

Integral Kabbalah V
Morning Practice

שחרית
SHAKHARIT



The Jewish Path of Presence

|

Elements

In this session, we will look at the basic elements of
Shakharit and *davening* in general...

Basic Elements

1. Form: sections and meanings
2. Skills: interplay between *kahal* (group) and *shliakh tzibur* (leader)
3. Music: traditional *nusakh* (melodic flavor) and newer melodies

Form

Shakharit is composed of four sections:

Birkhot HaShakhar – Morning Blessings

Pesukei D’Zimra – Verses of Praise

Kriyat Sh’ma Uverrakhteiah – Reciting *Sh’ma* and Her Blessings

Amidah – “Standing” Prayer

This is followed by some concluding prayers, recitations and hymns. These four sections have come to be associated in Kabbalah and Hasidic teaching with the “Four Worlds” and the four letters of the Name...

Atzeilut – World of Origination
Amidah



B'riyah – World of Creation
Sh'ma



Yetzirah – World of Formation
Pesukei D'Zimra



Assiyah – World of Action
Birkhot HaShakhar



However, all four sections were not created equal...

The two main pillars of Jewish liturgy are the *Sh'ma* and the *Amidah*:

The *Amidah* is also called *HaTefilah*, “The Prayer,” because it is the central prayer of the tradition; all other prayers frame and point to this central prayer.

It is also called the *Shemonei Esrei*, which simply means “eighteen,” since there were originally eighteen blessings. Eventually, a nineteenth “blessing” was added in response to persecutions of Jews by Roman pagans, and eventually Christians.

The *Amidah*'s blessings further break down into three categories:

Praise, Petition, and Gratitude

Let's review these three categories that we already looked at in the introductory session:

“Praise” is an expression of awe; it is bringing oneself into sensitivity to the miracle of the moment. For example:

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם בְּרוּךְ הוּא

Barukh She'Amar v'hayah ha'olam, Barukh Hu!

Blessed is the One who “speaks” the world in being; Blessed is the One!

“Petition” means asking God to bring something about. On the surface, this may seem like a primitive attempt to control our experience...

But keeping in mind the deeper meaning of prayer as Presence, the function of “petitioning” is actually to *admit* and *surrender* our desires. Asking God for some fulfilment in a *prayerful* way is an admission of desire, an admission that we are not in control, and ultimately a surrender to the greater “Will” of Reality...

Here is an example:

וְאֲנִי תַפְלִיתִי-לָךְ יְהוָה יֵת רָצוֹן אֱלֹהִים בְּרַב־חַסְדְּךָ עֲנֵנִי בְּאֵמֶת יִשְׁעֶךָ

Va'ani tefilati l'kha Adonai eit ratzon, Elohim b'rov Hasdekha,

Aneini (aneini) b'emet yishekha

May my prayer to You, Hashem, be at a favorable time; Elohim, in the abundance of Your Kindness answer me with the truth of Your Salvation!

“Gratitude” means receiving the gifts that are already being bestowed upon us, rather than taking them for granted. Gratitude is arriving in this moment, rather than reaching for something not present...

Here is an example:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה וּבָרָא בּוֹ נְקָבִים וְנְקָבִים חִלּוּלִים חִלּוּלִים
(אָמֵן – Cong.)

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam, asher yatzar et ha'adam
b'hokhmah, uvara vo n'kavim n'kavim, halulim halulim. (Cong. – *Amein*)

*Blessed are You, Hashem, our Divinity, Sovereign of the Universe, who forms us
with **Wisdom**, and creates within us many openings and passages.*

שְׁמַע
SH'MA

The *Sh'ma* is not really a prayer; technically, it is more of an affirmation,
consisting of a number of Torah passages. The core of the *Sh'ma* consists of the
first six words, which also form the foundation of our practice:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד
Sh'ma Yisra'el Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Ekhad!
Listen, Israel: Existence Itself is our God – Existence is One!

Equally important are the next ten words:

וְאַהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ.

*V'ahavta et Adonai Elohekha, b'khol l'avkha
uv'khol nafsh'kha, uv'khol m'odekha*

*You shall love Hashem your Divinity with all your heart,
all your soul and all your might!*

בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ

In our practice, these three types of love correspond to the Three Portals –
heart, body, and awareness of awareness itself...

All of this and much more is covered in the Level II Integral Kabbalah course, to which you now have access when you log into TorahOfAwakening.com. If you are new, it would be good to go through this course within the next couple weeks, together with this course.

Let me know if you need help accessing it!

The remaining two sections are:

Birkhot HaShakhar – Morning Blessings

Pesukei D’Zimra – Verses of Praise

The Morning Blessings are a collection of *brakhot* which also reflect the three types of prayer mentioned earlier, though their emphasis is on gratitude. The normative practice is to chant these blessings on one’s own before gathering together with a *minyan* for prayers, and then to respond “Amen” when the *shliakh tzibur* chants them again...

Pesukei D’Zimra consists mostly of a collection of psalms which serve as an introduction to the *Sh’ma* and the *Amidah*.

Nowadays, since *Pesukei D’Zimra* has grown so much over the centuries, it can be difficult to function as a true introduction. Instead, it is common to experience both *Birkhot HaShakhar* and *Pesukei D’Zimra* as little more than a rushed-through obligation...

In our practice, we will combine the key elements of *Birkhot HaShakhar* and *Pesukei D’Zimra* with the Thirty-Two Paths, so that all the blessings and verses will invoke each of the thirty-two qualities of Presence associated with the symbols of the letters and *sefirot*...

