HATZI KADDISH. A Kaddish is recited here to mark the completion of the required reading of the Torah; we now prepare for the reading of the haftarah, a reading taken from a different section of the Bible, the Prophets. So that the person called to chant the haftarah may also be honored with some words from the Torah scroll itself, another reading, called the maftir or “concluding reading,” is added. On Shabbat it is usually a simple repetition of the last few verses of the required reading.

LIFTING AND WRAPPING THE TORAH. Tractate Sofrim (9th–10th century) instructs that the Torah be lifted, that three columns of text be unrolled, and that the writing be displayed to the entire congregation (14:8). In Sephardic practice this is done before the Torah reading begins; in Ashkenazic services the Torah is lifted here upon the conclusion of the reading. Out of respect, the congregation remains standing while the Torah is wrapped—a ceremony that imitates the practice of royalty.

THIS IS THE TORAH. The liturgists combined Deuteronomy 4:44 and Numbers 9:23 in this line, underscoring that our entire Torah came from Moses as dictated by God. This theological claim is not made in the Bible itself. Since this passage conflates two biblical verses, the 20th-century Orthodox Jewish thinker Joseph B. Soloveitchik, for instance, did not recite it.

When reciting this passage, some people hold up or kiss the tzitzit of their tallit, to affirm their own active fulfillment of the Torah.