THE EVOLUTION OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH

by

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THE EVOLUTION OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH

Chapter I -- INTRODUCTION

Kiddush levanah is the traditional Jewish ceremony for blessing the new moon. The ceremony is also known as birkat halevanah. It is related to, but different from, the ceremony called kiddush hachodesh, although numerous authors incorrectly use the latter term to denote the former.[1]

Kiddush levanah is one of the most picturesque ceremonies of the entire Jewish liturgy, yet it is one of the least well known. The rite is both graphic and highly symbolic, yet today it has fallen into a state of disuse. Although the ceremony remains an official part of Jewish liturgy, and as such is retained in scholarly works about and editions of the prayerbook,[2] the Rabbinical bodies of all three major Jewish religious sectors in America have omitted kiddush levanah from their prayerbooks intended for regular use.[3] To the best of my knowledge, it is presently observed by only the most halakhically scrupulous of Orthodox Jews.

Once a month, on a clear night (preferably a Saturday night) when the new moon is waxing (i.e., during the first two weeks of the lunar month, or, more precisely, from the third[4] to the fifteenth night of the lunar month) Jews gather outdoors. They recite parts of Psalms 148 and 8, and then a blessing which praises God for creating the

heavenly spheres and for renewing the months. They praise God the Creator four times, using four synonyms the first letters of which form an acronym for the name Ya'akov. They then "dance" three times, and say three times that they hope their enemies have as difficult a time reaching them as they have just had reaching the moon. They recite a single verse from Exodus, forward and backward three times. They mention David, King of Israel, and his eternity. They then greet each other three times with the traditional shalom 'aleikhem, and respond to each other three times with 'aleikhem shalom. They recite what can only be described as an incantation for good luck, and then two lines from Song of Songs. They continue with two statements from the Talmud emphasizing the importance of blessing the moon monthly. Another line from Song of Songs follows, and then a prayer of kabbalistic origin, composed mainly of fragments of Biblical verses. The ceremony concludes with the recitation of Psalms 121, 150, and 67.

It should be clear even from this brief description that kiddush levanah combines many diverse elements from equally diverse times and places. It seems to be a hodge-podge ceremony lacking any internal cohesiveness. Yet the sources attest that at one time it was a very popular rite, the importance of which was unchallenged. In the same Talmudic statement upon which much of the development of the ceremony is based, the blessing of the moon is equated in

importance with welcoming the very presence of God. It is further stated that even had Israel merited no other privilege than to welcome God's presence once a month in this manner, it would have been sufficient.[5] These statements are very frequently quoted to emphasize the importance of the ceremony.

It is a ceremony which has undergone change in virtually every age, and which even today appears not to have a thoroughly fixed format.[6] A survey of the sources makes clear that important change has occurred not only in the form of the ceremony, but also in the halakhic framework in which the ceremony is conducted, in the symbolic content assigned to the text, and in the overall meaning associated with the ceremony.

It will be the task of this thesis to present the relevant literature, and to examine the development therein of kiddush levanah. The growth of the liturgy, the development of the related halakhah, the change in 'aggadic associations, and the ever-changing total meaning of the ceremony will all be considered. It is anticipated that this study will serve not only as an exhaustive study of kiddush levanah, but also as a useful paradigm of liturgical development.

It is both necessary and appropriate to state at the outset the limitations of this project: both those which I have set for myself, and those which have been imposed upon

me by circumstances.

First, the argument of this thesis will depend upon the presentation and analysis of a wide variety of texts. I have drawn extensively upon the code literature, old prayerbooks, and liturgical commentaries. To a lesser extent I have culled material from some midrashic works, commentaries, and responsa. Occasionally, for the convenience of the reader, I have made some attempt to set the texts within their historical contexts. It is obvious that to do justice to this latter task would be an enormous project, far beyond the scope of the present work. I have no choice but to admit the insufficiency of my historical generalizations. I cannot even attempt the level of scholarly documentation that I have sought in the textual portions of this work. Furthermore, I reiterate that these historical sections are provided merely for the convenience of the reader, and do not affect the argument of the thesis, which will be textually based.

Second, it will quickly become apparent that, at least in the latter stages of the development of kiddush levanah, the ceremony underwent several changes at the hands of kabbalists. I can claim no competency in kabbala; I therefore cannot provide an insider's insight into the meanings intended at this stage of development. I have been forced by my own limitations to exclude from the scope of this thesis several sources of a kabbalistic nature that

might otherwise have been included.

The text of the kiddush levanah ceremony follows:[7]

(Recited in the open air when the new moon is visible)

I) Praise[8] the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights. Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you stars of light. Praise him, highest heavens and waters that are above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded and they were created. He fixed them fast forever and ever; he gave a law which none transgresses. When[9] I look up at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars set in their place by thee, what is man that thou shouldst remember him, mortal man that thou shouldst care for him?

II) Blessed[10] art thou, Lord our God, who didst create the heavens by thy command, and all their host by thy mere word. Thou hast subjected them to fixed laws and time, so that they might not deviate from their set function. They are glad and happy to do the will of their Creator, the true Author, whose achievement is truth. He ordered the moon to renew itself as a glorious crown over those he sustained from birth,[11] who likewise will be regenerated in the future, and will worship their Creator for his glorious majesty. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who renewest the months.

III) (The following is said three times.)[12] Blessed be your Creator; blessed be your Maker; blessed be your Possessor; blessed be your Former.[13]

IV) (A "dance" at the moon is done three times, and the following is said three times.) Just as I dance at you but am not able to touch you, so too may all my enemies be unable to touch me for evil.[14]

V) (The following is said three times.) May[15] terror and dread fall on them; may they be motionless as a stone under the sweep of thy arm. Under[16] the sweep of thy arm may they be motionless as a stone; upon them may dread and terror

fall.

VI) Long live David, king of Israel!

VII) (The worshippers exchange greetings three times.) Peace be with you! With you be peace!

VIII) (The following is said three times.) May we and all Israel have a favorable omen and good fortune. Amen.

IX) The voice[17] of my beloved! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills! My beloved is like a gazelle, like a young deer; here he stands, behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice.

X) In the school[18] of Rabbi Ishmael it was taught: Had Israel merited no other privilege than greeting the presence of their heavenly Father once a month /by reciting the benediction over the new moon/, they would be contented! Abbaye said: Therefore /since it is a greeting of God's presence/, we must recite it standing.

XI) Who[19] is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?

XII) May it be thy will, Lord my God and God of my fathers, to readjust the deficiency of the moon, so that it may no longer be reduced in size; may the light of the moon again be like the light of the sun, as it was during the first seven days of creation, before its size was reduced, for it is said: "The two great lights."[20] May the prophecy be realized in us, which says: "They will seek the Lord their God, and David their king."[21] Amen.

XIII) A Pilgrim Song.[22] I lift my eyes to the hills; whence will my help come? My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip; he who guards you will not slumber. Behold, the guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. The Lord is your guardian; the Lord is your shelter upon your right hand. The sun shall never hurt you in the day, nor the moon by night. The Lord

will guard you from all evil; the Lord will guard your life. The Lord will guard you as you come and go, henceforth and forever.

XIV) Praise the Lord![23] Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his glorious heaven. Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him for his abundant greatness. Praise him with the blast of the horn; praise him with the harp and lyre. Praise him with the drum and dance; praise him with strings and flute. Praise him with resounding cymbals; praise him with clanging cymbals. Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

XV) For the Choirmaster;[24] with string-music; a psalm, a song. May God be gracious to us and bless us; may he cause his favor to shine among us. Then shall thy way be known on earth, thy saving power among all nations. The peoples shall praise thee, O God; all the peoples shall praise thee. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for thou rulest the people justly; thou guidest the nations on earth. The peoples shall praise thee, O Lord; all the peoples shall praise thee. The earth has yielded its produce; God, our own God, blesses us. God blesses us; all the ends of the earth shall revere him.

XVI) /Mourners' Kaddish.[25]/

Notes to Chapter I -- INTRODUCTION

[1] Kiddush hachodesh was the ceremony by which the new moon, the official beginning of the new month, was declared. The ceremony took place in the Sanhedrin, in the time when that body still functioned. The court would receive witnesses who claimed to have seen the new moon, and would cross-examine them. When the court had received two witnesses whose testimony was agreed to be trustworthy, the head of the court would proclaim, "It /the new month/ is sanctified," and the message would be sent to Jewish communities near and far by a system of fire-signals and/or by messenger. The ceremony is described in detail in M. RH 2:7 and the surrounding sections.

[2] See, e.g., Eliezer Levy, Torat Hatefillah, (Tel Aviv: Avraham Tsioni, 1962), pp. 184-185; Eliezer Levy, Yesodot Hatefillah, (Tel Aviv: Avraham Tsioni, 1955), pp. 302-305; Elie Munk, The World of Prayer, (New York: Philipp Feldheim, 1963), Vol. II, pp. 94-101; and A.Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy and Its Development, (New York: HUC-JIR Sacred Music Press, 1932), pp. 160-161; for works about the ceremony. For prayerbooks including the ceremony, see Zalman Baer, Siddur 'Avodat Yisrael, (Palestine: Shoken, 1937), pp. 337-339; and Philip Birnbaum, Hasiddur Hashaleim, (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 561-566.

[3] Mayer Abromowitz, "The Sanctification of the Moon: Ancient Rite of Rebellion," Judaism issue 85, Vol. XXII no. 1, Winter 1973, p. 47, on the omission of the ceremony from the Rabbinical Council of America's Orthodox Siddur and the Rabbinical Assembly's Conservative Sabbath and Festival Prayerbook. Kiddush levanah is not included in either the old or new prayerbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, for Reform Jews, nor in the Sabbath Prayer Book of the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation.

[4] Some say the seventh. See, for example, Joseph Caro, Shulchan 'Arukh: 'Orach Chayyim 426:4.

[5] San. 42a.

[6] The two most popular scholarly versions of the Ashkenazi prayerbook, Baer, Op. cit., and Birnbaum, Op. cit., exhibit considerably different versions of the kiddush levanah ceremony. The differences are mostly, but not exclusively, in regard to the order of the service.

[7]Translation is that of Birnbaum, Op. cit., except where otherwise specifically noted, but the order is that of Baer, Op. cit. Paragraph numbers have been added for convenient reference.

[8]Psalm 148:1-6.

[9]Psalm 8:4-5; lacking in Birnbaum, Op. cit. Translation is that of The New English Bible, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), where it is numbered as Psalm 8: 3-4.

[10]San. 42a.

[11]The Hebrew is 'amusei vaten, which is held by virtually all the sources to be an allusion to Isaiah 46:3, where it clearly refers to Israel. The phrase literally means "those with laden bellies." It is not a common idiom either in Rabbinic or modern Hebrew.

[12]Here, and below, wherever something is to be said three times, Birnbaum requires that it be said once only.

[13]This is my own translation. The four Hebrew nouns in the sentence are yotsreikh, 'oseikh, koneikh, boreikh, the initials of which form the name Ya'akov. Birnbaum reads, "Blessed be your omnipotent Creator, O moon!."

[14]The translation is my own. Birnbaum reads, "even as one cannot touch the moon, so may my foes by unable to harm me."

[15]Exodus 15:16.

[16]Birnbaum, Op. cit., omits the preceding sentence in English, although he has it in Hebrew. I have given a reverse rendering of his translation.

[17]Song of Songs 2:8-9.

[18]San. 42a. Birnbaum, Op. cit., places this and the two following paragraphs later in the ceremony, between Psalm 150 and Psalm 67.

[19]Song of Songs 8:5.

[20]Genesis 1:16.

[21]Hosea 3:5.

[22]Psalm 121.

[23]Psalm 150.

[24]Psalm 67.

[25]This is called for in Birnbaum, Op. cit., but omitted in Baer, Op. cit.

PART I -- DEVELOPMENT OF THE CEREMONY

Chapter II -- EARLY DEVELOPMENT

From the earliest days of the post-Biblical era, the moon had a dual significance for the Jewish people.[1] Its first meaning, shared with other natural phenomenon, was as a manifestation of the power of the God of Israel over nature. Its second, and more distinctive significance, was as the basis for fixing the Jewish calendar, and hence for structuring the liturgical year.[2]

In the early years of the Common Era, when the Second Temple still stood, the new moon (i.e. the beginning of the new month) would be officially determined according to sightings by witnesses, who after seeing the new moon would come forward to testify to that fact before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. Members of the court would cross-examine the witnesses,[3] and when they were satisfied that their testimony was trustworthy, they would proclaim the new month, by announcing, "It is sanctified," to which the people assembled would respond, "It is sanctified, it is sanctified."[4] This ceremony for the declaration of the new month was known as "kiddush hachodesh."[5] Kiddush hachodesh, like all other court proceedings, was conducted only during daytime hours, and always before a court of at least three judges.

The Mishnah testifies that in the Tannaitic period the privilege of declaring the new month became the prerog-

ative of the court of the Patriarch.[6] That the Patriarch himself had considerable power to influence the course of the proceedings is indicated by the story of Rabban Gamaliel II, who declared a new month based on the testimony of witnesses who had been found to be untrustworthy by other members of the court; Gamaliel succeeded in enforcing his decision, over the objections of his subordinates. The Talmud, too, provides examples of the Patriarch, in the Tannaitic period, enforcing his will in issues of the calendar over the objections of his court.[7] Nevertheless, it appears that the entire proceeding was subject to the approval of the Roman provincial governor, as the Mishnah hints: "Once Rabban Gamaliel went to obtain the permission of the Governor in Syria, and he delayed in returning, so the sages intercalated on the condition that he /Gamaliel/ would approve....."[8]

There is no other contemporaneous evidence of any ceremony related to the moon in the era of the Mishnah.

Exodus Rabbah, however, the midrashic collection generally considered to date from the Ninth century, has a collection of blessings over the moon which it claims date "from the time that Israel used to perform kiddush hachodesh." The blessings are claimed to have been recited by "he who sees the moon." They include: "Praised be He who renews the months" (barukh mechadeish chodashim);

"Praised be He who sanctifies the months" (barukh mekadeish chodashim); and "Praised by He who sanctifies Israel" (barukh mekadeish yisrael).[9] If these blessings do indeed date from the Tannaitic period, this midrash establishes a custom of blessing the moon on sight /probably on the first sighting of the new moon/, a diversity of possible blessings available, and a "ceremony" which consisted simply of a single brief blessing. However, these blessings are not attested in the Mishnah or Tosefta,[10] and similar blessings mentioned in the Talmuds make no claim of Tannaitic origin. Therefore, it may be that the tradition quoted in Exodus Rabbah is unreliable. The blessings quoted were certainly "old" to the author of the midrash, but they may not have dated all the way back to the period of the Mishnah.

In the Amoraic period, a number of blessings became associated with sighting the new moon. The Yerushalmi[11] notes several such blessings, for use in a variety of contexts. "One who sees the sun in its season or the moon in its season or the clear sky says 'Praised be He who made the Creation (barukh 'oseh verei'shit).' But Rabbi Chuna says that this is to be said during the rainy season only, after three days /of rain/." A second blessing is as follows: "He who sees the moon when it is new says 'Praised be He who renews the months (barukh mechadeish chodashim).'" A third notes that "In the Tefillah, Rabbi Yosi bar Nehuriya'

used to say '/Praised be He/ who sanctifies Israel and new months (mekadeish yisrael veroshei chodashim).'" Although all three of the above blessings have some relevance to kiddush levanah, the most important for our purposes is the second, since, first, it is the only one which specifies that it is said upon sighting the new moon (in language that later became a standardized formula for introducing discussion of kiddush levanah), and second, since the context is a discussion that very closely parallels the discussion of kiddush levanah in the Talmud Bavli.[12]

In both the Yerushalmi and the Bavli, the discussion in question begins with the question, "How long should the new month be blessed?" In identical language, both Talmuds give the answer, "Until its deficiency is filled ('ad shetitmal'ei pegimata')." In both Talmuds, the first answer is given by a single Rabbi, and is "up to seven days." The Bavli identifies that Rabbi as Jacob bar 'Idi, while the Yerushalmi cites it in the name of Jacob bar 'Acha'. In both Talmuds, the second, accepted answer is given in the name of a group. In the Bavli, the Nehardeans say "up to sixteen days." In the Yerushalmi, the Ceasareans say "up to fourteen days." Mordecai Hakohen has argued persuasively that the Rabbis quoted in the two versions are identical.[13] In addition, it is clear from the brief sketch I have given that on form-critical grounds we may consider the two passages to be merely different versions of a single tra-

dition.

