

High Holidays 2022

Yom Kippur *Musaf*



RECONSTRUCTING JUDAISM

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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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This *Musaf* service combines into one unit the *Musaf* Amidah that is chanted aloud, the *Avodah* service, and *Eleh Ezkerah*. They are woven together in a new way that emphasizes and enhances the themes of each of them. The confessions of the *Avodah* are placed strategically within the Amidah structure. For a lengthier explanation, see the Introduction, page xvi.

אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק עֲכָשְׂיוּ אֵין לָנוּ לֹא נְבִיא וְלֹא כֹהֵן לֹא קָרְבַּן וְלֹא
מִקְדָּשׁ וְלֹא מִזְבֵּחַ שְׁמֵכַפֵּר עָלֵינוּ וּמִיּוֹם שְׁחָרַב בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ לֹא
נִשְׁתַּיֵּיר בְּיָדֵינוּ אֶלָּא תַפְלָה:

Rabbi Isaac said:

Today, we have no prophet,
and we have no priest,
we have no sacrificial offering,
and we have no sanctuary,
and we have no sacrificial altar
to atone for us.

For since the Temple was destroyed,
we have in hand no other means than prayer.



In ancient days, when our people lived in *Eretz Yisrael*, the Temple in Jerusalem was the symbol of God's presence. Sacrifices were offered there daily on behalf of the entire nation, bearing testimony to Israel's consecration to God.

The Temple has long since been destroyed, yet we remember its place in the life of our people. The form of worship practiced there belongs to a bygone age; still, it continues to awaken solemn thoughts.

Today our people is scattered across many lands. But when we remember the Temple, we feel that we are part of one people, dedicated to the service of God and to God's rule of righteousness.

Our worship is one of prayer and praise. Our ancestors offered their best in the service of God from their meager store of cattle and grain. When we think of their piety, can we be content with a gift of mere words that costs us neither labor nor privation? Shall we not give of our store to the relief of suffering, the healing of sickness, the dispelling of ignorance and error, the righting of wrongs and the strengthening of faith?

Great and holy is the cosmos
of the blessed Holy One,
and the holiest of all lands of the earth,
the Land of Israel,
the holiest of all the cities
of the Land of Israel is Jerusalem,
and holiest of all the places in Jerusalem,
the Temple, and, the holiest place of all,
the sanctuary, Holy of Holies.

There are seventy nations of the world,
and among those most devoted to their holy calling
is the Jewish people.

And the holiest tribe among the tribes of Israel
is the tribe of Levi,
and holiest of all the tribe of Levi are the priests,
the *kohanim*, and, holiest of all the *kohanim*,
the *kohen gadol*, the High Priest.

And holiest among days of the year, the holidays,
And, above them all in holiness, Shabbat.
And above all Shabbatot in holiness is Yom Kippur,
known as *Shabbat Shabbaton*,
a Sabbath of complete cessation.

There are seventy languages in the world,
and the holiest of all,
the sacred tongue of Scripture,
and holiest of all texts in this tongue
is Torah, the holy teaching.
And of all the holy words of Torah,
the holiest are those of the Ten Commandments,
and the holiest of words within the Ten Commandments
is the name of God. ↵

גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ עוֹלָמוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, וְהַקְּדוֹשָׁה מְכַל אֲרָצוֹת
הָעוֹלָם — אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְהַקְּדוֹשָׁה מְכַל עָרֵי אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל —
ירוּשָׁלַיִם, וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ מְכַל הַמְּקוֹמוֹת בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם — בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:
וּבְבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הַמְּקוֹם הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּיִתְרָה — מְקוֹם קִדְשׁ הַקְּדוּשִׁים:
שְׂבָעִים אוֹמוֹת יֵשׁ בְּעוֹלָם: הַקְּדוֹשָׁה שְׂבַכְלָן — הָאוֹמָה
הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית: הַקְּדוֹשׁ מְכַל שְׂבַטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל — שְׂבַט לְוִי:
הַקְּדוּשִׁים מְכַל בְּנֵי לְוִי — הַפְּהֻנִים: הַקְּדוֹשׁ מְכַל הַפְּהֻנִים —
הַפְּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל. 365 יָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה, הַקְּדוּשִׁים שְׂבָהֶם — יָמִים טוֹבִים;
לְמַעַלְהָ מֵהֶם — קִדְשַׁת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת; לְמַעַלְהָ מִכָּלֶם קִדְשַׁת יוֹם
הַכַּפּוּרִים, שַׁבַּת שְׂפָתוֹן: שְׂבָעִים לְשׁוֹנוֹת בְּעוֹלָם; הַקְּדוֹשָׁה שְׂבַכְלָן
— לְשׁוֹן הַקִּדְשׁ: הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּיִתְרָה בְּלִשׁוֹן זֶה — הַתּוֹרָה הַקְּדוּשָׁה;
מְכַל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה קְדוּשִׁים בְּיִתְרָה — עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרוֹת, וּבַעֲשָׂרֶת
הַדְּבָרוֹת קְדוּשׁ בְּיִתְרָה — שֵׁם הַיְיָ: ←

COMMENTARY. How narrowly nationalistic and ethnocentric is the beginning of this declaration, and how broadly universalistic is its ending. Does it mirror in this respect our own individual movement of spirit?

Our first experiences of a religious tradition or of the sacred are often accompanied by the sense that only in this tradition, only in this particular way, only at this particular time and in this special place can the experience be preserved and renewed. The cherishing of the particular, the affirmation of this form and no other, does serve to protect the experience from dissipation or attrition.

With maturity and growing spiritual perspective, the essential locus of the sacred is increasingly seen as within human beings: this human being, any human being, all human beings. Thus, even while continuing to cherish and affirm the familiar forms and particular practices, we also come to recognize that the cherished form points to broader, nearly universal possibilities for experiencing the sacred at all times and all places.

Thus does the life of the spirit mirror the sequence of An-ski's profound proclamation.

E.G.

And one day of the year, in ancient times,
all four provinces of holiness
—land and people, time and language—
were united: when the High Priest went into
the Holy of Holies, and pronounced
the Tetragrammaton, the name of God,
whose utterance was otherwise forbidden.
And because this moment was considered
holy and awesome beyond measure,
the *kohen gadol* was in great danger,
as was the whole community of Israel.
And indeed, were he to stumble in his duties,
all the world was, God forbid,
in danger of destruction.

Whatever place a person stands
and looks toward heaven
is the holiest of holy places.
And every day throughout one's life
is a Day of Atonement,
and every person a *kohen gadol*,
and every word a person utters
in a state of holiness and purity,
a name of God.

Solomon An-Ski

יַפְעֵם אַחַת בְּשָׁנָה כָּל אַרְבַּע הַקְדוּשׁוֹת הָעֲלִיּוֹנוֹת מִתְחַבְּרוֹת לְיַחַד:
 בְּיוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים, כְּשֶׁנִּכְנַס הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל לְקֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוּשִׁים וְהוֹגֵה אֶת
 הַשֵּׁם הַמְפָּרָשׁ: וּמִפְּנֵי שֶׁהַשָּׁעָה הַזֹּאת הִיְתָה קְדוּשָׁה וְנוֹרָאָה עַד
 אֵין שְׁעוֹר — סִפְּנָה גְדוּלָה הִיְתָה כִּי לַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל וְלַכֹּלֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל;
 שְׂאֵלְמֵי נִכְשָׁל, הִיְתָה כָּל הָעוֹלָם חָרַב, חֵס וְשָׁלוֹם:
 כָּל מְקוֹם שְׂאֵדָם עוֹמֵד עָלָיו וְנוֹשֵׂא מִשָּׁם עֵינָיו הַשְּׂמִימָה — קֹדֶשׁ
 קְדוּשִׁים הוּא: כָּל יוֹם בְּחַיֵּי אָדָם — יוֹם כְּפוּר הוּא: כָּל אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה
 כֵּהֵן גְּדוֹל הוּא, וְכָל מְלָה שִׁיּוּצֵאת מִפִּי הָאָדָם בְּקִרְשָׁהּ וּבִטְהָרָה
 — שֵׁם הַיְהוָה הוּא:

COMMENTARY. Solomon Rapaport, known as S. An-Ski (1863-1920), was a member of the Haskalah (Jewish enlightenment movement) who lived in Russia, Paris, and Lithuania. A leading Jewish folklorist, An-Ski loved the values and tales of the Yiddish world. Best known as the author of *The Dybbuk* and of fifteen volumes of other writings, An-Ski had one foot in Jewish village life and the other in Western literary life. Thus his play, *The Dybbuk*, is not only a reflection of the tales on which it is based; it celebrates and comments on the world that gave rise to them. So, too, in this poem do we have a celebration of the Temple, the Hebrew language and the land of Israel, while at the same time the poem celebrates the power of the contemporary individual to take on the role of the High Priest speaking the name of God in holiness. Unlike some who experienced their dividedness between the worlds of Jewish tradition and Western intellect as painful and alienating, An-Ski was able to bring his two civilizations together in a way that allowed each to comment upon and enrich the other. He suggests to us that we, too, can celebrate both the image of a world that will never return and our power as individuals to reconnect to its highest ideals. From our particularity we can recognize and address the Universal.

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

In the hour when the Temple was destroyed,
and Zion's courtyards had been silenced,
there arose throughout the earth's four corners
places where holiness could dwell in smaller ways,
where Torah, prayer, and houses of assembly
could pay honor to your Name.

In every place where we have kept alive your memory,
you have made your Presence—your Sheḥinah—to abide.
The weeping of our widowed Holy City
is sealed upon our hearts.

We stand before you here in prayer,
we, the living, who are mindful of all life.

So cause our sins to pass away, erase our wrongful acts,
receive our prayers like sacrifices in a former time.

Let utterance of our lips fulfill the ancient rite,
let poetry and song, like incense, give delight,
as they commemorate the worship that our ancestors once did,
and blessed be its memory today, on Yom Kippur.

Gil Nativ

עַת חָרַב הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְחִצְרוֹת צִיּוֹן נִדְמּוּ
 בְּאַרְבַּע כְּנִפּוֹת תֵּכֵל מִקְדָּשֵׁי מַעַט קָמוּ
 לְתוֹרָה וְתַפְלָה בְּתֵי כְּנִסְיֹת לְשִׁמְךָ :
 בְּכָל מְקוֹם בּוֹ הִזְכַּרְנוּךָ הַשְׂרִית שְׂכִינְתְּךָ
 בְּכִי עִיר אֶלְמָנָה נִחַתָּם בְּלִבָּנוּ :
 בְּתַפְלָה נִצְבִּים פֹּה כְּלָנוּ הַחַיִּים
 חֲטָאֵתֵינוּ הַעֲבַר וּפְשָׁעֵינוּ מַחַח
 כְּקַרְבָּנוֹת קָדָם תִּפְלוֹתֵינוּ רְצֵה
 בְּשִׁיחַ שְׂפַתוֹתֵינוּ נִשְׁלֶמָה פָּרִים
 כְּקַטְרֹת בְּאַפֶּךָ זְמֶרֶת מְשׁוֹרְרִים
 אֲשֶׁר עָדָר עֲבוֹדַת אֲבוֹת מְזַכְּרִים :
 כְּרוּךְ זְכָרָה לְפָנֶיךָ בְּיוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים :

COMMENTARY. Jews have suffered much as a result of the circumstances in which they have found themselves throughout history. This poem dwells not upon the causes of our suffering, but upon our ability to transcend it. For having once made holiness a grand part of our heritage in days that have receded into the distant past, we retain many ways to keep with us glimmers of holiness and an abiding sense of the divine presence. We can recapture that sense of holy presence through it purify ourselves, and give to Yom Kippur the power it had of old.

D.A.T.

Here I am, meager of deeds!
In turmoil, and afflicted with such fear
to stand before the One enthroned
on Israel's songs of praise,
I come here now to stand in pleading
in your presence, for your people Israel,
who have sent me here,
even though I am unworthy of it.
For this, I ask you—God of Abraham and Sarah,
God of Isaac and Rebekah,
God of Jacob, Rachel, and Leah,
THE GRACIOUS ONE, THE GRACIOUS ONE,
God full of mercy and compassion,
you, Almighty One, awesome and feared—
that you may make my way successful,
as I stand and beg forgiveness
for myself and those who send me.
Do not find them to blame for sins of mine,
do not declare them guilty for my own mistakes,
for I myself am fallible, and have done wrong.
And do not let them suffer shame
because of any wrongdoing of mine,
and let them not incur disgrace on my account,
and let me, likewise, not incur disgrace through them.
Receive my prayer as if it were
the prayer of one experienced and wise,
whose utterance is well-accepted,
whose bearing is mature,
whose voice is sweet and pleasing
to the ear of all who hear it.
May you nullify the voice of cynicism,
and dispel whatever would prevent our prayer
from being heard. ↵

הִנְנִי הָעֲנִי מִמַּעַשׂ נִרְעָשׁ וְנִפְחָד וְנִפְחָד מִפְּחַד יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּאֲתִי
לְעַמּוֹד וּלְחַנּוּן לְפָנֶיךָ עַל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְוִנִי אֶף עַל פִּי
שְׂאִינִי כְדֵי וְהִגּוֹן לְכֹף: עַל כֵּן אֲבַקֶּשׁ אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹרָהֶם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי שְׂרָה אֱלֹהֵי רַבֵּקָה אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל וְאֱלֹהֵי לְאָה יִהְיֶה
יִהְיֶה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂדֵי אִים וְנוֹרָא: הִיֵּה נָא
מִצְלִיחַ דְּרַפִּי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לְעַמּוֹד לְבַקֵּשׁ רַחֲמִים עָלַי וְעַל
שׁוֹלְחִי: וְנָא אֵל תַּפְשִׁיעַם בְּחִטָּאתִי וְאֵל תַּחֲיִבֶם בְּעֹנוּתִי כִּי חוּטָא
וּפְשָׁעִי אָנִי: וְאֵל יִכְלְמוּ בְּפִשְׁעֵי וְאֵל יִבּוֹשׂוּ בִּי וְאֵל אִבּוֹשָׁה בָהֶם:
וְקַבֵּל תְּפִלָּתִי כְּתַפְלַת זֶקֶן וְרָגִיל וּפְרָקוּ נְאֻה וְזִקְנֹו מְגַדֵּל וְקוֹלוֹ
נְעִים וּמְעָרֵב בְּדַעַת עִם הַבְּרִיּוֹת: וְתַגְעַר בְּשָׁטָן לְבַל יִשְׁטִינֵנִי ←

COMMENTARY. *Hineni* was traditionally sung by the *hazan* just before the repetition of the *Musaf* Amidah while the *hazan* slowly walked from the back of the synagogue to the *bimah*. The theme of *Hineni* is a humble cantor's plea, which is in direct tension with the high drama of the music and ritual of this moment. Most Reconstructionist communities do not expect the cantor to enter in this highly dramatic way, and most do not repeat the Amidah. Thus, Reconstructionist communities include *Hineni* in different places of the service if at all. It can serve as the introduction to any Amidah that is chanted aloud, or to the silent Amidah. As with all *piyutim*, there is unlimited flexibility as to whether and where to include *Hineni*.
D.A.T.

COMMENTARY. This personal prayer recited by the prayer leader is a public declaration of unworthiness. The leader represents all the people seeking divine compassion and forgiveness. Who could possibly be worthy of such a task if its success depends on the moral purity of the leader? Indeed, true prayer always acknowledges our spiritual poverty. The leader asserts a readiness for true prayer—free of self-centered thoughts, free of manipulative strategies, no longer tallying merits. One is ready to seek God's love, compassion and forgiveness when one is ready to admit how small our efforts are in relation to divine grace.
S.P.W.

Let the banner of our passion
proclaim love for you,
and may you overwhelm all wrongdoing with love.
Reverse all trouble and affliction in our favor,
for the sake of all the people Israel,
for the sake of joy and gladness,
for the sake of life and peace.

May it be your will, ETERNAL ONE,
O God of Abraham and Sarah,
God of Isaac and Rebekah,
God of Jacob, Rachel, and Leah,
you, the supreme God,
you who have been ever changing and becoming,
that all your ministering angels,
all appointed as the guardians of prayer,
shall bring my prayer before your Throne of Glory,
and present it there before you,
for the sake of all the righteous and the loving,
all who are unblemished and deserving of respect,
and for the honor of your great and awesome Name.
For you are one who listens with compassion
to the prayer of your people Israel.
Blessed are you,
who listens to our prayer.

וַיְהִי נָא דְגַלְנוּ עָלֶיךָ אֱהָבָה לְכָל־פְּשָׁעִים תִּכְסֶּה בְּאַהֲבָה: וְכָל־צָרוֹת
וְרַעוֹת הַפֶּה־לָנוּ וְלְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וְלְשִׁמְחָה לְחַיִּים וְלְשָׁלוֹם:
הָאֵמֶת וְהַשְּׁלוֹם אֲהָבוּ וְאֵל יְהִי שׁוֹם מְכַשׁוֹל בְּתַפְלָתִי:

וַיְהִי רָצוֹן לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי
שָׂרָה אֱלֹהֵי רַבְקָה אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגְּבוּר
וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיוֹן אֱהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֱהִיָּה שְׁפֵל־הַמְּלָאכִים שֶׁהֵם בְּעֲלֵי
תַפְלוֹת יָבִיאוּ תַפְלָתִי לְפָנֶי פָּסָא כְבוֹדְךָ וַיִּצְיִגוּ אוֹתָהּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּעִבּוֹר
כָּל־הַצְּדִיקִים וְהַחֲסִידִים הַתְּמִימִים וְהַיִּשְׁרִים וּבְעִבּוֹר כְּבוֹד שְׁמֶךָ
הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא כִּי אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תַּפְלָת עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמִים: בְּרוּךְ
אַתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ תַּפְלָה:

KAVANAH. When people who are concerned about ethics and spirituality gather together, they collectively proclaim the glory of God before they even say a single word because their presence bespeaks the power of God.

E.M.

KAVANAH. The moisture diffused in mist and clouds reduces our vision and chills our bones. We can only wait for wind or sun to remove them. By contrast, on Yom Kippur when we confront the mist of our faults and foibles, sins and errors in our lives, we are able to act, precipitating and thereby concentrating. Through gaining awareness and making confession, our vision is cleared, fresh vistas are opened, and a pool of pure spiritual water before us provides the opportunity to cleanse our souls.

E.G.

COMMENTARY. *Hineni* has long been loved not only for its beautiful music but also because each of us must struggle in our own way with the problem it raises: "How can I be worthy of forgiveness? How can I purify myself enough to be worthy of the lofty hopes of this day?" D.A.T. / M.B.K.

ḤATZI KADDISH / SHORT KADDISH

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher by far than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

In communities where a full silent Musaf Amidah is recited, continue on page 739. Otherwise continue on the following page.

COMMENTARY. Holiness is the quality or value that things or persons have when they help people to become fully human.

M.M.K. (Adapted)

חֲצִי קַדִּישׁ

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֻלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיךָ
מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוּן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוּן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן
קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמֵיָא:
יְתַבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא
לְעֵלְא לְעֵלְא מְפַל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְאָמִירָן
בְּעֻלְמָא וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן:

Reader: Yitgadal veyitkadesh shemey raba
be'alma di vera hirutey veyamliḥ malḥutey
beḥayeyḥon uvyomeyḥon uvḥayey deḥol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam ulalmey almaya.

Reader: Yitbarah veyishtabah veyitpa'ar veyitromam veyitnasey
veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal shemey de kudsha berih hu
le'ela le'ela mikol birḥata veshirata tushbeḥata veneḥemata
da'amiran be'alma ve'imru amen.

*In communities where a full silent Musaf Amidah is recited, continue on page 740.
Otherwise continue on the following page.*

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 כַּהֵן־גָּדוֹל מִבֵּיתוֹ
לְלִשְׁכַּת פְּלִהָדָרִין וּמִתְקִינִין לוֹ כַּהֵן אַחַר תַּחֲתִיו שְׁמָא יַאֲרַע בּוֹ
פְּסוּל:

מְסֻרוֹ לוֹ זְקָנִים מְזַקְנֵי בֵּית־דִּין וְקוֹרִין לְפָנָיו בְּסֹדֵר הַיּוֹם וְאוֹמְרִים
לוֹ אִישִׁי כַּהֵן גָּדוֹל קָרָא אֶתָּה בְּפִיד שְׁמָא שְׁכַחַת אוֹ שְׁמָא לֹא
לְמַדַּת:

עָרַב יוֹם־הַכַּפּוּרִים שְׁחָרִית מְעַמְּדִין אוֹתוֹ בְּשַׁעַר הַמְּזֻרַח וּמַעֲבִירִין
לְפָנָיו פָּרִים וְאֵילִים וְכִבְשִׁים כְּדִי שְׁיֵהָא מִפִּיר וְרָגִיל בְּעִבּוּדָּה:
מְסֻרוֹהוּ זְקָנֵי בֵּית־דִּין לְזַקְנֵי כַּהֲנָה וְהַעֲלוּהוּ לַעֲלִית בֵּית־אֲבָטִינָס
וְהַשְׁבִּיעוּהוּ וּנְפֹטְרוּ וְהִלְכוּ לָהֶם: וְאָמְרוּ לוֹ אִישִׁי כַּהֵן־גָּדוֹל אָנוּ
שְׁלוּחֵי בֵּית־דִּין וְאַתָּה שְׁלִיחָנוּ וּשְׁלִיחַ בֵּית־דִּין: ←

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 כַּהֵן 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. ↩

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 לָךְ: הוּא פֹרֵשׁ וּבֹכָה וְהֵם פּוֹרְשִׁים וּבֹכִים: אִם
 הִיָּה חָכֵם דּוֹרֵשׁ וְאִם לֹא תִלְמִידֵי־חֲכָמִים דּוֹרְשִׁים לְפָנָיו וְאִם רָגִיל
 לְקִרְוֹת קוֹרָא וְאִם לֹא קוֹרֵין לְפָנָיו:
 הוֹרִידוּ כְהֵן־גְּדוּל לְבֵית־הַטְּבִילָה חֲמִשׁ 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: ←

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!'"

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

וּפְרוּ הָיָה עוֹמֵד בֵּין הָאוֹלָם וְלַמְזֻבָּח: וְסוֹמֵךְ שְׁתֵּי יָדָיו עָלָיו
וּמִתְוֹדֶה: בַּיּוֹם קָדוֹשׁ זֶה גַם אֲנִי בָּא אֶל הַיְכָלְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית
תְּפִלָּתְךָ: וּכְשֶׁם שֶׁהִכְהֵן הַגְּדוֹל הָיָה מִתְוֹדֶה וּמִבְקָשׁ מְחִילָה וְכַפָּרָה
בְּדַבֵּיר קָדְשְׁךָ כֵּן גַם אֲנִי מִתְוֹדֶה לְפָנֶיךָ לֵאמֹר:

וְכָךְ הָיָה אוֹמֵר אָנָּה הַשֵּׁם עוֹיְתִי פִשְׁעֵתִי חֲטָאתִי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי:
אָנָּה הַשֵּׁם כַּפֶּר-נָא לְעֹנֹת וּלְפִשְׁעִים וּלְחַטָּאִים שְׁעוֹתִי וְשִׁפְשָׁעֵתִי
וְשַׁחֲטָאתִי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי:

וְכָךְ אָנוּ אוֹמְרִים: אָנָּה הַשֵּׁם כַּפֶּר-נָא לְחַטָּאִים וּלְעֹנֹת וּלְפִשְׁעִים
שְׁחָטָאוּ וְשָׁעוּ וְשִׁפְשָׁעוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכֹל יוֹשְׁבֵי תְּהִלָּה
וְהִגִּיעֲנוּ לְחַטָּאת עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׁדֵי כְּפָתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ כִּי בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
יִכַּפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי יְהוָה....

