

בִּידוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי

B'yado Afkid Ruchi In Your Hands is my spirit

A PRAYERBOOK FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

לְשִׁלְמוּת, רְפוּאָה, וְלִשְׁלוֹם
FOR HEALING, WHOLENESS, AND PEACE

בִּידוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
בְּעֵת אִישׁוֹן וְאַעִּירָה
וְעַם רוּחִי גֹוֶתִי
יִי לִי וְלֹא אִירָא

My soul I give to You
My spirit in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Hold me in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Safely in Your hand

TEMPLE BETH MIRIAM
ELBERON, NJ

Introduction

In the lives of American Jews, there is more and more a desire for creative liturgy that speaks to the heart. This liturgy compliments, but does not replace, regular service liturgy and the services tend not to follow the standard service rubrics but are more free-flowing.

Since 1998, Temple Beth Miriam of Elberon, New Jersey, has sought to respond to this liturgical need. Our first prayerbook "O God, Heal Us" and its accompanying book of readings, focused on the themes of healing. This new volume, however, represents an even wider circle of spirituality and meditation. Not only does it include the theme of healing, but also other themes such as growth, awareness and transformation. People who are not in need of healing and who feel the desire for a sacred time of prayer and meditation in the middle of the week will feel more comfortable with the expanded format.

The Service for Spiritual Renewal prayerbook is divided into "seasons." This means that there is a general theme running throughout each season. In this way, some of the issues in your life, I hope, will be reflected in at least one of the seasons or, at least, one of the readings in each season.

I pray that all who worship through the agency of this prayerbook find solace, peace, healing, and a sense of spirituality that comes from true prayer.

Rabbi Cy Stanway
Temple Beth Miriam
February 6, 2002 / 24 שבט 5762

Four Seasons

Spring

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Spring

Asher Yatzar יָצַר אֱשֶׁר: Celebrating the Miracle of Creation

אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחִכְמָה
 וּבְרָא נְקָבִים נְקָבִים, חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים
 גְּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לִפְנֵי כִסֵּא כְבוֹדָךְ שָׂאם יִפְתַּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם אוֹ יִסְתֵּם אֶחָד מֵהֶם
 אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְהִתְקַיֵּם וּלְעֲמֹד לִפְנֶיךָ
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי רִפּוּא כָּל בֶּשָׂר וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת

Asher yatzar, et ha adam b'hochma
 Uvara n'kavim n'kavim
 Halulim, halulim.
 Galui v'yadua lifnei chise chvodech
 She'im yipatiach ecahd meihem
 O yisatem ehad mehem
 I efshar l'hitkayem v'la-amod l'fanecha
 Baruch atta Adonai rofei chol basar umafli la'a'sot.



FORTY-ONE

For Beginnings

Open my eyes, O Eternal, to change;
 Fill me with longing for possibilities.
 Let my life before be stepping blocks
 To what You want me to become.
 Open my eyes, O Eternal, to change;
 Let me write beyond my narrow descriptions
 To begin a new narrative,
 Underlined with Your Name.
 Open my heart, O Eternal
 To put You ever before me;
 Help me discard the insubstantial
 And replace it with Your words.
 Open my life, O Eternal, to fulfillment.
 Where before were shadows
 Let Your truths live in my life,
 Sustaining my actions.

Turn me back to You, O Eternal,
Back to long before I cannot remember
That beckon my soul.
Turn me back, O Eternal,
Opening to change.



You are generous to me, dear God;
you have taught my soul to trust you.
I have crept beside You and found
shelter in the shadow of your wings.

My great joy, God, is to praise you;
I will sing and awaken the dawn.
Wake up, my soul, wake up,
music in the depths of my heart.
I will praise you, God, to all people
and inspire them with my joy.



TWENTY-THREE

A Song for Rising

You set the morning in motion,
Rolling forward, a constant turning.
I look for You as I wake,
Calling Your Name in my heart.
I reach out for You as I struggle
To rise despite pain,
To face daily trials,
And I feel You there.
Pulse in my soul, Day Giver.
Press away dreams and night chills,
Start me on this new day.
You set the morning in motion,
Offering possibilities, an endless variety.
I listen for You as the day begins,
Creating echoes of Your teaching.
I embrace You as I strive
To face daily challenges,

To accept my limitations,
And I am guided by Your light.
Pulse in my soul, Day Giver.
Replace doubt with certainty,
Move my day toward holiness.



Modeh Ani

ה אֲנִי לִפְנֵיךְ מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם
שֶׁהֵחֵזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמַתִּי לְחֵמְלָה
רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ

Modeh ani lifanecha

**Melech hai v'kayyum
Shehehezarta bi nishmati l'hemla
rabba emunatecha**



THREE

From the flurry of my life, I will praise You.
As I drive the child-circle errand-round,
Hurrying to meet allotted times,
I will stop for You,
To marvel at Your creation.
From the tasks that await me,
That tempt me to focus on minutia
Of hometasks, and homework, and jobwork,
I will pause for You,
To remember Your goodness.
From my perpetual self-reproof:
Is it enough, could it be better,
One more effort, a different preparation,
I will tarry for You
To praise Your Name.
In this fullness of my life, O God,
Calm my constant motion,
Quiet my pursuit,
That I may wait for You with a serene soul.



Leafing idly through The Home Planet, I stop at a picture of Earth floating against the black velvet of space. Africa and Europe are visible under swirling white clouds, but the predominant color is blue. This was the one picture from the Apollo missions that told the whole story-how small the planet is in the vast sprawl of space, how fragile its environments are. Seen from space, Earth has no national borders, no military zones, no visible fences. Quite the opposite. You can see how storm systems swirling above a continent may well affect the grain yield half a world away. The entire atmosphere of the planet-all the air we breathe, all the sky we fly through, even the ozone layer-is visible as the thinnest rind. The picture eloquently reminds one that Earth is a single organism.



Dear God,
 Open the blocked passageways to you,
 The congealed places.
 Roll away the heavy stone from the well as your servant
 Jacob did when he beheld his beloved Rachel.
 Help us open the doors of trust that have been jammed with
 hurt and rejection.
 As You open the blossoms in spring,
 Even as You open the heavens in storm,
 Open us -to feel Your great, awesome, wonderful Presence.



Psalm 23

יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר: בְּנֹאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל-מֵי מְנוּחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי: נַפְשִׁי
 יִשׁוּבָב יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי-צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ: גַּם כִּי-אֵלֶךְ בְּגִיא צַלְמוֹת לֹא-אִירָא
 רָע כִּי-אַתָּה עִמָּדִי שְׁבִטְךָ וּמִשְׁעֲנֶתְךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחֵמֵנִי: תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי | שְׁלַחַן נֹגֵד
 צִרְרֵי דְשִׁנְתְּ בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסֵי רוּיָה: אַךְ טוֹב וְחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל-יְמֵי חַיִּי
 וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית-יְהוָה לְאָרֶךְ יָמִים:

Adonai ro-i lo echsar
 Binot deshe yarbetzeini
 Al mei m'nuchot y'nahalaeini
 Nafshi y'shoveive, yancheini
 V'maglie tzed l'man sh'mo
 Gam ki eileich b'gei tzalmavet lo ira ki ata imadi

**Shiv'tcha umishantecha heima y'nachamuni
Taaroach l'fanai shulchan neged tzor'rirai
Dishanta vashemen roshi kosi r'vaya
Ach tov vachesed yird'funi ko y'mei chayai
V'shavti b'veit Adonai l'orech yamim.**

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul; he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.



SEVENTY-ONE
A Song of Intention

In the worn smooth motions of prayer,
I will come before the Eternal;
For You will even out my ragged breathing,
Comforting my soul.
With confusion of spirit, I search for You;
Yet I cannot find the proper intention,
My mind grows numb as my voice whispers,
Stuttering over ancient words.
As I stumble along, I grow mute,
Forgetting the prayers of childhood,
The psalms learned in maturity,
The ringing hymns.
All around me, seekers pray;
All around me, prayers seek You,
Harmonizing their souls, lost in the whole.
Yet, I stand alone.
Return me to remembered devotions,
Words that have entered my being,
As much a part as my handedness,
My breathing, my eye blink.
Restore me to the songs of my fathers
and mothers,
The joy and longing of my people

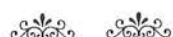
As they sat and wept for Jerusalem,
As they danced in the harvested fields.
Then, with a resolution of chords,
A restoring sigh will calm me,
A sure deep breath will flow in and out;
My words once more will rise to You.



Shma

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד
בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

**Shma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Ehad
Baruch shem k'vod malchuto l'olam vaed**



NINETY

A Song of Assents

Let my life smile yes to the Eternal;
Let my days praise God's name.
Let mouth be filled with songs of delight
Even as I delight in my Creator.
So with a nod and a wink and a grin,
I will dance to Your melody,
Twisting and turning a path of mitzvot
To honor and praise my Creator.
Let my life smile yes to the Eternal;
Let my nights find contemplation in God's
name.
Let my heart be soothed with loving thoughts
Even as I free it from sorrow.
As with a clap and a tap and a stomp,
My limbs keep time to Your melody,
Counting the beat of the heavens' gladness
That honors and praises the Creator.
Let my life smile yes to the Eternal,
Let my works praise God's name.

Let me honor You all my nights and my days,
Let my shadows be displaced by Your light.
Let my life smile yes.



TWENTY-FIVE

For the Chief Musician, with Guitar

In my moments of invention,
I honor You, Source of Creation,
Who created infinite worlds
That I might grow in this one.
You set the questions before me
And give me ways to find the answers;
You fashion a candle of my soul
And offer me the flaming brand.
I reach out my hand to Your hand,
And in that glowing space before they meet
I grasp the incandescent thread
And pull it toward me to form my answers.
Blazing with radiance, I move the filament
To write with new words,
To sing with Your melodies,
Transformed through my being.
Bless me with Your creative force;
Open me to innovation.
Ignite my soul with praise for You,
Burning sparks of exaltation.



Shma Koleinu

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ
וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת תַּפִּלָּתֵנוּ
כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ שׁוֹמֵעַ תַּפִּלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה

Shma Koleinu, Adonai Eloheinu,
Hus v'rachem aleinu
V'kabeil b'rachamim u'vratzon et t'filataynu
Ki El shomaya t'filot v'tachanunim atta.

Hear our voice, Adonai our God
Have compassion upon us,
And accept our prayer with favor and mercy
For You are a God who hears prayer and supplication.



I don't think it is enough appreciated how much an outdoor book the Bible is. It is a "hupaethral book," such as Thoreau talked about-a book open to the sky. It is best read and understood outdoors, and the farther outdoors the better. Or that has been my experience of it. Passages that within walls seem improbable or incredible, outdoors seem merely natural. This is because outdoors we are confronted everywhere with wonders; we see that the miraculous is not extraordinary but the common mode of existence. It is our daily bread. Whoever really has considered the lilies of the field or the birds of the air and pondered the improbability of their existence in this warm world within the cold and empty stellar distances will hardly balk at miracles. We forget the greater and still continuing miracle by which things are created each moment.



Listen Israel

**Listen Israel, Adonai, our God, is one. Shma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu
Adonai echad.**

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד



TWENTY-SEVEN A Song for Morning

Let me slide into the morning, Dawn Bringer,
With a smooth joining.
In the last glimpse of dreams,
Open my heart to a day
Poised to fill with goodness.
Let me move into today, Time Maker,
With a firm footing.
With Your Name upon my mouth,
I translate my praises into action,
Repairing my section of the world.
You recall to me my story;

You let me describe its sequel.
At day's beginning, You comfort me,
Offering a Hand filled with courage
To sustain my work.
Let me glimpse tomorrow, Eternal Planner,
With eager memories.
Breathing deeply to set my heart
To the rhythm of creation,
I continue Your work.
You bring me to my beginnings,
To the beginnings of Your people,
Connecting my days to all other days,
Tying my work to the work of Your hand.



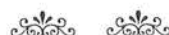
What is significant about sacred places turns out not to be the places themselves. Their power lies within their role in marshaling our inner resources and binding us to our beliefs. Our act of "holding sacred" is the root, not the place where we choose to carry out that act. It is in that act that we give places power to affect our lives. In holding a place sacred, we grant power to a place and acknowledge that power of the place. As an icon or through its own inherent patterns, we acknowledge its ability to impact our awareness of certain relationships and their value to us. Sacred places thus forge and strengthen bonds between us and the universe in which we believe. They empower us by affirming the wholeness of the universe we see revealed about us, and by reflecting our chosen place and role in that universe.



