

Experiential Worship: Incorporating Dance, Meditation, and Music
In Reform Services based on Jewish Tradition and Innovation

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Introduction to Experiential Worship

Spirituality is the buzz word in American culture today; many are exploring ways to make their lives more spiritual. Spirituality is difficult to define because it is a personal concept, for which every individual has a different understanding. It is an ambiguous term and while some associate spirituality with religion, according to sociologist of religion Wade Clark Roof, “it is not bound by doctrinal, creedal, or ecclesiastical categories. . . . [That said] spirituality encompasses . . . four . . . themes: a source of values and meaning beyond oneself, a way of understanding, inner awareness, and personal integration.”¹

Scholars agree that there is no one definition for spirituality. However, there are common themes among definitions that involve a search for deeper meaning and transcendence. Spirituality demands an integrated approach to life, in which body, mind, and soul are harmonized.

Jewish tradition offers a unique interpretation of spirituality. “In Modern Hebrew, spirituality is usually rendered as *ruhaniyut*. This word is based on the Hebrew word *ruach* which is frequently combined with *nefesh* and *neshemah*.”² These terms appear in the Torah and other Jewish writings and depending on the context can be translated as wind, spirit, breath and soul. These three terms have become important in Jewish thought and tradition, which emphasize

that a human being is more than a physical entity. There is in him/her an invisible element described by the Jewish mystics as a divine spark that enables every

¹Steven M. Cohen & Lawrence Hoffman. *How Spiritual Are America's Jews? Narrowing the Spirituality Gap Between Jews and Other Americans*. March 2009 Number 4. S3KReport. Available online www.synagogue3000.org. 1.

² *Ibid*, 13.

individual to aspire for something greater than the self. This assertion is the basis of spirituality.³

Jewish Mysticism views *ruach*, *nefesh* and *neshemah* as three of the five levels of the soul in the quest to become *yichud* (one with God).

The modern quest for spirituality began in the 1960s and 70s. Jewish philosopher, Eugene Borowitz notes that it began as a “cultural rebellion against institutions and social convention.”⁴ During this time Mysticism was already an academic discipline, “but the searchers wanted something more, the contemporary practice of Jewish mysticism, and they discovered the teachers of Jewish mystical practice waiting for them.”⁵ This quest for spirituality has only increased for Americans living in a culture where technology is advancing at a rapid pace. Although progress has its benefits, people are forced to acknowledge its ability to harm and cause destruction. They search for teachings that can unite and save humanity. David Ariel, a researcher of Kabbalah, explains that “the deep human impulse to search for meaning, has left many humanists with a deep sense that the human mind is limited in its ability to provide explanations for the mysteries of existence.”⁶ Therefore, they use spirituality to seek these explanations.

In response to this desire for Jewish spirituality, there’s been an increase in modern Jewish mystical thinkers, theologians, and organizations. They offer courses, retreats and numerous books on the topic of Modern Jewish Mysticism. Many of them have successfully rooted mystical thought and practice into Jewish tradition. Rabbi

³ *Ibid.* 17.

⁴ Eugene Borowitz, *Choices in Modern Jewish Thought* (Springfield, NJ.: Behrman House Inc., 1995), 250.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 250.

⁶ David Ariel, *The Mystic Quest* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 215.

Michael Strassfield views “life as a spiritual path from waking in the morning to resting at night, from traversing one whole year to traversing a life span from birth to death.”⁷ For each “life moment”, he presents traditional teachings that can guide each Jew on an individual life-path. Rabbi and Jewish philosopher, Art Green believes in a contemporary adaptation of Jewish Mysticism. “In turning back to the sources of Kabbalah, we seek inspiration and wisdom for what is a post-kabbalistic age.”⁸ He stresses the importance of first learning about traditional Kabbalah and then reshaping it so it meets the demands of our modern experience. Green believes that each individual must craft their own spiritual path with the help of professionals.

The trend of searching for meaning and spirituality can be seen as a rise of religious personalism in American culture. Dr. Jonathan Woocher, the CEO of JESNA (Jewish Education Service of North America) writes, “what is most meaningful in Judaism is that which touches the individual most intimately, e.g., those elements of Jewish life that relate to family, home, and personal values.”⁹ Judaism is inherently a community-based religion and this change towards religious personalism presents many challenges to Jewish worship. “In today’s era of religious personalism, it is the individual who makes the decisions as to what Jewishness means and how it will be

⁷ Michael Strassfield, *A Book of Life Embracing Judaism as a Spiritual Practice* (Woodstock, Vermont: Shoken Books, 2002) xiv.

⁸ Art Green, *Eheyeh, A Kabbalah For Tomorrow* (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003), 17.

⁹ Jonathan S. Woocher, *Jewish Education in the Age of Google, Changing Jewish Communities* no. 8, (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, May 15, 2006) Available on-line at <http://www.jcpa.org/cjc/cjcwoocher06.htm> 31.

expressed, based on criteria that are primarily internal and functional, rather than collective and historical.”¹⁰

The trend of religious personalism is especially popular among younger generations of Jews, who have a desire to be more spiritual. In a Synagogue 3000 recent report, titled *How Spiritual are America's Jews*, Rabbi Larry Hoffman and Rabbi Steve Cohen present the results of their spirituality surveys. They report that

For Jews, younger adults are more spiritual and more religious than their elders. We also observe increases in Spiritual Mentoring, Belief in God, Importance of Religion, and Number of Spiritual Experiences. All five indices register higher scores among the young than the middle-aged, and higher among the middle-aged than the elderly.¹¹

Unfortunately, this search for spirituality is primarily taking place outside the synagogue and the Jewish community. These Jews under the age of thirty five are not interested in Jewish culture and tradition. Many of them don't feel a connection to their heritage or *Am Yisrael*. “In virtually all recent research on American Jews, we find that younger Jews report lower levels of Jewish association (marriage, friends, neighbors), Jewish affiliation (organizations, synagogues, federations, etc.), and Jewish ritual practice (e.g., observance of holidays.)”¹² Based on these statistics Reform Judaism will be impacted by this decline in Jewish Affiliations.

Reform synagogues already report that they have a difficult time attracting young Jews. It is imperative that Reform clergy and synagogues relate to these young Jews and provide them with spirituality in the synagogue. Reform Rabbi, Rifat Sonsino comments that “there is no need for a Jew to seek spirituality by looking elsewhere in other cultures.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Cohen and Hoffman. *How Spiritual Are America's Jews*. 10.

¹² *Ibid.*

Judaism has a very rich spiritual tradition of its own.”¹³ However, these teachings are not integrated into the Reform synagogue. In particular, Reform worship services and educational programming need to be reinvented in order to engage Jewish spiritual seekers and to reflect the realities of the twenty first century. The challenge for Reform Judaism is to provide worship and programming that speaks to the individual in a manner that makes them feel part of the larger Jewish community.

Reform Judaism can respond to this cultural reality by adapting Experiential Education into worship and programming. Experiential Education is “a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase their Jewish knowledge, develop skills and clarify values.”¹⁴ Jewish Experiential education can be applied to the realm of Reform worship by providing a variety of ways for congregants to participate and experience prayer. This can be accomplished by including a myriad of Jewish prayer techniques that enable congregants to engage with their senses during prayer. By providing multiple entry points within the worship service, each individual can find a meaningful way to engage with the prayer.

The purpose of this paper is to explore Jewish worship techniques that use the senses and how they can be applied in a Reform worship setting. These techniques are music (including sound, chant, and silence), movement (including dance), and meditation. Throughout Jewish history these techniques have been used in prayer to cultivate a deeper connection with God. Chapter One is an exploration of the history of

¹³ Rabbi Rifat Sonsino, *Six Jewish Spiritual Paths A Rationalist Looks at Spirituality* (Woodstock Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000), 7.

¹⁴ K. Gilbertson, *Outdoor Education: Methods and Strategies*. (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. 2006), 9.

sacred dance used in Jewish worship. Chapter Two presents the historical development of meditation and its use in Jewish worship. Chapter Three outlines the musical elements in Jewish history that can contribute to creating experiential worship. Finally, Chapter Four presents a model for a Reform *Hoshanah Rabbah* that demonstrates the way worship can integrate music, meditation, and dance. Through exploring the history, and teaching how these techniques have been used, we can aide congregants in crafting and maintaining a relationship with God.

The overall goal of this thesis is to show that the integration of these techniques into synagogue life has many benefits. Eventually, prayer can be a tool that Reform congregants use in their lives that leads to healing their relationships with self, humanity, and the sacred. In addition, it aims to attract younger spiritual seekers and potentially spark the interest of older Jews. Most importantly, it can show these Jews the importance of a spirituality that is rooted in Jewish ritual and tradition. For this to happen, clergy and educators need to be educated in this realm and learn how to incorporate these techniques in their sermons and during *T'filah*. We need to offer courses¹⁵ and seminars that attract, engage, and educate Jews about Jewish prayer in a meaningful way. With the integration of these techniques, Reform worship can provide meaning to the individual that is grounded in Jewish tradition, therefore linking them with the larger Jewish community.

It is important to construct a prayer service and educational programming that are rooted in tradition. Jewish clergy must help to guide these seekers on their spiritual paths through integrating Jewish spiritual tradition into programming and prayer in the synagogue. Prayer can be the outlet that provides healing for the individual, community,

¹⁵ Please refer to the appendix for a concrete working out of this idea in a curriculum for teaching prayer using Jewish Experiential Education.

humanity, and in the divine realm. It can be described as “a process of making room in our bodies, hearts, minds, and spirits, for the Light, for God.”¹⁶ Once an individual has restored balance in their own life through the techniques in Jewish prayer they can work towards repairing the world.

¹⁶ Mark Malachai, “From the Depths of Silence: The Application of Sound in Kabbalistic Healing.” *Opening the Inner Gates: New paths in Kabbalah and Psychology*. Edited by Edward Hoffman (Boston, Massachusetts: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1995), 161.

Chapter 1: Dance in Worship

Dance, which includes various forms of choreography and movement, is an important part of Jewish culture and experience. It is undeniably a part of Jewish religious tradition from the Biblical period and thrived in different Jewish cultural surroundings during the Diaspora. Depending on the time and place where Jews lived, Jews used dance as a part of their worship to a greater or lesser extent. In particular, the Kabbalists and later the Hassidim adapted dance as a major component to mystical prayer. Unfortunately, in the last two hundred years dance was not integrated into Reform Judaism. Through education and a gradual introduction of dance in the Reform synagogue, it can become a valuable and meaningful addition to the Reform worship experience.

The use of dance can be traced to Ancient Israel where it was a religious and cultural expression.

In the communal and religious life of the Jewish people dance was always regarded as an expression of joy and religious ecstasy. In summarizing the activities of man, Ecclesiastes observes: "To everything there is a season. . . . A time to mourn, and a time to dance."¹⁷

In particular, the Bible describes the important implications of dance in ancient Jewish culture. The *Encyclopedia Judaica* notes that "there are eleven"¹⁸ Hebrew verb roots employed to describe dancing activity and to highlight the nuances of dance movements. This points to an advanced stage of choreography among the Jews."¹⁹ A close

¹⁷ Dvora Lapson, "Dance," *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Volume 5. (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), 1262.

¹⁸ The Eleven verbs are listed and explained in greater depth in WOE Oesterley, *The Sacred Dance: A Study in Comparative Folk Lore* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1923.) 44-53.

¹⁹ Lapson. "Dance". 1262.

examination of the instances where dance is used throughout the bible, displays the importance of dance in praising God for Ancient Israel. These many instances of dance teach us about the ways in which Jews pray and the way Jews worshiped/worship God.

פסח Leap²⁰ משחק Leap, play²¹ דלג Leap, skip²² רקד Dance, skip²³ קפץ Jump, skip²⁴
מפזז Dance, leap חזר Turn, return כרכר Whirl, dance מחול Dance²⁵

From this list²⁶ it is apparent that the writers of the Bible saw dance as a physical and perhaps strenuous activity with large movements such as leaping, skipping, turning, whirling, and jumping. “Most of these roots, when used in reference to dancing, occur only in intensive forms; this is significant as pointing to the nature and character of sacred dance,”²⁷ These intensive forms are more forceful and strong than other verb forms using the same root letters.

In many instances throughout the *Tanakh* these words are used in association with dance in three critical ways relating to prayer. The first is spontaneous prayer in order to thank God for a military victory. Perhaps the most famous is in Exodus 15:20, when the Israelites finally escaped the Egyptians and crossed the Sea of Reeds. “And Miriam the prophetess, Aaron’s sister, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after

²⁰ These root letters appear over 6 times in the *Tanakh*. For each instance please refer to the Concordance. Abraham Even-Shoshanah. *Concordanziah Chadasha*. (Israel: The Authors Heirs, 2000).

²¹ “In its intensive form it can mean “to laugh”, and is also used in the sense of “playing” (Job xl.29), and “merry making”. In the specific sense of “dancing” it occurs in 1 Samuel xviii.7” Oesterley. *The Sacred Dance*. 159-162.

²² Song of Songs 2:8

²³ Ecclesiastes 3:4, Psalms 114: 4 and 6

²⁴ Song of Songs 2:8 מקפץ

²⁵ These root letters appear over thirteen times in the Bible including variations Psalms. Even-Shoshanah. *Concordanziah Chadasha*.

²⁶ For more on the uses of these verbs and where they appear consult; Even-Shoshanah. *Concordanziah Chadasha*.

²⁷ Oesterley *The Sacred Dance*. 44.

her with timbrels and dances.” It is a common trend in the *Tanakh* for women to celebrate the military victories with dance. According to Lapson, “The victory dance was usually led by a woman singing and dancing, followed by a group of women responding in chorus with song and dance and musical instruments.”²⁸ Dance was used as a way to show praise after a victory because of its spontaneous nature. Dance gave these people a chance to express their intense emotions and celebrate.²⁹

Another type of dance in the *Tanakh*, are ecstatic dances which give insight into the way ancient Israelites may have prayed to God. The prophets, regarded as spiritual leaders of the people, used dance as a technique to increase their own *kavanah* and to inspire others into having a close relationship with God.

The *Nevi'im*, the forerunners of the greater prophets of later days, are said to have been groups of ecstasies who wandered about the country under a leader, and drew the impressionable onlookers after them by their furious dancing. This state of ecstasy was deliberately evoked in order to exalt them into a mood in which their religious feelings could find expression, and to bring the strongest possible influence to bear on the crowd among them.³⁰

In the Book of Samuel the prophets travel with bands of musicians. They use music as the medium to accompany dance and through its climax could bring the dancers into an ecstatic state. Once they were in this ecstatic state they could prophesize. King David and the house of Israel also danced ecstatically before God. There are “five descriptive terms used in reporting the ceremony in which King David and “all the house of Israel danced before God”: David not only danced in the ordinary sense of the word *sahek* (cHR) but also rotated with all his might, *karker* (rkrk); and jumped, *pazez* (zzp); and

²⁸ Lapson, “Dance.” 1263.

²⁹ For further discussion of dance as a celebration of victory see Oesterly, *The Sacred Dance*. 159-162.

