

# Yom Kippur *Musaf*

*Avodah* excerpts



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## AVODAH / SERVICE

For seven days preceding Yom Kippur, they set apart the High Priest from his household, to reside amid the Temple chambers, while appointing in his place another priest to carry out his ordinary priestly duties. This was to protect him from all inadvertent acts or contact that might render him impure, and thus invalidate him from performing the atonement ritual.

They provided him elders from the Court of Law, who read before him from the daily study portion. They would say to him: “Esteemed High Priest! Please read aloud yourself—lest there are things that you may have forgotten, or have never learned!”

And on the morning of the day preceding Yom Kippur, they stood him at the Eastern Gate, and passed before him cattle, rams, and sheep, that he might learn to recognize them, and become familiar with the details of the service.

The elders of the Court of Law would turn him over to the elders of the priesthood, who would bring him up into the chamber of the priestly clan of Avtinas, where they would admonish him before they took their leave. They said to him: “Esteemed High Priest! We are emissaries of the Court of Law, and you, our representative—and so, in turn, an emissary of the Court of Law, as well. ↪

שְׁבַעַת יָמִים קָדָם יוֹם־הַכַּפּוּרִים מְפָרִישִׁין כֹּהֵן־גָּדוֹל מִבֵּיתוֹ  
לְלִשְׁכַּת פְּלִהָדָרִין וּמִתְקִינִין לוֹ כֹּהֵן אַחַר תַּחֲתִיו שֶׁמָּא יֵאָרַע בּוֹ  
פְּסוּל:

מָסְרוּ לוֹ זִקְנִים מְזֻקְנֵי בֵּית־דִּין וְקוֹרִין לְפָנָיו בְּסֹדֵר הַיּוֹם וְאוֹמְרִים  
לוֹ אִישִׁי כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל קָרָא אֶתָּה בְּפִיד שֶׁמָּא שְׁכַחַת אוֹ שֶׁמָּא לֹא  
לְמַדַּת:

עָרַב יוֹם־הַכַּפּוּרִים שְׁחָרִית מְעַמְדִין אוֹתוֹ בְּשַׁעַר הַמְּזֻרַח וּמַעְבִּירִין  
לְפָנָיו פָּרִים וְאֵילִים וְכִבְשִׁים כְּדִי שְׁיֵהָא מִפִּיר וְרָגִיל בְּעִבּוּדָּה:  
מָסְרוּהוּ זִקְנֵי בֵּית־דִּין לְזֻקְנֵי כֹהֵנָה וְהַעֲלוּהוּ לַעֲלִית בֵּית־אֲבָטִינָס  
וְהַשְׁבִּיעוּהוּ וּנְפֹטְרוּ וְהִלְכוּ לָהֶם: וְאָמְרוּ לוֹ אִישִׁי כֹּהֵן־גָּדוֹל אָנוּ  
שְׁלוּחֵי בֵּית־דִּין וְאַתָּה שְׁלִיחָנוּ וּשְׁלִיחַ בֵּית־דִּין: ←

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COMMENTARY. Stratification and cooperation, complexity and complementarity, authority and humility: these and more are exemplified in the rules of priestly preparation for and execution of the rites of Yom Kippur.

The High Priest reviews the procedures for the forthcoming Temple ceremonies first under the tutelage of the Rabbinic Elders, then of the Priestly Elders. He assumes particular optional responsibilities in light of his particular endowments and abilities; if not so gifted, others in the community assume and discharge those responsibilities. Regularly addressed as *אִישִׁי כֹהֵן גָּדוֹל*, Esteemed High Priest, and accorded full respect and honor, the High Priest is nonetheless subject to scrutiny and critical, if sympathetic, assessment. A full range of confessions for self, for family, and for community adds further to the sense of fitting humility amidst ceremonial splendor.

In short, portrayed here in lively and sometimes touching detail is a well functioning, harmonious hierarchy, with powers and responsibilities broadly distributed. At the same time, traditional rules of procedure, God's mandate, set a standard for all who serve on behalf of the community.

E.G.

And we implore you, by the name of One  
whose name was made to dwell upon this House,  
that you not change a single thing from all  
we have declared to you!”

And he would turn aside and weep,  
and they would turn aside and weep.

If he was a sage, he would engage in study,  
or, if not, disciples of the sages  
studied in his presence.

If he was accustomed to reciting, he would read aloud.  
If not, they would recite before him.

And they would bring the High Priest  
down to the ritual bath-house.

Five immersions, ten sanctifications,  
would the High Priest undergo,  
and he would sanctify the day itself.

