

# BAR MITZVAH OF MILES TOKUNOW

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## 11 TEVET 5784

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# Welcome to the Bar Mitvah of Miles Tokunow

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I am delighted that you can join in this Milestone celebration. This is a coming of age ceremony that marks my commitment to ‘commandment’/mitzvah and honored to read the Torah. Currently, Bayard, my 4 year old, is reading a “From caterpillar to butterfly,” which feel like an appropriate analogy for transformation. This year of study has been my chrysalis. I have found a spiritual home in Judaism and am honored that you are here to witness my new wings.

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## SPECIAL THANK YOU

A special and heartfelt THANK YOU to Nahalat Shalom for your commitment in creating an expansive and diverse shul welcoming of my spiritual journey.

Thank you to Rabbi Min and Maggidah Batya Podos who led me on this journey, never saying no to going off on a random and constant tangential roads!

Thank you to all my Black Jews and Queer Jews who by living in their faith, showed me that my Jewish life could honor all parts of me.

Lastly and most importantly, Thank you to my family- Naima for your love and encouragement and support. To Zora and Bayard for being my guiding lights and sources of so many smiles. To all of my family and my family-in-law, your love, gifts, and guidance have led me to this moment. Thank you for your excitement as a walk down this new and remembered path.

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## SERVICE

### (8) Reb Zalman's Chant

(Words by Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. Music by D. Zaslow)

אֶחָד יְחִיד וּמְיֻחָד

Echad; Yacheed; Oo-m'yu-chad

The One; Every single one; Each one joined and united to the One.

### (7) Mah Tovv: Song

(Numbers 24:5: additional words from "Or Chadash")

*Weekday morning; Shabbat morning*

מַה טֹבֹו אֶהְיֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב, מִשְׁכְּנֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Mah tovu oha-lecha Ya-akov, mishk'notecha Yisra'ayl.

How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel.

מַה טֹבֹו אֶהְיֶיךָ שָׂרָה, מִשְׁכְּנֶיךָ רִבְקָה

Mah tovu ohala-yich Sarah, mish-k'nota-yich Rivkah

How goodly are your tents O Sarah, your dwelling places O Rebecca.

## Presentation of the Tallit

*Adapted by Rabbi D. Zaslow from Rabbi Marcia Prager who adapted it from Rabbi Rami Shapiro*

A tallis is a fractal of the cosmos

Its four corners are the outer reaches of the known,

Its fringes are the subtle teasing of the unknown.

To stand wrapped in tallis is to take your place upon the planet.

To stand wrapped in tallis is to take your share of responsibility

for the world, as it is written...

"One who takes a single life is as one who destroys an entire world;  
one who saves a single life, is as one who saves an entire world."

I accept the awesome call to stand in tallis and tzitzit.

May I grow in mitzvot and learn the skills of living in harmony with the world.

May I grow in the ways of wisdom, that through my life I might save life.

### (11) Tallit: The Blessing

(upon putting on tallit)

*Weekday morning; Shabbat morning*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam

You abound in blessing, ADONAI our GOD, SOURCE of all creation,

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִתְעַטֵּף בְּצִיצִית.

asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hit'atayf ba'tzeetzit.

for giving us ways to join ourselves to You,

and for teaching us to wrap ourselves in the tallit.

## (18) Asher Yatzar

Weekday morning; Shabbat morning

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחִכְמָה,

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam, asher yatzar et ha-adam b'chochmah;  
Blessed are You, YAH our GOD, SOURCE of creation, for forming us in Wisdom;

וּבְרָא בּוֹ נִקְבִּים נִקְבִּים, חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים,

Oo-vara vo n'kaveem n'kaveem, chaluleem chaluleem,  
creating within us numerous openings and cavities.

גָּלוּי וַיִּדּוּעַ לִפְנֵי כִסֵּא כְבוֹדְךָ

galui v'yadua lifnay chisay ch'vodecha,  
It is revealed and known before Your Throne of Glory

שָׂאִם יִפְתַּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם, אוֹ יִסְתֵּם אֶחָד מֵהֶם,

she'im yi-patay-ach echad mayhem, oh yisataym echad mayhem,  
that if but one of them were ruptured, or if one of them were blocked,

אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְהִתְקַיֵּם וּלְעֲמוֹד לִפְנֶיךָ:

Ee efshar l'hitkayaym v'la-amode l'fanecha  
it would be impossible to exist or to stand before You.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, רוֹפֵא כָּל בָּשָׂר, וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת:

Baruch Atah Yah, rofay chol basar oo-maflee la-asot.  
Blessed are You GREAT HEALER, who heals all flesh and performs wonders.

## (21) Elohai Neshamah: Song

(Words &amp; music by Rabbi Hanna Tiferet Siegel)

Weekday morning; Shabbat morning

אֱלֹהֵי, נִשְׁמָה שֶׁנָּתַתָּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא

Elohai n'shamah shena-tata bee t'horah hee.

