Kol Haneshamah

Shabbat Veḥagim

THIRD EDITION

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Commentators

At the end of each section in the commentary, the authors’ initials appear. Their full names are:

Rachel Adler                      Hershel Matt
Ronald S. Aigen                   Eric Mendelsohn
Devora Bartnoff                    Marcia Ptages
Leila Gal Berner                  Seth D. Riemer
Martin Buber                      Joel Rosenberg
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Kathy Green                       Rami M. Shapiro
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See also SOURCES, pages 855-873, for citations of previously published materials.
PREFACE

This new siddur reflects the work of a dedicated group of editors and Commission members, as well as thousands of thoughtful responses to its predecessor Kol Haneshamah: Erev Shabbat, by Reconstructionist laypeople and rabbis. It draws upon the talents of a myriad of nameless Jewish liturgists as well as many dozens of poets and commentators. Joe Blair, Lillian Kaplan, David Golomb, Allan Abrahams, David Steinberg and Shoshee Larkey have helped with proofreading. Arthur Green has been an invaluable advisor in forming the Hebrew text. Mel Scult has provided comments from the published and unpublished writing of Mordecai Kaplan. Seth Riemer has helped faithfully with liturgical research, literary permissions, paste-ups and other editorial tasks. Cantors David Tilman and Elizabeth Bolton have guided my choices of nusah and zmirot. Ezra Spiechandler graciously consulted regarding Hebrew poetry. Alvin Schultzberg of The Town House Press has guided the book’s design, typesetting and printing. Deborah Brin and Lee Friedlander have again served brilliantly in selecting readings. Joel Rosenberg has brought his wondrous poet’s ear to the task of translation. Betsy Platkin Teutsch has again enhanced the book through her artistic vision. Reena Spiechandler has labored diligently and good naturedly for years in developing the book’s manuscript. Mordechai Liebling has managed the finances and distribution of the volume.

Others who have helped include: Sheryl Beegal, Jeremy Brochin, Dee Einhorn, Ari Elon, Wendy Gabay, Evie Gechman, Bob Gluck, Emanuel Goldsmith, Rebecca Lillian, Lani Moss, Adina Newberg, Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Jacob Staub, Max Ticktin, Mary Wainstein, Muriel Weiss, Elie Wise, and Phyllis Zeeman.

xi / PREFACE
Those who utilize this book owe their gratitude to those mentioned here and to countless others who have worked on this book and its predecessors. They have all been of immeasurable aid, but responsibility for the decisions concerning this Prayerbook and for any errors it may contain rests solely with the Prayerbook Commission and its chair.

Praised are you, Yah, our God, sovereign of all worlds, who has kept us alive, and sustained us, and brought us to this time.

D.A.T.

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INTRODUCTION

The Reconstructionist Press now proudly presents this next volume in the Kol Haneshamah series, Shabbat Ve’lagim. This prayerbook has been profoundly influenced by the hundreds of detailed responses to the experimental Erev Shabbat siddur that preceded it. Together with the soon to be published daily prayerbook, the forthcoming High Holiday prayerbook and the already published Shirim Uvrahot, this volume is part of the complete cycle of liturgy that comprises Kol Haneshamah. While the Kol Haneshamah series strives to meet the needs of contemporary Jews, it stands in the tradition of earlier Reconstructionist liturgy.

When the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation first published the Sabbath Prayer Book in 1945, it was a revolutionary event. In fact, a picture of some rabbis who burned it as heresy appeared on the front page of the New York Times. That book plays a critical part in the legacy of the first generation of Reconstructionists. It rests on four principles: reverence for the traditional siddur; use of the vast literature of Judaism; cognizance of contemporary problems and aspirations; and courage to produce new liturgy and edit the traditional liturgy in order to be true to contemporary Jewish sensibilities and moral vision.

The series of prayerbooks launched in 1945 deleted references to Jewish chosenness, to Mashiah ben David (Messiah son of David), to hope for the reinstitution of sacrifices, to individual reward and punishment, and to bodily resurrection. It assumed that not every word of Scripture is factual and divinely ordained. Those prayerbooks, edited by Mordecai Kaplan, Eugene Kohn, Ira Eisenstein, Ludwig Nadelmann, Jack J. Cohen, and Milton Steinberg, have provided an invaluable legacy to this generation of worshippers. The new prayerbook remains faithful to these principles. In fact, they helped to inspire the current
generation's efforts by asserting that each generation should act in light of its own Jewish sensibilities, moral strivings, exploration of inherited tradition and spiritual search.

The situation of North American Jewry has changed remarkably since the 1940s. Then Jews were struggling to assimilate into North American society. Today many North Americans are trying to find their way into Judaism. In the 1940s the horror of the Holocaust and the emergence of the State of Israel had not yet redefined the Jewish sense of self, and the ethnic awakening of Jews had not yet begun. The language of prayer had not yet been affected by the growing informality of American manners. Changes in women's roles had not yet had a major influence. There was no way of anticipating the smaller groups that would join in prayer, the return to lay leadership in worship, and the growing desire for a sense of inclusion. Large congregations have also been revitalized by these trends. Many of the metaphors found in prayer were considered necessary conventions by those who had grown up with them. Today many Jews prefer other metaphors.

English usage, too, has changed considerably in the last forty years. Thus there was substantial agreement about the need to change. That change was guided by the Reconstructionist Prayerbook Commission.

The composition of the Prayerbook Commission is noteworthy. For the first time in Jewish history, the body overseeing the development of a Jewish prayerbook series contains a roughly equal number of rabbis and laypeople, as well as equal involvement of men and women. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association and the Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot appointed Commission members with the intention of representing the diverse views and practices of those who will use the new books. The lively discussions of the Commission often grew out of efforts to
understand the differing sensibilities of its members and to make room for them within the prayerbooks while maintaining the coherence of the prayerbooks as a unified liturgy.

The broad acceptance of the experimental Erev Shabbat volume, in its third printing as this siddur is published, evidences the growing constituency comfortable with Kol Haneshamah’s approach to liturgy. These are Jews who are finding their way to fuller Jewish lives despite scanty Jewish educations and scarce memories of powerful experiences of worship and ritual. They are discovering for themselves the treasures of learning and action, spiritual discipline and ritual in Judaism. Fears that more traditional worship styles inevitably carry with them more traditional theology have been put to rest.

The members of the Editorial Committee worked individually on the areas assigned them, with the product of their efforts coming back to the Prayerbook Commission for comment. The Editorial Committee has not only brought an extraordinary array of knowledge, skills and insights to bear on the project; it has brought varied spiritual lives and personal tastes as well. Furthermore, its members have been tolerant of the Prayerbook Commission’s need to retain editorial control. We have aimed to produce a book with a central core that unifies through style and basic theological assumptions while allowing the multi-vocal nature of the collective enterprise of Jewish prayer to emerge. What that has meant in more specific terms can be illustrated by looking at the individual parts of the prayerbook.

HEBREW. The new Hebrew text was shaped by several influences: The Sephardic and Ashkenazic texts of Kabbalat Shabbat, the theological considerations that frame Reconstructionism, and the recent additions to the service from around the world. Hebrew texts that were omitted for non-theological reasons in the first Reconstructionist prayerbook

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have been restored. Sections of the Song of Songs, traditionally recited on Friday evening, have been added to Kabhalat Shabbat, providing rich and vivid imagery. Several newly composed texts, including an additional version of the Aleynu, have been added. They respond to several needs: to include suitable references to the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel, to further explicate the movement’s commitment to pluralism and universalism, and to respond to lessons learned from feminism. Some of these changes are subtle, and some add options. The result is Hebrew text suitable for use either by itself or in conjunction with English translation and readings. Where it is traditional for the cantor or service leader to begin chanting a prayer, an asterisk has been placed in the Hebrew text.

TRANSLITERATION. Since a prayerbook is of little use if it is not accessible, and since many who could grow into its use have virtually no Hebrew language skills, transliteration has been placed adjacent to the Hebrew. All the parts of the service that are frequently sung are transliterated. That is done as a bridge for newcomers, encouraging their participation in worship. It is hoped that such participation will inspire people to learn Hebrew for themselves: Full participation in Jewish culture requires Hebrew literacy.

COMMENTARY. A large number of those who will use the new prayerbook have little knowledge of the structure or history of the siddur. In many cases they have had little opportunity to experience prayer as deeply moving and life-shaping. The commentary addresses that reality in several ways. It points out the underlying structure of the liturgy. It notes places where the new siddur differs from earlier prayerbooks and explains why. It provides contemporary interpretations and applications of the traditional liturgy and explores the meaning of particular terms and literary forms. The commentary will help to open the prayerbook to people who might otherwise find communal worship alienating, or who find private prayer

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incomprehensible. It can help all of us to continue learning about the liturgy.

The explanations at the bottom of the page are divided into six categories: Comments beginning with Hebrew words explain the meaning of those words. Notes are short explanations. Commentary discusses liturgical structure, literary forms and the meaning of particular prayers. Kavanot and Guided Meditations are intended to shape the spiritual intention, the inner direction with which prayers are spoken. Derash is a homiletical form that makes a moral point or provides a popular interpretation.

TRANSLATION. Influenced by the power of the King James translation of the Bible and by a desire for grandeur and majesty in worship, prayerbook translations in English have had an archaic flavor about them until quite recently. Moving toward a contemporary, vivid, yet elegant translation required the hand of a poet steeped in Jewish tradition and American idiom. Dr. Joel Rosenberg’s extraordinary efforts were complicated by the decision to make the translation completely gender-neutral. This and similar problems were resolved by complex interpretations weaving together the poetic, the theological, and the midrashic. These sources provided the foundation from which the new translation emerged.

The most difficult translation issue is the question of God-language. The classical translation of the Sản name of God is Lord, a masculine noun that does not work because of its gender. It does not work as living imagery. Furthermore, it is not consistent with a theology that stresses God’s immanence—God made manifest through human action, through nature, and through the workings of the human heart. After a careful review of the responses to the experimental Erev Shabbat book and lengthy discussion among members of the Commission, a decision was reached. Everywhere that the Tetragrammaton or Adonay appears in Hebrew, a descriptive name of God appears in

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half-caps in the English translation. Several reasons underlie this decision: It solves the problem that many people have in relating to “Lord.” It conveys some of the complexity and freshness of Jewish metaphors that refer to the divine. By explicating the many ways that God’s presence is made manifest in Jewish liturgy, this mode of translation encourages every worshipper to become aware of the elements of the divine infused in all the many parts of our lives and our world. The use of these many metaphors is also meant to suggest that no words are adequate for naming or containing the divine. All the images together point to a reality beyond themselves.

READINGS. The readings in the prayerbook are selected with attention to significant literary quality, to clarity and complexity, to their ability to evoke images and feelings, and to their ability to remain meaningful with repeated use. The readings are not didactic; they are meant to help us discover what is ready to be revealed within ourselves.

Furthermore, the readings play an important role by providing a counterbalance to the Hebrew. Changing huge sections of the Hebrew liturgy would sever our roots in traditional prayer. So missing themes must find their place elsewhere, and the additional readings are a natural place for them. For example, the voices of women emerge in the readings. That has not meant strained jargon or a separatist viewpoint, but rather the expression of hopes and perceptions that all can grow into sharing. This is a transitional time in the formation of prayer communities. We affirm the need for continued change and recognize that it will carry both the English and the Hebrew of the siddur far beyond what we in our lifetimes will witness. Still, we hope that some of what we have done will become a lasting part of Jewish tradition.

No prayerbook’s readings can be expected to be comprehensive. They cannot reflect the continuously changing panorama
of world events, or reflect every mood, insight, or theological nuance. Congregations should seek out additional readings that meet the needs of the liturgical moment or speak strongly to a particular congregation. Many of these prayers, which may work wonderfully once but not hold up to repeated use, should be made available within the congregation in a nonpermanent format. We hope that leaders will choose to use the readings here often and still recognize that a continuous search for supplemental sources will enrich the liturgical experience.

SONGS. For many, singing provides a sense of belonging and active participation in public worship. Because of the size of the volume, no musical notations have been included here. For musical notation, see Kol Haneshamah: Shirim Uvrahui, for which there is also an audio tape. In addition, audio tapes of the nusah (music for chanting and singing the liturgy) are available for the entirety of this volume.

MEDITATIONS. The guided meditations and Shiviti drawings are tools for inner exploration. Restoring silence and wordless melody to worship should enrich the prayer experience.

DESIGN. The design of this prayerbook highlights the meaning of the text and suggests fresh ways of thinking about it. Design should enhance the text rather than compete with it. Most of the artwork in this siddur is calligraphic because representational art has not been a frequently used Jewish form. While including artwork in a siddur is uncommon, it reflects a deep commitment to all aspects of Jewish civilization. That commitment has been the hallmark of the Reconstructionist movement.

The overall appearance of a prayerbook contributes to the aesthetic experience. We have done our best to produce clean, spare pages. They are meant to be both highly readable and pleasing to the eye. In general, we have placed the Hebrew on the left side of the page rather than on the customary right. This is done partly for aesthetic reasons and partly to allow the

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beginnings of the lines to be near each other for those moving back and forth between Hebrew and English. We feel confident that once people move beyond their initial surprise, they will quickly feel comfortable with the layout.

A User's Guide. The design of this siddur makes it easy to use. Relatively inexperienced service leaders and daveners should find that the rubrics guide them smoothly through such questions as: Where do I stand or sit? Where can I put extra readings? Which themes belong where? We hope that the siddur's rubrics will provide a sufficient guide to use, but we recognize that local minhagim (customs) vary so widely that all of them could not possibly be mentioned. We hope that differing local customs will continue to flourish.

A Collective Of Distinctive Individuals. By now it should be clear that the commentators and editors who worked on the various sections of the prayerbook had different charges. I believe that this process has produced a book in which many voices can be heard. No effort has been made to mute the distinctiveness of those voices. The members of the choir, however, were selected with an ear to the range and timbre of their voices. The distinctiveness of the soloists at any moment is therefore compatible with the liturgical choir. It will be up to each sheliah tzibur (service leader) to decide which voices should be heard on any given day. The wide range of choices should allow each congregation to use the new prayerbook in a way continuous with previous congregational practice. It is hoped that the book will also stimulate congregations and minyanim to try new things, to stretch themselves a bit. The prayerbook was never a homogenized entity. It always included the voices of theists and panentheists, mystics and scholars, pietists and traditionalists. That multi-vocality is just as present in our book. We hope that your voice, too, will be heard in the prayers that fly off the new siddur's pages.

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KOL HANESHAMAH. The name of this prayerbook series comes from Psalm 150—Kol haneshamah tehaléh Yah that is often translated, “Let every soul praise God.” But kol haneshamah could also mean, “all the soul.” Let it be the soul’s voice that offers praise. These are our hopes for this book. Let everyone who opens it find here the means to praise God. Let those who use it regularly fill their souls with the divine. And let us together give voice to the divine in ways that transform us and our world.

DAVID A. TEUTSCH
Chair, Prayerbook Commission
January 1994

PUBLISHER’S NOTE

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Reconstructing Judaism is the central organization of the Reconstructionist movement. We train the next generation of rabbis, support and uplift congregations and havurot, foster emerging expressions of Jewish life, and encourage people to be their best selves — always helping to shape what it means to be Jewish today and to imagine the Jewish future. Visit us online at ReconstructingJudaism.org.

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Reconstructionist Press
1299 Church Road
Wyncote, PA 19095

Email: books@reconstructingjudaism.org
Web: www.JewishReconBooks.org
Phone 215.576.0800
Fax 215.576.6143

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NOTES ON USAGE

Hebrew Pronunciation. The pronunciation in this book follows current Israeli usage. Accordingly, Hebrew words are accented on the final syllable unless otherwise noted. Where the stress is not on the last syllable of a word, the stressed syllable is marked with a caret ('). In biblical passages where there are cantillation marks, those marks replace the caret in marking the stressed syllable. The kamatz katan (pronounced “o” as in “store”) is marked with this sign: ך.

Transliteration. Where Hebrew words are not accented on the final syllable, this is indicated by underlining the accented syllable in the transliteration. Use of periods and capital letters roughly follows Hebrew sentence structure. Generally, no other punctuation will occur. Below is a table of Hebrew letters and vowels with their English equivalents.

Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>נ</td>
<td>(not pronounced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ב</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ו</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ג (as in “go”)</td>
<td>g</td>
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<tr>
<td>ד</td>
<td>d</td>
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<tr>
<td>ה</td>
<td>h</td>
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<tr>
<td>ו</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ז (as in “Zion”)</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ח (as in “ha-“)</td>
<td>ch</td>
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<tr>
<td>ט</td>
<td>t</td>
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<tr>
<td>י</td>
<td>y</td>
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<tr>
<td>כ</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ח (as in “bara-“)</td>
<td>kh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Vowels

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{x} / \text{x} & \quad \text{x} / \text{x} & \quad \text{e (as in “bed”)} \\
\text{x} / \text{x} / & \quad \text{x} / \text{x} & \quad \text{a (as in “are”)} \\
\text{x} / & \quad \text{x} / \text{x} / & \quad \text{o (as in “store”)} \\
\text{x} / & \quad \text{x} & \quad \text{u (as in “put”)} \\
\text{x} / & \quad \text{x} & \quad \text{i (as in “sit”)} \\
\end{align*} \]

Diphthongs and Glides

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{x} / \text{nx} / & \quad \text{nx} / \text{nx} & \quad \text{ey (as in “they”)} \\
\text{x} & \quad \text{x} & \quad \text{ay (as in “bayou”)} \\
\text{u} & \quad \text{uwi} (u + i, pronounced rapidly together) \\
\text{y} & \quad \text{oy (as in “toy”)} \\
\end{align*} \]

Those transliterations that have become accepted as standard or familiar English have not been changed. Examples: Shabbat, siddur, sukkah, Kiddush. In these cases the doubling of the middle consonant has been kept even though the system of transliteration used here does not require it.

* Indicates where it is traditional for the cantor or service leader to begin chanting in a prayer.

\[ \text{← and → indicate that a prayer continues on the next page.} \]
קבלה שבת
The Kabbalat Shabbat service was created by the Kabbalists (Jewish mystics) of Safed in the sixteenth century and was almost universally accepted by Jewish communities. Though a relatively recent innovation in Jewish liturgy, it probably springs from ancient customs such as those of R. Hanina and R. Yanay (third century Palestine). The Talmud records that at sunset on Shabbat eve, R. Hanina would stand dressed in fine garments and say, “Come, let us go forth to welcome the Sabbath queen.” R. Yanay, in festive attire, would exclaim, “Come, Oh bride! Come, Oh bride!”

The augmented version of Kabbalat Shabbat presented here is intended to offer variety within a traditional form of worship. The prayer-leader (shelihah tzibur) should construct a service by selecting elements from among the introductory hymns, passages from the Song of Songs, Psalms, and additional readings to be found below. For additional readings see pages 732-766.

A.G./S.S.

 Wrested. As God created for six days, so too do we labor. Just before Shabbat—the time of divine and human rest—begins, some of us engage in tzedakah to complete the work of renewing creation. The root letters of the word tzedakah translate as “justice” or “righteousness.” By giving to those in need, we help to right a wrong and thus share responsibility for creation. In some homes the pushka or tzedakah box stands next to the Shabbat candles to receive the last coins of our workday lives.

Some families may direct their tzedakah to a particular charity, organization, or cause. Family discussion and reconsideration of choices from time to time may heighten the meaning of the act. Some households create their own pushka and adorn it with biblical verses and illustration.

Rabbi Elazar would always give a coin to a poor person before praying. In explanation he would quote, “I shall behold your face betzedek, in righteousness” (Psalm 17:15).

B.W./K.G.

1 / TZEDAKAH
HADLAKAT NEROT SHABBAT / LIGHTING SHABBAT CANDLES

Candles are traditionally lit in the home. Many communities also light candles together at the beginning of the Kabbalat Shabbat service. For additional readings, see pages 732, 735-737, 797. On Shabbat Hanukah the Hanukah candles (page 672) are lit prior to the Shabbat candles.

To light candles in all the worlds—
that is Shabbat.
To light Shabbat candles
is a soul-lcap pregnant with potential
into a splendid sea, in it the mystery
of the fire of sunset.
Lighting the candles transforms
my room into a river of light,
my heart sets in an emerald waterfall.

* * *

As the great doors of night are opening
we come into the clean quiet room of Shabhat.
Let us be thankful, as we light these candles
like eyes of holiness, for this moment of peace.

Let us savor the fruit of the vine,
the blood of the earth that quickens us.

Let us be thankful for grain, fruit of grasses
that feed the cow, the gazelle and us.

Let us be grateful for the children and the work
of the week that are our own fruitfulness.

Let us as we eat never forget that food comes
from the earth we must cherish and heal
through labor we must respect and reward.

Marge Piercy

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 2
Candles are traditionally lit in the home. Many communities also light candles together at the beginning of the Kabbalat Shabbat service. On Shabbat Hanukkah the Hanukkah candles are lit prior to the Shabbat candles.

NOTE. While minimally we light two new Shabbat candles, we may choose to light more. Some families light a candle for each member.

The physical motions associated with candlelighting are unique to each of us and take on individual meaning. Some lift their hands over the flames and toward themselves as though drawing the light of Shabbat into themselves. Others lift their hands over the flames six times as though to incorporate each day of the week into Shabbat.

Many people cover their eyes while saying the blessing. In this way they maintain the customary order of blessing before acting—they delay their enjoyment of the lights. Covering the eyes also symbolizes our need to avert our eyes from the blinding light of the divine.

Many of us set aside the contemplative moments before and after candlelighting as a time for our own private prayers and intentions.

B.W./K.G./D.A.T.

3/ HADLAKAT NEROT SHABBAT/LIGHTING SHABBAT CANDLES
The candles are now lit. After candle-lighting, the following blessing is recited:

Blessed are you, SOURCE OF LIGHT, our God, sovereign of all worlds, who has made us holy with your mitzvot, and commanded us to kindle the Shabbat light.

* * *

Blessed is the match that’s consumed in kindling a flame.
Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret depths of the heart.

Hannah Senes (translator unknown)

* * *

Almighty God,
Grant me and all my loved ones
A chance truly to rest on this Shabbat.
May the light of the candles drive out from among us
The spirit of anger, the spirit of harm.
Send your blessings to my children,
That they may walk in the ways of your Torah, your light.

Shas Tkhines (translator unknown)

YEDID NEFESH / SOUL BELOVED

* Transliteration can be found on page 9.
* This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew

You who love my soul,
Sweet source of tenderness
Take my inner nature
And shape it to your will.
Like a darting deer
I will flee to you.
Before your glorious presence
Humbly do I bow.
Let your sweet love
Delight me with its thrill.
Because no other dainty
Will my hunger still.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 4
The candles are now lit. After candlelighting, the following blessing is recited:

כברח אתנה יהוה אלהינו פֹּלֶחְנוּ פֹּלֶחְנֵה יָשָׁרְנוּ נּוֹקָּקָנוּ
בְּמַצָּהָתָה לְצָנָנוּ לְחָרְלוּתָנוּ יִשָּׁרְנוּ שְׁבָתָנוּ:

Baruh atah adonay eloheynu melech ha’olam asher kideshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu lehadlik ner shel shabbat.

Many contemporary Jews are reciting berahot/blessings in ways that reflect their theological outlooks and ethical concerns. At any place where a blessing occurs in the liturgy the following elements can be combined to create alternative formulas for berahot. This can be done by selecting one phrase from each group to form the introductory clause.

I
Baruh atah adonay
Blessed are you Adonay
Berulah at yah
ברוך אתה יהוה
Blessed are you Yah
Nevareh et
נברך את
Let us bless

II
eloeheynu
אלהינו
our God
hashebinah
השכינה
Shehinah
cyn hayayim
 cinéֵי הַיָּמוֹן
Source of Life

III
melech ha’olam
מלך העולם
Sovereign of all worlds
hey ha’olamim
יה נבלם
Life of all the worlds
ru’ah ha’olam
רוח נפש
Spirit of the world

5 / HADLAKAT NEROT SHABBAT/LIGHTING SHABBAT CANDLES
How splendid is your light
Which worlds do reflect!
My soul is worn from craving
For your love’s delight.
Please, good God, do heal her
And show to her your face,
So my soul can see you
And bathe in your grace.
There she will find strength
And healing in this sight.
Her joy will be complete then,
Eternal her delight.

What pity stirs in you
Since days of old, my God!
Be kind to me your own child
Forgotten by your love.
For long and longing hours
I yearned for your embrace.

**COMMENTARY.** _Yedid Nefesh_ was written by Rabbi Eleazar Azikri of Safed. A love song of the soul to God, it achieved great popularity in Sephardic communities, where it was included in the daily prayerbook. Hasidic custom adopted it for use as an introduction to Shabbat. The poet speaks to God in most intimate terms as lover and parent, but also as shining light of the universe. The longing for God is fulfilled for “the time has come” as God spreads over the world the great _sukkat shalom_, canopy of peace, which is Shabbat.

The traditional Hebrew text of _Yedid Nefesh_ presented here differs in several places from Azikri’s original. Most notably, this version substitutes in the second verse “Eternal her delight” for “She shall be your handmaiden forever.” Here tradition seems to have improved on the author’s work!

_A.G._

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 6
7 / YEDID NEFESH/SOUL BELOVED
To see my light in your light
Basking in your grace.
My heart’s desire is
To harmonize with yours
Do not conceal your pity
Hide not that light of yours.

Help, my lover, spread
Your canopy of peace,
Enfold all human beings.
Give all pain surcease.
Your presence on this earth plane
Do make known to us
And we shall respond then
With song and with dance.
Rush, my love, be quick,
The time for love has come,
Let your gentle favor
Grace us as of old.

Eleazar Azikri (translated by Zalman Schachter-Shalomi)

COMMENTARY. The first letter of each verse spells out יהוה, the four-letter name of God. That name subsumes and unites all the descriptions which Jewish tradition has evolved in its quest for the divine. Jews may once have commonly pronounced יהוה, but they have avoided doing so since at least the third century B.C.E. The traditional vocalization “Yahweh” can be understood as, “He causes to exist,” or just, “He is!” It also resembles God’s enigmatic words to Moses at the burning bush: “Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh—I Am Who I am” (Exodus 3:14). Thus יהוה hints at the absurdity of assigning a name to an ineffable divinity.

M.P.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 8
Yedid nefesh av harahaman meshosh avdeha el retzoneha
Yarutz avdeha kemo ayal yishlahaveh el mul hadareha.
Te'erav lo yediduteheh minofet tzuf vehol ta'am.

Hadur na'eh ziv ha'olam nasehi holat ahavateha.
Ana el na refa na lah beharat lah no'am ziveha.
Az ti'hazek vetitrapeh vehayetah lah simhat olam.

Vatik yehemnu na rahameha vehusah na al ben ahuyeha.
Ki zeh hamah nihsf nihsfti lirot betiferet uzeha.
Eleh hamdah libi husah na ve'al titalam.

Higaleh na ufros havivi alay et sukkat shelomeha.
Ta'er etrez mikevodeha nagilah venismeheh bah.
Maher ahuv ki va mo'ed vehonenu kimey olam.

A quotation from Moses's prayer to heal Miriam, "God, please heal her" (Numbers 12:13). God is sought as the source of spiritual healing—soul healing. In union with the divine we find release from the pain of the futile cycle of searching and disappointment. Shabbat is our refuge of acceptance, our shelter from cravings and strivings. 

DERASH. Our yearning for salvation is the human form of the will to live, which is cosmic and characteristic of all living beings. In our case the will to live is the will to abundant and harmonious living...Human nature is part of the larger world of nature, and our salvation can only be conceived as a manifestation of a divine power both within and beyond us.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

/eleh hamdah libi/ is a corruption of the original/el i mahmad libi/. My God, my heart's beloved. The popular version, while grammatically difficult, offers a clear sense of surrender, a central motif of religious love poetry. All I want, O my God, is to be near you and to feel your presence. These are the only things my heart desires.

A.G.

9 / YEDID NEFESH/SOUL BELOVED
SHABBAT HAMALKAH /
THE SHABBAT QUEEN

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

The sun on the treetops no longer is seen;
Come, gather to welcome the Sabbath, our queen!

Behold her descending, the holy, the blessed,
And with her the angels, of peace and of rest.

Draw near, O queen, and here abide;
Draw near, draw near, O Sabbath bride.

Peace be unto you, O angels of peace.

Hayim Nahman Bialik (adapted from a translation by A. Irma Colbon)

NOTE. Shabbat Hamalkah is the work of Hayim Nahman Bialik, the great poet of the Hebrew national revival. His poem, like Yedid Nefesh, was not originally written for the synagogue, but it has achieved great popularity as a song of welcome to Shabbat.

A.G.
Haḥamah merosh ha’ilanot nistalekha.
Bo’u venetzey likrat shabbat hamalkah.
Hiney hi yoredet hakedoshah haberuḥah.
Ve’imah malahım rzeva shalom umn乎ah.
Bo’i bo’i hamalkah, bo’i bo’i hakalah.
Shalom aleyhem malaḥey hashalom.

11 / SHABBAT HAMALKAH/ THE SHABBAT QUEEN
SHALOM ALEYHEM

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

Welcome among us, messengers of shalom,
angels of the Highest One,
from deep within us, Majesty of majesties,
the blessed Holy One.

Come, then, in shalom,
blessing us with shalom,
leaving us with holy shalom,
from deep within us, Majesty of majesties,
the blessed Holy one.

translated by Burt Jacobson

Angels are another name for feelings.
When we love and act with kindness
we create angels of love and kindness;
when we hate and act with violence
we create angels of hatred and violence.
It is our job to fill our world with angels of love:
 messengers of kindness
that link people together as one family.

R.M.S.

COMMENTARY. Shalom Aleyhem is the best-known and most beloved of all
 the Sabbath hymns. Its simple words are a greeting to the angels of peace
 who come to dwell with us on Shabbat. The Hebrew word malah actually
 means “messenger” and is used in the Bible for both heavenly and earthly
 emissaries. All of us on Shabbat can become malahey shalom or messengers
 of peace to one another as we share our inner quiet and joy in this day.
 We sing this welcome to introduce the Shabbat meal, a time of festive
 rejoicing in the fullness of rest and in our sharing with one another. A.G.
שלום עליכם
שלום עליכם מלךיכים נשטרה מלכיך צליון
מלכי מלכי מלכיכה חורש ברוח הוא:
מואכים İşשלום מלךיכיوضלום מלכיך צליון
מלכי מלכי מלכיכה חורש ברוח הוא:
ברうちに יששלום מלךיכיوضלום מלכיך צליון
מלכי מלכי מלכיכה חורש ברוח הוא:
אמאוכי ישלם מלךיכיوضלום מלכיך צליון
מלכי מלכי מלכיכה חורש ברוח הוא:

Shalom aleyhem malahey hasharey malahey elyon
mimelech malyey hamalaheim hakadosh baruh hu.

Bo’alem leshalom malahey hashalom malahey elyon
mimelech malyey hamelaheim hakadosh baruh hu.

Barehuni leshalom malahey hashalom malahey elyon
mimelech malyey hamelaheim hakadosh baruh hu.

Tzethem leshalom malahey hashalom malahey elyon
mimelech malyey hamelaheim hakadosh baruh hu.

13 / SHALOM ALEYHEM
SHIR HASHIRIM / THE SONG OF SONGS

Select from among the following:

The Song of Songs, ascribed to Solomon.

He kisses me, full kisses with his mouth.
Yes, better is your love than wine, [I say,]
Oh, the aroma of your balm!
—a balsamum poured out: your name!
For such a thing the young girls love you.
Take me along with you, let’s run!

The king has brought me to his chambers:
We are gleeeful, we rejoice in you, [he says,]
we bring to mind your love
more than the finest wine,
yes, rightly they have loved you. 1:1-4

COMMENTARY. The historical origins of the love poems that comprise Shir Hashirim (The Song of Songs) is unknown. Were they simple shepherd love poetry, as they present themselves, or did they have a cultic setting in the distant pre-Israelite past, as some have suggested? The Kabbalists prescribed the recitation of the Song of Songs at Kabbalat Shabbat. They saw it as a love poem between the blessed Holy One and the Shekinah, or the male and female elements within divinity. Only in the union of these two can divine blessing flow into the world, giving us the enjoyment of Shabbat peace.

A.G.

NOTE. The translator, hearing a play on words in Hebrew, uses the spice name “balsamum” because of its likeness in sound to “Solomon.” King Solomon is the reputed author of Shir Hashirim.

