



High Holidays
5784 - 2023

Congregation Agudas Achim
Attleboro, Massachusetts

High Holidays 5784 - 2023

Services

Friday, September 15	Erev Rosh Hashanah*	7:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 16	Rosh Hashanah Day 1*	9:30 a.m.
Sunday, September 17	Rosh Hashanah Day 2*	9:30 a.m.
	Tashlich	1:30 p.m.
	<i>At the Duck Pond, North Main St., across from the Colonel Blackinton Inn</i>	
Friday, September 22	Shabbat Shuva	7:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 24	Kol Nidre*	6:15 p.m.
Monday, September 25	Yom Kippur Morning*	9:30 a.m.
	Yom Kippur Evening*	5:00 p.m.
	Break Fast	7:30 p.m.

* Service will be live-streamed. Links will be sent in member emails, or contact the office for information.

For Children and Families

Saturday, September 16	Rosh Hashanah Children's Services: Ages 3 to 8	10:00 a.m.
	Ages 9 to 13	10:30 a.m.
Sunday, September 17	Tashlich	1:30 p.m.
	<i>At the Duck Pond, North Main St., across from the Colonel Blackinton Inn</i>	
Monday, September 25	Yom Kippur Children's Services: Ages 3 to 8	10:00 a.m.
	Ages 9 to 13	10:30 a.m.

Childcare is available on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, Kol Nidrei, and Yom Kippur morning.

To help save paper, please leave this supplement behind after services so it can be reused. Thank you.

From the Rabbi

Shanah Tovah! As I've been meeting with various committees and pondering themes for the coming year, the topic of returning to our shared home together here in our building keeps coming up. I am so happy we are able to gather here in community together again.

I think our years of Zooming and streaming and living with the pandemic have taught us all not to take being able to be together for granted, to treat our lives as sacred, to work to care for each other, and to take the time to pause, reflect, and open ourselves to gratitude, to truly experience the joy of being together here in community.

Returning is a main theme of the high holiday liturgy, it is the linguistic origin of the word *Teshuvah* (often translated as repentance). It is my sincere hope that all of you will return, again and again, to our community over the coming year. We have something really special here together.



At Congregation Agudas Achim we strive to create an atmosphere that is reverent and at the same time welcoming to all who wish to participate. Please do your part to ensure this by turning off all electronic devices, by refraining from unnecessary conversation in the sanctuary and from loud conversation in the hallways, and by making sure your children are properly supervised when they are not taking part in the organized children's activities. If there is anything we can do to make your experience here more comfortable and enjoyable, please do not hesitate to speak with one of the ushers.

If you have any accessibility needs, board hosts and ushers are available to help. They are all wearing name tags so they can be identified. If you need a private restroom for any reason, the outer door of either restroom can be locked from the inside—please notify an usher, who will help you.

In the event of an emergency, long whistle sounds mean "evacuate." Short whistles mean "shelter in place." Please follow the instructions of the board host and ushers.

Some things to keep in mind:

Prayer works differently for different people. Some find meaning in the words in the book, others let the words rise out of their own hearts, others prefer melody or silence. All are valid and welcome here.

You have permission to zone out, take a walk outside, feel turned off by the prayer book or the rabbi's words, pray with your whole body, relax, sing "lai lai lai" or hum along if you don't know the words, and make mistakes.

We value praying together, but we all move at our own pace. Don't worry about being behind; if you find meaning in a particular word or phrase, let it linger. Feel free to roam around the prayer book or this supplement.

The Talmud teaches that God, too, prays. It teaches that God prays for God's compassion to exceed God's anger. But it doesn't even ask to whom God prays, because it doesn't matter. The act of contemplation, of seeking and expressing our most urgent spiritual needs, is the essence of Jewish prayer.

Rabbi Sharon Brous teaches, "Start where you are. Where is your heart today? Take a minute—or an hour—to identify where you're coming from. Are you in a place of gratitude or yearning? Are you holding heartache? Regret? Confusion? Prayer is not about being told what to feel. It's an invitation into your own inner life, and the only place to start is exactly where you are. Prayer can only flow from truth." She also teaches, "For prayer to move beyond impersonal, mechanical expression, we have to be willing to be a little bit uncomfortable...Don't flee the discomfort. Instead, try to lean in."

Jewish prayer happens in community. This means we all play an essential role just by showing up. Take a minute to feel the power of being in this room, with all these people. Direct some loving energy towards someone else in the room. Let the presence of others bring you joy or gratitude or comfort. And know that we are so, so glad you are here.

Psalm 92 / Ma Gadlu

Ma gadlu ma'asecha Yah, me-od amku mach-sheh-vo-techa, Hallelu Yah
How great are your works, God, how profound are your thoughts.

