



The liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp

This Week's Torah Portion: Bo

 *Candle lighting - 4:55 pm*

In this week's Scroll


The Liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp

Simon Says - The Amidah

Shabbat Services, Kiddush, & CAS News



The entrance to the dreaded Auschwitz concentration camp

 his week marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the notorious Auschwitz concentration



611 children under the age of 15 were among Auschwitz the survivors

camp. On January 27, 1945, after a protracted battle, the Soviet First Ukrainian Front, led by Russian officer Ivan Martynushkin, entered The Auschwitz concentration camp. Of the million people believed to have been imprisoned in the camp, only about 7,000 survivors were found, many of whom were sick and near death.

These prisoners were not deemed healthy enough to join the other prisoners who were transported by train or forced to endure a death march to other locations – so they were simply left to die. Technically that isn't accurate; the last of the Auschwitz prison guards had been ordered to kill all remaining prisoners before they evacuated the site; but, with the Russian army quickly advancing, self-preservation trumped obeying orders. Though approximately 700 of the estimated 7,000 prisoners were murdered, 90% of the remaining prisoners survived, including 611 children. Upon entering the camp, the battle-hardened Soviet soldiers were shocked and appalled by the depth of the Nazi cruelty.

While it is difficult to know precisely how many perished in the camp; it is estimated that 1.3 million people were sent to Auschwitz, and 1.1 million perished there, one million of which, were Jews. From 1944 through the end of the war 438,000 Hungarian Jews were sent there; a number that would have been much higher if it hadn't been for the heroic efforts of Raoul Wallenberg. Auschwitz even surpassed the infamous Treblinka in the number of prisoners it held. In addition to Hungarian Jews, Auschwitz held 300,000 Polish Jews, 70,000 French Jews, 60,000 Dutch Jews, 55,000 Greek Jews, 46,000 Czech and Moravian Jews, 27,000 Slovakian Jews, 25,000 Belgian Jews, 23,000 German and Austrian Jews, 10,000 Yugoslavian Jews, 7,500 Italian Jews and other Jews. However, Jews were not the only population to face death; Auschwitz also claimed the lives of 70,000 Polish political prisoners, 20,000 Gypsies, 10,000 Soviet POW's and countless others.

Auschwitz was located just outside the Polish city of Oświęcim. When the Nazis took control of the country, they renamed it Auschwitz. The Poles have

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since reclaimed its original name and the city is once again known as Oświęcim. The Auschwitz-Birkenau camp was huge, encompassing 40 square kilometers; it consisted of Auschwitz I, Auschwitz II – Birkenau and Auschwitz III – Monowitz. Overtime, Jews became the largest single group imprisoned at Auschwitz; but they were by no means, the only group imprisoned in the camps. Other prisoners included the Poles (the second largest population imprisoned in the camp,) communists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Czechs, and Roma (Gypsies.) While over two hundred Soviet soldiers died in the battle, it should be noted, it was not the goal of the Soviet army to liberate the camp and free its prisoners; the camp just happened to sit in the path of the Soviet advance through Poland.

it was simply a result of winning the battle. In fact, the government as well as the Russian media played down its liberation of the camp. Many subsequent articles in Russian publications retelling the liberation of the camp failed to mention Jews at all.

Most of the surviving prisoners were older adults or young children. Soviet medical personnel, in conjunction with the Polish Red cross tended to the medical needs of the survivors. Nearly 5,000 survivors were treated at Soviet hospitals. The most deftly ill survivors remained at the camp receiving medical treatment until well enough to leave. However, once the Auschwitz survivors left the camp, they were cut loose to fend for themselves. Unlike the American and British governments, the Soviets essentially washed their hands of the situation. Former prisoners from 29



This recreated photo depicts the Russians liberating Auschwitz.

different countries, old men and young children alike, had to find their way home on their own. Jewish concentration camp survivors faced harsh conditions and rabid hostility as they made their way home.

