The History of Reform Judaism Through the Lens of Liturgical Changes Made by the Reform Movement

An Adult Education Curriculum

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School of Education

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Description and Rationale

Adult education

Setting: Synagogue

Time frame: 8 Two-hour sequential lessons

Enduring Understandings

- Liturgy is a reflection of ideology, and as ideology changes, so too must liturgy to reflect this evolution.
- Reform Judaism is a product of the dynamic interaction among social, historical, political, economic forces in American life.
- The philosophical and theological underpinnings of the Reform Movement balance the desire to connect to Judaism and the larger Jewish community as well as to exist in the larger modern world.

Description and Rationale

Many adults come to Reform synagogues without a clear sense of what Reform Judaism is. They come from other Reform synagogues, non Reform Jewish settings, secular backgrounds and non-Jewish settings. They join Reform congregations for a variety of reasons that may have nothing to do with Reform ideology. Many members participate in Reform life to varying degrees but may not understand the rich history, theology, ideology and philosophy that come together to create the contemporary Reform Jewish experience.

It is imperative for educators to not only teach the history and progression of the Jewish people, but also where we are now and why we are Reform Jews in order to create not only committed Jews, but also committed Reform Jews. Reform Judaism has a unique history that continues the longstanding Jewish

tradition of finding a way to remain Jewish as well as be an active participant in the larger world. It is also very important to create prayer literacy for our Reform communities that is not simply based on any particular synagogue *minhag* but the larger body of Jewish liturgy. Both the history and the liturgy reflect on each other to create Reform Judaism both as a vibrant modern community as well as a thoughtful prayer community.

It is important to understand where we come from so that we can continue to make informed decisions about where we are going next. We are grounded in Jewish texts but how do our students see and understand these texts? One common form of Jewish expression is worship, yet do most Reform Jews feel comfortable during prayer? Do Reform Jews understand what they are saying and the greater context of these prayers? It seems that few understand the rich history of traditional liturgy or the choices that Reform Judaism has made concerning prayer. We are in a unique position as a movement that embraces human evolution and has decided to reflect this evolution in the prayer services; to learn about who we were and where we can be through understanding the history of Reform liturgical choices.

How can we learn from our collective past and create new meaning for the future? How can we encourage our students to feel a sense of ownership over their Jewish choices and their Jewish future?

My goals for the learners is to engage in the history of the movement that they are a part of, understand the roots and patterns of the Reform Movement and therefore where it is today, to become more familiar with Reform liturgy and the rationale behind the choices made about Reform liturgy and to feel a sense of ownership of and belonging in the Reform Movement.

The choices that have been made reflect all of our own individual choices, the struggles we have with our own sense of religion and God and modernity. I hope that the learners will have a chance to reflect on their own choice to be part of the Reform Movement, whether it was purposeful or accidental. What are the choices that they can continue to make with a better understanding of the history and prayer language of the Reform Movement?

Note to the Teacher

Dear Teacher,

My vision for this course is the melding of Reform Jewish history and liturgy in a way that not only presents the concrete information but also engages the learners in finding their place in Jewish history. I have coupled Reform Jewish history with liturgy because I have found that they complement each other, as many of the liturgical changes made by the Reform Movement directly reflect the social, political and cultural climate during which they were made.

I have created a collection of eight lessons that take the learner through the history of the Reform Movement. The lessons are also themed in a way that reflects the liturgical piece that will also be focused on.

My goals for the learners are for them to engage in the history of the movement in which they belong, to understand the roots and patterns of the Reform Movement and therefore where it is today, to become more familiar with Reform liturgy and the rationale behind the choices made about Reform liturgy, and to feel a sense of ownership of and belonging in the Reform Movement.

The choices that have been made reflect all of our own individual choices, the struggles we have with our own sense of religion, God and modernity. I hope that the learners will have a chance to reflect on their own choice to be part of the Reform Movement, whether it was purposeful or accidental. What are the choices that they can continue to make with a better understanding of the history and prayer language of the Reform Movement?

Finally, I hope that you as the teacher are able to enjoy facilitating and teaching this course, continuing to learn with and from your students. I have included the bibliography that I have used to shape these lesson plans and outlines. They are an excellent source for further information or for recommendations to learners who want more.

Good luck and Enjoy!

Jillian Cameron

Reform Jewish History through Liturgy
Syllabus

It is important to learn and understand the history of the Jewish people, and also where we are now in order to create both a renewed commitment to Judaism in general and Reform Judaism in particular. Reform Judaism has a unique history that continues the longstanding Jewish tradition of finding a way to remain Jewish as well as be an active participant in the larger world.

It is important to understand where we come from so that we can continue to make informed decisions about where we are going next. We may appreciate that Judaism is grounded in Jewish texts but how do we see and understand these texts? Do we feel comfortable during prayer? How can we continue to understand the rich history of traditional liturgy and the choices that Reform Judaism has made concerning the liturgy and prayer style? We are in a unique position as a movement that embraces human evolution. Our liturgy and patterns of worship reflect this evolution. We can learn a great deal about who we were and where we can be through understanding the history of Reform liturgical choices. Both the history and the liturgy reflect on each other to create Reform Judaism both as a vibrant modern community as well as a thoughtful prayer community. How can we learn from our collective past and create new meaning for the future? How can we encourage our students to feel a sense of ownership over their Jewish choices and their Jewish future?

My goals for you, the learner, are for you to understand how the roots and patterns of the Reform Movement shaped where it is today; to become more familiar with Reform liturgy and the rationale behind the choices made about Reform liturgy and to feel a sense of ownership of and continued belonging in the Reform Movement.

The liturgical choices that have been made reflect all of our own individual choices, the struggles we have with our own sense of religion and God and the world in which we live. I hope that the learners will have a chance to reflect on their own choice to be part of the Reform Movement, whether it was purposeful or accidental. What are the choices that we can continue to make with a better understanding of the history and prayer language of the Reform Movement?

Class text:
Michael Meyer, Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism

This book will be our class "text book." There will be suggested readings each week that will provide a more detailed background for each class session.

Course Outline:

Class 1: Welcome! Introduction to Course.

Reading for next class:

a. "Scholarship is Not Enough," Arthur Green. Moment Magazine

b. "The Script of Prayer: Words Spoken," Lawrence A. Hoffman. The Art of Public Prayer: Not for Clergy Only

c. Response to Modernity Preface, Chapter 1

Class 2: Emancipation and Enlightenment – Paving the Way for Reform Judaism

Reading for next class:

a. Response to Modernity Chapter 2

Class 3: Reform Judaism in Germany – A Reaction to Modernity

Reading for next class:

a. Response to Modernity Chapter 6

b. "The Three Paragraphs of the Sh'ma," Richard Sarason

Class 4: Reform Judaism in America – The "Thou" and "Art" of Classical Reform

Reading for next class:

a. Response to Modernity Chapter 8

Class 5: Zionism and Reform Judaism – What is Zion?

Reading for next class:

a. Response to Modernity Chapter 9 and 10

b. Gates of Understanding II Larry Hoffman p. 42-46

Class 6: Post-War Reform Judaism

Reading for next class:

a. "A Conversation with Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman on the Making of Mishkan T'filah—A Reform Siddur, the Movement's Innovative New Prayer Book," Reform Judaism Magazine.

b. "To Rise from the Dead? — Mishkan T'filah and a Reform Liturgical Conundrum," Rabbi Richard Sarason, PhD

c. "Whither Reform Worship?" Rabbi Richard Sarason, PhD

d. My People's Prayer Book Volume 2 – The Amidah Lawrence Hoffman p. 17 - 36

Class 7: Reforming Reform Judaism

Reading for next class:

a. Response to Modernity Chapter 11

Class 8: Reflections of the Past and Visions for the Future

LESSON PLAN 1:

Why Study the History of Reform Judaism?

I. Enduring Understandings:
- Liturgy is a reflection of ideology, and as ideology changes, so too must liturgy to reflect this evolution.
- The philosophical and theological underpinnings of the Reform Movement balance the desire to connect to Judaism and the larger Jewish community as well as to exist in the larger modern world.
- Reform Judaism is a product of interaction among social, historical, political, economic forces.

II. Essential Questions:
a. Why is it important to study the history of Reform Judaism?
b. What can we learn from each other in this setting?
c. Why are we coupling Reform Jewish history and Reform liturgy?

III. Evidence of Learning:
a. Learners will be able to articulate the goals of the class.
b. Learners will begin to understand the rationale and ideology of the course.
c. Learners will begin to form a connection to each other.
d. Learners will begin to form the skills of liturgical comparison in terms of language, theme, content, and historical context.

I. Program: (2 hours total)
- Introductions (30 minutes)
  i. Teacher introduces his/herself with his/her goals for teaching this course.
  ii. Provide stated goals of course if desired:

It is important to understand where we come from so that we can continue to make informed decisions about where we are going next. We are grounded in Jewish texts but how do our students see and understand these texts? Do they feel comfortable during prayer? Few understand neither the rich history of traditional liturgy, nor the choices that Reform Judaism has made concerning prayer. We are in a unique position as a movement that embraces human evolution and has decided to reflect this evolution in the prayer services; to learn about who we were and where we can be through understanding the history of Reform liturgical choices.
How can we learn from our collective past and create new meaning for the future? How can we encourage our students to feel a sense of ownership over their Jewish choices and their Jewish future?

My goals for the learners is to engage in the history of the movement that they are a part of, understand the roots and patterns of the Reform Movement and therefore where it is today, to become more familiar with Reform liturgy and the rationale behind the choices made about Reform liturgy and to feel a sense of ownership of and belonging in the Reform Movement.

The choices that have been made reflect all of our own individual choices, the struggles we have with our own sense of religion and God and modernity. I hope that the learners will have a chance to reflect on their own choice to be part of the Reform Movement, whether it was purposeful or accidental. What are the choices that they can continue to make with a better understanding of the history and prayer language of the Reform Movement?

iii. Ask learners to introduce themselves, tell the class something about themselves and take a moment to think about their own goals for the course.
    1. What interests them?
    2. What do they want to get out of the course?
    3. What do they want to learn about the Reform Movement?
    4. What do they want to learn about themselves or each other?

iv. Teacher concludes expressing desire to meet all of our goals and create a safe, fun and interesting learning community.

- Hand out Handout 1 – Prayer comparison (60 minutes)
    e. Break up the group into 3 smaller groups.
    - Have each group focus on one version of the *Maariv Aravim*. Provide short explanation of what the theme is and brief background of the *Maariv Aravim*.
    - Have them answer the following questions (also provided on handouts):
        i. Pay close attention to language and layout, not just the actual text of the prayer.
        ii. What do you notice immediately about this prayer?
        iii. What is familiar about this prayer?
        iv. What is not familiar about this prayer?
        v. What do you notice about the layout of the prayer?
        vi. What do you notice about the structure of the prayer?
        vii. Would you feel comfortable using this version during a prayer service? Why? Why not?
        viii. What can you infer about when this version of the prayer was created?

    f. Bring the groups back together and have them each read their version out loud to the rest of the group.
    g. Have each group share with the larger group what they discussed about the prayer, how the answered the questions.
    h. Lead full group discussion comparing all three versions:
        i. What are the major differences?
        ii. What are the similarities?
        iii. What can we begin to understand about the time period in which these versions were created?
        iv. Which version do you most connect with?
        v. Which version would you feel comfortable using in your own prayer and why?

vi. Remind group that we will be honing these skills of comparison and analysis through the course as we continue to look at a variety of versions of prayers. Please also pay attention to the fact that we did not say this prayer as a prayer but rather just analyzed it. How might this experience change when we begin to use these versions in prayer and then investigate the experience as well as the text and layout?

vii.

- Introduction to Material (20 minutes)

viii. Teacher:

"Now that we have all introduced ourselves and goals for this course, let me give you a brief overview of the course as a whole, so you know what to expect. I will also hand out a syllabus at the end of the class today with the requested/recommended reading for each week. In order to fully experience the liturgical/prayer piece of this course, in each lesson, except tonight, we will be doing a part of a prayer service, from a variety of difference sources. We will not only be looking at the liturgy from an academic/intellectual standpoint, but also through an experiential and even emotional place. After all, prayer does not exist to be studied but rather to communicate with God and ourselves. If you are uncomfortable with this aspect of the course, please let me know and we can figure out a way to make this work for you.

This course is made up of 8 class sessions, each focusing on a different piece of Reform Jewish history as well as a different portion of liturgy. The liturgy will vary, we may focus on one particular prayer in several incarnations or a section of the service, or the ideology behind prayers, rather than a specific prayer. There will be times when there will be no English, or no Hebrew, or no transliteration due to the nature of a particular prayer book or time period in which the prayer book was created. While this might create a certain amount of concern or worry, we are all doing this together, learning together, each with our own set of skills. Let's try to help each other as much as we can and realize that something will be new for each of you throughout the course of this class.

- Field any questions if necessary (5 minutes)

II. MID-CLASS BREAK (10 minutes)
   - Hand out syllabus and ask if anyone has any questions about it, the class in general or the lesson today. (10 minutes)
   - Hand out article by Arthur Green to be read for the next class.

III. Personal Reflection – At the end of each class, I will ask you to reflect on the class to yourself in order to evaluate the day's lesson. If you would like to discuss your reflections or anything else in the class, please feel free to discuss with me or the other learners!
   - What is a question you are leaving class with today?
   - What really stood out about today's session for you?

IV. Materials
   - Handout 1, 2, 3 – Prayer comparison, *Maariv Aravim*, UPB, GOB, MT

- Handout 4 – "Scholarship is Not Enough" by Arthur Green, Tikkun, Vol. 2, No. 3
- Handout 5 – ""The Script of Prayer: Words Spoken," Lawrence A. Hoffman. The Art of Public Prayer: Not for Clergy Only
- Handout 5 – Class syllabus

LESSON PLAN 2:
Emancipation/Enlightenment - Modernity
Paving the way for Reform Judaism

IV. Enduring Understandings:
- a. Enlightenment and emancipation in Europe had a profound effect on the creation of the Reform Movement.
- b. The modernization of Judaism reflects a changing ideology, philosophy, science and an unprecedented freedom of expression.
- o Modernity has had a profound and lasting effect on the whole Jewish world. This effect manifests itself in several different ways.

V. Essential Questions:
- a. What effect did emancipation and enlightenment have on European Judaism?
- b. How do the beginnings of Reform Judaism reflect the changing social, scientific, cultural and political movements of the 18th and 19th centuries?
- c. How do the Enlightenment and the start of the modern era affect our own contemporary view of liturgy and our Jewish community?

VI. Evidence of Learning:
- a. Learners will begin to understand the effects that enlightenment and emancipation had on the beginnings of Reform Judaism in Europe.
- b. Students will be able to articulate the reactions to modernity that occurred in the Jewish world.
- c. Students will be able to reflect on a prayer in terms of the different reactions to modernity.

V. Program – 2 hours
- o Questions/Comments from last class (10 minutes)
- d. Introduction to lesson on Emancipation and Enlightenment (5 minutes)
  - i. "Let's see if we can define the Enlightenment in Europe?"
    1. Write answers on the board. *Use this time to jog memories from past history classes and to provide teacher with the necessary information about the amount of knowledge students already have on the topic.*
  - ii. "Can we also define the period of Emancipation?"
    1. Again, write answers in a separate column on the board. (Fill in the blanks if necessary, but hopefully the reading and prior knowledge will create two decent lists)
  - iii. Keep these lists on the board for reference through the rest of the class.
- e. Group Discussion of Jewish Reaction to Modernity

i. "Jews dealt with these changes in a variety of ways. While the pre-modern Jewish community was never monolithic, the ideas of Enlightenment permeated throughout the Jewish community, as it did the larger mainly Western World. The Jewish reaction to Enlightenment and Emancipation can loosely be categorized, for our purposes into four groups, those who rejected modernity, those who completely accepted modernity and two groups in the middle who balanced modernity, one leaning more towards rejection and the other leaning more towards acceptance. Next class, we will spend more time defining those groups, especially, concerning the inception of Reform Judaism. I'm sure we can all think of formal groups or denominations of Jews that might fit into these categories, but for today; let's think about these groups purely as the overarching models of reaction to modernity." (3 minutes)
ii. Divide group into 4 groups and assign each a "reaction" group (2 minutes)
    1. Rejection
    2. Acceptance
    3. Partial Acceptance
    4. Partial Rejection
iii. Each group's task is to consider what you know about Modernity, as a member of your "reaction" group, what is your reaction to modernity? Consider prayer, life style, interaction with other Jews, relationship to the larger world, etc. Create a list of possible reactions to be shared with the larger group. (15 minutes)
iv. Bring groups back together and have each group share their conclusions. Encourage everyone to add to all lists if necessary/possible. (10 minutes)

VI. BREAK – 10 MINUTES

VII. Program Continued

f. Now that we have a grasp of the different reactions to modernity, let's look at a lesser utilized prayer service, Mincha. This service has four essential pieces once of which is the Ashrei prayer which is taken from the book of Psalms of the Tanakh. As Judaism began to change in the modern period, so too did the reaction to certain prayers, especially concerning God language, reward and punishment and the conception of God in relation to human beings. Using Ashrei as an example here, we will be able to use our skills as "modernists" to gain a new understanding of prayer interpretation.
g. In the same breakout groups, give students Prayer handout with Ashrei – Psalm 145 in Hebrew and English.
h. Students will then, in their groups, discuss the different possible interpretations as members of their groups. (10 minutes)

i. Bring groups back together and discuss their different interpretations. (10 minutes)

VII. Wrap Up

a. Group Discussion (10 minutes)

i. How do the ideas of emancipation and enlightenment influence the Jewish community's reaction to prayer?

ii. How did the interpretation of modernity and then the Ashrei influence your understanding of modern Judaism?

iii. What are your general reactions to the beginning of modernity in a Jewish context?

VIII. T'fillah – Mincha from orthodox siddur (15 minutes)

IX. Personal Reflection –

- What is a question you are leaving class with today?
- What really stood out about today's session for you?

X. Materials

b. Prayer Handout for Ashrei

LESSON PLAN 3:
Reform Judaism in Germany
A Reaction to Modernity

I. Enduring Understandings:
   a. The creation and evolution of Reform Judaism reflects the changing cultural, political, and scientific climate of 19th century Germany.
   b. Those who aided in reforming Judaism responded to the changing world in a variety of ways, creating divergent streams of Judaism.
   c. Reform Judaism was created in response to a desire of Jews to navigate between living rich modern lives and preserving religious tradition.

II. Essential Questions:
   a. How did early Reform thinkers navigate between modernity and Judaism?
   b. What outside influences are most evident in the philosophy and ideology of these Reform thinkers?
   c. How does the modified liturgy reflect these changes?

III. Evidence of Learning:
   a. Learners will engage in the long running philosophical debate between the thinkers who helped to shape Reform Judaism.
   b. Learners will struggle with the notion of creating a modern approach to Judaism.
   c. Learners will articulate the nuance of thought and ideas behind the creation of Reform Judaism.

IV. Program – 2 hours
   a. Questions/Comments from last class (5 minutes)
   b. Set Induction (15 minutes)
      i. Play three musical selections from the time period. After each, ask the following questions.
         1. Questions:
            a. Describe this musical selection
            b. What does it remind you of?
            c. Does it feel familiar or alien?
            d. Does it feel Jewish?
   c. The Great Debate Prep (15 minutes)
      i. Split learners into 4 groups and hand out the Biography Handouts, one thinker per group. Instruct each group to read through the provided biography and text excerpt in order to get a feel for their thinker (also using the reading for the class).
      ii. Discussion Questions:
         1. What can you infer about your thinker from his biography?
         2. How did his upbringing and experience influence his ideology?

3. After a careful reading of the excerpts, create several bullet points summarizing the position of your thinker.
4. How would you advocate his position?

V. BREAK (10 minutes)
   a. Set up room during break with a podium type structure in classroom, create 4 separate areas for each "team" to sit

VI. Program (continued) - The Great Debate (45 minutes)
   a. Introduce the Debate
      i. "Welcome to the Rabbinical Conference in Frankfort, we are here to discuss the current state of Judaism, reforming Judaism and what that means. We have assembled to discuss ideology and how we want to proceed, what we stand for, what we no longer agree with and what this new idea of Judaism looks like etc"
      ii. Go over rules of debate
      iii. Opening Statements (3 minutes per thinker, 12 minutes total)
      iv. Rebuttal for each group (3 minutes per thinker, 12 minutes total)
      v. Based on opening statements and rebuttals, create a list of themes for the group to continue to discuss and put on board
      vi. More informal debate/conversation loosely based on themes created by opening statements (15 minutes)
   b. Wrap up (10 minutes)
      1. What do these debates tell us about the beginnings of Reform Judaism?
      2. What did you learn?
      3. Who do you agree with? Why?
      4. Who do you disagree with? Why?
      5. How does this connect to the music we listened to at the beginning of the lesson?

VII. T'fillah (20 minutes)
   a. Re-introduce music from beginning of lesson
      i. Barchu, Shema etc
      ii. Classical, choir, heavily European influenced

XI. Personal Reflection –
   - What is a question you are leaving class with today?
   - What really stood out about today's session for you?

VIII. Materials
   a. CD player/computer
   b. CD of musical selections
   c. Handout 1, 2, 3, 4 – Biography

LESSON PLAN 4:
Reform Judaism in America
Pittsburgh Platform – Classical Reform

VIII. Enduring Understandings:
- a. American values and culture had a profound effect on the Reform Movement.
- b. The original Pittsburgh Platform attempted to shape and identify the Reform American experience.
- c. The Union Prayer Book exemplified Classical Reform Judaism and the influence that American culture had on Reform Judaism of the time.

IX. Essential Questions:
- a. How did American culture, society and values affect the nascent Reform Movement?
- b. How does the prayer language of the Union Prayer Book reflect the time in which it was created?
- c. How is the Pittsburgh Platform a product of its time?
- d. How does the Pittsburgh Platform create and reflect Reform Judaism of the time?

X. Evidence of Learning:
- a. Learners will understand how American culture and values affected the Reform Movement.
- b. Learners will be able to articulate the theory and thought behind the early Reform Movement in America.
- c. Learners will understand intellectually and aesthetically the Classical Reform prayer service.

XII. Program:
- o Questions and/or Comments from previous session or reading (15 minutes)
- d. Hand out the Pittsburgh Platform Sheet
  - i. Provide a brief introduction to the idea of a Platform and why this initial platform was created. Remind learners that the class will be looking at all of the Reform platforms in future classes, so they should keep this handout for future reference. (10 minutes)
  - ii. Instruct learners to read through it and underline passages that are confusing, interesting, that they agree with or disagree with etc. (10 minutes)
  - iii. Begin a discussion of the platform as a historical document and then towards what we can learn about classical Reform Judaism from this document. Go through each paragraph and ask if anyone underlined anything or noticed anything that they would like to discuss. (40 minutes)
  - iv. Discussion questions:
    1. How do we look at historical documents?
    2. What is the historical context, who wrote it, how does this effect what is being said?

3. As you read through this document, look at the language, what is being expressed through words, what is the message?
4. What American ideals, values, norms, are expressed in this document?
5. What can you tell about the drafters of this document?
6. What message are they trying to send?
7. How are they trying to shape Reform Judaism?
8. What influences can you detect?
9. What aspects of this document still seem relevant for today?
10. Which are out of date?

XIII. BREAK (10 minutes)

XIV. T'fillah with Union Prayer Book (20 minutes)

- Evening Service for Week-Days

e. Post-T'fillah discussion questions: (15 minutes)

i. In light of our discussion of the Pittsburgh Platform, does the Union Prayer Book fall in line?
ii. Is this prayer book uniquely American? How so?
iii. What did you notice about this prayer service after looking at the Pittsburgh Platform?
iv. How does this type of service help us understand the type of Judaism that classical Reformers wanted to create?
v. What type of experience did you have in this service?
vi. Was it meaningful, or just an exercise? How?

XI. Personal Reflection –

a. What is a question you are leaving class with today?
b. What really stood out about today's session for you?

XV. Materials

- Handout 1 - Pittsburg Platform
- Copies of Evening service for week-days from Union Prayer Book

LESSON PLAN 5:
Israel and Zionism
Columbus Platform

XII. Enduring Understanding:
- a. The relationship between the Reform Movement and Zionism has evolved from each of their respective inceptions.
- b. The Reform Movement's position concerning Zionism and eventually the state of Israel has evolved in its statement of principles as well as liturgically.
- c. The evolution of this relationship reflects the Reform Movement's recognition that Jewish peoplehood is an essential element of Judaism and the Jewish State is an important manifestation of that.

