



Congregation and chazzan:

So now, the Kedushah prayer shall ascend to You, for You, our God, are King.

Congregation and chazzan:

**וְתִהְיֶה** Let us now relate the power of this day's holiness, for it is awesome and frightening. On it Your Kingship will be exalted; \* Your throne will be firm with kindness\* and You will sit upon it in truth. \* It is true that You alone\* are the One Who judges, proves, knows, and bears witness; Who writes and seals, (counts and calculates); Who remembers all that was forgotten. \* You will open the

Book of Chronicles — it will read itself, and everyone's signature is in it. \* The great shofar\* will be sounded and a still, thin sound\* will be heard. Angels will hasten, a trembling and terror will seize them — and they will say, 'Behold, it is the Day of Judgment, to muster the heavenly host for judgment!' — for they cannot be vindicated\* in Your eyes in judgment. All mankind\* will pass before You like members of the flock. Chazan— Like a shepherd inspecting his flock, making sheep pass under his staff, so shall You cause to pass, count, calculate, and consider the soul of all the living; and You shall apportion the fixed needs of all Your creatures and inscribe their verdict.

Congregation then chazzan [in some congregations this is recited only by the chazzan]:

**בְּרֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה** On Rosh Hashanah\* will be inscribed and on Yom Kippur will be sealed how many will pass from the earth and how many will be created; who will live and who will die; who will die at his predestined time\* and who before his time; who by water and who by fire, who by sword, who by beast, who by famine, and who by thirst, who by storm,\* who by plague, who by strangulation, and who by stoning. Who will rest and who will wander, who will live in harmony and who will be harried, who will enjoy tranquility and who will suffer, who will be impoverished and who will be enriched, who will be degraded and who will be exalted.

Congregation aloud, then chazzan:

FAST VOICE MONEY

**But repentance, prayer and charity\*  
remove the evil of the decree!**

Congregation and chazzan:

**כִּי קִשְׁמָךְ** For Your Name signifies Your praise: \* hard to anger and easy to appease,\* for You do not wish the death of one deserving death,\* but that he repent from his way and live. Until the day of his death\* You await him; if he repents You will accept him immediately.

Chazan— It is true that You are their Creator and You know their inclination,\* for they are flesh and blood. A man's origin is from dust\* and his destiny is back to dust, at risk of his life he earns his bread, he is likened to a broken shard, withering grass, a fading flower, a passing shade, a dissipating cloud, a blowing wind, flying dust, and a fleeting dream.

Congregation aloud, then chazzan:

**But You are the King, \* the living and enduring God.**

THE ARK IS CLOSED

Congregation then chazzan:

**אֵין קֶצֶה** There is no set span to Your years and there is no end\* to the length of Your days. It is impossible to estimate the angelic chariots of Your glory\* and to elucidate Your Name's inscrutability. Your Name is worthy of You and You are worthy of Your Name, and You have included Your Name in our name.\*

Act for Your Name's sake and sanctify Your Name through those who sanctify Your Name, for the sake of the glory of Your revered and hallowed Name, according to the counsel of the holy Seraphim, who sanctify Your Name in the sanctuary. [The angels] who dwell on high together with [the people] who dwell below (proclaim the sanctification in three-fold measure in the Sanctuary) —

U-Netaneh Tokef

1. Mishnah Rosh Ha-Shannah 1:2

בארבעה פרקים העולם נידון  
בפסח על התבואה  
בעצרת על פירות האילן  
בראש השנה כל באי העולם עוברין לפניו כבני מרון  
שנאמר (תהלים ל"ג) היוצר יחד לבם המבין אל כל מעשיהם  
ובחג נידונין על המים:

Mishnah. At four seasons [divine] judgment is passed on the world: at Passover in respect of produce; at Pentacost in respect of fruit; at New Year all creatures pass before him like children of Maron, as it says, 'He that fashioneth the heart of them all, that considereth all their doings'; and on Tabernacles judgment is passed in respect of rain.

