



# **ROSH HASHANA**

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## **A TEFILLA TAKE-ALONG**

Benjy Myers

הַנְּבִי הָעֲבִי מִמַּעַשׁ  
נִרְעַשׁ וְנִפְחָד מִפְּחָד יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּאֵתִי לַעֲמֹד וּלְהִתְחַנֵּן לְפָנֶיךָ  
עַל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַחְתָּנִי  
(תפילת הש"ץ קודם תפילת מוסף)

*I, of little deed, stand here  
In awe and fearful of the One Enthroned on the Praises of Israel.  
I come before You in supplication  
On behalf of Your nation Israel who have sent me.  
(From the ḥazzan's prayer prior to Mussaf)*

## Introduction

The High Holidays are a time of intense *tefilla* (prayer) – communal and personal. We spend many hours together in the Beit Knesset (synagogue) trying to connect with God on many different levels; God as Creator, King, Judge, Father, Shepherd, Guardian, Beloved and more. Many of the prayers are in the form of poems, based on biblical verses and midrashic elements that are not necessarily familiar to all who pick up the *mahzor* (festival prayer book) on these Days of Awe. Many feel lost in the liturgy, feel that they have no connection with the *tefilla* and therefore miss the opportunity to relate to the day, the setting, the atmosphere and, by extension, to the Almighty Himself.

The aim of this work is as its name implies – a take-along. It does not come to replace our *tefilla*, but to supplement it; not to minimize our efforts in understanding the words (in the original or the translation), but to enhance them. It will include insights on the more familiar prayers and *brakhot* (blessings) as well as those unique to this time of year. The focus will be on the repetition of the Amida where most of the additions and changes unique to Rosh Hashana appear.

The guide is based in part on the Tefilla Trip-Tick produced by Rabbi Ari Perl,

previously of Congregation Shaare Tefilla in Dallas, TX. I had the pleasure of spending five years on *shlihut* in this wonderful community, and in which capacity I also participated in both traditional and explanatory services over the High Holidays as a member of the Community Kollel of Dallas.

It is also the result of being a *shlich tzibbur* in various communities across the world, and in particular at the Belfast Hebrew Congregation, where I had the opportunity to share my thoughts on the *tefilla* of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur with this delightful community.

Finally, my position as Educational Director of Ohr Torah Stone's Beren-Amiel | Straus-Amiel Institute, training rabbis and educators in Israel to serve as Jewish communal leaders across the world, has afforded me the opportunity to put this guide together.

May our prayers ascend before the Heavenly Throne and be answered for good.

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Elul 5777

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### **Introduction to the Second Edition**

I am deeply honoured and grateful that this guide has been so warmly received in communities across the world. I am indebted for the comments and feedback that I have received, many of which have been incorporated into this updated edition.

"אָבינוּ מַלְכֵנוּ פֶּתַח שַׁעֲרֵי שָׁמַיִם לְתַפִּלָּתֵנוּ."

"Our Father, our King – open the gates of Heaven for our prayers."

Rabbi Benjy Myers

Elul 5782

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Page numbers for two of the more popular *maḥzorim* have been added next to each section for ease of reference.

◇ AR = ArtScroll

◇ SK = Koren Mahzor with commentary by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

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## MAARIV: THE EVENING SERVICE

וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר

*And it was evening, and it was morning*

Ever since the time of creation, the Jewish day has begun at night. The word *maariv* comes from the root ע.ר.ב. which means evening. It is also the same root as the word *areiv*, meaning guarantor. God is our guarantor that each night as we close our eyes and enter the world of sleep, He will look after us. As happened during the creation of the world, each day afresh the all-encompassing darkness is replaced by the invigorating sunlight of dawn.

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On Shabbat: **Mizmor Shir**

בשבת: **מזמור שיר**

AR: 46  
SK: 49

When Rosh Hashana begins on Friday night, the service begins with two psalms – a song for Shabbat. Psalm 92 details God’s wondrous actions and our desire to be like the righteous, to dwell in God’s home, continuously singing His praises. Psalm 93 continues the description of God’s magnitude. Just as God girds himself with grandeur, so too do we change our clothing and dress ourselves in a way befitting the day itself.

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**Barkhu**

**ברכו**

AR: 50  
SK: 53

As we come together in prayer each evening and morning, we first praise God. In doing so, we bear witness that God is our sovereign and it is to Him that we turn with our entreaties, praises and thanks.

Barkhu is only recited in the presence of a *minyán* (quorum of men over the age of 13), further underscoring the importance of this statement.

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**Shema and it Blessings**

**קריאת שמע וברכותיה**

AR: 50  
SK: 53

The central part of this section is the Shema. In it we declare the

unity of God and His ultimate rule over all of creation. We also affirm our belief in the system of reward and punishment and recall the exodus from Egypt, the singular most important event that transformed the offspring of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob into the Nation of Israel.

Surrounding the three paragraphs that incorporate the Shema, we say two *brakhot* (blessings) before and two after. The first speaks of God as the Ongoing Creator, who each day renews the world and the times that govern all of existence. The second *brakha* speaks of God as the giver of the Law, a Torah given to us in love. It is because of this everlasting love that we accept our sacred duty to study and engage in the world of Torah and *mitzvot*. In the first *brakha* after Shema, we speak of God as the Redeemer, emphasizing the salvation from Egyptian bondage and signing off with God as the Ultimate Redeemer. The final *brakha* in this section beseeches God to look after us we lay to sleep. It is also a plea to God to care for us through all darkness and to spread His protective wings over us and all of Israel.

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## Amida

## עמידה

AR: 62  
SK: 67

Each Amida comprises a beginning, middle and end. The first three *brakhot* (blessings) express our praises of God as the provider of life and rain, the guardian of the ancestors, and, by extension, their offspring throughout the generation. The third blessing speaks of God's sanctity.

The last three *brakhot* express our thanks and admiration for everything that God has done, does and will do for us, from listening to our prayers to providing peace.

The middle section is what changes, depending on the day and festival. On a regular weekday, the middle section includes thirteen *brakhot*, each one asking for something different – understanding, knowledge, forgiveness, health, wealth, a return to Zion and the Davidic dynasty. On Shabbat and festivals, instead of thirteen intermediate *brakhot*, only one is inserted. This



speaks about the uniqueness of the day, and during Mussaf of Shabbat, festivals and Rosh Hodesh (new moon), it also recounts the additional sacrifices brought in the Temple. Mussaf of Rosh Hashana is different still, as will be explained later.

Note: If Rosh Hashana falls on a Friday night or Motza'ei Shabbat (Saturday night), make sure to insert the relevant phrases and passages.

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## Conclusion of the Service

## סוף התפילה

AR: 76/78  
SK: 83/85

While at Shaḥarit, Mussaf and Minḥa the *ḥazzan* now repeats the Amida, at Maariv there is no such repetition.

On Shabbat the service continues with the very first Biblical verses that speak of the very first Shabbat (Bereishit/Genesis 2:1-3). What follows is an abridged review of the Amida. One reason this was instituted in ancient times was to ensure that everyone left the Beit Knesset together, walking home safely in numbers.

Many congregations continue with Psalm 24 with its grand vision of the coronation of God as King, a most befitting prayer for the beginning of Rosh Hashana.

We conclude with Aleinu, a prayer that serves as the conclusion to all the daily services, and Psalm 27. This Psalm is recited twice daily from the beginning of the month of Elul through the end of Sukkot. In it we implore God with but one essential request – to be allowed to remain in God's home, close to His presence and sheltered by His very essence.

