

בס"ד  
תפילה קודם התפילה  
של רבי אלימלך מליזשענסק נ"ע

Rebbe Elimelech's Prayer  
*That We Might Pray Well*

<http://www.JewishRenewalHasidus.org/Reb-Zalman-Resources>

Yah, our God,  
You are our parents' God,  
You are open to hear our pleading prayer  
with compassion.  
You give a caring ear  
to what Your people Israel is crying for.  
This is our prayer to You,  
please grant it.

Open our hearts,  
focus our thoughts,  
help that our prayers  
may flow freely from our lips  
and, incline Your ear to hear  
how we, Your servants  
are seeking Your favor,  
crying in a pleading voice  
and with a shattered spirit.

You, kind compassionate One,  
God of infinite mercy!  
please forgive us, pardon us  
and atone  
for us and for Your entire people,  
the house of Israel,  
so that whatever we have failed to do right,  
or what we have done wrong,  
or when we acted in ways that were wicked  
and rebelled against You,  
*be forgiving, pardoning, and atoning  
for us and for Your entire people,  
the house of Israel.*

How well You know,  
and how apparent it is to You,  
that it was *not* with malice or willfulness  
that we transgressed what You taught us,  
what You commanded us

in Your Torah and Commandments.

In our bellies,  
there burns a fire without ceasing,  
a Yetzer Hara', the drive of selfishness  
which draws us  
to the vices of this world  
and its follies.

The Yetzer confuses our awareness  
even when we stand before You  
seeking to pray and plead for our lives.  
The Yetzer's incitement  
constantly confuses our thoughts  
with all sorts of thoughts and schemes.  
We cannot resist it;  
for our awareness is uncertain,  
our mind unsteady,  
the troubles and preoccupations  
of making a living,  
under times of oppression,  
bear down heavily on us.

Therefore, You,  
who are compassionate and kind,  
fulfill for us what You promised  
to Moses, Your faithful servant,  
when You said,  
"I will favor whomever I will favor  
and I will be compassionate  
on whomever I will be compassionate."  
And this, You had our sages tell us.  
This applies even to those  
who are not worthy  
for, this is Your way;  
to be kind both to those who are bad  
and to those who are good.

It must be obvious to You  
how we are troubled,

how hard is our life  
and what we must bear --  
it is so difficult for us  
to come near to You  
and to serve You well,  
to have our feelings be sincerely  
in harmony with Your will.  
Dear Father in heaven!  
What pain we feel in our souls!  
Please arouse Your mercy and kindness  
freely and abundantly  
and banish, erase  
our attraction to evil.  
Let not our evil Yetzer  
be active in our innards.  
Let him not seduce us,  
let him not deflect us from serving You.

May no evil schemes arise in our heart  
when we are asleep or awake  
especially at that time  
when we stand in prayer before You  
or at times  
when we study Your holy Torah;  
at times when we are busy  
fulfilling Your Commandments.  
Then, let our thoughts be pure and clear,  
our own awareness steady and strong,  
sincere and heartfelt  
as You would have us be.

Awaken in our hearts,  
and in the hearts of all of Israel,  
Your people,  
the aim to unify You  
in all truth, in all love,  
so to serve  
as to be pleasing to You.

Fasten such steadfast faith in You  
to be deeply anchored in our hearts;  
not to vacillate from it.

Remove from us all the barriers  
that separate us from You,  
Our father in heaven.

Save us from stumbling on our path;  
keep us from going astray.

Don't forsake us;  
don't abandon us;  
keep us from being disgraced  
before You.

Be present to us  
in the words of our prayers  
and in the work of our hands  
as they serve You  
and the thoughts of our hearts  
as we think of You.

Please, our Father in heaven,  
in Your abundant kindness,  
grant us the boon  
that our thoughts  
and words and actions,  
all our motives and our feelings,  
those we are aware of  
and those we are not aware of,  
those that are manifest  
and those that are hidden,  
with all of them, together,  
be unified in sincerity and truth,  
without any self-deception.

Purify our hearts,  
sanctify us,  
sprinkle us with cleansing water  
to purify us,  
wash us clean  
with Your kindness and love.  
Plant Your steadfast love  
and Your awe in our hearts  
at all times  
and in all places  
as we go about our lives,  
when we lie down and get up,  
that there always be Your Holy Spirit  
ardently active in our innards  
that we may rely on You always,  
on Your greatness,  
Your love and Your awe.

May we be securely anchored  
in Your written and Oral Torah,  
in the part of the Torah  
that is open to all  
and the part of Torah that is hidden.  
In doing the mitzvot,  
may we unify Your awesome Name.  
Protect us from hypocrisy,  
from pride, anger, and vindictiveness,  
from depression, from tale bearing  
and other vices.  
Protect us from everything  
that might damage the holiness and purity  
of our service to You, whom we love.

Pour out the Holy Spirit over us  
that we stay close to You,  
that our longing for You  
grows and increases.  
Raise us up from rung to rung  
that we might come close to the rung of  
our holy forebears,  
Abraham Isaac and Jacob,  
(may their merit protect us).  
In this way,  
You will always receive our prayer;  
You will always answer us  
when we pray for anyone,  
be it a single person  
or the whole people Israel.  
May You take joy in us  
May Your glory be reflected in us.

May our prayers bear fruit  
and be fulfilled above and below.  
Do not attend to our flaws,  
especially the sins of our Youth,  
as King David, (peace be upon him), said:  
"My Youthful sins, in my rebellions,  
do not keep in Your memory".  
Please turn our sins

and rebellions into merit  
that there flow to us,  
from the realm of repentance,  
the challenging call  
to return to You wholeheartedly  
and to repair all that we have damaged  
of Your pure and holy Names.

Rescue us from envy.  
Let not jealousy  
of any person arise in our hearts  
and, let not others be vindictive to us.  
On the contrary, place into our hearts  
appreciation for the goodness  
of our fellow beings,  
(let us not seek to find fault with them).  
May we speak to each person  
with civility and gentleness.  
Let not hatred arise from one to another.  
Strengthen us that we might love You more  
for You know well how our intention is,  
that it all should bring You  
pleasure and joy,  
for this is the roots of our intention,  
(despite the fact  
that we don't have a strong enough mind  
to keep the aim of the kavanah of our heart  
focused on You).  
Enlighten us so that we might learn  
to fully know Your good purpose.  
This is what we plead to  
You, all merciful God.  
Please accept our prayer  
in compassion and good will.  
Amen, let this be so willed by You.