

Introducing *Siddur Sim Shalom*

Jules Harlow

Any authentic Jewish prayerbook has its roots in the biblical and rabbinic texts which constitute the core of every service. Passages from the Torah, from Psalms and from the Prophets, among other biblical sources, were arranged for prayer by the ancient Rabbis of the first to the sixth centuries who also contributed their own liturgical formulations. These two elements—biblical and rabbinic—continue to sustain and inspire us as the basic texts of Jewish prayer, together with additions and modifications which have been made throughout the centuries.

The two oldest versions of the prayerbook that we know (arranged by Rav Amram Gaon of ninth-century Babylonia and by Rav Saadiah of tenth-century Egypt) prescribe specific texts which incorporate contributions of preceding generations and add commentary, new prayers, poetry and modifications to the texts which they had received. From the perspective of the twentieth century, these two versions might appear to be quite similar, but they do differ from each other, and they do feature different emphases. Individuals and groups in the succeeding generations, through modern times, have introduced their own modifications, deletions, additions, commentary and poetry, producing a great variety of prayer books. A number of other versions or rites (called *minhagim*) were also developed, each of them within a country or a smaller geographical area where a distinctive Jewish community flourished. At times, one or another of these versions was adopted by communities in other locales as well. Some of the prayer books have differed substantially from those in the mainstream of Jewish liturgy, but most of them incorporate and perpetuate the classic Jewish liturgical texts of biblical and rabbinic origin as their essential core.

Siddur Sim Shalom, to be published by the Rabbinical Assembly and the United Synagogue of America, is an heir to the wealth of classic Jewish prayerbook traditions. It looks to Rav Amram and Rav Saadiah for instruction, and it also benefits from other editions, rites, and commentaries of the succeeding centuries, only some of which are mentioned in the confines of this essay.

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It is natural that an editor writing about a new prayer book should emphasize the new features of the volume on which he has labored, to justify the great expenditure of effort and material resources represented by the new volume, and to point out what would be missing in the world of prayer without the new volume. Precisely because changes are emphasized, as they properly should be in introducing a new work, it is important to maintain a balanced view by realizing that the overwhelming majority of Hebrew texts in new editions of the prayerbook published by the Conservative movement preserve and perpetuate texts which have been in existence since the classic age of Jewish prayer composition. The modifications, additions and deletions which distinguish *Siddur Sim Shalom* and other prayerbooks produced by the United Synagogue and the Rabbinical Assembly affect a very small portion of the recognized Hebrew texts of Jewish prayer. We are linked to Jews of centuries past who have used the same liturgical formulations in addressing our Creator, in confronting challenges of faith and the spirit and in expressing gratitude and praise. The Jew in prayer does not stand alone before God. The first person plural form of almost all Jewish prayer reflects the fact that we stand in prayer together with Jews of all places in our time and of all centuries in our distinctive history. We hope that this will bind us with future generations as well.

Historical Overview

Siddur Sim Shalom is also part of that liturgical development within Jewish tradition, known as Conservative, which began formally in 1927 with the publication of the *Festival Prayer Book* by the United Synagogue of America. That volume was produced to meet the needs “of Conservative congregations and of American congregations in general.” The committee which produced it included Professor Alexander Marx and Mr. Maurice Farbridge, both of blessed memory, as Chairman and Editor, respectively. One of their aims was to “endow the traditional Jewish service with all the beauty and dignity befitting it and inherent therein.” This involved their presenting a satisfactory English translation as well as a correct Hebrew text, and devoting careful attention to layout and design. The format of some English texts allowed for responsive reading with ease. A prayer for the Government appropriate to a democratic society, composed by Professor Louis Ginzberg, of blessed memory, was added. Since the time of the prophet Jeremiah it has been customary for Jews to pray for the welfare of the government. Some brief prayers in English were also added. The *Festival Prayer Book* in one of its versions, as adapted by Rabbi Jacob Kohn, of blessed memory, introduced a significant textual modification in the *Musaf* service for Shabbat and Festivals. The petition for the restoration of the ritual of animal sacrifice in a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem was changed to a *recollection* of that sacrificial service which was central to the worship of our ancestors in ancient times.

