

We live in a society where many, perhaps most, Jewish women share equally in the bread-winning and professional worlds once the province only of men. But the heartfelt concerns and foci of this Tekhineh are compellingly relevant even to our different reality – the need for protection and guidance; the fear of humiliation, dependence and mistreatment; the fear of judgment; the desire to strengthen the spirits of children; the identification with others who are downtrodden and oppressed. Consider using it as a model for your own original prayer.

Tkhineh for When One's Husband is Away Seeking to Earn a Living

Almighty God! You are King of the whole world, a Helper over helpers. I beg You, great and merciful Father and King, to have mercy upon me and upon my husband and children. Protect us and shield us from all evil, lead us in the right path that we may earn an honorable living, that we may not – *kholile vekhas* (1) – need to be sustained through human tzedoke and not – *kholile* (1) – be humiliated. May only You, with Your gentle hand, sustain us, just as You sustained the wife of the righteous *Ovadye* and her children through *Elisha Hanovi*.(2)

Lead my husband in the right path; send good angels to accompnay him and be with him. Protect him wherever he goes – just as You sent angels to protect our father *Yankev*, (3) *Olev HaSholem* – so that he may be brought back in good health and peace, in joy and happiness, to his wife and children. May the merit of his little children, who are innocent of sin, stand him in good stead, merciful God. I beseech You, merciful God, to keep all evil decrees far from him. Do not treat him with Your attribute of justice, but only with Your attribute of mercy. Do not judge him when he goes into a place of danger. (4) May the merit of our pious ancestors, Avrom, Yitskhok, and Yankev,(5) and the merit of our little children protect us always, so that we will not – *kholile*(1)– become confused, so that we may grow old with honor, to live out our years and days in contentment.

Increase our strength in Your holy service, that we may serve You in love and in fear to perform Your holy *mitsves* (6). May we be able to strengthen the hearts of our children, so that they trespass not the slightest of Your *mitsves*, but serve only You with all their hearts.

Confound the evil thoughts of our enemies, that they not glory in our misfortune. Keep the *yeytser hore* (7) far from us so that we may serve our Lord God in submission and humility. Almighty and merciful Father! Be compassionate to us just as a father is compassionate to his children. Open the gates of mercy to us. Accept this prayer from me, a sinful person, to You, holy God. May the *goyel tsedek* (8) appear before us, and may we be redeemed from exile soon. Praised be You, God, who hears the prayer of all oppressed people who call upon You with truth, as it is written: “God is close to those who call upon Him in truth.” (9) It says further: “He hears their cries and will save them.” (10) You hear their cries and stand ready to help them at all times when they call out to You with all their hearts. *Omeyn*.

From The Merit of Our Mothers, A Bilingual Anthology of Jewish Women's Prayers, Compiled and Introduced by Tracy Guren Klirs (Cincinnati: HUC Press, 1992) pages120-122.

Notes:

(1) “Heaven forbid!”

(2) Referring to the story in *II Kings 4: 1- 37*. See L.Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews*, vol. IV, pp 240-1.

(3) Ginzberg's *Legends*, op cit. volume II, page 118.

(4) See *Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 32a*. The understanding was that just as women are judged in childbirth for their sins, so men are judged when they come to a place of danger.

(5) The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

(6) The commandments of the Jewish tradition, understood as encumbent on us as partners to the Covenant.

(7) The ‘Evil Inclination,’ a person's egocentric drive in Rabbinic psychology.

(8) A ‘righteous redeemer,’ a divinely- provided force for salvation.

(9) *Psalm 145:18*.

(10) The very next verse -- *Psalm 145:19*.