

was a general stir of admiration; they were surprised that words of such grace should fall from his lips. "Is not this Joseph's son?" they asked. (Luke 4:14-22)

26. The Shema ("Hear!")

From these brief texts we cannot conclude what prayers were said as part of the service or even whether the reading from Isaiah was part of the regular cycle of biblical passages that was later characteristic of the synagogue liturgy. That there were standardized prayers from the beginning and that they derived in the main from Scripture seems almost certain. One prayer taken over intact from the earlier Temple liturgy and whose recitation was obligatory, morning and evening, upon every Jew was the Shema, "Hear!" so called from its opening phrase. The whole was derived directly from the Torah.

Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Take to heart these instructions with which I charge you this day. Impress them upon your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them serve as a symbol [or "frontlet"] between your eyes; inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

The Lord spoke to Moses as follows: Speak to the Israelite people and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments throughout the ages; let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. That shall be your fringe; look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your lustful urge. Thus you will be reminded to observe all My commandments and to be holy to your God. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I, the Lord your God. (Numbers 15:37-41)

The Mishna provides additional details on the recitation of these scriptural prayers.

If a man recites the "O Hear" so softly that he himself cannot hear, he has nevertheless fulfilled the obligation. Rabbi Yosi says: He has not fulfilled it. If he recites it without pronouncing the words distinctly, Rabbi Yosi says he has fulfilled the obligation; Rabbi Judah says he has not. If a man recites the paragraphs in the wrong order, he has not fulfilled the obligation. If he recites it and makes a mistake, he must go back and recite it again. (M.Berakoth 2:3)

surprised that words of such Joseph's son?" they asked.

ar!")

prayers were said as part of the as part of the regular cycle of synagogue liturgy. That there that they derived in the main ken over intact from the earlier y, morning and evening, upon opening phrase. The whole was

e Lord alone. You shall love th all your soul and with all with which I charge you this ite them when you stay at own and when you get up. hem serve as a symbol [or n on the doorposts of your

peak to the Israelite people ges on the corners of their a cord of blue to the fringe ook at it and recall all the a, so that you do not follow us you will be reminded to to your God. I am the Lord of Egypt to be your God. I,

tion of these scriptural prayers.

hat he himself cannot hear, Rabbi Yosi says: He has not ncing the words distinctly, a; Rabbi Judah says he has rong order, he has not ful- a mistake, he must go back

Women, slaves and minors are exempt from reciting the "O Hear" and from putting on phylacteries [that is, the "frontlets" of Deuteronomy 6:8]. But they are obliged to say "the Prayer" [that is, the *tefilla*; see below], to perform the obligation of affixing and kissing a mezuza (next to the doorpost) and to say the blessing after meals. (Ibid. 3:3)

27. "The Prayer" (*Tefilla*)

The liturgical "prayer" (tefilla) par excellence was the Amida, said thrice daily while standing. Attested to from about 100 C.E. onward, it comprised the Shemoneh esreh, the "eighteen" benedictions that lay at the heart of the daily synagogue services, and, in a slightly reduced version, those of the Sabbath and other festivals.

God, open my lips, and my mouth shall pronounce Thy praise.

1. Blessed be You, O God, the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the great God, strong and terrible, most exalted One, Creator of heaven and earth, our shield and the shield of our fathers, our trust in every generation. Blessed be You, O God, the shield of Abraham.

2. You are strong, humiliating those who exalt themselves and pronouncing judgment against the oppressors. You live forever, bringing the dead back to life. You cause the wind to blow and the dew to fall. You support the living and revive the dead, and on a sudden You will bring us salvation. Blessed be You, O God, who brings the dead back to life.

3. You are holy and Your name is awe-inspiring. There is no god besides You. Blessed be You, O God, the Holy God.

4. Favor us with the knowledge which comes from You, and with the intelligence and understanding which comes from Your Torah. Blessed be You, O God, who favors us with knowledge.

5. Cause us to return unto You, O God, and we shall return. Renew our days as before. Blessed be You, O God, who delights in our conversion.

6. Forgive us, O Father, for we have sinned against You; wipe out and remove our iniquities from before Your eyes, for great is Your mercy. Blessed be You, O God, who forgives abundantly.

7. Look upon our distress and fight for us; redeem us because of Your Name. Blessed be You, O God, Redeemer of Israel.

8. Cure us, O God, of the wounds of our hearts, of sorrow and longing. Remove them from us and heal our sickness. Blessed be You, who heals the sicknesses of Your people Israel.

9. Bless this year, O our God, on our behalf, so that it shall be good for all kinds of harvests, and let us see soon the time of our redemption. Send dew and rain to the earth, and feed the earth with the treasures of Your goodness and blessings. Blessed be You, O God, who blesses the years.

10. Sound the great trumpet for our freedom, and raise the standard for the calling together of our exiles. Blessed be You, O God, who gathers the scattered members of Your people Israel.

