Minhah and Ma-ariv Service for a House of Mourning

Edited, with translations by Rabbi Bob Freedman
To use this *siddur* for a *minhah* service, begin on page 1 with *ashrey*, then continue with *hasti kaddish* and the *amidah* on pages 13-14. During the *minhah* service when the *amidah* is recited aloud use the *k’dushah* for the reader beginning with שָׁלוֹם ("We praise...") at the top of page 17.

For a *ma-ariv* service begin at the top of pages 3-4. During the *ma-ariv amidah*, recite the *k’dushah* for the individual in the middle of pages 15-16, then continue with אֲרוּם הָרוֹן ("You grace...") on pages 17-18.

In the first section of the *amidah* on pages 13-14 the words in parentheses provide a text that many egalitarian congregations use to mention the matriarchs.

**Key to transliteration:**
- *a* as in father
- *e* as in bed
- *ey* as in weigh
- *ai* as in aisle
- *i* as in meet
- *o* as in hope
- *u* as in rule
- *kh* as ch in Bach

The 4-letter name of God is usually represented in this *siddur* by “Adonai.” Traditionally we say “Adonai” when reading God’s name aloud in prayer. When you are in silent prayer, other names for God may occur to you.

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The minhah service begins here.

Happy are those who live in Your house, they shall continually praise You. Happy the people for whom this is so; happy the people who know Adonai to be God.

A Psalm of David

I will extol You, my Sovereign God, I will bless Your name forever. Every day will I bless You and praise Your name forever.

Adonai is great and greatly praised; this greatness is limitless. One generation tells the next of Your works, recounting Your power. I recount the splendor of Your glory and the tale of Your wonders. They speak of Your awesome strength; they tell of Your greatness. The fame of Your goodness they proclaim, singing of Your righteousness.

Gracious and merciful is Adonai; slow to anger and very kind. Adonai is good to all, merciful to all creation.

All Your works speak of you; Your righteous ones bless You. They tell of Your splendid majesty and Your might, so that all people will know of Your strength and resplendence. Your sovereignty is everlasting; Your dominion is for all generations.

Adonai holds up all who fall and straightens those who are bowed down. All eyes look to You hopefully, for You give them food at the proper time. You open Your hand, and Your favor satisfies all.

All of Adonai’s ways are righteous; all of God's works are gracious. Adonai is near to all who call, to all who seek sincerely. The wish of those who fear God is fulfilled; Adonai hears their cry and saves them. Adonai preserves those who serve in love and destroys workers of evil.

My mouth shall praise Adonai; let all creatures bless the holy name. We will bless God now and forever; Hallelu Yah!

Continue with hatsi kaddish and the amidah on page 14.
The ma-ariv service begins here.

God is merciful, forgiving sin and not destroying. Often God refrains from wrath and does not permit anger to awake. Adonai, save us. O Sovereign One, answer us when we call.

Reader:
Bless Adonai, the One of blessing!

Congregation:
Blessed is Adonai, the One of blessing forever and ever.

Barukh Adonai ham-vorakh l’olam va-ed.

Blessed are You, Adonai, our God, Sovereign of the universe, Whose word brings on the dusk of evening;
Whose wisdom opens the gates of heaven.
With understanding God orders the cycles of time and determines the succession of seasons.
God orders the stars in their heavenly courses and creates day and night, rolling away light before darkness and darkness before light.
God makes day pass and night fall, setting apart night from day.
Ruler of Heavenly Hosts is the Holy One’s name.
May God, living and eternal, rule over us forever.
Blessed are You, Adonai, who brings on the evening.

With lasting love You have loved Your people Israel, teaching us Torah, commandments, statutes and judgments. And so, O our God, when we lie down and when we awake we will review Your statutes, forever rejoicing in Your Torah and commandments. For they are our life and the length of our days, and upon them we will meditate day and night. May You never take Your love from us. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who loves your people Israel.
Hear Israel, Adonai our God, Adonai is One.
Sh'ma Yisra-el, Adonai Eloheynu, Adonai ehad.

Blessed be God’s sovereign glory forever and ever.

