

*Not*

# **JUST PRAYER**

The Shemoneh Esrei Elucidated

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## הרב יעקב העבר

מלפנים מרא דאתרא ק"ק בית תורה, מאנסי, ניו יארק  
זכעת רב בקהילת שבטי ישראל, רמת בית שמש

בס"ד

תפילה בלי כוונה כגוף בלי נשמה

The true meaning of the word Kavana is "focus".

We are living in a world of distraction. Our minds are racing and our hearts are full of noise. Even those of us that Daven three times a day and try to concentrate on the words of prayer face an uphill battle with the noise and distraction of our lives. How can we clear our minds and focus on the prophetic words of the Amidah?

Reb Yaacov Silverstein compiled an extremely succinct, yet profoundly effective system of prayer that focuses the heart. In a few short words explaining every phrase of the Amidah, he remarkably epitomizes hundreds of years of commentary. I davened with Reb Yaacov's short compilation just once, and my Tefilla will be forever changed.

May HaShem help that this incredible booklet reach the hands and hearts of everyone wishing to speak to Hashem with all their heart and with all their soul.

Rabbi Yaacov Haber  
Rav, Kehillas Shivtei Yeshurun  
Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel

*Rabbi Zev Leff*

*Rabbi of Moshav Matityahu*

*Rosh HaYeshiva—Yeshiva Gedola Matityahu*

הרב זאב לף

כ"ט

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Dear Friends,

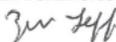
I have seen the booklet "Not Just Prayer" an elucidation of the Shemoneh Esrei by Yaakov Silverstein. The author has culled from many traditional sources a concise and lucid explanation of the Shemoneh Esrei prayer. This will serve as an invaluable tool to aid one in understanding the words of this prayer and to concentrate one's attention on their meaning and intent.

The author has produced a commendable work and has truly captured the basic meaning and intent of this prayer.

I recommend this booklet to all those that want to enhance the quality of their prayer.

May Hashem grant the author the wherewithal to continue to merit the community with further Torah projects.

Sincerely,  
With Torah blessings



Rabbi Zev Leff

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to thank Hakadosh Boruch Hu, for giving me the insight and time to prepare my first sefer, which I hope will lead to other works.

I would also like to thank my mother and my wife for editing my previous works, which were all stepping stones to the present work.

A big yasher koach to Howie Bryks for doing a great job editing “Not Just Prayer”.

Thank you to Uri Obadia for the quick graphics and Dovid Feinberg of HaDaF, who helped me get the final version out.

## INTRODUCTION

The idea for this sefer started over 10 years ago, before I got married. I encountered Iyun Tefillah, a magnificent sefer written by Rav Shimon Schwab, zt"l. His sefer changed my way of davening, which in turn changed my life.

I wish that I would have the same kavanah today as I had back then, but the busyness of life makes it difficult to keep the proper level of kavanah without constantly working hard at it.

There are many good seforim available to help us understand the daily tefillah better, but I feel there is a lack of seforim that help you take what you learned and put it into practice on a daily basis. That is the primary goal of "Not Just Prayer".

"Not Just Prayer" is based on several seforim that discuss the Shemoneh Esrei:

Iyun Tefillah / Rav Schwab on Tefillah  
Rav Hirsch Siddur  
HaSiddur VeHaTefillah  
Berumo Shel Olam  
Iyunim BeTefillah  
Avodat HaTefillah  
Sifsei Chaim  
Nefesh Shimshon  
Chesed LeAvraham  
Ya'aros Devash  
Tefillas Amecha

Explanations are kept as short as possible and include ideas from a wide spectrum of the Torah world. I am not being mechadesh anything of my own, but rather using ideas from many of the classical and newer seforim on tefillah. These ideas are presented in a more concise form, with applications to daily life. When you use this sefer and try to make your tefillah more personal, it is very possible that the words of the tefillah will speak to you differently. I encourage you to incorporate your daily issues into your tefillah.