The pure gift of my soul is restored every day.

As long as She dwells with me I will offer You sweet praise.

Though I wander from Your light through the shadows of death.

I find the wings of Your Holy Presence are centered in my breath.

## (22) Blessings for Daily Torah Study

Weekday morning; Shabbat morning

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam

Blessed are You SOURCE of Torah, our GOD, RULER of the UNIVERSE

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְעֲסוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה:

asher ki-d'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la-asoke b'di-v'ray Torah.

who has sanctified us with mitzvot & commanded us concerning words of Torah.

## (25) Morning Blessing:

(melody and words by Shefa Gold)

Weekday morning

Leader chants each line and group repeats:

Morning will unfold for us

Life will rise from dust

Chorus: Group rises and leader chants each line. Group repeats.

We're rising in remembrance

Of Your love

Everyone chants together while turning in a circle and clapping hands. Then sit.

Halleluyah, Halleluyah!

Leader chants and group repeats. Chorus is chanted between each line:

You open up our eyes to see...

You have made us free

You lift us up when we are down...

You share with us Your royal crown

You guide our steps at every turn...

You teach us what we need to learn

You give us strength when we are weak

Reminding us of what we need

Beyond imagination...

Your Presence fills creation

You lift the slumber from our eyes...

You signal for the sun to rise

## (1) Baruch Sheh-amar: Song

(Music and lyric version by Joseph &amp; Nathan Segal)

ברוך שְׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם, בָּרוּךְ הוּא, בָּרוּךְ עֲשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית, בָּרוּךְ אֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה  
 Baruch sheh-amar v'hayah ha-olam, baruch hu.  
 Baruch oseh v'raysheet, baruch omayr v'oseh.

Blessed is the One who speaketh the word, and the world Is.  
 Blessed is He and blessed is She, who was and forever Is.

## (7) Psalm 90: (Shabbat Morning)

(Ps. 90:12. Music: Yitzhak Husbands-Hankin)

לְמִנּוֹת יָמֵינוּ כִּן הוֹדַע וְנִבִּיא לְבָב חֲכָמָה

Limnot yamaynu kayn hoda v'navee l'avav chochmah

Teach us to treasure each day; that we may open our hearts to Your wisdom.

A prayer to Moses. a man of God.

## (13) Esa Aynai (Shabbat Morning)

(Psalm 121. Music by Shlomo Carlebach)

אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל-הַהָרִים מֵאֵין יְבֹא עֲזָרִי:

Esa Ay-nai el he-hareem may-ayin yavo ezri

I lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where does my help come?

עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ...

Ezree may-im Adonai osay shamayim va-aretz...

My help is from the ENDLESS ONE, CREATOR of heaven and earth...

...אל יתן למוט רגלך, אל ינום שמך:

הנה לא ינום ולא יישן שומר ישראל:

יהוה שמך, יהוה צלך על יד ימינה:

יומם השמש לא יכבה, וירח בלילה:

יהוה ישמך מכל רע ישמר את נפשך:

יהוה ישמר צאתך ובואך מעתה ועד עולם:

## (16) Ashray: Psalm 145

(Line 1-Psalm 84:5, Line 2-Psalm 149:15)

Weekday morning; Shabbat morning

אַשְׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֶלָה:

Ashray yoshvay vaytecha, ode y'ha-l'lucha selah.

Happy are those who dwell in Your house; they will praise You forever.

## (19) Psalm 150

(translation by R. Zalman Schachter-Shalomi)

Weekday morning; Shabbat morning

הַלְלוּיָהּ, הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקִדְשׁוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרָקִיעַ עֶזוֹ:

Halleluyah, hal'lu, ayl b'kodsho, hal'luhu, birkee-a oo-zo.

Halleluyah, Praise YAH in God's holiness.

Halleluyah, Praise YAH in God's firm strength

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרָתוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גְּדֻלוֹ:

Hal'luhu, big-voo-rotav, hal'luhu, k'rov gudlo.

Halleluyah, Praise YAH in God's might

Halleluyah, Praise YAH according to God's many graces

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר:

Hal'luhu, b'tayka shofar, hal'luhu, b'nayvel v'chinar.

Halleluyah, Praise YAH with the blast of the Shofar

Halleluyah, Praise YAH with strings and harps

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֹף וּמַחֲוֹל, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעִגָּב:

Hal'luhu, b'tof u'machol, hal'luhu, b'mineem v'ugav.

Halleluyah, Praise YAH with drum and dance

Halleluyah, Praise YAH with every instrument with every organ

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי שִׁמְעַ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה:

Hal'luhu, b'tzil-tz'lay shama, hal'luhu, b'tzil-tz'lay t'ru'ah.

Halleluyah, Praise YAH with the ringing sound

Halleluyah, Praise YAH with the clanging sound

כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהִלָּל יְהוָה הַלְלוּיָהּ.

