



Malchuyot, Zichronot, Shofarot

A Roadmap for Our Times

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I. Origins

1. Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 4:5

סֵדֶר בְּרִכּוֹת, אָמַר אָבוֹת וּגְבוּרוֹת וּקְדֻשַּׁת הַשֵּׁם, וְכֹלֵל מַלְכוּיּוֹת עִמָּהֶן, וְאֵינּוּ תוֹקֵעַ. קְדֻשַּׁת הַיּוֹם, וְתוֹקֵעַ. זְכוֹרֹנוֹת, וְתוֹקֵעַ. שׁוֹפָרוֹת, וְתוֹקֵעַ. וְאוֹמֵר עֲבוּדָה וְהוֹדָאָה וּבִרְכַּת כְּהֲנָנִים, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בֶּן נוּרִי. אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא, אִם אֵינּוּ תוֹקֵעַ לַמַּלְכוּיּוֹת, לָמָּה הוּא מְזַכֵּיר. אֲלָא אָמַר אָבוֹת וּגְבוּרוֹת וּקְדֻשַּׁת הַשֵּׁם, וְכֹלֵל מַלְכוּיּוֹת עִם קְדֻשַּׁת הַיּוֹם, וְתוֹקֵעַ. זְכוֹרֹנוֹת, וְתוֹקֵעַ. שׁוֹפָרוֹת, וְתוֹקֵעַ. וְאוֹמֵר עֲבוּדָה וְהוֹדָאָה וּבִרְכַּת כְּהֲנָנִים:

The order of the blessings [for Rosh Hashanah Musaf]: One recites *Avot, Gevurot, and Kedushat Hashem*, and one includes *Malkhuyot* along with them, [i.e., in *Kedudat Hashem*] and does not sound [the *shofar*. Then one recites]. *Kedushat Hayom*, and sounds [the *shofar*. Next:] *Zikhronot*, and sounds the *shofar*; *Shofarot*, and sounds the *shofar*. And then one recites *Avodah, Hoda'ah*, and *Birkat Kohanim*. This is according to Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri. Rabbi Akiva said to him: If one does not sound the *shofar* for *Malkhuyot*, why does he mention it? Rather, One recites *Avot, Gevurot, and Kedushat Hashem*, and includes *Malkhuyot* within *Kedushat Hashem*, and sounds [the *shofar*. Next:] *Zikhronot*, and sounds the *shofar*; *Shofarot*, and sounds the *shofar*. And then one recites *Avodah, Hoda'ah*, and *Birkat Kohanim*.

2. Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 4:6

אֵין פּוֹחֲתִין מַעֲשֵׂרָה מַלְכוּיּוֹת, מַעֲשֵׂרָה זְכוֹרֹנוֹת, מַעֲשֵׂרָה שׁוֹפָרוֹת. רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בֶּן נוּרִי אָמַר, אִם אָמַר שְׁלֹשׁ שְׁלֹשׁ מִכָּלָן, יֵצֵא. אֵין מְזַכֵּרִין זְכוֹרֹן מַלְכוּת וְשׁוֹפָר שֶׁל פְּרָעָנוֹת. מִתְחִיל בַּתּוֹרָה וּמִשְׁלִים בַּנְּבִיא. רַבִּי יוֹסִי אָמַר, אִם הַשְּׁלִים בַּתּוֹרָה, יֵצֵא:

One does **not** recite fewer than ten verses in *Malkhuyot*, or ten *Zikhronot*, or ten *Shofarot*. Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri says: If one recited three from each of them, they have fulfilled their obligation. One does not introduce verses of *Malkhuyot, Zikhronot*, or *Shofarot* about of punishment. One begins with verses from Torah and concludes with verses from the Prophets. Rabbi Yosei says: If one ends with a verse from Torah,

one has fulfilled one's obligation.

3. Rambam on Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 4:6:2

וזכרון ושופר ומלכות של פורענות כמו שאמר ויזכור כי בשר המה וגו' [תהלים עח] תקעו שופר בגבעה [הושע ה] אם לא ביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה וגו' [יחזקאל כ] וכמו כן זכרון יחיד כמו זכרה לי אלהי לטובה [נחמיה יג] אין מוציאין מידי חובה. והלכה כר' יוחנן בן נורי וכו' יוסי:

such as : “for the Eternal remembered that they were but flesh”, (Psalms 78:39): “Sound a ram’s horn in Gibeah” etc., (Hosea 5:8) “[I will reign over you with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with overflowing fury.” (Ezekiel 88). And hence, we don’t fulfill our religious obligation with the [mention] of a remembrance of an individual, as for example: “O my God, remember to my credit [all that I have done for this people].” (Nehemiah 5:19) And the Halakha is according to Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri and according to Rabbi Yossi.

4. Rosh Hashanah 32b:1

גמ' מלכיות, כגון: "חי אני נאם ה' אם לא ביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה ובחמה שפוכה אמלוד עליכם", ואף על גב דאמר רב נחמן: כל כי האי ריתחא לירתח קודשא בריך הוא עלן ולפרוקינן, פין דבריתחא אמור — אדכורי ריתחא בריש שתא לא מדכרינן.

