

S'lichot

סליחות

Preparing for the Days of Awe:
Prayer, Song, and Supplication

Slichot A time of preparation, when evening settles in our soul,
preparing us for a new day. A time of turning. Of returning and renewal.

This morning I sat alone, perfectly still in the darkness of an empty sanctuary void of worshipers, of prayer, of music. I listened to the silence, trying to hear the prayers of the many souls that had been there. I wondered, what do they pray when no one is listening? Then, I heard a faint echo. It was like the sound of lives lived in wonder: a choir of sighs and song, of high and low notes, of harmony and dissonance. And in the darkness of the empty sanctuary, I was comforted. I realized that life is not about one painful moment in time. Rather, it is an arc of time. And in that arc, countless souls have prayed and found some small measure of wonder. And despite all the pain, in that small measure of wonder, light bursts forth.

And in the light – forgiveness.

Darleen Salomon (z"l) lovingly dedicated six white Torah mantles that were designed and fabricated especially for BJBE by Jeanette Kuvvin Oren in her apartment in Jerusalem. On January 17, 2016, Darleen passed away. May her memory be for a blessing.

CANDLE LIGHTING

Tonight we light six candles for the six themes of *S'lichot*:

Hit'bon'nut
Self-reflection

B'reirah
Choosing

Vidu'i
Confession

T'shuvah
Repentance

Bakashah
Asking for help

Ratzon
Willingness

WE ARE ASKED TO SURRENDER to the softness in life
Where love is abundant
And faith is our guide
And forgiveness is the path.

We examine ourselves and ask the hard questions,
Those silent ones that direct our soul and our spiritual path.

We check our relationship with God
And have a conversation - honest, direct, and often imploring.

We take a long honest look at our relationships,
Asking for forgiveness and offering forgiveness.

So tonight, let us answer the call.
And begin once again to review,
To redirect,
To renew our determination
That we may live a life
Where love is abundant
And our faith is sure.

O God, may the light of Your Presence inspire us to live fully and faithfully, that our lives may become a blessing.

IF I COULD SEE GOD'S FACE within my heart...

I'd see the face of a Gardener –
compassionate to weed and flower alike, patiently pruning,
graciously planting,
loving the endless hours of tending and nurturing the earth –
seeds, roots, all that grows;
and true to the essence of the gardener's work:
forgiving the fallen branches, the withered petals, the cracked stones,
the broken stems.

If I could see God's face within my heart...

I'd see the human face in a thousand acts of mercy -
the one who gives bread to the hungry and shelters the lost,
who hears the voice of grief
and makes room for the stranger;
who brings relief to the blind, the bent, the unjustly imprisoned;
and true to the essence of holy work:
resisting evil, healing brokenness, easing pain;
and, in the end, forgiving ourselves as God forgives us.

OLAM CHESED

Olam chesed yibaneh.

עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבְנֶה.

Psalm 89:3

I will build this world from love...*yai dai dai*
And you must build this world from love...*yai dai dai*
And if we build this world from love...*yai dai dai*
Then God will build this world from love...*yai dai dai*

THE ONLY REGRETS I have in my life
are the times when I was ungracious.
When my limitations diminished my capacity for love.
When I was so small and filled with self
that my need to be right blinded me to the largeness of the truth.

This is the truth:
Life is short. Often tragic. At times, joyful.
Forgive yourself for all of those times when you forgot,
or didn't know, or didn't understand, or ignored,
or didn't have the inner strength to live
this truth.

*Sh'ma koleinu, Adonai Eloheinu,
chus v'racheim aleinu, v'kabeil
b'rachamim uv'ratzon et t'filateinu.
Hashiveinu Adonai eilecha,
v'nashuvah. Chadesh yameinu k'kedem.
Al tashlicheinu l'eit ziknah;
Kichlot kocheinu, al ta'azveinu*

שָׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
חַוֵּס וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ, וְקַבֵּל
בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרַצוֹן אֶת־תְּפִלַּתֵינוּ.
הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי,
וְנִשְׁוֹבָה. חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם.
אַל־תִּשְׁלִיכֵנוּ לְעֵת זִקְנָה,
כְּכֹלֹת פְּחָנוּ אֶל־תִּעַזְבֵנוּ.

