**Packing Your Spiritual Luggage – Prayer Exercises to Open your Mind, Body, and Soul**

Creative service for CA convention 2013- Monday morning

**Mah Tovu- sing together meditatively in a round – p.2**

**Read kavanah together**...

I am entering God's sanctuary....God's holy space... Ready to share this moment with God, my soul, and everyone here....

I am a clear, clean slate- ready for anything, ready for God's message!

I will reach down deep and find my purpose... I will pray with all the intention in my heart.

(Question connected to Mah Tovu : If you could create your own sanctuary, what would it look like? What might it feel like to pray there? How would the seating be arranged? Where would the ark and bimah be situated and how would they look? What materials are they made of? What are the acoustics like? What colors are used?)

**Lord Prepare Me- spiritual (unknown)**

D A G D A

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true

D A G A D

With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you

D A G D A

Pitchu li sha'arei tzedek avo vam odeh Yah

D A G A D

Zeh hasha'ar l'Adonai, tzadikim yavo'u vo

D A G D A

V'asu li mikdash, v'shachanti b'tocham

D A G A D

Va'anachnu n'vareich Yah, mei'ata v'ad olam

**Why are you here? What do you want from this prayer experience?**

Chant Va'ani tefilati - 3 times p.2

**A Playful Psalm from Danny maseng**  
Hey, you! Hey, you!  
Hey, you on high - come down here you on high and I on low,  
Down low and you are high  
That's no way for a you and me to be  
That's no way for a me to be with thee, with thou  
I thought this was a two thing being one on one  
Not you and me divided  
My beloved is for me, you know, and I'm for you  
Not me in beige and you in blue  
Hey, you! What's with the distance?  
What's with the attitude, your altitudiness?  
Come out, come out wherever you be,  
Whatever you are,  
Whenever you is you was the wiz,  
The one, the star!  
Numero Uno, Domine Allah  
You the name!  
Echad, Wachad,

My Dharma essence, Brahmanescence, Effervescence,  
Rex Tremendis, holy Tatta Mamma sister spirit -  
Drop the veil, cause of causes -  
Jump the gap  
Pull up a chair, a mat, a Zafu,  
Make yourself at - you know,  
Stay a while, what's the rush?  
The similes can wait, the metaphors can pale words, I have no words, no...  
You who are beyond compare - haven't I seen you everywhere before?  
Just kidding - no, not really  
Talk to me, you who never tell me anything  
Let's talk... OK, I'll go, like, first  
So... what's up?

**Hodu La'Adonai ki Tov- Danny Maseng –** p. 72

**Elohai n' shama mash up with Kavanah by Peri Smilow**  
1. Elohai N’shama shenatata bi,

tehora hi

2. Hineini b'tzelem Elohim  
N'kavim, n'kavim  
nishmati t'hora hi

3. Baruch Atah Adonai  
Wonderous source of healing  
Baruch Atah Adonai  
We thank you and praise your name

**Elohai N'shama- Casey Prusher *(capo 1)***

C C/B Am G Fmaj7

Elohai n'shama shenatata bi, shenatata bi - x2

Am G Fmaj7

T'ho----ra hi - x3

C G Fmaj7 C G Fmaj7

You created me, you shaped me, you breathed me into life - x2

C C/B Am G Fmaj7 C C/B Am G Fmaj7

Atah b'rata, atah y'tzarta, atah n'fachta, n'fachta bi - x3

**Ritual hand washing – all read together “**These Waters…” *Words and Music by Josh Nelson*  
This hope, this birth  
This life, this new creation  
These words, these blessings  
Are there beneath the surface

This rain, this sky  
This threshold of separation  
This time, this moment

Is a door to new beginnings

*The source of life is holy  
If you make it so*And these waters, they are living  
They are breathing all around  
The Shechinah does dwell within  
The waters on this ground

These eyes are dark  
These lips are silent in their way  
These hands are cool  
Surrounded by this ocean  
  
Breathe in, before…  
Breathe out, the crossing over  
These ears are quiet  
But for the heart that’s beating  
*The source of life is holy  
If you make it so*  
  
And these waters, they are living  
They are breathing all around  
The Shechinah does dwell within  
These waters on this ground

**Put Tallis and tefillin on together –p.4**

**Birchot Hashachar – p.10 - from USY’s “V’Ani Tefilati” -**

Just as God provides for all your needs and allows you to function each morning, you can imitate God in your actions to help others.