2. Talmud Bavli Rosh Ha-Shannah 16b

ואמר רבי יצחק: כל שנה שרשה בתחלתה מתעשרת בסופה, שנאמר אמרשית השנה - מרשית כתיב, ועד אחרית - סופה שיש לה אחרית.

ואמר רבי יצחק: אין דנין את האדם אלא לפי מעשיו של אותה שעה, שנאמר בכי שמע אלהים אל קול הנער באשר הוא שם.

ואמר רבי יצחק: שלשה דברים מזכירין עונותיו של אדם, אלו הן: קיר נטוי, ועיון תפלה, ומוסר דין על חבירו. דאמר רבי (אבין) +מסורת הש"ס: [חנן]: כל המוסר דין על חבירו הוא נענש תחלה. שנאמר גותאמר שרי אל אברם חמסי עליך, וכתוב דויבא אברהם לספד לשרה ולבכתה.

ואמר רבי יצחק: ארבעה דברים מקרעין גזר דינו של אדם, אלו הן: צדקה, צעקה, שינוי השם, ושינוי מעשה.

צדקה - דכתיב הוצדקה תציל ממות,

צעקה - דכתיב וויצעקו אל ה' בצר להם וממצקותיהם יוציאם,

שינוי השם - דכתיב זשרי אשתך לא תקרא את שמה שרי כי שרה שמה, וכתוב וברכתי אתה וגם נתתי ממנה לך בן,

שינוי מעשה - דכתיב חוירא האלהים את מעשיהם, וכתוב וינחם האלהים על הרעה אשר דבר לעשות להם ולא עשה.

ויש אומרים: אף שינוי מקום, דכתיב ויאמר ה' אל אברם לך לך מארצך, והדר ואעשך לגוי גדול. ואידך - ההוא זכותא דארץ ישראל הוא דאהניא ליה.

R. Isaac further said: If the shofar is not sounded at the beginning of the year, evil will befall at

the end of it. Why so? Because the Accuser has not been confused.

R. Isaac further said: Every year which is poor at its opening becomes rich before it ends, as it

says, From the beginning of the year — where the word is spelt meroshith— 'unto the end'; such a year is destined to have a 'latter end'.

R. Isaac further said: Man is judged only according to his actions up to the time of judgment,

as it says, God hath heard the voice of the lad as he is there.

R. Isaac further said: Three things call a man's iniquities to mind, namely, a shaky wall, the

scrutinizing of prayer, and calling for [Divine] judgment on one's fellow man. For R. Abin said: He who calls down [Divine] judgment on his neighbour is himself punished first [for his own sins], as it says, And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee, and it is written later, And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

R. Isaac further said: Four things cancel the doom of a man, namely, charity, supplication, change of name and change of conduct.

Charity, as it is written, And charity delivereth from death.

Supplication, as it is written, Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.

Change of name, as it is written, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be; and it continues, And I will bless her and moreover I will give thee a son of her.

Change of conduct, as it is written, And God saw their works, and it continues, and God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them and he did it not.

Some say that change of place [also avails], as it is written, Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and it proceeds, and I will make of thee a great nation. And the other [ — why does he not reckon this]? — In that case it was the merit of the land of Israel which availed him.

### 3. Talmud Yerushalmi Ta'anit 2:1

א"ר לעזר שלשה דברים מבטלין את הגזירה קשה ואלו הן תפלה וצדקה ותשובה ושלשתן בפסוק אחד [דברי הימים ב ז יד] ויכנעו עמי אשר נקרא שמי עליהם ויתפללו זו תפלה ויבקשו פני זו צדקה כמה דאת אמר [תהילים יז טו] אני בצדק אחזה פניך [דברי הימים ב ז יד] וישבו מדרכיהם הרעים זו תשובה אם עשו כן מה כתיב תמן [דברי הימים ב ז יד] ואני אשמע השמים ואסלח לחטאתם וארפא את ארצם.