11. Restore our judges and our counselors as at the beginning. And be You alone ruler over us. Blessed be You, O God, who loves justice.

12. Let there be no hope for renegades, and wipe out the kingdom of pride speedily in our days, and may all Nazarenes and heretics perish instantly, may their names be erased from the Book of Life and not be inscribed with those of the righteous. Blessed be You, O God, who humbles the proud.

13. May You have mercy on those who are converted to justice, and give us ample reward together with those who do Your will. Blessed be You, O God, the trust of the righteous.

14. Have mercy on Your people Israel, on Your city of Jerusalem, on Sion the dwelling place of Your glory, on Your Temple, and on the kingship of the house of David, Your truly anointed one. Blessed be You, O God, the God of David, who builds Jerusalem.

15. Hear, O God, the voice of our prayer and have pity on us, because You are a God full of grace and mercy. Blessed be You, O God, who hears prayer.

16. Be gracious to us and dwell in Sion, and may Your servants serve You in Jerusalem. Blessed be You, O God, whom we serve in reverence.

17. We thank You, our God and the God of our fathers, for all Your kindnesses, for Your love and mercy which You have bestowed on us and upon our fathers. When we stumble, Your love supports us. Blessed be You, O God, who loves to be gracious.

18. Send Your peace to Your people Israel and to Your city and Your portion, and bless us all together. Blessed be You, O God, who makes peace.

Certain rabbis attempted to push the origin of these prayers as far back as patriarchal times, though another tradition connected them directly with the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.

It has been stated: Rabbi Yosi son of Rabbi Hanina said: The Tefillas were instituted by the Patriarchs. Rabbi Joshua ben Levi says: The Tefillas

on behalf, so that it shall be good
on the time of our redemption.
and the earth with the treasures of
You, O God, who blesses the

freedom, and raise the standard
Blessed be You, O God, who gathers
Israel.

counselors as at the beginning. And
You, O God, who loves justice.

And wipe out the kingdom
of all Nazarenes and heretics perish
from the Book of Life and not be
Blessed be You, O God, who hum-

who are converted to justice, and
Blessed be You, O God, who

Jerusalem, on Your city of Jerusalem, on
on Your Temple, and on the
anointed one. Blessed be You,
Jerusalem.

for prayer and have pity on us,
mercy. Blessed be You, O God,

on, and may Your servants serve
You, whom we serve in reverence.

God of our fathers, for all Your
which You have bestowed on us and
Your love supports us. Blessed be

Israel and to Your city and Your
Blessed be You, O God, who makes

these prayers as far back as patriar-
and them directly with the destruction

Rabbi Hanina said: The Tefillas
Joshua ben Levi says: The Tefillas

were instituted (by the men of the Great Assembly) to replace the daily sacrifices. It has been taught in accordance with Rabbi Yosi ben Hanina and it has (likewise) been taught in accordance with Rabbi Joshua ben Levi. According to Rabbi Yosi ben Hanina Abraham instituted the morning Tefilla, as it says, "And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he had stood" (Gen. 19:27), and "standing" means only prayer, as it says, "Then stood up Phineas and prayed" (Ps. 106:30). Isaac instituted the afternoon Tefilla, as it says, "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide" (Gen. 24:63), and "meditation" means only prayer, as it says, "A prayer of the afflicted when he faints and pours out his meditation before the Lord" (Ps. 102:1). Jacob instituted the evening prayer, as it says, "And he lighted upon the place." (BT.Berakoth 26b)

As the same text in the Babylonian Talmud continues, it becomes unmistakable that the thrice-daily prayer in the synagogue was in fact set down next to, in time if not in place, the prescribed Temple rituals.

Why did they say that the morning "Prayer" could be said until midday? Because the regular morning sacrifice could be brought up to midday. . . . And why did they say that the afternoon "Prayer" can be said up to the evening? Because the regular afternoon offering can be brought up to evening. . . . And why did they say that for the evening "Prayer" there is no limit? Because the members and the fat (of the whole offering) which were not consumed (on the altar) by the evening could be brought for the whole of the night. (Ibid.)

28. The Synagogue Cycle of Scriptural Readings

As we saw in the vignette of Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth, the service in his day included a reading from Scripture, in his case Isaiah, and perhaps some instruction as well, as appears from this example from a Christian source, in this instance concerning Paul and companions in a Diaspora synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia.

On the Sabbath they went to synagogue and took their seats; and after the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the official of the synagogue sent this message to them: "Friends, if you have anything to say to the people by way of exhortation, let us hear it." Paul rose, made a gesture with his hand, and began. (Acts 13:14-16)

As with the synagogue "prayers," the public and liturgical reading of the Law goes back to Temple times—if not to Moses, as some authors claimed, then at least from the time that Ezra stood in the Temple and supervised the reading of the Torah.