³⁰ Aron Marko Rothmuller, *The Music of the Jews*. (New York: The Beechhurst Press, 1954), 18.

skipped, *rakad* (dcr) (II Sam. 6:5, 14, 16; I Chron. 15:29).” In this instance David’s worship experience was expressed through large physical movements. It is through his movements that the entire congregation of Israel was inspired to praise God through dance.

According to scholars, sacred dance evolved and became an essential part of worship in the First Temple. The Psalms were used in worship during the First and Second Temple periods and these texts were sung and accompanied by both dance and instruments. “Psalms were sung as part of daily temple ritual. To the best of our knowledge they were performed by chorus and accompanied with instruments, but they also employed some solo songs and possibly choreographed choral movement”³¹ Many of the Psalms are referred to as songs and discuss music and dance within their texts. For instance, Psalm 149 and 150 explain that dance, music, and instruments are needed to praise God. Psalm 149:1-3 begins with; “Sing unto the LORD a new song, and God’s praise in the assembly of the saints. Let them praise God’s name with dance; let them sing praises unto God with the timbrel and harp.” The idea of praising God with song, instrument, and dance is further emphasized in Psalm 150:4. “Praise God with the timbrel and dance; praise God with stringed instruments and the pipe.” Through studying the Psalms, it is possible to have greater insight to the ways dance, music, and instrumentation was used in Temple worship. There is speculation that in the period of the Second Temple worship was similar to the period of the First Temple. The central role of the Psalms, dancing, singing, and instrumentation was maintained.

³¹ Emanuel Rubin and John Baron, *Music in Jewish History and Culture* (Sterling Heights, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press 2006), 28.

In ancient Israel and other ancient cultures dance was a sacred act that accompanied their worship. “Sacred dance, in so far that it was performed in imitation of some supernatural power, to honor such by an imitative dance denotes a religious intention”³² These ancient civilizations were able to unite with their deity through dance³³ and had the “belief of many savage peoples that their sacred dances were originally taught to them by their gods.”³⁴ The ancient Israelites were surrounded by pagan cultures that had similar sacred dance rituals. However, after the second exile from Israel and as the Jews scattered across the world, the ritual of sacred dance was either lost or changed. The ancient motivations for dance were no longer compelling for the Jews in the Diaspora. There are a number of explanations for the loss of dance in Jewish worship. First, as the Jews moved to other civilizations they began to adapt different cultural norms. In many of the cultures, dancing was a social and cultural form of enjoyment rather than a form of religious expression. Oesterley argues, “The whole idea and object of dancing, among civilized peoples, has become so purely a matter of past time and enjoyment, that it is difficult to realize it’s very serious aspect among men in the past ages and among uncivilized races to-day”³⁵ During the dispersion, Jewish life was constantly changing and adapting to the different cultures. Therefore, depending on the place and time different dance traditions were adapted. However, dancing was most often used in social or lifecycle events and not as a major part of worship.

³² Oesterley. *The Sacred Dance*. 16.

³³ Lectures on the origin and growth of religion as illustrated by native religions of Mexico and Peru, 1895. 224.

³⁴ Oesterley. *The Sacred Dance*. 19.

³⁵ *Ibid*.

Second, the rabbis changed the nature of worship drastically as a result of the loss of the Temple. Prayer, “the service of the heart”, replaced the old sacrificial system as the primary mode to connecting with God. The physical act of worship in the sacrificial system was changed into an intellectual and verbal service. Additionally, the idea of joy and ecstasy was not maintained because the Jews were mourning the loss of their Temple and land. Therefore, the use of music and instruments were prohibited and without music and instruments, there was no longer the possibility to express their prayers with dance. There is a debate in the Talmud *Bavli* about the use of music and dance on Holidays and Shabbat. The *Mishnah* states that there are “activities which are prohibited rabbinically on the Sabbath and *Yom Tov*.” including “clapping hands, slapping thighs, and dance.”³⁶ Rashi notes that

these three acts usually associated with music. The *Gemara* will explain that they are prohibited because of the concern that one might repair a musical instrument to accompany his clapping or dancing, and violate the Biblical prohibition of making utensil.³⁷

This prohibition contributed greatly to the decline of dance in worship and changed the way Jews prayed for over five hundred years in the Diaspora.

After mysticism was brought from France and Spain to *Safed* in the wake of the expulsion, *Kabbalah* thrived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The mystics took notice of the important role dance played in the *Tanakh*. They taught that through dance, the individual can transcend and delve deep into prayer. The mystics saw dance as an integral part of the worship experience and believed that dance should be used in all prayer experiences. They saw the rich history of dance in Jewish life and viewed dance

³⁶ *Talmud Bavli*, Schottenstein Edition. Edited by Rabbi Hersch Goldwurm. (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Heritage Foundation, 1993) Tractate Beitzah. 36b.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

as a treasure for individual and communal transformation and transcendence. In particular they saw dance as an important part of Shabbat and Festival worship.

The use of dance as part of social and worship observance for Shabbat is traced to the *Kabbalists* of *Safed*. Dance was used as a social observance when “a group would go out to visit Jewish homes on *Motsa’ei Shabbat* with song and dance”³⁸. In addition, the entire *Kabbalat Shabbat* service developed in *Safed*, when the mystics would welcome the Sabbath in the fields at sunset. The Kabbalists, mirroring earlier customs, would go “over the hills of Galilee to welcome the mystic Queen Sabbath with the singing of psalms and dancing. On Saturday night they danced a farewell to the departing Queen.”³⁹ This custom became so powerful that the liturgy was eventually written down and *Kabbalat Shabbat* spread to Jewish communities across the world. Shabbat wasn’t the only occasion where mystics used dance as a means of creating community and worshiping God. The Jewish mystics saw dance as an important component to prayer for holidays and Life Cycle Events.⁴⁰

The Hassidism, a devout Kabbalist sect, emerged in the eighteenth century. They adapted the beliefs and practices of Kabbalah, which included the use of dance during worship. “They gave free rein to the expression of their religious feelings. . . Like the Biblical prophets, the Hassidim resort to singing and (dancing) to exalt their mood to the state of expression.”⁴¹ The father of Hassidism was Israel *Ba’al Shem Tov* who “exalted

³⁸Samuel Abba Horodetzky, “Hasidic Dance”. *Journal of Synagogue Music, Niggunim in Worship*.34 (Fall 2009): 127.

³⁹ Lapson.“Dance”. 1266.

⁴⁰ Consult Lapson, “Dance”. 1262-1268 for a complete listing of dances used for Holidays and Life cycle events.

⁴¹ Rothmuller. *The Music of the Jews*. 133.

singing and dancing as essential elements of Hassidic religious practices”.⁴² He “elevates religious dance to its highest pinnacle; only through its fiery excitement could one’s soul climb heavenward unimpeded.”⁴³

There are many Hassidic stories which give an insight into the way they used dance during prayer. The following is a tale from the Hassidic compilation, *Ohalei Shem*.

The rabbi came to pray in the morning and entered with holy emotion and joy, with a *Sefer Torah* in his arms, and he danced one dance before the holy Ark; then he placed the *Sefer Torah* therein. Then he danced another dance before the stand for the prayer leader. . . . And also during the *Shemoneh Esreh* he jumped up on his pure table and walked back and forth on it. Then after the *Shemoneh Esreh* he danced from the table down to the ground⁴⁴

The Hassidic rabbis declared that dancing was to be used on all occasions regardless of the mood. The Hassidim followed in the traditions of the earlier Kabbalists by integrating dance into their social Shabbat observance. They “danced on Friday nights around the rabbi’s banquet table, and at twilight on Saturday they danced with mystic fervor.”⁴⁵ The use of dancing at these events was seen as a way to connect with God. They “considered dance a fundamental element, an instrument for inducing religious ecstasy.”⁴⁶ They used dance as a way to create joy and *kavanah* (great awareness and attention in prayer) in hopes for inducing *devequt* (communion with G-d). Both Kabbalah and Hassidism view prayer as the means for connection with God. Further, it is through heightened joy that one can communicate and connect with God. Hassidic Rabbi

⁴² Eli Barnavi., *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*. (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 2002), 162.

⁴³ Horodetzky. “Hasidic Dance”. 127.

⁴⁴ *Ohalei Shem*. Ed. Y. A. Teomim- Frankle. 30 #9.

⁴⁵ Lapson. “Dance” *Encyclopedia Judaica* . 1267.

⁴⁶ Amnon Shiloah, “Music in the World of the Mystic,” *Jewish Musical Traditions*. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), 213.

Nachman of Bratzlav taught that it was “through dancing, and the movement you make with your body, that you awaken joy within yourself.”⁴⁷ However, *devequt* does not come easily, it takes time and concentration to reach a place where one can express joy to God. The mystics used singing and dancing as a means to inspire the joy which leads to *devequt*.

Hassidism teaches that every act performed by humanity has divine consequences. They view *devequt* as a way to restore balance to the cosmos. Dancing while praying is one way they can repair any damage in the cosmos. They can create equilibrium in their own lives as well as in the cosmos, by “lifting up holy sparks; and, in holy dance, the lower rung of spirituality lifts up to the higher.”⁴⁸ When a Hassid is fervently praying, the gestures and movements he is using cause unification between God and himself.

His dancing was dancing of *devequt*, of yearning and thirsting for God until expiration. With each and every movement he accomplished awesome and wondrous unifications until the whole house was full of light. All the heavenly hosts of angels danced with him, a great fire flamed around him, and, eye to eye, it was seen that *Sh’chinah* came to rest in his *Beit Midrash*.⁴⁹

The physical act of dancing allows one to free oneself from the weight of your body. Dancing is the medium in which the mystic is able to move out of the physical realm and into the spiritual.

While dancing during prayer creates a union with the individual and God, it also creates a communal bond. Many Hassidic dances are in the form of a circle, symbolic of

⁴⁷ Yitzhak Buxbaum, *Jewish Spiritual Practices* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1994), 483.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 487.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 490.

the Hassidic philosophy that "everyone is equal, each one being a link in the chain, the circle having no front or rear, no beginning or ending. Dancing as a community unites them in a common purpose. This sacred community supports each individual which creates trust so each individual can be vulnerable in expressing their emotions and praying.

Kavanah in prayer is important for the Hassid because it balances the *keva* (fixed liturgy). The fixed liturgy is a means to induce intense feelings as an individual relates or struggles with the words. Prayer is only possible when it comes from the individual (not just the words of the prayer book) and they are able to encounter and express deep emotions. Dancing is a great way to create *kavanah* because it has a spontaneous element. The Hassidic tradition teaches that

when you study Torah, or *davening*, or even just doing some chore-without reason, sing a *niggun*, and if you are inspired start dancing also. Perhaps you are tired or frustrated or at a low moment and feeling sad—just start singing to God, or dancing⁵⁰

Dance is a form of meditation and the mystic's belief in the power of movement to connect with our own emotions and with God. They teach that after spontaneous dancing it is possible to feel the presence of God. Their greatest desire is to experience physical, emotional, and spiritual unification with God. When praying the Hassid, "has purified and sanctified all his limbs to such an extent that with each step of his holy feet he accomplishes holy unifications"⁵¹

The Hassidic literature discusses how to dance during worship and what types of movements and gestures are most authentic. There are many elements and specific types

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 483.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 489.

of dance that they utilize in worship. First, there is a deep relationship between dance and music. Dance is almost always accompanied by music; therefore there are musical and rhythmic qualities of dance. “The deepest chords within him would vibrate with happiness during prayer, when he prays, as one should, with dancing and awesome fervor”⁵² The melody used when dancing is very important because the mystics saw the notes of the melody as having layers and layers of meaning.

Just as there are various movements in a melody, so are there also various movements in every part of the human anatomy which are suites to the tones of a melody, and every Chassid who desires to understand a *niggun* must be able to dance to each tone with a different part of the body.⁵³

Another element is the tempo, which is an important element for creating sacred dance. There is an arc to the service that gradually builds and the songs follow this arc. “Dance songs and wordless dance tunes often of Hassidic origin, and very rhythmic, frequently beginning in slow tempo and working up to a climax”⁵⁴ The dancers follow the music and as the music becomes faster their movements get larger. Their arms reach upward and they can be seen leaping into the air, until they reach ecstasy. The dancer is guided by the tempo of the music,

for the movements of one’s torso, head and extremities must reflect the melody’s measured movements and become one with it. Anyone who is privileged to experience this oneness, this losing oneself in the music and the dance, will recognize it as the most incomparable pleasure of all⁵⁵

While the music determines the arc and the flow of the dance it is important to analyze the various movements and gestures that are used to accompany the music. “The gestures for dance have the same kind of symbolic meaning as those for prayer, for

⁵² *Ibid.* 151.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Rothmuller. *The Music of the Jews*. 133.

⁵⁵ Horodetzky “Hasidic Dance”. 490.

the dances of a Jew are prayers”⁵⁶ Clapping of one’s hands is a gesture, which produces many affects that are helpful during prayer. It helps bring concentration by getting rid of unnecessary thoughts and ideas. This meditative act can be taught; “When you clap your hands, picture all foreign thoughts flying away as a flock of blackbirds at the clap of thunder”⁵⁷ Also, clapping “helps bring alertness and joy. Hassidim often clap their hands and snap their fingers during prayer to arouse themselves and to express their inspiration and happiness”⁵⁸ Hassidic teaching further articulates the position of our hands when clapping. We can profess God’s oneness by closing the five fingers together in one place.

Another important movement is swaying (which is like chanting). It is important to combine the “rhythmic movements of voice and body and reflect the movement of the Spirit.”⁵⁹ Swaying helps with concentration during prayer and the Hassidim recommend that after memorizing the words, close your eyes and let your body move. Additionally, swaying imitates *ruach*, so that when we sway we are like the wind and can begin to melt away the boundaries between body and soul. Other movements include, “raising our hands to go above and beyond our intellect. Waving, weeping, shouting, and looking up to remind us of God above, although God is everywhere.”⁶⁰ Pacing can be another important movement and some Hassidic groups walk or even run during prayer.

The Hassidic teachers recommend certain gestures to accompany particular prayers. During the *Amidah*, it is recommended to outstretch ones hands for requests.

⁵⁶ Lapson.”Dance”. 1267.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 167.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 490.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 165.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 166.

For the *Sh'mah*, touch your lips when you say, you shall speak of them when you sit in your house. For the *Aleinu*, mime the section that says “God above and upon this earth” and at “beneath” point to your heart and then heaven and earth.⁶¹ Using movements to accompany particular phrases in prayers can create deeper connections to the prayers.

Reform Judaism worship has never included sacred dance in worship. Reform Judaism was created in nineteenth century Germany and the reformers adapted the style of worship from their dignified Protestant neighbors. The Reformers wanted to create a service that would reflect the aesthetic values of the time. Therefore, Reform worship was concerned with decorum; Reform Jews prayed in the vernacular, sat quietly, and listened. Dance was not part of 19th century Protestant worship and therefore, would not be part of Reform Worship.

In our post modern world, Hassidism is practiced and it's teachings have been reinterpreted for other groups of Jews. Neo-Hassidism and Renewal Judaism adapt mystical teachings into their theology and philosophy and dance is an integral part of their worship. Art Green has created a modern mysticism that can be incorporated in all denominations' worship experiences. Reform Judaism has also changed and is no longer concerned with mimicking Protestant worship. The twenty first century is a time when Reform Judaism can embrace sacred dance and learn from the Hassidic and modern mystical movements.

