

From Where Does My Come; A Spiritual Approach to our Unpredictable Bodies and Souls.

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ABSTRACT

A curriculum designed to help community members build up their spiritual endurance when confronted with chronic and terminal illness, as well as the development of physical and mental difficulties. This is done by developing a personal theology based on Jewish texts and tradition that is then applying it to the wellbeing decisions one makes in their lifetime.

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ABOUT THIS CURRICULUM

INTRODUCTION

Modernity has afforded us a health care system that is better equipped to deal with what were once fast paced terminal diseases. Our medical system has advanced to such a degree that some diseases, AIDS for example, now verge more on the side of chronic illness rather than a quick death. Other diseases, such as various cancers, now have the ability to be cured at a greater success rate than before. We live in a time when people have a longer life expectancy than ever before, but this comes with new challenges, both physical and spiritual.

Since people are living longer the chances grow exponentially that they will develop some sort of handicap such as hearing loss, diminishing eyesight, adult incontinence. With these handicaps come feelings of loss and bereavement and an acknowledgement that one is starting their twilight years. Both the emotional pain and physical ailments are usually kept hidden which in turn only aggregate their affects.

In addition, life-sustaining treatment has advanced to such a degree that there is time now to ponder the meaning of death after a poor diagnosis. There is also a greater level of autonomy for medical decisions that one can make for their own treatment which create a new emotional toll for patients and their families. In the past a patient's doctor made most of the health-care decisions without consulting the patient. This is no longer a cultural norm and patients and their families are not only empowered, but also required to give authorization for health-care interventions. The likelihood of this happening without spiritual and emotional trauma occurring increases when these decisions have not been thought out before hand or are made without understanding the science behind what is occurring.

The purpose of this curriculum is to give the learner the spiritual tools needed to reduce the trauma due to these new hardships. The curriculum guides learners through building a theology that can encompass joys and jubilations as well as suffering and death. It will guide learners the courage to engage in a caring community and bring their struggles to a caring group of peers. In addition, this course also aims at familiarizing learners with the different medical processes and terminology that may be presented to help aid in the understanding of what a patient's different options are. The stresses which this course is aimed at specifically deal with issues related to having to deal with terminal diseases, chronic illness, challenges that may arise towards mental and physical health and wellbeing.

HOW YOU CAN USE THIS CURRICULUM

This curriculum should be used at an institution that promotes congregants to be empowered members of the community and aspire to demonstrate that they care deeply for one another. This institution's vision should empower each congregant to engage in synagogue communal life whether that life is inside or outside the walls of the synagogue. In addition, each congregant feels deeply connected to, and actively connects with, the entire congregational community and the Jewish community at large. The congregation feels a deep-rooted appreciation for the diversity of *Klal Yisrael*.

This curriculum would then be only one small part of a larger overarching vision that strives to foster a greater sense of community within the congregation. This particular curriculum is centered on understanding various Jewish principles around the subject of emotional and physical distress as well as how to engage with an individual and family members who are in these situations. This aims at achieving the priority goal for the learner to be engaged in a Jewish caring community.

This curriculum consists of seven weekend classes and one weekend retreat. The purposes of the evening classes are three fold. The first purpose is to build up the individual learner's spiritual resilience to the subject matter while at the same time wrestle with the issues at-large around the various topics. This culminates into the second purpose. The second purpose is to have the learner begin to formulate a theological point of view and language pertaining to the subject matter. This theology will then be utilized during the retreat. The final and perhaps the most important purpose is to foster a Jewish caring community built on the principles Jewish learning and supported through spiritual care of the peer group.

The classes are aimed at giving the learner the theological language needed to make spiritual sense of the emotional and physical distresses within their lives. While the curriculum engages those stresses during the seven classes they are mostly talked about in the general sense. The retreat will get into the specifics of the different stresses.

The facilitator of this course can include the rabbi, educator, and/or cantor as well as any in-house pastoral specialist. What matters more than title is whether or not this individual is a good fit for the course. Please note the Qualities of the Teacher section in the Pre-Class Work section for more on teacher requirements.

It would also be useful to have professionals such as doctors (specializing in palliative care, oncology, and/or any other related specialty), hospital/hospice chaplain, hospital social workers or psychiatrists available for different sessions during the retreat. This can be for one-on-one pastoral care or as a guide to the medical system. If possible the professionals who are teaching or leading workshops would be from the community to reinforce the value of support coming from within.

The target audience of this course is aimed at any individual who wants to deepen their understanding and practice of spiritual wellbeing. The learner's motivations would be to learn

more about how Judaism can offer spiritual guidance and care during times of emotional and physical distress. While the course is open to all, it is geared towards learners older than 50 years of age.

Learners will meet privately with the facilitator before the first class. This is not only to give the facilitator a better idea about what the learner's motivations to be part of this class, but also to begin fostering a close relationship with the learner.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER:

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

LEARNER OUTCOMES:

- 1) Learners will explore the role God plays in their lives when encountering distress.
- 2) Learners will be able to be present for each other during times of joy and in times of crises.
- 3) Learners will be able to articulate their own personal theology and how it is rooted in Jewish tradition.
- 4) Learners will be able use Jewish sources and concepts in the process of making decisions as to how they live their lives.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 2) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 4) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- 1) How do I experience God in times of need?
- 2) How does one comfort someone is in crisis?
- 3) How can Judaism/God guide me when making health decisions?
- 4) Why does suffering occur?

NOTICING MARKERS FOR ASSESSMENT

- 1) Learners will keep a weekly journal documenting their theological growth on the subject and include a section that relates to where they see God in relationship to the material.
- 2) Learners will be able formulate their theological perspective on the topics discussed and be able to articulate it to others.
- 3) Learners will create various documents that will be utilized in the future that reflects their understanding of Jewish tradition and thought. These documents include living wills, advance directives as well as an ethical will.
- 4) Learners will create different initiatives to bring the communal support gained during this curriculum back to the synagogue to be shared with the community at-large.

PRE-COURSE PREPARATIONS

QUALITIES OF THE TEACHER

It is important to acknowledge that not every congregation may be able to have their head spiritual leader run this curriculum. It also may be that the leader of the community may not be the individual who offers pastoral care and counseling to their constituents. Because of this or any numerous amounts of situations, it may become necessary for another individual to teach this course.

Since this curriculum focuses around pastoral care subjects it is very important to pick the proper teacher. When looking at possible teachers it is important to select someone who not only is a capable and qualified teacher, but also is someone who can relate to the emotional hardships found within this curriculum yet at the same time does not need to bring them to the class. Someone who has experience, for example, a chronic illness, does not necessarily make them a proper teacher of this course. It is less important to select someone who knows these exact dilemmas first hand, rather someone who can guide others through these issues.

At the same time hiring a chaplain to teach this course is also not necessary, however, having some qualities of a chaplain would not be a bad idea. The teacher should have the ability to foster spiritual healing and understanding, should have empathy not only for what the learner is going through, but also their point of view as to how they address it. They should be able to set their own theological points of view aside to help the learner develop their own point of view that is based on the views of Jewish tradition and not the instructor. It is for this reason that the teacher should have their own theology formulated even though they should only be sharing it, if at all, at the very last session of the retreat.

MEETING WITH PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

There are many different reasons why a student may want to take this course. One reason might be to prepare for the future. Another reason may be that they are currently going through it, or perhaps they have already gone through it.

It is for those reasons that it is highly encouraged that you perform some sort of one-on-one introductory meeting with just the teacher and the student to identify what is motivating them to take this course. In all of these cases is the possibility that the learner is searching for meaning and purpose within these events. You should ask the learner where he or she is on their theological journey. Ask about how they think about God when bad things happen or how they think about God when good things happen to them. Keep in mind that what the learner state is motivating them to take this course may not be the actual reason. Remember, pastoral issues may arise as the class continues on, doing this intake should help aid you in anticipating them, but if it appears that a learner needs some solid one-on-one pastoral care please feel inclined to either give it yourself, if you are trained, or refer the learner to someone who is.

In addition to all of this, give students who sign up ahead of time the worksheet “Guidelines for Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography”¹ so that students have something formulated ahead of time to share at the first class. There is time for students to continue formulating/ starting their spiritual autobiography within the first class if more time is needed. You should also do this ahead of time because it might your volunteering to share first may help others feel more comfortable sharing.

CLASS STRUCTURE

One of the basic principles of Jewish learning is that it is communal. Because of this, as well as the nature of this curriculum, it is important that all present at the class sessions know each other and develop bonds with each other. Hence, at the beginning of every class session leading up to the retreat there will be some sort of “Getting to know your community” activity. This will also help create a safe space for people to share their story with each other.

Each class will also have its own spiritual *chatimah* (seal) that is relevant to what the lesson was about. The *chatimah* will range from prayers, songs etc.

You will also need to provide each learner with a journal. They may bring their own, but they should have a journal dedicated just to their theological work.

The first lesson is meant to set the theological stage for the learners. This lesson will begin the process of thinking theologically about what happens in their lives. This lesson is very different from the other lessons, it has less text study and Jewish sources, but it does have more story telling. This was done purposefully to foster a sense of community. If the learner makes it to the end of the curriculum and can clearly articulate their own theology, but has no idea what the theology is of the person sitting next to them is, then the curriculum has failed to achieve the priority goal of having the learner participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

The second lesson starts to engage the learners with the theme of the curriculum and is focused on where we spiritually go for help when we are distressed. It will look at Psalm 121 through multiple lenses that will empower the learner to formulate their own theological response to distress and where they seek aid.

The third lesson deals with the fragility of the human body and soul. It aims at aiding the learner build on their theology to incorporate the fragility of life and challenges the learners to try and find purity in themselves especially when it might be difficult to do so.

The fourth lesson is on the uncertainty of life and trying to find meaning behind death. This lesson looks at the *U’netaneh Tokef* and Ecclesiastes chapter 3 to help learners formulate a theology that can encompass death particularly those that are not due to natural causes. While these texts can be troublesome try and guide your learners into finding a positive way to look at

¹ Gilbert, R. S. (2000). *Building Your Own Theology*. Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association. Volume 1 pp 8, 9.

these texts. How may we find a positive way to respond to suffering or the randomness of death?

The fifth lesson builds on the theology of death and adds to it a theology of suffering. This lesson looks at various biblical and traditional rabbinic views of death and moves the learner to find a way of determining their own theology of suffering. While they may choose one of traditional views on suffering they are encouraged to create their own Jewish theology of suffering. This new theology should be based on not only what their life dictates to them, but also with how they connect their experiences to Jewish sources.

The sixth lesson builds on this theology of suffering while we view the movie, “A Serious Man.” The main character resembles the character of Job. This lesson focuses on the idea that suffering is a mystery that we may never fully understand. This lesson also serves as a bridge between creating a theology to help support you in times of distress to the next lesson, which is on how to comfort others.

The seventh and final lesson before the retreat takes a look at the Book of Job. Because “A Serious Man” is focused on Job’s point of view on why one suffers, this lesson is focused on the “friends” response and how to respond to another’s distress. It emphasizes that while the persona theologies that the learners created helps guide them individually through distress, their personal theology may not help anyone else other than themselves. In this lesson the learners wrestle with how to be present with another who is struggling without trying to save them by giving them the wrong answers. This ability of being present and witness to another’s distress, but not playing the role of savior is the key foundation needed in order to have a positive retreat.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING YOUR SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PAGE 1

Sympathy Poem

By: Rabbi Alvin I. Fine

Birth is a beginning
and death a destination
and life is a journey:
From childhood to maturity
and youth to age;
from innocence to awareness
and ignorance to knowing;
from foolishness to discretion
and then perhaps to wisdom.
From weakness to strength or
from strength to weakness
and often back again;
from health to sickness
and we pray to health again.
From offense to forgiveness
from loneliness to love
from joy to gratitude
from pain to compassion
from grief to understanding
from fear to faith.
From defeat to defeat to defeat
until looking backwards or ahead
We see that victory lies not
at some high point along the way
but in having made the journey
step by step
a sacred pilgrimage.
Birth is a beginning
and death a destination
and life is a journey;
A sacred journey to life everlasting

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING YOUR SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PAGE 2

Your religious life story is your own; no one can tell you how to present it. Because narrative is such a central part of the religious quest, here are some guidelines that might help you tell your own spiritual autobiography. While it is possible to share your story from notes, the greatest benefit will come if you write it in full.

TIME LINE

Draw a horizontal line on a piece of paper. At the left margin make a dot and write the date of your birth; at the right margin make another dot and write the date you expect to die (a reasonable estimate); along the line make a third dot and write the current date. How do you feel about this?

LIFE FUNCTIONS IN SPACE

Identify the places in which significant things have happened to you. We might call this process mapping the spirit.

ALL LIFE IS MEETING OTHERS

Who are the three or four people who have had the greatest impact on your life? Why?

EXPERIENCES SHAPE OUR RELIGIOUS FAITH

What were two or three formative experiences in your life? Why are they important to you? Some of these experiences we choose to call religious.

WE LIVE IN COMMUNITIES

Which communities, religious or not, have had a lasting influence on your development?

WE ARE CHOOSING CREATURES

Think of the important decisions in your life. Discuss what they meant to you, how they were made, and the results.

LIFE IS MADE OF JOY AND SORROW

List a few of the happiest and saddest experiences of your life.

A MASTER STORY

Each of us has a “master story,” a theme that summarizes our life endeavor. See if you can discern your master story. What might be a theme for your life thus far? Reflect on your odyssey and discern any theological values that have informed you.

LESSON PLANS

LESSON 1 – A SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY²

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER:

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 2) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 4) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS?

- 1) What is theology and is there more than one of them?
- 2) If I am able to create my own personal theology, why should I do it with others?
- 3) How can my theology help me relate to distress?
- 4) How can I enter into a dialogue with Jewish texts and traditions in new ways?

CORE CONCEPTS

- 1) Every person is a theologian.
- 2) One can build their own theology by understanding their own story and fostering a relationship with our texts and traditions.
- 3) Being Jewish means being part of a people, therefore, it is best to be on this personal theological journey while with others.

NOTICING TARGETS

Learners Will:

- 1) Know something about who is in the class with them
- 2) Build the foundations of their theology
- 3) Believe that they have created a safe community
- 4) Feel a sense of belonging with the rest the Jewish people

TIMELINE

0:00 – 0:15 – Getting To Know Your Community

² Some of the ideas and activities come from various pieces of *Building Your Own Theology*. Gilbert, R. S. (2000). Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association. Volume 1.

0:15 – 0:30 – Orientation and Contract Building
0:30 – 1:25 – Sharing Your Spiritual Autobiography
1:25 – 1:30 – Wrap up

ACTIVITIES:

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY – WHAT’S IN A NAME?

- 1) Have the learners get into pairs
- 2) Instruct the pairs to interview each other about their names. What their names mean? Do they like their name? Do they have any nicknames? What is their Hebrew name? Are they named after any one? Have the interviewers try and get to know the other person by listening to the stories they tell based on their name.
- 3) Once each partner has had an opportunity to play both roles have him or her introduce their partner to the group based on what they have learned.

ORIENTATION

Theology is the rational and systematic study of religion and its influences and of the nature of religious truth it is also can be a particular system or school of religious beliefs and teachings. Essentially, it is the systematic religious theorizing that we do in order to make sense out of a world, which, at times, seems to lack any sense of order. You are all theologians; you all contemplate the meanings of life and the question of why. You are also the best ones at determining what answers make the most sense for you. As true as that is, while you are in this process of theological discovery you should not be caught up in arriving at an answer, but more on the journey to discover that answer. You should be mindful that what you conclude with on one week might be in direct opposition to what you determine the next week. Also keep in mind that what is right for you may not be for somebody else and that does not mean that either one of you is wrong.

CONTRACT BUILDING

Encourage group members to state why they are here. Begin by stating your own expectations and purposes. Explain how the course will deal with personal material, but in a non-threatening way. Each member has the right to pass on a question or discussion. It is important that participants agree on the discussion rules before the program begins.

SHARING YOUR SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Read “Sympathy Poem” by Rabbi Fine to set the stage for sharing of their Spiritual Autobiography

- Provide a few minutes for personal reflection. This will give those participants who have done their homework time to refine it, and those who have not will have an opportunity to outline their story.
- To help break the ice, and perhaps provide a model for others to follow, you may briefly share your own spiritual autobiography with the group.

- Ask the participants to form groups of three. Tell them that each person has about 30 minutes to tell his or her story with time for questions from partners. Offer participants a break if it seems necessary.

WRAP UP

- For next week ask participants to refine their spiritual journeys in their journals. Have them answer the following questions and share afterwards if they feel open to it. Use the response for observing your noticing targets
 - What have you learned from telling your stories?
 - Could you have told them differently?
 - How do you feel after having shared your spiritual autobiographies with the group?
 - What changes would you make to them now that your spiritual autobiography has been shared and discussed?
 - What was something interesting you learned from someone else?
- Conclude with singing the *shehecheyanu*
 We say the *shehecheyanu* to commemorate reaching a special moment or season in our lives, experiencing special occasions and for being grateful for having new and exciting experiences. For all of these reasons we are going to conclude today's class with singing this prayer together.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁחַיֵּינוּ קִיָּמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לַזְמַן הַזֶּה.

*Ba-ruch a-ta Adonai Eh-lo-hei-nu Meh-lech ha-o-lam, sheh- heh-cheh-ya-nu,
v'ki-y'ma-nu v'h'igi-a-nu la-z'man ha-zeh.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, for giving us life,
for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this day.

LESSON 2 – FROM WHERE DOES MY HELP COME

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 2) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 4) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Is there a Jewish way to respond to spiritual stress?
- 2) Where is God in my search for help?
- 3) Who in my community can help support me and how do I support them at the same time?
- 4) How can I enter into a dialogue with Jewish texts and traditions in new ways?

CORE CONCEPTS

- 1) There are multiple ways to spiritually respond to distress
- 2) Having a relationship with texts that struggle with being in distress can help the individual struggle with being in distress.
- 3) Being in a learning relationship with someone while wrestling with the texts helps with discovering your meaning of the text.

NOTICING TARGETS

Learners Will:

- 1) Articulate a way in which we can look to God or each other for help
- 2) Build on their theology to encompass today’s lesson
- 3) Believe that Jewish sources can be a source of strength
- 4) Feel a connection to their *chevruta* partner and larger class community

TIMELINE:

0:00 – 0:15: Getting To Know Your Community

0:15 – 0:35: Psalm 121 Text Study

0:35 – 0:45: Dan Nichols “Esah Einai” Text Study

0:45 – 0:55: Chana Rothman “We Can Rise” Text Study

0:55 – 1:20: Creating Your Theology

1:20 – 1:30: Optional sharing

ACTIVITIES:

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

In this first activity we will go around the group and share our names, and two things that we think is important that the group knows about us and that we feel comfortable sharing with each other. There is 15 minutes allotted for this activity to ensure that this activity is not just a quick go around the circle, but that we spend time on each person.

Ask exploratory questions about what they are sharing and really engage them on a deeper level than is commonly found in an opening mixer. If there enough people that it will be difficult to fit this into 15 minutes the time should be extended to that everyone could equally share. The focus is on building healthy relationships with each other. Time can be taken out of the wrap up to accommodate this.

PSALM 121 TEXT STUDY

Our course is called “From Where Will My Help Come? A Spiritual Approach to Our Unpredictable Bodies.” The first part of this title, “From Where Will My Help Come?” is taken from Psalm 121 and therefore study the Psalm and several interpretations from it is the best place to start our journey together. In a moment we will be breaking into pairs of people to study together for this class. This is traditionally called a “*chevrutah*” partnership. *Chevrutah* study is the traditional Jewish practice of learning with a partner. Partners take turns reading a text aloud then embark on a journey of learning through discussion. Partners share reactions, formulate insights and partake in an exchange of ideas that encourages freedom of expression and stimulates creative thinking.

The word *Chevrutah* comes from the same Hebrew root as *chaver*, “friend” and *chavurah*, “community of friends.” Your *chevrutah* is your study partner and learning in this way often leads to a special friendship. *Chevrutah* is usually done in pairs but can be expanded to small groups.

Unlike traditional frontal learning where wisdom emanates from the teacher, in *chevrutah* the two partners form an interactive, creative, teaching/learning unit. In this way each partner taps into innate wisdom and discovers they are indeed teacher as well as student. All of us in this class are part of not only a *chavurah*, but also a *chevrutah*. We are a learning community of friends, even if you are meeting people for the first time today.

In your *chevrutah*, I want you to read Psalms 121:1-8 and I want you to first place yourselves in the shoes of our Psalmist. What is happening to him that he needs God’s help? What is happening in his life that he needs this type of protection or reassurance in God? I then want you to look at the questions attached to the hand out and then look at it from your own point of view. Is this something that reassures you? Do you meet God in the same way, if at all, when you are in need? Where does your help come from?

Psa. 121:1 A song for ascents. I turn my eyes to the mountains; from where will my help come?
Psa. 121:2 My help comes from Adonai, maker of heaven and earth.
Psa. 121:3 God will not let your foot give way; your guardian will not slumber;
Psa. 121:4 See, the guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps!
Psa. 121:5 Adonai is your guardian; Adonai is your protection at your right hand.
Psa. 121:6 By day the sun will not strike you, nor the moon by night.
Psa. 121:7 Adonai will guard you from all harm; God will guard your life.
Psa. 121:8 Adonai will guard your going and coming now and forever.

Where is the writer now in his life?

Why do you think the writer goes from saying “*I turn my eyes...my help comes from*” in the first person voice in verses 1 and 2 to the second person voice “*God will not let your foot...Adonai is your...*” for the rest of the Psalm?

What is the Psalmist image of God?

Does this kind of statement help comfort you?

Text Study - Dan Nichols Esah Einai

Now that we have read the original Psalm we are going to look at two different interpretations of the Psalm. Both are musical pieces. The first is from Dan Nichols and Eighteen and the second is from Chana Rothman. These are both interpretations of the text and both have the ability to change the meaning of the text dramatically. As we look at the Dan Nichols Piece, *Esah Einai*, I want you to focus on not only what is being said and how, but also at what is not being said.

Words: Psalm 121, Music: David Appelman, Wendy Goldberg, Julia Levine and Dan Nichols

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From the CD, *The Roots* by Dan Nichols and Eighteen

E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, e-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim

Translation in italics: I lift my eyes to the mountains

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Where will my help come from?

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Where will my help come from?

Where will my help come from? Where will my help come from?

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, e-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Where will my help come from? Where will my help come from?

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

Chevrutah questions:

Does your understanding of the Psalm change once music is put to it?

Is this version of Psalm 121 more or less of a comfort?
When compared to the original, what is not being said?

Text Study - Chana Rothman – “We Can Rise”

In this interpretation I want you to look at what is added to the text that was absent in the original.

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From the CD “We Can Rise”

*E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyin yavo,
Meiyin yavo, yavo ezri
E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyin yavo,
Meiyin yavo, yavo ezri*

I lift my eyes up to the sun,
where on Earth will my help come from?
Come from heaven, come from Earth
Come from love, come from rebirth
I lift my eyes up to the sun,
where on Earth will my help come from?
Come from heaven, come from Earth
Come from Death, come from rebirth

*E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyin yavo,
Meiyin yavo, yavo ezri
E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyin yavo,
Meiyin yavo, yavo ezri*

There's blessings all around
From the sky to the ground
So back down from your frown
Listen for the sound,
If your lost stay put,
Just wait to be found,
Plant yourself down,
And if you fall get up
Cause your not that far-gone,
There is a new light about to shine into Zion,
If you made it this far you can push into
dawn
Come on, come on, come on

I lift my eyes - I lift my eyes

To my surprise - To my surprise
Beneath the lies - Beneath the lies
I can rise and you can rise

I lift my eyes - I lift my eyes
To my surprise - To my surprise
Beneath the lies - Beneath the lies
I can rise and you can rise
I can rise and you can rise
I can rise - You can rise
I can rise - You can rise
I can rise and you can rise
We can rise

*E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyin yavo,
Meiyin yavo, yavo ezri
E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyin yavo,
Meiyin yavo, yavo ezri*

Creating our Own Response

The three different pieces that we just looked at share a similar theological theme of finding aid. Beyond this, they all diverge. Spend some personal time working in your journals thinking about your spiritual autobiography and what you have been discussing with your *chevrutah* and start formulating your own theological view of how you relate to God and others when you are in distress. Is God holding your hand or is God doing the twisting? Do you feel a spiritual connection to others when they give you aid or does spirituality not have anything to do with it. Can you “rise” by yourself or do you need others?

