

שָׂאוּ שַׁעְרֵיכֶם וּשְׂאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם

S'u Sh'arim roshaychem, u's'u pitchay olam

Lift up your head, oh you gates; lift them up you everlasting doors! (Psalm 24: 9)

וּפְתַח לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵב הַרְחָמִים אֲדוֹן הַסְּלִיחוֹת בְּזֶה הַשָּׁבוּעַ
וּבְכָל־שָׁבוּעַ שַׁעְרֵי אֹרְחָה, שַׁעְרֵי אֶרֶךְ יָמִים וְשָׁנִים, שַׁעְרֵי אַרְיֵכַת אַפִּים,
שַׁעְרֵי בְרָכָה, שַׁעְרֵי בִינָה, שַׁעְרֵי גִילָה, שַׁעְרֵי גְדֻלָּה, שַׁעְרֵי גְאֻלָּה, שַׁעְרֵי
גְבוּרָה, שַׁעְרֵי דִיצָה, שַׁעְרֵי דַעַת, שַׁעְרֵי הוֹד, שַׁעְרֵי הָדָר, שַׁעְרֵי
הַצְּלָחָה, שַׁעְרֵי הַרְוָחָה, שַׁעְרֵי נְעֵד טוֹב, שַׁעְרֵי נְתִיקוֹת, שַׁעְרֵי זְרִיזוֹת,
שַׁעְרֵי זְמֶרָה, שַׁעְרֵי זְכוּיוֹת, שַׁעְרֵי זִיו, שַׁעְרֵי זֵהָר תוֹרָה, שַׁעְרֵי זֵהָר
חֲכָמָה, שַׁעְרֵי זֵהָר בִּינָה, שַׁעְרֵי זֵהָר דַּעַת, שַׁעְרֵי חֲדוּת, שַׁעְרֵי חֲמֵלָה,
שַׁעְרֵי חֵן וְחֶסֶד, שַׁעְרֵי חַיִּים טוֹבִים, שַׁעְרֵי חֲכָמָה, שַׁעְרֵי טוֹבָה, שַׁעְרֵי
טָהָר, שַׁעְרֵי יְשׁוּעָה, שַׁעְרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, שַׁעְרֵי בְּפָרָה, שַׁעְרֵי בְּלִפְלָה, שַׁעְרֵי
כְבוֹד, שַׁעְרֵי לְמוֹד, שַׁעְרֵי מְזוֹן, שַׁעְרֵי מְנוּחוֹת, שַׁעְרֵי מְחִילוֹת, שַׁעְרֵי
מַדְעָה, שַׁעְרֵי גְחֵמָה, שַׁעְרֵי גְקִיוֹת, שַׁעְרֵי סְלִיחָה, שַׁעְרֵי סִיעָתָא רְשָׁמְיָא,
שַׁעְרֵי עֲזָרָה, שַׁעְרֵי פְדוּת, שַׁעְרֵי פְרִנְסָה טוֹבָה, שַׁעְרֵי צְדָקָה, שַׁעְרֵי
צְהֻלָּה, שַׁעְרֵי קְדוּשָׁה, שַׁעְרֵי קוֹמְמִיוֹת, שַׁעְרֵי רְחָמִים, שַׁעְרֵי רְצוֹן,
שַׁעְרֵי רְפוּאָה שְׁלָמָה, שַׁעְרֵי שְׁלוֹם, שַׁעְרֵי שְׂמֵחָה, שַׁעְרֵי שְׂמוּעוֹת
טוֹבוֹת, שַׁעְרֵי שְׁלָחָה, שַׁעְרֵי תוֹרָה, שַׁעְרֵי תְּפִלָּה, שַׁעְרֵי תְּשׁוּבָה, שַׁעְרֵי
תְּשׁוּעָה, בְּדַכְתִּיב, וְתִשׁוּעַת צְדִיקִים מִיְהוָה מְעוֹנָם בְּעַת צָרָה. וַיַּעֲזְרֵם
יְהוָה וַיִּפְלְטֵם וַיִּפְלְטֵם מִרְשָׁעִים וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם בִּיַּחְסוֹ בּוֹ: וַנֹּאמֶר, חֲשֵׁף יְהוָה
אֶת־זְרוּעַ קִדְשׁוֹ לְעֵינֵי כָל־הַגּוֹיִם וְרָאוּ כָל־אֲפֹסֵי־אֶרֶץ אֶת יְשׁוּעַת
אֱלֹהֵינוּ: וַנֹּאמֶר, קוֹל צִפְיָךְ נִשְׂאוּ קוֹל יַחְדָּי וְרַנְּנוּ בִּי עֵין בְּעֵין יִרְאוּ בְּשׁוֹב
יְהוָה צִיּוֹן:

