

הַפְּנִי

THE NEW
HEBREW THROUGH PRAYER

3

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אֵין כְּמוֹךְ אֵב הֶרְחָמִים

אֵין כְּמוֹךְ



How do you feel when your friend gives you the latest CD you've been wanting for your birthday? You're probably excited and say a big "thanks!" The Jewish people regard the Torah as a precious gift, one for which we say thank you to God each time we read it. We express this gratitude in two prayers said just before the Ark is opened and the Torah is removed for the Torah service.

The first of these two prayers, **אֵין כְּמוֹךְ**, proclaims God's uniqueness. In it, we praise God for the power and the kindness that are God's alone—as well as for the strength and peace with which God blesses us. This prayer also communicates our belief that only God could have given us the precious gift of the Torah. Later in this chapter, we will learn about the second prayer said before the Ark is opened—**אֵב הֶרְחָמִים**.

Practice reading אֵין כְּמוֹךְ aloud.

1. אֵין כְּמוֹךְ בְּאֱלֹהִים, יְיָ, וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ. מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת
2. כָּל עוֹלָמִים וּמַמְשֻׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר.
3. יְיָ מֶלֶךְ, יְיָ מֶלֶךְ, יְיָ יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. יְיָ עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן,
4. יְיָ יְבָרֶךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.

There is none like You, Adonai, among the gods (other people worship), and there are no deeds like Yours. Your sovereignty is an eternal sovereignty, and Your reign is from generation to generation.

Adonai is Ruler, Adonai ruled, Adonai will rule forever and ever. May Adonai give strength to our people, may Adonai bless our people with peace.

PRAYER DICTIONARY

אין

(there is) none

כְּמוֹךְ

like you

כְּ(כ)מַעֲשֵׂיךָ

(like) your deeds

מַלְכוּתְךָ

your sovereignty

וּמַמְשִׁלְתְּךָ

and your reign

מֶלֶךְ

(is) ruler

מְלָךְ

ruled

יִמְלֹךְ

will rule

ALL YOURS

Many words in the אֵין prayer end in the suffix ךְּ. Connect each word below to its English meaning.

(like) your deeds

כְּמוֹךְ

and your reign

כְּ(כ)מַעֲשֵׂיךָ

like you

מַלְכוּתְךָ

your sovereignty

וּמַמְשִׁלְתְּךָ



Can you describe
the most precious
gift you've ever
received?

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

Each word next to יי below is built on the root מלכ ("rule").

Next to each line, write whether it is the past, present, or future tense.

tense:

_____ יי יִמְלֹךְ

_____ יי מְלָךְ

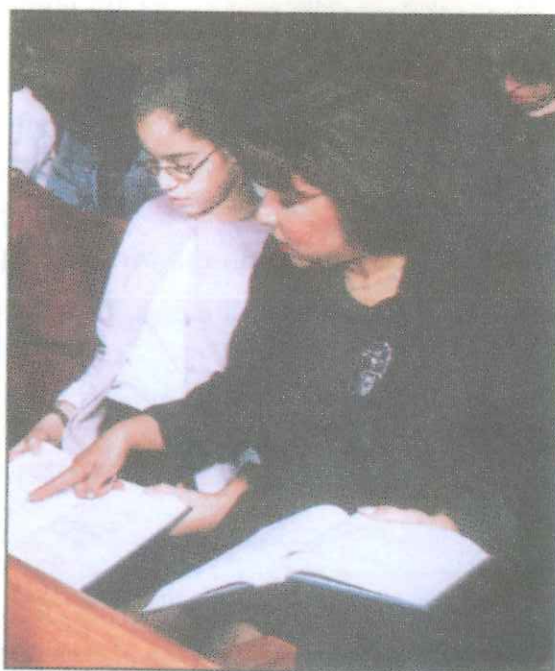
_____ יי מֶלֶךְ

TORAH SERVICE

What do you like about going to the movies with your friends? Maybe it's the popcorn. Or maybe it's getting seats together and talking until the lights go out. Or maybe you can't wait to see the coming attractions. But the part we all look forward to the most—the highlight of our experience—is seeing the movie itself! In the same way, the Torah service is the highlight of all the prayers in our synagogue service, many of which come from the Torah (for example, שְׁמַע, וְאֶהְיֶה לָּךְ, and מִי כָמוֹךָ).

The Torah is the first part of the Hebrew Bible. In it we read the stories of our ancestors. But the Torah is far more than a textbook like the one you study in history class. Not only does it tell the story of our ancestors, it also symbolizes our connection to them and to God. In the thousands of years since we received the Torah, the Jewish people have been reading it over and over again, passing down its teachings from generation to generation.

Most congregations read a portion of the Torah on Shabbat morning and on certain Jewish holidays. Others read from the Torah on Friday evenings. In some congregations, a portion of the Torah is read on Mondays and Thursdays, too. The Torah service itself has three main parts: taking the Torah out of the Ark, reading the Torah, and returning the Torah to the Ark. Each part of the Torah service has its own blessings and ceremonies.



Parents and children can work together to better understand the teachings of our tradition.



Prayer Building Blocks

אֵין כְּמוֹךָ בָּאֱלֹהִים “there is none like you among the gods (other people worship)”

אֵין means “(there is) none.”

כְּמוֹךָ is made up of two parts:

כְּמוֹ means “like.”

ךְ is a suffix meaning “you” or “your.”

Sometimes, when you add a suffix to a word, it changes the word's letters or vowels (כְּמוֹךָ = כְּמוֹ + רְ).

בָּאֱלֹהִים means “among the gods.”

בְּ is a prefix meaning “among the” or “in the.”

אֱלֹהִים means “gods.”

The word “gods” has a small “g” because it refers to pagan gods that people worshipped in ancient times. We write the name of our God with a capital “G” because there is only One God.

The Sh'ma expresses this belief:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל: יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד.

Write the English meaning of the Sh'ma below.



DID YOU NOTICE?

The Torah service begins with a reference to God, not to the Torah itself. Why do you think the Torah service praises God first?

וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֵׂיךָ "and there are no deeds like yours"

אֵין, we know, means "(there is) none."

The prefix וְ means _____.

כְּמַעֲשֵׂיךָ means "like your deeds."

We have just learned that the word כְּמוֹ means "like."

כְּ, the shorter form of the word כְּמוֹ, also means "like."

מַעֲשֵׂיךָ means "your deeds."

מַעֲשֵׂיךָ is built on the root עִשָּׂה.

(Note: Sometimes a root letter doesn't appear in a Hebrew word.)

