

# Alyth



## Soul Nidre

## **We Return /Hashiveinu**

Music by: Elana Arian and Noah Aronson

We return  
We return  
We return, return again

We return  
We return  
We return, return  
Again and again

To love (truth) (You)  
We return again to love (truth) (You)

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֵלֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה  
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם

*Hashiveinu Adonai Eilecha v'nashuva, Chadesh yameinu K'kedem*

### **An opening meditation**

It's the beginning of a new year. We have examined our deeds, made amends, and been renewed. But recovery and spiritual renewal do not come quickly or easily. Repentance, *teshuvah*, is hard work. That's really why we call this our New Year, despite it being the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. Because through honest repentance we are given the opportunity to begin life anew and get a fresh start on the year, and our lives.

*Teshuvah* is a kind of creativity. It is not a simple return, it is a return forward, a return to something that never was, a return to a new creation.

We return to who we have always been, and are meant to be, but have not yet become. We return to growth and possibility that have laid dormant within us and not yet flourished.

The Gaon of Vilna taught us: "Each day should be a new experience. Each day we have the opportunity of a fresh start. A person who has made *teshuvah* is like a newborn child."

Through the acts of *teshuvah* that we make this evening, may we return, may we renew, may we be reborn.

*Based on words by Rabbi Jan R. Urbach and Rabbi Kerry M. Olitzky*

On this journey the soul will awaken to itself. We will venture from innocence to sin and back to innocence again. This is a journey from denial to awareness, from self-deception to judgement. We will learn our Divine Name. We will move from self-hatred to self-forgiveness, from anger to healing, from hard-heartedness to brokenheartedness. This is the journey the soul takes to transform itself and to evolve, the journey from boredom and staleness – from deadness – to renewal ... It is the journey from little mind to big mind, from confinement in the ego to a sense of ourselves as a part of something larger. It is the journey from isolation to a sense of our intimate connection to all being ...

Every soul needs to express itself. Every heart needs to crack itself open. Every one of us needs to move from anger to healing, from denial to consciousness, from boredom to renewal. These needs did not arise yesterday. They are among the most ancient of human yearnings, and they are fully expressed in the pageantry and ritual of the Days of Awe, in the great journey we make between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

*Rabbi Alan Lew*

Today we stand before the Mirror of All  
to see ourselves as we are.  
We come with no gifts, no bribes, no illusions, no more  
excuses.  
We stand without defence and wait to be filled.  
What will fill us?  
Remorse, certainly. So much error and needless pain.  
And joy: remembered moments of love and right doing.  
We are too complex for single-sided emotions.  
And we are too simple to be excused by our complexity.  
Let us be bold enough to see,  
humble enough to feel,  
daring enough to turn and  
embrace the way of justice, mercy and simplicity.

*Rami Shapiro*

### **Psalm 121:1-2**

Music: Dan Nichols

My help will come from God, Maker of Heaven and Earth.

אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל־הָהָרִים  
מֵאַיִן יָבֹא עֶזְרִי:

*Esah einai el he'harim Meiayin yavo, yavo ezri*

I turn my eyes to the mountains, where will my help come from?

## Prayer from the Heart

I bow.

I face the ground.

I fall before the Most High.

Farther than heaven's heave are You,

Nearer to me than the flesh on my bones ...

What have I to offer You but my spirit?

How shall I lift my eyes to You?

How can my tongue give you praise?

The signs of Your love are countless,

As are my sins: more numerous than the sands of the sea.

So guide me toward the right path,

My teacher, my keeper of faith – source of all that I know.

When my heart speaks I hear the words myself.

And You – may you hear me, too.

*Abraham Ibn Ezra*

וְהוּא רַחוּם | יִכַּפֵּר עֲוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁתִּית וְהִרְבָּה לְהַשְׁיב אָפּוֹ וְלֹא יַעִיר כָּל־חֲמָתוֹ :

Being merciful, God forgives sin and does not destroy. Many times God turns aside rage and does not rouse divine anger.

*Psalms 78:38*

יְהִיָּה הוֹשִׁיעָה הַמֶּלֶךְ לְעַנְּנוּ בְּיוֹם־קִרְאָנוּ :

Save us God! May the Eternal Sovereign answer us on the day we call.

*Psalms 20:10*

Bar'chu et Adonai ha-m'vorach.

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ

Baruch Adonai ha-m'vorach l'olam va-ed

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד :

*Bless God whom we are called to bless.*

*Blessed be God whom we are called to bless forever and ever*

Baruch attah Adonai eloheinu melech  
ha-olam, asher bidvaro ma'ariv aravim,  
b'chochmah potei'ach sh'arim.  
Uvitvunah m'shanneh ittim, umachalif  
et ha-z'mannim, um'saddeir et ha-  
kochavim b'mishm'roteihem baraki'a  
kirtzono.

Borei yom valailah, goleil or mip'nei  
choshech v'choshech mip'nei or.  
Hama'avir yom umeivi lailah, umavdil  
bein yom uvein lailah, Adonai ts'va'ot  
sh'mo. Baruch attah Adonai, ha-ma'ariv  
aravim.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם.  
אֲשֶׁר בִּדְבָרוֹ מַעְרִיב עֲרָבִים. בְּחֻכְמָה  
פּוֹתַח שְׁעָרִים. וּבְתִבּוּנָה מְשַׁנֶּה עֵתִים.  
וּמַחְלִיף אֶת־הַזְּמָנִים. וּמַסְדֵּיר אֶת־  
הַכּוֹכָבִים בְּמִשְׁמְרוֹתֵיהֶם בְּרָקִיעַ  
כְּרִצּוֹנוֹ:

בוֹרֵא יוֹם וְלַיְלָה. גּוֹלֵל אוֹר מִפְּנֵי  
חֹשֶׁךְ וְחֹשֶׁךְ מִפְּנֵי אוֹר: הַמַּעְבִּיר יוֹם  
וּמַבְיֵא לַיְלָה. וּמַבְדִּיל בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין  
לַיְלָה. יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה  
יְהוָה. הַמַּעְרִיב עֲרָבִים:

*Blessed are You, our God and Creator, Sovereign of the universe, whose word  
brings on the evening twilight, who opens the gates of dawn with wisdom, and  
with foresight makes times pass and seasons change. Your plan sets the stars in  
their courses in the sky, creating day and night, turning light into darkness and  
darkness into light. You make the day fade away and bring on the night,  
separating day and night. You are the Ruler of the hosts of heaven. Blessed are  
You God, who brings on the evening twilight.*

We are embraced by arms that find us  
Even when we are hidden from ourselves.

