Suite for Kabbalat Shabbat: Five Hebrew Prayers

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SUITE FOR KABBALAT SHABBAT: FIVE HEBREW PRAYERS

by

Steven J. Kaup

A DOCTORAL DOCUMENT

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Suite for Kabbalat Shabbat: Five Hebrew Prayers

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Suite for Kabbalat Shabbat: Five Hebrew Prayers is a setting of five Hebrew prayers that are presented during Kabbalat Shabbat, the welcoming portion of a customary Shabbat service. The musical setting for each prayer strives to embody characteristic feelings conveyed by the text in order to capture the essence and power of the Shabbat tradition. One of the primary goals of this composition was to explore new harmonic possibilities using tonalities derived from traditional Jewish musical structures and motivic ideas as a point of departure, and then find ways to fluidly blend them within the more common compositional practices of tertian harmony. In order to provide a unique contrast, the melodic motives are centered around two Jewish Ahava rabbah modes, with their first scale degrees set to the intervallic distance of a tri-tone. Significant elements of the harmony were derived from the juxtaposed pitches of these two scales, forming a commonly used chord throughout the entire suite that offered interesting compositional possibilities for exploration and provided flexibility when moving between the two main tonal centers that are studied.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Congregation B’nai Jeshurun of the South Street Temple in Lincoln, Nebraska who hosted the first performance and provided a warm and inviting community that inspired this work;

and to

Rabbi Craig Lewis for steering me in the right direction whenever I needed help with the liturgy. Your insight, and guidance with the historical aspects of the Kabbalat Shabbat service started me on a long journey of exploration and research that culminated in the presentation of this work.

Thank you for all your support.
I would like to express my gratitude to the members of my supervisory committee: Dr. Eric Richards, Dr. Stanley Kleppinger, Dr. Tyler White, and Dr. Christin Mamiya. Your comments, advice, and guidance regarding this work have been invaluable and have helped make this composition possible. I especially want to thank Dr. Eric Richards, my chair and composition instructor, for the knowledge and time he provided as we worked together.

I also wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Tyler White for his contribution to my instruction. Our many discussions of music, philosophy, and composition pedagogy have been instrumental in my development both as a composer and as a teacher.

I am particularly grateful to Dr. Stanley Kleppinger who has been my mentor, throughout all of my years in graduate education. He has profoundly influenced almost everything that I know about musical processes.

I never would have made it this far without the effort of so many educators that have been instrumental in my development over the years. I would like to recognize Margaret Williams, my first instructor of music who gave up so much personal time to play Beethoven for me during those early morning hours; Rita Stinner, who taught me so much about life - without her I would never have started my musical career; and Dr. Maxine Fawcett-Yeske, who guided me on the path toward a graduate degree. Finally, I want to thank Nathaniel for the sacrifice and support that he has given me over the years.
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Introduction

*Suite for Kabbalat Shabbat: Five Hebrew Prayers* is a musical setting of five Hebrew prayers that are often presented during Kabbalat Shabbat, the welcoming portion of a customary Shabbat service. This portion of the service traditionally starts before the setting of the sun in order to coincide with the start of the Jewish observation of Shabbat, which begins at sunset. It invites the worshiper to separate from the business of the week in order to refocus their attention on the central portion of the service. The traditional liturgy for this segment of the service encompasses the six Psalms ninety-five through ninety-nine and Psalm twenty-nine, with each chapter representing the six days of the week. However, it is common to use selections from these chapters in conjunction with texts taken from other portions of Jewish liturgy.¹

In the musical setting for each prayer, I strove to embody characteristic feelings conveyed by the text in order to capture the essence and power of the Shabbat tradition. One of the primary goals of this composition was to explore new harmonic possibilities using tonalities derived from traditional Jewish musical structures and motivic ideas as a point of departure, and then find ways to fluidly blend them within the more common compositional practices of tertian harmony. In order to provide a unique contrast, I

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¹ The liturgical text used throughout the suite is directly taken from traditional Jewish liturgy as found in the *Mishkan T’filah: A Reform Siddur*, Elyse D. Frishman, ed., (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2007). The final movement titled *Ani v’ ata*, uses additional English lyrics written by the composer.
chose to center the melodic motives around two Jewish *Ahava rabbah* modes, with their first scale degrees set to the intervallic distance of a tri-tone. Scale-degree one of the first mode begins on the pitch D, as shown in Example 1, and is a commonly used mode for many Jewish melodies. The first scale degree for the second mode begins on A-flat, as can be seen in Example 2, and forms a scale that is not commonly used in traditional Jewish melodies.