Many communities finish with a song – either Yigdal, composed by Dayan Daniel ben Yehuda in 14<sup>th</sup> Century Rome, or Adon Olam, composed, many say, by the 11<sup>th</sup> Century scholar and poet, Ibn Gabirol. Both songs outline Maimonides' Thirteen Principles of Faith in poetic verse.

## SHAḤARIT: THE MORNING SERVICE

טוב להודות לה' ולזמר לשמך עליון; להגיד בבקר מסדף ואמונתך בלילות.

*How good it is to give thanks to God, to sing to Your exalted name;  
To recall Your loving-kindness in the morning and Your faith at night.*

Our day is bracketed in prayer. We end each night with the recitation of the Shema, accepting upon ourselves the yoke of Heaven, and we begin each day giving thanks to the Almighty for giving us the opportunity to spend another day engaged with His world and Torah.

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### Wearing the *Tallit*

### התעטפות בטלית

AR: 136  
SK: 205

As we enter the world of formal prayer, we first don the *tallit*, a four-cornered garment that has *tzitzit* – fringes – in each corner.

As we seek to immerse ourselves in prayer, we also perform a physical act of wrapping ourselves in a garment that serves as a reminder of all the *mitzvot* (cf. Bemidbar/Numbers 15:39).

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### Morning Blessings

### ברכות השחר

AR: 184  
SK: 267

Our daily prayer begins with a series of *brakhot* that relate to our personal status as obligated Jews, free to keep the *mitzvot*, and continues with blessings relating to our actions in arising, dressing and getting ready for the day. In this way we give thanks to God for all He has given us, and makes us aware that each step of the way is overseen by the Omnipresent One.

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### Verses of Praise

### פסוקי דזמרה

AR: 230  
SK: 297

Before beseeching a king with our request, it is proper to first sing his praises. This is the format for the daily prayer, where we begin the public service by blessing “He who spoke and made the world,” and

concluding with another *brakha* – “may Your name forever be praised.” In between these two blessings we find various psalms that praise the Almighty, and verses recalling the exodus from Egypt and our salvation at the Red Sea.

The *hazzan* for Shaḥarit begins with the word “Hamelekh” – “The King!” This sets the tone for the rest of the *tefilla*, whose overarching theme is the coronation of God as the King who sits in judgement over His subjects.

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## Shema and its Blessings

## קריאת שמע וברכותיה

AR: 266  
SK: 353

As in the evening, the central part of this section is the Shema (see the Maariv section for further details on the Shema). The Shema is once again enveloped between *brakhot*, two before and one after. The first speaks of God as the creator of light and dark, the universe and all that it contains. The second recounts God’s love for us, the Jewish people, and that because of this He gave and continually gives us the Torah – the Book of Life.

The *brakha* after the Shema describes our history as slaves in Egypt and retells the exodus from bondage to freedom. We conclude with the words “blessed are you, O Lord, Redeemer of Israel.” It is said in the present tense, underlining the fact that God did not only save us once at an earlier point in history, but that He continually looks over us, looks after us, and we are confident that He will do so in the future as well.

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## Amida

## עמידה

AR: 296  
SK: 381

As in the evening, the Shaḥarit Amida is comprised of seven *brakhot*. The first three and last three are similar to every other Amida throughout the year. The first three speak God’s praises as the shield of our forefathers; as the Creator and ultimately the One who will bring the dead back to life; and as the Omnipotent and holy Omnipresent One. The final three give thanks for everything we have received and everything we will receive in the future. Changes are made to reflect this time of year and

additional verses are inserted to these blessings that speak of repentance and forgiveness, beseeching God to inscribe us in the Book of Life.

The middle *brakha* is dedicated to the sanctity of the day, concluding with the words “who sanctifies [the Shabbat,] Israel and the Day of Remembrance.” What makes the festivals truly special is that it is the Jewish people who sanctify it, and through sanctifying the day, they in return are sanctified by God. We are partners in this world together with God – He as King and we as His subjects – coming together to make the world a better place.

Note: If Rosh Hashana falls on a Shabbat, make sure to insert the relevant phrases and passages.

### REPETITION OF THE AMIDA: INTRODUCTION

The repetition of the Amida serves an important role. Before the age of printing, owning a siddur was quite an expense, and not one that most people could allow themselves. Furthermore, not everyone could read. Therefore, the Sages instituted that the Amida be repeated for the benefit of those who were unable to pray by themselves. As such, this is a communal prayer and requires the congregation to be attentive to the *hazzan* and respond appropriately throughout.

The repetition also contains additions that are not found in the individual's Amida, such as Kedusha and the Priestly Blessing that are only said in the presence of a minyan.

In some communities, a number of thee *piyutim* listed below are skipped. Be sure to pay attention to any announcements.

### SHAḤARIT REPETITION (1<sup>ST</sup> DAY)

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#### Missod & Yareiti

מסוד, יראתי

AR: 306  
SK: 399

This section serves as the *hazzan's* introduction to the repetition. It outlines his fear and trepidation standing as the peoples'

emissary for this awesome task of bringing their prayers and supplications before the Divine Throne. Furthermore, on a regular weekday, Shabbat or festival, the repetition does not, as a rule, include any additional *piyutim* – liturgical poems – but rather maintains the same text said in the individual’s silent Amida, with only the addition of those sections recited when a *minyan* is present. Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, however, are different. In this section, the *hazzan* states that any additions have been signed off by Sages of yesteryear and are not to be considered an interruption to the prayer.

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### Zokhreinu

זכרנו

AR: 310  
SK: 405

This addition to the Amida is made throughout the Ten Days of Repentance, beginning with Rosh Hashana. “Remember us for life, O King who is desirous of life, and inscribe us in the Book of Life for Your sake, O God of Life.”

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### Atta Gibbor

אתה גבור

AR: 310  
SK: 405

The second *brakha* of the Amida describes the multi-faceted role that God plays, with the central theme being that of life – sustaining and supporting the living, and, at the end of days, returning the dead to life. The addition which is made in this *brakha* throughout the Ten Days of Repentance continues the theme, asking God to remember for life all living creatures in His great mercy.

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### Atta Hu

אתה הוא

AR: 314  
SK: 411

The Ark is opened for this next *piyut*, composed, according to some sources, by Rabbi Elazar HaKalir, a prolific *paytan* (composer of liturgical poems) who lived at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century. This *piyut* is constructed of short phrases, with each phrase beginning with the next letter of the *alef-bet*, and it presents a short, sharp overview of the power and majesty of God.

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**Aderet Mamlakha****אדרת ממלכה**AR: 316  
SK: 413

Another *piyut* written by Rabbi Elazar HaKalir, it speaks of Israel's kingdom which has suffered the ignominy of being destroyed, its people sent into exile, and yet they still proclaim God as King, praying for the day they are able to return to their eternal homeland in all its glory.

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**Eim Asher B'tzedek****אם אשר בצדק**AR: 318  
SK: 415

A central motif of Rosh Hashana pictures God as the redeemer, not only of the nation as a whole, but also of individuals. Perhaps the most recalled instance is the birth of Yitzhak to Sarah, who at the grand old age of 90 was miraculously given child who grew to become one of the three forefathers of the Jewish people.

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**A'apid Nezer****אפי"ד נזר**AR: 322  
SK: 417

This poem takes the form of a double acrostic, that is, the first and third word of each of the 22 lines begins with the same letter of the *alef-bet*. The poem details the Heavenly grandeur of the angels singing God's praises as outlined in Isaiah ch. 6, "*kadosh, kadosh, kadosh*" – "holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts."

