

“What is old can be made new, what is new
must be made sacred”

Harav Avraham Yitzchak Kook, 1st Chief Rabbi of Israel

Va'ani Tefilati *I Am My Prayer*

A Kadima/USY Guide to Enhance the Structured
Tefillah Service

Section 2 **Shabbat Morning**

Materials prepared by Amy Dorsch

Includes:

Matbe'ah Tefillah (Structure of the Service/ Service Outline)
Creative and Interactive Suggestions for Each
Prayer

Questions for Personal Meaning
Kavanot: poems, songs and stories



Creating An *Avirah Shel Shabbat*

(Shabbat Atmosphere)

Before Shabbat:

- Make sure each room is clean and in order
- Shabbat themes are always fun. Do an activity before Shabbat that welcomes the theme. i.e. Yedid Nefesh- Friendship-have each participant create a Shabbat-O-Gram for a friend. Shabbat Shalom greetings create community
- Gather the group for a quick meditation or *kavanah* (direction or intention) exercise to transition from mundane to holy, do a yoga stretch to relax the body, play soft music, tell a story, reflect on the week
- Gather the group before everything begins and tell a Midrash or traditional Jewish story. Serve tea and cookies to create a “mood”
- Set up the prayer space (*makom Tefillah*) as a *spiritual* space. Place posters of Jerusalem up, have the USYers create a mural or Shabbat Message Board where they write messages of peace and bracha to one another
- Create a mural of Jerusalem and hang it up on an entire wall
- Before candle lighting, welcome everyone in with soft, calming music, keep voices low to remind everyone that they are entering into a day of calmness and *menucha*
- Create a nice atmosphere for dinner by decorating the room with centerpieces, flowers and colored table cloths. Put Shabbat or Jewish quotes by each place setting as a conversation piece
- Incorporate a poem or Hebrew reading into the service for a creative *Kavanah*, read the lyrics to an applicable Hebrew or English song.
- Teach an Israeli dance to encourage interaction and *ruach*

The following pages include a guide to enhancing the structured prayer service with *Kavanot*, creative, inter-active exercises and brief explanations and suggestions for personalizing the prayer service. Please do not use every single activity or services will take hours to complete, but use a couple of ideas that will enhance the prayer experience for your group.






*A Caveat: Please note that credit and sources are given to the best of our knowledge. The origin of any source not indicated was unclear.

Guide to Symbols:

✨ Tefillah in Action

an activity to apply to this Tefillah

Kavanah: Ways to connect with the prayer, make it more meaningful and personal and allow the participant to answer “what does this mean and “what does this mean to me?”

 Please rise	 Kavanah, story or Midrash, Jewish text source	 Prayer Movement
 Please be seated	QPM- question for personal meaning, personalize the prayer	 Did you know?/Fast facts to share with the group or questions to consider

*a note on page numbers: You will notice that there are 2 different page numbers indicated. Page numbers that are underlined indicate pages of the full Sim Shalom. *Italics* indicate page numbers for Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals

Why Pray?

Reflections on Reasons for Prayer

(preparing to pray, a resource for discussion, interaction, contemplation)

Before we begin any prayer service, we must explore our intention for prayer. Why do we pray? Sometimes, all it takes for one to engage and find meaning in prayer is to find a *personal* connection, a reason why.

We often draw on Jewish sources for inspiration, motivation and reasons for prayer. Below are some secular selections (quotes marked by * are Jewish) collected for Rakavet (a division of METNY) USY Fall Kinnus 2008, that can be used for discussion, contemplation and debate for reasons why we pray.

1. “Prayer cannot mend a broken bridge, rebuild a ruined city or bring water to parched fields. Prayer can mend a broken heart, lift up a discouraged soul and strengthen a weakened will”- Ferdinand Isserman
2. God punishes us mildly by ignoring our prayers and severely by answering them.- Richard J. Needham
3. Prayer does not change God, but it changes he who prays. – Soren Kierkegaard
4. Trouble and perplexity drive me to prayer and prayer drives away trouble and perplexity. – Philip Melanchthen

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5. Don't pray when it rains if you don't pray when the sun shines. – Satchel Paige
6. The value of consistent prayer is not that God will hear us, but that we will hear God. – William McGill
7. Prayer may not change things for you, but it for sure changes you for things. – Samuel M. Shoemaker
8. Two hands working can do more than 1000 clasped in prayer.
9. I prayed for 20 years and received no answer til I prayed with my legs. – Frederick Douglas
10. We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.- Oswald Chambers
11. Prayer is when you talk to God; meditation is when you listen to God
12. Prayer is not merely an occasional impulse to which we respond when we are in trouble, prayer is a life attitude.- Walter A. Mueller
13. The trouble with our prayer is we often do it as a last resort. – Will Rogers
14. When you pray, rather let your heart be without words than your words without heart. [*what is Kavanah?*]
15. Prayer must never be answered. If it is, it ceases to be prayer and becomes correspondence.- Oscar Wilde
16. Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.- Victor Hugo
17. Complaint is the largest tribute heaven receives and sincerest part of our devotion.- Jonathan Swift
18. It is of course possible to dance a prayer.- Glade Byron Addams
19. Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue.
20. What we usually pray to God is not that God's will be done, but that God approve ours.- Helga Bergold Gross
21. Prayer is exhaling the spirit of person and inhaling the spirit of God.
22. *Always let a man test himself: if he can direct his heart, let him pray; if he cannot, let him not pray [Kavanah].- Talmud Bavli, Brachot 30b
23. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below. Words without thoughts never to heaven go.-King Claudius in *Hamlet*
24. Don't live too much and forget about prayer. Don't pray too much and forget about life. God won't give you straight answers so don't seek one. Seek the ways to find the answers, not the answer itself. Be loyal but not blindly loyal. Be ready to grasp God's response in any shape or form. Don't forget about prayer, don't forget about life.
25. *Prayer is our humble answer to the inconceivable surprise of living- Abraham Joshua Heschel
26. If the only prayer you said in your life was 'thank you,' that would suffice.- Johannes Meister Eckhart
27. *The issue of prayer is not prayer, the issue is God- A.J. Heschel
28. Our thanks to God should always precede our requests
29. Pray for what you want, work for what you need.
30. "I'm not religious. I don't know the prayers. I'd feel hypocritical. I'm not sure what I believe so how can I pray?" Would you say, "I'm not Albert

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- Einstein so I'm not going to think?" or "I'm not Michael Jordan so I shouldn't play basketball?"
31. Prayer is scary because we want answers to our questions and may not get them. The very least is that you ask yourself questions to find out who you are and could be "Is there someone there greater than us?" "Does he/she care about me?" "What is expected of me?" The answers may be just in asking, making you think of thoughts you may not have considered before. -Jewish Theological Seminary program advertisement

*Certainly apply any of the ideas from the Section 1: Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv to any Shabbat morning for prayers that repeat.

Preliminary Morning Prayers

Modeh Ani- p.2/61

Acknowledging God for restoring your soul following a night of unconsciousness. We take it for granted that the cycle of sleep and consciousness is a guarantee for us. We start our prayers for the day with the simplest form of gratitude- thanks for waking me up this morning!



this tefillah used to be said immediately upon awakening, usually in bed. Now it is said first thing in synagogue. Why?



נְשָׁמָתִי- my soul, my neshama. Do you know any other words with the same root? The word for breath -נְשִׁימָה- shares the same root as that for soul. What is the connection? Anything breathing has a soul? The restoration of the soul is indicated by the first breath in the morning.



Eicha 3:23 “They are new each morning; great is your faithfulness”



Tefillah in Action

- If you can get a copy of the children’s book *Modeh Ani Means Thank You*, by Ruth Lipson, ask one of your USYers to lead the group in story time and read this children’s book. It may seem silly, but everyone loves story time! You can involve the group by having them mime the story with their bodies, illustrating their bodies being restored from slumber
- Modeh Movements- if any of your USYers are athletic or comfortable with Yoga, try a few good morning stretches to wake everyone up.
- There are 3-4 popular tunes for Modeh Ani, try a few of them!
- Breathing exercise: Give them 20 seconds to count their breaths. Ask them to slow down their breathing and speed it up to compare how they feel when they breathe deeply and relax and then they are more alert with a faster breathing rate. How does this exercise help us understand and appreciate restoring our souls?

QPM: What is a neshama? Do all of our Neshamot look the same? How would you describe your soul? What makes you, you? (eg. my neshama is impatient but friendly).

Ask the group to answer the question “I am me because I..”

Or “Sometimes I am _____, other times, I am _____”

Pop culture reference: Film

Big or 13 Going on 30- different bodies, same person

QPM: What would it be like if you woke up in someone else's body, but it was still you? We thank God for restoring our soul because no matter what your body looks like, you're still you each morning.

