

Modeh Ani

I am grateful to face life, a path of living and lasting, as I am restored with a breath of compassion and abundant trust. (or confidence or optimism or hopefulness, etc.)

In this variation the Hebrew is changed and interpreted to express gratitude for facing the journey of life, with compassion and reverence, or the ability to feel comfortable in the world.

Intention here is to stress that “*I am restored with a breath ...*” “*Shemuḥzar*”, rather than saying my breath *has been* restored...as in V.2 below. A small distinction, but I prefer V.1.

“Abundant trust” means trusting that, as in the thought of Mordecai Kaplan, *the universe is so constituted as to support our striving for fulfillment.*

variant 1

מוֹדָה (מוֹדָה) אֲנִי בְּפָנֵי חַיִּים, דְּרָךְ חַי וְקַיִם
שְׂמֻחָזָר עִם נְשִׁמַת הַמְּלָה, וְרַבָּה אֱמוּנָה.

*Modeh (Modah) ani bifnei ḥayim, dereḥ ḥai v'kayam
shemuḥzar im nishmat ḥemlah, v'rabah emunah.*

Modah is feminine.

variant 2

מוֹדָה (מוֹדָה) אֲנִי לְפָנֵי הַחַיִּים, מַהֲלָךְ חַי וְקַיִם
שְׂהֻחָזְרָה בִּי נְשִׁמַת הַמְּלָה, וְאֱמוּנָה רַבָּה .

*Modeh (Modah) ani lifney haḥayim, mahalah ḥai v'kayam
shehuḥzerah bi nishmat ḥemlah, v'emunah rabah .*

I am grateful to face life, a journey of living and lasting, as restored within me is a breath of compassion and abounding trust.
with help from Eli Reshotko

In the Hebrew of this V.2 *shehuḥzerah* is considered more grammatically correct, since it matches the form used in the traditional text. But I struggle with the interpretive translation. Here, the stress is more on my breath being restored, rather than as I have written in V.1, “I am restored with a breath...”.

traditional version

מוֹדָה (מוֹדָה) אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם
שְׂהֻחָזְרָתְךָ בִּי נְשִׁמַתִּי בְּחֶמְלָה. רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ:

*Modeh (modah) ani lifaneḥa meleḥ ḥai v'kayam
sheheḥzarta bi nishmahti b'ḥemlah, rabah emunateḥa.*

I render thanks before thee, everlasting King, who hast mercifully restored my soul within me; thy faithfulness is great. (Daily Prayer Book, Siddur Ha-Shalem, Birnbaum, Hebrew Publishing Co., 1949)

Also: “*I gratefully thank You, O living and eternal King, for You have returned my soul within me with compassion - abounding is your faithfulness*”

(Artscroll Siddur Kol Ya'akov)

Modeh Ani is to be said immediately on arising in the morning.