

יזצר אור

Guide to the *Yotzer Or* Torah Ark

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יְוֹצֵר אֹר

Yotzer Or

Torah Ark - The Guide's Guide

DIGEST

Why do we pray the same prayers all the time? Our liturgy is a many-layered and evolving masterpiece. For this Capstone Project I singled out *Yotzer Or*, the creation prayer from the morning service. After exploring its historical and theological roots, stems and leaves - so to speak - I expressed my findings in a piece of artwork. The expression turned out to be a tabletop Torah ark. The paintings on both sides of each of the four doors as well as the Torah mantle are based on this research. Each panel includes a portion of the text of a traditional Ashkenazic version of *Yotzer Or* - including the *Kedushah d'Yotzer*, the angels' praise. The enclosed CD-ROM includes multiple photographs of the Ark.

What you have in front of you is the written component of my project - a teacher's guide conceived for adult learners. It is a running commentary on the history and thought behind the text panels of the ark, divided up into lesson plans. There are three options for teaching about *Yotzer Or* using the ark: six sessions, three sessions, or one two-hour session. Each lesson includes discussion of its particular prayer text as well as a more active way for the participants to synthesize the material through artwork or drama or conversation. There is also a section of Expanded Notes that includes everything printed one needs to lead these sessions.

Behind this project is a conviction that serious study of the texts our ancestors produced, combined with honoring our own life experience, can be channeled into creating the new understandings we need to repair the world in our generation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All of our projects are founded in the accomplishments of generations. This one may be more blatant than most about how those are used. Part of my idea is to pay homage to the people of all persuasions from many times and places whose work I have been privileged to get a glimpse of. In addition to the work of various Jewish artists and scribes which I've copied, I've benefited from the work of a multitude of scientists and photographers whose names are unmentioned for the most part. Then there are all the people who labored to produce the books and raw materials I used. Local and global societal inequities allow me to live in relative ease and devote significant portions of my time to study and artistic reflection. The list goes on.

There are those with whom I have been fortunate to study and interact on a daily basis. Rabbi Sam Joseph and Rabbi Rick Sarason have been my teachers and advisers here at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati and on this project in particular. The entire faculty has to approve the senior projects, so I thank them all for doing so. The staff of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives and the staff of the Klau Library is ever helpful - especially Noni Rudavsky, Israella Ginsburg, Laurel Wolfson and Dan Rettberg, the curator of the rare book and manuscript collection. I am indebted to all the administration and staff of HUC for their support of the students. The Board of Overseers of the Cincinnati campus also has my thanks for being enthusiastic about my first public showing of the not-yet-completed doors.

The one who suggested this project take the form of a Torah ark and then labored to build it, my husband and best friend, Steven Snyder, deserves all the thanks I can give him and more. Our two sons Sam and David continually send links to fascinating and funny articles and comics and help keep me connected.

In the end - in the beginning - perpetually - is the Source of Being.

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INTRODUCTION

... light-fashioner, darkness-creator, peacemaker, creator of everything ...

With the dawn, nature's familiar shapes and colors emerge from the darkness to delight us afresh with their variety and beauty. ... This world contains all we need for happiness, and power beyond measure is at our service. Would that we might use it wisely.¹

May we move in You, dance in You, learn to live in You
in our times of darkness, in our times of light.²

Purpose of the Project

Frequently I have heard children and adults alike wonder why we say the same prayers all the time. The general feeling of many Reform Jews is that the service is boring. I, on the other hand, have trouble remembering attending any service in which I was not engaged. Engagement does not necessarily mean unmitigated pleasure or satisfaction. Much of the language of the siddur, or prayer book, has been problematic for me starting with the word בָּרֵךְ *barukh*, blessed, the first word of many of our prayers. In Hebrew that word already carries the masculine gender. The gendered nature of Hebrew and its use in addressing God is only one complication. In spite of the difficulties, I have been drawn to the fact that Jews the world over have used a specific format and specific words for our prayers over the centuries. The prayers themselves are very powerful in spite of the time that has passed since their conception. I approach them as poetry, in the finest sense of the word. My thesis has been that modern Jews can find value in using much of ancient liturgy in prayer, that we need only insert ourselves into the story of the prayer, much as we insert ourselves

1. Adapted from an interpretive version of *Yotzeir Or* in the Reconstructionist Siddur of 1945.

2. From *Or Chadash*, a Renewal prayer book from 1991.

into the story of Torah.

I have spent the past decade struggling with Jewish liturgy in a continuing effort to understand its language, its themes, its history, and how I can use it wholeheartedly as the expression of my self. This seems a good point to insert what I see as the main reason God is part of my world-concept and why I pray. That is my need to express praise and gratitude. My position in life has been a particularly fortunate one. I realize that any sort of intellectual honesty demands that my prayer life include grief as well - my own personal mourning as well as acknowledgment of the suffering in the world. The prayer service as a whole contains ample opportunity to explore this range.

Happily, we are given the option at HUC to produce a capstone project in lieu of writing a thesis. A capstone project is meant to be a crowning achievement in a course of study, frequently in the arts and sciences where a piece of writing would be less appropriate than a piece of art or a set of experiments. At HUC the research is identical for either approach. The difference is in the way the research is expressed. Instead of producing an extensive piece of writing, the one who chooses a capstone project can choose what form that expression is to take. As my pre-rabbinic training was in art, I jumped at the chance to express my research visually.

This project - exploring יוצר אור - *Yotzer Or* - morning praise of the One who forms light - is an attempt to convey some of my fascination with the liturgy and to offer for consideration ways to approach prayer that will have meaning for modern American Jews. *Yotzer Or* is one of my favorite prayers. Its themes of creation and light offer many pathways for praise and contemplation - from appreciation of the natural world and its scientific exploration to theological considerations. This one prayer is composed of layers of Jewish literature and thought. Couched in these words are references to some of the most profound and sometimes painful questions we have about the nature of the world.

Why a Torah Ark?



Proverbs 6:23 on one of the stained glass windows in the Scheuer Chapel, HUC Cincinnati.

In the beginning of this process I was trying to describe to my husband my rather vague idea of expressing the layers of history and meaning of *Yotzer Or* in doors that opened to form a wider display. He proposed that they should open up to the Torah, that we should make a Torah Ark. He would build it and I would paint the images on the doors. This was a stroke of insight. In *Tanakh*,³ in the Hebrew Bible, Torah is compared to light.

כִּי נֵר מִצְוָה וְתוֹרָה אֹר

Ki neir mitzvah v'torah or . . .

For the commandment is a lamp, the teaching is a light . . . Proverbs 6:23

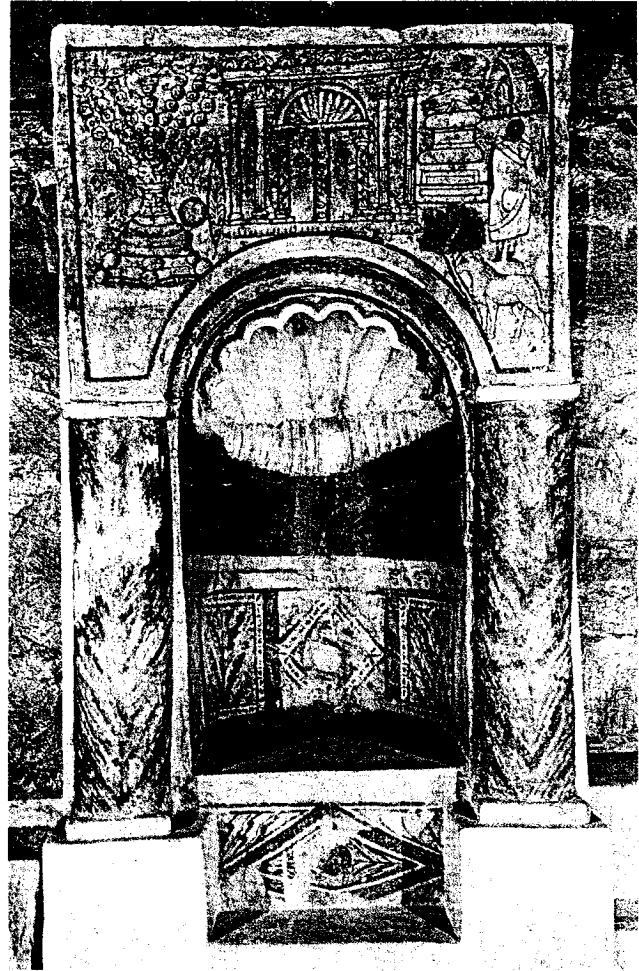
Jews have considered Torah over the centuries to be variously: the word of God as recorded by Moses, all the necessary instructions from God as to the proper way for us to live (when properly interpreted) and a record of our people's struggles with the concept of the divine. As a Reform Jew, I work from the assumption that Torah was written by people for human ends. For me this does not make it less valuable, but moreso. Here is what Kaufman Kohler - an early twentieth-century Reform rabbi - wrote on the subject:

*The Bible is holy not because it was inspired, but because and insofar as it does still, inspire. It is not true because God has spoken the word, but because in the truth, the comfort, the hope, the final victory of justice which it holds out, you hear God speak to you in soul stirring strains.*⁴

3. *Tanakh* is an acronym for *Torah*, the Five Books of Moses; *Nevi'im*, the prophetic books; and *Ketuvim* the Writings, which include *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, the five scrolls we read on holidays, to name a few.

4. Quoted in Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*

The history of the Torah ark itself is a fascinating subject in itself, which I will summarize here. According to the Book of Samuel ⁵ it was the act of bringing the holy ark into Jerusalem which David thought was necessary to make the city holy.⁶ That ark was something semi-portable carried on a wagon. According to the story it contained, not a Torah scroll, but the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. After the destruction of the Second Temple the Torah shrine became a permanent fixture in synagogues. At first it was a niche in the wall.⁷ Later it became a structure in its own right, a chest that was often kept on a raised platform, the *bimah*. The Sefardic community⁸ has developed a Torah Tiq - an individual case for each scroll. The scroll remains in the open case when the reader reads from it.



The Babylonian Talmud⁹ says that the Palestinian elders sat with their backs to the holy. In other words, with the torah niche or chest on the wall closest to Jerusalem they sat facing the congregation. Babylonian Jews continued this

(Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995) p. 273.

5. 2 Samuel, chapter 6.

6. Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) p. 187.

7. The Torah niche pictured here is a rather elaborate one from the synagogue in Dura Europa. Goodenough, Erwin R. *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1953, Vol. 2, Plate IX, 65.

8. In Medieval Hebrew Sefarad meant Spain and Sefardi referred to the Jews who lived in what is now Spain and Portugal. Sefardi Jews are presently considered the descendants of those expelled from Spain or Portugal in 1492. Ashkenaz is the name of one of Noah's grandsons. In Medieval Hebrew Ashkenaz meant Germany. Ashkenazi Jews are those from central and eastern Europe. The distinctions between the two groups become noticeable in their Hebrew pronunciation, and in their religious and liturgical practices.

9. Tosefta, Megillah 3:21

custom, whereas in the Land of Israel during the Byzantine Period the elders began to sit with the congregation, facing the ark and Jerusalem. In some sites the ark was set against the wall opposite Jerusalem. This custom was continued in some medieval synagogues.¹⁰

There are two different Hebrew words for the Torah chest or ark: תִּיבָה *teivah*, and אָרוֹן *aron*. They both refer to the same thing but have different associations.

Teivah is the same word used for Noah's ark and the basket in the story of baby Moses floating on the Nile. *Aron* is the word used for the container the Israelites made in the desert, according to God's instructions, to hold the tablets of the covenant. The earlier amoraic traditions tended to use *teivah*.¹¹ They were probably trying to avoid saying that the Torah ark was equivalent to the *mishkan* or tabernacle in the desert and the Holy of Holies in the Temple in Jerusalem. Later *aron* came to be standard for the name of the Torah chest. It seems evident that it became important for the synagogue to become in many ways a substitute for the Temple of former times, much as the prayer service came to be a substitute for the cultic sacrifices of the Temple. In Modern Hebrew *aron* is also used to refer to a wardrobe, bedside table, bookcase and coffin, among other things. We call the Torah ark *aron hakodesh*, the holy ark, to distinguish it from secular meanings of *aron*. That term, *aron hakodesh*, is found in 2 Chronicles 35:3 where King Josiah tells the Levites, "Put the Holy Ark in the House that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; as you no longer carry it on your shoulders."

This choice to use the Torah ark as the form to express my research on *Yotzer Or* has proven to be a very fruitful one. The interplay between Torah and siddur, or prayer book, and how they both relate to our lives as modern Jews has informed my thinking on *Yotzer Or*, on prayer in general, on Torah, and on God. My hope is that some of this textured thinking is communicated in the images of the ark, in the experience of opening the ark, and in studying with the aid of this Guide.

10. Levine, op. cit., p. 321.

11. Levine, op. cit., p. 327.

The Process

For a year *Yotzer Or* has been in my mind, either in the background of everything I do or in the foreground of my research and prayer and working on the ark. Naturally there were many changes as the original conception worked its way to actualization. Some of these were due to the collaboration with my husband who is also my carpenter. Not surprising, as he has always supported and challenged and enriched my ideas and my life.

I wrote my proposal in December, 2008. In January, 2009 I went on an American Jewish World Service trip to Mexico with rabbinic students from all branches of American Judaism - Conservative, Orthodox, Reform and Reconstructionist. Concerns with *tzedakah* - the Jewish duty of supplying funds to help those in need - and *tikkun olam* - repair of the world - has been pervading my thoughts all year as well. The rest of the winter and spring I kept a journal of my daily prayer and thoughts on *Yotzer Or* and its themes: On light and darkness and tranquility and trouble and even angels. The summer was devoted to my research and making a model of the ark. Originally conceived as a scale model of a walk-in ark, it became a full-size actual table ark. In the fall I organized what I had learned and began preliminary drawings for each panel. Finally, at winter break, Steven had the large block of time required to construct the ark.

This is the most complicated piece I have ever produced, a capstone project indeed. The piece as a whole includes nine individual panels, including the Torah and its cover nestled in the center of it all. They comprise a diptych and three different triptychs. A diptych is any visual piece comprised of two panels, often physically connected, in which each panel is readable as a whole by itself and in which the two panels also work together to create a larger whole. The form is reminiscent of the image of the two tablets of the Ten Commandments common in Jewish and Christian art. A triptych is the same over three panels. In the *Yotzer Or Torah Ark* one diptych and three triptychs are formed as the doors are opened. They are not simply random,

but composed with the intention that these images be viewed together as a piece in their own right, that the portions of *Yotzer Or* represented in each panel be considered together. The various levels of transparency were an additional design challenge.

From the beginning I planned to include references to the wonders of the world we live in as explained to us by science and as elucidated by art and poetry. That became the backdrop against which all the other ideas from my research played as the prayer unfolds. I decided early on that - though I think of *Yotzer Or* as generally joyful - each panel must include a reference to pain and suffering which is an inescapable part of our world. Another theme which emerged was the whole question of what angels have been through the centuries and what possible function they could serve now in my prayer life. I have never been at all attracted to the idea of angels - rather the opposite - so this was a challenge.

My usual way of working on a piece of art is to start with either a text or a drawing and weave the two together in a rather cerebral manner. In Jerusalem, in my first year of rabbinic school, I spent two hours every two weeks with a group of students under the tutelage of Edna Wapner. She helped still our incessant verbalizing cognitive mode, using music and meditation, and access a more emotional part of ourselves as we made images of any of the many materials we had gathered around us. Part way through this year I was reminded of that experience and made sure I spent some time with the idea of each panel, just playing music and doing whatever I wanted with the materials around me - not trying to explain anything or communicate anything, just to play. A parallel to this is the advice Anne Lamott gives to writers in her book *Bird by Bird*:¹²

This first draft is the child's draft, where you let it all pour out and then let it romp all over the place, knowing that no one is going to see it and that you can shape it later. You just let this childlike part of you channel whatever voices and visions come through and onto the page . . . because there may

12. Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird - Some Instructions on Writing and Life* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1995) pp. 22-23.

be something great in those six crazy pages that you would never have gotten to by more rational, grown-up means.

My journal started out to be a record of my daily prayer practice. At the end of the semester as I was heavily involved in writing papers at home, my prayer practice fell away. In its stead I realized, for the first time really, how study really is equivalent to prayer. Invariably I found in my research and writing for the day some reference to the themes of *Yotzer Or* that I wanted to include in my journal. After that I returned to daily prayer on my own for the summer months. Sometime in the fall I felt that I was making journal entries just because I'd decided to, not because I had anything useful or interesting to note. At some point I decided only to write down "aha" moments - whenever they came to me however infrequently. Just before Hanukkah I realized my notations were more about the next project I want to embark upon, so I have stopped writing in it until I finish the ark.

This past fall I took a course on teaching about God and spirituality and another on creation mythology. My senior sermon is about the need I see for us Reform Jews to be clear about our understanding that Torah was written by people. As a result, I have been sure to include an explanation of my assumptions on the matter above in the section called "Why a Torah Ark?".

God and Prayer

There are as many understandings of what God represents to a particular person as there are people to think about it. Even within the Reform Jewish community we do not share many understandings in common about what each of us thinks when hearing the word "God." This makes it hard to have conversations which include the word, and some would say we would do better to leave the whole subject of God aside. Another approach is to begin having conversations within our communities about what ideas various individuals among us hold about God and how they change with study and over time. It is this latter approach that most appeals to me. I am advocating use of traditional Jewish prayer language which includes constant references to God. In order for a group to have a conversation about prayer it seems to me a conversation about God is in order. It is important to accommodate a very wide latitude of ideas. For an idea of the wide range of Jewish thought on the subject over the centuries you might consult a book such as *Finding God - Selected Responses* by Rifat Sonsino and Daniel Syme, listed in the Practical Bibliography.

Once we have aired some of our ideas about God we can begin to consider the purposes of prayer. Since the destruction of the Second Temple the Rabbis understood the service of the heart referred to in Deuteronomy 11:13 as prayer.¹³ They labored to create a liturgy that would be worthy.¹⁴ As the cultic sacrifice at the Temple was considered a *mitzvah* - a commandment of God, a religious obligation - so prayer became. Many modern Jews no longer think of prayer as an obligation, though that need not be ruled out. Much as a writer, artist, or athlete works every day even when s/he doesn't feel like it, praying every day keeps our prayer "muscle" in practice.¹⁵ Among the other possibilities for the purpose of prayer is that of an emotional outlet for fear or confusion, contrition or sorrow, gratitude or joy. Prayer

13. Babylonian Talmud - Taanit 2a.

14. Ruth. Langer, *To Worship God Properly: Tensions Between Liturgical Custom and Halakhah in Judaism* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1998) Introduction.

15. Jakob J. Petuchowski, *Understanding Jewish Prayer* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1972) p. 23.

can be a spiritual outlet that provides entertainment¹⁶ as well as social relevance.¹⁷ Liturgy is poetry - a game with rules of its own. If you can take art and play seriously, you can do the same with liturgy.¹⁸ The prayer service, containing as it does some of our people's highest aspirations, offers an opportunity for a person to lift him or herself out of the daily grind and be cognizant of important things from a broad perspective. Prayer can lead to self-improvement. Maimonides thought that prayer and performing mitzvot prepared a person to be able to develop his [or her] intellectual understanding.¹⁹ For the Kabbalists, or Jewish mystics, the goal of prayer was *devekut*, to unite with God, and in so doing help to repair the fabric of being.²⁰

Most of our liturgy is meant for public recitation, but we have prescribed prayers for private moments as well. In addition, there is both a requirement and an allowance to offer the prayers of our own hearts - both in the context of public worship and when alone. As a broad generalization, Jews tend to expend effort on pronouncing prescribed prayers and are generally less comfortable with uttering spontaneous prayer. We either need to gain more facility with spontaneous prayer or spend time with our liturgy to be able to express ourselves in prayer. Doing both is also an option. Abraham Joshua Heschel has written that the purpose of prayer is quite exalted. It is transformation.

To be moderate in the face of God would be a profanation. The goal is not an accommodation but a transformation. A mediocre response to immensity, to eternity, is offensive.²¹

There are suggestions on how to guide this conversation on God in the Expanded Notes.

16. Eleazar Kallir (flourished 600-630) wrote, "With God's approval I shall speak riddles to make this people happy in this prayer for dew." Playing intellectual games, playing music, smelling lovely aromas, eating food and dancing can all be part of our prayer. Petuchowski's *Understanding Jewish Prayer*, p. 27.

17. *Understanding Jewish Prayer*, op. cit., p. 33.

18. *Understanding Jewish Prayer*, op. cit., p. 34.

19. Isaiah Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1980) pp. 944-945.

20. Ruth, Langer, op.cit., p. 39.

21. Quoted in *Understanding Jewish Prayer*, op. cit., p. 81.

LESSON PLANS

Three ways to teach *Yotzer Or* using this Ark and this Guide.

These plans are conceived with the adult learner in mind. Adult learners include people from about age 17 and up, though many individuals will buck the profile. Adults typically can sit through longer sessions than younger people, but that may be mostly due to politeness. Adults want to have fun too. All learning works best when the learner has an opportunity to synthesize new information into the experiences of his or her own life. Each session below includes an active learning portion which I have called Synthesis.

I also tried to make allowances for a variety of teaching experience and Judaic knowledge on the part of the person acting as the Guide for this exploration. Explanations of various terms and concepts, as well as short biographies and descriptions of classic Jewish texts, can be found in the footnotes and the Glossary. For anything I have neglected to explain, there is the Internet. For those proficient in Hebrew I've also included assorted Jewish texts (e.g. Talmud pages, Shulchan Arukh, Sefer Abudraham). Here follow three suggestions for how to teach *Yotzer Or* with this Guide:

1) **Six Sessions** - One session each for Panels 1-5, one session for Panels 6-9

Use the suggestions for Synthesis given with each Panel.

2) **Three Sessions** - devoted to the Reform version of *Yotzer Or*:

Session 1 - Panel 1 - Opening

Session 2 - Panel 2 - Who lights up the earth...

Session 3 - Panels 8 & 9 - Cause a new light to shine... and the Closing.

3) **One Session** - approximately 2 hours.

This session focuses on the panels that reflect the *Mishkan Tefilah* version of *Yotzer Or*: panel 1, the first half of panel 2, and panels 8 and 9.

To use the Ark and this Guide to teach about *Yotzer Or* in one two-hour session, you may choose to use the following lesson plan:

Goals

- Increase usefulness of liturgy as history, as teaching Jewish text, and as prayer

Objectives

- Explore this piece of liturgy
- Deepen comfort of participants with *Yotzer Or*
- Give participants an opportunity to build relationships with each other

Materials and equipment

- The Ark or the CD-ROM and projection equipment
- Enough copies of *Mishkan Tefilah* and *Sim Shalom* for each participant or photocopies of *Yotzer Or* from each. These texts can be found in the Expanded Notes.
- CD player or guitar or piano for introductory music *OR* a laptop with YouTube videos <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFkC95NrVgQ&NR=1>

A blended rap/melodic version with the opening of *Yotzer Or* as the chorus. It begins: From dirt give birth to light sometimes it hurts but its worth the fight to transform the night...

OR

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3wMPQVA2Tc>

This recording stays closer to the word of the prayer itself and is easier to understand.

The facilitator will have prepared by looking at the Ark (or photos thereof) and reading through this Guide, noting interesting points.

Play musical renditions of *Yotzer Or* in the background as people enter and get settled.

1) Introductions of participants and reasons for being present.

2) Read aloud in English the following two renditions of the daily version of *Yotzer* jotting down notes of striking parts - positive or negative.

(These texts are available in the Expanded Notes)

Mishkan Tefilah (Reform) pp. 60-61.

Siddur Sim Shalom (Conservative) pp. 107-110. This section includes the special readings for Shabbat - read only the weekday portions: The opening after the *Barekhu* on page 107, the bottom of page 109 "On weekdays," and page 110. This is the same version found in the Orthodox prayer book *Ha-Siddur Ha-Shalem*. It is worth pointing out that progressive Judaism includes these two versions - the one more succinct and the other more complete - as well as several others.

3) Suggested Questions for Discussion (could be done in small groups)

What is *Yotzer Or* about for its composers?

Here is a partial list (all against the grounding of Torah):

- A reaction to a new day dawning - both the wonder and the regularity.
- The power of the Creator.
- Praise to the One who creates - said praise modelled by the angels.
- Messianic hope in *Or Chadash*, A New Light.

What meanings do you, personally, find compelling in relation to *Yotzer Or*?

Note where *Yotzer Or* is in the service, as one of the blessings around the Shema.

How does that relationship affect your understanding of *Yotzer Or*? Of the Shema?

The Rabbis considered *Yotzer Or* part of the preparation for saying the *Shema* - as the angels accept God's sovereignty in *Yotzer Or*, so will we as a congregation in just a few moments in the *Shema*. Wonder at the world is, for some people, a path to God.

4) Look at the ark silently, opening all its panels, making mental or written notes.

5) Discuss the prayer and the ark using the participants' observations, supplemented by the facilitator's knowledge gained from the information on each panel given below.

6) Synthesis - In small groups share responses to the following questions:

- How has this discussion of *Yotzer Or* (over the past two hours, or the past weeks) helped you to articulate your own thoughts about prayer and God?

- Explain how this study experience has enabled you to build relationships - either with your ancestors or with God or with the people around you.
- What is the most important thing for you about what we have been doing together?

Come together as an entire group again and ask those gathered to express anything interesting they have just heard.

7) Closing Song - Sing together your favorite version of *Yotzer Or*. There is sheet music available in the Expanded Notes.



PANEL 1

Panel 1 - Opening

Music on YouTube for introduction:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3wMPQVA2Tc>

The opening and closing of *Yotzer Or* sung in Hebrew with accompanying illustrations.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת הַכֹּל

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha'olam

yotzer or uvorei choshekh 'oseh shalom uvorei et hakol.

BLESSED ARE YOU ADONAI OUR GOD RULER OF THE UNIVERSE

WHO FORMS LIGHT AND CREATES DARKNESS WHO MAKES TRANQUILITY AND CREATES EVERYTHING

(My translation of shalom as "tranquility" is based on that of Mark Brettler in *My People's Prayer Book*.²²)

The first six Hebrew words, sometimes called the blessing formula, or *brakhah* formula, have a history and set of meanings of their own. They appear at the beginning of almost every blessing. Because they are so widely used and not specific to *Yotzer Or* a discussion about them is included in the Expanded Notes.

Yotzer Or relates to the dependable wonder of a new day dawning as an explicit metaphor for the continued existence of the whole world. The authors do so through the lens of Torah.²³ The opening (not including the blessing formula) is a quote, actually a misquote, of Isaiah 45:7. Here the end of the preceding verse is included for context:

... אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עוֹד:
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא כֵּעֲנִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה
כָּל-אֵלֶּה:²⁴

22. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 1 The Sh'ma and Its Blessings* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1997) p. 45.

23. Reuben Hammer, *Or Hadash: A Commentary on Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 2003) p. xxiii.

24. You may notice that this text has cantillation marks ׀ ׀ in addition to the vowel marks ׀ ׀ - given in the

... I am the LORD and there is none else.

I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe

-- I the LORD do all these things.²⁵

To form an idea of what the biblical authors had in mind when they used some of these Hebrew words we first look to see how they were used throughout the *Tanakh*²⁶ Let us investigate the nouns: *or* - light, *choshekh* - darkness, *shalom* - peace, and *ra* - evil.

Or - light - often refers to physical light coming from sun, moon, stars or fire. Just as often it refers to something metaphorical - usually something positive, such as knowledge, life, guidance, goodness or constancy. Only rarely is it negative as in Job 18:7 - the light of the wicked - or frightening as in Job 37:3 where it refers to lightning.

Choshekh - darkness - can refer to physical darkness with no value assigned. It is neither good nor bad, just dark. In Exodus 10:21 one of the Ten Plagues of Egypt is darkness. That certainly carries a negative value. On the positive side, remember that darkness was one of the main characteristics of the day in the story of the revelation on Mt. Sinai in Deuteronomy 4:11. Nevertheless, as we look through the *Tanakh* darkness for the most part refers to something negative - and not just an absence of light, but an absence of righteousness or wisdom. Darkness is often used as a metaphor for wickedness - Proverbs 2:13, foolishness - Ecclesiastes 2:13, or despair - Psalms 107:10.

Shalom - well-being - is very often used to refer to a person's general welfare as in the story of Joseph being sent off to see how his brothers are doing in Genesis 37:14. It can also refer to a sense of ease or tranquility as in Genesis 43:23 where Joseph tells his brothers to be at peace, not to be afraid. Frequently it refers to the absence of a state of war as in Joshua 9:15. Except for the first case - of welfare which is neutral - it is something positive.

Ra - evil - is often translated as wicked, evil, or bad - all of which have varying levels of negative connotation. For example, when the skinny cows in Pharaoh's dream

first text. Generally, a Bible will include the cantillation marks so the text can be chanted. A siddur, or prayer book, will not, as the customs of chanting the prayers have a different basis than the cantillation marks.

25. *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1999).

26. This can be done using a Biblical concordance or software like *Bibleworks* which has a search function.

ate the fat cows, they looked just as *ra* as before. This is certainly not evil, just not good. The same holds for Nehemiah 2:1 where it may refer to Nehemiah being sad or out of sorts. On the other hand, sometimes it definitely means evil or wickedness as in Deuteronomy 28:20. If the Israelites do not obey God's commandments they will be punished because of their *ra* in forsaking God. As you can see, every translator has a number of possibilities available and each translation is an interpretation of that particular translator. The translator's job gets particularly tricky when the one who perpetrates the *ra* is God. Hence the variety of choices: evil, woe, and trouble; to name three.

If we rely on Chapter One of Genesis alone for information about the story of creation we would think that some things were already existing, not created by God, for example: darkness, wind, and water. For reasons that are not clear, it was important to some of the Rabbis to understand God's act of creation as *ex nihilo*, from nothing. They saw Isaiah 45:7 as providing more information about this: "I create light and darkness."²⁷ If anyone thought darkness existed before God this "proves" that untrue. This is proof to one who understands the Bible as being one harmonious piece as well as God's word.

Let's concentrate on the end of Isaiah 45:7:

'oseh shalom uvorei ra

I make weal and create woe

עֹשֶׂה שְׁלֹמִים וְבוֹרֵא רָע

This is the Jewish Publication Society translation. We now know from our brief exploration of the word *ra* in Bible that the following translation would also work:

I make peace and create evil...

The author of the Isaiah verse was arguing for the oneness of God very likely in contradistinction to Persian dualism. For Zoroastrians Ahuramazda was the god of light and goodness, and Ahriman was god of darkness and evil.²⁸ The Talmud

27. Michael Linetsky, *Rabbi Saadiah Gaon's Commentary on the Book of Creation* (Northvale NJ: Jason Aronson Inc., 2002) p. 60.

28. Israel Abrahams, *A Companion to the Authorized Daily Prayerbook* (New York: Hermon Press, 1966) p. 43.

comments on the nature of God:²⁹ "If one [in praying] says: ... May Your Name be mentioned for good... he is silenced. This implies for the good only and not for the bad - we have learned one must bless God for evil as he blesses him for good." In a monotheistic understanding which insists on *creatio ex nihilo* all things, including evil, must come ultimately from God.

It is important to remember that there is more than one manuscript of the various biblical books. One of the Dead Sea Scrolls records the end of Isaiah 45:7 as follows:³⁰

who makes **good** and creates evil 'oseh tov uvorei ra עושה טוב ובורה רע

Here the word choice within the parallel structure of the poem -

[verb] light [verb] darkness

[verb] good [verb] evil

reinforces the dualistic nature of the verse. In this manuscript light is clearly equated with good and darkness with evil.

Why did the Rabbis who wrote the opening to *Yotzer Or* use the verse from Isaiah, but change the last word? The Rabbis who wrote the Babylonian Talmud wondered the same thing. The discussion³¹ includes a suggestion that the word "darkness" also be changed to something less dark, like "twilight." That idea is rejected. Just as we mention daytime during the nighttime blessing³² so we mention night during the day. There is no explanation as to why this should be. The discussion continues that we change *ra* - "evil" or "trouble" - to "everything" because it is a euphemism that is more suitable for prayer.

We Jews have generally shied away from ascribing evil directly to God. "From above proceeds only good."³³ If God creates everything, the implication is that nothing is inherently evil, though it may become so in human hands. As Maimonides writes, "... evils are evils only in relation to a certain thing . . . Illness, poverty and ignorance are evils

29. Babylonian Talmud Brakhot 33b.

30. Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992) p. 264.

31. Babylonian Talmud, Brakhot 11b.

32. *Maariv* - the first blessing before the Shema in the evening service - see *Mishkan Tefilah*, p. 6. "You are the Creator of day and night..."

33. Genesis Rabbah 9. Genesis Rabbah is a collection of midrashim from the fifth century CE.

for man; all these are privations of properties . . . it cannot be said of God that He directly creates evil, or He has the direct intention to produce evil; this is impossible. His works are all perfectly good.”³⁴

A UAHC prayer book commentary called *Bechol Levavcha* makes another suggestion about *Yotzer Or*. “The author may have disagreed with Isaiah’s belief that God creates evil and preferred to teach that nature is filled with many mysteries we may never fully understand, including the bad things that happen to good people.”³⁵ That thought strikes me as more a product of the modern period than the rabbinic one. It is offered here in the event that it might be useful to a modern person’s appreciation of the prayer.

Another explanation that you may have seen online if you subscribe to *Ten Minutes of Torah*³⁶ is that the Rabbis had great respect for the power of words especially in the context of prayer. . . . Mindful that calling God creator of evil/trouble/woe might cause something of that nature to happen to the person praying, they opted to change the reference to a more neutral term. This commentary notes that just as the Rabbis edited scriptural verses for liturgical use, as in the case of *Yotzer Or*, more recent reformers have edited the prayer book when they found certain words, phrases and ideas problematic. We will come upon some instances of those changes further on especially in panels 4, 5 and 8, and not only in the modern period.

Light has long been used as a metaphor for God. Though it has often been a useful literary device to use the dualism of light=good/dark=evil, we must realize that this is a human construction, an artistic conception. Though that dualism can yield meaning, it can be - and has been - misused to draw unfortunate, even racist, conclusions. In reality it is just as true that light can be destructive and darkness can be healing. We are careful not to look directly at the sun because of the damage it would cause our eyes. Many seeds sprout best when buried in the dark earth. All of

34. The Guide for the Perplexed, Part 3, Chapter 10.

35. Harvey Fields, *B'chol L'avvcha* (New York: UAHC Press, 2001) p. 44.

36. *Ten Minutes of Torah*, online service of the Union for Reform Judaism, Rabbi Richard Sarason, March 26, 2009, <http://tmt.urj.net/archives/4jewishethics/032609.htm>.

these meditations are especially appropriate coming as they do in a prayer that introduces the Shema - God is One.³⁷

In the Kabbalistic understanding of the world there are sparks and emanations and radiance all over the place, but darkness is not necessarily or always a bad thing. In the *Zohar*³⁸ "light refers to Abraham, whose light is the light of day . . . darkness refers to Isaac who represents darkness and night, and this is why when he was old his eyes became dim." Judith³⁹ exemplifies light and darkness together. Lawrence Kushner⁴⁰ writes about "a spark of impenetrable darkness" connected with "the world that is coming." Both images are from the *Zohar* where they represent respectively, the father spark and mother womb of creation. Both are necessary for creation to occur. Yosef Karo writes about *Yotzer Or*:⁴¹ "Our great rabbi Mahari Abuhav, may his memory be for a blessing, gave another meaning: that if we didn't mention the characteristic of night by day it would seem that darkness was evil, and that is not so because everything God made is beautiful in its time."

The light=good/dark=evil dualism can also be used to good effect. Rabbi Jacob Petuchowski notes that grappling with this Isaiah verse about God as the creator of evil "at least witnesses to a God who is not unrelated to the tragic dimension of human existence."⁴² Sometimes we have the wisdom to see that paying attention to painful things can be helpful. "When we open ourselves to darkness - when we honestly look upon mortality, suffering and failure, in ourselves and in our world - we can elevate ourselves to higher planes."⁴³ The point of elevating ourselves is so that we can turn outward and repair the world, thus engaging in the Jewish value of *tikkun olam*.

37. Bezalel Porton, Quoted in Reuben Hammer's *Entering Jewish Prayer*, p. 138.

38. Part II, pp. 141b-142a. The *Zohar* is a foundational work of Jewish mysticism.

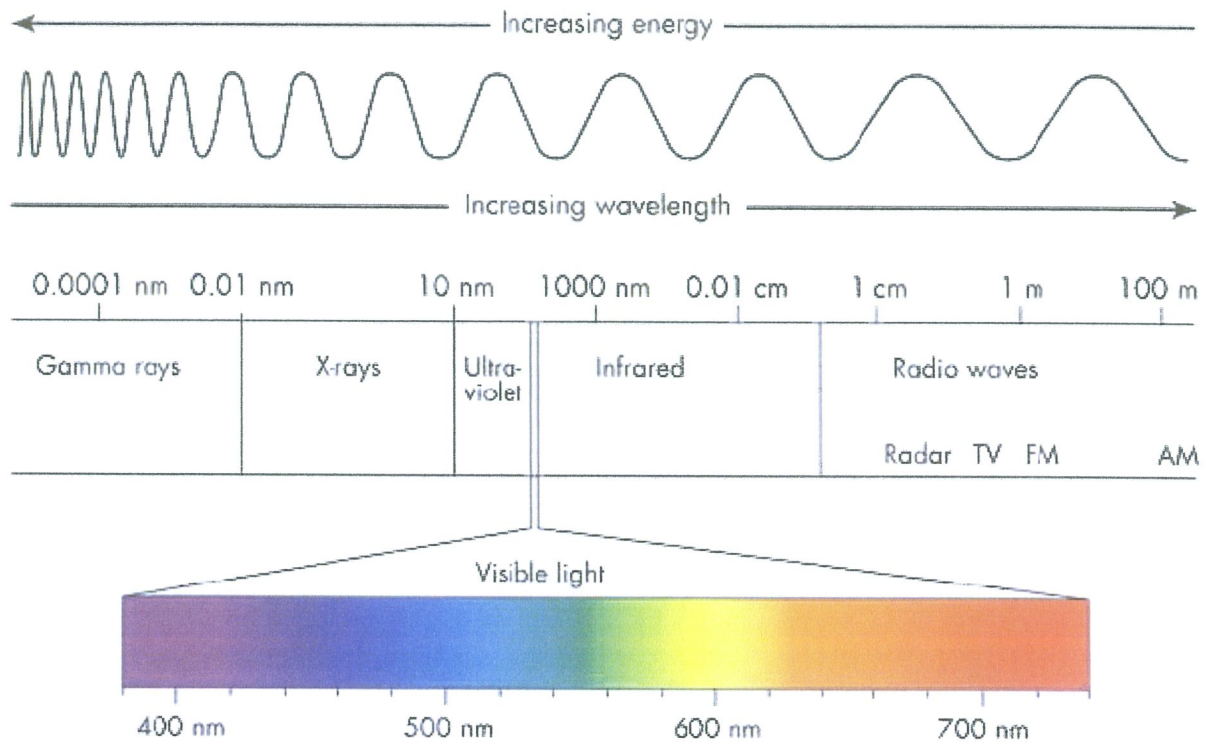
39. Judith is the protagonist in a book of the same name which was written in Hebrew in the Hellenistic era during the time of the Macabean war in the 2nd century B.C.E. (Before the Common Era). It was not included in the *Tanakh*, but has remained part of Jewish literary tradition.

40. Lawrence Kushner, *Kabbalah, A Love Story* (New York: Random House, 2006) p. 60.

41. *Beit Yosef, Orech Chayim* 59:1.

42. Jakob J. Petuchowski, *Understanding Jewish Prayer* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1972) p. 60.

43. *Dvar Tzedek*, American Jewish World Service, online commentary on *Acharei Mot/Kedoshim* 2009.



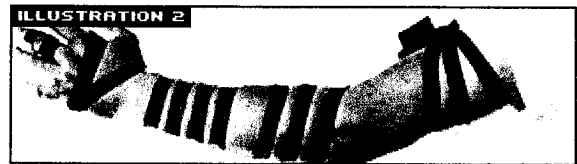
Electromagnetic Radiation⁴⁴

Physical science, too, suggests that we need not associate darkness with something negative. Electromagnetism is the force which keeps electrons in orbit around their nucleus and the force which gives matter its rigidity. Science has taught us that the portion of the spectrum of electromagnetic radiation that is visible to human eyes is quite small. Off the violet end of the spectrum we have found ultraviolet waves, which are visible to bees, but not to us. We have been able to use x-rays to create images of bones in living flesh that were formerly invisible to us. Off the red end of the spectrum we have found uses for infra-red, microwaves and radio waves. All these are invisible - one might say dark - yet they carry information that we are learning to understand and to use. In addition, astrophysicists have hypothesized the existence of something called dark matter. This unseen substance, if it even exists, could account for unexplained properties of our universe. Another sort of "darkness"

44. www.antonine-education.co.uk/physics_gcse/Unit_1/Topic_5/topic_5_what_are_the_uses_and_ha.htm

is that which is beyond the limits of our knowledge, beyond what we can know. Astrophysicists speak of a wall. It is a perfect sphere with a radius of 13.7 billion light years - the age of the universe - with us in the center.⁴⁵ It is not a physical barrier, rather because the universe has a finite age there is a limit to how far back in time we can see.

For those who pray with tefillin⁴⁶ there are at least two traditions relating to the opening of *Yotzer Or*. One is to touch the box on your arm (near your heart) when you say "*yotzer or*" - who forms light - and touch the box on your



forehead when you say "*uvorei choshech*" - and creates darkness.⁴⁷ Another tradition says that when you say "*yotzeir or*" you should touch the box on your arm and hold your hand there until you have finished saying, "*uvorei choshech*."⁴⁸

45. Giles Sparrow, *Cosmos* (London: Quercus, 2006) p. 214.

46. Tefillin are the boxes worn on head and arm of some Jews during some prayer times. Inside the boxes are parchments with scriptural verses about words being "a sign on your hand and a symbol on your forehead" written on them: Exodus 13:1-10; 13:11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21.

47. *Mishnah Berurah*, Kriat Shema 59, p. 182.

48. This version is found in *Sidur Thilat Yitzchak*, a Sefardi prayer book, but with no explanation of the reason for it.



SYNTHESIS

Though most Reform Jews do not lay tefillin when they pray, some do. Many of us think it looks foreign or “Orthodox.” In proper Reform Jewish fashion let us investigate a Jewish phenomenon and see what we can learn from it.

One or more people in the group lay tefilin using the photo above as a guide.⁴⁹ Left-handed people wrap the tefillin around their right arm as demonstrated by Rosie the Riveter⁵⁰, right-handed people around their left. The box of the head tefillin goes on the forehead. (Alternatively, if no tefillin are available, start here:) Have the group pray *Yotzer Or* in Hebrew and in English, touching their arm and/or forehead in one of the ways described above.

Afterwards sit quietly for a few moments before discussing the experience.

- Describe any reactions you have to laying tefillin or to praying with tefillin or seeing others do so. The important thing is to acknowledge feelings and move the group toward an acceptance of different choices in Jewish prayer practice.
- Are there any suggestions about why the customs of touching the tefillin at these specific places in the prayer may have come into being?

(We do not know the answer. Here is a suggestion offered by a Modern Orthodox woman I know who regularly lays tefillin. Chasya-Uriel reports that when she touches the tefillin on her arm she reminds herself to do good with her hands, to bring light. Touching the box on her forehead she is mindful to keep what comes out of her head from leading to darkness.)

- Did the experience teach you anything new about *Yotzer Or*?
- About tefillin?

49. This photo is from chabad.org. There are more detailed directions in *The Jewish Catalogue* beginning on page 59. See Expanded Notes.

50. When I googled “tefillin” this image came up at <http://sociologist/>.



Imagery in Panel 1

The letters themselves are the focus of this panel. The large initial letter - **ב** *bet* - of the blessing is meant to be reminiscent of the large initial *bet* of the Torah.⁵¹ Torah is basic to the prayer book. Not only did the Rabbis use parts of it in the siddur, they understood all of their knowledge to be based upon it. I do not share that latter view. As a Reform Jew, I understand the Torah to be written by humans and am ever grateful for knowledge which comes from other sources. Torah has been made sacred by the Jewish people's love and devotion.

The topic of *Yotzer Or* is "creation," the world we live in. It is both about the world, the universe, itself and how it came into being. It is about God imagined as Creator. In this part of the prayer God forms, creates and makes various things. This brings to mind the creative nature of humanity. Do we picture God as creator because we understand God in our own image and we are creative beings? The question of whether there is such a thing as *creatio ex nihilo* or whether there is not really any beginning or any end is a mind-expanding one, whatever way you look at it.

51. The first word of Torah is **בראשית** *Bereishit* - *In the beginning*, the first letter of which is **ב** (Hebrew being read from right to left).

בא"י אמ"ה

Instead of writing out the first six words of the blessing formula - ברוך אתה יי - אלהינו מלך העולם (*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam* - Blessed are You Adonai our God Ruler of the world) - I have abbreviated them using the initial letter of each word and the double slash (") which indicates that each abbreviation stands for more than one word. This is meant to call attention to the letters themselves. Each Hebrew letter has accumulated numerous stories woven around its name, its shape, and the number it represents. Books have been written on the subject.⁵²

The calligraphic style used for the blessing formula is called Stam - סת"ם. Stam is an acronym describing the three things scribes use it for: ס - a *Sefer Torah*, or Torah scroll; ת - the text inside the boxes of Tefillin; and מ (or ם in the final position) a mezuzah.⁵³ The rest of the words on the front panel are drawn after a modern font called "Chagit" designed by Ada Yardeni.

Alternative Translations and Readings

yOtzer Or u-vOray chOshech Osay shalOm u-vOray et ha-kOl
Blessed is creation, and blessed is the Mystery, Rhythm of the universe,
shaping light, creating darkness, bringing harmony, creating the whole.

You create light and darkness
The possibility of peace within a warring world
All forms and creatures
Who acknowledge their only common bond
In You.

Or Chadash, Renewal siddur, 1991

52. The most complete I have found: Yitzchak Ginsburgh, *The Alef-Bet: Jewish Thought Revealed Through the Hebrew Letters* (Northvale NJ: Jason Aronson, 1995).

53. A mezuzah, the Jewish artifact affixed to the doorposts of many Jewish homes, contains certain selected verses from Torah.

נקדש את עין החיים, מקור החשך והאור,
 מקור השלימות והתוהו, מקור הטוב והרע, מקור כל יצירה.
Nekadeish et ein hachayim, meqor hachoshekh vecha-or,
meqor hashlimut vehatorah, meqor hatov vehara', meqor kol yetsirah.
 Let us bless the source of life, source of darkness and light,
 heart of harmony and chaos, creativity and creation.
 Marcia Falk, *Book of Blessings*

We would assemble in the darkness. To light a candle there, or even a match, would have brought immediate disaster upon us. We spoke about matters of the spirit and eternal questions, about God, about Jews in the world, about the eternity of Israel. In the midst of the darkness, I sensed light in the unlit room, the light of Torah.

Leo Baeck quoted in *Mishkan Tefilah*, p. 527

מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם...
 אַתָּה הוּא הַכֹּל: אֹרֵי, לַפִּידִי, לַהֲבִי
 אֲנִי חֲסֵר כָּל וְתְשׁוּבָה אֵין לִי לַהֲבִיא

King of the universe...

You are everything; my light, my torchlight, my flame

I am empty handed and don't have an offering to bring.

Rabbi Ezekiel Hai Alberg "In the Forest at Evening"
 describes sleeping in a convoy on the way from Babylon to
 Israel. 20th century, quoted in *The Emergence of Modern
 Hebrew Literature in Babylon*.

To determine . . . by what modes or actions Light produceth in our minds the
 Phantasms of Colours is not so easie.⁵⁴

Isaac Newton 1642/3-1727

To understand the world I must love my home. It is difficult to perceive
 luminosity anywhere if there is no light in my own home. It is in the light of
 prayer's radiance that I find my way even in the dark. It is prayer that
 illumines my way.