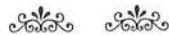
Rom'mu

רֹמְמוּ יי אלהנו והשתחוּ להר קדוש
כי קדוש יי אלהינו רֹמְמוּ

Rom'mu Adonai Eloheinu
V'histachavu l'har kodsho
Ki kadosh Adonai Eloheinu rom'mu



The beauty of the trees,
the softness of the air,
the fragrance of the grass,
speaks to me.
The summit of the mountain,
the thunder of the sky,
the rhythm of the sea,
speaks to me.
The faintness of the stars,
the freshness of the morning,
the dewdrop on the flower,
speaks to me.
The strength of fire,
the taste of salmon,
the trail of the sun,
and the life that never goes away,
they speak to me.



Reb Nachman's Prayer

**You are the One for this I pray that I may have the strength to be alone
To see the world to stand among the trees and all the living things
That I may stand alone and offer prayers and talk to You
You are the One to whom I do belong
And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in
my heart
May all the foliage of the field all grasses trees and plants
Awaken at my coming this I pray and send their life into my words of
prayer
So that my speech my thoughts and my prayers will be made whole
And through the spirit of all growing things
And we know that everything is one because we know that everything
is You
You are the One for this I pray I ask You God to hear my words
That pour out from my heart I stand before you
I like water lift my hands to You in prayer
And grant me strength and grant me strength to stand alone
You are the One to whom I do belong
And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in
my heart
You are the One for this I pray and I'll sing my soul to You**



FOURTEEN

*You turn the spindle to form me
To a fine and glistening thread,
Shining in the dawning light
Of Your compassion for me.
Free me from the knots of pain;
Unsnarl the fears that catch
The slender cords
And smooth them as they wind to You.
Fill Your needle
With the strands of my life,
Many hued, many textured,
As You stitch my days.
Unfolding, the tapestry moves to You.
Unraveling, the petit point of my worries
Obscures the pattern of Your concern,
Conceals the fabric of Your plans.
Shake out this cloth and hang it, unfinished,
To catch freshening breezes;
Then renewed, return it to Your hand
To complete the design.*



All that is living burns. This is the fundamental fact of nature. And Moses saw it with his two eyes, directly. That glimpse of the real world-of the world as it is known to God is not a world of isolated things, but of processes in concert. God tells Moses, "Take off your shoes, because the ground where you are standing is holy ground." He is asking Moses to experience in his own body what the burning bush experiences: a living connection between heaven and earth, the life that stretches out like taffy between our father the sun and our mother the earth. If you do not believe this, take off your shoes and stand in the grass or in the sand or in the dirt.



FIFTEEN For Beginnings

Soar, O Eternal. Catch the current
Of praise that rises toward You,
Spiralling upward to honor Your Name,

A fine, scented breeze.
We praise You as we open our eyes
To a spring dawn rising before us,
Replacing chill with growing warmth,
Shooing nightmares with brilliance.

*At this morning of the year,
We praise You.
We praise You as we stretch limbs,*

Easing night stiffness from our bodies,
Rubbing away sleep and strain,
As we welcome this dawn.
Climb, O Eternal, on these songs
Of Your people,
Ascending, as the lark ascends,
Pouring forth melodies.

*At this morning of the day,
We praise You.
Hover, O Eternal, in our hearts.
Sustain us as we move through this day.
Remember us as we sing Your praise.*



Hava Nashira

הַבָּה נִשְׁיֶרָה שִׁיר הַלְלוּיָהּ

Hava nashira, shir Hallelujah

Come, let us sing, let us sing Hallelujah



Spend time in a flower garden. Stay there as long as you wish, but make sure your visit is long enough to take in the various charms that the world of blossoms and petals provides. You can sit in a chair or on the grass, lie down looking up at the flowers from below, or walk around. However you choose to spend your time, be aware that you are a guest in someone else's home - nature's - so act accordingly. If the day is warm and sunny, savor the rays and imagine how the flowers must feel at this very moment. Look closely at the variety of blooms, at the different shapes and colors, at the way the individual blossoms grow out of

their leafy sheaths. Now use your sense of smell to take in the stunning array of fragrance, all of which can be divinely overpowering. Keep an eye out for the various animal life that also lives in the garden, the birds and squirrels, the insects that fly, the ones that crawl. Notice how intently they go about their business, how they move from place to place trying not to notice you but in fact finding that task difficult. Close your eyes and listen to the sounds of the garden, the chirping and humming, and the movement of the stems and leaves in the mild breeze. Now see if you can transcend your individual senses and feel the presence of the garden inside you. Try to become just another flower, at home in the garden as if you were in your own house or place of worship.



SEVENTEEN

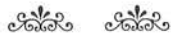
In Late Winter; for Growth

Tiller of my soul,
You coax me to growth
With the gentle planting
Of Your seeds of wonder.
Quietly, resting beneath winter snow,
Waiting for the frozen earth to awaken,
I absorb the nourishment
You have stored for me.
Nurture me with Your teaching;
Feed me with Your laws.
Transplant the seedlings
To the rockier bed of the world,
That they might lean against Your edicts
And grow toward the sun.
Toughen me with challenges;
Strengthen me with Your laws.
Rake the narrow spaces;
Discard the debris of unhappiness,
The weeds of hypocrisy:
Pinch back my fears.
Cultivate my heart to You;
Improve me with Your laws.
Grown to maturity, You harvest me,
Bind me to You,
And shake seeds upon the ground
To assure next year's crop.
Gather me to Your storehouse;
Keep me steadfast in Your laws.



Dear God,
We are bound with very tight knots.
They choke off air and stop the blood from pulsating freely.
The knots make us like computers with carefully controlled circuitry.
The knots in our brains tie our creativity - our link with You.
We follow the knot around in its intricacy - but it remains a knot.
The knots in our hearts keep us from crying and dancing when we long to -
They tie us to the posts of the fences that separate us from each other.
The knots in our muscles keep our teeth clenched, our jaws locked, our legs
crossed, our shoulders stooped, our backs bent, our chests from inhaling the full
sweetness of life's breath.
O, God, untie all our knots!

*Blessed are You for the night and its rest,
and for the morning and its joys, .
for the day and its challenges and its peace.
And blessed are You for the wonder of our bodies,
and for the miracle of our minds,
for the marvel of consciousness
and for the great depths within us.
For eyes to see, for ears to hear,
and for the words we are speaking now.
And blessed are You for creating me as a unique being.
Blessed are You for the gift of Jewishness,
and for the gift of being human.
And for the freedom to change and grow,
and for the capacity to give and receive love.
And blessed are You for bringing us here
to celebrate this precious day together.*



Al Tasteir

**Don't hide Your face from me
I'm asking for Your help.
I call to You, please hear my prayers, O God
If You would answer me as I have called to You
Please heal me now,
Don't hide Your face from Me.**



Standing in the garden,
left hand laden
with ripe strawberries. The sun
beams off the glassy
backs of flies. Three
birds in the birch tree.
They must have been there
all year.
My mother, my grandmother,
stood like this
in their gardens.
I am 43.
This year I have planted my feet
on this ground
and am practicing
growing up out of my legs
like a tree.



SIX

Assemble us, O God.
Convene us with the shofar call of Your love,
That we might draw near to You
As we draw near to each other.

Bless us, O God,
With Your light,
Shining in the human interactions
That nurture our growth.

Connect us, O God,
As, reaching tentative hands,
One to the next,
We feel Your hand upon our own.

Discover us, O God,
As we search for meaning;
Lift us, trembling, to rise
Renewed before Your presence.

Follow us, O God,
As we move through our days,
Finding Your hand
Each time we open our own.

Gather us, O God,
Enfold this community;
As the Grower gathers sheaves together,
Bind our hearts.

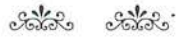
Honor us, O God,
With the affection of our loved ones,
Whose faces smile with Your mouth,
Whose eyes dance with divine mirth.

Join us together, O God,
That, embraced in the arms of Your people,
We shelter in Your house,
Secure in Your regard.



Each lifetime is the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.
For some there are more pieces.
For others the puzzle is more difficult to assemble.
Some seem to be born with a nearly completed puzzle.
And so it goes.
Souls going this way and that
Trying to assemble the myriad parts.
But know this. No one has within themselves
All the pieces to their puzzle.
Like before the days when they used to seal
jigsaw puzzles in cellophane.
Insuring that all the pieces were there.
Everyone carries with them at least one and probably
Many pieces to someone else's puzzle.
Sometimes they know it.
Sometimes they don't.
And when you present your piece
Which is worthless to you,
To another, whether you know it or not,

Whether they know it or not,
You are a messenger from the Most High.



Mi Shebayrach

מי שברך אבותינו מקור הברכה לאבותינו
מי שברך אבותינו
מקור הברכה לאבותינו

Mi she-bei-rach a-vo-tei-nu
M'-kor ha-b'-ra-chah l'-i-mo-tei-nu
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: A-mein
Mi she-bei-rach i-mo-tei-nu
M'-kor ha-b'-ra-chah la-a-vo-tei-nu

Bless those in need of healing with r'-fu-a sh'-lei-mah
The renewal of body the renewal of spirit
And let us say: Amen



FIFTY-TWO A Song for Morning

Hallelujah! I will praise You!
At my waking, I will praise You:
As my ears open to familiar sounds,
As my hands touch sleep tossed blankets,
As my eyes see again the shapes of another day.
Hallelujah! I will praise You!
You ease the efforts of my rising,
Because I know You are with me;
You linger as I set out the day's tasks,
Calling me to serve You in them all.
Hallelujah! I will praise You!
Even as my life swirls around me,
Even as the world spins on,

So You will linger with me
When I call upon You for comfort.
Hallelujah! I will praise You!
I will praise You at each beginning,
For You are the beginning;
I will praise You this day,
For You have made it.
Let my acts praise You, O Eternal;
Let my life today praise Your Name



And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

*I thank You, God for the skill, care and concern
of the many who have dedicated themselves to health and healing.
It is they who have had to respond to calls for help;
they will be there through the difficult times ahead
Grant wisdom, patience and understanding to them.
Bless the work of their hands and their hearts,
that their labors may not be in vain.
As Your helpers, may they find the way
to restore those in need to a life renewed
May we all feel the comfort of Your presence.
For health of body and spirit, I thank You, God
I was broken, and now I am whole.
I was weary, but now I am rested
I was anxious, but now I am reassured
I thank You for those who helped me in my need,
who heartened me in my fear,
and who visited me in my loneliness.
For the strength you gave me, O God,
I give thanks to You.*

O Guide My Steps

וּפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמֶךָ

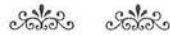
O guide my steps and help me find my way

I need Your shelter now

rock me in your arms and guide my steps and help me make this day,
a song of praise to You, rock me in Your arms and guide my steps.

U'fros aleinu sukkat shlomecha ufros aleinu sukkat shlomecha.

O guide my steps.



Summer
Pokeiach Ivrim פוקיח עורים: Opening our Eyes

V'anachnu N'varech Ya

וְאֶנְחֵנוּ נְבָרַךְ יְיָ
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם
הַלְלוּיָהּ

V'anachnu n'varech Ya
Me'ata v'ad olam, me'ata v'ad olam
Hallelujah.



Dear God,
Open the blocked passageways to you,
The congealed places.
Roll away the heavy stone from the well as your servant
Jacob did when he beheld his beloved Rachel.
Help us open the doors of trust that have been jammed with
hurt and rejection.
As You open the blossoms in spring,
Even as You open the heavens in storm,
Open us -to feel Your great, awesome, wonderful Presence.



FIFTY-ONE
A Song of Praise

Hallelujah!
Praise the Eternal in our lives!
Weave together our daily tasks,
Each act of kindness
A strengthening thread,
Reinforcing God's goodness.
Hallelujah !
Praise the Eternal Who made us all!
Entwine our arms about each other:
Hugs of caring, of comfort, of friendship,
Shoulders touching, hands clasping,

God's embrace in our lives.
 Hallelujah!
 Praise the Eternal every moment!
 Light the morning of our humanity
 With dappled and gentle sun,
 Glowing with Your teachings,
 That our lives might reflect Your greatness.
 Hallelujah!
 We give You thanks and praise!



