‘I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.’

(Ezekiel 36:26)
Rosh Ha-Shanah Evening Service
REFLECTIONS

The Eternal One spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the Children of Israel thus: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred assembly commemorated with Shofar blasts. You shall not work at your occupations.

Leviticus 23:23-25

At the coming of the seventh month, when the people of Israel were in their towns, all the people gathered together in the square in front of the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the Law of Moses which God had enjoined upon Israel. On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could listen with understanding; and he read it, facing the square in front of the Water Gate, from early morning till noon. Then Nehemiah the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people, said to them all: ‘This day is holy to the Eternal One your God; do not mourn or weep.’

From Nehemiah 8

Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You, and let those who love Your salvation say continually: Let God be magnified. But I am poor and needy; hasten to me, O God, my help and my deliverer. Eternal God, do not delay.

Psalm 70:5-6
Creation

Rabbi Eliezer said: 'In the month of Tishri the world was created.' As we prepare to welcome a new Jewish year, as we search for a new beginning to our lives, we look back to the days of creation, the first beginning. We look forward to a world filled with light, beauty and goodness; a world blessed by God's presence and promise for the future.

The stars of heaven, awesome in their majesty, are not more wonderful than the one who charts their courses. The elements, arrayed in perfection, are not marvels greater than the mind that beholds them. This miracle, matter, begets a wonder: the body thinks, insight comes from flesh, the soul is born of dust to build towers of hope, opening within us doors of lamentation and love. For You have made us little less than divine, and crowned us with glory and honour! Glory and honour within us: but every age has despised its endowment. And yet, O God, we look with hope beyond the near horizon. Beneath this trampled earth a seed of goodness will grow, we trust, to be our tree of life. Within and beyond us, O God of life, You are there. You dwell wherever we let You in. When we flee from You, we flee from ourselves. When we seek You, we discover that we are not alone.

Chaim Stern
ROSH HA-SHANAH

Rosh Ha-Shanah
New Year
New moon of Tishri
Dawning darkly
First stars
Sparkling pathways
From the past
Into the future

Hinneyni
Here I am
Standing on the threshold
Of the new year
Ready
But
Retreating

Teshuvah?
I turn back from the brink
Sarah’s laughter
Ringing in my ears
New life?
New beginning?
Is it possible?
For me?

And then
In the desert
Of those questions
Hagar’s eyes opening
Opening mine
Forcing me
To turn around again
Pressing me
To look forward
To gaze into the landscape
Beyond
To see
Wells of water
In the wilderness

Hinneyni
Here I am
Standing on the threshold
Of the new year
Ready
To begin
Again.

Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah

We shall remember the wheat stalk in the greenness of her youth,
The time she stood erect with her head to heaven,
Thin was her blade but straight and proud.
And now bent is her head to the ground,
For heavy is the gold of her ripeness,
The crown of her full pregnancy.
Beautiful are her seasons.
We shall remember the tree in the middle of his spring:
His blossoms were white and pink,
Trembling sunbeams glimmered in him on the branch
And the sweet resin dropped to earth
Like the bride’s tears on the day of her heart’s joy.
Now he stands in the abundance of his apples
Carrying his beautiful burden motionless
Knowing the spring of things to come.
We shall surely remember these things.
In the change of the year’s circuit and in the passage of day and night,
How the moon was fragile
And very full, then round and expired,
Yet its youth would be renewed.

Leah Goldberg
The essence of the Jewish conception of life seems to me to lie in an affirmative attitude to the life of all creation. The life of the individual has meaning only insofar as it aids in making the life of every living thing nobler and more beautiful. Life is sacred — that is to say, it is the supreme value to which all other values are subordinate. The hallowing of the supra-individual life brings in its train a reverence for everything spiritual — a particularly characteristic feature of the Jewish tradition.

But the Jewish tradition also contains something else, something which finds splendid expression in many of the Psalms, namely a sort of intoxicated joy and amazement at the beauty and grandeur of this world, of which humankind can just form a faint notion. It is the feeling from which true scientific research draws its spiritual substance, but which also seems to find expression in leafy trees and the crash of waves.

\[ \text{Albert Einstein} \]

O my God, O my God, I pray that these never cease: The sand and the sea, the rush of the waters, the crash of the heavens, the prayer of the human heart.

\[ \text{Hannah Senesh} \]

**Human Nature**

When God created human beings in the beginning, they were left free to follow their own inclinations. If we so choose, we can keep the commandments and do God’s will by acting with discernment.

\[ \text{Ben Sira} \]
A single person was created in the world in order to teach that if one had caused a single soul to perish, it is as if one had thereby destroyed an entire world; and if one saved a single life, it is as if one had thereby saved an entire world.

For two-and-a-half years the Schools of Shamai and Hillel remained divided. The former said: It would have been better if humankind had never been created. The latter said: It is better that humankind was created. After the debate, they reached a consensus: It would have been better had humankind not been created; now that we are here, however, let us look to our conduct.

Everyone has been given free will. If we wish to turn to the good way and be righteous, we have the power to do so; and if we wish to turn to the evil way and be wicked, we are free to do that. Everyone is capable of being righteous like Moses or wicked like Jeroboam, learned or ignorant, merciful or cruel, mean or generous. Nobody forces us, or decides for us, or pulls us in one direction or the other; but we, by our own volition, choose the path we wish to follow.
Rabbi Bunam said to his disciples: We should all have two pockets, so that we can reach into one or the other according to our need. In our right pocket there should be a piece of paper saying, ‘For my sake was the world created,’ and in the left, ‘I am but dust and ashes.’

*Chasidic*

When we do something which shows some moral weakness, the act is frequently condoned by the comment: It is human. The use of ‘human’ in such contexts has given it a connotation of weakness. It is human to err, it is human to satisfy the desires of the flesh even when it can be done only by ignoring the best moral standards, it is human to obey instincts which inhere in our humanity, it is human to yield to temptations. But there is another side to our nature. It is not only human to be weak but it is also human to have ‘a touch of the Divine’. It is not only human to feel temptation but it is also human to resist. Every day men and women make sacrifices to help others. By the power of the spirit they overcome the force of mere instincts. Their victory is the triumph of the human over the human. It is human to be weak. It is also human to be strong.

*Israel I Mattuck*

Today we stand before the Mirror of All
to see ourselves as we are.
We come with no gifts, no bribes, no illusions, no 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*
REFLECTIONS FOR THE EVENING SERVICE

The whole world is a very narrow bridge and the important thing is not to be afraid.

Nachman of Bratslav

Renewal

Forgive us our mistake
That we tried to encompass
What You may be
In an image which has become fixed and narrowed
To fit the poverty of our imagination.
Help us to expand beyond our limitations
To meet the infinite grace and love
That is the meaning of unceasing creation.
Teach us not to betray the trust
That was originally there between us.
Keep faith with us, as we keep faith with You.
For our life is a reflection
Of the abundance and treachery and splendid mystery
Of Your evolving universe,
And a reflection of the poverty and waste
When there is no replenishment and renewal of its holiness.
Help us to expand our image
Of what we may be.

Alix Pirani

That life is both fleeting and uncertain is a truth that presses upon the mind with special force as the old year ends and the new begins. Time speeds on, and we go with it, and though we have seen the old year close, we can never be sure of seeing the end of the new. We are utterly in Your hands, O God. And so we are led to turn our thoughts to You, to remember that You have given us our lives in trust, to use in Your service. But since life is so fleeting and frail, we must begin this serious use of it at once, and begin it by entering upon the task of self-examination and self-ennoblement which is its essential preliminary. A New Year, say the rabbis, should inaugurate a new life.

Morris Joseph
Teach me, my God, to pray
and to recite blessings for the
mystery of the withered leaf
no less than for the splen-
dour of the ripened fruit;
for freedom to see, to feel, to
breathe, to know, to hope —
and to fail.

Instruct my lips to sing Your
praise
when time renews itself each
dawn and night,
that my today be not as
yesterday,
nor any of my days become
routine.

Remember us for life, for
You, O Sovereign, delight in
life; and inscribe us in the
Book of Life, for Your sake, O
God of life.

Prayer

Normally, we are compelled to pass from one task to another in
quick succession; one duty is completed to be followed
immediately by the next; a difficulty surmounted, a problem
solved is replaced with such rapidity by further worries and by
other cares that we have no choice, in daily life, but to live from
one minute to another, to eliminate from our minds everything but
that which is immediately ahead of us and which demands
immediate attention.
In worship, however, we are freed from the pressure of life. There are no immediate tasks to be performed: no insistent needs clamouring for immediate satisfaction. For once, we are guaranteed Time and Quietude — the rarest possessions in life today. For once, we can escape from the tyranny of the next minute with its worries, tasks and duties.

Leslie I Edgar

We cannot all pray from our own creative resources because we are not all religious geniuses. We cannot all write words such as Shakespeare's, or compose music such as Bach's. But we can still make these our own. We can open our hearts to them and enrich ourselves by sharing and appropriating them.

In prayer, too, we can turn to the great religious geniuses, the Isaiahs, the Jeremiahs, and the Psalmists. We can take the visions they have seen, the communion they have established, the messages they have brought back, the words they have spoken, and make them our own. By an act of sympathetic fervour, of loving contagion, we can seek to achieve their glow.

This does not mean that all the deepest prayer or all the best poetry and music have already been written; nor does it mean that there is an end to inspiration.

The future is open; there is no limitation on the wonder of insight and creation. But each of us, in our own time and place, must conserve the resources already available and warm our hands at the fires already lighted.

Henry Slonimsky

How do I learn to pray? There is really only one answer: pray! Pray other people’s prayers. You will appropriate them to yourself by using them and pouring your own personality into them. Do not wait until you ‘feel like’ praying, or until you know how to pray. You never will.