This exercise highlights the differences among us and how when our souls are restored, we become ourselves again each morning.



Kavanah: You're Alive!

Try to open your heart to beauty

Go to the woods one day and weave a wreath of memory there/ Then if the tears obscure your way

You'll know how wonderful it is to be alive

- Young Judea Camp Siddur



Morning Blessing: an adaptation of Modeh Ani by Marcia Falk

The breath of my life will bless, the cells of my being

sing in gratitude, reawakening.

נְשַׁמַּת חַיֵּי תְבָרֶךְ
וְקָרַב לִבִּי יְשִׁיר:

כָּל עוֹד נְשַׁמָּה בְּקִרְבִּי
מוֹדָה/מוֹדָה אָנִי.

Mah Tovu- p.2/61



Words or phrases directly from Jewish sources: Bamidbar 24:5
Tehilim 5:8, 26:8, 95:6, 69:14



The words of Mah Tovu were originally intended to be a curse upon the Israelites. When Balaam the prophet saw them residing so peacefully, he changed his words for curse to blessing. Sometimes, we form a particular opinion about people and decide to treat them accordingly without really giving them a chance. We choose to be mean or rude to someone who truly doesn't deserve this treatment.

QPM (question for personal meaning): How can we apply this story of curse to blessing to our own lives?



Tefillah in Action

מַה טּוֹב אֲבוֹתֵינוּ יִצְחָק יִבְרָכְךָ יְיָ, מִשְׁכְּנֵי תְּיָיִךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל

*How goodly are your sanctuaries people of Jacob, your study houses,
descendents of Israel*

Themes to point out or highlight:

1. Beauty of praying as a community, shared prayer experiences
2. “Blessed are you in your entering-” Dvarim 28:6

Makom Tefillah: the prayer setting. What does a prayer space look like? We no longer have the Temple but we do have beautiful synagogues. Does prayer always have to be within the four walls of a synagogue? Why do we pray in a synagogue? Maybe it's because if we don't walk into a structure meant for praying, we may never take the time to pray or be around others who wish to do the same as a community. (see the Kavanah on this, a Hasidic Folktale)

QPM: Why decorate a prayer space? What feelings do you get when you enter an amazing looking sanctuary? Is it intimidating? Do you find it easier to pray in a less majestic space?

- Many synagogues decorate their space with a Jewish text. Can you share some of the quotes you have seen at different synagogues? Why would they choose that selection of Torah?

Some examples include (source: Higher and Higher, Brown, p.141-143):



Know before whom you stand



Every generation will extol His deeds



There is none other than the house of God and this is the gate of heaven



Truth, justice and peace



Happy are those who dwell in Your House



Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near

- If you have extra tallitot around, or can provide spare bed sheets somehow, try building your own “Ohel Yaakov” or Israelite community to share the words of Mah Tov. Creating a special *avirah* (atmosphere) for this Tefillah is easy with a few props! Ask for volunteers to stand in as the “tent poles” and sing Mah Tov and Hinay Ma Tov together as a prayer opener.
- Think about your most profound prayer experience. Where were you that you felt connected to God? Can you experience prayer outside of a

synagogue? If we were overlooking a lake right now, would your prayer experience be different? What if you were alone?

- The different names for synagogue

Beit Kneset- house of assembly

Beit Tefillah- house of worship

Beit Midrash- house of study

What else is a synagogue used for?

- Communal prayer vs. individual prayer- Why do we pray in a minyan?

Activity: 10 heads are better than 1

Core concept: learning to support each other (communal prayer)

Have one person lie on the floor. Ask one person to try and lift the person up with 3 fingers (impossible). Now ask for 9 others to join to show strength in community and the support of 10. Try to lift the person again (you should be able to do it). You can also try it using a chair if you aren't comfortable with so many hands touching one person.

Explain: prayer is a very personal, vulnerable experience, when we pour our hearts out to God. Think about when you're going through a tough time and feeling insecure or vulnerable. Doesn't it help to call a friend or enlist support from family members? You should not have to go through emotional experiences alone, so we pray as a community!

Entering prayer space מקום תפילה

- As the USYers or Kadimaniks enter the prayer space or sanctuary, welcome them in a neat way to distinguish outside space from prayer space. Examples:
 - make a human bridge
 - use the Tallit idea above of creating a tent or canopy
 - have the room set up for them to be seated on the floor in a circle
 - begin with a niggun to set the mood
 - have the group link arms to illustrate the community of prayer
 - try a visualization exercise and ask the group to imagine their own מקום תפילה. How would they design a sanctuary? Extreme Makeover: Sanctuary Edition- what would the bima look like? How would you design the ark? What decorations would you have? Should there be benches or pillows? Should the bima be in the middle? Ask for responses.

Kavanah: Finding God, Finding Yourself

A Hasidic folktale

There once was a young boy who always liked to spend his time in the forest. Now, the forest could be a very beautiful place, but there was no knowledge what once would find there. It could also be a place of great danger.

The young boy's father was worried. He was delighted that his young son was so full of adventure or curiosity, but he was afraid that something terrible would happen to him in the forest.

Finally, he asked his son, "Why do you always go into the forest?"

'I go there to find God," the son replied.

The father was relieved. Surely there was a way to convince his son that it was not necessary to go into the forest to find God, that he could find God anywhere.

"Don't you know that God is everywhere, one and the same?" he responded.

"Yes," agreed the son, "but I am not."

QPM: How do you relate to this story? Where and when do you feel closest to God? Have you ever read through some of the prayers and looked at it in a new way based on your experiences? Have you ever thought, "hey, I never noticed that there was a prayer for healing. I twisted my ankle playing baseball last week, I should recite this!"

Each time you pray, you are slightly different than the time before. So even if you've read the Tefillot over and over again, each time you read through the prayer service, you may gain something new because you are a different person. Additionally, you may experience an uplifting Tefillah experience on Massada in Israel where someone else may need to be in a synagogue sanctuary to pray. We all experience Kavanah in different places and spaces because we are different people.

The Tallit

- Even though those who wear Tallit will likely already be wearing theirs, try a group recitation of the **לְהַתְעוּטָךְ בְּצִיצִית** bracha. Ask for volunteers to tell a personal story of how they got their tallit and why it may be personally meaningful for them to wrap themselves in the comfort of this prayer garment.
- Or: Tallit Fashion Show- ask for 10 volunteers to come up and "model" their Tallitot and explain its origins.

QPM: Why do we wrap ourselves in a prayer garment in order to pray?

Possible answers:

a) just as a "blankie" gives a 2 year old comfort and security, our prayer shawl can offer comfort when we are feeling vulnerable. We are also enveloped and protected by the "wings of the Divine" (כְּנֵפֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם) as we pray.

b) Ready to play, ready to pray: The Tallit is our "team uniform." Just as your football team would show up to a game in uniform, ready to play, your kehilla shows up with Tallit, ready to pray.



Birkot Hashashar – Bokair Tov!!- p.10/65

This set of brachot has so much potential for creativity.



Each bracha is connected to something that happens in the morning.

Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 46

לְשׂוֹן כְּוִי בִּינָה - to distinguish between night and day- the rooster knows when it is morning and we hear him crow (what is a our 21st century version of the “rooster?” The alarm clock crows!)

מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרָמִים - gives us clothing to put on

פּוֹקֵחַ עֵינָיִם - rubbing the eyes

מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים - releases the bound (sitting up)

זוֹקֵף קְפוּפִים - raises those who are bowed (getting out of bed)

שֶׁעָלָה לִי כָּל צָרְכֵי - provides for my needs (putting your shoes on)

הַמְכִּין מִצְעָדֵי גִבּוֹר - walking (prepares a person to take steps)

אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִבּוֹרָה - girds Israel with might (putting on a belt)

עוֹטֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִפְאָרָה - Crowns Israel with glory (putting on a hat)

הַמְעִבִיר שְׁנָה מֵעֵינָי וְתוֹנְמָה מֵעַפְעָפִי - removes sleep from my eyes (washing the face)



Tefillah in Action

- Recognizing the significance of everyday acts: have the Kadimaniks read the English of each bracha and come up with an action they do that corresponds to the bracha (they may not be able to figure out an action for “crowns Israel with glory” so help them interpret the text. They should realize that these blessings cover the “waking up” process from opening our eyes to getting dressed and leaving the house. (see Shulchan Aruch text above for the order of activities).
- After reading Birkot Hashachar, ask people to stand up and call out their own Bokair Tov Brachot (what’s missing from these brachot that they’d like to acknowledge?). Ask them to share their morning routine. See what’s missing from the brachot that is part of the morning routine (note that breakfast doesn’t happen until after prayer).

