Prayers for Special Days

Teach me, O God, a blessing, a prayer
on the mystery of a withered leaf,
on ripened fruit so fair,
on the freedom to see, to sense,
to breathe, to know, to hope, to despair.
Teach my lips a blessing, a hymn of praise,
as each morning and night
You renew Your days,
lest my day be as the one before,
lest routine set my ways.

(Lea Goldberg)
The Abbreviated Hallel

The Hallel is a series of psalms added to the liturgy on festive days. This abbreviated alternative may be said during Chol HaMo‘eid Pesach, Chol HaMo‘eid Sukkot, and Chanukah, and on Rosh Chodesh, Yom HaAtzma‘ut, and Yom Yerushalayim.

Praise the Eternal, all you nations!
Extol God, all you peoples!
For great is God’s love for us, everlasting is God’s faithfulness.
Halleluyah!

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

Let Israel now say:
*God’s love is everlasting.*

Let the House of Aaron now say:
*God’s love is everlasting.*

Let all who revere the Eternal now say:
*God’s love is everlasting.*

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

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

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

Rabbi Yochanan taught: “Whoever blesses the new moon at the proper time is considered as having welcomed the Shechinah.” (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 42a)

In ancient times, before the lunar calendar was set, the sighting of the new moon was cause for great festivity. During the Second Temple period, two trained witnesses watched for the first sliver of moon and then testified before the Rabbinic court in Jerusalem, which would declare the new month. Bonfires were lit, hilltop to hilltop, until the news reached communities throughout Israel and the Diaspora (Mishnah Rosh HaShanah 2:2–4). By the middle of the fourth century, the Rabbis calculated a formula to regulate the calendar.

In the synagogue, Rosh Chodesh is celebrated during daylight hours with the singing of Hallel (page 301 or page 353, abbreviated) and the reading of Torah (Numbers 28:1–15).

Sanctifying the New Moon

Halleluyah! Praise the Eternal from the heavens; praise God from the heights.

Halleluyah, all God’s angels; Halleluyah, all celestial forces.

Halleluyah, sun and moon; Halleluyah, all stars of light.

Halleluyah, highest heavens; even waters beyond the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Eternal, for God is the One who commanded and caused them to be created.

God set them to stand for all time, established a law that will not change.
Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, whose word created the heavens, and whose utterance, all their forces. You set their course and pace that their orbit can never be altered. Happily, joyously they do their Maker’s will, fulfilling the truth of their Creator’s innovation.

The moon was told she would be renewed as a crown of beauty for those borne of the womb, who in time to come will be renewed like her, and made beautiful for their Creator, for the sake of God’s glorious rule. Praised are You, Adonai, who renews the months.

If God were the sun, then Israel might be the moon, her face reflecting God’s eternal light.

Yes, Israel is like the moon, the moon who waxes and wanes, grows old, and then renews herself, yet never leaves the skies.

Faithfully, she reappears to walk the night, glimmering, silver, in the darkened sky.

Faithfully, she spreads her pale and ghostly light on every room and tree and blade of grass.

“A torch at night is as good as a companion, but moonlight is as good as two. (Rav, Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 43b)

“The New Moon” by Ruth Brin

Yisrael is forever assured the possibility of a return to the light, if only it will not stray from the paths which have been assigned it by the Word of God. This thought is expressed in the blessing which we are to recite each month on beholding the new moon. (Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch)
Until the whole world turns to silver, transformed from darkness to shimmering beauty.

Yes, Israel, be like the moon, renew your faith each generation.

Even when the earth casts its shadow of darkness, faithfully reflect the light of God;

Pour over the whole world the moonlight beauty of holiness.

A Psalm for Rosh Chodesh

Praise the Eternal, O my soul. Adonai, my God, You are great indeed, clothed in grandeur and glory,

wrapped in light as in a garment, unfolding the heavens like a curtain.

God made the moon to measure the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.

You bring on the darkness; it is night when all beasts of the forest stir.

The young lions roar for prey, seeking from God their food.

“renew your faith” The women heard about the construction of the golden calf and refused to submit their jewelry to their husbands. Instead they said to them: “You want to construct an idol which is an abomination, and has no power of redemption? We won’t listen to you.” And the Holy One, Blessed be God, rewarded them in this world, in that they would observe new moons more than men, and in the next world, in that they are destined to be renewed like the new moons. (Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer 45)

Psalm 104:1,2, 19–24,31–35

When we greet the moon, we greet its Maker and Guide. (B’rachot 4b)
When the sun rises, they steal away and settle into their lairs.

Then people go out to work, to their labour until evening.

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

May the glory of the Eternal endure forever; may the Eternal rejoice in all creation.

God looks at the earth, and it trembles; God touches the mountains and they smoke.

I will sing to the Eternal all my life; I will chant to my God with all my breath.

Let my words be pleasing to God; I will rejoice in the Eternal.

Let offenders vanish from the earth, and the wicked be no more.

Praise the Eternal, O my soul. Halleluyah!
Counting the Omer

We count off the forty-nine days of the Omer, just before Aleinu, from the second day of Pesach to the day before Shavuot.

According to Rabbeni 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)

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.”

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.

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

Leviticus 23:15–16a

ברוך אתָה, יי אלהינו
מלך העולמים, א셔 קרשנו
במצותינו, ונצוג על
ספרית העומר.

ברוך ים אוחר עמנא.

ברוך ים ימים עמנא.
Yom HaShoah

Only years after the Holocaust did Yom HaShoah ritual and liturgy begin to emerge. Only after years of debate in Israel’s Knesset was the 27th of Nisan, marking the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, identified as the most appropriate date on the calendar for a day of collective mourning. It was as if the Jewish People had been struck dumb, unable to respond to the Holocaust, let alone pray to a God who seemed to have abandoned them. Until a common liturgy is established, the following is offered with humility, to remember the Six Million and to address the God of History.

Adonai our God and God of our ancestors, grant that none may hate us, and let hatred for others never enter our hearts.

(Rabbi Eliezer, Jerusalem Talmud, Brachot 4:2)

It’s burning, brothers, it’s aflame!
Our little, poor, beloved town’s aflame!

And with folded arms you watch it,
As if you were lame,
And with folded arms you watch it,
While our town is aflame!
All peoples have suffered cruelty, and we weep with them, too.

But this day we think especially of the pain suffered by the House of Israel. Exile and oppression, expulsion and ghettos, pogroms and death camps: the agony of our people numbs the mind and turns the heart to stone.

We can only wonder at the fortitude of our forebears who said, not once but many times: “Though You slay me, I will yet trust in You.” And we can only pray to be blessed with a measure of the faith that enabled them to remain true to God and Torah, even when the Eternal One seemed remote from them, and life itself might have lost all meaning.

A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping!

Rachel is weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for them, for they are no more.

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass along the road?

Look and see: is there any pain like that which has befallen me?

To what shall I liken you, how to comfort you, O innocent daughter of Zion? Truly, your ruin is as vast as the sea! Who can heal you?

How long, O God?
Will we be forgotten forever? How long will Your face be hidden from us?

All this has befallen us, yet we have not forgotten You, nor have we been false to Your covenant.

It is for Your sake that we have been slain all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
And there was silence! How many stood aside, mute and callous, forgetting the Divine command: “You shall not stand idly by while your neighbour bleeds!”

For the sin of silence,
For the sin of indifference,
For the secret complicity of the neutral.
For the closing of borders,
For the washing of hands,
For the crime of indifference.
For the sin of silence,
For the closing of borders—

Adonai, You see it: You see that none comes to help, none to intervene. Only the winds come to carry our dust to the four corners of the earth.

“And I shall make your descendants as the dust of the earth.”

As dust of the earth extends from one end of the world to the other, so will your children be scattered from one end of the world to the other.

As the dust of the earth can be blessed only through water, so too can Israel only be blessed through the Torah, which is to the thirsty soul what water is to the body.

And I shall make your descendants as the dust of the earth. "For the sin of silence"

If a flame has fallen among the cedars
What will the wall moss say?
If danger lies in wait for those who sleep
What will they who watch in silence say?
If the weary are dying to sit down
What will they who go on standing up say?
If in Oran plague has broken out
What will distant neighbours say?
If the hand is writing on the walls
What will they who have the last laugh say?

If even the innocent are scourged
What will they who cling to God say?
If the woman in love has wept into her pillow
What will the ancient ballads say?
If judgment pierces the mountains
What will the skeptics say?
If in the street darkness breathes
What will the glowing candles say?

(Hayim Gouri)

Leviticus 19:16
Whoever destroys a single life, it is as if that person has destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a single life, it is as if that person has saved an entire world. (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5)

Genesis 13:16
Midrash Genesis Rabbah 41:9
And as dust is made to be trampled upon, so too will Your children be made for kingdoms to trample upon.

And as dust wears away vessels of metal, but itself endures forever, so it is with Israel. All your enemies will come to nothing, but the People Israel will endure.

Under the Polish green trees, no more at play Moishelach, Shloimelach. No more at play Sorele and Leahle. Not in the grass and not in the snow.

No longer are heard the voices of Jewish children, of the mischievous Motelach and Shimelach, whose bodies contort as they practise their tricks and heroics.

“Moishelach, Shloimelach” by J. Papiernikow, lyricist; Israel Alter, composer
Now the little Polish trees are mourning.
Jewish homes are dead.
The streets are dead, their houses destroyed.
Some children hide there now like mice.

Jewish children with wide black eyes, shrouded in darkness.
Eyes full of fear of the impact of the catastrophe.

I believe in the sun even when it is not shining.
I believe in love even when feeling it not.
I believe in God even when He is silent. (Found on a cellar wall in Köln, Germany, written by a person in hiding)
In the presence of eyes
which witnessed the slaughter,
which saw the oppression
the heart could not bear,
and as witness the heart
that once taught compassion,
until the days came to pass
that crushed human feeling,
I have taken an oath: To remember
it all,
to remember, not once to forget!
Forget not one thing to the last
generation
when degradation shall cease,
to the last, to its ending,
when the rod of instruction
shall have come to conclusion.
An oath: Not in vain passed over
the night of the terror.
An oath: No morning shall see me
at flesh-pots again.
An oath: Lest from this we learned
nothing.

“A Vow” by
Avraham Shlonsky,
translated by Rabbi
Herbert Bronstein

Memory is the key
to morality. (Rabbi
Irving Greenberg)
In Memory of the Six Million

Six candles are lit by the families of survivors.

