

## *Gadlu: Position and Bowing*

By: ZVI RON

There is some confusion in Ashkenazic synagogues regarding how the prayer leader should position himself after receiving the Torah from the Ark and saying “*Gadlu*.” For example, the *ArtScroll Siddur* writes that the prayer leader “turns to the Ark and raises the Torah slightly as he bows” while reciting *Gadlu*.<sup>1</sup> The *Koren Shalem Siddur* also states that the prayer leader “bows towards the Ark” and says *Gadlu*,<sup>2</sup> while the Hebrew *Koren Siddur* explicitly states that the prayer leader “turns to the congregation” when saying *Gadlu* on weekdays, with no mention of bowing, but on Shabbat the instruction is to face the Ark and bow.<sup>3</sup>

In this article we will determine the origin of the various approaches as to how *Gadlu* should be recited and gain a clearer understanding of how the prayer leader should perform this part of the service.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Gadlu* When Removing the Torah**

The taking out of the Torah is not described in the Mishnah or Talmud as being accompanied by any special prayers.<sup>5</sup> The earliest source for these is *Masekhet Soferim*, which gives a detailed description of many verses and prayers recited as the Torah is removed from the Ark to be read, some of which are not customary today. Among those prayers we find that whoever takes the Torah says, “O magnify (*Gadlu*) the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together” (Psalms 34:4), along with the instruction that the Torah scroll must be elevated when this is said, just as it is when saying

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<sup>1</sup> Nosson Scherman, *The ArtScroll Siddur* (New York: Mesorah Publications, 1990), p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *The Koren Shalem Siddur* (Jerusalem: Koren Publishers, 2017), p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> David Fuchs, *Siddur Koren* (Jerusalem: Koren Publishers, 2013), pp. 78, 238.

<sup>4</sup> I would like to thank R. Jonathan Bailey for asking me about this, thus prompting the investigation of this practice.

<sup>5</sup> Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1993), p. 159.

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the *Shema* holding the Torah.<sup>6</sup> *Tosafot* explains that this particular verse was chosen because “it has six words paralleling the six steps of those carrying the Ark (II Samuel 6:13)”<sup>7</sup> after which a sacrifice was offered when the Ark was brought by King David to Jerusalem.<sup>8</sup> *Abudraham* further explains that this passage has twenty-six letters paralleling the numerical equivalent of the four-letter name of God; thus the verse itself hints to the name of God that is to be praised.<sup>9</sup>

This practice was already included in *Seder Rav Amram Gaon* where he adds congregational responses to the call of *Gadlu*, among them “Exalt (*Romemu*) the LORD our God and bow down to His footstool; He is holy!” (Psalms 99:5), and “Exalt (*Romemu*) the LORD our God, and bow toward His holy hill, for the LORD our God is holy” (Psalms 99:9).<sup>10</sup> This practice, of the leader saying *Gadlu* and the congregation responding with *Romemu*,<sup>11</sup> was brought by *Mahzor Vitry*,<sup>12</sup> *Tur* (*Orah Hayyim* 134:2), and later by Rama (*Orah Hayyim* 134:2). Although these sources do not mention the idea that the Torah should be raised at this point, *Magen Avraham* (134:4) and *Mishnah Berurah* (134:13) quote this from *Masekhet Soferim*. Note that none of these sources discuss facing the Ark or bowing along with the recitation of *Gadlu*.

R. Moshe Isserles in his comments to *Shulhan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim* 134:2, states, “the prayer leader says *Gadlu* and the congregation answers *Romemu*.” R. Menachem Mendel Landa (1862-1935) points out that saying *Gadlu* along with the prayer leader is an error, since this is the prayer

<sup>6</sup> *Masekhet Soferim* 14:11.

<sup>7</sup> *Tosafot*, *Megillah* 32a, s.v., *ve-gollelo*. Also noted in other early sources, for example, Simon Hurwitz, ed., *Mahzor Vitry* (Nuremberg: J. Bulka, 1923), vol. 1, p. 71, *siman* 93; Moshe and Yehudah Hershler, eds., *Peirushei Siddur Ha-Tefillah la-Rokeah* (Jerusalem: Machon Harav Hershler, 1992), vol. 1, p. 422, *siman* 74. Rokeah there writes that from here we learn that one should walk for six steps behind the Torah scroll. Regarding the view of *Kol Bo* (*siman* 20) about when *Gadlu* is said, see Y. (Shamash) Menatzpach, *Minhagim de-Kebillat Kodesh Vermiza*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: 1988), p. 20, note 6.