Examples;

Instead of helping us distinguish between night and day you could say giving us a new start to do great things

Instead of giving us the ability to see, you can say inspiring us to see things in a new way

- Are these brachot in the correct order? How would you change it based on the morning activities you do? Hand out pieces of paper with the translations above and have them put it in their own logical order.
- We’ve come a long way! The original text of Birkot Hashachar includes a bracha “sheh lo asani isha,” for men to say to thank God for not making

them a woman. What could have been the rationale to this prayer (see traditional Birkot Hashachar below).

- a) Halachikly, women are exempt from performing most “time bound” mitzvot. By not making someone female, God was giving them to responsibility and opportunity to perform all of the mitzvot and they are therefore, thankful.
- b) In traditional communities, women work(ed) so hard to bring children into the world and take care of the household. Men felt the need to thank God that they didn't have to go through the pain of childbirth and household labor.

- Physical and spiritual

Hand out copies of the different brachot on different pieces of paper. Have everyone stand on the left side of the room if they're bracha is an expression of gratitude for a physical need, and the right side of the room if it is a spiritual, emotional or mental need.

- Mind, body and soul: Have one person stand up as the *dugman* (model) or hold up a giant outline of a body on a piece of poster paper. Ask for volunteers to point to (or use stickers) to mark the different body, mind or soul associated for each bracha.
- Hand out copies of the traditional brachot. Ask the group to spot the differences. Go through the brachot that are different from the Sim Shalom text and ask for reasons why it was changed.

Explain: שְׁלֹא אֶעֱשֶׂי גּוֹי, שְׁלֹא אֶעֱשֶׂי נִי עֶבֶד, שְׁלֹא אֶעֱשֶׂי אִשָּׁה has been replaced by יִשְׂרָאֵל, בֵּת חֹרִין, יִשְׂרָאֵל (made me in God's image, a free person, a Jew).

One distinguishing feature between the Sim Shalom and more traditional texts (and the Conservative Movement and the Orthodox movement in general), is the notion of more gender friendly, politically correct text and Jewish practices. We replace what could be seen as offensive with a more egalitarian version of the brachot.

- Instead of thanking God for not making us from another faith, we thank God that we're all created alike, in God's image.
- Instead of thanking God for not making us slaves, we thank God that we're free (maybe because we're still enslaved to the material world).
- Finally, instead of thanking God for not making us all women, we thank God for making us unique in that we're all Jewish.

Comparing the Traditional Text with the Sim Shalom Birkot Hashachar

** indicates omissions from Sim Shalom*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הַעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְשִׁבְיָנוּ
בְּיַמֵּינוּ לְהַבְחִין בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לַיְלָה.

Sim Shalom

Traditional Siddur

who has made me in His Image שעשני בצלמו	who has not made me from another nation שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנִי גוֹי
Who has made me a free man/woman שעשני בת/בן חורין	who has not made me a slave שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנִי עֶבֶד
Who has made me a Jew שעשני ישׂראל	who has not made me a woman שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנִי נִי אִשָּׁה

* בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנִי גוֹי
(who has not made me from another nation)

* בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנִי עֶבֶד.
(who has not made me a slave)

* בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנִי נִי אִשָּׁה.
(who has not made me a woman)

(נשים אומרות: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם,
שְׁעָשָׂנִי כְּרָצוֹנִי.)

(Women say: "who has made me according to His will.)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, פּוֹקֵחַ עוֹרִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, זוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, רוֹקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ עַל
הַמַּיִם.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעַשָׂה לִי כָּל צָרָתִי.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְכִּין מִצְעָדֵי גְבוּרָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגְבוּרָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, עוֹטֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּתַפְאָרָה.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, הַנוֹתֵן לַיֶּעָרְף קֶחַח.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלְּךָ הָעוֹלָם, הַמַּעֲבִיר שָׁנָה מֵעֵינֵי
וּתְנוּמָה מֵעַפְעָפִי.

- Miming in the Mornin'- read each bracha one at a time and ask the group to mime or act out a physical interpretation of that bracha.
- Hand out copies of each bracha and ask for volunteers to come up and stand in order of the brachot. Ask the group to place them in a logical order. Why is the order as it is?
- Ask the group to list each step they take to get ready in the morning. Compose a new bracha for each one (Higher and Higher, Brown, p. 146)
- What else are you grateful for in the morning? What could we add to acknowledge upon waking up?

מַלְבִּישׁ עֵרְמִים You are What You Wear- a discussion

What does your clothing say about you?

How do you choose your outfit in the morning?

Ask for a (brave) volunteer to stand up and explain what he/she intended for her clothing to say about him/her. Is the clothing choice you make important to you? Why? Do you think it determines what people think of you? Who or what determines the message your clothing says about you? Explain to the group that God provides your clothing but you choose the message your clothing says about you. These brachot express how we are each made in the Image of God and how God provides us with clothing. How then can we choose our clothing so that we are reflected in the Image of God?

- Actions to imitate God- we thank God for everything we are able to do, everything we have in the morning. How can we transform God's actions of providing for us into helping others?

Kavanah: Talmud, Sota 14a

Hama bar Hanina, expounded the verse, "After the Lord your God ye shall walk" (Deut. 13:5): "How can man walk after God? Is He not a consuming fire? What is meant is that man ought to walk after [imitate] the attributes of God. Just as the Lord clothes the naked, so you shall clothe the naked. Just as He visits the sick, so you shall visit the sick. Just as the Lord comforted the bereaved, so you shall also comfort the bereaved; just as He buried the dead, so you shall bury the dead"

Just as God provides for all your needs and allows you to function each morning, you can imitate God in your actions to help others.

Core concept: **Imitatio Dei**- a theological concept meaning our obligation to imitate God through our actions.

Finish the sentence:

Just as God clothes the naked, I can _____

Just as God releases the bound, I can _____ (eg. advocate for animal rights)

Just as God provides for my needs, I can _____

Just as God gives sight to the blind, I can _____ (eg. donate my old eye glasses)

Kavanah: "God does not want to be believed in, to be debated and defended by us, simply to be realized through us"- Martin Buber, 20th century Jewish philosopher

Psalm for Shabbat (Psalm 92) – p.32/72



Continue standing until the end of Psalm



then be seated



Tefillah in Action

Psalm 92:4: Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the harp, to the melody of the lyre. **עֲלֵי-עֶשׂוֹר וְעֲלֵי-נָבֶל עָלַי הַגִּיּוֹן בְּכִנּוֹר.**

- The Sounds of Shabbat: Hand out different “tools” to use as instruments. This could be the bottom of the plastic container where the siddurim were stored, a chair, a trash can lid, whatever you can collect. Give the USYers/Kadimaniks 5 minutes to come up with a beat to Mizmor Shir.

Psalm 30: Mizmor Shir Channukat Habayit- p. 50/82

Mourner's Kaddish- p.52/82- see activities from Friday Night Maariv

P'sukei D'zimrah- p. 54/83



Baruch She'amar

Themes: Praising God for God's works of Creation. Praising God for rewarding those who follow God's mitzvot

- found in sources such as:



Talmud Shabbat 139a
Psalm 33:6, 9, 31:20



Fun with numbers: PZ= 87 → Baruch She'emar opens P'sukei d'Zimrah with 87 words. ט"ז - P"Z= 87



Hold front two Tzitzit and kiss at בְּתֵשֶׁבֶת



Kavanah for Creation: Partners in Creation

If God created the world, why did God purposely create it incomplete, with so many problems?

When God created the world, He made everything a little bit incomplete. Instead of making bread grow out of the earth, he made wheat grow so that man might bake it into bread. Instead of making the earth of bricks, He made it out of clay so that man might bake the clay into bricks. Why? So that man could become His partner in completing the work of creation.

(Adapted from Midrash)

From: Likrat Shabbat: Worship, Study and Song for Sabbath and Festival Services and for the Home, compiled and translated by Rabbi Sidney Greenberg, 1974, p.127

This also explains why we rest on Shabbat! If God rested after creating the world in six days, so do we rest after working for six days.



Tefillah in Action

"He created the world with His word. Praise Him."

- *How can we use our speech to "create," rather than destroy?*

Jewish value: Shmirat Halashon- guarding your tongue

Scenarios: Present a scenario to the group where there is choice how to use their words.

Eg. 3 girls are talking by their lockers. Another girl walks by.

Girl 1: "Ew. Did you see what's she's wearing? She looks like a clown in that outfit."

Girl 2: "Yah, where'd she get that, the 99 cent store?"

