

Israel in Contemporary Reform Liturgy

Erin Boxt

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

2012

Rabbi Richard Sarason, Referee

## Author's Appreciation and Gratitude

There are so many to whom I owe a great deal of gratitude for their help through this thesis journey. First and foremost, I want to thank Dr. Richard Sarason, my rabbi. Dr. Sarason has been a tremendous support over the years in so many ways, not the least of which was in editing and proofreading and being an overall rock as I researched and wrote this thesis. Words can never truly explain how thankful I am for his support, friendship and everything that he has been and will continue to be in my life!

I would also like to thank Rabbi Karen Kedar for spending time on the phone discussing with me her many contributions to Reform Judaism and to the writing of *Mishkan T'filah*. Thank you also to the writers and editors of *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav*, student rabbi Brian Nelson, Betsy W. Fuchs, Alden Solovy, and Rabbi Joel Simonds. Each of them helped to contribute thoughts, ideas and creativity to my thesis!

I dedicate this thesis to my wonderful friend, mentor and wife, Batya. Her unbelievable support and love for me over the years has been truly amazing and inspiring. Thank you so much Buzz! You continue to amaze me day after day, with your great love and affection!

## DIGEST

This thesis is an examination of contemporary North American liturgy that addresses the reality of the State of Israel. Focusing specifically on the liturgies of the American Reform movement, but also including other American liberal movements, there is an expectation that key years in Israel's history have influenced the creative liturgies of these movements. Through discussions with rabbis in the field, examination of creative congregational *siddurim*, services from camps and youth movements, this thesis will provide an overview of the liturgically reflected attitudes of the liberal Jewish movements in America.

Chapter One presents an overview of the dominant attitudes and major voices in the American Jewish community regarding Israel at the end of the nineteenth century and the ways in which these opinions changed throughout the twentieth century. Chapter Two is an examination of how these attitudinal changes are reflected in *siddurim* published by the American Reform movement. Chapter Three looks at reflections and attitudes in Reform Jewish creative liturgies written and published during the last three decades of the twentieth century, including those of youth programs, camps and those written by rabbis and educators in the field. The conclusion includes a final analysis of the prayer books and creative liturgies and summarizes trends in the attitudinal changes found in the research.

Although my original thought was that the more recent creative liturgies of the American liberal Jewish movements would show a cynicism toward Israel, I was pleasantly surprised to see that any attitude changes present were positive. Some of these changes appeared to be critical, but in a loving and supportive way. While Israel remains of vital significance and importance to American Jews in general, it does not display the same salience in a liturgical context as does their freedom as Americans to live their lives as autonomous men and women.

## Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Chapter One	6
Chapter Two	26
Chapter Three	52
Conclusion	74
Appendix	78
Bibliography	94

## **Introduction**

Israel has been an emotional topic for American Jews since before its founding in 1948 and continues to be so even today. For the early American Reformers, the notion of Israel being a land for all Jews to return to was problematic. These early Reformers were interested in creating a new Zion in America. While Jews had been granted full, equal civil and religious rights in France and in Germany, these same rights were ultimately thwarted by severe social discrimination and anti-Semitic prejudice. Allowed to both fully participate in civil society and openly practice their Judaism with no legal discrimination, the Jews in the United States would have a life with more freedom. The early Reformers believed that the land of Israel should be a place of refuge for those Jews who were oppressed and persecuted where they currently lived (mostly then in Eastern Europe). American Jews enjoyed freedoms that allowed them to see the land of Israel as a destination and homeland for “some” Jews, but not for “all” Jews.

As early as the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform, rabbis of the Reform movement had been expressing their opinions: “[We] therefore expect neither a return to Palestine...nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.” However, over the next fifty years or so, the opinions and ideas of those leaders seemed to be changing. Pro-Zionist rabbis such as Abba Hillel Silver and Stephen S. Wise influenced many other rabbis, as was evident in the 1937 Columbus Platform (formulated during the Nazi era in Germany) when the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) affirmed an obligation for all Jews to aid in the building up of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. These same rabbis agreed that the new homeland would be a “center of Jewish culture and spiritual life.”

When Israel was founded in 1948, the American Reform movement began to embrace Israel openly, even at one point encouraging Reform Jews to visit Israel and to make *aliyah* if they wanted to. Some Reform rabbis still were anti-Zionist, but they were a small minority as the movement became one of Israel's biggest supporters across the United States and Canada. The liturgy of the Reform movement began to shift with new prayer books and creative services starting to celebrate Israel and pray for her welfare in a variety of different contexts.

With Israel's incredible victory in the 1967 Six Day War, there was a sense of real excitement in the Jewish world for Israel and her future. Of course, this included the American Reform movement and its leaders. In 1976, following upon the centennial of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the CCAR adopted a new platform in San Francisco. Once again, a significant change in the attitudes toward Zionism and Israel was visible. "We are bound to...the newly reborn State of Israel by innumerable religious and ethnic ties..." The 1976 CCAR Platform continued to express a responsibility for building the State of Israel and helping to define its Jewish character. In 1978, the UAHC created the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA), continuing a trend toward a complete acceptance of, and attachment to, the State of Israel as a homeland for Jews. In less than a century, the official attitude of the American Reform movement completely shifted.

There have been many opinions stated and written regarding the overall "American Jewish" attitude toward Israel. Although the movements in America Jewry have differed from time to time on this topic, the American Jewish community overall

has been the greatest supporter of Israel both financially and in many other ways. The Reform movement, a movement that had been anti-Zionist or non-Zionist for so long, became Israel's friend and supporter. The creation of the State of Israel, a place where all Jews could make a Jewish home, had a great effect on American Reform Jewish opinion. "Once there was a state of Israel, virtually every Reform Jew – if not Zionist in the fullest sense – at least became its friend and supporter."<sup>1</sup>

This thesis is a study of two of my biggest passions: Israel and Liturgy. I here study contemporary liturgy – *siddurim*, creative liturgies, camp and movement services, and a few prayers sent from the field – of the American Reform movement, specifically focusing on liturgy that addresses Israel, and looking for a reflection of the trends in the attitudes toward Israel. Even the vaguest references to Israel will be examined. When I began my research, I asked for materials and resources from rabbis and laypeople in the field. I expected to receive some creative prayers as well as services created over the past thirty years or so. I did not receive a lot of materials, but what I collected was very interesting and certainly included prayers for Israel.

The first chapter of my thesis is a historical overview of the overall American Jewish view of Israel from the late 1800's to today. In this chapter, I examine and study the dominant opinions (major voices and organizations) in the American Jewish community. While subsequently I will focus primarily on liturgies of the Reform movement in Chapters Two and Three, I have also traced the overall opinions of Orthodox Judaism, Conservative Judaism, and Reconstructionist Judaism. This chapter

---

<sup>1</sup> Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 326.



intends to provide social and cultural background to the liturgical discussions in Chapters Two and Three.

The questions I have considered while doing my research are:

- 1) What were the general attitudes of American Jews toward Israel at the turn of the twentieth century?
- 2) What were the specific attitudes of the American Jewish movements toward Israel at the turn of the twentieth century?
- 3) How did these attitudes change throughout the twentieth century, specifically around key years in Israel's history?
- 4) Has the liturgy of the American Reform movement reflected shifts in attitude toward Israel? How so?

In Chapter Two, I show the results of my study of American Reform *siddurim*, including movement *siddurim* as well as creative synagogue *siddurim* published in the twentieth century. It is important to look to the movement prayer books for any influences on these creative synagogue *siddurim*. Chapter Three is a study of Reform Jewish creative liturgies written and published in the twentieth century including youth services, camp services, creative prayers written by two contemporary poets and a prayer written as part of the rabbinic thesis of Rabbi Joel Simonds. It was my assumption that American Jewish contemporary liturgy would illustrate the same changes we see in my research for Chapter One.

## **Chapter One**

This chapter will provide an overview of attitudes toward Zionism that were present in the American Jewish community during the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Important leaders of the American Jewish community were ranged at the outset between the anti-Zionist and pro-Zionist camps. A brief look as well at some of the liturgical changes in the liberal movements of Judaism – Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionism – will show how American Jewish views of Zionism evolved during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Along with the liturgy in the liberal movements of American Judaism, the platforms and stances of these movements exhibited their changing views. Any study of American Jewish opinions about Zionism must therefore begin with a look at the leaders and movements and their individual views and ideals.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were many important Jewish leaders such as Louis D. Brandeis, a staunch Zionist who became involved in Zionism in the 1910's, and David Philipson, a staunch anti-Zionist and signatory of the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 whose opposition to Zionism dated back before the formation of the Reform Movement. In the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, while Zionism was beginning to gain steam as a national movement, there was also a burgeoning anti-Zionist movement which remained oppositional until WWII when the overall American Jewish opinion toward Zionism drastically changed in light of the pressing need for a state for the Jews. Within the movements in American Judaism before that time, there existed agreements and disagreements regarding the need for a “safe haven” for Jews and the future of a Jewish state.

Reform Zionist leaders such as Stephen S. Wise, Julian Mack and Felix Frankfurter all shared the same idea as Louis Brandeis. Jonathan Sarna points out that for Zionists like Brandeis Zion became “a utopian extension of the American dream, a Jewish refuge where freedom, liberty, and social justice would reign supreme, an ‘outpost of democracy’ that American Jews could legitimately, proudly and patriotically champion.”<sup>2</sup> Brandeis, one of the founders of the Zionist Organization of America, really helped the Zionist movement become a political force under his leadership. As a progressive Jew, Brandeis was able to view his loyalty to the United States and to Judaism as a natural tie to his support for Zionism. “Your loyalty to America, your loyalty to Judaism, should lead you to support the Zionist cause.”<sup>3</sup> “They were committed to the Zionist cause – not as a need for a refuge from persecution since they themselves did not suffer from oppression, but rather as a possibility that a Jewish state could be established, based on the ethical principles of Judaism.”<sup>4</sup> For the Reform Jewish leaders who were active Zionists in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, creating a homeland or safe haven for Jews was of vital importance for those Jews who were in need of a place to live their lives safely and successfully, specifically those in Eastern Europe and then later (from the 1930’s) for those in Germany.

However, as mentioned above, there did exist within the Reform movement a strong opposing faction, with such leaders as David Philipson and Louis Marshall.

---

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, “A Projection of America as It Ought to Be: Zion in the Mind’s Eye of American Jews”, in Allon Gal, ed., *Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of North American Jews* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1996), 41.

<sup>3</sup> Bożenna Chylińska, “In Search of Greener Pastures”: *A Hundred Years of the Zionist Idea in the United States : From Zionism to Israelism [sic]*. (Warsaw: Institute of English Studies, School of Modern Languages, University of Warsaw, 1996), 73.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 79.

“David Philipson’s anti-Zionist philosophy was not unique; it was mainstream Classical Reform thinking in the U.S.A. and elsewhere, shared by hundreds.”<sup>5</sup> Those who were outwardly anti-Zionist were so for many reasons, including the idea that Israel was only “a home for those who had no home at all.”<sup>6</sup> For the anti-Zionists who were comfortable living freely as citizens of the United States, Israel was *for them* not an option. This was purely an outcry against Jewish nationalism, as these American anti-Zionists believed that, as Americans, they needed to be loyal Americans. What may come as a surprise, though, is that even some of the most adamant anti-Zionists, such as David Philipson, may have embraced the idea of Palestine as *a* homeland for *Jews*, but not as *the* homeland for the Jewish *people*.<sup>7</sup>

The American Conservative movement, which was pro-Zionist from the outset because it drew on the strong ethnic identity of Eastern European Jewish immigrants, was greatly influenced by Solomon Schechter, the architect of the Conservative movement and the founder of the United Synagogue of America. Schechter’s interpretation of Ahad Ha-Am in the context of his traditional religious views allowed for cultural Zionism to be naturalized on American soil.<sup>8</sup> While the Conservative movement was a major supporter of American Zionism from its founding, Conservative leaders were faced with a difficult quandary:

A similar ambivalence developed with regard to Zionism. On the one hand, as the foremost expression of *Klal Yisrael*, Zionism became an article of faith for many of the Movement’s founders. In its case, however, localistic limits of congregations came into contradiction with Zionist efforts as well as the institutional interests of the Seminary itself. Seminary leadership early on became

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 112.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 86.

committed to a Babylonia and Jerusalem model of Jewish peoplehood, in which the United States would be a center of Jewish life equal to Israel.<sup>9</sup>

Within the Orthodox communities in America, there has seemed always to have been a major disagreement between the ultra-Orthodox and the more liberal Modern Orthodox. According to the most ultra-Orthodox communities, the Kingdom of Israel will not be reinstated until the Messiah comes and the Temple is rebuilt in Jerusalem. Therefore, any creation of a State of Israel that is manmade is wrong and should be avoided. For example, Agudat Israel (the Union or Association of Israel) – an ultra-Orthodox worldwide Jewish movement and political party which is dedicated to the preservation of halakhic life – opposed nationalism because they believed Zionism questioned God’s promise to redeem the Jewish people through messianic redemption.<sup>10</sup> The Modern Orthodox communities, on the other hand, have taken a different stance on the State of Israel. They believe that the Jews in this world need to have a place of their own – after all, the Land was promised to the Jews in the Torah. For the Modern Orthodox, making *aliyah* and moving to Israel is of utmost importance. The Land of Israel is the place on earth that belongs to the Jews and that is where all should eventually immigrate. The liturgy of the Orthodox communities speaks of a return to Zion, so ultimately, that is the overall goal with regards to Israel.

It should be stated that although there were opposing sides to the Zionist issue in the American Jewish community even up to the Holocaust, the major reason for disagreement centered on the idea that all Jews needed to move to Israel. The Conservative movement remained “committed to the revival of the Hebrew language and

---

<sup>9</sup> Daniel Judah Elazar and Rela M. Geffen, *The Conservative Movement in Judaism: Dilemmas and Opportunities* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 67.

<sup>10</sup> Chylińska, “In Search of Greener Pastures”, 154.

the survival of the Jews as a distinct group,”<sup>11</sup> and thus became a real friend of the American Zionists very early on. However, the same leaders of the Conservative movement who gave strong support for Israel also made it clear that the United States was their home. There were many attempts made to support Zionism (i.e. an adaptation of the Israeli flag being flown at JTS); however, America came first in the eyes of the leadership of the Seminary.<sup>12</sup> Richard James Horatio Gottheil, a Reform Zionist and first president of the Federation of American Zionists, “emphatically insisted that Zionism neither predicted nor required that American Jews should immigrate to Palestine.”<sup>13</sup> He did believe, though, that those Jews who lived in Eastern Europe and who were in dangerous situations should move to Palestine. This was a view shared by many of the early American Zionists. Jews in the United States lived a comfortable life and had no need for a Jewish homeland. They believed their homeland was in the United States.

A major philosophy of Zionist American Jews was that, just as they lived in a safe haven of democracy in the United States, so should those Jews who moved to and lived in the Jewish state. “Rather than dreaming up a ‘utopia’ – an imaginary country with ideal laws and social conditions – American Zionism envisaged the Jewish community in Eretz Israel as the instrument for the absorption and refinement of American goals.”<sup>14</sup> Those Jews who lived in America, even those who seemed to be the most committed Zionists, never intended for the Land of Israel to become the home for all Jews. There was to be, as the Conservative Jewish leaders believed, a world in which there were two Jewish capitals – one in Eretz Yisrael, and the other in the United States. This was the

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 146.

<sup>12</sup> Elazar and Geffen, *The Conservative Movement in Judaism*, 67.

<sup>13</sup> Chylińska, “In Search of Greener Pastures”, 84.

<sup>14</sup> Allon Gal, *Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of North American Jews*, 15.

American Zionist dream. As Naomi Cohen writes, “The Zionism fashioned in America never meant *shelilat ha-golah*, or turning one’s back on the future of Jews in America. It was a comfortable Zionism, an ideology that called for a Jewish state as a refuge for less fortunate European Jews, or at best, a cultural and religious center that would invigorate Diaspora living.”<sup>15</sup>

By the 1930’s most American Jews saw the need for a Jewish state, a safe haven for Jews in Eastern Europe who were living in terrible conditions. Their support of Zionism was seen as an attempt to support those Jews outside of America who needed it. However, those same American Jews believed that they themselves had no need for this safe haven. After all, living in the United States provided the Jewish people a freedom they had not possessed since they were in their own land, 2000 years ago. David Ellenson notes, “Jews in America feel, correctly or incorrectly, that they have found a home, not just a haven on America’s shores...”<sup>16</sup>

So far, we have presented a very brief overview of American Jewish opinion toward Zionism. An examination of the platforms of the Reform Jewish movement and a look at the prayer books of the Reform movement in the United States will be helpful in illustrating the four clearly defined periods that mark the development of the Zionist idea in American Reform. There four defined periods are: (1) 1885 – 1917: Predominantly Anti-Zionist (beginning with the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885), (2) 1917 – 1936: Zionist opinion started to gain momentum, (3) 1936 – 1943: Acceleration of the Zionist idea (the minority pro-Zionist voice becomes the majority voice), and (4) 1943 – Present: the Israel

---

<sup>15</sup> Naomi W. Cohen, “Dual Loyalties: Zionism and Liberalism”, in Gal, *Envisioning Israel*, 321.

<sup>16</sup> David Ellenson, “Envisioning Israel in the Liturgies of North American Liberal Judaism”, in Gal, *Envisioning Israel*, 119.

orientation of the Reform rabbinate advanced from its ideological achievements to extensive programmatic activities in the United States and Israel.<sup>17</sup>

The first platform of the Reform movement, the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885, made its stance on Zionism very clear. Although the group that passed this platform was a small minority of 19 Reform rabbis, the ideals in it became standard for the Reform movement for the next 50 years. “The Pittsburgh Platform was most influential in the developing American Reform liturgy. It was, after all, through the prayer books, hymnals and rabbi’s handbooks that the Conference (CCAR) could exercise most control and steady influence.”

The Pittsburgh Platform “rejected diet, dress and purity regulations, and abandoned the two-thousand-year commitment to a return to Palestine.”<sup>18</sup> Although this platform was so very influential in the Reform movement, there were those who disagreed with some of the strong stances, especially with regard to Zionism. However, they remained in the minority until the 1930’s, when the number of Zionist rabbis in the CCAR began to grow. During the course of that decade, there was steady movement to change the official 50-year stance against Zionism. In the 1934 CCAR Yearbook (v. 44), there is a detailed discussion of whether to include in one of the services of the newly revised *Union Prayer Book* the Jewish aspiration for the restoration of Zion. As one might expect, there were very strong opinions on either side of the argument. Rabbi Harry Ettelson expressed what he deemed to be the majority attitude of the Reform

---

<sup>17</sup> David Polish, *Renew our Days: The Zionist issue in Reform Judaism* (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, 1996), 49.

