Acceptable to You: Sealing the Amidah

We began this journey with "Adonai S'fatai Tiftah," asking God to open our lips – a prayer before the formal prayer. We close with "Yihiyu L'Ratzon" and "Elohai N'tzor" – prayers after the formal prayer. These closing blessings aren't technically part of the Amidah, but they are part of our experience of praying the Amidah. Many people begin the recitation of the Amidah by taking three steps forward to enter the prayer and enter the divine Presence. This offering is like the three steps back we take upon concluding our prayer. As we back away from that period of holy encounter, how might we find ourselves changed?

– The Builders at Bayit

Post-Amidah Blessings: Yihiyu L'Ratzon and Elohai N'tzor

יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי
לְפָנֶיךָ. ה' צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי׃

Yihiyu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi
lfanecha Adonai tzuri v'goali.

May the words of my mouth & the meditations of my heart
be acceptable to You, YHVH, my rock and my redeemer.

אֱלֹהַי. נְצֹר לְשׁוֹנִי מֵרָע
וּשְׂפָתַי מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה.
וְלִמְקַלְלַי נַפְשִׁי תִדֹּם.
וְנַפְשִׁי כֶּעָפָר לַכֹּל תִּהְיֶה.

Elohai n'tzor l'shoni mera
usfatai m'daber mirmah.
V'lim'kallelai nafshi tidom
v'nafshi k'afar l'lol tih'yeh.

פְּתַח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ.
וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדֹּף נַפְשִׁי

P'tach libi b'Toratekha.
Uv'mitzvotekha tirdof nafshi.

O God, guard my tongue from evil
And my lips from speaking falsehoods.
And to those who curse me - may my soul be silent,
And my soul shall be as dust,
as earth before and for everyone

O God, open my heart to Your Torah,
and let my soul seek Your mitzvot!

וְכָל הַחוֹשְׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה. מְהֵרָה הָפֵר עֲצָתָם וְקַלְקֵל
מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ. עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן יְמִינֶךָ. עֲשֵׂה
לְמַעַן קְדֻשָּׁתֶךָ. עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן תּוֹרָתֶךָ
לְמַעַן יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי
יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ. ה' צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי
עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו. הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

V'khol ha-hoshvim alai ra'ah, m'herah hafer atzatam v'kalkal m'hashvotam. Aseh l'ma'an y'minekha. Aseh l'ma'an k'dushatekha. Aseh l'ma'an Torahtekha. L'ma'an yehaltzun y'didekha hoshiah y'minkha v'aneini. Yihiyu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi l'fanekha, Adonai tzuri v'goali. Oseh shalom biromav, hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael v'imru amen.

And all that rise against me for bad, quickly nullify their counsel and ruin their plans
Do it for the sake of Your Name, do it for the sake of Your right [hand], do for the sake of Your Torah, do it for the sake of Your Holiness For the sake of saving Your beloved, Your right [hand] deliver us and answer us. May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart, find favor before You, YHVH, my Rock and my Redeemer. May the maker of peace in the high heavens make peace for us and for all Israel, and let us say, Amen.

Shield Me

May words arising in thought and speech,
and the resounding music of my heart
be acceptable to You Yah,
my Rock and Redeemer.

God, help shield me
from my own worst impulses
in the way I think and speak
of others sometimes.
May my soul remain
in a state of equanimity
and discernment
when others speak ill of me.
Just as my heart beats
to Torah's rhythm,
so may my soul soar
on wings of mitzvot.
And for those who connive
against me and others,
help transform their plans
into things that are good
for all of us.

May the Oneness that is peace itself,
shining down from high high places
reveal the opportunity to each of us
to make peace within ourselves,
and between each other
So let's say Amen!

Rabbi David Zaslow

Meditations Of My Heart

Your words and creation are revealed
before me as the scroll unfurls.
My sight and soul connect quietly
without sound or fanfare.
The pulsing of my blood to divine rhythm
is my heart's meditation.
Any need for acceptable reality melts
into nothingness as
the letters slowly, clearly
rise from the flat plain
and take shape in the air.
Singly and together, forming and re-forming
they fly around this space,
perhaps sitting on a shoulder or
resting by the lamplight.
Each letter singing its name to a melody
which vibrates through
generational cells that recognize,
and sweetly inhale.
All that is, was, or will be soars
with abandon and joy and
all is utterly and completely
Whole.

elisheva cropper

Always You

Let my soul seek your mitzvot!