A linen sheet divided between him  
and the assembled people.

The High Priest would descend, immerse himself,  
ascend, and dry himself, and they would bring to him  
white garments, which he would put on. ↩

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COMMENTARY. “If he was a sage, etc.” Rabbinic lore about the priestly ritual of Yom Kippur took for granted that the priests, whose office was hereditary, often did not possess the elaborate knowledge of Israel’s traditions that rabbinic sages had come to prize. This situation often made the sages into tutors of the priests, and principal guardians of the tradition that would eventually survive the Temple and its hierarchy. Once the Temple and its ongoing life were translated into a mental terrain (a transformation that became the basis of all Talmudic culture and instruction in future centuries), the Temple would seem to have become secondary in importance—but, paradoxically, its passing was mourned all the more fervently by the sages, and yearning for its restoration would never cease.

J.R.

מִשְׁבִּיעִים אָנוּ עֲלֶיךָ בְּמֵי שֶׁשָּׁפַן שְׁמוֹ בְּבַיִת הַזֶּה שְׁלֹא תִשָּׁנָה דָּבָר  
 מִכָּל מַה שְּׂאֲמַרְנוּ לְךָ: הוּא פוֹרֵשׁ וּבּוֹכָה וְהֵם פּוֹרְשִׁים וּבּוֹכִים: אִם  
 הִיָּה חָכֵם דּוֹרֵשׁ וְאִם לֹא תִלְמִידֵי־חֲכָמִים דּוֹרְשִׁים לְפָנָיו וְאִם רָגִיל  
 לְקִרּוֹת קוֹרָא וְאִם לֹא קוֹרֵין לְפָנָיו:  
 הוֹרִידוּ כְהֵן־גְּדוּל לְבֵית־הַטְּבִילָה חֲמֵשׁ טְבִילוֹת וְעֲשֶׂרָה קְדוּשִׁים  
 טוֹבֵל כְּהֵן־גְּדוּל וּמְקַדֵּשׁ בּוֹ בַיּוֹם — פָּרְסוּ סֵדִין שֶׁל בּוֹץ בֵּינוּ  
 לְבֵין הָעָם: יֵרֵד וְטָבַל: עֲלֶה וְנִסְתַּפַּג: וְהִבְיֵאוּ לוֹ בְּגָדֵי לְבָן וְלָבֵשׁ: ←

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COMMENTARY. When the Second Temple was destroyed in the year 70, the rabbis replaced each of the sacrifice cycles with an Amidah. They made similar substitutions for all the other services of the year. While this sacrifice of the heart in the form of prayer substituted for the physical sacrifices of the Temple, during each service the rabbis also included an actual description of the sacrifice of the day. This *Avodah* / Sacrifice service existed in several traditional forms. One of the most popular was based on the section of the Mishnah dedicated to Yom Kippur. Over the last few generations this recitation has increasingly fallen into disuse because it substantially repeats the traditional Torah portion for Yom Kippur and because most Jews do not look forward to a time when the sacrifices will be reinstated.

Our version of the *Avodah* contains several major innovations. It is interspersed with the rest of the *Musaf* service. It places the worshipper in the role of the High Priest, and it leads each of us through forgiveness of self and family to community and the Jewish people and finally to the world. This structure reflects the critical importance of individual *teshuvah* and of healing self, family, people, and humanity. Ritual reconnection to God is only authentic if it changes our this-worldly relations as well.

Lee Friedlander/D.A.T./M.B.K.

NOTE. The liturgical use here of *Mishnah Yoma* is highly abbreviated as it has evolved over centuries of use. Often the text is interrupted in the middle of a mishnah and continues with a section from another mishnah, sometimes even another chapter.

M.B.K.

His sacrificial bull was standing in the space  
between the hallway and the altar.

The High Priest would place his hands upon it  
and confess: "Upon this holy day, I, too, have come  
into your Temple, which is in your House of Prayer,  
for, as the High Priests of a former time  
would make confession, and beseech your mercy  
and atonement, in your inner holy chamber,  
so now do I confess before you."

And thus would he declare:

"O Holy One,  
I have sinned, I have done wrong, and I have gone astray,  
before you, I and my household!  
I beseech you, Holy One, please grant atonement  
for the sins, the wrongful acts, and the transgressions  
I have done before you, I and my household."

And thus do we declare:

"O Holy One, please grant atonement for the sins,  
the wrongdoing and the transgressions  
that the House of Israel have done before you,  
they, and all who dwell on earth.  
And bring us all to the world's repair through divine rule,  
as it is written in the Torah of your servant Moses:  
'For on this day, atonement shall be made for you,  
to make you clean from all your wrongdoings.  
Before THE FOUNT OF MERCY, you shall all be clean!'"

