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THEATRE IN RITUAL: DRAMA IN THE CANTOR'S ART
A THESIS IN FIVE ACTS
By Alison Lee Wienir

There are profound and concrete connections between ritual and theatre, and understanding these connections can renew our religious worship. This thesis explores the ways in which ritual and theatre are inextricably linked, and seeks to discover how theatrical techniques can contribute to the efficacy, success, and meaningful communication of Jewish worship.

The purposes of theatre and ritual have much in common. They both seek to create transformative moments within a group of people, and they seek to reaffirm what we believe as a group or as a culture. Theatre and ritual both serve to reinforce our humanity; although ritual has the added component of reinforcing our relationship with God. Thus while ultimately theatre aims to entertain while ritual seeks to be efficacious, many of their secondary goals are the same.

Therefore, while the endpoints of theatre and ritual can be clearly articulated, it is their intersection and relationship that is of interest for this study. This thesis will show how utilizing the theatrical components of ritual can help to make ritual more efficacious.

One of the main issues in discussing the theatricality of ritual is that many people seem to equate theatre with pretense, show business, and entertainment. Therefore, Chapter 1 contains an explication of the terms "theatre, acting, and drama," in an attempt to dispel the myths, and to suggest the fact that human beings in fact need theatre in much the same way as they need ritual. Chapter 2 follows with an analysis of ritual as sacred theatre, comparing the goals of theatre with those of ritual, and setting forth three ways in which ritual achieves its theatrical goals: symbolism, transformation and community, and

the tension between a set structure and freedom. Chapter 3 looks at one such time when Jewish ritual very effectively utilizes theatrical techniques, the Passover Seder, and suggests that this could be a model for the integration of theatricality into our ritual.

Chapter 4 looks at the way in which music is one of the most important theatrical tools for making ritual meaningful. It contains an analysis of the function of music in Jewish worship – in particular, the way in which music can become a midrash on the text – and describes how one modern synagogue in Los Angeles creates a theatrical flow.

Chapter 5 offers some conclusions to this study, taking another look at the relationship between theatre and ritual, and discussing why it is important to view ritual theatrically. Finally, the epilogue explains another way in which theatre can be used to carry out ritual's purposes, with a series of principles of theatre technique for ritual.

This study draws primarily upon three realms: First, those works dealing with performance and ritual theory, by authors such as Richard Schechner, Victor W. Turner and Tom F. Driver; second, texts on Jewish ritual and worship, by authors such as Lawrence Hoffman and Irving Greenberg; and third, sources on the theory of theatre, for example, by Peter Brook and Sanford Meisner.

Theatre in the past has been looked at as antithetical to Jewish worship. It is the hope of this researcher that this study contributes to a new way of looking at the relationship between ritual and theatre, one in which we can begin to see how theatre can enrich and enhance our worship.

THEATRE IN RITUAL: DRAMA IN THE CANTOR'S ART
A THESIS IN FIVE ACTS

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

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROLOGUE:

There are profound and concrete connections between ritual and theatre, and understanding these connections can renew our religious worship. What are the ways in which ritual and theatre are inextricably linked? What are the boundaries between these two fields, what separates them, and in what realms do overlaps exist? There are theatre artists who use Judaism as the source for principles of art and theatre; can theatrical techniques also contribute to the efficacy, success, and meaningful communication of Jewish worship? While Jewish worship shares aspects of theatrical performance, it is not, nor should it in any way become, "show-biz;" the goal of this project is to show how it should *use* theatre to attain the goals inherent in Jewish worship, not how ritual should *become* theatre.

In many cultures, there is no separation between music, dance, ritual, and theatre. Richard Schechner of NYU explains in his book *Performance Theory*[1] that the real delineation between ritual and theatre is actually between "efficacy" and "entertainment;" that is, the purpose of the performance determines its shape. The very fact that it is often difficult to define the boundaries between these types of performance suggests strongly that by exploring the use of theatre in ritual, we could find important material with which to augment the methods we in the Jewish community use to achieve the goal of reforming worship.

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[1] Richard Schechner. *Performance Theory.* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 120.

Both ritual and theatre fulfill a profound human need. They both play with our understanding and sensation of time, as they thrust us into transformative moments, making us reside in the world of in-betweens. Both theatre and ritual do this by creating communities in which these transformations may take place. This thesis is an attempt to show where the realms of theatre and Jewish worship intersect.

The purposes of theatre and ritual have much in common. They both seek to create transformative moments within a group of people, and they seek to reaffirm what we believe as a group or as a culture. Theatre and ritual both serve to reinforce our humanity; although ritual has the added component of reinforcing our relationship with God. Thus ultimately theatre aims to entertain while ritual seeks to be efficacious, but many of their secondary goals are the same.

Therefore, while the endpoints of theatre and ritual can be clearly articulated, it is their intersection and relationship that is of interest for this study. This thesis will show how utilizing the theatrical components of ritual can help to make ritual more efficacious.

Because their goals are similar, the methods used to achieve those goals must also be similar. Form tends to follow function in our world: one would never build an office building that was artistic but could not stand up, nor could one use a dinner-table that slanted downward and therefore could not hold a dinner plate. Artistry should always have its place, but it cannot take the place of basic needs. Ritual has goals and needs, and first and foremost, it must fulfill

those goals. If ritual is to be efficacious for modern reform Jews, its form should be intertwined with its function.

We can draw from the theatre to create such efficacy. In the theatre, the actors have to live out the moments of their characters' lives on the stage. Actors experience the characters' world "as-if" they actually were living it. While in ritual the pretense of playing a character does not exist, the same need to experience moments "as-if" they were actually happening does exist. For example, as we will explore in Chapter 3, we are required in our Pesach seders to experience the Exodus as if we had actually been there. Theatre is made for such moments of reenactment.

Before we can look at ritual theatrically, we have to define what we mean by theatre. One of the main issues in discussing the theatricality of ritual is that many people seem to equate theatre with pretense, show business, and entertainment. Therefore, Chapter 1 contains an explication of the terms "theatre, acting, and drama," in an attempt to dispel the myths, and to suggest the fact that human beings in fact need theatre in much the same way as they need ritual. In reinterpreting theatre, we can begin to see where theatre and ritual intersect. Chapter 2 follows with an analysis of ritual as sacred theatre, comparing the goals of theatre with those of ritual, and setting forth three ways in which ritual achieves its theatrical goals: symbolism, transformation and community, and the tension between a set structure and freedom. Chapter 3 looks at one such time when Jewish ritual very effectively utilizes theatrical techniques, the Passover

Seder, and suggests that this could be a model for the integration of theatricality into our ritual.

One of the most important theatrical tools for making ritual meaningful, perhaps even the most important tool, is music. Music has the ability to serve a variety of purposes; this functional quality makes it useful for shaping theatrical worship. Chapter 4 analyzes some ways in which music is used in Jewish worship, and discusses in particular the way in which music can become a midrash on the text. Furthermore, every service contains a mixture of musical purposes; the end of this chapter describes a service at one particular synagogue, the Friday Evening service at Stephen S. Wise Temple in Los Angeles, and the way the service balances the different functional uses of music throughout this ritual.

Chapter 5 offers some conclusions to this study, taking another look at the relationship between theatre and ritual, and discussing why it is important to view ritual theatrically. Finally, the epilogue explains another way in which theatre can be used to carry out ritual's purposes. It poses a series of principles of theatre technique for ritual. If theatre is living truthfully within imaginary circumstances, then ritual is also living truthfully, this time with very real circumstances. This makes standing before the congregation all the more tricky; there is no untruth, no lie or mask behind which to hide, so the revelation of the self is even more honest, even more vulnerable, and even more complete. How do we learn to live out the moments of our rituals truthfully? How do we learn to re-enact the rituals and

events of our tradition, making them personal and honest, but at the same time working within the structure of the music and particular text?

It has been suggested that one of the soul's purposes is to be creative; in fact, some have used this as an explanation for how we are made *b'tzelem Elohim,* in the image of God.[2] If so, then theatre techniques are a way to release that creativity, and thereby to unbind the soul. It is not an attempt to project an unreal mask upon the ritual, but a way to strip it off, a way to get to the center of who we are as Jews, and as creative, soulful people connected to that which is Divine through our craft of ritual.

[2] Hollis Schachner. *Art and Soul.* (MSM Thesis, Hebrew Union College, 2001).

CHAPTER 1

ACT 1: WHAT IS THEATRE?

> *Human beings are by nature actors, who cannot become something until first they have pretended to be it. They are therefore to be divided, not into the hypocritical and the sincere, but into the sane, who know they are acting, and the mad who do not.*[3]

In this 21st century world of synagogue transformation and searching for honest meaning, some Jews often have a difficult time accepting the terms "theatre" and "drama" in the context of ritual. Theatre can be perceived as contrivance, falsity, and entertainment, and if so, it should have no relevance to the pursuit of inspiring and moving worship.

This chapter is an attempt to redefine these terms: theatre, drama, and acting; to peel from them these connotations that are destructive to our understanding of the human behaviors they describe. Human beings need theatre; we are in fact not only rational animals but theatrical ones.[4] Understanding this about ourselves will aid us in all that we seek to create and build in this world, and it will enable us to better fulfill our partnership with that which is Divine.

Let us start with "acting," a word at the base of the nature of theatre. There are two meanings for the verb "to act:" "to pretend," and "to do."[5] I would assert that the former meaning has come out of the lack of success with the latter.

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[3] Attributed to W. H. Auden. Found in Tom F. Driver. *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual.* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), 79.

[4] Dr. Lawrence Hoffman asserts that we are "interpretive animals," in that our knowledge of reality is based on our ability to interpret. He titled his recent book *The Art of Public Prayer* because "we are artistic beings; our interpretation is ultimately an artistic expression" (Synagogue 2000 Class Notes, Semester III, October 2000).

[5] Driver, 80.

Many commercial actors do not succeed in the simplicity of just doing the acts required by the script, and therefore they pretend, giving in to self consciousness or egotism. One cannot honestly engage in an act while watching oneself perform it. This is much like Martin Buber's I-Thou relationship: if you are conscious that you are engaging in this completeness of relationship, you cannot be actually *in* it.[6] In order to know that you are relating in this way, there must be a part of you reserving itself to watch and know, and this would deny the experience itself. The challenge of acting is to actually do, not to pretend to do; one favorite aphorism of acting teachers is "Never let me catch you acting." Therefore, to act, to do, is to make oneself quintessentially present, to actually live out the circumstances of the play.

If acting is the building block of theatre, then theatre is composed of honest doing, within the context of circumstances that are contrived by the imagination. Even though the circumstances are not real, in that they are not happening spontaneously in real time, the essential component, the center or core of the theatre is honesty, not pretext. Sanford Meisner, a student of Stanislavsky, a Jew of Hungarian descent, and founder of his own acting technique, describes this as the creation of real and truthful behavior within the imaginary circumstances of the theatre. The imaginary circumstances are the frame, the context, the outline of the thing, but the important part is living truthfully within

[6] Martin Buber. *I and Thou.* (second ed.) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958).

those boundaries.[7] For George Bernard Shaw, this truthful living in the theatre is nothing less than revelation of the self: "Self-betrayal, magnified to suit the optics of the theatre, is the whole art of acting." Meisner explains "by 'self-betrayal,' Shaw meant the pure, unselfconscious revelation of the gifted actor's most inner and most private being to the people in his audience."[8] Thus even though the actor is playing a part, enacting a story different from his or her own, still there is a component of reality in the behavior of the actor, and behind the mask of the character it is the actor who is being revealed.[9]

Just as the actors wear the mask of the characters, so too the audience wears the mask of the play itself. The masks make self-discovery and revelation bearable, and they allow us to learn about ourselves and our humanity in a more palatable fashion than individual soul searching. The audience has the opportunity to experience the emotions produced by the play, while all the time remaining safely in their seats, surrounded by a mass of others all experiencing the same thing. Thus the experience of being a part of an audience fulfills a fundamental human emotional need.

Peter Brook, in confronting this very issue of the difficulty in defining theatre, describes this differently:

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[7] Sanford Meisner and Dennis Longwell. *Sanford Meisner On Acting.* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1987), xviii.

[8] Found in Meisner, xix.

[9] A friend who gave up on her acting career confided to me: "I left because I simply couldn't be someone else. Underneath the form of the role, it was always me feeling things, not the character, and all I saw around me was the Strassberg Method actors, trying to be a chair, be a table." She has since found fulfillment in the work of the New York theatre group called "The Siti company," under the direction of Anne Bogart, which uses techniques that begin from the self and aim for honesty and strength.

> *Theatre* as a word is so vague that it is either meaningless or creates confusion because one person speaks about one aspect and another about something quite different. It is like speaking about life. The word is too big to carry meaning. Theatre is not to do with buildings, nor with texts, actors, styles, or forms. The essence of theatre is within a mystery called 'the present moment.'[10]

If the actors are living in this "present moment," miraculous things take place. The actor and the character seem to the audience to be one and the same; and the actor experiences the situation as if they were living the character's life. Sanford Meisner uses a story about the famous actress Eleanora Duse to explain the ultimate in reality on the stage.[11] Shaw wrote a review of a performance of hers in which she was sitting with a suitor, and all of the sudden she started to blush. He wrote of the wonder of the experience as an audience member, knowing that this moment was real for Duse; how else could she have made herself blush? The reality of the present moment for Duse created the reality for the audience; an audience always recognizes truth.

We say when we go to the theatre that we "suspend disbelief." It is clear that these events are not "real," in the sense that they are being created in a performance space with an audience. But when we begin to experience them as if they were real, we suspend more than disbelief; we suspend ourselves in time. Time collapses in on itself, in that the story we are watching does not take place according to our normal perception of its flow. A whole day, a whole year, can pass in an hour on the stage; or we can witness just one moment in the scope of a two-hour play. But our normal experience of time does not stop, and when that

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[10] Peter Brook. *The Open Door: Thoughts on Acting and Theatre.* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, Inc., 1995), 97.
[11] Meisner, 13.

hour has transpired, no matter how much time has passed on the stage, still we have only lived another hour in reality. Our sense perception of time is what is suspended. Theatre allows us to live for a brief moment "in-between." We are voyeurs, neither participating in the story enacted on the stage or screen, but neither *not* participating. If we are totally engaged in watching, we *forget* that we are watching; for that moment, we neither exist in our own lives, nor the characters. Blacking calls this kind of artistic experience of a moment "virtual time."[12] It is a threshold between one state and another. Thus, theatre is not an escape from reality, though we can leave our sense of our own particular lives behind. Instead, it is an "adventure into reality,"[13] perceived in a different way, almost through different eyes. Just as an actor tries to step into someone else's life to play out those circumstances, so too the audience experiences the passing of time external from themselves.

In order to make a transition from point A to point B, there must be a moment during which one is neither at point A or point B; this is the in-between-ness of which we spoke earlier. So in order to make any sort of transformation, we must enter the nebulous transitional moment. Theatre exists here in the realm of the in-between. It is:

> the building of a bridge between ourselves as we usually are, in our normal condition, carrying our everyday world with us, and an invisible world that can reveal itself to us only when the normal inadequacy of perception is replaced by an infinitely more acute quality of awareness. . .

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[12] John Blacking. "Humanly Organized Sound," *How Musical is Man?* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1973), 27.
[13] Ibid., 28.

the audience is awakened to an instant of deep insight into the fabric of reality.[14]

Imagine you are watching a movie, one that deeply engages and involves you, and you become carried away with that story, perhaps a horror story, one that scares and shocks you to your core. How often are all other senses suspended, while we live through the fear, the agony, the embarrassment, the joy, the process of falling in and out of love, the relief, of these characters? This is a bridge, one that carries us across to new understanding of ourselves, to identifying so totally with another human being that we temporarily lose the sense that we exist separately from the other. Their fear becomes our own; their acute sensory experiences become our own.

It is in our in-between status that we connect most easily to one another.[15] Transformation can thus effect a linking of identity with another, a moment of I-Thou relationship,[16] and a sense of identification with a group,[17] all of which lead theatrically to catharsis. We see our own stories presented, and we recognize that we are not alone. Anne Bogart describes for us that "out of the almost uncontrollable chaos of life, I could create a place of beauty and a sense of community."[18] One way of ordering the chaos is by bringing a group of disparate individuals together as a group. Theatre is the way in which "personal

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[14] Brook, *The Open Door*, 103.
[15] Victor Turner discusses this in "Liminality and Communitas," *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure.* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969); more on this in Chapter 2.
[16] Buber, *I and Thou.*
[17] This group can be the actors who relate to each other on the stage, and the audience, and a combination of both, as in the Esslin's "three-cornered feedback," as described below.
[18] Anne Bogart. *Viewpoints.* (Louisville: Actors Theatre of Louisville, 1995), 7.

experiences can be incorporated into the structure of a group;"[19] it is the way that what is common to all of us is passed on to the next generation.

This enables us to understand the essence of theatre. Theatre is a means by which we establish and reaffirm who we are as human beings, and it is a means by which we establish the relevancy of our lives. It "aim[s] for [an] enhanced level of consciousness, a memorable insight into the nature of existence, a renewal of strength in the individual to face the world."[20] This process, by which this "human community experiences its own identity and reaffirms it,"[21] takes place in a group dynamic, what Esslin calls the "three-cornered feedback,"[22] between performers and audience, and between individual members of the audience.