Not Just Prayer is intended primarily for those who already daven daily and want to find more meaning in their tefillah. Those new to tefillah may also find it helpful. Some may want to daven Shemoneh Esrei directly from this sefer, while others may use it as a learning tool. For those who would like to daven from it, please be aware that I omitted most of the tefillos that are not said on a daily basis. The nusach is Ashkenaz.

Most of our daily schedules do not allow us to think where we are headed spiritually. Our three prayers a day are times that we should use to put our yetzer hora to sleep and fill our minds with positive spiritual energy that will follow us throughout the whole day, even when our yetzer hora wakes up. Of course, without Hashem's help, we have no chance to win. When Hashem sees that we are honestly trying, He will help us win.

I decided to publish this work to coincide with the first yahrtzeit of my grandmother, Freidah Solomon / Meller, aleha hashalom. She was lucky that her Uncle Meir hired a rebbe to teach her how to read and write Hebrew so she could daven and say Tehillim. She wanted so much to

understand what she was saying, so she used a machzor with Yiddish translation, and you could see tears in her eyes from her sincere prayers. May the sefer be an aliyah for her special neshamah.

I still remember how she recited Tehillim word for word from a sefer – so slowly – as if it were the first time she was reading it. I am sure she read those pesukim thousands of times, yet they were always new to her.

It is my hope that this little work will help you find hischadshus in your daily davening to make a big change in your life. This will then help make changes in the people around you, bringing us to the final redemption, which we pray for every day.

---

אֲדַנִּי שִׁפְתַי תִּפְתָּח  
I feel that I need Your help  
to open my mouth to pray to You

---

וּפִי יִגִּיד הַתְהַלְּלָתְךָ  
And then I will be able to express  
my deep inner self to You in prayer

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'   
You, the source of all blessing,  
are in front of us,  
and we are talking to You now

---

אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
My Manhig who looks at me –  
Hashgacha Pratis

---

וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ  
Each of the Avos taught us a  
different aspect of Hashem's  
Hanhaga in this world

---

אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִרָהֶם  
Kindness

---

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק  
Might

---

וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב  
Truth

---

הָאֵל  
This name of Hashem  
expresses “might”  
through the trait of “mercy”

---

הַגְּדוֹל Chessed L'Avraham

---

הַגְּבוֹר Pachad Yitzchak

---

וְהַנּוֹרָא Emes L'Yakov

---

אל עליון  
אל עליון

We might understand Gadol, Gibor, and Norah, but it is above our understanding why righteous people suffer in this world

---

גוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים  
גוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים

Not only does His kindness benefit the recipient, He also allows it to benefit others

---

וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל  
וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל

We have nothing to offer You, for You own everything

---

חֹזְכֵי חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת  
חֹזְכֵי חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת

The biggest Chessed one can do is to instill in another person these traits of Hashem. Thus, the Avos are our roots to our knowledge of Hashem

---

וּמְבִיא גוֹאֵל לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם  
וּמְבִיא גוֹאֵל לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם

Even if the merit of our Avos is over, His redemption is always there

---

---

למען שמו באהבה  
Even if the redemption  
will come “for His own sake” and  
not Zechus Avos, it will still be  
a redemption with love

---

בעשיית זכרנו לחיים מלך חפץ בחיים  
וכתבנו בספר החיים למענך אלהים חיים

---

מלך The King who is our redeemer

---

עוזר He helps us  
when we make an effort

---

ומושיע He helps us even  
when we make no effort

---

ומגן He helps us even when we go  
against logic, but for His sake

---

ברוך אתה ה',  
מגן אברהם  
We see this act of Magen  
specifically by Avraham –  
he went against nature  
and Hashem saved him

---

אַתָּה גִּבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי

Hashem's Gevurah is not a thing of the past, it is constantly with us, never weakening

---

מְחִיָּה מְתִים אַתָּה

Techiyas Hameisim is in Hashem's hands and it begins the moment one dies, cleansing one from his sins

---

רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ

Hashem will rescue us from our Tzarah (death) even if we lack merits

---

בַּחוּרְף - מְשִׁיב הַרְיוּחַ  
וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם

