

Guided Meditation on the Morning (Shacharit) Service

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(Whenever you see BIBO, read it aloud as “breathe in ... breathe out ...”)

PART 1 B 14 MINUTES

This hour-long meditation, in five parts, follows the themes of the morning, Shacharit service. In preparation for this meditation, please close your eyes and take a deep breath ... BIBO ... BIBO ... As you get into the meditation, your breaths will become slower ... and ... deeper, and more regular. And if you find yourself straying from the meditation, you can get back into it by simply focusing your attention on your breathing ... BIBO ... BIBO

Each breath that you take ... is a gift ... from the Source of all breaths ... each slow breath, each soul breath ... is a gift from the Source of all souls ... BIBO ... breathing in, receiving this gift ... from the Source, breathing out, returning this breath / to the Source ... BIBO ... BIBO

Elohai, neshama she=natata bi, t=horah hi ... Elohai ... my God ... the soul that You gave me ... is pure ... and the soul-breath that You give me each day .. is pure ... BIBO ... each slow breath .. is a cleansing breath ... let your breath ... circulate inside your body ... inside your soul ... washing away ... anger ... guilt ... frustration ... resentment ... breathing in ... receive a cleansing breath ... breathing out, letting go ... breathing in, receiving a cleansing breath ... breathing out, letting go ...

Elohai, neshama she=natata bi, t=hora hi ... the soul that You gave me is pure ... at=tah verata, You created it ... at=tah ye=tzarta ... You shaped it into my very own soul ... at=tah nefachta bi ... You breathed it into me ... You breathed it into me ... BIBO ... just as You breathed the very first breath into our ancestors in the Garden, so too You breathed my very first breath into me ... and at each moment You breathe into me nishmat chayyim, the soul-breath of life... BIBO ... BIBO

As you breathe in ... imagine receiving a breath from God ... as you breathe out ... imagine breathing back into God ... BIBO ... with every deep breath that we take, we form a connection with the Source of all breaths, with the source of all souls ...

as you breathe in ... imagine breathing in from God ... as you breathe out ...
imagine breathing back into God ... breathing in from God ... breathing out back
into God ... breathing in from God ... breathing back into God ... when we pause in
our busy lives and take a deep breath, we can reconnect with You through our
breathing ... breathing in ... from God ... breathing back ... to God ... breathing in ...
from God ... breathing back ... to God ...

God is only a breath away ... when we close our eyes, when we slow down our
breathing, when we take a deep breath, God is there ... God is only a breath away ...
BIBO ... BIBO ... even when we are not aware of You, You are aware of us ...
at=tah m=shamra b=kirbi ... You guard my soul within me at every moment ... You
are the Source of my soul ... You are the Source of my life ... ki imcha m=kor
chayyim ... for with You is the source of life ... b=orcha nireh or ... in Your light
we see light ... BIBO ... BIBO

In Your light we see light ... picture the sun and its rays of light and warmth
streaming to us ... and imagine a Source of energy beyond the sun ... much greater
than the sun ... with rays of blessings streaming towards us ... BIBO ... BIBO ...
You are the Source of all Blessings ... when we see Your light ... when we see
Your blessings streaming toward us ... we see how blessed we are ... when we
move into Your light ... when we turn and see Your light ... we are basked in light
... BIBO ... BIBO ...

In Your light we see light ... when we slow down, when we take a deep breath,
when we recognize Your light, we have the clarity to see how blessed we are ...
when we are in Your light, we can focus on our blessings ... Baruch atah Adonai,
asher natan lasechvi vina, l=havchin bein yom uvein lay=la B we thank you God
for giving us understanding to distinguish between light and darkness, to recognize
our blessings and not dwell on our challenges ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

PART 2 B 16 MINUTES

The birchot hashachar reminds us of all our blessings, blessings that we now
acknowledge ... as we breathe in, we receive these blessings, as we breathe out, we
gratefully acknowledge their Source ... BIBO ... each breath connects us with the
Source of all of our blessings ... with each breath we experience the blessings
streaming toward us from the Source ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

You provide us with the gift of life ... that we wake up each morning ... that we awaken each day to a new day, to new opportunities, to new experiences ... breathing in, receiving the gift of life ... breathing out, acknowledging that blessing ... BIBO ... You provide us with the gift of health ... how wondrous are our bodies ... how amazing that they function so well ... how miraculous that healing is possible when they don't ... breathing in, receiving the gift of health, breathing out, acknowledging that gift ... breathing in, receiving the gift of healing, breathing out, acknowledging that gift ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