The notion of ecstatic joy implemented into worship by the Hassidic movement is a notion that is not found in Reform Prayer. Reform Services are often choreographed and formal. It is difficult in such an atmosphere to experience intense joy and express

⁶¹ See Aleinu prayer

that joy as an individual or community. Jewish mysticism teaches that through the use of music and dance in worship, joy can be experienced. Special programs can be conducted in Reform Synagogues that teach congregants of the different goals of prayer like *devequt* and joy. Once Reform congregants learn of the inherent joy of praying they can open themselves up to experience it. For instance, components of the *Kabbalat Shabbat* liturgy and service are used in Reform worship on Friday nights. Most synagogues take an excerpt from this liturgy by singing one of the seven psalms or the liturgical *piyut*, *L'cha Dodi*. This service is unique to Friday Evening and, if used properly, acts as a transition from the work week into the celebration and relaxation of the Sabbath. In Reform worship, we rarely take the time to go through this liturgical process in creating an atmosphere of celebration and joy. This liturgical practice has the possibilities of transforming Reform worship, through introducing the notion that Shabbat is a time for heightened joy and celebration in connection to God. While singing the Hebrew of this entire service might be an isolating experience for Reform Jews, dance in this section could help to give meaning to the text and create an atmosphere of joy. Dance can be adapted slowly to each psalm as we move from the work week and used as a way to crescendo into the final moment of *L'cha Dodi*, when the Shabbat Bride finally enters. Therefore when the Shabbat *Ma'ariv* service finally begins it will feel completely different from an ordinary Weekday *Ma'ariv* service.

Through exploring the Kabbalistic thought and the application of this thought for the Hassidic movement, there is a model that Reform Judaism can translate into their own modern worship experience. I believe that there are three potential dance experiences that can be integrated into a Reform service. The first can be used as a way to ease

congregants into the idea of dance in prayer. Clergy can bring greater awareness, focus, and concentration to the movements that are already in place in Reform worship. These movements; bowing, clapping, bending, covering eyes, stillness, and swaying can easily be highlighted to teach congregants about dance. Most of these gestures are small and can comfortably be added to the Reform Worship service. There are many benefits to adding or encouraging gestures. First, they can help congregants to concentrate by bringing greater present moment awareness to the service. Second, movements can help bring meaning to the Hebrew words that many congregants don't understand. Finally, they can learn about their bodies and their role during prayer through movement and stillness. For instance, they can be encouraged to stay completely still during the *Sh'mah* in order to concentrate on this creed and give it an elevated level within the service. Clergy can also be mindful of the way they instruct congregants to rise and be seated. They can ask congregants to be aware for the reasons that they rise as well as have greater awareness of their posture in these positions.

The music is an important part of the service and can be use to help induce movements such as swaying and clapping. Simple rhythmic patterns can be led by the clergy and help to build energy at certain points in the service. These prayerful climaxes are meant to be felt physically so eventually the congregants can begin to let go and open themselves up to a powerful experience.

Another movement that congregants already do that can be used to give congregants awareness of their body in prayer is the bending and the bowing. Rabbi Joshua Jacob asks,

Why should we succumb to mindless knee jerks? Can we not give them a more expressive quality? If the bows are meant to acknowledge Gods' presence and

the presence of those around us, we can use long bows, we can make a bow more deliberate and prayerful. Give it new meaning.⁶²

He further elaborates that the *Barchu* involves stretching and releasing that can be taught and used in prayer.

In modern dance, a dancer will bend over freely letting the head lead, being pulled down by weight in a whoosh. The coming up is done slowly, uncurling one vertebra at a time, feeling the length of the spine. The movement shapes the prayer. The bow leaves us a bit light headed and fully balanced in time for the word *Adonai*.⁶³

The bending for *Barchu* or *Baruch* (beit resih chet) can be a teaching moment and a way for congregant to embody blessing physically.

Another area of movement that can be emphasized to create greater intention during prayer is the three small steps backward and forward before the *Amidah*. Rabbi Jacobs says that they can become a “little less mindless, A little less *t’filah* shuffle, and a little more trying to walk in a new place.” Congregants can become more mindful of the space they are entering when reciting the *Amidah*.

A second area in which we can introduce dance within a worship service is through dance performance. Dance performance involves the emotional and spiritual attention of the congregants, without their physical participation. It can act as *Midrash* to a prayer by accompanying it and giving a new level of meaning to the prayer. It can also act as a prelude to a prayer, so congregants can prepare for a prayer. *Avodah* Dance Company, a New York based company works at creating Dance *Midrash*. It presents choreography within a service to act as a way of engaging congregants. These moments can give congregants a new perspective and bring them deeper into the worship

⁶² Webber, Karen. “Movement in Prayer.” SSM Thesis. (Hebrew Union College, 1990).

⁶³ *Ibid.*

experience. Within a congregation, it is also possible to hold Dance *Midrash* workshops for kids or adults and these pieces can be performed during a service.

The third way to incorporate dance into a service is with a facilitator who can lead the group in movement. Dance is an area where congregants are uncomfortable in a service because it is new and frightening. The first step for the facilitator is to have awareness of this issue. They must introduce dance slowly over time and begin by emphasizing movements that are already part of the service. Additionally, it is important to link the movement to Torah, *Midrash*, and Jewish tradition. Only through educating the congregants will they begin to feel comfortable to use movement in prayer. Clergy can teach them about movement in the *Tanakh*, the ways in which the mystics and Hassidim inherited the tradition.

A final way to incorporate dance in the service is through spontaneous dancing. Spontaneity is an important principle in mystical thought. Dance can be introduced slowly and eventually congregants can become comfortable with the notion of expressing themselves through movement. The Reform Service would benefit from the introduction of spontaneity in prayer. Congregants need opportunities to express a myriad of emotions ranging from their joy to sadness. They need a worship culture where they can express those emotions as quickly as they appear. Clergy can encourage congregants to clap their hands, sway to the music, dance with friends, and ultimately have the freedom to express themselves.

Reform Judaism is at a transitional point where congregants are searching for deeper meaning in their lives. Sacred dance is an important part of Jewish tradition that can be interpreted and applied to modern worship. Dance is one of the ways to create a

multi-sensory worship experience that can connect all levels of congregants' awareness with prayer.

“As you dance, dedicate all your movements and all your limbs to God. Think: God you have made all my limbs and by your Power they move. I dedicate all my limbs and movements to you, O Holy One” ⁶⁴

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Chapter 2: Meditation in Worship

Meditation has been a central part to Jewish worship through the course of Jewish history. While meditation was used in early Jewish history, it wasn't until Jewish Mysticism that it emerged as a discipline that was central to worship. The development of meditation in Jewish mysticism was a result of centuries of writings and practice. According to Rebbe Yitzhak Buxbaum, a leading writer and thinker in the field of Jewish spirituality, "more so than in other streams of Judaism, meditation has a special place among the spiritual practices of the Kabbalists and the Hassidim."⁶⁵ The mystics have created a system of worship, in which meditation is essential in connecting with the Divine. They see meditation as a way to use all the human senses, in order to become one in mind, body, and soul and unite with the Divine. In America doctors, mental health professionals, and healers promote the many physical and emotional benefits of meditation. With the current buzz for meditation and yoga classes, liberal Judaism has begun to offer programs on Jewish meditation. Meditation can be integrated into Reform worship in order to elevate the individual and communal worship experience. Additionally, it provides an entrance into prayer for those people who are searching for a way to use more of their senses in prayer.

The Hebrew term for meditation, *Hibonenut* is "a term which first appears in Kabbalistic literature, from the middle of the 13th century, referring to protracted concentration of thought on supernal lights of the Divine world and of the spiritual worlds in general."⁶⁶ According to Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, teacher of Jewish meditation,

⁶⁵ Buxbaum. *Jewish Spiritual Practices*. 368.

⁶⁶ Gershom Scholem, "Meditation" *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Volume 11. (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), 1217.

“the most common word for meditation in Judaic literature is *kavanah* “directed consciousness.”⁶⁷ His definition of meditation “consists of thinking in a controlled manner. It is deciding exactly how one wishes to direct the mind for a period of time, and then doing it.”⁶⁸ Through the intense physical, mental, and emotional practices of meditation, all divisions melt away so that unity with the sacred can occur. Thus, “the true primary objective of meditative practice within Jewish tradition is *yichud*, unification with God.”⁶⁹ The idea of cleaving and unifying with God is referred to as *devequt* in Jewish meditation. Rebbe Yitzhak Buxbaum, defines *devequt* as “the intensification of love of God until the love is so strong that you cleave to Him without separation.”⁷⁰ This cleaving to God is both a “direct awareness”⁷¹ and a “consciousness imbued with love.”⁷² According to Rebbe Buxbaum, *devequt* occurs in meditation by seeking “to fill the mind so completely with particular thoughts and feelings that what is meditated on is realized in experience.”⁷³ *Devequt* is the result of strict practice and discipline. The individual must become completely still and empty his/her mind of everything but love for God.

Jewish meditation and Jewish prayer are deeply connected. Practicing meditation during prayer can create a balance of *keva* and *kavanah* during worship. First, meditation can be used as a way to engage in and contemplate the *keva* (fixed liturgy). Jewish

⁶⁷ Aryeh Kaplan, *Jewish Meditation A Practical Guide*. (Shoken Books Inc. New York: 1985), 49.

⁶⁸ Kaplan. *Jewish Meditation A Practical Guide*. 3.

⁶⁹ Steve Fisdell, “Meditation as our Own Jacob’s Ladder.” In *Meditation from the Heart of Judaism*. Edited by Avram Davis. (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights, 1997).

⁷⁰ Buxbaum, *Jewish Spiritual Practices*. 3-4.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.* 368.

tradition instructs Jews to have a fixed daily prayer practice. Similarly, teachers of meditation explain that meditation only works when it is practiced daily at a fixed time. Meditation also brings deeper intention and connections (*kavanah*) to the prayers. It can bring an individual to higher levels of consciousness, where one can connect with the Divine. Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, who lived from 1772-1810, explains that prayer is talking to God and meditation is listening. When they are combined they can engage congregants to listen and speak. Jewish tradition gives us many opportunities to meditate and it is the role of the individual to bring the proper intention when they meditate.

Having established basic terms and understandings, let's look at the way meditation unfolded throughout Jewish history. Some scholars believe that meditation was used in the *Tanakh* as a practice to have visions and prophetic experiences. There are many biblical figures that had visionary and prophetic experiences as a way of connecting to God. According to Dr. Sharon Koren, the earliest mystical experiences can be found in Biblical Prophecy and “arose out of a desire to have an acute experience with God.”⁷⁴ The notion of “experiencing God” becomes the goal of Jewish meditation and prophecy is believed to be achieved in a meditative state. The *Tanakh* is filled with instances of visions and prophecy that describe meditative experiences.

There are many instances of biblical characters having visions of God. In these instances most commentaries translate the Hebrew word רָאָה as “seeing” or to “behold” God. The JPS Jewish study bible interprets this “seeing” as “having a visual experience

⁷⁴ Dr. Sharon Koren, Zohar Class Notes on the History of Jewish Mysticism. (Hebrew Union College. January 20th 2009.)

of God.”⁷⁵ The following three examples all show that there was a biblical process of experiencing God, which can be interpreted as the earliest form of meditation. In Exodus 24:10 and 11, after Moses reveals the *Sefer haBrit* (the book of the covenant) to the Israelites, they “saw” (ראה) God two times. Perhaps the act of listening to the *Sefer haBrit* which came directly from God gave way to their group vision of God. Later in Isaiah 6:1, he explains his elaborate vision of God, “I “beheld” (ראה) “God seated on a high and lofty throne and the skirts of his robe filled the Temple”⁷⁶ This vision may have been a result of a meditative practice or perhaps his vision took place in midst of a meditative trance. In Psalm 63:3 there is a similar description of the glory of God marked by the same word “behold” (ראה). This Psalm begins with the notion of David searching and yearning for God, with the hope that he will “behold” (ראה) God in the sanctuary and see God’s might and glory. The Jewish Study Bible explains that “this psalm is characterized by a deep spiritual, almost mystical sense”⁷⁷ Perhaps this psalm is different from all of the others because it is explaining a meditative process to induce visions of God. Isaiah is describing a vision that he had of God, whereas in Psalm 63, the writer explains his yearning and searching for God. Both the examples from Isaiah and the Psalms relate the idea of “beholding” (ראה) God within worship, because the visions of God are in the sanctuary and temple. All three instances of ראה express the idea of experiencing and seeing God in a unique way which can be viewed as early Jewish meditation.

⁷⁵ Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Jewish Study Bible*. (Jewish Publication Society. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 162.

⁷⁶ Isaiah 6:1-3 is used as part of the *K’dusha* prayer. In verse 6:2 the seraphim are above the Lord’s throne and in 6:3 they “called unto another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.”

⁷⁷ Berlin and Brettler. *The Jewish Study Bible*. 1349.

The prophet Ezekiel had visions of God that shaped Jewish mystical practice and belief for centuries. “Ezekiel experienced his vision near the beginning of the sixth century BCE. Even before his book was canonized as part of the Bible, his vision had become the archetype of Jewish mystical ascent.”⁷⁸ Ezekiel was in exile when “the heavens opened and he saw visions of God”⁷⁹ In his vision he saw a huge cloud with flashing fire surrounded by radiance. In the center of the cloud were four creatures with one wheel on the ground next to each of them. “Wherever the spirit impelled them to go—they went...and the wheels were borne alongside them; for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels”⁸⁰ The earliest Jewish mystics used meditation as a way to induce Ezekiel’s vision, which they believed would lead to union with the Divine. These early mystics were known as *Merkabah* Mystics and based their entire practice on Ezekiel’s visions. These accounts of prophecy and vision in the *Tanakh* have inspired mystics across history to use meditation as a way of experiencing and beholding that which is sacred.

During the time of the Second Temple, Jewish meditation was practiced and adapted Hellenistic aspects. Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE-50 CE) was an acculturated Jewish thinker who according to Eli Barnavi “was perfectly at ease within the general culture, adopting Greek ideas and techniques, yet loyal to his ancestral tradition.”⁸¹ He believed that contemplative prayer was the highest form of prayer because the mind abandons body and is able to reach God. “In its journey to God, the mind abandons body and sense perception and become absorbed in a form of intellectual prayer, which is

⁷⁸ Daniel Matt. *The Essential Kabbalah* (Edison, New Jersey: Castle Books, 1997),3.

⁷⁹ Ezekiel 1:1

⁸⁰ *Ibid* 1:19.

⁸¹ Barnavi. *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*. 36.

wordless and encumbered by position”⁸² Philo explains that meditation is an important part of Jewish practice on holidays. “The day of rest is the attempt to approach the Divine through contemplation and meditation.”⁸³ His religious philosophy and ideas on Jewish meditation reached Jewish communities across the Diaspora.