You shall love Adonai Your God with all your heart,
with all your soul and with all your might. These words that I
command you this day shall be upon your heart. You shall teach
them diligently to your children, speaking of them when you sit
in your house, when you walk on your way, when you lie down,
and when you rise up. You shall bind them for a sign on your
hand, and they shall serve as frontlets between your eyes.
You shall inscribe them on the doorposts of your house
and on your gates.

We recite silently:
Deuteronomy 6:4-9

If, then, you obey the commandments that I enjoin on you this
day, loving and serving Adonai your God with all your heart and
soul, I will give rain for your land in season, the early rain and the
late. You shall gather in your new grain, wine and oil—I will also
provide grass in the fields for your cattle—and thus you shall eat
and be satisfied. Take care not to be lured away to serve other
gods or bow down to them. For then the anger of Adonai will
blaze against you, and Adonai will shut up the skies so that there
shall be no rain; the ground will not yield its produce, and you
will quickly perish from the good land that Adonai is giving you.

Therefore impress these my words upon your heart; bind them
as a sign on your hand and let them be frontlets between your
eyes. Teach them to your children, reciting them when you sit in
your house, when you walk on your way, when you lie down
and when you rise up. Inscribe them on the doorposts of your
house and upon your gates, so that as long as there is a heaven
above the earth you and your children will endure in the land that
Adonai swore to your ancestors to give to them.

Deuteronomy 11:13-21
Adonai spoke to Moses saying: “Speak to the Israelites and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments throughout all their generations; they shall include a blue thread in each fringe. That shall be your fringe. Look at it and recall all the commandments of Adonai and observe them, so that you do not follow your own heart and eyes, lusting after other things. Thus shall you be reminded to observe all my commandments and be holy to your God. I am Adonai your God who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I, Adonai, am your God.”

Numbers 15:37-41

True and enduring are the words we have just read. Saying them, we steadfastly acknowledge that Adonai is our God, that there is no other, and that we are a people chosen by God.

It was God who redeemed us from the hand of oppressors, saved us from the grasp of tyrants and judged those who tormented and persecuted us.

God performs limitless wonders and deeds beyond imagining.

God has kept us alive, has kept our feet from stumbling and has given us the strength to overcome enemies stronger than we are.

God wrought wonders and miracles in the land of Pharaoh, smiting in wrath the first born of Egypt and bringing the people Israel out of bondage to everlasting freedom.

As God led the people Israel through the divided waters, their pursuers sank in the depths. When God’s people beheld this awesome power, they sang praises and accepted God’s sovereignty.

As Moses and all the people Israel sang their joyous song to you, we sing:
We sing:
Who is like You among divinities, Adonai? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, making miracles?
Mi khamaicha ba-elim Adonai? Mi kamocha ne-edar bakodesh nora t'hillot, osey feleih.

Your children saw Your awesome power as You split the sea before Moses.
“This is my God,” they cried. “Adonai will reign forever.”
Adonai yimlokh l’olam va-ed.

And it is said, “Adonai saved Jacob, rescuing him from a hand stronger than his own.”
Blessed are You, Adonai, Redeemer of Israel.

O God, help us to lie down in peace and arise to renewed life.
Spread over us Your sheltering peace; guide us with Your good counsel and save us for Your name’s sake. Be a shield about us, turning away enemies, sickness, war, hunger, and anxiety.
Remove the temptations that surround us. Shelter us in the shadow of Your wings, for You are our Guardian and Deliverer;
You are our Sovereign, compassionate and merciful. Watch over us as we go and return so we may live in peace now and forever.
Blessed are You, Adonai, eternal Guardian of Your people Israel.

May God’s glory be forever; may God continually rejoice in creation. May God’s name be blessed forever. For the sake of that great name God will never abandon us; Adonai resolved to make us a Godly people. When the people saw God’s wonders they bowed to the ground exclaiming, “Adonai is God! Adonai is God!” A day will come when Adonai will be Sovereign over all the earth; on that day Adonai will be one and be called One. Be gracious to us, Adonai, as we hope in You. Gather our dispersed from among the nations, and we shall thank You, praising Your holy name. May all the nations that You fashioned come to praise You and glorify Your name, for You are great; You alone perform wonders. We are Your people; You are our shepherd. Throughout all our generations we will thank You and speak Your praise.