My soul seeks you
always you
I want to know you
and to be known
to bask in your light
and feel
my own shining

My soul seeks connections
with you
always you
I want to do things
that bring you joy
to anticipate your asks
and fulfill them

You anchor me
and lift me up
may the words of love
I can't stop speaking
be acceptable
to you
always you

R. Rachel Barenblat

At The End of The Standing Prayer

Standing, tired, knees hurt,
Listening to the room of silent prayer,
Hidden in my tallit, mumbling to
The old white man on a throne in the white clouds,
Privilege incarnate,
A God for children of another era. Nah.
Who or what listens to me now?
Talking to myself, I guess,
Until I can sit down. But then

I imagine my ideal Listener—
All antiquity, quirks and holy one-ness,
I hear them in the whispers of the liturgy.
I love the mystery
And the boredom
And the hope
In our loud quiet.
Praying to an idea I don't believe in,
I can't shut up.

Help us!
We're scared.
We're in danger.
We're in shock.
Yet here we are, eyes closed and swaying,
Still holding ourselves to
Dreams of logic and compassion
And conversations with the divine.
We must be brave.

Standing in noisy silent prayer
I step back in ritual
I step back in jest
I step back in grief
I bow in awe
And then, I fly.
And then, my Listener,
I sit.

Amen.

Trisha Arlin

Untitled

Mike Cockrill

Dust

O God, guard my tongue from evil	*אֱלֹהַי. נְצֹר לְשׁוֹנִי מֵרָע*
And my lips from speaking falsehoods.	*וּשְׂפָתַי מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה.*
And to those who curse me - may my soul be silent,	*וְלִמְקַלְלַי נַפְשִׁי תִדֹּם.*
And my soul shall be as dust,	*וְנַפְשִׁי כֶּעָפָר לַכֹּל תִּהְיֶה.*
as earth before and for everyone	
O God, open my heart to Your Torah,	*פְּתַח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ.*
and let my soul seek Your mitzvot!	*וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדֹּף נַפְשִׁי*

I am thinking of Mar bar Ravina[1]
Who whispered this prayer
Hundreds of years ago
And then entered the world again.

And I remember the moments,
Before leaving the house,
I am sometimes taking
To pause for a split second

To hold up an intention,
A thought not to be forgotten,
A point on a to-do list,
Or just a memory,

Before entering the world
Which will scatter my soul
And carry it away in a million pieces
For me to collect again

Quietly. Carried by air.
Settling in cracks.
Blown into fires.
Floating in light.

To be all over the place.
To be collected.
At once.
Again.

R' Sonja K. Pilz, PhD

[1] The Talmud records a special prayer that Mar son of Ravina would say at the end of the Amidah. A variation of this prayer is now part of standard liturgy, beginning with the words *Elohai netzor*.

Guard My Tongue From Evil

Guard my tongue from evil but
Do not guard my tongue from teaching
Especially the hard facts
That no one wants to hear,
Grant me patience and talent
For my students
And truth in my information.
Education is life.

Guard my tongue from evil but
Do not guard my tongue from argument
Which is how we study our sacred texts
Asking the next logical question
And the one after that
And the one after that,
All for the sake of Heaven.
Arguing is fun.

Guard my tongue from evil but
Do not guard my tongue from gossip,
The blood of a community
Circulating useful information
Warning us against predators
Alerting us to impending joys
And looming disasters.
Gossip is love.

Guard my tongue from evil but
Do not guard my tongue from speaking up,
Especially in these fierce days
Of threats and indifferent cruelty
When actual monsters roam.
Humanity must be defended
And liars defied!
Speech is safety.

Blessed Holy Wholeness,
I give thanks for words
  and the freedom to use them
However long that lasts.
Amen.

Trisha Arlin

R. Hannah Dresner
gouache on red cedar veneer, 11 x 17"

What Lasts

“To those who curse me, may my soul be silent.”

Help me pay more attention to the sky.
Remind me to savor the soft peach
at the underside of clouds
when the sun is just past the horizon:
as eternal as Your Torah,
as ephemeral as a breath.
Sustain me with changing light.
Let falsehoods drift away
like cottonwood fluff
on the breeze.

R. Rachel Barenblat

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About Us

Co-created by members of Bayit's Liturgical Arts Working Group, 2025.

At Bayit, we empower Jewish community by developing innovative tools and resources that foster spiritual connection, education, and growth. Together our visionary teams of clergy, liturgists, artists, game designers, and educators create, test, refine, and share tools for a Jewish future always under construction.

Find our collaborations here: Liturgical Arts Working Group

And our bios here: Builder Biographies