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כי...יהיה / 'For...clean!' (Leviticus 16:30).

וּפְרוּ הָיָה עוֹמֵד בֵּין הָאוֹלָם וְלַמְזֻבָּח: וְסוֹמֵךְ שְׁתֵּי יָדָיו עָלָיו  
וּמִתּוֹדָה: בְּיוֹם קָדוֹשׁ זֶה גַם אֲנִי בָּא אֶל הַיְכָלְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית  
תְּפִלָּתְךָ: וּכְשֶׁם שֶׁהִכְהֵן הַגְּדוֹל הָיָה מִתּוֹדָה וּמִבְּקָשׁ מְחִילָה וְכַפָּרָה  
בְּדַבֵּיר קָדְשְׁךָ כֵּן גַם אֲנִי מִתּוֹדָה לְפָנֶיךָ לֵאמֹר:

וְכַךְ הָיָה אוֹמֵר אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם עוֹיְתִי פִשְׁעֵתִי חֲטָאתִי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי:  
אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם כִּפְרָנָא לְעֹנוֹת וּלְפִשְׁעִים וְלַחֲטָאִים שְׁעוֹתִי וְשִׁפְשָׁעֵתִי  
וְשַׁחֲטָאתִי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי:

וְכַךְ אֲנִי אוֹמְרִים: אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם כִּפְרָנָא לַחֲטָאִים וְלְעֹנוֹת וּלְפִשְׁעִים  
שְׁחָטָאוֹ וְשַׁעוֹ וְשִׁפְשָׁעוֹ לְפָנֶיךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכֹל יוֹשְׁבֵי תְּהִלָּה  
וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְחַקְנוּ עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׁדֵי כְּפָתוֹב בְּתוֹרְתְךָ כִּי בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה  
יִכַּפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטַהַר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנֶי יְהוָה....

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NOTE. And thus we say. Michael Strassfeld added this phrase to the text.

KAVANAH. Since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, prayer has taken the place of sacrifice, but that does not imply that sacrifice was abolished when the sacrificial rite went out of existence. Prayer is not a substitute for sacrifice. Prayer *is* sacrifice. What has changed is the substance of sacrifice: the self took the place of the thing. The spirit is the same.

“Accept the offerings of praise, Adonay,” says the Psalmist (119:108). “Let my prayer be counted as incense before You, and the lifting of my hands as an evening sacrifice” (141:12). In moments of prayer we try to surrender our vanities, to burn our insolence, to abandon bias, cant, envy. We lay all our forces before God.

The word is but an altar. We do not sacrifice. We are the sacrifice.

Prayer is a hazard, a venture of peril. Every person who prays is a *kohen* at the greatest of all temples. The whole universe is the temple. A.G.



And the priests,  
and all the people standing in the courtyard,  
when they would hear the glorious and awesome Name of God  
uttered aloud distinctly from the High Priest's mouth,  
in holiness and purity,  
would prostrate themselves, and bow down in acknowledgement,  
and touch their faces to the ground, and say:  
"Blessed are the glorious Name and majesty of God,  
to all eternity!"

And the High Priest, in turn,  
would thus complete the utterance of the Name  
in sacred devotion, facing those who offered blessing,  
and declare to them: "You shall be clean!"

And you God, in your goodness, stir up your compassion  
and forgive this people serving you.



Strange is our situation here upon earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that we are here for the sake of each other, above all, for those upon whose smile and well-being our own happiness depends, and also for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of others, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received and am still receiving.

Albert Einstein (Adapted)

וְהַפְּהַנְיִים וְהָעַם הָעוֹמְדִים בְּעֶזְרָה כְּשֶׁהָיוּ שׁוֹמְעִים אֶת־הַשֵּׁם הַנִּכְבָּד  
וְהַנּוֹרָא מִכָּרֶשׁ יוֹצֵא מִפִּי כֹהֵן גָּדוֹל בְּקִדְשָׁהּ וּבִטְהָרָה הָיוּ כּוֹרְעִים  
וּמְשַׁתְּחָוִים וּמוֹדִים וְנוֹפְלִים עַל פְּנֵיהֶם וְאוֹמְרִים: בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד  
מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: וְאִךּ הוּא הָיָה מִתְכַּנֵּן לְגַמֵּר אֶת־הַשֵּׁם כְּנֹגֵד  
הַמְּבָרְכִים וְאוֹמֵר לָהֶם: תִּטְהָרוּ: וְאַתָּה בְּטוֹבָךְ מְעוֹרֵר רַחֲמֶיךָ  
וְסוֹלֵחַ לְאִישׁ חֲסִידֶךָ:



In the evening when we were alone together my mother would make me sit on her footstool, and while her deft fingers manipulated the knitting needles she would gaze into my eyes as if she tried to absorb enough of me to last her for the coming months of absence. “You will write us, dear?” she kept asking continually. “And if I should die when you are gone, you will remember me in your prayers.”

