From *Kevah* to *Kavannah*: Explorations of the *Siddur*

A Curriculum Guide by Lev Metz
Spring 2008

Table of Contents

Rationale

Put yourself in the shoes of someone who has recently completed his or her Bar or Bat Mitzvah and is now starting to study at a community Jewish Day School. Engaged in Jewish learning, they are beginning to get a sense that the ritual and celebration are not so much the culmination they once thought it would be. Instead it seems to raise more questions than answers: What does it mean to be a Son or Daughter of the Commandments? What does it mean to take responsibility for living a Jewish life? And what does this have to do with those skills they worked so hard to pick up along the way - demonstrating an ability to participate in, and maybe lead, a synagogue service?

In the search for answers to these questions, take a moment to imagine that you have the opportunity to visit a wide range of Jewish communities throughout the ages. You have the power to observe men and women as they go through their daily and yearly routines, a fly on the wall of any synagogue or home you want. Through this experience you become obsessed with a burning question: what ties these people together, across disparate lands and cultures, over the course of almost 2000 years? As you listen in on their conversations, you hear them talking about Torah and God as well as business and family. Everyone is talking about life, but they are often saying radically different things about it.

What is it that makes these people Jewish? Rather than a birthright handed down from their ancestors or a classification imposed on them by others, you see their Jewishness permeating not only their thoughts, but also their very actions. In spaces both public and private, across the span of cultural context and era, you see people engaging in prayer - specifically Jewish prayer, *tefillah* - and you realize that this might be one of the

significant threads that binds these people together, past and present. When these people pray, they not only connect to each other, but also to God, to the land of Israel and the ongoing story of the Jewish people.

As you continue on your journey throughout the ages, you notice that the substance and styles of *tefillah* change, often incrementally and sometimes radically. Sometimes the music and liturgy used during *tefillah* reflect the cultural influences of those who live around them, and sometimes these Jews produce innovations so poignant that they express an aspect of Jewish thought unique to their own era and context. *Tefillah*, you realize, is a virtual *geniza*[1]: a sacred storehouse of Jewish thought and belief throughout history.

Every individual *brachah* (blessing) during the tefillah service is a window into an aspect of the Jewish experience. When examining variations of a specific prayer through the lenses of language, melody and usage, we can unpack the experiences and perspectives of the Jewish people. Participating in *tefillah* with the full understanding of the historical, cultural and ideological context of specific prayers, we open ourselves and our own beliefs to a life-long dialogue with Judaism, a conversation that countless Jews have had and continue to join.

This curriculum guide is designed to do three things. First, it aims to use liturgical texts found in the *siddur* as a **window**, revealing different aspects of Jewish thought and experience in a historical and/or biblical context. Second, it provides a **mirror** for the students, giving them an opportunity to articulate their own beliefs in relation those

[1] Here the Cairo *geniza* is the model of the sacred storehouse. It was first used to collect and then reveal its contents, rather than a cemetery where things are buried away, never to see the light of day.

espoused in the liturgical texts. Third, it will serve as a **frame** for helping the participants to become more comfortable in a variety of *tefillah* settings, acculturating the teens into a nuanced experience where they will able to articulate what makes one service different than the next. While this curriculum guide will primarily focus on exploring *tefillah* as a window, there will be times in which the mirror and frame become part of the foreground rather than stay in the background.

Ideally this curriculum guide would be utilized in conjunction with the regular practice of communal *tefillah*, giving participants the occasion to reflect and process their own beliefs and sense of connection to their group, their community, the Jewish people and God. We are not anthropologists studying Jewish prayer as outside, objective scholars. We are Jews, participating in *tefillah*, with roots reaching down into antiquity and branches spreading across the modern era. Our increased ability to participate in *tefillah* with intention will provide us with a greater sense of what it means to be a Bar or Bat Mitzvah - an adult in the Jewish community - as well as both the opportunities and responsibilities that are a part of our tradition.

For that reason, this Curriculum Guide is design around the following:

Enduring Understandings:

1. Through *tefillah* we can create connections with the Jewish people, both past and present, as well as explore our collective vision for the future.

2. Engagement with *tefillah* implores us to struggle with fundamental questions about our own individual beliefs and values.

3. Being familiar with mainstream *tefillah* (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox *minhagim*) enables us to more comfortably participate in the contemporary pluralistic American Jewish context.

4. *Tefillah* serves as the *geniza* (sacred storehouse) of Jewish thought throughout history.

5. The experience of communal Jewish prayer can help to build a group identity and an individual sense of belonging.

Curricular Goals:

- To uncover the connection between the *siddur* (liturgy or *kevah*) and prayer (*kavannah*).

- To empower the students to continue to learn about the *kevah* of the *siddur* in order to increase their *kavannah* during *tefillah*.

- To guide the students in exploring their own beliefs about God, themselves and the Jewish people through the lens of liturgical texts.

Curricular Objectives: Students Will Be Able To…

- Identify the themes and theological implications of these prayers and articulate their own beliefs in relation to them.

- Express what factors help them to increase their own personal *kavannah* during *tefillah*.

- Analyze how these prayers developed, in the context of their time and place in history.

- Distinguish how different denominational movements' ideologies are reflected in these prayers.

- Research, analyze and present at least one additional prayer in the *siddur*, its historical context and theological implications.

Notes for the Educator

Throughout the Curriculum Guide I have offered commentary in the form of "dialogue boxes" at specific points in the lessons, attempting to communicate more fully my intentions behind the programs. That being said, I believe that the activities are easily replicable in a variety of settings, and encourage you, the educator, to pick and choose according to the needs of your students.

Here are some basic comments about the Curriculum Guide as a whole:

- This is intended as an exploration of some of the prayers in the *siddur* and not its entirety. I recommend that at an appropriate time during each lesson, you take the opportunity to review the particular prayer. Depending upon the students' level of Hebrew proficiency, ideally you would have some time to familiarize them with the prayer as it is written in the *siddur*. If possible, have them try to translate sections of each prayer. This would help the students to gain a closer understanding of the meaning of the words and become more familiar with them as they are recited in the context of *tefillah*.

- The first and last lessons revolve around the question: Why do we pray? Try and revisit this question throughout the curriculum, to help bring into greater focus the tension between liturgy and prayer (or *kevah* and *kavannah*).

- For simplicity's sake I have organized the prayers into units, trying to reflect the order in which they are found in the *siddur*. If you want to change the order of the lessons, you are welcome to do so. My only recommendation is to keep the 1st unit intact, in order to help frame the rest of the lessons.

- All of the lessons in this Curriculum Guide are designed around a basic idea: that we can "zoom in" on prayers in the *siddur* in order to explore their origins, or "zoom out" in order to show what role they play in our modern Jewish lives. It can also be seen as an equivalent to an online wiki - where double clicking on a prayer will lead you do a number of different options for exploring the themes, theological implications, textual and historical contexts of the prayer. The potential paths for each prayer are endless, and the students should be encouraged to explore beyond the bounds of this Curriculum Guide.

- Though the body of this Curriculum Guide contains all of the handouts with some commentary on how and when to be used to in class, the final section is a compilation of handouts without comments (or answers).

- If you have any questions, comments or feedbacks to share, please contact me at lev36m@gmail.com.

Unit I - Introduction to *Tefillah*

Enduring Understandings:

- Engagement with *tefillah* implores us to struggle with fundamental questions about our own individual beliefs and values.
- *Tefillah* serves as the *geniza* (sacred storehouse) of Jewish thought throughout history.
- The experience of communal Jewish prayer can help to build a group identity and an individual sense of belonging.

Goals:

- To teach about the differences between liturgy and prayer.
- To guide the students explorations of their own beliefs about God, themselves and the Jewish people through the lens of liturgical texts.

Objectives: Students Will Be Able To (SWBAT)…

- List four differences between *Kevah* and *Kavannah*.
- Articulate what aspects of a service help to increase their own personal *Kavannah* during *tefillah*.
- Assess what traditional beliefs these prayers reveal, and clarify their own beliefs in relation to them.
- Describe 3 different Jewish images or conceptions of God and express how they, as modern American Jews, relate to them.

Lesson 1 - What is prayer, and why do we do it?

Goals:

- To introduce the concept of *tefillah* as Jewish prayer, and the *siddur* as the source text for *tefillah*.
- To uncover some of the reasons why Jews pray.

Activities:

- Hand out at least four or five post-its to each student, and give them five minutes to respond to the following question: **Why do Jews pray?** Designate 4 different corners of the room for dealing with issues about **God**, the **Jewish people**, the **self**, and **Other**. When the students have come up with as many reasons as they can, have them place their post-its in the appropriate corners. Divide the students into four groups (one group per corner) and have them **silently** work together to collate the post-its into categories, then present them to the class.

  This activity starts out as a MIRROR, encouraging students to come with reasons to prayer based on their own experiences and ideas. When it moves into the second part, comparing their answers with Rabbi Dorff's, it becomes a WINDOW into Jewish thought on prayer.

  IMPORTANT: Have someone write down these reasons generated by this activity and SAVE THEM for the final lesson in the curriculum.

  - Compare the students' lists with this one, developed by to Rabbi Elliott Dorff:
    - New moral insights or intellectual knowledge of the tradition
    - Increased sensitivity to nature and/or human beings
    - Relief of guilt feelings together with the resolve to do better
    - Expression of feelings of sadness and/or joy
    - A stronger sense of one's connectedness to God, nature, the Jewish people, and other human beings.

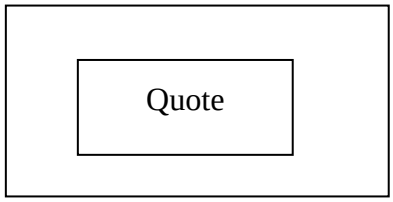
- Explore the word *Lehitpallel*, the Hebrew word meaning "to pray" (literally "to judge one's self"). From this root comes the words *tefillah* - Jewish prayer - and *tefillin* - the ritual objects traditionally worn during morning prayers. Because the verb is in a grammatically reflexive form, it indicates an action which is performed by one's self, for one's self. Look in a concordance for the different instances in which this verb is used in the Bible. (It is used 84 times.) Some examples could be:

  This activity helps introduce and explore the idea of *tefillah* and helps to reinforce our study of specifically Jewish prayer. It acts both as a FRAME and as a WINDOW into biblical prayer.

- God uses this word in relation to Abraham, naming him as a prophet who will "Pray on your behalf" in Abimelech's dream - Genesis 20:7
- The Israelites asked Moses to "Pray to Adonai" in order to stop Him from sending serpents to bite them because of their complaining while wandering in the desert - Numbers 21:7
- Jonah is noted as "Praying to Adonai" from the belly of the great fish - Jonah 2:2
- Samuel "Prayed to Adonai" when the people demanded that he appoint for them a king - I Samuel 8:6

Have students work in small groups to present a basic summary of these scenes and what types of prayers were said. How are these prayers like and unlike those that we say in a *tefillah* service today? (Like: They ask for things, as well as give thanks and praises. Unlike: They do not follow the same *Blessed are You, Adonai…* formula; they are individual, personal prayers, rather than communal recitations from a *siddur*.)

- Put the following quotes about prayer (see bullet points below) in small boxes and paste them onto a larger piece of butcher paper or poster board, one quote per page. A single quote might look like this, for example:



Set these up around the room and give the students 20 minutes to read each quote and, if they want, respond to it, writing on the outer paper. Tell the students that they can either respond to the original quote, or to each other's responses, indicating this with a line. In this way, many individuals can respond to the original quote, or create a conversation on paper. After students have had a change to read and respond, have them stand by one quote, read it out loud and explain people's responses.

Here are some quotes that can be used:

Many of these quotes bring up tensions between *kevah* and *kavannah*, which will be explored in a later lesson.

- "Prayer should always be a combination of set words and spontaneous expression." - Reuven Hammer
- "Said the Holy One to Israel, 'I have told you that when you pray, you should do so in the synagogue in your city. If you cannot pray in the synagogue, pray in your field. If you cannot pray in your field, pray in your house. If you cannot pray in your house, pray on your bed. If you cannot pray in your bed, meditate in your heart.'" - Midrash Psalms 4:9

- "Whenever the hidden and unfathomable is experienced, man can react either with the devoutness of silence, that most intimate feeling of the living God, or with poetry and prayer, which sings of the ineffable." - Leo Baeck

- "Prayer is a format by which the community is brought together for purposes of comradeship, education, celebration, mourning, sensitivity training, and moral stimulation." - Elliot Dorff

- "We each pray to God in our own special way, overcoming any physical and mental boundaries preventing our prayers from being answered. Our encounters with God are as individual as each of us." - Janice Elster

- "Do not think the words of prayer as you say them up to God.

  It is not the words themselves that ascend; it is rather the burning desire of your heart that rises like smoke toward heaven.