עִשָּׂה tells us that "do" or "make" is part of a word's meaning.

The suffix יְ means "you" or "your."

Circle the root letters in each word below.

לְמַעֲשֵׂה עִשָּׂה יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁעֵשֶׂה

Now circle the words built on the root עִשָּׂה in the prayer below.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ,
וְעַל כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

How many words did you circle? _____

Do you recognize the prayer? Write its name here. _____

What does עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם mean? _____

יְיָ מֶלֶךְ, יְיָ מֶלֶךְ, יְיָ מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

**"Adonai is ruler, Adonai ruled,
Adonai will rule forever and ever"**

The word מֶלֶךְ means "ruler" or "is ruler."

Read these words:

מֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ יְמֶלֶךְ

Each word is built on the root מלכ ("rule").

Reread the prayer on page 4 and circle all the words built on the root מלכ.

How many words did you circle? _____

FROM THE SOURCES

The prayer phrase יְיָ מֶלֶךְ, יְיָ מֶלֶךְ, יְיָ מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד is a compilation of verses from different parts of the Bible.

Read each biblical verse below and circle the phrase that appears in אֵין כְּמוֹךְ.
(Remember: God's name can be written as יְיָ or יְהוָה.)

Psalms 10:16

יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם וָעֶד
אֲבָדוּ גּוֹיִם מֵאֶרֶץ:

Psalms 96:10

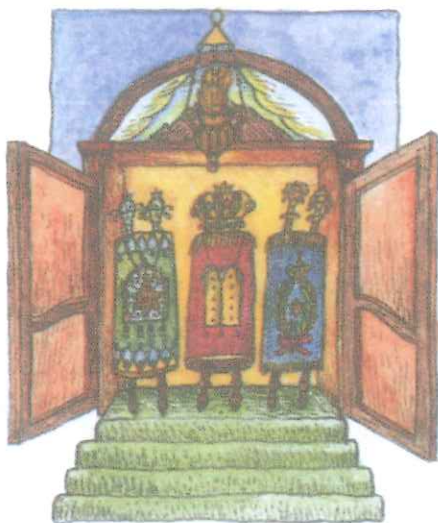
אֲמָרוּ בְּגוֹיִם | יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ
אֶת־תִּכְוֹן תִּבְל בַּל־תִּמּוֹט
יִדִין עַמִּים בְּמִישָׁרִים:

Exodus 15:18

יְהוָה | יְמֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

There is no single verse in the Bible that says God is, was, and will always be Ruler, yet the prayer expresses all these ideas in one sentence. Why do you think the prayer combines all these thoughts?

אֲב הַרְחָמִים



Whom do you trust most? You count on your mom or dad for lots of things—like helping you with your homework, cheering for you at your music recital, taking care of you when you're sick. You rely on your swim coach to teach you how to dive safely. And you depend on your best friend for everything from standing by you when you have a tough problem to telling you that your new outfit looks awesome!

The Jewish people put their trust in God to always be there for them. **אֲב הַרְחָמִים**, the second prayer recited as the Ark is opened for the Torah service, praises God for God's complete trustworthiness and mercy, and asks God to protect Jerusalem.

Practice reading **אֲב הַרְחָמִים** aloud.

1. אֲב הַרְחָמִים, הִיטִיבָה בְּרִצּוֹנָךְ אֶת-צִיּוֹן;
2. תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.
3. כִּי בָּךְ לְבַד בְּטַחְנוּ, מֶלֶךְ אֵל רֵם וְנִשְׂא,
4. אֲדוֹן עוֹלָמִים.

*Merciful Parent, favor Zion with Your goodness;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.*

*For in You alone do we trust, sovereign God, high and exalted,
eternal Ruler.*

PRAYER DICTIONARY

הַרְחֵמֵם

merciful, the mercy

יְרוּשָׁלַיִם

Jerusalem

בְּטַחָנוּ

we trust(ed)

WHAT'S MISSING?

Complete each prayer phrase with the missing word.

_____ אב

merciful parent

_____ תְּבַנֶּה חוֹמוֹת

rebuild the walls of Jerusalem

_____ כִּי בְּךָ לְבַד

for in you alone do we trust



When you're wrestling playfully with your brother, he trusts you not to hurt him.

MERCIFUL PARENT

In this prayer, we call God אב הַרְחֵמֵם ("merciful parent"). The root of הַרְחֵמֵם is רַחֵם ("mercy" or "compassion").

God is sometimes referred to by three other names, all expressing the idea that God is compassionate. The names are:

God full of mercy

the merciful one

compassionate and gracious God

אל מְלֵא רַחֲמִים

הַרְחֵמָן

אל רַחוּם וְחַנוּן

Circle the root letters רַחֵם in each of God's names above.

FROM THE SOURCES

אַב הֶרְחַמִּים asks God to favor Zion (Jerusalem) with goodness and to rebuild it.

These words are taken from Psalm 51, which was written 2,500 years ago, just after the destruction of the First Temple in 586 B.C.E.

Below is an excerpt from Psalm 51. Underline the words that appear in אַב הֶרְחַמִּים.

19 זָכַתִּי אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ נְשָׁפָרָה

לִב־נִשְׁפָּר וְנִדְכָּה

אֱלֹהִים לֹא תִבָּזֶה:

20 הִיטִיבָה בְּרָצוֹנְךָ אֶת־צִיּוֹן

תִּבְנֶה חֳמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם:

WHOM DO YOU TRUST?

The prayer ends with the statement that we put our trust in God:

כִּי בָךְ לִבִּי בִטָּחוֹנִי

Think of somebody you trust. On the lines below, describe an incident or the character traits that make that person trustworthy.

FLUENT READING

Below is the unofficial anthem of the State of Israel—הַתִּקְוָה. Based on a poem written in 1878 by Naftali Herz Imber, it expresses the hope that the Jewish people would someday return from exile to live in their homeland—אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Practice reading הַתִּקְוָה.

Circle צִיּוֹן and יְרוּשָׁלַיִם each time they appear. How many words did you circle? _____

כָּל עוֹד בְּלֵבב פְּנִימָה
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדֵי הוֹמָיָה
וּלְפָאֲתֵי מִזְרַח קְדִימָה
עֵין לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָּה.