Optional Sharing – Wrap up

- We have been working for most of this class time just with one other person, but as stated earlier this whole class is your *chevrutah*. So we are going to take this moment to share with the class. You can either share your theological response, or something that you are going to take away from this class, or even what it is you are struggling or wrestling with when it comes to this class.
- Conclude by playing Dan Nichols *Esah Einai*

Psa. 121:1 שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשָׁא עֵינַי אֶל-הַהָרִים מֵאֵין
יִבָּא עֲזָרִי :

Psa. 121:2 עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ :

Psa. 121:3 אֶל-יִתְּנָן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֶךָ אֶל-יָנוּם שְׁמֹרֶךָ :

Psa. 121:4 הִנֵּה לֹא-יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל :

Psa. 121:5 יְהוָה שְׁמֹרֶךָ יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל-יַד יְמִינֶךָ :

Psa. 121:6 יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא-יַכְכָּה וַיָּרֶחַ בַּלַּיְלָה :

Psa. 121:7 יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל-רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת-נַפְשֶׁךָ :

Psa. 121:8 יְהוָה יִשְׁמֹר-צִאתְךָ וּבֹאֶךָ מִכָּעַתָּה

וְעַד-עוֹלָם :

PSALM 121

- 1 A song for ascents. I turn my eyes to the mountains; from where will my help come?
- 2 My help comes from Adonai, maker of heaven and earth.
- 3 God will not let your foot give way; your guardian will not slumber;
- 4 See, the guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps!
- 5 Adonai is your guardian; Adonai is your protection at your right hand.
- 6 By day the sun will not strike you, nor the moon by night.
- 7 Adonai will guard you from all harm; God will guard your life.
- 8 Adonai will guard your going and coming now and forever.

Where is the writer now in his life?

Why do you think the writer goes from saying “*I turn my eyes...my help comes from*” in the first person voice in verses 1 and 2 to the second person voice “God will not let *your foot...Adonai is your...*” for the rest of the Psalm?

What is the Psalmist image of God?

Does this kind of statement help comfort you?

ESAH EINAI
DAN NICHOLS AND EIGHTEEN

Words: Psalm 121, Music: David Appelman, Wendy Goldberg, Julia Levine and Dan Nichols

© 2005 David Appelman

From the CD, The Roots by Dan Nichols and Eighteen

E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, e-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim

Translation in italics: I lift my eyes to the mountains

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Where will my help come from?

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Where will my help come from?

Where will my help come from? Where will my help come from?

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, e-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri, meiayin yavo, yavo ezri

Where will my help come from? Where will my help come from?

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

My help will come from God, Maker of heaven and earth

Does your understanding of the Psalm change once music is put to it?

Is this version of Psalm 121 more or less of a comfort?

When compared to the original, what is not being said?

WE CAN RISE
CHANA ROTHMAN
© 2007 From Oyhoo records
From the CD "We Can Rise"

E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyayin yavo,
Meiyayin yavo, yavo ezri
E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyayin yavo,
Meiyayin yavo, yavo ezri

I lift my eyes up to the sun,
where on Earth will my help come from?
Come from heaven, come from Earth
Come from love, come from rebirth
I lift my eyes up to the sun,
where on Earth will my help come from?
Come from heaven, come from Earth
Come from Death, come from rebirth

E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyayin yavo,
Meiyayin yavo, yavo ezri
E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyayin yavo,
Meiyayin yavo, yavo ezri

There's blessings all around
From the sky to the ground
So back down from your frown
Listen for the sound,
If your lost stay put,
Just wait to be found,
Plant yourself down,
And if you fall get up
Cause your not that far-gone,
There is a new light about to shine into
Zion,
If you made it this far
you can push through to dawn
Come on, come on, come on

I lift my eyes - I lift my eyes
To my surprise - To my surprise
Beneath the lies - Beneath the lies
I can rise and you can rise

I lift my eyes

To my surprise
Beneath the lies
I can rise and you can rise

I can rise and you can rise
I can rise - You can rise
I can rise - You can rise
I can rise and you can rise
We can rise

E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyayin yavo,
Meiyayin yavo, yavo ezri
E-sah ei-nai el he-ha-rim, Meiyayin yavo,
Meiyayin yavo, yavo ezri

*What is different about this version than
the other?
Who else has been added to this text?
How does this artist lift her eyes for
help?*

LESSON 3 – IF ONE OF THEM SHOULD WRONGLY OPEN OR CLOSE

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 2) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 4) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Is there a Jewish way to respond to physical distress?
- 2) Where is God when my body fails me?
- 3) How is my body holy when it doesn’t work right?
- 4) How can I stay connected to my community when I feel very isolated from them?

CORE CONCEPTS

- 1) Our bodies are carefully crafted, but also exist in a fine balance.
- 2) Even if our bodies are out of harmony, our souls don’t have to be and vice versa
- 3) It is beneficial for us to be in community with others especially if we feel like we need to be isolated because of how our bodies and souls are working.

NOTICING TARGETS

Learners will:

- 1) Know liturgical as well as textual sources on the subject of physical and mental wellbeing
- 2) Formulate a theology based on those textual and liturgical sources
- 3) Believe that Jewish tradition is sources of spiritual strength when confronted with anguish due to physical or mental distress
- 4) Feel a sense of belonging with the rest the Jewish people

TIMELINE

0:00 – 0:15 – Getting To Know Your Community
0:15 – 1:00 – Quotes From Our Tradition
1:00 – 1:10 – *Asher Yatzar/ Elohai Nishama* Text Study
1:10 – 1:25 – Theological Formulation
1:25 – 1:30 – *Asher Yatzar/ Elohai Neshama*

ACTIVITIES

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

FEAR IN A HAT³

- Ask everyone, including the group leaders, to complete this sentence on a piece of paper (anonymously): "In this group/program/etc, I am [most] afraid that..." or "In this group/program, the worst thing that could happen to me would be..."
- Collect the pieces of paper, mix them around, then invite each person to a piece of paper and read about someone's fear.
- One by one, each group member reads out the fear of another group member and elaborates and what he/she feels that person is most afraid of in this group/situation. No one is to comment on what the person says, just listen and move on to the next person.
- If the reader doesn't elaborate much on the fear, then ask them one or two questions. Avoid implying or showing your opinion as to the fear being expressed, unless the person is disrespecting or completely misunderstanding someone's fear. If the person doesn't elaborate after one or two questions, leave it and move on.
- When all the fears have been read out and elaborated on, then discuss what people felt and noticed.

VARIATIONS

- Likes and dislikes - in two separate hats
- Worries
- Complaints/gripes
- Wishes
- Favorite moments

QUOTES FROM OUR TRADITION

Have the learners break into *chevrutah* and then hand out the worksheet "Quotes From Our Tradition" 1 and 2. Both worksheets are broken down by theme. The first worksheet is on the physical wellbeing the second is on spiritual wellbeing. You can either give split the class into half and have one half study the body and the other study the soul and then they can report back to each other, or you can have each *chevrutah* look at one sheet and then look at the other.

ASHER YATZAR AND ELOHAI NESHAMA TEXT STUDY

³ <http://wilderdom.com/games/descriptions/FearInAHat.html>

- 1) How do you think that these two prayers may be related to each other?
- 2) What do these prayers have to say about the body and the soul?
- 3) How might this prayer relate to any of the values/ideas/principles that we have mentioned earlier?

THEOLOGICAL FORMULATION

Continue processing your theologies based on your interpretations of these prayers as well as the traditional quotes that you studied in your *chevrutah*. How do you intertwine body and soul? Do you find purity in your body and soul when they may not be working properly and why?

ASHER YATZAR AND ELOHAI NESHAMA TO MUSIC

Play Debbie Friedman's version of this prayer that interweaves these two prayers together?

- 1) Why might the composer have interweaved these two prayers together?
- 2) What might this composer imply by connecting these prayers together in regards to the entire being of a person?

QUOTES FROM OUR TRADITION

THE BODY

In a human body, the component parts are dependent on one another. When one ceases to function, so does the other. When they break apart one from the other, the body is stricken and the person dies, like a house that has four sides—if one side breaks away, the house collapses.

Midrash Sam 4. (ed. Buber [Cracow, 1903], p 54).

A Young tree bends, an old tree breaks

Yiddish Proverb

Moses was 120 years old when he died; his eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated. And the Israelites bewailed Moses in the steeps of Moab for thirty days

Deuteronomy 34:7-8

Flesh and blood: here today tomorrow no more.

P. Sanh 6:12. 23d

Once Rabbi Ishmael and Rabbi Akiva were strolling in the streets of Jerusalem along with another man. They met a sick person who said to them, “Masters, can you tell me how I can be healed?” They quickly advised him to take a certain medicine until he felt better.

The man strolling with the two rabbis turned to them and said, “Who made this man sick?” “The Holy Blessed One,” they replied. “And you presume to interfere in an area that is not yours?” the man remarked. “God has afflicted and you heal?” “What is your occupation?” they asked the man, “I’m a tiller of the soil,” he answered, “as you can see from the sickle I carry.” “Who created the land and the vineyard?” “The Holy Blessed One.” “And you dare to move into an area that is not yours? God created these and you eat their fruit?” “Don’t you see the sickle in my hand?” the man asked. “If I did not go out and plow the field, water it, fertilize it, weed it, no food would grow!”

“Fool,” the rabbis said, “the body is like a tree—the medicine is the fertilizer and the doctor is the farmer.” (Midrash Shmuel 4).

-
1. What does it mean to have eyes that are undimmed and vigor unabated? Is this to be taken literally or metaphorically?
 2. How does the Yiddish proverb differ from the quote from Deuteronomy?
 3. How does God fit into the physical health of your body?
 4. Where do you see yourself in these texts?

QUOTES FROM OUR TRADITION

THE SOUL

With regard to whom did David say five times, “Bless the Lord, O my soul?” He said these words with regard to the Holy One and with regard to the soul. As the Holy One fills the entire world, so the soul fills the entire body. As the Holy One sees but is not seen, so the soul sees but is not seen, so the soul sees, but is not seen. As the Holy One sustains the entire world, all of it, so the soul sustains the entire body. As the Holy One is pure, so the soul is pure. As the Holy One dwells in chambers that are innermost, so the soul dwells in chambers that are innermost. Therefore let him [i.e., human] who has these five characteristics come and praise God who has these five characteristics.

B. Ber 10a.

The breath of life is known by five names: life, spirit, soul, the solitary, the one that lives on. “Life” refers to the blood, as is said, “For the blood is the life” (Deut. 12:23). “Spirit” refers to it’s capacity to go up and down as is said, “Who knows the spirit of a person whether it goes upward” (Eccles. 3:21). “Soul” refers to people’s distinctive character. “The solitary”: while all other parts of the body are pairs, this one is solitary in the body. “The one that lives on”: while all other parts die, it lives on in the body. The soul fills the entire body, and when a person is asleep, it goes up and draws new life from above.

Gen R. 14:9

- 1) What do these texts know about the soul?
- 2) What do you know about the soul and does that match with the text?
- 3) How does the soul interact with the body?
- 4) Where do you see yourself in these quote

BARUCH atah, Adonai

Eloheinu, Melech haolam,

asher yatzar et haadam b'chochmah

uvara vo n'kavim n'kavim,

chalulim, chalulim.

Galui v'yadua lifnei chisei ch'vodecha

she-im yipatei-ach echad meihem,

o yisateim echad meihem,

i efshar l'hitkayeim

v'laamod l'fanecha.

Baruch atah, Adonai,

rofei chol basar umafla laasot.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי

אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה

וּבָרָא בּוֹ נְקָבִים נְקָבִים,

חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים.

גָּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לִפְנֵי כִסֵּא כְבוֹדְךָ

שֶׁאִם יִפְתָּח אֶחָד מֵהֶם,

אוֹ יִסָּתֵם אֶחָד מֵהֶם,

אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְהִתְקַיֵּם

וּלְעֲמוֹד לִפְנֶיךָ.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי

רוֹפֵא כָּל בָּשָׂר וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת.

PRAISE TO YOU, Adonai,

Our God, Sovereign of the universe,

who formed the human body with wisdom

creating the body's many pathways and openings.

It is well known before Your throne of glory

that if one of them be wrongly opened or closed,

it would be impossible to survive and stand before You.

Blessed are You, Adonai, who heals all flesh, working wondrously.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, רוֹפֵא כָּל בָּשָׂר וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת.

Baruch atah, Adonai, rofei chol basar umafla laasot.

ELOHAI, n'shamah shenatata bi

t'horah hi.

Atah b'ratah, atah y'tzartah,

atah n'fachtah bi,

v'atah m'shamrah b'kirbi.

Kol z'man shechan'shamah b'kirbi,

modeh / modah ani l'fanecha,

Adonai Elohai

v'Elohei avotai v'imotai,

Ribon kol hamaasim,

Adon kol han'shamot.

Baruch atah, Adonai,

asher b'yado nefesh kol chai

v'ruach kol b'sar ish.

אֱלֹהֵי, נְשָׁמָה שֶׁנָּתַתָּ בִּי

טְהוֹרָה הִיא.

אַתָּה בְּרָאתָה, אַתָּה יִצְרָתָה,

אַתָּה נִפְחַתָּה בִּי,

וְאַתָּה מְשַׁמְרָה בְּקִרְבִּי.

כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהַנְּשָׁמָה בְּקִרְבִּי,

מוֹדָה / מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ,

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי

וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי וְאִמּוֹתַי,

רִבּוֹן כָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים,

אֲדוֹן כָּל הַנְּשָׁמוֹת.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ,

אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ נֶפֶשׁ כָּל חַי

וְרוּחַ כָּל בָּשָׂר אִישׁ.

My GOD, the soul You have given me is pure.

You created it, You shaped it, You breathed it into me

and You protect it within me.

For as long as the soul is within me,

I offer thanks before You,

Adonai, my God

and God of my ancestral fathers and mothers,

Source of all Creation, Sovereign of all souls.

Praised are You, Adonai,

in whose hands is every living soul and the breath of humankind.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ נֶפֶשׁ כָּל חַי וְרוּחַ כָּל בָּשָׂר אִישׁ.

Baruch atah, Adonai, asher b'yado nefesh kol chai v'ruach kol b'sar ish.

LESSON 4 – WHY DOES IT KEEP RAINING ON ME?

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 2) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 4) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Is there a Jewish way to respond to distress?
- 2) Where is God in my search for meaning?
- 3) Why should I interact with my community when I am going through personal pain?
- 4) How can I enter into a dialogue with Jewish texts and traditions in new ways?

CORE CONCEPTS

- 1) Jewish text and traditions offer several ways of understanding suffering.
- 2) A theology around suffering does not need to be negative.
- 3) Building your own theology on why there is suffering will help give you the tools to find a response to hardships.

NOTICING TARGETS

Learners will:

- 1) Know the different traditional theologies on suffering
- 2) Build a theology on suffering that works for them based not only on their lives, but on Jewish sources as well
- 3) Believe that they can create their own theology on suffering
- 4) Feel a sense of belonging with the rest the Jewish people

TIMELINE:

0:00 – 0:15 – Getting To Know Your Community
0:15 – 1:00 – Theological Investigation
1:00 – 1:20 – Building Your Theology
1:20 – 1:30 – Sharing Theologies

ACTIVITIES

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

CATEGORIES – CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

- Ask everyone to stand up and then to walk around; explain that you will announce a category and that participants should then quickly organize themselves into smaller groups, based on the category to which they belong.
- Once everyone is organized into their groups, ask each group to identify itself.
- Make a brief comment or ask each group a question.
- Allow participants time to say hello and mingle/chat with each other when the smaller groups are formed.
- Keep things moving by asking participants to walk around before announcing the next category.
- Continue until the group is "warmed up" and ready for the next activity. This will probably be after ~5 topics, depending on the group, purpose, and time available.
- Categories can also be used as a fun, simple way to organize people into smaller groups for other activities.
- For the first category, use one with two options and announce one side of the room for one category and the other side of the room for the other category. This should help participants to get the idea for how the activity works.

Possible categories

- What is your favorite season?
- How many siblings do you have?
- What color are your eyes?
- What's your shoe size?
- What type of shoes are you wearing?
- What's your favorite color

THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Hand out the different theological fact sheets⁴ each one with a different theological view on suffering. They are suffering takes away sin, suffering is a mystery, suffering is deserved. Instead of working in chevrotah, this section should be done as whole group learning. When teaching this, make sure that you are teaching the theologies without a bias towards any particular belief. It is important for you to present the different theologies and have the learner decide what works best for them.

BUILDING YOUR THEOLOGY

⁴ These sheets come from different sections of *Wrestling Blessings: A Pastoral Response to Suffering* by Rabbi Myriam Klotz in Rabbi Friedman's, *Jewish Pastoral Care; A Practical Handbook from Traditional & Contemporary Sources* (pp. 3-27). Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing (2005).

After the group discussion, have the learners continue adding to their personal theology on their views of suffering.

SHARING THEOLOGIES

Use this time for learners to present their theologies. The likelihood is that this will be emotionally charged topic and therefore it is recommended that people share their pieces, but that others don't comment on them.

SUFFERING AS JUST DESERTS

Deuteronomy

11¹³If, then, you obey the commandments that I enjoin upon you this day, loving Adonai your God and serving God with all your heart and soul, ¹⁴ I will grant the rain for your land in season, the early rain and the late. You shall gather in your new grain and wine and oil — ¹⁵ I will also provide grass in the fields for your cattle — and thus you shall eat your fill. ¹⁶ Take care not to be lured away to serve other gods and bow to them. ¹⁷ For the God's anger will flare up against you, and God will shut up the skies so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its produce; and you will soon perish from the good land that God is assigning to you.

Deut. 11:13 וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמַעַתְּ שְׁמִיעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֹתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לֹא־הִבָּה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעַבְדּוֹ בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁכֶם:

Deut. 11:14 וְנָתַתִּי מִטֶּר־אֶרֶצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ וְאִסַּפְתִּי דְגָנְךָ וְתִירְשֶׁךָ וַיִּצְהַרְךָ:

Deut. 11:15 וְנָתַתִּי עָשָׂב בְּשָׂדֶךָ לִבְהֶמְתֶּךָ וְאָכְלָתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ:

Deut. 11:16 הַשְׁמִינִי לָכֶם כֵּן יִפְתָּה לִבְבְּכֶם וְסִרְתֶּם וְעַבַּדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם:

Deut. 11:17 וְחָרָה אַף־יְהוָה בְּכֶם וְעָזַר אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מִטֶּר וְהִיאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת־יְבוּלָהּ וְאִבְדֶּתֶם מְהֵרָה מֵעַל־הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה נָתַן לָכֶם:

Leviticus

26¹⁴But if you do not obey Me and do not observe all these commandments, ¹⁵if you reject My laws and spurn My rules, so that you do not observe all My commandments and you break My covenant, ¹⁶I in turn will do this to you: I will wreak misery upon you — consumption and fever, which cause the eyes to pine and the body to languish; you shall sow your seed to no purpose, for your enemies shall eat it. ¹⁷I will set My face against you: you shall be routed by your enemies, and your foes shall dominate you. You shall flee though none pursues.

Lev. 26:14 וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ לִי וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת־כָּל־הַמִּצְוֹת הָאֵלֶּה:

Lev. 26:15 וְאִם־בָּחַקְתִּי תִמְאָסוּ וְאִם אֶת־מִשְׁפָּטִי תִגְעַל נַפְשְׁכֶם לִבְלֹתִי עֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי לְהַפְרֹכֶם אֶת־בְּרִיתִי:

Lev. 26:16 אֶף־אֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה־נֹּאחַ לָכֶם וְהִפְקַדְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם בְּהִלָּה אֶת־הַשְׁתַּפַּח וְאֶת־הַקְדַּחַח מִכִּלּוֹת עֵינַיִם וּמִדִּיבַת נֶפֶשׁ וּזְרַעְתֶּם לָרִיק וְזָרְעֶכֶם וְאָכְלוּ אֹיְבֵיכֶם:

Lev. 26:17 וְנָתַתִּי פָנַי בְּכֶם וְנִגְפַתֶּם לִפְנֵי אֹיְבֵיכֶם וּרְדּוּ בְּכֶם שָׁנָאִיכֶם וְנִסְתָּם וְאִין־רָגַף אֹתְכֶם: ס

- 1) How do you respond to this approach to suffering?
- 2) How did this belief about human suffering help biblical authors come to terms with their situations?
- 3) Are there times in your own life when you have felt that your suffering was punishment for a misdeed or ill-conceived action?
- 4) Do you believe in a God who punishes human beings for their sins?
- 5) If you find yourself disagreeing with this typology of reward and punishment, is it possible to reframe this approach in a way that might be useful?
- 6) If not, how might your clarity regarding this stance be helpful when trying to comfort someone who feels guilty and believes that God is punishing them?

SUFFERING IS A MYSTERY

The narrator of the Job story rejects the view that suffering is always deserved punishment for sin. Job's experience demonstrates that there are situations in which even a person who has acted righteously might still suffer greatly. How is one to understand God's plan when it appears that neither is good rewarded with good nor evil with suffering? In the book of Job, God asserts directly to Job that this is beyond Job's ability to understand. The suffering of the righteous is a profound mystery, lessened only by the sense of God's presence. The human being's response to this mystery is to accept it with faith, remaining open to connect with God's plan. Precise answers to these ultimate questions will not be found, but the simple, utterly mysterious presence of God offers redemption and comfort.

- 1) In what ways might this response be helpful to the author of the Book of Job?
- 2) How does it mesh with the image of God as one who punishes for wrongdoings and rewards for good deeds?
- 3) Has there been a time in your life when you have been comforted by the mysterious presence of God, even though circumstances did not make sense and answers were elusive?
- 4) Consider how this approach could be comforting to someone.

SUFFERING TAKES AWAY SIN

Isaiah

53¹¹ Out of his anguish he shall see it to the full through his devotion

“My righteous servant makes the many righteous,

It is their punishment that he bears;

¹²Assuredly, I will give him the many as his portion,

He shall receive the multitude as his spoil.

For he exposed himself to death

And was numbered among the sinners,

Whereas he bore the guilt of the many

And made intercession for sinners.”

מֵעַמְל נִפְשׁוֹ יִרְאֶה יִשְׁבֶּעַ בְּדַעְתּוֹ יִצְדִּיק Is. 53:11

צָדִיק עֲבָדִי לְרַבִּים וְעֹנֶנְתָם הוּא יִסְבֵּל :

לָכֵן אֶחְלֶק לוֹ בְּרַבִּים וְאֶת־עֲצוּמִים יִחְלֶק Is. 53:12

שָׁלֹל פִּחַת אֲשֶׁר הָעֵרָה לְמוֹת נִפְשׁוֹ וְאֶת־פִּשְׁעִים

נִמְנָה וְהוּא חֲטָא־רַבִּים נָשָׂא וְלִפְשָׁעִים יִפְגִּיעַ : ס

In what ways might this view that God brings suffering to righteous human beings to allow them or others to come into closer relationship with the Divine have been satisfying to the author of this text?

Have you personally ever felt that suffering was offered to you to help you grow spiritually, to come closer to God, or to help others heal through your suffering?

Are there ways in which suffering has been a catalyst for growth and healing?

How might this view be helpful for someone attempting to find meaning to his or her pain?

LESSON 5: WHO SHALL LIVE AND WHO SHALL DIE?

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 1) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 2) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 3) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Is there a Jewish way to respond to distress?
- 2) Where is God in my search for meaning?
- 3) Why should I interact with my community when I am going through personal pain?
- 4) How can I enter into a dialogue with Jewish texts and traditions in new ways?

CORE CONCEPTS

- 1) Sometimes there is no clear meaning in death.
- 2) One’s theology on suffering can greatly influence one’s theology on death.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions can help us find comfort in death.

