

SE for SA (Shemone Esre for Sex Addicts)

Posted by davidr - 10 Oct 2013 09:13

I am a sex addict and am in SA (Sexaholics Anonymous), a 12 step program for sex addiction.

Lately, I am davening Shemone Esre with a new approach, thinking new meanings and prayers into the words. To be clear, I do not change any words of the actual Shemoneh Esreh. I believe that it is very holy and that every word has hidden and deep meanings. But I also believe that it is important for every individual to assign meanings to the words we say that are relevant to our lives. As a sex addict working on the twelve steps, I have become aware of the tremendous love Hashem has for me, and how only Hashem's power can save my life.

Below you can find the shemone esre translated into English with my kavono in parentheses.

(Instruction:)

While praying, concentrate on the meaning of the words and remember that you are tremendously privileged to stand before the Divine Presence. And remember that God loves you and is so happy to see you turn to him! Before beginning the Amidah, take three steps back, then three steps forward. Recite the Amidah quietly -- but audibly to yourself -- while standing with feet together.

(God, I am powerless. I am powerless over lust, I am powerless over my life. I may feel unworthy to stand before you and to connect with you. But what I cannot do for myself, you can do for me. So please...)

My L-rd, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise.

Bend Knees at "Blessed"; bow at "You"; Straighten at "L-rd our G?d":

(Thank you for being here for me..) Blessed are You, L-rd our G?d and G?d of our fathers, G?d of Abraham, G?d of Isaac and G?d of Jacob, the great, mighty and awesome G?d, exalted G?d, who bestows (not because I deserve it, but because you love me) bountiful kindness, who creates all things, who remembers the piety of the Patriarchs, and who, in love, brings a redeemer (from my addiction and their underlying causes) to their children's children, for the sake of His Name.

During the Ten Days of Penitence add:

Remember us for life, King who desires (true and addiction free) life; inscribe us in the Book of Life (without addiction, oh please God, keep me sober just for the day) , for Your sake, O living G?d.

Bend Knees at "Blessed"; bow are "You"; Straighten at "L-rd our G?d":

O King (my higher power who can and does keep me sober one day at a time) , (You are) a helper (when I'm triggered), a savior (when I'm about to act out) and a shield (protecting my eyes and heart). Blessed are You L-rd, Shield of Abraham.

(My addiction may be strong and old), but You are mighty forever, my L-rd; You resurrect the dead (and the dead feelings within me); You are powerful to save.

In summer say: (You have such gentle ways to make me grow) you make the dew to descend. In winter say: (But when necessary, you employ stronger methods to bring me close) You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.

(You) sustain the living with loving kindness (I therefore trust you and put myself in your care), (You) resurrect the dead with great mercy (you helped me find sobriety), (You) support the falling (you gently remind me to work on my recovery), (You) heal the (physically, mentally or spiritually) sick, (You) release the bound (you free me from the bounds of my addiction to experience joyful freedom), and (You) fulfill your trust to those who sleep in the dust (You care for me, think about me and trust me even when I am down and guide me back to you). Who is like You, mighty One (no power can take on my higher power)! And who can be compared to You, King, who brings death and restores life, and causes deliverance to grow (let my addiction be the seed for tremendous growth) !

During the Ten Days of Penitence add: Who is like You, merciful Father, who in compassion remembers His creatures for (a joyful and addiction free) life.

You are trustworthy to revive the dead (I've personally experienced the miracle of recovery). Blessed are You L-rd, who revives the dead (thank you God for every day of sanity).

When the Chazzan repeats Amidah, Kedushah is recited here.

We will hallow and adore You as the sweet words of the assembly of the holy Seraphim who thrice repeat "holy" unto You, as it is written by Your prophet: And they call one to another and Say, (Cong. and Chazzan:) "(I will turn my heart to God) Holy, (I will avert my eyes) holy, (I will help other recover) holy is the L-rd of hosts; (I will pray to you wherever and whenever I am triggered, because) the whole earth is full of His glory." (Chazzan:) Those facing them offer

praise and say, (Cong and Chazzan:) "Blessed be the glory of the L-rd from its place."
(Chazzan:) And in Your holy Scriptures it is written thus: (Cong. and Chazzan:) The L-rd shall reign forever; your G?d, O Zion, throughout all generations. Praise the L-rd.

You are holy and Your Name is holy, and holy beings praise You daily for all eternity (and I humbly ask to be allowed to join them). Blessed are You L-rd, the holy G?d. (During the Ten Days of Penitence substitute: the holy King.)