<sup>18</sup> Walter Jacob, *The Changing World of Reform Judaism: The Pittsburgh Platform in Retrospect: Papers Presented on the Occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pittsburgh Platform, February, 1985 and The Proceedings of 1885* (Pittsburgh: Rodef Shalom Congregation, 1985), 2, 14.



movement: “I believe everybody here would like the Palestine experiment in certain ways to go through, but I do not think that the Reform Jews as a whole are yet ready to include in their Prayer Book the Zionistic attitude which Reform Judaism historically repudiated. The effort here is to force Zionism on congregations which are not Zionistic.”<sup>19</sup> Rabbi Louis I. Newman, however, disagreed: “The revision is coming, sooner or later. The place of Palestine in contemporary Jewish life is known to you all, and any reader of the Bible is aware of the spiritual aspects of Palestine’s role in the Jewish tradition. That an endeavor should be made now to block what is certain to come, whether in 1935 or 1936, seems to me regrettable.”<sup>20</sup>

“It was not until the mid-thirties that the Zionists in the Conference felt they had sufficient strength to overturn the anti-Zionist position...”<sup>21</sup> In 1936, a very outspoken Zionist rabbi, Felix Levy, was elected president of the CCAR. The Columbus Platform, written and approved in 1937, tacitly endorsed Zionism and introduced into Reform ideology an emphasis on Jewish peoplehood. For the first time in the movement’s history, no one was afraid to support a Jewish state as either a concept or a reality. The new commitment to Jewish peoplehood increasingly gave support to the Zionists. “Unlike the Pittsburgh Platform, the 1937 statement is deliberately structured according to the age-old Judaic rubrics of God, Torah and Israel (with the addition of a section titled

---

<sup>19</sup> *Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis*, (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1891), 74.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 76

<sup>21</sup> Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 327.

‘Man’). Although the mission of Israel as a concept is reaffirmed, there is a new emphasis on Jewish peoplehood and a bow to Zionist influence.”<sup>22</sup>

There continued to be a strong anti-Zionist wing in the CCAR. Led by Rabbi Louis Wolsey from Philadelphia, the newly formed American Council for Judaism held a conference on December 7, 1942. At this conference, these anti-Zionists produced their own platform – the “Statement of *Non-Zionist Rabbis*,” the anti-Zionist Manifesto. The major concern of these rabbis was the ever-growing Zionist penetration of Reform Judaism.<sup>23</sup> Although the A.C.J. initially consisted of Reform rabbis, other rabbis in America joined the ranks as the group gained strength. While the philosophy of the A.C.J. today still reflects a strong American nationalistic approach, the anti-Zionist ideas of the 1940’s are no longer present. To quote their website:

We share with all Jews – and with many other people of good will - the hope and prayer for a secure, prosperous Israel, living in peace and justice with its neighbors. We support all the potential contributions that its people can make to the creative development of Jewish spiritual values and thought in the modern world - a vital part of that nation’s destiny that hopefully will be realized when its energies can be directed to peaceful endeavors. However, we believe that the major setting for the continued dynamic development, influence and mission of Judaism in the future, will lie here in a vital and spiritually renewed American Jewish community.<sup>24</sup>

On June 25, 1943, the CCAR, at their annual convention in New York, passed a resolution that would change the face of Reform Judaism. Although the Zionists in the CCAR were at this point gaining momentum, the official policy of the CCAR and Reform Judaism was not Zionistic. This resolution changed it all: “The Conference

---

<sup>22</sup> Dana Evan Kaplan, *Platforms and Prayer Books: Theological and Liturgical Perspectives on Reform Judaism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 34.

<sup>23</sup> Chylińska, "In Search of Greener Pastures", 147.

<sup>24</sup> "American Council for Judaism: Position Papers." *Welcome To The American Council For Judaism*. Web. 07 Oct. 2011. <[http://www.acjna.org/acjna/about\\_position.aspx](http://www.acjna.org/acjna/about_position.aspx)>.

declares that it discerns no essential incompatibility between Reform Judaism and Zionism, no reason why those of its members who give allegiance to Zionism should not have the right to regard themselves as fully within the spirit and purpose of Reform Judaism.”<sup>25</sup> The official debate over Zionism in the Reform movement was over, and a new and increasingly close relationship between American Jews and the State of Israel could be fostered.

There was not another official platform written by the CCAR until the Centenary Perspective of 1976. This document was intended to reflect on how the movement had grown and changed over the years. More importantly, though, the Centenary Perspective was meant to address where the movement was then, in 1976. In 1967, with Israel’s huge victory against her attackers, great pride was felt by Jews worldwide. Beginning in the aftermath of the Six Day War, American Reform Jews were traveling to Israel in greater numbers to visit and even to make *aliyah*. With the surprise of the Yom Kippur War in 1973, American Reform Jews turned their attention to helping Israel financially and in any other way necessary. As a matter of fact, two Reform *kibbutzim*, Lotan and Yahel, were founded in southern Israel in the 1970’s, no doubt partially as a result of this renewed love for Israel and her future. Also, as a result of the atrocities of the Holocaust, and the recent attacks on Israel, a new sense of civic responsibility came out of the Centenary Perspective: the centrality of the unity of all Jews, Jewish peoplehood, support for the State of Israel, Holocaust consciousness, and commitment to saving oppressed Jewish communities.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Polish, *Renew Our Days*, 48.

<sup>26</sup> Kaplan, *Platforms and Prayer Books*, 35-36.

An examination of these three statements of the Reform movement clearly shows that “Israel” was always a central element of the ideology of the Reform movement. “The Pittsburgh Platform talked about Israel as a corporate body (faith community) and rejected the idea of Jews as a people. It said quite explicitly that we have no hope to return to Palestine...The Columbus Platform said, ‘Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body...’”<sup>27</sup> By the time the Centenary Perspective was written, the Reform movement was speaking of the need to live a Jewish religious life with an obligation to both the State of Israel and the Diaspora. The American Reform movement remained committed to being loyal Jewish Americans; however, now they were stating that Israel was a vital part of their identity and a necessity for the world and for Jews to support.

As a result of this continued commitment to Israel, another document was released by the CCAR in 1997, a position paper completely dedicated to the relationship between Reform Judaism and Zionism. This 1997 Miami Position Paper on Israel for the first time also addressed Israel’s obligation to adhere to the highest moral ideals, as it was perceived to be unlike all other states. As will be discussed later in this chapter, there were several key factors that prompted this emphasis, including the Sabra and Shatilla massacres in Lebanon. As with the Centenary Perspective, the American Reform movement pledged to continue to assist Israel politically and financially.

In the Centenary Perspective, the Reform Jewish leaders had encouraged *aliyah* for the first time. In the 1997 position paper, the leaders took this a step farther. This paper suggested that although the Diaspora Jewish communities were viable and important, living in Israel might be considered by some to be more important. “While

---

<sup>27</sup> Jacob, *The Changing World of Reform Judaism*, 86.

Jews can live Torah-centered lives in the Diaspora, only in *Medinat Yisrael* do they bear the primary responsibility for the governance of society, and thus may realize the full potential of their individual and communal religious strivings.”<sup>28</sup> However, the paper also states that Israel bears an obligation to the Diaspora Jewish communities to treat all Jews as equal, regardless of their interpretations of sacred Jewish texts.

In 1999, the CCAR created one more platform which has remained the official position of the Reform movement ever since. In this platform, the Reform Jewish commitment to a love for Jewish people everywhere was reconfirmed. This platform affirmed the unique qualities of living in both Israel and the Diaspora and, just like the 1976 Centennial Perspective and the 1997 position paper, it encouraged *aliyah*. In line with the 1997 Miami Position Paper, this platform spoke of a vision of Israel with full civil, human and religious rights for all. Once again, the voice of the American Reform movement was crying out for Israel to be a “light unto the nations,” a nation to which all other nations could look as an example.

The ideological shift that became evident in the last two statements of the Reform movement, which was brought on by a variety of factors, was not only visible in the platforms. It was also present in the liturgy of the Reform movement. While it may be clear that American Jews are overwhelmingly still supporters of the State of Israel, this support is no longer given with a blind eye. It is my hope that a close examination of the liturgy of the Reform movement over the past thirty years will reflect this shift as well in some way. While in the chapters that follow, I examine creative synagogue prayer books

---

<sup>28</sup> Reform Judaism & Zionism: A Centenary Platform, Oct. 27, 2004, "The Miami Platform" – 1997.  
<http://ccarnet.org/rabbis-speak/platforms/reform-judaism-zionism-centenary-platform/>

and creative youth services (from the camps and youth movement), I also examine changes present in the liturgy of the Reform movement's prayer books.

“A description and analysis of how the State of Israel, as both a religious ideal and a modern nation, is presented in the contemporary prayer books of the major liberal denominations – Reconstructionist, Reform and Conservative – of American Jewish life provide significant insight into both the nature of the American Jewish community today and the way in which that community perceives and envisions Israel.”<sup>29</sup> These movements reformed their prayer books to reflect the existence of Israel and its contemporary meaning for liberal Jews. While some Orthodox communities have added into their liturgy an extra prayer which may be recited for the State of Israel (composed by the Israeli Chief Rabbinate), the traditional liturgy does not reflect a contemporary meaning of the new State. On the other hand, closer examination of the liturgy of the liberal movements of Judaism will give a very good indication of the role Israel plays in the lives of American Jews.

It is important to look as well at the liturgy of the other two large liberal movements in American Judaism: the Conservative and Reconstructionist movements. Since the Conservative movement has always been pro-Zionist, there have been some liturgical changes, especially those that reflect the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. The Weekday Prayer book of 1961 included prayers that thanked God for miracles such as the creation of the State of Israel. Another significant addition to the Conservative liturgy was a blessing that asked God to bless the people Israel in all their places of habitation. “This emphasis on the importance and religious significance of Jewish life in

---

<sup>29</sup> David Ellenson, “Envisioning Israel in the Liturgies of North American Liberal Judaism”, 120.

both Israel and the Diaspora is maintained in the most contemporary Conservative liturgy, *Siddur Sim Shalom: A Prayer Book for Shabbat, Festivals and Weekdays* (1985), and this idea finds prominent and consistent expression in its pages.”<sup>30</sup> *Sim Shalom* accords the State of Israel the status it deserves while at the same time also recognizing the ongoing validity and vitality of Jewish communities in the United States and the rest of the Diaspora.

Like the Conservative liturgy, the Reconstructionist liturgy reflects a commitment to the State of Israel as well as a very strong loyalty to the Diaspora and, more importantly, American Judaism. The 1963 edition of the *Daily Prayer Book* altered the words of *Ahavah Rabbah* to pray for the return to Israel of only *the homeless of our people*, as opposed to *all of the Jews* (as in the traditional and early Reconstructionist prayer book). This change reflects the idea that American Jews have no need to make Aliyah, as they are at home in America. The liturgy of the Reconstructionist movement reflected a major linkage between Diaspora and Israeli Jewry. Jerusalem is seen as the center of the world, therefore peace on earth will start there. However, the peace will spread out to every Jewish heart in the world.<sup>31</sup>

Although there will be a much more extensive examination of Reform liturgy from the past thirty years in the later chapters of this thesis, it is important also to glance now at the prayer books of the North American Reform movement from its institutionalization in the late 1800’s to the present. Taking a look at what is written or not written in these prayer books regarding Eretz Yisrael illustrates clearly the thoughts and ideals of the Reform movement throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the earliest

---

<sup>30</sup>ibid. 129.

<sup>31</sup>ibid. 122-127.

prayer books of the Reform movement, a number of traditional prayers were omitted. It will be beneficial for this study to examine and discuss why these prayers were omitted – looking at the ideas of the early Reform rabbis in America.

The first reformist prayer book in America was that of the Reformed Society of Israelites in Charleston, South Carolina in 1824. *The Sabbath Service and Miscellaneous Prayers Adopted by the Reformed Society of Israelites* excluded anything having to do with the ingathering of exiles to Palestine, the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem and the restoration of the sacrificial cult. While the Reformed Society of Israelites may have anticipated some of the changes that characterize the liturgy of the American Reform movement even today, the first institutionally significant Reform prayer books of the 1850's were produced by German immigrants who were writing their own *siddurim* based on their own background and experiences. To some degree, each prayer book of the Reform movement included a negation of the traditional Jewish hope that all Jews would physically be transplanted back to Jerusalem, to the land of Israel. Even today's prayer book, *Mishkan Tefillah*, reflects the importance of Israel *and* the Diaspora.<sup>32</sup>

The original *Union Prayer Book* of 1895 did not include any mention of Zionism or Zionist entities. However, by 1940, the newly revised *Union Prayer Book* included a reading supportive of the Zionist enterprise. This reading acknowledged the validity of creating and building up a home for those Jews who lived in the land of Israel:

It invoked God to 'uphold also the hands of our brothers who toil to rebuild Zion' and added the petition: 'Grant us strength that with Thy help we may bring a new light to shine upon Zion. Imbue us who live in lands of freedom with a sense of

---

<sup>32</sup> Gary P. Zola, "The First Reform Prayer Book in America: The Liturgy of the Reformed Society of Israelites," in Kaplan, *Platforms and Prayer Books*, 99-111.



Israel's spiritual unity that we may share joyously in the work of redemption so that from Zion shall go forth the Law and the Word of God from Jerusalem.<sup>33</sup>

The *Union Prayer Book* remained the official prayer book of the Reform Movement until 1975, when *Gates of Prayer* was published. Influenced by the events of the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War, *Gates of Prayer* included prayers for Holocaust Memorial Day and Israel Independence Day. The American Reform Movement was now completely embracing Israel as a viable and vibrant Jewish community; however, there was also an emphasis on what Israeli Jews can take from the vibrant Jewish Diaspora, especially those Jewish communities in the United States.<sup>34</sup>

Since the atrocities of the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, Israel has remained central in the minds of Reform Jews. Following the intensification of this attachment in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the CCAR established Yom HaShoah and Yom Ha-aztma'ut as permanent observances in the religious calendar of Reform Judaism. "The linkage between the genocidal fury of the Holocaust and the redemption offered by the establishment of the State of Israel in the minds of American Jewry could not be more strongly or directly expressed."<sup>35</sup> *Mishkan T'filah*, the current official prayer book of the Reform Movement reflects an even greater commitment to Israel and its future. A quote by Lawrence Hoffman, a prominent Reform liturgist, expresses the contemporary Reform commitment to Israel and the Diaspora:

We Reform Jews today still agree with the pioneers of our movement in insisting that we are not in exile...We are also the generation blessed in sharing in the miraculous rebirth of the State of Israel. The idea that God's presence returns to Zion after centuries of the Land's virtual demise reflects the reality of our love for

---

<sup>33</sup> Meyer, *Response to Modernity*, 321-322.

<sup>34</sup> Kaplan, *Platforms and Prayer Books*, 37-38.

<sup>35</sup> Ellenson, "Envisioning Israel in the Liturgies of North American Liberal Judaism", 140.

Zion. But Zionism within Reform ideology differs from secular Zionism in that, for us, any state – even a Jewish one – is incomplete without the guiding hand of God.<sup>36</sup>

As the liturgy since the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel shows, the prevailing American Jewish attitudes toward Israel changed substantially in favor of Zionism. Many have argued that Israel was created in response to the Holocaust. Human values were greatly challenged and people worldwide sought answers to how such devastation could happen. Israeli and American writers chose the topic of the Holocaust as a major theme. However, Israeli writers were challenged even further by this particular topic. “You can begin to see then, that the Holocaust is likely to play a kind of role in the Israeli imagination and in Israel writing that it wouldn’t play in American writing and the American imagination because it is not only a general matter of human values which are put into question by the Holocaust, but the whole nature of one’s national existence as well.”<sup>37</sup>

As the attitude of American Jews – especially within the Reform Jewish world – continued to turn toward Zionism and sustaining the Jewish community in Israel, the controversy that once existed seemed to be over. With the Six Day War in 1967 and Israel’s overwhelming victory, it was clear that Israel was not going anywhere, and the Reform Jewish world continued to be supportive in every way, including financially. Dennis Prager, a prominent Jewish American intellectual said, “During the Six-Day War, I walked to my college classes with a radio next to my ear...I then fell in love with Israel itself during those days of my own youthful romanticism and Israel’s own youthful and

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 146.

<sup>37</sup> Robert Alter, *America and Israel: Literary and Intellectual Trends* (New York: Hadassah Education Dept., 1970), 28.

romantic days of 1967.”<sup>38</sup> In 1978, the Association of Reform Zionists of American (ARZA) was established. Strengthening of the State of Israel was one of its foundational points. However, it was to be based on the prophetic vision of justice and peace. Israel’s victory in 1967 was seen by many as an act of divine providence, and for the Reform Jewish community, that meant that Israel was to remain committed to justice and peace.<sup>39</sup>

In the 1980’s, when it was assumed that American Jews supported Israel blindly without any hesitation, there were a few major events that began to cause American Jews to reconsider their blind support. The Likud victory in the Israeli elections in 1977 was very traumatic for American liberal Jews, as a more hawkish right-wing government would mean a probable attitude change toward the Palestinians, and one that was not in line with the ideals of those American liberal Jews. In 1982, there were several Israeli military incursions into Lebanon. Additionally, Israel was involved in the facilitation of the massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon. Two more events in the 1980’s exacerbated this American Jewish reconsideration: In November, 1985, a Jewish-American Navy intelligence analyst, Jonathan Pollard, was arrested in the United States for spying on the US for Israel and in December, 1987, the First Intifada began. Nightly news film of heavily armed Israeli soldiers chasing down and shooting or beating rock-wielding Palestinian teenagers “went a long way toward shattering the heroic image of the Israeli soldier...”<sup>40</sup>

Today, there are those who have suggested that American Jewish opinion no longer strongly supports Israel and her future. These suggestions are based on the

---

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Furman, *Israel through the Jewish-American Imagination: a Survey of Jewish-American Literature on Israel, 1928-1995* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 63.

<sup>39</sup> Gal, *Envisioning Israel*, 32.

<sup>40</sup> Furman, *Israel through the Jewish-American Imagination*, 8.