You bless us with relationships ... families, friends, communities ... people who we care about ... people who care about us ... You provide each of us with our unique abilities and personalities ... each in Your image ... yet each very different ... breathing in, receiving these blessings ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging their Source ... the Source of all blessings ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

You have created us in Your image ... giving us the gift of compassion ... giving us the ability to love abundantly and unconditionally ... Baruch attah Adonai, she=asani b=tzalmo ... BIBO ... You have created us free ... physically free ... spiritually free ... Baruch attah Adonai, she=asani ben chorin ... BIBO ... You have provided us with a rich heritage ... enabling us to link to generations past and to generations yet to come ... Baruch attah Adonai, she=asani Yisrael ... breathing in, receiving these blessings ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging their Source ... the Source of all Blessings ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

You have granted us the gift of sight ... and insight ... Baruch attah Adonai, pokeach ivrim ... Food, clothing and shelter come from You ... Baruch attah Adonai, malbish arumim ... You enable us to break the chains that bind us ... Baruch attah Adonai, matir asurim ... and You enable us to stand tall despite all the things that push us down ... Baruch attah Adonai, zokef k=fufim ... breathing in, receiving those blessings ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging their Source ... the Source of all Blessings ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

You have made the world predictable and safe ... Baruch attah Adonai, roka ha=aretz al hamayim ... You have given us the abilities to take care of ourselves ... Baruch attah Adonai, she=asah li kol tzorki ... and You provide us guidance and direction in our daily lives and in our life=s journey ... Baruch attah Adonai, she=heichin mitzadai ... breathing in, receiving these blessings ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging their Source ... the Source of all Blessings ... BIBO

...BIBO ...

You give us courage and strength ... Baruch attah Adonai, ozer Yisrael bigvurah ... and You help us use that strength wisely ... You give us a sense of dignity and beauty ... Baruch attah Adonai, oter Yisrael betifarah ... and when we need an extra measure of energy and strength, You provide that as well ... Baruch attah Adonai, hanotein la=ya=ef ko=ach ... breathing in, receiving those blessings ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging their Source ... the Source of all Blessings ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

When we step into God=s presence through our breathing ... when we turn to face God=s light ... we can see the light in our own lives ... so as we continue to breathe in ... and breathe out ... picture some of the blessings in your life ... one at a time ... and as you breathe in, recognize that blessing ... as you breathe out, gratefully acknowledge its Source ... breathing in, recognizing a blessing ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging its Source ... breathing in, recognizing a blessing ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging its Source ... breathing in, recognizing a blessing ... breathing out, gratefully acknowledging its Source ... the Source of all blessings ... BIBO ...

So many blessings ... we can=t even list them all ... they are beyond count ... we are not even aware of all of them ... yet Your blessings are always here ... we haven=t done anything to earn them ... for Your love for us is unconditional ... po=te=ach et yadecha, u=masbia l=chol chai ratzon ... You open Your hand, and freely provide each living being with sustenance ... Your blessings flow to us freely and unceasingly ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

And so we bless You for blessing us so richly ... so abundantly ... Barchu et Adonai Ham=vorach ... we acknowledge and bless You, the Source of all of our blessings, for all the blessings that You provide us ... Baruch Adonai ham=vorach l=olam va=ed ... we trust that Your blessings will continue forever ... may we continue forever to bless You for Your blessings ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

PART 3 B 13.5 MINUTES

Our teachers choreographed the Amidah as our audience with God. The focus of the initial part of the morning service is thus on our getting ourselves properly positioned ... by becoming aware of our blessings, by recognizing God as their

Source, and by gratefully acknowledging them. Our next task is to review and refine our understanding of God, to properly position God in our minds and hearts, so to speak, for the audience that we call the Amidah. Until now we have focused on God as the Source of our blessings, but as we turn to the Sh=ma, and the blessings surrounding the Sh=ma, different ways of envisioning God are presented. So take a deep breath as we begin the next step in our Shacharit journey. BIBO ... BIBO ...