In this way, the practice can better serve its function. We will still have all the major elements of the traditional practice, but we will greatly reduce the sheer volume of words, so as to fully *daven* in a way that is transformative, accessible and un-rushed...

You can get the full depth of these connections, as well as instructions in the movements and visualizations, in the Level III and Level IV courses, which you can learn after the Level II *Sh’ma* course, if you choose to stay within the Mastering Presence group...

Skills

There are four basic (external) skills involved in *davening*:

1. Chanting together (this is sometimes done in unison, sometimes more chaotically)
2. Chanting silently
3. Leader leading the group with solo melodies, as well as the group responding to the leader (*shliakh tzibur* – prayer leader, or *hazan* – prayer singer).
4. Singing melodies together

(The internal skills are the Seven Keys – Meditation, Prayer, Affirmation, Movement, Intention, Concentration and Visualization. We will be practicing all of these as well.)

The *nusakh* we will use for weekday *Shakharit* is an Ashkenazic version, based on the major pentatonic scale, with an occasional added 4th, causing the 3rd to sound like a 1, which temporarily creates a Phrygian sound rather than major pentatonic...

Let's try it!

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם בְּרוּךְ הוּא
בְּרוּךְ עוֹשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית
בְּרוּךְ אוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֵׂה
בְּרוּךְ גּוֹזֵר וּמְקַיֵּם
בְּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל-הָאָרֶץ
בְּרוּךְ מְרַחֵם עַל-הַבְּרִיּוֹת
בְּרוּךְ מְשַׁלֵּם שְׂכָר טוֹב לִירְאָיו
בְּרוּךְ חַי לְעַד וְקַיֵּם לְנֶצַח
בְּרוּךְ פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל
בְּרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ

Barukh She'Amar v'hayah ha'olam, Barukh Hu!
Barukh oseh vereisheet, Barukh omer v'oseh, Barukh gozer um'kayem
Barukh m'rakhem al ha'aretz, Barukh m'rakhem al ha'briyot
Barukh Hai la'ad v'kayam lanetzakh
Barukh m'shalem sakhar tov li're'av, Barukh podeh umatzil, Barukh Sh'mo!

*Blessed is the One who "speaks" the world in being; Blessed is the One!
Blessed is Maker of creation; Blessed is the "Speaker" and "Doer"
Blessed is the Decreeer and the Fulfiller; Blessed is the Compassionate One upon
all on the earth; Blessed is the Compassionate One upon all on the
the creatures; Blessed is the Completer of those with Awe; Blessed is the Eternal
Source of Life; blessed is the Redeemer and Resuer;
Blessed is The Name!*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הָאֵל הָאֵב הָרַחֲמָן הַמְהִלָּל בְּפִי עַמּוֹ
 מְשַׁבַּח וּמְפָאֵר בְּלִשׁוֹן חֲסִידָיו וְעַבְדָּיו וּבְשִׁירֵי דָוִד עַבְדְּךָ
 נְהַלְלֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּשִׁבְחוֹת וּבְזִמְרוֹת
 נִגְדָּלְךָ וְנִשְׁבַּחְךָ וְנִפְאֶרְךָ וְנִזְכִּיר שְׁמֶךָ וְנִמְלִיכֶךָ מִלְּכֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
Hazzan – יְחִיד חַי הָעוֹלָמִים מֶלֶךְ מְשַׁבַּח וּמְפָאֵר עַד־עַד שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל.
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ מְהִלָּל בְּתִשְׁבָּחוֹת
 (Cong. – אָמֵן)

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam, Ha'El,
 Ha'Av HaRakhaman, HaM'hulal b'fei amo, m'shubakh um'fo'ar
 bil'shon hasidav v'avadav, uv'shrei David avdekha.
 N'halelkha Adonai Eloheinu bishvakhot uvizmoriot,
 N'gadelkha u'n'shabehakha, u'n'fa'erkha v'nazkir shimkha,
 v'namlikhekha, Malkeinu Eloheinu!
Hazzan – Yahid, Hey HaOlamim, Melekh m'shubakh u'm'fo'ar adei ad Sh'mo
 Gadol. Barukh Atah Adonai, Melekh m'hulal batishbakhot!
 (Cong. – *Amein*)

*Blessed are You, Hashem, our Divinity, Sovereign of the Universe, the Divine, the
 merciful parent, Who is praised by the mouths of Your people, praised and
 glorified by the tongue of Your devoted ones, and servants, and through the songs
 of David Your servant.*

*We will extoll You, Hashem our Divinity, with praises and psalms;
 we will exalt, praise, and glorify You;*

We will chant Your Name, and proclaim You—our Sovereign, our God.

Hazzan – *The One Oneness, Life of All Worlds, Sovereign,
 praised is Your Eternal and Great Name.*

Blessed are You, Hashem, Sovereign, extolled with praises.

Yigdal:

יְגַדֵּל אֱלֹהִים חַי וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, נִמְצָא וְאֵין עֵת אֶל מְצִיאֹתוֹ
אֶחָד וְאֵין יְחִיד כְּיַחֲדוֹ, נֶעְלָם וְגַם אֵין סוּף לְאַחֲדוֹתוֹ

Yigdal Elohim Hai v'yishtabakh
Nimtza v'ayn eit el mitziyuto
Ekhad v'ayn yakhid k'Yikhudo
Nelam V'gam Ayn Sof l'Akhduto

*Exalted is the Living Divine and praised
It is Existence Itself, and there is no time to Its Existence
It is One, and there is no unity like Its Oneness
Hidden and Infinite is Its Oneness!*