Blessed be Adonai by day and by night. Blessed be Adonai when we lie down and when we arise.

In Your hands are the souls of all the living and the dead, the breath and flesh of all human kind. Into Your hand I entrust my spirit. You will surely redeem me, Holy One of truth.

O God, reveal Your oneness. Establish Your eternal sovereignty and rule over us forever. May our eyes behold, our hearts be glad and our souls truly rejoice in Your deliverance, when it shall be reported to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

For preeminence is Yours, and forever You will reign in glory. We accept no sovereign but You. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who reigns over us and all creation forever.
Magnified and sanctified be the great name in the world created by divine will. May the divine kingdom prevail in our lifetime, in our days and in the lifetime of all Israel, soon, and all say: Amen.

May the great name be praised throughout eternity.
*Y'hey sh'mey raba m'vorakh l'olam u'olmei almaya, yitbarakh.*

Blessed and praised, acclaimed and exalted, extolled and adored, hallowed and honored be the name of the Holy One—blessed be, even though it is above all blessing and song, praise and adoration spoken in this world, and all say: Amen.

Adonai, open my lips, and my mouth shall speak your praise.

*Blessed are You, Adonai, our God.
God of our fathers (and mothers)—
God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob;
(God of Sarah, God of Rebecca, God of Rachel and God of Leah;)
God, the Great, the Mighty, the Awesome, Supreme One,
Who rewards acts of loving kindness; Who possesses everything. Who, remembering the righteousness of our ancestors, brings redemption to their children’s children for Your own loving sake.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur add:
(Remember us that we may live, O Sovereign Who delights in life. Inscribe us in the book of life, for Your sake, O living God.)

Sovereign, Helper, Savior, Shield—
Blessed are You, Adonai,
Shield of Abraham (and Help of Sarah).

*Egalitarian congregations may wish to mention the matriarchs, using the words in parentheses.*
You are mighty forever, Adonai, giving life to the dead, powerful to save.

From Sukkot until Pesach say:
You bring wind and rainfall.
You sustain life with kindness and revive the dead with great compassion. You support the falling, heal the sick, free those who are bound and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.
Who is like You, Master of might? Who resembles You, Ruler over death and life, Source of salvation?

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur add:
(Who is like You, Merciful One? Remember Your creation in mercy
so that we might live.)

Faithfully You revive the dead.
Blessed are You, Adonai, Who revives the dead.

When the amidah is said aloud go to "We praise" at the top of page 18
When the amidah is recited silently during ma-ariv say:
You are holy. Your Name is Holy, and holy beings praise You all day.
Blessed are You, Adonai, the Holy God.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur conclude:
(Blessed are You, Adonai, holy Sovereign One.)

Continue with "You grace..." on page 18.

אתה זሞר לקהל אלֶה מֵחיים קַחָהָה קַחָהָה א־שַׁבָּתָה רַבּוּ לְלוֹוֹשָׁת.
From Sh’mini Atseret until Pesach say:
מְשַׁיָּהוּ הֵרַחַת וְזָכוֹרְךָ מִיָּם.
ואלֹים זֹאתֶם חָיָה חָיָה חָיָה יְזָרְעָה בּוֹרִים
שָׁמַעְתָּ נִפְלָלִים וּרְאֵם חָלָלוֹתָם יָמָהָה אֲנָכי
למשנה שם. מי כןך יִשָּׁב וּבֶרְוֵרֵם וּמִזְמַנְתָּם לְפָאָה מְקֻמָּה.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur add:
(כִּי טִפּוּת אֵין זֹאתֶם זָכָרְךָ לְחָיָה בּוֹרִים).

