

Rosh Hashanah Evening
5780 Readings

Reading # 1

All the stars are hidden
and the moon is dark tonight.
In the wide expanse of heaven,
north to south -
not a ray of light.

Light a bright candle
in my heart's shadowed tent,
and through the wide expanse of heaven
the light will shine.

Where there is sadness, let us offer love;
where there is fear, let us reach for hope.
On this eve of the New Year
may we bring light to one another.

Machzor Mishkan Hanefesh, page 10

Reading #2

This is the time when one day ends and another begins,
but the moment of transition is imperceptible.
So too Rosh Hashanah begins as the borders of the old
and new years touch.
What we accomplished in the year that is ending blends
into the year that begins;
what we hope for in the year that is starting
illuminates what we must leave behind.

Rabbi Richard Hirsh

Machzor Leyamim Noraim, Page 61

Reading #2

A World Where Evil Has no Voice.

If we can be courageous, one more time than we are
fearful; if we can be trusting, one more time than we
are anxious; if we can be cooperative, one more time
than we are competitive; if we can be forgiving, one
more time than we are vindictive; if we can be loving,
one more time than we are hateful...we will have
moved closer to the next breakthrough in our evolution.

Jonas Salk

Reading #4

So on this first night of Rosh Hashanah, here we are,
pressed together in a large room, a single spiritual unit,
helping each other acknowledge our actual condition,
and reciting this ancient service given to us by the
Divine Physician as a medicine for that condition, and
that condition is this:

This is real. This is very real.
This is absolutely inescapable.
And we are utterly unprepared.
And we have nothing to offer but each other and our
broken hearts.
And that will be enough.

Rabbi Alan Lew

Rosh Hashanah Day 1
5779 Readings

Reading #1

Oath of Disloyalty

I am a disloyal Jew.
I am not loyal to a political party.
Nor will I be loyal to dictators and mad kings.
I am not loyal to walls or cages.
I am not loyal to taunts or tweets.
I am not loyal to hatred, to Jew-baiting, to the gloating
connivings of white supremacy.
I am a disloyal Jew.
I am not loyal to any foreign power.
Nor to abuse of power at home.
I am not loyal to a legacy of conquest, erasure and
exploitation.
I am not loyal to stories that tell me who I should hate.

I am a loyal Jew.
I am loyal to the inconveniences of kindness.
I am loyal to the dream of justice.
I am loyal to this suffering Earth
And to all life.
I am not loyal to any founding fathers.
But I am loyal to the children who will come
And to the quality of the world we leave them.
I am not loyal to what America has become.
But I am loyal to what America could be.
I am loyal to Emma Lazarus. To huddled masses.
To freedom and welcome,
Holiness, hope and love.

Rabbi Irwin Keller

Reading #2

The Summer Day

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

Mary Oliver, [Kol Haneshamah Machzor Page 30](#)

Reading #3: Malchuyot

A Woman's Meditation

When men were children,
they thought of God as a Father;
When men were slaves,
they thought of God as a Master;
When men were subjects,
they thought of God as a King.
But I am a woman, not a slave, not a subject,
not a child who longs for God as father or mother.

I might imagine God as teacher or friend, but those
Images, like king, master, father or mother, are too
small for me now.

God is the force of motion and light in the universe;
God is the strength of life on our planet;
God is the power moving us to do good;
God is the source of love springing up in us.
God is far beyond what we can comprehend.

Ruth Brin, Harvest.

Machzor Leyamim Nora'im p. 456

Reading #4: Zichronot

Remember to remember our story. Remember to tell
the story as if you were there. Because you were there.
We were there. Alongside each other. Waiting. Hoping.
Giggling with anticipation. Prayerful. Awed. We were
there. You were there. Remember to remember to tell
your piece of Our Story.

Remember to remember sorrow. Embrace sorrow. Let
her comfort you. Let her open your heart to sweetness.
Honor what is gone. Mourn what is gone. Grieve what is
gone. Let sorrow comfort you. Let the smiling faces,
inviting aromas and savory flavors comfort you. Hold
them alongside your sorrow. Remember to remember
to embrace life.