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**Hashem Melekh****ה' מלך**AR: 328  
SK: 431

A threefold *alef-bet* poem with the refrain "God was King, God is King, and God will be King forever and ever." Each line speaks of the Jewish people or the angels and other Heavenly hosts singing God's praises, and ends with one part of the refrain.

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**L'Eil Orekh Din****לא-ל עורך דין**AR: 330  
SK: 435

While the overall theme of Rosh Hashana is the coronation of God as the King, it is also very much the day of judgement, when the King sits at the head of the Heavenly Court and records the fate of all His creatures for the coming year. This *piyut* sings the praises of God not just as a king, but also as the True Judge.

AR: 332  
SK: 437

The focal point of the repetition of the Amida during the week as well as Shabbat and festivals, is the Kedusha. Here, utilizing verses from the Prophets and Tehillim (Psalms), we declare with great fervour God's holiness and glory, and call upon Him to restore His visible presence to Jerusalem and the Beit HaMikdash (Temple).

### U'vkhein Ten Paḥdekha

### ובכן תן פחדך

AR: 334  
SK: 439

The third *brakha* of the Amida concludes with a number of short paragraphs calling on God to instill His awe in all of creation so that we may come to serve Him together. We ask for joy to return to the Land of Israel and its inhabitants, seeking for God to reign over the whole world, giving honour to the righteous and removing evil from the world.

### Atta V'ḥartanu

### אתה בחרתנו

AR: 334  
SK: 441

The fourth and middle *brakha* of the Amida refers to the sanctity of the day itself. God chose us, the Jewish people, from among the nations of the world to be His nation. As such, we have been given the festivals to observe. We ask God that he continue to sanctify us through His commandments and give us the hearts and minds to serve Him with true sincerity.

### R'tzei & Modim

### רצה, מודים

AR: 338  
SK: 443

We now enter the third stage of the Amida – thanksgiving. We ask that God accept our prayers and petitions, and thank Him for being the rock upon whom we have depended since time immemorial.

In Modim, the congregation recite a shorter and slightly different thanksgiving prayer from the *ḥazzan*. This is known as Modim D'Rabanan (The Rabbis' Thanksgiving) as it is a composite of various thanksgiving prayers composed by the Talmudic sages. It is recited in an undertone while the *ḥazzan* says the main Modim, as it is important to give thanks directly to one's master, and not only through an intermediary. This way, every

member of the congregation marks their own appreciation of everything God has done and continues to do for them.

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### Priestly Blessing

### ברכת כהנים

AR: 340  
SK: 447

The Priestly Blessing is inserted between the penultimate and final *brakhot* of the repetition of the Amida. Through the *kohanim* (priests), descendants of Aaron the High Priest, God bestows upon us blessings, culminating in the ultimate blessing – peace!

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### Sim Shalom

### שים שלום

AR: 340  
SK: 447

Above all, we and God desire peace. Peace brings light to the world; peace brings freedom to the world, freedom to serve the Almighty, to engage in his Torah and commandments, to take God's light that shines upon us and shine it onto the world in truth, loving-kindness, justice and mercy.

### SHAḤARIT REPETITION (2<sup>ND</sup> DAY)

The repetition on the second day is similar to the first day. The basic outline and structure of the *tefilla* remains, with certain changes and additions being made to the *piyutim*.

We will try to shine a different light on the same passages, so make sure to refer to the 1<sup>st</sup> day to get a more complete picture.

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### Missod & Atiti

### מסוד, אתיתי

AR: 342  
SK: 661

Following the *hazzan's* introduction in Missod, he entreaties the Almighty "with a torn and troubled heart," knowing that one's deeds are not sufficient to stand in supplication, but having to do so nonetheless as a messenger of the congregation.

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### Imrat'kha

### אמרתך

AR: 344  
SK: 665

This *piyut* is arranged alphabetically as are many others, and was



composed by R' Shimon bar Yitzhak, 10<sup>th</sup> Century Ashkenaz rabbi and liturgist.

In his *piyut*, R' Shimon bar Yitzhak turns to God with a request: while all testimonies are true and Your rulings are just, if You, God, judge us based only on strict justice, we will not survive. Therefore, please base Your rulings on the attribute of mercy, not strict justice.

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**Zokhreinu****זכרנו**

AR: 346  
SK: 667

One of the central motifs of the Ten Days of Repentance, beginning with Rosh Hashana and culminating on Yom Kippur, is life. We ask that the Lord of All Life grant us a good life, knowing that He too is desirous of life.

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**Atta Gibbor****אתה גבור**

AR: 346  
SK: 667

The second *brakha* of the Amida, while emphasizing God's place in the creation of life, also stresses His role not just as the Creator, but as a merciful creator. As such, the refrain that is added to the Amida throughout the Ten Days of Repentance is "who is like You, Father of mercy, who, in His mercy, remembers his creations for life."

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**Tamim****תמים**

AR: 346  
SK: 669

Another *piyut* composed by R' Shimon bar Yitzhak, this one too asks for the attribute of mercy to shine through, and just as God heard our forefather's Yitzhak's petition, we ask that He hears ours.

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**Shulachti****שלחתי**

AR: 348  
SK: 671

Similar to Missod, the *hazzan* turns to God as the people's emissary and asks God to listen to his petition on behalf of the people. The first four lines are recited aloud by the *hazzan*, and the remainder is said silently (in many communities, the continuation is omitted). The acrostic spells out the author's name – Shimon bar Yitzhak.

AR: 352  
SK: 675

The *piyutim* at the beginning of the repetition speak to God's justice and our plea that He deal with us mercifully. From this point forth we praise God's reign as King of Kings, describing the splendour of His throne, the majesty of His actions and His inherent holiness.

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**Melekh Elyon****מלך עליון**

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AR: 366  
SK: 693

“The King upon high will reign forever and ever!” This is the central motif of the *piyut* that contrasts the might, glory and omnipresence of the King of Kings with mortal monarchs.

Originally, after each stanza that details God's glory came a stanza comparing Him to human kings, however most versions only retained two such comparative stanzas towards the end of the *piyut*.

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**Hashem Melekh****ה' מלך**

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AR: 370  
SK: 699

While the words and alphabetical direction have changed from the *piyut* said on the first day, the main theme remains the same: “God was King, God is King, and God will be King forever and ever.”

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**L'Eil Orekh Din****לא-ל עורך דין**

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AR: 374  
SK: 705

In many communities this *piyut* is not said here, but instead is inserted into the repetition of Mussaf for the second day which is otherwise lacking in *piyutim*.

For an insight into the *piyut* itself, see notes from the first day.

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**Kedusha****קדושה**

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AR: 374  
SK: 707

The themes that permeate the day are monarchy, life and mercy. Part of Kedusha in Shaḥarit fuses these themes together, beseeching God as King to once more bring the Davidic dynasty back to the holy city and eternal capital of the Jewish people – Jerusalem.

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**U'vkhein Ten Paḥdekha****ובכן תן פחדך**

AR: 376  
SK: 709

The third *brakha* concludes with the words “Hamelekh HaKadosh” – “the Holy King”. This is a different ending from the rest of the year – “the Holy Lord” – and is used only during the Ten Days of Repentance when we emphasise God’s role as King and Judge.

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**Atta V’ḥartanu****אתה בחרתנו**

AR: 378  
SK: 711

The fourth *brakha*, beginning with the words “atta V’ḥartanu”, includes the section known as “Yaale V’yavo”. This paragraph is inserted in the Amida and Birkat HaMazon (Grace After Meals) on each festival. In it we turn to God and ask Him to remember us, our forefathers and Zion, and that on this day He should grant us life and have mercy on us.