Roll Into Dark

Roll into dark, roll into light,
night becomes day, day turns to night.
Roll into dark, roll into light,
night becomes day, day turns to night.

*Borei yom valailah,
goleil or mipnei choshech,
goleil or mipnei choshech,
vechoshech mipnei or.*

*El chay vekayam tamid yimloch aleynu le'olam va'ed.
Baruch atah adonay hama'ariv aravim.*

Noam Katz

Ahavat Olam / We Are Loved

We are loved by an unending love.

We are embraced by arms that find us
even when we are hidden from ourselves.
We are touched by fingers that soothe us
even when we are too proud for soothing.
We are counseled by voices that guide us
even when we are too embittered to hear.
We are loved by an unending love.

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

We are urged on by eyes that meet us
even when we are too weak for meeting
We are loved by an unending love.

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

*Rabbi Rami M. Shapiro,
melody by Rabbi ShirYaakov Feit*

Hashkivenu / Ufros Aleynu

Ufros aleynu sukkat shelomecha.

Spread over us the shelter of your peace.

The Head of the Year

The moon is dark tonight, a new moon for a new year.

It is hollow and hungers to be full.

It is the black zero of beginning.

Now you must void yourself of injuries, insults, incursions.

Go with empty hands to those you have hurt and make amends.

It is not too late.

It is early and about to grow.

Now is the time to do what you know you must and have feared to

begin.

Your face is dark too as you turn inward to face yourself,

The hidden twin of all you must grow to be.

Forgive the dead year.

Forgive yourself.

What will be wants to push through your fingers.

The light you seek hides in your belly.

The light you crave longs to stream from your eyes.

You are the moon that will wax in new goodness.

Marge Piercy

It is Enough to Enter

the templar

halls of museums, for

example, or

the chambers of churches,

and admire

no more than the beauty

there, or

remember the graveness

of stone, or

whatever. You don't

have to do any

better. You don't have to

understand

the liturgy or know history

to feel holy

in a gallery or presbytery.

It is enough

to have come just so far.

You need

not be opened any more

than does

a door, standing ajar.

Todd Boss

A Rebbi's Proverb

If You always assume

The person sitting next to you

Is the Messiah

waiting for some simple human kindness—

You will soon come to weigh your words

and watch your hands.

And if they so choose

Not to reveal their self

In your time—

It will not matter.

Adapted from Danny Siegel

Illuminations

I can begin with a prayer of gratitude for all that is holy in my life.

God needs no words, no English or Hebrew, no semantics and no services,

But I need them.

Through prayer, I can sense my inner strength, my inner purpose,

My inner joy, my capacity to love.

As I reach upward in prayer, I sense these qualities in my Creator.

To love God is to love each other, to work to make our lives better.

To love God is to love the world God created and to work to perfect it.

To love God is to love dreams of peace and joy that illumine all of us,

And bring that vision to life.

Ruth Brin

Unetaneh Tokef / Who by fire

And who by fire, who by water

Who in the sunshine, who in the night time

Who by high ordeal, who by common trial

Who in your merry merry month of May →

Who by very slow decay
And who shall I say is calling?

And who in her lonely slip, who by barbiturate
Who in these realms of love, who by something blunt
Who by avalanche, who by powder
Who for his greed, who for his hunger
And who shall I say is calling?

And who by brave assent, who by accident
Who in solitude, who in this mirror
Who by his lady's command, who by his own hand
Who in mortal chains, who in power
And who shall I say is calling?

Leonard Cohen

V'ye-eh-tayu / And They Shall Come

(refrain)

V'ytanu lecha Keter Melucha

And they shall give you the crown of sovereignty.

Malchuyot

What does it mean
to proclaim Your sovereignty
when we don't understand kings?
Before the Big Bang, there was You.

In the old year
we allowed habits to rule us.
Help us throw off that yoke
so our best selves may serve You.

Help us surrender. The cosmos
is not under our control.
Help us fall to our knees
and find home in Your embrace.
Let Your power increase in the world.
Help us be unashamed of yearning.
Strengthen our awe and our love
so our prayers will soar.

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Zichronot

God, remember us—
not only our mistakes
but our good intentions
and our tender hearts.

Remember our ancestors
who for thousands of years
have asked forgiveness
with the wail of the ram's horn.

Today again we open ourselves
to the calls of the shofar
reminding us *sleepers, awake!*
We remember what matters most in our lives.

Help us shed old memories
which no longer serve us.
Help us instead
to always remember You.

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Return Again, Return Again

Return to the land of your soul
Return again, return again
Return to the land of your soul

Return to what you are
Return to who you are
Return to where you are born and reborn again

Return again (return again)
Return again (return again)
Return to the land of your soul

We are the Ones Who Remember

We are the ones who remember.
We are responsible for a collective memory.
We have so many things to remember:
our ancient languages
memories that have been sung since Sinai
the people who perished in the Holocaust →

the struggle for wholeness and peace here, in Eretz Yisrael, and across the world.

