

# THESE ARE NAMES: ANSWER US!

## A Poem to Beseech A Forlorn God



In this unit we will read and write together, reflecting on some difficult theological questions using modern Israeli liturgy & building some resilience. The unit includes two poems and two creative writing exercises.

Bacol Serlui, an Israeli poet, wrote *These Are Names* on the third day of the Hebrew month of Heshvan, immediately after October 7th. This poem is a modern lamentation raising some big questions for people of faith.

Read the poem out loud. Each participant should read one short phrase and the next person in the group should pick up. You might want to read it out loud two or three times. Suggest that the learners write down emotions and thoughts as the reading proceeds.

### THESE ARE NAMES (3 HESHVAN 5784)

G-d of Ofakim, G-d of Be'eri, G-d of Zikim, G-d of Holit, G-d of Yachini, G-d of Israel,  
G-d of Kfar Aza, G-d of Kisufim, G-d of Kerem Shalom, G-d of Magen, G-d of Mefalsim,  
G-d of Nachal Oz, G-d of Nirim, G-d of Nir Oz, G-d of Nir Yitzchak, G-d of Nir Am, G-d of Netiv Ha'asarah, G-d of Netivot, G-d of Sderot, G-d of Sufa, G-d of Sa'ad, G-d of Ein Habisor,  
G-d of Ein Hashlosa, G-d of Alumim, G-d of Pri Gan, G-d of Re'im,  
G-d of the Holy Sabbath, G-d of innocence irretrievable,  
G-d of eyes won't be shut, G-d of the dead children, G-d of the burnt houses, G-d  
In affliction and in captivity

What name shall I call out till you hear me.  
I fear for the flesh, afraid of Man  
forlorn and wretched at your no-face.  
Tell me the obscure from the lucid as you appear  
In wrath, present at the sights of horror.  
Myriads of men, atoms of soul  
Pain-struck we've come to entreat you.  
In gathering of the names, the faces, the fears  
Only the shofar bleating bitter  
Ayeka?\* ('where are you?')

### שמות ג' חשוון התשפ"ד

אֱלֹהֵי אֶפְקִים, אֱלֹהֵי בְאֵרִי, אֱלֹהֵי זִיקִים, אֱלֹהֵי חוֹלִית,  
אֱלֹהֵי יַכִּינִי, אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֱלֹהֵי כְּפַר עֵזָה, אֱלֹהֵי  
כְּסוּפִים, אֱלֹהֵי כָרֶם שְׁלוֹם, אֱלֹהֵי מְגוֹן, אֱלֹהֵי מְפַלְסִים,  
אֱלֹהֵי נַחַל עֵז, אֱלֹהֵי נִירִים, אֱלֹהֵי נִיר עֵז, אֱלֹהֵי נִיר  
יַחְקָה, אֱלֹהֵי נִיר עַם, אֱלֹהֵי נְתִיב הָעֶשְׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי  
נְתִיבוֹת, אֱלֹהֵי שְׁדָרוֹת, אֱלֹהֵי סוּפָה, אֱלֹהֵי סַעַד,  
אֱלֹהֵי עֵין הַבְּשׂוֹר, אֱלֹהֵי עֵין הַשְּׁלוֹשָׁה, אֱלֹהֵי עֲלוּמִים,  
אֱלֹהֵי פְרִי גֹן, אֱלֹהֵי רַעִים,  
אֱלֹהֵי שֶׁבֶת קִדְשׁ, אֱלֹהֵי תְמִימוֹת שְׁלֵא תִשׁוּב עוֹד,  
אֱלֹהֵי עֵינַיִם שְׁלֵא יַעֲצֻמוּ, אֱלֹהֵי הַיְלָדִים הַמֵּתִים,  
אֱלֹהֵי הַבְּתִים הַשְּׂרוּפִים, אֱלֹהֵים  
בְּצָרָה וּבִשְׁבִיָּה  
בְּאֵיזָה שֵׁם אֶקְרָאָךְ עַד שֶׁתִּעֲנֵנִי.  
אֲנִי יִרְאָה עַל הַבֶּשֶׂר, חֲרָדָה מֵהָאָדָם,  
עֲזוּבָה וּמְרוּדָה בְּאֵין פְּנֵיךְ.  
לְמַדְנִי סְתוּם מִן הַמְּפֹרָשׁ שְׁעָה שְׁאַתָּה נִגְלָה  
בְּזַעַם, נוֹכַח בְּמִרְאוֹת הָאֵימָה.  
רְבוּאוֹת אָדָם, רְסִיסֵי הַנֶּפֶשׁ  
הַלּוּמִי כְּאֵב אֶתְאַנּוּ לְחִלּוֹת פְּנֵיךְ.  
בְּהֶאֱסֹף כָּל הַשְּׁמוֹת, הַפְּנִים, הַמּוֹרָאוֹת  
רַק גַּעֲיֵית שׁוֹפָר מְרָה מִנְפֹּט  
אֵיכָה





## ANENU: ANSWER US!

The Anenu prayer is usually chanted during the Sephardic Selichot and is a central part of the prayers. Begin with a free writing exercise, keeping in mind the idea that we're looking for help, for answers, for salvation.

- ◆ Begin by placing your pen or pencil on the paper.
- ◆ Let your hand write whatever comes naturally without overthinking.

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### ANENU

Answer us, God of Abraham, answer us.  
Answer us, fear of Isaac, answer us.  
Answer us, powerful one of Jacob, answer us.  
Answer us, shield of David, answer us.  
Answer us, the one who answers in times of heavenly favor, answer us.  
Answer us, the one who answers in times of trouble, answer us.  
Answer us, the one who answers in times of mercy, answer us.  
Answer us, God of the heavenly chariot, answer us.  
Answer us, God of Meir, answer us  
Answer us for the sake of Bar Yochai, answer us.  
Answer us, merciful and full of grace, answer us.

### עֲנֵנו

עֲנֵנו אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו וּפְחַד יִצְחָק עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו מָגֵן דָּוִד עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו הַעֲוֹנָה בְּעֵת רָצוֹן עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו הַעֲוֹנָה בְּעֵת צָרָה עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו הַעֲוֹנָה בְּעֵת רַחֲמִים עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו אֱלֹהֵי הַמְּרֻכָּבָה עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו אֱלֹהֵי דְמַאִיר עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו בְּצִכּוֹתֶיהָ דְבַר יוֹחַאי עֲנֵנו.  
עֲנֵנו רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן עֲנֵנו:

- ◆ Think of who in your social, communal & national circles was answered – who was in great fear or cried, and their cry – their prayer – was heard. Write it all down.
- ◆ On the following page, create your poem following the Anenu structure.

Encourage participants to share what they wrote with the group. Try to focus on the positive and refrain from being critical.





