth is rewarded in her lifetime and beyond. She becomes the great-grandmother of King David and the matriarch of the line which, according to tradition, will one day bring the dawn of the Messianic Age.

1) Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the field of Moav; he, and his wife, and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife was Naomi. His two sons were named Machlon and Kiliyon—Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. They came into the fields of Moav; and there they stayed.

3 Then Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died; and she was left alone with her two sons. They married Moabite women; one of them was named Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth; and they lived there for about ten years. And Machlon and Kiliyon also died, both of them. So the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.
Then she started out with her daughters- in-law, to return from the fields of Moav; for she had heard in the fields of Moav that the Eternal had cared for God’s People in giving them food.

She therefore went forth from the place where she had been staying, together with her two daughters-in-law; and they took the road back to the land of Judah.

Naomi then said to her two daughters-in-law: “Go, return—one of you—to her mother’s house. May Adonai deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead, and with me. May Adonai grant that you will find security, each of you in the house of her husband.” Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her: “We will certainly return with you to your people.”

But Naomi replied: “Return, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Are there any more sons in my body who might be husbands for you? Return, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I should say, ‘I have hope,’ even if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons—would you tarry for them until they were grown? Would you tie yourselves down for them and have no husbands? Oh no, my daughters. I would be all the more bitter on your behalf; for the hand of the Eternal has gone out against me.”
They lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell, but Ruth clung to her. So she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go, follow your sister-in-law.” But Ruth said, “Entreat me not to leave you, or to return from following after you. For wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die; and there I will be buried. The Eternal do thus to me—and more as well—if anything but death parts me from you.” When she [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she said no more to her. So the two went on until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they arrived in Bethlehem, that all the city was astir concerning them; and the women said: “Is this Naomi?” She replied: “Do not call me Naomi [‘Pleasantness’]; call me Mara [‘Bitterness’]: for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Eternal has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the Eternal One has testified against me, and the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me!” So Naomi returned. And Ruth, the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, returned with her out of the field of Moav. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.
On Sukkot

The Scroll of Ecclesiastes, excerpts from Chapters 1, 3, and 12

Written in the third century B.C.E., this most brilliant exposition of the futility of human strivings and of the inevitability of death will not convince us that life has no meaning. Yet our horizons are enlarged by the skeptics and the rebels whose thoughts fill the pages of the Bible. The authors of the Scroll of Ecclesiastes and the Book of Job explore areas of our life which have moved to the forefront of our awareness in this age of brutality. (Rabbi Herbert Bronstein and Rabbi Albert Friedlander)

Commenting on the verse, “Fear God and keep the commandments; for this is the whole person” (Ecclesiastes 12:13), Rabbi Leo Baeck wrote the following from the Theresienstadt concentration camp: “This is Ecclesiastes’ final word, the word of wisdom. It is not just that this man philosophizes and believes, head and heart, a precursor of that romanticism which is derived from skepticism; for he remained, with all his rationality, one of this people, which is unable to understand itself or the world without the law of God, indeed, cannot live without it. This people can have its members, who, like Kohelet, can cast doubt on all else, because they never doubt the law of God.”

1) The words of Kohelet, son of David, king in Jerusalem. 2) “Vanity of vanities,” said Kohelet; “Vanity of vanities—all is vanity.” 3) What profit has a man from all his labour which he labours under the sun? 4) One generation goes, another generation comes; but the earth abides forever. 5) The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place from whence it rose. 6) Going toward the South, returning to the North, the wind whirls about continually; and the wind returns again to its rounds. 7) All rivers run to the sea, but the sea is never full. To the place from which the rivers come, there they return again.
8 All things are wearisome: no one can recount them. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing. 9 What has been is that which will be. What has been done is that which will be done again. And there is nothing new under the sun!

3) 1 To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.
2 A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
3 a time to kill, and a time to heal, a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
4 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones;
5 a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.
6 A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.
7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silent, and a time to speak;
8 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.