I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah. And even if he be delayed, nevertheless, I believe. Nevertheless, I will await him, until that day, yet to come.

O God, full of mercy, who dwells on high, grant perfect rest in Your sheltering Presence and in the lofty heights where the holy and pure shine like the brightness of the firmament, unto the souls of the Six Million. These men, women, and children were all holy and pure, yet for the sanctification of God’s name they were killed, murdered, and slaughtered by the hands of the Nazi oppressors and those who aided them, may their names be obliterated. May their resting place be the Garden of Eden. May the Merciful One let them find eternal refuge beneath the shadow of Your wings, and let their souls be bound up in the bond of life everlasting. The Eternal One is their inheritance. May they rest in peace. And let us say: Amen.

From “The Thirteen Principles of Jewish Faith” by Rambam
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.

May the blessing and the 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 let us say: Amen.

From Psalm 113:2, Daniel 2:20

The funeral and the marriage, now, alas!
We know not which is sadder to recall;
For youth and happiness have followed age,
And green grass lieth gently over all.

Nathless the sacred shrine is holy yet,
With its lone floors where reverent feet once trod.
Take off your shoes as by the burning bush,
Before the mystery of death and God.

(Emma Lazarus)
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.

All are seated.

Words of Testimonial and Music of Memory may be included.

(“the life of the whole House of Israel”) If the 614th commandment
[i.e., Thou shalt not hand Hitler a posthumous victory] is binding upon the authentic Jew, then
we are, first, commanded to survive as Jews, lest
the Jewish people perish. We are commanded,
second, to remember in our very guts and bones
the martyrs of the Holocaust, lest their memory
perish. We are forbidden, thirdly, to deny or
despair of God, however much we may have to
contend with Him, lest Judaism perish. We are
forbidden, finally, to despair of the world as the
place which is to become the Kingdom of God,
lest we help make it a meaningless place in
which God is dead or irrelevant and everything
is permitted. (Rabbi Emil Fackenheim)
“Take comfort, take comfort, My people,” says your God.
This I call to mind, and therefore do I have hope.
God will swallow up death once and for all! The Eternal God will wipe the tears from every face and remove from all the earth the reproach laid upon our People.

Thus says the Eternal: “Hold back your voice from weeping, your eyes from tears! For your labour shall have its reward,” says Adonai.
“There is hope for your future,” says the Eternal God.

You must not say that you now walk the final way,
Because the darkened heavens hide the blue of day.
The time we've longed for will at last draw near,
And our steps, as drums, will sound that we are here!

From land all green with palms to lands all white with snow,
We now arrive with all our pain and all our woe.
Where our blood sprayed out and came to touch the land,
There our courage and our faith will rise and stand.

God lives, and so does religion, so long as there whispers that “still small voice” within, which no mortal tyrant or fiendish ruler can ever really stifle, that unquenchable, irresistible, undying voice of true religion which so softly, yet so sternly enjoins: “Let justice flow forth as water and righteousness as a never-failing stream.”

(Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath)
A hundred generations of victims and martyrs and still their blood cries out from the earth, from the unmarked graves at Dachau, at Buchenwald, at Babi Yar, at Auschwitz. . . .

What can we say? What can we do? How to bear the unbearable, or accept what life has brought to our people? They lived with faith. Not all, but many. And, surely, many died with faith: faith in God, in life, in the goodness that even flames cannot destroy. May we now find a way to the strength of that faith.

They have left their lives to us: let a million prayers rise whenever Jews gather; let a million candles glow against the darkness of these unfinished lives.

Please rise.

The Legacy (read by descendants of survivors)

WE TAKE THIS OATH! We take it in the shadow of flames with tongues that scar the soul of our People. We vow in the name of dead parents and children; we vow with our sadness tucked away, our faith renewed; we vow, we shall never let the sacred memory of our perished Six Million be scorned or erased.

WE SAW THEM hungry and afraid. We saw them rush to battle. We saw them in the loneliness of night, true to their faith. At the threshold of death, we saw them. We heard their silence, merged their tears with our own. Deportations, executions, mass graves, death camps; mute prayers, cries of revolt, desperation, torn scrolls; cities and towns, villages and hamlets; the young, the old, the rich, the poor; ghetto fighters and partisans, scholars and messianic dreamers; ravaged faces, fists raised. Like clouds of fire, all have vanished.

WE TAKE THIS OATH! Vision becomes word, to be handed down from father to son, from mother to daughter, from generation to generation. REMEMBER and BLOT OUT what the Nazi killers and their accomplices did to our People. Remember them with rage and contempt. Remember what an indifferent world did to us and to itself! Remember the victims with pride and with sorrow. Remember also the deeds of the righteous Gentiles, who are forever a blessing to humanity.
REMEMBER the miracle of the Jewish rebirth in the land of our ancestors. In the independent State of Israel, pioneers and fighters returned to our people the dignity and majesty of nationhood. From the ruins of their lives, orphans and widows built homes and old-new fortresses. We are indebted to those who realized our lofty dream of freedom in a land redeemed.

WE TAKE THIS OATH! Let our legacy endure as stone of the Temple Wall. For here prayers and memories burn. They burn and burn and will not be consumed.

The Acceptance (together)

WE ACCEPT the obligation of this legacy.

WE ARE BORN after the darkness. Through our parents’ memories and silences, we are linked to that annihilated Jewish existence. The echo permeates our consciousness.

WE DEDICATE this pledge to you, our parents who suffered and survived; to our grandparents, who perished in the flames; to our vanished brothers and sisters, more than one million Jewish children; to all Six Million whose unyielding resistance exemplifies our People’s commitment to life.

WE PLEDGE to remember!

WE WILL TEACH our children to preserve that Jewish spirit which cannot be destroyed.

WE WILL SHOUT to the world, “Look how far humanity can fall! And see the heights which were reached, even in hell itself!”

WE WILL FIGHT anti-Semitism and all forms of hatred wherever they may fester.

WE AFFIRM our commitment to the State of Israel and to the continuity of Jewish life in our homeland and in our own homes.

WE PLEDGE ourselves to the oneness of the Jewish People, and to the One God in heaven and on earth.

WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN!

WE ARE HERE!

WE WILL NOT FORGET!

Please leave the sanctuary in silence.
Memorial Day for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel

By the third Yom HaAtzma’ut (1950), the commemoration of the fallen soldiers emotionally dominated the day. It was decided, therefore, to set aside the day before Independence Day as a permanent Remembrance Day for the dead of Israel’s wars. The first year an extended whistle blast was sounded nationwide to mark the beginning and end of the day. All traffic stopped and the population of Israel stood silent for two minutes. This practice is still observed today with the wail of sirens echoing throughout the country. (Rabbi Irving Greenberg)

Laugh, laugh at all my dreams!
What I dream shall yet come true!
Laugh at my belief in humanity,
at my belief in you.

Freedom still my soul demands,
unbartered for a calf of gold.
For still I do believe in humanity,
and its spirit, strong and bold.

And in the future I still believe—
though it be distant, come it will—
when nations shall each other bless,
and peace, at last, the earth shall fill.

Then a new song will one poet sing.
To the beautiful and sublime his heart will beat.
For him, for that young poet, from my grave
They will gather flowers for his laurel wreath.

From “I Believe”
by Shaul Tchernichovsky,
translated by Maurice Samuel

A voice called.
I went.
I went, lest
I fall.
(Hannah Szenes)
The earth grows still,
the lurid sky slowly pales over
smoking borders.

Heartsick, but still living,
a People stands by
to greet the uniqueness
of the miracle.

Readied,
they wait beneath the moon,
wrapped in awesome joy,
before daybreak.
—Then, a girl and boy
step forward.
And slowly walk
before the waiting nation.

In work garb and heavy-shod,
they climb in stillness
wearing yet the dress of battle,
the grime
of aching day
and fire-filled night.

Unwashed, weary unto death,
not knowing rest,
but wearing youth like dewdrops
in their hair.

—Silently the two approach and
stand, unwavering.
There isn’t a hint if they are of the
living or of the dead.

No state is
dursed to a
people on a
silver platter
(Chaim
Weizmann)
Through wondering tears the people stare.  “Who are you?” The silent two reply: “We are the Silver Platter upon which the Jewish State was served to you.”

And speaking, they fall in shadow at the nation’s feet. Let the rest in Israel’s chronicles be told.

For Zion’s sake I will not keep silence; for Jerusalem’s sake I will speak out, until her light shines forth like the sunrise, her deliverance like a blazing torch.

Let the wilderness and the thirsty land be glad, let the desert rejoice and burst into flower.

The People who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who dwelt in a land dark as death, a light has dawned.

Mature your minds with great thoughts; to believe in the heroic makes heroes.

(Wellington Disraeli)

למעגל הימים

תפילות לבית

לעם הולכים בחושך

“עמורא דמרדך, ערדך
נשועה כלאמס’Brien כיהנה
והראשי זפור בחולודות
ילך על עוןbü שמיים.

For Zion’s sake I will not keep silence; for Jerusalem’s sake I will speak out, until her light shines forth like the sunrise, her deliverance like a blazing torch.

Let the wilderness and the thirsty land be glad, let the desert rejoice and burst into flower.

The People who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who dwelt in a land dark as death, a light has dawned.

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(Wellington Disraeli)
Prayer for the State of Israel

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

Continue on page 1 (for Ma’ariv), 31 (for Shacharit), or 79 (for Minchah).
**After Aleinu:**

My God, my God,
I pray that these things never end:
The sand and the sea,
The rush of the waters,
The crash of the heavens,
The prayer of the heart.
The sand and the sea,
The rush of the waters,
The crash of the heavens,
The prayer of the heart.

**Yizkor**

May God remember the sons and daughters who exposed themselves to mortal danger in those days of struggle prior to the establishment of the State of Israel. And may God remember the soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces who fell in the wars of Israel.

May the People of Israel keep them in their memory and be blessed by their descendants. Let them mourn the splendour of youth, the charm of courage, the holiness of will, and the devotion of self-sacrifice which ended in heavy battles.

May the loyal and valiant heroes of freedom and victory be sealed within the hearts of Israel, in each and every generation.

“A Walk to Caesarea” by Hannah Szenes

Deep in the heart of every Jew, in its purest and holiest recesses, there blazes the fire of Israel.

(Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook)

Even the ordinary soldier whose blood fell upon the ancient path knew that the splendour of mountains, the silvery treetops, and the glittering dome are the outer gold of the song of Solomon and of David’s tear. (Zelda)
God, full of compassion, dwelling on high, grant perfect rest under the wings of Your sheltering Presence among the holy and pure who shine as the light of the firmament, to the souls of all the soldiers of Israel and all the heroes of our People who sacrificed their lives for our homeland. As we pray for the ascent of their souls, the God of Compassion will protect them forevermore under the cover of Divine wings. And bind their souls in the bond of eternal life. Adonai is their inheritance. May their resting place be a Garden of Eden, a dwelling place of everlasting peace, and let us say: Amen.

I will not fear the tens of thousands that surround me. Rise up, O God, and save me. (Psalm 3:7–8)

Mourner’s Kaddish, page 384
HaTikvah, page 547

רַעְשָׂא מְנוּחָה מְנוּחָה
לְגִבּוֹרֵי עַמֵּנוּ שֶׁמָּסְרוּ וְכַנְפֵּי הַשְּׁכִינָה
בַּעֲבוּר שֶׁאָֽנוּ מִתְפַּלְּלִים לְעִלּוּי נִשְׁמָתָם
לָכֵן בַּֽעַל הָרַחֲמִים יַסְתִּירֵם בְּסֵֽתֶר כְּנָפָיו לְעוֹלָמִים
וְיִצְרוֹר בִּצְרוֹר הַחַיִּים אֶת נִשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם. יְיָ הוּא נַחֲלָתָם, בְּגַן עֵֽדֶן תְּהֵא מְנוּחָתָם, וְיָנֽוּחוּ בְּשָׁלוֹם עַל אָמֵן.

שֶׁאָֽנוּ מִתְפַּלְּלִים "(as we pray"
Verses for Memorial Day, a psalm of remembering for the war dead
What is the correct way to stand at a memorial ceremony?
Erect or stooped, pulled taut as a tent or in the slumped posture of mourning, head bowed like the guilty or held high in a collective protest against death,
eyes gaping frozen like the eyes of the dead or shut tight, to see stars inside?
And what is the best time for remembering?
At noon when shadows are hidden beneath our feet, or at twilight when shadows lengthen like longings that have no beginning, no end, like God?
(Yehuda Amichai)
On Yom HaAtzma’ut, we celebrate the miracle of the rebirth of the State of Israel, deepen our attachment to her sacred soil, and reflect upon our responsibilities to the dreams and realities of Israel. While Reform Judaism was founded, in part, on the belief that a Jew could make a real home in the modern Diaspora, today we complement this belief with the understanding that Israel is the centre of the Jewish world and that we are uniquely bound to that land.

When the Knesset voted that Yom HaAtzma’ut be celebrated on the fifth day of Iyar (the Hebrew date corresponding to May 14, 1948), David Ben-Gurion noted that this was the first new holiday to be added to the Jewish calendar in over 2,000 years. The official resolution states: “On this day, let all labour cease….Let the people gather in families and settlements for rejoicing and gladness, for memorial and thanksgiving, for unity and inspiration, for on this day Israel will celebrate its new holiday of independence.” No customs or rituals were yet established, but over time the following songs, prayers, and poetry have emerged in celebration of the re-establishment of the Jewish national home.

A Song of Ascents.

When God returned us to Zion from exile, we thought we were dreaming.

Then our mouths filled with laughter and cheers were on our tongues.

The other nations saw and said: “Adonai has done great things for them.”

Adonai has done great things for us, and we were very glad.

Psalm 126

Thus said Adonai: “Restrain your voice from weeping, your eyes from shedding tears; for there is a reward for your labour—They shall return from the enemy’s land. And there is hope for your future—Your children will return to their country.” (Jeremiah 31:15–16)

When Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the chemist who would become the first president of modern Israel, was lobbying British politicians to win their support for the Zionist effort to gain a Jewish homeland, a member of the House of Lords asked him: “Why do you Jews insist on Palestine when there are so many undeveloped countries you could settle in more conveniently?” Weizmann answered: “That is like my asking you why you drove twenty miles to visit your mother last Sunday when there are so many old ladies living on your street.” (As told by Rabbi Harold Kushner)

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת.

בְּשׁוּב יְהוָֹה אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן

הָיִֽינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים׃

אָז יִמָּלֵא שְׂחוֹק פִּֽינוּ

וּלְשׁוֹנֵֽנוּ רִנָּה;

אָז יֹאמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם הִגְדִּיל

יְהוָֹה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּֽנוּ

הָיִֽינוּ שְׂמֵחִים:

הִגְדִּיל יְהוָֹה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֵֽלֶּה׃

יֹאמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם הִגְדִּיל

יְהוָֹה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּֽנוּ

הָיִֽינוּ שְׂמֵחִים׃

Thus said Adonai: “When God returned us to Zion from exile, we thought we were dreaming. Then our mouths filled with laughter and cheers were on our tongues. The other nations saw and said: “Adonai has done great things for them.” Adonai has done great things for us, and we were very glad.”

A Song of Ascents.

When God returned us to Zion from exile, we thought we were dreaming.

Then our mouths filled with laughter and cheers were on our tongues.

The other nations saw and said: “Adonai has done great things for them.” Adonai has done great things for us, and we were very glad.

持AV時代。
Return us again to freedom, Adonai, like streams, long dry, to the Negev returning.

Those who sow in tears will reap in joy.

The farmer may weep when he buries the precious seed, but singing, he comes back with his arms filled with grain.

A Vision of the Prophets

Thus says the Eternal:

“I have returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called ‘The City of Truth’; and the mountain of Adonai Tz’va’ot, ‘The Holy Mountain.’”

Thus says Adonai Tz’va’ot:

“Old men and women shall yet dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand, enjoying length of days. And the streets of the city shall be filled with boys and girls; they will be playing in its streets.”

We came to the land You sent us to; it does indeed flow with milk and honey. (Numbers 13:27)

To caress and to kiss your stones I desire, and the taste of your soil would be for me a reward sweet as honey. (Yehudah HaLevi)

The national centre will not be a “secure home of refuge” for our People, but it shall be a home of healing for its spirit. (Ahad HaAm)
Thus says Adonai Tz’va’ot:

“Behold, I will save My People from the lands of the east and the west, and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be My People, and I shall be their God, in truth and in righteousness.”

Prayer for the State of Israel

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

Continue on page 1 (for Ma’ariv), 31 (for Shacharit), or 79 (for Minchah).
From Israel’s Proclamation of Independence

The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish People. Here their spiritual, religious, and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created a culture of national and universal significance. From here they bequeathed to the world the eternal Book of Books.

Exiled from the land of Israel, the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and restoration of their national freedom.

Impelled by this historic association, Jews strove throughout the centuries to go back to the land of their ancestors and regain their statehood. In recent decades they returned en masse to their land. They reclaimed the wilderness, revived their language, built cities and villages, and established a vigorous and ever-growing community with its own economic and cultural life. They sought peace and yet were prepared to defend themselves. They brought the blessings of progress to all inhabitants of the country, and looked forward to sovereign independence.

Šǝbôt L’Aramo
("they returned to their land")
The resettlement of our country—that is, the purchase of land, the building of houses, the planting of orchards, and the cultivating of the soil—is one of the fundamental commandments of our Torah; some of our ancient Sages even say that it is equivalent to the whole Law, for it is the foundation of the existence of our People. (Samuel Mohilever, “Message to the First Zionist Congress,” 1897)
In the year 1897, the first Zionist Congress, inspired by Theodore Herzl’s vision of the Jewish State, proclaimed the right of the Jewish People to national revival in their own country.…

This right was acknowledged by the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, and reaffirmed by the Mandate of the League of Nations which gave explicit international recognition to the historic connection of the Jewish People with Palestine and their right to reconstitute their National Home.

The Shoah, which recently befell the Jewish People—the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe—proved anew the need to solve the problem of homelessness and lack of independence of the Jewish People by means of the re-establishment of the Jewish State, which would open its gates to all Jews and endow the Jewish people with equality of status among the family of nations.…

First Zionist Congress  At the behest of our leader Herzl, I came to Basel to make all of the preparations for the first Congress. Among the many questions … was with which flag would we decorate the Congress hall? And in what colours? At that point, we had no flag. One had to be created…. And then an idea flashed into my mind. We already have a blue and white flag: the tallit with which we wrap ourselves in our prayers. This prayer shawl is our emblem. Let us take it out of its bag and open it up in front of Israel and the eyes of all peoples. I then ordered a blue and white flag with the Shield of David painted on it. That is how the national flag came into being. (David Wolffsohn)

Balfour Declaration  Dear Lord Rothschild, His Majesty’s Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use its best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done that may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country. I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely, Arthur James Balfour (From the Secretary of the Foreign Office, November 2, 1917)

If you will it, it is no dream. (Theodor Herzl, 1902)
On November 29, 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a Resolution requiring the establishment of a Jewish State in the Land of Israel. It is the natural right of the Jewish People to lead, as do all other nations, an independent existence in its sovereign State.

Accordingly we, the members of the National Council, representing the Jewish People in the Land of Israel and the World Zionist Movement, are met together in solemn assembly today, the day of termination of the British Mandate for the Land of Israel; and, by virtue of the natural and historic right of the Jewish People and on the basis of the decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations, we hereby proclaim the establishment of a Jewish State in the Land of Israel, to be called Medinat Yisrael, “The State of Israel”.

The State of Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion; will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; will be based on the principles of liberty, justice, and peace as conceived by the Prophets of Israel; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinguishing between them. The State of Israel shall be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion; will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; will be based on the principles of liberty, justice, and peace as conceived by the Prophets of Israel; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinguishing between them.

Rabbi Shmuel taught: “The only difference between this world and the Messianic Age is subjection to foreign powers.” (Babylonian Talmud, B’rachot 34b)

Justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may thrive upon and occupy the land that the Eternal is giving you. (Deuteronomy 16:20)
religion, race or sex; will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture; will safeguard the holy places of all religions; and will loyally uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Our call goes out to the Jewish People all over the world to rally to our side in the task of immigration and development and to stand by us in the great struggle for the fulfillment of the dream of generations for the redemption of Israel.

With trust in the Rock of Israel, we set our hands to this Declaration, at this Session of the Provisional State Council, on the soil of the Homeland, in the city of Tel Aviv, on this Sabbath eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708, the fourteenth day of May, 1948.

Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame.
Blessed is the flame that burns in the heart’s secret places.
Blessed is the heart with strength to stop its beating for honour’s sake.
Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame.

*Fourteenth day of May, 1948* At eight o’clock on the morning of May fourteenth, the British lowered the Union Jack in Jerusalem. By mid-afternoon the Arabs launched a full-scale attack against the Jews. At 4:00 p.m., despite great pressure from the government of the United States and the doubts of many of his colleagues, David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, read the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel. The Jewish population of Palestine, except for Jerusalem, which was without electricity, heard the proclamation ceremonies as they were broadcast from the Tel Aviv Museum. (Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz)
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.

May the blessing and the 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
dechol 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.

HaTikvah may be found on page 547.
For Jerusalem

These prayers, poems, and love songs may be offered on the twenty-eighth day of Iyar, Yom Yerushalayim, or on any day to celebrate and reflect upon the glory of the eternal city.

From the peak of Mount Scopus:
Shalom, Jerusalem!
From the peak of Mount Scopus
I will bow low to you.
For one hundred generations I have dreamed of you,
To earn the privilege of seeing the light of your face!

Jerusalem, O Jerusalem!
Let your countenance shine upon your children once again!
Jerusalem, O Jerusalem!
Out of your ruins will I rebuild you!

“Yerushalayim” by Avigdor Hameiri

From the peak of Mount Scopus:
מֵעַל פִּסְגַּת הַר הַצּוֹפִים
שָׁלוֹם לָךְ יְרוּשָׁלַֽיִם!
מֵעַל פִּסְגַּת הַר הַצּוֹפִים
אָשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לָךְ אַפָּֽיִם!
מֵאָה דוֹרוֹת חָלַֽמְתִּי עָלַֽיִךְ ,
לִזְכּוֹת, לִרְאוֹת בְּאוֹר פָּנָֽיִךְ!
יְרוּשָׁלַֽיִם, יְרוּשָׁלַֽיִם!
הָאִֽירִי פָנַֽיִךְ לִבְנֵךְ!
יְרוּשָׁלַֽיִם, יְרוּשָׁלַֽיִם!
רְבוֹתַֽיִךְ אֶבְנֵךְ!
מֵח

Judah shall abide forever and Jerusalem from generation to generation. (Joel 4:20)

מָתְרוֹבֹתֵךְ אֶבְנֵךְ
“out of your ruins will I rebuild you” I shall never forget my arrival in Jerusalem. The war still raged in the Sinai, but it was only the fate of Jerusalem that caught the imagination of the Jewish people. . . . Jews in the thousands ran to the Old City, and no one could stop them. A bizarre, elemental force had suddenly taken possession of all Jews—rabbis and merchants, yeshivah boys and kibbutzniks, officers and school children, cynics and artists—all had forgotten everything. Each wanted to be at the Western Wall, to kiss the stones, to cry out prayers or memories. Each knew that on that historic day, in that week, the place of the Jew was at the Temple Mount. I had the privilege to run with them. I have never run with such an impetus. I have seldom said “Amen” with such devotion as when the paratroopers, in the exultation, prayed the Afternoon service. I have never understood the profound meaning of Ahavat Yisrael, love of Israel, as I did on that day when I stood as in a dream, under the burning sun and thought with pride of Jewish existence. (Elie Wiesel)
From the peak of Mount Scopus:
Shalom, Jerusalem!
A thousand exiles from all the ends of earth lift up their eyes to you. Be blessed with a thousand blessings, O royal shrine, city of kings.

Jerusalem, O Jerusalem!
I will not budge from here!
Jerusalem, O Jerusalem!
The messianic dream will emanate from you! Let it come!

For the sake of Zion I will not be silent, for the sake of Jerusalem I will not be still, till her justice emerges resplendent and her rescue like a flaming torch. Nations shall see your justice, and every ruler your glory; and you shall be called by a new name, which the Eternal shall directly bestow.

You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Eternal, and a royal diadem in the palm of your God. Nevermore shall you be called "Forsaken," nor shall your land be called "Desolate"; but you shall be called “I delight in her,” and your land “Espoused.” For the Eternal takes delight in you, and your land shall be espoused. As a youth espouses a maiden, your sons shall espouse you; and as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.
Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen, who shall never be silent by day or by night. O you who remember Adonai, take no rest and give no rest to the Eternal, until God establishes Jerusalem and makes her renowned on earth.

Make Jerusalem rejoice! May all those who love her delight in her.

Upon your walls, City of David, I have stationed watchmen for each day and each night.

Make Jerusalem rejoice! ...

Don't be afraid, don't be frightened, servants of Jacob, for your enemies have all scattered.

Make Jerusalem rejoice! ...

Raise up your eyes and look about you. Everyone will be gathered in and come to you.

Make Jerusalem rejoice! ...

When all your people are righteous, they shall inherit the land for all time.

Make Jerusalem rejoice! ...

Based on Isaiah 66:10, 62:6, 49:18, Numbers 10:36, Jeremiah 46:27
A Song of Ascents. Of David.
I rejoiced when they said to me:
“Let us go to the House of the Eternal.”

Our feet stood in your gates,
O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city knit together, where tribes make pilgrimage, the tribes of God. It is ordained that Israel should acclaim the name of the Eternal.

There the thrones of judgment are set, thrones of the House of David. Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem:

“May those who love you be at peace. May there be tranquility within your ramparts, peace in your citadels. For the sake of my kin and companions, let me speak now for your well-being; for the sake of the House of the Eternal our God, I seek your good.”

For you, Jerusalem, between the walls of the city— for you, Jerusalem, a new light will shine.

In our hearts only one song exists. For you, Jerusalem, between the Jordan and the sea.

Psalm 122

Jerusalem is a port city on the shore of eternity. (Yehuda Amichai)
For you, Jerusalem,
a scene of antiquity and glory.
For you, Jerusalem,
secrets and mystery.

In our hearts . . .

For you, Jerusalem,
we will raise a song forever.
For you, Jerusalem,
City of the Tower of David.

In our hearts . . .

My heart is in the East
and I am at the edge of the West—
How can I savour my food,
how can I enjoy it?
How can I fulfill my vows
and pledges while
Zion lies fettered to Edom
and I in the bonds of Arabia?
It would be easy
for me to leave behind
all the good things of Spain
As it would be glorious
to see the dust of the ruined
Inner Sanctum.

“שִׁיר נִשָּׂא תָּמִיד”
From Psalm 116:13

HaLevi lived in both Christian and Muslim Spain. This poem was written after the First Crusade; “Edom” is a Rabbinic term for Christendom. Toward the end of his life he pursued his dream of settling in the Land of Israel. In September 1140, after an arduous voyage, HaLevi arrived in Alexandria to great acclaim. In May 1141 he set sail for Acco, but it is not known whether or not he arrived safely.
The mountain air is clear as wine
and the fragrance of pines is
carried in the evening breeze
with the sound of bells.
And in the slumber of tree and
stone, captive in a dream,
is the city that sits deserted, and
the wall is in its heart.

Jerusalem of gold, of bronze and light,
am I not a harp for all your songs?

As soon as I came today to sing
for you and to place a crown
upon you, I found I was smaller
than the youngest of your children,
and the last of the poets. For your
name burns the lips like the kiss
of a seraph.
If I forget you, Jerusalem,
all of gold . . .

Jerusalem of gold . . .

We have returned to the water
cisterns, to the market and to
the square. A shofar calls on the
Temple Mount, in the Old City.
And in the caverns of stone,
thousands of suns are shining.
And we again go down to the
Dead Sea by way of Jericho.

Jerusalem of gold . . .
Tish’ah B’Av

This day commemorates the fall of the First Temple, built by King Solomon. The Babylonians breached the walls of Jerusalem on the seventeenth of Tammuz; three weeks later, on the ninth of Av, 586 B.C.E., the Temple was destroyed and Nebuchadnezzar forced the Judeans into Babylonian exile.

On the ninth and tenth days of the month of Av in the year 70 C.E., the Roman legions smashed ... into the Second Temple and set it afire. One million of the world’s four to five million Jews died in that war for independence. The survivors were driven into exile, sold into slavery. To many, it appeared that Judaism itself was shattered beyond repair. God’s own sanctuary, symbol of the relationship between God and Israel, was destroyed. Had God rejected the covenant? Tish’ah B’Av commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temples as well as the loss of Jewish sovereignty. Mourning customs and fasting mark this day of collective loss, and the haunting chant of the Book of Lamentations retells the story. (Rabbi Irving Greenberg, adapted)

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, as we remembered Zion. Upon the willows in its midst we hung our lyres. For there our captors demanded of us a song, our tormentors asked for joy: “Sing for us from Zion’s song!” How could we sing a song of God in a foreign land?

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 137:1–6

The theophany of exile ... this is the history of Israel, as it is the history of the human being; and it may well be the history of the world, or that chapter of it which we have been given to read and to write so far. (Martin Buber)

םש יָשָׁבְנוּ גַּם־בָּכִֽינוּ בָּבֶל שָׁם עַל־נַהֲרוֹת בָּבֶל שָׁם יָשַׁבְנוּ כְרֵֽנוּ אֶת־צִיּוֹן׃

עָיִם תִּשְׁכַּחּ אִם־אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ יְרוּשָׁלַָיִם תִּדְבַּק־לְשׁוֹנִי לְחִכִּי אִם־לֹא אֶזְכְּרֵֽכִי אִם־לֹא אַעֲלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלָֽיִם עַל Рֹאשׁ שִׂמְחָתִי׃

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, as we remembered Zion. Upon the willows in its midst we hung our lyres. For there our captors demanded of us a song, our tormentors asked for joy: “Sing for us from Zion’s song!” How could we sing a song of God in a foreign land?

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.

םש יָשָׁבְנוּ גַּם־בָּכִֽינוּ בָּבֶל שָׁם עַל־נַהֲרוֹת בָּבֶל שָׁם יָשַׁבְנוּ כְרֵֽנוּ אֶת־צִיּוֹן׃

עָיִם תִּשְׁכַּחּ אִם־אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ יְרוּשָׁלַָיִם תִּדְבַּק־לְשׁוֹנִי לְחִכִּי אִם־לֹא אֶזְכְּרֵֽכִי אִם־לֹא אַעֲלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלָֽיִם עַל Рֹאשׁ שִׂמְחָתִי׃

This day commemorates the fall of the First Temple, built by King Solomon. The Babylonians breached the walls of Jerusalem on the seventeenth of Tammuz; three weeks later, on the ninth of Av, 586 B.C.E., the Temple was destroyed and Nebuchadnezzar forced the Judeans into Babylonian exile.