American Jewish desire to learn more about Israeli society and politics. American Jews today are no longer interested in supporting Israel just for the sake of supporting Israel. American Jews do not want to give Israel a blank check when it comes to the way her government acts toward her neighbors and those who are living within her borders. “...which is simply to suggest that our current post-Zionist milieu does not so much mark the end of the American Jewish relationship with Israel as it does mark the beginning, perhaps, of a more honest relationship between the two communities.”<sup>41</sup>

Steven M. Cohen, research professor at Hebrew Union College, in 1993 conducted studies intended to gauge how American Jews feel toward Israel. These surveys showed that while there may have been some slight distancing in the opinions of the elites/leaders of American Jewry, “the public Jewish opinion actually showed to possess more stable and positive attitudes toward Israel.”<sup>42</sup> Yes, it seems that the welfare and security of Israel still remain on the forefront of American Jewish minds. “Today it is a truism that the security and welfare of Israel have literally become articles of faith in the belief system of American Jews...”<sup>43</sup> The trends of these studies from 1993 still seem to be true today. Many Reform Jews are learning that one can be supportive *and* critical of Israel.

The effect of the relationship between American Jews and the State of Israel can be felt by both countries. Attempts to deepen understanding of the plight of both Jewish communities are vital for the future of both communities. From June 13-15, 1993 in Beer

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 11.

<sup>42</sup> Steven M. Cohen, “Did American Jews Really Grow More Distant from Israel, 1983-1993? – A Reconsideration,” in Gal, *Envisioning Israel*, 371.

<sup>43</sup> Arthur A. Goren, *The Politics and Public Culture of American Jews* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 190.

Sheva and Sde Boker, an international conference was held which brought North American Jews and Israeli Jews together. Titled “Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of North American Jews,” this conference was aimed “at improved understanding (particularly in ideological dimension) of the often problematic historical relationship between American and Israeli Jewry.”<sup>44</sup> This conference showed that American Jews and Israeli Jews need to be supportive of each other. These two Jewish communities may not agree on everything, but there are some basic ideals that they must agree upon for the sake of the future of both communities.

“It seems today that the Jewish world is not to be conceived as a circle with Israel as its growing center but as an *ellipse* with two centers, one in Israel and one in the United States. The two centers are of equal significance for the Jewish future.”<sup>45</sup> This last quote seems to really state the essence of the future of world Jewry. Diaspora communities must work together with the State of Israel to ensure creative Jewish survival for another 2000 years and beyond. In the next chapters of this thesis, I will explore the prayer books of the Reform movement, creative camp and youth group services as well as creative prayer books from a variety of Reform synagogues in the United States. Findings from an interview with one of the two rabbis responsible for the Israel prayers in *Mishkan Tefillah* will also be presented. It is my hope that the liturgical examinations in the following chapters will illustrate clearly the trends in attitude changes within the Reform movement since the 1890’s.

---

<sup>44</sup> Gal, *Envisioning Israel*, 7-8.

<sup>45</sup> Chylińska, “In Search of Greener Pastures”, 229.

## Chapter Two

This chapter will focus on an examination of the treatment of Zionism or the aspiration to return to the Land of Israel in the liturgy of the prayer books of the American Reform movement, the official movement prayer books as well as prayer books created by individual congregations. While I will examine all of the official prayer books of the movement from its inception, I will only examine creative synagogue prayer books written since the 1967 Six Day War. It is my hope that the creative prayer books from this forty-five year period will show distinct attitude changes with regards to Israel. As discussed briefly in Chapter One, the official movement prayer books have shown quite a bit of change in attitude toward Jewish peoplehood and toward a Jewish state.

The first official prayer book of the Reform Movement was the 1892 *Union Prayer Book*, which was edited by Isaac S. Moses. Based primarily on David Einhorn's *Olat Tamid* of 1858 and Isaac Mayer Wise's *Minhag America* of 1857, this *siddur* did not last very long. Almost immediately following its release, a group within the movement led by Rabbis Kaufmann Kohler and Emil G. Hirsch, the sons-in-law of David Einhorn, sought an implementation of greater changes. At great cost, the 1892 *Union Prayer Book* was recalled. The 1895 version of *Union Prayer Book*, vol. 1, officially printed as the "first edition," which omitted even more Hebrew, was, perhaps, a bit more consistent with the ideology of classical Reform Judaism. "Edited by Rabbi Kaufman Kohler, Einhorn's son-in-law and author of the famous Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 that defined Classical Reform Judaism for several generations, the 1895 UPB had a universalist orientation--it rejected such traditional Jewish notions as peoplehood, chosenness, the

resurrection, and a return to the Land of Israel.”<sup>46</sup> This attitude can best be illustrated in the treatment of the Yom Kippur Avodah service in vol. 2 (1894), where Einhorn’s theology of the mission of Israel is most fully articulated.<sup>47</sup> Examining this section, it is easy to find examples of this theology: “He has appointed Israel to carry the knowledge of Him, the only One, and the assurance of His all-sustaining love through all ages and to all nations.”<sup>48</sup> The message that God is One is not just for the Jewish people; Einhorn preached that it was for all people, all nations. Einhorn believed it was the responsibility to take the Word of God to all corners of the earth to Jews and non-Jews alike: “In the same spirit, we pray for all mankind. Grant that wherever a heart sighs in anguish under the load of guilt, wherever a soul yearns to return to Thee, it may feel the influence of Thy pardoning love and mercy.”<sup>49</sup> One last example of Einhorn’s theology found in the UPB shows his very strong ideology regarding Israel and her responsibility in the world:

But in course of time they learned to recall rather the promises of grace, which abound in God’s word, than the threatenings of his anger; they began to understand better and better the deep meanings of the teachings of the prophets, that all true atonement is perfected in the heart and when this returns to God in sincerity and with the firm resolve to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God, the loss of altar, sacrifice and priest need not make them doubt of their acceptance with God. Nay, it dawned upon them, like the rising of a new day, that their separation from their ancestral homes and their dispersion over the earth, far from being a punishment only, was in the hand of God a means of blessing to all mankind. Israel is to witness to the one true and living God and endeavor to unite all peoples into a covenant of peace, so that the word should be fulfilled in him: “In his stripes the world was healed, and in his bruises men found new strength, and through his chains the prisoners of error were set free.”<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> "Educational Resources - URJ." *Home - URJ*. Web. 20 Oct. 2011.

<<http://urj.org/worship/mishkan/current/?syspg.=article>>.

<sup>47</sup> *The Union Prayer-Book for Jewish Worship, Vol. 2*, (Cincinnati: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1894), 228-239

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 228.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 233-234.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 238.

The revised edition of the UPB which appeared in 1918 followed the earlier version with regards to Israel. However, the 1940 newly revised edition, completed after the Reform Movement adopted the Columbus Platform of 1937 in which the rebuilding of Palestine as a refuge for Jewish victims of persecution in Europe was now accepted within Reform ideology, introduced this theme into Reform liturgy in a single prayer with pro-Zionist leanings, in the fifth Shabbat evening service:

O Lord our God, we turn to Thee in hope as did our fathers. May Thy mercy descend upon our people in all their habitations. Extend Thy protection and help unto our brothers who struggle in lands of darkness as victims of oppression and persecution. Fill the hearts of all men with a love of freedom and justice, that tyranny may vanish and the reign of righteousness be established everywhere on earth. Uphold also the hands of our brothers who toil to rebuild Zion. In their pilgrimage among the nations, Thy people have always turned in love to the land where Israel was born, where our prophets taught their imperishable message of justice and brotherhood and where our psalmists sang their deathless songs of love for Thee and of Thy love for us and all humanity. Ever enshrined in the hearts of Israel was the hope that Zion might be restored, not for their own pride or vainglory, but as a living witness to the truth of Thy word which shall lead the nations to the reign of peace. Grant us strength that with Thy help we may bring a new light to shine upon Zion. Imbue us who live in lands of freedom with a sense of Israel's spiritual unity that we may share joyously in the work of redemption so that from Zion shall go forth the law and the word of God from Jerusalem.<sup>51</sup>

Twenty years later, as the *Union Prayer Book* was beginning to show its age, and with interest growing in the State of Israel and the Holocaust, the leaders of the Reform movement in the 1960's began to discuss creating a new prayer book for the Reform movement. In 1975, *Gates of Prayer: The New Union Prayer Book* was introduced.

*Gates of Prayer* was an immediate success in the Reform movement. The congregations embraced this new prayer book for a variety of reasons. One of the many perceived advantages of this new *siddur* was its articulation of the movement's new

---

<sup>51</sup> *The Union Prayer Book for Jewish Worship, Newly Revised Edition*, (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1940) 68-69.



dedication to Israel. All one has to do to see this new dedication to Israel is to look within the pages of the weekday and Shabbat services. We find in the *Amidah* section of the first option for a Weekday Service two prayers that refer specifically to Israel. The first refers to peace in Jerusalem, “And turn in compassion to Jerusalem, Your city. Let there be peace in her gates, quietness in the hearts of her inhabitants. Let Your Torah go forth from Zion and Your word from Jerusalem. *Blessed is the Lord, who gives peace to Jerusalem.*”<sup>52</sup> The second speaks of the worship of Israel, God’s people. The last two lines refer specifically to Zion, “...Let our eyes behold Your presence in our midst and in the midst of our people in Zion. *Blessed is the Lord, whose presence gives life to Zion and all Israel.*”<sup>53</sup> In the rendering of the **עבודה** prayer in the Yom Ha-atzma’ut service (as well as in versions of the Shabbat and Weekday services), we find a translation that specifically mentions that Jews live in all lands. “Wherever we live, wherever we seek You – in this land, in Zion restored, in all lands – You are our God, whom alone we serve in reverence.”<sup>54</sup> The land spoken about here is, of course, the United States of America. For the Reform movement, living in Israel is not a requirement. Although the movement has become very supportive of Israel and even of those who make *aliyah* – even to the point of encouraging *aliyah* – it is important to note that the Reform movement with this new prayer book continued the trend of supporting the Jewish communities in both Israel and in the United States. The liturgy of *Gates of Prayer* does not speak of *aliyah* except for those who are outcasts, hungry, or in desolation.

---

<sup>52</sup> *Sha'are Tefillah= Gates of Prayer; The New Union Prayerbook. Weekdays, Sabbaths, and Festivals, Services and Prayers for Synagogue and Home* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1975), 42.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* 43.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* 602.

There are many other examples of this dedication to Israel. For example we find in a translation of the **הב'ינו** prayer, "Let the righteous rejoice in the rebuilding of Your city and the flowering of Your redemption."<sup>55</sup> As there are many options for services, there are also a variety of options of prayers for Israel in the Shabbat services. For example, we find a meditation that is part of the *Avodah* section of the *Amidah*:

Lord, we give thanks for the freedom that is ours, and we pray for those in other lands who are persecuted and oppressed. Help them to bear their burdens, and keep alive in them the love of freedom and the hope of deliverance. Uphold also the hands of our brothers and sisters in the land of Israel. Cause a new light to shine upon Zion and upon us all, that the time may come again when Your Torah will go forth from the House of Israel, Your word from the tents of Jacob. Blessed is our God, whose presence gives life to His people Israel.<sup>56</sup>

Also within the pages of *GOP*, one finds for the first time two services that speak to this new commitment to Israel: a service for Tish'a be-Av and Yom Hashoah and a service for Yom Ha-atzma'ut. Within the service for Tish'a be-Av and Yom Hashoah, we find "O God, help us to build Your kingdom, one human world united in heart and soul!"<sup>57</sup> This line speaks of rebuilding God's kingdom on earth and a reunification of all peoples – the universalistic dream also found in the pages of the *Union Prayer Book*.

Within this service, there is also a prayer which is called "Comforter of Zion." This prayer speaks of those who are mourning the loss of Jerusalem since the destruction of the Temple. Present in this prayer is also recognition of the exile from Jerusalem. The final line of this prayer, the traditional ending for Tish'a be-Av, sums up the new commitment to Jerusalem and Israel by the Reform movement, "**ברוך אתה יי, מנחם**

---

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. 109.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. 201.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. 575.

ציון ובונה ירושלים,” “Blessed is the Lord, Comforter of Zion and Rebuilder of Jerusalem.”<sup>58</sup> An even greater innovation for *Gates of Prayer* is the Yom Ha-atzma’ut service, the service celebrating Israeli Independence Day. *Gates of Prayer* was the first movement prayer book in the United States to include a service for Yom Ha-atzma’ut. However, at the beginning of this service, we already find a very early American Jewish idea regarding Zionism: the ingathering to *Eretz Yisrael* specifically of all of those Jews who were oppressed. Thus, for example, we find the following: “He turns wilderness into flowing streams, parched lands into springs of water. There He gives the hungry a home, where they build cities to live in. They sow fields and plant vineyards and reap a fruitful harvest.”<sup>59</sup> While supporting the State of Israel, this prayer also makes it clear that Israel may be for those Jews who are in need of refuge, not necessarily for all Jews.

In the late 1960’s, the CCAR Liturgy Committee began to work on creating a new Passover Haggadah for the Reform Movement. In 1974, this committee finished and published a Passover Haggadah, under the editorship of Rabbi Herbert Bronstein. Toward the end of the Haggadah, we find yet another example of Reform commitment to a strong Jewish life in both the State of Israel and the Diaspora: “To plant, to build, and to bless, Wherever the people of Israel lives!”<sup>60</sup> While supporting Israel is very important, the Reform ideology of supporting Jewish communities wherever they live continues to prove to be one of the most important ideals in Reform liturgy. And, yet, on the final

---

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 586

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. 592

<sup>60</sup> Herbert Bronstein, ed., *A Passover Haggadah* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1974), 79.

page of the Haggadah, we find expressed the age-old hope of Jews around the world:

לשנה הבאה בירושלים, “Next year in Jerusalem.”<sup>61</sup>

In 1976, the CCAR published a home prayer book entitled *Gates of the House: Prayers and Readings*, intended to give Reform Jews the opportunity to pray not only in synagogue, but also at home. Very early in the *siddur*, on page 24, we find “For a Pilgrimage to Israel.”<sup>62</sup> This comprises an excerpt from Psalm 122 followed by a blessing for peace upon Israel and Jerusalem. This innovation definitely illustrates the Reform commitment to the success of Israel. Although this was not the first official source to offer a prayer about Israel, it was the first to offer the prayer for Israel at the beginning of the *siddur*. The Reform movement had begun to encourage *aliyah* with the Columbus Platform in 1937; however, this prayer for a pilgrimage to Israel placed at the front of the *siddur* definitely reflects a very strong relationship between the Reform movement and Israel.

With the success of *Gates of Prayer* and *Gates of the House*, the CCAR published *Shaarei Teshuvah, Gates of Repentance: The New Union Prayerbook for the Days of Awe* in 1978. Edited by Chaim Stern, the purpose of this *siddur* was to “satisfy the deepest needs of our people when on the Days of Awe they enter into prayerful dialogue with their God and with themselves.”<sup>63</sup> The morning services for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur include the following prayer just before the Torah is returned to the ark:

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. 93.

<sup>62</sup> *Gates of the House: The New Union Home Prayerbook : Prayers and Readings for Home and Synagogue* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1976), 24.

<sup>63</sup> Chaim Stern, [*Sha'are Teshuvah*] = *Gates of Repentance : The New Union Prayerbook for the Days of Awe* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1978), ix.

We pray for the land of Israel and its people. May its borders know peace, its inhabitants tranquility. And may the bonds of faith and fate which unite the Jews of all lands be a source of strength to Israel and to us all. God of all lands and ages, answer our constant prayer with a Zion once more aglow with light for us and for all the world, and let us say: Amen.<sup>64</sup>

Chaim Stern's greatly expanded *Seder Ha'avodah* section of the afternoon service for Yom Kippur illustrates a profound influence on the movement after 1967 of the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel. This expanded section (almost 40 pages) contains several prayers one might consider to be in line with Reform thought about Israel. One of these selections refers to the renewed life in Israel:

In one land especially we glimpsed the rays of a new dawn: the land of Zion, made ready for habitation by generations of pioneers. The great day came: Israel independent at last, the millennial dream, a dream no more! Drawn by its brightness, her children flocked to Israel from distant lands of despair, and found hope. Though bent in mourning, they ploughed the earth deep, so that grain would grow tall. And as they restored the land to its fruitfulness, they began themselves to be restored. Israel lives: a people at home again, rooted in its soil, its way of life, its ancient faith.<sup>65</sup>

The Reform movement moved to add more tradition to their official practices, and as such, another book was published in 1983. Entitled *Gates of the Seasons*, this supplement to the *siddur* was intended to explain the importance of the various holidays and important *minhagim* surrounding these days. *Gates of the Seasons* included two sections explaining the meaning and importance of these holidays to Judaism and to the Reform movement. There is also an explanation of Yom Yerushalayim, the date when the Old City of Jerusalem was recaptured during the 1967 Six-Day War. It seems that, as

---

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. 153, 219 & 355.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 442-443

time went by, the Reform movement became more and more committed to not only supporting Israel but illustrating that support in its liturgy.

In 1994, in an effort to become more sensitive to the problem of the gendered language in *Gates of Prayer*, the CCAR published *Gates of Prayer for Weekdays and Shabbat*, affectionately referred to as “Gates of Grey.” This new volume in the *Gates of Prayer* series was intended to present language that was gender-neutral. In the last few pages of this *siddur* we find supplementary prayers that reference Israel. On page 182, we find a prayer for the Sabbath prior to Yom Ha-atzma’ut. Referencing the Holocaust as one of the factors in the creation of Israel, the prayer gives thanks “that out of the ashes of the death-camps there has arisen a land renewed, a haven where broken lives have been made whole again...”<sup>66</sup> Once again, we see the long-standing Reform attitude that recognizes the need for Israel only for those whose lives were broken and in need.

The final page of this *siddur* presents a prayer “For Our Congregation, Our Nation and the State of Israel.”<sup>67</sup> This prayer recognizes the importance of praying for the whole House of Israel, wherever they may be scattered. The end of this prayer, specifically for the State of Israel, asks that the “bonds of faith and fate which unite the Jews of all lands be a source of strength to Israel and to us all.”<sup>68</sup> As we have seen before, the Reform movement continued with an ideology that supports Jews both in Israel and everywhere else they may be.

While the majority of the Reform movement switched to the *Gates of Prayer* series when the first *siddur* was released, there were still congregations using the *Union*

---

<sup>66</sup> Chaim Stern, *Gates of Prayer for Shabbat and Weekdays: A Gender Sensitive Prayerbook* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1994), 182.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. 186.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. 186.

*Prayer Book*. One of these congregations, Chicago Sinai Congregation, published a new edition of the *Union Prayer Book I* in 2000. Referred to as the *Sinai Edition*, this *siddur* was an attempt to continue the Classical Reform ideology of the *Union Prayer Book* while at the same time using a language that was more modern and reflected the Jewish community after the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel. This *siddur* also reflects a community that began to embrace the rights of all Jews no matter their gender or sexual preference.