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)

וְהַפְּהַנִּים וְהָעַם הָעוֹמְדִים בְּעֶזְרָה כְּשֶׁהָיוּ שׁוֹמְעִים אֶת־הַשֵּׁם הַנִּכְבָּד
וְהַנּוֹרָא מִכָּרֶשׁ יוֹצֵא מִפִּי כֹהֵן גָּדוֹל בְּקִדְשָׁהּ וּבְטַהֲרָהּ הָיוּ כּוֹרְעִים
וּמְשַׁתְּחִוִּים 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

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



אֱלוֹ דְבָרִים שְׂאָדָם אוֹכֵל פְּרוּתֵיהֶם בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְהַקָּרָן קָיָמָת לֹ
 לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא: וְאֵלוֹ הֵן כְּבוֹד אָב וְאָם וּגְמִילוּת חֲסָדִים וְהַשְׂפָּמָת
 בֵּית הַמְדָּרֵשׁ שְׁחִירִית וְעֶרְבִית וְהַכְּנָסָת אוֹרְחִים וּבְקוּר חוֹלִים
 וְהַכְּנָסָת כְּלָה וּלְוִיַת 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

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.

AMIDAH

The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three short steps forward and bowing left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence.

Open my lips, BELOVED ONE,
and let my mouth declare your praise.

1. AVOT VE'IMOT / ANCESTORS

Blessed are you, ANCIENT ONE, our God, God of our ancestors,
 God of Abraham God of Sarah
 God of Isaac God of Rebekah
 God of Jacob God of Rachel
 and God of Leah;

great, heroic, awesome God, supreme divinity,
imparting deeds of kindness, begetter of all;
mindful of the loyalty of Israel's ancestors,
bringing, with love, redemption to their children's children
for the sake of the divine name.

By counsel of the sages and the wise,
and by the knowledge of all learned in our ways,
may my mouth be opened, and my prayers arise,
to entreat the sovereign full of mercy and compassion,
who forgives and pardons all transgression. ←

תהלתך...אדוני / Open...praise (Psalms 51:17).

עֲמִידָה

The Amidah is traditionally recited while standing, beginning with three short steps forward and bowing left and right, a reminder of our entry into the divine presence.

אֲדַנִּי שְׁפַתִּי תִפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ :

אָבוֹת וְאֵמוֹת 

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֵמוֹתֵינוּ

אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק אֱלֹהֵי רַבְקָה

אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל

וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה :

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן גּוֹמֵל חַסְדִּים טוֹבִים וְקוֹנֵה
הַכֹּל זֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אָבוֹת וְאֵמוֹת וּמֵבִיא גְאֻלָּה לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן
שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה :

מִסוּד חַכְמִים וְנִבּוֹנִים וּמְלָמֵד רַעַת מְבִינִים אֲפַתְחָה פִּי בְּתַפְלָה
וּבְתַחֲנוּנִים לְחַלוֹת וּלְחַנּוּן פָּנֵי מֶלֶךְ מְלֵא רַחֲמִים מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ
לְעוֹנִים : ←

Baruḥ atah adonay eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu

elohey avraham

elohey sarah

elohey yitzhak

elohey rivkah

elohey ya'akov

elohey rahel

veylohey le'ah

Ha'el hagadol hagibor vehanora el elyon gomel ḥasadim tovim
vekoney hakol vezoher ḥasdey avot ve'imot umevi ge'ulah livney
veneyhem lema'an shemo be'ahavah.

Misod ḥaḥamim unevonim umilemed da'at mevinim efteḥah fi
bitefilah uvetaḥanunim leḥalot uleḥanen peney meleḥ maley
raḥamim moḥel vesole'ah la'avonim. ↩

Remember us for life,
our sovereign, who wishes us to live,
and write us in the Book of Life,
for your sake, ever-living God.

Regal One, our help, salvation, and protector:
Blessed are you, KIND ONE,
the shield of Abraham and help of Sarah.

2. GEVUROT / DIVINE POWER

You are forever powerful, ALMIGHTY ONE,
abundant in your saving acts.

You send down the dew.

In loyalty you sustain the living,
nurturing the life of every living thing,
upholding those who fall,
healing the sick, freeing the captive,
and remaining faithful to all life
held dormant in the earth.

Who can compare to you, almighty God,
who can resemble you, the source of life and death,
who makes salvation grow?

Who can compare to you, source of all mercy,
remembering all creatures mercifully, decreeing life!

Faithful are you in giving life to every living thing.
Blessed are you, THE FOUNT OF LIFE,
who gives and renews life. ↪

זָכַרְנוּ לְחַיִּים מֶלֶךְ חַיָּץ בַּחַיִּים וְכַתְּבָנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים לְמַעַנְךָ אֱלֹהִים
חַיִּים:

מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמָגֵן: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם וְעִזְרַת
שָׂרָה:

Zoh^{re}nu lehayim meleh hafetz ba^hayim ve^hot^{ve}nu besefer
ha^hayim lema'ane^ha elohim hayim.

Meleh ozer umoshi'a umagen. Baruh atah adonay magen
avraham ve'ezrat sarah.

גְּבוּרוֹת

אַתָּה גְּבוּר לְעוֹלָם אֲדָנִי רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ:
מוֹרִיד הַטָּל:

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים
וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים וּמְקַיֵּם אַמּוֹנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפְרָי: מִי
כְּמוֹךָ בַּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי יוֹמֵךְ לָךְ מֶלֶךְ מִמִּית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמֵּיחַ
יְשׁוּעָה:

מִי כְּמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים זוֹכֵר יְצוּרָיו לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים:
וְנֶאֱמָן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת כָּל חַי: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מְחַיֶּה כָּל חַי: ←

Atah gibor le'olam adonay rav lehoshi'a.

Morid hatal.

Mehalkel hayim behesed mehayey kol hay berahamim rabim
someh noflim verofey holim umatir asurim umekayem emunato
lisheney afar. Mi hamo^ha ba'al gevurot umi domeh la^h mele^h
memit umehayeh umatzmi'ah yeshu'ah.

Mi hamo^ha av harahamim zoher yetzurav lehayim berahamim.
Vene'eman atah leha^hayot kol hay. Baruh atah adonay mehayey
kol hay.

And so, let holiness arise to you,
for you, God, are our sovereign.

The ark is opened.

Now, we declare the sacred power of this day,
which is the most awesome and solemn of days,
when your rule is established over all,
and your throne set in place by the power of love,
and you come forth to govern in truth.

True it is that you are our judge,
you alone can reprove, you alone can know,
you alone are witness to all deeds.

It is you who shall write,
you who shall seal what is written,
you who shall read,
and you who shall number all souls.
You alone can remember what we have forgotten;
it is you who shall open the Book of Remembrance,
but its contents shall speak for themselves,
for it bears the imprint of us all,
which our deeds and our lives have inscribed.

And when the great shofar is sounded,
a small quiet voice can be heard,
and the heavenly beings are thrown into fright,
and, seized by a terrible dread, they declare:
“Behold, the Day of Judgment has arrived,
when even those in heaven’s court are judged,
for none can be exempt from justice’s eyes!” ↪

לִּדְ תַעֲלֶה קְדֻשָּׁה בִּי אֶתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ:



The ark is opened.

וּנְתַנֶּה תְּקֵף קְדֻשַׁת הַיּוֹם בִּי הוּא נוֹרָא וְאִים וְכוּ תַנְשֵׂא מְלֻכוֹתֶיךָ
וְיִכּוֹן בְּתֹסֵד כְּסֵאֶיךָ וְתִשָּׁב עָלָיו בְּאַמַּת: אָמַת בִּי אֶתָּה הוּא דִּין
וּמוֹכִיחַ וְיִוָּדַע וְעַד וְכוּתֵב וְחוֹתֵם וְסוֹפֵר וּמוֹנֶה וְתִזְכֹּר כָּל-
הַנְּשָׁכָחוֹת וְתַפְתַּח אֶת-סֵפֶר הַזְּכוּרוֹנוֹת וּמֵאֲלִיו יִקְרָא וְחוֹתֵם יָד
כָּל-אָדָם בּוֹ:

וּבְשׁוֹפֵר גְּדוֹל יִתְקַע וְקוֹל דְּמָמָה דִּקְהָה יִשְׁמַע וּמְלֵאכִים יִתְפַּזּוּן וְחִיל
וְרַעְדָּה יֵאָחֲזוּן וְיֵאֱמָרוּ הִנֵּה יוֹם הַדִּין: לְפָקֵד עַל צְבָא מְרוֹם בְּדִין
כִּי לֹא יִזְכּוּ בְּעֵינֶיךָ בְּדִין ←

COMMENTARY. On this day, we confront that which we spend most of our lives denying—that we shall die and be no more. Yom Kippur awakens us to lead our lives more fully because we come face to face with, and thus must acknowledge, our own mortality.

Michael Strassfeld

KAVANAH. What is my life's signature in the Book of Remembrance? Does the way in which I live my life reflect the divine image within me? What are the choices that I have made, and will the choices that I make over the coming year help me to live a life that will fashion God's image in the world?

Brian Walt

And all who come into the world
pass before you like sheep for the shepherd—
for, just as a shepherd numbers the flock,
passing the herd by the staff,
so do you make us pass by before you,
and number, and count, and determine the life,
one by one, of all who have lifebreath within.
You decide for each creature its cycles of life,
and you write down its destined decree.

On Rosh Hashanah, all is written and revealed,
and on Yom Kippur, the course of every life is sealed!

—how many pass on, how many shall thrive,
who shall live on, and who shall die,
whose death is timely, and whose is not,
who dies by fire, and who shall be drowned,
who by the sword, and who by the beast,
who by hunger, and who by thirst,
who by an earthquake, who by a plague,
who shall be strangled, and who shall be stoned,
who dwells in peace, and who is uprooted,
who shall live safely, and who shall be harmed,
whose life is tranquil, and whose is tormented,
who shall be poor, and who shall be rich,
who shall be humbled, and who is raised up! ↩

וְכַל־בְּאֵי עוֹלָם יַעֲבֹרוּן לְפָנֶיךָ כְּבִנֵי מְרוֹן: כְּבִקְרַת רוּעָה עֶדְרוֹ
מַעֲבִיר צֹאנוּ תַחַת שְׁבִטּוֹ כֵּן תַּעֲבִיר וְתִסְפֹּר וְתִמְנְה וְתִפְקֹד לְפָשׁ
כָּל־חַי וְתַחַתְךָ קִצְבָה לְכָל־בְּרִיָּה וְתִכְתֹּב אֶת־גְּזֹר דִּינָם:

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יִכְתָּבוּן וּבֵיּוֹם צוֹם כְּפוּר יִחַתְמוּן

Kevakarat ro'eh edro ma'avir tzono taḥat shivto ken ta'avir
vetispor vetimneh vetifkod nefesh kol ḥay vetaḥtoḥ kitzbah leḥol
beriyah vetiḥtov et gezar dinam.

Berosh hashanah yikatevun uveyom tzom kipur yeḥatemun

כָּמָה יַעֲבֹרוּן וְכַמָּה יִבְרָאוּן מִי יִחִיָּהּ וּמִי יָמוּת
מִי בְקִצּוֹ וּמִי לֹא בְקִצּוֹ מִי בְאֵשׁ וּמִי בַמַּיִם
מִי בַחֲרֹב וּמִי בַחַיָּה מִי בְרָעַב וּמִי בְצָמָא
מִי בְרָעַשׁ וּמִי בַמַּגָּפָה מִי בַחֲנִיקָה וּמִי בַסְּקִילָה
מִי יָנוּחַ וּמִי יָנוּעַ מִי יִשְׁקִיט וּמִי יִטְרַף
מִי יִשְׁלֹוּ וּמִי יִתִּיֶסֶר מִי יַעֲנִי וּמִי יַעֲשִׂיר
מִי יִשְׁפֹּל וּמִי יָרוּם: ←

But *teshuvah*, and *tefilah*, and *tzedakah*
make easier what God may decree,
make easier what life holds in store,
make easier facing the world,
make easier facing ourselves,

For, as is your name, so is your praise—
slow to be angry, quick to forgive;
you do not desire a person to die,
but only to change and to live.
Down to a person's last day of life,
the person is given the chance to return,
and all who return, and resolve to be just,
are welcomed by you straightaway.

For truly, you are their creator,
and you know their innermost nature,
and they know they are flesh and blood. ↪

Rabbi Yudan said in the name of Rabbi Elazar: Three things cancel harsh decrees: *tefilah*, *teshuvah* and *tzedakah*. All three are mentioned in a single verse (2 Chronicles 7:14): “Let my people humble themselves and pray, seek my face, and return from their evil way, and their sins will be forgiven, and their land healed.” “Humble themselves and pray” refers to *tefilah*. “Seek my face” refers to *tzedakah*, as it is said (Psalms 17:15), “I will seek your face בְּצֶדֶק / *betzedek* / in justice.” Finally, “and return from their evil way” refers to *teshuvah*.

Genesis Rabbah 44:12

וְתִשְׁבַּח וְתִפְלֵה וְצַדִּיקָה

מַעֲבִירִין אֶת רֵעַ הַגְּזֵרָה:

כִּי כְשֶׁמָּד בֵּן תְּהִלָּתְךָ קָשָׁה לְכַעַס וְנוֹחַ לְרִצּוֹת כִּי לֹא תַחֲפֹץ בְּמוֹת
הַמֵּת כִּי אִם בְּשׁוּבוֹ מִדַּרְכּוֹ וְחַיָּה: וְעַד יוֹם מוֹתוֹ תִּתְחַפֶּה-לוֹ אִם
יָשׁוּב מִיַּד תִּקְבְּלוּ: אַמֶּת כִּי אַתָּה הוּא יוֹצֵרְם וְאַתָּה יוֹרֵעַ יִצְרָם כִּי
הֵם בְּשׂוֹר וְדָם: ←

Uteshuvah utefilah utzedakah
ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah.

Ki heshimeha ken tehilateha kasheh lihos venoah lirtzot. Ki lo
tahpotz bemot hamet ki im beshuvo midarko vehayah. Ve'ad
yom moto tehaveh lo im yashuv miyad tekabelo. Emet ki atah
hu yotzram ve'atah yode'a yitzram ki hem basar vadam. ↪

DERASH. Excerpt from a radio interview with a Canadian World War II veteran on Remembrance Day, November 11, 1993: "As D-day approached we knew something would be happening soon. I knew I should pray. I tried. It wasn't working. Then, I realized that this was because I was praying for my own survival. What I should have been praying is that I would perform (my duties) well. I realized that if I did not survive that day, another soldier would take my place—but if I did not do my tasks well, others, including my buddies, would die. I was then able to pray." Through *teshuvah*, *tzedakah* and *tefilah*, we can alter the severity of what has been decreed for *others*. E.M.

All of humanity is founded on dust—
of dust they are made, and to dust they return;
as long as they live, they strive for their bread.
Like vessels of clay, they can break.
Like grass they can wither, like flowers they fade,
like shadows they pass, like clouds they are emptied,
like wind their strength is exhausted,
like dust they are scattered about,
like a dream they shall vanish from sight.
But you, holy one, your reign is eternal,
the God who lives and endures!

No limit exists to the years of your life,
no end is assigned to the length of your days,
no measure contains the array of your glory,
your name is beyond all translation.

Your name is the perfect expression of you,
and you have, in turn, embodied your name,
and have called us, as well, by your name. ↪

אָדָם יְסוּדוֹ מֵעֶפֶר וְסוֹפוֹ לְעֶפֶר: בְּנִפְשׁוֹ יָבִיא לְחָמוֹ: מְשׁוּל כְּחָרָס
הַנְּשֻׁבֵר כְּחֻצִיר יָבֵשׁ וּכְצִיץ נוֹבֵל כְּצֵל עוֹבֵר וּכְעֵנָן כְּלֶה וּכְרוּחַ
נוֹשָׁבֶת וּכְאֶבֶק פּוֹרֵחַ וּכְחֵלוֹם יְעוּף:

וְאַתָּה הוּא מְלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם:

אֵין קִצְבָה לְשִׁנוּתֶיךָ וְאֵין גֵּץ לְאַרְךָ יָמֶיךָ וְאֵין שְׁעוֹר לְמִרְכָּבוֹת
כְּבוֹדֶךָ וְאֵין פְּרוּשׁ לְעֵילוּם שְׁמֶךָ: שְׂמֶךָ נֶאֱדָה לְךָ וְאַתָּה נֶאֱדָה לְשִׁמְךָ
וְשִׁמְנוּ קָרָאתָ בְּשִׁמְךָ: ←

Adam yesodo me'afar vesofu le'afar. Benafsho yavi lahmo.
Mashul ka^hheres hanishbar kehatzir yavesh uhetzitz novel
ketzel over uhe'anan kaleh uheruah noshavet uhe'avak pore'ah
vehaalom ya'uf.

Ve'atah hu meleh el hay vekayam.

בשמך ושמנו קראת בשמך /you...have called us...by your name. To say something by God's name is to take an oath or make a vow. One interpretation of this line is that God has made a commitment to us. Another interpretation, playing on the idea that human beings are בצלם אלהים /in the image of God, has human beings functioning in part as the embodiment of God. That is, God recognizes that the divine is in each one of us. A third way of understanding this text is that God needs humanity. God calls us to make the divine manifest in the world. D.A.T.

The ark is closed. We remain standing for the Kedushah.

Act for the sake of your name,
and make your name holy
over all who now declare
the holiness of your great name.
Act for the glory of your name,
which is uplifted and made holy
by the hidden utterance of holy seraphim,
who, bathed in holiness, proclaim the holiness
of your great name,
joining those who dwell above
with those who dwell on earth,
as it is written by your prophet's hand:
"And they call out, one to another, and declare:
'Holy, holy, holy is THE CREATOR of the Multitudes of Heaven!
All the world is filled with divine glory!'"

God's glory fills the world,
as the ministering angels ask, one to another,
"What place could contain God's holiness?"
And they are answered with a blessing:
"Blessed is the glory of THE OMNIPRESENT,
wherever God may dwell!"

And from God's place, God mercifully turns,
bestowing graciousness upon the people
who declare the oneness of the divine name
evening and morning, each day continually,
as twice a day they say, with love: "Shema!"
"Listen, Israel: THE ETERNAL is our God,
THE ETERNAL ONE alone!" ↪

וכבוד...וקרא / And...glory! (Isaiah 6:3).

וממקומו...ברוך / Blessed...dwell! (Ezekiel 3:12).

ואחד...שמע / Listen...alone! (Deuteronomy 6:4).

The ark is closed. We remain standing for the Kedushah.

עֲשֵׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמֹךְ וְקֹדֶשׁ אֶת־שְׁמֹךְ עַל מְקוֹדְשֵׁי שְׁמֹךְ בְּעַבּוּר כְּבוֹד
שְׁמֹךְ הַנִּצְעָרִין וְהַנִּקְדָּשׁ כְּסוּד שְׁיַח שְׁרָפֵי־קֹדֶשׁ הַמְקוֹדְשִׁים שְׁמֹךְ
בְּקֹדֶשׁ דְּרִי מְעַלָּה עִם דְּרִי מְטָה כְּפָתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאָךְ: וְקָרָא זֶה
אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר

קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ

יהוה צבאות מלא כל־הארץ כבודו:

כבודו מלא עולם משרתיו שואלים זה לזה איה מקום כבודו
לעמנתם ברוך יאמרו:

ברוך כבוד יהוה ממקומו:

ממקומו הוא יפן ברחמים ויחן עם המיחדים שמו ערב ובקר בכל
יום תמיד פעמים באהבה שמע אומרים:

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד: —

Asey lema'an shemeḥa vekadesh et shimḥa al makdishey
shemeḥa ba'avur kevod shimḥa hana'aratz vehanikdash kesod
siah sarfey kodesh hamakdishim shimḥa bakodesh darey mala im
darey matah kakatuv al yad nevi'eḥa vekara zeh el zeh ve'amar:
Kadosh kadosh kadosh adonay tzeva'ot melo ḥol ha'aretz kevodo.
Kevodo maley olam mesharetav sho'alim zeh lazeh ayey mekom
kevodo le'umatam baruḥ yomeru:

Baruḥ kevod adonay mimekomo.

Mimekomo hu yifen berahamim veyahon am hamyahadim
shemo erev vavoker beḥol yom tamid pa'amayim be'ahavah
shema omrim:

Shema yisra'el adonay eloheynu adonay eḥad. ↪

COMMENTARY. The structure of the *Kedushah* rests upon myths in Jewish tradition about angelic choruses praising God. Standing at attention and singing words ascribed to the angelic chorus, Jews traditionally rock upward on their toes each time the word קדוש /*kadosh*/ Holy is chanted here. It is as if we were straining upward to join the heavenly choir in praise for the divine.

D.A.T.

This is our God.
This is our source.
This is our sovereign.
This is our saving power.
And this one, mercifully,
shall declare a second time,
for every living being to hear,
confirming God's divinity for you:
"I am THE OMNIPRESENT ONE, your God!"

O mighty one, our mighty one,
THE SOVEREIGN who watches over us,
how mighty is your name throughout the earth!
The time shall come that GOD will reign
throughout the earth. On that day
shall THE FOUNT OF LIFE be one,
the divine name be one.
And as is written in your sacred words of psalm:
"May THE ETERNAL reign forever,
your God, O Zion, from one generation to the next. Halleluyah!"

From one generation to the next
may we declare your greatness,
and for all eternities may we affirm your holiness,
and may your praise, our God,
never be absent from our mouths
now and forever.
For you are a great and holy God. ↪

אני...אלהיכם / I...God! (Numbers 15:41).

יהוה אדונינו...הארץ / THE SOVEREIGN...earth! (Psalms 8:10).

והיה יהוה אחד / The time...be one (Zechariah 14:9).

ימלך...הללויה / May...Halleluyah! (Psalms 146:10).

הוא אֱלֹהֵינוּ הוא אֲבִינוּ הוא מְלַכְנוּ הוא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ והוא יִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ
בְּרַחֲמָיו שְׁנִית לְעֵינֵי כָל חַי: לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים:
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

אֲדִיר אֲדִירֵנוּ יְהוָה אֲדִירֵנוּ מִה־אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ: וְהָיָה יְהוָה
לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהָיָה יְהוָה אֶחָד וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד:
וּבְדַבְרֵי קִדְשְׁךָ כְּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

יְמַלֶּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר הַלְלוּיָהּ:
לְדֹר וָדֹר נָגִיד גְּדֹלְךָ וּלְנִצַּח נִצְחִים קִדְשְׁתָּךְ נִקְדִּישׁ וְשִׁבְחֶךָ
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפְּיָנוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם וְעַד כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ
אָתָּה: ←

Hu eloheynu hu avinu hu malkeynu hu moshi'enu vehu
yashmi'enu berahamav shenit le'eyney kol hay lihyot lahem
leylohim ani adonay eloheyhem.

Adir adirenu adonay adoneynu mah adir shimeha behol ha'aretz.
Vehayah adonay lemelech al kol ha'aretz bayom hahu yihyeh
adonay ehad ushemo ehad.

Uvedivrey kodsheha katuv lemor.

Yimloch adonay le'olam elohayih tziyon ledor vador halleluyah.

