

YEHUDA SEPTIMUS

On the Boundaries of Talmudic Prayer

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Mohr Siebeck

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Annette Y. Reed (Philadelphia, PA)
Seth Schwartz (New York, NY)
Azzan Yadin-Israel (New Brunswick, NJ)

161



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Yehuda Septimus, born 1977; 2008 PhD in religious studies from Yale; 2008–2009 Gruss Scholar in Residence at New York University's School of Law; 2009–2010 Post-doctoral Fellowship at Columbia University; he has taught at universities including Yale, Columbia, and Brooklyn College.

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For Lisa

Table of Contents

Transliteration.....	XI
Abbreviations	XII
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Prayer and Ritual Speech – Assumption and Problems	1
How Atypical Is the Atypical Addressee?.....	5
Address to Non-Divine Beings and Rabbinic Monotheism	8
Ritual Speech Acts	15
Ritual Speech, Prayer, and “ <i>Tefillah</i> ,” in Talmudic Literature	21
Ritual Recitations Embedded in Talmudic Literature – Opportunities and Challenges	35
Non-Rabbinic Cognates of Rabbinic Address to Beings Other than God.....	40
Case Studies in Ritual Communication with Atypical Addressees	43
Prayer – A Working Definition	44
Chapter 2: The Pre-Privy Recitation: Guardian Angels, Magic, and Ritual Privy Etiquette.....	45
Introduction	45
The Yerushalmi’s Version.....	47
The Bavli’s Version.....	49
The Magical Character of Bavli B.....	53
Tensions in Rabbinic Attitudes toward Magic	59
Personal Guardian Angels	61
Liturgical Mediation, Prayer to Angels, and Angel Worship.....	66
Angels as Guardians, Liturgical Intermediaries, and Privy Practice in Qumran	71
Is the Recitation of Rabbinic Origin?	75
Illocutions of the Recitation	79
Conclusion	82

Chapter 3: The Dream Relabeling: Talmudic Discourse, Social Interaction, and Ritual Practice in Conversation	89
Introduction	90
The Yerushalmi's Dream Prayer	93
The Bavli's Dream Prayer	96
The Priestly Blessing and the Nullification of Bad Dreams.....	101
Dream Relabeling	106
The Judicial Setting of the Relabeling Recitation	110
The Magical Rhetoric of the Relabeling Recitation	114
Use of Scripture in the Relabeling Recitation	114
Original Context of the Scriptural Citations.....	117
The Post-Traumatic Dream Recitations and the Exploitation of Established Forms of Ritual Power	118
A Range of Rabbinic Post-Traumatic Dream Rituals	120
Rabbinic Dream Culture	123
Tempering of Revelatory Dream Orientation.....	129
Conclusion.....	137
Chapter 4: The Post-Scroll Blessing: Communal Blessing, Formalization, and the Vanishing Second-Person Address	143
Introduction	143
Yerushalmi and Bavli – Comparison of the Talmudic Contexts.....	145
Yerushalmi and Bavli – Comparison of the Embedded Prayer Texts.....	148
Evolution of the Scroll of Esther Liturgy – Summary of the Talmudic Evidence	152
Post-Talmudic Continuations of the Palestinian and Babylonian Versions	153
Address of People in Liturgical Blessing Formulae.....	159
Illocutions of the Recitation	167
Conclusion.....	168
Chapter 5: The Cemetery Blessing: Communication with the Dead or Ritual Rhetoric?	173
Introduction	173
Text of the Blessing.....	175
The Resurrection Motif and the “Who Resurrects the Dead” Blessing Formula	177
The Intimacy Motif and Its Biblical Intertexts	178

The Judgment Motif and Its Effect.....	182
Generalized Responses to the Confrontation with Death.....	189
Second-Person Address to the Dead in Cultural Context.....	197
Conclusion.....	209

Chapter 6: The Creation Blessing: Between Praising God and Venerating Creation..... 211

Introduction	211
Text of the Blessing.....	212
Natural Phenomena That Trigger the Creation Blessing.....	217
Circumstances That Trigger the Creation Blessing.....	218
Literary Character of the Tannaitic Sources.....	219
Rabbi Yehudah and the Relationship between the Mishnah and Tosefta	220
The Baraita as Cited in Amoraic Literature and Its Relationship with the Mishnah and Tosefta.....	223
The Amoraic Sources	226
Legal Clarification and Formalization.....	229
Veneration of Nature	237
Conclusion.....	242

Chapter 7: Conclusion 245

Extra-Mundane Communication	245
The Rhetorical Component.....	246
The Social Component	247
The Theurgic Component.....	248
Blessings Addressed to Humans.....	250
Rabbinic Ritual Texts and Rabbinic Culture.....	251
Defining Prayer – Rabbinic and General.....	254
The Regulation of Rabbinic Prayer and the Broadening of Its Scope.....	256

Appendices 259

2A Synoptic Comparison of Versions of Pre-Privy Recitation	260
2B Entire Passages of Jerusalem Talmud and Babylonian Talmud Translated.....	262
2C Synoptic Comparison of Entire Passages of Jerusalem Talmud and Different Witnesses of Babylonian Talmud.....	263
2D The Blessing Formula in the Jerusalem Talmud's Version.....	264
2E Differences between Versions	267

3A Post-Traumatic Dream Prayer and Dream Relabeling.....	270
3B Translation of Post-Traumatic Dream Prayer and Dream Relabeling	273
3C Witnesses of the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 55b).....	277
4A Versions of the Post-Scroll Blessing.....	282
4B Synoptic Comparison of Jerusalem Talmud, Babylonian Talmud, and Soferim.....	283
4C Synoptic Comparison of Jerusalem Talmud, Babylonian Talmud, and Soferim (Translation).....	285
5A Synoptic Comparison of Versions of Cemetery Blessing.....	288
5B Synoptic Comparison of Versions of Cemetery Blessing (Translation).....	290
5C Text of the Mourner's Liturgy.....	294
6A Synoptic Comparison of Versions of Tannaitic Sources (with Translations).....	296
6B Synoptic Comparison of Aramaic Sources for the Creation Blessing (with Translations).....	298
6C Synoptic Comparison of Witnesses of the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 59a).....	306
 Bibliography.....	 313
Acknowledgements.....	340
Index of Sources.....	343
Index of Modern Authors.....	356
Index of Subjects.....	358

Transliteration

Hebrew	English
א – alef*	’
ב – bet	B
בּ – vet	V
ג – gimmel	G
ד – dalet	D
ה – heh	H
ו – vav-consonant	V
ו – vav-vowel	O or U
ז – zayin	Z
ח – het	Ḥ
ט – tet	Ṭ
י – yod-consonant	Y
י – yod-vowel	I
כ – kaf	K
כּ – khaf	Kh
ל – lamed	L
מ – mem	M
נ – nun	N
ס – samekh	S
ע – ayin*	’
פ – peh	P
פּ – pheh	F
צ – zadi	Z
ק – kof	Q
ר – resh	R
ש – shin	Sh
שׁ – sin	S
ת – tav	T

* Transliterated only when appearing in the middle of a word.

