

ROSH HASHANAH EVENING SERVICE

OPENING TO PRAYER

Leader: Statement of Intent

Tonight's ritual is a journey. It is one of joy and celebration, even in the face of the unknown. While we cannot know what fate holds for us – we can know what we wish to manifest in the world. Tonight we will move through gratitude, strength and opening and allow ourselves to discover, to “remember” what it is we have done or not done this past year and what we are to do in the next year. Who you are to be in the next year?

We begin by shedding the old and finding the things that we are truly grateful for in our lives during the past year. Then we explore what it is we have needed strength for in the past year and what we will need strength for in the new year. We then open ourselves to the connections between each other, the Divine, and the world around us and make ourselves aware of how those connections provide us with strength.

To show that we have completed this journey we will give name to ourselves and the year that is to come, and ask the Divine to grant us the time to be this name. We end with the cry of a mother giving birth, the cry of a child being born, the cry of one who is dying, and the cry of the ones who have been left to mourn. And so a new year begins.

Leader: Casting a Circle

We gather here and now in sacred space – not because this space is more sacred than any other, but because what we do here and what we say here together make it so.

Let us cast the Circle by intoning Shma, “listen!,” one by one until we become not many individual voices, but one giant voice calling out.

Participant or All:

Lishma, Lishmo leshem havayah
Ar’ah, yama, veshamay
Anu osin igul nafashaya

In Her name, in His name, in the name of all the worlds,
Earth, sea, and sky
We make a circle of our souls

Each person consecutively intone the word “Shma” and join hands, gradually building until all people are intoning this word together

Leader: Shofar

"The great shofar is sounded... A still small voice is heard...
Even the angels are frightened... the Day of Judgment is here...
Who shall live? And who shall die?
Who shall find rest? And who shall be restless?
Who shall be raised up? And who shall be humbled?
Who shall be rich? And who shall be poor?"

On Rosh Hashanah it is written ... and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.”

Acknowledgement of Elements

Participant:

The water conceived and gave birth to darkness.

The fire conceived and gave birth to light.

The wind conceived and gave birth to wisdom.

The earth conceived and gave birth to life.

(Adapted from Exodus Rabbah 13:3)

O flame, mother of the light-spirits shine, on us!

O rain, father of the spirits of the dark waters, soak us!

O wind, mother of the spirits of wisdom, make us wise!

O dirt, father of all that breathes, bless us with a good harvest!

All:

Tonight we make ourselves aware of things that we have forgotten.

Tonight we remember that each of us carries a spark of Divine Fire within us.

Tonight we remember that our bodies are mostly water, yet solid.

Tonight we remember the air that we breathe.

Tonight we remember the earth that we stand upon.

Le'olam ulmei almaya:

In every world, in all the worlds, we say: amen (blessed be).

Leader:

Now we dig deep and give thanks to all that we have been blessed with. It is so easy to dwell on the negative. Now is the time to think all that has gone right and all that is wonderful. Give your offerings and name the blessings as we chant together

All Chant:

Modah Ani L'fanekha
Modah Ani L'fanekha
Ruach Chai, V'kayam

Oh, I am grateful
Oh, I am grateful
For the Breath of Life, flows through me

(Modified version of a chant by Holly Taya Shere)

(If Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat, insert Havdalah here)

STRENGTH IN REPENTANCE

Leader:

On Rosh Hashanah we recognize our human frailty. As such we refer to the Source of Life as our Parent looking at us as a loving father or mother would a wayward child. According to tradition, Rosh Hashanah is the anniversary of the creation of the humanity in the world, and that is why it is the new year of the soul. On this day, we appropriately ask heavenly Father and Mother to look down with compassion on the world and give us strength. But as this is the birthday of humanity, we cannot forget that a spark from the fire of the Divine resides in all of us and that is a source of strength. We can reach out to the Divine and draw strength by recognizing the Divine in each other.

~Divine Heart Mudra~

Leader: Finding Strength

Allow yourself to acknowledge the weaker parts of yourself; the parts that need strengthening. Give name to them aloud if you choose as we chant and throw them into the fire to purge them.

People will “cast off” (tashlich) negative traits, energy, problems from the past year and then be cleansed with a smudge stick or incense.

Chant:

The spirit is flowing, flowing and growing.
The spirit is flowing, through you and me.
Adonai guide me be faithfully beside me.
Adonai guide me and bless how I be.

The spirit is flowing, flowing and growing.
The spirit is flowing, through you and me.
Shekhinah reside in me, Your wisdom lives inside of me.
Shekhinah reside in me oh holy of holies.

