

SIDDUR SIM SHALOM

Introduction

ON JEWISH PRAYER ON THEMES AND STRUCTURE IN JEWISH PRAYER

EVERY JEWISH WORSHIP SERVICE has a formal structure and a prescribed text. There are opportunities for an individual's personal expression of prayer, but the essential service consists of a classic text which emphasizes specific themes basic to Jewish theology. Like all classics, this text not only bears repetition; it constantly reveals layers of meaning and inspiration to those who become familiar with it through regular study. The following outline is not all-inclusive. It briefly presents some of the elements of Jewish prayer; other elements are introduced where they appear in the prayerbook.

A basic liturgical formula used throughout each service, as well as on other occasions, is usually referred to in English as a "blessing" or a "benediction." In this prayerbook it is referred to by its Hebrew name, *berakhah* (plural: *berkhot*). This formula was in common use by the second century. One of the most familiar *berkhot*, recited before eating bread, reads: "Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth." The last element of the *berakhah* is varied to reflect the event or liturgical theme to which it responds. Although the worship service includes *berkhot* which are longer than the *berakhah* just cited, and different in form, all *berakhot* begin with the phrase "Praised are You, Lord . . ." (*Barukh attah Adonai . . .*).

An expanded variation of the *berakhah* includes the Hebrew words *asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav*, stating that God "has sanctified us with His commandments." A less literal translation emphasizes that God's commandments (*mitzvot*) add holiness to our lives. Our use of *berakhot* can heighten our awareness that the dimension of holiness is constantly available in each of our lives, that we are as holy as we allow ourselves to be.

Preface

IT IS WITH a deep sense of privilege that we present this prayerbook, *Siddur Sim Shalom*, to the household of Israel. We are grateful to God that we have been given the opportunity to share in this sacred enterprise. We are very thankful to colleagues whose creative contributions have enriched immeasurably this book of prayer.

While this volume is, in a sense, the result of collective effort, it is quintessentially the product of the labors of one man, our editor, Rabbi Jules Harlow. It is a worthy companion to his widely acclaimed edition of the *Mahzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*. Rabbi Harlow's rare talents, which combine scholarship with literary skill, poetic power, and religious sensitivity, have produced a liturgical work of deep spiritual quality and have also provided a setting of aesthetic delight.

It is fitting that we express our appreciation of the role played by those who served as President of the Rabbinical Assembly during our work on this volume: Rabbis Judah Nadich, Mordecai Waxman, Stanley Rabinowitz, Saul Teplitz, Seymour Cohen, Arnold Goodman, and Alexander Shapiro. We are also grateful for the support of Publications Committee Chairmen Rabbis Mordecai Waxman and Gilbert S. Rosenthal. We are pleased to record the cooperation of the officers and staff of The United Synagogue of America, including its President, Mr. Marshall Wolke, and its Executive Vice-President, Rabbi Benjamin Z. Kraetman.

It is our hope that *Siddur Sim Shalom* will strike a responsive chord in the hearts of our people and lead them to a deeper love and understanding of our rich liturgical tradition.

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day of the week at the Temple in ancient Jerusalem. Many congregations add the daily psalm at this point, together with other psalms for special occasions, such as the first day of a new month (Rosh Hodesh) or at a service in a house of mourning. (Some congregations include this unit of psalms at the end of the entire morning service, following *Aleinu*.) Psalm 30 and the Mourner's Kaddish conclude this first part of the morning service.

PESUKET DE-ZIMRA (Passages of Songs)

K'riat Sh'ma and the *Amidah*, the core of the service, are approached only after preparation. In the morning this preparation consists of *Birkhot Hashahar*, outlined above, and *Pesukei De-zimra*, most of whose passages are from the Book of Psalms. Proper concentration while reciting the words of these sections can help us to approach the core of our prayer in the proper spirit, with an informed heart, freely, openly, and gladly.

