THE STRANGE BLESSING OF YOTZER OR

By Allen Friedman

Introduction

There is only one blessing whose text is altered on Shabbat and *only* on Shabbat: the first blessing of *Keriat Shema* of *Shacharit*. Why does this blessing have this unique status?¹ To sharpen the question, it appears that the extensive insertions and substitutions made to this blessing on Shabbat were met with widespread acceptance, despite their apparent post-Talmudic creation. By contrast, the seemingly much more minor post-Talmudic insertion of "*Or Chadash*" as the penultimate sentence of the same blessing was met with widespread and vociferous opposition lasting many centuries.

Overview

We will look at the language and themes of the first of the blessings of *Keriat Shema* of *Shacharit* as recited during the first six days of the week, and the language and themes of that first blessing as recited on Shabbat, noting the similarities and differences with the weekday version. We will follow that with a look at the history of the Shabbat version and see how the differences and similarities between the two versions of the blessing have been explained – or, as the case may be,

http://www.beureihatefilla.com/files/Kriyat Shema and its Brachot.pdf.

¹ I am grateful to Abe Katz for posing the question and for his extremely useful compilations of many relevant sources on *tefilla*. See:

ignored — over the millennia. We will then suggest a hypothesis to explain the differences between the two versions and, in particular, the unique nature of those differences. We will examine the extent to which our hypothesis is consistent with (a) the *weltanschauung* of those who composed our *tefilla* and of those who selected those *tefillot* for inclusion in our *siddur*, and (b) themes found throughout our *tefillot* on Shabbat. Finally, we will test the hypothesis on the text of the Shabbat version to see how well the words of the *tefilla* bear it out.

To help the reader, set out below is the text of *Yotzer Or* (according to *Minhag Ashkenaz*), with the portions added or deleted on Shabbat clearly indicated.² It is strongly suggested that even if one is generally familiar with the *tefilla*, that the reader take a minute to scan the text before proceeding.

² Minhagei Sefard, Eidot Ha-mizrach and Teiman are very close to Minhag Ashkenaz except for small differences that will be discussed later.

Text of *Yotzer Or* according to Minhag Ashkenaz. Portions said only on Shabbat are set off by a box; portions said only on weekdays are set off by dashed lines.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעולָם. יוצֵר אור וּבורֵא חשֶׁרָ. עשה שָׁלום וּבורֵא אֵת הַכּל:

הַכּל יודוּדָ. וְהַכּל יְשַׁבְּחוּדָ. וְהַכּל יאמְרוּ אֵין קֶדושׁ כַּה': הַכּל יְרומְמוּדָ סֶּלָה יוצֵר הַכּל: הָא-ֵל הַפּותַחַ בְּכָל יום דַּלְתוֹת שַׁעֲרֵי מְזְרָח. וּבוקֵעַ חַלוֹנֵי רָקִיעַ. מוצִיא חַמָּה מִמְּקומָה. וּלְבָנָה מִמְּכון שִׁבְּחָה. וּמֵאִיר לְעוּלָם כָּלוֹ וּלְיושְׁבָיו. שֶׁבָּרָא בְּמִדֵּת הָרַחֲמִים:

> ָהָמֵאִיר לָאָרֶץ וְלַדְּרִים עָלֶיהָ בְּרַחֲמִים. וּבְטוּבו מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יום תַּמִיד. מַעֲשה בְּרֵאשִׁית: ביום חול:מה רבוּ מַעֲשׁיך ה'. פַּלָם בָּחָכמָה עַשִּית. מַלְאַה הַאַרֵץ קְנִיְנָדְ:

> > ַהַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּרומָם לְבַדּו מֵאָז. הַמְּשֻׁבָּח וְהַמְּפאָר וְהַמִּתְנַשׁא מִימות עולָם

אֶ-לֹהֵי עולָם. בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ. אָדון עָזֵנוּ. צוּר מִשֹגַבֵנוּ. מָגַן יִשְׁעֵנוּ. מִשֹּגָב בַּעֲדֵנוּ:

אַין כְּעֶרְכֶּדְ. וְאֵין זוּלָתֶךָ. אֶפֶס בִּלְתֶּדָ וּמִי דּוֹמֶה לָּךָ. אֵין כְּעָרְכֶּדָ ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ בְּעוֹלֶם הַזָּה. וְאֵין זוּלָתְדַ מַלְכֵּנוּ לְחַיֵּי הָעוּלֶם הַבָּא. אֶפֶס בִּלְתָּדַ גּוֹאֱלֵנוּ לִימות הַמְּשִׁיחַ. וְאֵין דּוֹמֶה לְּדַ מושִׁיעֵנוּ לְתִחַיַּת הַמֵּתִים:

בּשֶּׁבֶּת: אֵ-ל אָדוֹן עַל כָּל הַמַּעֲשׁים. כָּרוּךְ וּמְבַרֶךְ בְּפִי כָּל וְּשָׁמָה. גָּדְלוֹ הַמְּבָשׁים. בָּרוּךְ וּמְבַרָךְ בְּפִי כָּל וְּשָׁמָה. גָּדְלוֹ הָמְרָבָּשׁ. וְטְבּבָּר לְפְנֵי כִסְאוֹ. חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים מְלֵא וְנְהַדְּר בְּכָבוֹד עַל הַמֶּרְכָּבָה. זְכוּת וּמִישׁוֹר לְפְנֵי כִסְאוֹ. חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים מְלֵא כְּבוֹדוֹ: טוֹבִים מְאוֹרוֹת שֶׁבֶּרָא אֱלֹקֵינוּ. יְצֶרֶם בְּדַעַת בְּבִינָה וּבְהַשׁבֵּל. כַּחַ וּגְבּוֹר, נְתַן בָּהֶם. לְהִיוֹת מוֹשְׁלִים בְּקֵרֶב תַּבֵל: מְלֵאִים זְיוֹ וּמְפִּיִקִם נוֹגַה. וְגָבוּרָה נְתַן בְּּכָל הָעוֹלֶם. שמֵחִים בְּצֵאתָם וְששִׁים בְּבוֹאָם. עשִים בְּאֵימָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם: פְּאֵר וְכָבוֹד נוֹתְנִים לְשְׁמוֹ. צְהֲלָה וְרָנָּה לְזֵכֶר מַלְכוּתוֹ. קֵרָא לֵשֶׁמִשׁ וַיִּזְרֵח אוֹר. רָאָה וְהְתָּקִין צוּרַת הַלְּבָנָה: שֶׁבֵח נוֹתְנִים לוֹ כָּל צְּבָא לֵבוֹרו. תִּבְּים וְאוֹפַנִּים וְחֵיוֹת הַקְּדָשׁ:

ביום חול: אֵ-ל בְּרוּדְ גְּדוֹל דֵּעָה. הַכִּין וּפָעַל זָהָרֵי חַמָּה. טוב יָצַר כָּבוֹד לִשְׁמו. מְאורות נָתַן סְבִיבות עֻזּו. פִּנוּת צְבָאָיו קְדושִׁים. רומְמֵי שַׁ-דַּי. תָּמִיד מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֵ-ל וּקְדֵשָׁתו:

לָאֵ-ל אָשֶׁר שָׁבַּת מִכֶּל הַמֶּעֲשִים. בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי הָתְעַלָּה וְיָשֶׁב עַל כָּסֵא כְבודו. תִּפְאֶרֶת עָטָה לְיוֹם הַמְּנִהְה. ענֶג קָרָא לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת. זָה שֶׁבַח שֶׁל יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי. שֶׁבּוֹ שְׁבַת אֵ-ל מִכֶּל מְלַאּרְתוּ: וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִשְׁבָּח וָאוֹמֵר. מָזְמוֹר שִׁיר לִיוֹם הַשַּׁבַּת. טוב לְהודות לה':

