

# The Prayer for the State of Israel

## UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM

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It is a well-known fact that traditional Jewish prayer books contain unflattering wording when referring to non-Jews.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps these exclusive, and sometimes even insulting, expressions served as a coping device: a remedy for Jewish feelings of physical insecurity; a reassurance that God was still on their side; and a reminder that their powerless and, sometimes, humiliated state did not mean that God had abandoned them (as was often claimed by their Christian detractors). The language of chooseness was for many centuries a survival mechanism, the weapon of the weak, a form of spiritual resistance.

In this context, the situation in the State of Israel is unique in Jewish history of the last two millennia. In Israel, Jews are the majority,

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holding political and economic power in a state where their religion and language are dominant. I prefer to read Balaam's blessing (or, maybe, curse) describing the Israelites as "a people who live apart and does not consider itself one of the nations" (Numbers 23:9) as a question: can a people truly exist separately that way? Israeli Jews must regularly grapple with their connections to non-Jews who dwell in the same land or in neighboring territories.

To some extent, Jewish liturgy is hardly affected by all this—the traditional communities worship from a book that evolved through the centuries but is relatively immune to change today. Still, it is the nature of liturgy to reflect the life of those who use it, especially in progressive circles that welcome new compositions. The liturgy can be expected to reflect the ambivalent situation of Jews who live in a Jewish state but reside alongside Arab Palestinians with whom they are often in a state of tension and hostility.

How, then, does the liturgy capture a Jewish and Israeli perspective on non-Jews living in Israel and outside of it—the various Arab countries all around, and most specifically, the Palestinians? To answer that question, I turn to the Prayer for the State of Israel (PSI). I begin with its predecessors, Jewish prayers for the well-being of the various states and governments where Jews have lived. I then turn to special prayers composed exclusively for the Jewish state, the State of Israel. All of this will lead to some observations on universalism and particularism, inclusivity and exclusivity, in Jewish liturgy.

## Prayers for the State

The charge to pray for the welfare of the government goes back all the way to the destruction of the First Temple (587 BCE), when the prophet Jeremiah encouraged the exiles to lead normal lives, to build houses and plant gardens, to marry and have children. Part of this normality would be to "seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to Adonai on its behalf; for with its prosperity you shall prosper" (Jeremiah 29:7).

An interesting paradox underlines this call: the exiles should pray for the welfare of their enemies, but for their own benefit. Jews have known throughout the ages that when the political environment is calm, they are better off.

The rationale for the prayer for the government is reiterated by Rabbi Chanina (first century CE), the assistant high priest, who says, “Pray for the welfare of the government, for were it not for the fear of it, people would devour each other alive” (*Pirkei Avot* 3:2). Many centuries before Thomas Hobbes, Jewish political philosophy understood, as Jonathan Sarna phrases it, “that a government, even an oppressive government, is superior to anarchy.”<sup>2</sup>

And indeed, we find prayers that Jews have recited throughout the generations for the well-being of their gentile leaders of state.<sup>3</sup> The fourteenth-century Sephardi commentator on the siddur Rabbi David Abudarham described it as commonplace, citing as a proof text the prophet Jeremiah:

[After reading from the Torah] it is the custom to bless the king and to pray so that [God] would help him and strengthen him over his enemies, for it is written: “And seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to Adonai in its behalf, for in its prosperity you shall prosper” (Jeremiah 29:7). And the welfare of the city is that one prays for the victory of the king over his enemies.<sup>4</sup>

The most familiar prayer for the government, *Hanoten T’shuah* (“May the One who grants salvation”), appeared in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century and has become the traditional liturgical staple recited in both Ashkenazi and Sephardi congregations after the Torah service on Shabbat. Special versions were sometimes composed for specific leaders, among them King Ferdinand, who together with his wife Queen Isabella expelled the Jews from Spain in 1492!<sup>5</sup>

The standard text wishes health, success, victory, and prosperity to the ruler, usually specifying his name, and sometimes his wife and children as well. The prayer ends, however, with the wish to behold the redeemer coming to Zion. Here is one version of *Hanoten T’shuah*:

### ***Hanoten T’shuah***

“May the One who grants  
salvation to kings” (Psalm 144:10)  
and dominion to princes—  
His kingdom is an eternal  
kingdom—

### **הנותן תשועה**

“הַנּוֹתֵן תְּשׁוּעָה לַמְּלָכִים”  
(תהלים ימ"ד, 10), וּמַמְשִׁלָּה  
לְנָסִיכִים,  
מַלְכוּתוֹ מַלְכוּת כָּל עוֹלָמִים,

"the One who delivers David his servant from an evil sword" (ibid.),

"who opens a way in the sea, a path in the mighty water"

(Isaiah 43:16),

bless, keep, protect, help, exalt, magnify, and raise up the president and his vice president, and all the public servants of this land.

May [God] cause our enemies to be struck down before them. May He send blessing and success to their every endeavor.

In his mercy may the king over the kings of kings grant them life and guard them and save them from sorrow, and harm, in his mercy may the king, the kings of kings grant them and all their advisors wisdom to do well by us and by all of Israel.

In their days and in our days may Judah be saved, and Israel dwell securely, and may a redeemer come to Zion.

May this be God's will. And let us say: Amen.

"הַפּוֹצֵה אֶת דָּוִד עַבְדּוֹ מִיָּד עֶלְוִית  
רָעָה" (שם, 11).

"הַנּוֹתֵן בַּיָּם דֶּרֶךְ וּבַמַּיִם עֵזִים  
נְתִיבָה" (ישעיהו מ"ג, 16),  
הוּא יְבָרֵךְ וְיִשְׁמֹר וְיַנְצֵר וְיַעֲזֹר  
אֶת הַנְּשִׂיא וְאֶת מְשֻׁנְהוּ  
וְאֶת כָּל שְׂרֵי הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת.  
מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים בְּרַחֲמָיו יַחֲיִים  
וְיִשְׁמְרֵם וּמְכַל צָרָה וְיַגּוֹן וְנֶזֶק  
יַצִּילֵם.

וְיַדְבֵּר שְׁוֹנְאֵינוּ תַּחֲתֵיהֶם,  
וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה וְהַצִּלָּה  
בְּכָל מַעֲשֵׂי יָדֵיהֶם.  
מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים בְּרַחֲמָיו יִתֵּן  
בְּלִבָּם וּבְלִבְ כָּל יוֹעֲצֵיהֶם וְשָׂרֵיהֶם  
לַעֲשׂוֹת טוֹבָה עִמָּנוּ וְעִם כָּל  
יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּיָמֵיהֶם וּבְיָמֵינוּ תִּשְׁעַ יְהוּדָה  
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכֵּן לְבֵטָח וּבָא לְצִיּוֹן  
גּוֹאֵל.

וְכֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן, וְנֹאמַר: אָמֵן.

This prayer, which has many versions, brings to bear, as it were, the power of God and the special connection of the Jewish community with God to the benefit of the leaders, and thereby served as proof of Jewish loyalty to them. When (in 1768) the Russian authorities accused the first Chabad leader, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, of treason for sending charity to Jews in the Ottoman-occupied Land of Israel, a copy of *Hanoten T'shuah* written by him was produced as evidence of his loyalty to the czar and his family.<sup>6</sup>

Even during the Soviet era, those Jews who continued to attend synagogue services included (or, more likely, were instructed to include) a prayer for their Communist rulers.<sup>7</sup> We can be sure that many Jews recited this prayer with full intent, but it is also clear that in many cases they said it merely out of duty or even fear. Some even believe that these texts contained some inside jokes, in that the continuation of the biblical citations (which are not quoted in the text) can be read as mockery or even as a curse, hidden beneath the words of praise. “May the One who grants salvation to kings, the One who delivers David his servant from an evil sword” (Psalm 144:10) continues: “Rescue me, and deliver me out of the hand of strangers, whose mouths speak falsehood, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood” (Psalm 144:11). The verse “Thus says Adonai, who opens a way in the sea, a path in the mighty water, who brings forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power” (Isaiah 43:16–17) goes on: “They lie down together, they shall not rise; they are extinct, they are quenched as a wick.”<sup>8</sup>

By their nature, these texts deal primarily with the “other”—in this case, the ruler and those in power—and reflect the vulnerable state of Jews who lived as minorities in countries other than their own. They prayed for the rulers, it should be noted; only occasionally did they pray also for the welfare of the country itself or its inhabitants.

Obviously, the Prayer for the State of Israel (PSI), especially as recited by Jews in Israel, presents a completely different case because it is a case of Jews praying for the government of their own Jewish state. But the language of the prayer must inevitably confront that government’s attitude toward Israelis who are not Jews and Jews (those living in the diaspora) who are not Israelis.