Abraham Joshua Heschel in *Understanding Jewish Prayer*, p. 71

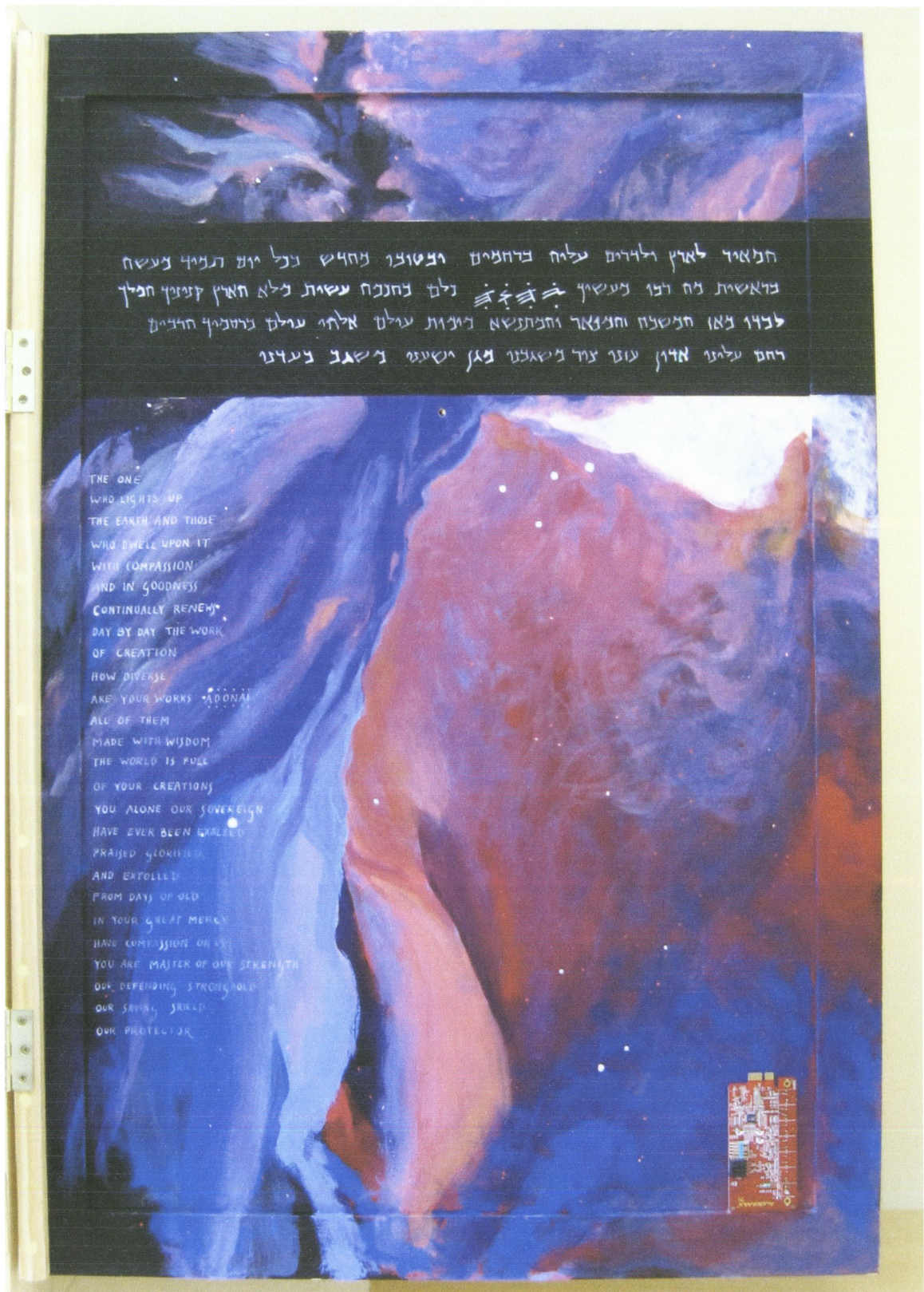
54. Margaret Livingstone, *Vision and Art: The Biology of Seeing* (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2002).

To the Sun

As I stood between the living and the already dying
(What a terrible craft!) a sharp scalpel in my hand
Sometimes weeping for joy and sometimes cursing in anger
I soaked up the last light from the pupil of a stranger, a dying man. . . .
And yet in that spark in the fading eye,
In that light soaking up light before it goes blind
And yet in that flash of scorching and screeching fire,
In the fire calling to fire, commanding disaster and destruction -
You, You were in all of them. . .

(reflections of a battlefield surgeon)

Saul Tchernichovsky, translated by Robert Alter



PANEL 2

Panel 2 - Who Lights Up the Earth

הַמַּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים, וּבְטוּבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם תָּמִיד
מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית. מָה רַבּוּ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְיָ, כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ, מְלֶאכֶה
הָאָרֶץ קִינְיָנָה. הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְרוֹמָם לְבָדוֹ מֵאֵז, הַמְּשַׁבַּח וְהַמְּפָאֵר
וְהַמְתַּנַּשֵּׂא מִימֹת עוֹלָם. אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ,
אֲדוֹן עֲזָנוּ צוּר מְשַׁגְּבֵנוּ, מָגֵן יִשְׁעָנוּ מְשַׁגֵּב בְּעֲדָנוּ.

*Hamei-ir la-aretz v'ladarim 'aleha b'rachamim, uvtuvo m'chadeish b'khol yom tamid
ma'asei v'reishit. Mah rabu ma'asekha Adonai, kulam b'chokhmah 'asita, mala ha-aretz
qinyanekha. Hamelekh hamromam l'vado mei-az, hamshubach v'hamfo-ar v'hamitnasei
mimot 'olam. Elohei 'olam, b'rachamekha harabim racheim 'aleinu adon 'uzeinu tzur
misgabeinu magein yish'einu misgav ba'adeinu.*

WHO LIGHTS UP THE EARTH AND ALL WHO DWELL UPON IT WITH COMPASSION
AND IN GOODNESS CONTINUALLY RENEWS DAY BY DAY THE WORKS OF CREATION.
HOW DIVERSE ARE YOUR WORKS, ALL OF THEM MADE WITH WISDOM.
THE WORLD IS FULL OF YOUR CREATIONS.
YOU ALONE, OUR SOVEREIGN, HAVE EVER BEEN EXALTED, PRAISED, GLORIFIED,
AND EXTOLLED FROM DAYS OF OLD.
ETERNAL GOD, IN YOUR GREAT MERCY HAVE MERCY UPON US.
YOU ARE MASTER OF OUR STRENGTH, OUR DEFENDING STRONGHOLD,
OUR SAVING SHIELD, OUR PROTECTOR.

The second half of text on this panel - beginning with YOU ALONE OUR SOVEREIGN, as well as all of panels 3-7 - is not included in *Mishkan Tefilah*, the most recent prayer book of the Reform movement.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3YOIEWoUt8&NR=1 This is a video of an a capella trio (two singing rabbis and a cantor) rendering the first sentence of this section.

On Shabbat *Yotzeir Or* is expanded by the addition of several insertions, some of them piyyutim, liturgical poems. Though none of these have been written out on the

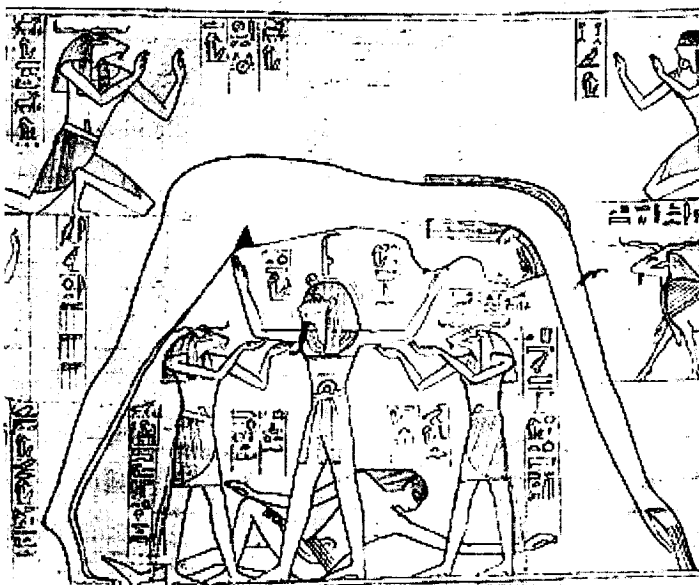
Ark, I kept them in mind as I composed each panel.

Included in my thoughts for this panel is the composition for Shabbat, *Hakol Yodukha*, All Creatures Praise You. Note that it begins with the last word of the previous section: *hakol*, "all" or "everything," here translated as "all creatures."

All creatures praise You; all declare: "There is none holy as Adonai." All exalt You, Creator of all, God who daily opens the gates of the heavens, the casements of the eastern sky - bringing forth the sun from its dwelling place, the moon from its abode, illumining the whole world and its inhabitants whom You created with mercy.⁵⁵

Included in the initial word "all" are - not only all people, animals, and plants living on earth, but - stars, planets, and angels as well. These last we will investigate more thoroughly in panels to come.

"There is none holy as Adonai" is a direct quote from Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:2. For the Rabbis this prayer is a model of *kavanah*, including the proper intention in prayer, not just mouthing words.⁵⁶ Though they derived their model of prayer from a woman the Rabbis did not see fit to include women in communal prayer.



Look for hints as to the importance I place on the Reform idea of the importance of women being fully included in Judaism on every panel.

The cosmology in this prayer is an ancient one. In the Ancient Near East the earth was conceived as being flat with the sky in a dome shape over it with gates for the sun and the moon.

At left is a drawing from an Egyptian papyrus from the 10th century BCE.⁵⁷ It depicts

55. This translation is from *Siddur Sim Shalom*, a Conservative prayer book.

56. Rachel Adler, *Engendering Judaism* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1998) pp. 64-65.

57. aldokkan.com

the sky goddess Nut arched over the air - represented by three standing figures - and the earth god Qeb, reclining. This cosmology is not explicitly spelled out in the Bible though it is alluded to in Psalm 19:7 -

His rising-place is at one end of heaven, and his circuit reaches the other.

God opening the gates of the heavens was taken in biblical times as an accurate description of the sun rising.⁵⁸ The following cosmological description is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls:⁵⁹

“... the times ordained of God: when light begins its dominion - each time it returns - and when, as ordained, it is regathered into its dwelling place; when night begins its watches - as He opens His storehouse and spreads darkness over the earth - and when it cycles back, withdrawing before the light; when the luminaries show forth from their holy habitation, and when they are regathered into their glorious abode ...”

The Babylonian Talmud⁶⁰ describes a more complicated scenario: seven heavens, each higher than the last, each containing its own celestial bodies. The lowest one is called וילון - “curtain.”

When the heaven called curtain is rolled up in its container the sun shines on earth, when it is spread out between the sun and the earth there is night - this act renews the work of creation every day.⁶¹

So what do we as modern people do with these out-moded ideas? One option is to rewrite the prayer to reflect more up-to-date conceptions of celestial bodies. It can be quite effective to bring into prayer a contemporary understanding of just how large the universe is by rewriting the liturgy. On the other hand, we can retain the ancient language and when we read it call to mind the evolution in understanding that has occurred in this regard. When we scroll through the cosmological views of ancients, medievals and moderns we are bound to wonder what the state of such things will be a

58. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 10, Shabbat Morning Shacharit and Musaf* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007) p. 70.

59. Donald W. Parry, & Emmanuel Tov, Editors, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader, Part 1, Texts concerned with Religious Law* (Boston: Brill, 2004) p. 37.

60. Chagigah 12b.

61. This is from the commentary of Rashi and the Tosafot on Chagigah 12b.

century from now or a millennium from now. It can be enriching to enfold our understanding into the ancient words rather than to discard them to use exclusively words of our own devising.

Mercy, *rachamim*, is mentioned twice in quick succession - at the end of *Hakol yodukha* as well as in the opening phrase of this panel - *Hamei-ir la-aretz*, who illumines the earth - which is part of *Yotzer Or* both on weekdays and on Shabbat. The quality of mercy is vitally important to the Rabbis' view of the world. They reasoned that if God judged us with strict justice none of us would be able to pass muster, neither at Yom Kippur nor at the judgment after our death. The world itself could not survive if God judged totally impartially with no tendency toward leniency. Therefore God tempers justice with mercy. There is a great story from Genesis Rabba 8:5:

Rabbi Simon said: When the Holy Blessed One wished to create the first person...

Benevolence, *chesed*, advised his creation on the grounds that he would practice charity. Truth, however, said that he should not be created, for he is full of lies.

Justice favored humanity's creation, saying he would do many acts of justice. Peace objected to man's creation because he would be full of conflict. What did God do?

God took hold of Truth, cast it to the earth [and created Adam.]

According to this story from the Midrash, God had to put truth out of sight before God could bear to create humanity. This speaks volumes about the Rabbis' ambivalence about the goodness of creation. Though mercy is not mentioned in this midrash, the implication is that the world could not exist without it.

Now we return to the first line of this panel which is used both in Shabbat and daily prayer:

הַמַּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים,

וּבְטוֹבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית.

Hamei-ir la-aretz v'ladarim 'aleha b'rachamim,

uvtuvo m'chadeish b'khol yom tamid ma'asei v'reishit.

WHO LIGHTS UP THE EARTH AND ALL WHO DWELL UPON IT WITH COMPASSION
AND IN GOODNESS CONTINUALLY RENEWS DAY BY DAY THE WORKS OF CREATION.

There are those who will argue that the first word properly refers only to

physical light, and that *Yotzer Or*, as a whole, is only about physical light.⁶² In any case it is not the sun that illumines the earth, but God who does so by way of the sun which God created.⁶³ According to R. Yaakov Emden⁶⁴ מְחַדֵּשׁ *mechadeish* (here translates as renews) means to make novel. Each day is novel in that there never was and never will be such a day in the history of the world.⁶⁵ The reason God is said to give light “with compassion” and renew creation “in goodness” may be another polemic against the dualism inherent in such modes of thought as Zoroastrianism and Gnosticism. Gnosticism arose in Second Temple times and continued into the Middle Ages. In Gnosticism the god associated with goodness and mercy is the unknown, far-off one, and the world-creating god is neither good nor merciful.⁶⁶

Another thing to consider about the merciful way God lights up the earth is that more than illumination is involved. The heavenly luminaries carry so much useful information. The combination of the solar and lunar movements allows us to keep a calendar so we know when to observe the holy days (and when to plant). Here is a passage from a 4th or 5th century Jewish mystical book. It was written in the Greek language in Hebrew letters:

After you see him, bow down, prostrate yourself upon the earth, and pray the following prayer: I revere you, Helios, who rises in the east, the good sailor, who keeps faith, the faithful leader, who turns the great wheel, who orders the holiness [of the planets], who rules over the poles, Lord, radiant leader, Ruler, who fixes the stars.⁶⁷

Though it seems blatantly pagan, it may not have been so in mind of its author. The movements of the planets and stars have, since ancient days, been connected with human events through the realm of astrology. There is more than one synagogue floor

62. Lawrence A., Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 1 The Sh'ma and Its Blessings*. (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1997) p. 49.

63. Reuben Hammer, *Or Hadash: A Commentary on Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 2003) p. 107.

64. Rabbi Jacob Emden was an 18th century German rabbi and noted scholar.

65. Siddur Beit Yakov commentary to Psukei d'Zimra, Psalm 19.

66. Jacob Petuchowski, “*The Liturgy of the Synagogue*” in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism* edited by William Scott Green. Chicago: Scholars Press, 1983, p. 21.

67. Safrai, Shmuel, Editor. *The Literature of the Sages, Second Part* (Assen, the Netherlands: Royal Van Gorcum, Fortress Press, 2006) pp. 635-636.

which has decorations that include the zodiac and the sun personified.

Here is the mosaic floor from the synagogue in Beit Alpha, Israel. The motif of Helios and the zodiac in a Jewish setting may refer to the power of God to bring redemption.⁶⁸



Moving on to the next sentence:

מָה רַבּוּ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְיָ, כָּל־אֵם בְּחִכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ, מְלֶאכָה הָאָרֶץ קִינְיָנָהּ.

Mah rabu ma'asekha Adonai, kulam b'chokhmah 'asita, mala ha-aretz qinyanekha.

HOW DIVERSE ARE YOUR WORKS, ALL OF THEM MADE WITH WISDOM.

THE WORLD IS FULL OF YOUR CREATIONS.

This line is a verse from Psalm 104. The Rabbis' inclusion of a phrase of Bible in liturgy can include by association the context of that phrase, in this case the entire psalm. Therefore, we are meant to have in mind the connections among creation and wisdom and God's role in the world.⁶⁹ This psalm, and this verse in particular, has some thoughts in common with an Egyptian work called the Hymn to the Aten, or the sun god. It was written in the 14th century BCE,⁷⁰ about 400 years before Psalm 104.

68. Shmuel Safrai, Editor, *The Literature of the Sages, Second Part* (Assen, the Netherlands: Royal Van Gorcum, Fortress Press, 2006) p. 636.

69. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 1 The Sh'ma and Its Blessings* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1997) p. 46.

70. S. E. Gillingham, *The Poems and Psalms of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) p.

Thought it was found sealed in a tomb, copies of it could have been circulating in the area. Part of it goes like this:

How plentiful it is, what you have made, sole god, without another beside you; you created the earth as you wished. . . all beings on land, who fare upon their feet, and all beings in the air who fly with their wings.

The Talmud interprets the first three words of Psalm 104 to mean, "How diverse are your works, some can live only on land, others only in the sea and so on,"⁷¹ which seems to carry a parallel understanding, of those words at least, with the Hymn to the Aten. The differences between the Hymn and the Psalm, however, are fairly marked. For one thing, darkness in the Hymn is a time of death and silence because the sun god is not in the sky. "The lion comes out. . . the serpents bite, for darkness is a blanket." In the Psalm, though, God rules the night as well: "You bring on darkness and it is night, when all the beasts of the forests stir. The lions roar for prey, seeking their food from God."

הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְרוֹמָם לְבָדוֹ מְאֹז, הַמְּשֻׁבַּח וְהַמְּפָאֵר וְהַמִּתְנַשֵּׂא
מִיָּמוֹת עוֹלָם. אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם, בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ,
אֲדוֹן עֲזֵינוּ צוּר מִשְׁגָּבֵינוּ, מְגִן יִשְׁעֵנוּ מִשְׁגָּב בְּעֲדָנוּ.

Hamelekh hamromam l'vado mei-az, hamshubach v'hamfo-ar v'hamitnasei

mimot 'olam. Elohei 'olam, b'rachamekha harabim racheim 'aleinu

adon 'uzeinu tzur misgabeinu magein yish'einu misgav ba'adeinu.

YOU ALONE OUR SOVEREIGN HAVE EVER BEEN EXALTED, PRAISED, GLORIFIED, AND
EXTOLLED FROM DAYS OF OLD. ETERNAL GOD,
IN YOUR GREAT MERCY HAVE MERCY UPON US;
YOU ARE MASTER OF OUR STRENGTH, OUR DEFENDING STRONGHOLD,
OUR SAVING SHIELD, OUR PROTECTOR.

This string of praise to God reminds us that every blessing always refers back to God as the Source of all. Obviously God does not need all these praises. The Jewish

210.

71. Babylonian Talmud, Chullin 127a.

approach is that it is important to realize that God is at the foundation of all of our achievements.⁷² It may seem a bit out of place that in the midst of this praise we should ask for mercy for ourselves. Remember the Rabbis' deep belief that we are not capable of living up to the demands of pure justice. The understanding of our need to be judged mercifully was never far from their thoughts, even when appreciating the world around them.

Also included in this part of *Yotzer Or* is a composition read on Shabbat that begins *Ein ke'erkekha*, None is so valued as You.

None is so valued as You and there is none other than You. There is nothing without You. Who is like You! None is so valued as You, Adonai our God, in this world, and there is none other than You, our king, in the life of the world-to-come.

There is nothing without You, our redeemer, in the days of the Messiah, and none is like You, our savior, when the dead will be revived.

There is a Chasidic tradition⁷³ that when we come to the words "None is so valued as You," we should not continue to pray until we have made ourselves as nothing. There are two parts to this undertaking. At first we become awestruck by God's greatness and think, "Who am I in comparison to that which is God?" The only response to an awareness like this is silence. Then when we come to the line that says, "there is none other than You" and we realize that we are part of this "awesome divine organism"⁷⁴ and our prayer is "a dimension of the divine, speaking its own joy." This idea that we are part of the "divine organism" speaks to the pantheistic element in Chasidic theology - that everything is God.

Now, what was that part about "when the dead will be revived"? Let's leave Messianism until a bit later.

72. Jakob J. Petuchowski, *Understanding Jewish Prayer* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1972) p. 60.

73. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries*, Vol. 10, *Shabbat Morning Shacharit and Musaf* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007) pp. 71.

74. Lawrence A., Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries*, Vol. 10, *Shabbat Morning Shacharit and Musaf* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007) p. 76.

SYNTHESIS - Panel 2**הַמַּאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים***Hamei-ir la-aretz v'ladarim 'aleha b'rachamim*

WHO LIGHTS UP THE EARTH AND THOSE WHO DWELL UPON IT WITH COMPASSION

Divide the participants into four groups and provide each group with gluesticks, a stack of magazines with lots of pictures, and a large piece of poster board or paper with one of the following headings (full size headings are included in Expanded Notes):

- 1) **הַמַּאִיר** - *Hamei-ir* - WHO LIGHTS UP
- 2) **לָאָרֶץ** - *la-aretz* - THE EARTH
- 3) **וְלַדָּרִים עָלֶיהָ** - *v'ladarim 'aleha* - AND THOSE WHO DWELL UPON IT
- 4) **בְּרַחֲמִים** - *b'rachamim* - WITH COMPASSION

Ask each group to find images in the magazines that represent their part of the prayer, tear them out, and glue them onto their sheet. There are no rules as to what may or may not be included - great creative latitude in interpretation should be encouraged - but each person should be ready to explain why they chose the images they did. Each person should bring everything he or she knows about life, Torah, Judaism, God, and prayer into these choices.

When most people have finished, put the pages up on the wall in order - either left to right if people are more comfortable with English or from right to left if you want to emphasize the Hebrew. Sit quietly or play the audio from the clip from YouTube from the beginning of this section and just look.

What the group has created is a visual commentary on the prayer. You may use the following questions to guide your discussion:

- What is your overall impression of the visual prayer that the group has constructed?

- Are there any images that you find especially pleasing?
- Are there any that you find at all disturbing?
- Ask the people who put those particular images up why they chose them.
- Are there any stories that come to mind around any of the images - either in the choosing or in seeing them now connected with these words?
- Does seeing the images you selected juxtaposed with the other images give you any new insights about the prayer?

You may now want to add another layer of commentary, explaining particular images or other ideas that were discussed. These can be written in colored markers or pens around the edges and enhance the overall design. You may decide to display this publicly so others in the community can see it and learn from it and perhaps even add their own commentary.

Imagery in Panel 2

Part of my overall plan for the ark has been for the imagery to include visual representations of invisible things. These things may be invisible for many reasons whether because of great distance or tiny size, or because they represent the major part of the electromagnetic spectrum which is invisible to our eyes, or one of several other reasons. In this panel the concern is distance. The Rabbis understood the earth to be a big place and they thought the stars were pretty far away, but they had no idea, as we do today, that our universe extends at least 13.7 billion light years away from us in every direction. Remember that a light year is the distance that light covers in one year as measured on earth. Light travels at a speed of 299,792,458 meters per second. One light year is just under 10 trillion kilometers or, if you prefer, just under 6 trillion miles. The image I've chosen is part of the Orion Nebula, which is a mere 1500 light years away. It is visible to the naked eye, just south of Orion's Belt, but in nowhere

near the detail or colors that we have thanks to the Hubble Space Telescope.⁷⁵

Not only is the nebula of Orion very beautiful, its constellation is mentioned three times in the *Tanakh*. In Amos chapter 5 God's greatness is described by the fact that God created Orion, and also that God changes night into day and back again. Though immensely powerful, God actually cares what people do. God even destroys the Northern Kingdom of Israel for crimes against the poor, according to Amos. The other two times Orion is mentioned are in the Book of Job. There the thrust of the story is different. In chapter 9 Job states that a man cannot win a suit against God because God is so powerful. God made the heavens, including Orion. Remember, though, that Job is a good man in the story. He knows that the injuries he suffers are not equitable punishments. When God finally does show up in chapter 38, God mocks Job for not being able to do any of the things God can. The text is really questioning God's goodness. The conclusion is that God may be good, but is also capricious. The point of the book is to debunk the concept of divine justice. Good and bad things happen to us, but we should not look on them as reward or punishment for our actions. When we do the right thing it should be solely because it is the right thing, with no expectation of reward.⁷⁶ The constellation of Orion has these associations for me. The part of *Yotzer Or* on this panel emphasizes God's goodness. It is important for me to represent the fact that Jews over the ages, looking at the world around them, have struggled with this assumption.

In the lower right hand corner is the circuit board from a graphics card. When it was functional it was a powerful piece of electronics. It had been used for playing video games, but here it represents human ingenuity. This is not necessarily self-serving. For one thing, I couldn't produce such a thing myself. For another, I see God as its source.

This portion of *Yotzer Or* is written in a script similar to that used on one of the scrolls found at Qumran, which was probably written in the first century BCE.⁷⁷ The four-letter name of God, however, is written in paleographic Hebrew, a more ancient

75. Giles Sparrow, *Cosmos* (London: Quercus, 2006) pp. 111-112.

76. Matitiah Tsevat, "The Meaning of the Book Job," Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Annual, vol. xxxvii, 1966, pp. 73-106.

77. Yardeni p. 175.

script, with dots above and below it to further mark the importance of the word. That was how this name was written in some of the Qumran scrolls.

Alternative Translations and Readings

(English translation of *Hakol Yodukha*)

All creation praises the One!

All reality glories in the One!

All existence chants in song:

...

The Power constantly whirling planets about the sun,
turning the earth to the darkness of night,
returning the earth to the new morning light,

...

May we move in You,
dance in You,
learn to live in You -
in our times of darkness,
in our times of light.

Or Chadash, Renewal siddur, 1991

(Interpretive version of *Hamei-ir La-aretz*, and *Hakol Yodukha*)

With the dawn nature's familiar shapes and colors emerge from the
darkness to delight us afresh with their variety and beauty. . .

Reborn with the day, we hail Thee, O God, who renewest continually the
work of creation. . .

And blessed be Thou, O Lord, for the light of understanding wherewith man
reads the meaning of nature and discovers the laws by which he can live.

The more man delves into the mysteries of creation, the more he marvels at
the order, the power, the wonder and the beauty of Thy universe. . .

This world contains all that man needs for the achievement of his happiness
and puts at his service power beyond measure. Would that he might use his
power aright and in conformity with Thy law!

Reconstructionist Siddur, 1945

You are praised who rolls out the rough, raw clay of the universe into
delicate vessels of light; and from nothing at all we could perceive in a world
that has turned old a shimmering new Creation right before our eyes made
this moment just for us. How much of life reveals Your presence? How
much Torah unfolds from each new flower, from each new wave that breaks

upon the sea! You are praised, who forms the clay that cloaks our lives, the delicate vessels which contain our light.

Richard Levy in *Mishkan Tefilah*, Reform, 2007

The Architect of the universe creates anew each day.

Therefore each day is an utterly new creation.

Take as much as you can from what each day has to offer.

Nachman of Bratslav in *Mishkan Tefilah*.

אס איז וואר גאט פר דיר אין קיין נאכט
אונ' די ליכט ביא דיר
אונ' דוא מאכסט דער לייכטן דיא גאנצי וואלט
פון דיין ליכט.

God, it is true, before you there is no night,
and the light is with you,
and you make the lights of the whole world
from your light.⁷⁸

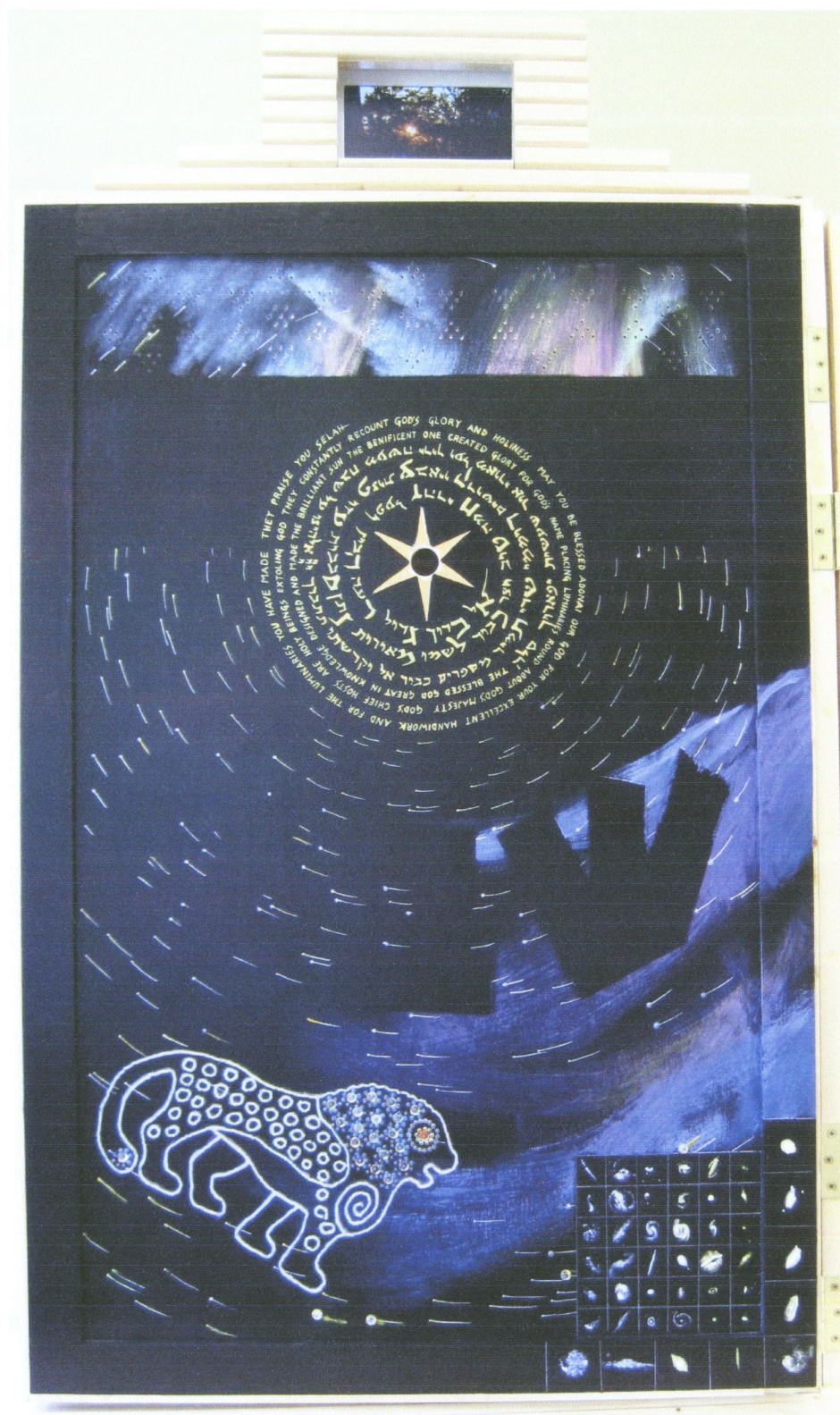
The beginning of a Yiddish *tekhineh* - a woman's supplicatory prayer - meant to be recited during *Yotzer Or* because women often did not know Hebrew.

All His works are truly lovely,
And are like blossoms to behold.
They live and abide for ever,
And to every need the whole universe responds.
All things are different one from another,
But of all He has made no thing is superfluous.
All give of their bounty one to another;
Who can gaze enough at their beauty,
At the sublime beauty of the pure firmament,
The very heaven overflowing with light?
... More words like these we will not add,
Our final word is: God is all.

A supplementary reading, Reconstructionist Siddur, 1945
Ben Sira⁷⁹ 42:22-43:1 and 43:27

78. Nahum N. Glatzer, *Language of Faith: A Selection from the most expressive Jewish Prayers* (New York: Schocken Books, 1967) p. 53.

79. *Sira*, or the *Wisdom of Sirach*, is a book from the Apocrypha - books that are included in the canon of the Catholic Church and of Eastern Christianity, but are not in the Hebrew or Protestant Bible. Joshua ben Sira was a Jewish scribe who probably lived in Jerusalem in the second century BCE.



PANEL 3

Panel 3 - The Blessed God

אֵל בָּרוּךְ גָּדוֹל יָדָעָה, הֵכִין וּפָעַל זֹהָרֵי חָמָה,
טוֹב יֵצֵר כְּבוֹד לְשִׁמּוֹ, מְאֹרוֹת נָתַן סְבִיבוֹתָּא,
פְּנוֹת צָבָאִיו קְדוֹשִׁים, רוֹמְמֵי שְׁדֵי תָמִיד מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֵל
וּקְדוּשָׁתוֹ.
תִּתְבָּרַךְ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל שֶׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יְדִידָה,
וְעַל מְאֹרֵי אוֹר שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ יְפָאָרוֹךְ סֵלָה.

*Eil barukh gadol de'ah, heikhin ufa'al zohorei chamah,
tov yatzar kavod lishmo, me-orot natan svivot 'uzo,
pinot tza-av qedoshim, romemei shadai tamid mesaprim
kevod eil uqdushato.*

*Titbarakh Adonai eloheinu 'al shevach ma'asei yadekha,
v'al me-orei or she'asita yefa-arukha selah.*

THE BLESSED GOD GREAT IN KNOWLEDGE DESIGNED AND MADE THE BRILLIANT SUN.
THE BENEFICENT ONE CREATED GLORY FOR HIS NAME,
PLACING LUMINARIES ROUND ABOUT GOD'S MAJESTY.
GOD'S CHIEF HOSTS ARE HOLY BEINGS THAT EXTOL GOD.
THEY CONSTANTLY RECOUNT GOD'S GLORY AND HOLINESS.
MAY YOU BE BLESSED ADONAI OUR GOD FOR YOUR EXCELLENT HANDIWORK
AND FOR THE LUMINARIES YOU HAVE MADE.
MAY THEY PRAISE YOU FOREVER.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQNdFl6DXXY> - 3minute long video with images of sun and moon as *Eil Adon* is sung with the words on screen line by line (no vowels though).

In this portion of *Yotzer Or* we have two alef-betical⁸⁰ acrostics, one for weekdays - *Eil Barukh* - and one for Shabbat - *Eil Adon*. It has been suggested that one

80. "Alphabet" refers to the first two letters of the Greek alphabet - alpha α and beta β. Here I'm using the term alefbetical which refers to the first two Hebrew letters: alef א and bet ב.

reason for using acrostics in prayer is to praise God with every available sound.⁸¹ All nature praises God, so too should humanity praise God with every letter, "for there is no end to thanking God for the gifts of life."⁸² Another reason is that it helps to remember them. Back in the days when everyone did not have access to a prayer book memorization was necessary. As the daily version is the one written out on this panel of the ark, we consider that one first.

Eil Barukh Gadol

The poem starts out with God making the luminaries and ends up with the creations praising God. Note the rhyme scheme in the Hebrew: aabbccb.⁸³ Sun, moon and stars praise God with the physical beauty of their light. The tone is set for all of God's creation to praise God. The luminaries are also the angelic hosts.⁸⁴ They praise God with words in addition to light as we will investigate further in Panel 5. In addition to their cognitive value the words have value simply in their sound and rhythm. Sometimes it is the sound of the words that carries the prayer. Using words for something other than their meaning may be familiar to us in relation to another part of the liturgy. When reciting the Mourners Kaddish, many of us are more aware of its rhythm and familiar sounds than the particular meaning of each word.

Placing luminaries around about God's majesty. This section of *Yotzer Or* and those in panels 4 and 5 may come from the mystical traditions of Judaism. It is possible that this phrase in particular refers to the primeval light that shines under God's throne.⁸⁵ If you reread Chapter One of Genesis, Torah's first creation story, you may notice that though light was created on the first day, the sun, moon, and stars were not created until the fourth. The Talmud speculates about this. In Chaggigah 12a we read:

"Rabbi Elazar said that with the light of the first day Adam could see everything from one end of the world to the other. But when God looked on the Generation of

81. Nossan Scherman, *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Weekday/Sabbath/Festival, Nusach Sefard* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, 1985) p. 90.

82. Harvey Fields, *B'chol Levavcha Commentary*, op. cit., p. 48.

83. The first two lines rhyme, the second two rhyme, the third two rhyme, and the last line rhymes with the second two.

84. Joseph Heinemann, Editor, *Literature of the Synagogue* (New York: Berhrman House, Inc., 1975) p. 216.

85. Israel Abrahams, *A Companion to the Authorized Daily Prayerbook* (New York: Hermon Press, 1966) p. 44.

the Flood and the Generation of the Dispersion [that of the Tower of Babel] God hid the light for the righteous to keep it away from the wicked. Another opinion: The first day's light *was* the light of the luminaries, but God did not suspend the sun, moon, and stars in the sky until the fourth day."

The Jewish mystical book, the Zohar, in the 13th century and the Baal Shem Tov⁸⁶ in the 17th century followed the first opinion offered in Chaggigah. They called the light of the first day *or ganuz*, hidden light, and they linked it with Torah. Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, the great grandson of the Baal Shem Tov added that we could find this hidden light in the stories of the Torah.⁸⁷

תָּמִיד מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֵל וְקֹדְשָׁתוֹ.

... *tamid mesaprim kevod eil ukdushato.*

They [the luminaries] constantly recount God's glory and holiness.

This line is strongly reminiscent of a line from Psalm 19.

הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד-אֵל

Hashamayim mesaprim kevod eil

The heavens recount God's glory.

This psalm is included in the Shabbat morning liturgy as part of *pesuqei d'zimra*, sections of song, before *barekhu*, the call to prayer. As has been mentioned before, the entire psalm is understood to be represented by this one verse. The message of Psalm 19 is a fundamental part of what I intend to convey by the artwork of the Ark, so here it is in full:

86. Baal Shem Tov was the nickname of Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, considered the founder of Chasidic Judaism.

87. Howard Schwartz, *Tree of Souls: The Mythology of Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) p. 337.

Psalm 19⁸⁸

¹For the leader. A psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God,
the sky proclaims His handiwork.

Day to day makes utterance,
night to night speaks out.

There is no utterance,
there are no words,
whose sound goes unheard⁸⁹

He placed in them a tent for the sun,
who is like a groom coming forth from the chamber,
like a hero, eager to run his course.

His rising-place is at one end of heaven,
and his circuit reaches the other;
nothing escapes his heat.

The teaching of the LORD is perfect,
renewing life;
the decrees of the LORD are enduring,
making the simple wise;

The precepts of the LORD are just,
rejoicing the heart;
the instruction of the LORD is lucid,
making the eyes light up.

The fear of the LORD is pure,
abiding forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true,
righteous altogether,
more desirable than gold,
than much fine gold;
sweeter than honey,
than drippings of the comb.

Your servant pays them heed;
in obeying them there is much reward.

Who can be aware of errors?

Clear me of unperceived guilt,
and from willful sins⁹⁰ keep Your servant;
let them not dominate me;
then shall I be blameless
and clear of grave offense.

May the words of my mouth and the prayer of my heart
be acceptable to You O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

88. JPS (Jewish Publication Society) translation.

89. or "their sound is not heard."

90. or "arrogant men."

This psalm can be divided up into three parts. Part 1) is about creation - specifically of the sun - and God is referred to as *Eil*. Part 2) is about Torah and teaching and Israel's name for God is used - the tetragrammaton, YHWH, the four letter name of God which we read as "Adonai." Part 3) is about the supplication of a particular individual to Adonai in light of Torah's message. The functioning of the natural world, especially the heavens, is linked to Torah and learning and a person's desire to live in the best way possible.

We might think it odd to juxtapose the sun and Torah but, as Nachum Sarna points out,⁹¹ throughout the Ancient Near East, long before the Hebrew Bible was written, the sun god was understood to be the source of law in both legal and liturgical documents. The prologue of the legislative record of Sumerian king Ur-Nammu (2112-2095 BCE) claims to operate "in accordance with the true word of Utu," the Sumerian sun god. The code of law of King Hammurabi of Babylon (ca. 1728-1686 BCE) included several references to Shamash the sun god, whose name means sun in Hebrew. Pheobus Apollo was sun god as well as the source and supervisor of law and order. An Assyrian hymn to Shamash touted that god both as the one who illuminates the world and dispels darkness, and as the one who enforces justice and morality.

The metaphors used for the sun are familiar from other Ancient Near Eastern literature. Shamash had a bride and the sun was described as "coming forth from its sleeping chamber" in Mesopotamian mythology.⁹² Shamash was also portrayed as a warrior and a runner. The metaphors used for Torah in Psalm 19 are very similar to those used in the solar cults. The word of the sun god in Mesopotamia was seen as pure and unchanging.⁹³ Psalm 19 says, "the decrees of the LORD are enduring, making the simple wise" and "the fear of the LORD is pure, abiding forever." The psalmist has transferred the divine characteristics of the sun gods onto Torah. Adonai, YHWH, the God of Israel, is kept above the fray. Gold, the sun's color as well as the metal, is here found to be inferior to Torah.

91. Nahum M. Sarna, *On the Book of Psalms: Exploring the Prayers of Ancient Israel* (New York: Schocken Books, 1993) p. 82.

92. Nahum M. Sarna, op.cit., p. 80.

93. Nahum M. Sarna, op.cit., p. 88.

Perhaps you can imagine that it was no easy thing to transfer a people's devotion from the sun - which was there in front of them apparently ruling their agricultural world - to a written scroll as a representative of an unseen God. We find clear references to the problem in Bible and in Mishnah. In Deuteronomy 4:19 Moses warns the people, "When you look up to the sky and behold the sun, the moon, and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them." In 2 Kings 21:3 we learn that King Menasseh of Judah (687-642 BCE) "bowed down to all the hosts of heaven and worshipped them." Even the Mishnah, representing the memory of Second Temple times, records, "Our fathers who were in this place had their backs to the Temple of the Lord, their faces turned eastward, and they worshiped the sun toward the east, but as for us our eyes are turned to the Lord."⁹⁴

The psalmist makes clear in verses 5-7 that the sun is under God's control. Sarna believed that this psalm was composed as a polemic against sun worship in the 7th century BCE.⁹⁵ Why worship the sun rather than the



power that created and controls it? This struggle to make the heavenly bodies, formerly seen as gods, firmly subordinate to God may be part of the reason why they are connected with angels.

In the 9th century Saadia Gaon recommended a longer form of *Eil Barukh* in which each letter of the alefbet was represented by at least two words.⁹⁶ The fact that

94. Mishnah Sukkah 5:4. All of these examples are from Sarna's book.

95. Nahum M. Sarna, op.cit., p. 74.

96. Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society,

he included an alternative suggests that there was still some latitude in his time about what words to use. *Eil Barukh* was not yet part of the standard liturgy.⁹⁷ This is part of our concern: to recognize that the prayer book and each prayer in it morphs. Even when the fluidity of the changes slowed with the invention of the printing press and the more widespread availability of prayer books, there was never one definitive edition of the prayer book. It has always been so that different communities follow different customs. More about this in the section on Panel 4.

Eil Adon

Eil Adon is the longer acrostic used on Shabbat mornings in place of *Eil Barukh*. Coming to its present form around the 8th century,⁹⁸ it was chanted by mystics intent on ascending to heaven to observe the angels' praise. Both its mystical connotations and its focus on angels have kept it from being included in some modern Jewish prayer books whose editors had a preference for rationalism. On the other hand it can be understood as a lovely poem without mystical leaning, which may be why it was included in the Reform Movement's *Gates of Prayer*. Part of the reason for its inclusion in *Mishkan Tefilah* probably has to do with renewed interest in mysticism.⁹⁹

God of all creation, You are blessed with each soul's breath.

Your greatness and goodness fill the world.

Knowledge and understanding surround your glory.

Holiest are You among the holy, seated in glorious splendor,
radiating purity and justice, bestowing loving-kindness.

In knowledge and understanding You created the heavenly lights,
giving them strength and power to bring light into the world;

full of splendor, they radiate brightness. The world is warmed by their flames.

We rejoice in their comings and goings, reflecting the will of their Creator.

Glory and honor they give to You, glowing praises to Your rule.

You call to the sun and it gives forth light; You set the patterns of the moon.

1993) p. 18.

97. Joseph Heinemann, Editor, *Literature of the Synagogue* (New York: Berhman House, Inc., 1975) p. 215.

98. Lawrence A., Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 10, Shabbat Morning Shacharit and Musaf* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007) p. 80.

99. Hoffman, Lawrence A. *My People's Prayer Book*, Vol. 10, op.cit., p. 83.

You are honored throughout the heavens with songs of glory and praise.

What is translated here as “Holiest are You among the holy, seated in glorious splendor” is in the Hebrew a clear reference to Ezekiel’s vision in Chapter One of his book of prophecy.¹⁰⁰ “The holy” are *chayot hakodesh* - holy animals or beings. “The splendor” in which God is seated is *hamerkavah* - the chariot. There is an entire school of mysticism called Merkavah Mysticism, which combs Ezekiel’s vision for clues to the nature of Creation and of God. There has always been a lot of controversy surrounding it, the fear being that the uneducated would take these words to be literal descriptions of God and the angels, as opposed to something more metaphorical. “We rejoice in their comings and goings” could also be translated “the luminaries [or angels] rejoice in rising and setting.”¹⁰¹ This latter translation is more appropriate for a mystical rendering. The heavenly bodies are animated and personified as willing servants of God. “You are honored throughout the heavens with songs of glory and praise” would be more literally rendered as “The entire army on high gives Him praise.”¹⁰²

Commentators often come up with more meaning than was ever intended by the composer of a piece. For example, the first letters of the words of the last line reveal to some a reference to the five visible planets: *SH[evach]* for *SHabtai* (Saturn); *N[ot’nim]* for *Nogah* (Venus); *K[ol]* for *Kokhav* (Mercury); *TS[’va]* for *TSedek* (Jupiter); and *M[arom]* for *Ma’adim* (the red one, Mars).¹⁰³ Through what was then thought of as the science of astrology the Rabbis understood the movements of the planets and stars to be directly connected to events in the lives of nations and individuals. “Brightness” or *nogah* is also the word for the planet Venus. In Hellenistic thought as well as in the Ancient Near East she was the goddess of love and war. Babylonians called her Ishtar, Canaanites Anat, Sumerians Inanna. Belief in astrology has persisted even among Jews. We even have preserved a Hebrew/Yiddish love charm which includes burying a mirror in the name of Venus.¹⁰⁴

100. Reuben Hammer, *Or Hadash: A Commentary on Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 2003) p. 108.

101. Ibid.

102. Lawrence A. Hoffman, *My People's Prayer Book*, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 80.

103. Lawrence A. Hoffman, *My People's Prayer Book*, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 83.

104. Lawrence A. Hoffman, *My People's Prayer Book* Vol. 1., op. cit., pp. 84-85.

There is one last comment on *Eil Adon* I cannot resist including. David Abudraham, of 14th century Spain, wrote a commentary on the prayer book. When it comes to *Eil Adon* he carefully counts the words. The first two lines of the Hebrew are comprised of 10 words. The next 9 lines have 8 words apiece. $9 \times 8 = 72$. The last verse has 12 words. 10, 72, 12. What associations do these numbers have? "By means of the most ineffable name of 72 letters, God gave the Torah (10 commandments) to the 12 tribes of Israel."¹⁰⁵ This is probably another case of creativity on the part of the commentator, unintended by the original author. Still, the fact that it is included in a respected prayer book commentary bolsters my own commentary on the prayer *Yotzer Or*. For the Rabbis who wrote this liturgy light was connected with both the luminaries and with Torah, which was meant to help us live better lives.

SYNTHESIS

The Hebrew letters have been supercharged with meaning. Not only does each one have a name with meanings and associations of its own, each letter has a numerical equivalent, and also stories and teachings associated with its shape. There was a Jewish doctor/astronomer in the 10th century in Italy named Shabbetai Donnolo. He wrote a commentary on *Sefer Yetzirah*, a book about mystical correspondences among the letters, and among the letters and the world and God. In his book Donnolo wrote: Before the creation of the world The Holy One played around with the twenty-two letters of the Torah.¹⁰⁶ Let us emulate God in this way. In that story God was concerned with the creation of the world. We are concerned with creating a world of Jewish knowledge.

105. Lawrence A. Hoffman, *My People's Prayer Book*, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 80.

106. Elliot R. Wolfson, "The Theosophy of Shabbatai Donnolo" in *Frank Talmage Memorial Volume 2* (Haifa: Haifa University Press, 1994) p.296.

Let it start with play.

Have each person in the group pick a favorite letter from the Hebrew alefbet. Look up that letter online -

<http://www.inner.org/hebleter>.

This is a site which reproduces some of the information contained in Yitzchak Ginsburgh's book *The Hebrew Letters: Channels of Creative Consciousness*. Another resource is Lawrence Kushner's *The Book of Letters - a Mystical Alef-bait*.

Draw an outline of that letter as large as possible on a piece of paper. (Alternately the leader can provide outlines of the letter available for free download at: <http://alefland.alefnet.biz/reading.html>.) Color with any colors you like either inside or outside of the letter. Use the space you have left open in which to write words or draw line drawings expressing what you have learned about the letter. The illustration on this page is a sketch for a birthday card for Tamuz's 30th birthday, as the letter lamed also carries the numerical value of thirty.

Each person is then invited to show and explain their work. Conclude with a discussion of how it has come to be that Hebrew letters have this extensive mythology attached to them, which is absent from the Latin letters we use to write in English. Hebrew was not originally a holy language. You will look in vain throughout *Tanakh* for a mention of the Hebrew language - the closest you will find is Judean.¹⁰⁷ Hebrew began to be referred to as holy when it was no longer the vernacular of the Jewish people.