XIII. Essential Questions:
- a. How and why did the relationship between the Reform Movement and Zionism/Israel evolve?
- b. What prompted these changes?
- c. How do we see this evolution liturgically?
- d. How will this relationship continue to evolve?

XIV. Evidence of Learning:
- a. Learners will understand the progression of relationship between the Reform Movement and Zionism.
- b. Learners will understand the connection between the statement of principles and the liturgical choices made by the Movement.

XVI. Program:
- o Questions/Comments/Review of readings (10 minutes)
- c. Set Induction: (5 minutes)
  - i. Enlarge and print out the two sections from the original Pittsburgh Platform and the Columbus Platform concerning Israel. Tape them to the board or in front of the classroom on the wall and ask two learners to read each statement out loud. Also write or post the following questions on the board. Do not tell the learners anything about the origins of the statements; that information will be provided later in the lesson. Just have them analyze the statements with the information they already have from previous classes or the readings.
  - ii. Questions to ponder during the lesson:
    1. What are the clear differences?
    2. What are the similarities?
    3. Which statement do you think came first? Why?
    4. Pay close attention to the language and pick out some key words in both statements that exemplify the differences and similarities.
  - iii. We will return to these statements towards the end of the lesson.
- d. Yotzer Or Prayer Comparison

i. Keeping these statements in mind, we will now look at the evolution of the Yotzer Or prayer from the early Union Prayer Book, then the Gates of Prayer Prayer Book and finally the newest Reform prayer book, Mishkan T'fillah.
ii. Provide some background on the Yotzer Or prayer briefly. When do we say it? Why do we say it? Where in the service do we say it? Etc. (5 minutes)
iii. Break the learners into three groups, each focusing on one version of the prayer. (20 minutes)
    1. Instruct groups to follow the questions on their sheets, which are similar to the questions asked about the platform statements.
    2. The focus is on language, primarily the English, but Hebrew as well if they can.
    3. Tell groups that they will need to answer the questions and teach their classmates about their version of the prayer when the class regroups in any way they would like, be creative!

XVII. BREAK (10 minutes)

    4. Regroup and have the Union Prayer Book group begin, followed by the Gates of Prayer group and then the Mishkan T'fillah group. (10 minutes each, 30 minutes total)

iv. Wrap Up:
    1. Group discussion, encompassing Platform Statements: (20 minutes)
        a. Refer back to the two statements posted in the front of the room.
        b. Revisit the original questions posted with the statements, have learners answer in larger group.
        c. Reveal the origin of the statements (if not guessed already).
        d. How do these Platform statements concerning Israel reflect the liturgy that we have just studied and vise versa?
        e. What can we understand about the evolution of the Reform Movement's relationship with Israel through the Yotzer Or and the Pittsburgh and Columbus Platforms?
        f. Looking at the most recent form of the Yotzer Or in Mishkan T'fillah, how has the Reform Movement's relationship continued to evolve?

XVIII. T'fillah with Union Prayer Book (20 minutes)

- Morning service
    v. Barchu
    vi. Yotzer Or
    vii. Shma
    viii. Amidah

XV. Personal Reflection –
   a. What is a question you are leaving class with today?
   b. What really stood out about today's session for you?

XIX. Materials
   a. Platform- Israel sheet
   b. Handout 1 – Yotzer Or
   c. Handout 2 – Columbus Platform
   d. Copies of Morning Service from Union Prayer Book
   e. Random supplies – post board, markers etc.

LESSON PLAN 6:
Post War Reform Judaism
San Francisco Platform (1976)

XVI. Enduring Understandings:
- a. The cultural, social, and political changes in the 21st century in America motivated the continuing evolution of Reform Judaism.
- b. The San Francisco Platform reflects the evolution of the Reform Movement in the post-WWII environment.
- c. The creation of the Gates of Prayer prayer book reflects the changes perceived by the Reform Movement in order to capture the mood of the time.
- d. The new emphasis of universalistic values in terms of social justice exists along side the Movement's desire to differentiate itself in terms of its understanding of chosenness.
- e. The introduction of modern musical themes into the Reform liturgy shows the continued influence of American culture on the Reform Movement.

XVII. Essential Questions:
- a. How did the post-War environment in America effect Reform Judaism?
- b. How does the San Francisco platform reflect the changes in the Reform Jewish culture?
- c. How does Reform ideology reconcile the desire to join universalistic social justice causes and the re-addition of the particularistic themes within the Reform liturgy?
- d. What is the influence of modern music on Reform Judaism and how does it affect the liturgy and the larger movement?

XVIII. Evidence of Learning:
- a. Learners will be able to identify the effect of the post-War American culture on Reform Judaism.
- b. Learners will be able to understand the myriad of influences on post-War Reform Judaism and understand their connection to each other.

XX. Program
1. Questions/Comments from last session or the reading (15 minutes)
- c. Set Induction (30 minutes)
  - i. Hand out short passages to each learner from the civil rights movement. Each quotation relates to a different civil rights movement within the United States; rabbis who helped fight for civil rights for African Americans and Feminism. Both of these movements captivated not only America but more specifically the Reform Movement and helped to clarify the Reform Movement's stance on equality and social justice.
  - ii. Split learners into two groups, give each group a few minutes to read over the passage and get into "character" and have a brief discussion about their "character."

iii. Each group will elect one person to present/read passage as their "character"
iv. Short Discussion with entire group:
1. What themes do these characters and speeches have in common?
2. How do they differ?
3. How do these writings as a whole reflect the direction of the movement?
4. How do these two people and their writing reflect Reform Judaism in the post-war era?

d. Let us now examine the Aleinu, in order to understand how these themes of particularlism and universalism are reflected in our classical liturgy and in the choices made by the movement.
i. Have each student on their own, compare the two paragraphs of the Aleinu with guiding questions. (20 minutes)
1. What are the themes of these two paragraphs separately?
2. Do they seem to belong together?
3. What is your impression of the two paragraphs?
4. Which one fits into your personal theology more, Why?
5. Why do you think the Reform Movement decided to add in the 2nd paragraph in the mid 70's?

XIX. BREAK – 10 minutes

XX. Conduct T'fillah (after break instead of normal end of lesson time) (20 minutes)
a. Use Gates of Prayer
b. Focus on the end of the service, particularly the Aleinu, give learners time to read through the paragraphs that they might not normally use.
c. Use a closing song that reflects the folk-influence of the 60's and 70's to subtly reflect the changing mood of the country and the influence it had on Reform Judaism.

XXI. Wrap Up (25 minutes):
a. Regroup and discuss using the same questions as well as these ideas:
b. How can we reconcile the universalism of human rights and the re-addition of the particularistic sentence in the Aleinu? (20 minutes)
i. Fighting for the rights of individualist groups, reflection of our own fight for equality
ii. Recognize the rights of separate groups while maintaining your own identity
c. How do you think Rabbi Silverman and Rabbi Priesand would react to the changes in the Aleinu?
d. What is your reaction to this possible dissonance between universalism and particularism?
e. What in our t'fillah reflected these ideas?
f. What did you notice about the musical selection?

g. How does our liturgy and prayer service reflect the changing mood of the country in the 1960's and 1970's?

XXII. Personal Reflection –

a. What is a question you are leaving class with today?
b. What really stood out about today's session for you?

XXI. Materials

- Handout 1- The Reform Movement and Social Justice: William Silverman
- Handout 2 – The Reform Movement and Social Justice: Sally Priesand

LESSON PLAN 7:
The Evolution of the Amidah

XXIII. Enduring Understandings:
- a. The Amidah is a central prayer in Judaism. The Reform Movement has attempted to align its ideology and the Amidah throughout Reform Jewish history.
- b. Understanding this evolution is important in order to reflect on the present as well as look towards the future of Reform Judaism.

XXIV. Essential Questions:
- a. How does the comparison of the Amidah reflect the experience of the American Reform Movement?
- b. How does it impact the prayer experience and what does it say about our Jewish community?
- c. Do the changes reflect a larger Jewish continuity through time and space or has our new experience of this prayer changed with us?

XXV. Evidence of Learning:
- a. Students will increase their understanding of the evolution of the Amidah in the Reform Movement.
- b. Students will be able to articulate the past and present of the Reform understanding of the Amidah.
- c. Students will begin to think about the future of Reform Judaism as it pertains to them as well as the larger movement.

XXII. Program:
- o Questions/Comments from previous session or readings (10 minutes)
- d. Introduction to the Amidah prayer (20 minutes)
  - i. Provide a brief definition of the traditional daily Amidah
  - ii. Hand out copy of traditional Amidah from the Birnbaum prayerbook with English translation
  - iii. As a class, go through each section in English and discuss
    1. Create a class outline
       - a. What are the major sections?
       - b. What are the themes?
       - c. What are Jews petitioning for?
       - d. What is the progression of themes?
       - e. What do you think about this prayer?
       - f. Would you feel comfortable saying it regularly?
       - g. What are some things you might add or take away?
    2. Remind learners to keep these themes in mind for next comparison of the Amidah

XXIII. BREAK (5 minutes)[1]

XXIV. Amidah Comparison – Union Prayer Book vs Gates of Prayer

e. Break up into groups of 3-4

f. Hand out prayer comparison handout, begin with the Union Prayer Book: (7 minutes)

i. "The Union Prayer Book was first published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1894. "The publishers indicated that their goal was to unite the moving memories of the past with the pressing demands of the present and to enhance the solemnity of the liturgy by bringing together both important elements, the honorable formulas of the past as well as the modern prayers and reflections in the vernacular." As we look through the three American Reform versions, pay close attention to everything. How does the format, language, inclusion or exclusion of people or phrases, etc affect the prayer and how does it reflect the time in which each of these prayer books were created?

ii. Instruct learners to answer the following questions:

1. What do you immediately notice about the prayer, the lay out, the language, the instructions?
2. What can you infer about the community that used this prayer book, who was leading the prayer, is it formal or informal etc?
3. What is the focus? Who is included? Who is excluded?
4. What can we understand about American Reform Jews in the early 20th century from this prayer?

g. Then instruct learners to move on to the Gates of Prayer version: (7 minutes)

i. "In 1975, the new prayer book for the Reform Movement was completed, Gates of Prayer. A great many changes were made to not only the layout and overall appearance, but the inclusion of more Hebrew, some further references to Israel and Zion, and a longer, more "traditional" Amidah, to name a few. Those of us who grew up in the Reform Movement will no doubt recognize this prayer book perhaps in this original incarnation or the revised version with the addition of the "imahot" and revised God language. "

ii. Instruct learners to answer the following questions:

1. What do you immediately notice about the prayer, the lay out, the language, the instructions?
2. What can you infer about the community that used this prayer book, who was leading the prayer, is it formal or informal etc?
3. What is your immediate reaction in comparison to the previous Amidah in the Union Prayer Book?

[1] There will be two 5 minute breaks instead of the normal one 10 minute break in order to break up the three sections of the lesson.

4. What changes are the most revealing about the evolution of the Reform Judaism in the last few decades of the 20th century?
5. How might these changes reflect a change in ideology?

h. Have all the groups come back together for group discussion: (15 minutes)

XXVI. BREAK (5 minutes)

XXVII. Program Continued:

a. "Finally, we are focusing on the newest prayer book for the Reform Movement, Mishkan T'filah. Perhaps your congregation is currently using this prayer book[2] and if not, maybe you have seen a copy or read about the impetus for creating this new prayer book and the changes that have been made. Mishkan T'filah is a prayer book that attempts not only to change the way that Reform Jews pray now and for the future, but it also attempts to reflect where Reform Judaism is now. We see this reflection in the changes made, especially when compared to the previous two Reform prayer books. Using what your groups have spoken about and now looking at the newest version, let's discuss together." (30 minutes)
   i. What do you immediately notice about the prayer, the lay out, the language, the instructions?
   ii. What can you infer about the community that used this prayer book, who was leading the prayer, is it formal or informal etc?
   iii. What does our new Reform Siddur say about our community?
   iv. Does it reflect your idea of Reform Judaism accurately?
   v. How does it reflect the current ideology of the Reform Movement?
   vi. What will it say about the American Reform Community in the future?
   vii. T'fillah experience (15 minutes)
      1. "This week, our T'fillah experience will become part of our study, as we attempt to not only study the Amidah in its most current form, but also experience it as a prayer. We will begin out loud and then you will have the opportunity to continue the prayer at your own pace. Read the words that are meaningful for you, in Hebrew or English and allow the sense of history to be your guide through this experience. Take all the time you need, when you are done, feel free to sit or continue standing until everyone has finished."

[2] If congregation is not currently using Mishkan T'filah, provide more background on the process, but also expect/hope that the learners have done the suggested reading for this class and have a certain amount of background even if they are not personally familiar with using Mishkan T'filah for prayer.

2. Hand out copies of Mishkan T'filah Amidah.
3. Begin the Amidah.

XXVIII. Personal Reflection –

a. What is a question you are leaving class with today?
b. What really stood out about today's session for you?

XXV. Materials

- Handout 1 - Traditional Amidah from Birnbaum siddur
c. Handout 2 – Amidah comparison
d. Extra paper/pens for final activity

LESSON PLAN 8:
What is your Reform Jewish future?

XXIX. Enduring Understanding:
- Reform Judaism is a product of interaction among social, historical, political, economic forces in American life.

a. Reform Judaism is a continual evolution of thought and ideology, which is reflected in the evolution of liturgical tradition.
b. Reform Judaism is a movement of learning, questioning and attempting to balance between being part of the modern world and part of the Jewish world.

XXX. Essential Questions:
a. Has this course changed how the learners feel about their place in Reform Judaism?
b. How does Mishkan T'fillah continue the Reform tradition of liturgical evolution?
c. What is the next step for the learners in terms of their own prayer experience and the larger future of the movement?

XXXI. Evidence of Learning:
a. Learners will be able to reflect on their learning in the class.
b. Learners will be able to look towards the future of the Reform Movement and Reform liturgy.
c. Learners will understand the evolution of Reform liturgy.
d. Learners will be able to pray at their own comfort level using the newest incarnation of Reform liturgy.

XXVI. Program:
- Questions/Comments from last class or the reading (15 minutes)
- T'fillah (35 minutes)
    i. Have the group help lead a Weekday evening service from Mishkan T'fillah. *If possible, change the location for this final prayer experience. A chapel or sanctuary location would add to the experience as well as provide a connection for the learners to continue praying in their home synagogue environment. Also, if possible, coordinate with a song leader or cantor in order to provide the full musical selections.*
- When t'fillah is finished, begin the group discussion with this quotation from Chaim Stern (20 minutes)

"Prayer is speech, but not 'mere' speech. The word is not to be despised. Words have power over the soul. "Hear, O Israel!" is a cry and an affirmation, a reminder of glory and martyrdom, a part of the very essence of our people's history. Our prayer books are but words on paper; they can mean little or nothing. Yet the searching spirit and questing heart may find great power in their words. Through them we link ourselves to all the generations of our people, pouring out our souls in prayer with those of our brothers and sisters. These words, laden with the tears and joys of centuries, have the power to bring us into the very presence of God. Not easily, not all at once, not every time, but

somehow, sometimes, the worshipper who offers up his heart and mind without reservation will know that he has touched the Throne of Glory."[3]

- Discussion questions:
  a. Analyze this quote, what do you think Stern means?
  b. What speaks to you in this quote?
  c. Is your understanding of history and liturgy and their influence on each other reflected by Stern?

BREAK (10 minutes)

The New Pittsburgh Platform (30 minutes)

- "To wrap up our discussion of the evolution prayer within the Reform movement, we will be looking at the most recent platform, the New Pittsburgh Platform. In the same groups you were in before, look through this new statement of ideology put out by the Reform movement in 1999. Although Mishkan T'filah had not been created yet, the seeds were planted. Does the newest prayer book reflect the ideology of the movement? Use all our previous discussion and investigation of the earlier platforms to discuss what changes have been made here and how the evolution of the Amidah reflects or does not reflect those changes. Finally, as a group, choose or create your own ideological statements that might be included in the next platform. What is the future of Reform Judaism?"
- Hand out New Pittsburgh Platform to each group.

XXVII. Personal Reflection (10 minutes)

- Please take 5 minutes to reflect on your overall learning in the class.
  - What has been most interesting for you?
  - What have your learned that you will take with you?
  - What would you have liked to have seen?
  - What was your experience with the prayer element?

XXVIII. Thanks and encouragement for further learning and understanding of the topic!

XXIX. Materials

- Mishkan T'fillah copies for each learner
- Handout 1 – New Pittsburgh Platform

[3] Chaim Stern, *Gates of Prayer*, no. 16, 6.

Annotated Bibliography

Ellenson, David. After Emancipation. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2004.

Similarly to Michael Meyer's book, Dr. Ellenson's book chronicles the changing face of Judaism post emancipation. This book does not only speak about Reform Judaism, but rather the changes in Judaism as a whole. There are several chapters that do focus on Reform changes and responses to modernity that are particularly interesting in terms of this curriculum such as, "The Prayers for Rain in the Siddurim of Abraham Geiger and Isaac Mayer Wise" p. 223 – 236.

I will use this book as a scholarly reference for historical data as well as for the understanding of the changing nature of Judaism in modernity. It provides an excellent overview of the response and the difficulties as well as innovations that modernity created.

Frishman, Elyse D. , Knobel, Peter S. *Introduction to* Mishkan T'filah*: A Reform Siddur*, New York: CCAR Press, 2006.

This article, as well as the accompanying lesson plans will serve as a basis for the final exploration of the curriculum of the newest prayer book of the Reform Movement. I do not intend to create a curriculum that centers around *Mishkan T'filah* but it is, of course, the most recent interpretation of Reform theology and prayer. The lesson plans and articles provided within them are a great basis for the understanding of where Reform Judaism currently is and what the future of Reform Judaism may be. This curriculum will primarily address the history of the movement but will conclude with a sense of the possibility of the future and what that means for the current adults within the movement as well as the future of our movement in the context of this new prayer book.

Hoffman, Lawrence A., ed. My People's Prayer Book. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 1997.

I have cited these series of books as one book although I plan to use the entire series as needed. Clearly, Dr, Hoffman's series will be the basis for the liturgical information that I will need and use when looking at Reform Jewish history through the lens of the liturgical changes made in the movement. This series not only provides the necessary historical information but the modern context and use specific to the Reform Movement. I have not decided if I am going to focus on a single prayer or several throughout the course of the curriculum, but as I make these decisions, I will be able to narrow down which of the series I will use most.

Meyer, Michael A. Response to Modernity: a History of the Reform Movement in Judaism. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988.

I plan to use this book as the basis for my historical information. It is the most complete and comprehensive text for the study of Reform Jewish history. The book begins with the introduction of modernity and the impact it had on the Jewish community, particularly in Europe. It proceeds through emancipation and enlightenment as the basis no only for modernity but the gradual reformation of Judaism.

Meyers also provides the ideological basis for the adaptation of modernity in Judaism through the writings of Samson Raphael Hirsch, Samuel Holdheim, Zacharais Frankel and Abraham Geiger. I plan to use these debates of ideas in my curriculum to contextualize the points of view that helped to create modern denominationalism.

Meyers then focuses his study on American Reform Judaism, following classical reform, Zionism and the more modern incarnation of Reform Judaism. Although his focus is historical, he does also write about the changing liturgy throughout the history of Reform Judaism and the impact it has had and continues to have on the movement.

Plaut, Gunther W., and Michael A. Meyer, eds. The Reform Judaism Reader: North American Documents. New York: URJ Press, 2000.

This book is a companion book to Response to Modernity: a History of the Reform Movement in Judaism. It is a source book organized by theme including, Theology, Life-cycle Events, Shabbat and Holy Days, and The Realm of Public Prayer. I plan to use this book extensively because of its source material as well as the chapter concerning prayer as it pertains to the lessons.

The discussion of the changes in the prayer books, p. 62-67 as well as the theology of ethical monotheism, p. 40, will provide the learners not only with the arguments of the day but will allow them to develop their own interpretation skills through the use of primary sources.

Plaut, Gunther W. The Rise of Reform Judaism : a Sourcebook of Its European Origins. New York: World Union for Progressive Judaism, Ltd., 1963.

Plaut wrote this book in the early 1960's, which alone will provide a certain amount of insight as to where the movement was then. This is also a source book with commentary from Plaut. The Gates of Prayer prayer book had not come out yet at the time of this writing and it is interesting to understand the Reform movement liturgically before the creation of Gates of Prayer. This book is a source book in two ways, for the actual source material it provides as well as a source itself for insight into the identity of the movement in the 1960s as the

need for a new prayer book and a changing identity begin to emerge. It also chronicles the changes in prayer in the movement, which will also be quite useful in the context of this curriculum.

Various articles, chapters and discussions about adult education

I plan to utilize a variety of articles, chapters and class discussions provided in Teaching Bible to Adults in the Fall semester as a reference for creating lessons that are developmentally appropriate for the learners. These techniques will hopefully compliment the subject matter and help me present the material in a way that speaks to the learners as adults.

Elbogen, Ismar. Jewish Liturgy: a Comprehensive History. Trans. Raymond P. Scheindlin. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1993.

Sachar, Howard M. The Course of Modern Jewish History. New York: Vintage, 1990.

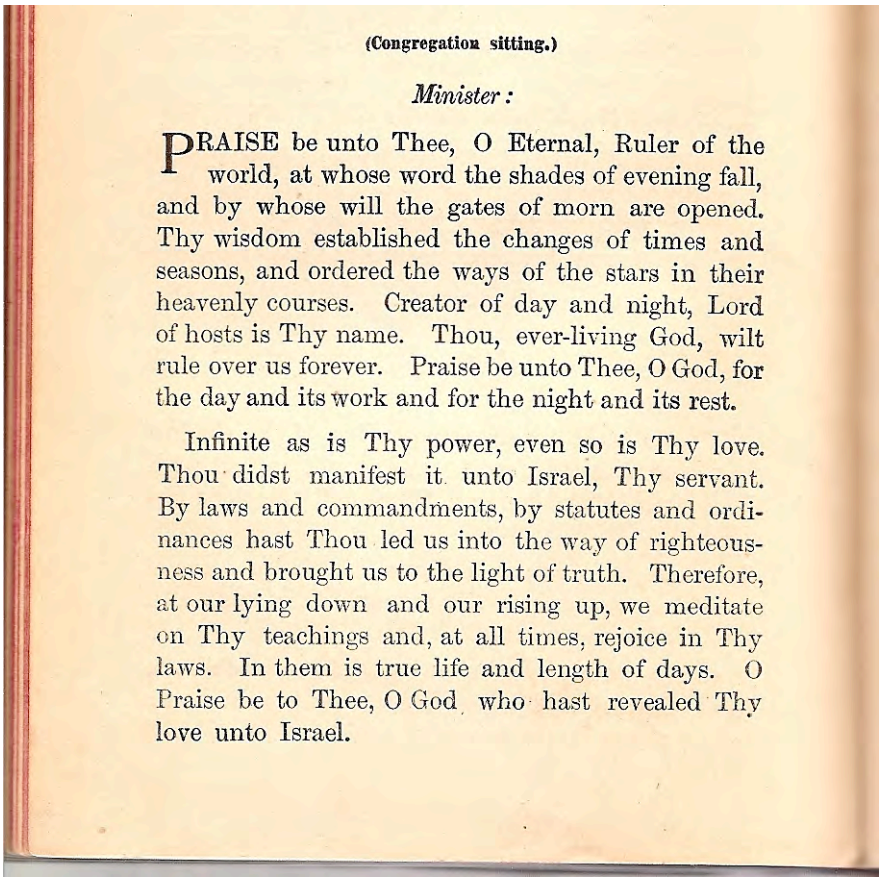
Reinharz, Jehuda, and Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, eds. The Jew in the Modern World : A Documentary History. New York: Oxford UP, Incorporated, 1995.

Appendix –
Lesson Plan Handouts

Lesson 1

Ma'ariv Aravim

Version 1



(Congregation sitting.)

