

# Avot v'Imahot אבות ואמהות

Introductory Prayers

Sh'ma &amp; Its Blessings

**Amidah**

Torah Service

Concluding Prayers

## To-Do List:

- ☐ Answer the **Ready...Set...Prep!** questions on Pages 1-2 with a *chevruta* partner
- ☐ Read the prayer in Hebrew (Page 3) with your *chevruta* partner
- ☐ Answer the **First Read** questions (Page 4) together
- ☐ Finish the prayer's translation (Pages 5-7) alone or together
- ☐ Answer the **Break It Down** questions (Pages 8-11) with your *chevruta* partner
- ☐ Do the **Reading Questions** on page 11 either alone or together.
- ☐ **Now Practice!** Read & sing the prayer together, alone, and/or online (see Page 12)
- ☐ Do the **Get Creative!** activity on Page 13
- ☐ Read and sing the prayer to a teacher to sign off

*chevruta*

חִבְרוּתָא

*n.* study companion.  
Shares a root with the  
word "friend" (חֵבֵר).

# Avot v'Imahot

Blue words are included in some communities but not others.

|                      |                       |               |               |                    |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Introductory Prayers | Sh'ma & Its Blessings | <b>Amidah</b> | Torah Service | Concluding Prayers |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|

Ready... Set... Prep!

The third section of the service is the central section – both in placement, as third out of five, and in importance. It's called the

## עֲמִידָה

which means

## standing

for two reasons: one literal and one metaphorical.

We are literally standing up for this section of the service,

and we are metaphorically standing before God as we make the most important requests of the service.

**Work with a *chevruta* partner to answer the following questions!**

1. Think of a *really big* thing you might ask your parents for at some point in your life. (Past or future!) What might you ask for? \_\_\_\_\_
2. When you ask them for it, do you jump right in to asking them for what you want, or do you start the conversation with something else? What is your opening strategy? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. What does it mean to “request” something?
  - In Google, type in “define:request” (without any spaces)
  - Requesting is not just asking for something – it’s asking for it in a way that is both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

This symbol means to use your tablet, computer, or smartphone to go online to find the answers!





4. What does it mean to ask “formally” for something?
- If you’re not sure, use the “define:\_\_\_” feature on Google for this too.
  - What does “formally” mean, in your own words? \_\_\_\_\_

So now let's say you wanted to make that *really big request* in a **polite** and **formal** letter to your parents.

Each paragraph of the letter should have one purpose – good examples are listed on the right below.



5. Put your three paragraph types in order from the list!

1.

2.

3.

## Make The Request

# Thanks In Advance!

# Complimenting Your Parents

The Amidah section of the service, like your letter to your parents, has three sub-sections within it:

1. Praise / א. שִׁבַּח
2. Requests / ב. בְּקָשׁוֹת
3. Thanksgiving / ג. הוֹדָאָה

The first prayer in the Praise section is the **Avot v'Imahot**.

Read the first **Praise** prayer of the **Amidah** below out loud – you might recognize some names in there!

Many Reform, Reconstructionist, & Conservative communities also say the **BLUE** words.

*Note: Bow on the **bolded** words.*

A אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

B שְׁכִינָה שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

- 1 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ.
- 2 אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב,
- 3 אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רַבֵּקָה, אֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה, וְאֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל.

These two will sometimes be in reverse order, depending on the *siddur* (prayerbook). (This is why it's important to **read**, not memorize!)

- 4 הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיוֹן
- 5 גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֶה הַכֹּל
- 6 וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת

- 7 וַיָּבִיֵא [גְּאוּלָּה / גּוּאֵל] לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם
- 8 לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה:

Some Conservative & Modern Orthodox communities use the **RED** word instead of the blue.

Ask your teacher if you're not sure which one to say!

- 9 מִלֶּךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֹּן:

- 10 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מִגֹּן אַבְרָהָם [וְעִזְרָת / וּפִקָּד] שָׂרָה.

## First-Read Questions

1. What **names** do you see in the prayer? *The first one has been done for you!*

|         |         |   | Hebrew Name | English Version |        |
|---------|---------|---|-------------|-----------------|--------|
| אָבוֹת  | Fathers | 1 | אַבְרָהָם   | Abraham         | Line 2 |
|         |         | 2 |             |                 |        |
|         |         | 3 |             |                 |        |
| אִמּוֹת | Mothers | 4 |             |                 | Line 3 |
|         |         | 5 |             |                 |        |
|         |         | 6 |             |                 |        |
|         |         | 7 |             |                 |        |

2. What **other words** do you already recognize?

| Hebrew Word | I think that it means... |
|-------------|--------------------------|
|             |                          |

Every time we bow in this prayer, the word is made **bold** on the previous page.