לְפִיכֶךְ יְפָאֲרוּ וִיבַרְכוּ לָאֵ-ל כָּל יְצוּרִיו. שֶׁבַח יְקֶר וּגְדֵלֶּה. יִתְּנוּ לָאֵ-ל מֶלֶךְ יוצֵר כּל. הַמַּנְחִיל מְנוּחָה לְעֵמוֹ יִשׁרָאֵל בִּקְדֵשָׁתוֹ בִּיוֹם שַׁבַּת קְדָשׁ:

ָשִׁמְדֶ ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ יִתְקַדַּשׁ. וְזָכְרָדֶ מַלְכֵּנוּ יִתְפָּאַר. בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל הָאָרֶץ מִתְּחַת:

ּתִּתְבֶּרַדְ <mark>בִּיוֹם חוֹל: ה' אֵלקִינוּ בּשַּׁבָּת:מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ</mark> עַל שֶׁבַח מַעֲשׁי יָדֶידָ. וְעַל מְאוֹרֵי אור שֶׁעֲשׁיתָ פָּ**אָרוּדָ פֶּלָה:**

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תַּתְּבֶּרַךְ צוּרֵנוּ מֵלְכֵנוּ וְגואֲלֵנוּ בּוֹרֵא קְדוֹשִׁים. יְשְׁתַּבַּח שִׁמְדָ לְעַד מַלְכֵנוּ יוֹצֵר מְשְׁרְתִים וַאֲשֶׁר מְשָׁרְתִים וַאֲשֶׁר מְשָׁרְתִים פַּלְבֵּנוּ יוֹצֵר מְשְׁרְתִים וַאֲשֶׁר מְשְׁרְחִים פַּלְם עומְים בְּיִרְאָה וְבִוּלְ דִּבְרֵי אֱלֹקִים חַיִּים וּמֶלֶךְ עולָם: כֻּלֶּם אָהוּבִים. כֻּלֶּם בְּרוּרִים. כַּלֶּם גִּבּוֹרִים. וְכַלֶּם עושים בְּאֵימָה וּבְיִרְאָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם: וְכַלֶּם בּּקְדָשָׁה וּבְטָהֲרָה. בְּשִׁירָה וּבְזָמְרָה. וּמְבַרְכִים וּמְשַׁבְּחִים וּמְפָּאֲרִים וּמַצֵּרִיצִים וּמַאֲרִיצִים וּמַמְדִּישִׁה וּבְטָהֲרָה. בְּשִׁירָה וּבְזָמְרָה. וּמְבַרְכִים וּמְשַׁבְּחִים וּמְפָּאֲרִים וּמַצְּרִיצִים וּמַאֲרִיצִים וּמַמְּדִישִׁים וּמְמְלִיכִים:

אֶת שֵׁם הָאֵ-ל, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא קְדוֹשׁ הוּא. וְכַלֶּם מְקַבְּלִים עֲלֵיהֶם על מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם זֶה מָזֶה. וְנוֹתְנִים רְשׁוֹת זֶה לָזָה לְהַקְדִּישׁ לְיוצָרֶם בְּנַחַת רוּחַ. בְּשׁפָה בְרוּרָה וּבִנְעִימָה. קְדֵשָׁה כַּלֶּם בְּאָחָד. עונִים וְאוֹמְרִים בְּיִרָאָה:

קָדושׁ קָדושׁ קָדושׁ ה' צְ-בָאות. מְלֹא כָל הָאָכֶץ כְּבודו:

ָּוָהָאופַנִּים וְחַיּות הַקּדֶשׁ בְּרַעֵשׁ גָּדול מְתְנַשׁאִים לְעֻמֵּת שֹׁרָפִים. לְעֻמֶּתָם מְשַׁבְּחִים וְאומְרִים:

בַּרוּךָ כִּבוד ה' מִמְקומו:

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לְאֵ-ל בָּרוּדֶ נְעִימות יָתֵּנוּ. לְמֶּלֶךְ אֵ-ל חֵי וְקַיֶּם זְמִירות יאמֵרוּ וְתִשְׁבָּחות יַשְׁמִיעוּ. כִּי הוּא לְבַדּוּ פּועֵל גְּבוּרות. עושה חֲדָשׁות. בַּעַל מִלְחָמות. זורֵעַ צְדָקות. מַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעות. בּורֵא רְפּוּאות. נורָא תְהָלות. אַדון הַנִּפְלַאות:

הַמְחַדֵּשׁ בְּטוּבו בְּכָל יום תָּמִיד מֵעֲשה בְרֵאשִׁית. כָּאָמוּר לְעשה אורִים גְּדלִים. כִּי לְעוּלֶם חַסְדּו: **אור** תַּדָשׁ עַל צִיּוּן תַּאָיר (נָזַבֶּה כַלְנוּ מָהֶרָה לָאורו. בַּרוּדָ אַתָּה ה'. יוצֵר הָמְּאורות:

^{**} Between the asterisks: angelic court theme.

The Weekday Version of Yotzer Or

The theme of the first part of the weekday version (from the opening of the blessing through יָפָאָרוּךָ סֶּלָה and of the last part (from לָּאַ-דּוֹרְ through the closing) is the Universal God, Creator and Sustainer of the natural world. This is a very appropriate theme for the first six days of the week because it refers to the continual renewal of God's work in the six days of Creation which parallel six days of the week. In between this envelope – from בַּרוּךְ בַּבוֹד ה' מִמְּקוֹמוֹ through בַּרוּךְ צוֹרְבוֹּ we find a second theme, the angelic court praising God.³

The Shabbat Version of Yotzer Or

The Shabbat version makes the following changes: (a) we insert אַ-ל אָדון before הַפָּל יודוּךָ and אֵין כְּעֶרְכֶּךְ and אֵין כָּעֶרְכֶּךְ מַּאָרָץ מָלְאָרָץ fer it, (b) we substitute אַ-ל אָדון הַל אָדון הַתְּבָּרַךְ before אָ-ל בָּרוּךָ . We also make two other seemingly minor changes: we omit the verse מְּשִׁירֶ הִי מְעֲשִירָ ה' אַ-לֹהִינו for ה' א-להינו for הָּאָרֶץ קְנְיָנֶךְ ה' א-להינו for תַּבְּרֵךְ ה' א-להינו שֵׁרָם מְעֵשִי יָדֵין.

³ According to many interpretations, the transition from the Universal God as Creator theme to the angelic court theme starts slightly earlier, with the last ten words of אַ-ל אַרוּדָ בּרוּדָ אַ-ל וּקְדַשָּׁתוּ :בָּרוּדָ בּרוּדְ אַ-ל וּקְדַשָּׁתוּ :בָּרוּדְ בּרוּדְ אַ-ל וּקְדַשָּׁתוּ :בָּרוּדְ בַּרִּוּדְ בַּרִּיִם בְּנוֹת צְּבָאִיו קְדוֹשִׁים רוּמְמֵי שַׁ-דֵּי תָּמִיד מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אַ-ל וּקְדֵשָּׁתוּ :בְּרוּדְ בַּרִּוּדְ etc. as referring to the ministering angels.

The seeming disparateness of these two themes will not be discussed here other than to observe that it has generated much discussion over the centuries. It should be noted, however, that the theme of תַּהְבֶּרְךְ צוּרְבֶּר – discussing as it does the angelic court of the Universal God – is more appropriate for the first blessing of *Keriat Shema* than it is for either the second blessing – which focuses on the Revelation – or the third blessing – which focuses on the Exodus.