Minister:

PRAISE be unto Thee, O Eternal, Ruler of the world, at whose word the shades of evening fall, and by whose will the gates of morn are opened. Thy wisdom established the changes of times and seasons, and ordered the ways of the stars in their heavenly courses. Creator of day and night, Lord of hosts is Thy name. Thou, ever-living God, wilt rule over us forever. Praise be unto Thee, O God, for the day and its work and for the night and its rest.

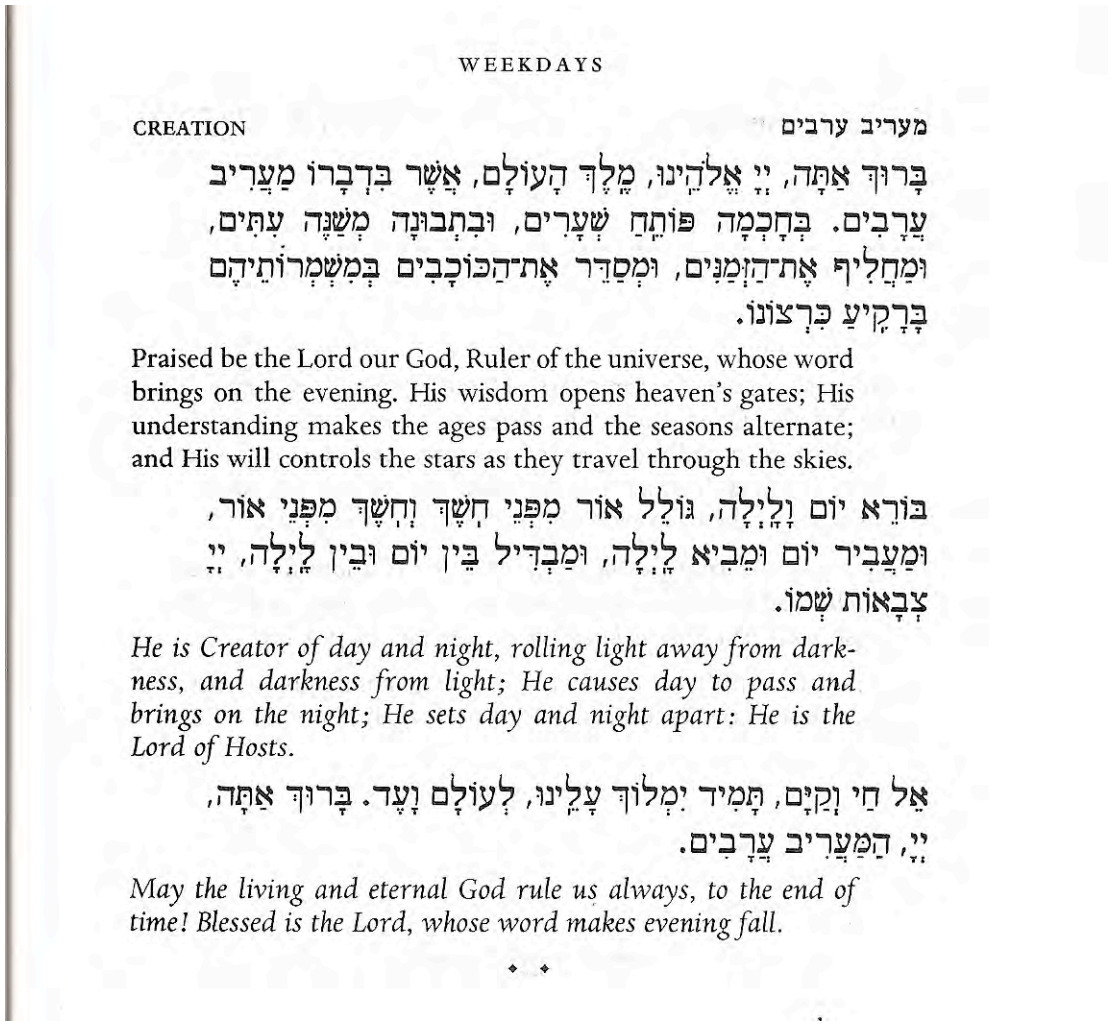
Infinite as is Thy power, even so is Thy love. Thou didst manifest it unto Israel, Thy servant. By laws and commandments, by statutes and ordinances hast Thou led us into the way of righteousness and brought us to the light of truth. Therefore, at our lying down and our rising up, we meditate on Thy teachings and, at all times, rejoice in Thy laws. In them is true life and length of days. O Praise be to Thee, O God who hast revealed Thy love unto Israel.

Pay close attention to language and layout, not just the actual text of the prayer.

- What do you notice immediately about this prayer?
- What is familiar about this prayer?
- What is not familiar about this prayer?
- What do you notice about the layout of the prayer?
- What do you notice about the structure of the prayer?
- Would you feel comfortable using this version during a prayer service? Why? Why not?
- What can you infer about when this version of the prayer was created?

Ma'ariv Aravim

Version 2



WEEKDAYS

CREATION

מעריב ערבים

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בִּדְבָרוֹ מַעֲרִיב עֲרָבִים. בְּחָכְמָה פּוֹתֵחַ שְׁעָרִים, וּבִתְבוּנָה מְשַׁנֶּה עִתִּים, וּמַחֲלִיף אֶת־הַזְּמַנִּים, וּמְסַדֵּר אֶת־הַכּוֹכָבִים בְּמִשְׁמְרוֹתֵיהֶם בָּרָקִיעַ כִּרְצוֹנוֹ.

Praised be the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, whose word brings on the evening. His wisdom opens heaven's gates; His understanding makes the ages pass and the seasons alternate; and His will controls the stars as they travel through the skies.

בּוֹרֵא יוֹם וָלָיְלָה, גּוֹלֵל אוֹר מִפְּנֵי חֹשֶׁךְ וְחֹשֶׁךְ מִפְּנֵי אוֹר, וּמַעֲבִיר יוֹם וּמֵבִיא לָיְלָה, וּמַבְדִּיל בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לָיְלָה, יְיָ צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ.

He is Creator of day and night, rolling light away from darkness, and darkness from light; He causes day to pass and brings on the night; He sets day and night apart: He is the Lord of Hosts.

אֵל חַי וְקַיָּם, תָּמִיד יִמְלוֹךְ עָלֵינוּ, לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הַמַּעֲרִיב עֲרָבִים.

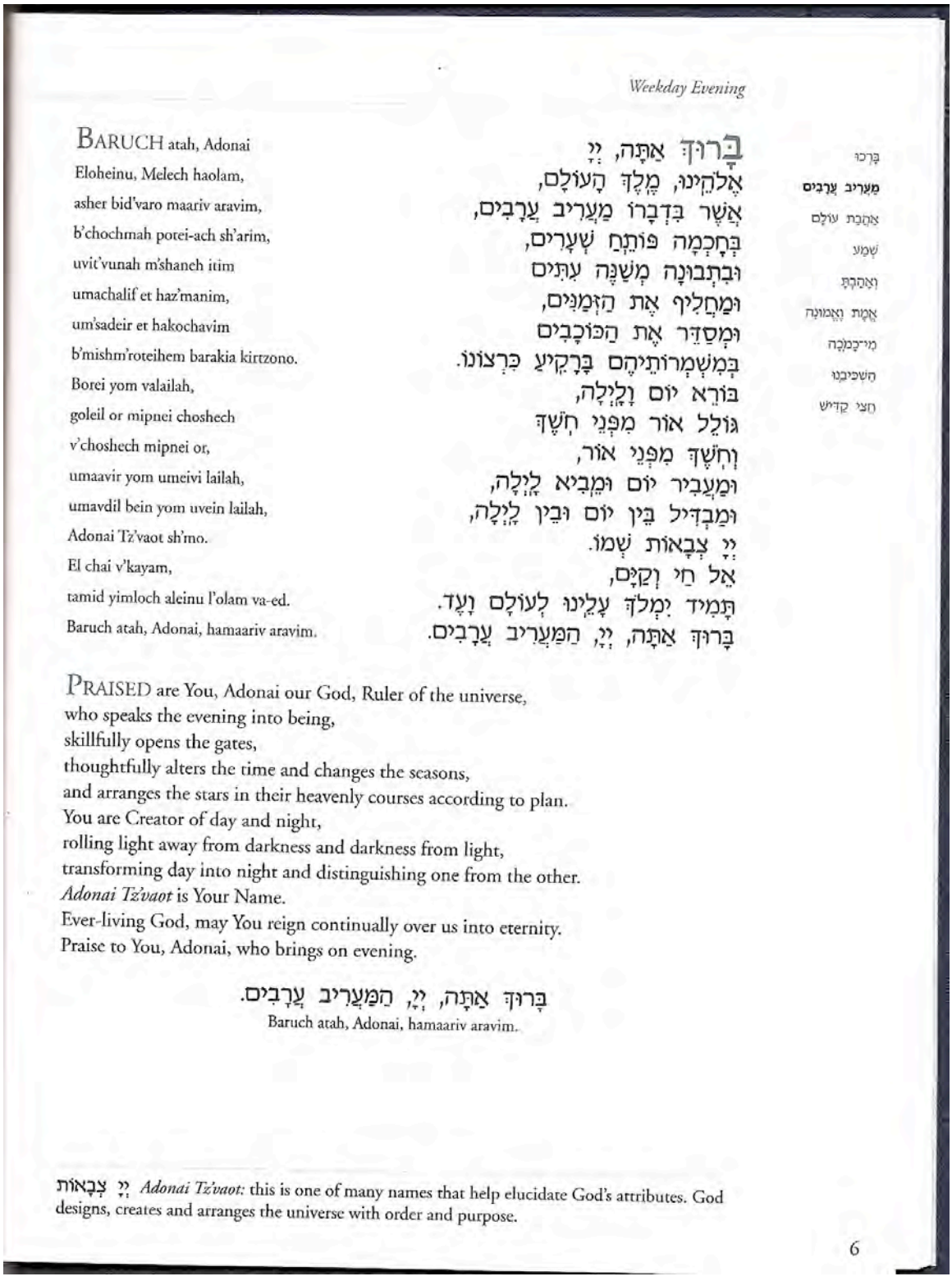
May the living and eternal God rule us always, to the end of time! Blessed is the Lord, whose word makes evening fall.

Pay close attention to language and layout, not just the actual text of the prayer.

- What do you notice immediately about this prayer?
- What is familiar about this prayer?
- What is not familiar about this prayer?
- What do you notice about the layout of the prayer?
- What do you notice about the structure of the prayer?
- Would you feel comfortable using this version during a prayer service? Why? Why not?
- What can you infer about when this version of the prayer was created?

Ma'ariv Aravim

Version 3



Weekday Evening

BARUCH atah, Adonai
Eloheinu, Melech haolam,
asher bid'varo maariv aravim,
b'chochmah potei-ach sh'arim,
uvit'vunah m'shaneh itim
umachalif et haz'manim,
um'sadeir et hakochavim
b'mishm'roteihem barakia kirtzono.
Borei yom valailah,
goleil or mipnei choshech
v'choshech mipnei or,
umaavir yom umeivi lailah,
umavdil bein yom uvein lailah,
Adonai Tz'vaot sh'mo.
El chai v'kayam,
tamid yimloch aleinu l'olam va-ed.
Baruch atah, Adonai, hamaariv aravim.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר בִּדְבָרוֹ מַעֲרִיב עֲרָבִים,
בְּחָכְמָה פּוֹתֵחַ שְׁעָרִים,
וּבִתְבוּנָה מְשַׁנֶּה עִתִּים
וּמַחֲלִיף אֶת הַזְּמַנִּים,
וּמְסַדֵּר אֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים
בְּמִשְׁמְרוֹתֵיהֶם בָּרָקִיעַ כִּרְצוֹנוֹ.
בּוֹרֵא יוֹם וָלָיְלָה,
גּוֹלֵל אוֹר מִפְּנֵי חֹשֶׁךְ
וְחֹשֶׁךְ מִפְּנֵי אוֹר,
וּמַעֲבִיר יוֹם וּמֵבִיא לָיְלָה,
וּמַבְדִּיל בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לָיְלָה,
יְיָ צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ.
אֵל חַי וְקַיָּם,
תָּמִיד יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הַמַּעֲרִיב עֲרָבִים.

בָּרְכוּ
מַעֲרִיב עֲרָבִים
אַהֲבַת עוֹלָם
שְׁמַע
וְאַהַבְתָּ
אֱמֶת וֶאֱמוּנָה
מִי־כָמֹכָה
הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ
חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

PRAISED are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe,
who speaks the evening into being,
skillfully opens the gates,
thoughtfully alters the time and changes the seasons,
and arranges the stars in their heavenly courses according to plan.
You are Creator of day and night,
rolling light away from darkness and darkness from light,
transforming day into night and distinguishing one from the other.
Adonai Tz'vaot is Your Name.
Ever-living God, may You reign continually over us into eternity.
Praise to You, Adonai, who brings on evening.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הַמַּעֲרִיב עֲרָבִים.
Baruch atah, Adonai, hamaariv aravim.

יְיָ צְבָאוֹת *Adonai Tz'vaot:* this is one of many names that help elucidate God's attributes. God designs, creates and arranges the universe with order and purpose.

6

Pay close attention to language and layout, not just the actual text of the prayer.

- What do you notice immediately about this prayer?
- What is familiar about this prayer?
- What is not familiar about this prayer?
- What do you notice about the layout of the prayer?
- What do you notice about the structure of the prayer?
- Would you feel comfortable using this version during a prayer service? Why? Why not?
- What can you infer about when this version of the prayer was created?

Lesson 3

Abraham Geiger
1810-1871

Biography:

Abraham Geiger was one of the leaders of the Reform movement in German Judaism and one of the outstanding scholars of the second generation of Wissenschaft des Judentums (The Society for the Scientific Study of the Jews). He was the founding editor of the journal of the Society, which became the most important forum in its day for modern Jewish studies. He also saw the journal as ally in the movement of religious Reform Judaism. "Jewish theology" based on critical historical scholarship, he held, would validate Reform's conception of Judaism as a continually evolving religion. Serving as a rabbi in Wiesbaden, Breslau and then in the city of his birth, Frankfurt am Main, in 1870 Geiger moved to Berlin, where he was instrumental in establishing a college for Jewish scholarship and the training of Liberal rabbis and religious schoolteachers. Like many of his contemporaries in the Wissenschaft, Geiger endeavored to demonstrate the inseparable and ever-fruitful link between Judaism and European culture and to point to the dynamic, developmental aspect of Jewish thought. In stern opposition to Orthodoxy, which he rejected as ossified by an anachronistic legalism and as lacking in aesthetic sensibilities appropriate to cultured Europeans, he emphasized the prophetic dimension of biblical faith and the corresponding universal mission of Judaism.

Excerpt from a letter from Abraham Geiger to J. Derenbourg in 1836:

…Alas, we still cleave so horribly fast to the exterior works, and when the blow that will strike the religious world falls…we shall have to fling ourselves into the arms of the new era without having had any significant part in bringing it about…There is one basic thought: *the establishment of proof, just like anything else that exists, is something that has come to be and has no binding force.* Every single piece of research, even if it should amount merely to a scholarly trifle, has worth and retains that worth…But all this does not set the course for us to follow; it is just material, and who knows what its use will be, or whether we, or anyone else, will use it or will be able to put it to use? But the course to be taken, my dear fellow, is that of critical study; the critical study of individual laws, the critical examination of individual documents—this is what we must strive for. The Talmud, and the Bible, too, that collection of books, most of them so splendid and uplifting, perhaps the most exalting of all literature of *human* authorship, can no longer be viewed as of Divine origin. Of course, all this will not come to pass today, or even tomorrow, but it should be our goal, and will continue to be so, and in this fashion we are working closely with every true endeavor and movement of our day, and we will accomplish more by study than we could by means of a hundred sermons and widespread religious instruction. For the love of heaven, how much longer can we continue this deceit, to expound the stories of the bible from the pulpits over and over again as actual historical happenings, to accept as supernatural events of world import stories which we ourselves have relegated to the realm of legend, and to derive teaching from them or, at

least, to use them as the basis for sermons and texts? How much longer will we continue to pervert the spirit of the child with these tales that distort the natural good sense of tender youth? But how can this be changed? By driving such falsehoods into a corner, of course; by clearly revealing this paradox both to ourselves and to others; by pursuing into their secret hiding places all those who could seek to evade the issue, and thus eventually helping to bring about the great cave-in which will bury and old world beneath its ruins and open a new world for us in its place…

Leopold Zunz
1794-1886

Biography:
Among the active members of the Society for the Culture and Science of the Jews (Wissenschaft des Judentums), he was the only one to maintain a commitment to Jewish Studies. This is partially explained by the fact that he considered the Science of Judaism to be his professional calling; even before the establishment of the society he engaged in Jewish scholarship. He was uniquely equipped to do so, having received a sound traditional education and possessing the disposition for assiduous and meticulous scholarship. As the Science of Judaism was not recognized as a legitimate and autonomous academic discipline and therefore not included in the university curriculum, Zunz persued his research in the field as a private scholar. He made his living as a preacher in Reform synagogues as an editor of a Berlin newspaper, as a headmaster of a primary school and as a director of a Jewish teachers' seminary. In an essay, published in 1818, Zunz presented a program for the scientific study of Judaism. The essay is permeated with a youthful enthusiasm for the idea of Wissenschaft. Specifically, it provided a new, indeed secular, definition of Jewish intellectual activity.

Excerpts from The Society for the Culture and Science of the Jews Statues: (1822)
Written by Eduard Gans, Moses Moser and Leopold Zunz

Introduction: Paragraph 1. The discrepancy between the inner state of the Jews and their outward positon among the nations has existed for many centuries. In modern times, however, this contradiction has become more apparent than before. A powerful change in intellectual orientation, among Jews as well as other peoples, has engendered new [cultural and social] patterns which daily enhance the anguish generated by this contradiction. This situation necessitates a complete reform of the peculiar education and self-definition thus far prevalent among the Jews; they will have to be brought to the same point of development reached by the rest of Europe.

Paragraph 2. …the society is an association of individuals who feel they ave the ability and calling to harmonize, by way of educational work, the Jews with the present age and with the states wherever they live.

Paragraph 3. …the society should endeavor to influence the world-view of different social classes [among the Jews] through the dissemination of a clear, objective knowledge. On the one hand, then, everything that can serve to enlarge the intellect will be made use of, such as the establishment of schools, seminaries, academies and the active encouragement of literary and other public activities of every description; on the other hand, the young generation [of Jews] for petty-trade and to improve the general tone of their social intercourse [with

non-Jews]. Thus, gradually, every peculiarity that distinguishes the Jews from the rest of the population will be overcome.[4]

[4] *Entwurf von Statuen des Vereins fuer Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden* (Berlin, 1822)

Samson Raphael Hirsch
1808-1888

Biography:

Hirsch was born in Hamburg where his family belonged to the traditionalist opponents of the Reform temple of that city. After completing his rabbinic studies he attended the University of Bonn where he befriended his future adversary, Abraham Geiger. From 1830 to 1841 he served as the chief rabbi of the principality of Oldenburg. He published two great works where he addressed the perplexed Jewry of his day, both these works seek to demonstrate the viability of traditional Judaism in the modern world. Hirsch did, however, recognize the need to revise certain, "external" aspects of Judaism, aesthetic forms of the public worship service—in order to facilitate the Jew's adjustment to the modern sensibility. On the other hand, he emphatically rejected Reform and any changes affecting the principles and content of halakhic Judaism. Hirsch's response to Reofrm may be summarized as agreeing to revision of the externals but allowing no reform of the principles of Judaism.

Excerpt from Religion Allied to Progress in 1854:

…"Religion allied to progress": [the leaders of Reform have] with undaunted courage embroidered [this slogan] in scintillating colours on to the banner of our present-day religious struggles, that the educated "progressive" sons and daughters of the new age might rally to this new flag of the prophet and advance with it unhindered. How leaderless was this new congregation of prophets before this new messenger with this new message of salvation appeared among them! Since the beginning of the century the ancient religion had been to them—ancient; it no longer fitted into the society of the songs and daughters of the new age with their frock coats and evening dresses. In club and fraternity, at the ball and the supper party, at concerts and in salons—everywhere the old Judaism was in the way and seemed so completely out of place…And in the political marketplace where emancipation was to be purchased, the modern sons of Judah could be seen in every corner offering to exchange the old Judaism for something else, since in any case it had lost all its value for their own use.
Now was is it that *we* want? Are the only alternatives either to abandon religion or to renounce all progress with all the glorious and noble gift which civilisation and education offer mankind? Is the Jewish religion really of such a nature that its faithful adherents must be the enemies of civilization and progress? There is however, no such dilemma. Judaism never remained aloof from true civilization and progress; in almost every era its adherents were fully abreast of contemporary learning and very often excelled their contemporaries. Judaism as it has come down to use from our forefathers is for us the gift and the word of God, an untouchable sanctuary which must not be subjected to human judgement nor subordinated to human considerations. It is the ideal given by God to all the generations of the House of Jacob, never yet attained and to be striven for unto the distant future. It is the great Divine revelation, which should infuse all our sentiments, justify all our resolutions and give all our actions their strength and stability, foundation and direction.

It is only through unfaithfulness of the majority that the loyalty of the minority becomes a duty demanding so much sacrifice, though the crown which it wins is all the more glorious for the thorns which our brethren strew in our path…

Zecharias Frankel
1801-1875

Biography:

Frankel was born in Prague and was educated at the University of Pesth, where he received a doctorate in classical philology. He served as the District Rabbi of Leitmeritz, and then as the Chief Rabbi of Saxony. He became well known for his personality as a dry, pedantic bookworm. He brilliantly harmonized traditional Torah study with modern university study and was considered one of the most brilliant of his contemporaries in this regard. He though of himself as part of the newly created Reform Movement as well as a member of the Society for the Culture and Science of the Jews (Wissenschaft des Judentums) until the Reform Rabbinical Conference at Frankfort when the proposal was made to eliminate Hebrew from the liturgy. Frankel decided to leave the movement and began to write about what he felt was the most important piece of Judaism, the connection to history. He believed that while the bible may be the literal word of God, it had become the historic vehicle of Jewish religious feeling. His Judaism, which he termed, "positive-historical Judaism" became the basis for modern Conservative Judaism.[5]

Excerpt from "On Changes in Judaism" (1845) written by Z. Frankel

"Judaism is a religion which has a direct influence on life's activity. It is a religion of action, demanding the performance of precepts which either directly aim at ennobling man or, by reminding man of the divine, strengthening his feelings of dependence on God. And because of this trait neither pure abstract contemplation nor dark mysticism could ever strike root in Judaism…A religion of pure ideas belongs primarily to the theologians; the masses who are not adapted to such conceptions concern themselves little with the particulars of such religions because they have little relationship to life. On the other hand, a religion of action is always present, demanding practice in activity and an expression of will, and its demands are reflected in the manifold life of the individual, with the result that the faith becomes the common property of every follower…Once the people are saturated with an awareness of the essential truths and the forms which embody them, a firm ground will have been established for adhering to Jewish practices."[6]

[5] Sachar, Howard M. The Course of Modern Jewish History. New York: Vintage, 1990. 167-170

[6] Reinharz, Jehuda, and Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, eds. The Jew in the Modern World : A Documentary History. New York: Oxford UP, Incorporated, 1995. 194-197.

The Three Paragraphs of the Sh'ma
by Rabbi Richard Sarason, PhD

A distinctive feature of Mishkan T'filah is its inclusion of more passages from the traditional liturgy. (Actually, each of the successive North American Reform prayer books published by the CCAR since the original version of the Union Prayer Book in 1895 has included more Hebrew texts than its predecessors.) A survey of Reform congregants' worship desiderata, conducted by the CCAR in the mid-1990s, which helped to generate the guidelines for editing the new Reform prayer book, recommended:

> The CCAR should take note of the greater appreciation now being given to the traditional texts and should consider, for example, the paragraphs of the Sh'ma which have been deleted in Gates of Prayer, resurrection of the dead, and other elements of the traditional siddur which Reform has dropped…Consideration should be given to the possibility of alternatives within the same prayer (e.g., m'chayeih hakol next to m'chayeih meitim).

Here we examine in historical perspective the three paragraphs of the Sh'ma .