We are touched by fingers that soothe us  
Even when we are too proud for soothing.

We are counselled by voices that guide us  
Even when we are too embittered to hear.

We are loved by an unending love.

We are supported by hands that uplift us  
Even in the midst of a fall.

We are urged on by eyes that meet us  
Even when we are too weak for meeting.

We are loved by an unending love.

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counselled  
Ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;  
Ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;  
We are loved by an unending love.

*Rami Shapiro*

**“And you shall love the Eternal Your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might.”**

Obedience may be commanded, but love must be freely given. God may command us to be just, or to observe given rituals, but how can love be mandated? Can those who have suffered be blamed for finding God unlovable?

A close look at the grammar of the first paragraph of the Sh'ma can help us understand this paradox. The verb *v'ahavta* is not an imperative, although it is invariably rendered as such by the translators. Rather, it refers to future action. We are not commanded to love God. The statement is, rather, one of prophecy. The time will come when we will love God of our own volition, even if we have difficulty doing so now.

Many of us have anger towards God because of our hurts, and the hurts of others. But there are answers to our questions, and we should not despair of ever learning them. Isaiah teaches us “that the earth will be as full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”.

*Rabbi Kenneth L. Cohen*

Ahavat olam beit yisra'el ammi'cha  
ahavta, torah umitsvot chukkim  
umishpatim otanu limmadta. Al kein  
Adonai eloheinu, b'shochbeinu  
uv'kumeinu nasi'ach b'chukkecha,  
v'nismach v'na'aloz b'divrei toratecha  
umitsvatecha v'chukkotecha l'olam  
va'ed. Ki heim chayeinu v'orech  
yameinu, uvahem nehgeh yomam  
valailah, v'ahavat'cha al tasir  
mimmennu l'olamim. Baruch attah  
Adonai, ohev et ammi yisra'el.

אַהֲבַת עוֹלָם בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמֶּךָ  
אַהֲבַת. תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת חֻקִּים  
וּמִשְׁפָּטִים אוֹתָנוּ לְמַדָּתְךָ : עַל־כֵּן יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ. בְּשׁוֹכְבֵנוּ וּבְקוּמֵנוּ נָשִׁיחַ  
בְּחֻקֶּיךָ. וְנִשְׁמַח וְנִעְלֹז בְּדִבְרֵי  
תּוֹרָתְךָ וּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְחֻקּוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם  
וָעֶד : כִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ וְאַרְךָ יָמֵינוּ. וּבָהֶם  
נִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה. וְאַהֲבַתְךָ אֵל־  
תִּסִּיר מִמֶּנּוּ לְעוֹלָמִים : בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה  
יְהוָה. אוֹהֵב אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל :

*With everlasting love have You loved Your people the family of Israel. Teaching and practice, duty and justice - these You have taught us. Therefore, our God and Guide, we think upon all this before we sleep and when we wake, and rejoice and delight in Your teaching and its practice forever and ever, for they are our life and the measure of our days. We keep them in mind both day and night. Never take Your love away from us. Blessed are You God, who loves Your people Israel.*

**שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד :**

Sh'ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad.  
*Hear, O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One.*

**בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד :**

Baruch shem k'vod malchuto l'olam va'ed.  
*Blessed be God's glorious kingdom forever and ever.*

V'ahavtah et Adonai Elohecha b'chol  
l'vav'v'cha u'vchol nafshcha u'vchol  
m'odecha. V'hayu hadvarim ha'eleh,  
asher anochi m'tzavcha hayom al  
l'vavecha. V'shinantam l'vanecha  
v'dibarta bam, b'shivt'cha b'veitecha,  
uvlecht'cha vaderech uvshochb'cha  
uvkumecha. Ukshartam l'ot al yadecha,  
v'hayu l'totafot bein einecha. U'chtavtam  
al mezuzot beitecha, uvisharecha.

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-  
לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ :  
וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי  
מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-לְבָבְךָ : וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם  
לְבָנֶיךָ וּדְבַרְתָּ בָם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ  
וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ  
וּבְקוּמְךָ : וְקָשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ  
וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ : וְכָתַבְתָּם  
עַל-מְזוּזֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשָׁעֶיךָ

*Love the Eternal your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your  
might. These words that I command you today shall be upon your heart.  
Repeat them to your children, and talk about them when you sit in your home,  
and when you walk in the street; when you lie down, and when you rise up. Hold  
fast to them as a sign upon your hand, and let them be as reminders before  
your eyes. Write them on the doorposts of your home and at your gates.  
(Deuteronomy 6:4-9)*

Listen, all you who wrestle with your fate: the intimate and the infinite are one. Trust that unity with your whole heart, doubt and all; with your whole soul, and with all the powers at your command. Remember it; repeat it everywhere, working or resting, sitting or walking, night and morning, alone and to all you love. See it written on your hand, on your brow, in every common place and in every face.

*Catherine Madsen*

So, you shall love what is holy  
With all your courage, with all your passion  
With all your strength.  
Let the words that have come down  
Shine in our words and our actions.  
We must teach our children to know and understand them.  
We must speak about what is good  
And holy within our homes  
When we are working, when we are at play,  
When we lie down and when we get up.  
Let the work of our hands speak of goodness.  
Let it run in our blood  
And glow from our doors and windows.

We should love ourselves, for we are of God.  
We should love our neighbours as ourselves.  
We should love the stranger, for we  
Were once strangers in the land of Egypt  
And have been strangers in all the lands of the world since.  
Let love fill our hearts with its clear precious water.  
Heaven and earth observe how we cherish or spoil our world.  
Heaven and earth watch whether we choose life or choose death.  
We must choose life so our children's children may live.  
Be quiet and listen to the still small  
Voice within that speaks in love.  
Open to that voice, hear it, heed it and work for life.  
Let us remember and strive to be good.  
Let us remember to find what is holy  
Within and without.

