

תְּפִילַּת רְפוּאָה שְׁלִימָה

t'fillat r'fuah sh'leimah

prayers for healing in wholeness

Temple B'nai Abraham
Livingston NJ
Yom Kippur Healing Service



Become Aware

Become aware of your pulse, its steady rhythm; the sound of blood flowing through your heart. Focus on calm, deep breaths. Inhale. Exhale. Experience the heart's sense of perfect balance with each breath's rise and fall. God has prepared your heart.

From *The Renewal of the Spirit*, ed. Cantor Ilene Keys, text from Psalm 10:17

I Pray

Source of Strength, open my heart to You.
Open my heart to hearts everywhere that hear.
Open my heart to hearts that respond.

Grant Your servant a heart that hears. וְנִתַּן לְעַבְדְּךָ לֵב שׁוֹמֵעַ.

Source of Compassion, open my heart to You.
Open my heart to hearts that respond.
Open my heart to hearts that ache.
Open my heart.
Open my ears.

Morning by morning You rouse, You rouse my ears to give heed.
God, You open my ears. יַעֲרֵךְ בְּבִקְרֹךְ, בְּבִקְרֹךְ יַעֲרֵךְ לִי אוֹזְן לְשׁוֹמֵעַ.

Source of love,
Open my heart.
Open my ears.

From *The Renewal of the Spirit*, ed. Cantor Ilene Keys

Prayer

Prayer is at the heart not only of great religion, but of significant living. Without prayer we cannot scale the heights of compassion, or attain the peaks of love of our fellow human beings of which we are capable.

Prayer has been an enduring and universal phenomenon of human life, not because a priesthood ordained it, not because tradition hallowed it, but because we are ever seeking to probe into our own depths and bring to light our hidden yearnings...

Prayer is a step on which we rise from the self we are to the self we wish to be.

Prayer affirms the hope that no reality can crush; the aspiration that can never acknowledge defeat...

Prayer is not an escape from duty. It is no substitute for the deed.

Prayer seeks the power to do wisely, to act generously, to live helpfully. It helps to reinforce the act rather than replace it.

Prayer is the search for silence amidst the noise of life...

Prayer takes us beyond the self. Joining our little self to the selfhood of humanity, it gives our wishes the freedom to grow large and inclusive.

Our prayers are answered not when we are given what we ask, but when we are challenged to be what we can be.

Rabbi Morris Adler, from *A Service of Healing*, Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley, Massachusetts

A Prayer for Prayer

O my God
My soul's companion
My heart's precious friend I turn to You.

I need to close out the noise to rise above the noise—
The noise that interrupts- the noise that separates—
The noise that isolates.
I need to hear You again.

In the silence of my innermost being,
In the fragments of my yearned-for wholeness.
I hear whispers of Your presence—
Echoes of the past when You were with me
When I felt Your nearness
When together we walked—
When You held me close. embraced me in Your love,
laughed with me in my joy.
I yearn to hear You again.

In your oneness, I find healing.
In the promise of Your love, I am soothed.
In Your wholeness, I too can become whole again.

Please listen to my call—
 help me find the words
 help me find the strength within
 help me shape my mouth, my voice, my heart
so that I can direct my spirit and find You in prayer
In words only my heart can speak
In songs only my soul can sing
Lifting my eyes and heart to You.

Adonai S'fatai Tiftach—open my lips, precious God.
so that I can speak with You again.

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman

אַחַת שְׁאַלְתִּי מֵאַתְּ-יְהוָה אֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ שְׁבִיטִי בְּבֵית-יְהוָה כֹּל-יְמֵי חַיֵּי
לַחַיּוֹת בְּנַעַם-יְהוָה וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהִיכָלוֹ:

*Achat sha'alti mei'eit Adonai otah avakeish, shivti b'veit Adonai kol y'mei chayai,
Lachazot b'no'am Adonai ulvakeir b'heikhalo.*

One thing I ask of God, one thing do I seek— that I may stay in the Divine Presence all the days of my life, envision Divine Delight, and contemplate God's existence.