Some insist that the disparateness of the two themes is proof that תַּתְּבֶּרַתְ was added later and that its theme is really not consistent with the "envelope," see for example Ezra Fleischer, "Kedushat ha-Amidah (u-She'ar ha-Kedushot): Hebeitim Histori'im Liturgi'im ve-Ideologi'im," in Tarbiz: Studies in Jewish Liturgy – A Reader (Jerusalem 2003), pp. 245-248. Others insist just as fiercely that the two parts were both in the "original" version and that they do very much relate to each other. For a forceful and persuasive articulation of the latter argument from a theological perspective, see Rav Soloveitchik's Worship of the Heart, pp. 122-132. For a forceful and persuasive articulation of the latter argument from a historical perspective, see Moshe Weinfeld, מהספרות המזמורית ועד לתפילות במגילות קומראן: הליטורגייה היהודית הקדומה, pp. 167-178 and Reuven Kimelman, "The Shema Liturgy: From Covenant Ceremony to Coronation," in Kenishta – Studies of the Synagogue World, vol. 1, pp. 88-89.

The insertions and the substitutions noted in the paragraph above elaborate on one of the two themes recited the other six days of the week, but leave the second theme untouched while adding three other themes:

אָבּל אָדון, the substitute for אָבּל בָּרוּדְ, elaborates on the ideas expressed in אַ-ל בָּרוּדְ and on the theme expressed in the first and last sections of Yotzer Or — the Universal God Creator and Sustainer of the natural world. It also contains an explicit reference in its last two phrases to the angelic court theme that is elaborated on later in the blessing: שֶׁבַּה שׁרִפּיִם (אופנים (חִינוֹם לוֹ כַּל צָבָא מְרוֹם תְּפָּאֶרֶת וֹגְדֶלָה שׁרִפִּים (אופנים (חִינוֹת הַקְּדָשׁ).

The heart of the second theme, the angelic court praising God – from בַּרוּך בַּבוּד ה' מִמְקומו – is left untouched.

As noted, the Shabbat version adds three themes. The first two are added in the two sections bracketing הַּמָּאִיר לַאָּרֵץ:

- (1) The section added just before הַּמֵּאִיר לָאָרֶץ adds the theme that **all** of mankind will praise God, emphasizing this theme through the five-fold repetition of הַבּל יִודוּךָ וַהַבּל יִאמְרוּ אֵין קָדוֹשׁ כַּה': הַבּל יְרוֹמְמוּךָ וְהַבּל יִאמְרוּ אֵין קָדוֹשׁ כַּה': הַבּל יִרוֹמְמוּךָ הַבָּל יִאמְרוּ הַבָּל יִאמְרוּ אֵין קָדוֹשׁ כַּה': הַבּל יִרוֹמְמוּךָ בַּבּל יִצר הָבּל הַבּל יִודוּךָ הַבָּל יִאמְרוּ אַיִּר הָבּל הַבּל יִודוּךָ בַּבָּל יִאמְרוּ אַיִּן הַבּל יִאמְרוּ אַיִּר הָבּל הַבּל יִרוֹמְמוּךָ בּבּל יִרוֹמְמוּךְ בּבּל יִאמְרוּ אַיִּר הָבּל יִרוֹמְמוּךְ בּבּל יִרוֹמְמוּךְ בּבּל יִרוֹמְמוּךְ בּבּל יִיצר הָבּל יִיצר הָבּל יִרוֹיִיצר הָבּל יִרוֹיִיצר הָבּל יִרוֹיִיצר הָבּל יִיצר הַבּל יִיצר הָבּל יִיצר הָבּבּל יִיצר הָבְּיִי בְּיִבְּיִי בְּיִינְיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִּייִי בְּיִייִיי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִּיי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִּייִי בְּיִּייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייְ בִּיּיִי בְּיִּי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִּי בְּיִּי בְּיִי בְיִי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִיי בְּיִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִיי בְּיִיי בְּיִיי בְּיִייִי בְּיִייִי בְּיִי בְיִיי בְּיִיי בְּיִייִי בְּיִיי בְיִיי בְּיִי בְּיִיי בְּיִיי בְּי
- (2) The section added just after הַמָּאִיר לָאָרֶץ adds the theme of the uniqueness of God throughout history, with special emphasis on the eschatological aspects. The theme also unfolds through a five-fold repetition, this time by referring to God five times with the word הַאָּין הַשְּרֶבֶּך וְאֵין זוּלְתָךְ מַלְבֵּנוּ לְחַיֵּי used five times to refer to man: אַין בְּעֶרְבֶּך וְאֵין זוּלְתָךְ מַלְבֵנוּ לְחַיֵּי אָּכֶּס בְּלְתָּךָ וּמִי דּוֹמֶה לְּךָ. אִין בְּעֶרְבֶּך הֹ' א-להינוּ בְּעוֹלֶם הַבָּא. אָבֶּס בְּלְתָּך גּוֹאֲלֵנוּ לִימות הַמְּשִׁיחַ. וְאֵין דּוֹמֶה לְּךָ מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ לְתְחָיַת הַמֵּתִים הַבָּא. אָבֶּס בְּלְתְּךָ גּוֹאֲלֵנוּ לִימות הַמְּשִׁיחַ. וְאֵין דּוֹמֶה לְּךָ מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ לְתְחָיַת הַמָּתִים the order that those who first recited the tefilla will have experienced them: this world (עוֹלֶם הַנָּה), the world to come (עוֹלֶם הַבָּאִיחַ), the days of the Messiah (מְמִתִּה הַמְּשִׁיחַ) and the revivification of the dead (מְחַיֵּת הַמְּשִׁיחַ).
- (3) The insert of אָשֶר שְׁבֶּע adds the third theme, the idea that the Shabbat is a proclamation of God's kingship. Several points are worth noting about this insert. First, it is the only Shabbat insert or substitution in *Yotzer Or* that mentions Shabbat. Second, the focus is on the Shabbat

as an actor – יום הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְשַׁבֵּח וְאוֹמֵר – an entity unto itself. Third, the role assigned to human beings is an assignment to *all* human beings – çt יְצוּרָיו – who are to praise God because of His creation of the Shabbat; Israel, the one actor who one might think would have a prominent role in a description of Shabbat, is relegated to passing mention as the nation to whom the holiness of Shabbat is granted to passing mention as the nation to whom the holiness of Shabbat is granted.

Fourth, שַּבַּת שָׁבַּת יִשְּׁבָּת is clearly intended to parallel the opening insert of הַכּל יודוּבָ in its repetition of הַכּל and of the idea of all mankind praising God.

The final point worth noting about this insert concerns the relationship between the themes: the weekday version segregates its two themes from each other by limiting the angelic court discussion to a self-contained unit sandwiched between opening and closing sections that deal with Universal God theme. The Shabbat version, on the other hand, intermixes different themes: it starts with the theme of all of mankind praising the Universal God in הַכּל יודוּך, launches the angelic court theme with שָׁבַח נִיּהְנִים לוֹ כָּל צְּכָא מָרום the theme of all mankind praising the Universal God – יְבָּרְכוֹ לְצִּבְּל יְצוּרְיוֹ שֶׁבַח יְקָר וּגְדֵלָה יִתְנוֹ לְצִּ-ל מֶלֶךְ יוצֵר כּל hefore going back once again to the angelic court theme in הַתִּבְּרַךְ צוּרְנוֹ וּיִבוֹ court in the angelic court theme in הַתִּבְּרַךְ צוּרְנוֹ וּשְׁבַח court in the angelic court theme in הַתִּבְּרַךְ צוּרְנוֹ שִׁבַח court in the angelic court theme in הַתִּבְּרַךְ צוּרְנוֹ וּשְׁבַח court in the angelic court theme in הַתִּבָּרַךְ צוּרְנוֹ וּשְׁבַח court in the angelic court theme in הַתִּבְּרַךְ צוּרְנוֹ וּשְׁבַּרְ צוֹרְנוֹ וּשִׁבַּרְ בַּיִבְּר בּיִבְּרָ בִּוֹרָ בִּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בִּיִבְּר בּיִבְּרָ בַּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְיִבְּי בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּר בְיִבְּר בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּר בְיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּר בְּי בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְי ב

History of the Shabbat Changes and of Commentary on Them

The Shabbat changes are not mentioned in the Talmud. They are, however, found in two of the four classic early *siddurim*: that of Rav Amram Ga'on⁴ (Bavel, d. 875) and in the Machzor Vitri (France, 11th century).⁵ They are also found in early manuscripts of the Palestinian rite from the Cairo Geniza⁶ and in the *Perushei Siddur Ha-Tefilla la*-

Seder Rav Amram Ga'on, ed. R. Aryeh Frumkin, p. 242.