**Example 1**

![Example 1](image1)

**Example 2**

![Example 2](image2)

An additional note can be added by raising the seventh scale degree when necessary in order to provide the leading tone function common in Western tonality. This also provides additional harmonic flexibility when moving between modes.

An important harmony derived from the shared pitches of these two scales, and used regularly throughout the suite is a chord consisting of various iterations of two juxtaposed tri-tones. This chord contains the tri-tone E-flat and A, superimposed over the tri-tone D-flat and G. The arrangement of this harmony was derived from the shared

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2 The *Ahava rabbah* mode is more commonly recognized as synonymous with the secular Eastern European *freygish* mode, which share the same scale-degrees. Throughout the history of these two modes, more diverse practices are associated with the secular mode, which eventually had an impact on the traditional uses within the temple liturgy. For a more in-depth discussion regarding the traditional uses of the *Ahava Rabbah* mode read *Jewish Music in its Historical Development* by Abraham Z. Idelsohn, (New York: Henry Holt, 1929).
functionality of this grouping of pitches found in both modes. By vertically re-arranging these pitches, one of the chords formed would be recognized as the French augmented six chord, which has a long history within music of Western culture. However, I was specifically interested in the way this chord could function within Jewish modes and in particular, I wanted to explore the possibilities it might bring between these to Ahava rabbah modes. An examination of the function for each individual scale degree revealed that the pitches D-flat and G could both serve as raised sevenths, allowing them to function as the leading tones within their respective modes (enharmonic C-sharp to D in the D Ahava rabbah and G to A-flat in the A-flat Ahava rabbah), while each also serving as the fourth scale degree in the sister mode a tri-tone away, see Example 3 below.

Example 3

I was particularly interested in the pitches E-flat and A because they served a dual function particular to the scale degrees of these two modes. I found that each integer can function as the dominant scale degree in one mode and simultaneously the flat two scale degree in the mode a tri-tone away. This was significant because in many
Jewish melodies that employ the *Ahava rabbah* mode, the subtonic harmony contains the second scale degree, which often serves as the penultimate note to scale-degree one, creating a milder function of instability that tends to resolve to the tonic note, (observe the Baritone part, mm.79-80, in Example 4). This instability is by no means as intense as the dominant-to-tonic relationship in traditional tertian harmony. Nevertheless, it does provide interesting compositional possibilities for exploration. The arrangement of these pitches gave me flexibility with regard to the harmonic motion between the two main tonal centers that I wished to explore, and provided a link for blending traditional Jewish music with common musical practices.

**Example 4**
Kabbalat Shabbat begins with the lighting of the Shabbat candles and the recitation of the Candle Blessing. As a metaphor of the Torah and the human soul, the candles represent the light we introduce into our community and the world. Just like the flicker of the candle flame, the unstable and erratic thought increases chaos and tension, making it difficult to turn one’s attention away from the cares and worries of the past week. Through communal song and prayer, we are eventually able to focus and find that moment of peace and quiet.

By way of demonstration, the musical setting I used for the start of this prayer represents the mental chaos generated from the week’s business that must be set aside as Shabbat begins. The metaphor of the flickering candle flame is experienced throughout the first part of the prayer via the shifting meters and unstable rhythms set to dissonant harmonies. These harmonies are derived from the tonalities of the two corresponding Ahava rabbah modes with scale-degrees set to the intervallic distance of a tri-tone. The unrest derived from the dissonance between these two tonalities brings uncharacteristic tension to the first part of this simple prayer, which is expanded upon starting at m. 33 by the interruption of a contrapuntal section written for the instruments that resembles a modern twist on the exposition of a baroque fugue.

The opening subject is announced by the clarinet in the D Ahava rabbah mode. The violin answers in the A-flat Ahava rabbah mode with a statement of the subject against the countersubject in the clarinet. The cello returns to the D Ahava rabbah mode
with another statement of the subject that gradually devolves into utter chaos between all voices caused by the conflicting harmonies from the two major sounding modes. The piano enters the fray incessantly repeating a rhythmically augmented motivic fragment first stated in the opening section to the text sung by the baritone soloist, *Eloheinu Melech haolam*, meaning “sovereign of the universe.” The tension grows until the harmonies resolve to the chord that resembles the French augmented six chord in m. 52.

The ending section returns to the text of this prayer sung by the baritone and supported with harmonic tension still maintained by the unresolved nature of the derived chord, which is expanded by short motivic gestures in the instruments in contrast to the melody of the baritone. The harmonic qualities change very little throughout the entire closing section, but dynamically grow, building the tension to the point of resolution on the D major harmony in the final measure, as seen in Example 4.