Steven S Schwarzschild
Prayer cannot mend a broken bridge, rebuild a ruined city, or bring water back to parched fields. But prayer can mend a broken heart, lift up a discouraged soul, and strengthen a weakened will.

_Ferdinand M Isserman_

You must force yourself to pray. Some people say that prayer must be totally spontaneous, without being forced; but they are wrong. You must force yourself to direct all your power into your prayer.

Nevertheless, when you pray with true devotion, binding thought to word and listening carefully to your words of prayer, then strength will automatically enter your worship. All your faculties will anticipate their being drawn into words of holiness. When you focus your mind on your prayers, this strength enters the words. Merely concentrate on the words, and strength will enter your prayers without your having to force it.

_Nachman of Bratslav_

The Tzantzer Rebbe was asked by one of his disciples: ‘What does the Rebbe do before praying?’

The Rebbe replied: ‘I pray that I may have the ability to pray!’

_Chasidic_

Hear our voice, Eternal One our God; have compassion upon us, and accept our prayer with favour and mercy.

Help us to return to You, O God; then we shall return. Renew our days as in the past.
God

Submit to God, uniquely conscious soul,
And rush to worship God in reverence.
Day and night turn toward your eternal source —
Why pursue vanity and emptiness?
Filled with life you resemble the living God
Who is invisible as you are unseen.
If your Creator be pure and flawless,
Know that you too are perfect and pure.
The Mighty One holds the heavens on one arm,
As you uphold the silent body.
My soul, present your songs to your Rock
Who has not set your like on earth.
My limbs, praise your Rock continuously
The one whose name every soul does praise.

O, Thou my God: all peoples praise Thee and assure Thee of their devotion.
But what does it mean to Thee whether I do this or not?

Solomon ibn Gabirol
Who am I, that I should believe my prayers are necessary?

When I say ‘God’, I know that I speak of the Only, Eternal, Omnipotent, All-Knowing and Inconceivable One, of whom I neither can nor should make for myself an image; on whom I neither may nor can make any demand, who will fulfil my most fervent prayer or ignore it.

And yet I pray, as each one prays who is alive; and yet I pray for mercies, miracles, fulfilments.

And yet I pray, for I do not want to lose the blissful feeling of unity, of communion with Thee.

O Thou, my God: Thy mercy left us prayer as a bond, a blissful bond with Thee: a gift greater than any fulfilment.

Wer bin ich, dass ich glauben soll, mein Gebet sei eine Notwendigkeit?


Und trotzdem bete ich, wie alles Lebende betet; trotzdem erbitte ich Gnaden und Wunder, Erfüllungen.

Trotzdem bete ich, denn ich will nicht des beseligenden Gefühls der Einigkeit, der Vereinigung mit Dir, verlustig werden.

O Du mein Gott, Deine Gnade hat uns das Gebet gelassen, als eine Verbindung mit Dir. Als eine Seligkeit, die uns mehr gibt, als jede Erfüllung.

Arnold Schoenberg

Shechinah Mekor Chayyeynu – Divine Presence, Source of our lives, shelter us under the wings of Your compassion.
When men were children, they thought of God as a father;  
When men were slaves, they thought of God as a master;  
When men were subjects, they thought of God as a king.  
But I am a woman, not a slave, not a subject,  
not a child who longs for God as father or mother.  
I might imagine God as teacher or friend, but those images,  
like king, master, father or mother, are too small for me now.  
God is the force of motion and light in the universe;  
God is the strength of life on our planet;  
God is the power moving us to do good;  
God is the source of love springing up in us.  
God is far beyond what we can comprehend.

Ruth F Brin

Abraham Joshua Heschel used to teach that the reason graven images are forbidden by the Torah is not that God has no image, but because God has but one image: that of every living, breathing, human being. You may not fashion an image of God in any medium other than that of your entire life — that is the message of the Torah.

To be a religious Jew is to walk the tightrope between knowing the invisibility of God and seeing the face of God everywhere. YHWH is but a breath, utterly without form, the essence of abstraction itself. And yet that same abstraction is the face of God that ‘peers out from the windows, peeks through the lattice-work’. That face contains within it all the faces of humanity, and each of them contains the face of God. God is ruach kol basar, the spirit that resides in all flesh. That presence may be brought to consciousness in the mind of every human who is open to it, as it may be blocked out and negated entirely by the closing of the human heart, by cruelty, or by the denial of God’s image. The Shechinah, the divine presence in our world, does not dwell where she is not wanted.

Arthur Green
Avinu Malkeynu — our Creator and Sovereign, be gracious to us and answer us, for there is little merit in us; treat us with charity and kindness, and be our help.
PREPARING FOR THE SERVICE

Look around this sanctuary: here we all are, ready to embark together on a new year. We bring our secrets, our fears, our failures, our sins, our good deeds, our painful attempts to grow and change, our loves and our losses. One person who is sitting here is struggling with the first yontif since the death of a loved one; another is rejoicing to be here for the first time since her recovery from a major illness. One person is here for the first time in many years, returning now after a long estrangement from Jewish life. There are so many stories, so many feelings, so many different memories in this place tonight! And the miracle is that out of all these individualities we will forge a worshipping community. Each of us will pray to God in our own way and out of our own need and yet all these prayers will somehow be woven together to make one congregation.

Daniel Pressman

(The Congregation will stand)
(The Scrolls may be carried into the Synagogue and placed in the Ark)

As we prepare to usher in a new year, we welcome into this sanctuary our Sifrey Torah: reminders of our heritage and faith, symbols of God’s guidance and presence.

How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling-places, O Israel! Through Your great love, O God, I enter Your house; with awe I worship in Your sanctuary.

Eternal God, I love the house where Your glory dwells; humbly I worship before my God and Maker.

May my prayer be acceptable to You, Eternal God. In Your great kindness, answer me with Your saving truth.
Eternal God, as the new year begins,
We have come together to pray as a congregation;
Yet each of us stands alone in Your presence.
Each of us comes before You with special hopes and dreams;
Each of us has personal fears and concerns.
Each of us has a prayer no one else can utter;
Each of us brings praise no one else can offer.
Each of us feels a joy no one else can share;
Each of us has regrets which others cannot know.
And so, we pray:

If we are weary, give us strength.
If we are discouraged, give us hope.
If we have forgotten how to pray, teach us anew.
If we have been careless of time, forgive us.
If our hearts have been chilled by indifference,
Warm us with Your presence, and inspire us
With the glowing spirit of this holy night.

Amen.

Eternal God, we unite with Jews around the world to proclaim a
new year of hope. As we kindle these flames, may they open our
eyes to the opportunities for good which await us in the year
ahead.
We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You sanctify us by Your commandments, and enjoin us to kindle lights for the [Sabbath and the] Day of Remembrance.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You have kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season.

May it be Your will, Eternal One our God and God of our ancestors, that the year five thousand seven hundred and ............ shall bring to us and to the whole House of Israel life and peace, joy and happiness, redemption and comfort; and let us say: Amen.

(The Shofar may be blown)

Blow the Shofar at the new moon, and when the moon is full, for our festival. It is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.

(The Congregation will sit)
Summer is passing. The days grow shorter. The sounds and colours of nature, the stirring of the wind, speak to us of changes in the world, in life and in our course on earth. We are also about to enter upon a new season of the spirit, of the soul. It reminds us of our changing lives and fortunes, of the changes that take place within our homes, our communities, our world. It bids us look upon the changes that have taken place within ourselves. Awed and subdued, we stand before the threshold of a new year.

We recall those moments in the past year when we rejoiced in our victories and achievements, our decent impulses and our generous actions. But now, in the presence of that Eternity to which a dying year compels our attention, we are mindful that our defeats may have been greater than our triumphs. We failed ourselves by failing to rise to our own level. We failed our God by worshipping ourselves. For all these, at this turning point in endless time, we would seek forgiveness, O God. We come to You to help us lift the burdens of our souls, for there is none of us so virtuous or so proud whose heart does not cry out, despite ourselves, for forgiveness.

David Polish

From Psalm 98

Sing a new song to the Eternal One, who has done wonderful things.

You have made known Your saving power, Your righteousness to the nations.

You remember Your love and faithfulness for Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen Your saving power.

Shout for joy to the Eternal One all the earth; break forth, sing aloud, sing praise!
Sing praise with the harp, with the harp and the sound of melody.

*Let the trumpet blast and horn resound before the sovereign God.*

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, the world and all who dwell in it.

*Let the rivers clap hands! Let the mountains join in joyful song.*

Before the Eternal God, who comes to rule the earth: to rule the world with justice, and the peoples with righteousness.

*(On a Sabbath)*

Psalm 93

The Eternal One reigns, in grandeur robed, robed and girded with strength.

The world stands firm, it shall not be moved.

Your throne is established from of old, for You are eternal.

The oceans roar, Eternal God, the thundering oceans roar, the thundering oceans rage;
Yet mightier than the roaring waves, mightier than the breaking seas, You stand supreme on high!
Sure are the proofs of Your power, O God, and holiness adorns Your house for ever.

(On a weekday)

Psalm 121

Unto the hills I lift up my eyes:
From where shall my help come?
My help comes from the Eternal God,
Maker of heaven and earth,
Who will not allow your foot to slip,
For your Guardian does not slumber.
Indeed, the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.
The Eternal God is your keeper,
Your shade at your right hand.
The sun will not strike you by day,
Nor the moon by night.
The Eternal One guards you from all evil,
And watches over your soul.
The Eternal One will guard your going out and your coming in,
From now and for evermore.

(The Congregation will stand)
Praised be the One to whom our praise is due.

