

Supplementary Readings for Rosh Hashanah

Themes:

- New Year
- Creation, Nature
- *Shofar*
- *Malhuyot, Zihronot & Shofarot*
- *Akedah*
- Welcoming Children



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In order to support this year's socially distanced High Holiday season, Reconstructing Judaism is making this excerpt from the *Mahzor Leyamim Nora'im: Prayerbook for the Days of Awe* available without cost. We hope that providing this excerpt will help make your at-home High Holidays observances uniquely meaningful.

We are grateful for the efforts of Rabbi Amy Loewenthal for producing this excerpt in tandem with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association under the leadership of Rabbi Elyse Wechterman.

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SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

THEME: NEW YEAR

Kabbalat Hashanah, pages 23-57, provides a broad variety of options for introducing the Yamim Nora'im/Days of Awe on the evening of Rosh Hashanah. This new liturgical feature can take a variety of forms to reflect the needs of the sheliaḥ tzibur/service leader and community.

Choose from the following:

This is the moment that the world changes; at this instant one year ends, the other begins. The air is cluttered with the past and potent with new possibilities.



This night as the New Year begins,
We come together as a community;
Yet each of us is strangely solitary.

Each of us comes here with special hopes and dreams;
Each of us bears our own worries and concerns.

Each of us has a story no one else can tell;
Each of us brings praise no one else can offer.

Each of us feels joy no one else can share;
Each of us has regrets that others cannot know.

And so, at this sacred time, we pray:
If we are weary, may we find strength;
If we are discouraged, may we find hope.

If we have forgotten how to share, may we teach each other
and learn together.

If we have been careless with one another, may we
seek forgiveness.

If our hearts have been chilled by indifference,
May we be warmed by renewed purpose,
inspired by the spirit of this holy night.

Sidney Greenberg (Adapted)



This Rosh Hashanah, each of us enters this sanctuary with a different need.

Some hearts are full of gratitude and joy:
They are overflowing with the happiness of love
and the joy of life;
they are eager to confront the day, to make the world
more fair;
they are recovering from illness or have escaped misfortune.
And we rejoice with them.

Some hearts ache with sorrow:
Disappointments weigh heavily upon them, and they have
tasted despair; families have been broken;
loved ones lie on a bed of pain;
death has taken those whom they cherished.
May our presence and sympathy bring them comfort.

Some hearts are embittered:
They have sought answers in vain;
have had their ideals mocked and betrayed;
life has lost its meaning and value.
May the knowledge that we too are searching
restore their hope that there is something to find.

Some spirits hunger:
They long for friendship; they crave understanding;
they yearn for warmth.

May we in our common need gain strength from one another;
sharing our joys, lightening each other's burdens, and praying
for the welfare of our community.

Chaim Stern



Our noisy year has now descended with the sun beyond our sight, and in the silence of this praying place, we close the door upon the hectic joys and fears, the accomplishments and anguish, of the year that we have left behind. What was but moments ago the substance of our life has now become its memory, and what we did must now be woven into what we are. On this day we shall not do, but be; we are to walk the outer limits of our humanity, no longer ride unseeing through a world we only vaguely sense beneath our cushioned wheels. On this day, heat and warmth and light must come from deep within ourselves; no longer can we tear apart the world to make our fire. On this day, but a breath away from our creation, we are to breathe in a world from which we may no longer feel apart, but as close as eye to blossom, and ear to the singing in the night.

We are here, on this Rosh Hashanah Eve, poised somewhere between what we have been and what we wish to be. We are here at this season of *teshuvah*, of turning, of returning to the self we have covered up behind the roles and masks with which we have learned to protect ourselves. We are here in celebration and in search, in judgment and embrace, ready to confront ourselves and the world in which we find ourselves this night. We seek to open wide the windows behind which we have hidden, and to send forth hand and heart to learn where we have come, what we have become, and what we hope to be.

Richard N. Levy (Adapted)



אָדָם בְּאַמַּת אֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ

אָדָם בְּאַמַּת אֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ אֱלֹא לְסֵפֶר אֶחָד בְּחַיָּיו
בְּאִשֶּׁר כָּל חַיָּיו נִקְבָּצִים לְעֵינָיו בְּסֵפֶר הַפְּתוּחַ לְעֵינָיו
בְּאִשֶּׁר הוּא קוֹרֵא בּוֹ דֵּף אַחַר דֵּף וְרוֹאֶה לְעֵינָיו
אֵיךְ יוֹם אַחַר יוֹם רִדֵּף כְּמוֹ דֵּף אַחַר דֵּף
בְּסֵפֶר הַפְּתוּחַ לְעֵינָיו.
וְאֵף לֹא אֶחָד נִעְזָב וּבְרַחֲמִים רַבִּים נֶאֱסָף
דֵּף אַחַר דֵּף
בְּסֵפֶר הַפְּתוּחַ לְעֵינָיו
כִּי רוֹאֶה לְעֵינָיו
פְּתוּחַ סֵפֶר חַיָּיו
בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים נִעְזָב.

Human beings need but one book in their life,
when my whole life is gathered like an open book
before my eyes, when I read it page by page
seeing with my own eyes how day has followed day,
flown like page has followed page
in the open book before my eyes.
And yet not even one is left behind;
in great mercy it is gathered
page by page,
like a book open before my eyes.
how, in great mercy
my open book of life
is left behind.

Amir Gilboa

Each year should be the best year I have yet lived.
Each year we are more learned in the ways of life.
Each year we are wiser than the year before.
Each year our eyes know better the sights to seek.
Each year our ears listen with a finer tuning.
Every happening is a jewel, wrought about the fancy of time.
All that we understand of the universe is the setting for each
sight and sound of the day.

The child looks with gladness each year to be one year
older.

Should not this welcome pursue us all our years?
The piling of the years is a richness like the piling of gold.
Our years are coins with which we can purchase more wisely
at the bazaars of each new season.
Our love is more pliant and patient having been taught by
time.

This new year is one year older than the last.
The earth is more abounding in its growth.
The creatures have moved another step in their unfolding.
Humankind has left us one more year of art for our
contemplation.

History is one year more resonant with lessons.
The sunrises are one year more familiar and promising.
The sunsets are one year less fearful, and the peace of the
night is one year closer.

Kenneth L. Patton

Concluding prayers begin on page 1195.

May it be your will, ETERNAL ONE, our God, our ancients' God,
that this coming year will be, for us and all your people,
the House of Israel, wherever they may be,
a year of **I**llumination,
a year of **B**lessing,
a year of **G**ladness,
a year of **D**ivine abundance,
a year of **H**eavenly splendor,
a year of **W**ise assembly,
a year of **S**ong,
a year of **H**appiness,
a year of **T**imely dew and rain,
a year of **J**ustice and salvation,
a year of **C**omplete atonement,
a year of **L**earning,
a year of **M**editative rest,
a year of **N**ew hope,
a year of **S**weetness and joy,
a year of **E**nchanting delight,
a year of **P**ersonal redemption,
a year of **C**elebration,
a year of **C**oming home from exile,
a year of **R**eturn to God's love,
a year of **S**olace and peace,
a year **T**hat you shall bring us up,
rejoicing, to our promised land, a year
when you shall open up the treasures of your goodness,
a year when your people Israel shall not have to turn
to one another in a state of urgent need, nor need the help
of other nations, and you shall bless the labor of their hands!

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שְׁתֵּהא
הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת הַבָּאָה עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכֹל מְקוֹם שֶׁהֵם

שְׁנַת אֹרֶה

שְׁנַת בְּרָכָה

שְׁנַת גִּילָה

שְׁנַת דָּגָן תִּירוּשׁ וַיִּצְהָר

שְׁנַת הוֹד

שְׁנַת וַעַד טוֹב

שְׁנַת זְמָרָה

שְׁנַת חֶדְוָה

שְׁנַת טַלְלִים וּגְשָׁמִים

שְׁנַת יִשׁוּעָה

שְׁנַת כְּפָרָה

שְׁנַת לְמוּד

שְׁנַת מְנוּחָה

שְׁנַת נְחֻמָּה

שְׁנַת שְׁשׁוֹן

שְׁנַת לַעֲנַג

שְׁנַת פְּדוּת

שְׁנַת צְהֵלָה

שְׁנַת קְבוּרָת גְּלוּת

שְׁנַת רְצוֹן

שְׁנַת שְׁלוֹם וְשִׁלוּהַ שְׁנָה שְׁתַּעֲלֵנוּ שְׂמֵחִים לְאַרְצֵנוּ

שְׁנַת אוֹצָרָה הַטּוֹב הַתְּפִיחַ לָנוּ שְׁנָה שְׁלֵא יִצְטָרְכוּ עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

זֶה לְזֶה וְלֹא לְעַם אַחֵר בְּתַתְּךָ בְּרָכָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיָם:

KAVANAH. A wonderful practice in the synagogue on the High Holy Days is to create a congregational acrostic. This acrostic reflects blessings. Ask members of the congregation to call out words of blessing that begin with each letter of the alphabet in order. Take as many blessings as are available for "a" before moving on to "b" and then "c," through the alphabet. S.P.W.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

THEME: CREATION, NATURE

This page is inserted to ensure matching left-right pages
when viewing in two page display.

MA'ASEY BEREYSHIT / A HYMN OF CREATION

Bless, O my spirit, THE ETERNAL ONE!
O LIVING ONE, my God, how vast you are!
In majesty and splendor you are clothed,
wearing the light of heaven as your shawl,
and stretching forth your canopy of sky,
you pitch the rafters of your chambers on the waters,
making the clouds your chariot,
surveying all on wings of air,
making the winds your messengers;
your servants, fire and flame.

And there was evening, there was morning: a single day. ↪

GUIDED MEDITATION. Sit comfortably in your chair, legs uncrossed. Close your eyes. Breathe in and out slowly for a minute or two. Pay attention to the order and strength in your body. Remember your connection with all living creatures.

Picture yourself on a small boat slowly floating along the banks of a river. You feel a quiet sense of calm. As you slowly drift along, you see on the riverbank the people you have connected with over this past year. They appear one by one, beginning from last Rosh Hashanah right on through to the present. Allow yourself time to review these connections as they occurred throughout the year. Let the images gradually emerge. Keep in mind that you can only accept from others what you have space to receive within yourself. As you end your ride, beach your boat and get out. Think about what you want to take with you. Put in the boat what you want to leave behind. Take a few minutes and enjoy the sun on the riverbank. How do you feel? When you are ready, open your eyes. D.B.

מְעֵשָׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית

We remember the creation of the world even as we strive to recreate it.

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גְדֹלֶת מְאֹד	בְּרַכֵּי נַפְשֵׁי אֶת־יְהוָה
עֵטָה־אֹר כְּשִׁלְמָה	הוּד וְהָדָר לְבָשֶׁת׃
הַמְקַרְה בְּמַיִם עַל־וֹתֵיו	נוֹטָה שָׁמַיִם בְּיָרִיעָה׃
הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל־פְּנֵי־רוּחַ׃	הַשֵּׁם־עֲבִים רְכוּבוֹ
מְשַׁרְתֵּיו אִישׁ לֵהֵט׃	עֲשֵׂה מְלֹאכְיוֹ רוּחוֹת

וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד׃

Vayehi erev vayehi voker yom ehad.

Who made the world?
Who made the swan and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
The grasshopper, I mean—
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

Mary Oliver

You place the earth on its foundations,
never to topple for as long as time endures.
You cover it with ocean for its garment;
the waters rise up on the mountains of the ocean floor.
You speak, they scurry to obey,
hastening in fright before your voice's roar;
they ascend the mountains, and descend into the depths;
to the places you have readied for them.

And you set a boundary that they cannot cross;
and never can they overrun the earth again.

And there was evening, there was morning: a second day.

You make the fountains of the deep gush forth their waters;
down between the hills they make their course.
And they give drink to every living creature,
slaking the thirst of every wild beast.
Beside them dwell the birds that fill the skies,
calling their song amid the foliage. ↪

בַּל־תִּמּוּט עוֹלָם וָעֶד :	יִסַּד־אֶרֶץ עַל־מְכוּנֶיהָ
עַל־הָרִים יַעֲמְדוּ־מַיִם :	תְּהוּם כָּל־בוֹשׁ כְּפִיתוֹ
מִן־קוֹל רַעֲמָה יִחַפְּזוּן :	מִן־גַּעְרָתָהּ יִנוּסוּן
אֶל מְקוֹם זֶה יִסְדֹּת לָהֶם :	יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יִרְדּוּ בְּקַעוֹת
בַּל־יִשׁוּבוּן לְכִסּוֹת הָאֶרֶץ :	גְּבוּל־שָׁמַת בַּל־יַעֲבְרוּן

וַיְהִי־עָרֵב וַיְהִי־בֹקֵר יוֹם שֵׁנִי :

Vayehi erev vayehi voker yom sheni.

