

A C o m p a n i o n t o t h e

# י מ י ם נ ו ר א ם

DAYS OF AWE



תשפ"א

5781

2020

# Welcome to the Fort Tryon Jewish Center!

*An independent, traditional, egalitarian community*

An anchor of the Uptown Jewish community since 1938, we have thrived by evolving with our neighborhood and our membership. With deep roots nurturing new life, the congregation is a diverse mix of families and individuals of many backgrounds and many types of observance.

## ***How to use this companion:***

This companion has something for everyone and is intended to help all of us stay present and reflective--open to and focused on the spiritual renewal that's available to us here and now.

Keep this companion around: before, during, and in between the holidays. Flip through it when you're inspired, bored, lost, or searching. Take a look at the sections on praying at home, the interpretive poetry for the season, or Rabbi Guy Austrian's sermons. Use the transliterations to help you sing. Let the questions on the Torah and Haftarah readings serve as doorways into those sacred texts and opportunities to reflect on our lives.

Also included are service outlines--both the complete service as normally done at FTJC, and a guided, streamlined service for the individual or family at home. Use the outlines to stay oriented along the arc of these days.

## ***How to use the machzor:***

Our machzor itself also has meaningful commentaries and stories below the line, as well as profound essays in the front. Let the prayers open up to you and open you up. and don't worry much about maintaining a particular pace or saying every last word. Make space with silence, so that your own meditations, intentions, and personal prayers can emerge.

## ***Prayer in any language:***

If we don't understand or can't read the Hebrew, we can pray with the English translations (or any other language). As we pray at home, we can move back and forth between languages as is fitting. Some parts of the tefillah might touch us more in Hebrew, such as the Shema. Other parts might be more moving and heartfelt in English. Experiment with what feels right. (Mishnah Sotah 7:1, Babylonian Talmud Sotah 32a, Shulchan Aruch 62:2)

*We look forward to gathering again in person for community, prayer, learning, and delicious food.*

# Seeking, Finding

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הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה,  
חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקִדְמָם

(איכה ה, כא)

*Return us to you, Holy One, and we will return.  
Renew our lives, as you have done so many times before.*

(Lamentations 5:21)

# “You Are Welcome Here”

*Rabbi Guy Austrian*

Each year since I became rabbi of our shul, I’ve offered a small ritual to the congregation on Yom Kippur night. At Kol Nidrei, we say, *anu matirin lehitpallel im ha’avaryanim* – literally, “we permit to pray with the transgressors,” or as I would translate it, “we allow ourselves to pray together as people who have transgressed.” Yom Kippur is an inclusive observance. But knowing that many of us may still feel excluded, or exclusive, and knowing that Jewish communities have too often hurt and alienated too many of us, I have made a point of proclaiming, “We need each and every one of us to do this holy work together, and each and every one of you is welcome here.”

Some of my welcomes are about a wide range of Jewish identity and observance, and being not Jewish or not religious. For example:

- “Whether you were born Jewish, chose to become Jewish, are worried that you’re not Jewish enough, would like to become Jewish, would like to be dating someone Jewish... YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.”

Some of my welcomes are about additional aspects of our identities. For example:

- “Whether you are Black, white, Asian, Latino, Arab, Native American, Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi... YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.”

Some are a little serious:

- “Whether you’re ready to confess, you’re ready to forgive, you’re ready to lay it all out on the floor, or if you’re not ready, you still need time, you’re still angry and hurt, you’re still protecting your heart... YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.”

And some have been more light-hearted:

- “Whether you speak and read Hebrew fluently, or you think that the word *shalom* is an event in the winter Olympics... YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.”

But this year, I don’t get to stand in front of the congregation. We don’t get to pack together in that well-loved basement sanctuary that we call “The Social Hall”—squishing in the chairs, standing in the back, and sitting on the stage. It’s incredibly sad, and I miss you all terribly.

So how can I say, “You are welcome here”? And what would I mean by “here”?

As I considered this question, I came to realize that “here” never really meant the Social Hall at all! It was never really a geographical term. While gathering in large numbers in one place creates a certain kind of experience, the place was never the point. Even if the gathering place was physical, the true destination never was.

“Here” was always really about something else: The collective experience of Yom Kippur. The sense of belonging to a community. To both of these, I can still welcome you.

Scattered and dispersed though we may be, we are doing this together. Like the Jewish People throughout the world and in all times, we are united even now.

We share the words of the machzor, that anthology of our ancestors' hopes and fears which ring so true this year. We share the readings in this Companion. We share the rhythms of these holy days, their evenings and their mornings and their evenings. We share this precious community of the Fort Tryon Jewish Center—supporting one another through all these hardships and the just plain boredom, breaking through isolation to stay connected, learning Torah together on Zoom, and sharing walks and picnics in the park. We are very much still “here.”

The Hebrew word for place is “Makom”, which is also—not coincidentally—a traditional name for God. When our ancestor Jacob was exiled from his home and all that was familiar to him, the Torah reads, “*vayifga bamakom*,” “he encountered the place.” But as our Rabbis taught, his true encounter was not merely with a physical place, but with God, *HA Makom*, THE Place—the Presence of the Divine. Though he slept in the wilderness on a bed of rocks and earth, he dreamed of a ladder that connected him to God. And he exclaimed, “how awesome is this place!”—“*Mah norah bamakom hazeh!*”

These are the *Yamim Nora'im*, the Days of Awe. And this year, to be “here” means really the same as ever: to be in a Makom, to be in the Presence of the Divine; connected to God and to one another, no matter where we are. And you are welcome here.

# Holy at Home

*Naomi Zaslou, FTJC student clergy intern*

In the opening of Psalm 27, the psalm for this season of repentance, the psalmist lists struggles that we may encounter in our lives. There are external struggles: violence, plagues, and enemies. There are internal struggles: fear, anger, and sadness. The world of the psalmist is no different from our own. These struggles are outside of our control—as so much of the chaos of life often is.

But we are not alone in this. “One thing I ask of Adonai, only this do I seek: to live in the House of God all the days of my life, to gaze at beauty and to seek God’s presence.” These homes where we sit, in living rooms and bedrooms and dining rooms, with our pet or child or favorite fridge magnets: these too are the House of God. This is our sanctuary, and this is where we seek and find God. It is not the House we imagined, but it is the House all the same.

“I will worship in God’s tent with shouts of joy. I will sing and chant praises to Adonai. Adonai, hear my voice when I call! Be generous and answer me! On Your behalf my heart says, ‘Seek My face.’ Your face, God, I will seek.”

So too, we seek, we sing, we shout. We beg. We cry. In our House, we can move, flail, and bow without shame. We can encounter the prayers unabashedly. It is just us and God, and the gates are open.

Not being together is a real loss. There is so much we will miss. This year, though, is a High Holidays experience that will be quieter and personal, reflective and contemplative, and certainly memorable. It is our hope that this Companion enables all of our members to have powerful and robust experiences of the holidays at home.

## *Tips for at-home Tefillah (prayer):*

- ★ **Plan Ahead:** Set a start time for tefillah based on the communal times on p. 9, so we may enter prayer as a community. If you are praying with a roommate or family member(s), discuss which parts you may want to experience, sing, discuss, or read together. Practice singing alone or together—let it sound however it will sound.
- ★ **Setting:** Set a space for your tefillah, where you feel comfortable and focused, in your home or outside. Dress in clothes that help you feel the holiness of the day.
- ★ **Language:** Tefillah can be in any language. Experiment with what feels right.
- ★ **Mode:** Try praying in a whisper. Try praying louder, as if you are talking to a friend. Pray with song, by chanting sentences over and over, or meditate silently. Yell or cry. Let your body move as it needs to: stand, sit, walk, bow, dance, and shake.
- ★ **Mindfulness:** Notice what you are feeling. You may find yourself feeling inadequate, inauthentic, bored, or distracted. This can be overwhelming. Naming what you are feeling (or taking a break) may help you reframe and refocus.

# The Days of Awe as a Spiritual Journey

*Rabbi Alan Lew, from "This Is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared."*

You are walking through the world half asleep. It isn't just that you don't know who you are and that you don't know how or why you got here. It's worse than that; these questions never even arise. It is as if you are in a dream.

Then the walls of the great house that surrounds you crumble and fall. You tumble out onto a strange street, suddenly conscious of your estrangement and your homelessness.

A great horn sounds, calling you to remembrance, but all you can remember is how much you have forgotten. Every day for a month, you sit and try to remember who you are and where you are going. By the last week of this month, your need to know these things weighs upon you. Your prayers become urgent.

Then the great horn sounds in earnest one hundred times. The time of transformation is upon you. The world is once again cracking through the shell of its egg to be born. The gate between heaven and earth creaks open. The Book of Life and the Book of Death are opened once again, and your name is written in one of them.

But you don't know which one.

The ten days that follow are fraught with meaning and dread. They are days when it is perfectly clear every second that you live in the midst of a chain of ineluctable consequence, that everything you do, every prayer you utter, every intention you form, every act of compassion you perform, ripples out from the center of your being to the end of time. Anger and its terrible cost lie naked before you. Grievance gives way to forgiveness. At the same time, you become aware that you stand at the end of a long chain of consequences. Many things are beyond your control. They are part of a process that was set in motion long ago. You find the idea of this unbearable.

Then, just when you think you can't tolerate this one moment more, you are called to gather with a multitude in a great hall. A court has convened high up on the altar in the front of the hall. Make way! Make way! the judges of the court proclaim, for everyone must be included in the proceeding. No one, not even the usual outcasts, may be excluded. You are told that you are in possession of a great power, the power of speech, and that you will certainly abuse it—you are already forgiven for having abused it in the past—but in the end it will save you.

For the next twenty-four hours you rehearse your own death. You wear a shroud and, like a dead person, you neither eat nor drink nor fornicate. You summon the desperate strength of life's last moments. A great wall of speech is hurled against your heart again and again; a fist beats against the wall of your heart relentlessly until you are broken-hearted and confess to your great crime. You are a human being, guilty of every crime imaginable. Your heart is cracking through its shell to be reborn. Then a chill grips you. The gate between heaven and earth has suddenly begun to close. The multitude has swollen. It is almost as if the great hall has magically expanded to include an infinity of

desperate souls. This is your last chance. Everyone has run out of time. Every heart has broken. The gate clangs shut, the great horn sounds one last time. You feel curiously lighthearted and clean.

Some days later you find yourself building a house; a curious house, an incomplete house, a house that suggests the idea of a house without actually being one. This house has no roof. There are a few twigs and branches on top, but you can see the stars and feel the wind through them. And the walls of this house don't go all the way around it either. Yet as you sit in this house eating the bounty of the earth, you feel a deep sense of security and joy. Here in this mere idea of a house, you finally feel as if you are home. The journey is over.

At precisely this moment, the journey begins again. The curious house is dismantled. The King calls you in for a last intimate meal, and then you set out on your way again.