12) 13 The conclusion of the oration sums up the whole: fear God and keep God’s commandments; for this is the whole person. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment concerning every secret thing, whether it is good or evil.
For Our Congregation and Our People

May the One who blessed our ancestors bless this sacred congregation, all who serve it, and those who contribute to its future. May all who seek Your Presence find it here.

Bless the House of Israel in all lands near and far. Uphold us, shield us from oppression and hatred, and bring to fulfillment the word of Moses, Your prophet: “The Eternal your God will make you a thousand times as many as you are, and will bless you as promised.” And together we say: Amen.

For Our Country, Its Leaders and Defenders

We pray for all who serve in positions of leadership and responsibility in our national life. Protect them as they aid and defend Your creation; inspire them to be responsive to Your will, so that Canada may be to the world an example of justice and compassion. Deepen our love for our country and our desire to serve it. Cause us to see clearly that the well-being of our nation is in the hands of all its citizens. Keep our homes safe from affliction, strife, and war.

For the State of Israel

God in heaven, Rock and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel, the first flowering of our redemption. Shield it with Your love, spread over it Your canopy of peace; enlighten its leaders with faith, and direct them with Your good counsel. Our God, strengthen the hands of the defenders of our sacred land; grant them salvation and crown them with victory. Establish peace in the land, everlasting joy for all its inhabitants. And let us say: Amen.

The State of Israel will prove itself not by material wealth, nor by military might or technical achievement, but by its moral character and human values.

(David Ben-Gurion)

Deuteronomy 1:11

The State of Israel

will prove itself not
by material wealth,
nor by military
might or technical
achievement, but by
its moral character
and human values.

(David Ben-Gurion)
Returning the Torah to the Ark on Pesach, Shavuot, and Sh'mini Atzeret

Let them praise the name of the Eternal, whose name alone is exalted.

God's grandeur reigns over earth and heaven. God raises the might of God's People. Praise to all the faithful, the People of Israel, a People who draws near to God. Halleluyah!

A Song of David.

Ascribe to the Eternal, O celestial beings, ascribe to the Eternal glory and might! Ascribe to the Eternal the glory of God's name. Bow before the Eternal with the splendour of holiness.

The voice of the Eternal is upon the waters! The God of glory thunders! The Eternal dominates the mighty seas! The voice of the Eternal is power! The voice of the Eternal is majesty! The voice of the Eternal breaks cedars; the Eternal shatters the cedars of Lebanon. God makes them leap like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox.
The voice of the Eternal carves out lightning bolts.  
The voice of the Eternal makes the wilderness tremble.  
The Eternal makes the wilderness of Kadesh tremble.  
The voice of the Eternal causes hinds to calve,  
and strips the forests bare, while in God’s Temple all proclaim: “Glory!”

The Eternal was enthroned at the flood; the Eternal is forever enthroned as Sovereign.  
The Eternal will give strength to the People; the Eternal will bless this People with peace.

Behold I have given you a good doctrine, My Torah. Do not forsake it. It is a tree of life for those who hold it fast, and all who cling to it find happiness. Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace.

Turn us toward You, Adonai, and we shall return. Renew our days as of old.

*The Ark is closed. All are seated.*
Returning the Torah to the Ark on the First Day of Sukkot

Let them praise the name of the Eternal, whose name alone is exalted.

God’s grandeur reigns over earth and heaven. God raises the might of God’s People. Praise to all the faithful, the People of Israel, a People who draws near to God. Halleluyah!

Hoshanot

The Torah is held before the congregation.

We beseech You. Save us!

For Your sake, our God, save us!

For Your sake, our Creator, save us!

For Your sake, our Redeemer, save us!

For Your sake, O God, who seeks us, save us!

