Evening Service for Weekdays

The heavenly spheres move in their course, turning like a potter’s wheel, telling Your glory without lips. And the earth is fixed in the centre, suspended from the cords of Your love.

The sun hastens to its place to rise again; it bestows some of its light on the moon; the dome of heaven is spread out like a tent, with stars upon it like a flowering garden—all to display Your fathomless thoughts.

(Rabbi Moses ibn Ezra, Spain, 11th–12th c.)
Evening Service for Weekdays

The Ma’ariv service, also known as Arvit, contains the prayer Ma’ariv Aravim, in which God is described as the One who brings on the twilight, “rolling light away from darkness and darkness from light.” God is praised not only as the Creator of the sun and moon and stars, but also as the One who consistently rules over the rhythms of day and night.

According to Rabbinic legend, the evening service originated with our patriarch Jacob, as it is written: “And he came upon a certain place and stopped there for the night, for the sun had set” (Genesis 28:11). Jacob’s dream of the ladder reaching to the heavens took place that very night. Another tradition claims that the Men of the Great Assembly (active in the centuries before 70 C.E.) formulated the three daily prayer services to correspond to the daily sacrifices, which were offered when the Temple stood in Jerusalem (Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 26b). Others suggest that the evening service simply developed in response to the human need to pray as nightfall descends. The Hashkiveinu prayer, found only in the evening liturgy, asks for God’s protection from the dangers that can come with darkness.

A Song of Ascents.

Behold, praise the Eternal, all you servants of God, who stand by night in the House of the Eternal One.

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary; praise the Eternal.

May God who made heaven and earth bless you from Zion.

Adonai Tz’va’ot is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah!

Adonai Tz’va’ot, happy is the one who trusts in You.

Adonai, save!

Sovereign, answer us when we call.
Sh’ma and Its Blessings

This portion of the service consists of the Sh’ma itself, and the blessings which introduce and follow it with dramatic and thematic structure. If Judaism were to have a motto, it would be the declaration of “Sh’ma Yisrael.” While not a prayer, it is prominent in our services; it is the first verse taught to young children; and it is meant to be the last verse spoken before we die. It is the hallmark of monotheism as we testify that God is one, unique, and indivisible. The recitation of the Sh’ma is a declaration of our acceptance of the yoke of Heaven, 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.

Rabbi Meir taught: “An angel collects all the prayers that are offered in all the synagogues of the world, weaves them into garlands, and presents them as a crown of glory for the Holy One Praised be God.” (Exodus Rabbah 21:4)

The hollow symbol  next to the word ברכה (”praise the Eternal”) indicates when the service leader may bow; the symbol  indicates that the congregation may respond to the Call to Worship in word and in action.

(“praise the Eternal”) This is the basic prayer in Judaism. There is no prayer in which, implicitly or explicitly, praise is not an essential element. (Rabbi Emil Fackenheim) One of the greatest powers given a human being is the ability to praise God. God is the ultimate Source of all blessings, but only we can praise God’s name.
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 shall meditate day and night. May Your love never depart from us. Praised are You, Adonai, who loves Your People Israel.
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.

“One” (אחד) God said to Israel: “My children, I have created everything in the universe in pairs: heaven and earth are a pair; the sun and the moon are a pair; Adam and Eve are a pair; this World and the World to Come are a pair. But My glory is one and unique in the world.” How do we know this? For it is written: “Hear O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One.” (Deuteronomy Rabbah 2:31)

“praised be God’s glorious majesty” (ברוך שם ברוך מלכותו) It is customary to say these words quietly. Our Sages teach that Moses overheard this prayer from the angels and then taught it to Israel. We dare not recite it in a full voice as if to presume we are worthy of the angelic formula. On Yom Kippur, however, when the People Israel elevates itself in holiness and purity, we do proclaim these words in a full voice, joining the chorus of angels on high. (Deuteronomy Rabbah 2:36)

“with all your might” (לעם מואדך) Rabbi Eliezer taught: “After we are told to love God with our whole life, why are we then told to love God with all our might [i.e., our wealth]? There are people to whom life is more precious than wealth. They are admonished to love God with all their life. But there are others whose actions show that wealth is dearer to them than life. They are asked to love God with all their wealth.” (Babylonian Talmud, Brachot 54a)
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.