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**R’tzei & Modim****רצה ומודים**

AR: 380  
SK: 713

Towards the end of the Modim blessing we add a line specific to the Ten Days of Repentance asking God to inscribe “all the children of Your covenant” for a good life, a theme that will be repeated in the Mussaf prayer.

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**Priestly Blessing****ברכת כהנים**

AR: 382  
SK: 717

The Priestly Blessing directs God’s blessings to his people through his emissaries, the priests. We ask that God bless and protect us, showing us His shining countenance and granting us the greatest gift – peace.

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**Sim Shalom****שים שלום**

AR: 382  
SK: 717

At the conclusion of this *brakha* is the final change we make to the Amida for the duration of the Ten Days of Repentance, asking God to remember us and inscribe in the Book of Life, Blessing and Peace.

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## BOTH DAYS

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### Avinu Malkeinu

### אבינו מלכנו

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AR: 384  
SK: 449 /  
719

As we stand in prayer, we refer to God in many different forms – God, Creator, Judge, Warrior and more. On Rosh Hashana we emphasise two main forms: King and Father. As a king, God has ultimate control over our lives. In many monarchies – certainly in previous generations – the king could usurp the authority of the court, meaning that while the judge ruled one way and the law requires the ruling to follow a particular course, the king could change that as he sees fit, often in keeping with the needs and welfare of his kingdom. On Rosh Hashana we approach God as King, acknowledging that he is the ultimate ruler and his decisions are final. At the same time, God is our Father. Parents can also be seen as final arbiters in the lives of their children, particularly when they are young. And yet there is an inherent difference. A parent will often mete out judgement with a heavy dose of mercy and love. We seek God’s judgment at this time of year through both prisms – the King who can look at strict justice and decide whether that is the best, most appropriate course of action, and also as a Father whose justice will always include love and mercy.

Note: Avinu Malkeinu is not recited on Shabbat.

Following the repetition of the Shaḥarit Amida and Avinu Malkeinu (except when the first day is on Shabbat and Avinu Malkeinu is not said) the service continues with Kaddish, the Psalm for the Day, Psalm 27 and the Hymn of Glory (Anim Zemirot). In some communities these psalms and Anim Zemirot are said elsewhere in the service.

## **KRIAT HATORAH (READING OF THE TORAH)**

The Torah is read in public on several occasions throughout the week and year. Each Monday, Thursday and Shabbat afternoon a short section from the beginning of the following week's portion is read. On Shabbat morning the reading follows a set cycle beginning and culminating each year on Simchat Torah. On Rosh Hodesh (New Month) the description of the daily and specific new month sacrifice is read, and on the festivals a section of the Torah that has a special connection to the day is chosen. On Pesah we read about the exodus; on Shavuot it's the receiving of the Torah; on Sukkot it's an overview of all the festivals finishing with a description of Sukkot itself and the *mitzva* of the four species. On Yom Kippur morning we read of the service of the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) in the Tabernacle on that day. It is interesting therefore to note that of all the festivals, only Rosh Hashana's reading does not relate directly to the day and its history. We could, for instance, have chosen to read about the creation of the world. One possible explanation is that the creation of the world was entirely God's doing. He did not have, nor need, mankind's assistance. Rosh Hashana, however, requires mankind's participation. We are the ones who need to seek God's forgiveness. We are the ones who need to seek forgiveness from our fellow man. We are the ones who need to crown God as King, for without us, He would be a king with no subjects. The reading has to inspire us to want to work with God, to be partners in populating, cultivating and preserving the world. We need to have an appreciation of God's hand in all this, to know that our prayers are answered, to know that miracles are possible, to know that – as in the words of the second paragraph in Aleinu – we are perfecting God's sovereign world. Together. As our ancestors did before us, and as we hope and pray our children and grandchildren will do after us.

AR: 390  
SK: 457 /  
727

The Torah is the book of life. It is the guide for our actions; its *mitzvot* and stories form the basis of our moral and religious actions, impacting on our personal, family and communal lives.

As mentioned above, the Torah is read publicly on various days throughout the year, and each time it is read, it is accompanied from the ark to the *shulhan* (reader's desk) with fanfare. We escort the Torah with verses from TaNaKh and approach the Torah scroll to kiss it on its way from and to the ark. The verses and psalms recited vary slightly from Shabbat to festivals and weekdays.

On the Three Pilgrimage Festivals (Pesah, Shavuot and Sukkot) as well as Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, we add the public recitation – traditionally sung in unison – of the thirteen attributes of Divine mercy, followed by a personal supplication, ending with the verse that is repeated three times asking God to heed our prayers in His abundant mercy.

Note: The thirteen attributes and supplication are omitted on Shabbat.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Day

### יום א' של ראש השנה

AR: 402  
SK: 467

On Rosh Hashana we call out to God to look after us – individually and communally – as well as all other creations. We hearken back to earlier times when God saw the plight of Avraham and Sarah who were bereft of children and remembered His promise to them. He miraculously gave them a son – Yitzhak – who according to tradition was born on Rosh Hashana. Furthermore, God heard the cries of Yishmael in his state of near-death and the cries of his mother, Hagar. We too cry out on this day and ask for life, forgiveness and mercy.

The *maftir* (additional reading) is taken from chapter 29 of the Book of Bemidbar (Numbers), detailing the additional sacrifices brought on the Altar on this day.

AR: 416  
SK: 477

The Haftara recalls the plight of another barren woman – Hana. In her distress she turned to God on one of the family trips to the Mishkan (Tabernacle), pouring her heart out before the Almighty. The son she was granted, Shmuel, grew to become one of Israel's most famous prophets who anointed Saul and David as kings of all Israel.

AR: 402  
SK: 737

As we turn to God on Rosh Hashana we recall the self-sacrifice made by our forefather Yitzhak who was willing to be offered up on the altar by his father, Avraham. We ask that in merit of this self-sacrifice and the sacrifices made by our forebears throughout the generations, God treats us with mercy.

After the near-sacrifice, the Torah reading continues with the description of the offering of a ram whose horns were caught in a nearby bush. It is the ram's horn that we blow on Rosh Hashana to recall this incident and open the Gates of Heaven to our prayers.

The reading concludes with an eye to the future, recounting the birth of Rivka, one of our matriarchs and future wife of Yitzhak. One take-home message of this ending is the belief and trust in God that no matter how dire the situation, the Jewish people will continue to live and thrive.

The *maftir* for the second day is the same as the first day.

AR: 416  
SK: 745

The Haftara evokes memories of our time in the wilderness, how God took care of us then, and how he will continue to care for us through other trials, tribulations and exiles, promising our Matriarch Rachel that her “children will return home.”

AR: 428  
SK: 751

Prior to hearing the *shofar* and returning the Torah to the Ark, in many communities a number of communal prayers are recited on behalf of the sick and of the congregation, for the sake of the local government, for the soldiers of the IDF and the State of Israel.

### Sounding the *Shofar*

### תקיעת שופר

AR: 432  
SK: 757

Rosh Hashana is not called thus in the Torah. It has two names: “Zikhron Teru’ah” – “remembrance of the [*shofar*] blast” (Vayikra / Leviticus 23) and “Yom Teru’ah” – “the day of the [*shofar*] blast” (Bemidbar/Numbers 29). The main *mitzva* of the day is to hear the sound of the *shofar*, and as the *mitzva* is not completed in its entirety until the full 100 notes have been sounded after the conclusion of Mussaf, it is incumbent on us not to interrupt ourselves with mundane talk. Thirty notes are sounded at this point, another thirty are sounded during the repetition of the Mussaf Amida and the final forty are sounded after the conclusion of Mussaf.