<sup>8</sup> See *Sotah* 35b.

<sup>9</sup> *Sefer Abudraham* (Jerusalem: Even Israel, 1995), vol. 1, p. 141.

<sup>10</sup> Daniel Goldschmidt, ed., *Seder Rav Amram Gaon* (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 2004), p. 58, *siman* 99. For variations in different sources and communities regarding the verses recited as the Torah is removed, see Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, p. 159.

<sup>11</sup> Regarding the various customs of saying both or one of the *Romemu* verses, see Menachem Mendel Landa, *Siddur Tz'luta d-Avraham*, vol. 1 (Tel-Aviv: Grafika, 1958), pp. 363-364.

<sup>12</sup> Hurwitz, *Mahzor Vitry*, vol. 1, p. 71, *siman* 93.

leader's call to the congregation, to which everyone responds.<sup>13</sup> Still, in some synagogues the prayer leader and congregation sing each other's parts,<sup>14</sup> especially the congregation saying *Gadlu* along with the prayer leader,<sup>15</sup> shifting the occasion to one of communal singing rather than the original call and response. This has been justified as following the popular practice of the congregation to say the opening part of *kedushah* along with the prayer leader, although this too is a call to the congregation.<sup>16</sup> However, that is based on a particular kabbalistic practice specific to *kedushah*.<sup>17</sup> It has been reported that R. Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, would say *Gadlu* along with the prayer leader.<sup>18</sup>

### Facing the Congregation or the Ark

The earliest source to discuss the posture of the prayer leader when saying *Gadlu* is the 11<sup>th</sup>-century work *Mahzor Vitry*. There we find that the prayer leader “takes the Torah scroll, turns towards the *bimah* פניו כנגד (מחזיר פניו כנגד) (הבימה), and says this verse (*Gadlu*) loudly.”<sup>19</sup> The Torah will be read at the *bimah*, so the instruction is to face the direction toward which the Torah

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<sup>13</sup> This was included in his work *Va-Ya'as Avraham* (Lodz: 1936), p. 297, and later in his popular *Siddur Tz'luta d-Avraham*, vol. 1, p. 364. See also Moshe Raḥamim Shaiv, *Mehkarei Aretz*, vol. 5 (Jerusalem: 2015), pp. 99-100, *siman* 50, where he writes that the custom of the congregation to say *Gadlu* along with the prayer leader is based on a lack of understanding that this is the prayer leader addressing them.

<sup>14</sup> For an example of the prayer leader singing *Romemu*, see Menatzpach, *Minbagim de-Kehillat Kodesh Vermiza*, vol. 1, p. 222, *siman* 188.

<sup>15</sup> Simḥah Rabinowitz, *Piskei Teshuvot*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: 2002), 134:10, p. 107, writes that this is the practice of the masses (ההמונים). Moshe Mendel Sklars, *Hayei Moshe*, vol. 2 (Bnei Brak: 2006), p. 75, calls this “מנהג העולם”, the way of the world.

<sup>16</sup> Yaakov Zvi Katz, *Leket Ha-Kemah He-Hadash*, vol. 5 (London: 1997), *Tomer Devorah* section, p. 3. On the common practice for the congregation to say the opening part of *kedushah*, see *Mishnah Berurah* 125:2.

<sup>17</sup> Saying the entire *kedushah* along with the prayer leader is the practice of the Ari, see *Ba'er Heitev* 125:1, but according to that practice one should say it word for word with the prayer leader, see *Magen Avraham* 125:2, *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 125:1. See the detailed discussion of this in Rabinowitz, *Piskei Teshuvot*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: 2007), 125:2, p. 924.

<sup>18</sup> Yisrael Granovter, *Ma'aseh Melekh* (Petach Tikva: 2012), p. 30, 5:5.

