

Acknowledgements

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I welcome your feedback on this booklet, and your suggestions for future editions.

With blessings for a *Shana Tova*.

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North Shore University Hospital

High Holiday Inspirations



**North
Shore LIJ** North Shore
University Hospital

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The period from Rosh Hashana to Yom Kippur is known as the *Yamim Noraim*, 'Days of Awe.' It presents an opportunity to re-appreciate the awesome people and things in our lives, reconnect with our child-like sense of awe and wonder, and clarify our priorities. These days challenge us to go from 'wandering Jews' to 'wondering Jews,' marveling at God's world and celebrating our fellow creations - the people and things that we often take for granted. This message is highlighted by the *Shofar*, symbolic of breath from the Ultimate Source of Life that created Adam, and each of us. The *Shofar* calls us to acknowledge each and every breath and be mindful of the blessings of life. It rouses us to re-create ourselves and imagine new frontiers and possibilities.

May we be granted the courage to embrace new horizons in the coming year and may we find many opportunities to uncover, recognize, and appreciate the blessings in our lives. *Shana Tova.*

Nobody's Friend

My name is gossip. I have no respect for justice.
I maim without killing. I break hearts and ruin lives.
I am cunning & malicious & gather strength with age.
The more I am quoted the more I am believed.
I flourish at every level of society.
My victims are helpless.
They cannot protect themselves against me
Because I have no name and no face.
To track me down is impossible.
The harder you try, the more elusive I become.
I am nobody's friend.
Once I tarnish a reputation, it is never the same.
I topple governments and wreck marriages.
I ruin careers and cause sleepless nights, heartache & indigestion.
I make innocent people cry in their pillows.
Even my name hisses. I am called Gossip.
Office gossip, Shop gossip. Party Gossip. Telephone gossip.
I make headlines and headaches.
Before you repeat a story, ask yourself is it true? Is it fair? Is it necessary?
If not – SHUT UP.

-Ann Landers

The essence of our soul

When we forget the nature of our essential soul
When we forget the importance of reaching into our inner lives
All becomes confused and uncertain.
The primary transformation which reveals the light in the darkness
Is that a person return to the root of his soul
And that...is to return to God Who is the soul of all souls

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935)

Rabbi Elazar's Prayer: For Love and Fellowship

May it be your will, O Lord our God,
To cause to dwell in our lot
Love, fellowship, peace and friendship,
To widen our boundaries through disciples,
To prosper our goal with hope and with future,
To appoint us a share in the garden of Eden,
To direct us in your world
Through good companions and good impulse,
That we may rise in the morning and find
Our heart awake to be revere your name.

-Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 16b



In the Service

Rabbi Levy noticed seven-year-old David staring up at the large plaque hanging in the shul lobby. It was covered with names and small American flags were mounted on either side of it. Rabbi Levy walked over to him and said quietly, "Shabbat shalom, David."

"Shabbat shalom, Rabbi," replied David, still intent on the plaque. "Rabbi, what is this?"

"Well, David, it's a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the service."

Soberly, they stood together, staring at the large plaque. Then in a barely audible whisper, David asked, "Which service, Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur?"

Candle Lighting for Rosh Hashana:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר יוֹם טוֹב.

*Ba-ruch A-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ha-o-lam,
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov.*

You, Lord our G-d, sovereign of the universe, are the source of all blessing who makes us holy with Your mitzvot and commands us to kindle the lights of the holiday.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה

*Ba-ruch A-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ha-o-lam,
shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higia-nu laz'man ha-zeh.*

You, Lord our G-d, sovereign of the universe, are the source of all blessing Who has granted us life, Who has sustained us, and Who has enabled us to reach this festive occasion.

Candle Lighting for Yom Kippur:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר יוֹם טוֹב
הַכִּיפּוּרִים.