For some the journey home took many months, for others, years. For many there was no going home, because home as they left it, no longer existed; their families were gone, possessions stolen, and homes confiscated or taken over. Many made it back only to find another family living in their home. With nothing to go back to, many Jews immigrated to the United States, Great Britain, and the Palestine mandate. Today, the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp is recognized as Holocaust Remembrance Day. ✨



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SAYS

Thought Provoking Insights from Rabbi Simon Rosenbach



Rabbi Simon Rosenbach

The Amidah is said three times a day and is properly called T'filah, prayer, or more accurately, supplication. The Gates of Prayer, the Reform Movement's siddur, labels the Amidah T'filah. The word Amidah comes from

the infinitive la-amod, which means to stand, because we stand when we recite the Amidah, to show respect for God the King of the universe. The most common name for the Amidah is shmoneh esrei, which means 18, because the Amidah originally contained 18 separate prayers. Every version of the Amidah that we recite nowadays does not contain 18 prayers, but the name stuck. Most of us are familiar with Shabbat versions of the Amidah, but here is a chart for the weekday Amidah, and we will discuss the Shabbat variations afterwards. The 19 weekday prayers, and where you can find them in Shabbat Sim Shalom.

1. Avot, which starts the Amidah, and ends with Magen Avot. (3)
2. G'vurot, which is from atah gibor through ha-metim. (3)
3. K'dushat Hashem, which is the prayer that you don't say when we repeat the Amidah. (3)
4. Da-at, which is from atah chonein, through ha-el ha-kodosh. (5)
5. T'shuvah, which is from hashiveinu through bitshuvah. (5)
6. S'lichah, which is from s'lach lanu through

lislo-ach. (5)

7. G-ulah, which is from r'eh through Yisrael. (5)

8. R'fu-ah, which is from r'fa-einu through amo Yisrael. (5)

9. Birkat hashanim, which is from barech through ha-shanim. (5)

10. Kibutz gluyot, which is from t'ka b-shofar through amo Yisrael. (6)

11. Birkat ha-din, which is from Hashivah through u-mishpat. (6)

12. Birkat ma-minim, which is from v-lamalshimin through zadim. (6)

13. Al ha-tzadikim, which is from al through la-tzadikim. (6)

14. Binyan Yerushalayim, which is from v-lirushayim through y'rushalayim. (6)

15. Moshi-ach ben David, which is from et tsemach through y-shu-ah. (6)

16. Sh'ma t'filah, which is from sh'ma through t'filah. (6)

17. Avodah, which is from r'tze through l'tzion. (7)

18. Hoda-ah, which is from modim through l-hodot. (7-8) In the cantor's repetition, this prayer includes the Birkat Cohanim in Shacharit.

19. Birkat ha-shalom, which is either from sim shalom or shalom rav through ba-shalom.

HISTORY

The Amidah was originally intended for public worship. It was recited by a precentor, a word that I learned when I was attending rabbinical school. It is a fancy English word derived from a French word meaning, "sing before." The congregants said "amen" after every prayer, making the prayer their own. Rabbi Gamliel II (incidentally, "Rabbi" in the days after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 was a title given to sages only in Palestine; the sages in Babylonia were called "Rav") decreed that a every

individual in the community should say the Amidah by himself. The repetition was introduced so that the Amidah remained as a public prayer. Gamliel II was head of the Sanhedrin in the early to the middle of the second century c.e., so you can see how ancient Amidah is.

How ancient is the Amidah? One tradition is that the men of the Great Assembly composed the Amidah. Tradition has it that the Great Assembly ruled Israel from roughly the return of the exiles until the Hellenistic period, from roughly 516-325 b.c.e. Modern scholars think that the Great Assembly did not exist as institution, but Ismar Elbogen, who wrote a comprehensive history of Jewish liturgy, concludes that the Amidah may have been put in its final form by Gamliel II, but its origins go back as far as the time when by tradition the Great Assembly ruled Israel. Other authorities hold that the Amidah was in a recognizable form in the late Second Temple period, and was somewhat fixed by the fall of Jerusalem. The Amidah was comprised of 18 prayers, because the 19th was added later.

We can see precursors of our Amidah in a book called Ben Sira (also called Ecclesiasticus, not to be confused with Ecclesiastes; Ben Sira lived in the second century b.c.e.). We can also see precursors of our Amidah in 2 Maccabees. There probably was not a fixed version of the Amidah, because the prayers were not fixed until the second century c.e. The ancient versions that have survived are different, but the final benedictions in the 18 (or 19) prayers are remarkably alike.