Given this new situation, rabbinic figures in the young State of Israel sought to distance themselves from the older formula of *Hanoten T’shuah* by composing a completely new prayer, namely, our Prayer for the State of Israel. It would not seek the welfare of the rulers alone but of the entire country and its inhabitants. The PSI is a significant liturgical breakthrough because Orthodoxy in general is loathe to add anything at all to what has been passed down by tradition. Yet precisely because it was deemed to be a new prayer without prior halakhic precedents and regulations, the PSI was open to enormous creativity—unconfined by classical liturgical formulae.

The PSI versions are sensitive to prevailing religious, ideological, and political sentiment; they readily expose the intentions of those who create them and those who recite them. Indeed, changes to the PSI, even

in the official version of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, can often be traced to specific changes in the political climate within Israel.<sup>9</sup> These serve as a litmus test for the ongoing tension between universalism and particularism as manifested in the liturgy.

## The PSI: A Prayer for the Jewish State

Even before the establishment of the state, some versions of prayers for Israel were composed, either in the traditional formula of *Hanoten T'shuah* or in the form of a *Mi Sheberakh* supplication. Dozens of such prayers have been created since then.<sup>10</sup>

More specifically, however, an official version of the PSI unrelated to these traditionalist formulas came into being in 1948. Its origins have been the subject of some debate, an early opinion being that it originated from the pen of Nobel Prize winner Shmuel Yosef Agnon. We now know, however, that it was composed by Rabbi Isaac Herzog, the Ashkenazi chief rabbi at the time.<sup>11</sup> Let us now look more closely at the version provided by Rabbi Herzog and used not just in Israel but in the diaspora as well.

Our heavenly father,  
rock of Israel and its redeemer,  
bless the State of Israel,  
the first sprouting of our redemption.  
Shield it with the wing of your grace  
and spread over it  
your tabernacle of peace.  
Shine your light and truth  
upon its leaders, ministers, and  
advisors,  
and grant them good counsel.  
Strengthen the hands of those who  
defend our Holy Land,  
and grant them deliverance  
and the crown of triumph,  
and grant peace in the land,  
and eternal joy for its inhabitants.

אֲבִינוּ שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם,  
צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֲלוֹ,  
בְּרַךְ אֶת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
רֵאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלָּתֵנוּ.  
הֲגֵן עָלֶיהָ בְּאַבְרַת חֶסֶדְךָ  
וּפְרֹשׁ עָלֶיהָ סֶפֶת שְׁלוֹמְךָ  
וּשְׁלַח אוֹרְךָ וְאֱמֶתְךָ  
לְרֹאשֵׁיהָ, שְׂרָיָהּ וְיוֹעֲצֶיהָ,  
וְתַקֵּם בְּעֵצָה טוֹבָה מְלַפְנֶיהָ.  
חִזַּק אֶת יְדֵי מְגִנֵי אֶרֶץ קְדֻשָּׁנוּ  
וְהַנְחִילֵם אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְשׁוּעָה  
וְעִטָּרַת נִצְחוֹן תְּעִטֵּרֵם,  
וְנֹתַת שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ  
וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם לְיוֹשְׁבֶיהָ.

Remember favorably our kinfolk  
of Israel throughout the lands  
of their dispersion,  
and lead them quickly and upright  
to Zion, your city, and Jerusalem,  
the dwelling place of your name,  
as it is written in the Torah of Moshe  
your servant:

"If any of you that are dispersed be  
in the uttermost parts of heaven,  
from thence will Adonai your God  
gather you,  
and from there will He take you.  
And Adonai your God will bring you  
into the land  
that your ancestors possessed,  
and you shall possess it;  
and He will do you good,  
and multiply you above your  
ancestors.

And Adonai your God will circumcise  
your heart,  
and the heart of your seed,  
to love Adonai your God with all  
your heart,  
and with all your soul, that you may  
live" (Deuteronomy 30:4–6).  
And unite our hearts to love and  
revere your name,  
and to observe all the words of your  
Torah.

And bring forth swiftly the son  
of David,  
your righteous messiah,  
to redeem those who eternally await  
your salvation.

וְאֵת אֶחָיו כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
פְּקֻדָּנָא בְּכָל אֲרָצוֹת פְּזוּרֵיהֶם  
וְתוֹלֵיכֶם מִהֲרָה קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְצִיּוֹן  
עִירָךְ, וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם מִשְׁכַּן שְׁמֶךָ.  
כַּפְתּוֹב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדְּךָ:  
"אִם יִהְיֶה נִדְחָךְ בְּקִצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם  
מִשָּׁם יִקְבְּצֶךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּמִשָּׁם  
יִקְחֶךָ: וְהֵבִיאֲךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל  
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יִרְשׁוּ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ  
וִירְשָׁתָהּ וְהִיטִבְךָ וְהִרְבְּךָ  
מֵאֲבוֹתֶיךָ וּמִלֵּךְ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת  
לִבְּךָ וְאֶת לִבֵּב זֶרְעֶךָ לְאַהֲבָה  
אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל לִפְתָּךְ  
וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ לְמַעַן תַּחֲיֶיךָ"  
(דברים ל, ד-ו).

וְיַחַד לְבַבְנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת  
שְׁמֶךָ  
וּלְשִׁמּוֹר אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ  
וּשְׁלַח לָנוּ מִהֲרָה בֶּן דָּוִד מְשִׁיחַ  
צִדְקָה  
לְפָדוֹת מִחֲכֵי קִץ יְשׁוּעָתְךָ.  
וְהוֹפֵעַ בְּהֵדֵר גָּאוֹן עֲזֶךָ  
עַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵיבֵל אֲרָצְךָ.

Reveal Yourself in your glorious  
 majesty  
 to all the inhabitants of your world.  
 Let everything that breathes  
 proclaim:  
 his majesty rules over all.  
 Amen, selah.

וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמָה בְּאָפוֹ:  
 יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֶלֶךְ  
 וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בְּכָל מַשְׁלָה.  
 אָמֵן סֵלָה.

The prayer begins in a lofty and poetic style before reverting to less flowery prose dependent on proof-texting from biblical verses. It requests the following:

- a. Peace and protection for the state, as the “first sprouting of our redemption”
- b. Wisdom for its leaders
- c. The victory and safety of Israel’s soldiers and defenders
- d. Ingathering of diaspora Jews
- e. Success in Israel for the religious mandates of tradition
- f. Redemption and the coming of the messiah
- g. Acceptance of God by all the inhabitants of the world

The perspective of the prayer is Israeli and Jewish: it concentrates on the State of Israel and its role. It deals at length with diaspora Jews, calling upon God to bring them home to Israel. Non-Jewish citizens of the state go unmentioned specifically but may be included in the petition for “eternal joy for its inhabitants.” Humanity in general is subsumed only in the traditional context of their ultimate messianic acceptance of God’s kingdom. This is, in sum, fully in keeping with traditional Judaism’s hope for the ingathering of exiles and the ultimate triumph of God throughout the world.

According to Joel Rappel, an Israeli scholar who examined the evolution and history of the official PSI, Herzog deliberately rejected early versions that began with the traditional words *Hanoten T’shuah* because he saw them as symbolizing Jewish powerlessness and submissiveness to the foreign ruler. He made it a point to compose a completely new prayer, which would stress Jewish sovereignty and independence.



But the PSI is conversant with another emotionally charged document of the time, the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel, signed by the members of the Provisional Government, on the day of the establishment of Israel, May 14, 1948 (5 Iyar 5708). The two texts share linguistic expressions of major national values that characterized the young state. We may go so far as to see PSI as a religious response to the Declaration and to those civil religious sentiments that the Declaration defined. Indeed, the very fact that it has the Declaration in mind may be the reason that ultra-Orthodox circles in Israel have rejected it so fiercely,<sup>12</sup> even though (as we shall see) it by no means accepts the secular views that the Declaration so clearly proclaims.

The Declaration was fully a modern civil document, a reflection of the world in which the fledgling secular state found itself. It necessarily addressed the different categories of “others,” people, that is, who did not fall into the category of Jewish Israelis. Here are the relevant paragraphs from the Declaration of Independence, with the categories italicized:

The State of Israel ... will foster the development of the country *for the benefit of all its inhabitants*; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to *all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex*; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places *of all religions*; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

We appeal to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the upbuilding of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the community of nations.

We appeal—in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months—to *the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel* to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

We extend our hand to *all neighboring states and their peoples* in an offer of peace and good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land.

The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of *the entire Middle East*.

Next comes an appeal for the diaspora Jews to unite around the cause of the young state:

We appeal to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream—the redemption of Israel.