# Communal & Personal Service Times

<b>Rosh Hashanah Seder</b>	Tue Sept 15	8:00 PM	Zoom
<b>A Taste of Erev Rosh Hashanah</b>	Fri Sept 18	5:30 PM	Zoom
<b>Rosh Hashanah 1 - Ma'ariv</b> Candle lighting: 6:40pm (+18 min.) <i>Light 25-br and yom tov candles. Bless "lehadlik ner shel shabbat v'shel yom tov," see machzor page 11</i>	Fri Sept 18	after lighting candles	personal
<b>Rosh Hashanah 1 – Shacharit</b>	Sat Sept 19	before 10:45 AM	personal
<b>Rosh Hashanah 1/2– Minchah/Ma'ariv</b> Candle lighting: 7:38 PM (or later) <i>Light yom tov candles, see machzor p. 11. For kiddush and special havdalah, see page 107.</i>	Sat Sept 19	Minchah before 7:00, Ma'ariv after candles	personal
<b>Rosh Hashanah 2 – Shacharit</b>	Sun Sept 20	before 10:45 AM	personal
<b>Tashlich &amp; Shofar at Little Red Lighthouse</b>	Sun Sept 20	2:00-5:00pm, check <a href="http://www.ftjc.org/hhd2020">www.ftjc.org/hhd2020</a> for exact times.	
<b>Shofar in Bennett Park</b>	Sun Sept 20		
<b>Rosh Hashanah 2 - Minchah/Ma'ariv</b> Havdalah: 7:36 PM <i>Havdalah on wine only (no spices or candle), bless "hagafen" and "hamavdil," see machzor page 978</i>	Sun Sept 20	Minchah before 7:00 PM, Ma'ariv after 7:40 PM	personal
<b>Yizkor for Yom Kippur</b>	Thu Sept 24	8:00 PM	Zoom
<b>Yom Kippur – Kol Nidrei</b> Candle Lighting: 6:25PM (+18 min.) <i>Light 25-br and yom tov candles; see machzor p. 45.</i>	Sun Sept 27	6:00 PM	Zoom
<b>Yom Kippur - Ma'ariv</b>	Sun Sept 27	after Kol Nidrei	personal
<b>Yom Kippur – Shacharit</b>	Mon Sept 28	before 10:45 AM	personal
<b>Yom Kippur – Minchah</b>	Mon Sept 28	before 6:40 PM	personal
<b>Yom Kippur – Ne'ilah</b> Fast ends: 7:23 PM <i>Havdalah candle lit from existing flame. Bless only "hagafen" and "hamavdil," see machzor p. 1259</i>	Mon Sept 28	end at 7:23 PM	personal
<b>Break-Fast with Community</b>	Mon Sept 28	7:45 PM	Zoom

## Tashlich:

FTJC and our neighbors at the Beis Community will meet at the Little Red Lighthouse under the George Washington Bridge at the edge of the Hudson River. Volunteers will be on hand the whole time with Tashlich booklets and a smile. Shofar will be sounded regularly--thirty blasts to fulfill your mitzvah to hear shofar: check [ftjc.org/hhd2020](http://ftjc.org/hhd2020) for updated schedule. Please bring your own bread!

# Basic Outline of Services

*It's easier to stay oriented when you realize that each day's services follow the same structure.*

*All pages listed are for the Koren Machzorim (prayer books) for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.*

<b>ROSH HASHANAH – DAY 1</b>		<b>ROSH HASHANAH – DAY 2</b>	
Psalms for Kabbalat Shabbat	48-49		
<b>MA'ARIV (Evening Service)</b>	52-95	<b>MA'ARIV (Evening Service)</b>	52-95
Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings)	266-297	Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings)	266-297
Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song)	300-345	Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song)	300-345
<b>SHACHARIT (Morning Service)</b>	<b>346-379</b>	<b>SHACHARIT (Morning Service)</b>	346-379
Shema + Individual Amidah	380-395	Shema + Individual Amidah	380-395
Repetition of Amidah	398-447	Repetition of Amidah	660-
<del>Avinu Malkeinu</del> (not on Shabbat)	448-453	Avinu Malkeinu	718-723
<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	<b>456-509</b>	<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	<b>726-769</b>
Torah reading: Hagar and Ishmael	466-475	Torah reading: Binding of Isaac	736-743
Haftarah: Channah's Prayer for a Child	476-483	Haftarah: Jeremiah – exile and return	744-749
<del>SHOFAR SERVICE</del> (not on Shabbat)	<b>492-505</b>	<b>SHOFAR SERVICE</b>	<b>756-765</b>
Devar Torah (sermon)		Devar Torah (sermon)	
<b>MUSAF (Additional Service)</b>	<b>510-653</b>	<b>MUSAF (Additional Service)</b>	<b>766-887</b>
Hineini (Here I Am – Leaders' Prayer)	510-511	Hineini (Here I Am – Leaders' Prayer)	766-769
Individual Amidah	515-549	Individual Amidah	770-803
- Includes Malchuyot, Zichronot, Shofarot		- Includes Malchuyot, Zichronot, Shofarot	
Repetition of the Amidah	550-639	Repetition of the Amidah	804-873
- Untaneh Tokef	564-575	- Untaneh Tokef	808-815
- Malchuyot (Sovereignty) + <del>Shofar</del>	600-6-7	- Malchuyot (Sovereignty) + Shofar	838-843
- Zichronot (Memory) + <del>Shofar</del>	608-617	- Zichronot (Memory) + Shofar	844-851
- Shofarot (Alert) + <del>Shofar</del>	617-623	- Shofarot (Alert) + Shofar	852-859
<del>Shofar</del> & conclusion	642-653	Shofar & conclusion	876-887
<b>MINCHAH (Afternoon Service)</b>	<b>892-935</b>	<b>MINCHAH (Afternoon Service)</b>	<b>892-935</b>
Torah: Ha'azinu (covenantal relationship)	904-907	Amidah	910-925
Amidah	910-925	Avinu Malkeinu	924-929
		MAARIV Motza'ei Rosh Hashana	948-985

<b>YOM KIPPUR</b>	
<b>KOL NIDRE + MA'ARIV</b>	<b>68-205</b>
Including Selichot (forgiveness) & vidui (confession)	
Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings)	474-507
Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song)	510-553
<b>SHACHARIT (Morning Service)</b>	<b>554-717</b>
Shema + Individual Amidah, with vidui	554-611
Repetition of Amidah, with vidui	612-711
Avinu Malkeinu	710-715
<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	<b>718-769</b>
Torah Reading: Tabernacle ritual for YK	726-737
Haftarah: Isaiah – Is this the fast I desire?	738-745
<b>YIZKOR SERVICE</b>	<b>756-765</b>
Devar Torah (sermon)	
<b>MUSAF (Additional Service)</b>	<b>770-801</b>
Hineini (Here I Am – Leaders' Prayer)	770-773
Individual Amidah, with vidui	776-801
Repetition of the Amidah	802-987
- Untaneh Tokef	842-851
- Avodah (The Temple Service)	878-902
- Eileh Ezkerah (These I Remember-Martyrs)	928-941
- vidui	948-959
<b>MINCHAH (Afternoon Service)</b>	<b>988-1103</b>
Torah: Leviticus 18 (sexual ethics)	992-997
Haftarah: Jonah	998-1011
<b>NE'ILAH (Closing of the Gates), Tekiah Gedolah</b>	<b>1104-1203</b>
<b>MA'ARIV</b>	<b>1204-1249</b>

*Throughout each service, the standard structure of each section is expanded by the insertion of numerous piyyutim (sacred prayer-poems), composed across the centuries.*

*But the structure of each section stays the same, opening and closing as it would on Shabbat or other holidays.*

# Curated Prayer Experience 1

## Rosh Hashanah Day 1: Shacharit & Musaf at Home

This year brings us the unique opportunity to create our own prayer service experience. This can also be quite daunting! This curated prayer experience is made to be followed at home, *without* a minyan (quorum of ten Jewish adults). The focus is on prayers said by us as individuals, and suggests tehillim (psalms) and piyyutim (sung, prayerful poems) to explore. This prayer experience also features abridged Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings) and Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song).

Take as much or as little time as you wish. Feel free to dwell on the comments and reflections in the machzor below the line on each page. Pause when a phrase or image draws you to reflect on your own life.

<b>ROSH HASHANAH – DAY 1</b>	
Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birechot Hashachar</li> <li>• Psalm 30</li> </ul>	266-269 296-297
Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baruch She'amar</li> <li>• Ashrei &amp; Psalms 145-150</li> <li>• Nishmat Kol Chai</li> </ul>	300-303 326-335 342-345
<b>SHACHARIT (Morning Service)</b>	
Shema + Individual Amidah	346-395
Notes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Omit Half Kaddish on p350/351</li> <li>• Omit Barchu on p352/353</li> <li>• Follow <i>machzor</i> notes for Shabbat prayers: On p354/355, say 1st line and continue on middle of p356/357</li> <li>• Add El Melech Ne'eman before Shema on p370/371</li> <li>• In the Amidah, add the words in parentheses for Shabbat</li> </ul>	
<b>Omit:</b> Repetition of Amidah	
<i>Note:</i> There are numerous piyyutim (prayerful poems) that are inserted into the Repetition. Singing them at home or reflecting on their symbolism may add to your personal prayer experience, even without the Repetition. Here are some favorites:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atah Hu - p410-11</li> <li>• Adonai Melech - p430-33</li> <li>• L'El Orech Din - p434-35</li> </ul>	
<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	
Torah reading: Hagar and Ishmael	466-475
Haftarah: Channah's Prayer for a Child	476-481
Omit <b>SHOFAR SERVICE</b> on Shabbat	
Devar Torah (sermon) - in this companion! Sermons begin on page 23.	

<b>MUSAF (Additional Service)</b>	
Hineini (Here I Am – Leaders’ Prayer) <i>Note:</i> While said by the prayer leader of a minyan, the words of the Hineini may speak to us personally, on this path of prayer at home.	510-511
Individual Musaf Amidah - Includes Malchuyot, Zichronot, Shofarot	514-549
<b>Omit:</b> Repetition of the Musaf Amidah <i>Note:</i> There are numerous piyyutim (prayerful poems) that are inserted into the Repetition. Singing them at home or reflecting on their symbolism may add to your personal prayer experience, even without the Repetition. Here are some favorites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Melech Elyon - p560-65</li> <li>● Untaneh Tokef - p564-73</li> <li>● V’kol Ma’aminim - p580-85</li> <li>● Va-Ye’etayu - p586-89 (See Additional Piyutim section for singable layout)</li> <li>● The Great Aleinu - p594-97</li> <li>● Hayom Harat/Areshet- p606-7</li> <li>● HaYom - p636-37</li> </ul>	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	
Ein Keloheinu	642-643
Aleinu	648-651
Kiddush for Shabbat + RH	654-655

# Curated Prayer Experience 2

## Rosh Hashanah Day 2: Shacharit & Musaf at Home

This year brings us the unique opportunity to create our own prayer service experience. This can also be quite daunting! This curated prayer experience is made to be followed at home, *without* a minyan (quorum of ten Jewish adults). The focus is on prayers said by us as individuals, and suggests tehillim (psalms) and piyyutim (sung, prayerful poems) to explore. This prayer experience also features abridged Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings) and Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song).

Take as much or as little time as you wish. Feel free to dwell on the comments and reflections in the machzor below the line on each page. Pause when a phrase or image draws you to reflect on your own life.