NOTICING TARGETS

Learners will:

- 1) Know the source of the *U’Netaneh Tokef* and it’s use as liturgy.
- 2) Be able to continue formulating their theology with *U’Netaneh Tokef* and Ecclesiastes chapter 3 as a source.
- 3) Believe that there can be a meaningful way of dealing with death
- 4) Feel a sense of belonging with the rest the Jewish people

Timeline:

0:00 – 0:15 Meet and Greet
0:15 – 0:20 *U’Netaneh Tokef* Introduction
0:25 – 0:35 *U’netaneh Tokef* Text Study
0:35 – 1:00 Ecclesiastes Text Study
1:00 – 1:25 Developing Your Theology
1:00 – 1:30 Turn, Turn, Turn

ACTIVITIES

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

UN'ETANEH TOKEF INTRODUCTION

The *U'Netaneh Tokef* has been traditionally attributed to Rabbi Amnon of Mayence. Rabbi Amnon, a wealthy and respected Jew of Mayence, had been asked, on several occasions, by archbishop of Mayence, to convert to Christianity. On the final occasion Rabbi Amnon evasively asked the archbishop to give him three days to consider the option. However, when the third day came he failed to return to the archbishop. The archbishop had him brought to him. Rabbi Amnon, rebuked for his failure to keep his promise, pleaded guilty, and said that his tongue should be cut out, because it had expressed a doubt as to the truth of Judaism. The archbishop, however, pronounced the sentence that Amnon's feet, which had refused to come, and his hands should be cut off. This was accordingly done.

This all transpired during the High Holidays and Rabbi Amnon gave orders that he be carried into the synagogue, where Rosh Hashanah was being celebrated. The service leader was about to begin the *Kedushah*, when he was asked by Rabbi Amnon to wait. Rabbi Amnon then recited the prayer called, from its initial words, "*U'netaneh Tokef*," which is a description of the Day of Judgment. No sooner had he finished the prayer than he died; and, according to legend, his body immediately disappeared. Three days later he appeared to R. Kalonymus in a dream, taught him the prayer, and asked him to spread it throughout the Jewish world.

U'NETANEH TOKEF TEXT STUDY

In your *chevrutah* read through the *U'netaneh Tokef*

1. How do you feel about this piece?
2. What does this piece say about death?
3. How can we predict who shall live and who shall die?
4. If you were to modify this text to better suit your take on God and death, how would you do that?
5. What emotions does this bring up for you when you hear it on the High Holy Days?
6. How might this be resonant for you if you were to have lost a love one the year prior to reading this?
7. How does this mesh with your previous theologies?
8. One might be able to read this as a way of stating that while God may know who shall live and who shall die, death is still random in our eyes and that we may never understand why it happens. If death is random, how might the conclusion help us deal with death?
9. How might the conclusion be used as a positive response to suffering?

ECCLESIASTES TEXT STUDY

Read Ecclesiastes together in a group.

1. How is this piece different for the *U'netaneh Tokef*?
2. How does Ecclesiastes envision death?

3. How is God involved with death?
4. If you were to modify this text to better suit your take on God and death, how would you do that?
5. What may be uplifting for you within this text?

TURN, TURN, TURN

Play the Byrds, “Turn, Turn, Turn,” and have the learners look for aspects of the original which are missing in the song and ask them to think about why they weren’t added in.

DEVELOPING YOUR THEOLOGY

Have the learners take some private time working on their theologies so that they are incorporated into their previous versions.

From Gates of Repentance

וּנְתָנָה תִּקְוָה קִדְשָׁתְּךָ הַיּוֹם כִּי הוּא נוֹרָא וְאִים. וְבוֹ
תִּנְשֵׂא מַלְכוּתְךָ וְיִכּוֹן בְּחֶסֶד בְּסֶאֱךָ וְתִשָּׁב עָלֶיךָ
בְּאֵמֶת. אָמֵת כִּי אַתָּה הוּא דִּין וּמוֹכִיחַ וְיֹדֵעַ נֶעֱד,
וְכוֹתֵב וְחוֹתֵם וְסוֹפֵר וּמוֹנֶה, וְתִזְכֹּר כָּל-הַנְּשָׁכָחוֹת,
וְתִפְתַּח אֶת-סֵפֶר הַזְּכוֹנוֹת, וּמֵאֱלֹו יִקְרָא וְחוֹתֵם
יָד כָּל-אָדָם בּוֹ.

Let us proclaim the sacred power of this day;
it is awesome and full of dread.
For on this day Your dominion is exalted,
Your throne established in steadfast love;
there in truth You reign.
In truth You are
Judge and Arbiter, Counsel and Witness.
You write and You seal, You record and recount.
You remember deeds long forgotten.
You open the book of our days,
and what is written there proclaims itself,
for it bears the signature
of every human being.

ובשוֹפָר גָּדוֹל יִתְקַע וְקוֹל דְּמָמָה דָּקָה יִשְׁמַע.
 וּמִלְאָכִים יִחְפְּזוּן וְחֵיל וְרַעְדָּה יֵאֱחָזוּן וַיֹּאמְרוּ: הִנֵּה
 יוֹם הַדִּין. לִפְקֹד עַל צָבָא מְרוֹם בְּדִין, כִּי לֹא יִזְכּוּ
 בְּעֵינֶיךָ בְּדִין. וְכָל-בָּאֵי עוֹלָם יַעֲבְרוּן לִפְנֶיךָ כְּבָנֵי
 מְרוֹן. כְּבִקְרַת רוּעָה עֲדָרוּ, מַעֲבִיר צֹאנוֹ תַּחַת
 שִׁבְטוֹ, בֶּן תַּעֲבִיר וְתִסְפֹּר וְתִמְנֶה וְתִפְקֹד נַפֶּשׁ כָּל-
 חַי, וְתַחֲתֶיךָ קִצְבָּה לְכָל-בְּרִיָּה וְתִכְתֹּב אֶת-גְּזֹר דִּינָם.

*The great Shofar is sounded,
 the still, small voice is heard;
 the angels,
 gripped by fear and trembling,
 declare in awe:
 This is the Day of Judgment!
 For even the hosts of heaven are judged,
 as all who dwell on earth
 stand arrayed before You.*

*As the shepherd seeks out his flock,
 and makes the sheep pass under his staff,
 so do You muster and number and consider
 every soul,
 setting the bounds of every creature's life,
 and decreeing its destiny.*

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יִכְתְּבוּן וּבֵיּוֹם צוֹם כְּפוּר יִחְתְּמוּן.
 כְּמָה יַעֲבְרוּן וְכְמָה יִבְרֹאוּן, מִי יַחֲיֶה וּמִי יָמוּת, מִי
 בִּקְצוֹ וּמִי לֹא בִּקְצוֹ, מִי בְּאֵשׁ וּמִי בַּמַּיִם, מִי בַּחֲרֵב
 וּמִי בַּחַיָּה, מִי בְּרָעַב וּמִי בְּצָמָא, מִי בְּרַעַשׁ וּמִי
 בַּמִּגָּפָה, מִי בַּחֲנִיקָה וּמִי בַּסְּקִילָה. מִי יָנוּחַ וּמִי יָנוּעַ,
 מִי יִשְׁקִיט וּמִי יִטָּרֵף, מִי יִשְׁלֹוּ וּמִי יִתִּיֶסֶר, מִי יַעֲנִי
 וּמִי יַעֲשִׂיר, מִי יִשְׁפֹּל וּמִי יָרוּם.

*On Rosh Hashanah it is written,
 on Yom Kippur it is sealed:*

How many shall pass on, how many shall come to be;
who shall live and who shall die;
who shall see ripe age and who shall not;
who shall perish by fire and who by water;
who by sword and who by beast;
who by hunger and who by thirst;
who by earthquake and who by plague;
who by strangling and who by stoning;
who shall be secure and who shall be driven;
who shall be tranquil and who shall be troubled;
who shall be poor and who shall be rich;
who shall be humbled and who exalted.

ותשובה ותפלה וצדקה
מעבירין את-רע הגזרה.

*But REPENTANCE, PRAYER, and CHARITY
temper judgment's severe decree.*

U'NETANEH TOKEF TEXT STUDY

In your *chevrutah* read through the *U'netaneh Tokef*

1. How do you feel about this piece?
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9. How might the conclusion be used as a positive response to suffering?

Ecclesiastes Chapter 3

¹A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven:

²A time for being born and a time for dying, A time for planting and a time for uprooting the planted;

³A time for slaying and a time for healing, A time for tearing down and a time for building up;

⁴A time for weeping and a time for laughing, A time for wailing and a time for dancing;

⁵A time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones, A time for embracing and a time for shunning embraces;

⁶A time for seeking and a time for losing, A time for keeping and a time for discarding;

⁷A time for ripping and a time for sewing, A time for silence and a time for speaking;

⁸A time for loving and a time for hating; A time for war and a time for peace.

⁹What value, then, can the man of affairs get from what he earns?

¹⁰I have observed the business that God gave humans to be concerned with:

¹¹God brings everything to pass precisely at its time; God also puts eternity in their mind, but without human beings ever guessing, from first to last, all the things that God brings to pass.

¹²Thus I realized that the only worthwhile thing there is for them is to enjoy themselves and do what is good in their lifetime;

¹³also, that whenever a person does eat and drink and get enjoyment out of all his wealth, it is a gift of God.

¹⁴I realized, too, that whatever God has brought to pass will recur evermore: Nothing can be added to it And nothing taken from it — and God has brought to pass that men revere God.

¹⁵What is occurring occurred long since, And what is to occur occurred long since: and God seeks the pursued.

¹⁶And, indeed, I have observed under the sun: Alongside justice there is wickedness, Alongside righteousness there is wickedness.

¹⁷I mused: “God will doom both righteous and wicked, for there is a time for every experience and for every happening.”

¹⁸So I decided, as regards men, to dissociate them [from] the divine beings and to face the fact that they are beasts.

¹⁹For in respect of the fate of man and the fate of beast, they have one and the same fate: as the one dies so dies the other, and both have the same lifebreath; man has no superiority over beast, since both amount to nothing.

²⁰Both go to the same place; both came from dust and both return to dust.

²¹Who knows if a man’s lifebreath does rise upward and if a beast’s breath does sink down into the earth?

²²I saw that there is nothing better for man than to enjoy his possessions, since that is his portion. For who can enable him to see what will happen afterward?

Ecclesiastes Chapter 3

- Ecccl. 3:1 לְכֹל זְמַן וְעֵת לְכָל־חֶפֶץ תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם: ס
- Ecccl. 3:2 עֵת לְלֶדֶת וְעֵת לָמוּת עֵת לְשַׁעַת וְעֵת לַעֲקוֹר נְטוּעַ:
- Ecccl. 3:3 עֵת לְהַרוֹג וְעֵת לְרַפֹּא עֵת לִפְרוֹץ וְעֵת לִבְנוֹת:
- Ecccl. 3:4 עֵת לִבְנוֹת וְעֵת לְשַׁחֹק עֵת סִפּוֹד וְעֵת רִקּוֹד:
- Ecccl. 3:5 עֵת לְהַשְׁלִיךְ אֲבָנִים וְעֵת כְּנוֹס אֲבָנִים עֵת לַחֲבֹק וְעֵת לִרְחֹק מִחֶבֶק:
- Ecccl. 3:6 עֵת לִבְקֹשׁ וְעֵת לֵאמֹר עֵת לְשָׁמֹר וְעֵת לְהַשְׁלִיךְ:
- Ecccl. 3:7 עֵת לְקַדֹּעַ וְעֵת לְתַפּוֹר עֵת לַחֲשׂוֹת וְעֵת לְדַבֵּר:
- Ecccl. 3:8 עֵת לָאֱהָב וְעֵת לִשְׂנֹא עֵת מִלְחָמָה וְעֵת שָׁלוֹם: ס
- Ecccl. 3:9 מַה־יִּתְרוֹן הָעוֹשֶׂה בְּאֲשֶׁר הוּא עֹמֵל:
- Ecccl. 3:10 רְאִיתִי אֶת־הָעֶנְיָן אֲשֶׁר נָתַן אֱלֹהִים לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם לַעֲנוֹת בּוֹ:
- Ecccl. 3:11 אֶת־הַכֹּל עָשָׂה יִפְּהוּ בַּעֲתוֹ גַּם אֶת־הָעֹלָם נָתַן בְּלִבָּם מִבְּלִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִמָּצֵא הָאָדָם אֶת־הַמַּעֲשֶׂה אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹהִים מִרְאֵשׁ וְעַד־סוֹף:
- Ecccl. 3:12 יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אֵין טוֹב בָּם כִּי אִם־לִשְׂמוֹחַ וּלְעֲשׂוֹת טוֹב בְּחַיֵּי:
- Ecccl. 3:13 וְגַם כָּל־הָאָדָם שִׂיאֲכַל וְשִׂתָּה וְרָאָה טוֹב בְּכָל־עֲמָלוֹ מִתַּת אֱלֹהִים הִיא:
- Ecccl. 3:14 יָדַעְתִּי כִּי כָל־אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא יִהְיֶה לְעוֹלָם עָלִי אֵין לְהוֹסִיף וּמִמֶּנּוּ אֵין לִגְרַע וְהָאֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה שִׂירָאוֹ מִלְּפָנָיו:
- Ecccl. 3:15 מַה־שֶּׁהָיָה כְּבָר הוּא וְאֲשֶׁר לֵהֵיוֹת כְּבָר הָיָה וְהָאֱלֹהִים יִבְקֹשׁ אֶת־נִדְרָף:
- Ecccl. 3:16 וְעוֹד רְאִיתִי תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם מְקוֹם הַמִּשְׁפָּט שָׁמָּה הִרְשַׁע וּמְקוֹם הַצֶּדֶק שָׁמָּה הִרְשַׁע:

Eccl. 3:17 אִמְרָתִי אֲנִי בְּלִבִּי אֶת־הַצַּדִּיק וְאֶת־הַרְשָׁע יִשְׁפֹּט
הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי־עַתָּה לְכָל־חֹפֶץ וְעַל כָּל־הַמַּעֲשֵׂה שָׁם:
Eccl. 3:18 אִמְרָתִי אֲנִי בְּלִבִּי עַל־דְּבַרְתִּי בְּנֵי הָאָדָם לְבָרָם
הָאֱלֹהִים וְלִרְאוֹת שָׂהִם בְּהִמָּה הַמָּוה לָהֶם:
Eccl. 3:19 כִּי מִקְרָה בְּנֵי־הָאָדָם וּמִקְרָה הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִקְרָה אָחֵד
לָהֶם כָּמוֹת זֶה כֵּן מוֹת זֶה וְרוּחַ אָחֵד לִכְלָם וּמוֹתֵר הָאָדָם
מִן־הַבְּהֵמָה אֵין כִּי הַכֹּל הֶבֶל:
Eccl. 3:20 הַכֹּל הוֹלֵךְ אֶל־מָקוֹם אָחֵד הַכֹּל הֵיחָ מִן־הָעֶפֶר וְהַכֹּל
שׁוֹב אֶל־הָעֶפֶר:
Eccl. 3:21 מִי יוֹדַע רוּחַ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם הָעֹלָה הִיא לְמַעַלָּה וְרוּחַ
הַבְּהֵמָה הַיֹּרֶדֶת הִיא לְמַטָּה לָאָרֶץ:
Eccl. 3:22 וְרָאִיתִי כִּי אֵין טוֹב מֵאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמַח הָאָדָם בְּמַעֲשָׂיו
כִּי־הוּא חֲלָקוֹ כִּי מִי יִבְיָאֵנוּ לִרְאוֹת בְּמָה שִׁיִּהְיֶה אַחֲרָיו:

ECCLESIASTES TEXT STUDY

Read Ecclesiastes together in a group.

1. How is this piece different for the U'netaneh Tokef?
2. How does Ecclesiastes envision death?
3. How is God involved with death?
4. If you were to modify this text to better suit your take on God and death, how would you do that?
5. What may be uplifting for you within this text?

Words-adapted from The Bible, book of Ecclesiastes
Music-Pete Seeger

To Everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time to every purpose, under Heaven

A time to be born, a time to die
A time to plant, a time to reap
A time to kill, a time to heal
A time to laugh, a time to weep

To Everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time to every purpose, under Heaven

A time to build up, a time to break down
A time to dance, a time to mourn
A time to cast away stones, a time to gather stones together

To Everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time to every purpose, under Heaven

A time of love, a time of hate
A time of war, a time of peace
A time you may embrace, a time to refrain from embracing

To Everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)
There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)
And a time to every purpose, under Heaven

A time to gain, a time to lose
A time to rend, a time to sew
A time for love, a time for hate
A time for peace, I swear it's not too late

LESSON 6 – A SERIOUS MAN

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 2) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 4) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- 1) Is there a Jewish way to respond to distress?
- 2) Where is God in my search for meaning?
- 3) Why should I interact with my community when I am going through personal pain?
- 4) How can I enter into a dialogue with Jewish texts and traditions in new ways?

CORE CONCEPTS

- 1) We may never know why we suffer, but that doesn’t mean we don’t struggle with it?
- 2) There is a moment in all of our lives when we feel like Job.
- 3) God can be hidden from us when we need God the most, but that doesn’t mean that God is absent.

Timeline:

0:00 – 0:15: Getting to Know Your Community

0:15 – 2:00: A Serious Man

2:00 – 2:30: Movie Discussion

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

Have individual get into smaller group had have them share how they are doing in their lives. Let them talk and catch up from the previous week.

FILM SYNOPSIS⁵

⁵ Taken from:

http://filmdramas.suite101.com/article.cfm/a_serious_man_film_review#ixzz0fjAgtP3N

A Serious Man is yet another Coen Brothers masterpiece. It's an existential Hitchcock movie crossed with Jewish spirituality, a touch of mysticism and the Coens' rigid insistence that the rates of mortality and morality are intertwined.

Leave it to Joel and Ethan Coen to tunnel out a narrative wormhole from Rashi — a medieval rabbi famed as the first comprehensive commentator on mainstream Judaism's Talmud — to Larry Gopnik, a nudge-nik Minnesotan Jew whose fracturing family might be trapped in an endless cursed cycle of indecision and loathing.

"Receive with simplicity everything that happens to you." — Rashi

"The boss isn't always right, but he's always the boss." — Rabbi Nachtner, *A Serious Man*

Joel and Ethan Coen Tackle Cosmic Collision of Religion, Righteousness in *A Serious Man*

Here, forces threatening to swallow up one man are inescapably omniscient and frighteningly insurmountable. But, in Larry's physics-professor parlance, there's a canyon-sized distinction between understanding the physics and knowing the math. When we merely surmise the specifics of grand-plan forgiveness and knowledge, what we make of human nature is all that truly guides us.

A Serious Man opens with a dimly lit folktale prologue about a dybbuk — the dislocated soul of a dead person who curses a home into which he's been invited — and a thrust dagger that might permanently seal the fate of the Gopnik clan.

From this, the Coens cosmically deliver us into the 1967 world of Larry Gopnik (Michael Stuhlbarg, sweaty, stunning and resembling a nebbish Joaquin Phoenix).

Quantum superposition is a fundamental law of quantum mechanics — defining the collection of all possible states an object can have. It's a paradox also known as "Schrodinger's cat" — the idea that a cat hidden in a sealed box is both alive and dead to the universe outside the box until someone opens it to look inside.

No one embodies this simultaneous life in breathing terms and death in emotional terms quite like Larry. A milquetoast professor sweating tenure at his college, Larry is practically disintegrating.

His wife is leaving him for the velveteen-voiced, psychobabbling Sy Abelman (Fred Melamed as a quintessentially condescending Coen creation). His brother-in-law Arthur (Richard Kind) is a hanger-on in his home, constantly draining his sebaceous cyst and perhaps losing his mind in the Mentaculus, "a probability map of the universe." And his kids have dissociated and drifted from him more each day, his only function for them adjusting the antenna to strengthen *F Troop's* signal.

Consider Larry, then, a twiddler on the roof — spineless and powerless to influence or change anything and rigidly concerned with boundaries and enforced codes. The repetition of even the most hellish things in his life creates a brutally comedic cadence —

like Prometheus forever chained to all that's around him. "I haven't done anything!" is both Larry's denial of wrongdoing and self-shame at his life's worth.

So when a student tries to bribe Larry into a good grade, an anonymous tormenter tries to torpedo his tenure and the naked sunbathing neighbor introduces him to recreational pot use, Larry's attempts at rationalization becomes a religious rigmarole from a trio of rabbis.

Equal Parts *Big Lebowski* and Franz Kafka, *A Serious Man's* Religious Discussion Feels Universal

A Serious Man has its light *Lebowski*-esque cosmic moments — anything involving Jefferson Airplane's *Somebody to Love* and a Hendrix-scored parable about a plea for help on a man's teeth — as well as inescapable Kafka-esque sick jokes (Larry's harassment at the hands of a record club he has no memory of joining).

Plus, there are, no doubt, touches to trigger knowing, internal laughter for people of the Jewish faith. But *A Serious Man's* discussion of organized religion feels universal all the way to central ideas of the Serenity Prayer. The idea of blind religious belief flies in the face of mankind's fundamental instinct — or curse? — to question, rationalize and neatly compartmentalize everything else about our lives. (Gaze in fright at the thickness of those rabbis' Rolodexes.)

But, like monolithic mathematical proofs and hypotheses, it is all that we can't figure out in life on which we will ultimately be tested. "Why does *Hashem* make us field the questions if he's not gonna give us the answers?" one character asks.

That's a question each of us asks regardless of what name we place on cosmic coincidence. So the Coens aren't sneering at people beneath them, they're sneering at themselves, at all of us — that if we don't hold dear to our principles, what do we have?

A Serious Man* Concludes with Finale As Abrupt and Unforgettable as *No Country For Old Men

The shocking ending to *A Serious Man* — a hair-raising piece of situational dread if ever there was one — is a beautifully damning illustration that overlooking even the most cursory aspects of our convictions can backfire on us. Like all fairytales, there is a message here — the tense sweep of a pencil becomes the equivalent of a dagger in the dybbuk.

Receive everything with simplicity. Do your own thing with it. *A Serious Man* never lampoons the idea of a supreme being in which so many people lovingly, unquestioningly place faith and before which so many kneel in supplication. What it does mock — mercilessly and memorably — is that without consulting our own moral compass, the only direction our decisions will take us is down.

Maybe that's only just part of it, though. In its own way, it's worthwhile to descend into its inexplicable madness just as Arthur does into his Mentaculus. That's because *A*

Serious Man is not a movie to be fully grasped upon a first viewing and, in keeping with one of the film's ideas, even on the third or fourth viewing.

Demanding repeat visits to savor its depth, debate its themes and simply let its haunting, horrifying final image sink in even deeper on your psyche, *A Serious Man* is one of 2009's greatest achievements.

Discussion Questions⁶

1. How does the Dybbuk story relate to the rest of the film?
The Dybbuk visits the Gopnik household and perhaps curses them.
2. What is the significance of the story of the goy's teeth? Do you have anything written on the inside of your teeth?
3. Gopnik is dismissive of the stories / fables used to illustrate the principles of physics which he teaches. He claims not to understand the stories, but to put all his faith in the mathematics. How does this relate to the mysterious fables related in the film: the dybbuk, the goy's teeth?
4. What do you think of the way the three rabbis respond to Gopnik?
5. What is the significance of the simultaneity of the two car accidents?
6. Where do you see God in this film?
7. Think about the variations on the phrase "I didn't do anything." A protestation of Gopnik's innocence: "I don't deserve this, I didn't do anything wrong"?
8. How does this assertion relate to Gopnik's dreams? Is he a good man for not having actually had sex with his neighbor's wife, though clearly he was tempted? Is he a bad man for not having actually taken his brother to Canada, sending him off with an envelope of cash? How good are we for not doing the wrong we dream of doing? How bad are we for not doing the good we dream of doing?
9. What's the difference between using the bribe money to bless his brother, or using it to pay his legal bills? Does the apparent choice to do the latter somehow lead to the bad things that happen to this "good" man? Or is it foolish to look for cause and effect in this? Does this relate to Gopnik's lectures on uncertainty, etc?
10. What do you make of the statement, "Why does Hashem make us field the questions if he's not gonna give us the answers?"