Psalm 148:13,14

יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָֹה שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ: כִּי נִשְׂגָּב שָׁמָֽיִם וְאֶֽרֶץ׃ הוֹדֵעַ נָא,

לָמַעְתֵּן אֲגַלְתּוֹ, הוֹדֵעַ נָא.

לָמַעְתֵּן בּוֹרָא, הוֹדֵעַ נָא.

לָמַעְתֵּן גוֹאֲלֵה, הוֹדֵעַ נָא.

לָמַעְתֵּן דּוֹרְשֵׁה, הוֹדֵעַ נָא.

deliverances” (deliverances”). Solemn processions with the willow were among the rituals of Sukkot in Jerusalem’s Temple: Every day they would circumambulate the altar once; on that day [the seventh day] they would circumambulate it seven times (Mishnah Sukkot 4:5). During the procession they would sing Psalm 118:25, calling for God’s saving power. After the destruction of the Temple, the prayers were preserved in the synagogue and the procession with the Torah scroll and the lulav and etrog became the substitute for the willow alone. (Rabbi Ismar Elbogen)
For the sake of Your truth, 
Your covenant, Your greatness, 
and glory; for the sake of Your 
Torah, Your majesty, Your 
commitment, and Your fame; 
for the sake of Your mercy, Your 
goodness, Your unity, Your 
honour, and Your wisdom; for 
the sake of Your sovereignty, 
Your eternity, Your mystery, 
Your strength, and Your 
splendour; for the sake of Your 
righteousness, Your holiness, 
Your abundant mercies, and 
Your Divine Presence, save us; 
for the sake of Your praise, 
do save us, we beseech You. 
O Eternal, save us!

Save Your People, 
and bless Your inheritance; 
nourish and sustain them forever.

May my words of supplication 
before the Eternal draw near to 
the Eternal our God, day and 
night, so that God will maintain 
the cause of the worshipper and 
the cause of the People Israel, 
as each day will require; so that 
all the people of the earth may 
know that the Eternal is God; 
there is no other.
Behold I have given you a good doctrine, My Torah. Do not forsake it. It is a tree of life for those who hold it fast, and all who cling to it find happiness. Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace.

Turn us toward You, Adonai, and we shall return. Renew our days as of old.

The Torah is returned to the Ark.

Proverbs 4:2, 3:1817
Lamentations 5:21

The Ark is closed. All are seated.

חַיִּים ("and we shall return") It makes a difference to be brushed by the wings of eternity. Regular prayer works on us in ways not immediately apparent. As the sea smoothes the stone, as the repeated hammer-blows of the sculptor shape the marble, so prayer—cyclical, tracking the rhythms of time itself—gradually wears away the jagged edges of our character, turning it into a work of devotional art. We begin to see the beauty of the created world. We locate ourselves as part of the story of our people. Slowly, we come to think less of the “I,” more of the “We”; less of what we lack than of what we have; less of what we need from the world, more of what the world needs from us. Prayer is less about getting what we want than about learning what to want. Our priorities change; we become less angular; we learn the deep happiness that comes from learning to give praise and thanks. The world we build tomorrow is born in the prayers we say today. (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks)
On the first day of Pesach include:

Prayers for Dew

I

Our God and God of our ancestors:

Grant dew to favour Your land.
In Your jubilation, set us as a blessing.
Increase for us our corn and wine.
Establish the city in which You delight—
With dew . . .

With dew bless our food.
In our fertile lands may there be no scarcity.
The nation You once led like a flock,
On her please, we pray, bestow Your favour—
With dew.

For You are the Eternal, Our God,
who causes the wind to blow and the dew to descend.

For blessing, and not for curse.
Amen.

For life, and not for death.
Amen.

For plenty, and not for want. Amen.

Elazar Kallir, Israel, 7th c.

