



A Prayer for Israel

By Rabbi Daniel Raphael Silverstein (YCT '15)

Infinite Source of life,
Power and Guide of our ancestors,
You have given us the gift of being alive.
You constantly breathe the breath of life into us.
For millennia we have wrestled with You, the Infinite Mystery, and with our fellow humans,
and succeeded in being ourselves.
We have succeeded through many vast seismic shifts of history, empires rising and falling,
global conflicts, and multiple attempts to eradicate us by seemingly mighty foes.
Throughout this long, dramatic, journey, we have succeeded in sharing our gifts with the world.
First and foremost, we shared the gift of our relationship with You, the intimate embodied
knowledge that everything is One, that everything is Love.
We shared the gift of our prayers, our prophecies, our stories.
We shared our Tanach, the Hebrew Bible, which is so full of our messy humanity, our failings,
our vulnerability, which have been the soil for so much human growth and evolution.
And on through the centuries, we helped humanity to evolve, by sharing our opposition to all
tyrannies, all absolutes, all forms of idolatry, and all dichotomies.
We insisted on the unity and sanctity of all existence.
We shared these gifts all over the world, in myriad languages and contexts.
But our success has not been without cost.
It aroused fierce enmity among some of our human brothers.
Two thousand years ago, after more than 1200 years of almost unbroken autonomy in the Land
of Israel, we lost the privilege of governing ourselves, and we were scattered among the
nations.
For two millennia, our blood was spilt without mercy at the whims of tyrants, despots and
hypocrites.
We were regularly used as scapegoats, as bogeymen, as a distraction from any inconvenient
truth.
Eventually, in the crucible of modernity and industrialized mass-murder, it became clear to us:
This cannot go on.
We must be responsible for our own survival.
We cannot leave the question of our very lives in the hands of those who have proven, so many
times, that they are all too human.
We are human too.
And we have failed in so many ways, and we will fail again.
But now, for the first time in two thousand years, our failures are our own.
Our lives are once more in our own hands, in partnership with You, the all-loving Source.
We have, somehow, returned to our land, from every corner of the earth.



We have, somehow, revived our ancient language, and begun to rediscover who we are, when we do not live in constant fear and oppression.

We are just beginning.

Our young country is the site of miracles that You have wrought, through our hands.

There is still much enmity toward us in the world, but we are no longer powerless in its wake.

We stand strong on the land of our ancestors, and our children, in service of life.

Our tiny population has made innumerable contributions to human healing and evolution, with Your help.

We are still wrestling with You, and with humans, and succeeding.

Please, Infinite Source of Life, help us to keep wrestling.

Help us to keep evolving ourselves, and our world, toward the Loving Oneness that we were sent to embody.

Help us to love ourselves so that we can love others.

Help us to become our best selves, and to share our fullest gifts with the world.

Help us to overcome all obstacles that stand in our way.

Help us to befriend all those who might join us in lovingly serving life.

Help us to prevail over those who are devoted to darkness, cruelty and death.

Help us to be Your vessels, and to bring Shalom – a Peace of Wholeness that incorporates vast diversity – to the entire world.

May the loving awareness of You

Fill the earth like water fills the sea.