*Marge Piercy*



V'hayah im shamo'a tishm'u el mitsvotai,  
 asher anochi m'tsaveh etchem ha-yom,  
 l'ahavah et Adonai eloheichem ul'ovdo, b'chol  
 l'avchem uv'chol nafsh'chem. V'natatti m'tar  
 arts'chem b'itto, yoreh umalkosh, **v'asafta  
 d'ganecha v'tirosh'cha v'yits-harecha.**  
**V'natatti eisev b'sad'cha livhemtecha,**  
**v'achalta v'sava'ta.**

Hisham'ru lachem, pen yifteh l'avchem,  
 v'sartem va'avadtem elohim acheirim  
 v'hishtachavitem lahem. V'charah af Adonai  
 bachem, v'atsar et ha-shamayim, v'lo yihyeh  
 matar, v'ha-adamah lo tittein et y'vulah,  
 va'avadtem m'heirah mei'al ha-arets ha-  
 tovah, asher Adonai notein lachem.  
 V'samtem et d'varai eilleh al l'avchem v'al  
 nafsh'chem, uk'shartem otam l'ot al  
 yedchem, v'hayu l'totafot bein eineichem.  
 V'limmadtem otam et b'neichem l'dabbeir  
 bam, **b'shivt'cha b'veitecha, uv'lecht'cha va-  
 derech, uv'shochb'cha uv'kumecha.**  
**Uch'tavtam al m'zuzot beitecha uvisharecha.**  
 L'ma'an yirbu y'meichem vimeit v'neichem, al  
 ha-adamah asher nishba Adonai  
 la'avoteichem lateit lahem, kimei ha-  
 shamayim al ha-arets.

*This will happen if you listen carefully to My commands which I give you today, to love and to serve the Eternal your God with all your heart and all your soul. I shall then give your land rain at the right time, the autumn rain and the spring rain, **so that each one of you can harvest your own grain, wine and oil. I shall also give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.** Take care that your heart is not deceived into straying, obeying other gods and worshipping them. God's anger will then blaze out against you. God will shut up the sky. There will be no rain. The land will not produce, and you will quickly be destroyed from the good land which God gives you. So put these words of Mine in your heart and in your soul, and secure them as a sign upon your hand and as reminders before your eyes. Teach them to your children, and talk about them **“when you sit each of you in your home, and when you walk in the street, when you lie down and when you rise up. Write them on the doorposts of your home and at your gates.”** Then you and your children may live long on the land that God promised to give your ancestors as long as there is a sky over the earth.<sup>1</sup>*

וְהָיָה אִם-שָׁמַעַתְּ אֶת-מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר  
 אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֹתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת-  
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעָבְדוֹ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּכֶם  
 וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁכֶם: וְנָתַתִּי מִטֶּר-אֶרְצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ  
 יוֹרָה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ וְאֶסְפַּתְּ דִּגְנְךָ וְתִירֶשְׁתָּ  
 וַיִּצְהָרְךָ: וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב בְּשָׂדֶךָ לְבִהֶמְתְּךָ  
 וְאָכְלָתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ:

הַשָּׂמֶרֶוּ לָכֶם פֶּן-יִפְתָּה לְבַבְכֶם וְסָרְתֶם  
 וְעַבַּדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם  
 לָהֶם: וְחָרָה אַף-יְהוָה בָּכֶם וְעָצַר אֶת-  
 הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה מָטָר וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא  
 תֵּתֵן אֶת-יְבוּלָהּ וְאֶבְדֶּתֶם מִהָרָה מֵעַל  
 הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה נָתַן לָכֶם:  
 וְשָׁמַתֶּם אֶת-דִּבְרֵי אֱלֹהַ עַל-לִבְבְּכֶם וְעַל  
 נַפְשְׁכֶם וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל-יְדְּכֶם  
 וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם: וְלִמַּדְתֶּם  
 אֹתָם אֶת-בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ  
 בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ  
 וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְכָתַבְתֶּם עַל-

מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:  
 לְמַעַן יִרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם וְיָמֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל  
 הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאַבְתִּיכֶם  
 לֵאמֹר לָהֶם כִּימֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

Vayomer Adonai el mosheh leimor:  
dabbeir el b'nei yisra'el v'amarta  
aleihem, v'asu lahem tsitsit al kanfei  
vigdeihem l'dorotam, v'nat'nu al tsitsit  
ha-kanaf p'til t'cheilet. V'hayah lachem  
l'tsitsit, ur'item oto, uz'chartem et kol  
mitsvot Adonai, va'asitem otam, v'lo  
taturu acharei l'avchem v'acharei  
eineichem, asher attem zonim  
achareihem.

L'ma'an tizk'ru, va'asitem et kol  
mitsvotai, vihyitem k'doshim  
leiloeichem. Ani Adonai eloheichem  
asher hotseiti etchem mei'erets  
mitsrayim, lihyot lachem leilohim, ani  
Adonai eloheichem.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:  
אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וְעָשׂוּ  
לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל־כַּנְפֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם  
לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל־צִיצִית הַכָּנָף פֶּתִיל  
תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם  
אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה  
וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא תִתּוּרוּ אַחֲרַי  
לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אֲתֶם  
זִנִּים אַחֲרֵיהֶם:  
לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֶת־  
כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי וְהִיִּיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים  
לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר  
הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם  
לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

*The Eternal said to Moses: 'Speak to the children of Israel and tell them that each generation shall put tassels on the corner of their clothes, and put a blue thread on the corner tassel. Then when this tassel catches your eye, you will remember all the commands of the Eternal and do them. Then you will no longer wander after the desires of your heart and your eyes which led you to lust. Then you will remember all My commands and do them and you will be set apart for your God. I am the Eternal your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your own God. I, the Eternal, am your God.'* (Numbers 15: 37-41)



## A Mikveh Ritual

Surrender

At nightfall, on the most dreaded night of the year  
We present ourselves together, as a community,  
As a single body,  
We seek the strength of the collective, to face our mortality  
Our mistakes, our fears.

At nightfall, on the holiest night of the year  
We strip ourselves of our egos, our image, our beauty,  
We dress ourselves in the sacred robe of humility, of humanity  
We make ourselves fragile and surrender  
To the designs of the Shechinah

At nightfall, on the most awaited night of the year  
We await those who will not come, we feel distances increase.  
We seek in ourselves in those around us  
For the warmth of familiarity, of home, of embrace.

At nightfall, on the most rejuvenating night of the year  
We wrap ourselves in hopes for a year of life,  
A year of strength, construction, and conquest.  
We fade today, hoping to shine,  
With the sacred force of Your blessing.