עוֹד לֹא אֲבָדָה תִּקְוָתֵנוּ
הַתִּקְוָה בַּת שְׁנוֹת אֲלָפִים
לְהִיּוֹת עִם חֶפְשִׁי בְּאֶרְצֵנוּ
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

*Within the heart
a Jewish spirit is still alive
and the eyes look eastward
toward Zion.*

*Our hope is not lost,
the hope of two thousand years
to be a free nation in our land,
in the land of Zion and Jerusalem.*



כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן

לֵךְ יְיָ

כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן

Which objects, or things that you do, link you to your past *and* to your future? If your mom gives you her wedding dress to wear when you get married, and you pass that dress on to your own daughter, you have created a chain linking your past and your future together. If your dad gives you his vintage baseball cards, and you someday give them to your own son or daughter, you also create such a chain. In the same way, the Torah links us to our ancestors and to our descendants. From generation to generation, the teachings of the Torah are passed down as we read it each week, creating an unending chain of knowledge and tradition, and building our heritage.

כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן, the prayer that we say as we remove the Torah from the Ark, connects us to our ancient past and to our future. It expresses our hope and our belief that both the Torah and the land of Israel will continue to be our source of spiritual strength for generations to come.

We stand as the Ark is opened.

Practice reading כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן aloud.

1. כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר-יְיָ מִירוּשָׁלַיִם.
2. בָּרוּךְ שְׁנַתֵּן תוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ.

*For out of Zion shall go forth Torah, and the word of God from Jerusalem.
Praised is the One, who in holiness gave the Torah to God's people Israel.*

PRAYER DICTIONARY

מִצִּיּוֹן

from Zion

תּוֹרָה

Torah, teaching

וּדְבַר

and the word of

מִירוּשָׁלַיִם

from Jerusalem

שָׁנַתָּן

who gave

לְעַמּוֹ

to God's people

בְּקִדְשׁוֹ

in God's holiness

MATCH GAME

Connect each Hebrew word to its English meaning.

to God's people

from Zion

and the word of

from Jerusalem

in God's holiness

who gave

Torah, teaching

תּוֹרָה

וּדְבַר

מִירוּשָׁלַיִם

מִצִּיּוֹן

שָׁנַתָּן

לְעַמּוֹ

בְּקִדְשׁוֹ

With each tender act,
parents can instill in
their children an ability
to love and nurture.



PRAYER VARIATIONS

As the Ark is opened, some congregations add the following words from the Torah (Numbers 10:35) before **כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן**.

וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעַ הָאָרֶן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה:

קוּמָה יְיָ וַיִּפְצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ, וַיִּנָּסוּ מִשְׁנֵאֶיךָ מִפְּנֶיךָ.

When the Ark was carried forward, Moses said:

Arise, Adonai; may Your enemies be scattered, may Your foes be driven to flight.

Other congregations do not mention war or the Jews' enemies, but add:

הָבוּ גִדְּלָ לֵאלֹהֵינוּ וְתָנוּ כְּבוֹד לַתּוֹרָה.

Let us declare God's greatness and give honor to the Torah.

No matter which words they add before **כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן**, all congregations are alike in praising God for giving us the Torah. Which version of the prayer is found in your synagogue's prayer book?

WHAT'S MISSING?

Circle the word that completes each sentence.

- | | | | |
|------------|----------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| לְעִמּוֹ | מִירוּשָׁלַיִם | מִצִּיּוֹן | 1. כִּי _____ תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה |
| | | | from Zion |
| מִצִּיּוֹן | מִירוּשָׁלַיִם | תוֹרָה | 2. וְדִבֶּר יי _____ |
| | | | from Jerusalem |
| תוֹרָה | יִשְׂרָאֵל | יי | 3. בְּרוּךְ שְׁנָתָן _____ |
| | | | Torah |
| וְדִבֶּר | מִצִּיּוֹן | יִשְׂרָאֵל | 4. לְעִמּוֹ _____ בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ |
| | | | Israel |

OUT OF ORDER

Number the seven words from the first line of **כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן** in the correct order.

- | | | | | | |
|--------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| תוֹרָה | <input type="radio"/> | וְדִבֶּר | <input type="radio"/> | תֵּצֵא | <input type="radio"/> |
| | | מִירוּשָׁלַיִם | <input type="radio"/> | מִצִּיּוֹן | <input type="radio"/> |
| | | כִּי | <input type="radio"/> | יי | <input type="radio"/> |

Number the six words from the second line of **כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן** in the correct order.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| לְעִמּוֹ | <input type="radio"/> | יִשְׂרָאֵל | <input type="radio"/> |
| בְּרוּךְ | <input type="radio"/> | שְׁנָתָן | <input type="radio"/> |
| בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ | <input type="radio"/> | תוֹרָה | <input type="radio"/> |

King David's Tower in the Old City of Jerusalem.



TORAH READING

How did the custom of reading the Torah originate?

Some of the Jews who had been in exile in Babylonia after the destruction of the First Temple in 586 B.C.E. were allowed to return to the land of Israel. But years had passed, and they and their children had forgotten the teachings of the Torah.

Around 400 B.C.E, Ezra the scribe, determined to rebuild Jewish life in Israel, stood during Rosh Hashanah in front of the gathered Jews and read to them from the Torah. The Jews cried when they heard the words of the Torah again.

They returned the next day to study Torah, and they celebrated Sukkot for the first time in many years. But Ezra knew they would have to be reminded of the meaning of the Torah if they were to live according to its laws. So he arranged public Torah readings on Mondays and Thursdays, on Shabbat, and on certain holidays.

Why on Mondays and Thursdays? Those were market days, when the people came together in large numbers to do business.

And to this day—thousands of years later—many congregations still read from the Torah in the synagogue on Mondays and Thursdays, and on certain holidays, in addition to Shabbat.

Answer the questions below:

- How did reading aloud from the Torah in public help the Jews in Ezra's time?

- Why do you think it is important to continue this tradition?



Prayer Building Blocks

מִצִּיּוֹן "from Zion"

מִצִּיּוֹן is made up of two parts.

מִ is a prefix meaning "from."

צִיּוֹן means "Zion."

מִצִּיּוֹן means _____.

Zion is another name for Jerusalem.

וְדָבָר "and the word of"

וְ is a prefix meaning _____.

דָּבָר means "the word of."

Read the following sentences and circle all the words built on the root דָּבָר ("speak," "word," or "thing").

- וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצֹוֶה הַיּוֹם, עַל לְבָבְךָ.
- בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הָאֵל הַנָּאֶמֶן בְּכָל דְּבָרָיו.
- וְעֵינֵינוּ תְּרַאֲיֵנָּה מִלְכוּתְךָ כְּדָבָר הָאֲמֹר בְּשִׁירֵי עֲזָרָה.
- וְדָבָר אֶחָד מִדְּבָרֶיךָ אַחֲזֹר לֹא יָשׁוּב רִיקָם.
- הָאֵל הַנָּאֶמֶן, הָאֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה, הַמְדַּבֵּר וּמְקַיֵּם.