Asher Yatzar

אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחִכְמָה
 וּבָרָא נְקָבִים וְנְקָבִים, חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים
 גָּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לִפְנֵי כֶּסֶף כְּבוֹדָךְ שָׁאֵם יִפְתַּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם
 אוֹ יִסְתֵּם אֶחָד מֵהֶם
 אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְהִתְקִים וּלְעֻמֵּד לִפְנֶיךָ
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ רוֹפֵא כָּל בֶּשָׂר וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת

Asher yatzar, et ha adam b'hochma
 Uvara n'kavim n'kavim
 Halulim, halulim.
 Galui v'yadua lifnei chise chvodech
 She'im yipatiach ecahd meihem
 O yisatem ehad mehem
 I efshar l'hitkayem v'la-amod l'fanecha
 Baruch atta Adonai rofei chol basar umafla la'a'sot.



FOUR

Together we sing Hallelujah.
 With many voices singing, we come before You,
 Joined in multilayered harmonies;
 Ancient chants and recent chords,
 Build a tower of ascending melody.
 How can we praise God in one voice?
 How can we sing Your song with varied timbre?
 Listen, O Eternal, to the chords that grow;
 Listen, as Your tone within us is altered
 By the songs of our days,

Is varied by the cadence of our lives.
Yet it sounds out,
Pure as You have placed it within our throats,
Glowing as moonlight
Through the atmosphere of the city,
Rising, shaded and changed, to fill the ear
With the melody of the Holy One.
Together we sing Hallelujah.



NINETY-ONE
Rosh Chodesh Tammuz

Tammuz is interlude, reiteration, steady growth:
Setting sprinklers, pulling weeds, nourishment
That signals the start of culmination.
Guide us, Eternal One, as we move in our tasks.
No longer wanderers, we have planted our
fields,
We have set out our fruit trees.
Now we contemplate Your care for us
As we wait for consolidation of further growth.
The longer days wind in on themselves,
Longer sunlight erases the hurry;
Longer moments to linger: a book, an embrace,
To listen to children's voices calling in twilight.
Hear us in the longer days, Source of Growth,
Calling as our fathers and mothers called,
Calling as we summon our children home from
play.

*Hear us as we call You in truth.
Hear us as we move into this time of increase,
As we gather up sunlight and breezes and rains
To lay aside against the unknowns ahead.
Hear us as we call You in truth.*



ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SIX
For Serenity

As the children grumbled for manna,
So do I mutter to You, my Counselor,

Picking over these pieces of sustenance,
Inspecting them for defects.
And I grumble in my indecision,
My careening attention that worries me.
It pulls the center from my focus,
You call and I am not here.
By day I rustle my lists and memos,
Clouds and piles of tasks and intentions;
Each week finds me further breathless
For completion and healing.
Too much to quantify, verify.
My days stumble out of rhythm,
Left searching for Your holy sound:
My heartbeat, my stillness.



ELEVEN

A Song for Strength

I crept upon the trail of my days,
Barely moving, forward then back
With the indecisions of my doubts,
Until I inched into Your light.
Then, casting no shadows, I stood.
Knowing little but believing,
I readied my soul to move into the Radiance
That would begin my learning.
For I have stood too long in this place,
Balancing first on one foot, then the other,
Fearful of moving away from this familiar gloom
Into Your light.
Set my foot upon the middle of the path.
Obscure the tangle of my life before,
And guide my steps to the clearing ahead,
Lighting the way.
Burn, O Divine Beacon,
Send Your light
Streaming through the woods,
Turning night into day.



THREE

From the flurry of my life, I will praise You.
As I drive the child-circle errand-round,
Hurrying to meet allotted times,
I will stop for You,
To marvel at Your creation.
From the tasks that await me,
That tempt me to focus on minutia
Of hometasks, and homework, and jobwork,
I will pause for You,
To remember Your goodness.
From my perpetual self-reproof:
Is it enough, could it be better,
One more effort, a different preparation,
I will tarry for You
To praise Your Name.
In this fullness of my life, O God,
Calm my constant motion,
Quiet my pursuit,
That I may wait for You with a serene soul.



You are generous to me, dear God;
you have taught my soul to trust you.
I have crept beside You and found
shelter in the shadow of your wings.

My great joy, God, is to praise you;
I will sing and awaken the dawn.
Wake up, my soul, wake up,
music in the depths of my heart.
I will praise you, God, to all people
and inspire them with my joy.



Shma Koleinu

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
חַי וְחַיִּים עֲלֵינוּ
וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ
כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה

**Shma Koleinu, Adonai Eloheinu,
Hus v'rachem aleinu
V'kabeil b'rachamim u'vratzon et t'filataynu
Ki El shomaya t'filot v'tachanunim atta.**

Hear our voice, Adonai our God
Have compassion upon us,
And accept our prayer with favor and mercy
For You are a God who hears prayer and supplication.



These four walls provide a safe perch from which I can contemplate all sorts of possibilities, knowing that on my inner compass, true north will always point me home. A house absorbs caretaking like a sponge, storing it up in the softness of comfortable couches and the soothing tones of a muted wall paper, then returning all that love to the original giver. All the hours spent arranging the furniture, choosing colors, even washing the floors, turn out not to have been in vain. Everything we have given we have given to ourselves. The home upon which we have lavished so much attention is the embodiment of our own self-love. I'm not surprised that many of us experience uneasiness when cut off from this source of emotional nourishment for too long, but to tell the truth, it's not the comforts of home I'm counting on to ease my journey into the future. It's the comforting.



FORTY
A Song of Delight

Hallelujah!
Sing praises to God!
You plant bright periwinkle
To bloom beneath sturdy birches,
You sustain lichens upon rocky hills.

Hallelujah!
Sing praises to God!

You open rivulets
To meet flowing rivers;
You add spring showers to great streams.

Hallelujah!
Sing praises to God!

You send the yearling doe
To leap through dappled sunlight,
You animate all things.

Hallelujah!
Sing praises to God!

You guard the fledgling eaglet
who readies for flight
Under eagles' wings.
You make hearts glad.

Hallelujah!
Sing praises to God!

You enliven the world
To recall Your creation;
You invigorate each day.
You give us youth
To warm days that follow;
You sustain us as we age
That the young might learn our steps.
So may we join, young and old,
To exalt You.
Sing to God!
Sing praises!



Reb Nachman's Prayer

**You are the One for this I pray that I may have the strength to be alone
To see the world to stand among the trees and all the living things
That I may stand alone and offer prayers and talk to You
You are the One to whom I do belong
And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in
my heart
May all the foliage of the field all grasses trees and plants
Awaken at my coming this I pray and send their life into my words of
prayer
So that my speech my thoughts and my prayers will be made whole
And through the spirit of all growing things**

**And we know that everything is one because we know that everything
is You**

You are the One for this I pray I ask You God to hear my words

That pour out from my heart I stand before you

I like water lift my hands to You in prayer

And grant me strength and grant me strength to stand alone

You are the One to whom I do belong

**And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in
my heart**

You are the One for this I pray and I'll sing my soul to You



Reb Nachman was once traveling with his Hasidim by carriage, and as it grew dark they came to an inn, where they spent the night. During the night Reb Nachman began to cry out loudly in his sleep, waking up everyone in the inn, all of whom came running to see what had happened. When he awoke, the first thing Reb Nachman did was to take out a book he had brought with him. Then he closed his eyes and opened the book and pointed to a passage. And there it was written "Cutting down a tree before its time is like killing a soul." Then Reb Nachman asked the innkeeper if the walls of that inn had been built out of saplings cut down before their time. The innkeeper admitted that this was true, but how did the rabbi know? And Reb Nachman said: "All night I dreamed I was surrounded by the bodies of those who had been murdered. I was very frightened. Now I know that it was the souls of the trees that cried out to me."



EIGHTEEN

Roadmaps

From the center, Eternal Guide,
You watch our steps
As we move on diverse paths.
The route is ours;
The map is Yours.
Give us eyes to look beyond the next step,
To search for the horizon.
The scene is ours;
The vista is Yours.
Give us ears to identify the passwords,
To filter out the clamor.
The message is ours;
The code is Yours.
Give us hands to part the thicket,
To push aside the undergrowth.

The tree is ours;
The forest is Yours.
Give us feet to hurry past confusion,
To stride along straightways.
For we are the walkers,
And You, our Guiding Light.
We are the explorers,
And You, our Native Land.
We are the travelers,
And You, our Welcome Home



Shma

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד
בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

**Shma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Ehad
Baruch shem k'vod malchuto l'olam vaed**



FORTY-ONE For Beginnings

Open my eyes, O Eternal, to change;
Fill me with longing for possibilities.
Let my life before be stepping blocks
To what You want me to become.
Open my eyes, O Eternal, to change;
Let me write beyond my narrow descriptions
To begin a new narrative,
Underlined with Your Name.
Open my heart, O Eternal
To put You ever before me;
Help me discard the insubstantial
And replace it with Your words.
Open my life, O Eternal, to fulfillment.
Where before were shadows
Let Your truths live in my life,
Sustaining my actions.
Turn me back to You, O Eternal,

Back to long befores I cannot remember
That beckon my soul.

Turn me back, O Eternal,
Opening to change.



I once received an unexpected lesson from a spider. It happened far away on a rainy morning in the West. I had come up a long gulch looking for fossils, and there, just at eye level, lurked a huge yellow-and-black orb spider, whose web was moored to the tall spears of buffalo grass at the edge of the arroyo. It was her universe, and her senses did not extend beyond the lines and spokes of the great wheel she inhabited. Her extended claws could feel every vibration throughout that delicate structure. She knew the tug of wind, the fall of a raindrop, the flutter of a trapped moth's wing. Down one spoke of the web ran a stout ribbon of gossamer on which she could hurry out to investigate her prey. Curious, I took a pencil from my pocket and touched a strand of the web. Immediately there was a response. The web, plucked by its menacing occupant, began to vibrate until it was a blur. Anything that had brushed claw or wing against that amazing snare would be thoroughly entrapped. As the vibrations slowed, I could see the owner fingering her guidelines for signs of struggle. A pencil point was an intrusion into this universe for which no precedent existed. Spider was circumscribed by spider ideas; its universe was spider universe. All outside was irrational, extraneous, at best raw material for spider. As I proceeded on my way along the gully, like a vast impossible shadow, I realized that in the world of spider I did not exist.



Gesher Tzar Me'od

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כֵּלּו גֶּשֶׁר צָר מְאֹד
וְהַעֲקָר לֹא לִפְחָד כָּלֵל

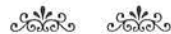
Kol haolam kulo gesher tzar me'od
Gesher tzar meod, gesher tzar me'od
Vhaikar, lo l'fached k'lal

The whole world is a very narrow bridge and the most important thing is not to be afraid.



THIRTEEN

Come again, Life-Giver,
Blow warm breath upon the grimy snow;
Uncover tentative shoots
Struggling to breach the muck.
Come again, Spring-Renewer;
Raise our eyes to greening branches,
Unfurl tender leaves
Hidden in budding limbs.
Come again in lengthening days;
Give us back our ambition
To sow the fortunes of our people
Beneath the fertile soils of Your teaching.
Come again in sunlight and gentle rains,
Nurturing the roots of Your law
With the ever growing sustenance
Of our faith.
Come again as we turn our faces to You,
As a young plant stretches toward the sun,
As a spotted fawn stretches toward his mother,
As the chick's beak opens to her father.



Mi Shebayrach

מִי שְׂבִיחַ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאַמּוּתֵינוּ
מִי שְׂבִיחַ אֲמוּתֵינוּ
מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ

Mi she-bei-rach a-vo-tei-nu
M'-kor ha-b'-ra-chah l'-i-mo-tei-nu
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: A-mein
Mi she-bei-rach i-mo-tei-nu
M'-kor ha-b'-ra-chah la-a-vo-tei-nu
Bless those in need of healing with r'-fu-a sh'-lei-mah
The renewal of body the renewal of spirit
And let us say: Amen



It may appear that the experience of true beauty is very difficult to achieve. This is definitely not true. In fact, the experience of beauty often arises naturally and unexpectedly. Several weeks ago, I went kiting with my children. It was a fine day. I have not flown a kite for a long time, and I am very glad that I did it again. For I discovered the beauty of kiting that day.

