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## **Foreword: The World of Jewish Prayer**

The Hebrew Bible is the foundation of the Jewish faith. The closing of the biblical canon in the Second Temple era did not end the vibrant spirituality of the Jewish people. The rabbis responded to the changing conditions of their time by invigorating Jewish life with the ability to survive the catastrophic destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Consequently, Jewish prayer utilizes the idioms and expressions of the Tanakh, i.e., the Hebrew Bible and the Sages of Israel.

While honoring personal prayer, Judaism is a liturgical religion. Many essential prayers, e.g., the Baruch She'amar, Amidah, Alenu, Kiddush, Havdalah, etc., are ascribed to the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah, the Men of the Great Assembly. According to rabbinic lore, the this Assembly included many biblical prophets of Israel, i.e., Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, etc. The Assembly stretched over many years into the Maccabean period. The Men of the Great Assembly established many of the Jewish practices that are known to us today. While the rabbis did not invent prayer, they did engineer Jewish rituals with a consciousness of God's presence in a world devoid of the Holy Temple.

Traditional Jewish prayer expresses the fundamental values and beliefs of Judaism. Jewish prayer recollects the historical experiences of the Jewish people affirms the present, and it looks forward to final redemption. While personal prayer is undoubtedly encouraged, Jewish prayer is generally collective. The individual prays "for us" and on behalf of all of the People of Israel. We pray for peace "upon us and all Israel" because each Jew is responsible for one another.

This is not simply an exercise in reminding the individual to notice the needs and sufferings of others. It is intended to make the individual aware that they are part of an extended family. This aspect is a crucial difference between Judaism and other religious traditions. The Jewish people are an ethnoreligious group. Judaism encompasses not only a religious faith in God but includes a unique history, a historic homeland, a language, and a family kinship. When Jews speak of the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or the Matriarchs, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, they are not simply invoking their spiritual memory. They also remember their forebears.

Judaism is a well-regulated religious tradition. There are specific laws for observing the commandments of the Torah. This leads to a fundamental question. Is prayer a commandment? If so, how can such a spiritual and personal endeavor be regulated? Why should prayer be structured? Is this not counterintuitive to the spiritual nature of prayer?

To this, the rabbis answer that all fulfillment is derived from a structure. Art is a discipline. Music is a discipline. Notes and instructions are followed to create something beautiful. Yet rules can kill spontaneity. One of the greatest Jewish sages of the medieval period, the Spanish Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (known as the

Rambam or Maimonides), asserted that prayer was a daily obligation prescribed by the written Torah. Deuteronomy 11:13 states:

"And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto My commandments which I command you this day, to love the L-RD your G-d, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul...."

He interpreted the service of the heart mentioned in the previous passage as referring to prayer. <sup>1</sup>In contrast, another great rabbi of the medieval period from Spain, Rabbi Moses ben Nachman (known as the Ramban or Nachmanides), believed that daily prayer was a rabbinic decree. The Torah only prescribed the obligation to pray in times of emergency.<sup>2</sup>

Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik reconciled these two positions by noting the sensitivity of the human condition. As humans, we are always in crisis, and hence, we are in desperate need of prayer every day. Both the Rambam and the Ramban experienced severe religious persecution during their lifetimes, and I believe they both would have agreed with Rabbi Soloveitchik's assertion.

This prayerbook provides a unique contribution to the world of Jewish prayer. It provides an accessible tool for individuals from varied Sephardic backgrounds with insights from the Shulchan Arukh and other halakhic sources. It gives the eager student a resource that will allow them to "grow" with the siddur as their Hebrew skills mature. This siddur is particularly noteworthy because it also incorporates elements from historic Spanish-Portuguese communities, historically formed from former Conversos or B'nei Anusim, who returned to Judaism centuries ago and whose spirit and courage continue to draw many Anusim to return to the faith of their fathers.

הריב יוף ען מאין החנא מאול

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<sup>• [</sup>The Talmud in Taanit 2a also relates that the service of the heart is accomplished by prayer. See Maimonides' Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tefilah 1:1.] However, Rabbi Moses ben Maimon asserted that the actual content of prayer and the number of daily prayers was rabbinic. [Hilchot Tefilah 1:1. Hayim Halevy Donin, To Pray as a Jew (New York: Basic Books, 1980), 10. Also see Charles Wengrov, trans., The Chafetz Chayim, The Concise Book of Mitzvoth (New York: Feldheim, 1990), 19-20.1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>· [Commenting on Sefer Ha-mitzvot (mitzvat asei 5), the Ramban states refers to prayer as being mandated only in times of crisis when the Torah (Numbers 10:9) writes, "And when ye go to war in your land against the adversary that oppresseth you, then ye shall sound an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies." For the Ramban it is a mitzvah to respond to every crisis by calling out to God in prayer.]

