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JEWISH MUSIC FOR HEALING

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Master of Sacred Music Degree

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New York, New York

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JEWISH MUSIC FOR HEALING

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INTRODUCTION

HEALING, JUDAISM AND MUSIC: A NEW FUSION

This thesis introduces a new fusion of domains: the process of healing, the heritage of Judaism and the art of music. Ideally, combining these distinct areas will prove to reverse the polarization that specialization has wrought over the centuries, allowing the fragments of our therapeutic, religious and aesthetic lives to come together in a healing that represents and promotes true *sh'leimut*, or "wholeness."

This thesis asserts that there are six principles which underlie the effective combination of these three domains. The relationships among them will always vary, but so long as the understanding of what the goal is in the ritual for which their particular combination is created, the enhancement of each will be accomplished, and the experience which moves the participants will be found somewhere between them. In this six-way service, God and Jewry are ultimately served.

HEALING IS SERVED BY JUDAISM. Healing implies restoration. When an individual or community has suffered due to the pain of illness or injury and has sustained loss and dysfunction it is in need of healing. Over time, it can either be restored to its original condition, or it can come to accept and recognize itself as whole and fully functioning in its new condition; either way, healing has occurred. Judaism is rich in text and tradition that can guide and accompany the healing process. A healing Judaism is there to assist its people when they are suffering; the rich resources of its heritage can be geared toward the restoration of the wholeness of its people. This process and its dialectical counterpart - Judaism served by healing - represent an ongoing, interdependent relationship between a people and its heritage.

HEALING IS SERVED BY MUSIC. The healing potential of music is found in its fluid nature. Through the experience of music, we can arrange ourselves with the motion of life and the universe in which we live. By

integrating ourselves with the complex tapestries of musical textures, we may sense corresponding resonances within ourselves until we reach that single place of perfect rest and unity, within the Divine balance of all vibration.

JUDAISM IS SERVED BY HEALING. Jewish healing can be seen as the restoration of Judaism in our own place and time: the rediscovery and transformation of Judaism in 1990's America for the next millennium.

JUDAISM IS SERVED BY MUSIC. Jewish music, the expression of the Jewish soul that has been passed down over the millennia throughout the corners of the globe, has always reflected the unique history and faith of its people, as well as Israel's Covenant with God as expressed in its sacred literature. Jewish music relays truths about Judaism and its adherents, bridging gaps in time, space and civilization. Music serves Judaism by being a natural expression of it, response to it, and perpetuation of it. It has also been a crucial means of transmitting the words of *Tanakh* and other sacred Jewish texts.

MUSIC IS SERVED BY HEALING. Flowing in time, music either launches text on its vibrations faster and deeper into the minds and hearts of those who hear it, or flies alone, released from the boundaries of text, bypassing the cognitive receptor in the brain, sending its powerful message straight to the soul. When healing has occurred there is an expression of joy and thanksgiving which complete the healing and return gratitude to both the Eternal Healer, and the healed one, as well. The response of the healed person or persons is to reach out to others in their joy, beautifying the atmosphere for themselves and those with whom they have contact.

MUSIC IS SERVED BY JUDAISM. This is perhaps the most complicated principle for which to make a claim. Judaism and its unique forms of expression can enable purely musical expression to become ever more expansive. While for Jews music is not the end, enhancing music can lead Jews to fulfill their primary spiritual task, service to God. This view has had a place in our tradition, albeit not mainstream. Eighteenth century Chassidism

espoused it, especially through its development and use of the *niggun*, the wordless song. This thesis raises questions about the ways that the Jewish spirit serves music. Aesthetics is therefore brought into discussion.

Each of these three disciplines, healing, Judaism and music, is a means and end, process and product, agent and principal. Moreover, one or another configuration of these disciplines can be designed to produce *sh'leimut*, the desired goal in worship and in living. Jewish healing music can be created as a spontaneous outpouring of Jewish pain at its most unbearable moment, or as a particularly Jewish tongue through which Jews express purely human pain. Jewish healing music can be felt as a balm of comfort or grasped as an outstretched hand by a Jew in the deepest of despair, or used as a vehicle for a Jew longing to ascend to God in spiritual connection. Jewish music healing the broken soul is a treatment for the body due to its resonantal effects, increasing the possibility for the achievement of wholeness.

This thesis will give a brief overview of music and healing from its beginnings through the ages, starting with non-Jewish models of healing, and then focusing on Jewish models based on Torah tradition. Describing the flowering of the Jewish Healing Movement, and focusing in on its ritual expression, the healing service, it will analyze various models identifying benefits and deficiencies. It will then advocate that music be prominent in healing services. Finally, it will make suggestions for expanding the scope and efficacy of healing services through the use of music.

CHAPTER I

NON-JEWISH MODELS AND UNDERSTANDINGS OF MUSIC AS A HEALING FORCE: A CROSS CULTURAL OVERVIEW

The use of music for healing is more than thirty thousand years. old.[1] Illness was thought to have been caused by an evil spirit which had to be frightened or beguiled out of the body and mind of the indisposed. A sick family member, unable to fulfill responsibilities, created problems for the other members and endangered the group's survival. It was in everyone's interest that the ill person be restored to health as soon as possible, and, to this end, all participated in the expelling of the evil spirit, chanting for hours, even days, around the patient.

The earliest form of music healing was perhaps a "wordless wailing vocal chant,"[2] sung on one tone, its rhythm a natural consequence of breathing or heartbeat. The use of percussive instruments was believed to increase the endurance of the healers who were thought to possess supernatural powers.

Eventually, all the significant episodes of tribal life were observed as rituals. Their primary activities of dancing and singing were led by a specialist who came to be know as the shaman. The role of music in shamanistic healing was and still is principally to calm the minds of both patient and shaman by modifying their conscious awareness. Most shamanistic healing songs are sung very slowly and without personal emotive expression. The musical accents are irregular, and the predictability of a steady rhythm is interrupted, though its effect may be hypnotic. The shaman uses this music to help engage the patient's attention physically and psychologically, thereby fortifying his resolution to heal. [3]

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1 Randall McClellan, The Healing Forces of Music: History, Theory and Practice, (Rockport, Mass.: Element, 1991), 110.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 111.

Many ancient civilizations had a few gods for healing and one or more for music.[4] In ancient Greece, the god of medicine and healing and the god of music were one and the same.[5] The orbit of the Greek god Apollo was vast. As the sun god, he was the symbol of life, and allocated its blessings. As the god of healing, he "purge[d] the soul of man from guilt, so he cleanse[d] his body of ills,"[6] as well as safeguarding the harmony of life by eradicating evil. As the god of poetry, music and dancing, Apollo's pulsating motion through the heavens created harmony in the universe. And as the god of virtue, he embodied the Greek idea that the purest harmony of the body and soul is manifest in the intention behind life. In Apollo, music and medicine were divinely conjoined and integrated.

Ancient Greece's afflicted would congregate at the temples to petition Apollo to restore their health. The music played in the religious and healing ceremonies in the temple was lofty and majestic, often performed by one singer, a flute and a harp or lyre in certain musical modes. Mathematically formulated by Pythagoras, each mode was thought to have carried a unique blend of qualities within it. Often, the Dorian mode was used; it was characterized by repose, peacefulness, and courage.

Later, in contrast to the supernaturalistic world of the shaman, which has remained more or less unchanged since ancient times, the naturalistic healing power of Apollo contributed to the removal of medicine from the temple, and the development of psychic and physical study as separate from religious belief.[7]

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4 Ibid.

5 The discussion on Greek mythology and music is derived in large part from Bruno Meinicke, "Music and Medicine in Classical Antiquity," in Music and Medicine, eds. Dorothy M. Schullian and Max Schoen, (New York: Henry Schuman, Inc., 1948), 47-95.

6 Ibid., 48.

7 Ibid., 51.

Dance has been an integral component of the healing rituals of many non-Jewish cultures. It was the only known treatment for Tarantism, a mysterious disease occurring in seventeenth century Apulia, Italy. According to seventeenth century observer Giorgio Baglivi, the inhabitants of Apulia had "a hot, scorched constitution, ...[and were] subject to ardent fevers, frenzies, pleurisies, madness and other inflammatory diseases."[8] The healing dance that developed, combating the effects of the stinging bite of the tarantula spider, was called the tarantella. The disease occurred during the summer. Usually victims were bitten at night, and would run to the market square, drink wine, and dance madly to the sound of music, often for days on end. According to contemporary accounts, music and dancing were the only effective remedies, and some people actually died because no music was available. All other remedies that the doctors tried failed; only the music, dancing and perspiring of the afflicted cured them, if not permanently, then at least until the following summer.

This is how Baglivi explained the efficacy of music and dance against tarantism:

> "It is probable, that the very swift motion impressed upon the air by musical instruments and communicated by the air to the skin, and so, to the spirits and blood, does, in some measure, dissolve and dispel their growing coagulation: and that, ... at last, the humors retrieve their primitive fluid state by virtue of these repeated shakings and vibrations; upon which the patient revives gradually, moves his limbs, ...till the sweat breaks and carries off the seeds of the poison."[9]

Baglivi's theory was echoed later in a different context by Louis Roger, a French physician who published a two-part work, A Treatise on the Effects of Music on the Human Body in 1748.[10] In Part I, Roger focuses on sources of sound, transmission of sound waves and reception of sound vibrations by the human ear. In Part II he inquires about music's ability to affect human beings--how it might occur and its resultant effects. He addressed his

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8 Henry E. Sigerist, "The Story of Tarantism", Ibid., 103.

9 Ibid., 111.

10 Armen Carapetyan, "Music and Medicine in the Renaissance and in the 17th and 18th Centuries", Ibid., 146.

research to the power of music on the mind and body, both separately and together. He said that the mind has an intrinsic penchant for regularity and that music is characterized by specially arranged relationships of pitches and rhythms. He followed with an inquiry into "the psychology of musical enjoyment.,"[11] and then continued with an elucidation of the effect of music on the physiological human body.