לְאַהֲבָה (“to love”) It is difficult to love.... Indeed, to love God is the most difficult kind of love.... He comes close to man, most close and then again withdraws to the most distant distance. He is at once the most longed for, and the hardest to bear.... The solution of these difficulties... like the solution of all the difficulties... of love, lies with the lover and... the strength he can put into his entreaty that God love him in return. (Franz Rosenzweig)
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.

**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.

The Hebrew word for truth is composed of *alef*, א, the first letter of the alphabet, *mem*, מ, the centremost letter of the alphabet, and *tav*, ת, the last letter of the alphabet. This teaches that language is the best human tool for discovering truth. And Hebrew, distinguished as a sacred language, is the finest tool of all.

The sword comes to the world on account of the delay of justice and perversion of justice. (Pirkei Avot 5:11)
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:

“How 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.

Awareness of the Divine begins with wonder. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)
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, who ever guards Your People Israel.

Shalom, by You I swear; by Your life, I say, it is only You I desire. Come to my house, Shalom.

(From a 14th–16th c. Yemenite poem)

השכיבנו, יי אלהינו, לשלום.
ורטרםנו, מלכנו, לחיים.
ומרשוعلינו, ספר שלמה.
ומקנוננו, בטש, מלענוה.
והרשבינו, למש, שמחה, דגון.
בש Asheville, ראמר, מלענוה.
והרסו, מיﻞ מלכינו ומאחרינו.
ובצל כחך, מתהנה, כי אולו
שומרו, ומצרים אתיה, כי
יאל מלך, חותם, ושחר אמת.
ישמרו, זאנות, וזכותו, להים.
וללשלום, מעשה, וור, עולם.
ברו, אתיה, יי, שומר עמו.
יישיאל, לעם.

השכיבנו (“grant that we may lie down [in peace]”) This prayer follows the text of Seder Rav Amram, our first known comprehensive prayerbook, circa 860 C.E.

והרסו, כיון (“subdue our inclination to evil”) The impulse to evil is like a conjurer who runs about the world keeping his hand closed. Nobody knows what he has inside of it. He goes up to everyone and asks: “What do you suppose I have in my hand?” And each thinks that the very thing that he wants most of all is hidden there. Thus everyone runs after him.

In the end, he opens his hand and it becomes clear to everyone that it is completely empty—there is nothing in it. (Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav)

In biblical and Rabbinic sources, HaSatan is depicted as one of the countless heavenly angels, servants of God. His unique role as the Prosecutor is to challenge God’s impulse to forgive the sins of human beings. This prayer alludes to the folk-wisdom that we should never give HaSatan an opportunity to put us on trial before the True Judge.
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

Judaism is not a single solitary path and it is not a totally communal path. It’s a community made up of individuals. It’s individuals in search of a community. There is always the idea of a minyan, of nine Jews who are looking for the tenth, of one Jew who’s looking for the other nine. (Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman)

Praise Me, says God, and I will know that you love Me.
Curse Me, says God, and I will know that you love Me.
Sing out My graces, says God,
Raise your fist against Me and revile Me,
says God.
Reviling is also a kind of praise, says God.
But if you don’t praise and you don’t revile, then I created you in vain, says God.

(Aaron Zeitlin)
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.

This section of the service has many names: the Sh’moneh Esrei (the prayer with eighteen blessings—although there later came to be nineteen); the Amidah (the standing prayer, as the Zohar refers to it); or simply the T’fillah (The Prayer par excellence, as it is named in the Talmud).

The three parts of the T’fillah represent the three basic categories of prayer: praise, petition, and thanksgiving. With the first three blessings, the one at prayer praises God, as a loyal subject praises the enthroned ruler before daring to make a request. The middle rubric, composed of thirteen (originally twelve) blessings, contains supplications for oneself, the Jewish People, and all the world. With the last three blessings, the individual takes leave from the inner chamber of the royal palace while expressing gratitude and confidence that God will hear every prayer. (Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 34a)

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.

There are two sorts of people who believe in God. Some believe because faith has been handed down by parents and grandparents; and that faith is strong. Others have arrived at faith by searching thought. And this is the difference between the two.