Ledor vador nagid godleha ulnetzah netzahim kedushateha
nakdish veshivha ha eloheynu mipinu lo yamush le'olam va'ed ki
el melech gadol vekadosh atah. ↪

COMMENTARY. On the pilgrimage festivals and Days of Awe, the paragraph
אֲדִיר אֲדִירֵנוּ /*adir adireynu*! / O mighty one is added to the *Kedushah*. This
provides an additional opportunity to emphasize not only divine
sovereignty, but the hope that God's rule will become permanently
manifest throughout the earth. Its placement here in the middle of the
Kedushah stands as a reminder that holiness is only complete when human
beings live lives that bring them into harmony with the divine. Thus the
prayer for divine sovereignty is a prayer we are meant to take personally as
we strive to be holy.

D.A.T.

If the remainder of the Amidah is being read silently, it is customary to remain standing. If the remainder of the Amidah is being chanted aloud (שׁוֹרֵר הַשִּׁיר/reader's repetition), it is customary to be seated here.

And therefore, HOLY ONE, let awe of you
infuse the whole of your Creation,
and let knowledge of your presence
dwell in all your creatures.
And let every being worship you,
and each created life pay homage to your rule.
Let all of them, as one, enact your bidding
with a whole and peaceful heart.
For we have always known, ALMIGHTY ONE,
that all authority to rule originates in you,
all strength is rooted in your arm,
all mighty deeds have emanated from your hand.
Your name alone is the source of awe
that surges through all life.

And therefore, HOLY ONE, let awe of you
infuse your people, let the praise of you
ring out from all who worship you.
Let hope enliven all who seek you,
and let all who look to you with hope
find strength to speak.
Grant joy throughout your land,
let happiness resound throughout your holy city,
soon, and in our days.

And therefore, let the just behold your peace,
let them rejoice,
let all who follow in your path sing out with joy,
let all who love you dance in celebration,
and may your power overwhelm all treachery,
so that it vanish wholly from the earth like smoke.
Then shall the power of injustice pass away! ↪

If the remainder of the Amidah is being read silently, it is customary to remain standing. If the remainder of the Amidah is being chanted aloud (ש"ץ/reader's repetition), it is customary to be seated here.

ובכן תגן פחדה יהוה אלהינו על כל-מעשיך ואימתך על כל-
מה-שבראת וייראוך כל-המעשים וישתחוו לפניך כל-הברואים
ויעשו כלם אגדה אחת לעשות רצונך בלבב שלם כמו שידענו
יהוה אלהינו שהשלטון לפניך עז בידך וגבורה בימינך ושמך
נורא על כל-מה-שבראת:

ובכן תגן כבוד יהוה לעמך תהלה ליראיך ותקנה לדורשיך
ופתחון פה למיחלים לך שמחה לארצך וששון לעירך במהרה
בימינו:

ובכן צדיקים יראו וישמחו וישרים יעלזו וחסידים ברנה
יגילו ועולתה תקפץ-פיה וכל-הרשעה בלה כעשן תכלה כי
תעביר ממשלת זדון מן הארץ: ←

May you alone be sovereign over all of your Creation,
and Mount Zion be the seat and symbol of your glory,
and Jerusalem, your holy city—
as is written in your holy scriptures:
“THE ETERNAL ONE shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, through all generations!
Halleluyah!”

Holy are you,
and awe-inspiring is your name,
and there is no God apart from you,
as it is written: “THE CREATOR of the hosts of heaven
shall be exalted through the rule of law,
and God, the Holy One, made holy by the reign of justice.”
Blessed are you, ETERNAL ONE,
the holy sovereign power. ↩

וְתִמְלֹךְ אֲתָהּ יְהוָה לְבִדְךָ עַל כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיךָ בְּהַר צִיּוֹן מִשְׁפַּן כְּבוֹדְךָ
וּבִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קִדְשֶׁךָ: כַּפְתּוֹב בְּדַבְרֵי קִדְשֶׁךָ: יְמִלֶךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם
אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן לְדָר וָדָר הַלְלוּיָהּ:

קְדוֹשׁ אַתָּה וְנוֹרָא שְׁמֶךָ וְאֵין אֱלֹוִהּ מִבְּלַעְדֶּיךָ: כַּפְתּוֹב: וַיִּגְבֶּה יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת בַּמִּשְׁפָּט וְהָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ נִקְדָּשׁ בְּצַדִּיקָה: כְּרוֹף אַתָּה יְהוָה
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקְּדוֹשׁ: ←

ימלך...הללויה / THE ETERNAL ONE...Halleluyah! (Psalms 146:10).
ויגבה...בצדקה / THE CREATOR...justice (Isaiah 5:16).

4. KEDUSHAT HAYOM / THE DAY'S HOLINESS

On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.

You have loved us, and have taken pleasure in us,
and have made us holy with your mitzvot,
and you have brought us, sovereign one,
near to your service,
and have called us to the shelter of your great and holy name.
And you gave us, **HOLY ONE**, our God, with love,
(this day of Shabbat, for holiness and rest, and)
this Day of Atonement,
for pardon, for forgiveness, and for atonement,
a day for pardoning all of our wrongful acts,
(with love,)
a holy convocation,
a remembrance of the going out from Egypt.
(Those who keep Shabbat enjoy your realm,
they call Shabbat the summit of delight.
A people that observes the holy seventh day
enjoys abundant goodness and delight.

The seventh day you favored and made holy,
you have called it the most loved of days,
a sign you made of it eternally,
in memory of Creation's works and days.) ↪

קְדוּשַׁת הַיּוֹם

On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.

אֵתָּה אֶהְבֵּתָנוּ וְרָצִיתָ בָּנוּ וְקִדְשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצּוֹתֶיךָ וְקִרְבָּתָנוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ
לְעַבְדוֹתֶיךָ וְשִׂמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ קִרְאתָ:

וְתַתְּנֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה אֶת-יּוֹם (הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה לְקִדְשָׁהּ
וְלִמְנוּחָהּ וְאֶת-יּוֹם) הַכּוֹפּוּרִים הַזֶּה לְמַחִילָהּ וְלִסְלִיחָהּ וְלְכַפְּרָהּ
וְלִמְחֹל-בּוֹ אֶת-כָּל-עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ (בְּאַהֲבָה) מִקְּרָא קֹדֶשׁ זָכָר לְיִצְחָאֵת
מִצָּרִים:

(יִשְׁמְחוּ בְּמִלְכוּתְךָ שׁוֹמְרֵי שַׁבָּת וְקוֹרְאֵי עֶנְג: עִם מְקַדְּשֵׁי שְׁבִיעֵי
כָּלֶם יִשְׁבְּעוּ וְיִתְעַנְּגוּ מִטּוֹבְךָ: וְהַשְּׁבִיעֵי רָצִיתָ בּוֹ וְקִדְשָׁתוֹ: חֲמֻדַּת
יָמִים אוֹתוֹ קִרְאתָ זָכָר לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית:) ←

(Yismehu vemaalhuteha shomrey shabbat vekorey oneg. Am mekadeshey shevi'i kulam yisbe'u veyitanegu mituveha. Vehashevi'i ratzita bo vekidashto. Hemdat yamim oto karata zeher lema'asey vereyshit.) →

We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow or prostrate at "bend the knee." Choose one of the following:

It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all,
to declare the greatness of the author of Creation,
who gave us teachings of truth
and planted eternal life within us.



It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all,
to declare the greatness of the author of Creation,
who created heaven's heights and spread out its expanse,
who laid the earth's foundation and brought forth its offspring,
giving life to all its peoples,
the breath of life to all who walk about. ↩

COMMENTARY. This siddur offers several versions of the *Aleynu*. The first emphasizes that the gift of Torah demands our committed response. The second emphasizes our obligation to God as part of Creation. The traditional *Aleynu* below the line has troubled some Jews because it implies the inferiority of other faiths and peoples. D.A.T.

MEDITATION. We pray every year at this time to be written in the Book of Life for another year. One more year. Give me one more year. I'm not finished. Not yet. We're afraid. We don't want to die. But Yom Kippur is about dying. We enact the drama of our dying. We put on our *kittels*. We stop eating. It's over. How do I let go of this life? How do I let go of myself? How do I forgive everything, everyone, myself, and let my life fall? Bowing completely is falling down back into the womb of the earth, slowly, softly. Relaxing completely. Give up your little story....Give back your small self. Sense the ground and through it the immensity of the Big Story, and from within it and behind it, feel its unknowable Author....We are only halfway home. Bowing is not just about giving up and going down. It's about giving up and going down *in order to get back up. All the way up.* Up, more easily and further than you have ever been. Up, with fresh energy, power, openness. Up, with renewed purpose, and yes, up with a sense of authority. From where does our strength come? Our strength comes from God. But sometimes we've got to go down to get it. We rise with strength renewed. Bruce Fertman

We rise for Aleynu. It is customary to bow or prostrate at "korim." Choose one of the following:

Aleynu leshabe'ah la'adon hakol
latet gedulah leyotzer bereyshit
shenatan lanu torat emet
vehayey olam nata betohenu.

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל
לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
שְׁנָתָן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת
וַחַי עוֹלָם נִטַּע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ:

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Aleynu leshabe'ah la'adon hakol
latet gedulah leyotzer bereyshit.
bore hashamayim venoteyhem
roka ha'aretz vetze'etza'eha
noten neshamah la'am aleha
veru'ah laholehim bah. ←

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל
לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית
בוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנוֹטֵיָהֶם
רֹקַע הָאָרֶץ וְצֹאצְאֵיהָ
נֹתֵן נְשָׁמָה לְעַם עֲלֵיהָ
וְרוּחַ לְהִלְכֵי־בָהּ: ←

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה
לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי
הָאָרְצוֹת וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה
שְׁלֹא שָׂם חֻלְקֵנוּ בָּהֶם וְגוֹרְלֵנוּ כְּכֹל
הַמּוֹנֵם:

It is up to us to offer praises to the Source of all, to declare the greatness of the author of Creation, who has made us different from the other nations of the earth, and situated us in quite a different spot, and made our daily lot another kind from theirs, and given us a destiny uncommon in this world.

And so, we bend the knee and bow,
acknowledging the sovereign who rules
above all those who rule, the blessed Holy One,
who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth,
whose realm embraces heaven's heights,
whose mighty presence stalks celestial ramparts.
This is our God; there is none else besides,
as it is written in the Torah:
"You shall know this day, and bring it home
inside your heart, that THE SUPREME ONE is God
in the heavens above and on the earth below.
There is no other God."

Our God, our ancients' God, may our prayer arise and come to you, and be beheld, and be acceptable. Let it be heard, acted upon, remembered—the memory of us and all our needs, the memory of our ancestors, the memory of messianic hopes, the memory of Jerusalem your holy city, and the memory of all your kin, the house of Israel, all surviving in your presence. Act for goodness and grace, for love and care, for life, well-being and peace, on this Day of Atonement.

Remember us this day, ALL-KNOWING ONE, our God, for goodness. Favor us this day with blessing. Preserve us this day for life. With your redeeming nurturing word, be kind and generous. Act tenderly on our behalf, and grant us victory over all our trials. Truly, our eyes turn toward you, for you are a providing God; gracious and merciful are you.

וידעת...עוד / You...other God (Deuteronomy 4:39).

וְאַנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים
הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא:

שְׁהוּא נוֹטֵה שְׁמַיִם וְיוֹסֵד אֶרֶץ וּמוֹשֵׁב יְקָרוֹ בְּשָׁמַיִם מְמַעַל וּשְׁכִינַת
עֶזֶר בְּגִבְהֵי מְרוֹמִים: הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד: אָמֵת מְלַכְנוּ אָפֶס
זוּלָתוֹ כְּפָתוּב בְּתוֹרָתוֹ: וְיִדְעָתָּ הַיּוֹם וְהַשַּׁבָּת אֶל-לְבַבְךָ כִּי יְהוּה
הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מְמַעַל וְעַל-הָאָרֶץ מִתְחַת אֵין עוֹד:

Va'anahnu korim umishtahavim umodim
lifney meleḥ malḥey hamelaḥim hakadosh baruḥ hu.

Shehu noteh shamayim veyosed aretz umoshav yekaro

bashamayim mima'al

usheḥinat uzo begovhey meromim.

Hu eloheynu eyn od.

Emet malkenu efes zulato kakatuv betorato.

Veyadata hayom vahashevota el levavecha

ki adonay hu ha'elohim bashamayim mima'al ve'al ha'aretz

mitaḥat eyn od.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ יַעֲלֶה וְיָבֹא וְיִגְיַע וְיִרְאֶה וְיִרְצֶה
וְיִשְׁמַע וְיִפְקֹד וְיִזְכֹּר וְיִזְכְּרוּנָנוּ וּפְקֻדוֹתֵינוּ וְזִכְרוֹן אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ
וְזִכְרוֹן יְמוֹת הַמַּשְׁיָיח וְזִכְרוֹן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קְדוֹשָׁךְ וְזִכְרוֹן כָּל עַמְּךָ
בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֶיךָ לְפִלִיטָה וּלְטוֹבָה לְחַן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים לְחַיִּים
וּלְשָׁלוֹם בַּיּוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים הַזֶּה:

זְכַרְנוּ יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה: וּפְקֻדָנוּ לְבִרְכָה וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בּוֹ
לְחַיִּים: וּבְדַבַּר יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים חוּס וְחַנּוּנוּ וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ
כִּי אֵלֶיךָ עֵינֵינוּ כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ חַנוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה:

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 שְׁנֵי שְׁעִירִים וְקִלְפֵי הֵיטָה שֵׁם וּבָה שְׁנֵי גּוֹרְלוֹת:
טָרַף בְּקִלְפֵי וְהֶעֱלָה שְׁנֵי גּוֹרְלוֹת: אֶחָד כְּתוּב עָלָיו לַיהוָה וְאֶחָד
כְּתוּב עָלָיו לְעֶזְרָאֵל: קָשָׁר לְשׁוֹן שְׁלֹזְהוּרִית בְּרֹאשׁ שְׁעִיר הַמִּשְׁתַּלַּח
וְהֶעֱמִידוּ כְּנָגֵד בֵּית־שְׁלוּחֹו וְלִנְשָׁחֻט כְּנָגֵד בֵּית־שְׁחִיטָתוֹ: בָּא לֹו
אֶצֶּל פָּרוֹ שְׁנֵיָה וְסוּמְךָ 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 בֶּה אָנּוּ חַיִּים:

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

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
שְׁעִוִיתִי וְשִׁפְשַׁעְתִּי וְשָׁחַטְתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנִי וּבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל:

וְכַךְ אָנוּ אוֹמְרִים אֲנִי הַשֵּׁם כְּפָר־נָא לְחַטָּאִים וּלְעֹנֹת וּלְפִשְׁעִים
שְׁחָטָאוּ וְשָׁעוּ וְשִׁפְשָׁעוּ 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 וּבְטָהֳרָה הָיוּ כּוֹרְעִים
וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים וְנוֹפְלִים עַל פְּנֵיהֶם וְאוֹמְרִים בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד
מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד: וְאִי הוּא הָיָה מְתַכּוֹן לְגַמֵּר אֶת־הַשֵּׁם כְּנֹדֶד
הַמְּבָרְכִים וְאוֹמֵר לָהֶם תְּטַהֲרוּ: וְאַתָּה בְּטוֹבְךָ מְעוֹרֵר רַחֲמֶיךָ
וְסוֹלֵחַ לְעַם מִשְׁרָתֶיךָ:

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).

INTRODUCTION TO ELEH EZKERAH/ MARTYROLOGY

מָה חַיֵּינוּ אִם לֹא נִזְכֹּר אֶת יְמֵי־חַיֵּיהֶם:
מָה חֲסִדְנוּ אִם לֹא תְהִיָּה לָנוּ דּוֹגְמַת חֲסִדֵיהֶם:
מָה צְדָקְנוּ לּוּלֵא צְדָקַת מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם:
מָה גְבוּרוֹתֵינוּ לְעוֹמַת מְסִרַת נַפְשָׁם עַל קְדוּשַׁת שְׁמֶךָ:
וּמָה נֹאמֵר לְפָנֶיךָ אִם לֹא נִזְכֹּר אֶת כָּל קוּרְוֹתֵיהֶם:
הֲלֹא כּוֹלֵם הָיָה אֲנֹשִׁי שֵׁם וְחֻכְמַיִם וְצַדִּיקִים:
וְכָל הַמְרָבָה לְסַפֵּר אִוְדוֹתֵיהֶם יִחְשְׁבוּ
לְתַלְמִידֵי תַלְמִידֵיהֶם וְהָרִי זֶה מְשׁוּבָח:

What is our life without remembering the days of their lives?
What is our piety without the example of their pious way?
What is our righteousness without their righteous deeds?
What is our courage in the face of their giving their lives to
sanctify God's name?
What can we say if we do not to remember their stories?
They were people of renown, wise and righteous.
All who elaborate in telling about them are called the students of
their students and are praiseworthy.

Michael Strassfeld

COMMENTARY. The traditional readings in the *Eleh Ezkerah* section of the Yom Kippur liturgy focus on acts of voluntary martyrdom known as *kidush hashem*, sanctification of the divine name. *Kidush hashem* involves voluntarily giving up one's life rather than committing a serious transgression or forsaking Torah. In more recent history, many Jewish martyrs were of a radically different sort because they died not out of a heroic choice, but merely because they were Jews. While the Holocaust is the most striking and most horrible example, such was the lot of some of the Jews who died in the Crusades, pogroms, and in countless unspeakable acts that have occurred in the last millennium. These two kinds of martyrs—those who made brave choices and those who appear to have had none—are more alike than they first appear, for each generation of Jews rededicates itself to the covenant anew. We know this act contains a risk. Voluntarily continuing the covenant is thus potentially an act of *kidush hashem*.

D.A.T.

The Yom Kippur Martyrology, the *Eleh Ezkerah*, is an early poem based on various *midrashim* about ten talmudic sages living under Roman authority who refused to abandon Torah, and, consequently, were tortured to death. That there were several versions of the poem, which differed with regard to the list of martyrs, few of whom were contemporaries of one another, was of no concern to the worshipping Jew, for historical accuracy had nothing to do with the purpose of the text. In a world of Jewish persecution, the legend of the Ten Martyrs became popular because it set before the oppressed an example of the greatest Sages faced with the same challenges. Especially from the time of the First Crusade, the Ten served as a model for contemporary martyrs.

In the order of the traditional liturgy, the Martyrology is placed immediately after the *Avodah* service, which describes the rites of the High Priest on Yom Kippur day. That placement suggests that since we can no longer offer animal sacrifices for the expiation of our sins, we offer the lives of our martyrs instead. If *we* are not worthy of expiation, *they* certainly were, and so we may be forgiven on account of their merit. But that understanding of sin and atonement is inconsistent with our own. We believe that no matter how meritorious the lives of our ancestors were, they cannot serve to remove the taint of our sins; we alone are responsible. Still we acknowledge that our lives are built on the foundations laid by those who have come before us, that their lives well lived can inspire us to live lives that may be an inspiration to others in the future. We also recognize that while our history is replete with so many who died for the sake of their principles, there were others who chose to live out their principles, even when a cruel and unjust world negated them.

Choose one of the following versions of Eleh Ezkerah: Martyrs through the Ages (beginning on page 899), Principles of Martyrs (beginning on page 919), The Martyrs of the Shoah (beginning on page 933).

ELEH EZKERAH I/
MARTYRS THROUGH THE AGES

מאחרי כל זה / *After All This*
שֶׁהָר הַזְכָּרוֹן יִזְכֵּר בְּמִקְוָמִי,
זֶה תִּפְקִידוֹ. שֶׁהֶגֶן לְזִכְרֵי יִזְכֵּר,
שֶׁהָרְחוֹב עַל שֵׁם יִזְכֵּר,
שֶׁהַבְּנֵי הַיְדוּעַ יִזְכֵּר,
שֶׁבֵּית הַתְּפִלָּה עַל שֵׁם אֱלֹהִים יִזְכֵּר,
שֶׁסֵּפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַמְתַּגְלָּגֵל יִזְכֵּר,
שֶׁהַיִּזְכֵּר יִזְכֵּר. שֶׁהַדְּגָלִים יִזְכֵּרוּ,
הַתְּכָרִיכִים הַצְּבָעוֹנִיִּים שֶׁל הַהִיסְטוֹרְיָה, אֲשֶׁר
הַגּוֹפִים שֶׁעֲטָפוּ הִפְכוּ אֶבֶק. שֶׁהָאֶבֶק יִזְכֵּר.
שֶׁהָאֲשָׁפָה תִּזְכֵּר בְּשַׁעַר. שֶׁהַשְּׁלִיָּה תִּזְכֵּר.
שֶׁחַיִּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם יֹאכְלוּ וַיִּזְכְּרוּ,
שֶׁכֶּלֶם יִזְכְּרוּ. כִּדִּי שְׂאוּכַל לְנוּחַ.

Let the Mount of Memory remember in my place
—that is its purpose.

Let the garden *in memoriam* remember.

Let the street named “in the name of” remember.

Let the building that is known remember.

Let the house of prayer in the name of God remember.

Let the rolled up Torah scroll remember.

Let the *Yizkor* prayer remember.

Let the banners of memorial remember.

Let the multicolored shrouds of history remember,
draped with fallen bodies that have turned to dust.

Let the heap of dung remember in the gate.

Let the remaining flesh remember.

Let beasts of the field and birds of the sky devour and remember.

Yes, let all of them remember,

so that I might rest.

Yehuda Amichai

אֵלֶּה אֶזְכְּרָה וְנִפְשִׁי עָלַי אֲשַׁפֵּחַ:

Eleh ezkerah venafshi alay eshpehah.

These I remember and pour out my soul.

We walk the world of slaughter,
stumbling and falling in wreckage,

surrounded by the fear of death,
and eyes which gaze at us in silence,

the eyes of other martyred Jews,
of hunted, harried, persecuted souls
who never had a choice,

who've huddled all together in a corner
and press each other closer still and quake.

For here it was the sharpened axes found them
and they have come to take another look
at the stark terror of their savage death.

Their staring eyes all ask the ancient question: **Why?**

Hayim Nahman Bialik (Adapted)

All the generations that preceded me contributed me
in small amounts, so that I would be erected here in Jerusalem
all at once, like a house of prayer or a charity institution.

That commits one. My name is the name of my contributors.

That commits one.

I am getting to be the age my father was when he died.

My last will shows many superscriptions.

I must change my life and my death
daily, to fulfill all the predictions

concerning me. So they won't be lies.

That commits one.

I have passed my fortieth year.

There are posts they will not let me fill
because of that. Were I in Auschwitz,
they wouldn't put me to work.

They'd burn me right away.

That commits one.

Yehuda Amichai

Our Rabbis taught: Once the wicked government (of Rome) issued a decree forbidding the Jews to study and practice the Torah. Pappos ben Yehudah came and found Rabbi Akiba publicly bringing gatherings together and occupying himself with the Torah. He said to him: "Akiba, are you not afraid of the Government?" He replied: "I will explain to you with a parable. A fox was once walking alongside of a river, and he saw fishes going in swarms from one place to another. He said to them: 'From what are you fleeing?' They replied: 'From the nets cast for us by men.' He said to them: 'Would you like to come up on to the dry land so that you and I can live together in the way that my ancestors lived with your ancestors?' They replied: 'Are you the one that they call the cleverest of animals? You are not clever but foolish. If we are afraid in the element in which we live, how much more in the element in which we would die!' So it is with us. If such is our condition when we sit and study the Torah, of which it is written, *For that is your life and the length of your days* (Deuteronomy 30:20), if we go and neglect it, how much worse off shall we be!"