And just as important you'll want to remember:
the smell of your bubbe's chicken soup or her hands holding yours,
your children's first smiles, first words,
friends who have held your hand in good times and hard times,
people you have loved.

We have so many things to remember.
The shofar announces the New Year, the possibility for new memories.

But it also brings us back, to remember.
We are the ones who remember.

Hayom Harat Olam for Zichronot

*Hayom harat olam
Hayom ya'amid bamish'pat
Kol yetzurei olamim
Im kevanim im ka'avadim
Im kevanim rachameinu
Kerachemet eim al banim
Ve'im ka'avadim
Eineinu lecha teluyot
Ad shet'choneinu
Vetotzi cha'or mish'pateinu
Ayom kadosh.*

Shofarot

The shofar reminds us
of the ram in the thicket.
Where are we, too, ensnared?
Can our song set us free?
The sound of the shofar
shatters our complacency.
It wails with our grief
and stutters with our inadequacy.
The shofar calls us to teshuvah.
The shofar cries out
*I was whole, I was broken,
I will be whole again.*
Make shofars of us, God!

Breathe through us: make of us
resonating chambers
for Your love.

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Hayom Harat Olam for Shofarot

*Hayom harat olam
Hayom ya'azin
Kol yetzurei olamim
Lekol shofar kol korei
Letakein olam bemal'chut Shadai
Kol holeich vechazeik me'od
Velanu ledabeir
Vela'asot vecha'Elohim
Ya'aneinu bekol
Ayom veKadosh.*

Before Shofar

The dream of restored wholeness is sounded out dramatically by the shofar blasts, the central symbolic expression of the teshuvah season. The shofar sound represents prayer beyond words, an intensity of longing that can only be articulated in a wordless shout. But the order of the sounds, according to one old interpretation, contains the message in quite explicit terms. Each series of shofar blasts begins with teki'ah, a whole sound. It is followed by shevarim, a tripartite broken sound whose very name means "breakings." "I started off whole," the shofar speech says, "and I became broken." Then follows teru'ah, a staccato series of blast fragments, saying: "I was entirely smashed to pieces." But each series has to end with a new teki'ah, promising wholeness once more.

The shofar cries out a hundred times on Rosh Hashanah: "I was whole, I was broken, even smashed to bits, but I shall be whole again!"

Rabbi Arthur Green

Entering the Synagogue

This Year, each of us enters this sanctuary with a different need.
Some hearts are full of gratitude and joy:
they are overflowing with the happiness of love and the joy of life;
they are eager to confront the day, to make the world more fair;
they have recovered from illness or have escaped misfortune. →

And we rejoice with them.

Some hearts ache with sorrow:
disappointments weigh heavily upon them, and they have tasted
despair;
families have been broken;
loved ones lie in bed in pain;
death has taken those whom they cherished.

May our presence and sympathy bring them comfort.

Some hearts are embittered:
they have sought answers in vain;
they have had their ideals mocked and betrayed;
life has lost its meaning and value.

*May the knowledge that we too are searching restore their hope
that there is something to find.*

Some spirits hunger:
they long for friendship;
they crave understanding;
they yearn for warmth.

*May we in our common need gain strength from one another,
sharing our joys, lightening each other's burdens, and praying
for the welfare of our community.*

Adapted from Rabbi Chaim Stern

Return

How to make it new:
each year the same missing
of the same marks,
the same petitions
and apologies.
We were impatient, unkind.
We let ego rule the day
and forgot to be thankful.
We allowed our fears
to distance us.
But every year
the ascent through Elul
does its magic,
shakes old bitterness
from our hands and hearts.

We sit awake, itemizing
ways we want to change.
We try not to mind
that this year's list
looks just like last.
The conversation gets
easier as we limber up.
Soon we can stretch farther
than we ever imagined.
We breathe deeper.
By the time we reach the top
we've forgotten
how nervous we were
that repeating the climb
wasn't worth the work.
Creation gleams before us.
The view from here matters
not because it's different
from last year
but because we are
and the way to reach God
is one breath at a time,
one step, one word,
every second a chance
to reorient, repeat, return.

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Ki Hinei Kachomer / Just Like a Lump of Clay

*Ki hinei kachomer beyad hayotzer.
Birtzoto marchiv uvirtzoto mekatzer.
Ken anachnu veyadcha chesed notzer.
Labrit habet ve'al tefen layetzer.*

*Ki hinei ka-even beyad hamesatet,
Birtzoto ochez uvirtzoto mechatet,
Ken anachnu veyadcha mechayeh umemotet,
Labrit habet ve'al tefen layetzer.*

*Ki hinei kagarzen beyad hecharash.
Birtzoto dibek la-ur uvirtzoto payrash.
Ken anachnu veyadcha tomech oni varash.
Labrit habet ve'al tefen layetzer.*

A Personal Al Chet

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

By allowing my body to be an afterthought too often and too easily;

By not walking, running, leaping, climbing or dancing although I am able;

By eating in my car and at my desk, mindlessly and without blessing;

By not embracing those who needed it, and not allowing myself to be embraced;

By not praising every body's beauty, with our quirks and imperfections.