You remember the proper name for the Amidah is T'filah, supplication. The transition from animal sacrifice to word prayer was ongoing during

the time when the Second Temple stood, but in 70 c.e., animal sacrifices stopped with the destruction of the Second Temple. The rabbis needed to construct a prayer that replaced all the sacrifice-based supplications. For example, the Mishnah states that when the Temple stood, the priests interrupted the morning sacrifices to recite three prayers. The prayers included the Avodah prayer (the basis of blessing 17), the Birkat Cohanim, and the Prayer for Peace, with which the Congregation responded to the Birkat Cohanim. The 14th benediction derives the Temple worship service, but not in its present form; every day the High Priest prayed for the welfare of Jerusalem.

When public prayer evolved after the Temple was destroyed, these three prayers that the priests recited were incorporated into the Amidah. The prayers, however, needed to have an hymnic introduction and thanksgiving conclusion. The hymnic opening is the first three benedictions and the thanksgiving conclusion is the last three prayers. The thanksgiving prayer was inserted between the Avodah benediction and the Birkat Cohanim, so the prayer for peace could come last. The first three benediction and the last three benedictions always open and close the Amidah, whatever form the Amidah takes. The six benedictions are mentioned in the Mishnah, which was written about 1900 years ago.

Petitions four through nine are for personal needs, and Petitions five and six (for repentance and forgiveness) reflect the spiritual attitude of people who created the Amidah. The combination of spiritual needs and material needs reflect a healthy outlook on life. Petition 16 (Sh'ma koleinu) is a natural conclusion: hear our prayers.

The national petitions were added later, as the result of the suppression of the cult by

Antiochus and the successful revolt of the Maccabees, and the establishment of an independent Judean kingdom. Apocalyptic images were plentiful, and they drew their inspiration from the Prophet Ezekiel, one of whose prophecies is the ingathering of the Israelites scattered around the world. Petition ten is for the ingathering of the scattered Jewish communities of the world, but we should not presume that the destruction of Jerusalem was the impetus for this prayer: a Jewish diaspora existed even before the Babylonian exile. Elbogen suggests that the prayer evolved during the Hellenistic period (immediately before the Hasmonean revolt, 170-250 b.c.e.), because that was a time when the leaders recognized that more and more Jews were thinking in Greek.

Petition 11 nowadays pleads for the restoration of honest judges, but it is hard to pinpoint a time when the prayer was composed: the Hasmoneans, the Herodian house, and certainly the Roman rulers would not have tolerated the thought that their judges were corrupt. The plea for honest judges must therefore have referred to some sort of messianic judgment.

The theology of the Amidah is Pharisaic, and (it might not be the same thing) anti-Sadducean. The second prayer in the Amidah invokes the resurrection of the dead, and the Sadducees rejected the resurrection of the dead, which was a Pharisaic staple.

We can date the 14th prayer (Binyan Yerushalayim) by turning to the Palestinian and Babylonian versions. The Palestinian version assumes that the Second Temple is yet standing, but the Babylonian version incorporates the destruction of Jerusalem. The oldest Babylonian version is found in Gaon Amram's siddur, which Amram Gaon composed in the

ninth century, and we follow that version. In addition, the Palestinian version of that prayer incorporates a blessing for King David, and the Babylonian version has a separate blessing for King David. We follow the Babylonian text, which you can see from page 6.

Blessing number 12, birkat ha-minim, is said to the last blessing added to the Amidah. "Minim" translates as "heretics," and we don't know who the heretics were. Scholars variously propose the Roman Empire, Jewish heretics in general, early Christians in particular, or the Sadducees, during the time when they held the High Priesthood when the Second Temple stood. It might be the last blessing added to the Amidah, but some scholars think it was in place at 70 c.e.