בֵּין הָרִים יְהִלְכוּן :	הַמְשַׁלַּח מַעֲיָנִים בְּנַחֲלִים
יִשְׁבְּרוּ פְּרָאִים צְמָאָם :	יִשְׁקוּ כָּל־חַיֵּיתוֹ שְׂדֵי
מִבֵּין עֲפָאִים יִתְנוּ־קוֹל : ←	עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכּוּן

COMMENTARY. This *piyut* was structured by Michael Strassfeld to reflect the Jewish understanding that Rosh Hashanah is the birthday of the world. Its intention is to remind us of the wonder of nature, which is reflected in each day of the biblical story of creation. As we re-experience the glorious complexity and astounding unity of our world, our quest for our place and purpose is renewed. In wonder and humility we celebrate the world's unity and mystery and acknowledge our lack of mastery.

D.A.T.

From your upper chambers you give water to the mountains,
replenishing the earth with your creation's fruits.
You make grains to grow, to feed the cattle,
vegetation for the human beings to till,
to bring forth bread out of the earth,
and wine for gladdening the human heart,
and oil for brightening the face,
and food for sustenance and life.

And there was evening, there was morning: a third day.

You make the moon for measuring the seasons,
the sun which knows its time to set.
You appoint the dark, and night arrives,
when forest animals awake and stir about,
the lions roaring for their prey,
seeking their food from God.

When sun gives forth its rays, they're gathered
to their lairs and make their beds,
and humans go out to their labors,
working till the evening comes.

And there was evening, there was morning: a fourth day. ↪

מְפָרִי מַעֲשֵׂיךָ תִּשְׁבַּע הָאָרֶץ :	מִשְׁקֵה הָרִים מַעֲלִיּוֹתָיו
וְעֹשֵׁב לַעֲבֹדֶת הָאָדָם	מִצְמִיחַ חֲצִיר לְבַהֲמָה
וְיֵין יִשְׂמַח לְבַב־אֲנוּשׁ	לְהוֹצִיא לָחֶם מִן־הָאָרֶץ :
וְלֶחֶם לְבַב־אֲנוּשׁ יִסְעֵד :	לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשָּׁמַן

וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי :

Vayehi erev vayehi voker yom shelishi.

שֶׁמֶשׁ יָדַע מְבוֹאוֹ :	עָשָׂה יָרַח לְמוֹעֲדִים
בּוֹ־תִרְמַשׁ כָּל־חֵיתוֹ־יָעַר :	תִּשְׁתַּחֲשֹׁף וַיְהִי לַיְלָה
וּלְבָקֶשׁ מֵאֵל אָכְלָם :	הַכִּפְּרִים שְׂאֵגִים לְטָרֶף
וְאֶל־מְעוֹנֹתָם יִרְבְּצוּן :	תִּזְרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יֵאֲסֹפּוּן
וּלְעַבְדָּתוֹ עַד־יָעֹרֵב :	יֵצֵא אָדָם לַפְּעֹלוֹ

וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם רְבִיעִי : ←

Vayehi erev vayehi voker yom revi'i.

The trees of THE ALMIGHTY drink their fill,
cedars of Lebanon, which God has planted,
where the birds have made their nests;
and junipers make shelter for the stork.
The lofty mountains are for wild goats;
the crannies of their stones, the badgers' homes.

Behold the sea in its immensity:
its teeming creatures dwell there beyond number,
living things both great and small;
and there the ships travel about; as does
Leviathan, whom you created for your sport.

And there was evening, there was morning: a fifth day.

How great is your Creation, FOUNT OF LIFE,
and all of it you made in wisdom!
How the earth abounds with all your creatures!
And all of them are looking toward you,
to give them food in time of need.
You give your sustenance for them to gather;
open your hand, and satisfy them well.

Should you conceal your presence, they are frightened;
should you take away their breath, they perish
and return to dust.
Send back your breath, and they revive;
earth's living face is thus renewed. ↪

אֲרִזִי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָטַע:	יִשְׁבְּעוּ עֲצֵי יְהוָה
חֲסִידָה בְּרוּשִׁים בֵּיתָה:	אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם צַפְרִים יִקְנְנוּ
סְלָעִים מַחֲסֵה לְשֹׁפְנִים:	הָרִים הַגְּבוּהִים לִיעֲלִים
שָׁם-רָמַשׁ וְאִין מְסַפֵּר	זֶה הֵימָּה גְדוֹל וְרַחֵב יָדָיִם
לוֹיִתָּן זֶה-יִצְרָתָ לְשַׁחֲקֵבוּ:	חַיּוֹת קִטְנוֹת עִם-גְּדֹלוֹת:
	שָׁם אֲנִיּוֹת יִהְלָכוּן
	וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם חַמִּישִׁי:

Vayehi erev vayehi voker yom hamishi.

כָּלֶם בְּחִכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנָךְ:	מִהֲרָבוּ מֵעֲשִׂיךָ יְהוָה
לִתַּת אָכְלָם בְּעֵתוֹ:	כָּלֶם אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁבְּרוּן
תִּפְתַּח יָדְךָ יִשְׁבְּעוּן טוֹב:	תִּתֵּן לָהֶם יִלְקָטוּן
תִּסַּף רוּחָם יִגְוְעוּן וְאֶל-עַפְרָם יִשׁוּבוּן:	תִּסְתִּיר פְּנֵיךָ יִבְהַלּוּן
וּתְחַדֵּשׁ פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה: ←	תִּשְׁלַח רוּחְךָ יִבְרָאוּן

Let the glory of THE ANCIENT ONE endure forever;
may you, THE SOURCE OF ALL, rejoice in your creation,
you, whose very gaze makes all life tremble,
whose touch upon the mountains sets them rumbling with
smoke.

I sing to you, CREATOR, all my life,
make melody to you, my God, while I yet live.

May my prayer be pleasing to you;
for in THE BOUNTIFUL do I rejoice.

Let wrongdoing be finished from the earth!

May evildoers cease, and be no more!

And bless, O my soul, THE ONE WHO IS! Halleluyah!

Based on Psalm 104 and Genesis 1



We are still in the midst of the sixth day. We are created, we have eaten of the tree of knowledge, been banished from Eden, loved, given birth, hated, killed and yet the sixth day is not over. Our human story repeated in endless generations is incomplete. God has called upon us to finish the work of creation and thus to say of the work of our hands *ki tov*/it is good.

Then will *vayehi erev vayehi voker*/And there was evening, there was morning, the sixth day, be immediately followed by *vayehulu* and then the work ceased, and the universe was complete, and all rested on the seventh day.

יְשַׁמַּח יְהוָה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו:	יְהִי כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם
יִגַע בְּהָרִים וַיַּעֲשֶׂנוּ:	הַמְבִיט לָאָרֶץ וּתְרַעַד
אֲזַמְרָה לֵאלֹהֵי בְעוֹדֵי:	אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה בְּחַיֵּי
אֲנֹכִי אֲשַׁמַּח בִּיהוָה:	יַעֲרֹב עָלָיו שִׁיחֵי
וַרְשָׁעִים עוֹד אֵינָם	יִתְּמוּ חַטָּאִים מִן־הָאָרֶץ

הַלְלוּיָהּ

בְּרַכֵּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה

Ashirah ladonay behayay azamerah leylohay be'odi.
 ye'erav alav sihi anohi esmah badonay.
 Yitamu hata'im min ha'aretz uresha'im od eynam
 barehi nafshi et adonay haleluyah.

ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS: ASHER BIDVARO

It Is Not You Alone Who Pray

It is not you alone who pray,
or we, or those others;
all things pray, and all things
pour forth their souls.

The heavens pray, the earth prays,
every creature and every living thing.
In all life, there is longing.

Creation is itself but a longing,
a kind of prayer to the Almighty.
What are the clouds,
the rising and the setting
of the sun,
the soft radiance of the moon
and the gentleness of the night?

What are the flashes of the human mind
and the storms of the human heart?
They are all prayers—
the outpouring of
boundless longing for God.

Michah Joseph Berdyczewski



God The Life of Nature

Our ancestors acclaimed the God
Whose handiwork they read
In the mysterious heavens above,
And in the varied scene of earth below,
In the orderly march of days and nights,
Of seasons and years,
And in the checkered fate of humankind.

Night reveals the limitless caverns of space,
Hidden by the light of day,
And unfolds horizonless vistas
Far beyond imagination's ken.
The mind is staggered,
Yet soon regains its poise,
And peering through the boundless dark,
Orients itself anew
By the light of distant suns
Shrunk to glittering sparks.
The soul is faint,
Yet soon revives,
And learns to spell once more the name of God
Across the newly visioned firmament.

Lift your eyes, look up;
Who made these stars?

God is the oneness
That spans the fathomless deeps of space
And the measureless eons of time,
Binding them together in deed,
As we do in thought. ↪

God is the sameness
In the elemental substance of stars and planets,
Of this our earthly abode
And of all that it holds.

God is the unity
Of all that is,
The uniformity of all that moves,
The rhythm of all things
And the nature of their interaction.

God is the mystery of life,
Enkindling inert matter
With inner drive and purpose.

God is the creative flame
That transfigures lifeless substance,
Leaping into ever higher realms of being,
Brightening into the radiant glow of feeling,
Till it runs into the white fire of thought.

And though no sign of living things
Breaks the eternal silence of the spheres,
We cannot deem this earth,
This tiny speck in the infinitude,
Alone instinct with God.

By that token
Which unites the worlds in bonds of matter
Are all the worlds bound
In the bond of Life.

God is in the faith
By which we overcome
The fear of loneliness, of helplessness,
Of failure and of death. ↩

God is in the hope
Which, like a shaft of light,
Cleaves the dark abysses
Of sin, of suffering, and of despair.

God is in the love
Which creates, protects, forgives.

It is God's spirit
That broods upon the chaos we have wrought,
Disturbing its static wrongs,
And stirring into life the formless beginnings
Of the new and better world.

Mordecai M. Kaplan (Adapted)

Autumn

Inside me the season is autumn,
the chill is in me, you can see through me,
and I am sad, but not altogether cheerless,
and filled with humility and goodness.

But if I rage sometimes,
then I am the one whose rage is shedding my leaves,
and the simple thought comes sadly to me
that raging isn't really what is needed.

The main need is that I should be able
to see myself and the struggling, shocked world
in autumnal nakedness,
when even you, and the world, can be seen right through.

Flashes of insight are the children of silence.
It doesn't matter, if we don't rage aloud.
We must calmly cast off all mere noise
in the name of the new foliage.

Something has apparently happened to me,
and I am relying on nothing but silence,
when the leaves laying themselves one on another
inaudibly become the earth.

And you can see it all, as if from a height,
when you can shed your leaves at the right time
when without passion inner autumn
lays its airy fingers on your forehead....

Y. Yevtushenko

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when viewing in two page display.

White butterflies, with single
black fingerpaint eyes on their wings
dart and settle, eddy and mate
over the green tangle of vines
in Labor Day morning steam.

The year grinds into ripeness
and rot, grapes darkening,
pears yellowing, the first
Virginia creeper twining crimson,
the grasses, dry straw to burn.

The New Year rises, beckoning
across the umbrellas on the sand.
I begin to reconsider my life.
What is the yield of my impatience?
What is the fruit of my resolve?

I turn from frantic white dance
over the jungle of productivity
and slowly a niggun slides
cold water down my throat.
I rest on a leaf spotted red.

Now is the time to let the mind
search backwards like the raven loosed
to see what can feed us. Now,
the time to cast the mind forward
to chart an aerial map of the months. ↩

The New Year is a great door
that stands across the evening and Yom
Kippur is the second door. Between them
are song and silence, stone and clay pot
to be filled from within myself.

I will find there both ripeness and rot,
What I have done and undone,
What I must let go with the waning days
and what I must take in. With the last
tomatoes, we harvest the fruit of our lives.