On the ninth and tenth days of the month of Av in the year 70 C.E., the Roman legions smashed ... into the Second Temple and set it afire. One million of the world’s four to five million Jews died in that war for independence. The survivors were driven into exile, sold into slavery. To many, it appeared that Judaism itself was shattered beyond repair. God’s own sanctuary, symbol of the relationship between God and Israel, was destroyed. Had God rejected the covenant? Tish’ah B’Av commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temples as well as the loss of Jewish sovereignty. Mourning customs and fasting mark this day of collective loss, and the haunting chant of the Book of Lamentations retells the story. (Rabbi Irving Greenberg, adapted)
It is told: On Tish'ah B'Av these events occurred; remember and do not forget,

For “Memory is the source of redemption.”

On Tish'ah B'Av, it was decreed upon the rebellious generation of the wilderness that they would not live to enter the Land of Israel.

“Return us to You, O God, and we shall return.”

On Tish'ah B'Av, Jerusalem’s First Temple, the Temple of Solomon, was put to the torch.

“Alas! How solitary does the city sit, once so full of people.”

On Tish'ah B'Av, the Second Temple was destroyed and the Temple Mount plowed up. Our People was carried off in chains to an exile that would last two millennia.

“One would have thought that the Temple Mount itself was seething hot from its base, it was so full of fire on every side; and yet there was even more blood than fire.”

On Tish'ah B'Av, the shining Jewry of a golden Spain was expelled into the darkness of yet further exile.

“My heart is in the East and I am at the edge of the West.”

On the ninth of Av the fire was kindled;
On the tenth of Av the fire destroyed.
On the ninth of Av the First World War began;
But the Great Burning was still to come.

We “have taken an oath: to remember it all, to remember, not once to forget…. Lest from this we learn nothing.”

“I am a Jerusalemite… The dust is my conscious, the stones my subconscious, and all my memories are closed courtyards at summer’s high noon.”

“Return us unto You, Adonai, and we shall return.
Renew our days as at the beginning.”
Comforter of Zion

Adonai our God, You are the Comforter of Zion’s mourners, the mourners of Jerusalem. How long has the city been mourned, despised and crushed, desolate?

How long were her children exiled, her homes ruined, her glory mocked, her people without a place to rest?

There she sat with head bowed like a woman bereft. Legions overran her, strangers dispossessed her.

They put Your People Israel to the sword; the arrogant slaughtered Your faithful ones.

Therefore did Zion weep bitterly, therefore Jerusalem cried aloud.

My heart, my heart goes out to the slain! My bowels are knotted for the slain!

As a mother comforts her children, says Adonai, so will I comfort you. And you will find comfort in Jerusalem.

(Isaiah 66:13)

Ten portions of wisdom are in the world—nine in Jerusalem, and one in the rest of the world.

Ten portions of hypocrisy are in the world—nine in Jerusalem, and one in the rest of the world.

Ten portions of Torah are in the world—nine in Jerusalem, and one in the rest of the world. (Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 49b)
Adonai, You consumed her with fire, and with fire will You have her rebuilt. As it is said: “As for Me,” says the Eternal, “I will be a fiery wall about her, and a glory in her midst.”

Praised are You, Adonai, Comforter of Zion and Rebuilder of Jerusalem.

**Continue with the weekday service: on page 1 for Ma’ariv, page 31 for Shacharit, or page 79 for Minchah.**

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**Answer Us**

Answer us, Adonai, answer us as we remember our affliction, the suffering that so often overtook us. Consider not our wrongdoings; do not hide Yourself from us; be mindful of our plea, and heed our supplication.

*Draw near when we cry out. Let Your loyalty be our comfort; answer even before we call.*

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**“You consumed her with fire”**

Pray to your God, prophet Jeremiah, for the one who is storm-tossed, flogged, afflicted—till God hearkens and says: “Enough!”—till God saves my children from captivity and the sword. (Elazar Kallir)

**“Rebuilder of Jerusalem”**

Reform Jewish prayerbooks do not include prayers for a rebuilding of the physical Temple or for a return to the ancient sacrificial system. Rather, we pray for a rebuilding of Jerusalem to her former grandeur and to the complete peace she has yet to know. As our Sages imagine: Jerusalem is destined to expand until it reaches the Throne of Glory (Numbers Rabbah 111:2).

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**“answer us”** This prayer is inserted into the seventh benediction of the Amidah on fast days.
For this is the promise spoken by Your prophet:
“I shall answer before they have called, I shall hear their word before it is spoken.”

Adonai, You answer us in time of trouble; You rescue and redeem in time of distress. 
Praised are You, Adonai, who answers the afflicted.

Eli Tzion

Let Zion and her cities wail like a woman in childbirth; like a young woman wrapped in sackcloth, mourning the husband of her youth.

For the Palace forsaken through the guilt of her flocks; and for the invasion of blasphemers within her innermost Sanctuary.

Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem; may those who love you be at peace. May there be tranquility within your ramparts, peace in your citadels. For the sake of my kin and companions, let me speak now for your well-being; for the sake of the House of the Eternal our God, I seek your good.

(Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem; may those who love you be at peace. May there be tranquility within your ramparts, peace in your citadels. For the sake of my kin and companions, let me speak now for your well-being; for the sake of the House of the Eternal our God, I seek your good.

(Psalm 122:6–9)

This Tish’ah B’Av elegy was written in the Middle Ages. The authorship is unknown.

when we thought of your being in ruins. You are not a shrine, a place of pilgrimage to which we come, and then depart. “Wherever I go, I go to Jerusalem,” said Rabbi Nachman… Let Jerusalem speak again to our people, to all people. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)
For the exile of God’s servants who sang her beautiful hymns; and for the blood that was shed like the waters of her rivers.

For the music of her dances now silenced within her cities; and for the desolated council and the dissolution of her Sanhedrin.

For the exile of God’s Presence when the Inner Sanctum was destroyed; and for the oppression of the persecutors who forced her to put on sackcloth.

עֲלֵי הֶגְיוֹן מְחוֹלֶיהָ ("for the music of her dances") There shall yet be heard in the cities of Judah and in the courtyards of Jerusalem the sounds of gladness and joy, the voice of bridegroom and bride ... the jubilant voices of young people feasting and singing. (Jewish wedding blessing)

דְּבִירֶֽיהָ ("the Inner Sanctum") Just as the navel is set in the centre of the human body, so is the land of Israel the navel of the world, situated in the centre of the world.

Jerusalem is in the centre of the land of Israel, the Temple is in the centre of Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies is in the centre of the Temple, and the Ark is in the centre of the Holy of Holies; the Foundation Stone is in front of the Ark, and it is from it that the world was formed. (Midrash Tanchuma, Kedoshim 10)
Excerpts from the Book of Lamentations

We are a people in mourning, but not in despair; overcome with grief, but devoid of self-pity; lamenting disaster, recollecting sins, self-impeaching. Mourning is repentance. We are a people in a moment that calls for mending. Such deep sorrow is cleansing. It is a nondeliberate way of expanding compassion, of understanding the nonfinality of current history. Lamentation leaves behind an echo in all our laughing. Yet that deep sorrow is also experienced as a prelude to redemption. (Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel)

According to our tradition, the Prophet Jeremiah wrote the Book of Lamentations after he witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. Known in Hebrew by its first word, “Eicha”—meaning “How?”—this book is not the questioning of an inquisitive student of philosophy; it is the rhetorical questioning of a grief-stricken eyewitness to devastation. These lamentations not only describe the loss, but also dare to offer explanation for the tragedy as well as hope for life beyond it.

Chapter 1:1–7, 18

1) How solitary sits the city that was once so full of people! She has become like a widow. She who was great among nations, a princess among the provinces, she has become a vassal. Bitterly does she weep at night, her tears stay on her cheeks: no one among her lovers comes to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they have become her enemies. Judah has gone into exile, driven out by affliction and slavery. She dwells among the nations; she finds no rest; all her pursuers caught her in the narrow places.

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The roads of Zion mourn, for none come to assemble; all her gates are desolate; her priests sigh, her maidens are grieved; she is in bitterness. Her enemies have become her masters now; her adversaries prosper, because the Eternal has afflicted her for her many sins. Her children have gone into captivity before the adversary.

Gone from the daughter of Zion is all her splendour. Her princes have become like deer that find no pasture and run without strength from a pursuer. Great treasures Jerusalem now recalls; the old days are remembered now in the days of her affliction and anguish; her people have fallen by the hand of the adversary, and no one helps her. The adversaries have seen her, they mock her destruction.

Just is the Eternal! For I have rebelled against God’s word. Listen, O listen, all you nations, and behold my agony: my maidens and my young men have gone into captivity!

Chapter 2:3–6

Cut off in fierce anger is the strong horn of Israel. Withdrawn is God’s right hand from before the enemy. God has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire which consumes everything.
4 Like an enemy, God has drawn the bow, the right hand set like a foe. God has slain all who were pleasant to the eye. In the tent of the daughter of Zion God has poured out fury like fire.

5 Adonai has become like an enemy, swallowing Israel whole; God has swallowed up all her palaces, destroyed God’s strongholds, increased wailing and lamentations in the daughter of Judah. 6 Fences have been stripped from God’s tabernacle, God’s garden; destroyed is God’s place of assembly. The Eternal has made Festival and Sabbath to be forgotten in Zion. In raging anger God has spurned king and priest.

Chapter 4:1, 2, 11–13

4) 1 How dull is the gold; how tarnished is the purest gold. The stones of the Sanctuary are cast out at the top of every street. 2 Behold the precious children of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they thought of now as earthen jars, works of a potter’s hands!

11 The Eternal has unleashed Divine fury in Zion, poured out fierce anger, kindled a fire, which has destroyed its foundations. 12 Kings of the earth and inhabitants of the world could not believe that an adversary and enemy would enter the gates of Jerusalem. 13 It must be due to the sins of her prophets, the iniquities of her priests, and those who have shed the blood of the just within her walls.
Chapter 5:1–5, 15–22, 21

5) 1 Remember, Adonai, what has befallen us. Behold and see our disgrace. 2 Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, our homes to foreigners. 3 We have become orphans, fatherless; our mothers are like widows. 4 We must buy our water to drink; our wood comes at a price. 5 Our persecutors are at our necks; we are growing weary, but for us there is no rest.

