

halakhicly and that's not necessarily a good thing, but halakha is halakha and we don't pick and choose." I might still disagree, but I would value her intellectual honesty. But she doesn't. Instead, she waxes poetic about sex being the purview of the married couple, or some such pabulum.

One area in which she hits a better note is when dealing with homosexuality. She says honestly that trying to change a gay person to make the person straight is damaging, and we should show understanding of those who cannot live a heterosexual lifestyle.

Finally, why do Orthodox books about sex have to be so serious? It's almost as if the authors were afraid that if they have any fun with the subject, people will think that they are not serious religious Jews—which just may be part of the problem. Jews need to lighten up when it comes to sex.

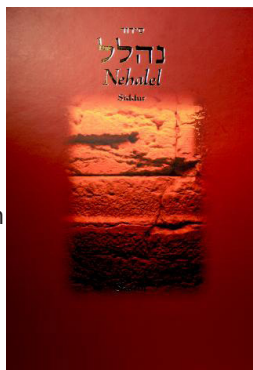
Bottom line, for a right-wing religious Jew, this book might work beautifully. For the Modern Orthodox crowd, go buy Justin Richardson and Mark Schuster's *Everything You Never Wanted Your Kids to Know about Sex (but Were Afraid They'd Ask)*, and then, armed with all the necessary information, you can make your own decisions.

***Nehalel beShabbat Siddur*
Devised and English translation by
Michael Haruni**

Nevarech, 2013, \$27
Distributed by KTAV and Urim

By Rachel Levmore

One cannot fathom the effect of this *siddur* until one actually prays with it. At first glance, the main innovation is immediately recognizable—stunningly beautiful



photographs accompanying each prayer on almost every page. The deep relevance of these photos

will grip even the skeptic who has years-long familiarity with the Shabbat prayers. Each photograph serves as a commentary to a single emphasized line on the page, thus sharply focusing the reader's thoughts on the intent of the words.

Moreover, the *siddur*, in its entirety, has a "natural" feeling to it, in more ways than one. First, it engenders a sense of reveling in God's world and our place in it. Secondly, there is room for all in this world. The photographs naturally include girls and boys (for "and light up our eyes with Your Torah"), men and women (in a *beit midrash* for "we shall discuss your decrees"), and scenes of natural wonders in Israel and in the universe (a brilliant juxtaposition of a baby taking his first steps to astronaut Buzz Aldrin's 1969 walk on the moon for "Who engineers the stride of man.")

The photographs also illuminate contemporary Jewish history and Zionism, as in an archival photo of the 1945 liberation of the Mauthausen concentration camp for "You emancipated us from a regime of slavery" and the classical shot of David Ben-Gurion declaring an independent Jewish state for "has made His redemption known."

Some may feel initial discomfort with a prayer book filled with photographs and would prefer to have the abstract words filled with meaning by the one who prays. Nevertheless, the photographs in this volume are simply inspirational and are filled with reverence.

The photographs are not the only way that Michael Haruni brings the ancient prayers into the mindset of the present-day Jew. His English translation is contemporary and succinct, serving itself as an elegant commentary. Prayers for the State of Israel, IDF soldiers, and captive soldiers are included, alongside those for the rulers of Britain and the United States. The excellent yet visually unobtrusive instructions firmly guide the individual in the practices of prayer alone or in the synagogue. The print is clean with a good-sized font. Furthermore, the Hebrew grammar and punctuation are consistently correct—an improvement over some other

popular prayer books.

It is not only the spiritual quality of this volume that is impressive; the paper quality also adds weight to the *siddur* (bringing it to 2.4 pounds). *Nehalel beShabbat* may be heavy for a *siddur*, but it is heavy with meaning.

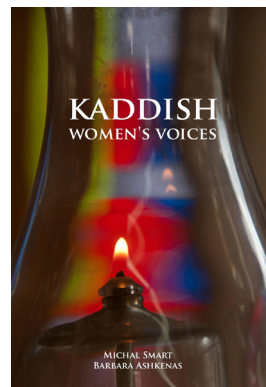
Haruni has added profound significance to the words chanted on Sabbath morning: "If our mouths were as filled with poetry as the hugeness of the ocean ... still we could not adequately thank You." Through the poetry and the photography of the *Nehalel siddur*, one can truly immerse oneself in prayer.

***Kaddish: Women's Voices*
Edited by Michal Smart, conceived
by Barbara Ashkenas**

Urim Publications, 2013, \$25

By Israel Drazin

Michal Smart and Barbara Ashkenas have collected some fifty essays by articulate women of various Jewish denomi-



nations who tell poignant tales of relatives who died and their experiences in saying *kaddish* for them, what motivated their taking on the practice, and how they felt doing so. The women, on the whole, derived much that was positive from saying *kaddish* for eleven months, despite the fact that some of them received unfortunate responses from Orthodox men. The book also includes three short chapters by rabbis concerning the laws of mourning and of saying *kaddish*.

Many of the women writers felt that saying *kaddish* provided them with an opportunity to engage others in helping them heal. It also facilitated their creating new and lasting bonds of friendship in their communities. Some felt that the