To see the kite take off in the wind, to let it soar into the heights, to feel the tightness of the string in my hand and to run around laughing and screaming like a child—all these add up to an exhilarating experience. It was such a tremendous feeling of liberation. For a while, it looked as if the world was just one big kite, soaring into the blue sky. There was a lot of action in the sport, but I felt a genuine sense of stillness and harmony at the same time.

I was one with the game. I was doing dynamic meditation.



And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

*I thank You, God for the skill, care and concern
of the many who have dedicated themselves to health and healing.
It is they who have had to respond to calls for help;
they will be there through the difficult times ahead
Grant wisdom, patience and understanding to them.
Bless the work of their hands and their hearts,
that their labors may not be in vain.
As Your helpers, may they find the way
to restore those in need to a life renewed
May we all feel the comfort of Your presence.*

*For health of body and spirit, I thank You, God
I was broken, and now I am whole.
I was weary, but now I am rested
I was anxious, but now I am reassured
I thank You for those who helped me in my need,
who heartened me in my fear,
and who visited me in my loneliness.
For the strength you gave me, O God,
I give thanks to You.*

B'yado

בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
בְּעֵת אִישָׁן וְאֶעִירָה
וְעִם רוּחִי גְוִיָּתִי
יֵי לִי וְלֹא אִירָא

**My soul I give to You
My spirit in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Hold me in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Safely in Your hand**

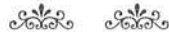
**B'yad afkid ruhi
Beit ishan v'aira
V'im ruhi g'viyati
Adonai li v'lo ira.**

Fall
Ma'ariv Aravim מַעְרִיב עֲרֵבִים: Transformation

B'yado

בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
בְּעֵת אִישׁוֹן וְאַעֲיָרָה
וְעִם רוּחִי גִוִּיתִי
יֵי לִי וְלֹא אִירָא

In God's hand I place my soul
When I sleep and when I wake
And with my soul, my body too
God is with me; I shall not fear.



You are generous to me, dear God;
you have taught my soul to trust you.
I have crept beside You and found
shelter in the shadow of your wings.

My great joy, God, is to praise you;
I will sing and awaken the dawn.
Wake up, my soul, wake up,
music in the depths of my heart.
I will praise you, God, to all people
and inspire them with my joy.



TWENTY-ONE

Help me to examine my days,
To locate moments of fulfillment
Within the hours of misgivings.
Let me plant bright bulbs
For spring blooming after winter's dark.
Help me to examine my space,
To make a nest of comfort
Among the prickles of danger.
Let me fence out anxiety
With a hedgerow of happiness.

Help me to examine my purpose,
To seek lofty reasons of being
That soar above petty trials.
Let me sow feather grass seed
To wave in summer breezes.
Take up the spade with me, Eternal Life Creator;
Take up the trowel.
Together we will plant
A garden of gladness,
Together in the midst of uncertainty.



ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SIX For Serenity

As the children grumbled for manna,
So do I mutter to You, my Counselor,
Picking over these pieces of sustenance,
Inspecting them for defects.
And I grumble in my indecision,
My careening attention that worries me.
It pulls the center from my focus,
You call and I am not here.
By day I rustle my lists and memos,
Clouds and piles of tasks and intentions;
Each week finds me further breathless
For completion and healing.
Too much to quantify, verify.
My days stumble out of rhythm,
Left searching for Your holy sound:
My heartbeat, my stillness.



TWENTY Facing Life Changes

Help me, O God, to find still moments,
Quiet spaces within to refresh my soul;
Calm my questions, my inner debates,
And let me meditate on Your goodness.
Help me, O God, to nurture my courage,
Recalling moments of strength,
Remembering days of fortitude,
The certainty of Your regard.

Help me, O God, to grasp changed visions,
Filmy curtains to blur my unhappiness
And wrap my tears with radiance,
Your hand upon my face.
Help me, O God, to turn to the light,
Warmed face, fingers outstretched,
Alive, alive in Your sight.

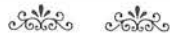


Home is a place where you can catch a dream and ride it to the end of the line and back. Where you can watch shadow and light dancing on a wooden floor or an intoxicated moon rising through an empty window. Home is a place to become yourself. It's the right spot, or just the spot where you can land on your feet or recline in a tub of sparkling brew if you're so inclined. It's a place of silence where harmony and chaos are shuffled like a deck of cards and it's your draw. It's somewhere you can close a door and open your heart.



ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SEVEN A Song For Memory and Honor

Surround us, Holy One, with sacred space.
Wrap mature trunks in newer growth,
Sturdy stems blooming in older shade,
Foreshadow of those to come.
Swirl around us a space of holiness,
Of community and truth, of justice and simcha,
Winding back to Sinai, rolling forward to
eternity:
A gathering place, a home-from-home.
Then we shall praise You for courage and vision,
For tasks in partnership with heaven's decree;
All voices gathering, rising to You, Holy One,
Renaming and reclaiming, rejoicing.



Al Tasteir

**Don't hide Your face from me
I'm asking for Your help.
I call to You, please hear my prayers, O God
If You would answer me as I have called to You**

**Please heal me now,
Don't hide Your face from Me.**



The stage of my life has changed; old doors are closed and new ones now stand open. Though I may have seen this space before, I now corner to make it mine, to call it home. Hello and greetings to the heart and soul of this new setting.

I honor this place that will shelter me, and I embrace the changes and opportunities that this move invites into my life.

Some days I think this one place isn't enough. That's when nothing is enough, when I want to live multiple lives and have the know-how and guts to love without limits. Those days, like today, I walk with a purpose but no destination. Only then do I see, at least momentarily, that most everything is here. To my left a towering cottonwood is lunatic with bird song. Under it, I'm a listening post while its great, gray trunk-like a baton-heaves its green symphony into the air.

I walk and walk, from the falls, over Grouse Hill, to the dry wash. Today it is enough to make a shadow.



Gesher Tzar Me'od

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ גֶּשֶׁר צָר מְאוֹד
וְהַעֲקָר לֹא לִפְחִיד כָּלֵל

**Kol haolam kulo gesher tzar me'od
Gesher tzar meod, gesher tzar me'od
Vhaikar, lo l'fached k'lal**



**THIRTY-EIGHT
A Song of Praise**

Hallelujah!
You open Your hand
Cascading light upon the earth,
Illuminating our days.
So may our acts prolong Your light.
Hallelujah!

You open Your hand
Spilling radiance upon the night,
Safeguarding darkness.
So may our deeds echo Your nightsong.
Hallelujah!
You open Your hand
And sculpt billowing rain clouds,
Nourishing Your creations.
So may we give succor in Your Name.
We remember Your kindnesses
In every hallelujah;
We recall Your creation
When we create goodness in our lives.
So may we be privileged to sing hallelujah!
Praise the Eternal!
Hallelujah!



ELEVEN

A Song for Strength

I crept upon the trail of my days,
Barely moving, forward then back
With the indecisions of my doubts,
Until I inched into Your light.
Then, casting no shadows, I stood.
Knowing little but believing,
I readied my soul to move into the Radiance
That would begin my learning.
For I have stood too long in this place,
Balancing first on one foot, then the other,
Fearful of moving away from this familiar gloom
Into Your light.
Set my foot upon the middle of the path.
Obscure the tangle of my life before,
And guide my steps to the clearing ahead,
Lighting the way.
Burn, O Divine Beacon,
Send Your light
Streaming through the woods,
Turning night into day.



Shma Koleinu

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
חַוֶּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ
וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת תַּפִּלָּתֵנוּ
כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ שׁוֹמֵעַ תַּפִּלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה

Shma Koleinu, Adonai Eloheinu,
Hus v'rachem aleinu
V'kabeil b'rachamim u'vratzon et t'filataynu
Ki El shomaya t'filot v'tachanunim atta.

Hear our voice, Adonai our God
Have compassion upon us,
And accept our prayer with favor and mercy
For You are a God who hears prayer and supplication.



I don't think it is enough appreciated how much an outdoor book the Bible is. It is a "hyphaethral book," such as Thoreau talked about—a book open to the sky. It is best read and understood outdoors, and the farther outdoors the better. Or that has been my experience of it. Passages that within walls seem improbable or incredible, outdoors seem merely natural. This is because outdoors we are confronted everywhere with wonders; we see that the miraculous is not extraordinary but the common mode of existence. It is our daily bread. Whoever really has considered the lilies of the field or the birds of the air and pondered the improbability of their existence in this warm world within the cold and empty stellar distances will hardly balk at miracles. We forget the greater and still continuing miracle by which things are created each moment.



Recently I have been reading Exodus, wondering about Moses and the burning bush. Moses, it is written, "turns aside to see a wonder," a bush that burns but is not consumed. Throughout my life, I had thought this a ridiculous passage. Why should God get Moses' attention by such outlandish means? I mean, why couldn't He just have boomed, "Hey, Moses!" the way He would later call to the great king, "Hey, Samuel!" Now I know why. The truth, when really perceived and not simply described, is always a wonder. Moses does not see a technicolor fantasy. He sees the bush as it really is. He sees the bush as all bushes actually are.

FORTY -TWO
Steadiness

Balance our days, Beloved Friend,
When we careen without plan
From task to task, from thought to thought,
Seeking right paths.
So many days we do not pause.
Rushing on, we lose our focus,
Forgetting the center of our being
Is contained within Your hand.
Like erratic winds, we swirl about,
Rustling all directions, turning dust to wraiths
Across this dry plain of responsibilities.
Running faster, calm evades us,
And the shattered fragments scatter,
Lost and tumbling along parched ground.
Pull around us, then, Your strong arm.
Halt our frantic motion.
Water this arid ground with living water;
Irrigate our thirsty souls.
Place our actions before us,
A rediscovered path to You;
Balance our days with Your regard,
Fill our tasks with holiness.



The Japanese tea master Sen no Rikyu built a teahouse on the side of a hill overlooking the sea. Three guests were invited to the inaugural tea ceremony. Hearing about the beautiful site, they expected to find a structure that took advantage of the wonderful view. After arriving at the garden gate, they were perplexed to discover a grove of trees had been planted that obstructed the panorama. Before entering the teahouse, the guests followed the traditional custom of purifying their hands and mouths at the stone basin near the entry. Stooping to draw water with a bamboo ladle, they noticed an opening in the trees that provided a vision of the sparkling sea. In that humble position they awakened to the relationship between the cool liquid in the ladle and the ocean in the distance, between their individuality and the ocean of life.



FORTY-ONE
For Beginnings

Open my eyes, O Eternal, to change;
Fill me with longing for possibilities.
Let my life before be stepping blocks
To what You want me to become.

Open my eyes, O Eternal, to change;

Let me write beyond my narrow descriptions
To begin a new narrative,
Underlined with Your Name.

Open my heart, O Eternal

To put You ever before me;
Help me discard the insubstantial
And replace it with Your words.

Open my life, O Eternal, to fulfillment.

Where before were shadows
Let Your truths live in my life,
Sustaining my actions.

Turn me back to You, O Eternal,

Back to long befores I cannot remember
That beckon my soul.

*Turn me back, O Eternal,
Opening to change.*



Listen Israel

**Listen Israel, Adonai, our God, is one. Shma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu
Adonai echad.**



THIRTY
A Hymn of Praise

Hallelujah!

Give thanks to the Eternal!
Give thanks for the journey,
And for the destination;
Give thanks for the testing,
And for the completion.

Hallelujah!

Give thanks to the Eternal!
Give thanks for the rehearsal,
And for the performance;
Give thanks for the kneading,
And for the good sweet bread.
Set the path before us
As an adventure;
Make our steps sure
With Your kindness.

Hallelujah!

Give thanks to the Eternal!
Give thanks for the washing,
And for the folded clothes;
Give thanks for the sweeping,
And for the cleared stoop.

Hallelujah!

Give thanks to the Eternal!
Give thanks for the research,
And for the publication;
Give thanks for the scales,
And for the sonata.
Set the going as an ending
That we delight in our days;
Set the ending as a goal
That our lives reflect Your glory.

The old man
must have stopped our car
two dozen times to climb out
and gather into his hands
the small toads blinded
by our lights and leaping,
live drops of rain.

The rain was falling,
a mist about his white hair
and I kept saying
you can't save them all,
accept it, get back in
we've got places to go.
But, leathery hands full
of wet brown life,
knee deep in the summer
roadside grass,
he just smiled and said
they have places to go to
too.