30 LAMED • LMD • תלם • TEACHING
LEARNING • THE ONLY LETTER
WITH AN ASCENDER • LAMED
MADE WITH: A YUD - SYMBOL
EVERY BEGINNING, A VAV - OF
CONNECTION, AND A KAF - SYMBOL OF
THE HEART
LAMED IS BOTH TEACHER CON-
TRACTING AND FOCUSING TO REACH STUDENT
AND FOCUSING TO REACH TEACHER
IT IS THE STRETCHING TO REACH
RUNNING RUN AND RETURN OF ALL LIFE
FARTHEST TO THE
OF POSSIBILITY REACHES
FOR GOD THEN RETURNING TO ONE'S REACHING
IN THE WORLD TO DO ONE'S WORK PLACE
AS MAY BE - THEN RUNNING AGAIN AS WELL
TO REPLENISH A SOUL AWASH
IN TERROR OR WEARINESS MAY YOU
AND YOUR LAMED ALWAYS BE
LEARNING AND TEACHING RUNNING AND
RETURNING. FOR TAMUZ FROM JEAN 2006

107. Nehemiah 13:24. Nehemiah is in the Writings section of Tanakh.

Imagery in Panel 3

I decided to visually represent the non-cognitive use of the words - their sound value - by writing the words in a spiral. This makes them difficult to read. The idea is that the words are important in themselves, not in their meanings. We discussed the uses words can have other than their meaning above. The spiralling text is not a



random idea. It has its basis in Aramaic incantation bowls from various sites around Mesopotamia from the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries CE.¹⁰⁸ These bowls were often found upside down in the corner of a room - possibly to trap the demon from which they were providing protection. Sometimes a picture of the particular demon involved was found at the center of

the bowl. This panel has a star is at the center. It is meant to represent our own star, the sun. The intention is not to demonize the sun. Its energy, after all, is what keeps the vast majority of life on our planet going.¹⁰⁹ Rather, I was playing with the idea of words of prayer as magic, meant to have a physical impact on our world.

Included at the bottom of the panel is a chart of the different types of

108. All material about incantation bowls including this picture is from J. B. Segal, *Catalogue of the Aramaic and Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum* (London: British Museum Press, 2000)

109. The majority? Don't forget the colonies of life surrounding the deep sea hydrothermal vents where sulfur is the basis of life. Instead of photosynthesis, organisms there depend on the chemosynthesis of bacteria that derive their energy from sulfur compounds.

galaxies, each of which may be as much as several hundred thousand light years across. Though our astronomical knowledge has increased... astronomically in the past century, there were many observations, discoveries and theories about the structure of the universe from ancient times, through the Middle Ages and in early modern times. In Judaism the zodiac represented the ordering of the heavens by God. Here I limit myself to Leo, which could also be interpreted as the Lion of Judah.

Space Diptych

At this point, with only the first door open you see Panels 2 and 3 next to each other. They form what is technically called a diptych - two panels that each work on their own, yet together express something more than the sum of their parts. Together they form a composite picture of the night sky as seen through various human lenses - that of the Hubble Space Telescope, that of ancient astrologers, that of Jews trying to understand the nature of the patterns of the universe and the connections among them. We try to make sense of and control our environment as much as we can - through magic, through science, and through story. Though modern minds may no longer believe in the efficacy of magic, we are still sustained by the images of art and poetry.



PANEL 4

Panel 4 - Angels

וַתִּתְבָּרַךְ צוּרֵנוּ מַלְכֵנוּ וְגֹאֲלֵנוּ בּוֹרֵא קְדוֹשִׁים, יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמְךָ לְעַד
מַלְכֵנוּ, יוֹצֵר מְשָׁרְתִים, וְאֲשֶׁר מְשָׁרְתֵינוּ כֻּלָּם עוֹמְדִים בְּרוּם עוֹלָם,
וּמִשְׁמִיעִים בִּירָאָה יַחַד בְּקוֹל, דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם. כֻּלָּם
אֲהוּבִים, כֻּלָּם בְּרוּרִים, כֻּלָּם גְּבוּרִים, וְכֻלָּם עֹשִׂים בְּאֵימָה וּבִירָאָה
רְצוֹן קוֹנָם. וְכֻלָּם פּוֹתְחִים אֶת פִּיהֶם בְּקִדְשָׁה וּבִטְהָרָה, בְּשִׁירָה
וּבְזִמְרָה, וּמְבָרְכִים וּמְשַׁבְּחִים, וּמְפַאֲרִים וּמַעְרִיצִים, וּמְקַדִּישִׁים
וּמְמַלְכִים

אֶת שֵׁם הָאֵל, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל, הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא, קְדוֹשׁ הוּא. וְכֻלָּם
מְקַבְּלִים עֲלֵיהֶם עַל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם זֶה מִזֶּה, וְנוֹתְנִים רְשׁוּת זֶה לָזֶה,
לְהַקְדִּישׁ לְיוֹצֵרם בְּנִחַת רוּחַ, בְּשִׁפְהָ בְרוּרָה, וּבִנְעִימָה קִדְשָׁה, כֻּלָּם
כְּאֶחָד עוֹנִים וְאוֹמְרִים בִּירָאָה:

*Titbarakh tzureinu malkeinu v-go-aleinu borei qedoshim, yishtabach shimkha la'ad
malkeinu, yotzer meshartim, va-asher meshartav kulam 'omdim berum 'olam, umashmi'im
beyirah yachad beqol, divrei elohim chayim umelekh 'olam. Kulam ahuvim, kulam berurim,
kulam giborim, vekhulam 'osim be-eimah uveyirah retzon qonam. Vekhulam potchim et
pihem biqdushah uvetohorah, beshirah uvezimrah, umvarkhim umshabechim, umfa-arim
uma'aritzim, umaqdishim umamlikhim
et sheim ha-eil, hamelekh hagadol, hagibor vehanorah, qadosh hu. Vekhulam meqablim
'aleihem 'ol malkhut shamayim zeh mizeh, venotnim reshut zeh lazeh, lehaqdish leyotzram
benachath ruach, besafah vrurah uvin'imah qedoshah kulam ke-echad 'onim ve-omrim
beyirah:*

MAY YOU BE BLESSED YOU WHO FORM US, RULE US, AND REDEEM US, CREATOR OF HOLY BEINGS.
PRAISED BE YOUR NAME FOREVER, OUR SOVEREIGN, CREATOR OF MINISTERING BEINGS, ALL OF
WHOM STAND IN THE HEIGHTS OF THE UNIVERSE AND REVERENTLY PROCLAIM ALOUD IN UNISON
THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD AND EVERLASTING SOVEREIGN.
ALL OF THEM ARE BELOVED, ALL OF THEM PURE, ALL OF THEM MIGHTY.
WITH AWE AND REVERENCE THEY ALL PERFORM THE WILL OF THEIR CREATOR.
THEY ALL OPEN THEIR MOUTHS WITH HOLINESS AND PURITY, WITH SONG AND MELODY,
AS THEY BLESS AND PRAISE, GLORIFY AND REVERENCE, SANCTIFY AND ACCLAIM
THE NAME OF THE GREAT MIGHTY AWESOME HOLY SOVEREIGN.
THEY ALL ACCEPT THE RULE OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF HEAVEN ONE FROM THE OTHER
GRANTING PERMISSION TO ONE ANOTHER TO SANCTIFY THEIR CREATOR
IN SERENE SPIRIT WITH PURE SPEECH AND SACRED MELODY,
THEY ALL EXCLAIM IN UNISON AND WITH REVERENCE . . .

The texts of panels 4 and 5 fit together seamlessly. I have separated them to emphasize the words that are spoken. Here we are primarily concerned with the nature and purpose of these creations about to speak (though the discussion will necessarily go back and forth between). Sometimes the word translated here as “ministering beings” is translated as “ministering angels.” The trouble with the word “angel” is that in the modern American imagination it conjures images of beautiful people in long robes sprouting lovely white feather wings from their shoulders. First, let’s notice that in Ancient Near Eastern literature creatures other than humans praise God. Then we can go into what sort of a thing an angel might be.

I have a word which I would tell,
a matter I would recite to you,
a word of the trees and a whisper of the stones,
discourse of heaven with earth,
of the deeps with the stars,
of thunderbolts the heavens do not know,
a word which men do not know,
and which the earthly mass do not comprehend.

Thus begins a love message to a goddess in the Ugaritic epic of Baal and Anath¹¹⁰ from roughly the 13th century BCE. People have long imagined natural forces to possess our own power of speech and desire to praise. The poetic notion of parts of nature - trees, stone, heaven, earth - voicing praise for their maker is not strange to us. Recall the verse from Psalm 19 quoted above: "The heavens declare the glory of God, the sky proclaims His handiwork." So what are the "ministering beings" or "angels" of this section?

"Angel" is a problematic term in Bible. The word in Hebrew is מַלְאָךְ - *malakh*. It refers to a messenger or servant. Sometimes those messengers are clearly human as in the man Joseph meets in the field when looking for his brothers in Genesis 37:14-17. Sometimes the *malakh* is a man in one part of the story and something divine in the next, as in the story of Jacob wrestling with the man/angel/God in Genesis 32:25-31. Sometimes it is difficult to tell from the story when a *malakh* is speaking and when it's the voice of God, as in the *Akeidah* - the binding of Isaac in chapter 22 of Genesis. *Tanakh* even uses the word *malakh* for the forces of nature as in Psalm 104:4:

He made the winds His messengers (*malakhav*), fiery flames His servants.

Tanakh has other terms to describe what we have come to call angels (from the Greek word ἄγγελος, which also means messenger). In Isaiah 6:2 we find *seraphim*, which may refer to fiery creatures or perhaps winged serpents.¹¹¹ Chapter 1 of Ezekiel tells of *Chayot*, living creatures - which had human characteristics as well as those of other animals - and *ofanim*, wheels. This vision is later described as the Chariot or *Merkavah*, though the word is not used here. *Keruvim* are winged beings associated with the heavenly chariot in Ezekiel and with the Temple in Exodus 25:19-20. In the Exodus account they are made of gold and placed at either end of the cover over the Ark that holds the pact of the covenant. As you can see the modern greeting card angel has little in common with the beings described here, some of which were terrifying.

The Rabbis have more to say about angels. Some say¹¹² they are made of fire

110. Quoted in Nahum M. Sarna, *On the Book of Psalms: Exploring the Prayers of Ancient Israel* (New York: Schocken Books, 1993) p. 79.

111. Israel Abrahams, *A Companion to the Authorized Daily Prayerbook* (New York: Hermon Press, 1966) p. 44.

112. Babylonian Talmud, Chagigah 14a.

and of song and that they die and new ones are created each day. Their proof for this is that it says in Lamentations 3:23, "They are new every morning." There is also a Talmudic tradition that with every utterance God makes, a new angel is created, which is explained by the Psalms verse (33:6) "By the word of Adonai were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." According to other traditions some are made of fire and some of snow, but when they stand near each other neither is injured.¹¹³ Israel is more dear to God than angels for we praise Adonai every hour and the angels only do so once a day.¹¹⁴ Israel mentions God's name after only two words: *Shema Yisrael Adonai... Hear Israel, Adonai is our God* - whereas the angels only mention God's name after three words: *Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh Adonai... Holy, holy, holy, Adonai...* This brings up the place of the *Kedushah* - the Holy, holy, holy... - piece in the liturgy, which we'll get to in a moment. The main thing to remember about angels in a Jewish context is that they are entirely subservient to and obedient to God. We do not pray to angels, we pray to God. We do not rely on angels, we rely on God.¹¹⁵ So why do angels get so much attention?

Isaiah of God on the divine throne surrounded by heavenly creatures. So did Ezekiel. Elements from those two visions (which we will explore more in Panel 5) were integrated into a liturgical piece called the *Kedushah*. The section of *Yotzer Or* included in panels 4 and 5 is called the *Kedushah* - Holiness - because the first thing the creatures say is - "*Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh*" - "Holy, holy, holy." It is called the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* because there are other *Kedushahs*. Reform Jews are familiar with one version of the *Kedushah* in the *Amidah*.¹¹⁶ Other streams of Judaism have retained the *Kedushah* of the *Yotzer* as well as a third *Kedushah* called the *Kedushah D'Sidra*. All three have in common the words that are spoken. Scholars agree that these forms are not ancient. All three were probably in existence by the 3rd century CE,¹¹⁷ though not

113. Deuteronomy Rabba 5:12.

114. Babylonian Talmud, Chullin 91b.

115. Israel Abrahams, *A Companion to the Authorized Daily Prayerbook* (New York: Hermon Press, 1966) p. 44.

116. *Amidah* means "standing" prayer. It is also called *Tefillah* which means "prayer" and is the standard designation for this particular prayer. *Yotzer Or* is in a rubric of liturgy that centers on the *Shema* called "the Shema and its Blessings." It has its own version of *Kedushah*. *Amidah* or *Tefillah* is another large section of the service, which has a *Kedushah* of its own.

117. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern*

necessarily as an established part of the liturgy. We don't know which one came first.

The main differences between the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* and the *Kedushah* of the *Amidah* are as follows. During the former we are watching the angels carry out their praise, whereas in the latter we join them. However, this is a later tradition that resulted from the discussion over whether it was proper to recite the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* when praying alone. In effect we are joining in with the angels during both *Kedushahs*. The former is said sitting down,¹¹⁸ and the latter standing up to emphasize our own participation.

It was accepted that we do not recite the *Kedushah* of *Amidah* without a minyan.¹¹⁹ There is a general principle in the Talmud¹²⁰ that “כל דבר שבקדושה לא יהא - פחות מעשרה - nothing involving the sanctification of God may be recited in the presence of less than ten.”¹²¹ We do not know the origin of minyan, but it is likely that it was developed to support and justify the institution of public prayer.¹²² There were no printed texts and few manuscripts. The only way for people to learn the right prayers was for them to participate in public worship on a regular basis. The Rabbis taught that some prayers were only acceptable to God if said in public.¹²³ On the other hand, the mystics promoting the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* may have wanted to give people who had to pray in private the opportunity to recite a *Kedushah*,¹²⁴ as will be discussed further below.

In the 12th century Maimonides¹²⁵ was concerned to harmonize Torah and Philosophy. His was a rational approach. For him “natural forces and angels are identical.”¹²⁶ He understood that this would be difficult for many of his contemporaries

Commentaries, Vol. 1 The Sh'ma and Its Blessings (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1997) p. 63.

118. Lawrence A. Hoffman, *My People's Prayer Book, Vol. 1*, p. 64.

119. Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1993) p. 59.

120. Babylonian Talmud, Brachot 21b.

121. At that time a minyan was ten adult Jewish men. In modern times liberal congregations include women in the minyan.

122. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 189.

123. Ibid.

124. Ismar Elbogen, op. cit., p. 59.

125. Moshe ben Maimon in Hebrew, Moses Maimonides in Greek, the RaMBaM - acrostic for Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon.

126. Rambam's *The Guide for the Perplexed* - Part 2 Chapter 6, originally published in 1190. M. Friedlaender, Translator, *The Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2004) p.277.

to understand.

Say to a person ... that the Almighty sends His angel to enter the womb of a woman and to form there the foetus, he will be satisfied with the account; he will believe it, and even find in it a description of the greatness of God's might and wisdom; although he believes that the angel consists of burning fire, and is as big as a third part of the Universe, yet he considers it possible as a divine miracle. But tell him that God gave the seed a formative power which produces and shapes the limbs and that this power is called "angel," . . . and he will turn away; because he cannot comprehend the true greatness and power of creating forces that act in a body without being perceived by our senses.¹²⁷

Maimonides also understood the human imaginative faculty to be included in the list of things that could be called angels.¹²⁸ These ideas can be quite pleasing to a modern point of view.

Looking at the words themselves of this section, a few interesting points stand out.

כָּלֶם אֲהוּבִים, כָּלֶם בְּרוּרִים, כָּלֶם גִּבּוֹרִים, וְכָלֶם עֹשִׂים בְּאֵימָה וּבִירָאָה
רְצוֹן קוֹנָם. וְכָלֶם פּוֹתְחִים אֶת פִּיהֶם

*Kulam ahuvim, kulam berurim, kulam giborim, vekhulam 'osim be-eimah
uveyirah retzon qonam. Vekhulam potchim et pihem*

ALL OF THEM ARE BELOVED, ALL OF THEM PURE, ALL OF THEM MIGHTY.

WITH AWE AND REVERENCE THEY ALL PERFORM THE WILL OF THEIR CREATOR.

THEY ALL OPEN THEIR MOUTHS WITH HOLINESS . . .

This section is an incomplete acrostic. The words after כָּלֶם - *kulam*, all of them - begin with alef, beit, gimel, ayin, and peh. The prayer book of some traditions has a more complete acrostic,¹²⁹ but the whole alefbet does not need to be represented in order for the aesthetic appeal and the usefulness of the form to pertain.

127. Rambam, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, Part 2 Chapter 6. Friedlaender, op. cit., pp. 277-278.

128. Ibid.

129. In the Crimea and in Persia. Ismar Elbogen, Op. cit., p. 18.

וְכֻלָּם עֹשִׂים בְּאֵימָה וּבִירָאָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם.

vekhulam 'osim be-eimah uveyirah retzon qonam.

WITH AWE AND REVERENCE THEY ALL PERFORM THE WILL OF THEIR CREATOR

Some pre-modern prayer books have a different spelling tradition for the last word.¹³⁰ קוֹנָם *qonam*, their creator - is written קוֹנֵיהֶם - *koneihem*, which means “their creators.” Obviously, that seems to imply more than one God. It was disturbing enough that virtually all prayer books published in the modern period read קוֹנָם *qonam*, their creator. It seems the sort of thing that would have been changed much earlier. Commentators have explained the old spelling in two ways. The plural form is taken to mean that each angel is individually obedient to its creator, to God. So the plural refers to the multiplicity of angels not of God. The other explanation is that this is another instance of referring to God in a plural form to indicate respect, as in אֱלֹהִים - *Elohim*.¹³¹

וּמְבָרְכִים וּמְשַׁבְּחִים, וּמְפָאֲרִים וּמַעֲרִיצִים, וּמְקַדִּישִׁים וּמְמַלְכִים אֶת שְׁמֶךָ

umvarkhim umshabechim, umfa-arim uma'aritzim, umaqdishim umamlikhim et sheim

AS THEY BLESS AND **PRAISE, GLORIFY** AND REVERENCE, SANCTIFY AND ACCLAIM
THE NAME

This list of verbs is similar in some ways to those in a midrash describing Moses praising God on the shores of the Red Sea.¹³²

אמר לפניו משה ומה עלי לעשות אמר לו הרים את מסך וגו' אתה תהא מרומם
ומפאר ומשבח ונותן שיר ושבח וגדולה ותפארת והודייה והלל למי שהמלחמות
שלו.

130. Nosson Scherman, *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Weekday/Sabbath/Festival, Nusach Sefard*. (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, 1985) p. 91.

131. Ba'er Heteiv 59:1. Ba'er Heteiv is a commentary on the Shulchan Arukh written by Rabbi Yehudah Ashkenazi in 1752. The Shulchan Arukh is the code of Jewish law or halakhah written by Joseph Karo in the 16th century. Together with its commentaries the Shulchan Arukh is generally considered to be the standard for present Jewish legal practice. As you see, Jewish law included such things as the correct words for prayers and explanations about them.

132. Reuben Hammer, *Or Hadash: A Commentary on Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 2003) p. 110. Mekhilta b'Shallach - 4.

(God then said to Moses: Moses, My children are in distress, the sea forming a bar and the enemy pursuing, and you stand so long praying?) Moses said before Him: What then should I be doing? Then He said to him: "Lift up your rod [and hold out your arm over the sea and split it, so that the Israelites may march into the sea on dry ground. Exodus 14:16]" - you should be exalting, **glorifying** and **praising**, uttering songs of laudation, adoration and glorification, of thanksgiving and praise to Him in whose hands are the fortunes of war.

(Remember this image of God as a master of war for Panel 6.) There is an interesting tension in this midrash between action and prayer. On the one hand, Moses is berated for praying so long and God tells him to act. On the other hand, included in the desired action is both lifting the rod and praising God. In other words, our praise of God in the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* - or, technically, our witnessing the angels doing so - has saving power when combined with action. At the very least it is a reminder of a very important time in our story when human action was required before God performed the saving miracle.

In most prayer books there is an odd line break between **וּמַמְלִיכִים** - *umamlikhim*, "and acclaim" - and **אֶת שְׁמֵוֹ** - *et sheim*, "the name." The Ashkenazi custom is for there to be a noticeable pause between these two words and it eventually became reflected on the printed page of the prayer book. If we spoke the words indistinctly it would sound like: **מֵת וּמַמְלִיכִים** - *umamlichim meit*, they acclaim the dead.¹³³ It seems likely that it was emphasized so as to differentiate ourselves from Christians. From a non-Christian perspective it could be said that Christians **מַמְלִיכִים** crown a **מֵת** dead man as their lord.¹³⁴ Another way to mark this pause - aside from a line break - is with a period after *mamlichim*.¹³⁵ This is a particularly poignant example of the care that has been given to what could be seen as minor details of prayer.

133. Naphtali Wieder, *Hitgabshut Nusach Hateflah bamizrach uvama'arav* - The Crystallization of Prayer Nusach in the East and the West (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute for the Study of Jewish Communities in the East, Yad Izhak ben Zvi and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1998) p. 81.

134. Mordechai Kornfeld - The Weekly Internet Parasha - Page.
<http://www.shemayisrael.co.il/parsha/kornfeld/archives/ekev.htm>

135. Sefardi Spanish Portuguese Siddur, published in New York City in 1941.

הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל, הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא

hamelekh hagadol, hagibor vehanorah

THE GREAT MIGHTY AWESOME HOLY

This is Moses' description of God from Deuteronomy 10:17. "Sovereign" is added because *Yotzer Or* is leading up to our recitation of the *Shema*, which is the proclamation of God's sovereignty.¹³⁶ Just as all the heavenly beings, including the sun, take on the "rule of the sovereignty of heaven" in the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer*, so shall the people in the congregation do in the *Shema*.¹³⁷

Though angels and ascending to the seventh heaven in prayer did not fit the rationalism of early Reform Jews, some of the angelology persisted in Reform prayer books. There is a commentary in the Hamburg Temple prayer book of 1941 that though *ofanim* and *chayot haqodesh* were translated as "figures of light," that was a metaphor for "powers of nature" à la Maimonides.¹³⁸ According to Judith Plaskow we moderns tend to "enlarge the concept of the natural to include the sacred" rather than imagine a separate world of supernatural beings.¹³⁹

It was particularly interesting for me to explore all these ideas about angels. I have never been attracted to the concept of angels, generally the opposite. When I hear about someone who claims that their guardian angel saved them from a potentially horrible accident, it repulses me. What about the 900 other people who died that very day in car crashes? Were their guardian angels asleep, or those people did not deserve guardian angels, or what?

The description of angels celebrating God's sovereignty grows out of, and adds to, our sense of wonder of our world. Once, lying in the grass looking up past a tall tree, to a hawk circling, to the clouds beyond - it occurred to me that all these details provided perspective which enlarged my conception of space. Without them the sky seemed high, but with their visual clues I could perceive so many more layers of

136. Reuben Hammer, *Or Hadash*, op. cit., p. 100.

137. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book*, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 62.

138. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book*, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 60.

139. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book*, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 64.

distance, adding to the grandness of the sky. The image of angels praising God may do something similar for us. God is not just some being floating about in the clouds. We imagine these massive beings made of light energy praising God in the high heavens - throughout the vast reaches of space - and yet God is somehow beyond them.

Art and poetry remind us that we do not need to believe in their literal existence to allow the idea of angels to spark our imaginations. We use language in creative ways to express things that are not factually true: the sun rising or setting, breezes murmuring or caressing.¹⁴⁰ Rabbi David Teutsch, President of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, wrote:

The tradition leaves ample room for each generation to understand angels as it will, whether as natural forces or as revealing moments in our lives, the divine in people we meet, or manifestations of the goodness in our world or in the inner workings of the human heart.¹⁴¹

SYNTHESIS

THEY ALL ACCEPT THE RULE OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF HEAVEN ONE FROM THE OTHER
GRANTING PERMISSION TO ONE ANOTHER TO SANCTIFY THEIR CREATOR

The writers of the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* have imagined the angels accepting heaven's rule from each other, rather than from the sovereign, which seems more natural. Why might this be so? Why do they need permission from anyone and specifically from each other to sanctify God? What does it mean to sanctify God? We won't answer these questions just yet, but let them float in the air as we act out the angels' exchange in this blessing dance, or moving prayer, from a Renewal publication.

BLESSING DANCE

Go over the words and motions together as a large group and then form pairs. Play some quiet wordless music that would be appropriate for a meditative setting.

140. Reuven Hammer, *Entering Jewish Prayer: A Guide to Personal Devotion and the Worship Service* (New York: Schocken, 1994) p. 140.

141. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book, Vol. 1*, op. cit., p. 61.

(My favorite music for meditation is Michael Strassfeld's *Songs to Open the Heart: Contemplative Ninnunim* and anything by Bustan Abraham - an Israeli group; but any contemplative music will do.)

Find a partner. One person will be active and give the blessing. The other will be receptive, standing to receive. In unison all the givers recite the prayer together and perform the motions.

Prayer	Dance
With love	Put hand to your heart
I grant you permission to sanctify your Maker	Make a grand bow Move hands up the front of your partner, palms up - lifting the energy.
with a joyous spirit	Jump up & clap hands above head.
with pure speech	Hands flow from your mouth to theirs
and with sacred melody	Flowing arms surround the receiver.

Now switch - the receiver is now the giver and vice versa.

Then find new partners and continue. Feel free to invent new movements.

Or Chadash, 1991 by Anne Toth & Miriam Minkoff

We have moved through this dance with several people. We have played two roles - both giving and receiving blessing. Now let's synthesize the experience.

- First, what are your immediate reactions? (People may have been very uncomfortable with something outside their realm of experience. They may also have been surprised by some positive reactions to this new experience.)
- What is it that we do in a prayer service that is equivalent to the angels' accepting God's sovereignty and sanctifying their Maker? According to the Rabbis it is saying the *Shema*. Do you feel we need permission from each other to recite the *Shema*? Explain.
- We say the *Shema* in community in morning and evening services. Many people follow the custom of saying the *Shema* before sleeping. It is also customary for it to

be the last thing a Jew says before dying. Can you think of any benefit to be gained from granting or receiving permission for reciting the *Shema*? (Though it is possible for any individual's practice to be unique and have personal meaning, the meaning is compounded when it is shared by an entire community over many centuries and across geographical areas. The process of granting and receiving permission may be part of forming this community.)

- What might we gain if we spent more time learning about each other's concepts of God - both personally, and as a community? (At the very least we could expand our own concepts of God. In addition we would build relationships in the community.)
- What are some of the differences between public and private prayer for you personally?
- Please explain any other insights you have discovered.

Imagery in Panel 4

Maimonides' understanding of angels as representative of natural forces is the most uplifting thing I've read about angels. I had to look up what a natural force is besides gravity. Technically, the four natural forces are: gravity, electromagnetism, strong nuclear force, and weak nuclear force. Electromagnetism was covered in the commentary on Panel 1. The strong nuclear force is the strongest of the four over the shortest range. It holds together the protons and neutrons in the nucleus of an atom. The weak nuclear force is responsible for radioactive decay. Of course Maimonides did not know about any of these and was thinking more broadly anyway in terms of imagination and life. Once I had that rational peg to hang my hat on, so to speak, I was very much freed up to play with some of the other images that have been connected with angels in Jewish texts. I love the image of all of the natural forces acting in harmony to perform the will of their maker, that the universe is one immense song of

praise. The big central swirl is meant to convey the idea of angels made of water and snow and fire and song swirling around God's glory, here represented by a light spot. Still, you notice that darkness is part of the picture as well.

The myriad green leaves comes in as my modern anti-militaristic reconception of *יְיָ צְבָאוֹת* - *Adonai tzeva-ot*, God of hosts - as the God of all the things that come in large quantities, hosts. God of grains of sand, God of mayflies, God of leaves. Technically this term does not appear until Panel 5. Yet because the text of these two panels is really one piece of text which I have split up in my rendering, I have no qualms about letting the imagery and words spill over from one panel into the next.

I even got comfortable enough to want to include a few humanoid angels. That is, after all, the way angels are most often rendered in Jewish art. The one in the upper left is from a 13th century German Jewish manuscript.¹⁴² All of the faces of people and angels were originally consciously left blank in this manuscript. Probably the artist was observing the Commandment that says in part (Exodus 20:4-6)

"You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image or any likeness of what is in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth."

Someone at a later period - who didn't understand why all the drawings were apparently unfinished - went through and drew in faces on many of the people. It was done with black ink instead of the original brown and not very skillfully. It's rather like drawing a moustache on the Mona Lisa, though without the ironic intent. The sun with the sad face at the top of the page is borrowed from a 15th century illuminated Hebrew Bible from the Iberian Peninsula. For me personally, though of course not historically, it is a symbol of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492.

The two angels in the lower left are taken from the Sarjevo Haggadah. They seem to me vaguely threatening not even having heads to leave the face off of. It is important for me that prayer - every prayer service, and even every prayer within it - should include anguish as well as joy. Holding the two together at once may not be possible, but the attempt feels necessary in the interest of honesty and justice. I never

142. The Laud Machzor from southern Germany around 1290. Bezalel Narkiss, *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, Ltd., 1969) plate 27.

want my prayer to be in effect, "Please God don't let me suffer as those people." Each panel has some reference to the parts of life that are difficult or impossible to praise God for.

The Hebrew script used is taken from an amulet from the 7th or 8th century.¹⁴³ As in Panel 3, I wanted to bring out the incantational quality of parts of *Yotzer Or*. It is even more appropriate for this part of the prayer than the portion in Panel 3. Here the synonyms are piled up on top of each other. One who prefers to concentrate on the meaning of the words might decide that silence is preferable to this excessive verbosity.

Alternative Translations and Readings

And the God of glory is wondrous
with the most perfect light of knowledge
in all the wondrous sanctuaries;
the godlike spirits are round about
the abode of the King of truth and righteousness.
All its walls perfect light...

From the Dead Sea Scrolls¹⁴⁴

... all the powers of nature are Thy ministers ...
Grant, O God, that our gratitude for all the beauty, order and power
that reveal Thee in nature impel us to serve Thee.

Reconstructionist Siddur 1945

143. Ada Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew Script: History, Paleography, Script Styles, Calligraphy & Design* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1997) p. 205.

144. Donald W. Parry, & Emmanuel Tov, Editors, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader, Part 5, Poetic and Liturgical Texts* (Boston: Brill 2004) p. 381.



PANEL 5

Panel 5 - Holy Holy Holy

קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, יְיָ צְבָאוֹת, מְלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.
וְהַאוֹפָנִים וְחַיּוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרָעַשׁ גָּדוֹל מִתְנַשְּׂאִים לַעֲמֹת שְׂרָפִים,
לַעֲמֹתָם מִשְׁבָּחִים וְאוֹמְרִים:
בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

Qadosh, qadosh, qadosh, Adonai tzva-ot, melo khol ha-aretz kevodo.

Veha-ofanim vechayot haqodesh bera'ash gadol mitnasim le'umat srafiim, le'umatam meshabechim ve-omrim:

Barukh kevod Adonai mimqomo.

HOLY HOLY HOLY IS ADONAI OF HOSTS, THE FULLNESS OF ALL THE WORLD IS GOD'S GLORY.

THEN THE OFANIM AND THE HOLY BEINGS, RISING WITH A LOUD SOUND TOWARD THE SERAPHIM,
RESPOND WITH PRAISE AND SAY:

BLESSED IS THE PRESENCE OF GOD FROM GOD'S PLACE

Now we come to what the angels say. There is one verse from Isaiah and one from Ezekiel.¹⁴⁵ Isaiah had a vision recorded in Isaiah chapter 6. He saw God sitting on a very high throne with God's robes filling the Temple. In 6:3 the *seraphim*, the fiery or astral¹⁴⁶ beings, say:

קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, יְיָ צְבָאוֹת, מְלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

Qadosh, qadosh, qadosh, Adonai tzva-ot, melo khol ha-aretz kevodo.

HOLY HOLY HOLY IS ADONAI OF HOSTS, THE FULLNESS OF ALL THE WORLD IS GOD'S GLORY.

145. Isaiah and Ezekiel are two of the major literary prophets. In other words they each have a large book named after them in the Prophets section of Tanakh.

146. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book - Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 10, Shabbat Morning Shacharit and Musaf* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007) p. 80.

The whole place is shaking and filling up with smoke. Isaiah is terrified at his own unworthiness to be witnessing all this.

Qadosh, often translated as holy, is a word that is complicated by varying usage over time. Biblically it meant something close to separate. It referred to God, but it also referred to how the People of Israel were to conduct themselves. The Israelites were supposed to separate themselves from the rest of humanity, not to become in any way divine, just different, in imitation of God. God is the ultimate instance of “separate” or “different.”

Tzeva (the singular of *tzeva-ot*) in Bible usually means an army. The heavenly host may have originally been the stars seen as organized for battle. As in Judges 5:20, “The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.”¹⁴⁷ Though the heavenly hosts themselves had been objects of worship, they are seen here as servants of Adonai. The image of the heavens serving God also serves to magnify God's greatness.

THE FULLNESS OF ALL THE WORLD IS GOD'S GLORY.

Heaven and earth comprise the whole of creation. As the heavens serve God, so does all the earth. God's glory - כְּבוֹדָּו *kevodo* - refers to God's presence or a manifestation of God's presence, as in the pillar of cloud in the wilderness or the cloud that filled the *Mishkan*, the Tabernacle. Exodus 40:34 - “(When Moses had finished the work,) the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence (וְכָבוֹד - *ukhevod*) of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.”

Now we turn to Ezekiel. Ezekiel's visionary experience is quite extended. At one point, after having watched the *chayot* and *ofanim* described above, he is carried away by a wind or a spirit. Behind him he hears (Ezekiel 3:12) קוֹל רָעַשׁ גָּדוֹל *kol ra'ash gadol*, a great roaring sound, within which he heard the following words:

בָּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ.

Barukh kevod Adonai mim-qomo.

BLESSED IS THE PRESENCE OF GOD FROM GOD'S PLACE.

You may notice that this doesn't make any particular sense. Some scholars have

147. Israel Abrahams, *A Companion to the Authorized Daily Prayerbook* (New York: Hermon Press, 1966) p.43.

thought that perhaps the text was meant to say בָּרוּךְ “when [the Presence of God] rose...”¹⁴⁸ This emendation is bolstered by a similar phrase in Ezekiel 10:4 - וַיָּרֶם - בָּבוֹד - But when the Presence of the Lord moved (or rose)... The same verb is used with *kevod Adonai*. The emended phrase indicates God's Presence, or Shekhinah, leaving its place in the Temple to accompany Ezekiel and the Israelites on their exile to Babylon.¹⁴⁹

In order to harmonize the two accounts of angelic praise given in the books of Isaiah and Ezekiel, the Rabbis made a sort of midrash.¹⁵⁰ They worked them both together into a duet of choirs. First the *seraphim* sing their song of praise, then the *chayot* and *ofanim* rise up toward them with a great roaring sound and sing their part. It all fits into *Yotzer Or* perfectly because the sun, moon, and stars created by God are God's obedient servants as are the angels that praise God every morning. The distinction - if there is one - between the luminaries and the angels is very blurry.

It was mentioned earlier that in the vision of Ezekiel Chapter One a moving throne or pedestal on which God rides or sits was described as a chariot, or *merkavah*. Mystical interest grew up around this vision as it offered so many tantalizingly suggestive details about heavenly beings. The roots of Merkavah literature may reach as far back as the Amoraim (Rabbis of the 3rd and 4th centuries) and even the Tannaim (Rabbis of the 1st and 2nd centuries).¹⁵¹ It would appear that Merkavah mysticism was not confined to the Rabbis. There is a mention of the chariot in the literature from Qumran, specifically in Songs for the Sabbath Sacrifice.¹⁵²

The [*keru*]vim prostrate themselves before him and bless. As they rise, a whispered divine voice [is heard], and there is a roar of praise. When they drop their wings there is a [whisper]ed divine voice. The *keruvim* bless the image of the

148. Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992) p. 358.

149. Reuven Hammer, *Or Hadash*, op. cit., p. 110.

150. Joseph Heinemann, Editor, *Literature of the Synagogue* (New York: Berhrman House, Inc., 1975) p. 19.

151. Ismar Elbogen, op. cit., p. 60.

152. It is unclear who the people who lived in Qumram were exactly, but they represented a stream of Israelite religion distinct from Rabbinic thought. There were various reactions to the traumas of foreign occupation and the Destruction of the Temple. Rabbinic tradition became the basis of Judaism.

throne-chariot above the firmament, they praise the [majesty] of the luminous firmament beneath his seat of glory.¹⁵³

The Book of 3 Enoch, also known as *Sefer Hekhalot Rabba*, was written anywhere from the 1st century CE to the 11th century, depending on whose scholarship you follow.¹⁵⁴ It has quite a bit to say about angels chanting the *Kedushah* :

All the ministering angels first go down into the River of Fire and bathe themselves in the fire... and dip their tongues and their mouths seven times... they stand in four rows over against the throne of glory in every heaven.¹⁵⁵

When the ministering angels utter the "holy" all the pillars of the heavens and their bases shake... the foundations of the earth... shudder... the constellations and the stars are alarmed¹⁵⁶

When the ministering angels recite the "holy" all the sacred names... on the throne of glory fly off like eagles and encompass and surround the Holy One... The angels of the host, the fiery ministers, the ophanim of power, the cherubim of the Shekina, the holy creatures, the seraphim... fall prostrate three times and say - *barukh kevod Adonai mim-komo*.¹⁵⁷

When they recite the "holy" - *kedushah* - properly they are crowned with starry crowns. When they do not they are devoured by a fire from God's little finger, who then creates new ones with a word.¹⁵⁸

A huge importance has been placed upon the *Kedushah*. Witnessing the angels' praise liturgically was a powerful experience that seems to have enjoyed some following in the late Second Temple period,¹⁵⁹ though we do not know the

153. Martin S. Jaffee, *Early Judaism* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1997) p. 193. The parts between brackets are physical gaps in the text that have been filled in with the educated guesses of the scholars who worked on them.

154. James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (New York: Doubleday, 1983) pp. 225-229.

155. 3 Enoch 36:1-2, Charlesworth, p. 289.

156. 3 Enoch 38:1, Charlesworth, p. 290.

157. 3 Enoch 39, Charlesworth, pp. 290-291.

158. 3 Enoch 40, Charlesworth, p. 291.

159. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 200.

extent of its use among the general population. Alternatively it may have been a part of the response to the loss of the Second Temple. With God's dwelling place destroyed there might have been a need to find a new way to feel close to God fulfilled by the *Kedushah*.¹⁶⁰

The *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* may have originated either in the Land of Israel or in Babylon, but it became part of the daily prayer service only in Babylon.¹⁶¹ It was recited in at least some places in the land of Israel, but only in Shabbat or festival services.¹⁶² There were probably many different versions of it used in different ways in different locales especially in the early stages of its development.¹⁶³ The *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* is mentioned several times in the minor Talmudic tractate *Soferim*, so its insertion in *Yotzer Or* had to have happened before that book was written¹⁶⁴ - around the middle of the 8th century CE.

The mystics' understanding of cosmology included the image of a number of heavens (seven or eight) with angels surrounding God seated on a throne of glory (or chariot or *merkavah*) at the apex of it all. Their goal was to rise out of their bodies through all these heavens in a psychic journey and join the angelic choruses praising God.¹⁶⁵ The journey was dangerous. The piling up of synonyms one on top of the other in the *Kedushah* probably had two functions. It was meant to circumvent the cognitive functioning of the mind, to induce an ecstatic or trancelike state.¹⁶⁶ In addition it may have included phrases or incantations that - when pronounced properly - would keep the worshiper sane and alive on the journey.¹⁶⁷ The danger involved for the uninitiated could have been why the Talmud says very little about the *Kedushah*.¹⁶⁸ Not discussing its meaning and proper observance - because they were so complicated - would have kept those details confined to the educated elite. Regular Jews would just pray the

160. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 199.

161. Ibid.

162. Joseph Heineman, *Prayer in the Talmud*, (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977) p. 232.

163. Joseph Heineman, *Prayer in the Talmud*, op. cit., p. 233.

164. Ismar Elbogen, op. cit., p. 59.

165. Lawrence Hoffman, *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979) p. 60.

166. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book - Vol. 1*, op. cit., p. 51.

167. Lawrence Hoffman, *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service*, op. cit., p. 60.

168. Joseph Heineman, *Prayer in the Talmud*, op. cit., p. 232.

prayer as it was led in the context of the synagogue worship service. There also were Rabbis who were not interested in the mystical tradition who wanted to curb its spread.¹⁶⁹

The oldest reference to *Kedushah* we can find in talmudic literature is in the Tosefta, which is a sort of companion volume to the Mishnah from around the 2nd century CE. Here Rabbi Judah has the custom of reciting "Holy, holy, holy..." and "Blessed is the glory..." along with the prayer leader.¹⁷⁰ Tosefta notes an interesting discussion:¹⁷¹ "Rabbi Yehuda said: Anyone who has not seen the heavenly luminaries may not lead the public recitation of Shema. They said to him: Many have expounded on the chariot who have never seen it." This discussion was about whether or not the person who led the recitation of *Yotzer Or* could be blind. It also implies that the *Kedushah* and its themes of light and angels is integral to the Shema.¹⁷² At first it seems to have only been part of communal service, not private prayer.¹⁷³

In *Sofrim*,¹⁷⁴ that late tractate from the Land of Israel mentioned above, there is a ruling that a minor may not recite the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* when praying alone, but an adult qualified to lead public prayer may recite it privately. The implication is that the child would not have the understanding to do it properly when alone. The adult would understand that when alone he should merely describe the praise without trying to participate in it.¹⁷⁵ It has always been clear that the *Kedushah* of the *Amidah* should only be pronounced in public. When in private we have an alternate reading.¹⁷⁶

There were several rulings in the Gaonic period against reciting *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* alone. In this period there weren't any rulings that said it was allowable. The fact that there were multiple rulings against it suggests that it was something people continued to do in spite of rabbinic disapproval.¹⁷⁷ The Rabbis who opposed private

169. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 200.

170. Tosefta Berakhot 1:9.

171. Tosefta Megillah 3:28.

172. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 196, note 21.

173. Ruth Langer, op. cit., pp. 200-201.

174. Masekhet Sofrim 16:8, quoted in Langer, Ruth, op. cit., p. 201.

175. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 202.

176. You are holy, Your name is holy, and those who are holy praise You every day. Blessed are You, Adonai, Holy Sovereign. (*Mishkan Tefilah* p. 80)

177. Ruth Langer, op. cit., pp. 204-205

recitation of the *Kedushah* were mystics. To them the communal nature of it was very important and would only be diluted if individuals continued to recite it in private.

Many alternatives were provided for reciting the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* in private, by leaving out the actual words of the angels, for example. This may have been part of the problem. With no prayer book, having to rely on memory, a person would have a hard time remembering one of many alternatives. One of Saadia Gaon's suggestions for reciting *Yotzer* when praying alone leaves out the *Kedushah* entirely.¹⁷⁸ It is similar to, but even shorter than, the present day Reform version of *Yotzer Or*. One Ashkenazi custom from the early medieval period was to only recite the initial words of the angels' praise - *Kadosh* and *Barukh* - when praying alone. Others said the whole thing. Others omitted the whole thing. Rambam forbade private recitation of *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* in his code, *Mishneh Torah*. Later in life his personal practice changed. His understanding of philosophy led him to believe that humans could not participate in any real way in so-called angelic liturgy.¹⁷⁹

Rulings about whether or not one could recite the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* alone went back and forth over the centuries. Regular folks continued to do what they'd always done - mostly they said the same thing in public and in private.¹⁸⁰ Finally, Yosef Karo wrote the *Shulchan Aruch* and managed to harmonize it all.¹⁸¹

Some say one praying alone recites the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* because it's only a narrative description. Others say one praying alone skips it. Some say you should recited it [the quotes from Isaiah and Ezekiel] with the cantillation of Torah study. The minhag¹⁸² is to say it when praying alone.

His innovation is to use the chanting melody for reading Scripture, instead of that used in a prayer service, when alone. This seems to have kept everyone happy since then.

Rambam's 12th century commentary on the *Kedushah*, specifically on the differences between what Isaiah saw and what Ezekiel saw, was that they saw the same thing. Isaiah's account has less detail because he was more accustomed to

178. Ruth Langer, op. cit., Appendix, p. 255.

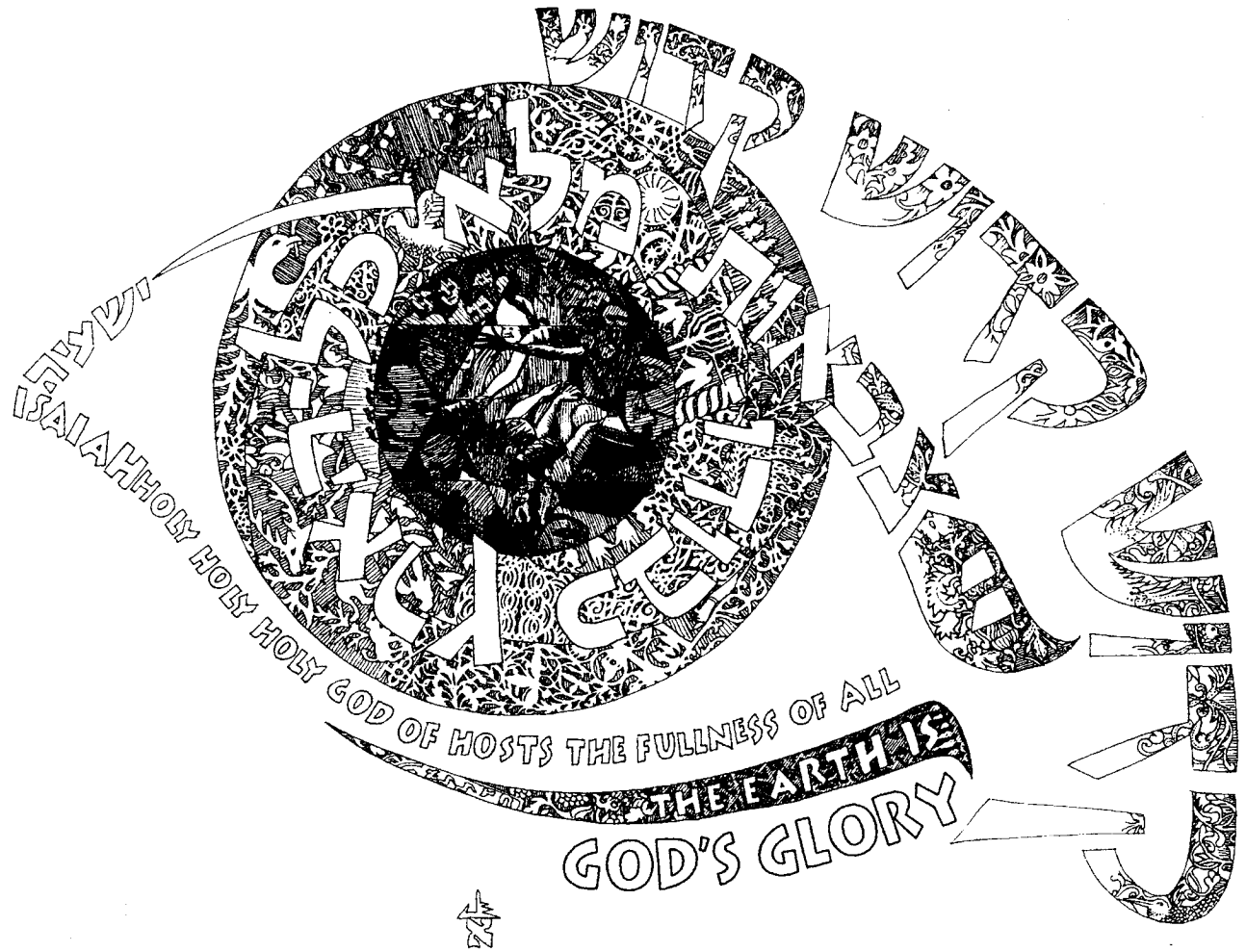
179. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 225.

180. Ruth Langer, op. cit., 214.

181. *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orech Chayim* 59:3.

