

JEWISH PRAYERS,  
PSALMS, & READINGS

for

*Comfort, Hope,  
and Support*



Caring for Generations

**JF&CS**  
Jewish Family & Children's Service

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*The mission of the JF&CS Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller Center for Jewish Healing is to help people feel a sense of connection when facing the challenges of illness, loss, or isolation by offering spiritual and communal supports to foster hope, comfort, and wholeness guided by Jewish tradition.*

*The 2013 printing of this Prayer Booklet was in honor of Marjorie U. Sokoll, the founder and director, for her 19 years of service at JF&CS.*

*For more information or to obtain additional copies of this Prayer Booklet, call us at 781-647-JFCS (5327).*

## HOW PRAYER MAY WORK

- ❖ Prayer may work in that we may have asked God for something which indeed came about.
- ❖ Prayer may work by invoking a greater sense of God's presence.
- ❖ Prayer may work by way of distraction, momentarily pulling us out of pain or discomfort into a place of beauty or transcendence.
- ❖ Prayer may work by deeply grounding us as we focus mindfully on our present moment.
- ❖ Prayer may work by quieting and centering the self.
- ❖ Prayer may work by connecting us with the wider Jewish community and with traditions that may provide additional strength.
- ❖ Prayer may work by helping us connect to a deep level of the self which is already healed and whole, reminding us of our essential wholeness. Music, for instance, often has the capacity to put us in touch with that deep place of wholeness.
- ❖ Prayer may work in focusing us, the pray-ers, on the blessings in our lives, enabling our sense of gratitude to blossom.

*Rabbi Amy Eilberg*



## **ASHER YATZAR**

*Recited as one arises in the morning*

Blessed are You,  
Adonai, Our God, Ruler of the Universe,  
who formed human beings with Wisdom,  
creating pores, orifices, hollows, and holes,  
openings, cavities, channels, and ducts....

It is clear and established  
before Your Throne  
that if one should open  
or another should close  
it would be impossible to endure  
and to stand before You.  
Blessed are You Adonai,  
who heals all flesh,  
performing wonders.

*Translation by Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub*

## **PRAYING FOR ONESELF**

The prayer of the sick person  
for his/her own healing  
is more potent  
than the prayer of another.

*Genesis Rabbah 53:14*

## MI SHEBEIRACH

*The traditional Jewish prayer for healing*

May the One who blessed our ancestors  
Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
Matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah  
Bless and heal the one who is ill:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
son/daughter of \_\_\_\_\_

May the Holy One, the fount of blessings,  
Shower abundant mercies upon him/her,  
Fulfilling his/her dreams of healing,  
Strengthening him/her with the power of life.

Merciful One:  
Restore him/her,  
Heal him/her,  
Strengthen him/her,  
Enliven him/her.

Send him/her a refuah shleymah/a complete healing,  
A healing of spirit and a healing of body  
Together with all who are ill,  
Among all the people of Israel and all humankind,

Soon, speedily, without delay, let us all say: Amen!

*Translation by Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub*

## **REFAEINU - HEAL US**

*Recited during the weekday Amidah*

Refaeinu/Heal us, Adonai,  
and we shall be healed;  
Save us  
and we shall be saved;  
for You are our Praise.

Lift up a complete and perfect healing,  
a healing of body and spirit,  
to all our wounds,  
for name one who is ill  
for You are a Ruler  
Who heals  
with faithfulness/trust/reliability,  
mercy/and compassion.

Blessed are You, Adonai,  
Healer of the sick  
among Your people of Israel.

*Translation by Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub*

## A PRAYER BEFORE SURGERY

I am scared, God. I feel vulnerable. I don't like feeling helpless. I am worried. So before surgery I pray:

I place my body and soul in Your hands. Please watch over me, God, in the operating room. Stay beside me. Never leave me. Strengthen my will to live. Enlighten my doctors and nurses with the skill, wisdom and insight to mend and cure me properly. Let this procedure go smoothly without complication.

Watch over my loved ones who are worrying about me now. Remind me that I am resilient. That I can and will grow stronger each day. Bless me, God, with Your healing power, protect me from all harm, shield me from pain. And when I wake, God, give me the courage and passion to fight for the sacred treasure You have granted me: my life. Amen.

