

Shema and Her Blessings: Light, Love, Oneness, Freedom

The angels praise and proclaim:

קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ

Kadosh! Kadosh! Kadosh!

יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת מְלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ:

Tzevaot! M'loh chol ha-aretz k'vodo.

בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ: *Baruch K'vod Yehovah mim'komo.*

Holy! Holy! Holy! Shaper of all the Powers of the Universe.

The Whole Earth Radiates Your Glory.

אֹר חַדָּשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תֵּאִיר וְנִזְכָּה כָּלֵנוּ מִהֶרָה לְאוֹרוֹ:

Or chadash al Tzion ta-eer, v'niz-keh chulanu m'hey-rah l'oro!

May a new light shine!

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת *Baruch Ata Yotzer Ha-M'orot*

We Enter the Love Song

אַהֲבָה רַבָּה אַהֲבַתָּנוּ

Ahavah Rabbah Ahavtanu

Calling on the Presence of Ahavah in Creation

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמְּקַרֵּב אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה *Baruch Ata Yehovah ha-m'kareyv et amo Yisrael b'Ahavah*

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

Shema Yisrael, יהוה Eloheynu יהוה Echad

בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

Baruch Shem K'vod Malchuto l'Olam Va-ed

We Sing our Redemption Song!

As we stand on the shore of the Sea of Reeds, the waters part before our eyes.
We join with Miriam and Moshe to sing our song of joy to You!

מִשָּׁה וּמִרְיָם וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
לָהֶן עָנוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׂמְחָה רַבָּה וְאָמְרוּ כָלֵם:
l'cha anu shirah b'simcha rabah, v'amru chulam:

מִי כָמוֹךָ בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה • מִי כָמוֹךָ נֶאֱדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ • נוֹרָא תְהִלַּת עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא.

Mi chamocha ba-eylim יהוה • Mi kamocha nedar ba-kodesh. • Nora t'heelot oseh fele.

Who is like You among the powers! Who is like You, awesome in holiness, author of wonders!

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. *yimloch l'olam va-ed*

“יהוה will be our Power as long as space and time endure!” (Exodus 15:11,18)

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה גָּאֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל *Baruch Ata יהוה Ga'al Yisrael*



The *Rosh HaShanah Amidah* in Guided Imagery

The *Amidah*, the “Standing Prayer,” is one of the most powerful meditations in Jewish spiritual practice. During these High Holyday services, the *Amidah* is *davvened* (prayed) twice. In this *Machzor* the *Shacharit Amidah* is contemplative and private. The *Musaf Amidah* after the Torah service is communal and is *davvened* and sung aloud.

Enjoy this personal journey through the *Rosh HaShanah Amidah* blessings in guided imagery. Think of each blessing as a beautiful garden. You may visit all the blessings, choose as many as you wish, or linger in one special blessing that attracts you right now. A Hebrew *Amidah* follows for those who wish a traditional text. We each take this journey privately until the melody calls us back.

1. *Avot*: We call upon our Ancestors for Support in our Journey

The image

Visualize Avraham and Sarah standing before you. They can be seen as two radiant light sources. Extend from them two rays of interwoven light. The light forms a chain that comes down through the generations into you. Receive the light from your feet. Connect it to the ground. Allow the light to grow up around you, following your spine until it comes to rest on the crown of your head. Spiral it down until you are enclosed in this light. The light is your protection.

Enveloped by protecting light, you feel your vitality, your urge to LIVE! Bring to awareness the link between your own urge to live and the great Power that sustains you. That Power is “*Melech*.”

The Blessing

זְכֵרְנוּ לְחַיִּים מֶלֶךְ חַפֵּץ בַּחַיִּים
וְכַתְּבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים. מֶלֶךְ עֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ אֲבֹרָהּ וְעֹזֵר שָׂרָה:

Zochreynu l'chayim, Melech chafeytz ba-chayim.

V'chat-veynu b'sefer ha-chayim, l'maan-cha Elohim Chayim

Melech ozeyr u-moshia u-mageyn.

Baruch Ata יהוה, mageyn Avraham v'ezrat Sarah.

Remember us that we may live. *Melech* who delights in life! Inscribe us in the *Sefer Chayim*, The Book of Life, for Your sake, God of Life. Helping, saving, and protecting Power. A Fountain of Blessing are You, Holy One, protector of Avraham, supporter of Sarah.



