Siddur Pirchei Kodesh

Shabbat Evening Service
Excerpted from the Complete Siddur

Toronto 2011—5772
Dedication

This prayer book is made possible by a generous gift from
Hershell Ezrin and Sharyn Salsberg Ezrin
In Loving Memory of Their Parents
Marcia and Sydney Ezrin (z”l)
Lillian and Nathan Salsberg (z”l)

Leaders of their synagogues like their parents before them,
Marcia and Sydney Ezrin and Lillian and Nathan Salsberg held the prayerbook
as a sacred inheritance to be lovingly entrusted from the hands of one generation
to the next. Presented as a gift before a long journey, when a new home was
established, and at other important moments in the lives of their families,
each siddur was given with personal blessings.

Their prayerbooks, now treasured family heirlooms, were inscribed with
genealogical information, lists of names, yahrzeit dates, and the names of towns
from which family members came. The prayers of the Jewish People
have thereby been woven into the lives of the
Ezrin and Salsberg families for generations to come.

Marcia and Sydney Ezrin, and Lillian and Nathan Salsberg instilled in
their children a love of Judaism and Israel, of community and
synagogue life. May their spirit and commitment to our tradition
be remembered forever.
Dedication

Holy Blossom Temple is pleased to dedicate this prayerbook in honour of Rabbi W. Gunther and Elizabeth S. Plaut.

The impact the Plauts have made on the Jewish world through their writing, teaching, and leading example is beyond measure. Rabbi Plaut served our congregation as its Senior Rabbi from 1961 to 1977 and as its Senior Scholar for the years following his retirement. Together, Rabbi and Mrs. Plaut shaped and strengthened the Holy Blossom Temple community for more than four decades.

This prayerbook is made possible by a personal gift from Judith Plaut, and Rabbi Dr. Jonathan V. and Carol Plaut in loving devotion to their parents. This prayerbook is also supported by a number of Temple funds to which congregants have given generously over the years in honour of the Plaut Family.

Rabbi and Mrs. Plaut will forever be treasured by this sacred congregation.
Old and grey as I am, I hurry forth on Friday, filled with love, to meet the Sabbath. My joy approaches, my grief disappears and I sing out: Welcome!

For love of this day, I purify my soul. I bless the Eternal God. I leap and dance. Yes! This is it! A foretaste of the World to Come!

(Excerpt from a 14th–17th c. Yemenite poem, written in Hebrew and Aramaic)
Shabbat Evening

The holy Shabbat is the greatest gift given us by the Holy One. We must rejoice in the coming of Shabbat. If the expectation of a special guest would cause us to prepare with great care, how much more carefully should we prepare when the guest is the Shabbat Bride? Fresh tablecloths (or some read: bed coverings) should be set aside for Friday evening. Something special should always be eaten on Shabbat. Everyone, even someone with servants, must do something himself to honour Shabbat, whether it be helping prepare the meal, cleaning the house, or purchasing flowers to adorn the Shabbat table. (Shulchan Aruch)

Yedid Nefesh

Soul’s Beloved, Av HaRachaman, draw Your servant to Your will. Like a deer Your servant will run, and bow down low before Your splendour. To him Your love is sweeter than honeycomb, than any taste.

Glorious Beauty, Radiance of the World, my lovesick soul aches for You. Please God, heal this soul by revealing to her Your tender light. Then with strength recovered and health restored, she will be Your maidservant forever.

Yedid Nefesh

יְדִיד נֶפֶשׁ

“soul’s Beloved”) There have been many inadvertent changes to this love song over the centuries. This version of Yedid Nefesh reflects the author’s own handwritten manuscript, in which he describes the Kabbalistic poem as “a supplication for union and the desire to love.” Together, the first letters of each stanza spell יהוה, the name of his soul’s Beloved.

אֵל נָא, רְפָא נָא לָה ("please God, please heal her") These five words are the shortest and most effective prayer in the Torah. Moses spoke these words when he prayed for the physical health of his sister, Miriam. On the eve of Shabbat, the poet prays for the spiritual health of the soul, which longs to be reunited with the Divine.
Ancient One, let Your compassion be aroused, have pity on Your beloved child. How long have I yearned to see the glory of Your strength! Please, my God, my heart’s desire, hurry, do not hide Yourself.

Reveal Yourself, please, Beloved, spread out over me Your shelter of peace. Let the earth shine with Your glory. Let us revel and rejoice in You. Hurry, Beloved, for the appointed time has come! Be gracious to me as in days everlasting.

Candle Lighting

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has sanctified us with mitzvot, and has commanded us to kindle the lights of Shabbat [and Yom Tov].

Sovereign of the universe, may these lights be, in Your eyes, like the lights which the Kohein kindled in the Holy Temple. May our light never be extinguished, and may Your light shine upon us.

(Ceder T’chines U’Vokshes)

"candle lighting") Normally we recite a blessing, then fulfill the mitzvah it describes. However, Shabbat candles are lit first, followed by the blessing, because the act of lighting a fire must precede the acknowledgment of the arrival of Shabbat. It is customary to cover one’s eyes when reciting the blessing, so that the blessing follows the act of lighting, but precedes the act of beholding the light. It is also customary to offer a private prayer for the well-being of loved ones. Lighting two candles recalls the dual commandment of Shamor V’Zachor, “Keep and Remember,” uniting descriptions of Shabbat in the Torah’s two versions of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8 and Deuteronomy 5:12).
Kabbalat Shabbat

In sixteenth century Tzfat, Rabbi Moses Cordovero developed the custom of singing a series of psalms to greet the Shabbat. He and other Kabbalists would dress in white, go out to the fields at sunset, and sing Psalms 95–99 and 29, L’chah Dodi, and Psalms 92–93 before the evening prayer service began. This custom spread quickly throughout the Jewish world and became known as “Kabbalat Shabbat,” “the Receiving of Shabbat.”

Come, let us sing to the Eternal, shout jubilantly to our Rock of Deliverance.

Let us enter God’s presence with thanks; with hymns let us raise our voices to God.

For a great God is Adonai, a great Ruler over all gods.

In God’s hand are the depths of the earth and the heights of the mountains.

God owns the sea and made it, God’s hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us worship and bow low. Let us kneel before the Eternal, who made us.

For the Eternal is our God, and we are the People of God’s pasture, a flock in God’s hand.

Today, if only you would hear God’s voice.

—from Psalm 95

Sovereign of the Universe, if I could sing, I would not let You remain above. I would harry You with my song until You came down and stayed here among us.

(Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz)

People of Israel kept but one Shabbat as it ought to be kept, the world would be redeemed immediately, for it is said: ‘Today, if only you would hear God’s voice.’ Which day is today? Shabbat.” (Midrash Tehilim 95:7)
Sing to the Eternal a new song!
Sing to the Eternal, all the earth!
Sing to the Eternal, praise God’s name; proclaim God’s deliverance from day to day.
Recount God’s glory among the nations, God’s wonders among all peoples.
For the Eternal is great and most praiseworthy, more awesome than all other gods.
For all the peoples’ gods are idols; but Adonai made the heavens.
Glory and grandeur are before God, strength and beauty in God’s sanctuary.
Ascribe to Adonai, O families of nations. Ascribe to Adonai honour and might! Ascribe to Adonai the glory of God’s name.
Raise a gift and enter God’s courtyards. Bow before the Eternal in glorious holiness.
Tremble before God, all the earth. Declare among the nations: “Adonai reigns!”

When a person is singing and cannot lift his voice, and another who can lift his voice comes to join him, then the first will be able to lift his voice, too. This is the hidden potential of the bond between spirit and spirit. (Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz)

Psalm 96

When a person is singing and cannot lift his voice, and another who can lift his voice comes to join him, then the first will be able to lift his voice, too. This is the hidden potential of the bond between spirit and spirit. (Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz)
The world stands firm; it shall not be shaken. God will judge the peoples with uprightness.

The heavens will rejoice, the earth exult. The sea and its fullness will roar.