> The audience, in some senses, ceases to be an assemblage of isolated individuals; it becomes a collective consciousness. There is nothing mystical about this. After all, if they are concentrating on the same action in front of their eyes, all these people, identifying with the action and the characters on the stage, are inevitably also responding to each other: it can be said that they all have the same thought in their minds (the thought which is expressed on the stage).[23]

None of this is an intellectual process, either on the side of the actors or on the side of the audience. Danny Maseng lists as one of his Principles of Acting "Intuition before Intellect,"[24] and the character work he has developed is designed to get the actor away from *thinking* about the character and toward *experiencing*

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[19] Tadashi Suzuki. *The Way of Acting: The Theatre Writings of Tadashi Suzuki.* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, Inc., 1986), 47.
[20] Martin Esslin. *An Anatomy of Drama.* (London: T. Smith, 1976), 28.
[21] Ibid., 29.
[22] Ibid., 27.
[23] Ibid., 24.
[24] Danny Maseng. "Principles of Acting." Based on Hassidic Teaching and Suzuki Roshi, (Unpublished; From a seminar for Spielberg Fellows, May 2000).

the world as the character. It is not that intellect is irrelevant, it is simply that its use comes after the intuition has been activated, to shape and organize the intuitive process, as it were. Peter Brook also tells us that "this cannot be an intellectual, least of all a rational process. The theatre is in no way a discussion between cultivated people. The theatre, through the energy of sound, word, colour [sic], and movement, touches an emotional button that in turn sends tremors through the intellect."[25] That "emotional button" challenges our self-understanding, and brings about new vision and vibrancy in our lives. It is in this way that theatre is "getting kicked in the soul;"[26] it is a gateway to the soul's intuitive sense of the world, to that center of us that is profound. We cannot always get to the soul through the mind; it has its own doorway, its own path. Whereas the mind's door is opened by the key of intellect, the soul is reached by intuitive meaning, through connection. "Theatre is a machine which enables all its participants to taste an aspect of truth within a moment; theatre is a machine for climbing and ascending the scales of meaning."[27]

In order to speak to the soul, we cannot use the same language we use to speak to the mind. Richard Rorty calls this not arguing better, but "speaking differently." It may be so that *ein chadash tachat hashemesh*, "there is nothing new to be said." But it is also so that there are other ways to say it, and that is what we do as artists. We seek to communicate things to people in ways that defy the regular pathways, to communicate in ways that would otherwise be

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[25] Brook, *The Open Door*, 103.
[26] Danny Maseng. Spielberg Fellowship Class Notes, May 2000
[27] Ibid.

impossible. The act of theatre is a symbolic event. It bears more meanings than words can say, and therefore comes to represent more than the sum of its parts.

Sometimes by saying things differently, we open up the possibility for people to hear that to which they have been unwilling to listen. By introducing pretense, the reality of a situation can be made clear. For example, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the play within the play allows Hamlet to say things to the new king that he could not say directly, and it allows the king to see himself clearly by watching his own life take place on the stage. It is in this way that "The purpose of art is to lay bare the questions which have been hidden by the answers."[28]

Therefore, it is not only the reality and honesty within the given circumstance that is important, but there is an important component of pretense. Actors *do* on the stage *as if* they were the characters, but they are not, and it is dangerous for them to actually believe they are someone else. Lee Strasberg's technique gets caught up in the refusal to admit the pretend quality, and therefore the question of the actor playing a character such as Macbeth, one who murders, is a dangerous one. If you have not killed, and if you are not going to actually kill in the course of the play, how can you actually play this role? Meisner's technique is therefore based on creating a series of "as-if's," engaging the imagination and behaving as if those imaginary circumstances were true. Danny Maseng retreats further from allowing the actor and the character to become inseparable, and has his actors "watching" their characters, as if they were real but

[28] James Baldwin. Found in Bogart, 7.

separate entities. And yet, Maseng sees theatre as "the anti-contrivance." The trick is that while there is some healthy part of the actor that recognizes that he or she is not the character, the audience in order to undergo the transformative liminal moment must believe they are one and the same. This is the magic and the trick of the theatre. That is, while for the audience, "everything should be as in real life,"[29] for the actor we need to add one small yet important word: "everything should be as *if* in real life."

We are essentially story-tellers. From the most mundane event to the most elaborate, we tell each other (and retell) the things that happened to us. We read novels and study Shakespeare and Homer, and our Bible consists of the stories of our ancestors' lives. The American Nation is fixated on other people's stories; many of us glued ourselves to the television to watch the television show "Survivor," and others cannot tear themselves from their favorite sitcom or soap opera. We need to tell stories; theatre is the quintessential method for making them come to life, and allowing all parties to experience and re-experience them.

So whether we are the actors or the audience, theatre reminds us of our humanity. Theatre challenges this humanity and allows us to healthily play out the complicated emotions we all possess and have to hide in our every day lives. It is a transformative moment, in that it takes us to a place of inbetween-ness, in which we are neither ourselves living in our own perception of time, nor the characters playing out their own lives on the stage. Just as we go through this as individuals, so too do we go through this as a community, and we have the

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[29] Anton Chekov. Found in Meisner, 3.

opportunity to interact anonymously with the other members of this group of voyeurs called an audience. We have the opportunity to tell our stories, as individuals and as a group, even if these stories are not "truth" but metaphor. We cultivate a part of ourselves that cannot be expressed or understood by framing ideas in words and sentences and paragraphs; we tap into a different way of communicating with one another that is more emotional and more intuitive. Theatre pushes the buttons of our souls, it challenges us to constantly redefine ourselves and our relationships, and it questions the rightness and necessity of human behaviors. Theatre "speaks differently," it calls to us as human beings in ways that can defy the intellect, and by freeing ourselves from the tyranny of our own minds, theatre fulfills a specific and soulful human need. It is through this process of telling, enacting, and watching our stories that we make some of our most profound discoveries about the meaning of our lives.

CHAPTER 2

ACT 2: SACRED THEATRE

SCENE 1: RITUAL = THEATRE +GOD

Religious ritual seeks to do some of the same things as theatre. As honesty and truth are goals of the theatre, so are they goals of ritual. But in ritual, the truths we seek are ultimate truths, those that pertain to our relationship with God and our reasons for existence, and they are not veiled by any kind of contrivance. Theatre works to make us live concretely in the given moment, to make ourselves present; ritual seeks to connect us not only with our own presence, but the presence of God.[30] We reveal part of ourselves in theatre under the mask of the play; in ritual, we attempt to reveal our whole selves in prayer to God.

Ritual helps us to transform ourselves within the profound relationships of the community. In it, time is suspended, as in the theatre, so that we may experience inbetween-ness. We seek an enhanced consciousness, and we seek insight. We find it through our stories. As actors and audience, we witness the stories of our lives; as Jews, we tell the story of our people and our God. Jewish ritual is not theatre itself but sacred theatre, in which we dramatize and tell stories for the purpose of spiritual awakening. Thus religious ritual has goals similar to those laid out in chapter one, but the final purpose is to encounter holiness. In this

[30] In many synagogues, the phrase written above the ark reads: *Da lifnei mi ata omed,* Know before whom you stand. One goal in prayer is to remember that we are standing in the presence of God.

chapter we will examine the goals of ritual in the light of our discoveries about theatre, and we will begin to see how theatre can enhance those goals.

Ritual provides a framework in which to look at our lives and begin to deal with ultimate questions, to establish and affirm who we are. One very clear example can be found in the blessings surrounding the Shema.[31] First, in a prayer relating to creation, we discover that the world was formed according to a certain plan. Day and night alternate in perfect order; we know that we can expect the sun to rise and set according to some regular pattern. We assert that there is an order to life, something to depend on in the natural workings of this world even if our individual lives may seem filled with chaos. In the next prayer, God offers us great love by giving us the Torah. This Torah tells us that the order we have come to count on is not only dependable but actually meaningful as well. There is a reason we are here. Finally, in the Redemption prayer, we learn that there is hope for the future. At some great time to come, our world will be repaired, and we are moving toward that time. Through the order God created, and through the meaning we discover for ourselves, the future will be built upon the hope of redemption. This basic framework allows us to deal with all other ultimate issues, and ritual is the way in which our understandings are questioned and affirmed.

Ritual, in much the same way as theatre, fulfills a profound human need, and this need has been defined in many ways. Indeed, the search continues: one colleague has filled her years of Cantorial school searching for the answer to the

[31] Lawrence Hoffman, Introduction to Liturgy, Class Lecture. New York: Hebrew Union College, 1998.

Jewish version of this question: Why do people come to synagogue anyway?[32] Modern thinkers such as Freud, Durkheim, and various Marxists have all looked at particular angles of the question of why we perform ritual, but it seems that none of their answers are satisfactory for the purposes of those optimistic about worship and ritual. Freud defines ritual as a neurotic obsession, a group memory of taboos and the need to direct oneself toward that which is forbidden. The ritual becomes a way to "touch" this object in particular conditions that alleviate the obsessions. Dr. Hoffman explains that "Freud's reductionism is rooted in a mechanistic conception of the human person."[33]

Durkheim[34] takes a different tack. If for Freud ritual is an individual neurosis based on taboos, for Durkheim ritual is a group neurosis. The social will imposes itself upon the individual, presenting symbolism that doesn't really exist except in the consciousness of the group. So just like with Freudian theory, the aim is to cure the group of this behavior, which can be done by removing any myth that the ritual has meaning.[35]

Marxists[36] have claimed, naturally, that ritual is a phenomenon linked to class warfare. Those in power create rituals that substantiate and perpetuate their position in relation to the underclass, and therefore these rituals maintain the political and social status quo.

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[32] Wendy Shermet, Synagogue 2000 Class, October 1999.
[33] Lawrence A. Hoffman. "Ritual, God, and Me," 42.
[34] Emile Durkheim. *On Morality and Society: Selected Writings.* Ed. Robert M. Bellah. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press).
[35] For a further wonderfully clear explanation of the basics of ritual critique, see Hoffman, "Ritual, God, and Me."
[36] Hoffman, "Ritual, God, and Me," 43.

These critiques by brilliant thinkers give ritual-supporters pause; Hoffman explains "We would hardly want to argue for a religious practice that is a persistent disease (Freud), ultimately delusionary (Freud and Durkheim), and supportive of oppression (Marx)."[37] There is basis in truth for all of these critiques, certainly. But advocates of ritual reject these theories.

> With Freud, we can agree that ritual is repetitive, but why on that account is it neurotic. . . with Durkheim, we can conclude that a group's collective consciousness uses ritual for its own ends, but does it follow that the group will alone is behind all ritual. . .[38]

and as for Marxist thought, "we can readily see that ritual is indeed both redundant and formalized, but must it be unethical?"[39] None of these, or any other great thinkers, have succeeded in conquering or dismantling ritual. The fact remains: we as Jews, and people around the world of other cultures, continue to ritualize. We continue to seek honesty and truth, to search for a greater understanding of ourselves and our God, to strive to transform ourselves, and to tell our stories.

In order to do this, ritual seeks like theatre to speak differently. It does this in three ways: through symbolism; by effecting personal transformation and community consciousness; and by employing the intimate balance between structure and freedom. The next part of this chapter will analyze these three methods of speaking differently, beginning with symbolism.

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[37] Ibid., 43.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

Symbolic Meaning: Beyond Words

Symbols bear more meanings than words can say; they enable us to make automatic associations and intuit profound understanding without having to define and explain and therefore detach ourselves from the very meaning we are trying to express. The old saying tells us that a picture is worth a thousand words; for a storyteller, the ability to create pictures immediately and concretely, with as few words and as little effort possible, is very powerful. Judaism contains a tradition of storytelling; for example, we tell the story of our history with our holidays. Therefore, the use of image-provoking symbols is instrumental to our worship.

Driver tells us "one of the purposes of ritualizing is to communicate with individuals or groups with whom communication would otherwise be impossible."[40] Ritual is "an experimental way of going from the inchoate to the expressive, from the sheerly pragmatic to the communicative,"[41] and therefore is a close relative of art. He continues, "so, both art and ritual are finding ways to express the inexpressible, the thing we need to communicate, but can't."[42] In this way, ritual needs to speak symbolically.

We see the way symbols function in Jewish worship through the lighting of the Shabbat candles on Friday night. For a Jew accustomed to this experience, the candles themselves may produce an association with the nature of Shabbat, a sigh of letting go, having made it through a busy week and being rewarded with *Shabbat menucha*, Sabbath rest and peace. For someone who remembers their

[40] Driver, 15
[41] Ibid., 31
[42] Ibid.

grandparents' observance of this *mitzvah*, the candles might symbolize all the feelings wrapped up in the nostalgia of family memory. The simple act of lighting candles can become a symbol of the historical and traditional presence of the Sabbath herself, reestablishing each week for us the essence of Judaism and our relationship with God. For those linked by worship and community, symbols function to bind people in common understanding.

Of course, symbols do not express linear and direct thoughts, and their meanings can even be contradictory. The Star of David has come to symbolize many things over time; and of course the most dramatic and powerful example of the transformation of a symbol's meaning is the appropriation of the swastika for the Nazi's profane usage. Indeed,

> symbols suggest different things to different actors in the same situation, different things to the same actors in different contexts, different things, at varying levels, to the same actors in the same situation. . . . Symbols. . . are capable of reaching out beyond those contexts, or, as stressed by Turner, of raising alternatives to the immediate reality. In other words, symbols reach out to bridge both space and time.[43]

Not only do symbols communicate information to us as individuals, but "sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos – the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood – and their world view – the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order."[44] They are also therefore a bridge between the way things are and the way we think they should be. Furthermore, they tell us

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[43] Harvey Goldberg. *Judaism viewed from within and from without.* Introduction, 21.

[44] Clifford Geertz. "Religion as a Cultural System," *The Interpretation of Cultures*. (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89.

who we are as a people and how we are supposed to behave, how to function within this synthesis of ethos and world order.[45] They do this by imposing a set of values and dispositions, and by giving our emotions validity and meaning. First, "in sacred rituals and myths values are portrayed not as subjective human preferences but as the imposed conditions for life implicit in a world with a particular structure."[46] Therefore they define how we perceive the order in our universe, and show us how to function within it. Second, "they both express the world's climate and shape it. . . by inducing in the worshipper a certain distinctive set of dispositions (tendencies, capabilities, propensities, skills, habits, liabilities, pronenesses)."[47] So they create order in this way too, providing pathways in which to function, and defining certain realms of behavior as acceptable or unacceptable. Third, symbols serve to

> Anchor. . . our resources for expressing emotions – moods, sentiments, passions, affections, feelings. . . . Religious symbols provide a cosmic guarantee not only for their ability to comprehend the world, but also, comprehending it, to give a precision to their feeling, a definition to their emotions which enables them, morosely or joyfully, grimly or cavalierly, to endure it.[48]

So now not only do our methods of viewing the world intellectually have meaning and order, but so also do our emotions have an organized outlet, while

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[45] As this is one of the aims of ritual, it is no wonder our worship employs so many powerful symbols.
[46] Geertz, 131.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., 104

containing also the freedom of expression.[49] Furthermore, this outlet is connected to a religious or eternal source.

Symbols thus carry and convey meaning. This meaning, in religious ritual, and links the members of the community in common understanding. Religious ritual is "high context,"[50] in that in order to understand the symbol, one needs prior information. Therefore the symbols have limited meaning outside the purview of the specific religious community. It takes work and learning to enter such a community, but once this understanding has been developed, the bonds formed by it are nearly impossible to break.

Not only can physical objects function as symbols but so can ideas or events. This is certainly true of Judaism; we have seen earlier how the very creation of the world can symbolize the order inherent in our lives,[51] and in chapter three we will see how the Exodus from Egypt is one of the most important symbols in Judaism. These events define for us how we are to behave and how we are to perceive our world, and thus one needs only mention "The Exodus," or tell someone "We all stood at Sinai" to convey a flood of information and meaning.

Symbols are certainly a bridge to another reality of time and space, one that exists in the realm of the sacred. By speaking in the language of symbols, we

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[49] This is an aspect of the interplay of structure and freedom: with proper structure, the freedom to act and feel is unleashed. With proper channels that are deemed appropriate by the religious society, emotionally charged acts are rendered safe and the energy of emotional and spiritual passions can be released.
[50] Edward T. Hall. *Beyond Culture.* (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1976.), 39.
[51] See p. 17

speak in a language that aims beyond the mind and into the soul. Our soul, that indefinable core of our being, may be the very thing that links us to one another and to God. Our use of symbols is no less than an attempt to dialogue with God and community about the ultimate issues of our lives.

Liturgical symbols also "aim to be transformative of human life."[52] When we engage in worship, using the symbols that connect us to one another in the bonds of intuitive understanding, we transform ourselves, from individuals to a community, from lonely souls to those engaged together in the search for the Divine.

Transformation and Community

As described in chapter 1, any transformation from one state of being to another involves a certain in-between-ness. Morning and night alternate in this sort of dance, and though we define for ourselves precisely when one becomes the other, there will always be a moment in-between. This is how limits work in mathematics as well; one thing approaches another, but never really reaches it exactly. Victor Turner applies this concept to ritual, identifying ritual as a rite of passage, literally, from one status to another. "Rituals separate specified members of a group from everyday life, place them in a limbo that was not any place they were in before, and not yet any place they would be in, then returned them,

[52] Fink, "Theoretical Structures for Liturgical Symbols," (*Liturgical Ministry 2.* (Fall 1993). Pp. 125-137.) 125.

changed in some way, to mundane life."[53] This is particularly apparent in our life-cycle events: for example, a bar-mitzvah. There can be no doubt that the child and his or her parents, as well as many members of the community, feel as if they are in the middle of something; a transformation does occur. For an individual engaged in a rite of passage, Turner calls the point of threshold or the state of inbetween-ness "liminality;"[54] we can extrapolate that this liminality not only occurs during these specific rites of passage for the individual, but for a whole community engaging in worship.