The basic component of this section consists of Psalms 145 through 150. Since these are the final chapters in the Book of Psalms, the worshiper can symbolically "complete the Praise of the Lord" each day. Psalms 146 through 150 each open and close with *Halleluyah*, "Praise the Lord." Later additions to this section include other psalms and passages from the biblical books of Exodus, Chronicles, and Nehemiah. Two *berakhot* were also added, one (*barukh sheh-amar*) at the beginning and one (*yish-tabaḥ*) at the end of the section. On Shabbat and Festivals, biblical and Rabbinic passages are added to those which are recited on weekdays.

K'RIAT SH'MA AND ITS BERAKHOT

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One.

This familiar declaration is a verse from the Book of Deuteronomy (6:4). In the prayerbook, it is followed by a declaration which is not in the Bible ("Praised be His glorious sovereignty throughout all time"). This phrase, taken from the ancient Temple liturgy, was placed by the Rabbis at this point in the service (even though it thus interrupts a passage from the Torah) to emphasize the purpose of reciting the passage from Deuteronomy: to declare our acceptance of God's sovereignty in our lives (*kabbalat ol malkhut shamayim*) and our ultimate loyalty to God alone. The passage from Deuteronomy is then continued, through verse 9 of chapter 6.

This is followed by two other groups of verses (Deuteronomy 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41). These passages tell of God's prov-

The *berakha*, like most of Jewish prayer, is both a declaration of dependence and an expression of gratitude praising our Creator for the many gifts with which we are blessed. Prayer, which begins with the self, can move us away from self-centeredness and an unreflective routinization of life. Too often we take the world for granted. The *berakha* is a specific way of not taking the world for granted, of responding to each of God's gifts with awareness, awe, and gratitude.

The Hebrew wording of the *berakha* contains a grammatical inconsistency which points to a basic quality of ancient Rabbinic prayer: The *berakha* begins by addressing God directly (as "You"). It continues by referring to God in the third person ("King . . . who brings forth bread," "King . . . whose mitzvot add holiness to our lives . . ."). Thus the wording of the *berakha* reflects our varying relationships to God, which include a bold, direct confrontation, as well as the distance between finite creatures and the immortal, sovereign Creator. These relationships are reflected in other passages too, such as those referring to God as "our Father, our King."

The core of the daily service, morning and evening, is ancient. Two of its obligatory components are to be recited daily, whether one prays with a congregation or as an individual, in a sanctuary or elsewhere. The first component (known as *K'riat Sh'ma*) entails the recitation of three biblical passages as an act of accepting God's sovereignty, affirming His providence, and embracing His mitzvot as deeds which lead to holiness. These biblical passages are preceded and followed by extended *berakhot*. The second component is the prayer *par excellence* in Jewish tradition, the *Amidah*, which consists of nineteen *berakhot*. In the morning, these major components are preceded by two sections, *Birkhot Hashahar* and *Pesukei De-zimra*, which were added to the service at a later date.

BIKHOT HASHAHAR (Morning berakhot)

This is the first section of the morning service (*Shaharit*). Its *berakhot* (many of which are taken from the Talmud) celebrate the renewal of life in a new day. Together with other passages, these *berakhot* express an awareness of human mortality and gratitude for God's gifts of body and soul, for His compassion, for the Torah, and for our covenant with Him. Selections from the Torah and from Rabbinic literature are included to enable one to fulfill at least the minimal obligation for daily study. A passage from Rabbinic literature is followed by *Kaddish De-rabbanan*, a version of the *Kaddish* (see below) especially associated with the study of a text. The inclusion of a daily psalm continues a practice begun by the Levites, who would sing a special psalm designated for each

These six berakhot begin and conclude all versions of the Amidah for weekdays and for special days of the Jewish calendar. The berakhot appearing between the first and the final three berakhot vary in number and content, depending upon the occasion. The weekday Amidah includes thirteen middle berakhot, requesting and praising God for knowledge, the acceptance of repentance, forgiveness, redemption, health, a productive year of good crops, the ingathering of exiles, justice, retribution for persecutors and plotters, reward for the righteous, the building of Jerusalem, messianic redemption, and His listening to prayer.