3. How many times do we bow during this prayer? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What word are we saying when we bow every time? \_\_\_\_\_
5. The prayer has an “introduction” that comes from a different source text than the rest of the prayer. The first word spells out a term we’re used to being represented by a “symbol-word,” like it is in Line 1. Write out the two versions:

| Intro Line A spells it... | Usually we see it as... |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
|                           |                         |

While it’s easy to mistake this for being God’s Hebrew name, it’s more like a **royal title**, meaning “my lord,” like a ruler of the land. Nobody knows how to pronounce God’s Real Name anymore, though, so we use lots of titles and nicknames to help us relate to God in our thoughts, speech, and prayers.

## Translation

1 of 3

Fill in the blanks of the translation of the first third of the prayer  
using the Word Bank at the bottom!

| Prefix | Suffix | Noun | Verb | Adjective | Proper Name |
|--------|--------|------|------|-----------|-------------|
|--------|--------|------|------|-----------|-------------|

|   |          |        |        |            |              |             |
|---|----------|--------|--------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | בְּרוּךְ | אַתָּה | יְי    | אֱלֹהֵינוּ | וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ | אֲבוֹתֵינוּ |
|   |          | are    | Adonai | our        | and          | fathers     |
|   |          | You    |        |            | mothers.     |             |

|   |         |           |         |         |           |         |
|---|---------|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| 2 | אֱלֹהֵי | אַבְרָהָם | אֱלֹהֵי | יִצְחָק | וְאֱלֹהֵי | יַעֲקֹב |
|   |         | Abraham,  |         | Isaac,  | and       | Jacob   |
|   |         |           |         |         |           |         |

|   |         |        |         |          |           |         |
|---|---------|--------|---------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 3 | אֱלֹהֵי | שָׂרָה | אֱלֹהֵי | רִבְקָה  | וְאֱלֹהֵי | רָחֵל   |
|   |         | Sarah, |         | Rebekah, | and       | Rachel. |
|   |         |        |         |          |           |         |

## Word Bank

|                                 |                    |                        |                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| אֵל                             | אֱלֹהֵי            | בְּרוּךְ               | -נוּ                 |
| god<br>(any god, not just ours) | God (of)<br>(noun) | blessed<br>(adjective) | our/ours<br>(suffix) |

The translations above go **right-to-left** with the Hebrew text. Now write out the English translations for all three lines from **left-to-right**. The first one has been started for you! (Check your work on page 8!)

1. are You,
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

2 of 3

Fill in the blanks of the translation of the second third of the prayer using the Word Bank at the bottom!

| Prefix | Suffix | Noun | Verb | Adjective | Proper Name |
|--------|--------|------|------|-----------|-------------|
|--------|--------|------|------|-----------|-------------|

*In Hebrew, adjectives come **after** the noun they're describing – so a "big dog" would look like "dog big" in Hebrew.*

|   |       |           |            |                    |       |           |
|---|-------|-----------|------------|--------------------|-------|-----------|
| 4 | הַאֵל | הַגָּדוֹל | הַגִּבּוֹר | וְהַנּוֹרָא,       | אֵל   | עֲלִיוֹן, |
|   | The   | great,    | heroic,    | and awe-inspiring, | _____ | highest,  |

|   |               |                         |            |         |
|---|---------------|-------------------------|------------|---------|
| 5 | גוֹמֵל        | חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים,       | וְקוֹנֶה   | הַכֹּל, |
|   | (You) deliver | _____ acts of kindness, | and create | _____,  |

|              |                   |        |              |   |
|--------------|-------------------|--------|--------------|---|
| וְזָכַר      | חֲסִדֵּי          | אָבוֹת | וְאִמָּהוֹת, | 6 |
| and remember | the kindnesses of |        | and _____,   |   |

## Word Bank

|                           |                      |                           |                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| טוֹבִים                   | הַכֹּל               | אֲמָהוֹת                  | אָבוֹת                    | אֵל                             |
| good/great<br>(adjective) | everything<br>(noun) | mothers<br>(noun, plural) | fathers<br>(noun, plural) | god<br>(any god, not just ours) |

The translations above go **right-to-left** with the Hebrew text. Now write out the English translations for all three lines from **left-to-right**. The first one has been started for you! (Check your work on page 8!)

4. The great, heroic, and

5.

6.

