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FROM: CANTOR JUDITH BENDER, COORDINATOR B'NAI MITZVAH
SUBJECT: TEACHING CANTILLATION
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Before teaching Cantillation to your students, you need to have a full understanding of the function of the Cantillation system, and be able to decode Torah text using the melodies that are taught at Temple Solel. Please take the time to study and learn this system from the Torah Cantillation tape that was given to you. I am also providing you with information about the Three Functions of Cantillation, its Musical Function, and the Traditions of both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic Melodies. This is for your information, and not to be handed out to students, as it would be too difficult and confusing for them. However, if YOU understand the functions, then you will be equipped to present Cantillation properly, and answer their questions: As always, I am available to address your concerns and to help you to teach this material in an understandable and creative manner.

- 1) First, present to the students the reasons and history of WHY we have Cantillation.
- 2) Students need to understand the Three Functions: Cantillation gives the melody for the word, it tells which syllable is to receive the accent, and it musically phrases the sentence according to the meaning of the text.
- 3) The most important musical notes and phrases to present to students are:
 - a) Mercha Tipcha Munach Etnachtah. Students should be taught that the word Etnachtah means "comma or pause," and that there is only ONE Etnachtah to a sentence. Color code this in green.
 - b) Mercha Tipcha Mercha Sof Pasuk. Students should be taught that the word Sof Pasuk means "end of sentence," and there is only ONE Sof Pasuk to a sentence. Color code this red.

c) Kadma Mapach Pashtah Munach Katon. Color code this yellow.

Other musical phrasing can be taught following these most frequently used musical phrases. Color code as you wish, just be consistent.

4) Now apply these notes to simple text. Please use REAL text from the Torah, not phrases that are in prayers and are never found in Torah. There are enough recognizable passages like V'ahavta and V'shomru where the students are familiar with the words.

An easy method that helps students understand the concept is to sing a translation of the English using the Cantillation.

Example: And you will love (Munach Katon)
the Lord your G-d, (Tipcha Etnachtah)
with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.
(Mercha Tipcha Mercha Sof Pasuk)

CANTILLATION

Three Functions

The cantillation signs serve three functions:

* **Syntax:** They divide biblical verses into smaller units of meaning, a function which also gives them a limited but sometimes important role as a source for exegesis. This function is accomplished through the use of various conjunctive signs (which indicate that words should be connected in a single phrase) and especially a hierarchy of dividing signs various strength which divide each verse into smaller phrases. The function of the disjunctive cantillation signs may be roughly compared to modern punctuation signs such as periods, commas, semicolons, etc.

* **Phonetics:** Most of the cantillation symbols indicate the specific syllable where the stress (accent) falls in the pronunciation of a word.

* **Music:** The cantillation signs have musical value: Reading the Hebrew Bible with cantillation becomes a musical chant, where the music itself serves as a tool to emphasise the proper accentuation and syntax (as mentioned previously).

Psalms, Proverbs and Job: The system of cantillation notes used throughout the Tanakh is replaced by an entirely different system for these three poetic books. Many of the symbols may appear the same or similar at first glance, but most of them serve entirely different functions in these three books. (Only a few signs have functions similar to what they do in the rest of the Tanakh.) The short narratives at the beginning and end of Job use the "regular" system, but the bulk of the book (the poetry) uses the special system.

The Musical Function

The musical value of the cantillation notes serves the same function for Jews worldwide, but the specific tunes vary between different communities. The most common tunes today are:

* The Polish-Lithuanian melody, used by Ashkenazic descendants of eastern European Jews, is the most common tune in the world today, both in Israel and the diaspora.

* Related Ashkenazic melodies from central and western European Jewry are used far less today than before the Holocaust, but still survive in some communities.

* Among Sephardic Jews, the "Jerusalem Sephardic" (Sepharadi-Yerushalmi) melody (of Syrian origin) is the one most widely used today in Israel, and it is also used in some Sephardic communities in the diaspora.

* The Moroccan melody is also widely used in Israel among descendants of immigrants from that country, and in the diaspora.

* The Yemenite melody can also be heard in Israel today.

Ashkenazic Melodies

In the Ashkenazic musical tradition for cantillation, each of the local geographical customs includes a total of six separate melodies for cantillation:

* Torah and Haftarot (3 melodies)

1. Torah (general melody for the whole year)

2. Torah - special melody for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. This tune is also employed on Simhat Torah in various degrees (depending on the specific community). Echoes of it can also be heard for certain verses in the Torah reading for fast days.

3. Haftarot

* The Five Megillot (3 melodies are employed for these five scrolls)

4. Esther - a light, joyous tune used for the Megillat Esther on Purim.

5. Lamentations - a mournful tune. Echoes of it can also be heard for certain verses in Esther and in the Torah reading preceding the Ninth of Av. The Haftarot preceding and during the Ninth of Av also use this melody.

6. The three remaining scrolls are publicly read with in Ashkenazic communities during the Three Pilgrimage Festivals. All are read in the same melody, which may be considered the "general" melody for the megillot: The Song of Songs on Passover; Ruth on Shavuot; Ecclesiastes on Sukkot.

The Ashkenazic tradition preserves no melody for the special cantillation notes of Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, which were not publicly read in the synagogue by European Jews.

Eastern Melodies

The Jews of North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia and Yemen all had local musical traditions for cantillation. When these Jewish communities emigrated (mostly to Israel) during the twentieth century, they brought their musical traditions with them. But as the immigrants themselves grew older, many melodies began to be forgotten. Unlike the Ashkenazic tradition, the eastern traditions include melodies for the special cantillation of Psalms, Proverbs, and Job. In many eastern communities, Proverbs is read on the six Sabbaths between Passover and Shavuot, Job on the Ninth of Av, and Psalms are read on a great many occasions. The cantillation melody for Psalms can also vary depending on the occasion.