In the Amidah for Shabbat, Festivals, Rosh Hodesh Musof or Hol Ha-mo'ed Musof, only one berakhot, reflecting the special nature of the day, is recited between the first three and the final three berakhot, for a total of seven berakhot.

On special occasions, such as Hanukkah, Purim, Rosh Hodesh, Festivals (including Hol Ha-mo'ed), Fast Days, Israel's Independence Day, and the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, special passages appropriate to the occasion are added to the text of the Amidah.

Although the Amidah is a formal structure of classic prayer, it is appropriate to add one's own prayers during the recitation of the petitionary middle berakhot. For example, the berakhot concerning health could contain one's own words on behalf of someone who is not well. Other statements could be added at appropriate points according to theme, and especially during the last of the petitionary berakhot, "Lord who hears prayer" (*shomeia tefillah*), when any theme may be stressed. At the conclusion of the Amidah, after the prayer for peace, it is also appropriate for an individual to add his or her own words or moments of meditation, in addition to or in place of the printed texts.

Whenever the Amidah is recited aloud by the person chanting any Morning, Afternoon, or Musof Service, a special section proclaiming God's holiness (*Kedushah*) is added, for responsive chanting. In one variation of reciting the Amidah, the congregation and the person who leads the service begin chanting the Amidah together and continue through *Kedushah*, after which individuals conclude the Amidah silently.

The Amidah has been an integral part of Jewish prayer since at least the first century.

K'RIAT HA-TORAH (Reading of the Torah)

The public cantillation of Scripture in Hebrew, with translation and elucidation of the text, is an ancient practice instituted to enable all

idence and call for the unqualified love of God, for the fulfillment of His mitzvot (including the use of *tallit*, *tefillin*, and *mezuzah*) which lead to holiness, for the study and transmission of Torah, and for the remembrance of the spiritual goals of the redemption from ancient Egyptian bondage.

The berakhot which follows *K'riat Sh'ma* in the morning and evening (with a different wording for each service) praises God as Redeemer of the people Israel. In the evening service, a second berakhot is added, praising God for His peace and protection.

K'riat Sh'ma is always preceded by two berakhot. While the words of these berakhot are not identical in the morning and evening services, the themes are the same. The first berakhot praises God for His gift of Creation; the second praises God for Revelation. His gift of Torah, a sign of His love. This statement of God's love for the people Israel is followed by a passage in *K'riat Sh'ma* which calls for the love of the people Israel for God. In services with a congregation, the first berakhot before *K'riat Sh'ma* is itself preceded by a formal call to public prayer. All stand as the leader chants *Barkhu* ("Praise the Lord, Source of all blessing"). *Barkhu* is recited only with a *minyan*, a quorum of at least ten adults which is required for acts of public worship.

This liturgical unit has been part of Jewish prayer since at least the second century.

AMIDAH

The Amidah, recited while standing (as its Hebrew name indicates), and while facing the direction of Jerusalem, follows *K'riat Sh'ma* and its berakhot in the morning and evening (*Arvit*) services. At the afternoon service (*Minhah*), which has no *K'riat Sh'ma*, the Amidah follows *Ashrei* (Psalm 145) and a variation of the *Kaddish* (see below). On Shabbat, Festivals, and other occasions when an additional (*Musof*) service is added, the Amidah constitutes the major element of that service. The Amidah (a post-Talmudic term) originally was called *Tefillah* ("prayer") or *Shemoneh Esreh Berakhot*, (eighteen berakhot¹). In Talmudic times a nineteenth berakhot was added to the original eighteen. It is also known as the Silent Prayer, or Silent Devotion. Individuals chant it in an undertone; the leader of a service chants it aloud when it is repeated.