The PSI, in contrast to the Declaration, contains almost no reference to any of the following: the community of nations, the Arab inhabitants of Israel, or the neighboring states or their peoples.<sup>13</sup> The difference between the texts can partially be explained by the fact that the Declaration is a political statement meant for both Jews and the “community of nations,” whereas the PSI is a text specifically meant for Jewish worship.<sup>14</sup> Still, the utter lack of references to non-Jews demands our attention. Rappel maintains that Herzog deliberately refrained from including them, just as he avoided the old, submissive *Hanoten T’shuah* formula. Instead, he created a liturgical text that deals solely with Israel from a Jewish perspective and a call to diasporan Jews to return to it.

We see, then, that Herzog’s purview remained within the traditionalistic mind-set that he had inherited from his Jewish past: he viewed the state from the perspective of its heralding the next great stage in God’s plan for the ultimate messianic rule that had been promised through the eons. Although couched in new language, the prayer’s sentiment remained fully in keeping with traditional Jewish liturgy’s accent on the coming of God’s kingdom at the end of time.

Later PSIs, however, composed in Israel as well as in the diaspora, and especially in non-Orthodox contexts, deal also with non-Jews in a variety of ways. Let us explore some of them now.

## Universalism and Particularism in the Prayers for the State of Israel

The Herzog prayer was not the only one to find its way into Jewish liturgies. Indeed, in the following decades, a variety of alternatives have appeared in

Israel, North America, and Europe. A convenient starting point for our survey is the PSI found in *Ha'avodah Shebalev*, Israeli Reform version (1982), the prayer book of the Progressive Movement in Israel and, therefore, both Reform and Israeli, with a strong Zionist perspective<sup>15</sup> and a liberal point of view. While directly citing the Herzog PSI in part, it also provides significant variations and an altogether different theology and ideology:

Rock of Israel and its redeemer,  
 bless the State of Israel,  
 the first sprouting of our redemption.  
 Shield it with the wing of your grace  
 and spread over it your tabernacle of  
 peace.  
 Shine your light and truth  
 upon its leaders, judges, and officials.  
 Grant them good council so  
 that they may follow the path of  
 righteousness, liberty, and justice.  
 Strengthen the hands of those who  
 defend our Holy Land,  
 and grant them salvation and life.  
 Grant peace to this land  
 and everlasting joy to its inhabitants.  
 Remember favorably our kinfolk of  
 the house of Israel  
 throughout the lands of their  
 dispersion.  
 Plant the love of Zion within their  
 hearts,  
 and may there be those among  
 them—may God be with them—  
 who shall come to Jerusalem,  
 your city that bears your name.  
 Spread your spirit over all the  
 inhabitants of our land.

צור יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֲלוֹ,  
 בָּרַךְ אֶת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
 רֵאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלָּתָנוּ.  
 הֲגֵן עָלֶיהָ בְּאַבְרַת חֲסֶדְךָ  
 וּפְרֹשׁ עָלֶיהָ סֶפֶת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.  
 שִׁלַּח אוֹרְךָ וְאִמְתְּךָ  
 לְרֹאשֵׁיָהּ, לְשׁוֹפְטֶיהָ וּלְנִבְחָרֶיהָ,  
 וּתְקַנֵּם בְּעֶצֶה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ  
 לְמַעַן יֵלְכוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ הַצְדָּקָה, הַחֲפֹשׁ  
 וְהַיָּשָׁר.  
 חַזֵּק אֶת יְדֵי מְגִנֵּי אֶרֶץ קְדֻשָּׁנִי,  
 וְהַנְחִילֵם יְשׁוּעָה וְחַיִּים.  
 וְנָתַתְּ שָׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ  
 וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם לְיוֹשְׁבֶיהָ.  
 פִּקֹּד נָא לְבָרְכָהּ  
 אֶת אַחֲיֵינוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 בְּכָל אַרְצוֹת פְּזוּרֵיהֶם.  
 טַע בְּלִבָּם אֶהְבֵּת צִיּוֹן,  
 וּמִי בָהֶם מִכָּל עַמָּנוּ  
 יְהִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עִמּוֹ  
 וְיַעֲלֵ לִירוּשָׁלַיִם עֲרָהּ  
 אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא שְׁמְךָ עָלֶיהָ.

Uproot from us hatred and  
animosity, zealotry and evil.  
Plant in our hearts love and amity,  
peace and friendship.  
Speedily fulfill the vision of your  
prophet:  
“Nation shall not lift up sword  
against nation, neither shall they  
learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:4).  
And let us say: Amen.

הֶאֱצִיל מִרוּחָךְ עַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי  
אֶרְצֵנוּ,  
הִסֵּר מִקֶּרְבָּנוּ שִׁנְאָה וְאַיְבָה, קִנְאָה  
וְרִשְׁעוֹת,  
וְטַע בְּלִבֵּנוּ אֲהָבָה וְאַחֻוָּה,  
שָׁלוֹם וְרַעוּת.  
וְקִיִּם בְּמִתְהַרֵּה חֲזוֹן נְבִיאָךְ:  
”לֹא יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל גּוֹי חֶרֶב  
וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה”  
(ישעיהו ב, ד). וְנֹאמֵר: אָמֵן.

The call for the ingathering of the exiles is significantly toned down, while the diaspora is viewed as a valid Jewish choice: to be sure, some “shall come to Jerusalem, your city that bears your name”; but this hope is balanced by the prayer that God “remember favorably our kinfolk of the house of Israel throughout the lands of their dispersion.” Requesting victory by the military is replaced by a concern for its soldiers’ well-being. Instead of petitions for the coming of the messiah, we get an emphasis on understanding and fellowship among all the inhabitants of the land.

The current situation is viewed, at least partly, as suffering from “hatred and animosity, zealotry and evil,” which require healing. In conclusion, we get a wish for the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy of peace—a passage that (in practice) is typically sung.

Relating to the State of Israel as “the first sprouting of our redemption” has proved especially problematic over the years. Many have been troubled by its messianic pretensions, holding that the State of Israel does not merit the title. Seeing the state as already redemptive, moreover, has led some extremists to demand a post-historical morality that permits violence toward Arabs.<sup>16</sup> This liberal version of the prayer therefore strikes a balance. It does see Israel as “the first sprouting of our redemption,” but the image of redemption is a far cry from the traditionalistic portrait that includes all Jews being restored to their homeland and the rest of humanity converted to the true vision of the one and unique Jewish God.

The parallel prayer found in *Mishkan T'flah*, the North American Reform siddur (2007), abbreviates the official text but adds an English sentence that does not appear in the Hebrew text at all. It turns the petition "Bless the State of Israel, first sprouting of our redemption" into a call for peace: "Bless the State of Israel which marks the dawning of the hope for all who seek peace."

Finding a PSI in a North American Reform siddur is not a given. It is, of course, absent from the older *Union Prayer Book*, whose three editions (1895, 1918, and 1940) were published before the establishment of the State of Israel. Classical reformers were, in any case, wary of Zionism, if not explicitly against it.<sup>17</sup> More surprising is the absence of a PSI in the newer *Gates of Prayer* (1975), which was published in a time of growing affinity toward the young state and support of Zionism. Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman, PhD, maintains that the editors were opposed to the phrase "first sprouting of our redemption" and therefore left the prayer out. Instead, a short paragraph asking God's blessing on the state was appended to the prayer "For Our People and Our Nation" (p. 452). The final paragraph requests God's favor "upon Israel, her land, her people" and reframes "first sprouting of our redemption" as "the promise of her beginning," which "may ripen into fulfillment."<sup>18</sup>

The United Kingdom provides three progressive alternatives: the Masorti Movement, akin to North America's Conservative Jews; the Liberal Movement, very much like North American Reform; and the Reform Movement, which shares the philosophy of the Liberal Movement but is somewhat more traditional ritually. The Liberal *Siddur Lev Chadash* (1995) has the following prayer, which appears in English only:

Eternal God, our Rock and Redeemer, grant blessing to the State of Israel, created to fulfill an age-old dream and to be a haven for the oppressed. Inspire its leaders and citizens with faithfulness to the aims of its founders: to develop the land for the benefit of all its inhabitants, and to implement the Prophetic ideals of liberty and justice. May they live in harmony with one another and in peace with their neighbours, and cause to come true once more the ancient vision that "out of Zion shall go forth Torah and the word of God from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

This Liberal offering emphasizes Israel's commitment to its initial aims. If the Herzog original reacts negatively to the Declaration of Independence

of the State of Israel, this prayer responds positively, most notably where it says, “To develop the land for the benefit of all its inhabitants, and to implement the Prophetic ideals of liberty and justice.” Whether by accident or design, it falls short of explicitly referring to Israel as a Jewish state or as the homeland of all Jews.