Many reasons have been given for the sounding of the *shofar*. Rabbi Saadia Gaon (882 CE, Egypt – 942, Baghdad) enumerated ten of them:

1. The sound of the *shofar* is akin to the sound of a trumpet used during the coronation of a new monarch. On Rosh Hashana we crown God as king, and use the *shofar* to trumpet in His reign.
2. The sound of the *shofar* encourages us to awaken, examine our actions and repent.
3. The sound of the *shofar* recalls the *shofar* heard during the time of the giving of the Torah. As we stand on Rosh Hashana and re-examine our ways, we once again undertake to adhere to the Torah and *mitzvot*.
4. The sound of the *shofar* is like the clarion call of the prophets of yore who called to the people to mend their ways, and to act justly and mercifully with others.
5. The staccato *teru’ah* notes sound like wailing and crying, reminding us



of the mournful sounds that reverberated at the time of the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash (Temple), thereby encouraging us to pray and strive for its rebuilding.

6. The *shofar* itself reminds us of the ram that Avraham sacrificed to God just after Yitzhak was spared upon the altar. We ask that God remember the self-sacrifice of Yitzhak and the willingness of Avraham to adhere to His command, and have mercy on their descendants – us – by virtue of their conduct. Furthermore, we endeavour to reach the lofty heights of self-sacrifice of our forefathers, and resolve to do all that is in our power to make it so.
7. The sound of the *shofar*, its mighty blast, reminds us of the greatness and awesomeness of the Almighty, and by contrast our own feebleness and human limitations, therefore instilling in us a sense of humility.
8. The sound of the *shofar* announces the arrival of the True Judge to His heavenly court, much as a trumpet heralds the arrival of a flesh-and-blood king to his court.
9. The sound of the *shofar* will be heard to herald the ingathering of the exiles and their return to the holy city of Yerushalayim.
10. The sound of the *shofar* will hail the arrival of the Messiah that we hope and pray will come speedily and in our days.

Note: On Shabbat the *shofar* is not sounded.

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### Returning the Torah

### החזרת ספר תורה

AR: 440  
SK: 503 /  
763

As was done when taking the Torah from the ark prior to the reading, we now accompany the Torah back, again reciting a psalm and a selection of biblical verses. We finish off the return stating that the Torah is the book of life, its ways are the ways of pleasantness and its paths are the paths of peace. We ask that God help us restore the spiritual heights of yesteryear.

## MUSSAF: THE ADDITIONAL SERVICE

According to the Talmud (Berakhot 26b), the three main *tefillot* of the day were institutionalised in place of the main daily sacrifices that were offered in the Temple. On Shabbat, Rosh Hodesh (new moon) and the festivals, an additional sacrifice was offered, in its place we now have the Mussaf Amida, the Additional Service.

The Mussaf Amida on Rosh Hashana is the longest silent Amida of the year. As such, it offers ample time to focus, to think about what transpired over the past year and where we'd like to be a year from now. Take your time, read through the translation and any notes you may have as you use this time to have your own private conversation with God.

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### Hineni

### הנני

AR: 444  
SK: 511 /  
767

“Behold, I stand here short of deed.” The *hazzan* opens with a private *tefilla*, a supplication to the Almighty that his prayers on behalf of himself, his family, community and all of Israel be accepted. While this prayer was written specifically for the *hazzan* to recite, it is well worth spending a few moments looking through this *tefilla*, and thinking for ourselves: what is it that we want this coming year for ourselves, family and community?

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### Amida

### עמידה

AR: 448  
SK: 515 /  
771

As mentioned above in the introduction to the evening Amida, the Amida comprises three separate sections. The first three *brakhot* give praise to God and the final three are *brakhot* of thanksgiving.

The middle section changes depending on the day and the *tefilla*. On a regular weekday the 13 intermediate *brakhot* are blessings of request where we turn to God and ask Him for health, wealth, sustenance, knowledge and more. On Shabbat and Yom Tov the middle section speaks to the uniqueness of the day.

Mussaf on Rosh Hashana is different in that the middle section comprises not one *brakha* that speaks of the day, but three – Malkhuyot (monarchy), Zikhronot (remembrance) and Shofarot (soundings of the *shofar*). These will be explained in greater detail as we reach each relevant section in the repetition of the Mussaf Amida.

Note: If Rosh Hashana falls on a Shabbat, make sure to insert the relevant phrases and passages.

### REPETITION OF THE AMIDA: INTRODUCTION

Having beseeched the Almighty in Hineni to serve as the emissary on behalf of the congregation, the *hazzan* now begins the repetition of the Amida. As was the case in Shaḥarit, the repetition also contains additions that are not found in the individual's Amida, such as Kedusha and the Priestly Blessing that are only said in the presence of a *minyan*. The noteworthy additions to the repetition are the sounding of the *shofar* at the conclusion of each of the additional sections, Malkhuyot, Zikhronot and Shofarot.

In some communities, a number of thee *piyutim* listed below are skipped. Be sure to pay attention to any announcements.

### MUSSAF REPETITION (1<sup>ST</sup> DAY)

Misod, Upad

מִסוֹד, אֲפָד

AR: 470  
SK: 551

As in Shaḥarit, the *hazzan* begins with a supplication asking for permission to add liturgical elements into the *tefilla*.

Upad is written as an alphabetical acrostic, and is attributed to Rabbi Elazar HaKalir, a prolific 7<sup>th</sup> Century scholar and *paytan* (poet) who is responsible for many of our liturgical poems on Shabbat and festivals, including many of the *Kinot* we read on Tisha B'Av.

This poem recalls the first sin of humanity when Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden fruit. They were created, judged and sentenced mercifully (they deserved the death penalty – “for on the day you eat from it you shall surely die,” Gen. 2:17). So too we ask that on this day that celebrates the

creation, the day when we ask God to judge us, that He do so mercifully and favourably.

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**Teifen**

**תפן**

AR: 472  
SK: 557

This reverse alphabetical acrostic also begs the Almighty to hear the sound of the *shofar*, to recall past covenants and the binding of Isaac, to sit on the Throne of Justice and judge the world mercifully.

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**Af Orach**

**אף ארח**

AR: 474  
SK: 559

This *piyut* is constructed with the first part of the line following the *alef-bet*, and the second part of the line beginning with the last letter, *tav*, and the final line meeting in the middle at the letter lammed.

The *piyut* itself recalls the time of creation when moments before the attribute of justice was used to create the world, the ability to repent – *teshuva* – was also created. Knowing that mankind is fallible and is destined to fall and break the covenant of with God, we pray that He look back and recall the covenant with our forefathers, judging us favourably in their merit.

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**El Emuna**

**א-ל אמונה**

AR: 476  
SK: 561

These two sentences are recited first by the *hazzan* and then by the congregation. If God truly judges us according to the letter of the law, what chance do we have? As such, we beseech God to refrain from dealing with mankind angrily, if not for our sake, then for His.

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**Melekh Elyon**

**מלך עליון**

AR: 476  
SK: 561

This *piyut* glorifies God's eternal majesty and ultimately contrasts it with the fleeting reign of an earthly monarch.

