

RABBI ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL, z'l

Sickness, while primarily a problem of theology, is a crisis of the total person, not only a physical disorder. There is a spiritual dimension to sickness. At a moment in which one's very living is called into question...the ultimate question of what it means to be alive [is] of...importance. ('The Patient as Person.' *Conservative Judaism*, Fall 1964.)

A Service of Jewish Healing

Modeh ani lefaneh-cha,
melech chai ve'kayam,
she-heh-che-zarta bee
neeshma-ti, b'chem-lah
raba emunate-cha.

מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ
מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם
שֶׁחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמַתִּי
בְּחַמְלָה, רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ.

I thank You, ever living Ruler. In kindness You have returned my soul to me. You are faithful beyond measure!

Modeh Ani – An Interpretation

I give thanks before You, my God, that I do not ask so much to be comforted, as much as to comfort others;
Not to be understood, but rather, to understand;
Not to be loved, but rather to love.
Since only when we give, do we receive;
Only when we forgive, are we forgiven;
And only with the dawning of the new day are we born again to life eternal.



ELOHAI N'SHAMAH

Elohai (2x) n'shama
Shenatata bi t'hora hi

אלהי נשמה
שנתת בי טהורה היא

Ata b'rata, ata y'tzarta
Ata n'fachta bi
V'ata (m'shamra) (2x) b'kirbi

אתה בראתה אתה יצרתה
אתה נפחתה בי
ואתה משמרה בקרבי

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.

Blessed are You, Adonai, Creator of the universe, who has made our bodies in wisdom, creating openings, glands and organs, marvelous in structure, intricate in design. Should but one of them, by being blocked or opened, fail to function, it would be difficult to stand before You. Praised are You, source of our health and strength, we give You thanks and praise.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר יצר את האדם בחכמה וברא בו נקבים נקבים חלולים חלולים. גלוי וידוע לפני כסא כבודך שאם יפתח אחד מהם או יסתם אחד מהם אי אפשר להתקיים ולעמד לפניך. ברוך אתה יהוה רופא כל בשר ומפליא לעשות.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁעָשִׂי בְּצַלְמוֹ.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam she-asani b'tzalmo

When I despise myself or the world, let me find Your image within me again.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who has made me in Your image.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁעָשִׂי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam she-asani Yisrael

When I doubt Your existence or make a god of my desires, let me find You again.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who has not made me a stranger to You.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁעָשִׂי בֶן/בַּת חוֹרִינֵן.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam she-asani ben/bat choriyn

When I am frightened to choose or stand alone, strengthen my will to be free.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who has made me to be free.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם פּוֹקֵחַ עֵינַיִם.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam pokei-ach ivrim

When I blame others for the darkness within me, give me the courage to face the truth.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who opens the eyes of the blind.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam malbiysh arumim

When I recognize my own insignificance, cover me with Your strength.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who clothes the naked.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam matir asurim

When I am caught by old guilt or destructive habits, release me from the prison of my past.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who frees those who are bound.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם זֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam zokeif k'fufim

When the things I possess weigh me down, teach me how to give.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who lifts up those bent low.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי כָל צְרָכַי.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam she-asah li kol tzorkee

When I am jealous, envious or greedy, help me accept what I have.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who provides for my every need.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמְכִינֵנוּ מִצְדָּדֵי גִבּוֹר.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam hameichiyn mitzadei gaver

When I am tempted to cheat, help me to be honest with myself and others.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who strengthens each person's steps.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִבוּרָה.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam ozeir Yisrael bigvura

When I am confused about being a Jew, show me the meaning of my life.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God; Source of the universe, who crowns Israel with glory.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַנוֹתֵן לַיָּגֵף כֹּחַ.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam hanotein laya-eif ko-ach

When failure or frustration makes me bitter, give me the strength to overcome it.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who gives strength to the weary.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמַּעֲבִיר שְׁנָה מֵעֵינַי וְתַנּוּמָה מֵעַפְעָפַי.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam hama-avir sheina mei-einai utnuma mei-afapai

When bewildered by delusions and fooled by my own desires, open my eyes to Your teaching.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Source of the universe, who takes away sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids.

(said standing:)

Barchu et Adonai

Hamevorach

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ.

Baruch Adonai

Hamevorach

L'olam Va-ed.

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ

לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Baruch Adonai

Hamevorach

L'olam Va-ed.

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Rabbi Harold Schulweis, Valley Beth Shalom

A MORNING PRAYER

Once I thought it strange,

A morning prayer of gratitude for apertures, veins, and arteries,

Now I have new regard, new wonder

At the body and its intricate parts,

A web of vessels, channels, pulses, rhythms.