It is related that soon afterwards Rabbi Akiba was arrested and thrown into prison, and Pappos ben Yehudah was also arrested and imprisoned next to him. He said to him: "Pappos, who brought you here?" He replied: "Happy are you, Rabbi Akiba, that you have been seized for busying yourself with the Torah! Alas for Pappos, who has been seized for busying himself with idle things!"

It is related that when Rabbi Akiba was taken out for execution, it was the hour for the recital of the *Shema*, and while they combed his flesh with iron combs, he directed his mind to accepting upon himself the sovereignty of heaven with love. His disciples said to him: "Our teacher, even to this point?" He said to them: "All my days I have been troubled by this verse, *And you must love the one your God with all your soul*, [which I interpret,] 'even if God takes your soul.' Now that I have the

opportunity shall I not fulfill it?" He prolonged the word *ehad* until he expired while saying it.

The ministering angels said before the blessed Holy One: "Such Torah, and such a reward? [He should have been] *from them that die by your hand, O God.*" God replied to them: "*Their portion is in life* (Psalms 17:14)."

A *bat kol* (voice from heaven) went forth and proclaimed, "Happy are you, Rabbi Akiba, that you are destined for the life of the world to come."

Talmud Berahot 61b

They wrapped him in the Torah he loved,
and lived by, and taught with awe,
in defiance of the Romans,
craving the teaching
as fish crave water.

Hanina was not the first Jew to be bound
and burned by the Amalek—enemy—
nor would he be the last—that was certain—
there were still the Priests and Princes of Spain
and Crusaders and Cossacks
and the most mass-efficient of all,
the Germans
to come.

But his tortured vision-message
was the first,
and would somehow make the Death of History easier
for his students and students-of-students
down to the Last Generation of Jews
who would have to suffer
for whatever there is
that calls for Jewish screams
to lullaby the world to restful sleep. ↩

As the flames cracked
and the body sizzled
Ḥanina was heard to say:
He Who will see this desecrated Torah
avenged
will make good, somehow, my dying.
I see the parchment burn,
but the Letters are soaring to their source.
You may burn a Torah,
but Torah will not be consumed.
You may kill Jews,
but the Jews will survive
and serve witness
to the Genesis—patterns of Creation
and the Isaiah—prophecies of hope.

Danny Siegel

Who has heard or seen such a thing? Ask and see: has there ever been an *Akedah* such as this since the days of Adam? When were there ever a thousand and a hundred sacrifices in one day, each and every one of them like the *Akedah* of Isaac, son of Abraham? Yet for the one bound on Mount Moriah, God shook the world to its base, as it is stated, “Behold the angels cried out and the skies darkened.” What did they do now? Why did the skies not darken and the stars not dim...when in one day one thousand and one hundred pure souls were slain and slaughtered! Oh the spotless babes and sucklings, innocent of all sin, oh the innocent lives! Will You remain silent in the face of these things, O God?

Shelomoh bar Shimshon

I heard from aged exiles of Spain that a certain ship was struck with plague and that the ship's owner cast the passengers off onto uninhabited terrain. Most died there of hunger; only a few found the strength to proceed on foot in search of civilization.

Among these was a certain Jew who struggled on with his wife and two sons. The wife, whose feet were untried, fainted and perished, leaving her husband, who was carrying the boys. He and his sons also fainted from hunger; when he awoke he found the two dead. In agony, he rose to his feet and cried, "Master of the Universe! You go to great lengths to force me to desert my faith. Know for a certainty that in the face of the dwellers of heaven, a Jew I am and a Jew I shall remain; all that You have brought upon me or will bring upon me shall be of no avail!" Then he gathered dirt and grasses, covered the boys, and went off in search of a settlement.

Those who went to Fez suffered God's judgments, particularly keen hunger. Denied entry to the cities by their inhabitants, who feared that food prices would soar, they pitched their tents in the fields and there sought out wild plants, praying that they might find some—for drought had destroyed all the vegetation, leaving only roots. Many died in the field with none to bury them, so weakened were the survivors by hunger. On Shabbat they would forage only with their mouths, taking comfort in the fact that they plucked nothing with their hands.

There, too, a poor woman saw her son faint away. Having no means of subsistence and seeing that his death was certain, she lifted a stone and hurled it upon his head, and the boy died. Then she struck herself until she, too, expired.

Solomon ibn Verga

Cossacks approached the city of Nemirow. When the Jews saw the troops from afar, their hearts trembled from fright, though they were not certain, as yet, whether they were Polish or Cossack. Nevertheless all the Jews went with their wives and infants, with their silver and gold, into the fortress, and locked and barred the doors, prepared to fight them. What did those evil-doers, the Cossacks do? They devised flags like those of the Poles, for there is no other way to distinguish between the Polish and the Cossack forces except through their banners. The [non-Jewish] people of the city were fully aware of this trickery, and nevertheless called to the Jews in the fortress: "Open the gate. This is a Polish army which has come to save you from the hands of your enemies, should they come." The Jews who were standing guard on the wall, seeing that the flags were like those of Poland, believed that the people of the city spoke the truth. Immediately they opened the gate. No sooner had the gate been opened than the Cossacks entered with drawn swords, and the townspeople too, armed with swords, spears and scythes, and some only with clubs, and they killed the Jews in large numbers. Women and young girls were ravished, but some of the women and maidens jumped into the moat surrounding the fortress in order that the uncircumcised should not defile them. They drowned in the waters. Many of them who were able to swim, jumped into water, believing they would escape the slaughter, but the Ukrainians swam after them with their swords and their scythes, and killed them in the water. Some of the enemy shot with their guns into the water, and killed them till the water became red with the blood of the slain.

It happened there that a beautiful maiden, of a renowned and wealthy family, had been captured by a certain Cossack who forced her to be his wife. But, before they lived together she told him with cunning that she possessed a certain magic and that no weapon could harm her. She said to him: "If you do not believe me, just test me. Shoot at me with a gun, and you will see that

I will not be harmed.” The Cossack, her husband, in his simplicity, thought she was telling the truth. He shot at her with his gun and she fell and died for the Sanctification of the Name, to avoid being defiled by him, may God avenge her blood.

Another event occurred when a beautiful girl, about to be married to a Cossack, insisted that their marriage take place in a church which stood across the bridge. He granted her request, and with timbrels and flutes, attired in festive garb, led her to the marriage. As soon as they came to the bridge she jumped into the water and was drowned for the Sanctification of the Name. May God avenge her blood. These, and many similar events took place, far too numerous to be recorded. The number of the slain and drowned in the holy community of Nemirow was about six thousand.

Nathan Nata Hanover

An old Jew was running down the street chased by a young Russian, about sixteen years old, with an ax in his hand. The boy caught up with the old man and, with one stroke, he split his skull. As the old man fell, the boy pushed the split head together with his boot.

Instantly, gun in hand, a young Jew darted up, a pale young man, with a gaunt face and glasses. They ran, and I ran after them. The young Jew shot, but missed. The Russian left the broad, open street and ran into a courtyard. My foot got caught in something, and I fell.

By the time I ran into the courtyard, the Russian was standing in a corner, his back to a fence. His childlike face was green, his gray eyes gaped and bulged, his teeth chattered in a rapid rhythm. The young Jew stood right in front of him, with the gun in his raised hand, but his face was even paler than before. He stared at the wild terror of young flesh and blood, stared for some time. Then he put the gun to his own head, and fired. ↪

The last light of reason vanished from the Russian's eyes. He sat down beside the body twitching at his feet, rose. Then, with an insane shriek, he leaped over the corpse and ran out of the courtyard.

A wild laugh erupted from inside my throat. My foot rose, of its own accord, and kicked the bloody carcass, lying twisted on the ground like a trampled worm.

Lamed Shapiro

They say the woman with the black hair
shivered as she turned
that the soldier called out to her in German
told her to wait, while the others lined up in front of the ditch,
took off their clothes.

Body after body was shot then,
one on top of the other into the ditch.
That by the time it took him to walk to the woman
(a matter of minutes)
her hair had turned completely white
and when she was finally shot
the bullets only wounded her
and she was buried like that,
still breathing, an old lady not quite twenty.

This happened thirty-nine years ago
and every woman that knows about her
had gone to sleep, one time or another
hugging her shadow.

Because what substance do we have?
And if we are not this woman, or her mother, or her daughter,
then, who are we? Who are we?

Carole Glasser

In the city of Warsaw such a long time ago
Two hundred children stand lined row on row
With their freshly washed faces and freshly washed clothes
The children of Poland who never grow old

In the orphanage yard not a child remains
The soldiers have herded them down to the trains
Carrying small flasks of water and bags of dry bread
To march in the ranks of the unquiet dead

With their small Jewish faces and pale haunted eyes
They march hand in hand down the street—no one cries,
No one laughs, no one looks, no one turns, no one talks
As they walk down the streets where my grandparents walked

Had my grandparents stayed in that dark bloody land
My own children too would have marched hand in hand
To the beat of the soldiers, the jackbooted stamp
That would measure their lives till they died in those camps

The cries of my children at night take me back
To those pale hollow faces in stark white and black
Only the blood of the children remains
It runs in the street—and it runs in our veins

Si Kahn

For a long time we have been promising each other to recite *Kol Nidrey* this year. A Jewish block elder has allowed us to pray in his block. Someone has brought a *tallis* from the clothing warehouse. The seriousness of the moment is felt in camp. It seems that the entire world is preparing for *Kol Nidrey*.

From every block, people assemble at the barracks of the Jewish block elder. People stand pressed next to one another. Everyone who feels a Jewish heart beating inside has come, even the other block elders and kapos. Always the grand aristocrats, now they stand among the ordinary “prisoners.” Even the German block elders and kapos, those terrible murderers, are silent. They avoid the barracks, moving in a large semicircle around it. Today, they have somehow grown afraid of the Jews.

The rabbi prays. Wrapped in the *tallis*, he recites the *mahzor’s* Prayer of Purification. Everything is frozen as the rabbi intones: “As if our bodies are placed on top of the altar to be accepted by the Almighty, as a sacrifice dedicated completely to God.” Through the boards of the barracks I look at the crematorium, from which smoke reaches into the gray heavens.

I hear the voice of the rabbi, as though it no longer came from his heart, but as if his heart itself had opened and wept: “And a portion of our fat and our blood.”

He wraps himself more tightly, and repeats the words; but now his heart bleeds, and he omits “and a portion”; “our fat and our blood.” The congregation repeats: “our fat and our blood.” As if under a spell, everyone stops at these words. The rabbi cannot go on. Louder and louder the congregation repeats: “our fat and our blood.” Someone shouts: “The blood and fat of our parents, children, and relatives.”

Tears pour from everyone’s eyes. The weeping flows together like a river. Hearts of stone have given way.

I do not weep. I cannot tear my eyes away from the clear smoke of the crematorium. I feel a terrible weariness in my bones. It is unbearably hot in the barracks.

When the rabbi says, "With the permission of the Almighty," I am transported to another world. It seems to me that I am sitting somewhere in a catacomb in Spain. I see the bonfires and the grim Torquemada, the unfortunate Jews who burn for the Sanctification of God's Name, who burn as martyrs. The smoke of the burned is carried straight into heaven. I hear the *shema yisra'el* carried by the smoke and, later, people wrapped in black, who come into the catacombs with their faces covered.

"We pray together with the sinners!" cry the figures in black. A terrible cry ascends from the images. I hear the rabbi saying: "From this Yom Kippur until the next."

And suddenly everything is silent. A dead stillness prevails in the barracks; no one prays, no one weeps on. It is as if all of our tongues were bound.

Only from outside do we hear the terrible wailing. On the road, the women are being led to the ovens. The sound of the trucks' motors are drowned out by the naked women's cries. There are many in the barracks whose dear ones are being led away. Everyone is still, as if trying to discern the voice of a loved one among the screams. Through the open gates, we see the victims lift up their hands toward the sky and plead for mercy. The women see the men in the barracks. Their shouts grow louder. Everyone inside is petrified.

The rabbi is the first to arouse himself. He interrupts *Kol Nidrey* and begins the morning service: "Now we proclaim the sacred power of this day." ↪

In the silence of the barracks his voice is heard, as if responding to the women's cries. His voice resounds, and when he comes to the words of the *Unetaneh Tókef*—"And who by fire"—a lament tears out from every throat: "And who by fire!" The phrase, "who by fire," comes as if from the other world.

The rabbi continues, but his voice is drowned out by the tragic cries, "who by fire," as if the Jews wanted to quench the terrible fire with their words. But the motors don't stop rumbling. More and more victims are led off to be burned.

"Who by fire!" the congregation does not stop shouting. The voices of the condemned mix with the men's prayer. As if hypnotized, everyone shouts: "Who by fire!" as if praying to be burned in the fire as well.

In the midst of the prayer, the sound of the shofar interrupts: *tekiyah, shevarim, teruah, tekiyah gedolah*.

The shofar awakens the men as if from a dream. At first it is quiet in the barracks. I hear my heart bang. Soon the whole crowd weeps. The voices of the naked women reach heaven. The crowd weeps softly.

In the block where we prayed, next to the oven which has been turned into a podium, the rabbi lies wrapped in the *tallis*. The shepherd's soul has departed.

Fires burn in the woods by the crematorium all night; the ovens are not big enough.

Yoysef Vaynberg (Adapted)

My approach to life was formulated through a small window of a dark cellar, under the kindergarten at Dolna Volnaka, a cellar in which papa, mama, my sister Milka, my eldest brother, my aunt, cousin, Mr. Bachmann and I spent 700 days. In the autumn of 1944, on Rosh Hashanah of the year 5705, I observed the vanguard of the Red Army entering the town to liberate it.

In August we had heard the thunderous sounds of explosions from the approaching front. Later on we were to find out that this was the sound of Soviet artillery guns. For us, who had dwelt in the muddy cellar, hidden deep in the greasy Ukrainian soil, those were the sounds of salvation.

Around us there was a roar of excitement, and we, eight shadows of human beings, with our bones sticking out and swarming with lice, crawled through the hidden window, the size of a shrunken human being, out of the muddy cellar and into the yard.

For 700 days and nights we had grown moldy in that cellar by the river.

There in the yard a crowd of embarrassed and perplexed Poles and Ukrainians gathered. They did not know where we had come from and how we had remained alive. Among them were former neighbors, one of them a Ukrainian boy who had accompanied the Germans around our houses seeking to help them find their prey—a small collaborator, a 12-year-old quisling.

Some time later, in the days of repentance between the New Year and Yom Kippur, the boy played with an unsuspecting object, and the sound of a blast was heard. When we stepped out of the house we found him dead, in a puddle of blood, with his hand torn off. I had hated him vehemently, but I did not rejoice in his death. A boy, even a collaborator, lying dead with his hand torn off, is a horrifying sight. ↪

In the days of repentance in September 1944, Mr. Bachmann, “a survivor of the Holocaust,” climbed up to the attic of his house, mounted a chair, tied a thin adhesive packing wire around his neck and hung himself. Mr. Bachmann, who had joined us in the cellar during the last “action” before the ghetto was liquidated, found out upon leaving the cellar that his wife and two small children had been slaughtered.

I found him hanging in the attic on the eve of Yom Kippur when I went to visit him. Whoever coined the term “survivors of the Holocaust” didn’t know what he was talking about: no one survived the Holocaust, even if he remained alive.

Unending columns of the Red Army moved through the main street of the town. From the columns, a Jewish-looking Soviet officer stepped out, and turned to us—filthy and thin, extinguished skeletons—and asked: “*am̄ha?*” (the code word by which Jews identified each other in the Diaspora of Ashkenaz). We answered “yes” and the tall, good-looking officer wept. We wept with him. The officer gave us some of his battle rations, returned to the head of the column, and continued the chase after the German troops.

In the days of repentance in 5705, we counted the victims of the slaughter and found that of over 14,000 Jews of Borislav in Eastern Galicia, only several hundred remained alive.

There in the forests of Poland my people died. And we, my father and mother, my eldest brother and sister, and I, the small one, stood at the dawn of 5705, a heap of bones, all of us together weighing 200 kilos, watching the long columns of the Red Army and listening to the bells of salvation.

Only several miles away, though the sun was shining, the butcher continued his despicable job.

Sheva Weiss (Adapted)

Links of fear slowly become a chain,
binding my hands and feet.
My father never wanted
to lead me to the sacrifice.
He was bound as I was.
But he led me.
Now I lie on the altar,
my father inside me, my grandfather inside me.
There is no escape—no escape. Moshe Youngman (Contemporary Yiddish Poet)

Choose another people.
We are tired of death, tired of corpses,
We have no more prayers.
For the time being
Choose another people.
We have run out of blood for victims,
Our houses have been turned into desert,
The earth lacks space for tombstones,
There are no more lamentations
Nor songs of woe
In the ancient texts.
God of mercy
Sanctify another land
Another Sinai.
We have covered every field and stone
With ashes and holiness.
With our crones
With our young
With our infants
We have paid for each letter in your Commandments.
God of Mercy
Lift up your fiery brow, Look on the peoples of the world,
Let them have the prophecies and Holy Days...
And O God of mercy
Grant us one more blessing—
Take back the divine glory of our genius.

Kadya Molodowsky

Fresh and pervasive
is the weeping of our lost communities.
The phrases of our prayers are vivified.
Contemporary are the laments
of our *el maley raḥamims*.
Unnecessary and absurd
is the death of individuals.
Legendary is the martyr-death of millions.

After so many deaths we stand reborn.
They gave us life.
In death they flung open the ghetto gates.
In exaltation they escaped from slavery.
By their deaths they gave us faith.

Were it not for their unequalled sacrifice
we should all have died disgraced,
without revenge or consolation,
without a breath of hope.
The blinded Samsons shook the pillars
in the halls of their tormentors,
and went forth to mete out punishment
for the unprecedented crime.

Not in secretive clandestine warfare,
nor lurking in a hidden ambush,
but on a sunlit canvas
they openly gave the signal for revolt.
The timid had grown bold—
And the torturer paid.

Brothers and sisters,
let us inscribe them in a new prayerbook.
Their deeds canceled out our entire martyr-history.
In all our prayers let us remember them.
In all our *yizkors* let us mourn them.
In all our *yitgadals* memorialize them.

Jacob Glatshstein

Now, as always, Jews are intimately linked one to another. Shout here and you will be heard in Kiev. Shout in Jerusalem, Jews everywhere reflect their sadness. An assault on Jews anywhere means an attempt to humiliate Jews everywhere. Thus a Jew lives in more than one place, in more than one era, on more than one level. To be Jewish is to be possessed of a historical consciousness that transcends individual consciousness....

All we want as Jews is to live and uphold the sanctity of life, all we want is to create peace and create in peace, to bear witness that people are not necessarily one another's enemies, that every war is senseless, that the solution lies in compassion and that compassion is possible.

All we want is peace. And yet...there is upheaval.

So how can one not be sad today? How can one be in this world of ours and not despair?

One day Ḥasidim came to inform the great Rebbe Naḥman of Bratzlav of renewed persecutions of Jews in the Ukraine. The Master listened and said nothing. Then they told him of pogroms in certain villages. Again the Master listened and said nothing. Then they told of slaughtered families, of desecrated cemeteries, of children burned alive. The Master listened, listened and shook his head. "I know," he whispered. "I know what you want. I know. You want me to shout with pain, weep in despair. I know, I know. But I will not, you hear me, I will not." Then, after a long silence, he did begin to shout, louder and louder, "*Gevalt, Yidden...!* Jews, for heaven's sake, do not despair...*Gevalt, Yidden*, Jews do not despair."

Elie Wiesel

זְכוֹר אֶת מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם אֶת גְּדוּלָתָם וְאֶת צְדָקָתָם
 בְּזִכְרוֹת חַיֵּי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ
 נִרְאָה אֵיךְ לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׁדֵי
 וּלְבָנוֹת בֵּית נְאֻמָּן בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
 בֵּית שֶׁל אֱהָבַת חֶסֶד לַמּוֹד תּוֹרָה
 וְכַבוֹד לְכָל מָה שֶׁבָרָאתָ שְׁנֹאמַר
 וּמָה יְהוּה דוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ כִּי אִם עֲשׂוֹת מְשֻׁפָּט
 וְאֱהָבַת חֶסֶד וְהִצָּנַע לָכֶת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

Remember their deeds, their greatness, their righteousness.

In the light of the lives of our ancestors, we can see how to perfect God's world.

To build a faithful house in Israel, a house with love of piety, of the study of Torah, and of honor to all these you have created, as it is written, "What does God ask of you: only to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Written and translated by Michael Strassfeld

ומה...אלהיך / What...God (Micah 6:8).

Out of the strong, sweetness;
and out of the dead body of the lion of Judah,
the prophecies and psalms;
out of the slaves in Egypt,
out of the wandering tribesmen of the deserts
and the peasants of Palestine,
out of the slaves of Babylon and Rome,
out of the ghettos of Spain and Portugal, Germany and Poland,
the Torah and the prophecies,
the Talmud and the sacred studies, the hymns and songs of the
Jews;
and out of the Jewish dead
of Belgium and Holland, of Rumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria,
of France and Italy and Yugoslavia,
of Lithuania and Latvia, White Russia and Ukrainia,
of Czechoslovakia and Austria,
Poland and Germany,
out of the greatly wronged
a people teaching and doing justice;
out of the plundered
a generous people;
out of the wounded a people of physicians;
and out of those who met only with hate,
a people of love, a compassionate people.

Charles Reznikoff

ELEH EZKERAH II / PRINCIPLES OF MARTYRS

אֵלֶּה אֶזְכְּרָה וְנִפְשִׁי עָלַי אֲשַׁפְּכָה :

Eleh ezkerah venafshi alay eshpeḥah.

These I remember and pour out my soul.

Rabbi Akiba ben Yosef, the foremost scholar of his age, exercised a decisive and radical influence on the development of the early Jewish legal system. Unlearned in his youth, Akiba was employed as a shepherd by Bar Kalba Shavu'a, one of the wealthiest men in Jerusalem. Bar Kalba's opposition to his daughter Rachel's marriage to Akiba led him to disinherit her. Unaffected, Rachel made her marriage to Akiba conditional upon his commitment to study Torah. Akiba agreed and courageously began to fulfill his commitment, though he was well beyond the age when one normally begins such pursuits.

Although he became a greatly respected teacher raising up thousands of students, Akiba remained remarkably self-effacing and modest. He also took an intimate interest in the plight of the poor, becoming an overseer for them, and collecting tzedakah on their behalf. His legal rulings, in addition to their profundity, reflect his breadth of outlook and magnanimity of spirit. Akiba taught, "Whatever God does is for the best." Indeed Akiba was possessed of a rare optimism by which he was able to comfort his people in spite of the sad state of affairs in his time. His death was premature and tragic, but his life was complete in his constant devotion to the teaching and living of Torah.

The Roman government decreed that Jews should no longer occupy themselves with Torah. Shortly after, Pappos ben Yehudah found Rabbi Akiba holding great assemblies and studying Torah. Pappos said to him, "Akiba, aren't you afraid of the wicked government?" He answered, "I reply by way of a parable. To what is the matter like? To a fox who was walking along the bank of the stream, and saw some fishes gathering

together to move from one place to another. He said to them, 'From what are you fleeing?' They answered, 'From nets which men are bringing to catch us.' He said to them, 'Come up on the dry land, and let us, me and you, dwell together, even as my forebears dwelt with yours.' They replied, 'And they call you the shrewdest of animals? You are not clever, but foolish! For if we are afraid in the place that is our life-element, the water, how much more so in a place that is our death-element, the dry land.' So also is it with us," Akiba continued. "If now, while we sit and study Torah, in which it is written, 'For that is your life, and the length of your days' (Deuteronomy 30:20), we are in such a plight, how much more so, if we would neglect it."