Kol han'shamah, Halleluyah, t'halayl Yah, Halleluyah.

Halleluyah, Praise YAH with every breath. Halleluyah



## (27) Half-Kaddish

Weekday morning; Erev Shabbat; Shabbat morning

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֶלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתִיהּ,

Yit-ga-dal v'yit-ka-dash sh-may rabba, b'alma dee vera chir-ootay

Magnified and sanctified be God's great Name in the world created according to Divine Will.

וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתִיהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ

V'yam-leech mal-chu-tay, b'cha-yay-chone oo-v'yomay-chone

And may the HOLY ONE rule the Kingdom in your lifetime and in your days

וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּעֶגְלָא וּבְזְמַן קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Oo-v'cha-yay d'chol bayt Yisra-ayl ba-agala oo-viz-man kareev v'im-ru, Amayn.

And in the lifetime of the entire house of Israel, speedily & in the near future, & let us say Amen.

יְיָ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי וְלְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵי:

Y'hay sh-may rabba miva-rach l'olam ool-al-may al-maya.

May God's great Name be blessed forever and for all eternity.

יְתַבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם

וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל

Yitba-rach v'yishta-bach v'yitpa-ar v'yitro-mam v'yitna-say, v'yit-hadar v'yit-aleh v'yitha-lall

Blessed and praised, glorified, exalted, and uplifted, honored, elevated, and extolled

שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא

Sh-may d'ku-d'sha b'reech-hu. L-ayla min kol bir-chata v'shee-rata

be the Name of the blessed HOLY ONE. Above all the blessings, hymns,

תְּשֻׁבָּחַתָּא וְנַחֲמָתָא, דְּאָמְרוּ בְּעֶלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Toosh-b'cha-ta vneh-che-mata da-ameeran b'alma v'eem-ru, Amayn.

praises, and consolations which we utter in the world. And let us say Amen.

Please stand as the reader chants:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְהוָה הַמְּבָרֵךְ:

(bow) Bar'chu et (rise) (Adonai or Yah) ha-m'vorach

We bless the SOURCE OF BLESSING Who is to be blessed.

Congregation responds and reader repeats:

בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Baruch (Adonai or Yah) ha-m'vorach l'olam va-ed.

Blessed is the SOURCE OF BLESSING forever and ever.

## (8) Ahavah Rabah: (Morning)

Weekday morning; Shabbat morning

אַהֲבָה רַבָּה אַהֲבַתְנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,

Ahavah rabah ahav-tanu Adonai Elohaynu

With boundless love You have loved us ADONAI, our God.

**(12) Shema**(Deuteronomy 6:4) *Weekday morning; Erev Shabbat; Shabbat morning*

Spiritual Practice: (1) Cover your eyes when chanting the Shema. Reb Shlomo reminds us that we are so close to God at this moment that it is beyond physical seeing. When two people kiss the eyes shut. The moment of the Shema is a spiritual kiss between each of us and the Beloved, the Holy One Blessed Be S/He; (2) Each time you say the Shema, envision a different place, moment, being, or object as God's dwelling.

Learning: Marcia Falk writes, "Hear, O Israel, The Divine abounds everywhere and dwells in everything; the many are One."

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל – לַאֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי פָנִים מְלֵא עוֹלָם  
שְׁכִינָתָהּ, רַבּוּי פָּנֶיהָ אֶחָד



**Shema Yisrael Adonai (or Yah) Elohaynu Adonai (or Yah) Echad**  
Hear O' Israel, the LORD is our GOD, The LORD, is ONE

*or*

Listen Godwrestlers, the Unity Beyond Names is our God,  
the UNITY BEYOND NAMES IS ALL ONE.

*or Reb Zalman's translation:*

Listen you Yisrael person, YAH who is, is our GOD, YAH who is, is ONE:  
Unique – All there is.

## (14) V'ahavta

(First paragraph of Shema. Deuteronomy 6:5)  
Weekday morning; Erev Shabbat; Shabbat morning

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּכָל לֵבְבְּךָ, וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ,

V'ahavta et Adonai Elohecha b'chol l'va-v'cha oo-v'chol naf-sh'cha  
You shall love Adonai, Your God, with all your heart, with all your soul,

וּבְכָל מְאֹדֶךָ.

Oo-v'chol m'oh-decha.  
and with all your might .

וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אֶנֶכִּי מְצִוֶּה הַיּוֹם, עַל-לֵבְבְּךָ:

V'hayu ha-d'vareem ha-ayleh asher anochee m'tza-v'cha ha-yome ahl l'va-vecha  
And these words which I command you today shall be upon your heart.

וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבְנֶיךָ, וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ,

V'shee-nantam l'vanecha v'deebarta bam b'shiv-t'cha b'vaytecha  
And teach them diligently to your children  
and you shall discuss them when you sit at home

וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ, וּבְקוּמָךָ.