We see this in the fact that rain falls even for those who don't merit it

---

בְּקִיץ - מוֹרִיד הַטֶּל

Dew is also beneficial to plants and will in the future revive the dead

---

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד

Hashem's Gevurah is that He gives us Chessed that our vessel can hold - for example

---

מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים      He has revived sick people  
on their death bed

---

בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים      At times such people need  
more than just regular mercy,  
to remove the bad decree of death

---

סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים      Those who start to fall – get sick  
or depressed, lose their money –  
Hashem brings them back

---

וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים      Those who are already in the  
midst of severe illness – He heals

---

וּמְחַיֶּה אֲסוּרִים      Very sick people whose body  
doesn't function well anymore –  
He brings back

---

וּמְקַיֵּם אֲמוּנָתוֹ  
לִישְׁנֵי עַפְרָה      Even if I die without receiving  
the requested salvation,  
Hashem will still keep faith with  
me and my descendants

---

מִי כְמוֹךָ בַעַל גְּבוּרוֹת

Who is like You? Who has the strength of destroying life and the strength of destroying the angel of death?

---

וּמִי דוֹמֶה לָךְ

Who can do even one of Your Gevuros?

---

מְלַךְ מִמִּית וּמְחִיָּה

Who brings death and life in so many aspects of our every day life (e.g. sleep and awakening)

---

וּמַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעָה

Who will bring about a future salvation, which will be even greater than the present? Like a seed becoming a plant

---

וְנֶאֱמַן אֶתְּךָ  
לְהַחְיִית מְתִים

And from all the daily Techiyas Hameisim-like events, we believe that You will bring the ultimate Techiyas Hameisim

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
מִחְיֵה הַמֵּתִים

You will resurrect all man from Adam until the time of resurrection

---

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ      You are completely separated and  
removed from our understanding

---

וְשִׁמּוֹךְ קָדוֹשׁ      Through Your actions in this  
world and Your name that  
has been revealed to us,  
we see Your holiness

---

וְקְדוּשֵׁימִים      This is both hinting to  
בְּכֹל יוֹם יְהִלְלוּךָ טָלָה      the angels and Am Yisroel  
who daily praise You

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',      Hashem has granted us the ability,  
הָאֵל (בְּעִשְׂיֵית הַמְּלָךְ)      in His great mercy, to overcome  
הַקְּדוֹשׁ      our nature and become Kedoshim

---

אתה חונן לאדם נעת

You give us true perception of  
the true nature of things (as a gift)  
to all of mankind –  
even to the undeserving

ומלמד לאנוש בינה

More than just giving,  
You actively teach us to be able  
to reach Binah – understanding  
one thing from another

חננו מאתך

Give us this knowledge from You,  
source of all good (unlike Adam  
by Eitz HaDaas)

דעה

Knowledge of Hashem – wisdom

בינה

Which leads to knowledge  
of the Torah – insight

והשכל

And let us apply both the wisdom  
and insight to all aspects of our life

ברוך אתה ה',  
חונן הנעת

We thank Hashem specifically for  
the Daas that He gives us for free,  
without any effort on our part

הַשִּׁיבֵנו אֲבִינוּ לְתוֹרָתְךָ

Return us to the awareness that it  
is Your Torah that we are learning

---

וְקַרְבֵנו מִלְכְּנו לְעִבּוֹדָתְךָ

and bring us closer to You  
through our prayer

---

וְהִחְזִירֵנו בְּתְשׁוּבָה שְׂלֵמָה  
לְפָנֶיךָ

Returning to You because we  
want to come closer, not out of fear

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
הַרוּצֵה בְּתְשׁוּבָה

He wants our repentance,  
and made it into a Mitzvah,  
deserving reward

---

סָלַח לָנוּ אֲבִינוּ  
כִּי חָטָאנוּ

Like a father forgives a son,  
please forgive me for the sins  
I did without intent