Imagine an effective Yom Kippur service. If what is supposed to happen takes place, the community goes through the process of *teshuvah,* turning away from sin and toward God. The prayers uttered lead us to a liminal state, having begun our process of repentance, but not yet having completed it. We all recite the "*Al Cheit 's*" together; individuals feel called upon to make *teshuvah,* and the community functions as the supporter of this process. We come together not only to feel something powerful, but to transform our lives, in this case, from sin to repentance.

The counterweight to personal liminality, and the enabler of group transformation, Turner describes as "communitas."[55] Communitas is "a communion of equality;"[56] it is the community that by its function and existence gives rise to liminal moments for the individual and for the group. "In a situation

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[53] Victor W. Turner. *The Anthropology of Performance.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 24.
[54] Turner, "Liminality and Communitas," 512.
[55] Ibid., 513.
[56] Ibid.

characterized by communitas participants are not hierarchically related but dwell in a communion of equality that Martin Buber. . . called I-Thou relation."[57] This is why we all recite the "*Al Cheit*" prayer,[58] whether or not we individually committed any given sin listed there. The individual is there to support the other individuals as much as to gain the transformative experience for himself, and in engaging in ritual acts, we are therefore bound up in liminal moments with the community. When ritual works, several things happen. One, we are so totally engaged in the community and the experience that we lose track of everything else. The I-Thou relationship precludes any other type of experience; the moment there is any part of one's being left to *describe* this experience is the moment in which one part of the self is standing *outside* of the experience. We cannot completely relate in this way and watch ourselves at the same time. If we are watching, we are relating to the other as IT, not THOU. Liminal moments are I-Thou moments, not I-It.

Two, as a result, time itself becomes relative. We do not experience time in the same way during a liminal moment; in fact, perhaps the way we know we have had one is through losing track of time. Perhaps Eugene Borowitz's image of the perfect date is the best way to describe this.[59] Two people are set up on a blind date, and they have no idea what to expect. But when they meet each other, they find that they have an unlimited amount of things in common. They gaze

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[57] Ibid., 511.
[58] "For the sin of. . . ." This prayer is a list of many sins we may have committed over the year.
[59] Eugene B. Borowitz. Class Notes, Introduction to Modern Jewish Thought, Spring 2000.

into each other's eyes, and talk for hours. Anyone who has been on such a date knows the joy of this lack of self-consciousness. Not only do these two people lose consciousness of themselves, but of time. Ritual, when it succeeds in creating liminal moments, might be thought of as a perfect date with God and the community.

John Blacking describes the power of music to achieve this function, though the same might be said of ritual or theatre: "Ordinary daily experience takes place in a world of actual time. The essential quality of music is its power to create another world of virtual time."[60] Ritual orders time differently from the way in which we perceive its presence in daily life. We completely lose track of time when we give ourselves over to prayer that brings us to an I-Thou moment.

Three, we can see the effects of the I-Thou relationship in a concept that Edward T. Hall terms "synchrony. . . basically, people in interactions move together in a kind of dance, but they are not aware of their synchronous movement and they do it without music or conscious orchestration."[61] This can be a physical expression of the kind of relationship described by Buber's I-Thou and by Victor Turner's communitas. Both audiences and congregations experience this synchrony; an audience engaged together in watching the same events and therefore having the same basic image in our minds leans forward and back together, shifts weight at the same time, coughs in the same moments. A congregation that reads or sings together also behaves in this way, and ultimately this community experiences both motion and time as a group.

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[60] Blacking, 27.
[61] Hall, *Beyond Culture*, 71.

Ritual therefore seeks to mold time, in order that "by means of rites religious man can pass without danger from ordinary temporal duration to sacred time."[62] It is dangerous to engage in this transformation, because "it is, in fact, a rite of the passage from the profane to the sacred, from the ephemeral and illusory to reality and eternity, from death to life, from man to the divinity."[63] The fact is that "religious man," as Eliade calls those of us engaged in sacred pursuits, "live in two kinds of time," and they are disjunctive. Sacred moments "have no part in the temporal duration that precedes and follows them. . . for they are of a primordial time."[64] Secular time as we know it proceeds in a particular and specific order, and no matter how relative our experience of it may be, the clocks continue to keep delineated measurements. The jarring nature of realizing just how much time has passed, however, reminds us that our perception of the world is not the same as the objective events, and something is required to reconcile this.

Brechtian theatre asserts that if you want an audience to believe in the play, it is vital to lay bare the conventions used to create it. Some of the most incredible moments in this type of theatre emerge when the audience is shown that the people on the stage are just actors, just saying the lines written in the script, that when they fly they are merely suspended by ropes, etc. Once this recognition takes place, the suspension of disbelief begins, and the audience can

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[62] Mircea Eliade. *The Sacred and the Profane: The nature of Religion, the significance of religious myth, symbolism, and ritual within life and culture.* (Translated from the French by Willard R. Task. New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1987), 68.
[63] Mircea Eliade. *The Myth of the Eternal Return, or, Cosmos and History.* (Translated from the French by Willard R. Task. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991), 18.
[64] Ibid.

enter the time and space of the play. Ritual too contains such conventions, and only once we set them aside can we begin to pray. The structures of both ritual and theatre allow us to balance our imagination and inner perceptions of time and space with the reality of the objective world.

Structure and Freedom

True freedom can only be achieved with structure, limits, and discipline. Ritual, working with this principle, provides a structure within which we can be free to perceive time as we wish. One such structure is the very fact of worship itself. Worship in Hebrew is *avodah shebalev*, the labor of the heart. It is work, it takes discipline, and there are certain specific ways in which to it. In theatre, a framework is created consisting of lines, blocking, and exterior forms. It is up to the actors to fill that with "life." One can either "go through the motions," relying upon the previous work in crafting the shape of the performance, or actually live through the experiences on the stage. Ritual may be less rehearsed, but nonetheless it contains structure. This is the *keva* we seek to balance with our *kavannah*, our intentions and personal prayers. When there is intention and no order, it is difficult to sustain prayer, and when there is order and no intention, the prayer isn't effective; in fact, it can be meaningless.

One of Danny Maseng's "Principles of Acting" is "Syag – If you want to give the cow its freedom – put a fence around the meadow."[65] He tells us "discipline is freedom," and this is very true in the theatre. Without technique,

[65]Maseng, "Principles of Acting."

without knowing the lines and the blocking, the actors are not free to play their roles. It is equally true of ritual.[66] The knowledge of what to do and how to do it, and the calm that comes from not having to worry about the details, is part of what can free the worshipper to express what is in his or her heart. Contrary then to linear, mathematical thought, limits create true freedom, and thus our rituals set limits and boundaries for us to master.

SCENE 2: THEATRICAL RITUAL

Form in our world usually follows function. Living beings are constructed to work properly, and the more detailed and difficult the function, the more intricate the form. Architecture too reflects this principle; building a structure with no function may be aesthetic, but it would be useless. Thus ritual too should follow its function with forms that are efficacious. If ritual and theatre function similarly, we would expect their expression to also be similar. While it is true that the forms they take also share and borrow elements from each other, sometimes the similarities are merely cursory. Particularly for Reform Jews, constantly walking the tightrope between tradition and our modern world, it is important that we use the techniques that move us to make our rituals work. Efficacious Reform worship is therefore theatrical, whether the very effect is to create an illusion of spontaneity and un-theatricality, or highly rehearsed art. It is

[66] One of the biggest complaints of newcomers to Jewish worship is that they are made to feel as if there is some big secret that they do not know. They do not know how to participate, how to free their innermost prayers, while they are trying to figure out what is going on in the ritual.

in enacting and reenacting where we have come from and who we are today that we discover something about the nature of our own lives, why we are here, and how we are to make this existence purposeful.

Dr. Lawrence Hoffman describes ritual as "liturgy acted out, the order of the text (as script) wed to music and action,"[67] and gives the examples of "opening the door for Elijah, blowing the shofar, lighting a candle when Yahrzeit begins, or dousing one when Havdalah is over."[68] He goes on to say that "in ritual enactment, we become actors who make traditions' shapes our own even as we subtly change them by the very act of taking ownership of them."[69] We do indeed become actors as we perform our liturgy, turning the words and behaviors on the written page into the ritual fullness that makes up our traditions and worship.

Schechner defines both ritual and theatre as forms of performance, lying on a spectrum that reaches from "entertainment" to "efficacy."[70]

> The basic polarity is between efficacy and entertainment, not between ritual and theater. Whether one calls a specific performance 'ritual' or 'theater' depends mostly on context and function. A performance is called theater or ritual because of where it is performed, by whom, and under what circumstances. If the performance's purpose us to effect transformations – to be efficacious – then the other qualities listed under the heading 'efficacy' will most probably also be present, and the performance is a ritual. And vice versa regarding the qualities listed under 'entertainment.'[71]

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[67] Hoffman, "Ritual, God, and Me," 41.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 46.
[70] Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 120.
[71] Ibid.

I have argued in chapter one that theatre also effects transformation, though the forms of this change are manifested differently. When Schechner speaks of ritual, he looks to rites of passage, in which the transformation is permanent. A person goes from being a child to an adult in Jewish tradition via the route of Bar Mitzvah; or one is not married, and then married after the performance of certain rituals. However, there are other rituals that, by virtue of temporality, are also ephemeral. Shabbat and its observance leave us after the sundown on Saturday, much as we would wish the peaceful effects of this day to remain. We try to hold on to the Sabbath as far into the week as we can, and in this way, the ritual can be seen as encouragement for further transformation. It is in this way that ritual and theatre are similar. The releasing of emotions as catharsis, the conscious or subconscious realization of one's nature or of the meaning of an aspect of one's world, are equally transformative, though the results may not necessarily be lasting. We might try to hang on to this spirit of release as long as we can, and though we have temporarily been transformed, it is up to us as individuals to determine whether that change will be lasting. Thus, no performance fits neatly into either the entertainment or efficacy category; both ritual and theatre act upon the people who came as spectators or as participants.[72]

[72] Schechner too believes in art's transformative properties, and describes this with the metaphor of cooking: "Cooking is something that is done to raw stuff to change it into food, and perhaps, to purify it. All cooked food was once raw; all raw food is cookable. Some fruits and vegetable are 'food' raw or cooked, but most meats need to be cooked before they are considered to be food. The process of cooking is irreversible. There is no way for raw food to 'come after' cooked food. So it is with art and life. Art is cooked and life is raw. Making art is the process of transforming raw experience into palatable forms"(Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 38).

In contemporary American life, we relate to theatre. Modern American culture is utterly preoccupied with movies and television, because they have become the most effective and efficient method of involving us in the story. The high degree of realism eliminates the separation between the audience and the screen, and we become one with the story. In addition, our culture is enamored of games and sports, both of which fit on the spectrum of performance Schechner illuminates. Ritual can take on parts of all of these, and when it does, it involves us in the stories we aim to tell most effectively.

Because we are basically storytellers, so much of what we do as Jews, in our worship, and in our study, can be theatrical. Theatre techniques are built for telling stories. Costumes and props help define the actors and their actions; set and architecture, as well as music and sound, define the space and time of the portrayal; and text and rehearsal, along with movement and blocking, create an encounter with poetry and language that cause us to hear and see things differently. All are can used in Jewish worship, just as in theatre. In fact, "whole areas of Jewish life – Hassidic worship, talmudic study-circles – reflect a displaced theatrical impulse. . . . Jewish life itself, considered as an inevitable dialectic of adherence to/departure from 'what is written,' bears a certain resemblance to theater work."[73] For example, the following description: "a small, select group goes off by itself to perfect its performance of the actions specified in

[73] David Cole. "Toward a Jewish Dramatic Theory," *Tikkun.* (Vol. 4, no. 2), 26.

a text whose author's view of experience the group seeks to embody. . ."[74] could either be "Jewish life under religious law, or rehearsal work on a script."[75]

It is instructive to look at the tables of contents of books about Jewish worship and the synagogue. In Isaac Levy's book *The Synagogue: Its History and Function,"* the table of contents tells us that not only are we to learn about the history of the synagogue, but also about the synagogue building and appurtenances, or set and props; the "actors," or "lay officers" and "officials and officiants;" the "discipline of prayer," which involves preparation or rehearsal, as well as a specific decorum, and "posture during prayer," or the blocking to take place during the worship service.[76] The synagogue is clearly not a place one can enter without knowing how things are done, what your lines and blocking will be, and how those details are to be executed.

Costumes

There is a similarity between the use of costumes in the theatre and the use of ritual garb in the synagogue. Using selected clothing for ritual purposes goes back to the temple days, when the priests had very specific garb that was integral to worship, "for dignity and adornment."[77] With the exception possibly of the

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Isaac Levy. *The Synagogue: Its History and Function.* (London: Valentine, Mitchell, and Co., Ltd., 1963). See also: Abraham Millgram. *Jewish Worship.* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971).
[77] Exodus 28:2

Urim and the Thummim,[78] none of the items listed as the priests' clothing had a truly functional nature; the slaughtering of an animal or the performance of priestly duties do not logically require such garb, but nonetheless, these garments were considered mandatory for the priests to execute their worship, and they are given much description in the Tanakh.

The rabbis tell us that "prayer. . . takes the place of the Temple offerings, therefore the worshipper must wear special garments, as the priests did when they performed their sacerdotal functions."[79] The way we dress can have a large effect upon the way in which we behave, as well as the way in which we perceive ourselves. Actors will often don "rehearsal skirts," or wear a particular hat, to enable them to feel what it is like to be the character they are portraying. Similarly,

> According to the midrash, wrapping ourselves in the prayer shawl is to aid us in attaining a proper mood of reverence for God and a prayerful spirit during our worship. 'Rabbi Hezekiah taught: When the children of Israel are wrapped in their prayer-shawls, let them [feel]. . . as though the glory of the [divine] presence were upon them, for. . . Scripture does not say: 'That ye may look upon them' [the fringes], but *That ye may look upon Him* [Num. 15:39], that is, upon the Holy One, blessed be He.'[80]

Costumes remind us of who we are, whether we are quite literally stepping into someone else's shoes, or becoming more fully ourselves. We wear a kippah, either just in prayer or always, to remind ourselves of who we are and before

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[78] Plaut describes in his Commentary on the Torah (p. 624) that "the biblical evidence about the nature of the oracular devices called Urim and Thummim is neither clear nor consistent." They were perhaps devices used to communicate with God, because unlike Moses, the priests did not have such direct access; maybe they were "stones (with inscriptions 'yes' and 'no' or perhaps a blank) which were employed like dice," (Plaut p. 624).

[79] Millgram, 345.

[80] Ibid.

whom we stand. We wear *tallit* and *t'fillin*, both of which originate in the Bible, and both of which are supposed to remind us of the commandments. What if we began to endow these items of clothing with the power to transform ourselves, and our world, from profane to sacred? These costumes used for ritual would allow us to enter sacred time, to leave behind the mundane nature of our lives and become like the priests, who, though not so close to God as Moses, had the responsibility of worship, and therefore the privilege of dialogue with God.[81]

Props and Sets

Just as the way we dress ourselves is important for our worship, so is the way our surroundings are created. The items we use for ritual and the way the space is defined helps to actually locate us in time and space.[82] Just looking at artifacts and wandering through ruins gives us an understanding of our history and our ancestors' stories. The central item of our worship, our Torah scroll, certainly has this power. If the words contained therein were the only important aspect of Torah, we would not need to pass them down in the form of an ancient scroll; somehow, when we read the words from the actual Torah, we are transported into

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[81] Other special clothing is worn by the Hazzan: a robe and a special hat, garments that are supposed to make one worthy of approaching a king.

[82] Items and artifacts have long been supposed to bring our imaginations to the time and place of their origin; the movie "Somewhere in Time" is a modern expression of these beliefs. In it, a man is fantastically whisked away to the time period of the woman with whom he has fallen in love, by setting up his own room to completely resemble the earlier decade. This, plus his hard wishing and imagination, actually sends him back in time. Ritual is also in a sense like time travel. We connect through ritual to a sacred order of time, one both circular, in that the year's holidays and celebrations repeat themselves, and linear, in that we travel through our lives experiencing events as separate and progressive. The props and sets we use in ritual help to establish this kind of time, by creating the space in which our minds can accomplish this temporal travel.

their meaning. There are specific instructions regarding the shaking of the lulav at sukkot, the lighting of the channukiah, the plunging of the havdalah candle into the wine at the end of Shabbat. We see the importance of the set ever since at least the time of Nehemiah, who describes the platform built specifically for the reading of the Torah in Ezra's time.[83] Every permanent Jewish place of worship has an ark for the Torah, both for the function of protecting our holy book, and to recall the ark with which we traveled in the desert. Many synagogues place the podium from which the shaliah tzibbur prays beneath the level of the ark, to produce the effect of calling to God from out of the depths, as described in the Psalms. We have a special set on Sukkot, which we build in a very particular way, creating three walls, and a ceiling through which we can see the sky. This is of utmost importance to the way in which we celebrate the holiday of Sukkot. It helps us to actually reenact and relive the time we spent in the desert living in such booths. Thus we can use these "props" and "sets" to create the stage of our people's dialogue with God, past, present, and future.

