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Subject: Fwd: Message from Rabbi Alan Silverstein, Rabbi Ari Lucas, Cantor Joel Caplan, and Susan Werk
Date: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 11:04:51 AM

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From: Congregation Agudath Israel <communications@agudath.org>
Date: Mon, Jan 4, 2021 at 2:01 PM
Subject: Message from Rabbi Alan Silverstein, Rabbi Ari Lucas, Cantor Joel Caplan, and Susan Werk
To: <abuelo39@gmail.com>



Message from Rabbi Alan Silverstein, Rabbi Ari Lucas, Cantor Joel Caplan, and Susan Werk

January 4, 2020 / 20 Tevet 5781



Dear CAI family,

The momentous polio vaccine developed by Dr. Jonas Salk in the mid-'50s effectively eradicated the deadly and crippling disease.

Today we are blessed with the development of a number of effective vaccines to fight COVID-19 and the start of widespread distribution.



Now — when we are focused on preserving our lives and taking precautions to benefit the health of the wider public — is a time for religious reflection and gratitude. This past Shabbat Rabbi Lucas delivered a d'var Torah that speaks to these issues

([Listen Here](#)). He said that when he receives the vaccine, he will recite the traditional blessing upon hearing good news: “*Baruch atah, Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha’olam, hatov v’hameitiv*” — “Praised are You, our God, King of the universe, who is good and beneficent.”

Susan Werk, in the spirit of her “Hallelujah Moments” and her emphasis on cultivating an “attitude of gratitude,” will recite a passage from Psalms: *Hodu l’Adonai ki tov, ki l’olam chasdo* — “Give thanks to the Lord, who is good; God's love and kindness endure forever.” (Psalms 118:29)

We encourage everyone to focus their attention on this historic example of “Shutafo Shel Hakadosh Baruch Hu” — humankind’s partnership with God — in restoring order and health to a chaotic situation.

What do you plan to say?

Here are a number of prayers suggested by the Rabbinical Assembly, with others to come.

Rabbi Karen Reiss Medwed

With gratitude and thanksgiving to the Healer of broken hearts and restorer of broken bones, appreciation and thanks for inspiring the medical teams and scientists, granting them the wisdom, knowledge, and expertise to prepare this vaccine for all of us. May it be your will that with my vaccination I will be granted the ability to heal and keep safe humankind and be granted the privilege to fulfill the mitzvah of one who saves a life. Blessed are you, Healer of all who are sick.

Rabbi Naomi Levy

I have been praying for this day, and now it is here!
With great excitement, a touch of trepidation,
And with deep gratitude
I give thanks
To all the scientists who toiled day and night
So that I might receive this tiny vaccination
That will protect me and all souls around this world.
With the pandemic still raging
I am blessed to do my part to defeat it.
Let this be the beginning of a new day,
A new time of hope, of joy, of freedom,
And most of all, of health.
I thank You, God, for blessing me with life,
For sustaining my life,
And for enabling me to reach this awe-filled moment.
Amen.

Rabbi Robert Scheinberg and Rabbi Naomi Kalish

This prayer contains an affirmation that one is performing a mitzvah, an expression of gratitude for the wisdom of scientists, a prayer for healing, and the blessing of gratitude traditionally recited each day for the magnificent workings of

*the human body. Elements are taken from the **prayer of Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu.***

Before receiving the vaccination

I am ready to fulfill the positive commandment of my Creator to protect the human body, as it is written in the Torah: “You shall be most careful with yourselves.”

(Deuteronomy 4:15)

We thank You, Adonai our God and God of our ancestors, God of all flesh, Creator of healing, who has granted knowledge and wisdom to human beings to discover and develop this vaccine to guard against the plague of disease. May it be Your will that this vaccination protect me [“and my family,” “and my patients,” “and my clients,” “and my students”] and all those with whom I come in contact. May it save the lives of millions of people across the world.

After receiving the vaccination

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, who has created the human body with wisdom, creating cells, tissues, and organs — it is known and revealed to You that when they do not function correctly it is not possible to exist and stand before You.

Blessed are You, Adonai, healer of all flesh, who does wondrous deeds.

Rabbi Andrew Sacks

Prayer to be recited by those administering the vaccine

“I praise the Eternal with all my heart in the assembled congregation of the upright.” (Psalm 111)

God who answers in times of distress and saves, “Healer of broken hearts who binds their wounds” (Psalm 147), Who shares divine wisdom with flesh and blood and has given us understanding, science, and discernment to create this vaccine: May it be Your will that through the power of this act I will merit healing and saving lives of all the living and be able to fulfill the teaching, “Whoever saves a single life...saves an entire world.” (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5) As it is written, “I am going to bring relief and healing.” (Jeremiah 33).

Praised are You who brings healing to all flesh and does wonders.

Prayer for people being vaccinated

God who answers in times of distress and saves, “Healer of broken hearts who binds their wounds” (Psalm 147), who shares divine wisdom with flesh and blood and has given us understanding, science, and discernment to create this vaccine: May it be Your will that through the power of this human effort aided by God who graciously grants humans knowledge and teaches mortals understanding, science, and discernment that I merit health and resilience so that these verses may be fulfilled for us: “I have removed illness from your midst” “for I the Eternal am your healer” (Exodus 23:25). “Let them praise the Eternal for God’s steadfast love and wondrous deeds for humanity.” (Psalm 107).

Praised are You who brings healing to all flesh and does wonders.

[Listen to Rabbi Lucas' D'var Torah](#)

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