

the earth, and the body here vibrates as we intone the whole name slowly: *Ah-bw-oo-n*.

The rest of the phrase completes the motion of divine creation. In *d'bwashmaya*, the central root is found in the middle: *shm*. From this root comes the word *shem*, which may mean light, sound, vibration, name, or word. The root *shm* indicates that which "rises and shines in space," the entire sphere of a being. In this sense, one's name included one's sound, vibration, or atmosphere, and names were carefully given and received. Here the "sign" or "name" that renders *Abwoon* knowable is the entire universe. The ending *-aya* shows that this shining includes every center of activity, every place we see, as well as the potential abilities of all things. In effect, *shmaya* says that the vibration or word by which one can recognize the Oneness—God's name—is the universe. This was the Aramaic conception of "heaven." This word is central to many of the sayings of Jesus and usually misunderstood. In Greek and later in English, "heaven" became a metaphysical concept out of touch with the processes of creation. It is difficult for the Western mind to comprehend how one word can have such seemingly different meanings. Yet this was the worldview of the native Middle Eastern mystic.

Body Prayers

In the first line of Jesus' prayer, we remember our origins—not in guilt or imperfection, but in blessing and unity, in both vibration and stillness. For the divine breath (*rukha*) touches even the absence of what we can measure as "light" or "sound."

1. Intone the sound *Ah-bw-oo-n* slowly, finding a pitch that resonates the most in your body. Take some time to find this "note"—it is your own heritage from *Abwoon*: the tone at which you vibrate most is part of your "name," in the Aramaic meaning of the word. Feel the vibration of the sound. Where do you feel it in your body? As the sound enters the silence, let yourself follow it there. Begin to feel all the movements within the body—heartbeat, breathing, peristalsis—that go on without our attention. Feel these movements as internal prayers that point to the gift and responsibility of co-creation with God.

2. When in nature, walking or sitting, breathe in feeling the sound *Abwoon* inside yourself, and breathe out feeling the sound *d'bwashmaya*. Feel breath come into you as it does into the grass, trees, rocks, and water. Feel the One Source of this breathing. And feel the breathing returning to all creation. Our breath feeds the plants and theirs us. The exchange unites us in God. All creation says the holy Name silently.

3. When at work, breathe in feeling the sound *Ah*; breathe out feeling the sound *bwoon*. As you inhale, feel all newness and nourishment coming into the heart-lungs area. As you exhale, feel everything old, everything that wants to be released, leaving with the breath. Where in the body can you feel the breath? What parts are not aware and could use waking up? As we become aware of the body, the darkness, the inside, we begin to be aware of soul (Aramaic, *naphsha*) and on the track of the kingdom/queendom within.