
Torah Portion: T'rumah, Exodus 25:1–27:19
Haftarah: I Kings 5:26-6:13

An Interrupted Life (excerpt)

By Etty Hillesum (translated by Arnold J. Pomerans) from The Torah: A Women's Commentary page 472

There is a strange little melody inside me that sometimes cries out for words. But through inhibition, lack of self-confidence, laziness and goodness knows what else, that tune remains stifled, haunting me from within. Sometimes it wears me out completely. And then again it fills me with gentle, melancholy music. Sometimes I want to flee with everything I possess into a few words, seek refuge in them. But there are still no words to shelter me. That is the real problem. I am in search of a haven, but I must first build it for myself, stone by stone. Everyone seeks a home, a refuge. And I am always in search of a few words.

A Prayer for Guarding, Redeeming, and Freeing the Hostages

From Kehilat Kol Haneshama, Jerusalem

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, אֲבָרְהָם וְשָׂרָה, רַבְּקָה וְיִצְחָק, רָחֵל, יַעֲקֹב
וְלֵאָה, מִי שֶׁעָנָה לְדִינָה בְּבֵית מְעֵנֶיהָ, לְיוֹסֵף בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִים וּלְדָנִיֵּאל בְּגוֹב
הָאֲרִיֹּת, הוּא יְבָרֶךְ אֶת כָּל הַשְּׁבוּיִים וְהַשְּׁבוּיֹת אֲשֶׁר נֶחְטְפוּ בְיַדֵי אֹיִב,
וְאֶת כָּל הַנֶּעְדָּרִים וְהַנֶּעְדָּרוֹת, אֲזָרְחִים, חִילִים, בָּנוֹת וּבָנֵי אָדָם הַנִּתְּוֹנִים
בְּצָרָה וּבְשִׁבְיָה. יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יי צְבָאוֹת, שֶׁתְּפַדֵּם בְּמַהֲרָה מִשְּׁבִי
וְתַחְזִירֵם לְאָרְצְכֶם, לְמִשְׁפַּחְתְּכֶם וּלְבֵיתְכֶם, בְּרִיאִים וְשְׁלֵמִים בְּגוֹפְכֶם וּבְרוּחְכֶם.

May the One who blessed our ancestors:

Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob, Rachel and Leah;

the One who answered Dena in her torture, Joseph in prison, and Daniel in the Lion's Den.

God of Abraham, the first,

who was willing to risk his life for the release of prisoners and hostages.

May You God bless the hostages, taken captive by our enemy,

and all those missing and unaccounted for:

citizens, soldiers, men, women and children

who are imprisoned and in grave danger.

May it be Your will, God of All, that they be released speedily and returned to our Land,

to their families and to their homes,

safe and sound in body and in spirit. Amen.