

# SOUL FULL: GRATITUDE AS PRAYER, PRAYER AS GRATITUDE



## VALUE

# GRATITUDE

## *Hakarat Hatov*

In this session, we explore the practice of gratitude through the language of Jewish prayer, drawing from *Soul Full: Gateways to Jewish Prayer*. Together, we'll reflect on prayers that express gratitude for different aspects of Jewish life: **freedom, belonging, and our connection to Israel and those who defend it**. You will choose the theme that speaks to you most, engage in rich conversation, and write a personal blessing inspired by the prayer that moved you. Through reflection, creativity, and sharing, this session invites you to deepen your spiritual practice and give voice to the good you carry, both within and beyond the words of tradition.



## TIMELINE: 90 MIN

BEGIN WITH INTENTION | 5 MIN

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION | 15 MIN

EMERGING THEMES | 15 MIN

SMALL GROUPS | 15 MIN

EXPRESS YOUR GRATITUDE | 15 MIN

GROUP SHARE | 15 MIN

BRING YOUR LEARNING HOME | 5 MIN

END WITH MEANING | 5 MIN



## WHO FACILITATES THE SESSION

The Community Leader opens and guides the session. Participants are invited to co-lead in reading texts, sharing reflections, or helping facilitate small groups.



## MATERIALS

- *Soul Full* book (hard copy) to share and show
- Pencils or pens
- Journal, or participants can write directly in their copy of *Soul Full*



## FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Review in the abridged *Soul Full* book that you received during the trip:
  - Freedom, p. 46
  - Jewish Community, p. 62
  - Prayer for the State of Israel, p. 162
  - Prayer for Israel's Defense Force Soldiers, p. 164
- Note: Due to multiple print runs of *Soul Full*, page numbers may vary slightly between copies. Please refer to the Table of Contents if needed.
- **Be prepared to offer participants the choice of which focus to explore in small groups.** Each group can engage with the theme or prayer that resonates most.
- Before the session, please remind participants to bring their copy of *Soul Full*!

## PART I

## BEGIN WITH INTENTION



5 MIN

In today's session, we'll explore **gratitude** through the lens of **prayer**. We've chosen four short pieces from *Soul Full* that reflect different aspects of this practice: freedom, Jewish community, and connection to Israel. We will begin with individual reflection, and as we move into small groups, you'll have the opportunity to choose the prayer or theme that speaks to you most and explore it more deeply with others.

Looking for ways to start your session with purpose?

Turn to Beginning with Intention (in the Universal Guide on p. 4) for simple, meaningful ideas to open your gathering with presence, connection, and shared energy.

## PART II

## INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION



15 MIN

Gratitude doesn't just live in grand moments. It shows up in daily breath, in belonging, in the safety of home, and in the hope we hold for people we've never met. **Jewish prayer is an opportunity to explore different pathways of gratitude**, and today we will focus on three themes: freedom, Jewish community, and Israel, and reflect on how **prayer helps us name what's good**.

On your own, take 15 minutes to review each of the following four short prayers.\* Try to come up with a one-sentence description of each that captures its core message or what it evokes for you. **On the facing page of each prayer, you'll find a personal reflection or contemporary commentary.** Feel free to include this in your reading; some may find it deepens the experience and helps them connect more meaningfully with the prayer.

- Freedom, p. 46
- Jewish Community, p. 62
- Prayer for the State of Israel, p. 162
- Prayer for Israel Defense Force Soldiers, p. 164

\* Note: Due to multiple print runs of *Soul Full*, page numbers may vary slightly between copies. Please refer to the Table of Contents if needed.

## PART III

## EMERGING THEMES



15 MIN

**Return to the full group.** Invite a volunteer to read each prayer aloud. After each reading, ask others to share a one-line description or personal takeaway. As a group, listen for recurring words, ideas, or themes that surface across the different prayers.

## PART III

# SMALL GROUPS



15 MIN

Participants then choose which theme they'd like to explore further in small groups: **Freedom, Jewish Community, or Israel.**

In small groups of 3-4\* revisit the prayer you've chosen to explore more deeply.

Take a moment to quietly scan it again, noticing what stands out now that you've heard it read aloud. Then discuss together:

- Which **word, phrase, or image** continues to stay with you? Why?
- What kind of **gratitude** is present in this prayer: personal, collective, spiritual, or something else?
- How does this prayer connect to **something real in your life right now**: an experience, a relationship, or a question you're carrying?
- What **emotional tone** do you sense in the prayer? Perhaps quiet strength, urgency, vulnerability, or pride? How does that tone resonate with you?

Speak from personal experience and listen for what feels shared, and what feels distinct, in one another's reflections.

\* For smaller cohorts (6-8 participants), consider one of the following approaches:

- Stay together as **one group** and explore **all three themes** briefly, **using one prompt per theme.**
- Let participants choose **one theme** to explore more deeply as a group, based on shared interest.
- If you still wish to offer the Israel theme with nuance, you can invite participants to reflect on **both** the State of Israel and the Israel Defense Forces **within the same conversation.**

The goal is meaningful discussion, not rigid structure, so facilitators should feel free to adapt based on group size and energy.

## PART V

# EXPRESS YOUR GRATITUDE



15 MIN

Write a short, personal blessing inspired by the prayer and theme you chose.

Draw directly from the language, imagery, or emotion that resonated most. You might echo a phrase, respond to an idea, or extend the prayer with words of your own.

Prompts to guide you:

- What am I **grateful** for in this part of my life or identity?
- What do I want to **carry forward** or **give voice to**?
- What words feel **true** right now?

You can begin with "**Blessed are You...**", or "**I give thanks for...**", or simply speak from the heart. *The blessing doesn't have to be polished... it just needs to be yours.*

**PART VI**  
**GROUP SHARE**



15 MIN

Return to the full group. Invite participants to share the blessings they wrote if they feel comfortable, and/or to reflect briefly on the writing process.

- What did you discover while writing your blessing?
- What came up for you as you tried to put words to your gratitude?

**PART VII**  
**BRING YOUR LEARNING HOME**



5 MIN

Commit to one or more ways to bring your learning home.

For example: Share the prayer or blessing you wrote with someone close to you, a partner, child, friend, or parent, and invite them to share something they're grateful for in return. Try introducing a short gratitude moment into your family's daily rhythm: naming one thing each person is thankful for at dinner, before bed, or during a walk. For teens or older kids, keep it simple. Ask what's something that went right today, or something small they're glad for, even if it's just noticing a tree or their favorite snack.

**PART VIII**  
**END WITH MEANING**



5 MIN

Head back to the Universal Guide on p. 4 for thoughtful ways to close your gathering with reflection, gratitude, and a sense of shared purpose.

As we move forward from this moment of reflection, may the blessings we've written echo in our lives in what we say, in how we notice, how we give thanks, and how we live with greater awareness and appreciation.

**Yomm: The Journey Continues**

To keep exploring gratitude and prayer in your daily life, we invite you to check out these journeys on Yomm, the Momentum app:



**Prayer as a Spiritual Force**

Deepen your understanding of prayer as an act of intention, strength, and connection.



**Prayers of the Lost and Found**

Discover how prayer can hold both longing and gratitude, even in uncertain or transitional moments.



**Start with Blessings**

When we elevate the first moments of our day, every hour after is more likely to be imbued with potential. Explore the beauty and meaning behind Jewish morning blessings.

Each journey offers short, meaningful reflections to help you stay grounded, connected, and inspired throughout the week.

