

The first berachah/blessing of the Amidah/'Standing' Prayer (Sim Shalom, Shabbat Shahrith, p.354)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל
עֲלִיוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חַסְדִּים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל, וְזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אֲבוֹת
וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶגֶן אַבְרָהָם.

Baruch atah Adonai, eloheinu vei-lo-hei avoteinu. elohei Avraham, elohei Yitzchak, vey-lo-hei Ya'akov [elohei Sarah, elohei Rivkah, vei-lo-hei Rachel v'Leah].

Ha'el, ha-gadol, ha-gibbor, v'ha-norah el el-yon, gomel chasadim tovim, v'konei ha-kol, v-zocher chas-dei avot, u-mei-vee go'eyl liv-nei v'nei-hem l'ma'an shemo b'ahavah.

Melech o-zeir u-mo-shee-ah u-ma-gein. Baruch atah, Adonai, Ma-gein Avraham [u'fo-keid Sarah].

Blessed are You, Adonai, our God and God of our ancestors—God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob [God of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah].

The God who is great, mighty and awesome, most high God, who bestows loving kindness, Creator of all, who remembers the loyal acts of the ancestors and will send a redeemer to their children's children in love, for such is his way.

Sovereign, Support, Redeemer and Shield! Blessed are you, Adonai, shield of Abraham [and provider to Sarah].

This is the first berachah/Blessing of the Amidah/'Standing' Prayer which is a sequence of berachot/blessings at the core of public and private worship.

The Amidah is built of three units of berachot/blessings: Praise, Petition and Thanksgiving. On Shabbat and holidays, the 'Petition' unit is replaced by a unit appropriate for the celebration. Only on the weekdays is the 'Petition' section deemed fitting. In any event, every Amidah begins the same way, with the above berachah/blessing.

This berachah/blessing is a moment of introduction in which we present ourselves as the descendants of ancestors whom God favored. We offer praise interwoven with a reminder of the mutual loyalty of God and our ancestors throughout the generations, a loyalty that precipitates not only good deeds in the world, but promises to bring about redemption.

Of all the berachot/blessings of the Amidah, only this one begins and ends with "Baruch atah/Blessed are You..." In every other case, it is only the concluding statement of each berachah/blessing theme that begins, "Baruch atah/Blessed are You..."