Psalm 27:4

BODY AND SOUL

Prayer for the Body

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה, וּבָרָא
בוֹ נְקָבִים וְנְקָבִים, חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים, גְּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לְפָנֶי כֶּסֶא כְבוֹדְךָ שָׂאם
יִפְתַּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם, אוֹ יִסְתֵּם אֶחָד מֵהֶם, אִי אֶפְשֶׁר לְהִתְקַיֵּים וּלְעֵמוּד
לְפָנֶיךָ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, רוֹפֵא כָּל בָּשָׂר, וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת:

*Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, asher yatzar et ha'adam b'chokhma, uvara
vo n'kavim n'kavim, chalulim chalulim, galu'i v'yadu'a lifnei khisei kh'vodekha she'im
yipatei'ach echad meihem, o yisateim echad meihem, i efshar l'hitkayeim v'la'amod
l'fanekha: Barukh Atah Adonai, rofei khol basar, umaflia la'asot.*

We praise You Eternal God whose presence fills Creation. You have formed us in wisdom and created within us the spark of life. Each cell does the work of its Creator, each organ's existence is a tribute to God. If the working of this wondrous structure were to fail in its tasks, we could not exist before You and give thanks for Your sustenance. Let us cherish this gift of flesh and blood and honor it as Your creation.

We praise You, divine Healer, who performs wonders.

Prayer for the Soul

אֱלֹהֵי, נְשָׁמָה שְׁנַתַּתָּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא. אַתָּה בְּרֵאתָהּ, אַתָּה יִצַּרְתָּהּ, אַתָּה
נִפְחַתָּהּ בִּי, וְאַתָּה מְשַׁמְרָהּ בְּקִרְבִּי, וְאַתָּה עֹתִיד לְטָלָהּ מִמֶּנִּי, וְלִהְיוֹתָהּ
בִּי לְעֵתִיד לְבוֹא. כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהַנְּשָׁמָה בְּקִרְבִּי, מוֹדָה / מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְיָ
אֱלֹהֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי וְאֲמוֹתַי, רַבּוֹן כָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים, אֲדוֹן כָּל הַנְּשָׁמוֹת.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֲשֶׁר בִּידוֹ נִפְּשׂ כָּל חַי וְרוּחַ כָּל בֶּשֶׂר אִישׁ.

*Elohai, n'shamah shenatata bi t'horah hi. Atah b'ratah, Atah y'tzartah, Atah n'fachtah bi,
v'atah m'shamrah b'kirbi, v'atah atid litlah mimeni, ul'hachazirah bi le'atid lavo. Kol z'man
shehan'shamah v'kirbi, modeh/modah ani l'fanekha, Adonai Elohai veilohei avotai
v'imotai, ribon kol hama'asim, adon kol han'shamot.*

Barukh Atah Adonai, asher b'yado nefesh kol chai v'ru'ach kol b'sar ish.

The soul that You have given me, O God, is a pure one. You have created and formed it, breathed it into me, and within me You sustain it. Some day You will take it from me and restore it in the time to come. So long as I have breath, therefore, I will give thanks to You, Eternal my God and God of all ages, wellspring of all Creation, life source of every soul. We praise You, Eternal God, in whose keeping are the souls of all the living and every human spirit.

The Blessings

God, God of the broken-hearted, God of the strong and the weak, God of the angry and the grieving: I stand before You today in pain, in doubt, in fear, in joy, and happiness. Many blessings have been given to us and many have been taken from us. At times we hesitate even to call out to You and yet we must, with every breath, try to speak Your praise, try to be mindful of being alive.

O God, thank You for the gift of this breath.

Every soul shall praise God, Halleluyah.

כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהַלֵּל יְיָ הַלְלוּיָהּ:

Kol han'shama t'haleil Ya hal'luyah.

SUPPORT

Open Up Our Eyes

Open up our eyes, teach us how to live.
Fill our hearts with joy, and all the love You have to give.
Gather us in peace as You lead us to Your Name,
And we will know that You are One.

- Jeff Klepper

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד:

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Sh'ma Yisra'el, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad.

Barukh Sheim k'vod malkhuto l'olam va'ed.

(Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One; Blessed be the Name, glorious in God's dominion, forever and ever)

Psalm 139 א לְמִנְצַח לְדוֹד מִזְמוֹר יְהוָה חִקְרֹתַי

וַתֵּדַע: ב אֶתְּהָ יִדְעֶתְ שְׁבֹתַי וְקוֹמֵי בְּנֵתְהָ
לְרַעֵי מִרְחוֹק: ג אֶרְחֵי וּרְבַעֵי זְרִיתְ
וְכָל-דְּרָכַי הִסְכַּנְתָּה: ד כִּי אֵין מַלְאָה
בְּלִשׁוֹנֵי הֵן יְהוָה יִדְעֶת כְּלָה: ה אַחֲרוֹר
וְקֹדֶם צִרְתָּנִי וַתֵּשֶׁת עָלַי כְּפָכָה: ו
פְּלִיאָה [פְּלִיאָה] דַּעַת מִמֶּנִּי נִשְׁגָּבָה
לֹא-אֹכֵל לָהּ: ז אָנָּה אֵלֶךְ מִרוּחְךָ וְאָנָּה
מִפְּנֵיךְ אֶבְרַח: ח אִם-אֶסֶק שְׁמַיִם שָׁם
אֶתְּהָ וְאַצִּיעָה שְׂאוֹל הַנֶּגֶד: ט אֲשָׂא
כְּנִפֵי-שָׁחַר אֲשַׁכְּנָה בְּאַחֲרֵית יָם:
י גַּם-שָׁם יִדְךָ תִּנְחַנֵּי וְתִאחַזְנֵי יְמִינֶךָ:
יא וְאָמַר אַךְ-חֲשֵׁךְ יִשׁוּפְנֵי וְלִילָה אֹר
בְּעֵדְנִי: יב גַּם-חֲשֵׁךְ לֹא-יִחְשֵׁךְ מִמֶּךָ
וְלִילָה כִּיֹּם יֵאִיר בְּחֹשֶׁיכָה כְּאוֹרָה:
יג כִּי-אֶתְּהָ קִנִּיתְ כָּלִיתִי תִסְכְּנֵי בְּבֶטֶן
אִמִּי: יד אֹדְךָ עַל כִּי נוֹרְאוֹת נִפְלִיתִי
נִפְלְאִים מַעֲשֵׂיךָ וְנִפְשֵׁי יִדְעֶת מְאֹד:
טו לֹא-נִכְחַד עֲצָמֵי מִמֶּךָ אֲשֶׁר-עֲשִׂיתִי
בְּסִתֶּר רִקְמָתִי בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת אֶרֶץ: טז גְּלָמֵי
| רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וְעַל-סִפְרֶךָ כָּלֵם יִכְתְּבוּ יָמִים
יִצְרוּ וְלֹא [וְלוֹ] אֶחָד בָּהֶם: יז וְלִי
מֵה-יִקְרֹו רַעִיךָ אֵל מֵה עֲצָמוֹ רְאִשֵׁיהֶם:
יח אֲסֻפְרָם מִחֹל יִרְבּוּן הִקִּיצַתִי וְעוֹדֵי
עִמָּךְ: יט אִם-תִּקְטֹל אֱלֹהֵי | רָשָׁע וְאֲנִשִּׁי
דָּמִים סוּרוּ מִנִּי: כ אֲשֶׁר יֵאמְרוּךְ לְמִזְמָה
נִשְׂאָ לְשׂוֹא עֲרִיד: כא הֲלוֹא-מִשְׁנֵאֲיֶךָ
יְהוָה | אֲשַׁנָּא וּבִתְקוּמָתֶךָ אֶתְקוּטָט:
כב תִּכְלִית שְׁנֵאָה שְׁנֵאָתִים לְאוֹיְבֵים הֵיוּ
לִי: כג חִקְרֵנִי אֵל וְדַע לִבִּי בְּחֻנֵּי וְדַע
שְׂרַעְפֵּי: כד וּרְאֵה אִם-דְּרָךְ-עֲצָב בֵּי וּנְחַנֵּי
בְּדֶרֶךְ עוֹלָם:

O God, You have searched me and know me well.
You understand all my thoughts and every word upon my tongue.
Your presence surrounds me;
You touch me with Your hand.
It exceeds my own perception;
It is a wonder beyond imagining.
If I say "Let darkness hide me and turn the light to darkness,"
Even the darkness is not dark for You;
The night shines forth like day;
The darkness is as light for You.
How precious are Your thoughts to me,
O God, how endless their number,
More numerous than the grains of sand.
When I awake, I am still with You.
Search my soul, O God, and know my heart.
If there is sorrow in me,
Lead me in Your everlasting ways.