The Talmud Bavli contains the first reference to a ceremony clearly related to the present kiddush levanah. As we have seen, the discussion begins with the question: "Until when may one bless the month?" In the context of the discussion which ensues, the question arises as to the identification of the proper blessing to be said. Rav 'Acha' from Difti suggests "Praised be He who is good and who does good (barukh hatov vehameitiv)," [14] but his suggestion is quickly rejected. The correct blessing, in the Talmud's own view, is given in the name of Rav Yehudah, and is precisely the same as the central blessing of the current kiddush levanah liturgy (rubric II of the present ceremony; see above, Chapter I). [15]

The Bavli sugya' just quoted,then, provides the first reference unmistakably related to our kiddush levanah ceremony. In addition to the major blessing itself, the sugya' provides several important bits of information about the ceremony in the Amoraic period. First, we learn in the name of Rav 'Acha' that "In the West /i.e., in Palestine/ they bless, 'Praised be He who renews the months (barukh mechadeish chodashim).'" This provides confirmation for the statement in the Talmud Yerushalmi (above). Furthermore, it coincides with the first blessing offered in Exodus Rabbah (above); this indicates that even though Exodus Rabbah probably does not accurately represent the Tannaitic

period, as it purports, it seems accurately to record Amoraic tradition. Second, we learn in the name of R. Yochanan that "Everyone who blesses the month in its season is as if he welcomes the presence of the shekhinah." The importance of this statement will be discussed at length below (Chapter VII). This concept is considered by the Talmud to be of Tannaitic origin, since it is then restated in the form of a baraita' from the school of Yishmael, which is quoted in the kiddush levanah ceremony (rubric X of the present ceremony; see above, Chapter I). Third, we learn in the name of Abaye that the ceremony is to be performed standing. Fourth, we learn of two sages, Mareimar and Mar Zutra', who "shouldered each other (mekatfei 'ahadadei)"[16] while blessing. Finally, we learn that the proper time to say the blessing (or, more precisely, the outside limit up to which the blessing may be said) is the subject of a halakhic debate. All parties agree that the moon is to be blessed "until its deficiency is filled ('ad shetitmalei' pegimata')," but the authorities are divided as to when that is; Rabbi Ya'akov bar 'Idai in the name of Rav Yehudah asserts that it may be said up to the seventh day of the month, while the Nehardeans say up to the sixteenth. The history of the halakhot relating to kiddush levanah will be discussed at length below (Chapter VI).

We are now in a position to draw certain conclusions concerning the origins of the kiddush levanah ceremony.

First, in the period of the Mishnah, there is no evidence of any ceremony directly related to kiddush levanah. The ceremony of kiddush hachodesh, which was practiced during the Tannaitic period, was a court procedure for officially declaring the calendric new month. It bears no direct relation to kiddush levanah. There is evidence that in the Tannaitic period there was a conceptual connection drawn between the renewal of the moon and welcoming the shekhinah, but there is no evidence that this concept was expressed anywhere in the existing liturgy of that time.

In Amoraic Palestine, it was apparently customary to bless the moon on a variety of occasions, including sighting it after three days or more of rain, and the first sighting after the new moon. The latter case is equivalent to the kiddush levanah situation. The blessing was apparently not fixed definitively, although "Praised be He who renews the months (barukh mechadeish chodashim)" was the most popular alternative, as attested by both the Yerushalmi and the Bavli, and by Exodus Rabbah. There is no evidence of a ceremony involving anything more elaborate than a single, simple blessing recited by the individual when he saw the new moon for the first time.

Amoraic Babylonia appears to have been the point of origin of the growth of the kiddush levanah ceremony. The Babylonian Amoraim were aware of the Palestinian custom, and of the Tannaitic tradition connecting blessing the moon with greeting the shekhinah. They elaborated and further institutionalized the custom. The blessing was expanded into a formal "long" blessing, a full paragraph in length. The connection between moon and shekhinah was elaborated and expressed. The ceremony gained its first "choreography" as 'Abaye (fourth generation Amora, c. 280-339 C.E.) performed it standing (and his custom became halakhah), and Mareimar and Mar Zutra' (sixth generation Amoraim, c. 375-417) "shouldered each other." The ceremony began to be placed in the framework of a halakhic discussion, at first concerning the limits of time during which the blessing could be said.

For several centuries, no additional development in the ceremony took place that we know of. Exodus Rabbah is able to report the former custom, in a way that indicates that it is no longer being practiced, but it adds no new information about the ceremony itself (although it does add considerably to the 'aggadic framework of the ceremony; see below, Chapter VII).

In short, by the end of the Amoraic period, the custom had been established to bless the moon monthly, the first time the new moon was sighted, in a standing

position. The blessing itself had been fixed. That is all we know of the ceremony itself.

The period of the completion of the Babylonian Talmud, known as the age of the Saboraim, is clouded in mystery. The period is as difficult to date as it is to understand. It is clear, however, that at the end of that vaguely defined period, roughly spanning the Fifth through Eighth centuries, the Babylonian Jewish community emerged as the undisputed center of world Jewry.

The next stage in the development of kiddush levanah, however, was to take place in Palestine. Therefore we turn our attention now to the re-emergence of a viable community, with its own strong traditions and claims of authority, in Palestine.

Notes to Chapter II -- EARLY DEVELOPMENT

[1]The same may probably be true even earlier; however, even if so, it would have no bearing on kiddush levanah, which did not begin significant development until the Tannaitic period or later.

[2]Strictly speaking, the Jewish calendar at this time was luni-solar, that is, based on the lunar cycle, but with periodic adjustments (called intercalations) in order to keep the lunar months roughly in line with the solar seasons. During the biblical period, the calendar apparently underwent three stages of development, one purely lunar, one purely solar, and the final one the luni-solar cycle. See D. Sidersky, "Le Trois Centieme Cycle de l'ere du Monde," Revue des Etudes Juives, Vol. LXXV, 1929, pp. 16-18. Although the luni-solar cycle is still the basis of the Jewish calendar, there is evidence that calendric development continued for many centuries. In particular, although authorities agreed that intercalations, the additions of "leap months" to certain years, should take place seven times out of every nineteen years, it was not generally agreed which of the nineteen those seven should be, until perhaps the Tenth or Eleventh century. See Jacob Licht and Ephraim Jehudah Wiesenberg, "Calendar," Encyclopedia Judaica, (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), Vol. V., pp. 43-53.

[3]Two witnesses whose testimony was in agreement were required. M. RH 2:6.

[4]Ibid. 2:7.

[5]Which term, as I noted above, is frequently used incorrectly as a synonym for kiddush levanah.

[6]M. RH 2:8-9.

[7]RH 25a.

[8]M.Ed. 7:7.

[9]Ex.R. 15:24.

[10]Saul Lieberman, Tosefta' Kifshutah, Vol. II "Rosh Hashanah," (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1962); and Chayyim Joshua Kasawsky, 'Otsar Leshon Hatosefta', (Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1961).

[11]P. Ber. 9:3.

[12]San. 41b-42a.

[13]Mordecai Hakohen, "Kiddush Levanah, -- Zemaneha, Birkhatah, V'simchatah," Sinai, Vol. XLVI, no. 2-3, November-December 1959, pp. 167-181.

[14]In general use to this day as the blessing said on hearing good news. See, e.g., Philip Birnbaum, Hasiddur Hashaleim, (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1949), p. 777.

[15]The language of the blessing is extremely close to that of the last Psalm of the pseudepigraphic Psalms of Solomon, which dates from the First century B.C.E. It is impossible to make exact linguistic comparisons, since the Psalms of Solomon has survived in manuscript in Greek only. There is no clear link between Psalms of Solomon and the Rabbinic tradition, although it is possible that the Talmudic Rabbis were acquainted with the Psalms. See Herbert Edward Pyle and Montague Rhodes James, eds., Psalms of Solomon, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), Ps. 19:1-4, pp. 151-153. Pyle and James assert that the language here has even earlier parallels, in Parables of Enoch 41:5 and in Apocalypse of Baruch 48:9-10. The existence of similar, or even identical language, however, does not in any way demonstrate the possibility of the existence of a similar ceremony, nor does it imply that the language at the earlier date carried the meaning that later came to be associated with it.

[16]The meaning of the term is uncertain, and the commentators offer a wide variety of interpretations.

Chapter III -- THE PALESTINIAN TRADITION

In order to understand the texts of the Palestinian tradition properly, it will be helpful first to provide some general historical background. It is important to reiterate at the outset that the generalized history that follows is provided merely as a matter of convenience to the reader. Thorough documentation of this material is far beyond the scope of this work, and is unneccesary, since textual analysis, not historical synthesis, is the basis of my discussion. The textual argument in this chapter rests on two historical premises alone, and I take these to be well established: that by Moslem times, if not earlier, there existed a vibrant Jewish community in Palestine despite any influences that might have diminished its grandeur in earlier Byzantine times, and that this community was frequently at odds with the Babylonian Jewish community on matters of liturgy and minhag.

In the Amoraic period, Palestine and Babylonia were controlled by two different, powerful, rival Empires. Palestine was an outlying province of the declining Roman Empire. When Diocletian split the ailing Empire into Western and Eastern divisions near the beginning of the Fourth century, Palestine became an outpost of the Eastern (Byzantine) Empire. Babylonian Jewry, on the other hand, was centered at or near the capital of the powerful

Sassanian Empire, during the years of its greatest vigor.

The Palestinian community, although it was probably no longer the principal Jewish community of the world even when the Amoraic period began, maintained the de jure status of the center of world Jewry. Thus the power to set the calendar, symbolic of the status of central authority, resided in Palestine with the Patriarchate.

With the spread of Christianity as the official religion of the Byzantine Empire, the position of the Palestine Jewish community seems to have deteriorated, though the extent of the deterioration is hard to determine. The decline began with the passage of laws imposing disabilities on Jews in the second quarter of the Fourth century.[1] This appears to have contributed to a sense of unrest which may have culminated in a rebellion in 350-352, led by one Patricius. In the middle of the Fourth century, the Patriarch Hillel II lost the power to set the calendar, the symbol of Jewish authority, and set forth a formula by which the calendar could be calculated mathematically. The status of the Palestinian Jewish community continued to deteriorate, so that in 429, when the Patriarch Gamaliel VI died, he was not replaced, and the Patriarchate, seat of the authority of the Palestinian community, came to an end.

Meanwhile in Babylonia, the Jewish community, centered at Sura near the Sassanian capital of Nehardea/

Ctesiphon, flourished. The Exilarch was granted broad authority by the Sassanians to control the legal functioning of the Jewish community, a function which he shared with the heads of the leading Academies. The power of the Exilarch (and thus of the entire organized Jewish community) was symbolized by a court of his own, and sanctioned by the Sassanians. The Jewish community appears to have enjoyed a favorable legal and economic status under the Sassanians until the latter part of the Fifth century. Even during the following two centuries, that uncertain period known as the Saboraic era, the Babylonian community seems to have fared better than its Palestinian counterpart. However, within the Jewish world, Babylonia never officially acquired the status of the "center" of world Jewry, represented by the power to set the calendar.

It seems natural that during the Amoraic period the Jewries of Palestine and Babylonia must have been intensely jealous of one another. Since one was within the Roman/Byzantine Empire and the other was within the Sassanian, communication between the two communities must have been difficult at times (although we do have numerous examples of envoys or students traveling between the two centers, and at least once a month news of declaration of the new moon was communicated from Palestine to Babylonia). Both communities inherited a large common body of tradition, both written (Bible and Mishnah) and oral. Both engaged in the

same task, the distillation of received tradition into a workable body of law, which culminated in the production of the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds. The two communities must have worked independently, and in competition with one another. Yet each seems to have had a decent acquaintance with the traditions of the other, as is apparent in the parallel Talmud passages from the Yerushalmi and the Bavli which are discussed above. Neither community hesitated to quote the other when such citation aided the flow of the discourse. It is not surprising that the Babylonian Talmud and the law reflected in it should create the impression of being more highly "finished" than the Palestinian Talmud and its law; because of external political events, the Babylonians were able to continue their work for more than two hundred years after the Palestinian academies had, for all intents and purposes, ceased to function.

In the fourth decade of the Seventh century, when the armies of Islam began their incredible century of conquest, both Palestine and Babylonia were among the first areas to attract their attention. By 638, the two were united under Islamic control. At this time, in spite of some serious difficulties during the last years of Sassanian rule,[2] Babylonian Jewry continued to be the most influential community in the Jewish world. The Palestinian community, on the other hand, more than two centuries after the collapse

of the Patriarchate, was apparently of little consequence in the world of Jewry. Moreover, the Babylonians happily found themselves situated near what would soom become the geographic center of the new civilization, Baghdad, while Palestine continued to be an outpost.

In 732, with the Moslem failure at the Battle of Tours, the period of Islamic expansion ended. In 747, the original Islamic dynasty, the Omayyads, gave way to a new Caliphate, the Abassids. The Abassid Caliphate concentrated on consolidation of the Islamic empire. Power was centralized. The Abassids supported centralization in the Jewish world, too, granting broad power to the leaders of Babylonian Jewry (now called Geonim) to direct the course of world Jewry.

Any centralization of control naturally implies a great increase in the power of those at the center, and a decrease in the power of those on the periphery. In other words, the rift separating those in power from those not in power widens very considerably. This seems to have been the case in the Jewish world of the Eighth century. Power shifts are accompanied by economic shifts, which in turn contribute to major social upheavals.

In the Eighth century, these factors must have manifested themselves. Jewry was probably faced with very unsettled social conditions. A disenfranchised class of former minor leaders was very likely available to take up

leadership of new groups. Palestine was a logical focal point of the ever-present neo-nationalist/neo-messianic undercurrent in Judaism that surfaces so often when times are unusually hard. Moreover, it was far enough away from the center of control in Babylonia to make it a reasonably safe haven for dissident groups.

Therefore we should not be surprised to find in the Eighth century a massive migration to Palestine of impoverished Jews in search of an ideology. The ideologies, too, were rapidly developed. From the Eighth century onward, Palestine provided a home to the Karaites who rejected Rabbinic law and the central authority that set it; to the 'Aveilei Tsion, a messianic group that made a virtue of its poverty; and to numerous cultural pursuits such as Masoretic study and renewed interest in midrash, pursuits which emphasized not Babylonian reliance on Aramaic and oral law, but rather "old-fashioned" Palestine-based Hebrew and Bible. Furthermore, at the end of the century, the Palestinians took the bold step of reinstituting the Patriarchate, by establishing the Ben Meir dynasty. This was to set the stage for the famous Saadia-Ben Meir (i.e., Babylonia-Palestine) controversy over the calendar about 120 years later.

Clearly, relations between Palestinian and Babylonian Jewries in the Eighth century could not have been smooth. The various Palestinian Jewish communities were

probably united primarily by their opposition to Babylonian hegemony. They must have tried to be indifferent, independent, and/or rebellious toward Babylonian control. They must have encouraged the development of indigenous Palestinian rites and customs, if not quite halakhot. The Babylonian Jews, for their part, did what they could to bring the Palestinians under control. In the end, however, the Babylonians were too far removed to exert much influence, and had to suffice with ignoring Palestinian works, or countering them with voluminous polemical material.

It was in this unsettled environment that kiddush levanah underwent its next stage of development, for the next important sources for the ceremony date from Eighth century Palestine.

After the Babylonian Talmud, the next source to describe a blessing over the moon is Masekhet Sofrim. Sofrim is a very important source for our ceremony, but one that is difficult to deal with. It is one of the "minor tractates" that today is printed in editions of the Babylonian Talmud at the end of the order Nezikin. This accident of printing format has caused many traditional Jews to this day to consider Sofrim to be somehow connected with the Talmud in origin (though not in authority).