<sup>19</sup> Hurwitz, *Mahzor Vitry*, vol. 1, p. 156, *siman* 164.

will be carried.<sup>20</sup> While not explicitly stating that the prayer leader is facing the congregation, he is certainly not facing the Ark, and is in fact turned away from it, heading toward the *bimah*. Later sources do not explicitly relate to the position of the prayer leader during *Gadlu*, although R. Zalman Yanet in his 15<sup>th</sup>-century work on Ashkenazic customs notes in passing that on Simḥat Torah, after all the Torah scrolls are removed from the Ark, “the prayer leader turns his face towards the people and says *Gadlu*...”<sup>21</sup> This instruction is fundamentally in line with *Maḥzor Vitry*, as when facing toward the *bimah* the prayer leader is also facing at least some of the congregation.<sup>22</sup>

The differences of opinion noted in contemporary prayer books regarding where exactly to face while saying *Gadlu* started being recorded in the 1800s. R. Yeḥiel Mikhel Epstein (1821-1908), in his *Arukh Ha-Shulḥan*, writes that the prayer leader says *Gadlu* “opposite the Ark, and lifts the Torah scroll a little, and bows,” adding that on Shabbat, while *Shema* is said facing the congregation, “he turns his face to the Ark and says *Gadlu*.”<sup>23</sup> This is a widespread practice seen in many synagogues today, and *Arukh Ha-Shulḥan* appears to be the only source for it.<sup>24</sup> Some have tried to date this practice earlier to *Abudraham* who states that *Gadlu* is said “לפני ההיכל,”<sup>25</sup> but that simply means “in front of the Ark” rather than specifically facing the Ark.<sup>26</sup> This has been reported as the practice of R.

<sup>20</sup> *Maḥzor Vitry* uses the term *bimah* as it is used commonly today, to refer to the place where the Torah is read. See Uri Dasberg, “*Kivun Ha-Tefillah—Pnei ha-Shatz Le’an?*”, *Tḥumin*, vol. 28, 5768 (Alon Shvut: Zomet Institute, 2008), p. 457.

<sup>21</sup> *Minbagei Ha-Rav Zalman Yanet*, pp. 176-177, in the back of Shlomo Spitzer, ed., *Sefer ha-Minbagim l-Rabbenu Isaac Tirnau* (Jerusalem: Machon Yerushalayim, 2000).

<sup>22</sup> Similarly, the German custom to say one word from *Gadlu* on each of the six steps descending from the Ark was presumably said while facing the congregation rather than walking backwards down stairs. See Meir Schwartz, “Addendum: *Lubot Ha-Brit b-Ashkenaz b-Germania*” in Daniel Sperber, *Minbagei Yisrael*, vol. 8 (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 2007), p. 161, note 3.

<sup>23</sup> *Arukh Ha-Shulḥan*, *Orah Hayyim* 134:4. Similarly in *Orah Hayyim* 282:1 when discussing taking out the Torah on Shabbat.

<sup>24</sup> Dasberg, “*Kivun Ha-Tefillah—Pnei ha-Shatz Le’an?*”, p. 457.

<sup>25</sup> See Yitzchak Goldberg, *Matza Hen* (Jerusalem: 2017), p. 72, note 145.

<sup>26</sup> Dasberg, “*Kivun Ha-Tefillah—Pnei ha-Shatz Le’an?*”, p. 458. See also Efraim Greenblatt, “Simḥat Torah” in *Noam*, vol. 13 (1970), p. 237, where he suggests that when *Tur* states that the prayer leader stands בפתח ההיכל this means he is facing the Ark, but the plain reading of that phrase is that he stands at the entrance of the Ark, not necessarily facing it. He also suggests that when *Maḥzor Vitry* writes that the prayer leader states פניו כנגד הבימה he actually means that he is facing away from the *bimah*, which is also a difficult reading.

Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe,<sup>27</sup> and is the only practice reported in *Otzar Dinim u-Minbagim*,<sup>28</sup> as well as some contemporary halakhic works which discuss the practices associated with the reading of the Torah.<sup>29</sup>

This ruling seems unusual, as the prayer leader is addressing the congregation when saying *Gadlu*, rather than directing a prayer to God, so it is reasonable for him to face the congregation.<sup>30</sup> For this reason R. Epstein's son, R. Barukh Epstein, in his work on the prayers *Barukh She-Amar*, writes that "it seems to me to be a mistaken custom" to turn away from the congregation for *Gadlu*.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, R. Menachem Mendel Landa writes, "I have seen prayer leaders who err and on Shabbat say *Shema* when facing west, towards the congregation, and afterwards turn to the east, to the Ark, and say *Gadlu*." He writes that the same way *Shema* is said facing the congregation, so too *Gadlu* should be said facing the congregation, since the prayer leader is addressing the congregation.<sup>32</sup> However, it has been countered that it may not be necessary to face the congregation directly when addressing them,<sup>33</sup> and since the prayer leader is including himself in the praise by saying "O magnify (*Gadlu*) the LORD with me" it can be reasonable for him to face the same direction as the congregation.<sup>34</sup>

Whatever justification can be found for facing the Ark for *Gadlu*, facing the *bimah* and congregation appears to be the older approach, going back to *Maḥzor Vitry*, and is the preferred practice noted in a number of halakhic works. For example, R. Avraham Hayyim Nach (1890-1954), in his *Ketzot Ha-Shulhan*, writes, "The custom is that the prayer leader turns a little towards the congregation when he says *Gadlu*."<sup>35</sup> This is the ruling adopted in *Piskei Teshuvot*.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Granovter, *Ma'aseh Melekh*, p. 44, 8:46; p. 137, 3:11.