By letting my emotions run roughshod over the needs of others;

By poking at sources of hurt like a child worrying a sore tooth;

By revealing my heart before those who neither wanted nor needed to see it;

By hiding love, out of fear of rejection, instead of giving love freely;

By dwelling on what's internal when the world is desperate for healing.

By indulging in intellectual argument without humility or consideration;

By reading words of vitriol, cultivating hot indignation;

By eschewing intellectual discomfort that might prod me into growing;

By living in anticipation, and letting anxiety rule me;

By accepting defeatist thinking and the comfortable ache of despair.

By not being awake and grateful, despite uncountable blessings;

By not being sufficiently gentle, with my actions or with my language;

By being not pliant and flexible, but obstinate, stark, and unbending;

By not being generous with my time, with my words or with my being;

By not being kind to everyone who crosses my wandering path.

For all of these, eternal Source of forgiveness

Help me know myself to be pardoned

Help me feel in my bones that I'm forgiven

Remind me I'm always already at/one with You.

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Rachamana / Merciful One

Rachamana d'aney, d'aney la-ani-yay aneyna (x2)

Rachamana d'aney, litvirey liba aneyna, aneyna (x2)

The Merciful, who answers the afflicted, answer us!

The Merciful, who answers the heartbroken, answer us!

Southern Journey

Before the wind shakes the bronze leaves from the oaks,
While the maple is aflame and the poplar is still gold,

Flocks of birds take to the flyaways of the continent
Down the great river valleys and along the seacoasts.

They fly above the changing landscape of autumn
Toward the warm lands of cypress and orange grove.

Sometimes we long to fly with them, to escape,
To send our souls away on a southern journey.

Lord God, who gave warbler, mallard and wren
The strength to migrate, the sense to know the way,

Give us strength to survive the cold seasons of our lives.
Help us through study and thought and mediation

To find the direction we are to travel,
With the same sure sense You have given the flying birds.

Help us through prayer and ritual and Your appointed days
To return even from the strange journeys of the soul →

That take us to far countries of pretend peace.
We thank You, Oh Lord, for making us part of earth,
To wonder at its creatures, to exult in all its beauty.
We give thanks to You for making us part of heaven,
To see beyond the changing beauties of this fair earth,
To praise You and bless You who are creator of all.

Ruth Brin

Letter to a Humanist

People are the messengers of God;
There are neither angels nor emanations;
Only people like you in whom God has planted
A Striving for justice and freedom and peace.

Inspiration and dedication and every inward joy
Are the gifts of God, who makes us equal with equal love
And appoints us, every one, God's messengers and workers
To bring another springtime to the world

Listen to your own inner conversation:
You will learn that
When you work for justice,
You are bringing redemption;
When you work for freedom and peace,
You are praying for salvation;
When you accept and love another person,
The Messiah draws near.

Ruth Brin

A Sense of Your Presence

Among our many appetites
There is a craving after God.

Among our many attributes
There is a talent for worshipping God.

Jews who wandered in deserts beneath the stars
Knew their hearts were hungry for God.

Jews who studied in candle-lit ghetto rooms
Thirsted longingly after God.

In tent or hut or slum
Jewish women prayed to God.

But we who are smothered with comfort
Sometimes forget to listen.

Help us, O Lord, to recognize our need,
To hear the yearning whisper of our hearts.

Help us to seek the silence of the desert
And the thoughtfulness of the house of study.

Bless us, like our ancestors in ancient days
With that most precious gift: a sense of Your presence.

Brush us with the wind of the wings of Your being.
Fill us with the awe of Your holiness.
We, too, will praise, glorify, and exalt Your name.

Ruth Brin

Al Chet—For the Sins

For the error of being picky and judgmental toward ourselves and others,

And for the sin of holding back when criticism and protest is truly called for.

For the error of tuning out the world because the news overwhelms us.

And for the mistake of getting immobilized by fear, futility, and "compassion fatigue."

For the error of getting lost in our dramas to the point of self-obsession,

And for the mistake of forgetting those in dire need.

For the error of consuming foods and other products that we know are harmful to ourselves and the environment.

And for the sin of not delighting ourselves in pleasures that are ours to enjoy.

V'al kulam, Eloha Slichot: Silach lanu! Michal lanu! Kaper lanu!

For all these wrongs, Power of Forgiveness: Forgive us, Pardon us, grant us Atonement!

