

## Supplemental Readings Shabbat Healing Service

### **An Unending Love** (Rabbi Rami M. Shapiro)

We are loved by an unending love.  
We are embraced by arms that find us  
even when we are hidden from ourselves.  
We are touched by fingers that soothe us  
even when we are too proud for soothing.  
We are counseled by voices that guide us  
even when we are too embittered to hear.

We are loved by an unending love.  
We are supported by hands that uplift us  
even in the midst of a fall.  
We are urged on by eyes that meet us  
even when we are too weak for meeting.

We are loved by an unending love.  
Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled...  
ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;  
ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;  
We are loved by an unending love.

### **Cold Feet**

They say cold feet are a sign of turning back,  
The failure of internal will-  
But I say it can be the other way,  
The body's anticipation of things to come.  
Whether demons are nipping at your heels  
Or gnawing within, here's the thing:  
Settle quietly, close your eyes,  
Then take the most deliberate, deep breath,  
As though it were the very first (God's breath) -  
And when you can feel it penetrate every bit of your being,  
Making the rest of your life possible,  
You open your eyes  
And take that first step out into the sea of reeds.  
Watered feet are just the price of coming home.

### **Merger** (Judy Chicago)

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.

### **Free Will**

I cannot choose the day of my death, but I decide the way of my life  
I do not know if I will get up tomorrow, but I can stand to be counted today  
My hands may weaken in time, but for now I can still write a loving message  
I may never find the cure for cancer, but I must search for a healing word for a friend  
My voice may someday falter, but today I may speak kindly to another human being  
I may lose my ability to walk, but now I must dance to the rhythm of life  
Blindness may someday fill my eyes, but I can look for G-d in all I see today  
I may become hard of hearing, but let me not harden my heart  
I do not know when I will last draw breath, but let this exhalation be a song of praise.

*Rabbi Aviva Bass*

## **Personal Prayers and Meditations**

*We invite you to use these meditations and prayers to guide these moments of personal introspection, as we seek healing and forgiveness. You may find a meditation or prayer that speaks to you directly, or you may find words that enable you to express the words of your own heart.*

*Whatever you may find,*

**יְהִי לְרִצּוֹן אֱמֹרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבָבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְיָ צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי.**

*May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You God,  
my Rock and my Redeemer.*

### **Effective Wisdom**

God of wisdom,  
Teach me the right words.  
Teach me the very words  
That will touch the hearts  
And souls of others.  
When a friend needs  
My understanding ear,

Teach me the words to say  
That will strengthen,  
That will encourage,  
That will express  
Only my love  
And concern.

*Rabbi Nachman of Breslov*

### **A Prayer for Myself**

Mother/Father God, God of the broken-hearted, God of the strong and the weak, God of the angry and the grieving: I stand before You today in pain in doubt, in fear. Many blessings have been taken from me; I hesitate even to call out to You and yet I must, with every breath, try to speak Your praise, try to be mindful of being alive. O God, thank You for the gift of this breath. Hallelujah.

Dear God: Thank You for creating many possibilities, so that one day I may feel sick, the next day I may feel well. Thank You for creating my body as a house for my spirit, and thank You for sustaining my spirit. Whatever the purpose of my life is, I leave it in Your hands.

I thank You God for giving me life today. Please help me to tolerate my pain and that part of my body which is no longer healthy; to love the sick parts and to affirm that which gives me health. By so doing, let me continue to see my own goodness — that which makes me lovable — and to give myself strength and courage to allow my love to touch those in my life whom I love so dearly.

I awake in pain, misery, and utter confusion; but still I awake. My life is sacred. My life has purpose and my soul houses Your holy spirit. I pray for healing and to heal others. I gratefully acknowledge today with its infinite possibilities and opportunities. And let me say, Amen.

Thank You God for the light that is breaking through the sky, the sun that shines upon my face, my mind that is still alert and functioning despite my limitations and pain. Through the day You will join me on this journey, so that I will never be alone or frightened, for I know You will be there. I am thankful for what I am capable of enjoying this day.

Dear God: Thank You for providing me with so many rich experiences and for leading me down a path woven with loving friends and family. My fond and grateful memories sustain me during this difficult time. I will never feel alone so long as Your guiding presence surrounds me and thoughts of those who came before embrace me with love. Blessed are You, God, for being able to see you through the people in my life.

### **A Prayer for Healing**

Strengthen me, Holy One, on my journey through illness;  
Steady my steps on this difficult path.  
Bring me through signposts of remedies and therapies,  
Secure in Your guidance as I face these changes.