<sup>28</sup> J. D. Eisenstein, *Otzar Dinim u-Minbagim* (New York: 1917), p. 374.

<sup>29</sup> For example, Shlomo Mann, *Zot Ha-Torah* (Jerusalem: 1992), p. 108, 10:9; Yehoshua Dov Feldstein, *Yad b-Kriat Ha-Torah* (Bnei Brak: 2002), p. 11, 3:18.

<sup>30</sup> Dasberg, "Kivun Ha-Tefillah—Pnei ha-Shatz Le'an?" p. 458.

<sup>31</sup> Barukh Epstein, *Barukh She-amar* (Tel Aviv: Am Olam, 1965), p. 178.

<sup>32</sup> This was included in his work *Va-Ya'as Avraham*, p. 297, and later in his popular *Siddur Tz'luta d-Avraham*, vol. 1, p. 364.

<sup>33</sup> This is the opinion of R. Yitzchak Berkovits, reported in Goldberg, *Matza Hen*, p. 72, note 145.

<sup>34</sup> Shmuel Gelbard, *Otzar Ta'amei Ha-Minbagim* (Petach Tikva: Mif'al Rashi, 1996), p. 219.

<sup>35</sup> Avraham Hayyim Nach, *Ketzot Ha-Shulhan*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Zuckerman, 1926), 25:6, p. 71a.

<sup>36</sup> Rabinowitz, *Piskei Teshuvot*, vol. 2, 134:10, p. 107.

A few explanations were given to explain from where the ruling of *Arukh Ha-Shulhan* may have originated. A popular explanation given by those who oppose the practice is that facing the Ark for *Gadlu* is an error that began because the prayer leader would turn to pick up his *siddur* that he put down when using both hands to receive the Torah scroll.<sup>37</sup> Supporters of the practice have suggested that it is in order to make a distinction between the *Shema* and *Ehad* parts and *Gadlu*,<sup>38</sup> although it is not clear why such a distinction would be important. R. Efraim Greenblatt reports that his father explained that all the verses should have been said facing the Ark, the way the prayer leader always faces the same direction as the congregation, and the way the Torah is read facing the Ark, and *Shema* and *Ehad* are the special exceptions where the leader is addressing the congregation and telling them to declare the oneness of God in the world.<sup>39</sup> Here too it is not clear why *Gadlu* does not work the same way, as it is also addressing the congregation.<sup>40</sup>

### **Bowing Towards the Ark**

We saw that *Arukh Ha-Shulhan* wrote that the prayer leader faces the Ark and bows when saying *Gadlu*. This is somewhat difficult in light of the general aversion to additional bowing found in many early sources,<sup>41</sup> and to objects in particular. This was most famously expressed by R. Isaiah di Trani (Riaz, c. 1235–c. 1300), quoted in *Shiltei Gibborim* (TB *Kiddushin* 14b) as saying that there is no source anywhere that indicates that people should bow to the Ark.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Eliyahu Shanon, *Siddur Ve-Shinantem* (Jerusalem: 2015), p. 524.

<sup>38</sup> Gelbard, *Otzar Ta'amei Ha-Minbagim*, p. 219. Note that while he generally brings sources for his explanations, on this matter no sources are provided.

<sup>39</sup> Greenblatt, “Simhat Torah”, p. 237.

<sup>40</sup> These distinctions between *Gadlu* and *Shema* may be at the root of the different practices instructed in the *Koren Siddur* for weekdays (when *Shema* is not said) and Shabbat (when it is said, so presumably there would be a need to distinguish *Gadlu* from *Shema*), although as noted above it isn't clear why such a distinction would be necessary in the first place.

<sup>41</sup> See the discussion in Efraim Greenblatt, *Rivevot Ephraim, Oraḥ Hayyim*, vol. 4 (Memphis, TN: Deutsch Printing and Publishing Co., 1985), *siman* 75, pp. 159-161.