While it seems to follow the *alef-bet*, in most *maḥzorim* it skips a letter each time. Some versions have a paragraph detailing the human king in

between each stanza of the Divine King, and then it does follow the *alef-bet*. Most communities just have two stanzas of the contrasting flesh & blood king towards the end of the *piyut*.

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### Unetaneh Tokef

### ונתנה תוקף

AR: 480  
SK: 565

Unetaneh Tokef describes in vivid detail the awesome nature of the day, and is very much the focal point not only of the *ḥazzan's* repetition, but of the entire Ten Days of Repentance. Ascribed to Rabbi Amnon of Mainz, this passage sets the scene for the most dramatic questions of the day: who will live and who will die? Who will be rested and who will be troubled? How many will come into the world and what will be their fate, and how many will pass from this world?

“Man comes from the earth and is destined to return to the earth,” and while each member of mankind may be but a mere flicker in God’s eyes, nevertheless He is desirous of their wellbeing and eagerly awaits their entreaties and repentance.

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### Ein Kitzva, Kedusha

### אין קצבה, קדושה

AR: 484  
SK: 575

As in every Amida that has a repetition, here too we find the Kedusha. Unlike other instances, here there is essentially a prelude to the Kedusha, beginning with the words “ein kitzva,” “there is no limit to Your years... You are befitting Your name and Your name is befitting You.” As a result, we find ourselves – indeed are compelled – to declare God’s great holiness which is the purpose of Kedusha.

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### Ḥamol

### חמול

AR: 488  
SK: 579

The constant refrain throughout our prayers on Rosh Hashana, is “God, have mercy!”. We now a further element – “and take joy in Your all that You have made.” This idea is also emphasised when we declare “joy to your land and happiness to Your city.” We want life, we want to be described in the book of life, and we want to do so with great joy!

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**V'khol Ma'aminim****וכל מאמינים**

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AR: 490  
SK: 581

Everyone believes, all are confident in God's attributes that are listed in this *piyut*. Following the *alef-bet*, the poem lists not only many of God's attributes – redeemer, inherently good, omniscient and more – but also adds how each of these attributes are put into practice.

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**U'vkhein Ten Paḥdekha****ובכן תן פחדך**

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AR: 494  
SK: 585

“And so, O Lord our God, place Your awe upon all that you've done.” Knowing that God is omniscient and omnipotent, it is now becoming of all His creations to come together with one voice, doing His will, and praying for the day when good will overcome evil, and when the righteous will rise and wickedness will cease to be.

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**Atta V'hartanu****אתה בחרתנו**

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AR: 496  
SK: 589

The fourth *brakha* includes the description of the additional sacrifice. However, “because of our sins we were exiled from our land,” and as a result we are left to recall the sacrifice while praying for a return to a rebuilt Jerusalem and the third Beit HaMikdash (Temple).

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**Malkhuyot & Aleinu****מלכויות, עלינו**

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AR: 500  
SK: 595

The middle – and central – part of the Amida contains the three *brakhot*, three subsections of Malkhuyot (kingship), Zikhrontot (remembrances) and Shofarot. Each section contains ten verses from throughout TaNaKh (Bible) that speak of the main heading, and each section concludes with a *brakha* and the sounding of the *shofar*. In the first subsection of Malkhuyot (kingship). We once again crown God as our king, and as such, willingly accept his judgment as the True Judge.

The focal point of Malkhuyot, Aleinu, describes our mission in this world – to create and recreate our surroundings and the world at large in God's image. The Ark is opened (except for one, and in some editions, two verses that speak of the idolatrous nations of the world) and many have the

custom to prostrate and bow to the floor upon reaching the words “and we bend our knees, bow and give thanks.”

This section concludes with the *brakha* “King over all the world, who sanctifies [the Shabbat,] Israel and the Day of Remembrance.” This is followed by the sounding of the *shofar*.

Note: On Shabbat the *shofar* is not sounded.

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## Oḥila

## אוחילה

AR: 504  
SK: 601

Similar to Hineni, this prayer is a personal supplication by the *ḥazzan* asking God that he be granted the ability to open his mouth and for the prayers to ascend before the Heavenly throne. It is recited with the Ark open, signifying the opening of the Heavenly gates, and is said just before beginning the section of the verses of monarchy.

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## Zikhronot

## זכרונות

AR: 510  
SK: 609

In this section we ask God to remember, and more importantly, to act on those memories. We ask Him to recall each and every person, their individual challenges and how they faced them. One of those mentioned here is Noah. We recall the depravity of the world prior to the flood and how Noah stood up and went against the flow. How he was faced with a world filled with theft and violence, and yet succeeded in remaining above the fray. We too hope and pray that when faced with challenges, we will also choose to walk with God and do the right thing.

This section concludes with the *brakha* “He who remembers the covenant.” This is followed by the sounding of the *shofar*.

Note: On Shabbat the *shofar* is not sounded.

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## Shofarot

## שופרות

AR: 516  
SK: 617

When explaining the *mitzva* of Shofar, the 10<sup>th</sup> century Babylonian sage Rav Saadia Gaon enumerates ten reasons for the *mitzva* as mentioned above. One of those reasons is to awaken the

slumbering souls and remind them that God is now sitting in judgment on all of creation. The upcoming sounding of the *shofar* is designed to stir within us a desire to change for the better.

This section concludes with the *brakha* “He who hears His people’s blasts of the *shofar*.” This is followed by the sounding of the *shofar*.

Note: On Shabbat the *shofar* is not sounded.

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### R'tzei & Modim

### רצה, מודים

AR: 520  
SK: 625

As we enter the final stages of the repetition of the Amida, we beseech God to accept the people of Israel and their prayers.

In the event that the *kohanim* ascend in preparation for the Priestly Blessing, a minor addition is made, imploring the Almighty to accept our prayers as if they were sacrifices offered up on the altar, and that we look forward to our eyes gazing once more upon the splendour of Jerusalem and the Temple.

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### Priestly Blessing

### ברכת כהנים

AR: 524  
SK: 629

In many communities throughout the world, the *kohanim* only recite the Priestly Blessing during Mussaf of Yom Tov (Pesah, Shavuot, Sukkot, Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur). As such, this is a wonderful opportunity to receive the Divine blessing in its intended form. Many families have the custom that the children gather by their parents, thereby receiving the blessing not only as individuals, but as a family.

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### Sim Shalom

### שים שלום

AR: 532  
SK: 635

The final blessing – peace – recalls that God has given us the Torah of life in order to instil in us a love of life and love of the God of life. As we head into the section of *hayom* (below), we recall the verse that “you who have embraced and cleaved to the Lord your God are all living today.” Indeed, one of the ways we celebrate life is by giving the opportunity to future generations to take what we have taught them, and



to live their lives to the full, cleaving to God and continuing the cycle of partnership with the Creator in the challenging, wonderful and ongoing task of recreating the word each day in God's image.

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## Hayom

## היום

AR: 532  
SK: 637

We conclude with another form of *hayom* - today. Today we ask God to bless us, to strengthen us, hear our cries and recall us for good. We ask for it today, without delay, and of course we'll remember to say thank you as well.

## MUSSAF REPETITION (1<sup>ST</sup> DAY)

Many of the passages and *piyutim* that were recited on the 1<sup>st</sup> day are repeated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day. We will shine a different light on the same passages, so make sure to refer to the 1<sup>st</sup> day to get a more complete picture.

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## L'Eil Orekh Din

## לא-ל עורך דין

AR: 538  
SK: 807

This *piyut* utilizes powerful imagery to describe the Day of Judgment and God's judicial process. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik maintained that being judged is actually a privilege. Only responsible creatures, human beings of age and sound mind, are judged. Only those who can tell the difference between right and wrong, who can make informed decisions, can be judged.

