

SUPPLEMENT

נוסחאות SWITCHING

Given all the נוסחאות that are available to us, it is fair to ask the question: how did each of us choose the נוסח התפלה that we follow? For most of us, it was an accident of birth. Based on that rule, I should be following נוסח ספרד today and not נוסח אשכנז. My father, ז"ל, a Holocaust survivor, never abandoned his habit of davening נוסח ספרד even when he was davening in a synagogue that followed נוסח אשכנז. (Before you criticize him for not following the נוסח of his shul, you should know that for the last 35 years of his life, he attended a shul which had an unspoken policy of allowing those present to follow either נוסח. If the shul had not adopted that policy when it first opened, it would not have had a minyan). Certain phrases he would recite loudly and I can still hear my father's voice when I recite them. From שועת עניים אתה תשמע, צעקת הדל תקשיב ותושיע: נשמת, You heed the the cries of the poor. You listen to the anguish of the downtrodden and You rescue them. From מהר והבא עלינו ברכה ושלווה מהרה מארבע כנפות הארץ: אהבת עולם, rush to bring us a blessing and peace quickly from the four corners of the earth. From the כתר יתנו לך י-י א-להינו, מלאכים המוני מעלה, עם עמך ישראל: שבת מוסף קדושה קבוצי מטה. יחד כלם קדשה לך ישלשו, A crown will be brought to You, G-d, our G-d, by the angels on high together with Your people, Israel, from below. Together they will recite the three words of Kadosh found in the verse of Kedushah; and the words: הן גאלתי הן גאלתי אתכם אחרית כראשית, I will rescue You in the end, as I did in the beginning.

By switching to נוסח ספרד, I would also be continuing the connection my father forged with his upbringing. I always knew that my father felt an affinity to Gerer Chasidus but I never learned why. It was only when I was sitting shiva for my father and I took out the ספר הזכרון that had been published to commemorate my father's hometown of Wielun, Poland, that I discovered a possible reason. In there I found an article that my father contributed (written in Yiddish which I struggled to read). He had been asked to write about the religious and charitable activities of his town. In that article I learned that the town was habited by a Gerer shteibl. I presume that my father attended that shteibl in his youth. (I also learned that the town had a שולחן, a woman's synagogue). I can surmise that had World War II not broken out, I might have grown up a Gerer Chasid. I do not see myself becoming a Gerer Chasid at this stage of my life but davening like one is a possibility.

I also have fond memories of davening in the Talner Rebbe's shul in Roxbury, MA, which followed **נוסח ספרד**, until I was five years of age. The Talner Rebbe, **זצ"ל**, a **תלמיד חכם** in his own right, was also the **מהותן** of Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, **זצ"ל** (the Rav). The Rav's daughter Atara married the Talner Rebbe's son, **יצחק**, who went on to become Dr. Isadore Twersky, **ז"ל**, the long time head of the Jewish Studies Department at Harvard University. I know that I was born on **שבת יום כיפור** and that my **ברית** took place on **שבת חול המועד סוכות** in the Talner Rebbe's **סוכה** and that the Talner Rebbe acted as my **סנדק**. My most lingering memory of the Talner Rebbe's shul is the taste and smell of the Talner Rebbetzin's lokschein kugel. It is a taste that I can still remember even though I have not encountered that kugel since I was five years old. I speak so highly of that kugel that my wife is convinced that one of my missions in life is to find a clone of that kugel. I will not deny it. Perhaps a tour of Chasidic shteibelach will lead me to reconnect with that kugel. At a minimum the tour may help me become so comfortable with **נוסח ספרד** that I can easily make the switch.

In truth a switch in **נוסח** should be based on more than the taste of a kugel. It should be based on what one perceives to be the correct positions in areas in which **נוסח ספרד** and **נוסח אשכנז** conflict. We have encountered many of those conflicts in our journey through the Siddur. I hope that I have appeared neutral while discussing those conflicts. How would I have voted? On most occasions, I would have favored **נוסח ספרד**. The reason I am writing this piece now is because during the recent **ימים נוראים** I became very annoyed with two positions taken by **נוסח אשכנז** that conflict with **נוסח ספרד**. The first conflict concerns the absence of **סליחות** during **מוסף**, **תפלת שחרית**, and **מנחה** on **יום כיפור**. That is a recent change that I attribute to publishers. (To their credit, German Jews, who are the true Ashkenazic Jews, have not removed **סליחות** from any of the **תפילות** of **יום כיפור**). That is an omission that I sense will soon be corrected. Many of the **פיוטים** that we recite during **תפלת שחרית** and **מוסף** on **יום כיפור** could be omitted in favor of reciting **סליחות**. My second complaint is centered on the practice of Ashkenazim to respond with **הודו לי-י כי טוב, כי לעולם חסדו** while shaking their **לולב** and **אתרוג** during **הלל** on **סוכות** after the **שליח ציבור** recites each of the following lines:

יאמר נא ישראל, כי לעולם חסדו.
יאמרו נא בית אהרן, כי לעולם חסדו.
יאמרו נא יראי י-י, כי לעולם חסדו.