The fields will be glad and all that is in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy before the Eternal who comes, who comes to judge the earth;

God will judge the world with righteousness and its peoples with faithfulness.

The Eternal reigns, the earth exults; the many islands rejoice.

Cloud and deep darkness are round about God; upon righteousness and justice God’s throne is set.

Fire will go before God to surround and consume the foes.

God’s lightning illuminates the world; the earth sees and trembles.

Mountains melt like wax before the Eternal, before the Ruler of all the earth.

The heavens declare God’s righteousness; and all the peoples behold God’s glory.

Our acts of kindness are used by God as seed for the planting of trees in the Garden of Eden. Thus, each of us, by our deeds, has the power to create our own paradise. (Rabbi Dov Baer of Mezritch)

Psalm 97

You are [just] One, yet You are exalted above shame or falling, unlike a human being, who falls when he is alone. (Solomon ibn Gabirol)
All who serve graven images, all who are proud of idols will be shamed; before God all gods will bow low.

Zion will hear and rejoice and the daughters of Judah exult, because of Your judgments, Adonai.

For You, Adonai, are most high over all the earth; You are greatly exalted above all gods.

Lovers of the Eternal, hate evil! God preserves the lives of the pious; from the hand of the wicked, God saves them.

Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright of heart.

Rejoice, righteous ones, in the Eternal! Give thanks to God’s holy name.

A Psalm.

Sing to the Eternal a new song, for God has performed wonders. God’s right hand, God’s holy arm has brought deliverance.

"hate evil" In the second century, Beruriah challenged her husband, Rabbi Meir, about the meaning of Psalm 104:35: “May sins cease from the earth and evildoers be no more.” Rabbi Meir was so terribly victimized under Roman rule that he prayed for the death of his attackers and interpreted this verse to mean: May sinners and evildoers cease from the earth. Beruriah corrected him and taught that he should pray for his enemies’ repentance, so that sins and evil will no more be on earth. (Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 10a)
The Eternal has made deliverance known; before the eyes of the nations God has revealed justice.

God has remembered loyalty and faithfulness for the House of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the deliverance of our God.

Raise a shout to the Eternal, all the earth!
Break forth, sing out, and make music!

Play to the Eternal with lyre, with lyre and the voice of song.

With trumpets and shofar blast shout joyfully before the Sovereign, the Eternal.

Let the sea and its fullness thunder; the world and its inhabitants.

Let rivers clap hands, mountains join in joyful song;

before the Eternal, who comes to judge the earth; who will judge humankind with justice, and peoples with uprightness.

The Sabbath symbolizes a state of union between humanity and nature and between one human being and another. By not working, that is to say, by not participating in the process of natural and social change—we are free from the chains of time. (Erich Fromm, adapted)

This psalm describes a chorus of human praises joining together with nature’s praises until all the world is united in devotion to its Creator and Judge.
The Eternal reigns; the peoples tremble. God is enthroned upon the K’ruvim; the earth quakes.

The Eternal is great in Zion and exalted above all the peoples.

They praise Your great and awesome name; holy is God.

O mighty Sovereign who loves justice, You have established uprightness; justice and righteousness amid Jacob have You made.

Exalt the Eternal our God, and bow low before God’s footstool; holy is God.

God is our God now, and not yet the God of all nations; but in the future God will be Adonai Echad, The Eternal alone. (Rashi)

The Sabbath as protest—I view the Sabbath as a useless day. We must once again understand that doing nothing, being silent, and open to the world, letting things happen inside, can be as important as, and sometimes more important than, what we commonly call the useful. Let there be some special time during the week when we do for the sake of doing, when we love the trivial and, in fact, simply love; when we do for others rather than ourselves and thus provide a counter-balance for the weight of endless competition that burdens our every day.

(Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut)
Moses and Aaron, among God’s priests, and Samuel among those who invoke God’s name, called to the Eternal and God answered them.

In a pillar of cloud God spoke to them; they kept God’s testimonies, and God gave them the law.

Adonai, our God, You answered them. You were a forgiving God for them, yet exacted punishment for their misdeeds.

Exalt the Eternal our God, and worship at God’s holy mountain; for holy is Adonai, our God.

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!

A human being’s nature is radically different from God’s, but human beings are capable of approaching God’s actions, God’s love, God’s mercy, God’s justice. (Rambam)
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.

For a thousand years are a sudden quake as against an eternal day—when those rising up and digging down with a single stroke, sky and abyss would sing.

(Amir Gilboa)
L’chah Dodi

Come, my Beloved, to greet the bride; Let us welcome the Sabbath.

“Keep” and “Remember”: spoken at once the unique God made us hear; the Eternal is One, whose name is One, for renown, for splendour, for praise.

Come, my Beloved . . .

To greet the Sabbath, come let us go, for she is a fountain of blessing. Still blessings flow, as from the start: even creation’s end was conceived at the very beginning.

Come, my Beloved . . .

Sanctuary of the Sovereign, royal city, Arise, go forth from your ruined state. Too long have you dwelt in the valley of tears. Now God will shower God’s mercy upon you.

Come, my Beloved . . .

Lift yourself up! Shake off the dust! Put on your clothes of glory, O my People! Through Jesse’s son of Bethlehem, draw near to my soul, redeem it.

Come, my Beloved . . .
Awake, awake, for your light has come: arise and shine! Awake, awake, break out in song, for the Eternal’s glory is revealed upon you.

Come, my Beloved…

Do not be ashamed, do not be confounded. Why be downcast? Why should you mourn? In you, the needy of My People find shelter and the city shall be rebuilt upon its ancient ruins.

Come, my Beloved…

Those who despoiled you shall be scattered; all who devoured you will be far away. Your God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.

Come, my Beloved…

Expand to the right and left, worship God in awe, by the hand of a descendant of Peretz; we will sing for joy.

Come, my Beloved…

Enter in peace, O crown of her betrothed; enter in gladness, enter in joy. Come to the People that keeps its faith. Enter, O bride!

Enter, O bride!

Come, my Beloved…

All rise and face the door to welcome the Sabbath bride.

Enter in peace, O crown of her betrothed; enter in gladness, enter in joy. Come to the People that keeps its faith. Enter, O bride!

Enter, O bride!

Come, my Beloved…

All are seated.

Many biblical passages refer to King David as a descendant of Peretz. It is said that the Messiah will come from the line of David.

בּוֹאִי בֶּן פַּרְצִי ("a descendant of Peretz")

בּוֹאִי כָל ("enter, O bride!") [On Shabbat]

Rabbi Yannai would put on his festive clothes and declare: “Enter, O bride! Enter, O bride!” (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 119a and Bava Kama 32b)
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.

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 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.

From Psalm 29

We’ll greet Shabbat with joy and prayer, then return home with hearts full of joy. There, the table is set, and candles will shine. All the corners of the house will brightly glow. . . . Come in peace, O angels of peace. (Chayim Nachman Bialik)

Weft, Tehillim 49

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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.
The Eternal God reigns, enrobed in grandeur; the Eternal is robed, girded with strength. God established the solid earth; it will not be shaken. Upright is Your timeless throne, endless are You.

The rivers cry out, Adonai, the rivers cry out their thunder, the rivers rage in their fury; but greater than the thunder of the torrents, mightier than the breakers of the sea, is the Eternal’s majesty on high!

Your law stands firm; holiness adorns Your House, Adonai, until the end of days.

On Yom Tov turn to page 237.

Herman Cohen

Man’s heart knows no greater conflict than that caused by doubt, that is, by the suspicion that this belief in the superior power of the good may be nothing but delusion and that all hope in the eventual triumph of truth may, in the end, prove vain. It is here that prayer can enable us to scale the heights of moral confidence and trust; for God is the rock to which all hope must cling. Yet the struggle of the two souls within us, the realistic, skeptical soul and the soul which believes that the idea is realizable after all—this, too, constitutes prayer. (Hermann Cohen)
Sh’ma and Its Blessings

The “Call to Worship” begins the main prayer service. In addition to the prayers which regularly surround the Sh’ma, on Shabbat we also include V’Shamru taken from Exodus 31:16–17 to emphasize that Shabbat is an eternal sign of the covenant between God and the Jewish People.