We dive in this living water and cleanse ourselves of all unnecessary and negative  
energy that we have brought up to this moment:  
With fear, we surrender to the Creative Force.  
In the sacred space of our prayers, we find the Divine Presence.  
Bathed in hope, we praise the Divine Wisdom

We humbly ask You, Kind and Merciful Mother, that we may emerge from this  
period of *teshuvah* and *tefillah* completely renewed.

Andrea Kulikovsky

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם. אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל  
הַטְּבִילָה:

*Baruch attah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu bemitzvotav  
vetzivanu al ha-tivilah*

Blessed are You, our Living God, Sovereign of the universe, whose commands make  
us holy and who commands us concerning ritual immersion.

Mi chamocha ba-eilim Adonai mi kamocha  
ne'dar ba-kodesh  
nora t'hillot oseih fele.

מִי כְמוֹכָה בְּאֵלִים יְיָ, מִי כְמוֹכָה  
נִאֲדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ,  
נֹרָא תְהִלָּת, עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא.

Malchut'cha Adonai eloheinu ra'u vanecha  
al ha-yam,  
yachad kullam hodu v'himlichu v'amaru:

מַלְכוּתְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
רָאוּ בְנֶיךָ עַל הַיָּם.  
יַחַד כְּלָם הִודוּ וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ.

Adonai yimloch l'olam va'ed.

יְיָ יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

*God, who is like You among the gods people worship! Who, like You, is majestic in holiness, awesome in praise, working wonders! Our Living God, Your children saw Your rule over the Sea of Reeds. All of them as one honoured You as Sovereign, saying: 'God alone will rule forever and ever.*



When despair for the world grows in me  
 And I wake in the night at the least sound  
 In fear of what my life and children's lives may be,  
 I go and lie down where the wood drake  
 Rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
 I come into the peace of wild things  
 Who do not tax their lives with forethought  
 Of grief. I come into the presence of still water  
 And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
 Waiting with their light. For a time  
 I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Wendell Berry

### Hashkiveinu

Music: Dan Nichols

הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ מַלְכֵנוּ לְחַיִּים

*Hashkiveinu Adonai eloheinu l'shalom, v'ha'amideinu malkeinu l'chayyim*

*Source of our life who watches over us, cause us to lie down in peace, and rise again to enjoy life.*

Spread the shelter of Your peace over us,  
 Guide us in wisdom, compassion and trust.

Save us for the sake of Your name,  
 Shield us from hatred, sorrow and pain.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַפּוֹרֵשׁ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־כָּל־הָעוֹלָם :

*Baruch attah Adonai, ha-poreis sukkat shalom aleinu v'al ammo yisra'el, v'al kol ha-olam*

*Blessed are You God, spreading the shelter of peace over us, over Your people Israel, and over all the world.*

כִּי־בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִכָּפֹר עֲלֵיכֶם לִטְהַר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל־חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה תִּטְהָרוּ :

For on this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you; of all your sins before the Eternal you shall be cleansed

Leviticus 16:30

## **Meditation before the Amidah**

"Come in," God said, "So, You Would like to interview me?"

"If you have the time," I said.

God smiled and said, "My time is eternity and is enough to do everything. What questions do you have in mind to ask me?"

"What surprises you most about humankind?"

God answered: "That they get bored of being children, are in a rush to grow up, and then long to be children again. That they lose their health to make money and then lose their money to restore their health. That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live neither for the present nor the future. That they live as if they will never die, and they die as if they had never lived ..."

God's hands took mine and we were silent for while, and then I asked ...

"As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?"

God replied with a smile:

"To learn that they cannot make anyone love them. What they can do is to let themselves be loved. To learn that what is most valuable is not what they have in their lives, but who they have in their lives. To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others. All will be judged individually on their own merits, not as a group on a comparison basis! To learn that a rich person is not the one who has the most, but is one who needs the least. To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in people we love, and that it takes many years to heal them. To learn to forgive by practicing forgiveness. To learn that there are people that love them dearly, but simply do not know how to express or show their feelings. To learn that money can buy everything but happiness. To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it totally differently. To learn that a true friend is someone who knows everything about them ... and likes them anyway. To learn that it is not always enough that they be forgiven by others, but that they have to forgive themselves."

I sat there for awhile enjoying the moment. I thanked God for the time and for all that God has done for me and my family, and God replied, "Anytime. I'm here 24 hours a day. All you have to do is ask for me, and I'll answer."

*Author Unknown*

*T'filah* is a journey  
 From the God of the ancients  
 To my Rock  
 And my Redeemer ...  
 On most nights  
 You stand on the holy summit of *T'filah*  
 And see before you  
 A land that calls out  
 For redemption  
 For healing,  
 For peace –  
 A world that needs you.  
 Kol Nidrei is different  
*T'filah* tonight  
 Is an inward journey  
 That takes you  
 Deep within yourself,  
 Pierces you to the core ...  
 You stand on the holy summit  
 Of this *T'filah*  
 And see before you the land within  
 A weary soul  
 Yearning to be forgiven,  
 Longing to be loved.

*Based on a concept by Rabbi Elaine Zecher*



**אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ :**

Adonai, s'fatai tiftach, ufi yagid t'hilatecha.

*Adonai, open my lips,  
 and my mouth shall declare Your praise.*

## God of History

Some perished by fire, some by water.  
Some crossed the sea, or watered the desert.  
Some starved all week to make a Shabbat feast.  
Some were left childless until old age.  
Some lifted their chins beneath a father's knife.  
Those who came before us gave everything  
So that we, generations later, could glorify You.  
And despite the danger,  
With Your protection,  
Some did survive, and even flourished,  
Some reaped in joy, were spared the knife,  
Were granted children.  
We are their inheritors, O God,  
And we know how rare is our good fortune  
To be born to such hard-won treasures.  
A great responsibility is ours,  
And Yours as well,  
For if You do not sustain us,  
As You did Abraham and Sarah,  
Rebecca and Isaac, Jacob, Rachel and Leah,  
Then who will sing Your praises?  
Who will lift their chins as we do now,  
To sanctify Your name?

Adam Sol

*Step back in time. Feel your ancestors – your family, your tribe or tribes, the ancient humans – standing at your side. What traditions do you keep in their honour? What message do they give you?*

Zochreinu l'chayim, Melech chafetz bachayim,  
v'chotveinu b'sefer hachayim. L'ma'ancha  
Elohim chayim.  
Melech ozer u'moshiah u'magen.  
Baruch Attah, Adonai, Magen Avraham pokeid  
Sara.

