

# **Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy**

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# ANTECEDENTS TO ISRAELI ART SONG \*

by Daniel Nachman Ziff

## JEWISH VOCAL MUSIC OF EUROPE

### CANTILLATION

In printed Hebrew texts of the Bible (but not in the parchment scrolls of the Torah itself) are found a set of diacritics, twenty-two small figures each with its own regular placement with regard to the text; some appear above the word, some below. They have both a grammatical and a musical meaning: grammatical in that they indicate both syllabic accent within the word and phrase structure within the sentence; musical in that they indicate approximate pitch contours. While the general melodic contour of these figures, called *neumes* or *tropes* (Heb. *te'amim*), remains constant throughout the Bible, for different readings the precise pitch and rhythmic values vary. The total result of the *tropes*, in whatever specific mode, is to render the text clearly understood, giving accent and inflection to the words according to their relationships within the syntactical structure. Biblical cantillation thus reflects the basic dynamic features of the Hebrew language,<sup>1</sup> demonstrating the natural vocal inflections of correctly spoken Hebrew and hence augmenting the rhythmic flow of the language.

Further, in efforts to preserve accurately all aspects of the law of Moses, Jewish religious leaders have zealously guarded the reading of the Torah from infringement by outside musical influence. This is not entirely the case with the prayer chants and melodies, into which has crept spurious musical material, or with folk music, which includes elements from alien sources. Because of the care which was taken to preserve the authentic cantillation tradition, little change has occurred in the rendering of the *tropes* over the centuries. Reuchlin notated the Pentateuch cantillation in the sixteenth century,<sup>2</sup> and his notation is surprisingly like that which is heard in the contemporary synagogue, considering that the *tropes* have been passed down orally by readers who lacked formal training in music.

Cantillation modes and details of rendition vary with the different portions of the Bible, and in some cases with different events in the liturgical year. For the reading of the Pentateuch, for instance, the mode

\*This article is taken from a dissertation, written by Dr. Ziff, called *Art Song In Israel: A Study of its Origins and Development At The Hands Of Immigrant Composers* (1971).

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is predominantly pentatonic, for prophetic readings, Aeolian. When the Pentateuch is read on the High Holy Days the major mode is used, and three other mode forms and motive variations are used variously for the five *Megillot*, one each for Esther and Lamentations, and one for Song of Songs, Ruth and Ecclesiastes. Thus cantillation may be the first recorded example of a liturgical leitmotiv system; in any event, it acted as the nucleus for the elaborate arrangements of the *nussah* (prayer chant) for the Jewish liturgical year, in which different occasions, and even different parts of the service for the same occasion, have their modes and motive-and phase- groups.

References to the musical material of the *tropes* are found in all aspects of Jewish music. The prayer modes, and many of their specific germinal motives, show the influence of cantillation, especially the musical service for the High Holy Days. While this is less the case with music for Sabbath and the Three Festivals, some motivic references appear there as well. The research of such scholars as Idelsohn and Ephros leads them to the conclusion that the prayer modes and their motives are based exclusively on the cantillations.<sup>3</sup> Looking to the future, Yasser concludes that just as the music of Western Europe draws from medieval Troubadour style which is in turn partially derived from Gregorian chant, so too should Jewish music be founded on the basis of Biblical cantillation.<sup>4</sup>

## LITURGICAL MUSIC

Rendition and interpretation of *nussah* is the function of the cantor, or *hazzan*, and this function is known as *hazzanut*. *Hazzanut* differs in several respects from cantillation, the most noteworthy of which is that, while the cantillations require strict adherence to the prescribed *tropes* and so allow very little room for improvisation, *hazzanut* has long been chiefly an improvisatory art, in which the *hazzan* freely develops melodic lines based generally on the *nussah* of the particular service. *Hazzanut* has thus grown into a dramatic, florid and highly specialized art, whereas rudimentary cantillation is much more easily mastered.

*Hazzanut* as an art form bears certain relationships with musical styles of the Middle East. During the nineteenth century, Southern Europe was the training ground for the vast majority of creative Jewish musicians who were later to emigrate Northward. This fertility of the South for Jewish music is explained by its proximity to the Middle East, which borders on some of the southern districts, from which inspiration was drawn. The best of the *hazzanim* who officiated in the North were trained in the



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South, and the South was considered by most *hazzanim* to be the "cradle of *Hazzanut*."<sup>5</sup> In its long, finely-spun melodic lines, with much ornamentation and with a fondness for light, flexible, high-pitched, almost nasal vocal quality, the cantorial art demonstrates its basic affinity with Middle Eastern singing style. Further, with the *nussah* principle being one of free and elaborate improvisation around a given mode and set of motives, a strong relationship is seen with Eastern Mediterranean folk music, in which the composer-performer improvises around the *maqam*, the theoretical foundation for Arabic music. The table below names the principle *nussah* modes and cites their equivalents in the Gregorian and *maqam* systems.

### MODE EQUIVALENTS AMONG NUSSAH, GREGORIAN, AND MAQAM SYSTEMS

Mode-forms of <i>Nussah</i>	Gregorian Equivalents	<i>Maqam</i> Equivalents
<i>Hashem-Malakh</i>	Mixolydian (above the primary octave the tenth is flatted; below, the seventh is sharpened)	<i>Yiharkah</i>
<i>Magen Avot</i>	Aeolian	<i>Buslik</i> combining with <i>Nahawand</i>
<i>Ahavah Rabbah</i>	Phrygian with third sharpened (below the primary octave the sixth and seventh are also frequently sharpened)	<i>Hijaz</i> combining with <i>Nahawand</i>
<i>Mi Sheberakh</i> ( <i>Ukranian</i> <i>Dorian</i> )	Dorian with fourth sharpened	

### FOLK MUSIC

Through the efforts of composers and researchers during the last seventy-odd years, the situation of world folk music has become greatly clarified.

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Although unanimity has not always been achieved, there now exist working definitions and conceptions concerning the terminology and ascription of folk music. We clearly sense in the music of Verdi, Mussorgsky and Bartok, to name but a few, the representation of a national creative impulse at work on the highest levels, and such recognition opens the door to a greater understanding of folk and national music at large. Within the folk group is nurtured the essence of a cultural uniqueness, a specific set of attitudes, modes of thought and esthetic preferences which is manifest in activities of the group. The appearance of this unique sensibility in a creative work is clearly recognizable, and its elements can be extracted, classified and compared. On the one hand, the quotation of folk motives in a work may bring it into the sphere of national music, but in the hands of one not thoroughly versed in a national style this need not necessarily be the case. On the other hand, a work may have national character without ever quoting a phrase of extant folk music if it is executed by one who has thoroughly assimilated the musical elements peculiar to a folk group and who can abstract their essence and predicate his work upon them.

The absence of a fixed site to serve as the cultural nucleus for the Jewish people limited the degree of homogeneity to be found in Jewish music, but there were two factors which helped to alleviate complete breakdown of Jewish musical identity. The first of these was the strong weight of cantillation. A clear sequence of events can be observed: the cantillation, most carefully guarded and buttressed against foreign influence, played a large role in shaping the form and style of *nussah*, which in turn penetrated into folk music. All of these various growths necessarily vary from one another; their common trunk has nonetheless promoted musical unity and effectively staved off a collapse into tonal anarchy. The second factor is what Idelsohn called the "spiritual nationality" of the Jews.<sup>6</sup> No matter how great the dispersion, no matter how far-flung the communities of the diaspora, a common bond was maintained among them which served to direct their fundamental national impulses to a clearly-defined goal. The entire history of the Jews is predicated on the pre-eminence of the land of Israel. It was here that the people was fathered, and it was here that they returned from Egypt and Mount Sinai to forge a national identity. References to Israel, Mount Zion and the Temple abound in the Bible and its commentaries, in the liturgy and the literature. It was the glorious past of the Jewish people, the national memories of and references to the homeland and the commitment to the re-establishment of that homeland which motivated the Jewish soul and which maintained a Jewish nationality as well as a religion. It was this intense awareness and strong kinship to a land never visited but paradoxically known

intimately, which gave impetus to the Jewish feeling of national identity and which, as will be seen, provided subject matter for many songs of the early settlers in Palestine.

The problem of identifying the truly unique elements in Jewish folk music weighed heavily on Idelsohn. His intuition grasped the difference between Eastern European and non-Jewish melodic style, but he was long hard-pressed to abstract the principle of distinction which could facilitate his musicological research. His first effort at such an abstraction said in effect that it is not an original scale formula which identifies a national music, but rather original motives and melodic curves which in their contours express national or group characteristics.<sup>7</sup> He further refined this observation by saying that even more important than the appearance of specific motives, which may in fact be common to two or more bodies of folklore, is the manner in which these motives are used, their arrangement in terms of succession and development, i.e. the way they are pieced together to form a tune which characterizes a specific folk group.<sup>8</sup> Essentially then, the attribution of Jewish origin to a melody is not to be derived from either the specific scale used or the motives themselves, that is to say from the bare structure of the music, but rather from the way the structures function in terms of a given piece of music.

As to the tonalities themselves, both Idelsohn<sup>9</sup> and Werner<sup>10</sup> have compiled extensive and detailed lists of scales and variations thereon used in Jewish folk music, but Idelsohn's summation of these types in his more popular work<sup>11</sup> will be adequate for the present purposes. Essentially, tonalities used in Jewish folk music are: (1) the Biblical and prayer modes, (2) various forms of minor, and (3) the major scale, infrequently used, and then in songs adapted from German or Slavic sources, mainly of recent date.

Some of the more interesting melodic characteristics deserve individual mention, for they will be important in later sections of the report. First, there is a general absence of leading-tone quality in the ascending scale pattern of all modes, derived in large measure from the modal tendencies of Biblical and prayer chants. The raised third degree of the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode is, however, acceptable, because it may gravitate to the fourth degree, hence reinforcing the second characteristic, the tendency toward a "plagal" quality in the music. Final cadences are frequently based on the IV-I progression, rather than the Western V-I formula. In addition, the commonplace use of the fourth scale degree as melodic resting point and as root tone of interior cadences both point in the direction of this "plagalism". This is obvious in songs using the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode, and is equally true of the others. Jewish folk music thus retains a strong tetrachordal foundation.

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The ubiquitous augmented second interval has been demonstrated to be a comparatively recent acquisition of the Jewish *melos*, having no roots in cantillation or in the oldest of the liturgical modes. Nonetheless, the significant popularity ascribed to it is not totally without foundation. Many virtuoso cantorial compositions utilize it incessantly, mainly within the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode, and *hazzanim* of today linger over it in their own endeavors at liturgical sublimity. It is also truly an important element in much Eastern European Jewish folk music of the last few centuries. This interval has unquestionably been borrowed from the music of southeast Europe and the Mediterranean countries, and its pertinence to Jewish folk music was a point of debate until recently. The attitude in Israel is that the augmented second is typical of the *galut* (diaspora) mentality, of which they want no part. It adds the element of melancholia and sentimentality, and is ideally suited to musical crying. Outside of Israel it is viewed in traditional quarters as a useful tool in liturgical music and in the portrayal of European Jewish life, but in the new State it is considered maudlin and unctuous. Edel maintains that it did serve one useful purpose, however, that of maintaining the distinctiveness of Jewish folk music so as to prevent its becoming completely absorbed within the Western major-minor tonal system.<sup>12</sup>

The principal resting point of the fourth acts in most cases as the semi-cadence, but other rest points are used as well. The major second below the tonic is used at the beginnings and endings of phrases, as a point of departure and a cadential figure respectively. Also used are the second degree of the scale, and in the case of the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode, the (major) third.<sup>13</sup> This is of special interest, as it indicates the absence of forced leading quality on this note. There is no compulsion to move from it to the fourth; it functions as a preparation for contours both ascending and descending from it. In those few melodies using the major scale without chromatic alterations, the typical resting point is the dominant, in keeping with their close relationship to the European musical tradition from which they are derived.

Werner describes the main types of ornamentation used in Jewish folk music: appoggiaturas which descend in a gliding and stepwise fashion, embellishments such as trills, mordents, vibrato and tremolo, and scale segments which themselves are extended and embellished.<sup>14</sup>

Harmonic structure of this folk material employs primary triads (I, IV, V) and is typical of folk music generally. As the product of a group wholly untutored in musical subjects, and dependent for their musical experience on the synagogue and on gleanings from the gentile world, Jewish folksong is characterized by its simplicity in its harmonic implications, except insofar as it uses the chromatic progressions inherent in the Jewish mode forms and limited variations on them. In its temporal aspect the same is true.

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Most liturgical music is non-metric, and Jewish folk music borrowed its meters from and poetic forms of the nations among whom they lived. Duple and triple meters, both simple and compound, find themselves in the material, but temporal creativity is kept to a minimum and rhythmic and metric analysis yields few surprises. One interesting feature is the appearance of triplets in significant numbers. As will be discussed below, these are attributable to cantillation and liturgical rhythms of the Hebrew, and their appearance in Yiddish folk songs can thus be viewed as a borrowing from Hebrew chant and song styles. Only in Hassidic music does great rhythmic vitality appear, including much syncopation; otherwise irregular accent patterns are generally avoided.

And finally, a point about the mood of this musical material. Jewish song is frequently thought of as mournful because of its heavy use of the minor mode, but this is not really so. What the minor tonality does convey is not a sense of the lugubrious, but rather a meditative, subdued quality,<sup>15</sup> indicative of the introspection and solemnity which characterized much of Jewish life in Europe.

The Jewish people, then, possessed of a unique musical tradition and determined to maintain their national integrity, were able to nurture a folk music of their own. If this music accepted aspects of other national styles from time to time, these encroachments did not rob it of its individuality. If it fell into disuse in one community or another, strong bonds of tradition maintained it elsewhere and revitalized it when necessary.