*Example 5*
L’Chah Dodi

*L’Chah Dodi* is a sixteenth century prayer written by Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz, a Jewish mystic and rabbi from S’fat, Israel. This prayer accompanied the practice of a time when the ancient mystics would go out to the fields dancing in white robes to greet Shabbat; and now, as a regular part of the Kabbalat Shabbat service, it is the prayer usually sung or recited nearest to sundown in order to welcome the start of Shabbat. The words *L’chah dodi* mean “come my beloved” and are a call to come greet the *likrat kalah*, or Shabbat bride. The poetry evokes the gratification associated with completing a full day of work and the ensuing celebration that elevates the soul to the inner light of Shabbat. In an actual Shabbat service, the entire congregation traditionally rises on the last verse and turns to face the entrance in order to greet Queen Shabbat upon her arrival.

In this setting the recurring words of the chorus, *L’chah dodi*, are sung to a joyful, lighthearted dance primarily in a 7/8 meter, which is frequently interrupted by short instrumental statements that contrast the asymmetric meter with a series of mixed meters employing a 3+3+2 rhythmic pattern. This rhythm follows the styling of the traditional *freilach* dance rhythms found in many *bulgars* and *freilachs*. The chorus also features the energetic accompaniment of the violin supporting melodic exchanges between the clarinet and cello, with ornamental outbursts from the piano.

The chorus is interspersed between four verses from Shlomo’s prayer. The verses gently implore the listener to amend their thoughts by contrasting the cheerful
dance of the chorus with tonal and textural changes of a more somber nature. Each
verse employs mode mixture and modulation with steady rhythmic pulses, constructing
an environment in which one is free to unite with sincere thoughts and emotions.

**Hamaariv aravim**

The *Hamaariv aravim* prayer speaks of the oncoming darkness, the altering
seasons, the stars arranged in the heavens, and the distinction between night and day. It
invokes the great mystery of the unknown, the uncertainty of the future. When writing
the music, I imagined myself standing at the edge of space and observing the bizarre
wonders and eerie mysteries before me. The piece opens with the chord derived from
the main two modes as the harmonic background that supports a short motive. As a
means for providing tonal instability the motive is transposed through multiple
tonalities. While the motive passes between the instruments, the vocalist recites a poem
from the *siddur*, a Jewish prayer book, that was inspired by the *Haamariv aravim*
prayer, and written by the Jewish poet, Lea Goldberg. At significant points throughout
the recitation, the instruments interrupt the recitation with emphatic statements of the
motive that underscore the thought behind the text. The density of the harmony thickens
the texture, building the tension as the listener ponders the unknown. It reaches a point
of resolution with the interruption of the Bar’chu prayer.
Traditionally, the *Bar’chu* is a prayer that introduces the communal part of a Shabbat service, and is followed by a series of blessings and prayers leading to the recitation of the most sacred prayer, the *Sh’ma*. The *Bar’chu* prayer invokes a sacrificial offering of hearts dedicated to the communal recitations. The setting for the prayer comprises a simple modal melody that contrasts the eerie harmonies and complex instrumental landscape of the *Hamaariv* prayer. The piece opens with a tonal shift from the D *Ahava rabbah* mode that ends the *Hamaariv*, to a G minor mode built off of the subdominant scale degree. A similar maneuver is found in many traditional Jewish melodies and serves to change the mood and focus. The harmonic progression employs mode mixture, and concludes by moving the melody back to the familiar *Ahava rabbah* mode near the end of the prayer in order to set up for a recap of the *Hamaariv aravim* prayer.

**Ani v’ ata**

The closing prayer is not a traditional part of the Kabbalat Shabbat service. I chose this prayer because it speaks of the hope for peace, while reminding of the reality that peace will only come through *Ani v’ ata*, Hebrew for “you and I,” as we are dedicated to peacefully changing the world. The text for *Ani v’ ata* was first set to music and made popular by the famous Hebrew singer and songwriter, Arik Einstein. His song
became an anthem of hope to many people living in Israel and the United States. The setting for this suite features an opening solo for cello that evokes the melodic chanting of the Hassan, or cantor, recalling motivic elements from the familiar Kol nidre. It serves as an introduction to the main theme, which is in the minor mode and passes through distantly related keys before returning to the opening tonality and an extended restatement of the cello solo. The solo then merges into the concluding statement of the main theme.