We praise the Eternal One to whom our praise is due for ever.

(The Congregation will sit)

We praise You, Eternal One, our God, Sovereign of the universe, whose word brings on the evening, whose wisdom opens heaven's gates, whose understanding changes times and seasons, and whose will sets the stars in their courses in the sky. You make day and night, rolling light away from darkness, and darkness from light. You make day pass and bring on the night, and separate day from night: You rule the hosts of heaven.

We praise You, O God, whose word makes evening fall.

Unending love have You shown Your people, the House of Israel: Torah and Mitzvot, laws and precepts have You taught us. When we lie down...
and when we rise up, we will reflect on the meaning of Your laws, and rejoice in the words of Your Torah and in Your Mitzvot for ever. On them we will meditate day and night, for they are our life and the length of our days. May Your love never depart from us.

_We praise You, O God: You love Your people Israel._

(The Congregation will stand)

**Shema Yisrael**

**Hear, O Israel: the Eternal One is our God, the Eternal God is One.**

**Praised for ever be God’s glorious majesty.**

You shall love the Eternal One, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. Let these words, which I command you this day, be always in your heart. Teach them diligently to your children; speak of them in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when you rise up. Bind them as a sign upon your hand; let them be like frontlets between your eyes; inscribe them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates.
Be mindful of all My commandments, and do them: so shall you be consecrated to your God. I, the Eternal One, am your God who led you out of Egypt to be your God; I, the Eternal One, am your God.

All this we hold to be true and sure: You alone, Eternal One, are our God, and we are Israel Your people. You have freed us from oppressors, and delivered us from tyrants; You led us out of Egypt, for ever to serve You in freedom. When we witnessed Your power, we praised Your name and gave thanks; willingly we accepted Your rule; then, full of joy, we sang together:

Who is like You, Eternal One, among the gods people worship? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, awesome in splendour, doing wonders? The Eternal God shall reign for ever and ever!
And it has been said: 'The Eternal One has delivered Jacob, and redeemed us from the hand of one stronger than ourselves.'

_We praise You, O God, Redeemer of Israel._

Grant, Eternal God, that we may lie down in peace, and let us rise up to life renewed. Spread over us the shelter of Your peace; guide us with Your wise counsel and, for Your name's sake, be our help. Shield us from sickness and war, from famine and distress, and keep us from wrongdoing. Shelter us in the shadow of Your wings, for You are our Guardian and Deliverer, a gracious and merciful God. Guard our going out and our coming in that, now and always, we may have life and peace.

_We praise You, O God: may Your sheltering peace descend on us and all who dwell on earth._
Worshippers must direct their heart to each word they utter. They are like a person walking through a garden collecting rare and precious flowers, plucking them one by one in order to weave a garland. So we move from word to word and from page to page combining the words into prayers. Each word seizes hold of us and cleaves to us, it entreats us not to abandon it, saying: ‘Consider my light, notice my grace. Be careful as you take hold of me, take care as you pronounce my name.’

Nachman of Bratslav

The words of our prayers must not fall off our lips like dead leaves in the autumn. They must rise like birds — out of the heart — into the vast expanse of eternity.

Abraham Joshua Heschel

(Some Congregations may recite the following standing:)

SHORT KADDISH

Magnified and sanctified be the great name of the One by whose will the world was created. May God's rule become effective in your lives, and in the life of the whole House of Israel. May it be so soon, and let us say: Amen.

May God's great name be praised to all eternity.

Blessed and praised; glorified, exalted and extolled; lauded, honoured and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, who is...
ever to be praised, though far far above the eulogies and songs of praise and consolation that human lips can utter; and let us say: Amen.

**Tefillah**

_(The Congregation will stand)_

Eternal God, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise.

We praise You, Eternal One, our God and God of our ancestors: of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah; great and mighty, awesome and exalted God. You deal kindly with us and embrace us all. You remember the faithfulness of our ancestors, and in love bring redemption to their children's children for the sake of Your name.

Remember us for life, for You, O Sovereign, delight in life; and inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, O God of life.
You are our Sovereign and Helper, our Redeemer and Shield.

We praise You, O God, Shield of Abraham and Protector of Sarah.

Unending is Your might, Eternal One; You are the Source of eternal life; great is Your power to redeem.

You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall, the sun to shine and the dew to descend.

In Your love You sustain the living; in Your compassion You grant us eternal life. You support the falling and heal the sick; You free the captive and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.

Who is like You, Source of all strength? Who is Your equal, Sovereign Author of life and death, whose will it is that goodness shall prevail?

Who is like You, Source of mercy? In Your mercy You remember Your creatures, and grant them life.

Trusting in You, we see life beyond death.

We praise You, O God, Source of eternal life.
You are holy, and Your name is holy, and every day we praise Your holiness.

(The Congregation will sit)

And so, Eternal One our God, inspire all Your works to be in awe before You, and let all creatures tremble at Your presence. Let all life revere You, and all creation turn to You in worship. Let all become a single fellowship to do Your will with a perfect heart. For well we know, Eternal God, that Yours is the majesty, Yours the might; and awesome is Your name in all creation.

And so, Eternal God, grant honour to Your people, glory to those who revere You, hope to those who seek You, and courage to those who trust You; fill Your land with gladness and Your city with joy, and cause the light of redemption to dawn for all humanity.
And then the just shall see and rejoice, the upright be glad, and the faithful sing for joy. Violence shall rage no more, and evil shall vanish like smoke; the rule of tyranny shall pass away from the earth, and You alone, Eternal God, shall have dominion over all that You have made, as it is written:

The Eternal One shall reign for ever; Your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Praise the Eternal One!

You are holy; awesome is Your name; there is no God but You, as it is written:

The Ruler of the hosts of heaven is exalted by justice; the holy God is sanctified by righteousness.

We praise You, O God, the holy Sovereign.

Our God and God of our ancestors, may You rule in glory over all the earth, and let Your grandeur be acclaimed throughout the world. Reveal the splendour of Your majesty to all who dwell on earth, that all Your works may know You as their Maker, and all the
living acknowledge You as their Creator. Then all who breathe shall say: ‘The Eternal One, the God of Israel, is Sovereign, ruling over all creation.’

You have given us a special task among the peoples. In Your love and favour You have sanctified us by Your commandments, drawn us near to Your service, and charged us to make known Your great and holy name. In Your love, Eternal One, our God, You have given us this [Sabbath day and this] Day of Remembrance, a day of sounding the Shofar, a sacred assembly in remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt.

* * *

(On a Sabbath)

The Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath in every generation as a covenant for all time. It is a sign between Me and the people of Israel for ever. For in six days I, the Eternal One, made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day I ceased from work, and rested.

* * *
Our God and God of our ancestors, be mindful of us and all Your people, the House of Israel. Grant us well-being and blessing, life and peace, on this Day of Remembrance.

Remember us this day for well-being. Amen.
Bless us this day with Your presence. Amen.
Grant us this day continued life. Amen.

According to Your promise, be gracious and compassionate to us, and redeem us. To You do we look, for You are a gracious and compassionate God and Sovereign.

Eternal God, this day we turn to You in prayer. But what can we say in Your presence? We speak of repentance, but we are slow to change. Our condition alters but little from year to year. We admit the same weaknesses, confess the same faults, voice the same regrets. And though now we turn to You, we fear that we shall turn away again.

But we cannot live without hope, and so we pray: may something remain with us from this struggle to reach You. Let us not leave Your presence unchanged. Fill our emptiness with Your love, turn our waywardness to Your purpose, transform our weakness into strength. Help us, Eternal God, to make real in our lives the words we speak in this house of prayer.
Our God and God of our ancestors, [may our rest on this day be pleasing in Your sight;] sanctify us by Your commandments and make us loyal to Your Teaching. Satisfy us with Your goodness, gladden us with Your salvation, and purify our hearts that we may serve You in truth; for You, O God, are Truth, and Your word is true for ever.

We praise You, O God, Sovereign of all the world, You hallow [the Sabbath,] the House of Israel and the Day of Remembrance.

Eternal God, be gracious to Your people Israel, and in Your love accept their prayers. May our worship now and always be acceptable in Your sight.

We praise You, O God, whom alone we worship in reverence.

We give thanks that You, Eternal One, are our God, as You were the God of our ancestors. You are the Rock of our life, the Power that shields us in every age. We thank and praise You for our lives, which are in Your hand;

Eternal God, be gracious to Your people Israel, and in Your love accept their prayers. May our worship now and always be acceptable in Your sight.

We praise You, O God, whom alone we worship in reverence.
for our souls, which are in Your keeping; for the signs of Your presence we encounter every day; and for Your wondrous gifts at all times, morning, noon and night.

May all who are loyal to Your covenant be inscribed for a good life.

We praise You, O God, Source of goodness, to whom our thanks are due.

Supreme Source of peace, grant true and lasting peace to Your people Israel, for it is good in Your sight that Your people Israel, and all peoples, may be blessed at all times with Your gift of peace.

May we be inscribed in the Book of Life and Blessing for a life of goodness and peace.

We praise You, O God, the Source of Peace.
Silent Meditation

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

Jack Riemer

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

This is the season of repentance, but it is not easy to repent. For we do not see ourselves as others see us, still less as God sees us. Self-love deceives us; pride makes us unwilling to admit the truth about ourselves. Our motives, we like to think, are good; our weaknesses excusable; our misdeeds due to forces beyond our power to control.

We would do better to recognise that it is we who cheat, distort and destroy – ‘we’, and not ‘they’; better to acknowledge that if the society around us is ugly with selfishness, falsehood and violence, the fault must lie not in our stars but in us.