On the other hand, eastern Jewish communities have no tradition of reading the three megillot publicly on the three pilgrimage festivals, and therefore preserved no special tune for those three books.

For interesting information about Biblical Chironomy, go to the following websites:

www.rakkav.com/kdhinc/pages/history.htm

www.rakkav.com/kdhinc/pages/chironomy.htm

Trope 'Cantillation'

3 Functions: Syntax, phonetics, music

music ① Cantillation gives the melody for the word

phonetics ② It tells which syllable is to receive the accent

syntax ③ It musically phrases the sentence according to the meaning of the text.

The Polish-Lithuanian melody is the most common tune in the world today, both in Israel and the diaspora.

בְּמִנְחָה זֵרְקָא בְּמִנְחָה סְגוּלָא

בְּמִנְחָה | בְּמִנְחָה רְבִיעִי

קְדָמָא בְּמִנְחָה פְּשֻטָא בְּמִנְחָה קְטָן

זְקָף-עָדוּל

Middle of sentence *Comma, pause*
בְּמִנְחָה טְפִיחָא בְּמִנְחָה אֲתִנּוּחָתָא

פְּאֵר

TROPE (CANTILLATION) TELLS US:

- 1) The melody for the word
- 2) Which syllable of the word receives the accent
- 3) How to phrase the sentence

אֲתִיּוּשָׁא-קְטָנָה

אֲתִיּוּשָׁא-גְדוּלָה

קְדָמָא וְאַזְלָא

אַזְלָא-גֵּרֶשׁ

גֵּרֶשׁ

זֵרְקָא תְּבִיר

יְתִיב

end of sentence
בְּמִנְחָה טְפִיחָא בְּמִנְחָה סוּף-פְּסוּקָה

שָׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה | אֶחָד:

וְאַהֲבֵתָ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ
וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָ: וְהָיָה הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ
הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָהּ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשַׁבְּתֶךָ
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתֶּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ: וְקִשְׂרָתָם
לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפוֹת בְּיַד עֵינֶיךָ: וְכַתְּבָתָם עַל-
מִזְוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

לְמַעַן

תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים
לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי
אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם לְהִיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

שְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֱוֹדָה
 וְאֶהְבֵּת אֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ
 וּבְכָל מַאֲדְךָ וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֵשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מֵצַוְרֶךָ
 הַיּוֹם עַל לִבְבְּךָ וְשִׁנְתָם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם בְּשִׂמְחֶתְךָ
 בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִסְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכֶנְךָ וּבְקוֹמְךָ וּקְשַׁרְתָּם
 לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטִטְפַּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ וּפְתַחְתָּם עַל
 מַזְוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעֲרֶיךָ

4 שְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֱוֹדָה
 5 וְאֶהְבֵּת אֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ
 6 וּבְכָל מַאֲדְךָ וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֵשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מֵצַוְרֶךָ
 7 הַיּוֹם עַל לִבְבְּךָ וְשִׁנְתָם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם בְּשִׂמְחֶתְךָ
 8 בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִסְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכֶנְךָ וּבְקוֹמְךָ וּקְשַׁרְתָּם
 9 לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטִטְפַּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ וּפְתַחְתָּם עַל
 10 מַזְוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעֲרֶיךָ

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

כְּמֵעַן
 תִּזְכְּרוּ וְעִשִׂיתֶם אֵת כָּל מִצְוֹת הַדְּבָרִים
 לְאֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֵשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי
 אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהִיטֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים אֲנִי
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

40
 תִּזְכְּרוּ וְעִשִׂיתֶם אֵת כָּל מִצְוֹת הַדְּבָרִים
 41 לְאֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֵשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי
 אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהִיטֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים אֲנִי
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

שָׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה | אֶחָד:

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ
וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָ: וְהָיָה דְבָרֶיךָ הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ
הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתֶּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְקָשַׁרְתָּם
לְאָזְנוֹת עַל-יָדֶיךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפוֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וְכַתַּבְתָּם עַל-
מַזְזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

לְמַעַן

תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהָיִיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים
לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי
אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהִיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

V'Ahavta

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-

נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ. וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה

אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְהָה הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ.

וּשְׁנַנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשַׁבְּתְךָ

בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתֹּתְךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ

וּבְקוּמְךָ. וְקִשַּׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יְדֶיךָ וְהָיוּ

לְטַטְפֹּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ. וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל-מְזוּזוֹת

בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ. לְמַעַן

תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת-כָּל-מִצְוֹתַי וְהָיִיתֶם

קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם. אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר

הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהִיּוֹת

לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

שְׁמֵי שָׁמַיִם וְעַד אֲדָמָה

בְּיָמֵינוּ יִשְׁמְרוּנוּ וְיִשְׁמְרוּנוּ
בְּיָמֵינוּ יִשְׁמְרוּנוּ וְיִשְׁמְרוּנוּ
בְּיָמֵינוּ יִשְׁמְרוּנוּ וְיִשְׁמְרוּנוּ
בְּיָמֵינוּ יִשְׁמְרוּנוּ וְיִשְׁמְרוּנוּ
בְּיָמֵינוּ יִשְׁמְרוּנוּ וְיִשְׁמְרוּנוּ