⁵ Siman 160. The original version of Machzor Vitry was compiled by Simcha ben Samuel (d. 1105) and was based on the ideas of his teacher Rashi.

Ezra Fleischer, *Tefilla u-Minhagei Tefilla Eretz-Yisraelim bi-Tekufat ha-Geniza* (Jersualem 1988), pp. 267 & 291. The manuscript Fleischer quotes dates from 1211. Fleischer, *ibid.*, p. 12. In it, the heads of the Palestinian synagogue in Fustat (old Cairo) set forth their rites as they had been recited for generations and took an oath to preserve them. It is therefore fair to assume that manuscript reflects practices that had been

Rokeiach (France, 12th century). By the time of the Abudraham (Spain, 1340), recitation of the special Shabbat version in essentially the form we use today was widespread, if not universal, and is currently found in all modern siddurim. Interestingly, "our" Shabbat version is not found in the two other classic early siddurim – that of R. Saadia Gaon (Egypt, Israel & Bavel, 882-942) and of the Rambam (Spain, Morocco & Egypt, 1135-1204). R. Saadia's siddur has only a modified version of שָׁבַּח and omits the other changes. In the Rambam's siddur, there are no modifications at all; the Shabbat version is identical to the weekday one. The significance of the non-modifications of the Rambam and of the very partial modifications of R. Saadia will be discussed later.

Almost as notable as the Shabbat changes themselves is the nearabsence of critical analysis of the changes on the part of both early and modern commentators on the *siddur*. To the extent they do note the modifications, they accept them as seemingly natural and attribute them to the fact that on Shabbat, we are not preoccupied with the workaday world and thus have more time to praise God, as we do with the "extra" inserts for Shabbat added to *pesukei de-zimra*. This explanation makes sense to some extent, especially when applied to the substitution of אַ-לִּ בְּרוֹּרֶז אָדוֹן for אָדוֹן for אָדוֹן. as the former is largely an elaboration of the themes of the latter. It does not, however, explain why:

established long, and perhaps centuries, before it was written.

[/] Chapter 92, p. 525.

The Shabbat version of *Yotzer Or* in *Sefer Avudraham*, *Shacharit shel Shabbat*, s.v. yotzer barukh. is very similar to the nusach we use today.

⁹ Siddur R. Saadia Gaon, eds. Davidson, Assaf & Joel (Jerusalem 2000), p. קב.

¹⁰ The Rambam's *Seder Tefillot Kol Ha-Shana* indicates various insertions and additions to make to the *tefilla* on Shabbat (*e.g., Nishmat* and the fourth blessing of the *amidot*), but indicates no change that is to be made to the blessings of *Keriat Shema*.

See, for example, the *siddur* of Rabbeinu Shlomo ben Shimshon of Worms: "And [referring to *Yotzer Or*] they lengthen on Shabbat the amount of praise [we say] because there is no interruption from work on Shabbat." See, similarly, the *Siddur Avodat Yisrael* ("On Shabbat that is honored more than all other days we lengthen the praises we give in the blessing of *Yotzer Or*") and the *Sefer Ha-Tamid* (quoted in *Tefilla Le-Moshe: Otzar Perushei Harishonim al Ha-Tefilla*, p. 604: "There is in [the Shabbat version of *Yotzer Or*] additional material in honor of Shabbat and the opportunity that one has to add to its praise.").

- 1. the inserts, with their heavy eschatological aspects, were put specifically into a blessing with the seemingly unrelated theme of Universal God the Creator;
- 2. no other blessing in *tefilla* is altered on Shabbat (and only on Shabbat):
- 3. these inserts are not recited on *Yom Tov*, when the same lack-of-preoccupation-with-work argument would apply;
- 4. the "angelic court" theme does not "enjoy" the same alteration and expansion on Shabbat as does the Universal God theme of *Yotzer Or*.

The one exception to the lack of critical analysis is Rav Yehuda Habarceloni's *Sefer Ha-Ittim* (circa 1120):

It is customary in most places to say on Shabbat הַכּל יודוּדָ ... [and] אַבָּר שְׁבַּת [and] יַּבָּל ... And thus wrote our master Rav Amram and thus is the custom of all those who have come after him. In my humble opinion, it seems to me that this custom has no basis and is an error as we never find that the Rabbis established the mentioning of Shabbat except in the fourth blessing of the [amida] and in birkat hamazon [in retzeh]. Whoever mentions Shabbat in other blessings errs and does not fulfill his obligation because he is deviating from the fixed text that our sages established for the blessings... It is [therefore] a mitzva to object [to the insertions]. 12

The Sefer Ha-Ittim's comments found no echo in any of the early or later commentators on the siddur.

¹² Sefer Ha-Ittim, siman 172.

The Or Chadash Controversy

R. Saadia Gaon vehemently objected to the new insertion: "Anyone who concludes the blessing by saying 'or chadash' etc. makes a mistake, since the sages established this blessing not over the future light of messianic days, but over the light of the present which shines each day ... One who says [these words] takes the Name of Heaven in vain." 13

R. Saadia's objection was by no means an isolated one. As Dr. Hoffman's classic work on the canonization of the prayer service summarizes the issue,

unlike R. Saadia's other isolated responsa or the individual opinions recorded by him in his prayer book, this ruling remained a cause celebre for centuries. It was known all over Europe, and scribes inserted his words in recensions of *Seder Rav Amram* lest people forget it. In Spain, R. Saadia's caveat was followed; it is found neither in our present Sefardic rite nor in the early ritual unearthed by Goldschmidt nor in the commentary of the fourteenth-century authority, David Abudarham. In Germany and France, the argument was still being waged ... as late as the twelfth century.¹⁴

¹³ Seder Rav Amram Ga'on, p. 94. As just noted, R. Saadia's objection was interpolated into Seder Rav Amram Ga'on. A similarly worded objection by R. Saadia, stating that the insertion "spoiled the original intention of the prayer," was apparently included in R. Saadia's siddur but the relevant pages were lost for centuries before being rediscovered in the Cairo Genizah. See Lawrence Hoffman, The Canonization of the Synagogue Service (Notre Dame 1979), p. 27.

¹⁴ Hoffman, *ibid.*, p. 29. It should also be noted that *or chadash* is omitted from the

There was, then, strong and continuous objection to the insertion into *Yotzer Or* of nine words referring to the redemption because, it was asserted, those words have nothing to do with the theme of the blessing – and the objections left a lasting impression: *or chadash* is omitted by *Eidot Ha-Mizrach* and the Yemenite rites to this day. By contrast, the far longer and more extensive changes of the Shabbat version – also heavily focused on the theme of redemption – were met with acquiescence and, in many cases, open endorsement – and those changes are largely normative in all *nuscha'ot* of the Shabbat *tefilla* recited today.

Why is This Insert Different: The Four Questions

These almost diametrically opposite reactions can only be understood if one assumes that the Shabbat changes *are* consistent with the themes of *Yotzer Or*. Put slightly differently, the almost universal acceptance of the Shabbat changes strongly suggests that there is an explanation for the changes that answers the four questions we posed above:

- 1. How do the changes, with their heavy eschatological aspects, fit specifically into a blessing with the seemingly unrelated theme of God the Creator?
- 2. Why was *Yotzer Or* the only blessing in *tefilla* whose text is altered on Shabbat (and only on Shabbat)?
- 3. Why, if the changes are in fact consistent with the rest of *Yotzer Or*, are they not made on *Yom Tov*?
- 4. Why does the "angelic court" theme not "enjoy" the same expansion on Shabbat as does the Universal God theme of *Yotzer Or*?