Remember to remember joy. Cook with joy. Serve with
joy. Read with joy. Sing with joy. Laugh with joy. Fill the
space, whatever space you find yourself in, with so
much joy that it must dance out doors and windows
into our neighborhoods, communities, localities, the
nation, around the globe and into the universe. Let it
touch as many souls as possible along the way so that
their joy also increases. Remember to remember to
increase joy.

-Sabrina Sojourner

Reading #5: Shofarot

Do not text me;
I will not notice,
And may ignore it
anyway.
How can one hundred and forty of
anything
compel me
to answer,
unless I merely seek
distraction
and not return?

I will answer
the sound of the shofar
that stayed the hand
that meant to slaughter;
That rang out
and tumbled the walls
that surrounded my heart;
That sang
in aching and awesome mystery
to announce
the presence of God.
I will hear
in this wilderness,
I will hear
in my longing
and I will turn
and turn again
and listen,
and I will
answer the shofar.

Stacy Zisook Robinson

Rosh Hashanah Day 2 5779

Readings

*All readings are also found within
Kol Haneshamah Machzor Leyamim Nora'im*

Reading #1

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chaim Stern, page 24

Reading #2

May these hours of rest and renewal
open my heart to joy and my mind to truth.
May all who struggle find rest on this day.
May all who suffer find solace on this day.
May all who hurt find healing on this day.
May all who despair find purpose on this day.
And may I live my life in such a way
that this day may fulfill its promise.

Rabbi Rami Shapiro, Page 52

Reading #3

We are each created in the image of God. When we allow the reflections of our own beings to illuminate the universe, when we understand that we carry God *within* us, we are closer to doing the work that will eventually perfect the world. When we each accept the purity of our own souls and the purity of the souls of others, *tikun olam* will have been achieved.

Rabbi Leila Gal Berner, Page 173

Reading #4

Let us ask ourselves hard questions
For this is the time for truth.
 How much time did we waste
 In the year that is now gone?
Did we fill our days with life
Or were they dull and empty?
 Was there love inside our home
 Or was the affectionate word left unsaid?
Was there a real companionship with our children
Or was there a living together and a growing apart?
 Were we a help to our mates
 Or did we take them for granted?
How was it with our friends:
Were we there when they needed us or not?
 The kind deed: did we perform it or postpone
 it?
 The unnecessary gibe: did we say it or hold it
 back?
Did we live by false values?
Did we deceive others?
Did we deceive ourselves?
 Were we sensitive to the rights and feelings
 Of those who worked for us?
Did we acquire only possessions
Or did we acquire new insights as well?
 Did we fear what the crowd would say
 And keep quiet when we should have spoken
 out?
Did we mind only our own business
Or did we feel the heartbreak of others?
 Did we live right,
 And if not,
 Then have we learned, and will we change?

Rabbi Jack Riemer, page 346

Reading #5

The man under his fig tree telephoned the man
under his vine. "Tonight they definitely might come.
Assign positions, armor-plate the leaves, secure the
tree, tel the dead to report home immediately."

The white lamb leaned over, said to the wolf:
"Humans are bleating, and my heart aches with grief
I'm afraid they'll get to gunpoint, to bayonets in the
dust. At our next meeting this matter will be
discussed."

All the nations united will flow to Jerusalem
to see if they Torah has gone out. And then,
inasmuch as it's spring, they'll come down
and pick flowers from all around.

And they'll beat swords into plowshares and
plowshares into swords, and so on and so on, and
back and forth.

Perhaps from being beaten thinner and thinner, the
iron of hatred will vanish, forever.

Yehuda Amichai, page 584

Yom Kippur Evening
5779 Readings

Reading #1

Last year's loose dust has turned into this soft willingness. The wind-flowers have come up trembling, slowly the brackens are up-lifting their curvaceous and pale bodies. The thrushes have come home, none less than filled with mystery, sorrow, happiness, music, ambition.

