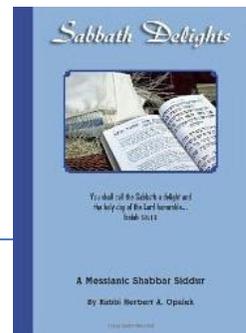


Getting to Know *Sabbath Delights, A Messianic Shabbat Siddur*

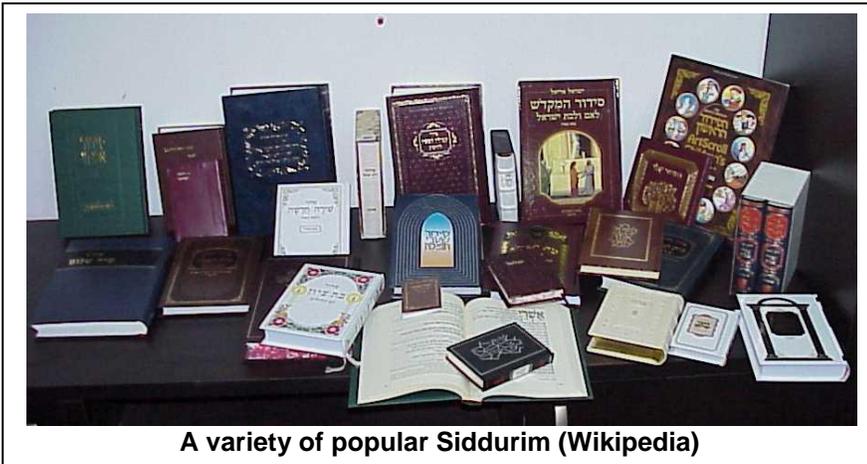
Authored by Rabbi Herb Opalek of blessed memory

Used at Congregation Lion of Judah since July 2011



Preface

Information presented here is a compilation of research gleaned from various sources in an effort to better understand the siddur that Rabbi Herb put together for our congregation. I wanted to know more about the prayers and readings that he chose for us. This led me to learn more about the history and purpose of the siddur and liturgy and to produce a paper entitled: Synagogue, Siddur and Liturgy. I herewith share what I learned and hope that it will bless and enlighten you as it has me. This is a very unique siddur that Rabbi Herb left not only Cloj but the whole Messianic community. Praise Adonai! Pari Johnson



A variety of popular Siddurim (Wikipedia)

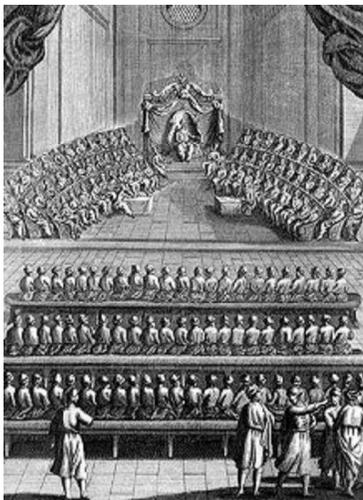
Siddurim (plural, Jewish prayer books) come in many different ‘flavors’, depending on the different rites, traditions and communities to be found in Judaism today. Some of these are: Sephardic, Ashkenazi, Yemenite, Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Messianic.

See: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siddur>

Another distinction in *siddurim* is between that of a ‘complete’ siddur (*Siddur Shalem*) and a weekday siddur. **Complete** siddurim have prayers for weekdays, Shabbat and some festivals. There are also liturgical variations according to the different sects’ traditions for the festivals. This has produced a variety of festival siddurim for the different denominations.

A typical siddur is not merely a book containing the liturgy of the synagogue, but a comprehensive collection of prayers and benedictions relating to every aspect of Jewish life. It contains vast amounts of scriptures, poetry and prayers from the Jewish sages (both ancient and modern). It is up to the *chazzan* to choose the ones that will be used at any given the service. Some siddurim have included ritual procedures for the synagogue as well.

Typically, a siddur can be used both at home and in the synagogue, during the week, on the Sabbath and festivals. Many blessings from a siddur are used in the home each day in the morning upon arising and throughout the day (travel, handwashing, pregnant women, during labor and birth of a baby, etc) or in the synagogue for life events such as: weddings, circumcision, and Bar Mitzvah to mention a few.



During the Second Temple period, according to traditional Jewish historiography, the Great Assembly of 120 rabbis ruled in the period after the time of the prophets (410 BCE and 310 BCE) up to the time of the development of rabbinic Judaism in 70 CE. (<http://www.aish.com/jl/h/cc/48939022.html>)

They established a standard pattern of prayer and gave outlines for the major blessings and the basic structure for *Tefillah*, later known as the *Amidah* or *Shemoneh Esreh* (Eighteen Benedictions).

