

## Text Study: *T'filat Haderech* (Traveler's Prayer)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לַעֲסֹק בְּדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam  
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah*

Praised are You Adonai, Ruler of the universe,  
Who sanctifies us with mitzvot and commands us  
to engage in the study of Torah.

### תְּפִלַּת הַדֶּרֶךְ

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,  
שְׁתוּלִיכֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְתַצְעִידֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְתִדְרִיכֵנוּ  
לְשָׁלוֹם, וְתַגִּיעֵנוּ לְמַחֲזֵז חֲפָצֵנוּ לְחַיִּים וּלְשִׂמְחָה  
וּלְשָׁלוֹם, וְתַחַזְרֵנוּ לְבֵיתֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְתַצִּילֵנוּ מִכָּף כָּל  
אוֹיֵב וְאוֹרֵב, וּמִכָּל מִיַּי פְּרַעֲנוֹת הַמִּתְרַגְּשׁוֹת לְבוֹא  
לְעוֹלָם וְתִשְׁלַח בְּרַכָּה בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ וְתַתִּיבֵנוּ לְחַן  
וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְעֵינֵי כָל רְאִינוּ, וְתִשְׁמַע  
קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנֵינוּ, כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה וְתַחֲנוּן אַתָּה;  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה.

### *T'filat HaDerech* (Traveler's Prayer)

May it be Your will, Adonai our God and God of our ancestors, to guide us in peace, to sustain us in peace, to lead us to our desired destination in health and joy and peace, and to bring us home in peace. Save us from every enemy and disaster on the way, and from all calamities that threaten the world. Bless the work of our hands. May we find grace, love and compassion in Your sight and in the sight of all who see us. Hear our supplication, for You listen to prayer and supplication.

Praised are You, Adonai who hears prayer.

Please note that God's Hebrew name appears on this page. As a sign of respect, instead of discarding it after use you may prefer to store it in a geniza—a place where printed materials containing God's name and old ritual objects are collected in preparation for ritual burial.

(see next page for discussion questions)

## Questions for Discussion

1. Although this is a fairly short prayer, it contains many requests. What are some of the requests made in the prayer? Upon whose behalf are these requests made?
2. The first sentence of this prayer repeatedly mentions "peace." The Hebrew word for peace, שלום *shalom*, derives from the Hebrew word for wholeness or completeness. In what ways do you think a journey might threaten one's sense of wholeness?
3. What does the request "Bless the work of our hands" suggest to you about what is expected to happen during a journey?

Please read the follow text and then answer the question below:

Abaye said: A man should always associate himself with the congregation [and it is advisable that he should not pray on his behalf alone]. How should he say [the prayer]? 'May it be Your will, Lord our God, to guide us in peace, etc.' When should he say this prayer? R. Jacob said in the name of R. Hisda: At the moment he starts on his journey

**Brachot 30a**

4. Why do you think Abaye notes that people should pray and travel as part of a group?
5. How might being part of a group be an asset when taking a journey?
6. In what ways does this prayer help you think about the journey we are embarking upon as a Kenissa Community of Practice?

## Background

**Abaye** – Considered one of the primary authors of the *Talmud*, Abaye (280-339 CE) was head of the Academy at Pumbedita and a successful farmer.

**R. Jacob** – Living at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, Rabbi Jacob was Babylonian-born though he migrated to *Eretz Yisrael*. He is frequently referred to in the *Talmud* as "a certain one of the rabbis."

**R. Hisda** – With the wealth he acquired from being a brewer, Rabbi Hisda (c. 217-309) rebuilt the famous rabbinical academy in Sura, Babylonia.

**Brachot** – A tractate of the *Talmud* that deals primarily with benedictions and daily prayers.