The first of the two berachot ... before the Sh=ma ... envisions You as Creator ... Creator of light ... Creator of darkness ... Creator of all things ... You created the world at the beginning of time ... and You create the world anew each day ... ham=chadesh b=tuvo b=chol yom tamid ma-a-sei b=rei-shit ... You created the world ... and You are beyond the world ... God of space ... God of time ... God beyond space ... God beyond time ... God of eternity ... God of infinity ... God the power behind and beyond the universe ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

The second berachah before the Sh=ma envisions God as lover ... ahavah rabba ahavtanu Adonai Eloheinu ... with great love ... with unbounded love ... with unconditional love ... you love us ... Adonai our God ... You love the people Israel ... You love the whole world ... You love all of creation ... You love each one of us ... with ahava rabba ... with great love ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

One beracha speaks of the distant God ... the God of the universe ... who is far beyond us ... and the other beracha speaks of the God who is nearby ... who is involved in a relationship with us ... who is close to us ... and within us ... one beracha speaks of the God who controls everything ... the other beracha speaks of the God who provides everything ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

When we recite the Sh=ma we declare that these two images of God are one ... that the transcendent God ... is the same as the immanent God ... that the powerful God ... is the same as the personal God ... that the God of the universe ... is the God that cares about us ... that the God who cares about us ... is the God of the universe ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

We have other images of God ... sometimes we envision You as a shepherd who takes care of us ... and guides us ... sometimes we envision You as a sheltering presence ... who spreads over us a tabernacle of peace, a sukkat shalom ... sometimes we envision You as a rock ... as a source of strength ... sometimes we

envision You as a parent ... in whose house we are always welcome ... sometimes we envision You as a partner who works with us at every step of our life's journey ... and sometimes we envision You as the source of our help ... as the source of our salvation ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

In addition to the images of God in the siddur, we each have our personal and individual ways of envisioning God ... so now bring your own images to mind ... and complete the phrase AI envision You as ...@ ... AI envision You as ...@ BIBO ... BIBO ...

At this time of our lives, we may be able to relate to God using certain images but not others ... but times may come when we will need to speak to God using a different image and a different name ... so we need to be aware of the many ways we envision God ... and we need to remember that the other images are always available to us ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

As we say the Sh'ma, we affirm that You are one ... that all of these images of God are but images ... that You encompass all the ways that we envision You ... that all of these images ... are images of one God ... that your unity transcends all of our imaginings of You ... hinchah echod b'chol dimyonot ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

Listen, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One ... Sh=ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad ... BIBO ... BIBO ... Here's a suggestion: Each time I say the word AShma@ or the word AListen@, insert your own name in place of "Israel" ... Listen ... Adonai is our God, Adonai is One ... Sh=ma ... Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad ... Listen ... the God of the universe is your personal God ... Listen ... your personal God is the God of the universe ... Listen ... God is available to you in each of these images ... each of these images is just another face of God ... Listen ... whenever and however you call to God, God is near ... karov Adonai l=chol kor=av ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

PART 4 B 9 minutes

Sh=ma Yisraeil, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad ... Adonai Eloheinu ... Adonai is our God ... the Creator of the universe is present in our lives ... and that is true ... Adonai Eloheichem Emet ... BIBO ... breathing in, Adonai is your God ... breathing out, acknowledging that to be true ... breathing in, Adonai Eloheichem ... breathing out, emet ... breathing in, Adonai Eloheichem ... breathing out, emet ... BIBO ...

BIBO ...

You are our God ... just as You were God of our ancestors ... You are present in our lives ... just as You were present for our ancestors ... You are a source of strength to us ... just as You strengthened our ancestors ... You help free us from our tight spots ... just as You freed our ancestors from their mitzrayim ... from their confinement in Egypt ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

Whenever we turn to You, You are there for us ... providing courage and strength ... assistance and guidance ... insight and serenity ... Baruch attah Adonai, ga'al Yisrael ... You are the redeemer of Israel ... You are the redeemer of each one of us ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

With a sense that God can make a difference in our lives, we imagine taking three steps forward ... three steps closer to God ... in order to begin the Amidah ...