Oo-v'lech-t'cha va-derech Oo-v'shoch-b'cha oo-v'kumecha.  
And when you travel on the road, and when you lie down and when you rise.

וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ, וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ,

Oo-k'shartam l'ote ahl ya-decha v'ha-yoo l'tota-fote bayn ay-necha.  
And you shall tie them as a sign upon your hand  
and they shall be t'fillin between your eyes.

וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל מְזוֹזֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ:

Oo-ch'tavtam ahl m'zuzote baytecha oo-vish-arecha.  
And you shall write them in mezuzzot on the doorposts of your house  
and on your gateways.*or Reb Zalman's translation*

Love YAH, who is your God,  
in what your heart is, in what you aspire to, in what you have made your own.  
May these values which I connect with your life be implanted in your feelings.  
May they become the norm for your children, addressing them  
in the privacy of your home, on the errands you run.  
May they help you relax and activate you to be productive.  
Display them visibly on your arm, let them focus your attention.  
See them at all transitions at home and in your environment.

## (23) Mee Chamochah: Song

(Exodus 15:10. Melody by Shlomo Carlebach)

מִי כְמוֹכָה בָּאֵלִים יְהוָה, מִי כְמוֹכָה נֹאדָר בְּקוֹדֶשׁ,

Mee cha-mochah ba-ayleem Adonai, mee ka-mochah nedar bakodesh  
Who is like You among the gods that are worshipped?  
Who is like You glorious and holy?

נֹרָא תִהְיֶה עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא. יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

Nora t'heelot osay feleh. Adonai yimloch l'olam va-ed.  
Awesome in splendor, amazing in miracles. The ETERNAL will reign forever and ever!

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה גָּאֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Baruch Atah Adonai ga-al Yisra'ayl.  
O Blessed are You, ADONAI, REDEEMER of Israel



# 9

**אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ**  
**Adonai, s'fatai tif-tach oo-fee yageed t'hilatecha**  
 Open up my lips O Yah that I may sing Your praise

## (1) The Ancestors: Avot v'Imahote

**בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה** (stand up) (bow) (bend knees)

**Baruch (bend knees) Atah (bow) Adonai (stand up)**  
 Blessed (bend knees) are You (bow) ADONAI (stand up)

**אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ,**

**Elohaynu vaylo-hay avo-taynu v'immo-taynu**  
 our God, GOD of our fathers and mothers,

**אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק וְרַבֵּקָה,**

**וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב רַחֵל וְלֵאָה.**

**Elohay Avraham v'Sarah, Elohay Yitzchak v'Rivkah,**  
**vay'lohay Ya'akov, Rachel, v'Lay'ah**

**God of Abraham & Sarah, God of Isaac & Rebecca,**  
**God of Jacob, Rachel & Leah.**

**הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן,**

**Ha-Ayl ha-gadol, ha-gibor v'ha-nora, El Elyon.**

**The God of all that is great, Mighty, and Awesome, the Almighty-Most High.**

**גּוֹמֵל חֲסִדִּים טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,**

**Gomayl chasa-deem toveem, v'konay ha-kol,**

**Who bestows loving goodness. In Whom is everything.**

**וְזוֹכֵר חֲסִדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת, וְיִמְבִּיא גּוֹאֵל לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם**

**V'zochayr chas-day avot v'i-ma-hote oo-mayvee go-ayl livnay v'nay-hem**

**Who is mindful of the kindness of the fathers and mothers**

**and Who brings redemption to their children's children**

**לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה:**

**I'ma-an sh'mo b'ahavah.**

**for the sake of the HOLY NAME with love.**

**מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן:**

**Melech ozayr oo-moshee-ah oo-magayn.**

**SOVEREIGN, HELPER, SAVIOR, and SHIELD:**

**בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה** (stand up) (bow) (bend knees)

**Baruch (bend knees) Atah (bow) Adonai (stand up) ma-gayn Avraham vezrat Sarah.**

**Blessed (bend knees) are You (bow), ADONAI (stand up), SHIELD of Abraham and help of Sarah.**

בעש"ית: זְכַרְנוּ לַחַיִּים, מֶלֶךְ חַיִּץ בְּחַיִּים, וְכַתְּבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים, לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים.  
 מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם וְעִזְרַת וְשָׂרָה:

## (3) Holiness: Kedushah

When praying alone or silently say:

**אַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קְדוֹשׁ וְקְדוּשִׁים בְּכֹל יוֹם יְהִלְלוּךָ, סְלָה.**

**Atah kadosh v'shimcha kadosh oo-k'dosheem b'chol yom y'ha-l'lucha selah.**

**You are holy, Your Name is holy, and holy ones praise You daily. Selah.**

**בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ:**

**Baruch Atah Adonai ha-Ayl hakadosh.**

**Blessed are You ADONAI, the ALMIGHTY, the HOLY ONE**

Bow in three directions (left, forward, right) while taking three steps backward as you leave the Holy Presence of the Shekhinah

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עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְמֵי הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם

Oseh shalom bimro-mav hu ya-aseh shalom

May the ONE who makes peace in the highest places make peace

עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל,

alaynu v'ahl kol Yisra'ayl

for all of us and for all of Israel,

וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן

v'ahl kol yoshvay tayvayl, v'im-roo, Amayn.

and for the whole world, and let us say Amen.