Hear our call, Adonai our God. Show us compassion.
Accept our prayer with love and goodwill.
Take us back, Adonai; let us come back to You;
renew our days as in the past.
Do not cast us away when we are old; as our strength diminishes,
so not forsake us.

HIT'BON'NUT: SELF-REFLECTION

Esa Enai – I Lift My Eyes

I am searching for words
For the words that describe,
Make sense, or at least comfort.
Words that summon me from the depths
Of my solitude.

In the night, there is darkness.
Restless attempts to sleep,
Twisting, turning into the shadows.
As I seek a comfortable pose
I bring my knees to my chest
Folding my dreams in half;
Will the crease ever come out?

And in the day there are
Silent attempts to find hope.
Twisting, turning toward the light
As I look for direction, a path, a way.

It is not easy to find the way.

And so
I lift my eyes to the mountains
Heaven lays her head upon the
mountaintop
And I begin to climb.

What is the source of my help?
I climb and gaze upon the vistas.
More mountains, more horizons
Never ending moments where Heaven meet
Never-ending possibilities to meet the Divin

Lift me, carry me, offer me courage.
Help me understand life's sharpest paradox:
That to live is tragic and wonderful,
Painful and awesome, dark and filled with li

I lift my eyes to the summit
And as I climb I find my help
In the turning and twisting it takes to
Ascend.

I have found a path and it is worn and
charted
By all those who are summoned from
solitude.

I take their lead.

And I know that in the most essential way
I am being carried up the mountain.

And even now,
Dear God, even now
I am not alone.

*Esa einai el he-harim
me-ayin yavo ezri?
Ezri me-im Adonai
oseh shamayim va-aretz.*

אֲשָׂא עֵינַי אֶל-הַהָרִים
מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי?
עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה
עֹשֶׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ.

*Achat sha'alti me-eit Adonai,
otah avakeish,
shivti b'veit Adonai
kol y'mei chayai,
la-chazot b'no'am Adonai
ul'vaker b'heichalo.*

אֶחַת שְׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת-יְהוָה,
אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ,
שִׁבְתִּי בְּבַיִת-יְהוָה
כָּל-יְמֵי חַיִּי,
לְחַזוֹת בְּנֹעַם-יְהוָה
וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהֵיכָלוֹ.

I lift up my eyes to the mountains;
from where does my help come?
My help will come from Adonai,
Maker of heaven and earth.

One thing do I ask of Adonai,
and I shall seek it:
To dwell in the house of Adonai
all the days of my life,
to see Adonai's glory,
and to visit God's holy Temple.

Psalm 121:1-2; Psalm 27:4

B'REI-RAH: CHOICE

*R'eh natati l'fanecha hayom
et hachayim v'et hatov.
u'vacharta bachayim
l'ma-an tich'yeh atah v'zaracha.*

רָאֵה נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם
אֶת־הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַטּוֹב.
וּבְחַרְתָּ בַחַיִּים
לְמַעַן תִּחְיֶה אַתָּה וְזַרְעֶךָ.

Behold, I set before you this day
life and goodness.
Choose life
so that you and your offspring may live.

Deuteronomy 30:15, 19

There is a moment in time when
you see a flash of light, or feel a slight wisp of wind,
or notice a momentary pause
as if the world is holding its breath.

And then suddenly, at that moment,
your life comes into focus.
And it is that very moment
that beckons you to take a turn in the road
and step on a path
that leads you to the truth of who you are.

And in the moment, in the light,
in the whisper of wind, in the pause,
you have a choice that can change your life forever.
You can choose to live.
To *really* live,
or to simply get along.