Abbreviations

Biblical Books

MLA (Modern Language Association) Style

Rabbinic Compositions

M.	Mishnah
T.	Tosefta
Y.	Yerushalmi (Palestinian Talmud)
B.	Bavli (Babylonian Talmud)

Ancient Inscriptions

<i>CIJ</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum: Recueil des inscriptions juives qui vont du III. siècle avant Jésus-Christ au VII. siècle de notre ère.</i> Edited by J.-B. Frey. Vatican City, 1936–1952
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae.</i> Editio minor. Berlin, 1924ff.
<i>JIGRE</i>	<i>Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt: With an Index of the Jewish Inscriptions of Egypt and Cyrenaica.</i> Edited by W. Horbury and D. Noy. Cambridge, 1992
<i>JIWE</i>	<i>Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe. Volume II: The City of Rome.</i> Edited by D. Noy. Cambridge 2005
<i>KAR</i>	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts.</i> Edited by E. Ebeling. Leipzig, 1919–1923

Chapter 1

Introduction

Prayer and Ritual Speech – Assumption and Problems

What is prayer?¹ How did the rabbis of late antiquity conceive of prayer?²

The meaning of the Hebrew term “*tefillah*” is significantly more circumscribed in biblical and talmudic usage than its oft presumed English equivalent, prayer.³ Given the absence of an alternative term,⁴ can we assume, as

¹ On the impossibility of a cross-cultural definition for prayer, see Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion*, 1–2. Pulleyn bases his rejection of a cross-cultural definition on the fundamentally divergent traits of prayer in different religious cultures. The example he cites of such divergence is that between classical Greek and biblical Israelite prayer. Israel’s identification of its God as “the only proper recipient of prayer,” says Pulleyn, distinguishes what they considered prayer fundamentally from what Greeks considered prayer. In asking what it means for God to be “the only proper recipient of prayer” when other beings are addressed in prayer contexts, this study problematizes the very distinction Pulleyn takes for granted in arguing against a cross-cultural definition. While Pulleyn’s assertion is correct, such questions only highlight the importance of a ritual category like prayer for heuristic and comparative purposes. The cultural, theological, and linguistic complexity of a phenomenon like prayer definitely demands alternatives to essentialist classification. (For a review of current approaches, see *Stanford Encyclopedia*, “The Structure of Concepts.” See also Lee, ed., *Philosophy of Language*, 3–32, and passim, two chapters in particular: Ahmed, “Ludwig Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations,” 121–37, and Frances, “Saul Kripke,” 249–67.) However, our goal in questioning a previously presumed definition of prayer is more than a *non*-essentialist definition of prayer. Our goal is a more accurate characterization and better understanding of the wide range of ritual practices in which the rabbis, and others, engaged when performing what we call prayer.

² For more on the rabbinic movement, which thrived primarily during the first through fifth centuries CE (whose members in this work are referred to as “the rabbis” or “the sages”), see Hezser, *Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine*; Katz, *Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 4: *The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*; and Urbach, *Sages*.

³ See pp. 21–35. On the English term “prayer,” see n. 10. As we will see, the modern Hebrew *tefillah* correlates more easily with the English “prayer.”

⁴ See nn. 109–114, below. None of the many biblical and rabbinic terms for components of Hebrew prayer are used to characterize all of the different types of ritual communication with God that are generally understood to be part of prayer. The closest equivalent to an all-inclusive term for prayer in biblical or rabbinic Hebrew, the term *hishtaḥavayah*, literally “bowing,” is used sometimes as a metonym for prayer. See, for example,

most scholars of Jewish ritual have, that prayer nonetheless existed as a category – analytic, legal, or practical – for the rabbis?⁵

If no such category of prayer existed for the rabbis, how did they understand the abundance of ritual recitations of communal and private worship found in talmudic literature? If such a category *did* exist for the rabbis, what were its characteristics and contours? Why was it given no name? How did it fit into the larger system of rabbinic ritual? Finally, how did it shape the soon-to-emerge genre of medieval rabbinic literature, the *siddur tefillah*, the “prayer” book?⁶

Gen. 22:5, 2 Kings 5:18, Isa. 66:23. See also Ehrlich, *Nonverbal Language of Prayer*, 39–40, and literature cited there. That said, even the term *hishtaḥavayyah* is equated more with worship generally, if anything representative of cultic and *non-verbal* worship even more so than prayer, for which verbal performance stands at the center. See, for example, Lev. 26:1, 1 Sam. 1:3.

⁵ See, for example, Heinemann, *Ha-tefillah bi-teqfat ha-tanna'im ve-ha-amora'im*, 10–11, 17, 181–82, and *passim*. See also Pulleyn in n. 1 above. Heinemann’s assumption is latent even in something as simple as his unquestioning and unqualified use of the modern Hebrew *tefillah*, as an equivalent to the English “prayer,” to characterize the entire spectrum of rabbinic ritual recitations that later found their way into medieval prayer books. In contrast to Heinemann, the two founders of modern scholarly research in Jewish prayer, Leopold Zunz and Ismar Elbogen, cast their nets more widely, defining their field of inquiry through their works’ terminology, structure, and content not as prayer, but as liturgy. Starting with the titles of their respective books, *Die Ritus des synagogalen Gottesdienstes (The Rites of the Synagogue Liturgy)* and *Der jüdische Gottesdienst (Jewish Liturgy)*, their choice characterization of the subject was the study of *Gottesdienst*, with more of a Lutheran focus on public service than cult. Not surprisingly, both scholars included all types of synagogue service, even ones not focused on communication with God, such as public Torah readings. Resembling Heinemann more so than Zunz and Elbogen, the Mishnah (the first great code of Jewish law, from about two centuries in the first millennium CE) places public Torah reading in Tractate *Megillah*, rather than in Tractate *Berakhot*, which is the *locus classicus* for almost all other matters of Jewish prayer. In contrast, Maimonides’ *Mishneh Torah* (the second great code of Jewish law, from about two centuries into the second millennium CE) inserts public reading into his section of laws of prayer proper, despite his exclusion of other “prayer-like” rituals from that section. However, while expansive in one sense, Zunz and Elbogen’s conceptualization of the field is restrictive – or simply inaccurate – in a different way: It implies a strict focus on synagogue services, whereas Jewish prayer, especially statutory prayer, exists extensively in public and private, crossing the line between the two domains with relative ease. Heinemann calls our attention to rabbinic prayer’s uniqueness in precisely this respect (see pp. 21–35 later in this chapter). For a discussion of the general *Tendenz* in both of these foundational works – to close the gap between Jewish and Protestant forms of public worship – see Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer*, 2–3, and literature cited there.

⁶ On the emergence of the earliest prayer books, see Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 271–74; Hoffman, *Canonization of the Synagogue Service*, 1–10 and 160–74; and Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer*, 122–206.

The present study approaches these questions from a specific angle, investigating a boundary phenomenon of rabbinic prayer – rabbinic ritual speech with addressees other than God.⁷ I will demonstrate that the rabbis treated this form of ritual speech – legally, literarily, and attitudinally – as they treated other forms of conventional prayer. Yet conventional it is not. In fact, it challenges the way prayer is generally conceived.