The traditional K'riat Sh'ma (Recitation of Sh'ma) comprises three biblical paragraphs: Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Deuteronomy 11:13-21, and Numbers 15:37-41. The Rabbis (Mishnah B'rachot 2:2) characterize the content of the first paragraph as "Acceptance of the Discipline [Yoke] of God's Sovereignty," and the second as "Acceptance of the Discipline [Yoke] of the Commandments." The third paragraph is called both the "Paragraph about the Fringes" and the "Exodus from Egypt" (with reference to the beginning and the end of its content; Babylonian Talmud B'rachot 12b). Early on, there was a difference of opinion as to whether the third paragraph was to be recited in the evening, since one did not wear fringes at that time (Mishnah B'rachot 1:5, 2:2; Babylonian Talmud B'rachot 14b), but its evening recitation quickly became standard practice. Interestingly, the newly restored option in Mishkan T'filah of including the third paragraph, but only in the morning when the tallit is worn, corresponds to this ancient variant custom and invokes the same logic!

The earliest Reform congregational prayer book (Hamburg, 1819) includes all three paragraphs of the Sh'ma. The first radical Reform prayer book (Berlin, 1848), however, omits all but the first paragraph, which only appears (after the first verse) in the vernacular, German. The first verse

(Sh'ma Yisrael) and its (non-biblical) response (Baruch shem kavod ; found in Mishnah Yoma 3:8, 4:1-2, and 6:2 as the congregation's response upon hearing the name of God pronounced in the Temple on Yom Kippur) are given in Hebrew and singled out for special performance practice: they are recited and sung in responsive repetition by the prayer leader, then by the choir and congregation, while the congregation stands. A variation of this practice would become normative in the North American Union Prayer Book. That is how the traditional first paragraph came to be reconceived as two separate entities, "the Sh'ma " and "the V'ahavta " in popular Reform liturgical understanding.

The deletion of the second and third paragraphs of the Sh'ma in the more radical Reform prayer books (Berlin, followed in North American by Leo Merzbacher's Seder Tefillah at Temple Emanuel in New York, 1855; David Einhorn's Olat Tamid in Baltimore, 1856; and the Union Prayer Book , 1895, and its successors) was justified in terms of both length and theology. In order to shorten the worship service (on the theory that less is more), repetitions were omitted. Thus, the second paragraph, which contains much of the same language as the first, was deemed redundant. But there were also theological problems with the second paragraph: It affirms that God rewards the observance of the mitzvot through rainfall in its proper season, and punishes violations through drought. To the modern scientific mind, this seemed rather primitive and gross, both as an account of the weather and as an understanding of divine providence. (In 1945 Mordecai Kaplan also deleted this paragraph from the first Reconstructionist prayer book as offensive to his naturalistic theology, and substituted for it Deuteronomy 28:1-6.)

In more radical Reform circles, the third paragraph, (or minimally, its first part, dealing with the mitzvah of tzitzit), was deemed expendable because the tallit , as distinctively Jewish, non-western prayer garb, was also deemed expendable. Also, the passage describes the function of the tzitzit as reminders to perform God's mitzvot---but many of these, too (particularly the ritual ones), were deemed archaic and dispensable in the modern world.

In more recent years, the new Reconstructionist liturgies have reinstated the second paragraph of the Sh'ma as an option (while also retaining Kaplan's alternative passage), arguing that it can be interpreted along ecological lines: "If we continue to pollute the environment---and thus display contempt for the integrity of God's creation---pure rain will cease to fall, and the ground will cease to give forth its produce." This rationale also was suggested in the first trial-draft of Mishkan T'filah (2002), which included the second paragraph as an option, noting that "traditional Reform thinking challenges Deuteronomic theology, that bad events which

occur are a result of communal sinful behavior. We do accept responsibility for social and natural ecology: how we treat one another and our environment has a powerful, direct impact on society and the planet."

Nonetheless, the verses describing an angry God "sealing up the heavens" were printed in smaller type, indicating the theological difficulties with this image. The paragraph ultimately remained sufficiently problematic to require both a recommendation from the Siddur Editorial Committee and a vote by the CCAR Executive Committee. Both decided to uphold the earlier Reform deletion of the paragraph in its entirety: even though subject to mitigating non-literalist interpretations, the text itself remains difficult for a modern Jew to recite in the liturgy. The third paragraph, on the other hand, has been restored as an option, since many Reform Jews have embraced the tallit as distinctively Jewish prayer garb; viewing the tzitzit while praying can usefully remind us of our religious obligations.

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www.urj.org

Lesson 4

1885 Pittsburgh Platform

Convening at the call of Kaufmann Kohler of New York, Reform rabbis from around the United States met from November 16 through November 19, 1885 with Isaac Mayer Wise presiding. The meeting was declared the continuation of the Philadelphia Conference of 1869, which was the continuation of the German Conference of 1841 to 1846. The rabbis adopted the following seminal text:

1. We recognize in every religion an attempt to grasp the Infinite, and in every mode, source or book of revelation held sacred in any religious system the consciousness of the indwelling of God in man. We hold that Judaism presents the highest conception of the God-idea as taught in our Holy Scriptures and developed and spiritualized by the Jewish teachers, in accordance with the moral and philosophical progress of their respective ages. We maintain that Judaism preserved and defended midst continual struggles and trials and under enforced isolation, this God-idea as the central religious truth for the human race.

2. We recognize in the Bible the record of the consecration of the Jewish people to its mission as the priest of the one God, and value it as the most potent instrument of religious and moral instruction. We hold that the modern discoveries of scientific researches in the domain of nature and history are not antagonistic to the doctrines of Judaism, the Bible reflecting the primitive ideas of its own age, and at times clothing its conception of divine Providence and Justice dealing with men in miraculous narratives.

3. We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only its moral laws, and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.

4. We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity, and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our days is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation.

5. We recognize, in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect, the approaching of the realization of Israel s great Messianic hope for the establishment of the kingdom of truth, justice, and peace among all men. We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship

under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.

6. We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion, ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason. We are convinced of the utmost necessity of preserving the historical identity with our great past.. Christianity and Islam, being daughter religions of Judaism, we appreciate their providential mission, to aid in the spreading of monotheistic and moral truth. We acknowledge that the spirit of broad humanity of our age is our ally in the fulfillment of our mission, and therefore we extend the hand of fellowship to all who cooperate with us in the establishment of the reign of truth and righteousness among men.

7. We reassert the doctrine of Judaism that the soul is immortal, grounding the belief on the divine nature of human spirit, which forever finds bliss in righteousness and misery in wickedness. We reject as ideas not rooted in Judaism, the beliefs both in bodily resurrection and in Gehenna and Eden (Hell and Paradise) as abodes for everlasting punishment and reward.

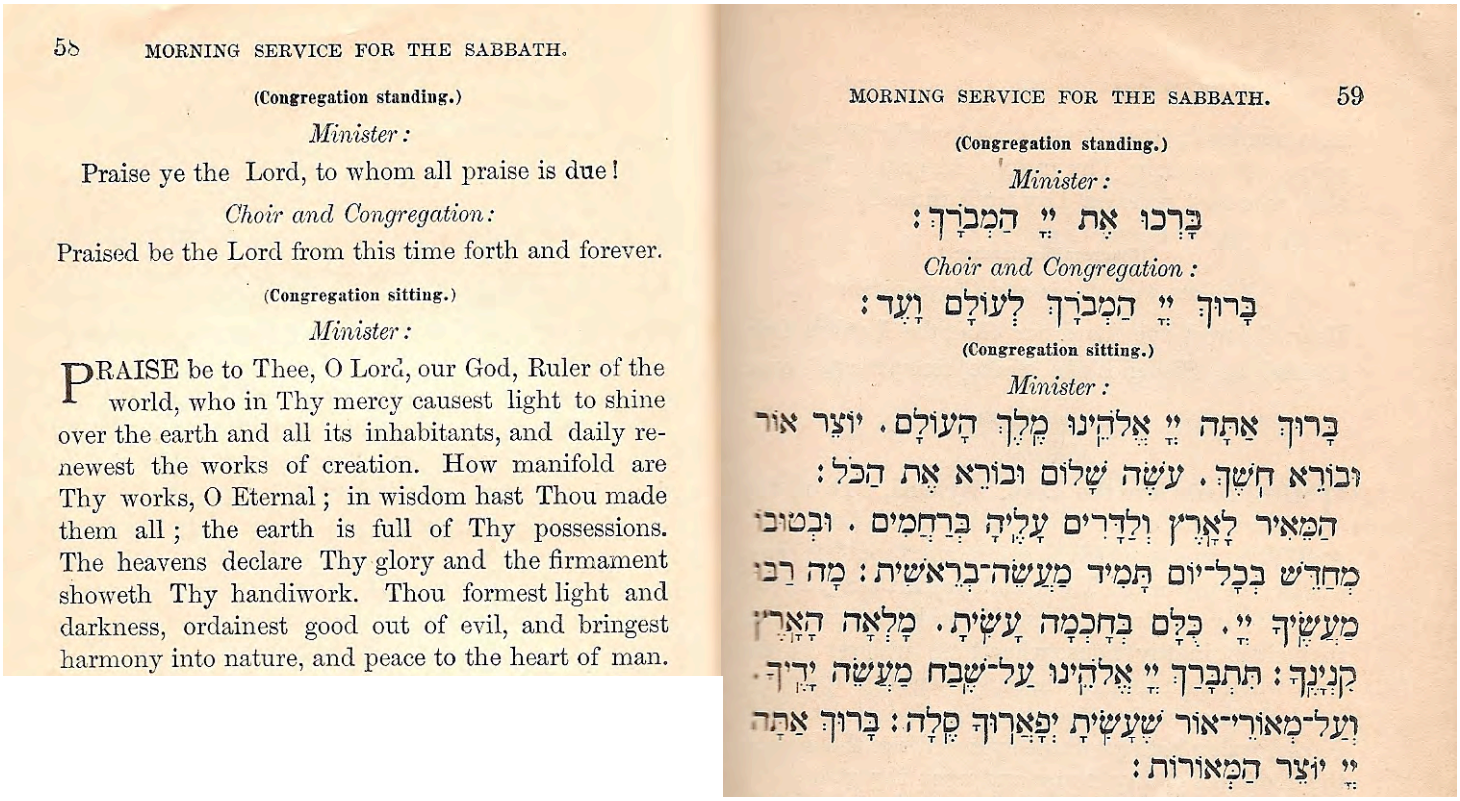
8. In full accordance with the spirit of the Mosaic legislation, which strives to regulate the relations between rich and poor, we deem it our duty to participate in the great task of modern times, to solve, on the basis of justice and righteousness, the problems presented by the contrasts and evils of the present organization of society.

Lesson 5

Reform Judaism and Zionism

Yotzer Or יוצר אור

Union Prayer Book:



58 MORNING SERVICE FOR THE SABBATH.

(Congregation standing.)

Minister:

Praise ye the Lord, to whom all praise is due!

Choir and Congregation:

Praised be the Lord from this time forth and forever.

(Congregation sitting.)

Minister:

PRAISE be to Thee, O Lord, our God, Ruler of the world, who in Thy mercy causest light to shine over the earth and all its inhabitants, and daily renewest the works of creation. How manifold are Thy works, O Eternal; in wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy possessions. The heavens declare Thy glory and the firmament showeth Thy handiwork. Thou formest light and darkness, ordainest good out of evil, and bringest harmony into nature, and peace to the heart of man.

MORNING SERVICE FOR THE SABBATH. 59

(Congregation standing.)

Minister:

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְבֹרָךְ׃

Choir and Congregation:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

(Congregation sitting.)

Minister:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. יוֹצֵר אוֹר
וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ. עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת הַכֹּל׃
הַמֵּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים. וּבְטוּבוֹ
מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל־יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה־בְרֵאשִׁית׃ מָה רַבּוּ
מַעֲשֶׂיךָ יְיָ. כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ. מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ
קִנְיָנֶךָ׃ תִּתְבָּרַךְ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל־שֶׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ.
וְעַל־מְאוֹרֵי־אוֹר שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ יְפָאֲרוּךָ סֶלָה׃ בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְיָ יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת׃

1. Just from what you see here, what is the theme of this prayer?
2. Carefully examine the Hebrew and English text, what do you notice?
3.

All rise

שמע וברכותיה

בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְבֹרָךְ׃

Praise the Lord, to whom our praise is due!

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

Praised be the Lord, to whom our praise is due,
now and for ever!

◆ ◆

CREATION יוצר

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ,
עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת־הַכֹּל.

Praised be the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who makes light and creates darkness, who ordains peace and fashions all things.

הַמֵּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים, וּבְטוּבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ
בְּכָל־יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית.

With compassion He gives light to the earth and all who dwell there; with goodness He renews the work of creation continually, day by day.

מָה רַבּוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, יְיָ! כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ, מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ
קִנְיָנֶךָ.

How manifold are Your works, O Lord; in wisdom You have made them all; the earth is full of Your creations.

תִּתְבָּרַךְ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, עַל־שֶׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ, וְעַל־מְאוֹרֵי־אוֹר
שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ: יְפָאֲרוּךָ. סֶלָה.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

Let all bless You, O Lord our God, for the excellence of Your handiwork, and for the glowing stars that You have made: let them glorify You for ever. Blessed is the Lord, the Maker of light.

◆ ◆

BARUCH atah, Adonai	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ,
Eloheinu, Melech haolam,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
yotzeir or uvorei choshech,	יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ,
oseh shalom uvorei et hakol.	עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת-הַכֹּל.
Hamei-ir laaretz	הַמֵּאִיר לָאָרֶץ
v'ladarim aleha b'rachamim,	וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים,
uv'tuvo m'chadeish b'chol yom tamid	וּבְטוּבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם תָּמִיד
maaseih v'reishit.	מַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית.
Mah rabu maasecha, Adonai,	מָה רַבּוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, יְיָ,
kulam b'chochmah asita,	כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ,
mal'ah haaretz kinyanecha.	מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶיךָ.
Titbarach, Adonai Eloheinu,	תִּתְבָּרַךְ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
al shevach maaseih yadecha	עַל שֶׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ
v'al m'orei or she-asita,	וְעַל מְאוֹרֵי אוֹר שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ,
y'faarucha selah.	יְפָאֲרוּךָ סֶלָה.
Or chadash al Tzion tair,	אוֹר חָדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תָּאִיר,
v'nizkeh chulanu m'heirah l'oro.	וְנִזְכֶּה כֻּלָּנוּ מְהֵרָה לְאוֹרוֹ.
Baruch atah, Adonai, yotzeir ham'orot.	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

PRAISED ARE YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe,
Creator of light and darkness, who makes peace and fashions all things.
In mercy, You illumine the world and those who live upon it.
In Your goodness You daily renew creation.
How numerous are Your works, Adonai!
In wisdom, You formed them all, filling the earth with Your creatures.
Be praised, Adonai our God, for the excellent work of Your hands,
and for the lights You created; may they glorify You.
Shine a new light upon Zion, that we all may swiftly merit its radiance.
Praised are You, Adonai, Creator of all heavenly lights.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

Baruch atah, Adonai, yotzeir ham'orot.

Carefully read the Hebrew and English translation of the Mishkan T'fillah version of the Yotzer Or, what do you notice? Are there differences?

"Shine a new light upon Zion, that we may all swiftly merit its radiance." Why was this added in again, back from the original prayer? What does it refer to? Why was it taken out by the classical Reformers and why was it put back in by the creators of Mishkan T'fillah?

"The Columbus Platform" – 1937

In view of the changes that have taken place in the modern world and the consequent need of stating anew the teachings of Reform Judaism, the Central Conference of American Rabbis makes the following declaration of principles. It presents them not as a fixed creed but as a guide for the progressive elements of Jewry.

A. Judaism and its Foundations

1. Nature of Judaism. Judaism is the historical religious experience of the Jewish people. Though growing out of Jewish life, its message is universal, aiming at the union and perfection of mankind under the sovereignty of God. Reform Judaism recognizes the principle of progressive development in religion and consciously applies this principle to spiritual as well as to cultural and social life. Judaism welcomes all truth, whether written in the pages of scripture or deciphered from the records of nature. The new discoveries of science, while replacing the older scientific views underlying our sacred literature, do not conflict with the essential spirit of religion as manifested in the consecration of man's will, heart and mind to the service of God and of humanity.

2. God. The heart of Judaism and its chief contribution to religion is the doctrine of the One, living God, who rules the world through law and love. In Him all existence has its creative source and mankind its ideal of conduct. Though transcending time and space, He is the indwelling Presence of the world. We worship Him as the Lord of the universe and as our merciful Father.

3. Man. Judaism affirms that man is created in the Divine image. His spirit is immortal. He is an active co-worker with God. As a child of God, he is endowed with moral freedom and is charged with the responsibility of overcoming evil and striving after ideal ends.

4. Torah. God reveals Himself not only in the majesty, beauty and orderliness of nature, but also in the vision and moral striving of the human spirit. Revelation is a continuous process, confined to no one group and to no one age. Yet the people of Israel, through its prophets and sages, achieved unique insight in the realm of religious truth. The Torah, both written and oral, enshrines Israel's ever-growing consciousness of God and of the moral law. It preserves the historical precedents, sanctions and norms of Jewish life, and seeks to mould it in the patterns of goodness and of holiness. Being products of historical processes, certain of its laws have lost their binding force with the passing of the conditions that called them forth. But as a depository of permanent spiritual ideals, the Torah remains

the dynamic source of the life of Israel. Each age has the obligation to adapt the teachings of the Torah to its basic needs in consonance with the genius of Judaism.

5. Israel. Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body. Living in all parts of the world, Israel has been held together by the ties of a common history, and above all, by the heritage of faith. Though we recognize in the group loyalty of Jews who have become estranged from our religious tradition, a bond which still unites them with us, we maintain that it is by its religion and for its religion that the Jewish people has lived. The non-Jew who accepts our faith is welcomed as a full member of the Jewish community. In all lands where our people live, they assume and seek to share loyally the full duties and responsibilities of citizenship and to create seats of Jewish knowledge and religion. In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life. Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, Justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal.

B. Ethics

6. Ethics and Religion. In Judaism religion and morality blend into an indissoluble unity. Seeking God means to strive after holiness, righteousness and goodness. The love of God is incomplete without the love of one's fellowmen. Judaism emphasizes the kinship of the human race, the sanctity and worth of human life and personality and the right of the individual to freedom and to the pursuit of his chosen vocation. justice to all, irrespective of race, sect or class, is the inalienable right and the inescapable obligation of all. The state and organized government exist in order to further these ends.

7. Social justice. Judaism seeks the attainment of a just society by the application of its teachings to the economic order, to industry and commerce, and to national and international affairs. It aims at the elimination of man-made misery and suffering, of poverty and degradation, of tyranny and slavery, of social inequality and prejudice, of ill-will and strife. It advocates the promotion of harmonious relations between warring classes on the basis of equity and justice, and the creation of conditions under which human personality may flourish. It pleads for the safeguarding of childhood against exploitation. It champions the cause of all who work and of their right to an adequate standard of living, as

prior to the rights of property. Judaism emphasizes the duty of charity, and strives for a social order which will protect men against the material disabilities of old age, sickness and unemployment.

8. Peace. Judaism, from the days of the prophets, has proclaimed to mankind the ideal of universal peace. The spiritual and physical disarmament of all nations has been one of its essential teachings. It abhors all violence and relies upon moral education, love and sympathy to secure human progress. It regards justice as the foundation of the well-being of nations and the condition of enduring peace. It urges organized international action for disarmament, collective security and world peace.

C. Religious Practice

9. The Religious Life. Jewish life is marked by consecration to these ideals of Judaism. It calls for faithful participation in the life of the Jewish community as it finds expression in home, synagogue and school and in all other agencies that enrich Jewish life and promote its welfare. The Home has been and must continue to be a stronghold of Jewish life, hallowed by the spirit of love and reverence, by moral discipline and religious observance and worship. The Synagogue is the oldest and most democratic institution in Jewish life. It is the prime communal agency by which Judaism is fostered and preserved. It links the Jews of each community and unites them with all Israel. The perpetuation of Judaism as a living force depends upon religious knowledge and upon the Education of each new generation in our rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

Prayer is the voice of religion, the language of faith and aspiration. It directs man's heart and mind Godward, voices the needs and hopes of the community and reaches out after goals which invest life with supreme value. To deepen the spiritual life of our people, we must cultivate the traditional habit of communion with God through prayer in both home and synagogue.

Judaism as a way of life requires in addition to its moral and spiritual demands, the preservation of the Sabbath, festivals and Holy Days, the retention and development of such customs, symbols and ceremonies as possess inspirational value, the cultivation of distinctive forms of religious art and music and the use of Hebrew, together with the vernacular, in our worship and instruction.

These timeless aims and ideals of our faith we present anew to a confused and troubled world. We call upon our fellow Jews to rededicate themselves to them, and, in harmony with all men, hopefully and courageously to continue Israel's eternal quest after God and His kingdom.

Israel Section of Platforms

We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only its moral laws, and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.
We recognize, in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect, the approaching of the realization of Israel s great Messianic hope for the establishment of the kingdom of truth, justice, and peace among all men.
We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.

Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body. Living in all parts of the world, Israel has been held together by the ties of a common history, and above all, by the heritage of faith. Though we recognize in the group loyalty of Jews who have become estranged from our religious tradition, a bond which still unites them with us, we maintain that it is by its religion and for its religion that the Jewish people has lived. The non-Jew who accepts our faith is welcomed as a full member of the Jewish community. In all lands where our people live, they assume and seek to share loyally the full duties and responsibilities of citizenship and to create seats of Jewish knowledge and religion. In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its up-building as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life. Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, Justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal.

We are committed to (Medinat Yisrael), the State of Israel, and rejoice in its accomplishments. We affirm the unique qualities of living in (Eretz Yisrael), the land of Israel, and encourage (aliyah), immigration to Israel.
We are committed to a vision of the State of Israel that promotes full civil, human and religious rights for all its inhabitants and that strives for a lasting peace between Israel and its neighbors.
We are committed to promoting and strengthening Progressive Judaism in Israel, which will enrich the spiritual life of the Jewish state and its people.

Lesson 6

Fighting Segregation, Threats, and Dynamite: Rabbi William B. Silverman's Nashville Battle

David J. Meyer

"A rabbi they don't want to drive out of town is no rabbi.
And a rabbi who lets himself be driven out is no man."
—Rabbi Israel Salanter[1]

Rabbi William B. Silverman
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

On 16 March 1958, the Nashville Jewish Community Center was dynamited by a group calling itself the Confederate Underground. As a public response, Rabbi William B. Silverman (1913–2001), of Nashville's The Temple Congregation Ohabai Sholom, delivered a sermon on a Sabbath eve in the days following the attack. This previously unpublished sermon,[2] "We Will Not Yield," captures the struggles and deliberations of a young rabbi who, with the support of his congregation but under enormous communal pressures, sought to live by the ideals of his faith.

The sermon is of particular historical note given the timeliness of the message (following so soon after the Nashville bombing), the referencing of contemporaneous events, the expression of the rabbi's own personal response to the crisis, and the example it presents of the use of biblical and, especially, prophetic texts, in making the argument for the rabbi's opposition to segregation. Silverman adopted this outspoken stance despite the dangers that he, his family, and his congregation faced. In this carefully crafted sermon, he defends his support for the integration of Nashville's schools on the grounds of both biblical precedent and Reform Jewish principle. Like other southern rabbis who spoke out against segregation and in favor of civil rights, he based his ideas of social justice upon his interpretation of Jewish tradition.[3] He refutes the premise that outspoken support for civil rights will bring harm to the Jewish community, and he places the events in Nashville within the historic context of the fight for integration. Finally, he offers his congregation concrete opportunities for ongoing response.

More than a decade prior to the Nashville bombing, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) had called for its membership to become involved in matters of civil rights and racial justice. In 1945, the CCAR's Commission

Her Ambition Is to Become a Rabbi -- And a Housewife
By GEORGE VECSEYSpecial to The New York Times
New York Times (1857-Current file); Apr 13, 1971; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2003)
pg. 32

Her Ambition Is to Become a Rabbi

By GEORGE VECSEY
Special to The New York Times

CINCINNATI—"A rabbi is a scholar, a teacher, a preacher, a counselor, a comforter, a leader and a preserver of Judaism," said the young rabbinical student. "And most important, a rabbi is a human being."