Since the middle of the second century c.e., a prayer that celebrates the New Moon (Rosh Chodesh) has been added to the 17th petition, following "R-tzei (Accept)." This is the familiar "ya-aleh va-yavo." We see another difference between our Conservative 17th petition and the Orthodox 17th petition: if you turn to page 118 in the Siddur Sim Shalom, on the second line, there are two words, "lidvir beitecha." The next word in Sim Shalom is "u-tfilatam," meaning "their prayers." The next words in an Orthodox siddur are, "v-ishai yisrael," literally meaning "fires of Israel," referring to the sacrificial fires. The Conservative Movement does not endorse the building of a third Temple in Jerusalem. See also, the second paragraph below under ON SHABBAT.

In the 18th petition, the prayer for thanksgiving, we find the "Al nisim (On [or about] the miracles)" insertions that we say on Hanukkah and Purim. I am not sure when those insertions became a part of the Amidah.

I could not find any reference to the phrase "mashiv ha-ru-ach," but I think it is appropriate to find the phrase in the second benediction, "m-chai-yei ha-meitim." As Fred always says before he sings Geshem, the tune for Geshem resembles the tune for Neilah, because rain in Israel is a matter of life or death, and Yom Kippur is a matter of life or death.

THE KEDUSHAH

The Kedushah is incorporated into the third benediction, the sanctification of the Name; the third benediction is an abbreviated form of the Kedushah when we say the Amidah silently ("Atah kadosh v-shimcha kadosh . . ."). The name "Kedushah" comes from Isaiah 6:3 (which, incidentally, is the haftarah for Parashat Yitro, my daughter's bat mitzvah portion), and contains the famous phrase, "Kodesh, kodesh, kodesh In the Shacharit Kedushah and the Musaf Kedushah, also are included "Baruch kavod Adonai mimkomo" (Ezek. 3:12) and "Yimloch Adonai l-olam . . .," which is the concluding verse of one of the Halleluyah psalms, 146. The verses from Isaiah and Ezekiel form the original Kedushah. Later, in the Musaf Amidah, we find the Sh'ma and a fragment from Num.15:41, "Ani Adonai Elocheihem," and the verse from Ps. 146 came both the Shacharit Kedushah and the Musaf Kedushah later still. The Shabbat Kedushahs (Kedushot) has all kinds of other things that we will visit.

The origins of the Kedushah are obscure. The little we know about it is that the verses from Isaiah and Ezekiel came first, and the concluding line from Ps. 146 came later.

The verses from Isaiah and Ezekiel describe the angels praising God, and the sages needed an

introduction to both Kedushot that liken the congregation to the angels. The most ancient of them is the introduction to the Musaf Amidah, “Na-aritzcha,” the introduction to the Musaf Kedushah. The introduction to the Shacharit Kedushah, as you know, “N-kadesh.” This introduction is the simplest form of the Kedushah, and it does not even mention the angels. No trace of the “N-kadesh” introduction is found in the ancient sources.

There are connecting sentences that serve as bridges between the scriptural verses. The first connecting sentence we see in the Shabbat Shacharit Amidah is “Az bakol.” The Talmud mentions the idea behind “az bakol,” so we can say that sentence, or at least the idea behind it, is ancient. The second connecting passage in the Shacharit Amidah is “Mimkomcha.” This is a plea to bring speedily the Messianic Age, when God alone will rule. The first word of the passage (Mimkomcha) echoes the last word in the second scriptural verse, mimkomo.

In the Musaf Kedushah, there is a sentence between Kodesh, Kodesh, and Baruch K’vod, and that sentence is the familiar, “K-vodo malei olam.” The first word of that sentence is the same as the last word of Kodesh, Kodesh, and the sentence ends with “L-umatam baruch yomeiru,” which means, “Those [angels] facing them [the angels who recite ‘aye m-kom k’vodo (Where is the place of glory)], say ‘Blessed.’”

The Sh’ma was included in the Musaf Amidah, but it needed to have introductory sentence. Thus, “Mimkomo hu yafen b-rachamim” and the additional words of the passage, telling us that with love we say the Sh’ma twice daily. Before

“yimloch” in the Musaf Amidah, we have “uvdivrei kod’shcha katuv lamor,” which is a citation reference to “yimloch.”