“Reading from a prayer book does not mean that one is praying. One may read a prayer book as one reads any other kind of book. *To Pray as a Jew, Rabbi Donin*, pp 19

Order of Prayers in a typical Shabbat Morning Prayer Service

Today, tradition and *Halachah* (Rabbinic laws) have determined a formalized order for the prayers for prayer services. This order is given here so as to better understand why **Sabbath Delights** is organized the way it is. Generally the order is:

A. Introductory/Preliminary Sections:

Introductory prayers are for the purpose of getting into the proper frame of mind for the obligatory prayers; to recount the praises of the Holy One before prayer (*Talmud: Berakhot 32a*).

- 1) The Morning Blessings (*Birhot HaShahar*)
- 2) Verses of Song (*Pesukei d’Zimra*) – usually from Psalms 145-150 to purify thoughts and make worthy to approach God in prayer; to prepare for the *Shema* and *Amidah*; not to be said hurriedly, but slowly

At one time, these introductory prayers were said privately either at home or in synagogue while waiting for the service to begin. They were gradually transferred to the synagogue. The chazzan or prayer leader would announce the start of the service by summoning the congregation by calling out: *Borkhu et Adonai hamevorakh!* Bless the Lord who is blessed. (*To Pray as a Jew pg 165*). The morning service would then begin with the *Shema* and its blessings. Today, more often than not, the morning prayers are said as a community. In a synagogue, the prayer service can last 3-4 hours with people coming and going for those parts that they wish to attend.

B. The heart of the Morning Prayer service:

- *Shema* & Its Blessings
- The *Amidah* (sections 1 & 3, only: Praise of God & Thanking God;

The middle section (#2) of the *Amidah* is for the needs of the individual and nation and is not done on shabbat: “it is forbidden to ask for one’s personal needs on the Sabbath” (*Yer. Shabbat 15:3*). For one to do so is to be reminded of what one is lacking, which can only sadden a worshiper, disturb his Sabbath tranquility, and strike a discordant note in the spiritual wholeness and physical contentment for all that the Sabbath day is intended to provide. (*To Pray as a Jew, Rabbin Donin, pp 76*)

C. Torah Service

- Remove Scroll from Ark
- Blessings before reading Torah
- Reading of the Torah
- Additional Amidah

"Jewish prayer is not meditation nor just words that are spoken. Prayer requires a mood and feeling. The ancients were known to spend considerable time just to get into the spirit of prayer." (*kavanah*)
To Pray as a Jew, Rabbin Donin, pg 18

D. Conclusion

- Concluding Psalms, Hymns & Aleinu

Decoding the 5 Liturgies in the Sabbath Delights siddur

Here is a list of some of the liturgy readings in our siddur with explanations and backgrounds.

Introductory Prayers

The Morning Blessings (*Birhot HaShahar*)

pg 14: Adon Olam (last line, "God is with me..." from Ps 118:6)

Been part of liturgy since 15th century

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adon_Olam

pg 17: "Morning Blessing" is an *Introductory Prayer* (see A. above)

Verses of Song (*Pesukei d'Zimra*)

pg 28: Nishmat Kol Chai (*The breath of every living thing*) is a Jewish prayer

pg 41: Yedid Nefesh (*Friend of my Soul*) usually sung to greet the Sabbath. It is a *piyyut* (a Jewish liturgical poem, usually designated to be sung, chanted, or recited during religious services)

The Hebrew Manuscripts at Cambridge University Libraries by Stefan C.

Reif (1997, page 93) refers to an appearance of **Yedid Nefesh** in the *Commentary On the Book of Numbers* by Samuel ben David ben Solomon, a manuscript dated to about 1438

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yedid_Nefesh

Heart of the morning prayer service

The Shema and Amidah are found in each of the 5 shabbat liturgies.

The Shema See Rabbi Herb's teachings: [Understanding Our Prayers – The Shema](#)

The Amidah see website below for more information about the Amidah:

(http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Prayers/Daily_Prayers/Shemoneh_Esrei/shemoneh_esrei.html)

Torah Service

pg 20 & 43: "There is none like You among the gods, O Lord" from Ps 86:8

"Arise, O Lord, and may Your enemies...." – Num 10:35

"When the Ark rested..." – Num 10:36

pg 44: "For the Torah will go out from Zion" - Isaiah 2:3

pg 44: "In this Torah we are loved by the unending love of (*Yeshua*)" – a modern interpretive version of the *Ahavat Olam* by Rabbi Rami Shapiro, a poet whose interpretations of the liturgy are used in many synagogues and prayer books: <http://www.rzlp.org/>

Pg 10 & 54: "Oh Lord, Oh Lord, come into my heart" – found in *Siddur Tehillat HaShem* by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi of Liadi

<http://opensiddur.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/Siddur-Tehillat-HaShem-Yidaber-Pi.txt>
Tehillat means a hymn/song that rises up out of gratitude for what God has done