How did the Sh’ma become the quintessential Jewish prayer, when technically it is not a prayer at all? (Prayers are addressed to God; the Sh’ma is addressed to the People of Israel.) Because it contains in just a few lines the basic theological commitments of Judaism: that there is a God; that there is only one God; that God is not only singular but also unique; that the Jewish People has a distinct relationship with God; and that we are commanded to love God, to study God’s word, and to teach it to our children (Eitz Chayim). These assertions and all they imply have caused the Sh’ma to be known as “the Watchword of our Faith.”

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, whose word brings on the evening, whose wisdom opens heaven’s gates, whose understanding alters time and rotates the seasons, and whose will sets the stars in their courses in the sky.

Humankind is God’s partner in the work of creation.
(Babylonian Talmud, Niddah 31a)

When God created the first man, God led him round all the trees in the Garden of Eden. God said to him: “See My works, how beautiful and praiseworthy they are. Everything I have created has been created for your sake. Think of this, and do not corrupt or destroy My world; for if you corrupt it, there will be no one to set it right after you.” (Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7:28)
God creates day and night, rolling light away from darkness, and darkness from light. God causes day to pass and brings on the night, and separates day from night: Adonai Tz’va’ot is God’s name. May the living and eternal God rule over us forever and ever. Praised are You, Adonai, who brings on the evening.

Revelation

Unending love have You shown Your People, the House of Israel: Torah and mitzvot, laws and precepts have You taught us. Therefore, Adonai, our God, when we lie down and when we rise up, we will reflect on the meaning of Your laws and rejoice in the words of Your Torah and in Your mitzvot forever. For they are our life and the length of our days. On them we will meditate day and night. May Your love never depart from us. Praised are You, Adonai, who loves Your People Israel.

Three things conspire together in my eyes to bring the remembering of You ever before me: the starry heavens, the broad green earth, the depths of my heart. (Solomon ibn Gabirol)

The commandments of the Eternal God are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. (Psalm 19:9–11)

תורה ומצוות ("Torah and mitzvot") All mitzvot are means of evoking in us the awareness of living in the neighbourhood of God, of living in the sacred dimension... They are reminders that we are stewards rather than landlords of the universe; reminders of the fact that we do not live in a spiritual wilderness, that our every act is an encounter of the human and the holy. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, adapted)
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.

Deuteronomy 6:4

Because you have  
ssingled Me out as  
unique among the  
many gods that are  
worshipped, I shall  
single you out as  
unique among the  
peoples. (Babylonian  
Talmud, Chagigah 3b)

Deuteronomy 6:5–9

“You shall love”  
means to cause  
God to become  
beloved through  
you. (Babylonian  
Talmud, Yoma 86a)

Sh'ma (“hear . . . God is One”) In the Torah scroll, the letters ayin and dalet are larger than the rest. Together they spell the word ע"ד, “witness.” The Sh'ma is our testimony to the one God.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai imagines God saying to all who come to testify: “When you are My witnesses, I am God. When you are not My witnesses, it is as if I am not God.” (Pesikta D’Rav Kahana 12:6; Sifrei 346)

“I shall love” ("you shall love") Of course, love cannot be commanded. No third party can command it or extort it. No third party can, but the One can. The commandment to love can only proceed from the mouth of the Lover. Only the Lover can and does say: “Love Me!” And He really does so. In His mouth the commandment to love is not a strange commandment; it is none other than the voice of love itself. The love of the Lover has, in fact, no word to express itself other than the commandment. (Franz Rosenzweig)
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.

Why does the Hebrew literally say “on your heart”? Should it not say “in your heart”? The heart is not always open; therefore, we should place these words on our heart, so that when it opens, they will be there, ready to enter. (Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk)
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 15:40-41)

Religion embraces both faith and action. The primary quality [of Judaism] is action, for it lays the foundation for faith; the more we do good, the more readily do we grasp the meaning of duty and life and the more readily do we believe in the Divine from which stems the good. (Rabbi Leo Baeck)
Redemption

All this we hold to be true and sure: You alone are our God; there is none else, and we are Israel Your People.

You are our Sovereign: You deliver us from the hands of oppressors, and save us from the fists of tyrants. You do wonders without number, marvels that surpass our understanding. You give us our life; by Your help we survive all who seek our destruction.

You did wonders for us in the land of Egypt, miracles and marvels in the land of Pharaoh. You led Your People Israel out, forever to serve You in freedom.

When Your children witnessed Your power, they extolled You and gave You thanks; willingly they enthroned You; and, full of joy, Moses, Miriam, and all Israel sang this song:

**גאולה**

You shall not oppress the stranger, for you know the soul of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.

(Exodus 23:9)

The world is full of wonders and miracles, but we take our little hands and we cover our eyes and we see nothing.

(The Baal Shem Tov)

Faith does not detach us from thinking: it does not suspend reason. It is opposed not to knowledge but to indifferent aloofness to the essence of living. Faith means to hold small things great, to take light matters seriously, to distinguish the common and the passing from the aspect of the lasting. . . . Faith is the insight that life is not a self-maintaining, private affair, not a chaos of whims and instincts, but an aspiration, a way, not a refuge. Faith is real only when it is not one-sided, but reciprocal. We can rely on God, if God can rely on us. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)
“Who is like You, Adonai, among the gods?
Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praise, doing wonders?”

Your children witnessed Your majesty when You divided the sea before Moses; “This is my God!” they exclaimed and declared:

“The Eternal will reign forever and ever!”

And it is said: “The Eternal One delivered Jacob, and redeemed him from a hand mightier than his own.”
Praised are You, Adonai, who redeemed Israel.

(“from a hand mightier than his own”) Pharaonic oppression, deliverance, Sinai, and Canaan are still with us, powerful memories shaping our perceptions of the world. The door of hope is still open; things are not what they might be. We still believe, or many of us do, what the Exodus first taught about possibility. First, that wherever you live, it is probably Egypt. Second, that there is a better place, a world more attractive, a promised land. Third, that the way to that land is through the wilderness. And finally, that there is no way to get from here to there except by joining together and marching. (Michael Walzer)
For Protection

Grant that we may lie down in peace, Adonai our God, and raise us up, O Sovereign, to life renewed. Spread over us the shelter of Your peace; guide us with Your good counsel; and for Your name’s sake, be our help. Shield us from hatred and plague; keep us from war and famine and anguish; subdue our inclination to evil. O God, our Guardian and Helper, our gracious and merciful Sovereign, give us refuge in the shadow of Your wings. Guard our coming and our going, that now and always we may have life and peace. Praised are You, Adonai, whose shelter of peace is spread over us, over all Your People Israel, and over Jerusalem.

Keeping Shabbat

The People of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath in every generation as a covenant for all time. It is a sign forever between Me and the People of Israel; for in six days the Eternal One made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day God rested, refreshing the soul.

On Shabbat a shelter of peace is spread over the world, which is thereby protected on all sides. . . . All beings are at peace, in both the upper and the lower spheres. (Zohar, vol. 1, Bereshit)

Exodus 31:16–17

One can say without exaggeration that more than the Jew has kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jew. (Ahad HaAm)
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.

לי đâu שמה רַבָּא, מְבָרַך לְעָלַם וְלֵעָלִים (From Psalm 113:2, Daniel 2:20)

לְעֵלָּא מִן כּל בִּרְכָתָא

[“far above all the blessings”] If God is above and beyond all blessings and songs, why do we praise God’s name at all?

Once Rabbi Dov Baer of Mezritch was walking on the street accompanied by his disciples and saw a little girl hiding in an alcove, weeping. When he asked why she was crying, the answer came: I was playing hide-and-seek with my friends, but they didn’t come looking for me!