You: _____

(options: "whatever guys, did you see last night's episode of _____"- change the subject. Or "Hey, she's got her own sense of style. Anyway...")

How could you be included in this conversation without participating in Lashon Hara but also not protecting yourself from disparaging comments (those that comment on one person will comment on anyone)?

We learn through Baruch She'amar that God created with His word. We too can create with our words- opportunities, friendships, healing a negative situation, etc. Use your words to create instead of destroy!

- בְּרוּךְ - How many times is this word mentioned? How many times do we praise God for God's works? Count it!



Ashrei- p.80/96



א.ש.ר – root word- happy (אוֹשֵׁר)



Ashrei is an alphabetical acrostic with each letter except ך. One explanation for this omission is that the word for “fall” - נִפֹּל - begins with a ך and since this is an uplifting, joyous Psalm, we keep it positive.

However, the text of the Ashrei, found in the Dead Sea scrolls, includes a ך beginning with the word נאמן or faithful.



Psalm 145

Themes: happiness and joy in connecting with God, praising God, God caring for those in need, rewarding the good, punishing the evil.



Talmud Brachot 4b:

Whoever recites this psalm three times a day is assured of a part in the world to come, because it contains the verse ‘you open Your hand and satisfy every living thing with favor.’

Brachot 4b also explains why the ך is the only missing letter in the acrostic.

R. Johanan says: Why is there no nun in Ashrei? Because the fall of Israel's enemies begins with it. For it is written: Fallen [נפלה] is Israel, she shall no more rise. (In the West this verse is thus interpreted: She is fallen, but she shall no more fall. Rise, Israel). R. Nahman b. Isaac says: Even so, David refers to it by inspiration and promises them an uplifting. For it is written: The Lord uphold all that fall.



Tefillah in Action

Ashrei is a happy song. Sing it in many ways:

- Popcorn- have people “pop up” to recite each line
- Since the ׀ is missing, ask the group to come up with their own word for ׀ in Hebrew or an N word in English. i.e. נְעִים – pleasant
- Alternate between boys and girls or different sides of the room
- Use different tunes or pitches for each line
- Try creating an alphabetical English acrostic using the themes from each line of the Ashrei. You’ve just created your own poem!

Eg. בְּכֹל יוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָ, וְאַהֲלִלָהּ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד


Bless God everyday as God blesses us

- וְזוֹקֵף לְכֹל הַכּוֹפְּטִים – *God supports those who stumble and raises those who have fallen down.* Ask group members to share something they do that helps them feel better or ask them to describe a challenge they have overcome
- דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֵׂי יְיָ, וּגְבוֹרֵי יְיָ יִגְיְדוּ – *One generation praises Your works to another.* What have your grandparents taught you about being Jewish? How have your parents instilled pride for being Jewish in you?
- Have volunteers stand up and pantomime each line and have everyone say the line that has just been depicted.

Question for Discussion- Which line discusses God rewarding those who are good and punishing the evil? If God rewards the good, why do good people still suffer? *Is it to teach us to be strong, to be resilient and to know that we can overcome our challenges? What do you think?*

Halleluyah (Psalm 150) p.88/100

Themes: there are so many different ways to praise God, praising God with music and sound, instruments and dance!

 During Temple times, instruments were used to praise God with song and dance. We no longer have the Temple so we stopped using instruments in prayer services. Some Conservative congregations are starting to allow the use of instruments in the sanctuary. Do you agree or disagree with the use of instruments for Tefillah?. Read this Psalm which declares that we should praise God with instruments. Should we make an exception for Halleluya and bring on the tambourine?

Tefillah in Action

- The night before, ask each person to bring one item to use as to help create a beat. Create a STOMP style movement and sound combination where everyone uses an object or body part to create sound. Invite a few volunteers to stand at the front and lead the others in a beat to the tune of Halleluyah
- Sing Halleluyah in different tunes

- Call out a Hebrew word for a musical instrument and ask the Kadimaniks to make a “soundtrack” of sounds for each word. It may seem silly, but they’ll have fun with it. Explain it as the Hallelu Psalm “sounds of praise.”

תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר - trumpet calls

כִּנּוֹר וְבַלַּיִם - harp and lyre (type of harp)

תִּפְּחוּ וְרָצוּ - drum and dance

עֲגָבִים וְעֶגְבֵי - flute and strings

צִלְצְלֵי שֵׁמֶט - clashing cymbals

- Dance in a circle together and keep the song going joyously
- Read the English and get the group to make up hand actions
- Notice the musical instruments mentioned. Create an “airband” with hand actions
- Many Ways to Praise: Actions- praise God with snaps, praise God with claps, with stomps, etc. Point out the many ways to praise using sounds.
- Sing a few rounds in different pitches. Sing the song a few times in a round. Try gospel style singing! Try beginning or ending the Psalm with a niggun to get everyone warmed up or cooled down.
- Think of other ways to praise God. We’ve looked at body and sound. How else can we praise God? Ask the group to volunteer other ways we praise.
- כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה הַלְלוּ יְהוָה הַלְלוּ יְהוָה. - Let every breath of life praise the Lord

Cool down with a slow breathing exercise. After so much excitement and joy, slow it down with deep breathing. Ask the group to listen to the sounds of praising God with our breath.



Kavanah: Praise God in Your Own Way: A Chassidic Story

The Baal Shem Tov was praying together with his students in a small Polish village. Through his spiritual vision, the Baal Shem Tov had detected that harsh heavenly judgments had been decreed against the Jewish people, and he and his students were trying with all the sincerity they could muster to cry out to G-d and implore Him to rescind these decrees and grant the Jews a year of blessing.

This deep feeling took hold of all the inhabitants of the village and everyone opened his heart in deep felt prayer.

Among the inhabitants of the village was a simple shepherd boy. He did not know how to read; indeed, he could barely say the letters of the *alef-bet*, the Hebrew alphabet. As the intensity of feeling in the synagogue began to mount, he decided that he also wanted to pray. But he did not know how. He could not read the words of the prayer book or mimic the prayers of the other congregants. He opened the prayer book to the first page and began to recite the letters *alef, bet, vet* - reading the entire alphabet. He then called out to God: "This is all I can do. This is my own way to pray. God, please accept my prayers and, arrange the letters in the proper way so that my prayers too can be answered."

Shirat Hayam (Az Yashir) - p.92/102



Exodus 15:1-18

- 🕒 This selection from the Torah praises God for drowning the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Should we be singing joyously for the fall of our enemies? Should we be celebrating the death of others? But they made us suffer so horribly! What do you think?
- 🕒 How does this help us understand the idea of enemies? How can we compare this to our enemies today? Do we wish for their demise or their friendship?
- 🕒 How does this selection describe God? As dangerous? As vengeful? As just (they made us suffer, now they suffer)?



וַיִּבְרַךְ דָּוִד (p.90)



Tefillah in Action

- As you sing, do a dramatic re-enactment of Bnai Yisrael on the other side of the sea, watching God destroy the Egyptians. Assign parts or have a number of people act it out while the others play “audience.” Remind your actors to use their movement and facial expressions to really convey the emotions
- Feelings:
 - imagine you are Bnai Yisrael. You have just witnessed the miracle of crossing the Red Sea and being pursued by your enemies behind you. React to this.
 - imagine you are Bnai Yisrael and you are watching the waters crash around the Egyptians. React to this.



Anthropomorphism- God as having human characteristics

Corporeal- having tangible characteristics or of bodily form

What human characteristics are used to describe God in this Psalm?

Does giving God human features help us understand God's power?

Does it empower or inspire us to take action?

Shacharit Service- begins at p.334/107



remain standing while silently reading Nishmat Kol Chai (p.334/104), then



****Note:** if you'd like to take a break between P'sukei and Shacharit, Try these ideas:

- leading the group in some stretching

- ask trivia questions
- try 34 jumping jacks for to remind them to turn to page 334!
- Explain that the Kaddish usually marks separation or transition and play a separation game like:

Sit down if you have a sister

Sit down if you have blue eyes

Sit down if you're over 5"5

Sit down if you go to Day School

Sit down if you've been to Israel or a USY summer program

 *Why do we have a prayer that marks separation?*

Shochein Ad- p.336/105

(formal chanting of Shacharit begins at Shochein Ad)

Yishtabach and Hatzi Kaddish- p.338/106



Hatzi Kaddish: Takin' it from the Text: Psalm 1113:2



Kaddish is usually used to mark a transition, separation or to prepare to begin something new. How do we mark transition in our lives? How do we prepare to start something (eg. stretching before we exercise). How do we mark transition in our day (lunch break), in seasons, in the lifecycle?