⁶ Some questions are based on those found on
<http://www.filmwell.org/2009/11/05/a-serious-man-questions-for-further-study>

LESSON 7 – A JEWISH CARING COMMUNITY

PRIORITY GOAL FOR LEARNER

- To be able to participate as a member in a Jewish caring community.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- 1) As a Jew I can access my relationship with God when having to make life style choices.
- 2) “It is not good for human to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) People need people during all life cycle moments no matter what the context of that moment may be.
- 3) Jewish texts and traditions have the capacity to be a guiding force for health and well-being decisions.
- 4) There is a multiplicity of responses and as a Jew I have to enter a conversation with Jewish tradition and texts to construct my own answers.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- 1) How can the Book of Job guide me towards knowing what is appropriate and what is not appropriate when responding to another’s pain?
- 2) Does what I say really matter either to somebody else, or to God?
- 3) Why should I care about how I respond to somebody else’s pain?
- 4) How can two contrasting theologies coexist?

CORE CONCEPTS

- 1) Jewish texts and traditions offer relevant insight on how to meet and care for those who are distressed.
- 2) By responding properly to someone’s pain you have saved their emotional life and “If you save one life, you save the world,” which is something that not only the individual, but God as well, cares very much about.
- 3) We are all intrinsically linked to one another, therefore, it matters how we treat each other.

NOTICING TARGETS

Learners will:

- 1) Be able to articulate various themes within the Book of Job
- 2) Build a guideline on how to comfort someone
- 3) Believe that there are multiple answers to the same question of “why there is suffering in the world” and that even though they contrast each other they can both be valid
- 4) Feel a sense of belonging with the rest the Jewish people.

Time Line:

0:00 – 0:15 – Getting to know your community

0:15 – 0:20 – Book of Job Introduction
0:20 – 1:00 – Read Job Excerpts
1:00 – 1:15 – How To Comfort
1:15 – 1:55 – Developing/Sharing Your Theology
1:55 – 2:00 – Lean On Me

ACTIVITIES

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

Send your learners an email or letter prior to their arrival at your class or meeting and ask them to bring a personal item that is somehow related to their life in the synagogue, or their relationship to Judaism, or perhaps even their developing theologies.

When it's time for students to introduce themselves, explain that you want to recognize and honor the life experiences and wisdom they bring to your classroom. Ask them to give their name, present the item they brought, and, in a minute or two, tell the group the story behind that item.

- Why did they choose it?
- What special memory does it elicit for them?
- What is its significance given your topic?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE INSTRUCTOR:

The following is taken from the JPS Study Guide and an excerpt of this is used to introduce, and fill the gaps of events within the story to the learners.

JPS Study Guide: Pages 103-105

Prologue (chapters 1-2). The book opens, in prose, with a story about the righteous man Job. At the urging of the Adversary (usually called Satan), God decides to test Job by inflicting on him horrendous suffering to see if he will remain faithful. Job bears his pain while maintaining faith in God's justice. Three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, come from afar to comfort him, and they sit with him for seven days. It is important to note three assumptions inherent in the prologue: Job is innocent, his pain is in no way punishment, and God is basically just, though his infliction of Job is, as God says, "without cause" (2:3); the purpose of the affliction is to test the purity of his piety.

Dialogue (chapters 3-38, excluding 28). Job suddenly bursts out with bitter complaints—first at life itself, then at God's injustice. Job repeatedly insists on his own innocence and demands that God appear to argue his case or at least to specify Job's putative wrongdoings. The friends first comfort Job and then, with increasing vehemence, condemn him. Each speech by Job is followed by the reply of a different friend. There are three such cycles in the extended dialogue, in chapters 3-27.

In his final speech (chapters 29-31), Job recalls his former good days, when he was in fellowship with God and honored by men, then he bewails his current degradation, and finally he declares his innocence by oath.

God's speeches (chapters 38-42:6). God appears in a whirlwind to Job and challenges him to debate. God speaks about the mysteries and wonders of creation, before which Job can only stand in humility and awe. At the end, Job humbles himself and repents.

Epilogue (chapter 42:7-17). At God's direction, Job's friends ask his forgiveness and are in turn forgiven. God then restores Job's fortunes, making them even greater than before, and he lives out a prosperous and long life.

Two digressions. The poem on wisdom and Elihu's speech do not fit into the book's otherwise clear and logical structure. They might be later additions (note how well God's speeches, starting in chapter 38, would immediately follow Job's final declaration of innocence in chapters 29-31). Alternatively, the digression might be intended by the author as a way of slowing the pace and putting off the denouement that will come with God's speeches.

The poem on wisdom (chapter 28). This poem asks, rhetorically, "Where can wisdom be found?" The answer is that it cannot be found, even in the farthest reaches of creation. God alone knows where it is. God created it and said to humans that the fear of God and the avoidance of evil alone constitute wisdom. This is the only real wisdom that humans can have.

Elihu (chapters 32-37). After Job and his three friends stop speaking (in frustration at what they see as each other's obtuseness), a new participant, Elihu, speaks up. He says that he held his silence because he is younger than the others, but he can no longer hold back his thoughts. He is angered by what he sees as Job's self-righteousness and irritated at the men's failure to respond adequately.

Elihu first speaks of the possibility that misery, such as in sickness, can have an educational function, warning people away from further sin. If the sufferer repents, an angel might speak on his behalf and convince God to spare the sufferer. Elihu accuses Job of wickedness and arrogance and declares God's justice, power, and goodness. Much of Elihu's speech, it should be said, is in very obscure Hebrew.

THE CHALLENGE TO THE READER

The interpretations of Job are many and varied. Prominent among the proposals for the central message of the book are the following:

- 1. God is mysterious. Innocent suffering can occur, contrary to the friends' declarations, but humans have to recognize that God's ways are hidden from their comprehension. They may complain of their suffering (as many psalmists do) and insist on their innocence, but in the end they must accept the limitations of human knowledge and humble themselves before God's wisdom and power.*
- 2. God is gracious. In the end, God's appearance shows Job that his suffering is not punishment (for God never blames it on Job's sin), and the fellowship that God's appearance offers comforts Job. Fellowship with God is the comfort that sufferers can hope for.*

3. *God is unfair. God did indeed inflict unwarranted suffering on Job, and (in the author's view) Job's railings were justified. When Job humbles himself before God, he does so tongue-in-cheek. After God's speeches, Job says, in 42:6: "Therefore, I recant and relent, being but dust and ashes" (literally, "... on dust and ashes"). Others would translate, "... and feel sorry for dust and ashes," that is to say, for wretched humans, who are but dust and ashes. Job is cowed by God's power, but he really feels revulsion before the divine dictator and pity for lowly mankind. This is the author's extraordinarily rebellious but carefully hidden message.*

BOOK OF JOB INTRODUCTION⁷:

Before we start reading from the Book of Job I want to frame the book of you. The following is an excerpt from *The Book of God and Man; A Study of Job* by Robert Gordis:

"Some years ago an American scholar declared that just as the humblest actor harbors a secret ambition to play Hamlet, so every biblical student nurtures the hope of some day writing about Job. The truth is that Job is a perennial challenge to every reader and biblical scholar. This "Mount Everest" of the human spirit continues to defy even the most intrepid and confident of climbers and probably will never yield all its secrets. For every aspect of the book poses problems that each reader and student must solve for himself. There is not, nor can there be, universal agreement on such major issues as the structure, the unity, and the basic meaning of the book, or even on such relatively minor questions as its style, date, and origin. Aside from these general considerations, the complexities of the book's language necessarily intrigue the commentator as he tries to interpret each word and passage in the text. It is no wonder then that each reader creates a Job in his own image."

Now we will not be reading this text as though we are biblical scholars, we will not be taking close readings of which word for God is being employed and why or how this might relate to various cultures of the times. We will, however, look at this text with the point of view of the human psyche. The very last line of the Robert Gordis quote is very important. "It is no wonder then that each reader creates a Job in his own image."

In order to fully comprehend what is happening to Job and how his interactions with his friends might affect him and why God might react in the way God does, I want you to picture Job in your head not as a biblical character, but as yourself. I want you to picture yourself saying Job's words, feeling his pain, and feeling his suffering. Then, once you

⁷ This introduction is taken from multiple sources. They are: JPS Study Guide, Book of Job JPS Commentary, *The Book of God and Man; A Study of Job* by Robert Gordis from the University of Chicago Press 1965

have done that I want you to listen to his friends' words and feel what Job might have felt if you had been told these words amongst and torrent of pain.

The book opens, in prose, with a story about the righteous man Job. At the urging of the Adversary (usually called Satan), God decides to test Job by inflicting on him horrendous suffering to see if he will remain faithful. Job bears his pain while maintaining faith in God's justice.

God permits Job to be tested by a series of disasters that deprive him of his children, strip him of his worldly possessions, and leave him the victim of some horrible skin disease. Despite this crushing burden of misfortune, no word of impiety, of questioning God's actions, escapes his lips. When his wife suggests that he renounce God and thereby put an end to his sufferings, he soundly rebukes her, and reaffirms his simple, unshakable faith: "Should we accept only good from God and not accept evil?" he asks. Three of his friends learn of his unutterable misery, and they travel from their respective lands to be with him and to console him. After a week of uninterrupted, somber, and obviously reflective silence, our hero finally unburdens himself, and he curses the day of his birth.

It is important to note three assumptions inherent in the prologue: Job is innocent, his pain is in no way punishment, and God is basically just, though his infliction of Job is, as God says, "without cause" (2:3); the purpose of the affliction is to test his piety.

JOB TEXT STUDY:

A. Job 3:3-13:

And that brings us to the Book of Job chapter 3. This is the point when Job finally cries out. I want you to listen to me read it, but I want you to try and get into this character's head. Remember what has happened to him. He has lost all of his worldly possessions, he has a skin disease and his children have died.

Read:

- ³Blot out the day when I was born
and the night that said,
"A male has been conceived!"
- ⁴Make that day dark!
may God not look after it from above,
no light flood it.
- ⁵Foul it, darkness, deathgloom;
rain-clouds settle on it;
heat-winds turn it to horror.
- ⁶Black take that night!
may it not count in the days of the year,
may it not come in the round of the months.
- ⁷That night be barren! That night!
no joy ever come in it!
- ⁸Curse it, men who spell the day,
men skilled to stir Leviathan.
- ⁹May its morning stars stay dark,

may it wait for light in vain,
 never look on the eyelids of dawn—
¹⁰Because it did not lock the belly's gates
 and curtain off my eyes from suffering.
¹¹Why did I not die inside the womb,
 or, having left it, give up breath at once?
¹²Why did knees advance to greet me,
 or breasts, for me to suck?
¹³Now I would be lying quietly.
 I would be sleeping then, at rest,

Ask:

1. If all of what happened to Job happened to you could you see yourself saying this?
 - *I might say something like this, but this seems extreme*
 - *I can see myself saying this. I would rather die, as a child then have to feel this pain.*
 - *I cannot see myself saying this. If this is God doing this, then it is divinely decreed.*
 - *This makes me unbelievably mad at God.*
2. To what extent can you identify with Job here? Why or why not?
 - I want you to take a moment and think about how if you were Job, and you were to tell this to a friend of yours, how would you want them to react?
 - *I would want comforting words*
 - *I would want someone to just be there with me whether or not he or she knew what to say.*
 - *I would want someone to tell me why this has all happened to me.*

B. Job 4:1-9

We have just heard Job cry out cursing the day he was born, and now his first friend responds to that pain. Can someone please volunteer to read Eliphaz's response?

⁴ ¹Eliphaz the Temanite then took up the argument and said:
²Might one try a word with you, or would you tire?—
 but who could hold back words now?
³You were always the one to instruct the many,
 to strengthen failing hands;
⁴Your words would pick up men who had fallen
 and firm up buckling knees;
⁵yet now it is your turn, and you go faint;
 it has reached you, and you are undone.
⁶Isn't your innocence some reassurance?
 Doesn't your righteousness offer you hope?
⁷Think: What really guiltless man has gone under?
 Where have the upright perished?

⁸I see men plowing wickedness,
seeding, harvesting trouble—
⁹One breath from God and they perish;
one snort from God and they're gone.

What is Eliphaz telling Job here?

That Job may claim to be righteous, but that because only the guilty are punished, and because Job is being punished, than Job must be guilty of something.

If Eliphaz believes that Job is guilty of sin, and that the sinful get what they deserve, then what is Eliphaz really telling Job.

That he has no right to be upset because he deserves this.

How might you react to Eliphaz's words of comfort?

C. Job 8:1-7

Job now responds to Eliphaz, but we aren't going to read it (if you want to read the whole thing I'll be more than happy to help you with that). We are going to look ahead to what his next friend, Bildad, has to say to comfort him. A volunteer please.

⁸Bildad the Shuhite then took up the argument and said:

²How long will you go on like this?

What a great wind are the words from your mouth!

³Would God pervert judgment?

Would the Almighty pervert what is right?

⁴Your sons have sinned against God, that is all,

And God got rid of them

on account of their own crimes.

⁵If you would now seek out God,

beseech the Almighty,

⁶be pure and true—

God would use for you

Restore your righteous home.

⁷Your former life will seem a paltry thing,

So greatly will you prosper in the end.

What has Bildad said about Job's children?

That they got what they deserved because they must have sinned

If you were a parent who just lost your children and someone was trying to comfort you by saying that they deserved it, how might you react?

Answers may vary, most likely the answer will not be positive towards the one offering "comfort"

What else does Bildad say?

That if Job admits his sins and repents to God all will be well.

What is the problem with that?
Job did not sin.

D. Job 11:1-6

Job now returns a speech to Bildad and we will now skip ahead to what Job's third friend, Zophar, has to say. Can I have another volunteer to read?

- 11 ¹Zophar the Naamatite then took up the argument and said:
²Should a speech go unanswered just because it is long?
Is someone with ready lips always right?
³You want to silence people with your bluster,
cow them with sarcasm, no one restrains you.
⁴You say, "My teaching's perfect," "I was pious"—
yes, in your eyes.
⁵But how I wish God would speak,
with open lips when you are present,
⁶Tell you some of wisdom's mysteries
(for wisdom comes wrapped up in double folds)—
then you would realize:
God is punishing you less than you deserve.

So, how well does Zophar do at comforting Job?
Not very good.
Hurtful.
Mean.

What are some of the things that Zophar says that are hurtful?
That Job was never really pious.
That he whines too much.
That God should punish him even more.

Why would a "friend" say these things? What might his motivations be?

We know that God is testing Job, and that Job is really a pious individual, yet Zophar makes the claim that if God would only speak to Job, God would tell Job that he was wicked and deserved a lot more in the way of a punishment. If God entered the conversation now, what might God say?
Nothing, because it would mean God's admitting that the punishment was unjust.
"How dare you claim to know what I am thinking."

Well, as fortune would have it, God does have something to say to Job's friends. It just comes much later in the book after another couple of rounds of speeches along the same lines as we have read here. There is a fourth "comforter" named Elihu who is quiet for much of the story until he just can't take it any longer and essentially "tells Job off" and in doing so evokes God's name apparently one too many times and concludes his speech

with: (Job 37:23-24) “We cannot find God out – God is great in power and justice and abundant in righteousness. God will never answer you (referring to Job’s calling out for an answer as to why this is all happening to him) Therefore, mortal, fear God whom none of the wise can perceive.” This must have been the final straw for God because the very next line (38:1) continues with, “Then God replied to Job out of the tempest and said...” In God’s speech to Job God never says why this is happening to Job only that they ways and wonders of God are a mystery to people that humans just cannot understand.

What is also interesting here is that God’s presence and acknowledgement of Job’s suffering, even is not revealing the why, is a comfort to Job.

Why do you think this might be?

Because his pain is being validated.

It means that he is being heard.

He now knows that his suffering wasn’t because of anything he did.

What does this tell us about the nature of suffering?

That it is a mystery

We don’t know why we suffer, just that we do.

It’s not something that we can control.

If suffering is not something that we can control, what is something that we can control?

How we respond to it.

And how we respond to it in others

I need one last volunteer to play the part of God and “tell off” Job’s “comforters.”

42 ⁷After God had said these things to Job, He said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “I am very angry at you and your two friends, for you have not spoken rightly about me as did my servant Job. ⁸So take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer them as whole burnt offerings for yourselves. And make sure that Job my servant prays for you; for only him will I heed not to treat you with the disgrace you deserve for not speaking rightly of me as did my servant Job.” ⁹Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamatite went and did exactly what God told them to do, and God accepted Job’s prayer.

What does God think of the comforting job they did?

God didn’t like it one bit.

What does God make them do?

Apologize to Job, because if Job doesn’t forgive them and pray for them, God will punish them.

If you were Job, do you think you could forgive them after what they said to you? Why or why not?

What does this tell you about why it might matter what you say to another who is suffering?

God cares very deeply about how we treat and talk to each other.

HOW TO COMFORT

Using Job's friends as poor examples of how to comfort someone, have the group come up with a guideline for how to comfort someone in distress. You can also use *Pirkei Avot* 4:23 as a starting point. If the group is really stuck you can use the attached guide as a source of inspiration, but do not use it to give them the answers. There is also a checklist for visiting the sick that can be found in the appendix.

Pirkei Avot 4:23

Rabbi Shimon Ben Elazar: Do not try to placate your friends at the height of their anger; do not attempt to comfort them in the first shock of bereavement; do not question their sincerity at the moment when they make a solemn promise; do not be overeager to visit them in the hour of their disgrace.

DEVELOPING YOUR THEOLOGY

While working in your journals to develop your theology further please consider the following questions:

- 1) How does the Book of Job test your theology?
- 2) How does it reinforce it?
- 3) Why do you think Job's friends react the way they do?
- 4) Job's friends had firm theologies when it came to suffering, yet they still weren't able to help Job. Why do you think this was and is there a way of incorporating that answer into your theologies?

SHARING THEOLOGIES

Use this time for learners to present their theologies. The likelihood is that this will be emotionally charged topic and therefore it is recommended that people share their pieces, but that others don't comment on them.

LEAN ON ME

Conclude with singing the song "Lean On Me" together.

Book of Job

3 ¹Then Job spoke and cursed his day ²and raised his voice and said:

³Blot out the day when I was born

and the night that said,

“A male has been conceived!”

⁴Make that day dark!

May God not look after it from above,

no light flood it.

⁵Foul it, darkness, deathgloom;

rain-clouds settle on it;

heat-winds turn it to horror.

⁶Black take that night!

May it not count in the days of the year,

may it not come in the round of the months.

⁷That night be barren! That night!

No joy ever come in it!

⁸Curse it, men who spell the day,

men skilled to stir Leviathan.

⁹May its morning stars stay dark,

may it wait for light in vain,

never look on the eyelids of dawn—

¹⁰Because it did not lock the belly’s gates

and curtain off my eyes from suffering.

¹¹Why did I not die inside the womb,

or, having left it, give up breath at once?

¹²Why did knees advance to greet me,

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to strengthen failing hands;

⁴Your words would pick up men who had fallen

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⁵yet now it is your turn, and you go faint;

it has reached you, and you are undone.

⁶Isn’t your innocence some reassurance?

Doesn’t your righteousness offer you hope?

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What a great wind are the words from your mouth!
³Would God pervert judgment?
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⁴Your sons have sinned against God, that is all,
And God got rid of them
on account of their own crimes.
⁵If you would now seek out God,
beseech the Almighty,
⁶be pure and true—
God would use for you
Restore your righteous home.
⁷Your former life will seem a paltry thing,
So greatly will you prosper in the end.

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cow them with sarcasm, no one restrains you.
⁴You say, "My teaching's perfect," "I was pious"—
yes, in your eyes.
⁵But how I wish God would speak,
with open lips when you are present,
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3 1 אַחֲרֵי־כֵן פָּתַח אִיּוֹב אֶת־פִּיהוּ וַיִּקְלָל אֶת־יוֹמוֹ: פ

2 וַיַּעַן אִיּוֹב וַיֹּאמֶר:

3 יֹאכָר יוֹם אֲנִלֵּד בּוֹ וְהַלֵּילָה אֲמַר תָּרָה גִּבֹּר: [עָלִיו נִהְיָה:

4 הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הָיָה יְהִי חֲשֹׁךְ אֶל־יִדְרָשׁוּ אֱלֹהִים מִמֶּעַל וְאֶל־תּוֹפֵעַ

5 וַיֵּאָלְהוּ חֲשֹׁךְ וַצִּלְמוֹת תִּשְׁכַּן־עָלָיו עָנְנָה וַיִּבְעֲתוּהוּ כַּמִּירִי יוֹם:

6 הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה וַיִּקְתְּהוּ אָפֶל אֶל־יָחִיד בְּיָמַי שָׁנָה בְּמִסְפַּר יָרְחִים

7 הִנֵּה הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה וַיְהִי גִלְמוּד אֶל־תִּבְאָה רַעְנָה בּוֹ: [אֶל־יָבֵא:

8 יִקְבְּהוּ אֲרֵר־יָוִם הָעֲתִידִים עָרָר לַוִּיתָן:

9 יִחְשְׁכוּ כּוֹכָבֵי נֶשֶׁף וַיִּקְו־לְאֹר וַאֲנִי וְאֶל־יָרְאָה בַּעַפְעַפ־יָשְׁחֹר:

10 כִּי לֹא סָגַר דִּלְתִּי בְטִגִּי וַיִּסְתֵּר עָמָל מֵעֵינַי:

11 לָמָּה לֹא מָרַחֵם אֲמוֹתַי מִבֶּטֶן יִצְאָתִי וְאֶנֹּעַ:

12 מִדּוֹעַ קִדְמוֹנֵי בִרְכִים וּמִה־שָׂדִים כִּי אֵינִק:

13 כִּי־עָתָה שִׁכַּבְתִּי וְאֲשָׁקוּט יִשְׁנֹתִי אֲזִוִּיתָה לִּי:

4 1 וַיַּעַן אֱלִיפָז הַתִּימְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר:

2 הַנֶּסֶךָ דָּבָר אֱלִיף תִּלְאַה וַעֲזָר בְּמַלְיָן מִי יוּכַל:

3 הִנֵּה יִסְרֹת רַבִּים וַיְדִים רַפּוֹת תַּחֲזֹק:

4 כְּזֹשֶׁל וְקִימוֹן מִלִּיף וּבִרְכִים כְּרַעוֹת תִּאֲמָץ:

5 כִּי עָתָה וַתִּבְּאוּ אֱלִיף וַתִּלְאַ תַּנַּע עֲדִיף וַתִּבְהַל:

6 הֲלֹא יִרְאָתָה כִּסְלִיתָה תִּקְוֹתָהּ וְתַם דְּרָכֶיהָ:

7 זָכַר־נָא מִי הוּא נָקִי אָבִיר וְאִיפֹה יִשְׁרִים נִכְחָדוּ:

8 כֹּאֲשֶׁר־רָאִיתִי תִרְשִׁי אֲנִי וְזֹרְעֵי עָמָל יִקְצְרוּהוּ:

9 מִנְשַׁמֵּת אֱלֹהֵי יֹאכָרֵי וּמִרוּחַ אֲפֹי יִכְלוּ:

8 1 וַיַּעַן בִּלְהָד הַשּׁוּתִי וַיֹּאמֶר:

2 עַד־אֲנִי תִמְלֵל־אֱלֹהִים וְרוּחַ כְּבִיר אֲמַר־פִּיף:

3 הֲאֵל יַעֲנֵת מִשְׁפָּט וְאִם־שֹׁדֵי יַעֲנֵת־צָדֵק:

4 אִם־בִּגְיָה חָטְאוּ־לֹו וַיִּשְׁלַח־ם בְּיַד־פִּשְׁעָם:

5 אִם־אָתָּה תִּשְׁתַּר אֶל־אֵל וְאֶל־שֹׁדֵי תַחֲתָנֹן:

6 אִם־נָךְ וַיִּשָּׁר אָתָּה כִּי־עָתָה יַעֲרִי עָלֶיךָ וְשָׁלֵם נָתַתְּ צָדִיקָךְ:

7 וְהִנֵּה רֹאשִׁיתָךְ מִצֹּעַר וְאַחֲרִיתָךְ יִשְׁגָּה מָאֵד:

11 וַיֵּעַן צֶפֶר הַנַּעֲמָתִי וַיֹּאמֶר:
 2 הָרֹב דְּבָרִים לֹא יֵעָנֶה וְאִם־אִישׁ שִׁפְתָּיִם יִצְדָּק:
 3 בְּדִידָהּ מִתִּים יִחְרִישׁ וְחִלְעֵנִי וְאֵין מִכֶּלֶם:
 4 וְחֹאמֶר נֶן לִקְחִי וְכֹר הִיִּיתִי בַּעֲיִנֶיהָ:
 5 וְאִילָם מִי־יִתֵּן אֱלֹהֵה דְבָר וַיִּפְתַּח שִׁפְתָּיו עִמָּךְ:
 6 וַיִּגְד־לָךְ וְתַעֲלָמוֹת חֻכְמָה כִּי־כַפָּלִים לְחֹשֶׁה
 וְדַע כִּי־יִשָּׂה לָךְ אֱלֹהִים מַעֲנֶנֶךָ:

42 7 וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי דְבַר יְהוָה אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֶל־אִיּוֹב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
 אֶל־אֱלִיפָז הַתִּימְנִי חֲדָה אִפִּי בָךְ וּבִשְׁנֵי רַעֲיָה כִּי לֹא דִבַּרְתָּם אֵלַי
 8 וְכֹנֶנָה כְּעַבְדִּי אִיּוֹב: 8 וְעַתָּה קְחוּ־לָכֶם שִׁבְעַת־פָּרִים וְשִׁבְעָה
 אֵילִים וּלְכוּ אֶל־עַבְדִּי אִיּוֹב וְהַעֲלִיתֶם עֹלָה בְּעַדְכֶם וְאִיּוֹב עַבְדִּי
 יִתְפַּלֵּל עֲלֵיכֶם כִּי אִם־פָּגְיוֹ אֲשָׂא לְבִלְחִי עֲשׂוֹת עִמָּכֶם נִבְלָה כִּי לֹא
 9 דִּבַּרְתָּם אֵלַי וְכֹנֶנָה כְּעַבְדִּי אִיּוֹב: 9 וּלְכוּ אֱלִיפָז הַתִּימְנִי וּבִלְחֶד
 הַשְׂחִי צֶפֶר הַנַּעֲמָתִי וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֲלֵיהֶם יְהוָה וַיֵּשָׂא יְהוָה
 10 אֶת־פָּגְיוֹ אִיּוֹב:

Pirkae Avot 4:23

Rabbi Shimon Ben Elazar: Do not try to placate your friends at the height of their anger; do not attempt to comfort them in the first shock of bereavement; do not question their sincerity at the moment when they make a solemn promise; do not be overeager to visit them in the hour of their disgrace.

