Samuel Field Y Adult Center

History Of Jewish Prayer

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Presented By Abe Katz, Founding Director,
The Beurei Hatefila Institute-www.beureihatefila.com

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Prayer In The Bible

1. Acts That Constitute Non Verbal Prayer;

2. Confessional Prayers;

3. Incidents In Which The Bible Relates That A Person Prayed But What He Said As Part Of His Prayer Is Not Revealed;

4. Incidents Where You Would Expect A Prayer To Have Been Said But No Prayer Is Recorded In The Bible;

5. Prayers That Are Recorded In The Bible:

   A. Vows;

   B. The Thirteen Attributes Of G-d;

   C. The Priestly Blessings;

   D. The Sin Of Miriam;

   E. The Prayer That Accompanies The Offering Of The New Fruits;

   F. Kriyat Shma;

   G. The Ten Commandments;

   H. Poetry.

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The Beurei Hatefila Institute-www.beureihatefila.com

This class is dedicated to the memory of my mother-in-law, Helene Pruslin, whose Yahrzeit will be commemorated on the 2nd day of Tamuz, June 10, 2013

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Prayer In The Bible

First Reference To Prayer In Bible

Non Verbal Prayer

1. And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bore Cain, and said, I have acquired a man from the Lord. 2. And she again bore his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord. 4. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat of it. And the Lord had respect for Abel and for his offering; 5. But for Cain and for his offering he did not have respect. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. 6. And the Lord said to Cain, Why are you angry? and why is your countenance fallen? 7. If you do well, shall you not be accepted? and if you do not well, sin lies at the door. And to you shall be his desire, and yet you may rule over him. 8. And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. 9. And the Lord said to Cain, Where is Abel your brother? And he said, I know not; Am I my brother's keeper? 10. And He said, What have you done? the voice of your brother's blood cries to me from the ground. 11. And now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand; 12. When you till the ground, it shall not henceforth yield to you her strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shall you be in the earth.

Confessional Prayer

13. And Cain said to the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear.
14. Behold, you have driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from your face shall I be hidden; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one who finds me shall slay me.
15. And the Lord said to him, Therefore whoever slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

Adam's Reaction To Having Sinned

1. Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, Has God said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2. And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, you shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. 4. And the serpent said to the woman, surely you shall not die; 5. For God knows that in the day you eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her; and he ate. 7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9. And the Lord God called to Adam, and said to him, Where are you?
10. And he said, I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11. And he said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree, which I commanded you that you should not eat? 12. And the man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate. 13. And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I ate. 14. And the Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life; 15. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. 16. To the woman he said, I will greatly multiply the pain of your child bearing; in sorrow you shall bring forth children; and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you. 17. And to Adam he said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it; cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life; 18. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; 19. In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return to the ground; for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust shall you return.

Additional Examples Of Non-Verbal Prayer In The Bible

Building Altars

Bereishis 12, 7-And the Lord appeared to Abram, and said, To your seed will I give this land; and there Abram built an altar to the Lord, who appeared to him.

Bereishis 46, 1-And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

Maseches Berachos 26b.-It has been stated: R. Jose son of R. Hanina said: The daily prayer services were instituted by the Patriarchs. R. Joshua b. Levi says: The Tefillahs were instituted to replace the daily sacrifices. It has been taught in accordance with R. Jose b. Hanina, and it has been taught in accordance with R. Joshua b. Levi. It has been taught in accordance with R. Jose b. Hanina: Abraham instituted the morning Tefillah, as it says, And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he had stood, and 'standing' means only prayer, as it says, Then stood up Phineas and prayed. Isaac instituted the afternoon Tefillah, as it says, And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at evening time, and 'meditation' means only prayer, as it says, A prayer of the afflicted when he faints and pours out his meditation before the Lord. Jacob instituted the evening prayer, as it says, And he arrived upon the place, and arrival means prayer, as it says, Therefore pray not you for this people neither lift up prayer nor cry for them, neither make intercession to Me.

Incidents In Which The Bible Relates That A Person Prayed But What He Said As Part Of His Prayer Is Not Revealed

Bereishis 25, 21. And Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Bereishis 30, 22. And God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her, and opened her womb.

Incidents Where You Would Expect A Prayer To Be Said But No Prayer Is Recorded In The Bible

The Binding Of Isaac

Midrash-Abraham placed Isaac on the altar. The eyes of Abraham were fixed on the eyes of Isaac and the eyes of Isaac were fixed on the heavens. Tears were falling from the eyes of Abraham to the point that he appeared to be drowning in them.

The Jeruslaem Talmud-Abraham reminded G-d that upon being commanded to sacrifice his son Isaac, Abraham could have challenged G-d since G-d had just advised Abraham that Abraham's descendants would be born from Isaac but Abraham remained silent. Abraham then asked G-d that in return for his accepting G-d's decree and not challenging it, G-d should always remember that moment whenever the Jewish People sin in the future. That is why the Jewish People remind G-d of the Binding of Isaac during their prayers on the High Holidays reminders.

Noah And The Flood

Did Noah pray that G-d not destroy the world with the Flood?

In contrast, Abraham prayed for the people of Sodom:

Bereishis 18, 20. And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave; 21. I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry, which has come to me; and if not, I will know. 22. And the men turned their faces from there, and went toward Sodom; but Abraham still stood before the Lord. 23. And Abraham drew near, and said, Will you also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24. Perhaps there are only fifty righteous inside the city; will you also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous who are in it? 25. Be it far from you to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, be it far from you; Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 26. And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous inside the city, then I will spare the whole place for their sakes. 27. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes; 28. Perhaps there shall lack five of the fifty righteous; will you destroy the whole city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty five, I will not destroy it. 29. And he spoke to him yet again, and said, Perhaps there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. 30. And he said to him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak; Perhaps there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. 31. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak to the Lord; Perhaps there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. 32. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once; Possibly ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. 33. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left talking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

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Prayer In The Bible

Prayers Found In The Bible

Vows

Bereishis 28, 20. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If G-d will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and garment to put on, 21. So that I come back to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my G-d; 22. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be G-d's house; and of all that you shall give me I will surely give a tenth to you.

Va'Yikra 7, 16-If the sacrifice he is offering is based on a vow or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he brings his sacrifice and on the next day he may also eat the remainder of it.

Bamidbar 30, 3- If a man issues a vow to the Lord or swears an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

Devarim 23, 22-When you shall utter a vow to the Lord your G-d, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the Lord your G-d will surely require it of you. Your delay will cause you a sin.

Confessional Prayers

Va'Yikra 5, 5-And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing;

Va'Yikra 16, 21- (On Yom Kippur) And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of an appointed man into the wilderness;

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The Thirteen Attributes Of G-d

Shemos 34, 5. And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. 6. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth generation.

Maseches Rosh Hashonah 17b-And 'the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed [etc.]. R. Johanan said: Were it not written in the text, it would be impossible for us to say such a thing; this verse teaches us that the Holy One, blessed be He, drew his robe round Him like the reader of a congregation and showed Moses the order of prayer. He said to him: Whenever Israel sin, let them carry out this service before Me, and I will forgive them.

The Priestly Blessings

Bamidbar 6, 22. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 23. Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying: with these words, you shall bless the People of Israel, saying to them: 24. May the Lord bless you, and keep you; 25. May the Lord shine His face upon you, and be gracious to you; 26. May the Lord favor you, and grant you peace. 27. And they shall put my name upon the people of Israel and I will bless them.

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The Sin Of Miriam

Bamidbar 12, 11. And Aaron said to Moses, Oh, my lord, I beg you, lay not the sin upon us, because we have done foolishly, and because we have sinned. 12. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb. 13. And Moses cried to the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech you.

The Prayer That Accompanies The Offering Of The New Fruits

Devarim 26, 5. And you shall speak and say before the Lord your G-d, A wandering Aramean was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous; 6. And the Egyptians dealt ill with us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard slavery; 7. And when we cried to the Lord G-d of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labor, and our oppression; 8. And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great awesomeness, and with signs, and with wonders; 9. And he has brought us to this place, and has given us this land, a land that flows with milk and honey. 10. And now, behold, I have brought the first fruits of the land, which you, O Lord, have given me. And you shall set it before the Lord your G-d, and worship before the Lord your G-d.

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Kriyat Shma

Part 1-Devarim 6, 4. Hear, O Israel; The Lord our G-d is one Lord; 5. And you shall love the Lord your G-d with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. 6. And these words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart; 7. And you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8. And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9. And you shall write them upon the posts of your house, and on your gates.

Part 2-Devarim 11, 13. And it shall come to pass, if you shall give heed diligently to my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your G-d, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, 14. That I will give you the rain of your land in its due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, and your wine, and your oil. 15. And I will send grass in your fields for your cattle, that you may eat and be full. 16. Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and you turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; 17. And then the Lord's anger be kindled against you, and he closed the skies, that there should be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest you perish quickly from off the good land which the Lord gives you. 18. Therefore shall you lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. 19. And you shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 20. And you shall write them upon the door posts of your house, and upon your gates; 21. That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

Part 3-Bamidbar 15, 37. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 38. Speak to the people of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a thread of blue; 39. And it shall be to you for a fringe, that you may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that you seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, which incline you to go astray; 40. That you may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy to your G-d. 41. I am the Lord your G-d, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your G-d; I am the Lord your G-d.

The Ten Commandments

Shemos 20, 1. And God spoke all these words, saying, 2. I am the Lord your God, who have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3. You shall have no other gods before me.

4. You shall not make for you any engraved image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5. You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6. And showing mercy to thousands of those who love me, and keep my commandments.

7. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

8. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work; 10. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates; 11. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and made it holy.

12. Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you.

13. You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

14. You shall not covet your neighbor's house, you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is your neighbor's.

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

The Role That Psalms (Tehillim) Played During The Temple Periods

Historical Timeline

- Exodus From Egypt-end of the 1200's BCE
- King Saul-1029-1007 BCE
- King David-1000-967 BCE
- King Solomon-970-928 BCE
- First Temple Built-965 BCE
- First Temple Destroyed-586 BCE
- Permission to Rebuild the Temple-538 BCE
- Purim Story
- Inauguration Of The Second Temple-516 BCE
- Macabee Revolt-167 BCE
- Destruction Of Second Temple-70 CE

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

Introduction To The Book Of Psalms

Nachum Sarna, On The Book Of Psalms, Schocken, 1993.

In The Law and the Prophets, G-d reaches out to man. The initiative is His. The message is His. He communicates, we receive. Our G-d-given free will allows us to be receptive, to be accepting, to turn a deaf ear, to reject. In the Psalms, human beings reach out to G-d. The initiative is human. The language is human. We make an effort to communicate. He receives; He chooses to respond or not, according to His inscrutable wisdom. He gives His assent or withholds it.

In the Psalms, the human soul extends itself beyond its confining, sheltering, impermanent house of clay. It strives for contact with the Ultimate Source of all life. It gropes for an experience of the divine presence. The biblical Psalms are essentially a record of the human quest for G-d.

The Psalm Of The Day In The Time Of The Temple

MISHNAH . The following are the Psalms that were chanted in the temple. On the first day of the week they used to say: (Chapter 24) the earth is the lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. On the second day they used to say: (Chapter 48) great is the Lord and highly to be praised, in the city of our G-d. On the third day they used to say: (Chapter 22) G-d stands in the congregation of G-d, in the midst of the judges He judges. On the fourth day they used to say: (Chapter 94) O Lord, You G-d to whom vengeance belongs, You G-d to whom vengeance belongs, shine forth. On the fifth day they used to say: (Chapter 81) sing aloud unto G-d our strength, shout unto the G-d of Jacob. On the sixth day they used to say: (Chapter 93) the Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty, the Lord is clothed, He has girded himself with strength. On Sabbath they used to say: (Chapter 92), a Psalm, a song for the Sabbath day: A Psalm, a song for the time to come, for the day that will be all Sabbath and rest for everlasting life.

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalm For The First Day Of The Week

Psalms Chapter 24
1. A Psalm of David. The whole world and what is in it belong to G-d, the earth and those who dwell in it.
2. For G-d He has founded the earth upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers.
3. Who shall ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy place?
4. He who has clean hands, and a pure heart; who has not taken My name in vain, nor sworn deceitfully.
5. He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the G-d of his salvation.
6. This is the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face, O Lord of Jacob.
7. Gates of the Temple, swing open! Be lifted up, everlasting doors! So that the King of glory may enter.
8. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.
9. Gates of the Temple, swing open! Lift up the everlasting doors! So that the King of glory may enter.
10. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. G-d has spoken.

Psalm For The Third Day Of The Week

Psalms Chapter 82
1. A Psalm of Asaph. G-d stands in the heavenly council; He judges among the judges.
2. How long will you judge unjustly, and show favor to the wicked? G-d has spoken
.
3. Do justice to the poor and the orphan; vindicate the afflicted and needy.
4. Save the poor and needy; rescue them from the hand of the wicked.
5. The judges on earth do not know, nor will they understand; they walk in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.
6. G-d had once declared: You are angels; and all of you are sons of the most High.
7. Nevertheless, you shall die like men, and fall like any mortal prince.
8. Arise, O G-d, judge the earth; for all nations are subject to Your control.

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Psalm For The Sabbath

Psalms Chapter 92

1. A Psalm Song for the Sabbath day.
2. It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Your name, O most high!
3. To declare Your loving kindness in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night,
4. Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the harp, to the melody of the lyre.
5. For you, Lord, have made me glad through Your work; I will sing of Your handiwork - creation- with joy.
6. O Lord, how great are Your works! And how deep are Your thoughts!
7. A stupid man does not know; nor can a fool understand this.
8. Evil may sprout like grass, and when it appears that all the evil doers flourish; but they will be destroyed forever;
9. But you, O Lord, will be honored forever.
10. For, behold, Your enemies, O Lord, for, behold, Your enemies shall perish; all the evil doers shall be scattered.
11. As if I were a wild ox You raise up my horn in triumph; I shall be annointed with fresh oil.
12. My eye has seen the downfall of my enemies, and my ears have heard the doom of the wicked who rise up against me.
13. The righteous flourish like the palm tree; he grows like a cedar in Lebanon.
14. Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our G-d.
15. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;
16. To declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalms In Preparation For Prayer

Psalms Chapter 145

1. David's Song of Praise. I will extol You, my G-d, O king; and I will bless Your name for ever and ever.
2. Every day I will bless you; and I will praise Your name for ever and ever.
3. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness cannot be understood.
4. One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall recall Your mighty acts.
5. I will speak of the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and of Your wondrous works.
6. And men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts; and I will declare Your greatness.
7. They shall utter the fame of Your great goodness, and shall sing of Your righteousness.
8. The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and full of abundant loving kindness.
9. The Lord is good to all; and His compassion is extended to all His works.
10. All Your creations shall praise You, O Lord; and Your pious ones shall bless You.
11. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, and talk of Your power;
12. To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom.
13. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations.
14. The Lord provides support for all who fall, and raises up all those who are subjugated.
15. The eyes of all wait upon You; and You give them their food in due season.
16. You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.
17. The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and gracious in all His works.
18. The Lord is near to all those who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.
19. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them.
20. The Lord preserves all those who love Him; but all the wicked He will destroy.
21. My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord; and let all creatures bless His holy name for ever and ever.

Samuel Field Y Adult Center
Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalms In Preparation For Prayer

Psalms Chapter 148
1. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest of heights.
2. Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts.
3. Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all you stars of light.
4. Praise Him, heavens of heavens, and you waters that are above the heavens.
5. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for He commanded, and they were created.
6. And He established them for ever and ever; He has made a decree which shall not be overturned.
7. Praise the Lord from the earth, creatures of the sea, and all the depths;
8. Fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind doing the All Powerful's bidding;
9. The mountains, and all hills; all fruit trees, and all cedars;
10. Wild animals and all domesticated ones; those that creep, and birds that fly;
11. Kings of the earth, and all their subjects; leaders, and all judges of the earth;
12. Young men and young women; old men, and children;
13. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven.
14. He also raises the status of His people, therefore the pious ones praise Him, for the children of Israel are the people closest to Him. Hallelujah! (Praise the Lord!)

Psalms Chapter 150
1. Hallelujah! Praise G-d in His sanctuary! Praise Him in the heavens firmament of His power!
2. Praise Him for His mighty acts! Praise Him in accordance with His exceeding greatness!
3. Praise Him with the sound of the Shofar! Praise Him with the harp and the lyre!
4. Praise Him with the tambourine and dance! Praise Him with stringed instruments and the pipe!
5. Praise Him with sounding cymbals! Praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
6. Let every thing that breathes praise the Lord! Hallelujah!

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalms That Are Part Of Hallel-The Song Of Great Praise

Psalms Chapter 113

1. Hallelujah! Praise, O you servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.
2. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore.
3. From sunrise to sunset the Lord's name is to be praised.
4. The Lord is high above all nations, and His glory above the heavens.
5. Who is like the Lord our G-d, who dwells on high,
6. Who looks far down to behold the things that are on heaven, and on the earth!
7. He raises up the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap,
8. And He looks forward to placing the Jewish People among the nobility, with the honored of His people.
9. He gives the barren woman a home by making her a joyful mother of children. Hallelujah!

Psalms Chapter 115

1. Not for our benefit, O Lord, not for us, but in the interest of Your name, give glory, on account of Your loving kindness, and for Your forthrightness.
2. Why should the nations say, Where is the G-d of the Jews?
3. Is not our G-d in the heavens; Can He not do whatever He pleases.
4. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.
5. The idols have mouths, but they cannot speak; they have eyes, but they can not see;
6. They have ears, but they cannot hear; they have noses, but they can not smell;
7. They have hands, but they cannot feel; they have feet, but they can not walk; and with their throats, they cannot speak.
8. May they who make the idols become like them, and so too every one who trusts in them!
9. O Israel, trust in the Lord; He is the source of their help and their protection.
10. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; He is the source of their help and their protection.
11. You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is the source of their help and their protection.
12. The Lord has been mindful of us; He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron.
13. He will bless those who fear the Lord, both small and great.
14. May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children.
15. May you be blessed of the Lord who made heaven and earth.
16. The heavens are the heavens of the Lord; but He has given the earth to the children of men.
17. The dead cannot praise the Lord, nor can any who go down into Hell.
18. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Hallelujah!

Samuel Field Y Adult Center
Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalms That Are Part Of Hallel-The Song Of Great Praise

Psalms Chapter 116

1. I love the Lord, because He has heard my voice and my supplications.
2. Because He has inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live.
3. The cords of death surrounded me, and the pains of Hell seized me. I found trouble and sorrow.
4. Then I called upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech you, save my soul.
5. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful.
6. The Lord preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me.
7. Return to your rest, O my soul; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.
8. For You have saved my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.
9. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.
10. I kept faith, even when I said, I am greatly afflicted;
11. I said in my haste, All men are false.
12. How shall I repay the Lord for all his benefits toward me?
13. I will raise the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.
14. I will redeem my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people.
15. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His pious ones.
16. O Lord, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your maidservant; You have freed my bonds.
17. I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.
18. I will redeem my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people,
19. In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalms That Are Part Of Hallel-The Song Of Great Praise
Psalms Chapter 118

1. O give thanks to the Lord; for He is good; because His loving kindness endures for ever.
2. Let Israel now say, that His loving kindness endures for ever.
3. Let the house of Aaron now say, that His loving kindness endures for ever.
4. Let now those who fear the Lord say, that His loving kindness endures for ever.
5. In distress I called upon the Lord; the Lord answered me, and set me free.
6. The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do to me?
7. The Lord takes my part with those who help me; therefore I shall watch those who hate me receive their due.
8. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in man.
9. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.
10. All nations surround me; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.
11. They surround me; indeed, they surround me; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.
12. They surround me like bees; they will be overcome quickly as is a burning bush; for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.
13. My enemies pushed me hard so that I might fall; but the Lord helped me.
14. The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation.
15. The voice of rejoicing and salvation will be heard in the tents of the righteous; the right hand of the Lord fights for me.
16. The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord acts bravely.
17. I shall not die, but live, and shall let all know of the great deeds of the Lord.
18. The Lord has chastised me severely; but He has not given me over to death.
19. Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord;
20. This is the gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.
21. I will shower You with words of thanks; for You have answered me, and You have become my salvation.
22. The stone which the builders rejected (a metaphor for the Jewish People) has risen to become the corner stone of the world.
23. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.
24. This is the day which the Lord has caused to occur; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
25. Save us, we beseech You, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech You, please send us prosperity!
26. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; we have blessed you from the house of the Lord.
27. G-d is the Lord, who has shown us light; let us look forward to binding sacrifices in a building that will never again be destroyed.
28. You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You.
29. O give thanks to the Lord; for He is good; for His loving kindness endures for ever.

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalms Recited In Times Of Trouble

Psalms Chapter 121

1. A Song of Maalot. I will lift up my eyes to the mountains. From where will my help arrive?
2. My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
3. He will not let your foot stumble; He who watches you will not slumber.
4. Behold, He who guards the Jewish People shall neither slumber nor sleep.
5. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade upon your right hand.
6. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
7. The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul.
8. The Lord shall preserve your goings out and your comings in from this time forth, and for evermore.