Marge Piercy

COMMENTARY. It is a long-standing custom to write special liturgical poems, *piyutim*, that tie each part of the service to the theme of the day. This custom has become less common in recent years because most *piyutim* reflect sensibilities and styles so far removed from our own. This poem by Marge Piercy reflects both the theme of this part of the service—wonder at the beauty, power and unity of creation—and the theme of this High Holy Day season. In that sense, it is the contemporary equivalent of a *piyut*.

D.A.T.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

THEME: SHOFAR

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when viewing in two page display.

SHOFAR SERVICE: READINGS

Select from among the following readings:

Even though sounding the shofar is an unexplained biblical decree, it seems to bear a message: Wake up sleepers! Examine your ways! Return to yourselves and repent.



Waking up is a common act like breathing or eating, something you do every day without reflection. It is also a turning point. If sleep is like death, then awakening is like resurrection. If sleep entails losing the world, awakening means regaining it. While the world into which you wake is resistantly old, impervious to the implications of dawn, a strong awakener knows the day which begins in starry darkness nonetheless is new.

We resist waking up. We yearn for a trance-like numbness, the uninterrupted flow of imagination. We choose to stumble through our days as if in a dream, for we are inertial beings given to drifting with the tide, heedless of our destination.

While Jews have been visionaries, we are not bound to our visions. While we continue to dream, we remain committed to interpretation. We sense we cannot see God and live, but we can hear God and awaken—as Abraham awoke from his terrible vision atop Mount Moriah where claspings the knife of imagination, he nearly slashed the tender neck of reality. “Abraham!” he heard the angel call. And he stopped. It takes an outside force to stun us. Surprised, jolted, disarmed, he awoke and discovered a ram caught by its horn in a thicket.

Abraham descending Moriah embodies the way of the Jew: Jews are interrupters, disenchanters, spell-breakers, committed to dreaming but with eyes open, committed to restful awareness, hallowed after “six days” of productivity.

Beginning again, re-newing the old, re-memorizing the sounds, re-calling the words, re-creating the world—this is the stuff of Torah, the business of the Jew.

James Ponet (Adapted)

עורו יְשָׁנִים מְשַׁנְתְּכֶם וְנִרְדָּמִים הִקִּיצוּ מִתְרַדְמַתְכֶם וְחִפְשׂוּ
בְּמַעֲשֵׂיכֶם וְחִזְרוּ בְּתִשְׁבָּה וְזָכְרוּ בּוֹרְאֵכֶם: אֱלוֹ הַשּׁוֹכְחִים אֶת
הָאֱמֶת בְּהַבְלֵי הַזְּמַן וְשׁוֹגִים כָּל שְׁנַתָּם בְּהַבֵּל וְרִיק אֲשֶׁר לֹא יוֹעִיל
וְלֹא יַצִּיל — הַבֵּיטוּ לְנִפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם וְהִיטִיבוּ דְרָכֵיכֶם וּמַעַלְלֵיכֶם
וַיַּעֲזֹב כָּל אֶחָד מִכֶּם דְּרָכּוֹ הַרְעָה וּמַחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר לֹא טוֹבָה:

Awake from your slumber and rouse yourselves from your lethargy. Scrutinize your deeds and turn in repentance. Remember what is true, you who forget eternal truth in the trifles of the hour, you who go astray all your years after vain illusions that neither profit nor deliver. Look well into yourselves and mend your ways and your actions; forsake the evil path and unworthy purpose, and turn to God.

Moses Maimonides



There are sounds which first we heard as children which have engraved themselves, like ancient riverbeds long dry, into our inner ear. Years later, when we've grown, those early sounds will open up those ancient streams, and the place and moment of that early music will flow again across our memory, and we are at once transported there, splashing in the cooling spray like the children we still are, with all the joy and playfulness and awe we thought had dried up in our long-sought maturity. Buried even deeper in us than our childhood is the childhood of our people, when we were wandering and playing at the foot of Sinai, full of wonder and confusion, as the cloud appeared, and holy fire, and thunder voices out of heaven, and the sounds of a shofar. Each year when the shofar sounds for us again, the cloud appears above the riverbed of memory, and we know that if sufficient wonder and confusion fill our minds, the holy fire will burn once more, and voices from our modest shofar will thunder out of heaven once again. If only we can listen, the moment and the place will flow again, and we can splash with the child our people was at the beginning, in the stream.

Richard Levy

The blowing of the shofar is the only special biblical ritual for Rosh Hashanah. The symbolism of the shofar is not made explicit in the Torah. Whether it is meant to arouse our slumbering souls or as a clarion call to war against the worst part of our natures, the primitive sound of the shofar blast stirs something deep within us. There is a sense of expectation in the silence before the shofar sound, followed by unease evoked by the various blasts. Part of its sense of mystery lies in the interplay of the silence, the piercing sound, and the hum of people praying. On its most basic level, the shofar can be seen to express what we cannot find the right words to say. The blasts are the wordless cries of the people of Israel. The shofar is the instrument that sends those cries of pain and longing hurtling across the vast distance toward the Other.

There are three shofar sounds: *tekiyah*—one blast; *shevarim*—three short blasts; and *teruah*—nine staccato blasts. The Torah does not state explicitly how many shofar blasts are required, but the rabbis (based on a complicated exegesis of Leviticus 25:9 and 23:24 and Numbers 20:1) derive the necessity to have three blasts of *teruah* preceded by and followed by *tekiyah*. The only question for the rabbis is what constitutes a *teruah*. One opinion is that it should sound like groaning (our *shevarim* sound); another is that it should sound like sobbing (what we call *teruah*); and a third opinion is that it should sound like both together (our *shevarim teruah*). Therefore, we have the pattern of *tekiyah teruah tekiyah, tekiyah shevarim tekiyah, tekiyah shevarim teruah tekiyah* to cover all possibilities.

Michael Strassfeld

The pattern of the shofar blasts mirrors the inner drama we experience as we take stock of our souls and our lives during the *Yamim Nora'im*. We begin Rosh Hashanah with a certain degree of inner wholeness and self-satisfaction reflected in the single drawn out note of *tekiyah*. During the course of the *Yamim Nora'im* we may experience anguish and broken-heartedness as we attempt to come to terms with our own shortcomings. This brokenness of heart and soul, a necessary part of the *teshuvah* process, is reflected in the moaning, sobbing sounds of the broken *teruah* and *shevarim* blasts. Just as these broken cries are followed by the renewed wholeness of the *tekiyah gedolah*—the longest shofar blast of all, so we hope to emerge from our days of introspection and prayer with a new sense of inner wholeness. The healing process of *teshuvah* can take place only after we honestly come to terms with the lack of completeness in our lives and our world. By the time of the *tekiyah gedolah*, may we find the strength and wholeness of heart and soul to go forth into a troubled and imperfect world with the will to bring wholeness and peace.

Reena M. Spicehandler



Isaac Arama sees the three shofar notes as symbolizing different approaches to three different kinds of people:

The *tekiyah*, with its simple and straightforward sound, is intended for the righteous, arousing feelings of confidence and inner peace.

The *teruah*, with its wailing sound, is aimed at the wicked, moving them to fear and trembling.

The *shevarim*, with its broken and uncertain sound, is designed for the average person, neither saint nor sinner, who may find in it a message of either hope or despair.

Herman Kieval

SOUNDING THE SHOFAR

God has ascended amid cries of joy,
THE OMNIPRESENT ONE, amid the shofar blast.
Sing out to God, sing out,
sing to the sovereign one, sing out!
For God is sovereign over all the earth;
Sing out a song of praise.

Psalms 47:6-8

From the depths, I called out: “Yah!”
God answered, bringing great relief.
You heard my call; don’t close your ear
to my outcry, my plea for comfort.
The beginning of your word is truth,
and all your righteous judgments are eternal.

Psalms 118:5

Lamentations 3:56

Psalms 119:160

Please stand in pledge for my release,
don’t let the lawless have me in their grasp!
I take pleasure in your utterance,
like one who finds great treasure.
In knowledge and good judgment teach me—
truly, I have faith in your mitzvot.
Please favor now my voluntary prayer,
and teach me now the justice of your ways.

Psalms 119:122

Psalms 119:162

Psalms 119:66

Psalms 119:108

Some communities repeat the singing of Min Hametzar between sections of the Shofar Blowing on the following page.

COMMENTARY. Psalm 118 literally reads: “From a narrow place I called out to God, but God answered me from an open place.” This is to teach that calling out for God’s help allows even the most narrow-minded, “uptight” person to break out of closed-mindedness into a more broad-minded, compassionate understanding. The shofar—with its narrow end through which we blow and wide end from which sound emerges—symbolizes the process of spiritual liberation through divine inspiration. S.D.R.



עֲלֵה אֱלֹהִים בְּתִרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר:
זַמְרוּ אֱלֹהִים זַמְרוּ זַמְרוּ לְמִלְפָּנָיו זַמְרוּ:
כִּי מִלֶּךְ פֶּלֶאֱאֻרִץ אֱלֹהִים זַמְרוּ מִשְׁפִּיל:
מִן־הַמִּצַּר קָרָאתִי יְיָ עֲנֵנִי בְּמִרְחַב יְיָ:
קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתָּ אֶל־תַּעֲלֵם אֲזַנְךָ לְרוּחֹתֵי לְשׁוּעָתִי:
לֹא־שִׁדְּבָרְךָ אֵמֶת וּלְעוֹלָם פֶּלֶא־מִשְׁפָּט צִדְקָךָ:
עֲרַב עַבְדְּךָ לְטוֹב אֶל־יַעֲשֶׂקְנִי יְדִים:
שֶׁשׁ אֲנֹכִי עַל־אִמְרֹתֶיךָ כְּמוֹצֵא שָׁלֹל רָב:
טוֹב טַעַם וְדַעַת לְמַדְנִי כִּי בְּמִצּוֹתֶיךָ הֶאֱמַנְתִּי:
נְדָבוֹת פִּי רָצָה־נָא יְהוָה וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְמַדְנִי:

Min hametzar karati yah anani vamerhav yah.

Some communities repeat the singing of Min Hametzar between sections of the Shofar Blowing on the following page.

NOTE. Sounding the shofar on behalf of the community is a sacred task. It has traditionally been delegated to an upright and humble person who has learned the proper technique. The meaning and responsibility that rest in the skills and intentions of the shofar blower shape a memorable moment of this awesome day, underlying the need for careful personal and musical preparation. D.A.T.

COMMENTARY. The traditional liturgy includes all of Psalm 47 here. It is a natural choice because of the way it heralds God with shofar blasts and cries of joy. Our *maḥzor* includes only verses 6-8 in keeping with our commitment to eliminate references to chosenness and to celebrations marking the destruction or subjugation of other peoples. D.A.T.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

THEMES: MALHUYOT, ZIHRONOT, SHOFAROT

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INTRODUCTION TO MALḤUYOT / ZIḤRONOT / SHOFAROT

The three major themes of the Rosh Hashanah *Musaf* are most frequently spoken of as reflecting three important aspects of God and theology. The first, *Malḥuyot*—sovereignty—proclaims God’s sovereignty over the world and humanity. The second—*Ziḥronot*—remembrance—tells us that God cares about the world and remembers all our deeds, both the good and the bad. The third, *Shofarot*, reminds us of the revelation of God at Sinai and of the final redemption still to come. Together they “describe” a god who is omniscient and omnipotent and who is actively involved in this world on a continuing basis.

These three aspects are also part of our lives, for we are created *betzelem elohim*—in the image of God. We are to reflect in our lives aspects of the Divine, or as the rabbinic principle states: You should be merciful as God is merciful, you should be just, etc. Looking at these three themes in this manner gives us a different perspective. *Malḥuyot* focuses on control—control over others and over ourselves. *Ziḥronot* has to do with memory and thought. Remembering is what the covenant is based on, for we are to remember what God did for us in Egypt and elsewhere. Remembering, too, is what all human relationships are based on, for without memory of past events and feelings, there is no way to deepen emotional attachments; each meeting becomes the first; whether for love or hate, no one has any more meaning to you than anyone else. *Shofarot*, the third, has to do with sound and thus with communication and speech.

Appropriately for Rosh Hashanah, these three themes are reflected in the three creation stories at the beginning of Genesis—that is, the Garden, the Flood and the Tower of Babel.

For the story of the tree in the Garden is a story of controls—of self-control and of curbing desire. Both God and humans learn from the Garden that there is no self-control without tasting of ↪

knowledge; without at least partial understanding of who we are and the consequences of our deeds, there is no motivation to curb desire. Both God and humanity learn that self-control will be difficult for humans.