THIRTY-THREE For Healing

As the farmer turns his field,
So do You turn my distress,
Plowing under random frights
To present me with smoothed ground.
Let me dig old sorrows away;
Let my tears water new growth.
Let me yield up memories to You,
And transform them to Your work.
As the seamstress matches raw edges,
So do You bind my soul,
Trimming away loose threads,
Discarding the ragged edges of my doubts.
Let me sew straight seams again;
Let my needle be true.
Let me orient my heart to You,
That I might seek You in peace.
Then will the remembrance of yesterday

Release its bond upon my heart;
Old wounds will scar with strength
As I wait for the Eternal.



Mi Shebayrach

מִי שְׁבִירַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב
מִי שְׁבִירַךְ אֲמוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רִבְקָה לֵאָה וְרַחֵל

Mi shebayrach avotaynu Avraham Yitzhak v'Ya'akov
Mi shebayrach imoteinu Sarah Rivkah Leah v'Rachel
May the one who blessed our Mothers,
May the one who blessed our Fathers,
Hear our prayer and bless us as well.

Bless us with the power of Your healing,
Bless us with the power of Your hope,
May our hearts be filled with understanding
And strengthened by the power of Your love.

Bless us with the vision for tomorrow
Help us to reach out to those in pain
May the warmth of friendship ease our sorrow
Give us courage, give us faith show us the way



"What's so original about this man ?" asked a visitor. "All he gives you is a hash of stories, proverbs, and sayings from other Masters." A woman disciple smiled. She once had a cook, she said, who made the most wonderful hash in the world.

"How on earth do you make it, my dear? You must give me the recipe."

The cook's face glowed with pride. She said, "Well, ma'am, I'll tell yer: beef's nothin'; pepper's nothin'; onion's nothin'; but when I throws myself into the hash- that's what makes it what it is."



Now, said the cook, I will teach you
how to stuff a pepper with rice.
Take your pepper green, and gently,

for peppers are shy. No matter which side
you approach, it's always the backside.
Perched on green buttocks, the pepper sleeps.
In its silk tights, it dreams
of somersaults and parsley,
of the days when the sexes were one.
Slash open the sleeve
as if you were cutting a paper lantern,
and enter a moon, spilled like a melon,
a fever of pearls,
a conversation of glaciers.
It is a temple built to the worship
of morning light.
I have sat under the great globe
of seeds on the roof of that chamber,
too dazzled to gather the taste I came for.
I have taken the pepper in hand,
smooth and blind, a runt in the rich
evolution of roses and ferns.
You say I have not yet taught you
to stuff a pepper? -
Cooking takes time.
Next time we'll consider the rice.



SEVENTY

Midway through this cold season,
You temper us with Torah's incandescence;
Warming sparks fly as bright arrows,
Your words in our mouths as we study.
We praise You, Story Writer,
As we study and wonder.
You contrast dreary clouds
With bright sun through icicles;
You partner cold with warming tales
Of the miracles wrought in Egypt.
We praise You, Story Writer
As we study and remember.

A chickpea leaps almost over the rim of the pot where it's being boiled.

"Why are you doing this to me?"

The cook knocks him down with the ladle.
"Don't you try to jump out.
You think I'm torturing you.
I'm giving you flavor,
so you can mix with spices and rice
and be the lovely vitality of a human being.
Remember when you drank rain in the garden.
That was for this."

Grace first. Sexual pleasure,
then a boiling new life begins,
and the Friend has something good to eat.

Eventually the chickpea
will say to the cook,
"Boil me some more.
Hit me with the skimming spoon.
I can't do this by myself.. .."



Just a cup of tea. Just another opportunity for healing. Just the hand reaching out to receive the handle of the cup. Just noticing hot. Noticing texture and fragrance. Just a cup of tea. Just this moment in newness. Just the hand touching the cup. Just the arm retracting. The fragrance increasing as the cup nears the lips. So present. Noticing the bottom lip receiving heat from the cup, the top lip arched to receive the fluid within. Noticing the first taste of tea before the tea even touches the lips. The fragrance and heat rising into the mouth. The first noticing of flavor. The touch of warm tea on willing tongue. The tongue moving the tea about in the mouth. The intention to swallow. The warmth that extends down into the stomach. What a wonderful cup of tea. The tea of peace, of satisfaction. Drinking a cup of tea, I stop the war.



ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Autumn Wondering

In colder winds, swirling, gusting
Leaves of muted hues,
In colder winds,
I call You, O Eternal.

Strengthen my back, as raking into piles
I separate and contemplate
These days and changes,
Crackling and clinging against my heart.
Strengthen my arms as pulling and pulling
I drag this heaped tarpaulin of my dilemmas
To pile high and light with hope's spark,
Burning away the turmoil of these days.
Not the pause before winter's sleep
But a beginning; even as the dormant roots
Take up nourishment
So shall my resolve be nourished by the Eternal.
There, a patch of red and gold still clinging
Guards against selflessness:
Your gift to me as I straighten from raking,
As I push the glowing embers together.



'My grandfather. was a lawyer, a judge, and a farmer. He was frequently busy and conquering, but I remember also that he some times entered into golden moments of wu wei. He and I used to go fishing at one of the little ponds on his farm. He would sit and hold his cane pole over the water, becoming as still as the stumps that jutted up from the water.

I usually tired of fishing fairly soon and went on to other things, like dandelions. One day having given up on the fishing, I was playing in his old black truck when I noticed that his fishing bait was still on the seat. I remember being surprised that my grandfather had been out fishing an hour or more without bait. I grabbed the bait basket and raced over to him. "Grandaddy, how can you fish without bait?"

He tilted back his hat and smiled as if he had been caught in some delicious secret. "Well, sometimes it's not the fish I'm after," he said, "it's the fishing."



Each lifetime is the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.
For some there are more pieces.
For others the puzzle is more difficult to assemble.
Some seem to be born with a nearly completed puzzle.
And so it goes.
Souls going this way and that
Trying to assemble the myriad parts.
But know this. No one has within themselves

All the pieces to their puzzle.
 Like before the days when they used to seal
 jigsaw puzzles in cellophane.
 Insuring that all the pieces were there.
 Everyone carries with them at least one and probably
 Many pieces to someone else's puzzle.
 Sometimes they know it.
 Sometimes they don't.
 And when you present your piece
 Which is worthless to you,
 To another, whether you know it or not,
 Whether they know it or not,
 You are a messenger from the Most High.



B'yado

**In God's hand I place my soul
 When I sleep and when I wake
 And with my soul, my body too
 God is with me; I shall not fear.**

בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
 בְּעֵת אִישׁוֹן וְאֶעֱרָה
 וְעִם רוּחִי גּוֹיְתִי
 יֵי לִי וְלֹא אִירָא



ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN For Leaving

You divide our attentions, Courage Builder,
 Growing callouses around our affections
 So the fingers playing out these tunes of loss
 Are toughened against the leaving.
 You wander with us through aisles of distractions,
 Holding our lists, binding up our abrasions
 With reminders of practicalities, touches
 That lend reality to our intention.
 You divide our attentions, Courage Builder
 With Your call to focus, to function,

To make new arrangements for changed days
Even as we shrink from imagining.
You are there for us, Holy One,
Bearing the unadorned truth of love
That holds and holds and then lets go,
Honoring Your design.



As I sit quietly here in my chair,
Sewing or reading or braiding my hair-
Human and simple my lot and my share-
I am aware of the systems that swing
Through the aisles of creation on heavenly wing,

I am aware of a marvelous thing,
Trail of the comets in furious flight
Thunders of beauty that shatter the night,
Terrible triumph of pageants that march
To the trumpets of time of Eternity's arch.

I am aware of the splendour that ties
All the things of the earth with the things of the skies,
Here in my body the heavenly heat,
Here in my flesh the melodious beat
Of the planets that circle Divinity's feet.
As I silently sit here in my chair,

I am aware



THIRTY-SEVEN

When I turn away from You, O Eternal,
I turn from myself.
I revolve back and back, never forth,
Stuck in this half circle of unhappiness.
Reach Your hand to me.
Push me away from my despair
With Your steady hand.
Like a branch snagged in rushing waters,
I beat against my fate, tiring my heart,
Wounding my spirit.
Yet I will not be moved.

Reach Your hand to me.
 Lift me beyond the sticking place
 To shoot through rapids.
 Before me looms uncertainty,
 Behind me, desperation.
 Birth me into the void
 With Your strong hand.
 There will I reach for You,
 And begin the long revolution home.



Psalm 23

יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחָסֵר: בְּנֹאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל-מִי מִנְחוֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי: נַפְשִׁי
 יִשׁוּבֵב יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי-צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ: גַּם כִּי-אֶלֶךְ בְּגִיא צַלְמוֹת לֹא-אִירָא
 רַע כִּי-אֶתָּה עִמָּדִי שִׁבְטֶךָ וּמִשְׁעֲנֶתְךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחֵמֵנִי: תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי | שְׁלֹחַן נֹגֵד
 צִרְרֵי דָשָׁנָה בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כוֹסֵי רוּיָה: אַךְ טוֹב וְחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל-יְמֵי חַיִּי
 וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית-יְהוָה לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים:

Adonai ro-i lo echsar
 Binot deshe yarbetzeini
 Al mei m'nuchot y'nahalaeini
 Nafshi y'shoveive, yancheini
 V'maglie tzed l'man sh'mo
 Gam ki eileich b'gei tzalmavet lo ira ki ata imadi
 Shiv'tcha umishantecha heima y'nachamuni
 Taaroch l'fanai shulchan neged tzor'rirai
 Dishanta vashemen roshi kosi r'vaya
 Ach tov vachased yird'funi ko y'mei chayai
 V'shavti b'veit Adonai l'orech yamim.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters.
 He restores my soul; he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
 for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me.
 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
 Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.



Winter

Rofeh Holim רופא חולים: Care for the Hurting

R'faeinu

רפאינו יי ונרפא
והושעינו ונבשינו כי תהליתנו אתה
והעלה רפואה שלמה לכל מפותינו
כי אל מלך רופא נאמן ורחמן אתה
ברוך אתה יי רופא כל עמו ישראל

Heal us, O God and we shall be healed
Save us, and we shall be saved
Because we sing praises to You.
Grant us a complete healing from all our wounds.
For You, Almighty Ruler, are faithful and merciful Sovereign of healing.
Blessed are You, Adonai, who heals the sick of Your people Israel.



ONE

Listen!
Because I know You will hear me
As I fear this unknown I must enter,
Surrendering my self, my authority,
If only for a brief while.
Listen!
Because I know You will hear
As I praise You at this season
Spreading warmth of renewal over cold earth,
Even as my soul's chill is warmed.
Listen!
Because I know You are there:
Hearing me,
Warming me,
Renewing me,
Leading me through this time
To a place of health and vigor.



TWO

And I will praise You with clear sweet tones,
Singing Your gift as I gather my courage,
Hearing the music of my life,
As, once again, I gird myself for battle.
And I will praise You with melodies
Remembered from my girlhood,
Songs that comfort me in night's darkness,
That relieve pain as I call forth their echoes.
And I will praise You with measures counted
In perfect stillness,
As machines whirl and focus their healing beams,
As fluids rush through clear tubing.
And I will praise You, seeking harmony
In the discord of this illness,
Seeking to hear again the sounds of strength
Above the cacophony of this invader.
And I will continually praise You,
All the days of my life.



FIVE

O Eternal, hold me with gentleness
Through this long night of pain;
Lay Your cool hand upon my body.
As a mother strokes the fevered brow
Of her beloved child,
Give me succor.
O Eternal, clasp me to Your bosom,
And rock me with quiet motion,
To and fro as the seconds pass,
Waiting, waiting for the next relief,
Stretching endlessly toward the dawn.
O Eternal, sing me to calm,
Humming a lullaby my grandmother sang
As she arranged the soup bowl on the tray,
And brought it to me with the warmth of her smile.
Sing me that song to soothe my soul.
O Eternal, guard me through this darkness.
Wrap me in a soft, warm quilt of Your regard
That I might find a paragraph of flickering comfort
To read and remember
Within this long, grim novel.

O Eternal, keep me safe through this night;
And let the morning come to renew me,
To turn me, to heal me,
To find me enfolded in the vigor of Your love.



