The Meditations of Our Hearts

The meditations of our hearts are not always “acceptable”
to you, our Source, or even to ourselves.
Sometimes our thoughts are bitter with anger,
and sometimes they are sour with remorse.
Sometimes they are dark with doubt,
and sometimes they are heavy with despair.
We acknowledge that we are creatures of many moods;
our emotions may reflect our inner turmoil and deep distress.
Help us to cope with our feelings with honesty and with patience.
Help us to ponder the immediate in the perspective of the eternal.
In our days of pain and anguish
in our nights of tearful sorrow,
give us faith to trust in the power of healing
that you have implanted within us.
Help us to draw strength from the assurance
that divine and human lovingkindness has not departed from us;
that we will yet know again the blessings of serenity and peace.

From Psalm 4 (inspired by Stephen Mitchell’s interpretive translation)

Even in the midst of great pain, Holy One,
I praise you for that which is.
I will not refuse this grief
or close myself to this anguish.
Let shallow people pray for ease:
“Comfort us! Shield us from sorrow,” they cry.
But as for me, I pray for whatever you send me,
and I ask to receive it as your gift.
You’ve put a joy in my heart
greater than all the world’s riches.
I lie down trusting the darkness,
for I know that even now you are here.
The Shema and Its Blessings

Bar’chu – Call to Worship

Leader:
Baruch et Adonai ha-m' vorach

All and then Leader:
Baruch Adonai ha-m'vorach l-olam va-ed

Alternative:

Bar’chu, Dear One,
Shechina, Holy Name.
When I call on the light of my soul,
I come home.

Evening Prayers
Even-ing the evenings, even-ing the frayed edges of our lives. Ma’ariv aravim - Ameyn

Prayer for Darkness
Blessed are You, Great Power that we are.
majesty of the universe,
who with rhythm and design
makes the dusk flow into the darkness of evening,
who, with unfathomable wisdom, opens the gates of night,
ordering the rhythms of time,
changing the seasons of the year,
forming a universe constantly filling with stars of light.

Creating day and night,
spinning the earth through the great expanse of night
and bringing us again to the light of day.
You are here in both darkness and light.
How blessed are we, one with the Infinite,
the Whole of creation, and the Mystery at its depths,
bringing on the evening’s darkness.

U-ma’ariva yom, u-mey’vi’ah lai’la, u-mav’dila beyn yom u-veyn lai’la, Yah tz’va’ot sh’mah. Eyla chaya v-ka’yemet, tamid tim’loch aleynu l-olam va-ed.
Aht b’rucha Sh’china, ha-ma’ariva aravim.
Ahavat Olam: Reflections on Eternal Love

With everlasting love you have loved us,
revealing Yourself through Torah and mitzvot.
Your love is also revealed through our dear ones
whose love has been a blessing in our lives.
For we have known the blessing of love and caring,
and love cannot take these gifts from us.
Your love is revealed as well
in our strength to carry on, to find our way again.
For while pain and suffering are real,
Your healing power is at work in our lives,
enabling us to endure our sorrow,
to transform our pain, and to find courage to go on.
From the darkness of our grief,
may rays of understanding shine forth,
that we may grow in wisdom
and perform deeds of lovingkindness,
nurturing our heritage of love and Torah
which reveal Your presence anew in every age.

Ahava Prayer
by Rami 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, smoothed, and counseled…
ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;
ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;
We are loved by an unending love.
Blessed are you Shechina, loving in all love.

Aht b’rucha Sh’china, ohev et b-chol ahava.
Ahava, v-rachamim, cheh-sed v-shalom

Sh'mah Yisra'el Adonai Eloheynu Adonai Echad

Evening Service During a Time of Mourning

YHWH Elohechem emeht.
Blessed are You, YHVH, delivering us all through every act of liberation.

Mi Camocha

Mi cha-mo·cha ba·ey·lim Adonai;
Mi ka·mo·cha neḥ·dar ba·ko·desh,
No·rah t’hi·lot o·sey feh·leh

What is like the Eternal among all powers, YHVH? What compares so revered in holiness, Awesome target of all praises, creator of wonder.
Hashkiveynu – Reflections

Help us to lie down in peace;
and awaken us with confident trust for tomorrow.

   Strengthen those who are burdened with sorrow.
   Grant them patience, courage and strength.

Guide them with good counsel,
Direct them toward the path of serenity.

   Shield them, we pray from all enmity,
   from fear, from anxiety, from despair.

Help them to feel protected and sheltered,
sustained, even in grief, by divine compassion.

   Guard them this night and every night;
   Bless them with healing and with hope.

Help them to lie down in peace;
awaken them with confident trust for tomorrow.