And I am walking out into all of this with nowhere to go and no task undertaken but to turn the pages of this beautiful world over and over, in the world of my mind.

* * *

Therefore, dark past,

I'm about to do it.

I'm about to forgive you

for everything.

Mary Oliver

Reading #2

A jellyfish, if you watch it long enough, begins to look like a heart beating. It's the way they pulse, the way they contract swiftly, then release ...If you live to be eighty years old, your heart would beat three billion times. I was thinking about that, trying to imagine a number that large. Three *billion*. Count back three billion hours, and modern humans don't exist - just wild-eyed cave people, all hairy and grunting. Three billion years, and life itself barely exists. And yet here's your heart, doing its job all the time, one beat after the next, all the way up to three billion. But only if you get to live that long.

It's beating when you're sleeping, when you're watching TV, when you're standing at the beach with your toes in the sand. Maybe while you're standing there, you're looking at sparkles of white light on dark ocean, wondering if it's worth getting your hair wet again. You squint a little. You are alive as anybody else right now. Meanwhile, the waves keep rolling over your toes, one after another, like heartbeat, almost -- you can notice or not. And the whole while, your heart just keeps going. It does what it needs to do, one beat after another, until it gets the message that it's time to stop, which might happen a few minutes from now, and you don't even know it.

They are out there, those Jellyfish, pulsing, 23 stings every 5 seconds. They will be out there, maybe for the rest of life on Earth. There are so many things to be scared of in this world: blooms of jellyfish, extinction, a middle school dance. But maybe we can stop feeling so afraid. Maybe we can remember that instead of feeling like a mote of dust, we can remember that all the creatures on this Earth are made from stardust. And we are the only ones who get to *know* it. Humans may be newcomers to this planet. We may be plenty fragile. But we're also the only ones who can decide to change.

Ali Benjamin, The Thing About Jellyfish

Reading #3

What they did yesterday afternoon

i've been praying,
and these are what my prayers look like;
dear god
i come from two countries
one is thirsty
the other is on fire
both need water.

later that night
i held an atlas in my lap
ran my fingers across the whole world
and whispered
where does it hurt?

it answered
everywhere
everywhere
everywhere.

Warsan Shire

Reading #4

Rest Me in Peace

I, may I rest in peace - I, who am still living, say,
May I have peace in the rest of my life.
I want peace right now while I'm still alive.
I don't want to wait like that pious man who wished for
one leg
of the golden chair of Paradise, I want a four-legged
chair
right here, a plain wooden chair. I want the rest of my
peace now.
I have lived out my life in wars of every kind: battles
without
and within, close combat, face-to-face, the faces always
my own, my lover-face, my enemy-face.
Wars with the old weapons - sticks and stones, blunt
axe, words, dull ripping knife, love and hate,
and wars with newfangled weapons - machine gun,
missile, words, land mines exploding, love and hate.
I don't want to fulfill my parents' prophecy that life is
war.
I want peace with all my body and all my soul.
Rest me in peace.

Yehuda Amichai

Yom Kippur Day
5779 Readings

Reading #1

How to Pray While the World Burns

Go outside.
Find a patch of grass, sand, dirt.
Sit, kneel, place a hand or just
A finger to the soft earth.
Feel its pulse back.
Open your palms and divine
The words creased between.
Rub the specks of dirt
Between your fingers,
See how they cling to skin,
How they listen in their soft-rough way.
The earth will hold you better
Than God can.
God could not stop the bullets
Or the sale of weapons.
God could not block the open
Synagogue doors.
But we keep saying, *Shema,*
Listen.
Our God is One.
Singular. Invisible.
Hiding in plain sight.
But listen, Israel, our God is beneath
Our feet, between
Our fingers, coursing
Through our veins.
Our God is trapped
In the poisoned grass,
Where the blood of our brothers cries out,
Where the ants heave centuries on their backs.
Pray to the God who sharpened the tiger's teeth,
Who stored the roar in its throat.
Pray to the God who gave you lungs and tongue
To sing and groan and hum.
I swear to you
When the leaf shivers in the wind
You have given it chills
From all its listening.
The earth hears your prayer.
There is nowhere for God to hide.
Get down on your knees and let
This precious earth soften for the weight of you.
You are held. You are heard.
The wind pulls its blanket over your back,
Smooths the hair from your face,
Touches your cheek
With its cool, trembling hands.