**Learning:** This is the moment to be seated, to meditate, and to receive private answers from God to our prayers. As Reb Zalman said, "You've been talking to God – now sit down and listen for an answer. Too often after the Amidah, just as God is about to speak to us we hang up the phone!"

## (1) Preparing to take Torah from Her Ark

"As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says ADONAI:

"My spirit and the words I have placed in your mouth will not depart from you nor from your children nor from your children's children from this time and forever."

We are the servants of the HOLY BLESSED ONE, whom we revere and whose Torah we revere at all times.

Not upon human beings do we rely, not upon angels do we depend, but upon the GOD of Eternity,

the GOD of Truth, whose Torah is truth, whose prophets spoke truth,

and Who abounds in deeds of goodness and truth.

In this GOD do we put our trust; to whose holy and precious being do we utter praise.

Open our hearts to Your Torah.

Answer our prayers and the prayers of all Your people Israel,

and the prayers of Your people from every nation,

for goodness, for life, and for peace. Amen.

(from the Zohar)

## (2) The Shema

An honoree holds the Torah, faces congregation, and chants alone; congregation repeats first two lines:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְהוָה אֶחָד.

Sh'ma Yisra'ayl Adonai Elohaynu Adonai echad

Hear O Israel, the Eternal is our God, The Eternal is One.

Honoree chants alone; congregation repeats:

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ, גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵנוּ, קְדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ.

Echad Elohaynu gadol Adonaynu kadosh sh'mo.

One is our God, great is our Master, whose Name is One.

Honoree turns to face ark, bends knees, bows, and chants alone:

גְּדָלוֹ לַיהוָה אִתִּי, וְנִרְמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו.

Gadlu l'Adonai itee oo-n'ro-m'mah sh'mo yachdav.

Declare God's greatness with me, and together we will exalt God's Name.

וְלֹא־יָכַל יוֹסֵף לְהִתְאַפֵּק לְכָל הַנֹּצְבִים עָלָיו וַיִּקְרָא הוֹצִיאוּ כָל־אִישׁ מִעָלַי וְלֹא־עָמַד אִישׁ אִתּוֹ בְּהִתְנוּדַע יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו:

Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone withdraw from me!" So there was no one else about when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־קֻלּוֹ בְּבִכּוֹ וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ מִצְרַיִם וַיִּשְׁמַע בֵּית פַּרְעֹה:

His sobs were so loud that the Egyptians could hear, and so the news reached Pharaoh's palace.

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו אֲנִי יוֹסֵף הָעוֹד אֲבִי חַי וְלֹא־יָכַל אָחָיו לַעֲנוֹת אֹתוֹ כִּי נִבְהָלוּ מִפְּנָיו:

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still well?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dumbfounded were they on account of him.

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו גִּשּׁוּ־נָא אֵלַי וַיִּגָּשׁוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי יוֹסֵף אֲחֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־מָכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי מִצְרַיִם:

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come forward to me." And when they came forward, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, he whom you sold into Egypt.

וַעֲתָה | אֲלֵת־עַצְבּוֹ וְאֲלֵי־חַר בְּעֵינֵיכֶם כִּי־מָכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי הִנֵּה כִּי לְמַחֲיָה שָׁלַח־נִי אֱלֹהִים לְפָנֵיכֶם:

Now, do not be distressed or reproach yourselves because you sold me hither; it was to save life that God sent me ahead of you.

וַיִּפֹּל עַל־צוּאָרָי בְּנֵי־מִן־אֶחָיו וַיִּבֶךְ וּבְנֵי־מִן בָּכָה עַל־צוּאָרָיו:

With that he embraced\* his brother Benjamin around the neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck.

וַיִּנָּשֶׁק לְכָל־אֶחָיו וַיִּבֶךְ עֲלֵהֶם וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן דִּבְרוּ אִתּוֹ:

He kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; only then were his brothers able to talk to him.

וְהַקֵּל נִשְׁמָע בֵּית פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר בָּאוּ אֶחָי יוֹסֵף וַיִּיטֹב בְּעֵינֵי פַרְעֹה וּבְעֵינֵי עֲבָדָיו:

The news reached Pharaoh's palace: "Joseph's brothers have come." Pharaoh and his courtiers were pleased.