For the sin of not offering comfort or help when we know someone around us is hurting. →

And for the wrong of not asking for help, or allowing others to show their love and concern for us.

For the sin of “image management,” and not letting others see our true face.

And for the wrong we do by holding on to our grievances because they give us a sense of identity and security.

For the sin of holding back our compassion for people whose views and politics are not our own.

For the wrong of relying on the Internet for words and ideas rather than our own creative abilities.

And for the wrong of not reading books, studying sacred texts, and seeking advice from wise elders.

V'al kulam, Eloha Slichot: Silach lanu! Michal lanu! Kaper lanu!

For all these wrongs, Power of Forgiveness: Forgive us, Pardon us, grant us Atonement!

For the error of “shooting from the hip,” jumping to conclusions before getting all sides of a story.

And for the sin of burying ourselves in information, thus keeping ourselves from hearing the “still small voice” within.

For the error of numbing ourselves with food, entertainment, and overwork.

And for the mistake of forgetting how it feels to go to bed hungry, and not sharing our abundance with others.

For the error of not saying “thank you” enough, for the precious gift of being alive.

And for the mistake of not doing everything we possibly can to protect life for young people, animals, and the natural world.

For the error of thinking that all these confessions absolve us of doing what is ours to do.

And for the mistake of forgetting who we really are: manifestations of God's loving power on earth.

V'al kulam, Eloha Slichot: Silach lanu! Michal lanu! Kaper lanu!

For all these wrongs, Power of Forgiveness: Forgive us, Pardon us, grant us Atonement!

Rabbi Tirzah Firestone

Avinu Malkeynu

Avinu Malkeynu, Chaneynu va'aneynu

Avinu Malkeynu Chaneynu va'aneynu ki ain banu ma'asim

Aseh imanu tzedakah va'chesed

Aseh imanu tzedakah va'chesed, v'hoshieynu.

Our Father, our King,
teach us how to make this year a new beginning.
Our Mother, our Queen,
teach us how to grow from the harshness of life.
Our Source and our Destiny,
teach us how to accept what we must accept.
Our Guide and our Truth,
teach us to change what must be changed.

Our Father, our King,
teach us how to face disease and death.
Our Mother, our Queen,
teach us how to enjoy the gifts of life.
Our Source and our Destiny,
teach us how to make peace with our enemies.
Our Guide and our Truth,
teach us how we can best help our people, Israel.

Our Father, our King,
teach us how we can best help all humanity.
Our Mother, our Queen,
let us find pardon for our wrongdoings.
Our Source and our Destiny,
let us return to You, wholly and completely.
Our Guide and our Truth,
teach us how to help those who are ill.

Our Father, our King,
let us write our names in the Book of Life.
Our Mother, our Queen,
help us to find meaningful work.
Our Source and our Destiny,
help us to find inner freedom.
Our Guide and our Truth,
help us to learn how to love. →

Our Father, our King,
receive our prayers.
Our Mother, our Queen,
teach us how to be good lovers.
Our Source and our Destiny,
teach us how to be good parents.
Our Guide and our Truth,
teach us how to be good children.

Our Father, our King,
teach us how to be good friends.
Our Mother, our Queen,
teach us how to be good Jews.
Our Source and our Destiny,
teach us how to be good people.
Our Guide and our Truth,
teach us how to be one with Your universe.

Rabbi Burt Jacobson

Unetaneh Tokef

*I. Unetaneh Tokef Kedushat Hayom,
ki hu nora v'ayom.
Uv'shofar gadol yitaka
v'kol d'mamah dakah yishama*

We declare the utter sanctity of this day
for it is an awe-filled day.
A great shofar is sounded
and a voice of slender silence is heard.

The voice is one's own—
a reed in the chorus,
a breath in the wind.

*II. B'rosh Hashanah yikateyvun
uv'yom tzom kipur yechateymun.*

*On Rosh ha Shana it is written
and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.*

Our lives are stories
inscribed in time.

At the turning of the year
we look back, look ahead, see
that we are always in the days between:

How many will leave this life
and how many will be born into it,
who will live and who will die,
whose life will reach its natural end
and whose will be cut short,
who by water and who by fire,
who by sword and who by beast,
who by hunger and who by thirst,
who by quake and who by plague,
who by choking and who by stoning,
who will rest and who will wander,
who will be tranquil and who will be torn,
who will be at peace and who will be tormented,
who will be raised high and who will be brought low,
who will prosper and who will be impoverished.