J.R.
Select from among the following:

She'ir Hashirim Acher Leshamah

משגיים מעשיכוה פיהו
כמ-מרבה זריח מגן
לירא משכנות טובים
שמא חירך שמח
על-ואר אלמנת אהבה
משכני אמותי והוה
הגמיו הפיל Хотרי
נבילה וה(jj)וחת פי
והלך זרה כנין
משה רבי פלך

COMMENTARY. The term She'hinah is an expansion of the biblical concept of Kevod HaShem א-כד, the manifest presence of God. In post-biblical literature She'hinah, which derives from the root ושין, to dwell, came to mean the feminine, in-dwelling experience of God. Jewish mystical literature elaborated this image of the She'hinah as feminine. Mystics thus saw the unity of the divine realm as dependent upon the healing union of God's transcendent (masculine) and immanent (feminine) aspects. It was believed that the people Israel can promote this healing through prayer and Torah. The rabbis understood this union between masculine and feminine, God and Israel, King and She'hinah, to be at the heart of Shir Hashirim.

M.P.

15 / SHIR HASHIRIM/THE SONG OF SONGS
My love called out to me, and said:
    “Rise up, dear mate, my lovely one,
    and come forth. Look! The chill has fled.
The rain has passed, has gone its way,
    and blossoms have appeared upon the land.
The pruning time has come,
    and chortling doves are heard around our land.
The figs have livened up their hue,
    the vines have given forth their fruit’s bouquet.
Rise up, dear mate, my lovely one,
    come out! My dove, you who are nestled
in the cranny of the rock,
    in the hollow of the step’s ascent,
show me your form, and let me hear your voice,
    for oh, how sweet your voice,
    and oh, how fine your form!
Go catch us foxes, little foxes,
    vineyard wreckers, in our fruit-filled vineyard!”
“My love is mine, and I am his,
who browses in the lotus patch.
Before the day has breathed its last
    and shadows have all fled,
come ’round and strike a pose, my love,
    of a gazelle, or of a young buck
of the rams, out on a mountain cleft.”  

2:10-17

COMMENTARY. Jewish sources have understood Shir Hashirim as a love dialogue between the community of Israel and its God. According to midrash,* Israel is the beautiful dark servant-girl coming forth from the wilderness after she is redeemed from Egypt. She and her divine lover seek one another, whisper terms of endearment, call out in voices of longing, and rejoice as they approach their sacred union. To Rabbi Akiva is attributed the astonishing assertion, “All of Scripture is holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies!”

A.G.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 16
שנה וזוים דקירה על זהים בציר פנים.
ולכל אחר: ונכון שהשנים,
珩גוש תקף צרים ל: משנים ואריך בציר.
אך.concurrentness רוחות тот הוחזר שמשה באורן.
המאגר ממקל פסיק
והשנים: הסדרות הנקראות
זכור על, רוחות מצרי
ולכל אחר: דוגמ
במקרהنقص את המספר המפורש
נאותי: את שמו ואתモデルית
והם: את מספרם שמשלים צרכים
ופ setHiddenו עכבר ומכיר
ודיר ולאיים.
והשנים: עד שמהת הים
 användה ציון
וכל חמה-לב: דוגמה
ולא ולפי המ בשביל
של תור בר.

*Midrash is a genre of interpretative commentary that derives its name from the root מְדָרָשָׁה to seek or search out. The activity of expounding midrash is one of elucidation through creative expansion of words, verses, or whole stories that are ambiguous in the biblical text. These provide fertile ground for imaginative explanation. Midrashic literature dates back to the period of the early Amoraic rabbis, ca. 400 C.E., and is still being created today.

M.P.

17 / SHIR HASHIRIM / THE SONG OF SONGS
DODI LI

My love is mine, and I am his,
who browses in the lotus patch.

Who is this coming up out of the wilderness
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense?

You have enlivened me, my sister-bride.

Awake, north wind,
yea, come, south wind!

A group of verses (2:16, 3:6, 4:9, 4:16) from Shir Hashirim

DERASH. One may read the Song of Songs as a poem reconciling disparate,
often polarized aspects of each human soul. Shelomo and Shulamit (whose
names mean peace and wholeness) are symbols of unification. We must
not hide from light our darkest, most passionate, most aroused and sensual
parts. Male and female, maiden and royalty, palace and field, blossom and
fruit, animals, birds and plants all draw into harmony on this day of inclu-
sive, overflowing love and self-acceptance.

S.P.W.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 18
Dodi li va'ani lo

horo'eh bashoshanim.

Mi zot olah min hamidbar
mi zot olah
mekuteret mor ulvonah.

Dodi li va'ani lo
horo'eh bashoshanim.

Libavtini ahoti kalah
libavtini kalah.

Dodi li va'ani lo
horo'eh bashoshanim.

Uri tzafon uvo'i teyman.

Dodi li va'ani lo
horo'eh bashoshanim.

19 / DODI LI
On Hol Hamo'ed it is customary to begin on page 48.  
On Festivals, turn to Kabbalat Hagg, page 532.

PSALMS

Come, sing in ecstasy to the Eternal One
ring out a fanfare to our rock of rescue!
Hurry forth in thanks before the Presence,
shouting in song to God.

For the Creator is a generous divinity,
a sovereign greater than all image-gods,
in whose hand the planetary depths reside,
the greatest heights, there in God’s palm,
to whom belongs the sea, as it was made,
the dry land, shaped by divine hand.

Come worship, bend the knee,
let’s bow to the Eminence who made us all.

——

COMMENTARY. The five psalms of Kabbalat Shabbat, Psalms 95-99, are a
literary unit within the Book of Psalms. Their spirit of joy and exultation
calls on the worshipper to rejoice in the presence of God that fills the
world. Nature itself joins in the symphony of praise as heaven and earth,
field and forest, sea and rivers all seem to clap hands and enter the song
and dance of joy. The coming of Shabbat fills us with a new vision, one
that sees earth as freshly created and brimming with divine radiance. This
vision is a universal one. It invites all nations to join in our celebration of
divine presence.

A.G.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 20
On Hol Hamo’ed it is customary to begin on page 49.
On Festivals, turn to Kabbalat Ḥag, page 533.

TEHILLIM

לבר ברמיה להございます
בכפירה תפירה להו
כשלא ידעה
אשכיר בית מחכירה
וסינהו:last
ינדשה ידיה
בברכה לפשיה�ו יעשה
באה נשאונה וברכה

Leḥu neranenah ladonay nari'ah letzur yishenu.
Nekademah fanav betodah bizmirot nari'ah lo.
Ki el gadol adonay umaḥelah gadol al kol elohim.
Asher beyado mchkeret qetz veyto'afot harim lo.

COMMENTARY. It may be the concluding line of Psalm 95 that caused this entire group of psalms to be included in Kabbalat Shabbat. The psalmist speaks of the forty years in the wilderness, saying that the generation who came out of Egypt were not able “to enter God’s place of rest,” the Holy Land promised at the end of Israel’s wanderings. But here in Kabbalat Shabbat “rest” has taken on a new meaning; it is in time rather than in place that rest is to be found. Shabbat has herself become a Holy Land, a time of rest in which we are called upon to cease our wandering. A.G.

21 / TEHILLIM/PSALMS
This is our God,
and we, nurtured by God, a flock under God's care

—today:
  if to the Voice
  you'll listen—:

“Harden not your heart as it was done at Meribah,
as on a day of trial in the wilderness,
there your predecessors tested me,
they put to trial my patience, but they saw my power.

For forty years I argued with that generation,
till finally I said: 'They are a people with a wandering heart.'

  nor did they ever
  come to know
  my ways.

And as for them, I swore amid my wrath,
that they'll not come into my place of rest.”
DERASH. The ancients deemed obedience to God's will to be a prime virtue. Abraham had it; Adam lacked it. In our own day this virtue must mean the power to conform to the basic law of life. Obedience to that law brings salvation; defiance of it leads to disaster.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

23 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
Sing out to The Redeemer a new song!
Sing to The Eternal all the earth!
Sing to The Sublime One—bless God’s name,
Bring news, day after day, of divine help.

Tell it among the nations, tell the glory,
among all the peoples, tell of miracles.

Yes, The Radiance is great, subject of praise indeed,
the source of awe, above all image-gods!

For all the nation-gods are idols,
but The Living One has made the heavens.

Grandeur and splendor belong to God,
Strength and beauty in the Holy Place.

Give praise to The Magnificent, families of nations,
Honor and power devote to The Great One.

Pay homage to Majesty for the glory of the name.
bear offering, approach the Courtyards,
bow down to The Incomparable with holy adornment,
tremble in God’s presence, all the earth,

Declare among the nations that The Eternal reigns:
the world is founded, none can topple it;

the peoples
shall be judged
unerringly.
Shiru ladonay shir ḥadash, shiru ladonay kol ha’aretz.
Shiru ladonay bareḥu shemo baseru miyom leyom yeshu’ato.
Saperu vagoyim kevodo, beḥol ha’amim nifle’otav.
Ki gadol adonay umhulal me’od, no-ra hu al kol elohim.
Ki kol elohey ha’amim elilim, vodonay shamayim asah.
Hod vehadar lefanov, oz vetiferet bemikdasho.
Havu ladonay mishpehot amim, havu ladonay kavod va’oz.
Havu ladonay kevodi shemo. se’u minah uvo’u lehatzrotav.
Hishtaḥavu ladonay behadrat kodesh, hilu mipanav kol ha’aretz.
Imru vagoyim adonay malah, af tikon tevel bal rimot.
Yadin amim bemeysharim.

תומם мира / the world is founded. There is cosmic order.

25 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
Let the skies rejoice, the earth have glee.  
Ocean resound, in all your fullness!

Let the fields rejoice, and all belonging there.  
And then, all forest trees exclaim ecstatically,

before THE ONE who comes,  
who comes to rule the earth,  
to rule over the settled world,  
over the peoples, faithfully.

DERASH. This psalm makes no explicit reference to Israel, Jews, or Judaism. All nations, all forces are controlled by God.

The psalmist shouts ה普查 is great—every day, always, everywhere, to everybody; come, join me in praising! The writer knows of the greatness of God from experience, not reason. The presence of God reaches beyond one person, beyond a nation, beyond human beings!

This great God makes demands on us; we are accountable for our actions, God judges; we must act justly.  
L.W.K.

KAVANAH. To affirm the sovereignty of God means to acknowledge a higher law and authority than one’s own arbitrary will.  
M.M.K.
Yismehu hashamayim vetagel ha'aretz yiram hayam umlo'o.
Ya'aloz saday vehol asher bo, az yeranenu kol atzey ya'ar.
Lifney adonay ki va, ki va lishpot ha'aretz.
Yishpot tevel betzedek, ve'amim be'emunato.

/ be'emunato: faithfully; / emunah means trust, constancy, or
righteousness. / emunah, bemishpat, bekrit L.W.K.

27 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
The Uncreated reigns! O world, rejoice!
Be happy, dwellers of all continents!

Clouds and thick darkness surround God,
justice and judgment bear up the Throne.
a fire goes before it,
flames surround its back,
it's lightning flashes light the world,
the earth beholds and trembles,  
mountains melt like wax before The One
before the First of all the earth,
whose justice all the skies declare,
whose glory all the nations see.
Let all who worship images be shamed,
all those who boast amid their idols,

let all gods
submit
to God.

Zion has heard, and has rejoiced,
the women of Judah sound their joy,
because of justice.
yours

YAH.
KAVANAH. The belief in the sovereignty of God should keep in our minds the prophetic teaching that God should be obeyed rather than worshipped, that obedience to God’s laws is the highest form of worship. It is an error to believe that the main function of the spiritual is to afford us an escape from the turmoil and the temptations of life—a sort of ivory tower of detachment. The truth of the sovereignty of God should remind us that our task is to turn temptations into a means of serving God.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

יהודה 혼まと/ Judea’s daughters, the women of Judah. The place rejoices, then the people join in. Some say that “daughters” includes the place itself.

L.W.K.

29 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
For you are The Radiance
above all earth.

Powerfully, you have ascended
over all the image-gods.

And you who love The Great One hate the bad,
so that the Guardian of loving souls

might save them
from the power
of the wicked.

Lightbeams are seeded for the righteous,
Happiness for those steadfast of heart,

Rejoice, O righteous ones in The Unnameable
be thankful for its sacred Trace!

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 30
Or zaru’a latzadik, ulyishrey lev simḥah.
Simḥu tzadikim badonay vehodu lezeher kodsho.

... ṣimḥah / you who love. . . . The lover of God naturally fights evil. Ethics and spirituality are closely linked.

מַעֲשֶׂה / God protects. Those who fight injustice are often in need of protection.

אִירָס / seeded. Light is like seeds because it needs to be nourished and tended. It demands patience. Another reading is יַעֲשָׂה / zaru’ah, a brilliant, dazzling light (The Me’iri).

לייזֵר / right-hearted, steadfast of heart—those with focused minds.

L.W.K.

31 / TEHILIM/PSALMS

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A psalm: Sing out to The Truthful a new song, to One who has wrought wonders in the world, whose right hand was of aid, as was the holy, saving arm, who made the divine might renowned, revealed God's justice to the eyes of many nations, and who made remembered divine love and faithfulness to the community of Israel.

To the farthest reaches of the earth, they saw our God's salvation!

Trumpet out in joy The Awesome One's praise, burst forth and sing, and play your music, music for The Omnipresent on a violin, on strings, with voice and melody, with hornplaying and shofar blasts, trumpet your praise before the sovereign to The One Who Is

Let the sea be in a tumult, and the settled world, and its inhabitants.

And let the rivers clap their hands together, and the mountains sing in joy, to The One who comes to rule the earth, to rule the settled world with justice, and all peoples with unerring deeds!

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זאר / zahar: has been loving; literally, remembers his love. The verb is related to זאר, potent; it implies acting on the memory.  

L.W.K.

DERASH. One of the fundamental implications of the sovereignty of God is that religion must be socialized. It must be translated into terms of social righteousness and not stop at the inward peace and serenity of the individual.  

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

33 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
The One of Sinai reigns, as nations seethe,
and sits between the cherubim, the earth is teetering.
The One Who Dwells in Zion is magnificent,
high above all peoples;
let them thank your name, so great and awesome,
holy it is!
With royal strength, but loving justice,
you have established equitable deeds.
Justice and righteousness on Jacob's behalf
have you performed.
Exalt the One Who Sees our God,
bow down before God's footstool,
    God is holy!
Moses and Aaron are among God's priests,
and Samuel among the ones who call God's name,
Calling to the Righteous One
who will respond to them.
In a cloud pillar, God speaks to them,
they keep God's precepts and God gives them rulings.
Great One you have answered them,
you were a forgiving God for them,
after you exacted penalty for things they did.
Exalt the name of the Ineffable One,
bow down before the sacred divine mount,
yes, holy is the Awesome One, our God!

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 34
/footstool—the Ark, which contained the tablets of the covenant (the Ten Commandments). In the ancient Near East, international contracts were kept under the ruler’s throne.

/ pillar of mist, cloud or smoke, perhaps of incense. A symbol for the mystery of how the human and divine speak to each other.

/ forgiving God (from פשע, to carry), “who puts up with.” Even Moses, Miriam, and Samuel made mistakes and needed forgiveness.

I.W.K.

35 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
A psalm of David: Give to The One Who Is, you so-called gods, give to The Indivisible glory and strength!

Give to The Unseen One the glory of the divine Name, worship The Ancient Of Days with holy ornament.

The voice of The Unending on the waters, God in full Glory thundering,

The One Who Calls over many waters, yes, voice of The Revealed One in full strength, voice of The Truthful in full beauty,

voice of Eternal Law breaking the cedars, The All-Knowing smashing cedars forests on Mt. Lebanon,

making them skip about like calves, yes. Lebanon and Sirion, like offspring of the wild ox.

COMMENTARY. Psalm 29, one of the most ancient in the Book of Psalms, celebrates the presence of God in the midst of a great thunderstorm. The word kol, which appears seven times in the psalm, here translated “voice,” can also mean “thunderclap.” The psalmist concludes with mention of a great quiet that follows the storm, recalling the mythic quiet that followed God’s triumph over the forces of chaos in Creation. The placing of the psalm here reminds us that our weekly struggle in the world of achievement and bustle is now at an end. We have repeated the struggles of creation and now we too are called upon to achieve that great inner quiet which is the secret of true rest.

A.G.

NOTE. In this psalm the divine name, מִצְבָּא, appears eighteen times. The translator has rendered thirteen of these to recall thirteen divine attributes, and the remaining five to echo the themes of the Five Books of Moses.

J.R.
מִזְמוֹר לֶדָד

הָו יָדָו דְּנַע לָדוּ הַכּוּבָל מֵאֲלִירָא

הָו יָדָו דְּנַע לָדוּ הַכּוּבָל אַלְּבָאָרָא

חָלַה לָדוּ הַכּוּבָל מֵאֶלֶּא

חָלַה לָדוּ הַכּוּבָל מֵאֶלֶּא קְדוֹשָא

כֹּל הָדוּ הַכּוּבָל קְדוֹשָא

כֹּל הָדוּ הַכּוּבָל קְדוֹשָא גַּבּּרָא

נִשְׁבָר הַדוּ הַכּוּבָל אַתְּאַראָדָא קְלֵבָא

נִיְרָנָא מְבוֹשֶׁקָאָל

Mizmor ledadiv.