The British Reform Movement siddur, *Forms of Prayer* (*Seder Ha-T’fillot*, 2008), pursues the same line of thought as the Liberal siddur but provides a Hebrew equivalent and makes reconciliation and the desire for peace in Israel its main focus:

Our God and God of the generations, we ask your blessing upon the State of Israel and all who dwell in it. Send your light and your truth to the people, and guide them with wisdom and understanding, so that peace and tranquility may reign on its borders and in its homes. May the spirit of friendship and understanding remove all fears and heal all wounds. There, may mercy and truth come together for the good of all, so that your promise is fulfilled: “for Torah shall come out of Zion and the word of God from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3). Amen.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי כָּל־הַדּוֹרוֹת שְׁלַח  
נָא בְּרַכְתְּךָ עַל מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ. שְׁלַח נָא אוֹרְךָ  
וְאַמְתְּתְךָ לְמִנְהִיגֵי־הָעָם וְהַדְרִיכֵם  
בְּחָכְמָה וּבְתִבְנוּנָה כְּדֵי שִׁשְׁרוּר  
שָׁלוֹם בְּגְבוּלוֹתֶיהָ וּשְׁלוֹהָ בְּבִתְּהָ.  
רוּחַ אַחֻוּהַ וְהַבְנָה הַדָּדִית תִּרְפֵּא  
כָּל פְּצָעַ וְחִבּוּרָהּ. תִּקְנֶה עֲמָהּ  
וְעַבְדֶּת בְּנִיָּה תַגְשֶׁמְנָה אֶת חֲזוֹן  
הַנְּבִיאִים, “כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תּוֹרָה  
וּדְבַר יְיָ מִירוּשָׁלַיִם”  
(ישעיהו ב, ג). אָמֵן.

The prayer was composed by Rabbi Lionel Blue for the British Reform Movement’s 1977 liturgy (*Forms of Prayer*) and was reprinted in its 2008 successor with some minor changes for the sake of inclusive language.<sup>19</sup> It is deliberately and emphatically universalistic, in that it seeks God’s “blessing upon the State of Israel *and all who dwell in it*.” It evokes “the spirit of friendship and understanding” to “remove all fears and heal all wounds.” Isaiah 2:3 was chosen as its closing verse, probably because it had been part of the PSI inherited from Great Britain’s venerable Singer prayer book,<sup>20</sup> a prayer book that had become synonymous with traditional

British practice and was consulted by non-Orthodox movements there. This verse from the PSI in Singer was also included by the Liberal prayer book (cited above) but had already been borrowed by Blue, who prefaced his Reform version, however, with the universalizing emphasis: “There, may mercy and truth come together for the good of all mankind” (the word “mankind” was changed in the 2008 edition to “all”).

The first contemporary German Reform prayer book emerged in 2009, *T'filot l'khol hashanah: Jüdisches Gebetbuch*, under the editorship of Rabbi Andreas Nachama and Jonah Sievers. Its PSI provides a short adaptation of the official version, with some conspicuous changes:<sup>21</sup>

Our heavenly father,  
Rock of Israel and its redeemer,  
Bless the State of Israel,  
So that it may be the first sprouting  
of our redemption.  
Fulfill through it the words of the  
Scriptures:  
“For out of Zion shall go forth  
Torah and the word of God from  
Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3).  
Spread a tabernacle of peace over  
the whole world;  
And may all the inhabitants of the  
world dwell in safety.  
And let us say: Amen.

אֲבִינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם,  
צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֲלוֹ,  
בְּרַךְ אֶת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
תְּהִיָּה רִאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלָּתֵנוּ.  
וְקִיִּם בָּהּ מִקְרָא שְׁכָתוֹב:  
“כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תּוֹרָה וּדְבַר יְיָ  
מִירוּשָׁלַיִם” (ישעיהו ב, ג).  
וּפֶרֶשׁ סֶכֶת שָׁלוֹם  
עַל כָּל הָעוֹלָם.  
וְכָל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל יִשְׁכְּנוּ לְבֶטַח.  
וְיֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן, וְנֹאמַר: אָמֵן.

As with the traditional versions, this one too discusses the rise of the State of Israel as “the first sprouting of our redemption.” Like Singer and the other British prayer books mentioned here, it then cites Isaiah 2:3 and moves on quickly to the well-being of the entire world, without special references to Israel or Jews. The “tabernacle of peace” that the official PSI would have God spread over Israel is here generalized, extending to the entire world. Like the European texts from England (cited above), this one too ignores the concept of “others” altogether.

A subtle but important feature of the German version is the way it deals with the implications of “the first sprouting of our redemption.”

Rather than have it refer to the past, as if Israel has already entered messianic times, it projects the phrase into the future: “So that it may be the first sprouting of our redemption.” It is hard to read this emendation of the English as anything less than a critique of traditionalists who see Israel as necessarily conferring messianic status on the present. In concept, it is reminiscent of *Gates of Prayer* (above), which, as we saw, preferred praying that “the promise of her [Israel’s] beginning may ripen into fulfillment.”<sup>22</sup>

So far, we have sampled a variety of denominational prayer books, but the liturgical landscape contains as well a number of liturgies published by nondenominational institutions, communities, and even individuals; many of them have published their own versions of PSI. A good example is the prayer composed by Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR), founded in 1988, the only Israeli rabbinic organization comprising Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbis. RHR revises the text from time to time; these are the 2013 Hebrew and English versions:

Sovereign of the Universe, accept in loving kindness and with favor our prayers for the State of Israel, her government and all who dwell within her boundaries and under her authority.

On the sixty-fifth anniversary of her founding, reopen our eyes and our hearts to the wonder of Israel and strengthen our faith in your power to work redemption in every human soul. Grant us also the fortitude to keep ever before us those ideals to which Israel dedicated herself in her Declaration of Independence, so that we may be true partners with the people of Israel in working toward her as yet not fully fulfilled vision.

רְבוֹן הָעוֹלָם, קַבֵּל נָא בְּרַחֲמִים  
וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ לְמַעַן מְדִינַת  
יִשְׂרָאֵל, מְמַשְׁלֶתָּהּ וְכָל הַדָּרִים  
בְּגְבוּלֶיהָ וְתַחַת שְׁלִיטָתָהּ.

פָּקַח נָא אֶת עֵינֵינוּ וּלְבָבוֹ מִחֲדָשׁ  
לְנִפְלֵא שְׂבִיקִימָהּ וְחִזֵּק אֶת  
אֲמוֹנָתָנוּ בְּכַחַד לְהַבִּיא גְאוּלָּה  
לְכָל נֶשְׁמָה. יֵתֵן לָנוּ אֶת הָאֶמֶץ  
וְהַתְמַדָּה לְרֹאוֹת תְּמִיד לְנֶגֶד  
עֵינֵינוּ אֶת הָעֲקֻרוֹנוֹת שֶׁהֻצְיָבָה  
לְעֶצְמָהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמַגִּילַת  
הָעֶצְמָאוֹת. הֵבֵא לָכֵן שְׁנֵהֶיהָ  
שְׂתַפִּי אֶמֶת עִם אֲזֻרְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּהַשְׁגַּת הַחֲזוֹן שְׁטָרֵם נְשָׁלֵם  
בְּמַלְאוֹ.



Grant those entrusted with guiding Israel's destiny the courage, wisdom and strength to do your will. Guide them in the paths of peace and give them the insight to see your Image in every human being. Be with those charged with Israel's safety and defend them from all harm. May they have the strength to protect their country and the spiritual fortitude never to abuse the power placed in their hands. Spread your blessings over the Land. May justice and human rights abound for all her inhabitants. Guide them "To do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8), and "May justice well up like water, righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24). Implant tolerance and mutual respect in every heart, and may all realize that "we were not brought into this world for conflict and dissension, nor for hatred, jealousy, harassment or bloodshed. Rather, we were brought into this world in order to recognize You, may You be blessed forever" (Rabbi Nachman of Breslov). Spread over Israel and all the world your shelter of peace, and may the vision of