Core concept: Imitatio Dei- a theological concept meaning our obligation to imitate God through our actions.

Finish the sentence:

Just as God clothes the naked, I can \_\_\_\_\_

Just as God releases the bound, I can \_\_\_\_ (eg. advocate for animal rights)

Just as God provides for my needs, I can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Just as God gives sight to the blind,

I can (eg. donate my old eye glasses)

Kavanah: "God does not want to be believed in, to be debated and defended by us, simply to be realized through us

"- Martin Buber, 20th century Jewish philosopher

**Ashrei – p. 80**

Use the song from CA cd OR use the USY page in their V’Ani Tefilati” which recognizes the connection within the prayer between God and our senses.

**Halleluyah – p. 88 - Leonard Cohen – OR USY idea for everyone using some part of their body to create a beat and adding to a scat format…prayer through scat.**

G Em G Em

I heard there was a secret chord that David played and it pleased the Lord

C D G D

But you don't really care for music do ya?

G C D Em c

It goes like this the fourth, the fifth, the minor fall, the major lift,

D B7 Em

A baffled king composing Halleluyah

C Em C G D G Em

Halleluyah Halleluyah Halleluyah Hallelu---yah

G Em G Em

Hallelu Eil b'kodsho halleluhu birkia uzo

C D G D

Halleluyah, Halleluyah

G C D Em C

Hallelluhu bigvurotav halleluhu k'rov gudlo

D B7 Em

Halleluyah, Halleluyah

C Em C G D G Em

Halleluyah Halleluyah Halleluyah Hallelu---yah

Halleluhu b'teika shofar, halleluhu b'nevel v'chinor, halleluyah, halleluyah

Halleluhu b'tof umachol, halleluhu b'minim v'ugav, halleluyah, halleluyah

Halleluhu b'tziltz'lei shama, halleluhu b'tziltz'lei t'ruah, halleluyah, halleluyah

Kol han'shama t'hallel Yah, halleluyah, halleluyah

**Barchu – p. 96 - Rise and Sing Together**

**Shema – p.100 - with sign language**

**Mi chamocha – p. 104 - Sheldon low- march across the Red Sea**

**Amidah – p. 106 –**

In the Amidah, we use many names for God. Rock, savior, redeemer, questions to ask yourself in these moments… do you believe in all of these aspects of God every day? Is that important? Can you pray the words without believing them? Do you feel comfortable skipping the paragraph if you don’t believe in it that day? How do you feel about the struggle? Is it holy or does it make it harder? Think of a God Metaphor- something to which you can compare God. What is God like for you personally? Example: God for me is like a body of water- vast, open, sometimes wavy, and sometimes smooth God is like a pen- thoughts, action and creation through its ink.

**Adonai S’fatai Tiftach**

Am G F C

Lai lai lai lai lai, lai lai lai lai lai

Am G F E

Lai lai lai lai lai, lai lai lai lai lai

Am G F C

Am I awake, Am I prepared?

Am G F E

Are you listening, to my prayer?

Am G

Will you hear my voice

F C

When I call your name?

A G

Are you listening?

F E

Do you understand?

Lai Lai-

Am G F C

Adonai S’fatai Tiftach

Am Em G

Ufi yageed T’hilatecha

Am G F C Am G F

Adonai Open up my lips that my mouth may declare your praise

**Oseh Shalom – Ochs**

FCG F c G

Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu

FCG F C G

Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu

G F C D

Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu

C D G G7 C D G

Ya'aseh shalom, ya'aseh shalom, shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael

G7 C D Em G7 C D G

Ya'aseh shalom, ya'aseh shalom, shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael

Chorus:

**Torah study – Sing off**

**Kaddish D'rabbanan Or Mourner’s Kaddish p . 162**

**El na refana la – Todd Herzog**

*El na refana la  
Refana lanu*  
Dear God of our ancestors  
Help us renew our faith  
Grant us a perfect healing  
Bring peace to all our days

*El na refana la  
Refana lanu*  
Restore our strength of body  
Help clarify our minds  
Refresh our tired spirits  
Rejuvenate our light  
  