Havu ladanay beney elim, havu ladanay kavod va'oz.

Havu ladanay kevod shemo, hishtahavu ladanay behadarat kodesh.

Kol adonay al hamayim, el hakavod hirim.

Adonay al mayim rabim.

Kol adonay bako'al, kol adonay behadar.

Kol adonay shover arazim, vayshaber adonay et arzey halevanon.

Vayarkidei kemuo egel, levanoni vesiyon kemuo ven re'emim.

37 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
The voice of THE JUST ONE hewing flames of fire,
the voice of THE ANOINTER making the desert writhe,
of ENERGY giving birth pangs to the wastelands of Kadesh.
the voice of THE MIGHTY ONE convulsing all the deer,
stripping the forests,
while amid God's palace all declare: "The Glory!"
THE REDEEMER prevailing at the Sea,
THE PRESENCE presiding for the cosmos,
THE WANDERER imparting strength to Israel,
GIVER OF WORDS blessing the people in their peace.

NOTE. The psalm acknowledges the four directions, with Jerusalem as the peaceful center.
םים / waters. Like many storms in Israel, this one starts in the west, over the Mediterranean Sea.
צפarriv / cedars, a symbol of something solid and lasting. The storm breaks in the high north, towards Lebanon.
זרע / Sirion—Mt. Hermon, towering on Israel's northern border. Even these mountains quake!
מדבר / desert—the Jordan Valley and the Judean Desert, as the storm moves south-east.
מדרגה / wilds of Kadesh south of Jerusalem. L.W.K.
כָּלַי הַיָּהָה הַצֶּבֶּה לֶחֶבֶּהַ חַסְּמִהְוֹת
כָּלַי הַיָּהָה הַצֶּבֶּה מְקַשְּבַּה
נִיחָשֶׁת יְרוּבֶּה
בֹּבְרֵכֵלִי כֹּל אָמַרְוֹ בְּבוֹדֵה:
יְהוָה לְפַדָּה יִשְׂבֶּה
יְהוָה בְּבָרֵךְ אַחֵיתְמֵמוֹ בְשֵׁלָיוֹת

כָּלַי הַיָּהָה הַצֶּבֶּה לֶחֶבֶּהַ חַסְּמִי
כָּלַי הַיָּהָה הַצֶּבֶּה מְקַשְּבַּה
נִיחָשֶׁת יְרוּבֶּה
בֹּבְרֵכֵלִי כֹּל אָמַרְוֹ בְּבוֹדֵה:
יְהוָה לְפַדָּה יִשְׂבֶּה
יְהוָה בְּבָרֵךְ אַחֵיתְמֵמוֹ בְשֵׁלָיוֹת

Kol adonay ḥotzev lahavot esh.
Kol adonay yaḥil midbar, yaḥil adonay midbar kadesh.
Kol adonay yeḥolel ayalot, vayehosof ye’arot.
Uvheyhalo kulo omer kavod.
Adonay lamabal yashav, vayeshev adonay meleh le’olam.
Adonay az le’amo yireh, adonay yevareh et amo vashalom.

39 / TEHILIM/PSALMS
LEHAI DODI / O, COME, MY FRIEND

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

"Keep" and "Remember" in a sole command
the solitary God did us command
"I AM!" is one, the Name is one,
in name, in splendor, and in praise.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

COMMENTARY. Six psalms, one for each weekday, open the traditional Kabbalat Shabbat service. The seventh element, the Shabbat psalm, is introduced by the song Lehah Dodi, "Come, My Friend." As Shabbat eve drew near, the Safed Kabbalists used to walk into the fields at the edge of their mountain village in order to greet the day of rest. There they could survey the beauty of creation apparent in the panorama spread before them: mountain, valley, forest, sky, and sea. Through the preceding psalms they gave voice to their praise of creation, and they honored Shabbat with specially composed hymns sung as they escorted Shabbat to their homes.

Lehah Dodi—a hymn to honor and escort Shabbat—was composed by Shelomo Halevi Alkabetz, a member of the Safed Kabbalists. The initial letters of the poem's first eight stanzas spell out his name: יְהַלְוָה לְהַלְוָה. The opening refrain and closing verse of the poem reflect the customs of R. Hanina and R. Yanay. Their images of Shabbat as queen and bride combine to link the formal and intimate aspects of Shabbat, the source of all blessing and ultimate intention of creation.

The hymn draws heavily upon prophecies of Israel's redemption and renewal in the messianic era—likened, in Jewish tradition, to a Shabbat without end. Shabbat stands in relation to the week as the messianic era stands in relation to the flow of world time. It is at once a celebration of the world's beginning and a foretaste of the world to come, a reservoir of past and future held in a single moment.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 40
Leḥah dodi likrat kalah peney shabbat nekabelah.
Shamor vezahor bedibur eḥad
Hishmi'anu el hamyuḥad
Adonay eḥad ushmo eḥad
Leshem ultiferet velit-hilah

Leḥah dodi... →


NOTE. The first stanza of Leḥah Dodi attempts to reconcile two versions (in the Ten Commandments) of the mitzvah to observe Shabbat. The integrity of both “remember the Sabbath day” (Exodus 20:8) and “keep the Sabbath day” (Deuteronomy 5:12) is maintained when the song proclaims that God—in whom all things unite—uttered both simultaneously (Babylonian Talmud, Shevuot 20b).

41 / LEḤAH DODI/O COME MY FRIEND
Toward the Sabbath, come, make haste,
for she has every blessing's taste,
ordained at first, and long ago,
the last thing made, the first in mind.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

O, Sovereign's abode, O, holy, regal town,
rise up, emerge, where once cast down,

enough of sitting in the vale of tears,
God pities you, yes you God spares,

O, come my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

Be stirred, rise up, throw off the dust,
my people, don your clothes of eminence,
by hand of Bethle'mite Jesse's child,
draw near my soul, redeem it, too.

O, come my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

KAVANAH. The love song of Kabbalat Shabbat continues from Yedid Nefesh,
Beloved of My Soul, to the Song of Songs, My Beloved is Mine, to Lehah Dodi, Come My Beloved. Stripped away of the work, worry and stress of
the week, all that remains is love—love in myriad verbal garments, in myriad melodies. Our pause on the seventh day allows us to fill our beings
with love, ever flowing forth from creation.

S.P.W.

KABBALAT SHABBAT / WELCOMING SHABBAT / 42
43 / LEH AH DODI/O COME MY FRIEND
Arouse yourself, arouse yourself,  
your light has come, arise and shine,  
awake, awake, pour forth your song,  
on you now shines the Glorious One.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,  
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

Don't be abashed, don't be ashamed,  
why be downcast, why do you sigh?  
In you my people's poor find shade,  
a city rebuilt where her ruins lay.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,  
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

Your robbers shall be robbed themselves,  
all your devourers will be removed,  
your God rejoices at your side,  
the joy of a bridegroom with his bride.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,  
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

COMMENTARY. Shabbat is here depicted in a glorious array of symbols that derive from the many terms Kabbalistic tradition has used to describe the Shechinah. She is the bride, the queen, Jerusalem the holy city too long prisoner in the vale of tears, the people Israel about to be crowned with the glory of God. All of these draw together in the single figure of Shabbat as we welcome her into our hearts.

A.G.

KAVANAH. God should be so real to us that, in place of the fear and distrust which overcloud our lives, we should be possessed of such peace, poise, and power as to render us free and joyful and give us a sense of dominion.

M.M.K.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 44
Hitordi hitordi
Ki va oreḥ kumi ori
Uri uri shir daberī
Kevod adonay alayih niglah. Leḥah dodi...

Lo tevoshi velo tikalemi
Mah ṭishtoḥabi umah tehemi
Bah yeheṣu aniyeṣ ami
Venivnetah ir al tilah. Leḥah dodi...

Vehayu limshisah shosayih
Veraḥakū kol mevale’ayih
Yasis alayih elohayih
Kimsos ḥatan al kalah. Leḥah dodi...

45 / LEHAH DODI/O COME MY FRIEND

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To right and left you shall burst forth,
revering God, to south and north,
by hand of one from Peretz's line,
we shall rejoice and find delight.

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

_We rise and face the entrance to welcome the Shabbat bride._

O, come in peace, O divine crown,
with joy, rejoicing, and with mirth,
amid the faithful, loved by God,
come in, O bride, come in, O bride!

O, come, my friend, let's greet the bride,
the Sabbath Presence bring inside.

---

וְאֶנְאָלָא / Bo'i veshalom, the last verse of Lehah Dodi, should be recited outdoors. Where this is not possible, a turn toward the doorway is traditional. At Bo'i halah (Come in, O bride), we receive into ourselves the _neshamah yetarah_, an extra measure of soul, that is not present to us during the week. This extra Shabbat soul may be viewed as the greater sensitivity allowed us by the restful and unpressured pace of Shabbat. Indeed, that extra soul may be inside us all the time, and _Lehah Dodi_ may be seen as a love song that coaxes our most sensitive self to come out of hiding, in the assurance that on Shabbat it will not be harmed or threatened.  

A.G.

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**KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 46**
Yamin usmol tifrotzi
Ve’et adonay ta’aritzi
Al yad ish ben partzi
Venismah venagilah.

Lehah dodi...

Bo’i veshalom ateret balah
Gam besimah utzoholah
Tob emune am segulah
Bo’i halah bo’i halah.

Lehah dodi...

DERASH. There is a Yiddish saying: בִּכְנָה בַּכֵּלָה שְׁטֶית דְּרֵי אָרְכֵּשָׁא / Bay “bo’i veshalom” shetey der oremen oybn on. “During Shabbos prayers, when the entire congregation turns its back to the altar, the pauper standing at the back is suddenly in front.” When the entire congregation turns to the back, inviting the Shabbos queen to come in peace, it is the poor, the shy, and the stranger in the back rows who are given the honor of welcoming her first. She comes in peace only where Jews act responsibly toward those who receive this honor.

E.M.

47 / LEHAH DODI/O COME MY FRIEND
A psalm. A song for the day of Shabbat.

A good thing to give thanks to The Eternal
to sing out to your name supreme,
to tell about your kindness in the morning,
and your faithfulness at night,
on ten-stringed lyre and on flute,
with melodies conceived on harp,
for you, Almighty One, elate me with your deeds,
I’ll sing about the actions of your hands.

How great your deeds have been, Supernal One.
your thoughts exceedingly profound.

Of this the foolish person cannot know,
of this the shallow cannot understand.

---

NOTE. Psalms 92 and 93 continue the motifs of wholeness, joy, and rest in Shabbat. Psalm 92 has been associated with Shabbat since biblical times. According to the midrash,* Shabbat itself stood up and recited this psalm at Creation, thus exulting *in the role given it as the day of inner joy for all of God’s creatures.

* A.G.

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KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 48
Mizmor shir leyom hashabbat.
Tov lehodot ladanay ulzamer leshimeha elyon.
Lehagid baboker hasdeha ve’emunateha baleylot.
Aley asor va’aley navel aley higayon behinor.

*Midrash is a genre of interpretative commentary that derives its name from the root רדש to search out. The activity of expounding midrash is one of elucidation through creative expansion of words, verses, or whole stories that are ambiguous in the biblical text. These provide fertile ground for imaginative explanation. Midrashic literature dates back to the period of the early Amoraic rabbis, ca. 400 C.E., and is still being created today.

M.P.

49 / PSALM 92
For though the wicked multiply like weeds,
and evildoers sprout up all around,

    it is for their destruction for all time,
    but you, MAJESTIC ONE, are lifted high eternally,

behold your enemies, RESPLendent ONE,
behold, your enemies are lost,

    all evildoers shall be scattered.

You raise my horn like that of the triumphant ox;
I am anointed with fresh oil.

My eye shall gaze in victory on my enemies,
on all who rise against me to do harm;

    my ears shall hear of their demise.

The righteous flourish like the palm trees,
like cedars of Lebanon they grow,

implanted in the house of THE ALL-Knowing ONE
amid the courtyards of our God they bear fruit.

In their old age, they'll put forth seed,
fleshy and fresh they'll ever be,

    to tell the uprightness of THE ONE ALONE,
    my Rock, in whom no fault resides.
Tzadik katamar yifraḥ, ke’erez balvanon yisgeh.
Shetulim beveyt adonay, beḥatrot eloheynu yafrihu.
Od yenuvn beseyvah, deshenim vera’ananim yihyu.
Lehagid ki yashar adonay. tzuri velo avlatah bo.

51 / PSALM 92
THE ETERNAL reigns, is clothed in majesty.
The INVISIBLE is clothed, is girded up with might.

The world is now established,
it cannot give way.

Your throne was long ago secured,
beyond eternity are you.

The rivers raise, O MIGHTY ONE,
the rivers raise a roaring sound,

the floods raise up torrential waves,
but louder than the sound of mighty waters,
more exalted than the breakers of the sea,

raised up on high are you, THE SOURCE.

Your precepts have retained their truth,
and holiness befits your house,

THE ETERNAL One, forever and a day.


DERASHI. Why does this psalm (93) follow the psalm for Shabbat (92)? In it God watches the seas. The midrash notes that just as earth was created by parting the waters, so was Redemption created by parting the waters. In Creation land was redeemed from the waters. In Redemption human freedom is created. The creation of Shabbat planted the seed of human redemption. The experience of Shabbat nurtures that seed, giving us the strength to quell the floods in our time.

D.A.T./S.D.R.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 52
Commentary. Psalm 93 concludes *Kabbalat Shabbat* by retelling the ancient tale of Creation. The waters raised a great shout, showing their power to overwhelm the dry land as it first emerged. So do the forces of chaos and destruction threaten the islands of peace and security we manage to create in our lives. The psalmist assures us, however, that the voice of God is greater than that of even the fiercest storm tides of the ocean. With God’s throne firmly established, the peace of Shabbar is now triumphant.

A.G.

53 / *PSALM 93*
HATZI KADDISH / SHORT KADDISH

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher (On Shabbat Shuvah add: by far) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

KABBALAT SHABBAT/WELCOMING SHABBAT / 54
חרית קדיש

יהביו לי חסידה שמה כל יום בצלאל ר' ברוך בר אвшийא
מלכתה תורתה וחסידותה באיה: כל יום בצלאל בצלאל בצלאל
קריבirim אמא: 
abei שמה כל יום בצלאל בצלאל בצלאל: 
הברכה לו חסידה ובראשית וידודו ואימים וידודו ואימים וידודו
והשמיע שמך ברוך בר א休み וני
צלאה צלאל (On Shabbat Shuvah add:COME EVERYONE)
השמיע שמך ברוך בר א休み וני
הנאתו הענפתא אמא וני בצלאל אמא: 

Reader: Yitgadal veyitkodash shemey raba
be'almah divra hirutey ve'amlih malhutey
behayeyhon uv'omyeyhon uv'hayey dehol beyt yisra'el
ba'agalah uv'ivznman kariv ve'imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam
ulalmey almayah.

Reader: Yitbarah veyishabah veyita'ar veyetromam
veynitasey veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal
shemey dekudsha beri'h hu
le'ela (On Shabbat Shuvah add: le'ela) min kol birhata veshirata
tushbha'ata venehemata da'amiran be'alam ve'imru amen.

55 / HATZI KADDISH/SHORT KADDISH

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set to Always in Acrobat Professional or Adobe Reader. Please contact your
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MA’ARIV

THE SHEMA AND ITS BLESSINGS

*When a minyan is present, the Barechu is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow.*

Bless The Infinite, the blessed One!
Blessed is The Infinite, the blessed One, now and forever

**KAVANAH.** Public worship aids us by liberating personality from the confining walls of the individual ego. Imprisoned in self, we easily fall prey to morbid broodings. Interference with career, personal disappointment and disillusionment, hurts to vanity, the fear of death—all these tend so to dominate our attention that our minds move in a fixed and narrow system of ideas, which we detest but from which we see no escape. With a whole wide world of boundless opportunities about us, we permit our minds, as it were, to pace up and down within the narrow cell of their ego-prisons. But participation in public worship breaks through the prison of the ego and lets in the light and air of the world. Instead of living but one small and petty life, we now share the multitudinous life of our people. Against the wider horizons that now open to our ken, personal cares do not loom so large. Life becomes infinitely more meaningful and worthwhile when we become aware, through our participation in public worship, of a common life that transcends our individual selves.