The "Millennial View of History" - an Introduction

The key to answering our four questions can be found in the "millennial view of history" – a view that sees history as having a finite beginning that starts with Creation, continues through six millennia of history and that has a finite end in a seventh, messianic, millennium. In

Machzor Vitri as well.

the next section, we will see that this understanding of how history will unfold was an important part of the world-view of those who shaped our *siddur*. In the section after that we will see that this understanding manifests itself in several places in our *tefillot* on Shabbat. In the final two sections, we will return to the text of *Yotzer Or* and note the direct relevance of this understanding to that *tefilla*.

One of the earliest sources for the millennial understanding of history is a mishna that we recite every Shabbat morning just before Aleinu. That mishna, the last one in Masekhet Tamid, tells us the chapter of Psalms, the shir shel yom, that the Levites would sing in the Temple during the service on a given day: שָׁבִּי חָבִּי חָבִּי , הַּיּוֹם יוֹם רָאשׁוֹ, etc., שַּׁבִּי הַמְּקְרָּשׁ שָׁבִּי הַמְּקְרָּשׁ שַׁבִּי הַמְּקְרָּשׁ בַּבִית הַמְּקְרָּשׁ . The mishna quotes the first verse from each of the given chapters, from each of the shir shel yom, without any commentary – except when it comes to the shir shel yom of Shabbat: The mishna tells us בַּשַּבָּת הָיוֹ אוֹמְרִים מִוְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּבָּת . The mishna then offers this commentary on the psalm, "A psalm for the future time to come, for the day that will be entirely Shabbat and rest for all eternity."

The gemara (Rosh Hashana 31a, and parallel sources in Sanhedrin 97a and Avoda Zara 9a) expands on this mishna and explains what the mishna's "future time ... that will be entirely Shabbat" – the יום ר וְשְבֶּת וּמְנוּחָה – refers to. The gemara tells us that Chazal differentiated between the shir shel yom sung on each of the first six days of the week, each of which is understood to refer to the corresponding day of Creation, and מַזְמור שִׁיר לִיום הָשָׁבַּת, which does not refer to the Shabbat of Creation or to the weekly Shabbat. As Rashi elaborates, מזמור שיר ליום is not about the Shabbat of Creation or the seventh day of the week but is said in anticipation of the future time – the seventh millennium – when the world as we know it will be destroyed and all human endeavors as we know it will cease. And, as Rav Katina states explicitly on that amud: "Six thousand years the world will survive and in the seventh millennium the world as know it will cease." Just as the six days of Creation were followed by the day of rest of Shabbat that proclaims God's sovereignty, so too six millennia of mankind's existence will be followed by one millennium in which mankind's normal activity will cease and God's sovereignty will be revealed, the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked punished. *Mizmor Shir Le-Yom Ha-Shabbat* is a description of that future Shabbat, that future millennium, and provides a link between that future Shabbat and the Shabbat we observe every seventh day.

Subsequent to its appearance in the Talmud, the "six + one" conception of history is found in Geonic-era sources such as R. Eleazar Ha-Kalir (6th century Palestine),¹⁵ Avot de-Rabbi Natan (c. 700-900 CE)¹⁶ and Pirkei de-Rebbi Eliezer (Italy, c. 833 CE)¹⁷ and is commonplace in early medieval *parshanim* such as Rashi,¹⁸ Ibn Ezra,¹⁹ Ramban,²⁰ and R. Bahya b. Asher,²¹ and later sources as well, such as the Abarbanel²² and the Rema.²³

The idea was picked up by the *Zohar*²⁴ and Kabbalists such as R. Avraham Saba (Spain 1440-1508).²⁵ Interestingly, the two *Rishonim* that

17 *Pirke De-Rebbi Eliezer*, ed. Gerald Friedlander (New York 1981), Ch. 19, p. 141. For this citation, and the following ones in this paragraph of the text I am indebted an excellent article by Mois Navon:

 $\label{lem:http://www.nds.com/chidusheitorah/pdf/2006/english/one_thousand_years_of_shabbat. pdf.$

¹⁵ Siluk le-Parashat Shekalim, discussed in Sacha Stern, Time and Process in Ancient Judaism (Oxford 2003), p. 78 ff.

¹⁶ Ch. 1, 8.

¹⁸ His comments on the relevant passages in the Talmud appear to indicate that he views Rav Katina's statements as normative.

¹⁹ Quoted by the Ramban on *Vayikra* 25:2.

²⁰ Sha'ar Ha-Gemul, ch. 58.

²¹ Commentary on *Bereishit* 2:3.

²² Commentary on *Bereishit* Chapter 2.

²³ *Torat ha-Olah*, 2:25, p. 45a.

²⁴ Zohar Vayera 119a and Shemot 20b.

Abraham Gross, *Iberian Jewry from Twilight to Dawn: The World of Avraham Saba* (Leiden 1995), p. 142 fn 3. Gross's book, and many other cites to discussions of this concept in Kabbalistic works are to be found in Reuven Kimelman, *The Mystical Meaning of* Lekhah Dodi *and* Kabbalat Shabbat (Jerusalem 2003), p. 26 & p. 46. For a complete discussion of the seven millennium conception of history and its relationship to the Kabbalistic concept of seven cycles of seven millennia (to be followed by a period of *Yovel* millennia), see I. Weinstock, *Be-Ma'agalei Ha-Nigleh Ve-ha-nistar*

have extensive discussions of how history will unfold and of messianic times that do *not* clearly subscribe to the "six + one" view are R. Saadia Gaon²⁶ and the Rambam.²⁷

In summary, the "six + one" conception of history appears in numerous sources discussing our future redemption. Those sources encompass the entire period and the entire geographical region responsible for our *siddur*: from the Mishnaic (and even pre-Mishnaic²⁸), Talmudic, Geonic, Medieval and early modern eras and from Bavel in the East, westward through Israel, Egypt and southern and northern Europe.

The Millennial View of History in our Shabbat Tefillot

Given its popularity in the eras and the areas in which our *siddur* was composed, it is not surprising to find the six + one conception of history in several places in our *tefillot* on Shabbat. We cited above one obvious example, the recitation every Shabbat morning of the last mishna in *Masekhet Tamid* that makes explicit reference to the idea of the millennial Shabbat.²⁹

Other examples of the "six + one" theme in our Shabbat *tefillot* are:

➤ *Kabbalat Shabbat*. The most recent major addition to our *tefillot*, the sixteenth-century creation known as *Kabbalat Shabbat*, is structured around the six + one theme. As Reuven Kimelman notes, the six chapters of Psalms that precede *Lekha Dodi* and the two psalms that follow it – *Mizmor Shir Le-Yom Ha-Shabbat* and

⁽Mossad Harav Kook, Jerusalem 1969), especially pp. 153-241.

See discussion of the redemption in R. Saadia, *Emunot ve-Deot*, Eighth Treatise. An excellent summary of R. Saadia's views on the subject can be found in Mois Navon's article, *ibid.*, p. 58 ff.

Rambam, Guide of the Perplexed II:29.

See discussion of Pseudo-Philo and other pre-Mishnaic sources in Stern, *ibid.*, p. 77 fn. 55.

This mishna is included in the *tefillot* of Shabbat morning in *siddurim* from Machzor Vitri onward. Not surprisingly, expositors of the *siddur* (from Machzor Vitri onward) explicitly connect the mishna to the passage from *Rosh Hashana* 31a and elsewhere cited above. See, *e.g.*, Machzor Vitri, *siman* 134 s.v. *l'kach anu*.