זְכוּרֵנוּ לְחַיִּים, מֶלֶךְ חָפֵץ בַּחַיִּים,  
וְכוֹתְבֵינוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים. לְמַאֲנְךָ  
אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים  
מֶלֶךְ עֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמָגֵן:  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מָגֵן אַבְרָהָם פּוֹקֵד  
שָׂרָה:

*Sovereign who delights in life, recall us to life and record us in the Book of Life for Your own sake, God of life! The Sovereign who helps, saves and shields. Blessed are You Adonai, the shield of Abraham who remembers Sarah.*



## God of Might

An empty page, An open book  
 A day of ultimate questions  
 Will I still be here next year at this time  
 With the ones I love beside me?  
 What is in store for my family?  
 And what will become of my friends?  
 Who will have reason to celebrate?  
 Who will contend with grief?  
 New love, new babies, marriages deepening or breaking apart,  
 Prosperity, struggle, reversal of fortune, illness, and health awaits us.  
 Who will be missing when we gather next?  
 Who will stand apart, who will be estranged?  
 And who will have joined us, enriching our community?  
 On the edge of the unknown we tremble:  
 What lies ahead for us all?  
 An empty page, An open book  
 Nothing is written and nothing is sealed.  
 Flesh and blood, frail creatures,  
 Our lives are fleeting and subject to chance.  
 Yet this we possess: the strength to persist,  
 To prevail, to comfort one another in the dark.  
 Prayer, right action, a turning toward the good –  
 These give us hope and help us bear the pain of life.

Rabbi Alan Lew

*See before you a dry seed planted in earth, and sprouting into a living plant. What in your life feels dry or lifeless? How do you need to awaken or grow?*

Mechalkel chayim b'chesed, mechayeh metim  
 b'rachamim rabbim; somech noflim v'rofeh  
 cholim, u'matir asurim, u'mekayem emunato  
 lishenei afar.  
 Mi chamocha av harachamim, zocher yetzurav  
 lachayim b'rachamim.  
 V'ne'eman Atah l'hachayot metim.  
 Baruch Atah, Adonai, mechayeh hametim.

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד, מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים  
 בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים, סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים,  
 וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,  
 וּמְקַיֵּם אֱמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עָפָר,  
 מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים זֹכֵר יְצוּרֵי  
 לַחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים  
 וְנֶאֱמָן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים.  
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מְחַיֶּה הַמֵּתִים:

*You care for the living with love. You renew life beyond death with unending mercy. You support the falling, and heal the sick. You free prisoners, and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who can perform such mighty deeds, and who can compare with You, a Ruler who brings death and life, and renews salvation? Who is like You, source of compassion, recalling Your creatures to life in compassion? You are faithful to renew life beyond death. Blessed are You God, who renews life beyond death.*

## God of Holiness

Prayer is not purely an act; all things pray,  
And all things pour forth their souls.  
The heavens pray, the earth prays,  
Every creature and every living thing.  
In all life there is longing.  
Creation is itself but a longing,  
A kind of prayer to the Almighty.  
What are the clouds, the rising and the setting of the sun,  
The soft radiance of the moon and the gentleness of the night?  
What are the flashes of the human mind  
And the storms of the human heart?  
They are all prayers –  
The wordless outpouring of boundless longing for God.  
Praise the light that shines before us, through us, after us.

*Alexander M. Schindler*

*See that you are in a sacred place. The guardian of this place welcomes you and anoints you. You too are sacred. Take a moment to consider how holiness is manifesting in your life right now.*

Baruch attah Adonai  
ha-melech ha-kadosh.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה.  
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ:

*Blessed are You Eternal, the holy Sovereign.*

### Holiness of this Day

Like smoke above the altar  
May a memory of us ascend and come before You.  
As Israel once came to You with offerings from the flock,  
So we bring to You offerings of our mouth –  
Not lip service but heartfelt prayer.  
So the prophet taught:  
“Return, O Israel, to Adonai your God,  
For you have fallen because of your sin.  
Take words with you  
And return to Adonai.”  
Accept the words we set before You,  
Awkward and imperfect as they are:  
Our hesitant questions, our corrosive doubts.  
Accept, too, our silences:  
Our thoughts that rise in the stillness,  
Our faith that coheres for a fragile instant –  
Then dissipates  
Like smoke above the altar.

*Mishkan HaNefesh*

*Today we stand at our most vulnerable before God. What blessing do you need in this moment? What blessing do you offer? What is your prayer?*

Baruch attah Adonai Melech mochel  
v'soleach l'avonoteinu v-l'avonot amo  
beit yisrael. U-ma'avir ashmotanu  
b'chol shana v'shana. Melech al kol  
ha'aretz m'kadesh yisrael v'yom  
ha'kippurim

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ  
לְעוֹנוֹתֵינוּ וְלְעוֹנוֹת עַמּוֹ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל.  
וּמַעְבִּיר אֲשָׁמוֹתֵינוּ בְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה.  
מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ מְקַדֵּשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיּוֹם  
הַכִּפּוּרִים

*Blessed are You, Eternal, Who forgives and pardons our iniquities, and the iniquities of His people, the House of Israel; and Who removes our trespasses each year; Sovereign over the whole earth, Sanctifier of Israel and the Day of Atonement.*

### Our offering

Prayer is for the soul what food is for the body.

The strength we get from one meal lasts until the next;  
So too, the blessings of a prayer last until we pray again.

The longer the pause between one prayer and the next,  
The more we're mired in worldly pursuits,  
In words that dim the purity of the soul, in speech that dulls its brightness.

When we pray we wash away all that clouds our vision  
And satisfy our spirit's hunger for a higher calling.

Prayer gives the soul what food gives the body.

*Based on a poem by Yehudah Halevi*

*Feel that you are part of the universe, woven into the fabric of creation. See divinity in yourself, in all beings, and in the earth. Where, right now, can you perceive divine presence?*

Baruch attah Adonai ha-machazir sh'chinato  
l'tsiyyon.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה. הַמַּחְזִיר שְׁכִינָתוֹ  
לְצִיּוֹן.

*Blessed are You God, ever restoring Your presence to Zion.*

## Thanksgiving

Our Sages teach that miracles are astounding acts – they shake us to the core.

And wonders? These, they say, are the miracles of which we are unaware.

Well-hidden in the laws of nature, great wonders reside:

The rhythm of our breathing, the rise and fall of tides,

The wing-beats of a hummingbird, the choreography of bees,

The cycles of the heavens, the seasons of the sky,

And sunlight on leaves transmuted into energy.