Scholars are in agreement, however, that this is not the case. Although the unity of the work, its exact origin, and intended function remain the subject of some

controversy, the scholarly consensus places the work in Palestine during the second half of the Eighth century.[3] It was probably not written by a single author. Its authors appear to have been well acquainted with the Palestinian Talmud and perhaps also with the midrash Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer.[4]

Masekhet Sofrim has survived in several versions, varying slightly from one another in many places.[5] In addition, Sofrim is sometimes quoted in various primary sources, which give different readings than those known in the extant versions.

Sofrim, like the Talmuds, sets its description of kiddush levanah in a halakhic framework, giving, however, several customs that are nowhere previously attested. First, one should recite the blessing only "on Saturday nights, when it is fragrant."[6] Second, one should recite the blessing only "wearing pleasant clothing."[7] Third, before blessing, one should direct one's eyes toward the moon, and "straighten" one's legs.

Having given this framework, Sofrim continues with the description of the ceremony itself.[8]

The ceremony begins with the recitation of the blessing over the new moon. The blessing given is nearly identical with that found in the Babylonian Talmud,[9] which forms the central rubric of the ceremony to this day (rubric II of the modern ceremony, Chapter I above). There

are, however, a number of minor changes in wording, which are worthy of note.

First, where the Bavli has "the true Author, whose achievement is truth (po'eil 'emet shepe'ulato 'emet)," Sofrim has the plural, "true authors, whose achievements are true (po'alei 'emet shepe'ulatam 'emet)." The difference would be insignificant, except that it requires a change in the allusion of the noun, which as a plural, can no longer refer to God. Early commentators[10] note the differences, and explain that if the plural is the correct reading, it refers to the heavenly bodies, which are "truthful" in not varying their assigned courses.

Second, Sofrim adds two new words to the blessing: "He ordered the moon to renew itself with precious light (be'or yakar) as a glorious crown...."

Third, the concluding, summary sentence (chatimah) of the blessing differs from that given in the Bavli. Sofrim concludes, "...who sanctifies Israel and New Moons," in place of "...who renews the months." This version is one of the new moon blessings quoted in the Yerushalmi in the name of Rabbi Yosi bar Nehuriya. As such, it is considered to be a typically Palestinian chatimah; this is not surprising.

Following the blessing, the ceremony continues with the three-fold recitation of an incantation for good luck. This closely resembles rubric VIII of the present ceremony

(Chapter I, above).

Then God is blessed three times using three synonyms. The blessing parallels rubric III of the modern ceremony, although the acrostic for Ya'akov is wanting. (Some editions,[12] however, do have the Ya'akov acrostic. It seems probably that this was lacking at first, and was added later when Jacob became an important symbol in the ceremony. This is clearly shown in Appendix B, Table II. Of the dozens of primary sources that quote Sofrim, none mentions the Ya'akov acrostic before the late Thirteenth century, and none lacks it after the late Fourteenth century.

A "dance" at the moon is done three times, followed by three-fold repetition of a wish that others should have as much difficulty touching Israel /for evil/ as Israel has just had trying to reach the moon. This is virtually identical to rubric IV of the present ceremony.

A verse from Exodus (15:16) is recited forward and backwards three times, exactly as in rubric V of the present ceremony. The words amen amen amen selah halleluyah are then recited.

The ceremony concludes with the worshippers' greeting one another with the words shalom 'aleicha, 'aleicha shalom, as in rubric VII of the present ceremony.

Clearly, in Masekhet Sofrim much of the framework around which the kiddush levanah ceremony grew is already

reflected. Once the version of Sofrim became generally known and accepted, it became, together with the passage in the Bavli, the universally quoted foundation of the ceremony. However, as we have seen, in the Eighth century the Babylonian Rabbis who championed the Bavli were not likely to be kindly disposed towards Sofrim, which set forth the independent traditions of the community in Palestine. Indeed, it would be a long time before the Bavli and Sofrim would be juxtaposed. We turn now to that issue: namely, how Sofrim came to be gradually accepted as a legitimate source by the Babylonian and Babylonian-influenced Rabbis who shaped the form of world Jewry.

Notes to Chapter III -- THE PALESTINIAN TRADITION

[1]For example, Constantine, while encouraging conversion to Christianity by offering tax benefits to new Christians and to wholly converted towns, forbade the owning of Christian slaves by Jews.

[2]As I have noted above, those difficulties are a characteristic of the period of the Saboraim. Little is known of their nature, cause, or extent.

[3]Michael Higger, ed., Masekhet Sofrim, (New York: Ginsberg Linotyping Company, 1937); Chapter 6 of "Introduction," p. 80.

[4]Ibid., p. 80; and Chapter 3 of "Introduction," p. 32.

[5]The best edition now available, upon which I rely primarily, is the scientific edition of Michael Higger, Ibid., Chapter 19:10, pp. 337-340.

[6]Ibid. The Hebrew here, "bemotsa'ei shabbat keshehu mevusam," is of uncertain meaning. The antecedent of the pronoun hu is not clearly defined, and could refer either to 'Saturday night' or to the person performing the ceremony. Furthermore, the commentators disagree over the meaning of mevusam. And some writers, e.g., Jonah ben Abraham Gerondi, Rabbeinu Yonah in his commentary to Hilkhot Rav Alfas (Jerusalem: Machon Tevel, 1968), Berakhot, end of chapter IV Tefillat Hashachar, have a different reading here altogether. The alternate reading is 'ad sheyitbaseim. At issue is whether the Hebrew verb B-S-M here relates to "spices," and hence to the blessing over spices in the Saturday evening havdallah ceremony, or whether it has a different meaning altogether, in which case the phrase bemotsa'ei shabbat in Sofrim may be viewed as a late addition based on a mis-interpretation of the verb. Gerondi takes the latter view.

[7]The meaning of the Hebrew here (bekeilim na'im) is uncertain. I have translated according to the prevalent tradition, which is that of Israel Isserlein, Terumat Hadeshen, Warsaw edition (published New York: Israel Wolf, 1958), Part 1: Responsa, number 35. Isserlein quotes the interpretation in the name of Maimonides, but I have not been able to locate it in the latter's writings.

[8]The reader may find it helpful to consult Appendix B, Table II, where the various elements of the ceremony

in its modern form, in Sofrim, and in many of the other sources are contrasted in chart form.

[9]San. 42a.

[10]See, e.g., Tos. to San. 42a.

[11]P. Ber. 9:3.

[12]See, e.g., Masekhet Sofrim printed with Talmud Bavli, (Jerusalem: Machon Tevel, 1968), 20:2.

Chapter IV -- A MERGING OF TRADITIONS

Thus far we have seen two different strands of tradition concerning kiddush levanah. The Babylonian tradition consisted of:

a) a blessing to be said upon sighting the new moon,

b) two statements which emphasize the importance of reciting this blessing, by comparing it to the welcoming of the shekhinah, and

c) some discussion of when the blessing may be said.

The ceremony, as presented in the Babylonian Talmud, is hardly a ceremony at all. The Palestinian tradition, on the other hand, as represented in Masekhet Sofrim, is much more eleborate, involving:

a) a blessing similar to the Babylonian one, but with a different chatimah,

b) "dancing",

c) a variety of three-fold repetitions,

d) recitation of a Biblical verse forward and backwards, and

e) other elements that seem more typical of a magical rite than a religious service.[1]

The next stage in the development of the kiddush levanah ceremony involved the weaving together of these two diverse strands. In view of the strained relationship between the Babylonian and Palestinian communities, as we have seen, it should not surprise us that this synthesis

was not to take place until considerable time had passed. To test this hypothesis, we shall have to examine the writings of numerous early authors who would be likely to include mention of any new moon ceremony in their works. From the Geonic period itself, we know of several extant Babylonian halakhic/liturgical compendia. We shall examine those relevant to our issue first.

Helakhot Gedolot[2] is a halakhic work generally attributed to Yehudai Gaon, but whose authorship is less than certain. Ginzberg asserts that the work was first written by Yehudai in the middle of the Eighth century, and was later revised and enlarged by Simeon Kiyyara, about 900 C.E. The edition currently extant is Kiyyara's, and is based on Yehudai's.[3]

Halakhot Gedolot's version of blessing the moon is given in a list of blessings to be said when seeing various aspects of nature. There are blessings for seeing the sea, for viewing a rainbow, for seeing the sun, and also for "seeing the moon when it is new." The blessing here is identical with that given in the Babylonian Talmud, which we have seen before (rubric II of the present ceremony). Nothing is added, and there are no other elements to the "ceremony."

In the Ninth century, Amram ben Sheshna Gaon (who died c. 875) compiled a prayerbook. Seder Rav Amram Gaon,[4] as it is called, has a blessing for the moon. Like the

version in Halakhot Gedolot, the blessing is introduced by the phrase, "One who sees the moon when it is new should say: (haro'eh levanah bechidushah 'omeir)." The blessing given is again the version of the Bavli. Amram also quotes other fragments of the Bavli section about blessing the moon, including the two statements equating this blessing with welcoming the shekhinah, and an abridged version of the discussion of the time limit for saying the blessing.

Saadia Gaon, (889-942), a native of Egypt who studied in Palestine before going to Babylonia, was, of all the Geonim, probably the best acquainted with Palestinian tradition, and the most likely to follow it. Yet he won his reputation, and his right to the Geonate, by defending Babylonian tradition against Palestine in the famous calendar controversy with the Patriarch Ben Meir. Hoffman has shown that unless there were mitigating factors to the contrary, Saadia gave no necessary preference to Babylonian customs.[5] Yet in the case of blessing the moon, Saadia must have felt too close to the controversial issue of the calendar to depart from Babylonian usage. In his early Tenth century Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon,[6] his version of the blessing parallels exactly that of the Babylonian Talmud. His affinity for the Palestinian does show, however, in that he sets the end limit for the time of blessing at fourteen days, in accordance with the Yerushalmi, as opposed to the sixteen days mentioned in the Bavli.

It comes as no surprise to us that the Geonim, themselves the prime creators and upholders of the Babylonian tradition, should quote it exclusively, and leave no entry at all for Palestinian custom. Generations later, after the exclusive mantle of leadership had already passed from Babylonia, the influence of the Geonim remained strong.

In the Eleventh century in North Africa, Issac Alfasi described the blessing of the moon just as one of the Geonim might, by abridging the relevant passage from the Bavli, and giving the Bavli version of the blessing verbatim.[7] A century later Maimonides did likewise. His blessing text has a number of slight innovations that are doubtless due to different readings in his Talmud text. He pays slightly more attention to delineating the halakhah related to the blessing than did most other authors before him. Yet there is no question at all that his version comes directly and exclusively from the Babylonian Talmud.[8]

The case for continued Babylonian hegemony cannot be made quite so strongly for the communities of Europe. The early European writers were not so intent upon codifying existing custom as were their colleagues in Africa.

We can, however, make something of an argument from silence, weak though such an argument admittedly is. Clearly, a commentary on the Talmud would be an appropriate and likely place to mention that a Talmudically-based custom had been expanded, were that the case. Yet in France,

both Rashi in the Eleventh century[9] and the Tosafists in the Twelfth through Fourteenth centuries[10] make no mention at all of any change in the ceremony in their commentaries to the Bavli's version of the moon blessing.

On the other hand, the first source after Masekhet Sofrim itself to make use of the Palestinian tradition for blessing the moon is Machzor Vitry,[11] the prayerbook attributed to Simcha ben Samuel, one of Rashi's pupils, in Eleventh century France. Although Machzor Vitry comes from the same school of tradition as both Rashi and the Tosafot, it quotes both the Bavli and the Sofrim texts, each of them nearly in full. The blessing itself is the Bavli version. Much Bavli material is quoted, including the statements equating blessing the moon with welcoming the shekhinah and much of the discussion about the time limits for the blessing. Yet the ceremony itself contains all the elements given in Sofrim (with the sole exception that the blessing uses the Babylonian chatimah, as noted above). The result is a neat synthesis of the two traditions, Babylonian and Palestinian, into a single ceremony drawn from both.

Sefer Hamanhig,[12] from the late Twelfth century in Provence, gives a version that is very much like that of Machzor Vitry, abbreviated. The text is so brusque and truncated (the author, Abraham ben Nathan, gives about half of each sentence, followed by "etc.") that it is

difficult to analyze. It is clear that the ceremony presented closely resembles that of Machzor Vitry, and that the author assumes the reader to have a good knowledge of the ceremony.

So the Twelfth century seems to mark the beginning of the synthesis of Babylonian and Palestinian traditions in Northern France, Germany, and Provence. A version of the ceremony based on the Machzor Vitry combination is now regularly presented in many sources. Among these are Sefer Harokeiach,[13] 'Or Zaru'a,[14] Sefer Mitsvot Gadol,[15] and 'Orchot Chayyim.[16]

The Palestinian tradition concerning blessing the moon seems to have been accepted in the Sefardi world much later than in the Ashkenazi. The first Sefardi citation of the Palestinian sources is by Jonah Gerondi[17] in the Thirteenth century. Gerondi does not describe the ceremony, so while it is clear from his reference that he knows Sofrim, there is no indication whether or not he accepts it.

In the late Thirteenth to early Fourteenth centuries, Sofrim is quoted as an accepted source by Bachya ben Chalava[18] in Spain and by Sefer Kol Bo[19] in Italy. Bachya's reference to Sofrim is very brief, at the end of an extended comment about the moon. Kol Bo, on the other hand, quotes extensively from Sofrim. The version given in both is essentially the same kind of synthesis of the Babylonian and

Palestinian traditions as was reflected two centuries earlier in Machzor Vitry.

Final acceptance of the merging of the two traditions was assured by the inclusion of such a composite version in the Tur,[20] which in the Fourteenth century "canonized" the union that had first been attempted in the Eleventh century.

It is easy to underestimate the time span which has been dealth with in these few pages. The period of more than three hundred years that it took for the Babylonian and Palestinian traditions to fit comfortably together is a very long, significant block of time. The fact that it took such a long time is testimony to the strength of the two traditions, and to the tension that originally must have existed between them. With the slow passage of time, however, the differences seemed less important. After the Tenth century, neither Babylonia nor Palestine was a very important Jewish center, and the rivalry between the two gradually diminished, for lack of partisans on either side. The synthesis of the two traditions must have taken longer in the Safardi lands, because Babylonian tradition (and hence opposition to Palestinian tradition) was stronger there. Furthermore, the magical and superstitious elements of the Palestinian tradition may have been less appealing in Spain than they were, say, in Germany, where a variety of socio-economic conditions

contributed to the rise of popular piety, best characterized by the Chasidei Ashkenaz of the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries.

Once the merger of the Babylonian and Palestinian traditions had been accomplished, the form of the kiddush levanah ceremony became stable. This form would be the basis of the ceremony from then on. From the Fourteenth century to the present day, all that has changed in the ceremony is that miscellaneous accretions have been added to the basic framework. We will now turn our attention to those accretions, and will thus conclude our discussion of the growth of the ceremony of kiddush levanah.

Notes to Chapter IV -- A MERGING OF TRADITIONS

[1]Joshua Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic and Superstition, (New York: Atheneum, 1970), p. 256, specifically mentions these as typical elements of magical acts.

[2]Halakhot Gedolot, Azariel Hildesheimer, ed., (Berlin: 1888), pp. 75-76.

[3]Louis Ginzberg, Geonica, (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1909), Vol. I, pp. 99-108.

[4]The best edition available, upon which I depend, is the scientific edition of Daniel Goldschmidt, Siddur Rav Amram Gaon, (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1971), pp. 90-91.

[5]Lawrence Ahrin Hoffman, Liturgical Responses Suppressed by the Geonim in their Attempt to Fix the Liturgy, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Ph.D. dissertation in unpublished typescript, 1973), pp. 242-249.

[6]Israel Davidson, Simcha Assaf, and Issachar Joel, eds., Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon, (Jerusalem: Mekitsei Nirdamim, 1941), pp. 90-91.

[7]Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi, Hilkhot Rav Alfas, printed in Talmud Bavli (Jerusalem: Machon Tevel, 1968), Berakhot, end of Chapter IV, Tefillat Hashachar; and Sanhedrin, Chapter V, Hayu Bodkin.

[8]Mishneh Torah Leharambam, Shlomo Rubenstein, ed., Sefer 'Ahavah, Hilkhot Berakhot, 10:16-17.