**M.M.R. (ADAPTED)**

**SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 56**
When a minyan is present, the Barēhū is said. The congregation rises and faces the ark. It is customary to bow.

בִּרְכָּה אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמָּכֵרָה:
בורּוּד יְהוָה הַמָּכֵרָה לֶעָלָם וּעָד.

Barēhū et adonay hamvoraḥ.
Baruḥ adonay hamvoraḥ le'olam va'ed.

KAVANAH. When we worship in public we know our life is part of a larger life, a wave of an ocean of being—the first-hand experience of that larger life which is God.  

M.M.K.

COMMENTARY. Ma'ariv is the heart of the Friday evening service. As on weekdays, it contains several parts: the Shema and its blessings, the Amidah (silent prayer), and the Aleynu. On Shabbat there are several additions: Veshamru (Exodus 31:16-17), a brief reprise of the Amidah, and Kiddush.

D.A.T.

57 / BAREHŪ
ASHER BIDVARO / GOD IN NATURE

For additional readings, see pages 732-739, 754-766, 798-799.

TRADITIONAL VERSION

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE our God, sovereign of all worlds, by whose word the evenings fall. In wisdom you open heaven's gates. With divine discernment you make seasons change, causing the times to come and go, and ordering the stars on their appointed paths through heaven's dome, all according to your will. Creator of the day and night, who rolls back light before the dark, and dark before the light, who makes day pass away and brings on night, dividing between day and night: The LEADER of the Throng of Heaven is your name! Living and enduring God, rule over us, now and always. Blessed are you, ALMIGHTY ONE, who makes the evenings fall.

DERASH. When we are about to say: “Blessed are you, our God, sovereign of all worlds,” and prepare to utter the first word “blessed,” we should do so with all our strength, so that we will have no strength left to say, “are you.” And this is the meaning of the verse in the Scriptures: “But they that wait for God shall exchange their strength.” What we are really saying is: “Source of life. I am giving you all the strength that is within me in that very first word; now will you, in exchange, give me an abundance of new strength, so that I can go on with my prayer.” M.B. (ADAPTED)

רו"מ, רו"מ, רו"מ / light, dark, light. The words roll into each other just as day rolls into night. They are not separate realms. They mix together. God rules both light and darkness. יב / beyn: between. Related to יבנ / binah and יבנה / ivunah: understanding. Wisdom is the ability to distinguish between things, to make sense out of confusion.

L.W.K.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 58
By whose word the evenings fall. The word plays a central role in the Jewish imagination. Our liturgy fantasizes that God brings on evening each night by saying “Evening!” Thus we repeat each day the original act of Creation that took place by means of the divine word. It is only because we affirm a God who so values language that we feel ourselves able to use words in prayer. Our word, perhaps like God’s, gives expression to a depth that goes beyond language, but that can be shared only through the symbolic power of speech.

A.G.

COMMENTARY. The two berahot which precede the Shema set the stage for its evening recitation. The first berahah praises God for the wonders of creation that are visible at twilight: the shifting patterns of the stars, the rhythm of the seasons, the regular passage from day to night. All of these are a nightly reminder of the unchanging plan of creation.

The second berahah praises God, whose instruction is a special token of love for Israel. Israel responds by meditating upon God’s teaching “day and night,” “when we lie down and when we rise.” This phrasing recalls the preceding berahah, adding Israel’s study of Torah to the natural order: The sun sets, the stars shine, and Israel studies—as regularly as day and night. The phrase “when we lie down and when we rise” anticipates the Shema, which follows. This interplay between the berahot and the Shema suggests that the Shema is Israel’s morning and evening Torah study. At the same time, it is Israel’s declaration of the oneness of the power that makes for the natural order and for learning, for creation and human creativity.

S.S.

59 / ASHER BIDVARO/GOD IN NATURE
INTERPRETIVE VERSION: ASHER BIDVARO

Praised are you, God, ruler of the universe, who has ordained the rhythm of life. The day with its light calls to activity and exertion. But when the day wanes, when, with the setting of the sun, colors fade, we cease from our labors and welcome the tranquility of the night. The subdued light of the moon and stars, the darkness and the stillness about us invite rest and repose. Trustfully we yield to the quiet of sleep, for we know that, while we are unaware of what goes on within and around us, our powers of body and mind are renewed. Therefore, at this evening hour, we seek composure of spirit. We give thanks for the day and its tasks and for the night and its rest. Praised are you, God, who brings on the evening.

1945 Reconstructionist Prayer Book (adapted)

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 60
INTERPRETIVE VERSION: AHAVAT OLAM

We are loved by an unending love.
We are embraced by arms that find us
even when we are hidden from ourselves.

We are touched by fingers that soothe us
even when we are too proud for soothing.
We are counseled by voices that guide us
even when we are too embittered to hear.
We are loved by an unending love.

We are supported by hands that uplift us
even in the midst of a fall.
We are urged on by eyes that meet us
even when we are too weak for meeting.
We are loved by an unending love.

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled . . .
ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;
ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;
We are loved by an unending love.

Blessed are you, BELOVED ONE, who loves your people Israel.

Rami M. Shapiro (adapted)

61 / AHAVAT OLAM/GOD’S LOVE IN TORAH

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AHAVAT OLAM / GOD'S LOVE IN TORAH

For additional readings see pages 740-753, 775-778.

TRADITIONAL VERSION

With everlasting love, you love the house of Israel. Torah and mitzvot, laws and justice you have taught us. And so, DEAR ONE our God, when we lie down and when we rise, we reflect upon your laws; we take pleasure in your Torah’s words and your mitzvot, now and always. Truly, they are our life, our length of days. On them we meditate by day and night. Your love will never depart from us as long as worlds endure. Blessed are you, BELOVED ONE, who loves your people Israel.

KAVANAH. The שמע / Shema is wrapped in אהבה / ahavah / love. The blessing preceding the Shema concludes, “who loves your people Israel.” This prayer begins וארחית / v’ahava, And you must love Hashem” First you are loved, then you respond with love. Love is central to Jewish life. Love means commitment and limitations—Torah and mitzvot. That is so both in our relationships with each other and in our relationship with God.

L.W.K.

DERASH. The term Shechinah implies that God is not aloof from human life with all its defeats and triumphs. God is in the very midst of life. The rabbis say that when people suffer for their sins, the Shechinah cries out. The Shechinah thus moves from Israel to all humanity. M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 62
Hamhat Olam

Ahavat olam beyt yisra’el aneha ahava.
Torah umitzvot ha’kim umishpatim otanu limadeta.
Al ken adonay eloheynu beshohvenu uvgumenu nasi’ah
be’hukeha
venismah bedivrey torateha uvmitzvoteha le’olam va’ed
ki hem hayeyenu ve’oreh yameynu
uvahem nehgeh yomam valaylah.
Ve’ahavateha lo tasur mimenu le’olamim.
Baru’ atah adonay ohev amo yisra’el.

Our text follows the Sephardic version, in the declarative model (“Your love will never depart from us.”) rather than the imperative (“Never remove your love from us!”). Divine love is unconditional. It is available to every one of us when we fashion our lives into channels to receive and share it. The Jewish people together experiences that eternal love as reflected in our love for the study of Torah—a wisdom lovingly received, shared, and passed on enriched by each generation.

A.G.

This prayer delights in God’s love for the Jewish people. To say that this people is beloved of God, however, is not to assert that we are the only beloved of God. When we are fully aware of the divine love, we also recognize that infinite love can equally embrace all peoples of the world in their uniqueness.

D.A.T.

63 / AHAVAT OLAM/GOD’S LOVE IN TORAH
**SHEMA**

Listen, Israel: The Eternal is our God,
The Eternal One alone!

Blessed be the name and glory of God's realm, forever!

And you must love The One, your God, with your whole heart, with every breath, with all you have. Take these words that I command you now to heart. Teach them intently to your children. Speak them when you sit inside your house or walk upon the road, when you lie down and when you rise. And bind them as a sign upon your hand, and keep them visible before your eyes. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

---

Listen... gates (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

DERASH. The Shema is called kabbalat ol malhut shamayim. We “receive upon ourselves the yoke of the sovereignty of Heaven.” To proclaim God as ours and as one is to acknowledge fealty to the divine will—and the Shema is a time to listen. We listen in order to discover God’s will.

D.A.T.

Love your God. Abbaye said, “Let the love of God be spread through your activities. If a person studies and helps others to do so, if one's business dealings are decent and trustworthy—what do people say? ‘Happy is the one who studied Torah, and the one who teaches Torah! Have you seen the one who studied Torah? How beautiful! What a fine person!’ Thus, the Torah says, ‘You are my servant Israel; I will be glorified by you’” (Isaiah 49:5).

TALMUD YOMA 86A

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**SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 61**
Shema yisra’el adonay eloheynu adonay ehad.
Baruḥ shem kevod maḥuto le’olam va’ed.
Ve’ahavta et adonay eloheha
bezolah levaveha uvzolah nafsheha uvzolah me’odeha.
Ve’elaya la’devarim la’aleh asher anoşi metzaveh ha yom al
levaveha.
Veshinistant levaneha vedibarta bam
beshivteha beveyteha uvlehte ha vadereh uvshohbeha
uvkumeha.
Ukhshartam le’ot al yadeha vehayu letotafot beyn eyneha.
Uḥtavtam al mezuzot beyteha uvishareha.

לברז / levaveha / your heart. The לברז / lev / heart, was seen as the source of
emotions and intellect. Feelings and reason are complementary partners,
not conflicting parts, of the human psyche. The double לברז of הלה be teaches
that a love of God must contain all dualities (e.g., the good and bad in
you).

תותף / totafot / pendants or forehead markings. The تותף / torah sees totafot as reminders of the divine will. The English
translation captures this figurative meaning of a visible reminder of the
mitzvot.

65 / SHEMA
For the second paragraph of the Shema, read either the version below or the biblical section beginning on page 68, then continue with the third paragraph, page 72.

BIBLICAL SELECTION I

It came to pass, and will again,
that if you truly listen

to the voice of The Eternal One, your God,
being sure to do whatever has been asked of you today,
The One, your God, will make of you a model
for all nations of the earth,
and there will come upon you all these blessings,
as you listen to the call of The Abundant One, your God:
Blessed be you in the city,
blessed be you upon the field.
Blessed be the fruit of your womb,
the fruit of your land, the fruit of your cattle,
the calving of your oxen, and the lambing of your sheep.
Blessed be your basket and your kneading-trough.
Blessed be you when you come home,
and blessed be you when you go forth.

See, I have placed in front of you today
both life and good, both death and ill,
commanding you today to love The Boundless One, your God,
to walk in ways I have ordained,
keeping the commandments, laws, and judgments,
so that you survive and multiply.
The Bountiful, your God, will bless you
on the land you are about to enter and inherit.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 66
BIBLICAL SELECTION I

For the second paragraph of the Shema, read either the version below or the biblical section beginning on page 69, then continue with the third paragraph, page 73.

I will teach you the way that you shall go; I will direct you in the path of judgment. I will teach you the way that you shall go; I will direct you in the path of judgment.

I will teach you the way that you shall go; I will direct you in the path of judgment.

I will teach you the way that you shall go; I will direct you in the path of judgment.

COMMENTARY. The traditional wording of Biblical Selection II presents detailed bountiful or devastating consequences of Israel's collective relationship to the mitzvot. That biblical section (Deuteronomy 11:13-21) offers a supernatural theology that many contemporary Jews find difficult. The biblical section on this page (Deuteronomy 28:1-6, 30:15-19) was included in the 1945 Reconstructionist siddur. It begins by encouraging observance in the same language, but concentrates on the positive ways in which observance of mitzvot focuses our attention on God's presence as perceived through productivity and the pursuit of abundant life. 

KAVANAH. The doctrine of the unity of God calls for the integration of all life's purposes into a consistent pattern of thought and conduct. M.M.K.

67 / SHEMA
But if your heart should turn away,  
and you not heed, and go astray,  
and you submit to other gods and serve them,  
I declare to you today that you shall be  
destroyed completely; you shall not live out  
a great expanse of days upon the land  
that you now cross the Jordan to possess.  
I call as witnesses concerning you  
both heaven and earth, both life and death,  
that I have placed in front of you  
a blessing and a curse.  
Choose life, that you may live,  
you and your seed!  
Continue with page 72.

BIBLICAL SELECTION II

And if you truly listen to my bidding, as I bid you now—loving THE FOUNT OF LIFE, your God, and serving God with all your heart, with every breath—then I will give you rain upon your land in its appointed time. the early rain and later rain. so you may gather in your corn, your wine and oil. And I will give you grass upon your field to feed your animals, and you will eat and be content. Beware, then, lest your heart be led astray, and you go off and worship other gods, and you submit to them, so that the anger of THE MIGHTY ONE should burn against you, and seal up the heavens so no rain would fall, so that the ground would not give forth her produce, and you be forced to leave the good land I am giving you.  

DERASH. This warning against idolatry has ecological significance. If we continue to pollute the environment—and thus display contempt for the integrity of God's creation—pure rain will cease to fall, and the ground will cease to give forth its produce. M.L.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 68
BIBLICAL SELECTION II

DERASH. God is the assumption that there is enough in the world to meet our needs but not to meet our greed for power and pleasure.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

DERASH. The traditional second paragraph of the Shema (Deuteronomy 11:13-21) offers an account of the natural process by which the blessings of God themselves lead to pride, self-satisfaction, and ingratitude on the part of those who receive them. Ironically, the more we are blessed, so it seems, the less grateful and aware of blessing we become. It is when we are most sated, Scripture warns us, that we should be most careful. Fullness can lead to ingratitude, and ingratitude to idolatry—primarily in the form of worship of our own accomplishments. Then, indeed, "the heavens might close up and no rain fall." For, once we begin to worship our achievements, we will never find satisfaction.

A.G.

69 / SHEMA
So place these words upon your heart, into your lifebreath. Bind them as a sign upon your hand, and let them rest before your eyes. Teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit at home, and when you walk upon the road, when you lie down, and when you rise. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates—so that your days and your children's days be many on the land THE FAITHFUL ONE promised to give your ancestors, as long as heaven rests above the earth.

Continue on page 72.

COMMENTARY. The statement of God's oneness unifies not only the context of Shema but the text as well—three scriptural paragraphs specified in the Mishnah (a second century codification of Jewish law). The powerful declaration of God's unity fuses the responsibility to love God and to study God's teachings (first paragraph) with the lesson that their fulfillment confirms God's presence (second and third paragraphs). Hence, the unity of God as idea and presence.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 70
In the handwritten scroll of the Torah
The word “Shema” of “Shema Yisrael”
Ends with an oversized ayin,
And the word “Ehad”
Ends with an oversized dalet.
Taken together
These two letters
Spell “Ed,” meaning “witness.”
Whenever we recite the Shema
We bear witness
To our awareness
Of God’s presence.

H.M.

71 / SHEMA
THE BOUNDLESS ONE told Moses: Speak to the Israelites—tell them to make themselves tzitzit upon the corners of their clothes, throughout their generations. Have them place upon the corner tzitzit a twine of royal blue. This is your tzitzit. Look at it and remember all the mitzvot of the ETERNAL ONE. And do them, so you won’t go off after the lusts of your heart or after what catches your eye, so that you remember to do all my mitzvot and be holy for your God. I am THE FAITHFUL ONE, your God, who brought you from Mitzrayim to be for you a God. I am THE INFINITE, your God.

הַמַּלְאָךְ הַיָּדָה / THE BOUNDLESS ONE ... God (Numbers 15:37-41)

COMMENTARY. In the ancient Near East, free people wore fringes, or tzitzit, on the hems of their everyday clothes. Since only free people wore tzitzit, they were a form of identification. Business transactions were sealed by kissing the tzitzit.

The mitzvah of tzitzit is based on that ancient sign of freedom. The fringes remind us that we voluntarily follow the way of God, who freed us from Egyptian slavery. It is, literally, a string tied around our finger.

Today, many Jews who recite the Shema gather the four corners of their tallitot (prayer shawls), hold the tzitzit, and kiss them at each mention of the word תִּפְּרָד / tzitzit. This custom shows that we take these words seriously, like a legal contract.

ל.ו.ק.

מִצְרָיִם / Mitzrayim was the escaping Hebrews', not the Egyptians', name for the land of Egypt: perhaps a slave-term, and probably not of Semitic origin, it has associations with the root מִצְרָא, to be in distress, constrained, in anguish, or in dire straits. This word powerfully evokes the choking oppression of slavery. As the psalmist wrote: וַיַּחֲדֶשׁ אֹתוֹ / From the depths I called to Yah.