GEMARA: Malkhuyot: “As I live, says God, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, will I be Sovereign over you” (Ezekiel 20:33). And although Rav Nahman said about this verse: With regard to **any anger like this, let the Holy One of blessing, express that anger upon us and redeem us**, if that is the process necessary for redemption, **since the verse was said with anger** it is not included, as **one does not mention anger on Rosh HaShana**.

5. Rosh Hashanah 32b:2

זכרון — כגון: "ויזכור כי בשר המה וגו'" שופר — כגון: "תקעו שופר בגבעה וגו'".

Zikhronot, for example: “So the Eternal remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes away, and does not come again” (Psalms 78:39). Nor verses of *shofar*, which refer to calamity, **for example:** “Sound the *shofar* in Giva, and the trumpet in Rama; sound an alarm at Beit Aven, behind you, O Benjamin” (Hosea 5:8).

6. רי"ף ראש השנה ח' ב:ה'

אין מזכרין מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות של פורענות (דף לב:) זכרונות כגון (תהילים ע"ח:ל"ט) ויזכור כי בשר המה רוח הולך ולא ישוב מלכיות כגון (יחזקאל כ':ל"ג) חי אני נאם ה' אלהים אם לא ביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה ובחמה שפוכה אמלוך עליכם ואע"ג דאמר רב נחמן כל כי האי ריתחא לירתח רחמנא עלן וליפרקינן אפ"ה כיון דבריתחא אמרה אזכורי ריתחא בריש שתא לאו אורח ארעא שופרות כגון (הושע:ח') תקעו שופר בגבעה אבל אם בא לומר מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות של פורענות של עובדי כוכבי' אומר זכרונות כגון (תהילים קלז) זכור ה' לבני אדום מלכיות כגון (תהילים צ"ט:א') ה' מלך ירגזו עמים אי נמי (תהילים ט) יהוה מלך עולם ועד אבדו גוים מארצו שופרות כגון (זכריה ט':ט"ו) וה' אלהים בשופר יתקע וסמך ליה (זכריה) ה' צבאות יגן עליהם

7. Rosh Hashanah 32b:4

אין מזכירין זכרון של יחיד, ואפילו לטובה, כגון: "זכרני ה' ברחמי עמך", וכגון: "זכרה לי אלהי לטובה".

The Gemara states: **One does not recite** a verse dealing with **the remembrance of an individual**, even if it is **for good**, for example: **"Remember me, O Lord, when You show favor to Your people"** (Psalms 106:4), and, for example: **"Remember me, my God, for good"** (Nehemiah 5:19).

על פן נקוה לך יהוה אלהינו, לראות מהרה
בתפארת עזך, להעביר גלולים מן הארץ והאלילים
פרות יפרתו, לתקן עולם במלכות שדי, וכל בני בשר
יקראו בשמך, להפנות אליך כל רשעי ארץ. יפירו
וידעו כל יושבי תבל, כי לך תכרע כל ברך, תשבע כל
לשון. לפניך יהוה אלהינו יכרעו ויפלו, ולכבוד שמך
יקר יתנו. ויקבלו כלם את עול מלכותך, ותמלך עליהם
מהרה לעלם ועד. כי המלכות שלך היא, ולעולמי עד
תמלך בכבוד.

פכתוב בתורתך:

א יהוה ימלך לעלם ועד. שמות טו יח

ב ונאמר: לא אהביט און ביעקב, ולא ראה עמל

בישראל, יהוה אלהיו עמו ותרועת מלך בו. במדבר כג כא

ג ונאמר: ויהי בישרון מלך, בהתאסף ראשי עם, יחד

שבטי ישראל. דברים לג ה

ובדברי קדשך כתוב לאמר:

א כי ליהוה המלוכה ומשל בגוים. תהלים כב כט

ב ונאמר: יהוה מלך גאות לבש, לבש יהוה עז התאזר,

אף תכון תבל בל-תמוט. תהלים צג א

ג ונאמר: שאו שערים ראשיכם והנשאו פתחי עולם,

ויבוא מלך הכבוד. מי זה מלך הכבוד, יהוה עוז וגבור,

יהוה גבור מלחמה. שאו שערים ראשיכם, ושאו פתחי

עולם, ויבא מלך הכבוד. מי הוא זה מלך הכבוד, יהוה

צבאות הוא מלך הכבוד, סלה. תהלים כד ז-י

which the human monarch was often seen as a manifestation of the deity.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION OF BIBLICAL VERSES. The meanings and emphases of the verses of Malkhuyot, Zikhronot, and Shofarot in their liturgical settings sometimes differ from their meanings in their biblical contexts. The translations here reflect that shift—varying, when appropriate, from some of the familiar English renditions, such as the JPS translation used in *Etz Hayim*, the Conservative movement's Torah commentary.