From Genesis 27:28

The poet invokes Isaac’s blessing for Jacob: “May God give you of the dew of heaven and the fat of the earth, abundance of new grain and wine” (Genesis 27:28). Kallir draws a parallel between Pesach, when God redeems Israel from physical and spiritual bondage, and springtime, when dew restores the natural world to its full glory.
Our God and God of our ancestors,

With dewdrops of light, illuminate the earth.
With dewdrops of blessing, bless the earth.
With dewdrops of joy, bring joy to the earth.
With dewdrops of exultation, make fertile the earth.
With dewdrops of splendour, make the earth resplendent.
With dewdrops of good gathering, summon the earth.
With dewdrops of song, serenade the earth.
With dewdrops of life, give life to the earth.
With dewdrops of goodness, enrich the earth.
With dewdrops of salvation, save the earth.
With dewdrops of nourishment, maintain the earth . . .

Amen.

...בְּטַלְלֵי רָכָה תְּבָרֵךְ אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי יָלָה תָּגִיל אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי יָצָה תְּדַשֵּׁן אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי וֹד תְּהַדֵּר אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי עַד טוֹב תְּוַעֵד אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי מְרָה תְּזַמֵּר אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי יִּים תְּחַיֶּה אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי וֹבָה תַּטִּיב אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי שׁוּעָה תּוֹשִֽׁיעַ אֲדָמָה,
בְּטַלְלֵי. . .
לְכָּלָה תְּכַלְכֵּל אֲדָמָה
cַבְּטַלְלֵי אָמֵן.

I shall look at the deeds of my God, so pleasant in their season.
I shall sweetly say: come in peace, dew.
The rains are over and gone, the winter is past.
Everything is created with such beauty: go in peace, rain.

The mandrakes give forth their perfume in the lovers’ garden.
Sorrows have gone: come in peace, dew.
The earth is crowned with new grain and wine.
Every living thing cries out: go in peace, rain!

(Excerpt from “Prayer for Dew,” 4th–6th c. C.E.)
**On Sh'mini Atzeret include:**

**Prayer for Rain**

Our God and God of our ancestors, remember Abraham, who yearned for Your Presence, who was blessed by You as a tree planted by streams of water, who was shielded by You when in his faith he braved fire and water. You sought him out because he sowed [righteousness] by every waterway.

*For Abraham’s sake, do not hold back Your gift of water.*

Remember Moses who was drawn in an ark from the reeds by the edge of water. He found for his flock an ample store of water, and when Your treasured ones thirsted, he struck the rock and there came gushing water.

*For Moses’ sake, do not hold back Your gift of water.*

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**תפילת גשם**

**Elazar Kallir,**

**Israel, 7th c.**

**תְּפִילַת גֶּשֶׁם**

"(prayer for rain)" This poem-excerpt is a supplication for rain, intoned only on Sh’mini Atzeret. Each stanza recounts a biblical reference to water. Rain in its proper time and proportion is said to fall for the sake of the righteous.

**זְכוֹר אָב**

"(remember Abraham)"

"If God were to command me now, as once He did my ancient Father, I would surely obey," sing my heart and my flesh on this night of rain, as the Angels of Peace stand at the head of my sleeping children!

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**חַשְׁרַת מָיִם**

"(gift of water)" Water means nothing but Torah, as it is written in Isaiah 55:1: “Ho! Let all who are thirsty ... come for water.” (Babylonian Talmud, Baba Kama 82a)

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**Outside:** Jerusalem, and the moaning of the Lord’s trees, cut down by her enemies in every generation; clouds heavy with rain, lightnings in them and thunders which, for me, on this night of rain, are tidings from the mouth of the God of Might to endless generations.

(Uri Zvi Greenberg)
Remember the twelve tribes of Israel for whom You parted the sea-waters, for whom You sweetened the bitter waters. For You their descendants were prepared to shed their own blood like water. Turn to us, for we have been encircled by many foes like water.

*For the sake of our ancestors, do not hold back Your gift of water.*

For You are Adonai our God who causes the wind to blow and the rain to descend.