At the moment of departure [from Eastern Europe to America], when the train drew into the station, she lost control of her feelings. As she embraced me, her sobs became violent, and father had to separate us. There was a despair in her way of clinging to me which I could not then understand. I understand it now. I never saw her again.

Marcus Ravage

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KAVANAH. One of the original intents of the *Avodah* service was to purify the Holy of Holies from pollution—from a *hilul hashem*—a hole in God’s name. Every time we commit a sin, we make a hole in the Name. (One definition of sin is making a tear in the Divine weave.) By the end of the year, God’s name—our connection to God—is riddled with holes. A new Name is needed. God enters into time to create the possibility of a new name for the next year. This offers us the possibility of creating our own root metaphor for how we interface with God this year. Z.S.S.

Once there were two brothers. One had a wife and children, the other did not. They lived together in one house—happy, quiet, and satisfied with the portions which they inherited from their father. Together they worked the fields with the sweat of their brows.

And the harvest came. The brothers bound their sheaves and brought them to the threshing floor. There they divided the crops of the field in two parts equally between them, and left them.

That night, the brother who had no family lay on his bed and thought: I am alone...but my brother has a wife and children. Why should my share be equal to his? And he rose from his bed, went stealthily out into the threshing floor, took from the stalks of his own sheaf, and added them to the sheaf of his brother.

That same night, the other brother turned to his wife and said: "It is not right that we have divided the crop into two equal parts, one for me and one for my brother. He is alone and has no other joy or happiness, only the yield of the field. Therefore, come with me, my wife, and we will secretly take from our share and add to his." And they did so.

In the morning, the brothers went out into the threshing floor, and they wondered that the sheaves were still equal. Each one decided to investigate. During the night each one rose from his bed to repeat his deed. And they met each other on the threshing floor, each with his sheaves in his arms. Thus the mystery was explained. The brothers embraced, and kissed each other.

And God looked with favor on this threshing floor where the two brothers conceived their good thoughts...and the children of Israel chose it for the site of their Holy Temple.

Retold from *midrash* by Zev Vilnay



אֵלוֹ דְּבָרִים שְׂאָדָם אוֹכֵל פְּרוּתֵיהֶם בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְהַקָּרָן קָיָמָת לֹ  
 לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא: וְאֵלוֹ הֵן כְּבוֹד אָב וְאִם וּגְמִילוּת חֲסָדִים וְהַשְׁפָּמָת  
 בֵּית הַמְדָּרֶשׁ שְׁחִרִית וְעֵרְבִית וְהַכְנָסָת אוֹרְחִים וּבְקוֹר חוֹלִים  
 וְהַכְנָסָת כְּלֵה וּלְוִית הַיָּמָת וְעֵינֵן תְּפִלָּה וְהַבָּאָת שְׁלוֹם בֵּין אָדָם  
 לְחֵבֵרוֹ: וְתִלְמוּד תּוֹרָה כְּנֹגֵד כָּלָם:

These are the things whose fruit  
 one enjoys in this world,  
 and whose principal is stored for us  
 in time to come:  
 the honoring of parents,  
 and bestowing acts of kindness,  
 and arising early to attend the house of study,  
 morning hour and evening hour,  
 and bringing home guests,  
 and visiting the sick,  
 and supporting the bride,  
 and attending to the dead,  
 and devotion in our prayer,  
 and bringing peace between one person and another.  
 And learning Torah  
 corresponds to all of them.

Mishnah Peah 1:1

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COMMENTARY. The opening lines of this mishnah tell us that doing good deeds provides “fruit one enjoys” right away. It makes this tangible by referring to the pleasure of eating. Yet the principal benefit of doing good deeds, “the principal,” remains to be enjoyed later. Here a financial metaphor is used. We benefit from the interest now, but the principal remains to be enjoyed “in time to come.” Originally that was a reference to the World to Come. Our translation gives a more this-worldly interpretation: we take pleasure in doing good deeds now, but they have transformational power for us and our communities that we will be able to feel cumulatively as time goes on.

D.A.T.