182. generally accepted custom

prophecy and "did not consider it necessary to communicate it to others as a new thing,



especially as it was well-known to the intelligent.”¹⁸³ Rabbi Isaac the Blind and Asriel of Gerona - mystics roughly contemporary with Rambam - explained something about how the *Kedushah* affected, the supernal world. There arose an idea of different aspects or emanations of God called the *Sefirot*. These range from the one closest to our own experience, *Malchut* or majesty, through several more all the way to *Keter* or crown.¹⁸⁴ There are ten in all. Rabbi Isaac the Blind said that the first “Holy” in the *Kedushah* represented the *sefirah* of *Chesed* or Mercy, the second “holy” represented the *sefirah* of *Gevurah* or Judgment, and the third that of *Tiferet* or Beauty.¹⁸⁵ Reciting

183. Rambam's *The Guide for the Perplexed*, Part 3 Chapter 9. Friedlaender, op. cit., p. 442.

184. See the Extended Notes for a chart of the *Sefirot*.

185. Isaiah Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1980) p. 969.

the prayer would unite these emanations or aspects of God. Azriel of Gerona had a different system so that reciting *Kedushah* united all ten sefirot. The medieval mystics believed that Jewish actions had the power to damage or repair both this world and the world above. Different parts of the prayer service accomplished different tasks. The world of the angels, specifically, was restored by proper recitation of the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer*.¹⁸⁶

SYNTHESIS

Even if you do not belong to a congregation that prays the *Kedushah* of *Yotzer* it is likely you will encounter the *Kedushah* in the *Amidah*. So let's explore it a bit. After all that intense discussion of what angels and their praise have meant over the centuries to different Jews, it is time for a light-hearted conclusion.

Put up a white sheet with lights behind it so that the people behind the sheet cast shadows. Divide into smallish groups of 3 to 5. Think of all we have discussed about what angels are made of, what shapes they might take, why they praise, and what their praise would look like. Add your own ideas on the subject. Decide in your group how you want to act out angels praising God. Will God be represented in your play in any way? If you want to include sound effects or speech or chant, you may.

Each group takes a turn acting out its praise story for the others.

Describe what you've learned from this play on the subject of angels, community, being in the Presence of God . . .

186. Tishby, op. cit., p. 956.

Imagery in Panel 5

The *seraphim*, the fiery angels, say, "Holy, holy, holy..." The *ofanim* - wheeled angels, and the *chayot hakodesh* - holy animals, rise up with a great noise to say their part. I love that there is a great noise involved. The *ofanim* and the *chayot* are represented for me by all manner of animals and plants. You'll see the curve of the earth's surface if you look. I'm not separating angels from powers of nature or any beings of nature. According to rabbinic understanding, angels are beings of nature - created by God like everything else. According to my understanding, angels are a human image brought into being to grapple with the problem of how everything works. It seemed fitting to include Superman and Wonder Woman, both created by Jewish cartoonists. Other graphic elements include angels, a goat and a chicken by Marc Chagall; praying hands and a fiery lioness-like creature by Ben Shahn; a menorah and ark from the First Leningrad Bible, from 10th century Egypt; and an angel and Aaron lighting the menorah from a 13th century French manuscript.

When training students for leading services I have often come upon the problem that they tend to rush through "kadoshkadoshkadosh" in a dull flat voice. Even when I tell them the story of Isaiah's vision their delivery improves only mildly, and that only in a half-hearted effort to humor me. Our cultural repertoire no longer grants importance to angelic choruses. I'm not sure that adults resonate with this language either. We either need to take it out of our liturgy or find a relevant way to include it. You may have gathered by now that I opt for the latter.

The script I copied is an Italian Book Hand from the 11th or 12th centuries.¹⁸⁷ There was no meaningful reason this time. I hope this script conveys the majesty of all the powers of nature praising God.

187. Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew Script*, op. cit., p. 225.

Alternative Translations and Readings

...the angels:

Ophanim - turning orbits and the planets,

Hayot - the constellations of the zodiac;

Seraphim - blazing ones, the galaxies

All in concert adore and venerate You

And sanctify Your Name

Chanting:

Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh - holy, holy, holy are You Lord of Hosts,

The cosmos is filled with Your radiance.

They pleas also

Bring this glory to radiate to us also on the level where we live.

Zalman Schachter Shalomi¹⁸⁸

Tens of thousands of his ministering angels stand before him,
myriads upon myriads surround his throne.

All are beloved, all are pure, all are mighty...

Thousands and myriads refer to:

The number of benedictions and prayers we are obligated to;

The number of bounties God bestows on us;

The number of raindrops that fall;

The number of angels who are appointed over each raindrop.

A version of Yotzer Or from the Cairo Genizah¹⁸⁹

Macro Space Triptych

This triptych of Panels 2, 4, and 5 crosses all the way from the far reaches of space to our own home planet. The angels are conceived of as being connected with both the grand stretches of nature and the workings of the human imagination. Much as I, personally, will never travel to the Orion Nebula - motion sickness is a real problem for me - neither will I consort with angels except in the context of the *Kedushah*. Yet my fascination and love for nature and poetry helps to feed the part in me that needs to offer praise to the Source of Being.

188. Zalman Schachter Shalomi, *A Siddur for Weekday and Shabbat Morning*,
www.ohalah.org/rebzalman/thesiddur.pdf.

189. Donald W. Parry, & Emmanuel Tov, Editors, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader, Part 5*, op. cit., p. 381.



PANEL 6

Panel 6 - They Offer Melodies

לְאֵל בָּרוּךְ נְעִימוֹת יִתְּנוּ, לְמֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם זְמֵרוֹת לֵאמָרוּ וְתִשְׁבַּחוֹת
 יִשְׁמִיעוּ, כִּי הוּא לְבָדוֹ פּוֹעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת, עֹשֶׂה חֲדָשׁוֹת, בֹּעֵל מִלְחָמוֹת,
 זֹרֵעַ צְדָקוֹת, מַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעוֹת, בּוֹרֵא רְפוּאוֹת, נוֹרָא תְהִילוֹת, אֲדוֹן
 הַנִּפְלְאוֹת, הַמְחִיד בְּטוּבוֹ בְּכָל יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית.

*Le'eil barukh ne'imot yiteinu, lemelekh eil chai veqayam zmirot yomeiru vetishbachot
 yashmi'u, ki hu levado po'eil gevurot, 'oseh chadashot, ba'al milchamot, zore'a tzedaqot,
 matzmiach yeshu'ot, borei refu-ot, nora tehilot, adon hanifla-ot hamchadeish betuvo bekol
 yom tamid ma'asei vereishit.*

TO THE BLESSED GOD THEY OFFER MELODIES.

TO THE SOVEREIGN THE LIVING AND ETERNAL GOD THEY SING HYMNS AND PRAISES.

FOR GOD ALONE PERFORMS MIGHTY ACTS, MAKES NEW THINGS, IS MASTER OF WAR,
 SOWS JUSTICE, PRODUCES TRIUMPH, AND CREATES HEALING.

REVERED IN RENOWN, LORD OF WONDERS,

WHO RENEWS IN GOODNESS EVERY DAY CONTINUALLY THE WORKS OF CREATION

http://www.shulmusic.org/sound_archives/

This site has MP3 files of mainly Ashkenazi liturgical music you can listen to for no charge. There is a recording of *Eil Barukh* under the heading of Hazan Avraham Nevo. He's a tenor and has a piano and choir backing him. Unless your group is highly musically literate it's probably best played as background music as people are entering, or just a bit of it with people paying closer attention. It is about five minutes long.

Finally we're concluding with the angels and turning back to our main concern: God. What some may see as an obsession with angels in the liturgy is, in the end, all about getting closer to, or understanding more about, God. Here we have a long list of descriptions of God. Not only has God created all the lights - stars and planets and

natural forces - but there are all kinds of other creative forces in the world for which God should be given credit. For this section we will rely heavily on a Spanish prayer book commentary from the 14th century by Rabbi David Abudraham.¹⁹⁰ He has gone through the liturgy and found connections in the biblical text for almost every phrase in the prayer book. These are not necessarily what the Rabbis had in mind when they put *Yotzer Or* together. Still, the Rabbis knew Bible really well. Hebrew was no more their every day spoken language and Bible was the source for much of their prayer vocabulary.

TO THE SOVEREIGN THE LIVING AND ETERNAL GOD

Rabbi Abudirham writes that this comes from Jeremiah 10:10 - "He is a living God, the everlasting King." Here is an opportunity to discuss the masculine and hierarchical language of much of the prayer book. Judith Plaskow suggests that calling God "Lord" or "King" is meant to express our own sense of limitation in relation to God.¹⁹¹ It can be an appropriate reaction when we realize that we are subject to forces way beyond our control. Another possibility is that calling God "King" reflects a belief that no human should wield that sort of power over another human. With this in mind, we can see that hierarchical images of God do have the possibility of offering hope to the oppressed. She suggests that an alternative to complaining about a particular image of God in the liturgy would be to expand the range of images even broader to include the ones that speak to each of us personally. The broader the range of images for God we use, the more likely it is that an individual worshipper will find some images that "speak the truth of their own experiences."¹⁹² Of course this includes the practice of addressing God as both male and female. By this we could communicate the message that though our images of God carry similarities to male and female humans, God transcends gender as God transcends humanity.

Rabbi Abudirham explains that the angels offer melodies, hymns, and praises - three things, just as there are three mentions of *kadosh* - holy. The Targum¹⁹³ explains

190. David Abudirham, *Sefer Rabbeinu David Abudirham, Volume 1* (Jerusalem: Or Hasefer, 2001) Originally entitled: *Chibur peirush habrachot vehatefilot* - Composition explaining the blessings and the prayers, written in 1340 in Spain, first printed in Lisbon 1489, pp. 170-177.

191. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book - Vol. 1*, op. cit., p. 65.

192. Ibid.

193. The Targum - "Translation" - is a translation of the Torah into Aramaic, which at one time was

that the first holy refers to heaven above, the second to the world below, and the third to the world to come.

According to Abudraham the “mighty acts” refer to those performed by God in days of old as related in Psalms 44:2. God “alone” performs them because, as it says in Deuteronomy 4:35, “There is none beside Him.”

The prayer says God “makes new things” because, as it says in Lamentations 3:23, “[God’s mercies] are renewed every morning.”

“Master of war” because in Exodus 15:3 it says, “Adonai is a warrior.” Not only did God act the part of the warrior at the time of the Exodus, but some of the prophecies for the distant future involve God as a warrior, as it says in Zechariah 14:3, “Then Adonai will come forth and make war on those nations.” This particular phrase has been troublesome for many modern readers. One option is to translate it away from its literal meaning as in Reuven Hammer’s translation in the Conservative prayer book, “championing justice.”¹⁹⁴ Another translation that mitigates the power of the language is “Lord over struggle,” which is found in a Sefardic prayer book published in New York. The Reconstructionist Siddur, *Renew our Days*, translates it literally as “master of wars” and adds a comment:

“The true master has the knowledge and the skill that brings not only mastery but also control over a situation. In this sense the one who is master over war will be able to ‘sow righteousness,’ cause redemption to flourish and create healing.”¹⁹⁵

The Yemenite prayer book leaves out the phrase altogether, but also CREATES HEALING. REVERED IN RENOWN, and WHO RENEWS IN GOODNESS EVERY DAY CONTINUALLY THE WORKS OF CREATION.

*Etz Yosef*¹⁹⁶ has a nice teaching on God who “sows justice.” There is a chain reaction that results from human action. “Thus an act of kindness is like a seed that

offered during the Torah reading so the people could understand what they were hearing. There is more than one translation. “The Targum” refers to Targum Onkelos, which was considered the official one in Babylon in Talmudic times. As you can see from the example given, The Targum offers more than a literal translation, but a certain amount of explanation as well.

194. Reuven Hammer, *Or Hadash*, op. cit., p. 110.

195. *Renew Our Days*, Reconstructionist Siddur from Montreal, 1996.

196. A 19th century prayer book commentary.

can produce luxuriant vegetation.”¹⁹⁷ This is a good thought to keep in mind when we have opened all the doors of the Ark and come to the Torah mantle itself.

This Panel closes by repeating a line from near the beginning of *Yotzer Or*:
WHO RENEWS IN GOODNESS EVERY DAY CONTINUALLY THE WORKS OF CREATION.

Rabbi Hammer suggests that this second mention of renewal is meant to turn our thoughts away from the physical light of the body of the blessing toward a new metaphorical sort of light: the redemption of Israel.¹⁹⁸ Alternatively this is returning to the original blessing text where it left off before the *Kedushah*.

(SYNTHESIS - for Panels 6 - 9 will be joined into one at the end.)

197. Quoted in Nosson Scherman, *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur*, op. cit., p. 93.

198. Reuven Hammer, *Or Hadash*, op. cit., p. 110.

Imagery in Panel 6

In this panel I have flipped the switch from the macro world of the far reaches of space to the micro world of molecules and subatomic particles. The main image on this Panel is one produced from an “old-fashioned” bubble chamber, used to track the paths of atomic particles. I say “old-fashioned” because researchers now use computerized electronic detectors instead.¹⁹⁹ Having no understanding of what exactly is represented here, I nonetheless, was captivated by the beauty of the image. It is one which one of my sons has used for the wallpaper of his computer screen.

In the lower left-hand corner is a crystalline form of several uranium atoms. It is an image made with a STEM, a scanning tunneling electron microscope. The STEM can magnify atoms 100 million times. The image created in this way is a sort of contour map.²⁰⁰ I was interested that their particular form of symmetry is reminiscent of a Star of David. That is why I changed the colors to shades of blue.

The script used on the prayer is a Byzantine cursive script from 14th century Salonica.²⁰¹ It is a bit difficult to read until you see the alefbet written out, but you can also use the transliteration of the Hebrew to work it out. As you may have noticed by now, Panel 2 had the oldest script in the Ark. As the doors open the scripts used have been coming from more and more recent times, from some of the many places around the world where Jews have made our homes.

199. Piers Bizony, *Invisible Worlds: Exploring the Unseen* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2004) pp. 32-33.

200. Bizony, *Invisible Worlds*, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

201. Yardeni, op. cit., p. 265.



PANEL 7

Panel 7 - Who Makes the Great Lights

כָּאֲמוֹר, [הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה] לַעֲשֵׂה אֹרִים גְּדֹלִים, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ.

Ka-amur, [hodu ladonai] le'osei orim gedolim, ki le'olam chasdo.

AS IT IS SAID [GIVE THANKS TO GOD] WHO MAKES THE GREAT LIGHTS
GOD'S COMPASSION IS FOREVER.

Out of context this part of the prayer makes no sense: AS IT IS SAID: WHO MAKES THE GREAT LIGHTS. GOD'S COMPASSION IS FOREVER. Because it is a verse from Psalms 136:7, I added a context clue so that it would make sense to anyone looking at the Ark without having to look anything up. Psalms 136:1 reads, "Praise the Lord; for He is good, His steadfast love is eternal." Subsequent verses praise various things God has done, each ending with, "His steadfast love is eternal," or as it is translated on the Ark, "God's compassion is forever." Because the verb "makes" is in the present tense we can understand that even now God is renewing the lights and all creation.²⁰² The psalm includes praise for both universal and particularist concerns - sun and moon, as well as the story of the Exodus.²⁰³

Rashi, Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak, that prolific commentator from 11th century France, points out that there are 26 repetitions of "God's compassion is forever." This refers to the 26 generations from Adam to Moses, during which the world had to exist without Torah. In spite of that lack, it was possible because of God's kindness.

Saadia's prayer book does not include this section.

202. Reuven Hammer, *Or Hadash*, op. cit., p. 110.

203. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book - Vol. I*, op. cit., p. 59.

Imagery in Panel 7

From the miniscule almost unimaginable dimensions of subatomic particles and molecules, this panel opens onto the world of microscopic cells and organisms, going all the way up to a life-size fish. The cells in the upper left are brain cells,²⁰⁴ with neurons and dendrites reaching away from them in all directions. As we marvel at what science can show us it is important to remember how much we don't understand. We still cannot demonstrate how such intangibles as consciousness and feeling arise. To the right of the brain cells are diatoms floating in water. They are a large group of algae, mostly single cells, though some congregate in bands. They are often used to monitor environmental conditions. At the bottom is a motion study of water as a fish swims through it.²⁰⁵ This part of *Yotzer Or* is about God who makes the great lights. Here I am taking the great lights to be a metaphor for human intellect. This includes, but is not limited to the people who have devoted their life work to exploring and describing the world around us.

The script used is a Sefardi script from the 15th century.²⁰⁶ I was intrigued with the way the alef points up dramatically. The decorative panel that opens the quote from Psalms is taken from a facsimile of a manuscript called *The North French Hebrew Miscellany* from the 13th century. In the original the word under the lion is *בראשית* - *Bereishit*, in the beginning - because it opens a copy of the Five Books of Moses. Especially interesting to me is the fact that the next words are "the heaven and the earth." These words are written in brown ink. At some point someone noticed that the rather important words "God created" had been left out. There is a little editor's carrot mark pointing upward where the missing words are added in black ink. It seemed an appropriate place to use this, seeing as I wanted to add in the words from the Psalm that would make the prayer understandable. One of my original plans for the Ark was to have it be a record of some of the variety of Jewish artworks through the ages. As it

204. Birzony, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

205. Aperture, *On the Nature of Things: The Scientific Photography of Fritz Goro* (New York: Aperture, 1993) p. 74.

206. Yardeni, op. cit., p. 247.

turned out this plan was too ambitious for this particular project, but there are still a few hangers-on. This decoration is one of them.

Alternative Translations and Readings

Give us of Thy light that we may walk in Thy way.
Reconstructionist Siddur, 1945.

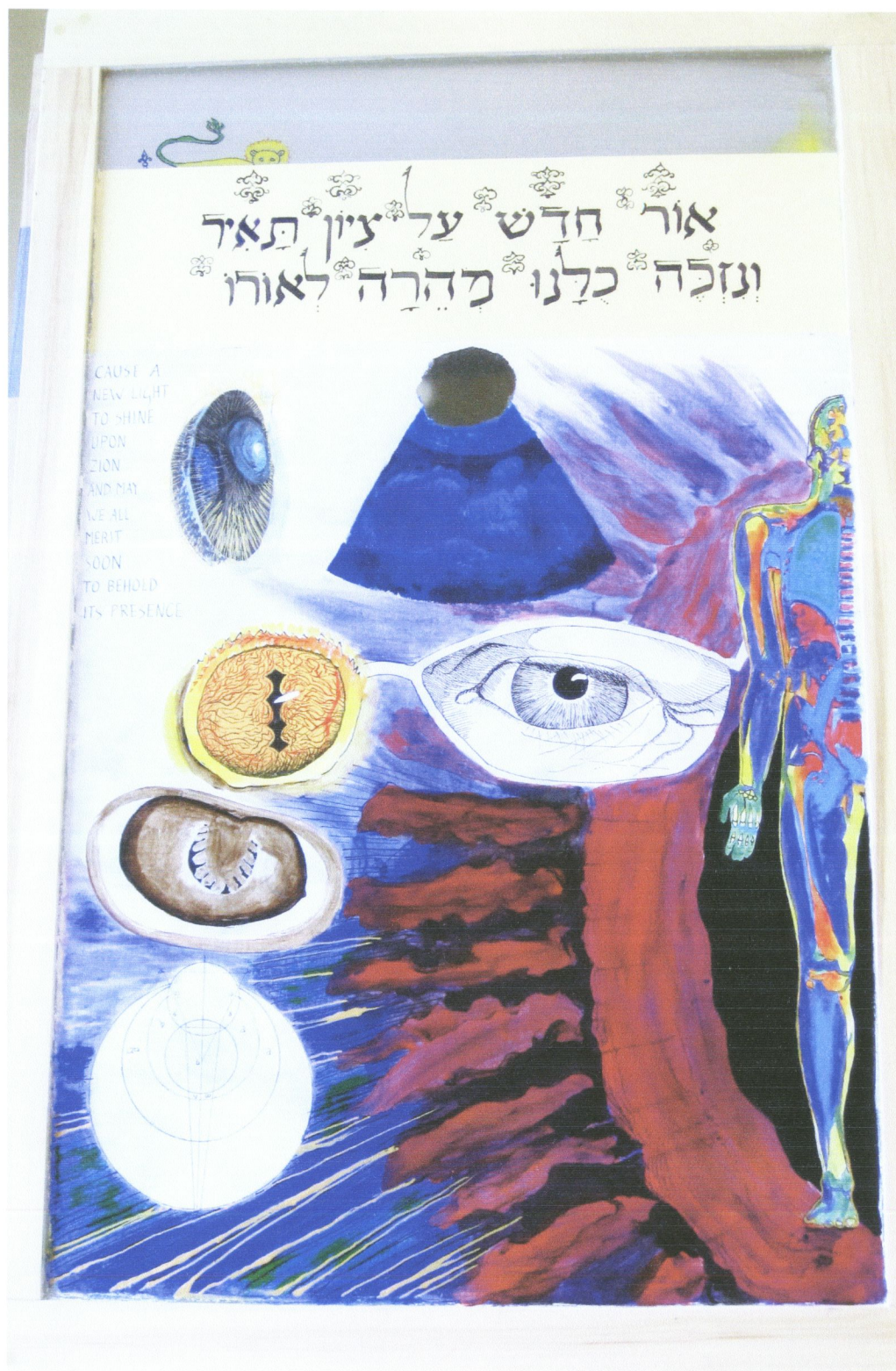
בא מדרך הקדים
וקולו כקול מים רבים
והארץ האירה מכבודו
קומי אורי כי בא אורך
וכבוד י"י עליך זרח בא"י יוצר המאורות.

He comes from the road of the east.
His voice is like the voice of many waters
And the land is illumined by his glory.
Arise, shine, for your light has dawned;
The Presence of the LORD has shone upon you! (Isaiah 60:1)
Geniza Fragment.²⁰⁷

Micro Space Triptych

Reading from right to left, Panels 6, 7 and 5 are now open. They form a new triptych. Both are anchored in the regular dimension of our life on earth as seen in panel 5. Whereas the Macro Space Triptych swept from the far reaches of space to earth, the Micro Space Triptych goes in the opposite direction - from sub-atomic particles, through the microscopic realm to the regular dimension of everyday life. These tiny objects are things that were invisible and have only become visible through the invention of various technologies. Microscopes have allowed us to see what microscopic objects look like in the visible spectrum only magnified. STEM's make representations of things that cannot be seen with visible light, rendering them in a visible image. All these are included in the ever unfolding process of what may run through my mind when I pray *Yotzer Or*.

207. Jacob Mann, "Geniza Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service." Cincinnati: HUC Annual, 1925, p. 292.



PANEL 8

Panel 8 - A New Light

אור חדש על ציון תאיר, ונזכה כלנו מהרה לאורו.

Or chadash 'al tzion ta-ir venizkeh khulanu meheirah le-oro.

CAUSE A NEW LIGHT TO SHINE UPON ZION

AND MAY WE ALL BE WORTHY SOON TO ENJOY ITS BRIGHTNESS

First we have to know what this *Or chadash*, this “new light,” refers to. If you are with a group of people, it would be a good idea to start out by brainstorming ideas. One answer is that it is the *or ganuz*, the hidden light. Remember that God made light on the first day of creation and then the sun, moon and stars on the fourth. One tradition says that the light of the first day was the light of the sun, moon and stars, God just didn’t hang them in the sky until the fourth day. A more widely held idea is that God hid that light away for the righteous in the world to come, as it says in Psalm 97:11, “Light is sown for the righteous, radiance for the upright.”

Let’s look at some special mentions of light in the Prophets. Isaiah 60:19 says,
No longer shall you need the sun for light by day,
Nor the shining of the moon for radiance *by night*;
For the LORD shall be your light everlasting, your God shall be your glory.

In the context of the whole chapter, this reading merely says that Israel will reclaim sovereignty in its own land, with the extra perk that all the nations of the world will support them in this. (Unlike the present situation where we have sovereignty, but the support of only a few other nations.) This was the original biblical idea of what the anointed one, the messiah, would accomplish. Messiah has since come to mean something more.²⁰⁸

In Second Temple times there were several groups of Israelites with competing agendas. We will only look here at the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The Sadducees

208. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book - Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries, Vol. 10, Shabbat Morning Shacharit and Musaf* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007) p. 74.

represented the priestly class. They were associated with a literal reading of Bible and rejected the idea that there was life after death.²⁰⁹ The Pharisees represented a lower socio-economic stratum of Israelites. They took the notion of resurrection of the dead mentioned in Daniel 12:2 - "Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence." - and made it a central part of their thought. The Pharisees were the predecessors of the Rabbis, the progenitors of what today we call Judaism.

It is important to remember that Messiah means something different to Christians and Jews. As I understand it, in a Christian context Messiah brings salvation to the individual. The Jewish concept sees the Messiah as an envoy of God sent to announce an age of perfection which entails the end of war, poverty and illness, though there will still be death. Let's look at two verses from the prophet Zechariah.

But there shall be a continuous day -- only the LORD knows when --

of neither day nor night, and there shall be light at eventide. Zech 14:7

Unlike the Isaiah quote, which could be taken to mean something that will occur in the normal way of the world, this one seems more supernatural. In Isaiah the sun and moon were still going to be around, it's just that we'll live by God's light, presumably God's way. In Zechariah it seems that day and night will be abolished, that this is truly about an end of time as we know it, with a special light to replace the sun and the moon. This is the sort of light the Rabbis were thinking of when they phrased *Or Chadash*.

Saadia Gaon taught that it was forbidden to say *Or Chadash* in *Yotzer Or*, "for the light about which we bless God is the light of the sun itself, nothing else."²¹⁰ In his view *Yotzer Or* is about creation and the physical light with us now in the present; and *Or Chadash* is about the future light of redemption.²¹¹ According to Saadia, *Or Chadash* spoiled the original intention of the blessing.²¹² *Or Chadash* is a prayer of petition inserted into *Yotzer Or*, which is a prayer of praise. It is not that Saadia did not believe

209. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor, *My People's Prayer Book - Vol. 10*, op. cit., p. 75.

210. Wieder pp. 155-157

211. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book - Vol. 1*, op. cit., p. 64.

212. Lawrence A. Hoffman, *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service*, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

in redemption. He referred to it specifically in a responsum: "Then the light of God's presence will appear shining upon the Temple with such brilliance that all lights will become faint or dim in comparison with it..."²¹³ Prayers for redemption were necessary, but should not be put in everywhere willy-nilly, changing the original intent of a particular blessing. Neither was it true that Saadia was voicing some sort of anti-Land-of-Israel sentiment.²¹⁴ *Or Chadash* was merely a genre error, a good sentiment misplaced.

Sherira Gaon (d. 998) argued that *Or Chadash* did not refer to anything messianic, but that it was just a general expression. Apparently both academies in Sura and Pumbedita always said *Or Chadash*, Saadia's opinion notwithstanding, even during Saadia's tenure as Gaon. That means they must have felt strongly about saying it, even though Sherira Gaon wrote in a responsum that if you'd rather leave *Or Chadash* out, that's fine too.²¹⁵

Over the centuries Jews have continued to argue about this. The general result was that generally speaking Ashkenazim included *Or Chadash* in *Yotzer Or* and Sephardim left it out. Instead the Sephardic practice is to recite the following line before the final blessing phrase (panel 9):

והתקין מאורות לשמח (את) עולמו אשר ברא

And he established luminaries to make the world that He created rejoice.

This may have been the original conclusion that was replaced by *Or Chadash*.²¹⁶

There are other assorted customs in the south of France, in the prayer books in the Italian rite or tradition.²¹⁷

Rabbi Eleazer ben Nathan of Mayence (c. 1090-c.1170), a contemporary of Rashbam and Rabbeinu Tam and the great grandfather of the Rosh, used Sefardi reasoning to allow Ashkenazi practice. He said that the light mentioned in *Or Chadash* is messianic, but that it was part of creation. God created it and stored it away.

213. Hoffman, Lawrence. *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service*, op. cit., p. 27.

214. Wieder pp. 155-157

215. Hoffman, Lawrence. *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service*, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

216. Elbogen, op. cit., p. 18.

217. These can be found in Elbogen pp. 18-19.

Therefore it can be properly included in a blessing about creation.²¹⁸

The whole issue came up again with the early Reform rabbis for a different reason. They saw *Or Chadash* less as a reference to messianic times, and more as an expression of nationalistic hope. As Enlightenment Jews they wanted to assure their countries of residence that they were loyal citizens. The preface to the 1819 Hamburg Temple prayer book includes the following:

The desire for a return to Jerusalem was omitted, because it is a wish which issues from the heart of only very few. When Cyrus permitted the Israelites to return from the Babylonian Exile, only some 42,000 availed themselves of the opportunity. The rest stayed behind, demonstrating that one can be a good Jew without praying for a return to Jerusalem. The prayers for a return to Zion which we have retained can be taken in a spiritual sense; but we do not request that God transport us physically to Zion, because we are satisfied with the place where we live.²¹⁹

The Reformers of the 19th century often pointed out that the great Saadia Gaon had also objected to the inclusion of *Or Chadash*. They neglected to mention that he had entirely different reasons for omitting it.²²⁰ More conservative rabbis were horrified at reforming rabbis taking various prayers out of the service. It is a bit ironic when you consider that centuries earlier there had been stiff resistance to including some of them in the first place.²²¹

Mishkan Tefilah has restored *Or Chadash*. The reason given is that we now fully support Israel. As Rabbi David Ellenson writes, "With the restoration of this passage to *Mishkan Tefilah*, our movement consciously affirms its devotion to the modern State of Israel and signals its recognition of the religious significance of the reborn Jewish commonwealth."²²² "Religious." Does that mean that we believe that the modern State

218. Lawrence A. Hoffman, Editor. *My People's Prayer Book - Vol. 1*, op. cit., p. 64.

219. Jacob Petuchowski, *Prayerbook Reform in Europe: The Liturgy of European Liberal and Reform Judaism* (New York: The World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1968) p. 53.

220. Jacob Petuchowski, *Prayerbook Reform in Europe*, op. cit., p. 283.

221. Jacob Petuchowski, *Understanding Jewish Prayer* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1972) p. 15.

222. *Mishkan Tefilah*, p.60.

of Israel is *ראשית צמחת גאולתנו* *reishit tzmichat ge-ulateinu*, the beginning of the flowering of our redemption, the coming of the age of the Messiah? It's a bit tricky. I thought so from Rabbi Ellenson's comment. However, Rabbi Mark Washofsky²²³ points out that we have taken that particular phrase out of the Prayer for the State of Israel in *Mishkan Tefilah*. In his view the view of Zionism expressed in this prayer book is ideal. It teaches that we should:

express our own spiritual longings in the traditional language of Jewish national rebirth. It instructs us to place the land of Israel, along with the people of Israel, at the center of our religious concerns. And it beseeches us to love the State of Israel - not, to be sure, blindly or uncritically, not with a zeal that obscures its reality as a political construction of and by flesh-and-blood human beings - but to love it nonetheless, to pray for its security, to work for its betterment, and to see it as the embodiment of the age-old hopes and dreams of our people.

Imagery in Panel 8

First the images, then the intent. Center top: Ultrasound image of one of my sons inside of me. Across the bottom: Electron scan of a portion of the iris of a human eyeball.²²⁴ Left bottom: Medieval diagram of the human eye.²²⁵ Top left: Eye of a honey bee. Right margin: MRI of a man. Here's a description of Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI):

"...a powerful magnetic field temporarily aligns all the atomic nuclei in the body in a particular direction, like trillions of little compass needles. While they remain aligned, a brief radio pulse is transmitted, causing the nuclei to

223. Mark Washofsky, "*Mishkan Tefilah and Israel: Some Reflections*" on ARZA's website under Resources for Israel at 60 - http://www.arza.org/6030/israel_at_60_resources/

224. Bizony, op. cit., p. 111.

225. Peter Murray Jones, *Medieval Medicine in Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: The British Library, 1998) p. 36.

go off alignment for a moment. When the radio pulse is switched off, the nuclei swivel back in line, still under the magnetic field's influence -- and as they do so, they emit tiny radio pulses of their own. The MRI scanner then distinguishes the outgoing signals, which are characteristic for each type of tissue."²²⁶

Center: My left eye as seen in a mirror through the lens of my glasses. Left of my eye: Eye of a gecko. Below the gecko eye: Eye of a ray.

The theme is interpreting information using light. On the margins are hints about what medical technology can do for us. Imagining for a moment that this kind of information is *or chadash*, a new light, have we considered who gets to benefit from it? In this age of health care reform and the almost inconceivable (to me) outcry against it, it is apparent that science is only one tool. We have a long way to go toward understanding our world and our society. The road to forming a just society is never-ending. What we hope for is to continue in the right direction making incremental adjustments, and occasionally startling changes, for the better.

The script used is from a *ketubah*, or marriage agreement, found in the Cairo genizah.²²⁷ Mostly I chose it because it's just so beautiful. Also, it is fitting to come to the metaphor of our desire to build a world of justice as a marriage between humanity and God. The universalism vs. particularism is tricky. I'm a Jew, not a Universalist.

Alternative Translations and Readings

Let the light of the spirit,
the sun of truth and salvation,
rise over all of us,
that we may rejoice in it,
in clarity and sincerity.

Geiger, 1854

226. Bizony, *Invisible Worlds*, op. cit., p. 94.

227. Elie Kedourie, Editor, *The Jewish World: Revelation, Prophecy and History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979) pp. 146-147.

O God, let a new light shine also for Zion,
and may that light also brighten our path.

Joel, 1872

Bring us peace in all the ends of the earth,
and grant us freedom in all lands.

Danzig, 1924

Spread a new light over the world,
and Thy all-pervading peace in our hearts.

Paris, 1925

Cause a new light to shine on Zion,
Arise, shine, for your light has dawned;
The Presence of the LORD has shone upon you!
The LORD is God; He has given us light;
Bind the festal offering to the horns of the altar with cords.
And cause the lamp of Your anointed one to shine for us
That we may all soon be worthy to enjoy its light.

Geniza fragment.²²⁸ Between the two lines of *Or Chadash*
are inserted Isaiah 60:1, Psalms 119:27, and the line about
the anointed one.

The sun will not be your light by day,
nor the moon by night,
but Adonai will be an everlasting light for you,
and your God will be your glory.
And on that day there will be neither bright light nor deep darkness.
It will be one day, known as Adonai's, neither day nor night.
But at evening there will be light.

Mishkan Tefilah, Adaptation of Isaiah 60:19 and Zechariah
14:6-7 as an alternative reading to *Or Chadash*

228. Elbogen, op. cit., p. 19.



PANEL 9

Panel 9 - Torah Cover

בָּרֻךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאֹרוֹת.

Barukh atah Adonai, yotzeir hame-orot.

BLESSED ARE YOU ADONAI WHO FORMS THE LIGHTS

This is the *chatimah*, or seal, of the blessing. No matter the spiritual and ideological flights the words of the prayer have shown us, these words bring us back to the point. The point of this blessing is that God forms the lights. Whether you take “the lights” to be literally the sun, moon and stars; or whether you prefer to include all manner of visible and invisible, literal and metaphorical lights; all of that you lay down here and simply - praise.

SYNTHESIS - Panels 6-9

This exercise is taken with only slight adjustments from a chapter by Roberta Louis Goodman in a book she co-edited with Sherry H. Blumberg, *Teaching About God and Spirituality*.²²⁹ It is a great resource.

Do a synectics exercise to get at the multiple understandings of God. (Synectics is the study of creative processes, especially as applied to a solution of problems by a group of diverse individuals.) Keeping in mind some of the many names that have been used for God in *Yotzer Or*, think of them as metaphors that help us understand what God is like. It is difficult to know God. Maimonides believed that we could not know what God is, only what God is not. Go through *Yotzer Or* and write down names you find for God (Adonai, our God, Ruler of the world, Former of light, Creator of

229. Roberta Louis Goodman & Sherry H. Blumberg, *Teaching About God and Spirituality* (Denver CO: A.R.E. Publishing Inc., 2002) p.202.

darkness...). Then for one of the names, write: God is like (name of God, e.g., Ruler of the world) because _____. Then identify objects around you or in your home. Write how God is like one of those objects. For example: God is like a cell phone because _____. Share responses. Then flip the exercise and write why God is *not* like those items. For example, God is not like a Ruler of the world because _____. God is not like a cell phone because _____. Based on these metaphorical writings, what is God like? Again, share responses.

Synthesis of Entire *Yotzer Or* Ark Learning Experience

In small groups share responses to the following questions:

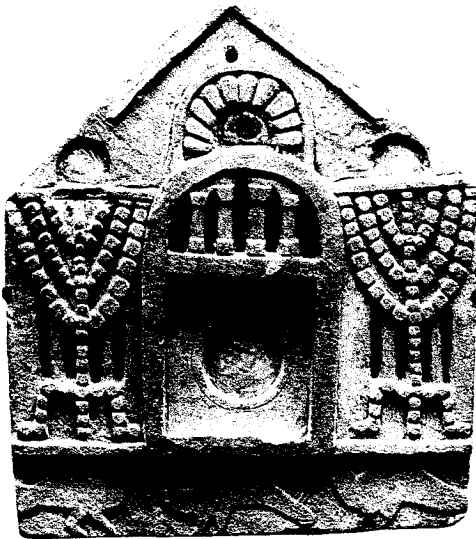
- How has this discussion of *Yotzer Or* (over the past two hours, or the past weeks) helped you to articulate your own thoughts about prayer and God?
- Explain how this study experience has enabled you to build relationships - either with your ancestors or with God or with the people around you.
- What is the most important thing for you about what we have been doing together?

Come together as an entire group again and ask those gathered to express anything interesting they have just heard.

Closing Song - Sing together your favorite version of *Yotzer Or* - there is sheet music available in the Expanded Notes, or you can replay one of the audio-video clips from YouTube.

Imagery in Panel 9

A white satin Torah cover on a black velvet ground should be a very striking comment about light and dark. Here I am not emphasizing the dualistic notion of light being good and darkness being bad, but rather the necessity of both light and darkness. Torah, after all, is written in black fire on white fire, or at least in black ink on light parchment.



The decorative panel with the word *Barukh*, blessed, in it is based on one from a manuscript... The mirror work in that panel has at least two bases. First it is a nod to a form that existed in the Land of Israel in the Greco-Roman period. It was a custom to have decorative plaques on the wall that included mirrors.²³⁰ Light being a symbol of God's

Presence, the mirrors brought actual light into the piece as a representation of God, without having to resort to drawing a hand from the clouds. It is also a nod to the Jewish communities of India. I know little about them, but intended the mirrorwork embroidery to be reminiscent of them. By the same token I wanted to include Jewish communities whose native language is Arabic. So the translation of the *chatimah* - the "seal" or closing of the blessing - is written up the righthand side



230. Goodenough, op. cit. Vol. 3, plate 440.

in English and up the lefthand side in Arabic.

The drawing of an adult hand helping a child's hand to put a coin in a tzedakah box is indicative of the connection I see between light and Torah. I have received more than I can ever repay (that's the light part), but I have to try to make the world a bit better because I have been here (Torah is representative of that need). Think back to one of the descriptions of God in Panel 6 as the One who sows justice - *zaruah tzedakah*. A seed bright with potential falls into the dark earth to sprout into luxuriant life. A shiny coin drops from a child's hand into the shadowy interior of a tzedakah box to come forth later to comfort and renew the lives of those it touches.

Rav Avraham Kook, first Chief Rabbi of Israel wrote:

The Torah was given to Israel, so that the gates of her light -- clearer, more extensive, and holier than all the gates of light of man's natural wisdom and natural moral spirit -- will open before us and through us to the rest of the world.²³¹

Torah was not given to Israel. Israel wrote Torah. The study of Torah by the People of Israel has acted as a lens magnifying the natural wisdom of humanity. I hope that is the gift we offer the world.

Closing Thoughts

Does all this run through my mind in my daily recitation of *Yotzer Or*? Certainly not. Some days I latch onto one word and meditate upon it. Some days I just feel the sounds of the words tumbling over my tongue. Some days I'm caught up in a particular melodic rendering. Some days a totally new and unexpected idea catches my attention. That still happens, even after a year of study and concentration on this one prayer. What I have gained in this process is a relationship with *Yotzer Or* and its authors and those who have prayed it in its many variations over the centuries and around the world. I am thoroughly at home with it. To me that means that it is a well-known place

231. Orot HaTorah pp. 69-71. Quoted in Erica Brown, *Inspired Jewish Leadership* (Vermont: Jewish Lights, 2008) p. 139.

that can still surprise and challenge me.

I also see sparkles of *Yotzer Or* throughout the service. References to light and illumination flare out at me - from the preparation for donning a tallit "You wrap Yourself in light as with a garment;" to "enlighten our eyes with Your Torah" in the morning prayer *Ahava rabah* - A great love; to *Sim Shalom*, the morning prayer for peace which includes the line, "Bless us, our Creator, with the light of Your Presence."

The precision of speech which led many rabbis to conclude that *Yotzer Or* is about the light of the sun and no other - say, the light of Messianic Days - I appreciate. I do. It was not just from a care for words, but from the necessity of making the prayer service a fitting substitute for the sacrificial service. It was out of a need to know that our prayer offering was acceptable to God. For me, though, prayer is more about making my life a fitting one. Daily prayer practice helps to maintain my emotional balance and my sense of perspective. The liturgy is my springboard, but I feel free to wander far afield. (Sometimes literally - I love to pray walking outside.) Thus metaphorical or poetic musings on "light" and "darkness" are all part of my approach as I discover and create the circumstances of my life.

May we study the words of our ancestors, and the knowledge at our fingertips, melding all with the wisdom of our own lives to create paths toward a kinder world.

Standing on the shoulders of all who came before,
Building for those to come,
Living in the moment,
23 Shevat 5770
Jean Elisheva Eglinton

EXPANDED NOTES - in order of their mention in the body of the text except that all the pages of Talmud and Midrash are together and a Glossary comes first.

Glossary of Teachers, Terms and Texts

Abuab da Fonesca, Isaac (1605-1693) - Rabbi of Portuguese community in Amsterdam who put Spinoza in cherem. 1642-45 he was the Rabbi of Recife in Brazil. He was the first appointed rabbi of the Americas.

Abudirham, Daivd - Rabbi of 14th century Seville, Spain, who wrote a commentary on the prayer book

Amidah - means "standing" prayer. It is also called *Tefillah* which means "prayer" and is the standard designation for this particular prayer.

Amoraim - ("those who say") Rabbis of the 3rd and 4th centuries

Ashkenaz - Ashkenaz is the name of one of Noah's grandsons. In Medieval Hebrew Ashkenaz meant Germany. Ashkenazi Jews are those from central and eastern Europe.

Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760) - the nickname of Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, considered the founder of Chasidic Judaism.

Ba'er Heteiv - a commentary on the Shulchan Arukh written by Rabbi Yehudah Ashkenazi in 1752.

BCE - Before the Common Era

Ben Sira - or the *Wisdom of Sirach*, is a book from the Apocrypha - books that are included in the canon of the Catholic Church and of Eastern Christianity, but are not in the Hebrew or Protestant Bible. Joshua ben Sira was a Jewish scribe who probably lived in Jerusalem in the second century BCE.

Cairo Geniza - hundreds of thousands of Jewish manuscript fragments were found in the 19th century in the *genizah*, or storeroom, of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in present-day Cairo. They have helped scholars reconstruct social, economic, literary and liturgical history beginning around 950 CE.

CE - Common Era, analogous to AD, but preferred by Jews as AD stands for Anno Domini, "the year of [the/our] lord."

Chasidism - founded by the Baal Shem Tov, this was a movement that originally promoted spirituality through joy and popularization of Jewish mysticism.

Dead Sea Scrolls - discovered in the mid-20th century in and around Qumran, they date

from approximately 150 BCE to 68 CE. and include copies of texts from the Hebrew Bible and the Apocrypha as well as sectarian documents.

Deuteronomy Rabba - homiletic commentary on the book of Deuteronomy collected around the 7th century.

diptych - any visual piece comprised of two panels, often physically connected, in which each panel is readable as a whole by itself and in which the two panels also work together to create a larger whole. A triptych is the same for three panels.

Emden, Yaakov (1697-1776)- German rabbi and talmudist

Gaonic period - roughly the 7th to 11th centuries - The Geonim were the heads of the academies at Sura and Pumbedita in Babylonia and the generally accepted leaders of the world-wide Jewish community until the Middle Ages.

Genesis Rabba - a collection of exegetical midrash, explaining the text of the book of Genesis verse by verse, sometimes word by word, from the 5th and 6th centuries from the Land of Israel.

Judith - the protagonist in a book of the same name which was written in Hebrew in the Hellenistic era during the time of the Macabean war in the 2nd century B.C.E. (Before the Common Era). It was not included in the *Tanakh*, but has remained part of Jewish literary tradition.

Karo, Yosef (1488-1575)- author of the great codification of Jewish Law the *Shulchan Arukh*. Expelled from Spain at the age of four he lived in many Mediterranean countries, finally settling in Tsefat in the north of the Land of Israel.

Kippah - Hebrew for *yarmulke*, which is Yiddish for Jewish head covering of the sort which used to be worn exclusively by traditionally observant men, but which some liberal Jews - women and men both - now wear as well.

Lilien, Ephraim Moses (1874-1925) - a painter and photographer, is sometimes called the first Zionist artist. Born in Galicia, trained in Poland, he was one of the co-founders of the Bezalel School. The Bezalel School was founded in what was then known as Palestine and its mission was to create a national style of art which combined Jewish, Middle Eastern and European motifs.

Maimonides, Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, Rambam (1137-1204) - born in Spain, eventually settled in Fostat, Egypt. Rabbi, talmudist, physician, philosopher. One of the greatest Jewish thinkers of all time. He wrote several important works, one of them *Mishneh Torah*.

Mekhilta - collected midrashim on the book of Exodus, one of the earliest collections of midrash texts from the 3rd century CE.

menorah - "lamp" in Modern Hebrew. The Menorah in the Temple had seven lights, as opposed to the *chanukiah*, the Chanukah menorah, which has nine.

mezuzah - the Jewish artifact affixed to the doorposts of many Jewish homes, contains certain selected verses from Torah.

midrash - originally oral literature that interprets Bible or occasionally other sacred literature, many in the form of sermons, eventually collected by different people in different times and places into several collections .

minhag - accepted custom.

minyan - a quorum of people necessary for public prayer, originally 10 adult Jewish males, in modern liberal Jewish circles, 10 Jews over the age of 13 - including men and women.

Mishnah - collection of rabbinic writings said to be made around the year 200 CE. It is the text upon which the rabbis comment in the Gemara - the Mishnah and Gemarah together with later commentaries comprising the Talmud.

Mishneh Berurah - a commentary on *Orech Chayim*, the section of the *Shulchan Arukh* that deals with prayer, synagogue, Shabbat and holidays by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, or the Chofetz Chayim (1838-1933)

Mishneh Torah - "repetition of the Torah" written by Maimonides. A code of Jewish law written in the 12th century intended by its author to be the only book a Jew would need to know the halakhah (Jewish law).

Nachman of Bratslav (1772-1810) - great grandson of the Baal Shem Tov, one of the great rabbis of Chasidism

Qumran - ancient settlement off the northwest shore of the Dead Sea near the caves in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. It is unclear who the people who lived in Qumran were exactly, but they represented a stream of Israelite religion distinct from Rabbinic thought. There were various reactions during the last two centuries BCE and the first century CE to the traumas of foreign occupation and the Destruction of the Temple. Rabbinic tradition became the basis of Judaism.

Rabbeinu Tam - nickname of Jacob ben Meir (around 1100-1171), grandson of Rashi, one of the most famous of the Tosafists - medieval rabbis who wrote explanatory additions to the Talmud which are now included on Talmud pages.

Rambam - see Maimonides

Rashbam - Shmuel ben Meir (1085-1158) - grandson of Rashi, Rabbeinu Tam's older brother, another famous Tosafist (see Rabbeinu Tam)

Rashi - (1040-1105) nickname for Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak, Torah and Talmud commentator from France.

the Rosh - nickname of Rabbeinu Asher, or Asher ben Yechiel (1250-1327) - born in Germany, died in Spain, talmudist

Saadia Gaon (882-942) - the Gaon (literally "eminence," plural Geonim) of Sura (one of the academies in Babylonia) the first important rabbi to write extensively in Arabic, he wrote works of Hebrew linguistics, halakha and philosophy.

Sefarad - In Medieval Hebrew Sefarad meant Spain and Sefardi referred to the Jews who lived in what is now Spain and Portugal. Sefardi Jews are presently considered the descendants of those expelled from Spain or Portugal in 1492.

Shulchan Arukh - the code of Jewish law or halakhah written by Joseph Karo in the 16th century. Together with its commentaries the Shulchan Arukh is generally considered to be the standard for present Jewish legal practice.

siddur - prayer book, from the same root as seder

Talmud - there are two: Babylonian and Jerusalem (or Palestinian), the former being the more authoritative. A page of Babylonian Talmud generally has a mishnah and its gemara (commentary) in the middle, with further explanatory notes by Rashi and the Tosafists and various others in the margins.

Tanakh - **Tanakh** is an acronym for **Torah**, the Five Books of Moses; **Nevi'im**, the prophetic books; and **Ketuvim** the Writings, which include *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, the five scrolls we read on holidays, to name a few.