Let us then strip away the vanity and self-righteousness with which we surround ourselves. Let us have the courage to say: we have sinned. Only then shall we be able to see our virtues in their true light. For there is goodness in us too: in us and in our fellow men and women. We have a yearning to be pure; to give, to help, to love, to build a better world. May this good inclination draw strength from our worship during these precious days of penitence. May it help us conquer the darker side of our nature and let the good in us assert itself more strongly in the year ahead.

Heavy is the burden upon those who despair of their strength to bear it; light is its weight for those who greet the dawn with trust. Dark is the night for those who shut their eyes to God; bright is the coming day for those who say: The Eternal One is my light and my salvation; of whom shall I be afraid?

Even more destructive than our past sins are despair and self-contempt. We are not free of sin until we look ahead with hope.

We will therefore seek our freedom in the joyful service of our Creator. God has made goodness possible and given us the task to make it real. Therefore our lives have meaning and purpose; therefore we look ahead with hope.
ROSH HA-SHANAH

(The Congregation will stand as the Ark is opened)

AVINU MALKEYNU: OUR CREATOR AND SOVEREIGN

Our Creator and Sovereign, we have sinned before You.

Our Creator and Sovereign, we have no Sovereign but You.

Our Creator and Sovereign, bring us back to You in perfect repentance.

Our Creator and Sovereign, pardon and forgive all our wrongdoing.

Our Creator and Sovereign, have compassion on us and on our children.

Our Creator and Sovereign, help us to conquer sickness, war and famine.

Our Creator and Sovereign, may we be inscribed for blessing in the Book of Life.

Our Creator and Sovereign, bless us with prosperity and well-being.

Our Creator and Sovereign, let the new year be for us a good year.

Our Creator and Sovereign, give strength to Your people Israel.
EVENING SERVICE

Our Creator and Sovereign, help us to hasten the time of redemption.

Our Creator and Sovereign, accept our prayer with favour and mercy.

Our Creator and Sovereign, be gracious to us and answer us, for there is little merit in us; treat us with charity and kindness, and be our help.

(The Ark is closed)

(The Sermon may be given here)

(When Kiddush is recited, see page 448)

ALEYNU

Let us now praise the Sovereign of the universe and proclaim the greatness of its Creator, whose unity it is our mission to make known, whose rule it is our task to make effective.

We bow in awe and thanksgiving before the supreme Sovereign, the Holy One, ever to be praised,
who spread out the heavens and established the earth, whose glory fills the highest heavens, whose might extends throughout all space, who alone is our God, for no other exists, who in truth is our Sovereign, for there is none else; as it is written: ‘Know then this day and take it to heart: the Eternal One is God in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is no other.’

Trust in You, Eternal God, we hope soon to behold the glory of Your might, when false gods will vanish from our hearts, and idolatry cease for ever. Help us to perfect the world by bringing it under Your unchallenged rule, when all will invoke Your name, relinquish evil, and turn to You alone.

May all who dwell on earth come to know that to You every knee must bend and every tongue swear loyalty. Before You, Eternal God, let them humble themselves, and to Your glorious name let them give honour. Let all submit to Your sovereign rule; may that time come soon, and last for ever.
For ultimate sovereignty is Yours, and to all eternity You will reign in glory, as it is written: The Eternal One shall reign forever.

And it has been said: The Eternal God shall rule over all the earth; on that day the Eternal God shall be One, and known to be One.

To open eyes when others close them. To hear when others do not wish to listen. To look when others turn away. To seek to understand when others give up. To rouse oneself when others accept. To continue the struggle even when one is not the strongest. To cry out when others keep silent. To be a Jew is that. It is first of all that. And further, to live when others are dead, and to remember when others have forgotten.

Emmanuel Eydoux

Our thoughts now turn to those whom we have loved and who are no longer in our midst. Though vanished from our sight, they live on in our hearts. For goodness is indestructible, and what was good in their lives endures for ever. God enfolds them in the mystery of eternity, as we embrace them in undying memory.

Our sorrow is to have been parted from them; our privilege to have known them; our responsibility to build on their achievements. We honour them best when we share with others what they meant to us. Let us then praise God for their lives and strive to fulfil the hopes and dreams they cherished.
Magnified and sanctified be the great name of the One by whose will the world was created. May God's rule become effective in your lives, and in the life of the whole House of Israel. May it be so soon, and let us say: Amen.

May God's great name be praised to all eternity.

Blessed and praised; glorified, exalted and extolled; lauded, honoured and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, who is ever to be praised, though far far above the eulogies and songs of praise and consolation that human lips can utter; and let us say: Amen.

May great peace descend from heaven, and abundant life be granted, to us and all Israel; and let us say: Amen.

May the Most High, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity, and let us say: Amen.
A KADDISH MEDITATION

Look around us, search above us, below, behind.
We stand in a great web of being joined together.
Let us praise, let us love the life we are lent
passing through us in the body of Israel
and our own bodies, let’s say amen.

Time flows through us like water.
The past and the dead speak through us.
We breathe out our children’s children, blessing.

Blessed is the earth from which we grow,
blessed the life we are lent,
blessed the ones who teach us,
blessed the ones we teach,
blessed is the word that cannot say the glory
that shines through us and remains to shine
flowing past distant suns on the way to forever.
Let’s say amen.

Blessed is light, blessed is darkness,
but blessed above all else is peace
which bears the fruits of knowledge
on strong branches, let’s say amen.

Peace that bears joy into the world,
peace that enables love, peace over Israel
everywhere, blessed and holy is peace, let’s say amen.

Marge Piercy
Great is the living God, for ever to be praised, existing both in time and space, unboundedly. And this our God is One, in singleness unique, unfathomable, endless is God’s unity.

An incorporeal God, who has no shape or form, without compare, unrivalled is God’s sanctity. A pre-existent God, who was before the world had come to be; none other shares God’s primacy.

And universally, to all created things there is revealed God’s greatness and supremacy. The gift of prophecy was granted long ago to chosen ones responsive to divinity.

Among them unsurpassed, was Moses, who perceived what God demanded with unclouded clarity. A teaching ever true God gave to Israel through faithful servants trusted with authority.
God’s nature does not change, immutable God’s law, and God alone abides in perpetuity. God knows our secret thoughts, and sees, when things begin, their end results and impact on our destiny.

God’s justice rules the world: the good we do prevails, but evil deeds lead only to calamity. And at the end of days God’s spirit shall be poured upon all flesh, redeeming all humanity.

Hope of immortal life God planted in our souls: God’s praise be sung from now until eternity.

Eternal God, who reigned before Your will had caused the world to be, Already then You reigned supreme In undisputed sovereignty.

And when the universe has ceased, You still will reign in majesty, For as You were, so will You be From now until eternity.

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EVENING SERVICE

לְאִם שָׁלוֹם חָאם, לְאִם נְמוּר ַּהוֹר, לוֹעַלְמִים לַוֹלְמָה.
עֵנֶיוּת וּוֹטָרוּת סְתָרָה, מְמוּיָה לֵאוֹסָה דָּבְרָ בְּכָרוֹתָה.
גְוֹמֵל לַאִישׁ תּוֹשֶׁר בָּמַעָלָה, נַוטֵּן לַחַשֶׂע יַעֲרֵשׁוּת. יִשְפָּל לַכָּל יוֹיָן עַל כֶּלֶּ-בֶּשֶׂר רְוֹה, לֵפוֹחֵת מַכְאֶרֶץ צֶרֶעַה.
כְּיַ עֹלֵלִים בִּעֲשָׂנָה, בּוֹרָה עֹדֵּי עַד שֶׁמָּ-תַּוֹלָה.

אָרוֹן עֹלֵלִים אָשֶׁר מָלָּה, מֵמַיְּרָהּ קִלְצֵי נְבָרָה, לְצָעַת בְּגַשְׁתָּ וּמָ-כָוָה, אֵין מָלָּה שְׁמָאָ-נְכָרוֹת.
אֲמַהְרִי בְּכָלוֹת הַדָּלָל, לְבָדָּ הַמֶּלָּה נְוָרָא, הָוֻא הַניָּה הוֹדָא מַוָּה, הָוֻא הַניָּה מַ-מַּ-פָּדוּרָה.

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Rosh Ha-Shanah

And You are One, there is none else,
No equal standing at Your side,
Without beginning, without end,
All might and rule in You reside.

My living and redeeming God,
My shelter on a stormy day,
My banner and my refuge still,
My cup of comfort when I pray.

Into Your hand I place my soul,
Asleep, awake, for You are near,
And with my soul, my body too:
You are my God, I shall not fear.

Concluding Benedictions

May it be Your will, Eternal God,
that love and harmony, peace and friendship
may dwell among us.
Help us to look forward with confidence and hope.
Guide us in the world with good companions and good intentions.
When we rise up in the morning, may we find our hearts ready to
revere You,
and may our deepest longings be fulfilled for our good.

* * *
The House of Israel intones her prayers, and praises.
O God, we beseech You, heal now our wounds.
May the year and its sorrows end now together.
Be strong, and rejoice, for oppression shall cease,
Hope in the Rock, who keeps the covenant.
May the year and its blessings begin now together.

* * *

Our God and God of our ancestors, bless us with the threefold benediction of the Torah:

God bless you and keep you.
God look kindly upon you, and be gracious to you.
God reach out to you in tenderness, and give you peace.

* * *

Eternal God: grant strength to Your people; Eternal God: bless Your people with peace.
Yom Kippur Evening Service
REFLECTIONS

I think I have lost something along the way,
What it is I do not know.
Shall I turn back? It is so far off now.
Yet it is a pity to let it go.

I have lost something, but do not know what.
Is it anything of worth?
I shall let it lie — for the day is short,
And vast is the earth.