The special features of the *Festival Prayer Book* were maintained and further developed in the *Sabbath and Festival Prayerbook* published jointly in 1946 by the United Synagogue of America and the Rabbinical Assembly. It was produced by a Committee which included Rabbi Morris Silverman and Rabbi Max Arzt, both of blessed memory, as Editor and as Secretary, respectively, and Rabbi Robert Gordis as Chairman. Three principles stressed by the Committee—continuity with tradition, relevance to the modern age and intellectual integrity—are discussed in the introduction to that prayer book. They are treated in greater detail, along with other aspects of producing a new prayer book, in an essay by Rabbi Robert Gordis, "A Jewish Prayerbook for the Modern Age," published in *Conservative Judaism*, October 1945.

The *Sabbath and Festival Prayerbook* retains the change in the *Musaf* service introduced in 1927 and adds further changes. Following a modification found in the prayerbook of Rav Saadiah Gaon, the Committee made explicit the traditional Jewish concern for universal peace by adding the Hebrew word *ba-olam* ("in the world") to the daily prayer for peace (*sim shalom*) at the end of the *Amidah*. A prayer for the welfare of the community, recited following the Torah Service on Shabbat, was modified to include a phrase commending those who are devoted to helping rebuild the Land of Israel. Three of the early morning blessings (*berakhot*) were also modified, to praise God for having created each individual in God's image, a free person, and a Jew, rather than to continue the conventional versions which express gratitude for not having been created a woman, a slave, or a non-Jew. New prayers and meditations in English were introduced, and many supplementary readings in English were added, for responsive reading and for contemplation, with a focus upon fundamental elements of Jewish life, thought and belief.

In 1961, the Rabbinical Assembly published a *Weekday Prayer Book*. Under the Chairmanship of Rabbi Gershon Hadas, of blessed memory, with Rabbi Jules Harlow serving as secretary, a contemporary approach to the language of the English translation was developed. The Introduction to that volume expresses the felt need for "fresh translations of our liturgy, for revisions in its text and for more attractive designs in its printing." The approach to recalling the ritual of animal sacrifice was further modified in this volume's *Musaf* services for *Rosh Hodesh* and for *Hol Hamo'ed*. Two versions of the appropriate passages are included as alternatives in the middle *berakhah* of the *Amidah*. One passage follows the precedent set in the *Festival Prayer Book*, as mentioned above. The other passage deletes specific mention of the sacrifices and adds a petition for the privilege of worship in Jerusalem, where the Temple stood, as well as a petition on behalf of all Jews, wherever they dwell.

Another innovation of the *Weekday Prayer Book* concerns the State of Israel in the Land of Israel. How does one react to that happy reality in a prayer book? One option is available through the addition of appropriate responsive readings in a supplementary section of the volume. Such readings

in general are not to be approached in a spirit of condescension. Since most Jews in the United States and Canada do not yet read Hebrew with comprehension, various English readings must be composed, as well as English translations which will provide those congregants with the possibility of becoming involved in prayer. It was felt, in addition, that an attempt must be made to include a liturgical reaction to the State of Israel in a manner which is integral to the fabric of the service. A liturgical model does exist in the prayers known as *al hanissim* which are added to the service (and to Blessings after Meals) on Purim and on Hanukkah, days commemorating miraculous deliverance in centuries past. A third *al hanissim* prayer was composed for this purpose, adapting the language and the style of the standard Hebrew text to produce a text which is appropriate for inclusion on Israel's Independence Day (*Yom Ha-atzmaut*). It is vital to compose liturgical reactions to modern realities. Such compositions should be based upon liturgical precedents whenever possible.

There are a number of other ways in which the reality of a State of Israel in the Land of Israel is reflected liturgically. The *Weekday Prayer Book* also includes a Torah Reading and a *Haftarah* Reading for *Yom Ha-atzmaut*. The passages selected are the same as those found in the special prayer book for *Yom Ha-atzmaut* published by the religious kibbutz movement in Israel. It was strongly felt that the existence of the State of Israel requires other changes as well. One such example is found in the Afternoon Service for *Tisha B'av*, the Fast Day which commemorates the destruction of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. The conventional text (*Naḥem*) for that service includes descriptions of Jerusalem as a city in mourning and laid waste, desolate. Even before 1967 and the reunification of Jerusalem those words did not reflect reality. The new text, in Hebrew and in English, recalls the tragedy of ancient times, over which we mourn, and recalls the desolation of Jerusalem in the past. It also speaks of a Jerusalem "rebuilt from destruction and restored from desolation." It asks that all who mourn Jerusalem of old rejoice with her now and it prays for the peace of that city. The new version of the prayer reflects the contemporary reality of Jerusalem restored, though not totally, and our hopes for its future.

