

NOTES (randomly numbered, as I thought of them)

These are notes which may be helpful before you begin (I have two sets of notes for you, these which follow, and the next section called footnotes---this made more sense earlier in my work, and to combine them now would leave a significant probability of error in citing them, so I just left them as is, notes and footnotes):

1. The subject may be placed after the verb in Hebrew, so if the sentence doesn't make sense, try using the word which comes after the verb as the subject; e.g., yish-ta-bach' shim-cha' = will be praised name Your --- really means --- Your name will be praised. It is very helpful to compare the literal translation with the interpretive translation in your siddur at any time, but especially when the meaning is not clear.

2. Don't take prepositions, e.g., of, to, in, with, too seriously; Hebrew uses them where we would not use them in English; e.g. milfaneicha, literally "from at your face", and another example is "bachar b-", translated as "chose in-", where we would just say chose, without a preposition, or "she-mor al" translated as guard, but also could be "watch over", which is more analogous. Sometimes there is no preposition in Hebrew where we would have one in English, so you will find the occasional (of) included.

3. Note that "and", designated by a vav, can be pronounced either as "ve" or "u" (of course, a rule: "u" before a consonant vowelled by a shva, and before mem, vet (or vav as a consonant), and fei).

4. If a word in the translation line is in parentheses or in italics, it is to compensate for the difference in English and Hebrew syntax, where there is an understood word which we would have included in English. It is to prevent unnecessary confusion (you may infer some confusion is necessary).

5. I use the simple future tense for the sake of consistency; e.g., "you will verb", for literal translation, when many of the interpretative translations use "you shall verb" or "may you verb", or "let it verb".

There is no different Hebrew word to differentiate will, shall, may you, and let it. That is part of an interpretative translation.

6. Remember that every noun is either male or female--and verbs, adjectives, and pronouns must agree with the nouns to which they refer; you will see "it,*f.*" or "it,*m.*" before a verb phrase to go along with the subject or with the noun being modified when "it" makes much more sense in the English.

7. An idiom which cannot be otherwise broken down in literal translation has its translation under the word without dividing it up. The whole transliterated word may or may not be underlined. An example of this is "le-ma'-an" , which can be translated either as "in order to" or as "for the sake of" , and "af al pi" translated as "although".

8. If there is an important shade of meaning that can be expressed by an English word, I will add it to the translation after a slash--- for example "a-dam'" means "man", but in the sense of mankind, so you may see man/person or person under a-dam'.

9. אֵת (et) is used to indicate a definite object in Hebrew, and under the word "et" you will find "(d.o.)" , meaning "definite object".

10. **The Changing Vav:** You may know enough Hebrew to notice, or you may notice as you become more familiar with Hebrew through this text (I hope) that a word used in one place is translated as future tense, and in another place appears to be translated as the past tense. In that case, note that there is a "vav" in front of the word, switching it from past to future or vice-versa. This is a "quirk" of Biblical Hebrew. The vav is also translated as "and" in the sentence. It (the vav) may also, in Biblical Hebrew, have the sense of: but, therefore, as, since, seeing, while, whereas, although. In modern Hebrew, it is only "and".

11. If two words with different meanings are spelled the same in the transliteration, check the Hebrew spelling---it will be different.

12. The shva, ׀ , under the Hebrew letter, sounds like "uh", or a muted form of *e* or *a* . The shva, if it is pronounced , making a separate syllable, is transliterated as *e* , smaller and in italic. this is a "vocal shva" . If the shva is in the middle of the word, it may be a silent shva, in which case it closes the syllable, e.g., *kid-sha-nu*, *mits-vo-tav'*, and *le-had-lik*, from the Candle Blessing, where the emboldened letters are consonants which are vowelled by a silent shva, and "close" a syllable. The *e* in *le-had-lik* is a vocal shva.

13. In the interest of clarity, which is difficult to achieve in this type of word by word translation, the possessive is loosely translated as "your" when the literal is really "of you" as in *sha-a-rei-chem'*, *gates of you* (pl.) Looking at "sha-a-rei-chem'" as an example, the "ei" between the root (sha-ar) and the personal pronoun suffix (chem), signifies that the root is plural and the suffix is possessive, i.e. your = of you (pl.) in English. A word could be "sha-a-rei-cha'" also, which would mean *gates of you* (singular) i.e., *your* (sing.) *gates*.

14. Hebrew uses "ha" meaning "the" more frequently than English does to indicate a definite rather than indefinite state. If the noun is definite, "the house" instead of "a house", an adjective associated with house must also be definite: "the house the new" where we would say "the new house". This sounds weird to English-listening ears, but as my friend the language teacher heard from her teacher, why would you describe something before you even know what it is? So it makes sense to have the noun first and then the adjective.

Ha- = the . Be = in or with . Le- = to, for, by, toward, belonging to, at, into, and written by (as in *mizmor le-david*). It also makes the infinitive, analogous the English "to". If "be" or "le" comes before "ha" (with the, to the, etc.), then they are merged, and the "h" is gone. They become "ba" or "la", with the "b-" representing the "be-" or the "l-" representing the "le-", and the "a" representing the "ha" in both.

15. The pronunciation of a kamats (ֿ) is usually "ah", but sometimes it is a long "o". For example: the word for "all", transliterated "kol" , is

spelled כָּל . Other examples are in the Kaddish, the part which has "ul-ol-me' ol-ma-ya'. These are examples of a kamats in a closed syllable. Sometimes there is a kamats and shva together (ֻּ), to indicate the "o" sound, and if there is a kamats in the preceding syllable, that kamats will also be pronounced as "o", as in tzoholah in one of the verses of Lechah Dodi. Sometimes the reason for the "o" pronunciation is obscure. The transliteration given is what is often heard today. Other opinions are welcome.