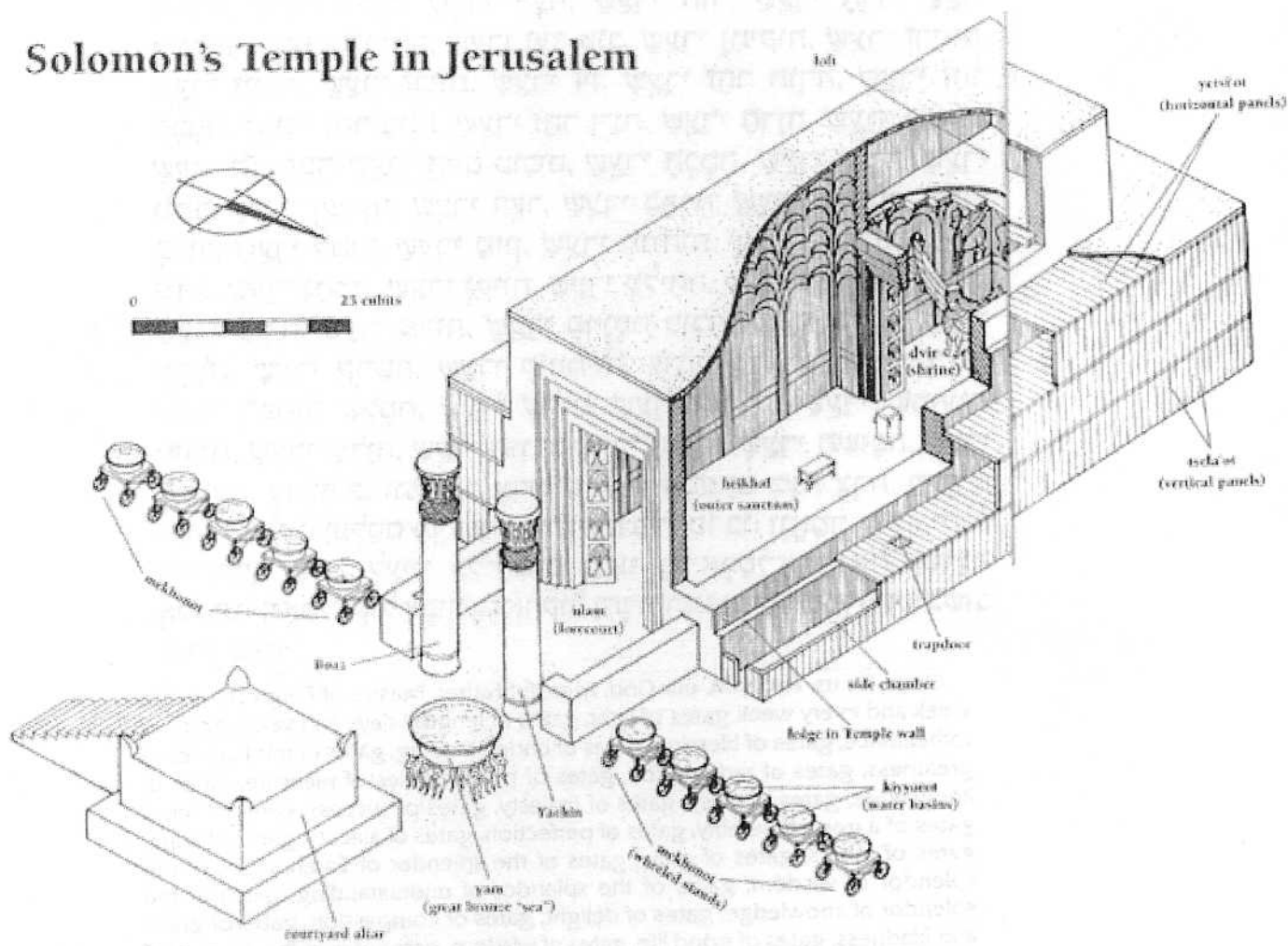
Open for us, HASHEM, our God, Merciful Father, Master of Forgiveness, this week and every week gates of light, gates of lengthy days and years, gates of forbearance, gates of blessing, gates of understanding, gates of mirth, gates of greatness, gates of redemption, gates of power, gates of pleasure, gates of knowledge, gates of glory, gates of majesty, gates of success, gates of relief, gates of a good assembly, gates of perfection, gates of alacrity, gates of song, gates of merits, gates of glow, gates of the splendor of Torah, gates of the splendor of wisdom, gates of the splendor of understanding, gates of the splendor of knowledge, gates of delight, gates of compassion, gates of grace and kindness, gates of good life, gates of wisdom, gates of goodness, gates of purity, gates of salvation, gates of uprightness, gates of atonement, gates of support, gates of honor, gates of learning, gates of food, gates of contentments, gates of forgiveness, gates of insight, gates of consolation, gates of cleanness, gates of pardon, gates of heavenly assistance, gates of help, gates of redemption, gates of sustenance, gates of charity, gates of cheerfulness, gates of holiness, gates of permanence, gates of mercy, gates of favor, gates of complete healing, gates of peace, gates of gladness, gates of good tidings, gates of tranquility, gates of Torah, gates of prayer, gates of repentance, gates of salvation. As it is written, But the salvation of the righteous is HASHEM, their might in time of distress. HASHEM helped them and caused them to escape. He will cause them to escape from the wicked and He will save them, for they took refuge in Him (Psalms 37:39-40). And it is said, HASHEM bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations and all corners of the world will see the salvation of our God (Isaiah 52:10). And it is said, The voice of your lookouts — they will raise their voice together singing glad song, for every eye will see God's return of Zion (ibid. 52:8).

