

Prayer in a Time of Serious Illness: A Modern Vidui

By *Rabbi Gilah Langner*

Traditional Judaism offers a confessional prayer, or *vidui*, to be recited during a time of serious illness or near death. If the patient is unable to recite the prayer, others may do so on his or her behalf. This modern adaptation places less emphasis on atonement for sins, and more on the bonds connecting the patient to his or her loved ones. It can be recited by a friend, family member, or chaplain on behalf of a person who is very ill, especially when life and death are hanging in the balance.

(Male)

Our God and God of our ancestors, we acknowledge that all of life is in Your hands.

We pray for healing for this beloved man.

May he be filled and embraced by a complete and healing love and forgiveness.

May he always know how precious his life is to those who love him.

Protect his beloved family:

Their souls are woven together for all time.

Grant hope and strength to his family and caregivers, guiding their hands and hearts and decisions with wisdom, loving care, and skill.

Ki malakhav yetzaveh lach, lishmorkha b'chol d'rakhekha.

May angels be appointed for him, to guard him on all his paths.

In Your hand lies his spirit. In Your Great Name, You hold the life and memories of each soul on earth. You redeem us, Adonai, God of Truth.

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Ekhad.

Hear O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

(Female)

Our God and God of our ancestors, we acknowledge that all of life is in Your hands.

We pray for healing for this beloved woman.

May she be filled and embraced by a complete and healing love and forgiveness.

May she always know how precious her life is to those who love her.

Protect her beloved family:

Their souls are woven together for all time.

Grant hope and strength to her family and caregivers, guiding their hands and hearts and decisions with wisdom, loving care, and skill.

Ki malakhav yetzaveh lah, lishmorah b'khol d'rakheha.

May angels be appointed for her, to guard her on all her paths.

In Your hand lies her spirit. In Your Great Name, You hold the life and memories of each person on earth. You redeem us, Adonai, God of Truth.

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Ekhad.

Hear O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Prayer

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