[9]Rashi to San. 41b-42a.

[10]Tosafot to San. 41b-42a.

[11]Machzor Vitry, Shimeon Halevy Horowitz, ed., (Nurenberg: 1923), section 202, pp. 182-183.

[12]Sefer Hamanhig (Berlin: Karnek, 1860), section 44, p. 46a.

[13]Sefer Harokeiach Hagadol (Jerusalem: 1960), section 229, p. 131.

[14]'Or Zaru'a (Zitamir, 1862), Part II no. 456, p. 182.

[15]Sefer Mitsvot Gadol (Kampost: 1807), Part II no. 27.

[16]'Orchot Chayyim (Florence: 1750), Vol. I, Hilkhot Rosh Chodesh, pp. 69b-70a.

[17]Rabbeynu Yonah, commentary to Hilkhot Rav Alfas, to Berakhot, end of Chapter IV, Tefillat Hashachar.

[18]Bachya al Hatorah, Chayyim Dov Shewel, ed., (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1967), Vol. II, Parashat Bo', p. 89.

[19]Sefer Kol Bo, (Lemberg: 1860), Rosh Chodesh, section 43.

[20]Tur: 'Orach Chayyim 426.

Chapter V -- LATE ADDITIONS

After the completion of the merger of the Palestinian and Babylonian versions of blessing the moon, and the fixing of the composite kiddush levanah ceremony by virtue of its inclusion in the Tur, the only substantive changes that took place were gradual additions. Some of these alterations seem trivial, and some seem to be matters more of form than of substance, but together the new additions constituted a definite change in the ceremony, and, very likely, in the meaning its practitioners saw in it.

The first bit of new material to become part of the kiddush levanah ceremony was the statement "David, king of Israel, lives and endures (David melekh yisrael chai vekayam)." This statement, which is rubric VI of the present ceremony (according to the numbering given above in Chapter I), is first attested in connection with kiddush levanah by Joseph ben Moses, in his Leket Yosher[1] in the Fifteenth century. Leket Yosher simply mentions, almost in passing, that after saying the verse of Exodus 15:16 (rubric V of the present ceremony) forward and backwards, one "also" says David melekh yisrael chai vekayam. The author attributes the custom to his teacher, whom he does not name. (His principal teacher was Israel Isserlein, and Leket Yosher frequently reflects Isserlein's practice; however, Isserlein's own writings do not attest David melekh yisrael ... as part of the ceremony.) By the Sixteenth

century, virtually all the sources which discuss kiddush levanah make mention of this sentence. For Moses Isserles,[2] in particular, it is an important symbol, worthy of extended explanation, as we shall see below (Chapter VII).

The sentence about David has a long history of its own, independent of its association with kiddush levanah. It was a slogan celebrating the eternity of the Davidic dynasty, which represented both the glory of Israel's former independence, and traditionally, the line from which the ultimate Redeemer would come. It has been suggested that in the Second century, for example, Bar Kochba claimed to be descended from David, and utilized David melekh yisrael chai vekayam as a slogan of the rebellion which he led.[3] A legend associates the sentence with the new moon in the Talmud,[4] by declaring that Judah Hanasi sent his associate Rabbi Chiyya to perform the kiddush hachodesh ceremony in the village of Ein Tov, and instructed him to send back the signal David melekh yisrael chai vekayam when he had done so. It is unclear whether Judah picked this signal because he considered it to have some intrinsic connection with the new moon, or whether it was merely a random password. It may have been selected because it referred to Judah's successful functioning as the Patriarch in determining the calendar, since Judah maintained that he was the licit Davidic descendent of his day. In any case, once the sentence had entered the kiddush levanah ceremony,

commentators naturally preferred to assume the former, and to argue that David had always been a symbol for the moon.

The next of the late additions to the kiddush levanah ceremony was a passage from Song of Songs 2:8-9 (rubric IX of the present ceremony). The passage reads:

> "The voice of my beloved! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills! My beloved is like a gazelle, like a young deer; here he stands, beyond our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice."

The passage, which in Hebrew begins with the phrase Kol dodi, is first attested in Poland in the late Sixteenth century, in Moses ben Abraham's Sefer Mateh Mosheh.[5] The author attributes the tradition of reciting these verses in the kiddush levanah ceremony to Judah Hechasid of Regensberg. No rationale for its inclusion is supplied. The custom apparently became popular quickly, for it is frequently attested in the Seventeenth century sources.[6]

The work Shenei Luchot Haberit, written in Poland in the late Sixteenth or early Seventeenth century, contains the first written record of several more additions to the ceremony. The work is kabbalistic, and difficult to decipher. At one point it reports some new additions, calling them "the custom of the land of Israel and environs."[7] The new additions are the recitation of the rabbinic kaddish and Psalm 150. The author, Isaiah Horowitz, explains that

the recitation of kaddish is intended to magnify God's name, thus helping to return the moon to its original state, that is, equal to the sun (this will be discussed below, chapter VII). As we will see, this is clearly a prayer for redemption in this context. The custom of reciting kaddish during kiddush levanah is without further attestation until the Twentieth century. At present, however, the rabbinic kaddish is part of the Sefardi rite,[8] while some versions of the Ashkenazi rite carry the mourners' kaddish,[9] and other versions have no kaddish at all.[10]

The addition of Psalm 150 goes unexplained. The custom became fairly popular, and is attested in several Seventeenth century sources.[11] It is possible that the Psalm was intended to replace the older custom of saying amen, selah, halleluyah (from Sofrim, above, Chapter III, but not part of the present ceremony), since the Psalm text makes use of the Hebrew verb H-L-L twice in each line, and since no version of kiddush levanah has both Psalm 150 and amen, selah, halleluyah.[12]

According to Abraham Gombiner,[13] Shenei Luchot Haberit is also the source for the addition of Psalm 121 to the kiddush levanah ceremony. However, I have not been able to locate any reference to this Psalm in the latter work. At any rate, some time during the Seventeenth century Psalm 121 did become a customary part of kiddush levanah,

perhaps because the Psalm was considered to protect those who ventured outdoors at night.[14]

Also during the Seventeenth century, it became customary to recite Psalm 148:1-6 at the beginning of kiddush levanah. The custom was apparently kabbalistic in origin. It is mentioned and "explained" by Jehiel Epstein and Abraham Nathan Ashkenazy.[15] Epstein explains that the passage is recited because its last work, ya'avor, has the same numerical value in gematria (288) as the number of "sparks" that were created by the moon's accusation of the sun.[16] The Psalm is thus viewed as helpful in collecting those sparks, and restoring the deficiency of the moon, thereby furthering the ultimate cause of redemption. Ashkenazy's explantion is considerably less comprehensible without a knowledge of kabbala. It makes prominent mention of Eve, David, and Rachel, probably as figures involved with creating and/or correcting the world's imperfection.

An additional, non-liturgical bit of choreography became attached to the ceremony during the Seventeeth century; the custom of shaking out the corners of one's clothing at the conclusion of the ceremony. The custom is attested by Gombiner, Epstein, and Ashkenazy[17] without explanation. Trachtenberg[18] notes that this is a common superstitious practice thought to ward off demons.

In the Nineteenth century two new additions to the

ceremony appeared. They are Song of Songs 8:5, and a prayer beginning Yehi ratson (rubrics XI and XII of the present ceremony). Jacob Reifmann,[19] who is the first to discuss them, attributes them to the Sixteenth century mystic, Isaac Luria. However, I have not seen any evidence at all to support his contention, and Reifmann himself cites no specific sources. As far as I know, these passages are not attested as being involved with kiddush levanah before the Nineteenth century, although the testimony of Reifmann indicates that the association is apparently older.

Two very late additions to the ceremony are the recitation of Psalm 8:4-5 just before the central blessing (the end of rubric I of the current ceremony) and the recitation of Psalm 67 at the end of the ceremony (rubric XV). Both of these features appear for the first time, without comment, in Zalman Baer's version of the Ashkenazi prayerbook.[20] Although I am sure that the customs did not originate with Baer, I can trace no antecedents. Birnbaum[21] does not even attest the first of these additions.

Finally, I have read in the secondary sources[22] that some communities are accustomed to saying 'Aleinu leshabeiach at the conclusion of the ceremony. I have not seen any version of the ceremony itself which includes this custom.

The accretions that mark the last stage in the

growth of the kiddush levanah came slowly and unevenly. Some are popular and well-accepted. Others remain mysterious in origin and meaning. We should note, for the time being, that most of these accretions came during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, when Jewry was attempting to cope with the effects of the expulsion from Spain and the Chmielmiczi Massacres in Poland. These centuries were marked by the rise of Safed mysticism and of Sabbateanism. These new trends in Jewish mysticism are undoubtedly involved in the growth of kiddush levanah. The extent of their effect, and the exact mystic meaning of the changes, are questions which must be left to other researchers, who are competent students of kabbala.

We have seen, in these chapters, how a ceremony began, grew, changed. We have noted, in passing, the seeming correlation between the independent life of the liturgy and the real events in the lives of the people the liturgy served. As the liturgy changed, so must its meaning have changed. These are issues to which we must return. But in the meanwhile, there are other, non-liturgical elements of the kiddush levanah literature to which we turn our attention.

Notes to Chapter V -- LATE ADDITIONS

[1]Leket Yosher, Jacob Freimann, ed., (New York: Menorah Institute, 1959), 'Orach Chayyim, pp. 69-70.

[2]Darkei Mosheh, 'Orach Chayyim 426; and Hagahot to Shulchan 'Arukh: 'Orach Chayyim 426.

[3]Mayer Abramowitz, "The Sanctification of the Moon: Ancient Rite of Rebellion," Judaism issue 85, Vol. XXII no. 1, Winter 1973, p. 49.

[4]RH 25a.

[5]Sefer Mateh Mosheh (Warsaw: Nathan Shrifgisser, 1876), Part IV, sections 532-541, pp. 126-127.

[6]See, e.g., Magein 'Avraham, to Shulchan 'Arukh: 'Orach Chayyim 426; and Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit, Dinei Kiddush Halevanah, pp. 55a-55b.

[7]Shenei Luchot Haberit, (Jerusalem: Foundation for the Publication of Shenei Luchot Haberit, 1959), Part II, Masekhet Pesachim, p. 42.

[8]Moses Gaster, ed., Seder Tefillah, (London: Oxford University Press, 1901), Vol. I, Part II, p. 146.

[9]Philip Birnbaum, ed., Hasiddur Hashaleim, (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 565-566.

[10]Zalman Baer, ed., Seder 'Avodat Yisrael (Palestine: Shoken, 1937), pp. 337-339.

[11]Magein Avraham and Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit, Op. cit.

[12]Jacob Reifmann, Pesher Davar (Warsaw: 1845), pp. 25-36.

[13]Magein Avraham, Op. cit.

[14]Sefer Shimush Tehillim, no. 121.

[15]Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit, Op. cit.; and Chemdat Yamim, Part II, Rosh Chodesh, Chapter V, pp. 24a-25a.

[16]In one version of the kabbalistic view, the imperfection of the world is represented by the doctrine of "sparks", which are the shattered remnants of the pristine

light of the days of Creation. Redemption, or correcting the imperfection of the world, is achieved when all the "sparks" are collected and reunited with their source.

[17]Magein Avraham, Op. cit.; Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit, Op. cit.; Chemdat Yamim, Op. cit.

[18]Joshua Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic and Superstition, (New York: Atheneum, 1970), p. 256.

[19]Reifmann, Op. cit.

[20]Baer, Op. cit.

[21]Birnbaum, Op. cit.

[22]Issachar Yaakovson, Netiv Binah (Tel Aviv: Sinai, 1973), Vol. III, pp. 336-348.

PART II -- HALAKHAH RELATED TO KIDDUSH LEVANAH

Chapter VI -- THE GROWTH OF HALAKHOT RELATED TO BLESSING THE NEW MOON

Jewish law, like Jewish liturgy, has a tendency to develop in a cumulative fashion. Once established, a law is rarely altered, and even more rarely abrogated. Rather, once a law is established, its tendency is to grow. Halakhah begins with relatively general statements. With the passage of time, details become more important. At first, general principles are enough; later the limits of and exceptions to those principles are sought. Practical experience with theoretical law forces the law to deal increasingly with the details of regular application. Such is the case with the laws related to blessing the new moon.

Time - End Limit

The first, and by far the most important, issue of law to be dealt with concerning kiddush levanah is the questions of when the blessing is to be said. The question is taken up in the very first sources to deal with a blessing recognizeably related to our ceremony, namely the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds.[1]

As I have indicated above (Chapter II), both Talmuds begin their discussion of blessing the moon with the question of how long the blessing may be said. More precisely, at issue in both works is the ending limit to the time span during which the blessing may be recited. In

both works, the first response is one of principle: The new moon may be blessed until its deficiency is filled. Both sources press on: Practically speaking, how long is that? In both cases, "up to seven days," is proposed, and in both cases it is rejected in favor of a longer limit. The Yerushalmi accepts an outside limit of fourteen days. The Bavli is slightly more lenient, allowing the blessing to be said up to sixteen days from the new moon. With the passage of time, the superior prestige which the Bavli came to enjoy over the Yerushalmi insured that the Bavli version, sixteen days, would come to be accepted as the legal end limit of the blessing. During the Geonic period and the time of the first Rishonim, while the rivalry between Babylonia and Palestine was still a live issue, a small handful of Palestinian-influenced authorities[2] quoted the Yerushalmi tradition. But literally dozens quoted the Bavli tradition, and the matter was effectively closed, without further debate.

Developments in the science of the calendar reopened the debate, however, many centuries later. It must have become apparent in the Thirteenth century that the traditional Jewish mathematical formual for fixing the date and time of the new moon did not always accord exactly with the true astronomical new moon, known as the molad.[3] So the question arose: Does the sixteen day limit for blessing the new moon apply counting from the official

(Jewish) date and time of the new moon, or from the true (astronomical) date and time. The decision, given first by Samson ben Zadok[4] and more authoritatively by Jacob ben Asher,[5] was that the limit was to be computed counting from the molad, the true astronomical new moon.

In the late Thirteenth or early Fourteenth century, when the exact duration of a lunar month must have been known, Maharil[6] applied this new knowledge to the old Talmudic precept that the moon may be blessed "until its deficiency is filled." He reasoned that the true meaning of this is not, as the rabbis of the Bavli had concluded, up to sixteen days, but rather up to exactly half the duration of the lunar month, counting from the molad. In precise terms, Maharil set the limit on blessing the new moon at half of 29 days, 12 hours, and 793/1080 of an hour, counting from the molad. However, he conceded that in practice, since the precise molad is difficult to determine, the Talmudic limit of sixteen days is an appropriate and workable approximation. Maharil's halakhic specification became the definitive interpretation.

Time - Beginning Limit

However, the original question, when the blessing over the new moon might be said, was not yet fully answered. The end limit for the blessing time was set; what of the beginning time? What was the earliest one might bless the new moon?

The earliest sources are silent on this question, probably because they didn't view it as an issue. Kiddush levanah was usually described as the blessing to be said "upon seeing the moon when it is new," and the implication clearly is that the blessing may be said immediately upon the visibility of the new moon. Nearly all of the early sources which make mention of a limit on the starting time of the blessing confirm this impression. Rashi[7] in the Eleventh century, and Menahem ben Solomon[8] and Maimonides[9] in the Twelfth all indicate that if one has not blessed the moon immediately, one many continue to do so up to the sixteenth day.

The first indication of any limit on the beginning of the blessing time comes from Saadia,[10] in the Tenth century. Saadia mentions, almost in passing, that the blessing is to be said "when the moon is visible, from the fourth night /i.e., after three days/ until the fourteenth." Saadia's position seems to have been generally ignored by other authorities, however, and the issue is never mentioned again until the Thirteenth century, when Jonah Gerondi, the Spanish philosopher and halakhist, devoted considerable attention to it.[11]

Gerondi based his argument on a reading of Masekhet Sofrim which is not longer extant. Apparently, his Sofrim text began, "One doesn't bless the moon 'ad shetitbaseim." The Hebrew phrase is of uncertain meaning,

and Gerondi gives two possible explanations. The first - and incorrect explanation, according to him, but one that has survived in our versions of Sofrim - is that the Hebrew verb B-S-M relates to "spices," so we are to understand from the sentence that the moon is not to be blessed until after the spices have been blessed (in the Havdalah service at the close of the Sabbath), and hence on Saturday night. The second and correct explanation, he says, is to understand the verb B-S-M as related to a marriage canopy, as in the Aramaic phrase 'aveid busma' levareih ("make a wedding canopy for his son"), in which case we would understand that we are not to bless the moon "until it resembles a marriage canopy." Gerondi interprets this to mean that it must be "somewhat large, and illuminating its environs.... Its light must be sweet, so that man may gain enjoyment from it. That is to say, after about three days." For Gerondi argues, surely the new moon on the first day of its appearance is too small to be enjoyed.