The chapters that follow present close analyses of a number of specific ritual recitations with these atypical addressees as they appear embedded in talmudic literature.⁸ Within their understanding of ritual speech, the rabbis, I will argue, conceived and practiced something similar to but broader than what is conventionally called prayer.⁹

The English term “prayer” is usually understood as communication with God or the gods.¹⁰ Scholars of Jewish ritual until now have accepted this characterization and applied it to Jewish *tefillah*/prayer.¹¹ In fact, one of the great scholars of rabbinic prayer in the twentieth century, Joseph Heinemann, devotes a significant portion of his classic, *Prayer in the Period of the Tannaim and the Amoraim*, to the argument that rabbinic liturgical blessings and prayers were by definition *always* addressed to God in the

⁷ By “addressees other than God,” I refer to addressees other than the supreme God of rabbinic Judaism. For the sake of brevity, this study will also sometimes refer to beings other than God as “non-Divine beings.” Such a characterization is not meant to deny in these beings, such as angels, the existence of any characteristics of the divine. The rabbis recognized certain divine characteristics in angels and other supra-natural entities. The use of the upper-case in “non-Divine” is rather meant to clarify that only the supreme God of rabbinic Judaism is excluded as the addressee of these rituals, not other supra-natural beings. See pp. 8–15 for a fuller discussion of the character of rabbinic monotheism and ritual address to non-Divine beings.

⁸ By “ritual recitations embedded in talmudic literature,” I refer to ritual recitations that are quoted, in part or in full, in the anthological collections of classical rabbinic teachings and traditions redacted primarily from the third to the seventh centuries CE (see n. 2 above). This includes not only the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds but also Mishnah, Tosefta, and numerous midrashic compilations.

⁹ This broad category of ritual speech contrasts with *tefillah*, the talmudic term commonly translated as “prayer,” which to the rabbis meant something significantly *narrower*. See pp. 21–35.

¹⁰ To take a few examples see Fallaize, “Prayer,” in Hastings’s *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 10:154; Selby, “Prayer,” 318, in Davies’ *Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*; and Guiver, “Prayer,” 380, in Bradshaw’s more recent edition of the *Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*. For an analysis of the etymology of the word “prayer,” see “Prayer, n. 1,” *OED Online*, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/149435?rskkey=2rmAFj&result=1>.

¹¹ For examples, see n. 1, above, in which a prominent scholar of Greek prayer takes precisely such a definition.

second person.¹² He dismisses the exceptions preserved in talmudic literature as aberrations.¹³

Does rabbinic prayer indeed necessarily entail second-person address to God, as Heinemann and others have presumed? If not, when and why not? Often God is the target of communication, even when ritual speech does not address God in the second person.¹⁴ But what if that speech is specifically addressed to beings *other* than God? What does this phenomenon teach us about the beliefs, ritual tendencies, and prayer culture of the formulators of such ritual speech?

The rituals we will examine are addressed to a broad range of entities, each of which raises its own set of challenges. These entities include: (1) the synagogue congregation¹⁵; (2) table fellows¹⁶; (3) gathered friends¹⁷; (4) judges¹⁸; (5) celebrants at a religious rite¹⁹; (6) mourners²⁰; (7) dead people²¹; and (8) angels²² or demons.²³ Talmudic literature often treats these embedded ritual recitations like conventional prayers.²⁴ However, not only are they far from conventional, but if one adopts the conventional definition of prayer, many of them do not qualify as prayers at all.

How did ritual speech addressed to beings other than God operate within various rabbinic circles, for those who composed and/or recited the talmudic texts that cite the prayers? Given that rabbinic prayers predominantly addressed God, how did the inclusion of such atypical addresses alongside more conventional prayer affect rabbinic ritual prayer as an institution? What was the rabbinic understanding of rituals with atypical addressees? How did they function within the larger tradition of conventional prayer, into which they seemed to have been absorbed almost unnoticed? What were the impulses that led to their inclusion among other, more conventional forms of prayer? Did other such recitations exist within but then disappear from the classical rabbinic prayer culture? Do the ritual texts embedded in talmudic sources already reflect alterations, the product of a process of

¹² *Ha-tefillah bi-tequfat ha-tanna'im ve-ha-amora'im*, iv–vi, 18–19, 67–77, 179, and passim.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 68, n. 2.

¹⁴ See pp. 15–21, below, for the distinction between the target of communication and the addressee.

¹⁵ For example, see Chapter 4.

¹⁶ For example, see p. 7.

¹⁷ For example, see Chapter 3.

¹⁸ For example, see Chapter 3.

¹⁹ For example, see p. 7.

²⁰ For example, see Chapter 5, pp. 182–189.

²¹ For example, see Chapter 5.

²² For example, see Chapter 2.

²³ For example, see p. 8.

²⁴ See pp. 13–14.

cultural and theological critique and absorption? While definitive and uncomplicated answers will not be offered, I contend throughout the study that these rituals represent more than the aberration Heinemann sees in them, to be noted with wonderment in brief footnotes and then peremptorily dismissed. Rather, like many boundary phenomena, they have something to teach us about rabbinic culture in general, and about the complex and increasingly more important institution of rabbinic ritual prayer in particular.

How Atypical Is the Atypical Addressee?

The ritual texts under discussion together represent a boundary phenomenon, seemingly outside the norm of rabbinic prayer. Does this boundary phenomenon require a new characterization of rabbinic prayer in general? Just how atypical *are* these atypical ritual addressees?

Joseph Heinemann's argument that rabbinic blessings and synagogue prayers were *always* addressed to God in the second person requires him to ignore the exceptions preserved in talmudic literature or to disregard them as peculiar and problematic anomalies. For example, Heinemann notes with bewilderment the position cited in a mishnah that a proselyte prayer leader should address the congregation referring to אלהי אבותיכם, "the God of your fathers," in the opening of the Amidah, the central prayer of rabbinic Judaism.²⁵ He calls this formulation "something absurd, not replicated in any other prayers."²⁶

But replicated it is. Heinemann himself notes other public prayers and addresses to beings other than God, and in each case, he labors to excuse the unusual address as an aberration.²⁷ He vigorously rejects the idea that the community itself can be an addressee, in spite of numerous instances in which this is clearly and precisely the case. Heinemann's adamancy on this point reflects the strength of his conceptualization of rabbinic prayer as addressed solely to God. Ultimately, Heinemann is right that ritual address to beings other than God is exceptional in rabbinic literature, but he himself grapples with a substantial-enough number of exceptions that these exceptions must be taken seriously as a category and mined for what they

²⁵ M. Bikkurim 1:4. According to this position the proselyte cannot use the standard formulation "the God of our fathers," since Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not his "genetic" forefathers.

²⁶ Heinemann, *Ha-tefillah bi-tequfat ha-tanna'im ve-ha-amora'im*, 68, n. 2.