HEALING

A Litany for Healing

When Miriam was sick her brother Moses prayed: "O God, pray, heal her please!" We join in this responsive prayer based on Moses' words:

We pray for those who are now ill.

Source of Life, we pray: Heal them.

We pray for those who are affected by illness, anguish and pain.

Heal them.

Grant courage to those whose bodies, holy proof of Your creative goodness, are violated by illness and the pain of illness.

Encourage them.

Grant strength and compassion to families and friends who give their loving care and support, and help them to overcome despair.

Strengthen them.

Grant wisdom to those who probe the deepest complexities of Your world as they labor in the search for treatment and cures.

Inspire them.

Grant clarity of vision and strength of purpose to the leaders of our institutions and our government. May they be moved to act with justice and compassion and find the courage to overcome fear and hatred.

Guide them.

Grant insight to us, that we may understand that whenever death comes, we must accept it— but that before it comes, we must resist it, by prolonging life and by making our life worthy as long as it is lived.

Bless and heal us all.

From *Service of Healing*, ed. Debbie Friedman

(This next section is conducted in silence)

In Prolonged Illness

בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֲדוֹנֵי דַרְשָׁתִי...
אֲזַכֵּרָה אֱלֹהִים וְאֶהְמָיָה, אֲשִׁיחָה וְתִתְעַטֵּף רוּחִי.

"In my time of distress I turn to the Eternal;
I call God to mind, I moan, I complain, my spirit fails." (Psalm 77:4)

My God and God of all generations, in my great need I pour out my heart to You. The days and weeks of suffering are hard to endure. In my struggle, let me feel that You are near, a presence whose care enfolds me. Rouse in me the strength to overcome fear and anxiety, and brighten my spirit with the assurance of Your love. In Your wisdom, guide my doctors, nurses and those who give care to me, as they seek to relieve my pain. Let my dear ones gain strength from You; as they seek to encourage me, may they find reassurance for themselves. Let the healing power encourage me, may they find reassurance for themselves. Let the healing power with me—Your gift to me—give me the strength to face the days ahead with hope. May Your love restore me to the wholeness for which I yearn with all my heart.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי רֹפֵא הַחֹלִים.

I praise You, Eternal One, source of healing.

A Patient's Prayer

Eternal God, source of healing,
Out of my distress I call upon You.

Help me to sense Your presence
At this difficult time.

You have already sent me gifts of Your goodness:
The skill of my physician,
The concern of others who help me,
The compassion of those I love.

I pray that I may be worthy of all these,
Today and in the days to come.

Help me to banish all bitterness;
Let not despair overcome me.

Grant me patience when the hours are heavy;
Give me courage whenever there is hurt or disappointment.

Keep me trustful in Your love, O God.
Give me strength for today, and hope for tomorrow.

To Your loving hands I commit my spirit—
When asleep and when awake.

You are with me; I shall not fear.
Help me, O God, in my time of need.

Prayers for Healing, Prayer Book Press

A Prayer for Coping.

O God, you know my feelings, You know that I want to feel better. I want to be better. I want to have my health restored.

But the hours of testing, the days of diagnosis, and the question marks concerning my future seem nearly more than I can take!

Grant me, O God, the strength to face each hour of this and every day. In fact, when it seems that I cannot face even this hour, fill me with sufficient strength to face the next five minutes. Amen.

Gates of Healing, CCAR

Caregiver's Prayer

Adonai, in Your everlasting providence
you have assigned me
to care for the life and health of Your creatures.
May I be motivated at all times
by love for my art.

May I always regard the sick
as fellow creatures who are in pain.
Give me the strength, the time and the opportunity
ever to perfect the skill I have attained
and ever to enlarge its sphere of influence.

O God, You have assigned me
to care for the life and death of Your creatures.
I am ready for my calling,
and I attend to my task.