Hila Ratzabi

Reading #2

Miracles

Around us, life burst forth with miracles - a glass of water, a ray of sunshine, a leaf, a caterpillar, a flower, laughter, raindrops. If you live in awareness, it is easy to see miracles everywhere. Each human being is a multiplicity of miracles. Eyes that see thousands of colors, shapes, and forms; ears that hear a bee flying or a thunderclap; a brain that ponders a speck of dust as easily as the entire cosmos; a heart that beats in rhythm with the heartbeat of all beings. When we are tired and feel discouraged by life's daily struggles, we may not notice these miracles, but they are always there.

Thich Nat Hanh

Reading #3

If you always assume
the person 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 so chooses
Not to be revealed
In your time—
It will not matter.

Rabbi Daniel Siegel

Reading #4

A Prayer for Responsibility for Children

We pray for children
who sneak popsicles before supper,
who erase holes in math workbook,
who can never find their shoes.
And we pray for those
who stare at photographers from behind cages,
who can't bound down the street in a new pair of
sneakers,
who live in places we wouldn't be caught dead,
who never go to the circus,
who live in an X-rated world.
We pray for children
who bring us sticky kisses and fistfulls of dandelions,
who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money.
And we pray for those
who never get dessert,
who have no safe blanket to drag behind them,
who watch their parents watch them die,
who can't find any bread to steal,
who don't have rooms to clean up,
whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser,
whose monsters are real.
We pray for children
who spend their allowance before Tuesday,
who throw tantrums in the grocery stores and pick at
their food,
who like ghost stories,
who shove dirty clothes under the bed, and never rinse
out the tub,
who get visits from the tooth fairy,
who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool,
who squirm in church or temple and scream in the
phone,
whose tears we sometimes laugh at,
and whose smiles can make us cry.
We pray for those
whose nightmares come in the daytime,
who will eat anything,
who haven't ever seen a dentist,
who aren't spoiled by anybody,
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,
who live and move, but have no being.
We pray for children who want to be carried,
and for those who must,
for those we never give up on
and for those who don't get a second chance.
For those we smother...and for those who will grab
the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.

Yom Kippur Afternoon/Yizkor / Ne'ilah 5779

Readings

Reading #1

REMEMBERING

Someone laughs a certain way and suddenly I am feeling you.

The radio plays a song you used to love. It feels as if you are here with me. The evening light glistens on the trees. My heart stings, after so many years, with the loss of you. The family gathers together. Each of us feels the absence of you.

Some of us are consoled for our loss. Some of us are yet inconsolable.

Some of us have bitterly wounded hearts for each and every loss we have suffered –

Some of us have healed.

Grandmothers, grandfathers, mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins and second-cousins, friends from the old days, friends from now...co-workers...

postmen we chatted with, men and women far, far, far from us

How brief life is.

Teach us to number our days, to be fully alive, fully aware each and every day, to live in awareness, to cherish awareness – oh teach us to number our days so that we may attain a wise heart.

That we may remember and mourn those we have lost and still celebrate the gift of their lives. The gift of life.

Rabbi Miriyam Glazer

Reading #2

Move to the front
of the line

a voice says, and suddenly
there is nobody

left standing between
you and the world, to take
the first blows
on their shoulders.

This is the place in books
where part one ends, and
part two begins,

and there is no part three.

The slate is wiped

not clean but like a canvas
painted over in white

so that a whole new landscape
must be started,

bits of the old

still showing underneath -
those colors sadness lends

to a certain hour of evening.