<b>ROSH HASHANAH – DAY 2</b>	
Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Birechot Hashachar</li> <li>● Psalm 30</li> </ul>	266-269 296-297
Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Baruch She'amar</li> <li>● Ashrei &amp; Psalms 145-150</li> <li>● Nishmat Kol Chai</li> </ul>	300-303 326-335 342-345
<b>SHACHARIT (Morning Service)</b>	
Shema + Individual Amidah	346-395
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Omit Half Kaddish on p350/351</li> <li>● Omit Barchu on p352/353</li> <li>● Follow <i>machzor</i> notes for weekday prayers: On p354/355, say full page for weekday, continue onto p356/357, at middle of page move to p362/363</li> <li>● Add El Melech Ne'eman before Shema on p370/371</li> </ul>	
<b>Omit:</b> Repetition of Amidah	
Notes: There are numerous piyyutim (prayerful poems) that are inserted into the Repetition. Singing them at home or reflecting on their symbolism may add to your personal prayer experience, even without the Repetition. Here are some favorites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Atah Hu - p674-75</li> <li>● Melech Elyon - p692-99</li> <li>● Adonai Melech - p698-705</li> <li>● L'El Orech Din - p704-05</li> </ul>	
Avinu Malkeinu	718-723
<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	
Torah reading: Binding of Isaac	736-743
Haftarah: Jeremiah – exile and return	744-749

<b>SHOFAR SERVICE</b>	
<i>Note:</i> FTJC will have shofar blowings today in Bennett Park. You may also blow at home if you have a shofar!	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Psalm 118 - p758-59</li> <li>● Blessing for Shofar - p760-61</li> <li>● Shofar blasts - p760-63</li> <li>● Ashrei Ha'Am - p762-63</li> </ul>	
Devar Torah (sermon) - in this companion! Sermons begin on page 23.	
<b>MUSAF (Additional Service)</b>	
Hineini (Here I Am – Leaders' Prayer)	766-769
<i>Note:</i> While said by the prayer leader of a minyan, the words of the Hineini may speak to us personally, on this path of prayer at home.	
Individual Musaf Amidah	770-803
- Includes Malchuyot, Zichronot, Shofarot	
<b>Omit:</b> Repetition of the Musaf Amidah	
<i>Note:</i> There are numerous piyyutim (prayerful poems) that are inserted into the Repetition. Singing them at home or reflecting on their symbolism may add to your personal prayer experience, even without the Repetition. Here are some favorites:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● L'El Orech Din - p806-07</li> <li>● Untaneh Tokef - p808-15</li> <li>● V'kol Ma'aminim - p820-25</li> <li>● Va-Ye'etayu - p826-29 (See Additional Piyutim section for singable layout)</li> <li>● The Great Aleinu - p832-33</li> <li>● Hayom Harat/Areshet - p858-59</li> <li>● Hayom - p870-71</li> </ul>	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	
Final shofar blasts	876-877
Ein Keloheinu	876-877
Aleinu	882-885
Kiddush for RH	888-889

# Curated Prayer Experience 3

## Yom Kippur Shacharit & Musaf at Home

This year brings us the unique opportunity to create our own prayer service experience. This can also be quite daunting! The curated prayer experience is made to be followed at home, *without* a minyan (quorum of ten Jewish adults). The focus is on prayers said by us as individuals, and suggests tehillim (psalms) and piyyutim (sung, prayerful poems) to explore. This prayer experience also features abridged Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings) and Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song).

Take as much or as little time as you wish. Feel free to dwell on the comments and reflections in the machzor below the line on each page. Pause when a phrase or image draws you to reflect on your own life.

<b>YOM KIPPUR</b>	
Birechot Hashachar (Morning Blessings)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birechot Hashachar</li> <li>• Psalm 30</li> </ul>	474-477 506-507
Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Song)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baruch She'amar</li> <li>• Ashrei &amp; Psalms 145-150</li> <li>• Nishmat Kol Chai</li> </ul>	510-513 536-543 550-553
<b>SHACHARIT (Morning Service)</b>	
Shema + Individual Amidah, with Vidui	554-611
Notes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Omit Half Kaddish on p558/559</li> <li>• Omit Barchu on p560/561</li> <li>• Follow <i>machzor</i> notes for weekday prayers: Say bottom lines of p562/563 through p565, then turn to bottom of p571</li> <li>• Add El Melech Ne'eman before Shema on p578/579</li> </ul>	
Omit: Repetition of Amidah	
<i>Note:</i> There are numerous piyyutim (prayerful poems) that are inserted into the Repetition. Singing them at home or reflecting on their symbolism may add to your personal prayer experience, even without the Repetition. Here are some favorites:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad Yom Moto - p624-27</li> <li>• Atah Hu - p630-31</li> <li>• Ha'aderet Vecha'emunah - p654-57</li> <li>• L'El Orech Din - p658-61</li> <li>• Ki Anu Amecha - p680-81</li> </ul>	
Avinu Malkeinu	710-715
<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	
Torah Reading: Tabernacle ritual for YK	726-737
Haftarah: Isaiah – Is this the fast I desire?	738-743
<b>Optional: YIZKOR SERVICE</b>	756-765



Devar Torah (sermon) - in this companion! Sermons begin on page 23.	
<b>MUSAF (Additional Service)</b>	<b>770-801</b>
Hineini (Here I Am – Leaders’ Prayer) <i>Note:</i> While said by the prayer leader of a minyan, the words of the Hineini may speak to us personally, on this path of prayer at home.	770-773
Individual Amidah, with Vidui	776-801
<p><b>Omit:</b> Repetition of the Musaf Amidah  <i>Note:</i> The Repetition of the Musaf Amidah has three additional sections: the Avodah, Eileh Ezkerah, and an additional Vidui (confessional). The Avodah and Eileh Ezkerah sections have optional suggestions for reflection below. There are also numerous piyyutim (prayerful poems) that are inserted into this Repetition. Singing them at home or reflecting on their symbolism may add to your personal prayer experience, even without the Repetition. Here are some favorites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Untaneh Tokef - p842-51</li> <li>● V’kol Ma’aminim - p858-63</li> <li>● Va-Ye’etayu - 864-65 (See Additional Piyutim section for singable layout)</li> <li>● Ki Anu Amecha - p946-947</li> <li>● HaYom - p982-83</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Optional:</b> Avodah (The Temple Service)  <i>Note:</i> The Avodah section is chanted by the prayer leader as part of Musaf, a dramatic retelling of the High Priest’s sacrifices in honor of Yom Kippur. Some highlights are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The 1st Confession - p884-87</li> <li>● The sprinkling - p890-91</li> <li>● The scapegoat - p894-95</li> <li>● The blessing - p898-99</li> <li>● March Kohen - 900-01</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Optional:</b> Eileh Ezkerah (These I Remember)  <i>Note:</i> The martyrology section is chanted by the prayer leader as part of Musaf. FTJC has a supplement booklet for reflection on tragedies that have occurred to Jewish martyrs across time. Feel free to explore these texts in a way that feels holy to you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Machzor - p928-41</li> <li>● FTJC Martyrology Booklet (red cover)</li> </ul>	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	
Aleinu	198-201
Psalm 27	204-205

# Questions

## **Rosh Hashanah, Day 1, Torah (p. 467)**

The first verse tells us, “Then Hashem *pakad* Sarah.” The verb *pakad* can mean “remembered” or “instructed.” The next verse says that Sarah conceived a child, but it’s not clear whether the two verses are connected. What else might Hashem have had in mind for Sarah? How does remembering obligate action? This year, what do you need to remember, and what do you need to do?

The journey that Hagar and Ishmael take in their exile is marked by hardship. The Hassidic master Rabbi Mendel of Vorki remarked on the particularity of the wording: the Torah names Hagar as crying, and God as answering Ishmael’s unheard prayers. Rabbi Mendel suggests that we can learn that God can hear the silent cries of the anguished heart, even when no words are uttered. How do you understand God responding to Hagar and Ishmael? What heard and silent cries do you need God to respond to at this time?

Abraham reproaches the Philistine king Avimelech, whose servants had stolen Abraham’s well. “I do not know who did this,” the king replies, “and you did not tell me before; I have never heard of all this until today!” Do you read this reply as evasive or justified? When two people share responsibility for a misunderstanding, what keeps us from sharing responsibility for its resolution?

## **Rosh Hashanah, Day 1, Haftarah (p. 477)**

Hannah names her baby Samuel, or “Shmu’el”, “*ki me’Hashem sh’iltiv*”—which could mean, because I asked for him from God, or because I borrowed him from God. How do we understand the children in our lives—as gifts or as loans? How does that shape our relationships, choices, and responsibilities?

Elkanah tries to comfort Hannah by saying “Am I not more devoted to you than ten sons?” This placating move is unsuccessful, as he fails to truly listen to the root of her sadness. In times of sadness or crisis, there is power in empathetic listening instead of prescribing solutions. What assumptions do we carry with us in life? How can we be better listeners to our family, friends, and community?

In Hannah’s song of gratitude, she exclaims (in words resembling Psalm 113 in Hallel), “God raises the poor from the dust, lifts up the needy from the dunghill, setting them with nobles, granting them seats of honor.” Why would God pay special attention to the vulnerable and marginal? What needs does your soul pray for, that will help you bring honor and care into our world?

## **Rosh Hashanah, Day 2, Torah (p. 737)**

In the opening verse, God calls to Abraham, and he answers “*Hineni*.” Translated as “here I am,” the word carries many connotations: readiness, attentiveness, receptivity, and responsiveness to instruction. For Abraham, the answer of “*hineni*” may be a readiness to bend to divine will. *Hineni* is said three times across this Torah reading, giving it thematic stress. What might *hineni* be symbolic of each time it is said? How do we answer to the demands that God makes of us? What are we saying *hineni* to?

Why does Abraham take “two lads” with him and Isaac? Why does he leave them behind at the foot of the mountain? Who are they, how did they experience this episode, and how did it affect their lives?

When you look around you, who are the people at the margins of your own story—can you imagine their perspective and experience? What would you ask them?

Abraham names the place where a ram was substituted for his son, “Hashem-yireh,” meaning Hashem will see. What does Abraham think God saw in that place? What does God see when God looks at us, at you? If you could catch a glimpse of that perspective, what might change in your life?

### **Rosh Hashanah, Day 2, Haftarah (p. 745)**

The Haftarah from Jeremiah 31 is all about shifting the current reality. Those in exile will be returned, those without hope will be redeemed, those in tears will dance in joyful abandon. What kind of shifts do you hope God brings forth for you? How does the knowledge of the joyous moments affect the way you encounter the difficult ones?

God reveals to Jeremiah that God has loved us with eternal love from the beginning, and that God continues to draw on that love and bestow it on us. What makes it easy or hard to accept that God loves you unconditionally and forever, simply because you exist? What could that love make possible?

Jeremiah imagines Ephraim (a stand-in for Israel, for us) lamenting, “Now that I have turned back, I am filled with remorse; Now that I am made aware, I strike my thigh. I am ashamed and humiliated, For I bear the disgrace of my youth.” Regret is such a powerful force. What do you regret about your younger self? What advice would you have given yourself? How does your regret shape the choices you make now—for better or for worse?

### **Yom Kippur, Morning, Torah (p. 727)**

When Aaron, the High Priest, would make the Yom Kippur sacrifices in the wilderness, he brought two young goats and a ram from public property, plus one bullock of his own, “as atonement for him and for his family.” What sins do you imagine Aaron might have committed? How does his family fit in? How can a leader in need of atonement hope to atone for the people as well?

In contrast to the famous High Priest, who is the anonymous *ish iti*, the “temporary person” appointed to escort the scapegoat out to the wilderness? Which role is more important? More holy? Harder to do? Who are the anonymous people whose service makes your own religious life possible?

The sacrifices of Yom Kippur must have verbal confessions said over them - “vidui.” The act of offering an animal to God does not make expiation by itself, it must be personalized. Throughout today, there are 10 times when we ourselves will have the opportunity to say the vidui, and to personalize the day for ourselves. How does confessing aloud change our relationship to our past misses, regrets, and sins? Why do you think the vidui is repeated so many times across one day?

### **Yom Kippur, Morning, Haftarah (p. 739)**

Isaiah tells us that according to God, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, unable to be still; its waters fling up mud and filth; there is no peace for the wicked.” In whom do you recognize this portrait of inner turmoil and outward flailing? What is the danger to such a person, and to those around them? How can these waters be stilled?