Rabbi Dov Baer turned to his students and taught: In the answer and the tears of that girl, I heard the weeping of the Shechinah, as it is written: “And I will surely hide My face” (Deuteronomy 31:18). It is as if God says, “I have also hidden my face, as it were, but no one comes to look for Me!” (Itturay Torah)
“Adonai, open my lips that my mouth may declare Your praise; for You take no delight in sacrifice. If I were to give a burnt offering, You would not be pleased” (Psalm 51:17–18).

When the Temple was destroyed, our primary means of worship—sacrifices—was also destroyed. According to Avot D’Rabbi Natan 11a, that generation, nearly lost, turned to God and said: “We are impoverished now that we cannot offer sacrifices.” God reassured them: “Now what I seek from you are words, as it is written: ‘Take words with you when you return to your God’ (Hosea 14:2).” The radical shift from sacrifice to prayer changed Jewish ritual life forever. Since then, we pile our words upon the altar and ignite them with the fire of the soul, releasing them Godward.

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.

Sefatayim are “lips,” but can also mean “boundaries.” Here we ask God to free us from our limitations so that we can offer praise without bounds. (Ramban)
Abraham

And I say to myself: from this remote ancestor right down to my own parents, all these ancestors have handed me a truth which flowed in their blood, which now flows in mine. Shall I not hand it on, with my blood, to those of my blood?

And I say to you: Will you take it from me, my child? Will you hand it on? Perhaps you will wish to abandon it. If so, let it be for a greater truth, if there is one. I shall not blame you. It will be my fault; I shall have failed to hand it on as I received it. But of this I am sure: whether you abandon it or whether you follow it, Israel will journey on to the end of days. (Edmond Fleg, adapted)

From Psalm 147:18

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

From Simchat Torah until Pesach include:

From Pesach until Sh’mini Atzeret include:

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.

From Psalms 145:14,
146:7-8
Daniel 12:2
I Samuel 2:6
Who is like You, Mighty One?
Who can compare to You, Sovereign of life and death, Source of salvation?

On Shabbat Shuvah include:
Who is like You, Av HaRachamim, who compassionately remembers Your creations for life?

You are faithful in extending life after death.
Praised are You, Adonai, who extends life after death.

The Holiness of God’s Name
You are holy, Your name is holy, and those who strive to be holy praise You day by day. Selah!
*Praised are You, Adonai, the holy God.

*On Shabbat Shuvah substitute:
Praised are You, Adonai, the holy Sovereign.

The Holiness of the Sabbath Day
You set the seventh day apart for the sake of Your name; it is the culmination of the creation of heaven and earth. You blessed it more than other days, made it more sacred than all other times, as it is written in Your Torah:

I envisioned You in holiness. How my soul thirsts for You; how my body longs for You.

(Psalm 63:2,3)

The opposite of love is not hate; it’s indifference. And the opposite of life is not death; it’s indifference. Because of indifference one dies before one actually dies. (Elie Wiesel)
Now the whole universe—sky, earth, and all their array—was completed. With the seventh day God had completed this work of creation; on the seventh day God rested from all the work which God had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, for on it God rested from all the work of creation which God had done.

Our God and God of our ancestors, may our rest on this day be pleasing in Your sight. Sanctify us by Your mitzvot, and let Your Torah be our way of life. Satisfy us with Your goodness, gladden us with Your saving power, and purify our hearts to serve You in truth. In love and favour, Adonai our God, let Your holy Sabbath remain our heritage, that all Israel, sanctifying Your name, may find rest.

Praised are You, Adonai, who sanctifies the Sabbath.

Shabbat spoke right up to the Holy One, saying: “Sovereign of the Universe, each one of the days of the week has a mate, but I have none.” The Holy One replied: “The congregation of Israel will be your mate.” This is implied in the verse: “Remember Shabbat and make it holy” (Exodus 20:8)—by uniting with it in holy wedlock (Genesis Rabbah 11:8).
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.

On Shabbat Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat Chol HaMo'eid include:

Our God and God of our ancestors, be especially mindful of us and all Your People, the House of Israel, for well-being and favour, for kindness and compassion, for life and for peace on this
— day of the New Month.
— Festival of Pesach.
— Festival of Sukkot.

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.

And may our eyes behold Your compassionate return to Zion.
Praised are You, Adonai, who restores Your Divine Presence to Zion.

No matter where I go, it is always to Jerusalem.
(Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav)

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

("receive our prayers with love") What then is left for us to do except pray for the ability to pray, to bewail our ignorance of living in His presence? And even if such prayer is tainted with vanity, His mercy accepts and redeems our feeble efforts. It is the continuity of trying to pray, the unbroken loyalty to our duty to pray, that lends strength to our fragile worship; and it is the holiness of the community that bestows meaning upon our individual acts of worship. These are the three pillars on which our prayer rises to God: our own loyalty, the holiness of Israel, the mercy of God. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)
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.

Psalm 79:13

On Chanukah include:

We give thanks for the redeeming wonders, the mighty deeds, and the triumphant battles by which our People was saved at this season in days gone by.

ןוֹדֶה ("gratitude") The root of this word (י–ד–ה) has three meanings: (1) to bow, so it is customary to bow at the beginning and end of this prayer; (2) to profess; (3) to thank. (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks)

על ניסים ("for miracles") Rabbi Moses Nachmanides differentiates between "revealed" and "hidden" miracles. Revealed miracles stand outside the laws of nature; hidden miracles take place within them. This prayer awakens us to both kinds of miracles.
For all this, O Sovereign God, let Your name be forever praised and exalted.

On Shabbat Shuvah include:

Inscribe all the children of Your covenant for good life.

On Chanukah continue:

In the days of Matityahu the Hasmonean and his sons, a tyrant arose against our ancestors, determined to make them forget Your Torah, and to turn them away from doing Your will. But with great compassion, You stood by them in their time of trouble. You defended their cause; You judged their case and avenged them.

Through the power of Your spirit, the weak defeated the strong, the few prevailed over the many, and the righteous were triumphant. Then Your children returned to Your House, entered the Holy of Holies, purified Your sanctuary, and kindled the lights in its courtyards. They dedicated these eight days of Chanukah to give thanks and to praise Your great name.

Hillel taught: In a place where no one is human, strive to be human. (Pirkei Avot 2:6)
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.

Peace

Bestow everlasting and abundant peace upon Israel, Your People, for You, O Sovereign, are the Power of all peace. May it be favourable in Your sight to bless Your People Israel at all times and at every moment with Your peace.

*Praised are You, Adonai, who blesses Your People Israel with peace.

*On Shabbat Shuvah substitute:

In the Book of Life, Blessing, Peace, and Prosperity may we and all Your People, the House of Israel, be remembered and inscribed for good life and peace.

Praised are You, Adonai, Maker of Peace.

Shalom Rab

שָׁלוֹם רָב עַל יִשְּרָאֵל שִׁמְךָ שָׁלוֹם
מֶלֶךְ אָדוֹן לְךָ טוֹב בְּעֵינֶךָ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת עֵת עֵמֶךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכֵל שָׁלוֹם
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּשָּׁלוֹם.

*"Shalom Rab" ("abundant peace") Literally "great peace." Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught: "Great is peace, for all blessings are contained within it, as it is written: 'The Eternal One's People shall be blessed with peace'" (Psalm 29:11).

"Shalom Rav" can be translated creatively to mean "the Rabbi's peace." As Hillel taught: "Be like the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving your fellow creatures and drawing them close to Torah." (Pirkei Avot 1:12)

Shalom ("peace")

Don't stop after beating the swords into ploughshares, don't stop! Go on beating and make musical instruments out of them. Whoever wants to make war again will have to turn them back into ploughshares first.

(Yehuda Amichai)
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.
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 a 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.

Adonai, heed my plea. Adonai, receive my prayer. Let my troubles be overcome. Let them disappear in an instant.