DID YOU KNOW?

In Hebrew, we refer to the Ten Commandments as עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרֹת.

Circle the root letters דָּבָר in the second word: עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרֹת

What does עֲשֶׂרֶת mean? _____

“from Jerusalem” מירושלים

מירושלים is made up of two parts.

מ is a prefix meaning “from.”

ירושלים means “Jerusalem.”

The prophet Isaiah first said the words מירושלים ודבר-י' תורה, in his vision of a peaceful world in which “they shall beat their swords into plowshares” and “nation shall not lift up sword against nation” (Isaiah 2:3-4). Here, תורה means “teaching” or “instruction.”

Read these sentences and underline the Hebrew word for Jerusalem in each one.

1. ובנה ירושלים עיר הקדש במהרה בימינו.
2. אב הרחמים, היטיבה ברצונך את ציון, תבנה חומות ירושלים.
3. תתגדל ותתקדש בתוך ירושלים עירך.
4. ברוך אתה יי, בונה ברחמי ירושלים, אמן.
5. שמחו את ירושלים וגילו בה כל אהביה.

Do you recognize the prayer in line 2?

Write its name here. _____

When do we say this prayer? _____



שָׁנַת "who gave"

שָׁנַת is made up of two parts.

שְׁ is a prefix meaning "who."

נָתַן means "gave."

בְּרוּךְ שָׁנַת תּוֹרָה means "praised is the One who gave the Torah."

Who is the One who gave us the Torah? Write your answer in Hebrew. _____

לְעַמּוֹ "to God's people"

לְ is a prefix meaning "to."

עַמּוֹ means "God's people."

עַם means "people" or "nation."

וְ at the end of a word means "his."

As God is neither male nor female, we translate לְעַמּוֹ as "to God's people."

בְּקִדְשׁוֹ "in God's holiness"

בְּ is a prefix meaning "in."

קִדְשָׁה means "holiness."

קִדְשׁוֹ means "God's holiness."

בְּקִדְשׁוֹ means _____.

What is the root of בְּקִדְשׁוֹ? _____

Circle the root letters קִדַּשׁ in each word below.

קִדְשׁוֹ מְקִדְשִׁים הַקִּדּוֹשׁ וְיִקְדֹּשׁ

וּקְדוּשָׁה קִדּוּשׁ

What does קִדַּשׁ mean? _____

HOLDING THE TORAH

In many congregations, the person holding the Torah, after it is taken out of the Ark, recites each of the following lines, first alone, and then with the congregation. In other congregations, the lines are recited in unison.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל: יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד.

Hear O Israel: Adonai is our God, Adonai is One.

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ, גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ, קָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ.

Our God is One and is great; God's name is holy.

A third line is added. In some congregations, the person holding the Torah turns to face the Ark and bows when this line is recited.

גִּדְּלוּ לִי אֶתִּי וְנִרְוִמָּהּ שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו.

Acclaim Adonai with me, and together let us exalt God's name.



When you become a Bar or Bat Mitzvah you will have the honor of holding the most sacred possession of the Jewish people.



Have you ever stood and watched something exciting go by? Maybe you've been to a wedding where you can't take your eyes off the beautiful bride walking down the aisle. Or maybe you've gone to a basketball game where the players run into the arena through a tunnel and emerge to cheers as the crowd jumps to its feet. Or maybe you've arrived early at the Fourth of July parade so you can get a good spot to watch the bands and floats.

Traditionally, during the Torah service, we stand to watch the Torah as it is carried through the congregation, perhaps by the rabbi, or the cantor, a bar or bat mitzvah, or an honored congregant. As the Torah is carried up and down the aisles, from the Ark to the reader's table on the *bimah*, there is a feeling of anticipation. Everyone turns to keep the Torah in sight as a sign of respect to God. As the Torah passes by, we sing לך יי, a prayer that praises God's greatness.

Practice reading לך יי aloud.

לך יי, הגדלה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד,
 כי כל בשמים ובארץ, לך יי הממלכה
 והמתנשא לכל לראש.

Yours, God, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and earth is Yours. Yours is the sovereignty, God; You are supreme over all.

Read the English translation of the prayer above. Notice that we do not mention the Torah in the prayer. You might expect us to praise the Torah as we carry it lovingly from the Ark, but instead we praise God.

Why do we praise God instead of the Torah? Because, although we honor the Torah and respect it, we worship only God.

Why do you think this prayer encourages us to worship God and not the Torah?

FLUENT READING

Each line below contains a word you know. Practice reading the lines.

1. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן בְּכָל דְּבָרָיו.
2. אֹר חֹדֶשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תִּאִיר וְנִזְכָּה כְּלָנוּ מִהֶרָה לְאוּרוֹ.
3. וּבְדַבְרֵי קֹדֶשׁ כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר: יְמִלֶךְ יי לְעוֹלָם אֱלֹהֵיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר הַלְלוּיָהּ.
4. אִם אֲשַׁכַּח יְרוּשָׁלַיִם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי.
5. גָּדוֹל יי וּמַהֲלֵל מְאֹד וְלִגְדָּלְתּוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר.
6. כִּי בָנוּ בְּחֵרֶת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ.
7. רָצָה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְתַפְלָתָם.
8. הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן.
9. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, הַבּוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה, וּבַמֶּשֶׁה עֲבָדוֹ, וּבִישְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ, וּבַנְּבִיאֵי הָאֱמֶת וְצֶדֶק.
10. לִהְיוֹת עִם חֶפְשִׁי בְּאַרְצִנוּ, אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

בְּרָכוֹת הַתּוֹרָה

3



Have you seen the Torah's elaborate cover and ornaments—its rich silver embroidery on fine fabric, tiny bells adorning brass or silver handle ornaments, and fancy breastplate? When the Torah reaches the reader's table after it has been carried through the congregation, the rabbi or Torah reader removes the covering and ornaments, sets the Torah on the table, and unrolls it to that week's פָּרָשָׁה—Torah portion.

Each *parashah* is divided into sections, or readings. For each section, one or more congregants are called up to the Torah to say two blessings—one before the Torah reader begins to read that section, and one after the reader has finished. The honor of being called up to recite these blessings is called an עֲלִיָּה ("going up"). The blessing before the Torah reading has two parts. The first part is the Bar'chu, a call to the congregation to praise God. The second part thanks God for choosing us to receive the gift of the Torah.