  If your prayer consists only of words and letters, and does not contain your heart's desire – how can it rise up to God?" - Nachman of Breslav

- "Elijah, the *Gaon* of Vilna, once asked his friend the *Maggid* of Dubno to give him ethical instructions so that he might strengthen himself in the service of God. Now the *Gaon* was known as a man of saintly disposition who spent all his waking time secluded in his room in study, prayer and contemplation. So the *Maggid* of Dubno said to him: It is easy to be a sage and a saint cloistered here in your room. You should go out into the marketplace and try to be a saint there.'" - Alan Unterman

- "May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, my Rock and Redeemer." - Psalm 19:15; This is also used as a traditional closing meditation after the *Amidah*

- "We are trained in maintaining our sense of wonder by uttering a prayer… to pray is to take notice of the wonder, to regain a sense of the mystery which animates all beings, the divine margin in all attainments." - Abraham Joshua Heschel

- "Perhaps first and foremost, prayer is a delivery system for committing us to the great ideas that make life worth living, because ideas that are ritually construed empower us to do what we would otherwise never have the courage to do. Prayer moves us to see our lives more clearly against the backdrop of eternity, concentrating our attention on verities that we would otherwise forget. It imparts Judaism's canon [official, classical collection] of great concepts and moves us to live our lives by them." - Lawrence Hoffman

Lesson 2 - *Kevah* vs. *Kavannah* (Scripted)

Goals:

- To teach about the differences between *kevah* and *kavannah*.
- To encourage a greater sense of awareness on how an individual can increase their own *kavannah*, or that of the community.

Objectives: SWBAT…

- Articulate the differences between *kevah* and *kavannah* and show examples of each in liturgical texts.
- Express how they can increase their own personal *kavannah* during *tefillah*.

Activity 1: 15 minutes

Hand the students the Concept Attainment sheet (page 15).

Divide the students into pairs and say to them, **"Take some time to read the statements in both the left and right columns of the page out loud. Once you have done that, summarize the statements in each column. Give each of them a title, and be prepared to explain how you came to it."**

Once the students have had time to discuss the sheet and articulate the differences between the columns, add the following:

"Both columns represent legitimate and very real Jewish views of tefillah. There is in our tradition a tension between *kevah* - a fixed, standard prayer (on the left) - and *kavannah* - the special intention or focus you can bring to a prayer (on the right). When we talk about *kevah* and *kavannah*, it's important to understand that it's not an either/or situation – a meaningful *tefillah* experience has aspects of both. We are now going to look at one particular prayer and examine it through the lenses of *kevah* and *kavannah*."

Activity 2: 15 minutes

Pass out copies of the Reform Movement's *Mishkan T'filah* as well as the Conservative Movement's *Sim Shalom*. Have the participants turn to the *Yotzer Or* and have two participants read the translations out loud, starting with the more traditional version. In this way, try to draw out the understanding that this is an example of how prayers change over time, in response to the needs of the movements.

If you would like to expand the different versions used in this activity, I recommend using one of the *iyyunim* (creative readings) found opposite the prayer in *Mishkan T'filah* on page 61, as well as a poem on creation from Marcia Falk's Book of Blessings

Ask the participants:

- **What is the difference between these two versions of the same prayer?**
  - Some possible answers could include the length of the Hebrew or the differences between the translations.
- **Which do you think is more an example of *kevah* and which is *kavannah*? Why?**
- **Which version do you connect more with, and why?**
- **If you read the traditional version every day, would that help you to have a greater connection with it?**
- **What do you think might help you to connect with a specific prayer, or an entire *tefillah* service?**
  - Some possible answers here could include things relating to time (of day/week), space used (inside/outside), different melodies or instruments, increased participation by the community, etc.

Activity 3 - Write Your Own Prayer: 15 minutes

Give the participants the time, material and space to write their own prayer. Have them first select a theme that they would like to address, and to determine if the prayer will be a request (*Bakashah*), praise (*Tehilah*) or a giving of thanks (*Hoda'ah*).

These categories of prayer will be more fully explored in the lesson on the *Amidah*.

Challenge the participants to incorporate aspects of *kevah* (perhaps using the traditional formula "Blessed are You, Adonai….") alongside their own *kavannah*, and have them articulate what setting they think would be the best place to recite their prayer.

Have the participants share their prayers out loud. After they have all presented, ask them to reflect on the similarities and differences of themes and language chosen by the individuals. Would they feel comfortable reciting their prayer during a *tefillah* service? Would they feel comfortable having the entire group recite their prayer during a *tefillah* service?

Debrief: 10 minutes

Ask the participants:

- **What are some of the variable that can encourage the presence of *kavannah* in *tefillah*?**
  - Possible answers:
    - The *siddur* (the text written on the page)
    - The *shaliach tzibbur* (prayer leader)
    - The music
    - The setting

        - Community participation
        - The individual person's state of mind

- **What do you think is the purpose of having *kavannah* as part of a *tefillah* service?**
    - Possible answers:
        - To provoke thought
        - To stimulate discussion
        - To shape the *tefillah* service so that it is spiritually meaningful
- **What do you think is the purpose of having *kevah* as part of a *tefillah* service?**
    - Possible answers:
        - To make sure that all Jews are "on the same page" (standardizes practice)
        - To connect with Jews of the past and present who have been reading these prayers for hundreds of years
- **If you could run or influence your own *tefillah* service, how would you try to make it more spiritually fulfilling for the participants?**

If these students participate in a community *tefillah* service at school or otherwise, try to bring their ideas to the service. Encourage them to participate and help to lead, in order to empower them to bring greater *kavannah* to the service.

Directions:
Take some time to read out loud the statements in both the left and right columns of the page. Once you have done that, summarize the statements in each column. Give each of them a title, and be prepared to explain how you came to it. Answer the questions below.

This is the Concept Attainment worksheet, to be used in the lesson above.

Praying regularly is important to me.	I only like to pray when I feel in the mood.
I think that when we pray, we should recite the traditional prayers in Hebrew.	I think that when we pray, we should read creative English versions that I can identify with.
Prayers should be recited in a synagogue.	Prayers should be recited outside in nature.
Ideally, I think prayers should be recited when among a community.	Ideally, I think prayers are best said spontaneously whenever someone feels like it.
I like that when I say the traditional prayers, I know that Jews around the world are saying the saying the same thing.	I like that my prayers are unique, original and creative.
The prayers in the *siddur* have stood the test of time and have allowed generations of Jews to connect with God.	Because the prayers in the *siddur* are so old, we should supplement them with newer, contemporary ones.

Title #1 Title #2

_____ _____

Why did you use these particular titles?

Which statements - on either side - do you identify with? Why?

What are the possible advantages or disadvantages of either perspective?

Lesson 3 - The *Siddur*

Goals:

- To introduce the *siddur* and its contents as a guide for learning about Jewish history and thought.
- To use different *siddurim* to reveal the ideological differences between denominations.
- To teach the value of learning Hebrew as a tool for participating in *tefillah*.

Activities:

- Pass out copies of as many *siddurim* as you have access to (including those used at camp, if possible). Have students work in teams to explore one *siddur* and to give as detailed a description about it as they can. Some questions they should answer:
    - How is the *siddur* arranged?
    - What are its prominent features? I.e. What makes this different from other *siddurim*?
    - What does the balance between Hebrew and English in the *siddur* reveal about the people who produced it?
    - Describe the type of person that this *siddur* was intended for. How do you know?
    - How would you feel, using this *siddur* in a *tefillah* service?

For an excellent article on the development of the *siddur*, read Teaching Tefilah, by Bruce and Barbara Kadden, pp. 12-15.

This activity serves to FRAME the language that we use in order to describe different *siddurim*.

- Choose one *siddur* (or one service within the *siddur*), and using its table of contents, have the students convert it into an illustrated road map.
- Using either *Rinat Yisrael* or *Mishkan T'filah*, look for places where the *siddur* uses citations from other Jewish texts. Find examples from the Torah, Nevi'im and Ketuvim, as well as from Rabbinic literature and list them together. How are these texts inserted into the *siddur*? Why would the compilers of the *siddur* use other existing Jewish texts?

This activity also helps to FRAME different parts of the service or *siddur* contents.

This activity begins to reveal the different ways in which the *siddur* acts as a WINDOW into different aspects of Jewish text and experience.

- Possible answers:
    - If people were already familiar with the biblical texts, this would serve to remind the participants of their central role in Judaism, even in the context of *tefillah*.
    - If people are not familiar with the biblical texts, their presence in the liturgy can serve as a way to become more familiar with them and to encourage the participants to begin to study them.
    - This also serves to link the biblical and rabbinic traditions, creating a sense of holy continuity through time and space.

- Question: If you stepped into synagogues in Arkansas, Moscow, Paris or Morocco, what would you find the same between the different *siddurim*? Answer: They would all have Hebrew written in them. Read the following article (out loud together or in small groups) and then answer the questions at the end:

Hebrew as the Language of Jewish Prayer

By Rabbi Reuven Hammer, from Entering Jewish Prayer

The language of Jewish prayer is Hebrew. Certainly it is permissible to pray in any language. The Sages of the Mishnah indicated how important they thought it was that we understand what we say: "These may be said in any language . . . the recitation of the Shema, the Prayer [the Amidah], and the Blessing After Meals" (Sotah 7:1).

If that is so, what need is there for the non-Hebrew speaker to pray in Hebrew? [German Jewish philosopher] Franz Rosenzweig remarked that "the uncomprehended Hebrew gives him more than the finest translation... Jewish prayer means praying in Hebrew." There is an emotional element that reciting prayer in Hebrew can add even to those who do not comprehend every word. There is a feeling of identification with an ancient tradition and with other Jews wherever they may be which enhances the experience of prayer.

There is nothing magical in Hebrew, but there is something culturally meaningful that is lost when traditional prayers are said in other languages. Even if one does not understand the words, a glance at the translation will enable one to bring some level of meaning to the recitation, which is then supplemented by the emotional impact of the Hebrew text. Furthermore, by learning about the texts themselves, you can apprehend the sense of the texts, if not of every word.

Obviously, the more one knows the text in its original language, the better. The real meaning of the text lies in its original language. The terms that are used, the multiple meanings and echoes within them, can seldom be fully conveyed in translation. Languages are also reflections of specific cultures. When God is called "*go'el*" and the English renders it "redeemer," we have entered into another thought-world with connotations not to be found in the Hebrew. For Christianity--and English is a Christian language--redemption means saving someone doomed to perdition because of sin. For Judaism, it means rescuing Israel from the enslavement of foreigners.

When we thank God for "*torah u-mitzvot*," we are not speaking of "law and commandments." "Law" is a set of legal norms. Torah is God's instruction, either in a specific book or in all of Jewish tradition as it has developed. "Commandments" has the harsh sound of orders given by a commander. Mitzvot are both actions we are expected to perform and actions of a positive nature which stem from religious convictions.
All of this is on the most basic level of semantics. If it is true, as has been said, that reading a work in translation is like kissing through a veil, what shall we say about trying to pray through translation? Beyond the basic level, there is the level of emotion that only the Hebrew can properly achieve.

What are we to do, therefore, when so many Jews do not understand the language? It is fatuous [i.e. silly, pointless] to say to all people, "Learn it!" as desirable as that would be. But we can say, "Learn the vocabulary of prayer." It is possible to study enough about the

prayers so that even if you do not understand every word, the main words and phrases will be familiar to you.

Glance at the translations as you pray to remind yourself of the meaning, but do not depend on them. For if all translations are interpretations, translations of prayers are even more likely to be explanations and to contain the theology and philosophy of the translator. If you have read about the prayers, you will know enough to assign whatever meaning you feel appropriate at the time you are saying them.

Questions:

1. Why does Franz Rosensweig say, “Jewish prayer means praying in Hebrew?"

2. What is the difference between the Hebrew “*go’el*” and the English “redeemer?” What other Hebrew terms can you think of which might have significantly different connotations in English?

3. How does the author recommend we struggle with Hebrew texts in the *siddur*? How do you choose to deal with it?

Lessons 4 - The God Lesson (or… To whom are we praying anyway?)

Goals:

- To encourage participants to think in a more sophisticated way about God - i.e. beyond the image of an all-powerful father figure sitting on a throne in the heavens.
- To show students how to use the *siddur* as a tool for understanding or finding a connection with God.

Activities[2]:

- As a class, have participants brainstorm their ideas about the following questions:
  - How do Jews think about God?
  - What is the classical, traditional Jewish image of God? (Just based on their own impressions, not necessarily on anything specific)
  - What questions do you have about God?

- Pass out siddurim. In *chevruta* (study partners) have them make a list of all the different names and/or images of God (i.e. King, Creator, Redeemer, etc.) they can find in the *siddur*. Come together as a group and have each *chevruta* share the names/images that they found.

This synectics lesson helps to FRAME an understanding of God through the images of the *siddur*, and act as a MIRROR for the participants to explore their own beliefs about God.

Step 1: Make a list on the board of all different names and images and have the group vote on one name/image to utilize for the next step. (Example: King, Father, Shepherd, etc.)

Step 2: List all the adjectives that describe the name/image they voted on. Once there is a comprehensive list, ask participants to identify all the adjectives that are antonyms (opposites). Have the group vote on a pair of opposites to utilize for the next step. (Example: destroying and nurturing)

Step 3: Have the group list all the "things" that can at different times be described using both of the adjectives in the pair that was voted on in Step 2. (Example: water, fire, humans, etc…)

Step 4: Have participants choose one of "things" from Step 3 (Example: water) and consider how they might complete the following sentence: **God is like <u>(fill in the blank)</u> when…. (or because….)**

[2] Many of these have been adapted from unpublished programs I helped to develop and lead at Wilshire Boulevard Temple.