The translation of the *Weekday Prayer Book* represents a departure in style. As one example, it refers to God as "You" rather than "Thou." It also avoids structures such as *didst*, *shouldst* and *wouldst*. Such language, which is not connected to our daily lives, removes prayer from the context of the realities of our lives. Prayer is too far removed as it is.

Futhermore, the word "You" more accurately reflects the Hebrew word *attah* than does the word "Thou." Many who prefer the use of "Thou" argue that it maintains a respectful distance. But the Hebrew *attah*, which is direct, is respectful. Most important, it is not a purpose of prayer to keep God at a distance, or to help us keep our distance from God. Prayer should help to bring us closer to God. Strong support for the use of "You" is found in a statement by Dr. Walter Kaufmann which was published years after the first appearance of the *Weekday Prayer Book*. Kaufmann produced

a new translation of the volume by Martin Buber widely known as *I and Thou*, in which Kaufmann translated the German *Du* as “You.” Kaufmann declares in his prologue to that translation: “The choice of *thou* did its share to make God remote and to lessen, if not destroy, the sense of intimacy that pervades Buber’s book.” The sense of intimacy and directness in the ancient rabbinic formula *barukh attah* is more adequately presented with the English “You.”

In 1964, the Rabbinical Assembly published a new edition of *Seliḥot*, with the Chairman and the Secretary of the *Weekday Prayer Book* Committee serving in the same capacities. This *Seliḥot* booklet features contemporary translation and design as well as a new edition of the Hebrew service. It adds three Hebrew poems, one from the eleventh century (by Solomon ibn Gabirol) and two from the twentieth century (by Hillel Zeitlin and Hillel Bavli), which expand upon themes of the High Holy Day season which the *Seliḥot* service introduces. Opening and closing prayers in English were also added.

The *Mahzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur* was published by the Rabbinical Assembly in 1972, with Rabbi Jules Harlow serving as Editor, continuing and developing Rabbi Hadas’ principles of liturgical translation and his concern for design, as well as his goal of presenting a liturgy meaningful for contemporary Jews.

The *Musaf* services in the *Mahzor* maintain the change introduced for Shabbat and Festivals in 1927. Additional passages were inserted into *Musaf* which reflect the reality of the State of Israel in the Land of Israel and which ask that God be merciful to all of the House of Israel who suffer persecution (“ . . . deliver them from darkness to light”). The types of changes in *Musaf* introduced in the *Weekday Prayer Book* are retained as well.

The Yom Kippur service has always featured a recollection of the sacrificial service (*Seder Ha-avodah*) of the *Kohen Gadol* on Yom Kippur in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. The conventional text of that service presents at least three problems for the modern congregant. It is presented as a medieval liturgical poem (usually *amitz koah* in the Ashkenazic tradition), it does not present in a clear and simple way the themes and structure of the Service which it commemorates, and it does not deal adequately with the problem of religious life without the Temple. Medieval poetry is filled with allusions to biblical and rabbinic passages. To miss the allusions is to miss much of the meaning and the impact of the poem. Further, the poetry delivers its emotional force in a way which is not typical of modern writing: it multiplies modifiers—adjectives and adverbs. Modern writing, in Hebrew as well as in English, features the directness of verbs and nouns, a style similar to that found in rabbinic literature. To present the re-enactment of the Service of the *Kohen Gadol*, in the Rabbinical Assembly *Mahzor*, it was decided to present, in Hebrew and English, an abridged adaptation of *Mishnah Yoma*, the rabbinic work which describes the duties of the *Kohen Gadol* for Yom Kippur in a straightforward manner. The liturgical additions

to the description were retained, featuring the counting of the ritual sprinklings and the re-enactment of bowing and falling prostrate at the mention of God's ineffable name. This adaptation more clearly teaches what the ritual procedures and the meaning of gaining ritual atonement were for our ancestors.