I couldn’t find anything about the origins of the concluding passage of the Kedushah, (“Lador v-dor”), but it is interesting that the passage incorporates the blessing, “ha-el ha-kadosh.” So the three blessings in the Amidah are intact when we say the Shabbat Amidah, as I said a few paragraphs above.

BIRKAT COHANIM

When the cantor repeats the Amidah, he recites the birkat Cohanim, the Priestly blessings, which we don’t say when we recite the Amidah ourselves. The birkat Cohanim, which we find in Num. 6:24-26, was recited by the priests when the Temple stood every morning and every afternoon. The place where the priests stood was called a dukhan; the word came to describe the act of the Cohanim reciting the birkat Cohanim with the Yiddish word dukhenen. Where a Cohen, or some Cohanim, is or are in attendance, the Cohen or the Cohanim say an elaborate version of the birkat Cohanim during the Musaf Amidah on the pilgrimage holidays and the High Holy Days. In Ahavas Sholom we have not seen dukhenning in a very long time, but the description of the procedure we will postpone to another session. Whenever Cohanim are not in attendance, the cantor recites the birkat Cohanim in an abbreviated form.

When the Temple stood, the priests quoted the Torah. Now, the cantor breaks the Torah verses into three separate blessings, to which the congregation responds either “amen” or “ken y’hi ratzon.” Scholars don’t know when the birkat Cohanim was incorporated into the Amidah, but the Mishnah (written the second century) assumes that the birkat

Cohanim was a part of the Amidah.

The Amidah technically ends with the blessing for peace: “sim shalom . . . oseh shalom.” We are all accustomed, however, saying another paragraph at the end of the Amidah: “elohai, n’tzor l-shoni . . .” Where did that paragraph come from?

The ancient sages concluded the Amidah with personal prayers, and some of them are recorded in the Talmud, Berachot 16b-17a. The one prayer that in the Ashkenazi rite universally follows the Amidah is partially by Mar son of Ravina. Mar’s prayer consists of the first two sentences of our modern prayer (“Elohai” through “nafshi”), then follows the fourth sentence of our modern version (“v-khol” through “machashavtam”) and Mar’s prayer concludes with the last verse of Psalm 19, “yeyu l-ratzon imrati . . .” I have not discovered where the third sentence of Mar’s prayer went, and I have not discovered where the additional words inserted in Mar’s prayer came from (a string of four supplications that begin with “aseh l-ma’an (do [so] for the sake of . . .”), and the version of Mar’s prayer that we say today ends with a plea for peace. The Talmud recounts four different versions of prayers that sages (including Mar) recited after saying the Amidah, but you don’t have recite Mar’s prayer, even though it is probably in all siddurim. You can finish the Amidah, and you can or can not add a personal prayer of your own.

ON SHABBAT

On Shabbat and the festivals, the Shacharit Amidah and the Musaf Amidah omit petitions four through 16, on purpose. The sages omitted them because on Shabbat and the festivals, we should not be

preoccupied by our concern for our worldly needs and wants. (There is an alternative justification: it is unseemly to concern ourselves with personal needs and wants, and pray that they should be fulfilled.) Instead of the missing 13 petitions, we have in the Shacharit Amidah four paragraphs. The first paragraph describes Moses joy in receiving the Ten Commandments that include the commandment to observe (or remember) the Shabbat. The next paragraph is a quotation from the Torah, Ex. 31-16-17 (“v-shamru . . .” [The Israelites shall observe the Shabbat]). The next paragraph tells us we alone have the gift of Shabbat, and the fourth paragraph asks God to find favor in our Shabbat rest. The fourth paragraph ends with a blessing, blessed are you God, who sanctifies the Shabbat.

In the Shabbat Musaf Amidah, the 13 worldly petitions are replaced with five paragraphs. The first paragraph celebrates the establishment of the Shabbat with its attendant, special rituals in the Temple. The second paragraph in the Orthodox tradition asks that God will bring us to the land of Israel and we will again perform the rituals and the sacrifices at the Temple. The Conservative siddurim replace those words with the past tense. Both paragraphs end with a citation to the verses in Pinchas (Num. 28:9-10) that describe the sacrifices that our ancestors made on Shabbat. The fourth paragraph is the familiar “yism’chu v-malcutcha,” and the last paragraph before the three benedictions that end all of the Amidot asks God to find favor in our Shabbat rest and asks God to grant the Shabbat to us eternally. This paragraph ends with the same blessing that we find in the Shacharit Amidah: blessed are you God, who sanctifies the Shabbat.