Hashkiveynu – traditional

Hashkiveynu Yah Eloheynu l-shalom
Oh God, cause us to lie down in peace, and then raise us up to life

U-f’ros aleynu sukkat sh’lam’echa
Spread over us a sukkah of peace

Baruch ata YHVH, shomer amo Yisrael la’ad.
Blessed are you, Yah, who watches over your people forever.

Amida – Silent Standing Prayer (Traditional Amida on page 8)

Blessed are You, Infinite One, God of our parents and ancestors, God of Abraham, God of Sarah,
God of all who hear truth, age after age.
Boundless, vibrant, awesome sublime, surrounding and filling all space and time; gradually
embracing all things into one.
Blessed be this Infinite Source, alive within us, as in all generations, Shield of Sarah and
Abraham.
Supporting the living with love, awakening compassion in those who care, as they lift up the fallen and heal the sick, free the bound, and carry on the dreams of those who sleep in the dust.

O YHVH, blessed are You within us, giving life to all things.

You are holy. Your presence -- holy. And those who are holy, day after day make Your world a holy place, and so reveal Your presence.

Blessed are You, Shechina, the Power of holiness.

O Eternal, for thousands of years our people has had a dream, a vision that rises from a secret source within us. We dream of a time when our people, all people, will live in acceptance, in justice and in peace. We dream of a time when righteous people everywhere will rejoice and sing, and violence will rage no more, and evil vanish like smoke. We dream of a time when all people will sense the wonder and mystery of existence, and so come to know that You are the Mystery, the core of reality.

O Infinite One, when we look about we are so frightened. The darkness in the world, the darkness we sense in our very selves is so deep. The darkness in which You dwell overwhelms us with disbelief. Is this dream we have dreamed a delusion, a fantasy? We work and we struggle, and sickness, pain and oppression remain the lot of people all over the world.

Help us to see Your world in new ways. May the seeds of Your light grow within the darkness of our souls. Help us to bring good out of the evil which exists in the world. Help us to let go of our childish dreams of paradise and to accept You in Your manifold entirety. Teach us to make our lives holy through deeds of kindness and justice. Let us find our own ways to Torah so we may discover the deeper meaning, the spiritual significance of our lives. Let us enjoy and bless Your world, and rejoice in the true inner freedom that is ours. Help us to purify our hearts to serve You in truth, for You, Shechina, are truth, and Your teachings are true.

May our eyes witness Your return to our lives, to Zion and to the whole world. And may our dreams of a universal Zion - a world of justice, compassion, and peace - begin to take root in the hearts of all human beings.

Blessed are You, Shechina, returning your presence to the world through our deeds of goodness and holiness.

We give our thanks to You, Adonai.
for our lives which are always in Your care.
for our souls, called forth by You,
for the surprises we meet. day after day,
and for the wonders and blessings
that happen to us at all times,
evening morning and noon.

Blessed are You, Adonai: Goodness is Your name, and it is fitting to bless You.

Let us now open our hearts to Your light within, so that through this inner light we may bring to our people, and to all peoples everywhere, grace and kindness, tenderness and joy, blessing and peace. Blessed are You, Holy One, blessing each of us, and all of us together with peace.
Traditional Amida (with Imahot)

Evening Service During a Time of Mourning

Traditional Amida

Evening Service During a Time of Mourning
Evening Service During a Time of Mourning
Evening Service During a Time of Mourning

Osheh Shalom

Osheh shalom bi-m’romav hu ya’aseh shalom aleynu v-al kol Yis’ra’el, v-al kol yosh’vey tey’vel

אָמַרָה: שְׁלוֹם
Psalm 23
A Psalm of David
If the Eternal be my shepherd
then what could I lack?
Letting me relax on green meadows,
Guiding me beside the restful waters,
Restoring my soul.
Leading me in the paths of justice
for the sake of the great essence.
Even if I walk the valley of death's shadow,
I will not revere evil, for You are with me.
Your staff, your walking stick comfort me.
You set a table before me
in the presence of those who would starve me.
With oil have you anointed my head,
my cup is filled to the brim.
Let goodness and love pursue me
everyday of my life,
for the span of all time.
And I will live in God's home,
for the great essence.
And I will live in God's home,
for the span of all time.
Evening Service During a Time of Mourning 10/2005

Gesher Tzar M'od - The Narrow Bridge
Kol ha-olam kulo  gesher tzar m'od\x3
Kol ha-olam kulo  gesher tzar m'od\x2
V-ha-ikar, v-ha-ikar,
lo l'fa'ched, lo l'fa'ched, klal.
V-ha-ikar, V-ha-ikar, lo l'fached klal.

All the world is just a shaky narrow bridge
But above all, above all, is not to fear, not to fear at all.

