

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

וּבְנַחֲהָ יֹאמֵר: שׁוּבָה יְהוָה רַבּוֹת אֵלַי יִשְׂרָאֵל.
קוּמָה יְהוָה לְמִנוּחֶתָּה, אֶתָּה וְאֶרְוֹן עֲזֹךְ.
כְּהִנִּיף יִלְבָּשׁוּ צֶדֶק, וְחִסְדֶּיךָ יִרְנְנוּ.
בְּעִבּוֹר דָּוִד עֲבָדְךָ, אֶל תָּשֵׁב פָּנַי מִשִּׁיחֶךָ.
◀ כִּי לָקַח טוֹב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם, תּוֹרַתִי אֶל תַּעֲזוּבוּ.
עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ, וְתִמְכִּיחַ מְאֹד.
דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי נֶעֱם, וְכָל־נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם.
הַשִּׁיבֵנו יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשׁוּבָה, חֲדָשׁ יְמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם.

The ark is closed.

חֲצִי קָדִישׁ

Leader:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא, בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא, כְּרַעוּתָהּ,
וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Congregation and Leader:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֵלְמָא וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמֵיָא.

Leader:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעֵלְמָא מִן כָּל־ [לְעֵלְמָא לְעֵלְמָא מְכָל־] [on Shabbat Shuvah we substitute:
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחַמְתָּא דְּאִמִּירָן בְּעֵלְמָא,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

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 אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ. 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.

WHENEVER THE ARK WAS SET DOWN יֹאמֵר וּבְנַחֲהָ. 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 עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ. 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 *b'rakhot* 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 דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי נֶעֱם וְכָל־ דְּרָכֶיהָ נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם. Proverbs 3:17. In their context, these