Psalms Chapter 130

1. A Song of Maalot. Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord.
2. Lord, hear my voice; let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.
3. If You, Lord, should consider all my iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?
4. But there is forgiveness with You, and for that we hold You in awe.
5. I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I place my hope.
6. My soul waits for the Lord with more expectation than do night watchmen waiting for the morning to arrive.
7. Let Israel hope in the Lord; for from the Lord we can expect loving kindness, and with Him we look forward to bountiful redemption.
8. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Prayer During The Temple Periods

Psalms Recited Before The Grace After Meals

Psalms Chapter 126

1. A Song of Maalot. When the Lord brought back the captives of Zion, we were like men who dream.
2. Then our mouths were filled with laughter, and our tongues with singing; then they said among the nations, The Lord has done great things for them.
3. The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.
4. Bring back our captives, O Lord, like the streams in the Negev.
5. So that those who sow in tears, shall reap in joy.
6. He who goes forth weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, may he come back with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalms Chapter 137

1. By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; we also wept, when we remembered Zion.
2. We hung our lyres on the willows in its midst.
3. For there those who carried us away captive required of us to sing songs; and those who tormented us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
4. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?
5. If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand lose all function.
6. If I do not remember you, O Jerusalem, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.
7. Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites, the day of Jerusalem; they said, Raze it, raze it, to its foundation.
8. O daughter of Babylon, you are to be destroyed! Happy shall He be, who repays you for what you have done to us!
9. Happy shall He be, who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock!

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

Perhaps The Most Well Known Psalm

Psalms Chapter 23
1. A Psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
2. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters.
3. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
4. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff comfort me.
5. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
6. Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm Recited Beginning A Month Before The Jewish New Year

Psalms Chapter 27
1. A Psalm of David. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? 2. When the wicked, my enemies and my adversaries, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.
3. Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident.
4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.
5. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; under the cover of His tent shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock.
6. And now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies around me; therefore I will offer in his tent sacrifices of joy; I will sing, I will make music to the Lord.
7. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice; be gracious to me, and answer me.
8. My heart recalls that You said: Seek my face; And so, Your face, O Lord, will I seek!
9. Hide not Your face from me; push not Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; do not abandon me, nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.
10. For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me up.
11. Teach me Your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.
12. Do not give me up to the will of my enemies; for false witnesses have risen up against me, and they breathe out violence.
13. Let me believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.
14. Wait on the Lord; have a heart of courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; and wait on the Lord.

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Prayer During The Temple Periods

A Psalm Read Responsively

Psalms Chapter 136

1. O give thanks to the Lord; for he is good; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
2. O give thanks to the God of gods; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
3. O give thanks to the Lord of lords; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
4. To him who alone does great wonders; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
5. To him who by understanding made the heavens; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
6. To him who stretched out the earth above the waters; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
7. To him who made great lights; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
8. The sun to rule by day; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
9. The moon and the stars to rule by night; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
10. To him who struck Egypt in their firstborn; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
11. And brought out Israel from among them; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
12. With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
13. To him who parted the Red Sea; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
14. And made Israel pass through the midst of it; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
15. And overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
16. To him who led his people through the wilderness; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
17. To him who struck great kings; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
18. And slew great kings; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
19. Sihon king of the Amorites; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
20. And Og the king of Bashan; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
21. And gave their land for a heritage; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
22. A heritage to Israel his servant; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
23. Who remembered us in our low estate; For his loving kindness endures for ever;
24. And has redeemed us from our enemies; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
25. Who gives bread to all flesh; For his loving kindness endures for ever.
26. O give thanks to the God of heaven; For his loving kindness endures for ever.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

The Definition Of The Oral Law

The Essential Talmud-Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, Basic Books 1976. Pages 10-11:

We know very little of the origins and early development of the oral law, since information on cultural and spiritual life in the First Temple era is generally sparse. But from various hints in the Bible, we can ascertain how the oral law evolved to interpret and complement written legislation. It is clear, in principle, that every written code of law must be accompanied by an oral tradition. In the first place, the oral tradition is inherent in the very act of transmitting the use of words, in the very preservation and study of a language. Every idea, every word in the written law must be handed down from generation to generation and explained to the young. Where simple, everyday words are concerned, this occurs automatically, as part of the normal transmission of the living language, but there are always rarer words that call for special elucidation. Furthermore, even in the most conservative society, language evolves and changes and the written documents of one era may be unclear to the next generation. As long as the Jewish people spoke and wrote biblical Hebrew, the transmission was carried out with ease, but even then, a tradition, an "oral law," was needed to preserve the meaning of words. The basic, simple vocabulary was preserved over the centuries and never aroused controversy or misunderstandings. But less common words, for example, nouns denoting objects, plants, animals, and so forth were not always decipherable without the backing of an oral tradition.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

The Transmission Of The Oral Law

Maseches Avos-Chapter One

MISHNAH 1. Moses received the torah at Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua; Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the Men of the Great Assembly.

MISHNAH 2. Simeon the Righteous was one of the last of the Men of the Great Assembly used to say: the world is based upon three things: the Torah, divine service, and the practice of kindliness.

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The Importance Of The Oral Law

Maseches Gittin 56a-Abba Sikra the head of the group that was defending Jerusalem was the son of the sister of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai. R. Johanan sent to him saying: Come to visit me privately. When Abba came to R. Johanan, he said to him: How long are you going to carry on in this way and kill all the people with starvation? He replied: What can I do? If I say a word to them, they will kill me. R. Johanan said: Devise some plan for me to escape. Perhaps I shall be able to save a little. He said to him: Pretend to be ill, and let everyone come to inquire about you. Bring something evil smelling and put it by you so that they will say you are dead. Let then your disciples get under your bed, but no others, so that they shall not notice that you are still light, since they know that a living being is lighter than a corpse. R. Johanan did so, and R. Eliezer went under the bier from one side and R. Joshua from the other. When they reached the door, some men wanted to put a lance through the bier. He said to them: Shall we cause the Romans to say. They have pierced their Master? They wanted to give it a push. He said to them: Shall we cause the Romans to say that they pushed their Master? They opened a town gate for him and he got out.

When he reached the Romans, R. Johanan said: Peace to you, O king, peace to you, O king. He, Vespasian, said: Your life is forfeit on two counts, one because I am not a king and you call me king, and again, if I am a king, why did you not come to me before now? R. Johanan replied: As for your saying that you are not a king, in truth you are a king, since if you were not a king Jerusalem would not be delivered into your hand, as it is written, And Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one. 'Mighty one' is an epithet applied only to a king, as it is written, And their mighty one shall be of themselves etc.; and Lebanon refers to the Sanctuary, as it says, This goodly mountain and Lebanon. As for your question, why if you are a king, I did not come to you till now, the answer is that the guards of the City of Jerusalem, among us did not allow me . . . At this point a messenger came to him from Rome saying, Up, for the Emperor is dead, and the notables of Rome have decided to make you head of the State. He had just finished putting on one boot. When he tried to put on the other he could not. He tried to take off the first but it would not come off. He said: What is the meaning of this? R. Johanan said to him: Do not worry: the good news has done it, as it says, Good tidings make the bone fat. What is the remedy? Let someone whom you dislike come and pass before you, as it is written, A broken spirit dries up the bones. He did so, and the boot went on. He said to him: Seeing that you are so wise, why did you not come to me till now? He said: Have I not told you? He retorted: I too have told you. Vespasian said: I am now going, and will send someone to take my place. You can, however, make a request of me and I will grant it. He said to him: Give me Jabneh and its Wise Men, and the family chain of Rabban Gamliel, and physicians to heal R. Zadok. R. Joseph, or some say R. Akiba, applied to him the verse, 'G-d turns wise men backward and makes their knowledge foolish'. He ought to have said to him; Let them the Jews off this time. He, however, thought that so much he would not grant, and so even a little would not be saved.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

Sample Page Of The Talmud

Tosafos →

← Rashi

Mishna

מאימתי קורין את שמע בערבין משעה שהכהנים נכנסים לאכול בתרומתן עד סוף האשמורת הראשונה דברי ר' אליעזר וחכמים אומרים עד חצות רבן גמליאל אומר עד שיעלה עמוד השחר מעשה ובאו בניו מבית המשתה אמרו לו לא קרינו את שמע אמר להם אם לא עלה עמוד השחר חייבין אתם לקרות ולא זו בלבד אמרו אלא כל מה שאמרו חכמים עד חצות מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר הקטר חלבים ואברים מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר וכל הנאכלים ליום אחד מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר אם כן למה אמרו חכמים עד חצות כדי להרחיק מן העבירה: גמ' תנא היכא קאי דקתני מאימתי ורתו מאי שנא דרתני בערבית ברישא לרתני דשחרית ברישא תנא אקרא קאי דכתיב ובשכבך ובקומך

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Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

Mishnayos That Deal With Kriyas Shema

MISHNAH. From what time may one recite the Shema in the evening? From the time that the priests enter their houses in order to eat their Terumah until the end of the first watch. These are the words of R. Rliezer. The Sages say: until midnight. R. Gamliel says: until the dawn comes up. Once it happened that R. Gamliel's sons came home late from a wedding feast and they said to him: we have not yet recited the evening Shema'. He said to them: if the dawn has not yet come up you are still bound to recite. And not in respect to this alone did they so decide, but wherever the Sages say until midnight, the precept may be performed until the dawn comes up . . . Why then did the Sages say 'until midnight'? In order to keep a man far from transgression.

MISHNAH. From what time may one recite the Shema in the morning? From the time that one can distinguish between the colors blue and white. R. Eliezer says: between the colors blue and green. And he has time to finish until sunrise. R. Joshua says: until the third hour of the day, for such is the custom of kings, to rise at the third hour. If one recites the Shema later he loses nothing, because he is like one who is reading in the Torah.

MISHNAH. Workmen may recite the Shema' on the top of a tree or the top of a scaffolding, a thing they are not allowed to do in the case of the Tefillah.

MISHNAH. Women, slaves and minors are exempt from reciting the Shema' and from putting on Tefillin. But they are subject to the obligations of Tefillah and Mezuzah and Grace after meals.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

Mishnayos That Deal With Shemona Esrei-The Prayer Of Eighteen Benedictions

Mishnah. Rabban Gamliel says: every day a man should say the Eighteen Benedictions. R. Joshua says: an abbreviated form of the Eighteen Benedictions. R. Akiva says: if he knows it fluently, he says the original Eighteen, and if not, an abbreviated Eighteen. R. Eliezer says: if a man makes his prayers a fixed task, it is not a genuine supplication. R. Joshua says: if one is travelling in a dangerous place, he says a short prayer, saying, save, O Lord, Your People the remnant of Israel; in every time of crisis; may their requirements not be lost sight of by You. Blessed Are You, O Lord, who hearkens to prayer. If he is riding on a donkey, he dismounts and prays. If he is unable to dismount, he should turn his face towards Jerusalem; and if he cannot turn his face, he should concentrate his thoughts on the Holy of Holies. If he is travelling in a ship or on a raft, he should concentrate his thoughts on the Holy of Holies.

Mishnah. The morning Tefillah can be said until midday; R. Judah says till the fourth hour. The afternoon prayer can be said till evening; R. Judah says, until the middle of the afternoon. The evening prayer has no fixed limit. The time for the additional prayers is the whole of the day; R. Judah says, till the seventh hour.

Mishnah. One should not rise to say Tefillah except in a reverent frame of mind. The pious men of old used to wait an hour before praying in order that they might concentrate their thoughts upon their Father in heaven. Even if a king greets him while praying he should not answer him: even if a snake is wound round his heel he should not break off.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

Those Prayers That Require The Presence Of Ten Men To Be Recited

Megilah 23b

Mishnah. The introduction to the Shema is not repeated, nor does one stand before the ark, nor do the priests lift their hands to bless the people, nor is the Torah read publicly nor the Haftorah read from the prophets, nor are halts made at funerals, nor is the blessing for mourners said, nor the comfort of mourners, nor the blessing of the bridegrooms, nor is the name of G-d mentioned in the invitation to say grace, save in the presence of ten.

The Value Of The Synagogue And Its Furnishings

Mishnah. If the community chooses to sell the town square, they may buy with the proceeds a synagogue; if they sell a synagogue, they may buy with the proceeds an ark; if they sell an ark they may buy wrappings for the Torah Scrolls; if they sell the wrappings, they may buy Torah scrolls; if they sell Torah scrolls they may buy a Sefer Torah. but if they sell a Sefer Torah they may not buy with the proceeds scrolls; if they sell scrolls they may not buy wrappings; if they sell wrappings they may not buy an ark; if they sell an ark they may not buy a synagogue; if they sell a synagogue they may not buy a town square. The same rules apply to any money left over.

Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

Can Prayers Be Said In Any Language Or Only In Hebrew

Maseches Sotah Chapter VII

Mishnah. The following may be recited in any language: the section concerning the suspected woman, the confession made at the presentation of the tithe, the Shema', the 'prayer of Eighteen Benedictions', the grace after meals, the oath concerning testimony and the oath concerning a deposit.

The following are recited in Hebrew: the declaration made at the offering of the first fruits, the formula of Halizah, the blessings and curses, the priestly benediction, the benediction of the high priest, the section of the king, the section of the calf whose neck is broken, and the address to the people by the priest anointed to accompany the army in battle.

Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

Prayer Service For Fast Days

Maseches Ta'Anis Chapter III

Mishnah. What is the order of the service for fast days? The ark is taken out to the open space of the city, wood ashes are placed on the ark, on the head of the chief justice of the court and on his second in command. Everyone else puts ashes on their own heads; the elder among them addresses them with words of admonition; i.e. For repentance, our brethren, scripture does not say of the people of Nineveh, and G-d saw their sackcloths and their fasting, but, and G-d saw their works, that they turned from their evil way. And in the prophets it is said, and rend your heart and not your garments.

When they stand up to pray they place as reader before the ark an old man conversant with the prayers, who has children and whose house is empty of food, so that his heart is concentrated on his prayer; he recites before them twenty-four benedictions, the eighteen recited daily, to which he adds six as follows, Zichronos (verses that refer to G-d remembering), Shofaros (verses that refer to G-d listening to the sound of the Shofar) and these psalms: in my distress I called unto the lord (Psalm 120); I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains etc. (Psalm 121); out of the depths have I called You, O lord (Psalm 130); a prayer of the afflicted when he faints (Psalm 102). R. Judah says: he need not recite the verses of Zichronos and Shofaros, but instead he should recite the following scriptural, passages, if there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence (Kings, 1, 8); the word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the droughts (Jeremiah 14, 1-10); and he ends each of the additional six sections with its appropriate concluding benediction. The first he concludes with, 'He who answered Abraham on Mt. moriah, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Blessed are You O Lord who redeems Israel. The second he concludes with, 'He who answered our fathers at the Red Sea, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Blessed are You O Lord who remembers all forgotten things. The third he concludes with, He who answered Joshua in Gilgal, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Blessed are You O Lord who hears the trumpet blast. The fourth he concludes with, 'He who answered Samuel in Mizpah, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Blessed are You O Lord who hearkens to cries. The fifth he concludes with, 'He who answered Elijah on Mt. Carmel, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Blessed are You O Lord who hearkens unto prayer. The sixth he concludes with, 'He who answered Jonah in the belly of the fish, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Blessed are You O Lord who answers in time of trouble. The seventh he concludes with, 'He who answered David and Solomon his son in Jerusalem, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Blessed are You O Lord who has mercy upon the land.

Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

Prayer Service On Rosh Hashonah

Mishnah. The order of blessings in the Mussaf 'Amidah is as follows: the reader says the blessing of the patriarchs, that of mightiness and that of the sanctification of the name and includes the kingship-verses with them and does not blow the Shofar. He then says the sanctification of the day and blows, the remembrance-verses and blows, and the shofar-verses and blows; and he then says the blessing of the temple service and the one of thanksgiving and the blessing of the priests. This is the view of R. Johanan b. Nuri. Said R. Akiba to him: if he does not blow the Shofar for the kingship-verses, why should he say them? Instead; the rule is as follows: He says the blessing of the patriarchs and of the resurrection and of the sanctification of the name, and says the kingship-verses along with the sanctification of the day and blows the Shofar, then he says the remembrance-verses and blows, and the Shofar-verses and blows. Then he says the temple service blessing and the thanksgiving and the blessing of the priests.

Mishnah. There should be recited not less than ten kingship verses, ten remembrance verses, and ten shofar verses. R. Johanan b. Nuri said: if the reader says three from each set he has fulfilled his obligation.

Mishnah. No mention is made of kingship, remembrance and shofar verses that signify punishment. It is proper to begin with the torah and conclude with the prophets. R. Jose said: if one concludes with the Torah verses, he has fulfilled his obligation.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Mishna

First Three And Last Three Brachos Of Shemona Esrei

Praise

1. Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d and G-d of our fathers, G-d of Abraham, G-d of Isaac and G-d of Jacob, the great, mighty and awesome G-d, exalted G-d, who bestows bountiful kindness, who creates all things, who remembers the piety of the Patriarchs, and who, in love, brings a redeemer to their children's children, for the sake of His Name. O King, (You are) a helper, a savior and a shield. Blessed are You L-rd, Shield of Abraham.

2. You are mighty forever, my L-rd; You resurrect the dead; You are powerful to save. He sustains the living with loving kindness, resurrects the dead with great mercy, supports the falling, heals the sick, releases the bound, and fulfills His trust to those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, mighty One! And who can be compared to You, King, who brings death and restores life, and causes deliverance to spring forth! You are trustworthy to revive the dead. Blessed are You L-rd, who revives the dead.

3. You are holy and Your Name is holy, and holy beings praise You daily for all eternity. Blessed are You L-rd, the holy G-d.

First Three And Last Three Brachos Of Shemona Esrei

17. Look with favor, L-rd our G-d, on Your people Israel and pay heed to their prayer; restore the service to Your Sanctuary and accept with love and favor Israel's fire-offerings and prayer; and may the service of Your people Israel always find favor. May our eyes behold Your return to Zion in mercy. Blessed are You L-rd, who restores His Divine Presence to Zion.

Thanksgiving

18. We thankfully acknowledge that You are the L-rd our G-d and G-d of our fathers forever. You are the strength of our life, the shield of our salvation in every generation. We will give thanks to You and recount Your praise, evening, morning and noon, for our lives which are committed into Your hand, for our souls which are entrusted to You, for Your miracles which are with us daily, and for Your continual wonders and beneficences. You are the Beneficent One, for Your mercies never cease; the Merciful One, for Your kindnesses never end; for we always place our hope in You. And for all these, may Your Name, our King, be continually blessed, exalted and extolled forever and all time. And all living things shall forever thank You, and praise Your great Name eternally, for You are good. G-d, You are our everlasting salvation and help, O benevolent G-d. Blessed are You L-rd, Beneficent is Your Name, and to You it is fitting to offer thanks.

19. Bestow peace, goodness and blessing, life, graciousness, kindness and mercy, upon us and upon all Your people Israel. Bless us, our Father, all of us as one, with the light of Your countenance. For by the light of Your countenance You gave us, L-rd our G-d, the Torah of life and loving-kindness, righteousness, blessing, mercy, life and peace. May it be favorable in Your eyes to bless Your people Israel, at all times and at every moment, with Your peace. Blessed are You L-rd, who blesses His people Israel with peace. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, L-rd, my Strength and my Redeemer.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

Introduction To The Talmud-1

The World of the Talmud By Morris Adler, Schocken Books, 1963- pages 50-55

The Mishna was complementary to the Bible. Now an extension of the Mishna was developed. It is called the "Gemara," from an Aramaic root meaning "study" or "instruction." The Gemara is sometimes also called Talmud, although the term Talmud is more generally applied to the entire Oral Law embracing both Mishna and Gemara. The Mishna is several times more voluminous than the Scripture on which it is based. The Gemara which represents the extension of the meaning and application of the Mishna is in turn many times larger than the text from which it takes its departure.

Before we examine the Gemara more closely, it will be helpful to recapitulate the concept of Oral Law which underlies it. The Rabbis did not conceive of the Written and the Oral Law as two disparate and independent systems. They were basically one, the Oral Law being the source for the authentic understanding of the intent and the provisions of Scripture. The interpretations of the Oral Law are imbedded and implied in the Written. Maimonides, in the introduction to his "Mishneh Torah" states, "All the Sinaitic ordinances were transmitted to Moses with their interpretations." The Oral Law was believed to have been included in the original covenant. A Biblical verse (Exodus 34.27) declares, "Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." The phrase "the tenor of these words" alludes to the spoken interpretations which accompanied the Written Law. One of the sages, with this verse as his authority, does not hesitate to conclude that "The Holy One Blessed be He established His covenant with Israel for the sake of the Oral Law alone." Indeed it may be said that "the words that were transmitted orally are the more valuable" (Hagiga, chapter I). The Rabbis did not feel that they were introducing anything extraneous into the text. Their activity was designed to elicit from it the meanings that were implicit, though not always explicit in it. There were general statements or concepts in the Torah that had to be analyzed and translated into detailed instruction before they could be implemented. One of the eminent jurists of our time, Judge Learned Hand, pointed out an exact parallel when he discussed the perennial responsibility of the law to define "broad clauses on which the conduct of a free society must in the end depend," which the Constitution itself does not pause to define. He cites such examples as "freedom of the press," "establishment of religion and the free exercise thereof," "unreasonable searches," "due process of law," and "equal protection of the law" -- as requiring constant interpretation and redefinition. The code must be explored anew in the light of a generation's new needs.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

Introduction To The Talmud-2

The World of the Talmud By Morris Adler, Schocken Books, 1963- pages 50-55

The Rabbis were governed, as we have already pointed out, by yet another consideration. As men of affairs and judges, they found themselves confronted by new situations with which the basic law had not dealt. As men of faith they were convinced that the Torah was divine in origin and that, therefore, there could not arise a circumstance which it had not anticipated. The only way to reconcile that apparent conflict was to follow the counsel of one of their colleagues, "Search in it (the Torah) and search in it yet again, for everything is included in it." Out of this intensive "search" in the Torah, the Mishna had emerged; out of this intensive "search" in the Mishna, the Gemara emerged. To be sure, the Mishna was not divine in the same direct and literal sense as was the Torah. But it might be said of it that it was divine at a remove, since it was the authentic and, in a figurative sense, the foreordained interpretation of a divine text.