---

מַחֵל לָנוּ מִלְכָּנוּ  
כִּי פָשַׁענוּ

And waive the punishment  
I may deserve for intentional sins

---

כִּי מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ אַתָּה

Please pardon and forgive both  
types of sins, when we repent,  
and turn our acts with intent into  
acts of non-intent and acts of  
non-intent into meritorious acts

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
חַנּוּן הַמֵּרַבֵּה לְסִלַּח

Even if one repeats the sin,  
Hashem does not lose  
His patience and still forgives

---

Not Just Prayer

---

רָאֵה בְּעֵינֵינוּ

Be there with us in the midst  
of our afflictions— not caused  
by others

---

וְרִיבָה רִיבֵנוּ

And fight our battles caused  
by the hostility of others

---

וּגְאֹלֵנוּ מִזְהָרָה  
לְמַעַן שְׁמִיךָ

If we lack merit, do it for  
Your name's sake – which  
assures us loving kindness

---

כִּי גֹאֵל חֹזֵק אַתָּה

You overcome nature  
and perform miracles

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
גֹאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל

He continuously  
redeems us in our exile

---

רְפָאנוּ ה' וְנִרְפָּא  
We want the refuah to come  
from You, and then we will  
remain healthy

---

הוֹשִׁיעֵנו וְנִשְׁפָּעָה  
Save us from our fears,  
frustrations and bitterness,  
and we will feel like a new person

---

כִּי תִהְיֶה לָנוּ אֶתָּה  
For we will give the credit to You

---

וְהִעֲלָה רְפוּאָה שְׁלֵמָה  
לְכָל מִבּוֹתֵינוּ  
Lift us up on a spiritual level,  
for this is the purpose of our  
physical illness

---

כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ  
רוֹפֵא נֶאֱמָן וְרַחֲמָן אֶתָּה  
He sent us the sickness,  
to cure our soul. Hashem  
is the only healer who is  
faithful and compassionate

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
רוֹפֵא חוּלֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
Because it is a Jewish concept that  
our Guf is sick to heal our Nefesh

---

בְּרַךְ עָלֵינוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ

Let us feel the blessing  
that You give to the world

אֶת הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת

Including all the seasonal and  
spiritual changes this year

וְאֵת כָּל מִינֵי תְבוּאֹתָהּ  
לְטוֹבָה

And may Your blessing to us  
be used by us for Your good

(בְּקִיץ - וְתֵן בְּרַכָּה)

(בַּחֹרֶף - וְתֵן טַל וּמָטָר לְבְרַכָּה)

עַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה

Let there be enough food to feed  
the hungry people of the world

וְשַׂבְּעֵנוּ מִטוֹבָה

Let us merit to be satiated  
by this good

וּבְרַךְ שָׁנָתֵנוּ  
בְּשָׁנִים הַטּוֹבוֹת

Let this year be blessed like  
the good years of the past,  
physically and spiritually

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
מְבָרֵךְ הַשָּׁנִים

Blessed are You Hashem,  
who blesses all the changes  
in nature, this year

תִּקַּע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל  
לְחֵרֹתֵנוּ

Let us hear the strong Shofar,  
that will take us out of our  
spiritual exile

---

וְשֵׂא נֶס

Let us all see through Your  
Oneness and Kindness

---

לְקַבֵּץ גְּלוּיֵינוּ

Each Galus has its own negative  
spiritual effect, once removed,  
we can have a physical redemption

---

וְקַבְּצֵנוּ יְחִיד

Not only physically,  
but also ideologically

---

מֵאַרְבַּע כְּנַפּוֹת הָאָרֶץ

With a moral uplifting of the  
world, people will feel a need  
to change their lives

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
מְקַבֵּץ  
נִדְחֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל

Hashem will gather in all those  
people who were pushed out and  
have forgotten their Jewishness,  
whether because of persecution  
or from having too much good

---

---

הַשִּׁיבָה שׁוֹפְטֵינוּ  
כְּבְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה

Return to us the quality of  
the judges who judge civil law

---

וַיִּזְעֲצֵינוּ כְּבִתְחִלָּה  
וַיִּזְעֲצֵנוּ

And those who gave us advice  
how to live correctly, which  
took away the need for judges

---

וְהִסֵּר מִמֶּנּוּ  
יָגוֹן

And remove from us  
the worries of our heart

---

וְאֲנָחָה

And the physical weakness  
that we get from our troubles

---

וּמֶלֶךְ עָלֵינוּ  
אֲתָהּ ה' לְבִדְךָ בְּחֶסֶד

And rule over us with the trait  
of kindness (limited) in this world

---

וּבְרַחֲמִים

And the trait of mercy (unlimited),  
in the World To Come

---

וְצִדְקָנוּ בְּמִשְׁפָּט

And find reason to judge us  
with justice, giving us a chance  
to pass the judgment

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
מֶלֶךְ  
אוֹהֵב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט

Hashem loves to give to us, by  
including the reasons for our sins  
in our judgment, He can be  
more lenient with the judgment

---

וְלִמְלֻשִׁינִים  
אֵל תְּהִי תִקְוָה  
Let there be no good result to  
those who have left to a different  
religion and slandered against us

וְכָל הָרָשָׁעָה כִּרְגַע תֵּאבְדַּךְ  
Their evil shall cease in an instant

וְכָל אוֹיְבֵי עַמְּךָ  
And all Your enemies, that want  
to get rid of us in their hearts

מְהֵרָה יִכְרְתוּ  
Quickly eradicate, for their  
existence brings a Chilul Hashem

וְהַזֹּדִים  
מְהֵרָה  
תַּעֲקֹר  
Those who intentionally do bad  
to us or sin against You (evildoers),  
uproot them completely

וְתִשְׁבֵּר  
Break them into  
ineffective fractions

וְתִמְגַּר  
Dividing these small fractions  
into individuals,  
being much less effective

וְתִכְנִיעַ  
בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ  
Let the remaining ones  
be left humbled  
and thus rendered harmless

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
שׁוֹבֵר אוֹיְבִים  
וּמְכַנִּיעַ זֵדִים  
You break those enemies who wish  
to annihilate us physically  
and humble the evildoers  
who wish to destroy us spiritually

עַל הַצְדִּיקִים  
וְעַל הַחֲסִידִים

The righteous are the ones who try to live exactly as Hashem requests, the devoted do more than what Halacha requires, both in Mitzvos and to others, through an inner desire to constantly do good

---

וְעַל זִקְנֵי עַמּוֹךְ  
בְּיַת יִשְׂרָאֵל

The great Torah scholars who we turn to, to instruct us about the letter and spirit of the Torah

---

וְעַל פְּלִיטַת סוֹפְרֵיהֶם

And the remaining teachers of our children's Torah

---

וְעַל גְּרֵי הַצְדִּיק

And the internal and external converts

---

וְעֲלֵינוּ

And me, the simple Jew

---

יְהִימוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ

May Your Mercy burst out without control and let us be able to feel it

---

וְתֵן שָׂכָר טוֹב

And our reward should be the type that can be shared with others, by inspiring others

---

לְכֹל הַבוֹטְחִים בְּשִׁמְךָ  
בְּאַמַּת      Both in good and bad times,  
they have full faith in Hashem

---

וְשִׁים חֲלָקְנוּ עִמָּהֶם  
            May we connect to such people,  
so they can elevate our faith

---

לְעוֹלָם      May we constantly strive  
for spiritual values

---

וְלֹא נִבְוֵשׁ כִּי בָךְ בְּטַחָנוּ  
            And then we will not be  
embarrassed, for our good  
will come from You and not man

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
מִשְׁעֵן וּמִבְטָח לְצַדִּיקִים  
            Hashem helps us conquer  
the Yetzer Hora,  
and gives us the merit as if  
we conquered him ourselves

---

וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירָךְ

May we merit to see Your  
return to the upper and lower  
Yerushalayim, Your city

