

The Amidah

An Introduction to the Amidah

The Amidah is the central prayer of all four services: shacharit (morning), mincha (afternoon), maariv (evening), and mussaf (additional) on the Sabbath. The word Amidah literally means standing, because it is recited while standing. It is also known as Shemoneh Esrei, meaning eighteen, because it originally consisted of eighteen blessings, and as prayer because it is the most important Hebrew prayer. The should try to pray three times a day, which was established by Ezra and codified in the Talmud (Berakhot 26b), is fulfilled by reciting the Amidah.

Question: Every Hebrew recites the same Amidah, yet every human being needs different things from god, so we do we all recite the same Amidah?

Answer: The Amidah was composed enormously powerful, that it becomes everyone's personal prayer. One can want wealth, the Amidah will focus on that. One can want health, it will focus on that. That's the power of the Amidah.

One should stand with one's feet together while reciting the Amidah as a show of respect for God. If one is unable to stand such as in a car or perhaps ill, you may sit. The rabbis add that this pose mirrors the vision of angels that Ezekiel had in which the feet of the angels appeared as one (Ezekiel 1:7). The custom is to face the direction of Israel,(from the USA it's East, the rest do the math) and if one is in Israel, to turn to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. Because all prayers head tours the Temple Mount and then rise up. This also shows respect for the Temples, which were central to Hebrew life, and reminds one that the synagogue was established to try to fill the gap in Hebrew life left by the Temple's' destruction. In many synagogues in the west, the ark is on the eastern wall of the synagogue for this reason.

Here is where the prayer begins:

To begin: take three steps backward, then three steps forward. Remain standing with the feet together while reciting Shemoneh Esrei. It should be recited with quiet devotion and without interruption.

Recite: When I call out the Name of Yahweh, (you can ascribe greatness to our Yahweh.here)

My EloHim/ Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise.

1. THE GOD OF HISTORY:

Blessed are You, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, the great, mighty and revered God, the Most High God who bestows loving kindnesses, the creator of all things, who remembers the good deeds of the patriarchs and in love will bring a redeemer to their children's children for his name's sake. O king, helper, savior and shield. Bend the knees at 'Blessed;' bow at 'You;' straighten at 'Lord' Blessed are You, O Lord, the shield of Abraham. Bend the knees at 'Blessed;' bow at 'You;' straighten at 'Lord'

2. THE GOD OF NATURE:

You, O Lord, are mighty forever, You revive the dead, You have the power to save. * You sustain the living with loving kindnesses, You revive the dead with great mercy, You support the falling, heal the sick, set free the bound and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, O doer of mighty acts? Who resembles You, a king who puts to death and restores to life, and causes salvation to flourish? And You are certain to revive the dead.

Blessed are You, O Lord, who revives the dead.

** From the end of Sukkot until the eve
of Passover, insert:
You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.*

3. SANCTIFICATION OF GOD:

If you are in a group of 10 or more recite:

[Reader] We will sanctify Your name in this world just as it is sanctified in the highest heavens, as it is written by Your prophet: "And they call out to one another and say:

[Cong.] 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.'" [Isa. 6:3]

[Reader] Those facing them praise God saying:

[Cong.] "Blessed be the Presence of the LORD in his place." [Ezek. 3:12]

[Reader] And in Your Holy Words it is written, saying,

[Cong.] "The LORD reigns forever, Your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah." [Ps. 146:10]

[Reader] Throughout all generations we will declare Your greatness, and to all eternity we will proclaim your holiness. Your praise, O our God, shall never depart from our mouth, for You are a great and holy God and King. Blessed are You, O Lord, the holy God. You are holy, and Your name is holy, and holy beings praise You daily. (Selah.) Blessed are You, O Lord, the holy God.

By Yourself Recite

You are holy and Your name is holy and holy beings praise You every day forever.

4. PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING:

You favor men with knowledge, and teach mortals understanding.
O favor us with the knowledge,
the understanding and the insight that come from You.
Blessed are You, O Lord, the gracious giver of knowledge.

5. FOR REPENTANCE:

Bring us back, O our father, to Your Instruction;
draw us near, O our King, to Your service;
and cause us to return to You in perfect repentance.
Blessed are You, O Lord, who delights in repentance.

6. FOR FORGIVENESS:

Forgive us, O our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, O our King, for
we have transgressed; for You pardon and forgive.
Blessed are You, O Lord, who is merciful and always ready to forgive.

7. FOR DELIVERANCE FROM AFFLICTION:

Look upon our affliction and plead our cause,
and redeem us speedily for Your name's sake,
for You are a mighty redeemer.
Blessed are You, O Lord, the redeemer of Israel.

8. FOR HEALING:

Heal us, O Lord, and we will be healed;
save us and we will be saved, for You are our praise.