The second creation story is that of the Flood, which is quoted in the liturgy of *Zihronot* as follows: “Remember us as You remembered Noah in love, graciously saving him when You released the flood to destroy all creatures because of their evil deeds...” The liturgy continues with a quotation (Genesis 8:1) from the Noah story. God *remembers* Noah and saves him. Later God remembers the people of Israel in Egypt and decides to redeem them. It is out of memory, out of cognition, that God acts, that God saves, and that God establishes or reestablishes relationships with humans.

We, too, are meant to remember the Noachs amid the floodwater and reach out to save them. We are to remember and emphasize the good in others in order to relate to them, not focus on their faults. We are also meant to remember the past and not live only in the present. Remembering the past gives us a proper sense of our place in the universe and, even more important, makes us cognizant of a future that we must be engaged in creating.

The third creation story is that of the Tower of Babel, in which we learn the power of speech and its danger. Today, we remain confounded by the diversity of languages, but even more by the difficulty of really communicating rather than just speaking.

Self-control, thinking/remembering, and speech are what make us human. To realize our full potential, we must strive with each of these aspects of our humanity, which in themselves are only reflections of the Divine.

Michael Strassfeld

Choose from the following songs:

וּבֹא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל וְלִשְׁבֵי פֶשַׁע בִּיעֶקֶב נָאִם יְהוָה:

Uva letzion go'el uleshavey fasha beya'akov ne'um adonay.

And a redeemer shall come to Zion, and to those of Jacob who return from their transgression, says THE GOD OF ISRAEL.



עֲבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בְּשִׂמְחָה בָּאוּ לְפָנָיו בְּרִנָּה:

Ivdu et adonay besimḥah bo'u lefanav birnanah.

Serve God with happiness,
come into God's presence
with a joyful song!



יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאוֹרֵיטָא קֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הָד הוּא:
תּוֹרָה אוֹרָה הַלְלוּיָהּ:

Yisra'el ve'orayta kudsha berih hu ḥad hu.
Torah orah halleluyah.

Israel, Torah, and the Blessed Holy One are one. Torah is light.
Halleluyah!

וּבֹא...יְהוָה / And...THE GOD OF ISRAEL (Isaiah 59:20).

עֲבְדוּ...בְּרִנָּה / Serve...song (Psalms 100:2).

יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאוֹרֵיטָא / *Yisra'el ve'orayta*. This song is a popular adaptation of a phrase attributed to the *Zohar* by the eighteenth-century Italian moralist Moshe Ḥayim Luzzatto.

R.S.

The three sections—*Malhuyot*, *Zihronot* and *Shofarot*—follow a logical progression. The first section proclaims God Creator and Monarch. As author of the universe, God is the one of absolute power, bringing life and death, awesome and holy. Emphasized here is the majesty of God's kingdom, along with the promise that God's true rule will one day be perceived by all. The God of *Malhuyot* remains distant, however, enshrined in a holiness that seems far beyond our reach. *Zihronot* balances that awesome monarchy; indeed, God may be Monarch, but God is one who cares. God remembered Noah, the one who was spared in the hour of God's greatest wrath. So God remembered Israel in Egypt, the righteous in their trials, and the life of each individual human being. The awesome Ruler has entered into a covenant with humanity (again, through Noah, not with Israel alone), a covenant that promises God will take cognizance of each individual human life, of every human cry. *Shofarot* then tells us of the acts of God: God who rules and remembers will also act. God has given us the gift of self-revelation at Sinai, and God will reveal a mighty hand yet again, at the end of time. These three sections of the liturgy should be read as a single unit, a summation of world history as seen from the perspective of Israel's faith.

Arthur Green (Adapted)

DERASH. *Malhuyot*/sovereignities, challenges us to get our priorities straight. When the ruler calls, everything else falls by the wayside. We do not usually order our priorities with awareness of the presence of the *Meleh*/Sovereign. As a result we often get means and ends confused. *Meleh* helps us remember not to give the means preponderance over the ends. Z.S.S.

Our God, our ancients' God,
rule over all the world in its entirety
by showing forth your glory,
and be raised up over all the earth
in your beloved presence.

And let the wondrous aura of your reign
be manifest in all who dwell upon the earth—
let every creature know that you are its creator,
let every living thing discern that you have fashioned it,
let everyone who draws the breath of life declare
that you, THE ANCIENT ONE, reign supreme,
and that your sovereignty embraces all.

On Shabbat, add the words in parenthesis.

Our God, our ancients' God,
(take pleasure in our rest,
enable us to realize holiness through your mitzvot,
give us our portion in your Torah,
let us enjoy the good things of your world,
and gladden us with your salvation.
(And help us to perpetuate, ETERNAL ONE, our God,
with love and with desire,
your holy Shabbat,
and may all your people Israel,
all who treat your name as holy,
find rest and peace upon this day.) ↪

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוּ בְּכַבּוּדָּךְ
 וְהַנְּשֵׂא עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ בִּיקָרְךָ וְהוֹפֵעַ בְּהַדָּר גְּאוֹן עֲדָךְ עַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי
 תֵּבֵל אֲרָצְךָ וַיֵּדַע כָּל פֶּעוּל כִּי אַתָּה פְּעַלְתּוּ וַיִּבֶן כָּל יְצוּר כִּי אַתָּה
 יְצַרְתּוּ וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמָה בְּאָפוֹ: יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ וּמְלֻכּוֹתוֹ כִּכְל
 מְשֻׁלָּה: אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ (רִצָּה בְּמִנּוּחֵינוּ) קְדֹשָׁנוּ
 בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְתַן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ שְׂפִילָנוּ מִטּוֹבְךָ וְשִׂמְחָנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ
 (וְהִנְחִילֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרִצּוֹן שֶׁבֶת קְדֻשָּׁךְ וַיְנַחֲנוּ בּוֹ כָּל
 יִשְׂרָאֵל מְקֻדְשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ:)

מלכות

MALHUYOT READING 1

We cannot actually picture goodness. It is not a being; it is a force, like electricity. Nobody ever actually saw electricity, but we can see and feel what electricity does. If we have an electric heater and connect it, we get heat. We get to know what electricity is by what it does. In the same way, we get to know what God is by what God makes us do: when people are, so to speak, connected with God, they do good things. We call those people godly people, and their acts, godly acts. Whenever this force is active, we say that God has exercised influence and power.

Belief in God, therefore, has to do...with human nature, with the way individual men and women act, with their attitudes, their ideals. Belief in God has to do with our attitude towards life itself. Do we find life good? Is life worthwhile? If we believe that life is good, that, in spite of sickness and accidents, in spite of poverty and war, in spite of all the sad and difficult conditions in the world, the world is a wonderful place to live in and can be made a still better place, then we believe in God. When we believe in God, we cannot be discouraged because we believe that all the misery in the world is due, not to the fact that misery is a necessary part of life, but to the fact that we have not yet discovered how to do away with that misery. Ira Eisenstein (Adapted)

MALḤUYOT READING 2



Our life is a faint tracing on the surface of mystery. [This] surface is not smooth, any more than the planet is smooth; not even a single hydrogen atom is smooth, let alone a [tree]. Nor does it fit together; not even the chlorophyll and hemoglobin molecules are a perfect match....Nature seems to exult in abounding radicality, extremism, anarchy. If we were to judge nature by its common sense or likelihood, we wouldn't believe the world existed. In nature, improbabilities are the one stock in trade. The whole creation is one lunatic fringe. No claims of any and all revelations could be so far-fetched as a single giraffe. If creation had been left up to me, I'm sure I wouldn't have had the imagination or courage to do more than shape a single, reasonably sized atom, smooth as a snowball, and let it go at that.

The wonder is—given the errant nature of freedom and the burgeoning of texture in time—the wonder is that all the forms are not monsters, that there is beauty at all, grace gratuitous, pennies found, like a mockingbird's free fall. Beauty itself is the fruit of the creator's exuberance that grew such a tangle, and the grotesques and horrors bloom from that same free growth, that intricate scramble and twine up and down the conditions of time.

This, then is the extravagant landscape of the world, given, given with pizzazz, given in good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

Annie Dillard

MALḤUYOT READING 3



Where shall I find you?

Your glory fills the world.

Behold, I find You

Where we earn our bread by the sweat of our brows,

Among the lonely and the poor, the lowly, the lost,

You are with us in blazing heat and shattering storm. ↪

Behold, I find You
In the mind free to sail by its own star,
In words that spring from the depth of truth.
Wherever we struggle for justice and freedom.
Where we toil to unravel the secrets of Your world.
Where we make beauty out of words,
Wherever noble deeds are done.

Behold, I find You
In the merry shouts of children at their play;
In the sleep falling on their infant eyelids,
And in the smile that dances on their sleeping lips.

Let me find the strength not to cast off one in need.
Not to bend the knee before a haughty tyrant.
Give me strength to lift my spirits above the trivial,
To bear lightly my joys and sorrows.

Rabindranath Tagore (Adapted)

I was brought up to believe in free will. Although I came to doubt all revelation, I can never accept the idea that the universe is a physical or chemical accident, a result of blind evolution. Even though I learned to recognize the lies, the clichés, and the idolatries of the human mind, I still cling to some truths which I think all of us might accept someday. There must be a way for us to attain all possible pleasures, all the powers and knowledge that nature can grant us and still serve God—a God who speaks in deeds, not in words, and whose vocabulary is the universe.

Isaac Bashevis Singer (Adapted)

COMMENTARY. When we become aware of our dependence upon the laws of nature, we acknowledge the rulership of a Power greater than and beyond us that determines the conditions under which human life is lived. This awareness, properly understood, leads to humility and a recognition of the limits of human power.

Ira Eisenstein

Refine our hearts to serve you truthfully,
for you are a God of truth,
and your word is truthful
and endures forever.

Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
the sovereign power over all the earth,
who raises up to holiness
(Shabbat,) the people Israel
and the Day of Memory.

We rise. The shofar is sounded.

May what our lips express
be pleasing in your presence
God exalted and sublime!
You who discern and listen,
you who keep watch, and hearken
to our shofar blast,
may you receive with mercy and with favor
this arrangement of our holy Scripture's
declaration of your rule.

COMMENTARY. How do I want to inscribe myself into the Book of Life for the coming year? What do I want my script to be? The *Areshet Sefateynu* reminds us that we are writing our script in partnership with God. It challenges us to write a good script. Z.S.S.

וְטַהַר לְבַנּוּ לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאַמַּת כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים אַמַּת וּדְבַרְךָ אַמַּת וְקָיָם
לְעַד: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ מְקַדֵּשׁ (הַשַּׁבָּת וְ) יִשְׂרָאֵל
יּוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן:

We rise.

Tekiyah Shevarim Teruah Tekiyah תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה
Tekiyah Shevarim Teruah Tekiyah תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה
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אֲרֵשֶׁת שְׁפָתֵינוּ יַעֲרַב לְפָנֶיךָ אֵל רָם וְנִשָּׂא מִבֵּין וּמֵאֲזִין מִבֵּית
וּמִקְשִׁיב לְקוֹל תְּקִיעָתֵנוּ וְתִקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרַצוֹן סֵדֶר מַלְכוּתֵינוּ:

*meleh al kol ha'aretz mekadesh (hashabbat ve) yisrael veyom
hazikaron.*

*Areshet sefateynu ye'erav lefaneha el ram venisa mevin uma'azin
mabit umakshiv lekol tekiyatenu utekabel berahamim uveratzon
seder malhuyoteynu.*

COMMENTARY. The sounding of the shofar, the most ancient rite in the observance of Rosh Hashanah, has been interpreted as a summons to the soul to present itself before the judgment seat of God. It has also been construed as *teruat meleh*, the salute of the Sovereign, with all its implications of fealty and allegiance. It has functioned, and should still function, in the life of the Jewish people as an invitation to the individual Jew to renew the oath of unqualified allegiance and loyalty to those ideals, the realization of which would convert human society into a kingdom of God.

M.M.K.

הַיּוֹם הַרַת עוֹלָם

הַיּוֹם יַעֲמְדוּ כָּל יְצוּרֵי עוֹלָמִים
כְּאַגּוּדָה אַחַת לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנָךְ בְּלִבְבֵּנוּ שְׁלֵם
לְהַתְחַדֵּשׁ עִם בּוֹרְאֵם עוֹלָם קְדוֹשׁ:

Hayom harat olam
Hayom ya'amdu kol yetzurey olamim
ke'agudah ahat la'asot retzoneha belevav shalem
lehithadesh im boram olam kadosh.