## SECOND CONFESSION: FOR OUR PEOPLE

The High Priest would come into the east side of the court, north of the altar.

To his right would stand his highest deputy,  
and to his left, the head of the officiating clan.  
And there were placed two goats,  
and there an urn, which held two lots.

He shook the urn, and drew from it two lots.  
On one was written: "For THE ETERNAL ONE,"  
and on the other one: "For Azazel."

He bound a thread of crimson on the head of the goat that would be sent away,  
and stood it at the place from which it would be sent,  
and he placed the goat that would be slaughtered at its slaughter-site. He then came to a second bull,  
and placed his hands upon it, and confessed:

"As the High Priest, in the past, took upon himself responsibility both toward his household and his fellow priests, so now are we, the people Israel, under obligation to assume responsibility for our mistakes, those that prevail in the society in which we live. We, too, today, lift up our eyes to God on high, on behalf of all our kin, the House of Israel, wherever they may be. Would that each person might return to God, a turning both of body and of spirit, as it is written:

'Turn toward me, that I might turn toward you,  
says THE CREATOR of all beings!'

For then we would be clean,  
and sanctify ourselves by your great Name,  
and become ready to receive your promise.

As it was then, so now: here stands before you  
all the House of Israel,  
who make confession in your presence." ↪

## SECOND CONFESSION: FOR OUR PEOPLE

בָּא לֹו לְמִזְרַח הָעֶזְרָה לְצִפּוֹן הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַסֵּגָן מִיְמִינוֹ וְרֹאשׁ בֵּית־אָב  
מִשְׁמָאלוֹ: וְשֵׁם שְׁנַי שְׁעִירִים וְקִלְפֵי הֵיטָה שֵׁם וּבָה שְׁנַי גּוֹרְלוֹת:  
טָרַף בְּקִלְפֵי וְהֶעֱלָה שְׁנַי גּוֹרְלוֹת: אַחַד כְּתוּב עָלָיו לִיהוּה וְאֶחָד  
כְּתוּב עָלָיו לְעֶזְרָאֵל: קָשָׁר לְשׁוֹן שְׁלֹזְהוּרִית בְּרֹאשׁ שְׁעִיר הַמִּשְׁתַּלַּח  
וְהֶעֱמִידוּ כְּנָגֵד בֵּית־שְׁלוּחֹו וְלִנְשָׁחֻט כְּנָגֵד בֵּית־שְׁחִיטָתוֹ: בָּא לֹו  
אַצֵּל פָּרוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶ וְסוּמֵךְ שְׁתֵּי יָדָיו עָלָיו וּמְתוּדָה:

כְּשֵׁם שְׁבַעְבָּר קִבֵּל הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עַל עֲצָמוֹ אֶת הָאֲחֵרִיּוֹת לְבִנֵי בֵּיתוֹ  
וְלְבִנֵי מַעֲמָדוֹ הַכֹּהֲנִים כִּף אָנּוּ עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל מְחַיִּבִים לְקַבֵּל עַל  
עֲצָמָנוּ אֶת הָאֲחֵרִיּוֹת לְפָגְמִים הַקִּיָּמִים בַּחֲבֵרָה בְּהָ אָנּוּ חַיִּים:

גַּם אָנּוּ הַיּוֹם נִשְׂא עֵינֵינוּ לְאֱלֹהֵי מְרוֹם עַל כָּל אֲחִינוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּאֶשֶׁר הֵם שֵׁם: מִי יִתֵּן וְיִשׁוּבוּ אִישׁ אִישׁ לְעִמּוֹ וְלֵאלֹהֵיו שְׂיִבֵת  
הַגּוֹרֵף וְתִשׁוּבַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ כְּכַתוּב שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי וְאֶשׁוּבָה אֲלֵיכֶם אָמַר יְהוּה  
צְבָאוֹת: אִזּוּ נִשְׁתַּהֵר וְנִתְקַדַּשׁ בְּשִׁמְךָ וְנִהְיָה רְאוּיִים לְקַבֵּל הַבְּטָחָתְךָ  
כְּאִזּוּ כֵן עַתָּה עוֹמְדִים כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמְתוּדִים לְפָנֶיךָ: ←

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COMMENTARY. Yom Kippur is effective because it posits a power that can forgive our sins. The Reconstructionist challenge is retaining that belief while rejecting belief in a capricious supernatural God. Divine forgiveness and healing become accessible to us both internally and through the power of the community seeking forgiveness. M.L./Z.S.S.

