

מלכויות

The ark is opened.

עֲלִינוּ לְשֹׁבַח לְאֲדֹנָי הַכֹּל,
לְתֵת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרָאשִׁית,
שֶׁלֹּא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגִוֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת,
וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה,
שֶׁלֹּא שָׁם חִלְקֵנוּ כָּהֶם,
וְגִרְלָנוּ כְּכֹל-הַמוֹנֵם.
וְאַנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים,
לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ, מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים,
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם וְיִסַּד אֶרֶץ,
וּמוֹשֵׁב יָקָרוֹ בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל,
וּשְׂכִינֵת עֶזוֹ בְּגִבְהֵי מְרוֹמִים,
הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד.
אִמֵּת מִלְּכָנוּ אָפֶס זִוְלָתוֹ,
כִּכְתוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ:
וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם וְהַשַּׁבָּת אֶל-לִבְבָּהּ,
כִּי יִהְיֶה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל
וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת, אֵין עוֹד.

The ark is closed.

Ha-Din, the Day of Judgment, when God is said to ascend the throne of judgment. The Malkhuyot section concludes with the fourth *b'rakhah* on the holiness of Rosh Hashanah, to which is added the phrase *melekh al kol ha-aretz*, "ruler of all the earth." These words join the standard holy day Amidah *b'rakhah* that describes God as sanctifying the people Israel and the holy day—in this case specified as *Yom Ha-zikkaron*, the Day of Remembrance.

IT IS FOR US עֲלִינוּ. Aleinu, originally written for the Rosh Hashanah service, is one of the best-known and oft-repeated prayers. Its central theme is a proclamation of God's sovereignty, an appropriate introduction to this section. It is traditionally attributed to Rav, a 3rd-century rabbi. Although this may not be historically accurate, it is certainly one of the oldest prayers.

AND SO WE BOW וְאַנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים. Throughout the year, we bow at the waist when praying this line. On Rosh Hashanah, it is customary for the prayer leader—and in many communities, members of the congregation as well—to prostrate themselves entirely. The Torah contains several references to "falling on the face" in supplicatory prayer, most often in connection with a request for forgiveness. Prostration commonly accompanied prayer in the Temple and in the early synagogue, but it was de-emphasized in order to distinguish Judaism from its sister religions, and was retained only on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Here, we prostrate ourselves as an expression of our humility and as an acknowledgment of God's absolute power and sovereignty. In some congregations two people help the prayer leader stand up while keeping their feet together, as the angels are said to do.

MALKHUYOT. The first of the special sections of Musaf is entitled Malkhuyot—prayers and biblical verses celebrating God's sovereignty. All appellations of God are metaphors, but the image of God as sovereign had particular power for medieval and rabbinic Judaism. (The Torah has few references to God as sovereign, but there are many in prophetic writings and in Psalms.) It represents a rejection of earthly authority as the arbiter of ultimate values. Additionally, the metaphor of God as sovereign expresses the common human experience of a transcendent power both glorious and terrifying, as well as the corresponding sense of vulnerability and dependence evoked by this image. Lastly, biblical narratives depict the earthly sovereign as functioning as a judge, so by employing the metaphor of sovereignty in reference to God we focus on Rosh Hashanah as Yom