<sup>42</sup> ולא נמצא בכל התורה שמשתחוין אפילו לארון הקודש. Regarding bowing to the Torah, see Hayyim Yosef David Azulay, *Birkei Yosef* 134:3, where he discusses this at length. See also the detailed discussions of the position of Riaz in consideration of the common practice to bow towards the Ark in a number of situations in Moshe Ha-Levi, “Is it proper to bow during *Brikkh Shmei d-Marei Alma?*” (Hebrew) in *Or Torah*, vol. 5(473), Shvat 5767 (2007), pp. 338-341, and David Barda,

R. Efraim Greenblatt gives two suggestions for the source of the ruling for the prayer leader to bow at *Gadlu* as found in *Arukh Ha-Shulhan*. His first suggestion is that the practice is in fact erroneous, based on confusing removing the Torah from the Ark with *bagbahab*, where the *Shulhan Arub* (*Orah Hayyim* 134:2) rules that one bows towards the Torah. Alternatively, since the prayer leader is calling upon the congregation to “magnify (*Gadlu*) the LORD with me,” the way that they express this is by bowing. Since the prayer leader himself is included in this magnification, he bows as well. R. Greenblatt notes that based on this, the prayer leader does not bow when saying the word *Gadlu* itself, and he would actually be facing the congregation at that point, but rather he turns to the Ark and bows when saying the name of God in the verse, thus magnifying God.<sup>43</sup> Note that based on this the primary people who should be bowing are the members of the congregation, and the prayer leader is joining along with them.

### Early Sources for Bowing

There are early sources for bowing at this point in the service, though not by the prayer leader and not at *Gadlu*. R. Eleazar of Worms (c. 1176-1238) in his *Rokeah* mentions in passing that the congregation bows when saying *Romemu*, but does not elaborate or explain why.<sup>44</sup> A fuller treatment of this custom is found in *Sefer Ha-Mahkim*, a collection of rulings and practices regarding the prayer leader written by the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Ashkenazic sage R. Natan ben Yehudah. He writes that when the congregation responds to *Gadlu* by saying “Exalt (*Romemu*) the LORD our God and bow down to His footstool; He is holy!” (Psalms 99:5), they all bow in the direction of the Temple in Jerusalem.<sup>45</sup> This is because *Eikhab Rabbah* 2:3 interprets the footstool in this verse as referring to the Temple.<sup>46</sup> This

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*Revid Ha-Zahav*, vol. 2 (Tiberias: 2008), p. 61. The ruling of Riaz is considered the main justification for those who do not bow during *bagbahab* as stated in the *Shulhan Arukh* (*Orah Hayyim* 134:2). On this, see Simḥah Rabinowitz, *Piskei Teshuvot*, vol. 2, 134:7, 105, n. 28. See also Saul Liebermann, *Shkikin* (Jerusalem: Shalem Books, 1992), 9, regarding Karaite opposition to what they considered the Rabbinite practice of bowing to the Torah.

<sup>43</sup> Greenblatt, *Riverot Ephraim*, *Orah Hayyim*, vol. 4, *siman* 75, pp. 160-161.

<sup>44</sup> *Rokeah*, *siman* 445. His focus in that section is on bowing when the Torah is returned to the Ark.

<sup>45</sup> Yaakov Freeman, ed., *Sefer Ha-Mahkim* (Cracow: Haeshkol, 1909), p. 15.

<sup>46</sup> *Eikhab Rabbah* 2:3, “Another interpretation: *He did not remember His Footstool on His day of wrath* (Lam. 2:1): this is not the footstool but the Temple. See, it is

ruling is found in a more abbreviated form in *Kol Bo*<sup>47</sup> and in *Orhot Hayyim* where after the author writes about the verses that the congregation says after *Gadlu* he states that “they bow towards the Ark,”<sup>48</sup> the same direction as the Temple in Jerusalem. In all these sources it is only the members of the congregation who bow and not the prayer leader, as this instruction follows the verses that they say and is related to the mention of the footstool in the *Romemu* verse they are saying.

It is significant that *Sefer Ha-Maḥkim* writes that the congregation says the verses of magnification to each other, and then they “say to each other, ‘If so, “bow down to His footstool; He is holy!”” right before bowing.<sup>49</sup> In *Kol Bo* and in *Orhot Hayyim* it states that the congregation says these verses in an undertone.<sup>50</sup> This would result in the appearance of the prayer leader saying *Gadlu* aloud, with the congregation responding quietly and bowing.