²⁷ Heinemann attributes one such case, in the Post-Scroll Blessing (Chapter 4), to "special attachment to the verse from Jeremiah" that employs the second person address (*Ha-tefillah bi-tequfat ha-tanna'im ve-ha-amora'im*, 65). He attributes another example – the prayer leader's invitation to bless – to the fact that the invitation stands outside the normal framework of prayer (67).

teach us about the character of rabbinic prayer. Exceptional or not, the category cannot be dismissed.²⁸

This category also cannot be considered a peripheral phenomenon, affecting only prayers far from the center of rabbinic liturgy. As we already noted, the proselyte prayer leader's address to the community appears in the paradigmatic prayer of rabbinic liturgy, the Amidah. A second liturgical address to the community is also located in the Amidah of crisis-induced fast days.²⁹ Immediately preceding the *hatimah* (the standard formula that concludes a long blessing, "blessed are you, Lord") for each of the six³⁰ blessings of these days, the prayer leader turns to the community, and declares: *מי שענה צעקתכם הוא יענה אתכם וישמע בקול צעקתכם* . . . את, "May He who answered [a named biblical figure] answer you, and heed the sound of your cry."³¹

In both of these insertions to the Amidah, the tannaitic sources themselves as well as the talmudic texts that discuss those sources give no indication of discomfort or perceived tension between prayer strictly construed as "communication with God," and prayer which addresses the community.³² There can be no doubt that these exceptions demand greater attention.

In addition to these two mid-Amidah addresses, and those treated in detail in this study, numerous other talmudic ritual recitations addressed to beings other than God further weaken Heinemann's argument. One such example appears in the *second* of the two central rituals of rabbinic liturgy, the Shema.³³ Talmudic sources describe a practice whereby the prayer leader

²⁸ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 11–12, cites Heinemann's problem and solution, which he views as acceptable. Hoffman then proceeds to identify a different problem with the text that Heinemann's approach ignores, one of social structure (12–15). I have argued that Heinemann's solution, even to his own question, is not sufficient and actually demands a social structural analysis of its own, albeit a different one than Hoffman's.

²⁹ M. Ta'anit 2:4.

³⁰ Or seven. See M. Ta'anit 2:2 and 2:4 and Maimonides, *Commentary to the Mishnah*, to 2:4.

³¹ Heinemann argues that the earlier version of the tradition appears in a parallel tosefta (Ta'anit 1:13), in which the address is made not during the *berakhah* itself, but rather, in between blessings, after each set of shofar blasts. Nonetheless, the mishnah cannot simply be dismissed as a textual corruption. The text as we have it is witnessed in all extant manuscripts, as well as in discussions of the mishnah in talmudic passages. Moreover, the tosefta's version, while not explicitly citing an address to the community within the prayer texts, features a seamless movement from sermon to prayer in a way that implies that both are in some way addressed toward the community. The clear implication of the tosefta is that it is the same person, the elder of the community, who addresses the people with a sermon and then moves directly into praying "before the people" (T. Berakhot 1:8–9): *זקן שבהם או לפניהם דברי כיבושין . . . או לפניהן עשרים וארבע ברכות* "their elder statesman says words of penitence before them . . . he says before them 24 blessings . . ."

³² See, however, T. Ta'anit 1:3, which preserves a different order. The relationship between the mishnah and tosefta is not easy to determine.

³³ See Fleischer, "*Ha-pores al shema*," 133–44, and the literature quoted there.

would address the opening of the Shema, שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד, "Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one," to the community.³⁴ According to some scholars, he would even recite the continuation of the Shema in dialogue with the community.³⁵ In two other cases, the leader of the pre- and post-Shema Blessings³⁶ and of the Grace After Meals³⁷ opens those blessings with a call to all those gathered to bless God. The call reads, ברכו את ה', "Bless the Lord," or ברכו את ה' המבורך, "Bless the Lord, who is blessed."³⁸

There are also numerous atypical liturgical addresses in non-synagogue contexts. These addresses tend to reflect an even stronger social component. In Chapter 5, on the topic of the Cemetery Blessing, I will discuss the direct address to the mourners and the comforters in the Mourner's Liturgy.³⁹ In another ritual recitation addressed to a human being, the celebrants at a circumcision respond to the father's blessings of his just-circumcised son:⁴⁰ כשם שהכנסתו בברית כן תכניסוהו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים, "Just as you entered him into the covenant, so may you enter him into Torah, the bridal canopy, and good deeds." All of these cases can be seen as ritualized social interactions rather than liturgical recitations addressed to humans.⁴¹ But they raise the possibility that the more exotic ritual recitations that inhabit the chapters of this work (like those addressed to angels and dead people) also represent ritualized social interactions with those supra-mundane beings.

Talmudic literature preserves other cases of second-person address to beings other than God in semi-liturgical yet spontaneous contexts.⁴² For example, the Bavli⁴³ states: "There are four [classes of people] who are required

³⁴ M. Megillah 4:5; T. Megillah 3:27; Leviticus Rabbah, *Aḥarei Mot* 23, s.v. "Rabbi Ḥannan"; B. Soṭah 30b.

³⁵ See previous note.

³⁶ M. Berakhot 7:3.

³⁷ M. Berakhot 7:3; B. Berakhot 43b.

³⁸ The sources provide an alternative formula that is not addressed in the second person to the community, instead using the cohortative, וברך, "Let us bless ..." See M. Berakhot 7:3.

³⁹ B. Ketubbot 8a.

⁴⁰ T. Berakhot 6:12. The same language appears in Y. Berakhot 9:3, 14, and Ecclesiastes Rabbah 3:3, s.v. "davar aḥer eit." All extant manuscripts of B. Shabbat 137b (MSS Munich 95, Moscow – Guenzburg 1337–1338, Oxford Opp. Add. fol., and Vatican 108) contain that text as well. In contrast, the printed editions of the Talmud – like printed editions of the prayer book to this day – eliminate the second-person address altogether and read, כשם שנכנס לברית כן תכנס לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים, "Just as he entered into the covenant, so may he enter into Torah, the bridal canopy, and good deeds."

⁴¹ For an example of work on ritualized social interactions, see Deal and Kennedy, *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*.

⁴² Form criticism raises the question of whether such recitations reflect more ritualized recitations that have been embedded into narrative contexts.

⁴³ B. Berakhot 54b.

to offer thanksgiving [after escaping from a life-threatening situation].” In that context, a story is told of Rabbi Yehudah, who recovered from illness. He was greeted by Rabbi Ḥana of Baghdad and other rabbis with the blessing, גִּירָא בְּעִינֵיהּ דִּיהֶבֶךְ נִיהֲלֵן וְלֹא יִהְיֶה לְעַפְרָא “Blessed be the All Merciful who has given you back to us and has not given you to the dust.” Rabbi Yehudah responds, “You have exempted me of the obligation of giving thanks.”