A tale is told that Rabbi Akiba was once walking through a graveyard when he met a charcoal-burner who was carrying wood on his shoulders, and running about like a horse. Akiba ordered him to halt. He said to him, "My son, why are you engaged in such heavy toil? If you are a bondsman, and your master imposes such a yoke upon you, I will redeem you and set you free. If you are poor, I myself will enrich you." The man replied, "Sir, let me be, for I cannot stay." Akiba asked, "Are you a human being or a demon?" He said, "I am of the dead. Day after day I am fated to gather wood to be burnt." Akiba asked, "What was your trade when you were living on earth?" He replied, "I was a tax-collector who favored the rich and burdened the poor." Akiba said, "My son, is there no remedy for your situation?" The man answered, "Do not hinder me, lest those set in charge of my punishment grow angry with me. For me there is no remedy. Yet I did hear them say that my punishment would be relaxed if I had a son who could stand up in the congregation and proclaim publicly, 'Bless ADONAY, the blessed one.' But I had no son. On my death I left my wife with child, but whether she bore a boy or a girl I do not know. And if she did bear a son, who will teach him Torah?" Akiba asked,

“What is your name?” He told him. “And your wife’s name?” He said, “Susmida.” “And your city?” “Alduka.” Akiba, troubled on account of the charcoal-burner, traveled from city to city until he came to the one where the man lived. He asked after the man and for his household. People answered, “May his bones be ground in hell.” Then he asked for the wife, and they said “May her name and remembrance be blotted out of the world.” Then he asked for his son. “He has not even been brought into the covenant of Abraham.” At once Akiba took the boy, and began to teach him Torah, but first he fasted on his behalf for forty days. A heavenly voice went forth, saying, “Because of this boy do you fast?” Akiba said, “Yes.” He taught the boy the alphabet, then the *Motzi*, the *Shema* and the *Amidah*. Then he made the boy stand up in the synagogue, and recite, “Blessed ADONAY, the blessed One, now and ever!” The charcoal-burner’s punishment was annulled, and he came to Akiba in a dream and said, “May you repose in Paradise, even as you have rescued me from hell.”



When Akiba was being tortured for teaching Torah, the hour for reciting the *Shema* arrived. He said it and smiled. The Roman officer called out, “Old man, are you a sorcerer or a fool, that you smile while in pain?” “Neither,” replied Akiba, “but all my life, when I said the words, ‘You shall love ADONAY your God with all your heart and soul and might,’ I was saddened, for I thought, when shall I be able to fulfill this commandment completely? I have loved God with all my heart and with all my possessions [might], but how to love God with all my soul—that

NOTE. Rather than focus on the tragic deaths of Jews in critical periods of our people’s history, in this *Eleh Ezkerah*, we study the teachings of four who chose life. Their words should elevate us to live as they lived, with dedication to the Torah, to justice, to righteousness and love for their fellow beings.

is, with all my life—was not assured to me. Now that I am giving my life at the hour for saying the *Shema*, and my resolution remains firm, should I not smile, even rejoice?” And as he spoke, his soul departed.

Talmud Beraḥot 61b (Adapted)



עַל שְׁלוֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד:
עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת הַסְּדִים:

Al sheloshah devarim ha'olam omed.

Al hatorah ve'al ha'avodah ve'al gemilut ḥasadim.

On three things the world stands—

on Torah, on worship, and on caring deeds.

Pirkey Avot 1.2

The Inquisition's racks and fires and the period's forced conversions were more than legendary. Thousands of Jews died martyrs' deaths, and thousands more became converts, albeit in name only. Still others chose exile. Together with massive displacement and the loss of life was a culture destroyed, the result of religious fanaticism. The cosmopolitanism of Spanish and Portuguese Jewry was arrested and remained dormant until the dawn of European Enlightenment.

Yehudah Abrabanel was a poet, physician, and the most prominent philosopher of his day. Expelled from Portugal in 1483 along with his father, he fled again from Spain less than a decade later. He was fortunate to settle in Italy where he found an intellectual home among the circle of scholars of the Platonic Academy of Florence. Abrabanel continued to practice his profession, teaching medicine at the university in Naples and serving as personal physician to the Spanish viceroy. The scope of his written work was wide and deep including poetry, biblical commentary, and general and social philosophy, as well as medical treatises. Rather than mourning the loss of his homeland, Abrabanel celebrated his internationalism, celebrating the possibilities even in his and his people's exile.



God created Adam in God's intellectual image by which Adam was prompted to strive to perfect his soul in the acknowledgment of the Creator and imitation of God's wisdom. God also made available all the things necessary for human existence in the Garden—food, drink and shelter. All this was in its natural state, requiring no human exertion. All was at Adam's disposal, so that he was not forced to burden himself to satisfy his bodily needs, but could concentrate on the perfection of his soul, for which purpose Adam was created. On this account, God commanded Adam to be content with the natural things with which God had furnished him and not be attracted to luxuries that require resorting to human artifice and worldly things, so that his intellect should not be diverted to the assuring of physical comforts, which is the reverse of spiritual perfection, ideally the ultimate aim of all humans. The meaning of the command, "Of all the trees of the Garden you may certainly eat" was: "I do not forbid you the things essential for your physical sustenance from the trees of the Garden and the tree of life. But you may not actually *eat* of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," by which is meant the indulgence in and study of worldly things.



Some have suggested that God chose to scatter Israel to the corners of the earth in order to destroy them. I disagree. When Israel is concentrated in one spot, the enemy can easily destroy them, as Haman tried when the Jews were in Persia. But where they are scattered in many kingdoms, they have always a place to flee. Indeed, our sages believed that God showed special kindness to Israel by scattering them among the peoples. The Trojans, a mighty nation, were totally destroyed by the Greeks because there they were in one place. But the Jews, however decimated, have always managed to survive and find refuge. The king of England wiped out the Jews in his kingdom as has the king of France in our own time. Had the Jews been in any one

place alone, not one Jew would have survived. But the Almighty promised us, “When they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, or spurn them so as to destroy them utterly (Leviticus 26:44).” Dispersion was thus a great kindness ensuring our survival and deliverance.

Yehudah Abrabanel



כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ Kol ha'olam kulo
 גֶּשֶׁר צָר מְאוֹד geshher tzar me'od
 וְהֵעָקָר לֹא לִפְחָד כָּלֵל: vеха'ikar lo lefahed kelal.

The entire world is a very narrow bridge.
 The essential thing is to have no fear at all.

Attributed to Nahman of Bratzlav



Raised in a distinguished, acculturated Jewish family in Hungary, Hannah Szenes spent her early years attending a Protestant girls' school that had opened its doors to Jews and Catholics. Although on graduation her teachers “positively assured” her mother that Hannah would be admitted to university even though she was Jewish, Hannah had already decided to emigrate to Palestine and to study at the agricultural school in Nahalal. As she told her mother, “Perhaps I ought to be impressed that in view of graduating summa cum laude, and with a plethora of recommendations from teachers and friends, I can get into the university, while a Gentile who just barely squeezed through the exams can sail in! Besides, are they really incapable of understanding that I don't want to be just a student, that I have plans, dreams, ambitions, and that the road to their fulfillment would only be barred to me here?”

Her dreams included helping provide a haven and a revitalized homeland for the Jewish people. When her mother questioned her decision to attend an agricultural school instead of a university, Szenes replied, “There are already far too many intellectuals in Palestine; the great need is for workers who can help build the country.” Setting out for Palestine in

1939, Szenes returned to Hungary in 1944 as part of a mission of thirty-two Jews from the land of Israel who had volunteered to parachute into Europe to try to save the remaining Jewish population. She was last seen on 9 June 1944, at the Hungarian border. She was captured, tortured, and shot as a prisoner of war in Budapest. After burial in the Martyr's Corner of a Budapest cemetery, her remains were moved to Israel, where, with full military honors, they were interred in a cemetery in the Judean Hills. Her tombstone, with its engraving of a parachute, is in a special section of the cemetery where six others who died on that mission are also buried. Szenes's spirituality was rooted in a love for the land of Israel and the Jewish people and in a continual struggle to "believe and trust in God."

When anyone in Hungary spoke of Zionism even two years ago, Jewish public opinion condemned him as a traitor to Hungary or considered him a mad visionary. But today, due perhaps to the recent blows suffered, Hungarian Jews are beginning to concern themselves with Zionism. At least so it seems when they ask, "How big is Palestine? How many people can it accommodate?" and "Is there room for me in the expanding country?" But the question least frequently voiced is "What is the purpose of Zionism, its basic aim?" It is with this seldom-voiced question I would like to deal, because I believe it to be the most important of all questions. When one understands this and applies it to oneself, one will become a Zionist, regardless of how many can emigrate to Palestine today or tomorrow, whether conditions here will improve or deteriorate, whether or not there are possibilities of emigrating to other countries.

If we had to define Zionism briefly perhaps we could best do so in the following words: Zionism is the movement of the Jewish people for its revival.

Perhaps many are at this very moment mentally vetoing this with the thought that Jews do not constitute a people. But how is a nation created out of a community? From a common origin, a common past, present and future, common laws, a common language and a native land.

In ancient Palestine these motives were united and formed a complete background. Then the native land ceased to exist, and gradually the language link to the ancient land weakened. But the consciousness of the people was saved by the Torah, that invisible but all-powerful mobile State.

It is, however, inconceivable that in the stateless world of the Middle Ages, when religion was the focal point of life, the self-assurance of the ghetto-bound Jew could have become so strengthened that he could have expressed his longing for a nation, or the restoration of his own way of life, or that he would have thought of rebuilding his own country. Yet the yearning expressed in the holiday greeting, "Next Year in Jerusalem," is absolute proof that the hope of regaining the homeland never died within the Jew.

Then came the human rights laws of the nineteenth century and with them new ideas and concepts of national values. From the peoples of the great countries to those in the smallest enclaves, all attempted to find themselves and their rights. It was the time of decision. Did a Jewish people still exist, and if so, would it be influenced by the strength of the spirit of the new movement?

The greater part of Jewry asked only for human rights, happily accepting the goodwill of the people among whom it lived, and in exchange casting off individuality and ancient characteristics. But a few hundred inspired zealots started off toward Zion. Thousands upon thousands endorsed the concepts and ideals of Zionism, and suddenly there was a Jewish nation. If you feel there is not, speak for yourself, but don't forget those to whom Jewishness means more than the data on a birth certificate.

We don't want charity. We want only our lawful property and rights, and our freedom, for which we have struggled with our own labors. We want to create a homeland for the Jewish spirit and the Jewish people. The solution seems so very clear: we need a Jewish State. Jews have proved their will to live, their love of work, their ability to establish a state; and they have shown that the name of Palestine is so powerful that it is capable of gathering in Jews from any and all parts of the world. This tiny piece of land on the shores of the Mediterranean which, after 2,000 years, Jews can again feel to be their own, is big enough to enable the new Jewish life and modern Jewish culture to be attached to its ancient, fundamental ways, and flourish. Even today, in its mutilated form, Palestine is big enough to be an island in the sea of seemingly hopeless Jewish destiny, an island upon which we can peacefully build a lighthouse to beam its light into the darkness, a light of everlasting human values, the light of the one God.

Hannah Szenes



אֵלֵי שְׁלֹא יִגְמַר לְעוֹלָם	Eli shelo yigamer le'olam
הַחֹל וְהַיָּם	haḥol vehayam
רִשְׁרוּשׁ שֶׁל הַיָּמִים	rishrush shel hamayim
בְּרַק הַשָּׁמַיִם	berak hashamayim
תְּפִילַת הָאָדָם.	tefilat ha'adam.

This translation can be sung to the same melody as the Hebrew.

My God, my God, I pray that these things never end.
 The sand and the sea, the rush of the waters,
 The crash of the heavens, the prayer of the heart.
 The sand and the sea, the rush of the waters.
 The crash of the heavens, the prayer of the heart.

Hannah Szenes



Six million Jews murdered, among them more than 1,500,000 children, and with them the destruction of Eastern and Western European Jewish life. Scientists, philosophers, composers, poets, scholars, all dead and all the millions upon millions of the unborn generations after. And the inhumanity witnessed, the reduction of human beings to less than animals, and the consequent hopelessness and loss of faith.

Leo Baeck was born into a religiously enlightened Jewish home and educated at the leading liberal seminaries that flourished in Germany at the beginning of this century. Shortly before World War II, Baeck settled in Berlin where he served as rabbi while lecturing at a liberal Jewish school for adults. After declaring that the "thousand-year" history of the German Jews had come to an end in 1933, Baeck devoted himself to defending the rights remaining for Jews under the Nazis. He refused all invitations to serve as rabbi or professor abroad, declaring that he would remain with the last minyan of Jews in Germany for as long as possible. He continued his work of encouraging his people even after his deportation to the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1943, serving there as a "witness of faith," to use his own words. He survived the war and lived out his years in London and Cincinnati.

Baeck's positive view of humanity and of hope is notable in all of his writings, even and especially in those written after the war. Nothing of what he experienced dimmed his faith in the future.

The respect we owe to our neighbor is not an isolated commandment but represents the whole content of morality, the quintessence of our duty. For in Judaism the content of all religiousness is that we serve God and love God. The Talmud teaches: "Love God in the human beings whom God has created"—that is the way in which we can freely give to God. When we seek the welfare of others, we find a way to God. The comprehensiveness of this demand was stressed by Hillel, who declared this teaching to be the "essence of the Torah." The same idea is implied in the admonition of the rabbis to walk in the ways of God by doing good, and by striving to be as just,

compassionate and merciful as is the Eternal. In what we do to our neighbor, we serve God.

Our relation to others is thereby lifted out of the sphere of good will, affection or even love; it is exalted into the sphere of the established relationship with God, which is common and equal to all and therefore unites all. Each person has an unconditional claim on us. Even our enemy may and must demand the fulfillment of our duty, for though he is our enemy, he does not cease to be our fellow. "If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink" (Proverbs 25:21). Whoever bears a human face is our neighbor and is entitled to our help and our compassion. What we owe to another and what we do for that person is not based on the uncertain foundation of good will, or on any transitory emotional impulse, but on the positive and social commandment of justice, solely because every person is a human being.

Leo Baeck



אָשָׂא עֵינַי אֶל־הַהָרִים	Esa eynay el heharim
מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי:	me'ayin yavo ezri.
עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה	ezri me'im adonay
עוֹשֶׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:	oseh shamayim va'aretz.

I lift my eyes up to the hills:
from where does my help come?
My help is from THE UNSEEN ONE,
the maker of the heavens and the earth.

Psalms 121:1-2



Attempts have been made to find the decisive difference between humans and beasts. It has been found that humans are beings who fashion tools and know grandparents and grandchildren. It could also be said that humans are beings of hope. Wherever

humans believe and love, they hope. The motif of hope is the wish, clear or cloudy, that sustains itself with actual or imagined appearances. The spiritual foundation of religious hope is the deep assurance in which the finite comes to experience something of the power of infinity, the certainty that the goal endures, and that there is a way that leads to it. That is the expectation that rises out of the strength of a people's belief. It is the hope above all hopes, the one that includes and unites all human beings within it.

We humans wander through wishes. They begin in us and then gain their own existence in what they reveal. But they still remain part of our existence, part of our self; in effect, they are our life as it projects itself in the distant reaches. Hopes, manifold as the days, always unite these two existences anew, so that they—distant and close life—always come to be one. Without the hopes, the self would split itself and life would finally break in two. Humans are beings who hope and since there are many days, there are many hopes.

Indeed our people of the great expectation always remained a people of many and changing hopes. Our people always understood both moving away to follow hopes, and remaining to wait for them. Above all, an expectation lived in us everywhere, for the children and the children's children. The spiritual history of our people, from generation to generation, is a history of suffering and renunciation, a giving up for the sake of children and grandchildren, that the hopes might fulfill themselves in them. We learned to live in what was coming; we became accustomed to live this way, to prepare in our own narrow and short existence a breadth of space and an extension of days. Under all oppressions, patience preserved a viable strength. It even became active, indeed, gaining something of the messianic dynamism of the great expectation—"searching out with the soul" the land of the children.

KADDISH DERABANAN / THE SAGES' KADDISH

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher by far than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

For Israel and her sages, for their pupils and all pupils of their pupils, and for all who occupy themselves with Torah, whether in this place or any other place, may God grant them and you abundant peace, and grace, and love, and mercy, and long life, and ample sustenance, and saving acts, all flowing from divine abundance in the worlds beyond. And say: Amen.

May heaven grant a universal peace and life for us and for all Israel. And say: Amen.

May the one who creates harmony above make peace for us, and for all Israel, and for all who dwell on earth. And say: Amen.



For our teachers and their students
And the students of their students:
We ask for peace and loving kindness
And let us say Amen.
And for those who study Torah
Here and everywhere may they be blessed
With all they need and let us say Amen.
We ask for peace and loving kindness
And let us say Amen.

Debbie Friedman

KADDISH DERABANAN / THE SAGES' KADDISH

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיךְ
מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן
קָרִיב וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵיָא:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא
לְעֵלְא לְעֵלְא מְכַל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא דְאִמְרִין
בְּעֵלְמָא וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל רַבְּנָן וְעַל תַּלְמִידֵיהוֹן וְעַל כָּל תַּלְמִידֵי תַלְמִידֵיהוֹן
וְעַל כָּל מָאן דְּעֵסְקִין בְּאוּרֵיתָא דִּי בְּאַתְרָא הָדִין וְדִי בְּכָל אַתְר
וְאַתְר יְהֵא לְהוֹן וּלְכוֹן שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא חֲנָא וְחֻסְדָּא וְרַחֲמִין וְחַיִּין
אֲרִיכִין וּמְזוּנֵי רוּחֵי וּפְרָקְנָא מִן קָדָם אָבוּהוֹן דְּבִשְׁמֵיָא וְאַרְעָא
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמֵיָא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ
אָמֵן: עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תְּבֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

NOTE. This martyrology was compiled by Lee Friedlander.

ELEH EZKERAH III:
THE MARTYRS OF THE SHOAH

אֱלֹהֵי אֶזְכְּרָהּ וְנִפְּשִׁי עָלַי אֶשְׁפָּכָה:

Eleh ezkerah venafshi alay eshpehah.

These I remember and pour out my soul.

It is told that when the great Israel Baal Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews, it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer, and the miracle would be accomplished and the misfortune averted. Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Mezrich had occasion, for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say, "Master of the Universe, I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer." And again the miracle would be accomplished. Still later, Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say, "I do not know how to light the fire. I do not know the prayer, but I know the place, and this must be sufficient." And it was sufficient and the miracle was

NOTE. The lives of the martyrs whom we remember are intertwined with our own lives. Communities can emphasize this connection by asking three members to briefly speak about their own experience of one of the themes: Torah, Devotion, and Caring Deeds. J.A.S.

NOTE. This Martyrology is based on one composed by Reconstructionist Rabbi Jeremy Schwartz.

accomplished. Then it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God, “I am unable to light the fire and I do not know the prayer; I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is to tell the story and this must be sufficient.” And it was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished.

We post-emancipation, post-Holocaust Jews long ago removed ourselves or were removed from the Lithuanian and Polish forests of these Ḥasidic masters. Culturally assimilated, we have forgotten their languages, and, as religious liberals, we question the efficacy of their prayers. Their fires were extinguished in the Death Camps and their stories, so lovingly told, did not save them.

Few died the deaths of martyrs in the Holocaust. Like unknowing sheep led to the slaughter, most were victims. But still, being Jews, we are driven to find meaning in meaninglessness, sparks of divinity in utter degradation, and truths that inform our lives and give us hope. This is the goal of this Martyrology: to understand a Jewish teaching in the example of three of our people who were martyrs of the Holocaust in death or for life. The teaching is ascribed to Shimon the *Tzadik*, one of the early sages of the Mishnah.

עַל שְׁלוֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד :
עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת הַחַסְדִּים :

Al sheloshah devarim ha'olam omed.

Al hatorah ve'al ha'avodah ve'al gemilut ḥasadim.

The world stands on three things—on Torah, and on devotion, and on caring deeds.

Pirkey Avot 1.2

A principal injunction of the Torah is the honoring of father and mother, for observance of which we are promised length of days. Though the theologically unsophisticated understood this literally and personally, our sages knew that the promised long life would not necessarily be experienced by the one who observed the Torah injunction. Length of days, they taught, might be credited to a life beyond our own, most particularly to our children who live after us, to our children who honor us as parents and who teach their children to honor them as parents, thereby ensuring the stability of the world through Torah.

The days before Rosh Hashanah 1942 were particularly difficult for the Koczicki family in the ghetto of Slotwina Brzesko. It was clear that they would soon be taken on their last journey.

Bronia, Rabbi Israel Koczicki's wife, had false papers, but her husband and mother-in-law did not. After much deliberation, a painful decision was made. The family would split up. Bronia would leave the ghetto and try to obtain Aryan papers for her husband and mother-in-law.

The parting was a painful one. Bronia took little Yitzhak with her while the older son, Zvi, age six, remained with his father and grandmother.

Bronia and her son boarded a passenger train filled with German officers. Her blond hair, blue eyes and Berlin-accented German were a perfect cover, but she was fearful because of little Yitzhak. Since the family had lived in Berlin, they all spoke German, but

NOTE. During the Holocaust, six million Jews were slaughtered intentionally and millions of other Jews victimized. Some were martyrs, but many others were swept up against their will. The details are less important than the memory of their lives—six million worlds. L.F. / D.A.T.

Yitzhak's German was intermingled with Yiddish words because he had been born and raised in Poland. Bronia held the child in her lap, displaying his beautiful blond curls. Yitzhak was asleep, and Bronia prayed that he would stay asleep until they arrived at Bochnia, their destination.

The German officers seated next to Bronia struck up a conversation with her. Before long, they were discussing the Germans' favorite topic—the Jews. Their remarks were brutal and vulgar, although they apologized to Bronia for using the vile language in the presence of a lady. Soon one officer was recalling how, on a similar journey, he had discovered a Jew who was travelling on Aryan papers, “I sniffed him out; I have a special talent for it. I made him pull down his trousers. The poor devil never made it to the next station.” He told his story gleefully, trying to amuse beautiful Bronia.

Little Yitzhak turned his head in his sleep. The fact that he was circumcised made Bronia's heart pound louder than the locomotive's puffings. But she managed to smile her calm smile. She pointed to the sleeping child and said, “Gentlemen, you don't want to wake up a future soldier.” The conversation continued in hushed voices.

When the train stopped in Bochnia, Bronia, without giving any sign that it was her stop, remained in her seat. Just as the train was about to pull out of the station, she swiftly stepped down to the platform. The train pulled out of the station, and Bronia waved to the German officers from below. They responded warmly as the train sped on its way. Bronia breathed a sigh of relief. Moments later, she was already planning the next step, the rescue of the other members of her family.

After a few days, Bronia was able to obtain Aryan papers for her husband and mother-in-law. With a reliable messenger and for a substantial sum of money, Bronia sent the papers to her husband in Slotwina Brzesko. Daily, Bronia went to the train station, ↪

hoping that her husband, older son, and mother-in-law would be among the passengers. But days passed and they did not arrive. Bronia began to worry. Maybe the documents had never reached her husband and were intercepted by the Germans; maybe her husband and mother-in-law had been recognized and betrayed on the train by a Polish acquaintance; maybe the papers had arrived too late. Desperate, Bronia decided to return to Slotwina Brzesko.