You are my Strength and my Hope,  
The Author of my healing.  
You are my Promise and my Courage,  
Guiding my helpers as I move toward healing.

Guard the encouragement of simple improvements,  
Every day praising Your loving concern.  
Make me Your partner, Divine Physician,

Restoring me for Your Name's sake. --Debbie Pearlman

### **A Special Prayer in Time of Illness**

Hear my voice, Adonai, when I call;  
Be gracious to me and answer me. (Psalm 27:7)  
In Your hand is the soul of every living thing,  
I turn to You, O God, in my distress.  
Give me patience and faith;  
Let not despair overwhelm me.  
Renew my trust in Your mercy  
And bless the efforts of all who are helping me.  
Be with my dear ones in these difficult days.  
Give them strength and courage  
To face the anxieties which they share with me.  
Grant me Your healing  
So that in vigor of body and mind  
I may return to my loved ones  
For a life which will be marked by good deeds.  
You have always been my help;  
Do not cast me off nor forsake me,  
O God of my salvation. (Psalms 27.9)

### **A Prayer Before Surgery**

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

*Naomi Levy*

### **Chemotherapy and Mystical Healing**

The two Rosh Hashanahs I passed while on chemotherapy were marked by a powerful feeling of cleansing. I stood tall and breathed deeply during the shofar blasts, and with each one sensed thousands of tiny white particles whisking through my body to rid it of whatever poisoning cancer cells might have eluded my two years of treatment.

Then, on my second Yom Kippur, as the rabbi came down the aisle, shaking hands and softly offering a "gut yom tov" to fellow congregants, he stopped in front of me, stood ramrod straight with his arms pressed stiffly at his sides and, bowing three times at the waist as if davenning, he proclaimed in a

strong, loud voice “You’re fine! You’re fine, You’re fine!” Then, his body relaxed again, and he offered me his hand and a soft “gut yom tov. Gut yaar.”

This rabbi didn’t know me or know of my health problems. He was my messenger. And, when in doubt, I only have to look back on that scene to reassure myself, God is indeed watching.

### **Prayer for Parenting**

Parent of All:

You have blessed us with children,  
with the b’rit/covenant of parenthood,  
with deep reservoirs of love, concern, responsibility, and guidance.

Thank You, Close One,  
for the astounding privilege of parenting;  
for discovering capacities we had not known in ourselves;  
for the blessings of health, safety, discovery, joy,  
and love for, and from, our children and all children;  
for opening our minds with curiosity,  
our hearts with compassion,  
our communities with care.

Help us to emulate the care of your Shekhinah:

To listen well and to respond sensitively;  
To be open and flexible, or clear and unyielding, as necessary;  
To maintain boundaries and yet to extend ourselves in some new ways;  
To know when to speak and when to be silent;  
To speak truth and match our deeds to our words;  
To rely on profound beliefs and hard-earned knowledge,  
but also to be able to take risks if required;

    To have faith in ourselves and in our world  
    so that we can do what is needed;

    To maintain hope and vision when the challenges before us are so hard.

When we are wracked by worry,

Help us reach for calm and equilibrium.

When we find ourselves confused and lost,

Open for us Your Torah and the Torah of loving parents’ lived experience.

When disappointment, frustration, or rage mount within us,

Enable us to keep perspective, consider different options,  
and channel the energy towards relationship and renewal.

Help us, Parent of all parents, to care for ourselves properly and regularly,  
in body, mind, and spirit,

so that we can be as present and effective as possible,

and model the shmirat hanefesh/self care we want our children to emulate.

May the words of Your prophet Malachi be fulfilled:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet

before the coming of the great and terrible day of Adonai:

And he shall turn the heart of the parents to the children,

and the heart of the children to their parents.”

Amen.

*Rabbi Simkha T. Weintraub*

### **A Prayer for Coping**

O God, you know my feelings, You know that I want to feel better. I want to be better. I want to have my health restored. But the hours of testing, the days of diagnosis, and the question marks concerning my future seem nearly more than I can take! Grant me, O God, the strength to face each hour of this

and every day. In fact, when it seems that I cannot face even this hour; fill me with sufficient strength to face the next five minutes.

### **Filled With Worry**

Holy One: Even though I am filled with worry and fear for my health, and with anger and frustration about my financial limitations and their impact on my health care, I praise You with great joy for my life, the beginnings and endings of Your days, and for the great hope for the future that Your presence in my life provides.