תֵּן לְכָל הַעוֹסְקִים בְּצַרְכֵי צָבוֹר  
אֶת אֲמִץ הַלֵּב, הַתְּבוּנָה וְהַכֹּחַ  
לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ בְּלִבְבֵּי שָׁלֹם. הַדְרֵךְ  
אוֹתָם בְּנִתְיבוֹת שָׁלוֹם וְהַעֲנֵךְ  
לָהֶם אֶת הָרְאִיָּה לְהַכִּיר אֶת צִלְם  
אֱלֹהִים בְּכָל אָדָם. חֲזֹק אֶת מְגִינֵי  
אֶרֶץ קְדֻשָּׁנוּ וְהַגֵּן עֲלֵיהֶם מִפְּנֵי  
אוֹיֵב, חָרֵב, סַכָּנָה וְיָגוֹן. טַע בָּהֶם  
עוֹ לְהַגֵּן עַל מוֹלַדְתָּם וְהַאֲצִיל  
עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת גְּבוּרַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ לְכַבּוֹשׁ  
אֶת יֵצֶר הַשְּׁלֹטוֹן וְהַכָּחַ.  
הֲרִק אֶת בְּרַכְתְּךָ עַל הָאָרֶץ וְעַל  
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ. יַמְצֵאוּ בָּהּ צֶדֶק  
וְזִכְיוֹת אָדָם לְכָל אָדָם. הַשְׁרֵשׁ  
בְּלֵב כָּלֵם אֶת מוֹסֵר נְבִיאֶיךָ  
”עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד  
וְהַצָּנֵעַ לָכֶת עִם אֱלֹהֶיךָ” (מִיכָה  
ו, ח) ”וַיִּגַּל בְּמַיִם מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה  
כְּנָחַל אֵיתָן” (עֲמוֹס ה, כד) לְמַעַן  
יִלְמְדוּ דַרְכֵי סוּבְלָנוּת וְכְבוֹד הַדָּדִי.  
יְהִי רְצוֹן שְׁכָל יוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ יִפְּירוּ  
כִּי ”לֹא בָּאוּנוּ לָזֶה הָעוֹלָם בְּשִׁבְלִי  
רִיב וּמַחֲלָקֶת וְלֹא בְשִׁבְלִי שִׁנְאָה  
וְקִנְיָאָה וְקִנְטוֹר וּשְׂפִיכוֹת דָּמִים.  
רַק בָּאוּנוּ לְעוֹלָם כְּדִי לְהַכִּיר אוֹתְךָ.  
תִּתְּבַרְךָ לְנִצָּח (ר, נחמן מברסלב).  
פָּרֵשׁ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל כָּל תֵּיבֵל

your prophet soon be fulfilled: “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:4). So may it be your will that speedily and in our day all inhabitants of the earth will say of the State of Israel, “It is very good” (Genesis 1:31), for she will have become a blessing to the entire world and a “light unto the nations” (Isaiah 42:6).

אֶת סֶכֶת שְׁלוֹמָךְ וְקַיִם בְּמַהֲרָה  
חֲזוֹן נְבִיאָךְ: “לֹא יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל גּוֹי  
חֶרֶב וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה”  
(ישעיהו, ב, ד). יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ  
שִׂיאֵמָרוּ [בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ] כָּל  
יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵיבֵל “הִנֵּה טוֹב מְאֹד,”  
כִּי יִתְבָּרְכוּ בְּמַדִּינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל  
מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה.

The very length of the prayer indicates how important it was to its authors. Rather than settle for general statements regarding peace, it specifies those to whom it refers: “All who dwell within her boundaries and under her authority,” a description that seems intended to encompass not only Israeli citizens but also Palestinians in the West Bank. It then expresses its wishes for the redemption of “every human soul.” Appropriately, the RHR prayer explicitly references the Declaration of Independence, which the original Herzog version had pointedly omitted. We are to “keep ever before us those ideals to which Israel dedicated herself in her Declaration of Independence,” a reminder of the commitments that those who signed it took upon themselves, commitments that bind us as well.

This version emanates from within Israel itself; its authors choose, therefore—like the official PSI and the Israeli Reform version (but unlike many of the diaspora PSI texts)—to call upon God for help in defending the Land from its enemies. God is to strengthen “those charged with Israel’s safety.” Like the Israeli Reform siddur (and unlike the Herzog text), it does not ask for victory; instead, it focuses on safety and security. Uniquely, however, it also requests spiritual fortitude “never to abuse the power placed in their hands.” Unlike diaspora PSI texts, this prayer places Israel at the center of attention even as it seeks for Israel to be a source of well-being for the entire world.

If Rabbis for Human Rights epitomizes institutions intent on publishing alternative PSI texts, then Rabbi Aryeh Cohen, a professor at the

American Jewish University, personifies individuals who have turned to the task on their own. Convinced of “a large and growing number of people who would like to include Israel in their prayers in all of its complexity and are unable to intone the Chief Rabbinate’s liturgy,”<sup>23</sup> the author set about creating something better. “In my mind,” he continues,

I framed the prayer between two powerful religious and literary moments. On the one hand, Rabbi Yehudah Halevi’s famous line: “My heart is in the east, and I am at the far reaches of the west.” On the other hand, Isaiah’s statement “Zion will be redeemed with justice, and those who return to her with righteousness” (Isaiah 1:27). The *piyyut* is a movement between those two poles.<sup>24</sup>

In other words, the prayer captures the Jewish People’s eternal longing for Zion and, at the same time, a demand that Zion redeemed shall be governed justly. The first verse addresses Zion; the second and third verses address God:

## Prayer

My heart, my heart goes out to  
you, Zion.

Tears and jubilation, celebration  
and grieving

Did we not dream a dream that  
came to be?

And here it is—both song and  
lament.

We are mere matter, and our  
prayer is to the Creator  
Toward the Good and the Just,  
direct the people in refuge in Zion  
For yours is all the world, and we  
have but one land,  
Which we inherited together with  
the sons and daughters of Hagar.

## תפילה

לְבִי לְבִי יוֹצֵא לְךָ צִיּוֹן.

דְּמָעוֹת וְצִהָלָה, שִׂמְחָה וְיִגּוֹן

הֲלֹא חֲלֹם חֲלַמְנוּ וַיְהִי

וַהֲנֵה-גַם רָנָה גַם נָהִי.

נַחֲנוּ רַק חֲמֹר וְתַפְלָה לָנוּ לִיּוֹצֵר,

לְטוֹב וּלְצַדִּיק הַכּוֹן אֶת הָעָם

בְּצִיּוֹן מִסִּתְתֶּרָה.

כִּי לְךָ כָּל הָאָרֶץ וְלָנוּ אֶרֶץ יְחִידָה,

אֲשֶׁר יִרְשָׁנוּ יַחֲדָיו עִם בְּנֵי הָגָר.

Favor us with knowledge with  
which to understand  
The wisdom of Avraham, "If you will  
go left, I will go right" (Genesis 13:9).  
Overflow with mercy on a great  
and troubled land.  
For "Zion will be redeemed in  
judgment and its inhabitants in  
justice" (Isaiah 1:27).<sup>25</sup>

חַנְּנוּ דַעַת אֲשֶׁר בּוֹן נְבִין  
חֻכְמַת אַבְרָהָם: "אִם תֵּשְׁמְאַלְהָ  
וְאַיִמִּין" (בראשית יג, ט)  
רַחֲמִים תִּשְׁפִּיעַ עַל אֶרֶץ רַבָּה  
הַגְּזִירָה.  
כִּי "צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט תִּפְדֶּה וְשִׁבְיָהּ  
בְּצִדְקָה" (ישעיהו א, כז).

Cohen composed his text in the middle of the Second Intifada, and it is used by the members of the Shtibl Minyan in Los Angeles. It concentrates on the relationship between the children of Abraham, both Jews and Muslims—or, to be more exact, the Palestinians. It neglects other matters, however, even the all-important consideration of Israel as a Jewish homeland. It thus constitutes the mirror image of the official PSI, in that Herzog ignores the non-Jewish dwellers in Israel, while Cohen makes them his main issue.

A second individual composition worth looking at comes from Moshe Greenberg, a Bible professor and Conservative rabbi. Greenberg was born in Philadelphia and emigrated to Israel in 1970. Cohen's text, we saw, condensed the PSI into a single solitary theme. Greenberg's 1989 version attempts the opposite: it seeks to include as many relevant topics as possible:

We are grateful to you, the  
Eternal, our God, for having  
woken your people to found a  
nation in the land that you  
bequeathed to our ancestors, and  
for having graced us with a surviv-  
ing remnant and a revival after the  
murderous destruction that the  
wicked of the world brought  
upon us.

מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ,  
עַל שְׁעוֹרֶרְתָּ אֶת בְּנֵי עַמְךָ  
לְהָקִים מְדִינָה בְּאֶרֶץ שֶׁהִנְחַלְתָּ  
לְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ, וְעַל שְׁחַנְּנָתָנוּ  
שְׁאֵרִית וְתִקּוּמָה לְאַחֵר  
הַהִשְׁמָדָה שֶׁהִמִּיטוּ עָלֵינוּ רֹשְׁעֵי  
הָעוֹלָם.

Now, our God, our eyes turn to you to give us wisdom to govern our nation, and counsel to make peace with our enemies, and love for our fellow children of Israel inside our land and beyond it so that we might become one body to sanctify your name across the world, for it is for that that we were created.

Our hands are stained with insolence and blunders that have fenced in our ways with thorns. We hoped for the good and aimed toward justice, but the leaven in our dough soured our deeds. We know not what we are to do; therefore our prayer is laid out before you that you will give us the wisdom to find our paths to our foes' hearts, and that you will direct their heart to make peace with us, and that you will spare our hands and theirs from killing and terror, and uproot from our midst thoughts of destruction and hatred.