Even less formal (though perhaps more fixed and oft-used) than the previous ritual recitation is an apotropaic line addressed, in some of its versions, directly to הַשָּׂטָן (Satan). The Bavli⁴⁴ tells the story of one Plimo, who would recite a brief counter-demonic incantation or curse (גִּירָא בְּעִינֵיהּ דְּשָׂטָן, “An arrow in the eye of Satan!”) on a daily basis. Talmudic texts that quote the recitation differ on whether it should read גִּירָא בְּעִינֵיהּ, “an arrow in *his* eye,” or גִּירָא בְּעִינֶיךָ, “an arrow in *your* eye,” in the second person.⁴⁵ Other spontaneous or non-statutory recitations might also fall into this category.⁴⁶

While the number of such rituals addressed to non-Divine beings would rise were I to include ritual addresses of likely talmudic date found in early prayer books, this study limits itself to rituals that are demonstrably talmudic. We will consider the phenomenon of the atypical addressee primarily for quality over quantity, relevance to our understanding of rabbinic prayer rather than prevalence within rabbinic prayer. That said, I call attention, especially in connection with the Post-Scroll Blessing of Chapter 4, to the tendency for later liturgical traditions to eliminate earlier cases of the atypical addressee. As a result, I argue, it is impossible to ascertain fully the phenomenon’s prevalence during the rabbinic period. But even granting that it was a genuine exception to the rule, this exception has much to teach about talmudic liturgy, about all ritual speech, and about prayer in particular.

Address to Non-Divine Beings and Rabbinic Monotheism

That these recitations with atypical addressees reflect a broader conception of prayer is not the only possible explanation of the dataset. Perhaps it is not the rabbinic conception of prayer that must be reconsidered but rather the rabbinic conception of the divine. One might ask: Were the rabbis indeed the monotheists most presume they were?

⁴⁴ B. Qiddushin 81a.

⁴⁵ B. Qiddushin 81a vs. B. Qiddushin 29b–30a. Some witnesses of the latter do read גִּירָא בְּעִינֵיהּ, but a number of the best witnesses read as above: MSS Munich, Cambridge T-S NS 329.1015 and the Spanish (1489 or later) and Venice (1520) editions. See later discussion of this text, pp. 60–61.

⁴⁶ See, for example, Y. Mo‘ed Qaṭan 3:7, 83c; B. Berakhot 7a, 57b, 58a; and B. Bava Mezi‘a 86a, as interpreted in Wieder, *Hitgabshut nusah ha-tefillah*, 1:131.

Formulations of the extent and nature of divine singularity varied among late-antique Jews.⁴⁷ Two recent scholarly trends have challenged, if indirectly, the previously unquestioned presumption that the rabbis were the staunchest of monotheists. The first set of scholars has challenged the very application of the term monotheism to *any* ancient culture.⁴⁸ Thus, for example, Paula Fredriksen⁴⁹:

Ancient monotheism means “one god on top,” with other gods ranged beneath, lower than and in some sense subordinate to the high god. ... Paul, for example – often identified as an “exclusive” monotheist – complains about the lesser divinities who try to frustrate his mission (2 Cor. 4:4, the *theos tou kosmou toutou*) ... “Indeed, there are many gods and many lords,” he says to his Gentiles in Corinth; but they are to worship only the god of Israel through his son (1 Cor. 8:5–6). These lower cosmic powers whom the nations worship through cultic acts performed before idols will themselves acknowledge the superior authority of the god of Israel once Christ returns to defeat them and to establish his father’s kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24–27) ... Paul certainly “believes in” these other gods, meaning that he knows that they exist and that they can have and have had real effects. He just does not worship them. Neither, he insists, should his Gentiles.

While Fredriksen here cites Paul as her one example of the “non-exclusiveness” of an ancient considered “an ‘exclusive’ monotheist,” one of her central characterizations of Paul does not hold true for the rabbis. Like Paul, the rabbis believed in divine beings other than the Lord of Israel. Unlike Paul, however, the rabbis did *not* refer to these beings as gods. In striking contrast to much of the biblical literature, talmudic literature consistently

⁴⁷ For some recent treatments of the topic, see Segal, *Two Powers*, 60–80, 182–204, 260–67; Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 89–127, and “Making of a Heresy,” 331–70; Stuckenbruck, *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, 1–15; Schremer, “Two Powers in Heaven Revisited,” 230–54; Goshen-Gottstein, “The Case of Two Powers,” 15–43; Smith, *God in Translation*, 294–300; Horbury, “Jewish and Christian Monotheism,” 16–44; and Dunn, “Was Jesus a Monotheist?,” 104–19, especially 104–107. For examination of the spectrum of monotheism among medievals, see especially Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 256–69. See also Hayman, “Monotheism: A Misused Word,” 1–15. On angel cults in late antiquity, see Lesses, “Speaking with Angels,” 41–60, and Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*, 67–68. On magic and monotheism, see Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 84–87. On Logos theology and monotheism, see Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 89–127. See also Hurtado, *One Lord, One God*, 28–35. It should be noted that even Jewish groups that evince a radically lower grade of monotheism than the rabbis still saw themselves as monotheists on some basic level. Thus, in his introduction to *Sefer Ha-Razim* (14), Margoliot notes that even the author of this work, in which libations and incense are offered to angels, and prayers are recited to heavenly bodies, can assert confidently that “there is no god apart from Him, and there is no god beside Him” (seventh firmament, lines 24–25).

⁴⁸ See Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement,” 241–43; and Hayman, “Monotheism: A Misused Word,” 1–15. For some of the recent problematizations of the term monotheism that do not go as far as do Fredriksen and Hayman’s call for “retiring” the word completely, see Schäfer, *Jewish Jesus*, 1–20; Peppard, *Son of God in the Roman World*, 9–30; Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 145–74; Smith, *God in Translation*, 3–26.

⁴⁹ Fredriksen, “Mandatory Retirement,” 241–42.

uses clearly differentiated terminology to distinguish God from other divine beings. Moreover, unlike Paul, the rabbis often referred to all gods other than their own as lacking any substance, “אין בהם ממש.”⁵⁰ Among other contexts, in fact, they specifically emphasize this lack of power and substance in the context of denying the efficacy of prayer to these other gods.⁵¹ In contrast to prayer to other *gods*, the efficacy of prayer to angels is not completely rejected; it is merely compared unenthusiastically with efficaciousness of direct appeal to God, which talmudic texts promote in its stead.⁵² What made appeal to these angels so much less egregious than prayer to other gods was precisely the recognition of the limits of these beings’ divinity⁵³ and their ultimate dependence on God.⁵⁴

Given that the rabbis viewed appeal to angels or other supra-natural beings as inferior to conventional prayer, it is not surprising that not many rituals of this sort are cited in talmudic literature. Indeed, the majority of the non-divine addressees amongst talmudic ritual recitations are typical humans. At the same time, due partially to the inferiority of such appeal, those few instances of supra-natural address are also not treated with particular concern by the rabbis. One might even argue that the power that inhered in angels was akin to the ritual power that inhered in many other religiously significant entities rather than the sovereign power of a king or emperor. Thus, we will see in Chapters 2 and 3 that licit – even prescribed – magic appears in numerous talmudic contexts. Unlike prayerful appeal to angels and other supra-natural powers, this magic was often considered quite effective. Sometimes address to supra-natural beings like angels plays a role in that magic; but just as often, such practices appeal to the ritual power that inheres within religiously significant humans, groups, and institutions, or within Scripture itself and God himself, rather than relying on supra-natural beings.⁵⁵ Their power was ritual power, not sovereign power; angelic power often seems to be quite the same.