These roles of a rabbi have been taught to Sally Priesand in her three years at Hebrew Union College.

There has probably never been a female rabbi in the history of Judaism, but on June 3, 1972, Miss Priesand will be ordained from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the parent rabbinical school for Reform Judaism in this country. On that date she will be legally as much a rabbi as the men in her class and the thousands of rabbis who have served their religion over the ages.

Temple Duties

This year Miss Priesand has been commuting every other weekend to Temple Beth Israel in Jackson, Mich., performing all rabbinical duties except marriages, for which a diploma is needed.

She admits people criticize her for her miniskirts, and she also admits there have been moments when she was not accepted as a potential rabbi. But the closer she comes to ordination, the more positive she sounds, refusing to dwell on the traditional patriarchal aspects of Judaism.

"In some ways I guess you could call this a defense mechanism," said Rabbi Kenneth Roseman, the dean of the college. "But this is part of Sally's strength. This is why we're pulling for her."

Miss Priesand says she has had support ever since she set her goal in the 10th grade. She says her father, who died three years ago, always encouraged her as did her rabbi back in Fairview Park, a suburb of Cleveland.

Received Encouragement

"Maybe people thought I was crazy," she said the other day. "Maybe they thought it wouldn't last. But they encouraged me."

She soon learned there was no legal reason why she could not attend rabbinical school.

"Rabbi is a Hebrew word for 'my teacher,'" said Dean Roseman. "It does not have a masculine or feminine ending. Traditionally, Jewish law prohibited women by defining the role of rabbi in such a way that it included performance of legal functions. There was also the feeling that women could not participate in services during menstruation because they were unclean.

"Reform Judaism has tried to negate the difference in sexual roles, going back to the 19th century. There was a conference in Pittsburgh in 1885, I believe, that redefined seating in the congregation, the right to conduct services, the right to initiate divorce proceedings.

The New York Times
Sally Priesand has been studying to be a rabbi

"We had women studying here back in the nineteen-twenties. We've been committed to a female rabbi going back 30 to 50 years," Dean Roseman said.

Miss Priesand was encouraged to attend Hebrew Union by its president, Dr. Nelson Glueck, the noted archeologist and scholar, who died two months ago.

"Dr. Glueck always told me how proud he would be to ordain me," she said.

After taking her bachelor's degree in English at the University of Cincinnati, Miss Priesand enrolled at Hebrew Union, just across the street. While there had been other women at the school, she felt strange at first.

"Teachers would begin their lectures by saying, 'Gentlemen . . . oh, yes, and lady.' There were a few little incidents. But I didn't want to rock the boat. Now everything is fine. They even tape lectures for me when I'm out of town."

Student Leader

Dean Roseman says Miss Priesand is a "good B student and a leader in our student body" but has not been accepted as "one of the boys"—meaning the men do not seem to invite her along "when they go out for a beer."

"I'm not an active supporter of women's lib," Miss Priesand said. "I don't need it. But I do think the feminist movement is important because it is time for us to overcome psychological and emotional objections. We must fulfill our potential as creative individuals."

Miss Priesand feels it is possible for a woman to achieve all the roles defined for a rabbi. She has found some resistance, particularly from women, in three congregations she has served—and one congregation in Tennessee would not accept her at all. But the congregation in Michigan has given her full status, she says.

"I do bar mitzvahs, funerals, I preach, I lead services. At one service, I asked a woman to read from the Bible. People seemed surprised when she was called. But it was almost as if they had forgotten that I was a woman."

Miss Priesand, while not serious about any man right now, envisions herself married with a family.

"My husband will have to work out any problems he might have about being married to a rabbi," she said. "But if he can't, then he's not the right man in the first place. He'll realize how much the rabbinate means to me. But if I married a rabbi, I'd be his assistant. I'd never serve equal to him or above him.

"And, yes, I can envision myself in my study, with the nursery in the next room. A rabbi can have children."

Potential Problem

"The rabbi has irregular hours," Dean Roseman noted. "You can be called to counsel somebody, or visit a family where death has taken place, at any hour. For a woman with a screaming kid who must be fed at certain times, this could be a problem. But she's not married yet, so that really isn't the issue now.

"I think there are still a lot of questions. Some congregations will resist this concept because they seek a male figure for a rabbi. Next year at this time, she'll have to find a congregation that will accept her as a full-time ordained rabbi. I'm sure she will. But next year will be a tense time for all of us."

"All I need," said Miss Priesand, "is one congregation. I don't think that will be so difficult."

The Reform Movement and the Rise of Social Justice

Rabbi Sally Priesand is the first ordained American female rabbi. She was ordained in 1972 at the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, OH. After her ordination, the CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis), the Reform rabbinical organization along with HUC-JIR, created a resolution allowing for the ordination of women and the equality of women in the Reform Movement for all positions.

Sally Priesand, then a rabbinical student, was interviewed by George Vecsey of the New York Times in 1971, a year before she was ordained. The article was titled, "Her Ambition is to Become a Rabbi – And a Housewife." The following are several quotations from Rabbi Priesand from the article:

"A rabbi is a scholar, a teacher, a preacher, a counselor, a comforter, a leader and a preserver of Judaism. And most important, a rabbi is a human being."

"I'm not an active supporter of women's lib. I don't need it. But I do think the feminist movement is important because it is time for us to overcome psychological and emotional objections. We must fulfill our potential as creative individuals."

"My husband will have to work out any problems he might have about being married to a rabbi. But if he can't, then he's not the right man in the first place. He'll realize how much the rabbinate means to me. But if I married a rabbi, I'd be his assistant. I'd never serve equal to him or above him. And yes, I can envision myself in my study with a nursery in the next room. A rabbi can have children."

Rabbi Priesand said this in the early 1990's of her career:

"When I decided to study for the rabbinate, I never thought much about being a pioneer, nor was it my intention to champion the rights of women. I just wanted to be a rabbi. Thus, I have spent my entire career in congregational life: first, at Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in New York City, then at Temple Beth El in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and since 1981, at Monmouth Reform Temple in Tinton Falls, New Jersey. My congregants and I have developed a creative partnership that reflects the traditional values of synagogue life – worship, study, assembly, and tikkun olam (repairing the world) – and my experiences as a rabbi have enriched my life in ways I never dreamed possible."

The Reform Movement and the Rise of Social Justice

Rabbi William B. Silverman was the rabbi at Nashville's The Temple Congregation Ohabai Sholom when the Nashville Jewish Community Center was bombed by a group called the Confederate Underground in 1958.

The following text is an excerpt from Rabbi Silverman's sermon on the Shabbat following the attack.

"I have been called a nigger-lover. This is true. I love Negroes and those who are yellow, brown and white. Isn't this what religion teaches? Isn't this the meaning of the prophet's plea: 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why then do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?' The Negro is my brother, a child of God, created in the divine image. Judaism and Christianity must take a stand for moral principle, for human rights and dignity, or be labeled a pious fraud. What is at stake is not whether our public school will be integrated. The question is: To what extent are we going to activate the principles of democracy and the American way of life? To what extent are we going to live by our faith?"

Rabbi Silverman wrote a book in 1970 called, Basic Reform Judaism. The following is an excerpt from this book.

To Reform Judaism there can be no religion and particularly no Judaism without ethics. Man's essential way of serving God is through righteousness. Reform Jews are expected to recognize that religion is related to life and must therefore practice their religious ideals in every facet of their lives whether it is convenient or inconvenient; comfortable or uncomfortable; fashionable or unfashionable. Reform Judaism emphasizes that, which has always been intrinsic to Judaism, that ritual without ethics is a profanation of God and a profanation of life namely, that ritual without ethics is a profanation of God and a profanation of life. Accordingly, Reform Jews are committed to apply the social ethic of the Hebrew prophets to the political, economic and international problems of the time. The emphasis in Reform Judaism has been on the teachings of the prophets who insisted that God is the God of all people, and that all men are equal before Him. Our stress has been and is on social justice, righteousness and brotherhood…. The devotees of the prophetic faith must mobilize for a religious war against ignorance, bigotry, racial and religious discrimination, poverty, disease, and despair for the purpose of implementing the values and precepts that will enable man to create a moral society that will fulfill the commandments of God.

San Francisco Platform - 1976

The Central Conference of American Rabbis has on special occasions described the spiritual state of Reform Judaism. The centenaries of the founding of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion seem an appropriate time for another such effort. We therefore record our sense of the unity of our movement today.

One Hundred Years: What We Have Taught

We celebrate the role of Reform Judaism in North America, the growth of our movement on this free ground, the great contributions of our membership to the dreams and achievements of this society. We also feel great satisfaction at how much of our pioneering conception of Judaism has been accepted by the Household of Israel. It now seems self- evident to most Jews: that our tradition should interact with modern culture; that its forms ought to reflect a contemporary esthetic; that its scholarship needs to be conducted by modern, critical methods; and that change has been and must continue to be a fundamental reality in Jewish life. Moreover, though some still disagree, substantial numbers have also accepted our teachings: that the ethics of universalism implicit in traditional Judaism must be an explicit part of our Jewish duty; that women have full rights to practice Judaism; and that Jewish obligation begins with the informed will of every individual. Most modern Jews, within their various religious movements, are embracing Reform Jewish perspectives. We see this past century as having confirmed the essential wisdom of our movement.

One Hundred Years: What We Have Learned

Obviously, much else has changed in the past century. We continue to probe the extraordinary events of the past generation, seeking to understand their meaning and to incorporate their significance in our lives. The Holocaust shattered our easy optimism about humanity and its inevitable progress. The State of Israel, through its many accomplishments, raised our sense of the Jews as a people to new heights of aspiration and devotion. The widespread threats to freedom, the problems inherent in the explosion of new knowledge and of ever more powerful technologies, and the spiritual emptiness of much of Western culture have taught us to be less dependent on the values of our society and to reassert what remains perenially valid in Judaism's teaching. We have learned that the survival of the Jewish people is of highest priority and that in carrying out our Jewish responsibilities we help move humanity toward its messianic fulfillment.

Diversity Within Unity, the Hallmark of Reform

Reform Jews respond to change in various ways according to the Reform principle of the autonomy of the individual. However, Reform Judaism does more than tolerate diversity; it engenders it. In our uncertain

historical situation we must expect to have far greater diversity than previous generations knew. How we shall live with diversity without stifling dissent and without paralyzing our ability to take positive action will test our character and our principles. We stand open to any position thoughtfully and conscientiously advocated in the spirit of Reform Jewish belief. While we may differ in our interpretation and application of the ideas enunciated here, we accept such differences as precious and see in them Judaism's best hope for confronting whatever the future holds for us. Yet in all our diversity we perceive a certain unity and we shall not allow our differences in some particulars to obscure what binds us together.

1. God -- The affirmation of God has always been essential to our people's will to survive. In our struggle through the centuries to preserve our faith we have experienced and conceived of God in many ways. The trials of our own time and the challenges of modern culture have made steady belief and clear understanding difficult for some. Nevertheless, we ground our lives, personally and communally, on God's reality and remain open to new experiences and conceptions of the Divine. Amid the mystery we call life, we affirm that human beings, created in God's image, share in God's eternality despite the mystery we call death.

2. The People Israel -- The Jewish people and Judaism defy precise definition because both are in the process of becoming. Jews, by birth or conversion, constitute an uncommon union of faith and peoplehood. Born as Hebrews in the ancient Near East, we are bound together like all ethnic groups by language, land, history, culture, and institutions. But the people of Israel is unique because of its involvement with God and its resulting perception of the human condition. Throughout our long history our people has been inseparable from its religion with its messianic hope that humanity will be redeemed.

3. Torah -- Torah results from the relationship between God and the Jewish people. The records of our earliest confrontations are uniquely important to us. Lawgivers and prophets, historians and poets gave us a heritage whose study is a religious imperative and whose practice is our chief means to holiness. Rabbis and teachers, philosophers and mystics, gifted Jews in every age amplified the Torah tradition. For millennia, the creation of Torah has not ceased and Jewish creativity in our time is adding to the chain of tradition.

4. Our Religious Obligations: Religious Practice -- Judaism emphasizes action rather than creed as the primary expression of a religious life, the means by which we strive to achieve universal justice and peace. Reform Judaism shares this emphasis on duty and obligation. Our founders stressed that the Jew's ethical responsibilities, personal and social, are

enjoined by God. The past century has taught us that the claims made upon us may begin with our ethical obligations but they extend to many other aspects of Jewish living, including: creating a Jewish home centered on family devotion: lifelong study; private prayer and public worship; daily religious observance; keeping the Sabbath and the holy days: celebrating the major events of life; involvement with the synagogues and community; and other activities which promote the survival of the Jewish people and enhance its existence. Within each area of Jewish observance Reform Jews are called upon to confront the claims of Jewish tradition, however differently perceived, and to exercise their individual autonomy, choosing and creating on the basis of commitment and knowledge.

5. Our Obligations: The State of Israel and the Diaspora -- We are privileged to live in an extraordinary time, one in which a third Jewish commonwealth has been established in our people's ancient homeland. We are bound to that land and to the newly reborn State of Israel by innumerable religious and ethnic ties. We have been enriched by its culture and ennobled by its indomitable spirit. We see it providing unique opportunities for Jewish self-expression. We have both a stake and a responsibility in building the State of Israel, assuring its security, and defining its Jewish character. We encourage aliyah for those who wish to find maximum personal fulfillment in the cause of Zion. We demand that Reform Judaism be unconditionally legitimized in the State of Israel.

At the same time that we consider the State of Israel vital to the welfare of Judaism everywhere, we reaffirm the mandate of our tradition to create strong Jewish communities wherever we live. A genuine Jewish life is possible in any land, each community developing its own particular character and determining its Jewish responsibilities. The foundation of Jewish community life is the synagogue. It leads us beyond itself to cooperate with other Jews, to share their concerns, and to assume leadership in communal affairs. We are therefore committed to the full democratization of the jewish community and to its hallowing in terms of Jewish values.

The State of Israel and the Diaspora, in fruitful dialogue, can show how a people transcends nationalism even as it affirms it, thereby setting an example for humanity which remains largely concerned with dangerously parochial goals.

6. Our Obligations: Survival and Service -- Early Reform Jews, newly admitted to general society and seeing in this the evidence of a growing universalism, regularly spoke of Jewish purpose in terms of Jewry's service to humanity. In recent years we have become freshly conscious of the virtues of pluralism and the values of particularism. The Jewish people in

its unique way of life validates its own worth while working toward the fulfillment of its messianic expectations.

Until the recent past our obligations to the Jewish people and to all humanity seemed congruent. At times now these two imperatives appear to conflict. We know of no simple way to resolve such tensions. We must, however, confront them without abandoning either of our commitments. A universal concern for humanity unaccompanied by a devotion to our particular people is self-destructive; a passion for our people without involvement in humankind contradicts what the prophets have meant to us. Judaism calls us simultaneously to universal and particular obligations.

Hope: Our Jewish Obligation

Previous generations of Reform Jews had unbound confidence in humanity's potential for good. We have lived through terrible tragedy and been compelled to reappropriate our tradition's realism about the human capacity for evil. Yet our people has always refused to despair. The survivors of the Holocaust, being granted life, seized it, nurtured it, and, rising above catastrophe, showed humankind that the human spirit is indomitable. The State of Israel, established and maintained by the Jewish will to live, demonstrates what a united people can accomplish in history. The existence of the Jew is an argument against despair; Jewish survival is warrant for human hope.

We remain God's witness that history is not meaningless. We affirm that with God's help people are not powerless to affect their destiny. We dedicate ourselves, as did the generations of Jews who went before us, to work and wait for that day when "They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

A Conversation with Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman on the Making of Mishkan T'filah—A Reform Siddur, the Movement's Innovative New Prayer Book

Reprinted from the Summer 2006 issue of Reform Judaism Magazine

The 2006 release of Mishkan T'filah--A Reform Siddur marks a historic turning: from exclusive rabbinic authorship to broad involvement of Reform Jews throughout North America; from linear to open services; and much more. To better understand this innovative prayer book, Reform Judaism Editor Aron Hirt-Manheimer interviewed Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman, the Barbara and Stephen Friedman Professor of Liturgy, Worship, and Ritual at HUC-JIR, who served on the planning committees for both the new prayer book and its predecessor, Gates of Prayer.

You have been involved in developing Reform prayer books for some time. Has the process changed?

Yes. Creating the Reform Movement's newest prayer book, Mishkan T'filah (2006), was a far more thorough, lengthy, and democratic process than ever before. We began with an extensive survey of our congregations, funded by an Eli Lilly grant and organized by Rabbi Peter Knobel and Dan Schechter. A preliminary committee then responded with recommendations to the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), after which several potential editors submitted proposals as to how best to crystallize these recommendations in practice. Then an editorial committee consisting of lay leaders, rabbis, cantors, and liturgists discussed every issue in detail, while field-testing each siddur draft at Union for Reform Judaism biennials and CCAR conventions and in nearly 300 congregations throughout North America. We also received hundreds of additional comments from lay people, rabbis, and cantors—and we listened to every suggestion. At the end, a publishing committee composed of Rabbis Peter Knobel, Bernard Mehlman, Elliot Stevens, Elaine Zecher, prayer book editor Elyse Frishman, Debbie Smilow, and me oversaw the final document, discussing global issues not yet settled, attending to prayer book design, guaranteeing true translations rather than paraphrases, and reviewing English alternatives—sometimes replacing them, sometimes supplementing them in consultation with specialists in Jewish literature, poetry, linguistics, and liturgy. Talk about inclusivity! Each stage of the process factored in issues of gender, age, theology, generation, academic expertise, and style--the intangible issue of how people like to pray. This is truly a prayer book by and for the people.

With all this input, Rabbi Elyse Frishman conceived of a brilliant layout device whereby every facing two-page spread would contain a traditional prayer (with translation and transliteration) on the right, and alternative

English readings on that prayer's theme on the left. Any given facing page might include (besides the traditional offering) a feminist voice, a classical Reform perspective, advocacy for social justice, personal reflections, and so forth.

The result is a set of double-page spreads with contents that vary enormously in register and in rhetoric. Some worshipers appreciate evocative poetry; others are drawn to prayers with evident cognitive or philosophical messages. Every double page has enough variety to allow each individual worshiper to find a "home" there. People may recite or sing along with the larger community in whatever options the prayer leader chooses, or elect instead to meditate on an alternative passage. But the left- and the right-side pages always conclude with the same traditional Hebrew line, which is called the chatimah. So when you get to that line, no matter what you're reading, you know to turn the page and keep up with the service.

What does the making of Mishkan T'filah tell us about the times we live in?

I like to link prayer books to economic history. Throughout the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, our economy was primarily industrial, with standardized goods (like the Model T Ford) made in factories. The mirror liturgical image was the 1895 Union Prayer Book, which standardized prayer with little regard for the individual worshiper. In that classical mode of prayer, Reform worship rarely varied. Wherever you went—New York, Chicago or Muncie, Indiana—Reform rabbis stood at the front and read at everyone else. Long paragraphs were given to the rabbi; the congregation got one-line responsive readings. But how much individuality can you express if all you get is a one-liner?

After World War II, we entered a service economy, where people expected to be served in a customized manner. Many Jews eventually stopped attending synagogue regularly, but came reliably for life-cycle events, which they treated as customized services. When they no longer felt the need for synagogue services, they quit.

Today we inhabit what's called an experience economy. Consumers shop at malls not just to buy what they want, but to have a buying "experience"—greeters at the door, music in the background, and other kinds of entertainment.

Gates of Prayerexpressed a service economy. It offered ten different service selections to satisfy individualized theological tastes, but only one could be used at any given Shabbat prayer experience. Mishkan T'filah, too,

provides options, but it does so on each page, not in separate services. On any double-page spread, individual voices on the left-hand page personalize the experience, while the traditional text on the right-hand page creates a community of worshipers. So Mishkan T'filah provides for a communal experience while allowing for individuality in prayer.

As part of the experience economy, Mishkan T'filah is less text than pretext for a worship experience where the act of prayer matters more than the fixed words it uses. No siddur of the past understood that prayer books are not so much books as they are scripts for the experience of worship.

The full title of the new prayer book is Mishkan T'filah—A Reform Siddur. Why was "Reform" added to the title of a CCAR prayer book for the first time?

We debated the English title at some length. Some people preferred Siddur for Prayer, but we elected to affirm this prayer book as Reform, even though we believe any Jew could use it. By using "Siddur" in the title instead of just "Reform Prayer Book," we are making the statement that our Movement is comfortable with the age-old vocabulary of our people. The word "Reform" modifies that language with a recognition that Reform Judaism has a point of view and, having been practiced for almost 200 years, is itself a valid tradition.

When you say that the new siddur reflects the Reform "point of view," what viewpoints come to mind?

The siddur reflects our Movement's historical commitment to the vernacular (not just the original Hebrew or Aramaic), to originating new prayers that address new times, to a theology that we can take seriously, to elevated aesthetics (especially music)—and, in more recent times, to egalitarianism.

But I want to emphasize two other aspects of Mishkan T'filah. The first is its integrity regarding content. We didn't include some traditionalist prayers that, in all good conscience, Reform Jews cannot say. For example, in traditionalist siddurim, the Sh'ma includes not just the Sh'ma Yisrael and V'ahavta, but two more paragraphs which American Reform prayer books have omitted ever since the 1890s. With the trend toward recapturing abandoned traditions, we were urged to reinstate the last two paragraphs. But the third paragraph links Divine reward and punishment to human merit and sin—an implicit suggestion that sickness or suffering may be God's retaliation, something Reform Jews reject. So Mishkan T'filah continues the Reform tradition of omitting this paragraph, even as we have readopted the second paragraph.

Second, Mishkan T'filah values inclusivity. Reform Jews like to ask "Who's in?," not "Who's out?" We know, for example, that some people have doubts about God. So, hoping to welcome them "in," we offer prayer and poetry that speak to the human condition without referencing God. We also include voices from classical Reform thought—like those of Leo Baeck and Lily Montague.

How does Mishkan T'filah's design and layout differ from previous Reform prayer books?

The aesthetic has changed. In addition to adding a second color (blue), each page has been uniquely designed. The best example is the Sh'ma. To express visually our belief in the Sh'ma as the central doctrine of our faith, the Hebrew text of that single line, Sh'ma Yisrael..., is enlarged and stretched across both pages. You look at it and say, "This is really central."

Also, Mishkan T'filah addresses questions Reform worshipers may have about the prayers they're reading. So at the bottom of the page, we provide historical and spiritual interpretations of the liturgy, as well as explanations of traditional body movements associated with particular prayers--not behavioral dictates but alternatives that derive from tradition.

Another unique design feature lets worshipers know where they are in the order of the service. The margins of each page list the sequence of prayers with the name of the prayer at hand highlighted typographically. Ritual depends on familiarity with structure--bringing in a birthday cake "works," for example, because everyone knows the candles will be blown out afterward. In prayer, too, knowing the flow of the service enhances every moment of it.

How do these innovations change the rabbi and cantor's role in the service?

People no longer want to be "talked to" or "sung at." So service leaders will have to work at engaging worshipers, especially in the music. Also, it will take some time for rabbis and cantors to get used to selecting from options on each double page. Prayer leaders will now need to prepare for the service in advance as a worship team, rather than walking independently onto the pulpit to read lines or sing music. Mishkan T'filah does include one linear Shabbat service for those more comfortable with the Gates of Prayer approach, but we expect that linear services will be used less and less as people are increasingly drawn to the spiritual possibilities of services framed around choices on facing pages.

How does the new prayer book reflect our Movement's commitment to social justice?

Gates of Prayer,published in 1975, appeared at a time of heightened fear for Israel's survival and concern for the plight of Soviet Jews. So it tilted toward particularism. Mishkan T'filah remains fiercely proud of peoplehood, but it reasserts what classical Reform Jews called "the mission of Israel," which is the whole point of peoplehood: to be engaged with God in transforming society. It thereby marks a return to a universalistic call to social justice. And while Gates of Prayer had a single service that focused on social justice—you could go to synagogue your whole life without ever encountering it—Mishkan T'filah has prayers for social justice everywhere. The Jewish prayer experience should not only evoke a Jewish response to God, but also a Jewish response to bettering God's world. If cries from without are not heard within, prayers from within are not heard on high.