Maintaining that sound vibrations in the air set other matter into motion, Roger theorized that the same is true for the matter in the human body, with the "susceptibility to sound vibrations" directly proportional to the density and elasticity of the matter. The human body is made of solids and liquids, with air present in the nervous fluid and the blood. He theorized that air has the same attributes inside and outside the body, and therefore responds to sound vibrations in similar ways. In addition, Roger also averred that the solids vibrate in sympathy with the sound source.

> "The vibration of the nerves, of which those of hearing and touch are especially susceptible to music, produces effects in the body itself and transmits sensations to the mind. ... The effect of music on the nervous fluid connects the mind and body, since it is actually the mind that directs the flow of the fluid."[12]

Rogers' findings are consonant with the views of twentieth century theoretician Randall McClellan. Music as a therapy comes in two forms.[13] In the first, which McClellan calls music-healing, melody and rhythm are united to produce songs designed especially for healing. These issue from the shamanistic healing songs. In the second, which he calls sound-healing, particular sounds and mantras are selected for their vibrational features and administered to certain parts of the body. They have healing effects regardless of their melody, if, indeed, there is any melody at all.

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11 Ibid., 147.
12 Ibid., 148-9.
13 McClellan, 6.

Roger's theories reflect the physics of sound-healing, which act upon the body through resonantal vibrations, thereafter altering that person's psychological condition. Music-healing, on the other hand, first stimulates the emotional and mental states, and the body responds accordingly. As we will see forthwith, music and dance in Torah tradition follow the music-healing model, affecting the spirit of the person, and making the improvement of the body's health a possible result.

CHAPTER II

BIBLICAL HEALINGS AND HOW COMMENTATORS HAVE UNDERSTOOD THEM

There are passages in Jewish sacred text that set a precedent for the use of music for healing. The following examination of three Biblical texts was drawn from presentations given by Jewish musicologist Mark Kligman.[14] These texts can be examined from the perspective of healing. This chapter will explain how their message relates to the alienation of the self, resulting in a state of brokenness, and the role that music can play in transforming that broken state into a joyous or whole one.

THE HEALING OF SAUL

The first passage, I Samuel, 16:14-23, contains the quintessential Biblical instance of music used for healing. Saul, who had been God's anointed King of Israel, was now, although still king, no longer God's anointed. He became either very frightened or depressed, depending on the interpretation, and only the sound of David's harp could lift him out of his negative state of mind.

> "Now the spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord began to terrify him. Saul's courtiers said to him, 'An evil spirit of God is terrifying you. Let our lord give the order [and] the courtiers in attendance on you will look for someone who is skilled at playing the lyre; whenever the evil spirit of God comes over you, he will play it and you will feel better.' So Saul said to his courtiers, 'Find me someone who can play well and bring him to me.' One of the attendants spoke up, 'I have observed a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is skilled in music; he is a stalwart fellow and a warrior, sensible in speech, and handsome in appearance, and the Lord is with him.' Whereupon Saul sent messengers to Jesse to say, 'Send me your son David, who is with the flock.' Jesse took an ass [laden with] bread, a skin of wine, and a kid, and sent them to Saul by his son David. So David came to Saul and entered his service; [Saul] took a strong

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14 Specifically, these presentations are a lecture on "Jewish Music and Spirituality" Mr. Kligman gave at the 1995 convention of the American Conference of Cantors, and a course he teaches at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion entitled "Explorations of Jewish Music in Textual Sources."

> liking to him and made him one of his arms-bearers. Saul sent word to Jesse, 'Let David remain in my service, for I am pleased with him.' Whenever the [evil] spirit of God came upon Saul, David would take the lyre and play it; Saul would find relief and feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him." [15]

Whether the *ruach ra'ah mei'eit Adonai*, the "evil spirit from the Lord," indicated that Saul's state of mind was filled with terror, possessed by jealousy, depression or melancholia, the *ruach Adonai*, or "spirit of the Lord" had departed. It is curious that Saul may not have recognized his condition as such; his servants, according to the text, had to inform him. They told him that the power of music could remove the evil spirit. The servants essentially diagnosed him and suggested treatment.

This marks an original approach to using music for healing which indicates a fundamental attitude change regarding harnessing the power of music to combat disease. Music here is applied as a therapy, in contradistinction to its use as an invocation to healing gods. To Israel, the people of the one God of Biblical monotheism, sorcery or magic was forbidden. An outgrowth of polytheism, in which gods and humans encountered one another in the same sphere, magic permeated the ancient world. Adherents to a magical system believed they could harness supernatural forces and even manipulate gods, for noble or hurtful ends. Biblical monotheism, on the other hand, and magic were incompatible. So, in this story of David and Saul, the use of music for healing is transformed to reflect the monotheistic belief in the power of one God to perform acts of healing.

Directly preceding this passage in the text, David had been anointed King of Israel, taking Saul's place as the anointed one of God. Having departed from Saul, the *ruach Adonai* came to rest on David. In modern words, Saul has become alienated. The function of music in this situation is to lift him out of

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15 Here and henceforth, all Biblical translations are taken from *Tanakh : A New Translation of The Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1985).

this state, enabling him to recover his function, to be what God intends him to be by fulfilling his role as king.

There is a problem, though. Saul remains in his former role on earth as king, but the *ruach Adonai* no longer rests upon him. It is a futile situation for Saul; his kingship is a shell without a core, the mere appearance of kingship. Once Saul becomes aware of his condition, he has a desire for healing, but a lasting healing cannot occur, and the subsequent history of Saul bears that out, culminating with his suicide.

What Saul suffered from was beyond the healing power of music. He wanted music to do something it wasn't able to do; it couldn't have restored *ruach Adonai* to him. What music may be able to do is restore one's *ruach*. Could it not be that for each person in need of healing, there is a soul which music can transform? While we all do not possess *ruach Adonai*, we do possess a *ruach*, as modern commentator Adin Steinsaltz explains:

> "..there exists, in every human being, a divine soul. This is the first spark of consciousness beyond that of the zoological species, ... and is directly connected to divine essence. This connection of the divine soul, in the form of a line drawn from above, extends from the primal level called "Soul" which exists in one form or another in every Jew. It exists in each and every individual being, hidden and veiled as a spark of a higher perception, of a superior aspiration, and touches the higher level, which is Spirit."[16]

Saul may have sought the way in which music touches and transforms the soul, as do all those disoriented by the experience of disease and alienation. Music perhaps could have brought his soul closer to wholeness, but it could not have restored to him the role which he had once held. Beneficial in the short term, this momentarily good feeling inspired by music couldn't last for Saul. Perhaps music therapy doesn't work independently, but as an adjunct therapy in combination with other therapies.

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16 Adin Steinsaltz, The Thirteen Petalled Rose: A Discourse on the Essence ofJewish Discourse and Belief, (New York: Basic Books, 1980), 56.

A further observation about this text is that David is "someone who can play well" and "a stalwart fellow and a warrior." The possessor of two complementary identities, he is Israel's sweet singer and mighty military hero. The medieval Kabbalists, reactivating a concern for Levitical song, addressed this relationship of counterbalancing qualities. They maintained that music could pacify the negative forces of the *s'firah* of *g'vurah*, ."..an inward withdrawal of forces, a concentration of power which provides an energy source for hate, fear, and terror as well as for justice, restraint, and control."[17]

David's victory song in II Samuel 23 is an example of his music making in the face of *g'vurah*, creating a potent musical hybrid of defiance and beauty. The Levitical musical imagination originates from the same place, which an anonymous thirteenth century Kabbalist calls "ever-emanating awe."[18] Music softens the angry blow of *g'vurah*, linking it with the *s'firah* of *chesed*, in Steinsaltz's words, "the irrepressibly expanding impulse...of love and growth."[19]

The dynamic tension between *g'vurah* and *chesed* is summed up in the following passage by the thirteenth century Spanish Kabbalist Moses de Leon, a possible redactor of the <u>Zohar</u> :

> ."..the secret of the quality of the Levite song was its ability to improve and gladden, to soften their own attribute in order to bind the 'left' to the 'right' through the pleasantness of song's sublime harmonization, and thereby to perform their service. Thus, with respect to all manner of song, it relieves despondency, cools anger and brings joy as a result of the bonding of the attribute of the 'right side' to all else. For in the joy of this unification, the sorrowful influence of stern judgment (as an autonomous factor) is removed from the world. Therefore, the Levites, through the pleasant sweetness of their song and the coordination of its goodly influence... bring about a unification of stern judgment with the power of mercy so that all would be unified in equanimity."[20]

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17 Ibid., 60-61.

18 Moshe Idel, "Music," in <u>Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought</u>, eds. Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 638.

19 Steinsaltz, 39, 60.

20 Cited in Idel, Ibid., 639.

THE HEALING OF ELISHA

The second passage is II Kings 3:15. Release from anger and grief, relief from depression, and restoration of his ability to prophesy are Elisha's desires as he is mourning his master Elijah's death:

> "Now then, get me a musician. As the musician played, the hand of the Lord came upon him."

According to *Targum Jonathan*, "the hand of the Lord" means a "spirit of prophecy from the Lord." Rashi, in his commentary to *P'sachim* 66b, says that due to Elisha's anger, the *Sh'khinah* departed from him, and with it his ability to prophesy. Rabbi Levi ben Gershon wrote that the emotional force of anger sabotages prophesy because it distracts one's attention and interferes with concentration.[21] David Altschuler, in his commentary *Mezudath David* to II Kings 3:15, explains that when the musician began to play, Elisha "rejoiced" and was able to receive the "spirit of prophecy."