## ARABIC AND JEWISH-ORIENTAL FOLK MUSIC

Aside from the obvious uniqueness of the *maqam* melodic system, Arabic music distinguishes itself in its rhythmic and textural patterns. As the *maqamat* prescribe motivic patterns in pitch contour, so do Arabic poetic meters dictate rhythmic configurations in vocal music. As a rule, rhythmic motives are complex, but they recur regularly and operate within fixed metric patterns. Rhythmic sophistication affects performance textures in that the nature of the musical material does not lend itself to homophonic accompaniment. Accompanying instruments and voices are used, but their enhancement of the original tune stems from melodic and rhythmic, rather than harmonic, considerations: they embellish the tune heterophonically, providing their own independent "glosses" which operate off the basic pattern.<sup>16</sup>

The principal technique involved in Arab folk music is that of embellishment, and this occurs in the part of the principal singer as well as in the

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various accompanying lines. The former establishes his basic material thoroughly, through repetition, and then builds an intricate series of embellishments and variations on it, being careful never to deviate so much that the basic pattern is lost to the listener; the latter follow the lead of the principal singer, and continue to weave secondary embellishments around the developing melodic line. Procedures governing the expansion process are well-defined and rather self-limiting, owing to the convention which retains principal characteristics of the basic tune through the embellishments. Thus one finds restrictions of pitch range, a total absence of transposition, and essentially simple forms.<sup>17</sup>

Mode forms in Arabic music are called *maqamat* (singular: *maqam*), each of which is a specific ordering of whole-, half and quarter- tone steps. All *maqamat* seem to derive from a pitch resource line that extends over a number of octaves, and each *maqam* utilizes a certain segment of this line in the same way that Western modes all emerge from, and use a portion of, the diatonic scale.<sup>18</sup> Spector states that the Arabic scale form is untempered, which seems to suggest that individual *maqamat* are not capable of transposition, as are the diatonic modes, but this is nowhere specifically documented in the literature available to the writer.<sup>19</sup> Some early theorists maintained that the quarter-tone phenomenon was accidental and haphazard rather than essential to the musical material,<sup>20</sup> but this view is now almost universally rejected. Meter in Arabic music derives largely from a complex set of poetic meters,<sup>21</sup> and these have implications for the rhythmic accompaniment pertinent to any given folksong.<sup>22</sup>

Thus a large number of limitations are inherent in performance practice of Arabic folksong, as documented above, and specific means of embellishment are few and circumscribed. The performer cannot look outward from his basic melody, and bring to it externally-derived developmental ideas, for in so doing he would lose fidelity to the original; he must rather look into the tune, and expand it without interfering with its fundamental pitch contour or its rhythm. Performance of folk material is thus an introspective process, involving subtle and sophisticated melodic elaboration not unlike that of the Indian *raga* or of *hazzanic* style. The *hazzanic* recitative has, however, borrowed heavily from Western technique and conception, while the *maqam* and the *raga* retain their uniqueness and operate at variance with Western practice. The musical unfolding of an Arab folksong is at first viewed by the Westerner as an exercise in monotony; incessant repetition seems to predominate, and the slow evolution of melodic idea is barely perceived because of its very subtle character. Convoluted melisma is the rule, and long, intricate phrases require careful attention in order that their unique aspects be realized. Melody expands almost

imperceptibly, while the listener is mesmerized by the drone of the percussive accompaniment.

One other consideration is that of vocal style. Arabic aesthetic dictates highly-pitched, narrow-throated, nasal and guttural singing, by now familiar to most Western ears, which is antithetical to Western preference for more open and broad qualities. Both styles prize flexibility, but this aspect finds entirely different forms of expression in the two traditions, owing to their respective musical and vocal conceptions.

Spector concludes that the fundamental differences between the musical conceptions of East and West preclude compatibility between them without injury to one or both,<sup>23</sup> and from the ethnomusicological point of view this may well be true: the purity of either style will be adversely affected by an infusion of elements from the other. Practically speaking, however, this cross-culturation is an inevitable result of improved and increased communication between East and West. It has already resulted in a popular style within the Arabic framework which is much influenced by European music. This becomes evident upon listening to Arab radio or to commercial recordings by Arab vocal stars which are becoming available in the West. Here one finds serious consideration given to harmony and Western style development procedure. To be sure, Arabic elements still predominate, but the tempering of them in accordance with occidental style is unavoidably noted. From the opposite point of view, many Israeli composers have sought specific features of Arabic folk music, modified them and incorporated them in their own serious output. Examples will be found in Chapters IV and V which are by no means purely Arabic in their derivation, but which combine specific materials that are unique to the Middle East, with techniques and procedures of Western music, thus pointing the way to a process of synthesis.

The Israeli composer is not motivated entirely by his geographical proximity to the Arabic countries, although this is a significant factor. Also to be considered is the fact that the music of most oriental-Jewish communities has borrowed heavily from Arab sources in its own development, and that large groups from these communities have found their way to Israel, where their cultural styles are largely maintained (at least for the present) and form an intrinsic part of Israeli culture. Thus the composer's interest in an important branch of Jewish music, hitherto largely uncharted, has led him to an exploration of its sources, which necessarily include Arabic music. The only oriental-Jewish music which has not been influenced by Arab music is that of the Yemenite liturgy, a finding first documented by Idelsohn.<sup>24</sup> Thus, Israel's musicologists have taken great care to collect and preserve Yemenite liturgical music, as they find in it possible intimations of ancient Jewish song.

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While this has great significance for musical research, its value is limited in the present study, as most of the composers herein discussed have turned to the more universal aspects of Arab music in seeking their personal identification with the Middle East.

### THE HEBREW LANGUAGE

Significance has been attached to the fact that the Hebrew language utilizes different accentuation patterns, and different rhythms generally, than the languages traditionally associated with art song. The patterns of Biblical and liturgical Hebrew, and their realizations in prayer chant (whether rendered simply or as elaborate *hazzanic* recitative) and cantillation, and the sharp staccato of modern conversational Hebrew, offer coloristic and rhythmic values different from those of European languages. These will be briefly explored in the hope that they will shed some light on compositional procedures of Israel's immigrant composers, in certain appropriate contexts.

The greatest difference between Hebrew and European languages, whether of Latin or Germanic derivation, is that Hebrew accent patterns tend to favor heaviest stress on the ultimate syllable of any given word. Since most Hebrew words are of either two or three syllables, Brod has written that "the rhythm of Hebrew is predominantly iambic and anapestic."<sup>25</sup> The term anapestic for three-syllable words is open to some question, for it is not entirely clear whether in these words the first two syllables do in fact receive equal stress, or perhaps equal absence of stress. Keren makes the point that whatever the final judgment of professional linguists, Israel's composers certainly have not arrived at a consensus on this issue.<sup>26</sup>

In any event, the predominance of last-syllable accent has prompted a number of theorists to advocate elimination of those traditional Western musical devices which create accent through stress on a strong beat which for one reason or another requires subsequent resolution on a weak beat, or a weak part of a strong beat. Chiefly at issue here are the suspension and *appoggiatura*, but other embellishments which also create this effect might be mentioned as well.

The problem of accentuation in suspensions can be solved for Hebrew texts simply by allowing the suspension to begin with the final syllable, which then slurs into the resolving tone, but to the purists this is not enough. Ephros maintains that inasmuch as the suspension is a product of speech rhythms different from those of Hebrew it is to be avoided for its own sake, to allow Hebrew music to develop its own characteristic patterns. The musician who desires to write Jewish music must "divorce himself completely



from the influence of his 'Western-European' environment."<sup>27</sup>

There are exceptions to final-syllable accent patterns in Hebrew, notably those in words in which both syllables use the same vowel. In the words *be-ged* (garment) and *ra-ash* (noise), for instance, the first syllable takes the accent. Accent remains on the first syllable of the roots of such words if a prefix of article or preposition is added, e.g. *ha-ra-ash* (the noise), but shifts in the case of plural or possessive suffixes to that suffix, as it causes the word to undergo certain vowel changes, e.g. *b'ga-di* (my garment). There are a number of such exceptions, and exceptions to those exceptions, and collectively they tend to make an arbitrary assignment of rules relatively unhelpful.

A number of theories concerning the setting of Biblical texts to music, from the point of view of their word accents, can be found in Keren<sup>28</sup> and need to be reviewed here. Two observations, however, must be added to his findings. Firstly, settings of *hazzanic* recitative style by both American and Israeli *hazzanim* tend to mix their use of duple- and triple-groupings (i.e. regular eighth-notes against triplet eighth-notes), and use considerably more of the latter than are found in most Western music. There would seem to be some justification for a moderation of view between the extremes of Orgad and Yaffe which are quoted by Keren, at least from this perspective.

Secondly, the problem of accent distribution cannot be measured by temporal elements alone; pitch accent is surely also a factor to be considered, for it contributes subtleties which are not revealed by pure rhythm. The problem of whether a three-syllable word is perceived as an anapest or as some other rhythmic figure can often be clarified by an examination of pitch selection by the composer, even if the rhythmic values for the two unaccented syllables are the same. Absence of discussion of this important element renders much of the published material on this topic of less than maximal value, and it will be the role of the present work to attempt to clarify certain aspects of the problem.

A number of inherent limitations have been discovered, however, which relate to the ability of this project to contribute to an understanding of the relationship between Hebrew language and music. First of all, most of the songs examined are set to contemporary Hebrew poetry, by Israelis and Europeans, and this poetry uses standard European poetic meter rather than meters associated with medieval Hebrew and Arabic poetry, hence the particular vagaries of the individual Hebrew word accents have already been accommodated by the poets into conventional meters. Because of this fact, "there is no evidence that the metric structure of modern Hebrew poetry has had any significant influence on Israeli musical works".<sup>29</sup> That is to say that

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composers have generally not had to seek new rhythmic devices by means of which to set Hebrew poetry, but were able to rely on standard Western practice as have their literary colleagues before them. One case involving a misapplication of the suspension will be discussed in the music of Ben-Haim, and another involving specific use of the neutral syllable *sh va na* in a song by Salomon. When Biblical texts are used, their metric implications will of course be explored, but as these are in the minority, textual factors will not receive as full a treatment as will strictly musical ones.

"Despite the reigning obscurity with regard to the exact rhythm of spoken Hebrew words, several of the Israeli composers declare that in their vocal works they aim to adhere to the rhythms and inflections of spoken Hebrew...The majority of these composers do not hold any special theories regarding Hebrew speech rhythm, and the method which they generally use for this aim is apparently based on how they themselves would recite the text."<sup>30</sup> This constitutes the second limitation for the present study. The composers herein discussed are all immigrants, and their concepts of spoken Hebrew rhythms are likely to be influenced by subtle, lingering habits from their former languages, besides which, they often lack accurate knowledge of the grammatical rules involved in current Hebrew accentuation. All that can be derived from analysis of their practice with regard to Hebrew speech rhythms, which in this context includes non-metric Biblical text as well, is an understanding of what has actually been done, excluding automatically a consideration of what ought to be done. The latter point will have to await the analysis of compositions by native composers schooled in these areas.

A few final observations on this topic in the realm of the practical: at first hearing, conversational Hebrew is spoken by native Israelis is quite musical, with considerable rise and fall of pitch for colorful vocal inflection. But conversation generally takes place at a very rapid rate of words per minute, at a high state of intensity, and with marked vocal constriction. Of these factors, constriction is the most significant; it manifests itself in slower speech as well, and may be attributed to Middle East vocal patterns generally. Only a very few professional speakers and singers are able to divest themselves of vocal tension. Most native Israeli men, and some women as well, possess a steely, cutting edge to the voice engendered by chronic pharyngeal constriction. This aspect of the language may also have some effect on music of the native composers.

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5. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, *ibid.*, p. 311.
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24. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, *ibid.*, p. 112.
25. Max Brod, *Israel's Music*, (Tel Aviv: WIZO Zionist Education Department, 1951), p. 25.

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26. Zvi Keren, "The Influences of the Hebrew Language on Contemporary Israeli Art Music", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XXV (1962), p. 216.
27. Gershon Ephros, "The Hebrew Language. Part II", *Jewish Music Forum Bulletin*, III (December, 1942), p.6.
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# JERUSALEM'S "YESHURUN" SYNAGOGUE A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

by Macy Nulman

Any visitor to Jerusalem who walks the streets of Rehavia is bound to encounter the synagogue-in-the-round, called the Bet Hakeneset Hamerkazi "Yeshurun", popularly known as the "Yeshurun" Synagogue. It was the first house of prayer to be built outside the Old City and remains one of the most vibrant in Jerusalem. From its inception it has been recognized as the central synagogue in Jerusalem. The Special Commission for Historic Sites and Monuments designated it and registered it as a national historic shrine. In honor of the 60th year of its founding the Israel Postal Administration issued a special stamp among its releases with a picture of the synagogue called *Mo'adim Lesimkha* (Happy Holiday). In 1993, at the first *Selihot* service, "Yeshurun" celebrated its 70th anniversary. This study traces the history of "Yeshurun" as to its origin, its architecture and furnishings, its liturgy, its customs and practices, its musical life and educational endeavors. In so doing, it is possible to learn of the influences "Yeshurun" had on the other houses of prayer in Israel as well as what synagogues throughout the world may derive from the sum total of events and practices which constitute "Yeshurun".

## EARLY BEGINNINGS

In 1920, a British-born nineteen-year - old newcomer from the United States, Louis (Shmuel Yehuda) Lober arrived in Jerusalem. Lober was known for helping develop the American film industry and was the head of United Artists' foreign distribution of films. In Jerusalem he was also secretary to the Governor of Jerusalem, Ronald Storrs, from 1923 to 1926. On the first Sabbath after his arrival he prayed at the Hurva Synagogue in the Old City. This synagogue was the largest of the Ashkenazic community in Jerusalem. It was called *Hurva* ("Ruin"), since it was built on the ruins of the House of Study of Rabbi Judah Hasid (Segal; 1660-1700). Although he was awed by the structure of the synagogue and inspired by its sanctity he felt an absence of youth involvement in the services as well as a lack of congregational participation. Louis Lober yearned for a modern traditional house of prayer outside the "Walls" which should include three major constituent parts: congregational singing, decorum, and a house of worship appealing to youth. His unusual

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discernment and foresight were unprecedented in Eretz Israel. There were those who tried to dissuade him, saying that Jerusalem was not ready for such revolutionary innovations. Contrary to their beliefs Mr. Lober was successful in bringing together a group of young men who would help him in developing this project.