The *Sinai Edition* includes a prayer celebrating Yom Ha-atzma'ut, "The Anniversary of Israel's Founding."<sup>69</sup> Written completely in English, this prayer (an adaptation of a prayer on pg. 182 in *Gates of Prayer: A Gender Sensitive Prayerbook*) begins with a paragraph linking the generations of Jews from the Patriarchs and Matriarchs to the present day. There is one sentence giving thanks "that out of the ashes of the death camps there has arisen a symbol of courage, an expression of the human creative will, and a refuge where broken lives have been made whole again."<sup>70</sup> There is recognition of the fact that Jews are dispersed throughout the world and that each Jew should think of Israel with love and devotion. This edition of the *Union Prayer Book* appears to affirm these communities separately, giving each its own distinction.

In the late 1990's, the CCAR began work on a new prayer book for the Reform movement. With the numerous and varied theologies present among Reform Jews, a prayer book was needed that would be able to reflect them all. Rabbi Elyse D. Frishman, editor, and Rabbi Peter S. Knobel, chair of the CCAR Liturgy Committee, led the team

---

<sup>69</sup> *The Union Prayerbook, Sinai Edition: An Adaptation of the Union Prayerbook, Newly Revised Edition, of the Central Conference of American Rabbis* (Chicago: Chicago Sinai Congregation, 2000), 132-133.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* 132.

that created this *siddur*. *Mishkan T'filah* was published in 2007 for a movement excited about its arrival. With pre-sales of over 70,000 copies, this *siddur* has proven to be a very valuable item. The liturgical innovation of the Reform movement continued with this *siddur*, reflecting the ethos of the North American Reform Jewish community in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To compose the liturgy for Yom Ha-atzma'ut, the editors contacted two rabbis who played prominent roles in the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ), Rabbi Karyn Kedar and Rabbi Kinneret Shiryon. Rabbi Shiryon, who still lives in Israel today, was the first woman rabbi in Israel's history. Rabbi Kedar, now senior rabbi at Congregation B'nai Jeshurun-Beth Elohim (BJBE) in Chicago, was the second woman rabbi in Israel's history and the first woman rabbi in Jerusalem, and had worked for the IMPJ. These two collaborated together on the Yom Haatz'ma'ut observance in *Mishkan T'filah*. Based on a style used by Telem Noar, the youth movement for progressive Israeli Jews, Rabbis Shiryon and Kedar wanted to produce a *ma'amad* – a liturgical moment without the rubrics of prayer. The section would be liturgical in nature and based on the ceremonies for Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha-atzma'ut which are held on Mt. Herzl in Jerusalem. As these ceremonies include the lighting of a seven-branch *menorah*, the Yom Ha-atzma'ut section would include seven themes.<sup>71</sup>

Each candle of the *menorah* is lit following the seven themes either created by Rabbis Shiryon and Kedar or from a polling of the CCAR. Each right-side page includes a section of the Israeli Declaration of Independence and a complementary biblical section. The left-side pages have the same organizing principle as the rest of *Mishkan*

---

<sup>71</sup> Rabbi Karyn Kedar, in discussion with the author, September, 2011.



*T'filah*: readings and a song that complement the right-side pages. The seven themes found in this section are: Miracle of Rebirth, For the Beauty of the Land, Ingathering of Exiles, For a Just Society, For the Renewal of Jewish Learning and Language, For Hope and Peace and For the Courage of Israel's People. The section For the Renewal of Jewish Learning and Language includes a Zionist-oriented text that reflects Torah coming out of a renewed Jewish land and a commitment to the renewal of Jewish learning and language, with a quote from Eliezer Ben Yehudah, the author of the first modern Hebrew lexicon, on the left-side of the page.

Rabbis Shiryon and Kedar insisted that *Mishkan T'filah* include a section on Yom Hazikaron, Israel Memorial Day. Just as Yom Hazikaron leads into Yom Ha-atzma'ut in Israel, so would this section. On page 534, we find an innovative prayer for Yom Hazikaron. For the first time in a North American Reform prayer book, American Jews are remembering the fallen Israeli soldiers. It is my opinion that this is a move of solidarity. By inserting this prayer into *Mishkan T'filah*, the leaders of the Reform movement are telling Israeli Jews that those who lost their lives defending Israel are the brothers and sisters of all Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora. The following line taken from one of the poems illustrates this solidarity: "Remember our brothers and sisters whose sacrifice gave birth to the State of Israel; may their courage be our inspiration and our strength."<sup>72</sup> Following this poem is *El Malei Rachamim*, the traditional memorial prayer. The page just prior to the Yom Ha-atzma'ut section contains a classic Israeli

---

<sup>72</sup> Rabbi Elyse D. Frishman, ed. *Mishkan T'filah : A Reform Siddur : Weekdays, Shabbat, Festivals, and Other Occasions of Public Worship* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2006), 534.

poem by Natan Alterman, “The Silver Platter,” which reminds us not only of the miracle of Israel, but of the price paid by those who struggled to help create her.<sup>73</sup>

Rabbi Kedar wrote an original prayer for Israel which she wanted to include in this section. However, a discussion among the editorial committee for *Mishkan T'filah* concluded with the decision to add a more traditional Israeli poem, rather than a creative one. Rabbi Meir Azari, the rabbi at Beit Daniel in Israel, wanted to address the topic of how modern, progressive religious Jews in Israel could celebrate Yom Ha-atzma'ut religiously. This section was created to provide an answer to this challenge. *Mishkan T'filah* acknowledges the human effort in the creation and survival of the State of Israel. There is both a theological and a human dynamic in this section. “If what we write codifies what we as a movement believe – than this section of *Mishkan T'filah* spells it out.”<sup>74</sup>

Beyond the above-mentioned sections, *Mishkan T'filah* presents other options to celebrate and pray for Israel. On page 113, we find one example of a prayer for the State of Israel. ,שאלו שלום ירושלים, ישליו אהביך, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; may those who love you prosper.”<sup>75</sup> This prayer, following the citation of Psalm 122:6, continues with a petition for the peace of Jerusalem and concludes by asking God to protect and bless the State of Israel. This is an adaptation of the Prayer for the State of Israel composed by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel in 1948. We also find in this *siddur* a “Prayer for Our Country,” signifying that we are to pray for our home countries and Israel separately.

---

<sup>73</sup> Rabbi Karyn Kedar, in discussion with the author, September, 2011.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> *Mishkan T'filah*, 113.

The same prayer recurs on page 377 and again on page 516. Something must be said about the fact that these prayers are found in the central section of the Shabbat and Festival morning service: in the Torah reading ritual. These prayers are found right after the Torah is put away, but in my experience many congregations recite them before returning the Torah to the Ark, recognizing the significance of having the Torah in the midst of the congregation while praying for the safety of Israel, as is done traditionally.

Having presented and examined the “official” prayer books of the North American Reform Movement, we now examine creative prayer books from the liberal Jewish movements in the United States. Admittedly, it would be impossible to study and locate every single creative liberal prayer book in America. Therefore, I will instead focus this section on a number of representative *siddurim*. The first part of this section will include prayer books that focus on Shabbat and weekdays. The second part will look at *siddurim* that focus on the holidays of the Jewish Year. The next chapter will study creative camp and youth group services as well as occasional liturgies and one rabbinical thesis that focuses on liturgy and Israel. I will present the *siddurim* chronologically beginning with the oldest of the published creative prayer books.

The first of these books, an early creative liturgical anthology, is not a Reform movement *siddur*; rather, it is a creative liberal prayer resource. *Bridges to a Holy Time* was published in 1973 by Ktav Publishing House and edited by Alfred Jospe and Richard N. Levy, who were at that time Executive Director of national B’nai Brith-Hillel, and the Hillel Director at UCLA, respectively. With an attempt to bring together tradition and innovation in worship, this volume included a variety of types of Shabbat services and themed services that originated at UCLA Hillel in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s.

Included in this anthology is a “Service for Israel.” Almost completely in English, this service presents many different readings: poetry, songs, and meditations. The first reading, “My Heart Is In the East,” a poem by Yehuda Halevi, speaks to the traditional attachment of the Jewish heart to Eretz Yisrael. Even when the Land is in the hands of another people, we pine for our Land. “But the dust of the Lord’s ruined house is the most precious treasure I prize.”<sup>76</sup>

This service for Israel continues with several readings that recount the history of the Jewish people and its link to the Land. It is this historical link to the land of Israel that keeps the Jewish heart and mind always focused to the East toward Eretz Yisrael. Even after our exile to Babylon, we still sought a return to our home. “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yes, we wept, when we remembered Zion.”<sup>77</sup> Seen as the perennial victim, the Jewish people continued to weep for a return from the second exile until the rebirth of the State of Israel in 1948. There is a very powerful reading by Elie Wiesel (an excerpt from his book, Night) found on page 145 that links the State of Israel to the Holocaust: “Never shall I forget that night...which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky...Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.”<sup>78</sup> The children, the future of the Jewish people and of the new State of Israel, are remembered. Those that perished who were not able to realize the dream of Israel – they will be remembered.

---

<sup>76</sup> Alfred Jospe and Richard N. Levy, *Bridges to a Holy Time; New Worship for the Sabbath and Minor Festivals* (New York: Ktav Pub. House, 1973), 139.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. 142.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 145

While remembering those who never were able to realize the dream, the next few pages of this service remind us of those who sacrificed their lives in the creation and defense of Israel. Natan Alterman's poem "The Silver Platter," which for many decades was recited in Israel at *Yom Hazikaron* observances, tells the story of the foundation of Israel. The following line is a perfect illustration of the point: "The nation then asks [the shades of a young man and young woman], bathed in tears and in wonder, 'Who are you?' And the two reply: 'We are the silver platter upon which the Jewish state was served to you.'"<sup>79</sup> While we celebrate the State of Israel, we must solemnly and somberly remember those who made it possible. This section about Israel continues with the singing of "Hatikvah," the national anthem of Israel, another set of readings reminding us of those who died in the wars of Israel and of the opportunity we have been given. "And perhaps there's some educational value in the whole thing – here we are standing in the places which have been sacred to our nation since its earliest history, here we are face to face with the whole of Jewish history. Not every generation has such an opportunity."<sup>80</sup>

This service makes the point that each generation of Jews must recognize the wonders and miracles present. For this generation of Jews, the realization of Israel is the greatest miracle. Although we celebrate, we must also never forget those who came before us in this century and in the thousands of years before. Appropriately, this Israel section ends with the singing of "Yerushalayim Shel Zahav-Jerusalem of Gold." Our history links us back to the cornerstone of the world in Jerusalem. Although we have been in exile many times, we always return to Israel, to Jerusalem. This service wants us

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 149

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 153

to always remember that, while at the same time never forgetting what is has taken for us to reclaim our national heritage.

In 1980, Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley published the second edition of a new *siddur* by a membership “searching for its spiritual sources.”<sup>81</sup> This second edition was also marketed outside of the congregation. The first edition had been published in 1975 and entitled *לְבַנוּ לְטָהוֹרָה*, *Purify our Hearts*. It was meant to bring traditional prayers back into the lives of the congregation, attempting to reconnect with some of the prayers that had been left out or abridged in the *siddurim* of the Reform movement. Acknowledging the feminist critique of liturgical language, this *siddur* includes not only “he” language but also “she” language with reference to God. It should also be pointed out that this *siddur* also includes the Matriarchs in the Amidah, a novelty at the time, and ahead of most of the Reform movement.

This is a beautiful *siddur* and its attempt to return to the traditional prayers and Hebrew of the prayers is certainly obvious. What is missing from this *siddur*, however, is anything that relates to Israel as a state. Certainly, Israel as a people is mentioned many times throughout the traditional liturgy. But this *siddur* does not include any prayers or sections regarding Israel. It is clear that this was not a main liturgical concern for the congregation. In contrast, the new official *siddur* of the Reform Movement *Gates of Prayer*, published also in 1975, did include a Prayer for the State of Israel.

Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles, California, under the guidance and leadership of Rabbi Harvey Fields, published their own *siddur* in 1987. Entitled *Shabbat*

---

<sup>81</sup> *Ve'faher Libenu Le'avdekha Be'emet* (Sudbury, Mass: Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley, 1975), 3.

*Worship*, this *siddur* was “created as an invitation to the sacred world of Jewish prayer. Its language, transliterations and songs are meant to involve us. Its art and commentary are here to enrich us.”<sup>82</sup> This *siddur* was created to preserve expressions of the past while at the same time reflecting the new ideology and sensitivities of the Reform Movement.

Another beautiful conglomeration of prayers, readings and pictures, this prayer book contains a prayer “For the Sabbath Near Yom Ha-atsma’ut, Israel Independence Day.”<sup>83</sup> The prayers found on this page speak of the exiles returning to Israel and building cities, bringing the ancient pride in Zion back to present times. There is a request for God to grant peace and security to Israel and all of her inhabitants. Connecting all Jewish people to Israel and Jerusalem, the final reading ends, “May the truths of Torah flow forth from Zion, and Your wisdom, O God, from Jerusalem.”<sup>84</sup> This page reflects a continued commitment of this congregation to the Reform ideology of supporting Israel while at the same time recognizing the Jewish communities outside of Israel.

In 1993, another Reform congregation, Congregation Kol Ami of White Plains, NY, under the direction and guidance of Rabbi Shira Milgrom, undertook the task of writing and publishing their own *siddur*. In Rabbi Milgrom’s introduction, which explains the need for this new *siddur*, she mentions how our world has changed and how these changes affect everything we do, including our thoughts and prayers. How we are able to pray together as a community with our many ideologies and thoughts is an

---

<sup>82</sup> (Los Angeles, CA, Wilshire Boulevard Temple, 1987) II.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. 76

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. 76

important topic to discuss, and Rabbi Milgrom explains that this *siddur* is a result of discussion on this topic:

The structure of this particular *siddur* reflects our understanding of the characteristics which define Jewish life at this time in the unfolding of Jewish history...Last, Jewish life after the Holocaust and the re-birth of the State of Israel challenges the fundamental assumptions of Jewish life in the modern world – that intelligent, cultured society will inevitably bring greater goodness, that human beings are essentially rational, that our most fundamental needs will be satisfied by becoming fully part of the secular society in which we live, and whose values we share.<sup>85</sup>

Beginning on page 52A, we find in this prayer book a special section for Yom Ha-atzma'ut. In a sidebar on the page, one of the readings is from the CCAR Centenary Perspective of 1976 which speaks to the survival of the Jewish people since the Holocaust and more importantly of the establishment of the State of Israel. Many quotes in Hebrew and English are present in this section, which speaks to the importance of the State of Israel. The section is brief, but it contains just enough for one to see a connection between biblical Israel and modern-day Israel. On the same page as “Hatikvah,” the national anthem of Israel, is the following reading which speaks to a continued hope for the Jewish people and the State of Israel: “In the vision of the dry bones, Ezekiel describes the despair of the exiled Jewish People [*Ezekiel 37*]: ‘Our bones are dried up, *avda tikvateinu*, our hope is lost and we are cut off.’ To this, the national anthem of Israel, *Hatikva* (The Hope) responds: ‘*Lo avda tikvateinu*, our hope is *not* lost.’”<sup>86</sup> This reading explains to us that Jews will never lose hope in the land of Israel and in the future of her people.

---

<sup>85</sup> Congregation Kol Ami, “*Entrances to Holiness are Everywhere*”: *Shabbat Morning Prayer Book*. (White Plains, NY: Jewish Community Center of White Plains, NY, 1993), iv.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. 53b.



Another creative liberal *siddur*, *The Book of Blessings*, by Marcia Falk incorporates a feminist and Reconstructionist but also a pantheist approach to the traditional Hebrew prayers. While the structure of the services in this prayer book is broadly traditional, the original Hebrew prayers and their translations throughout the book make it a product of a liberal Jewish mind. What may be the most interesting element of this book, at least with regards to this thesis, is that Falk does not include any specific prayers regarding the land of Israel. The nation of Israel as a people is referred to numerous times, especially in translation of the Hebrew. Two creative prayers, found in *The Book of Blessings*, both of which refer to peace among “all of the communities of Israel and all peoples of the world”<sup>87</sup>, will be discussed later as part of one of the other liberal *siddurim* I studied. Although this *siddur* includes poems by Israeli women (such as Zelda), it is clear that the land of Israel was not a part of Falk’s focus.

The leadership of Isaac M. Wise Temple in Cincinnati, Ohio, one of the premier congregations of the Reform Movement, guided by the vision of Rabbi Lewis H. Kamrass, embarked on a journey in the mid-1990’s to publish a new prayer book that would reflect the principles of Jewish prayer while allowing a variety of prayer options to appear together on a two-paged spread, an idea which would appear later in the official movement prayer book, *Mishkan T’filah*. The prayers in this new *siddur*, *Avodat Halev: Worship of the Heart*, were intended to allow the worshipper to find *kavanah*, heartfelt intention, within the words and prayers of the *keva*, the fixed. The book provides many opportunities to get lost in the prayers of the service. One can either follow along with

---

<sup>87</sup> Marcia Falk, *The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival* = *Sefer Ha-Berakhot*, (Harper San Francisco, California, 1996), 299.

the specific prayers being recited in the service or find oneself wandering through the many creative writings in Hebrew and English.

On page 91a of *Avodat Halev*, we find a prayer “For the State of Israel.” It turns out that this is the exact prayer that is in *Mishkan T’filah*. The prayer begins with Psalm 122:6 and continues with an adaptation of the prayer of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel in 1948. As this *siddur* was published in 1999, eight years prior to the publishing of *Mishkan T’filah*, it is clear that this served as a source for *Mishkan T’filah*. This is one of the first Reform congregational *siddurim* to include this prayer.

Rabbi Norman R. Patz, a longtime rabbi at Temple Sholom of West Essex in Cedar Grove, New Jersey, and his wife, Naomi Patz, decided in 2005 to create a new prayer book for their congregation of almost 36 years, in part to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation. Speaking to the many and varied spiritual needs of the members of Temple Sholom of West Essex, *Siddur Netivot Sholom* was to embody “all that is meaningful to us in our relationship with God, Torah and Israel.”<sup>88</sup> As with all of the *siddurim* I examined, *Netivot Sholom* intended to remain true to tradition while at the same time providing thought-provoking readings that would deepen the meaning for those who prayed with it.

On page 135 is a prayer poem derived from two individual prayers in Marcia Falk’s *The Book of Blessings* entitled “Blessing of Peace.” This prayer poem reconfirms a commitment to Israel and all of the Jewish communities throughout the world.

Eternal wellspring of peace –  
may we be drenched with the longing for peace  
that we may give ourselves over  
as the earth to the rain, to the dew,

---

<sup>88</sup> Naomi Patz, *Siddur Netivot Sholom* (Cedar Grove, NJ: Temple Sholom of West Essex, 2005), xi.

until peace overflows our lives  
as living waters overflow the seas.

