

 A MEDITATION ON THE AMIDAH
FOR SHABBAT

Help me, O God, to pray.

Our ancestors worshiped You. Abraham and Sarah, Rebecca and Isaac, Jacob, Rachel, and Leah, stood in awe before You. We, too, reach for You, infinite, awesome, transcendent God, source of all being, whose truth shines through our ancestors' lives. We, their distant descendants, draw strength from their lives and from Your redeeming love. Be our help and our shield, as You were theirs. We praise You, God, Guardian of Abraham.

Your power sustains the universe. You breathe life into dead matter. With compassion You care for all who live. Your limitless love lets life triumph over death, heals the sick, upholds the exhausted, frees the enslaved, keeps faith even with the dead. Who is like You, God of splendor and power incomparable? You govern both life and death, Your presence brings our souls to blossom. We praise You, God who wrests life from death.

Sacred are You, sacred Your mystery. Seekers of holiness worship You all their lives. We praise You, God, ultimate sacred mystery.

Blissful Moses, content with his gift, God's loyal servant aglow with glory, standing at Sinai, embracing the law! In it, keeping Shabbat is commanded, as it is written in Your Torah:

Israel's children must observe Shabbat, keeping it sacred, a timeless covenant age after age. Between God and the Jew an eternal symbol shall it remain. For in six phases God created heaven and earth — and on the seventh day came Shabbat, and soul.

Not to worldly empires, O God, not to worshipers of the base, not to the ruthless did Your gift of Shabbat descend, but to Israel, Your people, in love, to Jacob's seed whom You chose as Your own. Contentment and delight with Your blessings fill all who keep Shabbat holy, the seventh day, Your will and mystery and joy, sweetest of days, memento of Creation.


O our God, our ancestors' God, find pleasure in our Shabbat, consecrate us with Your mitzvot, give us a share in Your truth. Sate us with Your goodness, delight us with Your help. Make our hearts worthy to serve You truly. May we possess Your holy Shabbat with love and eagerness. May the people Israel, bearer of Your holy name, be blessed with tranquility. We praise You, O God whose Shabbat is sacred.

Would that Your people at prayer gained delight in You. Would that we were aflame with the passionate piety of our ancestors' worship. Would that You found our worship acceptable, and forever cherished Your people. If only our eyes could see Your glory perennially renewed in Jerusalem. We praise You, God whose presence forever radiates from Zion.

You are our God today as You were our ancestors' God throughout the ages; firm foundation of our lives, we are Yours in gratitude and love. Our lives are safe in Your hand, our souls entrusted to Your care. Our sense of wonder and our praise of Your miracles and kindnesses greet You daily at dawn, dusk, and noon. O Gentle One, Your caring is endless; O Compassionate One, Your love is eternal. You are forever our hope. Let all the living confront You with thankfulness, delight, and truth. Help us, O God; sustain us. We praise You, God whose touchstone is goodness. To pray to You is joy.

O God, from whom all peace flows, grant serenity to Your Jewish people, with love and mercy, life and goodness for all. Shelter us with kindness, bless us with tranquility at all times and all seasons. We praise You, God whose blessing is peace.

May my tongue be innocent of malice and my lips free from lies. When confronted by enemies may my soul stay calm, truly humble to all. Open my heart with Your teachings, that I may be guided by You. May all who plan evil against me abandon their schemes. Hear my words and help me, God, because You are loving, because You reveal Your Torah. May You find delight in the words of my mouth and in the emotions of my heart, God, my strength and my salvation. As You maintain harmony in the heavens, give peace to us and to the whole Jewish people. Amen.


MEDITATION ON THE AMIDAH FOR WEEKDAYS

Help me, O God, to pray.

Our ancestors worshiped You. Abraham and Sarah, Rebecca and Isaac, Jacob, Rachel, and Leah stood in awe before You. We too reach for You, infinite, awesome, transcendent God, source of all being, whose truth shines through our ancestors' lives. We, their distant descendants, draw strength from their lives and from Your redeeming love. Be our help and our shield, as You were theirs. We praise You, God, Guardian of Abraham and Sarah.