The year 1923 (5683) *Parshat Noah* marked a milestone in instituting a quorum (*minyan*) that eventually led to erecting "Yeshurun". Services were held in a rental hall of the Boys School on what is now called Harav Kook Street. Torah scrolls were obtained from the Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisrael, Rabbi Avraham Hacoen Kook and from the Eliashar family. This *minyan* was the only one to be privileged to receive the blessings of both Rabbi Kook and Rabbi Joseph Hayyim Sonnenfeld. Immediately prior to this it was learned that a group was meeting in private homes for prayer and Bible reading under the guidance of Dr. Judah L. Magnes, President of the Hebrew University. Their objective was to establish a progressive congregation (Reform) with women participation and readings of Hebrew translations of other religions. Rabbi Kook, fostering close ties with people of all shades of opinion and belief, intervened and managed to quiet this deplorable situation. The dissenting group became impressed with the progress the *minyan* was making due to the many new members who joined. The new participants were attracted to the congregational participation in the services and returned regularly. This fact proved there was no need for a "new form" of *tefillah* in Jerusalem. After two or three months the reform group dissolved and most of the members joined with the original *minyan*, including Dr. Magnes who became an active member. Later, his son even had his *Bar-Mitzvah* celebrated in this *minyan*. Among the first women to join was the president of Hadassah, Henrietta Szold (1860-1945), who attended regularly and enjoyed the service even behind the *mehitzah* (the partition separating men from women). The attendance grew rapidly from Sabbath to Sabbath and the tourists who came from overseas made up a congregation with more than one hundred worshipers. "This proved the necessity for building a synagogue in the new neighborhood of Jerusalem, outside the Old City", said Lou Lober, the first president and 'president for life'.

Between the years 1923 and 1936 the congregation moved several times to different locations. The enthusiasm for building a permanent house of prayer as well as building the land of Eretz Yisrael grew by leaps and bounds. A humorous incident is recalled when the *minyan* met on Rehov Yaffa. Affiliated with B'nai Akiva and the students of the new *Yeshivot*, it became a practice on the first day of a holiday, before *Musaf*, to march as a group to the Kotel wearing *Talaytim* in the streets of Jerusalem.

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while singing in the accepted tune.

*Amkha Yisrael Yibaneh* (Your people Israel will be built).

*Arizekha Yisrael Yibaneh* (Your land Israel will be built).

*Am Yisrael hai* (The people of Israel live).

*Hai, hai, hai* (Live, live, live).

Marching to the *Kotel* made a tremendous impression on all Jerusalemites. It happened that an American who remained in Jerusalem from *Pesah* to *Shavu'ot* heard the tune and learned it. Not able to pronounce the Hebrew words, he requested that someone transliterate them for him. The word *Hai* was spelled *Chaj* and on *Shavu'ot* when he marched along with the congregation he sang in a robust voice, *Am Yisrael Tzchai; tzchai, tzchai, tzchai.*

The stage was now set to think of building a permanent edifice but, as always, funds were lacking. It was Rabbi Israel Leventhal of the Brooklyn Jewish Center of Brooklyn, New York who, when visiting "Yeshurun" in 1924, changed the climate in reference to the critical financial situation. He committed himself to help raise funds in the U.S.A. He enlisted the help of others to join him in this venture, among them Cyrus Adler of Dropsie College, Adolph Ochs of the New York Times and others. As far back as 1926 the United Synagogue of America, together with its Women's League, were instrumental in raising \$168,000 which was placed at the disposal of the synagogue without any demand of affiliation. Rabbi Leventhal was informed at the outset that since refusal to join with any organization in the Land of Israel was already a factor, they surely would not join any organization in the Diaspora. The land on King George was purchased and construction began. It was believed that King George would become the center of the city and it was thus a fitting place to build "Yeshurun". The ceremony of laying the cornerstone was in the Spring of 1934. In the lobby today hangs a plaque attached to the wall in the vestibule of the synagogue. It reads:  
For testimony and remembrance  
The United Synagogue of America (U.S.A.):

They redeemed this Holy Land	And a place of Torah Israel
In Your Midst, O, Jerusalem	And gifts were donated for this building
(In the Year 1926)	The first to build Yeshurun
Inscribed for the established	May God bless them from Zion.
fund for Israel	
To erect a large synagogue	

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In 1936, just before the completion of the synagogue, funds again became scarce and the building committee was advised to stop construction. A woman by the name of Rivka Bernstein of Capetown, South Africa took ill and before dying she gave the doctor a key to a trunk in her room that contained her will and other valuables. After her burial the doctor opened the trunk and found approximately \$30,000. in government bonds. The will stated that the money was to be given for a synagogue in Jerusalem. The Capetown Hebrew Congregation wrote to Mr. Abraham Ussishkin (1863-1941), a member of the synagogue, who consulted with Dr. Mordecai Eliash (1892-1950). After much correspondence, the Chief Rabbi of South Africa and Chief Rabbi Herzog of Jerusalem decided that the money should be given to "Yeshurun". The building construction which was officially begun in 1934-35 was completed.

### ORIGIN OF THE NAME YESHURUN

The name "Yeshurun" is the title of honor for Israel formed from the root *Yashar* ("to be righteous"). It symbolizes the gathering of Jews together in a meeting place as written in the verse, "And there was a king in Yeshurun, when the heads of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together" (Deut. 33:5). The name was chosen with the aim of increasing unity among the Jews of Jerusalem.

### ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN and FURNISHINGS

The builders of "Yeshurun" were A. Friedman, M. Rubin, and E. Stolzer. The edifice includes the synagogue, a hall for *simhot*, a study hall, a library and an office. The synagogue with some 1,000 seats, is made of Jerusalem stone. Originally it was built for a lecture hall and the synagogue was to be built in another building. It is conspicuous among the other buildings in that it is built in a circular form. According to A. Friedman it was made to resemble the students sitting before R. Johanan b. Zakai in Yabneh. The synagogue is reached by a wide path raised above the street, called Shmuel Hanagid. The vestibule is simple. In one of its walls is a slot for charity with a sign above it reading *Matan Besayter* ("anonymous giving"). It has an additional entrance from another street called Keren Kayemet. "Yeshurun" has been the unofficial synagogue of chief rabbis, presidents and prime ministers. It is interesting that in 1991, during the High Holy Days, when this writer attended "Yeshurun", a red carpet was rolled out at the main entrance leading to the synagogue for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir when he



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attended services on Yom Kippur. In 1994, when we visited Jerusalem again, Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau and Ehud Olmert, Mayor of Jerusalem, were present during the High Holy Day services.

The circular synagogue has a well-balanced, unpretentious facade and presents many suggestions worthy of emulation. The *Aron Kodesh* (Ark) that follows the contour of the wall was built by the architect Friedman. It is made of wood and has etchings of the twelve tribes: six on each side. Several steps are provided to reach the Ark from both sides of the platform. The synagogue has an *amud* (reader's stand) where the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* stands in front of the Ark and a *Bima* or *Almemar* (from the Arabic *Almembar* meaning "a platform or pulpit") in the center, raised above the synagogue floor, from which the Torah is read and the *Shofar* is blown. Above the Ark are six colored glass windows. The colors may be a representation of the "breastplate of judgment" (*Hoshen Mishpat*) which the High Priest wore as described in Exodus 28:15-20. An unusual feature is the contraption devised for the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* to recline when saying *Tahanun*. Under the reader's stand a door opens and forms a seat and arm rest on which he can be seated and rest his head on his arm as required. Another marked peculiarity is the place designated for the *Kohanim*, called *Lishkat Kohanim* ("Chamber for the Priests") to have their hands washed before *Dukhenen*. Unlike most synagogues where the Levites and *Kohanim* walk out of the sanctuary into a vestibule for the Levites to wash the hands of the *Kohanim*, at "Yeshurun" a special place below, behind the *Aron Kodesh* is set up with sinks and water for this ritual. The *Levi'im* and *Kohanim* walk down a staircase on either side and so avoid the usual commotion generated in synagogues. Moreover, while walking down the steps the *Kohanim* and *Levi'im* need not miss the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur's* repetition of the *Amidah*. This feature adds for utmost decorum, especially in Israel, where *Dukhenen* takes place daily.

In the men's section the rows of seats are arranged in three parts and are slightly curved between the *Ark* and the *Bima*, as well as behind the *Bima*, and all face the Ark. Each worshiper is provided with a book-rest that holds a *Siddur*, *Mahzar*, or *Humash* and is attached to the back of the seat in front of him. The stand, which has a lip on it, folds up and a small built-in compartment becomes visible in which the congregant can leave a *Tallit* and prayer books under lock and key. When I attended the synagogue during the weekday I observed worshipers putting out a number of coins on the book-rest for the poor to take. It is interesting that the poor persons passing up and down the aisles took only a number of coins and left some for others.

On *Tishah b'Ab* each seat can be lowered in order to reduce the height as a sign of mourning, thus making it convenient so that the worshipers

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need not sit on the floor as is done in most congregations. There are eighteen small windows on either side of the sanctuary under which a bench extends the length of the wall.

"Yeshurun" does not have an Eastern Wall (*Mizrah Vant*) set aside for the upper echelon. Dignitaries sit in regular seats. It seems that at one time two seats were set aside on the East Wall for the two chief rabbis. With the establishment of the State of Israel an additional place was fixed for the president of the government. At one time they would pray at "Yeshurun" on holidays and attend important ceremonies. When Prime Minister Shamir came to the synagogue on Yom Kippur he sat in the first row of the middle section of the synagogue. A separate stand (*Shtender*) in the middle of the row was removed so that he was able to get to his seat without disturbing the congregants who were already seated. This is true for other dignitaries as well.

In the newly renovated section at the rear of the synagogue are housed bookcases for *sefarim* and prayer books. In this section many classes are held. In the rear of this section is another room where festivities are held. In this room is a "Chair of Elijah" (*Kitsay shel Eliyahu*), a special chair on which the *Mohel* places for a moment the baby to be circumcised, after which it is placed on a pillow on the knees of the *Sandek* ("holder").

The women's balcony, held up by pillars is reached by a staircase from the outer vestibule. It has a low ceiling, windows, and seats that are arranged in an ascending form so that the occupants have a view of the Ark and *Bima*. Its straight form is distinctive from that of the men's round form.

The synagogue acquires its character from restraint of ornamentation and the generous endowment of light, good acoustics, and comfort for the worshipers. All services for weekday, Sabbath, and holidays are held in the large sanctuary.

Before there were automatic clocks to put the lights off on *Shabbat* and holidays, the worshipers at "Yeshurun" devised their own way of extinguishing the lights by placing a cord around the switch and connecting it to an alarm clock. When the time came for the lights to go off, the cord would wind itself around and the lights went out. This method was used only for the lights to go off but there was no way of putting them on. Many times on *Shabbat* afternoon the Torah lectures were given in the dark and congregants humorously exclaimed *finstere Torah* (*Torah hashaykhah*). Actually the Torah lectures were bright and clear as the verse in Isaiah (58:10) cites, *Ve'zarah bahoshekh orekha* ("then shall Thy light rise in darkness").

## MUSICAL PRACTICES

As early as the 1920's "Yeshurun" can be credited with leadership in introducing congregational singing into the service. There was a desire to make the service stirring and meaningful by extending *Tefillah Betzibbur* (congregational prayer) to include *Zimrah Betzibbur* (congregational singing). Although in the U.S.A. there was an attempt made for this form of congregational participation in the Young Israel movement, active singing in synagogues generally did not get off the ground until the mid-1940's. At "Yeshurun", in early years, Hazzan Zalman Rivlin and his choir sang melodies late *Shabbat* afternoon. These tunes spread and became a heritage for the *Zemirot* sung in many congregations.

The melodies at services in "Yeshurun" have their origin in Ashkenazic and Sephardic traditions and draw upon the creations of the past synagogue-composers. Many of the tunes that were introduced in the early years are still sung today. They are synagogal in character, having a sense of style and are in the prayer-mode of the adjacent prayers. They do not contain the trite, sentimental exhibitionist melodies. Moreover, they do not embody the often strongly pulsed syncopated rhythms that are heard and have overtaken the musical service in many congregations.

As far as the office of *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* is concerned "Yeshurun" was unable to engage a *Hazzan* in the early period since funds were critical. Furthermore, there was much antagonism and opposition to *Hazzanim* and *Hazzanut*. Various congregants officiated at different services during the year. The two *Ba'alay Tefillah* who led the services during the High Holy Days were Judge Mordecai Levanon (*Shaharit*) and Dr. Mordecai Eliash (*Musaf*). Sir Herbert Samuel (1870-1963), the First High Commissioner of the Land of Israel, was so inspired by their services that he wrote a letter to the congregation expressing his spiritual enjoyment.

About 1937, prior to the Second World War, "Yeshurun" began to feel the need for a professional *Sheli'ah Tzibbur*. They advertised in the Polish periodical *Die Shul un Die Hazzanim Velt (Olam Hazzanim Uvatay Hakeneset)* as well as in other European papers specifying that they were seeking a *Hazzan* for "Yeshurun" on a yearly basis. Numerous applicants applied and in addition letters of recommendation were received. A letter, dated November 17, 1937 was sent by the editor of *Die Shul un Die Hazzanim Velt*, Pinchas Milakowski, to Alexander Eliash stating that Cantor Moshe Koussevitsky was not prepared to leave Warsaw for Jerusalem and instead "Yeshurun" should engage a choir leader who would be capable of uplifting the musical service of the synagogue. The person Milakowski recommended was the Polish born choral-conductor David Eisenstadt.