Now fill in the blanks of the translation of the last third of the prayer!

| Prefix | Suffix | Noun | Verb | Adjective | Proper Name | Preposition |
|--------|--------|------|------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
|--------|--------|------|------|-----------|-------------|-------------|

|           |         |                           |                 |   |
|-----------|---------|---------------------------|-----------------|---|
| בְּנֵיהֶם | לְבָנֵי | גְּאוּלָּה / גּוּאֵל      | וּמְבִיא        | 7 |
| their     | to the  | redemption / the redeemer | and (You) bring |   |

|              |            |                 |   |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|---|
| בְּאַהֲבָה : | שְׁמוֹ     | לְמַעַן         | 8 |
| in           | God's name | for the sake of |   |

|            |             |         |        |   |
|------------|-------------|---------|--------|---|
| וּמִגֹּן : | וּמוֹשִׁיעַ | עוֹזֵר  | מֶלֶךְ | 9 |
| and        | and Savior  | Helper, |        |   |

|           |                              |            |        |         |         |          |    |
|-----------|------------------------------|------------|--------|---------|---------|----------|----|
| שָׂרָה .  | וְעֹזֵרֶת/וּפֹקֵד            | אַבְרָהָם  | מִגֹּן | יְיָ ,  | אַתָּה  | בְּרוּךְ | 10 |
| of Sarah. | and Helper / and Remember-er | of Abraham |        | Adonai, | are You |          |    |

### Word Bank

|                      |                  |                |                        |                            |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| מֶלֶךְ               | מִגֹּן           | אַהֲבָה        | בְּרוּךְ               | בְּנֵי                     |
| ruler/king<br>(noun) | shield<br>(noun) | love<br>(noun) | blessed<br>(adjective) | children<br>(noun, plural) |

The translations above go **right-to-left** with the Hebrew text. Now write out the English translations for all three lines from **left-to-right**. The first one has been started for you! (Check your work on page 8!)

7. And bring redemption to
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

# Avot v'Imahot: Color-Coded for Meaning

The colors here are just to help you match each word to its translation in the English on the right.

Note: Since Adonai and Sh'khinah are two of God's many names, we don't usually translate them.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>A</b> אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ :</p>       | <p>Adonai, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise:</p>                       |
| <p><b>B</b> שְׁכִינָה שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּחִי וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ :</p>   | <p>Sh'khinah, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise:</p>                    |
| <p>1 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ .</p> | <p>Blessed are You, Adonai our God and God of our fathers and our mothers:</p>            |
| <p>2 אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם , אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק , וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב ,</p>            | <p>God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob,</p>                                    |
| <p>3 אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה , אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה , אֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה , וְאֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל .</p> | <p>God of Sarah, God of Rebekah, God of Leah, and God of Rachel.</p>                      |
| <p>4 הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיוֹן</p>                  | <p>The great, mighty, and awe-inspiring God, the highest God,</p>                         |
| <p>5 גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֶה הַכֹּל</p>                             | <p>(You) deliver great acts of kindness and create everything,</p>                        |
| <p>6 וְזוֹכֵר חֲסִדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת</p>                                  | <p>and remember the kindnesses of the fathers and mothers</p>                             |
| <p>7 וּמְבִיא [גְּאוּלָּה/גּוֹאֵל] לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם</p>                       | <p>and bring [redemption/the redeemer] to the children of their children,</p>             |
| <p>8 לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה :</p>  | <p>for the sake of God's name in love.</p>  |
| <p>9 מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וְמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן :</p>                                 | <p>Ruler, Helper, and Savior and Shield:</p>  |
| <p>10 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי , מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם [וְעֹזֵר/וּפוֹקֵד] שָׂרָה .</p>   | <p>Blessed are You Adonai, Shield of Abraham [and Helper / and remember-er] of Sarah.</p> |

Many Reform, Reconstructionist, & Conservative communities also say the words underlined/ outlined in BLUE.

Some Conservative & Modern Orthodox communities say the RED-underlined word instead. Ask your teacher if you're not sure which to say!

## Break it Down

- Underline at least two key Hebrew words in the prayer. Why did you choose them? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Almost all prayers fit into one of three types: **gratitude** ("THANK YOU, GOD!!"), **praise** ("WOW, GOD, YOU'RE AMAZING!!") or **petition** ("HELP!!!"). Which kind do you think this prayer is? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why do you think so? (Use evidence from the translation & your own opinions!)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL** prayers are said because they address the INDIVIDUAL's needs. Personal prayers can still be said with a community; the **subject matter** and **purpose** makes a prayer personal, not the way we say it.

**COMMUNAL** prayers are said to address the COMMUNITY's needs. Some communal prayers can still be said alone; the **subject matter** and **purpose within the service** makes a prayer communal more than anything else.

Some prayers are a little of both, but this one leans quite a bit more in one direction than the other.

3. Do you think this more a personal or a communal prayer? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why do you think so? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The first line we say, the one that isn't numbered, comes from the book of Psalms. What is a psalm?  
- In Google, type in "**define:psalm**"  
- What are the **first four words** of the definition it gives? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
- What is a "hymn"? (Use the same "define:\_\_\_" function for this word!)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
- So what is a "psalm," in your own words? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The *Tanach* (Jewish Bible) has a whole book composed entirely of psalms, and this line comes from the 51<sup>st</sup> psalm in that book (out of 150 total).