Already the shadows fall from the trees.
Long falls my shadow.
My heart is unquiet. It cries — turn back.
My loss torments me so.

So I stand still in the midst of the road,
Tormented, doubt-tossed.
I have lost something, but do not know what.
But I know that I’ve lost.

Abraham Reisen

How do we find our Creator
who is in heaven?
We find God by good deeds
and study of Torah.
And the Holy One, ever to
be praised, finds us
through love, through
community, through respect,
through companionship,
through truth, through peace,
through a good heart,
through decency,
through No that is really No,
through Yes that is really Yes.

Midrash
So many people go through life filling the storeroom of their minds with odds and ends of a grudge here, a jealousy there, a pettiness, a selfishness — all ignoble. Our true task is to create a noble memory, a mind filled with grandeur, forgiveness, restless ideals, and the dynamic ethical ferment preached by all religions at their best.

Leo Baeck

Al Chet — For the Sins....

On this day atonement shall be made for you, so as to purify you; you shall be cleansed from all your sins before the Eternal One.

For there is no one on earth so righteous that they never sin.

Who can say: ‘I have purified my heart, I am free of sin?’

At first, sin is like a spider’s web; in the end, it becomes like the rope of a ship. At first, it is like a visitor; in the end, it becomes the owner of the house.
If a person says, ‘I will sin and repent, then I will sin again and repent again,’ they are not in a position to repent. Likewise, if they say, ‘I will sin, and the Day of Atonement will atone for me,’ the Day of Atonement will not atone for them.

YOM KIPPUR

מishnah

We do not ask that our past sins may be forgiven in the sense that their effects may be cancelled, for that is impossible; we do not ask that our sins should not meet their punishment, for even if the request had any meaning, we can only regard punishment as disciplinal and advantageous. All we can and do ask for is better insight, purer faith, fuller strength. We want to grow in holiness of life and in the love of God. For this we ask God’s help, for this end we try by earnest prayer to realise better the true vileness of sin, how it separates us from God, and weakens and defiles us; for this end only we make repentance and seek atonement. Surely a day which is used for purposes such as these is suited for all. It involves no superstition; it is based on no assumed violation of law. As our conceptions of God, of sin, of repentance and of atonement are deepened and purified, so is the Day of Atonement deepened and purified too. Its importance and nobility rest with ourselves.

Claude G Montefiore
A Vocabulary of Sin

Cheyt אינת is the most common word for sin, but in Biblical Hebrew, and in the prayerbook, there are three common words for sin. Often they are used synonymously, but in essence they have different meanings.

Pesha עשה means rebellion. It refers to the attitude of mind where a person sets him or herself as sole judge of their actions, recognising neither God nor God’s Law, nor the civil law. For this person there are no external standards of right or wrong. Whatever pleases them or furthers their aim, is right; whatever would frustrate their actions or displeases them, is wrong.

Avon עון means ‘to be twisted’ or ‘crooked’. An inherent or developed trait in the character that seems to impel the person to do wrong, to be deflected from the paths that would otherwise be considered right.

Cheyt איה is the weakest term. It means ‘to miss the mark’. It is used of an archer where arrows fail to hit the target. Cheyt is the occasion where a person has no real intention of doing wrong, but just strays from the right path or action. The careless driver, the over-indulgent or neglectful parent, the thoughtless child, all are guilty of cheyt. Blame is attached even to unwitting sin if it could have been avoided with the exercise of greater care.

The rabbis generally speak of sin as Aveyrah עבירה: the opposite of mitzvah, the good deed, obeying God’s commandment. Aveyrah comes from the root meaning ‘to pass over’ — passing over the line of what is right, it is a transgression against God’s law.

Louis Jacobs

Ben Azzai used to say: One good deed leads to another, and one transgression to another; the reward of one good deed is another, and the recompense for a transgression is another.

Mishnah
The Impulse to Evil: Yetzer Hara

The evil inclination grows stronger against us from day to day, and seeks to destroy us; and if the Holy One, ever to be praised, did not help us, we would not be able to prevail over it.

It is forbidden for people to accustom themselves to use smooth and deceptive language. We should not say one thing when we mean another, but our inner thoughts should be in accord with the impression we give, and our mouth should utter that which we really think. Even one word of smooth talk or misrepresentation is forbidden, but a person should have true lips, a sincere spirit and a heart free of any trickery and deceit.

Above all, my children, be honest in money matters with Jews and non-Jews alike. If you have money or possessions belonging to other people, take better care of them than you would if they were your own. The first question that is put to a person on entering the next world is whether or not one was faithful in one’s business dealings.

‘You shall be clean before the Eternal One.’ That is, Yom Kippur will cleanse you of sins committed only against God (irreverence, neglect of prayer, ceremonial duties); but sins committed against a human being are not absolved by the Day of Atonement unless you try to correct the wrong you have done.
Self-Examination: Cheshbon ha-Nefesh

Each evening before he went to sleep it was the custom of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak to take a Cheshbon ha-Nefesh — that is, to examine his thoughts and deeds for that day. If he found a blemish in them, he would say to himself, ‘Levi Yitzchak will not do that again.’

Then he would chide himself, ‘Levi Yitzchak, you said the same thing yesterday.’

Then he would reply, ‘Yesterday Levi Yitzchak did not speak the truth. Today he speaks the truth.’

There is no final conquest of self. The ego is too elusive, subtle, and deceiving. It is an eternal struggle demanding eternal vigilance.

Samuel H Dresner

Fasting

The Eternal One spoke to Moses, saying: Note, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you: you shall practise self-denial; you shall do no work throughout that day. For it is a Day of Atonement on which expiation is made on your behalf before the Eternal your God.

Leviticus 23:26-28

With what shall I approach the Eternal One? How shall I worship the God of heaven? Shall I come before God with burnt-offerings or with yearling calves? Will God be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand...
rivers of oil? Should I give my first-born for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sins of my soul? People tell you what is good, but what does the Eternal One require of you? Only to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me? says the Eternal One. Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your conduct from before My eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do good, seek justice, correct oppression, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Come now, let us reason together, says the Eternal One: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall become white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become as wool.

If we fast for our sins, and go again and do the same things, who will listen to our prayer? And what have we gained by our fasting?
The Torah teaches that we should practise self-denial on Yom Kippur, a day on which atonement is made for us to cleanse us of all our sins. Although several other acts of self-denial are prescribed for Yom Kippur, depriving oneself of food and drink as an expression of regret at personal shortcomings and failings is the common way for most Jews to show their desire for atonement and reconciliation.

As well as focussing our minds on the spiritual rather than the material, fasting reminds us of those for whom lack of food and drink is not an occasional but an everyday experience. It deepens our empathy for them and reinforces our resolve to help them.

Fasting also strengthens our powers of self-discipline. On Yom Kippur, it is we who control and channel our appetites and desires rather than being driven by them. On Yom Kippur, our self-imposed lack of material sustenance encourages us to reach a true understanding of the proper role of the material during the rest of the year.

Preparations for Kol Nidrey

How should a person confess on the Eve of Atonement Day? One should say: ‘I confess to all the evil that I have done before You; to the evil path on which I strayed; all the wicked things that I have done, I shall do no more. Grant, Eternal One, my God, that You will forgive me all my wrong-doings, pardon all my transgressions and grant atonement for all my sins.’

Midrash
White is the colour that is prominent in the Synagogue over the High Holydays. The Torah mantles, Ark curtains and desk covers are white. Traditionally some wear a white robe (kittel) during services, and Erev Yom Kippur is the only evening service at which it is traditional to wear a tallit. White is the colour that symbolises the purity to which we aspire, as the prophet said:

Come now, let us reason together,
said the Eternal One;
Though your sins be as scarlet,
they shall be white as snow,
Though they be red as crimson,
they shall be as wool.

**Before putting on a Tallit**

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You sanctify us by Your commandments, and enjoin us to wrap ourselves in a fringed garment.

A Meditation for Rabbis and Readers

Sovereign of the universe, I stand before You in awe and humility to pray with Your people Israel and on their behalf. I know how unworthy I am for this; for I am a person of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips.
Who is fit to stand in Your holy place? For if You kept account of all our sins, who could stand? Yet You are present to accept those who worship You, and welcome transgressors who approach You in prayer. Therefore, in Your great mercy, have compassion on me and this congregation. In our common efforts to reach You, let them not falter on my account, nor I on theirs.

Guide the lips of those who represent Your people. Strengthen our faith and purify our thought, and in Your love draw a veil over all our failings. May our prayers ascend this day to the throne of Your glory.
We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You sanctify us by Your commandments, and enjoin us to kindle lights in honour of [the Sabbath and] the Day of Atonement.

Kol Nidrey

(The Ark is opened)

Silent Meditation

(The Kol Nidrey music may be played)

(One of the following meditations may be read)

In the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the earth brought forth life, and life gave birth to human beings, and they became conscious that they were free to create and destroy, to live and to die. Conscious, too, that they were not alone.
Slowly, dimly, they sensed the presence of One greater than themselves: their Maker and Teacher whose will must be done if they were to endure and become what they could be. Foremost among the seers of this vision were the ancestors of our people, and at the Mountain they pledged themselves and us, their descendants, to live by its light and share it with humanity. Here we stand, heirs of the past and makers of the future: priestly, privileged, but blinded by folly and burdened by unfaithfulness. Can we yet save ourselves, our people, our planet? Can we recapture the ideal of a human family redeemed from evil, united in love, living in peace and fulfilling its potential? This day, more than any other, has the power to make us whole. Let us open ourselves to its influence, that we may gain from its observance a new heart and a new spirit.