When the amidah is said aloud go to 17 עֲרָפָה at the top of page 17.
When the amidah is said silently say:
אתה שָׁמַעְתָּ לְזִמְנַתָּם וְהָרֹאָהּ בְּדַלּוּתָם בַּל יִהְלָלָה פָּלוּ
זֹאתָ הָאָדָם זֹאתָ הָאָדָם זֹאתָ הָאָדָם.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur conclude as follows:
(כִּי טִפּוּת אֵין זֹאתָ לְחָיָה בּוֹרִים).

Continue with 17 עֲרָפָה on page 17.
When the amidah is recited aloud during minchah say:

We praise Your name as it is proclaimed holy in the heights, in the words of the prophet: “They cried one to the other, ‘Holy, holy, holy is Adonai; Godly glory fills all the earth!’”

Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai ts’va-at m’lo khol ha-aretz k’vodo.

Other heavenly beings respond,

“God’s blessed glory is in every place!”

Barukh k’vodo Adonai mimkomo.

And in holy speech Your servant [David] wrote:

“Adonai will reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations; Hallelu Yah!”

Yislokh Adonai l’olam, Elohayikh tsiyon l’kor vador; Hallelu Yah.

In all generations we will declare Your greatness, and continually we will proclaim You holy. May Your praise never depart from our lips, for You are a great and holy ruler.

*Blessed are You, Adonai, Holy God.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur conclude:

(*Blessed are You, Adonai, holy sovereign One.)

You grace humankind with knowledge, teaching us understanding.

On Saturday night add:

(You grac’d us with knowledge of Your Torah and taught us to perform Your commandments. You set apart sacred from profane, light from darkness, Israel from other nations, and the seventh day from the rest of the created days. O God, may we have peace in the coming days. May we be free of sin, cleansed of wrongdoing, and more closely attached to Your glory.)

Grant us knowledge, discernment and wisdom.

Blessed are You, Adonai, Giver of wisdom.

Help us return to Your teaching, O Sovereign. Draw us to Your service, enabling us to turn to You in complete repentance.

Blessed are You, Adonai, Who welcomes repentance.
Forgive our sins, O God; pardon our transgressions, O Sovereign, for You are the One Who forgives and pardons. Blessed are You, Adonai, gracious and generous with forgiveness.

Observe our affliction and be our advocate. Redeem us for the sake of Your name, for You are a mighty savior. Blessed are You, Adonai, Redeemer of Israel.

Heal us Adonai and we shall be well; Save us and we will be saved, for You are our glory. Grant perfect-healing to all our illness, O God, merciful and faithful Healer. Blessed are You, Adonai, Healer of the people Israel.

Bless this year, O God. May the whole earth be blessed and may all its varied produce bring us good.

From Pesah through Dec. 4 say: Give rain
From Dec. 5 until Pesah say: Give dew and rain to bless the earth. Satisfy us with Your goodness as You bless all our years like years of plenty. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who blesses each year.

Sound the great shofar to herald our freedom, and raise a banner to summon the exiles. Gather the dispersed of our people from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who gathers our exiles.

Restore our judges as of old, and our counselors as in former times. Turn away from us anxiety and sorrow. Rule over us, You alone, in kindness and mercy, and make us fair in judgment.

*Blessed are You, Adonai, Who loves righteousness and justice.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur conclude:
*(Blessed are You, Adonai, Sovereign Judge.)
Let slanderers have no hope. Swiftly may all wickedness be destroyed and all Your enemies be routed. In our days may the arrogant be uprooted, broken and humbled. 
Blessed are You, Adonai, Who humbles the proud.

Let Your mercy rest, O God, on the righteous, the pious, the elders of Israel, scholars, true converts, and on us. Reward all those who trust in You, and may our lot be with theirs. 
Trust in You we will never be ashamed. 
Blessed are You, Adonai, Support and Trust of the righteous.

Return in mercy to Jerusalem, Your city, and dwell within her as You promised. Rebuild her now and for all time, and swiftly re-establish there the majesty of David. 
Blessed are You, Adonai, Builder of Jerusalem.

Bring to fruition the line of Your servant David and hasten the coming of redemption. Every day we hope for Your deliverance. 
Blessed are You, Adonai, Who brings to fullness the light of redemption.