- Hashem Malakh are meant to invoke a dual parallel: between the six days of the week + Shabbat, on the one hand, and the six millennia of history + the millennial Shabbat, on the other.³⁰
- ➤ Shabbat Mincha. Another well-known example is to be found in one of the earliest post-Talmudic additions to the tefilla, the middle blessing of the amida of Shabbat Mincha.³¹ The introductory paragraph אַהָּה אָהָד וְשִׁמְן אָהָה אַהָּד וֹשְׁמִן אַ is widely understood as an allusion to the description of the messianic era found in the verse from Zekharia וֹשְׁמֵּר בַּיִּוֹם הַהוֹא יִהְיָה הֹ' אָּהֶד and as a reference to the "millennial Shabbat" referred to Rosh Hashana 31a.³²
- ▶ Birkhat Ha-mazon. The birkat ha-mazon we recite after each meal on Shabbat includes an explicit reference to the millennial Shabbat: הרחמן הוא ינחילנו יום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים.³³

³⁰ See Kimelman, *ibid.*, p. 26.

³¹ The three different introductory paragraphs (אַקה אָקה מֹשֶה מֹשֶה מֹשֶה מִשֶּה מִשֶּה מִשֶּה מִשְּה אָקה מִשְּה מִּבְּשְׁה מִשְּה מִּשְּה מִשְּה מִשְּה מִּשְּה מִּבְּישְׁה מִשְּה מִשְּה מִשְּה מִּשְּה מִשְּה מִשְּה מִּשְּה מִּישְׁה מִשְּה מִּשְּה מִּישְּה מִּישְּה מִּישְּה מִּישְּה מִּישְּה מִּישְּה מִּישְּה מִּישְּמְת מִּישְּה מִּישְּמְ מִינְינוּ מְשָּה מִּים מְשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשָּבְּח מִינוּ מְשָּבְּח מִינוּ מְשָּבְּח מִשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשָּבְּח מִשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִּבְּח מִּבְּת מְּבְּח מִּבְּים מִינוּ מְשְּבְּח מִּיב מְּיִיבְּים מְּבְּישְׁת מְּיִים מְּבְּישְׁת מְּיִים מְּבְּישְׁת מְּישְּבְּישְׁת מְּיִּבְּים מְּבְּישְׁתְּישְּׁת מְּיִים מְּבְּישְׁתְּישְׁת מְּיִים מְּיִּבְּישְּיִּבְּים מְּיִּבְּים מְּיִים מְּיִּבְּים מְּיִים מְּיִים מְּיִּים מְּיִּים מְּיִים מְּיִים מְּיִים מְּיְישְּיְּים מְיּיִים מְּיִּבְּים מְּיִים מְּיִּים מְּיִים מְיּים מְּיִים מְיּים מְיּים מְיּים מְּיִים מְיּים מְיּיִּים מְשְּיְים מְּיִים מְּיִּים מְּיִים מְּיְּים מְּיְים מְּיְים מְּיִים מְּיְּבְּים מְּיִים מְּיְים מְּיִּים מְּיבְּים מְּיִים מְּיבּים מְּיבּים מְּיבְּים מְּיבּים מְיבְּים מְּיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּיבְּים מְיבְּים מְּיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְּיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְּיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּיבְּים מְיבְּים מְּיבְּים מְיבְּיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּים מְיבְּבְיבְּים מְּבְּיבְּבְּיבְּים מְּיבְיבְּים מְּבְּיבְּים מְּב

³² As the Machzor Vitri, siman 139 s.v. אַקָּה אָּקָה states, "קּיִם שֶׁבֶּלוּ יַשַּבָּח refers to the future Shabbat, to the day that is entirely Shabbat [קִינם שֶׁבֶּלוּ שַׁבָּח to the seventh millennium." The Artscroll Siddur commentary to Shabbat Mincha puts it as follows: "The Sabbath Mincha Shemoneh Esrei speaks of the spiritual bliss that will prevail in [the time of the Messiah] and universal recognition of God's sovereignty... Thus the Mincha Shemoneh Esrei directs our focus not only to the holiness of the Shabbat day, but to the spiritual bliss of the future" (Siddur Kol Yaakov, pp. 502 & 516-517).

The Redemption theme of the Shabbat *Mincha amida* crowns the Creation/Revelation/Redemption trilogy that characterize both the middle blessings of the three (non-Musaf) *amidot* of Shabbat and many other parts of our *tefilla*, including (a) the blessings of *Keriat Shema* in *Shacharit* and *Arvit*, (b) *birkat ha-mazon*, and (c) the three middle blessings of *Musaf* on *Rosh Hashana*. See Machzor Vitri, *siman* 139 s.v. אַהָּה אָהָה (noting the trilogy of the Shabbat *amidot*); Tur, OC 292 (same); Ezra Fleischer, "Tefillat Shemoneh Esrei – Iyunim be-Ofyah, Sidrah, Tokhnah u-Megamoteha in Tarbiz: Studies in Jewish Liturgy – A Reader (Jerusalem 2003), pp. 191-192; Lawrence Hoffman, ed. The Sh'ma and Its Blessings (Woodstock VT 1997), p. 113.

This "Ha-Rachaman" appears to be a relatively late addition as it is not found in birkat ha-mazon of the early siddurim (through the time of Machzor Vitri and the Avudraham).

The Millennial Shabbat and Yotzer Or

We have seen how the six + one conception of history is invoked frequently in discussions of the messianic era from the Mishnaic period onward, and how this idea is found in a number of places in our *tefillot* on Shabbat. We've also noted (and will discuss soon in more detail) that the Shabbat changes to *Yotzer Or* focus heavily on eschatological themes.

In fact, a close examination of the evidence strongly suggests that these points are related, and that the intent of the Shabbat changes to *Yotzer Or* is to incorporate the millennial view of history into that blessing and to emphasize a parallel between *Shabbatot* past, present and future: the primordial Shabbat of Creation, our weekly Shabbat and the "Shabbat" of the seventh, messianic, millennium. This thesis will explain:

- how the Shabbat inserts of *Yotzer Or* relate to each other;
- ▶ how the Shabbat inserts relate to the "untouched" part of Yotzer Or – the angelic court theme;
- ➤ the significance of an omission and a change we make to the text of *Yotzer Or* on Shabbat;
- why the Shabbat changes were not made in certain early nuscha'ot.

The relationship of the Shabbat inserts to each other. The eschatological emphasis of the Shabbat inserts starts with the first Shabbat insert to $Yotzer\ Or - הַבּל יודוּךַ – that talks of the praise of God by all mankind. The eschatological focus is clear not only from the theme of הַבּל יודוּךַ, but also from its choice of words to express that theme. As noted above, הַבּל יודוּךְ 's five-fold repetition of הַבּל connects it to the next – the אַין בְּעֶרְבֶּךְ – insert that is marked by the five-fold repetition of הַבּל הַבְּל יודוּךְ הַשְּרָבֶּר הַבְּל יודוּךְ הַמְּתִים hadition, אַיִּן הַבְּל יודוּךָ הַ is also clearly tied by language and theme to the final insert – הַבָּל יִודוּךְ אַשֶּר שָׁבַת - In addition, לָאֵ-ל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַת - As noted above, the latter passage also talks of praise by all mankind of God and ties that praise specifically to a Shabbat that is a universally felt presence. That the context here is the millennial Shabbat is clear both from the plain meaning of the words – all mankind praising God for a universally felt$

Shabbat is a concept most easily understood in the context of a millennial Shabbat³⁴ – and from its choice of words – the double use of יוצֶר and that tie it to the earlier inserts:

ַלְפִיכָךְ יִפַּאֲרוּ וִיבַרְכוּ לָאֵ-ל בָּ**ל יִצוּרַיו**. שֶבַח יִקר וּגְדֵלָה. יִתְנוּ לָאֵ-ל מֵלֶךְ **יוֹצֵר בּל**.