Rehearsal

Those who have attempted to put the Torah back into the beautiful ark at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York know that learning how to work with the set, rehearsing in the space, is of tremendous importance. We need to know how we are to do things, what is expected. Sometimes the only rehearsal we get for ritual is watching someone else do it. In

[83] Nehemiah 8:1-8.

medical terms, we "see one, do one, teach one." But nevertheless, even if it is only practiced in the mind, the way in which we execute our ritual needs rehearsal.

Audience

"Ritual is dramatic because it combines a spectacle, something to be seen or heard, with a live audience."[84] It is most often easy to differentiate in theatre between spectators and performers: the people on stage saying lines are the actors, and the rest of us are the audience. But in ritual, it is not so easy. On the "stage," or Bimah, are the Rabbi and Cantor, and since sometimes the congregation watches or listens to what they do, we might speculate that they are the "actors" while the rest of us are the audience. Then, however, there are the aspects of congregational singing and responsive readings, in which the congregation directly participates, like actors, in reciting and singing words written on a page; these words and tunes function as a script for the congregation. When the whole congregation functions as a group of actors, there seems to be nobody left to play the audience. There is a new aspect to ritual that does not exist in theatre: God. One of the qualifications for a performance to be a ritual and not theatre, according to Richard Schechner, is that ritual involves "an unseen other," while theatre does not. So while we have a system that is comparable to theatre, ritual contains three dimensions, while theatre functions in two. The third dimension, the depth, is God.

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[84] Esslin, 27.

Text: The Script, Our Stories

Judaism and its rituals are as much interactions with text as they are interactions with God or our community. We have multiple scripts, some that we study as a dramaturg does, some that we read like a poet or monologist, and some that we dramatize and present. The goal is to get beyond the text, to make the words jump off of the page and take on meaning for our lives. Midrash is one way in which the Jewish tradition has done this, in the creation of stories to fill in the gaps. This is very much like what actors do on a stage: "What the actor does is, precisely, to *enact* the sort of reading undertaken by the midrashist. The midrashic commentator fills in the blank of the text with imagined connections. The actor, having imagined the connections, fills in the blanks of the role with him or herself."[85]

Because our history consists of stories, and those stories are recorded in text and dialogue, the text itself provides us with examples of dramatic moments that are made for theatrical reenactment. The Talmud itself, for example, is written as a dialogue, even as it is one taking place over time between parties who did not know one another face to face. Nevertheless, it can be likened to a script itself.[86]

Most important however is the fact that in Jewish ritual, we act as storytellers, and stories, are indeed one of the bases of our lives as Jews. The introduction to a volume of stories by Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav contains these words: "Would it be that we should understand the great secrets and moral

[85] Cole, 27.
[86] Ibid.

guidance that are in these stories. Then we would be proper Jews, as we should be."[87] It is in the stories of our history that we learn how to be more fully who we are.

Furthermore, not only do we study the things we can no longer do and the mitzvot we can no longer fulfill, such as the Temple service and sacrifices, but we turn them into stories and dramatic expression. There is, appropriately, a story that illustrates this:

> When the Baal Shem Tov had a difficult task before him, he would go to a certain place in the woods, light a fire, and meditate in prayer. And then he was able to perform the task.
> A generation later, the Maggid of Mazrich was faced with the same task. So, he went to the same place in the woods, but he had forgotten exactly how to light the fire as the Baal Shem Tov had done. He said 'I can no longer light the fire, but I can speak the prayers.' And so he prayed as the Baal Shem Tov had done, and he was able to complete the task.
> A generation later, Rabbi Moshe Lev had to perform this same task. He too went into the woods, but he had not only forgotten how to light the fire, he had forgotten the prayers as well. He said 'I can no longer light the fire, nor do I know the secret meditations belonging to the prayers. But I do know the place in the woods to which it all belongs and that must be sufficient.' And sufficient it was.
> But, when another generation had passed, Rabbi Israel Salanter was called upon to perform the task. He sat down on his golden chair in his castle and said 'I cannot light the fire. I cannot speak the prayers. I do not know the place in the forest. But, we can tell the story of how it was once done, and that must be sufficient.' And sufficient it was.[88]

It is up to us to tell the stories, that it may be sufficient. On Shabbat, week after week, we tell of the creation of the magical seventh day. On the festivals, we tell the stories of our history. We tell stories for the same reasons we always have:

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[87] Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan. *Rabbi Nachman's Stories.* (Monsey, New York: Breslov Research Institute, 1983), xi.
[88] Found in Ron Wolfson, *The Art of Jewish Living: The Passover Seder.* (Woodstock: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996), 24.

> In telling stories, traditional man was affirming the unity of reality. The individual, the tribe, nature, and the cosmos fit together in concentric circles of integrated meaning. . . . Past, present and future were, likewise, bound together in a thematic unity. Thus the individual standing on the ever-disappearing point of present time could affirm that the meaning of his existence was not destroyed by the passing of time. . . . In effect, the story affirmed that the reality of the individual was not reducible to the present moment of experience but belonged to a continuity of meaning that the flow of time could not erode.[89]

In the telling and retelling of our Jewish stories theatrically, we affirm the meaning and purpose of our lives, through the prism of who we are as Jews. "The Jewish community must, in effect, become one in which large numbers of stories – traditional, historical, and personal – are exchanged."[90] We assert in the very act of retelling that there is truth to be found here, and by stepping into the shoes of our ancestors, we allow ourselves to activate personal and collective memories that challenge our knowledge of who we are. In the words of Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav, "All of us are asleep. By telling stories we are awakened."[91]

REPRISE

"Both [theatre and ritual] aim for an enhanced level of consciousness, a memorable insight into the nature of existence, a renewal of strength in the individual to face the world."[92] The difference is in the manifestation of the result. In theatre, this is "catharsis," while in ritual, we perhaps hope to achieve enlightenment and illumination. God has given us three levels of knowledge,

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[89] Sam Keen. *To A Dancing God.* (San Francisco: Harper, 1990), 97.
[90] Jonathan Woocher. "Toward a Unified Field Theory." Isa Aron, Sara Lee, and Seymour Rossel, *A Congregation of Learners.* (New York: UAHC Press: 1996), 26-8.
[91] Kaplan, vii.
[92] Esslin, 28.

da'at, binah, and *haskel.*[93] Our rituals help us to move up the chain, from knowledge of facts, to wisdom and understanding of how to use them, and finally to enlightenment and relationship with the Divine. Theatre, with its similar goals and functions, can be used to make ritual more efficacious.

> Art itself is an instrument, a cognitive instrument, and with religion the only instrument, for probing certain materials and questions. Art and religion probe the mysteries in those difficult areas where blurred and powerful symbols are the only possible speech and their arrangement into coherent religions and works of art the only possible grammar.[94]

Dr. Lawrence Hoffman calls his book on worship *The Art of Public Prayer,* because ritual is indeed an art form. Therefore, the way art functions in our world is important and instructive for the workings of our ritual.

Our stories, and the various interpretations of them, are also instructive. Rabbi Soloveitchik interprets the two versions of the creation story to mean that human beings have a "dual nature." We want to know both "what," like "Adam the First," and "why," like "Adam the Second." We are members of a community, and therefore not alone, but we are individuals as well, and therefore profoundly lonely. The very second we are so elated at the creations we achieve is the same second we are defeated by the knowledge that we are separate beings and therefore alone.[95]

The fact of human existence is that Soloveitchik is right; we are lonely. There is a collective hole inside of our souls, which some fill with the search for

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[93] From the Weekday Amidah Prayer
[94] Annie Dillard. *Living by Fiction.* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1982), 164.
[95] Joseph B. Soloveitchik. *The Lonely Man of Faith.* (New Jersey: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1965).

absolute truth, and some fill with the search for personal meaning. Whether it is God, a God-Idea, ultimate truth about why we exist, or just basic understanding of the way our world functions, we are all engaged in the pursuit of meaning. Both ritual and theatre are ways in which we gather together to search out meaning; to speculate on experience; to engage history, the present and the future in a dialogue with each other and with the imaginations of our minds; and by transforming ourselves, to somehow come closer to ordering the chaos that is life.

CHAPTER 3

ACT 3: REENACTING THE EXODUS, THE SEDER AS A MODEL

In every generation all are obligated to see themselves as if they went out of Egypt.[96]

Pesach is one of the quintessential expressions of Jewish theatrical storytelling. Ron Wolfson calls it "a talk-feast in four acts... with one overriding goal: to take each person at the Seder table back to Egypt, to re-enact the Exodus story, to make each one of us feel as if she or he had actually been redeemed from *Mitzrayim.*"[97] It is sacred theatre in its clearest expression, employing symbolism, the principles of transformation and community relationships, and a very distinct order within which there is freedom. Add to this the fact that *Y'tziat Mitzrayim*, the Exodus from Egypt, is one of the most defining moments of Jewish history, and it is not difficult to see why the Seder has survived so well even among the most unaffiliated of our people. The Seder, as well as its surrounding preparation and conclusion, should be seriously considered as a model for effective Jewish worship. Its symbolism is both deep and accessible. Those who know nothing about this holiday can be easily involved, and can find meaning for their personal lives, while at the same time those who have studied and lived this ritual for their entire lives also find fulfillment. It is a ritual we can engage in as a community,

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[96] Haggadah. Found in Noam Zion and David Dishon. *A Different Night: The Leaders Guide to the Family Participation Haggadah.* (Jerusalem: The Shalom Hartman Institute, 1997), 30.

[97] Ron Wolfson. *The Art of Jewish Living: The Passover Seder.* (Woodstock: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996), 47.

but that also leaves us transformed as individuals. And finally, it is a ritual that though structured, is responsive to personal freedom and style.

In this chapter, we will look at the seder as a model for the use of theatre to make ritual efficacious; we will discuss how this is done in the three part format established in Chapter 2: symbolism; transformation and community; and structure and freedom.

THE SYMBOLISM: WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

The extensive symbolism of Pesach centers around the Seder. The way in which the table is set, with a seder plate, matzah, a cup for Elijah, shows that the focus of the dinner itself is defined by these symbols. They are the props with which we begin the telling of the story; they facilitate the theatre that takes place at the table. They speak to us in a language beyond words, one that allows us entrance into the world of the sacred and the spiritual. We learn that the matzah symbolizes the bread the Israelites carried out of Egypt, and the fact that they did not have time to allow it to rise. We also learn the yeast symbolizes arrogance, one of the attributes of our human nature of which we seek to rid ourselves on this holiday, and therefore we eat the "bread of affliction," the matzah that teaches us of humility. We have the salt water to symbolize the tears of the slaves, the charoset that looks like the mortar we used, and the maror that tastes of the very bitterness of the lives we led in Egypt.[98] The symbolism goes on and on; some modern seder plates contain an orange, as it was once said that women have as

[98] Ruth Lurie Kozodoy. The Book of Jewish Holidays. (West Orange: Behrman House, 1981), 119.

much right to be in the rabbinate (or cantorate, for that matter) as an orange has to be on the seder plate.

Aside from the multi-layered symbolism of the Seder, the holiday of Pesach exists as a symbol in itself. It therefore gives us quick emotional access to ideas and ideals that are hard to articulate in words. It is a three-part paradigm for how we see ourselves in the context of our history. First, Pesach, and the Exodus from Egypt, symbolizes freedom itself, setting up a basic value that we are to hold, as Jews, and as human beings. "Human beings are meant to be free."[99] Jews concerned with social action have used this holiday to discuss the slavery of many peoples in our own time; for example, the oppressive policies of the Soviet Union, against which the Jewish community rallied. The Exodus from Egypt shows us that freedom is paramount, and that tyrants will always be brought down by the hand of real power. "God is independent of human control."[100] God brought us out of Egypt, not needing to pay any heed to the Pharoah. God is the ultimate authority, no matter how unbreakable the bonds of slavery to human powers seem to be.

Pesach defines for us a particular type of freedom that only exists when there is allegiance to God. The Israelites had to make a choice in order to be free. They had to decide to put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts, and they had to decide to leave Egypt. Not all Israelites left, we are told, and not all who left were Israelites. Therefore, this freedom is open to everyone, not just Jews; this

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[99] Irving Greenberg. *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays.* (New York: Touchstone, 1988), 35.
[100] Ibid.

God is the God of all people, and it is we who decide to which authority we will bend: God, or the narrow straights of Egypt. This freedom is the power to choose, the power to bend in humility and awe before the Ultimate Power in the Universe. This freedom is the power to witness and recognize truth. Moses had to choose to see the power of God. He had to turn again to look at the miracle of the burning bush, before he could be worthy to show the miracle of God to the Israelites. Those who chose to leave chose to see the miracle presented to them. Those who stayed chose their own blindness and slavery. Therefore when we sing "Let my people go," when we retell the story to our children, we plead for our own freedom. When we identify ourselves with slaves, we begin to see in how many ways we really are slaves still. Only then do we have the opportunity to choose freedom instead.

Second, "God is concerned,"[101] and God acts in human history. If we choose God, God also chooses us. The Israelites cried out to God, and God heard their cries.[102] Our suffering was not God's desire, and some describe it as painful to God as well. This God, powerful, full of jealousy and vengeance, is also good, and does not want people to suffer. Even when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, and the Egyptians died in the crushing waters behind them, God does not rejoice, nor does God wish for us to rejoice in their demise. Therefore in a world in which it is easy to see God as absent, unconcerned, or not able to act in our history, we must persist, because of the symbolism of the Exodus, in seeing God as

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[101] Ibid.

[102] We often describe God in our liturgy as the "One who hears prayer," *shomea tefillah*. This concept seems to come from the idea that God heard such cries in Egypt.

concerned. This unfortunately also provides serious problems for us in dealing with the nature of Evil. Lawrence Hoffman teaches us that in order to rationally deal with evil, we must give up one of the three major attributes of God: God cannot be all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-good at the same time, or evil would not exist. Hoffman is willing to give up all-powerful as the most logical and spiritually satisfying description of God. Eugene Borowitz teaches, however, that the subject of evil cannot be dealt with in a rational manner, but that there are other answers to why God would allow evil to exist. Indeed, many theologians have dealt with this subject. [103] Difficult as this is to deal with, sacred theatre forces us to confront our beliefs. It forces us to own up to the pain of the imperfections of the world, as growth requires going through such confrontation and struggle. We are Israel, the people who wrestles with God, and therefore it is fitting that our sacred theatre reflects this.

Third, Pesach is a symbol of another way to see our world. "Were it not for the Exodus, humans would have reconciled themselves to the evils that exist in the world. The Exodus reestablishes the dream of perfection and thereby creates the tension that must exist until reality is redeemed."[104] In this way, God acts with us in history in order to redeem the world. God does act, but then it is up to us to be witnesses and partners in the process of redemption. We choose, through the model of the Exodus, to see redemption as possible, and therefore we

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[103]Further reading on the matter might be: David Blumenthal. *Facing the Abusing God.* (1993). Martin Buber. *Images of Good and Evil,* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1952). Harold Schulweis. *Evil and the Morality of God* (Cincinnati: HUC Press, 1984). Eugene B. Borowitz. *Facing Up To It* (London: Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, 1967).

[104] Greenberg, 36.

must continue to work for the day when "To You every knee will bend and every tongue swear loyalty."[105] Only then, when we all choose to invest God with ultimate authority, and when we divest human beings with the power to enslave, then we will all truly be free.[106]

This symbolism is powerful, but ephemeral. We go through our daily lives, easily forgetting the task for which we were placed on this earth. The challenge, then, is to make these ideals unforgettable, to make them present in our lives.

> The challenge is to make the Exodus experience vivid enough in an ongoing way to counter but not blot out the unredeemed experiences of life. The goal is not to flee from reality but to be motivated to perfect it. To cope with contradiction and not to yield easily, the memory must be a 'real' experience, something felt in one's bones, tasted in ones mouth. This is why much of Jewish religion consists of reliving the Exodus.[107]

This is what the Pesach Seder seeks to do, to relive these moments in such a way that we remember what it was like to stand in Egypt, to prepare ourselves to leave, and to go forth into the unknown. Pesach succeeds through sacred theatre. Through theatre, we relive the transcendent moment of the Exodus, personally, as individual families, and as a larger community.

> Where does Israel get the strength – the chutzpah – to go on believing in redemption in a world that knows mass hunger and political exile and boat people? How can Jews testify to hope and human value when they have

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[105] From the prayer *Aleynu L'shabeach*

[106] In Chapter 2, we discussed the paradigm of "Order, Meaning, and Hope" as set forth by the blessings surrounding the *Shema* prayer. Here we can see the functioning of the same paradigm. Order: God is the ultimate power in the universe and transcends human tyrants, as witnessed by the defeat of Pharoah. Meaning: God is concerned with us, and heard our cries in Egypt. Hope: The world will be redeemed, just as we were redeemed from Egypt, so will there be a final redemption from the narrow straits of the world in which we now live.

[107] Greenberg, 38.

been continuously persecuted, hated, dispelled, destroyed? Out of the memories of the Exodus! 'So that you remember the day you went out of Egypt all the days of your life' (Deuteronomy 16:3).[108]

The more we study the story of Pesach, the more we reenact it, the stronger the symbolism becomes, and the stronger we become.

TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSCENDENCE

The Exodus from Egypt occurs in every human being, in every era, in every year, and even in every day.[109]

Pesach is a perfect model of personal and community transformation, because the event of the Exodus itself transformed our history. We went from slaves to free people; but transformation is slow and arduous, and even this grand and miraculous experience did not transform us as quickly as we might imagine. Even the fact that we had seen the Red Sea part, even the fact that we had personally been brought by the outstretched hand of God out of Egypt into the desert, even these miracles did not stay with us in our hearts and in our minds. We complained in the desert bitterly. We moaned that we would rather be in Egypt where we had food to eat and where we knew what was expected of us. Freedom is traumatic and difficult, and our fear prevented a complete transformation of our souls. Therefore the transformation took place over a period of time, and it is necessary still today to renew in ourselves the memory of the

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[108] Ibid., 37.

[109] Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav. Found in Zion, *A Different Night, Leadership Guide*, 44.

Exodus. Transformation requires constant vigilance. lest we return to our old ways. and we need to continue this process today.

We transform ourselves today by not eating *chametz* for the eight days of the holiday. Every time we eat matzah, every time we are forced to not eat the pizza or pasta or sandwich we really want, we remember that our job is to transform ourselves. Anyone whose home smells of brisket and matzah-brie and matzah kugel during this week knows the smell and taste of this transformation.

We transform ourselves by the shape of the seder itself. Every good performance has a flow to it, ups and downs, colors and tastes, and the seder is no different. The Talmud contains a record of an argument between two rabbis, Rav and Samuel, who disagree about the flow of the experience. Samuel describes the transformation as from slavery to freedom, while Rav tells us that it is really from idolatry to monotheism. In proper Jewish style, we do both. We transform ourselves from slaves to free people, and tell the story in this manner, but we also remove from ourselves all of the idolatrous ways, so that we may serve God alone. These ways are related: "In Judaism's view, slavery draws legitimacy from idolatry; democracy is ultimately grounded in the God-given dignity of every human being."[110] Thus we dramatize both these transformations in the course of the Seder.

Only after we have undergone the transformation inherent in Pesach can we be ready for the next major event in Jewish History, Shavuot. Only once we have truly become free can we be ready to accept *Aseret Hadibrot* and the Torah.

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[110] Greenberg. 53.

For Jews outside of Israel, the fact that the countdown to Shavuot, counting the Omer, begins at the second seder means that we do not leave this transformative event behind and go back to our old ways. This counting lends permanence to our transformation: the reenactment continues all the way through to Shavuot, when we stay up all night studying, to prepare to receive the Law.[111]

Not only does this transformation happen to us personally, but also as a community. "The entire seder is an experience in which normal social and structural patterns are suspended or transcended. . . . The Jewish people are reshaped into a *communitas*, an undifferentiated communion in which neither status nor power rules. All are united in common liberation,"[112] because we all go through this process together. "The rite is not exclusive: not just for the intellectuals, the wealthy or the priests; not contingent on the presence of expert singers; not limited to the adults in a household."[113] All of our levels of status are conveniently relegated to the same elevation by the Pesach Seder. The Seder "certainly simplifies social relationships, emphasizes mythic history, and sets up an atmosphere of *communitas* in which the culture's central values may be examined. . . . 'In relaxing the barriers that divide people mentally and socially,

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[111] In fact, the reenactment of Jewish history really continues all year long. Every holiday is connected to the others, and to the cycle of Jewish time. The goal is a permanent transformation, the aim is not to go back to our old ways but to change ourselves. Even on Shabbat, though the special moment of rest and peace must end, we try to carry with us each week a little more of the Shabbat spirit.

[112] Greenberg, 57.

[113] Baruch M. Bokser. *The Origins of the Seder: The Passover Rite and Early Rabbinic Judaism.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 80.

the focus of the evening may now be socially shared ideological considerations and not private concerns."[114] [Author's emphasis]

Even the text itself provides an example of the liminality that transformation depends upon. It is "located somewhere between an earlier oral exchange that it professes to record and a later oral interchange that it hopes to instigate."[115] At our seders, we not only reenact an ancient historical event but also our previous seder experiences. Imagine you are telling a story of which you are fond, something you have repeated many times and plan to tell many more times in the future. Each time you tell the story, you remember the actual event a little bit differently, partially due to the way in which you last explained these occurrences. Each time you relive the moment, and each time you transform it into a slightly new story. Therefore this process of retelling places you somewhere in-between the event that transpired and your present time experience of storytelling; when we repeat the seder's words, we place ourselves in a combination of our own time and the time of the historical events. This is like theatre, in that like a theatrical performance, "it involves 'another world.'"[116]

> Time collapses upon itself in this liminality. As Martin Buber tells us, since the night of the Exodus it has become a history feast, and indeed *the* history feast par excellence of the world; not a feast of pious remembrance, but of the ever-current contemporaneousness of that which once befell. Every celebrating generation becomes united with the first generation and with all those that have followed.[117]

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[114] Ibid., 81.
[115] Cole, 27.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Buber, *Moses*, pp. 72-73. Found in Gunther Plaut. *A Torah Commentary*, 1714

There is a timeless quality to the seder in this way. Ruth Fredman explains further: "The Exodus is both history, a sequence of events, and myth, a timeless explanatory model for the society's existence, and this 'mythic history' is made objective and palpable through the objects and actions of the ritual."[118] Thus we play with our understanding of the linear and cyclical nature of time, when by our sacred theatre we bring events of the past into the present. This in-between nature, this hovering between our selves and our ancestors, allows us a chance to transcend our daily lives. It provides us with the opportunity for the beginning of a transformation, from who we are, to who we wish to be.

THE ORDER PROVIDES FREEDOM

Just as we become free by submitting to God's sovereignty, so too do we set ourselves free by following the order of the Seder. Just like in the theatre, this ritual begins with preparation, which is both practical and psychological. Traditionally, we begin to study about Pesach the month beforehand.[119] One procedure is to collect *maot chittim*, the money to be given to the poor, so that they also can purchase the wine, matzah, and other things necessary to celebrate the holiday. We spend time before Pesach begins cleaning our houses of *chametz*, which is done in a specific order, involving the selling, burning, and declaring null and void of all *chametz*. Through this structure, through following the laws set out for us, we create the possibility for the freedom that we seek.

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[118] Found in Bokser, 86.
[119] Greenberg, 41.

This process of ridding the house of *chametz* is more than a practical discipline. We have seen that *chametz* can be a metaphor for arrogance, but it is also symbolic of that which we left behind when we left Egypt. Irving Greenberg tells us it is also "a symbol of what is allowed to stand around. *Chametz* signified staleness and deadening routine; getting rid of it became the symbol of freshness and life growth."[120] Therefore, we have to "prepare for freedom,"[121] both practically and spiritually. One particularly nice ritual has begun in some homes. As the guests walk in, they are handed a pencil and paper, on which they are to write a trait they wish to rid themselves of, something that represents the narrowness and slavery of their personal Egypt. When they have done this, they retreat to the fireplace to toss in the paper, watching it burn, thereby consuming the spiritual *chametz* just as we burn the remains of leavening found around the house after the cleaning is complete. This structure, this order of ridding ourselves of *chametz*, provides for freedom of practice. The keva allows for new kavannah each time, and new ways to discover it.

The very word "Seder" as we know means "order." We are provided with the symbolism, we are provided with the structure, and then we are allowed to run with it. As creative *haggadot* like *A Different Night* show, this holiday was built for personal style and freedom. Supposedly, we all stood at Sinai, and we all heard God's voice in a way particular to ourselves. This must also be true for our experience in leaving Egypt. Each one of us has within us the knowledge of what these events were like. Each re-enactment involves different people at different

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[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid.

moments in their lives, and therefore must be unique. In great theatre, every time the play is done, things are a little different. The lines are the same, the blocking the same, but the life of the play changes, and people come again and again to see the same play. The same is true for the Seder, though even the lines do not need to remain exactly the same. "No two family seders are alike. Each seder leader is a director who is challenged to fascinate the audience."[122] If we are to be effective, then we must tell our story uniquely to each new individual, and to each new group.

HOW THE THEATRE WORKS

We have a basic script: the *haggadah*. We have the props lining the table, as described in the beginning of this chapter, and we have the actors: ourselves. We have the story, and we have our creativity. We have our sense of play and fun, and with all of these tools, we create theatre. It is important that we know that this is our job at the Seder. There are many *haggadot* that make this easier for us today, such as *A Different Night*, one that also comes with a leaders guide. In this guide, we are told that "only personal witnessing can transmit identification;"[123] therefore, it is up to us to create an experience at our seders in which everyone has a chance to witness the Exodus. "Not knowledge, primarily, but empathy is required."[124]

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[122] Ibid., 50.
[123] Noam Zion and David Dishon. *A Different Night, The Family Participation Haggadah*. (Jerusalem: The Shalom Hartman Institute, 1997), 6.
[124] Ibid.

With the seder, our job is therefore made easy. "In its details and, more important, in its very structure, the seder induces the experience of going from slavery to liberty."[125] The drama and the script already exist for our use, and the tools surround us in the form of symbolic props. This is not to say that there are no creative means by which to achieve this theatricality. "*The Leader's Guide to the Family Participation Haggadah A Different Night*" provides multiple examples of how to spice up any seder. Some suggestions are: "Role-Playing at the Seder," and "Bibliodrama."[126]

Theatre works by putting ourselves into someone else's world. Whether we need costumes, music, role playing, or props to do this is up to the "director" and the "actors." Whatever ways we need to make this story come alive for us in our living rooms are the ways to make our ritual efficacious.

AFTER THE FOURTH CUP

The way in which we do this, the way in which we reenact these stories, is perhaps even of prime importance to the continuity of the Jewish community.

> A question from the standpoint of Jewish continuity is whether nontraditional Jews can be brought to see that their personal stories are connected to traditional and historical Jewish narratives ("master stories") and to a living community that tells and enacts these stories. . . . For this to occur, three things must happen: First, Jews must be encouraged to become storytellers and to share the narratives of their lives with other Jews. Second, Jews must have the opportunity to hear and grapple with the master stories, not as dicta to which they must conform but as templates that they can use to give their personal stories increased scope

[125] Greenberg, 49.
[126] Zion, *The Leader's Guide*, 30-34.

> and resonance. . . . Third, the Jewish community must continue to struggle with how to enact its master stories.[127]

Furthermore, "the celebration of a special event requires that the event be distinguished from ordinary events."[128] Art is a medium through which we do this. "When an artist creates an object we are presented with another way of seeing that object and what it stands for. We are given the gift of seeing a familiar object as though it were new."[129] This too is an argument for theatrical ritual – the art of theatre allows us to see our world anew; sacred theatre allows us to see not only events in our history, but also our souls, anew.

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[127] Woocher, 36.
[128] Stephen O. Parnes. *The Art of Passover.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 7.
[129] Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

ACT 4: MUSIC, A VITAL THEATRICAL TOOL

One of the most potent ways of reliving and experiencing anew is through music. Ritual and theatre both employ music as one of their most powerful tools, and so next, we must look at some ways in which this is accomplished.

We have discussed the fact that one goal of Jewish ritual is to make the participants present in the historical moment, to make them feel as if they had, for example, experienced the slavery of in Egypt, stood at the shores of the Red Sea, witnessed and heard the receiving of the Ten Commandments, etc. Music is a tool of primary importance in creating our ability to do this.

Music places the text, and the ritual participants, into sacred time and space. Music has the ability to make the words meaningful and relevant, to make people see old words in a new light. In fact, the essential task of the cantorate is to express texts in ways that make the liturgy a profound expression of people's lives, and by making the text understandable and meaningful, to bring the text to life in our own time. This act is theatrical. It is the process of taking a script, made up of a string of words on a page, and turning it into life for us to watch and participate in.

The experience of reading from Torah illuminates how important this process is to us as Jews. The scroll contains even less than the average script. It does not provide the way in which it is to be vocalized, either with the cantillation marks or even the vowels. We, by chanting Torah in the synagogue, bring this skeleton of consonants to life, providing our knowledge of the vowels and the

music in order to tell the stories of our lives. Like cantillation, the liturgy combines the text and ourselves, thus breathing life into all of our rituals; it is through this theatrical intertwining of our history and our own lives that our ritual becomes real.

There are two basic ways in which we use music in our tradition. These have been described by Boiles as "concurrent," and "concomitant."[130] He explains that the function of music is important to its description: "Is the power in the music itself and therefore *concomitant* to the occasion? Or is the music an appropriate but non-essential aspect, merely *concurrent* for the purposes of the occasion?"[131] In other words, if music is concurrent, it functions to support the text, creating a mood and enhancing the ideas and qualities inherent in its recitation, while if music is concomitant, it has separate and often primary importance. This chapter will expand upon Boiles' terms, to explain how music functions in the capacity of Jewish ritual.

CONCURRENT

In this role, music has the functional quality of creating the mood, and allowing either the text itself or the community spirit to take precedence. In congregational singing, the melody is simple enough for the whole group to sing together. It might have a peaceful and lullaby-like quality for a text such as *Shalom Rav*, or a joyous and upbeat quality symbolic of the celebration of the

[130] Boiles, *Man, Magic, and Musical Occasions.* (Columbus: Collegiate Publishing, Inc., 1978), 15.
[131] Ibid.

Shabbat for *Yismechu*. But the music in these cases is not the important factor. It is the community singing together, voices merging in common spirit, that is important. The creation of Communitas is of primary importance, and the music is a means to this end. "In no other experience of liturgical art can each individual member of the assembly be so drawn into an awareness of and a participation in the larger group."[132] Thus music is not only a means, but a primary source of this community experience.[133]

In the intoning of *nusach*, something similar takes place. Again, the music is a means to an end. This kind of music creates two different effects. First, it allows those knowledgeable in traditional motifs to focus on the text. The motifs are repetitive, they convey an emotion applied to a large body of text, and do not symbolize the words' literal meanings. The worshipper can simply go with the flow of the melodies. The text predominates, and the worshipper can find new meanings in it by allowing the words to be all-important. Second, by decreasing the attention on the music, the concomitant moments can have a greater dynamism. Through creating moments of greater flow, the high dramatic moments become more rich and poignant. These moments of simple declamation of the text allow the worshipper to focus more on the moments of heightened musical expression.

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[132] Judith Marie Kubicki. "Using J. L. Austin's Performative Language Theory to Interpret Ritual Music-Making." (*Worship:* Jan, 1999), 327.

[133] The experience of being a part of a community is mandatory for both theatre and ritual. as explained in chapters one and two.

CONCOMITANT

There are also many ways in which music in Jewish worship acts as concomitant to the occasion, and in which the music acts as a midrash on the text. *Nusach* is usually concurrent, but in certain cases it acts with primary and direct purpose. For example, often the text stays the same from worship occasion to occasion, but the *nusach* is what tells us where and when we are in Jewish sacred time. If anyone familiar with traditional *nusach*, even a blind person who could not tell the time by using sight, were to be transported by time travel into the synagogue, he or she should be able by the melodies used to know what time of day it was, and when in the course of the Jewish year it was. Even if we know what time of year it is, the music still conveys something beyond this academic knowledge. On the three festivals, "Barechu" at the Ma'ariv service is the first time we hear the new melody. If we are accustomed to hearing "Barechu" every night a certain way, then this change of *nusach* is of prime importance. Instead of using didactic, direct speech to communicate the fact that Sukkot has arrived, all of the sudden through the music, we have the emotional experience of locating ourselves in the moment of the festival. "The ability of music to situate worshipers in a sonic environment provides an experience, not only of the worship space, but also of the activity of music-making and of the worshiping assembly engaged in that activity."[134] The symbolic value of the *nusach* here is additional, beyond the words of the text that we say every night, whether it is a festival or not. Then, once we have been rooted in this new sacred time, the

[134] Kubicki, 326.

nusach returns to its function of concurrent with the occasion. *Nusach*, when used to tell Jewish sacred time, is thus concomitant to the text itself.

Another way in which this is accomplished is through musical foreshadowing, or anticipation. Hazzan Israel Goldstein calls this "signaling." It is using music to depict events in Jewish history, or the holiday or the time of year, by taking snatches of the motifs of the holidays, and inserting it beforehand.[135] For example, during the month of Elul, a cantor might utilize the themes from Yom Kippur throughout the liturgy of the prior weekdays or shabbatot, to effect a spiritual awakening, a desire among the congregation to look at their deeds of the past year and begin the process of teshuvah. This kind of "heralding" tells us symbolically more than the text provides; for those knowledgeable in Jewish *nusach*,[136] it is a link to the themes of the holidays and the spirit of their intent. Hazzan Goldstein thus helps us to connect with our stories through this musical anticipation: "I feel I am an instrument of Jewish music history."[137]

Another form of the concomitant use of music is the hazzanic craft of word painting. Just as a rabbi gives a D'var Torah, explicating and deepening our

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[135] Israel Goldstein, Interview. (New York: Hebrew Union College, October 2000).

[136] Hazzan Goldstein expressed that there is often difficulty with signaling in a Reform congregation, because it presupposes knowledge of the musical motifs. This is the challenge cantors face in utilizing nusach as symbolically expressive; if the congregation does not recognize the symbolism, it does not contain value. Adolph Katchko writes of this challenge optimistically: "deep down even in the most reformed Jew there glimmer sparks of a nigum [sic] here and there of our traditional nuschaot, which only the Hazzan who uses the correct nusach can once more revive." Adolph Katchko. "Changing Concepts of Hazzanut." *Journal of Synagogue Music*, vol. 6 no. 1 (April 1972) p. 14.

