

Kol Nidrei
Cantor Mark Levine

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כָּל נִדְרֵי וְאֶסְרֵי וְחַרְמֵי וְקוֹנָמֵי וְכַנּוּיֵי וְקִנּוּסֵי וְשְׁבוּעוֹת
דְּנִדְרָנָא וְדִאֲשְׁתַּבְעָנָא וְדִאֲחֲרִימָנָא
וְדִעְסָרְנָא עַל נַפְשָׁתָנָא
מִיוֹם כְּפָרִים *זֶה עַד יוֹם כְּפָרִים* הִבָּא עָלֵינוּ לְטוֹבָה
(שְׁעֶבֶר עַד יוֹם כְּפָרִים זֶה)
כְּלִהוֹן אַחַרְטָנָא בְּהוֹן. כְּלִהוֹן יְהוֹן שָׁרוֹן.
שְׁבִיקוֹן. שְׁבִיתוֹן. בְּטָלִין וּמְבַטְלִין.
לֹא שְׁרִירִין וְלֹא קִימִין:
נִדְרָנָא לֹא נִדְרֵי. וְאֶסְרָנָא לֹא אֶסְרֵי.
וְשְׁבוּעָתָנָא לֹא שְׁבוּעוֹת.

*Kol Nidrei V'esarei Vacharamei V'konamei V'chinusei V'kinusei Ushvu'ot
Dindarna Ud'isht'vana Ud'achareimna V'di'asarna Al Nafshatana
Miyom Kipurim Zeh Ad Yom Kipurim Haba Aleinu L'tovah
(She'avar Ad Yom Kipurim Ze)
Kolhon Ichratna V'hon. Kolhon Y'hon Sharan.
Shvikin. Shvitin. B'teilin Um'vutalin. Lo Sh'ririn V'lo Kayamin
Nidrana Lo Nidrei. V'esarana Lo Esarei. Usvhu'atana Lo Sh'vuot.*

Reading #1

All vows, prohibitions, consecrations, konam-vows, konas-vows, oaths or equivalent terms that we may vow, swear, consecrate, or prohibit upon ourselves from this Yom Kippur until the next Yom Kippur, may it come upon us for good – regarding them all, we regret them henceforth. They all will be permitted, abandoned, cancelled, null and void, without power and without standing. Our vows shall not be valid vows; our prohibitions shall not be valid prohibitions; and our oaths shall not be valid oaths.

Reading #2

“He who desires that none of his vows made during the year shall be valid, let him stand at the beginning of the year [Rosh Hashanah] and declare ‘every vow which I may make in the future shall be null.’”

Talmud

Reading #3

“When you make a vow to the Lord your God, do not put off fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will require it of you, and you will have incurred guilt, whereas you incur no guilt if you refrain from vowing.” (Deuteronomy 23:21-23)

“Be not rash with your mouth, and let not your heart be hasty to utter a word before God...better it is that you should not vow, than you should vow and not pay. Allow not your mouth to bring your flesh to guilt...but fear God.”

(Ecclesiastes 5:1, 4, 6)

Reading #4

“ While the text, a mere renouncement of vows, is devoid of religious emotions, its musical setting is generally accepted as an expression of the deep religious feelings which move the Jewish heart on the eve of the Day of Atonement.”

A.Z. Idelsohn

Reading #5

“Most of the text of Kol Nidrei, as it is now printed in the Machzorim makes no sense and is quite unintelligible; the only thing that gives it substance and meaning is the melody.”

Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe (16th Century)

Reading #6

“By the authority of the heavenly court of the earthly court: With the foreknowledge of the God of time and space and with the agreement of this congregation, we give permission to pray with habitual sinners (avaryanim.)”

Reading #7

He was perfectly successful. He lived the perfect life: an exceptional record in school, brilliant career, perfect wife, perfect kids. The whole package - Except it never sat right with him. Maybe because he'd gained it so easily, it felt he hadn't really earned it. Or maybe it just didn't seem to add up to the greatness he'd dreamed of. The inner unrest grew strong. But there was no one in whom he could confide. His wife was busy with her career and her pursuits. His friends would not have believed him. And besides, men don't easily share these things. So he held it together. He was perfect, and he was perfectly miserable. Welcome to Iberia.

One night at a company party, someone offered him a hit of cocaine. Why not? He never did it in college, too busy earning perfection points. Maybe now it was time to live a little. Moments later he felt remarkable. All the anxiety gone, he was once again at the center of the universe. When the same client visited him days later and offered another hit of the drug, he was eager. Soon after, he contacted the client and asked to buy some of the drug. Another, larger purchase ensued. And another after that. Gradually, the cocaine displaced everything in his life – his work, his friends, his wife and kids. Nothing mattered except the drug. When confronted, he reacted violently and irrationally, denied he had a problem. Piece by piece, he lost it all – the career, the family, respect, love – a perfect tragedy. To support his habit, he resorted to stealing. And then he got caught. In jail, he hit bottom and came to the truth. Slowly, he began to climb up and out and toward teshuvah. Slowly, he made his amends and began again. A true Iberian.