שאו שערים ראשיכם והנשאו פתחי עולם. Classically, "Jerusalem" refers to both the city on earth and a "heavenly city," each reflective of the other. "Gates" and "doors" refer not only to the gates of Jerusalem or the Temple, but also to "cosmic doors," through which the presence of God enters the world.

ESTABLISHING IN THE WORLD THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ALMIGHTY לתקן עולם. *Tikkun olam*, which means "mending the world," is an ancient Hebrew phrase that has acquired additional resonance in modern times. In its setting in this prayer, *l'takken olam* means "to establish the world in the kingdom of the Almighty [Shaddai]," or to bring about God's rule on earth. In contemporary usage it refers to the betterment of the world, including the relief of human suffering, the achievement of peace and mutual respect among peoples, and protection of the planet itself from destruction.
(adapted from Arthur Green)

THE BIBLICAL VERSES OF MALKHUYOT/SOVEREIGNTY. Whereas the Book of Psalms, some books of the Prophets, and the later rabbinic tradition take for granted that God is naturally referred to as King, these three verses are the only verses in the entire Five Books of Moses that expressly connect God to kingship. Perhaps this omission reflects a desire to further distance Judaism from the surrounding idolatrous nations, in

Shofar and the Soul

The Torah teaches us וְהִרְוִיעַת מְלִךְ בּוֹ, “their Sovereign’s acclaim is in their midst” (Numbers 23:21), a reminder that just as a trumpet blast announces a mortal king, so the shofar is blown to announce the coronation of God. According to the Midrash, the verse can be understood as “the shofar blast of kingship is within the person [Israel].” That is, the true shofar—the true power to crown God as sovereign—is found within the heart of each and every Jew. The physical shofar does no more than amplify the soul’s yearning to exalt the Divine.

And so, ADONAI our God, we await You, that soon we may behold Your strength revealed in full glory, sweeping away the abominations of the earth, obliterating idols, establishing in the world the sovereignty of the Almighty, when all flesh will call out Your name—even the wicked will turn toward You. Then all who live on earth will recognize and understand that to You alone knees must bend and allegiance be sworn. All will bow down and prostrate themselves before You, ADONAI our God, honor Your glorious name, and accept the obligation of Your sovereignty. May You soon rule over them forever and ever, for true dominion is Yours; You will rule in glory until the end of time.

As it is written in Your Torah:

✠ ADONAI will be *sovereign* forever and ever. Exodus 15:18

▢ God does not gaze upon the sins of Jacob, nor look upon the errors of Israel;

ADONAI their God is with them, their *sovereign’s* acclaim is in their midst. Numbers 23:21

▢ God became *sovereign* in Jeshurun, as the leaders of the people gathered with the tribes of Israel. Deuteronomy 33:5

And it is also written in Psalms:

✠ For *sovereignty* is ADONAI’s; God rules over the nations. Psalm 22:29

▢ ADONAI is *sovereign*, robed in splendor, girded in strength. So the earth is established on sure foundation. Psalm 93:1

▢ Lift up high, O you gates; lift up the eternal doors, so that the *Sovereign* of Glory may enter. Who is the *Sovereign* of Glory? ADONAI, mighty and valiant, ADONAI, mighty in battle. Lift up high, O you gates; lift up the eternal doors, so that the *Sovereign* of Glory may enter. Who is the *Sovereign* of Glory? *Adonai Tz’va·ot* is the *Sovereign* of Glory, forever. Psalm 24:7–10

וְעַל יְדֵי עֲבָדֶיךָ הַנְּבִיאִים כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:
א כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה, מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגֵאֲלוֹ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, אֲנִי
 רִאשׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן, וּמִבְּלַעֲדֵי אֵין אֱלֹהִים. ישעיה מד ו
ב וְנֹאמַר: וְעָלוּ מוֹשְׁעִים בְּהָר צִיּוֹן לְשַׁפֵּט אֶת־הָרָעָה, וְהִיתָה לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה. עבדיה א כא
ג וְנֹאמַר: וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
 יְהָיָה יְהוָה אֶחָד וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד. זכריה יד ט
 וּבִתְוֹרַתְךָ כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:
 שִׁמְעֵ יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְהוָה אֶחָד. דברים ו ד