Today, the world is born!
Today shall stand before you
all the beings of the cosmos, as one community,
to do your will with perfect heart,
to be renewed with their Creator
in the universal sacredness of life!

We are seated.

KAVANAH. "The whole notion of time as an arrow shooting inexorably forward has been shattered forever in the complex geometries of quantum space, where multidimensional strings and loops carry time in all directions and even bring it to a halt." (Deepak Chopra) Our ancestors intuited this understanding when they wrote: "Today the world was born." They did not say "the anniversary of the world's birth," but literally, "Today the world was conceived." This means that we can connect in this moment to the precise energy present at creation. This awareness can lead us to identify with a reality that is not bounded by time. S.P.W.

The essence [of the Jewish conception of life]...seems to me to lie in an affirmative attitude to the life of all creation. The life of the individual has meaning only insofar as it aids in making the life of every living thing nobler and more beautiful. Life is sacred—that is to say, it is the supreme value, to which all other values are subordinate. The hallowing of the supra-individual life brings in its train a reverence for everything spiritual—a particularly characteristic feature of the Jewish tradition.

But the Jewish tradition also contains something else, something which finds splendid expression in many of the psalms, namely, a sort of intoxicated joy and amazement at the beauty and grandeur of this world, of which we can just form a faint notion. It is the feeling from which true scientific research draws its spiritual sustenance, but which also seems to find expression in the song of birds.

Albert Einstein (Adapted)



Hail the hand that scattered space with stars,
Wrapped whirling world in bright blue blanket, air,
Made worlds within worlds, elements in earth,
Souls within skins, every one a teeming universe,
Every tree a system of semantics, and pushed
Beyond probability to place consciousness
On this cooling crust of burning rock.

Oh praise that hand, mind, heart, soul, power or force
That so inclosed, separated, limited planets, trees, humans
Yet breaks all bounds and borders
To lavish on us light, love, life
This trembling glory.

Ruth Brin

ZIHRONOT / REMEMBERING

You remember all that you have made within your world,
consider every creature fashioned since Creation.
Before you every secret is uncovered,
the whole multitude of mysteries since the world began.
Nothing is forgotten in the presence of your Throne of Glory,
and nothing hidden from before your eyes.
You remember each completed act and each created being—
none escapes your gaze.
All is revealed and known before you, ANCIENT ONE,
your watchful eye reaches beyond all generations,
for you bring the claim of memory into the world,
the power by which all breath and spirit must be reckoned.
All of your many works,
your mass of living creatures,
the vast infinity of beings—
each has its place within your memory and thought.
And so have you made known since the Beginning,
this you have made clear from days of old!

This very day marks the beginning of your Creation,
a memorial of the world's first day—
for it is Israel's law, a statute of the God of Jacob.
And on it, every nation stands in judgment:
which one destined for the sword, which for peace,
which for famine, which for plenty. ↪

DERASH. On the first day, the day of the world's birth, the whole world was in a state of pure potential. Contemplating that newborn world, we feel awe at the fact of creation. On Rosh Hashanah we are reminded that today is a first day. We still contain within us the awesome and godly potential of our creation. That potential is in our hands. J.A.S.

אתה זוכר מעשה עולם ופוקד כל-יצורי קדם: לפניך נגלו כל-תעלומות והמון נסתרות שמבראשית: כי אין שכחה לפני כסא כבודך ואין נסתר מנגד עיניך: אתה זוכר את-כל-המפעל וגם כל-היצור לא נכחד ממך: הכל גלוי וידוע לפניך יהוה אלהינו צופה ומביט עד סוף כל-הדורות כי תביא חק זכרון להפקד כל-רוח ונפש להזכר מעשים רבים והמון בריות לאין תכלית: מראשית כזאת הודעת ומלפנים אותה גלית: זה היום תחלת מעשיך זכרון ליום ראשון: כי חק לישראל הוא משפט לאלהי יעקב: ועל המדינות בו יאמר: איזו לחרב ואיזו לשלום איזו לרעב ואיזו לשבע: ←

COMMENTARY. The *Zihronot* section is meant to bring to awareness that “You remember everything, there is no forgetting before You.” This is a place of great awareness and enlightenment. *Zihronot* challenges us to create ongoing mindfulness of values, soul, truth, dedication. It prods us to be aware of impulsive reaction and to transform it with conscious memory.

Z.S.S.

DERASH. This people had [a] sense of history. It had a gift uniting the artistic and the moral, a receptivity through which some of eternity enters the human essence. This ability so rare in human beings came to be the possession of this people through its gradual growth: it was able to have time. This people’s Sabbath and festivals are not just ancient institutions, but they are evidences of a fundamental power, an ability which is as artistic as it is moral. This power was both the commandment and the ability of this people to take a step backward, as artists do, to view the totality of their work. This people stepped back from the work of days in order to see the path of the weeks, from the events of the months to see the journey of the years, and from the customs of the era in order to comprehend the enduring task. From this it gained the knowledge and the ability to possess time, to own time for its own life. It acquired the ability to think in generations and live in generations, to look backward into the far reaches and to look forward into the great distances. Through history, this people came to be what it is: the people of the great memory and the great expectation.

Leo Baeck (Adapted)

On it, every living thing is summoned to account,
brought into memory, for life or death.
Who can escape the claims of memory on this day?
For the memory of every creature comes before you:
each person's acts, each person's history,
every deed—each step a mortal takes, each thought,
each plan, each inclination, and each consequence.

Happy is the person who does not forget you,
or the human being who gains courage through your help!
For those who seek you out shall never stumble,
they who trust in you shall never suffer shame.
For the memory of all created beings comes before you,
and you read carefully the deeds of all.
And so, with love, did you remember Noah,
and appoint him for a fate of mercy and redemption,
even as you brought the Flood upon the world,
destroying all flesh, due to the evil of their deeds.
And thus, REDEEMING ONE, our God,
did Noah come before you in your thoughts.
He was remembered,
and allowed to multiply his seed on earth—
as many as the grains of dust upon the land,
descendants numbering as the sands beside the sea. ↩

DERASH. When we pray for God to remember, we are reciting a list of things that we then collectively remember. This remembering of past good deeds and good intentions for future actions inspires us to higher thoughts and deeds. In praying for God to remember, we need to take responsibility for becoming the vehicles by which our prayer can become reality. It is only our subsequent actions that can prove our prayers are not in vain.

D.A.T.

וּבְרִיּוֹתָ בּוֹ יִפְקְדוּ לְהַזְכִּירָם לַחַיִּים וְלַמָּוֹת: מִי לֹא נִפְקַד כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
כִּי יִזְכָּר כָּל-הַיְצוּר לְפָנָיִךְ בָּא מַעֲשֵׂה אִישׁ וּפְקַדְתוּ וְעֵלִילוֹת מַצְעָדֵי-
גֹבֵר מִחֻשְׁבוֹת אָדָם וְתַחֲבוּלוֹתָיו וַיִּצְרֵי מַעֲלֵי-אִישׁ:

אֲשֶׁרִי אִישׁ שְׁלֹא יִשְׁכַּחְךָ וּבֶן-אָדָם יִתְאַמֵּץ-בְּךָ כִּי דוֹרְשֵׁיךָ לְעוֹלָם
לֹא יִכְשְׁלוּ וְלֹא יִפְלְמוּ לְנַצַּח כָּל-הַחוֹסִים בְּךָ: כִּי יִזְכָּר כָּל-הַמַּעֲשִׂים
לְפָנָיִךְ בָּא וְאַתָּה דוֹרֵשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה כָל־אֶתְנַח בְּאַהֲבָה זְכָרָתָּ
וְתִפְקְדֶהוּ בְּדַבָּר יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים בְּהִבְיָאָךְ אֶת-מִי הַמַּבּוּל לְשַׁחַת
כָּל-בֶּשֶׂר מִפְּנֵי אֲרַע מַעֲלֵיָהֶם: עַל כֵּן זָכְרוּנוּ בָּא לְפָנָיִךְ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְהַרְבוֹת זֵרְעוֹ כְּעַפְרוֹת תַּבַּל וְצִאֲצָאוּ כְּחוֹל הַיָּם:

COMMENTARY. Who is it who remembers? Once we believed it was the father/king God, sitting above the small world and noting our behaviors in His great book. And now, when life is cheap and things are thrown away after one use and there is no heaven above the earth, who is it who notes and remembers? That our behaviors are recorded in God's book means that our actions have significance. It is our choice whether to dedicate what we do to supporting redemption or resisting it. Each separate thing we do, no matter how trivial it seems, can be a vehicle for furthering this redemptive process. Yet we discard so many opportunities each day, as though what we do doesn't matter. Each day we live, each act we perform, contributes to the flow of history toward salvation. Thus each thing we do really is recorded and preserved in the world. If we act on behalf of God, so it is written.

Daniel Siegel

DERASH. What are we affirming about God when we speak of God's memory? In the biblical pattern, God's remembering is followed by, or even implies, God's saving action—for example, God remembers Noah, Sarah, and the enslaved Israelites. We can find God in the feeling that we who are adrift, barren or oppressed are not alone, and in the possibility inherent in the universe for a transformed future.

J.A.S.

As it is written in your Torah:

“God remembered Noah and every living thing,
and all the beasts with him upon the Ark,
and God caused a breeze to pass throughout the earth,
and all the floodwaters withdrew.”

Genesis 8:1

And it is said:

“And God heard [Israel’s] cry of pain,
and God remembered the covenant with Abraham,
with Isaac, and with Jacob.”

Exodus 2:24

And it is said:

“And I remember now my covenant with Jacob—
and my covenant with Isaac
and my covenant with Abraham
I shall remember.
And the earth I shall recall.”

Leviticus 26:42

And in your holy Scriptures,
the following is written:

“God’s wondrous deeds were made to be remembered,
gracious and merciful is THE ETERNAL ONE.”

Psalms 111:4

And it is said:

“God gave sustenance
to those in awe of the divine,
God keeps the covenant in mind for all eternity.” ↩

Psalms 111:5

כְּכַתּוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ:

וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַח וְאֵת כָּל־הַחַיָּה וְאֶת־כָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵתוּ
בַתְּבֵבָה וַיַּעֲבֹר אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ עַל הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשְׁכּוּ הַמַּיִם:

וַנֹּאמֶר: וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַאֲקָתָם וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת־
אֲבֹרָהֶם אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב:

וַנֹּאמֶר: וּזְכַרְתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב וְאָף אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יִצְחָק וְאָף אֶת־
בְּרִיתִי אֲבֹרָהֶם אֲזַכֵּר וְהָאָרֶץ אֲזַכֵּר:

וּבְדַבְרֵי קִדְשְׁךָ כְּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

אֲכַר עֲשֵׂה לְנַפְלְאֹתַי חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה:

וַנֹּאמֶר: טָרַף נָתַן לִירָאִיו יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ: ←

COMMENTARY. It was ancient Israel that first assigned a decisive significance to history. "The heavens," in the words of the psalmist, might still "declare the glory of God," but it was human history that revealed God's will and purpose. This novel perception was not the result of philosophical speculation, but of the peculiar nature of Israelite faith. It emerged out of an intuitive and revolutionary understanding of God, and was refined through profoundly felt historical experiences. However it came about, in retrospect the consequences are manifest. Suddenly, the crucial encounter between humanity and the divine shifted away from the realm of nature and the cosmos to the plane of history, conceived now in terms of divine challenge and human response. The pagan conflict of the gods with the forces of chaos, or with one another, was replaced by a drama of a different and more poignant order: the paradoxical struggle between the divine will of an omnipotent Creator and the free will of God's creatures, people, in the course of history; a tense dialectic of obedience and rebellion.

Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (Adapted)

And it is said:

“And God remembered the covenant with them,
and, with great love,
relented from stern justice.”

Psalms 106:45

And by your servants' hands, the prophets,
the following is written:

“Go, and proclaim to Jerusalem's ears,
Thus says THE GOD OF ISRAEL: I recall
the love you showed me in your youth,
the time when you betrothed yourself to me,
following after me across a barren land.”

Jeremiah 2:2

And it is said:

“I remember my covenant with you,
in days when you were young,
and I shall now create for you,
an everlasting covenant.”