OTHER CHANGES FROM THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT

Some of the changes are obvious. Besides the changes we have already discussed, the Sim Shalom and Lev Shalem have an egalitarian version of the Amidah; the version includes the Matriarchs. The last paragraph of the Amidah proper in Sim Shalom, *sim shalom*, adds *ba-olam*, in the world. The annotated Sim Shalom, Or Hadash, says the addition reflects the version of the Amidah in the siddur of Saadiah Gaon, who lived in the tenth century. Another change that I have noticed in the weekday Amidah is in the 13th petition, “*al ha-tzadikim*.” The Orthodox siddurim read, in the middle of the paragraph, “*yehemu rachamecha*,” which means, literally, “may you have compassion your compassion,” which is ugly English, but the Artscroll translates it, “may your compassion be aroused.” The Sim Shalom puts “*na* (nun-aleph) after the word “*yehemu*,” *na* is the emphatic word for “please.”

TRANSLATION OF THE SHACHARIT AMIDAH

Blessed [Sim Shalom says praised] are you, Adonai, our God and God of our fathers [ancestors], God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, [God of Sarah, God of Rebekah, God of Rachel, and God of Leah], the great, mighty, and awesome God, exalted God, Who bestows acts of loving kindness and creates all, Who remembers the pious deeds of our fathers [ancestors], and will bring a redeemer to their children's children for the sake of His name in love. King, Helper, [pokaide, translated in the Sim Shalom as “guards,” but the ensuing blessing ends “*u-pokaide Sarah*,” and the origin of that phrase is the verse of the Rosh Hashanah day one Torah reading: “*Vadonai pakad et Sarah*,” which the JPS translates as, “God took note of Sarah”], Savior, and Shield, blessed are you Adonai, Shield of Abraham [and Guardian of Sarah].

You are mighty eternally, Adonai, You give life to the dead and have great power to save.

He [the Sim Shalom puts it in the second person] sustains the living with loving kindness and with great compassion revives the dead. He supports the fallen, heals the sick, sets captives free, and keeps His faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, master of might, and who is like You, King Who causes death and restores life and makes salvation grow.

Faithful are You in giving life to the dead. Blessed are You Adonai, who gives life to the dead.

Kedushah

We will sanctify Your name on earth, as they sanctify it in the highest heavens, as is written by Your prophet, “And they [the angels] call to one another saying,

“Holy, holy, holy, is Adonai of the hosts, the whole world is filled with His glory.”

Then with a sound of mighty noise, majestic and strong, they [the angels] make their voice heard, raising themselves toward the Seraphim, and facing them, say,

“Blessed is the glory of Adonai from His place.”

From Your place our King reveal yourself, and rule over us, because we are waiting for you. When You will rule in Zion? May it be soon in our time and forever may You dwell there. May You be exalted [lit: enlarged] and sanctified in the midst of Jerusalem Your city, from generation to generation forever and ever. May our eyes see Your kingdom, as it is said in the songs of Your splendor, written by David Your righteous anointed one:

“Adonai will reign forever. He is your God Zion, from generation to generation, halleluyah.”

From generation to generation we will tell of Your greatness and we will sanctify Your Holiness forever. Your praise, our God, shall not leave our mouth for-

ever, because You are God, great and holy King. Blessed are You Adonai, the holy God.

Resumption of the Shabbat Amidah

Moses rejoiced at the gift of his portion when You called him “faithful servant.” A crown of glory You placed on his head when he stood before You on Mount Sinai. He brought down in his hands two tablets of stone on which was engraved the observance of Shabbat. So it is written in Your Torah:

The Israelite people shall keep the sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout the ages as a covenant for all time. It shall be sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel. For in six days Adonai made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and was refreshed. (JPS).