Your power sustains the universe, You breathe life into dead matter. With compassion You care for those who live. Your limitless love lets life triumph over death, heals the sick, upholds the exhausted, frees the enslaved, keeps faith even with the dead. Who is like You, God of splendor and power incomparable? You govern both life and death, Your presence brings our souls to blossom. We praise You, God who wrests life from death.

Sacred are You, sacred Your mystery. Seekers of holiness worship You all their lives. We praise You, God, ultimate sacred mystery.

The mind is Your gift, wisdom a spark from You. May we grow in knowledge, insight, and understanding. We praise You, God, gracious giver of awareness.

Help us to find our way to Your truth again, to obey You with trusting faith, to attain wholeness in Your presence. We praise You, God who is always ready to help us start anew.

Forgive our failures with a parent's love, overlook our shortcomings with regal generosity, for You are gentle and gracious. We praise You, God of mercy and forgiveness.

See our suffering, sustain us in our struggles, save us soon. We praise You, God, our people's hope of redemption.

Heal us, O God, and keep us in health. Help us, that we might help ourselves, praising You always. Send true healing for all our pains, for You are the source of healing and compassion. We praise You, God from whom all healing comes.

Bless this year for us with prosperity. May the wealth of the earth and the rhythms of the seasons yield us a good harvest. We praise You, God whose blessings are as certain as the seasons.

Let freedom resound like a mighty ram's horn. Let our spirits soar, sustained by Your promise. May the scattered Jewish people find renewal in You. We praise You, God who brings home the lost Jew.

May our ancient sense of justice be renewed, our classic sources of wisdom rediscovered. May sorrow and sighing vanish from our midst. May Your tenderness and pity, justice and compassion govern our lives always. We praise You, God of kindness and justice.

May malice abate and ill will perish; may hatred cease and arrogance quickly wither in our lifetime. We praise You, God whose awesome power helps good to triumph over evil.

For the loving and the righteous, for the learned and the wise, for the stranger and for ourselves, may Your mercy appear and Your justice be made manifest. May we never regret having trusted in You. We praise You, God, strength of the just, root of our confidence.

Let Your love once more shine from Jerusalem. Let Your presence abide there as in days of David. Let Zion rebuilt stand firm, the hub of Jewish hope forever. We praise You, God, builder of Jerusalem.

May our people flourish, all of them, soon. Help us to hold our heads high, celebrating Your deliverance and ours. Every day and all day long we yearn for Your deliverance. We praise You, God by whose will we survive and flourish.

When we cry out, hear us with compassion; take our prayers gently and lovingly. Listen to Your people when we reach toward You with love. Turn us not away empty. We praise You, God who cherishes prayer.

May Your people at prayer gain delight in You. Would that we were aflame with the passionate piety of our ancestors' worship. Would that You found our worship acceptable now and forever. If only our eyes could see Your glory renewed in Jerusalem! We praise You, God whose presence forever radiates from Zion.

You are our God today as You were our ancestors' God throughout the ages; firm foundation of our lives, we are Yours in gratitude and love. Our lives are safe in Your hand, our souls entrusted to Your care. Our sense of wonder and our praise of Your miracles and kindnesses greet You daily at dusk, dawn, and noon. Compassionate One, Your caring is endless, Your love is eternal. Let all the living confront You with thankfulness, delight, and truth. Help us, O God; sustain us. We praise You, God whose touchstone is goodness. To pray to You is joy.

O God, from whom all peace flows, grant serenity to Your Jewish people — with love and mercy, life and goodness for all. Consider us kindly. Bless us with tranquility at all times and all seasons. We praise You, God whose blessing is peace.

May You find delight in the words of my mouth and in the emotions of my heart, God, my strength and my salvation. Amen.