The Mishna is concise and not given to lengthy discursive argumentation, though it does record the controversies between various schools and between individual teachers. The Mishna, however, is definitely intent upon brevity. The Gemara, on the other hand, may be described as a full-scale transcript of the give and take of the discussions in the academies. It is alive with debate and the clash of differing opinions. It bristles with challenge and argument. It is prolix and allusive. It reflects the freedom and latitude which oral discussion encourages. It does not hesitate to digress and wander afield when a term, a law, an incident or reference to a particular teacher lights up an association with or stimulates the recollection of something not related to the main line of the argument. The citation of a verse suggests another and not necessarily relevant interpretation or comment. As in all good conversation, much of the charm and interest derive from the admixture of the incidental, anecdotal and even fanciful with the solid core of a consistent and informed exposition of a view. A large part of the Gemara is non-legal in character. The broadest definition of the term "law" could not possibly include the range and variety of material found in the Gemara. A wise teacher would interrupt a lengthy and difficult legal argument with a digression of a less taxing and more edifying nature.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

Introduction To The Talmud-3

The World of the Talmud By Morris Adler, Schocken Books, 1963- pages 50-55

The sages declare that one should not disdain the parable, though unimportant in itself, since it can be a valuable aid in acquiring understanding of the words of the Torah. They characteristically offer a parable in defense of the parable. They say that it may be likened to a king who has lost a precious pearl and finds it by the light of a candle costing a trifle. Thus we find legend and history, contemporary science and folklore, Biblical exegesis and biography, homily and theology woven together into what, to one unfamiliar with the ways of the academies, would seem to be a curious medley of unorganized data drawn from a baffling number of unrelated categories. The Gemara does, however, return to the original subject though the digression may spread over several pages. What the argument, by reason of this apparent looseness of method, may seem to lose in directness and cogency, the Talmud gains in breadth and vitality. To pursue the Talmudic treatment of a specific subject, you cannot turn to an index, look up the particular volume in which the subject is discussed and relax in the assurance that you have exhausted your study. The same subject is dealt with in many places and in several of the sixty-three volumes of the Talmud. One particular tractate may contain the locus classicus of the particular law or decision. Yet for thoroughness one would have to examine the other volumes where, though this subject may be introduced only casually or as an excursus in an argument in another theme, the treatment may have serious import for the analysis of the concept and cannot be ignored.

The free and wide-ranging manner of the Talmud does not detract from the legal and intellectual acumen and profundity of its treatment and analysis. It remains to this day one of the most incisive and penetrating legal systems ever to be formulated. Its apparent discursiveness and its hospitality to the extraneous and incidental enable it to mirror the life of the centuries during which it grew, in an infinitely more comprehensive way than it could have possibly done if it had hewn strictly to a rigid line of legal discussion and interpretation. It is the life of its times and not only the law that we find in its pages. It is thus not simply a fundamental text for the study of the development of Jewish law, nor only an indispensable source of material for the historian nor exclusively an invaluable guide in tracing the evolution of Jewish religious concepts and practices. It is all these and more. It is a profoundly significant human document revealing the variety of universal aspirations, needs and responses of men as suggested by this literature created by a specific society during approximately a half-millennium. The Talmud presents us with no still-life portrait, but with a stream of life, active, restless vital within its banks.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

MISHNAH. From what time may one recite the Shema in the evening? From the time that the priests enter their houses in order to eat their Terumah until the end of the first watch. These are the words of R. Eliezer. The Sages say: until midnight. R. Gamliel says: until the dawn comes up.

GEMARA. On what basis did the Tanna believe that there was an obligation to read the Shema at night that he asks from what time? Furthermore, why does he deal first with the evening Shema'? Let him begin with the morning Shema'! The Tanna bases himself on the Scripture, where it is written: And you shall recite them . . . when you lie down and when you rise up, and he states the oral law thus: When does the time of the recital of the Shema' of lying down begin? When the priests enter to eat their terumah. And if you like, I can answer: He learns the precedence of the evening from the account of the creation of the world, where it is written: And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

MISHNAH. From what time may one recite the Shema in the morning? From the time that one can distinguish between the colors blue and white. R. Eliezer says: between the colors blue and green. And he has time to finish until sunrise. R. Joshua says: until the third hour of the day, for such is the custom of kings, to rise at the third hour. If one recites the Shema later he loses nothing, because he is like one who is reading in the Torah.

GEMARA. What is the meant by the term "distinguishing between blue and white"? Does he mean: between a lump of white wool and a lump of blue wool? The colors of those two lumps can also be distinguished in the night! He means rather: between the blue threads in it and the white ones in it. It has been taught: R. Meir says: The morning Shema' is read from the time that one can distinguish between a wolf and a dog; R. Akiba says: Between an donkey and a wild donkey. Others say: From the time that one can distinguish his friend at a distance of four cubits. R. Huna says: The Halachah follows the opinion of the 'Others'. Abaye says: In regard to donning Tefillin, the Halachah is as stated by the 'Others'; in regard to the recital of the Shema', it is as practised by the zealous. For R. Johanan said: The zealous used to complete the recital of the Shema with sunrise, in order to link the Bracha of redemption with the prayer of 18 Benedictions, and say the prayer of 18 Benedictions in the daytime. R. Zera says: What text can be cited in support of this practice? They shall express their fear of You with the rise of the sun, and pray again to You with the first appearance of the moon, throughout all generations. R. Jose b. Eliakim testified in the name of the holy community of Jerusalem: If one links the Bracha of redemption with the prayer of 18 Benedictions, he will not meet with any mishap for the whole of the day.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

MISHNAH. Rabban Gamliel says: every day a man should say the Eighteen Benedictions. R. Joshua says: an abbreviated form of the Eighteen Benedictions. R. Akiva says: if he knows it fluently, he says the original Eighteen, and if not, an abbreviated Eighteen. R. Eliezer says: if a man makes his prayers a fixed task, it is not a genuine supplication. R. Joshua says: if one is travelling in a dangerous place, he says a short prayer, saying, save, O Lord, Your People the remnant of Israel; in every time of crisis; may their requirements not be lost sight of by You. Blessed Are You, O Lord, who hearkens to prayer. If he is riding on a donkey, he dismounts and prays. If he is unable to dismount, he should turn his face towards Jerusalem; and if he cannot turn his face, he should concentrate his thoughts on the Holy of Holies. If he is travelling in a ship or on a raft, he should concentrate his thoughts on the Holy of Holies.

GEMARA. To what do these eighteen benedictions correspond? R. Hillel the son of Samuel b. Nahmani said: To the eighteen times that David mentioned the Divine Name in the Psalm (No. 29): Ascribe unto the Lord, O you sons of might. R. Joseph said: To the eighteen times the Divine Name is mentioned in the Shema. R. Tanhum said in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi: To the eighteen vertebrae in the spinal column.

Inserting Personal Requests Into The Prayer Of 18 Benedictions

Maseches Brachos 34b: Rabbi Yehuda said: a person should not make a request for his personal needs while reciting the first three blessings of the prayer of Eighteen benedictions and not while reciting the last three blessings but he can make personal requests while saying the middle blessings. This is in accordance with what Rav Chanina said: The first blessings are similar to a servant who is preparing the praise he plans to say to his master; the middle blessings are similar to a servant who is asking for a reward from his master; the last blessings are similar to a servant who received his reward from his master and is taking leave from him.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

Why Pray Three Times A Day?

Maseches Brachos 26b:

We learned that Rabbi Yosi said: Our forefathers established the three daily prayers. Rabbi Yehoshua said: The three daily prayers were established to correspond with the daily sacrifices. We found a source that supports Rabbi Yossi and we found a source that supports Rabbi Yehoshua. This is what the source that supports Rabbi Yossi states: Abraham established the morning prayer as it is written: Abraham arose in the morning to the place upon which he stood. The word "standing" in that verse means pray as it is written in another source: And Pinchas stood and prayed. Isaac established the afternoon prayer as it is written: And Isaac went out to speak in the field before dark. The word "speak" in that verse means pray as we learned elsewhere: A prayer for a poor person when he enwraps himself and in front of G-d he spills out his words. Jacob established the night prayer as it is written: And he encountered a place and slept there. Encountering a place is a synonym for prayer, as it is written: and you shall not pray for that nation and you shall not lift up cry nor prayer and do not encounter me. This is what the source that supports Rabbi Yehoshua says: Why did they say that you can pray the morning prayer until one-half the day? Because you can bring the morning sacrifice until one-half the day. Rabbi Yehudah stated: until the end of the fourth hour, because that was the deadline for bringing the morning sacrifice. And why did they say that the *Mincha* service could be recited until the end of the evening? Because the afternoon sacrifice was brought up to the end of the evening. Rabbi Yehudah said: until *plug mincha,* because the afternoon sacrifice was brought until *plug mincha.* And why did they say that the night prayer had no time limit (the whole night)? Because the limbs and fat that had not been consumed by nightfall continued to burn all night. And why did they say that *mussaf* could be recited anytime during the day? Because the *mussaf* sacrifice could be brought all day. Rabbi Yehudah said: until the end of the seventh hour because the *mussaf* sacrifice was brought until the seventh hour.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

Rules Governing Prayer

Maseches Brachos 31a:

R. Hiyya b. Abba said: A man should always pray in a house with windows, as it says, Now his windows were open. I might say that a man should pray the whole day? It has already been expressly stated by the hand of Daniel: And three times. etc. But perhaps this practice began only when he went into captivity? It is already said, As he did aforetime. I might say that a man may pray turning in any direction he wishes? Therefore the text states, Toward Jerusalem. I might say that he may combine all three daily prayer services in one? It has already been clearly stated by David, as is written, Evening and morning and at noonday. I might say that he should let his voice be heard in praying? It has already been clearly stated by Hannah, as is said, But her voice could not be heard. I might say that a man should first ask for his own requirements and then say the Prayer of 18 Benedictions? It has been clearly stated by Solomon, as is said, To hearken unto the cry and to the prayer: 'cry' here means the Prayer of 18 Benedictions; 'Prayer' means private request. A private request is not made after the prayer: 'True and firm', but after the the Prayer of 18 Benedictions, even the order of confession of the Day of Atonement may be said. It has also been stated: R. Hiyya b. Ashi said in the name of Rab: Although it was laid down that a man asks for his requirements in the Bracha that ends "He who hearkens unto prayer", if he wants to say something after the Prayer of 18 Benedictions even something like the order of confession on the Day of Atonement, he may do so.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

The Benedictions To Be Recited Upon Awakening

Maseches Brachos 60b: When he awakes he says: My God, the soul which You have placed in me is pure. You have created it in me; You infused it within me; You preserved it within me and You will one day take it from me and restore it to me in the time to come. So long as the soul is within me, I give thanks to You, G-d, my God, and the God of my fathers, King of all worlds, Lord of all souls. Blessed are You, G-d, who restores souls to dead corpses. When he hears the rooster calling he should say: Blessed is He who has given the rooster the ability to distinguish between day and night. When he opens his eyes he should say: Blessed is He who opens the eyes of the blind. When he stretches himself and sits up he should say: Blessed is He who frees those who are bound. When he dresses he should say: Blessed is He who clothes those who are naked. When he stands himself up he should say: Blessed is He who raises the bowed. When he steps on to the ground he should say: Blessed is He who spread the earth on the waters. When he commences to walk he should say: Blessed is He who prepares the steps of man. When he ties his shoes he should say: Blessed is He who supplied all my needs. When he fastens his belt, he should say: Blessed is He who girds Israel with might. When he places a hat on his head he should say: Blessed is He who crowns Israel with glory. When he wraps himself with tzitzit, he should say: Blessed is He who made us holy through his commandments and commanded us to wear tzitzit. When he puts the tefillin on his arm he should say: Blessed is He who made us holy through His commandments and commanded us to put on tefillin. When he puts tefillin on his head he should say: Blessed is He who made us holy through His commandments and commanded us concerning the commandment of tefillin. When he washes his hands he should say: Blessed is He who has made us holy through His commandments and commanded us concerning the washing of hands. When he washes his face he should say: Blessed is He who has removed the bands of sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyes. May it be Your will G-d, my God, to have me regularly study the Torah and make me cleave to Your commandments ...and let me obtain this day and every day grace, favour, and mercy in Your eyes, and in the eyes of all that see me and show loving kindness to me. Blessed are You, G-d, who bestows loving kindness upon Your people Israel.

Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

Additional Benedictions To Be Recited Upon Awakening

Maseches Menachos 43b:

It was taught: Rabbi Meir said: A man is required to recite one hundred blessings each day, as it is written: And now, Israel, what does G-d, your G-d require of you? On Sabbaths and on Festivals, Rabbi Hiyya the son of R. Avia would try to complete his 100 blessings by smelling spices and other delicacies. It was taught: R. Judah said: A man is required to say the following three blessings daily: Blessed are You, G-d who did not make me a non-Jew. . . who did not made me a woman and . . . who did not made me a boor. Rabbi Aha the son of Jacob once overhead his son saying Blessed are You who did not make me a boor, whereupon Rabbi Aha said to him, And this too? Said the son to him: Then what blessing should I say instead? Rabbi Aha replied. . . who did not make me a slave. And is that not the same as a woman? A slave has a lower status than a woman.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

The Key Words Of Kaddish And Their Impact

Maseches Berachos 3a-

It has been taught: Rabbi Jose says: I was once travelling on the road, and I entered into one of the ruins of Jerusalem in order to pray. Eliyahu Ha'Navi, of blessed memory, appeared and waited for me at the door until I finished my prayer. After I finished my prayer, he said to me: Peace be with you, my master! and I replied: Peace be with you, my master and teacher! And he said to me: My son, why did you go into this ruin? I replied: To pray. He said to me: You ought to have prayed on the road. I replied: I feared that passers-by might interrupt me. He said to me: If that was the case, you should have said an abbreviated prayer. I therefore learned three things from Eliyahu Ha'Navi: One must not go into a ruin; one may say the prayer on the road; and if one does say his prayer on the road, he may recite an abbreviated form of the prayer. The Prophet Eliyahu further said to me: My son, what sound did you hear in this ruin? I replied: I heard a divine voice, cooing like a dove, and saying: Woe to the children, on account of whose sins I destroyed My house and burnt My temple and exiled them among the nations of the world! And the Prophet Eliyahu further said to me: By your life and by your head! Not in this moment alone does G-d so exclaim, but three times each day does G-d exclaim like that! And more than that, whenever Jews go into the synagogues and schoolhouses and respond: May His great name be blessed! the Holy One, blessed be He, shakes His head and says:

Happy is the King who is thus praised in this house! Woe to the Father who had to banish his children, and woe to the children who had to be banished from the table of their Father!

Prayer During The Period Of The Talmud

Circumstances Under Which Kaddish Is Recited

Maseches Sotah 49a

Rabba said: And the curse of each day is severer than that of the preceding day, as it is stated: In the morning you shall say: If only it were possible that G-d advance the time so that it be evening! And at evening you shall say: If only it were possible that G-d advance the time so that it be morning. Which morning are they longing for? If you say it is the morning of tomorrow, does anyone know that it will not present an even more difficult circumstance? Therefore it must be that they were longing for the morning of the day before. In that case, why does G-d allow the world to endure? Because of the recital of the words of Kedushah and their Aramaic translation at the end of the prayer service and the Kaddish that is recited after the Scriptural reading, and the response of "May His great Name be blessed" which is uttered in the Kaddish after studying Midrash; as it is stated: A land of thick darkness, as darkness itself, a land of the shadow of death, without any order. Hence if there are Scriptural readings, the readings bring light to the thick darkness.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

Introduction To The Period Of The Geonim
Appx. 500 CE to 1100 CE

The Essential Talmud-Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, Basic Books 1976. Page 64:

Even before the Talmud was completed, it was evident that this work was to become the basic text and primary source for Jewish law. It is actually the last book of source material in Jewish literature, since the works that followed were to a large extent based on it, derived their authority from it, and consulted it whenever necessary for elucidation of theoretical and practical problems.

Copies of the Talmud or of isolated tractates reached all the Jewish communities, including the remotest settlements in Asia, Africa, and Europe. But from the first it was a difficult subject of study even for the most gifted of scholars. Because of the Talmud's nonsystematic editing, each section demanded a certain degree of prior knowledge, and the background or basis of concepts was not always clearly explained. The material therein, reflecting as it did a specific way of life and the content of the debates held in the Babylonian academies, sometimes appeared to students in other countries or other ages to be disjointed or incomplete. The language also created problems; the Aramaic Hebrew jargon in which the Talmud was written remained the dialect of Babylonian Jewry for many generations, but in other countries the Jews spoke indigenous dialects. Even in Babylonia, Aramaic eventually yielded to Arabic, brought in by the Moslem conquerors in the mid-seventh century.

Class Presented By Abe Katz, Founding Director,
The Beurei Hatefila Institute-www.beureihatefila.com

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Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

Introduction To The Period Of The Geonim-2

The Essential Talmud-Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, Basic Books 1976. Page 64-cont'.

Thus scholars in the various Diaspora communities encountered problems in the course of the studies and found it necessary to consult the commentaries on the Talmud. The natural authorities best equipped to clarify problems were the heads of the great Babylonian academies of Sura and Pumbedita. These scholars, known by the title of gaon (which initially meant head of a great academy, but changed in meaning after several hundred years of imprecise use), were the heirs of the amoraim and thus a primary source for explanation of the Talmud. The geonim continued to teach the Talmud in accordance with amoraite tradition. At the height of their achievement, disciples flocked to hear them from all over the Diaspora. But for the Jewish world as a whole, their influence was embodied in the responsa, of which only remnants have survived. The communities posed questions relating mostly to practical halakhah, but also of theoretical interest. In their letters of response, the geonim. would explain difficult words and terms and elucidate entire subjects (sugiyot). These letters were the first commentaries on the Talmud, neither systematic nor complete but composed in response to need. It was only the last of the geonim. who began to compose commentaries on whole tractates, and these, too, consisted mainly of interpretations of difficult words or phrases. Gaonic literature was mostly concerned with halakhic rulings and with the practical conclusions to be drawn from the talmudic text.

