

As soon as the Torah scroll is placed on [the reading desk] the whole congregation below should assume an attitude of awe and fear, of trembling and quaking, as though they were at that moment standing at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, and should pay attention and listen carefully; for it is not permitted then to open one's mouth, even for discussing the Torah, still less other subjects. All must be in awe and fear, as though they were speechless, as it is written: "And when he opened it, all the people stood up," and also, "And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Torah scroll" (Nehemiah 8:5 and 8:3). Rabbi Shimon said: "When the Torah scroll is taken out to be read before the congregation, the heavenly gates of mercy are opened and the attribute of love is stirred up, and each one should then recite the following prayer: "Ruler of the universe, praised be Your name and Your sovereignty. . . ."

—THE ZOHAR

ON SHABBAT, CONTINUE AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE.

We recite three times:

ADONAI, ADONAI, God merciful and compassionate, patient, abounding in love and faithfulness, assuring love for thousands of generations, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and granting pardon.

Adonai, Adonai, El rahum v'hannun, erekh appayim v'rav hesed ve-emet. Notzeir hesed la-alafim, nosei avon va-fesha v'hatta-ah v'nakkeih.

PRIVATE MEDITATION

Avinu Malkeinu, Master of peace, help us and strengthen us so that we always strive for peace. May there be harmony among all people, their companions, and friends. May there be no discord among the members of my family. You who establish peace above, extend peace upon us and the whole world. May we draw close to You and Your Torah in truth and may we all be bound together, carrying out Your will wholeheartedly. Master of peace, bless us with peace. Amen.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, ADONAI, my rock and my redeemer.

Some recite the following three times:

May this be an auspicious time, ADONAI, for my prayer. God, in Your abundant mercy, answer me with Your faithful deliverance.

Va-ani t'fillati l'kha, Adonai, eit ratzon.

Elohim b'rov hasdekha, aneini be-emet yish-ekha.

ON SHABBAT, THE FOLLOWING MEDITATION IS RECITED:

Ruler of the universe, praised be Your name and Your sovereignty. May Your favor abide with Your people Israel forever, and may Your liberating power be revealed to them in Your sanctuary. Extend to us the goodness of Your light and with compassion accept our prayers. May it be Your will to grant us long life and well-being; may I be counted among the righteous, and in Your compassion protect me, my family, and all the people Israel. You are the One who nourishes and sustains all life. You rule over all—even kings—for true sovereignty is Yours. I am a servant of the Holy One, whom I revere and whose precious Torah I revere in every time and place. Not on