John D Rayner
All vows, promises, and commitments made in Your presence —
May we be given the strength to keep them:
Our vows to ourselves, commitments to self-discipline —
May we take our own lives seriously enough to heed them,
Honouring our resolves in the way we eat and drink,
The way we work and rest, the way we regulate our lives.
Commitments made to loved ones and friends,
Pledges made to worthwhile causes —
Help us to become as compassionate and generous
As we sought to be at those noble moments.
The promises we made to study and to worship —
We meant them when we made them,
But distractions were many, and our wills were weak.
This time, may we be strong enough;
May our better selves prevail.
Promises made in the synagogue by young people
Who glimpsed what life as Jews might hold in store for them,
May devotion and idealism be with them all their days.
Our marriage vows — may they endure
Through dark days and through dull days,
Through fatigue and through frustration —
May our love prove strong and our faith firm.
O God, we meant the promises we made
To You, to each other, and to ourselves,
Even as we mean the vows we silently make tonight.
Reach down to us as we strive to reach up toward You;
Give us strength and self-respect, the fidelity and vision,
To grow to become the people we have sworn to be.
All worthy vows and commitments which we make
From this Yom Kippur until the next,
May we be faithful enough and firm enough to keep them.

Harold Kushner
Source of our being, accept the vows of the Children of Israel that they will turn from sin and evil, and walk in the ways of Your Law of righteousness and justice, from this Day of Atonement until the next — may we reach it in peace. We come to seek Your pardon and forgiveness. Help us to return to You with a whole heart, and give us strength to overcome our faults, so that through us Your great and holy name may become sanctified.

(The Aramaic version may be found on page 436)

Let the whole community of Israel, and all who live among them, be forgiven; for knowingly or unknowingly, all the people have sinned.

In Your great love, forgive the iniquity of this people, as You have been patient with this people from Egypt until now.
And the Eternal One said, ‘I have pardoned according to your plea.’

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You have kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season.

For on this day atonement shall be made for you, to purify you; you shall be cleansed from all your sins before the Eternal God.

(The Ark is closed)
(The Congregation will sit)

Our God and God of our ancestors, on this most solemn of days we join with our fellow Jews throughout the world in prayer and meditation. This night, hallowed by sacred memories, unites us with the generations of the past.

Recalling their piety and devotion, we stand before You, humbled. Stripped of all pretence and revealed in all our weakness, we seek Your pardon.

Eternal God, often we have been faithless to the heritage of our ancestors. Their passion for learning and justice has burnt but dimly within us; their teaching of mercy and peace we have much neglected.

We have fallen far short of what we might have been. We aim for the heights, but our footsteps falter. Greed and vanity diminish us, envy and arrogance consume us, selfishness blinds us to the needs of others. Unsteady, we stumble and fall; unsure of our bearings, we lose our way.
A year has passed since, at this season, we confessed our sins before You. In our desire to be reconciled to You, how profuse we were in our promises to lead a better life! And in truth the opportunities were not wanting, but we let many of them slip away.

As we look back, we see our path strewn with vows unfulfilled, promises unkept, aspirations unattained. O God, we lift up our eyes to You, longing for Your help.

In our weakness, give us strength; in our blindness, lead us by the hand; and when we falter, steady us.

Make consistent our impulses for good, that we may know the joy of walking in Your ways.

From Psalm 103

Bless the Eternal One, O my soul, and let my inmost being praise God’s holy name.

Bless the Eternal One, O my soul, and do not forget all of God’s kindnesses.

For You forgive all our iniquities, and heal all our afflictions.

You redeem our life from destruction, and surround us with love and compassion.

You fill our life with good and renew our youth like an eagle’s.

You are just, Eternal One, and You demand justice for all who are oppressed.
You revealed Your way to
Moses, Your deeds to the
Children of Israel.

You are merciful and gracious,
abundantly patient and full of
love.

You do not deal with us
according to our sins, or
requite us according to our
iniquities.

For as the heavens are high
above the earth, so great is Your
love for those who revere You.

As far as the East is from the
West, so far do You remove
our transgressions from us.

For You know our frailty; and
remember that we are dust.

We are mortal, and our days
are as grass. We flourish like a
flower of the field:

the wind passes over it and it is
gone, and its place knows it no
more.

But Your love, Eternal God,
rests for ever on those who
revere You, and Your right-
eousness extends to future
generations

if they keep Your covenant and
live by Your precepts.
You make Your throne in the loftiest heights, and Your sovereignty rules over all.

Let all Your angels, excelling in strength, praise You; those who do Your bidding and are obedient to Your word.

Let all the hosts of heaven praise You; Your ministers who do Your will.

Let all Your creatures praise You, throughout the length and breadth of Your realm. Bless the Eternal One, O my soul.

(The Congregation will stand)

Three things combine together in my eyes
To make me conscious of You at all times:
The heavens which proclaim Your name
And testify to Your reality;
The earth I live on, whose expanse
Awakes my sense of awe;
The intimations of Your presence
When I look within myself. Therefore, my soul, praise God continually!

Solomon ibn Gabirol
The Shema and its Benedictions

Praised be the One to whom our praise is due.

We praise the Eternal One to whom our praise is due for ever.

(The Congregation will sit)
and when we rise up, we will reflect on the meaning of Your laws, and rejoice in the words of Your Torah and in Your Mitzvot for ever. On them we will meditate day and night, for they are our life and the length of our days. May Your love never depart from us.

We praise You, O God: You love Your people Israel.

(The Congregation will stand)

Hear, O Israel: the Eternal One is our God, the Eternal God is One.

Praised for ever be God’s glorious majesty.

You shall love the Eternal One, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. Let these words, which I command you this day, be always in your heart. Teach them diligently to your children; speak of them in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when you rise up. Bind them as a sign upon your hand; let them be like frontlets between your eyes; inscribe them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates.
Be mindful of all My commandments, and do them: so shall you be consecrated to your God. I, the Eternal One, am your God who led you out of Egypt to be your God; I, the Eternal One, am your God.

(The Congregation will sit)

All this we hold to be true and sure: You alone, Eternal One, are our God, and we are Israel Your people.

We solemnly affirm the truth of Israel’s faith: there is One God in heaven and earth whose wisdom and power are manifest in nature, whose love and justice guide human life.

We see this most clearly when we look back upon the history of our own people. Delivered from Egyptian bondage, bound to God by the covenant at Sinai, inspired by prophets and instructed by sages, we survived oppression and exile, overcoming time and again the forces that would have destroyed us.

We were beset by the weaknesses and faults common to all men and women: yet it has been our glory to testify to the unity of God, to hold up before the world an example of courage, and to keep alive in dark ages a vision of our common humanity.

Let us therefore continue to labour for the day when all will recognise God’s unity and obey God’s Law. Then shall the nations live together in friendship and peace, and all will sing with one accord:
Who is like You, Eternal One, among the gods people worship? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, awesome in splendour, doing wonders?

The Eternal God shall reign for ever and ever!

And it has been said: 'The Eternal One has delivered Jacob, and redeemed us from the hand of one stronger than ourselves.'

We praise You, O God, Redeemer of Israel.

Grant, Eternal God, that we may lie down in peace, and let us rise up to life renewed. Spread over us the shelter of Your peace; guide us with Your wise counsel and, for Your name's sake, be our help. Shield us from sickness and war, from famine and distress, and keep us from wrongdoing. Shelter us in the shadow of Your wings, for You are our Guardian and Deliverer, a gracious and merciful God. Guard our going out and our coming in, that, now and always, we may have life and peace.

We praise You, O God: may Your sheltering peace descend on us and all who dwell on earth.
**Silent Meditations before Tefillah**

Enable us, God, to behold meaning in the chaos of life about us and purpose in the chaos of life within us. Deliver us from the sense of futility in our strivings toward the light and the truth. Give us strength to ride safely through the maelstrom of petty cares and anxieties. May we behold things in their proper proportions and see life in its wholeness and its holiness.

*Mordecai M Kaplan*

When all within is dark
And former friends misprise;
From them I turn to You,
And find love in Your eyes.

When all within is dark,
And I my soul despise;
From me I turn to You,
And find love in Your eyes.

When all Your face is dark,
And Your angers rise;
From You I turn to You,
And find love in Your eyes.

*Israel Abrahams*  
*(based on Solomon ibn Gabirol)*

(Some Congregations may recite the following standing:)

**SHORT KADDISH**

Magnified and sanctified be the great name of the One by whose will the world was created. May God's rule become effective in your lives, and in the life of the whole House of Israel. May it be so soon, and let us say: *Amen.*
May God's great name be praised to all eternity.

Blessed and praised; glorified, exalted and extolled; lauded, honoured and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, who is ever to be praised, though far far above the eulogies and songs of praise and consolation that human lips can utter; and let us say: Amen.

**Tefillah**

(The Congregation will stand)

Eternal God, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise.

We praise You, Eternal One, our God and God of our ancestors: of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah; great and mighty, awesome and exalted God. You deal kindly with us and embrace us all. You remember the faithfulness of our ancestors, and in love bring redemption to their children's children for the sake of Your name.
Remember us for life, for You, O Sovereign, delight in life; and inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, O God of life.

You are our Sovereign and Helper, our Redeemer and Shield.

*We praise You, O God, Shield of Abraham and Protector of Sarah.*

Unending is Your might, Eternal One; You are the Source of eternal life; great is Your power to redeem.

You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall, the sun to shine and the dew to descend.

In Your love You sustain the living; in Your compassion You grant us eternal life. You support the falling and heal the sick; You free the captive and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.

Who is like You, Source of all strength? Who is Your equal, Sovereign Author of life and death, whose will it is that goodness shall prevail?

Who is like You, Source of mercy? In Your mercy You remember Your creatures, and grant them life.
Tusting in You, we see life beyond death.
*We praise You, O God, Source of eternal life.*

You are holy, and Your name is holy, and every day we praise Your holiness.

