



# Torah Reading Blessings -

## Making Aliyah to the Torah

שְׁלוֹם רַב לְאַהֲבֵי תוֹרַתְךָ וְאִין־לָנוּ מִכְשׁוֹל:

*Great peace have those who love your law;  
nothing can make them stumble.*

*- Psalm 119:165*



Each Shabbat a weekly portion from the Torah (called a *parashah*) is chanted during morning services. This Torah portion itself is further divided into smaller sections called *aliyot* (literally, “ascents”), and it is customary to call up people from the congregation (called *olim*) to recite a blessing before and after each section is recited by the cantor or Torah reader.

For Shabbat services each *parashah* is divided in seven *aliyot* with a concluding portion (called the *Maftir*) recited by the person who will also recite the *Haftarah* blessings. This means that during a given Shabbat Torah Reading service, eight people will be called to recite blessings over the Torah (on weekday morning services (Monday and Thursday), the first three *aliyot* of the forthcoming Sabbath portion are read).

In order to recall the roles of service in the ancient Jewish Temple, it is customary to offer the first *aliyah* to a *Kohen* (i.e., a priestly descendant of Aaron, the brother of Moses), the second to a *Levi* (i.e., a descendant of the tribe of Levi), and the remaining *aliyot* (from *shlishi* to *shevi'i*) to *Yisraelim* (i.e., Jews who are neither *Kohen* nor *Levi*). You will be told in advance what your *aliyah* number is by the *gabbai* (synagogue official).

If you have been given the honor of being called up for an *aliyah*, you will chant the blessings before and after the reading of the Torah (by the cantor). Here is a brief guide to performing this honor:

1. When your name is announced by the *gabbai*, walk up to the *bimah*. Take the shortest route possible.
2. If you are wearing a prayer shawl (*tallit gadol*), the Cantor or *ba'al keriah* will point to the word on the scroll where he or she will begin reading. Take the *tzitzit* (fringes) from a corner of your prayer shawl and touch them to the word; you may bring the *tzitzit* to your lips as an expression of your love for the Torah.





- Stand directly in front of the scroll with both hands on the handles (*etz chayim*) and recite the following:

**The Barekhu Before Torah Recitation:**

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ.

ha-me·vo·rakh et-Adonai ba-re·khu

*Bless the LORD, who is to be blessed.*

*Congregation responds:*

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

va·ed le·o·lam ha-me·vo·rakh Adonai ba·rukḥ

*Blessed is Adonai, who is to be blessed forever and ever.*

- Now recite the following blessing:

**The Blessing Before the Torah Reading:**

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר

a·sher ha·o·lam me·lekh e·lo·he·y·nu Adonai at·tah ba·rukḥ  
who the universe king (of) our God Lord are you Blessed

בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ.

to·ra·to et la·nu ve·na·tan ha·am·mim mik·kol ba·nu ba·char  
his Torah ( ) to us and gave the peoples from all us chose

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

hat·to·rah no·tein Adonai at·tah ba·rukḥ  
(of) the Torah giver Lord are you Blessed

*Blessed are You, LORD our God, king of the universe, who chose us from all the peoples and gave to us His Torah. Blessed are You, LORD, giver of the Torah.*



Move to the right to allow the cantor to chant the portion from the Sefer Torah (torah scroll).

- At its conclusion, the cantor will point to the final word that was read. Again, touch it with the *tzitzit* as noted above.
- Recite the following blessing:

**The Blessing After the Torah Reading:**

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר

a·sher	ha·o·lam	me·lekh	e·lo·he·y·nu	Adonai	at·tah	ba·rukḥ
who	the universe	king (of)	our God	Lord	are you	Blessed

נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נִשְׂע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ.

be·to·kḥei·nu	na·ta'	o·lam	ve·chai·yei	e·met	to·rat	la·nu	na·tan
in our midst	set	everlasting	and life	of truth	the Torah	to us	gave

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

hat·to·rah	no·tein	Adonai	at·tah	ba·rukḥ
(of) the Torah	giver	Lord	are you	Blessed

*Blessed are You, LORD our God, king of the universe, who gave us the Torah of truth and set everlasting life in our midst.  
Blessed are You, LORD, giver of the Torah.*

- After reciting this blessing, depending on the *minhag ha-makom* (the custom of the place), you may either return to your seat or remain standing at the bimah while the next persons comes up to make their aliyah.

*Mazal Tov!* - You've just completed making "the Aliyah."