- Taking the same list of roles that God plays, based on the *siddur* (see above), start by asking the questions:

    - **How do you see your relationship with God?**

    - **Are any of these images ones that you personally connect to? How so?**

    - **How can we, as Jews, take these images or roles of God and personalize them to make them personally meaningful?**

    - **How do you see <u>your</u> presence in the *siddur*? Are you, as the one praying, included? How so or how not?**

    - **How might we be inspired to connect to God beyond the *tefillah* service? How can we manifest God's presence in our every-day lives?** (By acting ethically, by performing mitzvot, by creating beautiful works of art, etc.)

  With the students' help, start taking the images that they have described and changing them around - instead of using God as the subject, make God the predicate verb - i.e. instead of worshipping *Elohim*, enacting *Elohut*. Changing around some of the images might look like this[3]:

Column A	Column B
God is merciful	Extending mercy is Godly
God is just	Doing justice is Godly
God is forgiving	Forgiving is Godly
God feeds the hungry	Feeding the hungry is Godly
God cares for the sick	Curing the sick is Godly
God raises the fallen	Raising the fallen is Godly
God protects the innocent	Protecting the innocent is Godly
God punishes evil	Punishing evil is Godly

- **How might this list change the way you understand or interact with God?** (It would encourage me to change my behavior towards increased Godliness.)

  Moving beyond the *siddur*, encourage the students to come up with their own series of "Godly actions," perhaps for use in the classroom or home specifically, or more generally throughout their lives.

[3] This list is based on an article by Rabbi Harold Schulweiss.

Unit II

Enduring Understandings:

- Engagement with *tefillah* implores us to struggle with fundamental questions about our own individual beliefs and values.
- *Tefillah* serves as the *geniza* (sacred storehouse) of Jewish thought throughout history.
- The experience of communal Jewish prayer can help to build a group identity and an individual sense of belonging.

Goals:

- To explore the textual basis of the prayers in the *siddur*.
- To familiarize the students with some of the prayers commonly recited in a *Shacharit* service.

Objectives: SWBAT…

- Analyze the textual basis of the *tzitzit*, and their role in *tefillah*.
- Evaluate what traditional beliefs these prayers reveal about God, the differences between men and women, as well as the use of ritual objects, and their own beliefs in relation to them.
- Recognize how different denominational movements' ideologies are reflected in the prayers.
- Articulate how Gematria is used in order to find meaning in texts and objects.
- Discuss the tension between individual and communal needs in prayer.

Lesson 1 - *Nisim B'chol Yom*

Goals:

- To introduce the *Nisim B'chol Yom* prayer.
- To uncover some of the variations of this prayer in different *siddurim.*

Activities:

- Have the students come up with the definition of a miracle, and put it on the board. The Oxford American Dictionary defines a miracle as, "A surprising and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore considered to be the work of a divine agency." As you read through the prayer *Nisim B'chol Yom* (Daily Miracles), have the students evaluate if they think that these fit the definition. Also, if these miracles happen on a daily basis, how can we understand them to be surprising? Invite the students to share what they consider to be daily miracles.

This is a MIRROR activity.

- Assign each student one of the prayers, and have them develop a repeatable physical action to interpret it. After they have had a chance to practice this a few times on their own, have the students get stand in a circle, say their blessing and perform their action. After each individual student does this, have the class repeat the blessing and perform the action.

This is a FRAME for getting to understand the prayer better and for building a class community.

- Take a look at this prayer in at least two *siddurim* - one traditional and the other liberal. Aside from the order of the blessings (which vary widely across all *siddurim*), what are some of the main differences? Chart them out, perhaps like this:

This is a WINDOW into the differences between denominational movements.

Traditional	Liberal
…for not making me a heathen.	…for making me a Jew.
…for not making me a woman.	…for making me in God's image.
…for not making me a slave.	…for making me a free woman/man.

Ask: What do you think the traditional prayers reveal of the perspective of the writers? What about that of the liberal ones? Possible answers:

- While the traditional version is written with negative language (for NOT making me…), the liberal versions are written with positive language.

- The traditional versions reveal a system of values - that being male, free and Jewish are all of the highest values. In the liberal versions, though being Jewish is specific, the other two blessings have a universal quality to them, which make them more inclusive of women as well as other minority groups.

Lesson 2 - *Barchu* and the *Minyan*

Goals:

- To explore the values of communal vs. individual prayer.
- To introduce the concept of a *minyan* (quorum for prayer) and textual sources for communal prayer and study.

Activities:

- Explain the concept of a *minyan*: you need 10 Jewish adults to recite certain prayers (including the *Barchu* and the Mourners *Kaddish*) as well as chant Torah from the scroll. Orthodox Jews specify 10 adult Jewish men over the age of 13, though liberal Jewish communities count women as well. This figure was arrived at by rabbinic logic. The number ten was derived from the first verse of Psalm 82, which reads: "God stands in the congregation of God." The word *edah* (congregation) is also applied to the ten spies (not counting Joshua and Caleb) who, in the days of Moses, rendered a negative report on the land of Canaan. Hence it was established that a "congregation of God" consists of at least ten adults.

  This helps to FRAME the *Barchu* around the concept of the *minyan.*

- Hand each individual a copy of the text sheet (page 26). Give them the opportunity to read the through the texts silently, and another 5-10 minutes to respond to the text in writing with any thoughts, comments or questions that come up. After they have had the chance to do this, pair them up in *chevrutah* (study partners) and have them go through the texts again, out loud together. When they come back together ask if they had a different experience studying in pairs rather than alone. Some questions you can ask:

  This is a WINDOW into different perspectives on the need for communal prayer.

  - How did it feel to study the texts alone as opposed to with other people?
  - Did you gain a greater understanding of its meaning alone or with the group?.
  - Did speaking your ideas out loud make a difference? What about hearing other people's ideas?
  - Did you change or add to your understanding of the text when we came together to study it?
  - Why would Judaism encourage people to study in a community? Why are we encouraged to pray in a community? (Possible answers could include: because we can only live and thrive when together; because we may not know how to fulfill our traditional requirements on our own; because we want to stay literally on the same page with the rest of the community)

Individual vs. Communal Prayer Text Sheet

1. "Jacob's most intensive experiences of prayer took place when he was most alone… There are certainly times when the presence of others even impedes prayer… But Judaism is also wary lest such aloneness become the norm and the permanent status of the human being. Religion is not what we do with our aloneness, but what we do with our togetherness. It is not accidental that there is no Jewish ideal of worshipping God by leaving civilization and setting up a lonely cell in the wilderness." - Reuven Hammer, Entering Jewish Prayer pp. 15-16

2. "Whenever a man is able to offer his prayers in the synagogue he should do so since there proper concentration of the heart can be achieved. The Rabbis laid down a great rule: Communal prayer has special value and whenever ten pray in the synagogue the *Shekhinah* [the divine] is present." - Menachem Meiri [a 13th century Talmudist from Provence]

3. "See that you have a good friend, someone who can be depended upon and who is able to keep a secret. You should talk with the friend half an hour every day about everything in your heart and innermost thoughts… And if you have worries, you should talk them out with a friend, and if something good happens to you, then you should share your happiness with them as well." - Rabbi Asher of Stolin

4. "And Adonai said to Moses: 'Acquire for yourself Joshua the son of Nun.' (Numbers 27:18) The word 'acquire' implies much cots, for a companion is acquired after difficulties upon difficulties. Hence, say the sages, people should acquire a companion [for everything]: for reading Scripture with them, reciting Midrash with them, eating with them, drinking with them, and disclosing all of their secrets to them." - *Avot d'Rabbi Natan*, Chapter 8

5. "Adonai said, 'It is not good for Adam [a human being] to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him." Genesis 2:18

6. "Do not separate yourself from the community." - Rabbi Hillel, *Pirke Avot* 2:5

Lesson 3 - *Shema* and *V'ahavta* (Scripted)

Goals:

- To explore the use of *tzitzit* during *tefillah*, and their basis in biblical and liturgical texts.
- To introduce the concept of Gematria (Hebrew numerology) and show how it can play a part in understanding Jewish texts.
- To practice tying and wearing *tzitzit* as a way to strengthen *kavannah*, and uncover some of their numerological symbolism.
- To explore the meaning of the *Shema* and *V'ahavta* prayers in the liturgy.

Set Induction (10 minutes):

- Have the participants open *siddurim* to the *Shema* (or pass out copies). Ask: **What do you already know about this prayer?** Possible answers may include:
  - It comes from the Torah (Deuteronomy 6:4)
  - It is often thought of as the central prayer of Judaism
  - It is traditionally recited many times: Once each during the *Shacharit* and *Ma'ariv* services, as well as during the Torah service, the *Kedushah* of the *Musaf Amidah*, during specific festivals, as well as at night before one goes to sleep.
  - The first letter *ayin* and last *dalet* of the phrase are traditionally written larger than the rest of the letters. Abudraham, a 14th century Spanish rabbi, explained that these two letters together spell *eid*, meaning "witness." By saying the *Shema* we bear witness to God's oneness.
  - Many Jews traditionally recite it just before they die. The most famous example of this is Rabbi Akiva, who died as a martyr during the Roman occupation of Palestine around 100 CE.

This assumes that the students have had prior exposure to the *Shema*, and already know some ways in which it is recited and the reasons why.

- **The biblical passage continues with the recitation of the *V'ahavta*. Why is there another line inserted between these two passages?** (*Baruch Shem Kavod Malchuto L'olam Va'ed*, from Mishna Yoma) Allow them to come up with as many answers as they can, then share this story based on the Midrash (*Breishit Rabbah*):

This story can also be easily brought into a *tefillah* service, should one wish to parallel the learning in the classroom with the experience during *tefillah*.

"As Jacob lay dying of old age in his bed, he was worried. He had led a long and full life, attained a lot of wealth and fathered many children. But he was unhappy, thinking of his God and that after he was gone, his children and their families might be convinced to turn away from the one God and worship the many gods of their neighbors. Jacob had inherited the knowledge and devotion from his father Isaac, and had earned the name Israel - one who struggles with God. Isaac had inherited the tradition from Abraham, who was the first to hear God's call. But Jacob did not have one son to ensure the worship of God, he had twelve!

"Knowing that his time was quickly coming to an end, Israel sent for all of his children. They gathered around his bed as he tried to communicate to them his last wish. Finally understanding their father's desire, the children of Israel said together, as if with one voice, '*Shema Yisrael! Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad!*' (Hear, O Israel! Adonai is our God, Adonai is one!) With his dying breath Jacob whispered the following words: '*Baruch Shem Kavod Malchuto L'olam Va'ed*.' (May His glorious sovereignty be blessed forever and ever.)"

- Ask the participants: **As we say these prayers during tefillah, what can we do to remember this story?**
    - Traditionally, we recite the *Shema* out loud, and whisper *Baruch Shem Kavod* quietly, remembering Jacob's final words.
        - Note: This tradition may not be enacted in many liberal synagogues, where both lines are said out loud. Also, during Yom Kippur all Jews traditionally say both lines out loud.

Activity I: (10 minutes)

This section is meant to help FRAME both this prayer and the use of the *tallit/tzitzit* during *tefillah*.

- Direct the students to the 3rd paragraph of the *V'ahavta*, and read it out loud. Explain that this passage originally comes from the book of Numbers 15:37-41, but has been part of *tefillah* since at least the 1st century CE.

Numbers 15:37-41: "Adonai said to Moses: Speak to the Israelite people and instruct them to make for themselves *tzitzit* on the corners of their garments throughout the ages; let them attach a cord of blue to the *tzitzit* of each corner. That shall be your *tzitzit*; look at it and recall all the commandments of Adonai and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in lustful urge. Thus you shall be reminded to observe all My commandment and be holy to your God. I am Adonai your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am Adonai your God."

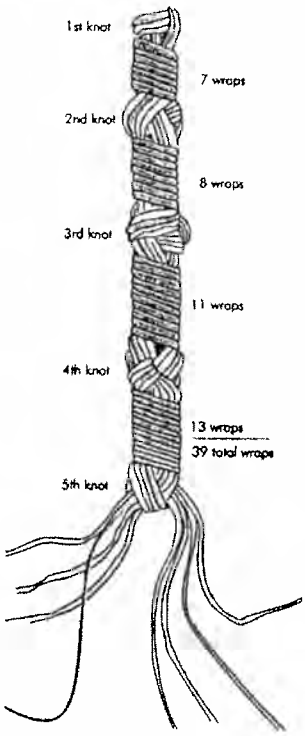
- Ask the participants:
    - **According the text, what should we do with the *tzitzit*?**
        - Attach them to the corners of our garments
    - **Today, what do we attach them to?**

        - Many Jews attach them to a *tallit* - a shawl traditionally used during *tefillah*. Some Jews also wear *tzitzit* attached to a four-cornered undershirt, called a *tallit katan*.
    - **What should seeing the *tzitzit* cause us to do?**
        - To be reminded of and observe the commandments
        - To not follow our "lustful urge"
    - **How might seeing the *tzitzit* cause use to be reminded of and observe the commandments?**
        - Traditionally they represent the 613 *mitzvot*. For an explanation and exploration how, see below.
    - **How do we use *tzitzit* during *tefillah*?**
        - We often use them as an aid for *kavannah*, reminding us that we are wearing a special garment because *tefillah* is a special activity. When reading this paragraph of the *V'ahavta*, we kiss the *tzitzit* every time they are mentioned.