Tannaim - ("those who repeat" or "those who teach") Rabbis of the 1st and 2nd centuries

tefillin - the boxes and straps worn on head and arm of some Jews during some prayer times. Inside the boxes are parchments with scriptural verses about words being "a sign on your hand and a symbol on your forehead" written on them: Exodus 13:1-10; 13:11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21.

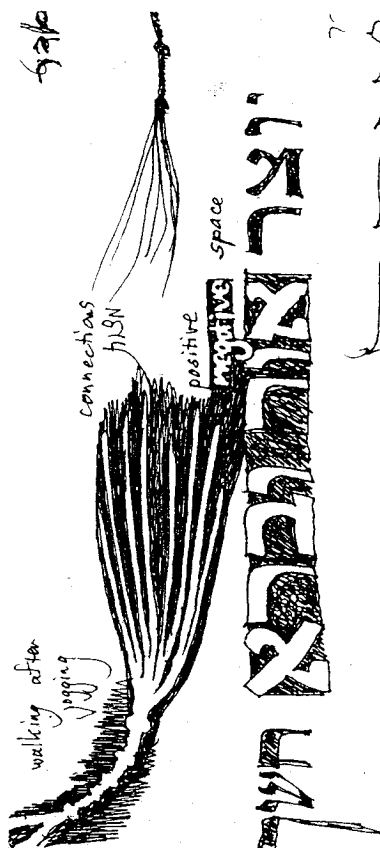
tikkun olam - repair of the world

tzedakah - the Jewish duty of supplying funds to help those in need

Ugarit - an ancient city on the Mediterranean coast in modern day Syria, at its height between about 1450 BCE and 1200 BCE, its language and literature related to Hebrew and the Hebrew Bible.

Zohar - "radiance" - foundational work of Jewish mysticism written by Moses de Leon in 13th century Spain.

Pages from My Journal - 1



Light the catalyst for ORDER and HOPE

driving to L.Ville thinking about to answer Sam's request for relationship advice

an auspicious advice

skipped service today to get חנוכה flyers distributed
back home did for the פארמאנע at 2:00
7:10 7:31 thinking in terms of enlightenment ^{word}
in דאס האלדע - there's an added phrase - at least it's not in ✓
ידיד ארבעט פאר און

In Holy Language class this morning - the suggestion that we teach the class and let the congregation come up with what about Hebrew is holy for them - and which things we need to say in Hebrew and what importance Hebrew has in our ongoing My recent emphasis on light as new understanding reminds me of 7/21/88 - and maybe I should add daily

W.D. & this year as well!

lets say ~~what~~ ^{creating} what is making light? Mystical idea of the spark \rightarrow ^{is} darkness just the absence of light? \rightarrow darkness in the darkness

~~also~~ also drunk matter
if ceiling
sunray

But the Over Touch from Same Rose Garmuchus about the Memorial
Nothing came during 731111
I drew one last week but didn't really consider it
5000 300
377111 symbol of love

אור = ישראל

ישראל אור
אור חרש עז יצחק
אור דוד אדר

הערה
למחברת

possibility
of changing thinking, if not circumstances

from outside sounds of construction ?
how do sounds fit in w/ the 73" ?
every day doesn't have to be some new insight
is enough - some days just the question is enough

HVC sitting next to Michel & baby Alexander
we read B11 in English - why is it not so wonderful in English?
"in mercy" ^{nach}

17

Pages from My Journal - 2

7125

reading away at beginning of service
 & just listen & ground to be able to continue in a focused fashion
 the piggot after 710291 in Shabbat
 exciting to hear it - too busy trying to keep up w/ the words to experience

7126

literally asleep on my feet at
 some points in the service
 I recited the Hebrew & had
 images flicker through my
 brain - hard to be insightful
 when exhausted

7127

living on light energy
 old water
 and soil nutrients

7128

REMEMBER
 not to forget silliness

7129

be STILL
 and
 know that i am god

7130

have been so many more creations on earth than the rabbis
 wrote this / knew of - dinosaurs, giant sloths ...
 7131

one also so many more 7132 - galaxies up in galaxies
 being even unfathomable (at least to me) distances
 than the rabbis were aware of.

7133

we brightest image in the stained glass in the chapel?
 Stars n Stripes not 7134
 making human taschen
 a bit driven
 period late
 PMSY didn't pray til
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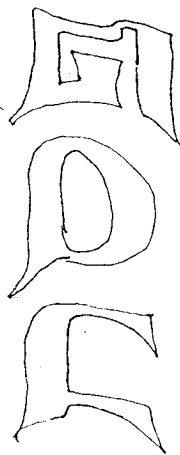
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Pages from My Journal - 3



over the centuries the slight inaccuracies in our calculation (overstated length of solar year by 11 minutes & 14 seconds & the length of a lunar year by 6 minutes & 39 seconds) [Originally $\gamma N \delta \beta \gamma$ was then vernal equinox coincided w/ $N \delta \beta \gamma$ has caused us to drift calendrically speaking.



Abraham Lincoln came to the seder
to remind us that the way we tell a particular bit of
"history" has can have more to do with what we want to be true.
that doing the right thing is often a complex and
nuanced decision

unruined decision
reading Why Faith Matters
how one acts in the world
inserts a kavannah before they הוציא → I am ready to receive.
myself the mitzvah
הוציא הוציא הוציא

... by this merit may I open my mouth

אֵלֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְעַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
אֵלֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ



20/11/2011

(Handwritten notes)

2010/04/20
16N21 2162



211 3172

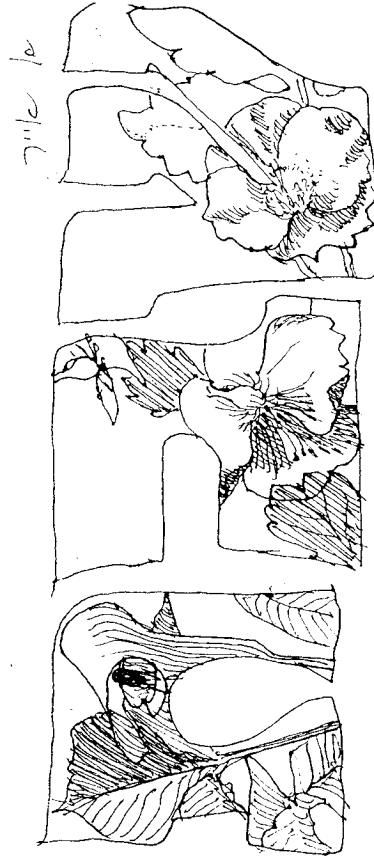
Handwritten notes on lined paper, likely a student's work. The text is written in cursive and appears to be a list or series of items, possibly names or numbers, written across three lines. The first line starts with 'K-2' and ends with '1'. The second line starts with 'K-2' and ends with '1'. The third line starts with 'K-2' and ends with '1'. The handwriting is somewhat messy and the ink is dark.

Pages from My Journal - 4

8
 SUN through the sky light in my face wakes me from drug-induced slumber. My hands close up to my face - the plants in sunlight reflecting bits of the rainbow magenta through green - no real blues or purples.

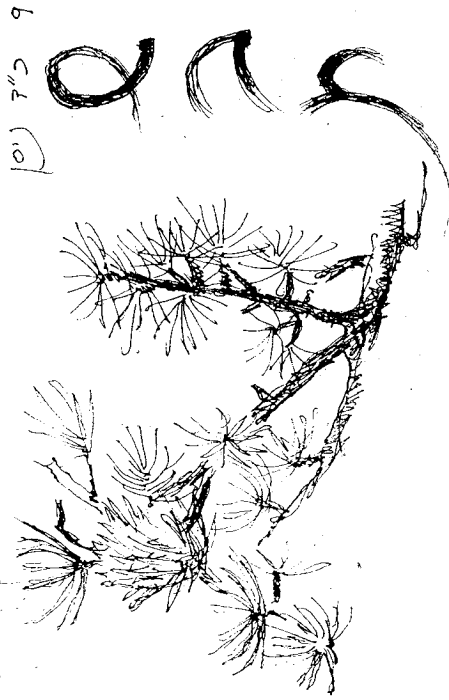
והאמר עתה
 בזהר הבהר

looking out on our hill in the back yard what looks natural is so much formed by human hands not only the mowed grass & specific plantings but the plants themselves - many of them - have been bred



R. Kagan
 to make a piece of art to capture the holiness of the camp

8
 Today feeling a need for simplicity too many tasks, too many loose ends, too much dissatisfaction w/ self. Praying from נעים דו - long version of נעים - too many words too complicated קוראים לכן usually a good thing. today a meditation would've been better



9
 leaving tired down to L'Vile practicing with 6th graders spinning through classes tired ending during ב"ה - the stained glass was very dark. pulpit lottery

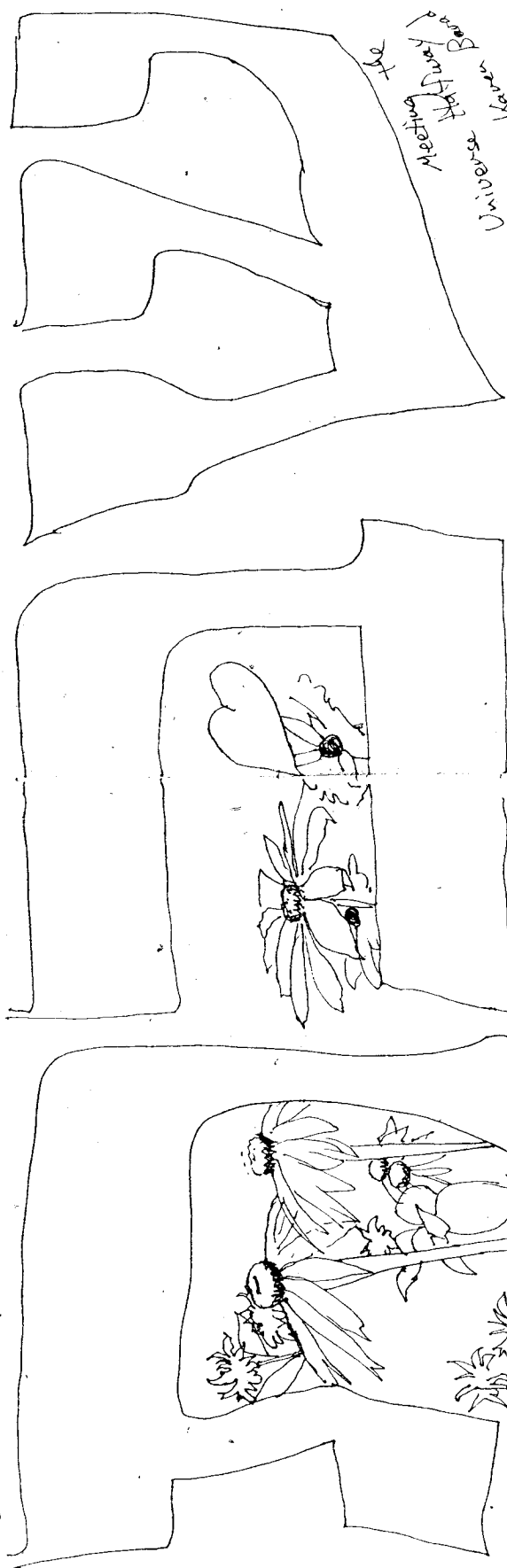
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 service Michael Meyer
 is light the first candle for the children.
 The children who wear green up to light their menorahs, waving out the chapel window flowers to see white petals spilled all over the ground.

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Pages from My Journal - 5

trying to pray while cars being serviced w/ television on "Jinja H"
 waiting room is well lighted - even w/ 7170

ברוך ה' אלהינו
 ברוך ה' אלהינו



Meeting
 Universe
 Beyond
 Light
 to be

"diffraction - helping to illuminate the nature of nature"
 There is a long history of using vision and optical metaphors to talk about knowledge. The physical phenomenon of refraction is a common metaphor for thinking... Donna Haraway proposes diffraction as an alternative to the well-worn metaphor of reflection... diffraction can serve as a useful counterpoint to reflection; both are optical phenomena, but whereas reflection is about mirroring and sameness, diffraction attends to patterns of difference.

Pages from My Journal - 6

שבת

4th cent

שבת

14th cent

Yemenite
1222

שבת

X V W

10th cent BCE

Samaritan

שבת

שבת
7th cent

שבת

335 BCE

14th cent
Sephardi

שבת

שבת

15th cent
Sephardi
script

Nahavi b. Nissim
N. Africa
11th cent

שבת

Yehudah Halevi
12th cent

14th cent Yemenite

שבת

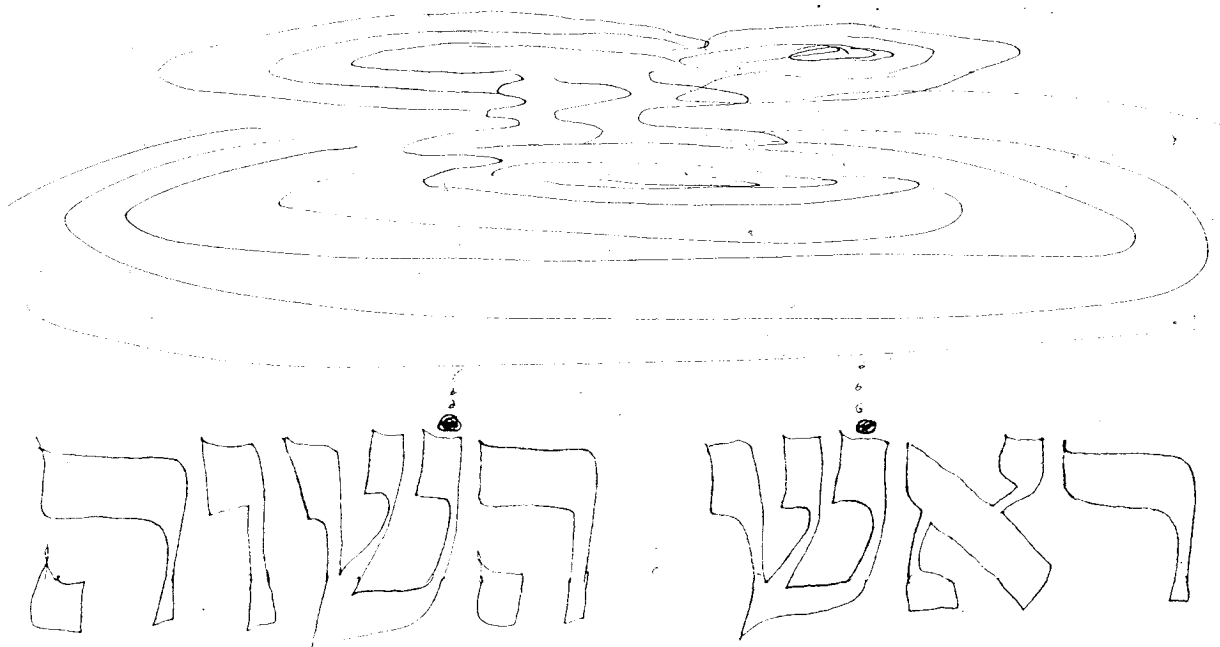
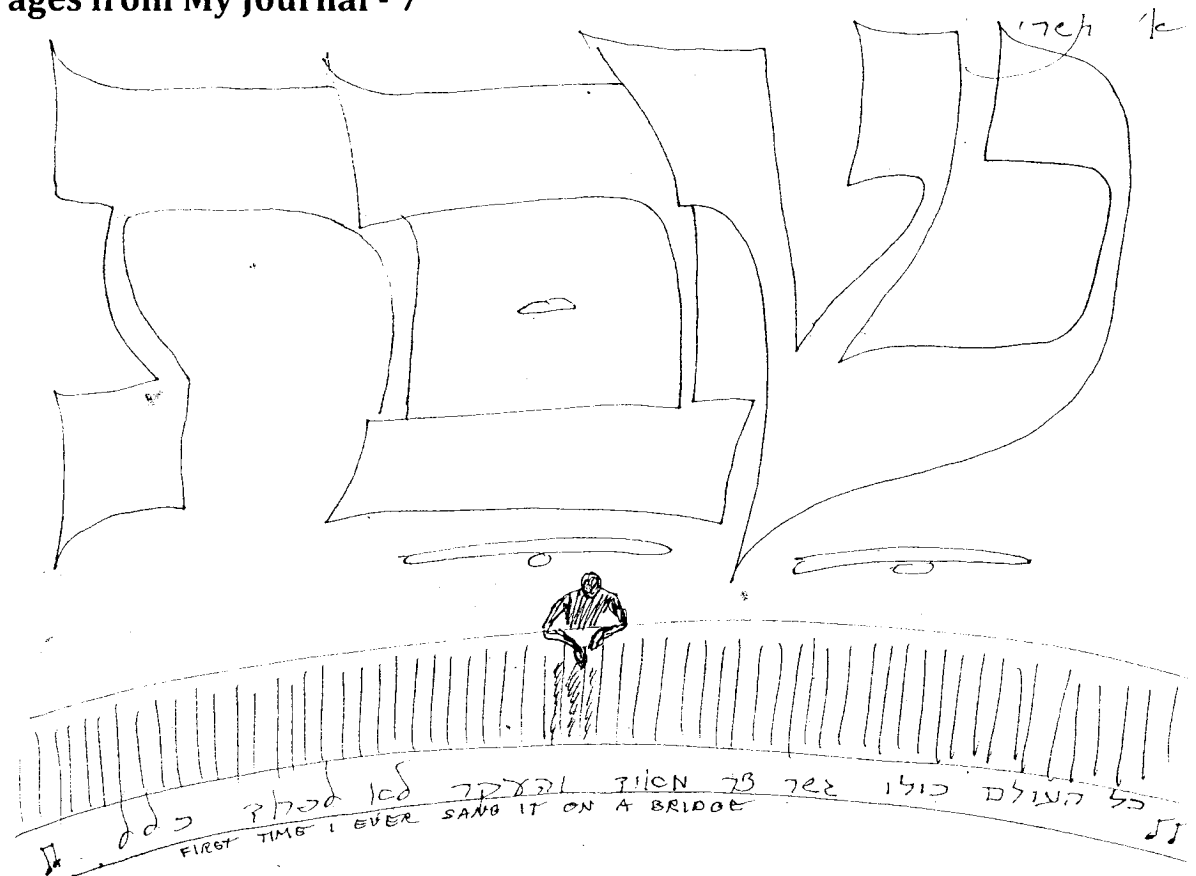
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15th Yemenite

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modern Sephardi 1934

Pages from My Journal - 7



God and Prayer - Guiding the Conversation

We should discuss the purposes of prayer with our children and within our own minds. The reasons we pray are many and varied and they tend to change over the course of our lives. We need different things at different times. When very involved with intellectual pursuits I may bring that frame of mind to prayer as well. Alternatively, I may choose some more meditative practice to give my mind a rest. In a crisis situation my prayer tends to be succinct. "Help me" is what it boils down to. I may be hoping for an actual reversal in the events of my life or the strength to deal with them. Either way, in my needy state I'm reaching outside of myself and into myself to... Wherever-whatever-it-may-be-may-be-I-don't-care-about-theology-right-now-I-just-need-help!

Here are two suggestions about how to guide a conversation about God and Prayer. The first is intended for a group with a particularly intellectual bent, the second for any group.

God and Prayer Conversation #1

Hand out the following sheets of paper which include extremely truncated versions of the thoughts of several Jewish thinkers as taken from the book, *Finding God - Selected Responses* by Rifat Sonsino and Daniel B. Syme URJ Press 2002.

Begin with the blessing for Torah study at the top of the page. Then go around the group reading each selection and discussing any ideas that are surprising, disturbing, pleasing, or otherwise noteworthy in any way.

Hand out copies of the God inventory that follows and ask them to fill it out.

Discuss any statements with which anyone strongly agreed or disagreed.

Remind the group that when we read Torah in synagogue there is a blessing before and another blessing after the reading. They are different and the inclusion of both probably came from a desire to honor both traditions and lose neither. End the session with Marcia Falk's Torah blessing as a counterpoint to the Torah study lesson with which we began.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לַעֲסֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah.

Finding God - Selected Responses by Rifat Sonsino and Daniel B. Syme URJ Press 2002

Rabbinic Literature

If I create the whole world on the basis of mercy alone, its sins will be great; [if I create it] on the basis of judgment alone, the world cannot exist. Hence, I will create it on the basis of judgment and mercy, and may it then stand!

Bereishit Rabbi, Bereishit 12:15.

God exists and God is one. God is portrayed in anthropomorphic and anthropopathic terms. Oral Law, divinely given, allows Judaism to grow and change in response to new situations.

Philo Judaeus (~20-50 CE)

Your reason will show you that as there is a mind in you, so is there in the universe; and that as your mind has taken upon itself sovereign control of all that is in you, and brought every part into subjection to itself, so too He . . . guides and controls the universe by law and right of an absolute way.

Philo adapts Plato's theory of forms to his Jewish convictions resulting in a spiritual monotheism. God exists yet is unknowable. Through the logos (Torah) it is possible for God who is pure spirit to have contact with the impure world.

Rambam, Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, Maimonides 1135-1204

Human reason cannot fully conceive God in His true essence, because of the perfection of God's essence and the imperfection of our own reason.

God is pure intellect, the Unmoved Mover of the universe. Our goal is intellectual and spiritual perfection.

Mysticism

This world is formed on the pattern of the world above and whatever takes place in this earthly realm occurs also in the realm above.

Zohar, 2:144a

For the mystics God exists but is unknowable. Ten s'firot, emanating from God, gave shape to our physical world. We humans are a microcosm of the universe and unite the "upper" and the "lower" worlds. Isaac Luria (1534-1572) postulated a self-limiting God who voluntarily contracted to make room for the physical world. In the aftermath of this contraction, certain divine vessels shattered, scattering divine sparks throughout the world. Through performing mitzvot and through prayer we humans can mend the world.

Baruch Spinoza 1632-1677

Besides God no substance can be granted or conceived.

God and the universe are one and the same substance. Free will is a human illusion. In reality, everything flows by necessity from the order of the universe. We are at peace with ourselves when we know our place in the universe and accept it. Our goal is to know God.

Martin Buber 1878-1956

All real living is meeting.

It is by genuinely relating to others as "Thou" that we meet our "Eternal Thou," God. This is not done by denying the world and our work in it. On the contrary, it is within the context of how everyday life is lived that God is truly revealed.

Milton Steinberg 1903-1950

God is Absolute in the sense of being a Creator to whom we stand as creatures while being at the same time a self-limiting Power. To the extent of the reality of our freedom, God is limited in His power. . . . If a man is to have real freedom, God's control cannot be complete.

Limited theism is based on the assumption that God is all-good but not all-powerful. We become partners with God in the work of creation and in the realization of the cosmic design.

Mordecai Kaplan 1881-1983

It matters very little how we conceive God, as long as we so believe in God that belief in Him makes a tremendous difference in our lives.

If God is that Power that makes for truth, good, justice freedom, then whenever we display moral responsibility we manifest the presence of God. Rejecting God as a supernatural power, Kaplan argued that God is the totality of all those forces that help us become the best people are capable of becoming.

Erich Fromm 1900-1980

God is one of the many different poetic expressions of the highest value in humanism, not a reality in itself.

Fromm urges that we move away from an authoritarian approach to religion toward a humanistic approach. We can find oneness with the world by developing our specifically human qualities of love and reason. God characterizes these ideas and stands for the highest human values that give meaning to our lives.

Abraham Joshua Heschel 1907-1972

A tremor seizes our limbs... our whole being bursts into shudders. But then a cry, wrested from our very core, fills the world around us, as if a mountain were suddenly about to place itself in front of us. It is one word: GOD. Not an emotion, a stir within us, but a power a marvel beyond us, tearing the world apart. The word that means more than universe, more than eternity, holy, holy, holy; we cannot comprehend it... He, who is more than all there is... whose question is more than our mind can answer; He to whom our life can be the spelling of an answer.

God, known by us intuitively, shows concern for humanity and is in need of human attention. God is a living Being, not a principle of thought.

Alvin Reines 1926-2004

God is the Enduring Possibility of Being.

Polydoxy is an ideology that affirms the right of each individual to freedom in belief and action, so long as that freedom does not impinge upon the freedom of others. Hylotheism, is

one of a number of finite God concepts that regards God as the enduring possibility of being. The only relationship that humanity has with that which Hylotheists call God is the improvement of the present world, and thus the improvement of its potential for the future.

Harold Schulweis 1925-

God is not in me, nor in you, but between us. God is not in me or mine, nor you or yours, but ours. God is known not alone, but in relationship. Not as separate lonely power, but through our kinship, our friendship, through our healing and binding and raising up of each other.

Marcia Falk 1946-

I would describe my own experience of the divine as an awareness, or a sensing, of the dynamic, alive, and unifying wholeness within creation - a wholeness that subsumes and contains and embraces me, a wholeness greater than the sum of its parts.

Judith Plaskow 1947-

God has many faces. This God is male/female lover, friend, companion, cocreator, the one who, seeing what is best in us, lures us to be the most we can become. This God is ground and source of all life, creating, holding, sustaining the great web of existence and, as part of it, the human companions who labor to make the world a home for the divine presence. This God is the God of Israel, the God the nascent community experienced and acknowledged behind the wonderful events at the Red Sea. This is the God the people stood before at Sinai. . . . This is the God to whom they found themselves tied in a covenant.

Lawrence Kushner 1943-

God is our sense of self, our innermost essence, encountered throughout all creation. Our selves are made of God's self. But this does not mean that the world is our creation, or that we are God. It does mean that this awareness, this sense of uniqueness we feel cannot possibly have come just from ourselves. It is bigger than us and must be in everyone else. . . . Indeed, this sense of self . . . is so holy we correctly intuit that it has created us . . . God is the Self of the Universe.

<i>Yitromeim libeinu,</i>	יְתְרוֹמִים לִבֵּינוּ
<i>t'shovav nafsheinu,</i>	תְּשׁוּבָב נַפְשֵׁינוּ
<i>ta'amik havanateinu</i>	תַּעֲמִיק הַבְּנֵיתֵנוּ
<i>b'oskeinu b'divrei torah.</i>	בְּעֶסְקֵנוּ בְּדִבְרֵי תּוֹרָה.

May our hearts be lifted, our spirits refreshed,
our understanding deepened by the study of Torah.

Marcia Falk

Agree	Unsure	Disagree	
_____	_____	_____	God created the universe.
_____	_____	_____	God directs what happens in the world.
_____	_____	_____	God cries with us when we suffer.
_____	_____	_____	God does not interfere in the affairs of people.
_____	_____	_____	God is aware of what I do.
_____	_____	_____	God can answer prayer.
_____	_____	_____	God punishes evil & rewards good behavior.
_____	_____	_____	God is limited in power.
_____	_____	_____	God intended us never to understand some things.
_____	_____	_____	If there were no people God would still exist.
_____	_____	_____	God cares about what happens to us.
_____	_____	_____	The universe is the physical manifestation of God.
_____	_____	_____	"God" is a term people use to describe their best hopes for humanity.
_____	_____	_____	God demands certain things from us..
_____	_____	_____	God is all the laws of nature.
_____	_____	_____	God is everywhere.
_____	_____	_____	God needs human beings.
_____	_____	_____	Humans are made in the image of God.
_____	_____	_____	God communicates with people.
_____	_____	_____	I can say what God is not, but not what God is.
_____	_____	_____	God has a special relationship with the Jewish people.

God and Prayer Conversation #2

Setup:

Post names for different images of God from the liturgy on walls around the room.

Here are some suggestions:

- o *Yotzer or u'vorei choshekh* - Creator of light and darkness
- o *Oseh shalom* - Who makes peace
- o *Oheiv tzedakah umishpat* - Who loves righteousness and justice
- o *Shekhinah* - The indwelling Presence
- o *Hamelameid Torah* - Who teaches Torah
- o *Avinu Malkeinu* - Our Father our King
- o *Rofei hacholim* - Who heals the sick
- o *Eloheinu v'elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu* - Our God and God of our ancestors
- o *Shomei'a tefilah* - Who answers prayer

Everyone starts out together comfortably seated. To set the tone of קדושה *kedushah*, of holiness, we recite the first six words of the Shema together.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai echad.

Hear O Israel, Adonia is our God, Adonai is one.

Point out and read the various God signs around the room. Ask the participants to go stand near the God sign that resonates the most for him or her at this time.

If there is more than one person at most signs, give time for them to talk among themselves about why they chose that particular name of God.

After a few minutes go around the room and ask people to share with the whole group something they heard that was interesting. If it has not already been mentioned ask if anyone has felt their concept of God or the community expanded by hearing the thoughts of the others.

Next ask for insights into how these particular ideas about God contribute to a person's prayer experience.

Close with the second line of the Shema:

בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

Baruch sheim kevod malkhuto l'olam va'ed.

Blessed is the glory of God's majesty forever and ever.

Yotzer Or in Mishkan Tefilah*Weekday Morning*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מִלְדֵּי הָעוֹלָם,
 יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ,
 עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת-הַכֹּל.
 הַמְאִיר לְאֶרֶץ
 וְלִדְרוֹת עֲלִיָּה בְּרַחֲמִים,
 וּבִטְוֵבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם תְּמִיד
 מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית.
 מָה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשָׂיו, יי,
 כָּל־סֵם בְּחֻמָּה עֲשִׂיתָ,
 מְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ.
 תִּתְּבָרֵךְ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
 עַל שֶׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ
 וְעַל מְאֹרֵי אוֹר שֶׁעֲשִׂיתָ,
 יִפְאָרְיֶךָ סֵלָה.
 אוֹר חָדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תִּאִיר,
 וְנִזְכֶּה כָּלֵנוּ מְהֵרָה לְאוֹרוֹ.
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאֹרוֹת.

ברכו

יוצר

אהבת רבה

שמע

ואהבת

למען תזכרו

ויאמור יי

אמת ויציב

מירכמכה

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

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאֹרוֹת.

אוֹר חָדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תִּאִיר *Or chadash al Tzion ta-ir . . . Shine a new light upon Zion . . .*
 Classical Reform prayerbook authors in the Diaspora consistently omitted this line with its
 mention of Zion from the liturgy because of their opposition to Jewish nationalism. With the
 restoration of this passage to *Mishkan T'filah*, our movement consciously affirms its devotion to
 the modern State of Israel and signals its recognition of the religious significance of the reborn
 Jewish commonwealth. *David Ellenson*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי . . . יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ *Baruch atah, Adonai . . . yotzeir or uvorei choshech . . .*
Praised are You, Adonai . . . Creator of light and darkness . . . Isaiah 45:7

מָה רַבּוֹ *Mah rabu . . . How numerous . . .* Psalm 104:24

Yotzer Or in Sim Shalom

*In the first berakhah before K'riat Sh'ma, we
praise God for His gift of Creation*

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, יוצר אור ובורא חשך
עושה שלום ובורא את-הכל.

המאיר לארץ ולדברים עליה ברחמים, ובטובו מחדש בכל-
יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. מה רבו מעשיו יהוה, כלם
בחכמה עשית. מלאה הארץ קנניה. המלך המרוקם לבדו
מאז, המשבח והמפאר והמתנשא מימות עולם. אלהי
עולם, ברחמיו הרבים רחם עלינו, אדון עונג, צור משגבנו,
מגן ישענו, משגב בעדנו.

אל ברוך גדול דעה, הכין ופעל והרי חמה. טוב יצר כבוד
לשמו, מאורות נתן סביבות עול. פנות צבאו קדושים,
רוממי שדי, תמיד מספרים כבוד אל וקדשתו. תתברך יהוה
אלהינו על שבח מעשה גדיך ועל מאורי אור שעשית,
ויפארוך סלה.

תתברך, צורנו מלכנו וגואלנו, בורא קדושים. ישתבח שמך
לעד מלכנו, יוצר משרתים, נאשר משרתיו כלם עומדים
ברום עולם ומשמעים ביראה יחד בקול דברי אלהים חיים
ומלך עולם. כלם אהובים, כלם ברוכים, כלם גבורים, וכלם
עשים באימה וביראה רצון קונם, □ וכלם פותחים את-
פיהם בקדשה ובטהרה, בשירה ובזמרה, ומברכים
שבחים ומפארים ומעריצים ומקדישים וממליכים

*In the first berakhah before K'riat Sh'ma, we
praise God for His gift of Creation*

Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, creating light
and fashioning darkness, ordaining the order of all creation.

You illumine the world and its creatures with mercy; in Your good-
ness, day after day You renew Creation. How manifold Your works, O
Lord; with wisdom You fashioned them all. The earth abounds with
Your creations. Uniquely exalted since earliest time, enthroned on
praise and prominence since the world began, eternal God, with Your
manifold mercies continue to love us, our Pillar of strength, protect-
ing Rock, sheltering Shield, sustaining Stronghold.

Our praiseworthy God with vast understanding fashioned the rays of
the sun. The good light He created reflects His splendor; radiant
lights surround His throne. His heavenly servants in holiness exalt
the Almighty, constantly recounting His sacred glory. Praise shall be
Yours, Lord our God, for Your wondrous works, for the lights You
have fashioned, the sun and the moon which reflect Your glory.

Our Rock, our Redeemer, our King, Creator of holy beings, You shall
be praised forever. You fashion angelic spirits to serve You; beyond
the heavens, they all await Your command. In chorus they proclaim
with reverence words of the living God, eternal King. Adoring,
beloved, and choice are they all, in awe fulfilling their Creator's will.
In purity and sanctity they raise their voices in song and psalm,
extolling and exalting, declaring the power, praise, holiness, and
majesty of God, the great, mighty, awesome King, the Holy One. One
to another they vow loyalty to God's kingship, one to another they
join to hallow their Creator with serenity, pure speech, and sacred
song, in unison chanting with reverence:

Yotzer Or in Sim Shalom

את-שם האל המלך הגדול והגבור והנורא, קדוש הוא. וכלם מקבלים עליהם על מלכות שמם זה מזה, ונותנים רשות זה לזה. להקדיש ליוצרים בנחת רוח, בשפה ברורה ובנעימה קדושה, כלם באחד עונים ואומרים ביחד:

קדוש קדוש קדוש יהוה צבאות, מלא כל-הארץ כבודו.

□ והאופנים וחיות הקדש ברעש גדול מתנשאים לעצמם שרפים, לעצמם משבחים ואומרים:

ברוך כבוד יהוה ממקומו.

לאל ברוך, נעימות יתנו. למלך אל חי ונקים, ומירות יאמרו ותשבחות ישמיעו, כי הוא לבדו פועל גבורות, עושה תדשות, בעל מלחמות, זורע צדקות, מצמיח ישועות, בורא רפואות, נורא תהלות, אדון הנפלאות, המחדש בטובו בכל-יום תמיד מעשה בראשית, באמור: לעשה אורים לים, כי לעולם חסדו. □ אור חדש על ציון תאיר, ונזכה בו מהרה לאורו. ברוך אלה יהוה יוצר המאורות.

Holy, holy, holy, Adonai tzeva'ot; the whole world is filled with His glory.

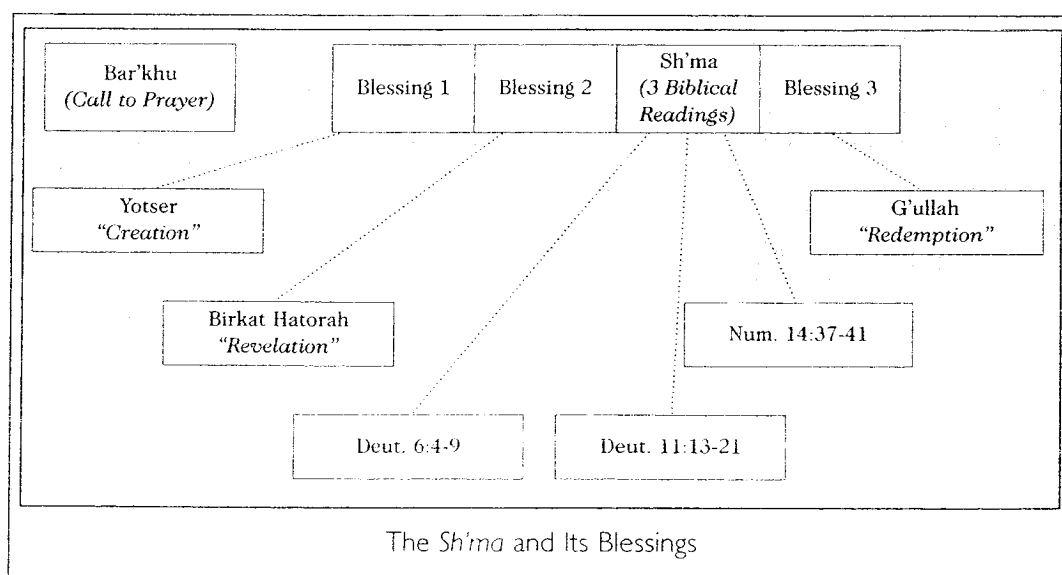
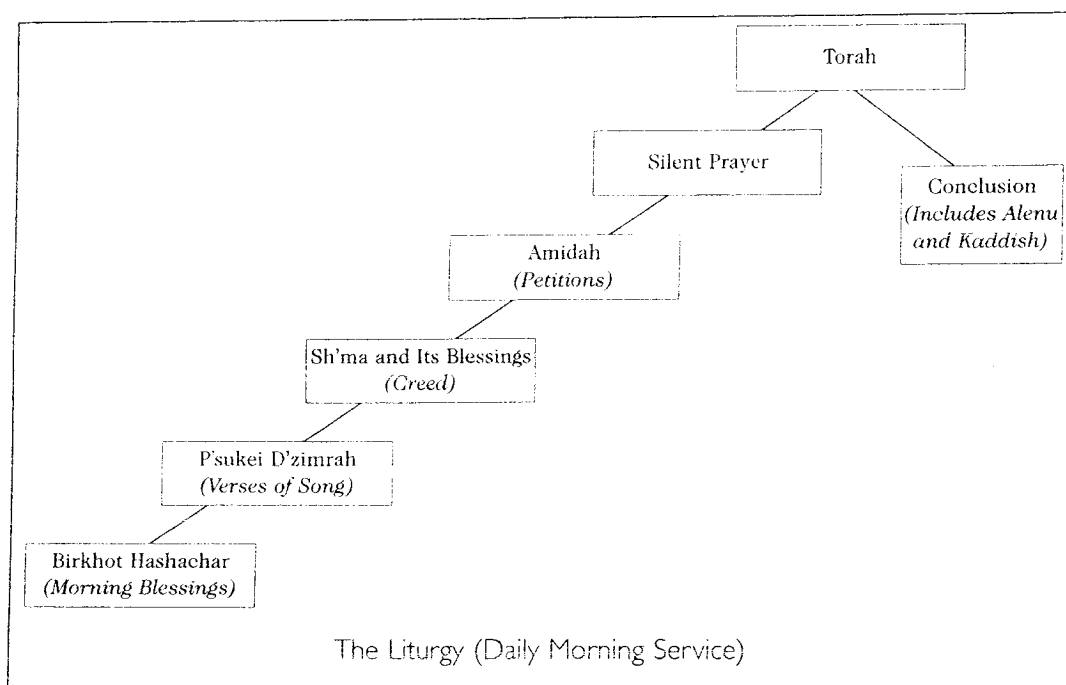
As in the prophet's vision, soaring celestial creatures roar, responding with a chorus of adoration:

Praised be the glory of the Lord throughout the universe.

To praiseworthy God they sweetly sing; the living, enduring God they celebrate in song. For He is unique, doing mighty deeds, creating new life, championing justice, sowing righteousness, reaping victory, bringing healing. Awesome in praise, Sovereign of wonders, day after day in His goodness He renews Creation. So sang the Psalmist: "Praise the Creator of great lights, for His love endures forever."

Cause a new light to illumine Zion. May we all soon share a portion of its radiance. Praised are You, Lord, Creator of lights.

Chart of the Daily Morning Service - from My People's Prayer Book Vol. 1



Brief History of *Yotzer Or* - "the Creator benediction) from Ismar Elbogen's *Jewish Liturgy*, pp. 17-19

(3) The current text of the Creator benediction contains rhymes, an alphabetical acrostic (in some rare versions, even further developed than in the current one), and other signs of relatively late origin.⁵ In accordance with the benediction's function as a morning prayer, it begins with praises based on Is. 45:7, with a slight alteration at the end of the verse to suit it for the service. The daily renewal of light is briefly praised as a renewal of the act of creation. The beginning and the end, twelve words in all, are quoted in B. *Ber.* 11b and 12a; and of what follows, the words *המחדש בכל יום מעשה בראשית*, "Who renews every day the act of creation," occur in B. *Hag.* 12b, though not in connection with our prayer. Parallel to the opening of the benediction is the eulogy *יוצר המאורות*, which is prefaced by the verse "Who made the great lights" (Ps. 136:7). This verse, too, may still be reckoned as part of the original stock of the prayer,⁶ but with these words everything has been said that needed to be said in this place. Indeed, the version of the prayer prescribed by Saadia for individual worship is in this short form, which is also found in several geniza fragments without special remark.⁷

The rest of the material between the opening and the conclusion in the current version adds nothing new to the ideas that were meant to be expressed; it is merely an artificial expansion that might be deleted without loss to the content. The beginning, *מה רבו*, "How numerous," is drawn from Ps. 104:24, and the conclusion has a petition, *רחם עלינו*, "Have mercy upon us," which is out of place here; the intervening words form an unnecessarily wordy transition to it. The words "have mercy upon us" themselves belong to the following series of rhymes, which Saadia quotes in a slightly altered form. Its content and form betray it as a later addition to the original base; yet, it may be older than the expansions that follow it. The fragment, *אל ברוך גדול דעה . . . תמיד*, "Blessed God, great in knowledge," is an alphabetical acrostic, which apparently was meant to include the letters that have special final forms (*מנצפ"ך*);⁸ it originated at the very earliest at the end of the talmudic period. In the geonic period such acrostics were not yet incorporated into the prayer; several were available to be inserted as alternatives. Saadia, for example, recommends a longer one in which every letter is represented by at least two words, and fragmentary prayer books provide additional examples. Another acrostic is found toward the end of this benediction: *כולם אהובים . . . ברורים . . . גבורים . . . עושים . . . פתוחים*, "All are beloved . . . pure . . . mighty . . . perform . . . open. . . ." The acrostic is not complete, but that need not mean that our tradition is defective, for the poets did not always work out the acrostics to their completion. We do find more of this acrostic in the Crimean rite than in the other rites (*ותיקים זכים חפצים . . . לובשים עוז*), but this is very likely a late addition.⁹

The thirteen following words, *תתברך*, "Be blessed," to *סלה*, "*Sela*," return to the theme of the benediction (the luminaries) and were therefore considered by Zunz to belong to the original benediction; but they do not fit there and serve only to pick up again the subject's broken thread. The words *קדושים*, "holy ones," and *משרתים*, "servants," open a new theme, leading to the Kedushah. All scholars agree that this Kedushah in its present form is not ancient, but they are divided as to whether the Kedushah itself originally belonged here or not. Many hold that this in fact was its original place, and that from here it entered the *Amida*, while others believe that it originated in the *Amida* and was transferred here. We deal with this problem below in §9a. The verbose character of our text, which serves as a transition and which appears in Saadia in a very abbreviated form, is apparently no older than the geonic period, having originated in the circles of the Merkava mystics,¹⁰ who strove mightily in their prayers

to comprehend the godhead. They longed for visions; and the heaping up of hymns is a tried and true means of achieving ecstasy that was practiced by mystics in every age. From the circles of the mystics we have many prayers of marvelous beauty, but also many in which verbiage overwhelms feeling and thought. According to information in *Seder rav 'amram*, the Kedushah was one of the most beloved prayers of the mystics of that period. Evidence has lately come to light that in the first century of the geonic period the mystics made great efforts to disseminate their ideas, thereby arousing much opposition.¹¹ They were especially eager to spread the recitation of the Kedushah. In Palestine the Kedushah was recited [in the *Amida*] only on Sabbaths and festivals, while the mystics demanded that it be introduced on weekdays as well; despite bitter opposition they did not let up until they had achieved their purpose. About the year 750 this movement spread from Babylonia to Palestine. It would seem that at that time the Kedushah entered Creator, while the ancient Palestinian rite did not know it at all. [This matter is still in dispute; see the supplementary notes to §9a, pp. 59–61, below.]

The section beginning **לאל ברוך**, “To the Blessed God,” is directly connected to the reference to the angelic choirs that preceded and thus cannot predate it. It, too, contains several rhymes (**עושה גבורות**, **פועל גבורות**, and so forth). In accordance with the ancient rule (see above, p. 16), it returns to the theme of the opening, in fact, to the very words: **המחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית**, “Who renews in His goodness every day the work of creation”; and as a biblical proof-text, **כאמור**, “as it is said,” it cites: **לעושה גדולים**, “Who made the great lights” (Ps. 136:7). But the word “lights” proved to be a stumbling block, for poetic souls (perhaps the mystics mentioned above) attached to it a petition for the light of the messianic redemption: **אור חדש על ציון תאיר**, “Cause a new light to shine upon Zion.” Saadia, whose prayer book does not even have “Who made the great lights,” campaigned against this addition,¹² but in Babylonia his effort was to no avail; yet, it is absent from the Sephardic, Romaniot, and Italian rites, while in the sphere of the French-Ashkenazic rite, Rashi expressed his opposition to it. In Germany it became known early on and was defended by R. Eliezer ben Nathan of Mayence (ca. 1100). The dispute is reflected in the manuscripts as well, some of them citing the sentence and others omitting it; in the printed editions of the Ashkenazic rite it is found since the first edition. Where “Cause a new light” is lacking, a different conclusion is found. The Italian and Romaniot rites have, after Ps. 136, **ובחסדו נתנם**, [להאיר] על הארץ, “and in His mercy He set them [Romaniot: to give light] over the earth”; and the Sephardic rite, **והתקין מאורות לשמח (את) עולמו אשר ברא**, “and He established luminaries to rejoice His world that He created.” It appears that this was the original conclusion until the messianic conclusion replaced it.¹³ The version “Cause a new light” itself is apparently a shortened version of a more elaborate messianic petition. In southern France it was the custom to follow “Cause a new light” with Is. 60:1 and Ps. 118:27. This might be a vestige of a Palestinian tradition, as is often the case with this rite; in the geniza fragments we frequently find between the two parts of the sentence “Cause a new light to shine” and “that we may all be worthy,” alongside the above-mentioned verses, **וגר משיחך תאיר לנו**, “And cause the lamp of your anointed one to shine for us.”¹⁴ The eulogy **יוצר המאורות**, “Creator of the luminaries,” is found already in B. Ber. 12a, Y. Ber. 1:8, 3b. The Reform prayer books have abridged the benediction in various ways; at first objections were raised only to “Cause a new light,” but later the references to angels (“Be blessed, our Rock”) were eliminated, and ultimately the short version found in Saadia was restored.

Sheet Music - from Transcontinental Music's *The Complete Shireinu***Yotzeir Or**

187B

Music: Jeff Klepper
Text: Morning Liturgy

With feeling (♩ = 138)

capo 5: Am Dm G C

Ba-ruch A - tah, A - do - nai E - lo - hei - nu,

Me - lech ha - o - lam, Ba-ruch A - tah,

A - do - nai E - lo - hei - nu, Me - lech ha - o -

lam, yo - tzeir or u - vo - rei cho - shech,

o - seh sha - lom sha - lom u - vo - rei et ha - kol,

Yo - tzeir or u - vo - rei cho - shech,

o - seh sha - lom, sha - lom u - vo - rei et ha - kol.

(Last time: rit.)

The *Brakhah*, or Blessing, Formula - the first six words of most blessings

There is a halakhic principle, a principle of Jewish law, that it is necessary to recite a blessing before fulfilling any commandment, including liturgical ones.²³⁵ Most blessings have a prescribed six-word opening:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha'olam

Blessed are You Adonai, our God, ruler of the world

To find the roots of this formula we look first in the *Tanakh*. There are many times in Bible that God is praised with an active participle: "who forms light,"²³⁶ "who hears prayer,"²³⁷ but not with this formula. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ - *Barukh atah Adonai*, Blessed are You Adonai - appears twice in Bible. In Psalms 119:12:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ לְמַדְנִי חֻקֶּיךָ

Barukh atah Adonai lamdeini chuqekha

Blessed are You LORD, train me in your laws.

and in I Chronicles 29:10:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִינוּ

Barukh atah Adonai elohei yisraeil avinu

[David blessed the Lord in front of all the assemblage; David said,] "Blessed are You, LORD, God of Israel our father, [from eternity to eternity.]"

The Rabbis decided that a liturgical blessing begins with the word *barukh*, and must mention God's name and God's sovereignty. It must God in the second person, though the Palestinian tradition was different in this.²³⁸ Using the second person form of address puts the speaker into a direct relationship with God.²³⁹

The Rabbis explained that the root of the word *barukh*, blessed, is also the root of the words "knee" and "pool." The former reminds us to bend our knees at the word *barukh* to show honor before God. The latter suggests that saying a blessing can be like

235. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 360.