R. Leazar said: Three things nullify the harsh decree, and these are they: prayer and charity and repentance/ And the three of them are in one verse (II Chron. 7:14) "if My

people, upon whom My name is called, shall humble themselves, and pray," - this is prayer - "and seek My face," - this is charity, as it is written (Psalms 17:15) "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness" - "and turn from their evil ways;" - this is repentance. If so, what is written there (II Chron., id.) "then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

*(Parallel text in Bereshit Rabbah 44:2)*

In the absence of an advocate against the one who reports transgression, may You testify for the sake of Jacob [s off-spring] regarding [their observance of Your] decrees and ordinances, thereby may You vindicate us in the judgment, O King of judgment

THE ARK IS OPENED

Responsively:

- Who grasps in hand\* the Attribute of Justice.
All believe\* that He is the God of faithfulness.\*
Who tests and examines hidden archives.\*
Who redeems from death and delivers from Gehinnom.
All believe that He is the strong Deliverer.
Who is the sole judge\* of all who walk the world.
All believe that He is the true Judge.
Whose Name is expressed as I will be as I will be.\*
All believe He was, He is, and He will be,
Whose Name is 'Certainty'; \* such is His praise.
All believe that there is none but He.
Who recalls favorable memories\* of those Who remember Him.
All believe that He remembers the covenant.
Who apportions life for all the living.
All believe that He is living and everlasting.\*
Who is good, and benefits the wicked and the good.
All believe that He is good to all.
Who knows the inclination of all creatures.
All believe that He fashioned them from the womb.

interpreted in two different ways. God takes the attribute of justice in order to judge man (Kazem). Or, God grasps judgment to prevent it from overwhelming man. Thus, if man is guilty in his judgment but is inclined to repent, God will restrain the punishment (Matah Levi).

All believe. All the descriptions of God found in this piyut are derived from Scriptural sources, and therefore we believe in them with perfect faith.
God of faithfulness. His judgment is always fair and honest.

Hidden archives. God is aware of the large accumulation of deeds that man does in secret but prefers to keep it hidden.
Who is the sole judge [lit. Who judges alone]. Even though God judges without consultation or discussion, all believe that He is the true judge.

I will be as I will be. When God first dispatched Moses to Egypt, He described Himself as the One Who will be with Israel in this exile just as He will be with them in the future exiles (Exodus 3:14, Rashi).

Whose Name is 'Certainty'. This is a descriptive title given to God in Berachos 33b, meaning that there are no doubts regarding His existence, power, or veracity. That this is so is His praise.

Favorable memories. God deals with people measure for measure. If they recall Him always and plan their actions to please Him, then He remembers the good that they do and ignores the bad.

Living and everlasting. Because only God is eternally alive and independent of any other being, He is the source of life; only He has the power to apportion life to His creatures.

באין מליץ ישר מול מגיד פשע, תגיד לעקב\* דבר חק ומשפט, וצדקנו במשפט, תמליך המשפט

Chazzan does not pause, but recites תפילך המשפט and recites תפילך המשפט in the same breath.

THE ARK IS OPENED

Responsively:

- האוחז ביד\* מדת משפט.
וכל מאמינים\* שהוא אל אמנה\*.
הבוטח ובודק גנאי נסתרות\*.
וכל מאמינים שהוא בוחן פליות.
הואל מפורת, ופזרה משחת.
הכן יחיד\* לבאי עולם.
וכל מאמינים שהוא בן אמת.
הטובי באהיה אשר אהיה\*.
וכל מאמינים שהוא היה הנה.
הדאי שמו\* פן תהלתו.
הזכר למזכירו טובות זכרונות\*.
וכל מאמינים שהוא זכר הפריה.
החותר הים לכל מי.
וכל מאמינים שהוא מי נקים\*.
הטוב, ומטיב לרעים ולטובים.
וכל מאמינים שהוא טוב לכל.
היודע יצר כל יצורים.
וכל מאמינים שהוא יוצרם בפניו.

one who, while in the second stich, it follows the phrase, ויציץ קמקמו ויציץ קמקמו. All believe that He. Nevertheless, it is customarily recited as if this latter phrase were the beginning of a new verse. Thus, the congregation recites ... ויציץ קמקמו ויציץ קמקמו, which is repeated by the chazzan. Then, the congregation recites ... ויציץ קמקמו ויציץ קמקמו, etc. The phrase ויציץ קמקמו, Who grasps in hand, is