[137] Goldstein.

understanding of Torah, word painting has long been the province of cantors seeking to offer commentary on the liturgy. This is the process of creating a picture with the sound of the music, in order to speak differently, and to provide meaning that enters our souls through intuition. It is not necessary for the listener to see the exact picture the Hazzan is creating musically; the specificity itself will have an effect.

Cantors today continue in this tradition. Hazzan Nathan Lam is adept at creating such pictures; one particularly profound moment is in the Rosh Hashanah liturgy. In the prayer *Ki Keshimcha*, we find the words *Adam y'sodo mei'afar, v'sofo le'afar*, "Man's origin is dust, and his end is dust." Those of us who were present during the Rosh Hashanah service of 1996 heard these words very clearly because of his musical explication (See Appendix 1, Illustration 1). The repetitive downward pattern creates the sense of descending into ground, and upon hearing this davened, one senses both a resignation to this fate, and humility before the One who does not descend into the dust. What we did not know when we heard this phrase was the image Hazzan Lam held in his mind. Later, upon questioning him, we realized that we had in fact seen what he had sought to portray. His picture was of a coffin being lowered into the ground. The descending pattern, the staccato on "*le-a-far*," and the sotto voce leading to almost no sound entirely, all conveyed quite clearly to our intuitions this concrete image. Shoshana Gelfand describes this sort of musical imagery as "Making Midrash out of Music."[138] Music, by filling in the gaps of the text, allows us to relate to the words

[138] Shoshana Gelfand. "Making Midrash out of Music." (*Journal of Synagogue*

and to find personal meaning therein. This is a quintessential theatrical experience. Actors transform the words of a script into a living moment by filling the text with themselves; music as midrash allows us to fill the liturgical text in the same way, with our ideas and our imaginations.

SHLOSH-ESREI MIDOT: A MIDRASHIC INTERPRETATION OF MOSHE GANCHOFF'S MUSICAL STATEMENTS

One might see Hazzan Moshe Ganchoff, z"l, as a musical midrashist, because his music is so full of imagery and commentary on the text. The drama he created through his singing and his music are particularly apparent in his rendition of the *"Shlosh Esrei Midot."* A rich subtext exists in this piece; by using the music to comment on the words, Ganchoff provides us with an effective example of concomitant liturgical music. The music serves to enlighten us with a greater understanding of the text, and it aids us in the transformation that we are supposed to undergo as we recite these words.

In order to understand the meaning of the musical subtext, we must first analyze the form of the music. True creativity is accomplished when limits are set; the discipline of working within modal structures and the boundaries of *nusach* can be the tool that sets the artist free, ultimately allowing the boundaries to be broken. This is overwhelmingly apparent in Ganchoff's *"Sh'losh Esrei Midot."*[139]

Music, vol. 19, no. 2: December 1989), 17.

[139] See Appendix 1, Illustration 2

The Form

The *Shlosh Esrei Midot,*[140] the thirteen attributes, are repeated three times, producing three sets of the same text, and we can find thirteen musical sections in this piece.[141] Section 1, the opening of the piece, is comprised of High Holy Days Torah cantillation. The motives are clear: "*mercha, tipcha, munach et-nachta, mercha tipcha, mercha sof-pasuk.*" It is only in section 2, half-way through the first recitation of these thirteen attributes, that Ganchoff gives us a clue that this piece will be composed of more than simple tunes or motives. Loosely, section 1 is in F Magein Avot (MA). It uses the MA scale, but the motives are drawn from cantillation, not from any particular traditional motives of MA. In fact, the key of section 1 seems ambiguous, because it lies in a shared area between F and Bb; F seems to be the strongest indication of a tonic, but the Bb is also prevalent. The rest of the piece will reflect the both the interplay of the keys of F and Bb, and the tension inherent in the striving to get from the first to the latter.

But Ganchoff artfully uses the MA character of this style of cantillation to proceed in section 2 into BbMA. This section is distinctly shorter than the first, and serves to establish the Bb before doing away with it altogether in the next section. In fact, this section could be seen merely as a bridge from section 1 to section 3; however, we will see later why it is important that this remain a section unto itself.

[140] From the Festival Torah Service liturgy. This piece is based on its use in the High Holy Days.
[141] See chart in Appendix 1, Illustration 3

Section 3 completes the first recitation of the Thirteen Attributes. An entirely new mode is introduced, Ahavah Rabbah (AR), in a key that is neither F nor Bb but in fact G. Thus Ganchoff takes us to rest in a key that is one whole step raised from the original. MA, literally "shield of our ancestors," often reflects the covenant between God and our people, not one that is exactly impersonal, but that does not pertain to an individual relationship we each have with God. AR on the other hand is often used to express that personal connection. The tension inherent in the augmented second of this mode necessitates an expression of longing, and cuts into the souls of our people. It is in fact, often referred to as "the Jewish mode." So we have moved from an expression that comes from our tradition, from God's relationship with our past, to an expression of our individual souls.

The second recitation of this text thus begins in segment 4 on a different tonal level from where the first began. We begin in GAR; something has been gained, we have literally been raised up a whole step from where we began the first segment, and we continue from where the last section left off. This uplifting motion was not direct however; Ganchoff took us soaring to Bb in section 2, only to be lowered back down to G in section 3. The notes in section 4 reflect a desire to again be uplifted. The musical line of the first word spans an entire octave, and the second takes this reaching a step higher to Db. But this reaching, like the last, cannot be sustained, and Ganchoff takes us tumbling back to the key of F, this time to AR, the mode symbolizing the personal connection, rather than to MA, which we recall placed us in relationship with God through our ancestors. So we

begin this period of reaching from our own personal struggling souls. Section 6 finds us reaching and tumbling and yearning in the mode of FAR.

Section 7, which begins more slowly and has a more patient and wistful tone, brings us back to BbMA. This time Ganchoff has us reach this place not from an aggressive and demanding air, but slowly, languidly, as it is written in the music, lento. And this time, we stay in the key of BbMA for the rest of this recitation of the text. However, lest we think we have arrived at our destination, this section concludes on the subtonic, and is immediately propelled into Bb Ukranian-Dorian (UkD) in section 8.[142] In fact, this section begins a sort of feud, a tension between UkD and MA for the rest of the piece, which ultimately culminates in MA. Thus the third recitation of the Thirteen Attributes consists of this back and forth switching between these two modes. The struggle seems intense and yet in order to achieve this effect, Ganchoff only has to alter one note. Just by moving from Eb to E, just by altering one accidental, Ganchoff creates this fierce tension that takes the rest of the piece to resolve.

The Content

At first glance, this piece for the *Yamim Noraim* seems to begin as simply as possible, in High Holy Days Torah cantillation; The *"Shlosh Esrei Midot"*, the Thirteen Attributes, come from Exodus 34:6-7, and Ganchoff begins this piece as

[142] Even though the Bb is missing here, this section makes the most sense when described as Bb Ukranian Dorian, rather than C Ahavah Rabbah. The ear notices that this is an unstable place, which is not expressed by denoting it in Ahavah Rabbah, and is better described by the tenuous and fleeting nature of Ukranian Dorian, which almost always leads to something else. The goal of Ukranian Dorian is to pull to the fifth scale degree, in this case, F.

if he were going to simply recite the whole thing according to the masoretic tropes. The simplicity seems to suggest that we are beginning with action, doing what we were asked to do, as if to say, "God, here we are reciting these words with which you made your covenant;[143] we are doing what you asked of us in order to repent."[144] There seems to be very little thought process here. We are just doing, not intellectualizing, just linking ourselves in the chain of what our ancestors have done before us. However, if we look closely, we see that the *te'amim* used in this piece are not the same as in the Torah: in the Masoretic text, "*Adonai Adonai*" begins with "*munach katon,*" while here we see "*mercha tipcha,*" and so on. Thus, we have to assume that Ganchoff's aim is not to reproduce what is found in the Torah. With his usage of trope, Ganchoff links this text with its origin, but he is already making a statement that there is something different going on here. In the Torah, God tells us that when we sin, we are to recite these 13 attributes, and we will be forgiven. Perhaps already, Ganchoff is giving us a new approach to this idea. Maybe not only do we have to recite these words, but we have to recite them from our own hearts, not as someone else would speak them. Perhaps this is the reason for the new *te'amim*: this is the way one person, Ganchoff, might approach *teshuvah.*

This theme is continued in the way the piece travels from Magein Avot, which we have described as the mode pertaining to the covenant with our

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[143] We are taught that God made a covenant with the Thirteen Attributes, so as to make them into a formula for forgiveness. If we turn ourselves from our sin, and then recite these words, we are sure to be forgiven.

[144] Dr. Larry Hoffman teaches that originally, *Vidui* meant not to confess, but to profess, to state that one has done what was asked of him or her. This seems to be a "profession" according to those terms.

ancestors, to Ahavah Rabbah, the mode symbolizing our personal strivings and yearnings. In fact, the whole piece plays upon our reaching upward. The first two notes of this piece, F and Bb, set up the dialectic that is present in the whole work. There is a constant pull between two poles, one at F and the other at Bb. We start at F, but we are trying to move beyond ourselves, reaching higher to a new way of being that takes place after teshuvah, represented by the Bb. The fact that the piece continually returns to F and plays with different manifestations of this key throughout might signify the difficulty we have in sustaining our goals of *shleimut*, of the wholeness that comes from returning to God. The tension never lets up until the very last motive.

It is in section 2, on the word *la'alafim*, "to the thousandth generation," that we see the first time the music breaks out of the contours of the *te'amim*, and we know for certain that there will be more to this piece. It is fitting that on the word that describes the continuity of the generations to whom God extends forgiveness, we see variation in the musical structure. We are different from the past generation, and it is not at all certain that God will forgive us the way God did our parents. Thus we express ourselves in a different way, making different mistakes, pleading differently as well.

We mentioned earlier that section 2 could be seen as a bridge rather than a modal shift in its own right. We could see this as one of Ganchoff's signature tricks, in which he takes us on something a wild ride, thrusting us into one plane and then in a completely new direction, just so we don't know what to expect. But I think there is more to this particular shift. He takes us into the key that we

will eventually be in at the end of the piece: the goal (the finish line) is BbMA. But *teshuvah* is not that simple. Each of the three times we say this text brings us closer to God's acceptance of our repentance and does so from another perspective; we cannot achieve our goal so immediately, and we have to search out every possible direction for our souls to reach the Divine. God has told us that if we sin and then say these words, we will be forgiven. But first, we have to struggle, we have to *not know* that we will be forgiven, we have to *not know* what lies ahead, or how to get there. We see this in the stretching from mode to mode and the tension inherent in Ganchoff's *dreidlach*. We therefore arrive at BbMA only temporarily, a taste of what is to come if we work for it.

The next mode, GAR, (in section 3) could be indicative of how Ganchoff thinks we have to approach the struggle. We have said that Ahavah Rabbah is the most intimate of the Jewish modes, and the most personal. It is interesting that Ganchoff decides to begin in the mode that in its very name suggests the concept of *z'chut avot*, the merit of our ancestors. God was "the shield of our ancestors," and by using this mode we are tapping into the covenant God made with them and with the Thirteen Attributes. Then, once we have established the connection and the fact that we are descendents of those who were worthy of God's forgiveness, we turn to the personal connection and the tortuous personal struggle, in the mode that calls to mind God's everlasting love for us. GAR is established most concretely on the word "*v'nake*," which means [God] pardons; we are turning toward God in our most intimate musical form, to plead with God to pardon us. This is a musical representation of the physical and emotional act of *Teshuvah*.

While we are led to think that we have reached this new level of the key of G, in actuality Ganchoff is about to sink us back from where we came, F (section 5). We are thrust back down into the knowledge that this process of repentance will not be so easy, and we are made acutely aware of our own sin, mortality, and humility before God. But this F in section 5 is not the same as the first F in section 1. We begin anew in AR, not from the standpoint of our fathers and mothers, but from the perspective of our own souls. In order to progress anywhere, in order to create anything, we have to first accept where we are ourselves. We cannot depend upon anyone else to pave the way for us. We have to just be, just acknowledge our own nothingness, just sink to the base of our existence. This is what Ganchoff seems to be doing by dropping back down to F, and by utilizing Ahavah Rabbah. God has everlasting love for us, even if we are nothing, even if we are sunk to the lowest barest rung of the ladder, and it is only through purifying ourselves with this honesty about what we really are, dust, that we can allow God's grace to penetrate our souls.

Because we have been honest about our ultimately humble beginnings, not hoisting ourselves up by the merits of our ancestors, we are allowed in this expression of the text to actually reach Bb Magein Avot, to have a taste of where we intend to arrive. But the work is not done. Holiness is not something that exists without struggle. While there have been great Rabbis who extended Shabbat from Friday night all the way through Tuesday evening, it is not advised that we ordinary people try to extend Shabbat too far, because living in constant sanctity is an emotional overload. The forgiveness we request of Adonai is not

something that necessarily creates peace within us. We might think we seek calmness in our souls, but to be bound up with God is to struggle. Our very name, Yisrael, means not "those who have struggled and achieved peace;" it is in the future tense, suggesting that we will forever wrestle with our angels. We will forever wrestle with God.

Not only does this process require struggle, but it requires transformation. We begin in Magein Avot, and end in Magein Avot, but the latter is changed from the former. We are not the same as we were when this piece began; we have been changed. We are not standing on the same spot; the perspective is quite different. However, there is resolution to the struggle, and we do arrive where we have striven to be. This is therefore an optimistic look at this text. If we do what God asks of us, God will do what is asked of God, that is, provide forgiveness. What is asked of us is not just to recite the text, but to be true to our nature, the people who struggles with God.

Finally, we see from Chart 1 that this piece expressing the 13 attributes of God actually walks us through 13 changes of mode, including the bridge from G AR to F AR in section 5. Whether or not this is was intentional is irrelevant; it is certainly a nice addition to the symbolism of the rest of the piece. It is not clear thus far, and it might never be clear, whether any of the above subtext was intentional. The fact is that such symbolic value exists within this piece. Hazzanut, and art in general, is not about conveying direct images and meaning from the performer to the audience, or in this case from the Hazzan to the congregation. A less literal, more symbolic form of musical and textual

communication is used here, and this is what this researcher hears in this artistic form of communication. Someone else might (and hopefully would) find something entirely different, pertaining to his or her own spiritual life.

All of this testifies to the power of music and the importance of its performance. Music contains purpose, direction, and meaning. It is not a one to one communication, like a conversation, but intentions are thrust out to a large group, individuals who might all perceive this information slightly differently. But no matter how differently we may perceive any given piece, music does serve as an important tool for efficacious ritual. It communicates in a symbolic manner, it has the power to help create communities and thereby affect transformation, and it utilizes a structure/freedom balance. Hoffman's paradigm order, then meaning, then hope can be applied to hazzanut as well as liturgy. There is an order, a set formula of *nusach* that defines the structure of the notes, and the particular patterns into which they should form themselves. From this order, we can derive meaning, such as what has been described above. And from that meaning, we discover hope: hope that the transformation of our selves will lead us to glimpse the divine; hope that the struggle we pursue is not in vain; hope that by stripping away all but our basic nature, we can begin to travel the path toward redemption, and a continued relationship with God.

This is one explication of a particular concomitant musical moment. Any service requires a mixture of concurrent and concomitant moments in order to function correctly; without the concurrent ones, everything is given too much importance and therefore nothing can be distinguished from anything else, and

without the concomitant ones, there is nothing to challenge and uplift the community. Every community needs to strike its own balance between these two. One example of a synagogue that has discovered such a balance is Stephen S. Wise Temple in Los Angeles. What follows is an analysis of the early Friday Night Service as it flows between concurrent and concomitant moments.

STEPHEN S. WISE TEMPLE: BALANCE IN THE FRIDAY EVENING SERVICE

One striking trend was present in this service[145] that helped to delineate between concomitant and concurrent moments. The concomitant moments were without doubt the high points in the service. They were the times when the direction and energy of the service could be changed and manipulated, and the cantor, by one alteration of the dynamic or even a facial expression, could switch the entire mood of the congregation. Music in these moments served to interpret and underscore the text, and the congregation waited, some holding their breath, most suppressing coughs and sitting very quietly. The concurrent moments were times in which the service flowed onward without tension, and the congregation let out their breath. They served as warm-ups for the congregation to test the waters of prayer, or as links between the high points of the service. They were sometimes resting places: when the concomitant moments introduced a new musical and emotional idea, the concurrent ones often allowed the congregation to stay with that mood long enough for it to feel comfortable. Sometimes, they were reactions to the concomitant moments: when the tension was built up by the high

[145] Friday, January 6, 2001: Stephen S. Wise Temple, Los Angeles.

dramatic moments, the concurrent music created a release, like the snapping of a rubber band back into place.

The service begins with two sets of warm-ups,[146] the first consisting of *Romemu* and *Shalom Aleichem,* and the second of the Candle Blessing and *Lecha Dodi.* The congregation walks into the room and starts to get settled during *Romemu,* and little by little, people start to sing along with the cantor. Mostly, however, people use this time to look around to find their friends and notice who else decided to show up that evening. Not only is the music highly in the background, but the text is mostly lost on a crowd still unconcerned with prayer. This could almost be any piece of music and any Hebrew words, and the not much would change. The same basic mood pervades the next piece, *Shalom Aleichem,* though more and more the crowd has settled and is becoming ready for the next step. These two pieces of music are concurrent, in that they create a flow that carries the energy of the congregation into the next part of the service. The music is functional, and not there to communicate anything about the words but to establish a mood and to make the congregation ready for prayer.