This torah portion is called Vayigash, which has been translated to 'And he approached', and continues the story of Joseph and his brothers. I am honored to be speaking on this timely, and personally important passage that deals with reconciliation, and, to me, masculinity, embodiment and forgiveness. Before I dive into this parsha, I want to give some context on the story of Joseph and his brothers for those who may not be familiar. Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel is his father's favorite. He's gifted a coat of many colors and has a special connection to dreams where he tells of a future of his brothers bowing to him which angers them and leads them to sell him into slavery. He is imprisoned but is freed and becomes the right hand of the Pharaoh because of his special prophetic dreaming capabilities. (fun fact- all of my experiences of deja vu I can trace back to the exact time I dreamt of the moment.) (bonus fun fact- Bayard's Hebrew name is Yosef/Joseph!)

Back at his home, his brothers lie to their father, telling him Joseph's dead, and later a famine (that Joseph foretold), drives the brothers to Egypt to buy food. When in Egypt, Joseph recognizes his brother but they don't recognize him. He puts them through a series of tests including jailing them, planting a silver cup on his younger brother, Benjamin, who he will take as a slave, but his brother, Judah, pleads for Joseph to take him as a slave in place of his father's other favorite child Benjamin. This is where my parsha begins, when Joseph is overcome with emotion and sees an act of selflessness on the part of his brothers.

How do we forgive those who have done us harm? How do we break through the shame of our wrongdoing?

To me, the answer lies in Joseph's open hearted breaking down. As the line reads, "His sobs were so loud that the Egyptians could hear, and so the news reached Pharaoh's palace." (45:2) This act of breaking open the heart allows for us to break through the guises/hats/facades we wear everyday. Rabbi Shefa Gold shares "These are the tears of profound relief and of love unbound." I was drawn to this line when I first read through this parsha and frankly, taken aback and unmoored. That kind of depth of feeling and emotion is not how I was taught to be man, in fact, when I was in 5th grade, I forced myself to stop crying and feeling so deeply because I had learned through our society that that is not manly and what a man is supposed to do. It took me over a decade to cry again and still is very difficult. Black feminist writer bell hooks' shares insight into the making of contemporary masculinity in her book, "All About Love":

The first act of violence that patriarchy demands of males is not violence toward women. Instead patriarchy demands of all males that they engage in acts of psychic self-mutilation, that they kill off the emotional parts of themselves. If an individual is not successful in emotionally crippling himself, he can count on patriarchal men to enact rituals of power that will assault his self-esteem.

She goes on to share that this first violence of burying our feelings serves the purpose of being able to fight in wars and be productive in capitalist society. I think back on Joseph's sobs in stark contrast to our contemporary performance of masculinity. I believe there is power and such vitality to being able to break the heart open to profoundly feel which can lead to authentic forms of forgiveness, care and a masculinity that is less harmful to all. 13th century Jewish scholar Radak has commented/translated that Joseph's sobs were so loud that the news of his crying spread like wildfire which quickly reached the Pharaoh. I think of this image in a contemporary sense- Joseph's sobs, or generally speaking our feelings and actions that come from a full and open heart are infectious in the best way. His (and all our) sobs are a lighthouse, a call, a clearing of the old forest and ways to allow for the new growth and ways to emerge. For me, this reconnection to a full emotional landscape and full heart (or more simply put- allowing myself to cry) is a part of my journey in modeling the open, feeling, forgiving and loving masculinity I hope to model for and impart on my son, Bayard. What kinds of men can be nurtured when men are allowed to feel all their feels? I want to help plant those new seeds of love unbound.

After Joseph removes his emotional mask, he announces to his brothers that it is actually him, their brother who is still alive and facing them. While his brothers are too stunned to speak, he asks them to come closer and continues to share, "I am your brother Joseph, he whom you sold into Egypt. Now, do not be distressed or reproach yourselves because you sold me hither; it was to save life that God sent me ahead of you." There are two elements to this incredible moment that I'd like to highlight - the act of coming closer (this line is where the name of this entire Parsha comes from) and divine understanding. While there is historic Midrash that asserts Joseph drew his brothers near to share with them the physical marking of his connection to them in the form of a circumcision, I prefer the more contemporary commentary by Rabbi Elliot Kukla who states, "The Torah is teaching us that to move in the direction of repairing relationships is literally to move toward one another. Even if we are unable to fully meet, to fully fix what's broken, we can begin to make a difference by stepping forward." This, too, is a lesson in embodiment and returning to the body. Have you ever noticed the body language of two people in an argument? This is one of my wife Naima's and my favorite parts of watching reality tv shows- studying the body language of people who for tv ratings are often put in situations where they enact harm on each other. Like those on screen, I, too, have physical expressions that I instinctively do when arguing with someone I care about- I move away from them. It often takes the form of one or a

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combination of these: sitting further away, leaning away, crossing arms, or disengaging eye contact. For me, during these emotionally charged times, the simple act (after some reconnecting with breath/body) of closing any of these distances helps the process towards repair. This parsha reminds us of the great power of bodily wisdom as a tool for repair. Drawing from teachings of black feminists, we know that the personal is political. Rabbi Kukla, too, continues to expand their commentary from the interpersonal to the political,

Vayigash offers a Jewish approach to global justice work—let us draw near. The divide of inequality between the Global North and the Global South may not be bridged in our lifetimes, but we can draw nearer to the people and the issues most impacted by global poverty and racism. We can draw near by educating ourselves, by being involved in advocacy efforts, and by supporting grassroots community development projects.