A marvel of broken parts that can be sutured,

Deep wounds congealing.

If but one of these openings be closed,

One of the vessels shriveled,

It would be impossible to exist.

I recite with new pertinence the curious prayer,

Blessed art Thou who heals all creatures and does wonders.

We are loved by an unending love.

We are embraced by arms that find us

even when we are hidden from ourselves

*We are supported by hands that uplift us
even in the midst of a fall*

*We are urged on by eyes that meet us
even when we are too weak for meeting*

We are loved by an unending love

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled...

ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;

ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;

We are loved by an unending love

Blessed are you, Beloved One, who loves your people Israel.

Shema Yisrael:

Adonai Eloheinu

Adonai Echad.

Baruch Shem Kevod

Malchuto L'olam Va'ed.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל,

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,

יְהוָה אֶחָד:

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְבוֹד מְלְכוּתוֹ

לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

13. *Birkat Hagomel*—Giving Thanks

Birkat Hagomel is recited in the synagogue upon receiving an *aliyah* after recovering from a serious illness, surviving a harrowing trauma, or successfully undergoing surgery or difficult treatments:

Praised are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe, graciously showing kindness to those in Your debt, even as You have bestowed favor on me.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַגּוֹמֵל לְחַיִּיבִים טוֹבוֹת
שְׂגִמְלָנִי כָּל טוֹב.

*Baruch atta Adonai, eloheinu melech haolam, hagomel lachayavim
tovot, shegemalani kol tov.*

The congregations responds:

May God who has been gracious to you continue to favor you with all that is good.

מִי שְׂגִמְלָךְ (וּשְׂגִמְלָךְ) כָּל טוֹב, הוּא יְגִמְלָךְ (וְיְגִמְלָךְ) כָּל טוֹב סְלָח.

*Mi shegemalcha (shegemalech) kol tov, hu yigmalcha (yigmalech) kol
tov sela.*

Mee chamocha

ba'eileem Adonai, Mee

kamocha ne'eda'ar

bakodesh nora teheelot

oseh fele.

מִי כַמּוֹכָה בְּאֵלִים, יְהוָה,

מִי כַמּוֹכָה נְאֻדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ,

נּוֹרָא תְהֵלֶת, עֹשֶׂה פְלֵא:

הַבִּינֵנוּ

¹ Adonai our God, grant us wisdom to know your ways and open our minds to revere You; forgive us that we may be redeemed; keep us far from suffering; satisfy us with the goodness of your land; gather our dispersed People from the four corners of the earth. ² Let those who stray be judged by your disposition; wield your hand against the wicked; let the righteous rejoice in the rebuilding of your city, and in the reconstruction of your Temple, and in the blossoming of your servant David's progeny, and in the continuance of the light of your anointed, the son of Jesse. ³ You answer us before we even call. ⁴ Blessed are You, Adonai, who hears prayer.

¹ הַבִּינֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְדַעַת דְּרָכֶיךָ. וּמוֹל
אֶת-לִבֵּנוּ לִירְאָתֶךָ. וְתִסְלַח-לָנוּ
לְהִיּוֹת גְּאוּלִּים. וְרַחֲקֵנוּ מִמַּכְאוֹב. וְדַשְׁנֵנוּ
בְּנְאוֹת אֶרֶץךָ. וּנְפוּצוֹתֵינוּ מֵאַרְבַּע כְּנָפוֹת
הָאָרֶץ תִּקְבֹּץ. ² וְהַתּוֹעִים עַל-דַּעְתְּךָ יִשְׁפֹּטוּ.
וְעַל-הַרְשָׁעִים תִּגְיֹף יָדְךָ. וְיִשְׂמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים
בְּבִנְיַן עִירְךָ וּבְתִקּוּן הַיְכָלְךָ וּבְצִמְיַחַת קֶרֶן
לְדוֹד עַבְדְּךָ וּבַעֲרִיכַת נֹר לְבוֹיֵשִׁי מְשִׁיחֶךָ.
³ טָרַם נִקְרָא אֶתְּךָ תַעֲנֵה. ⁴ בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ
שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה.

8. GOD OF HEALING

Heal us so that we may be healed. Save us so that we may be saved, for to you we turn in prayer. Grant us complete healing when we are ill, for You, God, are our Ruler, our faithful and merciful Healer. Praise You God, who heals the sick among Your people Israel.