2. *Chesed and Gevurah: We Open to Divine Expansiveness and Power*

The Image

See yourself in a time of your life in which you felt lost, confused, despairing. See a light come into your heart. Allow it to grow until you shine with your own Source. Imagine yourself lying down at first, and gradually, as the light fills you, you come to standing.

The Blessing

מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים זוֹכֵר יְצוּרֵיוֹ לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים.
וְנֶאֱמַן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְחַיֵּה הַמֵּתִים:

Mi chamocho Av ha-Rachamim, zocher yetzurav l'chayim b'rachamim.

V'ne-eman Ata l'ha-chayot meytim. Baruch Ata יהוה, m'chayey ha-meytim.

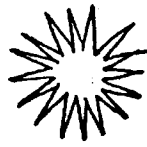
Who is like You, incomparable Source-of-Rachamim, Source of womb-nurturing Compassion. With *rachamim* you recall all your creatures towards life. Loyal restorer of life. A Fountain of Blessing are You, Holy One, restorer of life to the deadened.

3. *Kedushat Ha-Shem: We Name the Holy*

The Image

Breathe in and out, seeing the purity of your breath come into your body. Breathe out slowly, allowing all impurities to leave you. Experience the wholeness and completeness of each breath. Feel its circularity, its roundness, its holiness. God's Name is in each breath.

- Allow yourself to sense God's awesome power. Circulate this power through your body as you ask each part of you to become an extension of God's desire.
- Let your awareness shift to others who fill the room with you. Can you feel the others, like yourself, inviting their own selves to also become extensions of God? Feel their and your longing to serve God merge into one combined longing, like a woven wick that supports a great flame.
- Search within you for your old defenses and arrogances. They block your progress. If you can find them, this is a time to diminish their tyranny. Take a good look at where they come from, how they have served you, and also ruled you.



- As you begin to identify and work through each knot of negativity, you will feel yourself becoming lighter and more open. You can feel Godly energy move through you and into the world. This is the spiritual state of becoming a “throne” ~ a seat of the *Shekhinah*, The Divine Presence.
- Breathe deeply, allowing your breath to enter and soften all the sore, cramped muscles of your soul. As your breath fills you, an exaltation enters your being! You truly know your source in the One. Through your loving justice and compassion God’s *Kedushah*, Holiness, enters the world.

The Blessing

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ וְקְדוּשֵׁימִים בְּכֹל יוֹם יִהְיֶה לְךָ. סְלָה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

Ata kadosh, v'shimcha kadosh, u-k'doshim b'chol yom y'hall'lu-cha. Selah.
Baruch Ata יהוה, ha-Melech ha-Kadosh.

You are holy, Your Name is holy. All holy beings hail You each day.

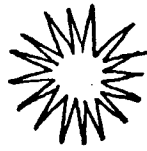
A Fountain of Blessing are You, Holy One, Breath-of-Life, Sacred *Melech* ~ Sourcing Power.

4. *Kedushat Ha-Yom*: We Open Ourselves to the Sacred on this Day of Remembrance

(On *Shabbat*, add the *Shabbat*-awareness phrases.)

The Image

- Look around the space you are in. We gather not only as individuals, but as a people. We share deep conscious and unconscious memories. Whether Jew by birth or choice, throughout our history our souls were together. Close your eyes and remember. You and we, fleeing *Mitzrayim* / Egypt. You and we at Sinai. You and we hearing Torah spoken as thunder shook the mountain. You and we hearing the *Teruah*, the *Shofar* blast, that split the heavens. Remember.
- We enter with God into a bond of shared memory. Feel all the prayers and hopes of the past flood into you to fortify your own deepest plea. Fill your heart with that plea and send it out.
- Locate in your body any remaining knots of cynicism and despair. Imagine hands massaging those knots. The hands are gentle and loving. Each time they touch you, you feel a warm rush of hope.
- Hope and gratitude blend as you and we allow Godly guidance, Torah and *mitzvot* to fill our lives. Feel the purity of your heart’s desire to serve the one Light.



The Blessing

וְטַהַר לִבֵּנוּ לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאֵמֶת.
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ מְקֹדֶשׁ (הַשַּׁבָּת וְ) יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וַיּוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן.

V'taher libeynu l'ovdecha beh-emet.

