



Naming God: Avinu Malkeinu Our Father, Our King (Prayers of Awe)

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An illuminating in-depth exploration of the complexities?and perhaps audacity?of naming the unnameable.

One of the oldest and most beloved prayers?known even to Jews who rarely attend synagogue?is *Avinu Malkeinu* ("Our Father, Our King"), a liturgical staple for the entire High Holy Day period. "Our Father, Our King" has resonance also for Christians, whose Lord's Prayer begins "Our Father."

Despite its popularity, *Avinu Malkeinu* causes great debate because of the difficulties in thinking of God as father and king. Americans no longer relate positively to images of royalty; victims of parental abuse note the problem of assuming a benevolent father; and feminists have long objected to masculine language for God.

Through a series of lively introductions and commentaries, almost forty contributors?men and women, scholars and rabbis, artists and thinkers from all Jewish denominations and from around the world?wrestle with this linguistic and spiritual conundrum, asking, "How do we name God altogether, without recourse to imagery that defies belief?"

Contributors:

Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson • Rabbi Anthony Bayfield • Rabbi Will Berkowitz • Dr. Annette Boeckler • Dr. Marc Brettler • Dr. Erica Brown • Rabbi Angela Buchdahl • Rabbi Elliot Cosgrove • Rabbi Joshua Davidson • Rabbi Lawrence Englander • Lisa Exler • Rabbi Paul Freedman • Rabbi Elyse Frishman • Rabbi Shoshana Boyd Gelfand • Rabbi Edwin Goldberg • Rabbi Andrew Goldstein • Dr. Joel M. Hoffman • Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman • Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur • Rabbi Elie Kaunfer • Rabbi Karen Kedar • Rabbi Reuven Kimelman • Rabbi Daniel Landes • Liz Lerman • Rabbi Asher Lopatin • Catherine Madsen • Rabbi Jonathan Magonet • Rabbi Dalia Marx • Chazzan Danny Maseng • Ruth Messinger • Rabbi Charles H. Middleburgh • Rabbi Jay Henry Moses • Rabbi Jack Riemer • Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin • Rabbis Dennis and Sandy Sasso • Rabbi Marc Saperstein • Rabbi Jonathan P. Slater • Rabbi David Stern • Rabbi David Teutsch • Dr. Ellen Umansky • Edward van Vooen • Rabbi Margaret Moers Wenig • Dr. Ron Wolfson • Rabbi Daniel Zemel • Dr. Wendy Zierler

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Ida Resler:

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