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ],
 מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָעוֹלָם כָּלוֹ בְּכַבֻּדְךָ,
 וְהַנִּשָּׂא עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ בִּיקָרְךָ,
 וְהוֹפֵעַ בְּהֵדֵר גָּאוֹן עֶזְךָ עַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵּבֵל אֶרֶץ,
 וַיֵּדַע כָּל־פֶּעוּל כִּי אַתָּה פֹּעֵלָתוֹ,
 וַיִּבִּין כָּל־יִצְוֹר כִּי אַתָּה יֹצֵרָתוֹ,
 וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמָה בָּאֶפֹּס,
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֶלֶךְ, וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בְּכָל מְשָׁלָה.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ] **[רְצָה בְּמִנוּחָתְנוּ]**
 קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ, וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ,
 שְׂבַעֲנוּ מִטוֹבָךָ, וּשְׁמַחְנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ. **[וְהִנְחִילֵנוּ, יְהוָה]**
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן שִׁבֵּת קִדְּשָׁךְ, וַיְנַחֲחוּ בָּהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִקִּדְּשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ.]
 וְטָהַר לִבֵּנוּ לְעִבְדְּךָ בְּאֵמֶת, כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים אֱמֶת,
 וּדְבָרְךָ אֱמֶת וְקִיָּם לְעַד.
 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ,
 מִקִּדְּשֵׁי **[הַשְּׁבֵת וְ] יִשְׂרָאֵל** וַיּוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן.

ADONAI SHALL BE AC-
 KNOWNED SOVEREIGN
 וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל־
 הָאָרֶץ. Zechariah 14:9.
 This verse is also quoted
 at the conclusion of the
 Aleinu. In it, we recognize
 that God's Oneness is not
 yet fully realized, and we
 express our hope that our
 prayers and actions will
 contribute to achieving
 that ideal. Here, the verse
 is followed directly by
 the first line of the Sh'ma
 (Deuteronomy 6:4), which
 is our declaration that God
 is, indeed, One, although
 the Sh'ma itself does not
 contain any form of the
 word *melekh*. The ancient
 Rabbis understood the
 recitation of the Sh'ma
 as *kabbalat ol malkhut*
shamayim, the accep-
 tance of the yoke of God's
 sovereignty. Therefore it
 was deemed appropriate
 to recite the Sh'ma as the
 tenth verse of Malkhuyot.

OUR GOD AND GOD OF OUR
 ANCESTORS וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
 אֲבוֹתֵינוּ. This paragraph
 concludes the fourth
b'rakhah of the Amidah;
 the text is nearly identical
 to the liturgy of Shabbat
 and Festivals. It includes a
 prayer to purify our hearts
 so that our service to God
 may be *emet*, "truth" (וְטָהַר
 לִבֵּנוּ לְעִבְדְּךָ בְּאֵמֶת). The
 Hebrew word *emet* implies
 more than mere honesty
 or absence of falsehood: it
 connotes also faithfulness,

wholeness, and integrity. Thus, we express our longing to be constant
 and consistent in our prayer and to liberate our relationship with
 God from the mixed motives and inner conflicts that generally char-
 acterize human behavior. The prayer's penultimate sentence—unique
 to the High Holy Days—takes up this theme of truth, applying the
 attribute to God and God's word, and emphasizing it as an essential
 quality of the Divine.

The Creative Process of T'shuvah

Rabbi Kalonymous Kal-mish Shapira, the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto, wrote on Rosh Hashanah 5702/1941 (*Esh Kodesh*): “The time for repentance is Rosh Hashanah, the anniversary of the creation of the world. This is because repentance . . . is also a kind of creativity.” The Hebrew word *t'shuvah* means repentance and return. However, as a creative act, *t'shuvah* is not a simple return. We return to who we are meant to be, but have not yet become. We return to growth and possibility that has lain dormant within us and not yet flourished, much as a sculpture lies hidden within a brute block of stone. That is why the process of *t'shuvah*, as painful and even humiliating as it can be, is in fact very joyous and hopeful.

(Adapted and translated
by Jan Uhrbach)

And Your servants the prophets further wrote:

✠ Thus said ADONAI, *sovereign* and redeemer of Israel, *Adonai Tz'va-ot*: I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God but Me. Isaiah 44:6

✧ Liberators shall ascend Mount Zion to judge Mount Esau; then *sovereignty* shall be ADONAI's. Obadiah 1:21

✧ ADONAI shall be acknowledged *sovereign* of all the earth. On that day ADONAI shall be one, and the name of God, one.

Zechariah 14:9

And it is written in Your Torah:

Hear, O Israel, ADONAI is our God, ADONAI alone.

Deuteronomy 6:4

Our God and God of our ancestors: in Your glory, rule over the entire universe; in Your splendor, be exalted over all the earth; in the majestic beauty of Your overwhelming presence, appear to all the inhabitants of Your world. Then, all that You have made will recognize You as their maker, all that You created will understand that You are their creator, and all living beings will say: ADONAI, the God of Israel, is sovereign, ruling over all.

Our God and God of our ancestors: [**embrace our rest,**] make us holy through Your commandments and let the Torah be our portion. Fill our lives with Your goodness and gladden us with Your triumph. [**ADONAI our God, grant that we inherit Your holy Shabbat, lovingly and willingly, so that the people Israel, who sanctify Your name, may find rest on this day.**] Purify our hearts to serve You truly, for You are the God of truth, and Your word is true, eternal, and unchanging. *Barukh atah ADONAI*, ruler of all the earth, who makes [**Shabbat,**] the people Israel and the Day of Remembrance holy.

