


A MEDITATION BEFORE KOL NIDRE

 Eternal God, who calls us to repentance, we are grateful for the opportunity to answer Your call, to forsake our sins, and to turn to You with all our hearts.

Yet we know that repentance is difficult. We know that there have been times when we resolved to mend our ways and did not succeed.

Even the admission that we have done wrong does not come easily: our pride is as tall as the mountains; our vanity is as wide as the sea; and excuses abound.

But before You there are no secrets. To You all stands revealed. Our pettiness and our greed, our selfishness and our weakness, our running to do evil and our limping to do good—all these are known to You.

On this night of atonement, we yearn to become better than we have been. For You, O Lord, have given us the great gift of atonement, enabling individuals and communities to return to You and to do Your will.

Open our hearts to the call of this sacred night, so that the words of our prayers may remain with us to renew us and to refine us. May our deeds make us worthy to hear Your Divine assurance, “*Salaḥti*—I have forgiven.”

*Seek the Lord while the Lord may be found;
Call upon the Lord while the Lord is near.*

*Let the wicked abandon their ways,
And the evil their designs.*

*Let them return to the Lord
Who will have mercy upon them;*

*Let them return to our God,
Who is ever ready to forgive. (Isaiah 55:6-7)*

אור זָרַע לַצְדִּיק וּלְיִשְׁרָיִי לֵב שִׁמְחָה:

Or *zarua la-tzadik, ul-yish-rey leyv simḥah.*

Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart.