Strengthen our hands to build our country, and to perpetuate what we have undertaken:

To prepare for the ingathering of the exiles; to watch over the development of the land for the good of all its inhabitants; to perpetuate social and legal equal rights for each and every citizen; to ensure

ועתה אלהינו, לך עינינו תלויות  
לתת לנו חכמה לכלכל את  
מדינתנו, ועצה להשלים עם  
אויבינו, ואהבת אחינו בני  
ישראל בארץ ובחוצה לה למען  
ניעשה אגודה אחת לקדש  
שמך בעולם, כי לך נוצרנו.  
בידינו זדונות ושגגות אשר  
שכו את דרכינו בקוצים;  
קיווינו לטוב וכיוונו לצדק,  
אבל השאור שבעיסתנו החמיץ  
את מעשינו.  
אנחנו לא נדע מה נעשה, ועל  
כן תפילתנו שטוחה לפניך  
כי תחכימנו למצוא מסילות  
ללבבם של צרינו, וכי תטה  
את לבבם להשלים עמנו, וכי  
תחשוך את ידינו ואת ידיהם  
מהרג וחבלה, ותעקור מקרבנו  
מחשבות הרס ושנאה.  
חזק את ידינו לבנין מדינתנו,  
לקיים את אשר קיבלנו על  
עצמנו בקומה:  
להיכון לקראת עלייה יהודית  
ולקיבוץ גלויות;  
לשקוד על פיתוח הארץ  
לטובת כל תושביה;  
לקיים שיוויון זכויות חברתי

freedom of religion,  
conscience, language, education,  
and culture to all of our citizens.  
May it be your will to help us meet  
our obligations for the sake of your  
glorious name, whose name we  
bear, so that through us the word  
of your prophet will be fulfilled:  
“You are my servant, Israel, and  
through you I shall be glorified”  
(Isaiah 49:3).

ומדיני לכל אזרח ואזרח;  
להבטיח חופש דת, מצפון,  
לשון, חינוך ותרבות לכל  
אזרחינו.  
יהי רצון מלפניך שתסייע  
בידינו לעמוד בהתחייבויותינו  
למען כבוד שמך הנקרא עלינו,  
ויקוים בנו דבר נביאך: “עבדי  
אתה ישראל אשר בך אתפאר”  
(ישעיהו מט, ג).

This PSI begins by offering gratitude and then specifies its petitions. It asks for wisdom to reconcile with the enemy, acknowledging the failure thus far to manage it on our own. Like the Rabbis for Human Rights’ PSI, it cites some key sentences relating to “others” from the Declaration of Independence. It ends with a request for help so that we may meet our commitments to God. This is also virtually the only text that explicitly refers to the Holocaust.<sup>26</sup> As far as I know, this text is not in current use.

Having dealt with denominational and then personal PSIs, we should also look at a version that is used in a specific congregation. I chose Mevakshei Derekh, a Reconstructionist-oriented congregation in Jerusalem, which is very engaged with liturgy and its meaning. This is a rather unique congregation on the Israeli liberal scene, since it uses a traditional prayer book (albeit with a few minor changes). In the case of the PSI, Mevakshei Derekh has two alternative versions of the prayer. The first is in use in other congregations in Israel, some modern Orthodox and some Masorti; the second is recited only at Mevakshei Derekh. Here is the first prayer; it is quite well known, but I could not trace its author:

Sovereign of the Universe, merci-  
fully accept our prayer for the  
State of Israel and its government.  
Pour out your blessing upon the  
land and upon those who faithfully

רבוץ העולם, קַבֵּל נָא בְּרַחֲמִים  
אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ בְּעֵד מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וּמַמְשֶׁלֶתָּהּ. הֲרִק אֶת בְּרַכְּתְךָ עַל  
הָאָרֶץ וְעַל הָעוֹסְקִים בְּצַדִּיקֵי צְבוּר

deal with the needs of the public. Guide them according to the laws of your Torah, and teach them to understand your precepts, in order that the land never be deprived of peace and tranquility, happiness and freedom. Please Eternal, God of the spirit of all flesh, reveal your spirit upon all the inhabitants of our land, and instill within them love and fraternity, peace and friendship, and uproot from their hearts all hatred and animosity, jealousy and competition. And remember all of our fellow members of the House of Israel, in all the lands in which they are dispersed, and lead them quickly upright to Zion, your city, and to Jerusalem, your habitation. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land, and grant them salvation, and crown them with the crown of victory. And grant peace in the land, and eternal joy to its inhabitants. And so may it be your will that our land be a blessing to all the inhabitants of the world. And may there abide among them friendship and freedom, and quickly establish the vision of your prophet: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4). Amen.

בְּאֱמוּנָה. הוֹרֵם מִחֻקֵּי תוֹרָתְךָ,  
הַבִּינֵם מִשְׁפָּטֵי צְדָקָה, לְמַעַן לֹא  
יִסּוּרוּ מֵאַרְצֵנוּ שְׁלוֹם וְשִׁלוֹה,  
אֲשֶׁר וְחֶפֶשׁ כָּל הַיָּמִים.  
אָנָּה יי אֱלֹהֵי הָרוּחוֹת לְכָל בֶּשֶׂה,  
הַעֲרֵה רוּחְךָ עַל כָּל תּוֹשְׁבֵי אֶרְצֵנוּ,  
וְטַע בָּהֶם אֱהָבָה וְאַחֻוָּה, שְׁלוֹם  
וְרַעוּת, וְעֶקֶר מִלֵּבָם כָּל שִׁנְאָה  
וְאִיבָה, קִנְאָה וְתַחֲרוּת.  
וְאֵת אֲחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל פִּקֹּד  
נָא בְּכָל אֲרָצוֹת פְּזוּרֵיהֶם וְתוֹלִיכֵם  
מִהֲרָה קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְצִיּוֹן עִירְךָ  
וּלְיִרוּשָׁלַיִם מִשְׁכַּן שְׁמֶךָ.  
חֲזֵק אֶת יְדֵי מִגְנֵי אֶרֶץ קֹדְשֵׁנוּ  
וְהַנְחִילֵם יְשׁוּעָה, וְעֲטַרְתַּן נֹצֶחֹן  
תַּעֲטֹרֶם. וְנָתַתְּ שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ  
וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם לְיוֹשְׁבֶיהָ.  
וְכֵן יִהְיֶה רָצוֹן שְׁתֵּהא אֶרְצֵנוּ בְּרָכָה  
לְכָל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל. וְתִשְׁרֶה בֵּינֵיהֶם  
רַעוּת וְחֵרוּת, וְקִיָּם בְּמִהֲרָה חֲזוֹן  
נְבִיאְךָ: "לֹא יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל גּוֹי חֶרֶב  
וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה".  
אָמֵן.

This is a new formulation of the prayer, independent of the structure of the official PSI composed by Rabbi Herzog but bearing some thematic resemblance to it. Instead of referring to Israel as the “first sprouting of our redemption,” it expresses the hope that it may become a blessing for the entire world. The last paragraph stresses the role that Israel should play in the world. And although it requests that the defenders of the Land should be crowned with victory (compare this to *Ha'avodah Shebalev*, which asks for the well-being and safety of the soldiers, and the Rabbis for Human Rights’ prayer, which asks for the restraint of their power), it seeks peace among the nations.

Aharon Loewenschuss, a chemistry professor and a member of *Mevakshei Derekh*, was not satisfied with this prayer and composed an alternative:

### **A Prayer on Behalf of Our People and Our Land**

Ruler of the universe,  
Accept with favor our prayer for  
the State of Israel and its people.  
Pour your blessing upon this land  
and upon all its inhabitants.  
Cause us to understand your  
righteous laws,  
and implant in our hearts the  
wisdom of your prophets—  
“To do justice, to love mercy, and  
to walk humbly with your God”  
(Micah 6:8).  
Pour out your spirit upon all the  
inhabitants of our land; plant within  
us tolerance and mutual respect,  
uproot hatred, violence, coercion,  
and exploitation from within us.  
Spread your tabernacle of peace  
over the house of Israel in all their  
dwelling places.

### **תפילה בעד עמנו ובעד ארצנו**

רבוֹן הָעוֹלָם,  
קַבֵּל נָא בְּרָצוֹן אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ לְמַעַן  
מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַמָּהּ.  
הֲרִק אֶת בְּרַכְתְּךָ עַל הָאָרֶץ וְעַל  
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ.  
הִבִּינֵנוּ מִשְׁפָּטִי צְדָקָה וְתֵן בְּלִבֵּנוּ  
אֶת מוֹסֵר נְבִיאֶיךָ —  
“עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד  
וְהִצָּנֶע לָכֶת עִם אֱלֹהֶיךָ” (מִיכָה ו, ח).  
הַעֲרֵה רוּחְךָ עַל כָּל תּוֹשְׁבֵי  
אֲרָצֵנוּ;  
טַע בָּנוּ סוֹבְלָנוּת וְכְבוֹד הֶדְדִּי;  
עֲקֹר מִתּוֹכֵנוּ שִׂנְאָה, אֲלִימוֹת,  
כְּפִיָּה וְנִצּוֹל לָרָע.