Baruch attah Adonai ... Source of all Blessings ... Eloheinu ... veilohei avoteinu ... we come before You as the children of ancestors who trusted in You ... and we come before You as individuals striving to understand Your essence ... striving to seek Your presence ... we recognize You as the God of creation, mighty and awesome ... and at the same time we acknowledge that You hold the whole world in Your hands ... that You care for us, that You provide for us, that You help us ... because that is Your Essence ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

And so Ribbono Shel Olam, we come before You as human beings ... imperfect and incomplete ... to stand in Your presence and speak from our hearts ... to tell you of our shortcomings and our needs ... and to pray that we will be able to tap into the stream of blessings that constantly flow from You to all of us ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

Where I feel confused, help me find clarity ... where I feel lost, help me find direction ... where I feel broken, help me find healing ... where I feel guilt, help me find forgiveness ... BIBO ... BIBO ... where I feel turmoil, help me find serenity ... where I feel fragmented, help me find wholeness ... where I feel fearful, help me find courage ... where I feel apprehensive, help me find hope ... BIBO ... BIBO ... where I feel powerless, help me find strength ... where I am powerless, help me find acceptance ... where I feel alone, help me experience Your presence ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

Sh=ma koleinu adonai eloheinu ... listen to our voices ... listen to my voice ...
ribbono shel olam ... loving and awesome God ... for we know that You hear all of
our voices with compassion ... that Your blessings flow abundantly ... and are
available to us whenever we turn to You and seek Your blessings ... Baruch attah
Adonai, shomei=a t=fillah ... for You receive our prayers with love and with
compassion ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

PART 5 B 9 minutes

We now turn to expressing our gratitude for all the blessings we receive ... imagine
a table in the center of the room, an altar to which you can bring your offering of
thanksgiving ... an offering of words ... we thank God for our blessings by saying
Athank You, God@ for our blessings.... Ribbono shel Olam, there are so many
things that we are thankful for ... and so we come to You to offer You our thanks ...
for the many blessings we receive ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

Each time you breathe in, focus on a particular blessing ... and each time you
breathe out ...express your thanks for that blessing ... place your word-offering on
your altar ... breathing in, focusing on a blessing ... breathing out, giving thanks ...
breathing in, focusing on a blessing ... breathing out, giving thanks for that blessing
... breathing in, focusing on a blessing ... breathing out, giving thanks for that
blessing ...

Modim anachnu lach ... we acknowledge Your presence in our lives ... modim
anachnu lach ... we thank You for each one of our blessings ...modim anachnu lach
... we bow to You in gratitude ... for the many gifts that You provide ... You are
always with us ...Your goodness and compassion are always available to us ...
hatov, ki lo chalu rachamecha ... mei=olam kivinu lach ... we can always trust that
You will be there ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

As we prepare to leave the Amidah, we return to the vision of God=s light
streaming toward us ... Borcheinu avinu, kulanu k=echad, b=or panecha ... bless
us, loving Parent ... each of us individually ... all of us together ... with the light of
Your face ... for with the rays of that light we receive abundant blessings ...
culminating in the gift of shalom ... tranquility ... serenity ... harmony ... spiritual
health ... wholeness ... and peace ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

V=tov b=ei-ne-cha l=va-rech et am-cha Yis-ra-eil b=chol eit u-v=chol sha-ah bish-lo-me-cha ... in Your eyes, it is Agood@ that You bless us and everyone .. at every moment ... with the gift of shalom ... the serenity we seek .. the wholeness we desire ... the peace that we crave ... are right here ... available to us all the time ... when we step into God=s presence ... when we turn to God=s light ... when we ask God for shalom ... we find it .. Baruch At-tah Adonai, oseh hashalom ... Blessed are you, Adonai, you are the One who makes peace, who makes shalom ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

You make peace and harmony in the heavens ... You provide the gift of shalom to each of us ... we hope and trust that You will soon bring shalom to our people and to all peoples ... oseh shalom bimromav ... hu ya=aseh shalom ... aleinu ... v=al kol yisraeil ... v=al kol yoshvei teiveil ... to which we respond AAmen@ B may it be so ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

One day ... everyone ... everywhere ... will realize that all of us worship the same God ... that though we have different visions of You ... all of our visions are one ... and that we can live together in harmony and unity ... on that day, You will be One ... and Your essence will be One ... ba=yom ha-hu yih-yeh Adonai echad ... u-sh=mo echad ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

Yih-yu l=ratzon imrei fi ... ve-heg-yon libi l=fanecha, Adonai tzuri v=go-a-li ... may the words of my mouth ... and the meditations of all of our hearts ... resonate with You, Adonai ... You are our Rock ... source of our strength ... You are our Redeemer ... source of our hope ... Amein ... BIBO ... BIBO ...

This concludes the Shacharit meditation service. You certainly may keep your eyes closed and continue breathing for as long as you like. When you are ready to return to the world around us, slowly open your eyes. May the rest of your day be filled with blessings.