Why is separation particularly important on Shabbat (distinguish between today and the rest of the week)?



Test their knowledge! Did you know that the Kaddish is written in Aramaic and not Hebrew? This was the language spoken in the Second Temple Period *Kriat Shema u'virchoteha (Shema and its Blessings)*

Barchu and Yotzair Ohr- p.340/107

Themes: separation of light and darkness, light images יוֹצֵר אֹר וּבּוֹרֵא ה' שֶׁךְ

- Creation of the universe, peace ע'שָׂה שְׁלוֹם וּבּוֹרֵא אֶת הַכֹּל
- 1st blessing before the Shema



Nechemia 9:5

Isaiah: 45:7



bow at the waist at בִּרְכוּ



stand up straight for the name of God



Tefillah in Action

- Sing a verse and chorus to *Light One Candle* BY Peter, Paul and Mary
How does light help Jews “not fail?” (eg. rituals involving candles)
- Read “Yotzair Ohr” and this song. Do you notice any repeating themes?

QPM: What do you do personally to “not let the [Jewish] light go out for you?
Which line of the lyrics resonates with you?

Kavanah: Light One Candle

Light one candle for the Maccabee
children with thanks that their light
didn't die

Light one candle for the pain they
endured when their right to exist was
denied

Light one candle for the terrible
sacrifice

Justice and freedom demand
But light one candle for the wisdom to
know When the peacemakers time is
at hand

Chorus:

Don't let the light go out!
It's lasted for so many years!
Don't let the light go out!
Let it shine through our love and our
tears.

Light one candle for the strength that
we need to never become our own foe
And light one candle for those who are
suffering pain we learned so long ago
Light one candle for all we believe in
That anger not tear us apart
And light one candle to find us
together
With peace as the song in our hearts

(chorus)

What is the memory that's valued so
highly that we keep it alive in that
flame?
What's the commitment to those who
have died that we cry out they've not

died in vain? We have come this far
always believing, that justice would
somehow prevail. This is the burden,
this is the promise **This is why we
will not fail!**

- Practicing the “Call and Response:” Sheket B’vaka-SHEMA Barchu prepares us for prayer. To see if we’re ready, to check if we’re paying attention, the *Shatz* (Shaliach Tzibur) or prayer leader, calls out the first line for us to answer with the second line. Let’s practice with a classic.

Leader calls out: Sheket B’vakasha!
Group responds: HEY!

Leader calls out: Sheket B’vaka-hey
Group responds: SHAA! Or in this case you can call out “SH....mmm...ah!” because the Barchu prepares us for the Shema.

- יוֹצֵר אֹר וּבֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ - What would you do if you had to spend a day in darkness? Do dark dreary days determine your mood? How is your mood affected by light and darkness?
- Ask for a volunteer to be “darkness.” Give him/her a blindfold and ask him/her to tie a shoelace. Next, try the task without the blindfold and ask him/her to describe the difference light makes.



Do you notice any opposites in the Yotzair Ohr bracha?



When else do you see the word אֹר in your prayers? Try and look out for it in the blessings before the Shema)

El Adon- p.342/108



Alphabetical acrostic
Themes of creation, sun, moon and stars (celestial)



Tefillah in Action

- Tefillah in pairs: Give every two people a line from El Adon and have the pairs pop up when it’s their turn to sing
- Star Wars- Hand out cut outs of celestial items such as sun, moon and stars. Write their Hebrew words found in El Adon on the back for Kadimaniks to hold these up during El Adon to illustrate the meaning of the prayer

Word list:

דָּשׁ חַיּוֹת הַקֶּדֶשׁ creatures celestial

יְהוָה יִבְרָא אֶת הַיּוֹרֵד טוֹבִים מְאֹד לְעֵינֵינוּ good are the lights created by our God

וְיִזְרַח אֶת הַיּוֹרֵד לְעֵינֵינוּ He summoned the sun and it shed its light

וְיַעֲרֹב אֶת הַיּוֹרֵד לְעֵינֵינוּ He made the moon setting its cycles

וְיִבְרָא אֶת הַיּוֹרֵד לְעֵינֵינוּ - שְׂרָפִים וְאַוְפָּנִים וְחַיּוֹת הַקֶּדֶשׁ Celestial creatures give glory and greatness

Ohr Chadash- bottom p.344/110

אֹר חָדָשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תִּאֲדָר – is this a different kind of light than the light of creation?

Ahava Rabah-p.346/111

Theme: everlasting love



Tefillah in Action

See Kabalat Shabbat section for additional ideas

QPM: According to Ahavah Rabah, God's great love for us is expressed in the Mitzvot God gave us to perform. Which mitzvot do you personally think are expressions of love?



Test Their Knowledge! This blessing is said right before the first paragraph of the Shema. Think about it. How are they connected?

אֱהָבָה-love- God's expression of love through Mitzvot

וְאָהַבְתָּ-the act of loving, express our love through active Mitzvot

וְלִקְיָם אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי תִלְמוּד תּוֹרַתְךָ בְּאַהֲבָה – Then we will study Your Torah, heed its words...lovingly fulfilling all its teachings.



How does this connect to what the V'ahavta is about? Why do we speak about Torah right before the Shema?

the Shema paragraphs are excerpts from the Torah!

K'riat Shema- p.346/112



Ve'ahavta: D'varim 6:4-9

Themes: teaching your children, physical signs of Mitzvot, daily life as a Jew

V'haya Im Shamo'ah: D'varim 11:13-21

Themes: consequences for not following mitzvot, reward and punishment

Vayomair Adonai: Bamidbar 15:37-41

Themes:



Reassuring Israel: adapted from Midrash Tanhuma Veyehi 8

"Listen Abba, don't worry about us. Your God is OUR God, the one and only!"

When Jacob [who was also known as Israel], was on his deathbed, he feared that under Egyptian influence, that his sons would worship other Gods. They reassured him saying: "Listen Israel-יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁמַע אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ Adonai is OUR God- אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ the Adonai we all worship is ONE in the same. אֶחָד יְיָ Jacob's relief and thanks are expressed to God in the next line: בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלִכּוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

See additional activities in Kabalat Shabbat section

Emet V'yatziv-Tehilot L'el Elyon p.350/113



Shemot 15:11. 15:18



Release the tzitzit that are held for the Shema at
וְנִחַמְדִּים לְעַד

עֲזַרְתָּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֶתְּהָּ הוּא מְעוֹלָם, מִגֵּן וּמוֹשֵׁי יַעֲלֵבְנֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּכָל דּוֹר וְדוֹר
You were always a help for our ancestors, a shield for them and for their children,
our Deliverer in every generation.

וְנִחַמְדִּים לְעַד - every generation



Has God “always been a help for our ancestors?” We’ve had such a
tumultuous past! How has God helped us even in tough times?

QPM: If you had advice to give future generations of Jews as the “ancestor,”
what would you tell them?



Tefillah in Action

- Vote on it: Who is the greatest Jewish ancestor of all times?
- If you could have dinner with any of our ancestors, who would it be and what would you ask him?
- Ask for the volunteer to sit in the place of the Jewish ancestor you chose. Ask the group to “interview” him/her and have the volunteer answer playing the role of that person.



Kavanah: Honi and the Carob Tree: a Talmud Tale

Honi the Wise One was also known as Honi the Circle Maker. By drawing a circle and stepping inside of it, he would recite special prayers for rain, sometimes even argue with God during a drought, and the rains would come. He was, indeed, a miracle maker. As wise as he was, Honi sometimes saw something that puzzled him. Then he would ask questions so he could unravel the mystery.


One day, Honi the Circle Maker was walking on the road and saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked the man, "How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?"

The man replied, "Seventy years."

Honi then asked the man, "And do you think you will live another seventy years and eat the fruit of this tree?"

The man answered, "Perhaps not. However, when I was born into this world, I found many carob trees planted by my father and grandfather. Just as they planted trees for me, I am planting trees for my children and grandchildren so they will be able to eat the fruit of these trees."

QPM: What was "planted" for you by your ancestors? What have you learned from your grandparents? From your parents? From Jewish history? What has been passed down in your family from generation to generation?

 How are fruit and trees are good metaphors for the message of this story?
You are the fruit of your ancestors; you came from the seeds they planted. Trees have roots and branches. Your ancestors are the roots and you are the branch!



Kavanah: The Bird of Happiness

To know your future, you must remember your past

Long ago in a far off kingdom, the King died and in order to choose a new king, the people decided to send the Bird of Happiness out to choose a new leader by setting itself down on the "chosen one's" head.