One of my favorite pillars of Judaism is Tikkun Olam, repairing the world. Through the story of Joseph, we are called to repair in our personal lives and in the politics of the world. Drawing near to repair the harm of colonization, imperialism, racism, sexism, capitalism, transphobia, ableism, homophobia, xenophobia, and the list goes on. We must lean in, draw closer, feel deeply and take the steps toward repair.

The second part of this moment that I want to highlight is when Joseph says the circumstances of his enslavement was a divine intervention. This act does two things, removes blame from his brothers with whom he wants to reconcile and forgive as well as shifts the perspective of hardship to a lifesaving blessing. Can you recall a time when a hardship upon review was a blessing? For Rabbi Shefa Gold, she reminds us of how human this experience is,

On some days we acknowledge the deep woundings that we have suffered; we mourn the loss of innocence; we confront the face of evil. And on some days we absolutely know that those very same wounds are the source of our compassion and our power; we celebrate the essential rightness of the path of Life in all its turnings, understanding that what feels like evil is an aspect of the goading force that unfolds the soul to its true breadth.

This cuts to my heart as an adoptee. For those who don't know, I was adopted at birth. Adoption is traumatic and this is often overlooked in the name of the blessing. Child adoptees can often be lumped into two categories- those who acknowledge the deep wounds and those who don't. I grew up as the latter, purely focused on the blessing of my adoption (but always listening to heart wrenching emo music.) For me the journey to face the wounds of adoption has led to the passion I have for my career. I am a community organizer and use the pain of my personal and historic (especially for Black folks) family separation to fight for policies that dismantle this practice. These policies include housing justice, livable wages, access to paid leave, healthcare for all, demilitarization, and just immigration practices that all help people decide to relinquish children out of economic necessity. This paradox is the divine. In turn, I work with community members to remove the blame of their circumstances (from the individual to the economic/political systems) which keeps people separated and inert. After transforming our hurt into opportunity by seeing the bigger picture, we are able to take action.

Later in the parsha, Joseph "kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; only then were his brothers able to talk to him," when the reconciliation was completed. We are taught that reconciliation can happen when these three things occur- full embodiment of feelings and vulnerability (cracking open the heart), drawing near/closing the distance and shifting perspective with fate. Our world is full of harm, from the ways we are taught to enact gender to the ways families are separated/torn apart. Right now, I am called to work towards Tikkun Olam, by continuing my journey to fully embody the spectrum of emotions, leaning into the difficult, and accessing the power to continue knowing my journey is divine.



**(6) Hagbahah & G'leela:****הַגְּבָהָה וְגִלְיָלָה**

*Torah is raised. She is then dressed with Her sash and covered with Her mantle*

**(7) Raising the Torah**

*Please stand*

*Torah is raised. Some hold tzitzit in right hand and point toward Torah.*

*Congregation chants together as one:*

**זֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׂם מֹשֶׁה לְפָנַי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
עַל פִּי יְהוָה בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה:**

**V'zot hatorah asher sam Moshe lifnay b'nai Yisra'ayl ahl pee Adonai b'yad Moshe.**

And this is the Torah which Moses set before the Children of Israel,  
through the word of God, by the hand of Moses.

**עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ, וְתוֹמְכֵיהָ מְאֹשָׁר:**

**Aytz chayeem hee lama-chazee-keem bah, v'toe-m'che-ha m'ooshar**

She is a tree of life to those who hold fast to Her, and all Her supporters are happy.

**דְּרָכֶיהָ דְּרָכֵי נֹעַם, וְכָל נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם:**

**D'ra-che-ha darchay no-am v'chol n'teevo-teh-ha shalom**

Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all Her paths are peace.

**26. Alaynu****(1) Reb Zalman's Universal Opening**

*for Hebrew & English chanting*

**עֲלִינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל,**

**Alaynu l'shabay'ach la-adon hakol**

We rise to praise You SOURCE OF ALL.

**לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרָאשִׁית,**

**la-tate g'doolah l'yo-tzayr b'raysheet**

Your generous work as CREATOR OF ALL

**שְׁלוֹ עָשָׂנוּ עִם גּוֹי הָאֲרָצוֹת**

**Shelo asanu im goy-yay ha-aratzot,**

You made us one with all of Life.