How to Comfort a Grieving Person

- Step 1
Allow the person to talk about his grief and express his feelings. Listen without offering advice or interrupting.
- Step 2
Be patient with the grieving person's changeable moods. It's normal for someone who is grieving to alternate between anger, sadness, numbness and acceptance.
- Step 3
Give the person as much time as he needs to grieve. Telling him to 'get over it' or 'let it go' won't help him grieve any faster.
- Step 4
Ask the bereaved what you can do to help. Try not to get frustrated if he doesn't know what he needs.
- Step 5
Offer suggestions of what you could do to help. For example, does the grieving person need more space? Does he want you to be around more? Are there tasks or errands he needs done?
- Step 6
Show affection such as hugs or handholding if the bereaved seems receptive. If he seems uninterested in affection, try not to get irritated – this will pass with time.
- Step 7
Encourage the grieving person to join a grief support group. He can call his doctor for a referral or look in the community service section of the yellow pages for grief support services.
- Step 8
Urge the grieving person to get professional help if he's so depressed that he's unable to function day to day. Assist him in setting up an appointment with a doctor to discuss counseling or possible medication.

Lean On Me
Bill Withers

Sometimes in our lives we all have pain
We all have sorrow
But if we are wise
We know that there's always tomorrow

Lean on me, when you're not strong
And I'll be your friend
I'll help you carry on
For it won't be long
'Til I'm gonna need
Somebody to lean on

Please swallow your pride
If I have things you need to borrow
For no one can fill those of your needs
That you don't let show

Lean on me, when you're not strong
And I'll be your friend
I'll help you carry on
For it won't be long
'Til I'm gonna need
Somebody to lean on

If there is a load you have to bear
That you can't carry
I'm right up the road
I'll share your load
If you just call me
So just call on me brother, when you need a hand
We all need somebody to lean on
I just might have a problem that you'd understand
We all need somebody to lean on

Lean on me when you're not strong
And I'll be your friend
I'll help you carry on
For it won't be long
Till I'm gonna need
Somebody to lean on
Lean on me...

RETREAT

WHAT IS THIS RETREAT ABOUT?

This retreat is about accomplishing several different tasks. The previous lessons were meant as a way of preping the body and soul for this retreat, sort of like training for a marathon. Hopefully the students have been able to build up their spiritual endurance to be able to talk about some very real things.

The activities during the retreat will vary from general health and wellbeing, to spiritual text studies and Jewish learning to various kinds of “support groups” and having a forum to talk about different types of grievings (not just grieving over the loss, fear of loss, or process of loss, of a loved one or even the loss of vision or hearing).

Keep in mind that some wounds may be opened during the retreat. It is important to constantly be checking in with your learners, make sure that the atmosphere is continually supportive, and that there is a powerful uplifting conclusion attached to the end. Multiple classess are being offered during each session so that if one topic is too emotionally difficult for an individual another is available for them. Services are built into the retreat schedule, it is recommended that before hand different learners signup to offer 5 minute sermons during the services.

There are also a couple of personel requirements that you should keep in mind. There are two specific sessions that require a certain knowledge background. The first is “Scheduled time with the ‘chaplain.’” Even if the facilitator of this program is a pastoral caregiver it is recommended that you bring in someone else to act as a chaplain for this trip in case one of the participants would like to talk to someone who is not part of their congregation. This would also allow the facilitator to facilitate other activities during this time. The other recommended session to bring someone else in is for “Hospital Terminology.” For this session it would be best if you were to bring in a hospital social worker, and possibly a doctor as well, to go over various hospital procedures, terminology etc. that you might need to know.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

Friday Night

- 1) Services
- 2) Dinner
- 3) Song Session/ Evening get together

Saturday

- 1) Optional morning Jog
- 2) Breakfast
- 3) Services
 - a. Torah Text Study
 - b. My Sister's Keeper Book Group
- 4) Scheduled time with the "chaplain"
- 5) Lunch
- 6) Break out session 1
 - a. Personal Health Audit
 - b. Hospital terminology
- 7) Afternoon electives
 - a. Running
 - b. Basketball/Baseball/ other
 - c. *Aleph Bet* Yoga
 - d. Scheduled time with the "chaplain"
- 8) Afternoon Session
 - a. End-of-life care
 - b. Hospital Terminology
- 9) Dinner
- 10) Evening Hang Out
 - a. Movie *Eulogy*
 - b. Scheduled time with the "chaplain"

Sunday

- 2) Optional Morning Jog/Workout
- 3) Breakfast
- 4) Services
- 5) Break out session 2
 - a. Ethical and Spiritual Wills
 - b. The Healing Power of the Prayer book
 - c. Scheduled time with the "chaplain"
- 6) Lunch
- 7) Bringing it all Back Home

MY SISTER'S KEEPER BOOK GROUP

In the back of the book there is a study guide. Here are two questions from it. In addition, there is also a resource from the URJ included in this lesson on supporting emotional and spiritual resilience in chronically ill children and their family.

While you may want to assign the book to be read ahead of time you can also play the movie instead just be aware of the differences between the book and the movie.

The Book: Anna wins her case, but before she can announce whether she's decided to give her kidney to Kate, she's involved in a car accident and becomes brain-dead. Her lawyer, who has power of attorney over Anna, grants the kidney to Kate, who lives -- believing that she was given a second chance because Anna took her spot in heaven.

The Movie: Before the case is decided, Kate and Anna's brother Jesse reveals that Kate no longer desires to undergo operations. Their mother comes to terms with the impending demise of Kate. After Kate dies, Anna's lawyer visits the house with legal papers claiming she has won the case and now has medical emancipation from her parents.

Study Guide from the back of My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult

- 1) What is your opinion of Sara? With her life focused on saving Kate, she sometimes neglects her other children. Jesse is rapidly becoming a juvenile delinquent, and Anna is invisible – a fact the little girl knows only too well. What does this say about Sara's role as a mother? What would you have done, in her shoes? Has she unwittingly forgotten Jesse and Anna, or do you think she has consciously chosen to neglect them – either as an attempt to save a little energy for herself, or as a kind of punishment? Does Sara resent her other children for being healthy? Did you find yourself criticizing Sara, empathizing with her, or both?
- 2) On page 149, Brian is talking to Julia about astronomy and says, "Dark matter has a gravitational effect on other objects. You can't see it, you can't feel it, but you can watch something being pulled in its direction." How is this symbolic of Kate's illness? What might be a possible reason for Brian's fascination with astronomy?

Supporting Emotional and Spiritual Resilience in Chronically Ill Children and Their Family

Taken from http://urj.org/life/health/?syspage=article&item_id=3524

Suggestions of what helps parents and children who are living with continual stress to develop and sustain a sense of trust in themselves, in others and in the world of which they are a part.

When children are ill it is common for parents to feel anguished over their inability to protect their child from suffering, from painful medical procedures, from limitations upon their ability to be fully involved in educational and social activities. Lack of optimism and gratitude cannot always be counted on when a child is not feeling well additionally; feelings of isolation, difference and discouragement can all add to the distress of living with an illness. For the same reasons, it may be tough to plan occupational and social activities or to think confidently about the future particularly if the course of the illness is not predictable or clear. Being part of a congregational community can be a source of strength and can bolster faith, hopefulness and a sense of belonging.

Reminding the person that he or she matters as an individual, is cherished and needed:

It is essential for parents, children, and siblings to experience themselves as recognized and valued individuals with worth, dignity, and as infinitely precious beyond and besides the illness or difficult situation with which they are coping. Parents do best when they feel cherished by their own spouses and friends and community organizations because of who they are not just because of what they do---when they are recognized as more than caretakers but supported in that role as well. Children need to be seen as more than their illnesses; the paradox is that while we want them to link with other children experiencing the same condition (support groups) we also want to strengthen the ways in which they view themselves as individuals and unique. Too often family members either feel others avoid them because they don't know what to say about the child's illness or, in the case of siblings, the other child may feel he no longer has a name, if everyone greets him with, "How is your brother?" There is a fine balance where the situation is acknowledged with empathy but the person's unique identity is also affirmed and valued.

Hospitals and medical personnel can help the child and their family feel like individuals by being sure to use names, to speak about each person's situation as unique, by inquiring and responding to the particular interests, fears, strengths, culture and relationships of the children and families with whom they come in contact. Parents need to be recognized by staff not as helpers or hindrances in care but as unique individuals.

In the same way, religious school and preschool teachers, clergy and other congregants can make special efforts to inquire not just about the illness or the ill child but also about other aspects of each family member's life. If a child needs to miss religious school or youth group activities visits from staff and other kids really help (be mindful of contagion

and hospital regulations.) It is so easy for each child ---including siblings—to feel him or herself as adding to the burdens of everyone else in the family when there is a chronically ill family member. This is where the congregation can provide activities that allow each child to shine and to remind him/her of all they contribute to family and community. This can include involving chronically ill kids or their family members in choir, in tzedakah activities, in serving as classroom aides, being torah readers or assisting in services in some special role.

Listening and uncritically validating the person's reactions

It is difficult to listen to the fears, the feelings of being unfairly singled out, the discouragement, the sometimes unrealistic hopes and denial all of the reactions that people living with chronic illness experience without arguing or attempting to provide reassurance. People---parents, kids, siblings, grandparents--- need to discuss what has happened to them, what they fear, how they have been affected and they will want to speak to clergy, synagogue administrators, office staff, teachers and fellow congregants. When they can't come to the synagogue phone calls and emails will give them a chance to share their feelings. Validating is not agreeing or disagreeing but accepting how it seems to them. This may include acknowledging the person feels cheated, worthless or hopeless, or furious at family, the congregation and even God. It is helpful to allow feelings and fears to be heard before reassurance and practical suggestions are offered, whether in preschool, religious school, at committee meetings, in the rabbi or cantor's study, in youth group or at home.

Reminding the person of how he or she has gotten through tough times in the past

Only after their shock and grief is acknowledged can we begin to ask questions that mobilize a person's past strengths and resources as they cope with a difficult diagnosis and condition facing their child. This can mean asking how the individual and family has coped with crises before, whether with the illness or with some other great challenge. This is the time to find out what the family thinks would help, asking what they might need of the congregation, reminding them of their own strengths and past triumphs. Families can be helped to remember their own existing connections with the congregation, the help available within friendship and family networks. Without seeming to deny the need for concrete assistance, it is helpful to mention personal strengths like determination, courage, humor, faith, inspiring stories that have helped them in the past.

Offering new ways of managing

It is essential to provide concrete help and new tools for managing the stress of chronic illness in a family. New resources can include help from the congregational caring committee such as meals being delivered, respite care, carpooling, cards and visits. If such a network exists within the congregation families can be linked confidentially to others who have offered to speak about how they have managed the same illness. Referrals can be made to support and medical groups outside of the synagogue. Healing prayers and readings from our tradition can be offered. When people are feeling overwhelmed a sense of control and competence can be enhanced through involvement in expressive activities (those that the condition or illness still allow) like art, music, dance, journaling, blogging, to yoga, meditation, non competitive sports. Siblings and children

with chronic illness can be engaged in youth groups where leaders handle their awareness of the medical situation with confidentiality and sensitivity

Locating the experience in a context of meaning that enhances a sense of belonging, purpose and faith

Our tradition offers so many examples of persisting in the face of pain and discouragement in an effort to get to a better place and these can be a source of inspiration and of meaning. Families can become involved in the many Jewish and secular organizations devoted to managing and researching new cures for the illness and other congregants can be helped to support efforts to raise money and awareness. We are always helped when we are able to view our lives as part of a larger whole, and that how we with both our challenges and our gifts is part of the larger tapestry of human experience. It helps to know others before us have faced and transcended difficulties, to be reminded of our people's reaching for strength and survival, of seeking hope after setbacks, losses and discouragement. Individuals are helped by being reminded that being resilient means facing difficulties, accepting that life can include painful feelings and situations. A spiritually healthy community is one in which we are helped to live through adversity while finding ways to treat one another with infinite care and respect.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH AUDIT

After looking through the Personal Health Audit have learners create their own Spiritual Health Audit to add to their physical ones. This will be one way in which the learners can bring what is spoken about in the classroom to life.

They could put in activities such as:

- Daily prayer
- Text study
- Meeting with friends
- Taking time to do non-work related tasks
- Etc.

My Personal Health Audit

A person should aim to maintain physical health and vigor in order that the soul may be upright, in a condition to know God.

Maimonides

- ☐ I participate in at least thirty minutes of physical activity, such as brisk walking, cycling, gardening, dancing, swimming, jogging or other sports, a minimum of three or four days each week.
- ☐ I maintain a healthy weight.
- ☐ I get adequate sleep almost every night.
- ☐ I am a nonsmoker.
- ☐ If I drink alcohol, I do so with moderation.
- ☐ I practice safe sex.
- ☐ I limit foods high in saturated fat, cholesterol, sugar, salt and trans fat, such as steaks, hamburgers, hot dogs, fried food, French fries, cheese, ice cream, chips, pastries, soda and candy.
- ☐ I eat at least five servings of fresh fruits and vegetables every day.
- ☐ I always wear a seat belt when riding in a car.
- ☐ I have working smoke alarms in my home.
- ☐ I avoid excessive exposure to the sun and wear protective clothing and sunscreen.
- ☐ I always wear protective gear, like a helmet, when biking or inline skating.
- ☐ I avoid driving after drinking and avoid riding in a car/motorcycle with someone who has been drinking.
- ☐ I am aware of those aspects of my life that bring me stress, and I have developed ways to reduce this stress.
- ☐ I take some time each day to quiet my mind and relax.
- ☐ I take some time each day to do something that I simply enjoy.
- ☐ I spend quality time with my family and friends.
- ☐ I have a faith community or other group or activity that gives support, comfort, meaning and direction to my life.
- ☐ I have a periodic checkup that monitors my blood pressure, weight, cholesterol and lipid levels, including HDL and LDL.
- ☐ I am over fifty and have been screened for colorectal cancer.
- ☐ I am a woman (eighteen or over) and have had a Pap smear within the last one to three years.
- ☐ I am a woman (forty years or over) and have had a mammogram within the last two years.
- ☐ I am a man over fifty and have had a prostate exam.
- ☐ I am over fifty and have had my yearly flu shot.
- ☐ I am coping with a chronic illness and follow the exercise, diet and medication regime recommended by my physician.
- ☐ I keep my medical and personal records, which include a Health Care Proxy, up to date.
- ☐ I promise to make the following changes to promote a healthier lifestyle:



UNION FOR
REFORM JUDAISM
האיחוד ליהדות רפורמית

SERVING REFORM CONGREGATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF JEWISH FAMILY CONCERNS

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HOSPITAL TERMINOLOGY

Bring in a hospital social worker and doctor to go over the different terms and procedure that patients and their families need to be made aware of when they have to be in the hospital. Many times there is added frustration and distress when a hospital visit is made because individuals do not immediately understand what is happening around them.

How can one get more information about medical choices they need to make? How does one get discharged? What does palliative care mean, both as a term and in regards to diagnosis? What are advanced directives? What is a DNR and how can one sign for them? What happens to the body after a family member dies? How do I make funeral arrangements?

Give some structure to this session, but primarily let this be a forum for individuals to voice their questions and concerns about the hospital process. The following are some suggested terms and their definitions:⁸

Advanced Care Planning

Advanced care planning is when you think ahead about the time when you may become terminally ill and give written or verbal direction about your care to someone you trust.

Advanced Directive

An advanced directive is a document that states your wishes about medical care when you cannot make the decisions for yourself.

Artificial Nutrition & Hydration

Artificial nutrition and hydration adds to or replaces ordinary eating and drinking by giving nutrients and fluids through a tube placed directly into a person's stomach. It can also be placed into the nose and down into the stomach or done intravenously. When this support is given to people with irreversible or terminal conditions, it will not reverse the disease's course or necessarily improve the quality of life.

Capacity

If a patient has the ability to understand the medical facts and the risks and benefits of different treatments, s/he has medical decision-making capacity. If the patient cannot do these things, a healthcare proxy or others can make decisions based on the patient's preferences.

Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR)

A DNR order means that a patient or family member has instructed healthcare providers not to restart the patient's heart should it stop suddenly, or initiate artificial respiration

⁸ Fins, J. J., & Maltby, B. S. (2003). *Fidelity, Wisdom & Love; Patients and Proxies in Partnership*. New York: Weill Cornell Medical College. Pp 42-43

should breathing cease. Having a DNR order should not affect the quality of care, nor limit other treatments. A DNR order must be signed by a physician to be valid.

Healthcare Proxy Form

A healthcare proxy form is a document in which you legally designate another person to make health care decision for you should you not be able to make them for yourself

Healthcare Proxy

A healthcare proxy is someone you legally appoint to make healthcare decisions for you in case you cannot make them for yourself. Depending on the state in which you live, a proxy may also be known as: a Healthcare Agent, or a Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare.

Living Will

A Living Will is a document that contains your written wishes for care at the end of life. It states your general preferences for or against aggressive, life-prolonging treatment.

Prognosis

A prediction of the probable course and outcome of a disease.

Ventilator (Breathing Machine)

A machine that helps people breathe when you cannot breathe on their own.

MOVIE NIGHT - EULOGY

Eulogy is a movie about three generations of a dysfunctional family gather in Rhode Island to bury the family patriarch, members of the Collins clan are at each other's throats in no time. Son Daniel is a secret porn actor, and daughter Lucy is a lesbian. Lucy totes along her lover Judy to the outrage of Lucy's aggressively neurotic sister Alice, whose hysterical overreaction to the pair's marriage plans ought to tell everyone something. Rounding out the delightful crowd are dim brother Skip, whose unfailingly rude twin sons offer caustic commentary on their elders' infantile predilections; matriarchal widow Charlotte, who becomes so justifiably distraught at the insanity of her children she tries to commit suicide; and Kate, a confused but comely college freshman who juggles preparation of the eulogy with internal debate over what to do with her childhood friend-turned-suitor. This is a funny extreme of dysfunctional family dynamics at the time of a death, yet one can easily identify with what is happening to these characters. This movie is recommended for an evening activity because it pertains to the subject matter, yet also serves as a stress reliever.

DELVING INTO TEFILAH FOR HEALING

We are going to look at various prayers from “On The Door Posts of Your House”⁹ that relate to spiritual and physical distress and need for healing. Go through these prayers and find the prayers that speak to you. What stands out about them for you? What do you like or dislike?

Once you have gone through the book and everyone has found a good example of a prayer that speaks to them have the learner find a personal space for them to go and work on their own prayers. These can either be for themselves or for someone else. This prayer should be based on a physical or spiritual need that they have or are requesting for someone else that they want to communicate to God. Have them use the examples in the book as a guideline for how formulate their prayers. You should also have some extra prayerbooks or even a Hebrew-English dictionary on site so the learner can find other examples of prayer structures or Hebrew phrases. However, you might want to limit their using other example if you are concerned with it stifling their creativity.

⁹ Donna Berman, E. G. (1994). *On The Doorposts of Your House*. (C. Stern, Ed.) NY, NY: CCAR Press.

MAKING AN ETHICAL WILL¹⁰

Although many people have heard of ethical wills, it is important to clarify that an ethical will is not a legal document such as one's last will and testament or "living will" (advance health care directive). Often an ethical will is a carefully created letter to be shared with loved ones. Each will be unique; some may be a simple page of instructions and blessings for future generations; others may include family memories, life lessons, personal reflections, and significant life events. Their purpose is to preserve values, ideas, memories, life lessons, personal reflections, or significant events for one's family and friends.¹¹

The prototype for this document can be found in Genesis 49, when a dying Jacob gathers his twelve sons, gives them his instructions and blessings, and obtains their promise not to leave his bones in Egypt, but instead to bury him in Canaan with his ancestors. Both components—blessing future generations, and making death, burial, and funeral requests— should be introduced for inclusion in the modern spiritual-ethical will.

In conducting any spiritual autobiography or ethical will seminar, facilitators should consider the following possible topics for discussion:

- My happiest times/my saddest times
- Expressions of love and gratitude
- Lessons I have learned from my life experience
- Successes and regrets in my life
- How spirituality has been a part of my life
- Episodes in my life where I learned something
- Influential people in my life
- My ancestral background and family stories
- Familial obligations
- Favorite Torah or Rabbinic passages
- Things that I have done that I regret
- Hopes and blessings for future generations
- Funeral and burial preferences

It is vital that the facilitator frame these questions in a Jewish context, perhaps by utilizing a piece of Jewish text. Our own biblical stories can show a participant how important memorializing our thoughts, stories, and wishes can be.

¹⁰ Address, Richard F., Rosenkranz A. L. (2005). *To Honor and Respect; A Program and Resource Guide for Congregations on Sacred Aging*. NY, NY: URJ Press.

¹¹ "Ethical Wills: A Legacy of Values," *Tikvah Times*, Summer 2004, p 103

It is acceptable in our Jewish tradition to deliver an ethical will during one's lifetime and not wait until after death. Here are a few modern examples of ethical wills:

To My Treasured Children,

More than material things already gifted, and beyond that which is bequeathed in my last will and testament, I hope I have given you a love of your faith, a trust in God, and a devotion to family, fairness, and peace. These are among the precious jewels that will enrich your life with vitality and wonder.

I hope you will enjoy good health, good humor, and well-being.

I hope you will use yourself with passion and compassion.

I wish you a life lived with love, courage, and fantasy. Explore, dream, and discover!

*Your loving mom*¹²

To my Grandchildren and Children Everywhere:

I leave you my unpaid debts. They are my greatest assets. Everything I own—I owe:

To America I owe a debt for the opportunity it gave me to be free and to be me.

To my parents I owe America. They gave it to me and I leave it to you. Take good care of it.