Leader: Avinu Malkenu¹

This is a time of change, a time to change, a time we must change.
We have named the strength we need in the coming year. We now
ask for strength we may not have known we needed. Together we
seal each stanza with “Source of Life, Hear our Prayer!”

Source of Life, teach us how to make this year a new beginning.
Heart of the Universe, show us how to grow when harshness
enters our life.

Breathing Spirit of the Worlds, help us to accept what we must
accept.

Fire of our Souls, guide us to change what must be changed.

Source of Life hear our prayer (all)

Source of Life, teach us how to face disease and death.
Heart of the Universe, show us how to enjoy the gift of life.
Breathing Spirit of the Worlds, help us to nurture those who are ill.

¹ Adapted from prayer by Rabbi Burt Jacobson

Fire of our Souls, guide us on a path towards peace with our enemies.

Source of Life hear our prayer (all)

Source of Life, teach us how to make the world a better place for all creation.

Heart of the Universe, show us how to make amends for our wrongdoings.

Breathing Spirit of the Worlds, help us to learn from the past.

Fire of our Souls, guide us down the path of freedom and peace for all.

Source of Life hear our prayer (all)

Source of Life, teach us how to be good neighbors.

Heart of the Universe, show us how to be good friends.

Breathing Spirit of the Worlds, help us to be good lovers.

Fire of our Souls, guide our actions to be good partners.

Source of Life hear our prayer (all)

Source of Life, teach us how to be good children.

Heart of the Universe, show us how to be good parents.

Breathing Spirit of the Worlds, help us to be good people.

Fire of our Souls, guide our hearts to treat all people as your people.

Source of Life hear our prayer (all)

Source of Life, receive our prayers.

Heart of the Universe, write our names in the Book of Life

Breathing Spirit of the Worlds, help us to be worthy of the lives we
are given.

Fire of our Souls, guide us towards unity with universe.

All Chant: (traditional Ashkenazic melody)

Avinu malkeinu (3) chaneinu va'aneinu ki ein banu ma'asim
Asai imanu tzedakah va'chesed (2) Ve'hoshi'einu.)

All:

L'shem Yichud kol p'nei elohut

For the sake of the unification of all aspects of deity

The Divine Abounds Everywhere and Dwells in Everything
The Many Are One

OPENING TO TESHUVAH

Leader:

A long time ago, my people were entrusted with a sacred book, a scroll, the Torah. The Torah is more than just a book; it is a connection to the Divine. Through its words, we can learn all there is to know, for words are how we express ideas. It does not matter if the stories are factually true. They are true in their spirit. They have something to teach us. Over time we learn new things from these stories. We find new meaning and new interpretations. From generation to generation my people have connected with each other through time through the study of Torah. “It is a tree of life for those who hold fast to it,” the saying goes.

Let us prepare ourselves to hear Torah by opening ourselves.

All: Chant for Blessing before Torah

I am opening up in sweet surrender to the luminous love light of the one (2x)

I am opening....I am opening (2x)

Leader: *Introduce Speakers*

Silent Meditation

Song – All:

Oseh Shalom Bimromav. Hu Yah se shalom aleinu v’akol Yisrael
b’imru imru: amein

May she who makes peace shine peace upon all of us.

Participant: Shofar

"The great shofar is sounded... A still small voice is heard...
Even the angels are frightened... the Day of Judgment is here...
Who shall live? And who shall die?
Who shall find rest? And who shall be restless?
Who shall be raised up? And who shall be humbled?
Who shall be rich? And who shall be poor?
But - Atonement, Prayer and Good Deeds deflect the harsh decree!
As for Man, he comes from dust
And to dust he shall return...
Man is like...
Grass that withers... A flower that fades... A shadow that passes..."

On Rosh Hashanah it is written ... and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.

In antiquity, the shofar called people to worship, called people to battle, called the people together. Tonight we are the shofar. Tonight we sound the battle cry. Tonight we cry out for peace. Tonight we cry out for change.

Leader:

Tekiah – solid cry
Shevarim – three distinct cries
Terurah – 10 cries (trill)
Tekiah – solid cry
Shevarim Teruah – three distinct cries followed by trilling
Tekiah – solid cry
Tekiah – solid cry
Shevarim – three distinct cries
Terurah – 10 cries (trill)
Tekiah Gedola – very long solid cry

Leader (and all):

Bruchah at Shekhina eloheinu ruach ha'olam shecheyanu
v'kiy'manu v'higyanu lazman hazeh.

Blessed is the Shekhinah, the Divine Presence, breath of the world
who has supported us, protected us, and brought us to this time.