How do we gain ritual atonement for sin today, in a world without the Temple, which is the only site where the atoning ritual sacrifices may take place? This is not a new question. Contemporaries to the destruction asked the question too, for human beings would continue to sin without the hope of gaining ritual atonement for sin. We can only read of and imagine the splendor and the glory of the Service of the *Kohen Gadol* in the Temple. The Rabbinical Assembly *Maḥzor*, in its adaptation of *Seder Ha-avodah*, declares, in the spirit of the composition *ashrei ayin*: "Blessed were those who shared the joy and delight of our people, blessed were those who saw the splendor of the *Kohen Gadol* at the Temple. They were cleansed and renewed through atonement in that Service. We are diminished by its loss."

The text then continues, introducing a passage from a rabbinic source, *Avot D'Rabbi Natan*: "The Temple is destroyed. We never witnessed its glory. But Rabbi Joshua did. And when he looked at the Temple ruins one day, he burst into tears. 'Alas for us! The place which atoned for the sins of all the people Israel lies in ruins!'"

"Then Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai spoke to him these words of comfort: 'Be not grieved, my son. There is another way of gaining ritual atonement, even though the Temple is destroyed. We must now gain ritual atonement for our sins through deeds of lovingkindness.'"

This is followed by a reading which draws from passages in rabbinic literature ("As God is gracious and compassionate, you be gracious and compassionate . . .") and from the prophet Isaiah, words chanted as part of the haftarah on Yom Kippur morning, presenting specific examples of deeds of lovingkindness through which we must now gain atonement for sin. The medieval description of the *Kohen Gadol* was replaced by the description in the Book of Ben Sira (chapter 50) upon which the later descriptions were based. There are a number of medieval poems presenting the Service of the *Kohen Gadol*. Most of them begin with a brief recapitulation of Jewish history. The Rabbinical Assembly *Maḥzor* accomplishes this briefly, largely through the use of biblical and rabbinic passages which progress from Creation and the lives of the patriarchs to Moses and Aaron and their use of ritual sacrifice, to the prophets' statements on the misuse of the ritual and their emphasis on the true meaning of religion, to the splendor and significance of the Temple ritual.

Also for Yom Kippur, the traditional martyrology (*Eileh Ezkerah*), which recalls the memory of rabbis martyred in talmudic times, has been adapted to include prose and poetry which form a liturgical response to the murder of Jews during the Holocaust. There is no adequate reaction to the Holocaust, liturgical or otherwise. But it is a serious fault not to attempt a

reaction to the Holocaust when Jews are gathered in great numbers on the most sacred day of the year.

The martyrdom of the ancient rabbis is recalled through a part of the medieval poem *Eileh Ezkerah* and through rabbinic narrative selected from the Talmud. (Here again, a clear, direct narrative featuring nouns and verbs is preferable to a medieval poem filled with allusions and modifiers.) Prose and poetry from Bialik, Hillel Bavli, A. M. Klein, Nelly Sachs and Soma Morgenstern, among others, are incorporated into this section in which the opening of the medieval poem (*Eileh ezkerah . . . These I recall and pour my heart out . . .*) is retained as a refrain. A unique form of the Mourner's Kaddish concludes this section, elaborating upon the form found at the end of Andre Schwartzbart's novel *The Last of the Just*. What is the purpose and function of this particular Kaddish? Without adding an extended explanation or footnote, we wanted to give expression to the tension between faith in God and the questioning of that faith which arises out of the Holocaust. The statement of faith *par excellence* in our tradition is the Mourner's Kaddish. At a time when one has perhaps the strongest reasons to question God, one is obliged to rise in public to praise God through the words of the Kaddish. We interspersed these words of faith with names of places at which Jews were slaughtered, names which give rise to the questioning of faith, thereby articulating the tension liturgically. The framework of essential faith is expressed by the final lines of this Kaddish which are uninterrupted.

The Rabbinical Assembly *Mahzor* reintroduces the text for the blessing of the congregation by its *kohanim* (*n'siat kapayim*) as an option in the *Musaf* services. An alternative Torah Reading is added for the *minḥah* service on Yom Kippur.