Adonai our God did not give [the Shabbat] to the other nations of the world, nor did our King, give it as a heritage to those who worship idols. In its rest the uncircumcised do not dwell, for You gave it in love to Israel Your people, to the descendants of Jacob whom You chose. The people who sanctifies the seventh day all find satisfaction and delight in Your goodness, for You favored the seventh day and made it holy, calling it the most cherished of days, a remembrance of the act of creation.

Our God and God of our ancestors, find favor in our rest. Make us holy through Your commandments and grant us our share in Your Torah. Satisfy us with Your goodness, grant us joy in Your salvation, and purify our hearts to serve You in truth. In love and favor Adonai our God, grant us as our heritage Your holy Shabbat, so that Israel who sanctify Your name may rest on it [the Shabbat]. Blessed are Adonai, who sanctifies the Shabbat.

The Conclusion of the Amidah (all varieties of the Amidah)

Find favor Adonai our God in Your people Israel

and their prayer. Restore the service to Your most holy house [and the sacrificial offerings of Israel] and their prayer accept in love and favor. May the service of Your people Israel always find favor with You.

And may our eyes witness Your return to Zion in compassion. Blessed are Your Adonai, who restores his Divine Presence in Zion.

We give thanks to You, because You are Adonai our God and God of our ancestors forever. You are the Rock of our lives, Shield of our salvation from generation to generation. We will thank You and declare Your praise for our lives which are entrusted to Your hand, for our souls which are placed in Your charge, for Your miracles which are with us every day, and for Your wonders and favors at all times, evening, morning, and afternoon. You are good, for Your compassion never fails. You are compassionate, for Your lovingkindnesses never cease. We have always placed in our hope in You. [The passage has allusions to Psalm 79:13 and Eichah 3:22.]

(When the cantor chants this passage of the Amidah, the congregation says in an undertone: we give thanks to You, for You are Adonai our God and the God of our ancestors, God of all flesh, Who formed us and formed the universe. Blessings and thanks are due to Your great and holy name for giving us life and sustaining us. May You continue to give us life and sustain us, and may You gather our exiles to Your holy courts, to observe Your decrees, do Your will, and serve You with a perfect heart, for it is for us to give You thanks. Blessed is God of thanksgiving. [Around 300 c.e., the custom arose in Babylonia that when the cantor said “modim” the congregation also said “modim.” There were two versions of “modim,” and we kept both.]

For all these things may Your name be blessed and exalted [lit. made higher] our King, always and forever.

And may all who lives thank You, selah [Scholars don't know what "selah" means. One theory is that "selah" was a prompt to the listeners to respond with a fixed, liturgical response, differing with the occasion.], and praise Your name in truth. God our Savior and our help, selah. Blessed are you God, Whose name is name is "the Good" and to Whom thanks are due.

Grant peace [to the world], goodness, and blessing, grace, lovingkindness and compassion to us and all Israel Your people. Bless us, our Father, all as one, with the light of Your face, for by the light of Your face You have given us, Adonai our God, the Torah of life and love of kindness, righteousness, blessing, compassion, life and peace. May it be good in Your eyes to bless Your people Israel at every time, in every hour, with your peace. Blessed are Your, Adonai our God, who blesses His people Israel with peace.

TRANSLATION OF THE SHABBAT PASSAGES OF THE MUSAF AMIDAH

Kedushah (only the passages that are not in the Shacharit Amidah)

We will revere and sanctify You with the words uttered by the holy Seraphim who sanctify Your name in the sanctuary, as is written by Your prophet:

His glory fills the universe. His ministering angels ask each other, "Where is the place of His

glory?" Those [other angels] facing them reply, "Blessed."

From His place, may He turn with compassion, and be gracious to the people who proclaim the unity of His name, morning and evening, every day, continually, twice each day, reciting in love the Sh'ma:

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

He is our God, He is our father, He is our King, He is our savior, and He in His compassion, will let us hear a second time in the sight of all that lives His promise to be a God to you. I am Adonai your God. [Num. 15:41]

And in Your holy writings it is written:
Resumption of the Shabbat Musaf Amidah (with the Musaf Shabbat insertions)

You instituted Shabbat, You favored its offerings. You commanded its specific laws along with the order of its libations. Those who delight in it inherit eternal glory, those who relish it merit life, and those who live its teachings have chosen greatness. At Sinai they were commanded about it. Then Adonai our God, commanded us to offer on it the additional offering of Shabbat in the proper way.