*Ba-ruch A-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ha-o-lam,
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel
Shabbat v'shel Yom HaKippurim*

You, Lord our G-d, sovereign of the universe, are the source of all blessing who makes us holy with Your mitzvot and commands us to kindle the lights of Shabbat and Yom Kippur.

Next, recite the Shehecheyanu blessing (see above).

PRAYER ON BEHALF OF THE CAPTURED IDF SOLDIERS

MAY it be Your will, Lord our God and God of our fathers, that you accept with mercy and favor our prayers and petitions, and that our supplications reach You. Have pity, show compassion and extend mercy to the captives:

Gilad ben Aviva Schalit

Guy ben Rina Chever

Zecharia Shlomo ben Miriam Baumel

Yekutiel Yehuda Nachman ben Sara Katz

Tzvi ben Pnina Feldman

Ron ben Batya Arad

(And any other IDF soldiers in distress)

and save them, showing redemption and mercy.
MAY the One who liberates captives release them from their detention, deliver them from captivity to freedom, from tyranny to redemption, and from darkness to light. Restore them to complete health, a healing of the soul and of the body, revitalize their spirit, reinvigorate their strength and speedily bring about the fulfillment of the scriptural verse (Isaiah 53:10) which says: "God's captives will be returned and they will come to Zion in joy; eternal happiness will be on their heads, they will be overcome with joy and gladness, and sorrow and anxiety will be banished." *Amein.*



On Confession

The highest moment in a man's career is the hour when he beats upon his breast and tells all the sins of his life.

-Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis*

Ashamnu: An Alphabet of Wrongdoing

Dear God, we sin against you and ourselves when we
Abuse our health
Betray the truth others place on us
Close our eyes to the poor and hungry
Dismiss serious matters with a joke
Enjoy the downfall of others
Forgive in ourselves what we condemn in others
Give in to illegitimate pressure
Hate others without cause
Ignore important issues in our community and country
Jeopardize our environment with our carelessness
Kid others without regard for their feelings
Listen to voices at odds with what we know is right
Make no time for those who need us
Notice only the faults of others
Openly criticize others without knowing the facts
Prevent others from showing their own strengths
Quietly accept hearsay as fact
Refuse to be generous
Stifle our conscience
Talk of others' failings instead of their successes
Use violence to achieve our goals
Vilify those with whom we disagree
Wait too long to restore relationships
Excuse ourselves for hurting others by saying, "It's their fault."
Yield to that which is most convenient
Zip past ideas worthy of deeper consideration.

-Rabbi Richard Sherwin



“Even when the gates of prayer seem closed, the gates of tears are never closed.”

-Talmud, Bava Metzia 59a



Putting God in His Place?

Religion has become a substitute for the couch of the psychoanalyst. It is expected to give us peace of mind, to bring us happiness, to guarantee us good health, and to assure us of never-ending prosperity. This religion is not God-oriented but man-centered; man is not required to serve God, but God is meant to serve man. It is the typical religion of a comfortable middle class. We have everything now: jobs, professions, homes, cars, insurance policies; and we also have a God. It is useful to have a God; one can never tell when one may need Him. Our religion is a prop for our prosperity and comforts. No one is concerned with the word of God; no one listens and no one obeys. The function of our awakened piety is to confirm in us our habits and our customary way of thought. We believe in God, but we also limit His authority. We prescribe for Him how to act toward us. Truth for Him is what we hold to be true; right what we consider right. He can ask of us no more than what we ask of ourselves. Most important of all, He is to be considerate; in no way may He inconvenience us to interfere with our comforts and pleasures.

-Rabbi Eliezer Berkovits



Forgive, O Lord, my little jokes on Thee, and I'll forgive Thy great big joke on me.

-Robert Frost

The only questions that really matter are the ones you ask yourself*

What things do you value most in life?

If you chose someone to give 2 pieces of advice, who would it be and what would you tell them?

Complete this sentence: “God put me on this earth to...”

What *Mitzvahs* have you done for your family &/or friends or community this past month/year?

What *Mitzvahs* have others done for you?

How does your family show you love?