[*Leader: Barukh atah Adonai,*] *Congregation: melekh al kol ha-aretz, m'kaddeish [ha-shabbat v'] yisra-el* [*Leader: v'yom ha-zikkaron*].

זִכְרוֹנוֹת

אַתָּה זֹכֵר מַעֲשֵׂה עוֹלָם, וּפּוֹקֵד כָּל-יְצוּרֵי קֶדֶם.
לִפְנֵיךָ נִגְלוּ כָל-תַּעֲלוּמוֹת, וְהִמּוֹן נִסְתָּרוֹת שְׁמִבְרָאשִׁית.
אֵין שְׂכָחָה לִפְנֵי כִסֵּא כְבוֹדְךָ, וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִנֶּגֶד עֵינֶיךָ.
אַתָּה זֹכֵר אֶת-כָּל-הַמַּפְעָל, וְגַם כָּל-הַיְצוֹר לֹא
נִכְחַד מִמֶּךָ.

הַכֹּל גָּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לִפְנֵיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
צוּפָה וּמַבִּיט עַד סוֹף כָּל-הַדּוֹרוֹת.
כִּי תָבִיא חֹק זָכְרוֹן, לְהַפְקִיד כָּל-רוּחַ וְנֶפֶשׁ,
לְהַזְכִּיר מַעֲשִׂים רַבִּים, וְהִמּוֹן בְּרִיּוֹת לֹאֵין תִּכְלִית.
מִרְאשִׁית כְּזֹאת הוֹדַעְתָּ, וּמִלְפָּנִים אוֹתָהּ גָּלִיתָ.

זֶה הַיּוֹם תִּחַלֵּת מַעֲשִׂיךָ, זָכְרוֹן לַיּוֹם רֵאשׁוֹן:
כִּי חֹק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא, מִשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
וְעַל הַמַּדִּינוֹת בּוֹ יֵאמַר:

אִיזוֹ לַחֲרֹב, וְאִיזוֹ לְשָׁלוֹם, אִיזוֹ לָרָעַב, וְאִיזוֹ לְשֹׂבַע.
וּבְרִיּוֹת בּוֹ יִפְקְדוּ, לְהַזְכִּיר לַחַיִּים וּלְמֹתוֹת.
מִי לֹא נִפְקֵד כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, כִּי זָכַר כָּל-הַיְצוֹר לִפְנֵיךָ בָּא,
מַעֲשֵׂה אִישׁ וּפְקֻדָּתוֹ, וְעַלִּילוֹת מַצְעָדֵי גִבּוֹר,
מִחֲשָׁבוֹת אָדָם וְתַחבּוּלוֹתָיו, וְיִצְרֵי מַעֲלָלֵי אִישׁ.

אֲשֶׁרִי אִישׁ שָׁלֹא יִשְׁכַּחְךָ, וּבֶן-אָדָם יִתְאַמֵּץ-בָּךְ.
כִּי דוֹרְשִׁיךָ לְעוֹלָם לֹא יִכָּשֶׁלוּ, וְלֹא יִכְלָמוּ לַנֶּצַח
כָּל-הַחוֹסִים בָּךְ.

כִּי זָכַר כָּל-הַמַּעֲשִׂים לִפְנֵיךָ בָּא, וְאַתָּה דוֹרֵשׁ
מַעֲשֵׂה כָלָם.

וְגַם אֶת-נֶחַם בְּאַהֲבָה זָכַרְתָּ, וְתִפְקְדֶהוּ בְּדִבְרֵי יְשׁוּעָה
וּרְחָמִים,

בְּהִבְיֹאךָ אֶת-יָמֵי הַמִּבּוֹל, לְשַׁחַת כָּל-בָּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי רָע
מַעֲלָלֵיהֶם.

עַל כֵּן זָכְרוֹנוֹ בָּא לִפְנֵיךָ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
לְהַרְבוֹת זִרְעוֹ כְּעַפְרוֹת תֵּיבֵל, וְצִאצָּאוֹ כְּחוֹל הַיָּם.

ZIKHRONOT. The Bible refers to Rosh Hashanah as Yom Ha-Zikkaron (the Day of Remembrance), highlighting the covenantal relationship between God and humanity. The metaphor of God as remembering captures the intimate concern and engagement of God with each individual person and creature, as well as our corresponding sense of accountability for our deeds.

YOU REMEMBER זֹכֵר. The introductory poem to this section is from the first half of the first millennium.

RITE OF REMEMBRANCE חֹק זָכְרוֹן. The "rite" is Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Remembrance.

"REMEMBER" In the Bible, God is described as remembering far more often than are humans. Memory is, primarily, a divine quality, representing God's ability to overcome the limitations of a particular time, to see the part as one segment of a far greater whole. When humans remember, therefore, we are imitating God, overcoming our own limits and, in God-like fashion, identifying with the breadth of history. Remembering is essential, because memory is divine. It is part of what makes us all images of God. Fundamentally, our memory is who we are. (David Kraemer)

*On Linking
the Generations*

The authentic individual is neither an end nor a beginning but a link between ages, both memory and expectation. . . .