(My own "best thinking" got me into trouble, I need a new way of thinking) You graciously bestow sanity (to distinguish what is good for me and what is bad for me) upon man and teach mortals understanding. Graciously bestow upon us from You, insight (to know how to accept that which I cannot change), understanding (to know how to change my attitude) and sanity (to know the difference). Blessed are You L-rd, who graciously bestows sanity.

(You are my father and I am your child. But I lost my way, and cannot find my way back to you without your help because I am powerless. And I cannot do it alone, I need others on this journey with me. So please ..) Cause us to return, our Father, to Your Torah (show us how); draw us near, our King, to Your service (give us the courage); and bring us back to You in whole-hearted repentance (I really need to feel your love right now!). Blessed are You L-rd, who (not only accepts, but) desires penitence.

(Deep in my heart I am always yearning to be loved and accepted and understood and connected and whole. I am really looking for you, because connecting with you is the only real Connection I can have. When I act out, I feel so far away from you. And after I act out, I feel that it's so hard to come back to you because I turned away from you, sometimes even deliberately. But I know you have not given up on me and I will not give up on my connection with you either. Pardon us, our Father, because we have sinned (only you really know and understand that I was really looking for you all along); forgive us, our King, because we have transgressed; for You are a good and forgiving G?d. (You are infinite and your ability to forgive is infinite. Yes, I know I have asked you to forgive me before, but unlike me, you never lose your patience. So I am back again. Help me stay with you just for today) Blessed are You L-rd, gracious One who pardons abundantly.

O behold our poverty (I am completely powerless over lust) and (so I ask you to) wage our battle (This is not just my battle, it's also yours. You desire my return just as much as I desire to be whole with you. But I can't win this battle, and you can. It's all yours. I will let go and let God); redeem us speedily (I am asking just for one day at a time, but please make it today) for the sake of Your Name (so that the miracles you do for us will encourage others to seek you), for You G?d are the mighty redeemer. Blessed are You L-rd, Redeemer of Israel.

(I am completely powerless over lust and it's causing me and the people around me so much pain and suffering. You are the only one who can help me and so I turn to you, praying not just for myself but also for my friends and for all those who are still suffering.) Heal us, O L-rd, and we will be healed (no other healing will truly heal my spiritual illness, my strong yearning to connect with you); help us and we will be helped (I recognize that I will not recover all at once, so I beg you to help me stay on the path of recovery); for You are our praise. Grant complete cure and healing to all our wounds (especially those I inflicted on others as a result of my malady. Help me fix what I broke and heal me of the underlying resentments, fears and

insecurities that caused me to hurt others); for You, Almighty King, are a faithful and merciful healer (I trust you to help me make amends in the least painful way possible). Blessed are You L-rd, who heals the sick of His people Israel.

Bless for us, L-rd our G?d, this year (help us stay in recovery thru all the changing seasons) and all the varieties of its produce for good (may my recovery be a blessing to all the different people I come in contact with); and bestow (During the summer season say:) blessing (During the winter season say: dew and rain for blessing) upon the face of the earth. Satisfy us from Your bounty and bless our year like other good years (I know merited to experience what sanity feels like and I want more of it!), for blessing; for You are a generous G?d who bestows goodness and blesses the years. Blessed are You L-rd, who blesses the years.

Sound the great shofar for our freedom (I can't wait to experience the ultimate freedom and closeness with You with our final redemption); raise a banner to gather our exiles, and bring us together from the four corners of the earth into our land (help me unite all the conflicting parts of my soul and bring them home). Blessed are You L-rd, who gathers the dispersed of His people Israel.

Restore our judges as in former times (restore my sanity and my judgement) , and our counsellors as of yore; remove from us sorrow and sighing, and reign over us, You alone, O L-rd, (please don't let my addiction rule me anymore) with kindness and compassion, with righteousness and justice. Blessed are You L-rd, King who loves righteousness and justice. (During the Ten Days of Penitencesubstitute with: the King of judgment.)

Let there be no hope for informers, and may all the heretics and all the wicked instantly perish; may all the enemies of Your people be speedily extirpated; and may You swiftly uproot, break, crush and subdue the reign of wickedness (within me that is ruining my life) speedily in our days. Blessed are You L-rd, who crushes enemies and subdues the wicked.

May Your mercies be aroused, L-rd our G?d, upon the righteous, upon the pious, upon the elders of Your people, the House of Israel, upon the remnant of their sages, upon the righteous proselytes and upon us. Grant ample reward to all who truly trust in Your Name, and place our lot among them (let me learn from others how to trust you again, I want to place my life in your care); may we never be disgraced (I don't want to go back the day when I could not face myself), for we have put our trust in You. Blessed are You L-rd, the support and security of the righteous.