Concluding Prayers

pp 13 & 57: "The God of Abraham Praise", -Christian hymn based on the *Yigdol* of Daniel ben Judah (middle 14th century CE). This poem forms part of the morning prayer among the Ashkenazim, and is sung by the Sephardim on the eve of Sabbaths and holy days. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_ben_Judah

pg 47: *Adon Olam*---last line, "God is with me..." from Ps 118:6)

Been part of liturgy since 15th century

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adon_Olam

Other readings in *Sabbath Delights*

pg 23 (also pg 67): "May He who blessed our fathers,..." (**MI SHE-BERAKH** - "He Who Blessed", initial words of a prayer formula said on various occasions and invoking God's blessing on the community and on individuals.

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0014_0_13992.html

"May He Who Blessed" often used at Brit ceremony and Bar/Bat Mitzvah

"...and our mothers, Sarah, Rebecca..." Used in Reform Congregations as part of the Amidah. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/amidah.html>

pg 32: Sabbath Prayer is called *Elohaynoo V Elohad*—Our God and God of our fathers; part of the Amidah

pg 37: **Av Harachamim** ("Father [of] mercy" or "Merciful Father") is a Jewish memorial prayer which was written in the late eleventh or early twelfth century, after the destruction of the Ashkenazi communities around the Rhine River by Christian crusaders during the First Crusade. First appearing in prayer books in 1290, it is printed in every Orthodox siddur in the European traditions of *Nusach Sefarad* and *Nusach Ashkenaz* and recited as part of the weekly Shabbat services, or in some communities on the Shabbat before Shavuot and Tisha B'Av. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Av_HaRachamim
(*Nusach* means "style of a prayer service; or the music; the liturgy".)

"The Holy One, blessed be He, desires the heart."

Talmud (Sanhedrin 106b)



See [Kavanah](#) on the internet

[Sabbath Delights is](#)

[for sale at](#)

Amazon.com

Other Pertinent Readings

[Synagogue, Siddur and Liturgy: An Introduction](#) by Pari Johnson

This Introduction paper is what prompted me to write **Getting to Know Sabbath Delights**.

[Why Liturgy?](#) By Matthew Wagman at Beit Ahavat Yeshua in Lebanon, Oregon.

Very good insights. May these excerpts 'wet' your appetite and draw you the website of this Messianic Congregation: <http://www.loveofyeshua.org/liturgy.html>.

Probably the most common description of our traditional service, as people step in from their own experiences in religious service, is "completely foreign."

Why Liturgy?

For a lot of people, you say, "liturgy" and their eyes glaze over. And, to be honest, if you're coming to a "worship service" to be entertained, you're not really coming to worship. You see, the focus of our attention is not supposed to be upon you. It's not supposed to be on whoever is standing up front leading the service. The focus is supposed to be upon God.

- *The purpose and design of Hebrew liturgy is to re-calibrate our thinking: setting the things that He has established as important to Him as our priority. Traditional Sabbath worship is designed to promote unity: not coming together as a bunch of individuals; but appearing before God as one.*
- *Traditional Sabbath worship is designed to focus our attention upon the person of God, not just individual attributes that concern us, but recognizing Him for who He is.*
- *Traditional Sabbath worship is designed to identify with His promises and His agendas, to get on board with Him, rather than suggest that He must be on board with us.*

Around the second or third Century, when once again the Jewish lifestyle and tradition was in peril, the sages and rabbis established a series of prayers taken from and based upon Scripture, including many of the songs and prayers that had been sang for thousands of years, to preserve the essence of Jewish worship: worship that would have been fully participated in by Messiah Yeshua and His earliest disciples. We can't know exactly what took place in 1st Century worship; but we know that many of these songs were sang and this is as close to it as we can possibly come.

Rabbi Herb Opalek Articles

1944-2011

[Rabbi Herb's testimony and Bio](#)

[Rabbi Herb's videos: testimony & sermon](#)

[Understanding Our Prayers – The Shema](#), plus:

The Shema as a document uniting Jew and Gentile in Messiah Yeshua

Rabbi Herb recommended this book

On Changes in Jewish Liturgy: Options and Limitations by Daniel Sperber

Hardcover, 221 pages (including index) - ISBN 13: 978-965-524-040-5 - publication: 2010

Although Jewish liturgy has its roots in antiquity, it evolved and developed throughout the ages to emerge in its present, largely standardized form. However, in some aspects, it is archaic, containing passages and statements that apply more to past eras than to the present day. In some cases, these passages may even be offensive to certain segments of our society. It is for this reason that this book attempts to delineate the parameters of halachically permissible changes in Jewish liturgy -- changes that have precedents in traditional sources and that may correct anachronisms and defuse possible conflict, thus enhancing the experience of prayer for an ever-widening spectrum of Orthodox Jewry.