

## From Sephardic

### Practice

Before reciting the Torah blessings, the honoree(s) turn(s) to the congregation with a word of blessing (in accord with the language of greeting found in Ruth 2:4), and the congregation then responds in recognition:

Honoree(s):

יהוה עִמָּכֶם.

May God be with you.

Adonai imakhem.

### Congregation:

יְבָרְכְךָ וְיְבָרְכְךָ יְבָרְכְךָ יְהוה.

May God bless you.

Y'varekh-kha/y'var 'kheikh/ y'var 'kheim Adonai.

### Shabbat: Resting-Place on Our Journey

Each Shabbat is its own revelation, but each leads us further on the road to eternity. Each Shabbat is a resting place, an oasis on the journey that is the life of Torah. Each Shabbat's Torah reading looks forward to yet another week—another revelation.

### Studying Torah

Once a young man who wanted to become a Hasid arrived at the court of Isaac Meir, the rebbe of Gur. The rabbi asked him if he had learned Torah. The young man didn't know what to answer. He had studied Torah but didn't want to appear too bold and answer "Yes," as if he knew all of Torah; nor could he say "No," for he would then be lying. So he responded, "I know a little." The rabbi replied, "Can anyone know more than a little?"

## Blessings Recited by Those Called Up to the Torah

The person who is honored with an aliyah recites the following before the Torah is read:

Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed.

Bar'khu et Adonai ha-m'vorakh.

The congregation responds:

Praise ADONAI, to whom all praise is directed forever and ever.

Barukh Adonai ha-m'vorakh l'olam va-ed.

The person who is honored repeats the above response, then continues:

*Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has chosen us from among all peoples, giving us the Torah.*

*Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives the Torah.*

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher bahar banu mikol ha-amim, v'natan lanu et torato. Barukh atah Adonai, noten ha-torah.

The person who is honored recites the following after the Torah is read:

*Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who has given us a teaching of truth, planting eternal life in our midst.*

*Barukh atah ADONAI, who gives the Torah.*

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher natan lanu torat emet, v'hayei olam nata b'tokheinu. Barukh atah Adonai, noten ha-torah.

### Mi Sheberakh:

#### Blessing for Those Called to the Torah

May the one who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, bless \_\_\_\_\_ who has/have ascended today to honor God and the Torah and Shabbat.

May the blessed Holy One protect him/her/them and his/her/their entire family, bring blessing and success to all the works of his/her/their hands, together with all his/her/their fellow Jews, and let us say: *Amen*.

For additional *Mi Sheberakh* prayers for special occasions, see pages 439–445.

## פְּרֻכּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה

The person who is honored with an aliyah recites the following before the Torah is read:

פְּרֻכּוֹ אֲתֵיְהוּהַ הַמְּבֻרָךְ.

The congregation responds:

פְּרֻכּוֹ יְהוה הַמְּבֻרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

The person who is honored repeats the above response, then continues:

פְּרֻכּוֹ אַתְּמָה יְהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנו אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ. פְּרֻכּוֹ אַתְּמָה יְהוה, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

The person who is honored recites the following after the Torah is read:

פְּרֻכּוֹ אַתְּמָה יְהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנו תּוֹרַת אֲמַתְּ הַחַיִּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ. פְּרֻכּוֹ אַתְּמָה יְהוה, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

## מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ לְעוֹלָה לַתּוֹרָה

For an individual:

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבֵרְהֶם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רַבֵּקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה, הוּא יְבָרְךָ אֵת — שְׂעֵלָה־שְׂעֵלָתָה הַיּוֹם לְכַבּוֹד הַמְּקוֹם וּלְכַבּוֹד הַתּוֹרָה, וּלְכַבּוֹד הַשַּׁבָּת. הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁמַר אוֹתוֹ\אוֹתָהּ וְיִשְׁלַח מַלְּשָׁפוֹתָיו\מַשְׁפָּחוֹתָהּ, וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרַכָּה וְהַצְלָחָה לְכָל־מַעֲשֶׂה יְדֵיו\יְדֵיהָ, עִם כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲחֵיו וְאַחֵיוֹתָיו\אֲחֵיֶיהָ וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן.

For a group of people:

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבֵרְהֶם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רַבֵּקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה, הוּא יְבָרְךָ אֵת כָּל־אֶלֶף שְׂעוֹלָה הַיּוֹם לְכַבּוֹד הַמְּקוֹם וּלְכַבּוֹד הַתּוֹרָה, וּלְכַבּוֹד הַשַּׁבָּת. הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁמַר אוֹתָם וְיִשְׁלַח מַלְּשָׁפוֹתוֹתָהֶם וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרַכָּה וְהַצְלָחָה לְכָל־מַעֲשֶׂה יְדֵיהֶם, עִם כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲחֵיהֶם וְאַחֵיהֶתֵיהֶם, וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן.

For additional *Mi Sheberakh* prayers for special occasions, see pages 439–445.

**THE READING.** In the Land of Israel in the 1st millennium, the Torah was read on a cycle of three-and-a-half years and divided into more than 150 portions. In Babylonia, the Torah was divided into larger portions, called *parashiyot*, which are read in sequence on Shabbat mornings throughout a single year. (The number of these portions was eventually fixed at 54.) Because some years are leap years and in some years festivals fall on Shabbat, certain *parashiyot* may be read together, so that the weekly readings remain coordinated with the calendar. Today, we follow the Babylonian custom, though some congregations read one-third of each *parashah* each week, thus completing a full Torah reading in three years.

The trope, the musical notation with which the Torah is chanted, is the oldest form of musical notation still in use; it dates at least to the end of the 1st millennium. Trope serve as syntactical signposts and provide interpretive meaning to the text.

**WHO HAS CHOSEN US** בְּנוּ. At the moment of approaching the Torah, one may feel especially chosen and may also experience the moment as being directly commanded.

**HAS GIVEN US . . . WHO GIVES THE TORAH** וְנָתַן לָנו הַתּוֹרָה. . . נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה. The Hebrew moves from the past tense to the present. The meaning of the words of Torah not only derive from the past, but each reading may offer a new revelation.