15 The joy of our hearts has ended, our dance has turned into mourning. 16 The crown has fallen from our head; woe unto us, for we have sinned. 17 For this our heart is faint; for these things our eyes grow dim. 18 Because Mount Zion is desolate; jackals prowl upon it.

19 You, Adonai, will remain forever; Your throne is set from generation to generation. 20 Why do You forget us forever; why forsake us for so long? 21 Turn us toward You, Adonai, and we shall return; renew our days as at the beginning. 22 Can You have rejected us so utterly? Can You be so angry with us?

21 Turn us toward You, Adonai, and we shall return; renew our days as at the beginning.
Take comfort, take comfort, My People, says your God. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and declare to her that her term of service is over, that her iniquity is expiated; for she has taken from the hand of the Eternal double for all her sins.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the herald, the one who proclaims peace, who brings tidings of good and proclaims deliverance, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

O ruins of Jerusalem, hear your sentries raise their voices and shout together in triumph, for clearly they see the return of the Eternal God to Zion. For Adonai has comforted our People and redeemed Jerusalem!

Aleinu and Kaddish may be found on pages 26 to 29.
A Song of Ascents.

When God returned us to Zion from exile, we thought we were dreaming.

Then our mouths filled with laughter and cheers were on our tongues.

The other nations saw and said: “Adonai has done great things for them.”

Adonai has done great things for us, and we were very glad.

Return us again to freedom, Adonai, like streams, long dry, to the Negev returning.

Those who sow in tears will reap in joy.

The farmer may weep when he buries the precious seed, but singing, he comes back with his arms filled with grain.

“Peace, peace!” is spoken, and yet there is no peace.

Psalm 126

In the city of Jerusalem stands a gate of gold.
And an angel of Heaven is stationed there.
At his post for two thousand years, standing there day and night until the day when Jerusalem is redeemed.

(Yaakov David Kamzon)

“we thought we were dreaming”) And I want to say something to you on this day, the Ninth of Av: Those who will succeed in escaping this catastrophe will live to experience a festive moment of great Jewish joy: the rebirth and establishment of the Jewish State. I do not know whether I myself will live to see it, but my son will. I am certain of this; just as I am certain that the sun will rise tomorrow morning. (Vladimir Jabotinsky, Warsaw, August 10, 1938. Jabotinsky died in 1940. In 1948, his son, Ezri, served in Israel's first Knesset.)

Jeremiah 6:14

Thus says the Eternal: A cry was heard in Ramah, wailing and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted for her children who are leaving. Restrain thy voice from weeping, thine eyes from shedding tears; for there is a reward for thy labour.... There is hope for thy future, thy children shall return to their country.

(Yeremiah 31:15-16)
During the Month of Elul

It is taught that Moses ascended Mount Sinai on the first day of Elul and descended on Yom Kippur (Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer 46). Each year at this time we emulate Moses’ forty days of solitude on the mountain by turning inward and taking a Cheshbon HaNefesh, an accounting of the soul.

Among the many Elul customs are the daily recitation of Psalm 27 and the sounding of the shofar, as well as giving tzedakah, choosing our words with extra care, and seeking forgiveness from others.

By David. The Eternal God is my light and my rescue—whom shall I fear?
The Eternal is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?
When evildoers close in to consume me, it is they, my enemies and foes, who stumble and fall.
Should an army besiege me, my heart would not fear.
Should war break out against me, still I would be confident.
One thing I ask of the Eternal One, only this do I seek:
to live in the House of the Eternal all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the Eternal and worship in the Temple.

From Psalm 27

אחת שאָלְמָה
(“one thing I ask”)
Before the gate has closed, before the last question is posed, before I am transposed.
Before the weeds fill the gardens, before there are no pardons, before the concrete hardens.
Before all the flute-holes are covered, before things are locked in the cupboard, before the rules are discovered.
Before the conclusion is planned, before God closes His hand, before we have nowhere to stand.
(Yehuda Amichai)

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For God will shelter me on the day of trouble.

God will hide me under the cover of God’s tent, will set me high upon a rock.

Now my head is high above my enemies who surround me.

I will offer sacrifice in God’s tent with shouts of joy.

I will sing and chant praises to the Eternal.

Adonai, hear my voice when I call.

Be gracious to me and answer me.

On Your behalf my heart recalls, “Seek My face.” Your face, Adonai, shall I seek.

Do not hide Your face from me. Do not turn Your servant away in anger.

You have been my help. Do not reject or forsake me, God, my Rescuer.

Were my father and my mother to forsake me, the Eternal would take me in.

למעגל החיים

Every single instant begins another new year; Sunlight flashing on water or plunging into a clearing

In quiet woods announces; the hovering gull proclaims

Even in wide midsummer a point of turning: and fading

Late winter daylight close behind the huddled backs

Of houses close to the edge of town flares up and shatters

As well as any screeching ram’s horn can, wheel

Unbroken, uncomprehended continuity,

Making a starting point of a moment along the way,

Spinning the year about one day’s pivot of change.

But if there is to be a high moment of turning When a great, autumnal page, say, takes up its curved flight in memory’s spaces, and with a final sigh,

As of every door in the world shutting at once, subsides

Into the bed of its fellows; if there is to be

A time of tallying, recounting and rereading

Illuminated annals, crowded with black and white

And here and there a capital flaring with silver and bright

Blue, then let it come at a time like this, not at winter’s

Night, when a few dead leaves crusted with frost lie shivering

On our doorsteps to be counted, or when our moments of coldness

Rise up to chill us again. But let us say at a golden

Moment just on the edge of harvesting,

“Yes. Now.”

(John Hollander)
Praised are You, Adonai, our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has sanctified us with mitzvot, and has commanded us to hear the voice of the shofar. 

Tekiah! 
Shevarim-Teruah! 
Tekiah!

All rise.

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

Tekiah! 
Shevarim-Teruah! 
Tekiah!

Sleepers, awake from your sleep! Slumberers, rouse yourselves from your slumber! Search your deeds and return in repentance to your Creator. (Rambam)

The shofar recalls the binding of Isaac, who offered himself to Heaven, as it is written: “And Abraham took the ram and offered it as a sacrifice in place of his son” (Genesis 22:13b). So should we ready ourselves to do God’s will.

And the shofar will announce our future redemption. May we long passionately for it, as it is written: “It shall come to pass on that day, that a great shofar shall be sounded; and all the lost shall return” (Isaiah 27:13).
Tashlich

Tashlich is the Rosh HaShanah afternoon custom of symbolically casting one’s sins into water. Apparently, the custom originated in Europe during the Middle Ages, and is based on a phrase in the biblical book of Micah (7:19): “You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” Penitential prayers are accompanied by the act of emptying one’s pockets or casting bread crumbs into flowing waters—symbolic of casting off regret and sin, and beginning anew.

To everything there is a season, and there is an appointed time for every purpose under heaven.

Now is the time for turning.

The leaves are beginning to turn from green to red and orange.

The birds are beginning to turn and are heading once more toward the south.

The animals are beginning to turn to storing their food for the winter.

For leaves, birds and animals turning comes instinctively. But for us turning does not come so easily.

It takes an act of will for us to make a turn.

It means breaking with old habits. It means admitting that we have been wrong; and this is never easy.

It means losing face; it means starting all over again; and this is always painful.

It means saying: “I am sorry.” It means admitting that we have the ability to change; and this is always embarrassing.

One generation goes, another comes. . . .

All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full.

(Ecclesiastes 1:4,7)
These things are terribly hard to do. But unless we turn, we will be trapped forever in yesterday’s ways.

Adonai, help us to turn—

From callousness to sensitivity, from hostility to love,

From pettiness to purpose, from envy to contentment,

From carelessness to discipline, from fear to faith.

Turn us around, Adonai, and bring us back toward You. Revive our lives, as at the beginning.

And turn us toward each other, O God, for in isolation there is no life.

Silent Personal Confession

In deep humility, I make supplication unto You, my God. Conscious of my frailties and my shortcomings, I seek You with the hope that I shall find You.

As I ponder fully the year now behind me, I recognize how I have failed to make it count in Your service and the service of all other people. I have often been selfish when I should have been self-sacrificing, harsh when I should have been gentle, hard when I should have been kind, thoughtless when I should have been considerate.

All too often I turned a deaf ear to the prompting of my better self and permitted my evil inclination to swerve me from the path of right. I know how often I have compromised my convictions and settled for less than the right. I confess this before You in this hour of self-searching and self-examination. I know how frail I am.

Deep as I may have fallen, I have Your assurance that I can rise to the heights if I so will. You have placed before me good and evil and have given me the power to choose between them. As mine is this power, so is mine also the responsibility.

Adonai, my God, open my eyes that I may see clearly where I have gone astray. And give me the strength in the coming days to recognize every year, every hour, that I am shaping my destiny and the destiny of Your world.
Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and forgives the transgression of the remnant of God’s possession? God does not stay angry forever but delights in lovingkindness. God will turn to us in compassion, suppress our iniquities, and cast into the depths of the sea all sins. Grant truth to Jacob, loyalty to Abraham, as You promised our ancestors in days long ago.

“Cast your sins” into the water.

A Song of Ascents.

From the depths I have called to You, Adonai.

Adonai, hear my voice; let Your ears be attentive to the sound of my pleas.

If You, Adonai, should keep account of sins, who could stand?

But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be revered.

I wait for the Eternal God, my soul awaits; and in God’s word I place my hope.

My soul waits for the Eternal God more than watchmen wait for the morning, watching for morning.

Israel, place your hope in Adonai, for with God there is steadfast love and power to redeem.

It is God who will redeem the People Israel from all its transgressions.

Turn us toward You, Adonai, and we shall return; renew our days as at the beginning.
During Sukkot

Sukkot is known by many names, including “HeChag,” “The Festival.” The culmination of the fall harvest has always been cause for great joy and thanksgiving. The mitzvot associated with the week-long festival are dwelling in sukkot, waving the lulav and etrog, hosting guests, and sharing our bounty with the hungry and homeless. These come to teach that the ultimate Source of the joys we reap is God who created every living thing; the permanent Shelter we take from the storms of life is God who is everywhere.

For Waving the Lulav

Here I am now ready and prepared to fulfill the command of my Creator, who has commanded us in the Torah: “On the first day you shall take for yourselves the fruit of the hadar tree, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook.”