236. Isaiah 45:7

237. Psalms 65:3

238. Ruth Langer, op. cit., p. 353.

239. Joseph Heineman, *Prayer in the Talmud* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977) pp. 88-89.

jumping into a pool. Both experiences can shock us into awareness.²⁴⁰ We might wonder what it can mean to say that God is “blessed.” Is not God the source of blessing? One suggestion is that it used to be common for people to conclude their business with the phrase, “May you be blessed before God,” and this etiquette was transferred onto God. It may also have arisen in a time when God was understood to the sort of being that could be affected.²⁴¹ The word is often translated as “praised.” You might say that that is simply to avoid the problem of blessing God. Also תהילה - *tehilah*, praise and ברכה - *brakhah*, blessing serve as synonyms in the Psalms.²⁴²

In regard to God's name, Adonai is our own Jewish name for God. “Our God ruler of the world” is God's job description, so to speak, or sovereignty, as the Rabbis would have it. This phrase reminds us that God, in the Rabbis' estimation, is concerned specifically with the Jewish people in addition to being the creator of the whole world.²⁴³

The words *barukh* and *atah* are masculine forms of “blessed” and “You.” Some people like to alternate the original *brakhah* formula with another version which uses feminine forms of the words. One option along those lines is:

ברוךנ את יְהוָה שְׁכִינָה רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם

Brukhah at Yah, Shekhinah ruach ha'olam

Blessed are You God, Shekhinah spirit of the world...

Yah is a name for God often used in Psalms. *Shekhinah* is not a biblical term, but one the Rabbis coined to refer to the indwelling presence of God. Feminists have seized upon it as a name for God with a grammatically feminine form. Maimonides wrote in the *Mishneh Torah*²⁴⁴ that it is permissible to recite a blessing in any language as long as one includes the name of God and God's sovereignty and the subject matter of the blessing. He did not have this kind of innovation in mind, but we answer the needs of our own time.

240. Debi Mahrer Rowe, *Introduction to the Siddur, Vol. 1: The Brakhah System* (Los Angeles: Torah Aura Productions, 1990) p. 8.

241. Moshe Greenberg, *Biblical Prose Prayer* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) p. 32.

242. Greenberg, p. 35.

243. Debi Mahrer Rowe, op. cit., p. 13.

244. *Hilkhhot Brakhot* 1:6.

מסורת
הש"ס

24

גמ' כשדבר בביתך פרט לעוסק במלואו. לקמיה מדרש מאי משמע: וכללך בדרך פרט לחסן. ואצ"ל דחסן מני עוסק במלואו הוא אי לאו קרא יתייה לא נפקא לן כשדבר קמא דכין דעוסק במלואו לא כחבי בקרא דהדיא אלמ מיעוטא כשדברא הוא דקא דרשין מבייתך ויחזעטין מינה עוסק במלאתא מלואו תורה איר.

גַּם בְּשִׁלְמָא בִּ"הָקָא מִפְרָשֵׁי מַעֲמִירוֹ וּמַעֲמָא
דְּבִישׁ אֵלֶּא בִּישׁ מִטְּ לֹא אִמְרִי כִּבֵּ"ה אִמְרִי לֶךְ
בִּישׁ אֵ"כ נִימָא קֵרָא *בִּבְכֶר וּבְעֶרְבַּר מֵאִי
בִּשְׁבָּכְךָ וּבִקְוֹמְךָ בִּשְׁעַת שְׁכִיבָה שְׁכִיבָה מִמֶּשׁ
וּבִשְׁעַת קִימָה קִימָה מִמֶּשׁ וּבִישׁ הָאִי וּבִלְכַתְךָ
בִּדְרָךְ מֵאִי עֵבִיד לָהּ הָהוּא מִבְּעִי לָהּ
*לְכַרְתֵּנָּיָא בִּשְׁבַתְךָ כְּבִיתְךָ פֵּרֵט *לְעוֹסֵס
בְּמַצוֹה וּבִלְכַתְךָ בִּדְרָךְ פֵּרֵט לַחֲתָן מִכָּאֵן אִמְרו
"הַכּוֹנֵס אֶת הַבְּתוּלָה פֵּסוּר וְאֵת הָאֲלֻמָּה הַיֵּיב
מֵאִי מִשְׁמַע אֲמַר רַב פֶּאָה כִּי דִרְךָ מַה דִּרְךָ
רְשׁוּת אָף כָּל רְשׁוּת מִי לֹא עֲסָקִין דְּקָא אוּלַּי
לְדַבֵּר מַצוֹה וְאִפִּילוּ הֵכִי אִמְר רַחֲמָנָא לְקָרִי אִם
כֵּן לְכַתּוּב רַחֲמָנָא בִּשְׁבַת וּבִלְכַת מֵאִי בִּשְׁבַתְךָ
וּבִלְכַתְךָ בִּשְׁבַת דִּידְךָ וּבִלְכַת דִּידְךָ הָאִי
דְּמַדְּיִיבִית הָאִי דְּמַצוֹה פְּטִירַת *אִי הֵכִי אִפִּילוּ
כּוֹנֵס אֶת הָאֲלֻמָּה נָכוֹן הָאִי מִרִיד וְהָאִי לֹא
מִרִיד אִי מִשּׁוּם מִרְדָּא אִפִּילוּ מִבְּעִי סְפִינְתוֹ
בֵּינָם נָכוֹן כִּי תִימָא הִ"נְּ אֲלֻמָּה אִ"ר אַבָּא בְר
וּבְדָא אִמְר רַב *אַבֵּל הַיֵּיב בְּכָל הַמַּצּוֹת
הָאֲמֻרוֹת בְּתוֹרָה דִּיחִין מִי תַּחֲפִילִין שְׁהִי
יִתְּנָא לָנוּ בְּרַם פֶּאָר שְׁנֵאמֵר °פֶּאָרֶךְ כְּבוֹשׁ עֲלֶיךָ
תָּתִם מִרִיד מִרְדָּא דְּמַצוֹה הַכָּא מִרִיד מִרְדָּא
דְּרְשׁוּת (6) *וּבִישׁ הָהוּא מִבְּעִי לָהּ פֵּרֵט לְשִׁלּוּחִי
מַצוֹה וּבִ"ה אִמְרִי מִמִּילָא ש"מ דֹּאִפִּילוּ בִּדְרָךְ
נָכוֹן קִי: תִּיר בְּה"א עוֹמְדִין וְקוֹרִין וְיֹשְׁבִין
וְקוֹרִין וּמִמֶּיִן וְקוֹרִין וְלִכְתֵּן בִּדְרָךְ וְקוֹרִין (7) עוֹשִׂין

דאזיכא ערדא אכל חסן ערדער
 דמחשבה בעלמא הוא שמחשב על
 עסק בתולים אי לאו קרא יתירה לא
 אחמטוס: **ב** **כונאם בכונאם פטור**.
 שטורד בחמשהם בעילת מלוה: **מא**
ממעט. פרט לעוסק במלוה: **כידרך**.
 בשנתן ובלכתן הקאס לדרך: **מי**
לא עסקינן כו'. כלומר מגלן דעדרך
 רשות לחודא ליירי קרא הא קרא
 דרך סחמא כתיב ומואלח שמעמ
 נמי מנייה דרך מלוה ואפילו הכי אמר
 רחמנא ליירי: **אי משום ערדא**.
 דמחשבה פטורא ליה אפילו עבדה
 ספינתו נמי: **אמאם אמר רבי אבא**.
 כחו למא אחר (י) אש"כ שטורד בצערו
 חיוב בכל המאות חוץ חזקת התפילין
 שגמרם בהם פאר ליחזקאל פארך
 חבוב עליונו' וכיון דבעו פאר ואכל
 מתגולל בצערו בשפר אין זה פאר:
טרי ערדא דמאס. ויזון דאגן
 מיעוט בעלמא דרשינן פרט לחסן
 מחסידיך אס ממעטת מנייה ערדא
 דמלוה: **וב"ה אמרי לו**. הכי נמי
 דקרא למדש מנייה פרט לחסן אחא
 ממילא נמי בלכת ידיך הוא דמחייבך
 אלאה בדרך נמי קרי: **עוסקין**
במלאכתן וקורין. לקמן מוקמינן
 לה בפרק שני (ד' ע"ז): **הטא ר'**
לאעורבן וזמנא גורולא רמז להפסיק
 שפיראנו וזמנא גורולא רמז להפסיק

אחת ארוכה ואחת קצרה . פירש
רש"י ארוכה אחת ואחונה

במאכלתן וקורן "ומעשה ברבי ישמעאל" ר' אלעזר בן עזריה שהיו מסבין במסע אחד והיה ר' ישמעאל מוטה ור' אלעזר בן עזריה וקוף כיון שהגיע זמן קריאת שמע הסה רבי אלעזר וקוף ר' ישמעאל אמר לו רבי אלעזר בן עזריה לר' ישמעאל ישמעאל אחי אמשול לך משל למה הרבר דומה משל אמור שואמרים לו וקנך מגדל אמר להם יהיה כנגד המשיחיתים אף כך אתה כל זמן שאני וקוף אתה מוטה עכשיו כשאני המטי אתה זקפת אמר לו אני עשיתי כדברי ב"ה ואתה עשית כדברי ב"ש ולא עוד אלא שמא יראו התלמידים ויקבעו הלכה לדורות מאי ולא עוד וכי תימא בית הלל נמי אית להו מסין ה"מ דמטה ואתא מעיקרא אבל הכא כיון דעד השתא הוית וקוף והשתא מוטה אמרי ש"מ כב"ש סבירא להו שמא יראו התלמידים ויקבעו הלכה לדורות . תני רב יוחנאל עשה כדברי ב"ש עשה כדברי ב"ה עשה רב יוסף אמר "עשה כדברי ב"ש לא עשה ולא רלוה

חוסיסחא זיל
 כפרי פריש
 וחסתק
 וזו כנגד המעשיים. משל שלך דומה
 לאחר שאומרים לו זקקך נאה ומגודל
 ואף אומר להם האולי וקלמסם אורו
 אף הוא יהיה כנגד המעשיים הגדול
 הזה יהיה נתון לחצר ולמספרים
 שצביח עליו ואמיתו: **עשוי שמי**
סעי. הרי אני כמקלם את מעשיך
 שייית מוטע ואחם נוקטם: **ב"ט נמי**
אם לנו מעין. דבשמין נמי שרו
 כדאמרינן לעיל מעין וקורין: **אכל**.
 עשוי כיון דעד השתא ביות זקקך
 ועכשו הטיח את לא נוקטני אני יראו
 התלמידים ויקבעו הלכה: **לא קיימם**
וי. ובי הוי נעשה כדברי ב"ה לא
 עשה ולא כלום לדברי ב"ש אף
 העושה כדברי ב"ש לא עשה ולא
 כלום לדברי ב"ה: **ברנני בשחר**
מדרך שמים וכו'. כדאמר בדברות
 ירושלמי שבע דברות הללו על שם
 (האלים קים) שבע ביום הללתיך
 אחם ארובם ואתם קלרם: אשמים
 לתאריב נעבדים הוי (ג"ל) אשמים

בתוך הבית כ"ש פוסלין וכו' וי"ב כ"ש וחקני כ"ה לבקר את ר' בה ושלחנו בתוך הבית ולא לו א"כ היית נוהג לאקיימת בדברי בית שמאי חייב מיתה הלסמים אמרו לו כדאי היית לאחריה ובערב מברך שמים קצר לקצר אינו רשאי להאריך אמר ר' יעקב א"ר אישעיא

*התנן מי שהיה ראשו ורובו בסוכה וישלחו
מבשריו אמרו להם ב"ה לב"ש מעשה שהלכו
יוחנן בן הדורנית מצאורו שהיה ראשו ורובו ב
אמרו לו כלום אמרו להם *משם ראיא אף הם א
מצות סוכה מימך רב נחמן בר יצחק אמר עש
בדרך והטתי לקרות כדברי ב"ש וסכנתי בעצמי מ
דברי ב"ה: **מתני'** יבשחר מברך שתים לפניו ואח
ארוכה ואחת קצרה מקום שאמרו להאריך את רשאי
תום שלא לתתם אינו רשאי לתתם: **גמ'** מאי מ

אמת ואמונה קצרה הסיבט) :
לחתום . בדרך : **שלא לחתום** . כגון
 ברכת הפירות ומלות : **(בן) מלי**
מכר . שמים לפניו דשחר מלי מיהו :
 יולר

Babylonian Talmud, Brakhot 11a-b

Mishnah This Mishnah discusses the blessings uttered before and after the *Shema*:

בשחר מברך שנים לפניו ואחת לאחריו – In the morning, one recites two blessings before [the *Shema*], and one after it. ובערב מברך שנים לפניו ושנים לאחריו – And in the evening, one recites two blessings before [the *Shema*], and two after it.^[37] – אחת ארוכה ואחת קצרה – one lengthy blessing, and one brief blessing.^[38] – מקום שאמרו להאריך אינו רשאי לקצר – In a place where [the Sages] said to recite a lengthy blessing, one may not recite a brief blessing. – לקצר אינו רשאי להאריך – Where they said to recite a brief blessing,^[39] one may not recite a lengthy one. – להתום אינו רשאי שלא להתום – Where they said to conclude a blessing with the words, “Blessed are You, Hashem etc.”,^[40] one may not refrain from concluding it in that manner.^[41] – שלא להתום אינו רשאי להתום – Where they said not to conclude a blessing with the words “Blessed are You, Hashem,”^[42] one may not conclude it in that manner.

Gemara The Gemara asks:

מאי מברך – What two blessings must one recite before the morning *Shema*?

The Gemara answers:

אמר רבי יעקב אמר רבי אושעיא – R' Yaakov said in the name of R' Oshaya:

NOTES

38. I.e. of the two blessings following the evening *Shema*, one is lengthy while the other is short. The long blessing is “True and faithful”; the short one, “Lay us down” (*Rashi*; cf. *Tosafos*; *Rabbeinu Yonah*; *Rashba*; *Ritva*). Although “Lay us down” is itself fairly lengthy, it is brief by comparison to “True and faithful” (*Meiri*; see there).

39. An example of a place where the Sages said to recite a lengthy blessing is the blessing of “True and faithful”; a brief blessing, that of “Lay us down” (*Rashi* to the *Rif*; cf. *Rabbeinu Yonah*; *Rashba*; *Ritva*;

see *Meiri*; *Shitah Mekubetzes*).

40. [E.g. the blessing of “Who forms light,” which ends with the phrase ברוך אתה ה' יוצר המאורות, *Blessed are You, Hashem, Who forms the lights*.]

41. [I.e. the final phrase of “Blessed are You, Hashem etc.” may not be omitted.]

42. Such as in the blessings upon food or upon mitzvos (*Rashi*).

מאימתי פרק ראשון ברכות

עין משפט
נר מצוה

ספור
השם

נדר א מיי פרא מלכות
קס בלגה ר טושע
לויח סימן נט עקיף א :
נה ב מיי טס סת
סני י תור טע
לויח סימן ט טעף א :
נו ב מיי פ"ז מלכות
חלה כלכל י טור
טעיף א :
נו ב מיי טס טושע
טס טעף ב :
נה ד מיי טס טושע
טס טעף ג :
נפ ו מיי טס מלכות
תמידין כלכל ד :

[עין 'חוס' נדר
ח. ד'כ'אמל]

[קטן דף יד:]

[עין 'חוס'
פסוקות ח.
ד'ה שכל'ו
חוס' לקטן ח.
ד'ה כל
הברכות חוס'
פסחים קד:
ד'ה חת]

תמיד דף לב:

הברכות
הבית

(6) נבי ולימא
יור: (3) טס
טלום ובורא
אח הכל מי
קא אמרין
כדכתיב:

(2) רש"י ד'ה
יור וט'בורא
אח הכל לקמיה
מסר:
(7) חוס' ד'ה
שכר וט'
לקט תת
ובשילוי א'ס
קטל
חוס'
הוא
(8) באר
ברכות כהנים:

יור וט'בורא חשך (טושע טלום ובורא רע). לקמיה מפרש אידך
מאי היא דלילו ברכה דשבתח אינה מן המנין שהיא לאחר פסוק
דמרה כמו ברכת הלל ואומרים אותה קודם זמן קריאת שמע אם
יטל: כדכתיב קאמרי'. כתיב בקרא יורל אור ובורא חשך עשה
תורה אור טלום ובורא רע: שכבר נפטר
י'יצר אור ובורא חשך (6) לימא יוצר אור ובורא
נוגה כדכתיב קאמרינן אלא מעתה עושה
שלום ובורא (רע מי קא אמרין כדכתיב אלא
כתיב רע וקרינן הבל *לישנא מעליא הבאנמי
לימא נוגה לישנא מעליא אלא אמר רבא
*כדי להוכיח מדת יום בלילה ומדת לילה
ביום בשלמא מדת לילה ביום כדאמרינן יוצר
אור ובורא חשך אלא מדת יום בלילה היכי
משכחת לה אמר אביי גולל אור מפני חשך
וחשך מפני אור ואידך מאי היא אמר רב יהודה
אמר שמואל אהבה רבה וכן אורי ליה רבי
אלעזר *לא פדת בריה אהבה רבה תניא נמי
הכי יאין אומרים אהבת עולם אלא אהבה
רבה ורבנן אמרי אהבת עולם וכן הוא אמר
*ואהבת עולם אהבתך על כן משכחך חסד
אי' יהודה אמר שמואל *השכים לשנות עד
שלא קרא ק"ש צריך לברך משקרא ק"ש
אי' לברך שכבר נפטר באהבה רבה אמר רב
הוגא למקרא צריך לברך ולמדרש אי' לברך
ור' אלעזר אמר למקרא ולמדרש צריך לברך
למשנה אי' לברך ור' יוחנן אמר אף למשנה
נמי צריך לברך [אבל לתלמוד אי' לברך]
ורבא אמר יאף לתלמוד צריך (להזכיר) לברך
*דאמר רב חייא בר אשי ויבנין סגיאין הוה
קאימנא קמיה דרב לחניי פרקין בספרא דבי
רב הוה מקדים וקא משי ידיה וברך וכתני לן
פרקין. מאי מברך אי' יהודה אמר שמואל
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו *לעסוק בברי
תורה ור' יורגן מסיים בה הכי *הערב נא ה'
אלהינו את דברי תורתך בפנינו ובפניפות עמך
בית ישראל ונהיה אנחנו וצאצאינו וצאצאי
עמך בית ישראל כלנו יודעי שכן *ועוסקי
תורתך ברוך אתה ה' המלמד תורה לעמו
ישראל ורב המנונא אמר איש בר בר כונו מכל
העמים ונתן לנו את תורתו ברוך אתה ה' נתון
התורה (*) אמר רב המנונא זו היא מעולה
שבברכות *הלכך לימדינהו לכולהו: תנן
התם *אמר להם הממונה ברט ברכה אחת
והם ברט וקראו עשרת הדברות שמוע והיה
אם שמוע ויאמר וברכו את העם ג' ברכות
אמת ויציב ועבודה וברכת כהנים ובשבת
מסיפין ברכה אחת למשמש היוצא מאי ברכה
אחת כי הא דרבי אבא ור' יוסי בר אבא
אקלעו להוהא אתרא בעו כעידו מאי ברכה
אחת לא הוה בידיהו ואתו שיליהו לרב
מרגה לא הוה בידיה אתו שיליהו לרב
יהודה אמר להו הכי אמר שמואל אהבה

רבנן אמרי אהבת עולם וכו'. הלכך תקינו למר בשחרית
אהבה רבה ובערבית אהבת עולם: שכבר נפטר
באהבה רבה. עד הלכך נומרינהו לכולהו. בירושלמי יש הא דאמרי'
שכבר נפטר באהבה רבה והוא ששנה על אחר פירוש שלמד
מיד בלוחו מקום. ושאל להרב ר'
יחזק כנון אט שאין אט לומדין מיד
לאחר תפלת השחר שאלו טרודין
והולכים כך בלא למוד עד אלמס
היום ואי יוחר אחאי אין אט מברכין
ברכת התורה פעם אחרת כשאלו
מתחילין ללמוד. והשיב ר"י דלא
קיימא לן כדאמרי ירושלמי האילוגמא'
שאל לא אחרי ואין צריך לאלתר
ללמוד. ועוד אפי' לפי הירושלמי
דוקא אהבה רבה דלא הוה עיקר ברכה
לברכת התורה דעיקר אהבה רבה
(7) לק"ש נתקן ובשיליהו אט נפטר
מברכת התורה אלא אט ילמוד מיד
וגם לא יעשה היסח הדעת. אבל
ברכת אשר בחר בט ובכרה לעסוק
בדברי תורה שכן עיקר לברכת
התורה פוטרת כל היום. וא"ת מאי
שנא מסוכה שצריך לברך על כל
סעודה וסעודה לישב בסוכה. וי"ל
דשאלו תורה שאיט מייאש דעתו דכל
שעה אדם מחוייב ללמוד דכתיב
והגית בו יומם ולילה והיו כמו יושב
כל היום בלא הפסק. אבל אכילה
בסוכה יש שעה קצושה. וא"ת מפני
מה אין אט מברכין לישב בסוכה.
וי"ל דברכה דאכילה שמברכין לישב
פוטרתו. אי' משום שמה לא יישן
והיו ברכה לבטלה שצרי אין בירו
לישן כל שעה שירצה. והיה אומר
ר"ת כשאלו עומד מחשבו בלילה
(בשחרית) ללמוד שאל' לברך ברכה
התורה מפני שברכת התורה של
אחרות שחרית פוטרת עד שחרית
אחרת ולא נהירא. והאלפתים נהגו
לומר פסוקים (א) בברכת כהנים וגם אלו
ברכים שאין להם שיעור שהיא משנה
(פ"א דשם) ואלו ברכים שאדם אכל
פירותיהן כו' שהיא *ברייאה (חם) שנה
קצו- מפני הירושלמי דבעי שילמוד
על אחר. אבל אי' כמו שכתבתי כבר:
ד'ג ברוך אתה ה' המלמד תורה
לעמו ישראל. אבל לא גרס
למדתי חקך שאין זו ברכה אלא בקשה
שאלת דוד: וברכת כהנים.
ואין זה דוכן שצרי לא היו עומדים
לדוכן עד לאחר הקטרת אומרים
דאמר' בתפנית (פ"ד ד' כו): שלשה
פעמים ביום כהנים טעלין כפיהם
וכו' וא"כ הוה ליה למחני ד' פעמים
אחד לפני הקטרה ואחד לאחר
הקטרה אלא בלא כפיהם כפיהם אמרו
ברכת כהנים כמו שאלו אומרים:
משום

נדר א מיי פרא מלכות
קס בלגה ר טושע
לויח סימן נט עקיף א :
נה ב מיי טס סת
סני י תור טע
לויח סימן ט טעף א :
נו ב מיי פ"ז מלכות
חלה כלכל י טור
טעיף א :
נו ב מיי טס טושע
טס טעף ב :
נה ד מיי טס טושע
טס טעף ג :
נפ ו מיי טס מלכות
תמידין כלכל ד :

גליון השם
בגמ' נפסוק ט'.
כריף הברכה על דית
שם ושפתי ט'.
כריף הברכה ופסוק
תורתך לשמח
שם נלכך ט'. כריף
וכהלים הברכה אחר
ר"ה הברך

(*) נכח אלמס אי' הוא
דרב המנונא שפלה כו'

[אולי שגת בדפוס הוא]

מאי ברכה אחת יורל אור: ואם אומרים. דקתני ברכו ברכה אחת: ברכות אין מעכבות זו את זו. ומהכא שמע ר' זיקא דס"ל לר"ל דהך ברכה
נפקא מיהא דיי חובתו בהיה שביך ואין חכמה מעכבת לומר שאין זו מועלת בלא זו. ומהכא שמע ר' זיקא דס"ל לר"ל דהך ברכה
אחת יורל אור היא: אי אחרים בשלמא יורל אור הוה אמרי. ולא אהבה רבה ואט' דמחש' ליה זמנא שאף בלילה ראו לומר כל שכן דכיון
דאמרי יורל אור ודלי משיא זמנה ואט' לא אחרי אלא יורל אור וכו' לא אמרי לה היינו דקאמר שמע מיה ברכות אין מעכבות זו את זו:

11b'

MEI'EIMASAI

CHAPTER ONE

BERACHOS

יוצר אור ובורא חשך – One recites the blessing of “Who forms light and creates darkness.”^[1]

The Gemara objects to the wording of this blessing:

לימא יוצר אור ובורא נוגה – But let us instead say: “Who forms light and creates twilight,” which is a more fitting praise of the Almighty!^[2]

The Gemara answers:

בדכתיב קאמרין – We say it as it is written! The phrase “Who forms light and creates darkness” is used in accordance with a verse that praises God in these precise terms.^[3]

The Gemara objects further:

– עשה שלום ובורא רע – But according to this,^[4] – when the verse continues and states:^[5] *Who makes peace and creates evil* – מי קא אמרין בדכתיב – do we then say the next segment of the blessing as it is written, i.e. in accordance with this part of the verse? No, we do not! אלא כתיב רע וקרינן הכל – Rather, what is written is “and creates evil,” but what we recite is “and creates everything,” as we employ the word “everything” as a euphemism for “evil.”^[6] – הקא נמי – Here too, לימא נוגה לישנא מעליא – let one say “twilight” as a euphemism for “darkness”! – ? –

The Gemara explains the blessing's wording:

בדי להקביר מדת יום – אלא אמר רבא – Rather, Rava said: – בלילה ומדת לילה ביום – We word the blessing as we do in order to mention the characteristic of day by night, and the characteristic of night by day.^[7] We therefore cannot replace the word “darkness” with “twilight,” since we must speak of that which is unequivocally a nighttime characteristic.^[8]

The Gemara asks:

בשלמא מדת לילה ביום – With regard to mentioning the charac-

teristic of night by day, all is well, since we in fact do make such mention, כדאמרין יוצר אור ובורא חשך – as we say in the first blessing of the morning *Shema*: “Who forms light and creates darkness.” – אלא מדת יום בלילה היכי משכחת לה – But with regard to mentioning the characteristic of day by night, where is it found that we do this?

The Gemara answers:

– גולל אור מפני חשך וחשך מפני אור – אמר אביי – Abaye said: – We do this in the first blessing of the evening *Shema*, which reads: “Who removes light from before darkness and darkness from before light.”^[9] We thus mention the daytime characteristic of light by night.^[10]

Having clarified the wording of the first blessing, the Gemara now inquires after the second blessing preceding the morning *Shema*:

– ואיך מאי היא – ואמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל – Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: – אהבה רבה – It is the blessing of “With an abundant love.” – וכן אורי ליה רבי אלעזר לרבי פדת – אהבה – And so did R' Elazar rule for his son R' Pedas: – רבה – The second blessing begins with the words “With an abundant love.”

The Gemara cites a Baraisa to support this reading of the blessing:

– אין – It has likewise been taught in a Baraisa: – אומרים אהבת עולם – WE DO NOT SAY “WITH AN ETERNAL LOVE” in the second blessing of the *Shema*, – אלא אהבה רבה – BUT “WITH AN ABUNDANT LOVE.”

The Gemara cites a dissenting opinion:

– אהבת עולם – But the Rabbis say: – ורבנן אמרי – The second blessing begins with the words, “With an eternal love.”^[11]

NOTES

1. This is the first blessing recited before the *Shema*; the Gemara below will identify the second blessing. [The blessing of “May Your Name be praised” (ישקבו שנק), however (although it immediately precedes the blessing of “Who forms light”), is certainly not one of the blessings of the *Shema*! Rather, it is intended as a concluding blessing to “The Verses of Praise” (*pesukei d'zimrah* – the liturgical section that precedes the blessings of *Shema*), which are similar to the *Hallel* prayer (another liturgical compendium of verses of praise) in that they require a concluding blessing. This is clear from the fact that this blessing may even be recited before the arrival of the time for the *Shema*. Evidently, then, it is not one of the blessings of the *Shema* (*Rashi*).]

2. [Darkness can be frightening and unpleasant, and is used extensively in Scripture to depict moments of suffering or exile (see *Isaiah* 5:30,59:9; *Ezekiel* 32:8; *Psalms* 107:10,14 for a few instances of such usage). It is not fitting to praise the Almighty by saying that He creates something so unpleasant. The Gemara therefore suggests *נוגה*, twilight, as a euphemism for darkness.]

[The word *נוגה* refers to the half-light of twilight or dawn, when light is mixed with darkness (*Gra*, *Imrei Noam* and *Beur to Proverbs* 4:18). Alternatively, it refers to light that emanates from a secondary source, such as moonlight, which is only the reflected light of the sun (*Malbim*, *Yair Or* א 11; *HaCarmel* נגה 11; *At any rate, though, the word describes light that shines during moments of darkness* (see *Isaiah* 4:5,13:10,60:19 for explicit examples of such usage); it was [therefore] used as a euphemism for “darkness” or “night” (*Aruch* נגה א; see *Rosh Yosef*; see *Pesachim* 2a-3a).]

3. The verse is in *Isaiah* 45:7. It is one of several discussing God's Oneness, and it describes Him thus: יוצר אור ובורא חשך עשה שלום ובורא רע – *Who forms light and creates darkness, Who makes peace and creates evil* – *I am Hashem, Who makes all these*. The blessing follows the language of Scripture.

4. [I.e. that the wording of the blessing follows that of the verse.]

5. *Isaiah* *ibid*.

6. [After the words, יוצר אור ובורא חשך, “Who forms light and creates darkness,” the blessing continues with the phrase, עשה שלום ובורא רע –

“Who makes peace and creates everything,” thus diverging from the wording of the verse! The reason for this deviation is that it is not fitting to praise God by saying that He creates evil; we therefore do not specifically mention the creation of evil, but speak in general terms of God creating “everything,” including evil.]

7. [The characteristic of day is light; that of night is darkness.]

8. [Namely, darkness.] The word *נוגה*, however, although often used euphemistically to refer to darkness, nonetheless describes a form of light (*Ritva*). Clearly, light of any sort cannot be considered an unequivocally nighttime characteristic.

9. [For why the Gemara did not give the evening blessing's earlier phrase of “Who creates day and night,” see *Ritva* and *Chidushei R' Elazar Moshe Horowitz*.]

10. *Rabbeinu Yonah* states (in the name of *R' Eliyahu HaTzorfati*) that the reason we mention the characteristic of night by day and that of day by night is to refute those heretics who invoke this verse's separate mention of “Who forms light” and “[Who] creates darkness” as proof that there exist two distinct gods: one who created light, the other who created darkness. We are therefore careful to always mention the characteristic of night by day, and of day by night, to underline the fact that there exists only one God, Who brought into being and rules over every aspect of Creation (see *Tos. HaRosh* from *Chullin* 87a; see *Maharsha*).

11. The Rabbis only dispute the wording of the first phrase; regarding every other aspect of the blessing, however, there is no dispute (*Bach*, *Prishah* to *Tur*, *Orach Chaim* §60; *Gra*, *Imrei Noam*).

[*Rif* and *Rosh* have an entirely divergent reading in this Gemara, in which the Baraisa's ruling is reversed; it accordingly reads: *We do not say “With an abundant love,” but “With an eternal love.”* According to their reading, the Baraisa is cited not in support of Shmuel and R' Elazar, but in support of the Rabbis. *Rif* and *Rosh* accordingly rule in accordance with the Rabbis; others, however, rule in accordance with Shmuel (see *Rashba*). The Geonim (cited in *Rashba*; *Tur* *ibid*.; see *Tosafos*) rule both versions to be valid; they therefore instituted “With an abundant love” to be recited before the morning *Shema*, and “With

11b⁴

MEI'EIMASAI

CHAPTER ONE

BERACHOS

וּבְשַׁבָּת מוֹסִיפִין בְּרָכָה אַחַת לְמִשְׁמֶר הַיּוֹצֵא, — AND ON THE SABBATH, THEY WOULD ADD A SINGLE BLESSING FOR THE OUTGOING WATCH.^[39]

The Gemara inquires regarding the single blessing the Kohanim would recite before the *Shema*:

מֵאִי בְרָכָה אַחַת — What was the one blessing that the Kohanim would say?^[40]

The Gemara answers:

כִּי הָא — It was as explained in the course of this incident: רַבִּי אָבָא וְרַבִּי יוֹסֵף בְּרַב אֶבְרָא אֶתְרָא — R' Abba and R' Yosef bar Abba happened to come to a certain place, בְּעוֹ מְנוּיָהּ — and [the people there] inquired of them: מֵאִי בְרָכָה אַחַת — What was the one blessing that the Kohanim would say? לֹא — They did not have [the answer] at hand. הָיָה בִידְיָהּ — They went and asked Rav Masnah [this question]. לֹא הָיָה בִידְיָהּ — He did not have [the answer] at hand either. אֶתְרָא וְהוֹדָה — They went and asked Rav Yehudah [this question]. אָמַר לְהוֹ — He said to them: הֵכִי אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל — This is what Shmuel said: אֶהְיֶה רַבָּה — The blessing the Kohanim would recite was "With an abundant love."

The Gemara cites a dissenting view:

בֻּרְרַי וְרַבִּי זְרִיקָא אָמְרִי — But R' Zerika said in the name of R' Ami, who said in the name of R' Shimon ben Lakish: יוֹצֵר אוֹר — The blessing they would recite was "Who forms light."

The Gemara makes a point regarding R' Zerika's quote from R' Shimon ben Lakish:

כִּי אָתָּא רַב יִצְחָק בַּר יוֹסֵף אָמַר — When Rav Yitzchak bar Yosef came to Eretz Yisrael, he said: הָא דְרַבִּי זְרִיקָא לֹא בְּפִירוּשׁ אֶתְמַר — That ruling cited by R' Zerika was not stated explicitly by Shimon ben Lakish, אֲלָא מְלֵלָא אֶתְמַר — but was derived by inference from another of R' Shimon ben Lakish's statements. דָּאמַר ר' זְרִיקָא אָמַר רַבִּי אָמִי, וְרַבִּי זְרִיקָא אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמּוֹן בֶּן לָקִישׁ — For R' Zerika said in the name of R' Ami, who said in the name of R' Shimon ben Lakish regarding the Mishnah just cited: זֶה הוּא — This ruling, i.e. that the Kohanim recite only one blessing before the morning *Shema*, indicates בְּרָכוֹת אֵין מְעַקְבוֹת זוֹ אֶת זוֹ — that the blessings that accompany the *Shema* are not essential to one another, i.e. one may be recited without the others.^[41] R' Zerika inferred from this statement that the blessing recited by the Kohanim was "Who forms light."

The Gemara shows how R' Zerika drew this inference:

אִי אָמַרְתָּ בְּשִׁלְמָא יוֹצֵר אוֹר הוּא אָמַרִי — He reasoned thus: All is well if you say that the blessing they would recite was "Who forms light," — for this is then why R' Shimon ben Lakish can deduce from this Mishnah that the blessings of the *Shema* are not essential to one another. לֹא — For although the time for its recitation had already arrived, [the Kohanim] did not recite "With an abundant love," but nonetheless *did* recite "Who forms light." Evidently, one blessing may be recited even when the other is not.

NOTES

Stone, and pronounce this blessing (*Rashi*, as explained by *Rosh Yosef*; cf. *Tosafos*, *Rashba* et al.; see *Tzalach*).

Although the Kohanim recited the blessing of "Be favorable" at this time, they did not recite the remainder of the *Shemoneh Esrei* prayer. This was due to the lack of time, for, being diligent in performance of mitzvos, they were in haste to complete the *avodah* (*Rashi*; see *Pnei Yehoshua* to 12a).

[*Tosafos* take issue with *Rashi* here, and maintain that although this blessing is called "the Blessing of the Kohanim," and in fact consists of these three verses, it was not pronounced with hands upraised [as is the regular Blessing of the Kohanim]. Others maintain that the three verses were not recited at this point at all! Rather, what was recited was the blessing of שלום, "Establish peace," the nineteenth blessing of *Shemoneh Esrei*; it was referred to as "the Blessing of the Kohanim" because it is prefaced in the repetition of *Shemoneh Esrei* by recitation of the three verses (*Rambam* to *Tamid* *ibid.* and in *Temidin U'Mussafin* 6:4, as explained by *Tos. Yom Tov* to *Tamid*; *Raavad* to *Tamid* 32b). *Gra* (*Imrei Noam*) states that the Kohanim recited both the three verses (with the introduction of אלהינו ואלהינו וכו', *Our God and the God of our forefathers* etc., usually recited in the repetition of *Shemoneh Esrei*) and the blessing of "Establish peace," while *Rosh* (to *Tamid* *ibid.*) explains that the three verses (recited without upraised hands) were followed by a special prayer beseeching God to accept with favor the regular Blessing of the Kohanim, which they would pronounce later in the day.]

39. The Kohanim were divided into twenty-four *shemot*, watches. Each

watch would serve in the Temple for two periods in the year, each period a week in duration. The changing of the watch took place every Sabbath, with the outgoing watch offering the morning *tamid* and the *mussaf* offering, and the incoming watch, the afternoon *tamid* and the two spoons of frankincense from the table of *panim* bread [see *Seder* 56b] (*Rashi*). [The Mishnah teaches that on the Sabbath the outgoing watch would recite an additional blessing; the Gemara below (12a) will identify this blessing.]

40. I.e. which of the two blessings that usually precede the *Shema* would they recite — "Who forms light" or "With an abundant love"? (*Rashi*; see *Pnei Yehoshua*).

41. That is to say, if one recites one of the blessings, but does not recite the others, he has nonetheless fulfilled his obligation regarding the one blessing that he recited. The blessings left unsaid do not undermine its validity (*Rashi*).

42. According to the premise of the Gemara, the blessing that was recited was "Who forms light." Now, if the time when this blessing may be recited had already arrived (see *Orach Chaim* 58:3 and *Magen Avraham* there §5), certainly it is an appropriate time for the blessing of "With an abundant love" as well, for "With an abundant love" may be recited even at night! [*Rashi's* usage of "night" seems to refer to the period immediately following the first light of dawn: *לילה ראשון* — see above, 9b note 37 and 8b note 33.] Since the Kohanim were not to recite "With an abundant love" (due to lack of time — see *Pnei Yehoshua* to 12a, and see above, note 38), it is evident that they may recite one blessing without reciting the others. *Rashi*.

Babylonian Talmud, Chagigah 11b-12a

הכל חייבין פרק ראשון חגיגה

עין משפט
נר מצוהמסורת
הדפוס

לכנסו מאנוסתו דלא כתיבא . דלילו בכו מאנוסתו כתיבא ערות אשה ובהו וגו' (ויקרא י"ח) משמע בין שהבת ממנו בין מואש אחר וכתיב קרא אחריכא ערות בת בנה לא בת בנה וגו' ומקמינן לה ביבמות (דף נ"ז) בביתו מאנוסתו מדליל אסר הכותב בת בנה של אשה זו אלא בבית הבת שטלדה הימנו ובהאי קרא דלמטה בת בנה ובהו כתיב בכו לא כתיב ואל"ת ק"ו הוא חין מזהירין מן הדין ואין עונשין מדין ק"ו דיני משמט ומטע עשה והלכות עבודה ופסולי קדשים אשה למד בק"ו אבל לא אזהרות ועונשין ומקראי נפקא לן במס' מטיט (דף ה:) תורה אור ומיהיב נפקא לן לביתו מאנוסתו :

יבמות ג.
סנהדרין ט.
פס' טו.
כריתות ט.

לבתו מאנוסתו דלא כתיבא *דאמר רבא אמר לי ר' יצחק בר אבדימי אחיא הנה הגה אחיא וימה ימה : הן הן גופי תורה : הני אין הנך לא אלא אימא הן והן גופי תורה :

הדרן עלך הכל חייבין

אין דורשין בעריות בשלישה ולא במעשה בראשית בשנים ולא במרכבה ביהוד אלא אם כן היה חכם ומבין מדעתו כל המסתכל בארבעה דברים רתיו לו כאילו לא בא לעולם *מה למעלה מה למטה מה לפנים ומה לאחור *וכל שלא חס על כבוד קונו רתיו לו שלא בא לעולם : גמ' אמרת ברישא ולא במרכבה ביהוד והדר אמרת אלא אם כן היה חכם ומבין מדעתו הכי קאמר אין דורשין בעריות לשלישה ולא במעשה בראשית לשנים ולא במרכבה ליהוד אלא אם כן היה חכם ומבין מדעתו : אין דורשין בעריות בשלישה : מ"ט אילמא משום דכתיב *איש איש אל כל שאר בשרו איש איש תרי שאר בשרו חד ואמר רחמנא לא תקרבו לגלות ערוה אלא מעתה דכתיב *איש איש כי יקלל אלהיו *איש איש אשר יתן מזווע למולך הני נמי אלא הנהו מיבעי ליה לרבות את הנכרים שמוזהרין על ברכת השם ועל ע"ז כישראל האי נמי מיבעי ליה

[תמיד ג.]
[קדוש ט.]

הדרן עלך הכל חייבין

אין דורשין בשלשה . שנים והוא : בשנים . אחד והוא : ביחיד .

אין ס' אלא הוא לבדו ובגמ' מפרש לה : **ארבעה דברים** . הני דמפרש ואיל : **מה למטה** . מקריע שעל ראשי החיות : **ומה למטה** . מהן : **ומה לפנים** . חוץ למחילת הרקיע למזרח : **ומה לאחור** . למערב : **תוספות** . איט יכול להיות מה שפרש

[סנהדרין ט:]

המורה מה לפנים חוץ למחילת הרקיע ומה לאחור למערב מדפריך שמונת גמ' בשלמא מה למטה ומה למטה ומה לאחור למי אלא לפנים מה דהוה הוה אלא מה לפנים קודם לעולם

[ג' לשלשה]

הוא ועוד בתוספתא (ג) מה לפנים ומה לאחור מה היה ומה עתיד להיות ע"כ תוס' : **כל שלא חס על כבוד קונו** . בגמ' מפרש מאי הוא : **דאמי** **הוא לו** . קוב ויפה היה לו אם לא

מכות כג:

בא לעולם ואומר אי שיהא לשון רתמנות כלומר מרוחם (ג) הוא אם לא בא לעולם ודוגמתו בתורה כהנים אל אלעזר ואל איתמר בניו הנתינים

[ויקרא י:]

אל אלעזר ואל איתמר בניו הנתינים שריתא הכתוב לאהרן : **גמ' אמרת ולא במרכבה ביחיד** . וכוין יחידי הוא ואינו שומע מפי הרב על כרחך מדעתו הוא מבין וקאסרת ליה והדר אמרת אלא אם כן היה חכם ומבין

[ויקרא י:]

לחלומי יחיד : **אלא אם כן היה חכם ומבין מדעתו** . ואם חמיו ואם חמיו דנפקי בגמ' סנהדרין (דף עה) מדרשא : **שקל וערי** . טעא ונתון בהלכה עס רבו : **מללי אודנים** . משה אלו ושומע דבריהן והן שומעין את דברי הרב אבל כשהן שלשה שקלי וערו הנך חרי זה עס זה ולא שמעו מאי דאמר רבן וחתו למישרי אסורא בעריות על ידי שלא שמעו מפי הרב כשדרש טי אסור : **דאמר מר גול ועריות כו'** . במתניתין בתרייתא דמסכת מכות (דף כג:) : **בפניו** . כשהוא רואה לפניו שיכול לגזול : **מנא הני מילי** . דאין שנים שאלין במעשה בראשית : **יכול ישאל אדם** . מה היה קודם שנברא העולם : **יכול לא ידוע** ולא **ישאל בשנים ימי בראשית** . דהא למן ברייתא אדם הוא דייב רשותא והוא בערב שבת נכרא : **הלמוד לומר לימים ראשונים** . מיום ראשון :

[ויקרא י:]

לבתו מאנוסתו . היא דערוה בת בנה מקמינן לה בריש טעין על האטסה (יבמות נ"ז) דמשמע הא בת בנה דיה גלי בלמטתו ואידך דאשה ובהו לא תגלה בנישואין דכתיב בה שאל : **דאמר רבא** אמר לי רב יצחק בר אבדימי . חרי הוה פי' בפ"ק דביבמות (דף נ"ז) ופס' ובפיק כל הכשר (חולין דף ק"י-ט"ס) :

הדרן עלך הכל חייבין

אין דורשין . במעשה בראשית . פי' ר"ת הוא סס מ"ב ואחיות הולא מבראשית ומפסוק של אחיו : **יבוא** ישאל מה למטה מה למטה *משמע הכא לפנים ולאחור

הי מה שס' אחרי הכיפה מורח ומערב והוא הדין לטון ודרוס ואילו לקמן (דף טז) בפירוש משמע מה שהיה קודם שנברא העולם ומה שיהיה לאחר כך דקאמר בשלמא מה למטה מה למטה ומה לאחור שפיר אלא

לפנים אחי' מה דהוה הוה רבי יוחנן ורבי אלעזר אחרי משל למלך שבעה פלטרין על גבי אשפה ט' והכי תניא בתוספתא (פ"ג) מה שהיה ומה שעמד להיות ו"ל דלויכא למימר הכי ואיכא למימר הכי :

הדרן עלך הכל חייבין **אין דורשין** בעריות בשלישה כו' . ש"ס כי הרב ור' חלפריא אין דורשין בעריות . מנא לן אי נישא מברכתי איש איש אל כל שאר בשרו ודרשין איש איש חרי יבוא קמי רבייהו חרי שקיל וטרי בהדי רביה ואידך מצלי אודניה לגמרא תלתא חד שקיל וטרי בהדי רביה והנך חרי שקלו וטרו בהדי חרדי ולא ידעי מאי קאמר רבייהו ואחו למישרי אסורא בעריות אי הכי כל התורה נמי עריות שאני *דאמר מר גול ועריות נפשו מהדרתן ומתאוה להם אי הכי גול נמי עריות בין בפניו בין שלא בפניו נפיש יצירה גול בפניו נפיש יצירה שלא בפניו לא נפיש יצירה : ולא במעשה בראשית בשנים : מנא הני מילי דחנו רבנן כ"י שאל נא לימים ראשונים יחיד שואל ואין שנים שואלין יכול ישאל אדם קודם שנברא העולם ת"ל *למן היום אשר ברא אלהים אדם על הארץ יכול לא ישאל אדם מששת ימי בראשית ת"ל לימים ראשונים אשר היו לפניך יכול ישאל אדם מה למעלה ומה למטה מה לפנים ומה לאחור ת"ל *ולמקצה השמים ועד קצה השמים מלמקצה השמים ועד קצה השמים אתה שואל ואין אתה שואל מה למטה מה לפנים מה לאחור

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א א מ"י ס"ד מלכות
יסודי המורה הלכה :

ב ב מ"י ס"ד הלכה יא :

ג ג מ"י ס"ד מלכות
מלכות הלכה כ ג :

ד ד מ"י ס"ד הלכה ה :

ה ה מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :ו ו מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :ז ז מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :ח ח מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :ט ט מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :י י מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :יא יא מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :יב יב מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :יג יג מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :יד יד מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :יז יז מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :יח יח מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :יט יט מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כ כ מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כא כא מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כב כב מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כג כג מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כד כד מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כה כה מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כו כו מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כז כז מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כח כח מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :כט כט מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :ל ל מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :לא לא מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :לב לב מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :לג לג מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :לד לד מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :לה לה מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :לו לו מ"י ס"ד מלכות
אסורי ביאה הלכה י :

Babylonian Talmud, Chagigah 11b-12a

Chapter Two

Mishnafi The last Mishnah of the previous chapter mentioned the subject of forbidden unions among other subjects treated by the Torah. The following Mishnah singles out this topic regarding a limitation on the number of students that may be taught this topic at any one time.^[1] The Mishnah then discusses similar limitations for two other exceptional topics:

ולא – אין דורשין בעריות בשלשה – The laws of forbidden unions may not be expounded among three people,^[2] ולא – במרובה בחיור – nor may *Maaseh Bereishis*^[3] be expounded between two people,^[4] ולא – אלא אם כן היה חכם ומבין מדעתו – nor may *Maaseh Merkavah*^[5] be expounded by even one person, unless [that person] was a scholar who could arrive at an understanding of the issues on his own.^[6]

The Mishnah warns against inappropriate fields of inquiry and irreverence towards God:

– רתיו לו כאילו לא בא לעולם – it would have been better for him had he never come into the world: – כל המסתכל בארבעה דברים – Whoever scrutinizes the following four things, – מה למעלה מה למטה – What is above, what is below,^[7] – מה לפניו ומה לאחור – what is before and what is after.^[8] – וכל שלא חס על כבוד קונו – And whoever has no heed for the honor of his Creator, – רתיו לו שלא בא לעולם – it would have been better for him had he never come into the world.^[9]

NOTES

1. Meiri; see Rambam; see below, note 27.

2. [The Gemara below initially understands this to mean that] one may not teach this subject *within* a group of three, i.e. one teacher and two students (*Rashi*).