Ultimately, the rabbinic perspective of God as on a different plane of existence from other divine or supra-natural beings differs fundamentally

⁵⁰ See, for example, Exodus Rabbah 1:32, s.v. “*ve-la-kohen*”; Deuteronomy Rabbah 2:20; Lamentations Rabbah, *pet.* 24, s.v. “*Rabbi Yoḥanan*”; B. Sanhedrin 63b. There is also a clear appreciation of the irony in the expression – that material idols have no substance in comparison to the God who can be neither seen nor touched.

⁵¹ See, for example, Midrash Tanḥuma, *Vayeze* 4, s.v. “*yelamdenu*”; Midrash Tehillim 31:3, s.v. “*davar aher*”; *Midrash Aseret Ha-Dibrot*, as cited in *Oẓar Ha-Midrashim*, 453, 17.

⁵² See pp. 76–77.

⁵³ For example, the relative superiority of humans, in all their imperfection, over sterilely perfect angels is a recurring theme in rabbinic literature. See Urbach, *Sages*, 143–54, and Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen*, 41–74.

⁵⁴ See cross-references in n. 52.

⁵⁵ See pp. 109–14.

from Paul's monotheism as described by Fredriksen. Whether for genuine or polemical reasons, Paul's use of overlapping terminology for lower and higher deities and his recognition of the potency of the former distinguishes his monotheism from rabbinic monotheism. As Fredriksen herself notes, numerous forms and forces of ancient monotheism existed. But contrary to Fredriksen's call for the "mandatory retirement" of the term monotheism, this reality instead calls for greater precision in describing and differentiating the numerous forms of ancient monotheism that existed.⁵⁶ Both the rabbis and Paul, for example, can and should be called monotheists, but their monotheism must be differentiated and delineated much more carefully and clearly than a generic label of monotheism can accomplish. Only then can the proper historical conclusions be reached. In the case of the rabbis, ritual address to angels cannot simply be dismissed as a reflection of a "lower grade monotheism." Rather, this complex ritual phenomenon must be examined more carefully.

The second recent challenge to a more conventional rabbinic monotheism arises from the scholarly promotion of what Daniel Boyarin calls "Jewish binitarianism." Based on phenomena like Philo's *Logos* and the Hekhalot's Metatron, Boyarin and others have argued that many, if not most, Jews in the first century CE attributed some sort of "two-ness" to God.⁵⁷ Boyarin even includes Jews on the periphery of rabbinic circles amongst his Jewish binitarians – what he calls "pre- and pararabbinic Judaism,"⁵⁸ like the targumic tradition of the *Meimra*, which scholars have associated with the *Logos*.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Fredriksen notes correctly students of religion often employ the term indiscriminately, either unaware of the extent of the differences between different forms of ancient monotheism or paying lip service to them but still applying later or more exclusive forms of monotheism to religious cultures that were not monotheistic in such ways. But the existence of numerous such subtle differences is all the more reason that the term is necessary. A case in point is Fredriksen's own reliance on the term numerous times in differentiating various forms of ancient monotheism; for example, a reality in which "Valentinus, Marcion, [and] Justin twined together two originally separate strands of monotheism – from the pagan side ... the monotheist principles of *paideia*, influenced by Platonism ... from the Jewish side ... biblical monotheism" to create yet a third form (242). What Fredriksen then should be calling for is an honest assessment of an individual or culture's specific form of monotheism, a proper characterization of that monotheism, with the appropriate historical conclusions to be drawn therefrom. In fact, if anything Fredriksen does not go far enough in recognizing the full breadth in that spectrum of monotheisms, skipping straight from late-antique forms of monotheism to the monotheism of "modern science," which "swept away a lot of cosmic clutter, reducing radically the number of divine personalities needed earlier to account for the way the world worked" (243).

⁵⁷ See Boyarin's "The Gospel of the Memra," 243–84, "Making of a Heresy," 331–70, and *Border Lines*, 120–27. See also Wolfson, *Through a Speculum*, 256–69, and Abrams, "Boundaries of Divine Ontology," 291–321.

⁵⁸ *Border Lines*, 106, 112, and 290.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 105–27.

Others have sided with Mark Smith's more sober assessment that this approach "exceeds available evidence."⁶⁰

Even the proponents of Jewish binitarianism have not cited talmudic recitations addressed to beings other than God, most likely because they see such rituals as doing little to further their arguments.⁶¹ The only hints at a less-than-conventionally monotheistic reading of such rituals comes from scholars who attribute them squarely to *non*-rabbinic groups. In Chapter 2, we will see that E. E. Urbach questions the rabbinic origins of the Pre-Privy Recitation addressing angels.⁶² What Urbach fails to explain is why the text appears in two separate talmudic texts, one of which even questions and reformulates it, and yet neither text expresses the slightest sign of

⁶⁰ *God in Translation*, 297. See also, Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 261, and Bucur, "Early Christian Binitarianism," 103.

⁶¹ Most of the arguments are based on aggadic texts, which must be treated carefully before drawing conclusions regarding rabbinic theology. The few times the proponents of Jewish binitarianism refer to ritual texts, the arguments are particularly weak. See, for example Boyarin, "Gospel of the Memra," 257: "even among rabbinic circles, it was possible to pray to both 'The Lord of All' and the 'Creator of Bere'shit [= Creation].'" The attribution of parallel designations for God in the famous *Aleinu/Alai Leshabeaḥ* prayer as a sign of binitarianism is particularly unconvincing when viewed in literary context, in which the *entire first half* of the prayer is constructed of doublets (*Siddur Rav Sa'adyah*, 221):

It is our duty to praise the Lord of All/to ascribe greatness to the Creator of Creation	עלינו לשבח לאדון הכללתת גדולה ליוצר בראשית
Who has not made us like the nations of the lands/nor placed us like the families of the lands	שלא עשאנו כגויי הארצותולא שמנו כמשפחות הארצות
Who has not made our portion like theirs/nor our destiny like all their multitudes.	שלא שם חלקנו מהםולוגורלנו ככל המונים
For they worship vanity and meaninglessness/and pray to a god who cannot save	שהם משתחווים להבל וריקוומתפללים אל אל לא יושיע
Whereas we worship the King of all kings, Blessed be He	ואנו משתחווים למלך מלכי המלכים ברוך הוא
Who extends the heavens/and establishes the earth Whose throne of glory is in the heavens above/and whose power's Presence is in the highest of heights.	נוטה שמיםוליוסד ארץ מושב יקרו בשמים ממעלוושכינת עזו בגבהי מרומים.