*The Congregation will sit*

And so, Eternal One our God, inspire all Your works to be in awe before You, and let all creatures tremble at Your presence. Let all life revere You, and all creation turn to You in worship. Let all become a single fellowship to do Your will with a perfect heart. For well we know, Eternal God, that Yours is the majesty, Yours the might; and awesome is Your name in all creation.

And so, Eternal God, grant honour to Your people, glory to those who revere You, hope to those who seek You, and courage to those who trust You; fill Your land with gladness and Your city with joy, and cause the light of redemption to dawn for all humanity.
And then the just shall see and rejoice, the upright be glad, and the faithful sing for joy. Violence shall rage no more, and evil shall vanish like smoke; the rule of tyranny shall pass away from the earth, and You alone, Eternal God, shall have dominion over all that You have made, as it is written:

The Eternal One shall reign for ever; Your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Praise the Eternal One!

You are holy; awesome is Your name; there is no God but You, as it is written:

The Ruler of the hosts of heaven is exalted by justice; the holy God is sanctified by righteousness.

We praise You, O God, the holy Sovereign.

Our God and God of our ancestors, may You rule in glory over all the earth, and let Your grandeur be acclaimed throughout the world. Reveal the splendour of Your majesty to all who dwell on earth, that all Your works may know You as their Maker, and all the
living acknowledge You as their Creator. Then all who breathe shall say: 'The Eternal One, the God of Israel, is Sovereign, ruling over all creation.'

You have given us a special task among the peoples. In Your love and favour You have sanctified us by Your commandments, drawn us near to Your service, and charged us to make known Your great and holy name. In Your love, Eternal One, our God, You have given us this [Sabbath day for holiness and rest and this] Day of Atonement for pardon and atonement, that our sins may be forgiven, and that we may unite in worship and recall the Exodus from Egypt.

* * *
(On a Sabbath)

The Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath in every generation as a covenant for all time. It is a sign between Me and the people of Israel for ever. For in six days, I, the Eternal One, made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day I ceased from work, and rested.

* * *
Our God and God of our ancestors, be mindful of us and all Your people, the House of Israel. Grant us well-being and blessing, life and peace, on this Day of Atonement.

Remember us this day for well-being. Amen.

Bless us this day with Your presence. Amen.

Grant us this day continued life. Amen.

According to Your promise, be gracious and compassionate to us, and redeem us. To You do we look, for You are a gracious and compassionate God and Sovereign.

Our God and God of our ancestors, pardon our sins on this Day of Atonement; sweep away our transgressions and misdeeds, so that they vanish from Your sight, as it is said, ‘I alone am the One who sweeps away your transgressions, that My will may prevail, and your sins I will remember no more.’ And it is said: ‘I have swept away your transgressions like a mist, and your sins like a cloud; return to Me for I have...
redeemed you.’ And again: ‘On this day atonement shall be made for you, to purify you; you shall be cleansed from all your sins before the Eternal One.’

Our God and God of our ancestors, [may our rest on this day be pleasing in Your sight;] sanctify us by Your commandments and make us loyal to Your Teaching. Satisfy us with Your goodness, gladden us with Your salvation, and purify our hearts that we may serve You in truth. For You alone are the One who pardons us in every generation; we have no Sovereign but You.

We praise You, Sovereign God, whose forgiving love annuls our trespasses year after year. Sovereign of all the world, You hallow [the Sabbath,] the House of Israel and the Day of Atonement.

Eternal God, be gracious to Your people Israel, and in Your love accept their prayers. May our worship now and always be acceptable in Your sight.

We praise You, O God, whom alone we worship in reverence.
We give thanks that You, Eternal One, are our God, as You were the God of our ancestors. You are the Rock of our life, the Power that shields us in every age. We thank and praise You for our lives, which are in Your hand; for our souls, which are in Your keeping; for the signs of Your presence we encounter every day; and for Your wondrous gifts at all times, morning, noon and night.

May all who are loyal to Your covenant be inscribed for a good life.

We praise You, O God, Source of goodness, to whom our thanks are due.

Supreme Source of peace, grant true and lasting peace to Your people Israel, for it is good in Your sight that Your people Israel, and all peoples, may be blessed at all times with Your gift of peace.

May we be inscribed in the Book of Life and Blessing for a life of goodness and peace.

We praise You, O God, the Source of Peace.

* * *
Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a willing spirit within me. You who know the thoughts of human beings and understand the minds of mortals know my longing to do Your will. Purify my thoughts, and free me from unworthy aims. May none of my troubles make me a stranger to You and keep me from serving You. Lighten the weight of mundane burdens that I may devote myself to fulfilling Your life-giving commands: so, with all my heart, shall I turn to You in perfect repentance. Body and heart may fail, but God is for ever the Rock of my heart and my life's destination.

Bachya ibn Pakuda

I still don’t know to whom,
I still don’t know for what I pray.
A prayer lies bound in me
And pleads for a god,
And pleads for a name.
I pray in the field
In the noise of the street,
Together with the wind when it runs in front of me,
A prayer lies bound in me,
And pleads for a god,
And pleads for a name.

Tonight we concern ourselves with teshuvah, turning:
Turning from ignorance to truth,
from darkness to light,
from evil to good,
from conceit to compassion,
from self to life.
Turning is the key to survival.
The seasons, the planets, the galaxies—all maintain their existence through turning.
Our turning, too, is in the natural order of things, it holds the key to our survival by returning us to holiness.

Rami Shapiro

* * *

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

or

May the Most High, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity.

(The Congregation will stand)
Divine Presence, Source of our lives, shelter us under the wings of Your compassion.

Divine Presence, Source of our lives, cause us to walk in Your ways of love and compassion.

Divine Presence, Source of our lives, fortify our desire to do good, that we may overcome our tendency to do evil.

Divine Presence, Source of our lives, give us strength to restrain our anger and to control our aggression.

Divine Presence, Source of our lives, teach us to use the gentle answer that turns away wrath.

Divine Presence, Source of our lives, let us be among those who bring healing and peace to Your world.

Divine Presence, Source of our lives, grant that we and our children may have a future and a hope.
Prayers for Forgiveness

*Unto You our prayers arise
When to darkness turns the light;
Give us peace, then, in the morning
To allay the fears of night:
So that joy and comfort cheer us
When another day takes flight.

Let our voices praise Your
goodness
In the waning hours of day,
And Your mercy come to meet us
At the early dawn’s first ray:
That our lives show Your salvation
When we close another day.

Over all our sins and failings
Our repenting spirits rise;
Then let Your forgiveness follow
With the morning’s sacrifice:
That our soul’s desire be granted
When again the daylight flies.

May our supplications find You
In the quiet of the eve,
And Your hand with each new
morning
Send us succour and reprieve:
That Your love and mercy guide us
When our earthly home we leave.

*The English is not a translation of the Hebrew but a hymn suggested by it.

(The Congregation will sit)
This day demands of us an unsparing effort to face the truth about ourselves, naked and undisguised; to acknowledge the many blemishes which disfigure us: greed and envy, self-pity and self-indulgence, cruelty and callousness, prejudice and arrogance, hatred and destructiveness.

Each of us shares in some measure these and many other failings. Who is so righteous that they can say: I have not sinned?

How we diminish our stature! So many are the opportunities for love and growth — and instead we heap misery upon our own heads: the misery of time and talent wasted, the agony of inner conflict, the torment of self-accusation, the frustration of being so much less than we know we might have been.

And how much hurt we inflict on others! Through our failures, families break up and children suffer; poverty and crime degrade our cities; the weak are robbed of their rights; heedless of the cost to future generations, nature is greedily exploited; starvation claims its victims; efforts at reform are obstructed; and people fall upon one another in savage wars.

These faults, by which we damage ourselves and one another, also estrange us from the Divine, as it has been said: ‘Your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden God’s face from you.’ Our weaknesses, too lightly condoned; our bad habits, too long indulged; our evil deeds, too often explained away — these drive God out of our hearts and our lives. The Divine presence recedes; the vision fades; the voice grows silent; the faith falters. In the end, we cease to search for God. We are left with a deep unease, but we no longer understand its source. We wander alone in a meaningless world; and we despair of redemption.

But there is deliverance if we will only grasp it. On this day may we begin to find our way back from the wilderness of our failings; may we recapture the awareness of blessed moments when the clouds parted and the sunshine broke through to us, if only for an instant, to heal our wounds and fill our souls with hope and joy.

(The Congregation will stand)
Our God and God of our ancestors, grant that our prayers may reach You. Do not turn a deaf ear to our pleas, for we are not so arrogant and stiff-necked as to say before You, Eternal One our God and God of our ancestors, that we are perfect and have not sinned; rather do we confess: we have sinned, we have done evil, we have transgressed.

We have offended and betrayed; we have robbed and slandered; we have been perverse and corrupt, arrogant and violent; we have deceived and misled others; we have lied and scoffed; we have been rebellious, cynical and stubborn; we have cheated and transgressed; we have oppressed; we have been obstinate, vicious and destructive; we have acted shamefully; we have gone astray and led others astray.

When we turn away from Your commandments and Your good precepts, it does not avail us. You are just, whatever evil we bring upon ourselves; for You will what is right, but we choose evil.
What shall we say before You, who dwell on high? What shall we plead before You, enthroned among the stars? Are not all things known to You, both hidden and revealed?

You know the mysteries of the universe and the dark secrets of every living being. You search the inmost chambers of our minds, and probe the deep recesses of our hearts. Nothing is concealed from Your sight.

Now may it be Your will, Eternal One our God and God of our ancestors, to forgive all our sins, to pardon all our wrongdoings and to blot out all our transgressions.