Hear our voice, O God; have compassion on us. Welcome and mercifully accept our prayers, for You are the One who heeds prayer and supplication. Our Sovereign, when You hear the pleas of Your people Israel, do not turn us away empty. 
Blessed are You, Adonai, Who hears prayer.
Adonai our God, favor Your people Israel. Restore worship in Your sanctuaries, and lovingly accept their offering of prayer. May the worship of Israel Your people always be acceptable to You.

On Rosh Hodesh and during Pesah and Succot add:
(Our God and God of our ancestors, regard; listen to, take account of and remember us, our ancestors, the Messiah, Your holy city Jerusalem and Your people Israel.

Grant them grace, kindness, compassion, vigor and wholeness on this day of Rosh Hodesh / Pesah / Sukkot.

Remember us for good, count out our blessings and deliver us to a life of spirit. As You promised, protect us and be gracious, for our eyes turn to You, merciful and kind Sovereign.)

Blessed are You, Adonai, Whose Presence returns to Zion.

We thank You, for You are eternally our God, God of our ancestors, Defender of our lives and our Shield throughout all our generations. May we thank and praise You for our lives in Your hands, for our souls in Your keeping, for Your miracles surrounding us daily, and for Your wonders and favors morning, noon and night.

Beneficent One, Whose mercy is never ceasing, Merciful One, Whose kindness is boundless, forever we hope in You.
During Hanukkah add:
(We thank You for the heroism, for the triumphs and for the miraculous deliverance of our people in ancient days at this time of year. In the days of Mattathias the Hasmonean, son of Yohanan the high priest, and his sons, a cruel power rose against Israel, demanding us to abandon Your Torah and to violate Your commandments. But You with great mercy stood by Your people in time of trouble. You defended them, vindicated them, and avenged their wrongs. You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the corrupt into the hands of the pure, the guilty into the hands of the innocent and the arrogant into the hands of those who were faithful to Your Torah.
You made Your name great and holy in Your world, and for Israel You wrought great victories and miraculous deliverance. Then Your people came into Your House, cleansed Your Temple, purified Your sanctuary and kindled lights in Your sacred courts. They established these eight days of Hanukkah as a time of giving thanks and reciting praise to You.)

For all these blessings, O Sovereign, Your name will be blessed and exalted forever.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur add:
(Inscribe all the people of Your covenant into the Book of Life.)

Every living being shall thank You and truly praise Your Name, O God, our Deliverance and our Help.
Blessed are You, Adonai; Your name is Goodness, and it is proper to give You thanks.

Grant full and lasting peace to Your people Israel, for You are the Sovereign of peace. May it please You to bless Your people Israel at all times and in all seasons with Your peace.
*Blessed are You, Adonai, Who blesses Israel with peace.

From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur conclude:
*(May we and all the nation of Israel be remembered and inscribed in the Book of Life, that our lives may be blessed with prosperity, goodness and peace.
Blessed are You, Adonai, Who makes peace.*

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My God, guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking slander. May my soul be silent to those who curse me; may she be humble as dust before all. Open my heart to Your Torah, so my soul can follow Your commandments. Frustrate the designs of all who wish me harm. Do so for Your own sake, for the sake of Your right arm, for the sake of Your holiness and for the sake of Your Torah, that Your loved ones may be delivered.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, my Rock and my Redeemer.

May God Who makes harmony in high realms grant wholeness and peace to us and to all Israel.

*A Meditation for Comforters:*
As we have come together this evening to bring comfort to our friends, we honor their loved one and feel their loss. We reach out to them to bring solace and consolation, standing with them in respect and affection and offering them our shoulders to lean on. Our ancestors taught us that *shivah* is a time when the community gathers to assure that mourners do not sit alone in their time of need. We pray that our Everpresent God will dry their tears, and lead them from the valley of shadow to mountaintops of daylight and healing sunshine.

*Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins*
Magnified and sanctified be the great Name in the world created by divine will. May the divine kingdom prevail in our lives, in our days and in the lifetime of all Israel, soon, and all say: Amen.