Activity II - Tying *Tzitzit* (30 minutes)

- Explain to the participants, **"We use *tzitzit* in order to increase our *kavannah*, traditionally during a *Shacharit* (morning) service, or when we lead any service. But we can also use them to be reminded of the commandment during the rest of our day, when they are tied to our belt loops, key chains and backpacks. In order to learn more about the symbolism of the *tzitzit* and how they are made, we will practice tying our own *tzitzit*."**
- Note to the teacher: the following materials are needed to do this project, and they are best assembled into "kits" in advance, so as to make best use of time. Also, please go through these steps yourself in order to help students with the project and have a working model for them to look at.
    - For every student:
        - One key ring (or paper clip)
        - Tape (to keep key ring steady and the strings taut)
        - Either a specific "*tzitzit* tying kit" or strings of the appropriate width - 3 white strings 1' long; 1 blue string, 2' long
- Pass out the directions (page 30) and help to walk the students through the steps.
- Encourage the students to place their new *tzitzit* in a place where they will be reminded about the *mitzvot* and their Jewish identities - i.e. a belt loop, on their backpacks or key chains, etc.

Directions for tying *tzitzit*



1. Start by evening up the ends of all four strands, starting at one end. Thread the strands through the key ring (or paper clip, etc.) and tape it to a wall or table. Even the seven ends as best you can, leaving the long blue strand (the *shammash*) free.

2. Using all 8 strands (4x4), tie a <u>double</u> knot. Try to alternate which of the set of strands is used for "over" or "under," so the length of the strands stays fairly even.

3. Take the *shammash* (long side of the blue thread). Wind it around the other 7 strands the required number of times (7, 8, 11, 13, respectively), making sure to begin and end at the same place so there are an exact number of twists.

4. Tie another double knot after each set of twists.

5. When the series of knots and twists is complete, check to make sure you tied and twisted them correctly. You can then even out the *tzitzit* - the most traditional way is by using your teeth!

Activity III - Gematria Games[4] (30 minutes):

These insights are meant as a WINDOW into the symbolic value of *tzitzit.*

- Say to the students, **"In Judaism, we try to find meaning in all aspects of our lives. Though we often read a text and try to understand what is says with the words, sometimes we also look for deeper clues hidden in the text. One of the ways to this is called Gematria - Hebrew numerology. By giving each Hebrew letter a numerical value, we can find meaning by adding and subtracting the numbers and looking for hints of meaning that we may not necessarily find otherwise."**
- Pass out the Gematria chart below (page 33) and have them start by adding up the numerical value of their Hebrew names and comparing them.
- Next, remind them that the *tzitzit* they just tied are supposed to symbolize the 613 *mitzvot* written in the Torah. How? Have them add up the numerical value of *tzitzit* (600). Then have them count the number of individual strands in the *tzitzit* (8). Then ask them how many double knots are in a *tzitzit* (5). Together these equal the 613 *mitzvot*!
- Another numerical *drasha* on the *tzitzit* - What do the windings of the *shammash* represent?
    - 7 is a reminder of Shabbat
    - 8 is a reminder of the *Brit*, the covenant of circumcision on the 8th day of life
    - 11 is a reminder of Joseph who famously dreamt of 11 stars bowing down to him
    - 13 are the traditional number of God's attributes, based on Exodus 34:6-7
- Yet another numerical *drasha* on the *tzitzit*:
    - 7 + 8 (windings) = 15 = YH, the first two letters in God's name
    - 11 = VH, the last two letters in God's name
    - 13 = *Echad* (one)
    - Together this reminds us of the *Shema* - That Adonai is one!
- Using the Gematria games worksheet (page 34), have the students fill out the chart and plot out the numerical values like a crossword puzzle.

[4] These have been collected from various sources, including Teaching Tefilah and unpublished materials from Temple Beth Am's *tallit* making workshop.

Debrief (5 minutes):

- **What are some of the ways that we looked at the *mitzvah* of *tzitzit*?**
  - Reading the biblical text from the book of Numbers
  - Seeing how we can use *tzitzit* during *tefillah*
  - Uncovering some of the numerological symbols that are tied into the *tzitzit*
- **What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of using Gematria to explore Jewish texts and symbols?**
  - Advantage - it can offer us new ways to understand and make meaning of the texts
  - Disadvantage - a clever and patient mathematician twist the text can find whatever he/she wants
- **Do you think that this method should be used when studying any text, such as Shakespeare's sonnets or the newspaper? Why or why not?**

Gematria Chart

100 = ק	10 = י	1 = א
200 = ר	20 = כ	2 = ב
300 = ש	30 = ל	3 = ג
400 = ת	40 = מ	4 = ד
	50 = נ	5 = ה
	60 = ס	6 = ו
	70 = ע	7 = ז
	80 = פ	8 = ח
	90 = צ	9 = ט

Your Hebrew name: _____

The Gematria of your name: _____

What other combinations of letters/numbers could equal your name?

What could this mean?

Gematria Crossword[5]

Directions:

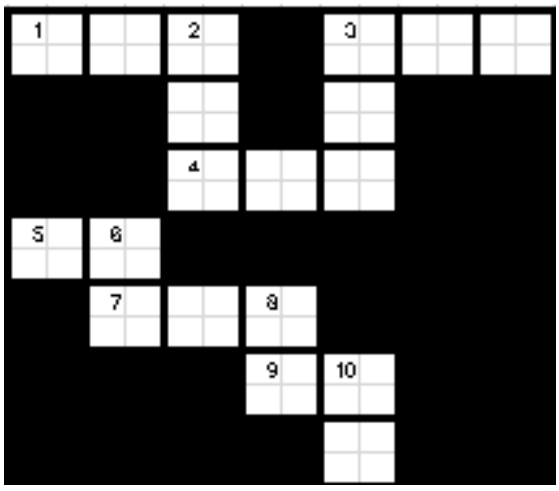
For each Hebrew word, fill in the blanks for the meaning of the word (translation) and its numerical value using Gematria. Then, fill in the numerical values in the boxes below like a crossword puzzle.

Across:

Hebrew Word	Translation	Gematria
1. תפילה		
3. טלית		
4. ציצית		
5. לב		
7. תורה		
9. אל		

Down:

2.מצות		
3.שמע		
6. יהוה		
8.אחד		
10. חי		



[5] This was developed by my mother Sharon McCauley, the creator of many magnificent *tallitot*, as a teaching tool for Gematria.

Educator's key

Across:

Hebrew Word	Translation	Gematria
1. תפילה	Jewish prayer	525
3. טלית	Prayer shawl	449
4. ציצית	Fringes on a tallit	600
5. לב	Heart	32
7. תורה	The Bible	611
9. אל	El - one name for God	31

Down:

2.מצות	Commandments	536
3.שמע	Hear!	410
6. יהוה	Adonai - another name for God	26
8.אחד	One	13
10. חי	Live/life	18

Lesson 4 - *Yotzer Or* and *Ma'ariv Aravim*

Goals:

- To explore the basis of the *Yotzer Or* prayer in biblical text, and how it has changed.
- To show the parallel nature between the *Yotzer Or* and the *Ma'ariv Aravim* prayers.

Activities:

- Looking at the *Yotzer Or* prayer in *siddurim*, read together the first line, "Blessed are You Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who forms light and creates darkness, Who makes peace and creates all (*hakol*)." If light and darkness are opposites, why is peace contrasted with "all"? Have the students look at the text of Isaiah 45:7, the source for this line of the prayer. What is the difference between them? (The line in Isaiah notes that instead of being the One who created "all", God created evil [*ra*].) Why might the rabbis have changed this phrase when they put it into the *siddur*? (Though Judaism asserts that both good and evil are created by God, the rabbis might not have wanted to emphasize God's creation of evil in the daily *tefillah*.) What does this reveal about changing biblical or liturgical text? (That it was done, even in ancient times.)

  This activity is meant to be a WINDOW into the textual basis of the prayer.

- Compare the *Yotzer Or* (in the *Shacharit* service) with the *Ma'ariv Aravim* prayer (in the *Ma'ariv* service). What are some of the main themes of these two prayers? (Creation, light vs. darkness, wisdom, etc.) Have students create a mixed-media art work (collage, painting, etc.) that shows the parallel nature of the two prayers, incorporating the themes and perhaps some of the Hebrew words of each prayer.

  This helps to FRAME the two different prayers and uncover the connections between them.

Unit III

Enduring Understandings:

- Through *tefillah* we can create connections with the Jewish people, both past and present, as well as explore our collective vision for the future.
- Engagement with *tefillah* implores us to struggle with fundamental questions about our own individual beliefs and values.
- *Tefillah* serves as the *geniza* (sacred storehouse) of Jewish thought throughout history.

Goals:

- To teach about the themes of the *Mi Chamocha, Hashkiveinu* and *Amidah* prayers.
- To teach about the textual origins and imagery of the *Lecha Dodi* prayer.

Objectives: SWBAT…

- Trace the textual origins *Lecha Dodi* and assess why it has uniquely, successfully become central to the Shabbat liturgy.
- Analyze the theological implications of these prayers and articulate their own personal beliefs in relations to them.
- Define "redemption," and describe God's role as a "Redeemer."
- Evaluate the use of popular contemporary non-Jewish songs in *tefillah* services.

Lesson 1 - *Mi Chamocha*

Goals:

- To uncover some of the textual allusions in the *Mi Chamocha.*
- To explore the theme of redemption, both in the *siddur* and in modern popular culture.

Technically, this prayer falls within the *Ge'ulah* (Redemption) subsection of the *Shema* and Her blessings. Because it is often perceived as a special unit, it gets special attention here.

Activities:

- Read through the text of the *Mi Chamocha*. Ask: To what text and time period does this prayer allude? (Hint: look at the line just before *Mi Chamocha*, and note that this is a time when "Moses [some liberal *siddurim* add the name of Miriam] and the children of Israel responded with song to You, all of them proclaiming…" or later in the prayer "the redeemed sang Your praise at the shore of the sea…") This locates the setting of the prayer during the time of the Exodus, after the Israelites had successfully fled Pharaoh's army and crossed the Red (Reed) Sea. Have the students read (from a *Tanakh*, *Chumash*, or even a *Sefer Torah*) the Song of Sea, in Exodus 15: 1-18. What do you notice is special about this section? (It's laid out differently - see the picture) Why do you think that is? (Perhaps to draw special attention to it as a landmark even of the Jewish people.)

This activity is meant to act as a WINDOW into the textual origins of the prayer.

- What lines from this text are used in the prayer? (15:11, 15:18; also 15:2 appears in Psalm 118 and is often sung either separately or as a part of Hallel) Also, scholars note that this is one of the oldest examples of biblical poetry, and often date its origin between the 12th-10th centuries BCE. Why do you think that this poem has been around for so long, even before it was written and canonized as part of the Bible (probably around 400 BCE)? Why do you think that Moses and the Israelites sang this song after crossing the Red Sea? Why do you think it has been imported into the *siddur*, to be used during *tefillah*?

Only this section and the Song of Debora in Judges 5 are laid out like this. The Talmud (Megillah 16b) notes, "All songs of praise in Scripture are written in the form of a half-brick above a whole brick, and a whole brick above a half-brick…" Also, this layout only appears in the Masoretic manuscripts, suggesting that it was a uniquely Jewish innovation.

This section is intended to act as a FRAME for understanding this prayer in the context of the greater *tefillah* service.

- Direct the students to the final paragraph of the section (in Hebrew). What words are repeated? (*Yisra'el* and *ga'al*) Explain that this prayer is in a section called *Ge'ulah*, meaning "redemption." What does it mean to be redeemed? The Oxford American Dictionary defines "redemption" as either "The action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil." **Or** "The action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt." How is this word used in the prayer? (It identifies Adonai as the redeemer of Israel, which is more in line with the 1st definition - God saving the Israelites from the Egyptians).

- One of the ways in which people try to make the *Mi Chamocha* and its theme of redemption more accessible to modern participants is to connect it with element of popular culture. Listen to Bob Marley's "Redemption Song," whose melody has been used to recite the *Mi Chamocha*, often in camp settings (The lyrics are below). How would you feel if this song became a regular addition to *tefillah*? What would be gained or lost if it replaced the *Mi Chamocha* in the service?

This is meant to be a MIRROR, allowing the students the opportunity to reflect on their own tastes and preferences during *tefillah*. Also, it is assumed that most students will be aware of the song.

Bob Marley was a legendary singer/songwriter. With his group the Wailers he was the first Jamaican (and Rastafarian) to penetrate international markets with reggae music; he was incredibly influential in the political and spiritual struggles of his time and continues to be associated with the fight for freedom in many countries.

“Redemption Song”

by Bob Marley, © 1980 Island Records LTD

Old pirates, yes, they rob I;
Sold I to the merchant ships,
Minutes after they took I
From the bottomless pit.
But my hand was made strong
By the hand of the Almighty.
We forward in this generation
Triumphantly.
Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom? -
'Cause all I ever have:
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs.