Does this siddur address the issue of masculine and feminine God language in a way that is likely to resonate with 21st century Reform Jews?

Yes, I think so. Our goal was not to describe God as male or female, but to use evocative language that lends the possibility of seeing God as either, or as both. We address God, for example, as "Teacher of Torah"; we plead with God to "help us be sensitive." Implicitly, then, God appears as both male and female, but explicitly the language is universal.

How does this translation differ from those of our previous prayer books?

Some Reform prayer books were exact translations of the Hebrew. In the 1850s, for example, our Movement's founder, Isaac Mayer Wise, wrote Minhag America. If he wanted to say something in English, he changed the Hebrew to accord with it. In Gates of Prayer, some passages were exact translations but others were not. Mishkan T'filah returned to Wise's standard of exact translations on every right-hand page, relegating creative expressions of the prayer's theme to the opposite page.

Transliteration of all the Hebrew is also provided on every page—another innovation?

Yes. The Union Prayer Book contained no transliteration at all. In Gates of Prayer, transliteration could only be found at the back of the book. Nowadays, while we as a Movement have increasingly advocated Hebrew literacy in recognition of Hebrew as our people's historic language, we have also urged that prayer be open also to people who cannot read the original. If Mishkan T'filah is a prayer book for all the people, then we shouldn't lock out those who can't read Hebrew.

A minority of rabbis opposed our decision to transliterate all the Hebrew in Mishkan T'filah, believing it will be a disincentive for Jews to learn Hebrew. In respectful response to them (though disagreeing with them), our committee decided to publish an alternative siddur version without transliteration.

The Union Prayer Book opened only from left to right. Gates of Prayer came in two versions, one opening from right to left and one from left to right. Why does the new prayer book open only from right to left?

While proudly universalistic, Mishkan T'filah reflects the growing importance of Hebrew and commitment to Am Yisrael (Jewish peoplehood) in our Movement; therefore, it opens in the traditional manner of a Hebrew book, from right to left.

How important is it to our Movement that a single prayer book becomes widely adopted by Reform congregations?

It's very important. Some people think that we live in a post-denominational age—that denominations just don't matter anymore. I disagree. More than ever, in this age of choice, Jews have to decide what kind of Jews they are. People who say they are "just Jewish" have not yet processed their Judaism beyond its bare essentials. Mature and full Jewish identity requires choices, and choices imply denominations. And the prayer book is the gateway to Jewish identity; more than anything else, how we pray defines what kind of Jew we are. I grew up in an Orthodox shul, and while I can still appreciate traditionalist services, I find the Orthodox prayer book unreflective of the Jew I have chosen to be. I chose Reform Judaism because of what it stands for, and we as a Movement have to make that message clear to ourselves and to others. If we have a plethora of prayer books, we will end up with a plethora of definitions of what Reform Judaism stands for; and although it is true that Reform encompasses a great variety of things, it is also true that if we are all things, we are nothing. Mishkan T'filah encourages individualism, but defines the community in which that individualism is possible. If you regularly attend the service and someone asks you, "What makes you a Reform Jew?," you'll be able to answer the question.

Had Isaac Mayer Wise been one of the readers during the market research phase of Mishkan T'filah, what do you think he would have told the committee?

Isaac Mayer Wise was a remarkable leader because he respected change. When his Minhag America was rejected as the basis for the Union Prayer

Book, he accepted the fact that his prayer book had been intended for Jews of the 1850s and '60s, but not the 1890s. Wise would have applauded Mishkan T'filah as the proper expression of Jewish identity not for the 1890s and not even for the 1990s, but for the 2000s and beyond.

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The Reform Movement and the Rise of Social Justice

Rabbi William B. Silverman was the rabbi at Nashville's The Temple Congregation Ohabai Sholom when the Nashville Jewish Community Center was bombed by a group called the Confederate Underground in 1958. The following text is an excerpt from his sermon on the Shabbat following the attack.

"I have been called a nigger-lover. This is true. I love Negroes and those who are yellow, brown and white. Isn't this what religion teaches? Isn't this the meaning of the prophet's plea: 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why then do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?' The Negro is my brother, a child of God, created in the divine image. Judaism and Christianity must take a stand for moral principle, for human rights and dignity, or be labeled a pious fraud. What is at stake is not whether our public school will be integrated. The question is: To what extent are we going to activate the principles of democracy and the American way of life? To what extent are we going to live by our faith?"

Rabbi Silverman wrote a book in 1970 called, Basic Reform Judaism. The following is an excerpt from this book.

To Reform Judaism there can be no religion and particularly no Judaism without ethics. Man's essential way of serving God is through righteousness. Reform Jews are expected to recognize that religion is related to life and must therefore practice their religious ideals in every facet of their lives whether it is convenient or inconvenient; comfortable or uncomfortable; fashionable or unfashionable. Reform Judaism emphasizes that, which has always been intrinsic to Judaism, that ritual without ethics is a profanation of God and a profanation of life namely, that ritual without ethics is a profanation of God and a profanation of life. Accordingly, Reform Jews are committed to apply the social ethic of the Hebrew prophets to the political, economic and international problems of the time. The emphasis in Reform Judaism has been on the teachings of the prophets who insisted that God is the God of all people, and that all men are equal before Him. Our stress has been and is on social justice, righteousness and brotherhood…. The devotees of the prophetic faith must mobilize for a religious war against ignorance, bigotry, racial and religious discrimination, poverty, disease, and despair for the purpose of implementing the values and precepts that will enable man to create a moral society that will fulfill the commandments of God.

To Rise from the Dead?—
Mishkan T'filah and a Reform Liturgical Conundrum
by Rabbi Richard Sarason, PhD

An example of the desire to include in Mishkan T'filah more passages from the traditional liturgy and to reconsider earlier Reform deletions is the treatment of m'chayeih hameitim, the affirmation of God's resurrection of the dead, in the second prayer of the Amidah. This belief was controversial in its origins, went on to become a hallmark of classical rabbinic theology that was given liturgical prominence in the daily Amidah, and then became controversial again in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries among modern western Jews. This month's Ten Minutes of Torah sets both the rabbinic belief in resurrection and its liturgical expression in historical context. The early Israelites believed in a shadowy afterlife in the underworld (Sheol, somewhat like the Greek Hades), without any reward or punishment after death. The individual joined his/her ancestors; immortality was attained through one's descendants. The problem of ultimate reward and punishment for individuals became acute later, in the Hellenistic era, which had a fuller concept of individual, as opposed to corporate, identity. The late biblical book of Daniel, from the period of the Maccabean wars (167-163 B.C.E.), frets about the problematic situation of those righteous martyrs who fought for Judean victory against the Syrians but did not live to experience its fruits. The solution? "At the time of the end . . .many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). This is likely the earliest articulation of the concept of resurrection in Jewish literature.

At the end of the Second Commonwealth period, a belief in bodily resurrection in order to receive reward or punishment after death was a hallmark of Pharisaic conviction, opposed by the Sadducees (both Josephus, the Roman-Jewish historian, and the Gospels attest to this). The Mishnah (c. 200 C.E.), the earliest rabbinic text, maintains that Pharisaic belief and excoriates anyone who holds that the belief in resurrection cannot be found in the Torah; such a person has no share in the world-to-come (Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1).

The belief in resurrection figures prominently in the G'vurot, the second prayer in the rabbinic Amidah. The theme of this prayer is God's power over life and death: God causes the rain and dew to fall, reviving plant life. By analogy, God will keep faith with "those who sleep in the dust" (coming from the Daniel passage quoted above), and bring them back to

bodily life in the messianic age, for both reward and punishment. The expression m'chayeih (ha)meitim, "Reviver of the dead," occurs four times in the traditional wording, for emphasis.

By the nineteenth century, this religious concept had become problematic. Enlightened Protestants in Western Europe affirmed the immortality of the soul, but not the bodily resurrection of the dead. Bodily resurrection was neither scientific nor spiritual. By the time of the Reform rabbinical conferences in the middle of the nineteenth century, most of the Reformers had spiritualized this belief as well. (Medieval Jewish rationalists like Maimonides believed similarly though they often kept it to themselves.) Abraham Geiger expressed this stance as follows:

> Many religious concepts have taken on a more spiritual character and, therefore, their expression in prayer must be more spiritual. From now on the hope for an afterlife should not be expressed in terms that suggest a future revival, a resurrection of the body; rather, they must stress the immortality of the human soul.

Nevertheless, none of the German Reform prayer books—including Geiger's—ever changed the wording of the benediction in Hebrew! Presumably, it was felt that the Hebrew expression m'chayeih hameitim could be understood figuratively. In some of these same prayer books, however, the German rendering of the phrase is paraphrased. Geiger, 1854, for example:

> Your supernal power, O God, gives life, preserves, and renews it. You revive vegetation when it freezes, and, when it dies, you let new growth spring up. You raise up the fallen, send healing to the sick, and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Indeed, Your supernal power inspires the dead with the promise that their salvation will sprout in a new, eternal life! Be praised, O God, who gives life here and there [i.e., in this existence and the next].

It should also be noted that the most radical German Reform prayer book, that of Berlin (1848 and many revisions), simply eliminated the Hebrew text of the Amidah (except for the K'dushah responses) and provided an abbreviated German paraphrase that, in this benediction, invokes God's grace to the souls of the dead.

North American Reform prayer books, on the other hand, almost always changed the Hebrew text of this benediction, as well as supplying a vernacular paraphrase. Leo Merzbacher's prayer book for Temple Emanuel, New York (1855), substitutes the phrase m'chayeih hakol ("who gives life to all things"); this is later taken up by Chaim Stern in Gates of

Prayer (1975), and remains in Mishkan T'filah. The first edition of Isaac Mayer Wise's Minhag America (1857) retains the traditional text, since it strives to be the prayer book for all American Jews; by the 1872 revision Wise eliminates m'chayeih hameitim, and substitutes (in only the last two iterations), v'ne'eman atah lachayim v'lameitim: Baruch atah Adonai, m'chayeih nishmot hameitim ("Faithful are You to the living and the dead: Praised be You, O Lord, who revives the souls of the dead"). David Einhorn's radical Olat Tamid (1858), which became the model for the Union Prayer Book (1894/95), introduces the phrase, (ha)notei'a b'tocheinu chayeih olam ("who implants within us eternal life"); this is taken up into all three editions of the Union Prayer Book. (Einhorn also renders, m'chalkeil chayim b'chesed / podeh nefesh avadav mimavet b'rachamim rabim---"who graciously sustains the living / who, in great mercy, redeems the souls of His servants from death").

In recent years, many have questioned Reform liturgical literalism as too quick to emend the traditional text. Is it not possible to understand the expression m'chayeih hameitim as a metaphor? Can it not, as a metaphor, be a source of comfort to those in mourning and a source of hope to others? Still others ask, "Is there nothing beyond God's ability? In that case, God can reverse death." For all these reasons, Mishkan T'filah supplies both options, m'chayeih hakol and m'chayeih hameitim, letting worshippers exercise informed choice in addressing their religious needs.

For further reading:

* Neil Gillman, The Death of Death: Resurrection and Immortality in Jewish Thought (Woodstock, VT, 1997)
* Jakob J. Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe: The Liturgy of European Liberal and Reform Judaism (New York, 1968)
* W. Gunther Plaut, The Rise of Reform Judaism: A Sourcebook of its European Origins (New York, 1963)
* Lawrence A. Hoffman, ed., Minhag Ami / My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries (Woodstock, VT, 1997-)

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We bow our head and bend our knee and magnify the King of kings, the Holy One, the ever-blessed.

Choir and Congregation:
Vanachnu

(Congregation sitting.)

Minister:

May the time not be distant, O God, when Thy name shall be worshiped over all the earth, when unbelief shall disappear and error be no more. We fervently pray that the day may come upon which all men shall invoke Thy name, when corruption and evil shall give way to purity and goodness; when superstition shall no longer enslave the minds, nor idolatry blind the eyes, when all inhabitants of the earth shall perceive that to Thee alone every knee must bend and every tongue give homage. O may all, created in Thine image, recognize that they are brethren, so that they, one in spirit and one in fellowship, may be forever united before Thee. Then shall Thy kingdom be established on earth, and the word of Thine ancient seer be fulfilled: The Eternal alone shall rule forever and aye.

Congregation:

On that day the Eternal shall be One, and His name shall be One.

Whither Reform Worship?
by Rabbi Richard Sarason, PhD

As you know, the North American Reform Movement is about to publish a new prayer book for a new generation. As one rabbi has put it, "Only let the prayer book voice the aspirations of the people; only let it be inspiring and people will throng to the synagogues." This vision of prayer book reform—if you revise it, they will come—was not voiced in 2005 at the Houston Biennial, but in 1914 at the convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. The French, as always, have a well-turned phrase for this: "Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose"—"The more things change, the more they remain the same."

Rabbi Herbert Bronstein, in an article on the platforms and prayer books of North American Reform Judaism, has noted that before each of our five prayer books was published, the hope was expressed that this action would mitigate several ongoing challenges: 1) that the new prayer book would "counter diminishing synagogue worship attendance"; 2) that the new prayer book would help promote a sense of unity in the North American Reform Jewish community; and 3) that the new prayer book would adequately respond to "changes in the Jewish condition and in the wider culture that had rendered the previous prayer book irrelevant or alienating to the community of Reform Jews and that required a new spiritual pedagogy as well" (Kaplan, 26).

Beyond the obvious observations that the new quickly becomes old, and that tastes in linguistic, musical, and liturgical style change both over time and inter-generationally, what do these recurring patterns tell us about Reform worship? Perhaps, to paraphrase Shakespeare, they tell us that the real issues, dear Jews, lie not in our prayer books, but in ourselves. A prayer book, after all, is only a script, a text to be enacted. Worship and prayer, on the other hand, are activities, things that we do. And, since Jews began entering the culture of western modernity over the past two hundred or so years, these activities have become increasingly problematic and by no means self-evident. The big elephant in the room is that many of us are ambivalent, conflicted, and uncomfortable with prayer and worship. Except in moments of extreme danger and extreme relief, we are not inclined to cry out, "O God, please help me!" or "Thank God!" We may not even believe in a personal God who responds to prayers, or we may have profound doubts about what we do believe. And we may feel awkward or guilty about that.

None of this is new; all of it is ongoing. Harry Golden, the popular raconteur of homespun Jewish wisdom in the 1950's, once related a remark of his father's about himself and his friend Schwartz. "Schwartz," he

would say, "goes to shul to talk to God. I go to shul to talk to Schwartz." So it is with many of us—indeed, so it is with all of us, some of the time. And so it has ever been. Jews come to services to socialize with other Jews—and that's okay. But why else do we come? What are we looking for here? What do we want to experience together in this space? How do we want to be touched? What do we want to leave with? Maybe some of us are too embarrassed to address those questions out loud in the presence of others, but I suspect that most of us, in our heart of hearts, have often felt their force.

Reform Jews in America today are an incredibly diverse group of people, with different sensibilities, different needs, and different thoughts about these questions. We are male and female; black and white and yellow and red; gay and lesbian and straight; old and young; well off and struggling; single and partnered, with or without children; healthy and ill; in-married and intermarried; believers and doubters. We strive to be an inclusive community, to allow everyone's voice to be heard; and yet we try also to transcend all of these different voices when we come together as Am Yisrael, the People of Israel, in this holy congregation. That is the reason why any prayer book that the Movement produces today will look a bit like a camel, which is to say, a horse put together by a committee. And indeed, Mishkan T'filah, the newest Reform siddur, has many voices juxtaposed with each other on every two-page spread. This can be seen as both a challenge and an opportunity. The hope is that every individual can find something personally resonant in the service, but also that we can together find a larger voice—in the words of the American national seal, E pluribus unam: "Out of many, one." Or, to cite a Jewish saying from Pirkei Avot, Al tifrosh min hatzibur—"Do not separate yourself from the community."

But let's return to the basics: Why are we here? What do we want from this experience together? What do we want the prayer book to map out for us? "Each of us comes into this sanctuary with a different need," notes a text in the Gates of Prayer. But we are all needy. As frail and finite creatures who are "human, all too human," we need strength and hope to face the vicissitudes of life. We need assurance that our lives are not meaningless, that we leave behind us something of value after we are gone. We need a sense of belonging to something larger than ourselves—to a caring, moral community of faith and fate, to a universe in which matter is never lost, although personal consciousness may be. We often need to be reminded, in the words of a Hasidic master, that human beings are God's language—that each and every one of us potentially enacts the presence of God in the world. We yearn for a sense of transcendence. And we're sometimes afraid to acknowledge all this. It's difficult to admit our vulnerability to ourselves, let alone to those around us.

Some people, like Schwartz, come to pray—to communicate with a personal God who hears and responds; others, who may not believe in a personal God, come to meditate, to reflect, to find a moment of calm, to sense a cosmic rhythm; still others value the expressiveness of the hallowed words and melodies of Jewish, and Reform Jewish, tradition in Hebrew or English—and the stability over time that they enact: for some of us, in the synagogue you really can go home again. And there are those who come also out of a sense of mitzvah, of divine and communal obligation, as part of a religious discipline that enacts a way of life.

The "worship wars" in our Movement over the past generation have really been about competing visions (often intergenerational) of Jewish liturgical identity and aesthetics—musical style, literary style, behavioral style—and the visions of personal and communal Jewish identity that these enact. We can debate whether or not change is always for the better (it isn't), but we dare not be so caught up in our own enthusiasms that we disenfranchise any generation in our multigenerational congregations or disparage their long-held Jewish identities and convictions.

Rabbi Elyse Frishman, the editor of Mishkan T'filah, made a very wise stipulation when she agreed to take on this grueling and often thankless task. She remarked that introducing a new prayer book served no purpose unless it was used as the occasion to generate a larger discussion about congregational worship—its nature, its purpose, its meaning. So that's what I'm attempting to seed here this evening.

I think that worship must enact a sense of belonging—a sense of deep, inclusive, and caring community—and of communing both with "the better angels of our natures" and with that aspect of the universe that resonates with them, whatever we choose to call it. In worship, we acknowledge our ultimate concerns—our hopes, our fears, our longings—and we express them both through our own words and through the words of our historic tradition. That expression is heightened through gesture and through the exuberance and poignant longing of musical expressiveness—through chant, song, and instruments, sometimes listening, sometimes joining in together. In worship, we act out both who we are and what we want to be. In the best of circumstances, we may be profoundly moved; ideally, we will leave with a richer sense of our humanity and of our moral bonds to, and responsibilities toward, each other.

But this doesn't happen automatically. It's not primarily a function of what's on the prayer book page or of what's happening on the bimah—though both may either facilitate or get in the way of such an experience.

Sometimes we are indeed caught up by surprise in a mood or an insight that comes to us from outside. But more often than not, it is what we bring to this sanctuary, to this encounter, that determines what we get out of it. It doesn't just happen; it's something that must be prepared: "the readiness is all." We cannot be passive; we must become active participants.

Here is a poetic congruence (or is it, perhaps, a divine message?): Both the title of our new Reform prayer book and its motto come from the beginning of this week's Torah portion. God tells Moses to instruct the Israelite people to bring gifts, from every person whose heart so moves him. These gifts will be used to build the mishkan, God's portable dwelling-place on earth, in the midst of the people. V'asu li mikdash v'shachanti b'tocham, says God: "Let them build for me a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst." But we can also read this verse midrashically: "It is only when they build me a sanctuary that I will dwell in their midst." In other words, the action initiative must come from us. The mishkan, God's dwelling place, is built only with what each of us brings to the task, with what our hearts are moved to give. Our new prayer book is called Mishkan T'filah, the Tabernacle, or Dwelling-Place of Prayer. But in reality, it is only a script, only a blueprint—only what our Torah portion calls tav'nit hamishkan, "the pattern of the Tabernacle." The real mishkan t'filah is all of us here in this holy congregation. It is what we as individuals and as a community bring to this time and this place, to this potentially sacred moment, from which God's true sanctuary is built. Worship is not what is in the prayer book. It is what we do, each and all of us, here, now, and always. The true worship ultimately is about how we live our lives in the presence of each other and of the divine.

May our worship here together this Shabbat inspire us to greater acts of caring and compassion, that we may truly become God's language. May we live our lives with reverence for all life and with humility before the mystery of the universe and of our own being in it.

Ken yehi ratson: Be this God's will, and our own.

_____

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Lesson 7

Have You Noticed?—
Changes in Hebrew and English Wording in Mishkan T'filah
by Rabbi Sue Ann Wasserman

From Birchot Hashachar (The Morning Blessings)

Elohai N'shamah

Mid-way through the prayer the option of modeh/modah (offer thanks, first in the masculine and then the feminine) is offered.

Further down in the prayer the word v'imotai (mothers) is added.

Nisim B'chol Yom

The order of the blessings is different from the order in Gates of Prayer (GOP). Two additional blessings are added: roka haaretz al hamayim, (Who stretches the earth over the waters), and she-asani b'tzelem Elohim, (Who made me in the image of God).

From Sh'ma u'Virchotecha (The Sh'ma and Her Blessings)

Yotzeir Or

MT has included the traditional sentence before the closing chatima: Or-chadash al Tzion ta-ir, v'nizkeh chulanu m'heirah l'oro (Shine a new light upon Zion, and may we all swiftly merit its radiance.).

Ahavah Rabbah

In the second paragraph which begins, V'ha-eir eineinu four words from the traditional text are added following v'lo neivosh. They are: v'lo nikaleim, v'lo nikasheil, (never deserve rebuke, and never stumble)

A few lines down in the prayer, set off by an asterisk is another inclusion from the traditional text: Vahavi-einu l'shalom mei-arba kanfot ha-aretz, v'tolicheinu kom'miyut l'artzeinu. (Gather us in peace from the four corners of the earth and lead us upright to our land.)

Sh'ma

Following the V'ahavta, MT offers the traditional third paragraph of the Sh'ma which begins Vayomer Adonai el Moshe… Numbers 15:37-39.

From the Amidah (The Standing Prayer)

Avot v'Imahot

The order of the matriarchs has changed to Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. In Talmud and Midrash the order is more commonly found as Rachel and Leah. There is never an explanation why, though the speculations many have offered are reasonable. It strikes me that this verse is something of a Rorschach, drawing strong personal reactions. Nonetheless, there's something significant to be said for following the tradition here, especially since there is nothing inherently negative in it.

A coincidence occurs as a result of changing the order of Rachel and Leah. After Leah, the next word is Ha-El (The God) which, of course, is Leah spelled backwards. It makes for good midrash and certainly downplays any sense that Leah was less significant than Rachel.

In balance, the argument for changing the most common traditional order and also being dissimilar from all other liberal movement prayer books was not strong enough. I appreciate that some may disagree. It's important to know that the decision was thoughtfully studied and considered over many years of our work on the siddur.
{Rabbi Elyse Frishman}

In the classical and medieval Talmudic and Rabbinic literature both orders are included: Rachel v'Leah, Leah v'Rachel—the former in 72 instances and the later in 25. Nobody much worried about the order in the 1994 version of Gates of Prayer for Shabbat and Weekdays until the Conservative Movement published their new siddur, Sim Shalom, using a different order. The order Rachel v'Leah derives less from the Talmudic literature than it does from the only Mi Shebeirach formula in the traditional siddur that uses the matriarchs' names at all—this is when a husband or son donates money to the synagogue in honor of his wife or mother—otherwise the matriarchs' names never appear. The formula there is Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel, v'Leah. This was clearly the precedent drawn on by the Conservative Movement and the one Mishkan T'filah has chosen to follow at this juncture. This is ultimately a debate in which both sides have good reasons; it boils down to a matter of taste and/or tradition.
{Dr. Richard Sarason}

G'vurot

MT includes in parentheses, as an option, the traditional wording m'chayeih meitim (You revive the dead) following m'chayeih hakol (You give life to all).

The seasonal prayers for wind, rain and dew according to the growing seasons in the Land of Israel are included following the first sentence of the G'vurot.

Birkat Shalom

In the second sentence, note the change of the word avinu (our Father) to yotzreinu (our Creator) in MT.

Before the chatimah (final blessing of the prayer) the Shabbat Shuvah insertion is expanded to resemble the insertion in Gates of Repentance.

Oseh Shalom (T'filat HaLev in MT)

Following v'al kol Yisrael (and all Israel) the words v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil (all who inhabit the earth) are added.