---

בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ תָּשׁוּב

Have mercy on the present broken  
and low state of Yerushalayim,  
and this will bring  
Your desire to return

---

וְתִשְׁכַּן בְּתוֹכָהּ  
כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ

And even before it is fully rebuilt,  
increase Your presence now

---

וּבִנְיָה אֹתָהּ  
בְּקֶרֶב בְּיָמֵינוּ

May we merit to see the full  
rebuilding, according to our  
understanding of “soon,”  
in our lifetime

---

בְּנֵן עוֹלָם

Built by Hashem,  
it will never again be destroyed

---

וְכֶסֶף דָּוִד  
מֵהֲרָה לְתוֹכָהּ תִּבְנֶה

And the return of the Davidic  
dynasty is required for this

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם

The re-building of Yerushalayim  
is an ongoing process, which  
started at the time of the Churban

---

את צמח דוד עבדך  
מהרה תצמיח

This slow process of the  
outgrowth of Moshiach Ben David  
that is taking place  
throughout every generation,  
please quicken it to its final  
completion (physical redemption  
which we are seeing in our days)

---

וקרנו תרום בישועתך

And with the return of  
the Shechinah to Yerushalayim,  
the power of David HaMelech  
will come back  
(complete spiritual salvation  
of the Shechinah in Galus)

---

כי לישועתך  
קוינו כל היום

Because we await the Shechinah's  
return every single day,  
"Tzipita LeYeshua"

---

ברוך אתה ה'  
מצמיח קרן ישועה

Throughout our long Galus,  
Hashem is constantly bringing our  
physical redemption closer,  
day by day

---

שמע קולנו  
Listen to our voice, even if  
all You hear is a sound,  
without proper intent or thought

ה' אלהינו  
Let Your leadership  
based on Mercy overpower  
that of Strict Judgment

חוס ורחם עלינו  
Spare us for Your own benefit for  
You desire man to live, and have  
mercy on us for we exist  
only because of that Mercy

וקבל  
ברחמים וברצון  
את תפלתנו  
And accept our prayers with  
mercy for our fate and favor  
for our endeavors

כי אל שומע תפלות  
ותחנונים אתה  
Because You listen to prayers and  
act toward fulfilling our prayers

ומלפניך מלכנו  
ריקם אל ה'שיבנו  
If the answer should be no,  
let us still at least feel faith  
and trust in our hearts

כי אתה שומע  
תפלת עמך ישראל  
ברחמים  
Because You listen to the prayers  
of Am Yisroel, the more we are  
connected to the Klal,  
the more our prayer has  
a chance to be accepted

ברוך אתה ה'  
שומע תפלה  
It is a hidden miracle that You  
listen to prayer and thus give the  
possibility for us to bring a change  
to Your original plans

רְצֵה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
בְּעַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וּבִתְפִלָּתָם

We hope that Hashem will find  
favor in us through the way  
we live our lives;  
if not, at least in our prayers

---

וְהָשִׁב אֶת הָעֲבוּדָה  
לְדַבֵּיר בֵּיתְךָ

The greatest Kiddush Hashem  
was the Avodah on Yom Kippur,  
may it return

---

וְאֲשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּתְפִלָּתָם  
בְּאַהֲבָה  
תִּקְבַּל בְּרָצוֹן

Even now in Galus,  
the Neshamos of the Tzaddikim  
are being brought before Hashem;  
may their prayers  
be accepted with favor

---

וְתִהְיֶה לְרָצוֹן תָּמִיד  
עֲבוּדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ

Yet all we have is to pray to You.  
May our prayers constantly  
be favorable before You

---

וְתַחֲזִיקָה עֵינֵינוּ  
בְּשׁוֹבֵבךָ לְצִיּוֹן  
בְּרַחֲמִים

May we be able to see with  
“prophetic eyes” and conceptualize  
the return of the Divine Presence  
to Zion, with mercy. For without  
it, we won’t be able to see  
all the activities surrounding  
the service in the Temple. This  
is accomplished by watching and  
guarding our eyes from seeing bad.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
הַמְחִזִּיר שְׂכִינְתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן

With our faith, we can see it  
happening already today

מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ  
שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ  
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

We praise You, solemnly, for  
the fact that Your name is upon us  
as it was upon our forefathers

צוּר חַיֵּינוּ

You form our life

מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ  
אַתָּה הוּא לְדוֹר וָדוֹר

Protect us from bad  
and save us from our troubles

נוֹדָה לָךְ  
וְנִסְפָּר תְּהִלָּתְךָ

We owe You much gratitude,  
yet we have no way to repay,  
but we can relate “Your praise”

עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְסוּרִים בְּיָדְךָ

We live and die by Your will

וְעַל נְשִׁמוֹתֵינוּ  
הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ

When we awaken, our soul is returned to us, and He does not withhold it due to our sins

וְעַל נִסְיֶיךָ  
שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם עִמָּנוּ

The daily miracles that we tend not to see, outside the realm of nature

וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ

And the salvation from bad that only Hashem knows about

שֶׁבְּכָל עֵת  
עֶרֶב וּבֹקֵר וְצַהֲרַיִם

Throughout all the periods in our lives, when we feel life is in a decline, or when things start getting better, and when we feel “on top of the world”

הַטּוֹב  
כִּי לֹא כָּלוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ

Hashem does good even to those who deserve punishment, and is not limited; Thus, is true good

וְהַמְרַחֵם  
כִּי לֹא תִּמּוּ חֲסְדֶיךָ

Hashem gives without reason, so His mercy is like our Chesed, complete giving

מֵעוֹלָם קוִינּוּ לָךְ

We do not deserve His mercy because of our good deeds, but rather because we rely on Him and are waiting for Him

ועל כלם  
יתברך ויתרומם  
שמך מלבנו  
תמיד לעולם ועד

For all the above good that we just mentioned, may Your name, which we know through Your Kindness and Mercy in this world, be uplifted by all mankind always, knowing that You are the source of all good

וכל החיים יודוך סלה

Not only must those who have it good thank You, but even those who are suffering in this world need to thank You for being alive

ויהללו את שמך באמת

We thank You not only for the good You have done for us, but we also praise You from deep inside ourselves, without even expecting this good

האל  
ישועתנו ועזרתנו  
סלה

Many times, the one who suffers sees “the light at the end of the tunnel,” but for those who don’t, may the suffering be instrumental for us to reach the World to Come – “Sela”

ברוך אתה ה'  
הטוב שמך  
ולך  
נאה להודות

We bow here to show that even when we are suffering and in pain, we accept Hashem – whose name represents true kindness and mercy.

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה  
חַן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים

May we have internal peace, being able to see the good in everything, happy with our portion – at times on credit – hoping that we will better our ways

---

עָלֵינוּ  
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּךְ

Extend this feeling of serenity also upon our loved ones, and then upon all of Israel

---

בְּרַכְנוּ אָבִינוּ  
בְּלֵנוּ כְּאֶחָד  
בְּאוֹר פְּנֶיךָ

Bless us Hashem our father, and let us be together as one, to receive “Hashem’s friendly face”

---

כִּי בְּאוֹר פְּנֶיךָ  
נִתְּתָ לָנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
תּוֹרַת חַיִּים

The Torah is “alive.” It is not meant to be accepted only by individuals; we must engage the Torah with others, which will then help bring peace and understanding amongst us

---

וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד

The desire for us to do kindness to others

---

וְצַדִּיקָה  
וּבְרָכָה  
וְרַחֲמִים  
וְחַיִּים

Charitable deeds to others, and through us, we bring Beracha to the whole world, and by us helping those in need, it enables one to continue living a normal life

---

וְשָׁלוֹם

Even though we might be upset with another person, a blessing of peace will help us make it possible to forgive and re-establish peace

---

וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ  
לְבָרְךָ  
אֶת כָּל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּכָל יְעַת וּבְכָל שְׂעָה  
בְּשָׁלוֹמְךָ

May it be good in Your eyes to bless us always with Your peace (which is complete) from wars and pogroms