The bird flew and landed on the head of a poor man. The man was proclaimed king and was given royal clothes and a golden crown to replace his shabby clothes and tattered hat. The King promised to always remember that he was king, but requested that a small hut be built near the royal palace where he could keep his shabby clothes and tattered hat. The hut was built and each day, the king would enter the hut, stay for a few moments and leave.

The King became a wonderful ruler and the kingdom flourished. When asked about his strange behavior and why he visited the hut with tattered clothing in it, the kind replied: "I made a promise to you to always remember that I am king. I made a promise to myself to always remember that I was once a poor man."


Mi Chamocha-Tzur Yisrael p.352/ 114



צור ישראל, קומה at

See additional activities in *Kabalat Shabbat* section

 a joke: What did they call the new flavored coffee drink at the Kosher Starbucks? *Micha Mocha*

 Test their knowledge! Where else did we see the Mi Chamocha this morning?

The Amidah- p.354/115

See *Kabalat Shabbat* for ideas and activities



until all are finished or



once you have completed your own Amidah.

Kaddish Shalem- p.392/138

The Torah Service- p.394/139

Ein Komocha



Psalm 86:8, Psalm 145:13, 51:20

Themes: there is nothing compared to God (*see activities from Kabalat Shabbat Mi Chamocha*)

God's rule is eternal throughout the generations



Tefillah in Action

How does the Torah service begin?

Review the steps of removing the Torah from its place.

As a group, come up with a new custom to add to הוצאת התורה – taking out the Torah

Examples: form two lines leading up to the Aron, create a semi-circle around the aron to “greet” the Torah



וְיִהְיֶה בְּנִסְוֹעַ הָאָרֶץ

We stand out of the utmost respect to receive the Torah



Bamidbar 10:35

A note about some of the choreography:



Why do we parade with the Torah? We travel with the Torah just as B'nai Yisrael traveled with the Aron while wandering the desert
יְהִי בְּנִסּוּעַ הָאָרֶץ



The Bima is usually a few steps up from the congregation which is why we use the word *Aliyah* (going up) when once is called to the Torah. The Torah is carried down to the congregation just as Moses brought it down from Mt. Sinai. The Torah service is almost a mini reenactment of receiving the Torah at Sinai. Each week, when we “receive the Torah” from the Ark, we are envisioning ourselves receiving the Torah at Sinai.



כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר יְיָ מִירוּשָׁלַיִם



Isaiah 2:3

Torah shall come forth from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem



Test their knowledge! Can you name 5 cities in Israel that are named after biblical cities?

Examples: Be'er Sheva, Beit El, Shechem, Arad, Gezer (a Kibbutz), Hebron, Beit She'an, Beit Shemesh, Timna

Private meditation

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אֲמָרֵי פִי וְהִגִּינוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְיָ צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to you Lord.

- See the *Kavanah* from *Halleluyah: Praise God in Your Own Way: A Chassidic Story*
- Close your eyes and imagine yourself alone. Take a moment to express a “meditation of the heart,” something that’s on your mind, something that may be bothering you or something that you wish to acknowledge. What would you want God to hear?



leader removes the Torah from the Ark and faces the Congregation before singing the first line of the Shema



Before we read the Holy words of the Torah, we once again, proclaim the oneness of God.



bow at גָּדְלוּ לִי אֶתִי, rise up on toes at וַנְרוֹמְמָה



Psalm 34:4



לֵךְ יְיָ הַגְדִּילָהּ – The Torah Parade, prepare for audience participation. We receive the Torah and share it with the people, just as Moshe did with B'nai Yisrael.



I Chronicles 29:11

After circling around the congregation for all to kiss the Torah (as the Torah belongs to us all), it is placed on the table to be read.



A Kohen gets the first Aliyah. If there is no Kohen, the first Aliyah is given to a Levi, the second to Yisrael



The role of the Gabba'im

Gabbai rishon- calls up the olim and stands on the right

Gabbai sheni- quietly corrects the Torah reader



Tefillah in Action

Playin' with the Parasha: Games to explore the Weekly Sedra

The following activities are meant to be used as interactive tools to engage the USYers (or Kadimaniks) in the weekly Sedra and add some creativity to the structured prayer service. You can use them as you wish- before the Torah is read, following the reading as a break before Musaf or even as a sicha. These activities do require advance preparation but are a great way to break up what can sometimes be a long morning.

Act it out

Act out the Parasha in a number of ways:

- Only in rhymes or rap
- Play the “question game” where they have to tell the whole story through questions instead of sentences. It's really challenging but can be fun and humorous.
- Make it 21st century- what would the story look like in today's world?
- Create a random cast and try a game of dramatic freeze using details of the parasha

- In between each reading, act out the scene that is about to be read. The different scenes can be like “commercials” in between the segments of the real story telling- the Torah readings

“Would you...” What would you do if it was you?

- Examine the behaviors of particular characters and put yourself in their shoes. “If you were Aharon, what would you do... or would you...”
- Try acting out a role play of yourself as the character and respond how you would have responded.

Parts of Parsha

Before Shabbat, type out the story of the parasha in sections and cut into strips. Hand out strips of parsha pieces to random USYers and then ask them to put the pieces of parasha together.

Silent Story

Act out a section of the story or a part of the story silently and have the group guess which part (or pasuk) it is

Parasha Vocab

Hand out pieces of 8.5 by 11 paper with specific words in Hebrew, transliteration and English translation that highlight the parasha story and have the USYers follow in the chumash. When they hear their word being read, they hold up the paper. It helps give them incentive to follow along.

Or: before you read from the Torah, have the USYers work in pairs and choose their own key Hebrew words or terms to highlight. Ask them to share it with the group before or after. When the word or phrase is read, they raise their hands (silently and respectfully)

Torah Quiz Show

To encourage USYers to follow the Torah reading, before you read, challenge them to a pre-Musaf game show (like a 7th inning stretch) that will follow the reading. Let them know there will be prizes (and then make sure to follow up later with prizes). You can ask specific USYers to be hosts beforehand.

Lawyers in Training

Another pre-Musaf “7th inning stretch.” If the parasha is particularly controversial, call the issue into question and give them 5 minutes in small groups to prepare an argument. Have 2-3 people as the team representatives or “experts” come up and present their argument on the issue. Then have the convention body “be the judge.”

21st Century Torah

Apply the Torah story to real life. What would this story look like today? How would these issues be handled? If this was a reality show, what would it look like?

Ask USYers to apply the issues or situation to their own real life experiences.

Pictorial Parsha

Find a number of artistic images (some obvious that relating to the parsha, others that require interpretation- try using Google images), Following the Torah reading, hand out packet of pictures to USYers to interpret and attribute to parts of the story.

Sing off!

Have USYers look through the text and think of Hebrew and English songs with matching words (or close to it) found in the parasha. Split into groups and go from group to group until each group gets "out"

Or: Look through the parasha in advance and make a list of words that are included in song lyrics (Zemirot, Hebrew songs, English songs) that can be found in the parasha. To play the game, call out a word on your list and the first group to sing the song with that word in it, wins that round.

*Bonus points if they can find the pasuk with the word in it and read aloud.

Makin' a Midrash

Give the USYers a pasuk and have them interpret it using their own skills to build a Midrash. Spark creativity using questions such as:

- a. What does this pasuk mean?
- b. What is its context?
- c. How could we explain it on our own terms? What could it mean?
- d. How can we fill in missing parts we don't quite understand?

Instructions: Get creative! This pasuk or perek may not make any sense to you.

Make up a story to fill in the ambiguous parts of the pasuk or story

*if it helps to explain *Midrash* to the group, try that. Use examples that you know of such as the Midrash of Avraham and his father's idol shop, which most of them know.

The Rhyming Game (like Rhymation)

Choose a key term in English, such as "priest" (Kohen). USYers must think of words that rhyme and put it into sentences. You can split the USYers into teams and give them 30 seconds after you've called out the word to come up with as many rhyming words to make it competitive, or ask them to raise their hands (so it isn't chaotic) one by one.

Or you can reverse the instructions by calling out a random English word and the USYers have to search for rhyming words from the parasha.

Eg. God- approved us with a nod...has no bod...for God we applaud...is no fraud...

Other Parsha Resources:

Stan Biner. Sedra Scenes.

Dr. Peter Pitzele **Bibliodrama* — www.bibliodrama.com- a style of dramatic interaction with text where the audience interviews a person playing a biblical character in first person

Richard J. Allen. Parasha Plays

Stan Biner. Class Acts: Plays and Skits for Jewish Settings

Meredith Shaw Patera. Kings and Things: 20 Jewish Plays for Kids 8-18

Gabrielle Suzanne Kaplan. The Magic Tanach and Other Short Plays

Sorel Goldberg Loeb and Barbara Binder Kadden. Teaching Torah: A Treasury of Insights and Activities

Mi Sheberach- p.402/143

Prayer for healing

QPM: How does your body respond to what is in your heart or mind? When your mood is uplifted, does your body feel good as well? When your spirits are down, does your body feel tired and achy?