Note: In some communities this *piyut* is said at Shaḥarit.

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## Unetaneh Tokef

## ונתנה תוקף

AR: 538  
SK: 809

"On Rosh Hashana we are written and on Yom Kippur we are inscribed." On this day the book of life is open before the Almighty. The truly righteous are signed and sealed today. The truly evil are, too. Those in the middle have a period of grace – the Ten Days of

Repentance – before they are sealed in the book on Yom Kippur.

One of, if not THE highlight of Mussaf is Unetaneh Tokef. Towards the end, we ask questions: who will live and who will die? Who is at their end and who is not at the end? It's interesting to note that the list of how to die greatly outweighs the list of how to live. Perhaps this is to show that how we live is not only up to God, but also up to us – will we live with happiness or regret? With a positive mindset or constant complaining? We thank God for our lives, but once we have that, so much is up to us and we must do our utmost to live life to its fullest – physically, emotionally, spiritually and religiously.

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### Ein Kitzva, Kedusha

### אין קצבה, קדושה

AR: 542  
SK: 817

Kedusha in Mussaf includes the first line of the Shema. While there are many highlights in Mussaf – Unetaneh Tokef, Aleinu and more – standing and declaring as one our ultimate belief in God and God's unity is an unequivocally powerful moment on this day when we also declare God as King.

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### Hamol

### חמול

AR: 544  
SK: 819

Rosh Hashana is not strictly a Jewish day, but also a universal one. It is a day that marks the creation of the world and specifically the creation of mankind. As such, when we stand in prayer on this day we ask for a favourable judgment not only for ourselves as individuals, as a family a community or even all the Jewish people, but also for all of mankind and indeed all of creation.

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### V'khol Ma'aminim

### וכל מאמינים

AR: 546  
SK: 821

The word “*amen*” testifies that we have full faith and confidence in what was just said. It is also a cry that the *brakha* recited should continue to be true. So too with *v'khol ma'aminim* that comes from the same root. We all believe, all are confident in God's attributes that are

listed in this *piyut*, and pray that these attributes continue to be manifest in the world.

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### U'vkhein Ten Paḥdekha

### ובכן תן פחדך

AR: 550  
SK: 827

Part of this section is the alphabetical poem “V’ye-etayu.” In it we state that all will come to bless and exalt God, forgoing their idolatrous ways, breaking out into song and dance as they rejoice the acceptance of the yoke of Heaven upon them, paying tribute to the True King.

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### Atta V’ḥartanu

### אתה בחרתנו

AR: 552  
SK: 829

“You have chosen us from among the nations.”

Although we mentioned above that Rosh Hashana is a day for all of humanity, nevertheless there is undeniably a special relationship between God and the Jewish people. It was the Jewish nation that was chosen to receive the Torah and all the commandments, including the commandment to declare the new month and as a consequence decide upon the actual day of each festival. In this way we are active partners with God in the management of the world. While this is a great privilege, it is also an immense responsibility, one which we undertake with both pride and trepidation.

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### Malkhuyot & Aleinu

### מלכויות, עלינו

AR: 554  
SK: 833

Aleinu is truly the highlight of the Malkhuyot section of the Amida. In this elemental prayer we openly declare our loyalty to THE King, and prostrate ourselves before Him.

The Ark is opened except for one, and in some editions, two verses that speak of the idolatrous nations of the world. Many have the custom to prostrate and bow to the floor upon reaching the words “and we bend our knees, bow and give thanks.”

This section concludes with the *brakha* “King over all the world, who sanctifies [the Shabbat,] Israel and the Day of Remembrance.” This is followed by the sounding of the *shofar*.

Note: On Shabbat the *shofar* is not sounded.

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## Oḥila

## אוחילה

AR: 558  
SK: 837

This personal prayer by the *ḥazzan* incorporates a verse that we say before beginning every Amida throughout the year – “God, open my lips and let my mouth state Your praises.” As such, we acknowledge that even though we desire, and in this case, the *ḥazzan* desires, to sing of God’s glory, we know that it is only through His grace that we are even able to open our mouths and do so.

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## Zikhronot

## זכרונות

AR: 562  
SK: 845

Having crowned God as our king and judge, we now throw ourselves upon the mercy of the Divine Court. We do this by asking God to recall our ancestors. Remember the Patriarchs and Matriarchs who walked in His footsteps, and have mercy on us in their merit and in the merit of the covenant He made with them. We do something similar at the beginning of each Amida when we refer to the Almighty as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Here we expand on the theme, knowing what is at stake during these Days of Awe.

This section concludes with the *brakha* “He who remembers the covenant.” This is followed by the sounding of the *shofar*.

Note: On Shabbat the *shofar* is not sounded.

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## Shofarot

## שופרות

AR: 568  
SK: 853

The sounding of the *shofar* isn’t only aimed at arousing us to *teshuva*. It also serves as a reminder of what was and what will be. We mention in the third section of Shofarot that the *shofar* was sounded on the

day of the giving of the Torah, getting louder and louder in readiness for the receiving of the Law and hearing God's booming voice descend from the heavens. We also mention the great *shofar* to be sounded at the time of the coming of the Messiah which will herald the ingathering of the exiles from the four corners of the earth.

This section concludes with the *brakha* "He who hears His people's blasts of the *shofar*." This is followed by the sounding of the *shofar*.

Note: On Shabbat the *shofar* is not sounded.

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### R'tzei & Modim

### רצה, מודים

AR: 570  
SK: 859

After Modim and during Mussaf of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, we add one last supplication asking God to be merciful and not be quick to anger, removing from us the threat of disease, suffering, war and bloodshed. Beyond such physical manifestations of strife, we ask that the plague of baseless hatred also be removed from us, so that we may only grow together, united and in peace.

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### Priestly Blessing

### ברכת כהנים

AR: 574  
SK: 863

We ask that God, through the *kohanim*, bless us with the three-part blessing – to be granted favour, graciousness, and peace.

Many families have the custom that the children gather by their parents during this blessing, receiving the blessing not only as individuals, but as a family. It is customary not to look at the priests' hands during the blessing, as the Divine Spirit is said to rest on them. This is the reason why the *kohanim* cover their faces and arms, and why many in the congregation will close their eyes and cover their heads as well.

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### Sim Shalom

### שים שלום

AR: 580  
SK: 871

The longest addition to the standard Amida throughout the Ten Days of Repentance is at the end of the final blessing. We ask to

be inscribed in the book of life, blessing and peace. This not something we want just for ourselves, but request that it be bestowed on all of Israel.

Furthermore, we ask that the rebuilt Temple serve as a center of prayer and acknowledgement of God's magnificence for all of mankind, what will be a true manifestation of the peace we all crave.

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## Hayom

## היום

AR: 582  
SK: 871

“Today may You strengthen us! Today may you bless us!”

These statements are called out – cried out – by the *hazzan*, with the congregation responding to each entreaty with a resounding “amen!”  
“May it truly be so!”

## BOTH DAYS

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## Final Kaddish and *Shofar*

## קדיש שלם ותקיעת שופר

AR: 584  
SK: 641 /  
875

The repetition has ended, and so a final grand Kaddish is recited, in many communities to a lively, upbeat tune.

The final forty blasts of the *shofar* are sounded at this point, either immediately after the Kaddish, or, in some communities, in the middle of the Kaddish. Other customs also abound, whereby thirty blasts are sounded here, and a further ten after Aleinu.