## **Introduction: About the Siddur**

This siddur is the fruit of about two years of much labor, but truly a labor of love. The intention of creating this came about as a congregational need for helping those with Converso or B'nei Anusim backgrounds (Spanish and Portuguese Jews who accepted Christianity in order to avoid death) to be able to join in with Jewish practice as well as be able to have a great resource to learn and grow with minimal hinderance. While in exile, the Sephardic B'nei Anusim have faced a difficult task of re-entering the world of Judaism and becoming members of often reluctant and even suspicious Jewish communities. Citing Yosef Karo, author of the Shulchan Arukh, in a letter to a community in Kandiyah, Greece:

"...We have heard that Jews who had lived in Spain and were forced to convert have now come to your kehillah in order to live freely as Jews and keep all the mizvot openly. Instead, you remind them of the sins they committed in Spain and, when a disagreement arises between them and the people of your kehillah, you claim these blessed baalei teshuvah are meshumadim (converts to Christianity). This is a terrible sin, because you are slamming the door in the faces of baalei teshuvah. The Mordechai (a Rishon from Ashkenaz) recorded in his sefer that Rabbenu Gershom decreed that any lew who does not openly accept ba'alei teshuvah should himself be considered menuddeh (not part of the Jewish people). Therefore, from today and henceforth, may every person be exceptionally careful in his dealings with these ba'alei teshuvah, and never again refer to them as meshumadim. And if, has veshalom (may Hashem forbid), the word escapes someone's lips, be he young or old, let him sit completely alone for an entire day and with his own mouth confess his ugly sin. And further, he must undertake never to do so again...Written this 15th of Tammuz, here in Sefat, in the year 5528, (1568), David ben Zimra, Yosef Caro, Moshe mi'Trani and Yisrael de Kuriel."

- quoted from The Story of Maran Bet Yosef: R Yosef Caro, Author of the Shulhan Aruch (The Sephardic Heritage Series), Artscroll, 1986.

We therefore feel it is our duty and a great mitzvah to bring these souls, as well as anyone closer to the light of Torah and Judaism. This siddur combines a traditional HaMizrach text which generally follows Tefillat Yesharim. We've seen with various common scenarios today, that those with B'nei Anusim backgrounds tend to be very zealous and studious when coming to Judaism. Many are not satisfied with the other various nusachim or rites. If attending a Sephardic congregation, more than likely a HaMizrach nusach is utilized. We kept to a format that incorporates customs of different communities, it will generally say "some say:" before a prayer or section that includes the custom of a different community. We kept the kabbalistic prayers, but generally do not translate or transliterate them, except for the "L'shem Yichud" prayer before Sefirat Omer, in the view of Chacham Ovadia Yosef, zt'll. We then provided the transliteration. We utilized a more modern, universal phonetic system, as it seems easier to understand for everyone who is new to hebrew. The translation was compiled predominantly from a combination of Book of Prayers by Moses Gaster (Spanish-Portugese), altered, as well as original translation. We put the time into making the translation unique, modern and not just simply using Old-English so that the import can be clear for anyone. We maintained transliterated Hebrew names and words to help in understanding as well as communicating in community. We then provided translation of certain laws from the Shulchan Arukh, as well as a few other sources, for a basic understanding of Sephardic Judaism.

May we continue to feel the importance of כל ישראל ערבים זה לזה ("All Yisrael are responsible for one another", caring for one another within the community, outside of the community, within Eretz Yisrael, and all over the world, a responsibility to all of עם ישראל / the people of Yisrael.

### Kelil President of Eitz Echad

# SHACHARIT / MORNING PRAYER

# Hashkamat HaBoker / Rising in the Morning

One should be as strong as a lion to rise in the morning for the service of the Creator. At any rate, one should not delay his prayers until after the congregation has prayed. Better are few supplications with kavanah (intention) than many without kavanah. (SA, OC 1:1,4)

### **Modeh Ani**

When awaking from sleep, one should say:

women: (Modah)

האשה: (מוֹדָה)

Modeh Ani Lefaneicha Melech Chai Vekayam Shehechezarta Bi Nishmati Vechemlah. Rabah Emunatecha. מוֹדֶה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיהּ מֶלֶהְ חֵי וְקַיָּם שֶׁהֶחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמְתִי בְחֶמְלָה. רַבְּּה אֱמוּנְתֶךְּ:

I offer thanks to You, everlasting King, Who has mercifully restored my soul within me; Your faithfulness is great.

#### LAWS OF NETILAT YADAYIM / WASHING OF HANDS

One should first pour water on his right hand and then his left. The water must be poured three times on each hand up to the wrist. Dipping the hands into a vessel filled with water constitutes valid washing for prayers. He who is awake all night should wash his hands without saying the blessing; and the same law applies to a case where one washed his hands before dawn had arisen. If one has no water, he may clean his hands with gravel or earth, and say the blessing: "Al Netilat Yadayim". He who sleeps during the daytime should wash his hands without saying the blessing. The minimum amount of water is a revi'it (approx. 3oz), you should add more water though, as Rav Chisda said "I washed a full hand of water and I was given a full hand of good. It is customary to wash out one's mouth as well. (SA, OC 4,158:10) Some have the practice to wait to make the blessing "Al Netilat Yadayim" until coming to the assembly, and arrange them with the rest of the blessings. The children of Sephardim do not do so. (SA, OC 6:2) Bless before washing, because every mitzvah you should bless before you do the mitzvah. But the custom is to bless after washing, because sometimes your hands aren't clean, so you bless after you clean your hands and before you do the second washing. (SA, OC 158:11) Only wash your hands with a vessel. All vessels are kosher for this, even galalim vessels (stone vessels, earthenware vessels, etc.) The vessel must be able to hold a revi'it of liquid. (SA, OC 158:11, 159:1)