A passage in the *G'marah*, *P'sachim* 117a, states that the *Sh'khinah* "rests on" prophets only out of the joy involved in performing *mitzvot*. This interpretation can explain the common psalmodic introductions: "To David, a psalm" and "A Psalm of David." The following *G'marah* passage examines these two introductory phrases and states that they indicate the use of music for healing the psalmist's soul as well as the souls of others.

> "[The superscription] 'To David, a Psalm' intimates that the Shechinah rested upon him and that he uttered [that] song; 'a psalm of David' intimates that he [first] uttered [that particular] psalm, and then the Shechinah rested upon him. This teaches you that the Shechinah rests [upon man] neither in indolence nor in gloom nor in frivolity nor in levity, nor in vain pursuits, but only in rejoicing connected with a religious act, for it is said, "'But now bring me a minstrel.' And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him."[22]

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21 Cited in II Kings: A New English Translation, trans. and ed. A. J. Rosenberg, (New York: Judaica, 1980), 255.

22 The Babylonian Talmud: *Seder Mo'ed, Pesachim*, ed. Isidore Epstein, (London: Soncino Press, 1938), 599-600.

David either first received the Divine Presence, the *Sh'khinah*, after which he was able to sing, or he sang first, and then the *Sh'khinah* rested upon him. Which order is correct? Is it possible simply one way or the other, or, giving this question a modern treatment, are the two locked in dialectical tension?[23]

Does it mean that faith is required to do the action, the *mitzvah* of *Bikkur Cholim* through the mode of singing? We cannot consciously know if the *Sh'khinah* is with us or not. The individual Jew asks herself: Is God really there when I pray, and does God need my prayer to exist at all? Which is the inspiration and which the consequence? A person of faith doesn't know for certain if the presence of God is there; but he does know that if he sings, he can invoke the *Sh'khinah*. The writer interprets this, the act of singing itself, as the meaning of *mitzvah*. Of course the rabbis were referring to the *halachah*, but the writer sees *mitzvah* as an action to engage oneself, to put oneself in touch with the *ruach*, described by Steinsaltz, that resides within each human being.

In *Sha'arei Orah*, the "Gates of Light," the Spanish Kabbalist Joseph Gikatilla (1248-1325), writes about the Levite melodies.[24] He says that the music of Psalms in the daily liturgy:

> "blazes a trail for the prayers to ascend heavenward, since by the power of the song the adversaries who prevent the upward flow of prayer are gathered up and bad influence is 'cut asunder' (*zemer*)."[25]

The word *zemer* also means "song," and the message here is that music can cut asunder any obstacle preventing the ascension of human prayer to the Eternal One.

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23 According to Eugene B. Borowitz, in Reform Judaism Today, (New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1983), I, 82, a dialectical tension is one in which one can locate "the truth in balancing one belief against another."

24 Idel, 640.

25 Ibid.

A BAND OF PROPHETS

In the third passage, I Samuel 10:5-6, Samuel instructs Saul as to what he should do and what he can expect after he has anointed Saul King of Israel.

> "After that, you are to go on to the Hill of God, where the Philistine prefects reside. There, as you enter the town, you will encounter a band of prophets coming down from the shrine, preceded by lyres, timbrels, flutes, and harps, and they will be speaking in ecstasy. The spirit of the Lord will grip you, and you will speak in ecstasy along with them; you will become another man."

Maimonides, in the *Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Y'sodei ha'Torah* 7:4, offers a commentary on prophecy:

> "All the prophets do not prophesy whenever they desire. Instead, they must concentrate their attention [upon spiritual concepts] and seclude themselves [waiting] in a happy, joyous mood, because prophecy cannot rest upon a person when he is sad or languid, but only when he is happy [taken from *P'sachim* 117a]. Therefore, the prophets' disciples would always have a harp, drum, flute and lyre [before them when] they would seek prophecy. This is what is meant by the expression, 'They were prophesying,' following the path of prophecy until they would actually prophesy, as one might say, 'So and so aspires to greatness.'"[26]

Music is clearly connected to the initiation of prophesy. Musicians were able to change the prophets' mental state, so that they were able to prophesy. One cannot prophesy if one has feelings of indisposition; to be *b'simchah*, "in a happy, joyous mood," is a prerequisite. In Maimonides' view, however, *simchah* is not necessarily related to the performance of a *mitzvah*, as the previous *G'marah* passage might seem to imply.

An understanding of the nature of prophecy in the Bible could serve as a guide for modern Jews in their search for healing. The prophets of King Saul's Israel are from the period before prophets began writing their prophetic statements down, marking the transition into the period of classical prophecy. Early prophecy contained elements of soothsaying and ecstasy,

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26 Moses Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Yesodai HaTorah*, ed. and trans. Eliyahu Touger, (New York: Moznaim, 1989), 250-253.

common practices in the ancient Near East. [27] According to Menahem Haran, early prophecy is characterized by bands of prophets and adherents experiencing a "collective ecstasy accompanied by rhythmic movements and disorientation of the senses"[28], using music and musical instruments to engender that ecstasy and infuse their ranks with spiritual inspiration. It is surmised that rhythm was also a factor, which would later became more formalized into dance. Classical prophecy, however, is characterized by its literature as the legacy of the prophet's expressive output. The assumed audience for these writings were readers, as opposed to live audiences. There are arguments for and against the experience of ecstatic behavior by the classical prophets.

The viewpoint of Biblical historian S. Mowinckel is that any prophet speaking the word of God would not have been in an ordinary mental condition, and so most probably experienced a kind of ecstasy. However, he maintains that classical prophets, (with the exception of Ezekiel)[29] in contradistinction to their predecessors, were inspired principally by *d'var Adonai*, the "word of God," rather than what he calls the "irrational" *ruach Adonai*, the "spirit of God." They wanted to separate themselves from the earlier prophets and their ecstatic demeanor, according to Mowinckel, by highlighting *d'var Adonai*.[30] Characterized by rationality of expression, Mowinckel asserts that classical prophecy "evolves... from ecstatic intoxication to divine revelation in the sphere of quiet contemplation and mental clarity."[31]

Israeli scholar Y. Kaufmann further explains that ecstasy is not the motivation for prophecy but, instead, the effect of the confirmation of *d'var Adonai* on the people who hear the words of the prophets.

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27 Menahem Haran, "From Early to Classical Prophecy: Continuity and Change," *Vetus Testamentum* 27 (1987), 385-397.
28 Ibid., 385.
29 Ibid., 395.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.

> "The word of God is not the outcome of the spirit, but rather the spirit is the outcome of the word of God."[32]

Haran suggests that ecstasy was an element in classical prophecy, but that it occurred first, largely in the guise of dreams, and then, some time later, the prophet, would put this ecstatic experience to the pen in a "sober, clear and rational"[33] way.

> "There should be no doubt that at the time the prophet sat down to commit his words to writing and to set his experience in a literary-artistic form, he was already liberated from the 'trance' which had seized him at the moments of the experience. The time of writing was of necessity one of mental clarity and lucidity, when the prophet had to struggle with the literary idiom, which calls for precision and polish. Thus, it was the use of the literary medium, which distinguished the classical from the early prophets, that also increased - if indeed it did not altogether determine - the rational and intellectualized basis of the verbal expression which the classical prophets had to provide for the 'word of God'."[34]

The ecstatic model of Elisha and the band of prophets who prophesied for Saul, received *ruach Adonai* by means of music. This model can perhaps enlighten modern Jews who, products of a movement based in rationality, have exalted *d'var Adonai* as it was transmitted by the classical prophets, as they search for an expanded base of spiritual authority and inspiration. Through a more integrated relationship with the Divine based on an openness to receive *ruach Adonai*, the reality of their healing will become a greater possibility.

In sum, the aforementioned citations from the Torah tradition are evidence that music was used for purposes that contemporary readers would identify as therapeutic: to lift Saul out of depression, to liven the prophets' mood, permitting them to prophesy, and to bring the psalmist closer to God. In each situation, music raises up. It enables the former king, and the prophets to fulfill their roles, to be what God intends them to be. The psalmist, the

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32 Cited by Haran 396.
33 Ibid., 397.
34 Ibid.

maker of music, who, at his moment of great passion and suffering, cries in song to God, "Where are You?," reestablishes his connection to God in the very performance of that act. Acknowledging the feeling of God's absence with his music, he cuts his doubt asunder (*zemer*), reaffirms his faith, and restores his soul. He ceases to feel alienated from himself or from God.[35]

35 Dr. Nancy Wiener discussed this theory. She hopes to expand on it in forthcoming writing.

CHAPTER III

LATER VIEWS OF JEWISH HEALING AND MUSIC

In many cultures, music has always been recognized as having therapeutic value. Modern western civilizations devalued this concept as its societies fragmented. The synergistic relationship between body and soul was neglected. However, this holistic concept was never totally lost. It has coexisted with the development of our scientific, humanitarian and aesthetic specializations, marginalized, to be sure, but not driven into extinction. The rationalistic strain in modern Judaism often tended to neglect this connection. A strong relationship between body and soul, however, always existed in Kabbalistic thought. Eighteenth and nineteenth century Chassidism and the twentieth century rabbis Ahron Soloveitchik and Leonard Gewirtz have emphasized the inexorable link between body and soul.

JEWISH MAGICAL TRADITION

Music has long been acknowledged as having a prophylactic power, and was used in conjunction with magical practices in many cultures. Eradicating magical beliefs and practices within its ranks was a continual struggle for Israel. The Bible banned magic and sorcery. The Talmud upheld the Biblical censure by classifying acts of sorcery into three categories of differing degree. Bringing about a physical effect through a real action warranted the death sentence, and creating an illusory cause and/or effect which appeared to be real warranted a lesser punishment. The only magical practice permissible was the using of the mystical names of God and God's angels. By the medieval period these gradations were widely accepted and certain types of sorcery were practiced. Medieval Jewish sorcery depended on powers for good which were summoned by the calling of their names, along with the names of God and God's angels. In this way, the rabbis argued, Jewish magic remained consonant with the tenets of the religion.

