

# *Davening At Robinson's Arch*

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with assistance from Percy Bysshe Shelley and Rav

**THE TRAVELLER:** The first day off the plane, they took us to the architectural dig at Tel Maresha, the ruins of an ancient Edomite civilization whose inhabitants fled rather than convert to Judaism.

**THE POET:** I met a traveler from an antique land,  
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
Stand in the desert...

**THE TRAVELLER:** We found bones and stones and shards of pottery, coins and lamps and carvings, relics of a great civilization. One girl found a sculptured foot, the base of some luckless divinity smashed long ago. "What a find!" said our guide. "Look at this amazing scrollwork on the toes!"

**THE POET:** Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,  
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,  
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,  
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read,  
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things...

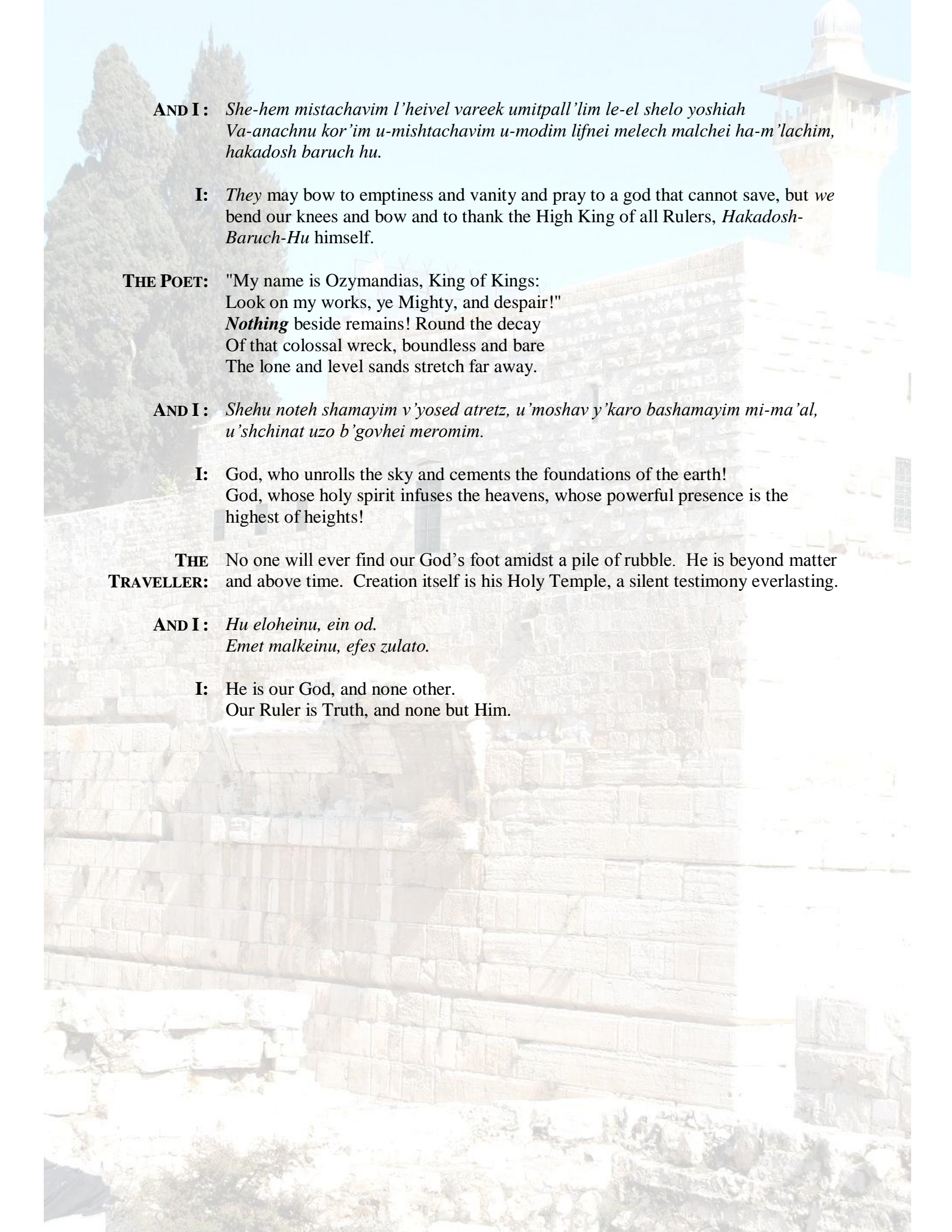
**THE TRAVELLER:** Next morning found us davening at the Southern Wall excavations of the Kotel, a sunken valley of antiquity in the shadow of the Temple Mount.

**AND I:** *Aleinu l'shabeach l'adon hakol, latet gedulah l'yotzer bereshit,  
She'lo asanu k'goyei ha-aratzot v'lo samanu k'mishpachot ha-adamah,  
She'lo sam chelkeinu kahem, v'goraleinu k'chol hamonam,*

**I:** We should thank the Lord of Everything, to pay tribute to the Maker of Creation, That he did not make us like the nations of the other lands, and did not designate us like the other families of the earth. He did not make our destiny like theirs, or our fate like that of the crowds around us

**THE POET:** which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,  
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;  
And on the pedestal these words appear:  
"My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"  
Nothing beside remains.

**THE TRAVELLER:** The ruined walls around us tower fifty feet above our heads, framing the blue morning sky in blocks of white stone. They are twenty times deeper than they are tall, foundations anchored in two thousand years of destiny.



**AND I:** *She-hem mistachavim l'heivel vareek umitpall'lim le-el shelo yoshiah  
Va-anachnu kor'im u-mishtachavim u-modim lifnei melech malchei ha-m'lachim,  
hakadosh baruch hu.*

**I:** *They may bow to emptiness and vanity and pray to a god that cannot save, but we  
bend our knees and bow and to thank the High King of all Rulers, Hakadosh-  
Baruch-Hu himself.*

**THE POET:** "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"  
*Nothing* beside remains! Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

**AND I:** *Shehu noteh shamayim v'yosed atretz, u'moshav y'karo bashamayim mi-ma'al,  
u'shchinat uzo b'govhei meromim.*

**I:** God, who unrolls the sky and cements the foundations of the earth!  
God, whose holy spirit infuses the heavens, whose powerful presence is the  
highest of heights!

**THE TRAVELLER:** No one will ever find our God's foot amidst a pile of rubble. He is beyond matter  
and above time. Creation itself is his Holy Temple, a silent testimony everlasting.

**AND I:** *Hu eloheinu, ein od.  
Emet malkeinu, efes zulato.*

**I:** He is our God, and none other.  
Our Ruler is Truth, and none but Him.