It is difficult to say why Gerondi chose to make an issue of such a seemingly small point in the Sofrim text. Perhaps Sofrim had already gained some semblance of authority, maybe appearing, even at that early date, to require harmonization with the Talmud. If so, he understandably felt a need to elucidate the text that is the primary source of the ceremony, and he may simply have felt that the alternative tradition, that of connecting kiddush

levanah with Saturday night, had no basis. In any event, Gerondi's presentation was convincing, and for several centuries it was universally quoted as the basis for the newly accepted halakhah: that kiddush levanah was not to be performed until at least three days after the new moon.

The first record of a different tradition comes from Joseph Caro, in the Sixteenth century. In his commentary to the Tur[12], Caro notes that he has seen a responsum by the kabbalist Joseph Gikatilla which requires that the moon not be blessed until seven days have passed from the molad. Later, in his own code,[13] Caro made this view into law.

The responsum which Caro cites as the source of this new view has been shown by Gershom Scholem not to have been written by Gikatilla (who lived in Spain, c. 1248-1325), but rather to have come from an anonymous kabbalist from the mystic community at Safed about 1500.[14] The responsum connects the moon with King David, who is the symbol of the divine attribute of malkhut ("kingship"), which is the seventh of the /lower/ divine attributes.[15] The author says that everything connected with this attribute comes in sevens, and everything that comes in sevens is testimony to the attribute. Hence blessing the moon, which is an important symbol of the attribute, should come only after seven days.

Caro's codification of this practice caused a split

in halakhic opinion. Some later authorities, including even the Bach and the Taz,[16] specifically reject the later limit. Most authorities quote both the earlier (three day) limit and the new (seven day) limit for beginning the period when the ceremony may be performed, and express a preference (but not a legal ruling) in favor of one or the other. The latest authorities[17] note that the seven days limit is generally observed by kabbalists, but that other Jews recite the blessing beginning after three days.

This concludes the development of the halakhah concerning the beginning limit of the time span during which the new moon may be blessed. But there are still other issues involved in setting the final current form of the halakhah concerning the time of the blessing. These issues stem from the Talmudic tradition connecting the blessing of the moon with welcoming the shekhinah, God's presence (and in kabbala, related to malkhut as the tenth of the divine attributes), and from the tradition (whether it was original or late is irrelevant) interpreting the Masekhot Sofrim description of kiddush levanah as referring to Saturday night.

Time - Other Issues

If our present reading of the Sofrim passage, "One only blesses the moon on Saturday night....." was a part of the early versions, it is reasonable to assume that early authorities would have limited the blessing to Saturday

nights only. Certainly this tradition was known by the Thirteenth century, when Gerondi discussed and rejected it. Even after Gerondi's alternative interpretation became accepted, the older tradition survived in the form of a preference for saying the blessing on Saturday night, whenever possible. Some authorities[18] even asserted that blessing the new moon on Saturday night, even though it is not a legal necessity, insures a successful month.

At the same time, the equation of performing kiddush levanah with welcoming the shekhinah led to the conclusion that the ceremony had to be performed in a joyous frame of mind, for surely it would be sinful to welcome God's presence otherwise. This principle had a number of practical halakhic consequences, which were elucidated beginning with Maharil, in the late Fourteenth and early Fifteenth centuries. Maharil argued, for instance, that if one must recite the blessing while in a joyous frame of mind, certainly one should not recite the blessing while fasting. Similarly, one should not bless in the days preceeding the fast, when one's mind is occupied with the fast to come, and the awesome or tragic circumstances that the fast commemorates. So, for instance, Maharil held that in the month of 'Av, one should not bless during or before the fast of Tishah Be'av. Similarly during Tishri, one should not bless on or before Yom Kippur.[19] Later authorities[20] extended this prohibition to

all fast days.

In a somewhat related issue, Maharil prohibited blessing the new moon on the Sabbath or on holidays.[21] His reason, that "just as there are /S̄abbath/ boundaries below, there are also /S̄abbath/ boundaries above," is of uncertain meaning. Later authorities,[22] however, retain the ruling, but attach the simpler justification that one should not dilute one joy by confusing it with another; thus one should not bless the new moon (which was to be considered a "joy") on a Sabbath or holiday (when it is also commanded to "rejoice").

Along the same lines, several additional details were added to the halakhah. One should not bless the new moon while in mourning.[23] One may bless on the night of Yom Kippur, immediately following the concluding prayers for the holiday, because then one is joyous at having survived the Day of Judgement. However, one should not bless on the night of other fast days, at least until after eating, because otherwise it is impossible to be joyous.[24] Some authorities, however, favor blessing before Yom Kippur, in order to go to judgment, as it were, with one extra bit of merit.[25] The variations are almost endless.

Time - Priorities

Finally, it became clear that there were so many constrictions and preferences on the time of the kiddush levanah ceremony that there was a high probability of their

contradicting one another. What if, for instance, the first Saturday night after Tishah Be'av fell on the fourteenth of the month, and the next two nights were cloudy, so that the moon was not visible, and it was impossible to recite the blessing within the prescribed time limits? Or what if, after waiting the prescribed seven days before the blessing, the next two or three nights were cloudy so that one might not bless, and then a close relative died, so that one became a mourner, incapable for reciting the blessing for another seven days, thus exceeding the time limit? The halakhah had to deal with the setting of priorities among the various regulations. Which were mere recommendations, which could be overridden in an emergency, and which were considered essential, not to be transgressed in any event?

It will not be a fruitful exercise to recite the evolution of the priorities which were, of necessity, eventually set. Suffice it to say that the halakhah had no choice but to deal with these issues, and the following priorities emerged:[26] It is imperative to perform the ceremony, even if one has to exceed the later time limit. It is nearly as important, however, to perform the ceremony within the appointed time, so that if only one or two (or in a cloudy country or season, five or six) nights remain, most of the other prohibitions, including those against blessing on fast days or during mourning, or even those

against blessing on the Sabbath or a holiday, may be abrogated. It is important to be able to see the moon clearly in order to bless it, but if time is running short, one may bless it even if it is visible through light clouds. It is important to bless with a congregation (although it is not forbidden to bless alone), so that one who is fasting privately may bless with the congregation in spite of his own fast. Similarly, if an individual is late in completing his Saturday afternoon prayers, and the congregation begins kiddush levanah before he has ushered out the Sabbath for himself, he may interrupt his own prayers to join the congregation. Finally, the tradition to bless Saturday night is merely a preference, which may be overridden by nearly any mitigating factor. Some authorities suggest that if one blesses on a night other than Saturday, one should wear good (or at least, clean) clothing, as if it were Saturday night at the conclusion of the Sabbath.

Time - Conclusion

The whole issue of when kiddush levanah may be conducted, the discussion of which we have now concluded, is a superb example of how the halakhah, founded on statements of principle with a textual basis, attains a life of its own, mushrooming with the passage of time in an ever-enlarging attempt to solve the problems raised by the application of the original principle(s). Like the liturgy, which we discussed in PART I, the halakhah is constantly in

a state of flux. Halakhah grows and develops, adapting its principles and texts to new situations as they arise.

Our discussion thus far has been concerned with halakhic issues related to the time of kiddush levanah. The other halakhot which exist are much less developed, but exhibit the same properties as the time issue, though on a much smaller scale. For the sake of completeness, I will mention them briefly.

Place

The second most important halakhic issue related to kiddush levanah is the place in which it is to be said. An issue is whether it must be said outdoors, or whether it may be said indoors. The issue is first raised by Isserles, who holds the former opinion.[27] (The argument is made that it is not befitting to welcome a king without going out to greet him.) A mitigating tradition was introduced in Sefer Mateh Mosheh.[28] In the end it was ruled preferable to perform the ceremony outdoors, but with exceptions if one was ill, feared reprisals from idolatrous neighbors, or lived in a dirty and unbefitting neighborhood. In these cases one might bless indoors via an open window through which the moon was visible.

Seeing the New Moon

A third issue originated with the injunction to bless the new moon upon seeing it. We have already seen how, in the face of time pressure, this injunction was miti-

gated, and how blessing was permitted even though the moon was covered by light clouds. The additional question arose whether a blind man, who could never see the moon, was nevertheless required to perform the ceremony. Leket Yosher contains the first ruling in the affirmative,[29] arguing that even though a blind man could not see the moon, ne benefitted from its light, which allowed others to see at night and guide him on his way. The argument was also presented (see below, PART III), by Solomon Luria and others, that the blind man would benefit from the coming redemption which the moon symbolized.[30]

Women

The final halakhic question related to kiddush levanah involved women. For a variety of reasons (which will be discussed in PART III), women were considered to have a special relationship to the new moon and its symbolism. So, for example, the day of the new moon itself, Rosh Chodesh, is to this day considered to be a special holiday for women, who are exempted from work during this day, although no similar prohibition applies to men. Because of these reasons, mostly of a kabbalistic origin, the late sources[31] forbid women from participating in the kiddush levanah ceremony.

As I have indicated, the halakhah of kiddush levanah is typical of Jewish law in general, developing in cumulative fashion, with applications becoming wider and more

specific as general principles are applied to real-life problems. The development of a fairly extensive body of law surrounding such a relatively small ceremony is an indication of the importance that was considered to attach to kiddush levanah. Halakhah, however, merely indicates, but did not cause, the view of the importance of the ceremony. That view was the result of the symbols and ideas which the ceremony was believed to convey. The ceremony was taken seriously because it spoke in an important way to the issues that affected peoples' lives. The symbols of kiddush levanah are the subject of PART III.

Notes to Chapter VI -- THE GROWTH OF HALAKHOT RELATED TO BLESSING THE NEW MOON

[1]P. Ber. 9:3; San. 41b-42a.

[2]Notably the anonymous Palestinian author of Pesikta Rabati, Me'ir 'Ish Shalom, ed., (Tel Aviv: 1963), beginning of Chapter 43, p. 179a; and Siddur Rav Saadia, Israel Davidson, Simcha Assaf, and Issachar Joel, eds., (Jerusalem: Mekitsei Nirdamim, 1941), pp. 90-91.

[3]That is, the traditional Jewish mathematical formula did not quite square with the mathematical formula accepted by astronomers. The Jewish calculation was subject to periodic adjustments, called dechiyot. Between adjustments, the Jewish and astronomical formulae might yield results that differed by as much as two days.

[4]Sefer Tashbeits, Dinei Havdalah, section 87, p. 7b.

[5]Tur, 'Orach Chayyim 426.

[6]Jacob ben Moses Moellin (Maharil), Sefer She'eilot Uteshuvot (Cremona: 1556), no. 19, p. 4a.

[7]Rashi to San. 41b.

[8]Midrash Seikhel Tov, Solomon Buber, ed., (Berlin: 1901), Parashat Bo', pp. 93-94.

[9]Mishneh Torah Leharambam, Shlomo Rubenstein, ed., Sefer 'Ahavah, Hilkhot Berakhot, 10:16-17.

[10]Siddur Rav Saadia, Op. cit.

[11]Rabbeinu Yonah, to Hilkhot Rav Alfas, Berakhot, end of Chapter IV, Tefillat Hashachar.

[12]Beit Yosef, 'Orach Chayyim, 426.

[13]Shulchan 'Arukh, 'Orach Chayyim, 426:4.

[14]Gershom Scholem, "Teshuvot Hameyachasot Lerabbi Yosef Gikatilla," in 'Emet Leya'akov: Sefer Yovel Leya'akov Freimann, (Berlin: The Rabbis of Berlin, 1937), pp. 163-170, where the responsum is published for the first time.

[15]Malkhut is generally considered to be the 10th

attribute. There are three "higher" attributes, and so malkhut is the 7th of the remaining "lower" attributes.

[16]Bayit Chadash (Bach), to Tur, 'Orach Chayyim, 426; and Turei Zahav (Taz), to Shulchan 'Arukh, 'Orach Chayyim, 426:4.

[17]'Arukh Hashulchan, 'Orach Chayyim, 426:13; and Mishnah Berurah, Vol. IV, section 426:20.

[18]Magein Avraham, to Shulchan 'Arukh 'Orach Chayyim, 426:2.

[19]Sefer Maharil, Ya'akov Bakhmer Mosheh Halevi, ed., (Benei Berak: Hame'or, 1959), Hilkhot Tishah Be'av, p. 65.

[20]See, e.g., Isserles, to Shulchan 'Arukh 'Orach Chayyim 426:2.

[21]Sefer Maharil, Op. cit. end of Hilkhot Shevu'ot, p. 44.

[22]See, e.g., Sefer Halevush (Berdichev, 1818), Vol. I: Levush Hachor, section 426.

[23]Magein Avraham, Op. cit., 426:4.

[24]Sefer Halevush, Op. cit.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Based primarily on Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit (1834), Dinei Kiddush Halevanah, pp. 55a-55b.

[27]Isserles, Op. cit., 426:4.

[28]Sefer Mateh Mosheh, (Warsaw: Nathan Shriftgisser, 1876), Part IV, section 537.

[29]Sefer Leket Yosher, Jacob Freimann, ed., (New York: Machon Menorah, 1959), 'Orach Chayyim, pp. 69-70.

[30]Solomon Ben Jehiel Luria, Sefer She'eilot Uteshuvot, (Piorda, 1768), end of number 77, p. 38a.

[31]Beginning with Magein Avraham, Op. cit., 426:1. Gombiner attributes the prohibition to Shenei Luchot Haberit, which clearly discussed much of the symbolism involved, but as far as I can tell, makes no halakhic pronouncement to this effect.

PART III -- THEMES AND SYMBOLS OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH

Chapter VII -- THEMES AND SYMBOLS OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH (I)

In PARTS I and II we have explored the liturgical and legal development of kiddush levanah. From such discussion we may learn much about the formal structure of the ceremony, and the circumstances in which it is performed. The value of the ceremony to its practitioners remains, however, unexplored. The most obvious entry intc this field of inquiry is to examine the themes and symbols which became associated with blessing the moon and with the moon itself. This is a first, but not a final, step in searching out the value of the ceremony to its practitioners, for the value is determined not only by the available symbolism, but also by the particular (and sometimes changing) meaning attached to symbols, and by the specific historical circumstance and intellectual climate in which practioners find themselves. Final evaluation of the subjective meaning of the ceremony, in its own terms, will therefore be left for PART IV. In this section, we merely begin the task, by examining the symbols and themes associated with the moon and its blessing.

Because of the bulk of the material involved, this section will be divided into two chapters. In Chapter VIII the more esoteric, complex symbols will be explored. The present chapter will discuss the simpler, more straightforward of the symbols. These are:

a) Welcoming the shekhinah,
b) God manifest in nature,
c) Deficiency of the moon,
d) Moon symbolizes Jacob, and
e) Moon symbolizes David.

Welcoming the Shekhinah

The shekhinah is at the same time one of the easiest and one of the hardest to analyze of all the symbols we will discuss. As I have mentioned, the Talmud already equates blessing the moon with welcoming the shekhinah;[1] it further declares that had Israel merited no other privilege than to welcome God's presence in this way once a month, it would be enough for them. Because of the prestige of the Talmud, these statements were quoted regularly in later discussions of kiddush levanah, to the point that some statements, originally intended to be merely descriptive, have actually become part of the kiddush levanah liturgy (rubric X of the present ceremony). From the very beginning, the shekhinah has been an important part of the symbolism of kiddush levanah.