The need for more comprehensive interpretation of the Talmud was greatly intensified when the ties with the geonim were weakened for various political reasons. The great Moslem Empire disintegrated into a number of rival kingdoms which were not always easily accessible to one another. The center of the caliphate, Baghdad (where the large academies were located), also waned in importance, and various upheavals eventually led to the closing down of these institutions, bringing to an end the period of the geonim.. Certain Jewish communities, in Europe for example, were never able to maintain regular contact with the geonim. and were obliged to become culturally and spiritually self sufficient.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

Contributions Of The Geonim To Jewish Liturgy

1. The First Prayer Books

2. Responsa Of The Geonim

3. The Differences Between The Customs In Babylonia And In Israel

4. The Reaction To The Karaite Movement

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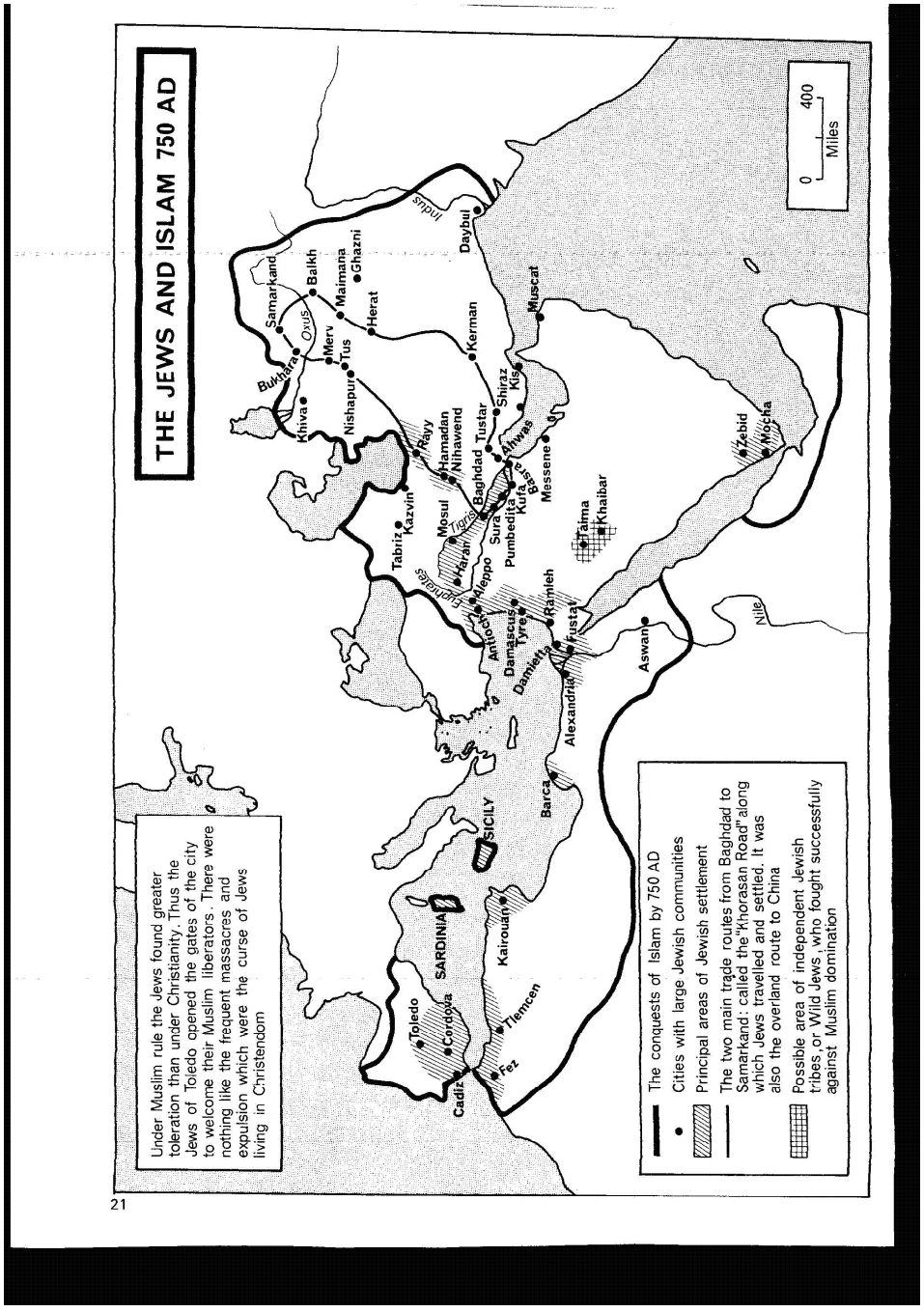
Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim



Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

First Page Of The First Siddur-1

Amrom son of Shashna, head of the Yeshiva in Masa Machsiya (suburb of Sura) responding to Rav Yitzchok son of the teacher and Rabbi, Rabbi Shimon, who is held dear, adored and honored in our eyes and in the opinion of the entire Yeshiva. Greetings of peace. May Heaven show compassion to you, your children and all the scholars, their students and our Jewish brethren who live there. Send greetings of peace from us and from Rav Tzemach head of the Jewish Court, from the officers, the scholars of the Yeshiva and the students of our Yeshiva and of the city of Machsiya. We, the teachers, the students and the Jewish citizens of this area are at peace. We are constantly concerned about your welfare and think of you favorably at all times. We pray for you and ask that G-d show compassion to you; that G-d bestow abundant mercy upon you, protect you, save you from troubles and difficulties, from sickness and affliction, from oppressive governments, from destructive actions, and from all the troubles that can occur in life. May G-d demonstrate compassion in granting you all that you ask for yourselves. Rabbi Yaakov, son of Rav Yitzchok, delivered ten gold coins that were sent for the benefit of the Yeshiva; five for the leadership of the Yeshiva and five for the Yeshiva itself. We have commanded that you be blessed with Brachos and that they come to fruition for you and for your descendants.

The order of prayers and Brachos for the entire year that you requested, that has been shown to us by Heaven, we deem appropriate to set forth and lay out in the manner in which the tradition was passed down to us, as compiled by the Rabbis during the period of the Mishna and of the Gemara. And so we learned: Rabbi Mayer said: a person is obligated to recite 100 Brachos each day. In the Jerusalem Talmud we learned: it was taught in the name of Rabbi Mayer; there is no Jew who does not fulfill one hundred Mitzvos each day, as it was written: Now Israel, what does G-d your G-d ask of you? Do not read the verse as providing for the word: "what" (Mah); instead read it as including the word: "one hundred" (Mai'Eh). King David established the practice of reciting one hundred Brachos each day. When the residents of Jerusalem informed him that one hundred Jews were dying everyday, he established this requirement. It appears that the practice was forgotten until our Sages at the time of the Mishna and at the time of the Gemara re-established it.

Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

First Page Of The First Siddur-2

The order of the 100 Brachos was set forth by Rav Natroni son of Hil'Ai, head of the Yeshiva at Masa Machsiya, in correspondence with the community in Lucena, Spain through Rav Yosef, the elder. Rav Natroni provided as follows: it is no longer possible to recite each Bracha at its correct time because today we awake each day with unclean hands, hands that inadvertently came in contact with unclean parts of our bodies during the night. Instead when a person wakes, he should first wash his face, hands and feet as is appropriate. That is how a Jew fulfills the directive in the following verse: Prepare, Jews, for meeting with the Almighty. Every person is obligated to do so. The following represents the custom among Jews in Spain, which is Hispania: in synagogue, the prayer leader recites the morning blessings on behalf of those present so that they may fulfill their obligation by answering: Amen to the Brachos that the prayer leader recites, as Rav Natroni son of Hil'Ai provided.

Samuel Field Y Adult Center

Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

Responsa Of The Geonim

The Origin Of Kaddish As Part Of The Prayer Services

Responsa Of The Geonim-Concerning the origin of Kaddish that you asked, we can not trace the practice to a clear and definitive source found among our ancestors' writings. However, those who followed them based their recitation of Kaddish upon this verse (Leviticus 22, 32) And I will be sanctified within the people of Israel and upon what our Rabbinic leaders extrapolated from the verse: that any prayer which results in the sanctification of the name of G-d must be recited only in a group of ten men. From theses teachings we can conclude that when ten men congregate to perform a mitzvah, whether it be for prayer or for the study of Torah, they must recite a prayer in which they sanctify the name of G-d. As a result, at the conclusion of the first section of the morning prayer, Pseukei D'Zimra, after reciting the Bracha in Yishtabach, those congregated should recite Kaddish because they have the completed the mitzvah of reciting Pseukei D'Zimra and they are about to perform an additional Mitzvah, the recital of Kriyat Shma and its blessings before and after . . . And they should recite Kaddish after Shmona Esrei because it too is an independent Mitzvah and it is not connected with that which is recited after it. And another Kaddish should be recited after the Torah Reading because in order to read from the Torah, ten men must congregate together. And another Kaddish after reciting the Kedusha in OO"Vah L'Tzion because it too is a Mitzvah unto itself and it is a Prayer of Sanctification of G-d's name and requires the presence of ten men.

Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

The Origin Of Kaddish As Part Of A Funeral Service

The prayer "Tzadok Hadin" that is recited at a burial is a Mitzvah that is the responsibility of the community to perform, as it is written in Tractate Megilah, page 3, side 2, that one must take time away from studying Torah to accompany the casket to the cemetery and to accompany a bride to her wedding, and it is therefore necessary to recite Kaddish at the burial. A minority of Gaonim hold that one should not recite Kaddish at a burial simply because Tzodak Hadin has been said. Instead, Kaddish should be recited only after a different Mitzvah was performed (i.e. learning Torah). Other Gaonim hold that the burial itself is the Mitzvah that triggers the recitation of Kaddish. Now, this line of reasoning may prompt you to be troubled by the following question: why is not also our custom to recite Kaddish at a wedding? Is not the performance of a wedding the type of Mitzvah that requires the presence of ten men? It is not appropriate to recite Kaddish at a wedding because the congregation is coming only to honor the couple; they do not say a word nor perform any act, so for what reason should those present recite Kaddish? Kaddish is not recited unless those present have said some words that are part of a Mitzvah or consist of words of praise.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

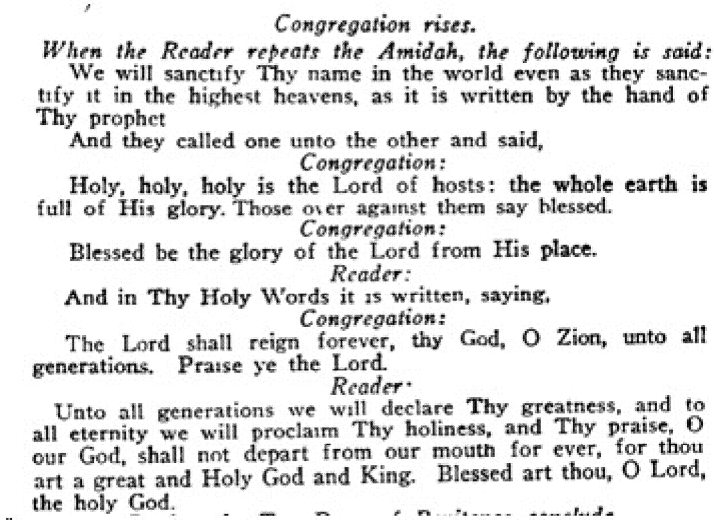
Differences In Practice Between The Jews Of Babylonia And The Jews Of Israel-1

The Number Of Brachot In Shemona Esrei

The Jews of Babylonia recited nineteen Brachot as part of Shemona Esrei (the Prayer of 18 Benedictions) while the Jews in Israel recited only eighteen.

Reciting Kedushah On Weekdays

The Jews of Babylonia recited Kedushah as part of the repetition of the Prayer of 18 Benedictions each day while the Jews of Israel recited Kedushah only as part of the Shabbat morning prayer service.



Congregation rises.

When the Reader repeats the Amidah, the following is said:

We will sanctify Thy name in the world even as they sanctify it in the highest heavens, as it is written by the hand of Thy prophet

And they called one unto the other and said,

Congregation:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. Those over against them say blessed.

Congregation:

Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place.

Reader:

And in Thy Holy Words it is written, saying,

Congregation:

The Lord shall reign forever, thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.

Reader:

Unto all generations we will declare Thy greatness, and to all eternity we will proclaim Thy holiness, and Thy praise, O our God, shall not depart from our mouth for ever, for thou art a great and Holy God and King. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the holy God.

Differences In Practice Between The Jews Of Babylonia And The Jews Of Israel-2

Taking Two Loaves To Break Bread on Shabbat

Babylonian Jews break bread on the Sabbath using two loaves of bread based on their deriving that two loves are necessary to mark the fact that G-d would provide the Jews with a double portion of Manna on Fridays to make up for the absence of manna on the Sabbath. The Jews of Israel would break bread on the sabbath using only one loaf. They believed that taking two loaves was an attempt to commemorate an act that took place on a weekday and commemorating it would trespass on the honor of Shabbos.

Giving A Ring As Part Of The Jewish Wedding Ceremony.

Babylonian Jews held that a groom giving a bride a ring as part of the Jewish wedding ceremony did not constitute adequate consideration while the Jews of Israel held that a ring given by a groom to a bride was appropriate consideration .

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Prayer During The Period Of The Geonim

Reactions To The Karaite Movement

1. Reciting A Bracha Before Lighting candles Before the Sabbath and the Holidays.

2. Reciting The Chapter Of Mishna That Deals With the appropriate fuels to use for providing lights on the Sabbath

3. Reciting a chapter from the book: Ethics Of The Fathers each Shabbat after the afternoon service.

Brief History Of The Karaite Movement

A Book Of Jewish Concepts by Dr. Philip Birnbaum, Hebrew Publishing Company, 1964-pages 546-548

KARAITES קָרָאִים

THE Karaite sect, founded by Anan ben David in the middle of the eighth century, regarded itself as an integral part of the Jewish people, though it was read out of the Jewish fold by the adherents of rabbinic Judaism. The struggle between the Karaites and the Rabbanites was both constant and arduous for more than four centuries. It is true that the Karaite movement weakened the Jewish people numerically, but it had a leavening effect on the development of Jewish learning throughout the Arabic-speaking countries, where Karaism flourished for some time and created a variety of controversial issues based on a new, more literal interpretation of the Bible.

Brief History Of The Karaite Movement-2

Anan ben David was often quoted by his followers as having said: "Make a thorough search of the Torah and do not rely on my opinion." The Karaites, then, rejecting talmudic-traditional authority and basing themselves on individual interpretation of the biblical teachings, frequently attacked rabbinic methods of interpretation and thus compelled great scholars like Rav Saadyah Gaon and Moses Maimonides to devote more time to the study of the Bible according to its literal sense (*peshat*). The Karaite writers, like Yefet ben Ali and Salmon ben Yeruḥam of the tenth century, considered themselves as the intellectuals (*maskilim*) of the time and used their Bible commentaries, each according to his style, to ridicule what they termed Rabbanite superstitions and misinterpretations.

Writing in his Arabic commentary on Isaiah, Yefet ben Ali digresses as follows: "This section refers to the people of the Diaspora and to the best among them as well. They are at present divided into four classes: 1) the exilarchs who pretend to be the possessors of knowledge; 2) the common people who neither desire wisdom nor think about it; they know no more about religion than to go to the synagogues from Sabbath to Sabbath and to say *Amen* and *Shema Yisrael;* 3) the studious among the common people, whom the exilarchs teach the nonsense of the Talmud, and sorcery, instead of what might profit them; 4) the *maskilim* (Karaite teachers) who, endowed with the knowledge of the Torah, are generous with the dissemination of their wisdom, in return for which they accept no recompense."

The Karaites failed to realize that the talmudic-traditional teachings stemmed from the need of adjusting Jewish living to changing conditions. Their watchword "back to the Bible" came to be purely a theoretical one, after all, when they developed a tradition of their own and called it "yoke of heritage" (סבל הירושה). In the course of time, the Karaites held as binding the doctrines and the usages which were regarded as obligatory by their community (*edah, kibbutz*), even though these could not be traced directly to the Bible.

Originally, the Karaites were known as Ananites, from the name of their founder Anan of Baghdad, Babylonia. In his *Book of Precepts* (*Sefer ha-Mitzvoth*), Anan extended the idea of forbidden work on Sabbath by making it unlawful, for example, to light on a Friday a candle that would keep burning on Sabbath eve. His adherents were therefore told to sit in darkness on Friday nights. He forbade them to leave their homes on the Sabbath, except to attend congregational services of their own.

According to Anan, the Jews of the Diaspora were forbidden to eat meat, since such food depended on the existence of a Temple and a sacrificial system. A strain of gloom pervaded Anan's injunctions; bad results followed when he had discarded the traditional prayers in use, substituting for them the recitation of isolated psalms and biblical verses newly put together.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Brief History Of Ashkenazic Jewry

From Mesopotamia to Modernity: Ten Introductions to Jewish History and Literature
By: Burton L. Visotzky; David E. Fishman, Westview Press, 1999; page 119-120

Jewish settlement in northern Europe was fueled by Jewish perceptions of economic vibrancy in that heretofore backward area and by a sense on the part of many barons that Jewish immigrants might broadly contribute to the general well-being of their domains and might, at the same time, directly enrich baronial coffers. Unfortunately, no memoirs in which Jews identified their motivations for moving northward are extant. In an interesting document in which he invited Jews to settle in Speyer in 1084, Bishop Rudiger, as temporal lord of the town, suggests that the immigration of Jews would enhance the glory of his town a thousandfold. What the bishop seems to be alluding to is the economic advantage that would accrue from Jewish settlement.The early Jewish settlers seem to have been involved primarily in the burgeoning trade of northern Europe. Documents both Jewish and non-Jewish show these Jews buying and selling a wide range of goods, interacting with a variety of Christian neighbors, setting up shop in town in some cases, traveling considerable distances to carry on their business in other instances. Involvement in trade spilled over inevitably in a number of related directions. Exchange of coinage was a major economic need in this rapidly developing area, and Jews seem to have been active in this arena. Extension of credit constituted yet another business-related enterprise, and Jews seem to have done that as well, although only in the most rudimentary ways. There is little evidence of genuine Jewish economic diversification. The Jewish immigrants came as businesspeople and seem to have remained businesspeople. The process of settling in did not include movement into crafts or agriculture. The essentially business orientation of the early Ashkenazic Jews was appreciated by many in majority society; nevertheless, it was clearly resented by others, particularly those for whom the burgeoning business of this rapidly developing area was both new and threatening.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Bishop of Speyer: Grant of Lands & Privileges to the Jews, 1084

In the name of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity, I, Rudiger, surnamed Huozmann, Bishop of Speyer,

When I made the villa of Speyer into a town, thought I would increase the honor I was bestowing on the place if I brought in the Jews. Therefore I placed them outside the town and some way off from the houses of the rest of the citizens, and, lest they should be too easily disturbed by the insolence of the citizens, I surrounded them with a wall. Now the place of their habitation which I acquired justly (for in the first place I obtained the hill partly with money and partly by exchange, while I received the valley by way of gift from some heirs) that place, I say, I transferred to them on condition that they pay annually three and a half pounds of the money of Speyer for the use of the brethren. I have granted also to them within the district where they dwell, and from that district outside the town as far as the harbor, and within the harbor itself, full power to change gold and silver, and to buy and sell what they please. And I have also given them license to do this throughout the state. Besides this I have given them land of the church for a cemetery with rights of inheritance. This also I have added that if any Jew should at any time stay with them he shall pay no thelony. Then also just as the judge of the city hears cases between citizens, so the chief rabbi shall hear cases which arise between the Jews or against them. But if by chance he is unable to decide any of them they shall go to the bishop or his chamberlain. They shall maintain watches, guards, and fortifications about their district, the guards in common with our vassals. They may lawfully employ nurses and servants from among our people. Slaughtered meat which they may not eat according to their law they may lawfully sell to Christians, and Christians may lawfully buy it. Finally, to round out these concessions, I have granted that they may enjoy the same privileges as the Jews in any other city of Germany.

Lest any of my successors diminish this gift and concession, or constrain them to pay greater taxes, alleging that they have usurped these privileges, and have no episcopal warrant for them, I have left this charter as a suitable testimony of the said grant. And that this may never be forgotten, I have signed it, and confirmed it with my seal as may be seen below. Given on September 15th, 1084, etc.

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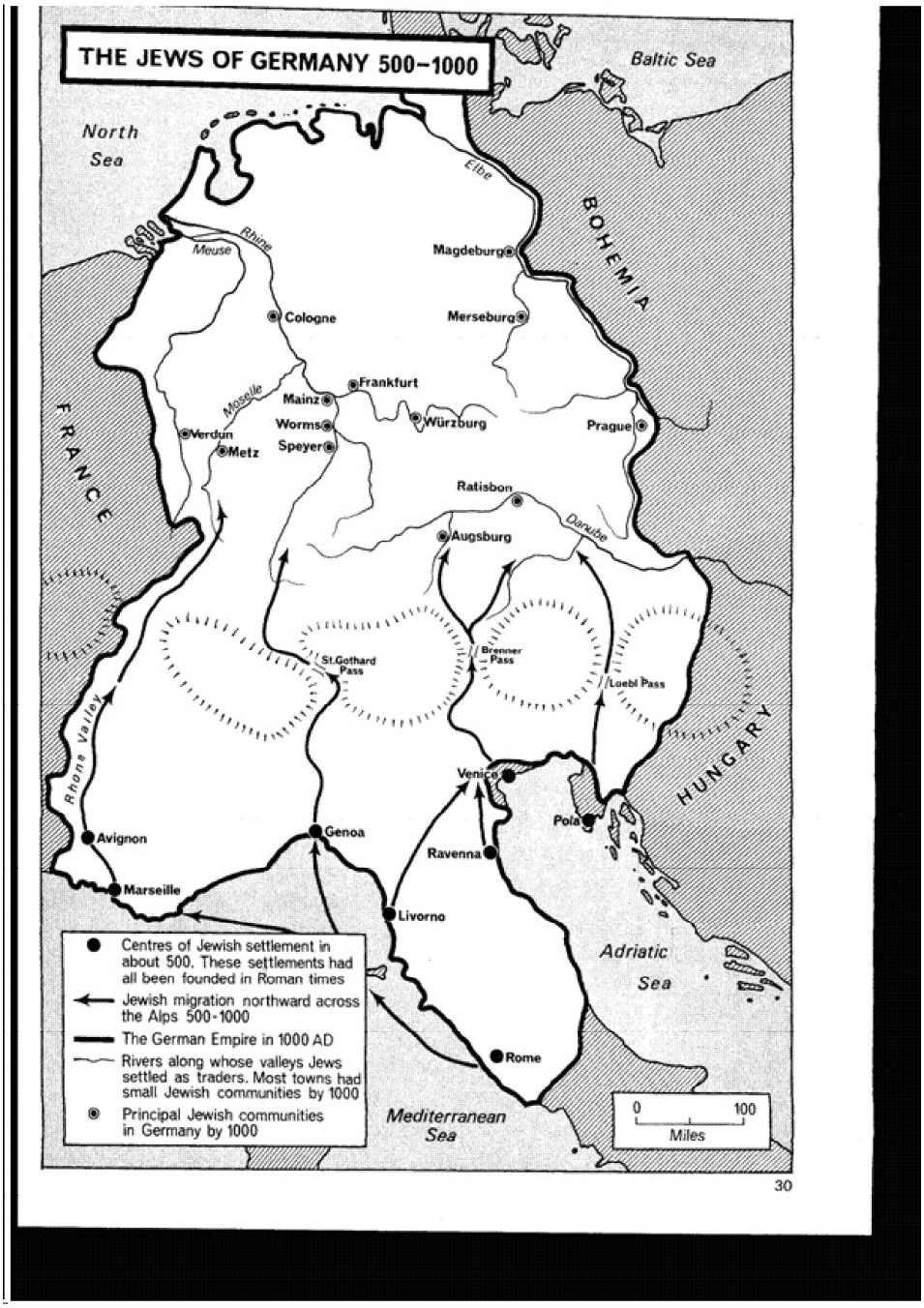
Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators



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The First Crusades And Its Impact On Jewish Prayer

From Mesopotamia to Modernity: Ten Introductions to Jewish History and Literature
By: Burton L. Visotzky; David E. Fishman, Westview Press, 1999; page 122

The first major crisis encountered by early Ashkenazic Jewry came in 1096, as a result of the call to the First Crusade. Pope Urban II, who exhorted the warriors of western Christendom to fight against the Muslim forces holding the Holy Land, surely made no reference to Jews, and the organized crusading armies that responded to his exhortation and eventually conquered Jerusalem in 1099 inflicted no harm on European Jewry as they made their way eastward. The papal call, however, aroused a wide variety of knights, preachers, and common folk. In many instances, the popular militias that were formed saw the crusading venture in highly idiosyncratic ways. Particularly extreme in both their thinking and behavior were the popular German crusading bands. For some of these bands, the call to take up arms against the Muslims in the Holy Land was generalized into a slogan of hatred toward and revenge upon all enemies of the Christian faith. This radical generalization led the German crusaders to ask themselves why they were journeying long distances to engage the Muslim enemy in the Near East, while a profounder enemy-- the Jews of Germany-- was living nearby. The animosity toward Jews that developed in some crusader circles out of the traditional Christian motif of Jewish guilt for the crucifixion of Jesus resonated among some of the burghers of the Rhineland cities as well. A potent coalition of crusaders and burghers assaulted the major Rhineland Jewish communities of Worms, Mainz, and Cologne, wiping out these three great centers of early Ashkenazic Jewish life. Although the attacks of 1096 were localized and the bulk of early Ashkenazic Jewry survived unscathed, the ferocity of the assaults, the devastation that they wrought in those three Rhineland cities, and the remarkable Jewish responses combined to make the events of 1096 both disquieting and memorable.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Excerpt From The Crusade Chronicles

There was a man there by the name of Meshullam, son of Isaac, and he called out in a great voice to his beloved wife Mistress Zipporah and to all those present: "Hear me, adults and children! God gave me this son; my wife Zipporah bore him in her advanced age. His name is Isaac. I shall now offer him up as a sacrifice as our Father Abraham did his son Isaac." His wife Zipporah said to him: "My lord, my lord, wait, do not yet move your hand toward the boy whom I have raised and brought up, whom I bore in my old age. Slaughter me first and let me not see the death of the child."[24] He replied: "I shall not tarry even for a second. He Who gave him to us shall take him as His share and place him in the bosom of our Father Abraham." He bound Isaac, his son, and took the knife in his hand to slaughter him, reciting the blessing for Ritual Slaughter. The boy responded: "Amen." And he slaughtered the boy. He took his shrieking wife and together they left the room. The errant ones then slew them.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Elegy Concerning The First Crusade Recited On Tisha B'Av-Commemorating The Destruction Of The Two Temples

Reader or Narrator: Truly, my eyelids gush with water and my eyes stream with tears, as I bewail in bitterness of soul the martyrs of Speyer; it happened on the eighth day in the second month, on the Day of Rest; my tranquility was changed to tumult and destruction as handsome youths and venerable men were slain; when they were gathered together, they gave up their souls heroically and in perfect unison for declaring the Unity of God in awe; they were valiant heroes, quick to fulfil his words; my priests too and my young men, they were ten in all who perished. *Cong.:* Alas, for the house of Israel and for the people of the Lord, for they are fallen by the sword!

Reader or Narrator: In the bitterness of my anguish and my sorrow, I compose dirges, as I call to mind this day and the martyrdom of the holy congregations; the congregation of Worms, well tested and chosen, the renowned ones of the land and perfect in purity; twice did they sanctify the Unity of God in awe, once, on the twenty-third of the month Iyar in all purity; and the second time in the third month Sivan during the reading and chanting of the Hallel, they gave up their soul bound to G-d in love; like a thick cloud full of water, so will I moan with a wailing cry for those who were adorned with the diadem of martyrdom. *Cong.:* Alas, for the house of Israel and for the people of the Lord, for they are fallen by the sword!

Reader or Narrator: For the noble ones of the esteemed congrega tion of Mayence, who were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions to do G-d's will; they gave up their souls for declaring the Unity of the Revered G-d; indeed, for them will I lament with a soul- shattering cry, for the foundations of both my Temples that were today laid bare, and for the destruction of my miniature temples and houses for study of the Law. *Cong:* Alas, for the house of lsrael and for the people of the Lord, for they are fallen by the sword!

Reader or Narrator: On the third day of the third month Sivan, more sorrow and destruction were added, the month which was turned into grief and distress; on the day of the giving of the Law I had hoped to find cause for regained happiness, but as on the day of its giving, so did the Torah return now; it ascended on high to the place of its dwelling, together with its casing and covering, its interpreters and those who explored it, those who studied and taught it in the darkness of night as well as during the day *Cong:* Alas, for the house of Israel and for the people of the Lord, for they are fallen by the sword!

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Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Incident In Blois, France 1171

Beautiful Death: Jewish Poetry and Martyrdom in Medieval France,By Susan L. Einbinder, Princeton University Press, 2002; page 26

The Blois incident marked the first time in medieval Jewish memory that a secular ruler responsible for their welfare had prosecuted and condemned his Jews, and it is no wonder that the Jewish sources reflect a sense of new crisis and dismay. The catalyst was the claim of a Christian servant that he had seen a Jew cast the corpse of a Christian child into the Loire River. Long-simmering resentments between a local Blois lord and a prominent Jewish woman named Pucellina (to whom we return in chapter 2) escalated tensions and resulted in the mass arrest of the Blois Jewish community, totaling some forty adult men and women. Ransom negotiations broke down and on May 26, 1171, thirty-two Jews were burned at the stake.

Although a majority (seventeen or eighteen) of the Blois victims were women, the men included scholars of renown associated with the northern French Tosafist schools. So, too, were the poets who commemorated them. These poets introduced new martyrological conventions, recasting the ideal martyr as a member of the scholar elite and fusing the descriptions of scholar-martyrs with images of biblical revelation. Hillel of Bonn first links the Blois martyrs to the story of Sinai, when G-d spoke from the fire to the assembled Israelites and gave them his Law. In Hillel's lament, the Sinai motif signals collective witness and obedience and is distinct from the motif of the martyrs' incombustibility, which appears a few stanzas later.

Wording Of A Liturgical Poem Dedicated To The Memory Of The Victims Of The Blois Massacre By Rabbi Ephraim Of Bonn

Woe unto me for my tragedy! My wound is fatal! When the wicked one—may his name be blotted out from the earth— ordered the burning of the pious of the Lord, so full of wisdom, He brought them to the place of burning, to be burned there. They [the Christians] said: "Exchange the Divine Glory for one who effects nothing!" The righteous spoke out in defiance, to put dust in their [the Christians'] mouths: "Burning and boiling are not convincing argument against proclaiming the unity of the Awesome and Pure. " They sang out the prayer '*Alenu le-shabeah'* in order to declare the unity of the one Lord.

Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

The Wording For Aleinu L'Shabeach

עלינו It is incumbent upon us to praise the Master of all things, to exalt the Creator of all existence, that He has not made us like the nations of the world, nor caused us to be like the families of the earth; that He has not assigned us a portion like theirs, nor a lot like that of all their multitudes, for they bow to vanity and nothingness. But we bend the knee, bow down, and offer praise before the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who stretches forth the heavens and establishes the earth, the seat of whose glory is in the heavens above, and the abode of whose majesty is in the loftiest heights. He is our God; there is none else. Truly, He is our King; there is nothing besides Him, as it is written in His Torah:[1] Know this day and take unto your heart, that the Lord is God, in the heavens above and upon the earth below there is nothing else.[2]

ועל And therefore we hope to You, Lord our God, that we may speedily behold the splendor of Your might, to banish idolatry from the earth—and false gods will be utterly destroyed; to perfect the world under the sovereignty of the Almighty. All mankind shall invoke Your Name, to turn to You all the wicked of the earth. Then all the inhabitants of the world will recognize and know that every knee should bend to You, every tongue should swear [by Your Name]. Before You, Lord our God, they will bow and prostrate themselves, and give honor to the glory of Your Name; and they will all take upon themselves the yoke of Your kingdom. May You soon reign over them forever and ever, for Kingship is Yours, and to all eternity You will reign in glory, as it is written in Your Torah: The Lord will reign forever and ever.[3]

Samuel Field Y Adult Center
Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

The Wording Of Av Harachamim

Recited on most Sabbaths during the Additional Service on Shabbat In Synagogues that Follow The Polish Ashkenaz Practices In Memory Of The Victims Of The Chmelnitzki Massacres of 1684.

Recited on the Sabbath Before Shavuos and Tisha B'Av In Synagogues that Follow The German-Ashkenaz Practices In Memory Of The Victims Of The Crusades

May the Father of mercies, who dwelleth on high in his mighty compassion, remember those loving, upright and blameless ones, the holy congregations, who laid down their lives for the sanctification of the divine name, who were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death were not divided; swifter than eagles, stronger than lions to do the will of their Master and the desire of their Rock. May our God remember them for good with the other righteous of the world, and avenge the blood of his servants which hath been shed; as it is written in the Law of Moses, the man of God, Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will make atonement for his land and for his people. And by the hands of thy servants, the prophets, it is written, saying, I will cleanse their blood that I have not yet cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion. And in the Holy Writings it is said, Wherefore should the nations say, Where is their God? Let there be made known among the nations in our sight the revenging of the blood of thy servants which hath been shed. And it is said, For he that maketh inquisition for blood remembereth them; he forgetteth not the cry of the humble. And it is further said, He judgeth among the nations; the land is full of corpses: he smiteth the head over a wide land. He drinketh of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Origin Of The Mourners Kaddish

Siddur Of Rashi-The leader recites: V'Hoo Rachum Barchu, the Evening Service in the order as he does all year, and recites Shmona Esrei as always, except that he recites Havdalah; in the blessing Chonain Ha'Daat, Atah Chonuntanu, whole Kaddish, he recites Havdalah on a cup of wine, and makes the blessing on the fire using the candles that were burning throughout Shabbat, and if it is the end of Shabbat, they recite V'Yitain L'Cha, and a minor recites Kaddish and they go home in peace.

Machzor Vitry-Hashem Chafetz L'Maan Tzidko Yagdil Torah V'Yaadir: Kaddish, and then the leader sits down. The congregation then recites: Shir Mizmor L'Assaf...Ki Kal Hamim Yalchu Ish B'Shem Elokav V'Anachnu Nalaich B'Shem Hashem Alokainu L'Olam Va'ed. And the minor stands and recites Kaddish and skips TiTkabel and says: Y'Hai Shlama Rabbah. When the congregation recites verses or a section of Mishna, the congregation must recite Kaddish afterwards; Ki Hamalchut Shelcha Hee OOL'Olmai Ad Timloch B'Kavod. Ki Ain Lanu Melech Elah Atah; Baruch Atah Hashem Hamelech Bichvodo Tamid Yimloch Aleinu L'Olam Vaed V'Al Kol Maasav. And he recites Kaddish until D'Amiran. They stand to recite Shmona Esrei and then say Kaddish. The leader then sits down and everyone recites Pitum Hakitoret...the minor stands and recites Kaddish without Titkabel. And this Kaddish is recited solely for the purpose of educating young children. It is not considered one of the seven mandatory Kaddishes that are represented by the verse: Seven each day I will praise you.

Ohr Zarua-Our custom in Bohemia and also the custom in the Rhineleand is that on Shabbos after the congregation recites Ain Kailokainu, the orphan stands and recites Kaddish but in France I saw that they are not concerned as to who recites the Kaddish whether it be a child who lost a parent or a child who has both parents. But our custom is more appropriate because of the story of Rabbi Akiva.

Why Ashkenazim Do Not Perform The Priestly Blessings Every Day

Sefer Ha'Igor-The Gadol HaDor Rav Molin (Maharal) was asked: why do the Kohanim not recite Birchat Kohanim each day given the fact that it is a positive commandment to do so each day. He answered that it was the custom of the Kohanim to go to the Mikveh before performing Birchat Kohanim as it is written in Ha'Gahot (Notes to) the Rambam. To do so each day would be difficult because of the winter months. As a result the practice became to do so only on Yom Tovim. In addition, to do so each day would take away from work time. The reason that it is not a problem is that if the Kohanim are not summoned to perform Birchat Kohanim, they have no obligation to do so.

Why only on Holidays?
It is the practice in these lands that Kohanim do not Bless the people except on Yom Tovim because on those days the people are immersed in the happiness of the holiday. It is when the people are feeling good that the Kohanim bless the people. This is not the way they feel on other days even on Shabbat. Even on Shabbat they are distracted by thoughts concerning their well being and the loss of work. Even on Yom Tov they bless the people only in Tephilat Mussaf. It is after Tephilat Mussaf that they leave synagogue feeling joyous about celebrating Yom Tov.

Presence Of Non-Jews In Synagogue
There are those who wrote that Birchat Kohanim is not recited each day in the Diaspora because of the presence of non-Jews. There are places where it is felt that it is inappropriate to recite Birchat Kohanim in the presence of non-Jews.

Mishna-The incident of Reuven is read in synagogue but is not translated. The story of Tamar is read and translated. The first account of the incident of the golden calf (Shemos 32, 1-20) is both read and translated, the second account (Shemos 32, 21-25) is read but not translated. The blessing of the priests is not read and is not translated. The stories of David (Shmuel 2, 11, 2-17) and Amnon (Shmuel 2, 13, 1-4) are read but are not translated. The blessing of the priests is not read and not translated. Rabbi Bah son of Kohain came before Rabbi Yossi and asked: what is the reason? Rabbi Yossi said: the verse states: Ko Sivarchu (so should you bless); the words were meant to be recited only for purposes of a blessing and not to be simply read.

Rashi-Because of the word "yisah". That non-Jews should not say that G-d favors the Jews. What non-Jews fail to understand is that there is every reason for G-d to favor the Jews, as it is written in Masechet Brachos (20,2): is it not appropriate that I, G-d, favor the Jews. I commanded them: eat, become satisfied and then bless me (Devarim 8). The Jews on their own instituted a stricter standard; even for an olive sized or egg sized amount of food.

Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Selichos Composed Before The Crusades

עננו Answer us, *GOD*, answer us. Answer us, our God, answer us. Answer us, our Father, answer us. Answer us, our Creator, answer us. Answer us, our Redeemer, answer us. Answer us, You who seeks us, answer us. Answer us, faithful God, answer us. Answer us, You who are steadfast and kind, answer us. Answer us, You who are pure and upright, answer us. Answer us, living and enduring One, answer us. Answer us, good and beneficent One, answer us. Answer us, You who knows our nature, answer us. Answer us, You who suppresses anger, answer us. Answer us, You who dons righteousness, answer us. Answer us, Supreme King of kings, answer us. Answer us, You who are awesome and exalted, answer us. Answer us, You who forgives and pardons, answer us. Answer us, You who responds in time of distress, answer us. Answer us, You who redeems and rescues, answer us. Answer us, righteous and upright One, answer us. Answer us, You who are close to those who call upon Him, answer us. Answer us, You who are hard [to be provoked] to anger, answer us. Answer us, You who are easy to be pacified, answer us. Answer us, You who are merciful and gracious, answer us. Answer us, You who listens to the destitute, answer us. Answer us, You who supports the wholesome, answer us. Answer us, God of our fathers, answer us. Answer us, God of Abraham, answer us. Answer us, Dread of Isaac, answer us. Answer us, Mighty One of Jacob, answer us. Answer us, Helper of the Tribes, answer us. Answer us, Stronghold of the Matriarchs, answer us. Answer us, You who responds in a time of favor, answer us. Answer us, Father of orphans, answer us. Answer us, Judge of widows, answer us.

מי He who answered our father Abraham on Mount Moriah, may He answer us. He who answered his son Isaac, when he was bound on the altar, may He answer us. He who answered Jacob in Beth-El, may He answer us. He who answered Joseph in prison, may He answer us. He who answered our fathers at the Sea of Reeds, may He answer us. He who answered Moses at Horeb, may He answer us. He who answered Aaron with the censer, may He answer us. He who answered Pinchas when he rose from amid the congregation, may He answer us. He who answered Joshua in Gilgal, may He answer us. He who answered Samuel in Mitzpah, may He answer us. He who answered David and his son Solomon in Jerusalem, may he answer us. He who answered Elijah on Mount Carmel, may He answer us. He who answered Elisha in Jericho, may He answer us. He who answered Jonah in the bowels of the fish, may He answer us. He who answered Hezekiah, King of Judah, in his illness, may He answer us. He who answered Chananyah, Mishael and Azariah in the fiery furnace, may He answer us. He who answered Daniel in the lion's den, may He answer us. He who answered Mordechai and Esther in Shushan the capital, may He answer us.

Selichos Composed After The Crusades

אֵיךְ How can we open [our] mouth before You, who dwells in the stretched-out [heavens]? In what way can we pour out prayers? We loathed Your upright and honest paths; we clung to abominations and despicable deeds. We went after vain and misleading oracles; we were stubborn and acted with insolence. Because of us You raged against the secure Dwelling Place [the Holy Temple]: it was destroyed, and the pleasing scent [of the offerings] ceased; driven away and made to wander about were the anointed priests — they who know how to arrange burnt-offerings and sacrifices. You chastised us oftentimes through the envoys that were sent, but we were not attentive to listen to those who rebuked. From then until now we have been dispersed, slain, slaughtered and butchered. We are left a mere few, among cut-down thorns, our eyes pining without finding relief. The oppressors of Your people who bow to Bel[1], why do they succeed in the morning and the evening? They rise up against You, uttering blasphemies: "Crushed ones, in whom do you trust?" [You] Who dwells eternally and are holy, observe the humiliation of those who groan; they rely on You and bond with You. May we be delivered forever by Your right hand's awesome deeds, for we trust in Your abundant mercy.

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1. Bel is a Babylonian idol cited in Isaiah 46:1. Early editions read "who bow to one who is dead," and this was probably altered by gentile censors.

Samuel Field Y Adult Center
Prayer During The Period Of The Early Commenatators

Major Prayer Books From This Era

Ashkenaz

SIDDUR RASHI AND THE MACHZOR VITRY

Rashi, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, Isaacides) was born in Troyes, in northern France in 1040; and died in Worms in 1105. He studied in the academies (yeshivot) of Troyes, Mainz, and Worms. His teachers, Rabbi Jacob ben Yakar and Rabbi Isaac ben Judah, were students of Rabbenu Gershom, Me'or Ha-Golah. In 1070, Rashi returned to Troyes and founded a yeshiva there, which was attended by students from far and near. At the same time, Rashi began writing his life work: a commentary on the Bible as well as on the entire Talmud, for which he was nicknamed Parshandata. His knowledge of Hebrew language and grammar on the one hand, and of the sciences and handcrafts on the other, find clear expression in his commentary, which is both deceptively simple and unfathomably deep. Rashi had three daughters, two of whom married prominent Torah scholars. His grandsons included such illustrious scholars as Rabbenu Jacob Tam and the Rabbi Samuel ben Rabbi Meir (Rashbam), both of whom were among the founders of the Franco-German Tosafist school of Talmud study. Rashi passed away in 1105.

PEIRUSH SIDDUR HATEFILLAH LAROKEACH

R. Elazar of Worms (the Rokeach) was born in Magentzia circa 4920 (1160 CE). He received his early Torah education from his father, R. Yehuda bar Klonimus (Ribak of Magentzia); subsequently he moved to Metz, where he studied under R. Eliezer, the author of the Yereim. Later, he moved to Shpera, where he studied under his primary teacher R. Yehuda bar Klonimus bar Meir, the author of Yichusei Tanaim VaAmoraim (Ribak of Shpera, apparently not related). In Shpera he was educated in the hidden Torah by his relative R. Yehuda HaChassid, whom he stayed by in Regensberg for a period of time. At a certain time he settled in Worms, and established a yeshiva. Many of the Torah giants of the generation number among his students, including R. Yitzchak of Vienna, author of the Or Zarua. He lost his wife and children during the Crusades, and he himself and many of his students were badly wounded. R. Elazar died in Worms at the end of the fifth millenium (circa 4990 - 1230 CE), and was buried there. His study hall still stands today; it is known as Rashi's beit medrash.

Sephardic

ABUDRAHAM

R. David ben R. Yosef Abudraham lived in Spain during the thirteenth century. He might have been a student of R. Yaakov Ba`al Ha-Turim, although this is not certain. His work, called Abudraham, is a collection of halachot, minhagim and commentaries on the prayers, and is one of the most important works of this type. The Abudraham includes commentaries and halachic decisions from earlier authorities.

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Definition Of Jewish Mysticism

Binah: Studies in Jewish Thought - Vol. 2, By Joseph Dan, Praeger Publishers 1989

Page 234-235-Scholem suggested a definition of mysticism in the Introduction to Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism. This book is based on a series of lectures delivered in New York and was meant to serve as an introduction to Jewish mysticism for scholars and students who do not read Hebrew. (For a long time, Scholem refused to allow its translation into Hebrew, for he claimed that anyone who could read the sources had no need of a book like this.) He explained that because the field is quite difficult to define, many disagreements arose among scholars. The essence of the definition he suggested was that mysticism expresses the attempt to get close to and commune with God -- the aspiration to achieve union with God. A similar definition may be found in many books dealing with mysticism, but it is seriously lacking in one respect: It bases the definition of mysticism on a quantitative, not qualitative, element in religious faith. Every religion embraces, to some degree, the striving to become close to God and to achieve a deep sense of oneness with Him. In mysticism, however, this striving is intensified; its strength is one of the striking and clear signs of mystical experience. Yet, according to this definition, the mystic is distinguished from the nonmystic believer by degree and not by quality; the mystic is apparently more extreme and persevering regarding a phenomenon which also exists among nonmystics. However, mystics themselves have consistently seen in mysticism a qualitative uniqueness differentiating it from established belief.