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Among the applicants were Cantors David Davidowitz of Munich, M. Engelstein of Shumsk (Poland), Reuven Moshe Eshwege of Wuerzburg, Menahem Frankel of Vienna, David Hirsch of Hamburg. The *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* finally chosen in 1938 was Yehudah Leib (Leibush) Miller, who was the first to hold this position after serving in Hungary, Vienna, and England. He was well received by the congregation and served until his death in 1947. Following *Hazzan* Miller, Cantors Abraham Eisen, Yisrael Meisels, and Abraham Reich were engaged at "Yeshurun". Serving as itinerant *Hazzanim* from time to time, were Cantors Yisrael Alter, Moshe Taube, and Yehoshua Rosenzweig. The *Hazzan* to follow this roster is the current *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* Asher Heimowitz, who holds the position with much dignity and spiritual pleasure to the congregation. He was appointed in 1977 after serving various communities in South Africa and England. His simplicity in chant, de-emphasis of elaborate virtuoso displays have been more conducive to inwardness. The worshipers respond with warmth when listening to familiar melodies. Through their active singing rather than passive listening a greater decorum is achieved at "Yeshurun". Equally impressive is Reb Rephael Moller, the *Ba'al Shoharim* and *Ba'al Keri'ah* whose *nusah* (prayer-mode) is impeccable and whose Torah reading is letter-perfect.

### LITURGY AND MINHAGIM

Although from its inception the members of "Yeshurun" were both of Ashkenazic and Sephardic descent, the Ashkenazic tradition was accepted. An innovation that was instituted at "Yeshurun" was the usage of the *havarah Sephardit* (Sephardic pronunciation), a practice that soon spread throughout Jerusalem and to other synagogues in Haifa and Tel-Aviv.

As in other synagogues in Israel, "Yeshurun", too, adopted the *Minhag Ha-Gra* (the customs of the *Gra*). *Ha-Gra* is an acronym for *Ha-Gaon* Rabbi Eliyahu, that is, Eliyahu ben Solomon Zalman, also known as the "Vilna Gaon" (Yidd. "Der Vilner Gaon") or "Elijah Gaon" (1720-1797). The Gaon, a Talmudist, Kabbalist, grammarian, and mathematician held no official position, yet his religious decisions were considered binding by Lithuanian Jewry. In 1783 he decided to emigrate to Eretz Yisrael but did not get beyond Germany and for unknown reasons he did not reach his destination and returned to Vilna. His influence however, percolated through his disciples who made up a small group of intellectual elitists and who comprised the upper echelon of rabbinic leadership. In 1770-72, his most important disciples R. Hayyim of Vilna and R. Israel b. Samuel of Shklov arrived and a few years after his death many of his disciples, called *Perushim*, emigrated.

They exerted a strong influence on many of the practices in the synagogues in Eretz Yisrael and "Yeshurun" was among them.

Following are some of the *Gra's* customs as well as others practiced at "Yeshurun":

1. Proper decorum is strictly observed at all services. Public events, page numbers, or times when services are to be held are not announced. Never is there need to tell the worshipers to be quiet during prayer or not to converse with each other.

2. The Preliminary section of the morning service is not said publicly but in an undertone because the worshipers learn an hour or two before *Shaharit*, necessitating the saying of *Birkat Hatorah* beforehand. During the High Holy Days, however, the service commences with *Adon Olam-Yigdal* and all the blessings.

3. In the winter season in the *Amidah*, *Mashiv haru'ah umorid hagashem* is said; in the summer months, *morid hatal* is said instead. The *Siddur Ha-Gra (Ishay Yisrael)* specifies that *morid hatal* should be said in Israel; Ashkenazim in the Diaspora do not say it.

4. At *Arvit*, *Barukh Hashem le'olam amen ve'amen* (weekday), *Veshamru* (Friday night), *Vayedabayr Moshe (Shalosh Regalim)*, *Tike'u* (Rosh Hashanah), and *Ki vayom hazeh* (Yom Kippur) are omitted since, according to the *Gra*, they constitute a *hefsayk* (interruption).

5. The *Minhag* of Jerusalem, according to Rav Tukazinsky, is to light candles forty minutes before *Sheki'ah*. The time for *Minhah* is fixed to allow the service to be concluded before *sheki'ah*. *Arvit* is always said at least eighteen minutes before the *sheki'ah*.

In 1940, because of the blackout during World War II, the *Kol Nidre* service was moved up to 4:30 in the afternoon so that the services might be concluded by approximately 5:30. The following announcement instructs the worshipers which prayers to omit, to say quietly, and to repeat. (See facsimile).

הסתדרות ישרון ירושלים.

בית הכנסת הישן

לתשומת לב כל מתפללי בית הכנסת ישרון.

סדר התפלה בליל יום כטור.

פגעת חובת ההאפלה או הקדמנו הטלת יכל נדרר לשעה 30. נוכל להתפלל לאור היום עד לשעה 50 בערך, או מניחים שהקול יניע או כחלטנו עד לאחרי תפלת שמונה עשרה בלחש. מכאן ואילך תחון יתפלל בקול, פסוק אחרי פסוק והקול יתפלל אחריו בלחש בתפלות שהצטרף משתתף בן ויקשיב בכונה בתפלות שהן רק חובת השי"צ.

הסינים יסלה נא אשמות/ אמנם כן, יצר טוב, כי הנה כחומר ביד היוצרי לא יאמרו השנה ממני דחוק השעה ובעל הסליחות יכפר לעמו.

הדודי חובת היום הוא ואנו מבקשים מתקלה לשמר ביותר או על השקט והסדר בעת התפלה. למען יוכל כל מתפלל להקשיב לתפלת תחון ולחזור אחריו בלחש על הדודי.

או בקרים שבין עטו יקראים עמדי (למי גבן נר שקבר מיל על כל תפלה לאור וקריא עמך למען תשכח

ועודת בית הכנסת

Facsimile of Card Showing time change for *Kol Nidre*

# Jerusalem's "Yeshurun" Synagogue-A Historical Overview

The following is printed on the front of the ticket issued for the High Holy Days: "One should not accustom himself/herself with frivolity in the synagogue by speaking; not during the prayer-service nor during the reading of the Torah. On the reverse side is printed the times when services commence, starting with *Selihot* through *Shemini Atzeret-Simhat Torah*. Also written on this side is the statement, "Don't make light of the prohibition of wearing leather shoes on Yom Kippur. (See facsimile).

הוח תמיד מקדים לתפילה	
שעת 10.30 לילית	א רחילות במוצאי ש"ס תבא
שעת 1.35 בבוקר	שליחת תפילה שחרית - עז רוח אגון אה
שעת 6.35 בבוקר	שליחת תפילה שחרית - עז רוח אגון ב
שעת 10.30 לילית	שליחת אהרן ברכת בערים
שעת 1.25 בבוקר	שליחת אהרן ברכת תפילה שחרית בטרם בשעת 6.00 בבוקר אגון אהרן
שעת 6.30 בבוקר	שליחת תפילה שחרית בברכות אגון א
שעת 7.45 בבוקר	שליחת תפילה שחרית בברכות אגון ב
שעת 6.45 בבוקר	שליחת תפילה שחרית בברכות אגון ג
3.25	החלק ותי
4.45	תפילה שמה
6.30	תפילה שריח ליל א' ו-ב
7.30	תפילה שריח א' ו-ב
8.30	תפילה שמה (אם א' ו-ב)
8.35	תפילה שריח במוצאי חג
8.35	תפילה שמה
8.45	תפילה שריח
9.15	תפילה שמה
9.30	תפילה שמה
9.40	קריאת
6.30	תפילה שריח במוצאי
1.00	תפילה שמה בשרי יחזק
5.11	החלק ותי
5.30	כל נודי
7.15	תפילה שריח
8.15	תפילה שמה
6.11	הקריאת
6.25	ספרת יחזק
5.04	החלק ותי
5.25	תפילה שמה
5.40	קבלת שבת
8.00	תפילה שריח
1.15	תפילה שמה נוזיל
5.10	תפילה שמה
6.20	תפילה שריח במוצאי
5.04	החלק ותי
5.30	תפילה שמה
6.05	תפילה שריח
8.00	תפילה שמה
5.15	תפילה שמה
6.15	תפילה שריח במוצאי חג
6.00	תפילה שריח אגון א
7.00	תפילה שריח אגון ב
5.25	תפילה שמה
6.00	תפילה שריח
4.50	החלק ותי
5.30	תפילה שמה
5.35	ספרת שיר ליום השבת
8.00	תפילה שריח
5.05	תפילה שמה
6.10	תפילה שריח במוצאי
6.30	תפילה שריח אגון א (חג)
4.35	החלק ותי
5.30	תפילה שמה
5.35	תפילה שריח
7.30	תפילה שמה
5.10	תפילה שמה
6.10	תפילה שריח במוצאי חג

Facsimile of High Holy Day Ticket

## Jerusalem's "Yeshurun" Synagogue-A Historical Overview

An additional practice that adds for decorum is a card handed out to those receiving the honor of *Petihah*. (opening the Ark). Since there are two large sliding doors to the Ark, two persons are given this honor. The card specifies the particular prayer at which to open the Ark, the side on which to walk up and a blessing for a good year (See facsimile).

הסתדרות ישרון  
בית הבנסת המרכזי

מתכבדים להזמין את כב'  
לפתח שערי היכל ארון הקודש

לאגידת

שיר המעלות ממעמקים

מזר שסאל

ומאחלים לכב' ולבני ביתו  
כתיבה וחתימה טובה

ירושלים תתכבב"א

יום ב' של ראש השנה תש

עולים במדרגות אל ארון הקודש במילים

ברכות והודאות מעתה ועד עולם

פותחים הארון במילים שיר המעלות

סוגרים הארון אחרי המילים מכל קוונותינו

י"שר כחן

### Facsimile of Card for *Petihah* Honor

6. *Av Harahamim* is always said on *Shabbat* unless a *Hatan* (after the wedding) is present or a *Brit Milah* takes place. On *Mevarhim Hahodesh* it is omitted, except on *Shabbat Mevarhim Ab*.

7. No *Piyyutim* are recited on the *Arba Parshiyot*.

8. At *Arvit* on Passover night *Hallel* is not said with the blessing.

9. According to the *Gra*, the *Mizmorim* said for the *Shir Shel Yom* every day make reference to *inyana deyoma* (the subject of the day). As on *Rosh Hodesh* when Psalm 104 is said both days so too, on both days of *Rosh*

## Jerusalem's "Yeshurun" Synagogue-A Historical Overview

Hashanah the same *mizmor* (Ps. 81) is said. For a complete listing of the *Mizmorim* recited according to *Minhag Ha-Gra*, see *Siddur Tefillat Kol Peh*, ("Eshkol", J. Weinfeld, LTD, Jerusalem, inside cover).

10. It is customary to omit the following *Selihot* paragraphs at *Shelihot Zekhor Brit*:

בסליחות נערה"ש נוהגים  
לדלוג על הסליחות הנאות:

" איככה אפצה פה"	139
" אל אלוה דלפה עיני"	146
" אל אמנה עזרה הבה"	149
" אלקים יראה לו שה פזורה"	151
" אמח אתה הוא ראשון"	154
" מלך אחד יהיה"	160
" אזעק אל אלקים"	167
" אב לרחם ורב סלוח חוללתנו"	169
" מפלטי אלי צורי"	ג(בערב) 175
" אליך צורי כפי ים שטחתי"	178
" תפילה תקח תחינה תבחר"	195
" אדוני האדונים השקיפה ממעונים"	198

הערות: א. בבית הכנסת "ישרון" נוהגים  
לפי מנהג הגר"א ואומרים אח  
הוידוי ("אשמנו וכו') פעם  
אחת בלבד.  
ב. כשאומרים סליחות בלילה אין  
לאמר חחנון.

11. When saying the prayer *Vete'erav* the verse *vesham na'avodkha* etc. precedes *Vetehezenah*. The *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* concludes with the regular blessing, *Barukh....hamahazir shekhinato le-Zion* instead of *she'otekha levadekha beyirah na'avod* (according to the *Gra*).

12. A *Kohen* who officiates as a *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* may *dukhen*. If, however, there are other *Kohanim* he should not do so (*Orah Hayyim* 128,20). In Jerusalem, according to *minhag Ashkenaz*, as well as at "Yeshurun", the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur dukhens* even if there are other *Kohanim* (*Sefer Ir Hakodesh Vehamikdash*). He washes his hands before the prayer service, he wears slippers during the service, and turns around when *dukhening*. A worshiper from the audience (Mr. Louis Lober) declaims beforehand each word of the threefold blessing for the *Kohanim*.



## Jerusalem's "Yeshurun" Synagogue-A Historical Overview

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13. Unlike in many congregations when saying *Hoshanot* the worshipers recite the entire paragraph and the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* repeats it, according to the *Gra*, the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* and congregation recite each stitch responsively, first the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* and then the worshipers. For example, the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* says *Hosha Na Even Shetiyah* and the congregation repeats it after him; and so on with each letter of the alphabet until the *Hakafah* is concluded (cf. *Ma'asay Rav*, 225).

14. On *Shemini Atzeret-Simhat Torah* the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* chants the entire *Atta Harayta* by himself. This is in contradistinction of other synagogues where each verse is uttered by a different worshiper.

15. *Tefillat Tal* (on *Pesah*) and *Geshem* (on *Shemini Atzeret*) are recited prior to the *Musaf* service. The Torah scroll is returned to the Ark and immediately after, the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* recites these prayers standing in front of the opened Ark. The *Piyyutim Bedato* (*Pesah*) and *Af Beri* (*Sukkot*) are omitted.