(Psalms 6:10–11)

May the One who blessed our mothers, May the One who blessed our fathers, Hear our prayer and bless us as well.

Bless us with the power of Your healing. Bless us with the power of Your hope.

May our hearts be filled with understanding And be strengthened by the power of Your love.

Bless us with the vision for tomorrow. Help us to reach out to those in pain.

May the warmth of friendship ease our sorrow. Give us courage, give us faith, show us the way.

(Cantor Lisa Levine)
Counting the Omer

From the second night of Pesach to Shavuot, the Omer is counted.

Here I am now ready and prepared to fulfill the mitzvah of counting the Omer, as it is written in the Torah: “You shall count for yourselves from the day after the holy day, from the day you bring the sheaf of wave-offering, seven complete weeks. You must count until the day after the seventh week—fifty days.”

We rise.

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

• This is the first day of the Omer.
• This is the _____ day of the Omer.

Sinai was the goal and object of the Exodus. Counting the days of the Omer becomes the bridge from the social liberation that occurred on Passover to the constitution of freedom accepted and ratified at Sinai. Through the act of counting the Omer, we affirm that the purpose of freedom is to live the holy life and ethical regimen of the Torah. (Rabbi Irving Greenberg)
The origin of this prayer is uncertain. Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer attributes it to Joshua upon his victory over Jericho; the letters of his name are encoded in the text of the prayer. Modern scholarship, however, suggests that its content and style were written to resemble the hymns of the Second Temple period. By the early fourteenth century, the Aleinu was offered as a concluding prayer to every service.

Although Judaism is not a proselytizing religion, here we articulate our hope for a time when all humanity will be united under the rule of the one God. “On that day Adonai will be one” is the universalistic complement to the particularistic declaration of the Sh’ma: “Hear, O Israel, Adonai is our God. Adonai is One.”

**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:

עָלֵֽינוּ לְשַׁבֵּֽחַ לַאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל
לָתֵֽהּ לְשַׁבֵּֽהּ לְיָרֹעַ הָבָל
לְגַלַּת בְּרֵאשִׁית גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
שֶׁלֹּא עָשָֽׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת
וְלֹא שָׂמָֽנוּ כְּמִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה שֶׁלֹּא שָֽם חֶלְקֵֽנוּ הֲמוֹנָם.
וַאֲנַֽחְנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לִפְנֵי מֶֽלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

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(“It is upon us”) No prayer more eloquently expresses the dual task of the Jewish People: its particular challenge to be God’s witnesses on earth, and its universal aspiration to speed the day when all the inhabitants of the earth will be united in service to the one God in whose image we all are made. The future is full of the gravest responsibilities.

We are promised a place in the sun—not to ravage and dominate, but to serve our people, ourselves, the world. Standing in the sun we shall be seen clearly as never before. Our abilities will be on trial before a world full of nations, which will judge us in the light of a glorious past of ideal service to humankind. For Israel, election has never meant anything but obligation. . . . It is a task, a heavy task, a holy task. (Henrietta Szold)
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.

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.

The Messiah will come only when he is no longer necessary; he will come only on the day after his arrival; he will come, not on the last day, but on the very last. (Franz Kafka)

 Isaiah 51:13

All are seated.

לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שַׁדַּי “(to perfect the world by Your divine rule”) What is a human being? Lowly dust become divine! In the heart reside deep-rooted principles of right, passionate yearnings for love, fervent longings for brotherhood and peace, mighty hungering and thirsting after the good, the beautiful, and the true—all that we have ever meant, or should have meant, by God. (Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath)
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.”

כי ימבלי כלם על מלכותך ותרמל עלים מכלור מלכותך יהיה כרי מלכות על мира יתברך ממלה ע överם יתברך מלכותו יתברך
והשם יהיה אחד.

וְנֶאֱמַר: וְהָיָה יְהוָֹה לְמֶֽלֶךְ הָאָֽרֶץ, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לְכָל־יִהְיֶה יְהוָֹה אֶחָד וְשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

(“on that day”) Knowledge of what is does not open the door directly to what should be. One can have the clearest and most complete knowledge of what is and yet not be able to deduce from that, what should be the goal of our human aspirations. Mere thinking cannot give us a sense of the ultimate and fundamental ends. To make clear these fundamental ends and valuations, and to set them fast in the emotional life of the individual, seems to me precisely the most important function which religion has to perform. (Albert Einstein)
Mourner’s Kaddish

The Kaddish does not speak of death, but rather affirms faith in God. Its rhythmic chant lulls the mourner with reassurance that God rules over all the living and the dead, and that God is forever worthy of praise. Especially after a tragic death, when praise for God is difficult to find, these words are an essential reminder that God is larger than this life, and larger than our grief. This prayer-poem calls upon the God who can hold our grief, contain our anger, protect the souls of our beloved dead, and see us back to life again.

All rise.

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

May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens cause peace to descend on us and on all Israel, and let us say: Amen.
For Kiddush and HaMotzi see pages 439 and 446.

אָמֵן

The word is first found in Deuteronomy, chapter 27. There the Israelites affirm each pronouncement of the Levites by responding, Amen. When one person hears another person say a blessing, the listener can affirm the blessing by responding with Amen. The word shares the same root as the word אֱמוּנָה, faith.

It is taught that the letters of אָמֵן stand for אֵל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָן, “God, the faithful Sovereign.” (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 119b)

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

For Kiddush and HaMotzi see pages 439 and 446.
# Guide to Pronunciation

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<td>patach</td>
<td>ק,ק</td>
<td>(silent)</td>
<td>alef</td>
<td>ק</td>
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<tr>
<td>a (as in “father”)</td>
<td>kamatz</td>
<td>ק</td>
<td>b</td>
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<tr>
<td>o (as in “ought” or “coat”)</td>
<td>kamatz katan</td>
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<td>ק</td>
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<td>kaf/final kaf</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ch (as in “Bach” and “baruch”)</td>
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Glossary of Names and Terms

Abraham ibn Ezra (1089–1164), Spanish-born poet, philosopher, astrologer, and scientist, best known for his commentary on the Bible which emphasized the grammar and literal meaning of the text.

Ahad HaAm (One of the People) (1856–1927), pen name of Asher Hirsch Ginsberg, Russian-born Hebrew essayist, father of spiritual and cultural Zionism.

Amichai, Yehuda (1924–2000), German-born Israeli, considered Israel’s leading poet of the late 20th century, an early proponent of writing in colloquial Hebrew.

Amora (pl. Amoraim), Talmudic authorities in Israel and Babylonia ca. 200–500 C.E., creators of the Gemara.

Apocrypha, sacred books from pre-Mishnaic times, such as Maccabees and The Wisdom of Ben Sirah, excluded from the canon of the Tanach.

Ark, the Aron or Aron HaKodesh (Holy Ark), receptacle containing the Torah scrolls in a synagogue.

Baal Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name) (ca. 1700–1760), designation of Israel ben Eliezer from Podolia in the Ukraine, founder of Chasidism.

Bachya ibn Pekuda (ca. 1050–1120), Spanish religious philosopher, author of The Duties of the Heart.

Baeck, Leo (1873–1956), German-born rabbi and theologian, spiritual leader of German Reform Judaism.

Berkovits, Eliezer (1908–1992), rabbi, theologian, Modern Orthodox educator, Holocaust survivor.

Beruriah (2nd c. C.E.), distinguished in the Talmud as a woman who participated in legalistic discussion, wife of the Tanna Rabbi Meir.

Bialik, Chayim Nachman (1873–1934), Polish-born Hebrew poet and essayist, leading figure in the development of modern Hebrew poetry.

Bible, see Tanach.

Borowitz, Eugene (1924– ), American rabbi, leading theologian of the Reform Movement.

Buber, Martin (1878–1965), influential Vienna-born religious philosopher whose works include I and Thou and translation of the Bible into German.

Carlebach, Shlomo (1925–1994), German-born rabbi, prolific composer of religious music, singer, and recording artist.