The trouble is, shekhinah is an enormously complex symbol, the meaning of which developed gradually throughout the period we are considering. Early Rabbinic thought envisioned the shekhinah as an undifferentiated experiencing of God's presence at activities of particular merit, such as study. The Mishnah indicates that the shekhinah is found wherever ten men (or even two or one) are engaged with Torah.[2] However, by the late Seventeenth or early Eighteenth

century, a distinction was perceived among such acts. Jacob Reischer, for instance, indicates that as distinguished from other acts (such as wearing tsitsit or greeting one's teacher) that are described "as if one is welcoming the shekhinah," performing kiddush levanah is really welcoming the shekhinah (kabbalat p'nei shekhinah mamash).[3] Finally, in the kabbala, shekhinah became identified with, or at least closely related to, malkhut, the tenth and last of the sefirot (divine attributes), and "the moon.....occupies an important place in the very rich symbolism of the last Sefirah."[4] In short, the term shekhinah is subject to great variation in meaning. We will have to consider this fact when we discuss the overall meaning of the kiddush levanah ceremony in different ages.

God Manifest in Nature

One explanation for the connection of the shekhinah with the moon is that God makes Himself manifest through natural phenomena. This view was stated first, and most eloquently, by Jonah Gerondi, in the philosophic climate of Thirteenth century Spain. Gerondi states, "Even though the Holy One, Praised be He, is not visible to the human eye, He is discernible by virtue of His mighty acts and wonders.....By virture of His renewal of the months He reveals himself to mankind, and this is as though they were greeting His presence (shekhinah)."[5]

This theme, and Gerondi's exposition of it, were

popular and commonly quoted for about three hundred years. This "naturalistic" explanation of the connection between the moon and the shekhinah was more frequently quoted than any other until, in the Sixteenth century, numerous different, more esoteric explanations were introduced by the kabbalists.

Deficiency of the Moon

The aspect of the moon that caused its great fascination for Jews as well as for others is that it undergoes regular cycles. Every month it starts afresh, gradually "grows," reaches fullness, gradually declines, and "dies," only to be reborn again with the new month.

For traditional Jews, who were literal interpreters of the Bible text, this had not always been the case. On the fourth day of creation, according to the biblical account, God first "made the two great lights," and only then appointed one "the large light, to rule the day," and the other "the small light, to rule the night."[6] At first, the Bible makes no distinction between the sun and the moon; hence they must originally have been equivalent in all aspects. Later, God lessened the moon, and forced it periodically to shrink until it disappeared completely, only later to be regenerated. Jews wondered what must have happened to the moon, for it to have received such unfavorable treatment from the hands of God. The various explanations that were devised to explain the

deficiency of the moon, and its ultimate restoration to equivalency with the sun, form an important element in the themes and symbols of kiddush levanah.

The earliest, and most frequently quoted of these explanations is that the moon was punished for over-stepping its boundaries and entering the territory of the sun (since the sun appears only during the day, while the moon, although assigned to the night, is also sometimes visible during the day).[7] A second explanation is that the moon was punished for initiating an argument with the sun, since "how can two kings wear one crown."[8] Very early Apocryphal sources connect the punishment of the moon with the latter's involvement in the sin of Adam and Eve.[9] According to Scholem,[10] the kabbalists take the deficiency of the moon to be a symbol of the exile of the shekhinah.

Jewish sources frequently equate the condition of the world during the days of Creation with its supposed condition after redemption. The terms gan 'eiden (Garden of Eden) and pardeis (paradise) are often used for both. If the condition of the moon is viewed as a deficiency inflicted in the days of creation, it is apparent that the correction of that deficiency would be symbolic, if not causal, of ultimate redemption. This leads us into other thematic areas, which will be discussed below.

Moon Symbolizes Jacob

It is well known that, in terms of symbolism, Jacob and Israel are used interchangeably in Jewish sources. This congruence is based upon God's conferring of the name Israel upon Jacob in Genesis 35:10. What is said of Jacob may be construed as applying to the people Israel. Similarly, whatever is said of Esau is considered to apply to the Gentile nations.

The equation between Jacob, that is, Israel, and the moon is first encountered in Genesis Rabbah.[11] There it is stated that it is appropriate for small things to go together, and for large things to go together. Jacob, who is called "small," represents a small nation, which counts according to the small light (i.e., follow a lunar calendar). Esau, who is called "big," represents the Gentiles, much greater than Israel in population, and who count by the large light (i.e. follow a solar calendar). Furthermore, just as the small light cannot be seen clearly until the larger light sets, so too Jacob cannot receive his due until the reduction of Esau (i.e., the glorification of Israel is contingent upon the diminishing of the power of the Gentiles).

Bachya, in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth centuries, is the next to pick up this theme, with a slightly new twist.[12] Just as the sun is visible only by day, but the moon can be viewed both day and night, Esau (Gentiles) is

destined for life in this world, but Jacob (Israel) is destined for life in both this world and the world to come.

From Bachya's time onward, the figure of Jacob became an important part of the symbolism related to kiddush levanah, and was quoted by many of the authorities who discussed the ceremony. This development corresponds almost exactly to the time when rubric III of the ceremony was altered to include an acrostic for the name Ya'akov, and when authors specifically pointed out the acrostic. When one said "Blessed be your Maker, Blessed be your Creator, Blessed by your Possessor, Blessed be your Former," spelling the name Jacob with the Hebrew initials of the nouns, it was as if to say, "May a blessing be bestowed upon Israel."

Moon Symbolizes David

David was the initiator of the first hereditary dynasty in an independent kingdom of Israel, and thus David symbolizes autonomy and kingship to Jews. During the long centuries of Diaspora, Jews longed for an end to their exile. The redemption that they dreamed of was one of renewed Jewish autonomy. David, symbol of autonomy, thus came to represent Messianic redemption. Equating the moon with David amounts to making the moon a symbol of redemption.

David is first compared with the moon in the midrash Exodus Rabbah.[13] Just as the moon has a thirty-day cycle, first waxing, reaching its peak after fifteen days, and then

gradually decreasing until it disappears, so too the Davidic kingdom. For fifteen generations it was in the making, culminating after that time with David himself. Then the quality of leadership waned for fifteen generations, until the kingdom was lost altogether. The implication of the comparison is clear. Just as the moon is renewed following its disappearance, so too will the Davidic kingdom (Israel's independence) be renewed eventually.

This interpretation remained an isolated tradition for centuries, until it was revived, almost simultaneously, by both Bachya[14] and the midrashic work Yalkut Shi'moni.[15] Again it dropped out of circulation for about a century, until finally it was introduced conclusively into the kiddush levanah ceremony (as rubric VI) in the Fifteenth century, first appearing in Leket Yosher,[16] and then becoming widespread.

In the next chapter we continue with our examination of the themes and symbols associated with the moon and with kiddush levanah. In the meanwhile, it is worthy to note how frequently the idea of salvation appears in the material we have examined so far. This phenomenon will be the subject of considerable discussion very shortly.

Notes to Chapter VII -- THEMES AND SYMBOLS OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH (I)

[1]San. 42a.

[2]M. 'Avot 3:2 and 3:6.

[3]Shevut Ya'akov, (Brooklyn: M.J. Finkelstein), Part III, number 31, p. 5a.

[4]Gershom Scholem, "Kabbala," Encyclopedia Judaica, (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), Vol. 10, p. 575.

[5]Rabbeinu Yonah to Hilkhot Rav Alfas, Berakhot, end of Chapter IV, Tefillat Hashachar.

[6]Genesis 1:16.

[7]Gen.R. 6:4.

[8]P.R.E., beginning of Chapter 6.

[9]Louis Ginzberg, Legends of the Jews (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), Vol. I, p. 80, and Vol. V, pp. 102-103, n. 92. Ginzberg says that in the Slavonic version of Apocalypse of Baruch, chapter 9, the moon laughed at the sin of Adam and Eve. In the Greek version, the moon accompanied the serpent to the tragic event, while the sun hid in embarrassment. This theme was not pursued in Jewish sources until many centuries later when it was reintroduced by the kabbalists. See below, Chapter VIII.

[10]Gershom G. Scholem, On the Kabbala and Its Symbolism, Ralph Manheim, Trans., (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 151-153.

[11]Gen.R. 6:5.

[12]Bachya Al Hatorah, Chayyim Dov Shewel, ed., (Jerusalem: Mcsad Harav Kook, 1967), Vol II, parashat Bo', pp. 88-89.

[13]Ex.R. 15:26.

[14]Bachya Al Hatorah, Op. cit., Vol. I, parashat Vayeisheiv, pp. 316-317.

[15]Yalkut Shim'oni parashat Bo', section 190.

[16]Sefer Leket Yosher, Jacob Freimann, ed., (New York: Machon Menorah, 1959), 'Orach Chayyim, pp. 69-70.

Chapter VIII -- THEMES AND SYMBOLS OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH (II)

The remaining themes and symbols related to kiddush levanah have nearly all been mentioned in the previous chapters. For the most part, they are rather esoteric themes which are hinted at in the literature, rather than spelled out in detail. All had their fruition, if not their origin, in the mystic writings of the kabbala. These themes have come to be so deeply involved in the kiddush levanah ceremony that it would be a grave error not to make mention of them. But full exploration of them is beyond the scope of this study, and must await treatment by a student well-versed in kabbala.

Sin in the Garden of Eden

The very late sources hint at a relationship between the first sin and the reduction of the moon's stature. As we have seen, the lessening of the moon is considered a symbol and result of the tainted state of the world -- a condition that will ultimately be corrected (at which time the light of the moon will be increased so that it "again" equals the light of the sun). Deficiency in the moon was introduced when sin entered the world, and will be corrected when sin is finally expunged.

The four sources which deal with this theme are divided as to who, exactly, was at fault in causing the reduction of the moon. One account blames the serpent,

one blames Adam, and two blame Eve.

The first such account comes from Menahem Azariah DaFano, in Sixteenth-Seventeenth century Italy.[1] His reference is rather oblique, noting that kiddush levanah does not refer to the destruction of the Temple, but rather to the restoration of the world to its pristine state as it was before the moon was lessened by the act of the serpent.

The remaining references to this theme all date from the Nineteenth (some possibly even the Twentieth) century, although it is possible that the traditions they cite go back much further. In Sefer Mekorei Minhagim,[2] Abraham Lowysohn states flatly, and without further explanation, that "the deficiency of the moon was caused by the first woman, by the sin that she committed, and therefore women avoid /the kiddush levanah ceremony, to this day/, out of embarrassment." Jehiel Epstein[3] says that "this is an important matter in kabbala, connected with the reduction of the moon and with Adam's sin. When Adam's sin is corrected, then, too, will the deficiency of the moon be corrected." Finally, the Chafets Chayyim[4] states bluntly that "women caused the deficiency of the moon."

Moon as a Feminine Symbol

There is, in my opinion, a clear but not easily documented thematic connection between the moon and femininity. For one thing, the moon is, as we have seen,

likened to the shekhinah, which, in later centuries at least, is considered to be the feminine aspect of God. Second, levanah, the Hebrew word used for 'moon' almost exclusively by the Rabbis, is a feminine noun (as contrasted with the available synonym, yareiach, which is masculine); moreover, as we shall see the moon is treated not infrequently as the feminine counterpart of the sun.

There is a small amount of literary evidence which supports the hypothesis that the moon is used as a feminine symbol. For instance, Bachya says flatly,

> "The moon exemplifies woman.....Just as woman has no independent motivation, and receives her motivation from the male, so the moon receives all its light from the sun. Likewise, /like the moon/, woman has no purpose other than adornment."[5]

Two other sources draw a similar, but more graphic picture. Isserles[6] wrote,

> "Every month woman is renewed by immersion /following menstruation/ and returns to her husband, and she is as precious to him as on the day of their marriage, just as the moon is renewed monthly, and they long to see it....."

Horowitz makes a very similar statement.[7]

Marriage

Beginning in the Sixteenth century, kiddush levanah is occasionally likened to a marriage. The renewal, by God, of the moon, symbol of Israel, is taken to be a symbol of the unification (marriage) of God and Israel.

Clearly the goal here is something akin to mystic union, which is a variety of ultimate redemption.

The first comparison between kiddush levanah and the marriage ceremony was by Jonah Gerondi, in a passage that is mentioned above in connection with the beginning limit on the time of holding the ceremony.[8] Gerondi's requirement that the ceremony not be held until the new moon is somewhat big, like a marriage canopy, follows from his interpretation of the Hebrew verb B-S-M, in Sofrim, to refer to a marriage canopy, as in the Aramaic phrase, 'aveid busma' lebareih. His choice of a marriage canopy for comparison is an odd one, but it does not seem to be intended very seriously as a symbol.

Isserles, on the other hand, introduces marriage and seems to be very serious about the comparison.[9] He speaks of the future redemption as the time when "Israel will return and cling to her master, the Holy One, Praised be He, following the example of the moon, which is renewed with the sun..... Therefore one rejoices and dances at the blessing of the new month, as an example of the joy of a wedding."

Horowitz[10] takes the symbolism one step further. Israel's power to set the calendar (and thus to set God's holidays), of which we are reminded at kiddush levanah, is a small gift betokening the betrothal of Israel to God. In the future, when the actual marriage takes place, God will

give Israel a much larger gift, redemption. Israel represents the bride, God is the groom, and the Torah is the document setting forth the marriage condition.

These are not isolated examples. Both Isserles and Horowitz are highly respected in halakhic/ceremonial circles, and their expression of kiddush levanah as a kind of symbolic marriage between Israel and God was quoted by numerous later authorities.

Redemption

Unlike the other themes mentioned in this chapter, redemption is neither esoteric, infrequently mentioned, nor a late addition to the array of topics related to kiddush levanah. In fact, a survey of sources indicates that second only to welcoming the shekhinah, redemption is quoted most frequently, throughout a longer time period, than any other kiddush levanah theme.[11] I could quote many quthorities directly naming kiddush levanah as a redemptive symbol. However, there is really no need to do so. For directly or indirectly, virtually every theme and symbol mentioned in these two chapters refers to redemption, and therefore virtually every source already cited in this chapter and the preceding testify to the fact that kiddush levanah, thematically, is aimed towards bringing the Messiah.

As I have indicated, the meaning of "welcoming the shekhinah" varied with the changing conception of the meaning

of shekhinah. In earliest times, when shekhinah simply meant God's presence, welcoming the shekhinah meant greeting God himself. Later, when shekhinah came to be considered the feminine aspect of God, redemption was viewed as union, frequently symbolized in sexual terms. Greeting the shekhinah/divine-feminity must have been viewed as a precursor to the ultimate, redemptive union. At the same time, shekhinah was viewed as the symbol of the tenth, lowest of the divine attributes, and hence as the link between the divine and the human. Concurrently, shekhinah was though to be in exile from the Godhead. Welcoming the shekhinah, symbolically portrayed through kiddush levanah, meant simultaneously having contact with the divine, and hastening the shekhinah, and its "lower" world" (i.e. human) associations with it, back to its destined, redemptive, return from exile and reunion with the Godhead.

Nature, at first glance, seems an unlikely place to look for a redemption symbol. Yet Judaism does associate natural phenomena, particularly cyclical ones, with the renewal of life and thus with redemption. The Mishnah, for example, associates resurrection with the power of rain.[12] The second blessing of the 'Amidah, said at every traditional Jewish worship service, invokes rain, dew, and redemption in one breath. The moon, then, is an ideal redemptive symbol, indicating as it does the cyclical, repeating, ever-renewing

quality of the natural phenomena created by God.

One of the simplest themes of kiddush levanah is the deficiency of the moon. With each of the various explanations for the moon's deficiency comes the explanation that the deficiency will be corrected with the coming of the Redeemer, who will restore the moon to equality with the sun.

The equation of the moon with Jacob is tantamount to equating the moon with Israel. Just as it is in the nature of the moon to wax and wane and finally be renewed, Israel can count on renewal of its status in the world.

The status to which Israel seeks renewal is symbolized by David, sign of Israel's former glory, and hope for her Messianic future.

If the moon speaks of the loss of pristine purity by virtue of the first sin in Eden, so too does it speak of recapturing that pristine purity, shedding that sin, and regaining its status as of the days of Creation.

The femininity of the moon makes possible the use of the moon to symbolize a partner in marriage.

That marriage represents the final, ultimate unification. Sin and impurity will cease; Israel will be at one with the will of God. This is nothing less than a description of the state of the world after redemption.