16. On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* starts from *Ayn Kamokha*. The *Aron Kodesh* is kept open from *Vayehi Binso'a* until the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* begins to walk with the Torah to the *Bima*; unlike many synagogues where the Ark is closed before saying *Shema*, etc.

17. The *Yehi Ratzon* passages said at *Shofar* blowing are omitted at "Yeshurun".

18. The Ark is opened during *Yizkor* when the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* recites the *Malay* prayer for the deceased soldiers.

19. Following the custom of the *Gra*, on Yom Kippur when saying *Kol Nidre* the text should read *mi-Yom Kippurim she-avar ad Yom Kippurim zeh, umi-Yom Kippurim zeh ad Yom Kippurim haba alaynu letovah* ("from the last Yom Kippur until this Yom Kippur, and from this Yom Kippur until the next Yom Kippur, may it come upon us for good"). This version is used so that the text refers to the past and to future vows.

20. When calling a person up to the Torah he is not called by name but by *Kohen*, *Levi*, *shelishi*, *revi'i*, etc. Exception is made for a distinguished Rabbi.

21. The *Ba'al Keri'ah* always reads the *Haftarah* from a *Navi*. At "Yeshurun" there are fifteen *Sifrei Torah* and one Sephardic *Sefer Torah* (read from on *Simhat Torah*). This Torah is kept in a metal case and read from the upright scroll, which is not removed from the case. The Torah scrolls are above on a shelf and below are the *Nevi'im*. The *Navi* is usually carried to the *Bima* by a minor.

## YESHURUN LIBRARY

Besides being a place of prayer, a *mikdash me'at* (a miniature sanctuary). "Yeshurun" is a place for fulfilling the intellectual needs of the community. A major part is its library with over 30,000 volumes and periodicals encompassing books on the Bible, Talmud, rabbinic literature, Jewish history, philosophy, and books on Zionism. The nucleus of the collection was formed on March 1, 1939 when it was decided to start a library with its collection of 2,500 volumes left by the late Rabbi Aryeh Ritter, Chief Rabbi of Rotterdam, Holland. The library was established by a partnership of two participants—the National Library and the Yeshurun Organization. The organizers were respectively Professor G. Weil and Rabbi Dr. Hayyim Brodie. The library played an important role in Jerusalem's modern history. In 1947, before the road to Mount Scopus was completely closed to Jewish traffic, the National Library smuggled out books that were brought to "Yeshurun". To many, "Yeshurun" Library was Jerusalem's Central Library.

In 1967, a special building was erected next to the "Yeshurun" synagogue to house the greatly expanded library. It created the facilities for approximately one hundred readers and two rooms designated for study and research. The readily given guidance by the librarians and pleasant atmosphere prevailing in the library brings many young readers closer to their heritage. The library is equipped with a computer in order to computerize the titles, subtitles, and subject matter of all the books and periodicals. A photocopying machine is also available to its public.

## EPILOGUE

Over the course of seven decades "Yeshurun" has made its mark on every phase of Jewish life in Israel. "Yeshurun" looks back with pride on its diverse activities in making prayer meaningful, in service to the community, and in Jewish education. "Yeshurun" never employed a rabbi. Mr. Lober said, "Who would want to be a rabbi in a synagogue where every chief rabbi as well as other rabbinical scholars attended services?" In the past as well as currently, large gatherings always had a part in binding together the Jewish community in Israel. Some of these took place when in 1939 a protest rally was held outside of "Yeshurun" protesting Britain's anti-Zionist policy, announced in the White Paper of May 1939, which severely restricted Jewish immigration and land purchase. Another was when an impressive memorial service was held for the Late Major-General Orde Charles Wingate. Prayers and addresses were offered by Chief Rabbis Ben-Zion Uziel and Herzog. Recently, in 1993, a mass memorial was held at "Yeshurun" for the late Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik bringing together the elite of Israel. Currently

## Jerusalem's "Yeshurun" Synagogue-A Historical Overview

"Yeshurun" houses the Beit Midrasha of Jerusalem, a center for advanced Jewish studies. Some fifty students are being trained for tomorrow's spiritual leaders. In the future "Yeshurun" looks forward to its association with Touro College. On October 1993, a cornerstone was laid for the establishment of a national center for Jewish culture.

At "Yeshurun" the various *shi'urim* (rabbinic discourses) in Bible, Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, women's classes, and seminars in various subjects connected with the land and people of Israel serve as a source of inspiration to all. The Biblical verse, "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling (*ma'on*) in all generations" (Ps. 90:1) can indeed be applied to "Yeshurun" as Raba gave the exposition that "this verse refers to synagogues and houses of learning" (Meg. 29a).

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I would like to thank the following at "Yeshurun" synagogue for their enthusiastic cooperation in helping me gather information for this article: "Life president" Louis Lober who helped me locate materials and apprised me of many aspects of "Yeshurun". Reb Rephael Moler provided details concerning various *minhagim* practiced at "Yeshurun". Librarians Simcha Glaser and David Kerschen provided me with materials concerning "Yeshurun's" library and the development of the synagogue in general.

To my wife, Sarah, I want to express my appreciation for her erudite and invaluable assistance in translating many of the writings from the original Hebrew and in preparing this article.

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MACY NULMAN is the author of *Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music* (McGraw Hill Book Company), *Concepts of Jewish Music and Prayer* (CCA), and *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Prayer* (Jason Aronson, Publishers). He is the former Director of the Philip and Sarah Belz School of Jewish Music of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, an affiliate of Yeshiva University.

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ישראל  
ISRAEL  
الجمهورية العربية  
1948 ת



בית החכמים ישרון, ירושלים  
דפוס 113



יחידים לשמחת התעוד  
YESHURUN SYNOGOGUE  
YERUSHALAYIM

עיריית ירושלים האגף לתרבות  
המחלקה למורשת ישראל



הסתדרות ישרון ירושלים  
רח' המלך גורני 44



# בית המדרש בישרון

ע"ש ר' חיים קוליץ ז"ל

ביום ב' א' באלול (8/8/94) יתחילו מידי יום בבית המדרש  
שבבית הכנסת המרכזי ישרון השעורים הבאים:

### לפני הנהרים

שעה	בימים	נושא	ד"ר
9.00 - 10.00	א' - ה'	סוגיות נבחרות בתלמוד ובפוסקים	ד"ר מאיר פרימן
10.15 - 11.15	א'	נושאים אקטואליים בהשקפת היהדות	ד"ר חגי בר-גורדא
"	ב'	עיונים בתלכה ובפסיקה	ד"ר יוסף אליהו לוין
"	ג'	דמויות ואישים בתנ"ך	ד"ר ישעיה שטיינברגר
"	ד'	עיון בפרשת השבוע	ד"ר עזריאל זילבר
"	ה'	ספר הכוזרי לרבי יהודה הלוי	ד"ר אברהם קוסמן
11.30 - 12.30	א' - ה'	שעור בידף היומרי בתלמוד הבבלי	ד"ר יצחק רינדלר
12.30 - 13.00	א' - ה'	לימוד בחברותות	
13.00	א' - ה'	תפילת מנחה גדולה ובשעת חקיץ - בשעה 13.15	

לדוברי אנגלית - תכנית שיוחדת לדוברי אנגלית שתקיימת בימים א', ג, ה' בין השעות 9.00-13.00

### אחר הנהרים

שעה	בימים	נושא	ד"ר
	א' - ה'	שעור יומי במסכת גיטין	ד"ר יעקב כץ
20.00	א'	שעור בתלמוד ירושלמי	ד"ר זאב גצל
18.30	ג'	ערכים באנציקלופדיה התלמודית	ד"ר יעקב כץ
20.00	ב'	שעור בתנ"ך לנשים (בערות נשים)	ד"ר נחמה אדלשטיין (אם ת)
20.30	ד'	שעור בתלמוד בבלי	ד"ר חגי בר-גורדא
	ה'	שעור בפרשת השבוע	ד"ר מרדכי אלון

(השעור משודר ברשת א' של קול ישראל)

### שבתות במערון

בעונת חקיץ שעה לפני תפילת מנחה - הרצאה ע"י מרצה אורח  
בעונת החורף בליל שבת בין קבלת שבת לערבית - רעיון לפרשת השבוע  
בכל שבת בשעה 12.15 שיעור בתלמוד - ד"ר מאיר מולד  
בסעודה שלישית לאחר תפילת מנחה - שיחה לפרשת השבוע ופרקי חזנות

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## Liturgical Music in England

The Role of Jews' College

by Jacob Sherman

The State of the Hazzan

by Stanley Brickman

Jews' College, one of the most important Jewish institutions in Great Britain was founded in 1855, and owes its existence to the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, Dr. Nathan Marcus Adler (1803-1890). The idea for such a seminary had its early beginnings in 1841, with Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885) as one of the driving forces. At a public meeting presided over by Sir Moses Montefiore, the first stone was laid on January 4, 1852. Dr. Adler, in defining the institution's task said, "We have a house to work in, teaching power to work with, and minds to work upon". The object of the institution was to educate and train rabbis, ministers, and teachers for the Jewish communities. Although the college was often short of funds, it was rich in the scholarship of its principals who included Louis Loewe (its first principal), Isadore Epstein, Jonathan Sacks and Irving Jacobs, to name but a few. From its alumni came rabbis and scholars of distinction, among them Sir Israel Brodie, Salomon Gaon and Lord Immanuel Jacobovits.

In 1885, a special class in *hazzanut* was formed for students who had passed the first theological examination of the college and who possessed vocal ability and an aptitude for *hazzanut*. This class was primarily for ministerial students who, when qualified as ministers, would have to act as assistant *hazzan* and when necessary conduct the entire service as well as preach the sermon. The student, therefore, had to be acquainted with the musical aspects of the service, since choral music was part of all services. The class was under the tutelage of Rev. Francis Lyon Cohen (1862-1934), a British rabbi, musician, and writer on Jewish music. He is known for compiling the well-known volume *The Voice of Prayer and Praise* (1899; 2d ed., 1914), a handbook of traditional liturgical melodies which still forms part of the repertoire sung in the United Synagogues. Rev. F. L. Cohen left Jews' College in 1905 when he emigrated to Australia. The leadership of the *hazzanut* class was later held by *hazzanim* who occupied positions in the United Synagogues. This continued until the outbreak of the war in 1939.

After the war, with the destruction of many Jewish communities in Europe, the influx of *hazzanim* to England unfortunately came to an end.

## Liturgical Music in England

With this setting in mind the Council of Jews' College under the leadership of Isadore Epstein (1894-1962), its principal, established a *hazzanut* department at Jews' College, exclusively for the training of *hazzanim*. The first class commenced in 1947 under the tutelage of *Hazzan* S. Pincasovitch, a synagogue-composer who held a prestigious position on the continent. The course of study included a three-year program with the following areas of study: *HAZZANUT-Seder Tefillah*, Hebrew music and its origin, *Hazzanic* interpretation and Biblical cantillation. Other course offerings were: *Sidra* with *Rashi*, prophets, *Mishnah*, liturgy, laws and customs for the synagogue, Jewish history and literature, and Hebrew grammar and composition. GENERAL MUSIC included rudiments of music and voice culture. Ten students enrolled and were expected to attend lectures on a daily basis. In order to avoid any hardship the Council decided to award each student a favorable bursary.

With the passing of *Hazzan* Pincasovitz in 1953, *Hazzan* L. Bryll of the Bayswater Synagogue in London was appointed lecturer. During his term of office, which lasted for thirty-five years until 1988, some very fine *hazzanim* were graduated and later occupied positions in the community. *Hazzan* Bryll was succeeded by *Hazzan* Jacob Sherman who took over the class in 1988 and continued until 1991 when the class was discontinued. The United Synagogue, which sponsored the program since its inception, withdrew its sponsorship. There is no doubt that this was prompted by the fact that as the United Synagogue intended to appoint part-time *hazzanim* only, it therefore felt that in the future the program and its expense was no longer warranted. Sadly, the *hazzanut* class begun in 1885 came to an end in 1991 after having functioned for 106 years.

## THE STATE OF THE HAZZAN

From the earliest days in England Jews have been concerned with the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* and the musical service of the synagogue. During the 19th and 20th centuries the position of the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* flourished greatly due to the involvement of the United Synagogue. This organization, established in 1870 and authorized by an Act of Parliament became the sole provider of the *hazzan* by funding him with a basic salary and providing for a pension plan. His official title was "minister-reader" and that of the rabbi, "minister-preacher". Both share the conduct of the weekday, Sabbath, and festival services and the reading of the Torah. Cantor and rabbi alternate weekly in reading the Torah. Unlike in the United States where the sole function of the *hazzan* is leading the prayer service on Sabbaths and festivals, the *hazzan* in

## Liturgical Music in England

England has a quasi-ministerial role in addition to leading services. He participates at weddings, funerals and *shivas*, visits the sick in the hospital and home, is active in educational programs, and assumes various duties. A number of limitations are imposed by the United Synagogue on the "minister reader". They are as follows: he cannot be a *mohel*, concertize, make recordings, or engage in any type of business. As for the musical-service of the synagogue the traditional *nusha'ot* are utilized and a choir assists the *hazzan* at services.

Reflecting the increased interest in synagogue song, Chief Rabbi Joseph Herman Hertz (1872-1946) felt it urgent to have a work published so that it be used by all *hazzanim* and choirmasters. The work, *The Voice of Prayer and Praise* (popularly called "The Blue Book") written by the editor to the choir committee of the United Synagogue, Francis Lyon Cohen (with D. M. Davis), was eventually published. The idea for publishing this work was that all congregations sing the identical melodies and thus unify the service of the synagogue in England. Furthermore, Rabbi Hertz felt that with the congregation joining in with the melodies and chants they would not read hurriedly through the service.