Leader: Sealing our Names

You have called out for change and names have great power to
spark change. It is said that on Rosh Hashanah it is written and on
Yom Kippur it is sealed. Tonight our names are written in the
Book of Life, or not. For nine days the gates between the worlds
are open. We can change our fate and prove our merits. Tonight
we will literally inscribe our own names, not necessarily the name
others call us, but the one by which we would like to be known;
the one that represents who you would like to be; the one that
represents what you wish to change. We name our life for the next
year.

Before we do this, if there are any who need to shed an old name,
before they can take on a new one— step forward now – and we
will act as witness for you.

Let us read together and meditate on our names before inscribing
them:

All: *Each of Us Has a Name*²

Each of us has a name given by the source of life and
given by our parents
Each of us has a name given by our stature and our smile
and given by what we wear
Each of us has a name given by the mountains and given
by our walls
Each of us has a name given by the stars and given by our
neighbors
Each of us has a name given by our sins and given by our
longing
Each of us has a name given by our enemies and given by
our love
Each of us has a name given by our celebrations and given
by our work
Each of us has a name given by the seasons and given by
our blindness
Each of us has a name given by the sea and given by our
death

Silent Meditation for Inscriptions

Leader:

Keep this unsealed for nine days, during this time you may change the name you have written, if you wish, or destroy it. On the ninth day (Yom Kippur), seal it with wax or through fire, through water, through earth. This name is a prayer, a promise to the Source of Life.

² Marcia Falk; *The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival*; Beacon Press; 1999

Participant: Mourners Kaddish – A Prayer from the Living³

The final act of Teshuva, making things right, is honoring those who have passed on. We do this for them and for us. We do this for the person they were and the person we wanted them to be. We do this to honor who the life they lead and the life they could have lead.

If you are in mourning for personal loss or would like to speak for all those who have passed on with no one to remember them, please stand and we will recite the prayer together.

All:

I send you on with love in my heart
Crying tears of joy for the life you have lived
Praising the Source of Life for connecting us,
I send you on to the next life

I send you on the way you lived
Embracing who you were, not the space that you leave
Praising the Source of Life for allowing us to love,
I send you on to the next life

I send you on without fear
I will not curse or rend my garments
Praising the Source of Life for granting us time,
I send you on to the next life

I send you on with praise
Singing songs of joy for all creation
Praising the Source of Life giving us life,
I send you on to the next life

³ Mourners Kaddish – A Prayer from the Living by Kohenet Ketzirah haMa'agelet

I send you on with libations and toasts
Drinking to health and drinking to life
Praising the Source of Life for giving us words to share,
I send you on to the next life

I send you on with stones not flowers
I will not add death to death
Praising the Source of Life for all creation
I send you on to the next life

Le'olam ulmay almaya
In this world, in all worlds
We say...amen

All: Aleinu Chant:

Od yavo shalom aleinu,
Od yavo shalom aleinu,
Od yavo shalom aleinu, V'al kulam
Salaam aleinu v'akol haOlam, Salaam Shalom

Peace will come upon us
Peace will come upon us
Peace will come upon us, and all the world
Peace...On us and everyone, Salaam Shalom

Leader: Releasing the Circle

Today is the birthday of humanity. We ask that the Source of Life smile upon us and inscribe us in the book of life for another year. We ask the Source of Life to judge us kindly.

All:

Before passing judgment on us, we ask the Heart of the Universe to look at us and remember the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.

Before passing judgment on us, we ask the Breathing Spirit of the Worlds to look at us and be reminded of the matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel.

Before passing judgment on us, we ask the Connecting Spark of Life to remember the prophets Moses and Miriam. We ask to be judged fairly according to our merits, not our failings.

Participant:

O flame, mother of the light-spirits shine, on us!

O rain, father of the spirits of the dark waters, soak us!

O wind, mother of the spirits of wisdom, make us wise!

O dirt, father of all that breathes, bless us with a good harvest!

Participant or All:

Lishma, Lishmo leshem havayah
Ar'ah, yama, veshamay
Anu osin igul nafashaya

In Her name, in His name, in the name of all the worlds,
Earth, sea, and sky
We release this circle of souls

Leader:

Let us release the Circle by together intoning Shma, “listen!” as a group and then one by one joining the silence.

All together intone the word “Shma” and join hands and then let go and stop intoning person-by-person, until all people there is silence.

Le'olam ulamei almay
In every world, in all the worlds,
We say...amen

All:

Leshana Tova Tikatevu



Many pieces of this ritual have been pulled from other sources, including the Kohenet Siddur. The content from the Kohenet Siddur utilized was written by R'Jill Hammer and Holly Taya Shere. This is for personal use only and should not be redistributed or posted on any website.