The next warm-up is a step closer to the goal of involving the congregation in prayer. The Rabbi gives an introduction to the Candle Blessing, which helps to situate the community in the mood of Shabbat; the congregation rises to show that this is a heightened moment in the service; and the tempo of the music slows down, allowing entrance into Shabbat. The Candle Blessing is still a concurrent moment however, because the music still functions more to create a

[146] See charts in Appendix 2, Illustrations 1 and 2 for the rubrics of the service, the music used, and the general flow of the prayers.

mood than to say anything new about the text. *L'cha Dodi* continues in this mood, and it is here where the congregation really begins to sing. The warm-up has been effective, and the community is ready for something else to happen.

The *niggunim* that are sung in between pieces of music carry largely the same concurrent function. Perhaps they function the same way the nusach does in a traditional synagogue. They move the service along, and the same music can be used for many different places in the service. Like nusach, the niggunim are not specific to any particular text, nor do they necessarily illuminate any text. However, the niggun before *Barechu* carries a special function, and even though it carries no text, it acts as a concomitant moment. Instead of being concomitant to the text, in that it illuminates and explicates the words, it is concomitant to the moment of the service. It transforms the moment, moving from a warm-up into what begins to feel like the real body of the service. It is a new melody, slow and reflective, with a lulling waltz-like feel, and the Cantor uses this moment to envelop the congregation with the calm of Shabbat. Something very direct is being communicated to the congregation: We are now finally ready to begin the ascent into our prayers. The community clearly feels this as they rise as preparation for *Barechu*. This is the first concomitant moment of the service, and people stand almost at attention, knowing something different is about to happen.

Once this mood has been established, it is carried onward by *Barechu*, which, because the moment before it was concomitant, becomes concurrent. This lasts just a moment, because the Cantor comes in to illuminate for us the *chatimah* of *Ma'ariv Aravim*. It might seem surprising that nusach would be a concomitant

moment here; but the service has been set up with a different type of "nusach," the Stephen S. Wise Temple "nusach." We expect more of the same contemporary feel to follow, and when the Cantor enters with the traditional flavor of the *chatimah,* we are called to listen more closely. The texture of Shabbat flows over us, as we praise the God who separated day from night and created our world. The music suggests that not only did God separate day from night, but that we stand at the threshold of one such separation; Shabbat can arrive only because day and night are distinct.

The tension of the congregation's intuitive realization of this new idea is then immediately released in *Ahavat Olam,* a jumpy, upbeat melody that takes the congregation easily into *Shema* and *V'ahavta.* The next high point is a curious one, because it is accomplished by a recitation of a text in English with instrumental accompaniment. The text is a creative rendition of the *V'ahavta* prayer,[147] and the accompaniment is Sol Zim's *Mi Chamocha.* The music's tempo is slowed down dramatically from the normal tempo of the song, and it therefore makes a totally different statement. In its slowed down version, the music seems to combine the pain of memory with longing and hope for the future, and it enhances the text's ability to move the listeners. It allows the congregation to somehow personalize the text, to hope and in fact to know, that if we attend to the commandments, we will know the presence of God. It is a profound moment for the congregation, and the researcher was surprised to notice so many people in tears.

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[147] See Appendix 2 Illustration 3 for the text of the reading.

The upbeat version of this melody follows immediately after. This change in tempo totally alters the feeling of the music, suggesting the joy and celebration that occurred at the shores of the Red Sea. But these ideas and sentiments are already contained in the text, and therefore the music is back to its more functional, flow-inducing, concurrent role.

With the *Hashkiveynu*, the service arrives at another concomitant moment. This is the first time the Cantor has an entire piece with which to illuminate the text and inspire the congregation, and they have been waiting for just such a moment. This is the highest point of the *ma'ariv* service,[148] appropriate because this is the one prayer that has a completely different theme from the prayers of the morning. Unlike in the morning when we have the whole day spread out in front of us, the one thing we need from God at night is protection from the vicissitudes that may await us when we go to sleep. In the *Hashkiveynu* prayer, we relinquish the control of our lives to God, and ask in this prayer that we be guarded from all sides and all manners of danger. So the congregation holds their breath as the Cantor brings them on a journey, from fear of the night and the treachery our loss of control brings, to trust and hope in God and the knowledge that we have an eternal protector in the One Who Never Sleeps. The improvisational nature of Rothblum's music allows the Cantor to play with his expression of the text, and even provides a congregational melody so that the community can lend their own voices to the mood the Cantor has created.

[148] Interestingly, the Hashkiveynu prayer is also the highlight in the Eastern European tradition.

After such a high point, the singing of *V'shamru* and subsequently *Mi Shebeirach* become moments of release, and they carry the service onward, just like in *Ahavat Olam* and *Mi Chamocha*. This flow continues through the *Avot, G'vurot*, the silent portion of the *Amidah*, and *Oseh Shalom*, until the next concomitant moment, *Avinu Shebashamayim*. By this time, the service is beginning to come to a close. The congregation has done what it came to do, and the process now becomes transitioning into going home and having Shabbat dinner.

There is one more series of concurrent moments, in the *Kiddush* through *Bayom Hahu*, leading to the final moment of concomitance, *B'yado Afkid Ruchi*. The Rabbi and Cantor sing this together as a duet. We see their friendship with each other emerge, as it is clear they enjoy singing together, and somehow this is as comforting as the words of the prayer. The subtext here seems to be, "We are entrusting our souls to God and to one another," and the congregation, seeing this modeled, is compelled to do the same. Though most of the congregation knows this melody, they are not interested in singing it themselves. Instead, those who sing do so quietly, not wanting to disturb the peace that the Rabbi and Cantor together are creating. It is one of those rare moments in which one feels they can see into another's soul, and nobody wants it to end.

When it does, however, the congregation erupts into *Adon Olam*, now ready to contribute their own souls in song. The flow of this music, its celebratory feel with its joyful Chassidic-style niggun, allows the congregation to

leave uplifted and relaxed, ready to embrace the next portion of their Shabbat experience, the meal.

In general, this service is very successful for this particular congregation. The congregation has been transformed into a "singing congregation:" in fact, it is the first time so much singing has taken place at a Friday Evening service in many years. It is still very new, having been initiated only in the last four months, and there are many changes that will take place in the near future. Perhaps the only major problem with the service is that the variation between concurrent and concomitant moments is not wide enough. The moments in which the service should flow often still carry too much weight, so that the heightened moments cannot thrive as much as they should. Perhaps too much is made of the concurrent moments by the clergy. On the other hand, this makes the service to a certain extent more comfortable; less release is created, but less tension is also created. The format and musical style of this service is new to Stephen S. Wise Temple; as this congregation becomes accustomed to this new format, perhaps the tension could be enhanced, so that the ritual becomes one of really letting go of the work week and entering the magical time and space of Shabbat.

Furthermore, thus far the music of the service has remained mostly the same, which has allowed the congregation to develop a high comfort level with the prayers. This was an important trend to set; but now that the comfort level exists, it would be inspiring to see what the Cantor could do by altering the moments of concomitance. Whereas now the *Hashkiveynu* is highlighted, perhaps one night the *Ahavat Olam*, with its theme of God's love for Israel, could be

illuminated, or maybe we could hear a musical midrash on the *V'ahavtah*. This would allow the ritual to remain fresh, to not devolve into a mere routine.

These are ways in which the musical structure of the service creates the theatrical structure; by alternating concurrent and concomitant moments in the music, different statements can be made about the nature of our community and our relationship with God.

CODETTA

Thus both types of music behavior, concurrent and concomitant, are utilized in Jewish ritual, and it is partly the alternation between them that creates ritual's theatrical form. The concomitant musical moments are surrounded by concurrent ones; moments of high drama are accentuated and made powerful by the less tense and dramatic moments encompassing them. One teacher of hazzanut explained that the music can best be performed by "holding the holds, running the runs, and giving it some oomph;" this could also describe the flow of the service. The concomitant moments are meant to be accentuated, while the concurrent ones allow us to flow with greater ease into the next peak.

Creating such flow in our ritual, particularly in Reform Jewish worship, which allows for so much freedom and so many opportunities for change, requires great skill in three areas. First, it is important to plan the concomitant moments well. Just like in the theatre, one must know when to allow the performance to peak, and when to allow the pace to continue quickly and smoothly. This is a

skill cantors and rabbis and prayer leaders continue to struggle with, searching for the appropriate balance for each congregation, and for each moment in time.

Second, the moments of concurrence must be created; this requires de-emphasizing the music so that the focus may remain on the text alone. It requires relieving tension rather than creating it, and it also requires that the prayer leader for the most part remove personal input and passion, thereby allowing room for the congregation to open up themselves. This process of *tzimtzum*, withdrawing oneself to make room for another, is practiced by brilliant song-leaders, and it is the specialty of ba'alei tefillah.

The third skill is in creating the moments of musical midrash. It is not enough to know the text and its academic meaning; and it is not enough to know the music and the vocal technique required for its creation. There is another step cantors must take, one which requires personal risk as well as technique. This is the skill that can perhaps best be developed through theatrical techniques and knowledge, and this is what the Epilogue will seek to describe.

CHAPTER 5

ACT 5: FINALE

The relationship between theatre and ritual provides us with some helpful conclusions in our search for more efficacious worship. It is important to stress that the nature of this relationship has changed with our cultural circumstances; that is, modern thinkers have changed the paradigm through which we view these terms. Richard Schechner has looked at performance in general, and has set up a spectrum upon which he places not only ritual and theatre, but games, sports, and play.[149] The fact that he and Victor Turner have described ritual as a form of performance[150] allows us the vocabulary to discuss theatre and ritual in the same breath. Lawrence Hoffman has looked at Jewish worship as an art form,[151] and thus has helped to define the new lens through which we see ritual behavior. Driver too researched ritual from a theatrical standpoint, pushing the metaphor further. Whereas once theatre and ritual were seen as opposite ends of a very broad spectrum, because of the research mentioned above, the poles of this spectrum have begun to form themselves into a circle, bringing them into a closer relationship.

Theatre's stated end-goal is entertainment. But the unstated goals, the "subtext" of theatre's purpose, shares much with ritual. Theatre and ritual provide frameworks and paradigms through which we see our lives, and by which we assert that there is meaning in our world. Theatre fulfils our need to come

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[149] Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 12.
[150] Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*.
[151] Hoffman, *The Art of Public Prayer*.

together as a community to be transformed by the telling and retelling of our stories. Ritual too utilizes transformative moments, only instead of a secular expression of liminality, ritual seeks to bring us to a new *makom*,[152] a place invested with the presence of God.

Ritual thus contains an additional dimension, the Divine. In order to reach this *makom*, we must use all of our resources. As this study has shown, one important resource is theatre. One of our greatest abilities is our imagination, something theatre accesses in a very grand way. Our tradition tells us that when we recite the words of the *Mi Chamocha* prayer, we should visualize passing through the great walls of water of the Red Sea. We are also told that we must reenact the Exodus at our Pesach seders as if we were really there; so much of our ritual can benefit from placing ourselves in the position of our ancestors.

Ritual is a means by which we speak to our souls, and it is a method of connecting that soul to God. In theatre, we seek honesty and truth, despite the pretense of imaginary circumstances; in ritual, we seek ultimate truths that connect our souls to one another and that link us all to God. Because theatre speaks in the language of symbolic meaning, and thereby allows us to communicate with a part of our selves not accessible through the intellect, theatre, like ritual, directs our energies beyond the text, and reaches out toward the truest center of who we are as human beings. It is in this way too that theatre can help us to empower our rituals, and to use them to communicate the truth we seek.

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[152] *Makom* in the Torah has been used as an epithet for God (*Vayetze*, Gen 28:10-22).

> There are moments in our lives, there are moments in a day, when we seem to see beyond the usual. Such are the moments of our greatest happiness. Such are the moments of our greatest wisdom. If one could but recall his vision by some sort of sign. It was in this hope that the arts were invented. Sign-posts to the way to what may be. Sign-posts toward greater knowledge.[153]

It is vital that we use the sign-posts that we have been given. Music has the ability to speak to our souls and to enlighten our minds, to comment on our texts and to tie our rituals together. Its ability to balance concurrent with concomitant functions makes it unique as a theatrical tool.

Now that the relationship between theatre and ritual has begun to be researched, the task remains to use what we have learned. The challenge in the future will be to use our new knowledge to create rituals that move us profoundly, that connect us to each other, and that aid us in our search for meaning in our lives. The Pesach seder is a good place to start; we already have the script and many new *haggadot* provide us with ideas for creativity. Purim is another example of how theatre can function easily in Jewish ritual. However, it is not just Pesach and Purim that should inspire us to worship God theatrically; all Jewish worship contains the seeds of this creativity. The *V'ahavta* prayer tells us that we should love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all of our might. Let us go forward with all of our imagination, and with all of our musical creativity, to enable our rituals to speak to us poignantly, and to transform our lives with meaning, as individuals, and as a community.

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[153] Robert Henri. *The Art Spirit.* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1923) 13.

EPILOGUE

A THEATRE TECHNIQUE FOR RITUAL

Artistry of any kind requires technique. Often the technique allows the artist to simplify the act of creation so that extraneous fears and difficulties cannot get in the way. This chapter is an attempt to set forth a series of principles for the performance of concomitant musical moments in ritual. One of the challenges for the Reform Cantor is to establish relevance, meaning, and personal connection to texts that the congregation may not agree with, understand, or even be able to read. This is quite a task, and theatre techniques can help. We have studied the way in which we utilize the theatrical ideas of symbolism, transformation within and through the community, and structure and freedom to make ritual more efficacious; now let us look at how leaders of ritual, particularly the Cantor, can make this ritual come alive through theatre techniques.

Acting technique is formulated to allow actors to breathe new life into texts, to enable these actors to believe in the words they are saying, and to give them resources for communicating the text and the belief to an audience. For this reason, a technique of "acting" is especially appropriate for the Cantor, who needs to be the quintessential communicator.

Believing in the words, and actually allowing oneself to express that belief, can be utterly terrifying in private, let alone in front of an entire congregation. To again quote the words of George Bernard Shaw, "Self-betrayal, magnified to suit the optics of the theatre, is the whole art of acting."[154] This self-

[154] Meisner, xviii.

betrayal is all the more potent when there is no mask for the artist to wear. The emotions expressed in a prayer are the Cantor's emotions, not some characters. The fears and vulnerabilities and weaknesses exposed are also the Cantor's, and when speaking to God, it is impossible to hide. It is so easy to feel compelled to create some sort of barrier to protect oneself from that vulnerability, and yet that is the very thing that detracts from the experience of prayer.

Our prayers have taken the place of the Temple sacrifices, of the burnt offerings that by means of fire sent their powerful and sweet aroma up to God. We know from brush fires in the Los Angeles area that some seeds need their outer shell to be ravaged by fire in order to open up the gift of life inside of them. Sometimes we are like those seeds; it has been said: "If you offer what you have to give to God, it will do you good. If you do not, but hold your gifts for yourself, they will do you ill."[155] Our prayers are our gifts to offer to God, through the fire of fear, self-betrayal, and vulnerability.

Based on acting techniques such as Meisner's, the British American Drama Academy, and Danny Maseng's own "Principles of Acting," and the insightful words of our teachers,[156] I propose a set of seven principles to help us offer our gifts to our community and to God, and by doing so, to come through the fire not only intact but refreshed.

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[155] A principle expressed by Danny Maseng, Kabbalah Class, January 2001.

[156] We are fortunate that there are many Cantors and prayer leaders today who are skilled at these techniques. While the book has yet to be written on a comprehensive theatrical technique for the pulpit, we can learn from our masters and teachers. These principles rely on interviews from January 2001 with: Cantor Nathan Lam, Los Angeles; Danny Maseng, New York; Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller, New York; Cantor Faith Steinsnyder, New York; and Cantor Robert Abelson, New York.

THE PRINCIPLES

1. Who you are is enough. Just be. Just stand there. You do not need to judge yourself. there will always be enough people to do that job for you. You do not need to be more than you are, or do anything complicated to make yourself worthy. There is a core of your being, and that core, that soul, was created by God. God does not create garbage.[157] You are made in the image of God, and therefore you are enough. Furthermore, nothing you can do will make you more than you are. So quiet the noise, and allow the "still small voice"[158] to have a chance to make itself heard.

2. Know the text. No matter what, the text is the guiding factor. You have to know what it means in order to communicate it. Your job is first and foremost as purveyor of texts. Remember this and make it simple: do your job.

3. The subtext: What the text means to you.

A. Be specific and personal. Know what you are trying to say in your own words, in your own voice. When it comes down to it, it is not Rashi standing on the Bimah, but you, and you have to know what YOU mean by these words. Know how these words affect you.

B. Go for simplicity and concrete imagery. The more simple and concrete the image, the more likely it will be communicated to the people listening.

4. Willingness: Be willing, once you know the text and you know what it means to you, to express it. Risk giving too much of yourself. Be generous.

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[157] Maseng, "Principles of Acting."
[158] Elijah's description of God's communication

Allow yourself to be vulnerable. What is beautiful to watch and listen to is the soul of another human being. Do not hold this back, or you will never be more than the music and text themselves. If you give of this gift, it will always be powerful.