Until World War II the office of the "minister reader" was one of dignity, giving the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* a sense of self satisfaction as he offered prayers to the Almighty and gave an *oneg ruhni* ("a spiritual delight") to the worshipers. It was only after the war that *hazzanim* of England were enticed by conditions of the cantorate in the United States and Canada, where they would only have to officiate at services and be free of any other duties the entire week. Furthermore, the decline of interest in synagogue musicianship as a vocation led to very few students entering the Jews' College department of *hazzanut*. Misinformation, lack of knowledge, and indifference began to reign in the realm of the synagogue service. More and more *minyanim* in *shitblach* arose where musical values and often liturgical values are non-existent. The period also saw a scarcity of funds in the United Synagogue. Therefore, the relative role of the United Synagogue funding its "minister-readers" and the *hazzanut* program at Jews' College declined commensurately. As a result only fifteen professional *hazzanim* remain in the country as opposed to more than three times the number twenty or thirty years ago and prestigious congregations now employ part-time *hazzanim* instead.

In 1989 a society of *hazzanim* was formed in London to preserve Jewish liturgical music and the cantorate in Britain. As previously mentioned, given the fiscal problems of the United Synagogue, funding the *hazzanut* department at Jews' College was curtailed. In the future the cause of the

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*hazzan* may find a receptive ear, as it seeks to stimulate a level of efficiency and effectiveness in uplifting the position of "minister-reader".

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HAZZAN JACOB SHERMAN, cantor-educator, born in London, held positions in London and the provinces, including the famous Dalston Synagogue in London.

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# AN ANALYSIS OF *HAD GADYA*

by Kenneth Brander

One of the most dynamic experiences in the Jewish calendar is the *Pesah Seder*. It is multi-faceted and quite often intergenerational. Young children come to the *Seder* table equipped with curiosity, with *Divrei Torah* and prepared to sing, some for the first time, the *Mah Nishtanah*. Children learn from the wisdom of their parents and grandparents, and adults share with each other various insights concerning the *Haggadah* and the Egyptian experience. The *Seder's* verbal dialogue, is fostered by experiential elements integrated into the *Haggadah* script. The *Seder* is an experience which galvanizes our senses, causing us to reflect upon the pains of our servitude and the challenges of redemption.

The *Seder* is divided into fourteen sections. The final section is known as *Nirtzah*, which contains various songs and poems. Some focus on the miracles of redemption that have permeated Jewish history, others on the belief system basic to the Jewish people. One such poem has been the enigmatic poem of *Had Gadya*. It recounts the purchase of a lamb who is being pursued by various animals and forces of nature.

There are those who suggest that *Had Gadya* is inserted into the *Seder* experience in order to create excitement and keep the children awake and entertained.<sup>1</sup> This seems to suggest that *Had Gadya* is a meaningless poem whose purpose is to be a vehicle of amusement. Can such a perspective be substantiated? Would the authors/editors of the *Haggadah*, insert a "nursery rhyme" for sheer amusement purposes? Furthermore, if *Had Gadya* is merely an "attention grabber" for the children, it would have been more productive to insert it somewhere in the middle of *Haggadah* as it would re-energize them, encouraging the children to continue participating in the *Haggadah* experience. Additionally, in the responsa of R. Hayyim Yosef David Azulai<sup>2</sup> we are told that someone was mocking the *Had Gadya* poem and was excommunicated. Rabbi Azulai defends the excommunication and considers it deserved:

This individual (who mocked *Had Gadya*) has ridiculed what has been the custom of tens of thousands of Jews in cities and suburbs of Poland and Germany. Included in these thousands of Jews (who recite the *Had Gadya* poem) are world Torah luminaries, of the highest level of holiness, as well as the scholars of every generation. Even today the Jewish people have not been orphaned and there are many *Roshei Yeshiva* and great scholars, may God continue to sustain them, who

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all recite the *piyyut* of *Had Gadya*. This person who ridiculed *Had Gadya* is a *rasha* for he mocks a myriad of Jews.

In this responsum Rabbi Azulai includes a discussion on the possible meaning behind *Had Gadya*.

There is no doubt that *Had Gadya* is not a meaningless poem. We have already been informed that the secrets behind many of these poems/prayers have been passed on (from one generation to another) and from one rabbi to another.

Indeed Maimonides<sup>3</sup> indicates that while Rabbinic texts are not to be taken at face value, rather in fact they contain a deeper meaning.

The third category comprises ..... so very few that it is almost incorrect to call it a category at all. . . . It consists of those men that have a clear conception of the greatness of the sages and of their surpassing intelligence, so that we find passages among their sayings that penetrate to the most profound truth. Although these men are but few and far between, their writings bear witness to their perfection, and to the fact that they have grasped the truth . . . They also know that the sages were not making jokes. Thus it becomes obvious truth to them that in their sayings we have to distinguish open and hidden meanings. Any statement or passage of theirs (of the Rabbis) that contains an apparent impossibility can therefore only be an allusion and allegory. This is the practice of great scholars.

It is the purpose of this article to explore and clarify the role of *Had Gadya* within the *Seder* experience. In keeping with the tradition of the *Seder* we will pose four questions about the *Had Gadya*<sup>4</sup> poem. When answered, our understanding of *Had Gadya* will hopefully, be substantially increased.

**Question 1:** What symbolic meanings can be inferred from the *Had Gadya* poem?

**Question 2:** The Talmud frowns upon Aramaic as a language of prayer:

One should never petition his/her needs in Aramaic and R.

Yochanan said: When one petitions for his needs in Aramaic the ministering angels do not heed him, for they do not understand Aramaic.<sup>5</sup>

This idea is codified in the *Shulhan Arukh*:

When one prays as an individual (without a *Minyan*) personal petitions may be requested in any language except Aramaic<sup>6</sup>.

Why is it that *Had Gadya* is the only complete passage in the *Haggadah* to be written and relegated to Aramaic? Does this carry any specific meaning?

**Question 3:** What is the theme of the final sections of the *Haggadah* - *Hallel* and *Nirtzah*?

**Question 4.** What function does *Had Gadya* play in developing those themes?

Let us explore these issues:

### A. SYMBOLISM

At least a dozen commentators struggle to clarify and explain the symbolism behind *Had Gadya*.<sup>7</sup> We will attempt to develop the approaches of three of those commentators. While each approach is unique, they share one common denominator, focusing on the idea of redemption. This common thread is reflected in the large majority of approaches presented by the commentators.

For some the *Had Gadya's* symbolism elaborates the Jewish people's historical interaction with the world community and our ultimate redemption. Others view the symbolism of *Had Gadya* as stressing that communal redemption must be predicated upon personal salvation. For others *Had Gadya* is a review of the Passover Temple experience. Its utterance at the *Seder* then forces us in our diaspora existence to recommit ourselves towards a future lifestyle which is Jewishly whole; a lifestyle that will enable us to participate in the Temple service and the paschal sacrifice.

**Approach 1 - Rav Yaakov Emden<sup>8</sup>- "A Personal Odyssey of Self Development"**

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**One Little Goat, One Little Goat That My Father Bought...** The soul is compared to a small goat<sup>9</sup>. The soul is the dimension of the body that our father (God) in heaven has given us.

... **For Two Zuzim...**For R. Emden the word *Zuzim* is not a denomination of money, rather a plural form of *Zuz*, to move. According to Kabbalah the soul migrates twice before it reaches our body. Once from the heavenly world to the world of *galgalim* and then to our world and body.

**Then came a CAT and ate the goat ..** The cat is an animal which will eat anything, whether it is good for it or not. Similarly in our infancy, we are undisciplined, we can become involved in habits, accustomed to desires which are damaging to our soul. "Tragic is a soul that is trapped in our undisciplined body". *d'Za-bin Abba* - which our father (God) entrusted to us.

One might think that being undisciplined as a child is acceptable for the child will soon grow up and the inappropriate behavior will give way to a more mature attitude.

**Then came a DOG ...that ate the goat...**If a child is not trained to embrace transcendental value it will grow up to be like a dog whose desires are never satiated. Our desires will continue to run contrary to the ideals of the soul and will destroy the environment of our soul. "Woe is the soul which is housed in an unredeemed body". *d'Za-bin Abba*. - for our father (God) entrusted to us, with this precious commodity, the soul.

Perhaps as the child matures into an adult he will remember the covenant between God and the Jewish people causing a mending of the ways and a change in his gestalt.

**Then came the STICK that beat the dog...that ate the goat ...**If a child grows up with his desires unchallenged then these behaviors will become ingrained, "beaten in," to his psyche and his attitude will not change. These deviant behaviors will act like a weapon, a stick, beating and destroying the internal spirit of the soul. *d'za-bin Abba* - which our father (God) entrusted to us.

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**Then came a FIRE and burned the stick...that ate the goat...** This behavior will continue and create "burning" passions and desires which will preclude any type of personal redemption. Fantasies and desires will burn a spiritual hole in the inner recesses of our self. Sinful desires will intensify until it will totally destroy the soul. *d'za-bin Abba* - which our father (God) entrusted to us.

Perhaps when we are senior in our years, our passions and behaviors which deviate from the norms/mores of Torah will automatically reform and allow our tormented soul to rise up from the shackles of impurity.

**The WATER came and quenched the fire....that ate the goat...** The soul will not automatically escape, for a person who has embraced a life style which is contrary to Torah values will have crushed and drowned the soul. *d'za-bin Abba* - which our father (God) entrusted to us.

**Then came the OX which drank the water...that ate the goat...** One must struggle to redeem oneself. One that does not and believes that it will happen on its own (automatically), is condemned to be considered a *Shor Mu'ad* (an ox due to his consistently injurious behavior is considered a force of destruction and must be destroyed). An individual not willing to work on self-redemption will continue to "wallow" in behavior which will destroy the spirit of the soul. *d'Zabim Abba* - which our father (God) entrusted to us.

**Then came the SLAUGHTERER and slaughtered the ox...that ate the goat...** Our Rabbis relate that with every sin a destructive force in the world is created. <sup>10</sup> A lifestyle devoid of values, creates a slaughterer (destructive force) who will persecute and inflict punishment on those involved in sinful ways. These afflictions will torment the soul, *d'Za-bin Abba* which our father (God) entrusted to us.

**Then came The ANGEL OF DEATH and slew the slaughterer....that ate the goat...** When the Angel of Death will remove the soul the deviant lifestyle will cause it to contain impurities "Woe is such a soul"! *d'Za-bin Abba* - which our father (God) entrusted to us

**Then came THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, And Smote the Angel of Death.....that ate the goat...** When God examines "this soul" in heaven do not think that in God's presence the soul will automatically achieve purification.

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For perfection of the soul and redemption of self can only be achieved in this world. It is in this world of experience that growth and self perfection may be achieved. Woe is the soul, that has not had the opportunity to struggle for greatness and to achieve perfection! *d'Zabin Abba* - Which our father (God) entrusted to us

**Approach 2 - Rav Yonatan Eybeschuetz<sup>11</sup>** - "The Historical Saga of Jewish People".

**One Little Goat, One Little Goat That My Father Bought...** The Jewish people are the lamb that God, our father, has bonded with.

... **For Two Zuzim...** Through two experiences Abraham's God has shown the eternal bond between Him and the Jewish people. They are: the *Brit Ben ha'Betarim*, the covenant of the pieces, which signifies that the destiny of the Jewish people is guided directly by God (*l'Malah Min ha'Mazal*); and the miraculous birth of Yitzhak to Abraham and Sarah highlighting the fact that the fate of the Jewish people will always defy nature and logic (*l'Malah Min ha'Tevah*).

**Then came a CAT and ate the goat...** This refers to the enslavement of the Jewish people by Pharaoh. The Talmud records that cats do not recognize their masters,<sup>12</sup> which typifies Pharaoh who did not recognize God. As the verse states: "And Pharaoh said: 'Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice... I know not the Lord'"<sup>13</sup>

**Then came a DOG...that ate the goat...** This is Amalek. Like a dog who knows his owner,<sup>14</sup> Amalek, through the miracles of Egypt, knew God. Nevertheless, Amalek rebelled against God by attacking the Jewish people. Their knowledge of God makes this rebellion worse than that of the Egyptian oppressors. Any nation bent on terrorizing/destroying the Jewish people is viewed as the physical/philosophical offspring of Amalek.<sup>15</sup>

**Then came the STICK that beat the dog...that ate the goat ...** This is the staff of Moshe. When lifted towards heaven (signifying the commitment to the bond between God and the Jewish people) the Amalakites, oppressors of the Jewish people, were defeated.

**Then came a FIRE and burned the stick....that ate the goat...** The

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commitment symbolized through the staff to God was further developed through Moshe by creating a structure for the Jew to bond with God, the *mishkan*. This ideal was fully developed after the Jewish people captured/settled the land of Israel by Shlomo building a permanent structure, the *Beit ha Mikdash*. However, all of this was destroyed with the fires of Nebuchadnezzar, who caused the Temple and Jerusalem to be razed and the Holy Ark and its contents to be buried.

**The WATER came and quenched the fire....that ate the goat...** Within Rabbinic literature water is symbolic of Torah.<sup>16</sup> After the destruction of the first Temple, the charismatic leadership of Ezra created a new commitment to the values of Torah, its observance and study. Many important legislations were established by his court including: the *mitvah* to study/read Torah regularly, formalized prayer, and the establishment of various laws to protect the sanctity of the *Shabbat* spirit<sup>17</sup> The commitment of those who returned with Ezra to Israel to rebuild Israel and the Temple represents the water (commitment to Torah) which finally doused the fire of destruction which occurred seventy years earlier.