Not only does the intermixing of the two themes point to a desire to equate one to the other, but two strong language parallels point in the same direction.

The first parallel: Seven days a week, we emphasize the unanimity of the angelic court praising God through the seven-fold use of the root בל בל מושנים בשנים הוא הובים בלם ברורים בלם גבורים וכלם עושים בְּאֵימָה וּבְיִרְאָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם וּ, כַּלָּם אָהוּבִים בָּלָּם בְּרוּרִים בָּלָּם גָּבּורִים וּכָּלָם עושים בְּאֵימָה וּבְיִרְאָה רְצוֹן קוֹנָם וּ, כַּלָּם אָהוּבִים בָּלָם עְלֵיהָם על - and twice after their acceptance: וּ בַּלָּם מְלֵּהְרִים בְּיִרְאָה רֹ בְּלָּם בְּאָהָה. שוֹנִים וְאוֹמְרִים בְּיִרְאָה one day a week, on Shabbat, we emphasize the unanimity of mankind praising God through the seven-fold use of the root בל זודור. וְהַכּל יִשַּבְּחוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִשַּבְחוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִשְּבְחוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִיִּבּר וֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִיִּבּר וֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרְ. וְהַכּל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִבּרוֹרְ בּיִבּר וֹרָת וֹבְּיִב בְּיִבְּהִר וֹרָּב בּיִבְּיִים בּּוֹרָ בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בּּבְּיִבְּיִים בּּיִבְּיִים בְּבָּר בְיִבְּיִבּים בְּבָּב בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּבִּים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּבִּיִבְּיִם בְּבִּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבּיל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִיִבּיב בְּיִבּיל יִדּוֹרָ. וְהַכּל יִדּיִר בְּיִבּי בְּיִבְיִים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִישְׁבִּים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיבִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִיּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִ

³⁴ See, for example, a passage that precedes it in the *tefilla*, that we recite every day and that explicitly relates to the eschatological period – וְּהָיָה הֹ שְּׁלֶדְ עֵל בָּל הָאָרֶץ בַּיוֹם הַהוּא

יאמְרוּ אֵין קָדושׁ כַּה': הַכַּל יְרומְמוּדָ סֶּלָה יוצֵר הַכַּל יוצֵר הַכָּל יִרומְמוּדָ סֶּלָה יוצֵר הַכַּל – and twice after their acceptance: יְפָאֲרוּ וִיבָרְכוּ לָאֵ-ל כָּל יְצוּרְיוּ. שֶׁבַח יְקָר וּגְדֵלָה. יִהְנוּ לְאֵ-ל מֶלֶךְ – that we use for the angelic court every day thereby becomes the model for our description of all of mankind on Shabbat.

The second parallel: Just before אָבֶר שָׁבֶּר שָׁבֶּל we talk of the angels – אָבָא מָרום – giving general praise – שָּבַּח – and two specific types of praise: אַבָּא מָרום – Towards the end of אָבּל אָשֶׁר שְׁבַּח mankind is described as giving general praise – שָּבַח – and two specific types of praise – יִּקָר וּגְדֵלָה – and two specific types of praise – יִּקַר וּגְדֵלָה The descriptions thus intentionally echo each other – שָׁבַח הִּפְאֶּרֶת וּגְדֵלָה for the angels; שָׁבַח יִּקְר וּגְדֵלָה for mankind – and remind us of the description of the glory of the king in Megillat Esther 1:4 - יִקר הָּבָּאַרֶת וְדֵלֹהוּ .35

לְאֵ-ל אֲשֶׁר שְׁבַת then concludes by explicitly connecting the praise of mankind with the praise of the angels: שָׁמְרָ הַ מִּלְכֵּנוּ יִתְקַדַּשׁ וְזָכְרְךָ מַלְכֵּנוּ יִתְקַדַּשׁ וְזָכְרְךָ מַלְכֵּנוּ יִתְקַדַּשׁ וְזַל וְעַל הַאָּרֵץ מִהָּחַתּ יִתְפַּאֵר בַּשִּׁמִים מִמְעַל וְעַל הַאָּרֵץ מִהָּחַתּ

The repeated connecting and equating on Shabbat of the two groups – angels and mankind – and the linking of these two groups, in turn, to the praise of the Universal Creator and to Shabbat makes perfect sense if the *tefilla* is intended to equate the everyday activity of the angelic court praising the Universal God with the future – and similar – activity of all mankind on the millennial Shabbat.

Other omissions and changes to the text of Yotzer Or. There are two other changes we make on Shabbat that can only be understood if the intent of the Shabbat changes is to redirect the focus away from the quotidian to the ultimate redemption. First, on Shabbat we omit from מָה רַבּוּ מַצְשִׁיךָ ה' כַּלְּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׁיתָ מְלְאָה הָאָרֶץ קְנְיָנֶךָ Omission of the verse is, for three reasons, consistent with a redirection of the Shabbat version of Yotzer Or away from the workweek and the first six days of creation: (1) בְּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי (1) from which the verse is taken, has as

Presumably תְּפְאֶרֶת was chosen for the angels both because it fits into the alphabetical scheme of אַ-ל אָדון and because it is more appropriate to talk of the angels (rather than man) giving glory – תַּבָּאֶרֶת – to God.

its theme the Creation of the world in six days, (2) the verse itself makes explicit reference to God as Creator (בָּלָם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִיתָ) and (3) the verse just before it in בָּרָכִי נַפְּשִׁר refers explicitly to the workweek: יֵצֵא אָדָם לְפָּצֵלוּ

The second change is the one we make to the concluding sentence of the first section of Yotzer Or, a sentence that summarizes the theme of the section it closes. During the week that sentence reads תַּלְשָׁבַּח מַעֲשִׁי יָדָיִּדְ On Shabbat that sentence also serves as a summary, in this case of the redirected theme of Yotzer Or and of the Shabbat inserts that it concludes. Furthermore, on Shabbat the sentence is identical to the weekday version — except that we substitute מוֹשִׁישֵנוּנוֹ for הֹינוֹ ה' ה'בּלֹהִינוֹ ה' א-לֹהִינוֹ מוֹשְׁישֵנוּנוֹ for ה' אוֹשָׁישֵנוּנוֹ ה' אוֹשְׁישֵנוּנוֹ on Shabbat is meant to be the Sabbath of the era of redemption.

Proof from silence – who does **not** make the changes. Interesting circumstantial proof for the "millennial Shabbat" explanation for the Shabbat version of *Yotzer Or* comes from the *siddurim* of R. Saadia and the Rambam, the great rationalists of the period of the Geonim and Rishonim, respectively. As was noted above, those *siddurim* omit the special – heavily eschatological – inserts. The Rambam, who is the only *Rishon* who (arguably) rejects the six + one conception of history outright,³⁷ is the only one whose Shabbat version of *Yotzer Or* is

³⁶ It should be emphasized that the thesis expressed in the text – that the focus of Yotzer Or on Shabbat is the millennial Shabbat – is consistent with the seven-day a week peticha and chatima of the blessing, especially with the words יוצר אור ובורא אַת הַכּל Both that phrase and the context of the verse in Isaiah 45:7 that is its inspiration – עשה שָׁלוֹם ובורָא אַת הַכּל – make clear that God is not merely the creator and continual "renewer" of the natural universe, He is also the One Who guides history; the verse in Isaiah is taken from God's address to Cyrus anointing him as the "human face" of the redemption of Israel. Put slightly differently, the Shabbat version of Yotzer Or highlights that Creation is not just about God creating and renewing the natural world, but about His continuing involvement with history.