---

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה',  
הַמְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּשָׁלוֹם

Bless us with a threefold peace:  
◇ Internal  
◇ Between one another  
◇ Absence of war

---

---

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן  
אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיזוֹן לְבִי  
לְפָנֶיךָ  
ה' צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי

May all the words that I have just  
spoken in prayer, or have thought  
in my mind, find favor in Your  
eyes and come into existence

---

---

אֱלֹהֵי  
נֹצֵר לְשׁוֹנֵי מִרְעַ  
וּשְׂפָתַי  
מִדְּבַר מִרְמָה

In my personal petition to You, I  
plead that my mouth, tongue and  
lips which have just been used in  
Prayer to You, will not forfeit  
any of their moral purity, through  
my dealings with my fellow-man

---

---

וְלִמְקַלְלֵי  
נַפְשֵׁי תוֹדֵם

And to those who wish to curse  
me, may I remain calm,  
with no feelings of  
verbal or physical vengeance

---

---

וְנַפְשִׁי  
בְּעֶפְרָ לִבְל תִּהְיֶה

Let me not even feel the insult,  
like the dust does not feel  
those stamping on it

---

---

פָּתַח לְבִי בְּתוֹרָתְךָ

But, when it comes to Torah,  
may I be open and accepting  
in all matters of Your Torah

---

ובמִצְוֹתַי  
תִּרְדֹּף בְּפִשִּׁי

May my heart run after Mitzvos.  
I will not be indifferent and  
passive here, for Hashem seeks  
those who run after the Mitzvos

---

וְכָל הַחוֹשְׁבִים עָלַי רָעָה  
מִהֲרָה  
הִפֵּר עֲצָתָם  
וְקָלְקַל מִחֲשַׁבְתָּם

Because of my running  
after Mitzvos, Hashem  
will thwart the plans  
of those trying to run after me,  
so they won't prevent my endeavors

---

עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמִי  
עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן יְמִינִי  
עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן קֹדְשִׁיךָ  
עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן תּוֹרָתֶךָ

(These allude to the 4 Sefiros.)  
Do it for Your Name (Chesed),  
for increasing Your  
rulership in this world (Gevurah),  
and for Your Torah (Tifferes).  
You are above all (Malchus).  
Our wrongful acts do nothing  
to Your essence – so we may  
continue to learn Your Torah  
in this world.

---

לְמַעַן יִחַלְצוּן יְהוָה יְדִיךָ  
הַרְשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ

Do it for the above reasons,  
so those who are deemed worthy  
of Your love can now experience  
release from their present feeling  
of bondage in this physical world,  
through Your miracles  
(right hand)

---

וְעַנֵּנִי

Answer me in the process of  
answering others. For whoever  
pleads for Hashem's Mercy  
on others, and is himself  
in need of the same thing,  
will be answered first.

---

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן  
אֲמַרְי פִּי וְהִגִּינוֹן לְבָבִי  
לְפָנֶיךָ

May our prayer be accepted  
by You, and also the thoughts  
that we were unable  
to express to You in words

---

ה' צוּרֵי וְגוֹאֲלֵי

Hashem, You protect us  
and save us from our troubles

---

---

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם (בְּעִשְׂיֵי תְּהִשְׁלוֹם) בְּמִרְמָיו  
You make peace in the  
spiritual world, between  
the angels of judgment and mercy

---

הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם  
עָלֵינוּ  
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל  
Impose Your peace on us, that we  
will all understand that everyone  
has a specific role to fill in  
this world, and there will be  
no more jealousy – only peace

---

וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן  
Once we reach this level of peace,  
even the angels that are  
seeking bad will say Amen,  
when we are like one,  
with peace amongst ourselves

---

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ  
שְׂיִבְנֶה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ בְּמִהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ  
וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ

---

וְשֵׁם גִּבּוֹרְךָ בִּירָאָה כִּימֵי עוֹלָם וּכְשָׁנִים קְדָמוֹת

---