Pray, place the courage in their souls to come to our land, "and may your children return to their own realm" (Jeremiah 31:16).

Teach us to accept with an open heart those who are gathering to our land.

And strengthen those who are coming to us, so that they endure the difficulties of their absorption.

And may we dwell in it together in fellowship.

Strengthen the hearts of our soldiers,

the defenders of our land, may their spirit be bold, and their weapons unblemished.

Shield them under the shadow of your wings,

and grant them salvation, so that they may prevail over our enemies.

But pray, grant peace to this land and may all who dwell in it be blessed by it,

speedily fulfill the vision of your prophets:

"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4).

פֶּרֶשׁ אֶת סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ עַל בֵּית  
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל תְּפוּצוֹתָיו.

אָנָּה, תֵּן עֹז בְּנַפְשָׁם לְבָא לְאַרְצֵנוּ,  
וְיִשְׁכְּנוּ בָּהּ שְׁבֵת אֲחִים גַּם יַחַד.

לְמַדְנוּ לְקַבֵּל בְּלֵב פְּתוּחַ אֶת  
הַמְתָּקִבְּצִים אֵלֵינוּ,

וְאֶת הַבָּאִים אֵלֵינוּ חֲזָק,

לְעִמּוֹד בְּקִשְׁיֵי קְלִיטָתָם, "וְיִשְׁבוּ

בָּנִים לְגִבּוֹלָם" (ירמיהו לא, טז).

אֲמִץ אֶת לֵב חֵילֵנוּ, מְגִנֵּי אֶרְצֵנוּ,

וְהַיְתֵה רוּחָם עֲזָה, וְנִשְׁקָם — טָהוֹר.

שׁוֹמְרֵם בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ,

הַנְּחִילֵם יְשׁוּעָה וְגִבּוֹרָה עַל אוֹיְבֵינוּ.

אֵהָ, אָנָּה, תֵּן שְׁלוֹם בְּאַרְץ

וְהַתְּבָרְכוּ בָּהּ כָּל יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ,

וְקַיֵּם בְּמַהֲרָה חֲזוֹן נְבִיאֶיךָ:

"לֹא יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל גּוֹי חֶרֶב, וְלֹא

יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה"

(ישעיהו ב, ד).

Loewenschuss explained to me that it became important to him to replace the traditional PSI, as well as the one from Mevakshei Derekh cited above, with a prayer that would accurately reflect what he considered the actual

ideology and beliefs of his community. Toward that end, he brought his proposal to the worship committee in the early 1980s, but it took some time before the committee even agreed to consider his composition. Loewenschuss says he “had to leave the sanctuary in anger” before the proposed text was admitted to discussion. Gradually, however, it became the community’s preferred text.

Rather than praying solely for the rulers and governing powers of the state, the Loewenschuss text requests wisdom, understanding, and courage for all. Written during the massive immigration from the former Soviet Union, it specifies the well-being of “those who are gathering to our land.” The writer, who immigrated to Israel as a child and recalls his family’s initial difficulties in the new land, calls for the acceptance of the newcomers “with an open heart.” When referring to the military, he asks that it be both courageous and moral, and he concludes the prayer with a request for the peace that will make Israel a blessing to all who dwell in it.

Most of the prayers discussed here were created for (and recited in) non-Orthodox circles. Orthodox communities show less interest in formulating PSIs; Orthodoxy avoids liturgical innovation in general, and ultra-Orthodox authorities reject the prayer in principle because they reject the very concept of Israel as an official Jewish state among the nations. In the National Orthodox community (not the ultra-Orthodox), the official PSI is recited in most synagogues, though the energy with which it is recited varies; it sometimes depends on their support of the government and its policies. Throughout recent decades, especially following the Oslo agreement in 1993 and even more so following the disengagement process from Gaza in 2005, some communities have chosen to make changes to the PSI reflecting their opposition to the current policy of the state.<sup>27</sup> In some extremely right-wing groups, the identification with the state has decreased so much that the state is no longer considered the “sprouting of our redemption,” and consequently, the prayer is not recited there anymore. In that sense, extreme settlers were in the position of many Jews in the diaspora, relating to a state that they did not consider their own.<sup>28</sup> Ironically, some of those in Orthodox circles who were eager to consider the establishment of Israel as a religious event, a stage in the messianic process, now find themselves estranged from it. In most Orthodox synagogues, however, the prayer is still recited with considerable fervor.

## Universalism and Particularism, Inclusivity and Exclusivity in the Prayers for the State of Israel

Prayer is conversation. Primarily we speak with God, but we also converse with other people, both those in our community and those outside of it. We even communicate indirectly with those who are not part of our people and religion—although they are probably not aware of our discourse and, indeed, need not be, because the statements we make to or about them are intended for our own benefit as much as for theirs. Prayers reflect the *Sitz im Leben*, the existential context of those who once composed them, those for whom it was composed, those to whom they now refer, those who actually recite them, and even those who reject them.

If you want to know about Jewish history, the hopes and fears of Jews, if you are interested in opening windows to the souls of Jews, you may want to look into their liturgy and rituals before turning to legal statements or systematic theological essays.<sup>29</sup>

The prayers for the State of Israel can therefore serve as a test case not just for liturgical innovation but also for identity writ large, as expressed through theology, ideology, and politics.

In that regard, we have seen how current PSIs reflect a current existential situation for Jews who write or recite them. Prayers for the government have been recited by Jews for many centuries, but the composers of the PSIs deliberately overlooked the classical medieval formula (*Hanoten T'shuah*) and created new ones, precisely because they understood themselves to be living in a new era and an unprecedented situation. As new texts altogether, reflective of the new era not of the liturgical past, the PSI texts have no halakhic (legal), liturgical, or textual constraints and can show significant flexibility. They freely express and assess national, social, and religious sentiments of today.

Finally, what is omitted from the liturgy can sometimes be at least as revealing as what is included. As we saw, for example, the official Israeli Chief Rabbinate PSI contains no reference to the non-Jewish inhabitants of Israel and its neighboring countries. Its composer, Rabbi Herzog, may have wanted to stress its role as an internal Jewish text; he may have seen it as an alternative and religious “Declaration of Independence,” this one for Israeli-Jewish use, as opposed to the official Declaration that has been directed to Israelis—to Jews as well as to the world at large. Other texts added but also omitted ideas to express their own changing views of the state’s essence, goals, and responsibilities.

Each text aims differently to strike a balance between the need to be part of the family of nations and the desire to stress Israel's own national aspirations.<sup>30</sup> They differ, among other things, in commitment to those who are not Jewish; most of the prayers that overtly relate to non-Jews who live in or near Israel stem from the liberal movements. The Orthodox camp is generally less enthusiastic about liturgical innovation and is less apt to show universalistic sensitivity. The few PSIs composed by Orthodox Jews do not relate to non-Jews at all.<sup>31</sup>

As one might expect, diaspora and Israeli texts differ with regard to Israel's role for the Jewish People as a whole. Israeli prayers deal largely with the actual situation in the country and with its concrete goals—we can say that most of them are Israel centered more than they are Jewish People oriented. Most of the diaspora prayers, by contrast, are more likely to highlight Israel as the birthplace of the Jewish People (“for Torah shall come out of Zion” [Isaiah 2:3]) and the locus for future Jewish hopes—concerns that provide Israel's somewhat different meaning to diaspora consciousness.

Sacred texts in general (but prayers in particular) set boundaries that distinguish one group from another; in so doing, some differentiate more rigidly than others. Traditional Jewish prayers tend to be on the rigid side, having sometimes either a negative view of others or being unconcerned with them—a reflection of the circumstances of having lived for most of Jewish history, especially in Europe, as a *reactive* minority. In the Jewish state, however, where Jews are no longer a minority, Jewish self-definitions can be *proactive*—allowing for concern about others without negating manifestations of Jewish nationality, religion, and peoplehood.