Isaiah mocks us for asking God in spiritual confusion, “Why, when we fasted, did You not see? When we starved our bodies, did You pay no heed?” The answer is swift and brutal: We are hypocrites whose ritual observance papers over the greed, callousness, and selfishness with which we exploit others. Yet the solution is just as clear: to act boldly with compassion, generosity, and justice. Then, when we call,

God will answer; when we cry, God will be present. Hearing this rebuke and advice, what emotions rise in you? Why? What can you do this year to deepen your experience of God's presence through action?

For the Torah reading on Rosh Hashanah, we saw "Hineni" (here I am) as a word with many connotations. Here, Godself calls out *hineni*, answering us when we cry and call out. But in the context of this Haftarah, God's presence seems to be dependent on our acts of justice, compassion, and loving-kindness. Why might the prophet want us to feel as if God's divine presence is dependent on our actions? Where in life do you feel God answering "*hineni*" to you?

### **Yom Kippur, Afternoon, Torah (p. 993)**

Leviticus 18 prohibits people with social power from imposing their sexual desires on those over whom they have power. In the first six verses, the text asserts four times, "I am God." Why does divine identity or presence matter here? Where is God in your own understanding of rules, limits, and hierarchies?

The words, "[which humans shall] live by them" (*vachai bahem*) serves as the crux of the rabbinic understanding that it is a positive commandment from the Torah to save a person's life. These words, *vachai bahem*, open up all kinds of possibilities for how we may respond when performing a mitzvah may put lives at risk (See Babylonian Talmud Yoma 44a). How do you see yourself living by the mitzvot? Where do you think there needs to be flexibility when religious values are in tension with each other?

The Torah here emphasizes that to live a holy life, we need to distance ourselves from the domination, degradation, and hedonism of sexual mores found elsewhere in society. Instead we can see sexuality as a sacred aspect of life and an expression of covenantal commitment—available to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. In what ways has society influenced you with negative messages about your own and others' sexuality and sexual agency? What would it take, in your own life, to replace those messages with a countercultural ethic of consent, respect, love, and holiness?

### **Yom Kippur, Afternoon, Haftarah (p. 999)**

Upon boarding the ship, Jonah told the sailors that he was fleeing God. Why didn't he say he was fleeing the mission God had given him? Is there a difference between God's presence and God's mission? Why did he tell them?

Sometimes, the situation that we are in can feel overwhelming. Many of us may want to huddle in bed, or sleep off difficult emotions. The call of the captain to Jonah, "How can you slumber at this moment? Arise, call out to your God!" encourages Jonah into action. Those words are often chanted during *Selichot*, the penitential early morning prayers that lead up to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Where in your life do you need to be encouraged into action? What wake-up calls are you listening for?

Jonah learns that his self-pity is overwhelmed by God's compassion, not only for him but for every human being, and for every animal, and for every plant. What makes universal divine compassion so compelling? So frightening? How can you extend your own compassion, and expand your own soul?

# Teshuvah Bookmark

## Rabbi Israel Salanter, The founder of Modern Musar (Jewish Ethical Mindfulness)

When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. But I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my country. When I found I couldn't change my country, I began to focus on my town. However, I discovered that I couldn't change the town, and so as I grew older, I tried to change my family. Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself.

But I've come to recognize that if long ago I had started with myself, then I could have made an impact on my family. And, my family and I could have made an impact on our town. And that, in turn, could have changed the country, and we could all indeed have changed the world.

Respond by writing and/or drawing below. Cut along the dotted line. Keep this bookmark in your *machzor* and reflect on it from time to time.

.....



### Teshuvah (תשובה) Bookmark

- ★ What change would you like to make in yourself?
- ★ What change would you like to make in your family?
- ★ What change would you like to make in your town?
- ★ What change would you like to make in your country?
- ★ What change would you like to make in your world?

**Brené Brown (*Daring Greatly*, p.72)**

“When we apologize for something we’ve done, make amends, or change a behavior that doesn’t align with our values, guilt—not shame—is most often the driving force...Guilt is just as powerful as shame, but it’s influence is positive, while shame is destructive.”

**C.S. Lewis, Christian theologian and author**

"I think that if God forgives us, we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise, it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than God."

**Jonathan Sacks (Koren *Machzor* for Yom Kippur, p.xiii)**

Judaism says that the god of love and forgiveness created Us in love and forgiveness, asking that we love and forgive others. God does not ask us not to fail. Rather God asks us to acknowledge our failures, repair what we have harmed, and move on, learning from our errors in growing.

Respond by writing and/or drawing below. Cut along the dotted line. Keep this bookmark in your *machzor* and reflect on it from time to time.

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**Teshuvah (תשובה) Bookmark**

- ★ What are you forgiving?
- ★ Where are you seeking forgiveness?
- ★ What in yourself are you letting go of?

## Derashot (Sermons)

### Rosh Hashanah: “May They Bind Themselves Together as One”

*Rabbi Guy Austrian*

When this terrible pandemic began, we New Yorkers rushed to pull together. There was a great upsurge in feelings of social solidarity as the wave crashed over the city, affecting every single person here. We rediscovered the many ways in which our fates, our lives, our livelihoods, are intertwined. We became newly conscious of how developments in other countries affect us here. The whole world was battling a common enemy. The unity of all humankind, so long appealed to by political idealists and spiritual mystics, finally seemed obvious to everyone. We often heard the saying, “We’re all in the same boat.”

But quickly enough, that metaphor was strongly contested: “We are certainly not in the same boat! Some of us are clinging to the flimsiest of life rafts, and some of us have escaped to our private yachts!” This retort is a political observation. But it also presents a profound challenge to our spiritual worldview. If we’re all deeply interconnected as creations of the ultimate Source of Oneness, the Holy Blessed One, then what do we make of the atomization, isolation, and segregation that this pandemic has not just caused, but has exposed? Are we, or are we not, “in the same boat?”

\*

The great Jewish teacher Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, taught two parables about boats. Let’s start with this one (Midrash Vayikra Rabbah 4:6):

“A group of people were sitting in a boat on the water. Suddenly, one of them picked up a drill and started drilling beneath his seat! Alarmed, the others said to him: What are you doing?! He replied: What do you care? Aren’t I drilling underneath myself? They protested back to him: But the waters will rise and flood the boat for all of us!”

The story sounds familiar, and the moral is plain. We’re all in the same boat, whether we know it or not. Although each of us might consider our own seat in it to be ours, to do what we will, our private domain is really part of a larger public commons, which we too are part of. When we disregard and damage the common good, we end up hurting everyone, including ourselves.

The pandemic laid this truth bare for all to see. We depend on each other for a network of goods and services that is almost too complex to imagine. Our individual choices have a cumulative effect on the health and well-being of everyone around us. We are deeply interconnected and interdependent. (See also BT Bava Kama 50b.)

\*

Rosh Hashanah is a holiday devoted to this interdependence. It marks the anniversary of the Creation of Universe. And while we do spend some time thinking and praying about the role of the Jewish People in the human story, our prayers emphasize that God is sovereign over all of humanity, and that the Oneness of God is the source of the unity of humans.

The problem, which our liturgy recognizes, is that we just don't get it. In every single Amidah of the High Holidays, the middle section begins with this plea:

וּבְכֵן תֵּן פְּחָדְךָ ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ עַל כָּל מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וְאִימַתְךָ עַל כָּל מַה שִּׁבְרָאתָ. וְיִירָאוּךָ כָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ  
כָּל הַבְּרוּאִים. וְיַעֲשׂוּ כָלֵם אֶגְדָּה אַחַת לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ בְּלִבָּב שְׁלָם.

“And so place the fear of You, Hashem our God, over all that You have made, and the terror of You over all You have created, so that all who were made will stand in awe of You, and all of creation will worship You, and they will bind themselves together as one (agudah echat) to carry out Your will with a whole heart (belevav shalem)...”

It's a poignant, almost desperate prayer. It's based on knowing the reality, that we humans are bitterly divided from one another, in defiance of our own created nature, in defiance of our Creator. And that that division is not just ignorance. It's a kind of idolatry.

The point is made sharply by Rabbi David Abudarham, the great medieval commentator on the liturgy (Spanish, mid-1300's). On this passage, he writes:

כִּי יֵשׁ בְּנֵי אָדָם שֶׁהֵם עוֹבְדִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת הַתַּיִם וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת הַיַּבֵּשׁ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת הַיָּבֵשׁ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת הַיָּבֵשׁ  
וְעַל כֵּן אָמַר 'תֵּן אִימַתְךָ עַל הַנְּבִרָאִים' הָאֵלֵּה שֶׁהֵם טוֹעִים וּמִתְגַּאֲבִים בְּעַצְמָם וְיִחְזְרוּ כּוֹלֵם לְעַבְדְּךָ  
בְּלִבָּב שְׁלָם.

“There are people who worship the sky and the earth and the sea monsters in the ocean. But there are also people who make themselves into deities, and about them it says, ‘place the terror of You over all You have created,’ on those who err and pride themselves, may they all return to worship You with a whole heart.”

Abudarham is saying that rejecting God's sovereignty is not just about refusing to submit to some divine tyrant. It's about refusing to acknowledge that there's anything greater, that anything or anyone matters, except for me the individual. It's the refusal to accept any kind of obligation or claim or limitation on me, even for the common good. It's the worship of the ego, and the idolatry of the self. And it emerges, ironically, from an entire culture of idolatry: widespread failures of compassion and empathy, a collapse of social solidarity. It's not just disheartening. It threatens the entire project of religion.

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So we have to acknowledge that people have a point when they say, “We are obviously not in the same boat.” While it may be true that in a global pandemic, “we're all in this together,” it's also clear



that we're in it unequally. Some of us have savings to weather the loss of a job or income, and some don't. Some of us can work from home, and others can't. Some of us can rent or buy a second home in a rural area with a lower infection rate, and some of us are stuck in overcrowded apartments in dense urban neighborhoods.

The virus, it's been said, doesn't discriminate, and that is true. But we do. We discriminate by race, income, immigration status, geography, ability, and much more, in ways that affect our underlying health, our access to health care, and the quality of that health care. All of these make some of us more vulnerable to the virus, more likely to suffer, to suffer longer and more severely, and to die.

It can feel like we're each of us alone, drifting in our own vessel.

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And yet ... Rosh Hashanah insists that there is indeed something that unites us. Paradoxically, it is always already true, and yet we need to do our part to make it true.

That something is what our passage from the liturgy alludes to: that central theme of Rosh Hashanah, which is Malchut – God's sovereignty. Malchut is not so much a top-down imposition as a cosmic reality that we can recognize or ignore. What's more, we can either strengthen or undermine it right here on earth through our own actions.

In the 10 verses of the Malchuyot section of the Rosh Hashanah Musaf service, the first nine all include a form of the word melech (sovereign). But the tenth verse doesn't. It's the Shema: "shema yisrael adonai eloheinu adonai echad," "Hashem is One."

That's because God's sovereignty is the same as God's Oneness. And that Oneness is the source and the ground for human beings coming together.

\*

This brings us to the second teaching from Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai about boats. If we're casting about for the right boat metaphor, I think that even more than the first, this is the one we need.

It begins with a verse from Deuteronomy: **וְיִהְיֶה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מֶלֶךְ בְּהִתְאַסֵּף רִאשֵׁי עַם יִחַד שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** – "There shall be a Sovereign (melech) among Yeshurun [Israel], when the heads of the people are gathered, when the tribes of Israel are united" (Deut. 33:5).

