The Torah scroll is placed in the ark. Personal meditations, such as those found on page 169, may also be recited here.

The ark is closed.

Leader:

יהוה שמה רבא מברך על למעמה מעולמה. [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute: ברכת שחרית שליחת התחילה.] המיבחר והים שלח עשויה בו י الخميس. ברכיה וברך.

Congregation and Leader:

הברים ויוחם ויוחם ויוחם ויוחם ויוחם בו י الخميس. ברכיה וברך.

WHENEVER THE ARK WAS SET DOWN

Numbers 10:36. As the Torah completes its circuit through the synagogue, we recall Moses’ words when the people finished a stage in their journey through the wilderness and came to rest in a new camp. This verse and the ones that follow (Psalm 132:8-10 and Proverbs 4:2) can also serve to refer to our own inner journey: we are accompanied now by Torah.

Only the first and last verse are recited in all rites; the others were added in many communities in the late Middle Ages.

IT IS A TREE OF LIFE FOR THOSE WHO GRASP IT

Proverbs 3:18. The Torah handles are called atzei hayim, “trees of life,” and this verse is the source of the custom of holding on to them as we recite the brakhot over the Torah. Thus, by studying Torah and by physically holding on to it, we both figuratively and literally “grasp” the tree of life.

ITS WAYS ARE PLEASANT, AND ALL ITS PATHS ARE PEACE

Proverbs 4:17. In their context, these two verses from Proverbs refer to wisdom, hokhmah. The ancient rabbis associated wisdom with Torah. As we put away the Torah, we pray that our study of Torah should provide us with the wisdom to promote a life characterized by pleasantness and the pursuit of peace.

TURN US TOWARD YOU, ADONAI

Significantly, this final verse is taken from Lamentations (5:21), the book of mourning for the destruction of Jerusalem. We end the Torah service with a prayer for the reconciliation of God and Israel.