How wondrously fixed and predictable –

Migration of birds, circulation of blood.

How utterly extraordinary is the ordinary.

But goodness – is it with us always? Can we feel it even now?

Consider this: the eye is narrow in its gaze.

For, at this very moment, some lives are bathed in miracle:

A newborn child in the arms of parents who were past the point of hope;

The happiness of improbably love after many years alone;

Recovery from surgery; the easing of grief;

Food for the hungry, rain after drought,

The first light of peace in a war-darkened land.

May I look up from my dark places and be glad:

Somewhere, even now, wondrous goodness blossoms forth.

*Mishkan HaNefesh, Inspired by Nachmanides' commentary to the book of Job*

*Visualise before you all the blessings in your life. Feel your gratitude for these blessings. Present yourself to God as you understand God. Offer your thanks.*

Baruch attah Adonai, ha-tov shimcha ul'cha    בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה. הַטּוֹב שִׁמְךָ וְלִךָ נָאָה  
na'eh l'hodot.    לְהוֹדוֹת

*Blessed are You God, known as goodness, whom it is right to praise.*

### God of Peace

Before the gate has been closed,  
Before the last question is posed,  
Before I am transposed.  
Before the weeds fill the gardens,  
Before there are no pardons,  
Before the concrete hardens.  
Before all the flute-holes are covered,  
Before things are locked in the cupboard,  
Before the rules are discovered.  
Before the conclusion is planned.  
Before the closing of God's hand,  
Before we have nowhere to stand.  
Bless us with peace.

Yehudah Amichai

*See yourself at peace. See the world at peace. Offer your energy to the work of bringing peace to the world. Ask for divine help in accomplishing this great task.*

Shalom rav al Yisra'el amm'cha tasim  
l'olam, ki attah hu melech adon l'chol  
ha-shalom, v'tov b'einecha l'vareich et  
amm'cha Yisra'el b'chol eit uv'chol  
sha'ah bishlomecha.  
Baruch attah Adonai, ha-m'vareich et  
ammo Yisra'el ba-shalom.

שְׁלוֹם רַב עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמְּךָ תָּשִׂים לְעוֹלָם.  
כִּי אַתָּה הוּא מֶלֶךְ אֲדוֹן לְכָל־הַשְּׁלוֹם.  
וְטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּכָל־עֵת וּבְכָל־שָׁעָה בְּשְׁלוֹמָךְ.  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה. הַמְּבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ  
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשְׁלוֹם:

*Set true peace upon Your people Israel forever. For You are the Source of all peace, and in Your eyes it is good to bless Your people Israel at every time and in every hour with Your peace.*

*Blessed are You God, blessing Your people Israel with peace.*

### A final petition

An ignorant villager, having heard it is a good religious deed to eat and drink on the day before Yom Kippur, drank himself into a stupor. He awoke late at night, too late for Kol Nidrei services. Not knowing the prayers by heart, he devised a plan. He repeated the letters of the alphabet over and over, beseeching the Almighty to arrange them into the appropriate words of the prayers. The following day he attended the Kotzker synagogue. After Neilah, the rabbi summoned him to inquire the cause of his absence at Kol Nidrei. The villager confessed his transgression and asked whether his manner of reciting prayers could be pardoned. The rabbi responded: "Your prayer was more acceptable than mine, because you uttered it with the entire devotion of your heart."

*Louis I. Newman*

Yihyu l'ratson imrei fi, v'hegyon libbi  
l'fanecha, Adonai tsuri v'go'ali.

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אֶמְרֵי־פִי.  
וְהִגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ.  
יְהוֹה צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי:

*May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to  
You, O God, my Rock and my Redeemer*

Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya'aseh  
shalom aleinu  
v'al kol Yisrael, v'al kol ha-olam, v'imru  
amen.

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בְּמִרְמֹיָו. הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה  
שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ  
וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־כָּל־הָעוֹלָם.  
וְאָמְרוּ. אָמֵן:

*May God who makes peace in the highest  
bring this peace upon us, upon all Israel, and upon all the world. Amen*

## Vidui

God gave two eyes to see. The right one to see the good in others and the left to see the fault in ourselves.

I see better now.

*Rabbi Howard Weiss*

*Before we are healed we must acknowledge our illness.*

*Before we find light we must know our own darkness.*

*Before we are forgiven we must confess our sins.*

*We confess our sins and those of our fellows, for we are responsible for each other.*

*Heal us God, and lead us through darkness to light.*

When I was young

And I learned the Alphabet,

Life was open to me

“A” was full of aspiration

“B” was for beauty; “C” for confidence

And “D” for dreams

And so on through the list – no fewer than twenty-six opportunities

Twenty-six possibilities.

And yet I fear that with the passage of time,

I’ve squandered them, creating instead

“A”s of apathy, “B”s of brusqueness and “C”s of coarseness.

Help me, then, return to that innocence.

Let the letters be letters once again,

And let them rise to the heavens

And form into the words

That you know I wish to say.

*Rabbi Alan Cook*



Eternal God and God of our ancestors, let our prayer reach You – do not turn away from our pleading. For we are not so arrogant and obstinate to claim in Your presence that we are indeed righteous people and have never sinned. But we know that both we and those before us have sinned.

אַשְׁמָנוּ. בַּגְּדָנוּ. גַּזְלָנוּ. דִּבְרָנוּ דְּפִי  
הֶעֱוִינוּ. וְהִרְשָׁעְנוּ. זָדָנוּ. חָמָסְנוּ. טָפְלָנוּ שָׁקָר.  
יַעֲצָנוּ רָע. כָּזְבָנוּ. לָצָנוּ. מָרְדָנוּ. נֶאֱצָנוּ.  
סָרְרָנוּ. עָוִינוּ. פָּשַׁעְנוּ. צָרְרָנוּ. קִשְׁיָנוּ עֲרָף.  
רָשָׁעְנוּ. שָׁחַתְנוּ. תַּעֲבָנוּ. תַּעֲוִינוּ. תַּעֲתָעְנוּ

Ashamnu, Bagadnu, Gazalnu, Dibarnu Dofi,  
He-evinu, v'Hirshanu, Zadnu, Chamasnu, Tafalnu Shaker,  
Yaatznu Ra, Kizavnu, Latznu Maradnu, Niatznu,  
Sararnu, Avinu, Pashanu, Tzararnu, Kishinu oref,  
Rashanu, Shichatnu, Tiavnu. Tainu. Titanu.