A midrash explains, this means that Malchut can exist only when we are united: **כְּשֶׁהֵם עֹשִׂים אֶגּוּדָה** **וְלֹא כְּשֶׁהֵם עֹשִׂים אֶגּוּדוֹת אֶגּוּדוֹת**, אחת, "when they are made as one whole (agudah achat), and not into many factions (agudot agudot)".

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai then teaches:

"This is analogous to bringing two boats, connecting them with braces and bars, and

building palaces upon them. So long as the boats are bound, the palaces endure; once the boats separate, the palaces no longer endure” (Sifrei Devarim 346:2).

That, I think, is an authentic—even achievable—Jewish social vision. We may not always be in the same boat. Our boats might not always be the same. But we can find ways to bind them together. We must. And when we do, it’s a foundation strong enough for a palace. The palace is this world, the one we are trying to build together, the one in which God’s presence can live, and God’s sovereignty can endure. It’s not just that recognition of God’s sovereignty should bring us all together. It’s that our own unity makes God, as it were, more sovereign.

To be a Jew in this world—in this pandemic, and every day of our lives—is to bind the boats together. We need to reach out to one another, and to all our fellow sailors on these turbulent seas, to all of humanity. Of course we have a special responsibility to ourselves and those close to us. But that doesn’t mean abandoning others or pretending that we can go it alone. Let’s put equal energy into providing for others, and building structures that provide for us all. Let’s make proactive choices to overcome our isolation and our segregation, and to reconnect the bonds of social solidarity, and to bind new ones together.

As the High Holiday prayers tell us, this unity is the opposite of idolatry. It is true service of God, **בלבב שלם**, belevav shalem, with a whole heart, a heart that is One.

## Untaneh Tokef: On Fighting for Life and its Limits

*Rabbi Guy Austrian*

The aches in my back were like no back pain I had had before. I dragged myself out of bed on Shabbat morning, and nursed my sore throat and dry cough with a cup of tea. I davened and then listlessly watched my daughters play a card game in the living room. By 10 AM it was back to bed for “just a little nap.” It turned out to be the first of three that day—which sounds like a really luxurious Shabbat, but by the third one, I was worried.

I looked at myself in the bathroom mirror. I didn’t tell Jill that I wasn’t feeling well. I told myself it was probably just my body releasing the stress of the last three days—the terrible days in March between Purim and Shabbat when the shul’s Board and I stayed up late, deciding to suspend in-person services, and writing a long message to the congregation, and hastily designing our first online Kabbalat Shabbat.

But what if it wasn’t just stress and exhaustion? What if the virus was here, in me? Jill was coughing too, and our girls had had a runny nose for days. What if my illness was just beginning? Standing there over the bathroom sink, my mind wandered forward in time. I envisioned myself in the hospital. I envisioned my funeral. I imagined what would happen to my family without me.

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אֱמֶת כִּי אַתָּה הוּא יוֹצֵרֵם. וְאַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ יוֹצֵרֵם. כִּי הֵם בְּשָׂר וְדָם: אָדָם יְסוּדוֹ מֵעֶפֶר וְסוּפוֹ לְעֶפֶר. בְּנִפְשׁוֹ יָבִיא  
לְחֵמוֹ. מְשׁוּל כְּחֶרֶס הַנְּשֻׁבֵר. כְּחֶצִיר יָבֵשׁ. וְכֶצִּיץ נוֹבֵל. כְּצִל עוֹבֵר. וְכַעֲנַן כָּלָה. וְכָרוֹחַ נוֹשֶׁבֶת. וְכֶאֱבֶק פּוֹרֵחַ.  
וְכִחְלוֹם יְעוּף:

“True, You are their Creator, and You know their form, that they are flesh and blood. A human’s beginning is from dust and their end is in dust; risking their life to get their bread, a human being is like a vessel that breaks, like grass that withers, like a flower that fades, like a shadow that passes, like a cloud that vanishes, like a wind that blows, like dust that disperses, and like a dream that dissolves.” (from *Untaneh Tokef*)

2020 has forced us to confront anew the possibility of our own death. Not only our mortality, but the fragility of our lives while we live. Not only our fragility, but also our ephemerality—how soon we might die, and how little a trace we leave as the world moves on. We don’t know how much time we have. And the impression we make upon the world is not indelible. Yes, the consequences of our presences will go on in the endless rippling outward of each action and interaction, the unforeseen unfolding of each cause and effect. But even three generations from now, how many of us will be personally remembered?

So the great paradox of a Jewish approach to what Heschel called “the inconceivable surprise of living” is how to battle fiercely for life, while at the same making peace with the reality of death. If we cling so tightly to life that we deny death as a natural part of life, then we wrench ourselves out of alignment with a holy way of living. But so too, if we become so accepting and blasé about death that we fail to fight for each precious moment of each precious life, then we slip toward passivity, or even complicity, in the presence of suicide and murder (God forbid).

And so we fight to live, while making room for the possibility of death.

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We often locate the climax of *Untaneh Tokef* at the famous line that “*tzedakah, tefillah, and teshuvah* avert the harshness of the decree.” (And machzor layouts encourage that with big bold print!) That may indeed be the climax, if we think that the central dilemma is how to avoid or endure the reality of suffering and death.

But maybe the broader dilemma, in light of our limitation, is how to live. In which case, we can see the climax of the poem much closer to the end. The author of *Untaneh Tokef* comes to terms with our limitations not just by listing the ways in which we die, but by contrasting them with God’s infinity:

אֵין קִצְבָה לְשָׁנוֹתֶיךָ. וְאֵין קֵץ לְאַרְךְ יְמֶיךָ. וְאֵין לְשִׁיעַר מִרְכָּבוֹת כְּבוֹדְךָ. וְאֵין לְפָרֵשׁ עֵלוֹם שְׁמֶךָ. שְׁמֶךָ נֶאֱחָד לְךָ  
וְאַתָּה נֶאֱחָד לְשְׁמֶךָ.

“There is no end to Your years and there is no limit to the length of Your days. Immeasurable are the chariots of angels who glorify You, and there is no way to describe Your imperceptible Name. Your Name is fitting for You, and You are worthy of Your Name.”

And then comes the line which suddenly collapses the vast chasm between us and God:

וְשִׁמְנוּ קִרְאֵת בְּשִׁמְךָ: עֲשֵׂה לִמְעַן שְׁמֶךָ. וְקִדַּשׁ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ עַל מְקִדְשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ. ... דְּרֵי מַעְלָה עִם דְּרֵי מַטָּה  
קוֹרְאִים וּמְשַׁלְּשִׁים בְּשְׁלוֹשׁ קִדְשֵׁי בְּקִדְשׁ

“But our name, You have called by Your Name. Act for the sake of Your Name, and sanctify Your Name through those who sanctify Your Name. ... Those who dwell on high together with those who dwell on earth, proclaim the three-fold sanctification in Your Sanctuary.”

We are named with a name of God, “*Yisra-El*,” those who wrestle with God. And it was one of us, that first lump of clay, *Adam*, who named God *Adonai* in the first place (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 17:4). Like *Adam*, we are animated by the divine breath of life that enters through our nostrils and courses through our flesh and blood.

It is we who sanctify God’s Name through the actions of our bodies, our dust and clay. It is we who make God’s Presence manifest in this world of dust and clay. We emerge from the Eternal Divine Unity into this differentiated life, we push and pull and rise and fall, and then dissolve back into that which is greater than us and from which we came.

Coming to terms with our finitude is really the precondition for transcending it. Our fragility and ephemerality are the necessary boundaries to make a container for a life lived with purpose, meaning, and urgency.

In the words of a poem by Rabbi Suzanne Offit:

The harshest decree is not  
Dying—without breath.

The harshest decree is  
Not living—with breath.

We are left to ask ourselves: What is the breath that animates our life? And what will we do with the breath we have left?

In the words of Psalm 119:19: **גַּר אֲנִי בְּאֶרֶץ אֲל־תִּסְתֵּר מִמֶּנִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ**, “I am a sojourner in this world; do not hide your *mitzvot* from me.” The commentator Radak (French, 1160-1235) elaborates: “We are like sojourners in this world, in that we will depart from it, because we have no real status or enduring existence here. Therefore, God, do not hide your mitzvot from me, because I do not know when I will be leaving.” In other words: show me what to do and how to live, and don’t let me miss a single opportunity.

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If the pandemic has taught us something—not only about death, but about life—it’s yet another paradox. It’s enough to do mitzvot, to live a life of service to God and other people. It’s not just enough; it’s a lot. It’s maybe everything. If they can say at our funeral, that we were **נוֹחַ לְשִׂמְיִם וְנוֹחַ לְבְרִיּוֹת**, “pleasing to God and pleasing to other people” (in the language of the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, 143:21), then **מֵה טוֹב חֶלְקֵנוּ**, how good is our portion.

At the same time, we do have choices about how we fulfill that service, how we make the most of our talents and skills, our heart and our soul, in every waking hour. If the pandemic has shaken our assumptions, or changed our plans, or caused us to reconsider our path; if we find ourselves unsatisfied, or awakened by a holy restlessness about our life or our world—then let’s take the opportunity to live into our mission with all we’ve got. That renewal and realignment, that return which collapses the chasm between us and God, between us and our best selves, is what we call *teshuvah*.

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It was a frightening Shabbat, that first Shabbat of not being together at FTJC. But when I woke up Sunday morning, I felt entirely better. No pain, no cough, no fever. Jill took antibiotics in case she had a sinus infection, and everyone cleared up. Maybe it really had been stress. Maybe it was nothing.

Only weeks later did we did get antibody tests, and we awaited the results: positive exposure to the virus. Maybe it really had been Covid-19 after all. But did that make us lucky or unlucky? Maybe it meant nothing. Maybe it meant everything. Had anything changed?

*See also: “Unetaneh Tokef for Black Lives” on page 43 of this Companion.*

## Yom Kippur: Teshuvah and the Call for Reparations

*Rabbi Guy Austrian*

On Yom Kippur, when we recite the Vidui, the Confession, we beat our chests as we go through long litanies of transgressions, of various kinds and degrees. But according to the Talmud, the essence of Vidui is just three words: *aval anachnu chatanu*, “But indeed we have sinned” (Yoma 87b).

As I recently learned from our friend Rabbi Elie Kaunfer, the source of this phrase, *aval anachnu chatanu*, is the story of Joseph’s ten brothers, who kidnapped him and sold him into slavery.

Years later, they come before Joseph in Egypt, seeking food, not recognizing him beneath his appearance as an Egyptian ruler. When Joseph insists on taking one brother hostage while the rest return to Canaan, the Torah tells us: “They said to one another, *aval ashemim anachnu*, indeed we are guilty, on account of our brother, because we looked on at his anguish, yet paid no heed as he pleaded with us. That is why this distress has come upon us. Then Reuben spoke up and said to them: Did I not tell you, ‘Do no wrong to the boy’? But you paid no heed. Now comes the reckoning for his blood” (Genesis 42:21-22).

The essential words of this quintessential prayer, the Vidui, are deeply connected to this particular ancient sin: kidnapping a human being and selling him into slavery.

But there’s more to the story. Although the brothers think that the reckoning has come, it hasn’t yet. Elsewhere in the Torah (Exodus 21:16), we learn that kidnapping is a capital crime—but the brothers never actually suffer this penalty.

And so it was that over one thousand years later, the Roman Caesar called ten rabbis into his palace. The story is recounted in the “*Eileh Ezkerah*,” the long piyyut (liturgical poem) also known as “the Martyrology,” which we read during Musaf of Yom Kippur. Based on several midrashim, the poem opens with the wicked Caesar reading his way through the Torah. He arrives at the verse, “One who kidnaps a person and sells him ... shall surely die” (Exodus 21:16).