Ezekiel 16:60

And it is said:

“Is Ephraim not my dearest child,
a source of joy to me?
Truly, whenever I make mention of it,
I am flooded with memories.
Therefore, I fill with yearning,
and am overcome with love.
So says THE ANCIENT ONE!”

Jeremiah 31:19

וְנֹאמַר: וַיִּזְכֹּר לָהֶם בְּרִיתוֹ וַיִּנַּחֵם כְּרַב חֲסָדָיו:

וְעַל יְדֵי עֲבָרָיִךְ הִנְבִּיאִים כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

הֲלֹךְ וְקָרְאתָ בְּאָזְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם לֵאמֹר: כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה זְכַרְתִּי לָךְ חֲסֹד
נְעוּרָיִךְ אֲהַבֵּת כָּל־וּלְתֵיךְ לְכַתֵּךְ אַחֲרַי בַּמְדָּבָר בְּאַרְצָן לֹא זְרוּעָה:

וְנֹאמַר: וְזְכַרְתִּי אֲנִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּךָ בְּיַמֵּי נְעוּרָיִךְ וַהֲקִימוּתִי לָךְ
בְּרִית עוֹלָם:

וְנֹאמַר: הֲבֵן יִקִּיר לִי אֶפְרָיִם אִם יֵלֶד שְׁעֲשׂוּעִים כִּי־מַדֵּי דְבָרֵי בּוֹ
זָכַר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד עַל־כֵּן הָמוּ מְעִי לוֹ רַחֵם אֲרַחֲמֶנּוּ נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

Our God, our ancients' God,
remember us, be mindful of our good,
we who stand before you.

Please designate us for a fate of mercy
and salvation, decreed from heaven's
highest, primordial heights.

And remember for our sake the covenant,
the love, the promise that you swore
to Abraham, our ancestor, on Mount Moriah.

Envisage once again the gift of Abraham,
our ancestor, as he bound and dedicated
at the place of sacrifice, his child Isaac,
reining in his love to do your will
with perfect heart.

So may your love restrain strict justice,
removing anger's burdens from us.

In your great goodness, let wrath be turned away
from us, your people, from your Holy City,
and from the Land of Israel, your inheritance.

Fulfill for us, ALL-MINDFUL ONE, our God,
the promise that you made in your Torah,
through your servant Moses,
from your glorious Presence,
as was said: ↩

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ זָכְרָנוּ בְּזִכְרוֹן טוֹב לְפָנֶיךָ וּפְקָדָנוּ
 בְּפִקְדוֹת יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים מְשֻׁמֵי שָׁמַי קָדָם וְזָכַרְלָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 אֶת־הַבְּרִית וְאֶת־הַחֶסֶד וְאֶת־הַשְּׂבוּעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁפָּעַתָּ לְאַבְרָהָם
 אֲבִינוּ בְּהַר הַמּוֹרְיָה וְתִרְאֶה לְפָנֶיךָ עֲקֵדָה שְׁעָקַד אֲבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ
 אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ עַל גִּב הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְכַבֵּשׁ רַחֲמָיו לְעִשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ בְּלִבְךָ
 שָׁלֵם: כֵּן יִכְבְּשׁוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ אֶת־כַּעֲסְךָ מֵעַלֵינוּ וּבִטּוּבְךָ הַגָּדוֹל יֵשׁוּב
 חֶרוֹן אִפְךָ מֵעַמְךָ וּמֵעִירְךָ וּמִנְחַלְתֶּךָ וְקִיַם־לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־
 הַדָּבָר שֶׁהִבְטַחְתָּנוּ בְּתוֹרָתְךָ עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה עַבְדְּךָ מִפִּי כְבוֹדְךָ
 כְּאָמֹר: ←

We are part of God's memory,
 because nothing precious is ever lost in the universe,
 and love is more precious than anything.
 Love's promise and love's fulfillment are never lost.
 They always turn up.
 They are our inheritance,
 if we remember.

S.P.W.

DERASH. The Torah states that God remembers our deeds and holds us accountable for our wrongdoings. Yet few of us believe in a God who takes a personal interest in humankind. Not many of us think of God as a person at all. Does it still make sense to follow the tradition and speak of "divine remembrance?" What we do in the world can cause good or evil that stretches vastly beyond our imagining. Our actions shape the world's memory. The genetic structure of various life forms has been shown—in places like Hiroshima and Chernobyl—to bear the impact of human misuse of the atom. Indeed, our contempt for the ecosystem that we share with other life forms is unforgettably etched onto the very landscape and will be visibly recalled with shame for generations to come. We cause good and evil that become a part of universal memory. By beginning to heal the wounds that we ourselves have caused, we will be remembered for a blessing. *Adonay*, you remember all things forgotten. For you there is no forgetting.

S.D.R.

“I have remembered, for your sake,
the covenant of former generations,
whom I brought forth from the land of Egypt,
in the eyes of all the nations
to become their God,
I, THE GOD OF ISRAEL.”

For you are a God who can remember
all that is forgotten, since eternity.
Nothing is forgotten in the presence
of your Throne of Glory.
So may you remember now
the sacrifice of Isaac,
and be merciful to his posterity,
who are alive today.
Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
who keeps the covenant in mind.

וְזָכַרְתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית רֵאשֹׁנִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי-אֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם
לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם לְהִיּוֹת לָהֶם יְאֵלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה: כִּי זָכַר כָּל-הַנְּשָׁפְכוֹת
אֹתָהּ הוּא מַעֲוֹלָם וְאִין שִׁכְחָה לְפָנַי כִּפְסָא כְּבוֹדְךָ: וְעַקְדַת יִצְחָק
לְזָרְעוֹ הַיּוֹם בְּרַחֲמִים תִּזְכֹּר. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה זָכַר הַבְּרִית:

יהוה / I...THE GOD OF ISRAEL (Leviticus 26:45). זוכרתי...יהוה

ZIHRONOT READING 1



Remember! All our ancestors live in us. Though their tongues are silent, they speak with ours. Though their hands are still, they labor through us.

The past lives in us, in our very bodies. The structure of our organs, the energy that moves our muscles, the nerves and brain wherewith we apprehend our world, all are an inheritance from generations that have passed.

Remember! The past lives in our worlds, in our ability to reason, to communicate thought and feeling, to work, to love.

Remember! The past lives in the world's wealth and resources. We eat the fruit of trees planted by forebears long gone. With metals stored in the earth we forge our tools. Through skills and devices conceived by vanished generations, we survive in the world.

Remember! The past lives in our society and our folkways. Others before us originated government to make us secure, courts to administer justice and protect our liberties, ritual to enhance our days.

May we cherish justice and freedom in the affairs of our land, peace and equality among the peoples, that our children after us may not revile us for bequeathing a heritage of evil.

May we be true to our past as Jews, seeking to fulfill the unrealized ideals of our prophets and sages. May we fit ourselves to be their successors, and to impart to our children the vision of a godly kingdom.

Milton Steinberg (Adapted)

ZIḤRONOT READING 2



Humans differ from the rest of living creation mainly in the possession of self-consciousness. Other creatures live from moment to moment. If they have memories, they are not aware that those are memories. If the future in any way determines their actions, they have no mental picture of that future. The consciousness of history is the consciousness of that larger self which one shares with one's fellows. Individuals are centuries, if not millennia, older than their chronological ages. But people who have a historical consciousness actually feel that the life they live extends far beyond the actual life of their bodies. Conscious of the experiences of the past, attached by a kind of umbilical cord to the history, the culture, the civilization of centuries, the individual's being becomes coextensive with the being of their peoples. The individual enjoys, as it were, an earthly immortality.

Mordecai M. Kaplan (Adapted)

ZIḤRONOT READING 3



Judaism does not command us to believe; it commands us to remember. The commandment of faith in the Torah is *Remember*: “that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live.”

There is a slow and silent stream, a stream not of oblivion but of memory, from which we must constantly drink before entering the realm of faith....The substance of our very being is memory, our way of living is retaining the reminders, articulating memory. ↪

The true story of the mind is not preserved in learned volumes, but in the living mental organism of everyone...The riches of a soul are stored up in its memory. This is the test of character—not whether an individual follows the daily fashion, but whether the past is alive in the present. When we want to understand ourselves, to find out what is most precious in our lives, we search our memory. Memory is the soul's witness to the capricious mind.

We are a people in whom the past endures, in whom the present is inconceivable without moments gone by. The vision of the prophets lasted a moment, a moment enduring forever. What happened once upon a time happens all the time.

Jews have not preserved the ancient monuments, they have retained the ancient moments. The light kindled in their history was never extinguished. With sustaining vitality the past survives in their thoughts, hearts, rituals. Recollection is a holy act: we sanctify the present by remembering the past.

Abraham Joshua Heschel (Collected & Adapted)

ZIHRONOT READING 4



So there is nothing new under the sun. I accept that. That is my challenge. There is beauty enough and ugliness enough and love enough and hate enough for any one of us to select from and shape our own absolutely personal combinations. But this shaping must be a conscious thing: a reaching back and forward for those details that create patterns and form and motif in a life. To see living as connection is to bevel the rough edges, miter the corners, blur the divisions so that time becomes a chain of always accessible segments, not fragments, of knowledge and experience.

Faye Moskowitz

ZIHRONOT READING 5



Out of the debris of dying stars,
this rain of particles
that waters the waste with brightness;
the sea-wave of atoms hurrying home,
collapse of the giant,
unstable guest who cannot stay;
the sun's heart reddens and expands,
his mighty aspiration is lasting,
as the shell of his substance
one day will be white with frost.

In the radiant field of Orion
great hordes of stars are forming,
just as we see every night
fiery and faithful to the end.

Out of the cold and fleeing dust
that is never and always,
the silence and waste to come—
this arm, this hand,
my voice, your face, this love.

John Haines

We rise. The shofar is sounded.

May what our lips express
be pleasing in your presence,
God exalted and sublime!
You who discern and listen,
you who keep watch, and hearken
to our shofar blast,
may you receive with mercy and with favor
this arrangement of our holy Scripture's
declarations of the power of memory.

Today, the world is born!
Today shall stand before you
all the beings of the cosmos,
whether as your children
or your servants.
If as your children, show them mercy,
like a mother toward her children.
If as your servants,
then our eyes are turned toward you
in great anticipation,
that you may be gracious,
rendering judgment for the good, on our behalf,
as clear as light of day.

We are seated.

COMMENTARY. The central theme of New Year's Day is the power of memory itself. Memory defies oblivion, breaks the coils of the present, establishes the continuity of the generations, and rescues human life and effort from futility. It affords the only true resurrection of the dead. The act of remembering is thus in itself redemptive. If, on the one hand, it involves a chastening assessment, it involves, on the other, a comforting reassurance. New Year's Day is at once a day of judgment and a new beginning. If it looks backward, it does so only on the way forward; and its symbol is the trumpet of an eternal reveille. Theodore H. Gaster (Adapted)

We rise.

Tekiyah	Shevarim	Tekiyah	תְּקִיעָה	שְׁבָרִים	תְּקִיעָה
Tekiyah	Shevarim	Tekiyah	תְּקִיעָה	שְׁבָרִים	תְּקִיעָה
Tekiyah	Shevarim	Tekiyah	תְּקִיעָה	שְׁבָרִים	תְּקִיעָה

אַרְשֶׁת שְׁפָתֵינוּ יַעֲרֹב לְפָנֶיךָ אֵל רָם וְנִשָּׂא מִבֵּין וּמֵאַזֵּין מִבֵּית
וּמִקְשִׁיב לְקוֹל תְּקִיעָתֵנוּ וּתְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן סֵדֶר זְכוּרוֹתֵינוּ:

Areshet sefateynu ye'erav lefaneha el ram venisa mevin uma'azin
mabit umakshiv lekol tekiyatenu utekabel berahamim uveratzon
seder zihronotynu.

הַיּוֹם הַרַת עוֹלָם

הַיּוֹם יַעֲמִיד בְּמִשְׁפַּט כָּל יְצוּרֵי עוֹלָמִים
אִם כְּבָנִים אִם כְּעַבְדִּים
אִם כְּבָנִים רַחֲמֵנוּ כְּרַחֲמֵת אִם עַל בָּנִים
וְאִם כְּעַבְדִּים עֵינֵינוּ לְךָ תְּלוּיֹת
עַד שְׁתַּחֲנְנוּ וְתוֹצִיא כְּאוֹר מִשְׁפָּטֵנוּ אִם קְדוֹשׁ:

We are seated.