I Kings 8:6, 9

וַיָּבִאוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־ה' אֶל־מְקוֹמוֹ אֶל־דְּבִיר הַבַּיִת אֶל־קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדְשִׁים אֶל־תַּחַת כַּנְּפֵי הַכְּרוּבִים :

The priests brought the Ark of the Lord's Covenant to its place underneath the wings of the cherubim, in the Shrine of the House, in the Holy of Holies.... There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets of stone which Moses placed there at Horeb.”

Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem



[Faint, illegible text visible through the paper, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]

Avodah Zarah 24b

ר' יצחק נפחא אמר רוני רוני השיטה התנופפי ברוב הדרך המחושקת בריקמי זהב
המהוללה בדביר ארמון ומפוארה בעדי עדיים

Rabbi Yitzhak Nappaḥa says: They did not recite a verse found in the Bible, but rather, the following song: **Sing, sing, acacia; ascend in all your glory; overlaid with golden embroidery, exalted by the book [*devir*] of the palace, and magnificent with jewels.** The song alludes to the Ark of the Covenant, which was made of acacia wood and covered with gold. The expression: Book of the palace, is a reference to the Torah scroll that was placed in the Ark.

Prof. Ismar Schorsch, *Lovers of Books*, March 2000

Not that "*devir*" would ever replace "*sefer*" as the common Hebrew word for book. But the redefinition of the word did encapsulate the history of Judaism. The fact is that taking refuge in a sacred book became the repeated response to national catastrophe. Thus, the book of Deuteronomy, inspired by ideas from the north, appears in Jerusalem a century after the destruction of Samaria in 722 B.C.E. The Torah takes final form in the Babylonian exile after Solomon's Temple goes up in flames in 587 B.C.E., as does the entirety of Hebrew Scripture, the Tanakh, in the wake of the razing of Herod's Temple in 70 C.E. Nor is it implausible to regard the Mishnah edited around 200 as yet another instance of literary reaction to military defeat, this time the futile Bar Kochba revolt against Rome that ended calamitously in 135.

As Judaism lost control of its sacred space, it increasingly expressed its sense of the holy in terms of a book, and it is that transformation that endowed it with the capacity to overcome the fate of exile. The sacred was now portable. God's presence assumed the form of the written word to be read publicly or studied privately anywhere. Without Scripture, the institution of the synagogue is inconceivable.

Moreover, a book is far less vulnerable than a Temple. Its destruction is not the end of its contents. According to the Talmud, when Moses broke the tablets, the letters of the Ten Commandments returned to heaven for another time (B.T. *Pesahim* 87b). The burning of the Talmud by the Church in Paris in 1242 and in Italy in 1553 made its study more difficult, but surely did not thwart it. In the fifteenth century Jews swiftly embraced the invention of printing in order to multiply copies of their sacred books.

Finally, sanctity in book form bears the seeds of democracy, especially when translated into the vernacular and made the content of public discourse. No longer the preserve of priests or susceptible to ritual pollution, Torah, Tanakh and Talmud were accessible to all. The commandment to study was seen as the obligation of every male Jew (expanded in our day to every Jew) and leadership became a function of learning.