3. Literally: the Account of Creation. See below, note 33, for a discussion of this term.

4. I.e. one teacher and one student (*Rashi*).

5. Literally: the Account of the Chariot. See below, note 33, for a discussion of this term.

6. [Initially, the Gemara will understand this line to say that an ordinary person may not delve into this subject on his own. However, the Gemara will explain these three rules in our Mishnah along other lines (*Rashi*). *Rambam* states that the words חכם ומבין מדעתו indicate two requirements: (a) The person must be a scholar, i.e. learned in the prerequisite fields of study; and (b) he must be able to understand on his own, i.e. he must have a quick comprehension. He must have a mind that can facily grasp an issue upon receiving a subtle hint (*Moreh Nevuchim* 1:33).

7. *Rashi* printed in the Vilna edition of our Gemara explains: What is above the expanse over the heads of the *Chayos* and what is below them. However, *Rashi* printed in *Ein Yaakov* says that “what is below” refers to what is below the earth (see also *Rambam* in his commentary to this Mishnah). This latter explanation would seem to be the more reasonable one because the Gemara on 13a describes the earth as being below the *Chayos* and states explicitly that one may delve into concepts that are associated with the earth. Furthermore, *Rashi* himself defines “what is below” differently on 16a. There he writes that this phrase should be understood in the light of a Baraisa on 12b, which lists all the items upon which the world stands, as it were. “What is below” refers to what is below the “arms of God,” the ultimate support of all Creation (see *Rashash*). [*Yerushalmi* (2:1) teaches that “what is below” refers to what is below “the depths.”]

Of course, the terms *מה למעלה מה למטה*, *what is above, what is below*, are metaphoric. It would not be possible, in spatial terms, to look at what is above the expanse over the *Chayos*, since these are all spiritual entities and are beyond physical dimensions. What then do these terms mean?

Meiri explains that “what is above” refers to what is above the limit of human comprehension. *Meiri* defines the boundary between the intelligible and the unintelligible as follows: A person who wishes to understand a specific idea [as opposed to simply repeating the words he is told] must be able to get some “picture” of it in his mind; he must be able to turn it around and to dissect it. Beyond the limits of human comprehension one can no longer envision an idea nor appreciate its elements. Intellectual investigations of such matters is, *Meiri* comments, fruitless and foolish.

Rambam compares the investigation of matters that are beyond one’s comprehension to trying to read writing that is extremely tiny or to make out the details of a minuscule illustration. When one strains his eyes in this attempt, he will not only have prevented himself from deciphering the writing or illustration, but he will also have rendered himself unable to see things that he previously could have seen without

much effort. In a similar fashion, when a person attempts to comprehend something that he is constitutionally unable to comprehend, he will not merely fail in the attempt; he will also dull his intellect until he will not be able to penetrate concepts that used to yield to him easily.

Rambam comments that this injury to oneself, among others, is alluded to in the verse (*Proverbs* 25:16): *When you find honey, eat what is sufficient for you, lest you be satiated and vomit it up*. Honey is a sweet and nourishing food, but if one overindulges in it, it will induce regurgitation. The verse does not say that one will grow sick of the honey, but that one will regurgitate it. Despite the loftiness and importance of profound spiritual insights and despite their utility in leading a person to perfection, if one does not observe his limits and take care with these ideas, they will affect him detrimentally (*Moreh Nevuchim* 1:32, cited here in part by *Rabbeinu Avraham min HaHar*; see also below, 14b note 29).

8. I.e. what is before the eastern confine of the expanse [of the universe] and what is after its western confine (*Rashi*). In the Mishnah’s metaphor, the universe, horizontally, as a circle. “Before” and “after” represent what is beyond the eastern half and the western half of this circle. Thus, what is beyond the northern and southern confines is also included in the terms “before” and “after” (see *Tosafos* and *Rashash*; see also *Rashi* to *Pesachim* 12b קאי בירמיה בן חנניאל).

Tosafos (ר"ה יכ"ו) and in a gloss printed in our editions of *Rashi* raise a difficulty with *Rashi*’s explanation: The Gemara below (16a) indicates that “what is before” refers to time and not space. Thus, “what is before” refers to what existed in the past, prior to Creation, and “what is after” refers to the future, subsequent to the end of the world (see *Rabbeinu Yehonasan Milunel*). Furthermore, the *Tosefta* (2:3) paraphrases “what is before and what is after” (מה לפניו ומה לאחור) as “what was and what is destined to be” (מה היה ומה עתיד להיות).

[Possibly, *Rashi* offered the spatial interpretation of before and after only according to the Gemara’s initial understanding of the terms. However, once the Gemara will have finished identifying the Scriptural sources for “what is below” and “what is after,” the Gemara will understand these terms to mean “what was and what is destined to be.”]

Maharal explains that what is above, below, before and after refers to matters that are beyond the framework of creation. For example, one cannot ask why man was created with two legs and not three; the answer to that question and all such questions are beyond our universe’s framework. One can only ponder the advantages of being two legged within the given circumstances of our world (see *Sifri*, *Haazinu* §2).

9. *Rambam* (*Commentary*) explains that these two warnings correspond to the last two fields of study mentioned above: *Whoever scrutinizes . . . what is above, what is below*, etc., corresponds to *Maaseh Bereishis* and *whoever has no heed for the honor of his Creator* corresponds to *Maaseh Merkavah*. In both cases, the Mishnah gravely cautions a person not to explore these topics without first attaining all the proper prerequisites (see below, 13a).

Rambam goes on to say that *כבוד קונו*, the honor of his Creator, is an expression for a person’s intellect. For God’s honor is manifested in a person’s intellect. [The intellect is the means we have to gain a perception of God and Godliness.] If a person forces himself to contemplate matters that are too profound for him, he will undoubtedly

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The Gemara asks:

“השתא דנפקא ליה מלמקצה השמים ועד קצה השמים” – Now that the Baraisa has derived [a prohibition] to inquire beyond the boundaries of the world from the verse *from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven*, למן היום אשר ברא אלהים אדם – why do I still need the beginning of that verse, *from the day that God created man on earth*? I no longer need it to prohibit inquiry into the period of time before the world was created: Once I know that inquiry is prohibited beyond the dimensions of this world, I know that inquiry is prohibited beyond the dimension of time as well.^[1] – ? –

The Gemara concedes the point:^[2]

כדרכי אלעזר – In truth, the beginning of the verse is no longer needed for that purpose. Rather, it should be understood as expounded by R' Elazar, ראמר רבי אלעזר – for R' Elazar said: אדם הראשון מן הארץ עד לרקיע – Adam, the first man, reached from the earth until the sky, שנאמר – as it says, למן היום אשר ברא אלהים אדם על הארץ – *from the day that God created Adam on earth and unto the end of heaven*.^[3] וכיון ששרח הניח – But once [Adam] soured, i.e. he sinned, הניח – the Holy One, Blessed is He, placed His hand upon him and diminished him.^[4] שנאמר – as it says of his formation:^[5] אחר וקדם צרתי ונשאת עלי – *Later and earlier You formed me and You placed Your palm upon me*.^[6]

Another statement concerning Adam's size:

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב – Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: Adam, the first man, אדם הראשון מסוף העולם ועד סופו היה

– שנאמר – *reached from one end of the world to the other*,^[7] as it says: למן היום אשר ברא אלהים אדם על הארץ – *From the day that God created Adam on earth* ועד קצה השמים – *and from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven*. כיון ששרח הניח הקדוש ברוך הוא ידו עליו ומיעטו – Once [Adam] soured, however, the Holy One, Blessed is He, placed His hand upon him and diminished him, שנאמר – as it says: ונשאת עלי כפתי – *and You placed Your palm upon me*.

The Gemara asks:

– If so, קשו קראי אהררי – the verses contradict each other. The phrase, *on earth and unto the end of heaven*, indicates that Adam reached from the earth to the sky; but the latter part of that verse, *from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven*, indicates that Adam reached from one end of the world to the other. – ? –

The Gemara answers:

– אידי ואידי חד שיעורא הוא – This [the distance between the earth and the sky] and that [the distance between one end of the world and the other] are the same measurement.^[8]

The Gemara commences a wide-ranging discussion of Creation: And Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: – *Ten things were created on the first day, and they are these:* שמים וארץ – (1,2) Heaven^[9] and earth, תהו ובהו – (3,4) *tohu and bohu*,^[10] (5,6) light and darkness, רוח ומים – (7,8) breath and water, מרת יום ומדת לילה – (9,10) the length of a day and

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1. [Although the entire physical world exists within the confines of time, time itself is a creation of God (see *Radak to Isaiah* 48:13). If one asks what is before the earliest moment, he is really inquiring into aspects of the Divine that are, by definition, incomprehensible. Such inquiry is prohibited.]

2. The words *from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven* tell us that one may not inquire beyond any of the dimensions of the world, including time, and therefore the words *from the day that God created man on earth* are not needed to tell us about the prohibition to inquire beyond the dimensions of time. Rather, these words are needed for a different exposition.

3. The word אדם can refer either to “a man” (as we have translated it above) or to “Adam,” the first man (as we translate it here).

4. That is, Adam was on the earth and he reached until the heavens (*Rashi*).

5. Until Adam was “only” one hundred *amos* tall (*Yalkut Shimoni, Torah* §827). Apparently, this detail appeared in *Rashi*’s version of our Gemara (see *Rashi to Sanhedrin* 100a קוממית *ר”ה*; see also *Rashbam to Bava Basra* 75a קומה *ר”ה*). Another Midrash states that Adam was reduced to a height of one thousand *amos* (*Osiyos DeRabbi Akiva* *ר”ה*; *Yalkut Shimoni, Torah* §20). [The meaning of these measurements may be similar to the Gemara’s statement in *Bava Basra* 58a that in death Adam’s two heels appeared as two orbs of the sun in their radiance. That is, even after his sin, Adam was a spiritual giant the like of which is completely beyond our experience (see *Michtav MeEliyahu* II p. 137).] See note 9.

6. *Psalms* 139:5.

7. You formed me twice: once as a lofty creation and once as a lowly one (*Rashi*; cf. *Rashi to Sanhedrin* 38b וקדם *ר”ה*).

8. When he lay down, his head reached to the eastern [extremity] and his feet reached to the western [extremity] (*Rashi*).

9. Like many of the Aggadic statements in the following pages, these measurements are not meant literally (see *Yad Ramah to Sanhedrin* 38b and *Magen Avos of Rashbatz*, cited by *Margaliyos HaYam* ad loc.; see also *Maharal, Be’er HaGolah; Be’er* §6 *ר”ה*). Rather, the Gemara refers to the measure of his mind. His mind was able to comprehend all that was from one end of heaven to the other and all that was from one end of the earth to the other. This suggests that

this means that Adam was a microcosm of all Creation. All the elements of heaven and earth, from the beginning of world history to its end, were contained within him (see *Michtav MeEliyahu* II p. 137). The two metaphors “from the earth to the sky” and “from one end of the world to the other end” are just different ways of expressing this same general concept.

Although these teachings are clearly analogies, the surface meanings of analogies should have a certain logic to them as well (see *Ibn Ezra to Proverbs* 26:7). A sage of the Talmud typically designs his analogy so that it is consistent with the factual assumptions of his target audience (*R’ Moshe Chaim Luzzatto* in his *Maamar al Aggados Chazal*, printed at the beginning of *Ein Yaakov*). Accordingly, many commentators are puzzled by the Gemara’s statement that the distance from the earth to the sky is the same as the distance from one end of the world to the other: If we envision the heavens as a sphere and the spot where Adam was created on the earth as the exact center of that sphere, then the distance from the earth to the sky is the radius of that sphere whereas the distance from one end of the sphere to the other is twice the radius (i.e. the diameter). How then could the Gemara say, in its surface meaning, that they are the identical distance?

Many Acharonim strive to explain this point (see *Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh* and *Sifsei Chachamim to Deuteronomy* 4:32). *R’ Mordechai Yafeh (Levush HaOrah* loc. cit.) offers a relatively simple explanation: We should envision one sphere (the earth) exactly in the center of another much larger sphere (the heavens). Adam lay upon half the circumference of the inner sphere, reaching from east to west. If, for argument’s sake, the earth has a circumference of 25,000 miles, then Adam extended for 12,500 miles. The outer sphere is much larger than the inner sphere, so that the distance from the surface of the inner sphere to the outer sphere is also 12,500 miles. Thus, the distance between the two spheres (from the earth to the heavens) is equal to the distance between east and west (from one end of the earth to the other).

10. Although the Torah appears to describe the creation of “the heavens” on the second day, the heavens had actually been created on the first day, but they were still in a state of flux. On the second day, at God’s command, “Let there be a firmament!” they solidified, so to speak (*Rashi to Genesis* 1:6; see Gemara below).

11. The Gemara explains these terms allegorically below. In his commentary to *Genesis* 1:2, *Rashi* states that *tohu* connotes astonishment and

מסורת
הש"ס

תורה אור

סגדרי'ן למ:

[בילקוס איזא
וועסירן על
מאה אמה ונוס
תבין מ"ט
ברשנ"ט כ"ב
עפ. ד"ה בשתי
קומות וכו'
ויוצר מזלך
גרס"י סנהדרין
ק.ד. הקמתיות
ע"ט]

ש
תהלים יח
ישעיה לז

חשלי י

שם
שם
תהלים סח
חזק
תהלים פח
שם כח

צדקה

נחום

תמיד לב.

צראזית

עמוד

יְשַׁעְיָה

זם ת

פסחים כז

כלומר שליש מחצ"ק שנה
הכי הוי זקן ועוד הוא
שליש מחצ"י שנים היתרים

[ועי' תוס' פסחים נד.
קית: ד"ה תן]

רבינו חננאל

[illegible]

the length of a night.^[12]

The Gemara cites verses for all the created items mentioned above:

שמים וארץ – Heaven and earth were created on the first day, as it is written in *Genesis*:^[13] בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ – *In the beginning of [everything], God created heaven and earth.*^[14] תהו ובהו – *Tohu and bohu*, as it is written:^[15] והארץ תהו ותהו – *And the earth was tohu and bohu.* אור וחשך – *Light and darkness* may be demonstrated as follows: חשך – *darkness*, דכתיב – *as it is written*:^[16] וחשך על פני תהום – *and darkness was upon the surface of the deep*; אור – *light*, דכתיב – *as it is written*:^[17] ויאמר אלהים יהי אור – *And God said, "Let there be light."* רוח ומים – *Breath and water*, as it is written:^[18] ורוח אלהים מרחפת על פני המים – *and the breath of God hovered upon the surface of the waters.*^[19] מדת – *The length of a day and the length of a night*, as it is written:^[20] ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום אחד – *And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*^[21]

The Gemara cites a Baraisa that defines two of the terms mentioned above:

תהו – *A Baraisa taught: תהו קו ירוק שמקיף את כל העולם כולו – "TOHU" IS A GREEN LINE THAT ENCIRCLES THE ENTIRE WORLD.* ויאמר – *and it is FROM [THIS LINE] THAT DARKNESS EMERGES, AS IT SAYS:*^[22] וישת חשך סתרו סביבותיו – *HE MADE DARKNESS HIS CONCEALMENT, AROUND IT.*^[23] בהו – *"BOHU" REFERS TO THE*

DAMP STONES SUNK IN THE DEEP, שמהן יוצאין מים – *and it is FROM [THESE STONES] THAT WATER EMERGES, AS IT SAYS:*^[24] ונקה עליה קו־תהו ואבני־בהו – *AND HE SHALL EXTEND UPON IT THE LINE OF TOHU AND THE STONES OF BOHU.*^[25]

The Gemara asks:

ואור ביום ראשון איברי – *And was light created on the first day?* ויתן אתם אלהים ברכיע השמים – *But it is written:*^[26] ויהי ערב, ויהי בקר יום רביעי – *And God set them [the sun and the moon] in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and it is written in that passage,*^[27] *And it was evening and it was morning, the fourth day.* Thus, light, which radiates from the sun and is reflected off the moon, must have come into existence on the fourth day. – ? –

The Gemara explains:

כדרכי אלעזר – *The Baraisa's teaching above that light was created before the luminaries refers to a different kind of light and should be understood in accordance with the following teaching of R' Elazar.* דאמר רבי אלעזר – *For R' Elazar said: Regarding the light that the Holy One, Blessed is He, created on the first day: אדם – Man could use it to survey everything from one end of the world to the other end of [the world].* ביום שנסתכל הקדוש ברוך הוא בדור המבול ובדור הפלגה – *Once, however, the Holy One, Blessed is He, looked at the generation of the Flood and the generation of the Dispersion, and He saw that their deeds were perverse, He proceeded to hide it*

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bafflement whereas *bohu* indicates emptiness and desolation (see *Maasei Hashem, Maaseh Bereishis* ch. 3, for a summary of other explanations).

12. The lengths of day and night were established so that together they would always form one twenty-four-hour period (*Rashi*), although at times during the year the day is longer than night and at other times the night is longer than the day.

Maharsha explains that these ten things correspond to the basic substances, the defining characteristics and the purpose of our world. There are five substances: the four material elements of our physical world (earth, wind, fire and water) and the ethereal substance of Heaven (see *Ramban* to *Genesis* 1:1). The four defining characteristics are space, time, quantity and quality. Finally, the very purpose of Creation is symbolized by the "light." See *Maharsha* at length for an explanation of the ten parallels.

13. 1:1.

14. [It is well known that in the beginning of *Rashi's* commentary on the Torah, he states that this verse cannot be understood as we have translated it. The Torah, he argues, on the basis of grammar and logic, is not telling us the order of Creation. Rather, the first three verses form one long sentence: *In the beginning of God's creating the heavens and the earth – when the earth was bewilderment and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep, and the breath of God was hovering upon the surface of the waters – God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.* However, in our Gemara's exposition of this verse, it appears that the verse is being read in a way that differs from its meaning according to *Rashi*. The Gemara expounds the verse to teach us that heaven and earth were among the first creations. Thus, we have translated the verse to conform with this sense: *In the beginning of [everything], God created heaven and earth.* (It should also be noted that this translation agrees with *Ramban's* explanation ad loc.)]

15. *Genesis* 1:2.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.* 1:3.

18. *Ibid.* 1:2.

19. [The translation of רוח as *breath* follows *Rashi* in his commentary ad loc. The word רוח is also used in the sense of spirit, soul and the like (see, for example, Gemara below).]

20. *Ibid.* 1:5.

21. All of the ten items are mentioned before the conclusion of this verse. Therefore, the Gemara derives that they were all created on the first day.

22. *Psalms* 18:12.

23. [This verse appears in a passage that discusses the heavens.] Thus, the line of darkness surrounds the heavens (*Rashi*). [This verse does not show that *tohu* is a line, but the next verse cited in the Baraisa does. Regarding the "greenness" of the line, see below, note 25.]

24. *Isaiah* 34:11.

25. The terms in this Baraisa demand interpretation. It is clear that the Baraisa is transmitting some hidden teachings – probably regarding *Maaseh Bereishis* – but it is not clear at all what these hidden meanings are.

We find that the *Zohar* presents esoteric teachings concerning the green line of *tohu* and the damp stones of *bohu* in at least three places: Vol. III 227a and 279a and *Tosefta* III 305b (see also *Tosefta* II 273b). Although a thorough exposition of these sources is far beyond the scope of this work, the general sense (based on the sources cited below) seems to be as follows: God wished to create man within a rather murky environment. If man were to have free will to choose between good and evil, man could not live on an enlightened plane in which evil was an insane and unthinkable choice. Man had to be "shielded" from God's light to such a degree that the choice of evil would seem to be a reasonable option. There are three filters or screens that serve this purpose: (1) *tohu*, (2) the darkness emerging from *tohu* and (3) *bohu* (see *Moreh Nevuchim* 3:9,11; there is also a fourth filter, see citations in the *Zohar*). The water emerging from the damp *bohu* stones – like springs bursting from rock – represents the diminished light that is allowed to reach our world and benefit it (*HaSulam, Parashas Bereishis*, pp. 33-34).

[According to *Nefesh HaChaim, Shaar 3* and *Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, man's very being would cease to exist if exposed to God's unfiltered Reality.]

The Gemara describes *tohu* as a ירוק, which we have translated as "a green line." It should be noted that the word ירוק is sometimes used to denote other colors, such as yellow. Regarding the symbolism of the color ירוק, see *Pardes Rimmonim, Shaar HaGevanim* and *Ben Yehoyada*.

26. *Genesis* 1:17.

27. *Ibid.* 1:19.

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from them, as it says:^[28] „וּמִנֵּעַ מִרְשָׁעִים אוֹרָם” – *And light was withheld from the wicked.* ולמי גָּנוּז – *And for whom did He hide [this light]?* לְצַדִּיקִים לְעַתִּיד לָבָא שְׁנֵאמֵר – *For the righteous people in the future, as it says:*^[29] „וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים” „וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים – *God saw that the light was good;* אין טוב – *and “good” refers to none other than a righteous person,* „אִמְרוּ צַדִּיק כִּי־טוֹב” – *as it says: Say of the righteous person that he is good.*^[30] בֵּין שְׂרָאָה אוֹר שְׁגָנוּ – *Once the light saw that [God] had hidden it for the righteous, [the light] was gladdened,*^[31] „אוֹר” – *שְׁנֵאמֵר* – *as it says:*^[32] *The light of the righteous is gladdened.*^[33]

The Gemara comments that this matter is actually in dispute: „כְּתָנָי – *This way of understanding the light created on the first day is the subject of a dispute between Tannaim:* אוֹר שְׂרָאָה – *Regarding THE LIGHT THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED IS HE, CREATED ON THE FIRST DAY – אָדָם – MAN COULD use IT to SURVEY AND OBSERVE everything FROM ONE END OF THE WORLD TO THE OTHER END OF [THE WORLD]. דְּכַרִּי רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב – THESE ARE THE WORDS OF R' YAAKOV. וְהַחֲכָמִים אֹמְרִים – BUT THE SAGES SAY:* הֵן

– The word “light” is used here in reference to the light of the LUMINARIES THEMSELVES, WHICH WERE CREATED ON THE FIRST DAY – *וְלֹא נִתְּלוּ עַד יוֹם רְבִיעִי – BUT WERE NOT SUSPENDED in space UNTIL THE FOURTH DAY.*

The Gemara lists another set of ten things that are integral to Creation:

– Rav Zutra bar Toviya said in the name of Rav: „בְּשֵׁשֶׁה דְּבָרִים נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם – *The world was created with ten things:* (1) *With wisdom and (2) with insight and (3) with understanding; and (4) with strength and (5) with rebuke and (6) with might; (7) with righteousness and (8) with justice; (9) with kindness and (10) with compassion.*^[34]

The Gemara cites verses for the ten things listed:

– *With wisdom and with insight,* – *as it is written:*^[35] „ה' בְּחָכְמָה וְיִסְדָּרְךָ כוֹנֵן שָׁמַיִם כְּתוּבָה” – *Hashem founded the earth with wisdom; He established the heavens with insight.* – *With understanding,* – *as it is written in the very next verse:* „בְּדַעְתּוֹ תְּהוֹמוֹת” – *Through His understanding, the depths were*

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28. Job 38:15.

29. Genesis 1:4.

30. Isaiah 3:10. The verse in Genesis is thus interpreted: *God saw [fit that the primordial] light [should be reserved] for the sake of [the righteous person, who is called] good.*

31. [Translation follows *Mesillas Yesharim* ch. 1 וְיָדָה וְאֵם תַּעֲמִיק; see *Dikdukei Soferim*.]

32. Proverbs 13:9.

33. Any item in this world is sublimely elevated when it serves the needs of a spiritually perfect man. The Sages convey this idea by saying that the light reserved for the righteous is itself “happy” (see *Mesillas Yesharim* loc. cit.).

The Gemara’s conclusion is thus that the light of the first day and the light of the fourth day were two very different kinds of light. The fourth day’s light is the light of the sun, the moon and the stars, the light that illuminates our physical world. The light of the first day, however, was a spiritual light that revealed the contents of the entire universe before Man (see *Michtav MeEliyahu* II p. 91). This comprehensive perception of the world was denied to the wicked (since they would misuse and abuse it). This light was concealed after the seven days of Creation (*Rashi* to Genesis 1:14, as explained by *Gur Aryeh* ad loc.; see *Isaiah* 30:26; cf. *Ramban* ad loc. who states that light was concealed after three days; see also *Tanna DeVei Eliyahu Zuta* ch. 21). This light will be restored when Jerusalem is rebuilt at the End of Days (see *Midrash Tehillim* §27).

[Although the phrase „לְצַדִּיקִים לְעַתִּיד לָבָא” for the righteous people in the future, might be taken to indicate that the light is reserved for the World to Come or the Messianic Age or the like, that is not the intent here, according to many sources. The Midrash says that the light was hidden for those who toil in the study of Torah. *SheBe’al Peh* by day and night (*Tanchuma*, *Noach* §3). The *Zohar* (II 148b-149a) states that whenever people exert themselves in the study of the Torah, a ray shines forth from that light and rests upon them (see also *Maharsha* here). *Geon Yaakov* cites the view that this light was hidden specifically in the Aggados of the Talmud (see *Zohar* I 31b and 203b regarding specific righteous men who enjoyed this light; cf. *Midrash Konein* p. 253 in *Otzar HaMidrashim*).

34. “Wisdom” is defined as the knowledge a person gains from what he learns. “Insight” is any detail he extracts from his wisdom through the machinations of his mind. “Understanding” is the reconciliation [of a topic’s disparate elements, i.e. a complete mental picture of that topic]. “Strength” is physical strength; “might” is the might of the heart. “Rebuke” is a vociferous shout (*Rashi*).

Maharsha comments that these ten things appear to be the ten *sefiros* [sometimes translated as “Emanations”] that played a significant part in the Creation of the universe. According to the consensus of Kabbalistic sources, the ten *sefiros* are: (1) *Keter*, (2) *Chochmah*, (3) *Binah*, (4) *Daas*, (5) *Gevurah*, (6) *Tiferes*, (7) *Netzach*, (8) *Hod*, (9) *Yesod*, (10) *Malchus*.

(5) *Gevurah*; (6) *Tiferes*; (7) *Netzach*; (8) *Hod*; (9) *Yesod*; (10) *Malchus*. [They shall remain untranslated here.] For various reasons, *Daas* is sometimes counted instead of *Kesser* (see *Shomer Emunim HaKadmon* 1:67, citing *Otzar Chaim* וְיָדָה וְאֵם תַּעֲמִיק). The *sefiros* *Chochmah*, *Binah*, *Daas*, *Chesed* and *Gevurah* seem to correspond to the similarly named items mentioned in our Gemara. The correspondence of the remaining five *sefiros* (*Tiferes*, *Netzach*, *Hod*, *Yesod*, *Malchus*) is not explicit.

The *sefiros* are first mentioned in *Sefer Yetzirah*, the *Bahir* and the *Zohar*. They are also mentioned, sparsely, in various late Midrashim (see e.g. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 14:12). *Ramban* and *Rabbeinu Bachya* make several direct and indirect references to them in their works and the *sefiros* are the major theme of the classic Kabbalistic tome, *Shaarei Orah*, by R’ Yosef Gikatilia (a contemporary of *Rashba*), and later of R’ Moshe Cordevero’s magnum opus, *Pardes Rimonim*, and still later of the collected teachings of the *Arizal*.

The topic of the ten *sefiros* is perhaps the archetypal example of an esoteric teaching that is susceptible to misinterpretation and distortion. The most important point that must be stated regarding the *sefiros* and that must be stated clearly is this: They are not God. God is an absolute Unity with no internal divisions or differentiation whatsoever. The *Rishonim* say that one who believes the *sefiros* are ten parts of God is comparable to one who believes in several gods (*Responsa, Rivash* §157; *Responsa, Rashbash* §189).

Furthermore, one is forbidden to pray to a *sefirah*. *Rabbeinu Bachya* to *Deuteronomy* 4:7 cites a *Sifri* [which is not extant] that teaches this explicitly. The verse states: *For which is a great nation that has a God Who is close to it, as is Hashem, our God, whenever we call to Him?* The *Sifri* expounds: „אֵלֵינוּ לֹא לְמוֹתָיו, [we call] to Him, but not to His attributes. This *Sifri* is cited also in *Pardes Rimonim* 32:2. [For more on prayer and *sefiros*, see *Rivash* loc. cit., *Pardes Rimonim* §32 and *Responsa, Rav Pe’alim, Sod Yesharim* II §11].

Rashbach (loc. cit.) and *Maharalbach* (*Responsa* §75) are emphatic in their discouraging of speeches to the public regarding the *sefiros*. *Rashbach* points out the terrible confusion that could be wrought through these speeches. This confusion has not disappeared in our own generation. It is therefore worthwhile to say the minimum necessary to avoid misconceptions.

The *sefiros* have been described as “tools” God uses to direct the world and as “windows” through which we may gain some faint glimmer of a perception of Him (see *Pardes Rimonim*, *Shaar* 4 and 8:12; see *Shomer Emunim HaKadmon*, *Viku’ach Rishon* §25, §27, §62, §65, see also R’ Yosef Chaim in his *Responsa, Rav Pealim, Sod Yesharim* II §5 and in his *Responsa, Torah Lishmah* §444).

Although much has been published and is available from reliable sources regarding the ten *sefiros*, any further discussion of this issue is beyond the scope of this elucidation.

Excerpts from Talmud and Midrash - Chagigah 14a

Chagiga 14a

תלמוד בבלי מסכת חגיגה דף יד עמוד א

כל יומא ויומא נבראין מלאכי השרת מנהר דינור, ואמרי שירה ובטלי,
 שנאמר +איכה ג'+ חדשים לבקרים רבה אמונתך. ופליגא דרבי
 שמואל בר נחמני, דאמר רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן: כל
 דיבור ודיבור שיוצא מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא נברא ממנו מלאך אחד,
 שנאמר +תהלים ל"ג+ בדבר ה' שמים נעשו וברוח פיו כל צבאם.

Every day ministering angels are created from the fiery stream, and utter song, and cease to be,⁷ for it is said: They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness.⁸ Now he differs from R. Samuel b. Nahmani, for R. Samuel b. Nahmani said that R. Jonathan said: From every utterance that goes forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, an angel is created,⁹ for it is said: By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.¹⁰

(7) Cf. the lines in Longfellow's Sandalphon (quoted by Streane): The Angels of Wind and of Fire Chant only one hymn, and expire With the song's irresistible stress

(8) Lam. III, 23. I.e., great is Thy praise on account of them (Rashi).

(9) But not from the fiery stream, as Rab holds.

(10) Ps. XXXIII, 6.

Excerpts from Talmud and Midrash - Chullin 60b

Talmud - Mas. Chullin 60b

תלמוד בבלי מסכת חולין דף ס עמוד ב

רבי שמעון בן פזי רמי, כתיב: +בראשית א'+ ויעש אלהים את שני המאורות הגדולים וכתב: את המאור הגדול ואת המאור הקטן! אמרה ירח לפני הקב"ה: רבש"ע, אפשר לשני מלכים שישתמשו בכתר אחד? אמר לה: לך ומעטי את עצמך! אמרה לפניו: רבש"ע, הואיל ואמרתי לפניך דבר הגון, אמעית את עצמי? אמר לה: לך ומשול ביום ובלילה, אמרה ליה: מאי רבותיה, דשרגא בטיהרא מאי אהני? אמר לה: זיל, לימנו בך ישראל ימים ושנים, אמרה ליה: יומא נמי, אי אפשר דלא מנו ביה תקופותא, דכתיב +בראשית א'+ והיו לאותות ולמועדים ולימים ושנים, זיל, ליקרו צדיקי בשמיך: +עמוס ז'+ יעקב הקטן שמואל הקטן +שמואל א' יז'+ דוד... הקטן. חזייה דלא קא מיתבא דעתה, אמר הקב"ה: הביאו כפרה עלי שמיעטתי את הירח!

R. Simeon b. Pazzi pointed out a contradiction [between verses]. One verse says: And God made the two great lights,² and immediately the verse continues: The greater light . . . and the lesser light. The moon said unto the Holy One, blessed be He, סSovereign of the Universe! Is it possible for two kings to wear one crown? עHe answered: סGo then and make thyself smaller. עSovereign of the Universe! עcried the moon, סBecause I have suggested that which is proper must I then make myself smaller? עHe replied: סGo and thou wilt rule by day and by night. עBut what is the value of this? עcried the moon; סOf what use is a lamp in broad daylight? עHe replied: סGo. Israel shall reckon by thee the days and the years ס3. עBut it is impossible, עsaid the moon, סto do without the sun for the reckoning of the seasons, as it is written: And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years ס4. עGo. The righteous shall be named after thee⁴ as we find, Jacob the Small,⁵ Samuel the Small,⁶ David the Small⁷, עOn seeing that it would not be consoled the Holy One, blessed be He, said: סBring an atonement for Me for making the moon smaller. עThis is what was meant by R. Simeon b. Lakish when he declared: Why is it that the he-goat offered on the new moon is distinguished in that there is written concerning it unto the Lord?⁸ Because the Holy One, blessed be He, said: Let this he-goat be an atonement for Me for making the moon smaller.

(2) Gen. I, 16.

(3) Ibid. 14.

(4) Righteous men shall be named סthe Smally after the moon which was reduced to become the small luminary.

(5) Cf. Amos VII, 2: How shall Jacob stand? for he is small.

(6) A renowned Tanna of the first century, called סthe Smally on account of his humility.

(7) Cf. I Sam. XVII, 14: And David was the youngest (smallest).

(8) Num. XXVIII, 15: And a he-goat for a sin-offering unto the Lord. These words, סunto the Lord, עare not found in connection with sacrifices on other festive seasons.

Excerpts from Talmud and Midrash - Chullin 91b

Talmud - Mas. Chullin 91b

תלמוד בבלי מסכת חולין דף צא עמוד ב

ויאמר שלחני כי עלה השחר, אמר לו: גנב אתה, או קוביוסטוס אתה, שמתירא מן השחר? אמר לו: מלאך אני, ומיום שנבראתי לא הגיע זמני לומר שירה עד עכשיו. מסייע ליה לרב חננאל אמר רב, דאמר רב חננאל אמר רב: שלש כתות של מלאכי השרת אומרות שירה בכל יום, אחת אומרת קדוש, ואחת אומרת קדוש ה' צבאות. מיתביב: חביבין ישראל לפני הקב"ה יותר ממלאכי השרת, שישראל אומרים שירה - בכל שעה, ומלאכי השרת אין אומרים שירה אלא - פעם אחת ביום, ואמרי לה - פעם אחת בשבת, ואמרי לה - פעם אחת בחודש, ואמרי לה - פעם אחת בשנה, ואמרי לה - פעם אחת בשבוע, ואמרי לה - פעם אחת ביובל, ואמרי לה - פעם אחת בעולם; וישראל מזכירין את השם אחר שתי תיבות, שנאמר: +דברים ו'+ שמע ישראל ה' וגו', ומלאכי השרת אין מזכירין את השם אלא לאחר ג' תיבות, כדכתיב: +ישעיהו ו'+ קדוש קדוש קדוש ה' צבאות; ואין מה"ש אומרים שירה למעלה, עד שיאמרו ישראל למטה, שנאמר: +איוב ל"ח+ ברן יחד כוכבי בקר, והדר: ויריעו כל בני אלהים! אלא: אחת אומרת קדוש, ואחת אומרת קדוש קדוש, ואחת אומרת קדוש קדוש קדוש ה' צבאות. והאיכא ברוך!

And he said: Let me go, for the day breaketh.¹⁶ [Jacob] said to him, וAre you a thief or a rogue¹⁷ that you are afraid of the morning? ע He replied: סI am an angel, and from the day that I was created my time to sing praises [to the Lord] had not come until now.ע This¹⁸ supports the statement of R. Hananel in the name of Rab. For R. Hananel said in the name of Rab: Three divisions of ministering angels sing praises [to the Lord] daily; one proclaims: Holy, the other proclaims: Holy, and the third proclaims: Holy is the Lord of hosts.¹⁹ An objection was raised: Israel are dearer to the Holy One, blessed be He, than the ministering angels, for Israel sing praises to the Lord every hour, whereas the ministering angels sing praises but once a day. (Others say: Once a week; and others say: Once a month; and others say: Once a year; and others say: Once in seven years; and others say: Once in a jubilee; and others say: Once in eternity.) And whereas Israel mention the name of God after two words, as it is said: Hear, Israel, the Lord²⁰ etc., the ministering angels only mention the name of God after three words, as it is written: Holy, holy, holy, the Lord of hosts.¹⁹ Moreover, the ministering angels do not begin to sing praises in heaven until Israel have sung below on earth, for it is said: When the morning stars sang together, then all the sons of God shouted for joy!²¹ ק It must be this: One [division of angels] says: Holy; the other says: Holy, holy; and the third says: Holy, holy, holy, the Lord of hosts. But is there not the praise of טBlessed²²?

(16) Gen. XXXII, 27.

(17) xuyxuhcue, a kidnapper (Rashi); a gambler (Tosaf.).

(18) That angels sing praises, or that they are limited to an allotted time for song (Tosaf.).

(19) Isa. VI, 3.

(20) Deut. VI, 4.

Excerpts from Talmud and Midrash - Deuteronomy Rabba 5:12

Deut Rabbah 5:12

דברים רבה (וילנא) פרשה ה

אמר ר"ל מיכאל כולו שלג וגבריאל כולו אש ועומדין זה אצל זה ואינם מזיקים זא"ז = זה את זה, אמר בר קפרא ומה אם העליונים שאין בהם לא קנאה ולא שנאה ולא תחרות הן צריכין שלום התחתונים שכולן שנאה ותחרות וקנאה עאכ"ו שהן צריכין שלום, רבנן אמרי תדע לך כמה גדול כחו של שלום אפי' המלחמה שאין אדם יורד לתוכה אלא בחרבות וברמחים אמר הקב"ה כשתהיו הולכים לעשות מלחמה לא תהיו פותחין תחלה אלא בשלום מנין ממה שקרינו בענין (דברים כ) כי תקרב אל עיר וגו'.

R. Levi said: Michael is made up entirely of snow, and Gabriel of fire,¹ and though they stand near one another yet they do not injure each other. Bar Kappara said: If the heavenly beings who are free from envy and hatred and rivalry are in need of peace, how much more are the lower beings, who are subject to hatred, rivalry, and envy, in need of peace. The Rabbis say: The greatness of peace² can be gauged from the fact that even when dealing with war upon which one enters with swords and spears, God said: סWhen you go to make war begin with proclaiming peace.ע Whence this? From what we have read in the context, WHEN THOU DRAWEST NIGH UNTO A CITY TO FIGHT AGAINST IT, THEN PROCLAIM PEACE UNTO IT.

(1) Cf. Num. R. XII, 8. סE.J.: The idea is that it is Michael's function to cool God's anger, as it were, while Gabriel, on the other hand, seeks to inflame it.

(2) Cf. Num. R. XI, 7.

About Tefillin - excerpts from Siegal and Strassfeld's *The Jewish Catalog*, pp. 58-61

PARTS OF TEFILLIN

Tefillin are composed of two main parts:

1. tefillin shel yad—the tefillin that are wound around your arm and hand; and
2. tefillin shel rosh—the tefillin that are placed on your head.

Tefillin have the following components:

1. *Bayit* (pl. *batim*)—*box*. Each part has a bayit. There are, however, basic differences between the bayit shel yad and the bayit shel rosh.

Shel yad: has one compartment

Shel rosh: has four separate compartments, though placed tightly together. Also the shel rosh has the Hebrew letter shin ש on two of its sides. One is a three-pronged ש; the other is a four-pronged ש. Some see these letters as an allusion to the three patriarchs and four matriarchs. Others say that since the gematria (see Gematria) of ש is 300, the letters serve us as a reminder that 300 out of 354 days of the year tefillin are worn. The unusual four-pronged ש, tradition says, was used on the Ten Commandments. The commandments were engraved all the way through the tablets so they could be read from either side. For a shin to be read both ways it has to be four-pronged so there are three spaces in between. To understand this, hold up four fingers and see how the spaces in between the fingers form a shin.

The bayit is made from the skin of a kosher animal and is in the shape of a perfect square. The corners should form sharp points. With “superduper” tefillin, each bayit is made from a single piece of leather.

2. *Parshiyot*—*portions from the Torah*. There is one set of four portions, i.e., Exodus 13:1–10; 13:11–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21, enclosed in each bayit. These portions deal with the mitzvah of tefillin.

The portions are written on parchment by a scribe (see Scribal Arts). The parshiyot are tightly rolled and tied with the hairs of an animal. They are then enclosed in another piece of parchment and again bound with hairs. For the shel yad, the parshiyot are written on one long piece of parchment. For the shel rosh, each parshah is written on a different piece of parchment and each parchment is put in a different compartment. The binding hairs are drawn through the bayit of the shel rosh and should be visible on the outside. This is one sign that the pair of tefillin is a good one.

3. *Titara*—*the square base* (length and width, not height). It should be larger than two fingers by two fingers (width, not height) and smaller than 4 x 4 fingers.

4. *Maabarta*—*a leather protrusion from the back of the bayit*. It is a hollow extension through which the strap is passed.

5. *Giddin*—*threads made from the fibers of the hip muscle tissue of kosher animals*. These are used for sewing closed the bayit. Twelve holes are made in a square around the sides of the bayit and the titara, which are then sewn together with the giddin.

About Tefillin - excerpts from Siegal and Strassfeld's *The Jewish Catalog*, pp. 58-61

6. *Retzuah*—strap. One long retzuah is attached (through the maabarta) to the shel yad. It is knotted in the shape of the letter yod and should always be close to the bayit. It is also shaped in the form of a noose so it can be tightened on the arm. One long retzuah is attached to the shel rosh. It forms a circlet which is adjusted to fit the head. The knot which forms the circlet is made in the shape of the letter dalet or double dalet—a square shape. The ends of the straps should be long enough to hang down slightly below the waist.

TO PUT ON TEFILLIN

The best and easiest way is to have someone show you, but if no one is available, the general order is to:

1. put on the shel yad;
2. put on the shel rosh;
3. finish tying the strap around your hand and fingers. Reverse this order when taking off the tefillin. Tefillin are put on and taken off while standing.

The tefillin shel yad is put on your “weak” hand—that is, your left hand if you are right-handed. This is done because of Exodus 13:16, which says: “And so it shall be as a sign upon your hand.” The Hebrew word for “your hand” has an extra Hebrew letter heh attached to it. The rabbis felt that the extra letter alludes to one’s weak hand **יד כהה** (=יד כהה) The left hand is closer to your heart and this fits the symbolism of the biblical statement: “And you shall place these words upon your heart.” Nonetheless, if you are a lefty, wear the tefillin on your weak hand, i.e., your right.

To begin:

1. Roll up your sleeve (if you have one) to above your muscle. This is done because there can be nothing between the tefillin and your skin. For this reason, watches should be taken off or put on your other hand.
2. Unwrap the straps of the tefillin shel yad. Place the bayit on the muscle of your arm. The maabarta should be on the side closest to your shoulder. Also, the knot should be both next to the bayit and on the side closest to your body. The bayit should be placed on top of your muscle, not on the side or the bottom. If you put your arm down to your side, the tefillin will be both facing toward and on the same level with your heart.

When everything is in place, say the blessing:

“Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to wear tefillin.”

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו
במצותיו, וצונו להניח תפילין:

Pull on the strap until the tefillin are tightly bound to your arm. With practice you will learn how tightly you have to pull to keep it from slipping. At first it is better to pull very tightly, for it has a tendency to slip off. However, tefillin are not supposed to cut off your circulation. Do not let the knot loosen while you wind the rest of the strap.

3. Many people wind the strap at least once around the upper arm to help keep the bayit in place.

4. Wind the strap seven times around your arm between your elbow and your wrist. Ashkenazic Jews wind the strap counterclockwise. Sephardic Jews wind it clockwise. The black side of the strap should always face outward.

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5. After the seventh time, bring the strap around the outside of your hand to your palm and then wrap the rest around the middle of your palm, i.e., the space between your thumb and index finger. Tuck the end of the strap underneath this middle coil to prevent the strap from unwinding.

6. Unwrap the tefillin shel rosh. Hold the bayit and place the bayit on the top of your head above the forehead. The maabarta should be on the side away from your face and thus toward the middle of your head. The opposite end of the bayit should rest at the beginning of your hairline. The bayit should not hang over your forehead. It should be centered between your eyes, as it says: "And they shall be a sign between your eyes."

7. Place the knot on the back of your head, i.e., on the nape of your neck. Check to see that the strap is not twisted. The strap ends should be brought forward to hang down over your chest. Make sure the black side is facing out.

8. Before you have the whole thing in place say the berakhah:

"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us concerning the precept of tefillin."

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל מִצְוַת תְּפִלִּין:

This should be followed by:

"Blessed be the Name of His glorious majesty forever and ever."

בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלָכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

This is said because of an involved halakhic question. Very briefly, there is doubt whether the second blessing is superfluous because you have already said the first blessing. Saying unnecessary blessings is frowned upon; so in case the second blessing is unnecessary, you say, "Blessed be the Name . . ." which "neutralizes" the second blessing.

9. Finally you unwind the part of the strap wrapped about the middle of your palm (leaving in place the coil from your wrist to your palm). According to Ashkenazic custom, you then wrap it three times around your middle finger, twice around the lower part of that finger (i.e., the part closest to the knuckle), and once around the middle part of the finger. While this is done, Hosea 2:21-22 is said: "And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in compassion. And I will betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." The remainder of the strap is brought under the ring finger and over the outside of the hand, forming a V. Then the strap is once again wound around the middle of the palm, forming a shin. Any extra strap is wound around this middle coil and again the end of the strap is tucked under this coil. The winding around the finger forms the Hebrew letter dalet.

10. To take the tefillin off, reverse the order—take apart the dalet and shin on your hand, wrapping the strap around the middle of the palm. Then take off the shel rosh and wrap up the straps. Loosen and unwind the strap on the hand; take off the shel yad and wrap up the straps. There is no prescribed way of wrapping the tefillin. Many people wrap the straps around the batim. Try various ways and see which one you like.

About Tefillin - excerpts from Siegal and Strassfeld's *The Jewish Catalog*, pp. 58-61

KAVVANOT

There is a multilevel symbolism involved in this mitzvah, often working in sets of three.

1. The central theme of the tefillin is the act of binding.

The tefillin bind you not only physically, but spiritually.

The shel yad binds your arm—that is, your body. The shel yad also binds your heart, as it says: "... impress these My words upon your very heart: bind them ..." (Deuteronomy 11:18).

The shel rosh binds your mind.

Thus, mind-heart-body, your total self, is bound together to worship God. The tefillin also reminds us to use mind-heart-body for good and not for evil.

Mind-body-heart — thoughts-actions-will — thoughts-possessions-feelings. Some base this trichotomy on the three words used in the Bible to refer to tefillin:

- (a) זָכָרוֹן memorial (mind);
- (b) אוֹת sign (heart);
- (c) טֻטְפוֹת frontlets (body).

2. The tefillin are a memorial, a remembrance (mind) of the most important event of our collective past—the exodus from Egypt. As it says: "... and as a reminder on your forehead ... that with a mighty hand the Lord freed you from Egypt" (Exodus 13:9). Thus we are reminded of leaving the binding to the slavery of Pharaoh for the binding to the service of God—the leaving of the leather thongs of the lash for the leather straps of the tefillin.

They are also to remind us of the mitzvot, as it says: "... that the teachings of the Lord may be in your mouth" (Exodus 13:9). We received at Sinai the mitzvot which bind us to the service of God.

3. The tefillin are a sign of where we have been (Egypt), who we are (the nation which stood at Sinai), and where we are going (the permanent duty of service to God). Thus the tefillin shel rosh, in particular, is seen as a sign to the nations "that the Lord's name is proclaimed over you" (Deuteronomy 28:10). Therefore, it is not covered when it is worn.

4. The tefillin are especially a sign of our recognition of God. This is symbolized in the very construction of the tefillin, for one of God's names, שְׁדַּי (Shaddai), is formed by the tefillin. That is, the ש (shin) on the hand or on the bayit of the shel rosh, the ד (dalet) on the fingers or the knot on the back of the head, the י (yod) is the knot next to the bayit of the shel yad or the end of the strap of the shel rosh.

Thus the tefillin help us in our feeling and awareness of the presence of Shaddai—Almighty God. The tefillin are a sign of our desire and will to worship God.

5. The frontlets, that is, the physical tefillin themselves—the physical act of binding—the touch of leather on skin—the parshiyot and their contents—"Hear O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is One. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul [mind], and with all your might"—these, too, are part of the mitzvah of tefillin.

