



September 2013 / Tishrei 5774  
A Few Thoughts for the New Year  
Levanah and Stan Tenen

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### The Place for “Jewish Meditation” in Jewish Meditation

Jewish meditation today is based on a number of similar traditions. Examples of various forms of meditational exercises are given by Cordovero, by Kaplan, and by many in between. Most involve letter or word permutations (Y-H-V-H, etc.). But in spite of all of these efforts, there are very few reports of any positive results or outcomes. This is the 600-lb. gorilla in the room: if Jewish meditational techniques that are now being explored are real, why are there no real results? And by the way, what is their function?

I think there has been a misunderstanding. The letter-meditation exercises that are available are all what might be called “warm-up” (or “cool-down”) exercises, designed to clear the mind of extraneous thoughts, and quiet the continuous mental agitation driven by our ego-desires. Because they leave us without personal will/willfulness, these exercises are designed to prepare a person for the actual mental exercises that can have real-world results and consequences.

These meditational exercises quiet the mind and subdue the ego as a pre-condition to entering into a loving minyan that fits the description given by Hayyim Vital (as presented by historian Yehuda Liebes):

The idea that love must prevail among the companions was not confined by Lurianic Kabbala to the theoretical, speculative realm, and it did not apply only to R. Akiva’s disciples. Luria himself took pains to ensure that love would prevail among the members of his group. Before worshipping in the synagogue, an individual had to commit himself to the mitsva of loving one’s fellow, so that all of the prayers of Israel would be combined together. Especially important, writes Hayyim Vital, was “the love of companions who study Torah together; each of them must regard himself as though he were one part of the body of the group of his companions, especially if he has the knowledge and understanding to know his fellow’s soul...[sic] And my teacher cautioned me greatly about the need for love to prevail among the companions in our group.” The source of this requirement for love in connection with prayer is the mystical conception of the minyan of ten worshippers in the synagogue as one body, symbolizing the sefirot or the bodily parts of the Shekhina...<sup>1</sup>

And continuing on this subject, from *The Alphabet That Changed the World*, p. 277:

...The minyan is nothing less than the principle that human beings can cooperate and join forces in such a way that the individuality of each person and the coordination of the group not only do not contradict each other, but are actually required for the optimization of human potential and the emergence of a new form of consciousness. At the same time, the principles that allow for the



coherence between the individual and the group show the way to the miracle of “emergence”: the coming into existence of unimagined and unanticipated capacities and qualities, far beyond what either the individual or the mere aggregate of individuals can achieve...[The] combination of individuals in a group in proper alignment promises the coming into being of possibilities that may seed and influence the entirety of life on earth.<sup>2</sup>

Some researchers report that spiritual experiences, and some psychic and emotional experiences, seem to correlate with brain states where delta or possibly theta waves are present, and where mental activity is confined to a small part of only one hemisphere. This brain state is essentially egoless (i.e., loving) because the part of the conscious brain that makes willful choices becomes quiet.

The deep, content-full meditations conducted by a loving minyan are likely to have actual, objectively measurable real-world consequences. I speculate on some of this near the end of *The Alphabet That Changed the World*. While they are prerequisites to the meditations, the actual meditations are not just lists and mantras of combinations of letters and vowels; they have content, and this content can only be from Tanach (Torah, Prophets, Writings), or possibly from the oldest portions of the prayer book (Kaddish, for example).

Complex and arcane equivalents of “Old MacDonald’s: ‘E I E I O’”, even when based on Y-H-V-H, are not the active side of Jewish meditation. But a properly chanted (and gestured?) Torah can be.

A true loving minyan is outside of time—consider the possibilities.

May you and yours be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life for good health and prosperity in the coming year.

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Marin, CA  
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<sup>1</sup>Yehuda Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, Arnold Schwartz, Stephanie Nakache, Penina Peli, tr. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993), 40–41.

<sup>2</sup>Stan Tenen, *The Alphabet That Changed the World: How Genesis Preserves a Science of Consciousness in Geometry and Gesture* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2011), 277.





### Meru Foundation on the Web

[www.meru.org](http://www.meru.org) Meru’s original website was created in 1996, and has a large selection of essays and posters on many different aspects of this work. This is a site for leisurely exploration; the home page also includes a PayPal button for contributions.

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A basic introductory packet on Meru Foundation, including a research summary, endorsements, a sample eTORUS, and biographical information, is posted at [www.meru.org/MeruIntroPacket.2013.pdf](http://www.meru.org/MeruIntroPacket.2013.pdf).

[www.meetingtent.com](http://www.meetingtent.com) Meru’s secure-server website for ordering our lecture DVD’s, books, and other materials, and for making contributions via credit card. This site also includes a Meru FAQ, sample videos, and contact information for the media.

[www.tatctw.com](http://www.tatctw.com) Website focused on Stan Tenen’s 2011 book, *The Alphabet That Changed the World: How Genesis Preserves a Science of Consciousness in Geometry and Gesture*. Includes professional and reader reviews, and a portal for ordering from Amazon.

[www.youtube.com/user/filmguy2121](http://www.youtube.com/user/filmguy2121) Meru President Bill Haber’s YouTube channel, featuring our introductory video *First Light*, animations, and video excerpts from live lectures by Stan Tenen.



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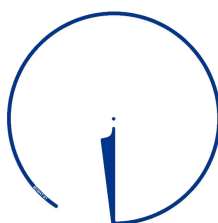
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