To the biblical tradition I owe the belief that man does not live by bread alone, nor does he live alone at all. This is also the democratic tradition. Preserve it.

To the six million of my people and to the thirty million other humans who died because of a man's inhumanity to man, I owe a vow that it must never happen again.

I leave you not everything I never had, but everything I had in my lifetime: a good family, respect for learning, compassion for my fellow man, and some four-letter words for all occasions, words like: help, give, care, feel, and love.

Finally, I leave you the years I should like to have lived so that I might possibly see whether your generation will bring more love and peace to the world than ours did. I not only hope that you will. I pray that you will.

*Grandpa Sam Levenson*¹³

Dear Anna, Peter and Eddie,

I am a quiet man, and I know that I have never offered much in the way of spiritual guidance. . . . I hope that my manner of living has served as a living example of my own moral code. As you know, this family has had its roots here . . . since our great-grandpa Jack settled it way back in 1867. I certainly don't expect you to keep the farm; I realize that even little Eddie will follow his big brother and sister to the city. My only request is that the house and the 15 surrounding acres be preserved as a family vacation spot. I want

¹² Jeanne Bearmon's letter to accompany individual picture albums she created for each of her children, in Rachael Freed, *Women's lives, Women's Legacies* (Minneapolis: Fairview Press, 2003) p. 234

¹³ Jack Riemer and Nathaniel Stempfer, *So That Your Values Live On: Ethical Wills and How To Prepare Them* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1994) p. 168

you to bring your children to relax, fish, swim, and have fun pursuing life's simple things, but most importantly, to stick together as a family. I love you all.

*Dad*¹⁴

END-OF-LIFE CARE

Use the book *Fidelity, Wisdom & Love; Patients and Proxies in Partnership* (copies should be purchased for each participant) as a guide for how to help participants think about End-of-Life care. With this program is an example of a Healthcare Proxy Form for the state of NY. You can get some copies of your state's form from any hospital. You can use this form as well as the guide book to help participants, in particular are four stories from the book that they should fill out during the session first by themselves and then with their families or some variation of that.

Pages 18-35 contains 4 different scenarios followed by questions that make the participant think about what they would want their care to be if they were in that situation.

The stories include having cancer with other complications, having a stroke and being put on a ventilator with no hope for "meaningful recovery," Alzheimer's, and congestive heart failure.

¹⁴ "Ethical Wills: A Legacy of Values," p. 103

NEW YORK STATE HEALTH CARE PROXY

(1) I, _____

hereby appoint _____

(name, home address and telephone number)

as my health care agent to make any and all health care decisions for me, except to the extent that I state otherwise. This proxy shall take effect only when and if I become unable to make my own health care decisions.

(2) **Optional: Alternate Agent**

If the person I appoint is unable, unwilling or unavailable to act as my health care agent, I hereby appoint:

(name, home address and telephone number)

as my health care agent to make any and all health care decisions for me, except to the extent that I state otherwise.

- (3) Unless I revoke it or state an expiration date or circumstances under which it will expire, this proxy shall remain in effect indefinitely. (Optional: If you want this proxy to expire, state the date or conditions here.) This proxy shall expire (specify date or conditions):

- (4) **Optional:** I direct my health care agent to make health care decisions according to my wishes and limitations, as he or she knows or as stated below. (If you want to limit your agent's authority to make health care decisions for you or to give specific instructions, you may state your wishes or limitations here.) I direct my health care agent to make health care decisions in accordance with the following limitations and/or instructions (attach additional pages as necessary):

In order for your agent to make health care decisions for you about artificial nutrition and hydration (nourishment and water provided by feeding tube and intravenous line), your agent must reasonably know your wishes. You can either tell your agent what your wishes are or include them in this section. See instructions for sample language that you could use if you choose to include your wishes on this form, including your wishes about artificial nutrition and hydration.

(5) Your Identification: (please print)

Your Name _____

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Address _____

(6) Optional: Organ and/or Tissue Donation

I hereby make an anatomical gift, to be effective upon my death, of: (check any that apply)

☐ Any needed organs and/or tissues

☐ The following organs and/or tissues _____

☐ Limitations _____

If you do not state your wishes or instructions about organ and/or tissue donation on this form, it will not be taken to mean that you do not wish to make a donation or prevent a person, who is otherwise authorized by law, to consent to a donation on your behalf.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

(7) Statement by Witnesses

(Witnesses must be 18 years of age or older and cannot be the health care agent or alternate.)

I declare that the person who signed this document is personally known to me and appears to be of sound mind and acting of his or her own free will. He or she signed (or asked another to sign for him or her) this document in my presence.

Date _____ Date _____

Name of Witness 1

Name of Witness 2

(print) _____ (print) _____

Signature _____ Signature _____

Address _____ Address _____

This is a form for the New York State Proxy. If you live in another state, and want to use this form, please make sure this form is acceptable in your state.

BRINGING IT ALL BACK HOME

Use this time to debrief the weekend as well as the class time. Bring up the different sessions that were offered as well as the different class subjects and go over what people thought of them. What helped them, or what wasn't as useful. Go over the process of writing a theology and ask participants if they would like to share their theologies to the group.

Also use this time to brainstorm the different ways that they can stay involved with each other as the year continues as well as how to maintain a caring community at the institution.

You can also use this time for polling participants as to what else they may like to study and how else they may like to engage themselves within the learning community of your congregation.

This session should not only be used as a way of concluding the curriculum but also should be used to empower the learner to carry it onward with them beyond the classroom.

POST-CLASS FOLLOW-UP

This program should not be a one-time occurrence. When you say good-bye at the end of the retreat the program should still continue. The goal of this curriculum was not just to help individuals figure out their theology, but also to engage individuals in a Jewish caring community. Therefore, there really does not have to be an end to this program. It's just the end of the lesson plans included in this curriculum.

Hopefully learners will continue to let the friendships and bonds they made during the program flourish. However, there is more to a Jewish caring community than friendship. Hopefully the learners believe that they are responsible to one another through good times and bad and as the years progress and individuals in the community start fading away from synagogue life.

How will we know if this program is a success? The short term answer is if they can articulate a theology that can be utilized during moments of spiritual stress and that they are able to share it with one another. The long term answer is if when members of the community start to become ill and fade away from synagogue life, if the participants of this program reach out to them and engage them in the community whether or not they walk through the doors of your congregation.

In the appendix of this curriculum you will find various meditations and blessings for healing, as well as several other sources. These sources can be utilized for creating the next generation of curriculum at your institution. Perhaps you might engage previous participants to create such curriculum and teach it to the next generation of participants so that one generation may guide the next. Thus fostering a community based around caring with learning at its roots.

Perhaps you, or a participant may want to start a book of the month group that deals with the topics discussed in this curriculum. Perhaps your learners will want to join various outreach or *Chesed* Caring Committees and share their learnings with others. Maybe you could run this curriculum or others like this, every 6 months instead of once every year and then bring all the former participants together on an alumni retreat with the current participants

But most importantly, make sure that you spread the knowledge that this program exists. Preach about it if you have to, because it isn't really about making sure that you have participants (which would be great) but rather that people know that there are those in the community that care very deeply about their spiritual wellbeing. Just preaching about these themes will send the message to your congregants that you, as well as the rest of the leadership team, are willing to discuss this with them. All too often congregants don't approach their clergy because they aren't sure if it's safe to talk to them about it or not. The key is to find as many ways as possible to integrate this with as much of the culture of your institution as possible. Running this program in and of itself will not create a caring community. Rather this curriculum should run in alignment with everything else

the congregation is doing to foster that caring community so that it becomes the cultural norm to seek out each other especially when one is absent from the community based on health reasons.

APPENDIX

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

***Saying Kaddish; How to Comfort the Dying, Bury the Dead & Mourn As a Jew.* Diamant, A. (1998). New York, NY: Schocken Books.**

This book is broken into four different parts. Part 1 explains what the significance behind this prayer is and why it has remained such a powerful prayer especially when recited in memory of loved ones who have died. Part 2 traces how Jews deal with death from before death until the end of the funeral and also encompasses end-of-life issues, how to talk to the dying, *Viddui*, the mitzvah of *kavod hamet* as well as a full description of a Jewish funeral. Part 3 is centered on the different ways one can comfort the bereaved and Part 4 is a collection of different translations and interpretations for the *Kaddish*.

***Behoref Hayamim; In the Winter of Life A Values-Based Jewish Guide for Decision Making at the End of Life.* Reconstructionist Rabbinical College - Center for Jewish Ethics. (2002). Wyncote, Pennsylvania: Reconstructionist Rabbinical College Press.**

This book offers a practical guide featuring advice on end-of-life decisions. This guide is meant to help individuals wrestle with what Jewish traditions and practices have been for centuries while acknowledging that we live in a post-*halakhic* world. The book brings together the writings of physicians, scholars and chaplains to provide medical information and practical guidance and merge it with Jewish moral perspectives. Topics include: end-of-life medical interventions and how they are performed, documents and advice that are available to families, how to ask for guidance from professionals, challenges accompanying diagnosis, theologies of pain and suffering, discussion of hospice and end-of-life care, and when to end a life.

***The Healing Powers of Psalms.* Chiel, S., & Dreher, H. (2000). New York: Marlowe & Company.**

The authors believe that the psalms can be used as sources of inspiration and guidance especially during moments of spiritual turmoil. Fifteen various psalms on the topics of healing, spiritual coping, and acceptance and recovery. They use each psalms as a starting point for offering spiritual and emotional guidance for their reader. To accomplish this goal the authors expound on the text by asking the spiritual questions that the psalms stir within us and then use modern vinettes, biblical references, talmudic sources, as well as modern Jewish spiritual responses as a way of responding to those questions and offer their readers some guidance.

***Fidelity, Wisdom & Love; Patients and Proxies in Partnership.* Fins, J. J., & Maltby, B. S. (2003). New York: Weill Cornell Medical College.**

This is an interactive workbook on how to make end-of-life decisions. The book carefully walks readers through the various challenges that they may have to face at some point in their life or the lives of those close to them. The book goes over various hospital terminology such as a DNR order and advanced directives. It also defines and explains the impact of what it means to be put on a ventilator or to be on artificial nutrition and hydration systems. It guides readers through working out what they want their advanced directives to be as well as how to fill out a healthcare proxy form.

To Honor and Respect; A Program and Resource Guide for Congregations on Sacred Aging.* Rabbi Richard Address with Andrew Rosenkranz. (2005). New York: URJ Press. Chapter 5 *Seeing Life as a Sacred Journey: Seeking Meaning and Purpose

This contains many examples of how to create a spiritual autobiography as well as ethical and spiritual-ethical wills as a way of in various approaches. These approaches include on a retreat, and doing a spiritual assessment survey. The assessment survey asks the participant about what are their inspirational sources of support, and prompts individual to clarify how they envision spirituality in their lives. This chapter also provides an intergenerational approach of how to passing on ethical tradition.

***Wrestling Blessings: A Pastoral Response to Suffering.* Rabbi Myriam Klotz (2005). In Rabbi D. Friedman, *Jewish Pastoral Care; A Practical Handbook from Traditional & Contemporary Sources* (pp. 3-27). Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing.**

This article contains all the major theological themes surrounding suffering in Jewish tradition from the Bible to modernity. The article is geared towards a chaplain and makes the argument that one should not be asking “Why is this happening to me?” or “Why is God allowing me to suffer?” but rather “What am I going to do with this situation of suffering?” While offering pastoral care it is important to keep in mind that there are no simple resolutions to the nature of suffering, no guidelines for being a companion; that we all must always exude “radical caring” and the godly qualities of loving-kindness and empathic presence.

Olitzky, C. O. *Jewish Spiritual Guidance; Finding Our Way to God.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. Chapter 11 *Continuing The Spiritual Journey.*

This chapter looks at Psalm 119. Psalm 119 can be used as a source for principles relating to spiritual guidance. The Hebrew acrostic which begins each stanza can be seen as a thematic guide for the entire stanza. Such themes include being happy for others, dealing kindly to others, steadfast love, etc. This chapter can be utilized as a guide for understanding Psalm 119 and how to use it within the settings of this curriculum as well as a guide on how to construct your own spiritual Psalm within the same structure and style of Psalm 119

***Building Your Own Theology.* Gilbert, R. S. (2000). Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association. Volume 1.**

This curriculum is based on the assumption that everyone can be their own theologian and serves as a guide on how to formulate and articulate your personal theology. It does this by integrating an individual's life story while also rooting them within the textual and theological sources from their religious background. This curriculum is rooted in the Unitarian tradition, however, with a few modifications it can be applied to any faith based theological process.

PSALMS

PSALMS 119

Psa. 119:1 Happy are those whose way is blameless, who follow the teaching of the LORD.
Psa. 119:2 Happy are those who observe His decrees, who turn to Him wholeheartedly.
Psa. 119:3 They have done no wrong, but have followed His ways.
Psa. 119:4 You have commanded that Your precepts be kept diligently.
Psa. 119:5 Would that my ways were firm in keeping Your laws;
Psa. 119:6 then I would not be ashamed when I regard all Your commandments.
Psa. 119:7 I will praise You with a sincere heart as I learn Your just rules.
Psa. 119:8 I will keep Your laws; do not utterly forsake me.
Psa. 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? — by holding to Your word.
Psa. 119:10 I have turned to You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commandments.
Psa. 119:11 In my heart I treasure Your promise; therefore I do not sin against You.
Psa. 119:12 Blessed are You, Adonai; train me in Your laws.
Psa. 119:13 With my lips I rehearse all the rules You proclaimed.
Psa. 119:14 I rejoice over the way of Your decrees as over all riches.
Psa. 119:15 I study Your precepts; I regard Your ways;
Psa. 119:16 I take delight in Your laws; I will not neglect Your word.
Psa. 119:17 Deal kindly with Your servant, that I may live to keep Your word.
Psa. 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may perceive the wonders of Your teaching.
Psa. 119:19 I am only a sojourner in the land; do not hide Your commandments from me.
Psa. 119:20 My soul is consumed with longing for Your rules at all times.
Psa. 119:21 You blast the accursed insolent ones who stray from Your commandments.
Psa. 119:22 Take away from me taunt and abuse, because I observe Your decrees.
Psa. 119:23 Though princes meet and speak against me, Your servant studies Your laws.
Psa. 119:24 For Your decrees are my delight, my intimate companions.
Psa. 119:25 My soul clings to the dust; revive me in accordance with Your word.
Psa. 119:26 I have declared my way, and You have answered me; train me in Your laws.
Psa. 119:27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts, that I may study Your wondrous acts.
Psa. 119:28 I am racked with grief; sustain me in accordance with Your word.
Psa. 119:29 Remove all false ways from me; favor me with Your teaching.
Psa. 119:30 I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set Your rules before me.
Psa. 119:31 I cling to Your decrees; Adonai, do not put me to shame.
Psa. 119:32 I eagerly pursue Your commandments, for You broaden my understanding.
Psa. 119:33 Teach me, Adonai, the way of Your laws; I will observe them to the utmost.
Psa. 119:34 Give me understanding, that I may observe Your teaching and keep it wholeheartedly.
Psa. 119:35 Lead me in the path of Your commandments, for that is my concern.
Psa. 119:36 Turn my heart to Your decrees and not to love of gain.
Psa. 119:37 Avert my eyes from seeing falsehood; by Your ways preserve me.
Psa. 119:38 Fulfill Your promise to Your servant, which is for those who worship You.
Psa. 119:39 Remove the taunt that I dread, for Your rules are good.
Psa. 119:40 See, I have longed for Your precepts; by Your righteousness preserve me.
Psa. 119:41 May Your steadfast love reach me, Adonai, Your deliverance, as You have promised.
Psa. 119:42 I shall have an answer for those who taunt me, for I have put my trust in Your word.
Psa. 119:43 Do not utterly take the truth away from my mouth, for I have put my hope in Your rules.
Psa. 119:44 I will always obey Your teaching, forever and ever.
Psa. 119:45 I will walk about at ease, for I have turned to Your precepts.
Psa. 119:46 I will speak of Your decrees, and not be ashamed in the presence of kings.

Psa. 119:47 I will delight in Your commandments, which I love.
Psa. 119:48 I reach out for Your commandments, which I love; I study Your laws.
Psa. 119:49 Remember Your word to Your servant through which You have given me hope.
Psa. 119:50 This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your promise has preserved me.
Psa. 119:51 Though the arrogant have cruelly mocked me, I have not swerved from Your teaching.
Psa. 119:52 I remember Your rules of old, Adonai, and find comfort in them.
Psa. 119:53 I am seized with rage because of the wicked who forsake Your teaching.
Psa. 119:54 Your laws are a source of strength to me wherever I may dwell.
Psa. 119:55 I remember Your name at night, Adonai, and obey Your teaching.
Psa. 119:56 This has been my lot, for I have observed Your precepts.
Psa. 119:57 Adonai is my portion; I have resolved to keep Your words.
Psa. 119:58 I have implored You with all my heart; have mercy on me, in accordance with Your promise.
Psa. 119:59 I have considered my ways, and have turned back to Your decrees.
Psa. 119:60 I have hurried and not delayed to keep Your commandments.
Psa. 119:61 Though the bonds of the wicked are coiled round me, I have not neglected Your teaching.
Psa. 119:62 I arise at midnight to praise You for Your just rules.
Psa. 119:63 I am a companion to all who fear You, to those who keep Your precepts.
Psa. 119:64 Your steadfast love, Adonai, fills the earth; teach me Your laws.
Psa. 119:65 You have treated Your servant well, according to Your word, Adonai.
Psa. 119:66 Teach me good sense and knowledge, for I have put my trust in Your commandments.
Psa. 119:67 Before I was humbled I went astray, but now I keep Your word.
Psa. 119:68 You are good and beneficent; teach me Your laws.
Psa. 119:69 Though the arrogant have accused me falsely, I observe Your precepts wholeheartedly.
Psa. 119:70 Their minds are thick like fat; as for me, Your teaching is my delight.
Psa. 119:71 It was good for me that I was humbled, so that I might learn Your laws.
Psa. 119:72 I prefer the teaching You proclaimed to thousands of gold and silver pieces.
Psa. 119:73 Your hands made me and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn Your commandments.
Psa. 119:74 Those who fear You will see me and rejoice, for I have put my hope in Your word.
Psa. 119:75 I know, Adonai, that Your rulings are just; rightly have You humbled me.
Psa. 119:76 May Your steadfast love comfort me in accordance with Your promise to Your servant.
Psa. 119:77 May Your mercy reach me, that I might live, for Your teaching is my delight.
Psa. 119:78 Let the insolent be dismayed, for they have wronged me without cause; I will study Your precepts.
Psa. 119:79 May those who fear You, those who know Your decrees, turn again to me.
Psa. 119:80 May I wholeheartedly follow Your laws so that I do not come to grief.
Psa. 119:81 I long for Your deliverance; I hope for Your word.
Psa. 119:82 My eyes pine away for Your promise; I say, "When will You comfort me?"
Psa. 119:83 Though I have become like a water-skin dried in smoke, I have not neglected Your laws.
Psa. 119:84 How long has Your servant to live? when will You bring my persecutors to judgment?
Psa. 119:85 The insolent have dug pits for me, flouting Your teaching.
Psa. 119:86 All Your commandments are enduring; I am persecuted without cause; help me!
Psa. 119:87 Though they almost wiped me off the earth, I did not abandon Your precepts.
Psa. 119:88 As befits Your steadfast love, preserve me, so that I may keep the decree You proclaimed.
Psa. 119:89 Adonai exists forever; Your word stands firm in heaven.
Psa. 119:90 Your faithfulness is for all generations; You have established the earth, and it stands.
Psa. 119:91 They stand this day to [carry out] Your rulings, for all are Your servants.

Psa. 119:92 Were not Your teaching my delight I would have perished in my affliction.
Psa. 119:93 I will never neglect Your precepts, for You have preserved my life through them.
Psa. 119:94 I am Yours; save me! For I have turned to Your precepts.
Psa. 119:95 The wicked hope to destroy me, but I ponder Your decrees.
Psa. 119:96 I have seen that all things have their limit, but Your commandment is broad beyond measure.
Psa. 119:97 O how I love Your teaching! It is my study all day long.
Psa. 119:98 Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies; they always stand by me.
Psa. 119:99 I have gained more insight than all my teachers, for Your decrees are my study.
Psa. 119:100 I have gained more understanding than my elders, for I observe Your precepts.
Psa. 119:101 I have avoided every evil way so that I may keep Your word.
Psa. 119:102 I have not departed from Your rules, for You have instructed me.
Psa. 119:103 How pleasing is Your word to my palate, sweeter than honey.
Psa. 119:104 I ponder Your precepts; therefore I hate every false way.
Psa. 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light for my path.
Psa. 119:106 I have firmly sworn to keep Your just rules.
Psa. 119:107 I am very much afflicted; Adonai, preserve me in accordance with Your word.
Psa. 119:108 Accept, Adonai, my freewill offerings; teach me Your rules.
Psa. 119:109 Though my life is always in danger, I do not neglect Your teaching.
Psa. 119:110 Though the wicked have set a trap for me, I have not strayed from Your precepts.
Psa. 119:111 Your decrees are my eternal heritage; they are my heart's delight.
Psa. 119:112 I am resolved to follow Your laws to the utmost forever.
Psa. 119:113 I hate men of divided heart, but I love Your teaching.
Psa. 119:114 You are my protection and my shield; I hope for Your word.
Psa. 119:115 Keep away from me, you evildoers, that I may observe the commandments of my God.
Psa. 119:116 Support me as You promised, so that I may live; do not thwart my expectation.
Psa. 119:117 Sustain me that I may be saved, and I will always muse upon Your laws.
Psa. 119:118 You reject all who stray from Your laws, for they are false and deceitful.
Psa. 119:119 You do away with the wicked as if they were dross; rightly do I love Your decrees.
Psa. 119:120 My flesh creeps from fear of You; I am in awe of Your rulings.
Psa. 119:121 I have done what is just and right; do not abandon me to those who would wrong me.
Psa. 119:122 Guarantee Your servant's well-being; do not let the arrogant wrong me.
Psa. 119:123 My eyes pine away for Your deliverance, for Your promise of victory.
Psa. 119:124 Deal with Your servant as befits Your steadfast love; teach me Your laws.
Psa. 119:125 I am Your servant; give me understanding, that I might know Your decrees.
Psa. 119:126 It is a time to act for Adonai, for they have violated Your teaching.
Psa. 119:127 Rightly do I love Your commandments more than gold, even fine gold.
Psa. 119:128 Truly by all [Your] precepts I walk straight; I hate every false way.
Psa. 119:129 Your decrees are wondrous; rightly do I observe them.
Psa. 119:130 The words You inscribed give light, and grant understanding to the simple.
Psa. 119:131 I open my mouth wide, I pant, longing for Your commandments.
Psa. 119:132 Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is Your rule with those who love Your name.
Psa. 119:133 Make my feet firm through Your promise; do not let iniquity dominate me.
Psa. 119:134 Redeem me from being wronged by man, that I may keep Your precepts.
Psa. 119:135 Show favor to Your servant, and teach me Your laws.
Psa. 119:136 My eyes shed streams of water because men do not obey Your teaching.
Psa. 119:137 You are righteous, Adonai; Your rulings are just.
Psa. 119:138 You have ordained righteous decrees; they are firmly enduring.
Psa. 119:139 I am consumed with rage over my foes' neglect of Your words.
Psa. 119:140 Your word is exceedingly pure, and Your servant loves it.
Psa. 119:141 Though I am belittled and despised, I have not neglected Your precepts.
Psa. 119:142 Your righteousness is eternal; Your teaching is true.
Psa. 119:143 Though anguish and distress come upon me, Your commandments are my delight.