**וְלוֹ שָׁמְנוּ עִם מְשֻׁפְּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה**

**v'lo sa-manu im mish-p'chote ha-adamah.**

You helped us to share with all humankind

**שְׁלוֹ שָׂם חֶלְקֵנוּ עִמָּהֶם,**

**Shelo som chel-kaynu ee-mahem,**

You linked our fate with all that lives

**וְגַרְלָנוּ עִם כָּל הָעוֹלָם**

**v'go-ra-laynu im kol ha-olam**

and made our portion with all in the world

*or,*

*Reader chants, congregation repeats,*

Let us adore —————▶ the EVER-LIVING GOD  
and render praise —————▶ unto the ONE,  
who spread out the heavens —▶ and established the earth,  
whose glory —————▶ is revealed in the heavens above,  
and whose greatness...

*Reader and congregation chant together:*

...is imminent within this world. You are our God. There is nothing else

## 27. Mourner's Kaddish

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֶלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרְעוּתָהּ,

Yit-ga-dal v-yit-ka-dash sh'may rabba, b'alma dee v'ra chir-ootay

Magnified and sanctified be God's great Name in the world created according to Divine Will.

וְיִמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּתֵיכּוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכּוֹן

V'yam-leech mal-chu-tay, b'cha-yay-chone oo-v'yomay-chone

And may the HOLY ONE rule the Kingdom in your lifetime and in your days

וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. בְּעֶגְלָא וּבְזִמָּן קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן

Oo-v'cha-yay de-chol bayt Yisrael ba-agala oo-viz-man kareev v'im-roo, Amayn.

And in the lifetime of the entire house of Israel, speedily and in the near future, and let us say Amen.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵיָא

Y'hay sh'may rabba miva-rach l'alam ool-al-may al-maya.

May God's great Name be blessed forever and for all eternity.

יְתִבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא

Yitba-rach v'yishta-bach v'yitpa-ar v'yitro-mam v'yitna-say,

Blessed and praised, glorified, exalted, and uplifted,

וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלָּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא

v'yit-hadar v'yit-aleh v'yitha-lall sh'may d'k-oo-d'sha b'reech-hu.

be the Name of the blessed HOLY ONE

לְעֵלָא מִן כָּל בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא, תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא

Le-ayla min kol bir-chata v'shee-rata toosh-b'chata

honored, elevated, and extolled above all the blessings, hymns, praises

וּנְחֻמָּתָא, דְּאָמִירָן בְּעֶלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן

V'neh-che-mata da-amee-ran b'alma ve-imru, Amayn.

and consolations which we utter in the world. And let us say Amen.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן

Y'hay sh'lama rabba min sh'maya v'cha-yeem alaynu v'al kol Yisra'ayl v'im-roo, Amayn.

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

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל,

Oseh shalom bimro-mav hoo ya-aseh shalom alaynu v'al kol Yisra'ayl

May the ONE who makes peace in the heavens make peace for all of us, and for all of Israel,

וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן

v'ahl kol yoshvay tayvayl, v'im-roo, Amayn.

and for the whole world, and let us say Amen.

## (12) Kiddush for Shabbat Day

(Exodus 31:16)

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת,

V'shamru v'nay Yisra'ayl et ha-Shabbat

And the children of Israel shall preserve the Sabbath

לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרוֹתָם בְּרִית עוֹלָם.

La-ah-sote et ha-Shabbat l'doro-tam b'reet olam.

to maintain the Sabbath for their generations as an everlasting covenant.

בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹת הִיא לְעוֹלָם,

Bay-nee oo-vayn b'nay Yisrael ote hee l'olam.

Between Me and the children of Israel, it is a sign for eternity

כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ,

Kee shay-shet yameem asah Adonai et hashamayim v'et ha-aretz

that in six days ADONAI made the heavens and the earth,

וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנָּפֶשׁ.

Oo-va-yom hashvee-ee Shavat vayee-nafash....

and on the seventh day GOD abstained from work and rested....

...עַל כֵּן בֵּרַךְ יְהוָה אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְּשֶׁהוּ.

Ahl kayn bay-rach Adonai et yom ha-Shabbat va-y'ka-d'shayhu

Therefore ADONAI blessed the day of Shabbat and made it holy.

*Raise your cup high*

סַבְּרֵי חֲבֵרִי:

Savree Cha-vay-rye

Attention friends!

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam boray p'ree ha-gafen.

Blessed are You, ADONAI our GOD, SOURCE of All, CREATOR of the fruit of the vine.

## (4) B'rich Rachamana

Chant as a Round in Hebrew or Hebrew & English

(melody by Jack Kessler or Shefa Gold. Talmud)

Learning: The Talmud (Berachot 40b) teaches, Benjamin the Shepherd made a sandwich and said, Blessed be the Master of this bread, and Rab said that he had performed his obligation. But Rab has laid down that any benediction in which God's name is not mentioned is no benediction? We must suppose he said, Blessed be the All-Merciful, the Master of this bread.

בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא מַלְכָּא דְעֵלְמָא מְרִיָּה דְהַאי פִּיתָא

Brich Rachamana, Malka D'alma Ma-ray d'hai pita!

You are the Source of life for all that is and Your blessing flows through me