For blessing, and not for curse. 
*Amen.*

For life, and not for death. 
*Amen.*

For plenty, and not for want. 
*Amen.*
Aleinu

Originally recited only on Rosh HaShanah, the Aleinu became a fixed part of the daily service liturgy around the year 1300. Although God is not yet universally recognized as One, this prayer articulates the messianic dream of one humanity united through its devotion to the one God.

All rise.

It is upon us to praise the God of all, to ascribe greatness to the Author of creation, who has not made us like the nations of the lands nor the other families of the earth; who has not assigned our lot as theirs, nor our destiny as that of all the multitudes.

Therefore, we kneel, we bow in worship, and offer thanks before the Sovereign Ruler of all rulers, the Holy One, praised be God:

Who spreads out the heavens and establishes the earth, whose glory dwells in the highest heaven, whose mighty Presence is in the loftiest of heights. This is our God, there is no other; our true Sovereign, who is beyond exception. As it is written in Your Torah: “Know this day and take it to heart: the Eternal is God in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is none else.”

All are seated.

Longing after the highest and noblest, attachment to the whole, soaring up to the Infinite, despite our finiteness and limitedness—this is religion. (Rabbi Abraham Geiger)

(“it is upon us”) Maybe God and perfection are at the end and not at the beginning. Maybe it is a growing world and a growing humanity and a growing God, and perfection is to be achieved, not something to start with. (Henry Slonimsky)
We therefore place our hope in You, Adonai our God. Soon may we behold the glory of Your power: banish idolatry from the earth; wipe away false gods; and perfect the world by Your divine rule. Then all humanity will call upon Your name and even the wicked will turn toward You. All the inhabitants of the earth will come to know that to You alone every knee must bend and every tongue swear loyalty. Before You, Adonai our God, let them humble themselves. To Your glorious name, let them give honour. Then all will accept the yoke of Your dominion, and You will reign over them soon and forever. For sovereignty is Yours, and to all eternity You will reign in glory. As it is written in Your Torah: “Adonai will reign forever and ever.”

And it is said: “Adonai shall rule over all the earth. On that day, God shall be One and God’s name shall be One.”

On the first day of Pesach and the first day of Sukkot,
turn to page 348 for Kaddish.

On the seventh day of Pesach, on Shavuot, and on Sh’mini Atzeret,
turn to page 339 for the Yizkor service.

In the sixteenth century, the kabbalist Isaac Luria redefined *tikkun olam* as the process by which human beings can observe the mitzvot and thereby fix the brokenness of the world, and even fix God, who is broken, too. (Marc Brettler and Rabbi Elliot Dorff)
The wisdom of the departed I regard as my portion,
And their writings are a balm to my sorrow,
And among them I hold sweet discourse,
Since they are the choicest of the faithful.
And when I swim in the sea of their wisdom
I gather pearls to embroider the days,
And in them is the delight of my eyes and heart,
And of them my jubilating lips will sing—
The light of my eyes, the song in my ears, the honey
   in my mouth,
And in my nostrils the scent of cinnamon.
And of them I shall muse, and be exalted all my days,
For in them are the sources of my being.

(Rabbi Moses ibn Ezra, Spain, 11th–12th c.)
Memorial Service

Many of our mourning rituals were instituted by Rabban Gamliel II after the fall of the Second Temple in 70 C.E.; however, the earliest reference to the custom of the Yizkor service dates to the ninth century. Later, when entire communities were massacred during the Crusades, the Yizkor custom was expanded and observed on the three Pilgrimage Festivals. It is our practice to include the Memorial Service on Yom Kippur, Sh’mini Atzeret, the seventh day of Pesach, and Shavuot. On these days we encounter the full range of emotion—the joy of the Festival and the sorrow of loss.

A Song of David.

The Eternal is my Shepherd, I shall not want. God makes me lie down in green pastures, leads me beside still waters; God restores my soul, and leads me in right paths for the sake of God’s name. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, for You are with me; with rod and staff You comfort me. You have set a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Eternal forever.