M.P.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 72
Transliteration can be found on page 285.

דפיי היה אל-משה אדם: דוד אל-ברון. יָשָׁרְלָא רָאִית
עֲלֵם וּקְשָׁר לָהֵם צֵאת עָלֶיךָ בְּדִירָם לָרֵיחַ צְוָאָם עָלֶיךָ
צֵאת עֲדֵנָה פָתֵל תַּכְּלַת: רֹדֶה לָכֶם לָרֵיחַ אֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדֹנֵי
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EMET VE’EMUNAH / REDEMPTION

The traditional Ge’ulah is on this page; an interpretive version begins on page 76.
For additional readings see pages 748, 767-771, 800.

Our faith and truth rest on all this, which is binding upon us:
That The BOUNDLESS ONE alone is our divinity
and that no divinity exists but One;
that we are Israel, community of God;
that it is God who saves us from the hand
of governments, the very palm of tyrants;
who enacts great deeds without measure,
and wondrous deeds beyond all count;
who puts our souls amid the living,
and who keeps our feet from giving way;
who breaks apart the schemes of those who hate us,
confounds the thoughts of any bearing us ill-will;
that it is God who made miracles for us in Egypt,
signs and wonders in Ham’s children’s land.
From one generation to the next, God is our guarantor,
and even on a day that turned to night,
God stayed with us when death’s deep shadow fell.
And even in our age of orphans and survivors,
God’s loving acts have not abandoned us,
and God has brought together our scattered kin
from the distant corners of the earth.
As then, so now,
God brings the people Israel forth
from every place of menace, to a lasting freedom.
God is the one who brought the Israelites
through a divided Sea of Reeds.
There, they beheld divine might;
they praised and thanked the Name,
and willingly accepted for themselves
God’s rule. (Continue on page 78)

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 74
COMMENTARY. The blessing immediately following the Shema deals with the theme of divine redemption. The present text, a rewritten version, includes references to the Holocaust, from which there was no redemption, and the return to Zion, a fulfillment of Israel's ancient dream. The same divine spirit that gave Israel the courage to seek freedom from Egypt in ancient times inspired those who fought for Israel's freedom in our own day. At the same time, this version omits those portions of the text that glory in the enemy's fall or see in God a force for vengeance. All humans are God's beloved children, as were the Egyptians who drowned at the sea.

A.G.

75 / EMET VE’EMUNAH/REDEMPTION
INTERPRETIVE VERSION

We acknowledge as true and trustworthy that there is but one universal God, and that to God’s service Israel stands eternally committed.

We recognize in God the power that has enabled us to triumph over defeat, persecution and oppression.

It was God who redeemed us from Egyptian bondage, and delivered us from the despotism of the pharaohs.

For God wills that we be free to use our powers in holy service, and be not bound to the arbitrary rule of any mortal.

Whenever human rulers usurp divine authority, and exploit the people, those tyrants’ hearts are hardened, their own arrogance writes their doom.

Therefore we will never be discouraged nor dismayed when unrighteous powers rise up to destroy us.

Though enemy hosts pursue us, we shall remember how our ancestors were saved at the Sea of Reeds.

We therefore repeat the words of triumph with which they gave thanks for their deliverance:

(Congregation sings נצוד ו. page 79)  
1945 Reconstructionist Prayer Book (adapted)

COMMENTARY. Two beautiful berahot complete the liturgical framework of the Shema in the evening service. The first of these is called Ge’ulah—“Redemption.” Recalling the Exodus from Egypt, it thematically echoes the third paragraph of the Shema. Moreover, it identifies the sovereign God, named in the Shema’s credo, as the power that freed Israel from slavery. Its vivid, here-and-now recollection of the escape from Egyptian bondage invites and challenges Israel to claim the redemption as a personal experience in each generation and to hear echoes of that ancient triumph over tyranny in each modern-day struggle for freedom, in every attempt to move toward the messianic future.

S.S.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 76

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Mosheh umiriam uvney yisra’el leha anu shirah besimah rabah ve’amuru ḥulam.

DERASH. Rabbi Judah said: [At the sea] each tribe said to the other, “You go into the sea first!” As they stood there bickering, Naḥshon ben Aminadav jumped into the water. Meanwhile Moses was praying. God said to him, “My friend is drowning—and you pray!” “What can I do?” Moses asked. [God responded as it says in the text] “Speak to the people of Israel and tell them to go! Raise your staff . . . .”

TALMUD SOTAH 37A


77 / EMET VE’EMUNAH/REDEMPTION
Moses, Miriam, and all the Israelites broke out in song, abundant in their joy, and, all as one, they said:
"Who among the mighty can compare
to you, WISE ONE?
Who can compare to you,
adorned in holiness,
awake in praises,
acting wondrously!"

Your children saw you in your majesty,
splitting the sea in front of Moses.
"This is my God!" they cried, and said:

"THE HOLY ONE will reign forever!"

And it was said:

"Yes, THE REDEEMING ONE has rescued Jacob,
saved him
from a power
stronger than his own!"

Blessed are you, THE GUARDIAN, Israel's redeeming power!

When our ancestors beheld these truths
they proclaimed:
Among all the gods we can name,
who can compare to the One Beyond Naming?
Among all the quantities we can label, number,
mark and measure,
which compares to the Mystery
at the Heart of Reality?

R.M.S.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 78
Mi ḥamōhah ba'elim adonay.
Mi kamoḥah nedar bakodesh
nora tehilot osey feleh.
Malḥuteḥa ra'u vaneḥa boke'a yam lifney mosheh.
Zeh eli anu ve'ameru.
Adonay yimloḥ le'olam va'ed.
Vene'emar ki fadah adonay et ya'akov ugalo miyad Ḥazak
mimenu.
Baruḥ atah adonay ga'al yisra'el.

COMMENTARY. This siddur reinstates reference to the splitting of the sea as a sign of God's redeeming power. The earlier Reconstructionist prayerbook omitted that reference because of its emphasis on supernatural intervention. As myth, however, the ancient tale of wonder underscores the sense of daily miracle in our lives. Even those of us who cannot affirm a God who intervenes in the natural process, and thus cannot accept the literal meaning of the tale, can appreciate its human message. According to the midrash, the sea did not split until one Israelite, Naḥshon ben Aminadav, had the courage to walk upright into the water. Perhaps it was the divine spirit in Naḥshon, rather than the magic of Moses's wand, that caused the sea to split.

A.G.

NOTE. Biblical references include Exodus 15:11, 18 and Jeremiah 31:11.

79 / EMET VE'EMUNAH/REDEMPTION
who spreads your harmonious canopy
and over Jerusalem.

HASHKIVENU / DIVINE HELP

For additional readings see pages 753, 765, 775-778, 801-804. For commentary see pages 82-83.

Help us to lie down, DEAR ONE, our God, in peace, and let us rise again, our sovereign, to life. Spread over us the shelter of your peace. Decree for us a worthy daily lot, and redeem us for the sake of your great name, and enfold us in the wings of your protection, for you are our redeeming guardian. Truly, a sovereign, gracious, and compassionate God are you. Guard our going forth each day for life and peace, now and always. Spread over us the shelter of your peace.

Blessed are you, COMPASSIONATE ONE, who spreads your canopy of peace over all your people Israel and over Jerusalem.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 80
Blessed are you, Yah/the Compassionate, over all your people Israel

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COMMENTARY. Hashkivenu / Help us lie down [in peace]—is the final prescribed part of the Shema. It recalls the Shema by expressing the hope that we will “lie down...in peace” and “rise again...to life.” An extension of Emet Ve'emunah, Hashkivenu joins the vivid recollection of past redemption to a prayer for present protection and future peace. By calling God “guardian” and “protector” but also “redeemer,” Israel recognizes new dimensions of the power that makes for freedom. The final acknowledgment of God as the one who “spreads the sukkah of peace over us, over Israel, and over Jerusalem” conjures up the now familiar image of Shabbat as a foretaste of that future time when Israel, its people, and its holy city will dwell in peace. The blessing is unique to the evening service. Perhaps responding to the cold, dark uncertainty of night, we invoke God’s dwelling of peace.

S.S.

KAVANAH. Enable us, God, to behold meaning in the chaos of life about us and purpose in the chaos of life within us. Deliver us from the sense of futility in our strivings toward the light and the truth. Give us strength to ride safely through the maelstrom of petty cares and anxieties. May we behold things in their proper proportions and see life in its wholeness and its holiness.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

NOTE. For our ancestors, the future of Jerusalem was not just about the future of the Jewish people. Jerusalem, in the biblical vision, will become the capital of the whole world. Praying for the peace of Jerusalem is the same as praying for the unity of all humanity and peace throughout the world.

D.A.T.

COMMENTARY. The version presented here follows certain Sephardic versions by deleting the series of petitions for protection. Such petition is considered inappropriate on Shabbat, a day of fulfillment and appreciation for the many blessings we have. Shabbat itself is a sukkah of peace. We pray that real and complete peace be the lot of Israel and Jerusalem, so torn by strife in recent memory. Our tradition sees Jerusalem as the center of the world. Creation began there, according to the rabbis. So may the peace that begins there radiate forth and bless all earth’s peoples. The peace of Jerusalem, the “heart of the world,” is also the peace of every human heart.

A.G.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 82
Hashkivenu adonay eloheynu leshalom veha'amidenu malkenu lehayim ufros aleynu sukkat shelomeh. Vetakenenu ve'etzah tovah milefaneha vehoshi'enu lema'an shemehe. Uvtzel kenafeh tashirenu ki el shom'renu umatzilenu atah ki el melech hanun verahum atah. Ushmor tzeytenu uvo'enu lehayim ulshalom me'atoh ve'ad olam. Ufros aleynu sukkat shelomeh. Baruh atah adonay hapesu sukkat shalomeh aleynu ve'al kol amo yisra'el ve'al yerushalayim.

KAVANAH. As we enter the dark of evening, we face the unknown. Earlier, in Asher Biduro (the Creation section immediately following Barcnu), we affirmed the power that transforms night into day and day into night. Now we call for protection from the shadows that lengthen around us—shadows of fear and guilt, the uncharted future, the ever pursing past. We ask that the shadows of God's wings envelop us with love and mercy. The unknown night, like the unknown tomorrow, can only be met with faith in the power of infinite compassion to care for us.

When fears multiply
And danger threatens;
When sickness comes,
When death confronts us—
It is God's blessing of shalom
That sustains us
And upholds us.
Lightening our burden,
Dispelling our worry,
Restoring our strength,
Renewing our hope—
Reviving us.

83 / HASHKIVENU/DIVINE HELP
VESHAMERU / OBSERVING SHABBAT

Let Israel's descendants keep Shabbat, making Shabbat throughout all their generations, as an eternal bond. Between me and Israel's descendants shall it be a sign eternally. For in six days THE FASHIONER OF ALL made skies and earth, and on the seventh day God ceased and drew a breath of rest.

(When Shabbat coincides with a festival, add: Moses proclaimed the Festivals of THE ENDURING ONE to the children of Israel.)

__________________________________________________________

NOTE. The placement of Vesham eru after Hashkivenu suggests an aspect of the agreement between God and Israel: God guards Israel, and Israel guards Shabbat, which is a reminder and foretaste of peace in our world.

KAVANAH. The recitations of Vesham eru preceding the Amidah and of Vayhulu following it on Friday evening are acts of witnessing. In keeping Shabbat Israel bears testimony to the fact that ours is a created world. For us this means that divinity fills the universe. Our task is to treat all living things with respect, and so enhance the divine light in them. Only by this way of living is the testimony of Shabbat made real.

__________________________________________________________

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 84
Veshameru veney yisra’el et hashabbat
la’asot et hashabbat ledorotam berit olam.
Beyni uveyn beney yisra’el ot hi le’olam.
Ki sheshet yamim asah adonay et hashamayim ve’et ha’aretz
uvayom hashevi’i shavat vayinafash.

(When Shabbat coincides with a festival, add:
ויימו השבת ברוח הקודש, וימין עמשו של כל בן ישראל.)

Vaydaber mosheh et mo’adey adonay el beney yisra’el.)

NOTE. Veshameru (Exodus 31:16-17) serves as the introduction to the
Amidah (silent prayer) of Shabbat eve. In places where prayerbooks were
scarce, this prologue served as a reminder to include the Shabbat berakah
in the silent prayer which follows.

... וְדַבֵּר... Moses ... Israel (Leviticus 23:44).

85 / VESHAMERU/OBSERVING SHABBAT
HATZI KADDISH / SHORT KADDISH

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher (On Shabbat Shuvah add: by far) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

On the opening and closing days of Pesah, Shavuot and Sukkot, turn to the Amidah for Pilgrimage Festivals, page 394.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 86
הכדש קדיש

תְּנַבֵּל וְתַבְּטְלֵלָה, שֶׁמֶה רַבָּא מַעְלֵלָה, וְיַעֲקֹב רַבָּא כַּרְשֵׁהוּ וְקַלּוּבָה
מִלְכָּה, בָּאִיבִּים בַּבּוֹמְלֵי לֵבָנָה, לְבֵל דְּחֵיֵי שֶׁלֶם בָּאִיבִּים וְקַלּוּבָה
שֶׁמֶה לָא מְפֶרֶד אָמֵן.

יָשָׁם רַבָּא מְבַרֵּךְ לְצַלַּקְלַקְוּ כָּלִילֵי שֶׁמֶה:

תְּנַבֵּל וְתַבְּטְלֵלָה, שֶׁמֶה לָא מְפֶרֶד אָמֵן.

(On Shabbat Shavuot add: אֲשֶׁר אֲכָלָה כָּלָה שִׁירָה) שֶׁמֶה לָא מְפֶרֶד אָמֵן.

תְּנַבֵּל וְתַבְּטְלֵלָה, שֶׁמֶה לָא מְפֶרֶד אָמֵן.

Reader: Yitgadal veiytkdash shemey raba
be' alma divra hirutey veynamli' malhutey
behayeyhon uvyomeyhon uvhayey dehol beyt yisra'el
ba'agalat uvyizman kariv ve'imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam
ulalmey almaya.

Reader: Yitbara' veyishtaba' veyitpa'ar veyitromam
veyitnase'ey veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal
shemey dekudsha berih hu
le'ela (On Shabbat Shavuot add: le'ela) min ksil hir'ata veshirata
tushbehata venehemata da'amiran be' alma ve'imru amen.

On the opening and closing days of Pesah, Shavuot and Sukkot, turn to the Amidah for Pilgrimage Festivals, page 594.

87 / ḤATZI KADDIsh/SHORT KADDISH
INTRODUCTIONS TO THE AMIDAH

Standing here in Abraham’s desert
Affirming: one God.

Moving in the old spaces
Warmed by our ancestors’ embrace.

Standing here in Sarah’s tent
Laughing: new life.

Moving in the old spaces
Renewed by our ancestors’ hope.

Standing here in my place
Listening to our voices: yearning.

Moving in my own spaces
Translating the silence.

Dear God,

* * *
Open the blocked passageways to you,
The congealed places.

Roll away the heavy stone from the well as your servant
Jacob did when he beheld his beloved Rachel.

Help us open the doors of trust that have been jammed with
hurt and rejection.

As you open the blossoms in spring,
Even as you open the heavens in storm,
Open us—to feel your great, awesome, wonderful presence.

Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

KAVANAH. Prayer is communion. To commune with God is to put oneself
in touch with the source of cosmic energy. M.M.K.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 88
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AMIDAH

The traditional Amidah follows here. Directed meditations begin on page 725. A short Amidah can be found on page 730. The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three short steps forward and bowing left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence. For additional readings see pages 737-738, 740-748, 752-759.

Open my lips, BELOVED ONE, and let my mouth declare your praise.

1. AVOT VE'TIMOT / ANCESTORS

Blessed are you, THE ANCIENT ONE, our God, God of our ancestors,

God of Abraham  God of Sarah
God of Isaac     God of Rebekah
God of Jacob    God of Rachel

and God of Leah; 

COMMENTARY. A. J. Heschel has said, “The term, ‘God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob’ is semantically different from a term such as ‘the God of truth, goodness, and beauty.’ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob do not signify ideas, principles or abstract values. Nor do they stand for teachers or thinkers, and the term is not to be understood like that of ‘the God of Kant, Hegel, and Schelling.’ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not principles to be comprehended but lives to be continued. The life of one who joins the covenant of Abraham continues the life of Abraham. For the present is not apart from the past. ‘Abraham is still standing before God’ (Genesis 18:22). Abraham endures forever. We are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” In this same spirit, we are also Sarah and Rebekah, Rachel and Leah. L.W.K.