In the Diaspora, the rabbis instituted prayer to replace sacrifice. The rabbis were aware of the importance of meditation and referred to it in the Talmud. In *Berachot* 32b we learn that the “earliest pietists, would meditate for one hour prior to the start of synagogue services”⁸⁴ However, the rabbi’s “were very concerned about the dangers of meditation, and restricted its practice to those who were mature and well versed in Torah study.”⁸⁵ They explain the dangers of practicing meditation in the Talmud. *Chagigah* 14b tells the story⁸⁶ of four Mishnaic sages who used meditative techniques to enter paradise: Rabbis Akiva, Ben Zoma, Ben Azzai, and Elisha Bein Abuyah. Out of the four who entered the “mystical orchard”⁸⁷, Rabbi Akiva was the only one who entered and exited in peace.⁸⁸ Ben Azzai gazed and died. Ben Zoma gazed and went insane. Elisha Ben Abuyah gazed and became a heretic. This story explains possible consequences of practicing meditation and asserts the importance of preparation before one engages in mystical acts.

⁸² David Winston, “Philo and the Contemplative life” in *Jewish spirituality from the Bible through the Middle Ages* edited by Arthur Green. (Crossroad: NY.) 219.

⁸³ Jutta Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria*. Texts and studies in Ancient Judaism (Mohr. Siebeck, 2001.) 63.

⁸⁴ Babylonian Talmud. *Berachot* 32b

⁸⁵ Sonsino. *Six Jewish Spiritual Paths*. 95.

⁸⁶ This story is told in other sources; Zohar (I, 26b) and Tikunei Zohar (Tikun 40), Jerusalem Talmud Chaigai Chpter 2 Halacha 1.

⁸⁷ The divine realm. This term appears in the Babylonian Talmud Chagigah 14b

⁸⁸ Babylonian Talmud Chagigah 14b and Jerusalem Talmud Chaigai Chpter 2 Halacha 1.

Jewish mystics understood these warnings from the rabbis and they developed meditation as a secret tradition that was hidden from the masses. According to Gershom Scholem, these earliest mystics had to be careful because there was a great danger in this period of “ubiquitous Jewish heresies. They feared that mystical speculation based on private religious experience would come into conflict with that “rabbinical” Judaism which was rapidly crystallizing during the same epoch.”⁸⁹ Therefore, the Jewish mystics had to develop their practices within the framework of *Halachic* Judaism and keep their esoteric teachings hidden. As a result, Jewish meditation was not transmitted into main stream Jewish practice and was kept covert for centuries.

While there are accounts of Jewish meditation in early Jewish history it is not clear to the extent of its usage and practice. It isn’t until the development of Jewish mysticism that meditation flourishes and is developed into a primary practice. According to David Ariel, a scholar of Jewish mysticism, “The Kabbalists transformed meditation from a simple act of intentionality into a mystical ritual.”⁹⁰ The growth of meditation and its principal role in worship can be traced through the entire history of Jewish mysticism.

As was previously noted, the earliest known Jewish Mysticism was *Merkabah* Mysticism which developed out of the Temple Cult during the period of the second Temple. Scholem explains that “the first phase in the development of Jewish mysticism before its crystallization in medieval Kabbalah is also the longest and remains traceable over a period of almost a thousand years from the first century BC to the tenth century

⁸⁹ Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. (Schocken Books: New York, 1954), 47.

⁹⁰ Ariel. *The Mystic Quest*. 211.

AD.”⁹¹ *Merkabah* mysticism based its doctrine and practice on the Temple Cult and the vision of Ezekiel. It viewed the Temple as the most holy place on earth because it was the only space where humanity can have a direct encounter with God. “The Temple was the point of a rupture between the heavenly realm and the earthly realm.”⁹² However, when the Temple was destroyed the *Merkabah* Mystics had to develop a way to communicate with God without this meeting point. They dealt with this separation by focusing on Ezekiel’s vision of God in Babylonia. This vision held the secret of God’s presence on earth and was a way to experience God in the Diaspora. The vision of the chariot was a moving throne of God’s presence on earth (The *Shekinah*). They viewed the chariot as a way for God to move with the Jews.

The *Merkabah* Mystics practiced a form of mediation known as contemplation in order to understand and experience the heavenly chariot. “This contemplation could also be achieved by way of preparatory stages which would train those who "descend to the *Merkabah*" to grasp the vision and pass on from one thing to another without being endangered by the audacity of their assault on the higher world.”⁹³ The *Merkabah* mystics were able to use contemplation as a way of achieving union with God on earth.

Merkabah Mysticism remains the only known source of mysticism for the first eleven centuries of the Common Era. In the twelfth century a group of Ashkenazim in Germany found fragments of *Merkabah* mystical literature. “This group of German pietists was very interested in the Temple Cult and Ezekiel’s vision and created the next

⁹¹ Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. 40.

⁹² Dr. Sharon Koren. Zohar Class Notes on the Temple Cult. (Hebrew Union College. March 24th 2009.)

⁹³ Scholem. “Meditation”. 1217.

stage of Jewish Mysticism known as Medieval Hassidim.”⁹⁴ These Hassidim developed their own interpretation of *Merkabah* Mysticism. Scholem states that within Medieval Hassidism, “the combination of estaticism and magic already noted as characteristics of *Merkabah* mysticism, reappears on a new plane on this mysticism of prayer”⁹⁵ There were three principles that characterized these Hassidim according to the Book of the Devout: “Ascetic renunciation of the things of the world; complete serenity of mind; and an altruism grounded in the principle and driven to extremes”⁹⁶ The way for the Hassid to achieve complete serenity of the mind was through different forms of meditation. In one form of meditation, “they set themselves up as prophets by practicing the pronunciation of holy names, or sometimes they only direct their intention upon them without actually pronouncing the words.”⁹⁷ Eventually, this meditative act resulted in an out-of-body experience, which witnesses viewed as a seizure, during which the Hassid would encounter the Divine. There are also accounts of the Hassidim meditating before prayer in the Talmud. “The early Hassidim would tarry for an hour before prayer in order to direct their hearts to God.”⁹⁸ For the Hassidim, meditation was used in prayer as a way to focus, so they could encounter the Divine.

At the same time as the German Hassidim, Kabbalah, a new strand of Jewish mysticism was developing in southern France. From France, Kabbalah moved to the Iberian Peninsula in the thirteenth century. Kabbalah flourished in Castile because of a cultural renaissance which was created by Ferdinand III and the backing of Kabbalistic

⁹⁴ Information from Dr. Sharon Koren. Zohar Class Notes on the History of Jewish Mysticism.

⁹⁵ Scholem. *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. 102.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 92.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 102.

⁹⁸ Babylonian Talmud. *Berachot* 5:1

teaching from Nachmanidies, an esteemed rabbi.⁹⁹ With the creation of Kabbalah a new type of mysticism developed that explained the nature of creation and God through the *sefirot*. Through their studies of the *Tanakh* and *Midrashim*, they believed that God had ten attributes¹⁰⁰ which could affect and were affected by the actions of humanity on earth.

While the Spanish Kabbalists continued meditating in similar ways to the *Merkabah* mystics, they also developed a new practice that is based on their theory of creation. This method transports the mystic to the *sefirotic* realm where creation is possible. According to Scholem, it “leads to the communion of the meditating mind with its higher sources in the world of emanation itself.”¹⁰¹ The Spanish Kabbalists instituted the use of mediation as essential during prayer. For the Spanish Kabbalists, *kavanah* was the means for connecting prayer with meditation.

Kavanah for the mystic is “mystical intention or concentration.” In the liturgy, “the Kabbalists found a way to hidden worlds and the first causes of all existence. They developed a technique of meditation which enables them to extract, as it were, the mystical prayer from the exoteric prayer of the community the text of which followed a fixed pattern”¹⁰²

They were able to create *kavanah* in prayer through deep concentration on each individual word in a prayer. With this *kavanah*, they believed they were opening up the inner Divine lights which illuminated the individual words.

Prayer, according to this idea of meditation, is not just a recitation of words or even concentration on the contents of the words according to their simple meaning; it is the adherence of man's mind to the spiritual lights and the mind's advancement in these worlds. The worshiper uses the fixed words of the prayer as

⁹⁹ Information from Dr. Koren. Zohar Class Notes on the History of Jewish Mysticism.

¹⁰⁰ These attributes were mentioned in the *Sefer Ha Bahir* (the Book of Illumination) which is one of the oldest Kabbalistic books. However, the *sefirotic* structure was not fully developed until Kabbalah flourished in Spain.

¹⁰¹ Scholem. “Meditation”. 1218.

¹⁰² Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. 34.

a banister during his meditation which he grasps on his road of ascension so that he should not be confused or distracted. Such meditation results in the joining of human thought to the Divine thought or the Divine will—an attachment which itself comes to an end, or is "negated." The hour of prayer is, more than any other time, suitable for meditation.¹⁰³

The Spanish Kabbalists believed that each word of the prayer was a way to bring balance to the Divine realm and the earthly realm.

During this age of spiritual revival and amidst the cultural background of Spain, the Zohar was published by Moses De Leon in the 1280s. The Zohar is perhaps the most important book of Jewish mysticism and gives in-depth explanations of ways to achieve *devequt*, through meditation. Zohar II 56b-57a explains the “value of *kavanah* in prayer.”¹⁰⁴ In this passage the mystic uses different meditative techniques in order to unify God’s name during his morning prayers.

When the morning dawns and the man prays and unifies the holy name in the proper manner,¹⁰⁵ they extend to him a thread of love. He gazes at the firmament, the light of the wisdom of holy knowledge settles upon him, and the man is adorned with it, and all are in awe of him. Then this man is called “a son of the Holy One, blessed be He”...He enters all His gates”¹⁰⁶

When the mystic is able to correctly unify the holy name his prayer can “enter the gates”, meaning “ascend without hindrance”¹⁰⁷ to the realm of the Divine.

The Zohar is rich with explanations of ways to achieve unity with God through meditation. One innovation in this area was linking the different levels of souls with meditation. According to Kabbalah, there are five different levels of the human soul and

¹⁰³ Scholem. “Meditation”. 1218.

¹⁰⁴ Isiah Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar, Volume Three*. Litman Library of Jewish Civilization. (Oxford Press, 1989) 1049.

¹⁰⁵ “He concentrates on unifying the *sefirot*, particularly *tiferet* and *malchut*, symbolized by the letters of the divine name YHWH.” Isiah Tishby. *The Wisdom of the Zohar Volume Three*. 1050.

¹⁰⁶ Zohar II 56b

¹⁰⁷ Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*. 1050.

only through a gradual process of spiritual evolution can one's soul reach enlightenment. Meditation was a vehicle for reaching this enlightenment.

The lowest level of the soul is the *nefesh*, which is the resting or animal soul and is connected with the body and physical experience. The *nefesh* is spiritual existence which resides in the body and keeps the physical metabolism working and the person alive. The second level is the *ruach*, the part of the soul that "rises and descends". The *ruach* rises to the mind and then descends to the body connecting thought and action. It is the feeling that God is everything and your deepest desire is to be loyal and close to God. The third level is *neshamah*, which is the level of soul felt in the experience of pure thought. The *neshamah* level is the highest level of the soul that most humanity will encounter. It is at this level, where it is possible to experience God intimately. The next two levels of the soul are *chaya* and *yechidah* and they are associated with the highest realms of God's creation and emanation.

Sheldon Kramer, a transpersonal psychologist has written on the connection between healing and Jewish Mysticism. He explains that meditation is an important tool in reaching higher levels of awareness and healing.

The Goal of Jewish meditation is to be able to separate oneself from the identification of the *nefesh* and attach oneself to *ruach* with the possibility of bridging with *neshamah*. . . . By training in this manner one can have a taste of higher centers of consciousness.¹⁰⁸

The Zohar¹⁰⁹ explains the first three levels of the soul; *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshamah* through the metaphor of the three strands of a candle flame; the wick (black and blue

¹⁰⁸ Sheldon Kramer, "Jewish Meditation: Healing ourselves and our Relationships" *Opening the Inner Gates: New paths in Kabbalah and Psychology*. Edited by Edward Hoffman. (Boston, Massachusetts: Shambalah Publications, Inc. 1995), 227.

¹⁰⁹ Tikkunay ha Zohar 21:50a

light), the yellow light in the center of the flame, and the filmy portion above the flame. Through this form of contemplative meditation, one can begin the process towards enlightenment

Throughout the history of Kabbalah, different strands of meditation developed. One of the more popular forms was *hitbodedut* “concentrated thought” developed by a contemporary of Moses de Leon, Rabbi Abraham Abulafia (1240-1295). “He was the first great Kabbalist to put Jewish meditation practices into formal writing.”¹¹⁰ Abulafia believed that by reaching a state of ecstasy/prophecy, one could understand the bliss of the world to come. Abulafia believed that by reaching a state of ecstasy/prophecy, one could understand the bliss of the world to come. His strand of Kabbalah was known as Ecstatic Kabbalah. Daniel Matt notes that Abulafia’s meditative system was influenced by other religious mystical traditions. “In his travels he may have been influenced by Sufism and yoga . . . (therefore) in Palestine, Abulafia’s ideas were combined with Sufi elements”¹¹¹

Abulafia’s style of mediation was very different than earlier Mystical meditation because it was a practice that was independent from prayer.

It consists principally of instruction concerning meditation on the Holy Names of God and, in a wider sense, meditation on the mysteries of the Hebrew alphabet. This meditation, which is not dependent on prayer, was described in his more important manuals as a separate activity of the mind to which man devotes himself in seclusion at given hours and with regular guidance by an initiate teacher.¹¹²

This system of meditation introduced the notion of using meditation as strict discipline outside the realm of worship.

¹¹⁰ Kramer. “Jewish Meditation. 225.

¹¹¹ Matt. *The Essential Kabbalah*. 12-13.

¹¹² Scholem. “Meditation”. 1218-19.

His system was based on the secrets of Hebrew letters. “The emphasis of Ecstatic Kabbalah was on meditative techniques, especially the recitation of Divine names and combinations of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet based on *Sefer Yetsirah*.”¹¹³ Through sound, visualization, and contemplation of combinations of Hebrew letters, one could reach their goal of ““untying the knots” that bind the soul, to free the mind from definitions, to move from constriction to the boundless.”¹¹⁴ Once they were free from these boundaries, *devequt* could be realized.

In the second half of the sixteenth century the next major stage of Kabbalah occurred in Safed, where mystics wrote about and practiced meditation.¹¹⁵

Here the magic aspect attached to meditation is once more emphasized, even though the author explains it in a restricted sense. The last steps in the ascension of the meditating mind which seeks to bring down the influx of the supernal lights to earth require meditative activities of a magic nature, which are known as *Yihudim* ("Unifications"). The practical importance of these doctrines, whose influence can be recognized throughout the whole of late kabbalistic literature, should not be underrated.¹¹⁶

In particular there was one major innovation in Safed that expanded the goals of meditation. This innovation was Isaac Luria's theory of creation. The “most popular form of Kabbalaistic mysticism is the practice of “raising the sparks” by recognizing the presence of God within all”¹¹⁷ Luria lived from 1534-1572, forty years after the expulsion from Spain. He lived with the reality that Jews can be expelled from their country. He was able to make sense of exile with his theological system.