 Psalm 23

Whoever shares a congregation’s grief will merit seeing its comfort and relief.

(Babylonian Talmud, Ta’anit 11a)
A Song for Ascents.

I lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where will my help come? My help comes from the Eternal God, Maker of heaven and earth. God will not let your foot slip; your Guardian will not slumber. Behold, the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. The Eternal is your Protector, the Eternal is the shade at your right hand. The sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Eternal will guard you from all harm, and will protect your soul. The Eternal will guard you, going and coming, from this time forth and forever.

O God of Life, amid the ceaseless tides of change which sweep away the generations, Your enduring Presence brings us comfort and hope. Around us are life and death, decay and renewal: the rhythm of time all things obey. Our life is a dance to a song we barely perceive. Its melody courses through us for a little while, then seems to cease. What is the source of this melody, and where does it go? In darkness as in light, we turn to You, Adonai, the Source of Life, the Answer to all mysteries. Can it be that we, Your children, are given over to destruction, when our few days on earth are done? Or do we live on in ways we cannot know? Only this have we been taught, and in this we put our trust: from You comes the human soul, and to You it must return. More we cannot say, for all else is hidden from our sight by an impenetrable veil.

We thank You, for the life we are granted, for the gifts we enjoy, and for Your eternal Presence, which fills us with the hope that what is good will not perish. Adonai, what are we? A breath, a passing shadow. Yet You have made us little less than divine.

Praised be the True Judge. (Blessing said upon hearing of a death)
A Prayer of Moses, man of God.

Adonai, You have been our refuge in every generation.
Before mountains were born, before You brought forth earth and universe, from eternity to eternity You are God.

You turn mortals to dust; You decree: “Return, children of the earth!” For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday gone, as a watch in the night. You engulf them in sleep; they are like grass that renews itself: at daybreak it flourishes anew; at dusk it withers and dries.

The span of our life is but seventy years, or, given strength, eighty years; the best of those years have trouble and sorrow. They pass by swiftly, and we fly off.

Teach us, therefore, to number our days that we may attain a heart of wisdom.

Turn to us, Adonai. How long before You show mercy to Your servants? Satisfy us at daybreak with Your steadfast love that we may sing and rejoice all our days.

The Gates of Tears are always open.
(Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 32a)

Not to have had pain is not to have been human.
(Yiddish proverb)

לבב חכמה (‘heart of wisdom’) When we are dead, and people weep for us and grieve, let it be because we touched their lives with beauty and simplicity. Let it not be said that life was good to us, but, rather, that we were good to life. (Rabbi Jacob Philip Rudin)
Let Your deeds be seen by Your servants, Your glory by their children. May Your favour, Adonai, be upon us.

*Let the work of our hands endure for us!* Let the work of our hands endure!

I have set the Eternal before me always. God is at my right hand; I shall not be shaken.

Therefore my heart exults and my glory rejoices; my body rests secure.

For You will not abandon me to Sheol nor let Your faithful see destruction.

Show me the path of life. Joys overflow in Your presence; delights are forever in Your hand.

Psalm 16:8–11

Let Your deeds be seen by Your servants, Your glory by their children. May Your favour, Adonai, be upon us.

*Let the work of our hands endure for us!* Let the work of our hands endure!

I have set the Eternal before me always. God is at my right hand; I shall not be shaken.

Therefore my heart exults and my glory rejoices; my body rests secure.

For You will not abandon me to Sheol nor let Your faithful see destruction.

Show me the path of life. Joys overflow in Your presence; delights are forever in Your hand.