New readings, including poetry and prose of modern and contemporary writers, rabbis, and scholars, are incorporated into the services or presented in separate sections, arranged for responsive reading or for reflection and study. Ancient and medieval sources not usually included in prayerbooks also have been added. Rubrics pointing to the structure and themes of services appear throughout the volume. Explanatory notes were added on basic themes of the High Holy Day liturgy, and on the Kaddish.

In 1982 the Rabbinical Assembly published a new edition of the Passover Haggadah, the *Feast of Freedom*, with Rachel Rabinowicz as Editor and with Rabbi Max J. Routtenberg as Chairman of the Haggadah Committee. The *Feast of Freedom* features a commentary to explain passages and to provoke discussion, a guide to the Seder rituals, a revision of the Hebrew text which reflects Conservative ideology, additions to augment the text, a new English translation, and the graphic art of Dan Reisinger.

Siddur Sim Shalom

The new siddur, which is called *Sim Shalom*, is the most comprehensive in scope of the prayerbooks which have been published within the Conservative

movement. It includes services for Shabbat, Festivals and weekdays, as well as texts for various other occasions at home and in the synagogue, including Blessings after Meals, *zemirot* (liturgical songs), and blessings for various occasions (*birkhot hanehenin*). A rabbinic text for study, *Pirkei Avot* (Teachings of the Sages), with a new translation by Rabbi Max J. Routtenberg, is also included. *Siddur Sim Shalom* incorporates the basic features introduced in the prayerbooks described above, and presents further modifications and additions, extending the approaches of its predecessors.

Reflecting the reality of differing practices in various congregations, the text of the new Siddur makes options and alternatives available. For example, some passages are preceded by the rubric, "Some congregations add," to clarify the options of inclusion or non-inclusion. Elsewhere it is pointed out, as in *Pesukei D'zimra*, that passages in some sections of a service may be treated as an anthology.

Alternative texts are provided for an individual's prayer immediately following the conclusion of the silent *Amidah*, consisting of passages adapted from the Psalms, from rabbinic literature and from hasidic rabbis. Jewish prayer for the most part is phrased in the first person plural. Even when *davvening* alone we pray as part of a community. There are some points in the service, however, when the first person singular should be emphasized. At these points, we must try to insert something of ourselves into the service. This is a traditional practice which largely has been ignored or overlooked. After the silent *Amidah* there is a passage beginning, "My God, keep my tongue from evil, my lips from speaking lies." Many people incorrectly consider this passage to be a required part of the *Amidah*. It is an optional passage added *after* the *Amidah*. It has been adapted from the words of Mar bar Ravina, of fourth-century Babylonia. At this point in the service *anyone's* words are as authentic, appropriate and halakhic as the words of any sage or ancient rabbi. We must develop the practice of inserting our own words or meditations at this point and at similar points in the service. In the Siddur, alternatives are presented together with the familiar *Elohai n'tzor l'shoni*. The alternatives vary for weekdays, Shabbat, Festivals and *Rosh Hodesh*. They are presented to affirm the acceptability of alternatives and to encourage this type of personal involvement.

Two alternatives for the weekday *Amidah* are also presented. One alternative, in English only, composed by Rabbi Andre Ungar, is a version which reflects contemporary concerns and attitudes which are not reflected in the same way, or at all, in the translation which accompanies the Hebrew text. Similar alternatives composed by Rabbi Ungar are presented for Shabbat and for Festivals as well. The other type of alternative is the traditional condensation known as *Havineinu* (the first Hebrew word of its central section, which replaces the thirteen middle *berakhot* of the weekday *Amidah*). In *Siddur Sim Shalom*, *Havineinu* is printed together with the first and last three *berakhot* of the weekday *Amidah*, so that it could be recited without having to turn back and forth in the prayerbook.

The psalm usually associated with services in a house of mourning,

Psalm 49, is accompanied by an alternative, Psalm 42, which articulates thoughts of many mourners which are not found in Psalm 49. The text of *Birkat Hamazon* (Blessings After Meals) is printed together with an alternative which is based upon the shorter text of those blessings found in the Siddur of Rav Saadiah Gaon.