BLESSING BEFORE THE TORAH READING

Practice reading the blessing aloud.

1. בְּרָכוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְבָרֵךְ.
2. בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
3. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
4. אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר־בָּנוּ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים,
5. וְנָתַן־לָנוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ.
6. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

Praise Adonai, who is praised.

Praised is Adonai, who is praised forever and ever.

*Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world,
for choosing us from all the nations
and giving us God's Torah.*

Praised are You, Adonai, who gives us the Torah.

PRAYER DICTIONARY

בָּחַר

chose (choosing)

בָּנוּ

us

מִכָּל

from all

הָעַמִּים

the nations

וְנָתַן

and gave (and giving)

לָנוּ

to us

תּוֹרָתוֹ

God's Torah

נוֹתֵן

gives

MATCH GAME

Connect each Hebrew word to its English meaning.

us

and gave (and giving)

chose (choosing)

to us

God's Torah

gives

from all the nations

בָּחַר

בָּנוּ

מִכָּל הָעַמִּים

וְנָתַן

נוֹתֵן

לָנוּ

תּוֹרָתוֹ



This Torah mantle is adorned with a quote from Leviticus 25:10, which also appears on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia.

LETTER LINK

It is no easy task to read from the Torah. You must be trained to read Hebrew fluently, and without vowels or punctuation, in order to read without mistakes. What's more, in many synagogues the Torah portion is chanted using special musical inflections or melodies called trope. The Torah reader (בַּעַל קְרִיאָה, for a man or a boy; בַּעֲלַת קְרִיאָה, for a woman or a girl) often prepares for the reading by practicing in a *tikkun*, a book in which the words of the Torah appear twice—in one column they appear in regular Hebrew print with vowels and punctuation, and in the second column, the text looks just like the Torah itself.

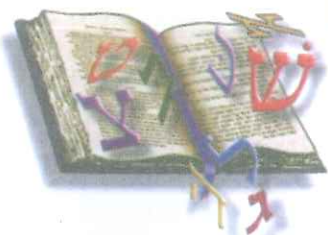
Sometimes, the Torah reader is the Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah, whose family members are given the honor of an *aliyah*—reciting the blessings before and after the sections in the Torah reading. If you read Torah when you celebrate becoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah, you may learn how to read trope.

Here is the way Hebrew letters look in a Torah scroll.

א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ל מ נ ס ע פ ק ר ש ת

Connect each Torah letter below to the matching printed letter.

ם	ך	ג	י	א	ה	ד	ך
ז	ר	ת	ג	ר	מ	ל	ד
ץ	ם	י	ת	ה	א	ז	ל
ף	ץ	ס	ט	מ	ר	ש	ש
ר	ף						



Prayer Building Blocks

Read the first two lines of the Torah blessing. Do you recognize them?

1. בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ.
2. בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

The Torah reading begins with the **בָּרְכוּ**—the Call to Worship, the official opening of the prayer service. Why do you think the blessing before the Torah reading begins with the **בָּרְכוּ**?

Words built on the root **ברך** have “praise” or “bless” as part of their meaning. Circle all the words in the **בָּרְכוּ** that are built on the root **ברך**.

This root means _____ or _____.

Now read the next part of the Torah blessing.

1. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
2. אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר-בָּנוּ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן-לָנוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ.

Underline the six words that are found at the beginning of most **בְּרָכוֹת**.

אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ “who chose us” (“for choosing us”)

אֲשֶׁר means “who.”

בָּחַר means “chose.”

בָּנוּ means “us.”

Who chose us to receive the Torah? _____

To whom does “us” refer? _____

וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ

"and gave us God's Torah" ("and giving us God's Torah")

וְנָתַן means "and gave."

וְ is a prefix meaning _____.

נָתַן means _____.

לָנוּ means "to us."

תּוֹרָתוֹ is made up of two word-parts: תּוֹרָה and the word ending וֹ ("his").

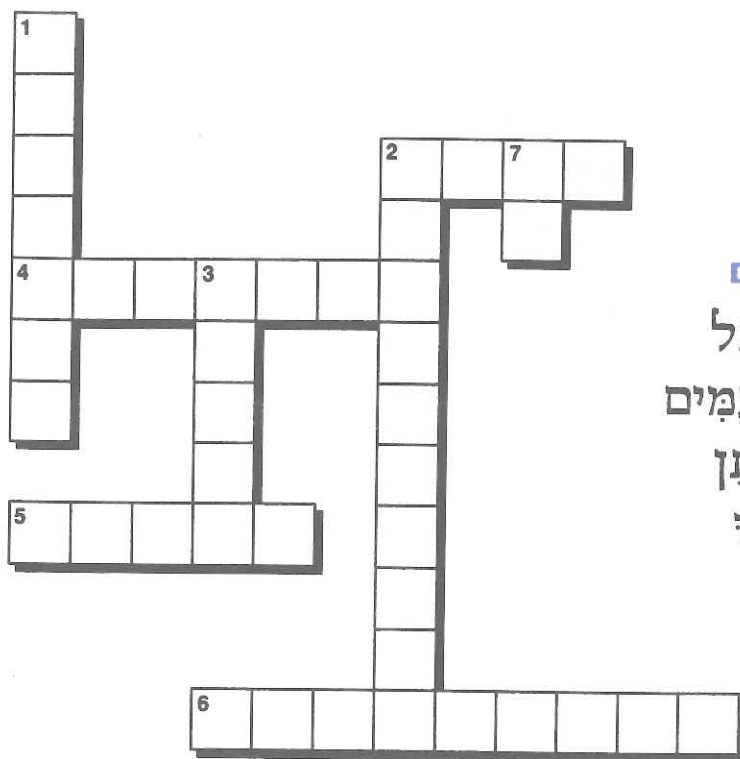
Because God is neither male nor female, we translate תּוֹרָתוֹ as "God's Torah."

What did God give us? _____

Write your answer in Hebrew. _____

CROSSWORD

Read the Hebrew clues and fill in the correct English words.



DOWN

1. מָכַל
2. הָעַמִּים
3. נֹתֵן
7. בָּנוּ

ACROSS

2. לָנוּ
4. וְנָתַן
5. בָּחַר
6. תּוֹרָתוֹ

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT THE TORAH READING

- The Torah (also called the Five Books of Moses) is divided into 54 portions (פָּרָשִׁוֹת).
- It takes exactly one year to read the whole Torah. We begin reading the first book, Genesis (בְּרֵאשִׁית), on Simḥat Torah, and complete reading the last book, Deuteronomy (דֵּבָרִים), one year later on the following Simḥat Torah. We then begin all over again.
- The last person called to the Torah on Shabbat is known as the *maftir* (for a man or a boy) or the *maftirah* (for a woman or a girl). This is often the Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah. The *maftir* or *maftirah* recites the blessings before and after the reading of the last few verses of the Torah portion, and then chants a portion from Prophets called the *haftarah*.