KAVANAH. "One who 'slaughters' the evil inclination is as one who has offered a sacrifice on the Temple altar. But to do this, one must know how and what to slaughter."  
Reb Simcha Zissel Ziv

COMMENTARY. Late in the day on Yom Kippur we are tempted to think of a wholesale change in personality. But the real *teshuvah* can only come about through a knowledge of the effective modes of change. Just as the ritual of atonement in the Temple followed precise instructions in order to work, real change requires an understanding of how and what to change. E.M.

שובו...צבאות / Turn...beings! (Zechariah 1:3).

And thus would he declare:

“O Holy One,  
I have sinned, I have done wrong, and I have gone astray,  
before you, I and all your people, the House of Israel.  
I beseech you, Holy One, please grant atonement  
for the sins, the wrongful acts, and the transgressions  
I have done before you, I and my household.”

And thus do we declare:

“O Holy One, please grant atonement for the sins,  
the wrongdoing and the transgressions  
that the House of Israel have done before you,  
they and all who dwell on earth.  
And bring us all to the world’s repair through divine rule,  
as it is written in the Torah:  
‘For on this day, atonement shall be made for you,  
to make you clean from all your wrongdoings.  
Before THE FOUNT OF MERCY, you shall all be clean!’”

And the priests,  
and all the people standing in the courtyard,  
when they would hear the glorious and awesome Name of God  
uttered aloud distinctly from the High Priest’s mouth,  
in holiness and purity,  
would prostrate themselves, and bow down in acknowledgment,  
and touch their faces to the ground, and say:  
“Blessed are the glorious Name and majesty of God,  
to all eternity!”

And the High Priest, in turn,  
would thus complete the utterance of the Name  
in sacred devotion, facing those who offered blessing,  
and declare to them: “You shall be clean!”

And you God, in your goodness, stir up your compassion  
and forgive this people serving you.

וְכַךְ הָיָה אוֹמֵר אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם עֲוִיתִי פִּשְׁעֵתִי חָטָאתִי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנִי וְכָל  
עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל: אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם כְּפָר־נָא לְעֹנֹת וּלְפִשְׁעִים וּלְחַטָּאִים  
שְׁעֵרֵתִי וְשִׁפְשַׁעְתִּי וְשָׁחַטְתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנִי וּבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל:

וְכַךְ אָנוּ אוֹמְרִים אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם כְּפָר־נָא לְחַטָּאִים וּלְעֹנֹת וּלְפִשְׁעִים  
שְׁחָטָאוּ וְשָׁעוּ וְשִׁפְשְׁעוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל יוֹשְׁבֵי תְּבֵל  
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׁדֵי כְּפָתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ כִּי בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה  
יִכְפֹּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי יְהוָה....

וְהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַעַם הָעוֹמְדִים בְּעֶזְרָה כְּשֶׁהָיוּ שׁוֹמְעִים אֶת־הַשֵּׁם הַנִּכְבָּד  
וְהַנּוֹרָא מִפְּרֹשׁ יוֹצֵא מִפִּי כֹהֵן גָּדוֹל בְּקִדְשָׁה וּבְטָהָרָה הָיוּ כּוֹרְעִים  
וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים וְנוֹפְלִים עַל פְּנֵיהֶם וְאוֹמְרִים בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד  
מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: וְאִי הוּא הָיָה מְתַכּוֹן לְגַמֵּר אֶת־הַשֵּׁם כְּנֻגַד  
הַמְּבָרְכִים וְאוֹמֵר לָהֶם תְּטַהְרוּ: וְאַתָּה בְּטוֹבְךָ מְעוֹרֵר רַחֲמֶיךָ  
וְסוֹלֵחַ לְעַם מִשְׁרָתֶיךָ:

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COMMENTARY. God's name had four letters, each of which corresponds to one aspect of reality. The world is a physical, emotional, mental and spiritual reality. Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism, speaks of the four worlds—a physical, an emotional, a mental and a soul world. In each of these four realms of human experience, a Jewish person is called upon to sanctify the name of God. When you make an offering or sacrifice to God, you must be sure, therefore, to do so *בכל מאדך*—with everything you have. It's not enough just to give money or some thing to charity; that's only a material donation. You have to give with feeling and compassion; there has to be a strong desire that informs your act of giving. But that's not enough either. With your compassion there needs to go an intelligent purpose; you need to understand intellectually why it's important to give. But even that won't suffice. Guiding your mental understanding should be an awareness that a Divine Mystery sustains all purposes; behind even the wisest plan lives a sense of holiness, a connection with God. S.D.R.

יהוה...לפני כי ביום.../For on...clean! (Leviticus 16:30).