16. Hebrew has two options for command forms, a unique form for a direct imperative, (as in Lech! or Le-chi! male and female forms of Go!) and the polite imperative, which is the same as the future tense in the second person (e.g. te-lech' or tel-chi'). The negative command is always "al ___" with the next word in the second person future, meaning "do not ___" (naturally it is in the future---it doesn't do any good to command something that is in the past or the present--too late!); it can be either singular or plural, e.g. al te-lech' (m.), al tel-chi' (f.), or al tel-chu' (plural): don't go.

17. When two nouns are together, making a definite noun-noun phrase, most often with the concept of "of" in between, the definite article "the" is placed before the second noun, but the sense is as follows: cedars of the Lebanon = the cedars of Lebanon; book of the life = the book of life, day the Sabbath = the Sabbath day, etc. We have noun-noun phrases in English, too: we can say Lebanon cedars.

18. yish-ta-bach': the root of this word is shin-bet-chet, which means "to praise, laud" (Klein). A tav is needed by the future tense, as in "yit-ga-dal' ve-yit-ba-rach' = will be made great and will be blessed", the first words of the Kaddish. Perhaps because it was difficult to say yit-sha-bach, a rule evolved to let the shin and the tav (ת) switch places; this switch occurs in other words which begin with shin.

19. Command forms and other words may be made more emphatic by the addition of "ah" at the end of the word, e.g. Le-chah' do-di': Lech is the masculine singular command form for "Go"; for emphasis, the "ah" is added as a suffix to form Le-chah', meaning "Go!!!". (Le-

chi' is for speaking to a woman, and Le-chu' for male and female, and the old form for women only is Lech'-nah). "A-shir' means "I will sing"; a-shi-rah' means "I will enthusiastically sing!"; Mi-cha-mo-chah, with the suffix hei, means "Who is like You?" One reference to this is Essentials of Biblical Hebrew by Kyle M. Yates, Ph.D., 1938. , the cohortative mood, p.125. The "ah" on the end of a word may also indicate motion toward something.

20. At the end of a phrase or sentence, the stress may change from the last syllable to the next to the last syllable. This is frequent in the Veahavta, and caught my attention in the Hashkivenu, in the word A'-tah used instead of A-tah'. This was done to show that this is the end of a phrase in the days before there were written vowels and punctuation.

21. The present tense of the verb "to be" is understood in Hebrew; words are not used for *am*, *is*, or *are*. Therefore, where one places our English *am*, *is*, or *are*, is a guess, some more educated than others. (the one exception that I know of is in Adon Olam, where the verse "ve hu hayah, ve hu ho-veh', ve hu yiheyeh", uses the past, present, and future "He was, He is, and He will be" with poetic license), and hoveh, I read in one of my books, is in the sense of being present, or of existing. 501 Hebrew Verbs also gives the present tense conjugation (for completeness?). Hoveh is also the word for the present tense in grammar.

22. All cities, towns, countries, and continents are female in Hebrew, but Israel as a people is male. Israel as the state of Israel is female.

23. A ם(t) replacing the ן on the end of a singular female word means *of*. This will be indicated in the translation. Male words do not obviously change when *of* is implied.

24. An extra ם = m at the beginning of a word may indicate an abstract noun of the verbal root, or it may mean "place of".

25. The present tense for singular male, be it "he" or "you" is the same. Unless the pronoun "he" or "you" is used, verbs in that tense could be for either one. In the prayer for *Gevurot* (atah gibor le-olam, see Contents), the verbs mechalkel, mechaiyeh, somech, rofeh, matir, could be either for "he" or "you". Since the prayer started with "Atah", I used "You" until the word "emunato" indicated that it was "His faith" at that point (suffix -o meaning "his"). As in many of the blessings, for lighting the candles, for bread, and many others, the blessing begins "Blessed are You, Adonai our G-d..." but soon changes from "You" to "He", continuing "Who sanctified us with *His* mitzvot" This is because of awe and reverence (אַרְיָ), (also translated as fear) not presuming to address Hashem directly for too long a time.

26. A verb beginning with a yud is often the future tense of "he" or "they". Disregard the yud and you may find the root.

27. If the ending is "av", it means the noun to which "av" (his) is attached is plural; if the noun is singular, the ending is "o"; e.g. de-va-ro'=his word ; de-va-rav' =his words.

21. Evelyn Garfiel, in the book Service of the Heart, explains all the parts of the Service with many historical connections. She believes that malchut should be translated as "kingship" rather than "kingdom" as the latter connotes limited place, rather than unlimited authority over all the world and universe and eternity.

22. Most nouns which end in "ah" and many singular nouns which end in a " ך " (tav) are female. Other female words have other endings, but ah and tav are very frequent.

23. "face" (panim), like "life" (chaiyim), is a plural word in Hebrew; therefore, the plural form of the suffix for "his": -av instead of -o: pa-nav'.

24. In the passive form of verbs, which begin with the letter nun (n), the present and past tenses of the singular male form are usually the same, and you have to tell from the context which is meant.

25. A combination of a form of the verb called the "infinitive absolute" with the regular tense of the verb is for emphasis. This technique is seen in a favorite Passover song, "Simcha Raba", in one verse: "sha-ol', esh-al' ar-ba' kushiot; sha-toh', esh-teh' ar-ba' ko-sot'." (drink, I will drink 4 cups; ask, I will ask 4 difficult [questions]).

You may see this technique in other places in the prayers, as in: bo ya-vo' (Birkat Hamazon), and in the Shema, ...im sha-mo'-a tish-me-u'...