*El na refana la  
Refana lanu*Thank you for all these blessings  
Throughout our days and nights  
We celebrate the journey  
This precious gift of life  
  
*El na refana la  
Refana lanu*Copyright 2007 Todd Herzog (VoxArt Music, ASCAP)

**Halleluyah – Rick Recht - think of one word that could be a prayer to you...**

3X: Halleluyah, halleluyah, halleluyah, halleli

**Hava Nashira –** Hava, hava nashira Shir Halleluya, Shir Halleluyah!

**Va’ani Tefilati – I Am My Prayer**

**A Kadima/USY Guide to Enhance the Structured Tefillah Service**

1. “Prayer cannot mend a broken bridge, rebuild a ruined city or bring water to parched fields. Prayer can mend a broken heart, lift up a discouraged soul and strengthen a weakened will”- Ferdinand Isserman

2. God punishes us mildly by ignoring our prayers and severely by answering them.- Richard J. Needham

3. Prayer does not change God, but it changes he who prays. – Soren Kierkegaard

4. Trouble and perplexity drive me to prayer and prayer drives away trouble and perplexity. – Philip Melanchthen

5. Don’t pray when it rains if you don’t pray when the sun shines. – Satchel Paige

6. The value of consistent prayer is not that God will hear us, but that we will hear God. – William McGill

7. Prayer may not change things for you, but it for sure changes you for things. – Samuel M. Shoemaker

8. Two hands working can do more than 1000 clasped in prayer.

9. I prayed for 20 years and received no answer til I prayed with my legs. – Frederick Douglas

10. We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.- Oswald Chambers

11. Prayer is when you talk to God; meditation is when you listen to God

12. Prayer is not merely an occasional impulse to which we respond when we are in trouble, prayer is a life attitude.- Walter A. Mueller

13. The trouble with our prayer is we often do it as a last resort. – Will Rogers

14. When you pray, rather let your heart be without words than your words without heart. [what is Kavanah?]

15. Prayer must never be answered. If it is, it ceases to be prayer and becomes correspondence.- Oscar Wilde

16. Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.- Victor Hugo

17. Complaint is the largest tribute heaven receives and sincerest part of our devotion.- Jonathan Swift

18. It is of course possible to dance a prayer.- Glade Byron Addams

19. Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue.

20. What we usually pray to God is not that God’s will be done, but that God approve ours.- Helga Bergold Gross

21. Prayer is exhaling the spirit of person and inhaling the spirit of God.

22. \*Always let a man test himself: if he can direct his heart, let him pray; if he cannot, let him not pray [Kavanah].- Talmud Bavli, Brachot 30b

23. My words fly up, my thoughts rema in below. Words without thoughts never to heaven go.-King Claudius in Hamlet

24. Don’t live too much and forget about prayer. Don’t pray too much and forget about life. God won’t give you straight answers so don’t seek one. Seek the ways to find the answers, not the answer itself. Be loyal but not blindly loyal. Be ready to grasp God’s response in any shape or form. Don’t forget about prayer, don’t forget about life.

25. \*Prayer is our humble answer to the inconceivable surprise of living- Abraham Joshua Heschel

26. If the only prayer you said in your life was ‘thank you,’ that would suffice.- Johannes Meister Eckhart

27. \*The issue of prayer is not prayer, the issue is God- A.J. Heschel

28. Our thanks to God should always precede our requests

29. Pray for what you want, work for what you need.

**TORAH TALK :**

**Vote on it**:

Who is the greatest Jewish ancestor of all times?

• If you could have dinner with any of our ancestors, who would it be and what would you ask him?

• Ask for the volunteer to sit in the place of the Jewish ancestor you chose.

Ask the group to “interview” him/ her and have the volunteer answer playing the role of that person.

**Act it out**

* Act out the Parasha in a number of ways:

• Only in rhymes or rap

• Play the “question game” where they have to tell the whole story through questions instead of sentences. It’s really challenging but can be fun and

humorous.

• Make it 21st century- what would the story look like in today’s world?

• Create a random cast and try a game of dramatic freeze using details of the parasha In between each reading, act out the scene that is about to be read. The different scenes can be like “commercials” in between the segments of the real story telling-the Torah readings

**“Would you...” What would you do if it was you?**

Examine the behaviors of particular characters and put yourself in their shoes. “If you were Aharon,

what would you do... or would you...”