NINE
For Complete Healing

Like a pure crystalline tone,
Sounding in the deepest fear of night,
So will You call to me
To leave this land of my distress.
O let me turn to You,
Let me loose the steel bands of my dread
And listen for the ringing
Of Your summons.
How can I leave with so much undone?
How can I move away from this place,
And follow, fearless, into the strength
Of Your concern for me?
I am only Your creation,
Striving to create my own remembrance,
To leave this world with knowledge
Of my passage through it.
So soon You call me to Your harmonies,
To close my manuscript,
To sing unaccompanied
These notes of my life, the final hymns.
Still my terror with clear notes, Righteous One;
Quiet me with a silken melody,
That by accepting Your judgement,
I might turn to sing with You.



TEN
For Healing

Surround me with stillness,
Tiny ripples spreading across the pond,
Touched by one finger of Your hand,
Calmed by the warmth of Your palm.
Croon the wordless melody
That fills my being with peace.

Under the spreading tree of Your affection,
 I will sit and meditate
 On the goodnesses You have brought,
 Counting the happy moments like glistening beads
 Strung to adorn my days.
 Light the shadowed corners with gentle glow,
 To fill my being with peace.
 Drape about me the dappled sunlight of
 Your teachings,
 Opening my eyes to the search,
 Clearing my heart of small distractions
 That I might find the answers within myself.
 Blow the breeze of compassion upon my brow,
 Breathing the sigh of peace.
 Let me rest by the water,
 Probing gently for the sense of what I see,
 Releasing my hurts to restore my spirit,
 Feeling You guide me toward a distant shore.



Shma Koleinu

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ
 וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ
 כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה

**Shma Koleinu, Adonai Eloheinu,
 Hus v'rachem aleinu
 V'kabeil b'rachamim u'vratzon et t'filataynu
 Ki El shomaya t'filot v'tachanunim atta.**

Hear our voice, Adonai our God
 Have compassion upon us,
 And accept our prayer with favor and mercy
 For You are a God who hears prayer and supplication



THIRTEEN

Come again, Life-Giver,
 Blow warm breath upon the grimy snow;
 Uncover tentative shoots

Struggling to breach the muck.
Come again, Spring-Renewer;
Raise our eyes to greening branches,
Unfurl tender leaves
Hidden in budding limbs.
Come again in lengthening days;
Give us back our ambition
To sow the fortunes of our people
Beneath the fertile soils of Your teaching.
Come again in sunlight and gentle rains,
Nurturing the roots of Your law
With the ever growing sustenance
Of our faith.
Come again as we turn our faces to You,
As a young plant stretches toward the sun,
As a spotted fawn stretches toward his mother,
As the chick's beak opens to her father.



SIXTEEN For Serenity

Open me to silence, Sound Creator;
Clear my ears from the background of my life,
Quiet the highway of my emotions
As they growl with gridlocked traffic.
When I calm my soul I can hear You.
Open me to silence, Sweet Singer;
Switch off the electronic noise makers,
The automatic switches I flip unawares,
That flap their clamor into my hours.
When I turn from the din I can hear You.
Open me to silence, Word Revealer;
Turn off the inner dialogues,
Still the divisive monologues,
End the gibberish of my misgivings.
When I stop my words I can hear You.
Open me to silence, Source of Sound;
Open me to hear Your words in my heart;
Open me to hear Your teachings in my soul.



NINETEEN

A Song for the Mishpocheh

Hallelujah!
We praise You
With a small child's hug,
An ecstatic grin
From an ankle-high puddle.
Hallelujah!
We praise You
With growing plants and mowed lawns,
With cleaned garages,
With tied shoelaces.
Hallelujah!
We praise You
With vigilance by bedsides
And patience with tantrums,
With gentle pats in darkness.
Hallelujah!
We praise You
With coins in a pushke;
We praise You With clothes for those who are homeless;
With a small child's hug, With packed lunches for hungry wanderers.
An ecstatic grin
From an ankle-high puddle. Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! We praise You
With honesty and trust,
We praise You With fairness and forthrightness,
With growing plants and mowed lawns, With attention to quality.
With cleaned garages,
With tied shoelaces. Hallelujah!
Hallelujah! We praise You
In every hour of each day,
We praise You By the many acts of our lives.
With vigilance by bedsides
And patience with tantrums, With the varied ways You have made us,
With gentle pats in darkness. We continually praise You.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!



B'yado

בִּידוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
בְּעֵת אִשָּׁן וְאֶעִירָה
וְעַם רוּחִי גִוִּיתִי
יֵי לִי וְלֹא אִירָא

**My soul I give to You
My spirit in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Hold me in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Safely in Your hand**

**B'yado afkid ruhi
Beit ishan v'aira
V'im ruhi g'viyati
Adonai li v'lo ira.**



TWENTY-TWO For Reassurance

I shall wait in Your sight:
Prepare me with Your teachings;
Place knowledge as a screen,
A shelter against winds of adversity.
I shall wait in Your sight:
Animate me with Your teachings;
Invigorate my days with purpose,
Enlarge my actions with meaning.
I shall wait in Your sight:
Empower me with Your teachings;
Let my thirst never be quenched,
Let me drink from Your well.
I shall wait in Your sight.
Secure in who I am,
I will push back the webs of worry,
To face my daily challenges.
I shall wait in Your sight.
Secure in Who You are,

I will lean against Your teachings
To guide my daily acts.



TWENTY-FOUR
A Song of Comfort

Turn me toward the light.
Uncover the choices that flourish
When I relinquish my yesterdays.
Turn me toward the light.
Unveil the hopes that grow
When I face my realities.
Turn me toward today
Turn me to a vision of possibilities,
That denies apprehensions.
Turn me toward today.
Turn me to this moment of extension,
That opens old constrictions.
Before me You place iridescence
To soften brittle sorrows.
Let me rest on the cushion of Your care,
Comforted by Your regard.
Beside me You heap soft pillows
To ease ancient grief.
Bolster my courage with Your kindness
As You support my head.
Stretch the stiff limbs of my confusion,
And let me rise, renewed,
To turn into Your light.



Al Tasteir

**Don't hide Your face from me
I'm asking for Your help.
I call to You, please hear my prayers, O God
If You would answer me as I have called to You
Please heal me now,
Don't hide Your face from Me.**



TWENTY-SIX
A Song of Strength

Call me on a quest for You.
Call me away from each day's turbulence,
Stilling the waves of confrontation,
Drying my tears.
For You reveal the breadth of creation,
And offer peace to my soul;
You surround me with beauty,
And let me see my reflection.
Lead me on a search for You.
Lead me on through smoke of confusion,
Wiping away the smudges of weariness,
Clearing the air before me.
For You set a far horizon before me,
And offer hope to my soul;
You layout the distance,
And move my foot toward the first step.
Sustain me on my journey to You.
Sustain me through dullness of spirit,
Alerting my senses,
Animating my tentative grasping.
For You move the stars in their patterns,
And offer delight to my soul;
You turn my head to Your glory,
And touch me with eternity.



TWENTY-EIGHT
For the Caregivers
Show me how to offer hope.
Open Your hand with the colors of faith
That I might begin to fill in spaces
To strengthen another's life.
Show me how to offer comfort.
Point out Your nesting place,
Feathered against the adversities
That wound those I love.
Show me the direction
When I am lost,
Searching to help
But finding no paths.
Show me tolerance,

When I weary of helping,
And a long dreary day
Stretches toward a restless night.
You place before us life and love;
Show us endurance.
You place before us healing and hope;
Show us persistence.
Reach deep within me, Eternal Strength,
And bring my strength to consciousness.
Pull it around us:
Let it radiate with Your power,
Let it guide our way.



TWENTY-NINE For Strength

Out of my yearning
I sang to You;
From the soul of my soul
I gathered sighs to form Your Name.
Opening my being to all I am,
Discarding vexation and worry,
I devised a new self,
Free to honor the Eternal.
From the center of my center,
The shapes begin their dance;
From the heart of my heart,
The tones sound their melody.
Only when I free myself
Can I be free to sing Your praises;
Only when I loose the ties of doubt
Can I wander onto Your canvas.
Fortify my song with strong harmony;
Fill my brush with bright paints.
Remove the reservations from my heart,
That I might bow before You.



Reb Nachman's Prayer

**You are the One for this I pray that I may have the strength to be alone
To see the world to stand among the trees and all the living things
That I may stand alone and offer prayers and talk to You
You are the One to whom I do belong
And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in
my heart
Mayall the foliage of the field all grasses trees and plants
Awaken at my coming this I pray and send their life into my words of
prayer
So that my speech my thoughts and my prayers will be made whole
And through the spirit of all growing things
And we know that everything is one because we know that everything
is You
You are the One for this I pray I ask You God to hear my words
That pour out from my heart I stand before you
I like water lift my hands to You in prayer
And grant me strength and grant me strength to stand alone
You are the One to whom I do belong
And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in
my heart
You are the One for this I pray and I'll sing my soul to You**



THIRTY-TWO

A Song of Endings and Beginnings

*Let us sing of our completions, smooth, round,
Silvered voices to praise Your Name.
Every season holds starts and stops,
Years of trees and spirits and souls,
Days ripe with harmony and turning,
Circled, cycled, to order our lives.
Inside each completion,
We hear Your creation;
Inside our creations,
We resound with Your voice.
Let us mold a new shape for our completions,
Fluid and longing, subtle limbs
That lead us onward to praise Your Name.*

Every season casts away its jagged edges,
Rubs away the torn moments
To rejoice in the realignment
Of old ways made straight.
Inside each refitting,
We renew again Your creation,
Pulling it taut against us,
A firm bound shield of Your affection.
Let us sing of our completions.
Your hand hovers, blesses,
Bids us move to new beginnings.
Your hand moves us forward,
Toward unimagined completions.



THIRTY-THREE For Healing

As the farmer turns his field,
So do You turn my distress,
Plowing under random frights
To present me with smoothed ground.

*Let me dig old sorrows away;
Let my tears water new growth.
Let me yield up memories to You,*

And transform them to Your work.
As the seamstress matches raw edges,
So do You bind my soul,
Trimming away loose threads,
Discarding the ragged edges of my doubts.

*Let me sew straight seams again;
Let my needle be true.
Let me orient my heart to You,*

That I might seek You in peace.
Then will the remembrance of yesterday
Release its bond upon my heart;
Old wounds will scar with strength
As I wait for the Eternal.



A Song of Praise

Praise the Eternal!
You create mighty cascades,
Filling us with awe of Your strength;
You create a trickle of water,
To nourish a thirsty heart in the desert.
Praise the Eternal!
You dance in shimmered sunlight,
Coaxing the earth in her blossoming;
You vibrate in starlight,
To awaken our imaginings.
Praise the Eternal!
You wind over high mountain paths,
Making our footsteps secure;
Your hand steadies our steps over cracks,
Balancing our daily striving.
Praise the Eternal!
You echo through our shouts of joy,
Singing the harmony of our wonder;
You croon a single note
That comforts our loneliness.
Praise the Eternal!
Multifaceted, All Encompassing,
God of All we know and wish.

We praise You.
We seek You.
We wait for You.



Dear God,

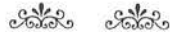
Open the blocked passageways to you,
The congealed places.
Roll away the heavy stone from the well as your servant
Jacob did when he beheld his beloved Rachel.
Help us open the doors of trust that have been jammed with
hurt and rejection.
As You open the blossoms in spring,
Even as You open the heavens in storm,
Open us to feel Your great, awesome, wonderful Presence.



V'anachnu N'varech Ya

וְאַנְחֵנוּ נְבָרֵךְ יְיָ
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם
הַלְלוּיָהּ

V'anachnu n'varech Ya
Me'ata v'ad olam, me'ata v'ad olam
Hallelujah.



THIRTY-FIVE

Sit beside me, Eternal One,
Comfort my soul.
At the clamoring bell of news revealed,
You listen with me,
Hearing my disbelief,
Absorbing my gasp of fright.
Wait beside me, O Eternal:
Comfort my soul.
Recall to me my cherished memories
To bring me forward through adversity,
To stretch from then to now to beyond,
Beckoning to a future You will guard.
Walk beside me, O Eternal:
Comfort my soul.
Help me find the broken pieces,
Gathering them to my trembling hand,
Raw materials for my future life.
Let me find Your hand in this design.
Watch beside me, O Eternal:
Comfort my soul.
Reform me to a different vessel:
Altered by dark fires of fortune,
Hardened in an unknown kiln,
Burning away the superficial.
Wrap me in Your healing light,
Wrap me in Your healing care.