May the blessings of peace and kindness,  
graciousness and compassion  
flow among us  
and all the communities of Israel,  
all the peoples of the world.<sup>89</sup>

It does seem pretty clear that this insertion into *Siddur Netivot Sholom* speaks to the universalistic approach to Reform Judaism. Later in this siddur, on page 201, we find a prayer in English that speaks directly to the State of Israel. This prayer asks God to bless the congregation, our land and its inhabitants and the Jewish people throughout the world. The last paragraph includes a section in which God is asked to grant blessing and safety to the State of Israel. There is also a line that asks God to “inspire its leaders and citizens to remain faithful to the aims of its founders: to develop the land for the benefit of all its inhabitants, and to implement the prophetic ideals of liberty and justice.”<sup>90</sup> This is a rather significant assertion which addresses the concern for Israeli Arab citizens as well as Israeli Jews. This assertion restates Israel’s commitment to equal treatment of all of her citizens, the liberal social justice concern of Reform Judaism applied to the State of Israel. The prayer concludes with a prayer for Israel to live in peace and harmony with her neighbors. This congregation once again has continued the trend of praying for the safety of Israel, but in this *siddur* Israel and the Diaspora communities are included together in the same prayer.

In 2009, Congregation Sha’ar Zahav in San Francisco, California published *Siddur Sha’ar Zahav*. Congregation Sha’ar Zahav, one of the first congregations

---

<sup>89</sup> As quoted in *Siddur Netivot Sholom* on pg. 135. Marcia Falk, *The Book of Blessings*, 250, 299.

<sup>90</sup> *Siddur Netivot Sholom*, 201-202.

committed to offering full acceptance to bisexual, transgender, lesbian, gay and queer-identified Jews, wanted to have a *siddur* that reflected this acceptance while at the same time reflecting many of the innovations of the Reform Movement. “Our prayer book attempts to embody the teaching that each of us is created *b’tzelem Elohim*, ‘in the image of God.’ While we know that not every reading will speak to each of us, we hope that in these pages all of us will find a point of departure for prayer, and for dialogue with the Source of creation.”<sup>91</sup>

Unlike the other *siddurim* I have examined, *Siddur Sha’ar Zahav* includes two pages of Israel-themed prayers written by members of Congregation Sha’ar Zahav. Michael Tyler, one of the editors of *Siddur Sha’ar Zahav*, granted me permission to include some of these prayers as part of this thesis. This section of the thesis will include two of these prayers while the appendix will reproduce the others. The two poems included here are entitled “For Going to Eretz Yisrael” and “For Israel (2).” While both of these poems are beautiful and illustrate true passion for Israel and her inhabitants, there is definitely uneasiness also present in the second poem, indicative of the tension present today in the liberal Jewish world with regard to Israel.

For years I read Your map of this place  
as a topography of voices that needed  
no home but the ark of my heart.  
And yet now I move in this landscape of echoes,  
every hill a place where story grows deep in the soil.  
Blessed are You of living history, of Torah that goes on –  
blessed is this land of ancestral dream and holy desire.  
In the shadows of the desert  
I still hear Sarah laughing.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>91</sup> Michael Tyler and Leslie Kane, eds., *Siddur Sha’ar Zahav* (San Francisco, Calif: Congregation Sha’ar Zahav, 2009), ix.

<sup>92</sup> “For Going to Eretz Yisrael,” by Jacqui Shine, first published in *Siddur Sha’ar Zahav* (San Francisco: Congregation Sha’ar Zahav, 2009), 45. Copyright (c) 2008 Jacqui Shine. All rights reserved.

Holy One, remember the Covenants you made with Noah, with Abraham and with Hagar, and cause Your rainbow of peace to spread over the holy land. May all the children of Abraham come to learn how to live in the land of peace. May Israel once again be the land of milk and honey to all who dwell there.<sup>93</sup>

Now that we have examined the official *siddurim* of the Reform movement as well as a variety of creative congregational and other prayer books which focused on Shabbat and weekdays (as well as some that included the Festival services), it is time to focus on a few *siddurim* that focus primarily on the Festival and Holiday services. This section of this chapter will focus on five *siddurim*. These *siddurim* include services for Pesach, Hanukkah, the High Holy Days and even funeral and memorial services. It is my hope that these services will also reflect various attitudes toward Israel. The first four prayer pamphlets were published by the Institute of Creative Judaism, an organization that later changed its name to the Polydiox Institute. This institute was begun by the students of Rabbi Alvin Reines, professor of Philosophy and Theology at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. The fifth siddur was edited and translated by Rabbi Richard N. Levy, former Director of the Rabbinical School at Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles and prior to that Executive Director of the Hillel Foundation at UCLA, in association with Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.

One of the primary goals of the Polydiox Institute from its founding was to allow for every Jew to choose for himself which *minhagim* and traditions he practiced. The products of this goal are short creative prayer pamphlets for various holidays that are intended to allow for personal exploration with regard to religion and theology. The four liturgies I examined were: *A Rosh Hashanah Service for the Young at Heart* (1973),

---

<sup>93</sup> "For Israel (2)," by Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, first published in *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* (San Francisco: Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 2009), 45. Copyright (c) 2008 Jo Ellen Green Kaiser. All rights reserved.

*Haggadah: A Passover Service for the Family* (1976), *A Rosh Hashanah Service for the Family* (1976), and *Funeral and Memorial Services* (1979).

While I expected to find mention of Israel or Jerusalem in each of these siddurim, I was surprised to find only a couple of mentions to the ancient Land of Israel without any references to modern-day Israel. In *Haggadah: A Passover Service for the Family*, there is mention of the ancient Land of Israel: “The Israelites ruled themselves, and from liberty’s choice a community was born. Laws were written, and ancient promises fulfilled. Settling in the ancient land of Canaan, the Israelites created a new country...”<sup>94</sup> In his *Funeral and Memorial Services*, Reines quotes a selection from the Book of Ecclesiastes, mentioning ancient Jerusalem. In the mid 1970’s, when all of these liturgies were published, the Reform movement officially was supportive of Israel. Therefore, it is a bit surprising to not find more references to modern-day Israel or prayers for Israel, especially since the Institute of Creative Judaism had as its intention to allow Jews to find their own traditions and practices. Clearly, Israel was not a particular focus of the Institute, at least liturgically speaking.

*On Wings of Awe: A Fully Transliterated Machzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur* (2011), edited and translated by Rabbi Richard N. Levy, is a revised edition of the original (1985) and now includes transliteration of all Hebrew. The first edition, certainly an innovation in its time, included some transliterations, the matriarchs in prayer and an adjustment to translations to avoid gendered language. As can be expected of a *Machzor* with intentions of being inclusive, this new revised edition contains even more innovations with regards to transliteration and inclusive language. Although this

---

<sup>94</sup> Alvin Jay Reines and Bonia Shur, *Haggadah: A Passover Service for the Family*. (Cincinnati: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976), 10-11.

*Machzor* is not an official prayer book of the Reform Movement or of a Reform congregation, I decided to include it in my research, since it was edited by Rabbi Richard Levy and is a liberal *Machzor*. We will focus our examination on Israel-themed liturgy.

With the exception of the traditional phrase **לשנה הבאה בירושלים**, *Next Year in Jerusalem*, there is not a single mention of modern-day Israel in this *Machzor*. Complete with a lot of inclusive language throughout, *On Wings of Awe* is very successful at welcoming a variety of “types” of Jews to pray with it. However, by leaving out a reference to modern Israel, unlike the Reform *Machzor* which includes a Prayer for Israel in the Torah services, I do believe that many Jews would wonder about this omission, especially in a time when Israel needs as much support from Diaspora Jewry.

With a few noted exceptions which I will discuss more in the conclusion, the majority of the prayer books we have focused on do not give us a negative or qualified opinion of Israel. While attitudes toward Israel have shifted within the Reform movement over the past thirty years, it is not clear at this point that the liturgy shows as strong a shift. Through my research thus far, the shift is not all-pervasive and is sometimes muted, especially in the liturgy. The next chapter of this thesis will examine creative non-*siddur* services (from NFTY, HUC-JIR, and from synagogues) for Kabbalat Shabbat, Shabbat morning, Havdalah, Weekday services and even a few holiday services. I will also examine some of the occasional liturgies found in the library at HUC-JIR as well as a few creative prayers written by rabbis and educators in the field.

### Chapter Three

The focus of this chapter will be on individual creative (non-*siddur*) services from the Reform movement over the past thirty-five years. The first section will look at creative youth group, HUC-JIR, camp and synagogue Kabbalat Shabbat services. The second section will examine Shabbat services from the above organizations. The third section will focus on creative prayers for Yom HaZikaron, Yom Ha-atzma'ut and Yom Yerushalayim services. In the fourth and final section of this chapter, I will examine and discuss occasional liturgies from the Klau Library at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati as well as specific prayers written by cantors, rabbis and educators in the field. I will also include a few creative prayers written for services from liberal Jewish organizations not already named. Within the first three sections, I have examined creative services from the Southeast region of NFTY, Camp Coleman, Goldman Union Camp, Valley Temple of Cincinnati, Temple Emanu-El of Atlanta, and services from HUC-JIR in Cincinnati. With permission from Rabbi Jared Saks and Student Rabbi Brian Nelson, I have also examined services from Temple Israel of Minneapolis and their summer camp, Camp TEKÖ.

Including the creative services from Temple Israel of Minneapolis, I studied approximately 150 services dating back to the late 1980's. What came as a big surprise to me was that I only found five services that included a prayer for Israel. What was even more surprising was that one particular service which had as its main theme peace and reflections on war did not include any mention of modern-day Israel. It is true that most Reform congregations that include a prayer for Israel do so during their Torah reading service. The Reform Jewish practice of celebrating the uniqueness and importance of the



Diaspora communities is certainly present in the creative services. This celebration does not oppose Israel; it celebrates the Diaspora while remaining true and loyal to the Jewish community in Israel as well.

One service, a confirmation service from The Valley Temple in Cincinnati, Ohio, includes a “Prayer for our Congregation,” leaving out a “Prayer for Our Country” and “For the State of Israel,” which are in the same sections of the Reform *Siddur Mishkan T’filah* as a “Prayer for Our Congregation.” This service is a reproduction of the Shabbat evening service from *Mishkan T’filah* with the addition a “Prayer for Our Congregation” and the closing *T’filah* sections from *Mishkan T’filah*. Valley Temple, like many other Reform congregations, originally was anti-Zionist in ideology. However, as the movement’s attitudes changed in regard to Israel, so did those at Valley Temple. The exclusion of the Prayer for Israel in their Kabbalat Shabbat service does not speak to a feeling of anti-Zionism. The inclusion of only the “Prayer for Our Congregation” is not a statement against Israel. Rather, as this service was a Confirmation Service, the Valley Temple chose to celebrate the children of the community in prayer. Similarly, the lack of prayers for Israel in a variety of individual services and congregational prayer books may indicate only that the issue is less salient liturgically than other concerns.

Two other Confirmation services, both from Temple Emanu-El in Atlanta, Georgia, both include a “Prayer for the State of Israel.” This prayer is another adaptation of the prayer written by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel in 1948. Beginning with the words, *Avinu shebashamayim*, “Our Father in heaven, Rock and Redeemer of the people Israel...,” this prayer first asks for God’s blessing on the State of Israel followed by a request for divine protection and finishing by asking God to bless the Land with peace.

These two Confirmation services include these prayers just after *Shalom Rav*, the prayer for peace and just before *Mi Shebeirach* and the Silent Prayer. The implication is that as we ask God for peace and protection we take a few moments to think of our fellow Jews in the State of Israel as well.

A creative service from Goldman Union Camp in July, 1998 includes two prayers that reflect opinions on Israel. The first prayer, **החזרת השכינה**, “The Restoration of the Shechina,” prays for the return of the Shechina, the immanent, feminine aspect of God, to Israel. With the return of the Shechina to Jerusalem, peace will be felt throughout the land as all places will be infused by the presence of the Shechina. This prayer seems to imply that when God’s presence returns to Jerusalem, all of the world will benefit. This is an ancient idea; however, its inclusion in a contemporary creative service signifies a very strong connection to the Land of Israel and the significance of God’s presence there. The second prayer is a poem written by Amy Izen entitled “O Ishmael.” The theme of this poem is one of reconciliation between Ishmael and Isaac, the two sons of Abraham. Capturing a cry and plea for peace between the descendents of Ishmael and Isaac, this poem suggests that as they were once together when they buried Abraham, it could happen again. Both of these creative writings pray for peace: the return of God’s presence to Jerusalem and the reconciliation between the sons of Ishmael, the Arabs, and the sons of Isaac, the Jews.

Another creative service from Goldman Union Camp expresses expectations and hopes for the future on the part of those who wrote the various service sections. Although most of the written sections refer to new schools and successful future careers, the first begins by speaking of a future that will finally include peace in Israel. The

author of this section writes that he hopes that there will be no more war and no more bombing. It is likely that this service was written by children aged 14-15, as this was the final service for the summer. It certainly does say something about this generation of children if one of the first things that are prayed for is the peace of Israel!

I have also selected two creative services, both from the Southern area region of the North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), to illustrate possible differences that appear in the Reform Jewish world with regard to Israel. The first service entitled “Pursuing Peace, Reflections on War” was created by the Temple Emanu-El Federation of Temple Youth in Atlanta, Georgia. From the title of the service, it is clear that the youth group members wanted to address an essential value of Judaism – seeking peace. The service was used on February 21, 2003, just a year and a half after the tragic events of September 11, 2001. It is clear that the youth group members were responding to what they envisioned as challenges in the United States as a result of the aftermath of September 11.

This service does present an overall theme of seeking for world peace. However, what is missing is a prayer of any kind for the State of Israel. I understand that the youth group members wanted to focus on the United States of America and our government, but I was a bit surprised not to have found a prayer for Israel. I do not believe this implies the youth group was anti-Zionist; again, I believe it shows their nationalism and strong patriotic ties to the United States. This, no doubt, was instilled in their identities early on in their Jewish and non-Jewish experiences.

The second creative service from the Southern area region of NFTY was for Erev Shabbat during the Liz Leadership Training Institute. This particular convention was

geared for the leaders in the regional youth movement and carried the following theme: “Am Segullah: A Treasured People, Building a Kehillah K’doshah, a Holy Community.” The readings chosen and written for this service all reference the qualities of a good leader. One particular piece, written by Shira Pratt, a 12-year-old Israeli girl, speaks to a hope for peace for Israelis and Palestinians, regardless of the side of the Green Line on which one lives. This beautiful work reflects the hopes of one Israeli for the leaders of her country as well as for the leaders of those who oppose Israel. I believe the inclusion of this prayer in their creative service makes quite a statement. Placed just before the Hebrew prayer for peace and silent meditation, it gives us the opportunity to reflect on the beautiful words and our individual roles in pursuing peace.

The next section of creative services will be Shabbat morning services from the above mentioned organizations. While I expected to see a larger presence of prayers for Israel in this section, I was surprised to find fewer of these prayers. My research with the *siddurim* has shown that Reform organizations have been more likely to include a prayer for Israel either right before, during, or immediately after the Torah service. However, at least with the one hundred or so services I perused, I only found a few examples of prayers that expressed an opinion on Israel. The majority of those services, including two of the three examples I have chosen to discuss in this thesis, placed the prayers for Israel around the **ברכת שלום**, the prayer for Peace.

The first example comes from a creative service organized for a youth convention in 1993 held in Chattanooga, Tennessee. This service contains a prayer for Israel found in the *Gates of Prayer* on page 385. This convention’s theme was “Yad b’Yad,” that all Jews could work hand in hand with our non-Jewish neighbors to create a world of peace

and love. The prayer that mentions Israel asks God to strengthen those who are working to rebuild Israel. This prayer continues by asking God to feed and take care of everyone in the world, seeking a world in which all are treated with kindness. Placed between a responsive reading that asks for there to be acceptance and love where there is now prejudice, and a part of the *Kedushah*, it is clear that the group of youth who put this service together had as their theme the idea that while we pray to God for help in attaining peace, we must also work together with each other to bring about that peace.

The second service is a Shabbat morning *T'fillah* from a College Convention at Hebrew Union College in 1999. The theme of this service was “that which has been commanded,” and includes creative writings from a variety of sources including one prayer written by a 13-year-old Jerusalemite, Shlomit Grossberg. In this prayer, Shlomit asks God what she should pray for. She claims to lack nothing and only requests one thing for everyone in the world: peace. To quote the end of the poem, “What shall I ask You for, God? I have everything. Peace is what I ask for, Only peace.” This young Israeli teen requests the one thing which she believes the adults around her have been unable to accomplish. For Shlomit, only God can bring peace to her land, the Land of Israel.

The final service I will include in this section is a Shabbat morning service from Camp Teko, the summer camp affiliated with Temple Israel of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Just after *V'Shamru*, a biblical verse that articulates the meaning of the Shabbat commandment, we find a meditation using the words of the Prayer for Israel from the *Gates of Prayer*, page 385. This is the same prayer mentioned above that asks God to give strength to those who are in the process of rebuilding Israel as well as asking for

God to look out for all of those in the world who are hungry, whether it be a physical or spiritual hunger.

While I expected to find prayers for Israel or writings that spoke of Israel in the Torah section, as are found in the Reform *siddurim*, these prayers were mostly found near the Prayer for Peace. One explanation of this is that most NFTY and camp kids think thematically rather than structurally with regard to the services they create. Many of these kids had not regularly experienced in their congregations the model found in the Reform *siddur*. My findings in this section tell me that while some Reform institutions and organizations choose to pray for peace in Israel, others either choose to include readings that express our hope for Israel, or to pray for the health and safety of their individual organizations and/or communities. I do not believe there is a message that ignores or portrays Israel in a negative light. I do believe, however, that maintaining peace and harmony in their individual communities may come first.

In the next section of this chapter, I will examine services for Yom Hazikaron, Yom Ha-atzma'ut and Yom Yerushalayim. I do expect to find a greater variety of prayers for Israel. In this section, I will also include my research from an examination of a packet designed by the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA) for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Israel's independence. Included in this section will be a brief discussion of a few examples of services, then I will discuss my overall findings for this section.

When I was very young, my synagogue would celebrate Israel's Independence Day with an "Israel Day." This consisted of a short service with a few poems written by Israeli writers followed by a program with Israeli food, Israeli music, Israeli dancing and other Israeli cultural projects. It was as if for one day we celebrated Israel and then went

back to our “normal” American Jewish lives. As I grew older, especially when I was in NFTY in high school, the services started to take on more meaning to me. The poetry we read was no longer just from Israeli writers. My friends and I were now writing about Israel as if we lived there and struggled with those who actually lived in Israel.