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery;
None but ourselves can free our minds.
Have no fear for atomic energy,
'Cause none of them can stop the time.
How long shall they kill our prophets,
While we stand aside and look? Ooh!
Some say it's just a part of it:
We've got to fulfill de book.

Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom? -
'Cause all I ever have:
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs.

“…pit.” This alludes to the biblical story of Joseph, in Genesis. He was cast into a pit by his brothers and sold into slavery. Marley’s use of “merchant ships” draws a parallel between this story and that of the Africans who were sold into slavery.

“… the hand of the Almighty.” This arguably alludes to Exodus 13:3, “Remember this day, on which you went free from Egypt, the house of bondage, how Adonai freed you from it with a mighty hand…”

Lesson 2 - *Hashkiveinu*

Goals:

- To introduce the *Hashkiveinu* prayer and locate it within the *Ma'ariv* service.
- To explore the idea of praying for protection.
- To examine the imagery used in the prayer.

Activities:

- Read through the prayer as a class and try to identify the main themes. What are we praying for in the *Hashkiveinu*? (Protection from our enemies) Why do you think this prayer appears only in the *Ma'ariv* service? (Because nighttime and the darkness can be particularly frightening)

This serves as a FRAME, locating the prayer specifically during the nighttime service.

This is meant to act as a MIRROR, so that students can articulate their own beliefs in relation to the prayer. It could potentially lead to some very serious and difficult discussion.

Write a 1-2 page journal on the following questions: When and have you been particularly struck by fear? What are some things that you do (or can do) in order to feel safe? How do you think that reciting this (or any) prayer could help?

- Often when we are afraid, we feel small in comparison to the rest of the world. But sometimes it is important for us to remember that small things - people and actions - can have a big impact. Use the Hebrew text of the prayer as the basis for a micrography project. After examining the imagery of the prayer, use pencils to illustrate some of the themes and images. Once the picture is outlined, use a pen to write the text of the prayer along the lines of the drawing, in letters as small as possible. Write out the prayer as many times as necessary in order to fully illustrate the picture. Gently erase the original pencil markings and color as desired. Have the students go through at least one rough draft before working on the final project. When the class is finished, have them exhibit their micrography works and explain why they chose to illustrate or emphasize specific images.

This activity is a WINDOW into different aspects of the imagery in the prayer.

Lesson 3 - *Lecha Dodi* (Scripted)

Goals:

- To examine the imagery in the *Lecha Dodi* prayer.
- To demonstrate the textual origins of this prayer.

Though this lesson appears out of context with the order of the *siddur*, it was placed here to balance the unit and continue to demonstrate the Guide's EUs.

Set Induction - 10 minutes:

- Write the following prompt on the board, and have the students write a short passage in response: **Think about one time when you attended a wedding. What did you wear and how did you act? What emotions did you have towards the bride and/or groom? How did the wedding guests treat them?**

This should help to draw them into the bridal imagery and give an event to identify with for the next activity.

Activity I - 30 minutes:

- Split the students into *chevrutah* pairs. Have them read the Shabbat Text Sheet below (page 44), and discuss the questions on the sheet. After 15 minutes, bring the class together to discuss some of answers to the questions. Ask: **If you had to guess, what prayer do you think uses or invokes these themes and images of Shabbat?**

These texts are a WINDOW into Shabbat imagery, and development of the idea of the Sabbath Bride.

- Have the students take turns reading the *Lecha Dodi* prayer out loud. Make sure to point out:
  - The fact that the verses rhyme in Hebrew
  - The author's name (see below) spelled out among the 1st letter of each stanza
  - That while reciting the last paragraph we customarily stand and face toward the entrance (not east), in order to welcome the Sabbath Bride
  - The last line is a direct allusion to Rabbi Yannai's words from the Talmud (to which we will return in the Debrief section)
  - Many of the lines of the poem allude to lines in the Bible

For a complete list of biblical allusions, see Entering Jewish Prayer by Reuven Hammer, pp. 215-218

Activity II - 30 minutes:

- Divide the class into two or three groups and have them compete in a sing-down. There will be three rounds, in which you will announce to all of the groups one word, and they have to come up with as many songs as they can that use that word. Go around the teams and have them sing (together) one (chorus and/or verse of a) song at a time. For each one they perform well, give them a point. Songs cannot be duplicated. For the first two rounds use the words "wedding" and "Shabbat." For the last round, explain that you are going to do something different. Have them instead work together to each sing a different melody for *Lecha Dodi* - one chorus and one verse. Try to get through the entire prayer, or choose specific verses (I recommend verses 1, 2, 5 and 9, which are commonly recited in Reform communities).

This activity is often used in a camp setting. It is appropriate here in order to further explore the imagery associated with the Sabbath Bride, as well as reveal the many and varied melodies for reciting the poem. I recommend compiling your own collection of melodies to share, in case the students can only identify one or two.

Debrief - 10 minutes:

- Have the students refer back to the last text on the hand out. Read out loud this paragraph from Lawrence Hoffman's <u>My People's Prayerbook: *Kabbalat Shabbat*</u> (p.14):

"[No] one so much discusses that account [in the Talmud, about Rabbis Chanina and Yannai] before the 16th century poet Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz decided to build his brilliant poem *L'kha Dodi* around it. Without *L'kha Dodi*, Rabbi Yannai's dictum would likely have remained submerged in the sea of Talmud along with most of the other cryptic stories about Rabbis that rarely get cited except among specialists. *L'kha Dodi* is the actualization of Rabbi Yannai's dream: the ritualized means for whole communities to greet Shabbat. Rarely has a single liturgical creation seized the imagination of an entire people so quickly, so thoroughly, and so lastingly as *L'kha Dodi* has."

- Ask:
    - **Why do you think this poem has managed to spread so completely across the Jewish world - beyond the boundaries of Reform, Conservative or Orthodox, beyond the differences between Ashkenazim, Sephardim and Mizrachim?**

Shabbat Text Study

Directions: Read through the following texts and discuss the questions (in **bold)** below.

What prayer do you think invokes all of the following images?

1.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.	זכור את יום השבת לקדשו

- Exodus 20:8 (JPS translation)

How would you do "remember" and "keep Shabbat holy" (either traditionally or personally)?

2. The Sabbath came before the Holy One and said, "Sovereign of the Universe. All the other days have a mate; am I to be without one?"
The Holy One said to it: "The Community of Israel shall be your mate."
As it is said: "Remember the Sabbath day *le-kaddesho*: to betroth it." (Exodus 20:8)

-Genesis Rabbah 11:8

How does this text understand interpret or translate the Hebrew from Exodus 20:8 differently than in the first quote?

3. Rabbi Chanina would wrap himself in his cloak and stand at sunset of Sabbath eve, proclaiming, "Come, let us go forth to welcome Queen Shabbat!"
Rabbi Yannai put on his Sabbath cloak on Sabbath eve and exclaimed: "Come forth, O Bride, Come forth, O Bride!"

-Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 119a

What two images does this text use to symbolize Shabbat?

How could this impact your understanding or practice of Shabbat?

How would imagining Shabbat as a bride change what you do in order to "keep it holy?"

Lesson 4 - The *Amidah*

Goal:

- To unpack the core values and hopes of the Jewish people through an exploration of the *Amidah*.

This is a FRAMING activity, meant to introduce the themes of the *Amidah*

Activities:

- Read a translation of the *Amidah* and chart out the themes of the 19 *brachot*, categorizing them as *Shevach*, *Bakashah* and *Hoda'ah*. (Praise, requests and thanks-giving)

Using a traditional *siddur*, the list should look something like this:

1. God as the protector of the Forefathers
2. God as the power that makes for salvation
3. God as the source of holiness
4. For knowledge
5. For the strength to repent
6. For forgiveness
7. For relief from affliction
8. For healing
9. For the bounty of the land and material prosperity
10. For the ingathering of the exiles into the Holy Land
11. For the establishment of the reign of true justice
12. Against slanderers and informers
13. For the support and protection of the righteous
14. For the rebuilding of Jerusalem
15. For the coming of the Messiah
16. For the acceptance of our prayers
17. For the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem
18. Gratitude as man's response to God's work in the world
19. For peace

1- 3 are considered *Shevach* - prayers of praise.

4-16 are considered *Bakashot* - requests.

17-19 are traditionally considered to be *Hoda'ah* - a prayer of thanks, though 19 is a request for peace.

- Compare some of the different *brachot* (in Hebrew or English) between a traditional *siddur* and the Reform Movement's *Mishkan T'filah*, highlighting the differences between traditional and Reform ideology, specifically:

  This activity is a WINDOW into the ideological differences between Reform and Orthodox Judaism.

  - #2 *Gevurot* (the differences between *Mechayei Meitim* and *Mechayei Hakol*)
  - #9 *Barech* (one focuses on enriching the agriculture in *Eretz Yisrael*, the other on our own country)
  - #10 *Teka B'shofar* (one on the ingathering of exile - i.e. *Aliyah*, the other about freedom for the oppressed)
  - #15 *Emet/Melech David* (Deliverance through truth vs. deliverance through the Messiah)

- Create a collage of each one of the *brachot*, based on the themes of the prayer, piece them together for a visual representation of the *Amidah*, along with a short paragraph describing some of the choices they made and why. Have students present their blessing (to the rest of the class, the school or their parents) and the artistic choices they made to represent it.

  Use this activity as a MIRROR, giving the participants the opportunity to explore their own beliefs, in relation to the text.

Unit IV

Enduring Understandings:

- Being familiar with mainstream *tefillah* (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox *minhagim*) enables us to more comfortably participate in the contemporary pluralistic American Jewish context.

- *Tefillah* serves as the *geniza* (sacred storehouse) of Jewish thought throughout history.

- The experience of communal Jewish prayer can help to build a group identity and an individual sense of belonging.

Goals:

- To guide the students in exploring their own beliefs about God, themselves and the Jewish people through the lenses of the prayers in the *siddur*.

- To teach the historical development of these prayers.

- To give students the opportunity to embark on their own explorations of the *siddur* and its blessings.

Objectives: SWBAT…

- Identify the core themes and ideas of the *Aleinu* and *Kaddish Yatom*.

- Analyze how these prayers were developed, in the context of their time and place in history.

- Assess what traditional beliefs these prayers reveal, and articulate their own beliefs in relation to these traditional beliefs.

- Complete their own projects and presentation on different prayers in the *siddur*, exploring their textual and ideological significance.

Lesson 1 – The *Aleinu*

Goal:

- To teach about how the text of the *Aleinu* differs between Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities, and how the versions reflect historical circumstances and ideological differences.

Activity:

- Compare the differences between the Sephardi and Ashkenazi versions, focusing on the line omitted from most Ashkenazi texts: "They bow to vanity and emptiness and pray to a god that cannot save." One resource you can use is the note from Birnbaum's Ha-Siddur Ha-Shalem, p. 136:

> "*Aleinu* has been used as the closing prayer of the daily services since the thirteenth century. It is reported that it was the death-song of Jewish martyrs of the Middle Ages. *Aleinu* has been the occasion of repeated attacks on account of the passage… [see above]. Through fear of the official censors, the passage in question has been excluded from the prayer."

- Divide the class into teams, have them research and prepare a debate on whether or not to keep/reinsert this line in the *Aleinu*, arguing to keep or remove it along these lines:
    - Censorship during medieval times - My People's Prayer Book V.6, p.144: "As is well known, medieval censors removed the line that juxtaposes Isaiah 30:7 and 45:20: 'They bow down low to vanity and emptiness and pray to a god who does not save.' Some have imputed reference to Christianity here, because in Hebrew numerology *varik* ('and emptiness') equals 'Jesus' (*yeshu*). But only paganism is intended, not monotheistic religions. No halakhic authority has argued for the continued exclusion of the phrase, and some, like Maharil Diskin (late nineteenth to twentieth century, Lithuania and Jerusalem), have strenuously urged its retention. A counterargument for its continued exclusion may be *mipnei aivah* ('because of enmity'): it causes needless and unintended enmity between gentiles and Jews. A further reason for excluding it is the hesitancy to change what is by now a three-hundred-year-old custom."

- Where do you stand on being a "chosen people?" As a class, try to answer the questions below. Read the article and then return to the questions, filling in any gaps that were left unanswered.

Questions:

1. What does the difference between being a “chosen-people,” a “mission-people” and a “choosing people?”

2. How is this sense of being a chosen people reflected in the *Aleinu*?

3. Why would this sense of a being a chosen people be both positive and negative in building the culture and identity of the State of Israel?

4. What do you believe about the Jewish people being chosen by God? Why?

This article acts as a historical WINDOW and the questions help the students to MIRROR their beliefs on the subject.

Chosenness: Some Modern Views

By David S. Ariel; Reprinted from www.myjewishlearning.com

The greatest challenge to chosenness as a central tenet of Judaism came with the opportunity for Jews to integrate as individuals within modern societies. It became difficult to reconcile Jewish uniqueness with the case for social and political acceptance.

Spreading Morality: A Jewish Mission

Reform Judaism was one of the first modern responses to this challenge.