Alphabet Chart – Sephardic Pronunciation

Pronunciation	Book Print	Final Form	Letter Names in English	Block	Script	Numbers	Vowels Hebrew Name
Silent letter	א		Aleph	א	א	1	א a as in yacht Patah פתח
B as in Boy V as in Vine	ב		Bet	ב	ב	2	ב a as in yacht Qames קָמֶץ
G as in Girl	ג		Gimmel	ג	ג	3	ג ee as in bee Hireq חִירֶק
D as in Door	ד		Dalet	ד	ד	4	ד ay as in hay Sere צֵרֵי
H as in House	ה		Hey	ה	ה	5	ה eh as in bed Segol סֶגוֹל
V as in Vine	ו		Vav	ו	ו	6	ו or ו o as in row Holem חוֹלָם
Z as in Zebra	ז		Zayin	ז	ז	7	ז oo as in pool Qibbus קִבּוּץ
CH as in BaCH	ח		Chet	ח	ח	8	ח oo as in pool Sureq שׁוּרֶק
T as in Tall	ט		Tet	ט	ט	9	ט o as in row Hataf qames חֲטַף קָמֶץ
Y as in Yes	י		Yod	י	י	10	י see page 16-17 Sheva שְׁוָא
K as in Kitty CH as in BaCH	כ	ך	Kaf	כ	כ	20	
L as in Look	ל		Lamed	ל	ל	30	
M as in Mother	מ	ם	Mem	מ	מ	40	
N as in Now	נ	ן	Nun	נ	נ	50	
S as in Sun	ס		Samech	ס	ס	60	
Silent letter	ע		Ayin	ע	ע	70	
P' as in People F as in Food	פ	ף	Pey	פ	פ	80	
TS as in NuTS	צ	ץ	Tsade	צ	צ	90	
K as in Kitty	ק		Qof	ק	ק	100	
R as in Robin	ר		Resh	ר	ר	200	
SH as in SHape S as in Sun	ש		Shin	ש	ש	300	
T as in Tall	ת		Tav	ת	ת	400	

Spelling of the names of vowels in both English and Hebrew was taken from *Introduction to Hebrew* by Moshe Greenberg (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965).

Headings for Panel 2 Synthesis

המַעֲלִיר

Hamei-ir

WHO LIGHTS UP

Headings for Panel 2 Synthesis

בְּרַחֲמִים

b'rachamim

WITH COMPASSION

Headings for Panel 2 Synthesis

וְלֹאֲדָרִים עָלֶיהָ

v'ladarim 'aleha

AND THOSE WHO DWELL
UPON IT

Headings for Panel 2 Synthesis

אֶרֶץ

la-aretz

THE EARTH

Book of Prayer According to the custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews
 Edited and translated by David de Sola Pool, Minister of Congregation Shearith Israel
 New York City 1941

מיושב

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. יוֹדֵר אוֹר
 וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ. עָשָׂה שְׁלֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת-הַכֹּל: הַמֵּאִיר
 לְאַרְצֵנוּ וּלְיָדֵינוּ עֲלֵיהֶם בְּרַחֲמֵינוּ. וְכַשֵּׁיבוּ מִתְּחִיל בְּכָל-
 יוֹם תָּמִיד. מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית: מִדֵּרְבּוּ מִעֲשֵׂי יי בְּכָל
 בְּחֻבְמָה עֲשִׂיתָ. מִלְּאָה הָאָרֶץ מִיָּנִיד: הַמֵּלֶךְ הַמְרוֹמָם
 לְבִדּוֹ מֵאֵז. הַמְשַׁבֵּחַ וְהַמְפָּאֵר. וְהַמְחַנֵּשׂא מִימֹת עוֹלָם:
 אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם. בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ. אֲדוֹן עֲוֹנוֹ.
 צִדִּיק מִשְׁפָּטֶינוּ. מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ. מִשֹּׁבַב בְּעֶרְבֵנוּ:

אֵל בָּרוּךְ גָּדוֹל דָּעָה
 הָבִין וּפָעַל וְהָרִי תָמִיד
 טוֹב יָצַר כְּבוֹד לְשִׁמּוֹ
 מְאֹדוֹת גִּתָּן סְבִיבוֹת עֲוֹ
 פָנוֹת אֶבְרָהָם קְדוֹשִׁים רְוֵמֵי שְׂדֵי
 תָמִיד מְסַפְרִים כְּבוֹד אֵל וְקִדְשָׁתוֹ:
 תְּהַפְּרֶךְ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּשִׁמְךָ מִפְּעֵל. וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתְחַת.
 עַל כָּל-שֶׁשֶׁבַח מַעֲשֵׂי דְדִי. וְעַל מְאֹדֵי-אוֹר שִׁינְרָתוֹ.
 הַמֵּלֶךְ יִפְאֲרֶךְ סֶלָה:

(Seated)

Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who formest light and createst darkness, who makest peace and createst all things. Thou sheddest light in Thy mercy on the world of the living, in Thy goodness renewing ever anew each day the work of creation.

"How manifold Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom Thou hast made them all, the earth is filled with Thy handiwork."

Ruler, exalted uniquely from aye, extolled, praised, uplifted from days of old, abounding in pity, show mercy to us, God of all time, our sheltering Rock, God of our strength, our shield and protection.

God, the blessed and all-knowing, planned and created the brilliance of the sun. Well has He wrought for His glorious name. Luminaries He has set to encircle His mighty expanse. The chiefs of His hosts exalt the All-mighty in holiness, forever recounting God's glory and holiness.

Lord our God, hallowed be Thy name; Divine Ruler, adored be Thy name on this earth beneath as in the heavens above, more than in all the praises chanted of Thee everlasting by the works of Thy hands and by the luminaries of Thy creation.

Book of Prayer According to the custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews

תִּתְקַבֵּץ לְנֶצַח. צוּרֵנוּ. מֶלֶכֵּנוּ. וְנוֹאֲלָנוּ. בּוֹרֵא קְדוֹשִׁים;
 יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמֶךָ לְעַד מִלְּפָנֵינוּ יוֹצֵר מִשְׁרָתֵינוּ. וְאֲשֶׁר מִשְׁרָתֵינוּ
 כָּלֵם עוֹמְדִים בְּרוֹם עוֹלָם. וּמִשְׁמִיעִים בִּירְאָה יְהוָה. בְּקוֹל
 דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמִלֶּךְ עוֹלָם: כָּלֵם אֲהוּבִים. כָּלֵם
 בְּרוּרִים. כָּלֵם גְּבוּרִים. כָּלֵם קְדוֹשִׁים. כָּלֵם עוֹשִׂים בְּאֵימָה
 וּבִירְאָה רָצוֹן קוֹנֵם: וְכָלֵם פּוֹתֵחִים אֶת־פִּתְחֵם בְּקִדְשָׁה
 וּבִטְהָרָה בְּשִׁירָה וּבְזִמְרָה. מְבָרְכִים. מְשַׁבְּחִים. מְפָאֲרִים.
 וּמְקַדְּשִׁים. וּמְעִירִיצִים. וּמְמַלְכִים. אֶת־שֵׁם הָאֵל הַמְּלֶכֶךְ
 הַגָּדֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא. קְדוֹשׁ הוּא: וְכָלֵם מְקַבְּלִים עֲלֵיהֶם
 עַל מַלְכוּת שְׁמֵיךָ יְהוָה. וְנוֹתְנִים רְשׁוּתָהּ לָהֶם. לְהַקְדִּישׁ
 לְיוֹצְרֵם בְּנֶחֱת רוּחַ. בְּשִׁפְהָ בְּרוּךְהָ וּבְנִיעִמָּה קְדוֹשָׁה. כָּלֵם
 בְּאַחֶד עוֹנִים בְּאֵימָה. וְאוֹמְרִים בִּירְאָה.

**** קְדוֹשׁ. קְדוֹשׁ. קְדוֹשׁ. יי אֲבֹתָה. מִלֵּא כָל־הָאָרֶץ
 בְּבוֹדוֹ:**

וְהָאֲפֻסִּים וְחַיֵּי הַקֶּדֶשׁ. בְּרַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל מִתְשַׁאֲשֵׁם. לְעִמְתָּם
 מְשַׁבְּחִים וְאוֹמְרִים.

**** בְּרוּךְ בְּבוֹד יי מִמְּקוֹמֵנוּ:**

לֵאֵל בְּרוּךְ נְעִימוֹת יִתְנֶה. לְמַלְךְ אֵל חַי וְנִכְנֵם
 זְמִירוֹת יִאמְרוּ. וְחִשְׁבֻּחוֹת יִשְׁמְעוּ: כִּי הוּא לְבָדוֹ מְרוֹם
 וְקְדוֹשׁ. הוֹעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת. עוֹשֶׂה חֲדָשׁוֹת. בַּעַל מְלַחְמוֹת.
 זוֹרֵעַ צְדָקוֹת. מַצְמִיחַ יִשׁוּעוֹת. בּוֹרֵא רְפוּאוֹת. נוֹרָא
 הַחַיּוֹת. אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת. הַמְּחַיֶּה בְּשׁוּבוֹ בְּכָל־יָוִם
 תְּמִיד מִעֲשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית. בְּאֶמְרוֹ. לְעִשָׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים.
 כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִידוֹ: וְהַחֲזִין מְאוּרוֹת מְשַׁמֵּם עוֹלָמוֹ אֲשֶׁר
 בָּרָא: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי. יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוּרוֹת:

Be Thou eternally blessed, our Rock, our King, our Redeemer, creator of holy beings. Be Thou for ever extolled, our King, creator of ministering angels who subsist in the lofty empyrean reverently proclaiming in unison the words of the living God, the King of the universe. They are all beloved, all pure, all mighty, all holy. They all perform in reverent awe the will of their Maker. Opening their mouth with jubilant song of purity and holiness, they all bless and praise the infinite sovereign holiness of God, the Ruler omnipotent, awe-inspiring and holy. Mutually accepting for themselves His heavenly rule, in unison they all give one another the word to hallow their Creator in serene, pure utterance of sacred harmony, in awed chorus all reverently proclaiming:

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts,
 The fulness of all the earth is His glory.”

From His heavenly servitors soaring in mighty response rescounds His praise:

“Blessed be the Lord’s glory throughout all space.”

Thus they chant in melodious psalmody to the blessed God; they raise their songs of lauding and praise to their King, the eternal God of life. For He alone in exalted holiness is ever anew supreme in achievement, the Lord over struggle, sowing victory and reaping triumph. He creates healing, for He is Lord of wonders, awesome in praises. In His goodness He ever revives each day anew His work of creation. In the psalm it is sung “To Him who made great luminaries, for His mercy endures forever.” He gladdens the world of His creation by establishing heavenly lights. Blessed art Thou, Creator of heavenly light.

[illegible][illegible]

Siddur Farhi, Egypt, 1st edition 1914, 4th edition 2003

טו

שחרית

החזן קורא את "המבורך":

הקול בלחש

וְשִׁתְּכָה וְתִסְפָּאֵר שְׁמוֹ שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
שְׁמוֹ הָאֱשׁוֹן וְהוּא אֶחָדִין וּמִבְּלִגְדָיו אֵין אֲלֵהִים. וְהוּ
שֵׁם "מְבוֹרָךְ מְעֻמָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם וְהַיּוֹמָם עַל כָּל בְּרָכָה וְהַתְּהִלָּה:

הכל בקול רם בְּרוּךְ "המבורך לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה "אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבִרְוֵא הַיּוֹשֵׁר. עֲשֵׂה
שְׁלוֹם וּבִרְוֵא אֶת כָּל. הַמַּאֲוִיר לְאֶרֶץ וּלְדָרִים עֲלֵיךְ בְּרַחֲמִים:
וּבְמִשְׁכּוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ כָּל יוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית: מִה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךְ
יְיָ כָּלם בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ עֲשֵׂה מֶלֶךְ הָאֶרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ: הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּרוֹמָם
לְבָדּוֹ מֵאֵין. הַמְּשַׁבֵּחַ וְהַמְּפָאֵר וְהַמְּתַנַּשֵּׂא מִמּוֹת עוֹלָם: אֱלֹהֵי
עוֹלָם בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ רַחֲמִים עֲלֵינוּ. אֲדוֹן עֲזֵנוּ. צוֹר מַשְׁגָּבֵינוּ.
מִמֶּנּוּ יִשְׁעֵנוּ. מַשְׁגָּב פִּיעֲדֵנוּ: אִם אֵל בְּרוּךְ גְּדוֹל הַעֶדָה. הַבּוֹן וְהַפֹּעֵל
זָרְדֵי תְּהִי. מִוֹךְ יוֹצֵר כְּבוֹד לְשִׁמּוֹ. מַאֲרוֹת נִמֵּן כְּבוֹדוֹת עֵזוֹ. הַנּוֹת
אֲבָחוֹת קְדוּשִׁים. הוֹמָמֵי שְׁדֵי תְּמִיד. בְּסֻפְרֵם כְּבוֹד אֵל וְקִרְיָתוֹ:

וְהַבְּרָךְ "אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּשָׁמַיִם מַפְעֵל וְעַל הָאֶרֶץ מַתְרַת. עַל כָּל
שְׂכֵחַ מַעֲשֵׂי נִדְרֶךָ. וְעַל מַאֲוִרֵי אוֹר שְׁיִזְרֹתֶךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמַּאֲוִיר כָּלָה:

וְהַבְּרָךְ לְנֵצַח צוּרֵנוּ. מֶלֶכֵנוּ. וְנוֹאֲלָנוּ. בִּרְוֵא קְדוּשִׁים. וְשִׁתְּכָה
שְׁמוֹךְ לְעַד מֶלֶכֵנוּ יוֹצֵר מִשְׁרָתֵנוּ. וְאֲשֵׁר מִשְׁרָתֵנוּ כָּלם
עוֹמְדִים בְּרִים עוֹלָם. וּמַשְׁמִיעִים בִּרְוֵאָה נֶחֱד בְּקוֹל דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים
תִּיִם וּמֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם. כָּלם אֲדוּבִים. כָּלם בְּרוּרִים. כָּלם גְּבוּרִים.
כָּלם קְדוּשִׁים. כָּלם עוֹשִׂים בְּאִמָּה וּבִרְוֵא רִצּוֹן קִנְיָנֵם. וְכָלם
הוֹתִים אֶת פִּיִּם. בְּקִרְיָשָׁה וּבְטָהֳרָה. בְּשִׁירָה. וּבְנִקְיָה. מְקִרְבִּים.
מִשְׁכָּחִים. מִסְּאָרִים. וּמִקְדִּישִׁים. וּמִעֲרִיצִים. וּמִבְּלִיָּה אֶת שֵׁם הָאֵל
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּדוּל הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא קְדוֹשׁ הוּא. וְכָלם מְבַבְלִים
עֲלֵיָם עוֹל מִלְּבוֹת שָׁמַיִם זֶה מִזָּה. וְנוֹתֵנִם רִשּׁוֹת זֶה לָזֶה.

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صلاة الصبح

(المزمار) (١) باركوا الله المبارك

(الجمهور بصوت مختل) ليسبح ويحمّد اسم الملك الاعظم ملك الملوك القدس والمبارك. الذي هو الاول وهو الآخر ولا اله سواه. لكن اسم الله مباركا من الآن وإلى الابد. وثنائيا على كل بركة ومدح.

(جميعا بصوت عال) مبارك الله المبارك الى الابد والابد

مبارك انت يا الله الهنا ملك العالم. مصور النور وخالق الظلمة صانع السلام وخالق الكل (اش ٤٥: ٧).

المعطي نوراً للأرض والساكنين فيها برحمته. والجدد اعمال الطبيعة في كل يوم دائماً حسب جوده: ما اعظم اعمالك يا رب. كلها بحكمة صنعت. ابتلاء الأرض من غثا (من ١٠٤: ٢٤). ايها الملك المتعالي وحده منذ القدم. المسيح والمجد والسامي منذ الازل: ايها الاله الابدي ارحنا حسب سرائحك الجريئة. يا سيد قوتنا وصخر حصتنا. وزر خلاصنا. وحصن لاجلتنا. الاله المبارك العظيم المزمرة الذي كونا ونظم اشعة الشمس. وخلق هذه الاشياء الحسنة تمجيداً لاسمه. جعل البركات حول عزه. ورؤساء جنوده المقدسة تنظم التقدير ونحدث دائماً بجد الرب وقداسته

لتبارك يا الله الهنا في السماء من فوق وعلى الأرض من تحت لاجل سمو اعمال يدبك والبركات التي خلقت فهي تمجيدك الى الابد.

لتبارك الى الابد يا صخرنا. وملكنا. وخالق القديسين. ليسبح اسمك الى الابد يا ملكنا. خالق الملائكة. الذي ملائكته واقفون في اعالي الكون وينادون سوبة بخشوع كلمات الله الحي والملك الابدي. ملائكة كلهم محببون. كلهم ابرار. كلهم اقوياء. كلهم مقدسون. ويعملون كلهم مشيئة مالككم بخوف وخشوع. وكلهم يشحون اقواهم بقداسته وطهارته. يشيدون وتربل. وباركون ويسبحون ويمجدون ويقدمون ويوفرون ويمتدحون بملك اسم الاله الملك العظيم الجبار المهيمن. قدوس هو وكلهم يفلتون عليهم نبر الملوك السماوي الواحد من الآخر. ويعلمون ان هذا الواحد لا آخر

(١) هو المذموب من الشعب ليتلو الصلاة بصوت عال

Siddur Farhi, Egypt, 1st edition 1914, 4th edition 2003

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שחרית

לְהַקְדִּישׁ לַיהוָה בְּנֵחַת רֹחַ . בְּשִׁפְחָה בְּרִנָּה וּבְנִיעֻמָּה קְדוּשָׁה .
כָּלֶם כְּאַחַד עֲוִינִים בְּאַיִמָּה . וְאַזְמִירִים בְּיִרְאַה . קְדוּשָׁה . קְדוּשָׁה . קְדוּשָׁה
” צְבָאוֹת מְלֹא כֹל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ ; וְהַאֲוִיפִינִים וְחַיִּים הַתָּשׁוּשׁ בְּרִיעֻשׁ
מְדוּל מִתְנַשְּׂאִים לְעִנְיָתָם (לְעִנְיַת הַשְּׂרָפִים) מִשִּׁבְבוֹת וְאוֹמִירִים ;
כְּרוֹךְ כְּבוֹד ” מִמִּקְוָמוֹ :

לֹאֵל כְּרוֹךְ נְעִימוֹת וְנֶמֶן . לְמִלְךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם זְמִירוֹת יִאֲמִרוּ .
וְתִשְׁבְּחוּת יִשְׁמְעוּ . כִּי הוּא לְבוֹד מְרוֹם וְקְדוּשָׁה . פּוֹעֵל גְּבוּרוֹת .
עֹשֶׂה תְּהִלּוֹת . פּוֹעֵל מִלְּחָמוֹת . זוֹרֵעַ צְדָקוֹת . מַצְמִיחַ יִשׁוּעוֹת .
בּוֹרֵא רְפוּאוֹת . נוֹרֵא תְהִלּוֹת . אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת . הַמְּחַיֶּה הַמְּמוֹת
כָּל יוֹם שְׂמִיד מִעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית . כְּאֲמֹר לְעֹשֶׂה אוֹרִים גְּדוֹלִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִידוֹ . וְהַתְּקִין מְאוּרוֹת מִשְׁפָּחָה עוֹלָמוֹ אֲשֶׁר כָּרָא :
כְּרוֹךְ אֶתָּה ” יִצְרַר הַמְּאוּרוֹת :

אֲדַבַּר עוֹלָם אֲהַבְתִּי ” אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַמְּלִיךְ גְּדוֹלָה וְיִתְדָה הַמְּלִיךְ
עָלֵינוּ . אֲבִינוּ מִלְּכֵנוּ . פֶּעַכּוֹר שְׂמֵךְ הַגְּדוֹל וּבִעֲבוֹר אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
שִׁבְחָהוּ כְּדֹ וְהַמְּלִיכָמוֹ הִקֵּין חַיִּים לְעֵשׂוֹת (חֲסִין) רְצוּנָה בְּלִבִּי שְׁלֵם
כִּן תְּהִלָּנוּ אֲבִינוּ אֵב הַתְּהִלָּן . הַמְּנַחֵם רֹחַם נָא עָלֵינוּ . וְחַן בְּלִבֵּנוּ
בִּינָה . לְהַבִּין לְהַשְׁפִּיל לְשִׁמּוֹעַ לְמֹד וּלְמַד לְשִׁמּוֹר וּלְעִשׂוֹת וּלְגִי
אֵת כָּל דְּבָרֵי תְלִמּוֹד תּוֹרָה בְּאַהֲבָה . וְהֵאָר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרָה . וְדַבֵּק
לְכֵנוּ כַּמְּעֻתִיד . וְנִחַד לְכֵנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאַה אֵת שְׂמֵךְ לְמַעַן לֹא
נִבּוֹשׁ וְלֹא נִפְלֵם וְלֹא נִשְׁפָּל לְעוֹלָם נֶעֱד . כִּי בְשֵׁם כְּדִשָּׁה הַגְּדוֹל
הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא כְּמֹדֵנוּ . נִגְלֶה וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה בִּישׁוּעָתָה . וְנִתְפַּד ”
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִתְפַּדֵּי הַרְבִּים אֵל יִצְחָכֵנוּ נִצַּח כֶּלָּה וְעַד . מִדֵּר וְהִבֵּא
עָלֵינוּ . בְּרַכָּה וְשִׁלּוֹם . מִהֲרָה מְאַרְבַּע בְּנִיּוֹת כָּל הָאָרֶץ . וְשִׁבְחוּ
עוֹל הַגּוֹיִם מִעַל צִנְאוֹתֵינוּ . וְהוֹלִיכֵנוּ מִהֲרָה כְּקִנְיָנוֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ . כִּי
אֵל שׁוֹעֵל יִשׁוּעוֹת אֶתָּה . וְכֵנוּ בְּהִרְתָּ מִכָּל עַם וְלִשׁוֹן . וְתִתְּנֵנוּ
מִלְּכֵנוּ לְשִׁמְךָ הַגְּדוֹל בְּאַהֲבָה לְהוֹדִית לָךְ וּלְהַלְלוֹךְ . לְרָאֵה וּלְאַהֲבָה
אֵת שְׂמֵךְ . כְּרוֹךְ אֶתָּה ” הַבּוֹהֵר בְּעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה :

صلوة الصبح

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ليقدسوا خالقهم يهدو بال بلفظ قبة ويثمنهم مقدس وكلهم سوية يجيئون بخوف ويقولون
يخشعون . « قدوس قدوس رب الجنود المالى الارض يجده » (اش ٦ : ٣)
واولافانم والمخوقات المقدسة ترتفع بصوت عظيم كالرعد مقابل السرافيم وتسبح قائلة
» مبارك بعد الرب من مكانه « (خر ٣ : ١٣)

لااله مبارك الكل ينعمون . ملك اله حي صدي بالتانيل ينظرون . وبالتسايح
يتادون . لانه هو وحده علي وقدوس فاعل الاعمال العظيمة والصانع المستحدثات
سيد الحروب . زارع الحنات . منبت الخلاص . خالق العلاجات . موفر بالتسبيحات
سيد المعاني . المجده بحسب جوده في كل يوم دائماً اعمال الخليفة كما قيل
» لصانع انواراً عظيمة . لان الى الابد رحمته « (مز ١٣٦ : ٧) . وقد ترتب
التبرات السماوية التي بها يفرح عاله الذي خلقه . مبارك انت يارب خالق التبرات

قد احتيتا يارب الهنا بحجة ابدية . وشفت علينا بشفاعة عظيمة وقائمة . ابانا
ملكنا لاجل اسمك العظيم ولاجل آياتنا الذين اتكلموا عليك وعلمتهم فرائض الحياه
لبسوا حسب مشيتك قلبهم سليم . هكذا نحن علينا يا ابانا الاب الرحمان . يا رحوم
ارحمنا واعطنا نعماً لنفهم . ونذكرك . ونطيع . ونعلم . ونحفظ . ونعمل . ونسب
كلام تعليم شريعتك بحجة . وأزاعيتنا بشريعتك . وعلق قلبنا بوصاياك . ووجد
قلبنا لنحب ونهاب اسمك لكي لا نخزي ولا نخجل ولا نتر الى الدهر والابد . لاتنا
على اسمك القدس والعظيم والجليل والهيبت اتكلمنا . لنبتهج ونفرح بخلاصك . يارب
الهنا لاتدع رحمتك وافضالك الكثيره تتركنا الى الابد . سلام . اسرع وانمنا
بركة . وسلاماً عاجلاً من اروع زوايا الارض . واكسر نير الامم من عنقا وسيرنا
سريماً قايماً لارضنا . لانك انت اله تفعل الخلاص . واخترتنا من كل شعب ولسان .
وفرقتنا يا ملكنا لاسمك العظيم بحجة للتسكرك . ونوحدك ونهاب ونحب اسمك :
مبارك انت يارب الذي اختار شعبه اسرائيل بحجة .

Ordnung der Oeffentlichen Andacht, Hamburg Germany 1819

Ordnung der öffentlichen Andacht / Hamburg 1819 (Rec.)
Für die Sabbath und Festtage — 32 —
von J. J. J. J.

32 32

[illegible]

Das halbe 2777 Seite II.

[illegible][illegible]

(Die Gemeinde wiederholt den letzten Vers,
der Vorbeter fährt sodann fort.)

הַיְיטִיּוֹת הַזֵּהוּ. הַיְיטִיּוֹת הַזֵּהוּ.

Her, Herr aller Wunderthaten! du fündest Wohlgefallen an
Gesängen des Dankes, ewiger, allmächtiger König und
Herr! Amen.

Barclay.

Lobet den Ewigen, den Hocherhabenen.

(Gem.) Darich Adonay kammeborich leolam
waed, (Gedacht ist der Ewige, der Hochgelobte, immer
und ewig)

(Vorb.) Gelobt seyst du Ewiger, unser Gott, König der Welt, der du das Licht geschaffen und die Finsterniß, du hast Alles gemacht und erhältst Alles in Ewigkeit.

Hacol jodúcha.

Alles lobet dich, alles preiset dich, alles spricht: Nichts
ist so heilig, als Gott der Herr!

Alles ruhmte des Weltalls Schöpfer, den Gott, der jeden

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[illegible][illegible]

Tag, des Oſten's goldne Pforten öffnet, die Fenster des Himmels aufthut, der mit Majestät die Sonne führt in ihrer Bahn, den Mond in seinem Laufe, auf das sie Welten und Welt: Geschöpfen leuchten, durch seine Huld geschaffen.

Du, der du die Welt und was darauf wogt mit Licht umfrahst, und jeden Tag der Schöpfung Meißerwerk erneuest, du warst von Anbeginn der hocherhabne König, allein gepriesen und verherrlicht von immerher Herr des Weltalls! mit deiner unendlichen Huld erbarme dich unser! du bist Herr unserer Kraft, Hort unsres Schutzes, Schild unsres Heils, du bist unsere feste Burg. Niemand ist dir gleich, niemand dir ähnlich, und keiner ist außer dir!

Schinchá.

Darob werde dein Name, o Gott! geheiligt, dein An-
denken gefeiert im Himmel oben, so wie Hienieden auf der

Ordnung der Oeffentlichen Andacht, Hamburg Germany 1819

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וְהָאֲפֻסִּים וְחֵירוֹת הַקָּדָשׁ בְּרַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל מִתְנַשְּׂאִים
לְעִמּוֹת שְׂרָפִים. לְעִמּוֹתָם מִשְׁבַּחִים וְאֲמוֹנִים
(Senn.)
בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹדֵךָ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ:

לֵאמֹר בְּרוּךְ נִצְמֹת יִתְנוּ. לְמַלְךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם
וְמוֹרֹת יֵאֱמָרוּ וְתִשְׁבַּחֹת יִשְׁמְעוּ. כִּי הוּא לְבוֹנוֹ
פוֹעֵל גְּבוּרֹת עֲשֵׂה חֲדָשׁוֹת בְּעַל מִלְחָמוֹת וְזֹרֵעַ
צִדְקוֹת מִצְוֹת לְשׁוֹעֲרֵי בֹרָא רְפוּאֹת גִּדְּלָה
הַחַיּוֹת אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת הַמְּהֻדָּשׁ בְּסוּכּוֹ בְּכָל־יָוֵב
תִּמְדֵּם מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית. בְּאֵמוּר לַעֲשֵׂה אוֹרִים
וְהַלִּיִם כִּי לְעוֹלָם תִּסְפֹּן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ יִצְחָק
הַמְּאוֹרֹת:

ist der Herr Gebaoth, des Weltalls Stamm ist voll von heiliger Majestät.)

Die Ophanim und heiligen Lichtgestalten erheben sich gegen die Otephaim und singen im Wechselchor:

(Senn.) Baruch keboð Adonay minnekomo. (Gelobt sey die Herrlichkeit des Ewigen, wo sie thronen!)

Alles weiset dem Ewigen Lobgedichte, dem unendlichen Schöpfer Hochgesang. Nur er allein ist Gott der Stätte, er allein der Wunderthäter, er nur ist Herr der Schaaßen, er der Tugend heiliger Erster, er allein des Heils Verberter, er allein der Kranken Arzt, furchtbar im Lobe, über allen Preis hocherhaben. Mit jedem Tag verjüngt er uns der Schöpfung Neusein. Der Lichtgestirne großer Schöpfer, unendlich walter seine große Güte. Gelobt sey du, Ewiger, des Lichtes Schöpfer. Amen.

C

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יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל־שִׁבְחָה מַעֲשֵׂי יְדִידֶךָ. וְעַל־מַאֲדֵי יָאֵר

מַעֲשֵׂי־שֵׁית. יִפְאָרוּךְ כָּלֶּה:

הַתְּבַרְךְ צוּרֵנוּ מִלְּכֵנוּ וְנֶאֱלָנוּ בֹרֵא קְדוֹשִׁים.
וְשׁוֹבֵחַ שְׁמוֹ לְעַד מִלְכֵנוּ יִצְחָק מִשְׁרָתִים. וְנֶאֱשָׂר
מִשְׁרָתֵינוּ כָּלֶם עוֹמְדִים בְּרוֹם עוֹלָם. וּמִשְׁמַעִים
בִּירְאָה יִחַד בְּקוֹל. דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמִלְךְ עוֹלָם.
כָּלֶם אֲהוּבִים כָּלֶם בְּרוּרִים כָּלֶם גְּבוּרִים וְכָלֶם
עֲשִׂים בְּאֵיפֹה וּבִירְאָה רָצוֹן קוֹנֵם. וְכָלֶם פּוֹתִחוֹם
אֶת־פִּיָּהֶם בְּקִדְשָׁה וּבְמִתְבָּרָה. בִּישְׁרָה וּבִזְמִרָה.
וּמְבַרְכִּים וּמִשְׁבַּחִים וּמִפְאָרִים וּמַעֲרִיצִים וּמִקְדְּשֵׁים
וּמִמְלִיכִים אֶת־שֵׁם הָאֵל הַמִּלְךְ הַגָּדוֹל הַגְּבוּר
וְהַנּוֹרָא. קְדוֹשׁ הוּא. וְכָלֶם מְקַבְּלִים עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹל
מַלְכוּת שְׁמִים זֶה מִזֶּה. וְנוֹתְנִים רְשׁוֹת זֶה לָזֶה.
לְהַקְדִּישׁ לְיִצְחָק בְּנִחָת רֹחַ בְּשִׁפְהָ בְּרוּרָה
וּבְנִעֲמָה קְדוֹשָׁה. כָּלֶם בְּאַחַר עוֹנִים וְאֲמוֹרִים בִּירְאָה
(Senn.) קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ קְדוֹשׁ יְיָ צְבָאוֹת. מְלֵא כְּבֹדֶךָ.

הָאֲרֵץ כְּבוֹדֵךָ:

Erde, gepriesen ob der Pracht deiner Werke, der Lichtes Weisheit, die du geschaffen; Alles preise dich, Gelob.

Titbarach.

Sey gepriesen, du unser Gott! unser König und Erhöher, der du die Heiligen schufst; ewig werde dein Name verehrt, du Schöpfer deiner Diener in der Höhe. Sie stehen in ätherischen Räumen und rufen mit Ehrfurcht:

(Senn.) Kadósch, kadósch, kadósch Adonay Zebaoth; melo col haareiz keboðó. (Heilig, heilig, heilig

The Order of Prayer, Dr. Merzbacher, Temple Emanu-el, New York, 1864

תפלת שחרית

כ" מנחה למזרח

קריעו ל" כל-הארץ: עבדו את " בשמחה. באו
לפניו ברגל: דעו כי " הוא אלהים. הוא עשנו ולו
אנחנו. עמו נצא מרגלותיו: באו שערי בתורה.
הצרתיו בתהלה. הודו לו ברכו שמו: כי טוב "
לעולם חסדו. ועד דר נדור אמונתו:

ברכות ק"ש

ברכו את " המברך:
[מתאברך] המברך לעלם ועד:
ברוך אתה " אלהינו מלך העולם. יוצר אור
ובורא חושך. עשה שלום ובורא את הכל:
הפאיר לארץ ולדלים עליה ברחמים. וכמו
מחדש בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. הפלך המרוקם
לכדו מאו. הפישבא והפפאר והפחנשא מימות עולם:
אלהינו עולם ברחמיו הרבים רחם עלינו. אדון ענו
צור משגבנו. כגן ישענו משגב בעדנו: שמך "
אלהינו יתקדש. וזכרך מלכנו וחפאר. בשמים כמפל
ועל הארץ מתחת. התברך מושיענו על שבת מעשה
ידך. ועל מאורי אור שעשית ופארך סלה: ברוך
אתה " יוצר המאורות.

MORNING SERVICE.

PSALMS.

Ps. 100. A Psalm of Thanksgiving.

Shout unto the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come into his presence with a song. Know ye that God is the Lord. He hath made us, and we are His; His people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter ye into his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good: his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations.

BENEDICTIONS.

Bless ye the Lord, who is ever Blessed!

Congr. Blessed be the Lord, who is blessed for evermore.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God! King of the universe, who formest light and createth darkness, maketh peace, and createth all things.

Who giveth light to the earth, and to those who dwell thereon, in mercy; and in his goodness reneweth every day constantly the work of creation.

Thou art the only King, who is extolled, praised, glorified, and exalted, ever since the creation. Everlasting God! in thy abundant mercies have compassion on us; O Lord of our strength, Rock of our fortress, Shield of our salvation, Tower of our defence!

Thy name, O Lord, our God! shall be sanctified, and thy memorial, O our King! glorified in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. Blessed art Thou, O our Help! for the praiseworthy works of thy hands, and for the bright luminaries which thou hast formed, thou shalt be glorified. Selah. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the former of the Lights.

Forms of Prayer, West London Synagogue, 1841

(Minister.) ברוך אתה " O Lord, our God!
King of the universe, who formest the light, and createst darkness:
makest peace, and createst all things; who with mercy enlightenest
the whole earth, and those who dwell therein; and in thy goodness
every day constantly renewest the work of the creation. How great
are thy works, O Lord! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the
earth is full of thy possessions. *Thou art the only King, extolled,*
praised,
VOL. I. E

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MORNING SERVICE.

praised, glorified, and exalted ever since the creation. Everlasting
God! in the abundance of thy mercy have compassion on us. O
Lord of our strength! Rock of our fortress! Shield of our salvation!
be thou a defence for us! Blessed be thou, O Lord, our God!
in the heavens above, and on the earth beneath, for all the
admirable works of thy hands, and for the bright luminaries which
thou hast formed. They shall glorify thee for ever. Blessed art
thou, O Lord! the Creator of the luminaries.

(חזן) ברוך אתה " אלהינו מלך העולם. יוצר אור ובונה חושך.
עשה שלום ובנה את הכל. המאיר לארץ ולדרים עליה
ברחמים. ובמנוח מחדש בכל יום תמיד. מעשה בראשית: מה
רבו מעשיו " כלם ברחמים עשית. מלאה הארץ קנינה: הפלך
הברומם

שחרית

ג

הפולקס לבדו מאו. המשפח. והמפא. והמנעש ממות עולם.
אלהי עולם. ברחמים הרבים דהם עלינו. ארץ ענו. צור
משגבנו. מן ישענו. משגב בעדנו. תחברך " אלהינו בשמים
מפעל. ועל הארץ מנחת. על כל שבת מעשי ידיך. ועל מאורי
אור שצורת. המור ופאורך סלה: ברוך אתה " יוצר
המאורות:

Union Prayer Book, 1892

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MORNING SERVICE FOR WEEK-DAYS.

MINISTER:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ:

CONGREGATION:

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

MINISTER AND CONGREGATION:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא
 חֵשֶׁךְ. עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת הַכֹּל:
 הַמְאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדָּרִים עֲלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים. וְכַטּוֹבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ
 בְּכָל־יוֹם תְּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה־בְּרָאשִׁית: מָה רַבּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ
 יְיָ. כָּל־שֶׁכַחְתָּ עֲשִׂיתָ. מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנְךָ: תִּתְכַּבֵּר
 יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל־שִׁבְחָךָ מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ. וְעַל־מְאֹרֵי־אוֹר
 שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ יְפָאוֹרֶךְ סֵלָה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ יוֹצֵר הַמְּאֹרוֹת:

Bor'chu es Adónoy hammevóroch.

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

Boruch Adónoy hammevóroch, P'ólam voéd.

Praised be the Lord through eternal eternity!

WE PRAISE Thee, O Lord, our God, Ruler of the universe, that in Thy mercy Thou causest light to shine over the earth and all its inhabitants, and renewest daily in kindness the wonders of creation. How manifold are Thy works, O Eternal; in wisdom hast Thou made them all, the earth is full of Thy treasures. Thou formest the light and the darkness, ordainest the good and the evil, bringest harmony into nature, and peace into the heart of man. Praised art Thou, O God, Creator of light and peace.

Forms of Prayer for Jewish Worship, Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, 1977
(British Reform is akin to American Conservative, British Liberal to American Reform)

תפלת שחרית לשבת

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ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם. יוצר אור ובורא
 חֵשֶׁךְ. עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם וּבֹרָא אֶת-הַכֹּל: הַכֹּל יִרְדּוּךָ. וְהַכֹּל
 יִשְׁבַּחְךָ. וְהַכֹּל יֵאמְרוּ אֵין קִדּוּשׁ כִּי: הַמֵּאִיר לְעוֹלָם כָּל
 וְלִישְׁכָּיו וּבִטּוּבוֹ מְחִדֵּשׁ בְּכָל-יוֹם מִמִּיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְרָאשִׁית: מִה
 רְבוּ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יי. כָּל־מַחֲמָה עָשִׂיתָ. מְלָאָה הָאָרֶץ קוֹנִיָּךְ:
 הַמִּלֵּךְ הַמְרוֹמָם לְבָדוֹ מְאֹד. הַמְשַׁבֵּחַ וְהַמְפָּאֵר וְהַמְתַּנַּשֵּׂא
 מִיָּמֹת עוֹלָם: אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם. בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הַרְבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ.
 אֲדוֹן עֲוֹנוֹ. צוּר מַשְׁעָנֵנוּ. מִן יִשְׁעֵנוּ. מְשֻׁבַּב בְּעַדָּנוּ: בְּרוּךְ
 אַתָּה יי. יוֹצֵר הַמְּאֹדוֹת:

SABBATH MORNING SERVICE

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*THE
CREATOR
OF THE
UNIVERSE*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, king of the universe, who forms
 light yet creates darkness, who makes peace yet creates all. All
 things proclaim You, all things honour You, and all say: 'None is holy
 like the Lord.' He gives light to all the world and those who live in it.
 In His goodness He renews the work of the creation day by day.
 Lord, how great are Your works; You made them all in wisdom; the
 earth is full of Your creatures. You are the only king exalted from the
 beginning of time, who has been worshipped, praised and glorified
 since days of old.

Everlasting God, in Your great mercy have mercy upon us; Lord
 of our strength, rock of our protection, shield of our safety, our true
 protector. Blessed are You Lord, who creates the lights of the
 universe.

Ha'avoda She'balev, siddur of Israeli Progressive Judaism, 1991

תפילת שחרית לחול

ברכת "יוצר אור", הברכה הראשונה שלפני קריאת שמע
 ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, יוצר אור
 ובורא חשך, עשה שלום ובורא את הכל:

המאיר לארץ ולדלים עליה ברחמים, ובטובו מחדש
 בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. מה רבו מעשיו
 יהוה, כלם בחכמה עשית, מלאה הארץ קנאות:
 הפלך המרוקם לבדו מאז, המשבח והמפאיר
 והמחנש מימות עולם. אלהי עולם, ברחמיך
 הרבים רחם עלינו, אדון עולם, צור משפחנו, קגו
 ישענו, משגב בעדנו.

תפילת יד

אור ה' על ציון תאיר ונוקה כלנו מהרה לאורו.
 ברוך אתה יהוה, יוצר המאורות:

ברכת "אברהם", הברכה השנייה שלפני קריאת שמע

אברהם רבה אברהם, יהוה אלהינו, חמלה גדולה
 ויתרה חמלה עלינו. אבינו מלכנו, בעבור אבותינו
 שפסחו: בך ותלמדנו חסי חיים, פו תחננו ותלמדנו.
 אבינו, האב הנחמן המרחם, רחם עלינו ותן בלבנו
 להבין ולהשפיל, לשמוע, ללמד וללמד, לשמו
 ולעשות ולקיים את כל דברי תלמוד תורתך
 באהבה. והאר עלינו בתורתך, ודבק לבנו במצוותיך,
 וחדד לבנו לאהבה וליראה את שמך, ולא נבוש
 ולא נכלם ולא נפשל לעולם ועד.

כי בשם קדשך הגדול והנורא בלחנו, נגילה
 ונשמחה בישועתך. והבא עלינו ברכה ושלום, וקבץ
 גלותנו מארבע כנפות הארץ, ותליכם קוממיות
 לארצנו. כי אל פועל ישועות אתה. וקבץ ברחמיך
 מפליגים ולשוו, וקבצתנו לשמוך הגדול סלה באמת,
 להודות לך ולתהדר באהבה. ברוך אתה, יהוה,
 הבורח בעמו ישראל באהבה:

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תפילת שחרית לחול

הפסחה הראשונה של קריאת שמע - קבלת עול ביכור שמע

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה | אחד:

ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד.

ואתה את יהוה אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך
 ובכל מאדך: והיו הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצו
 היום על לבבך: ושונתם לבך ודברת בם בשבתך
 בביתך ובכל דרךך בדרך ובשכבך ובקומך: וקשרתם
 לאות על ידך והיו לטעפת בין עיניך: וכתבתם
 על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך:

הפסחה השנייה - קבלת עול מצות

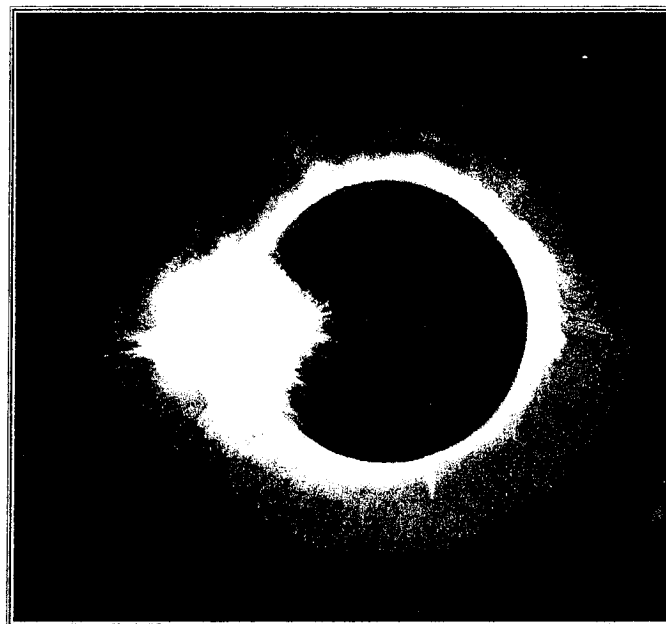
והיה אם שמע תשמעו אל מצותי אשר אנכי מצוה
 אחכם היום לאהבה את יהוה אלהיכם ולעבדו
 בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם: ונתתו מעור ארצכם
 בעמך יורה ומלכות ואספת דגוה ותירשע וצחקו:
 ונתתו עשב בשדך לבהמות ואכלת ושבעת:
 ושמרתו לכם פריפתה לבבכם ושרתם ועבדתם
 אלהים אחרים והשתחויתם להם: וקלה אף יהוה
 פתם ועצר את השמים ולא יהיה מטר ותאדמה לא
 תמן את יבולת האדמה מהרה מעל הארץ הטבה
 אשר יהוה נתן לכם:

ושמרתם את דברי אלה על לבבכם ועל נפשכם
 וקשרתם אתם לאות על ידכם והיו לטעפת בין
 עיניכם: ולפדתם אתם את בניכם לדבר בם בשבתך
 בביתך ובכל דרךך בדרך ובשכבך ובקומך: וכתבתם
 על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך: למען יראו ימכם וימי
 בנים על האדמה אשר נשבע יהוה לאבותיכם לתת
 להם פיסי השמים על הארץ:

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*Entrances to Holiness are Everywhere, Congregation Kol Ami,
White Plains, NY, Reform, 1998.*

יוצר	
<p>ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, יוצר אור ובורא חשך, עשה שלום ובורא את-הכל. המאיר לארץ ולקדים עליה ברחמים, ובטובו מחדש בכל-יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. מה רבו מעשיו, יי כלם בחכמה עשית, מלאה הארץ קנינה. תתברך, יי אלהינו, על-טוב מעשה ידך, ועל-מאורי-אור שעשית: יסארוך. סלה. ברוך אתה יי יוצר המאורות.</p>	



CREATION	
<p><i>Baruch ata Adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, yotser or uvorei choshech, oseh shalom uvorei et-hakol.</i></p> <p>Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who creates light and forms darkness; who makes peace and is the Creator of all.</p> <p>With compassion You give light to the earth and all who dwell there; with goodness You renew the work of creation continually, day by day.</p> <p>How manifold are Your works, O Eternal; in wisdom You have made them all; the earth is full of Your creations.</p> <p>Let all bless You, O Eternal our God, for the excellence of Your handiwork, and for the glowing stars that You have made: let them glorify You forever. Blessed is the Eternal, the Maker of light.</p>	

This prayer is taken from the prophet Isaiah, who was responding to a view of the world in which people believed in a force of good and a separate force of evil. Isaiah wrote:

I am the Eternal, and there is none else. I form light and darkness. I make peace and create evil. (45:7)

The early rabbis were uncomfortable with acknowledging that God is the source of evil and changed "who creates evil" to "who creates all."

ON SEEING THE SOLAR ECLIPSE OF 1991:

"The universe works," proclaimed Dr. Rosenzweig, a noted physician from Burlingame, California. "There's some satisfaction in that...."

The sky got very dark, the horns of the crescent sun shrank together...as the sun disappeared, and the leading edge of the moon's shadow swept over them at 1,500 miles an hour.... They put away their filters and looked up at a blank circle surrounded by a pure white ring of light, the corona formed by the sun's atmosphere....

Dr. Rosenzweig was having trouble looking through his viewfinder. "I've been crying for four minutes," he said. "I haven't taken any 35mm pictures because I just forgot about it. I'm absolutely awed...." Dr. Rosenzweig stood up and started clapping. "Encore! Encore!" he shouted. And then, upon reflection, "Author! Author!"

The New York Times, July 12, 1991

Ner Tamid

“The Ner Tamid of the synagogue... is a modest little lamp that serves as a reminder of the light which was kept burning nightly in the sanctuary in Jerusalem. Since it has no function beyond recalling memories of the past, the Ner Tamid is hardly ever noticed. It is certainly no symbol of eternity. It is not through ‘meaningful’ lighting fixtures that synagogue Judasim seeks contact with eternity.”

So wrote Eliezer Berkovits in *Understanding Jewish Prayer*.²⁴⁵ Sometimes translated as “eternal light,” “regular light” would be more exact. The directions were to kindle it every evening. As it says in Exodus 27:20-21:

You shall further instruct the Israelites to bring you clear oil of beaten olives for lighting, for kindling lamps regularly (נֵר תָּמִיד *leha'alot ner tamid*). Aaron and his sons shall set them up in the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain which is over *the Ark of the Pact*, to burn from evening to morning before the LORD. It shall be a due from the Israelites for all time, throughout the ages.

Leviticus 24:2 differs only by a few words. Keeping in mind a regular light rather than an eternal one, I decided to use a digital picture frame for the *ner tamid* of this Ark. On it I have loaded photos I have taken during the year of all the sorts of light I came across. There is the sun and the moon, Shabbat candles and Chanukiah candles, the seven colors of the visible spectrum. Also there are stoplights and neon lights and images from the Scheuer Chapel at HUC Cincinnati.

In ancient Israel images of the sun and moon in the Temple would have been especially frowned upon. Today, I deem it appropriate to offer as part of my praise a testament to the partnership between God and humanity. We are born into a world with electromagnetic radiation, we have eyes to see some of it with, we have brains and hands with which to shape it. Instead of lighting an oil lamp, I take a photo with my digital camera, store and manipulate the images in my computer and transfer them onto a digital picture frame.

245. Petuchowski, *Understanding Jewish Prayer*, op. cit., p. 143.

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