Now the line of light at the horizon
is the hinge between earth

and heaven, only visible

a few moments

as the sun drops

its rusted padlock

into place.

Linda Pastan, Kol Haneshamah Machzor Page 1022

Reading #3

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 Ukraina,
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, Kol Haneshamah Machzor Page 918

Reading #4

Prayer after Pittsburgh

Shall we also sit shiva for America the Beautiful, land
that we love;
Shall we sit shiva for Abraham and Sarah who welcomed
the stranger to their tent;
Shall we sit shiva for the leadership of Moses who was
the humblest of all people;
Shall we sit shiva for Hillel who taught that which is
hateful to you, do not do to another, the rest is
commentary—go and be that commentary;
Shall we sit shiva for Emma Lazarus whose poem adorns
the Lady who welcomes immigrants to this country with
the torch of liberty;
For this week we did sit shiva with the Holy One who
made all humans in God's image—as God sat weeping
amidst the ruins of a sanctuary.
There are those who proclaim darkness is light
Who proclaim fake is true
Who say that everyone not like them is an
other.
Who live by stereotype and prejudice
Who seek to divide, disparage and demean
Yet in the face of the encroaching darkness, we gather
and hold hands proclaiming our humanity.
Long ago, we ate of the Tree of Knowledge of good and
evil. We know good and evil. Each week we strive to
separate darkness from light, brokenness from
wholeness, helping from harming.
For there was another tree in the Garden of Eden. Each
week we grasp that Tree of Life as we return the Torah
scroll to the ark. We hold on to that Torah even as so
many more have joined the too long list of Jews who
were killed only because they were Jews, of black men
killed for being black men, and on and on.
Their deaths were not a kiddush hashem—a
sanctification of God's name. Their deaths were a
horrible tragedy.
The kiddush hashem/sanctification of God's name is
how we will live our lives in the light of their lives.
We will continue to choose life over death, caring over
callousness, meaning over meanness.
Od lo avdah tikvateinu—we will not lose hope.
We will organize. We will help. We will march. We will
reach out. We will lobby. We will have compassion and
we will vote.
The time of mourning is past into yizkor.
It is time to get up from shiva.
It is the time to stand—to stand up and cry out.

Rabbi Michael Strassfeld

Additional Readings

Ne'ilah

The Revolving Gates

Standing at the gates of Repair
I look behind and am reminded of my loss
Is there something new on these sides of the gates?

Can I move forward in this New Year
Letting go of short-sightedness, of only having the good
I want,
Shielding myself from the good I am receiving in this
moment?

Will I come to know that the Universe gives to me by
what it removes?
Is there greater learning than only the pain I have felt
with the losses I have experienced?
Are these gates revolving doors, cycles that evolve?

Am I in my own way?
Allow me to see that my life and my choices can wind
towards goodness
With faith and with grace help me trust that things
emerge as good and whole.

The gates open and close; they spin again.
I arrive at the same spot each time with new eyes.
Mah Norah HaMakom Hazeh: How awesome is this
place, this moment?!

I did not know
But I am ready to learn

-Rabbi Joshua Lesser

For Individual Reflection

Here I am,
one soul within this prayer community.

Like those around me, I bring my own concerns and
yearnings to this place,
hoping they will find expression in the time-hallowed
words
of my people and in the traditions cherished by
generations before me.
May I bring the best of my energies to these Holy Days,
approaching this spiritual work with open heart and
mind,
Sincerity, and sustained focus on the deep questions of
this season:
Who am I? How shall I live? Where have I fallen short -
or failed?
This night I take up the challenge of the Days of Awe:
Cheshbon hanefesh - a searching examination of my life,
a moral inventory of my deeds, words, and thoughts.
During the next ten days, let me face the truth about
myself and listen to Your still, small voice.
Taking comfort in Your promise that I am always free to
change,
released from staleness and routine,
let me know the joy of beginning again.
May I gain strength as I share this task with those
around me, united by our common purpose:
tikkun middot (improving our characters) and *tikkun
olam* (repairing the world).