[This is the Sim Shalom translation, because the Conservative Movement does not endorse the building of a third Temple in Jerusalem, and the Hebrew has been changed]: May it be Your will, Adonai our God and God of our ancestors who returns Your children to their land, to lead us in joy to our land and to settle us within our borders. There our ancestors offered to You their daily and special sacrifices. And the special sacrifice for Shabbat they offered lovingly, according to Your will, as written in Your Torah through Moses, Your

servant:

On the sabbath day two yearling lambs without blemish together with two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in as meal offering, and with proper libation, a burnt offering for every sabbath, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its libation. [JPS, Num. 28:9-10]

Those who keep Shabbat and call it a delight shall rejoice in Your Kingship. The people who sanctify the seventh day shall all be satisfied and take delight in Your goodness, for You favored the seventh day and declared it holy. You called it "most desirable day" in remembrance of creation.

THE CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE AMIDAH

When we begin the Amidah, we should take three small steps forward. You may notice people taking three small steps backwards, but those three steps are only to make room for the three steps forward. We are emulating our entrance to a throne room, where God is the king. We bow at four times during the Amidah to show our humility, and three of those times we bend the knee at Baruch, bow from the waist at Atah, and straighten up at God's name. These three times are during the opening words (the first three words of the initial blessing; the introduction to the Shacharit Amidah is from Psalm 51:17. It is not part of the Amidah itself. The same is true for the introduction to the Musaf Amidah, which consists of that verse preceded by a Torah verse, Deut. 32:3), the next blessing (which ends the Avot prayer, and the first blessing following Modim anachnu lach. We bow from the waist at "modim," the start of the prayer for thanksgiving, but we don't bend the knee, because we don't say "baruch" ("berech," from which "baruch" comes from,

is the Hebrew word for "knee"). High priests and kings in the olden days were obligated to bow more often (possibly as a reminder that they should be humble), but nowadays, if you bow more than the designated times you appear to arrogant (nobody is more righteous than I).

When we say the Kedushah, we traditionally stand feet together, in emulation of the angels; Ezekiel depicted angels having only one leg. When we conclude "n-kadesh" or "na-aritzcha," we bow to the left, right, and center, in imitation of the angels facing each other and responding to one another's praises. We rise up on our toes when we say "Kodesh, kodesh, kodesh," "baruch k'vod," and "yimloch," to imitate the angels that were saying these phrases.

There is a disagreement about the relationship between the cantor and the congregation during the Kedushah. On the one hand, the three quotations from the angels are meant to be said communally; therefore, the cantor should join in the congregation. On the other hand, the cantor is saying the words that somebody who is praying silently can not say; therefore, the cantor needs to be heard alone. The rabbis from the Middle Ages to today's times didn't agree; therefore, either option is acceptable.

Why don't we say the Kedushah when we read the Amidah silently? The Kedushah is communal prayer, and for a communal to be recited, we need a minyan.

When we end the personal prayer at the end of the Amidah, we retreat three steps and bow left, right, and center. That is the reverse of initial three steps, because people in olden times (maybe people in modern times taking leave from, for example, Queen Elizabeth) took three steps backward and bowed, before they

turned their backs on the king.

The last thing that I will say is about the music. I don't know much about Jewish liturgical music, but I know that some tunes are designated "Mi-sinai:" they were handed down at Sinai and they are cast in stone. The familiar tunes that we follow when we sing the Amidah were not composed 3400 years ago. They were probably composed as recently as 150 years. The tune

that I sing for "M'chalkeil Chayim" was written by Max Wohlberg, who was born in 1907 and died in 1997. And the tune that I sing for "Mimkomcha" in the Kedushah was written by Lawrence Avery, who died in 2015. I have heard the Kedushah set to Broadway show tunes. Other than the sensibilities of the congregation, there is nothing sacred about the melodies of the Shabbat Amidah (as opposed to other Amidahs, to which the cantor follows a traditional melody.) ✨

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SUPER BOWL SUNDAY



9:AM @ CONGREGATION AHAVAS SHOLOM

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