SHOFAROT / CALLING

You revealed yourself
amid your cloud of glory,
to a holy people, to converse with them.
From heaven did you make your voice heard,
as you revealed yourself
through heaven's radiant mists.
And the entire world was shaken by your presence,
the beings you created trembled at your coming forth.
As you, our sovereign, became manifest upon Mt. Sinai,
to teach your people Torah and mitzvot,
You made heard the splendor of your voice,
your holy utterances, through flames of fire.
With thunder and lightning, you were shown to them,
amid the shofar's call to them did you appear.

As it is written in your Torah:
“And it happened on the third day, when morning came,
that there were thundering sounds and lightning,
and thick clouds upon the mountain,
and the shofar's great and mighty voice was heard,
and all the people trembled in their encampment.”

Exodus 19:16

And it is said:
“And as the shofar's call grew louder and more forceful,
Moses spoke, and THE ALMIGHTY answered him aloud.” ↪

Exodus 19:19

שופרות

אָתָּה נִגְלִיתָ בְּעֵנַן כְּבוֹדָךְ עַל עַם קְדֻשְׁךָ לְדַבֵּר עִמָּם: מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם
הַשְּׁמַעְתָּם קוֹלְךָ וְנִגְלִיתָ עֲלֵיהֶם בְּעַרְפְּלֵי טָהָר: גַּם כָּל־הָעוֹלָם כִּלּוֹ
חַל מִפְּנֵיךָ וּבְרִיּוֹת בְּרֵאשִׁית חֲרָדוֹ מִמֶּךָ בְּהַגְלוֹתָךְ מִלְּפָנָי עַל הַר
סִינַי לְלַמֵּד לְעַמְּךָ תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת וּתְשַׁמְיַעֵם אֶת־הוֹד קוֹלְךָ וְדַבְרוֹת
קְדֻשְׁךָ מְלֵהָבוֹת אֵשׁ: בְּקוֹלוֹת וּבְרָקִים עֲלֵיהֶם נִגְלִיתָ וּבְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר
עֲלֵיהֶם הוֹפְעֶתָ:

כִּפְתּוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ:

וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בְּהִיט הַבַּקָּר וַיְהִי קֹלֹת וּבְרָקִים וְעָנָן כָּבֵד עַל־
הַהָר וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר חָזַק מְאֹד וַיִּיחָרַד כָּל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר בַּמַּחֲנֶה:

וְנֹאמַר: וַיְהִי קוֹל הַשׁוֹפָר הוֹלֵךְ וְחֹזֵק מְאֹד מִשֶּׁה יְדַבֵּר וְהֶאֱלִהֵם
יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּקוֹל:

DERASH. Maimonides speaks of the shofar as an awakener. We want to awaken to a higher awareness that gives us a perspective from which we can see the flaws in the routines of life and how they can be improved. The word shofar can be derived from *leshaper*, fixing or improving. *Shapru ma'asehem*: *Shofarot* encourages us to repair our deeds. The awareness provided by the shofar blast enhances our experience of this reflective day.

Z.S.S.

DERASH. Our ancestors imagined the divine voice as sometimes booming amidst the fire and thunder, sometimes whispering in the desert wind. When they were able to hear the divine command, a place deep inside them trembled, the place that sometimes trembles when we hear the shofar blast.

J.A.S.

And it is said:

“And all the people then beheld the thunder’s voices,
the flaming torches, the sound of the shofar,
and the mountain smoldering with smoke.
And the people were afraid, and wavered,
but they stood and viewed it from afar.”

Exodus 20:15

And in your holy scriptures
the following is written:

“God ascended amid horn-blasts,
THE REDEEMER by the call of the shofar.”

Psalms 47:6

And it is said:

“With trumpets and the shofar’s call,
sound forth before the sovereign one,
THE GOD OF ISRAEL!”

Psalms 98:6

And it is said:

“Blast piercing notes upon the shofar for the New Moon,
for the full moon, for our festive holiday!
For it is Israel’s law,
a statute of the God of Jacob!” ↩

Psalms 81:4-5

COMMENTARY. “The people then beheld the thunder’s voices, the flaming torches, the sound of the shofar.” How can people see the sound of the shofar? By “see” does it mean all sensory perception including listening? What is most important here is the fear felt by the people in light of what they experienced—the apprehension caused by what they apprehended.

D.A.T.

וְנֹאמֵר: וְכָל־הָעַם רְאִים אֶת־הַקּוֹלֹת וְאֶת־הַלְּפִידִם וְאֵת קוֹל הַשּׁוֹפָר
וְאֶת־הָהָר עֲשֵׂן וַיֵּרָא הָעַם וַיִּנְעוּ וַיַּעֲמְדוּ מֵרַחֵק:

וַיְדַבְּרֵי קְדֹשֶׁף כְּתוֹב יֵאמֹר:
עֲלֵה אֱלֹהִים בְּתִרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר:

וְנֹאמֵר: בְּחִצְצוֹת וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר הָרִיעוּ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוָה:

וְנֹאמֵר: תִּקְעוּ בַחֲדָשׁ שׁוֹפָר בְּפֶסַח לְיוֹם חֲגִלְנוּ כִּי חָק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא
מִשְׁפָּט יֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב: ←

COMMENTARY. Consider the word שופר /shofar. Its letters also spell the world *shefer* /beauty. Reorder those letters, and you have the word *refresh* /mud. We blow through the shofar's narrow end, but the sound comes out the broad end. The soul of each person is like a shofar: each of us has a capacity for broadmindedness and courage, and for narrow-mindedness and cowardice. Our task in doing *teshuvah* /repentance, as in blowing the shofar, is to move from narrowness towards broadness, from our earthly mire toward divine beauty. Each of us is both mud and spirit—lowly creatures of the earth and children of the Most High. The shofar sounds rise upward, challenging us to follow. S.D.R.

And by your servants' hands, the prophets,
the following is written:
"All you who dwell upon the globe,
all the earth's inhabitants,
when the signal has been raised upon the mountaintops,
behold, and listen to the shofar's piercing call!"

Isaiah 18:3

And it is said:

"And it shall happen on that day,
upon the sounding of the great shofar,
that all lost souls throughout Assyria,
and all forlorn throughout the land of Egypt,
shall bow down to THE REDEEMING ONE,
upon the holy mountain of Jerusalem!"

Isaiah 27:13

And it is said:

"And THE INEFFABLE shall then be seen by you,
God's arrow shall go forth like lightning.
The sovereign God, emerging
with the shofar's piercing call,
shall tread the storms of Yemen,
THE CREATOR of all beings
shielding you from harm!"

Zechariah 9:14-15

So may you shield your people Israel,
with your everlasting peace!

Our God, our ancients' God,
sound the great shofar for our freedom. ↩

וְעַל יְדֵי עֲבָדָיךָ הַנְּכִיָּאִים כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:
כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּבְלֶה וְשֹׁכְנֵי אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן־נִסּוּ הָרִים תִּרְאוּ וְכִתְּלֶע שׁוֹפָר
תִּשְׁמָעוּ:

וְנֹאמֵר: וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל וּכְאוּ הָאֲבָדִים בְּאֶרֶץ
אֲשׁוּר וְהַנְּדָחִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם וְהַשְׁתַּחֲוִי לַיהוָה בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ
בִּירוּשָׁלָּיִם:

וְנֹאמֵר: וַיְהוֶה עֲלֵיהֶם יִרְאָה וַיֵּצֵא כִּכְרֶק חֲצוֹ וְאֲדָנִי יְהוָה בְּשׁוֹפָר
יִתְקַע וְהִלֵּךְ בְּסַעֲרוֹת תִּימָן: יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת יִגַּן עֲלֵיהֶם:

כִּן תִּגַּן עַל עַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׁלּוֹמְךָ:

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֱמוּנֵינוּ תִקַּע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל לְחִירוֹתֵנוּ:

COMMENTARY. God is sovereign. This means that nothing else, no political system, no authority figure, no flesh and blood monarch can ultimately claim one's allegiance. God as ruler is a great motivator for radical challenging of the political status quo. The metaphor allows us to realize that even the most powerful system, law, ruler, or institution is not absolute.

S.P.W.

הַלְלוּ יְהוָה

הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקֹדֶשׁוֹ הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקְיעַ עֲזוֹ:

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרֹתָיו הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גְּדָלוֹ:

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר:

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֶף וּמַחֲוֹל הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעָגָב:

הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי-שָׁמַע הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה:

כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה הַלְלוּ יְהוָה:



כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְהַלֵּל יְהוָה

Halleluyah halelu el be**ko**dsho. Hale**lu**hu bir**ki**'a uzo.

Hale**lu**hu vigvurotav. Hale**lu**hu kerov gudlo.

Hale**lu**hu beteka shofar.

Hale**lu**hu benevel ve**hi**nor.

Hale**lu**hu betof uma**ho**l.

Hale**lu**hu beminim ve'ugav.

Hale**lu**hu betziltzeley **sha**ma.

Hale**lu**hu betziltzeley teru'ah.

Kol haneshamah te**ha**lel yah. Halleluyah.

Hallelu/Yah!

Call out to Yah in Heaven's holy place!

Boom out to Yah across the firmament!

Shout out for Yah, for all God's mighty deeds!

Cry out for Yah, as loud as God is great!

Blast out for Yah with piercing shofar note!

Pluck out for Yah with lute and violin!

Throb out for Yah with drum and writhing dance!

Sing out for Yah with strings and husky flute!

Ring out for Yah with cymbals that resound!

Clang out for Yah with cymbals that rebound!

Let every living thing Yah's praises sing, Hallelu/Yah!

SHOFAROT READING 1



For untold generations, our ancestors listened as we do at this season to the sound of the shofar. What did they hear in its piercing tones? What solemn truth did they detect in its melodies, that stirred them to improve the world? What does it say to us, who stand between two years, groping for a light to guide us?

Tekiyah! Awake! Awake! The shofar calls. Let not the torpor of habit dull your minds to the heroism of humanity, human yearnings and aspirations! Let us heed the *tekiyah* of the shofar, and rouse ourselves from our thoughtlessness, lest we waste our lives in the search for wealth that avails not, and pleasures in which there is no peace.

Shevarim! Hear the accents of the *shevarim*, the broken refrain, the hesitant melody which echoes the sighing and weeping of an unhappy humanity.

Many who might be alive today moulder on battlefields, vain sacrifices, forgotten by all except those hearts that will never be joyous again for want of them. Many who love sunlight and cleanliness must dwell in the foul darkness of hovels.

Many who toil faithfully go hungry for want of bread and naked for lack of clothing. Many who could be strong are frail in body because of hardship, twisted in limb because of cruelty of their fellows.

Let us heed the *shevarim* of the shofar. Let us open our ears to the cry of suffering humanity, our hearts to compassion and love. ↩

Have we heard the tragic wail of pain-racked bodies and bitter hearts? And are our souls sad? Then listen now to the trumpet-blast of the *teruah*, the call to battle.

These evils need not be. Give of your bread to those who hunger, and of your strength to those who fail; give of your energies to justice and truth; then will the evils that oppress humanity pass away. In our hearts, and in our minds, we hold the means whereby these scourges can be banished from the earth forever.

Milton Steinberg (Adapted)

SHOFAROT READING 2



Beat! beat! drums—blow! bugles! blow!
Through the windows—through doors—burst like a ruthless
force,
Into the solemn place, and scatter the congregation,
Into the school where the scholar is studying;
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must he have
now with his bride,
Nor the peaceful farmer any place, ploughing the field or
gathering the grain,
So fierce you whirr and pound you drums—so shrill you bugles
blow,

Beat! beat! drums—blow! bugles! blow!
Over the traffic of cities—over the rumble of wheels in the
streets;
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? No
sleepers must sleep in those beds,
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or speculators—
would they continue?
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to sing?
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before the
judge? ↪

Then rattle quicker, heavier drums—you bugles wilder blow.
Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation,
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or prayer,
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie awaiting
the hearses,
So strong you thump O terrible drums—so loud you bugles
blow.