On the very day she planned to leave, Bronia received a letter from her husband. The Aryan papers had arrived safely, but his mother was afraid to use them. She claimed that her looks and accent would betray her and, consequently, all of them. Since the command to “Honor your mother” is a principal command in the Torah, he could not leave his mother alone. He hoped that Bronia would agree, and would understand and forgive him.

A few days later, Bronia received a second letter from her husband. He wrote that their fears had begun to materialize. They had all been taken in a transport to Tarnow. There the men were separated from the women, and he was separated from his mother. Though he feared the worst, their son, Zvi, was well and was with him. He continued his letter, reminding her that Yitzhak would be three years old on Rosh Hashanah, so she should make sure that he wore a *tallit katan* and always remembered that he was a Jew. Israel begged her forgiveness if he had ever offended her during their married years, and thanked her for the wonderful years they had been given together to build a family. A substantial sum of money was enclosed in the letter. After reading it, Bronia rushed to a man in the Bochnia ghetto who was known as an expert smuggler, one who was able to transport people from ghetto to ghetto.

“To Tarnow I do not travel,” the man declared, shaking his head. “It is entering the lion’s den without any possible exit.” Bronia offered to pay double. Still he refused. “A person is responsible

first for himself,” he said, “and this mission is just too dangerous.”

A few days later, Rabbi Israel was sent to the gas chamber. On his last journey from Tarnow to Belzec, he managed to break one of the iron bars of the cattle car’s only window and squeeze his six-year-old son through the space. Thus he tossed Zvi to freedom from the speeding train, certain that somehow, Bronia would find him.

Bronia, in the Bochnia ghetto, sensed that her son would be found along the Tarnow-Belzec tracks. She hired a Polish peasant for a handsome sum of money and posted him day and night along the death road. The peasant pretended that he was gathering mushrooms in the forest along the tracks leading from Tarnow to the death camp of Belzec.

The tracks were strewn with pictures of Jewish families, smiling faces of young and old. On the backs were scribbled frantic messages in shaky handwriting, asking for help. Then, at the edge of the tracks, the peasant noticed a pair of small shoes on top of a bush. The shoes were on the feet of a little boy who was more dead than alive. The peasant picked up the boy and rushed to Bochnia, reuniting Bronia with her beloved son.

עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד :
עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חַסְדִּים :

Al sheloshah devarim ha’olam omed.

Al hatorah ve’al ha’avodah ve’al gemilut hasadim.

The world stands on three things—on Torah, and on devotion, and on caring deeds.

A well-known piece of the Yom Kippur liturgy declares of those who serve God, “All of them are beloved, pure and mighty, and all of them in dread and awe do the will of their Master; and ↪

all of them open their mouths in holiness and purity, with song and psalm, while they glorify and ascribe sovereignty to the name of the Divine Ruler.” We commonly identify those so devoted to the Deity as the religiously pious, but such devotion can be found in the most unlikely people, even in those who oppose God and God’s devotees in principle. Their devotion, so differently motivated, is no less world sustaining.

In the Janowska Road Camp, there was a brigade foreman from Lvov by the name of Schneeweiss, one of those people one stays away from if one values one’s life. Schneeweiss had known Rabbi Israel Spira in Lvov, but was not aware that the latter was a camp inmate. Only a handful of Ḥasidim who were close to the rabbi knew the rabbi’s identity, and they kept it a secret.

It was the eve of Yom Kippur. Tensions and fears were at their height. A few Ḥasidim came to Rabbi Spira and asked him to approach Schneeweiss and request that on Yom Kippur his group not be assigned to any of the thirty-nine main categories of work, so that their transgression of the law by working on Yom Kippur would not be a major one. The rabbi was very moved by the request of his Ḥasidim and despite his fears, for he would have to disclose his identity, went to Schneeweiss. He knew quite well that Schneeweiss did not have much respect for Jewish tradition. Even prior to the outbreak of World War II, he had publicly violated the Jewish holidays and transgressed against Jewish law. Here in Janowska, he was a cruel man who knew no mercy.

With a heavy heart, the rabbi went before Schneeweiss. “You probably remember me. I am the Rabbi of Pruchnik, Rabbi Israel Spira.” Schneeweiss did not respond. “You are a Jew like myself,” the rabbi continued. “Tonight is *Kol Nidrey* night. There is a small group of young Jews who do not want to transgress any of the thirty-nine main categories of work. It means everything to them. It is the essence of their existence. Can you do something about it? Can you help?”

“Tonight I can’t do a thing,” said Schneeweiss. “I have no jurisdiction over the night brigade. But tomorrow, on Yom Kippur, I will do for you whatever I can.” The rabbi shook Schneeweiss’s hand in gratitude and left.

In the morning, the rabbi and a small group of young Hasidim were summoned to Schneeweiss’s cottage. “I heard that you prayed last night. I don’t believe in prayers,” Schneeweiss told them. “On principle, I even oppose them. But I admire your courage. For you all know well that the penalty for prayer in Janowska is death.” With that, he motioned them to follow him.

He took them to the S.S. quarters in the camp, to a large wooden house. “You fellows will shine the floor without any polish or wax. And you, rabbi, will clean the windows with dry rags so that you will not transgress any of the thirty-nine major categories of work.” He left the room abruptly without saying another word.

The rabbi was standing on a ladder with rags in his hand, cleaning the huge windows while chanting prayers, and his companions were on the floor polishing the wood and praying with him. “All of them are beloved, pure and mighty, and all of them in dread and awe do the will of their Master; and all of them open their mouths in holiness and purity, with song and psalm, while they glorify and ascribe sovereignty to the name of the Divine Ruler.” The floor was wet with their tears.

At noon, the door opened wide and into the room stormed two S.S. men in their black uniforms. They were followed by a food cart filled to capacity. “Noontime, time to eat bread, soup, and meat,” announced one of the two. The room was filled with an aroma of freshly cooked food, such food as they had not seen since the German occupation: white bread, steaming vegetable soup, and huge portions of meat. ↪

The tall S.S. man commanded, "You must eat immediately, otherwise you will be shot on the spot!" None of them moved. The rabbi remained on the ladder, the Ḥasidim on the floor. The German repeated the orders. The rabbi and the Ḥasidim remained glued to their places. The S.S. men called in Schneeweiss. "Schneeweiss, if the dirty dogs refuse to eat, I will kill you along with them." Schneeweiss pulled himself to attention, looked the German directly in the eyes, and said in a very quiet tone, "We Jews do not eat today. Today is Yom Kippur, our most holy day, the Day of Atonement."

"You don't understand, Jewish dog," roared the taller of the two. "I command you in the name of the Führer and the Third Reich, *eat!*"

Schneeweiss, composed, his head high, repeated the same answer. "We Jews obey the law of our tradition. Today is Yom Kippur, a day of fasting."

The German took out his revolver from its holster and pointed it at Schneeweiss's temple. Schneeweiss remained calm. He stood still, at attention, his head held high. A shot pierced the room. Schneeweiss fell. On the freshly polished floor, a puddle of blood was growing bigger and bigger.

The rabbi and the Ḥasidim stood as if frozen in their places. They could not believe what their eyes had just witnessed. Schneeweiss, the man who in the past had publicly transgressed against the Jewish tradition, had sanctified God's name publicly and died a martyr's death for the sake of Jewish honor.

"Only then, on that Yom Kippur day in Janowska," said the rabbi to his Ḥasidim later, "did I understand the meaning of the statement in the Talmud: 'Even the transgressors in Israel are as full of good deeds as a pomegranate is filled with seeds.'"

עַל שְׁלוֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד :
עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חַסְדִּים :

Al sheloshah devarim ha'olam omed.

Al hatorah ve'al ha'avodah ve'al gemilut ḥasadim.

The world stands on three things—on Torah, and on devotion, and on caring deeds.

Our tradition teaches that each person is a microcosm of the world, an entire world in himself. One who saves the life of another, therefore, preserves the world. A single act of *gemilut ḥesed*, one caring deed, can be the vehicle of such preservation.

In Bergen-Belsen, Bronia's dedication to the education of her two small sons, Zvi and Yitzhak, was viewed by some as an obsession bordering on insanity. She would deny herself food, bartering it for her children's education. For a piece of bread and a potato, Mr. Rappaport taught her children Jewish law and tradition. She herself taught the children the weekly Torah portion. At times the children were so hungry that they could neither hear nor see. Words became muffled, distant sounds, and the letters seemed like a colony of busy ants rushing in all directions.

When Pesah approached, Bronia's program became more rigid. She insisted that the children learn all the laws and customs pertinent to the holiday, while she herself supervised their studies and hustled for food. A kind old German who worked at the showers gave her some beets and potatoes. These she saved for the holiday so she and the children would be able to manage without bread.

Bronia did not rest until she had disposed of her leavened food as required by law. She sold it for the duration of Pesah to a non-Jewish woman from Prague, the wife of a famous Jewish lawyer, neither of whom were inmates of Bergen-Belsen. Bronia's sale of *ḥametz* became a source of mockery. People ↪

taunted her and asked if the sale of *ḥametz* was her only concern at this particular time and place.

“I learned the Jewish tradition in my father’s home when I was a child. Now it is my duty as a Jewish mother to teach it to my children in my home.”

“Some home, a Nazi concentration camp!” someone said, while glancing at the two children with pity for their sad lot, being children to a mother who had lost her mind in these troubled times.

On their way back to the barracks, Bronia and the children stopped at the infirmary. A long line of people were standing and waiting for treatment that would offer relief from their pain and discomfort. Two German doctors in white coats passed by. One casually pointed to the people in the line and said to his companion, “I don’t know why God has punished me so severely by forcing me to witness daily such ugliness as these Jews.”

Bronia glanced at the line. All around her were skeletons disfigured by disease and starvation, covered with boils, blotches, and sores. “Mama, did you hear what the German doctor said?” asked Zvi of his mother. “Yes, I heard,” Bronia responded. “Just study and be good, for a time will come when we will once more be a great and wise nation.”

Pesaḥ came and went, but the Jews of Bergen-Belsen were still slaves behind barbed wire. On the evening when Pesaḥ ended, a woman named Mindel Heller came running. “Bronia, it is a matter of life and death. The Rabbi of Pruchnik is almost dead. He hardly ate during Pesaḥ, and now he refuses to eat *ḥametz* that was not sold prior to the holiday as required by law. I heard that you are the only person in camp who sold your *ḥametz*.”

Bronia did not hesitate for a moment. She took out a loaf of white bread, her most precious possession, and gave it for the Rabbi of Pruchnik.

The people around her shook their heads in disbelief. “Woe to a woman who gives away her children’s last bite to a stranger.”

“What I learned and saw at my father’s home, I want my children to see and learn in my home. I could not choose the home, but I can preserve its spirit,” said Bronia as she handed the bread to Mindel.

In time the Rabbi of Pruchnik improved. Bronia’s bread had saved his life.

Years later, when Bronia Koczicki finished her story, she asked a listener, “Do you know the value of the loaf of bread I gave Mindel Heller? Today a skyscraper in Times Square is less valuable than a loaf of white bread in Bergen-Belsen.”

עַל שְׁלוֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד:
עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חַסְדִּים:

Al sheloshah devarim ha’olam omed.

Al hatorah ve’al ha’avodah ve’al gemilut hasadim.

The world stands on three things—on Torah, and on devotion, and on caring deeds.

Upon Israel and upon the rabbis, and upon their disciples and upon all the disciples of their disciples, and upon all who engage in the study of the Torah in this place and in every place, to them and to you—abundant peace, grace, lovingkindness, mercy, long life, ample sustenance and salvation.

Upon Israel and upon the rabbis

and upon the disciples and upon all the disciples of their disciples

and upon all who study Torah in this place and in every place, ↪

to them and to you
peace;
upon Israel and upon all who meet with unfriendly glances,
sticks and stones and names—
on posters, in newspapers, or in books to last,
chalked on asphalt or in acid on glass,
shouted from a thousand thousand windows by radio;
who are pushed out of classrooms and rushing trains,
whom the hundred hands of a mob strike,
and whom jailers strike with bunches of keys, with revolver
butts;
to them and to you
in this place and in every place
safety;

upon Israel and upon all who live
as the sparrows of the streets
under the cornices of the houses of others,
and as rabbits
in the fields of strangers
on the grace of the seasons
and what the gleaners leave in the corners;
you children of the wind—
birds
that feed on the tree of knowledge
in this place and in every place
to them and to you
a living;

upon Israel
and upon their children and upon all the children of their
children
in this place and in every place,
to them and to you
life.

Charles Reznikoff

For our teachers and their students
And the students of their students:
We ask for peace and loving kindness
And let us say Amen.
And for those who study Torah
Here and everywhere may they be blessed
with all they need and let us say Amen.
We ask for peace and loving kindness
And let us say Amen.

Debbie Friedman

Remember, for our sake,
the ancestral covenant, as you have promised:

“And I shall remember my covenant with Jacob,
and, as well, my covenant with Isaac,
and, as well, my covenant with Abraham;
I shall remember them, and shall recall
the Land I promised them.”

Leviticus 26:42

Remember, for our sake,
the covenant of former times, as you have promised:

“And I shall remember, for their sake,
the covenant of former times,
whereby I brought them from the land of Egypt,
in the sight of all the nations,
to become their God,
I am THE LAWGIVER!”

Leviticus 26:45

Have mercy on us, and do not destroy us, as it is written:

“For THE FOUNT OF MERCY is a God compassionate,
who shall not let you wither, and shall not destroy you,
nor shall God forget the covenant made with your ancestors,
the one promised by oath to them.”

Deuteronomy 4:31

Open up our hearts to love and to revere your name, as it is
written:

“THE BOUNTIFUL, your God, shall circumcise your hearts
and your children’s hearts,
to love THE FOUNT OF LIFE, your God,
with all your heart, with all your soul,
that you might live.” ↪

Deuteronomy 30:6

זָכַרְלָנוּ בְּרִית אָבוֹת כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתָּ:
וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב וְאָף אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יִצְחָק וְאָף אֶת־בְּרִיתִי
אֲבָרָהֶם אֲזַכֵּר וְהָאָרֶץ אֲזַכֵּר:

זָכַרְלָנוּ בְּרִית רַאשׁוֹנִים כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתָּ:
וְזָכַרְתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית רַאשׁוֹנִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי־אֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם לְהִיּוֹת לָהֶם יְלֹאֵהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה:

רַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְאֵל תִּשְׁחִיתֵנוּ כְּמָה שֶׁכָּתוּב:
כִּי אֵל רַחוּם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ לֹא יִרְפֶּךָ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתֶךָ וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּח אֶת־
בְּרִית אֲבֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לָהֶם:

מוֹל אֶת־לִבְבֵנוּ לְאַהֲבָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ כְּמָה שֶׁכָּתוּב:
וּמַל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ אֶת־לִבְבְּךָ וְאֶת־לִבְבֵנוּ וְרַעַף לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיךָ כְּכֹל־לִבְבְּךָ וּכְכֹל־נַפְשְׁךָ לְמַעַן חַיֶּיךָ: ←

Be present for us when we call on you, as it is written:

“And you shall seek out THE BELOVED ONE, your God,
from where you are, and you shall find God,
provided that you search for God
with all your heart, and all your soul.”

Deuteronomy 4:29

Blot out our sins upon this day, and purify us,
as it is written:

“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.”

Leviticus 16:30



Return us, BLESSED ONE, let us return!
Renew our days, as you have done of old! ↪

השיבנו...כקדם / Return...old! (Lamentations 5:21).

הַמְצֵא לָנוּ בְּבִקְשֵׁינוּ כְּמָה שְׂכָתוֹב:
וּבְקִשְׁתֶּם מִשָּׁם אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ וּמִצָּאתָ כִּי תִדְרָשְׁנוּ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ
וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ:

כִּפּוּר חֲטָאֵינוּ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְטַהֲרָנוּ כְּמָה שְׂכָתוֹב:
כִּי־בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִכְפּוּר עָלֵיכֶם לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
תִּטְהָרוּ:



הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ וְנִשְׁוֵבָה חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם: ←

Hashivenu adonay eleha venashuva hadesh yameynenu
kekedem. ↪

COMMENTARY. Why does so much of religious longing find its voice in the appeal to antiquity? What is it about the past, real or imagined, that makes it a destination of choice for the soul that seeks renewal? Why look backward instead of forward?

Perhaps the answer lies in the word *hadesh*, which means both “new” and “renew.” We cannot become the person we long to be by ignoring the persons we have been. In order to become “new” we have to “renew”—we have to recover moments of holiness, accomplishment, and integrity from our past and bring them forward into the lives we are continuously shaping. An individual—or a people—that believes it can move forward without looking backward is destined to defeat. R.H.

Remove our wrongs like smoke, and like a cloud,
as you have promised:

“I remove your wrongs like smoke,
your sins like clouds.

Return to me, for I have set you free!”

Isaiah 44:22

Sprinkle over us pure waters
that we may be clean, as it is written:

“And I shall sprinkle you with purest waters,
and you shall be clean. From all your wrongs,
from all of your idolatries,

I make you clean.”

Ezekiel 36:25

Grant atonement for our wrongs
this very day, that we may be clean,
as it is written: “For on this day
atonement shall be made for you
for all your wrongdoings,
before THE FOUNT OF MERCY
you shall all be clean.”

Leviticus 16:30

Bring us to your holy mountain,
make us joyful in your house of prayer,
as it is written: “I shall bring you
to my holy mountain, I shall make you joyful
in my house of prayer. Truly, my house
shall be called a house of prayer
for all nations!”

Isaiah 56:7

מַחַה פְּשָׁעֵינוּ כְּעָב וְכַעֲנָן כְּאֲשֶׁר אֶמְרָתָּ: מַחֲתִי כְּעָב פְּשָׁעֶיךָ וְכַעֲנָן
חַטָּאוֹתֶיךָ שׁוֹבָה אֵלַי כִּי גְּאֻלְתֶּיךָ: זֶרֶק עָלֵינוּ מַיִם טְהוֹרִים וְטַהֲרֵנוּ
כְּמָה שְׁפָתוֹב: וְזַרְקָתִי עֲלֵיכֶם מַיִם טְהוֹרִים וְטַהֲרָתֶם מִכָּל
טְמֵאוֹתֵיכֶם וּמִכָּל-גְּלוּלֵיכֶם אֲטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם: כִּפּוּר חֲטָאֵינוּ בַּיּוֹם
הַזֶּה וְטַהֲרֵנוּ כְּמָה שְׁפָתוֹב: כִּי-בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִכְפּוּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם
מִכָּל חַטָּאוֹתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי יְהוָה תִּטְהַרְוּ: הִבֵּיאֲנוּ אֶל הַר קְדוֹשְׁךָ וְשִׁמְחָנוּ
בְּבַיִת תְּפִלָּתְךָ כְּמָה שְׁפָתוֹב: וְהִבֵּיאוֹתִים אֶל-הַר קְדוֹשֵׁי וְשִׁמְחָתִים
בְּבַיִת תְּפִלָּתִי... כִּי בֵּיתִי בַּיִת תְּפִלָּה יִקְרָא לְכָל-הָעַמִּים:

KAVANAH. My sins and transgressions are not solid. They are not essential to my identity or to my innate being. They are insubstantial. They can be erased. They can be washed away by plain water. They are not who I am. Rather, I am the one who is able to ascend to the holy mountain and the house of divine prayer. S.P.W.

מַחַה פְּשָׁעֵינוּ / Remove our wrongs. This does not mean that we wish to deny the wrongs we have committed or pretend that they did not happen. Instead, we are summoned to boldly confront ourselves and the effects of our deeds. The Hebrew letters that we use to form the word *mehey* / remove can also mean “strike out,” “protest,” and “forewarn.” From these same letters we form the word *moah*, marrow: the innermost part of our being. Forgiveness is not a casual, passive or superficial thing: it requires that we look deeply into ourselves, and that we strike out against the human potential for wrongdoing. Only when we ourselves make it our personal commitment to take an active role in combatting evil in the world will it be possible for God to “remove our wrongs.” Then, in the very marrow of our being, our transgressions will evaporate like a mist, our sins disperse like a cloud. S.D.R.

We rise.

Hear our voice, ETERNAL ONE, our God,
and accept our prayer with mercy and good will.
Turn us, ANCIENT ONE, toward you,
let us return.

Renew our days like days of old.
Do not cast us away from dwelling in your presence,
and do not remove your holy spirit from our midst.
And do not cast us off as we grow old;
do not forsake us when our strength departs.
Do not forsake us, GENTLE ONE, our God,
do not withdraw from us.

Give us a sign of blessing, so that anyone who bears us ill
shall hesitate to harm us.

For truly you, ETERNAL ONE,
have always helped us and consoled us.

Hear now our words, GOD OF COMPASSION,
and behold our contemplation.

May our words of prayer and meditations of our hearts
be seen favorably, PRECIOUS ONE, our rock, our champion.

For we place our hope in you, ETERNAL ONE,
so may you answer us, Almighty One, our God. ↩

We are seated.

שמע קולנו / Hear our voice. We do not ask God to hear our words, but rather to hear our voice. The deepest prayer of the heart is often articulated in sounds, rather than in words. From the sobbing of grief to the sighing of pleasure, we know the power of our own voices. When we have been separated from those we love, our first reaction is often, "It is so good to hear your voice!" In such moments, it almost does not matter what is said. So too at this sacred season, we imagine God's pleasure in hearing our voices again, reuniting, reconnecting, and renewing our hopes for rebirth. Hear our voice...we are here. R.H.

NOTE. *Shema Kolenu* is based on biblical verses adapted by the author.

שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ

יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ חוּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ

וְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן אֶת־תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ:

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשְׁוֶבָה חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:

אֶל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְרוּחַ קְדֻשְׁךָ אֶל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנּוּ:

אֶל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנוּ לַעַת זְקֵנָה כְּכֹלֹת כְּחֵנוּ אֶל־תַּעֲזֹבֵנוּ:

אֶל־תַּעֲזֹבֵנוּ יְהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנּוּ:

עֲשֵׂה־עֲמָנוּ אוֹת לְטוֹבָה וְיִרְאוּ שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ וְיִבְאוּ

כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוה עֲזַרְתָּנוּ וְנִחַמְתָּנוּ:

אֲמַרְיֵנוּ הַאֲזִינָה יְהוה בִּינָה הַגִּיגָנוּ:

יְהִיו לְרָצוֹן אֲמַרְיֵינוּ וְהִגִּיזוּן לְבָנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוה צוּרֵנוּ וְגוֹאֲלֵנוּ:

כִּי־לָךְ יְהוה הוֹחֵלְנוּ אַתָּה תַעֲנֶה אֲדָנִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ←

We are seated.

Shema kolenu adonay eloheynu hus verahem aleynu
vekabel berahamim uveratzon et tefilatenu.

Hashivenu adonay eleha venashuvah hadesh yameynu kekedem.

Al tashlienu milefaneha veru'ah kodsheha al tika mimenu.

Al tashlienu le'et ziknah kihlot kohenu al ta'azvenu.

Al ta'azvenu adonay eloheynu al tirhak mimenu.

Asey imanu ot letovah veyiru soneynu veyevoshu

ki atah adonay azartanu venihamtanu.

Amareynu ha'azinah adonay binah hagigenu.

Yihyu leratzon imrey finu vehegyon libenu lefaneha adonay
tzurenu vego'alenu.

Ki leha adonay hohalnu atah ta'aneh adonay eloheynu. ↪

Our God, our ancients' God,
do not forsake us, and do not turn us away,
and do not cause us shame,
and do not nullify your covenant with us,
but bring us nearer to your Torah,
teach us your mitzvot,
instruct us in your ways.

Incline our hearts to treat your name with awe,
and open up our inner nature to your love,
and bring us back to you in truth,
with whole and peaceful heart.