Despite their apparent disparity and lack of relation one to the other, all of the themes and symbols

connected with kiddush levanah form a single, interlocking network with a single, simple message. Kiddush levanah is an expression of the dream of Jews for final redemption.

Notes to Chapter VIII -- THEMES AND SYMBOLS OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH (II)

[1]Menahem Azariah DaFano, She'eilot Uteshuvot, (Duhrenfurt: 1788), number 78.

[2]Abraham Lowysohn, Sefer Mekorei Minhagim (Berlin: 1846), number 40, pp. 69-70. Lowysohn cites Shenei Luchot Haberit as the source for this tradition, but I have not succeeded in locating it there.

[3]'Arukh Hashulchan (Vilna: 1923), Vol. II, 'Orach Chayyim, section 426, pp. 540-543.

[4]Mishnah Berurah (Fietrikov: 1909) Vol. IV, section 426, pp. 571-574.

[5]Bachya 'Al Hatorah, Chayyim Dov Shewel, ed., (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1967), Vol. II, Parashat Bo', pp. 88-89.

[6]Darkei Mosheh, to 'Orach Chayyim, section 417.

[7]Shenei Luchot Haberit, (Jerusalem: Foundation for the Publication of Shenei Luchot Haberit, 1959), Part III, Parashat Bo', p. 114.

[8]Rabbeinu Yonah, to Hilkhot Rav Alfas, Berakhot, end of Chapter IV, Tefillat Hashachar.

[9]Isserles, Hagahot to 'Orach Chayyim 426:2.

[10]Shenei Luchot Haberit, Op. cit., Parashat Vayakheil Vepekudei, pp. 146-147.

[11]See Appendix B, Table IV.

[12]M.Ber. 5:2.

PART IV -- THE MEANING OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH

Chapter IX -- THE MEANING OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH

So far we have studied the growth of the kiddush levanah liturgy, the development of the related issues of halakhah, and the emergence of the various themes and symbols that have come to be associated with the ceremony. In the first section, dealing with the liturgy, the approach was historical, tracing, in chronological manner, the gradual evolution of the service. In the second and third sections, the approach was rather thematic, dealing with each halakhic and 'aggadic rubric as a separate entity, without much regard for chronology.

What we have not yet done is to combine the two approaches, to view the ceremony as a whole in all its components: liturgical, legal, symbolic, and historical. That will be the goal of this chapter. Only be seeing kiddush levanah as an organic whole can we hope to glean some understanding of what it meant to its practioners in various ages.

It would be impossible to undertake such a task for every time and every place where kiddush levanah has been performed. Therefore, I have selected four ages that our study reveals as pivotal eras in the development of kiddush levanah. Those eras are: Amoraic Babylonia and Palestine, Eighth century Palestine, the Thirteenth century in both Spain and Germany, and the Sixteenth century in Poland and

the countries of the Middle East. For each of these times and places, I will attempt to synthesize the materials that have thus far been analyzed, and to present an integrated view of the meaning of the ceremony. Our discussion might well begin with a consideration of the pertinent secondary research of others.

The only scholar, to my knowledge, who has studied kiddush levanah with a view towards elucidating its meaning is Mayer Abramowitz,[1] who draws substantially on some ideas first advanced by Eliezer Levy.[2] Abramowitz sees kiddush levanah as a Tannaitic invention occasioned by the Bar Kochba Rebellion. The ceremony was intended as a ruse by which rebel sympathizers could clandestinely smuggle supplies and lend moral support to the guerilla soldiers hidden in the mountains. The ritual would have seemed plausible to the Romans, who were themselves worshippers of the heavenly bodies, and would have been innocuous to Jews, who would know that it was religiously meaningless, and hence not idolatrous.

Viewed in this light, the ceremony proceeds as follows. The civilian supplier ("worshipper") arrives at the rebel camp in the mountains, outdoors, and under the cover of dark, as is hinted by the references to mountains in kol dodi and Psalm 121 (rubrics IX and XIII of the present ceremony). The civilian then reveals his identity by spelling his name in code -- the Ya'akov acrostic

(rubric III) is an example of how to do this -- and exposes his location by jumping up and down ("dancing" in rubric IV). The sentry demands the secret password, by stating a biblical verse, and the civiliar shows his familiarity with the code by repeating the verse backwards (rubric V of the present ceremony is an example of how this might have been done). When the civilian is finally admitted into the camp he states the motto of the rebellion, "Long live David, king of Israel" (rubric VI), greets the soldiers with "Shalom 'aleichem" (rubric VII), deposits his supplies, and wishes the rebels luck, "Siman tov" (rubric VIII) as he leaves.

The supplying of the forces was viewed as absolutely essential to the rebellion, which itself was considered vital to the continuation of Jewish life. Hence the importance of the ceremony was deemed very high, "as if one were greeting God himself."

In the wake of the failure of the rebellion, and the devastating Hadrianic persecutions that followed, the Rabbis considered it advisable to expunge all record of the clandestine ceremony, so all related traditions were carefully edited out of the Talmudic literature. Masekhet Sofrim escaped censorship, however, since it was only a "minor" tractate. Centuries later, Jews reconstructed the ceremony from the remnants of its description in Sofrim, solely because they found it commanded there, with

no idea of its real meaning. The ceremony has been carried out to this day as a meaningless ritual, which its practitioners don't understand.

Abramowitz's reconstruction would seem very attractive were it not for his total lack of concern for the chronology of the sources. He disregards textual development by postulating editorial censorship in those sources lacking a description of kiddush levanah. However, if the texts were edited, how did any memory of the ceremony survive at all? Sofrim, which Abramowitz apparently believes to have been extant at the time of the "editing," but to have survived the process, is generally believed by scholars to date from the Eighth century, some six hundred years after Abramowitz's theory requires it to have been extant. Furthermore, why should the Sofrim account, if indeed it is contemporaneous with the alleged clandestine ceremony, have omitted reference to so many parts of the ceremony that Abramowitz relies on for his reconstruction ("Long live David...," "Kol dodi," Psalm 121)? And if these elements were forgotten in Sofrim, how could they have been "remembered" later? Our exploration has revealed that "Long live David....." is not connected with kiddush levanah in the literature until the Fifteenth century; kol dodi makes its appearance only at the end of the Sixteenth; Psalm 121 is absent until the beginning of the Seventeenth!! How were these traditions

"remembered" for so long with no literary basis? If there survived some "oral tradition" connecting them with kiddush levanah, why should their meaning have escaped oral transmission? Finally, our study has shown that, contrary to Abramowitz's contention, the ceremony of kiddush levanah over the centuries has been no meaningless shell to its practitioners, but a highly dramatic rite in which thousands of people sought comfort and hope. Abramowitz's theory is colorful and fascinating, but it disregards too many factors: it is oblivious to historical perspective; it glosses over textual evidence of the transmission of tradition; and it must therefore be discounted.

What then was the meaning of the kiddush levanah ceremony? We turn now to that question, drawing our own conclusions based on evidence presented in the previous chapters.

In the Period of the Talmud

During the talmudic period, both in Babylonia and Palestine, kiddush levanah consisted of nothing more than a blessing. The blessing over the new moon, like the blessings over the sea, the rainbow, or a thunderstorm, was no more and no less than a simple praise of God as master of the universe in all of its ordered natural glory. The blessing was an expression of awe, praise, and thanks. Certainly in Palestine, and probably also in Babylonia, the wording of the blessing itself was not fixed, but

numerous alternatives were available according to the preference of the individual, or the individual could compose his own blessing. Like several other seemingly minor commandments, this one was likened to receiving God's presence, which merely meant that it was considered a meritorious act. The sources convey the impression that they new moon blessing was one application of the principle that one approaches God and does His will by fulfilling His law, even in its minutest destails. The blessing over the new moon was one such detail.

In the Eighth Century

In the Eighth century, Palestine was the locus of considerably social turmoil. The Palestinian Jewish community was emerging as a rival to that of Babylonia, and in that rivalry, the calendar was a volatile issue. Hence the moon was an important symbol. The kiddush levanah ceremony, developed in Eighth century Palestine and reflected in Masekhet Sofrim, represents a number of factors. First, the Palestinian authorities, as part of their attempt to elevate the status of their community, would have encouraged the development of unique, indigenous Palestinian rites. Second, popular piety -- including reliance of magic and superstition, charm and incantation -- was characteristic of the community. These elements found their way into kiddush levanah.

In the Thirteenth Century

The Thirteenth century was an important and active one for Jewish life, marking a high point of Diaspora development in Spain, Northern France, Provence, and Germany. Though border areas like Provence shared cultural peculiarities of both Northern France (Ashkenaz) and Spain (Sefarad), and despite the existence of regular communications throughout European Jewry, there was still a marked difference in conditions between the two extremes of Northern France on one hand, and Spain on the other.

In Spain, although the Christian reconquest was well under way, the cultural milieu remained basically what it had been under Islamic rule. Spain was known as a center for philosophy and the sciences, where Jews had for many years been well=integrated into society, serving in important roles in government, trade, and medicine. It must have been an optomistic, "rational" society, one that in many ways must have resembled the Jewish society of Nineteenth century Germany.

In central Europe, by contrast, Jews lived in a fragmented, feudal society. Although some Jews had achieved positions of prominence, by the Thirteenth century the bulk of the community was becoming more and more isolated from general society. The reactions of their neighbors to the Jews during the Crusades must have highlighted the precariousness of Jewish existence. Pressures

against the Jewish communities must have been mounting, for the anti-Jewish riots related to the spread of the Black Death, and the expulsion of Jews from France, for example, were not far into the future.

At the same time, both communities enjoyed a sense of internal autonomy. The hegemony of the Babylonian Jewish community, and the Babylonian-Palestinian rivalry in the Jewish world were things of the past.

The first attempt to reconcile the Babylonian and Palestinian traditions of kiddush levanah had been made in Machzor Vitry, in Eleventh century France, but this synthesis of traditions was not widely accepted until Thirteenth century Spain. It is not surprising that the optimistic, rational climate of Spain at this time would provide a congenial setting for such a synthesis to take hold. Nor is it surprising that the Spanish scholars gave the magical elements of kiddush levanah a naturalistic, this-worldly meaning, insofar as that was possible. Kiddush levanah was the welcoming of the shekhinah, that is, the glorification of the power of God, who set forth the laws of nature in an orderly, rational fashion.[3]

At about the same time, the identical synthesis of Babylonian and Palestinian traditions regarding kiddush levanah was accepted in the Ashkenazi world. In Ashkenaz, however, the meaning seems to have been different. Instead of the "naturalism" of the Spanish philosophers, Ashkenazi

authorities introduced redemptive symbolism. Just as the natural phenomena, and particularly the moon, are renewed periodically in an orderly fashion, so too will we be redeemed. In order to strengthen the analogy between the moon and Israel, Jacob became an important symbol in kiddush levanah, and the Ya'akov acrostic was introduced into the ceremony, as we have seen above. Ashkenazi Jewry in the Thirteenth century was characterized by popular piety, as exemplified by the Chasidei-Ashkenaz; and the kiddush levanah ceremony fit comfortably in this milieu.

In the Sixteenth century

The Sixteenth century was a dreary one for Jewry. Just before the beginning of the century, the entire Sephardi commuuity had been suddenly and violently uprooted, by virtue of the expulsion from Spain in 1492, causing a real level of physical hardship and a climate of spiritual depression. The theme of exile was in the minds of the Sephardi community, as they sought new homes in Italy, Amsterdam, the New World, Turkey and Palestine.

The Ashkenazi community, although outwardly more stable, was in nearly as unsettled a situation. The past century and a half had brough a series of expulsions from France and various precincts of Germany, so the Ashkenazi community, too, was recently uprooted. By the beginning of the century, the center of Ashkenazi life had shifted eastward to Poland, and there too, it would not be long before

Jews felt that their situation was tenuous.

Mysticism was an important force in Jewish life in the Sixteenth century, in both the Ashkenazi and Sephardi worlds. The mystical communes of Safed flourished. By mid-century it is nearly impossible to find an important Rabbi anywhere whose biography does not list "kabbalist" prominently among his other areas of renown.

Under kabbalistic influence, many changes and additions were brought to the kiddush levanah ceremony, its legal framework, and its thematic associations. Passages from Song of Songs and Psalms were added to the liturgy. The beginning of blessing time was delayed until the seventh day, in order to conform to the kabbalistic mathematical systemization of the cosmic plan. The addition of David melekh yisrael chai vekayam to the ceremony was even justified on the basis of the phrase's numerical equavalence (819) with the Hebrew for "new moon" (rosh chodesh). At the same time, numerous esoteric, mystical themes became associated with kiddush levanah: the femininity of the moon, the reduction of the moon as a result of original sin (probably accountable to Eve), the ultimate restoration by marriage, that is, unification of the elements involved, symbolized as male and female.[4]

As I have shown above, in chapter VIII, all of these themes and symbols point to a single dream: redemption.

Conclusion

Several conclusions emerge from our study of kiddush levanah. Kiddush levanah appears as a microcosm of many aspects of Jewish tradition, so many of these conclusions have wide applicability in other areas. We have seen first how the liturgy and halakhah of kiddush levanah have been subject to change and development in virtually every age. Such change comes as the result of one or both of the following causes: the historical climate and needs of the community; and the authority of tradition itself, once it is recorded in respected texts.

Second, we have seen how kiddush levanah retained its appeal by changing its meaning. Old ceremonial practices and objects are made to address new issues and problems by a revision of their symbolic content.

Third, there is a clear association between kiddush levanah and both mysticism and popular piety. Whenever those forces become strong, kiddush levanah broadened its appeal.

Finally, the conclusion is inescapable that blessing the new moon was important primarily in that it was viewed as a redemptive rite. We have argued at length that virtually every symbol and every theme associated with kiddush levanah has as its ultimate referrent the belief in and desire for eventual salvation. Some historical circumstances, like the Spanish community's experience of exile at the end

of the Fifteenth century, gave a particular urgency to the wish for salvation. In such times, kiddush levanah often experienced a strong renewal of its popular appeal among Jews. Yet in every age, yearning to be saved was a nearly universal aspiration, so kiddush levanah ever since its inception has had strong appeal in virtually every time and place that there has been a significant Jewish community.

Notes to Chapter IX -- THE MEANING OF KIDDUSH LEVANAH

[1]Mayer Abramowitz, "The Sanctification of the Moon: Ancient Rite of Rebellion," Judaism issue 85, Vol XXII no. 1, Winter, 1973, pp. 45-52.

[2]Eliezer Levy, Yesodot Hatefillah, (Tel Aviv: Avraham Tsioni, 1955), pp. 302-305.

[3]On the other hand, kabbala was also popular in Thirteenth century Spain, and shekhinah must have been subject therein to non-rationalistic interpretations. This issue is, however, beyond the scope of the present work.

[4]Eliade has shown these elements to be integral to a universal complex of symbols associated with the moon in virtually all religions. Mircea Eliade, "The Moon and Its Mystique," Patterns in Comparative Religions, (n.p.: Meridian, 1958) pp. 154-185.

Appendix A -- KEY TO HEBREW TRANSLITERATION

All Hebrew transliteration within this thesis is according to the table which follows, with these exceptions:

1) personal names, which are used according to the transliteration of Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971);

2) material within direct quotations, which is given according to the usage of the original author;

3) proper names or technical terms which have a generally accepted spelling in transliteration simpler than that given by this system, which are spelled according to their common usage (e.g., yisrael instead of yisra'el).

All transliterated words are underlined, except for proper nouns, and in general are given in lower case, regardless of their meaning, except where proper English usage requires capitals (as, important words in book titles, or initial words of sentences). Note that "kabbala" and derivative nouns and adjectives are accepted English words, and are thus not subject to the rules just stated.