Answer the following questions:

1. How many portions (פָּרָשִׁוֹת) are contained in the Torah? _____
2. On which holiday do we finish reading the Torah and begin all over again?

3. Explain what the *maftir* or *maftirah* does.

4. How do you think it feels to be the *maftir* or *maftirah*? Why?

BLESSING AFTER THE TORAH READING

The blessing we say after the Torah reader has finished reading that section of the Torah praises God for giving us the Torah of truth and eternal life. Although our bodies cannot live forever, by reading the Torah and passing it and its lessons down to our children and then to their children, we keep Torah and we keep our heritage alive forever. The chain of tradition that began when Moses and the Israelites received the Torah almost 3,500 years ago lives on as we hear its words each week.

Practice reading the blessing said after the Torah reading.

1. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
2. אֲשֶׁר נָתַן-לָנוּ תוֹרַת אֱמֶת
3. וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ.
4. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

*Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world,
who gave us the Torah of truth,
and implanted within us eternal life.
Praised are You, Adonai, who gives us the Torah.*

PRAYER DICTIONARY

תּוֹרַת

Torah of

אֱמֶת

truth

וְחַיִּי

and life (of)

עוֹלָם

eternal, world

PHRASE MATCH

Connect each Hebrew phrase to its English meaning.

and eternal life

ruler of the world

forever and ever

Torah of truth

לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת

וְחַיִּי עוֹלָם

מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם



When we help someone in need, or perform any other mitzvah, we are keeping the words of the Torah alive.

WHAT'S MISSING?

Fill in the missing Hebrew words in the prayer.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

אֲשֶׁר נָתַן-לָנוּ

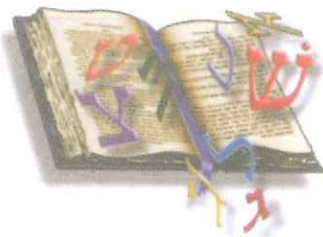
Torah of truth

נֹטֵעַ בְּתוֹכָנוּ.

and eternal life

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הַתּוֹרָה.

gives



Prayer Building Blocks

אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת "who gave us the Torah of truth"

נָתַן לָנוּ means _____.
תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת means "Torah of truth."
תּוֹרַת is a combination word that means "Torah of."
אֱמֶת means "truth."

Complete the Hebrew phrase: _____ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ

What did God give us? _____

Why do you think we refer to the Torah as "Torah of truth"?

וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם "and eternal life"

וְחַיֵּי means "and a life of."
וְ is a prefix meaning _____.
חַיֵּי means "a life of."

The word for "life" is חַיִּים. (Do you know the toast "לְחַיִּים!" — "To Life!"?)

עוֹלָם means "eternal."
עוֹלָם also means "world."
וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם means _____.

Read the following sentences and underline עולם in each one.

1. וְשִׁבְחָךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפִּינוּ לֹא יָמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
2. אֲדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ בְּטָרֶם כָּל יַעִיר נִבְרָא.
3. יִתְבָּרֶךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
4. וְאִנְחָנוּ נִבְרָךְ יְהִי מַעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם.
5. נִקְדֵּשׁ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ בְּעוֹלָם, בְּשֵׁם שְׁמִקְדִּישִׁים אוֹתוֹ בְּשֵׁמִי מְרוֹם.
6. אֵל חַי וְקַיִם תָּמִיד יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

CHALLENGE QUESTION

Reread the blessing on page 30.

Describe the theme—or main idea—of this blessing, which is recited after the Torah reading.

ALIYAH

Why do we use the term **עֲלִיָּה** ("going up")? We *go up* to the *bimah* when we are called to recite the blessings before and after each section of the Torah reading. We also *go up* in the eyes of the congregation when we receive this honor. And we *go up*, or move closer, to God.

You may have heard the word **עֲלִיָּה** in a different context. Going to live in Israel is called **עֲלִיָּה** (we "make *aliyah*"). We don't just *move* to the Holy Land, we *go up* to it.

The number of **עֲלִיּוֹת** in each Torah portion depends on the day it is read. For example, on Mondays and Thursdays there are three **עֲלִיּוֹת**, on Yom Kippur there are six, and on Shabbat morning there are usually seven. The number of **עֲלִיּוֹת** indicates the level of holiness of the day. In this case, Shabbat is even holier than Yom Kippur!

In some congregations, each person honored with an *aliyah* receives a special blessing of well-being, called a **מִי שְׁבֵרָךְ**. In this blessing, we ask God to protect the person from illness and distress, and to bless him or her with good health and success. Another version of the prayer, said during the Torah service, asks for the well-being of sick congregants, their loved ones, and friends.



New immigrants
making *aliyah* to
the State of Israel

FLUENT READING

Each line below contains a word you know. Practice reading the lines.

1. בָּרוּךְ שָׁתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ.

2. יְהִי שֵׁם יי מְבָרָךְ, מַעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

3. הוּא נוֹתֵן לָחֶם לְכָל בָּשָׂר.

4. תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת, חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים אוֹתָנוּ לְמִדָּת.

5. שָׁכַל דְּבָרָיו אֱמֶת וְצֶדֶק.

6. וְתָתֵן לָנוּ חַיִּים אָרְכִּים, חַיִּים שֶׁל שְׁלוֹם,
חַיִּים שֶׁל טוֹבָה, חַיִּים שֶׁל בְּרָכָה.

7. כִּכְתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ: יי יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.

8. אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹא אַתָּה.

9. חַיִּים שְׁתֵּהִי בָנוּ אֶהְבֵּת תּוֹרָה וְיִרְאַת שָׁמַיִם.

10. כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תִּפְלֹת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּרָכוֹת הַהַפְטָרָה



The Torah is the first part of the Bible (תנ"ך); the Book of Prophets (נְבִיאִים) is the second; and Writings (כְּתוּבִים), which includes psalms, poems, and proverbs, is the third. At the conclusion of the Torah reading on Shabbat and on holidays, an honored person in the congregation reads a section from the Book of Prophets called the הַפְטָרָה ("conclusion"). The haftarah is often related by theme to that week's Torah portion or to

a holiday season. When you become a Bar or Bat Mitzvah and are called up to the Torah for the first time, you will be the one to chant the haftarah that day!