From the services I have studied – from a variety of organizations and groups – I have found that Israel remains of strong importance to progressive American Jews. Even services that contain a prayer for Israel that may seem critical have an overall supportive feeling. Yom Ha-atzma’ut and Yom Hazikaron appear to be observances that synagogues and organizations are trying to focus on to help foster the relationships between our American Jewish youth and Israel. Including a prayer for Israel in a service does not necessarily indicate a strong relationship, but the words used, even when critical, can make the difference in helping to foster this solidarity.

When my wife and I moved to Atlanta, Georgia, we joined Temple Emanu-El. For the first time in my life, I was teaching in a classroom next to an Israeli teacher. So, of course, our services and programs that celebrated Israel were much more thought-out and focused. The first service from which I quote in this section is a Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha-atzma’ut service which was held just after Wednesday night Hebrew School. We invited parents and congregation members to join us. Unfortunately, as I remember, there were not many congregational members who actually showed up. The theme of the service was “we,” not “they.” We were mourning the loss of Israeli soldiers together with Israelis. We remembered those who sacrificed their lives for our Jewish homeland.

This particular service begins with a description of the significance of Yom Hazikaron, not just from an Israeli or American perspective, but from a shared Jewish

perspective. The first reading that everyone reads begins, “We stand together, proclaiming our solidarity with Israel. We honor the memory of our brothers and sisters...”<sup>95</sup> Each teacher in the religious school was given a section of a memorial prayer to read and a candle to light in memory of the soldiers who had died in Israeli wars as well as the victims of terror attacks in Israel. The inclusive language, “we,” “ourselves,” etc. clearly indicates that the American and Israeli Jewish communities are one community in remembering those who had died.

The service continues according to the pattern of observance in Israel as the Yom Hazikaron service transitions to the Yom Ha-atzma’ut service. The inclusive language continues with the following, “On this anniversary of Israel’s birth, Jews around the world celebrate with parades, parties and songs of joy. We join in this global celebration and read from the Declaration of Israel’s Independence...”<sup>96</sup> The reading of the Israeli Declaration of Independence also illustrates the solidarity this American Jewish community feels with Israel. The service ends with the congregation rising and joining together in singing the Israeli national anthem, “Hatikvah,” yet another example of the identification of the American Jewish community with the Israeli Jewish community.

Yet another interesting American Jewish innovation is the *Haggadah* for Yom Ha-atzma’ut, although there are now such *Haggadot* written in Israel as well. As the Hebrew word *Haggadah* means “telling,” this innovation is a service which tells the story of Israel and her independence. In these services, Jews learn about Israel and her wonders while at the same time recognizing God’s gift of Israel to the Jews and their responsibility to maintain Israel. Often these *Haggadot*, when retelling the story of the

---

<sup>95</sup> Service for Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha-atzma’ut, Temple Emanu-El Atlanta, 2007.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.



modern-day nation of Israel, link the story of the Holocaust with the formation of the new State of Israel. We find quotes from famous Holocaust survivors such as Elie Wiesel. It is a very clear attempt to link the Diaspora Jewish community with the Israeli Jewish community.

Two such *Haggadot*, both produced by the United Jewish Appeal (now the United Jewish Communities) in the mid 1970's, have very powerful and meaningful prayers that certainly help to foster the relationship between the Jewish communities in Israel and the Diaspora. The first example, a *Haggadah* from 1974 with the theme "A Moment in Time," includes a variety of voices which show a strong connection with Israel. Produced right after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the words of this *Haggadah* intend to be inclusive, showing that Israel is not alone. American Jews were in pain for the loss of the soldiers in the 1973 Yom Kippur War; at the same time, American Jews celebrated with Israel her independence and continued existence despite the troubles that were still present in the Middle East.

The following section from this *Haggadah* expresses this deep connection:

We all learned how deep our personal involvement is with the existence of Israel. Our attitude during the Yom Kippur War was not sympathy or compassion: we were ourselves in the crisis. The qualities manifested in the days of crisis, qualities of care and readiness for sacrifice, are not accidental. They are the result of two thousand years of living, suffering, striving, and dreaming. We share joy as well as anxiety. We care intimately and strongly.<sup>97</sup>

A second *Haggadah* from 1975 entitled "We Are One," represents a continuation of the strong message of family that exists between the Jews of Israel and the United States. This service begins with the singing of "Hatikvah," the Israeli national anthem. Filled with songs and readings that speak of unity and reunification, it is clear that the

---

<sup>97</sup> "A Moment in Time: Haggadah for Israel Independence Day." Rabbinical Advisory Council of the United Jewish Appeal. New York, NY. 1974.

liturgy and creative readings in this service are making a very strong statement. Jews, no matter where they live, are part of the same vibrant and living family: **עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל הִיא**.

The covenant referred to in this service is not just for the Jews of Israel – but for all Jews, regardless of their location. “It is because of *memory, hope* and *courage* that we turn eternally to Eretz Yisrael – The Holy Land.”<sup>98</sup> The “we” in this quote represents the sentiments of this *Haggadah*: the Jewish communities of Israel and the United States are together in every aspect.

In 1969, the Central Conference of American Rabbis adopted a resolution that directed its Committee on Liturgy to prepare a service and cultural program for Yom Ha-atzma’ut, making the American Reform movement the first congregational movement in the United States to do so. In 1970, it was determined that a fixed liturgy for Yom Ha-atzma’ut would not satisfy the needs of their colleagues in the field. Therefore a compilation of a variety of sources was prepared by Malcolm Stern, which included services by many of his colleagues. This collection of source materials was intended to signify the importance of Israel in the lives of the American Reform Jewish community. Below is an example of one of the sources, a Prayer for Israel, which was included in this collection.

O Guardian of Israel, we turn to you with hope renewed, with hearts aglow in gratitude. From the tiny land of Israel’s birth You scattered Your people among the nations to be living witnesses of Your word. Often through the centuries Your message went unheeded. Our fathers suffered and felt the wrath of men, but it was not Your will that Israel should perish. In the night of darkness there glowed in the hearts of the people a dream – that Zion might be restored. For there the Psalmists had sung their praise to You; the prophets thundered calls to justice. There our faith was born and nurtured. There we discovered You.

---

<sup>98</sup> “*We Are One: Haggadah for Israel Independence Day.*” Rabbinical Advisory Council, United Jewish Appeal. New York, NY. 1975.

We are grateful, O God, that Zion has been reborn. Out of darkness, a light came; out of destruction, a nation born. The soul of the Jewish people has been revived and strengthened. The barren soil has yielded fruit. The homeless have found a home [i.e., those persecuted European Jews still in need of a refuge]. Lord of the land and people of Israel, hear our gratitude!

We praise You for the triumph of human spirit from which this miracle has been wrought. O protect and prosper those who labor for the up building of our ancient land. Guard those who dwell within it. Be their shield and strength. May each anniversary of the state find it more secure. Inspire its leaders with wisdom and with faith that from Zion may go forth new light to the nations: the light of liberty and justice, the light of brotherhood and lasting peace. Amen.<sup>99</sup>

In anticipation of the celebration of Israel's 60<sup>th</sup> Yom Ha-atzma'ut, the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA) put together a binder of services and resources available for Reform congregations that wanted or needed help with their own celebrations. Complete with readings for before and after a variety of Hebrew prayers, this binder included everything any congregation would need. As with many of the other creative liturgies I have studied, the ARZA binder uses inclusive language. I will cite in this section one of the prayers found in this collection as well as place one of the prayers from this ARZA supplement in the Appendix.

*On Behalf of Israeli Defense Forces:*

May the One who blessed our fighters Joshua, David and Judah, Deborah, Yael and Judith, bless those who have been called to active service. May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that they be guided safely and protected against every enemy and harm. May their path be successful and guard their going out and coming in to life and peace now and forever. And let us say: Amen.<sup>100</sup>

Proclaimed a new holiday in 1968 by the Israeli government and written into law in 1998, Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day) celebrates the reunification of Jerusalem under Israeli control in 1967. American Reform congregations began celebrating Jerusalem Day soon after it was legalized in Israel, i.e., after 1998, not after 1968. Many

---

<sup>99</sup> Malcolm Stern, *Prayer for Israel*, 1970.

<sup>100</sup> Adapted from the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism's Siddur. "On Behalf of Israeli Defense Forces..." *Our Israel: A Reform Response*, sponsored by ARZA for the URJ. Worship Supplement, Page 1

of these congregations have services for their community in which Israeli songs and writings are read. Although this is a day of great celebration, it is also a time to remember those who lost their lives in the battles that allowed Jerusalem to be united.

As a response to my request from rabbis in the field, I received two services for Yom Yerushalayim. With permission from Rabbi Don Cashman of B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation in Albany, NY, I will present a reflection on these two services. The first service is a Kabbalat Shabbat service booklet that begins with the lighting of the Shabbat candles. Throughout this service, we find beautiful readings about Jerusalem and our connection to her. One of the readings speaks about the ongoing spiritual connection of the Jews to Eretz Yisrael. "Spiritually the Jews have never left Eretz Israel. In the Diaspora they live according to its calendar, celebrating the spring and the harvest when it is spring and harvest time in Eretz Israel..."<sup>101</sup> The prayer continues with a description of how Jews from all over the world enacted a variety of concrete and abstract moments tied to the Land of Israel throughout their daily lives. These are precisely the types of things that were eliminated by the early Reformers in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The second service was compiled to celebrate the "36<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of Jerusalem." Rabbi Cashman includes in this service countless sources about Jerusalem. Taking up the themes of the traditional Jewish prayers, these writings about Jerusalem are intended to create a traditional-feeling service while at the same time celebrating Jerusalem and her unification in 1967. This was also a *Kabbalat Shabbat* service beginning with candle-lighting and *Kiddush*. The service presents several readings that glorify God for bringing us out of exile and back to Israel. One beautiful

---

<sup>101</sup> *Yom Yerushalayim*, B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation. Albany, NY, late 1980's.

story, written by Elie Wiesel, is found just before the Mourner's Kaddish. The story begins, "I shall never forget my arrival in Jerusalem..."<sup>102</sup> and continues to speak about how the souls of those who died in the *Shoah* are protecting Israel today, even during the wars she fights. I believe this beautiful story is being used to show that those who died in the Holocaust and those Israeli soldiers who have died defending Israel did not die in vain. Their souls are continuously watching over and protecting all of Israel – in Eretz Yisrael and in the Diaspora.

For the final section of this chapter, I have read and researched some of the occasional liturgies found in the library at HUC-Cincinnati as well as several creative prayers that were sent to me from rabbis and educators in the field. I will present my findings for this section by first presenting a description and summary of the creative prayers, including one rabbinic thesis that contains a creative prayer for Yom Ha-atzma'ut, that were sent to me, followed by a summary of the occasional congregational liturgies from the Klau Library. Following this section will be an overall summary of my research and findings from this chapter. Many of the prayers discussed in this chapter are to be found in the Appendix at the end of this thesis.

While I admit that I did not receive a lot of prayers from the field, the ones I did receive were beautifully written and very interesting. I have received Tu B'Shevat services from ARZA, and personal prayers from poets Betsy Fuchs and Alden Solovy. I also was granted permission to reproduce the creative prayer on behalf of Israel written by Rabbi Joel Simonds in his 2009 rabbinic thesis. Each of these along with the many other prayers I read contains the hope of peace for Israel and for Israel's neighbors. Even the writings that seem to be critical of Israel are so with the intention of challenging the

---

<sup>102</sup> *Yom Yerushalayim*, B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation, Albany, NY. 2002-2003

State of Israel to improve itself and attempt to fulfill the biblical prophecies of social justice and peace.

One of the prayers I received was written by Betsy Fuchs. On her website, one can find a variety of prayers, including a prayer regarding Israel. While her prayer speaks about bringing together Jews from all around the world, the following excerpt speaks directly to bringing peace not just for the Jews, but for those with whom the Jews have struggled throughout history, “So this day we do not ask that You God make the miracle of peace happen for us. Rather we pray that You give us the strength to struggle with each other through sacred words (all words are sacred) and through sacred arguments (loud, angry, prolonged as they may be).”<sup>103</sup> Her words speak to an idea that is present in Reform Jewish thought today: peace can only come in the Middle East when everyone is granted an equal partnership in the discussions. She is not critical of Israel; rather, she encourages Israel and her neighbors to see each other as family and as equals.

Alden Solovy, a modern poet and writer, has written some very beautiful poetry regarding Israel. His website <http://tobendlight.com/> includes prayers on a variety of subjects including Israel. For this section, I would like to focus on one of his poems, “For Peace In the Middle East.” This poem reminds us of the link between Jews, Christians and Muslims, taking us all the way back to Abraham, Hagar and Sarah. One of the paragraphs speaks directly to these three religions, “One G-d. My brother calls you Allah. My sister calls you Adonai. You speak to some through Moses. You speak to some through Mohammed. We are one family, cousins and kin.”<sup>104</sup> This is a poem that asks God to bring peace to all of the brothers and sisters of these three religions and to the

---

<sup>103</sup> *Betsy's Prayers*. Web. 02 Dec. 2011. <<http://www.betsysprayers.com>>.

<sup>104</sup> *To Bend Light*. Web. 08 Dec. 2011. <<http://tobendlight.com/>>.

Middle East. Just when we are about to forget about our connection to each other, we should read this poem and relearn who we are and where we come from. Beautifully written, this poem contains language that is not forceful, but passionate and comforting. It is this link to Israel, as a land and a state, that we should all remember when we consider our relationships as Jews, Muslims and Christians to the land of Our Father, Abraham.

In 2009, Rabbi Joel Simonds of University Synagogue in Los Angeles, California submitted his rabbinic thesis to HUC-JIR, Los Angeles, which was entitled “The Religiosity of Yom Ha-atzma’ut: How We View the Creation of the Modern State of Israel in Our Religious Practice.” In his thesis, Rabbi Simonds takes a look at the religious significance of what some consider a secular holiday. In the final chapter, Rabbi Simonds includes a new prayer for Yom Ha-atzma’ut. In this chapter, Rabbi Simonds explains his reasoning for writing this new prayer:

Through my research I have become envious of the rich and public debate in Orthodox communities regarding the religiosity of Yom Haatzmaut...While writing a Seder Yom Haatzmaut would be a bit too ambitious, I have created a prayer for Yom Haatzmaut which can express our cautious theology towards the Land and State of Israel.<sup>105</sup>

Rabbi Simonds’ stated intention is bold, as it is a very difficult task to write a prayer which appeals to the wide spectrum of Reform theology. However, my belief is that Rabbi Simonds’ prayer is a beautiful affirmation of the sanctity of the Land of Israel; at the same time he is asking God to provide us the opportunity to continue establishing

---

<sup>105</sup> Joel Simonds, “The Religiosity of Yom Ha-atz’ma’ut: How we View the Creation of the Modern State of Israel in our Religious Practice,” Rabbinic Thesis, Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, Los Angeles, 2009, p. 65.

Israel – to push ourselves and the leaders of our communities to make the State of Israel *Or Lagoyim*, a “light unto the nations.” His prayer is included in the Appendix.

Within the occasional liturgies in the Klau Library at HUC-Cincinnati, I found approximately 200 services in several categories: regular and special *shabbatot*, Israel and Yom Ha-atzma’ut, Yom Hashoah Holocaust-related observances. Many of the themes that have been present in the Reform liturgies I have researched are found in these services. While these services extend an arm of support and comfort to Israel, they also celebrate the unity of American Jewry and Israel Jewry. The statement being made is that while American Jewry (and all Diaspora Jewry) stand with Israel, American Jews are comfortable in their “new Zion.” Even in the current times, American Jews are supportive of Israel while at the same time celebrating our loyalty to the United States. As I have shown earlier in my research, even those prayers which may appear to be critical of Israel are so in a supportive and loving manner.

I sifted through two boxes of occasional liturgies, containing roughly 150 services as well as many other non-service resources. I found a variety of services ranging from regular Shabbat services to Selichot services. I have selected six services to focus on for this section. The six services come from four congregations: Washington Hebrew Congregation, the Jewish Community Center of White Plains, NY, Congregation Emanuel B’nei Jeshurun in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Temple Akiba in Culver City, California, and two organizations: the CCAR and the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East (as sent to HUC by the URJ). Each of these services contains very thoughtful prayers regarding Israel, either from Jewish sources or creative prayers written by varying authors.



The first two services, both of which marked the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the State of Israel in 1974, come from Congregation Emanu-El B'nei Jeshurun in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and the Jewish Community Center of White Plains, NY. Both services have some sort of introduction, either an opening hymn or a short speech. The service from the Jewish Community Center contains the themes of beauty, yearning, nostalgia and hope. The readings in this service attempt to take those in attendance on a journey that eventually brings them to the hope of an Israel that is united and peaceful. Every reading is a translation of a song that is sung by the choir and congregation, allowing the congregation to wander spiritually and find their own connection to Israel based in the texts of the service.

The service from Temple Emanu-El-B'nei Jeshurun seems to be more of a structured service – structured around the traditional liturgy. The themes present in this service are: the miracle of Israel, the promise from God to Israel, the harvest of Israel, and the thanksgiving of Israel. This service creatively traces the nation of Israel back to biblical times and then reminds us of God's promise that in every generation Israel will merit the fulfillment of the promise to our ancestors. In the section "The Harvest," we find the affirmation of Israel from American Jewry. The identity of the Jewish people was reattached to the land of Israel and the American Jewish community stood by first in line of support. In the final section, "The Thanksgiving," we find a commitment to Israel and the request that God help us (all of Israel) to continue to make Israel the land of social justice and freedom for all. This is a beautiful service which recognizes the importance of our dedication to Israel while at the same time encouraging all of world Jewry to work together in building up the state as a "light to the nations".

The third synagogue service is a Shabbat morning service from Washington Hebrew Congregation. The first remarkable aspect of this service is that it was prepared for the *bar mitzvah* of Thomas Alan Forman and the *bat mitzvah* of Lory Ann Farber and Bonnie Starr. This Shabbat service took place in the Hebrew Union College Chapel in Jerusalem, Israel in 1978. The fact that this service was held in Jerusalem is already a strong statement of support for Israel. That this service was held on the campus of Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem also shows a strong connection to Reform Judaism and expresses a very positive link between Reform Judaism, American Judaism and Israel. Throughout this service, we find various writings which celebrate the beauty and wonder of Israel.

There are three particular prayers which relay a message of peace between Israel and her neighbors, in fact between Israelis and the whole world. I will include one of the prayers here and the other two can be found in the Appendix. This prayer, entitled "Peace is a Young Mother," gets right to the point of what peace means to this young man aged 13. This prayer is a cry for peace, one that requires every man, woman and child to listen:

Peace is a young mother  
Walking with her son  
Hand in hand,  
A smile of happiness  
On her face;  
And you knowing  
You will not have  
To meet her again in the street  
Ten years later  
Wearing black,  
Tearful and wrinkled  
A look of endless grief  
In her eyes  
Which nothing can console.