Baruch Ata יהוה, m'kadeysh (ha-Shabbat v-) Yisrael v-Yom ha-Zikaron.

Purify our hearts to do Your work in truth. A Fountain of Blessing are You, Holy One, making sacred (*Shabbat* and) *Yisrael*, and this Day of Remembrance.

5. *Avodah*: We Open Ourselves to Sacred Service

The Image

See yourself as a flame, offering yourself to God. Feel the flame burning inside you. Feel your longing, your desire to know God, to serve God. Experience the great yearning that rests in that flame.

The Blessing

וְתַחֲזִינָה עֵינֵינוּ בְּשׁוּבָךָ לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמַּחֲזִיר שְׂכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.

V'teche-zenah eyneynu b'shuv-chah l'Tzion b'rachamim.

Baruch Ata יהוה, ha-machazir Shekhinahto l'Tzion.

May our eyes behold Your loving homecoming to Zion.

A Fountain of Blessing are You, Holy One, who brings Your *Shekhinah* home.

[*Shekhinah* is our name for the Divine Feminine, also called the Divine Presence, the aspect of the Creative Power we call God that dwells most closely and most intimately with us, and that most profoundly feels the pain of being exiled by our hardness of heart and alienation.]

6. *Modim*: We Open Ourselves to Gratitude

The Image

See yourself as being grounded in the earth and touching heaven. Know that you are a vessel for miracles. Contemplate for yourself some simple miracles that occur in your daily life. Find one that has happened to you this very day.



The Blessing

וְכָל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ סֶלָה וַיְהִלְלוּ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ בְּאֵמֶת הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתָנוּ וְעִזְרָתָנוּ
סֶלָה. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַטּוֹב שְׁמֶךָ וְלָךְ נִאֶה לְהוֹדוֹת.

V'chol ha-chayim yoducha, Selah. Viy-hall'lu et Shimcha beh-emet. Ha-El yeshua-teynu v'ezra-teynu. Selah! Baruch Ata יהוה, ha-tov shimcha, u-l'cha na-eh l'hodot.

Let all life acknowledge You in gratitude! And sing *Hallel/Praise* to Your Name in truth, saving and helping Power. A Fountain of Blessing are You, Holy One, Your Name is Goodness and to thank you is pleasure!

7. *Shalom*: We Open to Wholeness, Completeness, Fulfillment and Peace.

The Image

Visualize yourself bathed in light. The light is a rainbow of contentment, moving from your heart out to the people around you, into the ones you love, out into the community and beyond. See the light bathing the earth in love and peace. See what your world might look like filled with *shalom*: wholeness, completeness, perfection. Picture yourself in a place of true peace. Allow one image to grow colorful, clear and radiant. Rest in that image of yourself in *shalom*.

The Blessing

בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים בְּרָכָה וְשָׁלוֹם וּפְרִנָּסָה טוֹבָה נִזְכָּר וְנִכְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ
אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשָׁלוֹם.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה עוֹשֵׂה הַשָּׁלוֹם.

B'Sefer Chayim, bracha, v'shalom, u-farnassah tovah, nizacher v'nikatev l'fanecha, anachnu v'chol am'cha Beyt Yisrael, l'chayim tovim, u-l'shalom.

Baruch Ata יהוה, oseh ha-shalom.

In the Book of Life, blessing, *shalom* and prosperity, may we be remembered and written before You, all of us, and all Your people *Beyt Yisrael*, for good lives and *shalom*. A Fountain of Blessing are You, Holy One, You bless us with *shalom*.

(Brachas 1-3 and 5-7 are adapted from "Amidah in Movement" by Talia DeLone in P'nai Or Religious Fellowship Siddur Or Chadash 1989)

In the Book of Life, blessing, *shalom* and prosperity,
may we be remembered and written before You;
all of us, and all Your people *Beyt Yisrael*,
for good lives and *shalom*.

בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים בְּרָכָה וְשָׁלוֹם וּפְרֻנְסָה טוֹבָה
נִזְכָּר וְנִכְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ
אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשָׁלוֹם.

*B'Sefer Chayim, bracha, v'shalom, u'farnassah tovah,
n'zacher v'nikatev l'fanecha!
Anachnu v'chol am'cha Beyt Yisrael:
L'chayim tovim, u-l'shalom*