We have **a**bused and **b**etrayed. We are **c**ruel.  
We have **d**estroyed and **e**mbittered other people's lives.  
We were **f**alse to ourselves.  
We have **g**ossiped about others and **h**ated them.  
We have **i**nsulted and **j**eered. We have **k**illed. We have **l**ied.  
We have **m**isled others and **n**eglected them.  
We were **o**bstinate. We have **p**erverted and **q**uarrelled.  
We have **r**obbed and **s**tolen.  
We have **t**ransgressed through **u**nkindness.  
We have been both **v**iolent and **w**eak.  
We have practised **e**xortion.  
We have **y**ielded to wrong desires, our **z**eal was misplaced.

For the sins I have committed against myself:

**A**ccepting the lies that depression tells me

**B**laming

**C**aring too much what other people think about me

**D**oing too much

**E**xcessively worrying that I did wrong

**F**ailing to see the spark of God within me

**G**uilt

**H**atred

**I**nsecurity

**J**udgment

**K**eeping silent

**L**ying about my feelings

**M**inimizing my accomplishments

**N**ot believing I'm good enough

**O**bsessing over my mistakes

**P**unishing myself

**Q**uitting

**R**efusing to recognize my goodness

**S**elf-loathing

**T**wisting words

**U**nderestimating myself

**V**icious thoughts

**W**anting to be someone else

**Y**earning to sleep and not wake up

*Rabbi Sara Davidson Berman*

Forgiveness is a by-product of an on-going healing process. Many of us grew up believing that forgiveness was an act to be performed or an attitude to possess, and the reason that we could not forgive was that WE were not trying hard enough. But what really keeps us from forgiving the people who hurt us is that we have not yet healed the wounds they inflicted.

Forgiveness is the gift at the end of the healing process. We find it waiting for us when we reach a point where we stop expecting "them" to pay for what they did or make it up to us in some way.

Forgiveness is an internal process. It happens within us. It is a feeling of wellness and freedom and acceptance. Those feelings can be ours at any time, as long as we want to heal and are willing to try.

Forgiveness is a sign of positive self-esteem. It is no longer building our identity around something that happened to us in the past, realizing that there is more to us and more we can do. The past is put into its proper perspective, and we realize that the injuries and injustices are just a part of our life and just a part of who we are rather than all of us.

*Dr. Sidney B. Simon and Suzanne Simon*

## Ana El Na

Words: based on Numbers 12:13

Music: Daphna Rosenberg and Naveh Agmon

אַנָּא אֵל נָּא רְפָא נָּא לָּהּ

Ana El na, r'fa na la

*Please God, please bring healing*

## Selichot

*We turn to the Selichot, the poems of pardon, the songs of supplication, the pleas of our ancestors. May the thoughts inside us match the words we speak aloud.*

בְּמַה אֶקְדֵּם יְהוָה אֶכְפֹּר לֵאלֹהֵי מְרוֹם

How shall I come into the presence of the Eternal, and bend low before God on high?

*Micah 6:6*

הִנֵּה-בָאתִי בַמִּגְלָת־סֵפֶר לְטוֹב עָלַי:

See, I come, carrying a book, telling the story of my life.

*Psalms 40:8*

We wrong You when we wrong ourselves.

For our failures of integrity, Adonai, we seek forgiveness.

For passing judgement without knowledge of the facts,  
And for distorting facts to suit our purposes.

For succumbing in silence to social pressure,  
And for acquiescing in beliefs we find offensive.

For using others' bad behaviour to excuse our own  
And for blaming others for our mistakes and poor decisions.

For pretending to emotions we do not feel,  
And for appearing to be other than what we are.

For condemning in our children the faults we tolerate in ourselves,  
And for tolerating in ourselves the faults we condemn in our parents.

For the sin of **A**bandoning our values and **A**iming too low

And **A**ssuming we can't do more – 'because we are, after all, only human';

For the sin of **B**elittling the blessings we do bestow

And **B**elieving the worst of ourselves - when we are, after all, only human;

For the sin of **C**reating dramas out of minor irritations

And our **D**estructive behaviour - towards ourselves, and our planet –

And then **D**enying the consequences...

וְעַל כָּלֵם, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מַחֵל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ

*V'al kulam, elohai selichot, s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu, kaper lanu*

For the sin of **E**ntering relationships that are doomed to fail  
And **F**ailing in relationships that are full of potential;  
For the sin of **G**rasping in greed for what glitters, then fades  
And the **H**ating of others for the things that they do,  
and **H**ating yourself for what you don't do,  
and then for the things that you do...

וְעַל כָּלֵם, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מַחֵל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ

*V'al kulam, elohai selichot, s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu, kaper lanu*

For the sin of **I**ndulging ourselves when there's work to be done  
And **J**udging ourselves as lacking in judgement;  
For the sin of **K**illing off hopes, and **K**issing our dreams goodbye,  
Of **L**oving ourselves too much, or **L**oving ourselves not enough...

וְעַל כָּלֵם, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מַחֵל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ

*V'al kulam, elohai selichot, s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu, kaper lanu.*

For the sin of **M**oonlighting as experts when we know nothing about it, and  
**M**ocking at others who're too clever by half;  
For the **N**asty comments behind people's backs  
And **O**ffering compliments we don't really mean, that flatter and deceive but  
secretly scorn;  
For the sin of **P**olluting the sea and **P**oisoning the air and **P**lundering the earth  
And **Q**uietly ignoring the death of our world, for we know it will happen "but what  
can we do?"