*National Center for Jewish Healing*

### **Why Am I Suffering?**

Eternal Presence of the world, I am not asking You to show me the secret of Your ways, for it would be too much for me. But, I am asking You to show me one thing: what is the meaning of the suffering that I am presently enduring, what this suffering requires of me, and what You are communicating to me through it, Eternal Presence of the world. I want to know not so much why I am suffering but whether I am doing so for Your sake.

*Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev*

### **The Long Days**

My God and God of all generations, in my great need I pour out my heart to You. The long days and weeks of suffering are hard to endure. In my struggle, I reach out for the help that only You can give. Let me feel that You are near, and Your care enfolds me. Rouse in me the strength to overcome my weakness, and brighten my spirit with the assurance of Your love. Make me grateful for the care and concern that are expended on my behalf. Help me to sustain the hopes of my dear ones, as they strive to strengthen and encourage me. May the healing power You have placed within me give me strength to recover, so that I might proclaim with all my being: I shall not die, but live to declare the works of God.

*Gates of Healing*

### **Recovery From a Difficult Childhood**

A prayer, a wish  
that you may be healed  
from the wounds of the abuse of your childhood.  
And that you may move from fear to strength,  
a healing from the trembling.

### **Healing After Divorce**

I never thought that I would say this, (and with all due respect to those who have lost) but I would almost prefer to have been widowed.

At least then my family would still be a single unit.

At least then there would have been no lawyers representing another side.

At least then, I would not play that crazy game of blaming myself.

Either I failed, or I misjudged .

Dear God, I know you have forgiven me for any mistakes I may have made. Now give me the strength, God, to return to a life of wholeness, trust and joy.

### **For the Struggle With Depression**

**יוצר אור**. You, God, are the Creator of Light. Perhaps that's why we don't talk as much lately - light and I haven't been getting along all that well. As the sun comes up each morning, I am again aware of how much my soul is crying out for calm and peace again. My body aches; I am tired. My eyes feel heavy; I am weary. **הנותן ליעף כח**. You, God, are the Giver of strength to the weary.

God, with Your daily light, give me strength, for I am weary. I long to celebrate each day again. I long

to celebrate your ability to bring morning again. I long for strength - from You, for myself, again.

**Prayer After Hearing Bad News**

Sit beside me, O Eternal:

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.

*Debbie Pearlman*

**For the Struggle with Weight**

God, You created me in Your image, with love and compassion, justice and mercy. At times in my life, I have neglected the wonder of Your creation in me, not caring for myself, not making exercise and sleep a priority, and not making mindful choices in the foods I eat. I am aware of my struggle, and I look to You for strength, understanding and forgiveness.

Help me to respect and love myself the way I respect and love Your majestic creations of earth and sea, bird and animal. Endow me with a sense of patience as I struggle, a sense of will as I commit myself, and a sense of wonder in this body You made for me. As we say each morning, "what a wonder it is that You created my body in a perfectly balanced system - were it to fail, how much I would be aware!" Help me to work to be an ongoing partner in Your creation of me, and ongoing partner with You in my health and happiness.

### **On Aging**

Dear God,  
help me grow old with dignity and wisdom.  
As the twilight years cast their shadow  
upon me,  
help my mind remain clear-  
at peace with the world and with itself.  
Let me learn to let go  
of my bonds with this world of my need for honor and status;  
of my attraction to physical indulgences;  
of my envy of others;  
of my regrets  
over all that might have been.

Teach me, God,  
to live out my days focused on  
all that is meaningful in life.  
As unaccountable aches and pains  
multiply,  
as memory and retention fade,  
teach me to relate to my physical existence  
with an ever-expanding recognition  
of its transient nature;  
teach me to relate to my soul  
with an ever-expanding awareness  
of her eternal nature  
and ageless worth.

*Prayers from The Gentle Weapon: Prayers for Everyday and Not-so-Everyday Moments*

### **For the Doctors and Nurses**

Adonai, give me the strength to continue to provide a sense of ongoing care, commitment and wisdom as I treat my patients. Bless me with a measure of enduring compassion, and an understanding that I am learned, medicine is advanced, and You are ever-present in my work. Continue to endow me with your blessings of wisdom, fortitude, patience, compassion and hard work, and I will continue to work in partnership with you for the health of my patients. Blessed are You, God, in Your wisdom You created mankind, and granted me the gifts to help keep humanity healthy.

### **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.