He devises a malevolent plan. First, he orders the palace floor to be covered in shoes. Why shoes? Because according to midrash, Joseph’s brothers thought so little of their crime, that with the silver they got from the slave traders, they each bought a new pair of shoes (Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer 38, based on Amos 2:6).

That was the scene that greeted the ten sages when they arrived at the palace. “I have a deep question of halachah for you,” says the Caesar. “Ask,” say the rabbis. “What is the law for a person who is found to have kidnapped and sold one of his brothers as a slave?” When they answered, “The kidnapper shall be put to death,” the trap was sprung. “If your ancestors were still alive,” says Caesar, “I would judge them instead. But now, you shall bear their sins.” (“*Eileh Ezkerah*,” see Midrash Genesis Rabbah 84:16 and Midrash Eileh Ezkerah in *Beit Hamidrash* vol. 2, pp. 64-65).

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This year, a powerful movement for racial justice has again called attention to the deep foundations and enduring structures of inequality. And on this Yom Kippur, the holiday of *teshuvah* (repentance,

and return to a life in alignment with God and other people), I want to explore one form of *teshuvah* that has been proposed: reparations.

The debate about reparations brings up many profound questions that are at once social and spiritual. What is the meaning of words like guilt, shame, confession, responsibility, and repair? Are we who live in the U.S. today guilty of America's historic slavery? Are we responsible for addressing it? How can our Jewish tradition help us to find a way forward?

Several rabbis have done important work recently to lay out the support for reparations in halachah and aggadah (Jewish law and narrative). In 2017, Rabbi Sharon Brous raised the Talmudic case in which a thief steals a beam of wood and uses it to build a house. The ruling is that it's not necessary to destroy the house—otherwise, the thief might never be willing to do *teshuvah*. But while the house can stand, the injustice cannot: the victim of the theft must be compensated financially, plus damages (Mishnah Gittin 5:5, Babylonian Talmud Gittin 55a, Leviticus 5:21-24). Rabbi Brous applied this ruling to the house which is the United States: “Our country was built on a stolen beam,” she wrote. “Except it was several million stolen beams. And they weren't beams; they were human beings.”

A year later, Rabbi Aryeh Bernstein published “The Torah Case for Reparations.” He explored the Torah's insistence that God directed the Israelite slaves to demand money from the Egyptians on their way out of slavery (see Gen. 15:14, Ex. 3:21-22, Ex. 11:2). Surveying the classic commentaries by Jewish interpreters, he concluded: “This taking of reparations was not castigated as dishonest plundering or sinful vindictiveness, nor even as an optional bonus, but rather as a required component of liberation.”

What I hope to add to this conversation is how deeply connected the question of reparations is to our Jewish understanding of *teshuvah*, and to the core liturgy of Yom Kippur.

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As I mentioned, the Talmud says that the essence of Vidui, Confession, is just three words, *aval anachnu chatanu*, “Indeed we have sinned.” But in the text of prayer compiled by the Rambam, Maimonides, he prescribes four: *aval anachnu v'avoteinu chatanu* – We and our ancestors have sinned (MT *Seder Tefillah* 4:13 *acc. to MS Oxford*). What a powerful transformation by adding just one word. What a profound awareness of the way we are shaped by those who came before us. And Jewish communities have recognized this, and have adopted that version into our machzor.

Why? The medieval Spanish ethicist, Rabbeinu Yonah, explains it this way: “A person needs to confess their own sins and those of their ancestors, because we are punished for those “**בְּאוֹחַזוֹ בְּיָדוֹ מַעֲשֵׂה אֲבוֹתָיו בִּידוֹ**” – for holding onto the deeds of our ancestors” (Sha'arei Teshuvah 1:40). In other words, we may not have committed the sins of our fathers, but we are still responsible as long as we let things stay the same and don't put them right.

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So what do we make of this story of the Caesar and the ten martyred rabbis, which we recount every year on Yom Kippur? Does it mean that contemporary Americans, or at least the descendants of

slaveowners, should be put to death for the sins of their ancestors?! Is that the only way to accomplish *teshuvah*?

Well, no, I'm not suggesting that. And even the piyyut itself distances itself from that, by casting in the role of prosecutor the Roman Caesar, who's hardly a moral authority. And later, when the rabbis send a representative up to heaven to ask whether this decree was God's will, the angel Gabriel doesn't affirm that, but simply says that they must accept it.

And even if we were to take the halachic question seriously, the ten rabbis would not be sentenced to death. As we know, the Talmud imposed severe conditions on enacting the death penalty, which wouldn't be satisfied here. We also know that the Torah tells us, "Parents shall not be put to death for children, nor children be put to death for parents: a person shall be put to death only for his own crime" (Deut. 24:16).

However—the midrash and the piyyut do have another message, which is more subtle but just as penetrating: that, as Joseph's brothers suspected, a reckoning will come. It must come. The hole that's left behind when a sin tears the fabric of the moral universe cannot just be left hanging open forever. It needs to be repaired. Someone will have to deal with it, even many generations later. In the case of reparations for slavery, I believe that that generation is ours.

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As contemporary Americans, we have inherited the legacy of chattel slavery, not only in the form of racist attitudes that need to be unlearned, but also of racist policies that need to be unraveled. Our inheritance is not just the long persistence of oppression and discrimination, but also the inability of African Americans to inherit: generational wealth, which the US government has long fostered for white families and disrupted for Black families.

As a rabbi, I don't pretend to know what reparations should actually look like in the United States, what policies and mechanisms should be employed. But as the Black writer Ta-Nehisi Coates put it: "I believe that wrestling publicly with these questions matters as much as—if not more than—the specific answers that might be produced. An America that asks what it owes its most vulnerable citizens is improved and humane. An America that looks away is ignoring not just the sins of the past but the sins of the present and the certain sins of the future" ("The Case for Reparations," *Atlantic Magazine*, 2014).

As a rabbi, I do think that we can learn from what Yom Kippur teaches us about *teshuvah*. It encourages us that atonement is readily and universally available. But it also teaches us that atonement isn't free. *Teshuvah* requires Vidui, confession, acknowledgment of all that has been done, a kind of "truth and reconciliation" process, which may involve some pain and embarrassment (see BT Yoma 86b and Rambam, *Hilbot Teshuvah* 1:1).

*Teshuvah* also, often, costs money. It requires the restitution of what was damaged or stolen. The victims must be made whole, even if the theft has gone on for generations.

We as Jews, we as Americans – it doesn't matter if we aren't descended from slaveowners. It doesn't matter if we are recent immigrants. We have lived in this house, and it's our responsibility. Especially if we are white, but really all of us as a society. I hope that when this process of truth-telling and



reparation comes around—and it will—that we will be open to it, and embrace it with a whole heart. To be the generation that accepts the reckoning is not a punishment, but a blessing.

I'll leave the last word to the Black journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones (*New York Times Magazine*, June 30, 2020):

“If black lives are to truly matter in America, this nation must move beyond slogans and symbolism. Citizens don’t inherit just the glory of their nation, but its wrongs too. A truly great country does not ignore or excuse its sins. It confronts them and then works to make them right. If we are to be redeemed, if we are to live up to the magnificent ideals upon which we were founded, we must do what is just.

“It is time for this country to pay its debt. It is time for reparations.”

## Tashlich: Casting Away

*In addition to these core texts, Tashlich liturgy can be found on 936-947 in the Koren machzor for Rosh Hashanah.*

### Micah 7:18-20

מִי־אֵל כְּמוֹךָ נִשְׂא עוֹן וְעֵבֵר עַל־פְּשָׁע לְשִׂאֲרֵית נִחְלָתוֹ לֹא־הֶחְזִיק לְעַד אָפוּ כִּי־חָפַץ חֶסֶד הוּא: יָשׁוּב יִרְחַמֵּנוּ יִכַּבֵּשׁ עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ וְתִשְׁלִיךְ בְּמַצְלוֹת יָם כָּל־חַטָּאוֹתָם: תִּתֵּן אֱמֶת לִיעֲקֹב חֶסֶד לְאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְתֵּינוּ מִיְמֵי קֶדֶם:

Who, God, is like You, who pardons iniquity and forgives the transgression of the remnant of God's heritage? God does not stay angry forever, but delights in loving-kindness. God will again have compassion on us, suppress our iniquities, and cast into the depths of the sea all their sins. Grant truth to Jacob, kindness to Abraham, as You promised our ancestors in ancient times.

### Psalm 118:5-9

מִן־הַמִּצַּר קָרָאתִי יְיָ־הֵ עָנְנִי בְּמַרְחֵב יְיָ־הֵ: ה' לִי לֹא אֵירָא מִה־יַעֲשֶׂה לִי אָדָם: ה' לִי בְעֲזָרִי וְאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְּשִׁנְאִי: טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בְּה' מִבְּטַח בְּאָדָם: טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בְּה' מִבְּטַח בְּנְדִיבִים:

From constricted distress I called on Hashem. Hashem answered me in the wide expanse. Hashem is with me; I will not be afraid. What can any person do to me? Hashem is with me as my helper. I will see the downfall of my enemies. It is better to take refuge in Hashem than to trust in a mortal. It is better to take refuge in Hashem than to trust in princes.

### Psalm 130

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעַמְקִים קָרָאתִיךָ ה': אֶ־דָּנִי שְׂמַעַה בְּקוֹלִי תְהִי־יְיָ אֲזִנִּיךָ קְשׁוּבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי: אִם־עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמַר־יְיָ־הֵ אֶ־דָּנִי מִי יַעֲמֵד: כִּי־עַמְךָ הִסְלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּזְרָא: קוֹיִתִי ה' קוֹיִתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלְתִי: נַפְשִׁי לֹא־דָנִי מִשְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר שְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר: יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־ה' כִּי־עַם־ה' הַחֶסֶד וְהַרְבֵּה עֲמוֹ פְדוֹת: וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו:

A song of ascents. From the depths I have called to You, Hashem. Hashem, hear my voice; let Your ears be attentive to my plea. If You, Hashem, should keep account of sins, O Hashem, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be held in awe. I wait for Hashem, my soul waits, and in God's word I put my hope. My soul waits for Hashem more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. Israel, put your hope in Hashem, for with Hashem there is great loving-kindness, and great is God's power to redeem. It is God who will redeem Israel from all their sins.

*some recite seven times (Psalm 119:89)*

לְעוֹלָם ה' דְּבַרְךָ נֹצֵב בַּשָּׁמַיִם:

Forever, Hashem, Your word stands firm in the heavens.

## **“Casting Away”** by Marcia Falk

We cast into the depths of the sea our sins, and failures, and regrets.  
Reflections of our imperfect selves flow away.

What can we bear,  
with what can we bear to part?

We upturn the darkness, bring what is buried to light.

What hurts still lodge,  
what wounds have yet to heal?

We empty our hands,  
release the remnants of shame,

let go fear and despair  
that have dug their home in us.

Open hands, opening heart —

The year flows out, the year flows in.

## **“A Prayer for Tashlich”** by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Here I am again  
ready to let go of my mistakes.

*Help me to release myself  
from all the ways I've missed the mark.*

Help me to stop carrying  
the karmic baggage of my poor choices.

*As I cast this bread upon the waters  
lift my troubles off my shoulders.*

Help me to know that last year is over,  
washed away like crumbs in the current.

*Open my heart to blessing and gratitude.  
Renew my soul as the dew renews the grasses.*

## **Tashlich Questions for Children and Grownups**

What is a really good thing that you want to remember from this past year?

What is something that you want to throw away and forget from this past year?