The language of the Prayer for the Government has been modified so that it may also be used by congregations in countries other than the United States of America. A prayer on behalf of the State of Israel and a prayer for universal peace are included in the same section.

An alternative *Amidah* for Shabbat *Musaf* presents a revised middle *berakhah* which differs from the standard version in Conservative prayer books, though it develops an idea introduced in the *Weekday Prayer Book*. This alternative provides a rendition which omits reference to the ritual of animal sacrifice.

In *Musaf* services (except the alternative for Shabbat) biblical passages describing the sacrifices for the day are preceded by the rubric, "Some congregations add," indicating that these passages are optional. The view that these passages are optional is found in the presentation of twelfth-century Rabbi Moses Maimonides. In the *Musaf* service for Festivals these passages, which repeat part of the Torah Reading for each Festival, appear in Hebrew only. Their translations are found in the text which is read at each Festival during the Torah Service.

A further change associated with ritual sacrifice occurs in the early morning service (*Birkhot Hashahar*). Conventionally, this part of the service contains a number of rabbinic passages describing sacrifices and offerings in ancient times which can only be recalled, not carried out. Most of these passages were deleted in the *Sabbath and Festival Prayerbook*. One passage which remained is known as Rabbi Ishmael's thirteen principles of biblical interpretation. It was originally included in this section of the prayerbook because it is the opening of the rabbinic commentary known as *Sifra*, the oldest midrash on the Book of Leviticus, which is replete with sources on sacrifices.

As pointed out above in connection with the Service of the *Kohen Gadol* on Yom Kippur, the sacrificial ritual in ancient times was construed as a means whereby a Jew gained atonement for sin. After the destruction of the Temple and the consequent end of the sacrificial rites there, the Jewish people were deprived of this means. The passages introduced in *Siddur Sim Shalom* to replace the passage from *Sifra* cite the rabbinic teaching that deeds of lovingkindness must now atone for sin, and present specific examples of such deeds. *Siddur Sim Shalom*, by replacing Rabbi Ishmael's passage with other rabbinic texts, draws upon rabbinic tradition to emphasize appropriate teachings about atonement for sin and about exemplary human behavior. Depending upon time and inclination each day, one or more of the passages of examples could be selected for reading and/or elaboration. This is followed by the form of Kaddish known as *Kaddish De-rabbanan* which is immediately preceded by the following newly composed *yehi ratzon*:

“May it be Your will, Lord our God and God of our ancestors, to grant our portion in Your Torah. May we be disciples of Aaron the *kohen*, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving our fellow creatures and drawing them near to the Torah.”

Another textual change in the morning service involves *Tahanun*, a series of supplications which follow the weekday morning *Amidah*, with additional passages on weekdays when the Torah is read. Originally, this point in the service was considered appropriate for the personal supplications of each individual, and it still is. Over the years, however, certain stylized passages were printed as the fixed text of *Tahanun*. These passages contain references to the physical desolation of Jerusalem and statements of extreme self-abasement. To reflect present reality, such references and statements have been deleted, other passages have been abridged or adapted, and brief portions of supplications by Rav Amram and by Rav Saadiah Gaon have been added. These are closer to us in spirit than many of the passages of later origin which were canonized by the printing press. One’s own prayers and reflections are often appropriate, and traditional. Notes to that effect are included where appropriate throughout *Siddur Sim Shalom*, along with suggested texts as a guide (as, for example, in *Tahanun*, before candle-lighting on Shabbat and Festivals, immediately following the conclusion of each silent *Amidah*, or before the open Ark at the beginning of the Torah Service).

Responsive readings in English (as well as translations of the Hebrew texts) enable people who otherwise would not be able to participate meaningfully in a service to do so. While everyone should be encouraged and helped to learn enough Hebrew to be able to pray in the original, translations are provided, and responsive readings in English on various themes are presented in a supplementary section. The translation is intended to present the meaning of the original text to those who do not understand Hebrew, and to provide a devotional text in English which could involve them in the service. Almost without exception, the psalms which appear in this siddur are arranged to provide the option of their being read responsively in Hebrew or in English. It should be kept in mind that any of these psalms may be read at any time, not only in the context of the particular section in which it appears. Psalms 120–134, traditionally associated with Shabbat afternoon, are also included in *Siddur Sim Shalom*.