To us, recollection is a holy act; we sanctify the present by remembering the past. To us Jews, the essence of faith is memory. To believe is to remember.

—ABRAHAM JOSHUA
HESCHEL

Fifth B'rakhah: Zikhronot—Remembrances

PRAYERS AND BIBLICAL VERSES ON REMEMBRANCE

You remember the deeds of the world and You are mindful of Your creatures since the beginning of time.

Before You stands revealed all that is hidden, and every mystery from the moment of creation.

Nothing is forgotten in Your awe-inspiring presence, nothing concealed from Your gaze;

You remember every deed, and nothing in creation can be hidden from You.

Everything is revealed and known to You, ADONAI our God; You see to the end of time.

It is You who established a rite of remembrance, to take account of every being, every soul, to recall the multitude of deeds, and call to mind countless creations.

From the beginning You made this known, and from of old You revealed it.

This day which You, God of Jacob, established as a ritual for the people Israel, and as a day of judgment, marks the beginning of Your creation, a reminder of the very first day.

And this is a day of decree for all nations: war or peace, famine or abundance. Every creature is called to account: reckoned for life or death. Who is not remembered this day?

Everyone's record is set before You: each individual's actions and their consequences, all that people do, all that humans think and plan, and all that each of us intends.

Blessed is the person who does not forget You, the one who draws strength from You; for those who seek You will never stumble, and those who trust in You will never be shamed.

Surely, the record of every deed is before You; You probe everyone's acts.

Did You not lovingly remember Noah, when You brought the flood waters, destroying all flesh because of their evil deeds?

Did You not assure him with words of salvation and compassion?

So his memory, ADONAI our God, came before You and his descendants became as numerous as the dust of the earth, and his children like the sand of the sea.

כִּכְתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ:

א וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַחַת, וְאֶת כָּל־הַחַיָּה וְאֶת־כָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה
אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתְּבָה, וַיַּעֲבֹר אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ עַל־הָאָרֶץ, וַיִּשְׁכּוּ
הַמַּיִם. בראשית ח א

ב וְנֹאמַר: וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַאֲקָתָם, וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב. שמות ב כד
ג וְנֹאמַר: וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב, וְאֵף אֶת־בְּרִיתִי
יִצְחָק, וְאֵף אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אַבְרָהָם אֲזָכֹר, וְהָאָרֶץ אֲזָכֹר.
ויקרא כו מב

וּבְדַבְּרֵי קֹדֶשׁ כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

א זָכֹר עֲשֵׂה לְנַפְלָאֲתֵינוּ, חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה. תהלים קיא ד
ב וְנֹאמַר: טָרַף נָתַן לִירְאָיו, יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ. תהלים קיא ה
ג וְנֹאמַר: וַיִּזְכֹּר לָהֶם בְּרִיתוֹ, וַיִּנָּחֵם כָּל־בְּחַסְדָּיו. תהלים קו מה

וְעַל יְדֵי עֲבָדֶיךָ הַנְּבִיאִים כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:
א הֲלֹךְ וְקִרְאֵת בְּאָזְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם לֵאמֹר, כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה,
זָכַרְתִּי לָךְ חֶסֶד נְעוּרֶיךָ, אֶהְבֵּת כְּלוּלָתֶיךָ, לְכַתֵּךְ אַחֲרֵי
בְּמִדְבָּר, בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא זְרוּעָה. ירמיהו ב ב
ב וְנֹאמַר: וְזָכַרְתִּי אֲנִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אוֹתְךָ בִּימֵי נְעוּרֶיךָ,
וְהִקִּימוֹתִי לָךְ בְּרִית עוֹלָם. יחזקאל טז ט
ג וְנֹאמַר: הֲבֵן יִקִּיר לִי אֶפְרָיִם, אִם יִלְד שְׁעָשׂוּעִים, כִּי־
מִדֵּי דְבָרֵי בּוֹ זָכֹר אֲזַכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד, עַל כֵּן הֵמוּ מַעֲי לּוֹ, רַחֵם
אַרְחַמֶּנּוּ, נָא יְהוָה. ירמיהו לא כ

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאֲמֹתֵינוּ], זָכַרְנוּ בְּזִכְרוֹן טוֹב
לְפָנֶיךָ, וּפְקַדְנוּ בְּפִקְדֹת יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים מִשְׁמֵי שָׁמַי קָדָם.
וְזָכַר־לָנוּ, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֶת־הַבְּרִית וְאֶת־הַחֶסֶד, וְאֶת־
הַשְּׁבוּעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ בְּהַר הַמְּרִיָּה.
וְתִרְאֶה לְפָנֶיךָ עֲקֵדָה שְׁעָקֵד אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ אֶת־יִצְחָק
בְּנוֹ עַל גְּבִי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, וְכַבֵּשׁ רַחֲמָיו לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ בְּלִבְּךָ
שָׁלֵם. כֵּן יִכְבְּשׁוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ אֶת־כַּעֲסְךָ מֵעַלֵּינוּ, וּבִטּוֹבְךָ

LEVITICUS 26:42. In the Torah, this verse is preceded by a reference to future generations of Israel humbling themselves and atoning for sin. God's "remembrance" thus follows Israel's *t'shuvah*.