**Then came the OX which drank the water....that ate the goat...** Represents the Greek Hellenists who, during the Second Temple period, forced the Jews to disavow any relationship with Jewish practice or God. They caused the fountains of Torah to dry up and insisted that Jews write on the horns of oxen that they are no longer committed to the God of Israel.<sup>18</sup>

**Then came the SLAUGHTERER and slaughtered the ox....that ate the goat..** The Hasmonean family overthrew the Greek Hellenists and rededicated the Temple. The symbolism of a ritual slaughterer is used for it represents two components of the Hasmonean dynasty. First the courage of the Hasmoneans to defy the Greek Hellenists, overcoming religious tyranny. Second, the ritual task of a slaughterer may only be performed by a Jew.<sup>19</sup> Born out of Hasmonean dynasty is Herod, a non Jewish servant of the family. Herod usurps the throne and in his disgust for Rabbinic leadership murders them all, except for Baba Ben Buta. The ritual slaughterer signifies that the Hasmonean dynasty did not include Herod's rule over the people for his rule is contrary to the mandate of Jewish law.

**Then came the ANGEL OF DEATH and slew the slaughterer that ate the goat...**This is the Roman emperor Titus, who is held in contempt for destroying Jerusalem and the Second Temple, ultimately leading us to the

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present exile of the Jewish people. Titus is viewed as the Angel of Death for he was the initiator of our Diaspora experience, one that has taken the lives of millions of Jews.

**Then came THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, and smote the angel of death.....that ate the goat...** This is the commitment by God to reverse the actions of Titus. This commitment includes the establishing of a third and final commonwealth in Israel which will ultimately include the building of the Third Temple. This event will guarantee religious freedom and the ability for all Jews to live safely within the borders of Israel.

**Approach 3 R . Moses Sofer (*Hatam Sofer*)** "A Review of the Passover sacrificial laws in preparation for the Messianic Age".

**One Little Goat, One Little Goat That My Father Bought...** These represent the two goats brought by the congregation of Israel on the eve of *Pesah*, the Paschal sacrifice and the Hagigah sacrifice.<sup>20</sup>

**.. For Two Zuzim...** The Talmud relates that sacrificial offerings were normally purchased for two talents (*zuzim*) of silver.<sup>21</sup>

**.. Then came a CAT...** While each group was eating the Paschal sacrifice they would discuss the Egyptian experience and join in song to celebrate the redemption. The Talmud states that one who sees a cat in a dream will be involved in beautiful song<sup>22</sup>. Therefore to allude to this component of the experience the cat was used as a symbol of song by the author of *Had Gadya*.

**Then came a DOG...** The Paschal sacrifice could not be eaten after midnight, which is in the middle of the second third of the night. The Talmud relates that during this time period the dogs bark<sup>23</sup>. The author is reminding us that the song and festive eating must be complete while the dog still barks.

**Then came the STICK...** A sign that the sacrifices were viewed by God with pleasure was indicated by smoke ascending from the altar in a stick shape fashion<sup>24</sup>.

**Then came a FIRE...** Representing the heavenly fires receiving the "stick shape" smoke from the altar.



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**The WATER came and quenched the fire....** The rearrangement/removal of the ash on the altar (*T'rumat ha'Deshen*) was done on the morning of Passover. The priest that won the lottery to perform this first duty of the day would begin by approaching the *kiyor* (water of the laver), preparing for service by washing with water his hands and feet.

**Then came the OX which drank the water....** On Passover day many of the Jewish people would enter the courtyard of the Temple waiting to offer sacrifice to God. The sacrifices were primarily oxen. The *Mishnah*<sup>25</sup> tells us that prior to sacrificing the animals they were given water to drink from golden Temple cups.<sup>26</sup> This event is symbolically mentioned in the above stanza.

**Then came the SLAUGHTERER and Slaughtered the Ox...**The Jewish people who participated in the sacrificial process.

**Then came the ANGEL OF DEATH and slew the slaughterer...**This is the nation of Edom (Rome) who took all of this away from us when they destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem.

**Then came THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, And Smote The Angel Of Death...** Yet we have trust in God, who will destroy Edom and terminate the diaspora. This will once again enable us to worship, sing and prepare the Paschal sacrifice on the Temple mount.

### B. ROLE OF *HAD GADYA* IN THE *SEDER* EXPERIENCE

The *Haggadah* is divided into three sections. The first section is recited prior to the *Seder* meal and focuses on the Egyptian servitude and our redemption from slavery. The first two psalms of *Hallel* are recited as part of this section. The second section of the *Haggadah* is juxtaposed to the *Seder* meal and confronts the experience of slavery and redemption by consuming various symbolic foodstuff, such as the eating of *matzah*, *marror*, *haroset*, the Hillel sandwich and for some, the consumption of a hard boiled egg. This section concludes with a meal and the *Afikoman*, a symbolic remembrance of the Paschal sacrifice. The *Afikoman*, like the Paschal sacrifice, must be consumed after one is satiated, must be eaten prior to midnight, and

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its taste must linger in our mouths throughout the night. The third and final section of the *Seder* which follows the meal, contains the final two components of the *Seder*, *Hallel* and *Nirtzah*. The Maharal, R. Judah Loew, explains<sup>27</sup> this section no longer focuses on the past redemption but looks to the final redemption, the coming of Messiah, the establishment of the third and final commonwealth and the rebuilding of the *Beit ha'Mikdash*. Therefore, his final section begins with the pouring of a cup of wine reserved for Elijah who ushers Messiah into our world. Elijah is the emissary of the Messiah who will bring the final redemption. As it states: "Behold I will send you, Elijah, the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day."<sup>28</sup>

We open the door to welcome this event and recite the prayer of *Shefokh Hamatkha*, a prayer consisting of four different verses, calling on God to destroy the Gentile nations which have persecuted the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora experience. As the *Maharal*<sup>29</sup> states, we request the arrival of *Milhemet Gog u'Magog*- the destruction of the nations oppressing the Jewish people. Following *Shefokh Hamatkha*, we continue with the final psalms of *Hallel*, a prayer which we began in *magid* but was interrupted by the eating of ritual foods and the *Seder* meal. It is important to note that on the first two nights of Passover there is a Rabbinic obligation to recite all the psalms which comprise *Hallel*.<sup>30</sup> The decision in the *Mishnah*<sup>31</sup> to divide *Hallel* into two sections (pre/post meal) is significant. This division has led many to suggest that the Passover night obligation to recite *Hallel* is not fulfilled through the *Seder*. For the recitation of the *Hallel* psalms must be done in an uninterrupted sequential order and in the *Haggadah* psalms are interrupted by the meal. Many halakhic authorities<sup>32</sup> urge both men and women to recite *Hallel* after the *Ma'ariv* service before the *Seder* to fulfill the halakhic requirement of reciting the *Hallel* psalms without interruption and with a blessing. However, halakhic authorities do not suggest that the *Hallel* in the *Haggadah* be arranged differently to allow its recitation in an uninterrupted form. This is consistent with the *Maharal's* conception of the *Seder* that all the *Hallel* psalms recited during *magid* are consistent with the theme of *magid* elaborating on the miracles of the Egyptian experience, while the *Hallel* psalms, left for after the meal focus on the future and final redemption. One only needs to read the Psalms of the *Hallel* section of *Haggadah* to realize that they all pray for, and elaborate upon the final redemption.

The final section of the *Haggadah*, *Nirtzah*, follows the psalms of *Hallel*.

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The Talmud asserts<sup>33</sup> that the fifteenth day of *Nissan* and the entire month is set aside in history as a day/time for redemption. In keeping with that tradition the poems of *Az Rov Nissim* and *Ometz Gevuratekha* relate the miracles which have been performed for the Jews throughout the ages on *Pesah*. They conclude with a prayer that this time period should usher in the final day of redemption. These poems are followed by *Ki Lo Na'eh* and *Addir Hu* which list the accolades of God, yet focus on the fact that God's name will only be complete when we have total sovereignty over our own destiny enabling us to worship and serve God in our own land with the Temple rebuilt.

We then recite *Ehad Mi Yode'a*, which discusses the basic notions of Jewish faith. The principles enunciated in *Ehad Mi Yode'a* represent the ideals which unify God and the Jewish people, an act which will be complete in the Messianic era. Its insertion in this final section reflects the theme that redemption can only be speedily achieved when we are committed to the norms and mores of the Jewish tradition.<sup>34</sup> God's presence is visited upon us in direct proportion to our commitment to the values of the Jewish faith system.<sup>35</sup> Interestingly we find a custom that *Ehad Mi Yode'a* is sung to newlyweds on their first *Shabbat* together.<sup>36</sup> Every marriage represents in miniature the larger hope of the cosmos which is an event of Messianic proportion which happens when there is a reunification of God and His chosen people; for God and the Jewish people are often referred to as each other's marriage partners.<sup>37</sup> ( This is the reason we recite prayers for the redemption of Jewish people and for reunification with God within the marriage ceremony's *Sheva Berakhot*).

We then conclude with the poem of *Had Gadya* which on many levels reflects the idea of redemption. It closes the *Pesah Seder* because it is unique, not only because it highlights the rigors and commitments we must actualize in both our private and communal lives to achieve redemption, but because it is written in Aramaic. This language is not understood by the angels, only by God. Our future, which we have prayed for throughout *Hallel* and *Nirtzah*, is not to be secured by angels but rather by God. Therefore even *Had Gadya*'s language stresses that God alone can hear our pleas and deliver us into redemption.

We can also understand the custom to recite *Shir ha'Shirim* after the *Seder*. The whole focus of *Shir ha'Shirim* is the love affair between God and the Jewish people. This relationship can only be fully actualized when we no

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longer live a Diaspora existence. Then the Jewish people will perform *mitzvot* within the palace of the king (Land of Israel), will be a true light unto the nations, and will gather daily to celebrate holidays in a rebuilt Temple engaging in song to God.

### FOOTNOTES

1. See *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 7:1050; J.D. Eisenstein *Ozar Perushim We-Ziyurim el Haggadah Shel Pesah* (Israel, 1975).
2. *She'elot U-Teshuvot Chayim Sha'al*, Vol. 1, #28.
3. Introduction to the eleventh chapter of *Sanhedrin Perek Helek*, (page 121 in the Mosad Ha'Rav Kook edition).
4. Some suggest the *Had Gadya* (and *Ehad Mi Yode'a*) are sixteenth century *piyyutim* and have secular origins (See the *Jewish Encyclopedia* and the *Encyclopedia Judaica* s.v. *Had Gadya* as well as A. Scheiber, "The Hungarian Parallels of the *Ehad Mi Yode'a*", *JQR* 46 (1955/56). However this author has great difficulty with that. Refer to an article by Menachem Fuchs, in the periodical *Osafot* (5748) page 201 where he proves that earlier manuscripts of these poems have been found dating back to at least 1355 (if not earlier) which predate their secular counterparts.
5. *Shabbat* 12b.
6. *Orah Hayyim* 101:4.
7. For a list of commentaries on this poem see an article by A.M. Haberman, "*Had Gadya*" *Machanayim* (Israel, 5721).
8. Based on commentary found in J. D. Eisenstein *Ozar Perushim We-Ziyurim el Haggadah Shel Pesah* (Israel, 1975).
9. See R. Moses Alshekh commentary on Genesis (XXXVIII:17); *Esther Rabbah* VII:11 s.v. *b'Hodesh ha'rihshon* (Vilna Edition).
10. This is an idea discussed within Kabbalistic literature. For a development of this idea see R. Joseph Haim b. Elijah al Hakham, *She'elot u'Tshuvot Rav Pe'alim* (Vol. I, *Orah Hayyim, Siman One* and *Sod Yesharim, Siman One*).
11. *Sefer Ma'amar Yonatan* (Jerusalem, 5746).
12. *Horiyot* 13a.
13. Exodus V:2.
14. *Horiyot* 13a.

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15. This idea is espoused by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, "*Kol Dodi Dofek*" b'*Sod ha' Yahid v-ha-Yahad* (Israel, 1976) footnote 23.
16. *Ta'anit* 7a.
17. *Baba Kama* 82a; *Megillah* 31b; *Mishneh Torah Hilkhot Tzfillah* (chap. I).
18. *Midrash Tanhuma Parshat Tazriya, Siman* 11.
19. *Yoreh De'ah, Siman* II:1.
20. *Pesahim (Chapter VI:3) Mishneh Torah Hilkhot Korban Pesah (X:12)*.
21. *Hagigah* 6a.
22. *Berakhot* 56b.
23. *Berakhot* 3a.
24. *Shabbat* 145b; *Yoma* 38a.
25. *Tamid*, Chapter III.
26. As the *Mishnah* states this did not only happen on Passover but on all the major holidays when the Jews would visit the Temple.
27. *Divrei Negidim*, Page 155.
28. *Malakhi*, 3:23.
29. *Divrei Negidim*, *ibid*.
30. *Pesahim* 9:3; Jerusalem Talmud *Pesahim* (5:5).
31. *Pesahim* 10:6.
32. *Tosafot Berakhot*, 14a, s.v. *Yamim*; R. Ovadiah Yosef, *Yehavah Da'at* (5:34).
33. *Rosh Hashanah* (11b).
34. *Sanhedrin* 98a.
35. For elaboration of this point see *The Kuzari, Ma'mar Bet, Perek* 24.
36. This is discussed in the *Yeshiva University Haggadah*. Additionally, modified forms of *Ehad Mi Yode'a* have found themselves as part of wedding celebrations in various cultures. See A. Scheiber "The Hungarian Parallels of the *Ehad Mi Yode'a*" *JQR* 46 (1955/56) p. 355.
37. *Shir ha' Shirim*.

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## RECENT BOOKS AND OLDER TITLES

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### **JUDAICA REFERENCE SOURCES - A SELECTIVE, ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIC GUIDE-SECOND EDITION.**

By Charles Cutter and Micha Falk Oppenheim, Juneau, Alaska: The Denali Press, 1993, 224 pp.

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This work brings together approximately 900 selected general reference works covering specific areas and a small selection of basic works that should be at hand in any core collection of Jewish studies. J.R.S., divided into two sections (General Reference and Subject Reference), covers every aspect of Jewish life and knowledge - history, culture, religion and contemporary issues. Drawn from publications from 1970 through 1992 as well as older titles, this book provides doses of wisdom and expert guidance for the lay person as well as students, researchers, and librarians to Judaica reference material.