Chanukah (dedication, inauguration), eight-day celebration, beginning 25th of Kislev, commemorating the 165 B.C.E. victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian-Greek ruler Antiochus Epiphanes, and the subsequent rededication of the Temple.

Chasidism, religious and social movement emphasizing joy in reaching the Divine, founded by the Baal Shem Tov.

Chidushim, innovative interpretations of Written Law (Torah) or Oral Law (Talmud).

Chol HaMo’eid (ordinary days of a Festival), days between the holy days that begin and conclude Pesach and Sukkot.


Deuteronomy Rabbah, see Midrash.

Diaspora, Jewish community living outside Israel.

Disraeli, Benjamin (1804–1881), English author, Prime Minister of England, raised to the peerage as Lord Beaconsfield by Queen Victoria.

Dubnow, Simon (1860–1941), Russian-born historian, author/editor of a universal history of the Jewish People emphasizing social factors.
Ecclesiastes Rabbah, see Midrash.

Etz Yosef, commentary on prayers by Rabbi Chanoch Zundel ben Rabbi Yosef, himself known as Etz Yosef (19th c.).

Elbogen, Ismar (1874–1948), German-born scholar, author of Jewish Liturgy, A Comprehensive History.

Etrog (citron), one of the Four Species used during Sukkot.

Exodus Rabbah, see Midrash.

Ezra the Scribe (5th c. B.C.E.), leader who brought exiled Jews from Babylon back to Judea, where he reformed religious observance and community life.

Fackenheim, Emil (1916–2003), German-born Canadian-Israeli rabbi and philosopher, post-Holocaust theologian.

Festivals, the three Pilgrimage Festivals: Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot/Sh’mini Atzeret.

Frank, Anne (1929–1945), German-born Dutch Holocaust victim, author of the diary recording her childhood years in hiding (1942–1944) from the Nazis.

Frankl, Viktor (1905–1997), Viennese physician, psychiatrist, author, and Holocaust survivor, author of Man’s Search for Meaning.

Freehof, Solomon (1892–1990), British-born Reform rabbi, set standard for Reform Halachah; chair of CCAR Committee on Liturgy, which produced The Union Prayer Book.

Fromm, Erich (1900–1980), German-born American author and psychoanalyst, author of The Art of Loving.

Geiger, Abraham (1810–1874), German scholar and rabbi, early leader of Reform Judaism.

Gemara (completion), commentary on the Mishnah. Mishnah and Gemara make up the Talmud.

Gemilut chasadim, deeds of loyal kindness; acting responsibly toward one another.

Genesis Rabbah, see Midrash.

Geonim (sing. Gaon), heads of Talmudic academies and intellectual leaders of the Babylonian Jewish community ca. 600–1050 C.E. “Gaon” refers as well to certain outstanding scholars of later times.

Gersonides (Rabbi Levi ben Gershon, Ralbag) (1288–1344), Provençal philosopher, mathematician, astronomer, Bible commentator, and Talmudist.

Glückel of Hameln (1646–1724), German diarist and business woman.

Greenberg, Irving (1933– ), American Orthodox rabbi, founder of National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL), advocate of Jewish pluralism.

Haftarah (conclusion), excerpt from books of Prophets (Nevi’im) chanted on Shabbat and Holy Days.

Halachah, Jewish law established in the Torah and in Rabbinic texts and decisions.

Hallel (praise), Psalms 113–118, added to the liturgy on festive days. Psalms 145–150 are often called Daily Hallel.


HaTikvah (The Hope), Israel’s national anthem, written in 1886 by Galician-born poet Naftali Herz Imber.

Havadalah (distinction, separation), ceremony marking the end of Shabbat, Festival, or High Holy Day.

Hertz, Joseph (1872–1946), Slovakian-born Chief Rabbi of the British Empire 1913–1946, author of a widely read Torah commentary.

Herzl, Theodor (1860–1904), Hungarian-born founder of political Zionism.

Heschel, Abraham Joshua (1907–1972), Polish-born, German-educated American rabbi, scholar, theologian, philosopher, and political activist; initially on faculty at Hebrew Union College, later professor of Jewish Ethics and Mysticism at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Hillel (1st c. B.C.E.), with Shammai, the last of the Zugot (pairs) of teachers of the Oral Law, founder of a rabbinic dynasty and of the leading school of interpretation of the Law, noted for lenient rulings.
Hirsch, Samson Raphael (1815–1889), German leader of Orthodox Judaism, progenitor of Modern Orthodoxy.

Israel (one who struggles with God), the name given to the biblical Patriarch Jacob; the Jewish People; the biblical Land of Israel; the modern State of Israel.

Itturay Torah (ornaments of the Torah), ethical writings on the Torah and Festivals by Rabbi Aharon Yaakov Greenberg (20th c.).

Jabotinsky, Vladimir (Ze’ev) (1880–1940), Russian-born right-wing Revisionist Zionist leader, founder and early leader of Irgun.

Jonas, Regina (1902–1944), German scholar and teacher, first woman ever ordained as a rabbi (1935), communal leader with Rabbi Leo Baeck in Terezin, murdered in Auschwitz.

Josephus (Joseph ben Matityahu, Josephus Flavius) (ca. 38–100 C.E.), politician, military commander, and historian; captured in the revolt against Rome (66–70 C.E.), joined Roman general Vespasian’s entourage.

Kabbalah (received tradition), mystical stream in Judaism emphasizing communion with God.

Kallir, Elazar (6th–7th c.), Hebrew poet who wrote in Israel, many of whose works are sung in the synagogue service.

Kaplan, Mordechai (1881–1983), Lithuanian-born American rabbi and philosopher, founder and exponent of Reconstructionist Judaism.

Kiddush (sanctification), ceremonial blessing recited on Shabbat and Holy Days, composed of the benediction over wine and a benediction proclaiming the holiness of the occasion.

Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (Abridged Shulchan Aruch), condensed version of Joseph Caro’s 16th c. code of Jewish law and practice compiled by Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried (19th c.).


Leibowitz, Nehama (1905–1997), Latvian-born Israeli academic, teacher, and author of Torah commentaries; role model for Orthodox women’s scholarship, sister of Yechezkel Leibowitz.

Leibowitz, Yechezkel (1903–1994), Latvian-born Orthodox Israeli chemist and intellectual; outspoken on holding Orthodoxy to modern ethical standards.

Leviticus Rabbah, see Midrash.

Loewe, Herbert (1882–1940), English professor of Jewish Semitic Studies, co-editor of A Rabbinic Anthology.

Löw, Judah ben Bezalel (the Maharal of Prague) (1525–1609), Czech rabbi and mystic, recognized leader of Ashkenazi Jews; associated with the Golem legend.

Lulav (palm branch), palm branch, myrtle, and willow bound together and waved during the Festival of Sukkot.

Luria, Isaac (the Ari) (1534–1572), rabbi and mystic based in Tzfat, founder of the dominant school of Kabbalah.

Luzzatto, Moses Chayim (Ramchal) (1707–1746), Italian Kabbalist, Hebrew poet, and writer; major figure in early modern Hebrew literature.

Ma’ariv (“brings on the evening”), the evening prayer service, also known as Arvit.


Maimonides (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, Rambam) (1134–1205), Spanish-born rabbi, legalist, philosopher, and physician; pivotal force in rationalist Judaism; works include The Guide of the Perplexed (Moreh Nevuchim), the Mishneh Torah, and the Thirteen Principles of Jewish Faith.
Megillah (scroll; pl. me'egillot) The five me’egillot of the Bible are Song of Songs, read on Pesach; Ruth, read on Shavuot; Lamentations (Eichah), read on Tish’ah B’Av; Ecclesiastes (Kohelet), read on Sukkot; and Esther, read on Purim.

Mezuzah (doorpost), decorative casing containing a parchment scroll on which are written the biblical verses Deuteronomy 6:4–9 and 11:13–21, affixed to the right side of the entrance of rooms occupied by Jews.