Psalm 16:8–11

"Your servants") We are not a people that dies.... I know it is difficult to find the balm which would heal our body and our soul. But perhaps it will do us good if we kindle freely the lights of our own treasures and then sing freely in all the hues with which they were born. They will follow us in this world as a shadow that is no shadow at all; it is the Jew within us. It becomes abundantly clear that the freer we are, the more Jewish we are. And the more Jewish we are, the more human we become. (Marc Chagall)

"You will not abandon my soul") Liturgy is not a matter of fact, but a matter of faith—faith that despite all, the world is good and God does not forget us. Nothing affirms this better than the prayers which state that although our bodies die, our souls do not perish. (Rabbi John Moscowitz)
We recall the martyrs of our People. How often in ages past did our People walk through the flames. God of Mercy, let the memory never fade of the faithful and upright of our People who have given their lives to sanctify Your name. They continue to speak to us of faith and courage. They rest in nameless graves, but their deeds endure, and their sacrifices will not be forgotten. No evil will touch them: they are at peace.

*Their souls are bound up in the bond of Life Eternal.*

We remember, too, the men and women who but yesterday were part of our sacred congregation and our community. To all who cared for our well-being and worked for the betterment of our People and of humanity, we pay tribute. May we prove worthy of carrying on the tradition of our People and our faith, for now the task is ours.

*Their memories will forever be a blessing.*

O God, this hour revives in us memories of loved ones who are no more. What joy we shared when, loving and loved, we walked through life together! Days or years may have passed, yet we feel near to them, our hearts yearn for them still. Though the bitter grief may have softened, a duller pain abides, for the place where once they stood is empty now. The links of life are broken. But the bonds of love and longing cannot break.

*Let us be grateful for a love which is stronger than death.*

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**“the martyrs of our People”**

We are their inheritors, O God, and we know how rare is our good fortune to be born to such hard-won treasures.

A great responsibility is ours and Yours as well, for if You do not sustain us, as You did Abraham and Sarah, Rebekah and Isaac, Jacob, Rachel and Leah, then who will sing Your praises?

Who will lift their chins, as we do now, to sanctify Your name?

(Adam Sol)
Private Yizkor

While the rituals of mourning are for one who has lost immediate relatives—parents, siblings, spouse, or child—one may also wish to recall the memories of other relatives and loved ones.

May God remember the soul of my father/mother, my teacher, _______ my brother/sister, _______ my husband/wife, _______ my son/daughter, _______ my dear one, _______

who has gone to his/her eternal home. May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of life, and may he/she be at peace, with fullness of joy in the comfort of Your eternal Presence. Amen.

(Private Yizkor) Sovereign of the world. Master of the world: Behold, I come before You with a broken heart and lowly spirit ... I pray with an outpouring of my heart before You, blessed God, that You arouse Your mercy to remember the soul of my loved one, _______, who passed away; to elevate that soul to a lofty place, that it may stand at the foot of Your throne of glory, shining and radiant like the brilliance of the firmament. May that soul find a place among the holy souls of the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the matriarchs—Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, and among all the holy souls of the righteous men and women. May the soul of my loved one be bound up in eternal life. Please forgive all of his/her wrongdoings, and remember only his/her good deeds. May the merit of the tzedakah that I give today stand in his/her favour, to lift the soul ever higher. (Hanna Mikhae Friedman, slightly adapted)
In the rising of the sun and in its going down,

we remember them.

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,

we remember them.

In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring,

we remember them.

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,

we remember them.

In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn,

we remember them.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends,

we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength,

we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart,

we remember them.

When we have joys we yearn to share,

we remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live,

for they are now a part of us, a part of what we will become

as we remember them.

“what we will become” If worry and despondency seek our undoing, then we should think about Yizkor in such a way that we carry on the work of our ancestors from Sinai; in that we today are truly their children, and in that we are parents of the future generations. Then the chain does not break and we gain the strength to carry out nobly these historical responsibilities, and to thank God sincerely that Yizkor has become the celebration of our soul. (Rabbi Regina Jonas)
All rise.

