

Text

Acheinu

אֲחֵינוּ

Some scholars believe this well-known prayer first appeared in a 12th-century French prayer book - Machzor Vitry - compiled by a student of Rashi and has long been used in times of crisis for the Jewish people. Unfortunately, the words are as relevant today as they were hundreds of years ago - our people are again in distress, darkness, and captivity. Most communities are familiar with the powerful tune composed by Abie Rotenberg. During the current war, Acheinu has been sung at rallies, funerals, memorials, synagogues both in Israel and around the world.

As for our brothers, the whole house of Israel, who are given over to trouble or captivity, whether they abide on the sea or on the dry land:

May the All-present have mercy upon them, and bring them forth from trouble to enlargement, from darkness to light, and from subjection to redemption, now speedily and at a near time.

אֲחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַנְּתוּנִים בְּצָרָה
וּבְשִׁבְיָה, הַעֹמְדִים בֵּין בָּיִם וּבֵין בִּיבְשָׁה,
הַמְּקוּם יְרַחֵם עֲלֵיהֶם, וַיּוֹצִיאֵם מִצָּרָה לְרוּחָה,
וּמֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹרָה, וּמִשְׁעֶבֶד לְגֹאֲלָה, הַשְׁתָּא
בְּעִגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב

[Central Synagogue with pictures of the hostages](#)

[American Jewish School](#)

[Soldiers singing in Gaza](#)

Activity Idea:

1. Have students write a translation (the translation does not need to be word-for-word but rather express the song's main ideas) for "acheinu" into their own language that fits into its popular tune. Record students singing "acheinu" in both its original Hebrew and in the translation that they create. Share video with parents and students.
2. The "[Israel Forever Foundation](#)" hosts an activity called: Art of Acheinu: Israel as a Family. Have students paint or draw an image that expresses their solidarity with Jewish suffering atop the words of Acheinu and submit their artwork to the Israel Forever Foundation.