In the eighteenth century, the founders of the Reform movement began to play down the role of the commandments and exalt the ethical dimensions of Judaism. The change in emphasis within Reform Judaism was evident in the renewed attention paid to the role of the Jewish people as "a light of nations" [*le-or goyyim*, Isaiah 49:6].

In order to highlight this role, the expression was changed to "a light unto the nations [*or le-goyyim*]. " Such a subtle shift stressed that Israel was not only to be a moral exemplar but also to see its religion as missionary, with morality as the Jewish mission.

Early Reform thinkers believed that Judaism is a set of universalistic teachings that have made great contributions to Western civilization. They introduced the "mission-people" concept as a new twist on the chosen-people concept. The mission-people concept places the responsibility on Israel both to live up to the ethical demands of the covenant and to disseminate these ethical teachings to the world. In dropping the ethnic and ritual dimensions of Judaism, the proponents of the mission-people concept sought to turn Judaism into a universal ethical culture.

The Reform reinterpretation of the chosen-people concept as the mission-people concept has come to mean that the Jews are not chosen by God, but rather choose to embrace a social gospel—that Jews have a higher calling to solve the injustices in modern society.

Re-embracing Chosenness

In 1975, Reform Judaism made a decisive break with its own past and restored much of what its predecessors had eliminated, including an emphatic statement about the importance of tradition, peoplehood, and the Hebrew language. Reform Judaism now reaffirmed belief in chosenness, peoplehood, and certain mitzvot, but continued to insist that the exalted station of the Jewish people is a product of its ethical religion. This ideological shift reflected the shift back to traditional beliefs within the Reform movement as well as an increasing recognition of the importance of Israel and peoplehood in modern Jewish life.

The Choosing People, Not the Chosen people

Among the four religious denominations of American Judaism, the more traditional ones -Orthodox and Conservative Judaism--continue to advocate a belief in chosenness rooted in the notion of religious obligations, the mitzvot, that define the specifically Jewish way of life. Only the Reconstructionist movement rejects the idea of the chosen people.

This reflects the position of the founder of the movement, Mordecai Kaplan, who vehemently opposed the idea that God chooses one people over another. God, for Kaplan, was the impulse for goodness that resides in human beings, not a transcendent being with a capacity to choose. Thus, the Jewish people is the "choosing people" rather than the "chosen people."

National Uniqueness

Some Jewish thinkers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries believed that a revived national definition of the Jewish people could provide a coherent system of meaning for modern Jews.

Ahad Ha'am ([literally] "One of the People"), a cultural Zionist, believed that the Jewish people possessed a "national spirit" which was characterized by a commitment to the prophetic ideals of absolute righteousness. The Jewish people had survived throughout history by virtue of their national spirit and will to live, which was based on dedication to the fundamental and abiding principle of doing what is uncompromisingly right--not by virtue of belief in God. But over time Judaism had become encrusted with rituals, observances, and a law that threatened to stultify the moral sensibilities of the Jewish people.

Lesson 2 - *Kaddish Yatom* (Scripted)[6]

Goals:

- To explore Jewish mourning rituals and their purpose in strengthening community bonds.
- To teach about Jewish afterlife concepts.
- To demonstrate how the recitation of the *Kaddish* can contribute to a greater degree of participation during a *tefillah* service.
- To teach how Jewish mourning rituals are meant both to honor the dead and to sustain the living.

Objectives - SWBAT:

- Articulate at least 3 Jewish traditions regarding mourning and the reason behind the ritual
- Identify when the *Kaddish* is recited, both in a tefillah service and as part of the mourning process
- List at least 4 Jewish concepts of the afterlife
- Describe how and why the recitation of the *Kaddish Yatom* helps to strengthen community bonds
- Articulate how, when and why they would participate in a communal recitation of *Kaddish Yatom*

Set Induction: Mourning Customs Match up - 15 minutes

1. Give each student one of the Mourning Customs cards (found at the end of this lesson), and make sure that there are an equal number of rituals (top line) and reasons (bottom line).

2. Give half of the students ritual-card and the other half cards bearing reasons for those rituals. Tell the students to walk around the room and find the student with their matching card.

3. Have each of the pairs read their cards - ritual and reason - and perhaps comment on whether or not they had ever seen, heard of or experienced the ritual, and if they think that the reason is logical, satisfactory.

This is meant to draw the participants' attention to different rituals surrounding mourning, a significant event for the Jewish community. Starting broadly with these different rituals, this activity is meant to lead the group to focus on the *Kaddish Yatom*, as one of the few mourning practices that are part of the *tefillah* service, and why it serves that purpose.

[6] The activities in this lesson were adapted from materials developed by Yossi Fendel for the *Kesher* program in Northern California.

4. Ask the students:
    a. **Why do you think we have developed such mourning customs?**
    b. **Which of these customs seem reasonable or practical, and which ones seem to be arbitrary?**
    c. **Are there any customs of mourning that you know which did not make the list?**
    d. **Which of these customs had you already heard of?**
        i. (The hope here is to lead them into a discussion of the Mourner's *Kaddish*.)

Activity I: Exploring the *Kaddish* - 20 minutes

This constitutes the FRAME section of the lesson.

1. Pass out siddurim and ask the students to open them up to the *Kaddish Yatom* - the Mourner's (literally "Orphan's") *Kaddish*.

2. Ask the students:
    a. **What can you tell me about this prayer, and when it is said in a *tefillah* service?** (Write their answers on the board) Some of the answers should include:
        i. It is only said in a *minyan*
        ii. Traditionally, only mourners stand and recite it; in liberal communities, often many other people either stand or also stand and recite it
        iii. It is only recited for someone after they have been buried
        iv. It is recited every day during the first week after burial (for some people the first month) and regularly for the first 11 months
        v. It is written in Aramaic (not Hebrew), the common language of Babylonian Jews
        vi. There are many different versions of the *Kaddish* - traditionally they often act as bookends between different parts of the service
    b. **What is the value in having the mourners stand apart from the rest?**
        i. (The community can see who is in mourning, in order to be able to offer their support outside of the *tefillah* service.)
    c. **What is the value of having everyone standing together?**
        i. (The community helps to affirm the vulnerability of the mourner by standing with them in solidarity, helping them by reciting the words even if the mourner is too emotional to do so.)
    d. **Which would you prefer if you were mourning a loved one?**

e. **What do you think is (or should be) the role of the rest of the community when the *Kaddish* is being recited?**
    i. (To listen attentively and respond with at the appropriate time.)

3. Have the students read a translation of the prayer out loud from a *siddur*.

4. Ask:
    a. **According to the text, what do you think is the main theme of the prayer?**
        i. (The power and grace of God)
    b. **What seems to be missing from this prayer?**
        i. (Any mention of death or mourning)
    c. **When you are mourning a loved one, why would you want to (or need to) proclaim that God is great?**
        i. (In order to not curse God that your loved one was unfairly taken from you.)
    d. **Why do you think we say this prayer?**

5. Tell the following story to the students:
    a. **"An old man appeared in a cemetery, carrying a heavy load of wood. Rabbi Akiba saw this man and asked him why he was doing such hard labor. Akiba offered to redeem the man if he was a slave or help support him if he was poor. The man explained that he had been condemned to burn in hell and that he had to carry the wood for his own suffering. Akiba asked if there was any way for him to be relieved of his suffering. The man replied that he would be free of this judgment if his young son were to say the first part of the *Kaddish* and people were to respond, "*Y'hey Sh'mey Rabba*…" Rabbi Akiba searched for the man's son, found him, and taught him what he needed to know. The son recited the *Kaddish*, and his father's soul was saved from punishment."** (From *Netiv Binah* I, pp. 367-368)

This story is intended to reframe the recitation of the *Kaddish* both as something useful for us, the mourners, but also for the deceased. It is meant to lead the participants to ask questions about life after death, which will be dealt with in the next section.

6. Ask the students:
    a. **According to this story, what is one reason that we say the *Kaddish*?**
        i. (In order to release our relatives' ghosts/souls, in case they are toiling under harsh conditions in the afterlife, as a result of bad deeds or missed opportunities during their lives.)
    b. **Do you think that this is the primary reason that we say the prayer today?**
        i. (Many people think that we say *Kaddish* in order to help strengthen the bonds of community by having this establish a relationship between the community and the mourner. Often it is said in order to help the mourner feel connected to the Jewish people and God. Also, it can give them the specific times to remember and mourn loved ones, rather than having to live with the burden throughout their lives.)

Activity II: Exploration of the Jewish Afterlife - 15 minutes

1. Break the students up into groups of three.

2. Read the following explanation: **"In the story we just heard, a man had briefly gotten out of "Hell." But do Jews really believe in Heaven and Hell? Well, yes and no. There are Jewish ideas that are very similar to the Christian versions of Heaven and Hell, but these are not the only afterlife concepts in Judaism. Judaism has many different ideas of what happens to us after we die."**

This section acts as a WINDOW into different conceptions of the afterlife, and should give students the opportunity to define their own beliefs as a MIRROR.

3. Each team is given an envelope of "Afterlife Possibilities" - cut into the categories. Tell the students: "In the envelopes you are given 10 different afterlife cards. Some are Jewish and some are not. Divide the cards into two piles - Jewish afterlife traditions and non-Jewish ones."

4. Allow the teams 5 minutes to read through and sort them into piles.

5. Read through the list of which afterlife traditions are actually Jewish and which are not.

6. After this is finished, ask the following questions:
    a. Was there anything here that surprised you?
    b. Which afterlife concepts, Jewish or not, did you find most appealing? Why?

Mourning Cards

Rituals are on the 1st and 3rd rows, with their corresponding reason just below; the most important card is the one that deals with the *Kaddish Yatom*, because it leads to the next activity.

A Jewish funeral is always "closed casket."	Mourners tear their clothing. Today, many mourners choose instead to tear a ribbon pinned to their clothing.	When covering a casket with earth, a mourner uses the back of the shovel.	A candle is lit after returning from the burial, and each year at the anniversary of a person's death.	In a mourner's home, the mirrors are covered.
The embalming that is necessary to make a corpse presentable is viewed as invasive and disrespectful.	Mourners often have a great deal of pent-up anger. This provides a controlled venting of that anger.	This reflects that an otherwise ordinary object is being used for an extraordinary and holy purpose.	It is symbolic of human life, which burns slowly, always reaching upward, until it is extinguished.	At such a difficult time, mourners should only be concerned with their well being, not their appearance.
Mourners sit on low stools or pillows during the week after burial. This is called, "sitting *Shiva*."	It is considered inappropriate to initiate a conversation with a mourner.	Flowers are not brought to a cemetery. Instead, a rock is left at the gravesite.	All meals for a mourner are to be provided by the mourner's community.	A *minyan* (10 people) is required to allow the mourner to say *Kaddish Yatom*.
Being physically closer to the ground is a reflection of how low their spirits are.	When the mourner is ready to talk, he or she will talk. Until then, just being present is comforting.	A gift that is intended to give "new life" to the memory of a lost loved one should not itself die so quickly.	It helps the mourner to survive physically as well as feel the comfort of the community.	This prayer requirement helps to ensure that those who can provide comfort will always surround the mourner.

Afterlife Concepts

1. ***Beit Mishpat Ha'elyon***: When we die, our souls are brought to trial in a heavenly court, with angels acting as the prosecuting and defending attorneys.
2. ***Gan Eden***: When we die, we return to this biblical paradise from which our ancestors, Adam and Eve, were banished.
3. ***Gehenna***: This is a place where the wicked are punished for their sins after they die. We observe Mitzvot in this world in order to avoid being sent to this place.
4. ***Gilgul***: After death, a soul eventually returns to earth and assumes a new physical body.
5. ***Hod Hashechinah***: The soul leaves the body upon its death, and enters a world with no bodies, no eating or drinking, nothing except the study of Torah and dialogue with other souls.
6. ***Klum***: After we die, we cease to exist in any form. We no longer see, hear, or even think. The soul dies along with the body.
7. ***Malach***: After our body is lowered into the grave, our soul takes on a new reality - that of an angel who can help our loved ones in subtle ways.
8. ***She'ol***: Upon death, one descends deep beneath the earth into this "underworld." It is neither good nor bad, but is just a domain for the dead beyond the control of God.
9. ***Sulam Olamim***: Ours is one in a series of radically different worlds, with different laws of physics and concepts of reality. Death is the transition between these worlds.
10. ***T'chiyat Hametim***: When we die, our bodies lie in coffins waiting, perhaps for thousands of years, for the Messiah to come and bring us back to life so that we can all live in the land of Israel under the reign of God until the end of time.

All of the concepts, real and made-up, have Hebrew titles. This is meant to both be a red herring to throw students off as well as a reinforcement of the Hebrew names for the real concepts. Jewish concepts: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10; all others were made up.

Lesson 3 - Concluding Our Journey

Goals:

- To uncover the connection between the *siddur* (liturgy or *kevah*) and prayer (*kavannah*)
- To empower the students to continue to learn about the *kevah* of the *siddur* in order to increase their *kavannah* during *tefillah*

Activities:

- Remind the participants about where they started on this exploration into *tefillah* - (probably) confused, bored and without a connection. Have them draw up a list of the prayers covered in the curriculum, and try to respond to each with a paragraph or bullets points detailing: "Before we studied this I thought…" as well as "After we studied this I thought…" Ask them if/how their experiences during *tefillah* have changed after going through the lessons in this curriculum. How can understanding more about the *siddur* and individual prayers help to increase *kavannah*?