Having proclaimed that our ultimate hope rests in the hands of the King of judgment, we now describe His majesty, as He sits in judgment, all-knowing, all-powerful, and merciful. This piyut contains a double alphabetical motif. In the first stich of each verse, the alphabet follows the definite article ה, the, or, the

- ב Who can do everything and combines all together. \*  
 ב All believe that He can do everything.  
 ל Who lodges\* in concealment, in shadow — the Almighty!  
 ל All believe that He is the Solitary One.  
 מ Who gives sovereignty to kings\* but retains kingship.  
 מ All believe that He is the eternal King.  
 ז Who guides every generation with His kindness.  
 ז All believe that He preserves kindness.\*  
 ס Who is patient and averts His eye from rebels.  
 ס All believe that He forgives — Selah!  
 ע Who is Supreme and attends to those who fear Him.\*  
 ע All believe that He responds to prayer.  
 פ Who opens a gate to those who knock in repentance.\*  
 פ All believe that His hand is open.  
 צ Who awaits the wicked and desires his vindication.  
 צ All believe that He is righteous and upright.  
 ק Who is brief in anger and Who is patient.  
 ק All believe that He is hard to anger.  
 ר Who is merciful, and prefers mercy to wrath.  
 ר All believe that He is easy to appease.  
 ש Who is unchanging, and treats small and great alike.\*  
 ש All believe that He is a righteous Judge.  
 ת Who is perfect and deals perfectly with wholesome ones.  
 ת All believe that His work is perfect.

**הַשֶּׁבַח** May You alone be exalted and reign over everything in Oneness, as it is written by Your prophet: **HASHEM** will be King over all the world — on that day **HASHEM** will be One and His Name will be One.<sup>1</sup>

THE ARK IS CLOSED

<sup>1</sup> וְהָיָה שֵׁם ה' יחיד — And combines all together. Not only is God capable of doing everything. He can do it all simultaneously, if He so wishes.

הַשֶּׁבַח — Who lodges. Based on the Targum of Psalms 91:1, this verse expresses the idea that God is beyond the comprehension of human intelligence.

זֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ — Who gives sovereignty to kings. Only God decides who shall reign and who shall fall; however, even though He confers authority upon others, He retains all power for Himself.

עַל כָּל דָּוָר — Preserves kindness. God rewards thousands of generations for the righteousness

of their ancestors (Exodus 34:7).

וְנִצַּח אֵל יְהוָה — And attends to those who fear Him. Although God is the Supreme One and should be unconcerned with the insignificant activities of His creatures, His concern is always directed toward those who fear Him.

וְנִסְחָה עֵינָיו מֵרֵעֵב — Who knock in repentance. A sinner is like someone who is ousted from the king's palace. His repentance is like a regretful knock on the door, which God opens for him gladly and mercifully.

וְנִסְחָה עֵינָיו מֵרֵעֵב — And treats small and great alike. God shows no favoritism.

- הַכֹּל יָכוֹל וְכוֹלְלֵם יְחַד.\*  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת כָּל יָכוֹל.  
 הַכֹּל\* בְּסִתְרֵי בְּצֵל, שְׂרִי.  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת לְבָדוֹ הוּא.  
 הַמַּמְלִיךְ מַלְכָּךְ עוֹלָם.  
 הַחוֹדֵג בְּחֶסְדּוֹ כָּל הַדֹּר.  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת נֶצַר הַסֵּד.\*  
 הַסּוֹבֵל, וּמַעֲלִים עֵינָי מִסּוֹרְרִים.  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת סוֹלֵךְ סֵלָה.  
 הַעֲלִיז, וְעִינָיו אֵל יְרֵאֵינוּ.\*  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת עֲוֹנָה לְחֵשׁ.  
 הַחוֹתֵם שְׂעֵר, לְדוֹפְקֵי בַתְּשׁוּבָה.\*  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת פְּתוּחָה יָדוּ.  
 הַחוֹפֶה לְרָשָׁע, וְסוֹפֵז בְּהַצְדָּקוֹ.  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת צְדִיק וְיֵשֶׁר.  
 הַקָּצֵר בְּזַעַם, וּמַצְרִיךְ אָף.  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת קִשָּׁה לְכַעֵס.  
 הַרְחוּם, וּמְקוֹדִים רַחֲמִים לְרַגְזוֹ.  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת כֹּף לְרִצּוֹת.  
 הַשְּׂוֹה, וּמַשׂוּה קָטָן וְגִדּוֹל.\*  
 וְכָל מַאֲמִינִים שְׂחוּת שׁוֹפֵט צְדָק.  
 הַתָּם, וּמִפְנֵם עִם תְּמִימִים.

