



MORNING MINYAN GUIDE

a guide to your morning
prayer experience



ADAS ISRAEL
Congregation



Beth El
Synagogue Center



INTENTION & ARC OF SERVICE

WELCOME!

We are so glad you are here with us for minyan this morning.

Inside this booklet, you will find **brief introductions to each section of the service**, an **outline with key prayers and page numbers**, and **explanations of certain moments and movements** throughout the service. We hope this guide will accompany you and **enrich your prayer experience this morning** as we make our way through the siddur as a community.



HIGHLIGHT PRAYERS:

BIRKOT HASHACHAR:

These blessings were originally said in the home and guide a person through the process of waking and readying for the day. Though they now appear all together as part of the liturgy in our siddur, they remind us that getting to a place of prayer can be a long and slow transition with many steps along the way. Birkot HaShachar gives us the space to warm up (and wake up!) our minds, bodies, and souls.

PSALM 150:

The climax of the psalms of P'sukei D'zimra is Psalm 150, which describes praising God through breath, instrument, and song. Often sung out loud, Psalm 150 reminds us that there are lots of ways to pray. Sometimes prayer happens through the recitation of words; other times, through deep inner reflection. And sometimes prayer happens by singing, humming or drumming along, and just letting go.

P'sukei D'zimra

Literally translated as “verses of song,” P'sukei D'zimra was added by the Rabbis to precede the morning service (Shacharit). It helps the davener transition into the mode of prayer before the core liturgy of Shacharit.

OUTLINE:

Opening blessings (p. 1→12)

Kaddish deRabbanan - Mourner's Kaddish (p. 13→15)

P'sukei D'zimra

- Baruch SheAmar - Opening Blessing (p. 16)
- Selections from Tanakh, including Psalm 145/Ashrei p. 21 and Psalm 150 (p. 25)
- Song of the Sea (p. 27)
- Yishtabach → Closing Blessing (p. 29)

MY ROLE:

Settle into the space.
Put aside what you don't need.
Breathe. Sing. Let go.

CHOREOGRAPHY:

While most of P'sukei D'zimra is said while seated, the congregation rises in spirit or body together for the song of the sea - one of the final texts of this section. In this moment, we are not just describing the Exodus - we are, in our own way, reliving it, entering our morning by walking in the steps of our ancestors' journey of redemption.

HIGHLIGHT PRAYERS:

SEHMA:

This prayer encompasses Judaism's central beliefs--the belief in one God, that our relationship with God should be rooted in love, and that we have a part to play in upholding this covenantal relationship by teaching new generations and by living a life observing mitzvot. The Shema is best known for its first line, "Hear, Oh Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One." The full prayer is made of three paragraphs, collaged together from different sections of the Torah.

AMIDAH:

The word "amidah" means "standing," because we traditionally recite this prayer while standing. Each blessing within this prayer offers us a structure to praise, petition, or offer thanks to God around a number of themes, including connection to our ancestors, forgiveness, health, hearing our prayers, and more. We can recite all nineteen blessings or meditate on just a few, imagining a world where we truly feel the reality of each of these ideas.

Shacharit

Once we have completed the warm up of P'sukei D'zimra, we begin the official morning service, Shacharit. This service begins with a call-and-response invitation to prayer. Shacharit is oriented around Judaism's two core prayers: the Shema and the Amidah. The blessings surrounding the Shema and leading into the Amidah take us on a journey through light, love, and redemption. There is a custom not to have any interruptions from Barechu through the Amidah.

OUTLINE:

Chatzi Kaddish (p. 29)

Barechu (p. 30)

Shema and its blessings (p. 30→35)

Amidah (p. 36→44)

Tachanun (p. 62→63; on Mondays and Thursdays p.59→63)

[Hallel on Rosh Chodesh and holidays instead of Tachanun (p. 50→56)]

Chatzi Kaddish (p. 64)

MY ROLE:

Follow along with the prayer leader or let yourself get lost in a word, phrase or feeling. Notice and bless the places of light, love, and redemption in your own life.

CHOREOGRAPHY:

Weekday services are often word-heavy, with much of the liturgy recited silently. The choreography of the Shema gives us a chance to experience prayer in a more embodied way: to use our hand to cover our eyes; to touch the tefillin boxes on our arm and between our eyes (if wearing); to gather and kiss the tzitzit hanging from our tallit (if wearing).