Peace is all this  
For us and for other people as well.  
All this and much,  
Much more.<sup>106</sup>

The final synagogue service is a Yom Ha-atzma'ut and Yom Hashoah double service from Temple Akiba in Culver City, California. The section I have selected is from the Yom Ha-atzma'ut service. This service begins with a reading followed by a song. This same method continues throughout this service with each reading building upon the previous one. The final reading just before "Hatikvah," an excerpt from the Israeli Declaration of Independence, sends a very clear message of support and articulates the mission of American Jewry with regard to Israel:

We extend our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help. We appeal to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of ERETZ YISRAEL in the tasks of immigration and up-building and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age old dream – the redemption of Israel.<sup>107</sup>

The last two services I read through come from two different organizations: the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the United States Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East. What these two services have in common is their intention: hoping to create peace in the Middle East. The first service is for the opening of the CCAR Conference in Jerusalem on Tuesday, June 23, 1981. The CCAR has made a commitment to support Israel in every way possible, and this includes having its annual conference in Israel every seven years. The title of this service is "For the Peace and Well-Being of Jerusalem." Throughout this service are readings that speak to the beauty

---

<sup>106</sup> Shai Ben Moshe, "Peace is a Young Mother," Kfar Mordechai, Israel, found in Washington Hebrew Congregation, Shabbat in Jerusalem, August 12, 1978.

<sup>107</sup> Temple Akiba, Culver City, California, "Yom Ha-atzma'ut and Yom Hashoah Shabbat Service," 1981.

of Jerusalem, all of Jerusalem, and the need for peace among brothers, all of the inhabitants, of Jerusalem: “Guard me, O God, from hating man my brother, Guard me from recalling what, from my earlier youth, he did to me. Even when all the stars in my sky are quenched, even when my soul’s voice grows mute – when I am overcome by disaster, let me not lay bare his guilt...”<sup>108</sup>

The final creative service I am discussing in this section is entitled “A Service of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East.” Prepared by the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, the cover contains a picture of a dove, the international symbol for peace, on top of three banners representing the three major religions in the Middle East: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Created with the intention of being a service that spoke to all members of these three world religions, it contains readings from each of the religious traditions. The service begins with the singing of “The God of Abraham Praise,” a hymn that represents the relationship that each of the three religions share: each comes from Father Abraham, a hymn very similar to *Yigdal* found in our *siddurim*. Within each section of the service, we find a reading from the Scriptures of each religion, followed by a reflection and a space for prayer. The closing song of this service once again represents the theme of the service, “Let There Be Peace On Earth.” The prayers included in this service may be found in the Appendix.

In the concluding chapter of this thesis, I will speak more about my research findings. However, one main theme I have found in my research is a very deep and real support for Israel. Even within the most modern creative services, I have found prayers that hope and pray for peace in the Middle East between all brothers and sisters. Those

---

<sup>108</sup> Service for the Opening of the Conference of the CCAR, Jerusalem, Israel, “For the Peace and Well-Being of Jerusalem,” 1981.

prayers which at first glance may seem critical of Israel are meant to be both critical and supportive. Just as we are sometimes critical of members of our family, we should be critical of Israel. We should do so with a heart of love and remain supportive, even in our criticism. One major argument I have heard against criticism of Israel is that one cannot really understand what it is like in Israel until she has journeyed to Israel. I believe that the most critical of prayers are those written by Jews who have traveled to Israel and seen the real potential that exists there. However, these same prayers are critical while remaining supportive of Israel. After all, it is Eretz Yisrael that is in our hearts and Medinat Yisrael of which one may in fact be critical.

## Conclusion

When I began my research for this thesis, I believed that the liturgy of the American Reform movement in recent decades would prove to show changes in the attitude of American Reform Jews to Israel. I have to admit, though, that the results of my study show the exact opposite of my original belief. I believed that the liturgy would show a cynical eye to Israel and even an angry or annoyed eye at Israel. What I discovered is that while some Jews may be critical of the State of Israel – the government - all Jews seem to want peace and safety for the Land of Israel – the people, all of the people in Israel. As I find liturgy to be a very meaningful way to express one's aspirations and give others the opportunity to reflect on a variety of topics and ideas, it was my hope and expectation that liturgy produced over the past thirty years would show these changes. I read through and studied hundreds of creative services from youth groups, camps, HUC-JIR, synagogues as well as many creative synagogue *siddurim*. I also studied the official *siddurim* of the American Reform movement.

Beginning with my research of the official *siddurim* of the American Reform movement, it was clear that the movement definitely shifted its attitude toward Israel beginning with the *siddur Gates of Prayer* in 1975. "Motivating factors for the change from *The Union Prayer Book* to *Gates of Prayer* were ideological changes that occurred especially in the post-World War II period, the importance of the *Shoah* and Israel following the June 1967 Six Day War, and the breakdown of the intellectual underpinnings of classical Reform Judaism."<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>109</sup> Peter S. Knobel, "The Challenge of a Single Prayer Book," in Kaplan, *Platforms and Prayer Books*, 159.

*Gates of Prayer* and all subsequent *siddurim* have included a prayer or a section on Israel and/or Israeli Independence Day as well as memorial services for Yom Hazikaron and Yom Hashoah. In *Mishkan T'filah*, the newest *siddur* of the American Reform movement, we find an entire section dedicated to Israel. This section, written and compiled by two Reform rabbis, one living in the United States and one living in Israel, shows an absolute commitment to Israel and her safety. *Mishkan T'filah* shows a very dramatic change in attitude toward Israel from the earlier *siddurim* of the American Reform movement, and certainly a more intense involvement with Israel on the part of the movement's rabbis. The apparent changes in the American Reform attitude toward Israel certainly are shown by the changing liturgy of the official movement *siddurim*.

In Chapter Two, I provided results of my research into creative American Reform *siddurim*. Many of the synagogue prayer books I studied also show a definite connection and commitment to the safety of Israel and to peace in the Middle East. In some of the examples, the prayers do not just lend a supportive hand to Israel, but to the entire Middle East. One example of a creative prayer from Chapter Three speaks to Isaac and Ishmael, the two sons of Father Abraham, asking them to remember how they were together when they buried their father. To some, this particular prayer might show a lack of support for Israel. However, I believe this prayer is only showing support for all of the descendants of Abraham, Jewish, Christian and Muslim, and a desire for the end of the conflict, which would bring peace to both Israel and her neighbors.

I believe that Chapter Three of this thesis provides even more support for the hypothesis of a shift in attitude toward Israel. The services I studied showed more support for Israel as well as her neighbors, praying for peace among all nations. In these

services, we see less of a hope for God to bring peace. Instead, we see prayers asking God to remind these fighting peoples of their connection to each other, begging for these men and women to bring peace for each other and their nations. The examples I included in Chapter Three really do provide more evidence of the growing hope of American Jews regarding the future of Israel and her people.

I have really enjoyed and have been blessed in researching this topic for this thesis. I have learned so much about the commitment of the American Reform movement to Israel and her future. Even the prayers that may have appeared to be critical or even against Israel actually had the intention to push Israel to be the nation that the Bible speaks about. These prayers encourage Israel to be *or la goyim*, “a light unto the nations.” In some ways, Israel is held to a higher standard, a self-imposed standard based on biblical requirements. If the State of Israel, the government of Israel, was to make decisions based on these biblical requirements, Israel would be that nation that we all hope and pray for.

It has been suggested that in order to really be supportive of Israel, one must consider that everything that Israel does is correct without any “checks and balances” on their decisions. I believe the prayers in each of these chapters and the examples in the Appendix pray for Israel to make decisions considering the welfare of all of its inhabitants, Jewish, Christian and Muslim. These prayers pray for peace and harmony for all people. I believe my research has shown that there has been a dramatic change in attitude toward Israel. American Reform Jews are absolutely supportive of Israel the Land and even Israel the State.



Two final thoughts regarding this change in attitude: 1) While Israel is important to American Jews, Israel does not have the same salience in a liturgical context for American Reform Jews as do their freedoms living in America, and 2) The concern for Israel often is infused with an idealistic aspiration for peace and justice in the Middle East and the rest of the world. This idealistic aspiration was intensified after the Lebanon War in 1981 and with the rise of right-wing (Likud) governments in Israel. This wish for an idealistic state certainly has also been affected by the portrayal of Israel in press coverage throughout the world. American Reform Jews wish for Israel to be the just and right society that is spoken about in our sacred texts, the Torah. It is precisely this reason why American Reform Jews expect that all Jews, including those in the State of Israel, should live a socially and morally better life. It is necessary for these two groups of Jews, Israeli and American (and all Diaspora Jews), to work together to create that future for our children for which we all hope and to which we all aspire.

## Appendix

I was very blessed in my research to come across some very beautiful and inspirational prayers. Some of them are prayer book prayers that have stayed constant over the years in Reform or Progressive Jewish prayer books. Others, like the poetry from Chapter Three, were written within the past few years as part of a reflection on the current situation in Israel and in the world. I do feel that many Jews are critical of Medinat Yisrael, the State of Israel. I also believe that the criticism of some of these Jews comes from a place of love and affection. As I have stated a few times in my thesis, even the most critical of prayers ultimately pray for peace between Israel and her neighbors.

This Appendix shares some of the most interesting and inspirational prayers that I found. The structure of the Appendix is identical with the structure of my thesis. The first section of the Appendix contains prayers found in various prayer books from our movement and its synagogues. The second section includes creative prayers found in creative Shabbat, Weekday and Holiday services. Section three includes the creative prayer written by Rabbi Joel Simonds and a couple of poems from Betsy Fuchs and Alden Solovy.

## **Section 1: Prayers from Prayer Books**

### *The Silver Platter*

There is peace in the land.  
A red sky slowly dims  
Over smoldering frontiers.  
And a nation is gathered  
Scarred but alive...  
To welcome the miracle  
To which none is compared...

She prepares for the ceremony.  
Arising under the moon  
She stands before day-break  
Wrapped in festivity and awe.

Then a lad and a maiden  
Approach from afar  
And they march in slow cadence  
And confront the nation.  
In their work-clothes and full gear  
Heavy shoes on their feet  
Up the path they  
Silently march.  
Their garb has not been changed  
Nor has water erased  
The traces of the day's hard toil  
And the night's heavy fire.  
Exhausted beyond measure  
Having forsworn repose  
And dripping the dew-drops  
Of Hebrew youth  
Speechlessly the two step forward  
And stand motionless  
And there is no sign if they are living or slain.

The nation then asks  
Bathed in tears and in wonder  
"Who are you?"  
And the two reply:  
"We are the silver platter

Upon which the Jewish state was served to you.  
Thus they speak  
And they fall at her feet

Shrouded in shadows.

The rest will be told in Israel's chronicles.

**"The Silver Platter," by Nathan Alterman, in *The Pioneer Woman*, Vol. 39, No. 3, March 1964, pg. 18. Reprinted in *Bridges to a Holy Time*, edited by Alfred Jospe and Richard N. Levy, 1973, pgs. 148-149.**

**(This poem, in the original Hebrew, has been regularly used in Israeli ceremonies observing Yom Hazikaron since it was originally written)**

*From Psalm 122*

I rejoiced when they said to me: Let us go up to the House of the Lord.  
Now we stand within your gates, O Jerusalem!

Jerusalem restored! The city united and whole!  
Jerusalem, built to be a city where people come together as one.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: may those who love you prosper!  
Let there be peace in your homes, safety within your borders.

For the sake of my people, my friends, I pray you find peace.  
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.

May the Lord bless us from Zion, and let us see the good of Jerusalem.  
Peace be upon Israel.

**"For a Pilgrimage to Israel," from Psalm 122, in *Gates of the House: The New Union Prayerbook, Prayers and Readings for Home and Synagogue*, CCAR, 1977, pg. 24.**

*For the Sabbath Near Yom Ha-atsma-ut: Israel Independence Day*

O God, grant peace to the State of Israel. May security and justice dwell in her gates,  
cooperation and harmony among all her inhabitants. May the truths of Torah flow forth  
from Zion, and Your wisdom, O God, from Jerusalem.

***Shabbat Worship: Wilshire Boulevard Temple, 1987, pg. 76.***

*The Sabbath before Yom Ha-Atzmaut*

And now we are privileged to celebrate Israel's rebirth. We recall with gratitude the  
vision of its pioneers, the devotion of its builders, and the courage of its defenders. In the

desolate spaces of a never-forgotten homeland they have build villages and towns, planted gardens and established industries. We give thanks that out of the ashes of the death-camps there has arisen a land renewed, a haven where broken lives have been made whole again, an affirmation of our people's fidelity to its past and confidence in its future.

***Gates of Prayer for Shabbat and Weekdays, CCAR, 1994, pg. 182.***

*From Yom Ha-atz-ma-ut: The Anniversary of Israel's Founding*

*Reader:*

Guardian of Israel and Redeemer of all people, grant that Zion may become a light for all nations. Give is people strength to continue the sacred task of building a land in which the vision of justice and mercy shall be fulfilled, for the good of all humanity. Then shall the brightness of truth, compassion and peace shine forth from Zion, as it is written:

*Congregation:*

Out of Zion shall go forth God's teaching, and the word of the Eternal God from Jerusalem.

***Union Prayer Book: Sinai Edition, An Adaptation of Union Prayer Book from the CCAR, Chicago Sinai Congregation, 2000, pg. 133.***

*From the Torah Service*

Eternal God, our Rock and Redeemer, grant blessing to the State of Israel, created to fulfill our age-old dream and to be a haven for the oppressed of our people. Inspire its leaders and citizens to remain faithful to the aims of its founders: to develop the land for the benefit of all its inhabitants, and to implement the prophetic ideals of liberty and justice. May Israel and its neighbors live in peace and harmony so that our people may realize the ancient vision: "Out of Zion shall go forth Torah and the word of God from Jerusalem."

***Siddur Netivot Sholom, Temple Sholom of West Essex, Cedar Grove, New Jersey, 2005, pgs. 201-202.***

***The next two poems are from Mishkan T'filah, pgs. 545, 553, from the Yom HaAtzma-ut section:***

Israel is a personal challenge, a personal religious issue.  
It is a call to every one of us as an individual,  
A call which one cannot answer vicariously...  
The ultimate meaning of the State of Israel

Must be seen in terms of the vision of the prophets:  
The redemption of all...  
The religious duty of the Jew is to participate  
In the process of continuous redemption,  
In seeing that just prevails over power,  
That awareness of God penetrates human understanding.

Abraham Joshua Heschel

In one land especially we glimpsed the rays of a new dawn;  
The land of Zion, made ready for habitation by generations of pioneers.

The great day came:  
Israel independent at last, the millennial dream, a dream no more!  
Drawn by its brightness,  
Her children flocked to Israel from distant lands of despair and found hope.  
Though bent in mourning,  
They ploughed the earth deep, so that grain would grow tall.  
And as they restored the land to its fruitfulness,  
They began themselves to be restored.  
Israel lives: a people at home again,  
Rooted in its soil, its way of life, its ancient faith.

Chaim Stern

**The following two prayers come from *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav*, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, San Francisco, California, pgs. 45-46**

*For a Visit to Israel*

Yonder to the land that was promised  
We travel, one by one  
To claim the legacy  
To witness the energy.

Nowhere else is there magic  
Like the magic of Israel  
The light and the darkness  
The passion and the fury.

To step onto her soil  
Brings the nexus of the ancestors  
The wanderings, the oppression

The agonies, the victories.

The breeze of change races through  
Bringing waves of pride and magnificence  
Of purpose for all to claim and embrace,  
Our land, our home, our gift...

Marjorie Hilsenrad

*For Israel (1)*

This place is as broken as I am, the scarred hills and acres of my ancestors so much like the unhealed miles in my body. Every wind is stirred by the still small voice, and everywhere soil cracked by unruly roots forcing themselves to the skies. Let me move through this place cradling it as carefully as I wish I could my own heart, each step a prayer for its healing, a prayer for the ancestor I become.

Jacqui Shine

## **Section 2: Prayers from Creative Services**

### **החזרת השכינה**

#### **Hahazarat Hash'khinah**

Let us restore Shekhinah to her place  
In Israel and throughout the world,  
And let us infuse all places  
With her presence.

**Prayer taken from *Our Art as Prayer*, Goldman Union Camp Kabbalat Shabbat Service, Friday, July 31, 1998, pg. 5.**

What shall I ask You for, God?  
I have everything.  
There's nothing I lack.  
I only ask for one thing  
And not for myself alone;  
It's for many mothers, and children, and fathers-  
Not just in this land, but in many lands hostile to each other.  
I'd like to ask for Peace.  
Yes, it's Peace I want,  
And You, Yon won't deny the single wish of a child.  
You created the Land of Peace,

Where stands the City of Peace,  
Where stood the Temple of Peace,  
But where still there is not Peace...

What shall I ask You for, God? I have everything.  
Peace is what I ask for,  
Only Peace.

**Shlomit Grossberg, Age 13, Jerusalem, Taken from *That Which Has Been Commanded*, Shabbat Morning Tefillah, HUC-JIR College Convention, April 10, 1999, pg. 9.**

Sometimes I wonder, what if I was someone else  
Not born in Israel, but in Palestine?  
After all, it's the same place, so why two different names?  
And if I was born on the other side of the Green Line?  
Is my world so different here, so far?  
Perhaps, perhaps there is a girl like me, naïve  
Who asks: what would it be like if I were different?  
I'm sure she plays hopscotch and ball, just like me,  
And hates it when her father goes to the reserves  
"Just so we can be ready...in case..."  
She, too, must be sick of things as they are...

In a few years, when I am a soldier  
What will I tell that girl then?  
If only there would be a real peace!  
I bet she wants it as much as I do!  
Sure we have some agreements and signatures  
But also attacks and bombs  
And daily news of those wounded or killed  
They also cry over their dead...

So, for my sake, and her sake, and all of the children,  
Let us make peace between the two sides!  
Let us behave like human beings  
And make an end to tears and blood!!!

**Shira Pratt, age 12, Taken from *Am Segullah – A Treasured People*, Erev Shabbat, NFTY-SAR Liz Leadership Training Institute, September 2, 2005, pgs.7-8.**



**The following two prayers come from *Yom Ha-atzmaut Service: Marking the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The State of Israel*, Congregation Emanu-el B'nei Jeshurun, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April 26, 1974, pgs. 3-4.**

From *The Harvest*

Nowhere does the festival of Israel's freedom evoke a deeper sentiment than in these United States.

The American people was the first to sustain Israel in its solitude and peril at the moment of its birth.