  This activity is a MIRROR for the students to reflect on their own growth.

- Mirror the first activity of the curriculum.
  - Step 1: Hand out at least four or five post-its to each student, and give them five minutes to respond to the following question: **Why do Jews pray?** Designate four different corners of the room for dealing with issues or questions about **God**, **the Jewish people**, **the self**, and **Other**.
  - Step 2: When the students have come up with as many reasons as they can, have them place their post-its in the appropriate corners. Divide the students into four groups (one group per corner) and have them **silently** work together to collate the post-its into whatever categories seem to be evident, and present them to the class.

    This is meant to be a form of authentic assessment, for the educator and the students.
  - Step 3: Compare their lists for this activity to the responses they gave at the beginning of the curriculum. What has changed?
- Final project: Recognizing that we were only able to unpack a small number of prayers in the *siddur*, instruct them to work in *chevrutah* (or as individuals or small groups) to create displays (models, posters, etc.), papers or presentations on one prayer, similar to the activities in this Curriculum Guide. They could either go in different directions exploring a prayer covered in the curriculum, or choose prayers or sections not covered. All of their projects (regardless of the medium) should answer the following questions:

- What are the main themes of this prayer?
- Where does it appear in the *siddur*? (And if possible, explain why)
- How and when is it recited in a *minyan*?
- Is the prayer written or recited differently in different communities (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox; Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi)? How and why?
- If the prayer alludes to another Jewish text, explain the original text's significance and why it is used in the *siddur*.

For a list of resources to consult in order to complete the project, please read through the Annotated Bibliography, page 61.

Memorable Moments

The following are activities that can be used to supplement and enhance the learning associated with this Curriculum Guide. Depending on timing and resources, these can be woven into the plan for the semester or year.

1. The students help to lead a service for the school by each offering a brief, original *iyyun* for a single prayer. They can be memories, poems or *kavannot*, but should deal with the theme of the prayer itself. These *iyyunim* will be compiled into a class *siddur*, and used in a *tefillah* service at the end of the curriculum, with students reciting their *iyyunim* before the appropriate prayer.

2. Visits at least three Jewish communities (either different denominations or cultural backgrounds) and participate in their *tefillah* services. Before each visit, introduce the students to that particular community, its origins and style of prayer, as well as the *siddur* they use. After each visit, encourage the students to reflect on their experiences, either through written texts or discussions.

3. Have the students work together to write a prayer, to be used in the school's *tefillah* service. This could be added as a gift to the school community, to be incorporated into their *siddurim*. In this way they could participate in the process of *siddur* development, adding their own *kavannah* to become *kevah* for future generations.

4. Visit other religious communities during their prayer services, in order to demonstrate the points of resonance and dissonance between their styles of service, layout of prayer space, the interaction between the leader and community, the use of liturgical texts, and anything else that may come up. If possible, also try to arrange a brief question and answer session with the community/religious leader and have the students prepare beforehand a series of questions to ask.

5. Host a presentation of the students' final projects for the parents and extended school community, including other students, faculty and administrators.

Annotated Bibliography

Birnbaum, Philip, Daily Prayer Book: Ha-Siddur Ha-Shalem, Hebrew Publishing Company, New York, 2002

A non-denominational rendering of the traditional *siddur*, Birnbaum's Daily Prayer Book has a modern, literal translation of the Hebrew text. It is also annotated, serving to highlight specific issues within the prayers and offer biblical and rabbinic allusions as well as directions on choreography and comments on the plain meaning of the text.

Central Conference of American Rabbis, Mishkan T'filah: A Reform Siddur, CCAR Press, New York, 2007

A groundbreaking compilation of traditional, liberal and alternative Jewish liturgical texts, Mishkan T'filah is the Reform Movement's attempt to bridge tradition with contemporary sensibilities. Each two-page spread includes the Hebrew text of the prayer (either with a traditional or a changed, liberal text), the English transliteration of the Hebrew prayer, the English translation of the prayer and an alternative reading that thematically corresponds to the prayer. This layout has been designed to give the widest possible usage for the movement's communities, as well as a dynamic tool for varying services within the community from one to the next. It also has some biblical and rabbinic citations of the liturgical texts, as well as some notes to guide the reader or practitioner.

Falk, Marcia, The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival, Harper Collins, New York, 1996

In her own attempt to bridge the gap between a literal translation of the traditional Hebrew prayers and her modern, feminist perspective, Falk has developed a book that can either supplement or perhaps replace sections of the *siddur*. A recognized poet, Falk offers a series of blessings in Hebrew and English on different subjects, often directly connected to those found in the traditional *siddur*, using gender-sensitive language in reference to God and offering specific blessings for women. The index is useful for finding creative iterations of well-recognized prayers, and the use of Hebrew shows how she tries to maintain a connection with the traditional liturgy.

Hammer, Reuven, Entering Jewish Prayer: A Guide to Personal Devotion and the Worship Service, Shocken Books, New York, 1994

An easy to read book with a substantial index, Entering Jewish Prayer has a wealth of information regarding the origins and development of the texts in the traditional *siddur*. The book also has several chapters devoted to the idea of prayer, and speaks directly to the Jewish need to base prayer on the texts available. It has a useful glossary, and Hammer has gone out of his way to make the information dynamic and accessible for a variety of audiences, though this is perhaps best suited for liberal Jews with some working knowledge of modern *tefillah*.

Harlow, Jules, Siddur Sim Shalom: A Prayerbook for Shabbat, Festivals and Weekdays, Rabbinical Assembly, New York, 1985

The *siddur* most commonly used in modern Conservative synagogues, Siddur Sim Shalom contains the traditional Hebrew text, a creatively-rendered (non-literal) English translation as well as some alternative readings. There are very few directions regarding choreography and no commentary. Though I did not utilize this *siddur* often in the development of this Curriculum Guide, its ubiquitous presence in the American milieu makes it noteworthy as a possible resource.

Hoffman, Lawrence, My People's Prayer Book, Jewish Lights Publishing, New York, 1997

A series of volumes each dedicated to a specific part (or parts) of the *siddur*, My People's Prayer Book provides a substantial amount of background information as well as reflections on the prayers' implications for modern Jews. It contains the traditional Hebrew text and a new literal translation. Structured similarly to a page of Talmud, the liturgical text is surrounded by different modern commentator's responses to the text, each through a different lens: biblical, feminist, halakhic, medieval, rabbinic, chasidic, mystical, theological and historical. These responses are geared towards adults with some Jewish background.

Kadden, Bruce and Kadden, Barabara Binder, Teaching Tefilah: Insights and Activities on Prayer, ARE Publishing, Denver, 1994

This is a guide for teachers who want to help students uncover different aspects of *tefillah* - both in prayer and liturgy. Primarily suited for K-5th grade students in a supplementary Reform religious school, this resource provides a lot of well-researched information about the prayers and their development. Chapters are divided based on individual prayers or the section of different services, and each chapter begins with a short, easy to read essay on the prayer, its origins and its importance in the service. This resource was extremely helpful in the production of this Curriculum Guide.

Sherman, Nosson and Zlotowitz, Meir (Editors), Siddur Ahavat Shalom: The Complete Artscroll Siddur, Mesorah Publications Ltd., New York, 1984

The standard *siddur* used in American Orthodox circles, Siddur Ahavat Shalom contains the traditional Hebrew text, English translations, biblical and rabbinic citations, as well as notes on usage and choreography. It is available in both Ashkenazi and Sephardi *nusach* (versions). Though it can be an invaluable resource, the perspective of the editors and publishers are sometimes substantially different than that of a community day school, specifically regarding the participation of women. Its commentary also reveals the strong belief that the *siddur*, it ordering and theological implications, come straight from Hashem, via Moses and the rabbis.

Steinsaltz, Adin, A Guide to Jewish Prayer, Shocken Books, New York, 2000

A dense and difficult to read book, A Guide to Jewish Prayer attempts to give answers to every possible "How or When" question a reader could ask about *tefillah*. It

has a significant amount of information from a very rigid, Halakhic perspective - i.e. this is the only right way to do things. There are chapters on daily prayer, Shabbat prayer, prayer for all of the different holidays, the history and make-up of the synagogue as well as the differences between Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Yemenite and other customs and traditions. The book also contains a useful glossary as well as a section on the biographical sketches of the rabbis who were instrumental in creating and ordering the prayers throughout the ages.

www.myjewishlearning.com

This accessible, highly interactive website has a wealth of short articles on many different subjects, all relating to Jewish life, culture and practice. Many of the articles used for this Curriculum Guide were found on this website. The only issue is in trying to utilize this resource to answer specific questions. While its search function is quite capable, it is not exhaustive and should be used with patience. Also, the website has many links to audio, video, pictures and other textual resources which can be very helpful.

Directions:
Take some time to read out loud the statements in both the left and right columns of the page. Once you have done that, summarize the statements in each column. Give each of them a title, and be prepared to explain how you came to it. Answer the questions below.

Praying regularly is important to me.	I only like to pray when I feel in the mood.
I think that when we pray, we should recite the traditional prayers in Hebrew.	I think that when we pray, we should read creative English versions that I can identify with.
Prayers should be recited in a synagogue.	Prayers should be recited outside in nature.
Ideally, I think prayers should be recited when among a community.	Ideally, I think prayers are best said spontaneously whenever someone feels like it.
I like that when I say the traditional prayers, I know that Jews around the world are saying the saying the same thing.	I like that my prayers are unique, original and creative.
The prayers in the *siddur* have stood the test of time and have allowed generations of Jews to connect with God.	Because the prayers in the *siddur* are so old, we should supplement them with newer, contemporary ones.

Title #1 Title #2

_____ _____

Why did you use these particular titles?

Which statements - on either side - do you identify with? Why?

What are the possible advantages or disadvantages of either perspective?

Hebrew as the Language of Jewish Prayer

By Rabbi Reuven Hammer, from Entering Jewish Prayer

The language of Jewish prayer is Hebrew. Certainly it is permissible to pray in any language. The Sages of the Mishnah indicated how important they thought it was that we understand what we say: "These may be said in any language . . . the recitation of the Shema, the Prayer [the Amidah], and the Blessing After Meals" (Sotah 7:1).

If that is so, what need is there for the non-Hebrew speaker to pray in Hebrew? [German Jewish philosopher] Franz Rosenzweig remarked that "the uncomprehended Hebrew gives him more than the finest translation... Jewish prayer means praying in Hebrew." There is an emotional element that reciting prayer in Hebrew can add even to those who do not comprehend every word. There is a feeling of identification with an ancient tradition and with other Jews wherever they may be which enhances the experience of prayer.

There is nothing magical in Hebrew, but there is something culturally meaningful that is lost when traditional prayers are said in other languages. Even if one does not understand the words, a glance at the translation will enable one to bring some level of meaning to the recitation, which is then supplemented by the emotional impact of the Hebrew text. Furthermore, by learning about the texts themselves, you can apprehend the sense of the texts, if not of every word.

Obviously, the more one knows the text in its original language, the better. The real meaning of the text lies in its original language. The terms that are used, the multiple meanings and echoes within them, can seldom be fully conveyed in translation. Languages are also reflections of specific cultures. When God is called "*go'el*" and the English renders it "redeemer," we have entered into another thought-world with connotations not to be found in the Hebrew. For Christianity--and English is a Christian language--redemption means saving someone doomed to perdition because of sin. For Judaism, it means rescuing Israel from the enslavement of foreigners.

When we thank God for "*torah u-mitzvot*," we are not speaking of "law and commandments." "Law" is a set of legal norms. Torah is God's instruction, either in a specific book or in all of Jewish tradition as it has developed. "Commandments" has the harsh sound of orders given by a commander. Mitzvot are both actions we are expected to perform and actions of a positive nature which stem from religious convictions.
All of this is on the most basic level of semantics. If it is true, as has been said, that reading a work in translation is like kissing through a veil, what shall we say about trying to pray through translation? Beyond the basic level, there is the level of emotion that only the Hebrew can properly achieve.

What are we to do, therefore, when so many Jews do not understand the language? It is fatuous [i.e. silly, pointless] to say to all people, "Learn it!" as desirable as that would be. But we can say, "Learn the vocabulary of prayer." It is possible to study enough about the

prayers so that even if you do not understand every word, the main words and phrases will be familiar to you.

Glance at the translations as you pray to remind yourself of the meaning, but do not depend on them. For if all translations are interpretations, translations of prayers are even more likely to be explanations and to contain the theology and philosophy of the translator. If you have read about the prayers, you will know enough to assign whatever meaning you feel appropriate at the time you are saying them.

Questions:

1. Why does Franz Rosensweig say, “Jewish prayer means praying in Hebrew?"

2. What is the difference between the Hebrew “*go’el*” and the English “redeemer?” What other Hebrew terms can you think of which might have significantly different connotations in English?