The faith of the first is firm and cannot be shaken, no matter how many objections are raised to it, because it has been taken over from the ancestors. But there is a flaw in it: it is a commandment given by human beings; it has been received without thought or reasoning. The advantage of the second kind of faith is that it has been claimed through much seeking and careful thought. This, too, has a flaw: it is easily shaken by contrary evidence. But those who combine both kinds of faith are invulnerable. That is why we say, “Our God,” because of our own searching, and “the God of our ancestors,” because of our tradition. (Rabbi Sholom Rokeach)
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.

During the Ten Days of Repentance include:

Remember us for life, O Sovereign who desires life, and inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, O God of Life.

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:

You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.

From Pesach until Sh’mi Atzeret include:

You cause the dew to descend.

With loyal kindness You sustain the living; with great compassion You extend life to the dead.

From Psalm 147:18

From Psalms 145:14, 146:7–8, Daniel 12:2, I Samuel 2:6

The descendants of Abraham are characterized by three traits: a capacity for kindness, a sense of shame, and a commitment to doing what is right. (Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 79a)

The original Avot prayer refers only to God’s relationships with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as ideal models of mutual devotion. Many biblical texts are silent when it comes to female figures, so, like the early Rabbis, we must fill in the blanks with imagination. However, Genesis is filled with detailed descriptions of the matriarchs and their relationships with God. “The One who attends to Sarah” is a new name for God. It refers to Genesis 21:1, when God heard Sarah’s plea and responded to it.
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?

**During the Ten Days of Repentance 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.

*During the Ten Days of Repentance substitute:*

Praised are You, Adonai, the holy Sovereign.

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**Deuteronomy 13:5**

“You shall walk in God’s ways” (Deuteronomy 13:5)? God clothes the naked, as it is written: “And the Eternal God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them” (Genesis 3:21); so too should you clothe the naked. The Holy One Praised be God visited the sick, as it is written: “And the Eternal appeared to him [Abraham] by the terebinths of Mamre” [after Abraham’s circumcision] (Genesis 18:1); so should you visit the sick. God comforts the mourners, as it is written: “And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed Isaac his son” (Genesis 25:1); so should you also comfort mourners. God buried the dead, for it is written: “And God buried him [Moses] in the valley” (Deuteronomy 34:6); so too should you ensure a proper burial of the dead.

(Leviticus 19:2)
Understanding

You favour humankind with knowledge and teach mortals understanding. Favour us with a measure of Your knowledge, understanding, and insight. Praised are You, Adonai, gracious Giver of knowledge.

Repentance

Cause us to return, Avinu, to Your Torah; draw us near, our Sovereign, to Your service; and lead us in wholehearted repentance back to You. Praised are You, Adonai, who desires repentance.

Forgiveness

Forgive us, Avinu, for we have sinned; pardon us, our Sovereign, for we have transgressed, for You are the One who pardons and forgives. Praised are You, Adonai, who graciously extends forgiveness.

Ben Zoma taught: “Who is wise? The one who learns from every human being.” (Pirkei Avot 4:1)

Great is t’shuvah; it brings healing to the world. (Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 86a)

One must be straight with other human beings the same way one is straight with the Omniversal. (Jerusalem Talmud, Sh’kalim 3)
Redemption

Look upon our affliction and defend our cause; redeem us speedily for the sake of Your name, for You are a mighty Redeemer. Praised are You, Adonai, Redeemer of Israel.

Healing

Heal us, Adonai, and we will be healed. Save us, and we will be saved; for You are our Praise, the One who grants complete healing for all our afflictions.

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.

For You are a sovereign God, a faithful Healer, the compassionate One. Praised are You, Adonai, Healer of the sick among Your People Israel.

Rav Chuna ("healing") The mitzvah of visiting the sick is without measure. Rav Chuna said: “One who visits the sick takes away one-sixtieth of the remaining illness.” The Rabbis challenged: “If so, why not gather sixty people and restore him to health?” [Rabbi Acha explained that each visitor only takes away one-sixtieth of the remaining illness.] But Rav Chuna insisted: “No, sixty people could actually restore him to full health, so long as they truly love him as they love themselves.” (Leviticus Rabbah 34:1 and Babylonian Talmud, N’darim 39b)
Abundance

Bless us, Adonai, our God; let this year and all the varieties of its produce be for goodness; and bestow blessing upon the face of the earth. Satisfy us with Your bounty and bless our year as the good years. Praised are You, Adonai, who blesses the years.

Freedom

Sound a great shofar for our freedom. Raise up a banner to gather our exiles, and gather us together from the four corners of the earth. Praised are You, Adonai, who gathers the dispersed of Your People Israel.

