mystery of God cannot be contained in personal metaphors. The Thou becomes an infinite and mysterious Power, filling all being. For me then, a contemporary liturgy needs to relativize all human symbols for God, and it must be able to move back and forth between personal and meta-personal ways of imaging the divine. The Zohar provides a theological model for this approach to prayer, as Moses de Leon depicts the *sefirot* (stages of divine emanation) in both personal and meta-personal ways.

There are other difficulties I experienced with traditional liturgy as well. The idea of the chosen people is a form of chauvinism that I can no longer accept, at least in its conventional formulation. I have come to feel that while emphasizing our love for the Jewish people, our liturgy must also embrace humanity at large.

The *Siddur* is Not Personal Enough

A contemporary liturgy must also be more personal than traditional liturgy has been; it must deal with the "I" as well as the "We". It needs to focus on personal experience as well as collective Jewish and human experience. The rabbis who formulated the traditional liturgy did not, in my opinion, draw enough from the individually-oriented prayers of the psalmists; nor did their liturgy deal with the personal crises of faith that the psalmists did address so well. The element of individual worship cannot be fully accounted for in any set liturgical forms. Our worship services today must include generous periods of silence for personal meditation and prayer.

The *siddur* speaks of God as the source of goodness. But we have all been scarred by the Holocaust. Can we speak to God in the same way today that we spoke to God before the Holocaust? I don't think so. We must find a way— as the psalmists did— to engage ourselves with the dark side of God, as well as with the bright side of God.

Finally, the traditional liturgy does not adequately account for human responsibility. The prayers in the *siddur* make it seem like everything in the universe and in human history is in God's hands. Torah is depicted as totally divine in origin; redemption is wholly in the hands of God. Yes, we are charged with doing *mitzvot*, with doing *teshuva*, but these are not related to the great change in the image of the human being that has been emerging since the Renaissance. The traditional liturgy makes the assumption that God will, in "his" own good time, bring the messiah— with or without human help. After the Holocaust, such a view is no longer tenable. Our liturgy should draw on the insights of Lurianic *kabbalah*, and make a place for the human contribution to *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). ●

The orthodox also innovate

Joseph Siev

Orthodox Jews are not opposed to liturgical innovation and creativity. One need only look to the book of *kinot* (lamentations) for *Tisha Beav* to observe selections written in various eras in response to historic events ranging from the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, to the persecutions of 1096, to the Holocaust.

There are segments within the orthodox community today that are struggling to find meaning in Jewish tradition in the context of a constantly changing world and in response to changed needs and circumstances.

Indeed, how can one remain liturgically and ceremonially indifferent to contemporary events of such momentous import as the Holocaust and the rebirth of creative Jewish life in the land of Israel? To do so would be inconsistent with past practice. Jewish prayer has always been an expression of the soul of the people.

A few examples will serve to illustrate the existence of innovation and creativity within traditional Jewish life and with the sanction of halachic authorities.

The Chief Rabbinate of Israel has introduced a brief *"harachaman"* (petitionary) prayer, in *Birkat Hamazon* (Grace After Meals), for the welfare of the State, and the lengthier and perhaps more familiar prayer recited *Shabbat* morning, the *Tefilla Lishelom Hamedina* (Prayer for the Peace of the State). Numerous communities recite some version of *"kina"* on *Tisha Beav* commemorating the destruction of 6 million Jews during the Holocaust, and an emended *"nachem"* text in the *mincha* (afternoon) service. The Passover *seder* for many includes a Ritual of Remembrance for victims of the Holocaust, the "Matza of Hope" prayer for Soviet Jewry, and the drinking of a fifth cup as a form of thanksgiving for the beginning of the promised ingathering of the exiles. One might even consider the singing of prayers to popular tunes, a practice that has become quite widespread, to be in the nature of recently developed liturgical practice.

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New Celebrations Abound

Bat Mitzvah celebrations are a matter of course in many traditional communities. Less well known is the revival in America of the *Tu BiShevat seder* of Kabbalistic origin, replete with liturgical readings and fruit feasting.

Groups of orthodox women meet to worship and study together or to celebrate *Rosh Hodesh* (the New Moon) together. Several new commemorative days adorn the Jewish calendar in some orthodox circles, including *Yom Haatzmaut*, *Yom Yerushalayim*, and *Yom Hashoa*, each with its own observances and prayer service.

Finally, the joyful experience of the birth of a daughter has found expression in a whole variety of celebrations (often called *"simchat bat"*). In the absence of personal guidance and precedent, parents have drawn upon Jewish tradition and their own creativity to create celebrations which include any number of the following elements: the traditional blessing appropriate for joyous occasions; prayer of thanksgiving for women after childbirth; *Birkat Hagomel*, the blessing of thanks after being delivered from danger (recited by the mother); *Seder Zeved Ha-bat*, the Sephardic naming ceremony for girls; biblical selections expressive of the emotions and aspirations of the occasion; a *devar Torah;* a festive meal of thanksgiving.

These innovations in ceremony and liturgy patently display great sensitivity to Jewish tradition as well as a passionate desire to give expression to deeply-rooted religious feelings. Modest though they may be, (Make no mistake, they remain unaccepted by the majority of orthodox Jewry. There is resistance to change. It occurs slowly.) they nevertheless represent sincere efforts to respond meaningfully from within the tradition to new realities, a practice as old as the tradition itself.

That there are serious contemporary issues that persist and that need to be confronted and resolved remains a source of deep frustration. The tragic plight of the *aguna*, to name one, begs for solution. Would that movement in some of these other areas were as quick as in the area of the liturgical and ceremonial. ●

An alternative to matri/patrilineage

Jack Moline

The growing conviction that men and women are equals and should be so considered in the eyes of the tradition is finding expression in a variety of circles. It is important to remember that even the most dedicated egalitarian would not entertain the notion that women and men are the same; rather, given the opportunity, each individual can offer a unique contribution to the chain of tradition.

Traditionalists among us tenaciously and accurately point out that the tradition is indeed egalitarian, but that *halakhah* and *minhag* (custom) have established role differentiations to preserve the distinctions between men and women. It is, they claim, modern sociological perspective which assigns a higher value to one role than the other.

In one area of *halakhah*, however, the principle of egalitarianism has been muddled, and that is in the determination of who is a Jew. The law is weighted decidedly in favor of women in determining the status of the offspring, which has created a dilemma for the intermarried couple and the Jewish community.

There was a time when father and mother contributed equally to the identity of the child, and such identity was incompletely Jewish without the contribution of each. For example, consider the story of the *mekallel* in Leviticus 24:10-16. The offender is defined in the text as the son of an Israelite mother and an Egyptian father who fought with the son of an Israelite mother and an Israelite father. In the course of the altercation, the man of mixed parentage blasphemed the Ineffable Name. There appears to be some confusion on the part of the Israelites in dealing with him. The emphasis on his lineage seems to indicate that there was a qualitative difference between the transgression of the Egyptian father's son and an Israelite father's son. This is reinforced by God's revelation that anyone who blasphemes is to be treated the same: *kager kaezrach*, the outsider as well as the native. The *mekallel* is an outsider, missing a tribal identity, because he is missing a Jewish father. He is a hanger-on to his mother's tribe of Dan, but is not defined as a member of that tribe. He lives admidst the Israelites, but not among them.

Father Gives Tribal Identity/Family Name

It is tribal affiliation which the father contributes to the child, just as the mother contributes religious/national affiliation. Today, the only remnant of ancient tribal identity may be found in the distinctions among *Kohen*, *Levi* and *Yisrael*.

However, the modern equivalent of tribal identity

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