### THIRD CONFESSION: FOR OUR WORLD

They brought to him the ladle and the fire-pan,  
and he took two handfuls of the incense,  
which he placed into the ladle,  
whether large or small, according to his hand—  
thus was its measurement.

He took the fire-pan in his right hand,  
and the ladle in his left, and he proceeded  
through the Temple, till he came into the space  
between the ark-curtains that separated  
the sanctuary from the Holy of Holies.  
The space between them was a forearm's length.  
He came before the Ark, and placed the fire-pan  
between two linen cloths.

He heaped the incense on the coals,  
and the entire chamber filled with smoke.  
He then would exit by his route of entry,  
and would offer a short prayer in the outer chamber,  
making sure to keep it brief, so as not to frighten  
the assembled Israelites.

He took the sacrificial blood,  
and entered the place he previously had entered,  
and he stood again where he had stood,  
and he sprinkled from the bowl of blood,  
one time above, seven below,  
and counted thus:

One. One and one. One and two. One and three.  
One and four. One and five. One and six. One and seven.

And thus would he declare:

“O, Holy One, they have sinned,  
they have done wrong, and they have gone astray before you—  
these the House of Israel, your people.” ↩

### THIRD CONFESSION: FOR THE WORLD

הוֹצִיאוּ לֹ אֶת־הַכֶּפֶף וְאֶת־הַמַּחֲתָה וְחַפֵּן מְלֵא חֲפָנָיו וְנָתַן לְתוֹךְ  
הַכֶּפֶף: הַגְדוֹל לְפִי גְדוֹלוֹ וְהַקָּטָן לְפִי קָטָנוֹ וְכֹךְ הִיְתָה מִדְתָּה: נֹטֵל  
אֶת־הַמַּחֲתָה בְיַמֵּינוּ וְאֶת־הַכֶּפֶף בְּשִׂמְלֵנוּ: הִזָּה מְהִלָּךְ בְּהִיכֵל עַד  
שְׂמַגְיֵעַ לְבֵין שְׁתֵּי הַפְּרָכוֹת הַמְבַדִּילוֹת בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין קֹדֶשׁ־  
הַקֹּדְשִׁים וּבִינֵיהֶן אִמָּה: הַגִּיעַ לְאֲרוֹן נוֹתֵן אֶת־הַמַּחֲתָה בֵּין שְׁנֵי  
הַבַּדִּים: צָבַר אֶת־הַקְטָרֶת עַל גְּבִי הַגְּחָלִים וְנִתְמַלֵּא כָּל־הַבַּיִת כְּלוֹ  
עֶשֶׂן: יֵצֵא וּכְאִלּוּ בְדֶרֶךְ בֵּית־כְּנִיסָתוֹ וּמִתְפַּלֵּל תְּפִלָּה קְצָרָה בְּבֵית־  
הַחֵיצוֹן וְלֹא הִיָּה מֵאַרְיֵה בְּתַפְלָתוֹ כְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא לְהַבְעִית אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

נֹטֵל אֶת־הַדָּם מִמִּי שֶׁהִיָּה מְמַרְס בּוֹ נִכְנַס לְמָקוֹם שֶׁנִּכְנַס וְעֹמֵד  
בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁעֹמֵד וְהִזָּה מִמָּוֶה אַחַת לְמַעַלָּה וְשֹׁבַע לְמַטָּה וְלֹא הִיָּה  
מִתְכַּוֵּן לְהַזוֹת לֹא לְמַעַלָּה וְלֹא לְמַטָּה אֱלֹא כְּמִצְלִיף: וְכֹךְ הִיָּה  
מוֹנֵה אַחַת: אַחַת וְאַחַת: אַחַת וְשְׁתַּיִם: אַחַת וְשֹׁלֵשׁ: אַחַת וְאַרְבַּע:  
אַחַת וְחֲמִשׁ: אַחַת וְשֵׁשׁ: אַחַת וְשֹׁבַע:

וְכֹךְ הִיָּה אוֹמֵר אָנָּה הֵשֵׁם חָטְאוּ עוֹוֵי פִשְׁעוּ לְפָנֶיךָ עֲמֵךְ בֵּית  
יִשְׂרָאֵל: ←

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COMMENTARY. Clouds and vapors are sometimes unpleasant, undesirable, obscuring that which should be clearly seen. On the other hand, they sometimes shield us from too much sunlight and heat. In this mode, they may also shield from viewing too fully that which cannot or should not be fully seen.