Choose to live.

VIDU'I: CONFESSION

FOR THE SIN WE COMMITTED against You,
through evading and avoiding, because we could not face the truth.
For our flight into hypocrisy and deception because we did not dare to speak it.
For the facts we dissembled, and all we glossed over, for the excuses we made.

For the sin we committed against You,
for feeding our bodies and starving our souls.
For interfering with the souls of others, and neglecting their needs.
For shifting our responsibilities, for reproaches and recriminations.

For the sin we committed against You,
For our foolishness, our folly and false standards.
For seeing these things only in others, never in ourselves.
For our complacency which blinds us, and our self-righteousness
which lessens us.

For the sin we committed against You,
For calculating kindness and measuring out pity.
For charity that is cold, and prayers without feeling.
For withholding our love.

For the sin we committed against You,
For the appeals that we ignored, and the people whom we refused.
For the affection which died, and our lives that became bitter.
For the visions which faded, the ideals we neglected,
and the opportunities we lost.

For the sin we committed against You,
For the fear of change and renewal, and our unbelief.
For saying prayers aloud, but refusing to listen.
For being our own worst enemy.

*V'al kulam Elo'ah s'lichot,
s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu, kaper lanu!*

וְעַל כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂינוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, סְלִיחוֹת,
סְלַח לָנוּ, מַחַל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר-לָנוּ!

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

OUR GOD and God of our ancestors, may our prayers come before You. Hide not Yourself from our supplication, for we are neither so arrogant nor so hardened as to say before You: "God and God of our ancestors, we are righteous and have not sinned." Verily, we have sinned.

We have trespassed, we have been faithless, we have robbed, and spoken slander; we have acted perversely, we have wrought wickedness, we have been presumptuous, we have done violence, and uttered falsehood, we have counseled evil, we have revolted, and provoked; we have rebelled, we have committed iniquity, we have failed to keep our promise, we have transgressed, oppressed, and have been stiff-necked; we have done wickedly, we have corrupted, and committed abomination; we have gone astray and have led others astray.

*Ashamnu, bagadnu, gazalnu,
dibarnu dofi. He'evinu,
v'hirshanu, zadnu, chamasnu,
tafalnu shaker. Ya'atznu ra,
kizaavnu, latznu, maradnu,
ni'atznu. Sararnu, avinu,
pashanu, tzararnu, kishinu oref.
Rasha'nu, shichatnu, ti'avnu,
ta'inu, ti'ta'nu.*

אֲשָׁמְנוּ, בָּגַדְנוּ, גָּזַלְנוּ,
דִּבַּרְנוּ דֹפִי הַעֲוִינוּ,
וְהִרְשָׁעְנוּ, זָדְנוּ, חָמַסְנוּ,
טָפַלְנוּ שָׂקֵר. יַעֲצֵנוּ רָע,
כִּזְבּוּנוּ, לָצְנוּ, מָרַדְנוּ,
נִאֲצָנוּ. סָרַרְנוּ, עֲוִינוּ,
פָּשַׁעְנוּ, צָרַרְנוּ, קִשִּׁינוּ עֲרֵף.
רָשָׁעְנוּ, שִׁחַתְנוּ, תַּעֲבָנוּ,
תַּעֲוִינוּ, תַּעֲתָעְנוּ.

T'SHUVAH: REPENTANCE

RABBI NACHMAN OF BRESLOV taught:

Always look for the good
in yourself.

And remember:

Joy is not incidental to your spiritual quest;
it is vital.

For so it is written (*Isaiah 55:12*):

“You will go out through joy,
and be led forth in peace.”

Focus on the good in yourself;
take joy in what is good,
and you will be led forth from inner darkness.

Yah anah emtza'acha
M'komcha ne'aloh v'nelam
V'ana lo emtza'acha
K'vodcha malei olam.