¹¹³ Matt. *The Essential Kabbalah*. 11.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* 12.

¹¹⁵ Kabbalistic Texts on Meditation: *Sefer Haredim* (Venice, 1601) of Eleazar Azikri, from chapter 30 in Moses Cordovero's *Pardes Rimmonim* (Cracow, 1592) and the *Sha'arei Kedushah* of Hayyim Vital, part 3, chapters 5–8.

¹¹⁶ Scholem. “Meditation”. 1219.

¹¹⁷ Ariel. *The Mystic Quest*. 257

Creation began when *Ein Sof* sent forth a beam of light into the void, which went on to create the ten vessels. However, some of the later vessels couldn't hold the great power of *Ein Sof* and they shattered. This act, *shevirah*, resulted in the creation of evil and imperfection which exist both in the realm of the *Sefirot* and in the earthly realm. Fortunately, through the act of *tikkun* (repairing), God and humanity can act as partners and restore the fallen sparks to the Divine realm. Humanity has the power to restore God to what God always intended to be. "The philosophical reasons behind this bizarre myth involve the Lurianic concepts of the reasons of the *tzimtzum* and the origin of the creation process, as well as the eternal problem of the source of evil."¹¹⁸ The Kabbalists in Safed, believed in theurgy, which is the human attempt to have an impact on Divine realm. Further, every action on earth had a theurgic consequence in the *Sefirotic* realm. Therefore, Jewish actions like *mitzvot*, prayer, and meditation were intended to help raise the fallen sparks and repair the cosmos. "For theurgic Kabbalists, *devequt* meant directing one's religious actions in such a way that they influence Divine"¹¹⁹ *Devequt* was only possible through meditation, and theurgic meditation became a practice which had profound implications. The basis for Luria's theology was built on the idea of *tikkun* which was in the Zohar. The Zohar lists four different levels of *tikkun* in prayer.

The first *tikkun* is the restoration of oneself, self perfection (the worshiper), the second *tikkun* is the restoration of this world, the third *tikkun* is the restoration of the world above throughout all the hosts of heaven (the realm of the angels); the fourth *tikkun* is the restoration of the holy name through the mystery of the holy chariots. (the *sefirotic* realm)¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Joseph Dan, *Jewish Mysticism and Jewish Ethics*. (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1986), 95.

¹¹⁹ Ariel. *The Mystic Quest*. 207

¹²⁰ Zohar II 215b.

According to the Zohar, it is only through prayer and meditation that these four levels of *tikkunim* can be realized or actuated.

The next stage of development of meditation was initiated by the Baal Shem Tov in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Hassidim used meditation primarily in prayer for the purposes of *devequt*. “The early Hassidic movement was founded on mysticism and meditative exercises...However, over time the Hassidic movement tended to use traditional prayer as a form of meditation for the purpose of sharpening concentration or attention.”¹²¹ The Hassidim of 18th century Poland used meditation in all aspects of prayer. They “were to pray with melodies, pray slowly, pray with discipline to avoid distracting thoughts, pray with silence all around, shut their eyes when they pray, and look down keeping their mind directed to heaven”¹²² The Hassidim have continued to use meditation as a means for connecting with God.

The major role that meditation played in Jewish prayer didn’t spread to other Jewish denominations in the nineteenth century. The development of rational thought and sciences in the 18-19th centuries militated against meditation, which could not be understood rationally. Rabbi Areyeh Kaplan teaches,

For this and other reasons, all references to meditation vanished from mainstream Jewish literature about 150 years ago. This is true even in Hassidic literature, where meditation initially played a central role. Because of this anti-mystical trend even Kabbalistic works published after around 1840 show a surprising lack of the slightest mention of meditation.¹²³

¹²¹ Kramer. “Jewish Meditation”. 225.

¹²² Ivan G Marcus. “The Devotional Ideals of Ashkenazim Pietism”. *Jewish Spirituality*. Edited by Arthur Green (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1986), 361-62.

¹²³ Kaplan. *Jewish Meditation A Practical Guide*. 41.

Reform Judaism which developed during this time in Germany did not include meditation as part of their service. During its inception, Reform Jews wanted to create a Judaism that reflected the advanced notions of their surrounding culture. Additionally, Reform Judaism reflected the Protestant aesthetics in their services, which did not include meditation. It wasn't until the mid-twentieth century that a return to Jewish mysticism occurred. During the 1960's –“with civil rights and then the Vietnam War increasingly creating moral problems-was a time in which many of the assumptions of modernity crumbled”¹²⁴ Jews looked to mysticism, meditation, and yoga in order to provide meaning in their lives. Over the past fifty years the interest in spirituality has only increased. New Age books on meditation and meditation centers are extremely fashionable. While other strands of Judaism have begun integrating meditation into their worship and programming, Reform Judaism has remained reluctant.

Given what we have learned from the historical development of meditation, let's survey the techniques and categories of meditation. In Jewish meditation most of the different practices of meditation that have developed over the centuries have either visual or aural elements. Meditation uses different senses and sensations as a way of focusing so that one can let go of physical sensations and transcend to spiritual planes. These categories of meditative practices were adapted throughout Jewish history. One of the most popular meditative techniques today is Mantra meditation. “Mantra” is an eastern term but the practice of repetition of words and vowel sounds is a part of Jewish meditation. It brings the mystic to a spiritual state through repeating a phrase or word

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

until he/she becomes focused on it. This allows the mind to be cleared so it can enter a spiritual space.

The second category, and possibly most famous in Jewish meditation, is contemplation. This term was used to explain meditation in the earliest eras of Jewish meditation.

The kabbalists did not distinguish between the terms meditation and contemplation. In the kabbalistic view, contemplation was both the concentrated delving to the depths of a particular subject in the attempt to comprehend it from all its aspects, and also the arresting of thought in order to remain on the subject.¹²⁵

Contemplation meditation is a visual form of meditation where the meditation allows an object, word or, idea to fill the mind. Contemplation has two levels, the first which Scholem explains as “arresting of thought.” In this level, one could use an external object or idea to focus the mind. The second level is “concentrated delving into the depths of a subject.” This level is an advanced notion where one goes beyond the physical realm to contemplate the Divine realm.

Visualization is one of the oldest Jewish meditation techniques and was used by prophets and biblical figures. Visualization is also a way to train the mind’s eye. For example, Areyeh Kaplan discusses the importance of “the images that one sees when their eyes are closed. An important discipline in meditation is learning how to control these images”¹²⁶ He believes that this type of training leads to a clearer meditative state. The visualization and combination of Hebrew letters, which was instituted by Abraham Abulafia is still practiced today. Abulafia’s practice used Hebrew letters because they are abstract in nature and won’t cause distraction, while they are also the letters that make up

¹²⁵ Scholem. “Meditation”. 1217.

¹²⁶ Kaplan. *Jewish Meditation A Practical Guide* .71

the name of the Divine. “Abraham expounds a peculiar disciple whom he calls *Hokhmah ha-Tseruf* i.e. the science of the combinations of letters. . . The individual letters of their combination have no ‘meaning’ in the ordinary sense”¹²⁷ But on a spiritual plane these letters represent the pure thought of God. Therefore the Hebrew letters “are the elements both of the most fundamental spiritual reality and of the profoundest understanding and knowledge”¹²⁸ Rabbi Kramer believes that there is deep healing potential in working with Hebrew letters for the modern Jew. First, he teaches the importance of gazing at Hebrew Letters.

Hebrew letters are considered a sacred language that resonates with the *neshamah*. In fact, each Hebrew letter can be seen as a symbol of who gazes and if one gazes at the shapes of the letters once can understand the mysteries of each shape and the different aspects of the Divine¹²⁹

Kramer also teaches the importance of using breath and sound permutations in Hebrew letter meditation. This also stems from Abulafia’s writings and practices. “Many of the “ancient” practices involved working with a variety of sacred names and the permeation of the breath with the various letters of the different names of God.”¹³⁰ Hebrew letter meditation is an integral practice because it uses mind, emotions, and body. Kramer also uses Abulafia’s movement techniques in modern Jewish meditation. This method of using the body, “involves the conscious use of visualizing, sounding, and moving to the shape of the Hebrew vowel sounds with head motions”¹³¹

¹²⁷ Scholem. *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*. 133.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Kramer. “Jewish Meditation.” 229.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* 240. He also outlines the way to use the Tetragram YHVH as a way to use Hebrew Letter meditation and to connect with God on p 240.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 242.

Since the goal of Jewish meditation is *devequt* (cleaving to God), all Jewish mediation practices prepare the individual for this greater purpose. There are many meditative practices that deal with focusing on the Divine and the *sefirotic* realm. Abulafia's meditative practices involve visualizing God's name in order to reach *devequt*. Other practices deal with meditating on the qualities of the Divine. This includes meditation on God's goodness and exaltedness, for God's creative power is endless and still occurring. This type of meditation is used by the Hassidim who believe that "God's goodness and love are imprinted in everything and in every event...everything beautiful and noble, everything that inspires you, everything that you love and revere has its root in Him."¹³² The practice of meditating on the Divine can be done aurally through the repetition of a prayer, Psalm, or sentence about God.

One of the most famous Hassidic practices is called *hitbodedut* (self seclusion), which was the centerpiece of the way to God, taught by Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav. *hitbodedut* is the establishment of time in seclusion to be with God. "The way time is spent in *hitbodedut* can vary: Conversation with God, prayer, meditation, self reflection, and spiritual account taking, repentance, and confession are among the possibilities."¹³³ This idea of conversing with God may not be a meditative practice because it is unstructured. However, it is a meditative technique, if he/she can block out all other earthly notions and only concentrate on their conversation with God. Their time in *hitbodedut* can be directed by the inner-realm, not determined by external stimulus. This practice can prepare one for spiritual elevation and helps create a stronger relationship with God.

¹³² Buxbaum. *Jewish Spiritual Practices*. 370.

¹³³ *Ibid.* 610.

Meditation is a practice that can potentially be practiced with all the human senses. Kabbalists “believed that being able to work on different senses at the same time helps increase our ability to concentrate and elevates our consciousness.”¹³⁴ The uses of visual, auditory, and aural senses are the most commonly used in meditation practices. The kinesthetic notion is also prevalent and many mystics have used body movements as a way to meditate. The Hassidim use swaying and “shuckling” as a meditative act to help them concentrate during prayer. Meditation also includes smell, taste, and touch. Meditation should be used in all aspects of daily life. There are blessings for fragrances and food and they can be used as an introduction to a meditative experience around sensations such as taste and sent. Other sensations that are common in Jewish meditation are light and heat. The *Sefirot* are explained in Kabbalistic literature as vessels that contain light. Light is often uses as a visualization and sensation in meditation. The early Hassidim would “imagine that the light of the Divine presence was above their heads was flowing down and spreading around them, they would sit in the light and tremble and shake from their awe”¹³⁵ These senses and sensations in Jewish meditation create a holistic approach to worship.

From the above analysis of meditative techniques in Judaism it is clear that meditation has been regarded as a very serious discipline. Meditation is used by Jews who are extremely knowledgeable in Torah and devote their lives to becoming closer with God. The achievement of *devequt* takes a life time of daily practice and study. Consequently, it may seem bizarre to use meditation in Reform worship because of the lack of knowledge and commitment of many Reform Jews. However, basic Jewish

¹³⁴ Kramer. “Jewish Meditation”. 225.

¹³⁵ *Maabar Yakob* quoted in *Avodah u'Moreh Derech*. Chapter 25 p 42

Mediation can be used as a way to attract Reform Jews to learn and practice Judaism. Additionally, there are practical aspects of meditation that can be incorporated into Modern Reform Worship. Meditation can be used to bring greater attention and meaning to the *keva* (the fixed liturgy). Art Green understands that we are moving toward an age where prayer transcends language. Words can exclude members of our community, and believes that we can pray without words. Mediation can be used as a technique to move beyond words and allow the congregation to find personal meaning.

We can also weave moments of silence into the service. This would give the time and space for congregants to experiment with meditation. Silence can also give each individual space to connect with God in her/his own way. Integrating meditation into the service can help foster spiritual experiences for our congregants. Daniel Matt, a leading scholar of Jewish Mysticism, who has written many books and articles on Jewish spirituality, views meditation as a necessary part of modern worship. He states that during prayer, “we need fewer words—and more room for silence. We need fewer prayers and more time for reflection.”¹³⁶ He suggests that “rabbis should be trained in meditation, so that they can introduce their congregants to spiritual silence.”¹³⁷

Daniel Matt understands the positive benefits of meditation and its necessary role in Jewish Mysticism. However, it is also important to note that introducing meditation into Reform Synagogues can be uncomfortable for congregants. Clergy can begin by offering special programs and services on meditation. The integration of meditation into services needs to be a gradual process because meditation is a difficult pursuit.

¹³⁶ Matt. “Why Meditate?”

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

Nevertheless, it is necessary because many Reform Jews search for meditation in non-Jewish sources and don't know of its significance in Jewish tradition.

Reform Jews can receive many benefits from meditation as long as the clergy gradually and gently introduce it to them. The first benefit is that unlike some other meditation traditions, Jewish meditation brings an emotional aspect. "Jewish meditation isn't just mind meditation; it is also emotion meditation as well. It is not only the head that must be directed and focused, but the heart also" ¹³⁸ Jewish meditation can provide an outlet for people to get rid of the emotions of daily life and express their emotions connected with the Divine. Through expressing these emotions in relation to God, one can begin to build a greater relationship with God.

This leads to the second benefit of Jewish meditation, which gives space for congregants to think about and connect with the Divine. Matt states that,

one of the benefits of meditation is that it enables us to surrender the images we have of God and self. . . . The Bible demands that we smash the idols. Each smashing of an image allows for a more expanded image, which itself must be expanded until we have smashed all the images. That's what happens in the laboratory of meditation. Then we confront God anew in every moment. ¹³⁹

The notion of bringing God into the service is really attractive to many congregants.

The liturgy can often alienate congregants and reflect a notion of God that is foreign and that they can't relate to. Meditation gives them a way to create their own ideas and relationships with the Divine.

The last goal in integrating meditation into Reform Judaism is *tikkun* (*repairing*). The notion of *tikkun* is prevalent throughout the history of Kabbalah. In the Zohar,

¹³⁸ Buxbaum. *Jewish Spiritual Practices*. 370.

¹³⁹ Matt. "Why Meditate?"

tikkun is the purpose of Jewish meditation and in Luranc Kabbalah it gave intention to *mitzvot*. *Tikkun Olam* is a very popular notion in Reform Judaism today. However, it is only understood on one level, repairing the world. However *tikkun* exists on many levels. It must begin with the individual; “refining ones character because healing the world begins with healing oneself”¹⁴⁰ The use of *tikkun* as a desired goal in Jewish worship and meditation could educate and heal our congregants.