Attributed to Moses Maimonides

רְפִאנוּ יי וְנִרְפָּא, הוֹשִׁיעֵנו וְנוֹשְׁעָה, וְהַעֲלֵה רְפוּעָה שְׁלֵמָה לְכָל-מִכּוֹתֵינוּ. (וְיִהְיֶה
רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתְּשַׁלַּח מִהֲרָה רְפוּאָת
שְׁלֵמָה, רְפוּאָת הַנְּפֹשׁ וְרְפוּאָת הַגּוּף, לְחוֹלָה / חוֹלָה _____ בְּתוֹךְ
שְׂאֵר חוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) כִּי אֵל מְלַךְ רוּפָא נְאֻמָּן וְרַחֲמָן אַתָּה.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, רוּפָא חוֹלֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Heal us, Eternal One, and we shall be healed; save us, and we shall be saved; for You are our hope. And grant us a perfect healing from all our wounds. (May it be Your will, our Eternal God and God of our ancestors, to send a complete healing, of body and of soul, to _____ who is now ill, among all those who require healing.) For You are a faithful and merciful Healer.

We praise You, Eternal One, Healer of the sick.

Heal Us Now

R'fa'einu Adonai v'neirafei,

Hoshi'einu v'nivashei'ah

El karov l'chol kor'av,

Ach karov lirei'av yish'o

We pray for healing of the body.

We pray for healing of the soul.

For strength of flesh and mind and spirit.

We pray to once again be whole.

El na r'fana, Oh, please heal us now

R'fu'at hanefesh, u'r'fu'at haguf

R'fu'ah sh'leimah, Heal us now.

Hoshi'a et amekha uvareikh et nachalatecha

Ur'em v'nas'eim ad ha'olam

Mi shebeirakh avoteinu, mishebeirakh

imoteinu

Ana Adonai hoshi'ah na.

רְפְּאֵנוּ יי וְנִרְפָּא,

הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ וְנִוְשָׁעָה,

אֵל קָרוֹב לְכֹל-קוֹרְאָיו

אֶךְ קָרוֹב לִירְאָיו יִשְׁעוּ

אֵל נָא רְפָא נָא

רְפוּאת הַנֶּפֶשׁ וּרְפוּאת הַגּוּף

רְפוּאת שְׁלֵמָה

הוֹשִׁיעָה אֶת-עַמְּךָ וּבְרַךְ אֶת-נַחְלַתְךָ

וּרְעֵם וְנִשְׂאֵם עַד-הָעוֹלָם

מִי שְׁבַרְךָ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

מִי שְׁבַרְךָ אֲמוֹתֵינוּ

אָנָּה יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא

Leon Sher, Hebrew from Liturgy; Numbers 12:13; Psalms 145:18; 85:10; 28:9, 118:25

MOURNING

Dirge without Music

I am not resigned to the shutting away of loving hearts in the hard ground.

So it is, and so it will be, for so it has been, time out of mind:

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave
Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;
Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the brave.

I know,

But I do not approve.

And I am not resigned.

A Service of Healing, eds. Rabbi Nancy Flan and Rabbi Yoel Kahn, Ruach Ami, San Francisco

'Tis a fearful thing

It is a fearful thing
to love what death can touch.

A fearful thing
to love, hope, dream:
to be-

to be,
and oh! to lose.

A thing for fools, this
and
a holy thing
a holy thing
to love.

For
your life has lived in me,
your laugh once lifted me,
your word was gift to me.

To remember this
brings painful joy.
'Tis a human thing, love,
a holy thing,
to love
what death has touched.

Rabbi Chaim Stern

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוַמָּיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

*Oseh shalom bimromav Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisra'el, v'al kol yoshvei teveil,
v'imru amein.*

May God who makes peace in the heavens, make peace for us, for all of Israel, and all of human kind.

WHOLENESS

Kavanah

How did the world begin? For Jewish mystics the world began with an act of withdrawal. God did *tzimtzum*. God contracted God's self to leave space for the world to exist. Before that God was everywhere, filling every space and every dimension. After this *tzimtzum*—this withdrawal—some divine energy entered the emerging world, but this divine light, this divine energy was too strong, overpowering the worlds that tried to contain it, and the universe exploded with a cosmic bang. Shards of divine light, of holiness, were scattered everywhere in the universe. The sparks of holiness are often buried deep in the cosmic muck of the universe, they are difficult to behold and yet they are everywhere, in everyone, in every situation. They are the life and meaning of the universe.

We live in this world of shattering. We feel in our bodies and in our souls the brokenness of the world, we too feel at times the resonance in our selves of that initial cosmic shattering. Our bodies, like that primordial world, try not to contain, but rather to hold onto the divine light and energy flowing around us and in us. But, as in the world's origin, our bodies are too frail, made only frailer with the passage of time, and so we begin to leak our divine image/energy, Perhaps then illness is really the leaking of our souls. In this world of shattered hopes and expectations, we search for wholeness.