It is appropriate, therefore, to supplement the definition proposed by Scholem in his Introduction, and to suggest an additional qualitative element: Mysticism is the claim that religious truth is found beyond human senses and intellectual wisdom, and cannot be articulated through the tools with which an individual usually expresses his feelings and his intellectual cognition, namely, language. Indeed, one significant characteristic of mystical truth is that it does not possess the usual linguistic norms for articulation. The way in which a mystic arrives at the knowledge of hidden truth is itself mystical; it is not given to linguistic expression. The only way in which a mystic can describe the methods of mystical understanding and the most rudimentary of mystical ideas is through those special techniques which ostensibly use linguistic means, but at a completely different level -- through symbolism.

Class Presented By Abe Katz, Founding Director,
The Beurei Hatefila Institute-www.beureihatefila.com

References To Angels In The Five Books Of Moses-1

Genesis 18-1. And the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre; and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; 2. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to the ground, 3. And said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, pass not away, I beseech you, from your servant; 4. Let a little water, I beseech you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; 5. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and you comfort your hearts; after that you shall pass on; seeing that you are come to your servant. And they said, So do, as you have said. 6. And Abraham hurried to the tent to Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes. 7. And Abraham ran to the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it to a young man; and he hurried to prepare it. 8. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they ate. 9. And they said to him, Where is Sarah your wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10. And he said, I will certainly return to you at this season; and, lo, Sarah your wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. 11. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well advanced in age; and it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am grown old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? 13. And the Lord said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old? 14. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return to you, at this season, and Sarah shall have a son. 15. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, No; you did laugh.

Genesis 28-10. And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.
11. And he lighted upon a certain place, and remained there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed; 14. And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15. And, behold, I am with you, and will keep you in all places where you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you, until I have done that about which I have spoken to you. 16. And Jacob awoke from his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. 17. And he was afraid, and

References To Angels In The Five Books Of Moses-2

said, How awesome is this place! this is no other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. 18. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon its top. 19. And he called the name of that place Beth-El; but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. 20. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and garment to put on,
21. So that I come back to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God;
22. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you shall give me I will surely give the tenth to you.

Genesis 32- 25. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 26. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 27. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let you go, except you bless me. 28. And he said to him, What is your name? And he said, Jacob.
29. And he said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince you have power with God and with men, and have prevailed. 30. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I beg you, your name. And he said, Why is it that you ask after my name? And he blessed him there. 31. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. 32. And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he limped upon his thigh. 33. Therefore the people of Israel do not eat of the sinew of the vein, which is in the hollow of the thigh, to this day; because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the vein.

Prayer During The Period Of The Kabbalists Of Safed

Isaiah's Vision

Isaiah 6-1. In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2. Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly. 3. And one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. 4. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of he who cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. 6. Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; 7. And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.

Ezekiel's Vision

Ezekiel 3- 10. And he said to me, son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart, and hear with your ears. 11. And go, get you to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them, and tell them, Thus said the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will refuse to hear. 12. Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place. 13. I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels beside them, and a noise of a great rushing. 14. And the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.

Merkavah (Chariot) Mystics

Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History, By Ismar Elbogen, Jewish Publication Society, 1993

Page 287-Only in the post-talmudic period do we encounter the mystics as a unified group with uniform goals. Reacting against the one-sided preoccupation with religious law and against the excessive esteem accorded studies that leave the heart cold, the movement of the Merkava (chariot) mystics arose. These were mystics who observed fasts on consecutive days and hung their faces to the ground as they murmured all sorts of hymns in order to become filled with the divine. They called this "descending to the merkava" and in the tannaitic period merkava was the generic term for all esoteric speculation. "The events in heaven, particularly those that occur in the immediate vicinity of God, the court of heaven with its troops and ranks, and especially the varied panegyrics with which the angels praise the hidden Creator -- all these are the subject of the Merkava." The thoughts and goals of these mystics are set forth in the hekhalot literature, in the description of the seven chambers of heaven filled with angels, which the mystic believed he could see and among whom he could walk. The oldest hekhalot book that has reached us, Hekhalot rabati, is composed for the most part of Kedushah hymns, "strange fantasy-pieces of varying length, each ending with the trishagion. The hymns lack any real thought-content, but occasionally they are suffused with a passionate fantasy carried on top of a surging wave of words." The main subject of these books is the angels, their song, and their praise of God.

The intense veneration of God is expressed through the heaping-up of words that are equivalent in meaning and similar in sound, but that say little and do not advance the train of thought. These hyperbolic hymns are by preference placed in the mouths of the angels, who are introduced and brought forward in troops and camps. In all this they differ considerably from the sober piety of the Bible, the Talmud, and the ancient prayers, which were oriented rather toward the psalmists' proverbial words, "to You silence is praise." In the mystics' zeal to disseminate their ideas, it is not surprising that they had great influence on the liturgy. Even in the statutory prayers there are passages where the abundance of the vocabulary bears no relationship to the content, and where, by contrast to other passages, the angels play a significant role. This is clearest in the Kedushah, the favorite prayer of the members of these circles, who saw themselves as divinely charged to cultivate and disseminate it, and who expected God's grateful recognition in return.

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Hasidei Ashkenaz-German Pietists-1

Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History, By Ismar Elbogen, Jewish Publication Society, 1993

p. 288- We do not know how long the Merkava mystics remained in the foreground, but it is certain that mystical ideas won over broad circles of the people and had great influence for centuries. A direct line connects the mysticism of the geonic age to similar tendencies that won significance in Germany from the middle of the twelfth century.

Samuel the Pious b. Kalonymus the Elder, born in Speyer in 1115, and his son Judah the Pious b. Samuel the Holy,11 who died in Regensburg in 1217, were the founders of mysticism among the German Jews. This movement was a reaction to the dominance of the study of Talmud as it was developed at that time by the casuistic system of the tosafists. But these two "pietists" are not to be seen as opponents of the Talmud, for both were authorities on religious law; they simply desired to give the longings of the heart their due and to bring to realization a profound ideal of piety and morality. Both went their own ways, consciously and decidedly deviating from the tendency of their times. What concerns us here is their opinion about prayer and the synagogue service. The talmudists held that piety must be expressed first and foremost in the study of Torah; accordingly, they reduced as much as possible the amount of time to be-p.289-devoted to prayer. But the mystics emphasized that prayer is the highest expression of piety: Not satisfied merely with the received form of public worship, they demanded ecstatic intensity in relation to God, which the soul can attain only through contemplation and abnegation of the things of the world. Since true prayer is the ascent of the soul to God, one can only pray properly in a state of ecstasy. With this attitude as their starting point, these two pietists revealed to their contemporaries the hidden meanings of prayer, till then the secret heritage of their family. Samuel's father, who died while Samuel was still young, transmitted the "order of prayers and their secret meaning" to Eleazar the Precentor in Speyer, so that he could transmit them to Samuel when the latter would be old enough. Samuel then cultivated these doctrines with all the strength of his rich imagination and deep spiritual life, and transmitted them through his own son. The contents of these mysteries can be learned from the commentaries on the prayer book that these two composed,

They demand full spiritual concentration in prayer, and the direction of all of the thoughts of the heart to heaven. Conduct in the synagogue must be appropriate to the sanctity of the place where we approach the Lord of the world; strong words and harsh rebukes are addressed to the people of the age for neglecting to apply themselves to the cultivation of such conduct. One should pray only in a language that he understands, for prayer requires proper intention, which is impossible unless the contents are understood. The highest

Hasidei Ashkenaz-German Pietists-2

Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History, By Ismar Elbogen, Jewish Publication Society, 1993

moral demands are made of the precentor: moral purity, humility, and unselfishness; he must be generally liked and not at odds with the community. He must understand his prayers, and must not seek to display his beautiful voice, but rather to awaken the heart of the congregation with his prayer. His prayer must be grounded in sincerity and emotion. One who is not actually suffering hardship or one who has a personal interest in the inflation in food prices may not serve as precentor on a fast day on account of drought. One who is not moved to tears should not recite selichos before the congregation that depict the worshiper as weeping.

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Prayer During The Period Of The Kabbalists Of Safed

The Mystics Of Safed-1

Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History, By Ismar Elbogen, Jewish Publication Society, 1993

The Kabbalah, which originated in Provence and was cultivated mainly in Spain, went a different way from that of the German pietists. It was a reaction against the rationalism of Aristotelian philosophy, which had been disseminated particularly by the writings of Maimonides, and against the evaporation of Judaism in theoretical speculation. Thus from the beginning its concern was primarily theoretical, with the doctrines of God's incomparability and of the emanations of the spheres in the foreground. But the Maimonists had also given offense through their allegorical exegesis of Jewish ritual law; it was therefore only natural for their opponents to accord the ritual law strong affirmation. Magical power was attributed to the performance of ritual acts; these ensure the continued existence of the world and draw down to the lower world the blessing from the world of the spheres. For this purpose prayer was considered to be particularly important; but it had to be understood in its most profound signification and recited precisely according to precept, because the prayer draws down the fullness of grace that proceeds from God. This bounty does not come from Him directly, but through the mediation of the spheres. The tradition must be followed exactly, for only in this way can one exercise the necessary influence on the upper world. It was not long before practical mysticism became known in Spain and became amalgamated with the theoretical. In the Zohar, composed ca. 1300, the union of the two is already complete. Now every means of achieving ecstasy known to us from the Ashkenazic pietists is encouraged: invoking angels, manipulating the letters of the alphabet, hypnotic gestures, and all sorts of techniques that permit man's soul to be translated to the celestial realm, where it can view the supernal splendor. Naturally, prayer again takes first place among the means that serve to unite the upper and lower worlds. "What the burning flame does to the coal, that is what prayer accomplishes for the elevation of man to -291-the world of light." The angels, who are the masters of the spheres, stand ready to receive the true prayers.

The Zohar's view of the meaning of prayer enhanced its status tremendously. In an age when traditional prayer was viewed with apathy by the enlightened and incomprehension by the masses, the Zohar lent prayer new value, and created for it a kind of apotheosis. The Zohar's fantastic ideas freed many downtrodden people from the burdens of their lives; the spiritual uplift that they experienced in traditional prayer and in the recitation of the kabbalistic hymns gave them a taste of the world to come in the midst of the hell of their everyday lives. But at the same time we must not close our eyes to the severe harm done to Jewish piety by kabbalistic theory. It turned prayer into a tool for forcibly bringing about magical effects. By introducing intermediaries between God and man, it spelled a fateful

The Mystics Of Safed-2

regression in the history of the Jewish religion. Finally, the new doctrine gave a boost to all kinds of superstition.

Under the influence of both mystical movements, the efforts to fix the traditions of prayer were understandably intensified. If every word and every letter, every motion and every gesture produces an infinite number of effects, then the tradition must be explored and taught in the most exact and detailed way. In a period of intellectual health and sound spiritual life the fact that the customs are so varied would have undermined these doctrines; but this was a period of decline, one less able than any other period to accept such considerations. In the face of the insecurity of life and the fear of the troubles and dangers threatened by tomorrow, the spiritual exaltation provided by the pietistic exercises of the Kabbalists was very desirable. With the deterioration of spiritual life and the establishment of Zohar as a "holy book," the influence of its doctrines increased. After the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, the Zohar found fertile ground in the Holy Land, in the new Jewish community of Safed. Only rarely has history brought together in one place such a large number of enthusiastic and gifted adherents to a single doctrine as it did at that time in the circle of the kabbalists of Safed. The whole atmosphere was suffused with mystical ideas, and a great community was prepared to fulfill the practical demands that followed from them. It was a city of "saints and men of deeds" headed by distinguished talmudists like David Ibn Zimra and Joseph Caro, popular preachers like Moses Alshekh "the Saint" and Abraham Halevi Berukhim, and poets and visionaries like Solomon Alkabetz and Moses Cordovero. But they were all overshadowed by Isaac Luria, whose short life of thirty-eight years and whose sojourn of only two years (1570-72) in Safed were enough to earn him nearly the adulation due a deity. Isaac Luria was the sun in whose rays the light of all the other stars seemed to pale. The new Kabbalah, which spread to wherever Jews lived, was attached to his name. The institutions of the "Holy Ari," as Luria was called by his followers, still enjoy unparalleled respect among all the Jews who have not been touched by the spirit of the religious movements of the modern period. Isaac Luria built a new system founded on the Zohar, but the actual goal of his doctrine and that of the circle of the Safed kabbalists was the absolutely practical one of preparing the age for salvation, when the order of the cosmos will reach its perfection. In pursuit of this exalted moral goal, a kind of religious order came into being in Safed, demanding of its members human virtues at the highest, almost superhuman level, a spirit of -292-repentance that takes hold of the whole man and transforms him from within. Among the pietistic practices of the Safed kabbalists, liturgical assemblies and prayer again played an outstanding part, and new liturgical institutions were devised that spread to all countries. For Luria, prayer is one of the most important functions of life; through his intense attachment to God, man becomes a

The Mystics Of Safed-3

receptacle for new reflection of the divine light and a new emanation of His grace. Every utterance in prayer has, besides its literal meaning, a profound mystical meaning; one who recites a prayer without devotion, or who desecrates it with impure thoughts, delays the time of redemption. Therefore, special preparations -- “prayers of intention" -- were devised, that is, words designed to focus the worshiper's thoughts in prayer toward one of the holy names, and “unifications" -- that is, the manner in which a particular occurrence of the divine name in the context of a prayer should be emphasized and pronounced.

p. 293-Lurianic mysticism, with its liturgical innovations, spread in every direction as swiftly as an infectious disease. No other movement was to have such a powerful effect so quickly on the liturgy and the prayer book. Luria's apostle, H?ayim Vital Calabrese (d. ca. 1620),25 propagated the new doctrine so that its adherents spread into all the lands and conquered all the communities. Luria's mystical approach to prayer was disseminated by the printing press, which brought the new prayers, unintelligible meditations fasts, and penances everywhere. Zunz writes:

No rite was spared, as attested by daily and festival prayer books from Tlemcen to the Crimea. Innumerable prayers beginning "May it be Your will," names of angels, and sefirotic bombast immortalized superstition and spirit worship. What was significant in public worship was pushed to the background, and in its place came charms and talismans filling the prayer books and the heads of the masses.

From Palestine, Lurianic fanaticism passed first to Italy, where Menahem Azaria Da Fano won converts to it. There the first Minor Day of Atonement ceremony was held; there fraternities were established that fasted and prayed every Monday and Thursday; and there the early Morning Devotions and Midnight Services of lamentation were introduced. "Selections were chosen from Ashkenaz, Sepharad, and Rome, and new pieces were fashioned to be added to them, partially kabbalistic in content, and this new prayer was declared to be the more important and more certain to effect the redemption than public worship." All collections of this type were called tikun. The texts of the Sephardic rite published from that time on are full of instructions in the kabbalistic spirit of Luria. What did the most for the dissemination of Lurianic mysticism was its taking root also in Poland, home of the greatest concentration of Jews. Since the thirteenth century the "mysteries of prayer" had never retreated from the foreground, and were brought to Poland during the migration there by the sages. At first they remained a kind of secret doctrine whose content was entrusted to only a few select disciples. Only around 1600, when the condition of the Jews deteriorated in Poland, too, did people reach for the kinds of consolation that flowed abundantly from the Lurianic Kabbalah.

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The Influence Of The Introduction Of Coffee Into The Middle East

Judaism and Hebrew Prayer, by Stefan Reif, Cambridge University Press, 1995

page 244-It has even been suggested by Elliot Horowitz that such a humble matter as the drinking of coffee had an influence on the acceptance of one of the practices of the Safed school of mystics and the convincing case that he has made indicates that the wider social sphere , what he calls the 'social history of piety' is another one that has to be taken into account in arriving at explanations of liturgical developments, Although there were precedents in the land of Israel and Italy for prayer vigils at night and in the early morning, the fact is that it was the midnight tiqqun hasoth championed in Luria's Safed, that succeeded in becoming the popular form of such piety in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although on such occasions as Shavu'oth and Hosh'ana Rabbah it became customary to spend the whole night in prayer and study, the tiqqun hasoth was generally adopted as a lengthening of the evening and it is Horowitz" thesis that the increase of the drinking of coffee and the opening of coffee-houses in the Holy Land and italy were major factors in the preference for staying up at night over arising at dawn. The introduction of this stimulant brought with it 'the emergence a new perception of the night in which the hours of darkness could be shaped and manipulated by human initiative rather than condemn man to passive repose.' Thus it was that laments for the destruction of the Temple, prayers for the restoration of the Jews to their land, and the recitation of certain psalms, centred around the midnight hour, became a popular addition to the catalogue of Jewish acts of worship in the form chosen by the AR'I (the 'lion' i.e. Elohi Rabbo Yishaq, R. Isaac the divine).

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Prayers Directed To The Angels

A Prayer Recited At The End Of The Selichos Service **מכניסי רחמים**

You, angels who bring in pleas for mercy, bring in our plea for mercy before the Presence of the Master of mercy. You, angels who cause prayer to be heard, cause our prayer to be heard before the Hearer of prayer. You, angels, who cause outcry to be heard, cause our outcry to be heard before the Hearer of outcry. You, angels who bring in tears, bring in our tears before the King who is appeased by tears. Intercede and increase supplication and entreaty before the King, the high and exalted G-d. Mention before Him, cause to be heard before Him, the Torah and the good deeds of those who repose in the dust. May He remember their love, and give life to their offspring, so that the remnant of Jacob not be lost. For the flock of the faithful shepherd has become a disgrace; Israel, the unique nation, an example and a taunt. Hasten, answer us, G-d of our salvation, and redeem us from all harsh decrees; and in Your abundant mercies save Your righteous anointed and Your people.

A Song For Before Friday Night Dinner **שלום עליכם מלאכי השרת**

Peace be unto you, you ministering angels, messengers of the Sabbath Most High, the supreme King of Kings, holy and blessed is He.

Angels- May your coming be in peace, messengers of the Most High, the supreme King of Kings, holy and blessed is He.

Bless me with peace, you messengers of the Most High, the supreme King of Kings, holy and blessed is He.

May your departure be in peace, you messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, the supreme King of Kings, holy and blessed is He.

The Source For The Song Shalom Aleichem
Talmud-Maseches Shabbos 119b-It was taught, R. Jose son of R. Judah said: Two ministering angels accompany man on the eve of the Sabbath from the synagogue to his home, one a good angel and one an evil one. And when he arrives home and finds the lamp burning, the table laid and the bed covered with a spread, the good angel exclaims, 'May it be even thus on another Sabbath too,' and the evil angel unwillingly responds 'Amen'. But if not, the evil angel exclaims, 'May it be even thus on another Sabbath and the good angel unwillingly responds, 'Amen'.

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A Liturgical Poem Composed By The Kabbalists Of Safed, Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz

Lecha Dodi

Come, my beloved, to greet the bride; let us welcome the Sabbath;
"Observe and Remember " in one act of speech,
The One and Only Lord made us hear;
The Lord is One and His name is One
For renown, for splendor, and for praise

To greet the Sabbath, come let us go;
For blessing she is the source,
From the outset, as of old, ordained:
Last in deed, first in thought

Sanctuary of the King, royal city,
Arise go forth from your ruined state.
Too long have you dwelt in the valley of tears!
Now shall God's tenderness shepherd your ways.

Rise, O my folk, from the dust of the earth,
Put on your clothes of glory, My people;
Through the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite
Will freedom be achieved and the return of glorious days.

Wake and bestir you,
For the light has come! Rise, Shine!

Awake, awake, break out song!
For the Lord's glory is revealed on you
Be not ashamed ", said the Lord, "nor be distressed;
Fear not and doubt not. The people oppressed,
Why be downcast? Why do you mourn?
In you, Zion, my people shall find shelter
And the city shall be rebuilt on its hill.

"Those who despoiled you shall be plundered,
All who devoured you shall be far away
God shall exult and rejoice in you,
Joyful as bridegroom over his bride".

Your borders will stretch out to the left and to the right;
Fear but the Lord, Whom to fear is delight,
The man, descendant of Perez, shall gladden our sight,
And we shall rejoice to the fullness of days.

Come in peace, O crown of her husband
Come in joy and jubilation;
Among the faithful of the treasured people,
Enter O bride, Enter O bride.

Source for the poem-
Talmud Babba Kamma 32a-For R. Hanina used to say'Come, let us go forth to meet the bride, the queen!' Some [explicitly] read:'. . . to meet Sabbath, the bride, the queen.' R. Jannai, however, while dressed in his Sabbath attire used to remain standing and say: 'Come you, O queen, come you, O queen!'

The Besht's Epistle To R. Gershon of Kutov

On Rosh Hashanah of the year 5507 (1746), I made an oath and elevated my soul in the manner known to you. I saw wondrous things in a vision, the like of which I had never witnessed since the day my mind first began to awaken. The things which I saw and learned when I ascended there would be impossible to communicate, even if I could speak to you in person. When I returned to the lower Garden of Eden, I saw many souls, both living and dead, some known to me and others unknown-their number was beyond reckoning. They were hastening back and forth in order to ascend from one world to another through the pillar known to those initiated into the mysteries. Their joy was too great for the mouth to express or the physical ear to hear. Also, many evil-doers were repenting, and their sins were being forgiven, since it was a special time of Divine favor. Even to me, it was amazing how many of them were accepted as penitents, a number of whom you also know. There was great joy among them, too, and they ascended in he same manner.