The first level of *tikkun*, as instituted by Isaac Luria is of repairing the self. Meditation is a way to heal the mind and become aware of emotion, which ultimately leads to changes of behavior. The *Chabad*, a branch of Hassidim, uses meditation as a way to work on raw aspects of our personality. “One’s fearful parts can be transformed into the quality of sensitivity, stubbornness into determination, procrastination into serenity, and judgement into discrimination.”¹⁴¹ *Tikkun* at this first level will bring balance to the individual as one becomes “aware of the variety of different parts of the self though acceptance, integration, and forming coherence between them...Through the healing of the fragments inside the personality, one begins to experience more the *Ruach haKodesh*”¹⁴²

At the second level, *tikkun* helps the individual to repair the world. Kramer believes that this begins with healing relationships with those who are closest with us. The development of sacred love is the ability “to utilize a relationship as a vehicle for evolution, one must make a commitment to one another and see each other as equals in

¹⁴⁰ Kramer. “Jewish Meditation,” 230.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.* 231.

sort of a spiritual partnership.”¹⁴³ In close relationships, one partner holds the qualities that balance the other. The important thing to remember is that love is not enough; the partners must trust each other so they can grow together. “Our own intimate relationships then become a laboratory for refining a character that will hopefully permeate all our relationships when we move out from our homes to the outer world.”¹⁴⁴ There is a lot of work to be done on this first level before we can move to *tikkun olam*. The final two levels involve the Divine realms and can only be available to our congregants after intense spiritual and psychological work on the two basic levels. These higher levels need strong commitment and education.

Through introducing Reform Jews to these ideas in creative ways, we can give them the inspiration and desire to seek out education and develop their own spiritual discipline. The Reform synagogue can be a community where the worship, programming and education use meditation to support the mind, body, and spirit of all our congregants.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* 235.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 236.

Chapter 3: Music in Jewish Mystical Worship

The aim of this paper is to outline ways to create experiential worship. In order for worship to be experiential it needs to include multiple modes that include all the senses; kinesthetic, spatial, verbal, and auditory, etc. When used together movement and meditation draw on many of the senses. Music is the final component of experiential worship. Music's role in Jewish culture is paramount and extraordinary. It has always been a crucial part of worship and cultural reflection. There are many books that give a historical survey of music in Jewish history. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the musical elements in Jewish history that can contribute to creating experiential worship. These elements were introduced and developed by Jewish mystics. Musicologist, Abraham Idelsohn states that

when we glance over the long history of Judaism, we become aware of the continuation of a hidden mystical stream flowing through Jewish life from ancient time on. And music is and always had been an important means wherewith to procure the mystic's inspiration and to express his ideas.¹⁴⁵

The intention of the mystics' in musical expression is the same intention for their use of meditation and movement. They used these techniques to gain insight into the Divine realm and to achieve a level of higher consciousness in hopes of uniting with God.

In every mystical stage, the mystics relied on the secrets of sound and music as an essential element in creating harmony and connecting with the Divine realm. "In the mystics' world, prayer and the singing associated with it were perceived as elevating the soul to celestial realms where it could bask in the supreme glory."¹⁴⁶ Music is embedded

¹⁴⁵ Abraham Z. Idelsohn, "Chassidic Song," *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development* (Dover Publications Inc. New York: 1992) 411.

¹⁴⁶ Amnon Shiloah, "Music in the World of the Mystic". *Jewish Musical Traditions* (Wayne State University Press Detroit: 1992), 131.

within Kabbalah and is used to bring mystics into a meditative state so they can encounter the Divine. The mystics viewed music as both a form of ritual and as a science. When music is used in “ritual performance it is able to lift the soul from its prison.”¹⁴⁷ They believed that he/she can release the powers of music, only when they are knowledgeable in the science of singing.

There is much power in good music. As proof notice that when the cantor has a good appearance, a pleasant voice, clear speech, and good melodies, the congregation rejoices with him, and for this reason the souls, which are sublime, take pleasure. Souls come from God, and thus God rejoices along with them, concerning which they say, “making happy God and men.”¹⁴⁸

When the science and ritual of music were done correctly, they had the potential to lift their souls to the Divine realm.

The science of music in mysticism was made famous by Abraham Abulafia in Prophetic Kabbalah. In Prophetic Kabbalah, music was both an analogy and technique for prophecy and prophetic experience. Music was the tool that prepared the intellect for meditation, which led to prophecy. Abulafia viewed “music as the final stage in the progression towards the goal of prophetic ecstasy.”¹⁴⁹ When mystics were truly ready to achieve prophetic ecstasy, they would participate in “praying and singing psalms in a pleasant and melodious voice”¹⁵⁰

Abulafia’s theory of the mystical combination of Hebrew letters (*hochmat ha tseruf*) explains an advanced state of meditation, in which the letters take the place of

¹⁴⁷ Moshe Idel, “Conceptualizations of Music in Jewish Mysticism,” in *Enchanting Powers: Music in the World’s Religions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 180.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 181.

¹⁴⁹ Judith Kaplan Eisenstein, “The Mystical Strain in Jewish Liturgical Music?” *Sacred Sound; Music in Religious Thought and Practice* Edited by Joyce Irwin (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 40.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

musical notes. “We learn that the combination of letters gives the same pleasure as musical harmony, because these combinations unveil hidden secrets.”¹⁵¹ Abulafia believed that the secrets of music and the Hebrew letters were hidden in the Bible. In particular, he focused on the use of musical instruments in creating the meditative state. According to Abulafia, there are many instances in the Bible, of minstrels playing for prophets in order to induce prophecy. In II Kings 3:15, the prophet Elisha summons a minstrel in order to encounter God’s presence. Elisha says, “But now bring me a minstrel.” And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.” In Samuel 10:5, there is an account of prophets using musical instruments to induce prophecy; “that thou shall meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they will be prophesying.” Abulafia used these accounts in creating his own system of meditation that used music to induce prophetic visions. He understood the power of music with a comparison between musical instruments and the human body. “The body of man is full of holes and cavities, from which you may understand how the *shekinah* dwells in the body which is pierced and (contains) cavities and which produces speech:”¹⁵² Through the playing of instruments and the creation of musical sounds, the body could release the soul to encounter the Divine. After Abulafia, Jewish mysticism continued to use music as a way to interact with and influence the Divine realm. In the 16th century, Kabbalists were “convinced that music possessed the power to lift the human soul to the Eternal or even to attain prophecy.”¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Shiloah, “Music in the World of the Mystic” 136.

¹⁵² Idel, “Conceptualizations of Music in Jewish Mysticism”. 177.

¹⁵³ See next page

They developed three religious approaches to interact and influence the Divine realm. The first was theurgy, which is the human attempt to have an impact on Divine realm. Theurgy was present in Luranc Kabbalah, which believed that every act affects the Divine realm. The Luranc Kabbalists used *mitzvot* as a way to repair the disaster of creation. The Kabbalists also used music as a way to impact the Divine realm. Moshe Idel explains that “musical activity is not only pleasant but also implies the possibility of transmitting power from the source to the object, thus exercising a certain type of influence on the latter.”¹⁵⁴ Rabbi Meir ibn Gabbai, a Spanish Kabbalist viewed man as a musical instrument “able to cause the reverberation of his melody by the divine organ, conceived also as a musical instrument.”¹⁵⁵ His metaphor demonstrates that the human instrument has profound effects on the Divine instrument. Music is a powerful element because it exists in the *sefirotic* realm and in the human world. Music was the means of communication between the two realms.

As a result of the lack of emphasis of music in rabbinic literature, The Kabbalists used biblical examples “to establish music’s authority.”¹⁵⁶ They focused on the High priests, who they believed were trained in the science of music.

Those who served in our glorious Temple were expert in the subtleties’ of the *nequddot* (notations) which went forth from their mouths when they made music. At the moment when the melody emanates from their mouths with awe, reverence, holiness, and pleasant voice, rising and falling, extending and shortening..some of them high pitch and other of low pitch, some are small and

¹⁵³ Eliyahu Schleifer, “Music from the Bible to Hasidism.” *Sacred Sound and Social Change: Liturgical Music in Jewish and Christian Worship*. Edited by Hoffman, Lawrence A. and Janet R. Walton (Notre Dame Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1992), 44.

¹⁵⁴ Idel. “Conceptualizations of Music in Jewish Mysticism.” 160.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 172.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 161.

others large (rhythmic values). ..then the Holy Spirit awakens, sparkles, and craves.¹⁵⁷

The mystics desired to uncover the secrets to the science of music so they could experience union with God.

The second religious mode, in which they used music to interact with and influence the Divine realm, was magic. Magic, for the Kabbalists was an attempt to manipulate nature. The Kabbalists understood that all beings have a longing to the source and music was a cosmic magical system that allowed them to connect and alter the Divine realm. The Mystics believed that the Levites used their singing in order to have certain effects on the *sefirotic* realm.

This has been the worship of the Levites, who were playing the musical instruments sometimes they were raising their voice sometimes they were lowering it. . . When they were raising their voice during their singing, it was in order to prevent the influx from the wicked. . . . and when they were singing in a low voice their intention was to draw down the influx to all the lower and created entities.¹⁵⁸

The mystics used this technique of lowering their voice in order to bring holiness from the Divine realm into the human realm, and the technique of raising their voice in order to prevent the wicked from having dominion over the *sefirotic* realm.

The final religious mode that the Kabbalists used was mystical. They viewed music as a way to shape their inner consciousness. Music was a tool that could bring the Kabbalists inward, so they could eventually transcend their consciousness. In Safed under Lurianic Kabbalah, they created special songs used to induce meditation. The *Ein Sof* song was a category of songs used as a method of achieving enlightenment. One

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 165.

¹⁵⁸ Rabbi Levi Yitzhaq of Berditchev, 18th Cent, *Qedushat Levi* 184.

example was an acrostic poem with the tetragram, יהוה composed by Eleazar Azkari, a disciple of Isaac Luria

The Hassidim were profoundly affected by the role music played in Jewish mysticism. They viewed music as the greatest means to attain unification with the Divine. Velvel Pasternack, a scholar of Hassidic music, writes that the Hassidim “felt that the power of *neginah*, melody was such that it could reach the heavens faster and be more acceptable to God than spoken prayer.”¹⁵⁹ For the Hassidim, music was part of a deeply religious experience that transcends the physical realm. Samuel Kisselhoff, a scholar in Jewish folk music, explains the way that the Hassidim view melody.

True melody can be sung entirely without voice, it is sung within the heart, within the bowels. That is the secret sense of King David’s words “all my bones speak”. In the marrow of his bones must man sing; there must the melody reside, that highest praise of God, may he be praised! That is no longer the melody of a man of flesh and blood, it is not excogitated melody! It is already a part of that melody with which God created the world. . . and of the soul that He has set in it.¹⁶⁰

The Hassidim weaved music into their worship because of its unique existence in the Divine realm.

The Hassidim developed a unique vision of music in worship. The Baal Shem Tov created Hassidism in a time when Jewish morale was very low. He felt that Jewish religious observance had become joyless and decided to reintroduce the idea of *simcha* into Jewish worship. Joy became “the cornerstone of Hassidism”¹⁶¹ and music was their way to encounter exuberant joy, their highest religious duty. The Hassidim wanted to

¹⁵⁹ Velva Pasternak, *Songs of the Chassidim Volume One*. (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1968), 1.

¹⁶⁰ From *Mequbbolim* (Cabbalists) Quoted in Samuel Kisselhoff’s ‘Das Judische Volkslied.’ Judischer (Verlag, Berlin, 1913), 9.

¹⁶¹ Pasternak. *Songs of the Chassidim Volume Two*. 2.

emotionally experience their relationship with God. It was through joy that they were able to communicate with God. “Ecstasy of melody is the key with which Hassidism strives to unlock the gates of heaven. It is so to speak the ladder to the throne of God”¹⁶² The method which the Hassidim used to reach joy and union with the Divine was cultivated through a series of stages. They believed that it was important to learn the proper ways to attain bliss. It is impossible to leap immediately from extreme melancholy to extreme joy. It is impossible for a human being to rise from the lowest to the highest state without proceeding through the whole scale of sentiments of the soul. “Great stress and care is laid upon each progressive stage of development, as significant for the education of the soul and the improvement of the spirit”¹⁶³ The leaders of the Hassidim educated their followers on the different levels of the soul and there were even different melodies for each level.

The Hassidim developed a new type of music, *niggunim* that guided them through the process of experiencing joy and eventually divine bliss. They viewed *niggunim* as the supreme manner in achieving union with God for the singer or dancer. In fact it was recognized as more influential than speech or silence. The *niggun* is usually a song that is wordless and incorporates various syllables and “depending on circumstances, the singing can be slow, heartfelt, drawn out and ornamentally embellished or wild and martially rhythmic.”¹⁶⁴ Jewish musicologist and composer, Judith Epstein describes the various styles of *niggunim*.

Sometimes their melodies were meditative, highly melismatic and deeply emotional. At other times they were vigorously rhythmic, impelling the clapping

¹⁶² *Ibid.* 1.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.* 8.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

of hands, snapping of fingers, stamping, and dancelike movement. Frequently, they combined both in one song. Some of their melodies were derived from the liturgical chant, but many were mainly contra facts on popular folksongs, gypsy tunes, drinking songs, even soldier songs. Again we observe the process of redeeming secular song and making it holy.¹⁶⁵

The Hassidim developed guidelines for the creation and singing of *niggunim*.

The *niggun's* goal is to progress through various stages to reach enlightenment, therefore there are multiple sections to each *niggun*. These sections represent the various meditative steps:

These steps for the elevation of the spirit begin with the lowest, called *histapchuth hannefesh*-the outpouring of the souls, and its effort to rise out of the mire of sin...Thence the devotee rises to *hithpaaluth*, a stage which he is possessed by his thought; and from this state he reaches *devequt*, communion with God. Then he progresses to *hithlahavuth*, a flaming ecstasy and finally he attains the highest step, *hishpashtuth hagashmiyuth*, a stage when the soul casts off its permanent garment of flesh and becomes disembodied spirit.¹⁶⁶

As the singer progresses through the song, he is believed to experience the different stages. Therefore each *niggun* must contain a minimum of two sections and there are *niggunim* that contain as many as thirty six sections. Many *niggunim*, mostly from the Chabad movement contain four sections representing the four realms of the universe. Starting at the bottom with;

- בְּרִיאָה, the realm of Creation
- יִצְרָה, the realm of Formation
- עֲשֵׂה, the realm of Action
- אֶצִּילוּת, the realm of Emanation

In a *niggun*, a particular tune is used in each section to musically represent each of these realms. Each section is represented by a new melodic line and frequently has a different musical mode. The mode can change from minor, to the relative major, or

¹⁶⁵ Eisenstein. "The Mystical Strain in Jewish Liturgical." 42.

¹⁶⁶ Idelsohn. "Chassidic Song." 419.

to one of the Jewish modes which contain the augmented second; Ahavah Rabbah (ra mi), Ukrainian Dorian (me fi), and harmonic minor (le ti). In Eastern Europe, where Hassidism developed, they came into contact with Turkish/Arabic folk songs and dances. Therefore, they adapted improvisational techniques and ornaments in their performances which include; repetition of an important interval, a trill on the penultimate beat of a cadential formula, a well placed turn, and elements of the Arabic modal system known as Maqam.