Our tradition teaches that the prophets were learned, righteous people who spread the word of the Torah to the Jewish people. They were the conscience of the Jews. The truths taught by the prophets are told in the haftarah and help us to better understand important ideas or values found in the Torah.

We say a blessing before chanting the haftarah. Because the prophets were so important in communicating God's word, this blessing praises God for the fact that the Israelites had prophets.

BLESSING BEFORE THE HAFTARAH READING

Practice reading the blessing aloud.

1. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר
2. בְּנְבִיאִים טוֹבִים, וְרָצָה בְּדִבְרֵיהֶם הַנְּאֻמִּים בְּאֵמֶת.
3. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הַבוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה, וּבְמֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ,
4. וּבִישְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ, וּבְנְבִיאֵי הָאֱמֶת וְצֶדֶק.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who chose good (faithful) prophets, and was pleased with their words spoken in truth.

Praised are You, Adonai, the One who takes delight in (chooses) the Torah, and in Moses, God's servant, and in Israel, God's people, and in prophets of truth and righteousness (justice).

PRAYER DICTIONARY

בָּחַר

chose

נְבִיאִים (בְּ)

prophets

טוֹבִים

good (faithful)

הִנָּאֲמָרִים

spoken

בְּאֵמֶת

in truth

הַבּוֹחֵר

the one who chooses

עֶבְדּוֹ

God's servant

עַמּוֹ

God's people

וְצִדִּיק

and righteousness
(justice)

THE FAMILY CONNECTION

There are three sets of related words in the blessing before the **הַפְטָרָה** reading.

3	2	1
בְּאֵמֶת	בְּנְבִיאִים	בָּחַר
הָאֵמֶת	וּבְנְבִיאִי	הַבּוֹחֵר

Write the number of the related words next to their English meaning.

_____	prophets
_____	choose
_____	truth



It may seem as though you find the number 13 everywhere you look in the year you become a Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

MAKE ME A MATCH!

Connect the Hebrew word to its English meaning.

God's people	טוֹבִים
and righteousness (justice)	הִנָּאֲמָרִים
good (faithful)	עֶבְדּוֹ
spoken	עַמּוֹ
God's servant	וְצִדִּיק

CLUE WORDS

The Hebrew name for the Bible—תנ"ך—is an acronym. It is made up of the first letter in the name of each part of the Bible:

Torah 1. תּוֹרָה (ת)

Prophets 2. נְבִיאִים (נ)

Writings 3. כְּתוּבִים (כ, ק)

Find the two Hebrew words that mean "prophets" in the blessing on page 36 and write them below.



DID YOU KNOW?

Both the Torah and the haftarah are chanted according to musical inflections (trope) shown by markings under and over the words themselves. But the tunes of the trope for the Torah and haftarah differ slightly.

While the Torah is chanted from a scroll that is rolled from one portion to the next, the haftarah is chanted from a printed book. On Simhat Torah, when we finish reading the Torah for the year, it must be rerolled all the way from the end of the scroll back to the beginning in order to start over again!

PROPHET MATCH

Connect the Hebrew and English names of each prophet.

Micah

יִרְמְיָהוּ

Deborah

עֲמוֹס

Zechariah

יְשַׁעְיָהוּ

Ezekiel

יְחִזְקָאל

Amos

דְּבוֹרָה

Jeremiah

מִיכָה

Isaiah

זְכַרְיָה



Prayer Building Blocks

אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בְּנְבִיאִים טוֹבִים "who chose good (faithful) prophets"

בָּחַר means "chose."

נְבִיאִים is the plural of נְבִיא.

Circle the part of נְבִיאִים that shows it is plural: נְבִיאִים

נְבִיא means _____.

נְבִיאִים means _____.

טוֹבִים is an adjective describing נְבִיאִים.

Circle the part of טוֹבִים that shows it is plural: טוֹבִים

טוֹב means _____.

טוֹבִים means _____.

הִנָּאמְרִים בְּאֵמֶת "spoken in truth"

הִנָּאמְרִים means "spoken."

The root letters of הִנָּאמְרִים are אִמַּר.

אִמַּר means "speak" or "say."

בְּאֵמֶת means "in truth."

Read the following phrases aloud. Circle the words with the root אִמַּר.

1. הָאֵל הִנָּאמֵן, הָאוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה
2. יִהְיוּ לְרִצּוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי
3. חֲבֵרִים כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן
4. אֲזַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם: "הַגְדִּיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם אֱלֹהִים"
5. בְּרוּךְ שֶׁאִמַּר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם, בְּרוּךְ הוּא

An Ethical Echo

Psalm 15 teaches us that telling the truth—**אֱמֶת**—is so important that only those who “speak truth in their hearts and have no slander on their tongues” will “live in God’s house.” The prophets, whose words we read in the haftarah, were also known as “prophets of truth,” because they passed the truth of righteous and just behavior from God to the Jewish people.

Think About This!

It would be hard to find someone who’s *never* told a lie! Maybe you ate a slice of the freshly baked apple pie meant for that night’s dinner guests, and then pretended it wasn’t you. Perhaps you forgot to walk the dog, but then claimed you did, so your dad wouldn’t get upset. Or maybe you’ve joined in spreading false rumors about someone. What does the expression “to get caught in a web of lies” mean? In addition to being truthful to others, why do we need to be truthful to ourselves?

הַבּוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה “the one who chooses the Torah”

הַבּוֹחֵר means “the one who chooses.”

In this phrase, הַ is a prefix meaning “the one who.”

בוֹחֵר means _____.

הַבּוֹחֵר is built on the root בָּחַר.

The root בָּחַר tells us that “choose” is part of a word’s meaning.

Below are lines from two prayers you have studied. Read each excerpt and circle all the words built on the root בָּחַר. Then write the number of the line from each prayer next to the name of the prayer.

1. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר-בְּנוֹ
מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן-לָנוּ אֶת-תּוֹרָתוֹ.

2. כִּי בָנוּ בַּחֲרָת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁת מִכָּל הָעַמִּים

Kiddush _____

Blessing Before the Torah Reading _____

וּבְמֹשֶׁה עֶבְדוֹ "and Moses, God's servant"

וּבְמֹשֶׁה means "and Moses."

וְ is a prefix meaning _____.

מֹשֶׁה means _____.

עֶבְדוֹ means "God's servant."

עֶבְדוֹ is made up of two word-parts: עֶבֶד and the word ending ו ("his").
Because God is neither male nor female, we translate עֶבְדוֹ as "God's servant."
In what ways was Moses God's servant?