*Rabbi Naomi Levy*

## A PRAYER WHEN ONE IS UNDERGOING A LONG AND DRAINING TREATMENT

I'm tired, God. My doctors say that this treatment will help me, but it is sapping me of my strength. I'm sick of feeling sick, God. Sometimes I want to give up.

But most of the time I just want to get better.

I love being outdoors and breathing fresh air.

I love the sun and the rain. I love the sky at night.

I love my family and friends.

I love life, God. I love it more now than ever before.

Please God, let me keep it. Help me to bear the stench of medicines and hospitals. Give me the stamina to stare down this disease and conquer it.

Fill me with strength, God, and I will fight for my life.

Fill me with health, God, that I may live, Amen.

*Rabbi Naomi Levy*

## PSALMS AND BIBLICAL READINGS

Adonai, hear my prayer, let my cry come before You.  
Do not hide Your face from me in my time of trouble;  
Turn Your ear to me when I cry, answer me speedily.

(*Psalm 102:2-3*)

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains  
From where will my help come?  
My help comes from the Eternal  
Who made heaven and earth.

(*Psalm 121:1-2*)

They cry out, and the Eternal hears,  
And saves them from all their troubles.  
The Eternal is close to the brokenhearted;  
Those crushed in spirit the Eternal delivers.

(*Psalm 34:18-19*)

Out of the depths have I called to You.  
God, hear my cry, heed my plea.  
Be attentive to my prayer, to my sigh of supplication.

(*Psalm 130:1-2*)

The Eternal heals the brokenhearted  
And binds up their wounds.

(*Psalm 147:3*)

Be strong and let your heart take courage  
Hope in Adonai.

(*Psalm 27:14*)

They who hope in God shall renew their strength  
They shall mount up with wings as eagles  
They shall run and not grow weary,  
They shall walk and not grow faint.

(*Isaiah 40:31*)

A cheerful heart is good medicine;  
But low spirits sap a person's strength.  
(Proverbs 17:22)

Heal me, God, and I will be healed;  
Save me and I will be saved;  
For You are my praise.  
(Jeremiah 17:14)

For I am the Eternal who heals you.  
(Exodus 15:26)

## FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Dear God, be with my family and friends.  
Bring peace to their troubled spirits. Enable them to  
know that their love gives me strength. Help me to  
express my gratitude and appreciation to them for all  
they have done and are continuing to do.

Let them feel free to bring me their own joys  
and sorrows that I may continue to participate in their  
lives even as they share mine.

May this also be a time of inner searching, that I may  
appreciate more fully the good and beautiful in life and  
labor to bring these to the lives of others. Grant me  
health and healing that I may carry out  
Your will in peace.

Then will my life reflect Your presence,  
and my love, Your love.

*Baruch ata Adonai, rofeh ha-cholim.*

We praise You, O God, healer of the sick.

*Gates of Healing*

## GIVING THANKS & TAKING COMFORT WHEN ILL

Holy One of Blessing, Your Presence fills creation.

You know my life, my story, my triumphs and losses.

You understand me completely.

I feel You with me in times of illness, injury, doubt, and  
pain – or strength and happiness.

Be with my body and spirit now as I travel a winding  
road from illness toward recovery. Stay near  
to remind me – I am never alone on this journey.

When the sun rises, reassure me that I will rise as well.

When the sun reaches noon, renew my hope  
as I look up to be warmed by its radiance.

When the sun slides toward twilight,  
I will give thanks for a day that has lifted my spirit.

Through every long night, stay by my side.  
Comfort me as phantoms of fear fly through my  
imagination, then out into my darkened room.

Help me contain them: hold my hand.

Bless my many caregivers: they freely give skill,  
companionship, and the fruits of their deep knowing  
and loving kindness.

Living in this interlude of uncertainty, I feel guided  
toward the misty shores of recovery. Help me see Your  
face shining upon me as my strength grows,  
self-confidence increases, and faith deepens day by  
healing day. Surely I'm cared for silently  
through time and space.

May the words of my mouth and thankful meditations of my  
heart remind me now and always of Your sustaining  
love and everlasting healing powers.