Moses, as you know, shattered the first set of tablets, the first set of the Ten Commandments. And then he got a second set that he helped to write. When the ark was constructed for the sanctuary, the rabbis tell us not only the whole second set of tablets was put into the holy ark, but the pieces of the first set as well.

Wholeness comes not from ignoring the broken pieces, or hoping to magically glue them back together.

The shattered co-exists with the whole, the divine is to be found amidst the darkest depths and the heaviest muck of the universe.

Every moment has the potential for redemption and wholeness. Our brokenness gives us that vision and the potential to return some of the divine sparks scattered in the world.

Rabbi Michael Strassfelt, from *Service of Healing*, ed. Debbie Friedman

My God, my God,
אֵלִי, אֵלִי, שְׁלֹא יִגְמַר לְעוֹלָם, I pray that these things never end,
הַחֹל וְהַיָּם, רִשְׁרוּשׁ שֶׁל הַמַּיִם, The sand and the sea,
תְּפִילַת הַשָּׁמַיִם, בְּרַק הַשָּׁמַיִם, The rush of the waters,
The crash of the heavens,
The prayer of the heart.

Eili, Eili, shelo yigameir l'olam, hachol v'hayam, rishrush shel hamayim, b'rak hashamayim, t'filat ha'adam.

Silent Meditation

O God,
You are a consolation to Your creatures,
For in the moments of forgetting,
We but call to mind your care,
And we are comforted.
When we hope no more,
A pattern in the snow
Reminds us of Your loving-kindness.
Your dawns give us confidence,
And sleep is a friend.
Our sorrows dissipate
In the presence of an infant's smile
And old men's words revive our will-to-wish.

From The Renewal of the Spirit, ed. Cantor Ilene Keys

Cause us to return, Eternal One, and we
shall return.

Renew our days as of old.

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם.

Hashiveinu Adonai eilekha v'nashuvah chadeish yameinu k'kedem.

That is the kind of prayer that God answers. We can't pray that God makes our lives free of problems; this won't happen and it's probably just as well. We can't ask God to make us and those we love immune to disease, because God can't do that. We can't ask God to weave a magic spell around us so that bad things will only happen to other people and never to us. People who pray for miracles, usually don't get miracles any more than children who pray for bicycles, good grade, or boyfriends get them as a result of praying. But people who pray for courage, for strength to bear the unbearable, for the grace to remember what they have left instead of what they have lost, very often find their prayers answered. They discover that they have more strength, more courage than they ever know themselves to have. Where did they get it? I would like to think that their prayers helped them tap hidden reserves of faith and courage which were not available to them before. The widow who asks me on the day of her husband's funeral, "what do I have to live for now?", yet in the course of the ensuing weeks finds reasons to wake up in the morning and look forward to the day; the man who has lost his job or closed his business says to me, "Rabbi, I'm too old and tired to start all over again," but starts over again nonetheless—where did they get the strength, the hope, the optimism that they did not have on the day they asked me those questions? I would like to believe that they received those things from the context of a concerned community, people who made it clear to them that they cared, and from the knowledge that God is at the side of the afflicted and downcast.

Harold Kushner, from *Service of Healing*, ed. Debbie Friedman

God My Shield

Oh, You, God my shield
You raise my head,
My voice calls to You.
And You, You answer me,
From Your holiness I call to you.

V'Atah Adonai magein ba'adi
K'vodi umeirim roshi.
Koli el Adonai ekra
Vaya'aneini meihar kodsho selah.

(And) You, You'll care for me,
As I am with You now
'Til the end of time.
And You, You'll bless us all,
And we will be Your blessing evermore.

Ladonai ha'y'shua
Al amkha
Virkhatekha
Selah.

וְאַתָּה יְהוָה מָגֵן בְּעַדִּי
כְּבוֹדִי וּמְרִים רֹאשִׁי:
קוֹלִי אֶל-יְהוָה אֶקְרָא
וַיַּעֲנֵנִי מִהַר קִדְשׁוֹ סֵלָה:

לַיהוָה הַיְשׁוּעָה
עַל-עַמֶּךָ
בְּרַכָּתְךָ
סֵלָה:

Debbie Friedman, Hebrew text from Psalm 3:4-5, 9