Who can doubt the eminence of that moment among the supreme acts in human history!

For this was an hour which re-established the identity of a people, inaugurated the transformation of a land,  
Released the youthful vigor of an ancient culture; opened  
the gates of hope and freedom to hundreds of thousands in  
Distant lands;  
brought consolation to a people at the moment of its unfathomable grief, gave the community of nations a new link with its oldest spiritual roots...

From *The Thanksgiving*

Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who  
redeemed our forefathers from Egypt and has redeemed  
Israel in our own day.

So, O Lord our God of our fathers, may it be our privilege  
to achieve and witness yet other deliverances, of the spirit and of  
the body, of Israel and of the peoples of the world.

Such deliverances as the returning of Thy presence unto  
Zion, the emancipation of all the sons of man from all their  
servitudes, and the establishment of Thy kingdom of universal freedom, justice, and peace on earth. Blessed art  
Thou, O Lord, Redeemer of Israel.

**The following two prayers come from *Shabbat in Jerusalem*, Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, D.C., pgs. 4, 11**

Hear O Israel

Hear the unspoken love of parents  
the eloquence of hands  
clasped in friendship

the still small voice within  
and you will hear the voice of God.

Hear O Israel

Hear the voice  
demanding that  
you feed the hungry  
clothe the naked  
loosen the bonds  
and you will hear the voice of God.

Hear O Israel

The many languaged voices of men  
crying out for one another  
the birth pangs of brotherhood  
waiting to be born  
and you will understand the  
oneness of God.

*I Don't Like Wars*

I don't like wars  
They end up with monuments;  
I don't want battles to roar  
Even in neighboring continents.

I like Spring  
Flowers producing,  
Fields covered with green,  
The wind in the hills whistling.

Drops of dew I love,  
The scent of jasmine as night cools,  
Stars in darkness above.  
And rain singing in pools.

I don't like wars. They end  
In wreaths and monuments;  
I like Peace come to stay  
And it will some day.

Matti Yosef, Age 9, Bat Yam, Israel

**The following two prayers come from *Service for the Opening of the Conference of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, CCAR, Jerusalem, Israel.***

Reader

Glory unto those who hope,  
For the future is theirs.  
Who stand against the mountain without recoil  
Shall ascend its summit.

So hopes the river, pushing to the sea,  
For the freeing of its desires in the roar of the ocean.  
So hopes the tree, sending a branch toward the sky,  
To touch the palm of the sun some day.

And all who join in the covenant of hope with the universe –  
They are the heroes of aspiration.

Therefore, forge the future's desires,  
As the waves beat out the rocks of the shore.  
Form dreams of faithfulness.  
The desolation will not vanish from the wilderness before it vanishes from the heart...

David Rokeah

*Benediction (from Psalm 122:6-8)*

Ask for the peace of Jerusalem,  
Peace be within your walls,  
And well-being within your dwelling  
For the sake of all our brothers  
I will say: "Peace be among you."

**The following three prayers come from *A Service of Prayer for Peace In the Middle East*, U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1991.**

*By a Jew*

O God, Sovereign of all being,  
We beseech You to bless those entrusted with charting peace in the  
Middle East. Grant them the patience, understanding, vision and  
courage needed for this formidable challenge. And give them all  
full awareness of the awful consequences should they fail.

Help them to transcend self-righteousness and narrow nationalist thinking. Make your Spirit alive within them so they understand that ultimately only by securing peace and justice for all peoples in the Middle East will any people prosper.

O God, Source of Peace, help us as American Jews, Christians and Muslims shoulder our responsibility to create an atmosphere here that will encourage and sustain the best efforts by our own leaders as they seek to help achieve peace in the Middle East. And may the day come soon when all will share the blessings of Shalom. Amen.

*By a Christian*

O God of Peace and Justice,  
present in our midst even when we hide our faces from you,  
reaching out in yearning love even when we ignore you,  
and continuing to affirm us even when we deny you –  
Render our selfish wills vulnerable to your generous will for peace.

May the moving power of your Spirit trouble the waters  
of age old conflicts in the Middle East,  
so that a new vision can emerge, and we can begin, with your help,  
to shape that vision into the frail but breathtaking possibility  
of a Middle East – indeed, a whole world –  
in which the powerful share power and the powerless are granted power,  
so that the children of every tribe and nation in your human family  
can begin at last to live in peace. Amen.

*By a Muslim*

O God, Lord of all Beings,  
Lord of peace in whose hand is all good;  
give us peace in our world and peace with our neighbors!

All-merciful God, be gracious towards your servants  
who are engaged in the work of peace.  
help them to achieve a just and durable peace  
in your 'Holy House,' the land of peace.

Help us all to seek your good pleasure.  
Help us to love justice  
and to walk humbly with you in your ways,  
the ways of peace. Amen.

*Before the Mourner's Kaddish*

*Telling the Tale*

I shall never forget my arrival in Jerusalem. The war still raged in the Sinai, but it was only the fate of Jerusalem that caught the imagination of the Jewish people. The Arabs were still shooting from the rooftops, but Jews, in the thousands, ran to the Old City, and no one could stop them.

A bizarre, elemental force had suddenly taken possession of all Jews, rabbi and merchants, yeshivah boys and kibbutzniks, officers and schoolchildren, cynics and artists—all had forgotten everything. Each wanted to be at the Kotel HaMaaravi, to kiss the stones, to cry out prayers or memories. Each knew that on that historic day, in that week, the place of the Jew was at the Temple Mount.

I had the privilege to run with them. I have never run with such an impetus. I have seldom said “amen” with such devotion as when the paratroops, in their exaltation, prayed *Minhah*. I have never understood the profound meaning of *Ahavat Yisrael*, love of Israel, as I did on that day when I stood, as in a dream, under the burning sun and thought with pride of Jewish existence.

At that time an elderly Jew – I thought he was one of the main characters who had stepped out of one of my novels – remarked to me, “Do you know why and how we defeated the enemy and liberated Jerusalem? Because six million souls took part in our battle.”

Then I actually saw what the naked eye seldom sees: souls on fire floated high above us, praying to the Creator to protect them and all of us.

And this prayer itself was also transformed into a soul.

Elie Wiesel

**Originally printed in *Telling the Tale : A Tribute to Elie Wiesel on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday - Essays, Reflections, and Poems*, 1993. Reprinted in *Yom Yerushalayim*, B'nei Sholom Reform Congregation, Albany, NY, 2002-2003, pg. 9.**

*Before the Yotzer Prayer*

For us, as Reform Zionists, Israel is once again a source of hope. As a people with a sovereign state, we are no longer merely speaking truth to others who wield power: we now have the opportunity and imperative to use power as a force of good. As we bring our values to bear on our collective national venture, our tradition calls on us to seek a higher standard for nation-building and policy-making, and to let Torah lead us towards being an exemplar for the world. When we gather from the four corners of the earth, will we hold our heads high, ever ready to do the difficult work of tempering power with righteousness?

*Or chadash...* It is taught that within each of us resides Holy sparks of Divine light. As Israel, we are a people with a mission. As Israel, we aspire to nurture the holiness within.

As Israel, we gather our sparks into a great light – and work to direct that light for a holy purpose. In Israel, we have a locus for the gathering of our People's light and the chance to shine a light of holiness for the world. A new light once again shines from Tzion. May we work towards the day when each of us is reflected in that light.

*Or Chadash al Tzion ta-ir v'nizkeh kulanu m'heirah le-oro.* Shine a new light on Zion that we all may swiftly merit its radiance.

***Israel at 60 Weekend, ARZA.org, pg. 76.***

### **Section 3: Creative Prayers from Rabbi Joel Simonds, Betsy Fuchs and Alden Solovy**

#### *A Prayer for Yom Ha'atzmaut*

Adonai our God, guard and protect the State of Israel. On this Day of Independence, we thank You, Adonai our God, for providing us a Land and a State where we can fully serve You and all of humanity. Strengthen our hands and voices so that we may continue the creation of the State of Israel and build her up to be a beacon of hope and justice, of good and peace. May the words of our Prophets find voice in all who ascend to her highest peaks and all who walk in her sacred valleys. May the history of our sacred Land inspire the State and all who serve her to become a light unto the nations. Adonai our God, give us the strength and courage to make Israel the spiritual center from which our redemption will proceed.

**Rabbi Joel Simonds, "The Religiosity of Yom Ha'atzmaut: How We View the Creation of the Modern State of Israel in Our Religious Practice," Rabbinic Thesis, HUC-JIR Los Angeles, California, February 2009, pgs. 65-66.**

#### *Prayer for Peace in Medinat Yisrael*

Medinat Yisrael, Israel you were to be our refuge our hope, hatikvah.

You were to be the land where we could be a light to the nations.

Israel you are our home, our safe or not so safe haven, our mystical center.

Medinat Yisrael, Israel you are today a nation like other nations, taking your place as one among equals.

We, the scattered Jews, have been "led upright to our land, in peace from the four corners of the earth" some to visit, some to live. And some of us (not all of us) to pray, each in his own way, each in her own way.

We the religious ones pray to You God, some daily and some weekly on Shabbat, that you bring peace to Jerusalem. We the observant ones are reminded in our prayers that “we were strangers in the land of Egypt” and that we should welcome the others, the strangers, even those of us, Yehudim, who seem as strangers to others of us, even those of us who pray and live Jewishly yet differently.

We know God that you left it up to us to struggle with being human, with making peace, with welcoming the stranger, even the stranger among us, who is one of us.

So this day we do not ask that You God make the miracle of peace happen for us. Rather we pray that You give us the strength to struggle with each other through sacred words (all words are sacred) and through sacred arguments (loud, angry, prolonged as they may be).

We pray that with each other and with Your inspiration, we will bring peace within our extended mishpocheh, all of Bnai Yisrael in Medinat Yisrael and in the Disapora.

We pray that we may fulfill Your promise with much work, with much struggle, with love and understanding, to become a light unto the Jewish people first in Medinat Yisrael, and that the glow from this light illumine beyond in the Diaspora and beyond in the world.  
Amen.

Betsy W. Fuchs, <http://www.betsysprayers.com>, 2011.

### *For Peace in the Middle East*

Sons of Abraham,  
Sons of Hagar and Sarah,  
Of Isaac and Ishmael:  
Have you forgotten the day we buried our father?  
Have you forgotten the day we carried his dead body into the cave near Hebron?  
Have you forgotten the day we entered the darkness of Machpaelah  
To lay our Patriarch to rest?

Sons of Esau and Jacob:  
Have you forgotten the day we made peace?  
The day we set aside past injustices and deep wounds to lay down our weapons and live?  
Or the day we, too, buried our father? Have you forgotten that we took Isaac's corpse into that humble cave  
To place him with his father for eternity?

Brother, I don't remember crying with you.  
Sister, I don't remember mourning with you.

We should have cried the tears of generations.  
We should have cried the tears of centuries,  
The tears of fatherless sons  
And motherless daughters,  
So that we would remember in our flesh that we are one people,  
From one father on earth and one Creator in heaven,  
Divided only by time and history.

One G-d,  
My brother calls you Allah.  
My sister calls you Adonai.  
You speak to some through Moses.  
You speak to some through Mohammed.  
We are one family, cousins and kin.

Holy One,  
Light of truth,  
Source of wisdom and strength,  
In the name of our fathers and mothers,  
In the name of justice and peace,  
Help us to remember our history,  
To mourn our losses together,  
So that we may,  
Once more,  
Lay down our weapons and live.

G-d of All Being,  
Bring peace and justice to the land,  
And joy to our hearts.

© 2010 Alden Solovy and [www.tobendlight.com](http://www.tobendlight.com). All rights reserved.

*Israel: A Meditation*

Israel,  
You are my people.  
You are my heart and you are my hope.  
We waited together at the mountain  
When G-d revealed the Holy Word.  
We wandered together through the desert  
On the path to sacred soil.  
We watched the sea part.  
We heard the heavens roar.  
We stood at the doorway to freedom,  
At the border of a Promised Land.



Israel,  
You are my destiny.  
You are my joy and you are my truth.  
We were victorious at Jericho,  
Unyielding at Masada.  
We defied empires  
For Torah.  
We defied kings  
For justice and freedom.  
We've traveled the earth,  
Wandered the millennia,  
Refugees of the ages,  
Homeless and hopeful,  
Waiting to return  
To native ground.

Israel,  
You are my brother in history,  
My sister in fortune,  
The mother of my spirit,  
The father of my heart,  
The child of my longing,  
And the light of generations.  
To you I pledge my right arm  
And my voice in song.  
To you I pledge my soul.  
To you I pledge my spirit.

Israel,  
You are my nation.  
You are my inheritance.  
You are my home.

© 2010 Alden Solovy and [www.tobendlight.com](http://www.tobendlight.com). All rights reserved.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources:

Bronstein, Herbert, and Leonard Baskin. *A Passover Haggadah*. New York: Grossman Publishers, 1974.

Central Conference of American Rabbis. *Gates of the House: The New Union Home Prayer Book*. New York: CCAR, 1977.

Central Conference of American Rabbis. *Gates of Prayer The New Union Prayerbook*. CCAR, 1975.

Central Conference of American Rabbis. *The Union Prayer Book for Jewish Worship, Part II*. Cincinnati: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1894.

Central Conference of American Rabbis. *The Union Prayer Book for Jewish Worship, Newly Revised Edition*. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1940.

Chicago Sinai Congregation. *The Union Prayerbook, Sinai Edition: An Adaptation of the Union Prayerbook, Newly Revised Edition, of the Central Conference of American Rabbis*. Chicago: Chicago Sinai Congregation, 2000.

Falk, Marcia. *The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, The Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival*. San Francisco: Harper Publications, 1996.

Fields, Harvey J. *Shabbat Worship*. Los Angeles: Wilshire Boulevard Temple, 1987.

Jospe, Alfred and Levy, Richard N. *Bridges to a Holy Time: New Worship for the Sabbath and Minor Festivals*. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1973.

Levy, Richard N. *On Wings of Awe: A Machzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*. Washington, D.C.: B'Nai Brith Hillel Foundation and New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1985.

Milgrom, Shira. *Chapel in the Woods Prayer Book*. White Plains, NY: Jewish Community Center of White Plains, 1993; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1998.

Milgrom, Shira. *Entrances to Holiness are Everywhere: A Siddur for Shabbat and Holidays*. White Plains, NY: Jewish Community Center of White Plains, 2009.

*Mishkan T'filah: A Reform Siddur* (New York, 2007)

Patz, Naomi. *Siddur Netivot Sholom*. Cedar Grove, NJ: Temple Sholom of West Essex, 2005.

Reines, Alvin Jay, and Bonia Shur. *Haggadah: A Passover Service for the Family*. [Cincinnati]: Institute of Creative Judaism, 1976.

Stern, Chaim. *Gates of Prayer for Shabbat and Weekdays: A Gender Sensitive Prayerbook*. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1994.

Stern, Chaim. [*Sha'are Teshuvah*] = *Gates of Repentance : the New Union Prayerbook for the Days of Awe*. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1978.

Tyler, Michael and Leslie Kane. *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav*. San Francisco, CA: Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 2009.

*Vetaher Libenu*. Congregation Beth El of Sudbury, MA, 1980.

Occasional congregational liturgies on file in the Klau Library:

SC Box A-77 2023 (special Shabbatot)

SC Box A-81 742 (regular Shabbatot)

SC Box A-81 615 (Israel, Yom Ha'Atsma'ut: file folder)

SC Box A-82 375 (Yom HaShoah and Holocaust-related observances)

Personal interview with Rabbi Karyn Kedar, September 2011

Rabbi Joel Simonds, "The Religiosity of Yom Ha'atzmaut: How We View the Creation of the Modern State of Israel in Our Religious Practice," Rabbinic Thesis, HUC-JIR Los Angeles, California, February 2009

Creative prayer books and services from various organizations and individuals (items to be solicited through Ravkav, HUCalum, Iworship and ACC listervs)

*ARZA*

*B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation, Albany, NY*

*CCAR Opening Meeting, Jerusalem, Israel*

*Goldman Union Camp Institute, Zionsville, IN*

*Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH*

*NFTY-SE Region*

*Temple Akiba, Culver City, CA*

*Temple Emanu-El, Atlanta, GA*

*Temple Israel (Camp TEKO), Minneapolis, MN*

*United Jewish Communities*

*URJ Camp Coleman, Cleveland, GA*

*U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, Philadelphia, Pa*

*Valley Temple, Cincinnati, OH*

*Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, DC*

Secondary sources: Recent sources on American Jews in Israel, American Jewish community and their feelings/view of Israel

Alter, Robert. *America and Israel, Literary and Intellectual Trends*. New York: Hadassah Education Dept., 1970.

Chylipnska, Bozena. "In Search of Greener Pastures": *A Hundred Years of the Zionist Idea in the United States: from Zionism to Israelism*. Warsaw: Institute of English Studies School of Modern Languages University of Warsaw, 1996.

Elazar, Daniel Judah and Geffen, Rela M. *The Conservative Movement in Judaism: Dilemmas and Opportunities, SUNY Series in American Jewish Society in the 1990s*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000.

Furman, Andrew. *Israel Through the Jewish-American Imagination: A Survey of Jewish-American Literature on Israel, 1928-1995, SUNY Series in Modern Jewish Literature and Culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.

Gal, Allon. *Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of North American Jews*. Jerusalem, Magnes Press, Hebrew University; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996.

Goren, Arthur A. *The Politics and Public Culture of American Jews*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Meyer, Michael A. *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Polish, David. *Renew Our Days: The Zionist Issue in Reform Judaism*. Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, 1976.

### Background Reading – Liturgy and Platforms

Jacob, Walter. *The Changing World of Reform Judaism: the Pittsburgh Platform in Retrospect: Papers Presented on the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Pittsburgh Platform, February, 1985 and The Proceedings of 1885*. Pittsburgh: Rodef Shalom Congregation, 1985.

Kaplan, Dana Evan, ed. *Platforms and Prayerbooks: Theological and Liturgical Perspectives on Reform Judaism*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002.

*Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook*, vol. 1 (Cincinnati: Bloch Publishing, 1891).

### Websites

“American Council for Judaism: Position Papers”  
[http://www.acjna.org/acjna/about\\_position.aspx](http://www.acjna.org/acjna/about_position.aspx).

“Betsy’s Prayers” – Betsy Fuchs  
<http://www.betsysprayers.com>

“Educational Resources – URJ”  
<http://urj.org/worship/mishkan/current/?synspg.=article>.

“Reform Judaism & Zionism: A Centenary Platform, Oct. 27, 2004”  
<http://ccarnet.org/rabbis-speak/platforms/reform-judaism-zionism-centenary-platform/>

“To Bend Light” – Alden Solovy  
<http://www.tobendlight.com/>.