III. Ut'shuva
Turning inward
to face one's self

Ut'filah
Entering into prayer
and contemplation

Utz'dakah
Giving to the needy,
as justice requires

Ma'avirin et-roah hag'zerah
These diminish the harshness
of the decree

IV. Ut'shuva
Returning to the inner artistry
that gives each life its form,
seeking to become
one's truest self →

Ut'filah

Being alive to the unending flow
within and around us,
holding dear
the transient beauty

Utz'dakah

Knowing that we are, all of us
flesh and blood
and our fates are intertwined—
sweet with bitter, bitter with salt—
and that the fruit of kindness is kindness,
and good deeds
are its fulfillment

Maavirin et roah hag'zerah

We become present to the fullness of our lives
and untether ourselves from the fear
of what lies ahead

V. We begin in earth
and we end in earth.
We spend our lives earning our bread.
We are like broken vessels,
dry grass, withering blossoms,
passing shadows, vanishing clouds,
drifting wind, scattering dust,
a fleeting dream.

Born in nature
and borne by nature,
we die in its lap-and-fold.
The whole lives on,
infinite in mystery,
its manifestations numberless.
Seeing beyond our separate deaths,
we find ourselves in the greater whole,
our names embedded in its names,
its names embedded in ours.

Unetaneh tokef kedushat hayom.

We proclaim the powerful sanctity of this day.

Marcia Falk

Avaha / Love

Ahava v'rachamim chesed v'shalom
Love and compassion, grace and peace.

Bon Singer

Going Back

I've gone back to my childhood
for a while. I am going to
walk through the old rooms,
remember what my bedspread
looked like, remember how
my brothers scotch-taped
pictures of their sports idols
to the walls over their beds
like serious Catholics stick
up a crucifix for a child
to look at as he falls asleep.

What bizarre things you
remember. I'm going to walk
around that old apartment
and cry out loud all the tears
I swallowed as a child.
I'll cry, I'll cry, and when I'm
finally done I'll empty out
the old furniture, sweep
clean the floors. I'll feel
so light that the old habit
I've always had—the deep sighing—
that old habit will have
mysteriously disappeared.

Merle Feld

Heavy

That time
I thought I could not
go any closer to grief
without dying
I went closer,
and I did not die. →

Surely God
had his hand in this,
as well as friends.
Still, I was bent,
and my laughter,
as the poet said,
was nowhere to be found.
Then said my friend Daniel,
(brave even among lions),
“It’s not the weight you carry
but how you carry it—
books, bricks, grief—
it’s all in the way
you embrace it, balance it, carry it
when you cannot, and would not,
put it down.”
So I went practicing.
Have you noticed?
Have you heard
the laughter
that comes, now and again,
out of my startled mouth?
How I linger
to admire, admire, admire
the things of this world
that are kind, and maybe
also troubled—
roses in the wind,
the sea geese on the steep waves,
a love
to which there is no reply?

Mary Oliver

What the Living Do

Johnny, the kitchen sink has been clogged for days, some utensil probably fell down there.

And the Drano won’t work but smells dangerous, and the crusty dishes have piled up

waiting for the plumber I still haven’t called. This is the everyday we spoke of.

It’s winter again: the sky’s a deep, headstrong blue, and the sunlight pours through

the open living-room windows because the heat’s on too high in here and I can’t turn it off.

For weeks now, driving, or dropping a bag of groceries in the street, the bag breaking,

I’ve been thinking: This is what the living do. And yesterday, hurrying along those

wobbly bricks in the Cambridge sidewalk, spilling my coffee down my wrist and sleeve,

I thought it again, and again later, when buying a hairbrush: This is it.

Parking. Slamming the car door shut in the cold. What you called that yearning.

What you finally gave up. We want the spring to come and the winter to pass. We want

whoever to call or not call, a letter, a kiss—we want more and more and then more of it.

But there are moments, walking, when I catch a glimpse of myself in the window glass,

say, the window of the corner video store, and I’m gripped by a cherishing so deep

for my own blowing hair, chapped face, and unbuttoned coat that I’m speechless:

I am living. I remember you.

Marie Howe

Things to Do in the Belly of the Whale

Measure the walls. Count the ribs. Notch the long days.
Look up for blue sky through the spout. Make small fires
with the broken hulls of fishing boats. Practice smoke signals.
Call old friends, and listen for echoes of distant voices.
Organize your calendar. Dream of the beach. Look each way
for the dim glow of light. Work on your reports. Review →

each of your life's ten million choices. Endure moments of self-loathing. Find the evidence of those before you. Destroy it. Try to be very quiet, and listen for the sound of gears and moving water. Listen for the sound of your heart. Be thankful that you are here, swallowed with all hope, where you can rest and wait. Be nostalgic. Think of all the things you did and could have done. Remember treading water in the center of the still night sea, your toes pointing again and again down, down into the black depths.