Justice

Restore the justice sought by our judges and our counsellors as at the beginning. Remove from us sorrow and sighing, and may You alone reign over us, Adonai, with kindness and compassion. Make us righteous with justice.

The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, an almost fanatical love of justice, and the desire for personal independence: these are the features of the Jewish tradition which make me thank my lucky stars I belong to it. (Albert Einstein)
Praised are You, Adonai, *Sovereign, Lover of righteousness and justice.

**During the Ten Days of Repentance substitute:**
The Sovereign who is Justice.

**Against Enemies**

For slanderers let there be no hope, and may all wickedness perish instantly; may all Your enemies be swiftly cut off, and may You quickly uproot, crush, rout, and subdue the insolent speedily in our days. Praised are You, Adonai, who breaks enemies and subdues the insolent.

**The Righteous**

Over the righteous, over the pious, over the elders of Your People, the House of Israel, over the remnant of their scholars, over the true converts, and over us may Your mercy well up, Adonai, our God. Grant bountiful reward to all who truly trust in Your name and place our lot among them forever. May we not be put to shame, for in You have we put our trust. Praised are You, Adonai, Support and Trust of the righteous.

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**לינשלינהו:** “against enemies”) I have no quarrel with God, only with men! I want to bring to trial a civilization for whom man was such a worthless being. But to bring God to trial? On what charges? For giving men the ability to choose between good and evil? (Yaffa Eliach, Holocaust survivor)
For Jerusalem

To Jerusalem, Your city, turn in compassion, and dwell therein as You have promised. Rebuild it soon in our days as an eternal edifice. Praised are You, Adonai, Builder of Jerusalem.

Deliverance

Cause the sprout of deliverance to spring up soon. Let the light of deliverance shine forth according to Your word, for we hope for Your deliverance all the day. Praised are You, Adonai, who causes the light of deliverance to break through.

Hear Our Prayer

Hear our voice, Adonai, our God, have pity and compassion upon us, and accept our prayer with mercy and favour, because You are God who hears prayers and supplication. Our Sovereign, do not turn us away empty, for You listen compassionately for the prayer of Your People Israel. Praised are You, Adonai, who listens to prayer.

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither. Let my tongue cleave to my palate if I do not remember; if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

(Psalm 137:5–6)

Shalom Yerushalayim

לירושלים יטרק ברטמיה
ךשוח, ורشعונים שהכתיב
כבירה, ונבנה אבות הכהנים
בзываנו בשם עולם.
ברוחך אתה נבנה ירושלים.

קרף ישועה

את טעם הישועה מ✋הרה
텀מה, וקורי ישועה תורם
כנאמק, כי לישועתה
קוהנה כל היום.
בזרות אתה נמצאת
קרף ישועה.

שמע קולנו

שמע קולנו, כי ב얄דינו, והוס
רוחם עליינו, קוקל ברטמיה
נגרון אהת הכהנים, כי אל
שומעkeleton יהבינה
אתה, ממלאכות, מלאכה, ריקם
אל חטיבות, כי אתה שומעים
מפלשל עקב ישועה ברטמיה.
ברוחך אתה נבנה, שומע תוחלת.

When you call Me and come and pray to Me, I will hear you. When you seek Me, you will find Me, if only you search for Me wholeheartedly. I shall let you find Me, says the Eternal One.

(Jeremiah 29:12–14)

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither. Let my tongue cleave to my palate if I do not remember; if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

(Psalm 137:5–6)

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither. Let my tongue cleave to my palate if I do not remember; if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

(Psalm 137:5–6)

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither. Let my tongue cleave to my palate if I do not remember; if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

(Psalm 137:5–6)
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 Rosh Chodesh, Chol HaMo'eid, and Yom HaAtzma'ut 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.
— day of Israel’s Independence.

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.

הרותיך עתונות בשופקה
לצינו בחרים.
ברוך אתה, יי, שמחוני
שכרתך לצים.

מishnah Rosh HaShanah 4:5, 
Mishnah Tamid 5:1
(“receive our prayers with love”) Do not think that the words of prayer as you say them go up to God. It is not the words themselves that ascend; it is rather the burning desire of your heart that rises like smoke toward heaven. If your prayer consists only of words and letters, and does not contain your heart’s desire, how can it rise up to God? (Rabbi Wolf of Zhitomir)
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.