For the Reading of Torah

Av harachamim

This literally translates as Father of mercy. In GOP it had been changed to El harachamim which literally translates as God of mercy. However, both MT and GOP translate these phrases as "Source of mercy."

Aleinu and Mourner's Kaddish

Aleinu

There are two versions: Aleinu I and Aleinu II.

Aleinu I is the full traditional text as was Aleinu I in GOP.

Aleinu II parallels Aleinu II in GOP in the English and Hebrew. There is an additional alternative English reading in MT as well as an additional Hebrew text before V'ne-emar (Thus it has been said): Al kein n'kaveh l'cha Adonai Eloheinu, lirot m'heirah b'tiferet uzecha, l'takein olam b'malchut Shaddai (Adonai our God, how soon we hope to behold the perfection of our world, guided by a sacred Covenant drawn from human and divine meeting.).

Rabbi Wasserman is the Union for Reform Judaism's Director of Worship, Music and Religious Living.

www.urj.org

Introduction

While prayer invites us to beseech God, we must also be open to what God wants from us. Samuel Karff wrote, "Each generation must struggle to hear the call, 'Where art thou?' Each must choose to answer, 'Here I am, send me.'" *Each generation*—not merely each individual. A *siddur* must challenge narcissism; that challenge begins by saying to a worshipper: your voice is here amidst others. *To hear the call:* to realize that prayer is not merely an outpouring of self; it is the opening of our senses to what is beyond our selves. *Send me:* prayer must motivate us to give selflessly.

In any worship setting, people have diverse beliefs. The challenge of a single liturgy is to be not only multi-vocal, but poly-vocal—to invite full participation at once, without conflicting with the *keva* text. (First, the *keva* text must be one that is acceptable; hence, the ongoing adaptations of certain prayers, over time, such as the *G'vurot*). Jewish prayer invites interpretation; the left hand material was selected both for metaphor and theological diversity. The choices were informed by the themes of Reform Judaism and Life: Social justice, feminism, Zionism, distinctiveness, human challenges. The heritage of Reform brings gems from the *Union Prayer Book* and from *Gates of Prayer,* as well as from Reform's great literary figures over the last century and more.

Theologically, the liturgy needs to include many perceptions of God: the transcendent, the naturalist, the mysterious, the partner, the evolving God. In any given module of prayer, e.g., the *Sh'ma and Blessings,* we should sense all of these ways. The distinction of an integrated theology is not that one looks to each page to find one's particular voice, but that over the course of praying, many voices are heard, and ultimately come together as one. The ethic of inclusivity means awareness of and obligation to others rather than mere self-fulfillment.

An integrated theology communicates that the community is greater than the sum of its parts. While individuals matter deeply, particularly in the sense of our emotional and spiritual needs and in the certainty that we are not invisible, that security should be a stepping stone to the higher value of community, privilege and obligation. We join together in prayer because together, we are stronger and more apt to commit to the values of our heritage. Abraham knew that just ten people make a difference. In worship, all should be reminded of the social imperatives of community.

Prayer must move us beyond ourselves. Prayer should not reflect "me"; prayer should reflect *our* values and ideals. God is not in our image; we are in God's. It is critical that Reform Jews understand what is expected of them. The diverse theologies of the new *siddur* reflect religious naturalism, the theology of human adequacy, process theology, and the balance of particularism and universalism. But the essence of Reform liturgy continues to be what God demands of us, with heavy emphasis on ethical action and social justice.

In *Beyond the Worship Wars,* Thomas G. Long teaches, "Part of the joy of worship is to know the motions, know the words, know the song. The vital congregations knew their order of worship and moved through it with deep familiarity. What is more, the worshippers had active roles—speaking, singing, moving—and many of these they could perform from memory." The *siddur* is a tool in the larger system of worship. Lawrence Hoffman teaches, "The book is less text than pre-text for the staging of an experience. We are returning to the age of orality, where performance of prayer matters more than the fixed words. The question of worship leadership has expanded now, to include the theology and artistry of being a *sh'liach tzibur*—how to orchestrate

seating, fill empty space, provide the right acoustics, and honor individualism within the group experience."

Using *Mishkan T'filah,* the actual selection of prayer can wait for the moment. The *sh'liach tzibur* must offer a recipe that works comfortably for the community, and be able to adapt each week to the particular needs of the community, and to individuals within that community.

Mishkan T'filah invites familiarity, even as it allows for diversity. Over time, one cannot help but memorize the book. The content of each page spread, though varied, becomes known. The constancy of the *keva* text (the right hand side of each page which offers the traditional prayer) anchors every creative prayer on the left. It is the cumulative effect of worshipping from this *siddur* that will deepen meaningful ritual.

The publication of *Mishkan T'filah* continues the Reform Movement's tradition of liturgical innovation. A single prayer book provides an important vehicle for group identification as well as personal prayer. *The Union Prayer Book* and its successor *Gates of Prayer* and now *Mishkan T'filah* each express the ethos and values of its own era, at the same time being fully rooted in the structure and substance of the historical liturgical tradition of the Jewish people.

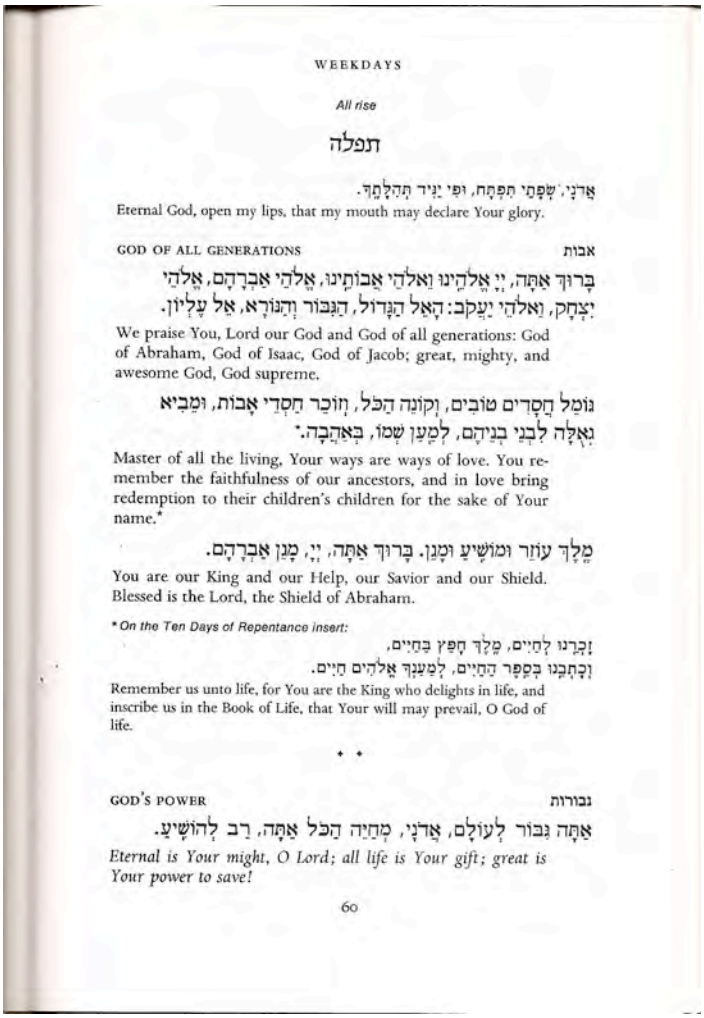
The title *Miskhan T'filah* is drawn from Exodus 25:8 where God commands us to build a portable sanctuary that can accompany us on our wanderings. "And let them build Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." *Mishkan T'filah* is a dwelling place for prayer, one that moves with us wherever we might be physically or spiritually. It offers the opportunity for God, the individual and community to meet.

The desert *mishkan* was a portable sanctuary. Its care was guarded by the Levites and the priests yet it invited all to bring their offerings. Today, we are all caretakers of *Mishkan T'filah*; may our offerings be acceptable before God.

May all who enter find joy, solace and meaning.

RABBI ELYSE D. FRISHMAN
Editor

RABBI PETER S. KNOBEL
Chair of the Editorial Committee



All rise

תפלה

אֲדֹנָי, שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ.
Eternal God, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your glory.

GOD OF ALL GENERATIONS אבות

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב: הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל, הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֶלְיוֹן.
We praise You, Lord our God and God of all generations: God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob; great, mighty, and awesome God, God supreme.

גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל, וְזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אָבוֹת, וּמֵבִיא גְּאֻלָּה לִבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם, לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ, בְּאַהֲבָה.*
Master of all the living, Your ways are ways of love. You remember the faithfulness of our ancestors, and in love bring redemption to their children's children for the sake of Your name.*

מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמָגֵן. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם.
You are our King and our Help, our Savior and our Shield. Blessed is the Lord, the Shield of Abraham.

** On the Ten Days of Repentance insert:*

זָכְרֵנוּ לְחַיִּים, מֶלֶךְ חָפֵץ בַּחַיִּים,
וְכָתְבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים, לְמַעַנְךָ אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים.
Remember us unto life, for You are the King who delights in life, and inscribe us in the Book of Life, that Your will may prevail, O God of life.

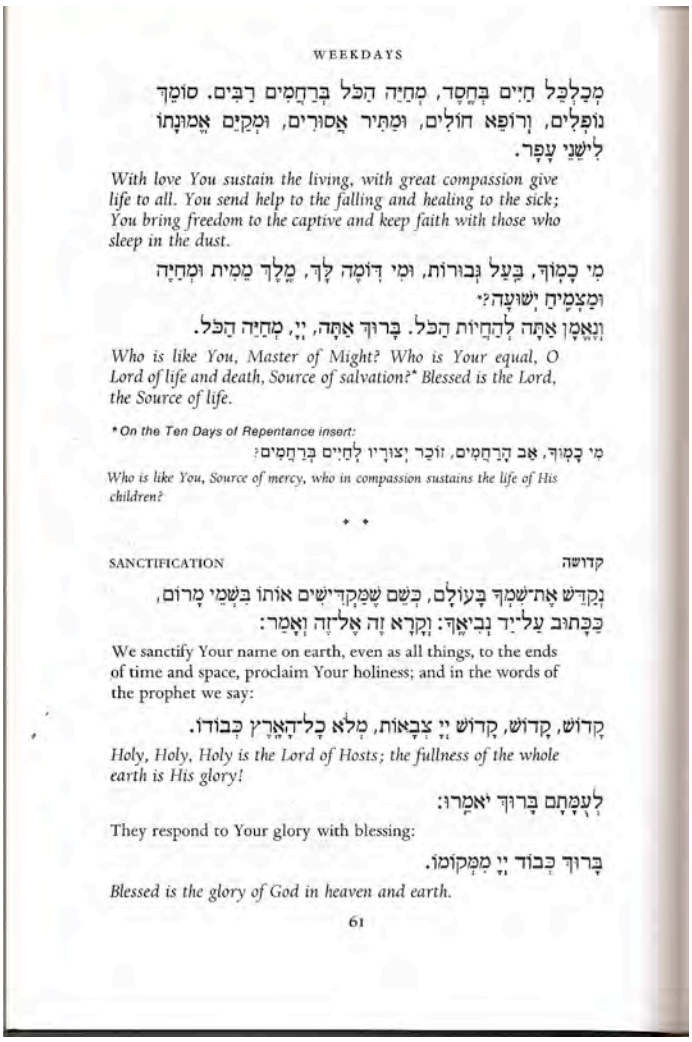
* *

GOD'S POWER גבורות

אַתָּה גִּבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם, אֲדֹנָי, מְחַיֵּה הַכֹּל אַתָּה, רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ.
Eternal is Your might, O Lord; all life is Your gift; great is Your power to save!

Gates of Prayer
(1975)

God of All Generations	אבות
God's Power	גבורות
Sanctification	קדושה



מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד, מְחַיֵּה הַכֹּל בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים. סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים, וּמְקַיֵּם אֱמוּנָתוֹ לִישֵׁנֵי עָפָר.
With love You sustain the living, with great compassion give life to all. You send help to the falling and healing to the sick; You bring freedom to the captive and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.

מִי כָמוֹךָ, בַּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת, וּמִי דּוֹמֶה לָךְ, מֶלֶךְ מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעָה?
וְנֶאֱמָן אַתָּה לְהַחֲיוֹת הַכֹּל. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מְחַיֵּה הַכֹּל.
Who is like You, Master of Might? Who is Your equal, O Lord of life and death, Source of salvation? Blessed is the Lord, the Source of life.*

** On the Ten Days of Repentance insert:*

מִי כָמוֹךָ, אַב הָרַחֲמִים, זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים?
Who is like You, Source of mercy, who in compassion sustains the life of His children?

* *

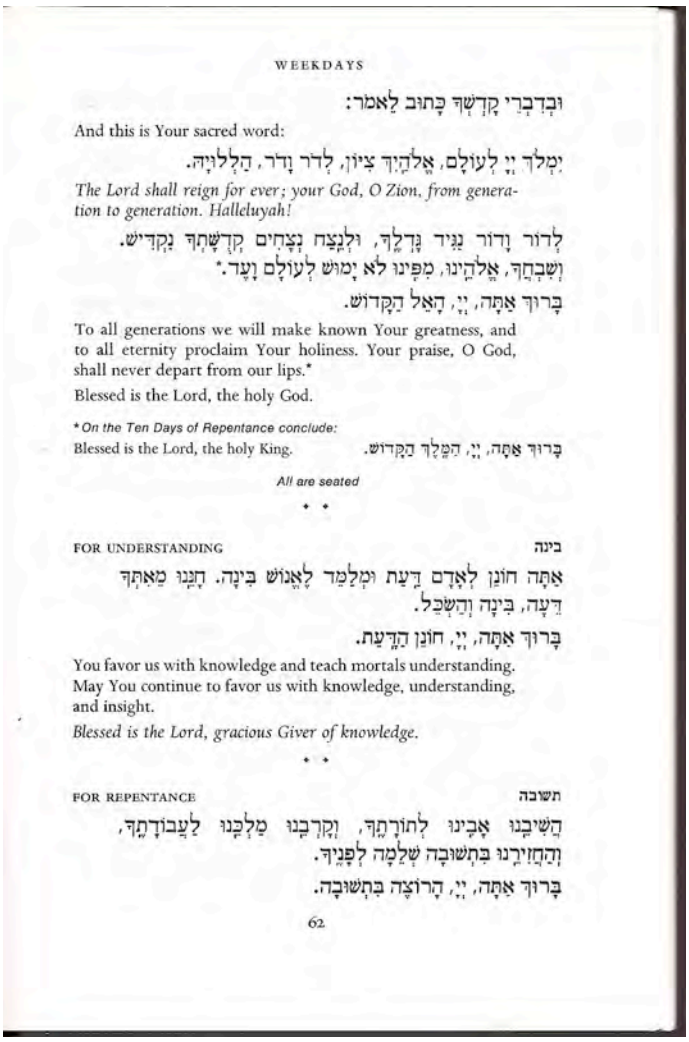
SANCTIFICATION קדושה

נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־שִׁמְךָ בָּעוֹלָם, כְּשֵׁם שֶׁמַּקְדִּישִׁים אוֹתוֹ בִּשְׁמֵי מָרוֹם, כַּכָּתוּב עַל־יַד נְבִיאֶךָ: וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל־זֶה וְאָמַר:
We sanctify Your name on earth, even as all things, to the ends of time and space, proclaim Your holiness; and in the words of the prophet we say:

קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ יְיָ צְבָאוֹת, מְלֹא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.
Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts; the fullness of the whole earth is His glory!

לְעֻמָּתָם בָּרוּךְ יֹאמֵרוּ:
They respond to Your glory with blessing:

בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.
Blessed is the glory of God in heaven and earth.



וּבְדִבְרֵי קָדְשְׁךָ כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:
And this is Your sacred word:

יִמְלֹךְ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן, לְדֹר וָדֹר, הַלְלוּיָהּ.
The Lord shall reign for ever; your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Halleluyah!

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נַגִּיד גָּדְלֶךָ, וּלְנֵצַח נְצָחִים קְדֻשָּׁתְךָ נַקְדִּישׁ.
וְשִׁבְחֲךָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מִפִּינוּ לֹא יָמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.*
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.
To all generations we will make known Your greatness, and to all eternity proclaim Your holiness. Your praise, O God, shall never depart from our lips.*
Blessed is the Lord, the holy God.

** On the Ten Days of Repentance conclude:*

Blessed is the Lord, the holy King. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

All are seated

* *

FOR UNDERSTANDING בינה

אַתָּה חוֹנֵן לְאָדָם דַּעַת וּמְלַמֵּד לֶאֱנוֹשׁ בִּינָה. חָנֵּנוּ מֵאִתְּךָ דֵּעָה, בִּינָה וְהַשְׂכֵּל.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, חוֹנֵן הַדָּעַת.
You favor us with knowledge and teach mortals understanding. May You continue to favor us with knowledge, understanding, and insight.
Blessed is the Lord, gracious Giver of knowledge.

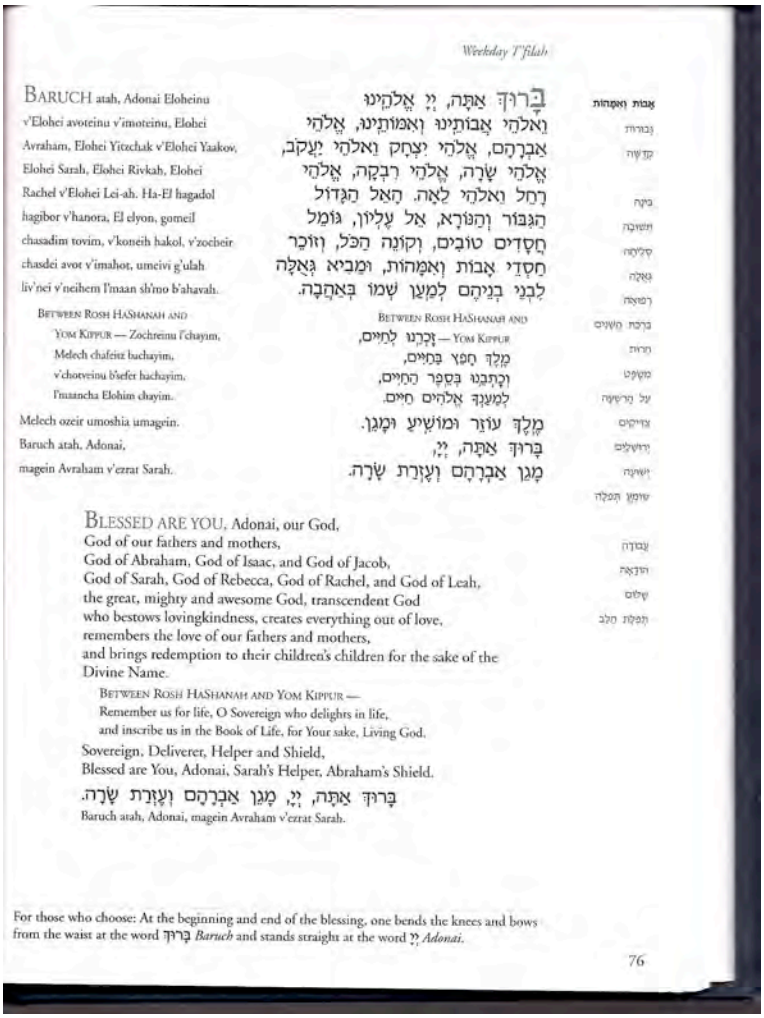
* *

FOR REPENTANCE תשובה

הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ אָבִינוּ לְתוֹרָתֶךָ, וְקָרְבֵנוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ לַעֲבוֹדָתֶךָ,
וְהַחֲזִירֵנוּ בִּתְשׁוּבָה שְׁלֵמָה לְפָנֶיךָ.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הָרוֹצֶה בִּתְשׁוּבָה.

Mishkan T’filah
(2007)

Avot v’Imahot אבות ואמהות



Weekday T'filah

BARUCH atah, Adonai Eloheinu
v'Elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, Elohei
Avraham, Elohei Yitzchak v'Elohei Yaakov,
Elohei Sarah, Elohei Rivkah, Elohei
Rachel v'Elohei Lei-ah. Ha-El hagadol
hagibor v'hanora, El elyon, gomeil
chasadim tovim, v'koneih hakol, v'zocheir
chasdei avot v'imahot, umeivi g'ulah
liv'nei v'neihem l'maan sh'mo b'ahavah.

BETWEEN ROSH HASHANAH AND
YOM KIPPUR — Zochreinu l'chayim,
Melech chafeitz bachayim,
v'chotveinu b'sefer hachayim,
l'maancha Elohim chayim.

Melech ozeir umoshia umagein.
Baruch atah, Adonai,
magein Avraham v'ezrat Sarah.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, אֱלֹהֵי
אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב,
אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה, אֱלֹהֵי
רָחֵל וֵאלֹהֵי לֵאָה. הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל
הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֶלְיוֹן, גּוֹמֵל
חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל, וְזוֹכֵר
חַסְדֵי אָבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת, וּמֵבִיא גְּאֻלָּה
לִבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

BETWEEN ROSH HASHANAH AND
YOM KIPPUR — זָכְרֵנוּ לְחַיִּים,
מֶלֶךְ חָפֵץ בַּחַיִּים,
וְכָתְבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים,
לְמַעַנְךָ אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים.

מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמָגֵן.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ,
מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם וְעֶזְרַת שָׂרָה.

BLESSED ARE YOU, Adonai, our God,
God of our fathers and mothers,
God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob,
God of Sarah, God of Rebecca, God of Rachel, and God of Leah,
the great, mighty and awesome God, transcendent God
who bestows lovingkindness, creates everything out of love,
remembers the love of our fathers and mothers,
and brings redemption to their children's children for the sake of the
Divine Name.

BETWEEN ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR —
Remember us for life, O Sovereign who delights in life,
and inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, Living God.

Sovereign, Deliverer, Helper and Shield,
Blessed are You, Adonai, Sarah's Helper, Abraham's Shield.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם וְעֶזְרַת שָׂרָה.
Baruch atah, Adonai, magein Avraham v'ezrat Sarah.

For those who choose: At the beginning and end of the blessing, one bends the knees and bows from the waist at the word בָּרוּךְ *Baruch* and stands straight at the word יְיָ *Adonai*.

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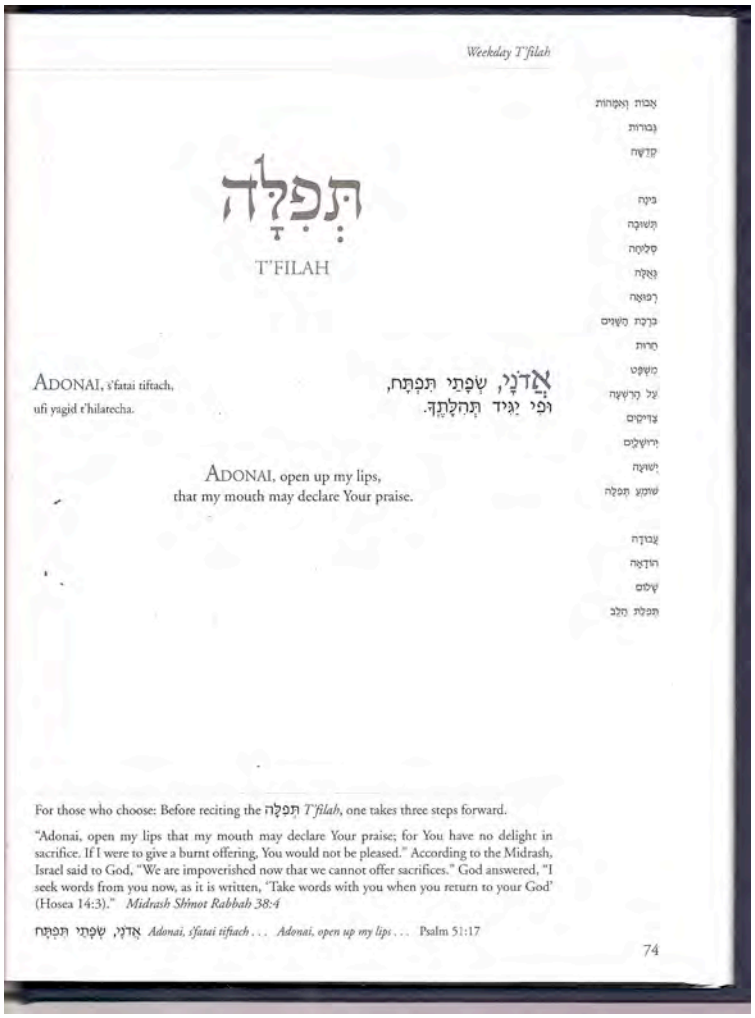

Weekday T'filah

תְּפִלָּה
T'FILAH

ADONAI, s'fatai tiftach,
ufi yagid t'hilatecha.

