

Worship

Explore prayer in **The Window and on the Temple website**

Many congregants have asked for help feeling more comfortable, confident and competent to participate in Shabbat services. Each month we will explore a different prayer from the Shabbat liturgy with a short explanation or reflection provided by a member of the congregation in *The Window*. The website will feature the printed text of the prayer (in Hebrew, transliteration and English translation all from *Mishkan T'filah*) and a MP3 recording for you to read or sing along with Cantor Cohn. Resources to learn more about prayers and the art of worship will also be available. Log on to www.tedallas.org and click the prayer study link on the home page. Please share your feedback about these resources with us at thechairoad@tedallas.org.

This month Worship Committee Chair Katherine Krause helps us focus on the *G'vurot*. (Page 50 on Friday nights and page 128 on Shabbat Mornings in *Mishkan T'filah*.)

The *G'vurot* is the blessing of praise for God's divine power/might and is the second prayer within the *Amidah*. Threaded throughout the *G'vurot* we recognize and praise God's power by acknowledging God has the ability to give life to human beings and nature, to sustain life with kindness, heal the sick, free the captive and raise the fallen.

The traditional version of *G'vurot* uses the Hebrew word *metim* which makes the phrase mean "God gives (or restores) life to the dead." Reform leaders in the nineteenth century did not believe in this idea but they did believe in God as the Creator of All Life. They changed the Hebrew from *metim* to *hakol*. This changed the meaning of the phrase to be, "God gives life to everything." There are four different places where our new prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah* allows us to choose between the words *hakol* and *metim* depending on our personal beliefs.

G'vurot
גבורות

In this prayer, the image of "raising up the fallen" stands out. Rabbi Elliot Dorff, in *My People's Prayer Book* writes, "When people fall physically, intellectually or emotionally --- it is necessary, though often difficult, to help them regain their standing...Support for the fallen is often a normal and too little noticed part of day-to-day life; as an exercise of both power and goodness, it is nothing short of a godly act." He suggests it is up to us to act like God and strive to help lift and "make whole" others who are dealing with illness, loss or other life struggles.

Reflecting upon the meaning of the *G'vurot* and the attributes of God's power, we can look outside our struggles and emulate God's attributes according to our ability and power. We can try to do all that we can to lift our fellow humans to a place of strength in big and small ways.