In response to requests for variety in the evening services for Shabbat and Festivals (a feature of several rites), this siddur includes supplementary readings on the pages designated for the early part of those services. On each page, care has been taken to differentiate clearly between the core of rabbinic prayer and the additional readings which elaborate upon the themes of *K’riat Sh’ma* and of the *berakhot* which precede and follow it.

The Torah Service includes prayers to be recited on behalf of those called to the Torah. The language of the liturgical formulas in *Siddur Sim Shalom* reflects the reality that in many congregations both men and women participate in this service. They also include reference to both the patriarchs

and matriarchs. Passages designated for use on *Simhat Torah*, when the conclusion and the renewal of the annual cycle of Torah Readings are celebrated, include texts appropriate for those congregations which follow the option of formally designating women as well as men as honorees (*Hatan* or *Kallat Torah*). The prayer on behalf of the congregation recited after the Torah Reading on Shabbat morning has been emended to reflect the fact that women as well as men are members of a congregation. Thus the prayer that God bless "the members of this congregation, them, their wives. . . ." deletes these last two words.

On the twenty-seventh of the Hebrew month of *Nissan*, we formally and as a community remember the Jews who were tortured and murdered during the Holocaust. On Yom Kippur there is an appropriate liturgical setting for this remembrance—the Martyrology, *Eileh Ezkerah*, as described above. What is appropriate for a weekday service? We briefly considered the composition of an entire service especially for *Yom Hashoah*. This was rejected as being too exaggerated a response. There is no special service for *Tisha B'av*, for example, when we simply add certain features to the regular weekday service. It was decided to add passages which could be added to any weekday service, as well as a formal reading. The vastness of the literature on the Holocaust makes any choice difficult. It was decided to focus primarily upon diaries and recollections of victims and survivors. These first-person accounts repeat a common theme: Do not forget us! Several pages of readings appropriate for *Yom Hashoah* are included in the supplementary section of *Siddur Sim Shalom*, for addition to any of the services held on that day. These passages are followed by a formal reading arranged for responsive use. The section is concluded with a Mourner's Kaddish similar in structure to that which is described above for the Martyrology on Yom Kippur.

Careful attention has been paid to the Hebrew text of the Siddur. While new modifications and additions have been introduced, especially in the *Musaf* services and in the sections of the morning service described above, suggestions made by authorities of past generations have been incorporated as well. As in the text of the *Mahzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*, an innovation of sixteenth-century Rabbi Isaac Luria has been followed. The early morning service includes the declaration that one is prepared to take upon oneself the mitzvah presented by God in the Torah to "love your neighbor as yourself."

In the *al hanissim* prayers recited on Hanukkah, Purim and Israel's Independence Day, *Siddur Sim Shalom* follows the text of Rav Amram Gaon, emending the introductory formula which expresses gratitude for miracles "in other times, at this season," to read "in other times, and in our day," *bayamim hahem u-vazman hazeh*. The addition of the *vav* adds a basic theological dimension that miracles are not confined to a remote and unavailable past. As in the *Sabbath and Festival Prayerbook* and in subsequent volumes described above, Rav Saadiah's prayerbook has been a precedent for articulating an explicit concern for peace throughout the world in the

final *berakhah* of the *Amidah* whose opening words are *sim shalom*. *Siddur Sim Shalom*, in that same spirit, introduces a similar feature into the text of the *Amidah* for afternoon and evening services in the parallel *berakhah* whose initial words are *shalom rav*.