אֲדֹנָי, שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח,
וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ.

ADONAI, open up my lips,
that my mouth may declare Your praise.

For those who choose: Before reciting the תְּפִלָּה *T'filah*, one takes three steps forward.

"Adonai, open my lips that my mouth may declare Your praise; for You have no delight in sacrifice. If I were to give a burnt offering, You would not be pleased." According to the Midrash, Israel said to God, "We are impoverished now that we cannot offer sacrifices." God answered, "I seek words from you now, as it is written, 'Take words with you when you return to your God' (Hosea 14:3)." *Midrash Shmot Rabbah 38:4*

אֲדֹנָי, שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח *Adonai, s'fatai tiftach . . . Adonai, open up my lips . . .* Psalm 51:17

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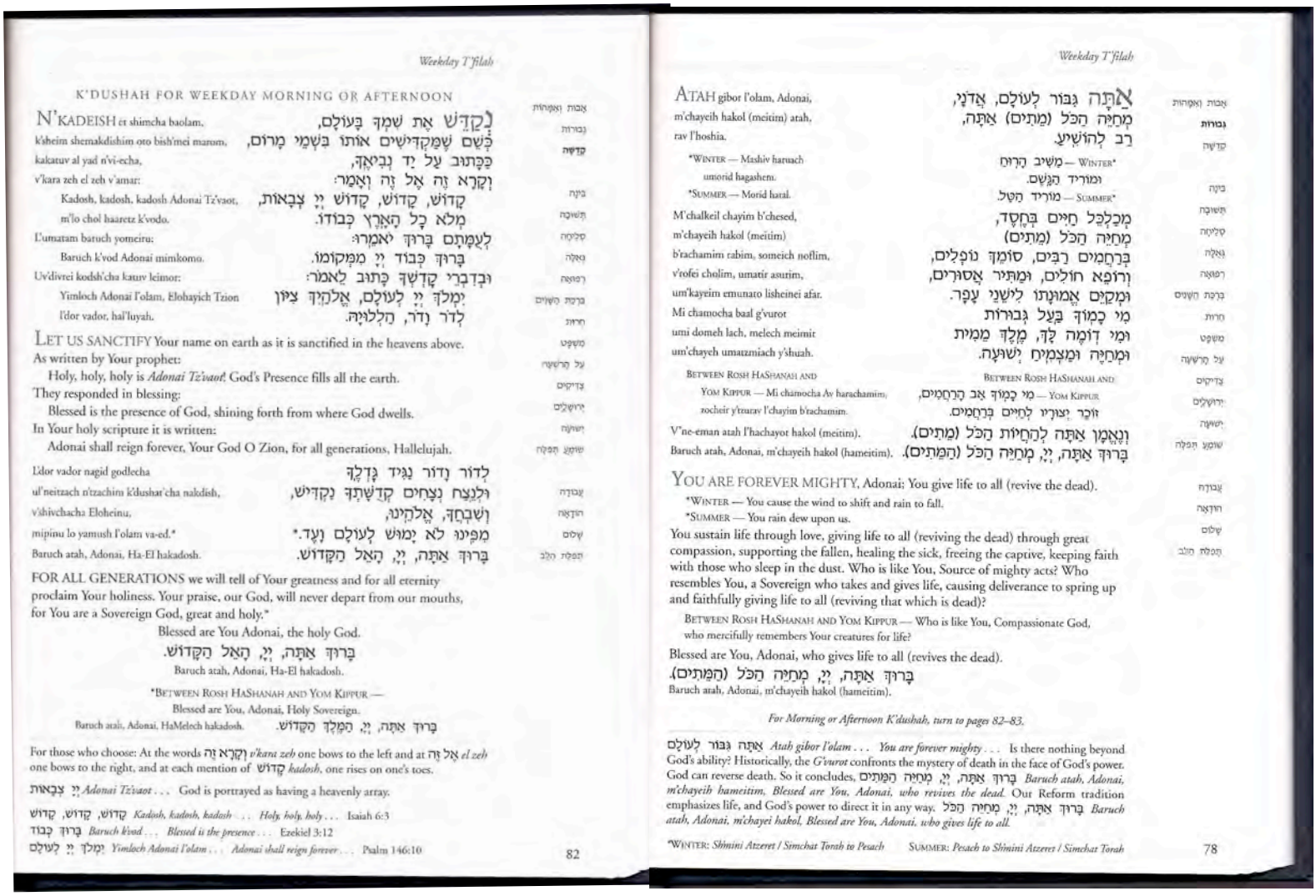
Mishkan T’filah

(2007)

G’vurot	גבורות
K’dushah	קדושה



Weekday T'filah

K'DUSHAH FOR WEEKDAY MORNING OR AFTERNOON

N'KADEISH et shimcha baolam,
k'sheim shemakdishim oto bish'mei marom,
kakatuv al yad n'vi-echa,
v'kara zeh el zeh v'amar:
Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai Tz'vaot,
m'lo chol haaretz k'vodo.
L'umatam baruch yomeiru:
Baruch k'vod Adonai mimkomo.
Uv'divrei kodsh'cha katuv leimor:
Yimloch Adonai l'olam, Elohayich Tzion
l'dor vador, hal'luyah.

נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת שִׁמְךָ בָּעוֹלָם,
כְּשֵׁם שֶׁמַּקְדִּישִׁים אוֹתוֹ בִּשְׁמֵי מָרוֹם,
כַּכָּתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאֶךָ,
וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר:
קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ יְיָ צְבָאוֹת,
מְלֹא כָל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.
לְעֻמָּתָם בָּרוּךְ יֹאמֵרוּ:
בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.
וּבְדִבְרֵי קָדְשְׁךָ כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:
יִמְלֹךְ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן
לְדֹר וָדֹר, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

LET US SANCTIFY Your name on earth as it is sanctified in the heavens above.
As written by Your prophet:
Holy, holy, holy is *Adonai Tz'vaot*; God's Presence fills all the earth.
They responded in blessing:
Blessed is the presence of God, shining forth from where God dwells.
In Your holy scripture it is written:
Adonai shall reign forever, Your God O Zion, for all generations, Hallelujah.

L'dor vador nagid godlecha
ul'neitzach n'tzachim k'dushat'cha nakdish,
v'shivchacha Eloheinu,
mipinu lo yamush l'olam va-ed.*
Baruch atah, Adonai, Ha-El hakadosh.

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נַגִּיד גָּדְלֶךָ
וּלְנֵצַח נְצָחִים קְדֻשָּׁתְךָ נַקְדִּישׁ,
וְשִׁבְחֲךָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
מִפִּינוּ לֹא יָמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.*
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

FOR ALL GENERATIONS we will tell of Your greatness and for all eternity proclaim Your holiness. Your praise, our God, will never depart from our mouths, for You are a Sovereign God, great and holy.*

Blessed are You Adonai, the holy God.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.
Baruch atah, Adonai, Ha-El hakadosh.

*BETWEEN ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR —
Blessed are You, Adonai, Holy Sovereign.

Baruch atah, Adonai, HaMelech hakadosh. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ.

For those who choose: At the words וְקָרָא זֶה *v'kara zeh* one bows to the left and at אֶל זֶה *el zeh* one bows to the right, and at each mention of קָדוֹשׁ *kadosh*, one rises on one's toes.

יְיָ צְבָאוֹת *Adonai Tz'vaot* . . . God is portrayed as having a heavenly array.

קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ *Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh* . . . *Holy, holy, holy* . . . Isaiah 6:3
בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד *Baruch k'vod* . . . *Blessed is the presence* . . . Ezekiel 3:12
יִמְלֹךְ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם *Yimloch Adonai l'olam* . . . *Adonai shall reign forever* . . . Psalm 146:10

Weekday T'filah

ATAH gibor l'olam, Adonai,
m'chayeih hakol (meitim) atah,
rav l'hoshia.

אַתָּה גִּבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם, אֲדֹנָי,
מְחַיֶּה הַכֹּל (מֵתִים) אַתָּה,
רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ.

*WINTER — Mashiv haruach umorid hagashem.
*SUMMER — Morid hatal.

*WINTER — מַשִּׁיב הָרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם.
*SUMMER — מוֹרִיד הַטָּל.

M'chalkeil chayim b'chesed,
m'chayeih hakol (meitim)
b'rachamim rabim, someich noflim,
v'rofei cholim, umatir asurim,
um'kayeim emunato lisheinei afar.
Mi chamocha baal g'vurot
umi domeh lach, melech meimit
um'chayeh umatzmiach y'shuah.

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד,
מְחַיֶּה הַכֹּל (מֵתִים)
בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים, סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים,
וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,
וּמְקַיֵּם אֱמוּנָתוֹ לִישֵׁנֵי עָפָר.
מִי כָמוֹךָ בַּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת
וּמִי דוֹמֶה לָךְ, מֶלֶךְ מֵמִית
וּמְחַיֶּה וּמַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעָה.

BETWEEN ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR — Mi chamocha Av harachamim, zocheir y'tzurav l'chayim b'rachamim.

בֵּין רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְיוֹם כִּפּוּר — מִי כָמוֹךָ אָב הָרַחֲמִים, זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים.

V'ne-eman atah l'hachayot hakol (meitim).
Baruch atah, Adonai, m'chayeih hakol (hameitim).

וְנֶאֱמָן אַתָּה לְהַחֲיוֹת הַכֹּל (מֵתִים).
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מְחַיֵּה הַכֹּל (הַמֵּתִים).

YOU ARE FOREVER MIGHTY, Adonai; You give life to all (revive the dead).

*WINTER — You cause the wind to shift and rain to fall.
*SUMMER — You rain dew upon us.

You sustain life through love, giving life to all (reviving the dead) through great compassion, supporting the fallen, healing the sick, freeing the captive, keeping faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, Source of mighty acts? Who resembles You, a Sovereign who takes and gives life, causing deliverance to spring up and faithfully giving life to all (reviving that which is dead)?

BETWEEN ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR — Who is like You, Compassionate God, who mercifully remembers Your creatures for life?

Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives life to all (revives the dead).

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מְחַיֵּה הַכֹּל (הַמֵּתִים).
Baruch atah, Adonai, m'chayeih hakol (hameitim).

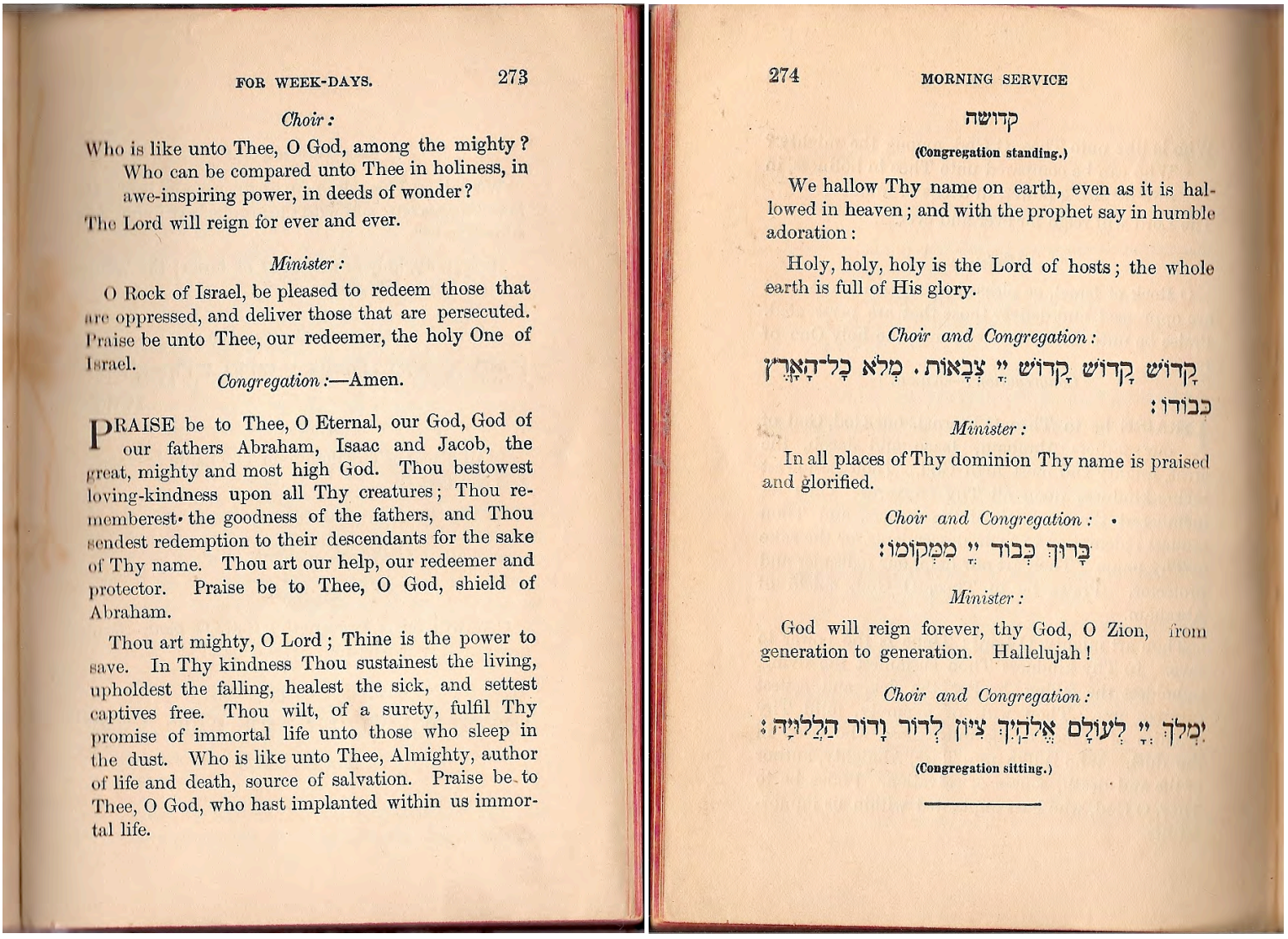
For Morning or Afternoon K'dushah, turn to pages 82–83.

אַתָּה גִּבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם *Atah gibor l'olam* . . . *You are forever mighty* . . . Is there nothing beyond God's ability? Historically, the *G'vurot* confronts the mystery of death in the face of God's power. God can reverse death. So it concludes, בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מְחַיֵּה הַמֵּתִים *Baruch atah, Adonai, m'chayeih hameitim, Blessed are You, Adonai, who revives the dead.* Our Reform tradition emphasizes life, and God's power to direct it in any way. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, מְחַיֵּה הַכֹּל *Baruch atah, Adonai, m'chayei hakol, Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives life to all.*

*WINTER: *Shmini Atzeret / Simchat Torah to Pesach* SUMMER: *Pesach to Shmini Atzeret / Simchat Torah*

Union Prayer Book
(1910 edition)

English Reading
קדושה



Choir :

Who is like unto Thee, O God, among the mighty? Who can be compared unto Thee in holiness, in awe-inspiring power, in deeds of wonder?

The Lord will reign for ever and ever.

Minister :

O Rock of Israel, be pleased to redeem those that are oppressed, and deliver those that are persecuted. Praise be unto Thee, our redeemer, the holy One of Israel.

Congregation :—Amen.

PRAISE be to Thee, O Eternal, our God, God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the great, mighty and most high God. Thou bestowest loving-kindness upon all Thy creatures; Thou remberest the goodness of the fathers, and Thou sendest redemption to their descendants for the sake of Thy name. Thou art our help, our redeemer and protector. Praise be to Thee, O God, shield of Abraham.

Thou art mighty, O Lord; Thine is the power to save. In Thy kindness Thou sustainest the living, upholdest the falling, healest the sick, and settest captives free. Thou wilt, of a surety, fulfil Thy promise of immortal life unto those who sleep in the dust. Who is like unto Thee, Almighty, author of life and death, source of salvation. Praise be to Thee, O God, who hast implanted within us immortal life.

קדושה

(Congregation standing.)

We hallow Thy name on earth, even as it is hallowed in heaven; and with the prophet say in humble adoration:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.

Choir and Congregation :

קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ יְיָ צְבָאוֹת. מְלֹא כָל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ:

Minister :

In all places of Thy dominion Thy name is praised and glorified.

Choir and Congregation :

בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ:

Minister :

God will reign forever, thy God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Hallelujah!

Choir and Congregation :

יִמְלֹךְ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן לְדוֹר וָדוֹר הַלְלוּיָהּ:

(Congregation sitting.)

Lesson 8

New Pittsburg Platform
Adopted at the 1999 Pittsburgh Convention
Central Conference of American Rabbis
May 1999 - Sivan 5759

Preamble

On three occasions during the last century and a half, the Reform rabbinate has adopted comprehensive statements to help guide the thought and practice of our movement. In 1885, fifteen rabbis issued the Pittsburgh Platform, a set of guidelines that defined Reform Judaism for the next fifty years. A revised statement of principles, the Columbus Platform, was adopted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1937. A third set of rabbinic guidelines, the Centenary Perspective, appeared in 1976 on the occasion of the centenary of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Today, when so many individuals are striving for religious meaning, moral purpose and a sense of community, we believe it is our obligation as rabbis once again to state a set of principles that define Reform Judaism in our own time.

Throughout our history, we Jews have remained firmly rooted in Jewish tradition, even as we have learned much from our encounters with other cultures. The great contribution of Reform Judaism is that it has enabled the Jewish people to introduce innovation while preserving tradition, to embrace diversity while asserting commonality, to affirm beliefs without rejecting those who doubt, and to bring faith to sacred texts without sacrificing critical scholarship.

This "Statement of Principles" affirms the central tenets of Judaism - God, Torah and Israel - even as it acknowledges the diversity of Reform Jewish beliefs and practices. It also invites all Reform Jews to engage in a dialogue with the sources of our tradition, responding out of our knowledge, our experience and our faith. Thus we hope to transform our lives through (kedushah), holiness.

God

We affirm the reality and oneness of God, even as we may differ in our understanding of the Divine presence.

We affirm that the Jewish people is bound to God by an eternal (b'rit), covenant, as reflected in our varied understandings of Creation, Revelation and Redemption.

We affirm that every human being is created (b'tzelem Elohim), in the image of God, and that therefore every human life is sacred.

We regard with reverence all of God's creation and recognize our human responsibility for its preservation and protection.

We encounter God's presence in moments of awe and wonder, in acts of justice and compassion, in loving relationships and in the experiences of everyday life.

We respond to God daily: through public and private prayer, through study and through the performance of other (mitzvot), sacred obligations -- (bein adam la Makom), to God, and (bein adam la-chaveiro), to other human beings.

We strive for a faith that fortifies us through the vicissitudes of our lives -- illness and healing, transgression and repentance, bereavement and consolation, despair and hope.

We continue to have faith that, in spite of the unspeakable evils committed against our people and the sufferings endured by others, the partnership of God and humanity will ultimately prevail.

We trust in our tradition's promise that, although God created us as finite beings, the spirit within us is eternal.

In all these ways and more, God gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

Torah

We affirm that Torah is the foundation of Jewish life.

We cherish the truths revealed in Torah, God's ongoing revelation to our people and the record of our people's ongoing relationship with God.

We affirm that Torah is a manifestation of (ahavat olam), God's eternal love for the Jewish people and for all humanity.

We affirm the importance of studying Hebrew, the language of Torah and Jewish liturgy, that we may draw closer to our people's sacred texts.

We are called by Torah to lifelong study in the home, in the synagogue and in every place where Jews gather to learn and teach. Through Torah study we are called to (mitzvot), the means by which we make our lives holy.

We are committed to the ongoing study of the whole array of (mitzvot) and to the fulfillment of those that address us as individuals and as a

community. Some of these (mitzvot), sacred obligations, have long been observed by Reform Jews; others, both ancient and modern, demand renewed attention as the result of the unique context of our own times.

We bring Torah into the world when we seek to sanctify the times and places of our lives through regular home and congregational observance. Shabbat calls us to bring the highest moral values to our daily labor and to culminate the workweek with (kedushah), holiness, (menuchah), rest and (oneg), joy. The High Holy Days call us to account for our deeds. The Festivals enable us to celebrate with joy our people's religious journey in the context of the changing seasons. The days of remembrance remind us of the tragedies and the triumphs that have shaped our people's historical experience both in ancient and modern times. And we mark the milestones of our personal journeys with traditional and creative rites that reveal the holiness in each stage of life.

We bring Torah into the world when we strive to fulfill the highest ethical mandates in our relationships with others and with all of God's creation. Partners with God in (tikkun olam), repairing the world, we are called to help bring nearer the messianic age. We seek dialogue and joint action with people of other faiths in the hope that together we can bring peace, freedom and justice to our world. We are obligated to pursue (tzedek), justice and righteousness, and to narrow the gap between the affluent and the poor, to act against discrimination and oppression, to pursue peace, to welcome the stranger, to protect the earth's biodiversity and natural resources, and to redeem those in physical, economic and spiritual bondage. In so doing, we reaffirm social action and social justice as a central prophetic focus of traditional Reform Jewish belief and practice. We affirm the (mitzvah) of (tzedakah), setting aside portions of our earnings and our time to provide for those in need. These acts bring us closer to fulfilling the prophetic call to translate the words of Torah into the works of our hands.

In all these ways and more, Torah gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

Israel

We are Israel, a people aspiring to holiness, singled out through our ancient covenant and our unique history among the nations to be witnesses to God's presence. We are linked by that covenant and that history to all Jews in every age and place.

We are committed to the (mitzvah) of (ahavat Yisrael), love for the Jewish people, and to (k'lal Yisrael), the entirety of the community of Israel. Recognizing that (kol Yisrael arevim zeh ba-zeh), all Jews are responsible

for one another, we reach out to all Jews across ideological and geographical boundaries.

We embrace religious and cultural pluralism as an expression of the vitality of Jewish communal life in Israel and the Diaspora.

We pledge to fulfill Reform Judaism's historic commitment to the complete equality of women and men in Jewish life.

We are an inclusive community, opening doors to Jewish life to people of all ages, to varied kinds of families, to all regardless of their sexual orientation, to (gerim), those who have converted to Judaism, and to all individuals and families, including the intermarried, who strive to create a Jewish home.

We believe that we must not only open doors for those ready to enter our faith, but also to actively encourage those who are seeking a spiritual home to find it in Judaism.

We are committed to strengthening the people Israel by supporting individuals and families in the creation of homes rich in Jewish learning and observance.

We are committed to strengthening the people Israel by making the synagogue central to Jewish communal life, so that it may elevate the spiritual, intellectual and cultural quality of our lives.

We are committed to (Medinat Yisrael), the State of Israel, and rejoice in its accomplishments. We affirm the unique qualities of living in (Eretz Yisrael), the land of Israel, and encourage (aliyah), immigration to Israel.

We are committed to a vision of the State of Israel that promotes full civil, human and religious rights for all its inhabitants and that strives for a lasting peace between Israel and its neighbors.

We are committed to promoting and strengthening Progressive Judaism in Israel, which will enrich the spiritual life of the Jewish state and its people.

We affirm that both Israeli and Diaspora Jewry should remain vibrant and interdependent communities. As we urge Jews who reside outside Israel to learn Hebrew as a living language and to make periodic visits to Israel in order to study and to deepen their relationship to the Land and its people, so do we affirm that Israeli Jews have much to learn from the religious life of Diaspora Jewish communities.

We are committed to furthering Progressive Judaism throughout the world as a meaningful religious way of life for the Jewish people.

In all these ways and more, Israel gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

(Baruch she-amar ve-haya ha-olam).
Praised be the One through whose word all things came to be.
May our words find expression in holy actions.
May they raise us up to a life of meaning devoted to God's service
And to the redemption of our world.