Faith vs. Science: Some argue that prayer and faith can heal the spirit, which then heals the body. How do you feel when someone wishes you a “refu’a shleyma” or speedy recovery? If you knew someone was praying for you, would it make you feel better inside?

Connect to Tefillah: How does the Mi Sheberach make a difference to someone suffering illness?




Tefillah in Action

Kadima Word Search: Ask the group to find these words associated with healing:

- A feeling we have for someone who is ill: Compassion רַחֲמִים
- the word closest to doctor (רופא) רִפּוּא
- a common wish in Hebrew we make to someone who is ill רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה
- We wish for two types of healing to make the person whole again. Can you find them? Can you have one without the other or does one bring upon the other? רְפוּאָת הַנֶּפֶשׁ, וְרְפוּאָת הַגּוּף - healing of body, healing of soul.
- Bikur Cholim, the mitzvah of visiting those who are ill, is one of the most important mitzvot one can perform. Many people are uncomfortable with

this because they're unsure what to do while visiting. What are some ways you can brighten someone's day by visiting? What makes you feel better when you're ill?

Hazti Kaddish- p.408/146

 Test their (previous) knowledge: Why is the Hazti Kaddish read at this point? *Hazti Kaddish marks transition, it marks moving into another part of the service*




Hagbah and *G'lilah*: It is often difficult to remember which role is *Hagbah* and which is *G'lilah*. One trick to use is to explain that *Hagbah* “hugs” the Torah using both arms to lift, *G'lilah* dresses the Torah or wraps the Torah like one wraps a gift.


Hagbah-hug- bend at the knees, lift and display at least 3 columns of text

G'lilah- gift- roll the Atzei Chayim (wooden handles) together, put on the “belt”, put on the dress so the cover faces the Hagbah, put on the breastplate (Ephod) and yad last.

זְזַת הַתּוֹרָה  Devarim 4:44, Bamidbar 9:23

עַל פִּי יְיָ בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה  Bamidbar 9:23

Yakum Purkan (followed by prayers for the different communities to which we belong)- p.412-416/148-151

 Why would prayers for the different communities be said immediately after Torah and Haftara?

In the past, prayers for teachers and scholars and communal institutions were said after the Torah was read. Today, we continue to say prayers for community, encompassing people and institutions. Yakum Purkan is written in Aramaic, the language spoken by Babylonian Jews.

Themes: We can look at this as blessings of our most inner circle to our most outer- our synagogue community, our country, Israel, the world.

1. Blessing the Congregation: blessing the Congregation with sustenance, long lives, health, happiness...the basics. Yakum Purkan, includes a note to wish for “healthy children who do not neglect Torah.” USY and Kadima fulfills this wish for the Congregation! We connect knowledge of Torah to youth because without passing on the gift of Torah to the youth, the community cannot continue to grow and thrive. You hold the torch!
2. Blessing our country of residence- govern with justice and equality

3. Blessing for the State of Israel- God's protection, redemption, guide its leaders, strengthen its defenders, peace
4. Prayer for Peace



Tefillah in Action: Read some of the wishes included in this blessing for the congregation. Notice a number of things:

- Yakum Purkan is directed at “you,” as if everyone is sharing a wish or blessing for one another. Turn to your neighbor and wish him/her a blessing!
- The Prayer for the Congregation lists a number of needs to pray for in order to keep the community going. What do you need to run a congregation? What would a synagogue community pray for in order to flourish?
- Read the prayer for the congregation in English. Call out some of the puzzle pieces that make up the picture of congregational life in the prayer for the congregation on page 414. What goes into creating a synagogue community? What would you add to this list that you feel a synagogue needs in order to function? Why do we not include a special prayer for the clergy?

Examples from the prayer:

--“funds for heat and light”- money for basic building maintenance
--“wine for Havdalah and Kiddush”- items for ritual use
--“bread”- bread for Kiddush, for those who have nowhere else to eat
--“all who devotedly involve themselves with the needs of the community and Land of Israel”- lay leadership or synagogue volunteers, committees, community involvement. Being involved in the community is an important mitzvah!
-dedication to Israel

- If you were to rewrite or edit these prayers, what would you include in blessing the Congregation?
- What you would include in blessing America/Canada?
- What would you include while praying for Israel?
- What would you wish the world? Would you mention specific global issues to resolve or would you keep it general?
- Some prayer books include a prayer for the safety and well being of Tzahal (The Israel Defense Forces). Do you think this is already included in our thoughts when we bless the defenders of the State of Israel or should it be a separate blessing? Why is it not included in the Sim Shalom? Debate it!



Which pop songs can you think of that call out for world peace? Try singing one

Example: Heal the World by Michael Jackson

Chorus: Heal The World
Make It A Better Place
For You And For Me
And The Entire Human Race
There Are People Dying
If You Care Enough
For The Living
Make A Better Place
For You And For Me

Ashrei- p.420/151



Tefillah in Action

This time around, focus on the IMAGES of the Ashrei. What symbols, metaphors or images are presented in the Pslams of the Ashrei and how can you explain them?

Using the sense to imagine: Examples from the *Ashrei*

- **Sight:** Happiness, delight and joy- imagine the scene from the film *Patch Adams*, when the older woman swims in a pool of noodles? Imagine what pure happiness looks like and share your ideas or images.
- **Touch:** “Your Power is felt”- how do we *feel* the power of God?
- **Sounds** of the unbounded cosmos- what sounds could you imagine would depict the cosmos?
- **Touch:** קָרוֹב יי לְכֹל קִרְאָיו, סוֹמֵךְ יי לְכֹל הַנִּפְּלִים, וְזוֹקֵף לְכֹל הַכּוֹפְּטִים: “upholds all who falter...lifts the downtrodden,” “Near to all those who call to You” - test the group’s strength to uphold one another by trying this activity: have everyone lean to one side, standing shoulder to shoulder. How long are you able to stand that way? You may not always be able to “hold yourself together,” but in the Ashrei we recognize that God will help us when we “fall.”
- **Touch-** example #2 פוֹתֵחַ אֶת יָדָךְ – have everyone hold their hand up by their sides, palms facing up. Notice the feeling of an empty hand. Now place your hand on your neighbors and sense how one open hand over another open hand can fill one with comfort.
- **Taste** פִּי יִדְבֵּר פִּי – “my lips will utter God’s praise”. Two functions of the lips are to experience taste and communicate language. Words can nourish the soul, food nourishes the body. For what tastes can you praise God? What are your favorite foods?

החזרת התורה: Returning the Torah to the Ark-p. 422/153




יְהַלְלוּ אֶת שֵׁם יי




Psalm 148:13-14

Tefillah in Action


מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד, הָבוּ לִי בְנֵי אֱלִים  Psalm 29

קוֹל יי - The Voice of God

This Psalm is fun to sing with alot of ruach, but how can we use its *meaning* to “raise the roof” with sound? Read the English and look for different words that depict different “sounds” of God. Make a “soundtrack” (a beat or rhythm) to this Psalm so that we may escort the Torah with passion.

 Proverbs 3:18 עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ, וְתִמְכֶּינָהּ מְאֹד - “It is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it and all who support it are happy”

 Proverbs 3:17 דַּרְכֶּיךָ דַּרְכֵינִי עִם וְכָל-נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם

 The wooden handles of the Torah are also called *Atzei Chayim* (plural for *Etz Chayim*). The Oleh “holds fast to it,” while the Torah is being read. Why are the handles called *Etz Chayim* as well as *Etz Chayim* being a metaphor for the Torah? *The poles or handles are what hold the words of the Torah together.*

Why is the Torah compared to a tree of life?

Have a volunteer stand up and form a tree shape with his/her body. Ask the group to consider the “Torah as a tree of life” metaphor and compare the Torah to each part of the tree

Eg, roots- The Torah is the root of the Jewish people. We became a nation after receiving the laws of the Torah. Everything we do or believe is rooted in the Torah

Branches- different denominations have branched out, the branches could be the different Rabbinic sources such as the Talmud, different published Rabbinic commentaries that have branched off from the Torah

Leaves- each person is a leaf on the tree of Jewish life

The Musaf Service- p.428/155



remain standing

Hatzi Kaddish- p. 428/155



Test previous knowledge: Why do we begin Musaf with the Hatzi Kaddish? *Again, to mark transition or separation.*

What else could you do to mark a separation in the service? Tell a story? Read a poem?