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## Ein Keiloheinu

## אין כא-להינו

AR: 586  
SK: 643 /  
877

An ancient poem recited after Mussaf on Shabbat and festivals (and in Israel it is said daily) affirming that no power can be compared to, be as blessed or as holy as, God.

Following the poem we recite the recipe for the incense that was offered in the Beit HaMikdash, further emphasising our desire for the rebuilding of the Temple and the ingathering of the exiles.

It concludes, once again, with a cry for peace – “God will give strength to His people, God will bless His people with peace.”

AR: 590  
SK: 649 /  
883

While Aleinu was already said as part of the Mussaf Amida, including a full prostration, it also retains its regular place as part of the concluding elements of each of the three daily services.

### Psalm for the Day & L'David

### שיר שלם יום, לדוד

AR: 170  
SK: 255

Each day of the week the Levites in the Temple would recite a different chapter from King David's Book of Psalms. We do this too, and depending on the day of the week, the psalm changes. Some congregations will recite a special psalm that is befitting Rosh Hashana, and not the psalm for the relevant day of week.

From the start of the month of Elul until Hoshana Rabba at the end of Sukkot, we add Psalm 27 to the tefilla in the evening and morning. In this Psalm King David speaks of God as his light and saviour, and asks to dwell permanently in the Almighty's abode.

Note: Some congregations will say this after Shaḥarit and before taking out the Torah, or prior to beginning P'sukei D'zimra (Verses of Praise).

### Hymn of Glory

### שיר הכבוד

AR: 166  
SK: 249

Also known as Anim Zmirot, this highly allegorical poem is often sung by a young child. It describes God and His throne in intense detail, including His interaction with Moses to whom He showed the knot of His *tefillin*. Understanding that God and the Jewish people share such experiences is all aimed at bringing us closer to God, and to sing His praises.

Note: Some congregations will say this after Shaḥarit and before taking out the Torah, or prior to beginning P'sukei D'zimra (Verses of Praise).

### Adon Olam

### אדון עולם

AR: 180  
SK: 263

Many communities conclude with this popular song that depicts in poetic form the thirteen Principles of Faith defined by Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, better known as Rambam or Maimonides.

## MINḤA: THE AFTERNOON SERVICE

אֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בַבֹּקֶר וְאֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבָיִם

*The one lamb you shall offer up in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer up in the afternoon.*

Minḥa, beyond being the name given to the afternoon service, also means gift. It is during this time that the second part of the daily sacrifice was brought in the Temple.

According to the Talmud (Berakhot 26a) the times for each of the daily prayers was instituted by the forefathers. Of Yitzḥak it is said “Yitzḥak went out to meditate in the field towards evening” (Gen. 24:63). The Sages understood this to mean that he went out to pray.

Minḥa is often the hardest of the daily prayers as it comes in the middle of the day when we are busy doing a thousand different things. Perhaps this is why Yitzḥak is described as meditating. Meditation enables one to withdraw from one’s day-to-day grind and ascend the necessary steps to engage in conversation with the Almighty. It is no easy task, but we take heart from our forefathers who showed us the way.

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### Ashrei

### אשרי

AR: 598  
SK: 893

Psalm 145 is bracketed by verses from other psalms describing the greatness of dwelling in God’s abode. It finishes with a call that we will, from now and forever, bless God.

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### Uva L’Tziyon

### ובא לציון

AR: 600  
SK: 895

Following Ashrei come a series of verses from the entire TaNaKh, some with their Aramaic translation. This is known as Kedusha D’sidra – the arranged Kedusha.

Note: When Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat, the Torah is taken out at this point and the first part of the following week’s portion is read.



AR: 612  
SK: 911

The Minḥa Amida is similar to both the Maariv and Shaḥarit Amida. It comprises seven blessings, with middle one speaking of the uniqueness of the day.

Similar to Shaḥarit, here the *ḥazzan* repeats the Amida and adds the Kedusha. However, unlike Shaḥarit, there is no Priestly Blessing.

Note: If Rosh Hashana falls on a Shabbat, make sure to insert the relevant phrases and passages.

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**Avinu Malkeinu****אבינו מלכנו**

AR: 622  
SK: 925

Avinu Malkeinu is said following the repetition of the Amida. The middle part of this list of petitions is recited responsively, with the *ḥazzan* reciting one line and the community repeating it. It begins with a plea that God enable our true return to Him, continues with a request for good health, and concludes with a series of requests to be written in the book of life, health, prosperity, salvation and repentance.

The last line is often sung and in it we ask God to act charitably and with kindness towards us, for we know that based on our actions, we are not worthy of such consideration.

Note: Avinu Malkeinu is not recited on Shabbat.

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**Conclusion of the Service****סוף התפילה**

AR: 626  
SK: 931

The service concludes with Aleinu, the prayer that serves as the conclusion to all the daily services

## MAARIV: THE EVENING SERVICE

וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר

*And it was evening and it was morning*

Just as we began Rosh Hashana with the evening service, so too we mark the transition from the sanctity of these holy days into the rest of the week (or Shabbat in some years) through the means of Maariv.

The basic structure remains, while some of the content changes.

When Rosh Hashana transitions into Shabbat, we begin the evening service with Kabbalat Shabbat – welcoming Shabbat. While this service would normally include a number of psalms as well as the beautiful of Lekha Dodi written by R' Shlomo Alkabetz in 16th Century Safed, here we use the shortened form and begin with Psalm 92 that begins with the verse "A song for Shabbat".

On Shabbat after the Amida the service continues with "Vayekhulu", the verses from Bereishit (Genesis 2:1-3) and then the abridged review of the Amida. Following this comes the full Kaddish, Aleinu, Psalm 27 and Yigdal.

Note: It is best to use a regular siddur (prayer book) in this situation.

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### V'hu Raḥum

וְהוּא רַחוּם

AR: 646  
SK: 949

Each weekday Maariv begins with two verses asking God to forgive us our transgressions and that He hears our heartfelt prayers.

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### Barkhu

בָּרְכוּ

AR: 646  
SK: 949

Once again we begin the formal part of the *tefilla* inviting all present to bless God "who is blessed forever and ever".

Barkhu is only recited in the presence of a *minyan*, further underscoring the importance of this statement.

AR: 646  
SK: 949

In the evening, the Shema is surrounded by two blessings before and two after. These blessings bracket the Shema which is the ultimate declaration of our faith in the one true God.

## Amida

## עמידה

AR: 654  
SK: 961

While the opening three and closing three *brakhot* of the Amida are similar to the other instances of the Amida that we have seen over the course of Rosh Hashana, it is the middle section that changes dramatically. We insert thirteen supplications asking God for health, wealth, understanding, forgiveness, a return to Zion and a general request that He accept our prayers.

In the first of the thirteen middle blessings, we insert a paragraph for *havdala* (lit. separation) in which we note that it is no longer Yom Tov but rather a weekday. We ask that God bestow upon us days free from sin and deep in connection with the Almighty.

Beginning with the first Maariv of Rosh Hashana and throughout the Ten Days of Repentance, culminating in Yom Kippur, minor but significant changes are made in the Amida. This includes, among others, the conclusion of the third blessing which instead of the regular "the Holy God" changes to "the Holy King".

## Conclusion of the Service

## סוף התפילה

AR: 666  
SK: 981

As noted previously, at Maariv there is no repetition of the Amida. On a weekday we continue with Kaddish, Aleinu and Psalm 27.

In some communities the *havdala* ceremony - a *brakha* over a cup of wine and a *brakha* noting the separation of the holy and mundane - will take place.



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