

Rosh Hashana Both Nights Guide

#	Prayer	What is it?	Background	Action and Explanation	Page										
1	Annulment of Vows	Undoing all vow commitments in the presence of a Beth Din	The Torah obligates us to fulfil all of our vows, or to annul them to avoid breaking them. We strive to do the latter.	Basic structure from the Torah Judges sit as a Beth Din always does. Petitioners stand before them.	2-4										
2	Barchu	Communal blessing of Hashem	Rabbinic obligation to utilise the opportunity of a community coming together to publically sanctify Hashem, affirming that He is the source of all blessing.	Second Temple Era Stand: Public Sanctification of Hashem's Name Bow: Submitting ourselves to Hashem, or because this is considered the beginning of the process of the Amida.	50										
3	Brachot before the Shma	Blessings of Hashem's control of light and dark, and His love for us	Rabbinic obligation to say blessings before the Shma so that we will truly understand and feel the Oneness of Hashem and Love for Hashem we say in the Shma.	Second Temple Era We sit to settle our minds in preparation for the Amida, and Kabbalistic reasons	50-52										
4	Shma	Accepting Hashem as our God, reward and punishment, and Mitzvot	Torah obligation to say the first two paragraphs each day morning and evening, and to speak of the Exodus from Egypt (third paragraph) each day.	1312 BCE We cover our eyes with our right hands and say Shma in a loud voice, in order to block out all distractions	52-56										
5	Brachot after the Shma	Blessings of redemption and protection	Rabbinic obligation to say blessings after the Shma acknowledging Hashem's redemption throughout history and asking for His protection from all harm.	Second Temple Era We sit to settle our minds in preparation for the Amida, and Kabbalistic reasons	56-58										
6	Tikku BaChodesh	Verse from the Torah about Shofar blowing	It is customary to say this verse to usher in the "Day of the Shofar"	Middle Ages	60										
7	Half Kaddish	Prayer for Hashem's greatness to be revealed	Kaddish, an Aramaic prayer that was composed in Talmudic times and took its current form in the early middle ages, is said at transition points in the service. Brachot of the Shma to the Amida is such a transition.	Middle Ages We stand for Kaddish because this is a public sanctification of Hashem's Name. The person saying Kaddish takes three steps back and bows at the end, as we do at the end of the Amida. See there for the explanation.	60										
8	Amida	Intimate conversation with Hashem - consists of praise, request and thanks	It is a Torah obligation to stand before Hashem in prayer once per day. Amida was formulated by the Rabbis, who obliged us to pray Shacharit and Mincha. Men are obligated in Maariv also by custom. The Rosh Hashana Shacharit Amida is composed of 7 blessings in 3 sections: <table border="1" data-bbox="622 1193 1115 1433"> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Praise</td> <td>Avot: Hashem is all-loving</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gevurot: Hashem is all-powerful</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kedusha: Hashem is all-holy</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Request</td> <td>Kingship: May Hashem be revealed as King</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avodah: Temple Service</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Thanks</td> <td>Modim: Thanks for daily miracles</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shalom: Peace</td> </tr> </table>	Praise	Avot: Hashem is all-loving	Gevurot: Hashem is all-powerful	Kedusha: Hashem is all-holy	Request	Kingship: May Hashem be revealed as King	Avodah: Temple Service	Thanks	Modim: Thanks for daily miracles	Shalom: Peace	Prayer dates back from the creation of Adam and Eve. The formal Amida is from the Second Temple Era Take steps back and forth at the beginning and end. Three steps forward at the beginning to enter through three "passages" to Hashem (as Moshe did). Three steps back at the end to withdraw. Other steps for space. Stand with our legs together: As angels do in Heaven, and to show that we don't want to go anywhere else. Whisper our prayer: So that those confessing their sins to Hashem will not be embarrassed, and because Hashem hears even a whisper. However on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur you may pray at a normal speaking volume, provided that doesn't disturb your neighbours in Shul. Bow during Bracha of "Avot" and "Modim": Correct behaviour to bow to the King when we approach Him and when we begin to take leave "Shokel", rock back and forth, based on the verse: "All my bones will say 'Hashem, who is like You?'" Bow left, right, and forward and the conclusion of our Amida. The specific nature of the bowing shows that we truly believe that we are in the presence of Hashem. We begin with our left - Hashem's "right" which represents His kindness, and then our right, His "left", the attribute of justice.	62-74
Praise	Avot: Hashem is all-loving														
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9	Psalm 24	Prayer for “The King of Glory” to enter	This Psalm heralds the coming of Hashem and is thus appropriate for Rosh Hashana.	Late Middle Ages		78
10	Full Kaddish	Prayer for Hashem’s greatness to be revealed	Full Kaddish, which includes a request that our prayers be accepted, is said after a communal Amida prayer.	Middle Ages	We stand for Kaddish because this is a public sanctification of Hashem’s Name. The person saying Kaddish takes three steps back and bows at the end, as we do at the end of the Amida. See there for the explanation.	80
11	Rabbi’s Sermon	Interesting and inspiring Torah speech	The Shul sermon is a fairly recent innovation in Jewish life.	1800 CE		
12	Kiddush in Shul	Declaring holiness of Rosh Hashana	The Torah commands us to make mention of the holiness of holy days. The Rabbis formalised the requirement for Kiddush over wine, and a custom developed in the Middle Ages to do so in Shul for the benefit of the wayfarers who would sleep there.	Middle Ages	We stand out of respect for the Shabbat (Yom Tov) queen.	82
13	Aleinu	Praising Hashem, longing for perfection of the world	This prayer, originally composed for the Rosh Hashana Mussaf Amida, was adopted by Jewish communities around the world to be said at the conclusion of every prayer service.	Middle Ages	We stand to give weight to the great praises of Hashem that we say in this prayer.	84
					We bow at “Korim Umishtachavim” to fulfil the declaration: “And we bow... before the King of Kings...”	
14	Mourner’s Kaddish	Prayer for Hashem’s greatness to be revealed	This Kaddish, said at the transition point from Aleinu to LeDavid Hashem Ori, was assigned to Mourners to give them the Mitzva of sanctifying Hashem’s name.	Middle Ages	We stand for Kaddish because this is a public sanctification of Hashem’s Name. The mourner saying Kaddish takes three steps back and bows at the end, as we do at the end of the Amida. See there for the explanation.	86
15	LeDavid Hashem Ori	Psalm 27: Joy in Hashem’s help.	It is customary to say this prayer from the beginning of the month of Elul until Simchat Torah.	Late Middle Ages		86
16	Mourner’s Kaddish	Prayer for Hashem’s greatness to be revealed	This Kaddish, said at the transition point from LeDavid Hashem Ori to the end of the service, was assigned to Mourners to give them the Mitzva of sanctifying Hashem’s name.	Middle Ages	We stand for Kaddish because this is a public sanctification of Hashem’s Name. The mourner saying Kaddish takes three steps back and bows at the end, as we do at the end of the Amida. See there for the explanation.	86
17	Yigdal	Song of the 13 Principles of Faith	The Rambam articulated the 13 principles of the Jewish Faith and Yigdal is a poetic adaptation of those principles which have become a standard addendum to prayer services.	Middle Ages		88