Why do you think rabbis many years ago decided to add a line from psalms that says "אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח" / "Adonai, open my lips" before we start this prayer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What kind of opening of our lips/mouths are we about to do?  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What could happen if we didn't watch what came out of our mouths when we recite this (or any) prayer? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Some people think this opening line contains the most important six words in the entire *T'fillah* (prayer) service. Why might they think that? \_\_\_\_\_
8. The second version of that intro line switches to one of the **feminine** names for God, *Sh'khinah*. (*Adonai* is one of God's **masculine** names.) How many **other** words have to change pronunciation when the name changes to a feminine version? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Take another look at the names mentioned in lines 2-3. Who **else**, besides those biblical figures, might we be referring to when we ask God to remember the acts of kindness our "אַבּוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת" did? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What might be an example of one of the חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים/acts of **kindness** that one (or several) of our אַבּוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת probably performed? \_\_\_\_\_



The ***Avot v'Imahot*** is the first prayer in a set of prayers called the *Amidah*. The full *Amidah* has nineteen prayers in it. This section is also called the "*Sh'moneh-Esrei*," the "Eighteen," because that was the original number, but no one knows anymore which of the 19 prayers was added in later. Those 19 prayers are divided into the three sections mentioned on Page 3: ***Shevach/Praise*** (3 prayers), ***Bakashah/Request*** (13 very short prayers, usually said silently), and ***Hoda'ah/Thanks*** (3 prayers).

11. The *Avot v'Imahot* calls God a מִיָּגוֹ twice. What is a מִיָּגוֹ? \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you think this is a compliment to God? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

12. The prayer lists several other praising descriptions of God besides מִיּוֹן. Can you find at least four more? Rate each one on how much of a compliment you think each one is! *One has been started for you as an example, but you still need to rate it!*

| Line | Hebrew    | English     | Rating                       |
|------|-----------|-------------|------------------------------|
| 4    | אל יבליין | highest God | insult 1 2 3 4 5 high praise |
|      |           |             | insult 1 2 3 4 5 high praise |
|      |           |             | insult 1 2 3 4 5 high praise |
|      |           |             | insult 1 2 3 4 5 high praise |

13. In your opinion, **which line** of the *Avot v'Imahot* is the **most effective Shevach/** Praise of God, that “butters God up” the most before making requests in the next section? **Why?** \_\_\_\_\_

### Reading Questions

1. Draw lines between each syllable of the word below (ex. טַבּוּר):

גְּאוּלָּה

How many syllables are there total? \_\_\_\_\_

What does this word mean? \_\_\_\_\_

What event or story from the Torah is that referring to? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Draw lines between each syllable of the word below:

וּמוֹנְשֵׁי

How many syllables are there total? \_\_\_\_\_

3. The prefix that means “and” can take on two different shapes/sounds. What are they? \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

(Look back at the Color-Coded Translation on Page 8 if you need a hint!)

4. What suffix means “our/ours”? \_\_\_\_\_

Practice, Practice, Practice!

Many Reform, Reconstructionist, & Conservative communities also say the **BLUE** words.

Note: Bow on the **bolded** words.

**A אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ :**

**B שְׁכִינָה שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ :**

1 **בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ.**

2 אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב,

3 **אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רַבֵּקָה, אֱלֹהֵי לָאָה, וְאֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל.**

4 הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיוֹן

5 גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֶה הַכֹּל

6 וְזוֹכֵר חֲסִידֵי אֲבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת

7 וּמֵבִיא [גְּאוּלָּה / גּוֹאֵל] לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם

8 לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה :

9 מְלֶכֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגּוֹן :

10 **בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מִגּוֹן אַבְרָהָם [וְעִזְרַת / וּפּוֹקֵד] שָׂרָה.**

These two will sometimes be in reverse order, depending on the *siddur* (prayerbook). (This is why it's important to **read**, not memorize!)

Some Conservative & Modern Orthodox communities use the **RED** word instead of the blue.

Ask your teacher if you're not sure which one to say!



### Practice Online:

In **ShalomLearning**, practice with the JiTap soundboard directly in your browser!

Or open the **JiTap app** and search for “**Avot**” to find the Tap-and-Hear soundboard to practice.

Or search **YouTube** for “**Avot Prayer Karaoke**” – the videos should have a white background and black→blue letters.

## Avot v'Imahot: Get Creative!

Create a family tree of your family, and list under each person one of the **חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים** (good acts of kindness) they've done that you hope God would remember when considering how much **גְּאוּלָּה** (redemption) to bring **לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם**, to their children's children. (That's us!) Use the outline below or ask for a larger sheet of paper from your teacher so you have more space!