The popular use of Psalms set to music for protective purposes was common at different times in Jewish history. For example, the chanting of Psalm 91, the "*shir shel pega'im*," popularly known as the "anti-demonic" psalm, was considered a dependable prophylactic.[36] The Talmud, in which the term "anti-demonic" first appeared, states that even the wicked souls residing in *Gehinnom*, the Jewish nether world, would get a *shabbat*; its fires would be reserved, its torments withheld, and its captives would be allowed to enter earth. At the conclusion of *shabbat*, however, the angel *Dumah* would reassemble them once again to *Gehinnom*.[37]

The possibility that *Dumah* might miss a few stray souls became cause for pervasive superstition. Such stray souls could conceivably wreak harm on human victims. One combative measure was the introduction of this psalm into the liturgy of the concluding service of *shabbat*. It was deemed potent due to its thematic content and its inclusion of mystical names of God. The one hundred and thirty words in the psalm, if one repeated the last verse, were understood to correspond to the one hundred and thirty years during which Adam was separated from Eve and consorted with demons. The psalm, it was believed, could chase away the demons plaguing later generations of Jews.[38] Therefore, its use was not restricted to the end of *shabbat*. It was recited anytime one wanted to ward off evil spirits: at funerals, when spirits were believed to have been especially animated; at night before retiring, when defenses are down and people are at their most vulnerable; and even by famous rabbis such as Meir of Rothenburg and Jacob Weil before their daily naps.[39]

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36 Joshua Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion, (New York: Atheneum, 1939), 112.

37 Ibid., 66,67.

38 Ibid., 113.

39 Ibid.

KABBALISTIC AND CHASSIDIC TRADITION

Abraham Abulafia (1240-1292), was an early Kabbalist who developed a system of combining Hebrew letters as though they were notes forming melodies. Achieving oneness with God as his goal, Abulafia concentrated on the music of the countless variations of the letters, which was always directed to the names of God.[40] Through this discipline, he sought to go beyond reality of this world, to discover a way to share intimacy with God. Abulafia's way is traveled in solitude, the individual withdrawn from all other people. For him, divinely inspired ecstasy can be achieved only in isolation. It was believed to be the sole way of ensuring the "liberation of his soul from the 'seals' and 'knots' that kept it in bondage to the material world."[41]

For the eighteenth and nineteenth century Chassidim, transcendence is impossible to achieve in isolation. One must be in community, under the guidance of a rebbe. The uninitiated are also participants in the pursuit of transcendence through their *d'veikut*, their "cleaving" to God. Their spiritual thriving becomes the focus of their life, and their music becomes their religious offering. In this way Judaism serves music; their ultimate creation is an art offering to God. Although Abulafia and the Chassidim share the same goal, achieving transcendence, their respective journeys in pursuit of that goal are different.

Insight into the classic Chassidic musical model can be gained by looking at the words of some great Chassidic masters. The Ba'al Shem Tov, the founder of Chassidism, is said to have considered music a direct way to experience the magnificence of the universe. Reb Dov Baer of Lubavitch maintained that everyone had his or her own particular melody that could open the way to higher states of consciousness. Reb Nachman of Breslov said:

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40 Ben Zion Bokser, The Jewish Mystical Tradition, (Northvale, N. J.: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1993), 97.

41 Ibid., 98.

"Get into the habit of singing a tune. It will give you new life and fill you with joy."[42]

For the early Chassidic masters, forceful body movement was also valued as a method of stretching beyond ordinary everyday perception into a realm of joy, where true awareness of the meaning of existence would be experienced. According to some accounts, during worship, congregants were known to have prayed while doing somersaults! The ecstasy produced by melody would be spontaneous, devoid of decision, will and option. Transformed by song and dance, there is no awareness of self, instead, only a knowledge of the Divine. [43]

There is a compelling story of Chassidic transcendence through music. The *niggun*, a song without words, is considered by the Chassidim to be the highest form of spiritual expression. A melody with words is bounded by the conclusion of a text, but a *niggun* can be repeated again and again, lifting one into a state of spiritual ecstasy.

In 1914, upon learning that his leg would have to be amputated in order to save his life, Reb Yisroel Taub, the first Modjitzer rebbe, composed the *niggun* "*Ezk'rah HaGadol.*"[44] Reb Yisroel said that a *niggun* could awaken one from the dreamlike state of everyday life by injecting new sound and new rhythm into one's soul. For many years, the rebbe had pondered the significance of the following words from the concluding service of *Yom Kippur*: "*Ezk'rah Elohim ve'ehemayah...*" "God, I remember and I moan when I see every city built on its high pedestal, while the city of God is cast down to the depth of the abyss..."[45]

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42 Nachman of Breslov, The Empty Chair: Finding Hope and Joy, trans. Moshe Mykoff, (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1994), 104.

43 Edward Hoffman, The Way of Splendor: Jewish Mysticism and Modern Psychology, (Boulder, Co.: Shambhala, 1981), 164.

44 Mordechai Staiman, Niggun: Stories behind the Chasidic Songs that Inspire Jews, (Northvale, N. J.: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1994), 92.

45 Ibid., 93.

In a painful preliminary examination, Reb Yisroel closed his eyes and anchored himself in the meaning of this text as he began his *niggun.* It brought him away from the pain. And when it came time for the operation itself, the rebbe outright refused to take anesthesia; it's effects on the mind were not well understood and it's safety was questionable; he had to be certain that he would live, his mind and body intact, to continue his work for the restoration of Jerusalem.

The rebbe began with the meaning of the text. The music he created based on those few words expanded and elevated his experience to another level. After the meaning of the words launched his *niggun*, the music broke free from the words, and, as an independent entity, carried their spirit heavenward.

As the operation proceeded, Reb Yisroel composed "*Ezk'rah HaGadol.*" It contains thirty-six sections, and takes a good thirty minutes to sing, illustrating the augmenting power of music. Whether he had been working on it before or not, which is in dispute, Reb Yisroel was resolved to begin afresh at this very moment when his life was in the balance, and he could gather together his thoughts on the purpose of his life into this one song.

Chassidism revived and popularized the use of music to serve Jewish spiritual needs, especially with their development and use of the *niggun.* Its utilization of music demonstrates clearly that the pure language and structure of music can be harnessed with great Jewish devotion, will and intent to be the most direct route toward the Divine.

TWO MODERN THINKERS

The concepts of ecstasy and joy have recurred frequently in Jewish discussions of music and healing. How do the citations in the discussion of Biblical texts and commentaries speak to modern American Jews, and how can

their teachings affect how today's Jews approach healing? Music is used in the Bible to raise people up out of an alienated state. What about us? Rabbis Aaron Soloveitchik and Leonard Gewirtz discuss the concept of *simchah*, building on the ideas of the *G'marah*, Maimonides, Kabbalah and Chassidism, and applying them to our own era and circumstances.

Rabbi Soloveitchik contrasts two concepts: *simchah*, "joy of the heart," and *hollelus*, "hilarity and jollity."[46] They appear externally to be similar but in fact couldn't be more opposite. *Simchah* originates in the act of living in reality, whereas *hollelus* originates in the act of avoiding it. He explains that all people are interested in having happiness in their lives and tailor their activities to achieve that happiness. Americans spend their time and money on entertainment of all kinds, but do they find what they seek in this pursuit? Soloveitchik says no. He writes that our lives are really filled with darkness produced by the troubled world in which we live. Filling up one's life with one entertainment option after another is only an escape.

> "[*Simchah* is] the joy whereby one endeavors to assert one's individuality rather than to suppress it, and at the same time to confine and restrain oneself in accordance with one's inner strength rather than to overreach and overrun oneself by emulating other."[47]

Soloveitchik brings into discussion an assertion of Hillel: "*Im ani kan hakol kan v'im eini kan mi kan.*" If I am here, then everything and everybody is here, and if I am not here, then who is here?" *Simchah* arises when one aims to maintain one's *ani*, one's individuality, in the context of the *kan*, the "here." *Kan* is a representation of *hakol*, the "entire cosmic extension,"[48] and this is particularly true when applied to humanity. Our individual lives mesh with the lives of our family, our community, and the family of humanity. With growing cognizance of this human context, our character becomes more integrated. But an individual's attention directed

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46 Ahron Soloveitchik, Logic of the Heart, Logic of the Mind: Wisdom and Reflections of Topics of Our Times, (Jerusalem: Genesis Jerusalem Press, 1991), 160.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid., 161.

inward only leads him to a diminishing of his *ani*, and he must then fabricate contrivances as his daily modus operandi.

> "In short, genuine *simchah* consists of an endeavor to assert one's unique personality, which manifests itself in a broadening of one's ego so that the specific life experience reflects an awareness of the whole. *Hollelus*, on the other hand, consists of a constant preoccupation with oneself and not even with one's true self."[49]

Leonard Gewirtz relates a story about the Baal Shem Tov which illustrates a similar difference in types of joy. In all aspects of life there is *nitzotz shel kedushah*, "the holy spark,"[50] which, when recognized and integrated into a person's life, can transform secular activities into sacred ones. Thus, if one consecrates eating and drinking, one will perceive the *nitzotz shel kedushah* inherent in them. Gewirtz quotes the Besht:

> ."..the sinners attach themselves to the physical aspect of the activity in which they indulge, such as eating, drinking and other physical activities; but the righteous attach themselves to the divine spark of their activity, which is the spark of life in whatever they do."[51]

Gewirtz says that we need to attend to our *kiyyum biyologi*, our "physical existence," but this should not be the purpose of our existence; true satisfaction is illusory when we pursue *kiyyum biyologi* incessantly. The development of our *kiyyum ruchani*, our "spiritual existence" should be addressed after taking care of the *kiyyum biyologi*.[52] When we are conscious of the *nitzotz shel kedushah* in ourselves, our lives attain more meaning. The pursuit of *emet, ts'dakah* and *yofi*, what is "true, good and beautiful," gives our life it's purpose.