TABLE I -- KEY TO HEBREW TRANSLITERATION

Vowels

(no notation)	=	silent ְ	ee	=	ֵ
e	=	vocal ְ	e	=	ֶ
a	=	ַ	o	=	ֹ
a	=	ָ	u	=	ֻ
ei	=	ֱ	u	=	ּ
ei	=	ֲ			
i	=	ִ			

Consonants

'	=	א	t	=	ט	p	=	פ
b	=	ב	y	=	י	f	=	פ
v	=	ב	k	=	כ	ts	=	צ
g	=	ג	kh	=	כ	k	=	ק
d	=	ד	l	=	ל	r	=	ר
h	=	ה	m	=	מ	sh	=	ש
v	=	ו	n	=	נ	s	=	ס
z	=	ז	s	=	ס	t	=	ת
ch	=	ח	'	=	ע			

Appendix B -- A COMPARISON OF THE SOURCES

The three tables which follow show in graphic form the development of kiddush levanah in the primary sources. The sources in each case are listed in chronological order, to the extent that they can be determined. All sources listed in the Bibliography (Appendix C) have been considered for these tables. If a source appears in the Bibliography, but not it one of these tables, it contains no significant references to the topics covered in the table. For each rubric in each table, a mark of (X) indicates that the rubric is attested in the source in question; a mark of (#) indicates that the rubric is attested, but as a secondary preference or with a connotation or in a context that differs from the norm.

Table II deals with the development of the kiddush levanah ceremony and its various parts. Table III shows the growth of the halakhah related to kiddush levanah. Table IV indicates the various themes and symbols associated with the blessing of the new moon in the sources.

TA

TABLE II -- THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CEREMONY

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I.

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II.

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III.

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IV.

V.

—

VI.

VII.

VIII.

IX.

X.

XI.

XII.

XIII.

XIV.

XV.

XVI.

—

TABLE II -- THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CEREMONY

RUBRIC	Talmud Yerushalmi	Talmud Bavli	Pirkei Rabbi Eliezer	Masekhet Sofrim	Siddur Rav 'Amram Gaon	Halakhot Gedolot	Shemot Rabbah	Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon	Hilkhot Rav Alfas	Rashi	Machzor Vitry	Midrash Seikhel Tov	Sefer Ha'eshkol	Mishneh Torah Leharambam	Seder Hamanhig	Sefer Harokeiach Hagadol	'Or Zarua'	Sefer Haminhagot	Sefer Shibolei Haleket
I. Psalm 148:1-6 / Psalm 8:4-5																			
II. Blessing with mechadeish	#	x			x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
II. Blessing with mekadeish	#	#		x			x												x
III. Blessed by your Creator... with Ya'akov acrostic				#															
III. Blessed by your Creator... without acrostic				x							x				x	x	x		x
IV. Dancing. Just as I dance...				x							x				x	x	x		x
V. May terror and dread...				x							x				x	x	x		x
Amen, selah, halleluyah				x							x					x	x		x
VI. Long live David...		#																	
VII. Peace be with you...				x							x					x	x		x
VIII. May we and all Israel...				x							x					x	x		x
IX. The voice of my beloved...																			
X. In the school of Rabbi Ishmael...		x			x				x		x	x	x			x	x		x
XI. Who is this coming up...																			
XII. May it be thy will...																			
XIII. Psalm 121																			
XIV. Psalm 150																			
XV. Psalm 67																			
XVI. Kaddish																			
Shake out clothing																			

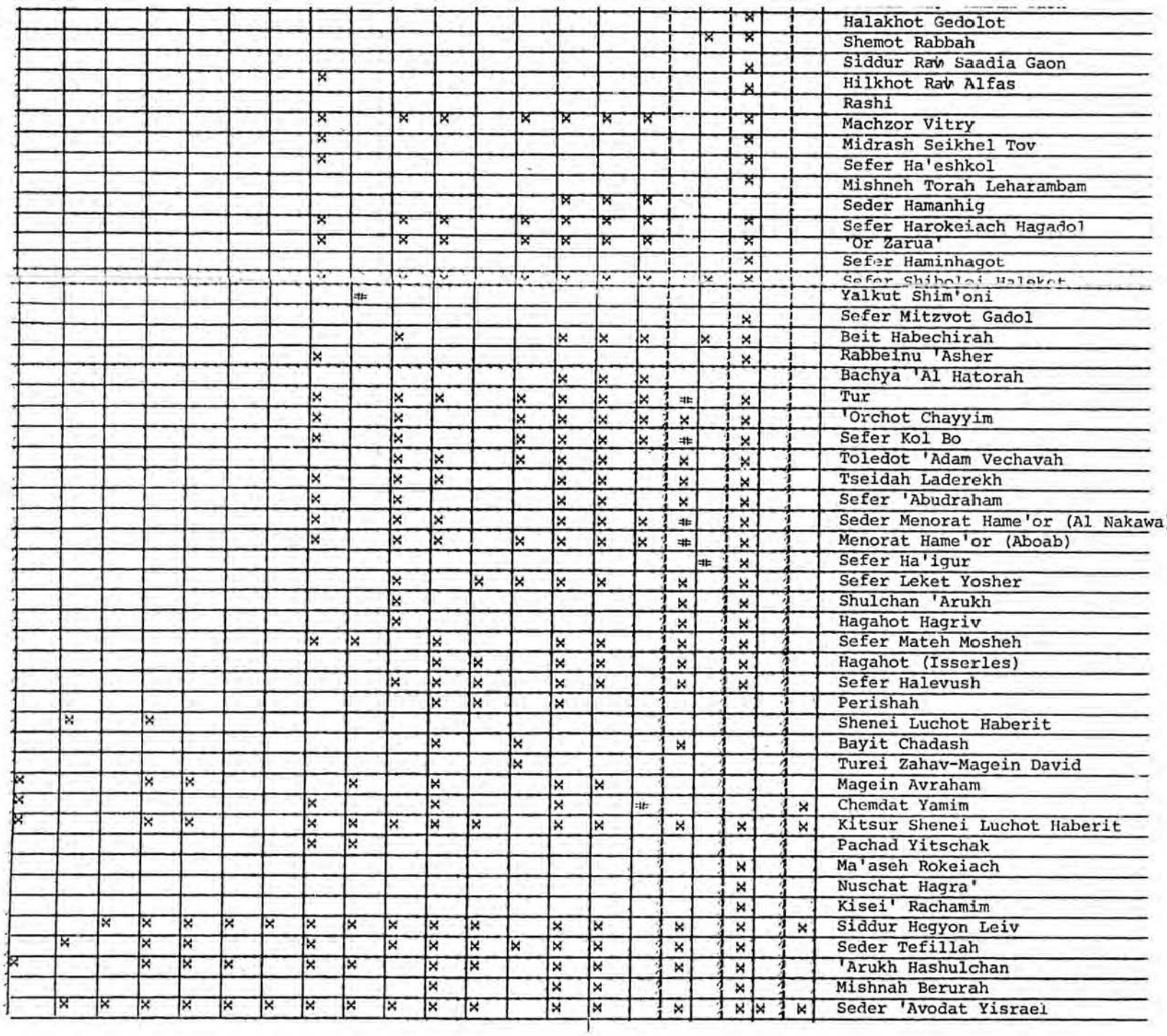
Halakhot Gedolot
Shemot Rabbah
Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon
Hilkhot Rav Alfas
Rashi
Machzor Vitry
Midrash Seikhel Tov
Sefer Ha'eshkol
Mishneh Torah Leharambam
Seder Hamanhig
Sefer Harokeiach Hagadol
'Or Zarua'
Sefer Haminhagot
Sefer Shibolei Haleket
Yalkut Shim'oni
Sefer Mitzvot Gadol
Beit Habechirah
Rabbeinu 'Asher
Bachya 'Al Hatorah
Tur
'Orchot Chayyim
Sefer Kol Bo
Toledot 'Adam Vechavah
Tseidah Laderekh
Sefer 'Abudraham
Seder Menorat Hame'or (Al Nakawa)
Menorat Hame'or (Aboab)
Sefer Ha'igur
Sefer Leket Yosher
Shulchan 'Arukh
Hagahot Hagriv
Sefer Mateh Mosheh
Hagahot (Isserles)
Sefer Halevush
Perishah
Shenei Luchot Haberit
Bayit Chadash
Turei Zahav-Magein David
Magein Avraham
Chemdat Yamim
Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit
Pachad Yitschak
Ma'aseh Rokeiach
Nuschat Hagra'
Kisei' Rachamim
Siddur Hegyon Leiv
Seder Tefillah
'Arukh Hashulchan
Mishnah Berurah
Seder 'Avodat Yisrael

TABLE III -- THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HALAKHAH

Start of

TABLE III -- THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HALAKHAH

HALAKHIC TOPIC	End of Blessing Time: 7 days	14 days	16 days	Counts from molad	Start of Blessing Time: New Moon	3 days	7 days	Saturday Night: Must be	Should be	Don't bless Sabbaths and holidays	Don't bless on or before fasts	Women don't bless	Blind people do bless	Must be Outdoors	Should be Outdoors
Talmud Yerushalmi	#	x													
Talmud Bavli			x												
Pesikta' Rabbati		x													
Masekhet Sofrim								x							
Siddur Rav 'Amram Gaon	#		x												
Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon		x				x									
Hilkhot Rav Alfas	#		x												
Machzor Vitry	#		x					x							
Midrash Seikhel Tov			x		x										
Sefer Ha'orah			x												
Sefer Ha'eshkol	#		x												
Mishneh Torah Leharambam			x		x										
Sefer Hamanhig			x					x							
Sefer Harokeiach Hagadol			x												
'Or Zarua'			x					x							
Sefer Haminhagot	x	x													
Rabbeinu Yonah			x			x									
Sefer Shibolei Haleket	#							x							
Sefer Mitsvot Gadol			x		x										
Sefer Tashbeits			x	x											
Beit Habechirah	#		x		x				x						
Rabbeinu 'Asher	#		x												
Bachya 'Al Hatorah								x							
Tur	#	x	x	x				x							
'Orchot Chayyim															
Sefer Kol Bo	x		#			x			#						
Toledot 'Adam Vechavah	#		x						x						
Tseidah Laderekh			x	x		x			x						
Sefer 'Abudraham			x	x		x			x						
Sefer Menorat Hame'or (Al Nakawa)	#		x	x				x							
Menorat Hame'or (Aboab)	#		x												
Sefer Maharil				x						x	x				

										x		x			Mishneh Torah Leharambam
							x					x			Sefer Hamanhig
												x			Sefer Harokeiach Hagadol
							x					x			'Or Zarua'
													x	x	Sefer Haminhagot
									x			x			Rabbeinu Yonah
							x							#	Sefer Shibolei Haleket
										x		x			Sefer Mitsvot Gadol
											x	x			Sefer Tashbeits
						x				x		x		#	Beit Habechirah
												x		#	Rabbeinu 'Asher
							x								Bachya 'Al Hatorah
							x				x	x		#	Tur
							#					x		x	'Orchat Chayyim
						#			x			#		x	Sefer Kol Bo
						x						x		#	Toledot 'Adam Vechavah
						x			x		x	x			Tseidah Laderekh
						x			x			x			Sefer 'Abudraham
							x				x	x		#	Sefer Menorat Hame'or (Al Nakawa)
												x		#	Menorat Hame'or (Aboab)
				x	x						x				Sefer Maharil
						x									Terumat Hadeshen
x		x		x		x					x	x			Sefer Leket Yosher
						x		#	x		x	#		x	Beit Yosef
								x			x	x			Shulchan 'Arukh
						x		x				x			Teshuvot Hameyachasot Lerabbi Yosef Gikatillah
		x													Sefer She'eilot Uteshuvot (Luria)
x						x		#	x		x	x			Sefer Mateh Mosheh
	x			x	x	x					x	x			Hagahot (Isserles)
	x			x	x	x		x	#		x	x			Sefer Halevush
					x			x	#						She'eilot Uteshuvot (DeFano)
						x									Shenei Luchot Haberit
x				x	x	x			x		x	#			Bayit Chadash
x		x		#	x				x						Turei Zahav-Magein David
#		x	x	#	x	x		#	#	#					Magein Avraham
x		x	x		x			x							Chemdat Yamim
x				#		x		#	x		x	x			Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit
x		x	x	x	x	x					x	x		x	Pachad Yitschak
								#	x						Ma'aseh Rokeiach
x					#							x			Birkei Yosef
x					x	x			x		x	x			Siddur Hegyon Leiv
#		#	x	#	#	x		#	x		x	x			'Arukh Hashulchan
x		x	x	x	x	x		#	x		x	x			Mishnah Berurah

TABLE IV -- THEMES AND SYMBOLS

AGGADIC THEME	Welcoming Shekhinah	God Manifest in Nature	Deficiency of Moon	Moon=Jacob=Israel	Moon=David=Kingdom	Original Sin	Fertility/Femininity	Wedding	Redemption
Mishnah		#							#
Berei'shit Rabbah	×		×	#					#
Talmud Bavli									
Pirkei Rabbi Eliezer			×						×
Siddur Rav 'Amram Gaon	×								
Shemot Rabbah					#				×
Hilkhot Rav Alfas	×								
Rashi	×								×
Machzor Vitry	×								
Sefer Hakuzari					#				
Midrash Seikhel Tov	×								
Sefer Ha'eshkol	×								
Mishnah Torah Leharambam	×								
Sefer Harokeiach Hagadol	×								
'Or Zarua'	×								
Sefer Haminhagot	×								×
Tosafot			×						
Rabbeinu Yonah	×	×						#	
Sefer Shibolei Haleket	×	#	×						×
Yalkut Shim'oni				×	×				
Sefer Mitsvot Gadol	×								
Sefer Tashbeits	×								
Beit Habechirah	×	×						#	×
Rabbeinu 'Asher	×								
Bachya 'Al Hatorah	×			#	×		×		×
Tur	×	×	×	#					
'Orchot Chayyim	×	×						#	×
Sefer Kol Bo	×	×		#				#	×
Toledot 'Adam Vechavah	×								
Tseidah Laderekh	×	×							
Sefer 'Abudraham	×	×	×	×					
Sefer Menorat Hame'or (Al Nakawa)	×		×	#					
Menorat Hame'or (Aboab)	×	×		#					×
Sefer Maharil	×								
Sefer Ha'igur		×	×						
Sefer Leket Yosher					×				

×								×	Serer Haminnagot
						×			Tosafot
	#						×	×	Rabbeinu Yonah
×						×	#	×	Sefer Shibolei Haleket
				×	×				Yalkut Shim'oni
								×	Sefer Mitsvot Gadol
								×	Sefer Tashbeits
×	#						×	×	Beit Habechirah
								×	Rabbeinu 'Asher
×		×		×	#			×	Bachya 'Al Hatorah
					#	×	×	×	Tur
×	#						×	×	'Orchot Chayyim
×	#				#		×	×	Sefer Kol Bo
								×	Toledot 'Adam Vechavah
							×	×	Tseidah Laderekh
					×	×	×	×	Sefer 'Abudraham
					#	×		×	Sefer Menorat Hame'or (Al Nakawa)
×					#		×	×	Menorat Hame'or (Aboab)
								×	Sefer Maharil
						×	×		Sefer Ha'igur
				×					Sefer Leket Yosher
×	×					×	×	×	Beit Yosef
				×				×	Teshuvot Hameyachasot Lerabbi Yosef Gikatillah
×							×		Sefer She'eilot Uteshuvot (Luria)
×						×	×	×	Sefer Mateh Mosheh
×	×	×		×		×	×	×	Darkei Mosheh
×				×	×		×	×	Sefer Halevush
×			×						She'eilot Uteshuvot (DeFano)
				×					Perishah
×	×	×		×	×	×			Shenei Luchot Haberit
					×				Bayit Chadash
×			#	×			×	×	Chemdat Yamim
×				×	×				Kitsur Shenei Luchot Haberit
								×	Shevut Ya'akov
								×	Siddur Hegyon Leiv
×	×	×	×	×		×			Sefer Mekorei Minhagim
×	×		×	×	×	×	×	×	'Arukh Hashulchan
×			×			×			Mishnah Berurah

Appendix C -- Bibliography

This bibliography consists of two sections: the first dealing with primary sources containing useful information on kiddush levanah, and the second listing secondary works consulted. Certain works appear in both lists, for they fulfill both functions. Primary sources are listed in English alphabetical order, according to the transliteration of the title of the work, exclusive of prefatory words or particles, such as Sefer and ha-. Primary sources have been placed in their historical setting by brief annotations. Secondary sources are listed in standard form, in alphabetical order according to the author's last name.

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