The only source to explicitly mention the prayer leader bowing is *Arukh Ha-Shulḥan*, who is also the only source for facing the Ark for *Gadlu*. All of the sources which have the prayer leader face the congregation for *Gadlu* do not instruct him to bow. This leads to the conclusion that facing the Ark for *Gadlu* and bowing are interconnected. This forms the basis of the explanation of the prominent Cleveland rabbi, R. Israel Porath (1886-1974) as to why the prayer leader must face the Ark when saying *Gadlu*, since it would not be appropriate for him to bow towards the congregation.<sup>51</sup>

Why would the prayer leader bow in the first place? Porath writes that it is because the prayer leader is trying to abide by the ruling of *Kol Bo* to bow. This itself, however, is strange as that instruction was directed to the congregation, not the prayer leader. Thus, the custom of the prayer leader facing the Ark and bowing, to the extent that it is based in some way on

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written, ‘Exalt (*Romemu*) the LORD our God and bow down to His footstool; He is holy!’ (Psalms 99:5).” See also Targum Yonatan, R. Saadiah Gaon and Rashi on Lam. 2:1.

<sup>47</sup> The date and authorship of *Kol Bo* is uncertain, but seems to be from the 13th century. See the Introduction by Shlomo Zalman Havlin in *Sefer Kol Bo* (Jerusalem: Even Yisrael, 1997), 7-10.

<sup>48</sup> *Kol Bo*, *siman* 20; Aaron ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Orhot Hayyim* (Florence: 1750), p. 22a, *siman* 7. See Yosef Noam Rimon, ed., *Orhot Hayyim* (Merkaz Shapira: Machon Or Etzion, 2017), p. 382, n. 119.

<sup>49</sup> Freeman, *Sefer Ha-Maḥkim*, p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> בלהש. *Kol Bo*, *siman* 20; Aaron ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Orhot Hayyim* (Florence: 1750), p. 22a, *siman* 7.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted by Greenblatt, “Simḥat Torah,” p. 237.



a correct practice and not a complete error,<sup>52</sup> is understood as a case where a behavior that was originally meant for the congregation spread to the prayer leader as well, similar to the blurring of the roles of the prayer leader and the congregation seen in reciting *Gadlu*. Alternately, it has been explained as the prayer leader modeling to the congregation what they should be doing.<sup>53</sup> In any event, the bowing was instituted for the congregation and not the prayer leader.

### **A Custom is Reversed**

The early Ashkenazic practice was that the congregation bowed in the direction of Jerusalem when saying Psalms 99:5 in response to hearing the prayer leader instruct them to magnify God. Since that verse was not sung aloud and would ultimately be said quietly, the bowing was not necessarily associated with the footstool reference in people's minds. Every member of the congregation bowed at this point, and when a person served as prayer leader, he may very well have wanted to continue the bowing he would do as a member of the congregation. To do so, he had to face in the same direction as them, towards Jerusalem, the direction of the Ark,<sup>54</sup> but the only occasion for him to do so is while he is still standing before the Ark. Once some prayer leaders bow when saying *Gadlu*, it may appear to others that to skip the bow would be a display of lack of piety. These factors led to a replacement of the original logical practice found in *Mahzor Vitry* to face the *bimah* and the congregation when calling upon them to magnify God. At the same time, the original practice of the congregation bowing while saying *Romemu* gradually disappeared from halakhic literature.

This new practice of the prayer leader bowing towards the Ark when saying *Gadlu* was later codified in *Arukh Ha-Shulhan* and is found as the only instruction in some prayer books today. In actuality, that practice is preserving in a corrupted way a remnant of the old practice of the congregation to bow towards Jerusalem at this point in the service. This ultimately has led to the complete reversal of the original Ashkenazic custom

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<sup>52</sup> The same way turning toward the Ark for *Gadlu* has been explained as originating when the prayer leader would turn to pick up his *siddur* that he put down when receiving the Torah scroll, similarly the "bowing" can be explained as the prayer leader simply bending down to get his *siddur*.

<sup>53</sup> Shaiv, *Mehkarei Aretz*, vol. 5, p. 100, *siman* 50.

<sup>54</sup> Note that there was no idea of bowing to the Ark, just bowing to Jerusalem, conforming to the statement of Riaz above that there is no source for bowing to the Ark as such.

of the prayer leader facing the congregation for *Gadlu* and not bowing, and the congregation facing the Ark and Jerusalem and bowing at *Romemu*.