Darashti kirvat'cha
B'chol libi k'raticha
Uv'tzeiti likrat'cha
Likrati m'tzaticha.

Where might I go to find You,
Exalted, Hidden One?
Yet where would I not go to find You,
Everpresent, Eternal One?

My heart cries out to You:
Please draw near to me.
The moment I reach out for You,
I find You reaching in for me.

יְהִי אָנֹכָה אֶמְצָאָךְ
מִקוֹמְךָ נִעְלָה וְנִעְלָם
וְאָנֹכָה לֹא אֶמְצָאָךְ
כְּבוֹדְךָ מְלֵא עוֹלָם.

דָּרַשְׁתִּי קִרְבְּתְךָ
בְּכָל לִבִּי קִרְאתִיךָ
וּבְצִאתִי לְקִרְאתִיךָ
לְקִרְאתִי מִצִּאתִיךָ.

I POSE THIS CHALLENGE to my spirit:

To receive with open mind and hear what is offered to me.

May I learn to embrace as easily as I evaluate.

May I quiet the ever-present instinct to judge and critique.

May I cultivate the gift of listening without framing a reply.

May I learn to accept help from those who care for me.

May I grow less insistent that life bend to my will and expectations.

May generosity of spirit find a home with me.

DEAR GOD,

I long to find comfort in the shadow of Your wings.

So that I may learn

To risk for the sake of love, for the sake of life.

Teach me O God to step softly and gently,

To live with mystery and uncertainty.

O God,

Forge a path in my soul that leads towards forgiveness,

And I will follow.

Hashiveinu Adonai eilecha v'nashuvah.

Chadesh yameinu k'kedem.

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְנָשׁוּבָה.
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם.

Lamentations 5:21

Return again, return again.

Return to the land of Your soul.

Return to who you are, return to what you are,

Return to where you are, born and reborn again.

BAKASHAH: ASKING FOR HELP

Avinu Malkeinu, sh'ma koleinu.

אָבינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ, שְׁמַע קוֹלֵנוּ.

Avinu Malkeinu – Almighty and Merciful – hear our voice.

Avinu Malkeinu, chatanu l'fanecha.

אָבינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ, חָטְאנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ.

Avinu Malkeinu, we have strayed and sinned before you.

Avinu Malkeinu, chamol aleinu, v'al olaleinu v'tapeinu.

אָבינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ, חָמַל עָלֵינוּ, וְעַל עוֹלָלָנוּ וְטַפָּנוּ.

Avinu Malkeinu, have compassion on us and on our families.

Avinu Malkeinu, kaleih dever v'cherev v'ra'av mei-aleinu.

אָבינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ, כָּלָה דֶּבֶר וְחֶרֶב וְרָעַב מֵעָלֵינוּ.

Avinu Malkeinu, end the onslaught of sickness, violence, and hunger.

Avinu Malkeinu, kaleih kol tzar u'mashtin mei-aleinu.

אָבינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ, כָּל צָר וּמַשְׁטִין מֵעָלֵינוּ.

Avinu Malkeinu, end the reign of those who cause pain and terror.

Avinu Malkeinu, kotveinu b'sefer chayim tovim.

אָבינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ, כְּתֹבנוּ בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים טוֹבִים.

Avinu Malkeinu, enter our names in the Book of Lives Well Lived.

Avinu Malkeinu, chadeish aleinu shanah tovah.

אָבינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ, חַדֵּשׁ עָלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה.

Avinu Malkeinu, renew us for a year of goodness.

RATZON: WILLINGNESS

It is written: "Know before whom you stand" –
but in truth we do not know.

Perhaps we stand before our history -
a chronicle of stubbornness,
quiet heroism and the will to live.

Perhaps it is the memory of those who struggled to be human
in a world that was dark and cold.

Perhaps it is Torah that summons us to rise:
the golden chain of tradition:
a reverence for learning;
permission to question and doubt.

Perhaps we stand before ideals that call us
to do justice, to love kindness, to walk humbly on this earth.

