

סדר קריאת התורה לשבת

הוצאת התורה

אֵין כְּמוֹךָ בָּאֱלֹהִים, אֲדֹנָי, וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ.

מַלְכוּתְךָ מְלָכּוּת כָּל-עֲלָמִים,

וּמִמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל-דֹּר וְדֹר.

יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ, יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד.

יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.

אֲב הַרְחָמִים, הִיטִיבָה בְּרָצוֹנְךָ אֶת-צִיּוֹן,

תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, כִּי בָךְ לְבַד בְּטַחְנוּ,

מֶלֶךְ אֵל רִם וְנִשְׂא, אֲדוֹן עוֹלָמִים.

We rise as the ark is opened.

וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֶן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה:

קוֹמָה יְהוָה וַיִּפָּצוּ אֵיבֶיךָ, וַיִּנָּסוּ מִשִּׁנְאֶיךָ מִפְּנֶיךָ.

כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

בְּרוּךְ שְׁנַתֵּן תוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְשָׁתוֹ.

סֵדֶר קְרִיאַת הַתּוֹרָה. Opening the ark, carrying the Torah in a procession through the congregation, and reading aloud from the scroll are all symbolic moments when the presence and will of the Divine may be especially felt. It is as if with the opening of the ark, the doorway to heaven itself is opened.

Since there is no physical representation of God in Judaism, the Torah has come to be seen as the most significant expression of the presence of God—it is the representation of God's voice, God's call to us. Taking out the Torah has come to be seen as a representation of divine sovereignty, and so it has taken on the drama of a royal procession. Thus, the Torah is adorned with a crown, and its cover is kissed as it passes through the congregation, as was the custom for kissing the hem of the king's garments. Additionally, the Torah is dressed with accoutrements of the High Priest, including a breastplate and bells (originally used to signal

his presence). In short, how we treat the Torah scroll combines the three "crowns" about which the ancient rabbis spoke: the crown of sovereignty, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of Torah (Pirkei Avot 4:17).

NONE COMPARES TO YOU אֵין כְּמוֹךָ. Psalm 86:8. As etiquette in Europe's royal courts became more elaborate (12th–14th centuries), the Ashkenazic Torah service incorporated verses emphasizing God's sovereignty, as if to say that God alone—and no earthly ruler—is the ultimate sovereign. The next verse, "Your sovereignty," is Psalm 145:13; "Adonai, give strength" is Psalm 29:11.

ADONAI IS SOVEREIGN יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ. This sentence is a compilation of biblical phrases about God's sovereignty stitched together to form a creed: God has ruled the world since before creation and will continue to rule eternally.

COMPASSIONATE CREATOR אֲב הַרְחָמִים. This address, followed by a verse that calls for Jerusalem's reconstruction (Psalm 51:20), is all that remains from prayers for forgiveness that were recited during the Torah service in an earlier era.

AS THE ARK WAS CARRIED FORWARD וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֶן. Numbers 10:35 depicts the ark as the seat of divine protection, leading the march and warding off the fledgling nation's enemies. One interpretation is that upon realizing that it is God whom they are fighting, enemies will flee and warfare will become unnecessary (Abraham ibn Ezra).

TORAH SHALL GO FORTH FROM ZION תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה מִצִּיּוֹן. From Isaiah 2:3: "And many peoples shall come and say, 'Let us go up to the mountain of Adonai, to the House of the God of Jacob, for Adonai shall teach us God's ways, that we may walk in that path; for Torah shall go forth . . .'" As the ark is opened, we express our belief that Torah contains ideals of ethics, politics, and wisdom that affect all humanity.