Psa. 119:144 Your righteous decrees are eternal; give me understanding, that I might live.
Psa. 119:145 I call with all my heart; answer me, Adonai, that I may observe Your laws.
Psa. 119:146 I call upon You; save me, that I may keep Your decrees.
Psa. 119:147 I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope for Your word.
Psa. 119:148 My eyes greet each watch of the night, as I meditate on Your promise.
Psa. 119:149 Hear my voice as befits Your steadfast love; Adonai, preserve me, as is Your rule.
Psa. 119:150 Those who pursue intrigue draw near; they are far from Your teaching.
Psa. 119:151 You, O LORD, are near, and all Your commandments are true.
Psa. 119:152 I know from Your decrees of old that You have established them forever.
Psa. 119:153 See my affliction and rescue me, for I have not neglected Your teaching.
Psa. 119:154 Champion my cause and redeem me; preserve me according to Your promise.
Psa. 119:155 Deliverance is far from the wicked, for they have not turned to Your laws.
Psa. 119:156 Your mercies are great, Adonai; as is Your rule, preserve me.
Psa. 119:157 Many are my persecutors and foes; I have not swerved from Your decrees.
Psa. 119:158 I have seen traitors and loathed them, because they did not keep Your word in mind.
Psa. 119:159 See that I have loved Your precepts; Adonai, preserve me, as befits Your steadfast love.
Psa. 119:160 Truth is the essence of Your word; Your just rules are eternal.
Psa. 119:161 Princes have persecuted me without reason; my heart thrills at Your word.
Psa. 119:162 I rejoice over Your promise as one who obtains great spoil.
Psa. 119:163 I hate and abhor falsehood; I love Your teaching.
Psa. 119:164 I praise You seven times each day for Your just rules.
Psa. 119:165 Those who love Your teaching enjoy well-being; they encounter no adversity.
Psa. 119:166 I hope for Your deliverance, Adonai; I observe Your commandments.
Psa. 119:167 I obey Your decrees and love them greatly.
Psa. 119:168 I obey Your precepts and decrees; all my ways are before You.
Psa. 119:169 May my plea reach You, Adonai; grant me understanding according to Your word.
Psa. 119:170 May my petition come before You; save me in accordance with Your promise.
Psa. 119:171 My lips shall pour forth praise, for You teach me Your laws.
Psa. 119:172 My tongue shall declare Your promise, for all Your commandments are just.
Psa. 119:173 Lend Your hand to help me, for I have chosen Your precepts.
Psa. 119:174 I have longed for Your deliverance, Adonai; Your teaching is my delight.
Psa. 119:175 Let me live, that I may praise You; may Your rules be my help;
Psa. 119:176 I have strayed like a lost sheep; search for Your servant, for I have not neglected Your commandments.

REB NACHMAN'S 10 PSALMS FOR HEALING

PSALM 16

Psa. 16:1 A michtam of David. Protect me, O God, for I seek refuge in You.

Psa. 16:2 I say to God, "You are my Lord, my benefactor; there is none above You."

Psa. 16:3 As to the holy and mighty ones that are in the land, my whole desire concerning them is that

Psa. 16:4 those who espouse another [god] may have many sorrows! I will have no part of their bloody libations; their names will not pass my lips.

Psa. 16:5 Adonai is my allotted share and portion; You control my fate.

Psa. 16:6 Delightful country has fallen to my lot; lovely indeed is my estate.

Psa. 16:7 I bless Adonai who has guided me; my conscience admonishes me at night.

Psa. 16:8 I am ever mindful of Adonai's presence; God is at my right hand; I shall never be shaken.

Psa. 16:9 So my heart rejoices, my whole being exults, and my body rests secure.

Psa. 16:10 For You will not abandon me to Sheol, or let Your faithful one see the Pit.

Psa. 16:11 You will teach me the path of life. In Your presence is perfect joy; delights are ever in Your right hand.

:JK`Db yIty¶IsDj_y`I;k l#EaÆ y^nñérVm`Dv
d;IwðdVl M¶D;tVkIm Psa. 16:1
:ÔKy`RlDo_lA;b y#ItDbwOfÆ hD;t;Da y∞DnOdSa
hÎwhy`Alæ V;t√r∞AmDa Psa. 16:2
:M`Db_yIxVpRj_lD;k y#éryî;dAa∆wÆ hD;m;Eh
X@r∞DaD;b_rRvSa MyIvwødVqIlæ Psa. 16:3
:y`DtDpVc_lAo M#DtwømVv æ_tRa a¶DÚcRa_lAbá...w
Móð;dIm M∞RhyE;kVs^n JKy∞I;sAa_lA;b ...wr¶DhQDm
r°EjAa MDtwøbV...xAo ...wñ;b√r^y Psa. 16:4
:y`Ilðrwø...g JKy¶Imwø;t h#D;tAaÆ y;Iswøk∆w
yñîqVlRj_tÎnVm hGÎwh`Vy Psa. 16:5
:yèDlDo hñðrVp`Dv t#DlSjÅnÆ_PAA
My;ImIo∆...nA;b yIlæ...wlVp`Dn My∞IlDbSj Psa. 16:6
:y`DtwøyVlik y^n...wõrV;s^y tw#ølyElÆ_PAA
y^n;DxDo∆y r∞RvSa hÎwh∆yΣ_tRa JK#érDbSa Psa. 16:7
:fwáø;mRa_lA;b yG^nyImy`ImÆ y¶I;k dy;ImDt
y∞I;d∆g%nVl h∞Dwh∆y yIty.^...wIv Psa. 16:8
:jAf`RbDl NñO;kVv^y y#îrDcV;bÆ_PAA
yóîdwøbV;k l%g∞D¥yÅw yI;bIlæ j∞AmDc -N§EkDl
Psa. 16:9
:tAj`Dv twñøa√rIl #ÔK√dyIsSjÆ N¶E;tIt_aáøl
lwóøaVvIl y∞IvVpÅn bâOzSoAt_aøl -y§I;k Psa. 16:10

:jAx`Rn ∞ÔK∆nyImyI;b twäømIo∆n
 ÔKy;RnDÚp_tRa twOjDmVcæ oAbâOc My¶^¥yQAj
 járôOa y^nEoyîdwáø;t Psa. 16:11

PSALM 32

Psa. 32:1 Of David. A maskil. Happy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered over.

Psa. 32:2 Happy the person whom Adonai does not hold guilty, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Psa. 32:3 As long as I said nothing, my limbs wasted away from my anguished roaring all day long.

Psa. 32:4 For night and day Your hand lay heavy on me; my vigor waned as in the summer drought. Selah.

Psa. 32:5 Then I acknowledged my sin to You; I did not cover up my guilt; I resolved, "I will confess my transgressions to Adonai," and You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

Psa. 32:6 Therefore let every faithful person pray to You upon discovering [his sin], that the rushing mighty waters not overtake him.

Psa. 32:7 You are my shelter; You preserve me from distress; You surround me with the joyous shouts of deliverance. Selah.

Psa. 32:8 Let me enlighten you and show you which way to go; let me offer counsel; my eye is on you.

Psa. 32:9 Be not like a senseless horse or mule whose movement must be curbed by bit and bridle; far be it from you!

Psa. 32:10 Many are the torments of the wicked, but he who trusts in Adonai shall be surrounded with favor.

Psa. 32:11 Rejoice in Adonai and exult, O you righteous; shout for joy, all upright men!

:h`DaDfSj y...wâsV;k oAv#RÚp_y...wc`Vn yñérVvAa
 ly¶I;kVcQAM dG^wðdVl Psa. 32:1
 :hî¥yIm√r wâøj...wrV;b Ny™Ea∆w NóOwDo wâøl h∞Dwh∆y
 bWovVjÅy a∆øl M#ðdDa yér`Vv¶Aa Psa. 32:2
 :Mwáø¥yAh_lD;k y#ItîgSaAvV;b£ y;DmDxSo ...wâld;b
 yI;tVvârTjRhæ_y`I;k Psa. 32:3
 :hDl`Rs X^yââq y´näOb√rAjV;b y;I;dAvVl JK¶AÚpVh%ñ
 ÔKñ@dZîy y#AlDo d¶A;bVki;t hDl∆yAlîw M∞Dmwø y-ysI;k
Psa. 32:4
 NäOwSo Dta§DcÇîñ h°D;tAa∆w h;DwhyAl yAoDvVpæ y∞ElSo
 hô@dwøa yI;t√r#AmDa yIty#I;sIk_aáøl y§In„OwSoÅw
 &ÔKSoy©îdwøa y°ItaDÚfAj Psa. 32:5
 :hDl`Rs y∞ItaDÚfAj

:...woy`I...gÅy aâø1 wy#DlEaE My;I;bår M^y∞Am PRfEvVlœ
 q#år añOxQVm t°EoVl ÔKyRlEa -dy°IsDj_lD;k
 lWE;lAÚpVt^y taÓøz_lAo Psa. 32:6
 :hDl`Rs y^ñ∞EbVbwäøSV;t f;E;lAp y¶E...nðr
 y^ññérV...xQI;t r°A...xIm yIl rRt¶Es -h§D;tAa Psa. 32:7
 :y`InyEo ÔKy∞RlDo h™DxSoy`Ia JK;ElEt
 ...wñz_JK@rá@dV;b #ÔK√rwøa`Vw -°ÔKVly`I;kVcAa Psa. 32:8
 :ÔKy`RlEa bêOrVq l#A;bE MwóølvbIl wâøY√dRo
 NRsâ@rÎw_gRt`RmV;b Ny¶IbQDh Ny§Ea d@rRpV;k s...wñsV;k
 -...wôyVh`I;t_lAa Psa. 32:9
 :...w...n`RbVbwøSôy dRs#RjE h;DwhyA;b Aj¶Efwø;bAhôw
 o¶DvQðrDl My#IbwøaVkAm My¶I;bår Psa. 32:10
 :b`El_yérVv^y_lD;k ...wnyG^ñ√rAhôwE Myóîqyî;dAx
 ...wly^gôwΣ h∞Dwhy`Ab ...wWjVmIc Psa. 32:11

PSALM 41

Psa. 41:1 For the leader. A psalm of David.

Psa. 41:2 Happy is he who is thoughtful of the wretched; in bad times may Adonai keep him from harm.

Psa. 41:3 May Adonai guard him and preserve him; and may he be thought happy in the land. Do not subject him to the will of his enemies.

Psa. 41:4 Adonai will sustain him on his sickbed; You shall wholly transform his bed of suffering.

Psa. 41:5 I said, "O Adonai, have mercy on me, heal me, for I have sinned against You."

Psa. 41:6 My enemies speak evilly of me, "When will he die and his name perish?"

Psa. 41:7 If one comes to visit, he speaks falsely; his mind stores up evil thoughts; once outside, he speaks them.

Psa. 41:8 All my enemies whisper together against me, imagining the worst for me.

Psa. 41:9 "Something baneful has settled in him; he'll not rise from his bed again."

Psa. 41:10 My ally in whom I trusted, even he who shares my bread, has been utterly false to me.

Psa. 41:11 But You, O Adonai, have mercy on me; let me rise again and repay them.

Psa. 41:12 Then shall I know that You are pleased with me: when my enemy cannot shout in triumph over me.

Psa. 41:13 You will support me because of my integrity, and let me abide in Your presence forever.

Psa. 41:14 Blessed is Adonai, God of Israel, from eternity to eternity. Amen and Amen.

:d`IwðdVl rwnømôzIm Aj#E...xÅnVmAl Psa. 41:1
 :h`Dwhôy ...wh¶Efv;lAm`Vy h#DoðrE MwñøYV;b lóð;d_lRa
 ly°I;kVcAm yérVvAaæ Psa. 41:2
 :wy`DbôyOa vRp∞RnV;b ...whG´nV;tI;tE_l`Aaôw
 X@r;DaD;b [r∞AÚvUaôw] rOÚvVa%y ...whE¥yAjy`^wΣ
 ...whâérVmVv^y -h§Dwhôy Psa. 41:3

:wáøyVlDjVb D;tVk¶ApDh w#øbD;kVvImE_lD;k y;DwV;d
 c@r°Ro_lAo ...w...n@dDoVs^yΣ hGÎwh`Vy Psa. 41:4
 :JK`Dl yIta¶DfDj_yI;k y#IvVpÅnE h¶DaDp√r y^n;E...nDj
 h°Dwhôy yI;t√rAmDæ_y^nà≈a Psa. 41:5
 :wáømVv d¶AbDaôw t...w#mîyE y¶AtDm y;Il oââr
 ...wêrVmaø y#Abôywøa Psa. 41:6
 :r`E;bådôy X...wâjAl a™Ex´y wóøl N%w¶Da_XD;bVq^y
 w#ø;bIl r#E;bådôy aôw§Dv -tw°øa√rIl a§D;b_MIaôw Psa.
41:7
 :y`Il h°Doðr ...wäbVvVjÅy -y/AlDo y;DaônOc_lD;k
 ...wvSjAlVt^yΣ y°AlDo dAjGÅy Psa. 41:8
 :M...wíqDl Py¶Iswø_y_aøl b#AkDv r¶RvSaÅw wóø;b
 q...wâxîy lAoÅÿyIlV;bæ_rAbá√;d Psa. 41:9
 :báéqDo y°AlDo lyäî;dôgIh y;ImVjAl l°Ekwøa wäøb
 yI;tVj°AfD;b_rRvSa -y°Imwølvv vy§Ia_MÅ...g Psa. 41:10
 :M`RhDl h¶DmV;lAvSa`Aw y^n;EmyIqShÅw y^n¶E...nDj
 hGÎwhôy h§D;tAaôw Psa. 41:11
 :y`DlDo y°IbôyOa Aoyäîrîy_aáøl y§I;k y;I;b
 D;tVx°ApDj_y`I;k yI;tVoådîyΣ taâøzV;b Psa. 41:12
 :M`DlwøoVl ÔKy°RnDpVl y^n™EbyI...xA;tÅw y;I;b
 D;tVk°AmD;t yI;mUtV;bæ yG^nsaÅw Psa. 41:13
 :N`EmDaôw -N¶Em„Da M#DlwøoDh d¶Aoôw MDlwøoDh`Emœ
 l#EaðrVc^y y§Eh„ølTa -h¶Îwhôy JK...wûr„D;b Psa. 41:14

PSALM 42

Psa. 42:1 For the leader. A maskil of the Korahites.

Psa. 42:2 Like a hind crying for water, my soul cries for You, O God;

Psa. 42:3 my soul thirsts for God, the living God; O when will I come to appear before God!

Psa. 42:4 My tears have been my food day and night; I am ever taunted with, "Where is your God?"

Psa. 42:5 When I think of this, I pour out my soul: how I walked with the crowd, moved with them, the festive throng, to the House of God with joyous shouts of praise.

Psa. 42:6 Why so downcast, my soul, why disquieted within me? Have hope in God; I will yet praise Him for His saving presence.

Psa. 42:7 O my God, my soul is downcast; therefore I think of You in this land of Jordan and Hermon, in Mount Mizar,

Psa. 42:8 where deep calls to deep in the roar of Your cataracts; all Your breakers and billows have swept over me.

Psa. 42:9 By day may Adonai vouchsafe His faithful care, so that at night a song to Him may be with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

Psa. 42:10 I say to God, my rock, "Why have You forgotten me, why must I walk in gloom, oppressed by my enemy?"

Psa. 42:11 Crushing my bones, my foes revile me, taunting me always with, “Where is your God?”

Psa. 42:12 Why so downcast, my soul, why disquieted within me? Have hope in God; I will yet praise Him, my ever-present help, my God.

:járíOq_y´nVbIl ly¶I;kVcAm Aj#E...xÅnVmAl Psa. 42:1
:My`IhølTa ÔKy∞RlEa gëOrSoAt y°IvVpÅn N§E;k
M^y;Dm_yéqy`IpSa_lAo gëOrSoA;t lGÎ¥yAaV;k Psa. 42:2
:My`IhølTa y∞EnVÚp h#RaðrEaðwE awóøbDa y¶AtDm y¶Dj
l°EaVl MyIhølaEl -y°IvVpÅn hWDaVmDx Psa. 42:3
:ÔKy`RhølTa h¶E¥yAa MwGø¥yAhE_ld;k y¶AlEa
rñOmTaR;b hDlðy;DlÎw M∞Dmwø yMRjRlæ y∞ItDoVmîd
yWI;l_hDtðy`Dh Psa. 42:4
h¶D...nîr_lwøqV;b My¶IhQølTa ty¶E;b_dAo M#é;dâ;dRa
JKD;sA;b -r°ObTo`Ra y§I;k y#IvVpÅn -y°AlDo
hWDkVÚpVvRaðw -h°ðrV;kðzRa hR;l§Ea Psa. 42:5
:g`Egwøj Nwñømdh h#ðdwøtðw
:wy`DnDÚp twñøo...wvðy ...w...n#@dwøa dwñøo_yI;k
MyIhøla`Elæ yIly∞Ijwøh y¶DlQDo y°ImThR;tÅw yIvVpÅn
-y°IjSjwWø;tVvI;t_hAm Psa. 42:6
:r`DoVxIm r¶AhEm MyG^nwøm\vrRjðwE Nóé;d\vrÅy
X@r∞RaEm ÔK\vrD;kðzRaæ N#E;k_lAo j¶DjwQø;tVvIt
y°IvVpÅn yAlDo y#Ahølàça Psa. 42:7
:...wr`DbDo y¶AlDo ÔKy#R;lÅgðwE ÔKyñ@rD;bVvIm_l`D;k
ÔKyó@rwø...nIx lwêøqVl aérwOqæ MwâøhV;t_lRa_MwáøhV;t
Psa. 42:8
:y`D¥yAj l∞EaVl h#D;lIpV;tE y;I;mIo [wêøryIv]
;hðryIv hDlðyA;lAb...wæ w#ø;dVsAj -h¶Îwhðy h,%.wAxðy
-M§Dmwø y Psa. 42:9
:b`Eywøa XAj∞AlV;b JK#ElEa rñédOq_hD;m`Dl
y^n¶D;tVjQAKVv h°DmDl yIoVlAs l¶EaVl -hðrVmWøa Psa.
42:10
:ÔKy`RhølTa h¶E¥yAa MwGø¥yAhE_ld;k y¶AlEa
MñðrVmDaV;b yóðr\rwøx y^n...wñp\vrEj y#AtwømVxAo`V;b -
jAxô@rV;b Psa. 42:11
yGÅnDÚpE tñOo...wvðy ...w...nó@dwøa dwâøo_yI;k
MyIhølaèElæ yIly∞Ijwøh y¶DlQDo y°ImThR;t_hAmá...w
yIvVpÅn -y°IjSjwWø;tVvI;t_hAm Psa. 42:12
:y`Dhøla`Ew

Psa. 59:1 For the leader; al tashheth. Of David. A michtam; when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to put him to death.

Psa. 59:2 Save me from my enemies, O my God; secure me against my assailants.

Psa. 59:3 Save me from evildoers; deliver me from murderers.

Psa. 59:4 For see, they lie in wait for me; fierce men plot against me for no offense of mine, for no transgression, O Adonai;

Psa. 59:5 for no guilt of mine do they rush to array themselves against me. Look, rouse Yourself on my behalf!

Psa. 59:6 You, O Adonai God of hosts, God of Israel, bestir Yourself to bring all nations to account; have no mercy on any treacherous villain. Selah.

Psa. 59:7 They come each evening growling like dogs, roaming the city.

Psa. 59:8 They rave with their mouths, sharp words are on their lips; [they think,] “Who hears?”

Psa. 59:9 But You, O LORD, laugh at them; You mock all the nations.

Psa. 59:10 O my strength, I wait for You; for God is my haven.

Psa. 59:11 My faithful God will come to aid me; God will let me gloat over my watchful foes.

Psa. 59:12 Do not kill them lest my people be unmindful; with Your power make wanderers of them; bring them low, O our shield, Adonai,

Psa. 59:13 because of their sinful mouths, the words on their lips. Let them be trapped by their pride, and by the imprecations and lies they utter.

Psa. 59:14 In Your fury put an end to them; put an end to them that they be no more; that it may be known to the ends of the earth that God does rule over Jacob. Selah.

Psa. 59:15 They come each evening growling like dogs, roaming the city.

Psa. 59:16 They wander in search of food; and whine if they are not satisfied.

Psa. 59:17 But I will sing of Your strength, extol each morning Your faithfulness; for You have been my haven, a refuge in time of trouble.

Psa. 59:18 O my strength, to You I sing hymns; for God is my haven, my faithful God.

:wáøtyImShAl t^y#A;bAhE_tRa ...wörVmVv^¥y`Aw l...wóaDv
AjjñølvvI;b M¶D;tVkJQIm d°IwðdVl tEjVvA;t_lAa
Aj∞E...xÅnVmAl Psa. 59:1
:y^n`Eb∆...gAcV;t y¶AmVmwøqVtImI;m y;DhølTa -
y¶Ab∆yOaEm y^n™ElyI...xAh Psa. 59:2
:y^n`EoyIvwøh My#ImðdE y¶Ev∆nAaEmá...w N%w;Da
yElSoâOÚpIm y^nElyI...xAhæ Psa. 59:3
:h`Dwh∆y y∞ItaDÚfAj_aøl∆w y™IoVvIp_aøl My;IzAo
y∞AlDo ...wr...wâgîy y#IvVpÅnVl ...w&b√r`Da h°E...nIh y§I;k
Psa. 59:4
:hEa√r...w y∞Ita∆rVqIl h∆r...wäo ...wn;Dnwø;k^y∆w
N...wâx...wr∆y NOwDoæ_yIl`V;b Psa. 59:5
yé∆∆gäO;b_lD;k N°OjD;t_lAa M;Iywø...gAh_l`D;k
döOqVpIl hDxy#IqDh l#Ea∆rVc^y y§Eh,,ølTa tw&øaDbVx -
My¶IhølTa_h`Dwh∆y h§D;tAa∆w Psa. 59:6

:hDl`Rs N%wDa
 :ry`Io ...wbVbwñøsy^w bRl#D;kAk ...wñmTh%y b@rRoDlæ
 ...wb...wâvÎy Psa. 59:7
 :Ao`EmOv y¶Im_yI;k M;RhyEtwøtVpIcV;b twObðrSjΣ
 M#RhyIpV;b N...wôoy„I;bÅy -h§E...nIh Psa. 59:8
 :M`Iywø...g_lDkVl g#AoVlI;tÆ wOm;Dl_qAjVcI;t hÎwhðyΣ
 h∞D;tAaðw Psa. 59:9
 :y`I;bÅ...gVcIm My#IhølTaÆ_y`I;k hðróOmVvRa ÔKy∞RlEa
 wøΩzUoæ Psa. 59:10
 :yáðr√rOvVb y^n¶Ea√rÅy My#IhølTaÆ y^n;Em√;dâqðy
 [y∞I;dVsAj] wø;dVsAj y∞EhølTa Psa. 59:11
 :y`DnOdSa ...wn∞E...n^g`Dm wOmóedyîrwøhðw ÔKVlyEjVbæ
 wOm∞Eoy^nSh y#I;mAo ...wWjV;kVv^y_N`RÛp -
 M§Eg√rAhA;t_lAa Psa. 59:12
 :...wr`EÛpAsðy vAj∞A;kIm...w h™DlDaEm...w M;DnwøaðgIb
 ...wöDvkD;l^yðw wømy¶EtQDpVc_rAbá√;d wømy#IÛp_taAÛfAj
Psa. 59:13
 :hDl`Rs X@r∞DaDh y™EsVpAaVl búOqSoÅyV;b l∞EvOm
 MyIhølTaΣ_y`I;k ...w#o√d`y`Vw wOm¶EnyQEa`Vw h°E;lA;k
 hDmEjVb h¶E;lA;k Psa. 59:14
 :ry`Io ...wbVbwñøsy^w bRl#D;kAk ...wñmTh%y b@rRoDlæ
 ...wb...wâvÎyðw Psa. 59:15
 :...wny`IlÎÿyÅw ...w#oV;bVc^yÆ añøl_MIa lóOkTaRl
 [N...wâoy^nðy] N...wo...wnðy hD;mEhæ Psa. 59:16
 :y`Il_rAx MwâøyV;b swGønDm...wÆ y;Il b∞D...gVcIm
 Dty∞IyDh_y`I;k ÔK¶R;dVsQAj r@q#O;bAl N¶E...nârSaÅw
 ÔKRΩzUo ry∞IvDa -y§InSaÅw Psa. 59:17
 :y`I;dVsAj y¶EhølTa y#I;bÅ...gVcImÆ My¶IhølTa_y`I;k
 hðr;E;mÅzSa ÔKy∞RlEa yIΩzUoæ Psa. 59:18

PSALM 77

Psa. 77:1 For the leader; on Jeduthun. Of Asaph. A psalm.