Perhaps it is awe that the kinship of all that live,
of the Unknowable, Unnamable mystery that brought us here.

We stand together:
seekers, doubters, and those who are firm in their faith.

And this we know:

The day is short;
the work immense;
the laborers are reluctant;
the reward is great;
and the need is urgent.

KADDISH

Yitgadal v'yitkadash shmei raba.

B'alma divra chirutei,

v'yamlich malchutei

b'chayechon uv'yomeichon

uv'chayei d'chol beit Yisrael,

ba-agala uvizman kariv,

v'imru Amein.

Y'hei shmei raba m'vorach

l'alam ul'almei almaya.

Yitbarach v'yishtabach,

v'yitpa'ar v'yitromam v'yitnasei,

v'yit'hadar v'yitaleh v'yit'halal

shmei d'kudsha, b'rich hu,

L'eila min kol bir-chata v'shirata,

tush-b'chata v'nechemata,

da-amiran b'alma, v'imru Amein.

Titkabel tz'lot'hon uva'ut'hon

D'chol beit yisrael

Kodam avuhon di vishmaya

V'imru amen.

Y'hei shlama raba min sh'maya,

v'chayim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael,

v'imru Amein.

Oseh shalom bim'romav,

hu ya'aseh shalom

aleinu v'al kol Yisrael,

v'imru Amein.

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.

בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ,

וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ

בְּחַיִּיכוּן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוּן

וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,

בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב.

וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ

לְעָלַם וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמַיָּא.

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח

וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא

וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל

שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא,

לְעֵלְא מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא

תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחַמְתָּא,

דְאָמְרִין בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תִּתְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתְהוֹן וּבְעוֹתְהוֹן

דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

קָדָם אַבוּהוֹן דִּי בְשַׁמַּיָּא

וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שַׁמַּיָּא,

וְחַיִּים עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו,

הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם

עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל,

וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

OLAM CHESED

Olam chesed yibaneh.

עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבְנֶה.

Psalm 89:3

I will build this world from love...*yai dai dai*

And you must build this world from love...*yai dai dai*

And if we build this world from love...*yai dai dai*

Then God will build this world from love...*yai dai dai*



SOURCES

Page 1—*This morning I sat alone*, Rabbi Karyn Kedar, The Bridge to Forgiveness: Stories and Prayers for finding God and Restoring Wholeness, p. 23.

Page 2—*We are asked to surrender*, by Rabbi Karyn Kedar.

Page 3—*Vision of God*, Yehudah Halevi, Mishkan HaNefesh: Yom Kippur, p. 108.

Page 3—*Olam chesed yibaneh*, music and lyrics by Rabbi Menachem Creditor.

Page 4—*The only regrets*, Rabbi Karyn Kedar, The Bridge to Forgiveness: Stories and Prayers for finding God and Restoring Wholeness, p. 56.

Page 5— Rabbi Karyn Kedar, The Bridge to Forgiveness: Stories and Prayers for finding God and Restoring Wholeness, p. 85.

Page 7— *Choose to Live*, music by Noah Aronson, lyrics by Rabbi Karyn Kedar.

Page 8—*For the sin we committed against you*, Rabbi Lionel Blue, Mishkan HaNefesh: Yom Kippur, p. 299.

Page 10—*Yah anah*, Yehudah Halevi, Mishkan T'filah, p. 81.

Page 11—*pose this challenge to my spirit*, Rabbis Janet and Sheldon Marder, Mishkan HaNefesh: Yom Kippur, p. 409.

Page 11—*Dear God, I long to find*, Rabbi Karyn Kedar, The Bridge to Forgiveness: Stories and Prayers for finding God and Restoring Wholeness, p. 91.

Page 13—*Know before whom you stand*, Rabbis Janet and Sheldon Marder, Mishkan HaNefesh: Yom Kippur, p. 436.