The sin we have committed against You under duress or by choice.

The sin we have committed against You consciously or unconsciously.

And the sin we have committed against You openly or secretly.
YOM KIPPUR

The sin we have committed against You by our thoughts.

The sin we have committed against You by our words.

And the sin we have committed against You by our deeds.

The sin we have committed against You by hardening our hearts.

The sin we have committed against You by being arrogant.

And the sin we have committed against You by showing contempt.

The sin we have committed against You by profaning Your name.

The sin we have committed against You by defying the moral law.

And the sin we have committed against You by disrespect for parents and teachers.

The sin we have committed against You by foolish talk.

The sin we have committed against You by speaking slander.

And the sin we have committed against You by testifying falsely.
EVENING SERVICE

The sin we have committed against You by groundless hatred.

The sin we have committed against You by dishonesty in business.

And the sin we have committed against You by hurting our fellow men and women in any way.

For all these, O God of mercy, forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement!

* * *

Silent Confession

From Psalm 51

In Your love, O God, be gracious to me; in Your great mercy, wipe out my transgressions.
Wash away my guilt, and free me from my sin:
For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.
Against You, You alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You accuse me rightly, and condemn me justly.
You love truth in the inner being; therefore teach me wisdom in my heart.
Purify me, that I may become clean; 
wash me, till I am whiter than snow.
Let me hear the sound of joy and gladness, so that my oppressed being may exult.
Turn Your face from my sins, and wipe out all my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a willing spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from Your presence, do not remove Your holy spirit from me.
Let me know again the joy of Your salvation, and keep alive in me a generous spirit.
Then will I teach transgressors Your way, and cause sinners to return to You.
Then I will sing the praises of Your goodness.
Eternal God, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise!

* * *

The Eternal, the Eternal God is merciful and gracious, endlessly patient, loving and true, showing mercy to thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and granting pardon.
Our God and God of our ancestors, may the sense of Your presence never leave us; may it keep us ever faithful to Your covenant. Make us responsive to Your Teaching, that we may walk in Your ways. Fill our souls with awe, and our hearts with love, that we may return to You in truth, and with all our being.

For we are Your people, and You are our God. We are Your children, and You our Parent. We are Your subjects, and You our Ruler. We are Your flock, and You our Shepherd. We are Your vineyard, and You our Keeper. We are Your creatures, and You our Creator. We are Your beloved, and You our Friend. We are Your people, and You our Sovereign.

Eternal God, this day we would open our hearts to You, knowing that only when we are truly honest are we worthy to stand in Your presence. And yet, how can we address You, how can we face You? How can we think of You? You are the Mind of the universe, and far beyond our meagre understanding. When we picture You as speaking in the still, small voice of conscience, our failures shout within us and threaten to overwhelm us with guilt and despair. We call You the source of love and beauty, but do not
pause to look beyond the moment, and are blind to the Eternal, which endlessly seeks to break into our lives. We have known the joy of thought, the rapture of love, the persistence of goodness, the wonder of beauty — but in all these we have not allowed ourselves to recognise You.

Now, on this Day of Atonement, we express our dismay, our sadness, our loneliness. And so we ask this now: take away our shame, remove our disquiet, pardon our guilt, that we may come before You with hope renewed and serve You with gladness of heart.

On this Sabbath of Sabbaths, let our hearts be filled to overflowing with the joy of faith; let our unshadowed spirits sing praises to Your name. Grant that in our lives we may bring gladness to others, and add some goodness to this needful world.

Hear our voice, Eternal One our God; have compassion upon us, and accept our prayer with favour and mercy.

Help us to return to You, O God; then we shall return. Renew our days as in the past.

(The Congregation will stand as the Ark is opened)

AVINU MALKEYNU: OUR CREATOR AND SOVEREIGN

אֲבֵינוּ מָלֵךְנוּ, צָדוֹקֵנוּ לֵפִינָךָ. Our Creator and Sovereign, we have sinned before You.

אֲבֵינוּ מָלֵךְנוּ, אֱלֹֽהִי מִלָּחָם אֱלֹֽהִי. Our Creator and Sovereign, we have no Sovereign but You.

אֲבֵינוּ מָלֵךְנוּ, הַמְּרוֹם בְּדַעְשׁוֹבוֹת שְׁלֵמָה לֵפִינָךָ. Our Creator and Sovereign, bring us back to You in perfect repentance.

אֲבֵינוּ מָלֵךְנוּ, שְׁלוֹםַ חָֽמֵֽךְ לֵפִינָךָ וְעָזְנוּ. Our Creator and Sovereign, pardon and forgive all our wrongdoing.
EVENING SERVICE

Our Creator and Sovereign, have compassion on us and on our children.

Our Creator and Sovereign, help us to conquer sickness, war and famine.

Our Creator and Sovereign, may we be inscribed for blessing in the Book of Life.

Our Creator and Sovereign, bless us with prosperity and well-being.

Our Creator and Sovereign, let the new year be for us a good year.

Our Creator and Sovereign, give strength to Your people Israel.

Our Creator and Sovereign, help us to hasten the time of redemption.

Our Creator and Sovereign, accept our prayer with favour and mercy.

Our Creator and Sovereign, be gracious to us and answer us, for there is little merit in us; treat us with charity and kindness, and be our help.

(The Ark is closed)

(The Sermon may be given here)
Let us now praise the Sovereign of the universe and proclaim the greatness of its Creator, whose unity it is our mission to make known, whose rule it is our task to make effective.

We bow in awe and thanksgiving before the supreme Sovereign, the Holy One, ever to be praised, who spread out the heavens and established the earth, whose glory fills the highest heavens, whose might extends throughout all space, who alone is our God, for no other exists, who in truth is our Sovereign, for there is none else; as it is written: ‘Know then this day and take it to heart: the Eternal One is God in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is no other.’

Trusting in You, Eternal God, we hope soon to behold the glory of Your might, when false gods will vanish from our hearts, and idolatry cease for ever. Help us to perfect the world by bringing it under Your unchallenged rule, when all will invoke Your name, relinquish evil, and turn to You alone.
May all who dwell on earth come to know that to You every knee must bend and every tongue swear loyalty. Before You, Eternal God, let them humble themselves, and to Your glorious name let them give honour. Let all submit to Your sovereign rule; may that time come soon, and last for ever.

For ultimate sovereignty is Yours, and to all eternity You will reign in glory, as it is written: The Eternal One shall reign for ever.

And it has been said: The Eternal God shall rule over all the earth; on that day the Eternal God shall be One, and known to be One.

As we near the end of this solemn service, we pause to consider, not only what it has meant to us tonight and in the past, but also what it meant in years gone by to others, whom we loved and still love, who have gone to their eternal home. They prayed, repented, sought atonement, as we have done. They had their faults and weaknesses, but they drew strength from their faith, as we seek strength in ours. Their noble and endearing qualities enriched us and gave us joy. We remember them with gratitude.

May all that was good in their lives remain, through memory, a source of blessing to us and to all who knew them.
Magnified and sanctified be the great name of the One by whose will the world was created. May God's rule become effective in your lives, and in the life of the whole House of Israel. May it be so soon, and let us say: Amen.

May God's great name be praised to all eternity.

Blessed and praised; glorified, exalted and extolled; lauded, honoured and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, who is ever to be praised, though far far above the eulogies and songs of praise and consolation that human lips can utter; and let us say: Amen.

May great peace descend from heaven, and abundant life be granted, to us and all Israel; and let us say: Amen.

May the Most High, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity, and let us say: Amen.

(The Congregation will sit)
Great is the living God, for ever to be praised, existing both in time and space, unboundedly. And this our God is One, in singleness unique, unfathomable, endless is God’s unity.

An incorporeal God, who has no shape or form, without compare, unrivalled is God’s sanctity. A pre-existent God, who was before the world had come to be; none other shares God’s primacy.

And universally, to all created things there is revealed God’s greatness and supremacy. The gift of prophecy was granted long ago to chosen ones responsive to divinity. Among them unsurpassed, was Moses, who perceived what God demanded with unclouded clarity. A teaching ever true God gave to Israel through faithful servants trusted with authority.

God’s nature does not change, immutable God’s law, and God alone abides in perpetuity.
God knows our secret thoughts, 
and sees, when things begin, 
their end results and impact on 
our destiny.

God’s justice rules the world: 
the good we do prevails, 
but evil deeds lead only 
to calamity.

And at the end of days 
God’s spirit shall be poured 
upon all flesh, redeeming 
all humanity.

Hope of immortal life 
God planted in our souls: 
God’s praise be sung 
from now until eternity.

(The Congregation will stand)

Eternal God, who reigned before 
Your will had caused the world to be,
Already then You reigned supreme 
In undisputed sovereignty.

And when the universe has ceased, 
You still will reign in majesty,
For as You were, so will You be 
From now until eternity.

And You are One, there is none else, 
No equal standing at Your side, 
Without beginning, without end, 
All might and rule in You reside.
My living and redeeming God,
My shelter on a stormy day,
My banner and my refuge still,
My cup of comfort when I pray.

Into Your hand I place my soul,
Asleep, awake, for You are near,
And with my soul, my body too:
You are my God, I shall not fear.

Concluding Benedictions

May it be Your will, Eternal One our God, that there dwell among us love and harmony, peace and friendship. May You increase our numbers and prosper our aims with a future and a hope. May You direct us in Your world with good companions and good intentions. May we rise in the morning and find ourselves eager to do Your will.

Our God and God of our ancestors, bless us with the threefold benediction of the Torah:

God bless you and keep you.
God look kindly upon you, and be gracious to you.
God reach out to you in tenderness, and give you peace.