Psa. 77:2 I cry aloud to God; I cry to God that He may give ear to me.

Psa. 77:3 In my time of distress I turn to Adonai, with my hand [uplifted]; [my eyes] flow all night without respite; I will not be comforted.

Psa. 77:4 call God to mind, I moan, I complain, my spirit fails. Selah.

Psa. 77:5 You have held my eyelids open; I am overwrought, I cannot speak.

Psa. 77:6 My thoughts turn to days of old, to years long past.

Psa. 77:7 I recall at night their jibes at me; I commune with myself; my spirit inquires,

Psa. 77:8 “Will Adonai reject forever and never again show favor?

Psa. 77:9 Has His faithfulness disappeared forever? Will God’s promise be unfulfilled for all time?

Psa. 90:15 Give us joy for as long as You have afflicted us, for the years we have suffered misfortune.

Psa. 90:16 Let Your deeds be seen by Your servants, Your glory by their children.

Psa. 90:17 May the favor of Adonai, our God, be upon us; let the work of our hands prosper, O prosper the work of our hands!

:ríOdÎw rêOdV;b ...wn#D;l Dty¶IyDh hD;tAæ NwâøoDm
yGÎnOdâ~a My¶IhQølTaDh_vy`Ia h°RvOmVl hD;lIpV;t Psa.
90:1

:l`Ea h¶D;tAa M#DlwOoE_dAo M¶DlwøoEmá...w l;EbEtôw
X@r°Ra l`ElwâøjV;tÅw ...wd#D;l`y Myôîr„Dh -M@r§RfV;b
Psa. 90:2

:MáðdDa_y`nVb ...wb...wâv rRma#ø;tÅwE a;D;kâ;d_dAo
vwOnTaΣ b°EvD;t Psa. 90:3

:hDlôy`D;lAb hñðr...wmVvAaôw róObSoÅy y°I;k
lwOmVtRaæ MwâøyV;k ÔKyG%nyEo`V;b MyÓ^ndv PRl°Ra
y§I;k Psa. 90:4

:PáølsjÅy ry¶IxDjR;k r@q#O;bA;bE ...wóyVh^y h°DnEv
MD;tVmârôzΣ Psa. 90:5

:v`EbÎyôw l¶Elwømôy b@r#RoDlE P;DlDjôw Xy°IxÎy
r@qO;bA;bæ Psa. 90:6

:...wnVl`DhVb^n ñÔKVtDmSjAbá...w ÔK;RÚpAaVb
...wny¶IlDk_y`I;k Psa. 90:7

:ÔKy`RnDÚp rwñøaVmIl ...wn#EmUlSoE ÔK;R;dôg%nVl
...wny°EtOnOwSo [h°D;tAv] D;tAv Psa. 90:8

:h%g`Rh_wømVk ...wny°EnDv ...wny™I;lI;k ÔK;RtðrVbRoVb
...wânDÚp ...wnyEmÎyΣ_lDk y°I;k Psa. 90:9

vy#IjE z¶Dg_yI;k N%w;DaÎw l°DmDo MD;bVhðrôwΣ hGÎnDv
My§^nw„ømVv -t°Or...wbôgI;b M§Iaôw hÓÎnDv My°IoVbIv
M¶RhDb ...wny°EtwønVv_y`Emôy Psa. 90:10

:hDp`UoÎ...nÅw

:ÔK`RtðrVbRo #ÔKVtDa√r^yVk...wE ÔK;RÚpAa zâOo
AoédwOyæ_y`Im Psa. 90:11

:h`DmVkJdj b°AbVl a#IbÎnôwE oóådwøh N°E;k ...wnyEmÎyΣ
twâønVmIl Psa. 90:12

:ÔKyá@dDbSo_lAo M#EjÎ...nIhôwE y;DtDm_dAo hÎwhôyΣ
h°Db...wv Psa. 90:13

:...wny`EmÎy_lDkV;b h#DjVmVc^ndwE h¶Dnô...nârôná...w
ÔK;R;dVsAj r@qâO;bAb ...wn°EoV;bAc Psa. 90:14

:h`Doðr ...wny¶Iaðr twGønVv E ...wn;Dty^...nIo twâømyI;k
...wnEjV;mAcæ Psa. 90:15

:M`Rhy´nV;b_lAo #ÔK\rdShÅwE ÔK;RlFoDp
 ÔKyâ@dDbSo_lRa h∞Raðr´y Psa. 90:16
 :...wh`En∆nwø;k ...wny#édîyE h¶EcSoAmá...w ...wny;ElDo
 h¶Dn∆nwø;k ...wnyéédîyΣ h∞EcSoAm...w ...wny¶ElQDo
 ...wny#EhølTa y¶DnOdSa MAoôOn -y§Ihy^w Psa. 90:17

PSALM 105

Psa. 105:1 Praise Adonai; call on God's name; proclaim God's deeds among the peoples.

Psa. 105:2 Sing praises to God; speak of all God's wondrous acts.

Psa. 105:3 Exult in God's holy name; let all who seek Adonai rejoice.

Psa. 105:4 Turn to Adonai, to God's might; seek God's presence constantly.

Psa. 105:5 Remember the wonders God has done, God's portents and the judgments God has pronounced,

Psa. 105:6 O offspring of Abraham, God's servant, O descendants of Jacob, God's chosen ones.

Psa. 105:7 Adonai is our God; His judgments are throughout the earth.

Psa. 105:8 God is ever mindful of the covenant, the promise God gave for a thousand generations,

Psa. 105:9 that God made with Abraham, swore to Isaac,

Psa. 105:10 and confirmed in a decree for Jacob, for Israel, as an eternal covenant,

Psa. 105:11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your allotted heritage."

Psa. 105:12 They were then few in number, a mere handful, sojourning there,

Psa. 105:13 wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another.

Psa. 105:14 God allowed no one to oppress them; God reproved kings on their account,

Psa. 105:15 "Do not touch My anointed ones; do not harm My prophets."

Psa. 105:16 God called down a famine on the land, destroyed every staff of bread.

Psa. 105:17 God sent ahead of them a man, Joseph, sold into slavery.

Psa. 105:18 His feet were subjected to fetters; an iron collar was put on his neck.

Psa. 105:19 Until his prediction came true the decree of Adonai purged him.

Psa. 105:20 The king sent to have him freed; the ruler of nations released him.

Psa. 105:21 He made him the lord of his household, empowered him over all his possessions,

Psa. 105:22 to discipline his princes at will, to teach his elders wisdom.

Psa. 105:23 Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

Psa. 105:24 God made God's people very fruitful, more numerous than their foes.

Psa. 105:25 God changed their heart to hate God's people, to plot against God's servants.

Psa. 105:26 God sent God's servant Moses, and Aaron, whom God had chosen.

Psa. 105:27 They performed God's signs among them, God's wonders, against the land of Ham.

Psa. 105:28 God sent darkness; it was very dark; did they not defy God's word?

Psa. 105:29 God turned their waters into blood and killed their fish.

Psa. 105:30 Their land teemed with frogs, even the rooms of their king.

Psa. 105:31 Swarms of insects came at God's command, lice, throughout their country.

Psa. 105:32 God gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land.

Psa. 105:33 God struck their vines and fig trees, broke down the trees of their country.

Psa. 105:34 Locusts came at God's command, grasshoppers without number.

Psa. 105:35 They devoured every green thing in the land; they consumed the produce of the soil.

Psa. 105:36 God struck down every first-born in the land, the first fruit of their vigor.

Psa. 105:37 God led Israel out with silver and gold; none among their tribes faltered.

Psa. 105:38 Egypt rejoiced when they left, for dread of Israel had fallen upon them.

Psa. 105:39 God spread a cloud for a cover, and fire to light up the night.

Psa. 105:40 They asked and God brought them quail, and satisfied them with food from heaven.

Psa. 105:41 God opened a rock so that water gushed forth; it flowed as a stream in the parched land.

Psa. 105:42 Mindful of God's sacred promise to God's servant Abraham,

Psa. 105:43 God led God's people out in gladness, God's chosen ones with joyous song.

Psa. 105:44 God gave them the lands of nations; they inherited the wealth of peoples,

Psa. 105:45 that they might keep God's laws and observe God's teachings. Hallelujah.

:wy`DtwølyIlSo My#I;mAoDbœ ...woyñîdwøh wóømVvI;b
...wâa√rIq hîwhyAlœ ...wêdwøh Psa. 105:1
:wy`DtwøaVlVp^n_lDkV;b ...wjy#Icœ wóøl_...wrV;mÅz
wäøl_...wry`Iv Psa. 105:2
:h`Dwhôy yWEvVqAbVm -b§El j#AmVc^yœ wóøv√dðq
MœEvV;b ...wlVlAhVt`Ihœ Psa. 105:3
:dy`ImD;t wy∞DnDp ...wävV;qA;b wóøΩzUoôw h∞Dwhôy
...wâv√rî;d Psa. 105:4
:wy`Ip_yEfVÚpVvIm...w wy#DtVpOmœ h;DcDo_rRvSa
wy¶DtwøaVlVp^n ...w#rVk^z Psa. 105:5
:wyáðryIjV;b bêOqSoÅy y™EnV;b wóø;dVbAo MœDhðrVbAa
oâr%z Psa. 105:6
:wy`DfDÚpVvIm X®r#DaDhœ_lDkV;b ...wny;EhølTa h∞Dwhôy
a...whœ Psa. 105:7
:rwíø;d PRlœRaVl hGÎ...wIxœ r¶Dbð;d wóøtyîrV;b
MœDlwøoVl rœAkîz Psa. 105:8
:q`DjVc^yVl wâøtDo...wäbVv...w M;DhðrVbAa_tRa tårD;kœ
rœRvSa Psa. 105:9
:M`Dlwøo tyâîrV;b l#EaðrVc^yVlœ qóOjVl bêOqSoÅyVl
Dhâ®dyImSo`A¥yÅw Psa. 105:10
:M`RkVtAlSjÅn lRb#Rjœ NAO;DnV;k_X®r`Ra_tRa N¶E;tRa
#ÔKvl r#OmaEl Psa. 105:11
:;h`D;b Myñîrîgôw f#AoVmI;kœ r;DÚpVsIm y∞EtVm
MDtwøyVh`I;bœ Psa. 105:12
:r`EjAa M¶Ao_lRa h#DkDlVmA;mImœ ywóø...g_lRa
ywâø...gIm ...wkV;lAhVt^¥y`Åw Psa. 105:13

:My`IkDlVm M∞RhyElSo jAkWäø¥yÅw MóðqVvDoVl MâðdDa
Ajy∞I...nIh_aáo1 Psa. 105:14
:...woáérD;t_lAa yAayIbðnIlðwE y;DjyIvVmIb
...wñoð...gI;t_l`Aa Psa. 105:15
:r`DbDv MRj¶Rl_hEÚfAm_l`D;k X@r;DaDh_lAo bDoðrΣ
aâðrVq^¥yÅw Psa. 105:16
:P`Eswø y r¶A;kVm^ñ dRb#RoVlE vy;Ia M∞Rhy`nVpIl
j∞AlDv Psa. 105:17
:wáøVvpÅn hDa∞D;b lG%z√rA;bE [wóølðgår] wyDlðgår
lRb∞R;kAb ...wâ...nIo Psa. 105:18
:...whVt`DpðrVx h∞Dwhðy täärvMia wúørDb√d_aáo;b
t¶Eo_dAo Psa. 105:19
:...wh`EjV;tApðy`Aw My#I;mAoE l¶EvOm ...whóéryI;tÅyÅw
JKRlRmæ jAl∞Dv Psa. 105:20
:wáønîyðnIq_lDkV;b l#EvOm...wE wóøtyEbVl NwêødDa
wâømDc Psa. 105:21
:M`E;kAjðy wy¶Dnéqðz...w wóøVvpÅnV;b wyâðrDc
râOsVaRl Psa. 105:22
:M`Dj_X@r`RaV;b r∞D...g b#OqSoÅyðwE M^yóðrVxIm
l∞EaðrVc^y aâðbî¥yÅw Psa. 105:23
:wyâðrD...xIm ...whEmIxSo`A¥yÅwE dóOaVm wâø;mAo_tRa
rRp∞R¥yÅw Psa. 105:24
:wyáðdDbSoA;b l#E;kÅnVtIhVlE wóø;mAo aâønVcIl
MD;bIlæ JK∞ApDh Psa. 105:25
:wáø;b_rAj`D;b r∞RvSa N#OrShAaE wóø;dVbAo h∞RvOm
jAlDvæ Psa. 105:26
:M`Dj X@r∞RaV;b My#ItVpOm...wE wy;DtwøtOa yâérVbî;d
MDbæ...wm`Dc Psa. 105:27
:[wíørDb√;d] wwðrDb√;d_tRa ...w#rDmE_aáo1ðw
JK;IvVjÅ¥yÅw JKRvOjæ j`Al∞Dv Psa. 105:28
:M`Dtîg√;d_tRa tRmGî¥yÅwE MóðdVl M∞RhyEmyEm_tRa
JK∞ApDh Psa. 105:29
:M`RhyEkVlAm y#ér√dAjV;bE My;Io√;d√rApVx M∞Dx√rAa
XâårDv Psa. 105:30
:M`Dl...wbð...g_lDkV;b MyG^...nI;kE búOrDo aâðbî¥yÅw
rAmDæ Psa. 105:31
:M`Dx√rAaV;b twâðbDhRl v™Ea dóðrD;b M∞RhyEmVv^...g
N∞Atîñ Psa. 105:32
:M`Dl...wbð...g X∞Eo r#E;bAvðyÅwE M;DtîñEaVt...w
MîñVpÅ...gæ JK∞A¥yÅw Psa. 105:33

:...wny`EtwørO...nI;k ...wny#lD;tE ;h;DkwøtV;b
 My¶IbðrSo_l`Ao Psa. 137:2
 :Nwáø¥yIx ry¶IÚvIm ...wn#DlE ...wry¶Iv h;DjVmIc
 ...wny∞ElDlwøtøw ryIvæ_yérVbî;d ...wny&Ebwøv
 ...wn...wølEa`Vv M°Dv y§I;k Psa. 137:3
 :r`Dk`n t¶AmvdAa l#AoE h;Dwhø_y_ryIv_tRa ry¶Ivîñ
 JKy#Ea Psa. 137:4
 :yî^nyImø_y j¶A;kVvI;t MÊ#DlDv...wr`Vy
 JK¶EjD;kVvRa_M`Ia Psa. 137:5
 :yèItDjVmIc vaêør l#AoE MÊ;AlDv...wrø_y_tRa hRlSoAaæ
 aâøl_MIa yIkñérV;køzQRa aøøl_MIa yI;kIjVl -
 y¶^nwøvVl_q¶A;bvdI;t Psa. 137:6
 :;h`D;b dwñøø_yAh d#AoE ...wr;Do -...wr§Do
 MyîrVmâOaDhæ MÊ¶DlQDv...wr`Vy Mwøø_y tEa Mw#ødT
 y.`nVbIl -h¶îwhø_y røOkøz Psa. 137:7
 :...wn`Dl V;tVl¶Amî...gRv JK#El...wmø...gE_tRa
 JK;Dl_MR;lAvø_yRv yñérVvAa hñðd...wQdVÚvAh
 l#RbD;b_tA;b Psa. 137:8
 :oAl`D;sAh_lRa JK^y#AlDlOoE_t`Ra XWEÚp^ñøw
 z/Ejaø¥yRv -yôérVvAa Psa. 137:9

PSALM 150

Psa. 150:1 Hallelujah. Praise God in God's sanctuary; praise God in the sky, God's stronghold.

Psa. 150:2 Praise God for God's mighty acts; praise God for God's exceeding greatness.

Psa. 150:3 Praise God with blasts of the horn; praise God with harp and lyre.

Psa. 150:4 Praise God with timbrel and dance; praise God with lute and pipe.

Psa. 150:5 Praise God with resounding cymbals; praise God with loud-clashing cymbals.

Psa. 150:6 Let all that breathes praise Adonai. Hallelujah.

:wáøΩzUo Aoyñîq√rI;b ...wh...w#lVlèAhE wóøv√døqV;b
 l¶Ea_...wlVl`Ah -;h¶îy ...wlVl¶Ah Psa. 150:1
 :wáøl√d"...g bêOrV;k ...wh...w#lVlèAhE wy;DtOr...wbøgIb
 ...wh...wñlVl`Ah Psa. 150:2
 :rwáø...nIkøw lRb∞EnV;b ...wh...w#lVl`AhE r;Dpwøv
 oâq∞EtV;b ...wh...wlVl`Ahæ Psa. 150:3
 :b`Dg...woøw My¶I...nImV;b ...wh...w#lVl`AhE lwóøjDm...w
 PâOtVb ...wh...wlVl`Ahæ Psa. 150:4
 :h`Do...wrVt y¶ElVxVlIx`V;b ...wh...w#lVl`AhE
 oAm;Dv_yElVxVlIxVb ...wh...wñlVl`Ah Psa. 150:5
 :;h`Dy_...wlVl`Ah ;hGîy l¶E;lAhV;t hDmDvø...nAhæ lâO;k
Psa. 150:6

MEDITATIONS AND HEALING

*It May Be*¹⁵

It may be so with us, that in the dark
When we have done with time and wander space,
Some meeting of the blind may strike a spark,
And to death's empty mansion give a grace.

It may be that the loosened soul may find
Some delight in living without limbs,
Bodiless joy of fresh-untrammelled mind,
Peace like a sky where starlit spirit swims.

It may be that the million of cells of sense,
Loosed from their seventy years' adhesion, pass
Each to some joy of changed experience,
Weight in the earth or glory in the grass;

It may be that we cease; we cannot tell.
Even if we cease, life is a miracle.

*It is a Fearful Thing*¹⁶

It is a fearful thing to love what death can touch.
A fearful thing to love, hope, dream: to be –
To be, and Oh! To lose.

A thing for fools, this, a holy thing, a holy thing to love.

For your life has lived in me, your laugh once lifted me,
Your word was a gift to me.

To remember this brings painful joy.

It is a human thing, love, a holy thing,
To love what death has touched.

¹⁵ Anonymous.

¹⁶ Anonymous.

¹⁷O God, You are as near as
The very air we breathe,
Yet as far as the farthestmost star.

We yearn to reach You.
We seek the light and warmth of Your Presence.
Though we say You are near,
We are lonely and alone.

O let our desire be so strong
That it will tear the veil that keeps You from our sight!
Let Your light release our darkness
And reveal the glory and joy of Your presence.

¹⁸You are with us in our prayer, our love and our doubt,
in our longing to feel your presence and do your will.
You are the still clear voice within us.
Therefore, O God, when doubt troubles us,
when anxiety makes us tremble, when pain clouds the mind,
we look inward for the answers to our prayers.
There may we find you,
and there find courage, insight, and endurance.
And let our worship bring us closer to one another,
that all Israel, and all who seek You,
may find new strength for Your service.

; El na r'fa na lah

h`Dl a™Dn

a¶Dp√r a¢Dn l>Ea

God, I pray, heal her.
Numbers 12:13

¹⁷ Chaim Stern

¹⁸ Harvey Fields

Birkat HaGomeil¹⁹

Creator of miracles, mercy and life,
protect us from danger, Keep us from harm.
Creator of wonders, compassion and hope,
bless us with healing surround us with love.

Kol tov selah
Kol tov selah
Kol tov selah
Kol tov selah

Kol tove selah...

Give thanks for all that is good

May God who is gracious, be gracious to you,
protect you and bless you and care for you.
For all you are, and all you hope to be,
we give thanks for all that is good.

Kol tov selah
Kol tov selah
Kol tov selah
Kol tov selah

VISITING THE SICK A CHECKLIST OF DO'S AND DON'T FOR VISITORS²⁰

The Initial Visit

Do:

- Visit sick friends or strangers after the crisis period of the illness has passed
- Call or write a note before coming if you do not know the patient well.
- Call again if the patient does not wish to see you initially. This simply may be a bad day.
- Familiarize yourself with the patient's condition, if possible, so that you do not appear surprised if he or she is disfigured or disabled.
- Enter the room with something to talk about that will interest the patient.
- Leave a note if, when you visit, the patient is asleep or out of the room.
- Bring a little gift.
- Relax yourself into a visiting mode by concentrating on your visit, so that you can truly "be present."

Don't:

- Be afraid of doing something wrong.
- Wear perfume or shaving lotion as illness often heightens a person's sense of smell.
- Make elaborate plans for your initial visit.
- Insist on visiting if the patient repeatedly asks you not to visit,
- Wear a depressed face.

Appropriate Time to Visit

Do:

- Visit during hospital hours or at home, during the early afternoon to early evening unless the patient requests otherwise.
- Visit on the Sabbath and holy days.

Length and Frequency of Visits

Do:

- Visit a Patient both at the hospital and after returning home.
- Suggest that you come another time, if the patient has visitors.
- Step out of the room if the doctor wants to examine the patient.
- Visit frequently, if possible

Don't:

- Stay long, unless the patient requests it.

²⁰ Address, Richard, *The Synagogue As A Caring Community* page 42

Listening

Do:

- Listen actively by questioning and acknowledging what the patient is telling you.
- Let the patient's anger come out without taking it personally.
- Remember that you are there as a friend and do to have to make things better.
- Keep matters confidential if that is what the patient's desire.

Don't

- Question the doctor's judgment on the diagnosis or treatment. Even when the patient does.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books

- Address, Richard F., ed. *A Time to Prepare: A Practical Guide for Individuals and Families in Determining a Jewish Approach to Making Personal Arrangements, Establishing The Limits of Medical Care, and Embracing Rituals at the End of Life*, rev. ed. New York: UAHC Press, 2002. Includes resolutions formally adopted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union for Reform Judaism.
- Baines, Barry. *Ethical Wills: Putting Your Values on Paper*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus, 2001.
- Brener, Anne. *Mourning and Mitzvah*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing 1993.
- Birren, James E., and Cochran, Kathryn N., *Telling the Stories of Life Through Guided Autobiography Groups*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001
- Dorff, Elliot N. *Matters of Life and Death: A Jewish Approach to Modern Medical Ethics*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004.
- Faith in the Future: Healthcare, Aging, and the Role of Religion*. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Press, 2004
- Falk, Marcia. *The Book of Blessings*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Koenig, Harold G. *Aging and God: spiritual Pathways to Mental Health in Midlife and Later Years*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press 1994
- Kogan, Barry S., ed. *A Time to Be Born and a Time to Die: The Ethics of Choice*. New York: deGruyter Press, 1991.
- Moody, Harry R., and Carroll, David, *The Five Stages of the Soul: Charting the Spiritual Passages that Shape Our Lives*. New York: Warner Books, 1995
- Riemer, Jack. *Ethical Wills: Modern Jewish Treasury*. Edited by Nathaniel Stampfer. New York: Knopf, 1986
- Roszak, Theodore. *Longevity Revolution: As Boomers Become Elders*. Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Hills Books, 2001
- Sherman, Andrea, and Marsha Weiner. *Transitional Keys: A Guidebook – Rituals to Improve Quality of Life for Older Adults*. Dobbs Ferry, NY: Transitional Keys, 2004.
- Sinclair, Daniel B. *Tradition and the Biological Revolution: The Application of Jewish Law and the Treatment of the Critically Ill*. Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press, 1989
- Stern, Chaim, ed. *On the Doorposts of Your House: Prayers and Ceremonies for the Jewish Home*. New York: CCAR Press, 1994.
- Wakefield, Dan. *The Story of Your Life: Writing a Spiritual Autobiography*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990

Web Sites

- www.ethicalwill.com for details on creating an ethical will.
- www.reminiscenceandlifereview.org The International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review develops reminiscence and life review strategies as an interdisciplinary field of study.
- www.urj.org/educate/adults For the guide published by the URJ department of Lifelong Jewish Learning, *Adult B'nei Mitzvah: Affirming our Identity: A Guide for Facilitators* (New York: UAHC Press, 2001).

www.huc.edu/klasman The Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health, at the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles, serves as an educational and training center for HUC-JIR students and alumni and for all people committed to spirituality and healing.

www.projectfrace.org Provides nondenominational guidance for end-of-life care and advance care planning.

www.rwijf.org Includes position statements from “Last Acts Coalition” and “Last Acts Partnership” on end-of-life decisions.