**תְּשׁוּבָה** לְכַדְהָ, וְתַמְלִיךְ עַל כָּל בְּיָחוּד, פְּתוּב עַל יַד גְּבִיאוֹת;  
 וְהִנֵּה יַהּוָה לְמַלְכָּךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה  
 יַהּוָה אֶחָד וְשֵׁמוֹ אֶחָד.<sup>1</sup>

THE ARK IS CLOSED

**Ha-Ochez be-Yad Middat Mishpat**

**1. Deut. 23:41-43**

(מא) אִם־שָׁנֹתַי בִּרְקַח חֲרָבִי וְתֹאחַז בְּמִשְׁפַּט יָדַי אֲשִׁיב נֶקֶם לְצָרִי וְלִמְשֹׁנָי אֲשִׁלֵּם:

41 If I whet My glittering sword, and My hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to Mine adversaries, and will recompense them that hate Me.

(מב) אֲשִׁכִּיר חֲצֵי מַדָּם וְחֲרָבִי תֹאכַל בֶּשֶׂר מַדָּם חָלַל וְשָׁבִיָּה מֵרֹאשׁ פְּרָעוֹת אוֹיֵב:

42 I will make Mine arrows drunk with blood, and My sword shall devour flesh; with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the long-haired heads of the enemy.'

(מג) הֲרִנִּינוּ גוֹיִם עִמּוֹ כִּי דַם־עֲבָדָיו יִקּוּם וְנֶקֶם יֵשִׁיב לְצָרָיו וְנִכְפָּר אֲדָמָתוֹ עִמּוֹ:

43 Sing aloud, O ye nations, of His people; for He doth avenge the blood of His servants, and doth render vengeance to His adversaries, and doth make expiation for the land of His people.

**2. Rashi ad loc. (verse 41)**

ותאחז במשפט ידי - להניח מדת רחמים באויבי שהרעו לכם, (זכריה א, טו) אשר אני קצפתי מעט והמה עזרו לרעה. דבר אחר ותאחז ידי את מדת המשפט להחזיק בה ולנקום נקם:

אשיב נקם וגו' - למדו רבותינו באגדה מתוך לשון המקרא שאמר ותאחז במשפט ידי, לא כמדת בשר ודם מדת הקב"ה, מדת בשר ודם זורק חץ ואינו יכול להשיבו, והקב"ה זורק חציו ויש בידו להשיבם, כאלו אוחזן בידו, שהרי ברק הוא חצו, ונאמר כאן ברק חרבי ותאחז במשפט ידי, והמשפט הזה לשון פורענות הוא בלע"ז יושטיצ"א [עונש]:

And My hand will hold judgment - to set down the attribute of mercy with my enemies who harmed you, (Zecharia 1:15) "[and I am very sore displeased with the nations that are at ease;] for I was but a little displeased, and they helped for evil." Alternatively, My hand will hold the attribute of judgment to grab it and take vengeance.

"I will return vengeance..." - Our rabbis learned in the *aggadah* from the language of scripture, which said "and My hand will hold judgment," [that] the attribute of the Holy One, blessed be He, are not like the attribute of flesh and blood. The attribute of flesh and blood, he casts an arrow and he cannot return it. But the Holy One, blessed be He, casts his arrows and has the ability to return them, as if He were holding them in His hand, for behold lightning is his arrow, and it is written here "my glittering sword (reading "berak" as "barak," lightning) and My hand will hold judgment." This judgment is a language of chastisement.