These activities, expressions of individual personality which reach out to others, are products and perpetuators of *simchah* and healing. For Gewirtz, excessive attention to *kiyyum biyologi* is like Soloveitchik's *hollelus*. Pursuing

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49 Ibid., 162.
50 Leonard B. Gewirtz, Jewish Spirituality: Hope and Redemption, (Hoboken, N. J.: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1986), 7.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid., 4.

emet, *ts'dakah* and *yofi* in order to fulfill our *kiyyum ruchani* leads to Soloveitchik's *simchah* - true joy.

CHAPTER IV

THE JEWISH HEALING MOVEMENT

OVERVIEW OF THE MOVEMENT

The Jewish Healing Center, founded in 1991 in San Francisco, by three women rabbis, is an organization designed to assist Jews living with illness and their families. Since its establishment, another office of the organization has been opened in New York City, known as The National Center for Jewish Healing. Their goals and activities are far-reaching:

> "..seeking from within the ancient treasures of Jewish tradition, the wisdom to craft contemporary responses to the spiritual and emotional challenges of illness. We teach - knowing that the answers are yet to be - the ill, their loved ones and the professionals in the healthcare and religious communities who give of themselves to the task of healing. Through the wealth of Jewish stories, prayers, ideas and community, we offer ways of building meaning and offering comfort."[53]

The Centers offer healing services, support groups, workshops, seminars, counseling, library materials, information and referral services, assistance to rabbis, chaplains, and healthcare workers. The Jewish Healing Center is now part of *Ruach Ami*: Bay Area Jewish Healing Center, which also includes the Jewish hospice care program *Kol Haneshamah* and the Bay Area's Jewish community chaplaincy. It is located at Mt. Zion Health Systems and has the membership of at least sixteen area synagogues.

The Centers were established in response to a growing awareness of a need for healing, stemming from a void in existing Jewish tradition and practice. We have sustained a great deal of hurt, pain, disease and injury in both our individual lives, and as an American Jewish community. We are suffering from alienation and isolation. People whose lives are not directly affected by this brokenness certainly know others who are enduring hardships of this kind. We are all suffering from the neglect of our *kiyyum ruchani*. The centers are the hub of the burgeoning Jewish Healing

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53 The National Center for Jewish Healing, The Outstretched Arm, 1995.

movement, which is pioneering the way to fill in that void, answering a community's cry for help.

IDENTIFIED CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CREATING A HEALING SERVICE

The most widespread ritual expression of the Jewish Healing Movement is the healing service. It came from smaller more experimental rituals that were created mostly by Jewish women seeking to fill in the gaps left by our traditional Jewish heritage. This work has been going on for about twenty years. Larger groups in synagogues and health care facilities have begun to adopt the healing service.

There are four models which have been used for healing services.

1. Creating new services by extracting any text from liturgy or other Jewish tradition to be used without regard to its possible traditionally time-bound nature. For instance, the morning prayers *Asheir Yatsar* and *Elohai N'shamah* can be included in an evening service. The statement this model makes is that Jews coming together to pray and our existing liturgy are in and of themselves sources of healing.

2. Using existing traditional services as bases for healing services. The familiarity of the service, and the messages of their specific prayers can bring comfort and healing. This model may be appropriate for Jews who are familiar with the traditional service structure. In such a model, *Asheir Yatsar* and *Elohai N'shamah* would appear in a morning service only.

3. Using a specific ritual and/or liturgy in a healing context. The traditional symbolic structure is reconstructed according to its potential healing qualities, and then those are made manifest.

4. Expanding existing holiday home rituals and worship services to highlight their healing potential. Already in existence is a home ritual for

Chanukah, created by Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, the Rabbinic Director of the National Center For Jewish Healing. Rabbi Weintraub explains:

> "The Temple in Jerusalem represented God's dwelling with and among the Jewish people - but Jewish tradition teaches that our bodies, too, are "temples," each one an image of God, housing the spirit of God. *Hanukkah* offers us an opportunity to recognize the sacredness of our bodies, to offer thanks for the miracles of our bodily functions, and rededicate our physical selves to the service of God and humankind...we offer eight commonly-shared junctures in the journey of illness. For each juncture, we have selected verses from the Book of Psalms, centered around images of light - for reflection, study, prayer, chanting, and/or meditation. We suggest that each night of *Hanukkah*, just before lighting the candles, we pray for those who are ill, with particular focus on the designated juncture."

Those junctures include:

> "experiencing pain or symptoms... moving through tests and evaluations... receiving a diagnosis... receiving treatments... undergoing surgery... recovering from surgery and/or treatments... 're-entering' - stepping into the next phase of life... surviving - incorporating the illness into their lives and stories."

A similar type of healing focus could be applied to *Purim*, a holiday which has an inherent potential for healing because it is steeped in humor. Masquerading as something that you are not, as part of synagogue worship, could have healing effects. Music could be included to turn the *Purimspiel* into a psycho-spiritual *Singspiel* !

SPECIFIC APPROACHES TO CREATING SERVICES

The healing services in current use seem to share certain components.[54]

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54 Data is compiled from services created by: Temple *B'nai Or*, Morristown, N. J.; *Beth Emet* The Free Synagogue, Evanston, Ill.; *Anshe Chesed* Fairmount Temple, Cleveland, Oh.; Temple Israel, Boston, Mass.; Temple *Emanu-El*, Dallas, Tx.; "*Mei'Ayin Yavo Ezri*", National Center For Jewish Healing, New York, N. Y.; "*R'faeinu Adonai v'Neirafei*", based on text from *Kol Haneshamah*: The Reconstructionist *Shabbat* and Festival Prayerbook; "*R'faeinu* 1996", created by Rabbi Stuart Kelman and Debbie

Thematically Based Model I Services

I. Confronting the darkness, recalling our struggles with our illnesses, and those of our loved ones
II. Moving toward holiness, seeking the presence of God, and requesting help in carrying the burden of illness
III. Moving toward *sh'leimut*, toward transcending suffering to achieve peace with ourselves

Liturgically based Model II Services

I. Blessings and praises - *Asheir Yatsar, Elohai N'shamah, Nishmat, Nisim B'khol Yom*
II. Rituals of hand washing or candle lighting
III. *Sh'ma* and *V'ahavtah*
IV. *Hashkiveinu*
V. *Amidah*
VI. Silent Meditation
VII. Insertions
VIII. *Kaddish Yatom*
IX. Closing Benedictions: *Shehecheyanu, Birkat Kohanim*

Both models can and often do contain: Biblical and liturgical texts, especially psalms; litanies; poems; individual and communal readings; a guided meditation; a silent meditation; petitions for healing and prayers for those who heal; congregational sharings and testimonials; and, rituals and ritual objects.

Friedman; Central Synagogue, New York, N. Y.; *Anshe Chesed*, New York, N. Y.; a service inspired by the format of "A Service of Healing" created by *Ruach Ami*: The Bay Area Jewish Healing Center and Congregation *Sha'ar Zahav*, San Francisco, Ca.; three unidentified services.

Musical possibilities are: *niggunim*; chanted prayers; congregational songs such as "*Shalom Rav*," "*Eili Eili*," "*Mi Shabeirach*," "*T'filat HaDerech*," "*Kol HaN'shamah*," "*Oseh Shalom*," "*Kol HaOlam Kulo*," "*Y'did Nefesh*," "*L'chi Lach*" and "*Yad B'Yad* ;" and, a repeating musical refrain throughout the service.

The success of a healing service can be due not so much to the content of the service, because the content of existing services is very much the same, but rather to the service leaders themselves, the partnership they create and the beauty of form which communicates the content to their congregants. It takes great skill and sensitivity to lead a healing service in a way that approaches its full effectiveness. People who have chosen to attend such a service are presumably hurting in some way, and compassionate attention is required of those officiating. Those in attendance need to feel safe amongst caring, concerned people. As hospital chaplains are trained to lend their non-anxious, calming presence to difficult clinical situations in visits with patients and their families, so, too should service leaders strive to incorporate a similar presence in their leadership on the pulpit. The goal should be intimacy, for intimacy will allow for a great lifting and healing. Such intimacy can be achieved by fusing spirituality and a sensitive delivery style. This is an exquisitely artistic, spiritual and holistic model to emulate. As with any other talent or skill, there are variances in capabilities of service leaders, but anyone's ability can be developed with training and experience.

An unpleasant experience at a healing service can leave one indifferent or confused at best, angry at worst. One model, of leading the congregation through alternating sections of prayer and study throughout the entire service can prove frustrating for some. Although congregants may learn something, they are not able to pray for longer than in fits and starts. Thus, one can leave the service in a more broken state than one had entered it.

CURRENT CONCEPTS OF HOW MUSIC CONTRIBUTES TO HEALING SERVICES

How has music been used in healing services thus far? The following excerpt states the position of the leadership of the National Center For Jewish Healing regarding the use of music in healing services:

> "Music is an Essential Component - The tone of the evening is largely guided by the measure of the singing. Traditional songs, a rich repertoire of *niggunim*, Debbie Friedman melodies, all contribute to many successful services. Will you lead the singing and or will you enlist a partner? your cantor? Will you have instruments - guitar, flute? Will you invite participants into the music process through singing, clapping, humming?
>
> "If you are adept and comfortable with guiding the group through breathing and moving exercises, you many want to weave them artfully into the service. Remember to always keep in mind the physical abilities and limitations of the participants."[55]
>
> "Creating a Text and Selecting Accompanying Music - The best services are organic; they should rise, reach a peak and fall as a breath. Avoid services that are anthologies of prayers and songs. Some of the most successful services have a gentle beginning (a welcome statement of purpose to ground people and help them settle in, a *niggun*, perhaps some breathing or relaxing technique), a core theme, musical refrain, or image that runs throughout, a feeling of progression, a letting go and a closing."[56]

This explanation leads to a second, unaddressed, question: what is the function of music in the healing service? What are our musical expectations? The effect of any performance and the efficacy of any service is proportional to the level of knowledge, understanding, appreciation and personal involvement of both the leaders and the participants. If we don't know how to make music or react to it, then our expectations of it are going to be minimal. So the person preparing a healing service must be cognizant of these questions and attuned to their answers in light of the anticipated group that will gather.