Mi Shebayrach

מִי שְׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב
מִי שְׁבֵרַךְ אֲמוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רִבְקָה לֵאָה וְרָחֵל

**Mi shebayrach avotaynu Avraham Yitzhak v'Ya'akov
Mi shebayrach imoteinu Sarah Rivkah Leah v'Rachel
May the one who blessed our Mothers,
May the one who blessed our Fathers,
Hear our prayer and bless us as well.**

**Bless us with the power of Your healing,
Bless us with the power of Your hope,
May our hearts be filled with understanding
And strengthened by the power of Your love.**

**Bless us with the vision for tomorrow
Help us to reach out to those in pain
May the warmth of friendship ease our sorrow
Give us courage, give us faith show us the way**



**THIRTY-SIX
For the Waiting Ones**

Rest beside me, Blessed Watcher.
Clasp my hand as I startle awake,
Remembering as dreams fade,
Hearing again the pounding of my heart.
Soothe my brow, Loving Hand,
Smoothing furrows of worry,
Wiping tears that fall unnoticed
As I fumble to awareness.
In an instant, our life is arrayed before me.
Happy moments tumble beneath reality's feet.
I reach for Your hand as mine reaches out,
Hands calming, fears in brief retreat.
Support me as I wait and worry,
Snapping back my anger at these changed plans;
Space our days with pockets of relief,
Strengthening moments to move forward.

Let tomorrow's rising find me stronger.
Pushing the tight bands of fear away;
Gird me rather with the courage of Your attention,
Waiting in the light.



THIRTY-NINE
For Consolidation

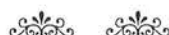
Twine my life to life, a Eternal,
Plied strength on strength,
To nurture my heart and renew my soul.
Join me in a partnership with You.
Tightly wrap my days in duties for Your sake.
Spin around me the words of Your sages,
The dreams of Your children.
Rub my face with the rough weave of women's
stories
To strengthen my faint pulse.
Bind me to Your Torah,
Four bright blue comers
Knotted together for Your glory.
You are the warp and the weft;
Braid in this slender thread upon Your loom.
You are the texture and the smooth cloth;
Form me in a running stitch to You.



FORTY-THREE
A Song for Courage

Reach down for me, O Eternal,
To draw me up beside You;
Coax me away from anger and fear,
Beckoning forward, climbing higher.
Grasp tightly as I grope above,
Bind my heart to You.
Place my hand upon the sturdy branch
That eases the climb to You.
For You are the sure Hand
Beneath my elbow,
Guiding my steps as the
Blind are guided.
You are the Light

Shining through dark branches,
Illuminating the ascent
Through strangling vines.
You are the steady Voice
That recalls me from my confusion
And bids me order my days,
That I might turn to You in wonder.
Recall me, recall me, sing my name
That I might hear Your welcome;
Lift me, turn me, to breathe fresh air
Above the forest canopy.



Listen

If you're lost
You feel afraid
And you don't know what to say
Then listen, listen to our God
Is there a question on your mind?
Is the answer hard to find?
Then listen, listen to our God
Listen with all your heart and soul
And with all your might
Write them and learn them and teach them well
Every morning and night
Close your eyes and listen
Quiet yourself
There's nothing to say
Stop all the chatter that gets in the way
And listen, listen to our God
When the wind and thunder finally disappear
There's still a voice that you can hear
If you listen, listen to our God
You can hear it from the top of the highest hill
Or from the valley below
It can come from the edge of the universe
It can come from within your soul
Close your eyes and listen
Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad
Baruch Shem K'vod, Shem K'vod, Mal'chuto L'olam Va-ed

שמע ישראל יי אלהינו יי אחד



FORTY-FOUR

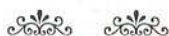
I praise You, Connection-Maker,
For Your creations that touch my days,
The changing variety of lives
That changes the variety of my life.
All hearts sing Your praises
On their journey one toward another.
I praise You, Heart-Binder,
You let me know kindred spirits,
Vines growing toward me
As I grow in my own right.
All souls sing Your praises .
As they join one to another.
I praise You, People-Linker,
For the faces who lift in greeting
As my own smiles to theirs,
A kiss across a room.
All loves sing Your praises,
As they shine one to another.
I praise You, Component-Designer,
For You see me in all my connections;
You urge me open to new friends, new loves,
New souls to embrace my own.
You create opportunities to look beyond myself.
You guide me in the holy interchange.



V'anachnu N'varech Ya

וְאֲנַחְנוּ נְבָרַךְ יְיָ
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם
הַלְלוּיָהּ

V'anachnu n'varech Ya
Me'ata v'ad olam, me'ata v'ad olam
Hallelujah.



FIFTY
For Healing

You are the Open Door
That beckons me in;
Peeking around the door frame,
I begin to enter into Your glory.
You move me forward, O Eternal,
To step beyond self-made boundaries;
Lift my foot over the threshold
That I might abide with You.
In the house of the Eternal,
I found my questions;
Waiting to be posed,
They filled me with wonder.
Through the doorway of the Eternal
Come jumbled sounds and mingled scents;
Warm sunlight falls across my lap:
All this, all this, Your creation.
Sit with me, Eternal Teacher,
Encourage my seeking;
As I fill my hours with Your mitzvot,
So shall I be filled.
Then send me through Your door
Stretching up to honor Your Name,
Sharing out this wonder,
Enriching myself in the giving.



SIXTY-ONE
First Night

Brief brave light,
Guarding against the deepest dark;
One finger of Your hand
To guide us through winter's cold.
So long we struggled,
Hidden in stony hills,
Hidden in the valley of our fears,
Afraid of what the light might reveal.
Too long we huddled, hiding,
Pushing away Your hand,
Denying our birth heritage,
Afraid of bringing forth our own light.
Kindle the living light, O Israel!

Light the flame that burns away fear,
That casts out oppressors
And reveals a new way.
Kindle the living light, O Israel!
Light the flame to chase internal chill,
To thaw the frost of denial
And fill us with healing fire.



SIXTY-FOUR A Song for Winter

Strong and Mighty Tree,
Sturdy and ever-growing,
You reach down with nourishing roots
To the very center of the earth.
We praise You, O God;
You stand firm in hostile winds.
Fluttering like winter birds,
We dance among the branches,
Wings half stretched to gather sunlight,
Calling out Your Name.
We praise You, O God;
You shelter us from cold loneliness.
Rattle in the wind, bare branches;
Shake your brittle castanets of winter.
We will trust in the Eternal,
Who guards us from the dark times.
We will fly through frigid air,
Singing our greeting to the Eternal;
We will shelter by the Living Tree
And linger in this holy place.
We will fly, singing praises
To honor the Eternal;
Winter gray surrounds us,
Yet will we praise Your Name.



SIXTY-SEVEN

In winter's cold we are muffled,
Bundled against adversities,
Woolen scarves and puffy coats,
Stiffly armored in arctic winds.

Numbed as well, removed
From temperature's reality,
As the Children were removed
When they sojourned in Egypt.
Is this shielding, this layering away
Of the cold, a muffling of the spirit?
Can an icy finger, creeping through
Awaken us anew to God's call?
How slowly we plod, heads lowered,
Lifting booted feet above snow drifts,
Failing to see the sparkle of Light
Through icy branches.
How much harder we must strive
To answer yes in this frigid time;
To hear Your call to us,
The call to Your embracing warmth.



SIXTY-NINE As Treatment Begins

I stand at this corner of my life,
Looking east and west,
Peering north and south,
Seeking the path we will find together..
For I must walk in some direction;
You call me forward as I hesitate
And glance about me at the passing scene,
Passing hours moving by.
And again You beckon, gently prodding,
To turn this way or that.
I must turn and move forward,
I must turn and choose.
East and west, the path leads Home,
The obstacles vary only in my heart;
South and north, the path leads Home,
Winding back on itself for a block or two.

You will not abandon me as I walk on,
For I trust in Your sound directions;
You will light street lamps
When the darkness looms around me.
You follow me in unfamiliar boulevards,
Noisy paths and lonely ones,
That the strangeness might ease,

And my steps again be secure.
Around the corner and on,
I will walk with the Eternal;
Moving on past trepidation,
Moving forward for Your Name's sake.



Each lifetime is the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.
For some there are more pieces.
For others the puzzle is more difficult to assemble.
Some seem to be born with a nearly completed puzzle.
And so it goes.
Souls going this way and that
Trying to assemble the myriad parts.
But know this. No one has within themselves
All the pieces to their puzzle.
Like before the days when they used to seal
jigsaw puzzles in cellophane.
Insuring that all the pieces were there.
Everyone carries with them at least one and probably
Many pieces to someone else's puzzle.
Sometimes they know it.
Sometimes they don't.
And when you present your piece
Which is worthless to you,
To another, whether you know it or not,
Whether they know it or not,
You are a messenger from the Most High.



Gesher Tzar Me'od

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כֵּלּוֹ גֶּשֶׁר צָר מְאוֹד
וְהַעֲקָר לֹא לִפְחוֹד כָּלֵל

Kol haolam kulo gesher tzar me'od
Gesher tzar meod, gesher tzar me'od
Vhaikar, lo l'fached k'lal

All the world is a very narrow bridge and the most important thing is not to be afraid



ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

Blessing You I bless myself:
I hold the spark of me before Your eyes
And tremble as I see my reflection,
Holy One to holy one.
Blessing You I bless myself,
For I bless remembering and placing,
Separating, discerning, arranging
Spaces of holiness, moments of benediction.
Blessing You I bless myself,
Triggering ancient words, gestures,
Motions that twine me to before,
To befores without number.
Blessing You I bless myself
As ancient words transform,
Comfortable in this time,
Singing songs for days to come.
Blessing You I bless myself
With knowledge, with goodness and care:
Sacred words for everyday;
Every day for sacredness.



ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-TWO

Turn me, turn me, return me to You;
Turn me, heal me with grace of shalom.
Turn me, my Maker, return me, my Friend,
Return me to chesed, to faith, back to Home.
Turn me, turn me, I will return
To build foundations of honor and blessing.
Return me to duty, to love, to repair,
To the work of my hands for Your glory.
Turn me, turn me, return me to You,
Watching creation renewed for my sake.
Turn me, heal me, transform hesitations
To form a new covenant, a holy embrace.



ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FIVE
A Song of Healing

Soothe away my fears, Holy One;
Order these difficult days.
Praising You, I reach for healing,
Holding close Your constancy.
In between each today and tomorrow,
Arrange my move toward wholeness.
Bring Your strength to my need!
A mending and a healing,
True and straight.
Every day stronger, I bless You:
Small steps to complete healing.
Trusting You, I accommodate these changes,
Helped by skilled hands,
Embraced by love and concern,
Resting in Your care.



Dear God,
We are bound with very tight knots.
They choke off air and stop the blood from pulsating freely.
The knots make us like computers with carefully controlled circuitry.
The knots in our brains tie our creativity - our link with You.
We follow the knot around in its intricacy - but it remains a knot.
The knots in our hearts keep us from crying and dancing when we long to -
They tie us to the posts of the fences that separate us from each other.
The knots in our muscles keep our teeth clenched, our jaws locked, our legs
crossed, our shoulders stooped, our backs bent, our chests from inhaling the full
sweetness of life's breath.
O, God, untie all our knots!

*Blessed are You for the night and its rest,
and for the morning and its joys, .
for the day and its challenges and its peace.
And blessed are You for the wonder of our bodies,
and for the miracle of our minds,
for the marvel of consciousness
and for the great depths within us.
For eyes to see, for ears to hear,*

and for the words we are speaking now.
 And blessed are You for creating me as a unique being.
 Blessed are You for the gift of Jewishness,
 and for the gift of being human.
 And for the freedom to change and grow,
 and for the capacity to give and receive love.
 And blessed are You for bringing us here
 to celebrate this precious day together.