PSALM 106:45. The act of remembering causes even God—who is enduring and unchanging—to act differently with Israel. So, too, our remembering on Rosh Hashanah should lead us to change who we are and how we behave.

OUR GOD אֱלֹהֵינוּ. This prayer evokes the Binding of Isaac, noting that Abraham subdued his mercy in order to do God's will. In return, we ask God to do the reverse: to allow mercy to subdue the divine will to anger. We thus echo God's own prayer, as our Sages said, "What does God pray? Rav Zutra ben Tobi said in the name of Rab: 'May it be My will that My mercy may suppress My anger, and that My mercy may prevail over My [other] attributes, so that I may deal with My children in the attribute of mercy and, on their behalf, stop short of the limit of strict justice'" (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 7a).

THE HIGHEST HEAVENS

ABOVE מִשְׁמֵי שָׁמַי קָדָם. The phrase, from Psalm 68:34, has both a spatial and a temporal connotation. Like the Hebrew word *olam*, which can refer to both infinite space and eternal time, *kedem* can refer either to the east, whence the sun (which was imagined to come from heaven) rises, or to ancient times.

Forgetting and Remembering

✖

Forgetfulness leads to exile, while remembrance is the secret of redemption.

—BAAL SHEM TOV

כ

Rabbi Sh'lomo of Karlin asked: "What is the worst thing the Evil Urge can achieve?" And he answered: "To make a person forget that one is the child of a king."

—A HASIDIC TALE

א

God does not forget those who have been abandoned by others. Some of the key verses in this section are taken from the story of the flood, when God remembers those who are left when the world has come undone, and from the story of the Israelites as slaves in Egypt, when God hears their cries. God remembers us even when we think that we are disgraced or abandoned.

—RACHEL KAHN-TROSTER

As it is written in Your Torah:

✖ God *remembered* Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark, and God caused a wind to blow across the earth and the waters subsided. Genesis 8:1

כ God heard their agonized cry, and God *remembered* the covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Exodus 2:24

א Then will I *remember* My covenant with Jacob; I will remember also my covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham; and I will remember the land. Leviticus 26:42

And it is also written in the Book of Psalms:

✖ God has made wondrous works to be *remembered*; ADONAI is gracious and compassionate. Psalms 111:4

כ God always *remembers* the covenant, providing sustenance for those in awe of the Divine. Psalms 111:5

א God *remembered* the covenant and, with great love, relented.

Psalms 106:45

And Your servants the prophets further wrote:

✖ Go proclaim to Jerusalem: Thus said ADONAI: I *remember* the affection of your youth, your love when we were betrothed when you followed Me in the wilderness, a barren land. Jeremiah 2:2

כ I will always *remember* the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth, and establish it with you as a covenant that will last forever. Ezekiel 16:60

א Is not Ephraim My dear son, My precious child, whom I *remember* fondly even when I speak against him? So my heart reaches out to him, and I always feel compassion for him, declares ADONAI. Jeremiah 31:20

Our God and God of our ancestors, remember us favorably, and from the highest heavens above fulfill Your promise of compassion and deliverance. For our sake, remember Your loving relationship with us, the covenant and the promise that You made to Abraham on Mount Moriah. Hold before You the image of our ancestor Abraham binding his son Isaac on the altar, when he overcame his compassion in order to obey Your command wholeheartedly. Now, allow Your compassion

שופרות

אתה נגלית בענן כבודך, על עם קדשך, לדבר עמם.
מן השמים השמעתם קולך, ונגלית עליהם בערפלי טהר.
גם כל־העולם כלו חל מפניך, ובריות בראשית חרדו ממך,
בהגלותך מלכנו על הר סיני, ללמד לעמך תורה ומצות,
ותשמיעם את־הוד קולך, ודברות קדשך מלהבות אש.
בקלות וברקים עליהם נגלית, ובקול שופר עליהם הופעת.

ככתוב בתורתך:

א ויהי ביום השלישי בהית הבקק, ויהי קלות וברקים,
וענן כבד על ההר, וקל שפר חזק מאד, ויחרד כל־העם

אשר במחנה. שמות יט טז

ב ונאמר: ויהי קול השופר הולך וחזק מאד, משה ידבר
והאלהים יעננו בקול. שמות יט יט

ג ונאמר: וכל־העם ראים את־הקולת ואת־הלפידם,

ואת קול השפר, ואת־ההר עשן, וירא העם וינעו

ויעמדו מרחק. שמות כ טו

YOU REVEALED YOURSELF אתה נגלית. Like the introductory poems to Mal-khuyot and Zikhronot, this poem dates back to the fifth century (or earlier) and exhibits some of the features that characterize the transition from early post-Biblical to medieval liturgical poetry. There are four stresses in each line, the same rhythm as in Aleinu, the prayer with which the special sections of Musaf began.