O God, full of compassion, who dwells on high, grant perfect rest in Your sheltering Presence to the souls of our beloved who have entered eternity. May they be exalted among the souls of the holy and the pure, who radiate like the illuminated heavens. May they be remembered this day for eternal blessing; may their resting place be the Garden of Eden. Merciful One on High, let them find refuge in the shadow of Your wings and let their souls be bound up in the bond of life everlasting. God is their inheritance. May they rest in peace, and together we say: Amen.

The dust returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit returns unto God who gave it. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

All rise.

Religion cannot prove the truth of the statement that God revives the dead, even though the liturgy says it. The belief must be taken on trust, albeit a trust based on reasonable arguments.

These derive from our experience of this life, which seems to point to purpose and meaning beyond itself. Most of us feel, even though we cannot prove it, that it would be absurd to assume that life ends with death. For the purpose and meaning of my life to make sense, I may have to assume that my life, in some unfathomable way, continues beyond the grave. Death, as Eugene Borowitz has put it, may mean living in another way, existing on another level than that which binds us to our bodies.

In the absence of hard evidence one way or the other, our belief becomes a matter of decision. Even though I cannot prove life after death, I hope for it, because the arguments against such hope, though serious, are neither convincing nor conclusive. While our metaphors may differ from those of earlier ages, our language testifies to an inescapable need to reach out to what is beyond our grasp. (Rabbi Dow Marmur)
Mourner’s Kaddish

For the Jew on Yom Tov, there is both joy in our memories and longing in our celebration. Our sacred duty to carry on with the Holy Days is even more acute when chairs sit empty at our table. The calendar carries us along, as we remember those who have gone from this life.

We are festive weepers, etching names on every stone, touched by hope, hostages of governments and history, blown by wind and gathering holy dust. (Yehuda Amichai)

Magnified and sanctified be the great name of the One by whose will the world was created. Amen. May God’s sovereignty govern our lives, and the life of the whole House of Israel, and let us say: Amen.

May God’s great name be praised for all eternity.

Blessed and praised; glorified, exalted, and extolled; lauded, honoured, and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, who is ever to be praised, far above all the blessings and songs of praise and consolations which human lips can utter, and let us say: Amen.

May the blessing and the promise of life come to us and all Israel, and let us say: Amen.

There is a love stronger than death.
(Song of Songs 8:6)

From Psalm 113:2, Daniel 2:20

Lord has taken away; praised be the name of the Lord. (Job 1:21)
May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens cause peace to descend on us, and let us say: Amen.

Yit·ga·dal ve·yit·ka·dash she·mei ra·ba. A·mein.
Be·al·ma di·ve-ra chir·u·tei, ve·yam·lich mal·chu·tei be·cha·yei·chon u·ve·yo·mei·chon u·ve·cha·yei de·chol Beit Yis·ra·e·l, ba·a·ga·la u·vi·ze·man ka·riv, ve·im·ru: A·mein.

Ye·hei she·mei ra·ba me·va·rach le·a·lam u·le·al·mei al·ma·ya.

Yit·ba·rach ve·yish·ta·bach ve·yit·pa·ar ve·yit·ro·mam ve·yit·na·sei ve·yit·ha·dar ve·yit·aleh ve·yit·ha·lal she·mei de·Ku·de·sha, be·rich Hu, le·ei·la min kol bir·cha·ta ve·shi·ra·ta tush·be·cha·ta ve·ne·che·ma·ta da·a·mi·ran be·al·ma ve·im·ru: A·mein.

Ye·hei she·la·ma ra·ba min she·ma·ya ve·cha·yim a·lei·nu ve·al kol Yis·ra·e·l, ve·im·ru: A·mein.

O·seh sha·lom bim·ro·mav, Hu ya·a·seh sha·lom a·lei·nu ve·al kol Yis·ra·e·l, ve·im·ru: A·mein.

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn and comfort to all who are bereaved. And together we say: Amen.