The incense cloud is biblically associated with the mystery of God's Presence, serving as both pointer to and protector of that Presence. Even as God does "appear in the cloud upon the cover" (Leviticus 16:2), we notice that both this Appearance and we, the gazers, are shielded by the incense cloud. Similarly, as the High Priest approaches the Holy of Holies, "he heaped the incense on the coals and the entire chamber filled with smoke."

E.G.

And thus do we declare:

“O, Holy One, please grant atonement for the sins,  
the wrongdoing and the transgressions  
that the House of Israel has done before you,  
they, and all who dwell on earth.

And bring us all to the world’s repair through divine rule,  
as it is written in the Torah of your servant Moses:  
‘For on this day, atonement shall be made for you,  
to make you clean from all your wrongdoings  
before THE FOUNT OF MERCY.’”

And the priests,  
and all the people standing in the courtyard,  
when they would hear the glorious and awesome Name of God  
uttered aloud distinctly from the High Priest’s mouth,  
in holiness and purity,  
would prostrate themselves, and bow down in acknowledgment,  
and touch their faces to the ground, and say:  
“Blessed are the glorious Name and majesty of God,  
to all eternity!”

And the High Priest, in turn,  
would thus complete the utterance of the Name  
in sacred devotion, facing those who offered blessing,  
and declare to them: “You shall be clean!”  
And you, God, in your goodness, stir up your compassion,  
and forgive your world.

The High Priest would pronounce sanctification,  
and immerse himself. They then would bring him  
garments of white, and he would dress,  
and sanctify his hands and feet.  
They brought him his own clothes, and he would put them on,  
and they would then escort him to his house,  
And he made celebration with those close to him,  
upon emerging safely from the holy place.

וְכָךְ אָנוּ אוֹמְרִים אָנָּה הַשֵּׁם כְּפָר־נָא לַחֲטָאִים וְלַעֲוֹנוֹת וְלַפְשָׁעִים  
שְׁחָטָאוּ וְשָׁעֲרוּ וְשָׁפְשָׁעוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכֹל יוֹשְׁבֵי תְּבֵל  
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׁדֵי כְּפָתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ כִּי בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה  
יִכַּפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטַהַר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי יְהוָה:

וְהַפְּהַנִּים וְהָעַם הָעוֹמְדִים בְּעִזְרָה כְּשֶׁהָיוּ שׁוֹמְעִים אֶת־הַשֵּׁם הַנִּכְבָּד  
וְהַנּוֹרָא מִפְּרֵשׁ יוֹצֵא מִפִּי כֹהֵן גָּדוֹל בְּקִדְשָׁהּ וּבְטַהֲרָהּ הָיוּ כּוֹרְעִים  
וּמְשַׁתְּחִוִּים וּמוֹדִים וְנוֹפְלִים עַל פְּנֵיהֶם וְאוֹמְרִים בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד  
מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: וְאַף הוּא הָיָה מְתַבְּנֵן לְגַמֵּר אֶת־הַשֵּׁם כְּנֹגֵד  
הַמְּבַרְכִים וְאוֹמֵר לָהֶם תִּטְהָרוּ: וְאַתָּה בְּטוֹבְךָ מְעוֹרֵר רַחֲמֶיךָ וְסוֹלֵחַ  
לְאִישׁ חַסִּידְךָ:

קִדְשׁ וְטָבֵל: הִבִּיאוּ לוֹ בְּגָדֵי לָבָן וְלִבְשׁ וְקִדְשׁ יָדָיו וְרַגְלָיו: הִבִּיאוּ  
לוֹ בְּגָדֵי עֶצְמוֹ וְלִבְשׁ: וּמְלוֹיֵן אוֹתוֹ עַד בֵּיתוֹ וְיוֹם־טוֹב הָיָה עוֹשֶׂה  
לְאוֹהֲבָיו בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁיֵּצֵא בְּשָׁלוֹם מִן הַקִּדְשׁ:

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DERASH. What is God's holy of holies? Not a shrine in the Temple built of stone and wood. Rather, a sanctuary for compassion, a preserve of kindness, a refuge of devotion in the human heart. S.D.R.

COMMENTARY. As with Moses in the cleft of the rock (Exodus 33:20-23), here, too, the Presence of the Divine must not exceed the human capacity to receive and withstand it. Thus even on this holiest of days, in this holiest of places, the priestly apprehension of the Divine is only partial.

As with them, all the more so with us: we who are finite can never receive the Infinite in its fullness. Yet the assurance of this Presence, the glimpse of this Glory, is as sweet and sustaining to our spirits as is the incense to our nostrils. E.G.

יהוה...כי / For...MERCY (Leviticus 16:30).