The most famous example of a *niggun* representing the progression of the four worlds or stages is *The Rav's Niggun*, the Rabbi's tune. "The Rabbis tune gives tonal expression to the four realms of the universe"¹⁶⁷ Analysis of the Rabbi's tune gives insight into the way it can musically express the four worlds. In the first section it begins quietly in E *ahavah rabbah* and only uses the lower pentatonic range (E, F, G #, A, B). According to Idelsohn, "the tune starts in *largo* and voices the first stage, the outpouring of the soul."¹⁶⁸ The *niggun* progresses to the second stage, which represents "spiritual awakening"¹⁶⁹ at the end of measure five. At this point, the melody moves to a higher range and no longer centers around the E. It gives a brief hint to A minor in measure seven. The section ends by returning home to E *ahavah rabbah*. The third section beginning at the end of measure nine, is meant to reflect both *hithpaaluth and devequt*. This section moves firmly from E *ahavah rabbah* into A minor. The melody line is also higher and reaches a high G. The rhythmic nature of this section is composed of eighth, sixteenth, and thirty second notes. It is marked as *andante* and *mezzo forte* and therefore

¹⁶⁷ Idelsohn. "Chassidic Song." 419.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

moves faster and higher, to the realm of ecstasy. The fourth section at bar thirteen “presents the stage of the disembodied soul.”¹⁷⁰ This section returns to the original tempo and is more legato in rhythm. It eventually returns to E *ahavah rabbah*, alternating between the upper and lower parts of the scale. The *niggun* ends by descending back through the E *ahavah rabbah* scale. Musically, the song ends where it began by repeating the motifs from the first section. However, while the song is in the final stage there is still the memory of all the stages before it. The singer of the *niggun* has a new perspective as they reach final section.

Many types and styles of *niggunim* were created to help the Hassidim work through each particular stage. Therefore, different musical characteristics represent each stage. A *devequt* song tends to be free and un-rhythmic, whereas tunes for awakening are built on energetic and syncopated dancing rhythms. The *rikud niggun* is very important to the Hassidim because dance is essential for achieving ecstasy. *Rikud niggunim* tend to be in a major scale, have three sections, and be very long in length. “The *rikkudim* would sometimes last as long as half an hour, until the dancers would be spent or the song changed.”¹⁷¹ *Dveikes* are songs which are sung during the Rabbis *tish*. These melodies are long, with several parts, and varying moods. A third category is the *devequt* melody which is slow, introspective, soul stirring song, usually lengthy, and sung with deep feeling representing the stage of communion with God. Other styles of *niggunim* are the Hassidic march and $\frac{3}{4}$ waltz which are set to liturgy. These two styles represent the musical hybridization of *niggunim*. The Hassidim took “the foreign elements of surrounding cultures and created a unique body of song with its own definite

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ Pasternak. *Songs of the Chassidim* .6.

characteristics.”¹⁷² The Hassidim saw the sacredness in all music and believed that every song could be redeemed. In order to make these borrowed tunes holy, “they developed a typical style, a Hassidic melodic line. This style branched itself out into subdivisions, in compliance with the spirit of the various courts of Hassidim.”¹⁷³

The Lubavitcher Hassidim are a Hassidic movement located in Crown Heights Brooklyn, who are very interested in *tikkun*, the restoration of music. They developed a science and process for transforming a piece of music. According to the musicologist Ellen Koskoff, there were three steps in this process. The first step was that the “appropriate person---especially a *Tzadik* or Rebbe must be able to perceive a holy spark hidden in the music.”¹⁷⁴ Second, if the song has potential then “the song must be transformed over to this person.” The *Tzadik* or Rebbe must either ask or trick the composer or singer to teach it to them. The third step involves the releasing of the holy spark that was originally perceived in the music. “The holy spark of the music must be released by opening up the song to let the spark fly upward. . . and remove the coarse outer shell that imprisons it---usually the text”¹⁷⁵ The Lubavitcher movement, like other Hassidim, saw the words as limitations and only by transforming them, could the spark be released. “Finally, the holy spark must be returned to its proper place. The spark now available through a new musical performance by a Lubavitcher, within the new context of Hassidic religious and aesthetic values can be reclaimed and a mitzvah can be

¹⁷² *Ibid.* 4.

¹⁷³ Idelsohn. “Chassidic Song.” 417.

¹⁷⁴ Ellen Koskoff, *Music in the Lubavitcher Life* (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 77.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

accomplished.”¹⁷⁶ This process was seen as highly important and spiritual. They are able to contribute to the *tikkun* of the universe by restoring the spiritual essence of music to nonreligious music.

According to Koskoff “one must look more deeply into the music itself to understand the multi-leveled musical, spiritual, and social meanings that the sounds of the *niggunim* carry.”¹⁷⁷ In her experiences with the Lubavitcher community, she observed that they view everything whether it be music, people, and social constructs as a hierarchy. They judge everything based on its holiness and closeness to God. They trust that the *niggun* will cause them to reach a deeper level of spirituality. For example, “wordless *niggunim* served as substitute prayers; a long, wordless melody would be followed by a recitation of the corresponding prayer”¹⁷⁸ Cantor Eliyahu Schliefer explains their reasoning for using *niggunim* as preludes to the prayers. “Melodies with texts are like souls with bodies, whereas melodies without texts are like pure souls”¹⁷⁹ By preceding the prayer with the *niggun* they were able to bring this purity into the service and allow for ecstasy.

Elements of Hassidic music and the *niggun* spread to other Jewish spheres in the last three hundred years. First, Hassidic song greatly influenced the chazzanut of Eastern Europe. Idelsohn notes that “almost all the prominent chazzanim were reared in the Hassidic atmosphere and were imbued with its mystical spirit and its emotionalism. These characteristics are reflected in their musical creations.”¹⁸⁰ The chazzanim borrowed stylistic techniques such as melismatic turns, and trills from the Hassidim.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 78.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 85.

¹⁷⁸ Schleifer. “Music from the Bible to Hasidism.” 47.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Idelsohn. “Chassidic Song.” 432.

Additionally, the composers of nusach used the modal changes inherent in Hassidic music. The method of teaching and learning *niggunim* was also adapted by the great chazzanim of Europe. The Hassidim learned the melodies through constant repetition and originally didn't write down the melodies. Similarly, the chazzanim trained their *meshoranim* with the task of spreading the melodies.

In the 20th and 21st centuries new movements developed within Judaism. Many of these movements adapted some form of Hassidic music into their worship. Unfortunately, most Hassidic tunes have been simplified and not taught or used with the proper intention. For instance Neo- Hassidim adapted “so-called Hassidic songs, imitations of the older songs. These are largely settings of biblical verses, of the metrical-hand-clapping variety, but lacking in the hallmarks noted; no melismas and no contemplative melodies. These songs serve as highly over-simplified congregational hymns.”¹⁸¹ In the 1960s and 70s Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach adapted elements of the Hassidic style into his compositions. However, his melodies were easy to learn and reflected elements of the folk genre. Even the Reform movement, which arose out of an anti- Hassidic sentiment, now features “Hassidic style” services; unfortunately they are much-simplified versions of the real thing.

If modern worship includes Hassidic music, it must do so authentically, through educating congregants about the use of *niggunim* and analyzing their structure. These songs can open a world of possibilities in modern worship. In an age where the text can get in the way of prayer, wordless melodies can be used in conjunction with meditation and dance to create joy, *kavanah*, and give individuals the ability to experience prayer.

¹⁸¹ Eisenstein. “The Mystical Strain in Jewish Liturgical Music.” 43.

There is much to learn from the rich history of music and mysticism. Music is the realm and the expertise of the cantor, therefore it is up to the cantor to teach congregants this history and give them tools to use music as a way to experience prayer with physical, emotional, and eventually spiritual senses. Cantor and lecturer on Jewish music, Sam Weiss, comments that in the past few decades the role of the cantor has changed “from liturgical soloist to liturgical song leader.”¹⁸² With this change, congregants are not educated in the realm of liturgical Jewish music (*nusach*, chant, recitative, and cantillation). Amnon Shiloah, Jewish musicologist states that “the performative values of the chazzan’s office has not diminished; it is only weighted more towards selecting, leading, modulating, and perhaps composing the congregational singing.” Further, the chazzan must offer courses and teach from the *bimah* on liturgical music and incorporate it into the prayer experience. The chazzan can teach them that music is more than a beautiful melody or a fun song. It has the power to cause joy, be meditative, and a means of connecting with God.

The intention of the mystics’ worship was to reach enlightenment and they worked through many stages to reach this goal. This element is missing from Reform worship, and instead Jews seek out spirituality from other religions and institutions like Buddhism and Yoga. Amnon Shiloah asserts that they can find all the elements of spirituality in Kabbalistic Prayer.

The Kabbalists ecstasy can be described as a profound meditation through which the mysteries of the Divine name reveal themselves to the illuminated. This state can be reached by prayer with intention (*kavanah*), the singing of hymns, and the

¹⁸² Sam Weiss, “Carelback, Neo-Hasidic Music and Liturgical Practice. *Journal of Synagogue Music, Niggunim in Worship*. 34 (Fall 2009): 69.

science of letter combinations. In every respect he sounds of speech, recourse to the pre-eminent language, Hebrew.¹⁸³

Music is the means in which meditation and *kavanah* can be reached in prayer. *Kavanah*, which is the true essence of prayer is expressed through melody and sound. According to Yehudah the Pious, “Whoever is unable to arrange his words well, should express his supplication, praise or penitence by means of melodies.”¹⁸⁴ Reform Worship is concentrated on *keva* and words. There are many readings and songs filled with words instead of the space to be still and introspective. When used in mystical ways, music is the ingredient that can give each individual the space to develop their own intention.

In order to create experiential worship, music must be used in conjunction with other techniques. Music can be used in a variety of ways to give entry points for different types of worshipers and to include a variety of senses in the service. The mystics discuss the power of sound and believed that through sound, they could connect with the entire universe. Sound is experienced aurally and verbally. Rabbi Nathan is able to elucidate the role of sound in the mystical work, *Tikkun* by Rabbi Nachman. Sound can be experienced through the voice and “the sounds we make with our voice are the foundation of our relationship with God.”¹⁸⁵ Jews use their voice to call out, converse, make requests, sing, praise, appeal, cry, and confess to God. The Jew’s relationship with God is through the voice. The second component associated with sound is hearing because the “voice is something heard. It is through our faculty of hearing that we

¹⁸³ Shiloah, “Music in the World of the Mystic.” 135.

¹⁸⁴ Hanoch Avenary, “The Hasidic Niggun: Ethos and Melos of a Folk Literature.” *Journal of Synagogue Music, Niggunim in Worship*. 34 (Fall 2009): 48.

¹⁸⁵ “Song,” from Rabbi Nachman’s *Tikkun*, Compiled and Translated by Avraham Greenbaum (Jerusalem/New York: The Breslov Research Institute, 1984), 54.

become conscious of voices and songs.”¹⁸⁶ The sense of hearing in Judaism is extremely important. “Our entire life-giving faith and holiness are founded on what we have heard from (God)¹⁸⁷ our parents and teachers.”¹⁸⁸ Even the *Shema* elevates the importance of hearing in Judaism above other senses because “faith in God depends on (our ability) to hear.”¹⁸⁹ The ability to hear and use one’s voice is an important tool for prayer and communicating with the Divine. These senses can be elevated through teaching, experimentation, and musical exercises.

Vibration is another component of sound which is very powerful when used in prayer. Mark Malachai, who has studied healing in different religions, believes that the Kabbalists used sound to experience holistic healing. “From the rotation to the earth to the beating of the human heart, everything is vibration. And since everything that vibrates produces sound, it can be said that all life is sound; an endless symphony of infinite proportion.”¹⁹⁰ The vibrations of sound and music can be used during meditation and worship to connect us to the entire universe. Vibration is a part of everything and everyone. In fact, all matter has a state where it vibrates a frequency known as resonate frequency, “each resonate frequency is an individual cluster of tones that sings the sound of individual form.”¹⁹¹ For example, each organ and cell in the human body has a resonant frequency that can be tuned to create balance in ourselves and in the universe.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Deuteronomy 4:12. When the Torah was given to the Israelites, “you heard the voice of the words but you saw no form :only a voice.”

¹⁸⁸ “Song,” from Rabbi Nachman’s *Tikkun*. 55.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Malachai. “From the Depths of Silence.” 168.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

The Kabbalists believed that the human body was related to the Divine realm. Each part of the human body is a metaphor for the *sefirot*. Through healing the human body, they believed that they could heal the *sefirotic* realm. Healing took place in the three realms simultaneously beginning with physical, emotional, and finally spiritual. Further, they saw sound as one tool for healing the two realms. “Each *sefirah* is actually an aspect of consciousness, just as it is a particular vibration. Each has its resonate frequency, which when aligned properly with all other *sefirot*, creates a beautiful harmony—a soul song”¹⁹²

While this Kabbalistic theory of *sefirot* appears esoteric, there is value in this Jewish metaphor for healing on both personal and universal levels. This metaphor can be used in worship through integration of different types of music such as chanting, toning, and *niggunim*.

There are many ways in which music can also be used as transition in experiential worship. First, music is the means in which we can create different levels of emotion within a service. Through the use of dynamics, tempo, and certain types of music, congregants can be physically, emotionally, and spiritually transported. Additionally, the *shalizch tzibur* can use tempo to pace worship. The tempo can be used in “slowing down or speeding up in order to generate moods of introspection, excitement or something in between.”¹⁹³ *Niggunim* can also be used in key transitions of the service. For instance, a *niggun* can be used to move from a meditative or ecstatic state to the keva of the service. Lastly, music can be the transition between the physical and spiritual realms. For instance, “the early Hassidim wanted to move beyond a fixed formula into the higher

¹⁹² *Ibid.* 170.

¹⁹³ Weiss. “Carelbach, Neo-Hasidic Music and Liturgical Practice.” 64.

spheres of God's presence. They fervently sung *niggunim* as musical bridges between heaven and earth"¹⁹⁴ Music is the thread that weaves together the drama and emotion of the worship service.

In most Reform worship settings congregational singing is very popular. In addition to congregational singing, listening moments should be a part of worship because they can elevate the congregation. Judith Epstein believes that "mystical trends in music of the synagogue may be perceived rather, in a few of the sophisticated compositions for the synagogue."¹⁹⁵ In majestic works like *Bloch's Sacred Service*, he used mystical principles to interpret each word and to create an element of mystery in his composition. These masterpieces are not commonly used in Reform Congregations because they are regarded as "high art" which isn't accessible to the congregation. Epstein argues that "mysticism of our day is finding its artistic apotheosis in the work of the sensitive and talented individual, rather than in spontaneous folk out-pouring."¹⁹⁶ When performed with integrity, using works of serious composers can be an entry point into experiential worship. They provide moments of deep meditation where the music expresses the mystical experience. Chazanut has a similar power in expressing the emotions and mystery of the text.

The appropriate balance between music and silence is also important in experiential worship. In Reform worship, we have the tendency to fill up every moment with words or music. By weaving silence into the service, we give individuals a gift to express their own prayers.

¹⁹⁴ Joseph Levine, "The Issue of Niggunim in Worship: Too much of a Good Thing." *Journal of Synagogue Music, Niggunim in Worship*. 34 (Fall 2009): 5.

¹⁹⁵ Eisenstein. "The Mystical Strain in Jewish Liturgical." 44.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 44.