Midrash, a method of study offering interpretations of the biblical text by finding and explicating new meanings in addition to the literal one. The various Rabbinic books of midrash (2nd–12th c. C.E.) may contain halachic decisions, ethical teachings and legends (aggada), or textual exegesis. Often, a midrash established the law or found support for law already accepted. The word also applies to legends and ethical precepts derived from the biblical text.

Midrash Mechilta, see Midrash.
Midrash Tanchuma, see Midrash.
Minchah (offering), afternoon prayer service replacing the daily afternoon Temple offering.
Mishnah (repetition, study), legal codification of the Oral Law redacted ca. 200 C.E. by Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi.
Mishneh Torah (the Torah recapitulated), comprehensive law code compiled by Maimonides (late 12th c.).
Mitzvah, a commandment of the Jewish Law, the fulfillment of such a commandment, a meritorious or charitable act.
Montagu, Lily (1873–1963), English social reformer, a founder and president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism.
Moses Hasid (active ca. 1717), Austrian author of Iggeret HaMusar (letter on ethics).
Moses ibn Ezra (ca. 1055–1135), Spanish rabbi, linguist, philosopher, and writer of penitential prayers.
Musar (ethics, instruction), a 19th c. ethical, educational, and cultural movement among Orthodox Lithuanian Jews.

Nachmanides (Rabbi Moses ben Nachman, Ramban) (1194–1270), foremost Spanish Talmudist, author of a major Torah commentary.
Numbers Rabbah, see Midrash.
Omer (a measure of barley), the first sheaf of the barley harvest offered in the Temple as a sacrifice following the first day of Pesach. The Counting of the Omer marks the days between Pesach and Shavuot.
Orach Chayim (way of life), practical code of Jewish law on prayer, Shabbat, and Holy Days, compiled by Rabbi Yaakov ben Asher, known as the Tur (13th–14th c.).
Oral Law, see Mishnah.
Panim Yafot (comely face), commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Pinchas Halevi Horowitz (1730–1805).
Perek HaShalom, section of the tractate Derech Eretz Zuta, dealing with themes of peace, contemporary with the Talmud.
Pesach (Passover), one of three Festivals of Pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Pesach begins on the 15th of Nisan and commemorates the Exodus from Egypt.
Pesikta D’Rav Kahana, see Midrash.
Philo (ca. 25 B.C.E.–50 C.E.), Alexandrian Jewish philosopher.
Pirkei Avot (Chapters of the Fathers, or Ethics of the Fathers), Mishnah tractate containing sayings and religious and ethical teachings of the Sages, 3rd c. B.C.E. –3rd c. C.E.
Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer, see Midrash.

Piyut (pl. piyutim), Hebrew liturgical poetry, originating in Israel in the 3rd c. C.E.

Purim (lots), festival observed on the 14th of Adar when Megillat Esther is read, telling the story of the rescue of the Persian Jews through the mediation of Queen Esther, 4th c. B.C.E.

Rabbi (my master), designation of a tannaitic Sage; modern title of an officially ordained Jewish religious leader. Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi is known in the Talmud simply as "Rabbi."

Rabin, Yitzchak (1922–1995), first native-born Prime Minister of Israel, Chief of Staff during the Six Day War (June 1967), awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 for his role in the creation of the Oslo Accords; assassinated while serving a second term as Prime Minister.

Rambam, see Maimonides.

Ramban, see Nachmanides.

Rashi (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac) (1035–1104), lived in northern France and Germany (Ashkenaz), foremost commentator on the Bible and the Talmud.

Rebbe, designation of a leader of Chasidic Jews.

Rosenzweig, Franz (1886–1929), German philosopher, considered conversion to Christianity and later devoted his life to Jewish education; noted for his treatise The Star of Redemption.

Rosh Chodesh (head of the month), the start of a Jewish month determined by the lunar cycle.

Rosh HaShanah (head of the year), the Jewish New Year celebrated on the new moon of the month of Tishrei, the first of the Days of Awe (Yamim Nora'im).

Ruth Rabbah, see Midrash.

Sa'adyah Gaon (ca. 882–942), Egyptian-born philosopher and scholar, Gaon of Talmudic Academy of Sura in Babylonia, author of one of the earliest Jewish prayerbooks.


Salanter, Israel (1810–1883), Lithuanian rabbi, founder of the Musar movement in Jewish ethics.

Sanhedrin, assembly of 71 scholars which functioned as the highest court and legislature in the Second Temple period (5th c. B.C.E.–70 C.E.).

Schechter, Solomon (1847–1915), rabbi and scholar, founder of the United Synagogue of America and shaper of Conservative Judaism; preserved and analyzed texts from the Cairo Geniza.

Seder Eliyahu Rabbah, see Midrash.

Seder T'chines U'Vokshes (book of supplications and requests), 17th c. Yiddish prayerbook used by women at home and in the synagogue.

S'fat Emet (language of truth), Torah commentary by Rabbi Yehudah Leib Alter, Chasidic master, himself known as S'fat Emet (1847–1905).

Shabbat (Sabbath), the seventh day of the week in the Jewish calendar, a sacred day of rest as described in the Torah, observed from Friday evening until Saturday after nightfall.

Shabbat Shuvah (Sabbath of Return), the Shabbat during the Days of Awe (Yamim Nora'im) between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur.

Shacharit (of the dawn), morning prayer service, instituted as a substitute for the daily sacrifice offered at dawn in the Temple.

Sharansky, Natan (1948– ), Ukrainian-born mathematician and spokesman for Soviet Jews, imprisoned as a refusenik; made aliyah and entered Israeli political life.

Shavuot (Feast of Weeks), Pilgrimage Festival observed on 6th of Sivan, commemorating the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai and the offering of the first fruits in ancient Israel.

Shemer, Naomi (1931–2004), renowned Israeli songwriter and composer.

Shneur Zalman of Liady (1745–1812), Lithuanian-born founder of Chabad Lubavitch Chasidism.

Shochar Tov, see Midrash.
Shulchan Aruch (prepared table), authoritative code of Jewish law and practice compiled by Joseph Caro in Tzfat ca. 1565.

Sifra, see Midrash.

Sifrei Deuteronomy, see Midrash.

Simchat Torah (Joy of Torah), the day following Sh’mini Atzeret; celebration of the renewal of the Torah-reading cycle. The Torah scrolls are carried in joyful procession for seven hakafot, circuits.


Sofrim (scribes), Talmudic treatise compiled in 8th c. Israel, containing laws relating to sacred scrolls and their treatment.

Solomon ibn Gabirol (ca. 1021–1058), Spanish poet, moralist, and Neoplatonist philosopher.

Soloveitchik, Joseph Dov (1903–1993), rabbi, Talmudist, philosopher, and leading figure of Modern Orthodox Judaism.

Song of Songs Rabbah, see Midrash.

S’rafim, fiery angels mentioned in the Bible and in mystical writings.


Sukkah, temporary shelter used during the Festival of Sukkot.

Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles), seven-day Pilgrimage Festival beginning five days after Yom Kippur, commemorating the 40 years of wandering in the desert and celebrating the fall harvest in Israel.

Szenes, Hannah (1921–1944), Hungarian-born poet and World War II heroine, served in the Haganah and British Armed Forces rescuing Yugoslav Jews, captured and executed by the Nazis.


Talmud (teachings), compilation of the Mishnah and its commentary, the Gemara. The two versions of the Talmud are the Yerushalmi (Jerusalem) or Palestinian, redacted 4th c. C.E., and the Bavli or Babylonian, redacted 5th–7th c. C.E. The Babylonian Talmud remains the primary document governing Rabbinic Judaism.

Tanach, Jewish biblical canon comprising 24 books, divided into three sections: Five Books of Moses (Pentateuch), Prophets, and Writings. In Hebrew, these sections are known as Torah, Nevi’im, and K’tuvim (thus, TaNaCh).