Boyarin would not claim that other parallels in this list – "our portion" and "our destiny," for example – represent differentiated entities; "The Lord of All" and the "Creator of Bere'shit" should be no different. They represent rhetorical – rather than theological – doublets. The one exception to the pattern of rhetorical doublets in this section of the prayer, the intentional omission of any parallel within the climactic line of the entire prayer, in fact contrasts Jewish worship to that of the other nations. The absence of any parallel within the line, "whereas we worship the King of all kings, Blessed be He," if anything, emphasizes the *singularity* of "the Lord of All" and the "Creator of Bere'shit," in contrast to the objects of other nations' worship.

⁶² See pp. 75–76. While Urbach bases himself more on linguistics than on addressee, it is hard to imagine that the unique character of this recitation, its addressee in particular, did not influence his thinking on the matter.

unease with the ritual or with its address to the angels. Ultimately, these recitations demand a broader and more sophisticated conception of rabbinic prayer rather than a cavalier dismissal of the monotheism they represent.

Another indication of the conventionally monotheistic character of these rituals is the lack of distinction – in talmudic treatment, ritual language, and performative context⁶³ – between rituals with atypical addressees and the other talmudic prayers addressed directly to God. To continue with the example of the Pre-Privy Recitation that Urbach considered non-rabbinic, the recitation appears in its talmudic context among a set of six⁶⁴ or ten⁶⁵ ritual recitations, all of which – with this one exception – *do* fit conventional definitions of prayer.⁶⁶

In both Talmuds, the recitation is paired with a typical blessing, Asher Yazar (“Who Created Man”), which is recited upon leaving the privy. This pair stands as part of a larger unit of recitations made before or after entering and leaving certain places or activities: large cities, bathhouses, blood-letting, sleep, and the privy.⁶⁷ On compositional and redactional levels, each of the embedded prayer texts appears within the same stereotyped, literary frame: “One who enters ‘x’ recites two prayers/blessings, one before entering and one before leaving.” *All* of the ritual recitations other than the one preceding entrance into the privy present the typical formal and literary features found in countless rabbinic prayer texts. They open either with the blessing formula, “Blessed is [the Lord],”⁶⁸ or with the almost as common, “May it be your will, Lord, my God, that ...;” and they close with, “I give thanks to you, Lord, my God, for ...”. That all of the other recitations *do* fit the typical style and content of rabbinic prayer – and that they are all treated the same way by the composers and redactors of the passages – highlights the uniqueness of this address to the angels; but it also suggests that the composers and redactors of these passages did not see the ritual as notably different from the conventional prayers and blessings among which it appears.

⁶³ Of course, the extent to which performative context can be reconstructed varies from case to case.

⁶⁴ In the Yerushalmi, 9:4, 14b. See Appendices 2B and 2C.

⁶⁵ In the Bavli, 60a–b. See Appendices 2B and 2C.

⁶⁶ See Heinemann, *Ha-tefillah bi-tequfat ha-tanna'im ve-ha-amora'im*, 52–66 and 100–101.

⁶⁷ B. Berakhot 60a–b; Y. Berakhot 9:4, 14b. For a lengthier literary analysis of the Babylonian passage discussing recitations made before entering and leaving various places, see Marx, “The Early Morning Ritual,” 135–43.

⁶⁸ On whether blessing formulae like ברוך אשר יצר ..., should be translated “blessed is he who created...” or whether with an ellipse – “blessed are you, Lord, king of the universe, who created ...” – see Groner, *Berakhot she-nishtaqe'u*, 23–24. Such blessing formulae appear numerous times in this book and are translated simply “blessed is he who ...” But the same question applies in almost all such cases. See also later in this book, pp. 257–58.

Once one considers rituals addressed to beings other than God as belonging to one data set, it will be difficult to see these recitations as the product of anything other than the rabbinic monotheism that emerges from the sources; one that, while recognizing angelic divinity, distinguished decidedly between angels and God. Rituals addressed to supernatural beings like angels and the dead are treated like the rituals addressed to humans, such as fellow worshipers or ritual courts. In fact, addresses to supernatural beings are the minority in the data set, both individually and as a category.⁶⁹ Explanations for these rituals that do not presume a divine plurality – whether social, magical, or otherwise – must be considered.

Similarly, the Pre-Privy Prayer example highlights another factor that points to the typical rabbinic monotheism underlying these rituals: the lack of opposition to or tension regarding these rituals in the rabbinic sources that cite them. Even Boyarin, who considers the possibility of rabbinic or pararabbinic binitarianism, sees such binitarianism as peripheral to and controversial within rabbinic Judaism. Talmudic sources routinely levy potential and real legal and theological challenges to any matter they address, often intentionally exaggerating and often exacerbating them. In fact, one defining feature of talmudic literature is its emphasis on and celebration of such problematization, even in the absence of any obvious tensions (legal, theological, or otherwise). Thus, when rabbis found a ritual text to be theologically objectionable, they protested with vigor.⁷⁰ The absence of such protest or problematization in the treatment of these non-Divine ritual addresses therefore demands explanation. The extent of the controversy caused by these very same rituals in medieval sources⁷¹ only highlights the absence of any tension over the matter in talmudic sources. It also highlights the need to explain that absence.

We will consider the possibility in Chapter 6 that opposition to the Creation Blessing was linked indirectly to concerns of veneration of a non-Divine body – the sun. However, that blessing is not one of the rituals with atypical addressees. Rather, it serves as a control for the other test cases in this study, all of which share in common their atypical addressee. We will encounter precise parallels between the lists of heavenly bodies for whose viewing the Creation Blessing is recited in the Bavli and in *Sefer Ha-Razim*. In fact, they share precisely the same list of heavenly bodies. However, unlike its rabbinic counterpart, in *Sefer Ha-Razim*, the sun *is* addressed.⁷²

⁶⁹ See p. 4.

⁷⁰ See, for example, M. Berakhot 5:3; M. Megillah 4:8–9; or T. Berakhot 6:20.

⁷¹ For sources on ritual address to angels in medieval sources, see Emmanuel, “*Al amirat makhnisei raḥamim*,” 5–11. For sources on ritual address to the dead in medieval sources, see Horowitz, “Speaking to the Dead,” 303–17.

⁷² The remarkably venerative language in *Sefer Ha-Razim* will help us appreciate Rabbi Yehuda’s strong censure of the Creation Blessing in the Tosefta, despite its formulary

The rabbis' general commitment to a stronger version of monotheism than many of their contemporaries has been noted. The coexistence of that monotheism with ritual texts addressed to angels and the dead, on the other hand, has not; and it is worthy of note. The apparent tension between exclusive worship of one God and ritual address to beings other than God is resolved if the rabbis saw these addresses as serving essentially rhetorical purposes, a possibility we will often consider.⁷³ But even if these addresses were seen as real communication, not merely apostrophic,⁷⁴ I will argue that the rabbis distinguished clearly between ritual *communication* and *reverence*. Moreover, even when God is not the addressee of a ritual, I will demonstrate that he still can be, and often is, a ritual recitation's "target audience."⁷⁵ The fact that these rituals were not seen as conflicting with a monotheistic worldview enriches our understanding of both, and of rabbinic prayer generally.