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55 Nina Beth Cardin, A Leader's Guide To Services and Prayers of Healing, (New York: The National Center For Jewish Healing, 1996), 11.

56 Ibid., 13.

The current healing services seem to recognize that focusing on the content of words can be limiting. Words used and experienced aesthetically, however, as in chant or mantra form, can perhaps constitute a bridge for participants who are comfortable with text, but not accustomed to going beyond it in their spiritual quest.

Niggunim and chant are widely used in healing services. These musical forms can generate corporate altered consciousness, discharging group ecstasy, as well as agony, proportional to the levels of freedom and trust within the group. The musician/healer need only initiate, giving others the invitation, opportunity, tools and support to face their adversity. Chanting in a circle can be especially effective in achieving such a group state. Gathered in a circle, each individual participant chants at his own pace in a *davening* style, fully aware of the differentiated yet communal body of sound that everyone is creating collectively.

Another very different approach can be taken by a service leader who is also a professional musician. Before singing her composition, "*Mi Shebeirach*," based on the traditional prayer for healing, composer / singer / guitarist Debbie Friedman announces that she will sing it three times: "The first time, sing and think of someone who is not in this room who is in need of healing and well-being. The second time, think of someone who is in this room... The third time I ask you not to sing as I sing the '*Mi Shebeirach*' for each of you." This is a creative and effective way to share the prayers for healing.

WAYS TO EXPAND, BUILD ON AND ADD TO THESE CONCEPTS

The stated goals and existing forms of the current Jewish healing services give rise to additional questions. How are ideas regarding the reasons for illness and techniques of diagnosis and treatment related to principles and processes of musical composition and performance? What would Jewish "healing performance" rituals be like? How would the ethical, social,

aesthetic, metaphorical and improvisational components of ceremonies be framed? In what ways would they be Jewish? Jewish text would certainly make them Jewish. And if the text is not Jewish, what if it is sung by Jews? And if there is no text, and non-Jews are playing it on instruments, and, even if the composer is not Jewish, what if it is being heard by Jews?

Sensual activity is both physical and psychological, objective and subjective experience. The auditory world has a unique immediacy for us that the visual world does not. When we look, we use our faculties of observation and focus, whereas when we listen, we are encompassed by sound and become unwitting participants in it, whether we choose to or not. Looking distinguishes us from the world, while listening draws us into it. The *Sh'ma*, which commands us to hear, attests to the impact of what passes through the ear, displacing our ego and altering our consciousness for the duration of the sound, and sometimes thereafter. We are forced to be engaged, and must react to the perfection or affliction that we perceive, according to our own genes, training and vision.

There is so much more that can be done, but it requires the participation and music making of those who, like King David, know how to play and play well, and, like the Levites, know how to sing well. In the quintessential example of music healing, it is repeated three times that the musician must be skilled: *ish yodeia m'nagein bakinor,* "someone who is skilled at playing the lyre," *ish meitiv l'nagein,* "someone who can play well," and *yodeia nagein,* "skilled in music." (I Samuel, 16:16-18) Americans live in "a poverty of riches,"[57] when it comes to our daily musical life. For many, our habitual contact with music cannot be classified as meaningful experience because we have been so anaesthetized to it. It is ironic that music is so prevalent in our culture, nevertheless, our idea of what music has to offer us can be narrow and unimaginative. How can we expect to go beyond this stage and hope to experience spiritual contact under these conditions?

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57 Kathleen Marie Higgins, The Music of Our Lives, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 2.

We tend to fail to recognize the role that silence can play. Silence can be an essential element in a meaningful worship experience, a time to respond, to resonate, to digest and reflect what we have experienced and learned. Many of us are uncomfortable with it, perceiving it as an encroachment on the safe white noise of our mundane lives, or are surprised and taken aback by it. Yet it is through silence that our truth can emerge, slowly surfacing inside us, and finally begging expression.

We also can expand our ideas of how musical tones are utilized in our services as sound-healing. [58] One idea is that an entire service could be spoken on pitch and sung, including the responsorial, prayerful or testimonial offerings of congregants. The style could be similar to the classical Italian operatic recitative, but Jewish modes, *nusach* and familiar melodies from congregational songs could be used. Speaking on pitch is an unusual act for most people, requiring a mustering of courage, necessitating the taking of a risk. The Cantor could set the tone by first leading the congregation in a familiar song, like "*Y'did Nefesh*," and then continuing to use the "*Y'did Nefesh*" melody in a recitative style with the following text:

> "I propose that we try an experiment with physical sound and perhaps our mind's eye will see the glimmer of divine light. Please close your eyes, so that physical light and space will not intrude on our holy time in this endeavor. I certainly don't mean to sing a monologue, so please feel free to interrupt me and comment at any time, giving voice to your ideas in musical tones, slow or fast, soft or loud, and, maybe if your imagination is very free, you yourself will be able to improvise. You will be creating even if you chant only on one tone with no variation - that's alright, too.[59] The point is to experience an exploration of the spiritual through sound that has shape and sustenance, through music, through an art of sound in time that expresses ideas and emotions through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony and color."[60]

This approach is so unusual as to be arresting, and will open people up to new ways of receiving and experiencing what will follow.

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58 See McClellan's definition of sound-healing in Chapter I of this thesis.
59 The cantor delivers this part of the text on one repeated pitch.
60 Text and musical improvisation by A. Nicholson (unpublished, 1995).

Another idea is to try an isolated vocal exercise within the body of the service. Here's an example of one composed by the writer, and inspired by the Kabbalisitc ideas of contemporary Israeli rabbi Matityahu Glazerson. [61]

> "*Yud hei vav hei*, the letters of the unpronounceable name of God, illustrate the sound production of the voice. *Yud* signifies the depth of sound coming from the inside of us, activating respiration. *Hei* embodies the five parts of breathing: the two lungs, the two bronchia and the trachea. We exhale through the throat, indicated by *Vav*, a likeness of the throat, its stem adjoining the trachea, its top opening at the mouth. The final *Hei* depicts the tones departing from the mouth through the five kinds of consonantal sounds.
>
> "Please repeat these letters after me: *aleph, chet, hei, ayin* - gutturals from the throat; *gimel, kaf, yud, kuf* - palatals from the palate; *daled, tet, lamed, nun, taf* - consonants from the tip of the tongue against the front of the palate; *bet, vav, mem, pei* - labials from the lips; *zayin, shin, reish, tsadi* - sibilants expelled between the tongue and teeth. The repeated *hei* reminds us of the five levels of the spirit: *nefesh* - soul, the physical life force of the body; *ruach* - wind or spirit, nearer to the physical level of existence; *n'shamah* - breath, the link between the spirit and the body; *chayah* - alive, the source of life; *y'chidah* - the unique, single one. Please repeat these levels of the spirit: *nefesh, ruach, n'shamah, chayah, y'chidah.*
>
> "Most of us take our ability to utter words and tones for granted, but if we bear in mind that this marvelous bodily apparatus is also a physical metaphor of the name of God, it may provide a spiritual connection and appreciation for the gifts of speech and song as we create them."[62]

While on the one hand, this composer aspires to fluidity, personal expression and improvisation, on the other hand, she advocates for a familiar aesthetic -- diatonic western art music. Ideally, the attempt to combine the two approaches, or at least vacillate between them, in an irresolvable tension, would help the worshipping community achieve the expression of its true state; that is, it could live that tension artistically in trying to fuse the processes of western art music, the form most trained ears know, with the music contained in the collective congregational ear. This juxtaposition would

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61 Matityahu Glazerson, Music and Kabbalah, (Jerusalem: n.p., 1988), 94-95.

62 Text and musical improvisation by A. Nicholson (unpublished, 1995).

produce a new musical creation of the moment, and that fused art would create a healing, a step toward *sh'leimut*.

To conclude, the ideal balance in healing services would allow congregants to make music that expresses their needs and desires while also allowing them to be touched by something beyond themselves so that they may be transformed by the encounter.

CHAPTER V
NEW APPROACHES TO MUSIC AND JEWISH HEALING

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW MODEL III RITUAL

Rabbi Irving Greenberg has written that a Jewish dream lies between reality and illusion. "In offering hope of perfection, the Jewish tradition takes the countervailing evidence of reality fully into account. The party of hope fully admits the possibility of defeat but does not yield the dream. Rather it offers a method to make the dream come true."[63] The writer has created a reconstruction of the *havdalah* ceremony as a healing ritual, paying special attention to and expanding on the sensory elements. The concluding structure of *shabbat* ensures that hope does not become illusion. The *havdalah*, or "separation" ritual draws boundaries around our dreams, providing a passage from a perfect world back into the real one. Facing the reality of the coming week, or, for our adaptation, facing the reality of illness, so fraught with difficulty, it is all too easy for us to give up. The *havdalah* ritual helps us confront what lies ahead.

There are times when we can come to rejoice in or because of our trials; their existence in our lives sometimes serves to affirm our very living. So we drink wine in a *kiddush* that heralds the days of illness which lie before us, those very days in which we can do the sacred work of *tikkun olam*, the repair of the world. We bless the spices as a remembrance of the good health we once knew, and we remind ourselves that it's return would be welcome. It's fragrance nourishes us when we weaken in the face of our loss. We exuberantly bless the light of fire, once more asserting the meaningfulness of our lives in spite of our hardship, and honoring our capacity to repair the world.