• Try acting out a role play of yourself as the character and respond how you would have responded.

**Parts of Parsha**

Before Shabbat, type out the story of the parasha in sections and cut into strips.

Hand out strips of parsha pieces to random USYers and then ask them to put the pieces of parsaha together.

**Silent Story**

Act out a section of the story or a part of the story silently and have the group guess which part (or pasuk) it is.

**Parasha Vocab**

Hand out pieces of 8.5 by 11 paper with s pecific words in Hebrew, transliteration and English translation that highlight the parasha story and have the USYers follow in the chumash. When they hear their word being read, they hold up the paper. It helps give them incentive to follow along. Or: before you read from the Torah, have the USYers work in pairs and choose their own key Hebrew words or terms to highlight. Ask them to share it with the group before or after. When the word or phrase is read, they raise their hands (silently and respectfully)

**Torah Quiz Show**

To encourage USYers to follow the To rah reading, before you read, challenge them to a pre-Musaf game show (like a 7th inner stretch) that will follow the reading. Let them know there will be prizes (and then make sure to follow up later with prizes). You can ask specific USYers to be hosts beforehand.

**Lawyers in Training**

Another pre-Musaf “7th inning stretch.” If the parasha is particularly controversial, call the issue into question and gve them 5 minutes in small groups to prepare an argument Have 2-3 people as the team representatives or “experts” come up and present their argument on the issue. Then have the convention body “be the judge.”

**21st Century Torah**

Apply the Torah story to real life. What would this story look like today? How would these issues be handled? If this was a reality show, what would it look like? Ask USYers to apply the issues or situation to their own real life experiences.

**Pictoral Parsha**

Find a number of artistic images (some obvious that relating to the parsha, others that require interpretation- try using Google images), Following the Torah reading, hand out packet of pictures to USYers to interpret and attribute to partsof the story.

**Sing off!**

Have USYers look through the text and think of Hebrew and English songs with matching words (or close to it) found in the parasha. Split into groups and go from group to group until each group gets “out”

Or:

Look through the parasha in advance and make a list of words that are included in song lyrics (Zemirot, Hebrew songs, English songs) that can be found in the parasha. To play the game, call out a word on your list and the first group to sing the song with that word in it, wins that round.

\*Bonus points if they can find the pasuk with the word in it and read aloud.

**Makin’ a Midrash**

Give the USYers a pasuk and have them interpret it using their own skills to build a Midrash. Spark creativity using questions such as:

a. What does this pasuk mean?

b. What is its context?

c. How could we explain it on our own terms? What could it mean?

d. How can we fill in missing parts we don’t quite understand?

Instructions: Get creative! This pasuk or perek may not make any sense to you. Make up a story to fill in the ambiguous parts of the pasuk or story \*if it helps to explain Midrash to the group, try that. Use examples that you know of such as the Midrash of Avraham and his father’s idol shop, which most of them know.

**The Rhyming Game (like Rhymation)**

Choose a key term in English, such as “priest” (Kohen). USYers must think of words that rhyme and put it

into sentences. You can split the USYers into teams and give them 30 seconds after you’ve called out the word to come up with as many rhyming words to make it competitive, or ask them to raise their hands (so

it isn’t chaotic) one by one. Or you can reverse the instructions by calling out a random English word and the USYers have to search for rhyming words from the parasha.

Eg. God- approved us with a nod...has no bod...for God we applaud...is no

fraud...

**Other Parsha Resources:**

Stan Biner. Sedra Scenes

.Dr. Peter Pitzele

\*Bibliodrama

–-www.bibliodrama.com-a style of dramatic interaction with text where the audience interviews a person playing a biblical character in first person

Richard J. Allen. Parasha Plays

Stan Biner. Class Acts: Plays and Skits for Jewish Settings

Meredith Shaw Patera. Kings and Things: 20 Jewish Plays for Kids 8-18

Gabrielle Suzanne Kaplan. The Magic Tanach and Other Short Plays

Sorel Goldberg Loeb and Barbara Binder

Kadden. Teaching Torah: A Treasuryof Insights and Activities