How do you show your family that you love them?

What is your biggest fear? How would your life be different if you were able to overcome it?

If you could possess one quality that you don't think you have now, what would it be?

What were your 3 biggest achievements this year? 3 biggest mistakes?

What would you change if you could live your year/life over?

What are your goals for the year? For life?

What are you doing to achieve them?

What practical steps can you take in the next week? Month?

Is there someone you need to reconcile with before moving into the coming year?

Is there a part of yourself you need to reconcile with?

*Questions inspired by www.doyou10q.com, The Shabbat box of Questions & www.jewishexperience.org. Quote by Ursula LeGuin

Shackled by Shame

Many of us are simply too ashamed to do *t'shuva* (introspection), embarrassed to ask ourselves if perhaps some of the things we have been doing until now are not right and we could be doing them better. It takes a great deal of courage to look at ones self squarely and say: "It's time for a change.



There are things I ought to be doing that I am not."

Rejecting a pattern of the past and starting a new way, such as starting to observe the Sabbath, takes immense courage. You will always say: "If I can't do it right, I don't want to do it at all."

That, dear friends, is something of a "cop out," and it is a corollary of shame.

Or the decision to make ones home kosher. That takes

courage too. It means calling the Rabbi and saying: "I'm ready to change my home." It's not an easy call to dial.

Actually, of course, it is a very simple thing to do practically, but it is a hard thing to pick up the phone and say: "I'm ready; help me." If it makes you feel any better, I can tell you that it is the nicest call that a Rabbi can receive.

Adin Steinsaltz, in a recent book on *t'shuva*, suggests that every act of spiritual improvement requires a leap of faith. He draws an analogy to a person standing in the water on the sea shore wanting to swim. He cannot go from a standing position to a swimming status without lifting his feet off the ground and leaving the earth behind. That act takes courage. One can stand in the water for a very long time without ever taking the leap to become a swimmer.

And God said to the Man, 'Wherefore can I not send thee to Hell, and for what reason?'

'Because in Hell have I always lived,' answered the Man.

And there was silence in the House of Judgment.

And after a space God spake, and said to the Man, 'Seeing that I may not send thee into Hell, surely I will send thee unto Heaven. Even unto Heaven will I send thee.'

And the Man cried out, 'Thou canst not.'

And God said to the Man, 'Wherefore can I not send thee unto Heaven, and for what reason?'

'Because never, and in no place, have I been able to imagine it,' answered the Man.

And there was silence in the House of Judgment.



"Forgive yourself for your faults and your mistakes and move on"

-Les Brown



"Kum ba ya" ("Come by here")

Kum bay ya, my Lord, kum bay ya; Kum bay ya, my Lord, kum bay ya;

Kum bay ya, my Lord, kum bay ya, O Lord, kum bay ya.

Hear me crying, Lord, kum bay ya; Hear me singing, Lord, kum bay ya;

Hear me praying, Lord, kum bay ya; Oh, I need you, Lord, kum bay ya.

The House of Judgement

by Oscar Wilde

And there was silence in the House of Judgment, and the Man came naked before God.

And God opened the Book of the Life of the Man.

And God said to the Man, 'Thy life hath been evil, and thou hast shown cruelty to those who were in need of succor, and to those who lacked help thou hast been bitter and hard of heart. The poor called to thee and thou didst not hearken, and thine ears were closed to the cry of My afflicted. The inheritance of the fatherless thou didst take unto thyself, and thou didst send the foxes into the vineyard of thy neighbor's field...and on Mine earth out of which I made thee thou didst spill innocent blood.'

And the Man made answer and said, 'Even so did I.'

And again God opened the Book of the Life of the Man.

And God said to the Man, 'Evil hath been thy life, and with evil didst thou requite good, and with wrongdoing kindness. The hands that fed thee thou didst wound, and the breasts that gave thee suck thou didst despise. He who came to thee with water went away thirsting, and the outlawed men who hid thee in their tents at night thou didst betray before dawn. Thine enemy who spared thee thou didst snare in an ambush, and the friend who walked with thee thou didst sell for a price, and to those who brought thee Love thou didst ever give Lust in thy turn.'