## Netilat Yadayim / Washing of Hands

Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam Asher Kideshanu Bemitzvotav Vetzivanu Al Netilat Yadayim. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. אֲשֶׁר קִדְשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וִצְוַנוּ עַל נִטִילַת יַדִים:

Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the washing of hands.

## **Asher Yatzar**

Every day when using the restroom, bless "Asher Yatzar" and not "Al Netilat Yadayim" [every time] even if one wants to learn or pray right away. (SA, OC 7:1)

Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam Asher Yatzar Et Ha'Adam Bechochmah. Uvara Vo Nekavim Nekavim. Chalulim Chalulim. Galui Veyadua Lifnei Chisei Chevodecha. She'im Yisatem Echad Mehem. O Im Yipate'ach Echad Mehem. Ei Efshar Lehitkayem Afilu Sha'ah Echat. Baruch Attah Adonai Rofei Chol-Basar Umafli La'asot.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ. מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלְם. אֲשֶׁר יְצֵר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה. וּבְרָא בוֹ נְקָבִים נְקָבִים. חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים. גָּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לִפְנֵי כִפָּא כְבוֹדֶךְ. שֶׁאִם יִפְּתֵח אֶחָד מֵהֶם. אוֹ אִם יִפְּתַח אֶחָד מֵהֶם. אֵי אֶחְת. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֶחָת. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת:

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe, Who has formed man in wisdom, and created in him many openings and cavities. It is revealed and known before Your glorious Throne, that if one of them were closed or one of them opened, it would be impossible to survive, even for a short while. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who heals all flesh and works wonders.

### **Elohai Neshamah**

Elohai Neshamah Shenatata Bi
Tehorah. Attah Veratah. Attah
Yetzartah. Attah Nefachtah Bi.
Ve'attah Meshamerah Bekirbi.
Ve'attah Atid Litelah Mimeni.
Ulehachazirah Bi Le'atid Lavo.
Kol-Zeman Shehaneshamah
Vekirbi. Modeh
Women: (Modah) Ani Lefaneicha
Adonai Elohai Velohei Avotai.
Ribon Kol-Hama'asim Adon
Kol-Haneshamot. Baruch Attah
Adonai Hamachazir Neshamot
Lifgarim Meitim.

אֱלֹהֵי נְשָׁמָה שֶׁנְּתַתָּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה. אַתָּה בְּרָאתְהּ. אַתָּה יְצַרְתָּהּ. אַתָּה נְפַחְתָּה בִּי. וְאַתָּה טְתִיד לִטְּלֶה מְמֶנִי. וּלְהַחֲזִירָהּ בִּי לֶעְתִיד לְבוֹא. בְּקַרְבִּי. מוֹדֶה בְּקַרְבִּי. מוֹדֶה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵי וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵי. רְבּוֹן כָּל־הַמְּעֲשִׂים אֲדוֹן כְּלֹ־הַנְּשָׁמוֹת. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה הַמַּחֲזִיר נְשָׁמוֹת לִפְגָרִים מֵתִים:

My God, the soul which You have endowed me with is pure. You have created it. You have formed it. You have breathed it into me. You preserve it within me, and You will after reclaim it and restore it to me in the life to come. So long as there is soul within me, I confess before You, Hashem my God and God of my fathers, that You are the Sovereign of all creation, the Ruler of all living, the Lord of all souls. Blessed are You, Hashem, Restorer of the souls to the dead.

# Birkhot HaShachar / Blessings of the Morning

When making blessings, one should concentrate on the meaning of the words. When mentioning the name "Hashem", concentrate on the meaning of the proclamation is lordship, that He is the Master of all, and concentrate on the writing of Y-d H-ei that was, is, and will be. And when one mentions "Elohim", concentrate on that He is Powerful, Master over everything and Master of the powers of everything. (SA, OC 5)

Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam Hanotein Lasechvi Vinah. Lehavchin Bein Yom Uvein Lailah. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלֶם. הַנוֹתֵן לַשֶּׂכְוִי בִינָה. לְהַבְחִין בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לָיְלָה:

Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, Who gives even to the rooster understanding to make us recognize day from night.

Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam Pokei'ach Ivrim. בָּרוּף אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. פּוֹקֵחַ עִוְרִים:

Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, Who opens the eyes of the blind.

Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam Matir Asurim. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלַךְ העוֹלם. מַתִּיר אַסוּרִים:

Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, Who releases the bound.

Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam Zokeif Kefufim. בָּרוּך אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלֶם. זוֹקֵף כַּפוּפִים:

Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, Who raises up those who are bowed.