## **MY GOD! OUR GOD!**

MY GOD! OUR GOD! Could You please add to my blessings?

Would You bless me with days and weeks and months  
in my life when I don't have to pick and choose  
between the normal daily activities because the  
resources for energy are running too low for all of them?

Would You bless me with the strength of an immune  
system and body so that if I want to smother a runny nose  
baby or coughing hacking adult with my affections I can do  
it without concern of compromising my own health?

Would You bless me with blood test reports that  
confound medical science and put the numbers  
in the realm of a miracle?

And while You are assessing what is possible and how  
everything actually fits together...given the free will of  
our human realm and the complexities of Your creation...

Would You continue to bless me with the Courage to  
wake up, get dressed, and get going...?

Would You continue to bless me with the Will to  
fight, argue and act on behalf of myself and my health?

Would You continue to bless me with the Grace  
I strive to carry in my life and into all of my  
relationships every time I give of myself and try and  
share my lessons about faith, friendship and love.

Would You continue to bless me with Community who  
pray for me, care for me and celebrate life with me?

O MY GOD! O OUR GOD! I AM GRATEFUL FOR  
THE BLESSINGS THAT CONTINUE....AND FOR  
THE ONES THAT ARE YET POSSIBLE.

Could You please add to my blessings?

*Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller*

## IN MY LONELINESS

There are often times, O God, when I feel alone,  
and yet I know in my heart that I am never alone.

You are always there waiting for me to speak to You  
of my desires, hopes and dreams.

Yet how seldom do I reach out to You  
to voice my gratitude for all that is beautiful  
in my life...all the gifts of my life.

Love, family, friendship, have come from You.

But the greatest gift of all is Your presence, which time  
and again has given me strength, faith and courage.

Now, in the midst of doubt and confusion,  
I need to know that You are beside me  
in the depth of my being.

With You there,  
I know I am not alone - ever.

My Friend, my strength, my God.

*Gates of Healing*

## A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION AT NIGHT

In the name of Adonai  
the God of Israel:

May the angel Michael be at my right,  
and the angel Gabriel be at my left;  
and in front of me the angel Uriel,  
and behind me the angel Raphael...  
and above my head the presence of God.

*Translation by Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub*

## SHEMA

Hear, O Israel: the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One.  
*Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad.*

## SOURCES

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*“It is not good for people to be alone.”*  
*Genesis 2:18*

## ABOUT BETTY ANN

The *Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller Center for Jewish Healing* was founded in 1998 to bring the solace of Jewish tradition and community to people facing the challenges of illness, loss, or isolation. As a teenager, Betty Ann survived Hodgkin's Lymphoma, a cancer of the lymphatic system. Intensive year-long treatment left her weakened and prone to chronic medical issues. Those challenges deepened her compassion for others, and eventually drew her to JF&CS, first as a client, then as a supporter.

Moved by the mission of Jewish Healing Connections (the original 1998 name) she became a founding member of the Jewish Healing Connections Advisory Council. She also became a professional chaplain through Hebrew SeniorLife's Clinical Pastoral Education program. She found great meaning in the opportunity to comfort, listen, and be present with another person in moments of loneliness and distress.

Upon the untimely passing of Betty Ann in 2015, her husband Dan made a very generous gift in loving memory of Betty Ann, z"l\*, and Jewish Healing Connections was renamed the *Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller Center for Jewish Healing*. Betty Ann's meaningful legacy continues to inspire our community. May her memory be for a blessing.

\**of blessed memory*

For 150 years, JF&CS has focused on a singular, powerful mission: to improve people's lives. With a comprehensive network of 40 programs, we're able to serve more than 250 communities in Massachusetts and help people overcome challenges at every stage of life.

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For more information visit [jfcsboston.org](http://jfcsboston.org) or call **781-647-JFCS (5327)**.

Stay Connected:   

*"Peace and Wholeness  
To the Far and to the Near  
Says the Eternal One  
And I Will Heal Them"*

Isaiah 57:19

Caring for Generations

**JF&CS**  
Jewish Family & Children's Service

*JF&CS is a leading provider of comprehensive human services, delivering personalized and integrated care that improves people's lives.*



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