May the Great Name be praised throughout eternity.
Y'hey sh'mey raba m'vorakh
l'alum ulalumey elmaya, yitbarakh.

Blessed and praised, acclaimed and exalted, extolled and adored, hallowed and honored be the name of the Holy One – blessed be – even though it is above all blessing and song, praise and adoration spoken in this world, and all say: Amen.

Mourners omit; comforters recite silently:

May the prayers and supplications of all Israel be acceptable to the Holy One of high realms, and all say: Amen.

May there be peace from heaven and life for us and all Israel, and all say: Amen.

May the One who makes harmony in high realms grant shalom for us and for all Israel, and all say: Amen.

From the second night of Pesah until Shavuut count the omer:
I am ready to fulfill the mitzvah of counting the omer, as it is written in the Torah: “You shall count from the day following the day of rest, from the day that you brought an omer of grain as an offering; seven full weeks shall be counted. You shall count fifty days to the day following the seventh week.”

(Leviticus 23:15-16)

Blessed are You, Adonai, Sovereign of all worlds, who has taught us ways of holiness, and bids us to count the omer.

Today is the ... of the omer.
It is for us to praise the Holy One and to recognize the greatness of the Creator, Who did not fashion us like the other nations or families of the earth, but gave us a destiny and inheritance of our own.

We bend our knees and bow, and give thanks to the most Sovereign Ruler, Holy One of blessing.

You stretch out the heavens and establish the earth. Your glory is revealed in the vaulted heavens and your might in the lofty heights. God is, there is nothing else; our true Sovereign, there is no other. As it is written in Your Torah, “Today, know and be fully conscious that Adonai is God in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is nothing else.”

So we hope in You, O God. Soon may we see Your power’s splendor sweeping idolatry from the earth, casting out false gods and perfecting the world under Shaddai’s sovereignty. Let all people know Your Name and the wicked of the earth turn to You. Let all who dwell in the world know that to You every knee must bend and every tongue pledge loyalty. Before You, O God, may they bow, giving honor to Your cherished name. Then, as all accept Your sovereignty, You will rule them, soon and always.

For sovereignty is Yours, and forever You will reign in glory, as it is written in Your Torah: “Adonai will reign now and forever.” It was said, “Adonai will be Sovereign in all lands. On that day Adonai will be One and God’s Name will be One.”


From the first of Elul until Sh’mini Atseret say Psalm 27 on pages 37-38.
Eternal God, Who remembers our deeds and our lives, we turn to You for solace and hope when we are bowed in grief. As we recall ______ who has departed from life, we think of the memories she/he left behind, and we thank You for the companionship and love she/he shared with us.

Honoring the chain of faith that links the generations of the house of Israel, those who mourn now open their lips to sanctify Your name with the words of the Kaddish.

Yitgadal v’yitkadash sh’mey rabah (Amen) b’alma divra khirutey vyamikh malkhutey b’hayeikhon uv’yomeikhon uv’hayey d’kol beyt Yisra-el ba-agala uv’izman kaiv ‘imru Amen.

Y’hay sh’mey raba m’vorakh l’alam u’almei almaya.

Yitbarakh vyishfafah vy’dipa-ar vy’tromam vy’tnasay vy’tzaddar vy-it-aleh vy’ithalal sh’mey d’kudsha – b’rika hu – l’eylah (l’eylah) min kol birkhata v’shirata tushb’hana v’nehemata da-amirin b’alma v’imru Amen.

Y’hay shlama raba min sh’maya v’hayim aleynu v’al kol Yisra-el v’imru Amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleynu v’al kol Yisra-el v’imru Amen.

Magnified and sanctified be the great Name in the world created by divine will. May the divine kingdom prevail in our lifetime, in our days and in the lifetime of all Israel, soon, and all say: Amen.

May the Great Name be praised throughout eternity. Blessed and praised, acclaimed and exalted, extolled and adored, hallowed and honored be the name of the Holy One – blessed be – even though it is above all blessing and song, praise and adoration spoken in this world, and all say: Amen.

May there be peace from heaven and life for us and all Israel, and all say: Amen.