Together they begged and implored me unceasingly, "Because of the glory of your Torah, God has granted you an additional measure of understanding to grasp and to know these matters. Ascend with us so that you can be our help and support."

Because of the great joy that I beheld among them, I agreed to go up with them... And I sought my master (Achiyah HaShiloni) to accompany me, for the ascent to the Supernal Worlds is fraught with danger. From the day of my birth until now, I never experienced such an ascent as this.

I went up from level to level until I entered the Palace of the Messiah, where the messiah studies with the Tannaim (rabbinic sages)and tzaddikim, as well as the Seven Shepherds. There I found extremely great rejoicing, but I did not know the cause of this delight. At first I thought that it might be due to my having passed away from the physical world, God forbid. Later they told me that I had not yet died, for they have great pleasure on high when I effect mystical unifications in the world below through their holy Torah. However, to this very day, the nature of their joy remains unknown to me.

I asked the messiah, "When will you come, master?" And he replied, "By this you shall know: it will be a time when your teachings become publicized and revealed to the world, and your well-springs have overflowed to the outside, [when] that which I have taught you-and that which you have perceived of your own efforts-become known, so that others, too, will be able to perform mystical unifications and ascents of the soul like you. Then all the evil klippot [shells] will be destroyed, and it will be a time of grace and salvation."

I was amazed at this and greatly troubled, since a long time must pass for this to be possible. But while I was there I learned three segulot and three Holy Names which are easy to learn and explain. My mind was then set at ease, and I thought that with these teachings the people of my own generation might attain the same spiritual level and state as myself. They would be able to elevate their souls and to learn and perceive just as I do. However, I was not granted permission to reveal this during my lifetime. I pleaded for your sake to be allowed to teach you; but I was denied permission altogether and took an oath to that effect.

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Prayer During The Period Of The German Reform Movement

Events And Personalities Leading To The German Reform Movement

The Mystics Of Safed

Shabbetai Tzvi

Baruch Spinoza

The Haskala

Moses Mendelssohn

Emancipation

Class Presented By Abe Katz, Founding Director,
The Beurei Hatefila Institute-www.beureihatefila.com

Shabbetai Zvi-The False Messiah And The Sabbatean Movement-1

Messianism, Mysticism, and Magic: A Sociological Analysis of Jewish Religious Movements By: Stephen Sharot, p.86

On the eve of Pentecost 1665, in Gaza, Palestine, a young scholar, Nathan Ashkenazi, fell into a trance during the religious service and made a number of utterances, including a reference to an acquaintance, Sabbatai Zvi. After coming out of the trance, Nathan explained that he had been chosen by God as a prophet and that the meaning of his utterance was that Zvi was the messiah. At the end of May 1665, Zvi accepted Nathan's prophecy and announced that he was the messiah; to signify the break in history, he announced that the Fast of the Seventeenth of Tammuz would be a day of rejoicing. Zvi traveled from Gaza to Jerusalem, where he was expelled by the rabbinic authorities after he ate forbidden animal fat. He then went to Aleppo; in his absence, enthusiasm grew among the communities in Palestine, and miracle stories were communicated to other communities. In a number of towns, such as Aleppo, Smyrna, Safed, and Damascus, the presence of Zvi produced great enthusiasm, but the acceptance of Zvi as the messiah spread far beyond the area of activities of Zvi and Nathan.

Many Jews in Gaza came to accept Zvi as the messiah, but in the first months following Zvi's acceptance of Nathan's prophecy, Nathan, Zvi, and their followers appear to have made little effort to spread the tidings. The movement spread not by organized missionary activity but almost entirely by letters and rumors. Nathan and his group began making definite efforts to spread their message from the middle of September 1665, but only two emissaries were sent from Palestine, one to Egypt and another to Italy, and it is doubtful that even they had a formal mission. Enthusiastic letters from Aleppo, where Zvi stayed for a while, began to arrive in Constantinople in September 1665, and in the following months the messianic tidings spread rapidly to many other communities under Islam. The first reports to reach Christian Europe arrived in Italy at the end of October and beginning of November. From Italy the news traveled to Germany, Holland, England, and the rest of the continent. The news entered Poland from Turkey, via the Balkans.

The commercial and family ties between Jewish communities, especially those in Turkey, Italy, and Holland, greatly facilitated the spread of the message. Amsterdam, which received reports as early as December 1665, became an important center for the transmission of the news. Parts of letters received in Amsterdam were put together and then sent on to London, Germany, and Poland. During 1666 in many Jewish communities each mail brought many letters and created great excitement. As the news passed from one community to another, new interpretations and additions often transformed its content. There were often wide gaps between the teachings of Nathan, the events around Zvi in the

Shabbetai Zvi-The False Messiah And The Sabbatean Movement-2

Middle East, and the content of the news.

Nathan did not expect the Redemption to take place through military action: he did not expect Zvi to take the role of warrior, and vengeance on gentiles was to be limited to those responsible for the massacres in Poland in 1648 and the following years. Nor did Nathan expect a sudden occurrence of miracles: he argued that believers should have faith without a sign or miracle, and those who denied the messiah, however orthodox they might be, would be condemned. He predicted that the reign of the messiah would begin in 1667, but this did not include the ingathering of the exiles. The only miracle at that time would be the rulers' acknowledgment of Zvi as the messiah, which would allow the Jews to live in peace and honor in their societies. The period of messianic woes would begin in 1672, and the miraculous events of the apocalyptic legends would then follow.

The letters and rumors told of miracles and mythological and apocalyptic events occurring in the present, presaging an imminent return to the Holy Land and the Redemption. The earliest reports received in Italy told not of specific events in Palestine but of the ten lost tribes marching on Gaza. Letters from Egypt on the appearance of the lost tribes in Arabia and the conquest and destruction of Mecca were received in Amsterdam. At the end of 1665 the believers in Palestine also began to include legendary material in their letters. They told of a fiery cloud encompassing the prophet, of a voice of an angel emanating from a cloud, and of Christian churches sinking into the earth. The earliest reports received in Amsterdam stated that Zvi had confirmed his messiahship by miracles: he had predicted accurately the sudden death of certain people, a day of darkness, and a storm of great hailstones, fire, and brimstone, and he had entered a fire without harm. News of miraculous events continued after Zvi's imprisonment by the Turkish authorities. Letters told that Zvi had resurrected the dead and had passed through the locked and barred doors of his prison. Christian news reports in the form of small pamphlets were dependent on Jewish sources, but they added distortions, exaggerations, and embellishments of their own. Jews took note of the impression that the movement made on Christians, and they quoted from their reports.

Reports of the appearance of a messiah and signs of an imminent redemption spread throughout a large part of the diaspora. However, Jewish communities differed in the proportion of believers in Zvi, the strength of the community's commitment, and the forms of messianic activity.

The Sabbatean Movement

p. 115-
Sabbatai Zvi: Imprisonment, Conversion, and Death
Excitement in many Jewish communities reached a pitch early in 1666 when Sabbatai Zvi sailed from Smyrna to Constantinople. They expected that he would remove the crown from the sultan, assume the rule over the Ottoman Empire, and inaugurate the messianic era. On 6 February 1666, however, Turkish authorities intercepted his ship and brought him ashore in chains. Revolts were frequent in the empire, and rebels or suspected rebels were usually speedily executed. Although the Turks had little reason to fear the Sabbatian movement, they may have wished to avoid making Zvi a martyr. Whatever the reason, they showed unusual restraint in his case by putting him in prison. They took him to the fortress of Gallipoli. There, with the help of bribes, he managed to meet with his followers and to hold court in some style for several months. In September, Zvi came before the divan in Adrianople, who gave him the choice between immediate death and conversion to Islam. Zvi denied having made a messianic claim and chose conversion.

p. 117-A minority did not admit that they had been mistaken about Zvi. In most previous Jewish messianic movements believers had accepted the disconfirmation of prophecy and had returned to everyday life. The widespread belief in Zvi in some communities, and the ecstatic behavior that accompanied it, led some to believe that the new era of history had already begun; in their minds, the imminent redemption had become a realized redemption. The mass prophecy, the wave of penitence, and the visions and trances had given an extraordinary inner sense of freedom. Some believers could not admit that their personal experience had been false, and it appeared impossible that so many Jews had had a false experience.

Baruch Spinoza-1

Fifty Key Jewish Thinkers, By: Dan Cohn-Sherbok, Routledge, 1997.

p. 119- The roots of Jewish thought during the Enlightenment go back to seventeenth-century Holland where a number of Jewish thinkers sought to interpret the Jewish tradition in the light of the new scientific understanding of the world. The greatest of these Dutch Jewish thinkers was Baruch Spinoza who was born in Amsterdam in 1632 of a former Marrano family. Initially Spinoza was exposed to Hebrew, the Bible and the Talmud as well as medieval Jewish philosophy; subsequently he engaged in the study of natural science and contemporary philosophy.

At the age of twenty-three he was questioned by the leaders of the Amsterdam Jewish community about his religious beliefs, and offered a stipend if he would remain silent and conform to Jewish practice. When he refused to comply, he was excommunicated.

p. 120- In the first section of his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, Spinoza maintains that prophecy is of an imaginative-as opposed to philosophical-character. In his view, the biblical prophets were philosophically untrained, indeed they were ignorant of the causes of natural events. Rejecting Maimonides' belief that Hebrew Scriptures were addressed in different ways to both the masses and the intellectuals, Spinoza maintains that the Hebrew Scriptures were directed solely to a general audience. God is presented as a lawgiver to appeal to the multitudes. The function of biblical law is to ensure social and political stability-hence its prescriptions are not of divine origin. In addition, Spinoza asserts that the biblical laws are suitable only to ancient times; they have no relevance for subsequent ages.

Concerning miracles, Spinoza contends that God's nature and activity cannot be known through miraculous events, but only from the order of nature and from clear self-evident ideas. Unlike medieval Jewish philosophers such as Maimonides, who believed that miracles transcend the natural order, Spinoza argues that nothing can occur outside natural law. In this light, Spinoza insists that the Bible must be regarded in the same way as any work of ancient literature-the biblical books should be interpreted only according to their author's intentions. Such a conviction led Spinoza to the view that the Torah as a whole was not written by Moses and that the historical books are compilations assembled by many generations. Ezra, he concludes, was responsible for harmonizing the various discrepancies found in Scripture.

For Spinoza, the function of religion is to provide a framework for ethical action. Philosophy, on the other hand, is concerned with truth, and philosophers should be free to

Baruch Spinoza-2

engage in philosophical speculation unconstrained by religious opinions:

Faith, therefore, allows the greatest latitude in philosophical speculation, allowing us without blame to think what we like about anything, and only condemning as heretics and schismatics, those who teach opinions which tend to produce obstinacy, hatred, strife and anger, while, on the other hand, only considering as faithful those who persuade us, as far as their reason and faculties will permit, to follow justice and charity. (Spinoza, vol. I, 1956,189)

According to Spinoza, it is a usurpation of the social contract and a violation of the rights of man to legislate belief. On the basis of this view, Spinoza propounded a metaphysical system based on a pantheistic conception of nature. Beginning with a belief in an infinite, unlinked self-caused Substance-which he conceives as God or Nature-Spinoza argues that God and Nature are one. For Spinoza God is totally immanent; hence all interconnections within the one divine system are logical relations. By knowing the truth about the whole system, one is able to comprehend the logical connections between each part. These connections are necessary-there is nothing contingent within the vast complex. 'In the nature of things nothing contingent is admitted, but all things are determined by the necessity of divine nature to exist and act in a certain way' (Spinoza, 1963, part I, prop. 29). According to Spinoza, although God or Nature is self-creating and thereby free, within nature all things are determined and everything is deducible from the concept of God.

Departing from traditional Judaism, Spinoza rejects the belief that there is a final purpose to creation. In his view God does not have a separate existence from the world; instead he is totally immanent as the uniformity and sum of all laws: He is the principle of law and its manifestation in both nature and thought. On such a basis, Spinoza envisages God as the totality of all bodies in the physical universe. Such a conception led Spinoza to the conviction that there is neither creation nor freedom. The whole of Reality is free only in the sense that it is self-caused. Human beings are free, however, when they love God and perceive that they are made of Him. Such freedom consists in the liberation from anxiety and care. For Spinoza, submission to the interconnection of all things brings about a feeling of serenity and peace. Happiness is therefore defined in terms of intellectual joy. Not surprisingly Spinoza's ideas were bitterly attacked by the Jewish establishment of his time and largely ignored by later Jewish thinkers, yet his writings had a profound impact on the history of Western philosophy.

Moses Mendelssohn-1

Fifty Key Jewish Thinkers, By: Dan Cohn-Sherbok, page 92

The principles of rational investigation propounded by Baruch Spinoza and others in the seventeenth century continued to dominate the intellectual climate of the next century. During the period of the Enlightenment, political and religious reformers pressed for the application of reason to all spheres of inquiry. From France this spirit of rationalism spread throughout Europe to the United States. In Germany the Jewish thinker Moses Mendelssohn spearheaded a revolution in Jewish life and thought. Born in Dessau in 1729, Mendelssohn suffered from a disease as a child which left him with a curvature of the spine.

To bring about the modernization of Jewish life, Mendelssohn also translated the Pentateuch into German so that Jews would be able to learn the language of the country in which they lived, and oversaw the production of commentary on Scripture (Biur) which combined Jewish scholarship with secular thought. Prior to his friendship with Mendelssohn, Lessing had written a play portraying a Jew of exceptional qualities-for Lessing and others Mendelssohn represented such a person. With Lessing's assistance Mendelssohn published a series of philosophical essays in which he argued for the existence of God and creation, insisting that human reason is capable of discovering the reality of God, providence and immortality. At the height of his career, Mendelssohn was challenged by the Christian apologist John Casper Lavater to defend the superiority of Judaism over Christianity. From 1769 he engaged in Jewish apologetics, and in 1783 published his major work on the Jewish faith, Jerusalem or On Religious Power and Judaism. In this study Mendelssohn maintains that no religious institution should use coercion; neither the Church, nor the state, he argues, has the right to impose its religious views on the individual. Addressing the question whether Jewish law sanctions coercion, he emphasizes that Judaism does not coerce the mind through dogma:

> The Israelites possess a divine legislation-laws, commandments, statutes, rules of conduct, instruction in God's will and in what they are to do to attain temporary and eternal salvation. Moses, in a miraculous and supernatural way, revealed to them these laws and commandments, but not dogmas, propositions concerning salvation, or self-evident principles of reason. These the Lord reveals to us and as well to all other men at all times through nature and events, but never through the spoken or written word. (Mendelssohn, 1969, 61)

The distinction Mendelssohn makes between natural religion and the Jewish faith is based on three types of truth:

1. logically necessary truth;

Moses Mendelssohn-2

2. contingent truths such as the laws of nature; and

3. the temporal truths that take place in history.

In this regard he writes:

> Whenever God intends man to understand a certain truth, his wisdom provides man with the means most suited to this purpose. If it is a necessary truth, God provides man with whatever degree of reason he requires for its understanding. If a natural law is to be disclosed to man, God's wisdom will provide him with the necessary capacity for observation; and if a historical truth is to be presented for posterity, God's wisdom authenticates its historicity by establishing the narrator's credibility beyond any doubt. (Ibid., 64-5)

In Mendelssohn's view, all human beings are capable of discovering religious truth. However, Judaism is different from other religions in that it contains a revealed legal code. The Jewish people did not hear God proclaim that he is an eternal, necessary and omniscient being who rewards and punishes humanity; rather, the mitzvot (commandments) were revealed to His chosen people:

> The voice that was heard at Sinai on the great day did not proclaim, 'I am the eternal, your God, the necessary autonomous being, omnipotent and omniscient, who rewards men in a future life according to their deeds.' This is the universal religion of mankind, not Judaism, and this kind of universal religion-without which man can become neither virtuous nor happy-was not and, in fact, could not have been revealed at Sinai. For who could have needed the sound of thunder and the blast of trumpets to become convinced of the validity of these eternal verities. (Ibid., 68-9)
>
> Rather at Mount Sinai the Jewish people heard the historical truth, 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt'-a statement introducing the legal code which is binding on the Jewish nation.

For Mendelssohn the purpose of ceremonial law is to bring all peoples to a belief in ethical monotheism:

> And now I am finally at the point where I can elucidate my hypothesis about the purpose of the ceremonial law in Judaism. Our people's patriarchs-Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-had remained faithful to the Eternal and tried to preserve pure religious concepts free of all idolatry, for their families and descendants. And now these

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> descendants were chosen by Providence to be a nation of priests, that is, a nation which, through its constitution and institutions, through its laws and conduct, and throughout all changes of life and fortune, was to call wholesome and unadulterated ideas of God and his attributes continuously to the attention of the rest of mankind. It was a nation which through its mere existence, as it were, would unceasingly teach, proclaim, preach and strive to preserve these ideas among the nations. (Ibid., 89)

Yet despite this universal mission, Jews are not at liberty to divorce themselves from their cultural connections with the countries where they dwell. Rather, they must engage in civic life while remaining faithful to their religious heritage:

> Adopt the mores and constitution of the country in which you find yourself, but be steadfast in upholding the religion of your fathers, too. Bear both burdens as well as you can. True, on the one hand, people make it difficult for you to bear the burden of civil life because of the religion to which you remain faithful; and, on the other hand, the climate of our time makes the observance of your religious laws in some respects more burdensome than it need be. Persevere nevertheless; stand fast in the place which Providence has assigned everything which may happen, as you were told to do by your Lawgiver long ago. (Ibid., 104-5)

At the end of Jerusalem, Mendelssohn argues for the individuality of all religious traditions. Rejecting the idea that all faiths should be merged into one universal creed, he maintains that the existence of many different religions is fundamental. In Mendelssohn's view, human reason serves as a means by which all people can arrive at universal truths about the nature of God and His activity in the world. In this sense all religions have the capacity to discover the reality of God, divine providence and the immortality of the soul. Yet as far as Judaism is concerned, the Jewish people are the recipients of a divine revelation consisting of ritual and moral law. This supernatural dispensation is what distinguishes Judaism from other faiths, and serves to impel the nation toward their universal mission for all humanity.

The Haskalah: the Jewish Enlightenment

The Haskalah marked a change in many aspects of Jewish cultural life. At its simplest it was a movement of Jewish writers influenced by European literary forms. But it also had wider ideological goals, and sought to transform almost every aspect of Jewish life from education to communal organization. It viewed the Jews, particularly of Central and Eastern Europe, as remaining in a form of medievalism and challenged them to confront and absorb the best elements of modernity.

The initial period of the Haskalah was led by disciples of Mendelssohn. They championed a return to Hebrew and rejected Yiddish-the traditional language of the Jewish community of the time-as a degenerate form of German. They also respected biblical Hebrew rather than the later rabbinic Hebrew. This stance related to their rejection of traditional Jewish education which emphasized the study of rabbinic texts, particularly the Talmud, almost to the exclusion of any other subject. The reformers viewed rabbinic forms of Judaism as degenerate compared with the purer and earlier biblical form. Like liberal Christians, they sought a return to a purer, more historically authentic faith. Such a project ultimately became one of the building blocks for Reform Judaism as it developed in the nineteenth century. In terms of language the Haskalah initially emphasized Hebrew and subsequently emphasized the use of German-the emphasis on German and the vernacular language of the country of residence also became one of the hallmarks of Reform.

The Haskalah played a provocative and oppositional role in relation to the development of Orthodox Hasidism in modern times. As the Haskalah moved into Eastern Europe and Russia, its opposition to medievalism often translated into a rejection of Hasidism with its emphasis on mysticism and its charismatic leaders, the tzadikim. Its satires often singled out Hasidism for ridicule. One effect was to engender a fierce mutual opposition between the two tendencies in modern Judaism, and to precipitate Hasidic opposition to modernity. The opposition is reflected in many Hasidic tales in which the Maskil (disciple of the Haskalah) is depicted as an opponent.

Like the ideas developed by Mendelssohn, the Haskalah can be seen as transitional. It represented the beginnings of the transformation of the Jewish community through its encounter with modernity. It laid the foundation for many of the religious trends that came to fruition in the middle of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, as missionaries of modern values and culture the Haskalah influenced the early Reformers who sought to create a Judaism that was consonant with modern values and culture. On the other hand, by its opposition to traditional values and the Hasidic community, it helped create a strong association between modernity and the rejection of traditional Judaism and thereby strengthened Orthodox Judaism's suspicion and hostility towards modernity.