In the special prayer recited on the Shabbat which precedes the beginning of a new month (*Rosh Hodesh*), the phrase asking for renewal in “this month,” *ha-hodesh hazeh*, has been changed to read in “the coming month,” *ha-hodesh haba*, in keeping with the plain meaning of the passage. In the third *berakhah* of *Birkat Hamazon* (Blessings after Meals), an emendation has been inserted so that the last words of the commonly used phrase *ki im leyadkha hameleiah hapetuḥah hakedoshah vehareḥavah* now reads *hagedushah vehareḥavah*. This, too, follows the plain meaning of the text, as the word *hagedushah* (“full”) is more appropriate a synonym for words meaning “open and generous” than is the word *hakedoshah* (“holy”). The prayerbook commentary of twentieth century Rabbi Menahem Mendel Hayyim Landau and other traditional editions point this out. In the hymn *Yigdal*, the phrase commonly printed as *lekhhol notzar* reads *vekhhol notzar* in *Siddur Sim Shalom* and in the *Mahzor*, following a reading cited by nineteenth-century Rabbi Jacob Tzvi Mecklenberg in his prayer book commentary. *Yigdal* is based upon Maimonides’ Thirteen Principles of Faith, and this reading reflects the meaning of the Fifth Principle (that it is proper to pray only to God, the Creator) by stating that every creature declares God’s greatness and sovereignty (*vekhhol notzar yoreh gedulato u-malkhuto*). The other reading simply affirms God as Lord of every creature (*hino adon olam lekhhol notzar . . .*).

In all versions of the Kaddish for the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the phrase which commonly appears as *l’eila u-l’eila* has been corrected to read *l’eila l’eila*, as in the Italian Rite and other sources, such as the commentary of nineteenth-century Rabbi Seligman Baer in his edition of the prayerbook. A phrase in *Kaddish D’rabbanan* as commonly printed contains another passage which requires correction: *avuhon di vishmaya v’ara* (our Father in Heaven and on earth). It has been corrected to read *avuhon di vishmaya* (our Father in Heaven), following the text and commentary of Rabbi Baer in his *Seder Avodat Yisrael*, and the prayerbook commentary of Rabbi Menahem Mendel Hayyim Landau, both of whom cite Maimonides. In the prayer known as *Magen Avot*, recited on Friday evening, the phrase *mei-ein haberakhot* (“appropriate form of blessings”) has been replaced by *ma-on haberakhot* (“Source of blessings”), following the prayerbook of Rav Saadiah Gaon. (The first phrase has been retained as an alternative reading.)

Reflecting the custom of many congregations in Israel and in North America, *Siddur Sim Shalom* adds the text of the hymn *Yedid Nefesh* at the beginning of the service of Kabbalat Shabbat. Errors have crept into the printed form of this poem. The text in *Siddur Sim Shalom* has been corrected according to the manuscript of the hymn’s author, sixteenth-century Rabbi

Elazar ben Moshe Azikri, which is found in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

The editor and translator of *Siddur Sim Shalom* is indebted to many people for their help during years of preparation. A more complete listing is found in the introduction to the prayerbook. As noted in the preface to the *Mahzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*, the English translation could not have been possible without the help of Rabbi Gershon Hadas, of blessed memory. As in the *Mahzor*, the final version of the translation in *Siddur Sim Shalom*, which is the work of the editor, incorporates passages from the translations of Rabbi Hadas. His general approach to translation and to liturgy, as well as his specific criticisms and insights, are a continuing influence. Rabbi Max J. Routtenberg, Chairman of the Rabbinical Assembly Siddur Committee, contributed the distinguished translation of *Pirkei Avot* which enhances the new Siddur. He has been a constant source of suggestions, stimulation and encouragement, and is responsible for countless improvements in the manuscript. Rabbi Hayyim Kieval and Rabbi Avraham Holtz, who have contributed their knowledge and discernment to Rabbinical Assembly liturgical publications in the past, have also reacted to the entire manuscript. Each of them made significant suggestions which were incorporated into the finished work. The Siddur has also benefitted from discussions held at regional meetings of the Rabbinical Assembly, and with many colleagues, including members of the Rabbinical Assembly Publications Committee. None of the above can be held responsible for the inadequacies of the manuscript.

The Siddur bears the name *Sim Shalom*. The final *berakhah* of the Jewish prayer *par excellence*, the *Amidah*, begins with those words, which in themselves constitute a prayer for peace. All versions of the Kaddish (except for *Hatzi Kaddish*) conclude with a prayer for peace. Rabbinic tradition teaches that there is no "vessel which contains and maintains a blessing" for the people Israel so much as peace. As a community and as individuals, may we "seek peace and pursue it." May the Master of peace bless us as a community and as individuals with all the dimensions of peace.