El Maley Rachamim
To the most compassionate on high and within,
Grant perfect rest under the wings of holy presence, the wings of Shechina,
among the holy and pure who shine with heavenly splendor
to the soul of ____________________________ who has passed from this world,
may her/his rest be as restful as in Eden's Garden.
Source of compassion, shelter her/him under your wings forever more
even as her/his soul remains woven in the fabric of the life.
The Eternal One is her/his portion. May she/he rest in peace. And let us say: Amen

For Female

אל כלא חפם שעון בפורים. חפם קנוה חפתי חפתיappa
קרושים שלמה שמור לקנאים את נפשתך שפגעה בך. 
בגב אלוהים קנוה חפתי חפתיappa
אנו בך חפתי חפתיappa.

El ma'ley rachamim, sho'cheyn ba-m'romim
ham'tzey m'nuch'a n'chona tachat kan'fey ha-Sh'china b-ma'a'lot k'doshim [k'doshim] u-t'horm
k-zohar ha-ra'ki'ah maz'hirim et nish'mat ____________ sheh-hal'chah l-olama,
b-gahn ey'den t'hey m'nuchata.
Anah ba'al ha-rachamim, has'ti'rey'ha b-sey'ter k'naf'eha l-olamim,

For Male

אל כלא חפם שעון בפורים. חפם קנוה חפתי חפתיappa
קרושים שלמה שמור לקנאים את נפשתך שפגעה בך. 
בגב אלוהים קנוה חפתי חפתיappa
אנו בך חפתי חפתיappa.

El ma'ley rachamim, sho'cheyn ba-m'romim
ham'tzey m'nuch'a n'chona tachat kan'fey ha-Sh'china b-ma'a'lot k'doshim [k'doshim] u-t'horm
k-zohar ha-ra'ki'ah maz'hirim et nish'mat ____________ sheh-hal'chah l-olama,
b-gahn ey'den t'hey m'nuchata.
Anah, ba'al ha-rachamim, has'ti'rey'hu b-sey'ter k'naf'eha l-olamim,

V-nomar: Ameyn
Mourner’s Kaddish

Yit'gadal v-yit'kadash shmey rabah

**Ameyn**

B-alma di-v'ra chirutey v-yamlich malchutey
b-cha'yey'chon u-v-yo'mey'chon
u-v-cha'yey d-chol beyt Yisra'el
ba-agala u-viz'mahn kariv v-im'ru:

**Ameyn**

Y'hey shmey rabah m'varach
l-alam u-l-al'mey al'ma'ya.

Yit'barach v-yish'tabach v-yit'pa'ar
v-yit'romam v-yit'na'sey
v-yit'hadar v-yit'ah'leh
v-yit'halal shmey di-kud'shah,

**B'rich hu.**

L-eyla mi-kol bir'chata v-shirata
tush'b'chata v-nechemata da-amiran b-alma.
V-imru: Ameyn

Y'hey shlama rabah min sh'ma'ya'h,

v-ch'a'yim, aleynu v-al kol Yis'ra'el, v-imru:

Ameyn

Oseh shalom bim'romav, hu ya'h'seh
shalom aleynu,
v'ahl-kol Yisra'el, v-al kol Yish'ma'el
v-al kol yosh'vey tey'vel
V-imru: **Ameyn**.

The Great Essence will flower in our lives and expand throughout the world.

May we learn to let it shine through so we can augment its glory.

We praise, we continue to praise,
and yet, whatever it is we praise, is quite beyond the grasp
of all the words and symbols that point us towards it.

We know, yet we do not know.

May great peace pour forth from the heavens for us,
for all Israel, and for all who struggle toward truth.

May that which makes harmony in the cosmos above,
bring peace within and between us, and to all who dwell on this earth.

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn
and comfort all who are bereaved.

And let us say: Amen.

**COMFORTING THE MOURNERS**

Ha-makom y'nachem et'chem

**B-toch sh'ar avey'ley Tzi'on, vi-Y'ru'sha'la'yiym**

May the One Who dwells in every place
Comfort you and bring you peace with all those who mourn.
SONGS

1) **Return Again**
   ....Rafael-Simkha Kahn
   Return again, return again,
   Return to the land of your soul
   Return again, return again,
   Return to the land of your soul
   Return to who you are
   Return to what you are
   Return to where you are
   Born and reborn again
   Return again, return again,
   Return to the land of your soul

2) **Esa Ev'nai**
   Esa ey'nai el heh-ha'rim
   Mey-a'yun mey-a'yun yavo ezri?
   Ezri mey-im ha-Shem
   Oseh shama'yim va-aretz.
   [I gaze toward the mountains;
   From where does my help come?
   It comes from the Divine Essence,
   Creator of heavens and earth.]