I now prepare myself to pray - one soul amidst this holy
congregation.

If you hold your knowledge of self and world wholeheartedly, your heart will at times get broken by loss, failure, defeat, betrayal, or death. What happens next in you and the world around you depends on how your heart breaks. If it breaks apart into a thousand pieces, the result may be anger, depression, and disengagement. If it breaks open into greater capacity to hold the complexities and contradictions of human experience, the result may be new life.

Parker J. Palmer, *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*

Kindness

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth.

What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.

How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.

Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness,
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.

You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.

Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.

You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.

Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to mail letters and
purchase bread,

only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
it is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you every where
like a shadow or a friend.

Naomi Shihab Nye, The Words Under the Words

An AI Chet for the #MeToo Era

For the sin we committed through inappropriate use of power.

For the sin we committed by inappropriate sexual advances.

For the sin we committed by putting people in power without oversight.

For the sin we committed by not taking seriously the complaints of a colleague.

For the sin we committed by not believing victims when they spoke up.

For the sin we committed by not being aware of our own power or privilege when making an advance.

For the sin we committed by pushing forward when we should have waited and listened.

For the sin we committed by believing that sexual victimization does not happen in the Jewish world.

For all of these sins, God, help us rectify the evil we have brought about, help us to restore justice through the hard work of repentance. Only then, God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

For the sin we committed in choosing to think a person who is appropriate with us is appropriate with everyone.

For the sin we committed by choosing our own comfort over the safety of others.

For the sin we committed by focusing on our intent rather than our impact.

For the sin we committed by prioritizing reputations and money over safety.

For the sin we committed by ignoring sexual victimization as a problem until #MeToo.

For the sin we committed by performative wokeness.

For the sin we committed by failing to acknowledge our ignorance about sexual victimization.

For the sin we committed by waiting to stand against a perpetrator until we saw others doing so.

For the sin we committed by making light of victims' suffering.

For the sin we committed by contributing to rape culture.

For all of these sins, God, help us rectify the evil we have brought about, help us to restore justice through the hard work of repentance. Only then, God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

For the sin we committed by causing survivors to doubt their truth.

For the sin we committed by misusing Jewish texts to promote silence.

For the sin we committed by not supporting survivors.

For the sin we committed by gaslighting victims and victim advocates.

For the sin we committed by cutting corners in best practice protocols.

For the sin we committed by talking more than listening.

For the sin we committed by prioritizing nuance over moral clarity.

For the sin we committed by urging those who have been victimized to forgive, especially before their perpetrator did the hard work of repentance.

For the sin we committed by prioritizing some victims' voices over others.

For the sin we committed by requiring vulnerable people to depend on me, rather than investing in the development of healthy, decentralized systems that empower the entire community, and hold us accountable.

For all of these sins, God, help us rectify the evil we have brought about, help us to restore justice through the hard work of repentance. Only then, God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

An Ashamnu for #MeToo

We **Abused** our power, we didn't **Believe** survivors, we were **Complicit**, we **Demeaned**. We **Echoed** the majority, we **Focused** on our own self-interest over safety, we **Gave** abusers opportunities to further harm, we **Humiliated** survivors, we **Ignored** our impact, we **Justified** inappropriate behavior. We **Kept** abusers in power, we **Laughed** at jokes that supported rape culture, we **Marginalized** narratives that weren't easy to digest, we **Normalized** problematic behavior, we **Ostracized** victims, we **Participated** in the erasure of survivors' voices. We **Questioned** survivors' motivations, we **Reinforced** harmful myths, we **Silenced** voices trying to come forward, We **Trivialized**. We didn't **Use** safe protocols, we **Violated** boundaries, we **Waited** too long to take action, we **eXonerated** perpetrators who didn't repent, we **Yielded** to our basest impulses, we **Zealously** defended perpetrators of harm.

-By Danya Ruttenberg, Shira Berkovits, S. Bear Bergman, Guila Benchimol