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

It is held in the left hand with the pitam pointed down while the blessing Al Netilat Lulav is recited (and also Shehecheyanu when this is done for the first time on Sukkot).

3. After reciting the blessing, turn the etrog so that the pitam points up for the waving, the actual mitzvah.

Hold both hands tightly together and shake three times in six directions—east, south, west, north, upward, downward.

When to shake the lulav and etrog:
1. Immediately after reciting the blessing.
2. During the Hallel at the words hodu and ana.
3. Never while God’s name is pronounced.

For Waving the Lulav

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When to shake the lulav and etrog:
1. Immediately after reciting the blessing.
2. During the Hallel at the words hodu and ana.
3. Never while God’s name is pronounced.
On the first evening of Sukkot, turn to page 440 for the Festival Kiddush.
For all other celebrations in the sukkah, recite:

**In the Sukkah**

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

When one waves the lulav or sits in the sukkah for the first time each year, add:

**Shehecheyanu**

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

When celebrating with wine or grape juice:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

**Ushpizin—Welcoming Guests into the Sukkah**

May it be Your will, Adonai my God and God of my ancestors, that You make Your presence felt among us. Spread over us the shelter of Your peace, encircle us with Your majestic glory, holy and pure.

According to the Zohar, the great men and women of the Bible are our invisible companions in the sukkah. We are also urged to invite living guests, including the poor, to share our meals. These two customs transform the fragile sukkah into a timeless, stable fortress that provides shelter from all harm.
As for those who are hungry and thirsty, provide them with sufficient bread and water. Grant us long life in the land, sacred land, that we may serve You in reverence. Praised be Adonai forever. Amen and Amen.

To this meal we invite sublime guests; may their memory be for blessing.

Abraham, exalted guest, you are welcome here, along with Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and David.

Sarah, exalted guest, you are welcome here, along with Rebekah, Leah, Rachel, Miriam, Hannah, and Deborah.

("serve You in reverence") A Chasidic rabbi once taught: “During the High Holy Days in the month of Tishrei we Jews serve God with our whole being: on Rosh HaShanah, the Day of Remembrance, with our minds, since memory encircles the mind; on Yom Kippur, with our hearts, since fasting strains the heart; on Sukkot, with our hands, as we grasp the etrog and the lulav; and on Simchat Torah with our feet, when we parade in circuits and dance with the Torah.”

("sublime guests") We will yet return to the ancient melody and the song will continue. We’ll raise another glass, with bright and cheerful eyes. Our tents are filled with goodness because the dance uplifts us. Our tents are filled with goodness as we return to the ancient melody.

(Michael Kashtan)
Simchat Torah

Simchat Torah, “the Joy of Torah,” developed during the Middle Ages to celebrate the renewal of the annual Torah reading cycle. As soon as the book of Deuteronomy is completed, the book of Genesis is begun once again. The Torah scrolls are paraded around the sanctuary seven times; seven is the number of completion.

A Chasidic tale tells of a bored student’s complaint to his teacher: “Why do we have to read the Torah over and over again? The words are the same every year!” The teacher answered him: “The Torah does not change, but you do.”

You have made it known that the Eternal One is God, there is no other but You alone, who alone made great wonders, whose steadfast love is eternal.

There is none like You among the gods, and nothing compares with Your deeds.

May the Eternal One’s glory endure forever; let the Eternal rejoice in divine works.

Let the name of the Eternal be praised, from now and forevermore.

May the Eternal our God be with us, just as with our ancestors; may God never abandon or forsake us.
Cry out: Deliver us, our God of deliverance, gather us and save us from among the nations, that we may acknowledge Your holiness and be praised through Your fame.

The Eternal reigns, the Eternal has reigned, the Eternal will reign forever and ever. Adonai will give strength to God’s People. Adonai will bless God’s People with peace.

May our words be pleasing before the Ruler of all.

All rise. The Ark is opened.

Whenever the Ark would set out on its journey, Moses would proclaim: “Arise, Adonai, and let Y our enemies be scattered; let those who hate Y ou flee before Y ou.”

Arise, Eternal One, to Y our resting place, Y ou and the Ark of Y our might.

On that day it shall be said: “Behold, this is our God for whose deliverance we hoped. This is the Eternal for whom we have hoped; let us be glad and rejoice in God’s deliverance.”

Your sovereignty reigns for all eternities, and Your rule is for all generations.

For out of Zion shall go forth Torah, and the word of the Eternal from Jerusalem.
Av HaRachamim,
deal well with Zion; rebuild the
ewalls of Jerusalem, for in You alone
have we trusted, sovereign,
sublime, and exalted God,
Ruler of all worlds.

Eternal One, we pray, deliver us;
Eternal One, we pray, let us prosper;
Eternal One, we pray,
answer us when we call.

God of all spirits, deliver us;
Searcher of hearts, let us prosper;
Mighty Redeemer, we pray,
answer us when we call.

First Hakafah.

Speaker of righteousness, deliver us;
Beautifully enrobed, let us prosper;
Venerable and devoted One,
answer us when we call.

Second Hakafah.

Virtuous and upright One,
deliver us;
O Gracious to the needy,
let us prosper;
Good and magnanimous One,
answer us when we call.

Third Hakafah.
You who discern thoughts, deliver us; Powerful and radiant One, let us prosper; Garbed in righteousness, answer us when we call.

**Fourth Hakafah.**

Sovereign of all worlds, deliver us; Source of light and majesty, let us prosper; Supporter of those who fall, answer us when we call.

**Fifth Hakafah.**

Helper of the needy, deliver us; Deliverer and Rescuer, let us prosper; Everlasting Rock, answer us when we call.

**Sixth Hakafah.**

Holy and awesome One, deliver us; Compassionate and gracious, let us prosper; Guardian of the Covenant, answer us when we call.

Upholder of the innocent, deliver us; Forever powerful, let us prosper; perfect in Your ways, answer us when we call.

**Seventh Hakafah.**

Ben Bag Bag taught: “Turn it and turn it over and over again, for it contains everything. Keep your eyes riveted to it. Spend yourself in its study. Never budge from it, for there is no better way of life than that.” (Pirkei Avot 5:25)
Remembrance Day

As the troops fought and fight for freedom, ours is the supreme responsibility to give meaning to that freedom, by embracing the language of respect, the language of inclusion, the language of harmony.... That is the Canadian way.... We love our veterans and the freedom we enjoy thanks to them. We remember, with everlasting gratitude, by giving meaning and substance to that freedom. Let us together soldier on toward that goal. And may God bless our sacred partnership. Amen. (Rabbi Reuven Bulka, Honorary Chaplain, Dominion Command, Royal Canadian Legion)

In Flanders fields the poppies blow Between the crosses row on row, That mark our place; and in the sky The larks, still bravely singing, fly Scarce heard amid the guns below. We are the Dead. Short days ago We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, Loved and were loved, and now we lie In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe: To you from failing hands we throw The torch; be yours to hold it high. If ye break faith with us who die We shall not sleep, though poppies grow In Flanders fields.

"In Flanders Fields" John McCrae, an idealistic Canadian doctor, wrote this poem in a field hospital during the First World War’s Second Battle of Ypres in 1915. The poem reflects his admiration for the heroics of the soldiers, but also his anguish over the horrors of war. "between the crosses" Jews have served in many of the wars fought by Canada both before and after Confederation. Four thousand Canadian Jews enlisted in the various armed branches of the Canadian Forces in the First World War—over 100 were killed, many received wounds, and 84 were decorated for bravery and meritorious service. It is neither commonly known nor appreciated that during the Second World War, out of a total population of Jewish Canadians numbering some 167,000 men, women, and children, over 18,000 served in one or more of the branches of the Canadian Armed Services. Of that number, 423 sacrificed their lives. This, no doubt, was one of the greatest per capita contributions of any ethnic or religious group in Canada. (From the Jewish War Veterans of Canada)
Prayer for the Safety of the Canadian Armed Forces

Almighty God on High,
Omnipotent Sovereign, look
down from Your holy station and
bless the valiant soldiers of the
Canadian Armed Forces who risk
their lives to protect the welfare of
all Your creation. Benevolent God,
be their shelter and fortress, and
do not allow them to falter. May
harmony dwell in their ranks,
victory in their battalions. Fill
their hearts with faith and courage
to abolish every rule of evil.
Protect them on land, in the air,
and in the sea.

Guide them in peace, lead them
toward peace, and return them
speedily to their families alive and
unharmed, as it is written:

If I am not for myself, who
will be for me?
If I am only
for myself,
what am I?
And if not
now, when?
(Hillel, Pirkei
Avot 1:14)
The Eternal God will guard you from all harm, and will guard your being. The Eternal God will safeguard your departure and your homecoming, from this time forth and forever.

Grant us true peace in fulfillment of the prophecy: “Nation shall not lift up sword against another nation, nor shall they learn war any more.”

May this be Your will, and let us say: Amen.

The young soldiers do not speak.

Nevertheless, they are heard in the still houses: who has not heard them?

They have a silence that speaks for them at night and when the clock counts.

They say: We are young. We have died. Remember us.

They say: We have done what we could but until it is finished it is not done.

They say: We have given our lives but until it is finished no one can know what our lives gave.

They say: Our deaths are not ours; they are yours; they will mean what you make them.

They say: Whether our lives and our deaths are for peace and a new hope or for nothing we cannot say; it is you who must say this.

They say: We leave you our deaths. Give them their meaning.

We were young, they say. We have died. Remember us.

“our deaths are for peace” We, who are scattered to the four winds of heaven, should supplicate Almighty God for the peace of all the inhabitants of the world; that no nation lift up sword against nation; and that the Eternal One remove from their hearts all strife and hatred: for in their peace, we, too, have peace. (Azariah dei Rossi, 16th c.)
Lighting the Chanukah Candles

On the twenty-fifth day of Kislev, the very day on which, three years before, the altar of God had been profaned, the sanctuary of God was rededicated with songs and music, and the people praised the Eternal One, who had given them a great victory. ... Judah and his brothers and the whole community of Israel determined that every year at this season, the days of Chanukah, of Rededication, should be observed with gladness and joy for eight days. (I Maccabees 4:59)

The lights of Chanukah are a symbol of our joy and our hope. In times of darkness, our ancestors had the courage to struggle for freedom: freedom to worship their God, freedom to study their Torah, freedom to shape their own destiny in the Land of Israel. Theirs was a victory of the weak over the strong, the few over the many, and the righteous over the arrogant. It was a victory for all ages.

