

## Commentary on Modim Prayer

For those who find petitionary prayer difficult to a personal Gd difficult, it may be worth citing the Rabbinic adage, “In the time to come, all prayers (of petition) will be annulled (as superfluous), but the prayer of gratitude will not be annulled”. (Midrash Rabbah, Leviticus 9:7). The *hodaah*, the thanksgiving benediction in the Amidah, is a good place to discover one’s religious sensibilities, for there is always reason to be thankful for the sustained gift of life. In our unredeemed world, expressions of human need remain achingly relevant; much that is heartfelt can be learned from the prayers of our ancestors, in the end our needs are not so different from theirs.

(Richard S. Sarason, as quoted in PrayTell : A Haddasah Guide to Jewish Prayer, Hadassah and Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003, p.101).

“You are the essence of goodness” (from the Modim prayer).

This verse is taken from a verse in the Book of Lamentations. In the Book of Lamentations, these words are spoken by a man who has suffered terribly at the hands of Gd. When we repeat these words, we follow this one man’s example of maintaining faith in spite of affliction. (Harlow, Rabbi Jules, *ibid*, p. 102).

## Commentary on Martin Buber

“All real living is meeting” (Buber, Martin. Between Man and Man, 1947, p. 14.)

...The two of you have truly come to know each other. In authentic encounter -- meeting, dialogue, relationship-- two individuals come to understand and appreciate one another, not just the words or signs the exchange. Buber called this the I-Thou relationship (Borowitz, Dr. Eugene, Choices in Modern Jewish Theology, Behrman House, 1983, p.147.)

After Buber's experience with the young man, Buber gave up on the "religious " experience that was the exception to life. Instead, Buber focused on finding faith and God in everyday moments.