What is something you want to do better this year?

What is something that you feel sorry about?

Is there anything you want me to say I'm sorry for?

# Additional Piyutim (Prayer-Poems)

## Vaye'etayu (All Shall Come Forth)

for Rosh Hashanah Musaf (first day p. 587; second day p. 827); Yom Kippur Musaf (p. 865).  
after each verse, we repeat the last line as a refrain; after each triplet we sing a lively melody!

Refrain: **veyitnu lecha keter meluchah** (they will offer You the royal crown)

And all shall come forth to worship You  
and they shall bless Your honorable name  
and they shall tell of Your righteousness in the islands

וַיֵּאָתִיּוּ כָל לְעַבְדְּךָ  
וַיְבָרְכוּ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדְךָ  
וַיְגִידוּ בְּאֵיִם צְדָקָךָ

and nations that have not known You shall seek You out  
and all the ends of the earth shall praise You  
and shall always say, "May the Lord forever be exalted"

וַיִּדְרְשׁוּךָ עַמִּים לֹא יָדְעוּךָ  
וַיִּהְלְלוּךָ כָּל אֶפְסֵי אֲרֶץ  
וַיֹּאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל יי

and they shall spurn their idols  
and be ashamed of their graven images  
and they shall turn their shoulder as one to worship You

וַיִּזְנְחוּ אֶת עֲצָבֵיהֶם  
וַיִּחְפְּרוּ עִם פְּסִילֵיהֶם  
וַיִּטּוּ שִׁכְמָם אַחַד לְעַבְדְּךָ

and those who seek You shall see You with the sun  
and they shall recognize Your majestic power  
and the errant ones shall learn to understand

וַיִּירָאוּךָ עִם שֶׁמֶשׁ מְבַקְשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ  
וַיִּכְּפִירוּ כֹחַ מְלֹכוֹתֶיךָ  
וַיִּלְמְדוּ תוֹעִים בִּינָה

and they shall speak of Your might  
and they shall exalt You who are exalted above all rulers  
and they shall leap back in fear at Your presence

וַיִּמְלְלוּ אֶת גְּבוּרָתְךָ  
וַיִּנְשְׂאוּךָ מִתְנַשֵּׂא לְכָל לְרֹאשׁ  
וַיִּסְלְדוּ בַחֲיִלָּה פָּנֶיךָ

and they shall crown You with a diadem of glory  
and the mountains themselves shall break out in song  
and the islands shall joyfully shout as You are crowned

וַיַּעֲטְרוּךָ נֹזֵר תְּפָאֲרָה  
וַיִּפְצְחוּ הָרִים רִנָּה  
וַיִּצְהְלוּ אֵיִם בְּמִלְכָךָ

and they shall accept the yoke of Your reign over them  
and You shall be exalted among assembled multitudes  
and they shall hear from far and wide and come

וַיִּקְבְּלוּ עַל מְלֹכוֹתֶיךָ עֲלֵיהֶם  
וַיִּרְוּמְמוּךָ בְּקֹהֵל עַם  
וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ רְחוֹקִים וַיָּבֹאוּ

to offer you the royal crown.

וַיִּתְּנוּ לְךָ פֶתֶר מְלוּכָה

## **Mi She'anah (The One Who Answered)**

*for Yom Kippur Ma'ariv Service (Night of Kol Nidrei), replaces page 187.*

*traditional version includes only men. additional verses by Rabbi Julia Andelman and Lisa Exler, 2004*

May the One who answered Abraham our father on Mount Moriah	answer us.
May the One who answered Sarah our mother at the door of the tent	answer us.
May the One who answered Isaac their son when he was bound on the altar	answer us.
May the One who answered Hagar & Yishma'el in the desert of Be'er Sheva	answer us.
May the One who answered Rebecca when she went seeking	answer us.
May the One who answered Jacob in Beit Eil	answer us.
May the One who answered Rachel and Leah in Padan Aram	answer us.
May the One who answered Tamar when they brought her out to be burned	answer us.
May the One who answered Joseph in prison	answer us.
May the One who answered Shifra and Pu'ah in Egypt	answer us.
May the One who answered Yokheved and Miriam on the bank of the Nile	answer us.
May the One who answered our ancestors at the Sea of Reeds	answer us.
May the One who answered Moses at Horeiv	answer us.
May the One who answered Aaron with the censer	answer us.
May the One who answered Pinchas when he rose up amidst the people	answer us.
May the One who answered Joshua at Gilgal	answer us.
May the One who answered Deborah at Mount Tavor	answer us.
May the One who answered Ruth when she went to the threshing floor	answer us.
May the One who answered Hannah in Shiloh	answer us.
May the One who answered Samuel in Mitzpah	answer us.
May the One who answered David and Solomon his son in Jerusalem	answer us.
May the One who answered Elijah on Mount Carmel	answer us.
May the One who answered Elisha in Jericho	answer us.
May the One who answered Jonah in the belly of the fish	answer us.
May the One who answered Hezekiah in his illness	answer us.
May the One who answered Hananiah, Misha'el, & Azariah in the furnace	answer us.
May the One who answered Daniel in the lions' den	answer us.
May the One who answered Mordekhai and Esther in the city Shushan	answer us.
May the One who answered Ezra in exile	answer us.
May the One who answered all the righteous, pious, perfect, and upright	answer us.

hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ בְּהַר הַמּוֹרִיָּה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְשׂוֹרֵה אֲמֵנוּ בְּפֶתַח הָאֵהָל
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְיִצְחָק בְּנָם כְּשֶׁנֶּעְקַד עַל גְּבִי הַמְּזֻבָּח
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְהֶגֶר וְיִשְׁמַעְיָאל בְּמַדְבַּר בְּאֵר שׁוֹבַע
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְרַבֵּקָה בְּלִכְתָּהּ לְדָרוֹשׁ
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְיַעֲקֹב בְּבֵית אֵל
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְרַחֵל וְלָאָה בְּפָדוֹן אָרָם
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְתָמָר כְּשֶׁהוֹצִיאֹתָ לְשׂוֹרֵה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְיוֹסֵף בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִים
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְשִׁפְרָה וּפּוּעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְיוֹכָבֵד וּמְרַיִם עַל-שִׁפְתַּי הַיָּאֵר
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְאַבְוֵתֵינוּ עַל יַם סוּף
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְמִשָּׁה בְּחוּרָב
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְאַהֲרֹן בְּמַחֲתָה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְפִנְחָס בְּקוּמוֹ מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְיִהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּגִלְגָל
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְדָבוּרָה בְּהַר-תְּבוֹר
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְרוּת בְּרִדְתָּהּ לְגוֹרֹן
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְחַנָּה בְּשִׁילָה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְיִשְׁמוּאֵל בְּמִצְפָּה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְדָוִד וְשְׁלֹמֹה בְּנוֹ בִירוּשָׁלַיִם
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְאַלְיָהוּ בְּהַר הַכְּרִמָּל
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְאַלְיָשָׁע בִּירוּחוֹ
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְיוֹנָה בְּמַעַי הַדָּגָה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְחִזְקִיָּהוּ בְּחִלּוֹ
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְחַנְנִיָּה מִיִּשְׂאֵל וְעַזְרָיָה בְּתוֹךְ כְּבֹשֶׁן הָאֵשׁ
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְדָנְיָאֵל בְּגוֹב הָאֲרָיוֹת
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְמַרְדְּכַי וְאַסְתֵּר בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבִּירָה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְעִזְרָא בְּגוֹלָה
hu ya'aneinu	הוא יֵעֲנֵנוּ	מי שְׁעֵנָה לְכָל-הַצַּדִּיקִים וְהַחֲסִידִים וְהַתְּמִימִים וְהַיִּשְׁרָיִם

## El Nora Alilah (God, Inspiring Awe through Actions)

for Yom Kippur Ne'ilah Service, before Reader's Repetition of the Amidah, page 1137  
(trans. Machzor Lev Shalem)

Awe-inspiring Creator, God,  
awe-inspiring Creator, God,  
find forgiveness for us,  
in this closing hour.

א-ל נורא עליה  
בשעת הנעילה

א-ל נורא עליה  
המצא לנו מחילה

### *El nora alilah, el nora alilah, hamtzei lanu mechilah, bish'at hane'ilah!*

We who are called “few in number” raise  
our eyes toward You, and tremblingly  
beseech You, in this closing hour

לך עין נושאים  
בשעת הנעילה

מתי מספר קרואים  
ומסלדים בְּחִילָה

As we pour out our souls, wipe away our  
sins and denials, craft forgiveness for us,  
in this closing hour.

מחה פשעם וכחשם  
בשעת הנעילה

שופכים לך נפשם  
והמציאם מחילה

Be our protector. Shield us from terror;  
seal our fate for joy and glory, in this  
closing hour.

והצילם ממארה  
בשעת הנעילה

היה להם לסתרה  
וחתמם להוד ולגילה

Be compassionate and loving toward us;  
bring judgment on all who would oppress  
or war against us, in this closing hour.

וכל לוחזן ולוחם  
בשעת הנעילה

חון אותם ורחם  
עשה בהם פליה

Remember our ancestors' righteousness  
and renew our days as of old, and as at  
the beginning, in this closing hour.

וחדש את ימיהם  
בשעת הנעילה

זכר צדקת אביהם  
פקדם ותחלה

May this year be one which is pleasing to  
You. Restore Your remaining flock to  
their former glory, in this closing hour.

והשב שאר הצאן  
בשעת הנעילה

קרא נא שנת רצון  
לאהליבה ואהלה

May we, Your children, celebrate with joy  
and gladness, length of days merited in  
this closing hour.

הבנים והאבות  
בשעת הנעילה

תזכו לשנים רבות  
בדיצה ובצחה

Micha'el, angel prince of Israel! Eliyahu  
and Gavriel! Herald the coming of  
redemption! – in this closing hour.

אלהיו וגבריאל  
בשעת הנעילה

מיכאל שר ישראל  
בשרו נא הגאלה

# Transliterations

## **Avinu Malkeinu**

*near the end of most services except Musaf on both RH and YK; the concluding lines are as follows:*

avinu malkeinu, avinu malkeinu  
avinu malkeinu, choneinu va'aneinu  
ki ein banu ma'asim  
aseh imanu, tzedakah vachessed  
aseh imanu, tzedakah vachessed vehoshi'einu

## **Thirteen Attributes of God**

*on opening the Aron Kodesh (holy ark) for each morning Torah Service, and repeatedly during Selichot (Forgiveness) sections of Yom Kippur Ma'ariv and Ne'ilah services*

Adonai, Adonai, el rachum vechanun, erech apayim verav chesed ve'emet,  
notzeir chesed la'alafim, nosei avon vafesha vechata'ah, venakeih

## **Va-Ani Tefilati**

*on opening the Aron Kodesh (holy ark) for each morning Torah Service*

va'ani tefilati lecha Adonai, eit ratzon, Elohim, berov chasdecha,  
aneini (aneini) be'emet yishecha

## **Ashamnu**

*at the beginning of the Vidui (Confession) section of every Amidah on Yom Kippur*

ashamnu, bagadnu, gazalnu, dibarnu dofi;  
he'evinu, vehirshanu, zadnu, chamasnu, tafalnu sheker;  
ya'atznu ra, kizavnu, latznu, maradnu, ni'atznu, sararnu, avinu, pasanu, tzararnu, kishinu oref;  
rashanu, shichatnu, ti'avnu, ta'inu, titanu.