Musaf Amidah- p. 430/156

see activities for Kabbalat Shabbat Amidah



continue standing until everyone has completed their Amidah or sit quietly until all have finished.



Tefillah in Action

Try new tunes for the different lines of the Kedusha

Some congregations use creative tunes for each line sung by the Shatz such as Israeli songs, niggunim or even an appropriate tune from an English song.

Kaddish Shalem- p.506/181

Ein Kelohaynu- p.508/182



Did you know that Ein Kelohaynu was designed to guarantee that Jews would fulfill the mitzvah to recite 100 blessings a day?

אֵין כְּאֵלֵּינוּ – there is nothing like our God- what is like God?

QPM: Think of a God Metaphor- something to which you can compare God. What is God like for you personally?

Example: God for me is like a body of water- vast, open, sometimes wavy, and sometimes smooth

God is like a pen- thoughts, action and creation through its ink.

Do not hesitate to try this with Kadima- you'd be surprised by the insight they can share with this activity



Tefillah in Action

Recall the version of Ein Kelohaynu performed in the film “Keeping the Faith” (2000). This scene featured Joshua Nelson, the “Prince of Kosher Gospel,” a Jewish gospel singer who now tours all over North American singing “Kosher Gospel.” You can download it and learn it to teach to the group. It is fun and full of spirit!

Aleinu- p.510/183



Themes: the ultimate Kingship of God as ruler of the Universe, the hope that one day all mankind united, will acknowledge God and God's sovereignty.



Ohr L'goyim- Read the Aleinu and respond to anything that may be bothersome. The Aleinu does not claim that Jews are better than everyone else, rather the theme or concept behind the Aleinu is the notion that Judaism can be a "light unto the nations" (אור לגוים) and that there is so much the world can learn from our God, our faith, our way of belief.



Did you know that this prayer was recited by Jewish men and women in the town of Blois, France who were burned at the stake for refusing to be baptized. They recited Aleinu before they were killed as a declaration of belief that the Jewish people were chosen by God to follow His law with the hope that idolatry would vanish and everyone would worship God (and not be punished for different beliefs). During the Spanish Inquisition, a line was censored which was felt to be demeaning to Christians...Jews later invented their own methods of censorship to prevent any more words of prayer to be removed. (*Higher and Higher, S, Brown, p. 157*).



Tefillah in Action

False Gods- Should everyone believe in our God? Is claiming that there is no other God like our God and that everyone should accept our God, denouncing other faiths? Some people may not be comfortable with this concluding declaration of faith. Try this activity:

Finish the sentence:

I respect other beliefs but what I wish other people could learn about Judaism is

Or: What I would want to share with the world about what I love about Judaism is

Mourner's Kaddish- p. 512/184

Adon Olam- p. 514/187



Tefillah in Action

- Again, have fun with tunes
- Turn you Adon Olam into an orchestra or air band and "play" instruments as you sing
- Dance in a circle while singing Adon Olam
- Help a friend fold his/her tallit
- Stand up and have some fun with it

Va'ani Tefilati
I Am My Prayer

A Kadima/USY Guide to Enhance the Structured Tefillah Service

Sources

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Sasso, Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg and Rabbi Jeffery Schein. Siddur Kol Hanoar: The Voice of Children. Elkins Park, PA: Reconstructionist Press, 2005.

Weinberg, Alex. Siddur Sim Shalom: Remix 2.0 Teacher's Edition, 2006

*self published. Please contact Alex through his website: www.alexweinberg.org

Greenberg, Rabbi Sydney. Likrat Shabbat: Worship, Study and Song. Bridgeport, CT: Media Judaica, 1974

Additional Resources for Creative Tefilah

Books

General Prayer:

- Entering Jewish Prayer: A Guide to Personal Devotion and the Worship Service- Reuven Hammer
 - To Pray as a Jew - Dov Peretz Elkins
 - A Guide To Jewish Prayer: Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz
 - The Art of Public Prayer: Not for Clergy Only – Lawrence Hoffman
 - L'elah L'elah/Higher and Higher: Making Jewish Prayer Part of Us – Steven M Brown *A USY publication
 - My People's Prayer Book Set: Volumes 1-10 – Ed. Lawrence Hoffman
 - Or Hadash: Commentary on the Sim Shalom – Reuven Hammer
 - Rediscovering the Art of Jewish Prayer- Rabbi David Golinkin
 - Siddur Sim Shalom Remix 2.0 Teacher's Edition- Alex Weinberg
- *an excellent teaching resource when using the Sim Shalom, student edition also available- www.alexweinberg.org

Creative resources:

- L'elah L'elah/Higher and Higher: Making Jewish Prayer Part of Us – Steven M Brown *A USY publication
- Modim: We Give Thanks – Alisa Pomerantz Boro
- Karov L'chol Korav/For All Who Call: A Manual for Enhancing the Teaching of Prayer- Rabbi Jeff Hoffman, Andrea Cohen Kiener [with accompanying CD]
- The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival - Marcia Falk
- Toward Meaningful Prayer [I and II]: Inspiring Thoughts and Stories on Tefillah from Classic Sources- S. Feldbrand
- Talking to God- Naomi Levy
- Minding the Temple of the Soul: Balancing Mind, Body and Spirit [Yoga] – Tamar Frankiel, Judy Greenfeld [With musical accompaniment]
- Alef Bet Yoga – Steven A Rapp
- Book of Jewish Sacred Practices: CLAL's Guide to Everyday & Holiday Rituals & Blessings- Rabbi Irwin Kula and Vanessa Ochs
- Worship with Joy: A Demonstration of New Techniques and Models-
- Sedra Scenes: Skits for Every Torah Portion- Stan J. Biner
- God Whispers: Stories of the Soul, Lessons of the Heart – Karyn Kedar

Va'ani Tefilati
I Am My Prayer

A Kadima/USY Guide to Enhance the Structured Tefillah Service

- Three Times Chai: 54 Rabbis Tell Their Favorite Stories- Laney Katz Becker
- Filling Words with Light: Hasidic and Mystical Reflections on Jewish Prayer - Rabbi Lawrence Kushner and Rabbi Nehemia Polen
- Jewish Stories from Heaven and Earth: Inspiring Tales to Nourish the Heart and Soul - [Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins](#)
- Our Dance with God: Finding Prayer, Perspective and Meaning in the Stories of Our Lives – Karyn Kedar
- The Path of Blessing: Experiencing the Energy and Abundance of the Divine - Rabbi Marcia Prager
- PRAY TELL :A [Hadassah](#) Guide to Jewish Prayer - Rabbi Jules Harlow with Tamara Cohen, Rochelle Furstenberg, Rabbi Daniel Gordis and Leora Tanenbaum
- Soul Judaism: Dancing with God into a New Era - Rabbi Wayne Dosick

Music

Almost any popular song can be applied to a Jewish prayer in one way or another, you just have to think outside the box and be creative. For example, *One* by U2 is a great song to teach about faith, and monotheism in the Shema. But for specific Jewish music appropriate to use for Tefillah, read on!

www.Jewishmusic.com or www.oytunes.com for downloadable hits.

Jewish musical mavens who can help bring creativity to traditional nusach:
(name, website, sample album)

- Craig Taubman –www.craignco.com - *The World is a Very Narrow Bridge*
- Shlomo Carlebach- www.Jewishmusic.com - *Hits of Carlebach*
- Sheldon Low –www.sheldonlow.com - *On One Foot*
- Debbie Friedman – www.debbiefriedman.com- *One People, Blessings*
- Rick Recht – www.rickrecht.com- *Shabbat Alive!*
- Avner Levi- www.jewishmusic.com - *Sephradic Super Party*
- Safam- www.safam.com
- Peter Halpern- www.urj.org- *Sweet Songs and Sacred Prayer*
- Sam Glaser- www.samglaser.com - *A Day in the Life*
- Joshua Nelson [Jewish Gospel] –www.joshuanelson.com- *Mi Chamocha*

Drama:

Sedra Scenes – Stan Biner

**Bibliodrama* – Dr. Peter Pitzele - www.bibliodrama.com

Parasha Plays – Richard J. Allen

Class Acts: Plays and Skits for Jewish Settings – Stan Biner

Kings and Things: 20 Jewish Plays for Kids 8-18 – Meredith Shaw Patera

The Magic Tanach and Other Short Plays – Gabrielle Suzanne Kaplan

Va'ani Tefilati
I Am My Prayer

A Kadima/USY Guide to Enhance the Structured Tefillah Service

*uses role playing as an excellent technique to engage with text through empathy and emotion

Enjoy these suggestions to enhance the experience of prayer for the Pray-er!