Ritual Speech Acts

Our emphasis on ritual communication, as opposed to reverence, moves the inquiry away from a primary focus on theology to one on ritual speech. Besides classical literary and historical analysis, this focus on rabbinic prayer as ritual speech will take two interdisciplinary approaches, those of ritual studies⁷⁶ and of speech act theory.⁷⁷ Ritual prayer – Jewish and

innocuousness. This reminds us that the language of a blessing is hardly the lone factor in considering the import of the blessing. See pp. 237–42.

⁷³ Cases in which the addressee is more likely completely rhetorical will not be addressed in this study, though the very distinction between rhetorical and apostrophic address will be called into question. See, for example, M. Sukkah 4:5.

⁷⁴ By apostrophic address, I mean a figure of speech in which a speaker addresses someone or something not normally the target of communication, and not the communicative target of the speech under discussion. Thus, for example, the apocryphal Psalm "Apostrophe to Zion" is not a literal communication with Zion so much as an emotional address to a personified Zion. Similarly, the address to the deceased in this blessing, if understood as apostrophic, would serve some rhetorical or emotive goal but would not be considered communication with the dead.

⁷⁵ On the distinction between addressee and target, see pp. 16–21.

⁷⁶ Still in its early stages, the field of ritual studies seeks to understand ritual – broadly understood to include rites, ceremonies, religious and even secular performances – in their numerous contexts, in accordance with their varied performances, processes, roles, and meanings for individuals and communities, nations, and religions. Its interdisciplinary approach employs scholarship from anthropology, religious studies, sociology, psychology, performance studies, ancient, medieval, early modern and contemporary history, area studies, philosophy, art, literature, dance, and music. For background and bibliography, see Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies and Readings in Ritual Studies*; Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*; and Kreinath et al., eds., *Theorizing Rituals*. For examples

otherwise – has received surprisingly little attention among scholars taking a ritual studies approach.⁷⁸ Perhaps because of the emphasis in ritual studies on the performative component of ritual, research employing ritual studies has focused largely on rituals that are primarily non-verbal. Nevertheless, since the founding of speech act theory, it has been emphasized that speech is just as performative as non-verbal performance. In recent years there has also been greater recognition of the enormous non-verbal component to prayer.⁷⁹

The great anthropologist and ritual theorist Stanley Tambiah puts speech acts at the forefront of his highly regarded performative definition of ritual.⁸⁰ Tambiah defines ritual as a

culturally constructed system of symbolic communication ... constituted of patterned and ordered sequences of words and acts, often expressed in multiple media, whose content and arrangement are characterized in varying degree by formality (conventionality), stereotypy (rigidity), condensation (fusion), and redundancy (repetition).⁸¹

Tambiah first attaches equal importance to “sequences of words and acts.” Then he proceeds further, placing these “sequences of words” at the center of his definition. “Ritual action in its constitutive feature is performative,” says Tambiah,

of more recent developments, see Sax, *The Problem of Ritual Efficacy*; Seligman, *Ritual and Its Consequences*; and recent publications in the *Journal for Ritual Studies*.

⁷⁷ Ascribed to the mid-twentieth century linguist J. L. Austin, this interdisciplinary field has illuminated the ability of language to do things other than describe reality (Green, “Speech Acts,” <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2009/entries/speech-acts/>). For example, the sentence “I bet you it will rain tomorrow” does not just describe a reality; it often performs the act of betting. Similarly, “I now pronounce you man and wife,” does not just describe the state of marriage but, in some traditions, performs it. Austin called these sentences “speech acts,” since they are not merely descriptive, but performative. For background and bibliography on speech act theory, see Bach, “Speech Acts,” and Green, “Speech Acts.”

⁷⁸ Thus, for example, in the index of Catherine Bell’s *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, “prayer” is not even an entry. Similarly, Kreinath et al.’s *Theorizing Rituals*, a 777-page collection of articles that aims to address ritual theory from its many different angles, features an extensive index in which “prayer” appears nowhere. A look at one of the editors’ definitions of ritual offers one possible explanation. In an expanded list of 24 defining characteristics of ritual, the term “God” or “divine” does not appear once. See Snoek, “Defining ‘Rituals,’” 11. More individualized treatments of the topic produce similar results. For example, the significant index in the back of Roy Rappaport’s magnum opus, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*, turns up one citation about “prayer and efficacy” in the 535-page book – a single paragraph reference, which refers to the efficacy of prayer, drugs, and “similar” rituals, such as “voodoo death.”

⁷⁹ See, for example, Ehrlich, *Nonverbal Language of Prayer*.

⁸⁰ For a comprehensive list of the leading scholarly definitions of ritual, see Grimes, “Appendixes for The Craft of Ritual Studies” (<http://oxrit.twohornedbull.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/grimes-craft-appendixes.pdf>), 2–7.

⁸¹ Tambiah, “A Performative Approach to Ritual,” 128.

in the Austinian sense of performative, wherein saying something is also doing something as a conventional act.

Tambiah refers here to J. L. Austin's classification of performatives, in which Austin distinguishes between locutionary and illocutionary acts – between the *meaning* of words and the *force* of one's words, between what one's words *say* and what one's words *do*.⁸² Informing, ordering, warning, and undertaking are, according to Austin's classification, all examples of illocutionary acts.⁸³

According to Austin's classification, there is also a third type of speech act: the perlocutionary act. Austin defines the perlocutionary act as "what we bring about or achieve" in relation to others "by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say surprising or misleading."⁸⁴ Because of numerous theoretical and practical problems with Austin's and others' methods of distinguishing illocutions from perlocutions (and the relative unimportance of the manner or the fact of the distinction for my purposes), I will focus on both together, simply referring to them as illocutions, by which I mean all extra-locutionary speech acts.⁸⁵

In introducing the perlocutionary act, Austin makes the basic point that:

Saying something often, or even normally, produces consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of *the audience, or of the speaker, or of another person*: and it *may* be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them.⁸⁶

Austin here notes that a given utterance can have a number of possible goals, since the speaker's words can affect the speaker himself, the addressee, or the other hearers. This is especially true of utterances as complex as ritual speech. Indeed some scholars view the overlap, often the indistinguishability, between performer and audience as one of the defining

⁸² Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 121. See also Bach and Harnish, *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts*, 3–4, 13, 34, 42–55, 113–16.

⁸³ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 109. Subsequent scholars, starting with Searle, expanded the category of the locutionary act to include the act of speaking words and the formation of meaning. Regardless of what one says with one's words, says Searle, one is always doing something (Searle, "Austin on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts," 405–24). While I will follow Searle's important modification, it is the illocutions beyond the formation of meaning that are of primary relevance to this study.

⁸⁴ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 109.

⁸⁵ See Gu, "The Impasse of Perlocution," 415–32, and the extensive literature quoted there. See also Reich, "The Cooperative Nature of Communicative Acts," and Huang, "Communicative Acts: Intentionality, Contextuality and Reciprocity," 116–22. Its difficulties notwithstanding, the model of classical pragmatics better serves our purposes than that of post-Gricean pragmatics. On the continued relevance of pre-Gricean speech act theory, see Korta, "Pragmatics" (<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/pragmatics/>).

⁸⁶ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 101, emphasis added.