## **Al Cheyt**

*near the end of every Vidui (Confession); the refrain is as follows:*

ve'al kulam elo'ah selichot, selach lanu, mechal lanu, kaper lanu.

*NOTE: Mourner's Kaddish appears in transliteration on the last page of the machzor.*



# Readings and Reflections

## **A Community Al Cheit (Admitting Mistakes)**

*adapted from online submissions by members of the Fort Tryon Jewish Center community*

We have allowed ourselves to forget those around us.  
We have been unkind and unfair to our spouses.  
We have been impatient with our elderly parents.  
We have paid more attention to our cellphones than to our children.  
We have yelled at those whom we love.  
We have been frightened of our neighbors.  
We have taken our family for granted.  
We have ignored our siblings.

We have considered ourselves superior to others.  
We have considered ourselves inferior to others.  
We have judged others harshly on first appearances.  
We have wanted others to be more like us.  
We have been jealous of others' jobs and careers.  
We have been ungenerous in sharing our friends.  
We have let our anxiety hurt our interpersonal relationships.  
We have let our hopelessness keep us from comforting others.

We have allowed our words to be more moral than our actions.  
We have silenced our inner voice for fear we'd have to take action.  
We have lost our patience with those we disagree with.  
We have engaged in unproductive fights on social media.  
We have wanted to give up volunteering.  
We have thought of abandoning our community.  
We have not made enough time for justice work.  
We have sat instead of acted.

We have blamed God for bad things but not thanked God for good things.  
We have broken promises to ourselves and continued self-destructive actions.  
We have failed to communicate our needs and boundaries for safety.  
We have intentionally made poor decisions.  
We have wallowed in depression.  
We have squandered our opportunities.  
We have undermined our own future.  
We have not loved ourselves fully.

## **A Personal Al Cheit (Admitting Mistakes)**

*by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat (excerpted)*

I need to speak these words aloud and to know that the universe hears them.  
I get caught in old patterns and paradigms; I am stubborn and hard-headed.  
In the last year I have missed the mark more than I want to admit.  
Forgive me, Source of all being, for the sin I have sinned before you...

By letting my emotions run roughshod over the needs of others;  
By poking at sources of hurt like a child worrying a sore tooth;  
By revealing my heart before those who neither wanted nor needed to see it;  
By hiding love, out of fear of rejection, instead of giving love freely;  
By dwelling on what's internal when the world is desperate for healing.

By indulging in intellectual argument without humility or consideration;  
By reading words of vitriol, cultivating hot indignation;  
By eschewing intellectual discomfort that might prod me into growing;  
By living in anticipation, and letting anxiety rule me;  
By accepting defeatist thinking and the comfortable ache of despair.

By not being awake and grateful, despite uncountable blessings;  
By not being sufficiently gentle, with my actions or with my language;  
By being not pliant and flexible, but obstinate, stark, and unbending;  
By not being generous with my time, with my words or with my being;  
By not being kind to everyone who crosses my wandering path.

For all of these, eternal Source of forgiveness  
Help me know myself to be pardoned  
Help me feel in my bones that I'm forgiven  
Remind me I'm always already at/one with You.

*NOTE: an interpretive vidui (Confession) also appears in the machzor, pp. 1355-137*

## Unetaneh Tokef for Black Lives

*by Imani Romney-Rosa Chapman (excerpted from the Lilith Magazine blog)*

Each day we hazard our Black lives in the Court of the White World  
We know our worth  
Yet the white world is judge--self-appointed  
We pass before you to be counted  
12.5 million bodies stolen  
1.8 million mercifully avoided your shores  
Stolen shores, stolen land  
10.7 million arrived unsafely  
...times 401 years  
...times infinite human indignities  
...times % of a human being  
We now number 47.8 million

In the morning it is written and by curfew it is sealed  
Who shall die while jogging (#AhmaudArbery)  
Who shall die while relaxing in the comfort of their home (#BothamJean #AtatianaJefferson)  
Who shall die while seeking help after a car crash (#JonathanFerrell #RenishaMcBride).  
Who shall die while holding a cellphone (#StephonClark).  
Who shall die while decorating for a party (#ClaudeReese).  
Who shall die while leaving a party (#JordanEdwards #SeanBell)  
Who shall die while enjoying music (#JordanDavis).  
Who shall die while selling music...trying to make a way outta no way (#AltonSterling).

Who shall die while sleeping (#AiyanaJones)  
Who shall die while worshipping the Lord (#Charleston9).

Who shall die for a traffic violation (#SandraBland).  
Who shall die while coming from the store (#MikeBrown and #TrayvonMartin).

Who shall die while playing cops and robbers (#TamirRice).  
Who shall die while lawfully carrying a weapon (#PhilandoCastile, #FreddieGray).  
Who shall die while on the shoulder of the road with car problems (#CoreyJones #TerrenceCrutcher).  
Who shall die in the first hours of the new year (#OscarGrant)  
Who shall die while shopping at Walmart (#JohnCrawford).  
Who shall die while cashing a check in peace (#YvonneSmallwood).

Who shall die while reading a book in their own car (#KeithScott).  
Who shall die while taking a walk with their stepfather (#CliffordGlover).

Who shall die while reaching for their wallet (#AmadouDiallo).  
Who shall die while running away (#WalterScott).

Who shall die while asking a cop a question (#RandyEvans).  
Who shall die while begging for their life, their breath (#EricGarner #GeorgeFloyd).

Who shall die by the effects of supremacy, greed, and apathy  
...who by beast, indeed

“But repentance, prayer and charity temper judgment’s severe decree”

“But repentance, prayer and charity avert judgment’s severe decree?”

But turning, connection and giving, these return us to our Gd?

Whose repentance? Whose prayer? Whose charity?

Temper, please temper

Temper already! Temper...

For sins against God, the Day of Atonement brings forgiveness; for sins against one’s fellowman,  
the Day of Atonement brings no forgiveness till he has become reconciled with the fellowman he  
wronged. (Mishnah Yoma 8:9)

“The Day of Atonement brings no forgiveness

till he has become reconciled with the fellowman he wronged.”

When will you atone? How will you atone?

For you, like us, will be judged.

You, like us, will return to dust.

**from “The Head of the Year”** —*Marge Piercy*

Forgive the dead year. Forgive  
yourself. What will be wants  
to push through your fingers.  
The light you seek hides

in your belly. The light you  
crave longs to stream from  
your eyes. You are the moon  
that will wax in new goodness.

**from “Dreams Before Waking”** —*Adrienne Rich*

What would it mean to live  
in a city whose people were changing  
each other’s despair into hope?—  
You yourself must change it.—  
what would it feel like to know  
your country was changing?—  
You yourself must change it.—  
Though your life felt arduous  
new and unmapped and strange  
what would it mean to stand on the first  
page of the end of despair?

**“In the Days of Awe”** —*Ruth Brin*

Dangling from a leather sling in the oak,  
the tree trimmer, high in the swaying tree,  
reaches out to saw away a branch.  
It leaves a staring eye when it drops,  
a round white eye on the tree trunk.  
Cautiously, with rope and saw,  
tools swinging from his belt,  
he crawls upward, seeking limbs to cut.

Now I too slash away unnecessary branches,  
opening eyes to the sky.  
Imperiled, dangling, lacking skill to choose  
the limbs that stifle growth, I pray  
to Thee Whose marks I bear within  
like rings of trees.  
I pray Thee guide my hand,  
I, the tree trimmer, I the tree.

## **Before the Law**

*a tale by Franz Kafka (Translation by Ian Johnston, adapted)*

Before the Law sits a gatekeeper. To this gatekeeper comes a man from the country who asks to gain entry into the Law. But the gatekeeper says that he cannot grant him entry at the moment. The man thinks about it and then asks if he will be allowed to come in later on. "It is possible," says the gatekeeper, "but not now."

At the moment the gate to the Law stands open, as always, and the gatekeeper walks to the side, so the man bends over in order to see through the gate into the inside. When the gatekeeper notices that, he laughs and says: "If it tempts you so much, try it in spite of my prohibition. But take note: I am powerful. And I am only the most lowly gatekeeper. But from room to room stand gatekeepers, each more powerful than the other. I can't endure even one glimpse of the third."

The man from the country has not expected such difficulties: the Law should always be accessible for everyone, he thinks, but as he now looks more closely at the gatekeeper in his fur coat, at his large pointed nose and his long, thin, black Tartar's beard, he decides that it would be better to wait until he gets permission to go inside.

The gatekeeper gives him a stool and allows him to sit down at the side in front of the gate. There he sits for days and years. He makes many attempts to be let in, and he wears the gatekeeper out with his requests. The gatekeeper often interrogates him briefly, questioning him about his homeland and many other things, but they are indifferent questions, the kind great men put, and at the end he always tells him once more that he cannot let him inside yet.

The man, who has equipped himself with many things for his journey, spends everything, no matter how valuable, to win over the gatekeeper. The latter takes it all but, as he does so, says, "I am taking this only so that you do not think you have failed to do anything."

During the many years the man observes the gatekeeper almost continuously. He forgets the other gatekeepers, and this one seems to him the only obstacle for entry into the Law. He curses the unlucky circumstance, in the first years thoughtlessly and out loud, later, as he grows old, he still mumbles to himself. He becomes childish and, since in the long years studying the gatekeeper he has come to know the fleas in his fur collar, he even asks the fleas to help him persuade the gatekeeper.

Finally his eyesight grows weak, and he does not know whether things are really darker around him or whether his eyes are merely deceiving him. But he recognizes now in the darkness an illumination which breaks inextinguishably out of the gateway to the Law.

Now he no longer has much time to live. Before his death he gathers in his head all his experiences of the entire time up into one question which he has not yet put to the gatekeeper. He waves to him, since he can no longer lift up his stiffening body. The gatekeeper has to bend way down to him, for the great difference has changed things to the disadvantage of the man.

“What do you still want to know, then?” asks the gatekeeper. “You are insatiable.”

“Everyone strives after the Law,” says the man, “so how is it that in these many years no one except me has requested entry?”

The gatekeeper sees that the man is already dying and, in order to reach his diminishing sense of hearing, he shouts at him, “Here no one else can gain entry, since this entrance was assigned only to you. I’m going now to close it.”



*The open doors of our Aron Kodesh (Holy Ark) in the Social Hall at Hebrew Tabernacle,  
with High Holiday white parochet (curtain) hand-sewn by our member Karen Greene.*

*photo by Karen Greene, used with permission.*

*The words at the top of the Aron Kodesh read:*

דַּע לִפְנֵי מִי אַתָּה עוֹמֵד

Know before Whom you stand.

עֲקֹבִיָּא בֶן מַהֲלֵלָאֵל אֹמֵר, הִסְתַּפֵּל בְּשִׁלְשָׁה דְבָרִים וְאֵי אַתָּה בָּא לִיְדֵי עֵבְרָה.  
דַּע מֵאֵין בָּאתָ, וּלְאֵן אַתָּה הוֹלֵךְ, וּלְפָנֵי מִי אַתָּה עֹתִיד לִתֵּן דִּין וְחֶשְׁבוֹן.

Akavyah ben Mahalalel would say:

pay attention to three things and you will not come to transgress:

know where you came from,

and where you are going,

and before whom you will give an account and a reckoning.

(Pirkei Avot 3:1)



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*Thank You*

*The Fort Tryon Jewish Center is deeply grateful to our dozens of committed member volunteers who have contributed hundreds of hours, and unmeasured quantities of love, care, focus, skill, learning, Torah, voices, money, problem-solving, determination, and humor to make these Days of Awe live up to their name.*

**טוב להודות ליי**

It is good to give thanks to the Source.  
(Psalm 92:1)