The Seeds Of The German Reform Movement-1

In Leviathan, Saul Ascher (1767-1822) laid the philosophical cornerstone of the Reform movement in Judaism. Unlike Mendelssohn who saw Judaism as a revealed law, Ascher argued that the defining feature of Judaism was its religious faith, not its political or legal constitution. This emphasis on faith, in effect, made Judaism equivalent to other European religions-a theme constantly returned to by modern Reform Judaism. By separating it from its political and practical basis, Ascher placed Judaism among other 'religions', and saw it as compatible with the cultural and political life of modern Europe. Unlike traditional Judaism which treated all aspects of Jewish law and tradition as equally authoritative, Ascher selected or emphasized certain practices as essential while ignoring or de-emphasizing others. He focused on the subjective personal aspects of religion, emphasizing the importance of personal satisfaction and happiness. He saw the law as a means to these ends, thus opposing those who emphasized the communal aspects of religion and who saw faithful observance as the fulfillment of God's will and thus an end in itself. Ascher also emphasized a concept of history which underpins all modern forms of Judaism, that is, as a process of development with the implication of unfolding spiritual progress. Many of these themes, particularly the concept of religious subjectivity, underpinned the ideas of the Reform movement and are still significant features of it. Ascher's arguments also provided a philosophical basis for the changes which were subsequently introduced by both his contemporaries and successors.

The origins of the Reform movement lie not only in the cultural transformations associated with the dawn of modernity (notably the rise of the Enlightenment), but also in the political changes which characterized early modern Europe-most notably the rise of the nation state and individual freedoms. During the latter half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth the Jewish community in Western Europe experienced a significant transformation in status. As the period progressed Jews were increasingly given political freedom-a transformation marked by the move from protected, semi-autonomous minority to citizen (or subject). The French Revolution and the Napoleonic period marked one of the key points in this transformation. With increasing access to political and cultural life and decision-making, Jewish communities, particularly in what was to become Germany, began to develop forms of Judaism more in keeping with their new found status. Although the process of reforming synagogue practice had been progressing since the late eighteenth century in Amsterdam, a more structured programme of reform did not occur until the nineteenth century, under the leadership of Israel Jacobson (1768-1828). It is perhaps significant that Jacobson was a lay rather than a rabbinic leader. The process began in Westphalia and continued in Berlin. Among the changes which were initially instituted was a transformation in the form of service, moving from one which was perceived to be less

The Seeds Of The German Reform Movement-2

decorous, and thus out of keeping with wider cultural forms, to a form of service which was more highly structured and characterized by European ideas of decorum. Some of these changes included a reduction of physical rituals, for example the procession, and changes in the content and structure of the service, for example minimizing active congregational participation. After his move to Berlin, Reform services were held in the homes of Jacobson and Jacob Baer. These services added to the changes already instituted in Westphalia. The new additions included the use of German elements in the service alongside the Hebrew, removal of the partition between men and women and the removal of repetitions within the service. The process was also occurring in Hamburg with the establishment of the first Reform Temple in 1817.

By the mid-nineteenth century the process of reform moved from a focus on forms of worship and life to include areas of belief and self-perception. Thus in the prayer book reforms of that period we find removal of concepts of messianic ingathering, bodily resurrection and Zionist hopes. The removal of the messianic ingathering was tied to two separate concepts: (a) a transformation of the concept of messiah from the traditional model of an actual political and spiritual leader who would bring about a transformation in the world and gather all Jews back to Israel to a concept of messianic age which would be brought about through the inexorable progress of humanity; and (b) the rejection of the notion that Jews would be returned to Israel as an end to the negative condition of diaspora. Reformers considered diaspora to be a positive state and wanted to emphasize their ongoing commitment to the European states in which they lived. These priorities led them to be hostile to Zionism. They saw Zionism as a statement of Jewish separatism and the desire for a nation set apart. The reformers chose to define Judaism as a religion not a people or nation and thus with no need of a national home or end to diaspora. Likewise, the concept of bodily resurrection offended their ideas of rationality. In many prayer books it was either removed or changed to reflect belief in the immortality of the soul.

Abraham Geiger (1810-74) was another intellectual and rabbinic leader of Reform during this period. He introduced or emphasized several themes which remain characteristic of the Reform movement. He emphasized the historical nature of Judaism and thus the contingent nature of its practices and beliefs. He also emphasized Judaism's universal message-a theme that also has been very influential in changes in the language of prayer. One of Geiger's most significant emphases was the ethical nature of Judaism and the concept of ethical monotheism. For him the key unifying theme of Judaism was not observance but morality. This concept was enshrined in the notion of prophetic Judaism-an emphasis on the ideals proclaimed by the prophets rather than the observances taught by the rabbis.

Examples Of Liturgical Reform Within The German Reform Movement

The presence of the many pleas for the restoration of Zion and the Return to Jerusalem, in the traditional liturgy, was one of the main motivations for the liturgical reform of the nineteenth century.

Concerning the Aleinu prayer, Abraham Geiger wrote:

> The separation between Israel and the other peoples, which existed at one time, has no right to be expressed in prayer. Rather ought there to be an expression of the joy that such barriers are increasingly falling.

Benediction 10

Traditional Text-Sound the great Shofar for our freedom, and lift up the banner to gather in our exiles, and assemble us together from the four corners of the earth. Praised art Thou, O Lord, who gatherest the dispersed of Thy people Israel.

Hamburg 1841-Sound the call of freedom, and lift up the banner of freedom for al who groan in slavery. Break the yoke, O G-d, from upon our shoulders wherever it still rests heavily upon us. Praised art Thou, O G-d, who truly carest for the outcasts of Thy people Israel.

Leipzig, 1876- Sound the great Shofar for the freedom of all who are oppressed, and lift up the banner for those who hope for Thy redemption; and may the sound of liberty be heard in the four corners of the earth. Praised art Thou, O Lord, who proclaimest liberty to the captives of the whole earth.

Benediction 12

Traditional Text-And to Jerusalem, Thy city, do Thou return in mercy, and do Thou dwell therein as Thou hast spoken. And build it soon in our days as an everlasting building. And speedily set therein the throne of David. Praised art Thou, O Lord, who buildest Jerusalem.

Hamburg 1841-May Thy glory be again enthroned in Thy city of Jerusalem. Establish and strengthen the seat of truth in an everlasting building, even as Thy word hath promised: "For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the lord from Jerusalem." Praised art Thou, O G-d, who establishest Jerusalem.

Prayer During The Period Of The German Reform Movement

American Reform

The Emergence of Conservative Judaism: The Historical School in 19th Century America
By: Moshe Davis JPS 1963 p. 11

American Reform

One school of thought, which grew into the American Reform movement and made the greatest headway during the century, explained Judaism essentially as a universal religion that emphasized the ethical tradition as its basic dimension. The eternal moral teachings of Judaism possessed a universal character which all the world, Christianity included, was destined to recognize as the supreme truth. The Reformers held that, in order to fulfill its role in the world, Judaism must constantly keep pace with the changing age, incorporating and reflecting modern developments, without necessarily being bound by the historic evolution and continuity of the Jewish tradition. America was a land where Jews were free to teach their ideas of religion to all mankind. By the term which the Reformers used most, "American Judaism," they meant fundamentally that the ideals of America and Judaism were one. With this American philosophy of Judaism, they hoped to bring back within the Jewish fraternity countless contemporaries who had rejected the traditional view and looked upon ritual practice as obsolete. Yet despite their most radical innovations in Jewish practice and interpretation, the Reformers were most careful not to separate themselves from the living Jewish people, but to function as part of it. They conceived themselves to be not a sect, but a party within Judaism.

The Emergence of Conservative Judaism

The Emergence of Conservative Judaism: The Historical School in 19th Century America
By: Moshe Davis JPS 1963 p. 13-

A third school of thought, the Historical School, was no less inspired by the divine character of Jewish Law, taught by the Orthodox, nor by its moral purpose as stressed by Reform. Indeed, leaders of this group maintained that both these fundamentals of the Jewish tradition come into their fullest significance only when they are viewed as part of the totality of the historic Jewish experience. The Bible, the Talmud and commentaries, the Holy Land, the Hebrew language -- these are the seedbeds of the Jewish spirit which nurtured the institutions of Jewish religion and life. Growth and development are inherent in the historical process because they are a response to the demands of life. However, even while affirming the imperative of change and adjustment, the entire Tradition and Jewish experience would have to be explored and studied before specific innovations could be made, so as to prevent the innovation from being at variance with the basic spirit of Jewish legal principles. The exposition of this view was the Historical School's answer to the challenge of contemporaneity. In Europe, the Historical School was shaped by men of great scholarly learning, such as Nachman Krochmal, Leopold Zunz, Solomon J. L. Rapoport, Zacharias Frankel, Heinrich Graetz and others. They used Jewish scholarship as their vehicle for interpreting the present in the light of the past. In America, the rabbinic leaders and laity turned to methods of practical organization and to the building of primary institutions. But the techniques and institutions depended, in the end, on a congeries of ideas and values unique to the School. As we shall explain in detail in the course of the volume, these ideas emphasize the evolving character of the Jewish tradition, the historic experience of the Jewish people as organic to that development, and the acceptance of modernity as a positive force in the growth of that Tradition.

Toward the end of the century these schools of thought became less fluid and they incorporated themselves into three separate religious movements in American Jewry: Reform, Orthodoxy and Conservative Judaism. Each element built its own organization and institutions which consisted of a seminary for the training of a native rabbinate, a union of synagogues and a conference of authorized rabbis. This development did not come about through any preconceived plan or program. Individual positions were fluid and very often contradictory. The conditions of time and place compelled the direction of basic ideas into unchartered institutional forms. Nor could anyone foresee that the shape of events to come would make American Jewry, even toward the end of the century, one of the largest centers of Jewry in history. A difficulty which confronts the student of American Jewish religious history is the possibility of confusing nineteenth- century groups with their respective twentieth-century developments. This confusion must be studiously

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avoided, for it is just as anachronistic to identify the formative expressions of the religious groups with their respective contemporary twentieth-century compositions as it is to identify American democracy of that period with the democracy of our times.

The definition of the name " Historical School" and the delineation of the constellation of ideas to which the members of the School stood committed are essential. The name "Historical School" has fallen into disuse in recent decades: it has been supplanted by the more popular name "Conservative Judaism." In fact, some historians of American Jewry declare the name "Historical School" to be a misnomer even of the nineteenth-century group. They prefer to call it "Conservative," thus interpreting the record of events a posteriori rather than out of its origins. Upon considered study of the sources and documents of the period, it seems clear to me that between the two possibilities, with the entire century in mind, the name "Historical School" presents the more accurate description of the pre-twentieth-century "Conservative Movement." It emphasizes the evolutionary character of the idea which only eventually became embodied in particular institutional forms, and includes such differing approaches as the traditionalism of Isaac Leeser and Sabato Morais, the developmental conception of Alexander Kohut and the progressivism of Benjamin Szold and Marcus Jastrow -- all of whom identified themselves with this School and its institutions.

The name " Historical School" is also most appropriate conceptually. It emphasizes the distinctive interpretation of Judaism put forth by the movement as a whole. From its inception and through the years of struggle against factions on the right and the left, many of its leaders, both lay and clerical, have rejected the practice of attaching adjectives to the word "Judaism." By selecting the adjective "historical," it was possible to best define the program of the School, to escape partisanship and to embrace the totality of the Jewish past as well as the varieties of contemporary experience. Regardless of the ideological shadings and personal practice of the individual constituent -- Orthodox, traditional or progressive -- the leaders of the Historical School, who sought to root Judaism in America, were men bound to the spirit and substance of the Jewish tradition. On the other hand, they were also well versed in secular culture and recognized the demands of life. To preserve the Jewish collectivity in America in the encounter between Tradition and environment was a commitment which resulted from their historic consciousness. Therefore they were prepared to accept the principle of the legitimacy of differences within the all-inclusive idea of historical Judaism, as embodied in the Jewish people. The concept of Klal Yisrael was expressed frequently in the presentations and plans of the spokesmen of the School.

As is shown in this study, this concept was first discussed by Isaac Leeser who spoke of

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Kneset Yisrael ("catholic Israel") as the ideological and social basis for a religiously unified American Jewry within world Jewry, anticipating in part Solomon Schechter, with whom this concept is identified in the thought of Conservative Judaism. Other leaders of the School in the nineteenth century followed in Leeser's foot steps. In the midst of the struggle against Reform, when a suggestion was made to call the new rabbinical seminary "The Orthodox Seminary," Alexander Kohut decided that the new institution must be dedicated to Klal Yisrael. Clearly stating his view of the Seminary, Kohut said, "We do not desire it to be destined for a sect, whether reform, conservative, or orthodox..." This view was immediately accepted by his colleagues; they understood the mission of their movement. It was decided from the beginning to unite various groups with different ideas for the future of Judaism in America. The common element which would unite all of them was the idea of a developing historical Judaism. The Historical School in its interpretation of Klal Yisrael identified itself with the total experience and commitment of the Jewish people throughout the ages. As a result, when the Seminary was reorganized in 1902, it was called the "Jewish Theological Seminary of America," not the "American Jewish Theological Seminary."

Seen in this way, it is possible to understand why and how men whose interpretations of Judaism were as far apart as Isaac Leeser's, Samuel Isaacs', Sabato Morais' and H. P. Mendes', on the one hand, and Benjamin Szold's, Marcus Jastrow's and Frederic de Sola Mendes', on the other, could work together in one direction and for the same cause. Within this framework it was possible for the pioneer leader in American Jewry, Isaac Leeser, who by nature, practice and theology, was a traditionalist, not only to work with the progressivists within the Historical School but actually to lead in the creation of those institutions around which he rallied the rabbinic and lay leaders of various viewpoints in the School. Similarly with the leftists of the School: theologically, Szold and Jastrow were more radical than Isaac Mayer Wise. Yet, when the real test came, they interrupted their tentative working alliances with the Reformers and remained loyal to the foundations and institutions of the Historical group. The Historical School at one time included various strands of American Jewry. Some of them subsequently joined other movements while most of them remained within the School and, despite their differences, worked together to create the Conservative movement.

What then were the basic and uniting ideas which prompted men of such differing modes of practice to remain together in one school of thought and action? Principles crystallized in spite of the different emphases in different periods of the Historical School and in spite of the fact that its members did not systematically articulate any one theology. These ideas, as they emerge from the historical context, can be formulated as follows:

The Emergence of Conservative Judaism-4

1) The Emancipation and secular Enlightenment must be accepted as significant positive factors in the Jewish present and future development.

2) The equal status of Jews in democratic societies generally, and in the United States in particular, offers new opportunities for Jews and Judaism.

3) Klal Yisrael is the historic basis for the unity of the people at all times and places.

4) Judaism can be adapted to changing conditions according to biblical and talmudic teachings in the light of the development of the Tradition in all ages.

5) The traditional mitzvot, the precepts, are the basic precondition for the establishment of a Jewish way of life.

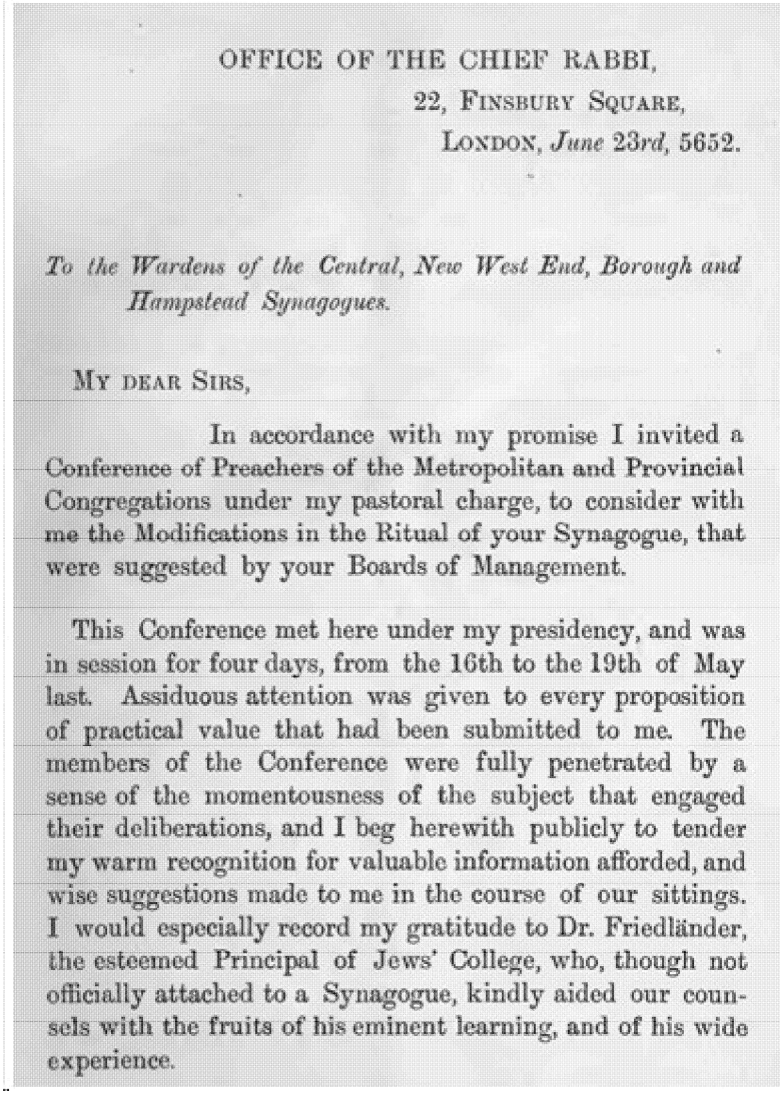
It has been pointed out that these principles were not formulated as a platform of the Historical School at any one occasion or even in one generation. They resulted from the collective judgment of many generations. Nevertheless, these principles were the pivot around which all the polemics against other currents, and the discussion within the Historical School itself, revolved. And these ideas make it possible to assess the adherence of individuals and congregations to the Historical School.

Thus, as far back as 1856, Isaac Leeser, the first spokesman of the Historical School, emphasized that traditional faith and Jewish communal existence must be based on the new conditions of modern society: Jewish emancipation, equality of rights, and practical separation of Church and State. These principles became guiding beacons to all members of the Historical School, whether they accepted the authority of the Shulhan Arukh in all its details or leaned toward modification in observance of the mitzvot. The leaders of the Historical School, unlike the Orthodox but like the Reformers, were willing to accept advantages accompanying the equality of rights and the cultural advances brought by the Enlightenment; they also wanted to benefit from the freedom that came as a result of the separation of Church and State. Unlike the Reformers, however, they were not willing to limit Jewish life so that it might evolve into a "Jewish Church" or to forgo -- within the separation of Church and State principle -- such questions, concerning the survival of the people, as education, family laws, and specifically Jewish aspects of communal life. Consequently, despite its strict insistence on the principle of separation of Church and State, the Historical School, like Orthodoxy, strove vigorously to maintain the religious, ethnic and cultural unity of American Jewry and its indissoluble tie with World Jewry. With Orthodoxy and unlike Reform, it strove to enforce the authority of Jewish Law. The Historical School believed that the Jews, because of their spiritual heritage, were unique among the nations of the world. It insisted upon the necessity of finding new approaches to Judaism which would maintain the integrity of Tradition and be consonant with the strivings for emancipation and democracy in America.

Prayer During The Period Of The German Reform Movement

Conference In England To Consider Changes To Liturgy -June 23, 1888

Orthodox Jewry Reacts To The Reform Movement



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF RABBI,
22, FINSBURY SQUARE,
LONDON, *June 23rd*, 5652.

To the Wardens of the Central, New West End, Borough and Hampstead Synagogues.

MY DEAR SIRS,

In accordance with my promise I invited a Conference of Preachers of the Metropolitan and Provincial Congregations under my pastoral charge, to consider with me the Modifications in the Ritual of your Synagogue, that were suggested by your Boards of Management.

This Conference met here under my presidency, and was in session for four days, from the 16th to the 19th of May last. Assiduous attention was given to every proposition of practical value that had been submitted to me. The members of the Conference were fully penetrated by a sense of the momentousness of the subject that engaged their deliberations, and I beg herewith publicly to tender my warm recognition for valuable information afforded, and wise suggestions made to me in the course of our sittings. I would especially record my gratitude to Dr. Friedländer, the esteemed Principal of Jews' College, who, though not officially attached to a Synagogue, kindly aided our counsels with the fruits of his eminent learning, and of his wide experience.

Conference In England To Consider Changes To Liturgy -June 23, 1888

I. MINYAN.—(B. 1).—The supposition that, in the absence of ten male worshippers, Divine Service need not, and should not be held in a Synagogue, is entirely erroneous. I am grieved to learn that, in several of the smaller provincial congregations, some of the members, after awaiting for a little while unsuccessfully the arrival of other worshippers to make up the prescribed *Minyan*, disperse without holding Service. This procedure is due to a misconception. Divine Service should be held, however small the numbers of worshippers may be. The Prayers should be offered up by the Reader with the same solemnity as though *Minyan* were present. But in accordance with our religious statute, certain portions, viz: קַדִּישׁ וּבָרְכוּ and the repetition of the *Tefillah* with the *Kedushah*, should be omitted. The Scroll of the Law should be taken from the Ark, and the prescribed portion read, without any קְרוּאִים. The Haphtarah should also be recited, but without the blessings.

Should any mourner be present, I advise that, as the Kaddish must not be said, he should offer up the Prayer for Departed Relatives אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ מָלֵא רַחֲמִים. (The Authorised Daily Prayer Book, p. 323.)

QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE BRIDAL COUPLE.

The Celebrant.—"You, A. B. and C. D., are about to be wedded according to the law of Moses and of Israel.

"Will you, A. B., take this woman, C. D., to be your wedded wife? Will you be a true and faithful husband unto her? Will you protect and support her? Will you love, honour and cherish her?"

The Bridegroom.—"I will."

The Celebrant.—"Will you, C. D., take this man, A. B., to be your wedded husband? Will you be a true and faithful wife unto him? Will you love, honour and cherish him?"

The Bride.—"I will."