Dan Albergotti

Seder Avodah / Avodah in the days of the Temple

The High priest would enter into the place where he had entered
And stand on the place on which he had stood
Wash his hands and his feet
Immerse himself, come up and dry himself
Come from the place from whence he came
And go unto the place to which he went
Strip off his mundane clothes
Put on white garments

And thus he would say
Please, O God, forgive the sins, the wrongdoings and the transgressions
which I have sinned before You, I and my house
And if one could remember
the flaws, the shortcomings
All the transgressions, all the wrongdoings
Thus they would surely count;
One, one and one, one and two
One and three, one and four, one and five
They would give up right away
Because they wouldn't be able to bear
the bitterness, the sin
The shame, the missed opportunity
The loss

And the priests and the people standing in the courtyard
when they would hear God's name explicated
coming out of the high priest's mouth
would bend their knees, bow down and fall on their faces
"Blessed be the name of God's glorious kingdom for ever and ever!"

He would step unto the place where he had stepped
His face turned to the holiness, his back to the Sanctuary
Sinlessly, his mouth and deeds are at one
He would come from the place from whence he came
And go unto the place to which he went
Strip off white garments
Put on golden garments

And thus he would say
Please, O God, forgive the sins, the wrongdoings and the transgressions
which I have sinned before You, I and my house
And if one could remember
the graces, the favors
All the mercies, all the salvations

Thus they would surely count;
One, one and one, one and two
One of the thousand thousand, thousands of thousands and myriad
myriads
of miracles and wonders
which You have done for us
days and nights

He would come out of the place where he had come out of
And tremble on the place on which he had stood
Strip off golden garments
Put on his own clothes

And all the people and the priests
would accompany him to his house
and a day of festivity for his friends
for all the congregation of the children of Israel shall be forgiven
Happy is the people that is in such a case
Yea, happy are the people whose God is the Lord...

Even as the expanded canopy of heaven,
was the countenance of the priest
As the lightning that proceedeth from the splendor of the angels,
was the countenance of the priest
As the appearance of the bow, in the midst of the cloud,
was the countenance of the priest
As the amiable tenderness depicted on the face of the bridegroom,
was the countenance of the priest

Marei Kohein Gadol / How the High Priest's Face Glowed!

*Emet ma nehedar haya kohen gadol
betzeyto mibeyt kodshey hakodashim b'shalom b'li fegah*

*K'ohel hanimtach bedarei mala
Marei Kohein
Kivrakim hayotzim miziv hachayot
Marei Kohein
K'godel gdilim b'arba k'tzavot
Marei Kohein
Kidmut hakeshet betoch he'anan
Marei Kohein*

*K'hod asher hilbish tzur litzurim
Marei Kohein
K'vered hanatun betoch ginat chemed
Marei Kohein
K'zeir hanatun al metzach melech
Marei Kohein
K'chesed hanitan al p'nei chatan
Marei Kohein*

Truly, how beautiful was the appearance of the high priest, when he came forth safe and whole from the holy sanctuary.

Like the canopy of heaven, was the countenance of the priest.
Like the lightning that emerges from the glow of the angels
was the countenance of the priest.
Like the beautiful blue thread in the fringes of the garments,
was the countenance of the priest.
As the appearance of the bow, in the midst of the cloud,
was the countenance of the priest.

As the majesty with which the Creator attired the patriarchs,
was the countenance of the priest.
As the rose in the midst of a delightful garden,
was the countenance of the priest.
As the diadem put on the forehead of a king,
was the countenance of the priest.
As the tenderness appearing on the face of the bridegroom,
was the countenance of the priest.

The Place Where We are Right

From the place where we are right
Flowers will never grow
In the spring.
The place where we are right
Is hard and trampled
Like a yard.
But doubts and loves
Dig up the world
Like a mole, a plow.
And a whisper will be heard in the place
Where the ruined
House once stood

Yehuda Amichai

Praying the heart

You can only pray what's in your heart.
So if your heart is being ripped from your chest
pray the tearing
if your heart is full of bitterness
pray it to the last dreg
if your heart is a river gone wild
pray the torrent
or a lava flow scorching the mountain
pray the fire
pray the scream in your heart
the fanning bellows
pray the rage,
the murder and
the mourning
pray your heart into the great quiet hands that can hold it
like the small bird it is.

Elizabeth Cunningham

Ne'ilah

The hinge of the year
the great gates opening
and then slowly slowly
closing on us. →

I always imagine those gates
hanging over the ocean
fiery over the stone grey
waters of evening.

We cast what we must
change about ourselves
onto the waters flowing
to the sea. The sins,

errors, bad habits, whatever
you call them, dissolve.
When I was little I cried
out I! I! I! I want, I want.

Older, I feel less important,
a worker bee in the hive
of history, miles of hard
labor to make my sweetness.

The gates are closing
The light is failing
I kneel before what I love
imploring that it may live.

So much breaks, wears
down, fails in us. We must
forgive our broken promises—
their sharp shards in our hands.