The movements of the Amidah reflect a combination of humility and audacity as we petition God. We begin by taking three steps forward (preceded, if necessary, by three steps back) to physically move into God's presence. There is also a tradition to stand throughout the Amidah with our feet together to mimic angels. When we reach the conclusion of our silent prayers, there is a custom to take three steps back and bow to each side, followed by three steps forward and rising on one's toes.

Tachanun was the original opportunity for people to articulate their deepest, most private prayers in their own words. To create a sense of privacy for this moment, we sit and cradle our faces in the crook of our arms, leaning on the forearm.

HIGHLIGHT PRAYERS:

ALIYAH BLESSINGS:

People who are called up for an aliyah recite the blessings before and after the reading of the Torah. Receiving an aliyah is an honor and can be used to mark the celebration of sacred occasions such as b'nai mitzvah, baby namings, birthdays, yartzheits, or other special milestones.

MISHEBEIRACH FOR HOLIM:

We pause in the middle of the Torah readings to offer a blessing for those who are in need of healing in the presence of the sefer Torah. This is an opportunity to offer prayer for, and share the name of, those in our lives who are in need of healing of mind, body, soul, or spirit.

Torah Service

The Torah is read as part of the morning service on Mondays, Thursdays, Shabbat, and holidays. On Mondays and Thursdays, we read the opening section of the parsha that will be read and studied in full on Shabbat.

OUTLINE:

Remove the Torah from the Ark (p. 65)

Torah readings (p. 261→346)

Mi Shebeirakh - blessings for healing and special occasions (p. 68→70)

Return the Torah to the Ark (p. 76→77)

MY ROLE:

Listen to, or read along with, the Torah readings.
Find interest and meaning in a word, phrase, or commentary.
Celebrate communal blessings.

CHOREOGRAPHY:

We honor the Torah's teachings and role in our tradition by showing respect to its physical presence. When we take the Torah out and return it to the ark, we process with it around the prayer space. Some have a practice of kissing the Torah with their siddur or tallit as it passes.

HIGHLIGHT PRAYER:

KADDISH:

Jewish communal liturgy is framed by the recitation of multiple kinds of Kaddish prayers. The goal of each Kaddish is to elevate and praise God. It was written in Aramaic (the spoken language of its time) in order to make it an accessible opportunity for a communal response. Kaddish d'Rabbanan is a version of the Kaddish that is recited after learning a rabbinic text, which we recite twice during our morning service--once at the beginning of P'sukei Dezimrah and once after we teach at the end of davening. The Chatzi Kaddish, a shortened version of the Kaddish, marks a transition between parts of the service (you may have noticed that there was one between P'sukei Dezimrah and Shacharit; another between Shacharit and the Torah service; and another after we read Torah). Kaddish Shalem, meaning "full Kaddish," marks the end of the main parts of every service. In addition to words of praise, this version of the Kaddish includes our hopes that our prayers will be answered and prayers for peace. Kaddish Yatom is the Mourner's Kaddish, which is recited after certain Psalms and at the end of the service by those in a period of mourning or observing a yartzheit.

Concluding Prayers

In the same way that P'sukei D'zimra helps us warm up for prayer, the concluding prayers give us a chance to wind down while including a few more opportunities to praise God and recite the Mourner's Kaddish.

OUTLINE:

Ashrei (p. 78)

Lamenatzeach (p. 79)

U'va Letziyon (p. 80)

Kaddish Shalem (p. 82)

Aleinu (p. 83)

Mourner's Kaddish (p. 84)

Psalm of the Day (p. 85→91)

Mourner's Kaddish (p. 100)

MY ROLE:

Let the words of the liturgy, your movements, and your presence in community this morning sink in. Try to find a word or phrase or feeling you can use as an intention to carry with you into the rest of your day.

CHOREOGRAPHY:

In its original context on the High Holidays, there is a custom to fully prostrate oneself on the ground before God during the recitation of Aleinu. However, on a regular day, our prostration is more subdued. When we reach the phrase beginning "Va'anachnu," we bend our knees at "kor'im" (kneel), bow at the waist at "u'mishtachavim" (bow), and straighten after "u'modim" (thank), moving our bodies to acknowledge the Divine presence in the world. While we are not laying ourselves flat on the floor, in performing these actions, we are physically affirming that we are committed to praising and serving God.



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