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 Chanukah.

Praised are You, Adonai, our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this season.

The following blessing is included only on the first night of Chanukah:

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

The candles are placed in the Chanukah menorah from right to left and lit from left to right, so that the newest candle is lit first each night.

On Friday evening, the Chanukah candles are lit before the Shabbat candles. On Saturday night, the Chanukah candles are lit after Havdalah.
Rock of Ages, let our song praise Your saving power; You, amid the raging foes, were our sheltering tower. Furious they assailed us, but Your arm availed us, and Your word broke their sword, when our own strength failed us.

We kindle these lights because of the miracles and wonders, deliverances and victories You performed for our ancestors at this season in days long ago.

During these eight days of Chanukah these lights are sacred; we are not to make use of them, but only to behold them, so that their glow may rouse us to give thanks and praise Your great name for Your miracles, Your wonders, and Your deliverances.

For Chanukah songs, see page 553.

"Maoz Tzur"
by Mordechai ben Yitzchak HaLevi, 13th c.

From Sofrim 20

And God said, “Let there be light!” (Genesis 1:3)

For You light my lamp; the Eternal God makes bright my darkness.
(Psalm 18:29)
Tu BiShvat

Tu BiShvat, the fifteenth day of the month of Shevat, was established in Mishnaic times as the New Year of the Trees. During Shevat the almond trees begin to blossom in Israel. Caring for the earth is a mitzvah firmly established in the biblical account of creation, as it is written: “So God Eternal took Adam, placing him in the Garden of Eden to till it and tend it” (Genesis 2:15). Tu BiShvat is a minor festival, but widely celebrated now that Jews are once again free to plant in the land of Israel. The environmental movement also calls renewed attention to our responsibility to care for all the earth until it is restored to Eden.

And God said: “Look, I have given you all seed-bearing plants on the face of the earth, and every tree that has in it seed-bearing fruit—these are yours to eat. And to every land animal, and to every bird of the sky, and to all that creeps on the earth in which is the breath of life, I [give] all the green vegetation for food”—and so it was. God then surveyed all that God had made, and look—it was very good! And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai taught: “If a sapling were in your hand, and you were told that the Messiah had come, first plant the sapling, then go out and greet the Messiah.” (Avot D’Rabbi Natan 31b)

Rabbi Assi teaches that human beings are God’s partners in creation. One verse, referring to the third day of creation, says, “The earth brought forth vegetation:...” (Genesis 1:12), whereas the other verse, speaking of the sixth day, says, “... no shrub of the field was yet on earth ...” (Genesis 2:5). The verses, seemingly contradictory, teach us that plants commenced to grow [on the third day] but stopped just as they were about to break through the soil, until Adam [who was created on the sixth day] came and implored for mercy [i.e., rain] upon them; and when rain fell, they sprouted forth. (Babylonian Talmud, Chullin 60b)
Praise the Eternal, O my soul.
Adonai, my God, You are great indeed, clothed in grandeur and glory.

From Your lofty heights You water the mountains; the earth is replete with the fruit of Your labours. You make grass grow for cattle, fields for humankind to cultivate, and to bring forth bread from the earth. You make wine to cheer the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to sustain the human heart.

The trees of the Eternal drink their fill; the cedars of Lebanon, planted by God, are where birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the cypresses.

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

I will sing to the Eternal all my life; I will chant to my God with all my breath. Let my words be pleasing to God; I will rejoice in the Eternal.

Let offenders vanish from the earth, and the wicked be no more. Praise the Eternal, O my soul. Halleluyah!

The [biblical] prohibition against purposeless destruction of fruit trees around a besieged city is to be taken as only one example of general wastefulness. Under the concept of "you shall not destroy" ("גְּלֹלָה מִשְׁחַת"), the purposeless destruction of anything at all is taken to be forbidden.... Our text becomes the most comprehensive warning to human beings not to misuse the position which God has given them as masters of the world and its matter by capricious, passionate, or merely thoughtless, wasteful destruction of anything on earth. (Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch)
When seeing trees in bloom for the first time in the year:

Rabbi Yehudah declared: “In the spring when a person goes forth and sees beautiful trees swaying in the breeze, he should stop and offer a prayer.”

Praised are You, Adonai our God, who has created a world in which nothing is wanting, and who has fashioned living things and beautiful trees and plants to delight the hearts of humankind.

For other nature blessings, see page 464.

How can I sing of day and night, when it is God who formed them?

How can I sing of heaven and earth, when it is God who decreed them?

How can I sing of mountains and hills, when it is God who planted them?

How can I sing of seas and deserts, when it is God who begot them?

And how can I sing of earth and its fullness, when it is God who bade them be?

I shall sing to God who fashioned all and is beyond all; it is to God I shall sing!

Throughout all of this the tree remains my object and has its place and its time span, its kind and condition.

But it can also happen, if will and grace are joined, that as I contemplate the tree I am drawn into a relation, and the tree ceases to be an It....

The tree is no impression, no play of my imagination, no aspect of a mood; it confronts me bodily and has to deal with me as I must deal with it—only differently. (Martin Buber)

I contemplate a tree.

I can accept it as a picture: a rigid pillar in a flood of light, or splashes of green traversed by the gentleness of the blue silver ground.

I can feel it as movement: the flowing veins around the sturdy, striving core, the sucking of the roots, the breathing of the leaves, the infinite commerce with earth and air—and the growing itself in its darkness.

I can assign it to a species and observe it as an instance, with an eye to construction and its way of life....
Master of the Universe,
Grant me the ability to be alone;
may it be my custom to go outdoors each day
among the trees and grass,
among all growing things,
and there may I be alone,
and enter into prayer,
to talk with the One to whom I belong.
May I express there everything in my heart,
and may all the foliage of the field,
all grasses, trees, and plants,
may they all awake at my coming,
to send the powers of their life
into the words of my prayer,
so that my prayer and speech are made whole
through the life and the spirit of all growing things,
which are made as one
by their transcendent Source.

When you come to the land, you
shall plant every kind of fruit tree.
The tree of the field will give forth
its fruit and the land its produce.

Give thanks to the Eternal,
who is good.
*For God’s love is everlasting.*

When planting a tree, one may say:

Praised are You, Adonai our God,
Sovereign of the Universe, who has
created this tree and its fruit.

(“the tree of the field will give forth its fruit”) While the Sage,
Choni, was walking along a road, he saw a man
planting a carob tree. Choni asked him: “How
long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?”
“Seventy years,” replied the man.
Choni then asked: “Are you so healthy a man
that you expect to live that length of time and
eat its fruit?”

The man answered: “I found a fruitful world
because my ancestors planted it for me.
Likewise, I am planting for my children.”
(Babylonian Talmud, Ta’anit 23a)
Purim

When the month of Adar begins, our joy increases! (Babylonian Talmud, Ta’anit 29a)

Purim, the fourteenth day of Adar, is a day of merrymaking, a day of celebrating the defeat of Haman’s plot to annihilate the Jews of Persia. (The story is set during the period 486–465 B.C.E.) However, the laughter of Purim teeters on the edge of despair, for the Megillah of Esther suggests that Jewish destiny in the Diaspora is always on the brink of destruction—both from within and without. But in every time and place, human heroes like Esther and Mordechai emerge to signal to the Redeeming God that Jewish life must endure.

The following blessings are recited before the reading of the Scroll of Esther:

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

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this season.

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

For the Jews there was light and happiness, joy and honour. So may there be for us! (Havdalah prayer based on Esther 8:16)

מְגִלָּה (“Megillah”) In the time to come [the Messianic Age] all the other texts of the books of Prophets and Writings will lose their worth; only the Torah of Moses and Scroll of Esther will retain their value. (Jerusalem Talmud, Megillah 1:7)

When all the other festivals will become superfluous [in Messianic times], Purim will remain. (Midrash Mishlei 9:2)
Following the reading of the Megillah:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who pleaded our case and defended our cause. You have ever been our deliverance, our hope in every generation. Those who trust in You shall never be shamed or humiliated. Praised are You, the God of deliverance.

A Song of Ascents for David.

Were it not for the Eternal, who was with us, let Israel now declare:

Were it not for the Eternal God who was with us when mortals rose against us, they would have swallowed us alive when anger burned against us.

The waters would have overwhelmed us and the torrent swept over us; they would have swept over us, the raging waters.

Praised be the Eternal God, who has not given us as prey for their teeth.

From Psalm 124

“A Song of Ascents for David.

Were it not for the Eternal, who was with us, let Israel now declare:

Were it not for the Eternal God who was with us when mortals rose against us, they would have swallowed us alive when anger burned against us.

The waters would have overwhelmed us and the torrent swept over us; they would have swept over us, the raging waters.

Praised be the Eternal God, who has not given us as prey for their teeth.”

(“shall never be shamed”) The four Rabbinic mitzvot assigned to Purim are to hear the Megillah, to eat a festive meal, to send gifts of food to friends, and to send gifts to support the poor.

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Our life is like a bird escaped from the fowler’s trap; the trap was broken and we escaped.

Our help is in the name of the Eternal who made heaven and earth.

For I will save you from afar, and your descendants from their land of exile.

And Jacob will return tranquil and serene, with none to make them afraid.

Make your plans— they will be annulled; scheme against us— it will not avail, for God is with us.

כִּי עִמָּֽנוּ אֵל (for God is with us) Then Esther, the queen, overwhelmed with deadly anxiety, fled to the Eternal; she took off her splendid clothing and put on garments of distress and mourning, and instead of the rarest perfumes, she covered her head with ashes, and every part that she delighted to adorn she covered with her tangled hair.

And she prayed to the Eternal and said: “My Lord, our King, You stand alone; help me who am alone, and have no helper but You; for my danger is in my hand. Adonai, do not give up Your sceptre to those who have no being, and do not let them mock at our fall, but turn their plan against themselves, and make an example of the man who has begun this against us. Remember, Adonai, make Yourself known in this time of our affliction and give me courage. Put eloquent speech in my mouth, before this lion, and change his heart to hate the man who is fighting against us, so that there may be an end of him and of those who support him. But save us by Your hand, and help me, who stand alone, and have no one but You, Adonai. (Excerpt from “The Prayer of Esther,” Chapter 14:1–19 of the apocryphal “Additions to the Book of Esther”)