3. How does the author recommend we struggle with Hebrew texts in the *siddur*? How do you choose to deal with it?

Individual vs. Communal Prayer Text Sheet

1. "Jacob's most intensive experiences of prayer took place when he was most alone… There are certainly times when the presence of others even impedes prayer… But Judaism is also wary lest such aloneness become the norm and the permanent status of the human being. Religion is not what we do with our aloneness, but what we do with our togetherness. It is not accidental that there is no Jewish ideal of worshipping God by leaving civilization and setting up a lonely cell in the wilderness." - Reuven Hammer, Entering Jewish Prayer pp. 15-16

2. "Whenever a man is able to offer his prayers in the synagogue he should do so since there proper concentration of the heart can be achieved. The Rabbis laid down a great rule: Communal prayer has special value and whenever ten pray in the synagogue the *Shekhinah* [the divine] is present." - Menachem Meiri [a 13th century Talmudist from Provence]

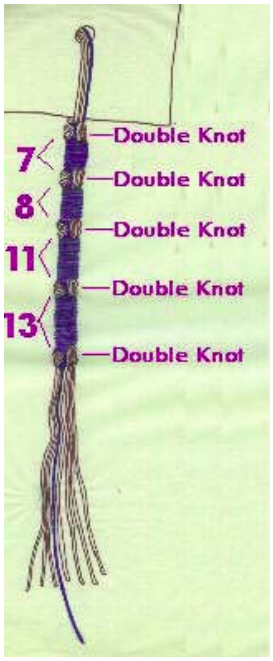
3. "See that you have a good friend, someone who can be depended upon and who is able to keep a secret. You should talk with the friend half an hour every day about everything in your heart and innermost thoughts… And if you have worries, you should talk them out with a friend, and if something good happens to you, then you should share your happiness with them as well." - Rabbi Asher of Stolin

4. "And Adonai said to Moses: 'Acquire for yourself Joshua the son of Nun.' (Numbers 27:18) The word 'acquire' implies much cots, for a companion is acquired after difficulties upon difficulties. Hence, say the sages, people should acquire a companion [for everything]: for reading Scripture with them, reciting Midrash with them, eating with them, drinking with them, and disclosing all of their secrets to them." - *Avot d'Rabbi Natan*, Chapter 8

5. "Adonai said, 'It is not good for Adam [a human being] to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him." Genesis 2:18

6. "Do not separate yourself from the community." - Rabbi Hillel, *Pirke Avot* 2:5

Directions for tying *tzitzit*



1. Start by evening up the ends of all four strands, starting at one end. Thread the strands through the key ring (or paper clip, etc.) and tape it to a wall or table. Even the seven ends as best you can, leaving the long blue strand (the *shammash*) free.

2. Using all 8 strands (4x4), tie a double knot. Try to alternate which of the set of strands is used for "over" or "under," so the length of the strands stays fairly even.

3. Take the *shammash* (long side of the blue thread). Wind it around the other 7 strands the required number of times (7, 8, 11, 13, respectively), making sure to begin and end at the same place so there are an exact number of twists.

4. Tie another double knot after each set of twists.

5. When the series of knots and twists is complete, check to make sure you tied and twisted them correctly. You can then even out the *tzitzit* - the most traditional way is by using your teeth!

Gematria Chart

100 = ק	10 = י	1 = א
200 = ר	20 = כ	2 = ב
300 = ש	30 = ל	3 = ג
400 = ת	40 = מ	4 = ד
	50 = נ	5 = ה
	60 = ס	6 = ו
	70 = ע	7 = ז
	80 = פ	8 = ח
	90 = צ	9 = ט

Your Hebrew name: _____

The Gematria of your name: _____

What other combinations of letters/numbers could equal your name?

What could this mean?

Gematria Crossword

Directions:

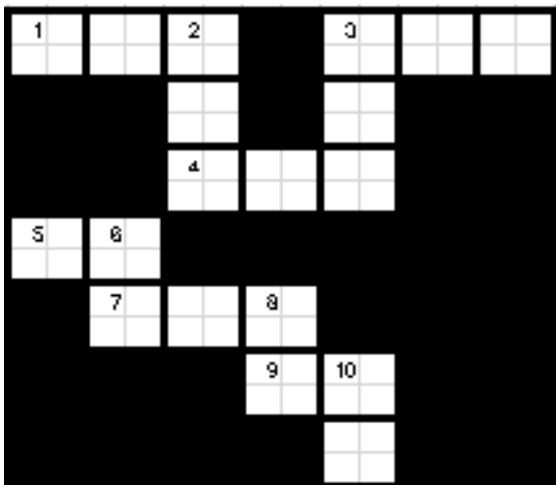
For each Hebrew word, fill in the blanks for the meaning of the word (translation) and its numerical value using Gematria. Then, fill in the numerical values in the boxes below like a crossword puzzle.

Across:

Hebrew Word	Translation	Gematria
1. תפילה		
3. טלית		
4. ציצית		
5. לב		
7. תורה		
9. אל		

Down:

2.מצות		
3.שמע		
6. יהוה		
8.אחד		
10. חי		



“Redemption Song”

by Bob Marley, © 1980 Island Records LTD

Old pirates, yes, they rob I;
Sold I to the merchant ships,
Minutes after they took I
From the bottomless pit.
But my hand was made strong
By the hand of the Almighty.
We forward in this generation
Triumphantly.
Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom? -
'Cause all I ever have:
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs.

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery;
None but ourselves can free our minds.
Have no fear for atomic energy,
'Cause none of them can stop the time.
How long shall they kill our prophets,
While we stand aside and look? Ooh!
Some say it's just a part of it:
We've got to fulfill de book.

Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom? -
'Cause all I ever have:
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs.

Shabbat Text Study

Directions: Read through the following texts and discuss the questions (in **bold)** below.

What prayer do you think invokes all of the following images?

1.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.	זכור את יום השבת לקדשו

- Exodus 20:8 (JPS translation)

How would you do "remember" and "keep Shabbat holy" (either traditionally or personally)?

2. The Sabbath came before the Holy One and said, "Sovereign of the Universe. All the other days have a mate; am I to be without one?"
The Holy One said to it: "The Community of Israel shall be your mate."
As it is said: "Remember the Sabbath day *le-kaddesho*: to betroth it." (Exodus 20:8)

-Genesis Rabbah 11:8

How does this text understand interpret or translate the Hebrew from Exodus 20:8 differently than in the first quote?

3. Rabbi Chanina would wrap himself in his cloak and stand at sunset of Sabbath eve, proclaiming, "Come, let us go forth to welcome Queen Shabbat!"
Rabbi Yannai put on his Sabbath cloak on Sabbath eve and exclaimed: "Come forth, O Bride, Come forth, O Bride!"

-Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 119a

What two images does this text use to symbolize Shabbat?

How could this impact your understanding or practice of Shabbat?

How would imagining Shabbat as a bride change what you do in order to "keep it holy?"

Questions:

1. What does the difference between being a “chosen-people,” a “mission-people” and a “choosing people?”

2. How is this sense of being a chosen people reflected in the *Aleinu*?

3. Why would this sense of a being a chosen people be both positive and negative in building the culture and identity of the State of Israel?

4. What do you believe about the Jewish people being chosen by God? Why?

Chosenness: Some Modern Views

By David S. Ariel; Reprinted from www.myjewishlearning.com

The greatest challenge to chosenness as a central tenet of Judaism came with the opportunity for Jews to integrate as individuals within modern societies. It became difficult to reconcile Jewish uniqueness with the case for social and political acceptance.

Spreading Morality: A Jewish Mission

Reform Judaism was one of the first modern responses to this challenge.

In the eighteenth century, the founders of the Reform movement began to play down the role of the commandments and exalt the ethical dimensions of Judaism. The change in emphasis within Reform Judaism was evident in the renewed attention paid to the role of the Jewish people as "a light of nations" [*le-or goyyim*, Isaiah 49:6].

In order to highlight this role, the expression was changed to "a light unto the nations [*or le-goyyim*]. " Such a subtle shift stressed that Israel was not only to be a moral exemplar but also to see its religion as missionary, with morality as the Jewish mission.

Early Reform thinkers believed that Judaism is a set of universalistic teachings that have made great contributions to Western civilization. They introduced the "mission people" concept as a new twist on the chosen people concept. The mission people concept places the responsibility on Israel both to live up to the ethical demands of the covenant and to disseminate these ethical teachings to the world. In dropping the ethnic and ritual dimensions of Judaism, the proponents of the mission-people concept sought to turn Judaism into a universal ethical culture.

The Reform reinterpretation of the chosen people concept as the mission people concept has come to mean that the Jews are not chosen by God, but rather choose to embrace a social gospel -that Jews have a higher calling to solve the injustices in modern society.

Re-embracing Chosenness

In 1975, Reform Judaism made a decisive break with its own past and restored much of what its predecessors had eliminated, including an emphatic statement about the importance of tradition, peoplehood, and the Hebrew language. Reform Judaism now reaffirmed belief in chosenness, peoplehood, and certain mitzvot, but continued to insist that the exalted station of the Jewish people is a product of its ethical religion. This ideological shift reflected the shift back to traditional beliefs within the Reform movement as well as an increasing recognition of the importance of Israel and peoplehood in modern Jewish life.

The Choosing People, Not the Chosen people

Among the four religious denominations of American Judaism, the more traditional ones -Orthodox and Conservative Judaism--continue to advocate a belief in chosenness rooted in the notion of religious obligations, the mitzvot, that define the specifically Jewish way of life. Only the Reconstructionist movement rejects the idea of the chosen people.

This reflects the position of the founder of the movement, Mordecai Kaplan, who vehemently opposed the idea that God chooses one people over another. God, for Kaplan, was the impulse for goodness that resides in human beings, not a transcendent being with a capacity to choose. Thus, the Jewish people is the "choosing people" rather than the "chosen people."

National Uniqueness

Some Jewish thinkers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries believed that a revived national definition of the Jewish people could provide a coherent system of meaning for modern Jews.

Ahad Ha'am ([literally] "One of the People"), a cultural Zionist, believed that the Jewish people possessed a "national spirit" which was characterized by a commitment to the prophetic ideals of absolute righteousness. The Jewish people had survived throughout history by virtue of their national spirit and will to live, which was based on dedication to the fundamental and abiding principle of doing what is uncompromisingly right--not by virtue of belief in God. But over time Judaism had become encrusted with rituals, observances, and a law that threatened to stultify the moral sensibilities of the Jewish people.

Mourning Cards

A Jewish funeral is always "closed casket."	Mourners tear their clothing. Today, many mourners choose instead to tear a ribbon pinned to their clothing.	When covering a casket with earth, a mourner uses the back of the shovel.	A candle is lit after returning from the burial, and each year at the anniversary of a person's death.	In a mourner's home, the mirrors are covered.
The embalming that is necessary to make a corpse presentable is viewed as invasive and disrespectful.	Mourners often have a great deal of pent-up anger. This provides a controlled venting of that anger.	This reflects that an otherwise ordinary object is being used for an extraordinary and holy purpose.	It is symbolic of human life, which burns slowly, always reaching upward, until it is extinguished.	At such a difficult time, mourners should only be concerned with their well being, not their appearance.
Mourners sit on low stools or pillows during the week after burial. This is called, "sitting *Shiva*."	It is considered inappropriate to initiate a conversation with a mourner.	Flowers are not brought to a cemetery. Instead, a rock is left at the gravesite.	All meals for a mourner are to be provided by the mourner's community.	A *minyan* (10 people) is required to allow the mourner to say *Kaddish Yatom*.
Being physically closer to the ground is a reflection of how low their spirits are.	When the mourner is ready to talk, he or she will talk. Until then, just being present is comforting.	A gift that is intended to give "new life" to the memory of a lost loved one should not itself die so quickly.	It helps the mourner to survive physically as well as feel the comfort of the community.	This prayer requirement helps to ensure that those who can provide comfort will always surround the mourner.

Afterlife Concepts

1. ***Beit Mishpat Ha'elyon***: When we die, our souls are brought to trial in a heavenly court, with angels acting as the prosecuting and defending attorneys.
2. ***Gan Eden***: When we die, we return to this biblical paradise from which our ancestors, Adam and Eve, were banished.
3. ***Gehenna***: This is a place where the wicked are punished for their sins after they die. We observe Mitzvot in this world in order to avoid being sent to this place.
4. ***Gilgul***: After death, a soul eventually returns to earth and assumes a new physical body.
5. ***Hod Hashechinah***: The soul leaves the body upon its death, and enters a world with no bodies, no eating or drinking, nothing except the study of Torah and dialogue with other souls.
6. ***Klum***: After we die, we cease to exist in any form. We no longer see, hear, or even think. The soul dies along with the body.
7. ***Malach***: After our body is lowered into the grave, our soul takes on a new reality - that of an angel who can help our loved ones in subtle ways.
8. ***She'ol***: Upon death, one descends deep beneath the earth into this "underworld." It is neither good nor bad, but is just a domain for the dead beyond the control of God.
9. ***Sulam Olamim***: Ours is one in a series of radically different worlds, with different laws of physics and concepts of reality. Death is the transition between these worlds.
10. ***T'chiyat Hametim***: When we die, our bodies lie in coffins waiting, perhaps for thousands of years, for the Messiah to come and bring us back to life so that we can all live in the land of Israel under the reign of God until the end of time.