KAVANAH. The introductory words (Psalm 51:17) of the Amidah contain a paradox of divine and human power. Our ability to be whole, upright, free, and fully alive grows as we acknowledge and appreciate an infinitely higher source of power in the universe. This allows us to be receptive. By acknowledging our human vulnerability, we open our hearts to the support, compassion, and faithfulness available around us. S.F.W.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 90
The traditional Amidah follows here. Directed meditations begin on page 725. A short Amidah can be found on page 730. The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three short steps forward and bowing left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence.

COMMENTARY. Hatefilah / The Prayer, is the central prayer of the worship service. The language and manner of reciting the Tefilah offer insights into the place of the individual in communal prayer. When the Tefilah is recited privately, each individual stands (hence the name Amidah, "standing") and addresses God in a sustained conversational way. Calling God "you" indicates intimacy and immediacy. Nevertheless, the individual prays with the communal voice: "We acknowledge you," "Bless us," "Grant us peace." The Mishnah provides the structure within which additional prayers and petitions are placed. Even an individual's private needs have importance within the communal context.

Throughout the centuries the pursuit of meaningful communal prayer has led to variations in the Amidah. These variations reflect the attitudes and beliefs of different prayer communities. In the ongoing pursuit of meaningful prayer for a Reconstructionist prayer community, changes have been introduced into this Amidah, most notably in the first two of the seven berachot which comprise the Shabbat Amidah. The first berahah has been expanded to include the patriarchs along with the patriarchs as exemplars of God's presence in human lives. By concentrating on examples of healing forces and life-sustaining rains, the second berahah acknowledges God as the power that sustains life. The traditional emphasis on God's ability to resurrect the dead has been replaced here by a celebration of God as the power that sustains all life.

91 / AMIDAH
great, heroic, awesome God, supreme divinity,
impacting deeds of kindness, begetter of all;
mindful of the loyalty of Israel's ancestors,
bringing, with love, redemption to their children's children
for the sake of the divine name.

On Shabbat Shuvah add:
(Remember us for life,
sovereign who wishes us to live,
and write us in the Book of Life,
for your sake, ever-living God.)

Regal One, our help, salvation, and protector:
Blessed are you, KIND ONE,
the shield of Abraham and help of Sarah.

הָרֶשׁ הָרֶשׁ / ezrat sarah. The biblical term ezet has two meanings, “rescue” and “be strong.” It is commonly translated as “aid” or “help”. It also has the sense of power and strength. In Deuteronomy 33:29, ezet is parallel to מַגֵן, majesty. Eve is described as Adam’s ezet benogdo, a power equal to him, a strength and majesty to match his. Thus magen avraham (shield of Abraham) and ezrat sarah (help of Sarah) are parallel images of power and protection.

R.S.A.

KAVANAH. God is experienced as רַשׁ, helper, every time our thought of God furnishes us an escape from the sense of frustration and supplies us with a feeling of permanence in the midst of universal flux.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

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In each age
we receive and transmit
Torah.
At each moment
we are addressed by the
World.
In each age
we are challenged
by our ancient teaching.
At each moment
we stand face to face with
Truth.
In each age
we add our wisdom
to that which has gone before.
At each moment
the knowing heart
is filled with wonder.
In each age
the children of Torah
become its builders
and seek to set the world firm
on a foundation of Truth.

93 / AMIDAH
2. GEVUROT / DIVINE POWER

You are forever powerful, ALMIGHTY ONE, abundant in your saving acts.

*In summer:* You send down the dew.

*In winter:* You cause the wind to blow and rain to fall.

In loyalty you sustain the living, nurturing the life of every living thing, upholding those who fall, healing the sick, freeing the captive, and remaining faithful to all life held dormant in the earth. Who can compare to you, almighty God, who can resemble you, the source of life and death, who makes salvation grow?

*(On Shabbat Shuvah add: Who can compare to you, source of all mercy, remembering all creatures mercifully, decreeing life!)*

Faithful are you in giving life to every living thing. Blessed are you, THE FOUNT OF LIFE, who gives and renews life.

3. KEDUSHAT HASHEM / NAMING THE HOLY

Holy are you. Your name is holy. And all holy beings hail you each day. Blessed are you, AWESOME ONE, the holy God.

*(On Shabbat Shuvah conclude: the holy sovereign.)*

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COMMENTARY. We acknowledge the presence of God in the natural rhythms of passing seasons. Our awareness of wind, rain, and dew as daily miracles also serves to remind us that the purity of these gifts, so vital for our survival, must be maintained by human watchfulness. In thanking God for air and water, we assert our commitment to preserving them as sources of life and protecting them from life-destroying pollution. The mention of rain or dew follows the two-season climate of Eretz Yisrael; summer extends from the first day of Pesah until Sliemini Atzeret, and winter until the following Pesah.

A.G.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 94
In summer:

In winter:

On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(On Shabbat Shuvah conclude)

95 / AMIDAH
4. KEDUSHAT HAYOM / THE DAY’S HOLINESS

You sanctified the seventh day, your signature upon completion of the heavens and the earth. You made it most blessed of all days, declared it holiest of times. Thus is it written in your Torah:

Heaven, earth, and all their beings were finished. God completed on the seventh day the work that had been done, and ceased upon the seventh day from all the work that had been done. God blessed the seventh day and set it apart. For on it God had ceased from all the work that had been done in carrying out Creation.

Our God, our ancients’ God, take pleasure in our rest. Enable us to realize holiness through your mitzvot, give us our portion in your Torah, let us enjoy the good things of your world, and gladden us with your salvation. Refine our hearts to serve you honestly. Help us to perpetuate, DEAR ONE our God, your holy Shabbat, with love and joy. Let all Israel, and all who treat your name as holy, rest upon this day. Blessed are you, SACRED ONE, source of the holiness of Shabbat.

DERASH. We ask God to remove the impurities that have collected in our minds so that we might be truthful enough to serve God. What are these impurities, these false coverings? They are the myth of isolation, the denial of interrelatedness, the prideful pretense that we are alone and abandoned in the cosmos.

S.P.W.

DERASH. The creation of the world is not completed so long as we have not fulfilled our creative function in it.

M.M.K.

ותלויים / Heaven... Creation (Genesis 2:1-3).

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 96
Kavanah. Through our observance of Shabbat, we shall come to know God as the source of salvation. In that state of being, our powers are harmoniously employed in the achievement of worthwhile aims.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

Commentary. One of the most distinguished words in the Bible is the word kadosh, a word which more than any other is representative of the mystery and the majesty of the divine. Now what was the first holy object in the history of the world? Was it a mountain? Was it an altar?

It is indeed a unique occasion at which the word kadosh is used for the first time: in the book of Genesis, at the end of the story of creation. How extremely significant is the fact that it is applied to time. “And God blessed the seventh day and made it kadosh.” There is no reference in the record of creation to any object in space that would be endowed with the quality of kedushah, holiness.

A.J.H.

97 / AMIDAH
5. AVODAH / WORSHIP

Take pleasure, GRACIOUS ONE, our God, in Israel your people; lovingly accept their fervent prayer. May Israel's worship always be acceptable to you.

(When Shabbat coincides with a Rosh Ḥodesh or Festival, add: Our God, our ancients' God, may our prayer arise and come to you, and be beheld, and be acceptable. Let it be heard, acted upon, remembered—the memory of us and all our needs, the memory of our ancestors, the memory of messianic hopes, the memory of Jerusalem your holy city, and the memory of all your kin, the house of Israel, all surviving in your presence. Act for goodness and grace, for love and care, for life, well-being and peace, on this day of

On Rosh Ḥodesh: the new moon.
On Pesah: the festival of matzot.
On Sukkot: the festival of sukkot.

KAVANAH. Prayer itself is the divinity. PINHAS OF KORETZ

We assert our faith in the coming of a messianic age, a time when justice will reign and all humanity will be united in recognition of the one God. Even in our people's darkest hour, this vision of the future strengthened us as we faced both life and death. However, distanced we may be from the more naïve aspects of belief in the person of messiah, the vision of a transformed future remains our guide, just as we know that the vision will become reality only if our deeds reflect it.

A.G.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 98
The external mouthing of words alone cannot move us. It is the inward flame of devotion that brings our prayer close to God. Indeed, as the Hebrew phrasing vividly conveys, a passionate longing for godliness can exist among those unable to express that feeling in words. The phrase lahav tefilatam, “the flame of Israel’s prayer,” recalls that feeling of hidlahavut: the “in-burning” flame of passionate devotion. To attain hidlahavut in prayer is to soar with the rapturous ecstasy of divine communion, to access the infinite and be aflame with the nearness of God.

A.G./M.P.
Remember us this day, All-Knowing One, our God, for goodness. Favor us this day with blessing. Preserve us this day for life. With your redeeming, nurturing word, be kind and generous. Act tenderly on our behalf, and grant us victory over all our trials. Truly, our eyes turn toward you, for you are a providing God; gracious and merciful are you.

And may our eyes behold your homecoming, with merciful intent, to Zion. Blessed are you, The Faithful One, who brings your presence home to Zion.

6. HODA'AH / THANKS

We give thanks to you that you are The All-Merciful, our God, God of our ancestors, today and always. A firm, enduring source of life, a shield to us in time of trial, you are ever there, from age to age. We acknowledge you, declare your praise, and thank you for our lives entrusted to your hand, our souls placed in your care, for your miracles that greet us every day, and for your wonders and the good things that are with us every hour, morning, noon, and night. Good One, whose kindness never stops, Kind One, whose loving acts have never failed—always have we placed our hope in you.

KAVANAH. So long as the Jewish people is linked in communion with the eternal, it can look forward to an eternal life for itself. M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

KAVANAH. Gratitude is the overwhelming experience of the person of faith. Faith stimulates gratitude, and the practice of gratitude expands faith. We experience thankfulness when we know that our lives are safe within God's protection. We trust that the future is assured. We need not consume our days in fear and anxiety. We are released. We can marvel at the daily wonders.

S.P.W.

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 100
DERASH. The insights of wonder must be constantly kept alive. Since there is a need for daily wonder, there is a need for daily worship. The sense of the "miracles which are daily with us," the sense of the "continual marvels," is the source of prayer. There is no worship, no music, no love, if we take for granted the blessings or defeats of living . . . . The profound and perpetual awareness of the wonder of being has become a part of the religious consciousness of the Jew.

A.J.H.

101 / AMIDAH
(On Hanukah add: For the miracles, for the redemption, for heroic acts, for saving deeds, for consolations, all of which you have enacted for our ancestors at this time of year in days gone by—as in the days of Matthew, son of Yoḥanan, Hasmonean High Priest, and Matthew’s sons: a wicked Hellenistic government arose against your people Israel, forcing them to shun your Torah and to leave off from the laws you will ordained. And you, in your abundant mercy, stood up for Israel in their hour of distress. You pressed their claim, exacted justice for them. You delivered armed might to the weak, the many to the power of the few, the wicked to the power of the just, the vicious to the power of those occupied with Torah. You made known your name that day, and made it holy in your world. And for your people Israel you enacted great deliverance, as in our own time. Afterward, your children came into your Temple’s inner room. They cleared your sanctuary, purified your holy place, kindled lights inside your holy courtyards, and established these eight days of Hanukah, for giving thanks and praise to your great name.)

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

(On Shabbat Shuvah add: And write down for a good life all the people of your covenant.)

Let all of life acknowledge you! May all beings praise your name in truth. O God, our rescue and our aid. Blessed are you, THE GRACIOUS ONE, whose name is good, to whom all thanks are due.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 102
On Hanukkah add:

(על הגביש ועל הכסף ועל הבירה ועל המרגעות על המזבחות
שנשכן לאובזרוג ביצים שלחון גשמים ביכר מלמדות ונחורים
מתקurtles הש蓐ואיםбитים משמעה מלכותינו ודעון ר stron
ישראל לפשיטם ותרוקו אלてしまいます ממקש יפל וראיה缠維
הניבים טעמים להעב מחת צרכנו להא תירבה תקנו את ריבם שפילת
ב_learn^

ביד עוזר חלושה: הלך כשקות אני ירושא יערשל בעלטשמו גלעם
ישראל לפשיט Railway Woch Pecher יירה המתא משמיע
וזכאי לאריך ייבה יפה את חלשל יערשל את מיישכון והתקיא
בﻩו יערשל יאשא שמשוב ייי תגרה אל שלח ואחרות וחקלא
לשם המיטה.

(On Shabbat Shuvah add: קברים גלויים טביבים כל-כברים יכירה)

(כל התחים חיוות פסק ריקול זה שמקשה עניא הזה ישבו
ףקרו להך פסקו בחרצך unlawful ויהרו

103 / AMIDAH
7. BIRKAT HASHALOM / BLESSING FOR PEACE

Grant abundant peace eternally for Israel, your people. For you are the sovereign source of all peace. So, may it be a good thing in your eyes to bless your people Israel, and all who dwell on earth, in every time and hour, with your peace.

(On Shabbat Shu'ah add: In the book of life, blessing, peace, and proper sustenance, may we be remembered and inscribed, we and all your people, the house of Israel, for a good life and for peace.)

Blessed are you, COMPASSIONATE ONE, maker of peace.

The Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.

/ and all who dwell on earth. According to the sages, every Amidah must conclude with a prayer for peace and an acknowledgement of God as the power that makes for peace. Inclusion of the words “and all who dwell on earth” proclaims that Israel desires the blessing of peace, not for itself alone, but for all humanity. S.S.

Maker of peace. This ancient version of the prayer for peace in its most universal form was assigned in the traditional liturgy to the ten days of teshuwa. During the year the text read, “who blesses your people Israel with peace.” In our times, when life has been transformed by the constant threat of global destruction, the need of the hour calls for the more universal form of the prayer throughout the year. A.G.

KAVANAH. God is shalom. God’s name is shalom, everything is held together by shalom. ZOHAR

My God, you are salam peace.
Peace comes from you goes back to you.
Let us live in peace and with peace.
You are great and generous. SIDI SHEIKH MUHAMMAD AL JEMAL

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 104
ברכת נשולים

שלום רב על ישראל עאם נשולים יאה נאה אמרה אברך ואברך
עון נשולים: מ_entities:_beta
עון נשולים: מ_entities: beta

On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(ב applyMiddleware ברכת נשולים פורים טביה טביה וсотם ל_entities: beta
עון נשולים: מ_entities: beta

ברך נאה נאה ערש נשולים

Shalom rav al yisra’el ameha tasim le’olam.
Ki atah hu melah adon lehol hashalom.
Vetov be’eynah levareh et ameha yisra’el
ve’et kol yoshvey tevel
behol et uvhol sha’ah bishlomeha.

On Shabbat Shuvah add:

(Besefer hayatim berahah yeshalom ufarnasa tovah
niza’er venikatev lefaneha
anahnu vehol ameha beyt yisra’el
lehayim tovim ulshalom.)

Baruh atah adonay osey hashalom.

The Amidah traditionally concludes with bowing and taking three steps back.

105 / AMIDAH
ELOHAY NETZOR/A CONCLUDING MEDITATION

Dear God, protect my tongue from evil,
and my lips from telling lies.
May I turn away from evil
and do what is good in your sight.
Let me be counted among those who seek peace.
May my words of prayer
and my heart's meditation be seen favorably,
Beloved One, my rock and my redeemer.
May the one who creates harmony above
make peace
for us and for all Israel,
and for all who dwell on earth.
And say: Amen.

COMMENTARY. The Talmud lists examples of twelve personal meditations that could follow the Amidah. If this one does not speak to you, compose your own, or stand or sit in silent meditation. L.W.K.

NOTE. Like the opening verse of the Amidah, this prayer employs the singular and deals with the power of words. But here the concern is for words between people, not for those directed to God. Some people find it easier to talk to God than to talk to others. L.W.K.

KAVANAH. Sin is the failure to live up to the best that is in us. It means that our souls are not attuned to the divine—that we have betrayed God. M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

 Governments... ish / May... redeemer (Psalm 19:15).

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 106
אלוים, בצור
אלוים, בצור, לשלמה, מקרע
 }}} יְשֵׁפַתְּךָ, פְּאֹרְבִי, כֹּלֵחָה.
יהי, רצון, совершен, מקרע
והשואל, בּעְצָמִיהו, אָסְפַּה.
יהי, קְלֵך, על, מִבְּקָשֵׁי, שלום, וְרֹעֲפֵיה.
יהיו, לֵרָצוּ, אָמְרֵי, מִי
והבּוּלֵי, לֶב, לְפָקֵדֵי
ויהי, צרו, נְגֵדֵלי.
אָסְפַּה, שלום, מַמְרָפְּדוּ
והא, יְשֵׁפַת, שלום.
עֲלָיוֹ, אֵל, כֶּל, יִשְׂרָאֵל.
ועָלָיו, כֶּל, יִשְׂרָאֵל. 
ואֵלָה, אַםְו.

