

אהבה רבה

אֵהָבָה רַבָּה אֶהְבֵּתֵנוּ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, חֲמֵלָה גְדוּלָה וַיִּתְּרָה חֲמֵלֶתָ עָלֵינוּ. אָבִינוּ מְלִכֵנוּ, בְּעֵבוֹר אֲבוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁבִטְחוּ בָךְ, וַתְּלַמְּדֵם חֻקֵי חַיִּים, בֵּן תַּחֲנֹנֵנוּ וַתְּלַמְּדֵנוּ. אָבִינוּ, הָאָב הַרְחֵמֵנוּ, הַמְּרַחֵם, רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ, וַתֵּן בְּלִבֵּנוּ לְהִבִּין וּלְהַשְׂכִּיל, לְשִׁמְעַ, לְלַמֵּד וּלְלַמֵּד, לְשִׁמֵּר וּלְעֲשׂוֹת וּלְקַיֵּם אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי תְלִמוּד תּוֹרָתְךָ בְּאֵהָבָה. וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ, וְדַבֵּק לִבֵּנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ, וַיַּחַד לְבָבֵנוּ לְאֵהָבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ, וְלֹא נִבּוֹשׁ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: כִּי בְשֵׁם קִדְשְׁךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּטַחְנוּ, נִגְיֵלָה וְנִשְׁמָחָה בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ.

With a great love you have loved us—You have given us blessings beyond numbering; you have given us life and hope, earth and its sustenance, and the loved ones you have made and allowed to us. Adonai Eloheinu—Although each day we know your gifts and your grace, you are nonetheless ineffable. [With] great and abundant mercy you have been merciful to us—You constantly forgive our wrongdoing; you endlessly re-create our world so that when we refrain from destroying it while life still remains, you raise it up again and again. Our Progenitor, our Sovereign—We see the hallmarks of your power and majesty all around us, from the wheeling cosmos of a summer night’s sky to the miraculous structure of your molecular building-block, and yet we are mystified by the unity of your creation. For the sake of our forefathers [and foremothers] who trusted in you and whom you taught the statutes of life, be gracious to us and teach us—For the sake of those who walked in your paths and lived your Torah, helping you create the righteousness that we have inherited, because you taught them the rules of your creation and how to live in your image, help us to find their strength and courage, their piety and scholarship, that we too may fully know and live your Torah; do this too for the sake of ourselves, our families, our communities, our people, our nation, and all humanity. Our Progenitor, our merciful Parent—You are our source and our sustenance, who without fail provides for all our needs when we reach within ourselves, our communities, and our people to use all that you have given us. Who acts with compassion, have compassion on us and put [it] into our hearts to understand and to think creatively, to listen, to learn, and to teach, to preserve, to practice, and to fulfill all the words of instruction in your Torah with love—You who have shown kindness by creating the gift of life and sustaining it in the face of our indifference and abusiveness, help us again, now, to turn our hearts and minds to your will, that we begin to use all the imaginative power that you make available to us, so that we are always listening to and learning your Torah, maintaining it through our study and deeds, raising it up and carrying it with a love that matches your own for us. Put the light of Torah in our eyes—Let us not be distracted by the sirens of secular life that turn us away from your path, and instead let us be a light to others. And cause our hearts to hold fast to your commandments—Enable us to know fully the unity of your Creation and your Torah, that your directions to us describe the inner structure of the world, and that they are thus the most reliable guides for our lives. Make our hearts one to love and be awed by your name—Help us to shed our arrogance and ignorance, and the doubts and distrust that accompany them; and sustain us in our search to stand face-to-face with your awesome light. And may we never be put to shame, for in your holy, great, and awesome name have we trusted—May we never fail to use all of your gifts, always trusting in your blessing and commandments, to save ourselves from degradation and destruction. May we exult and rejoice in your deliverance—Let us embrace all of your divine power, accepting openly and joyfully that in you and your Torah we are strengthened and guided to meet the challenges we face.