Psalm 23

יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר: בְּנֹאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל־מֵי מְנוּחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי: נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב יִנְחֵנִי
 בְּמַעְגְלֵי־צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ: גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶךְ בְּגִיא צַלְמוֹת לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אַתָּה עֲמָדִי שֹׁבֵט
 וּמִשְׁעֲנֶתְךָ הִמָּה יִנְחָמֵנִי: תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שִׁלְחֹן נֹגֵד צִרְרֵי דְשָׁנֶת בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסֵי רוּיָה:
 אַךְ טוֹב וְחֹסֵד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה לְאָרְךָ יָמִים:

Adonai ro'ee lo echsar
 Binot deshe yarbetzeini
 Al mei m'nuchot y'nahalaeini
 Nafshi y'shoveive, yancheini
 V'maglie tzed l'man sh'mo
 Gam ki eileich b'gei tzalmavet lo ira ki ata imadi
 Shiv'tcha umishantecha heima y'nachamuni
 Taaroch l'fanai shulchan neged tzor'rirai
 Dishanta vashemen roshi kosi r'vaya
 Ach tov vachessed yird'funi ko y'mei chayai
 V'shavti b'veit Adonai l'orech yamim.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters.
 He restores my soul; he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
 for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me.
 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
 Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.



ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN
For Leaving

You divide our attentions, Courage Builder,
Growing callouses around our affections
So the fingers playing out these tunes of loss
Are toughened against the leaving.
You wander with us through aisles of distractions,
Holding our lists, binding up our abrasions
With reminders of practicalities, touches
That lend reality to our intention.
You divide our attentions, Courage Builder
With Your call to focus, to function,
To make new arrangements for changed days
Even as we shrink from imagining.
You are there for us, Holy One,
Bearing the unadorned truth of love
That holds and holds and then lets go,
Honoring Your design.



And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

*I thank You, God for the skill, care and concern
of the many who have dedicated themselves to health and healing.
It is they who have had to respond to calls for help;
they will be there through the difficult times ahead
Grant wisdom, patience and understanding to them.
Bless the work of their hands and their hearts,
that their labors may not be in vain.*

*As Your helpers, may they find the way
to restore those in need to a life renewed
May we all feel the comfort of Your presence.
For health of body and spirit, I thank You, God
I was broken, and now I am whole.
I was weary, but now I am rested
I was anxious, but now I am reassured
I thank You for those who helped me in my need,
who heartened me in my fear,
and who visited me in my loneliness.
For the strength you gave me, O God,
I give thanks to You.*

O Guide My Steps

וּפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמֶךָ

**O guide my steps and help me find my way
I need Your shelter now.
Rock me in your arms and guide my steps and help me make this day,
a song of praise to You, rock me in Your arms and guide my steps.**

U'fros aleinu sukkat shlomecha ufros aleinu sukkat shlomecha.

O guide my steps.



Music

Rom'mu

רוממו יי אלהנו והשתחונו להר קדשו
כי קדוש יי אלהינו רוממו

Rom'mu Adonai Eloheinu
V'histachavu l'har kodsho
Ki kadosh Adonai Eloheinu rom'mu

Al Tasteir

Don't hide Your face from me
I'm asking for Your help.
I call to You, please hear my prayers, O God
If You would answer me as I have called to You
Please heal me now,
Don't hide Your face from Me.

R'faeinu

רפאינו יי ונרפא
והושעינו ונבשינו כי תהלתנו אתה
והעלה רפואה שלמה לכל מכותינו
כי אל מלך רופא נאמן ורחמן אתה
ברוך אתה יי רופא כל עמו ישראל

Refainu Adonai v'nirafeh
V'hoshiyainu v'nvasheinu ki tihilatenu atta
v'ha'aleh refuah shelema l'chol makoteinu
ki El melech rofeh ne'eman v'rachaman atta
Baruch atta Adonai rofei chol amo Yisrael

Heal us, O God and we shall be healed
Save us, and we shall be saved
Because we sing praises to You.
Grant us a complete healing from all our wounds.
For You, Almighty Ruler, are faithful and merciful Sovereign of healing.
Blessed are You, Adonai, who heals the sick of Your people Israel.

B'yado

בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
בְּעֵת אִישׁוֹן וְאַעִירָה
וְעַם רוּחִי גֹוִיָתִי
יִי לִי וְלֹא אֵירָא

My soul I give to You
My spirit in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Hold me in Your hand
Draw me near
I shall not fear
Safely in Your hand

B'yado afkid ruhi
Beit ishan v'aira
V'im ruhi g'viyati
Adonai li v'lo ira.

O Guide My Steps

וּפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמֶךָ

O guide my steps and help me find my way
I need Your shelter now.
Rock me in your arms and guide my steps and help me make this day,
a song of praise to You, rock me in Your arms and guide my steps.

U'fros aleinu sukkat shlomecha ufros aleinu sukkat shlomecha.

O guide my steps.

Psalms 23

יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר : בְּנֵאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל-מִי
מִנְחוֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי : נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי-צֶדֶק
לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ : גַּם כִּי-אֵלֶךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמוֹת לֹא-אֵירָא
רַע כִּי-אֶתֶּה עִמָּדִי שְׁבִטְךָ וּמִשְׁעֶנֶתְךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחֵמֵנִי :
תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלֹחַן נֶגֶד צָרְרִי דִשְׁנֶת בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי
כּוֹסֵי רוּחָה : אֵךְ טוֹב וְחֹסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל-יְמֵי חַיִּי
וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית-יְהוָה לְאָרְךָ יָמִים :

Adonai ro'ee lo echsar
Binot deshe yarbetzeini
Al mei m'nuchot y'nahalaeini

Nafshi y'shoveive, yancheini
V'maglie tzed l'man sh'mo
Gam ki eileich b'gei tzalmavet lo ira ki ata imadi
Shiv'tcha umishantecha heima y'nachamuni
Taaroach l'fanai shulchan neged tzor'rirai
Dishanta vashemen roshi kosi r'vaya
Ach tov vachessed yird'funi ko y'mei chayai
V'shavti b'veit Adonai l'orech yamim.

Gesher Tzar Me'od

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כָּלוֹ גֶּשֶׁר צָר מְאֹד
וְהַעֲקֹר לֹא לִפְחָד כָּלֹל

Kol haolam kulo gesher tzar me'od
Gesher tzar meod, gesher tzar me'od
Vhaikar, lo l'fached k'lal

V'anachnu N'varech Ya

וְאַנְחֵנוּ נִבְרַךְ יְיָ
מִעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם
הַלְלוּיָהּ

V'anachnu n'varech Ya
Me'ata v'ad olam, me'ata v'ad olam
Hallelujah.

Shma Koleinu

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ
וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ
כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלוֹת וְתַחֲנוּנִים אַתָּה

Shma Koleinu, Adonai Eloheinu,
Hus v'rachem aleinu
V'kabeil b'rachamim u'vratzon et t'filataynu
Ki El shomaya t'filot v'tachanunim atta.

Hear our voice, Adonai our God
Have compassion upon us,
And accept our prayer with favor and mercy
For You are a God who hears prayer and supplication.

If you're lost
 You feel afraid
 And you don't know what to say
 Then listen, listen to our God
 Is there a question on your mind?
 Is the answer hard to find?
 Then listen, listen to our God
 Listen with all your heart and soul
 And with all your might
 Write them and learn them and teach them well
 Every morning and night
 Close your eyes and listen
 Quiet yourself
 There's nothing to say
 Stop all the chatter that gets in the way
 And listen, listen to our God
 When the wind and thunder finally disappear
 There's still a voice that you can hear
 If you listen, listen to our God
 You can hear it from the top of the highest hill
 Or from the valley below
 It can come from the edge of the universe
 It can come from within your soul
 Close your eyes and listen
 Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad
 Baruch Shem K'vod, Shem K'vod, Mal'chuto L'olam Va-ed
 שמע ישראל יי אלהינו יי אחד

Mi Shebayrach

מי שְׁבַרְךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאֲמוּתֵינוּ
 מי שְׁבַרְךְ אֲמוּתֵינוּ
 מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ

Mi she-bei-rach a-vo-tei-nu
 M'-kor ha-b'-ra-chah l'-i-mo-tei-nu
 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: A-mein
 Mi she-bei-rach i-mo-tei-nu
 M'-kor ha-b'-ra-chah la-a-vo-tei-nu
 Bless those in need of healing with r'-fu-a sh'-lei-mah
 The renewal of body the renewal of spirit
 And let us say: Amen

Mi Shebayrach

מי שברך אבותינו אברהם יצחק ויעקב
מי שברך אמותינו שרה רבקה לאה ורחל

Mi shebayrach avotaynu Avraham Yitzhak v'Ya'akov
Mi shebayrach imoteinu Sarah Rivkah Leah v'Rachel
May the one who blessed our Mothers,
May the one who blessed our Fathers,
Hear our prayer and bless us as well.

Bless us with the power of Your healing,
Bless us with the power of Your hope,
May our hearts be filled with understanding
And strengthened by the power of Your love.

Bless us with the vision for tomorrow
Help us to reach out to those in pain
May the warmth of friendship ease our sorrow
Give us courage, give us faith show us the way

Reb Nachman's Prayer

You are the One for this I pray that I may have the strength to be alone
To see the world to stand among the trees and all the living things
That I may stand alone and offer prayers and talk to You
You are the One to whom I do belong
And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in my heart
Mayall the foliage of the field all grasses trees and plants
Awaken at my coming this I pray and send their life into my words of prayer
So that my speech my thoughts and my prayers will be made whole
And through the spirit of all growing things
And we know that everything is one because we know that everything is You
You are the One for this I pray I ask You God to hear my words
That pour out from my heart I stand before you
I like water lift my hands to You in prayer
And grant me strength and grant me strength to stand alone
You are the One to whom I do belong
And I'll sing my soul I'll sing my soul to You and give You all that's in my heart
You are the One for this I pray and I'll sing my soul to You

Listen Israel

Listen Israel, Adonai, our God, is one. Shma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu Adonai echad.

B'yado

בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
בְּעֵת אִישׁוֹן וְאֶעֱרָה
וְעִם רוּחִי גֹוִיתִי
יְיָ לִי וְלֹא אֵירָא

In God's hand I place my soul
When I sleep and when I wake
And with my soul, my body too
God is with me; I shall not fear.

Asher Yatzar

אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה
וּבְרָא נְקָבִים וְנָקְבִים, חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים
גָּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לִפְנֵי כֶּסֶף כְּבוֹדָךְ שָׁאֵם יִפְתָּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם
אוֹ יִסְתֵּם אֶחָד מֵהֶם
אֵי אֶפְשָׁר לְהִתְקַיֵּם וְלַעֲמֹד לִפְנֶיךָ
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ רוֹפֵא כָּל בָּשָׂר וּמַמְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת

Asher yatzar, et ha adam b'hochma
Uvara n'kavim n'kavim
Halulim, halulim.
Galui v'yadua lifnei chise chvodech
She'im yipatiach ecahd meihem
O yisatem ehad mehem
I efshar l'hitkayem v'la-amod l'fanecha
Baruch atta Adonai rofei chol basar umafla la'a'sot.

Hava Nashira

הָבָה נִשְׁרָה שִׁיר הַלְלוּיָהּ

Hava nashira, shir Hallelujah

Come, let us sing, let us sing Hallelujah

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Sources

"Unite," Sheila Peltz Weinberg

"Dear God, open...", Burt Jacobson

"Each lifetime...", Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, "Honey from the Rock"

"May the One who blesses all life...", Leila Berner

"When Miriam was sick....," Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

"And then all that has divided us...", Judy Chicago

Music

Asher Yatzar, D. Friedman

Modeh Ani, Klepper

Psalm 23, D. Friedman

Shma, Traditional

Shma Koleinu, D. Friedman

Listen Israel, D. Kotler

Rommu, Craig Taubman

Reb Nachman's Prayer, D. Friedman / Nahman of Bratslav

Hava Nashira, Folk

Mi Shebayach, D. Friedman

Mi Shebayrach, L. Levine

O Guide My Steps, D. Winston

V'anachnu Nivarech, D. Friedman

Gesher Tzar Meod, Nahman of Bratslav

B'yado, C. Taubman

B'yado, D. Friedman

R'faieinu, D. Friedman

Al Tasteir, D. Friedman

Listen, D. Cotler

O Guide My Steps, D. Winston

Readings

Many secondary readings were gleaned from Spiritual Literacy: Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life, by Frederick and Mary Ann Brussat: Scribner 1996