J.R.S. won the Association of Jewish Libraries' Outstanding Reference Book Award for 1993.

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### **NEFESH HARAV LEMALOT SHANAH LEPETIRAT MARAN HARAV YOSEF DOV HALEVI SOLOVEITCHIK.** By Rabbi Tzvi Schachter, Jerusalem: Hotza'at Reshit Yerushalayim, 1944, 322 pp.

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Over the course of several decades Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, known to his students as "the Rav" (thus the title *Nefesh Harav*- "The Soul of the Rav") has exemplified mastery in *Halakhah* and in a broad knowledge of many subjects, making him a unique Torah personality.

Rabbi Tzvi (Hershel) Schachter, a *talmid muvhak* of "the Rav" and Nathan and Vivian Fink Professor of Talmud and *Rosh Kollel* at Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (Yeshiva University) captured every nuance of "the Rav's" wide range of thoughts, interests, and sayings. Whether it be the Bible, Talmud, *Halakhah*, liturgy, philosophy, the Land of Israel, or *Mesorah*, Rabbi Schachter has given us the rich garlands and accounts of many of "the Rav's" little known approaches to these subjects. Much light is shed on his life, influences, and concerns.

*Nefesh Harav* is a landmark collection as a memorial to Rabbi Soloveitchik and at the same time it satisfies the curiosities of readers who want to know more about "the Rav", the Torah giant in our own time.

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### **THE CANTOR'S MANUAL OF JEWISH LAW.** By Walter Orenstein, Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 1994, 153 pp.

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The increase in the number of manuals of Jewish Law is an encouraging sign indicating, on the part of individuals, the desire to learn more about the Jewish religion. One such manual that stands out is *The Cantor's Manual of Jewish Law*.

Previously published in 1965 by the Cantorial Council of America associated with the Philip and Sarah Belz School of Jewish Music (Cantorial Training Institute) and with the Division of Communal Services at Yeshiva University, the volume attempts to fulfill the

## Recent Books And Older Titles

high ideals of the cantor in the Jewish community. Written in clear, lucid style, one which can be understood and appreciated by both the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* as well by the worshiper, the volume leads the reader "step by step" through the portals of laws in the *Shulhan Arukh* as well as in responsa literature as to conducting the synagogue service.

A bilingual edition, parts I and II discuss general laws and laws of the Sabbath and festivals. Part III, entirely in Hebrew, covers responsa pertaining to repeating words in a synagogue service, using a tuning fork on *Shabbat*, wearing special cantorial garb, breaking a long term contract etc. In the new edition a lengthy introduction is added.

This is a book not only for the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* but also for the rabbi and layman since it embraces the interaction that takes place between the leader and the congregation during the synagogue service.

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**HAMIKRA BEN TE'AMIM LEPARSHANUT.** By Simcha Kogut, Jerusalem, Israel: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1994, 270 pp.

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The author gives an in-depth explanation of the correlations between biblical accentuation and traditional Jewish exegesis. Various interpretations discussed are those by Rashi, Abraham ibn Ezra, Samuel David Luzzatto, David Kimchi, and others. This is a must for reading and study.

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**PESACH-PASSOVER-ITS OBSERVANCE, LAWS, AND SIGNIFICANCE/A PRESENTATION BASED ON TALMUDIC AND TRADITIONAL SOURCES.** By Rabbis Shimon Finkelman, Moshe Dov Stein, Moshe Lieber, Nosson Scherman, Brooklyn, New York: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 1944, 176 pp.

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An insightful, fact-filled volume covering many aspects of the Passover holiday: *hashkafah*-philosophical perspective on major concepts of the festival; rabbinic thought, anecdotes, homilies, and interpretations; and laws and customs. The special section on the laws of *Shabbat erev Pesah* are invaluable.

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**HASSIDUR VEHATEFILLAH (VOLS I AND II).** By Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, Tel-Aviv, Israel: "Yediot Aharonot" and "Sifray Hemed", 1994, 462 pp.(Vol I), 196 pp.(Vol. II).

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As stated in the introduction, these two volumes are designed for the reader to learn what takes place in the synagogue during prayer, the order of the prayers, and what is said and done during the prayer service. The first volume, comprised of 27 chapters, discusses such topics as the prayers for weekday, special days, Sabbath, festivals, Torah reading, blessings, etc. Of special interest to the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* are the chapters dealing with the history of the synagogue, the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur*, and the music of the prayer service.

Volume II gives, in alphabetical order, a listing and explanation of the different prayers, as well as different terms used in conjunction with the synagogue and prayer service.

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**DEREKH HATORAH-HILKHOT KERI'AT HATORAH.** By Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu, edited by Rabbi Joseph Alnekaveh, Jerusalem, Israel: 1991, 161pp.

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In an eighteen chapter question-and-answer format, this book presents the laws and customs for Torah reading in the Sephardic and Ashkenazic rites. The sources for each law are given, underscoring the authenticity of the ruling stated.

The volume is an excellent guide for *Ba'alei Keri'ah* and for those who are involved in the Torah-reading-service in the synagogue.

## Recent Books And Older Titles

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**TORAT HAMITZVOT BE'EMUNAT YISRAEL.** By Dr. Gersion Appel, Jerusalem: Hotza'at Re'even Muss, 1990, 202pp.

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This book appeared originally in the English language under the title *A Philosophy of Mitzvot* (Ktav Publishing House, Inc. New York, 1975). This compelling analytical edition in Hebrew provides additional material on the *Sefer Hahinukh* and on other subjects.

The *Sefer Hahinukh* is recognized as one of the principal medieval works in Jewish ethical and *halakhic* literature and as a primary source for an investigation of the meaning and the purpose of the *mitzvot*. Dr. Appel's work fills the need for an evaluation of the *Hinukh's* contribution to a search for the *Ta'amei Hamitzvot*.

With this translation, Dr. Gersion Appel makes it possible for a broader readership to acquaint itself with a proper understanding of the *Hinukh* and the important teachings of the main concepts of Jewish ethical and religious philosophy.

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**THE CUSTOMS OF WORMS JEWRY.** By R. Juda Low Kirchheim; with references, notes, indices, and introduction by Israel Mordechai Peles, Jerusalem: Mifal Torah Chachmey Ashkenaz Machon Yerushalayim, 1987, 387 pp.

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Compilations of *minhagim* that describe the customs of various communities have come down to us throughout the ages. *The Customs of Worms Jewry* from the eighteenth century, covers a wide range of subjects and is printed for the first time from a manuscript that was in the possession of Dr. Manfred Lehmann. The scope of coverage is broad, emphasizing the customs and practices for the *Shaharit* (weekday), *Shabbat*, *Rosh Hodesh* services, weddings, and the customs in the prayer-service for each month of the year.

The city of Worms, where Jews lived from the latter part of the tenth century, had a number of distinguished scholars. Among them were Rashi, Eleazer b. Judah, Meir of Rothenberg, Moses Samson Bacharach, Jacob Molin (Maharil) and many others. Drawing on the resources of these luminaries, as well as many others, R. Juda Low Kirchheim compiled the *minhagim* of Worms that are steeped in *Halakhah*, *Haggadah*, *Musar*, and Jewish philosophy. This is an important work in that it describes the sphere of custom that prevailed in Worms for many years.

The work is dedicated by Dr. Manfred Lehmann and his wife Anne Lehmann to the memory of their beloved son Hayyim Menahem Lehmann, *A.H.*

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**THE OLD TESTAMENT IN MUSIC.** By Moshe Gorali, Jerusalem, Israel: Maron Publishers Ltd., 1993, 602 pp.

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The appearance of Moshe Gorali's work is an event that should be warmly welcomed by all. This major volume is the first ever to be published on musical creativity inspired by Scripture. Beautifully designed, it surveys more than 5,000 musical works from 44 countries spanning the last 1,000 years.

The structure of the book is made up of six distinctive musical forms that include liturgical and mystery plays, oratorios, operas, folk songs, vocal and instrumental music, and scores from the Book of Psalms. The one element that unites them all is their common heritage—the Bible. Musical Illustrations re-produced from the original works of the period as well as ancient mosaics add richness and warmth to the page.

The author leaves nothing unresearched. He includes a discography, bibliography, libraries, and music information centers.

Gorali proves the strong ties between music and Scripture, making his work a classic addition to every theologian and music lover's library.



## Recent Books And Older Titles

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**YUVAL (VOL.VI)-JEWISH ORAL TRADITIONS, AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH.** Edited by Israel Adler, Frank Alvarez-Pereyre, Edwin Serouss, and Lea Shalem, Jerusalem, Israel: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1994, 233pp.

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In similar style of the previous five volumes, this book presents the outcome of research papers of seminars devoted to Jewish oral traditions. Covering a broad spectrum the topics include "Towards an Interdisciplinary Study of Jewish Oral Traditions", "Plurivocality in Liturgical Music of the Jews of Sanca (Yemen)", "Towards a Typology of Judeo-Spanish Folksong", "A Hassidic Ritual Dance: The *Mitsve Tants* in Jerusalemite Weddings", and "The Rules of the Oral Transmission of the Mishnah According to the Aleppo Tradition".

This book, a landmark collection in Jewish musicology, has an enduring significance.

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**HEBREW PSALMODY-A STRUCTURAL INVESTIGATION.** By Reinhard Flender, Jerusalem, Israel: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1992, 156pp.

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The researched analysis, along with Reinhard Flender's personal observations, bring the reader to a closer understanding of the reading of the Book of Psalms. This work, appearing in the Yuval Monograph Series (IX), traces the development and structure of the psalms and their performance practices and gives many detailed aspects of the *Ta'ame EMeT* and the reading of the psalms at different occasions. A list of sixteen musical examples are appended to the softcover volume.

Reinhard Flender brings to light Biblical accentology, a field so neglected and unknown in modern times.

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**HAZZANIM VE-HAZZANUT BE-MONTREAL.** Cantor Arie Leib Subar, editor; Montreal, Quebec, Canada: Council of Hazzanim of Greater Montreal, 1971, 184 pp.

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This book charts the history of numerous lives of *Hazzanim* who have practiced their profession in Canada for many years. Generously illustrated with photographs, the reader becomes familiar with the *sheluhei tzibbur* who have perpetuated the Jewish heritage through chant and song in different synagogues in Canada.

Of particular interest are the musical notations for a variety of texts of the synagogue service. Equally important are the literary articles by Sidar Belarsky, Tzvi Halperin, Efraim Schlepach, Dr. Henry Biberfeld, and Nathan Mendelson.

The volume, published at the anniversary of the Council of Hazzanim of Greater Montreal, provides the reader with historical background from the period of which the organization grew.

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**THE HISTORY OF THE ISRAELI PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA.** By Uri (Erich) Toeplitz, a Hebrew translation by Hed Sela, Tel-Aviv, Israel: Sofriat Poalim, 1992, 362 pp.

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This is an invaluable book describing the formation and establishment of the IPO as told by one of its leading instrumentalists, the flutist Uri Toeplitz. Many musicians from different cultural backgrounds joined the orchestra's early stages and later years. Interesting insights are provided as to the orchestra's standards, conductors, guest soloists, and financial considerations. *The History of the IPO* reflects in many ways the story of the

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*Yishuv* and of Israel in its formative years. It is an important book which every lover of music ought to own and read since the orchestra is a major Israeli institution that represents the country's contribution to art music.

## RECORDED MUSIC AND FILM

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**SYNAGOGAL MUSIC IN THE BAROQUE-I. ITALY-II. AMSTERDAM-SOUTHERN FRANCE.** Cameron Singers, Avner Itai, Conductor: Israel Adler, Editor: Jerusalem, Israel, The Jewish Music Research Centre, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1991.

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These two tapes are handsomely boxed separately with notes and texts of all the selections sung and played. Compositions by Salomone Rossi, Carlo Grossi, and V. Gallichi and F. Drei are among the Italian settings. Composers represented in the Amsterdam-Southern France group are Abraham Caceres and Cristiano G. Lidarti.

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**BETH ORA HOLIDAY SERIES-THE HIGH HOLY DAYS.** By Rabbi Moshe Jablon and Cantor Arie Subar: Montreal.

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This tape describes in words and song the entire High Holy Day period, beginning with the month of *Elul* until *Neilah*, the closing service on Yom Kippur. Participating in the presentation is also the Beth Ora Choir with Ralph Kronick as director. The narrations are made by R. and M. Zelniker and Stephen Glass supplies original musical accompaniment.

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**SELIHOT.** By Arie L. Subar, Beth Ora Choir, Ralph Kronick, conductor: Montreal.

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In this tape, that was recorded live, Hazzan Subar chants the entire *Selihot* service. He is assisted by the Beth Ora Choir.

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**TEFILLOT SHABBAT BENUSAH ASHKENAZ.** By Hazzan David Ulman, accompanist Raymond Goldstein, edited by Ezra Barnea: Jerusalem, Israel, "Renanot", The Institute for Jewish Music.

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These three tapes cover the entire liturgy for the Sabbath service and Sabbath *Rosh Hodesh*. Of interest is the same text sung to different musical settings. Each setting is listed with accompanying notes giving the composer and/or notator's name.

Variations of the *nusah* are given in many instances; for example, five different settings for *Lekhah Dodi*, depending on the Sabbath in the year cycle; or, two settings for the *Barekhu*, chanted on Friday evening.

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**GOLDEN VOICES OF ISRAEL.** Jewish Music Archives: Black and white, 60 minutes, English and Hebrew titles.

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This film depicts twelve *Hazzanim* of former years singing elaborate recitatives and choral works. Among the *Hazzanim* are Joseph Rosenblatt, Joseph Shlisky, David Roitman, Mordecai Herschman, and others.