וְעַל כָּלֵם, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מַחֵל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ

*V'al kulam, elohai selichot, s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu, kaper lanu*

For the sin of **R**elying on others to save the day, and **R**ubbishing those who offer  
us hope;  
For **S**urrendering to complacency and **S**uspecting the new, and **S**hying away from  
the needs of the soul;  
For **S**earching for sex when it's love that we want  
And the sin of **T**rusting in tradition, but not in ourselves;  
And for all that's **U**ngracious, **U**nkind and **U**njust in our hearts

וְעַל כָּלֵם, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מַחֵל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ

*V'al kulam, elohai selichot, s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu, kaper lanu*

For the sin of **V**anity about what matters least  
 And **W**axing lyrical at the weight we have lost, or feeling our **W**oe at the weight  
 we have gained when half the world is hungry;  
 For the sin of **W**atching our backs and to hell with the rest, of **W**aiting for others to  
 get it all wrong, or **W**illing them harm so it won't happen to us  
 For our **X**enophobia (what else?), that suspects the outsiders and wants them  
 away;  
 And for dissatisfied **Y**earning that ignores what we have, and **Y**ielding to despair  
 when there's grandeur at hand  
 And for the sin of our **Z**ionism when it lacks justice or care, and when **Z**eil for the  
 land makes us blind to the image of God in those others who also love that land -  
 for then we stand condemned, for the rabbis say 'all Jews are sureties for each  
 other today'.  
 So the fate of us all is in balance this day, and our deaths are but a hair's breadth  
 away

וְעַל כָּלֵם, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מְחַל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ

V'al kulam, elohai selichot, s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu,kaper lanu

*And for all these things, forgiving God, forgive us, pardon us, and grant us  
 atonement.*

*Rabbi Howard Cooper, 2008, 2010, 2013*

אֵל מֶלֶךְ יוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא רַחֲמִים. מִתְנַהֵּג בַּחֲסִידוּת. מוֹחֵל עֲוֹנוֹת עַמּוֹ. מְרַבֵּה מְחִילָה  
לְחַטָּאִים וְסִלִּיחָה לְפוֹשְׁעִים. עוֹשֶׂה צְדָקוֹת עִם כָּל בֶּשָׂר וְרוּחַ. לֹא כִרְעַתָּם לָהֶם  
גּוֹמֵל

El Melech yosheiv al kisei rachamim. Mitnaheg bachasidut, mochel avonot amo, marbeh m'chilah l'chata'im us'lichah l'fosh'im, oseh tz'dakot im kol basar varuach, lo ch'ra'atam lahem gomer.

God of forgiveness, we come before You in need of compassion.

At Sinai You spoke words that guide our lives to this day,  
But our ancestors lost faith in You, lost hope in their Redeemer.

With one voice, they had promised: "We will do and obey";  
And yet, stiff-necked, they broke their word, adoring an idol of gold.

How wondrous Your compassion in the face of their rebellion,  
Your forgiveness in that moment of human weakness and doubt!

We, too, have broken promises to You.  
We, too, worship the work of our own hands.  
We, too, make of gold a god.  
And we, too, forsake Your word.

At Sinai You revealed thirteen attributes of mercy;  
These aspects of Your nature – Your very essence – we now recall.

יְהוָה יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת: נֹצֵר חֶסֶד לְאֲלָפִים נִשְׂא עוֹן  
וְפֹשֵׁעַ וְחַטָּאִה וְנִקָּה:

Adonai, Adonai, El rachum v'chanun erech apayim v'rav chesed va'emet. Notzeir chesed la'alafim nosei avon vafesha v'chata'ah v'nakeir.

*Adonai, Adonai, a God of mercy and compassion, slow to anger, generous in love and truth, showing love to thousands, forgiving sin, wrong and failure; who pardons.*

*Exodus 34: 5 – 7*

Our God and God of our ancestors, do not forsake us or reject us; do not shame us or set aside Your covenant with us. Bring us near to Your Torah, teach us Your commands, show us Your ways. Reach out to our minds so that Your being fills us with awe; pierce our hearts so that we love You – then we shall return to You, both in truth and with a perfect heart. For the sake of Your great name; forgive and pardon our iniquities.

Strange is our situation here upon earth.  
 Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why,  
 yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose.  
 From the standpoint of daily life, however,  
 there is one thing we do know:  
 that we are here for the sake of others;  
 above all for those on whose smile and well-being  
 our own happiness depends;  
 and also for the countless unknown souls  
 with whose fate we are connected  
 by a bond of sympathy.

Many times a day I realise how much  
 my own outer and inner life is built upon the labours of  
 others,  
 both living and dead,  
 and how earnestly I must exert myself  
 in order to give in return as much  
 as I have received and am still receiving.

*Albert Einstein*

Ki anu amecha, v'atah Eloheinu;  
 anu vanecha v'atah avinu.  
 Anu avadecha, v'atah adoneinu;  
 anu k'halecha, v'atah chelkeinu.  
 Anu nachalatecha, v'atah goraleinu;  
 anu tzonecha, v'atah ro'einu.  
 Anu charmecha, v'atah not'reinu;  
 anu f'ulatecha, v'atah yotz'reinu.  
 Anu ra'yatecha, v'atah dodeinu;  
 anu s'gulatecha, v'atah k'roveinu.  
 anu amecha v'atah malkeinu  
 anu m'amirecha v'atah ma'amireinu

כִּי אֲנִי עַמְּךָ וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.  
 אֲנִי בְנֶיךָ וְאַתָּה אָבִינוּ:  
 אֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ וְאַתָּה אֲדוֹנֵנוּ.  
 אֲנִי קְהִלָּתְךָ וְאַתָּה חֶלְקֵנוּ:  
 אֲנִי נַחֲלָתְךָ וְאַתָּה גּוֹרְלֵנוּ.  
 אֲנִי צִאֲנֶךָ וְאַתָּה רוֹעֵנוּ:  
 אֲנִי כֶרֶמְךָ וְאַתָּה נוֹטְרָנוּ.  
 אֲנִי פֹעַלְתְּךָ וְאַתָּה יוֹצְרֵנוּ:  
 אֲנִי רֵעִיתְךָ וְאַתָּה דוֹדֵנוּ.  
 אֲנִי סִגְלָתְךָ וְאַתָּה קְרוֹבֵנוּ.  
 אֲנִי עַמְּךָ וְאַתָּה מַלְכֵנוּ:  
 אֲנִי מְאִמְרֶיךָ וְאַתָּה מְאִמְרֵנוּ

*For we are Your people and You are our God.  
 We are Your children and You are our parent.  
 We are Your servants and You are our master.  
 We are Your community and You are our portion.  
 We are Your inheritance and You are our destiny.  
 We are Your flock and You are our shepherd.  
 We are Your vineyard and You are our keeper.  
 We are Your work and You are our creator.  
 We are Your beloved and You are our friend.  
 We are Your own and You are our nearest.  
 We are Your people and You are our sovereign.  
 We are the people known to You and You are the God made known by us.*

## **We Return /Hashiveinu**

Music by: Elana Arian and Noah Aronson

We return  
We return  
We return, return again

We return  
We return  
We return, return  
Again and again

To love (truth) (You)  
We return again to love (truth) (You)

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֵלֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה  
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם

Hashiveinu Adonai Eilecha v'nashuva, Chadesh yameinu K'kedem

## G'mar Chatimah Tova