May the One who makes harmony in high realms grant shalom for us, for all Israel and for all who live on earth, and all say: Amen.
1 We thank You, O God of life and love, for the resurrecting gift of memory which endows Your children, fashioned in Your image, with the Godlike sovereign power to give immortality through love. Praised be You, O God, who enables Your children to remember.

Rabbi Morris Adler

2 The awareness of our blessings, and of the source from which they come, prepares us also for their inevitable surrender. For, being mortal, we know that the things we cherish cannot last forever, and even if they do last, we cannot always be around to enjoy them. A final separation awaits every relationship, no matter how tender. Someday we shall have to drop every object to which our hands cling.

These thoughts sadden us, but we can bear them more readily when we remember that the measure of our loss is also the measure of our privilege. Shall we rebel because the rose lasts for a brief few days? No! We dare not grieve for the days when no roses bloom in our garden. We must rather give thanks for whatever days we were privileged to enjoy roses, to taste their beauty and their fragrance.

Every day of our life our blessings are given to us anew. For the gift given to us and for whatever time we are privileged to keep it, we are grateful. And when we are asked to surrender the gift we shall still know that we were richly blessed. And we shall say, “Praised are You, Adonai our God, that You privileged us to know the adventure of life.”

Adapted from: Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser, Minnah and Ma-ariv Service, p. 44.

Adonai is my Shepherd; I shall not want. God lays me down in green pastures, leads me beside calm waters, and restores my soul.

God guides me on paths of righteousness for the sake of the holy Name.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for You are with me. Your rod and Your staff comfort me.

You spread a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of Adonai forever.

Psalm 23
A Psalm of David

Adonai is my light and my help, whom need I fear?
Adonai is the strength of my life, whom need I dread?

When evil-doers draw near to destroy me, when foes threaten,
they stumble and fall. Though armies be arrayed against me, I will
have no fear; though war threatens, I remain steadfast in my faith.

One favor I ask of Adonai, for this do I yearn: to dwell in the
house of Adonai all the days of my life, to enter into God’s
sanctuary, and to behold God’s graciousness.

In perilous days God will secure shelter for me, keeping me in the
recesses of a tent or lifting me to safety on a high rock. God will
raise my head above enemies that surround me.

I will offer to God shouts of joy; I will sing,
chanting praises to Adonai.

O God, hear my voice when I call, be gracious to me and answer.
“It is You that I seek,” says my heart, “I seek Your presence.”

Do not hide from me; do not reject Your servant.
You have always been my help; do not now abandon me or
forsake me, O God of deliverance. Though my father and mother
abandon me, God will care for me.

Teach me, O God, guide me on the right path, that my oppressors
may be confounded. Do not deliver me to the will of my foes.
False witnesses rise up against me, those that breathe out violence.

Yet I have faith that I shall see God’s goodness while I live.
Hope in God. Be strong; take heart, and hope in Adonai.

Psalm 27
Hear this all peoples; listen well, all inhabitants of the world, mighty and lowly, rich and poor alike.

Why should I be afraid in evil times, when the wickedness of schemers surrounds me? They trust in their riches and praise the abundance of their wealth. But this will certainly not redeem them; one cannot give to God a ransom for a life. The redemption of a soul is beyond price.

We must give up the hope that we might live forever and never see the nether world. For you see that the wise die; together with fools and dullards they perish, leaving their wealth to others. Their graves will be their home forever, a dwelling place for all generations. Humans do not abide in splendor; like sheep they must die; death becomes their shepherd.

But it is God who will redeem me from the pit’s grasp, for God will receive me.

Selected verses from Psalm 49
Don’t grieve for me, for now I’m free.
I’m following the path God laid for me.
I took God’s hand when I heard the call;
I turned my back, and left it all.
I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work or play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way,
I found that place at the close of day.
If my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Ah yes, these things I too will miss.
Be not burdened with times of sorrow,
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life’s been full. I savored much—
Good friends, good times, a loved one’s touch.
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief;
Don’t lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me
It’s my time; I’ve been set free.

Author unknown