In *Guide of the Perplexed* II:29, the Rambam states that Rav Katina's view is a *da'at yachid*. Mois Navon points out that the Rambam does not, however, explicitly reject, nor accept, the idea of the "six + one" theory on general (but merely rejects the

notion that the seventh millennium will be one of desolation or inactivity). Navon, *ibid.*, p. 52.

³⁸ See fn. 10. Further circumstantial proof along the same lines may be found in the current text of the Yemenite rite (in both the Baladi and Shami versions). Followers of that rite view it as the one closest to that of the Rambam, an understanding that is borne out in this case. Like the siddur of the Rambam – but unlike other minhagim – Eidot ha-Mizrach do not recite the last mishna in Masechet Tamid (קיום שֶׁבֶּלוֹ שֵׁבֶּלוֹ שֵׁבֶּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבֶּלוֹ שֵׁבֶּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבָּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלוֹ שֵׁבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלִ שְׁבָּבוֹ מִבְּשִׁי יְבָיִבְ הוֹ אַבּבְּתַ בְּשֵׁשׁ יִבְּיִבְּלוֹ שִׁ לִי שֶׁבַה מִּשְׁשִׁי יָבָיִבּן הוֹ אַבְּלוֹ שִׁבְּלִבְּלוֹ שִׁ לַ שֶׁבָּה שְׁבִּבְּלוֹ שִׁ יִבְיִינִם שַׁל שֶׁבִין בְּלֵי שֶׁבָּה שִׁבְּעֲבִי יְבָיִבְּל שִׁי יְבָיִבּן הוֹבְּל שִׁבְּל שְׁבִּבְּל שִׁבְּיִבְּל שִׁל שֶׁבִים בְּל שֲׁבִּי יְבָּלִינוֹ עַל שְׁבָּי שִׁבְּיִבְּל שִׁי יְבָיל שְׁבִּי שִׁיִי יְבָּיל יִבְּל שְׁבִּים בְּעִבּים שִׁבְּישׁי יִבְיל שְׁבּבּח בַּבְשׁי יִבְיל שְׁבּי שִׁבְּישִׁי יְבָּיל שְׁבּבּח בְּשִׁבּי שִׁבּים בּעִבּים שִׁל שֵּבּים בּעִבּבּי Paramid (בּיוֹ שִׁל שְׁבִּים בְּיִבְּים בְּי שִׁבְּיבּים בְּיִים שִׁל שְׁבִּי בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּי

³⁹ The text of R. Saadia's Shabbat insert reads as follows:
אֵ-ל אֲשֶׁר שֶׁבַת מִבֶּל מֵּצְשִׁיו וֹבֵּיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי נְתְעַלֶּה וְיָשַׁב עַל כְּפֵא כְבוֹדו. מִּפְאֶרֶת עָטָה לְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי נְתְעַלֶּה וְיָשַׁב עַל כְּפֵא כְבוֹדו. מִּפְאֶרֶת עָטָה לְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי. שֶׁבּוֹ שֶׁבַּת אָב'ל מְבֶּל מֵּצְשִׁיו: וצוה ושבתו עמו כל דגלי יעקב ועשו בו מנוחה וקראו אותו עונג וְיום הַשָּׁבִיעִי מְשַׁבַּח וְאוֹמֵר מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וְאוֹמֵר מְנִמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וְאוֹמֵר מְזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וְאַבּר לָצֵאַר שְׁבֹּר שְׁבַּת קְדָשׁ:
שֶׁבָּח יְקֶר ותהילה . יְתְנוּ לָצָאַר יְשָׁבָּת וְתְבָּאַר בּוֹרָא קְדוֹשִׁים וכו'

Siddur R. Saadia Gaon, Davidson, Assaf & Joel ed., p. 121

As noted in the previous footnote, just before וְיום הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְשַׁבֵּחַ וְאומֵר we find the phrase וצוה ושבתו עמו כל דגלי יעקב ועשו בו מנוחה וקראו אותו עונג.

Instead of the phrase יַתְּנוּ מְלֶךְ יוֹצֵּר כּל. הַמַּנְחִיל מְנוּחָה, R. Saadia substitutes יִתְּנוּ לָאֵ-ל מֶלֶךְ שָׁהִינְחִיל מְנוּחָה.

of the millennial Shabbat from R. Saadia's discussion of the end of days.⁴²

Conclusion

Let us conclude by revisiting our four questions:

(1) How the Shabbat changes fit into Yotzer Or: We now understand how the changes – precisely because of their eschatological aspects – fit specifically into a blessing with the seemingly unrelated theme of God the Creator. It seems plain that the Shabbat version of Yotzer Or is meant as a deliberate contrast to the one said on the other six days of the week. The weekday version emphasizes the continual renewal of God's work in the six millennia of history that parallel six days of Creation (and, of course, the six days of the week). The Shabbat version emphasizes the eternal rest of the millennial Shabbat that parallels the Shabbat of creation (and, of course, the weekly Shabbat). Or, to paraphrase Rashi's statement on Rosh Hashana 31a in a related context: " שכל ששת ימים נאמרים ה [ברכות] הללו על שם העבר ושל שבת על שם נאמרים ה [ברכות]

His omission of "our" changes and his tepid endorsement ("ve-yeish mosifim") of even a modest addition to Yotzer Or cannot be attributed to an unwillingness to tamper on Shabbat with the regular nusach. If anything, R. Saadia is more willing than any of the other early classical editors of the siddur to tamper with the weekday nusach, as can be seen from the fact that he deviates from the weekday text in other blessings of Keriat Shema (specifically, in the blessings of ma'ariv). See Siddur R. Saadia Gaon, p. 110. These deviations are not mentioned in any of the other classic early siddurim (except in the Seder Rav Amram Ga'on where they are mentioned as something to be rejected). R. Saadia's nusach was likely due, at least in part, to his Palestinian background; there are other isolated early instances of different nuscha'ot on Shabbat (and other days) for other blessings in Palestinian rites. See Joseph Heinemann, Tefillot haShabbat, http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/kitveyet/mahanaim/tfilot-2.htm, Hoffman, The Canonization of the Synagogue Service, pp. 79-81. As is typical of cases where the Palestinian rite deviated from the Babylonian one, none of the uniquely Palestinian deviations from the weekday nusach of birkot Keriat Shema became normative. In any case, R. Saadia's deviations stick closely to the topic of the (non-millennial) Shabbat.

In contrast, the insertion of *Or Chadash*, which sparked a long and loud opposition, cannot be explained by the "millennial Shabbat" thesis and is thus left (in the view of many) looking like a thematic misfit.

- (2) Why no other blessing is altered: Conversely, we understand why Yotzer Or was the only blessing in tefilla whose text is altered on Shabbat (and only on Shabbat). Precisely because Yotzer Or is the blessing whose theme is God's activities in the six days of Creation (which, in turn, parallel both Sunday through Friday of each week and the six millennia of history), this first blessing of Keriat Shema is the most suitable vehicle of all the berakhot for conveying via supplementation and alteration of the weekday text this aspect of Shabbat highlighted above.
- (3) Why the changes are not made on Yom Tov. We understand why the changes are not made on Yom Tov as the parallel between Shabbat and the seventh millennium is not apposite for any day other than Shabbat.
- (4) Why no change is made to the "angelic court" theme. Finally, we understand why no changes are made on Shabbat to the "angelic court" theme. The angelic court of God is an eternal one whose character will not change with the redemption in the seventh millennium. Rather, it is the rest of creation that will change at that time. Hence, on Shabbat its description is brought into line with that of the angelic court.

This article has been an effort to demonstrate that a careful study of the origins and history of *tefilla*, of a comparison of different *nuscha'ot*, and of the period in which a given *tefilla* was composed can shed a new light – an *or chadash* – on prayers we recite on a regular basis. May this effort and others like it help achieve the goal of our *tefilla*, to bring us closer to our Redeemer and our redemption.