The first three berakhot of the Amidah celebrate God's presence as reflected in history and nature, and praise His holiness. The final three berakhot ask that our prayers be accepted, express gratitude to God for life, and ask that we be blessed with peace.

creation. May He cause His sovereignty soon to be accepted, during our life and the life of all Israel. And let us say: Amen.

This was followed by a response:

Amen. May He be praised throughout all time.

The Kaddish emphasizes the act of hallowing and praising God through the redemption of life in this world and through the universal acceptance of His sovereignty.

By the seventh century, the Kaddish held a fixed place in the service. Today we know the Kaddish in several variations, even the shortest of which is longer than the original version. The shortest form, known as *Hatzl Kaddish*, adds the following passage to the brief prayer and response cited above:

Glorified and celebrated, lauded and praised, acclaimed and honored, exalted and exalted may the Holy One be, beyond all song and psalm, beyond all tributes which mortals can utter. And let us say: Amen.

Hatzl Kaddish separates certain sections of the service.

Kaddish Shalem also separates units of the service. Its text consists of *Hatzl Kaddish* plus these three passages.

May the prayers and pleas of the whole House of Israel be accepted by our Father in Heaven. / Let there be abundant peace from Heaven, with life's goodness for us and for all the people Israel. / He who brings peace to His universe will bring peace to us and to all the people Israel. ("And let us say: Amen" concludes each passage.)

The Mourner's Kaddish consists of the text of *Kaddish Shalem* less the first of the three passages above, beginning "May the prayers." The Mourner's Kaddish is recited by mourners for the first eleven months after the burial of a close relative, at every anniversary of the death, and at memorial services. Its use dates from the twelfth or the thirteenth century.

Kaddish De-rabbanan substitutes for that same passage a longer passage concerning teachers and their disciples:

Heavenly Father, grant lasting peace to our people and their leaders, to our teachers and their disciples, to all who engage in the study of Torah in this land and in all other lands. Let there be grace and kindness, compassion and love for them and for us all. Grant us fullness of life, and sustenance. Save us from all danger and distress. And let us say: Amen.

The Kaddish, in any form, is recited only in the presence of a *minyán*, since it is an act of praising God in public.

members of the community to share in the content of Revelation. It is a third basic component of Jewish worship. Every Shabbat and Festival morning service includes a prescribed Reading from the Torah. On Shabbat afternoons and on Monday and Thursday mornings, the first section of the Torah Reading prescribed for the following Shabbat is chanted. Passages from the Torah are also read on Rosh Hodesh, *Hol Ha-mo'ed* of Passover and Sukkot, on Hanukkah, Purim, Israel's Independence Day, Tisha B'av morning and afternoon, and on other Fast Days in the afternoon. On Shabbat and Festivals, Israel's Independence Day, and on Tisha B'av morning and afternoon and on all other Fast Days in the afternoon, a passage from the Prophets (*Hofaruch*) is chanted as well.

During each Torah Reading, some members of the congregation are honored by being "called up" to the Torah (for an *aliyah*), to recite appropriate *berakhot* before and after each of the portions which make up the Reading. The Torah Service is an appropriate time for the insertion of additional prayers commemorating rites of passage or responding to times of crisis in the life of the individual or the community.

Other books of the Bible, known as *Megillot* ("Scrolls"), are chanted on other occasions: The Book of Esther on Purim, the Book of Lamentations on Tisha B'av, the Book of Ruth on Shavuot, The Song of Songs on Passover, and Ecclesiastes on Sukkot. The first two are mandatory. Customs vary concerning the other three.

ALEINU

Since the fourteenth century, *Aleinu* has been included toward the end of every service. Through its words, Jews daily envision and pray for the universal recognition of God's sovereignty by a united humanity.

