

Prayer in a Time of Serious Illness

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.

–In memory of Dr. Paul Woolf z”l

(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 _____’s beloved family: _____.

Their souls are woven together for all time.

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

כִּי מִלְאָכָיו יִצְוֶה לָךְ לְשִׁמְרָךְ בְּכֹל דְּרָכֶיךָ:

Ki malachav yetzaveh lach, lishmorcha b’chol d’racheh-cha.

May angels be appointed for him, to guard him in 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.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד:

Shma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad.

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

Prayer in a Time of Serious Illness

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(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 _____'s beloved family: _____.

Their souls are woven together for all time.

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

כִּי מַלְאָכָיו יִצְוּהָ לָךְ לְשִׁמּוֹרָה בְּכָל דְּרָכֶיךָ:

Ki malachav yetzaveh lach, lishmorcha b'chol d'racheh-cha.

May angels be appointed for her, to guard her in 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.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד:

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