

Temple Aliyah
Shavuot 2016 Sermon Slam
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Last year I highlighted the Birkat Shalom prayer in Amidah as an argument- an argument based in part on Matan Tora and in part on the goodness to G!d in blessing us with peace- I said it's good and noble to argue for peace and an argument with G!d.

Re-look: Matan Tora is not a good argument. 1st, it's an argument for peace among Jews- maybe basis of Rashi's famous interpretation of Israelite unity at that event. 2nd things went wrong 40 days later. Really not even a good argument for peace among Jews.

And by the way, if it were good in G!d's eyes to place peace among us, would've happened a long time ago, especially if the argument is viewed as an argument for world peace. If this is the case an omnipotent G!d would've put all the armies & Kerry would be out of business- not a bad thing.

Here's the rub: that third word in our Siddur version- ba'olam- place peace in the world- plunked in there seemingly by committee that makes it look like a request and argument for world peace. Apologies to anyone who may've been on the committee.

Now it's cruddy argument: Place peace *in the world* and grace and lovingkindness, because of what you once did *for Israel*, that didn't go so well, and because of what we think it's good in your eyes to do *for Israel*. Hardly likely that G!d would chortle as G!d does in a midrash elsewhere that "My children have defeated Me in argument."

Arguing for world peace- and arguing for it with G!d- is still a good and noble thing, but the right place is in Oseh Shalom- add v'al kol yoshevei teivel as in Siddur Leyv Shalem. Then it's a good argument in one sentence, and like all our

prayers is well worth saying in our best diction, without regard to whatever mispronunciation any melody might impose on it.