KADDISH

According to a widely accepted theory, Kaddish was originally a brief Aramaic prayer with a response, recited at the close of a lesson in the ancient synagogues or houses of study. Such lessons, which featured the teaching of biblical or Rabbinic passages, would end with a message of hope. The Kaddish is a formalized extension of that message. The earliest Kaddish consisted of a few words recited by the teacher or preacher:

Hallowed and enhanced may He be throughout the world of His own



ON RITUALS DURING PRAYER

Jewish worship includes ritual acts as well as words of prayer. Two major examples of this accompany the recitation of *K'riat Sh'ma* and the *Amidah*.

Proper devotion while saying the six Hebrew words beginning *Sh'ma Yisrael* ("Hear, O Israel!") during *K'riat Sh'ma* demands complete concentration. This has led to the custom of covering or closing one's eyes during the recitation of that verse. (This practice is not followed when the verse appears elsewhere in a service.)

The fringes of the *tallit*, known as *tzitzit*, are the focus of the final passage of *K'riat Sh'ma* (Numbers 15:37-41). *Tzitzit* symbolize devotion to all of the mitzvot. During the morning service it is customary to be holding the *tzitzit* before reciting this passage. The four fringes are gathered, and held in the hand, while one recites the last phrases of the *berakhah* which precedes *Sh'ma Yisrael*: *Va-havi-enu I'shalom . . .* ("Bring us safely . . ."). Then, during the recitation of the passage from Numbers, one kisses the *tzitzit* each of the three times the word *tzitzit* is recited. The *tzitzit* are kissed again, and released, during the first part of the passage which follows, when the leader recites *ve-emunato la'od kayamanet*.

The *Amidah* is known as the prayer (*tefillah*) in Rabbinic tradition. Since it is our prayer *par excellence*, we prepare for it with a heightened sense of approaching God's Presence, the throne of the sovereign Creator. The ritual acts associated with the *Amidah* resemble those practiced in a court of royalty: approaching the throne; standing respectfully in the sovereign's presence, feet together; bowing at appropriate times; and finally stepping backward.

When reciting the *Amidah* one stands facing in the direction of Jerusalem (sometimes this is not possible because of the architecture in some synagogue sanctuaries). In Jerusalem, one stands facing in the direction of the Western Wall and the site of the ancient Temple.

Before beginning the *Amidah*, one takes three steps forward and declares, *Adonai s'fatai tiftach . . .* ("Open my mouth, O Lord . . ."). Some step forward only after having taken three steps backward.

One bows at the knee and at the waist four times while reciting the *Amidah*: at the beginning and at the ending of the first *berakhah* and of the next to last *berakhah*. During the first, one bows while pronouncing the first word, *Barukh* ("Praised") and stands erect at the word *Adonai* ("Lord"). During the close of this *berakhah* ("Praised are You, Lord, Shield of Abraham"), one bows at *Barukh* and stands erect at *Adonai*. During the next to last *berakhah*, one bows while saying the

first words, *Modim anahnu lakh* ("We proclaim that You . . .") and stands erect before pronouncing the word *Adonai*. At the closing of this *berakhah* ("Praised are You, beneficent Lord to whom all praise is due"), one bows at *Barukh* and stands erect at *Adonai*.

At the end of the personal meditation which follows the *Amidah*, one takes three steps backward while bowing at the waist to the left, to the right, and then straight ahead. This usually occurs during the passage which begins *Oseh shalom bimromav* ("He who brings peace . . .").

This passage is also found at the end of most versions of the *Kaddish* (Mourner's *Kaddish*, *Kaddish Shalem* and *Kaddish De-rabbanan*). In these instances as well it is customary to step backward while bowing.

At the formal call to worship, which the leader begins by chanting *Barukh* while bowing at the waist, one bows at the waist while reciting the first word of the congregational response: *Barukh*.

Bowing is also customary during the first passage of *Aleinu*. One bows at the knee and at the waist while saying *va-anahnu* ("we . . ."), standing erect at *lifnei melekh* ("before the King . . .").