6. Claude Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, vol. II (London: Macmillan, 1909), 594.
7. For an overview on Jewish understandings of a missionary task, see Reuven Silverman, "Jewish Mission," in *Jewish and Christians: Perspectives on Mission; The Lambeth-Jewish Forum*, ed. Reuven Silverman, Patrick Morrow, and Daniel Langton (Cambridge: Woolf Institute, 2011), 3–21; see also Deborah Prinz, "The Convert among Us" (paper for UAHC Outreach Commission), [huc.edu/gerecht/images/sermonsarticles/r.%20prinz%20article](http://huc.edu/gerecht/images/sermonsarticles/r.%20prinz%20article); Sue Fishkoff, "The More Jews the Better?" *Moment Magazine* (July/August 2002), [www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Judaism/2002/07/The-More-Jews-The-Better.aspx?p=1](http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Judaism/2002/07/The-More-Jews-The-Better.aspx?p=1).
8. Israel I. Mattuck, "The Missionary Idea," in *Aspects of Progressive Jewish Thought*, ed. I. I. Mattuck (London: Victor Gollancz, 1954), 49.
9. Samuel Holdheim, "This Is Our Task" (1853), translation quoted in W. Gunther Plaut, *The Rise of Reform Judaism: A Sourcebook of Its European Origins* (New York: World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1963), 138.
10. Leo Baeck, *Das Wesen des Judentums* (1905), 77.
11. Leo Baeck, "The Mission of Judaism: Its Later Development and Its Significance for World Judaism Today," in *Report of the 6th International WUPJ Conference*, London, July 14–19, 1949, 72–77.
12. Leo Baeck, 1946 Presidential Address to the Fifth International Conference of the World Union for Progressive Judaism.
13. Abraham Joshua Heschel, "No Religion Is an Island," *Union Theological Seminary Quarterly Review* 21, no. 2, pt. 1 (January 1966): 14.

### **A Sage among the Gentiles? A Halakhic Lesson on Moral Universalism, by Rabbi Daniel Landes**

1. Mossad Harav Kook edition of the *Mishneh Torah*, *Rambam Le'Am*, vol. 14, p. 398, n. 69.

### **The Prayer for the State of Israel: Universalism and Particularism, by Rabbi Dalia Marx, PhD**

1. For example, the blessing recited in the morning service "Blessed ... who did not create me a gentile," a blessing that was changed in liberal liturgy to a positive language: "Blessed ... who created me a Jew." See Joel Kahn, *The Three Blessings: Boundaries, Censorship, and Identity in Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
2. Jonathan Sarna, "Jewish Prayers for the U.S. Government," in *Moral Problems in American Life*, ed. K. Halttunen and L. Perry (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 202.
3. See Joseph Tabory, "The Piety of Politics: Jewish Prayers for the State of Israel," in *Liturgy in the Life of the Synagogue: Studies in the History of Jewish Prayer*, ed. Ruth Langer and Steven Fine (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), esp. 229–31. For examples of such prayers, see David Golinkin, "Prayers for the Government and the State of Israel," 2006, Schechter Institute website, [www.schechter.edu/insightIsrael.aspx?ID=35](http://www.schechter.edu/insightIsrael.aspx?ID=35).

4. *Sefer Abudraham Hashalem* (Jerusalem: T'khiyah, 1963), 136.
5. Barry Schwartz, "'Hanoten Teshua': The Origin of the Traditional Jewish Prayer for the Government," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 57 (1986): 113–20.
6. Regarding the leadership of the founder of Chabad, see, e.g., Samuel Heilman and Menachem Friedman, *The Rebbe: The Life and Afterlife of Menachem Mendel Schneerson* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).
7. *Siddur Hashalom* (Moscow 1956, 1968) contains special prayers for the leaders of the USSR, "the defenders of peace in the entire world."
8. See Sarna, "Jewish Prayers," 204–5.
9. See Aharon Arend, *Pirkey Mechkar L'yom Ha'atsma'ut* (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University, 1998), 176–200; Rabbi Dalia Marx, "Liturgical Responses to the Disengagement Process in Summer 2005" [in Hebrew], *Akdamot* 18 (2007): 119–39; Joel Rappel, *The Prayer for the State of Israel* (forthcoming).
10. Regarding the Prayer for the State of Israel, see Joel Rappel, *The Convergence of Politics and Prayer: Jewish Prayers for the Government and the State of Israel* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2008); Tabory, "The Piety of Politics."
11. See Rappel, *Prayer for the State of Israel*.
12. Ibid.
13. References to the Arab countries do appear in the different versions of *Al Hanissim*, another Israeli-Zionist liturgical innovation. (See Rabbi Dalia Marx, "Al Hanissim for Yom Ha'atsma'ut," forthcoming.)
14. Rappel, *Prayer for the State of Israel*.
15. In some cases one may say that *Ha'avodah Shebalev* reflects a hyper-Zionist perspective, much more accented than in traditional prayer books. See Rabbi Dalia Marx, "Ideology, Theology, and Style in Israeli Reform Liturgy," *CCAR Journal* (Winter 2010): 52–62.
16. See Uriel Tal, "Contemporary Hermeneutics and Self-Views on the Relationship between State and Land," in *The Land of Israel: Jewish Perspectives*, ed. Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 316–38.
17. See Michael Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), esp. 326–34.
18. *Gates of Prayer* also contains a "meditation," titled "Land of Hope and Prayer" (p. 240), composed by Rabbi Stephan O. Parnes. It appears as a personal text, not as part of the communal service. This text, slightly revised, is printed also in the U.S. military siddur from 1984.
19. "Fathers" became, in the 2008 edition, "[God of the] generations"; "all mankind" was changed to "all." I thank Rabbi Jonathan Magonet, for the information regarding the creation of this text and its evolution.
20. *Daily Prayer Book of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire*, 1890. It had been issued by the office of Chief Rabbi Nathan Marcus Adler and provided with an English translation by Rabbi Simon Singer, whence it received its name.

21. The prayer appears originally in Hebrew and German; I translated it into English. In some circles, both liberal and more traditional, this change to the jussive is currently made in the way the words are spoken aloud, even if the written version does not already contain it.
22. After fierce discussions on this question, the editing committee of the Israeli Reform Passover Haggadah, *Haggadah Lazman Hazeh*, decided to keep the traditional text but to add the jussive form in parentheses (Jerusalem, 2009, p. 88).
23. Aryeh Cohen, quoted in Ruth Andrew Ellenson, "Avant-Garde L.A. Minyan Adopts Prayer for Zion," *Forward*, June 28, 2002.
24. Cohen, *ibid*.
25. Translation by Ariella Radwin and Aryeh Cohen.
26. For a discussion of the references of the Holocaust in modern prayer books, see Rabbi Dalia Marx, "Memorializing the Holocaust," in *May God Remember: Memory and Memorializing in Judaism*—Yizkov, Prayers of Awe, ed. Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2012), 39–62.
27. See above, note 10.
28. It is hard to collect data reflecting this phenomenon; sometimes it seems that the press exaggerates its proportions.
29. Cf., in general, Lawrence A. Hoffman, "The Liturgical Message," in *Gates of Understanding*, ed. Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1977), 1:117–31; Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman "Jewish Liturgy and American Experience," *Religion and Intellectual Life* 5, no. 1 (Fall 1987): 71–80; Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman, *Beyond the Text: A Holistic Approach to Liturgy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 1987.
30. This chart, albeit general and schematic, may show the evolvement of the tension between particularism and universalism in liberal liturgy:

	Particularism	Universalism
Traditional prayer	+	(-)
Classic Reform prayer	-	+
Contemporary Liberal prayer	+	+

31. A conspicuous exception to this rule is a prayer composed by Rabbi Shmuel Avidor Hakohen, who was ordained by Rabbi Herzog, the composer of the official PSI. The last paragraph of his PSI begins with the following words:

Our Heavenly Father, bless us, our neighbors and all the nations of the world, and fulfill the words of the prophet, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4).

אבינו שבשמים, ברך אותנו, את  
שכנינו ואת כל עמי תבל, למען  
יקוימו בנו דברי הנביא: 'לא יִשָּׂא  
גוי אֶל גוי חֶרֶב וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד  
מִלְחָמָה' (ישעיהו ב, ד).

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### The Music of *V'ye'etayu*—"All the World,"

by Dr. Mark L. Kligman

1. Jeffrey Shiovitz, ed., *Zamru Lo: The Next Generation*, vol. 2 (New York: Cantors Assembly, 2006), 148–49.

### For a Judaism of Human Concerns, by Rabbi Walter Homolka, PhD, DHL

1. Bradley Shavit Artson, "Building a Future Worthy of Our Past," blog on the *Times of Israel*, December 1, 2013.
2. Hermann Cohen, *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1995), 452.
3. Artson, "Building a Future."

### Is Judaism Too Important to Be Left Just to Jews? The *Sh'ma* and the *Alenu*, by Rabbi Reuven Kimelman, PhD

1. See *Sifrei Deuteronomy* 32, ed. Finkelstein, p. 54.

2. עלינו:  
הוא אלהינו אין עוד אמת מלכנו אפס זולתו  
ואין זולתו שמע של ערבית: אמת... הוא יי אלהינו  
מלכנו שמע של שחרית: אמת אלהי עולם

*Alenu:* hu eloheinu ein od **emet** malkeinu efes zulato

*Shema shel arvit:* **emet** hu adonai eloheinu v'ein zulato

*Shema shel shaharit:* **emet** elohei olam malkeinu

*Alenu:* He is our God, there is no other; truly our king, none besides Him

Evening Sh'ma: **Truly**, He is Adonai our God there is no one besides Him

Morning Sh'ma: **Truly** the eternal God is our king

3. *Esther Rabbah* 1:4 (end).