Yihyu leratzon imrey fi
vehegyon libi lefanecha
adonay tzuri vegovali.
Oseh shalom bimromav
hu ya’aseh shalom
aleynu ve’al kol yisra’el
ve’al kol yoshvey tevel
ve’imru amen.

107 / ELOHAY NETZOR/A CONCLUDING MEDITATION
VAYHULU / CREATION COMPLETED

“Heaven, earth, and all their beings were finished. God completed on the seventh day the work that had been done, and ceased upon the seventh day from all the work that had been done. God blessed the seventh day and set it apart. For on it God had ceased from all the work that had been done in carrying out Creation.”

ME’EYN SHEVA / REPRISE OF THE AMIDAH

Blessed are you, THE ANCIENT ONE, our God, God of our ancestors,

  God of Abraham    God of Sarah
  God of Isaac      God of Rebekah
  God of Jacob      God of Rachel
      and God of Leah;

great, heroic, awesome God, supreme divinity,
who creates the heavens and the earth.

KAVANAH. Shabbat represents the affirmation that life is not vain or futile, but supremely worthwhile. M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

יָהלָה ... לְכָהט / Heaven ... Creation (Genesis 2:1-3).

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 108
Vayhulu hashamayim veha’aretz vehol tzeva’am
vayhal elohim bayom hashevi’i melahato asher asah
vayishbot bayom hashevi’i mikol melahato asher asah.
Vayyarch elohim ct yom hashevi’i vaykadesh oto
ki vo shavat mikol melahato asher bara elohim la’asot.

Baruh atah adonay eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve’tomoteynu
eolohey avraham, elohey sarah
eolohey yitzchak, elohey rivkah
eolohey yaakov, elohey rachel
veylohey le’ah
ha’el hagadol hagibor vehanora
el clyon
koney shamayim va’aretz.

109 / ME’EYN SHEVA/REPRISE OF THE AMIDAH
Shielding our ancestors with a word,
a speech enlivening all beings,
the holy God (On Shabbat Shuvah: the holy Sovereign),
to whom no being can compare,
who gives this people rest upon the holy Shabbat—
yes, God is pleased to give them rest!
We stand in the divine presence, awed and trembling,
and offer up continually our thankful prayer,
our expression of praise.
God to whom all thanks are due,
the source of peace, who sanctifies Shabbat,
who blesses the seventh day
and gives rest in holiness
to a people steeped in Shabbat joy,
in memory of Creation in the beginning.

אבות מצה / Magen Avot summarizes the Shabbat Amidah. It refers to each of
the seven blessings in order: shielding ancestors, giving life, providing
holiness, ordaining Shabbat, allowing worship, inspiring thanks, blessing
with peace. Perhaps once an alternative Amidah, Magen Avot today provides
a joyous communal reprise of the themes first invoked in the privacy of
the Amidah.

SIIABBAT MA’ARIV / 110
Magen avot bidvaro
mehayey kol ḥay bema’amaro.
ha’el (On Shabbat Shuvaḥ: hameleḥ) hakadosh she’eyn kamohu
hameniah le’amo beyom shabbat kodsho
ki vam ratzah lehani’ah lahem.
Lefanav na’avod beyirah vafahad
venodeh lishmo behol yom tamid
me’eyn haberaḥot.
El hahoda’ot adon hashalom
mekadesh hashabbat umvareḥ shevi’i
umeniaḥ bikdushah le’am medushency oneg
zecher lema’ascy vercyshit.

111 / ME’EYN SHEVA/REPRISE OF THE AMIDAH
TRADITIONAL VERSION

Our God, our ancients’ God, take pleasure in our rest. Make us holy through your mitzvot. Make us a part of Torah. Let us enjoy the good things of your world and rejoice in all your saving acts. Refine our hearts to serve you honestly. Help us to perpetuate, with love and joy, your holy Shabbat. Let all Israel, and all who treat your name as holy, rest upon this day. Blessed are you, BELOVED ONE, source of the holiness of Shabbat.

ALTERNATIVE VERSION

Shabbat of holiness, beloved and blessed.
may your glory dwell amidst the people of your holy place.
In you, our queen, we find our rest.
And in your holy mitzvot our souls rejoice.
With your goodness we are content.
In you our hearts grow pure,
and in your Shabbat rest we find true worship.
Holy Shabbat, source of blessing,
may you, too, be blessed in our rest.
And blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE, who makes Shabbat holy.

Shabbat of holiness. This original Hebrew text addresses Shabbat in feminine language, as bride and as queen. She is the subject of our affection and the source of our sustenance. We ask that her blessing dwell in our midst for peace and joy. We ask, too, that the Jewish people bless Shabbat with their love and devotion.

M.P.
TRADITIONAL VERSION

Eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu
retzev vimnuhatenu.
Kadeshenu bemitzvoteha
veten helkenu betorateha.
Sabe'enu mituveh
vesamehenu bishu'ateha
vetaher libenu le'ovdeha be'emet.
Vchanhilenu adonay eloheynu
be'ahavah uvratzon shabbat kodsheha
veyanu'hu vah yisra'el mekadeshey shemeha.
Baru'h atah adonay mekadesh hashabbat.

ALTERNATIVE VERSION

Shevet K'hirah Hakohavot v'Kemahovet
Keshet Cevovot Belev Sem Keshoret:
Be Cimatzim Kemahovet:
Kemahovet K'rashot Tzial Cimahovet:
Kelev Cimahovet Belev Kelev:
Kemahovet Cimatzim Leqvoteh Amom:
Shevet K'hirah Kifrot Cherabot
Keharbitim v'Sim Kemenchatim:
Baru'h Atah Adonay Meakhes Nesheha.

113 / ME'EYN SHEVA/REPRISE OF THE AMIDAH
KADDISH TITKABAL / KADDISH FOR COMPLETING PRAYER

Reader: Let God’s name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God’s great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be haled though it be higher (On Shabbat Shuvah add: by far) than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

And may the prayer and supplication of the whole house of Israel be acceptable to their creator in the heavens. And say: Amen.

May Heaven grant a universal peace, and life for us, and for all Israel. And say: Amen.

May the one who creates harmony above make peace for us and for all Israel, and for all who dwell on earth. And say: Amen.

KAVANAH. Adding the rabbinic phrase “ve’al kol yoshvey tevel” (and for all who dwell on earth) logically completes the concentric circles of our aspirations—our care starts with our minyan, extends to the entire Jewish people, and radiates outward from there to all who share our planet.

D.A.T.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 114
Yehey shemey raba mevaraḥ le'alam ulalmey almaya.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya’aseh shalom aleynu ve’al kol yisra’el ve’al kol yoshvey tevel ve’imru amen.
PRELUDE / KAVANAH

The commandment to bless this wine is a commandment to drink life as deeply as we drink from this cup.

It is a commandment to bless life and to love deeply.

It is a commandment to remember with Shabbat heart, to act with Shabbat hands, to see the world with Shabbat eyes.

It is a commandment to laugh until we are all laughter, to sing until we are all song, to dance until we are all dance, to love until we are all love.

This is the wine that God has commanded us to bless and drink.

Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 116
Commentary. The Kiddush recalls two reasons for the celebration of Shabbat—the rhythm of creation, when God rested on the seventh day; and the going forth from Egypt, when human observance of Shabbat began. Shabbat is part of nature and of history, of the cycle and the unfolding of time. The Kiddush thus illustrates how Jews discover the essence of nature through their experience of history.

D.A.T.

Note. Hillel and Shamai argued about the order of the two blessings that comprise the Kiddush. Shamai held that the blessing of the day should come first because God ordained Kiddush as part of the order of the universe. Hillel claimed that the blessing over wine must come first because only when we taste the wine do we really begin to experience Shabbat. We follow the school of Hillel, for the metaphysical reality of Shabbat only becomes significant when we take it into ourselves.

D.A.T.
We rise for Kiddush.

With the permission of this company:

Blessed are you, THE BOUNDLESS ONE, our God, sovereign of all worlds, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are you, THE SOURCE OF LIFE, our God, sovereign of all worlds, who has set us apart with your mitzvot and taken pleasure in us, and the holy Shabbat with love and favor made our possession, a remembrance of the work of Creation. For it is the first of all the holy days proclaimed, a symbol of the Exodus from Egypt. For you have called to us and set us apart to serve you, and given us to keep in love and favor, your holy Shabbat. Blessed are you, THE SOURCE OF WONDER, who sets apart Shabbat.

*From the eve of the second day of Passah through the evening before Shavuot, the counting of the Omer, page 674, is inserted here.*

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In a traditional Ashkenazi Kiddush refers to the chosenness of the Jewish people here (קרוב ותענוג / ki vanu vaharta / for you have chosen us). Reconstructionists have traditionally omitted this phrase. The 1945 Reconstructionist prayerbook substituted אין ההנהגה ההגנה פנים / ki otanu kerava la'avodateha / for you have drawn us near to your service. While the Ashkenazi version was rejected because of the chauvinism and triumphalism it has often sheltered, the 1945 Reconstructionist substitute neither deals with the issue of holiness as voiced in the traditional version (ki otanu kidashta), nor lends itself easily to song. The version used here imagines a God who calls all humanity and makes holy those who, like Israel, heed the call and engage in God’s service. In this way biblical phrasing, Reconstructionist theology, and the search for holiness are seamlessly joined.

D.A.T.

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**SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 118**
We rise for Kiddush.

Savreyy ḥaveray.
Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu meleḥ haʾolam borey peri hagafen.
Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu meleḥ haʾolam
asler kideshanu bemitzvotav veretzeh vanu
veshabbat kodosh beʾahavah uvratzon hinhilanu
zikaron lemaʾasey vereshit.
Ki hu yom teḥilah lemiḳraʾey kodesh
zeḥer litziʾat mitzrayim.
Ki eleynu karata veʾotanu kidashta laʾavdateḥa
veshabbat kodesheha beʾahavah uvratzon hinḥaltanu.
Baruḥ atah adonay mekadesh hashabbat.

From the eve of the second day of Pesah through the evening before Shavuot, the counting of the Omer, page 674, is inserted here.

119 / KIDDUSH
ALEYNU

We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow at “bend the knee.” For an alternative version see page 126. For additional readings see pages 737-739, 748, 772-774, 776-777, 803-804. Choose one of the following:

It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all,
to declare the greatness of the author of Creation,
who gave to us teachings of truth
and planted eternal life within us.

It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all,
to declare the greatness of the author of Creation,
who created heaven’s heights and spread out its expanse,
who laid the earth’s foundation and brought forth its offspring,
giving life to all its peoples,
the breath of life to all who walk about.

COMMENTARY. This siddur offers several versions of the Aleynu. The first, which appeared in the 1945 Reconstructionist siddur, emphasizes that the gift of God’s Torah or teaching demands our committed response. The second version, based on Isaiah 47:5 and fit into the Aleynu by Rabbi Max D. Klein, emphasizes that our obligation to God flows from our role as part of Creation. The traditional Aleynu that appears below the line has troubled Reconstructionist Jews because it implies the inferiority of other faiths and peoples.

D.A.T.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 120
We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow at “kozim.” Choose one of the following:

Aleynu leshabe’aḥ la’adon hakol

latet gedulah leyotzer bereyshit

shenatan lanu torat emet

vehayey olam nata betohonu.

Continue on page 123.

Aleynu leshabe’aḥ la’adon hakol

latet gedulah leyotzer bereyshit

bore hashamayim venotehyem

roka ha’aretz vetze’etza’cha

noten neshamah la’am aleha

versaḥ laholehim bah

Continue on page 123.

It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all, to declare the greatness of the author of Creation, who has made us different from the other nations of the earth, and situated us in quite a different spot, and made our daily lot another kind from theirs, and given us a destiny uncommon in this world.
And so, we bend the knee and bow, acknowledging the sovereign who rules above all those who rule, the blessed Holy One, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth, whose realm embraces heaven's heights, whose mighty presence stalks celestial ramparts.

This is our God; there is none else besides, as it is written in the Torah:

“You shall know this day, and bring it home inside your heart, that THE SUPREME ONE is God in the heavens above and on the earth below.
There is no other God.”

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DERASH. Every person and people that feel they have something to live for, and that are bent on living that life in righteousness, are true witnesses of God. M.M.K.

KAVANAH. As the hand held before the eye hides the tallest mountain, so this small earthly life hides from our gaze the vast radiance and secrets of which the world is full, and if we can take life from before our eyes, as one takes away one’s hand, we will see the great radiance within the world. M.B. (ADAPTED)

והי... יהיה / You... other God (Deuteronomy 4:39).

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SHABBAT MA'ARIV / 122
Va’anahnu korim umishta’avim umodim
lifney melech malheyy hamela’him hakadosh baruh hu.

Shchu notch shamayim veypoed aretz umoshav yckaro
bashamayim mima’al
ush-hinat uzo begovhey meromim.
Hu eloheynu eyn od.
Emet malkenu efes zulato kakatu betorato.
Veyadata hayom vahashevota el levaveha
ki adonay hu ha’elohim bashamayim mima’al ve’al ha’aretz
mitahat eyn od.

123 / ALEYNU
And so, we put our hope in you,
The Eminence, our God,
that soon we may behold
the full splendor of your might,
and see idolatry vanish from the earth,
and all material gods be swept away,
and the power of your rule repair the world,
and all creatures of flesh call on your name,
and all the wicked of the earth turn back to you.
Let all who dwell upon the globe perceive and know
that to you each knee must bend, each tongue swear oath,
and let them give the glory of your name its precious due.
Let all of them take upon themselves your rule.
Reign over them, soon and for always.
For this is all your realm, throughout all worlds, across all
time—
as it is written in your Torah:
"The Eternal One will reign now and forever."

And it is written:
"The Everlasting One will reign
as sovereign over all the earth.
On that day shall the Many Named be one,
God’s name be one!"

__________________________

Kavanah. A world of God callers is a world of truth and peace, a world
where the lust for power, greed, and envy—the idols of pride—is uprooted
from the individual and group psyche.

S.P.W.

SHABBAT MA’ARIV / 124
Kakatuv betorateha: Adonay yimloḥ le'olam va'ed.
Vene'emar: Vehayah adonay lemeleḥ al kol ha'aretz.
Bayom hahu yihye adonay eḥad ushmo eḥad.

DERASH. When senseless hatred reigns on earth and people hide their faces from one another, then heaven is forced to hide its face. But when love comes to rule the earth and people reveal their faces to one another, then the splendor of God will be revealed.

M.B. (ADAPTED)

DERASH. It is not the seeking after God that divides but the claim to have found God and to have discovered the only proper way of obeying God and communing with God.

M.M.K. (ADAPTED)

זฯ...(hwnd / THE ETERNAL ONE... forever (Exodus 15:18).

זฯ...(hwnd / THE EVERLASTING ONE... one (Zechariah 14:9).

125 / ALEYNU
ALTERNATIVE VERSION

It is up to us
to hallow Creation,
to respond to Life
with the fullness of our lives.
It is up to us
to meet the World,
to embrace the Whole
even as we wrestle
with its parts.
It is up to us
to repair the World
and to bind our lives to Truth.

Therefore we bend the knee
and shake off the stiffness that keeps us
from the subtle
graces of Life
and the supple
gestures of Love.
With reverence
and thanksgiving
we accept our destiny
and set for ourselves
the task of redemption.

Rami M. Shapiro

MA'ARIV / 126
* * *

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

Judy Chicago

127 / ALEYNU
It is customary to acknowledge mourners on the Shabbat during shivah, traditionally their first return to the synagogue following the death of their loved one. They are welcomed with the words:

המקול יבשא אחים מתים שארять涿州 אבותינו ור��ל:

May God console you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MOURNERS’ KADDESH

In reciting the Kaddish we affirm our awareness of holiness in our world. Much of our experience of divine goodness, grace and love has come to us through those whose lives have touched our own. (Today we remember…) We invoke the transcendent power of love and caring as we sanctify God’s name.

Love is not changed by Death, and nothing is lost and all in the end is harvest. — Edith Sorwell

NOTE. Congregations usually mention the names of congregants and their relatives who have died in the previous week before reciting the Mourners’ Kaddish. In many congregations a Yahrzeit list is read as well. In more informal settings the leader sometimes invites those present to speak the names of those they wish to be remembered. — D.A.T.

MA’ARIV / 128