Walt Whitman (Adapted)

SHOFAROT READING 3



Connections are made slowly, sometimes they grow
underground.
You cannot tell always by looking what is happening.
More than half a tree is spread out in the soil under your feet.
Penetrate quietly as the earthworm that blows no trumpet.
Fight persistently as the creeper that brings down the tree.
Spread like the squash plant that overruns the garden.
Gnaw in the dark and use the sun to make sugar.
Weave real connections, create real nodes, build real houses.
Live a life you can endure: make love that is loving.
Keep a tangling and interweaving and taking more in,
a thicket and bramble wilderness to the outside but to us
interconnected with rabbit runs and burrows and lairs.
Live as if you liked yourself, and it may happen:
reach out, keep reaching out, keep bringing in.
This is how we are going to live for a long time: not always,
for every gardener knows that after the digging, after the
planting,
after the long season of tending and growth, the harvest comes.

Marge Piercy

Raise up the banner for the gathering-in of those in exile,
and bring near to you all those dispersed among the nations.
Let all our scattered people, as if by miracle,
be reunited from the earth's remotest lands,
and bringing us forth to Zion, to your City,
to Jerusalem, rejoicing where your presence
comes to rest. For there our ancestors
made offerings to you, their gifts
of reconciliation.

As is written in your Torah:

“Upon the day of your rejoicing, your appointed times,...
on your New Moons,
you shall sound a piercing note on trumpets,
you shall make memorial celebration
in the presence of your God,
I am THE FOUNT OF LIFE, your God!”

For you are the one who listens to the shofar's call
and hearkens to its blast,
and there is none like you.

We rise for the sounding of the shofar.

Blessed are you, ALMIGHTY ONE,
who listens mercifully to your people Israel's call.

May what our lips express
be pleasing in your presence,
God exalted and sublime!
You who discern and listen,
you who keep watch, and hearken
to our shofar blast,
may you receive with mercy and with favor
this arrangement of our holy Scripture's
verses of the shofar's call.

We are seated.

וביום...אלהיכם / Upon...God! (Numbers 10:10).

וְשֵׂא נֶס לְקַבֵּץ גְּלִיּוֹתֵינוּ וְקָרַב פְּזוּרֵינוּ מִבֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וּנְפוּצוֹתֵינוּ בְּנֶס
מִיְרֻכְתֵי-אֶרֶץ: וְהֵבִיאֵנוּ לְצִיּוֹן עִירָךְ בְּרִנָּה וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם בֵּית מִקְדָּשְׁךָ
בְּשִׂמְחַת עוֹלָם שְׂשֵׁם עָשׂוּ אַבּוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת-עוֹלוֹתֵיהֶם
וְאֶת-זִבְחֵי שְׁלֵמֵיהֶם: וְכֵן כָּתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ:

וּבַיּוֹם שִׂמְחַתְכֶם וּבְמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם וּבְרֵאשֵׁי חֳדָשְׁכֶם וּתְקַעְתֶּם בְּחֻצְרוֹת
וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן לְפָנַי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ קוֹל שׁוֹפָר וּמְאֲזִין תְּרוּעָה וְאִין דְּוָמָה לָךְ: בְּרוּךְ
אַתָּה יְהוָה שׁוֹמֵעַ קוֹל תְּרוּעַת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמִים:

We rise.

Tekiyah Teruah Tekiyah תְּקִיעָה תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה

Tekiyah Teruah Tekiyah תְּקִיעָה תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה

Tekiyah Teruah Tekiyah (gedolah) (גְּדוֹלָה) תְּקִיעָה תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה

אֲרָשֶׁת שְׂפָתֵינוּ יַעֲרֹב לְפָנֶיךָ אֵל רָם וְנִשָּׂא מִבֵּין וּמְאֲזִין מִבֵּית
וּמִקְשִׁיב לְקוֹל תְּקִיעָתֵנוּ וּתְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרַצּוֹן סֹדֵר שׁוֹפְרוֹתֵינוּ:

Areshet sefateynu ye'erav lefaneha el ram venisa mevin uma'azin
mabit umakshiv lekol tekiyatenu utekabel berahamim uveratzon
seder shofroteynu.

We are seated.

לְצִיּוֹן / bringing us forth to Zion; not only to Eretz Yisrael. In the
imagery of the classical prophets, *Zion* is a symbolic term which connotes
the Jewish people settled in safety in their homeland in a world without
war. We pray to be “restored” not only as residents of our ancestral
homeland, but as citizens of a planet of peace. R.H.

NOTE. The *tekiyah gedolah*, the extra-long blast at the end of the day’s
shofar blowing, sometimes occurs here, unless it is the custom of the
community to blow the shofar as part of *Kaddish Titkabal*, page 1196.

INTERPRETIVE HAYOM HARAT OLAM

Have you ever seen
anything
in your life
more wonderful

than the way the sun,
every evening,
relaxed and easy,
floats toward the horizon

and into the clouds or the hills,
or the ruffled sea,
and is gone—
and how it slides again

out of the blackness
every morning,
on the other side of the world,
like a red flower

streaming upward on its heavenly oils,
say, on a morning in early summer,
at its perfect imperial distance—
and have you ever felt for anything

such wild love—
do you think there is anywhere, in any language,
a word billowing enough
for the pleasure
that fills you
as the sun
reaches out,
as it warms you—

(Continued on the facing page)

as you stand there,
empty-handed—
or have you too
turned from this world—

or have you too
gone crazy
for power,
for things?

Mary Oliver

הַיּוֹם הַרְתָּ עוֹלָם

הַיּוֹם יֵאָזֵן כָּל יְצוּרֵי עוֹלָמִים לְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר קוֹל קוֹרָא לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם
בְּמַלְכוּת שְׂדֵי קוֹל הוֹלֵךְ וְחֹזֵק מְאֹד וְלָנוּ לְדַבֵּר וּלְעֲשׂוֹת וְהַאֲלֵהֵם
יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּקוֹל אִים וְקָדוֹשׁ:

This is the birthday of the world!
Today, all beings of the cosmos
listen to the shofar's call.
Its voice proclaims the world's repair,
through sovereignty of THE ALMIGHTY ONE—
a voice that grows in strength as it proceeds.
All we need do is speak and act,
and God will answer us,
a voice awesome and holy.

Communities that conclude with the final blessings of the Amidah continue on the following page. Others continue with Kaddish Titkabal (page 1196), Aleynu (page 1201), Psalm 27 (page 1217), or Mourner's Kaddish (page 1215).

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

THEMES: AKEDAH

This page is inserted to ensure matching left-right pages
when viewing in two page display.

The real hero of the sacrifice was the ram
who knew nothing of the plot among the others.
He sort of volunteered
to die in Isaac's place.

I want to sing a song in his memory—
of curly wool, of the human eyes,
of the horns, so still in his living head—
and they turned them into trumpets
after the kill
to sound their war-cry
to sound their crude joy.

I like to see the last scene
as a photo in a glossy fashion magazine
the young man, tan and pampered
in his designer suit,
and the angel by his side in a
long silk receiving gown,
and both of them empty-eyed,
glancing at two empty places.

And behind them, as a colorful background, the ram
caught in a thicket before the kill,
and the thicket his last friend.

The angel went home,
Isaac went home,
and Abraham and God went home,

But the real hero of the sacrifice
is the ram.

Yehuda Amichai

Inheritance

The ram came last.
And Abraham did not know
that it answered the question
that had come first
in the sunset of his life.

When he raised his white head
he saw he was not dreaming;
when he saw the angel
the knife dropped from his hand.

The boy who was unbound
saw the back of his father.

Isaac, it is told, was not sacrificed.
He had a long life, a good life,
until his eyes went dark.

But that hour
he bequeathed to his descendants
still to be born
a knife
in the heart.

Haim Guri

Yitzhak

Toward morning, the sun took a walk in the forest,
together with me, and with Abba,
with my right hand in his left.

Like lightning, a knife was flashing through the trees,
and I was struck with fear at my eyes' terror
at the blood upon the leaves.

Abba, Abba, hurry up and save Yitzhak,
so no one will be missing from the noonday feast.

It's I who am the slaughtered one, my son,
my blood already on the leaves.
And Abba's voice was stifled,
and his face was white.

And I wanted to cry out, I writhed not to believe,
ripping my eyes open,
and I awoke,
my right hand drained of blood.

Amir Gilboa

יִצְחָק

לפְּנוֹת בְּקֹר טִילָה שְׁמֶשׁ בְּחוּף הַיַּעַר
יַחַד עָמִי וְעַם אָבִא
וַיְמִינִי בְּשִׂמְאֱלוֹ.

כְּבָרְק לְהִבֵּה מְאֻכָּלֶת בֵּין הָעֵצִים.
וְאֲנִי יָרָא כָּל־כָּךְ אֶת פֶּחַד עֵינַי מוֹל דָּם עַל הָעֲלִים.

אָבִא אָבִא מֵהָר וְהִצִּילָה אֶת יִצְחָק
וְלֹא יָחִסֵּר אִישׁ בְּסַעֲדַת הַצְּהָרִים.

זֶה אֲנִי הַנִּשְׁחָט, בְּנִי.
וּכְבָּר דְּמִי עַל הָעֲלִים.
וְאָבִא נִסְתַּם קוֹלוֹ.
וּפְנֵיו חִוְרִים.

וְרָצִיתִי לְצַעֵק, מִפְּרֹפֵר לֹא לְהֶאֱמִין
וְקוֹרֵעַ הָעֵינַיִם.
וְנִתְעוֹרְרִתִּי.

וְאֶזְלַת־דָּם הִיָּתָה יַד יָמִין

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

THEMES: WELCOMING CHILDREN

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when viewing in two page display.

A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

We pray for the children who put chocolate fingers on everything, who love to be tickled, who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants, who eat candy before supper and who can never find their shoes in the morning. And we also pray for those who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire, who have never bounded down the street in a new pair of shoes, and who are born in places that we would not be caught dead in and that they will be.

We pray for the children who give us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions, who sleep with their dogs and who bury their goldfish, who hug us so tightly and who forget their lunch money, who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink, who watch their fathers shave, and who slurp their soup. And we also pray for those who will never get dessert, who watch their fathers suffer, who cannot find any bread to steal, who do not have any rooms to clean up, whose pictures are on milk cartons instead of on dressers, and whose monsters are real.

We pray for the children who spend all of their allowance by Tuesday, who pick at their food, who love ghost stories, who shove dirty clothes under the bed and who never rinse the bathtub, who love visits from the tooth fairy, even after they find out who it really is, who do not like to be kissed in front of the school bus, and who squirm during services.

And we also pray for those children whose nightmares occur in the daytime, who live in the gunsights of their brothers and sisters, who will eat anything, who have never seen a dentist, who are not spoiled by anyone, who go to bed hungry and wake up hungry, whose bodies consume themselves, who live and move and have no address. We pray for those who will grab the hand of anyone kind enough to offer it, and for those who find no hand to grab.

For all these children, we pray today, for they are all so precious.

Ina J. Hughes (Adapted)

ON ROSH HASHANAH: WELCOMING THE NEWBORN

Parents who have welcomed children into their homes are invited with them to the Bimah.

Reader: When the people of Israel stood at Mount Sinai ready to receive the Torah, God said to them, “Bring me good securities to guarantee that you will keep my Way, and then I will give Torah to you.” They said, “Our ancestors are our securities.” God said, “I have faults to find with your ancestors...” They said, “Our prophets will be our securities.” God said, “I have faults to find with your prophets....” They said, “Our children will be our securities.” And God replied, “Indeed, they are good securities. For their sake will I give you my Torah.” Song of Songs Rabbah 1:4

Congregation: For the sake of the children, for the sake of the unfolding was Torah given to Israel. Let us welcome the newborn of our people and the children who have come into our midst this year, bringing special joy. Let us welcome the children, that they might become our guarantors, reminding us that we receive Torah only to teach Torah. And that we teach Torah only when we do Torah: here, now and always.

Parents: We are humbled by this moment. Through our love, we raise this child in love. The mystery of beginnings is with us, and we acknowledge its presence.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם שהתלנו וקיימנו והגייענו לזמן הזה:

Blessed is the FOUNTAIN OF BEING whose power enlivens us, sustains us, and enables us to reach this moment of joy.

Reader: There is grace in every dawn, loveliness in every fresh morning. We will endure, we will prevail—we the children of Hope, children of the One who crowds the heavens with stars, endows the earth with glory, and fills the mind with wonder!

Chaim Stern (Adapted)

Parents and children are seated.