ח. רפואה

רַפְּאוּנוּ יְהוָה וְנִרְפָּא,
הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ וְנִשְׁעָה.
כִּי תִהְיֶלְתְּנוּ אֶתְּךָ, וְהַעֲלֵה
רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה לְכָל מַפּוֹתֵינוּ,
כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ רֹפֵא נֶאֱמָן
וְרַחֲמָן אַתָּה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה,
רֹפֵא חוֹלֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

"The purpose of maintaining the body in good health is to make it possible for you to acquire wisdom." – Maimonides

The first prayer for the sick:

El na rafa na la
El nã rafa na lo

אֵל נָא רַפֵּא נָא לָהּ
אֵל נָא רַפֵּא נָא לוֹ

God, please heal her.
God, please heal him.

[As Moses prayed on behalf of his sister, Miriam. Numbers 12:13]

3. *Mi Sheberach*—

Music by Debbie Friedman

Lyrics by Debbie Friedman and Drorah Setel

מִי שְׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ

Mi sheberach avoteinu, m'kor habracha l'imoteinu:

May the Source of strength who blessed the ones before us

Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing

And let us say: Amen.

מִי שְׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ

Mi sheberach imoteinu, m'kor habracha l'avoteinu:

Bless those in need of healing with *refuah shelaymah*

The renewal of body, the renewal of spirit

And let us say: Amen.

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May it be your will
our God and God of our ancestors
that the scourge of disease soon evanesce into oblivion.
May those afflicted know only strength and wholeness.
May their families, lovers, and loved ones know words of comfort.
May their faces never forget how to form smiles.
May their thoughts abound in dreams.
May their hearts know only hope.
Grant wisdom and insight to the scientists and researchers
Grant continued strength to those who give compassionate
care to Your children.
And heal us all, dear God.

Yitgadal v'yitkadash
shemei raba. **Amen.**

B'alma divera chirutei
vayam'lich malchutei
b'chayeichon
u'v'yomeichon u'vechayei
dechol beit Yisrael ba'agala
u'vizman kariv v'imru:
Amen.

**Y'hei shemei raba
mevarach le-alam
ule'almei almaya.**

Yitbarach v'yishtabach
v'yitpa'ar v'yitromam
v'yitnasei v'yit'hadar
v'yitaleh v'yit'halal shemei
dekudeshâ **b'rich Hu,**

L'eila min kol birchata
veshirata tush'bechata
v'nechemata da'amiran
b'alma v'imru: **Amen.**

**Y'hei shlama raba min
Sh'maya v'chayim aleinu
v'al kol Yisrael V'imru:
Amen.**

**Oseh Shalom Bimromav Hu
Ya'aseh shalom. Aleinu v'al
kol Yisrael v'imru: Amen.**

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא,
אָמֵן. בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כְרֻעֵינָהּ,
וְנִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ **אָמֵן.**

**יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ
לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.**

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם
וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל
שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעָלָא מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא,
תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחְמַתָּא
דְאָמִיבוּ בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ **אָמֵן.**

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וְאָמְרוּ **אָמֵן.**

עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוַמֵּי, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה
שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאָמְרוּ **אָמֵן.**

All the world is just a narrow bridge
And above all—is not to fear it all.

(R. Naḥmān)

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ
גֶּשֶׁר צָר מְאֹד
וְהִעִיקָר לֹא לִפְחֹד כְּלָל

Kol ha-oh-lam ku-lo
geh-she'r tzar m'od
v'ha-i-kar (2x) lo l'fa-hed k'lal

Eight Possible Ways in Which Prayer May "Work"

compiled by Rabbi Amy Eilberg

(borrowed from

Acts of Lovingkindness: A Training Manual for Bikkur Holim
by Rabbi Nancy Flam, Janet Offel, and Rabbi Amy Eilberg)

A. Prayer may "work" in that one may have asked God for something which indeed came about.

B. Prayer may "work" by invoking a greater sense of God's presence.

C. Prayer may "work" by way of distraction, momentarily pulling the one who is ill out of his or her pain and suffering into a place of beauty or transcendence.

D. Prayer may "work" by way of focusing more deeply on the pain or discomfort in the suffering person's life; in this way, prayer can be deeply grounding and clarifying.

(These last two examples may be compared to different techniques in childbirth preparation: one technique, Lamaze, uses distraction, while the Bradley method helps women to enter the pain more deeply and wholly.)

E. Prayer may "work" by quieting or centering the self.

F. Prayer may "work" by significantly connecting the one praying or being prayed for with Jewish community and tradition.

G. Prayer may "work" by helping the one praying or being prayed for to connect to a deep level of the self which is already healed and whole, reminding the person of his or her essential wholeness. Music, for instance, often has the capacity to put us in touch with that deep place of essential wholeness.

H. Prayer may "work" in focusing the pray-er on the blessings in his or her life, enabling him or her to magnify his or her sense of gratitude.