And for the sake of your great name,
be merciful, and grant forgiveness for our wrongs,
as it is written in your prophets' words:
"For the sake of your great name, ETERNAL ONE,
forgive my wrongdoing, for I have done much wrong."

Our God, our ancients' God,
forgive us, pardon us, help us atone—
we are your people, and you are our God,
we are your children, and you are our creator,
we are your servants, and you are our sovereign,
we are your community, and you are our portion,
we are your possession, and you are our fate,
we are your sheep, and you are our shepherd,
we are your vineyard, and you are our keeper,
we are your creation, and you are our fashioner,
we are your loved ones, and you are our beloved,
we are your treasure, and you are our kin,
we are your people, and you are our ruler,
we are your faithful, and you are our source of faith! ↪

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ אֶל תַּעֲזֹבְנוּ וְאֶל תִּטְשׁוּנוּ וְאֶל
 תְּכַלִּימְנוּ וְאֶל תִּפְרֹ בְּרִיתְךָ אִתָּנוּ קִרְבָּנוּ לְתוֹרַתְךָ לְמַדְנוּ מִצִּוֹתֶיךָ
 הוֹרָנוּ דְרָכֶיךָ הֵט לִבְנוּ לִירְאָה אֶת־שִׁמְךָ וּמֹל אֶת־לִבְבָנוּ לְאֱהָבָתְךָ
 וְנָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ בְּאֵמֶת וּבִלְבַשׁ שָׁלֵם וּלְמַעַן שִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל תִּמְחַל וְתִסְלַח
 לְעֲוֹנוֹנוּ כְּפָתוּב בְּדַבְרֵי קְדוֹשְׁךָ: לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ יִהְיֶה וְסִלַּחַת לְעוֹנֵי כִי
 רַב הוּא:

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ סִלַּח לָנוּ: מַחֵל לָנוּ: כְּפָר־לָנוּ:
 כִּי אָנוּ עֹמְדִים וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ: אָנוּ בְנֵיךָ וְאַתָּה אֲבוֹתֵנוּ:
 אָנוּ עֹבְדֶיךָ וְאַתָּה אֱדוֹנֵינוּ: אָנוּ קְהֵלְךָ וְאַתָּה קְהִלָּנוּ:
 אָנוּ נִחְלָתְךָ וְאַתָּה גּוֹרְלָנוּ: אָנוּ צִאֲנֶךָ וְאַתָּה רוֹעֵנוּ:
 אָנוּ כְרֻמֶּךָ וְאַתָּה נוֹטְרָנוּ: אָנוּ פְּעֻלָּתְךָ וְאַתָּה יוֹצְרָנוּ:
 אָנוּ רַעֲיָתְךָ וְאַתָּה דוֹדָנוּ: אָנוּ סִגְלָתְךָ וְאַתָּה קְרוֹבָנוּ:
 אָנוּ עֹמְדִים וְאַתָּה מְלַכָּנוּ: אָנוּ מְאִמְרֶיךָ וְאַתָּה מְאִמְרָנוּ: ←

Eloheynu velohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu selah lanu. Mehal lanu.
 Kaper lanu.
 Ki anu ameha ve'atah eloheynu. Anu vaneha ve'atah avinu.
 Anu avadeha ve'atah adoneynu. Anu kehaleha ve'ata helkenu.
 Anu nahalateha ve'atah goralenu. Anu tzoneha ve'atah ro'enu.
 Anu harmeha ve'atah notrenu. Anu fe'ulateha ve'atah yotzrenu.
 Anu rayateha ve'atah dodenu. Anu segulateha ve'atah kerovenu.
 Anu ameha ve'atah malkenu. Anu ma'amireha ve'atah
 ma'amirenu. ↪

אנו למען...הוא / For...wrong (Psalms 25:11).

We are strong-willed and stubborn,
but you are merciful and gracious.
We are stiff-necked, but you are slow to anger.
We are full of error, but you are full of mercy.
We—our days are like a passing shadow,
but you are one whose years shall never end.

Our God, our ancients' God,
may our prayer come before you.
Hide not from our supplication,
for we are not so insolent and stubborn
as to say, here in your presence,
"HOLY ONE, God of our fathers and our mothers,
We are righteous, and we have not sinned,"
for we indeed have sinned. ↩

אָנוּ עֲזִי פָּנִים וְאַתָּה רַחוּם וְחַנוּן: אָנוּ קָשִׁי עֵרָף וְאַתָּה אָרֶךְ אַפַּיִם:
אָנוּ מְלֵאֵי עוֹן וְאַתָּה מְלֵא רַחֲמִים: אָנוּ יִמְיֵנו כְּצֶל עוֹבֵר וְאַתָּה הוּא
וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא יִתְמוּ:

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ תְּבוּא לְפָנֶיךָ תִּפְלָתֵנוּ וְאֵל
תַּתְּעִלֵּם מִתְּחַנְתָּנוּ שִׂיֵּאִן אֲנַחְנוּ עֲזִי פָּנִים וְקָשִׁי עֵרָף לֹא מֵר לְפָנֶיךָ
יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ צְדִיקִים אֲנַחְנוּ וְלֹא חָטָאנוּ
אֲבָל אֲנַחְנוּ חָטָאנוּ: ←

We rise.

We have acted wrongly,
we have been untrue,
and we have gained unlawfully
and have defamed.

We have harmed others,
we have wrought injustice,
we have zealously transgressed,
and we have hurt
and have told lies.

We have improperly advised,
and we have covered up the truth,
and we have laughed in scorn.

We have misused responsibility
and have neglected others.

We have stubbornly rebelled.

We have offended,
we have perverted justice,
we have stirred up enmity,
and we have kept ourselves from change.

We have reached out to evil,
we have shamelessly corrupted
and have treated others with disdain.

Yes, we have thrown ourselves off course,
and we have tempted and misled.

We rise.

אֲשַׁמְנוּ: בִּגְדָנוּ: גָּזַלְנוּ: דִּבְרָנוּ דְּפִי:
הֶעֵוִינוּ: הִהַרְשַׁעְנוּ: זָדְנוּ: חָמְסְנוּ:
טַפְּלָנוּ שָׁקַר: יַעֲצֵנוּ רַע: כְּזָבְנוּ: לֵצָנוּ:
מַרְדָּנוּ: נֹאֲצָנוּ: סָרְדָנוּ: עָוִינוּ:
פִּשְׁעָנוּ: צָרְדָנוּ: קִשְׁיָנוּ עֶרְף: רִשְׁעָנוּ:
שִׁחַתְנוּ: תִּעֲבָנוּ: תִּעֲתֵעָנוּ:

Ashamnu bagadnu gazalnu dibarnu dofi.
He'evinu vehirshanu zadnu hamasnu
tafalnu shaker. Ya'atznu ra, kizavnu latznu
maradnu ni'atznu sararnu avinu
pashanu tzararnu kishinu oref. Rashanu
shihatnu ti'avnu ta'inu titanu.

For an alternative Al Het, turn to page 969.

You know the secrets of the universe,
the most hidden recesses of all that lives.
You search the chambers of our inner being,
you examine the conscience and the heart.
There is nothing hidden from you,
nothing is concealed before your eyes.
So, let it be your will,
ETERNAL ONE, our God, God of our ancestors,
that you may grant forgiveness to us for all of our sins,
and be merciful to us for all of our injustices,
and let us atone for all we have done wrong:

For the wrong that we have done before you
in the closing of the heart,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
without knowing what we do.
For the wrong that we have done before you
whether open or concealed,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
knowingly and by deceit. ↩

For an alternative Al Het, turn to page 969.

אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ רִזִי עוֹלָם וְתַעֲלוּמוֹת סְתָרֵי כָל חַי: אַתָּה חוֹפֵשׁ כָּל חַדְרֵי
כֶּטֶן וּבֹחֵן כְּלִיּוֹת וְלֵב: אֵין דְּבָר נֶעְלָם מִמֶּךָ וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִנְּגִד
עֵינֶיךָ: וּבִכֵּן יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ שְׁתַּסְּלַח לָנוּ עַל כָּל חַטָּאוֹתֵינוּ וְתִמְחַל לָנוּ עַל כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ
וְתִכַּפֵּר לָנוּ עַל כָּל פְּשָׁעֵינוּ:

עַל חֵטָא

עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּאִמּוֹץ הַלֵּב:
וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּבִלִי רְעַת:
עַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּגִלוּי וּבִסְתָר:
וְעַל חֵטָא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּרְעַת וּבְמִרְמָה: ←

COMMENTARY. It is customary for the entire community to tap their chests during the recitation of the *Vidui*. By doing this as a collective, we ensure that the one who knows when he/she should be tapping will not be humiliated by tapping alone. D.A.T.

For the wrong that we have done before you
through the prompting of the heart,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
through the influence of others.

For the wrong that we have done before you,
whether by intention or mistake,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
by the hand of violence.

For the wrong that we have done before you
through our foolishness of speech,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
through an evil inclination.

And for them all, God of forgiveness,
please forgive us, pardon us, help us atone!

For the wrong that we have done before you
in the palming of a bribe,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
by expressions of contempt.

For the wrong that we have done before you
through misuse of food and drink,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
by our avarice and greed.

For the wrong that we have done before you
through offensive gaze,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
through a condescending glance.

And for them all, God of forgiveness,
please forgive us, pardon us, help us atone! ↪

עַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּהִרְהוּר הַלֵּב:
וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּוַעֲדַת זְנוּת:
עַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּזִדּוֹן וּבְשִׁגְגָה:
וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּחִזּוֹק יָד:
עַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּטַפְּשׁוֹת פֶּה:
וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּלִצְר הָרַע:

וְעַל כָּלֵם אֱלֹוִהַ סְלִיחוֹת סְלַח לָנוּ: מְחַל לָנוּ: כַּפֶּר-לָנוּ:

Ve'al kulam eloah selihot selah lanu. Mehal lanu. Kaper lanu.

עַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּכַפַּת שׁוֹחַד:
וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּלִצּוֹן:
עַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּמֵאֲכָל וּבְמִשְׁתֶּה:
וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּנִשְׁפָּה וּבְמִרְבִּית:
עַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּשִׁקּוֹר עֵין:
וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטָּאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּעֵינַיִם רְמוֹת:

וְעַל כָּלֵם אֱלֹוִהַ סְלִיחוֹת סְלַח לָנוּ: מְחַל לָנוּ: כַּפֶּר-לָנוּ: ←

Ve'al kulam eloah selihot selah lanu. Mehal lanu. Kaper lanu. ↪

For the wrong that we have done before you
by our quickness to oppose,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
by deception of a friend.
For the wrong that we have done before you
by unwillingness to change,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
by our running to embrace an evil act.
For the wrong that we have done before you
by our groundless hatred,
and for the wrong that we have done before you
in the giving of false pledges.
And for them all, God of forgiveness,
please forgive us, pardon us, help us atone! ↩

עַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּפִלְלוֹת:
 וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּצָרִית יָרֵעַ:
 עַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּקִשְׁיוֹת עֲרָף:
 וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּרִיצַת רַגְלַיִם לְהִרְעַ:
 עַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּשִׁנְאֵת חֲנָם:
 וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטָאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּתִשּׁוּמַת יָד:

וְעַל כָּלֵם אֱלֹוִהַ סְלִיחוֹת סְלַח לָנוּ: מְחַל לָנוּ: כַּפֵּר-לָנוּ: ←

Ve'al kulam eloah selihot selah lanu. Mehal lanu. Kaper lanu. ↪

And for mitzvot that call on us to act,
and for mitzvot that bid us not to act,
for mitzvot that say: "Arise, and do...!"
and for mitzvot that do not say: "Arise, and do...!"
for those that are made known to us,
and those that are not known to us.

Those that are known to us
are things we have acknowledged
and confessed before you,
but those that are not known to us
are things revealed and known only to you,
as it is said: "The hidden things
belong to THE ETERNAL ONE, our God.
What is revealed belongs to us and to our children,
always and forever—all the matters
of this Torah that are ours to carry out."
For you are the source of all forgiveness,
the fount of mercy for each and every generation,
and apart from you we have no sovereign
so full of mercy and forgiveness, none but you.

We are seated.

Continue on page 971.

וְעַל מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה וְעַל מִצְוֹת לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין שְׁשֵׁי-בָּה קוּם עֲשֵׂה וּבֵין
שְׁאֵין בָּה קוּם עֲשֵׂה אֶת-הַגְּלוּיִים לָנוּ וְאֶת-שְׂאִינָם גְּלוּיִים לָנוּ: אֶת-
הַגְּלוּיִים לָנוּ כְּכֹר אֲמֶרְנוּם לְפָנֶיךָ וְהוֹדִינוּ לְךָ עֲלֵיהֶם וְאֶת-שְׂאִינָם
גְּלוּיִים לָנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ הֵם גְּלוּיִים וַיְדוּעִים כַּדָּבָר שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: הַגְּסַתְרֹת
לִיהוָה אֲלֹהֵינוּ וְהַגְּגֹלֹת לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ עַד עוֹלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי
הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת כִּי אַתָּה סֵלְחֵן בְּכָל-דָּוָר וְדָוָר וּמִבְּלַעַדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ
מִלֶּךָ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ אֱלֹא אַתָּה:

We are seated.

Continue on page 972.

הנסתרות...הזאת / The hidden...out (Deuteronomy 29:28).

ALTERNATIVE AL HET

For the wrong we did before You by listening to voices at odds
with what we knew was right;
For the wrong we did before You by not listening to voices
telling us unpleasant truths;
For the wrong we did before You by closing our ears to the poor
and the hungry;
For the wrong we did before You by not working at
relationships;
For the wrong we did before You by making no time for those
who needed us;
For the wrong we did before You by abusing our health;
For the wrong we did before You by unnecessary anger;
For the wrong we did before You by giving in to bullies;
For the wrong we did before You by talking of others' failings
behind their backs instead of face to face;

וְעַל כָּלֵם אֱלֹוֹהִים סְלִיחוֹת סַלַּח לָנוּ: מְחַל לָנוּ: כַּפֹּר־לָנוּ:

Ve'al kulam eloah seliḥot selaḥ lanu. Meḥal lanu. Kaper lanu.

For all these wrongs, O God of forgiveness, forgive us, wipe the
slate clean, grant us atonement.
For the wrong we did before You by forgiving in Jews what we
condemn in others;
For the wrong we did before You by forgiving in others what we
condemn in Jews;
For the wrong we did before You by taking Israel for granted;
For the wrong we did before You by polluting our environment;
For the wrong we did before You by cutting ourselves off from
people of other races and cultures;
For the wrong we did before You by being afraid of others'
disabilities; ↵

For the wrong we did before You by callous treatment of those
with whom we live;
For the wrong we did before You by callous treatment of those
with whom we work or study;

וְעַל כָּל־מַעֲלֹתֵינוּ סְלִיחוֹת סְלַח לָנוּ: מְחַל לָנוּ: כַּפֹּר-לָנוּ:

Ve'al kulam eloah seliḥot selah lanu. Meḥal lanu. Kaper lanu.

For all these wrongs, O God of forgiveness, forgive us, wipe the
slate clean, grant us atonement.

For the wrong we did before You by ignoring the everpresent
threat of war;

For the wrong we did before You by bearing grudges;

For the wrong we did before You by indulging in excessive
luxuries;

For the wrong we did before You by giving less *tzedakah* than
we could afford;

For the wrong we did before You by manipulating others for our
own gain;

For the wrong we did before You by making those we love feel
guilty;

For the wrong we did before You by ignoring important issues in
our own community and country;

For the wrong we did before You by being ashamed to act
morally in public;

וְעַל כָּל־מַעֲלֹתֵינוּ סְלִיחוֹת סְלַח לָנוּ: מְחַל לָנוּ: כַּפֹּר-לָנוּ:

Ve'al kulam eloah seliḥot selah lanu. Meḥal lanu. Kaper lanu.

For all these wrongs, O God of forgiveness, forgive us, wipe the
slate clean, grant us atonement.

We are seated.

On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.

Our God, our ancients' God,
forgive us our transgressions,
this Day (of Shabbat, and) of Atonement,
blot out and cause to pass away
our wrongdoings and our errors
from before your eyes, as it is said:
"I, yes I, shall be the one
who blots out your wrongdoing, for my sake;
your errors I shall not remember any more!"
And it is said: "I have made your sins
vanish like a stormcloud,
and, like a mist, the things you have done wrong.
Return to me, for it is I who have redeemed you!"
And it is said: "For on this day,
atonement shall be made for you,
to make you clean from all of your wrongdoings.
Before THE FOUNT OF MERCY, you shall all be clean." ↩

On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ מְחַל לְעוֹנוֹתֵינוּ בְּיוֹם (הַשַּׁבָּת
הַזֶּה וּבְיוֹם) הַכֹּפְרִים הַזֶּה: מְחַה וְהַעֲבֵר פְּשָׁעֵינוּ וְחַטָּאתֵינוּ מִנְּגִד
עֵינֶיךָ: כְּאָמֹר: אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מְחַה פְּשָׁעֶיךָ לְמַעְנֵי וְחַטָּאתֶיךָ לֹא
אֶזְכֵּר: וְנֹאמֵר: מְחִיתִי כְעַב פְּשָׁעֶיךָ וְכַעֲנֵן חַטָּאתֶיךָ שׁוֹבָה אֵלַי כִּי
גִּאלְתֶּיךָ: וְנֹאמֵר: כִּי בְיוֹם הַזֶּה יִכַּפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטָהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל
חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי יְהוָה תְּטַהְרוּ: ←

אזכר / I, yes...more! (Isaiah 43:25).

מחיתי...גאלתיך / I have...you! (Isaiah 44:22).

כי ביום...טהרו / For on...clean (Leviticus 16:30).

On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.

Our God, our ancients' God (take pleasure in our rest),
enable us to realize holiness with 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,
your holy Shabbat, with love and joy,
and let all Israel, and all who treat your name as holy,
rest upon this day,) and refine our hearts
to serve you truthfully.

For you are a forgiving God to Israel,
and compassionate to all the tribes of Yeshurun
in each and every generation,
and apart from you we have no sovereign,
none full of compassion and forgiveness,
except you.

Blessed are you, FORGIVING ONE,
sovereign of mercy and forgiveness
for our wrongdoings, and for those
of all your kin, the house of Israel,
you who make our guilt to pass away,
year after year,
the sovereign power over all the earth
who raises up to holiness
(Shabbat,) the people Israel
and the Day of Atonement. ↪

On Shabbat add the words in parenthesis.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֱמוּנָתֵינוּ (רְצֵה בְּמִנוּחָתָנוּ) קִדְשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְתַן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ: שְׂבַעֲנוּ מְטוֹבָךָ וְשִׂמְחָנוּ
בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ: (וְהִנְחִילֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרַצוֹן שִׁבְתָּ קִדְשֶׁךָ
וְיָנוּחוּ בָּהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִקִּדְשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ) וְטִהַר לִבָּנוּ לְעִבְדֶּךָ בְּאַמֶּת: פִּי
אֲתָה סֹלֶחַן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וּמְחַלֵּן לְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל־דּוֹר וְדוֹר
וּמְבַלְעָדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ אֶלָּא אַתָּה: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ לְעוֹנוֹתֵינוּ וְלְעוֹנוֹת עַמּוֹ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
וּמַעֲבִיר אֲשֵׁמוֹתֵינוּ בְּכָל־שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה מֶלֶךְ עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ מִקִּדְשׁ
(הַשְּׁבֵת וְ) יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים: ←

5. AVODAH / WORSHIP

Take pleasure, GRACIOUS ONE, our God, in Israel your people; lovingly accept their fervent prayer. May Israel's worship always be acceptable to you.

And may our eyes behold your homecoming, with merciful intent, to Zion. Blessed are you, THE FAITHFUL ONE, who brings your presence home to Zion.

6. HODA'AH / THANKS

We give thanks to you that you are THE ALL-MERCIFUL, our God, God of our ancestors, today and always. A firm, enduring source of life, a shield to us in time of trial, you are ever there, from age to age. We acknowledge you, declare your praise, and thank you for our lives entrusted to your hand, our souls placed in your care, for your miracles that greet us every day, and for your wonders and the good things that are with us every hour, morning, noon, and night. Good One, whose kindness never stops, Kind One, whose loving acts have never failed—always have we placed our hope in you.

For all these things, your name be blessed and raised in honor always, sovereign of ours, forever. ↪

עבודה

רצה יהוה אלהינו בעמך ישראל ולהב תפלתם באהבה תקבל
ברצון ותהי לרצון תמיד עבודת ישראל עמך:

ותחזנה עינינו בשוכך לציון ברחמים: ברוך אתה יהוה המחזיר
שכינתו לציון:

הודאה

מודים אנחנו לך שאתה הוא יהוה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
ואמותינו לעולם ועד צור חיינו מגן ישענו אתה הוא לדור ודור:
נודה לך ונספר תהלתך על חיינו המסורים בידיך ועל נשמותינו
הפקודות לך ועל נשיתך שבכל יום עמנו ועל נפלאותיך וטובותיך
שבכל-עת ערב ובקר וצהרים: הטוב כי לא כלו רחמיך והמרחם
כי לא תמו חסדיך מעולם קיינו לך:

ועל כלם יתברך ויתרומם שמך מלפניו תמיד לעולם ועד: ←

Our creator, our sovereign,
remember your love for us,
and banish pestilence and war,
and famine, and captivity, and slaughter,
and crime, and violence, and plague,
and terrible disaster,
and every kind of illness,
and every kind of tragic accident,
and every kind of strife,
and all the forms of retribution,
and all evil decrees,
and groundless hatred,
Remove them from our midst,
and from the midst of all
who dwell on earth.
And write down for a good life
all who share your covenant.

Let all life acknowledge you! May all beings praise your name in truth, O God, our rescue and our aid. Blessed are you, THE GRACIOUS ONE, whose name is good, to whom all thanks are due. ↵

אֲבִינוּ מִלְפָּנָיו זָכַר רַחֲמֶיךָ וְכִלְיָה דְּבָר וְחָרֵב וְרָעַב וְשָׁבִי וּמִשְׁחִית
וְעוֹן וְשִׁמְד וּמִגְפָּה וּפְגַע רַע וְכָל-מַחֲלָה וְכָל-תַּקְלָה וְכָל-קִטְטָה
וְכָל-מִינֵי פְרַעֲנוּיֹת וְכָל-גְּזֵרָה רָעָה וְשִׁנְאָת חֲנָם מִעֲלֵינוּ וּמֵעַל כָּל-
בְּנֵי עוֹלָמְךָ:

וְכַתֵּב לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים כָּל-בְּנֵי בְרִיתְךָ:
וְכֹל הַחַיִּים יוֹדוּךָ שֶׁלָּהּ וַיְהִלּוּ אֶת שִׁמְךָ בְּאַמַּת הָאֵל יִשׁוּעָתָנוּ
וְעִזְרָתָנוּ שֶׁלָּהּ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַטוֹב שִׁמְךָ וְלָךְ נֶאֱדָה לְהוֹדוֹת: ←

7. BIRKAT HASHALOM / BLESSING FOR PEACE

Our God, our ancients' God,
bless us with the threefold blessing
spoken from the mouth of Aaron and his sons, as is said:

May THE ETERNAL bless you
and protect you. Let it be God's will!

May THE ETERNAL's face give light
to you, and show you favor. Let it be God's will!