When we are young, sometimes we
are tempted to gossip or tell tales.

As we mature, we begin to
understand how hurtful such
behavior can be.



וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ "and Israel, God's people"

וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל means "and Israel."

וְ means _____.

יִשְׂרָאֵל means _____.

עַמּוֹ means "God's people."

עַם means "people" or "nation."

וְ at the end of a word means "his."

Because God is neither male nor female, we translate עַמּוֹ as "God's people."

וּבְנֵי אֵי הָאֱמֶת וְצֶדֶק

"and prophets of truth and righteousness (justice)"

וּבְנֵי אֵי means "and prophets of."

ו means _____.

נְבִיאִי means "prophets of."

הָאֱמֶת means "the truth."

הָ means _____.

אֱמֶת means _____.

Read the following prayer excerpts. Circle the word אֱמֶת in each line.

1. וְטָהַר לְבָנֵנוּ לְעַבְדֶּךָ בְּאֱמֶת
2. אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תוֹרַת אֱמֶת וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ
3. אֱמֶת מְלַכְנוּ, אִפְס זִוְלָתוֹ
4. תוֹרַת אֱמֶת נָתַן לַעֲמֹ אֵל עַל יַד נְבִיאָיו נֶאֱמַן בֵּיתוֹ
5. הוֹלֵךְ תָּמִיד וּפָעֵל צֶדֶק וְדֹבֵר אֱמֶת בְּלִבּוֹ

וְצֶדֶק means "and righteousness" or "and justice."

ו means _____.

צֶדֶק means _____.

An Ethical Echo

The Hebrew word צֶדֶקָה comes from the word צֶדֶק ("righteousness" or "justice"). Giving tzedakah is a commandment and an obligation for all Jews. According to Jewish law, we should all give a portion of our earnings to those less fortunate. The highest level of tzedakah is when we give anonymously and so generously that a needy person can become self-sufficient.

Think About This!

What kinds of tzedakah—besides money—can we give? If you give food to a food bank or clothes to a clothing drive, is that tzedakah? Why? If you give a needy person a job, why is that considered the highest level of tzedakah? Do you think it is important to give tzedakah anonymously? Why or why not?

BLESSINGS AFTER THE HAFTARAH READING

When people you can count on—maybe your parent or your best friend—promise to do something, you usually rely on them because of your relationship and your trust. You believe your best friend's promise to keep it secret that you have a crush on that cute kid in math class. You believe your dad when he says he'll pick you up after the dance. Our tradition teaches us that the Jewish people have a relationship with God that is also built on trust, and that God watches over us, gives us life, and is merciful to us. We believe in God's promises.

We say four blessings after the haftarah reading. The first three blessings have to do with promises made by God to the Jewish people and our hope that those promises will come true.

The fourth and final blessing after the haftarah thanks God for the Torah, the worship service, the prophets, and Shabbat.

Practice reading the first of these blessings aloud.

1. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, צוּר כָּל הָעוֹלָמִים,
2. צַדִּיק בְּכָל הַדּוֹרוֹת, הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן, הָאוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה,
3. הַמְדַּבֵּר וּמְקַיֵּם, שְׁכַל-דְּבָרָיו אֱמֶת וְצֶדֶק.
4. נֶאֱמָן אַתָּה הוּא, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְנֶאֱמָנִים דְּבָרֶיךָ, וְדָבָר אֶחָד
5. מִדְּבָרֶיךָ, אַחֲזֹר לֹא יָשׁוּב רִיקָם, כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָן
6. וְרַחֲמָן אַתָּה.
7. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן בְּכָל-דְּבָרָיו.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, rock of all eternity, righteous in all generations, the faithful God, the One who says and does, the One who speaks and fulfills, for all God's words are truthful and just.

You are faithful, Adonai our God, and faithful are Your words, and not one of Your words will return empty, for You are a faithful and compassionate God and Ruler.

Praised are You, Adonai, faithful in all Your words.

BLESSINGS GALORE!

You learned that the blessing before the haftarah praises God for choosing prophets who are faithful, who speak the truth, and who act justly.

The four blessings after the haftarah have very different themes. Read the theme for each blessing, then answer the question.

Blessing 1

praises God, whose words are true and who fulfills all promises.

Blessing 2

asks God to have mercy on and to protect Zion, and prays for our return there. In ancient times, Zion was another name for Jerusalem.

Blessing 3

asks God to reinstate the descendants of David as the rulers of the Jewish people.

Blessing 4

thanks God for: (1) the Torah, (2) the worship service, (3) the prophets, and (4) Shabbat, our holy day of rest.

How is the fourth blessing after the haftarah the high point of all the other blessings, including the blessing before the haftarah?



DID YOU KNOW?

We are not sure exactly when the **הַפְּטָרָה** blessings were composed. The *Amoraim*—the rabbis whose commentaries on Jewish law are recorded in the *Gemara*—first referred to these blessings around the year 300 C.E. So the haftarah blessings are at least 1,700 years old.

FLUENT READING

Practice reading blessings two, three, and four which are said after the הפטרה reading.

II

1. רַחֵם עַל־צִיּוֹן כִּי הִיא בֵּית חַיִּינוּ, וְלַעֲלוּבַת נַפֶּשׁ תּוֹשִׁיעַ.
2. בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, מְשַׁמֵּחַ צִיּוֹן בְּבִנְיָהּ.

III

3. שְׂמַחֲנוּ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּאַלְיָהוּ הַנְּבִיא עֲבָדְךָ, וּבְמַלְכוּת בֵּית דָּוִד.
4. מְשִׁיחֲךָ, בְּמַהֲרָה יָבֹא וְיַגִּיל לָבְנוּ. עַל־כִּסְאוֹ לֹא־יֵשֵׁב זָר.
5. וְלֹא־יִנָּחֲלוּ עוֹד אֲחֵרִים אֶת־כְּבוֹדוֹ, כִּי בִשְׁם קֹדֶשְׁךָ נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ.
6. לוֹ שְׁלֹא־יִכָּבֵה נֵרוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, מְגַן דָּוִד.

IV

7. עַל־הַתּוֹרָה, וְעַל־הָעֲבוּדָה, וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים, וְעַל־יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה,
8. שְׁנַת־לָנוּ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לְקֹדֶשׁה וּלְמִנוּחָה, לְכָבוֹד וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת,
9. עַל־הַכֹּל, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֲנַחֲנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ, וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ.
10. יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל־חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
11. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.