In **נוסח ספרד**, those congregated do not respond to those lines when they are read by the **שליח ציבור** with **הודו לי-י כי טוב, כי לעולם חסדו** and they do not wave the **לולב** and

להבין את התפלה

while reciting those lines. In נוסח ספרד they wave the לולב and אתרוג only when they say the opening line of: *כי לעולם חסדו*, *הודו לי-י כי טוב*, *כי לעולם חסדו* after the *שליח ציבור* recites that same line first. My objection to responding with *הודו לי-י כי טוב*, *כי לעולם חסדו* to those lines is that they are adding words to הלל. What is the source of the practice followed by נוסח אשכנז?

תלמוד בבלי מסכת סוכה דף לו עמוד ב-משנה. והיכן היו מנענעין? בהודו לה' תחילה וסוף, ובאנא ה' הושיעה נא, דברי בית הלל, ובית שמאי אומרין: אף באנא ה' הצליחה נא.

Translation: Mishna: At what point do they shake the lulav? While reciting the words: Hodu L'Ashem in the beginning and at the end and while reciting: Anna Hashem Ho'Shiya Nab; those are the words of Beis Hillel. Beis Shamai say: also while reciting Anna Hashem Ha'Tzliha Nab.

תוספות מסכת סוכה דף לו עמוד ב-ועכשיו שנהגו ששליח צבור אומר יאמר נא ישראל והצבור עונים הודו וכן ביאמרו נא יראי ה' הצבור מנענעים על כל הודו והודו שעונים אבל שליח צבור לא ינענע. ויש מפרשים דאף שליח צבור מנענע אגב ציבורא שעונים בכל פעם ופעם הודו ומנענעין מנענע נמי שליח צבור ביאמר נא וביאמרו נא.

Translation: Now they have adopted the following practice: when the prayer leader recites the words: Yomar Nab Yisroel, those congregated respond with Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov. They do the same when the prayer leader says: Yomru Nab Yirei Hashem. In addition, those congregated shake their lulav each time they recite the lines of Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov. However, the prayer leader should not shake his lulav while reciting the verses of: Yomar Nab Yisroel and Yomru Nab Yirei Hashem. Some argue that the prayer leader should do so as well when reciting the lines of Yomar Nab and Yomru Nab since those congregated are responding with Hodu and shaking their lulavim.

Although תוספות reports the practice, they chose not to describe it as a mandatory practice but rather as “עכשיו שנהגו”, now that it has become the practice. It appears that תוספות may have had reservations about the practice but chose not to disturb the existing custom. The ר”ן³ objects to the practice and for good reason:

ר”ן על הרי”ף מסכת סוכה דף יח' עמ' ב'-בהודו לה' תחלה וסוף. פי' בהודו לה' שבתחלת הפרשה ובהודו לה' שבסוף הפרשה. וכתבו בתוס' שעכשיו שהצבור עונים הודו אחר שהחזן אומר יאמר נא ישראל ויאמרו נא בית אהרן ויאמרו נא יראי ה' צריכין הצבור לנענע על כל פעם ופעם שאומרים הודו אבל שליח צבור אינו מנענע כשאומר יאמר נא ישראל ויאמרו נא או אפשר שכיון שהצבור מנענעים כשעונים אחריו אף הוא מנענע זה דעתם ז”ל ואינו מחזור שכיון שמה שעונים הצבור הודו אינו אלא כדי לצאת מיאמר נא ויאמרו נא. כשם שיאמר נא ויאמרו נא אין צריך נענוע כך עניית הודו אינה צריכה נענוע. ולפיכך אין מנענעין בהודו לה' שבתחלה אלא פעם אחת אבל בהודו לה' שבסוף שכופלים אותו שליח צבור והצבור מנענעין בו על כל פעם ופעם וכן באנא ה' הושיעה נא וכן נהגו.

3. Rabbi Nissim ben Reuven of Gerona born in Barcelona in 1320 and died in 1380.

Translation: While reciting Hodu in the beginning and at the end. This means: while reciting the verse of Hodu which is the opening verse of Tehillim Chapter 118 and while reciting the verse of Hodu which is the closing verse of Tehillim Chapter 118. Tosaphos wrote: now they have adopted the following practice: when the prayer leader recites the words: Yomar Nah Yisroel, those congregated respond with Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov. They do the same when the prayer leader says: Yomru Nah Yirei Hashem. In addition, those congregated shake their lulav each time they recite the lines of Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov. However, the prayer leader should not shake his lulav while reciting the verses of: Yomar Nah Yisroel and Yomru Nah Yirei Hashem. Some argue that the prayer leader should do so as well when reciting the lines of Yomar Nah and Yomru Nah since those congregated are responding with Hodu and shaking their lulav. The position of Tosaphos is unclear. The only reason for those congregated to respond with the words: Hodu L'ashem Ki Tov is if they are unable to recite the words: Yomar Nah and Yomru Nah on their own. They can fulfill their obligation to recite those words by responding with the line of Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov. Moreover since the Gemara did not require that we shake our lulavs when reciting the words: Yomar Nah and Yomru Nah, we should not shake our lulavs when we recite the line of Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov in their place. The proper practice is to shake the lulav once when reciting the first line of Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov. When we recite the last verse of Hodu L'Ashem Ki Tov we shake the lulav twice because both the prayer leader and those congregated recite the verse twice. And so too when we recite the line of Ana Hashem Hoshiya Nah.

I am going to vote in favor of נוסח ספרד on this issue.

And by the way, I prefer אתה כוננת over אמיץ כה.