Return in mercy to Yerusholayim (the city of Yerusholayim is at the center of the world and the name is composed of the words Yirah Sholem, may I be whole again and feel your presence in the center of my being), Your city and dwell therein as You have promised; speedily establish therein the throne of David Your servant, and rebuild it, soon in our days, as an everlasting edifice. Blessed are You L-rd, who rebuilds Jerusalem.

Speedily cause the scion of David Your servant to flourish, and increase his power by Your salvation, for we hope for Your salvation all day (I need your help throughout the day, because I am completely powerless). Blessed are You L-rd, who causes the power of salvation to flourish.

Hear our voice, L-rd our G?d; merciful Father (have mercy on me and all those I harmed) (Note:

Pray in your mind for yourself, your family members and anyone you may have harmed or who you have resentments against), have compassion upon us and accept our prayers in mercy and favor (don't let me die a spritual death, let me live to pray to you on this and every day), for You are G?d who hears prayers and supplications; do not turn us away empty-handed from You, our King, (and I pray to you without shame) for You hear the prayer of everyone. Blessed are You L-rd, who hears prayer.

Look with favor, L-rd our G?d, on Your people Israel and pay heed to their prayer; restore the service to Your Sanctuary and accept with love and favor Israel's fire-offerings (when I surrender my burning lust to you) and prayer; and may the service of Your people Israel always find favor.

On Rosh Chodesh and Chol HaMoed, (Our G?d. . . may there ascend) is recited here.

Our G?d and G?d of our fathers, may there ascend, come and reach, be seen, accepted, and heard, recalled and remembered before You, the remembrance and recollection of us, the remembrance of our fathers, the remembrance of Mashiach the son of David Your servant, the remembrance of Jerusalem Your holy city, and the remembrance of all Your people the House of Israel, for deliverance, well-being, grace, kindness, mercy, good life and peace, on this day of

On Rosh Chodesh: Rosh Chodesh

On the holiday of Passover: the Festival of Matzot

On the holiday of Sukkot: the Festival of Sukkot.

Remember us on this [day], L-rd our G?d, for good; be mindful of us on this [day] for blessing; help us on this [day] for good life. With the promise of deliverance and Compassion, spare us and be gracious to us; have mercy upon us and deliver us; for our eyes are directed to You, for You, G?d, are a gracious and merciful King.

May our eyes behold Your return to Zion in mercy. Blessed are You L-rd, who restores His Divine Presence to Zion (thank you for being in my life again, one day at a time).

We thankfully acknowledge that You are the L-rd our G?d and G?d of our fathers forever (Thank you for always being there for me, even if everyone else abandoned me). You are the strength of our life, the shield of our salvation in every generation. We will give thanks to You and recount Your praise, evening, morning and noon, for our lives which are committed into Your hand, for our souls which are entrusted to You, for Your miracles which are with us daily (thank you for the daily miracle of my sobriety and grant me one more day), and for Your continual wonders and beneficences (thank you for all the little ways you show me your love and caring throughout the day). You are the Beneficent One, for Your mercies never cease; the Merciful

One, for Your kindnesses never end; for we always place our hope in You.

On Chanukah and Purim, the following is added.

And [we thank You] for the miracles, for the redemption, for the mighty deeds, for the saving acts, and for the wonders which You have wrought for our ancestors in those days, at this time

On Chanukah continue here:

In the days of Matityahu, the son of Yochanan the High Priest, the Hasmonean and his sons, when the wicked Hellenic government rose up against Your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will. But You, in Your abounding mercies, stood by them in the time of their distress. You waged their battles, defended their rights and avenged the wrong done to them. You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the wanton sinners into the hands of those who occupy themselves with Your Torah. You made a great and holy name for Yourself in Your world, and effected a great deliverance and redemption for Your people to this very day. Then Your children entered the shrine of Your House, cleansed Your Temple, purified Your Sanctuary, kindled lights in Your holy courtyards, and instituted these eight days of Chanukah to give thanks and praise to Your great Name.

On Purim continue here:

In the days of Mordechai and Esther, in Shushan the capital, when the wicked Haman rose up against them, and sought to destroy, slaughter and annihilate all the Jews, young and old, infants and women, in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to take their spoil for plunder. But You, in Your abounding mercies, foiled his counsel and frustrated his intention, and caused the evil he planned --- to recoil on his own head, and they hanged him and his sons upon the gallows.

And for all these, may Your Name, our King, be continually blessed, exalted and extolled forever and all time.

During the Ten Days of Penitence add:

Inscribe all the children of Your Covenant for a good life.