From Lamentations 3:22

Rabbi Akiva taught: “Be not like those who honour their gods in prosperity and curse them in adversity. In pleasure or pain, give thanks!” (Midrash Mechilta)

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.

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.
On Chanukah continue:

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.

On Purim 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.

In the days of Mordechai and Esther, in the capital city of Shushan, the wicked Haman rose up, plotting the destruction of all the Jews. He planned to annihilate them—young and old, women and children—in a single day, the thirteenth of Adar, and to plunder their possessions as well.

But You, in Your great compassion, thwarted his plan and frustrated his scheme.

The one who is distressed by the tribulations of the People Israel and offers prayers to dispel them is permitted to complain against God. (Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav)
For all this, O Sovereign God, let Your name be forever praised and exalted.

During the Ten Days of Repentance include:

Inscribe all the children of Your covenant for good life. 

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.

*During the Ten Days of Repentance 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.

During the Ten Days of Repentance include:

Inscribe all the children of Your covenant for good life.

Where there is no peace, prayers are not heard. (Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav)

A peace which comes from fear and not from the heart is the opposite of peace. (Rabbi Levi Gersonides)
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.

All are seated.

תבנרי, נצור

The Talmud records the private prayers of many Sages. This one is attributed to Mar bar Ravina.

This is the time to pray personally, in any language, for all of one’s needs, and especially for the spiritual welfare and Jewish continuity of one’s children and grandchildren. (Mishnah B’urah)

Counting the Omer

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

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.

All rise.

According to Rabbenu Nissim, the Israelites were told that they would receive the Torah on the fiftieth day following the Exodus from Egypt. In their eagerness for that event, they counted the days from Pesach, the Season of our Freedom, until Shavuot, the Season of the Giving of our Torah. In biblical times, when Israel was still an agriculturally based society, our ancestors counted those days by counting the omer, a sheaf or measure of grain. By continuing this tradition, we link the Redemption of Pesach with the Revelation at Sinai. When we accept upon ourselves the yoke of Torah, we cease to be Pharaoh’s servants and become servants of the Eternal God. For freedom without law is anarchy; law without freedom is slavery. (Rabbi Michael Strassfeld, adapted)
Religion is a momentous possibility, the possibility, namely, that what is highest in spirit is also deepest in nature. That the things that matter most are not at the mercy of the things that matter least. (Henry Slonimsky)

In Rabbinic tradition, a sermonic teaching usually concludes with a nechemta, a message of comfort and hope for the future. The Rabbis who compiled the siddur positioned the Aleinu, with its messianic vision of one united humanity, as the nechemta of the prayer service.

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.

Aleinu

Eric Platt

“You shall be a blessing ... and by you shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (Genesis, 12:2–3)
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. 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.”
Mourner’s 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.

All rise.

From Psalm 113:2, Daniel 2:20

לעלמי ולשלמי עולם

עמד בעלמי די ברא
cרתוותה, מלכות מלכותה
בחיינו ובפורים ובמה
ברל בית ישראל, בענה
ובזון בריב. אמרו: אמן.

From Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman

Machzor Vitry, a twelfth century French halachic collection, records the story of Rabbi Akiva who met the distressed soul of a man who had died. Rabbi Akiva finds the man’s son, teaches him Torah, invites him to lead services and recite the Kaddish. Because of these acts, the soul of the father is finally put to rest. (Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman)

From this source the custom developed that one should recite Kaddish for a year to ensure his or her parent’s place in heaven. The year was then scaled back to eleven months, to signify that one’s parent is not dependent on the Kaddish to secure a place in heaven, but rather, had already earned such reward by his or her own merits.

We know nothing about death, nothing beyond the one fact that we shall die. But what is that, to die? We do not know. We must therefore assume that death constitutes the final limit of all that we are able to imagine. The desire to extend our imagination into the beyond of dying, to anticipate psychically what death alone can reveal to us existentially, seems to me a lack of faith disguised as faith. Genuine faith says: I know nothing about death, but I do know that God is eternity; and I also know that God is my God. (Martin Buber)
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.

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·eil, 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·eil, 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·eil, 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.

When reciting these concluding words, it is customary to bow, take three steps back, bow to the left, right, and centre, as if taking leave from the Divine Presence.