

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space,

who endows each and every living thing with unique capabilities and purpose,

and creates me in the divine image;

who grants me free will, and the ability to exercise it,

and blesses me with the gift and responsibility of being a Jew;

who opens my eyes to the world around and within me, blessing me with insight, awareness, and understanding,

and protects me when I feel vulnerable,

exposed, or ashamed; who frees me from all that limits or confines me, and restores my dignity

when I feel bent or broken;

who leads me back to solid ground when the world shifts beneath my feet,

and guides me along my path when I am lost or confused;

who creates me with needs, and the wherewithal to meet them,

and strengthens the people Israel with the courage to embody our beliefs;

who crowns the people Israel with a sense of mission and purpose,

and renews me each night when I am weary, that I may awake to each new day with strength.

— JAN UHRBACH

who releases the bound, who straightens those who are bent,

who stretches out the earth over the waters, who steadies our steps,

who has provided for all my needs, who strengthens the people Israel with courage,

who crowns the people Israel with glory, and who gives strength to the weary.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, matir asurim.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, zokef k'fufim.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, roka ha-aretz al ha-mayim.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ha-meikhin miczadei gaver.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-asah li kol tzorki.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ozer yisrael bigvurah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, oter yisrael b'tifarah.

Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, ha-noten laya-eif ko-ah.

Barukh atah ADONAI, our God, sovereign of time and space, who removes sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids.

May it be Your will, our God and God of our ancestors, that You accustom us to study Your Torah

and cling to Your mitzvot;

do not lead us into error, or transgression, or sin, nor subject us to trials or disgrace.

Do not let the inclination to evil control us, and distance us from people who would do us evil

and from friends who commit evil;

spur in us the yearning to do good and to act with goodness.

Bend our will and our desires to Your service.

► Today and every day, may You look upon us, and may all who see us look upon us, with eyes filled with kindness, love, and compassion. Act toward us with kindly love.

Barukh atah ADONAI, who acts with kindly love to the people Israel.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, מתיר אסורים.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, זוקף פופוסים.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, הוקע הארץ על המים.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, המכין מצעדי גברי.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, שעשה לי כל צרכי.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, אוזר ישראל בגבורה.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, עוטר ישראל בתפארה.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, הנותן ליער קח.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, המעביר שנה מעיני ותנומה מעפעפי.

יהי רצון מלפניך יהוה אלהינו אלהי אבותינו [ואמותינו], שתוריקנו בתורתך ודבקנו במצותיך, ולא תביאנו לא לידי חטא, ולא לידי עברה ועון, ולא לידי נסיון, ולא לידי בזיון, ולא תשליט בנו יצר הרע, והרזיקנו מאדם רע ומחבר רע. ודבקנו ביצר הטוב

ובמעשים טובים, וכוח אהיצורנו להשתעבד לך. ותגנו היום, ובכל יום, לחן ולחסד ולרחמים בעיניך, ובעיני כל יודאינו, ותגמלנו חסדים טובים.

ברוך אתה יהוה, גומל חסדים טובים לעמו ישראל.

WHO RELEASES THE BOUND וְיָקִי אֲסוּרִים. Releasing the fetters of wickedness, freeing the oppressed, feeding the hungry, and providing for the homeless are mentioned by the prophet Isaiah as acts that God desires of human beings (58:6).

WHO STRAIGHTENS THOSE WHO ARE BENT וְיִקְוֶי פּוּפּוּסִים. Literally, "making those who are bowed down stand upright." This phrase, as found in Psalm 146:8, is the biblical warrant for standing up straight when God's name is pronounced, after having bowed at the beginning of a blessing.

WHO STRETCHES OUT THE EARTH OVER THE WATERS וְיִקְוֶי הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם. Genesis depicts dry land being formed from the splitting of the primal waters.

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL וְיִהְיֶה רָצוֹן. A prayer recorded in the Babylonian Talmud (Berakhot 60b).

TRIALS נִסְיֵי. The trials of life are many: confronting personal illness or tragic situations, difficult ethical dilemmas, temptations that may endanger us. In addition, because faith is often accompanied by doubt, and even the strongest faith may be vulnerable in trying times, we hope that today will affirm rather than challenge our faith.

INCLINATION TO EVIL יִצְרָה. The ancient rabbis

believed that we are subject to impulses that lead us to do good or evil. For instance, competitiveness can spur us to exert greater energy but it can also lead to hurtful behavior. The yearning for fame and the approbation of others can influence us to perform acts of kindness and to exercise leadership roles, but it can also produce egos that are never satisfied. We yearn to do good, but we are often impeded by our jealousies, our self-concern, and our desire for mastery and conquest.