O grant a perfect healing to all our ailments, for You, almighty King, are a faithful and merciful healer. Blessed are You, O Lord, the healer of the sick of his people Israel.

** At this point, one may interject a prayer for one who is ill:*

May it be Your will, Hashem my G-d, and the G-d of my forefathers, that You quickly send a complete recovery from heaven, spiritual healing and physical healing to the patient (name) son/daughter of (mother's name) among the other patients of Israel.

9. FOR DELIVERANCE FROM WANT:

Bless this year for us, O Lord our God,
together with all the varieties of its produce, for our welfare.
Bestow ([from the 15th of Nissan insert:] dew and rain for) a blessing upon
the face of the earth. O satisfy us with Your goodness, and bless our year
like the best of years.
Blessed are You, O Lord, who blesses the years.

10. FOR GATHERING OF EXILES:

Sound the great shofar for our freedom,
raise the ensign to gather our exiles,
and gather us from the four corners of the earth.
Blessed are You, O Lord, who gathers the dispersed of his people Israel.

11. FOR THE RIGHTEOUS REIGN OF GOD:

Restore our judges as in former times,
and our counselors as at the beginning; and remove from us sorrow and
sighing. Reign over us, You alone, O Lord, with lovingkindness and
compassion, and clear us in judgment. Blessed are You, O Lord, the King
who loves righteousness and justice.

12. FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF APOSTATES AND THE ENEMIES OF GOD:

Let there be no hope for slanderers, and let all wickedness perish in an instant. May all Your enemies quickly be cut down, and may You soon in our day uproot, crush, cast down and humble the dominion of arrogance.

Blessed are You, O Lord, who smashes enemies and humbles the arrogant.

13. FOR THE RIGHTEOUS AND PROSELYTES:

May Your compassion be stirred, O Lord our God, towards the righteous, the pious, the elders of Your people the house of Israel, the remnant of their scholars, towards proselytes, and towards us also. Grant a good reward to all who truly trust in Your name. Set our lot with them forever so that we may never be put to shame, for we have put our trust in You. Blessed are You, O Lord, the support and stay of the righteous.

14. FOR THE REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM:

Return in mercy to Jerusalem Your city, and dwell in it as You have promised. Rebuild it soon in our day as an eternal structure, and quickly set up in it the throne of David.

Blessed are You, O Lord, who rebuilds Jerusalem.

15. FOR THE MESSIANIC KING:

Speedily cause the offspring of Your servant David to flourish, and let him be exalted by Your saving power, for we wait all day long for Your salvation.

Blessed are You, O Lord, who causes salvation to flourish.

16. FOR THE ANSWERING OF PRAYER:

Hear our voice, O Lord our God; spare us and have pity on us.
Accept our prayer in mercy and with favor,
for You are a God who hears prayers and supplications.
O our King, do not turn us away from Your presence empty-handed,
for You hear the prayers of Your people Israel with compassion.
Blessed are You, O Lord, who hears prayer.

17. FOR RESTORATION OF TEMPLE SERVICE:

Be pleased, O Lord our God, with Your people Israel and with their prayers.
Restore the service to the inner sanctuary of Your Temple,
and receive in love and with favor both the fire-offerings of Israel and their
prayers. May the worship of Your people Israel always be acceptable to
You. And let our eyes behold Your return in mercy to Zion.
Blessed are You, O Lord, who restores his divine presence to Zion.

18. THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S UNFAILING MERCIES:

We give thanks to You that You are the Lord our God
and the God of our fathers forever and ever.
Through every generation You have been the rock of our lives, the shield
of our salvation. We will give You thanks and declare Your praise for our
lives that are committed into Your hands, for our souls that are entrusted
to You, for Your miracles that are daily with us, and for Your wonders and
Your benefits that are with us at all times, evening, morning and noon.
O beneficent one, Your mercies never fail; O merciful one, Your loving
kindnesses never cease. We have always put our hope in You.
For all these acts may Your name be blessed and exalted continually,

O our King, forever and ever. Let every living thing give thanks to You and praise Your name in truth, O God, our salvation and our help. (Selah.) Blessed are You, O Lord, whose Name is the Beneficent One, and to whom it is fitting to give thanks.

19. FOR PEACE:

My G-d, guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking deceitfully. To those who curse me, let my soul be silent; and let my soul be like dust to everyone. Open my heart to Your Torah, then my soul will pursue Your commandments. As for all those who design evil against me, speedily nullify their counsel and disrupt their design. Act for Your Name's sake; act for Your right hand's sake; act for Your sanctity's sake; act for Your Torah's sake. That Your beloved ones may be given rest; let Your right hand save, and respond to me. * May they be acceptable the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart, before You Adonai, my rock and my redeemer.

Bow and take three steps back, Bow left and say 'He Who makes peace in His heights 'bow right and say 'may He make peace among us' bow forward and say 'and upon all Israel... Amen.'