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63 Irving Greenberg, The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 154.

The blessing of separation, described by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook as that between the holy and the not yet holy,[64] has been adapted for this new ritual to distinguish between the healed and the not yet healed. The coexistence of stasis and action, of hope and reality, of perfect repose with the hardship of the coming days, culminates in a declaration of the arrival of ultimate redemption captured in the singing of *"Eiliyahu HaNavi."* In our ritual, this can mean that we can experience healing, if not cure: we can either return to the former image of ourselves or come to recognize ourselves as whole in our new condition, having overcome our sense of alienation. As in a covenantal agreement, healing embodies a partnership between possibility and fulfillment.

The ritual begins with hand washing, a symbolic act of purification. Congregants then take their seats on which photographs of beautiful scenes of nature have been placed. Others who prefer to observe rather than participate directly can join in the singing which carries the ritual forward.

Journeying through the *havdalah* liturgy, we stimulate our senses, in an attempt to refresh and restore our souls. The sight of nature and beauty in photographs, the sound of music resonating in our bodies and in the air, the taste of fruits from the vine and the earth, the smell of fragrant spices and herbs, the feel of warmth by the candle flame - all these stimuli can invigorate or relax the brain, caress the tightened forehead, massage the heart and introduce a smile on the lips, if we only allow ourselves to be as susceptible to treatment as we unfortunately are to illness. The senses can be gateways of susceptibility. In the words of Randall McClellan:

> "The experience of union is music's primary value as a healing force. Overcoming the anxiety of separateness in a world so often perceived as hostile, music is the reassurance of the harmony and purposefulness, the essential order and beneficence of our universe."[65]

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64 Ibid., 156.
65 McClellan, 6.

THE RITUAL

Congregants are invited to wash their hands, as the cantor chants "*Al N'tilat Yadayim* " to a theme from "*Ezk'rah HaGadol* ," Reb Yisroel's *niggun.*

> "Blessed are You, *Adonai,* our God, Ruler of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and commanded us regarding washing the hands."

The candle is lit as the music makes a transition into the sephardic melody the congregation will sing during the spreading of a giant communal tallit, the "*Hashkiveinu* ."

> "Help us, *Adonai,* to lie down in peace, and awaken us to life again, our Ruler. Spread over us Your shelter of peace, guide us with Your good counsel, and save us for the sake of Your Name."

The cantor chants "*Hinei Eil y'shu'ati*" and follows with the *b'rachot* over wine and fruit, both to themes from "*Ezk'rah HaGadol* " .

> "Behold! God is my deliverance; I am confident and unafraid. *Adonai* is my strength, my might, my deliverance. With joy shall you draw water from the wells of deliverance. Deliverance is *Adonai*'s; the Eternal will bless God's people. *Adonai* of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Adonai* of hosts, blessed the one who trusts in You. Help us, *Adonai*; answer us, O Sovereign, when we call. Grant us the blessings of light, of gladness and of honor which the miracle of deliverance brought to our ancestors. I lift the cup of deliverance, and call upon *Adonai.*"
>
> "Blessed are You, *Adonai,* our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, *Adonai,* our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth."

During the passing of the wine and the eating of the berries, the congregation sings a lively Israeili song by Avihu Medina, "*La Neir v'l'Visamim.*" Percussion instruments are picked up and played by congregants.

> "My soul awaits the candle and the incense, if you should but give me a goblet of wine for *havdalah*! I lift my eyes with a longing heart to God who

provides me with the things I need, day and night. Prepare ways for me, paths for the one who is lost. Open gates for me, all you angels on High!"

The cantor chants the *b'rachot* over spices and fragrances to a theme from "*Ezk'rah HaGadol* ."

"Blessed are You, *Adonai*, our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates fragrant spices. Blessed are You, *Adonai*, our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates species of fragrance."

During passing of spices and fragrances, a congregant who can sing well joins the cantor for a duet entitled "Holy One of Blessing," by Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller, based on a text from the *siddur* V'taheir Libeinu.

"Holy One of Blessing, you nourish the world with goodness and sustain it with grace. Holy One, because of You, we have found strength, for You sustain and strengthen all that lives. We thank You, God, for all Your gifts, and praise You as all who live shall praise You. Holy One, Your presence fills creation. May we be worth of Peace."

The cantor chants the *b'rachah* over fire to a theme from "*Ezk'rah HaGadol* ."

"Blessed are You, *Adonai*, our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the lights of fire."

While gazing upon the fire's glow, the cantor and congregation sing the ballad "Peace by Piece," by Robert Solomon of the musical group *Safaam*, with added guitars and percussion instruments.

"The work is too heavy for one person alone, and each day it just seems to increase. But when carried by many, oh how light it becomes, taking it peace by piece! The world we are building for our families to share is made up of our words and our deeds. For the sake of our children we must build it with care, building it peace by piece.

"Taking it peace by piece 'til we bring this world together, peace by piece, 'til we find release, peace by piece!

"Some people may tell you that it's useless to try; all your efforts are dust in the breeze. But little by little, we just might stem the tide, taking it peace by piece. There are millions of weapons in hundreds of lands, and

> each moment their numbers increase, But with love in our hearts and with tools in our hands, we'll dismantle them piece by piece.
>
> "Taking it peace by piece..."

The cantor chants "*Hamavdil bein kodesh l'khol,*" with an appropriate text substitution, to a theme from "*Ezk'rah HaGadol .*"

> "Blessed are You, *Adonai*, our God, Ruler of the universe, who has endowed all creation with distinctive qualities, distinguishing between the sacred and the secular, between light and darkness, between days of good health and healing and days of illness. Blessed are You, *Adonai*, who distinguishes between the sacred and the secular."

The flame is extinguished and the congregation sings the traditional "*Eiliyahu HaNavi .*"

> "Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah of Gilad, may he quickly come to us, in our days, with Messiah, son of David."

The *havdalah* part of the ritual is now completed, but a silent meditation and extra music of praise and thanksgiving and a benediction may be included to bring the service to an elegant conclusion. There may also be introductory material added to provide the right spiritual / aesthetic atmosphere. Musical notation for the congregational songs can and should be included in the order of service program.

MUSICAL NOTATION

In healing services at which the writer has been present, musical notation has not been provided nor has there been frequent mention of composers.[66] In lieu of that, the service program simply reads "*Niggun,*" or gives the liturgical text as its title. This necessitates that the service leader must be open to choose spontaneously what he will do musically. The result is

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66 The writer's service programs have included musical notation.

a service format that demands fluidity, creativity, personal expression and improvisation.

Since there is hardly ever a specified tune to be sung to accompany text, clearly the specified text in the service can be perceived as the essential element. It may function on another level through the medium of music, but the text gets the emphasis, becomes the dominant factor in content and style choices in worship and, frequently, the music is marginalized as a result. This approach views coming together as a community as healing, text as healing, and singing as a help. But *niggunim* are liberally used. Clearly, the aesthetic has a healing power independent of the text. Is it being tapped to its full potential, and is it capable of doing what text cannot do?

There is a parallel in the acts of looking at the letters of printed text and the notes of musical notation. The eye sees two symbolic languages, but the determining factor insofar as the psychological effect is concerned is literacy. In praying with text, we process the word visually, and then cognitively and/or affectively. Therefore, it feels familiar to us to receive that word through our visual and mental faculties. Besides, it is impractical for us to memorize it; we want our minds to be filled with the richness of our heritage, of the breadth of what constitutes our written tradition.

Praying with music in the same manner depends on music literacy. Unfortunately, music literacy is very low, and it will probably decrease in time, because arts education in school curriculums is decreasing. Many who do sing probably learn melodies by repeating them over time, and then they know and recognize them as familiar friends. They are not used to thinking that music has a written language, just as ideas do, and they feel it an imposition to even think in those terms, or to see notation. They are used to learning music experientially. By rote or by repeated exposure, actively or passively, music rubs off on them; the undifferentiated experience is what they associate with music; hence they tend to sing the same things, frozen in a comfortable place.

THE CANTOR'S FUNCTION

A goal of the cantor is to help congregants deepen and broaden their capacity for transformative experience in worship through music. This means allowing her artistry to manifest itself with the intention of gathering listeners into her sphere. How can she accomplish this? What kind of dialogue and implicit agreement can transpire between those whose command of the musical and/or Jewish language are so disparate? Her means of gathering them may, out of necessity, have to be leading, cajoling, pacifying, entertaining, or otherwise manipulating them. But they must be willing to go along with her. Once she has done this, she can raise their aspirations up to God. The only other means of their empowerment is the development of their Jewish and musical literacy through study.

According to the Spanish American aesthetician George Santayana (1863-1952), ."..morality is... concerned... with the prevention of suffering."[67] One could argue that the aesthetic is similarly concerned, although, in Santayana's view, the aesthetic apprehends good, whereas the moral apprehends evil.[68] The application of the aesthetic can empower its recipients on their own artistic or spiritual journeys at a level of greater commitment. If this is true, the effectiveness of a facilitator who performs an act, devoid of an aesthetic, which fosters healing, is limited; however, the same act including an aesthetic component will have increased effectiveness. Confronting the evil of suffering with the aesthetic, which apprehends the good, broadens and deepens the healing. This is one reason why people bring flowers to the sick. The beauty of flowers speaks to the patient's well being, no matter how obscured or inaccessible it may be, and opens her to the possibility of an inner journey. In this way, the flowers increase the facilitator's healing potential.

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67 George Santayana, The Sense of Beauty: Being the Outline of Aesthetic Theory (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1955), 24.