May THE ETERNAL's face be lifted
toward you, and bestow upon you
peace. Let it be God's will! ↪

COMMENTARY. Traditionally the Priestly Blessing was done by the male descendants of the *kohanim*. In some congregations the *sheliah tzibur* (service leader) recites the blessing, and the congregation responds with "*Ken yehi ratzon*." In other communities all the members of the congregation wrap arms and tallitot around each other and recite the blessing together. Another way to enact the Priestly Blessing is for each congregant to turn to a neighbor and recite the first half of each blessing, while the neighbor responds with the second half of the blessing. Michael M. Cohen

COMMENTARY. Rabbi Lavy Becker of Montreal noticed that when this blessing was pronounced in the synagogue of Pisa, all the children gathered under the sheltering wings of their fathers' tallitot to receive it. He recognized this "as a reconstruction of the ancient priestly ceremony." He modified that custom so that those wearing a tallit share it with their neighbors and all are under the sheltering wings of the Sheḥinah as we bless each other. It is now an established part of Canadian Reconstructionist practice. E.M.

יברכך...שלוֹם / May...peace (Numbers 6:24-26).

בְּרַכַּת הַשְּׁלוֹם

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ בְּרַכְנוּ בְּבְרַכָּה הַמְּשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי אַהֲרֹן וּבְנָיו כְּאֲמֹר:

יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:

כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

יֵאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ

וְיִחַנְדֶּךָ:

כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

יֵשֶׁא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ

וְיִשֶּׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:

כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן:

Eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu
barehenu baberahah hamshuleshet
ha'amurah mipi aharon uvanav ka'amur:

Yevareheha adonay veyishmereha.

Ken yehi ratzon.

Ya'er adonay panav eleha vihuneka.

Ken yehi ratzon.

Yisa adonay panav eleha veyasem leha shalom.

Ken yehi ratzon. 

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 לֹו אֶת־הַכֶּפֶף וְאֶת־הַמַּחֲתָה וְחַפֵּן מְלֵא חַפְּנָיו וְנָתַן לְתוֹךְ
הַכֶּפֶף: הַגְּדוֹל לְפִי גְדוֹלוֹ וְהַקָּטָן לְפִי קָטְנוֹ וְכֹךְ הִיְתָה מִדְּתָה: נֹטֵל
אֶת־הַמַּחֲתָה בְּיַמֵּינוּ וְאֶת־הַכֶּפֶף בְּשִׂמְלֵנוּ: הִזָּה מְהִלָּךְ בְּהִיכֵל עַד
שְׁמַגִּיעַ לְבֵין שְׁתֵּי הַפְּרָכוֹת הַמְּבַדִּילוֹת בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין קֹדֶשׁ־
הַקֹּדְשִׁים וּבִינֵיהֶן אִמָּה: הַגִּיעַ לְאֲרוֹן נוֹתֵן אֶת־הַמַּחֲתָה בֵּין שְׁנֵי
הַבַּדִּים: צָבַר אֶת־הַקְּטָרֶת עַל גְּבִי הַגְּחָלִים וְנִתְמַלֵּא כָּל־הַבַּיִת כְּלוֹ
עֶשֶׂן: יֵצֵא וּכְאִלּוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ בֵּית־כְּנִיסָתוֹ וּמִתְפַּלֵּל תְּפִלָּה קְצָרָה בְּבַיִת־
הַחִיצוֹן 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 וְשִׁבְעַ לְמַטָּה וְלֹא הִיָּה
מִתְכַּוֵּן לְהַזוֹת לֹא לְמַעַלָּה וְלֹא לְמַטָּה אֲלֵא כְּמִצְלִיף: וְכֹךְ הִיָּה
מוֹנֵה אַחַת: אַחַת וְאַחַת: אַחַת וְשְׁתַּיִם: אַחַת וְשִׁלֹּשׁ: אַחַת וְאַרְבָּע:
אַחַת וְחֲמִשׁ: אַחַת וְשֵׁשׁ: אַחַת וְשִׁבְעַ:

וְכֹךְ הִיָּה אוֹמֵר אָנָּה הַשֵּׁם חָטְאוּ עָוֹו פִּשְׁעוּ לְפָנֶיךָ עֲמָדָה בְּיַת
יִשְׂרָאֵל: ←

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.

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

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

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

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.

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

What I learned about myself is that freedom is indivisible. If I am not free, you are not free, and if you are not free, I cannot have freedom either. What happens to the other person happens to me, not in some philosophical sense, but in a very concrete and immediate way. If to keep others down, their freedom must be taken away, then a condition of the system will be that my freedom must also be diminished. If I have to deny myself, then my own condition is a situation of unfreedom.

What I learned about being Jewish is that there are no lines of division, no unmarked boundaries, between my being Jewish and my being human. The one flows into the other and back again. Human beings are suffering. That they have suffered for centuries does not make their suffering any less pressing. The situation is urgent because suffering and oppression always are now, always happen when they happen, however long they already have happened. We cannot stand idly by. We must make the condition of humanity in any country a matter of personal engagement and personal concern. The frontiers of freedom encompass the whole of humanity. We really are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, and our brothers and our sisters are everyone.

Jacob Neusner

Two paths lie before us. One leads to death, the other to life. If we choose the first path—if we numbly refuse to acknowledge the nearness of extinction, all the while increasing our preparations to bring it about—then we in effect become the allies of death, and in everything we do, our attachment to life will weaken; our vision, blinded to the abyss that has opened at our feet, will dim and grow confused; our will, discouraged by the thought of trying to build on such a precarious foundation anything that is meant to last, will slacken; and we will sink into stupefaction, as though we were gradually weaning ourselves from life in preparation for the end. On the other hand, if we reject our doom, and bend our efforts toward survival—if we arouse ourselves to the peril and act to forestall it, making ourselves the allies of life—then the anesthetic fog will lift: our vision, no longer straining not to see the obvious, will sharpen; our will, finding secure ground to build on, will be restored; and we will take full and clear possession of life again. One day...we will make our choice.

Jonathan Schell

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

Judy Chicago

Let no one be discouraged by the belief there is nothing one person can do against the enormous array of the world's ills, misery, ignorance and violence. Few will have the greatness to bend history, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. And in the total of all those acts will be written the history of a generation. It is from numberless, diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a person stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he or she sends a tiny ripple of hope. Crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples can build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

Robert F. Kennedy

Rabbi Joshua ben Levi met Elijah the prophet....He asked Elijah:
“When will the Messiah come?”

Elijah answered: “Go and ask him yourself.”

“Where is he?”

“At the gates of the town.”

“How shall I recognize him?”

“He is sitting among the poor lepers. The others unbind all the bandages of their sores at the same time and then rebind them all together. But he unbinds one sore at a time and then binds it again before treating the next one, thinking to himself, ‘Perhaps I will be needed, and if so I must not delay.’”

Rabbi Joshua went to the Messiah and said, “Peace unto you, master and teacher.”

The Messiah answered, “Peace unto you, son of Levi.”

“When will you come, master?” asked Rabbi Joshua.

“Today,” came the answer.

Rabbi Joshua returned to Elijah, who asked, “What did he tell you?”...

“He spoke falsely to me,” said Rabbi Joshua, “for he said he would come today, but he has not come.”

Elijah answered him, “This is what he told you: ‘Today—if you will but hearken to God’s voice’ (Psalms 95:7).”

Talmud Sanhedrin 98a

If you always assume
the one sitting next to you
is the Messiah
waiting for some simple human kindness—

You will soon come to weigh your words
and watch your hands.

And if the Messiah chooses
not to be revealed
in your time—

It will not matter.

Danny Siegel (Adapted from a Yiddish Proverb)

Once, Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakai was emerging from Jerusalem,
and Rabbi Joshua was walking after him,
and saw the sanctuary lying desolate.

Rabbi Joshua declared:

“Alas for us, it lies in ruins,
the house by which our people Israel purified themselves of sin.”

And Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakai answered him:

“My child, don’t let it trouble you, we have another like it to
atone for us.

And what is that? Performing acts of kindness.

As it is said: ‘For I desire love, not sacrifice!’”



Open to me, O you gateways of justice,
let me come in and bless Yah.

Psalms 118:19

The beginning of God’s way is truth,
and eternal is your righteous law.

Psalms 119:160

Let one inclined to boast take pride in this alone:
to have understanding and knowledge of Me.
For I am THE ETERNAL, the totality
of love and righteousness within the world,
for in these alone do I desire, says THE FOUNT OF LIFE!

Jeremiah 9:23

Righteousness, and righteousness alone, shall you pursue,
that you may live!

Deuteronomy 16:20

Don’t place your trust in falsehoods, saying,
“Here it is! Here it is! Here it is! GOD’s palace!”
No, only by mending your ways and deeds wholeheartedly,
only if you bring justice
between one person and another! ↩

Jeremiah 7:4-5

כי...זבח / For...sacrifice! (Hosea 6:6).

פַּעַם אַחַת הָיָה רַבֵּן יוֹחָנָן בֶּן-זִכְאִי יוֹצֵא מִירוּשָׁלַיִם וְהָיָה רַבִּי
 יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַלֵּל אַחֲרָיו וְרָאָה אֶת-בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ חָרֵב: אָמַר רַבִּי
 יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: אוֹי לָנוּ עַל זֶה שֶׁהוּא חָרֵב מְקוֹם שְׂמֹכְפָרִים בּוֹ עֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם
 שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל: אָמַר לוֹ רַבֵּן יוֹחָנָן: בְּנֵי אֵל יִרַע לָךְ: יֵשׁ לָנוּ כַּפָּרָה
 אַחֲרַת שֶׁהִיא כְּמוֹתָהּ: וְאִיזוֹ: גְּמִילוֹת חֲסָדִים שְׂנֵאָמַר: כִּי חֲסֵד
 חִפְצָתִי וְלֹא זָכַח:



פתחו לי שערי צדק אבא-בם אודה יי:

Pithu li sha'arey tzedek avo vam odeh yah.

ראש-דברך אמת ולעולם כל-משפט צדקך:

כי אם-בזאת יתהלל המתהלל השכל וידע אותי כי אני יהוה לעשה
 חסד משפט וצדקה בארץ כִּי-בְּאֵלֶּה חִפְצָתִי נְאֻם-יְהוָה:

צדק צדק תרדף למען תחיה:

אל-תבטחו לכם אל-דברי השקר לאמר היכל יהוה היכל יהוה
 היכל יהוה הִמָּה: כִּי אִם-הִיטִיב תִּיטִיבוּ אֶת-דְּרֹכֵיכֶם וְאֶת-
 מַעַלְלֵיכֶם אִם-עָשׂוּ תַעֲשׂוּ מִשְׁפָּט בֵּין אִישׁ וּבֵין רֵעֵהוּ: ←

Once...sacrifice! (Avot Derabi Natan 4:17-18). פעם...זבח

COMMENTARY. *Tzedakah* derives from the Hebrew word for justice, in contrast to the word “charity” that derives from the Latin term for love. The impulse to *tzedakah* must derive from a commitment to justice, not from a feeling of affection. Undertaking *tzedakah*—righteousness in the world—is our obligation as God’s partners in helping to repair creation.

R.H.

Let them give their bread to one in hunger,
and cover the naked one with clothes. Ezekiel 18:7

Let each of you not bear a grudge over the misdeed of another,
and do not love false promises, for all such things do I abhor,
says THE ETERNAL ONE. Zechariah 8:17

Through justice shall you be established,
and kept far from oppression and ruin;
you shall have no fear,
for truly, it shall not come near you. Isaiah 54:14

And the work of righteousness shall lead to peace,
and justice shall bring quiet and security forever. Isaiah 32:17

And justice shall roll down like waters,
and righteousness like a mighty stream! Amos 5:24

For THE CREATOR of all beings
shall be exalted through justice
and sacred divinity through righteousness! Isaiah 5:16

I shall betroth myself to you in righteousness,
and in justice, and in love, and in compassion.
I shall betroth myself to you in truth,
and you shall know THE FOUNT OF LIFE. Hosea 2:21-22

For the ANCIENT ONE is righteous, and loves righteous deeds,
the upright shall behold God's face. Psalms 11:7

A righteous person's mouth speaks wisdom,
such a person's tongue speaks justice. Psalms 37:30

Light is seeded for the righteous,
happiness for those upright of heart. Psalms 97:11

Happy are those who keep just law,
and righteousness in every hour! Psalms 106:3

Open to me, O you gateways of justice,
let me come in and bless Yah! Psalms 118:19

לחמו לרעב יתן ועירם יכסה פגוד:

ואיש את־רעת רעהו אל־תחשבו בלבבכם ושכעת שקר אל־
תאהבו כי את־כל־אלה אשר שנאתי נאם־יהוה:

בצדקה תפונני רחמי מעשק פי־לא תיראי וממחטה פי לא־תקרב
אל־יך:

והיה מעשה הצדקה שלום ועבדת הצדקה השקט וכטח ער־
עולם:

ויגל פלמים משפט וצדקה פנחל איתן:

ויגבה יהוה צבאות במשפט והאל הקדוש נקדש בצדקה:

וארשתיה לי בצדק ובמשפט ובחסד וברחמים: וארשתיה לי
באמונה וידעת את־יהוה:

כי־צדיק יהוה צדקות אהב ישר יחזו פנימו:

פי־צדיק יהגה חכמה ולשונו תדבר משפט:

אור זרע לצדיק ולישרי־לב שמחה:

Or zarua latzadik uleyishrey lev simhah.

אשרי שמרי משפט עשה צדקה בכל־עת:

פתחו־לי שערי־צדק אבא־בם אודה יה:

Pithu li sha'arey tzedek avo vam odeh yah.

All peoples shall come forth to worship you,
blessing your glorious name,
giving praises of your justice in isolated lands,
declaring your reality to those who know it not,
and hailing you throughout the earth,
with voices ever shouting: "Great is God!"
Zealously, they shall give up false worship,
having nothing more to do with inauthentic service,
turning with a single will toward you,
in awe of you, seeking your presence,
knowing the power of your holy realm,
learning to discern you, they who long have strayed.
May they find words for telling of your power!
Now let them exalt you as supreme,
startled in awe at your embracing presence.
On you, a crown of splendor shall alight,
while, powerful in joy, the mountains dance.
Singing in happiness, far islands hail your rule,
and come to take upon themselves your yoke of majesty,
raising you on high in prayerful assembly.
Surely may all hear it from afar and come,
to give to you alone the crown of sovereignty!

וַיֵּאָתְרוּ כָּל לְעַבְדֶּיךָ וַיְבָרְכוּ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדֶיךָ
וַיִּגְדְּלוּ בְּאֵימֵי צִדְקֶיךָ וַיְדַרְשׁוּךָ עַמִּים לֹא יִדְעוּךָ
וַיַּהֲלִלוּךָ כָּל־אֶפְסֵי־אֶרֶץ וַיֹּאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל יְהוָה
וַיִּזְנְחוּ אֶת־עֲצָבֵיהֶם וַיַּחֲפְרוּ עִם פְּסִילֵיהֶם
וַיִּטּוּ שִׁכְמָם אַחַד לְעַבְדֶּיךָ וַיִּירָאוּךָ מִבְּקָשֵׁי פְנֵיךָ
וַיִּפְּרוּ פֶּחַ מִלְכוּתְךָ וַיִּלְמְדוּ תוֹעִים בִּינָה
וַיִּמְלְלוּ אֶת־גְּבוּרָתְךָ: וַיִּנְשָׂאוּךָ לְכָל לְרֹאשׁ!
וַיִּסְלְדוּ בְּחִילָה פְּנֵיךָ וַיַּעֲטֹרוּךָ נֹזֵר תְּפָאֶרֶת
וַיִּפְצְחוּ הָרִים רִנָּה וַיִּצְהֲלוּ אֵימִים כְּמִלְכָּךָ
וַיִּקְבְּלוּ עַל מִלְכוּתְךָ עֲלֵיהֶם וַיְרוּמְמוּךָ בְּקֹהֵל עָם
וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ רְחוּקִים וַיִּבְּאוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ לְךָ פֶּתֶר מְלוּכָה:

COMMENTARY. This hymn is very similar in content to the last paragraph of the *Aleynu*. It envisions the joy that will enter the human and natural world when we awaken to the unity of all creation. It holds out a vision of earthly harmony and peace founded on spiritual realization. This does not necessitate the triumph of one particular religion or culture. Rather, it signifies a world where all people recognize our relation to others and to the planet and embrace our common origin and destiny. S.P.W.

Grant peace, goodness and blessing in the world,
grace, love and mercy
over us and over all your people Israel.
Bless us, source of being, all of us, as one
amid your light,
for by your light,
WISE ONE, our God, you give to us
Torah of life, and love of kindness,
justice, blessing, mercy, life, and peace.
So may it be a good thing in your eyes,
to bless your people Israel, and all peoples,
with abundant strength and peace.

In the book of life, blessing, peace, and proper sustenance,
may we be remembered and inscribed,
we and all your people, the house of Israel,
for a good life and for peace.

KAVANAH. Try to imagine a time of true peace and tranquility, and think about your part in helping this time to come about. What can you do? What can you commit to? How will *you* be a peacemaker? L.G.B.

שִׁים שְׁלוֹם טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה בְּעוֹלָם חֵן וְחֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל
כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמְּךָ: בְּרַכְנוּ אָבִינוּ פְּלָנוּ כְּאֶחָד בְּאוֹר פְּנִיךָ: כִּי בְּאוֹר
פְּנִיךָ נִתְּתָ לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ תּוֹרַת חַיִּים וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְצַדִּיקָה
וּבְרָכָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם: וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאֶת כָּל הָעַמִּים בְּרַב עֹז וְשְׁלוֹם.

בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים בְּרָכָה וְשְׁלוֹם וּפְרִנְסָה טוֹבָה נִזְכָּר וְנִכְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנַחְנוּ
וְכָל־עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְלְשְׁלוֹם:

Sim shalom tovah uverahah ba'olam hen vaḥesed veraḥamim
aleynu ve'al kol yisrael ameḥa. Bareḥenu avinu kulanu ke'eḥad
be'or paneḥa. Ki ve'or paneḥa natata lanu adonay eloheynu torat
ḥayim ve'ahavat ḥesed utzedakah uverahah veraḥamim veḥayim
veshalom. Vetov be'eyneḥa levareḥ et ameḥa yisra'el ve'et kol
ha'amim berov oz veshalom.

Besefer ḥayim berahah veshalom ufarnasah tovah nizaḥer
venikatev lefaneḥa anahnu vehol ameḥa beyt yisra'el leḥayim
tovim uleshalom.

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 שֶׁתְּהֵא
הַשָּׁנָה הַזֹּאת הַבָּאָה עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל מְקוֹם שֶׁהֵם

שְׁנַת אֹרֶה

שְׁנַת בְּרָכָה

שְׁנַת גִּילָה

שְׁנַת דָּגָן תִּירוּשׁ וַיִּצְהָר

שְׁנַת הוֹד

שְׁנַת וַעַד טוֹב

שְׁנַת זְמָרָה

שְׁנַת חֶדְוָה

שְׁנַת טָלְלִים וּגְשָׁמִים

שְׁנַת יִשׁוּעָה

שְׁנַת כְּפָרָה

שְׁנַת לְמוּד

שְׁנַת מְנוּחָה

שְׁנַת נְחֵמָה

שְׁנַת שְׁשׁוֹן

שְׁנַת לַעֲנַג

שְׁנַת פְּדוּת

שְׁנַת צְהֵלָה

שְׁנַת קְבוּרָת גְּלוּיּוֹת

שְׁנַת רְצוֹן

שְׁנַת שְׁלוֹם וְשִׁלוּהַ שָׁנָה שֶׁתְּעֲלֵנוּ שְׂמֵחִים לְאַרְצֵנוּ

שְׁנַת אוֹצְרֶךָ הַטּוֹב תִּפְתָּח לָנוּ שָׁנָה שְׁלֵא יִצְטָרְכוּ עִמָּךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

זֶה לְזֶה וְלֹא לְעַם אַחֵר בְּתַתֶּךָ 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.

Today, give us courage and strength.	Amen!
Today, give us blessing.	Amen!
Today, give us goodness.	Amen!
Today, seek our welfare and good.	Amen!
Today, write us down for a good life.	Amen!
Today, please hearken to our cry.	Amen!
Today, accept with mercy and good will our prayer.	Amen!
Today, may your right hand keep us safe.	Amen!
Today, forgive and pardon all our sins.	Amen!

On a day like today,
 may you bring us, joyful and glad,
 to the completion of our reconstruction.
 As is written by your prophet's hand:
 "And I shall bring you to my holy mountain,
 and you shall celebrate there
 inside my house of prayer....
 For my house shall then be called
 a house of prayer for all peoples!"

Isaiah 56:7

And may we and all the people Israel,
 and all who dwell on earth,
 enjoy justice and blessing,
 lovingkindness, life, and peace, until eternity.
 Blessed are you, ABUNDANT ONE, maker of peace.

COMMENTARY. The היום /*hayom* / Today is a crowning prayer of the High Holy Day liturgy. It is reserved just for that purpose. Its power stems not only from its fresh and energetic sense of hope and not only from its beautiful music; it comes also from the powerful awareness that what matters is Today, the powerful commitment of this moment. The challenge of Yom Kippur is in part to remember that when tomorrow comes, it too will be Today. The hope of this moment, of every moment, lies in the knowledge that all we ever have is Today. If we live in the possibility of this moment, Today is more than enough. D.A.T.

אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תְּאַמְצֵנוּ:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תְּבָרַכְנוּ:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תְּגַדְּלֵנוּ:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תְּדַרְשֵׁנוּ לְטוֹבָה:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תְּכַתְּבֵנוּ לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תִּשְׁמַע שׁוֹעֲתֵנוּ:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תִּקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרַצוֹן אֶת־תְּפִלָּתֵנוּ:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תִּתְמַכְּנוּ בִּימִין צְדָקָה:
אָמֵן:	הַיּוֹם תִּמְחַל וְתַסְּלַח לְכָל־עוֹנוֹתֵינוּ:

כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה תָּבִיא אֶת־נְדָחֵינוּ שְׁשִׁים וּשְׁמֹנִים אֶל־אַרְצֵנוּ וְתִחְזִיר אֶת־שְׂכִינָתְךָ אֶל־הַר קְדֹשְׁךָ: כַּפְּתוּב עַל־יַד נְבִיאֲךָ וְהִבִּיאֹתִים אֶל־הַר קְדֹשִׁי וּשְׁמַחְתִּים בְּבֵית תְּפִלָּתִי... כִּי בֵּיתִי בֵּית־תְּפִלָּה יִקְרָא לְכָל־הָעַמִּים: וְצַדִּיקָה וּבְרָכָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם יִהְיֶה לָנוּ לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְכָל־הָעַמִּים עַד הָעוֹלָם: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹי עוֹשֵׂה הַשְׁלוֹם:

Hayom te'amtzenu.	Amen.
Hayom tevarhenu.	Amen.
Hayom tegadlenu.	Amen.
Hayom tidreshenu letovah.	Amen.
Hayom tihtevenu lehayim tovim.	Amen.
Hayom tishma shavatenu.	Amen.
Hayom tekabel berahamim uveratzon et tefilatenu.	Amen.
Hayom titmechenu bimin tzidkeha.	Amen.
Hayom timhol vetislah lehol avonoteynu.	Amen.

COMMENTARY. Why do we repeat the word “today”? “Today” raises the immediacy of our prayer. “Today” acknowledges our readiness. “Today” affirms our experience of God’s nearness. We remember that yesterday exists no more and tomorrow may not come. It is today, only in this moment, that we can be blessed, strengthened, heard, sustained and forgiven.

S.P.W.