3) **Eyli Eyli (Halicha l-Key'sari'a)**
   by Chana Senesh
   Eyli eyli,
   Sheh-lo yi'ga'meh l-olam
   Ha-chol v-ha-yahm,
   Rish'rush shel ma'ayim
   B'rak ha-sha'ma'yim
   T'fi'lat ha-adam
   O hear my words,
   That these may never end:
   The sand and the sea,
   The rush of the waters,
   The thundering heavens,
   The prayers of our hearts.

4) **ANGEL SONG**
   B-sheym Ha-Sheym elo-hey Yis'ra-el:
   Mi-mini Mi-cha-eil u-mi-s'moli Gav'ri-eil,
   u-mi-l'fanai Uri-el u-mey-acha-rai Rafa-eil
   V-al roshi, v-al roshi Sh'chi-nat Eyl.
   In the name of the Holy One, the God of Yisrael
   On my right side is Mi-cha-el, on my left is Gavri'el
   Before me is Uriel, and behind me Raphael.
   Above my head, above my head
   Is Shechinat Eyl.
Evening Service During a Time of Mourning

Because We Believe in You

Because we believe in you, O God of healing,
we pray that you will heal those who grieve,
softening their pain, binding up their wounds,
and wiping the tears from their faces.

Because we believe in you, O God of compassion,
we pray that you will show mercy to the sorrowing,
sending them strength and courage for today
Trust and hope for tomorrow.

Because we believe in you, O God of forgiveness,
we pray that you will grant relief from grief and remorse,
for things done and things left undone,
for words spoken and for words left unspoken.

Because we believe in you, O God of love,
we pray that you will console the heavy-hearted,
helping them to sense that even in darkness
the light of your love still glows.

Because we believe in you, O God of Eternity,
we pray that you will comfort the bereaved,
with the faith that their beloved is bound to you,
in the bond of everlasting life.

Because we believe in you, O God of goodness,
we pray that you will deepen the goodness in each of us,
that we may help, support, and love one another,
and thus share in the gift of your divine love.

We Remember Them

Sylvan Kamens and Jack Riemer

At the rising of the sun and at its going down,
we remember them.

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
we remember them.

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of winter,
we remember them.

At the blueiness of the skies and in the warmth of spring,
we remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of summer,
we remember them.

At the beginning of the year and when it ends,
we remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live, for they
are now a part of us as we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength,
we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.

When we have joy we crave to share, we remember them.

When we have decisions that are difficult to make,
we remember them.

When we have achievements that are based on theirs,
we remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live, for they
are now a part of us as we remember them.

5) Lim'not Ya'mey'nu

(Text: Psalm 90; music by Yitzchak Husband-Hankins)

Lim'not ya'mey'nu, }x3
keyn hoda v-navi ley'vav chochma
Lim'not ya'mey'nu,
keyn hoda v-navi ley'vav chochma

Teach us to treasure each day,
Treasure each day, teach us to treasure each day
That we may open our hearts
to your wisdom

6) Min Hameyztar

Min ha meytzar karati Yah,
anani va-mer'chav Yah.
Adonay li lo iver
meh yataseh li adam.

I have called to Yah from the narrows. Yah, answer me from spaciousness!
The One is with me; I have no fear. What can a human being do to me?

7) Ozi

Ozi v-zim'rat Yah, va-y'hi li li-shu-ah
Yah is my strength and my song, and, for me, is deliverance itself.

READINGS

Because We Believe in You

Because we believe in you, O God of healing,
we pray that you will heal those who grieve,
softening their pain, binding up their wounds,
and wiping the tears from their faces.

Because we believe in you, O God of Eternity,
we pray that you will deepen the goodness in each of us,
that we may help, support, and love one another,
and thus share in the gift of your divine love.
Life After Death
--Laura Gilpin
These things I know:
How the living go on living
and how the dead go on living with them
so that in a forest
even a dead tree casts a shadow
and the leaves fall one by one
and the branches break in the wind
and the bark peels off slowly
and the trunk cracks
and the rain seeps in through the cracks
and the trunk falls to the ground
and the moss covers it
and in the spring the rabbits find it
and build their nest
inside the dead tree
so that nothing is wasted in nature
or in love.

Concluding thoughts
We join our voices in prayer tonight,
honoring the departed,
and seeking to comfort the living.
By joining with those who are in mourning
and by sharing some measure of their sorrow,
we hope to remind them that they are not alone.
May the spirit of the divine which is everywhere
be with them in their grief
and guide them through the valley of shadow
into the open meadows of sunshine and healing. Amen