And all living things shall forever thank You, and praise Your great Name eternally, for You are good. G?d, You are our everlasting salvation and help, O benevolent G?d. Blessed are You L-rd, Beneficent is Your Name, and to You it is fitting to offer thanks.

Bestow (inner and outer) peace, goodness and blessing, life, graciousness, kindness (may I be kind to others always) and mercy (may I feel compassion and not be judgemental towards others), upon us and upon all Your people Israel. Bless us, our Father, all of us as one, with the light of Your countenance. For by the light of Your countenance You gave us, L-rd our G?d, the Torah of life and loving-kindness, righteousness, blessing, mercy, life and peace. May it be favorable in Your eyes to bless Your people Israel, at all times and at every moment, with Your peace (teach me how to make peace with myself, the people around me and with you in every difficult situation throughout my day).

During the Ten Days of Penitence add: And in the Book of life, blessing, peace and prosperity, deliverance, consolation and favorable decrees, may we and all Your people the House of Israel be remembered and inscribed before You for a happy life and for peace.

Blessed are You L-rd, who blesses His people Israel with peace.

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You (replace my lustful thoughts with thoughts that are pleasing to you), L-rd, my Strength and my Redeemer.

(I cannot change what other people think or say of me, help me learn to accept what I cannot change. And may I not be tempted to harm other people in any way. So ..) My G?d, guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking deceitfully. Let my soul be silent to those who curse me ; let my soul be like earth to all (may I be as accepting as the earth which never fights back. May I never cause harm like the earth which doesn't burn, corrode or destroy. May I be a blessing to all like the earth which takes small seeds and returns a great bounty). Open my heart to Your Torah, and let my soul eagerly pursue Your commandments. As for all those who plot evil against me, hasten to annul their counsel and frustrate their design. Let them be as chaff before the wind; let the angel of the L-rd thrust them away. That Your beloved ones may be delivered, help with Your right hand (the hand of love and generosity) and answer me. Do it for the sake of Your Name (let my recovery bear witness to your care and power) ; do it for the sake of Your right hand; do it for the sake of Your Torah; do it for the sake of Your holiness (let me be holy, because your holy spark is inside my holy soul). May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, L-rd, my Strength and my Redeemer.

(Let me remember to always be humble before you.)

Before reciting the following verse one should bow, and in this bowed position, take three steps backward. While still bowing, he should turn his head to his left saying, "He who makes peace in His heavens"; bow forward, saying, "may He"; turn his head to his right, saying, "make peace for

us"; and finally bow forward, saying, "and for all Israel; and say, Amen".

He who makes peace (During the Ten Days of Penitence say: the peace) in His heavens, may He make peace for us and for all Israel; and say, Amen.

May it be Your will, L-rd our G?d and G?d of our fathers, that the Bet Hamikdash be speedily rebuilt in our days, and grant us our portion in Your Torah.

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Re: SE for SA (Shemone Esre for Sex Addicts)
Posted by ploni.almoni@gmx.com - 10 Oct 2013 14:26

I wouldn't be caught dead with a modified shmone esrei for addicts, because addiction is not new in our tradition, everything is in the Torah, but I give you a lot of credit for originality.

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Re: SE for SA (Shemone Esre for Sex Addicts)
Posted by davidr - 11 Oct 2013 00:15

Thanks for the compliment.

I should have explained: I didn't mean to modify the shmone esrei (chas vesholom), rather to show what the words mean to me and what I think about when I say these words (I don't say these words, but I may think them).

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Re: SE for SA (Shemone Esre for Sex Addicts)
Posted by ploni.almoni@gmx.com - 11 Oct 2013 01:35

That's cool.

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Re: SE for SA (Shemone Esre for Sex Addicts)

Posted by SIB101854 - 14 Oct 2013 05:10

Take a look at Tefilas Zakah-does it not suffice for your needs rather than thinking that we have the madregah to write the text of a Tefilah?

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Re: SE for SA (Shemone Esre for Sex Addicts)

Posted by davidr - 15 Oct 2013 06:33

I am not writing the text of a new tefilah, nor am I modifying the words of the shemone esreh. I am simply describing the meaning these words have for me as a sex addict.

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Re: SE for SA (Shemone Esre for Sex Addicts)

Posted by MBJ - 15 Oct 2013 12:07

I must say I was at first disturbed by an entire shemonah esrei focused on addiction. Having read it again, I find it beautiful, and I can honestly say that I have had some tefillot go like that as well, as I thank and beg Hashem through it all to help me. So while some of the connections seem forced, it is well done.

Now I feel like a judge on a reality TV show.

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