And the Man made answer and said, 'Even so did I.'

And God closed the Book of the Life of the Man, and said, 'Surely I will send thee into Hell. Even into Hell will I send thee.'

And the Man cried out, 'Thou canst not.'

Dear friends, strange as it may seem, on Kol Nidre night all of us are, as it were, standing in the water. Will we have the courage to take the plunge and to start swimming in the world of *t'shuva*? Remember, in making our decision, we have nothing to lose but our sins. We have everything to gain – especially ourselves.

-Rabbi Haskel Lookstein



I do not know the prayer

When the great Rabbi Israel Baal Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews, it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer, and the miracle would be accomplished and the misfortune averted.

Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Mezritch, had occasion, for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say: "Master of the Universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say a prayer."

And again, the miracle would be accomplished.

Still later, Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say; "I do not know how to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, but I know the place and this must be sufficient."

It was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished.

Then it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: "I am unable to light the fire and I do not know the prayer. I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is tell the story, and this must be sufficient."

And it was sufficient.

Listen, God, We are going to tell the story.

-Hasidic tale

Seasons Of Love

-Adapted from Rent

525,600 minutes. Moments so dear.

525,600 minutes. How Do You Measure A Year?

In Daylights? In Sunsets? In Midnights? In Cups Of Coffee?

In Inches? In Miles? In Laughter? In Strife?

How Do You Measure A Year In The Life?

How About Love? Measure In Love.

Seasons of Love.

525,600 minutes. 525,600 Journeys To Plan

How Do You Measure The Life Of A Woman Or A Man

It's Time Now - To Sing Out

Though The Story Never Ends

Let's Celebrate. Remember A Year In The Life Of Friends

Remember the Love. Measure In Love

You know that love is a gift from up above

Share love, give love, spread love

Measure, measure your life in love.



Halakhic Man

Halakhic man does not indulge in weeping and despair, does not lacerate the flesh or flail away at himself. He does not afflict himself with penitential rites and forgoes all mortification of body and soul. *Halakhic* man is engaged in self-creation, in creating a new "I."

The main principle of repentance is that the future dominate the past and there reign over it unbounded fashion.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

A Life-Changing Experience

In 1913, the Jewish-born philosopher Franz Rosenzweig resolved to adopt Christianity, a move that was conventionally viewed as a necessary prerequisite to full acceptance into European culture and society. However, he wished to enter the new religion "as a Jew," and therefore determined to spend the last days before his conversion in Jewish settings, emulating the founders of Christianity who had seen the new faith as a fulfillment of their Judaism. When Rosenzweig confided his plans to his observant mother, she threatened to have her apostate son turned away from the Yom Kippur services in the central synagogue of Cassel. As result, Rosenzweig attended services on Oct. 11, 1913, at a tiny orthodox house of prayer (shtiebl) in Berlin. The experience was an overpowering one. Rosenzweig never described precisely what it was that transformed him in that Berlin synagogue, but we know that immediately afterwards his perspectives underwent a complete reversal, and that the prospect of conversion was "no longer possible." In later writings Rosenzweig emphasized that, beyond feelings of personal exaltation and communal solidarity, Yom Kippur constitutes "a testimony to the reality of God that cannot be controverted." He described movingly how on that day every Jew "confronts the eyes of his judge in utter loneliness as if he were dead in the midst of life..." And yet, in spite of the apparently unbridgeable gap between individual and Creator, on Yom Kippur "he is as close to God...as it is ever accorded man to be." Whatever it was that Rosenzweig experienced in that Berlin synagogue, it impelled him to devote the remainder of his life- much of it in the grip of a debilitating illness- to studying and teaching the Jewish Tradition. His *Star of Redemption* remains one of the most challenging works of Jewish Theology.