Marge Piercy

We Rise

We rise
Humbly hearted
Rise
Won't be divided
Rise
With spirit to guide us
Rise

Chorus, x2:
In hope

In prayer
We find ourselves here
In hope
In prayer
We're right here

We rise
All of the children
Rise
Elders with wisdom
Rise
Ancestors surround us
Rise

Chorus, x2

We rise
Up from the wreckage
Rise
With tears and with courage
Rise
Fighting for life
We rise

Chorus, x2

We rise
Humbly hearted
Rise
Won't be divided
Rise
With spirit to guide us
Rise

Batya Levine

El Nora Alila / God, Great of Deeds, the Awesome One

*El Nora Alila,
El Nora Alila
Ham-tzey lanu mechila,
Bi-sha-at ha-ne-i-lah.*

Sha'arei Ora / Open for us the Gates

Sha'arei Ora, Sha'arei V'racha
Sha'arei Gila, Sha'arei Da'At
Sha'arei Hod V'Hadar, Sha'arei Vidui
Sha'arei Z'chuyot, Sha'arei Chesed
Sha'arei Tohora, Sha'arei Yeshua
Sha'arei Chapara, Sha'arei Lev Tov
Sha'arei Mechila, Sha'arei Nechama
Sha'arei Slichah, Sha'arei Ezra
Sha'arei Parnasa, Sha'arei Tzedaka
Sha'arei Komemiut, Sha'arei Refua
Sha'arei Shalom, Sha'arei Teshuva

Oh When I Rise

Oh when I rise, let me rise
Like a bird, joyfully
And when I fall, let me fall
Like a leaf, gracefully
And without regret

Adapted from Wendell Berry

The Healing Time

Finally on my way to yes
I bump into
all the places
where I said no
to my life
all the untended wounds
the red and purple scars
those hieroglyphs of pain
carved into my skin, my bones,
those coded messages
that send me down
the wrong street
again and again
where I find them
the old wounds
the old misdirections

and I lift them
one by one
close to my heart
and I say holy
holy.

Pesha Joyce Gertler

Out of My Need

Out of my need and my helplessness I cry to You
Knowing You are One, and we who cry are many,
Knowing that without illusions I am weak
And without rationalizations I am naked,
Knowing that before You I must cover my head
And seek to hide my thought with shame.
Knowing that You are far off, still I pray to You,
For You are the source of all help and all strength.
Love me better than I have loved,
And protect me better than I protect my own.
Teach me to pray, teach me to believe;
Teach me to be one in my heart as You are One.
I am to you nothing, You are to me God;
Therefore I beg of You: hear me, help me, teach me.

Ruth Brin

May the Cry of the Shofar

May the cry of the shofar shatter our complacency.

May the cry of the shofar penetrate our souls.

May the cry of the shofar break the bonds of all that enslaves us.

*May the cry of the shofar destroy the idols we have placed at the
forefront of our lives.*

May the cry of the shofar awaken us to how we have sinned.

May the cry of the shofar summon us to a life of responsibility.

May the cry of the shofar elicit the response, "Here I am."

*May the cry of the shofar remind us that we can be instruments
of redemption.*

May the cry of the shofar penetrate our hearts.

*May the cry of the shofar bring blessing to us, the people who
hear its call.*

Olam Chesed Yibaneh

Olam chesed yibaneh...yai dai dai (x4)

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

Text: Psalm 89:3

Music and English: Menachem Creditor

A Prayer Among Friends

Among other wonders of our lives, we are alive
with one another, we walk here
in the light of this unlikely world
that isn't ours for long.
May we spend generously
the time we are given.
May we enact our responsibilities
as thoroughly as we enjoy
our pleasures.
May we see with clarity,
may we seek a vision
that serves all beings, may we honor
the mystery surpassing our sight,
and may we hold in our hands
the gift of good work
and bear it forth whole, as we
were borne forth by a power we praise
to this one Earth, this homeland of all we love.

John Daniel

Crossing a Creek

crossing a creek
requires 3 things:
a certain serenity of mind,
bare feet,
and a sure trust
that the snake we know
slides silently
underwater

just beyond our vision
will choose to ignore
the flesh
that cuts through
its territory
and we will pass through
some people think crossing a creek
is easy,
but I say this—
all crossings are hard,
whether creeks, mountains,
or into other lives
and we must always believe
in the snakes at our feet
just out of our vision
and we must practice believing
we will come through.

Martha Courtot



Misheberach—Prayer for Healing

Misheberach Avoteynu,

M'kor HaBracha L'Imoteynu

May the Source of Strength Who blessed the ones before us
Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing
And let us say, Amen.

Misheberach Imoteynu,

M'kor HaBracha L'Avoteynu

Bless those in need of healing with refuah shlema
Renewal of body, renewal of spirit
And let us say, Amen.

Debbie Friedman



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