Throughout the composition, the derived chord is transposed, and can be heard in a more conventional sense as a modulatory tool for reaching the various tonalities. While several compositional possibilities remain to be explored within the scope of the particular tonal arrangements described, my hope is that this work contributes to the growing interest in melding Jewish musical traditions, both folk and liturgical, with more common musical practices. In addition, my hope is that this composition manages to somewhat capture the essence and power of the Shabbat tradition, providing for many a moment of clarity and peace in an increasingly busy life.
Suite for Kabbalat Shabbat:
Five Hebrew Prayers

for

Clarinet
Violin
Cello
Baritone solo
Piano

by

Steven J. Kaup
Baruch ata, Adonai

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.
Baruch ata, Adonai

12

B♭ Cl.  

12

Vln.  

mp

p

mp

Pno.

12

15

a tempo

ad libitum

attaca

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

pp

B

Pno.

B-a-ruch a-tah,_______A-do-nai_______

f

f

f

f
Baruch ata, Adonai

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
Baruch ata, Adonai
Baruch ata, Adonai
Baruch ata, Adonai
Baruch ata, Adonai
Baruch ata, Adonai
Baruch ata, Adonai

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
Baruch ata, Adonai
L’ Chah Dod

B•Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

nei Shab - bat n’-ka-b’ - la

Pno.

B•Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Sha - mor v’-za-chor b’-di-bur e -
L’ Chah Dod

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

chad

hish - mi-a - nu El ha - m’ yu -

chad, A-do - nai e - chad u-sh’ mo e -
L’ Chah Dodi

Allegro (M.M. \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{c}} = 120 \))

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

chad, l’ - shem u-l’-ti-fer et v’lit-hi-lah.

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

L’ - Chah do - di li - krat ka - lah p’

Pno.
L’ Chah Dod

Bn Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

L' Chah Dod

nei Shab - bat n'ka b' - la

Bn Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
krat Shab bat l' - chu v' - neil - cha,

ki hi m' -
L’ Chah Dodi

Bs Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

Bs Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
L’ Chah Dod

Bs Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

sha - va t’chi - lah.

Pno.

Bs Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.
L' Chah Dod

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
L’ Chah Dod

Bs Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

shir da-bei-ri.

k’-vod A-do-nai
L’ Chah Dod

Allegro (M.M. \( \text{m} \) = c. 120)

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

al-ay-ich nilah. L’ Chah do-di li-

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

krat ka-lah p’ nei Shab - bat n’ ka-b’ -

Pno.
L' Chah Dod

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Bo - i

Pno.
L’ Chah Dod

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
L’ Chah Dod

[B♭ Cl.] 126

[Vln.] 126

[Vc.] 126

[B] 126

Chah do-di li- krat ka-lah p’ nei Shab-

[Pno.] 126

[B♭ Cl.] 129

[Vln.] 129

[Vc.] 129

[B] 129

bat n’-ka-b’-la
L’ Chah Dod

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

krat__ka_lah_p’_nei_Shub_-bat_n’_-ka_b’-

L’ - Chah do - di li -
Mysterious $d = 65$

Clarinet in B♭

Violin

Cello

Piano

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.
Hamaariv aravim/Bar'chu
This is an hour of change. Within it we

...
B’s Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

stand uncertain on the border of

Pno.

B’s Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

light.

stand uncertain on the border of

Pno.
Shall we draw back or cross over?
Where shall our hearts turn?

Shall we draw back my brother, my sister,
Hamaariv aravim/Bar'chu

B♭ Cl.  

Vln.  

Vc.  

B  

Ham'vo rach  

Pno.  

B♭ Cl.  

Vln.  

Vc.  

Pno.
This is an hour of change,

and within it, we stand quietly on the border of light.
What lies before us? Shall we draw back, my brother my sister,
or shall we cross over?  
Ba-ruch a-tah
Ani v' ata

Tempo rubato, molto espressivo

Clarinet in B♭

Violin

Cello

Baritone

Piano

\[ \text{\(-\text{\(60\)}} \]

\(\text{Espressivo}\)

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Ani v' ata
Ani v'ata

poco a poco accel.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
Ani v'ata

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.
Ani v'ata
Ani v' ata

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

Pno.

ra, ein da-var, ein da-var, zeh lo no-

seh mei-ha-t' cha-lah; yih'-yeh la-nu
You and

we will change the
hearts strive on, toil of hope for

peace to come!

You and
1 we will change the

world.

Ani v' ata
Ani v'ata

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

B

ta n'sha - neh et ha - o - lam,

Pno.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.
Ani v' ata

Bb Cl.  
\(p\)  

Vln.  
\(p\)  

Vc.  
\(3\)  

Pno.  

82  

Bb Cl.  
\(riten.\)  
\(accel.\)  

Vln.  
\(mp\)  

Vc.  
\(deliberate\)  

Pno.  
\(mp\)
You and I we will change the world.

Ani v'ata

Ani v'ata n'sha-
BIBLIOGRAPHY