68 Ibid., 23.

What if there is no perceived suffering, or necessary "healing," as we know it? If we administer the aesthetic regardless, the possibility exists that the recipient will be lifted to a state of more complete wholeness, and thus experience a profounder healing. We humans are always in a state of disrepair at some level, unaware that we can benefit from a healing experience that we never thought we needed. Since the facilitator understands that others may be unaware of their need for healing, she engages in aesthetic activity which accomplishes that higher, deeper healing for the recipient and for herself as well.

ARTICULATING GOALS FOR SERVICES

The efficacy of healing services depends on at least four factors concerning the use of music: something for everyone, a separation of study and prayer, a participation in the context of community and proper closure.

First, a service must offer something for everyone in attendance. This requires that there be a balanced variety of music presented and shared. There are two possible options: 1) a healing service in which the rabbi and cantor share the responsibilities, and music has a more prominent role than in current practice; and 2) a "music-healing service," led by a cantor, in which the entire worship would be celebrated musically. Since the latter format would be an innovation, it would be very important to advise possible worshipers in advance regarding the nature of the service, because the expectations of people in vulnerable, brittle conditions seeking spiritual nourishment should be anticipated. A "music-healing service" led by a cantor may not meet everyone's needs, and should therefore attract a self-selected group by means of appropriate publicity.

Second, the study and prayer aspects of the gathering must be separate. The service could be preceded or followed by a study session, which could take the form of a sermon, lecture or workshop. This could be led by the rabbi or cantor. However, creating a structure that draws on distinct brain processes,

intellectual and experiential, can be confusing and exhausting. Constantly interrupting the experience of prayer with study frustrates its motion and destroys its efficacy. A congregant might come away from the gathering having been intellectually challenged, but he might not have had a prayer experience. This congregant might even have been moved by the insight he gained. While it is certainly true that study as a means of spiritually moving toward the Divine is a traditional Jewish doctrine, it is the highly adept scholarly, pious Jew who can simultaneously combine the two methods. Most people would probably find this combination to be confounding in terms of bringing and sustaining one toward a realm of Divine mystery.

Some rabbis and congregants make a justified criticism that the cantor should not give a concert in services; they don't wish to hear a concert when they are trying to pray. If that is their perception, something is obstructing the functioning of the execution of the prayer, either from the cantor's approach and delivery or from the recipient's receiving. The service leaders must take care not to polarize themselves into fixed complementary presentational roles, if this pitfall is to be avoided.

Concertizing and performing, however, are two different actions. An effective worship service of any kind is a mutual performance by officiant and congregant of an act of *avodah* to God. Everyone goes "per-" - that is, through - a "-form" - that is, a structure. One can only get "across" if one goes "through." Per-forming in worship - passing through musical and/or musical-textual form - can lead to "trans"-formation, and if uplifting occurs, "trans"-cendance. In both cases, participants have crossed over into another state of being. The complex structure of music, either alone or accompanied by text, is an artifice that can inherently offer the critical distance from its listener to accomplish this crossing over. Cantor William Sharlin has said that we can encounter a lamb in an open field, but, should we wish to behold a tiger, protective bars would be required to provide the necessary separation. Art and ritual provide these bars.[69] The paradox is that the artifice allows

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69 Comments are from a lecture Cantor Sharlin gave in New York in 1992.

inhibitions and defenses to be subdued, yet it engenders the possibility of closeness and community of spirit.

Third, a sense of belonging to a community and creating communally should be nurtured and utilized. Heide Göttner-Abendroth, a contemporary German feminist and aesthetician, says that art should "shape life and so change it."[70] If this happens, art can lead to ecstasy, and group and individual healing can occur. What are the two actions concerning us and music? We make music; we sing or we play, and, in so doing, we make something else sing. We hear music; music makes us resonate and respond, "sing," if you will. Why do we make music? To express our emotions or to inspire or provoke our listeners. Why do we listen to music? To expose ourselves to a catalyst which sets into motion our outpouring, meditation, concentration or free association. We may be acted upon, to be inspired to act. In any of these ways, participants should have sense of contributing to and creating something together. As a result, social action within the group can spontaneously occur and carry over into the individual spheres of the participants when they leave. To combine the ideas of many of the thinkers discussed previously, one could argue that social action and involvement might result from the experience because the action, the *mitzvah*, of involvement with the *yofi* of music can incline one toward *ts'dakah*, and toward God.

Fourth, the service should be structured so that a gentle and complete closure can be accomplished, beginning in advance of the final challenge or benediction. The result is that the worship experience should have a positive effect on participants. They should emerge with a sense of greater personal wholeness than when they entered. If they don't feel any difference, or if they feel worse, the service has done a disservice to them. A healing service has the potential to open up a person to pain that heretofore she might have been suppressing. Transformation and transcendence can leave a person

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70 Heide Göttner-Abendroth, "Nine Principles of a Matriarchal Aesthetic," in Feminist Aesthetics, ed. Gisela Ecker, trans. Harriet Anderson (London: The Women's Press, 1985), 84.

vulnerable, and care should be taken to respect and protect this vulnerability. Restoring the strength of participants to face the world when the service and gathering have concluded should be a priority.

There are certainly more considerations with regard to the creation of a healing service, but the above mentioned four are essential. If each participant feels that some aspect of the service has spoken to him, if she can study and pray at distinct times, if he can participate in a supportive communal context, and if the service concludes respectfully and compassionately, the gateway to reclaiming wholeness has been opened.

CONCLUSION

HEALING, JUDAISM AND MUSIC: A GATEWAY TO RECLAIMING OUR SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL WHOLENESS

Music can facilitate the exploration and expression of emotions and thoughts related to illness and brokenness, thereby bringing healing to both its maker and its listener.

Anxiety can be mitigated by music, pain managed by it, relaxation fostered by it. So is music truly a healing agent or merely a coping mechanism? Perhaps it is what tides us over, sees us through, accompanies us while practitioners diagnose and treat us. Possibly it contributes to our well-being by easing and opening our reception to treatment. At the very least, it can be a useful distraction. The victim of an insurmountable case of needle anxiety, the writer always erupts in an impassioned melody whenever she has gotten a shot or donated blood. Of course, the negative is also in the equation. Music can incite, sting and torture; one's aural paradise may be another's noisy inferno.

A certain pianist who had recently lost his father confided in the writer that he played Mozart every day, because, for him, Mozart was perfect, immutable, reliable, an anchor which could connect him to some stability, even if only for the duration of the playing. Songs can be a safe haven. Sometimes they are familiar and predictable, comfortably nested in a definitive structure. Especially when shared by two or more people, songs can provide the support required to broach frightening or otherwise difficult matters. Music promotes a trusting relationship among its partakers; it can help decrease feelings of isolation, all too common among those of us who hurt, or who have been rendered non-responsive by an unrelenting assault of painful experience.

What in Jewish music is so special to American Jews, well integrated into modern American culture? Living in 1996, most American Jews are far removed from Ashkenazic Eastern European roots. Yet, we seem to have a collective unconscious memory which responds to the resonances from that heritage, even if we may not consciously realize it. Some of the most profound and lasting healing can take place on a sub-conscious level. Jews have a rich musical tradition, both Ashkenazic and Sephardic, that is replete with possibilities. We need only rediscover and reclaim it. When we confront parts of it that don't have relevancy for us, it may be possible to transform those parts. Determining and understanding our needs, and applying our tradition to them, we will experience the power of our traditional music as a community. Thus strengthening our corporate bond, we will share a communal healing.

The next stage of this research is to investigate the ideas of non-Jewish theoreticians in the field of aesthetics. Two have been briefly mentioned: George Santayana, who wrote extensively on the theory of beauty, and Heide Göttner-Abendroth, whose structure of feminist aesthetics has particular relevance for the Jewish Healing movement, since this movement is primarily the product of contemporary Jewish women. The theories of Santayana, Göttner-Abendroth and perhaps those of Austrian born (and probably Jewish) Max Schoen, a middle twentieth century theoretician in education and psychology, whose hypothesis is that music is the most effective therapeutic art form, will be applied to Jewish traditional and contemporary belief and practice.

The writer believes in art *lishmah*, "for its own sake," because inherent in beautiful art is the inclination toward the good. Moreover, if we create a thing of beauty, we are performing a *mitzvah*; in some way, we are either alleviating suffering, or we are lifting an already elevated spirit even higher and closer to the Eternal God. The writer would expand on Reb Dov Baer of Lubavitch's saying that each person has his or her own melody opening a gateway to higher awareness. She would add that healing itself has its own

melody, particular to healing. Discovering and developing that music can create for us a *kabbalat r'fuah*, a receiving of healing.

Shirat r'fuah, the song of healing, which began in the 1970's, was given thematic development by the founders of the Jewish healing movement and gathered variations from lay and professional Jews in recent years is now ripe for its second movement. A movement into the multiple communication levels of music will continue the work of healing our people whose bodies or spirits are broken.

The following poem by twentieth century rabbi, thinker and poet Abraham Joshua Heschel captures the essence. The writer begs Rabbi Heschel's indulgence, in *ha'olam haba*, for gender sensitizing his language.

"A Song for God"[71]

"The one who chooses a life of utmost striving for the utmost stake, the vital, matchless stake of God, feels at times as though the spirit of God rested upon her eyelids - close to her eyes and yet never seen.

The one who has realized that sun and stars and souls do not ramble in a vacuum will keep his heart in readiness for the hour when the world is entranced.

For things are not mute:

the stillness is full of demands, awaiting a soul to breathe in the mystery that all things exhale in their craving for communion.

Out of the world comes a behest to instill into the air a rapturous song for God,

to incarnate in stones a message of humble beauty,

and to instill a prayer for goodness in the hearts of all people."

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71 Abraham Joshua Heschel, I Asked For Wonder, Samuel H. Dresner, ed., (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1983), 4.

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