5. Acceptance: Take the risk that you can actually believe and pray these words. Do not judge them, but find a way to make them work. Struggle before and after, but not during. If you cannot find a way to say the words and believe them, even as metaphor, do not say them. You will only be able to communicate your struggle with the words, and you will not go beyond this.

6. Know before whom you stand:

A. God. Remember the Hassidic injunction to carry with you at all times two notes. In one pocket, you must have the words "I am dust and to dust I shall return," and in the other, "For me, the world was created." Therefore, be humble, but not obsequious. You have the right to stand there before God, because God gave that right to all of us.

B. The Congregation: It is for the congregation, not for you. Do not make prayer about satisfying ego. Do not look for praise of your voice or your talents. This is not a source of greatness either on the stage or the bimah. It is not about your voice or your talent. It is about your honesty and your soul. Therefore, be honest, and give generously of your soul.

7. Intuition before Intellect:[159] Sing from your heart, not your head. Always go with your intuition before you let your reason and intellect kick in. Your intellect will help you connect with people in speech, but not in prayer.

One Bonus Principle: When it comes down to the moment, let all of this work go.

[159] Danny Maseng, "Principles of Acting," #5

APPENDIX 1

ILLUSTRATION 1: *Adam Y'sodo M'afar*

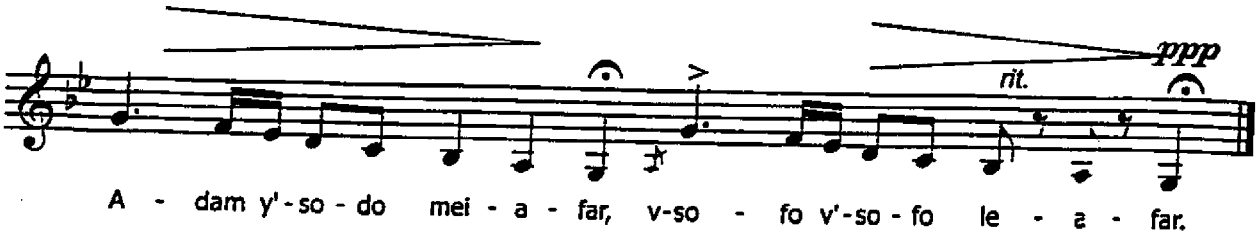
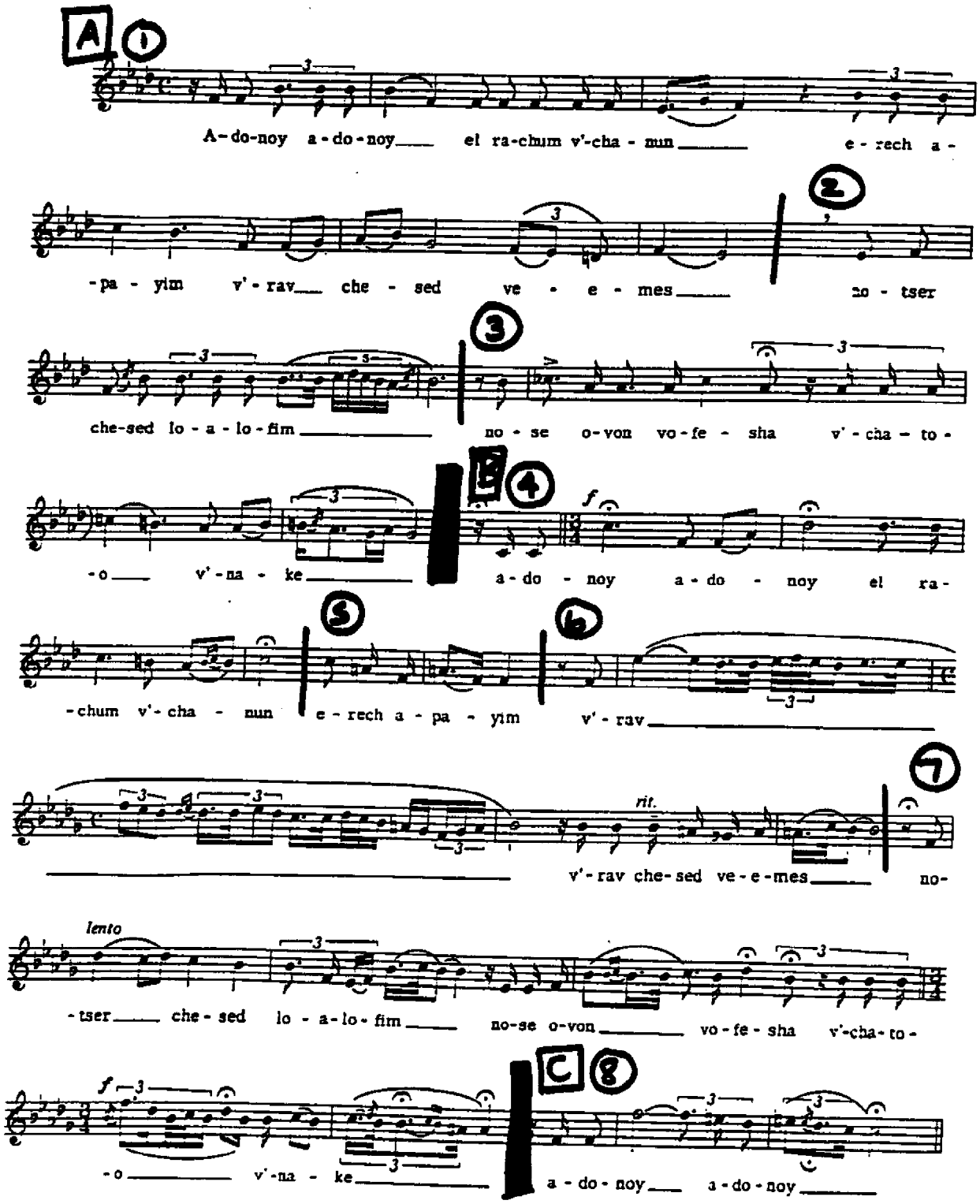


ILLUSTRATION 2: MOSHE GANCHOFF'S "*SHLOSH ESREI MIDOT*"



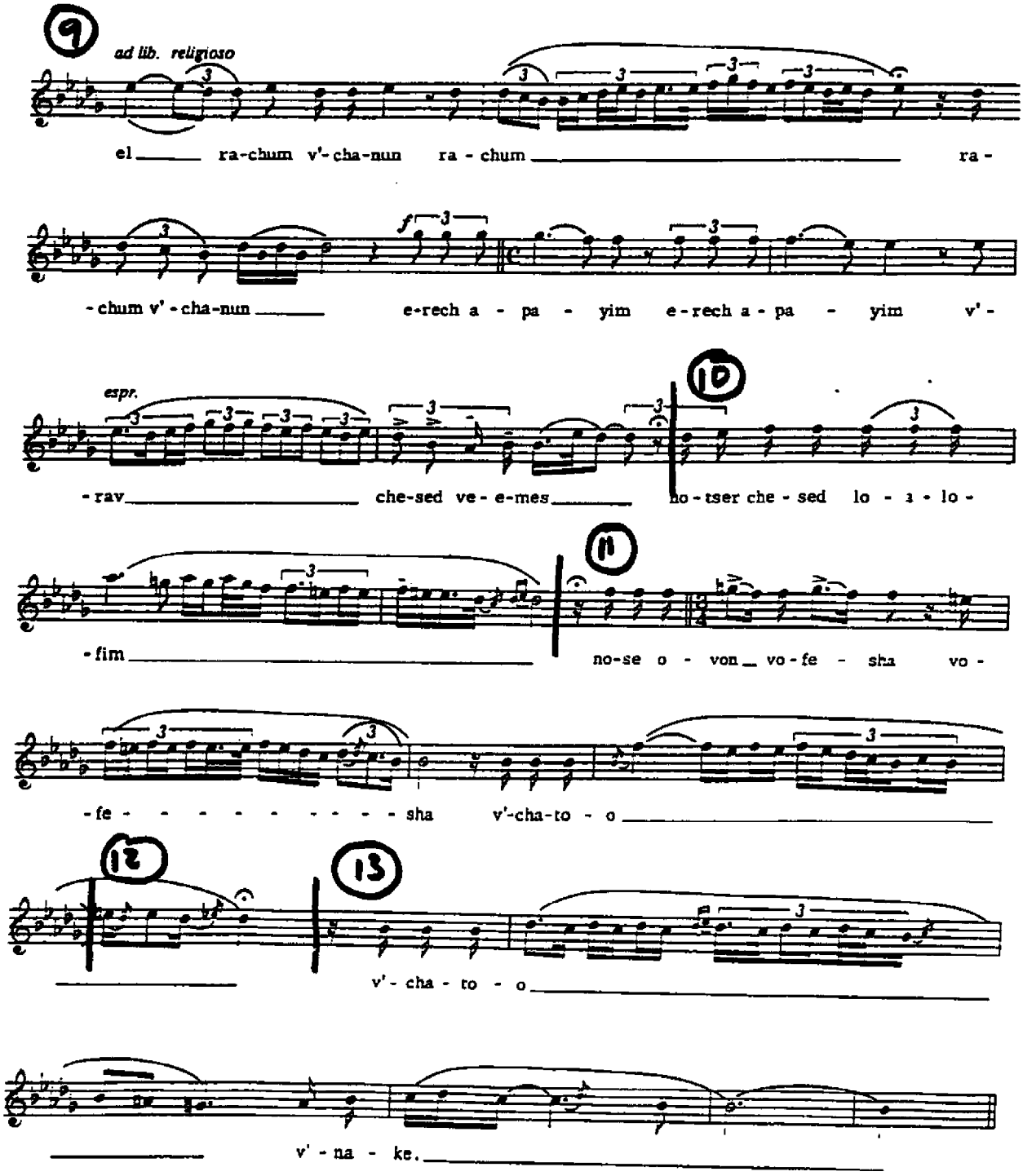

9
ad lib. religioso
el ra-chum v'-cha-nun ra - chum ra -
- chum v' - cha-nun e-rech a - pa - yim e-rech a - pa - yim v' -
espr.
10
- rav che-sed ve - e-mes no - tser che - sed lo - a - lo -
11
- fim no-se o - von vo - fe - sha vo -
- fe - - - - - - - - - sha v'-cha-to - o
12
13
v' - cha - to - o
v' - na - ke.

ILLUSTRATION 3: USE OF MODES

IN GANCHOFF'S "SHLOSH ESREI MIDOT"

Text Set	*Section*	*Key*	*Notes/Scale*
1	1	F MA	D – Eb – **F** – G – Ab – Bb – C
	2	BbMA	F – – Ab – **Bb** – C – Db
	3	G AR	**G** – Ab – B – Cb/C
2	4	G AR	C – – F – [ ] – Ab/A- B – C - Db
	5	F AR	**F**– – A – – C
	6	F AR	**F** – Gb – A – Bb – C – Db – Eb
	7	BbMA	Eb – F – – **Bb** – C – Db – – F
3	8	UkD	F – –[ ] – C – Db – E – F
	9	MA	**Bb** – C – Db – Eb – F – Gb
	10	UkD	**Bb** – C – Db – E – F – G – Ab
	11	MA	**Bb** – C – Db – Eb – F
	12	UkD	**Bb** – C – Db – E – F
	13	MA	G – A – **Bb** – C – Db – Eb

BOLD: Tonic
[ ] : Tonic not heard but implied

APPENDIX 2: STEPHEN S. WISE TEMPLE FRIDAY EVENING SERVICE

ILLUSTRATION 1: RUBRICS OF THE FRIDAY EVENING SERVICE

LITURGY	COMPOSER	CONCURRENT	CONCOMITANT
Romemu	Taubman	•	
Shalom Aleichem	Carlebach	•	
Niggun (Shalom Aleichem)	Carlebach	•	
Candle Blessing	Binder	•	
Niggun (Shalom Aleichem)	Carlebach	•	
L'cha Dodi	Carlebach	•	
Niggun (Mi Chamocha)	Zim		•
Barechu	Nusach	•	
Ma'ariv Aravim	Nusach		•
Ahavat Olam	Aloni (children's service)	•	
Shema	Sulzer	•	
V'ahavta	Trope	•	
*Creative Reading (with instrumental music: Mi Chamocha)	Zim		•
Mi Chamocha	Zim	•	
Hashkiveynu	Rothblum		•
V'shamru	Finkelstein	•	
Mi Sheberach	Friedman	•	
Amidah: Avot. G'vurot	Nusach	•	
(Silent Amidah)	-------		
Oseh Shalom	Friedman	•	
Avinu Shebashamayim	Lazar and Berger		•
Kiddush	Lewandowski	•	
Aleynu	Traditional	•	
Bayom Hahu	Aloni	•	
(Kaddish)	-------		
B'yado Afkid Ruchi	Taubman		•
Adon Olam	Aloni	•	

ILLUSTRATION 2: FLOW OF FRIDAY EVENING SERVICE

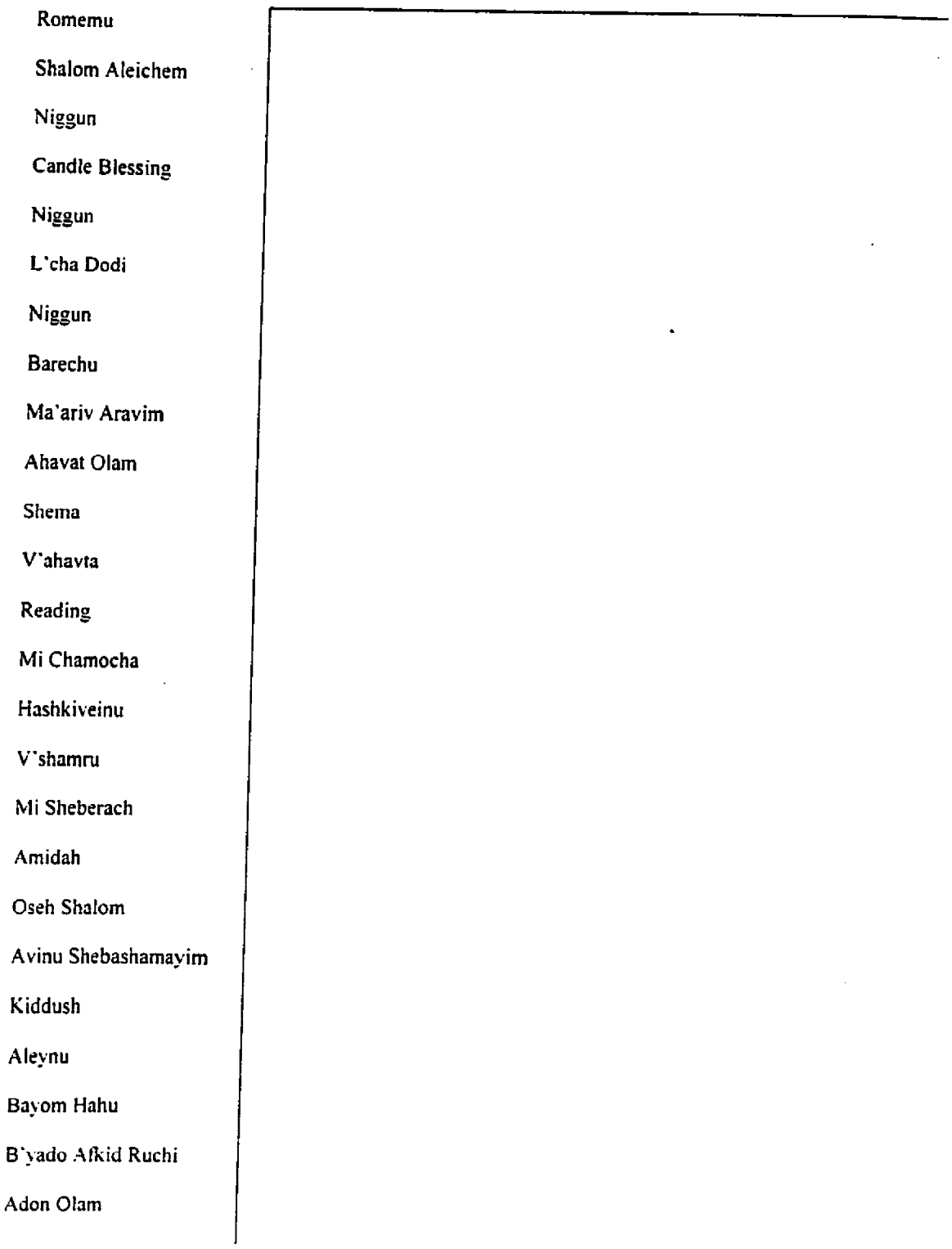


ILLUSTRATION 3: ADDITIONAL TEXT

Listen to My Commandments

If you listen to My commandments and do them, the rain that falls on your fields will also fall in your lives, enabling everything to grow. Your fields will be fruitful and your animals will be fruitful, and you will be fruitful in body and in spirit.

But if you turn away from My commandments, then you will also turn away from My rain; You will no longer be aware of this blessing and its source, so that, for you, the rain will no longer exist. Your fields will no longer be fruitful, and your lives will no longer bear fruit.

Listen to My commandments, be mindful of My blessings, and inherit the promises I made to your ancestors: of fields rich with My bounty, of lives rich with My presence.

Joe Rosenstein

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