One of the most important components of experiential worship is its ability to inspire creativity. It encourages the *shlichei tzibur* and the congregation to engage in a multi-sensory experience where spontaneity and imagination are paramount. In many Reform synagogues, the text of the *siddur* can easily become the entire service. Experiential worship helps us to move beyond the text and incorporates our modern *midrash* and creativity. Therefore, our own interpretations and prayers are incorporated into the service. “The Kabbalists, among whom were talented poets, believed in fostering poetic creativity, as it could raise the individual and help him overcome the drabness and mundane tribulations of life in this world.”¹⁹⁷ For instance, Isaac Luria wrote many mystical songs in Aramaic and Israel Najara, a paytan in Safed published *Zmirot Yisrael* in 1587. Unfortunately, as is noted in *Music in Jewish History and Culture*: “Israel Najara, was the last poet, hazan, and composer in the direct succession of paytanim who introduced beauty, poetry, and lively rhythm into a service that had become stilted and was lacking in creative force”¹⁹⁸ Like the Safed Kabbalists, we can add creativity and meaning to the service by composing music and poetry. Judaism encourages *midrash* and commentaries on Torah, the same should be true for prayer. Every generation has the potential to add their creativity and imagination to the worship service.

The mystics viewed music as one of the most powerful elements in the universe. Music was magical and existed in the Divine realm and on earth, as a gift that unites the universe. The Hassidim used music to bring joy and ecstasy to worship. Their views of music are important in understanding our own worship experiences. These elements can

¹⁹⁷ Shiloah, “Music in the World of the Mystic.” 46.

¹⁹⁸ Rubin and Baron. *Music in Jewish History and Culture*. 91.

be taught and introduced into Reform Worship. They can move worship into a deeper realm and can be used in conjunction with meditation and movement, in creating experiential worship.

Conclusion: *Hoshanah Rabbah*
Using music, meditation, and dance in Experiential Worship

It is evident from the preceding three chapters that the techniques of dance, meditation, and music have a place among Jewish worship across history. The blending of these techniques in Reform worship can provide a way for different types of Jews to feel connected and give them the ability to be active participants in prayer. The goal of a worship service that integrates these techniques is to empower congregants to pray in the synagogue in a way that transforms their daily lives. Ultimately, Reform Jewish prayer can be a tool that heals the individual and their relationships with the humanity and God.

In order to exemplify how to integrate these techniques into a Reform worship setting in an experiential manner, I have created a Reform *Hoshanah Rabbah* service. *Hoshanah Rabbah* is a holiday that is grounded in Jewish tradition but has not been observed in the Reform synagogue. This gives me complete liberty to adapt it in ways that can be meaningful for Reform Jews. Additionally, *Hoshanah Rabbah* is traditionally an experiential event in which congregants take active part in the ritual through the *hakafot* and beating the *lulav*.

Hoshanah Rabbah occurs on the last day of *Sukkot*, which is an agricultural and harvest festival. During the time of the First Temple there was a complex ritual for *Sukkot* that included various components¹⁹⁹ including; beating the altar with twigs, lighting lamps, torch dances, songs, and water libation. These acts don't all exist today but their themes are apparent in the liturgy of *Sukkot*. According to Raphael Patai "The purpose of the ceremonies could be none other than one, namely, to induce the fall of

¹⁹⁹ For the complete layout of the ritual see page 32 of Raphael Patai, *Man and Temple: In Ancient Myth and Ritual*. (New York: Ktav, 1967)

rain. Each and every one of these eleven elements had indeed numerous parallels in the rain-making ceremonies of many other peoples”²⁰⁰ The use of water in the ceremony²⁰¹ was used in a magical way of impacting the heavens which would cause the rain to fall, the torch dances were used to bring about lightening, and singing and instrumentation were used to mimic the sounds of the rain. These various techniques were a way for the Israelites to use theurgy, by acting out a process on earth; they believed that it would happen in the heavens. This process is a sensory experience and elements of it can be used in a modern *Hoshanah Rabbah* service. There are modern ecological concerns that can be expressed through using the senses in a modern worship service. Additionally, *Hoshannah Rabbah* acts as a liturgical bridge between *Yom Kippur*, receiving forgiveness and *Shminie Atzeret*, asking God for rain. All of the repentance of the High Holy Days culminates in the congregation being worthy to get the life-giving rain.

Hoshanah Rabbah has its roots in the Bible. *Hoshanah Rabbah* is observed on the twenty first day of *Tishrei*, the seventh day of *Sukkot* (the last of the intermediate days (*Hol ha moed*)). According to Philip Goodman’s *Sukkot and Simchat Torah Anthology*, “on *Hoshanah Rabbah*, people would first march joyfully to *Motza* (thirty minutes distance from Jerusalem), where they would cut many willow branches, and then return to the Temple, where they decorated the altar with them. After making seven circuits around the altar they would beat a small bunch of willow springs against the ground”²⁰²

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 34.

²⁰¹ “The highly significant act of the water libation had to be performed by the priest in such a way that all the surrounding people were able to see that he did in fact pour the water into the bowl on the altar.” *Ibid.* 31.

²⁰² Philip Goodman, *The Sukkot and Simhat Torah Anthology*. (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), 131.

The Mishnah and Talmud explain the choreography of the *Hoshanah Rabbah* service as it had been observed in the Temple. In the Mishnah, *Hoshanah Rabbah* is referred to as *Yom ha-shevi' shel ararav*, the seventh day of the willow.²⁰³ On each day of *Sukkot*, the priests would make one circuit (*hakafah*) around the altar. On *Hoshana Rabbah*, instead of circling once, they would circle the altar seven times. “On *Hoshanah Rabbah*, the seventh day of the festival, the worshippers hold aloft the palm and citron and make seven processional circuits in the synagogue emulating the ancient priests who circles the Temple altar seven times on this day”²⁰⁴ We learn in *Sukkah* 4:5 that as they made the processions around the altar they would recite Psalm 118:25; *Ana Adonai Hoshiah Na, Ana Adonai Hatzlicha Na*. Please Adonai, save now! Please, Adonai, make us now to succeed (prosper). This phrase is accompanied by other liturgy which becomes known as *Hoshanot*.²⁰⁵ *Hoshana Rabbah* gets its name from the many *Hoshanot* recited. According to the Talmud, the *Hoshana Rabbah* service ends with the beating of Palm Branches. “R Jonathan b Beroka said, they use to bring palm twigs and beat them on the ground at the sides of the altar, and that day was called (the day of) the beating of the palm twigs.”²⁰⁶

The Talmud describes *Hoshanah Rabbah* as a water drawing festival. Another *aggadah* relates that at the Water Drawing celebration on the seventh night of *Sukkot*, “the notables of Israel would dance with flaming torches in hand singing psalms of

²⁰³ Mishnah Sukah 4:3.

²⁰⁴ Goodman. *The Sukkot and Simhat Torah Anthology*. 330.

²⁰⁵ “The word *hoshanah* has come to mean in English a cry of adoration or praise or jubilation. The original Hebrew has a different meaning, “O Lord, please save!” Morrison David Bial. *Liberal Judaism at Home*. New York, New York: Union for Reform Judaism, 1971. 151.

²⁰⁶ Mishnah Sukkah 4:6

praise. So joyous was this annual religious ceremony that Rabbi Simon ben Gamaiel was said to juggle eight torches while singing and dancing, with no two of them ever touching.”²⁰⁷ The theme of water in *Hoshanah Rabbah* becomes a very important motif in the liturgy of the celebration. The Encyclopedia of Judaica notes that “it is probable that the view of *Hoshanah Rabbah* as a day of Judgment was probably originally connected with the ancient belief that during the festival the world is judged for the water it received, ie., whether the coming year would be blessed with rain or be one of drought...”²⁰⁸

This idea of judgment becomes paramount to *Hoshanah Rabbah* in the middle ages. Philip Goodman explains that “the Zohar popularized the conception of *Hoshanah Rabbah* as a day of judgment when the decrees decided by God on *Yom Kippur* for every individual commence to take effect.”²⁰⁹ With this message *Sukkot* becomes part of the Days of Awe. In the Middle Ages, it was a popular belief that God’s judgment was not finalized until *Hoshana Rabbah*. The observance of *Sukkot* becomes vital to conclusion of *t’shuvah* and there is a bitter sweet quality to the holiday because it is a time of prayer and repentance as well as celebration of the harvest. Zion Zohar notes that “it says in the Zohar that on this day all the decrees that were sealed on *Yom Kippur* are dispatched. An unfavorable sentence can still be torn up through a sincere repentance. If the children of Israel continue to repent and take action in the New Year, God will forgive.”²¹⁰ The

²⁰⁷ BT Sukkah 51a

²⁰⁸ Eliezer Eliner, “Hoshanah Rabbah” *Encyclopedia Judaica second edition*. Volume 9 (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 2007), 560.

²⁰⁹ Goodman. *The Sukkot and Simhat Torah Anthology*. 133.

²¹⁰ Zion Zohar, *Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry: From the Golden Age of Spain to Modern Times* (New York, New York: NYU Press, 2005) 204.

Zohar masterfully connects the themes of harvest, judgment and water in affirming that *Hoshanah Rabbah* is the day when God's judgment is final.

On the seventh day of Tabernacles the judgment of the world is finally sealed and the edicts are sent forth from the King, and God's might is aroused, and the willows of the brook depend on it, and we require to awaken the might which sends the rain and to go round the alter seven times and links it with the water of Isaac, because the well of Isaac is filled with water, and then all the world is blessed with water. We therefore pray that the rain giving power is manifested, and afterwards destroy willow twigs, since Judgment is closed on this day.²¹¹

The mystical view of *Hoshanah Rabbah* spread across Europe in the Middle Ages. Jewish liturgist Ismar Elbogen, writes that "the day was declared the day of judgment in Italy, France, and Germany it was singled out by the early Middle Ages (going back to the twelfth century)"²¹² The Italian Jews of Casale Monferrato were among the first to innovate *Hoshanah Rabbah* worship. They were influenced by the Kabbalistic tradition of night vigils that were spreading across Europe. "In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the vigil of *Hoshanah Rabbah* offered one of the most widespread occasions for the performance of art music works."²¹³ The community of Casale Monferrato used the night vigil as an opportunity to have a musical ceremony reflecting the art music of Italy

Sephardic Jews created their own customs on *Hoshanah Rabbah*. Syrian Jews have a night vigil, where "they stay up all night studying the entire book of Deuteronomy, *Tehillim* and the Zohar."²¹⁴ The study concludes with a visit to the *Mikveh* at four in the morning, followed by *Hoshanah Rabbah shacharit* Services. Moroccan

²¹¹ Zohar Tsav 31b-32a.

²¹² Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1993), 11.

²¹³ Alter, Israel, "Introduction" *Hoshana Rabbah in Casale Monferrato 1732*. (Jerusalem, Israel: The Jewish Music Research Centre The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1990), IX.

²¹⁴ Herbert C. Dobrinsky, *A Treasury of Sephardic Laws and Customs*. (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1986), 351.

Jews also have a night vigil where they read Psalms and eat sweet cakes and tea throughout the night. They conclude Hoshanah Rabbah with ten blasts from the Shofar. The Spanish Portuguese Jews dressed their synagogue in white. “As on the Day of Atonement, the ark, scrolls, pulpit, and reading desk are garbed in white. The Torah scrolls are held before the congregation while seven *hakafot* are made in which the palm branch are carried around the synagogue by young and old.”²¹⁵ These customs enable Sephardic Jews to highlight the many themes of *Hoshanah Rabbah* such as its connection to the High Holy Days, judgment, harvest, and sweetness for a New Year.

Throughout the centuries, Jews have added themes, customs, and innovations to *Hoshanah Rabbah*. My goal is to create a Reform *Hoshanah Rabbah* that will be meaningful to contemporary Jews. The goal of the project is to empower the congregants to be part of the service and to take action in their own lives. *Hoshanah Rabbah* gives Jews the chance to show God that they are ready to change by giving them the time to implement the promises to change that they made on *Yom Kippur*. The Reform *Hoshanah Rabbah* ritual will be an opportunity for congregants to move past asking for forgiveness to putting their promises into action.

This ritual will create a modern liturgical interpretation of the seven *Hoshanot*. Each of the *Hoshanot* will have a message that will be enhanced through music, meditation, and dance. Additionally, the service will include poetry and readings that will be included into the ritual to explain the significance of this day. These elements will blend together in order to create an experiential service.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.* 366.

Music will be the primary mode used throughout the experience that will tie together the different *Hoshanot*. The musical *nusach* for *Hoshanah Rabbah* is very unique. The modes switch between weekday, *Yom tov*, Shabbat, and even the High Holidays. I plan on using the different *nusachot* to create a safe space for congregants to explore the emotions of this day. In addition to the different musical modes, the service will include varied musical genres and styles including; *niggunim*, chazzanut, art song, chant, and folk song. Meditation will be used in the service as a way to draw in the congregants and help them to make the praying a personal experience.

Dance and movement will be another way to reach congregants. *Hoshanah Rabbah* provides a non-threatening introduction to movement in services for Reform Jews, because movement is part of the ritual of *Hoshanot*. There will be opportunities for congregants to both participate and to watch dance. Through watching dance, they can get insight into particular themes and meaning of the liturgy. By participating in dance, they are actively involved in the service.

This *Hoshanah Rabbah* ritual is a model for experiential worship, integrating all the senses. However, this model can be used for all types of prayer services and as a way of teaching prayer to congregants.²¹⁶ Ultimately this model of prayer will empower congregants to take action in their lives to heal their relationships with themselves, their community and the sacred.

²¹⁶ Please refer to the appendix for a concrete working out of this idea in a curriculum for teaching prayer using Jewish Experiential Education.

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Known as "The Rav's Nigun," attributed to Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Ladi, also known as "The Rav" or Master (1747-1812), founder of the school of Chabad Chassidism. [see No. 2] He described the development of a NIGUN mystically in these words: "It must follow the elevation of the spirit in each of its steps, beginning with the OUTPOURING OF THE SOUL, proceeding to the SPIRITUAL AWAKENING, to the POSSESSION BY THOUGHT, to COMMUNION with God, to FLAMING ECSTASY, to the complete CASTING OFF OF THE FLESH—the DISEMBODIED SPIRIT."

Tune from: SEFER HANIGUNIM; Op. Cit.

מִיחָסִים אֶת הַנִּיגוֹן לְרַ' שְׁנֵאוֹר זַלְמָן מְלִיאָדִי, יוֹצֵרָה שֶׁל הַתְנוּעָה הַחֲסִידִית הַחֲב"דִּית (רֹאה לְעִיל מ.ס. כ'). הַנִּיגוֹן מְכוּנָה: "נִיגוֹנוֹ שֶׁל הָרֵב", אוּ "נִיגוֹן כַּעַל אַרְבַּע הַכּוֹת" הַמְכוּוֹנֹת כְּנֶגֶד ד' עוֹלָמוֹת: "אַצִּילָה", "בְּרִיאָה", "יִצִּירָה" וְ"עֲשִׂיָּה". מ, סֵפֶר הַנִּיגוֹנִים.

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