Tanna (pl. Tannaim), teacher living during the first two centuries C.E., usually with the title of Rabbi, mentioned in the Mishnah or a Baraita (contemporary teaching not included in the Mishna).

Tefillin (phylacteries), two black leather boxes fastened to leather straps and containing parchments of biblical text (Exodus 13:1–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21), worn at weekday morning prayers. One box is attached to the arm, one to the head.

Temple, the central edifice for worship and the sacrificial cult in Jerusalem ca. 900 B.C.E.–70 C.E.; common designation of a Reform synagogue.

Ten Days of Repentance (Aseret Y’mei T’shuvah), the ten days from Rosh HaShanah through Yom Kippur.

Tish’ah B’Av (9th day of Av), fast day commemorating the destruction of the First and Second Temples; also associated with the expulsion from Spain and other calamities in Jewish history.

Torah, the sacred scroll containing the text of the Five Books of Moses; may refer to the entire corpus of Jewish teaching.

Tosafot (addenda), commentary on the Talmud by French and German scholars of the 12–13th c., most notably Rashi’s grandsons.

Tosefta (addendum), supplement to the Mishnah (200–450 C.E.).

Tu BiShvat (15th day of Shevat), New Year for Trees, celebrated by planting trees in Israel.
Tur (column, row), codification of legalistic literature by Yaakov ben Asher, himself known as the Tur (14th c.); the basis for the Shulchan Aruch.

Tzedakah (from tzedek, righteousness), charity, acts of righteous giving.

Tzitzit (fringe), knotted threads worn on the four corners of garments (see Numbers 15:37–41), the essential feature of a tallit.

Wiesel, Elie (1928– ), Romanian-born Holocaust survivor, intellectual, author, Nobel laureate.


World to Come (Olam HaBa), eternal world of the spirit to which the human soul passes after death; the Messianic Age.

Yalkut Shimon (Shimon’s collection), a late compilation of midrashic teachings, probably ca. 13th c.

Yehudah HaLevi (ca. 1075–1141), Spanish secular and religious poet, physician, and philosopher, author of The Kuzari.

Yehudah HaNasi (Yehudah the Prince) (d. ca. 220 C.E.), rabbi, Talmudic scholar, leader of Judean Jewish community under Roman rule, redactor of the Mishnah.

Yishuv, the Jewish community in Palestine from the late Ottoman period through the British Mandate, late 19th c. to 1948.

Yom HaAtzma’ut, annual celebration of Israel’s Independence Day, May 14, 1948; observed 5th of Iyar.

Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27th of Nisan (also known as Yom HaShoah V’Hagvurah to honour heroism and resistance).

Yom HaZikaron, Israel’s Remembrance Day, 4th of Iyar.

Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), solemn fast day observed on the 10th of Tishrei, the last of the Days of Awe (Yamim Noraim) and the Ten Days of Repentance.

Yom Tov (good day), designation of the three Pilgrimage Festivals and the High Holy Days.

Zionism, spiritual and political movement for the return of the Jewish People to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel, with the goal of a Jewish state.

Zohar (brightness, splendour), chief work of the Kabbalah mystical tradition, attributed to the Tanna Shimon bar Yochai but probably composed by Moses de Leon, 13th c. Spain.

Compiled by Brenda Saunders with thanks to Diane Kriger (z”l)
Guide to the Illustrations

Yad (pointer for reading from the Torah) (page xv)
Dedication: Pesach, 1857, by Elyakum ben Yitzchak of the Asher family and his wife Rachel, daughter of Officer Nathan Katz of Montreal. A Torah scroll and silver adornments were their gift to the newly established Jewish congregation in Toronto.
Inscription: “Given to the Sacred Congregation of Pirchei Kodesh (Blossoms of Holiness) in the city of Toronto ... as a gift in perpetuity.”

Grand Façade of Sanctuary Exterior (page i)
Design: Architects Alfred Chapman and J. Morrow Oxley, with Morris D. Klein as an associate architect, and George Pokorny, “whose artistic designs have embellished this edifice with so many things of beauty and of symbolic significance.”
Dedication: May 22, 1938.

Rose Window Interior View “The Circle Is Complete” (page xxiii)
Artist: Peter Haworth and Robert McCauslan Limited.
Dedication: 1943, by Dr. Sigmund Samuel in memory of his parents, Lewis and Kate Samuel, founding members of our congregation in 1856.
Restoration: Vision Art.

Main Sanctuary Exterior Doors (page 1)
Hand-carved white oak.
Artist unknown.
Dedication: May 22, 1938.

Bernard and Alice Herman Chapel Ark Doors (page 79)
Hand-carved white oak.
Artist unknown.
Brought from the Holy Blossom Synagogue on Bond Street.
Original dedication: 1897.

Congregational Hall Ark “L’Dor VaDor” (page 103)
Hand-carved wood which incorporates a piece of the altar taken from the Richmond Street Synagogue.
Hand-woven tapestry of viscose and cotton.
Overall design: Harold Smith.
Woodworker: John Rosa.
Textile artist: Temma Gentles.
Dedication: 1981 by Mrs. Saul A. Silverman, Peter Silverman, and Cynthia Silverman in memory of Mr. Saul A. Silverman, and in honour of Daniel Silverman’s Bar Mitzvah.

Main Sanctuary Ark Doors (page 145)
Pierced and gilded wood.
Dedication: May 22, 1938, by Aaron and Rose Silverman.

Youth Chapel Ark Doors (page 205)
Copper lettering on wood.
Artist: Ludwig Wolpert.
Dedication: June 5, 1960, by the Confirmation Class of 1958.
Max Enkin Board Room
Portable Ark (page 235)
Hand-carved wood and stained glass.
Artist unknown.

North African Torah Scroll Case (page 259)
Sterling silver plate over wood and blue velvet.
Believed to be from Egypt. (Scroll from Romania.)
Original dedication: the 7th of Iyar, 5626/1866, to Congregation G’milut Chasadim in memory of Yehoshua and Yaakov Matzlach.

Iraqi Torah Scroll Case (page 301)
Silver and gold plate over wood. Red glass beading.
Case and scroll from Iraq.
Original dedication: 5690/1930, by the elder Mas’udah, wife of Solomon Yechezkeil.
Gift to Holy Blossom Temple from Dr. Morton Shulman, after 1980.

Iraqi Torah Scroll Case (page 339)
Silver plate over wood. Green glass beading.
Case from Iraq. (Scroll from Egypt.)
Original dedication: 5662/1902, to Congregation Ashur (Assyrian) in honour of Moshe ben Nireili(?).
Gift to Holy Blossom Temple from Dr. Morton Shulman, after 1980.

Main Sanctuary Apse (page 351)
Dedication: May 22, 1938.

“Sabbath” Stained Glass Window (page 429)
Artist: Peter Haworth.
Dedication: 1961, by Mr. and Mrs. Percy Levy and Mr. and Mrs. Louis Moscovitz in memory of David and Edith Moscovitz.

“Shalom” Stained Glass Window (page 469)
Artist: Peter Haworth.
Dedication: 1978, in memory of Samuel Bacher by his daughter, Sheila Bacher, and his grandchildren.

“The Scroll of the Book” Stained Glass Window (page 499)
Artist: Peter Haworth.
Dedication: by Mr. and Mrs. Manning Starkman in honour of their parents, Rose and Jacob Starkman.

“Thanksgiving Song” Stained Glass Window (page 535)
Artist: Peter Haworth.

Torah Script from “Torat Chayim” (page 559)
Ink on parchment.
Scribe: Neil Yurman, who guided the hands of more than one thousand congregants as they wrote the first chapter of this Torah scroll.

“Tree of Life” Breastplate (page 608)
Sterling silver.
Design: William B. Meyers Co.
Dedication: to the memory of Hanna Brookstone (1880–1953) by her children.

Photo credits: Paul Hellen, Jack Steiner, and Sergio Lasky.
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