TO YOUR HOLY PEOPLE על עם קדשך. The preposition here is על, literally "upon," as opposed to the more usual אל, "to." The implication could be that Israel is no mere recipient of revelation, but the vehicle upon which God's word is carried into the world.

ALLOWING THEM TO HEAR YOUR VOICE מן השמים השמעתם קולך. Deuteronomy 4:36.

YOUR SACRED WORDS ודברות קדשך. A reference to the Decalogue, which was revealed to the people Israel at Sinai, accompanied by the sound of the shofar.

ON THE THIRD DAY. All three verses from the Torah are taken from the description in Exodus of the revelation on Mount Sinai. The first two (Exodus 19:16, 19) occur before the giving of the Decalogue, and the last (Exodus 20:15) after. This last verse, with its conflation of sight and sound—"the people saw the thunder and lightning"—conveys the full depth of the transformative experience of revelation.

Are you hiding betrayal?
 Do you hold smolder-
 ing brands?
 And I slammed the door
 shut, turned the lock,
 threw the bolt,
 Fell to the floor, put my
 face in my hands.
 The night grew dark,
 then, as blindness is
 dark.
 My floor became hard as
 stone,
 And he stood on the
 other side of the door.
 From the other side, I
 heard sobs and a moan.

—KADYA MOLODOWSKY
 (trans. Kathryn Hellerstein)

Sixth B'rakhah: Shofarot

PRAYERS AND BIBLICAL VERSES ON THE SHOFAR

You revealed Yourself in a cloud of glory
 to speak to Your holy people,
 allowing them to hear Your voice from the heavens.
 Through a pure mist You disclosed Yourself,
 and the whole world—everything—quivered in Your presence.
 All of creation trembled in awe,
 as You, our sovereign, made Yourself known on Mount Sinai,
 teaching Your people Torah and mitzvot.
 You spoke to them from amidst fiery flames,
 allowing them to hear Your majestic voice and Your sacred words,
 revealed Yourself to them amidst thunder and lightning,
 and appeared to them with the sounding of the shofar.

As it is written in Your Torah:

✠ On the third day, as morning dawned, there was thunder
 and lightning, a dense cloud covering the mountain, and the
 powerful sound of the *shofar*; all the people who were in the
 camp trembled. Exodus 19:16

▢ The sound of the *shofar* grew ever more powerful; as Moses
 spoke, God's response thundered. Exodus 19:19

▣ All the people saw the thunder and lightning, the blare of the
shofar and the mountain smoking; as the people saw it, they
 fell back and stood at a distance. Exodus 20:15

The blasts of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah revitalize the soul and mind of every Jew. Each one receives a new soul and a new level of understanding, all according to their own level. This new soul and vision are drawn from the inner countenance of God.

—NAḤMAN OF BRATZLAV

And it is also written in Psalms:

- ✠ God ascends amidst the cry of the *shofar*; with its sound ADONAI is enthroned. Psalm 47:6
- ▢ Sound the trumpet and *shofar* before the Sovereign, ADONAI. Psalm 98:6
- ▧ Sound the *shofar* on our feast day, on the new moon, when it is hidden. For it is Israel's law, a decree of the God of Jacob. Psalm 81:4–5

Halleluyah! Praise God in the sanctuary,
Praise God in the powerful heavens.

Praise God for the mighty deeds,

Praise God for infinite greatness.

Praise God with the *shofar* call,

Praise God with harp and lyre.

Praise God with drum and dance,

Praise God with flute and strings.

Praise God with crashing cymbals,

Praise God with resounding cymbals.

Let every breath of life praise ADONAI. Halleluyah! Psalm 150:1–6

Hal'luyah.

Hal'lu El b'kodsho, hal'luhu bi-r'ki-a uzzo.

Hal'luhu vi-g'vurotav, hal'luhu k'rov gudlo.

Hal'luhu b'teika shofar, hal'luhu b'neiveil v'khinnor.

Hal'luhu b'tof u-mahol, hal'luhu b'minnim v'ugav.

Hal'luhu v'tziltz'lei shama, hal'luhu b'tziltz'lei t'ru-ah.

Kol ha-n'shamah t'hallel yah, hal'luyah.

And Your servants the prophets further wrote:

- ✠ All you inhabitants of the world and dwellers on earth: when a banner is raised on the mountains, look! When the *shofar* is sounded, listen! Isaiah 18:3
 - ▢ For on that day, a great *shofar* will be sounded: those lost in the land of Assyria and those cast away in the land of Egypt shall come back and worship ADONAI on the holy mountain in Jerusalem. Isaiah 27:13
 - ▧ ADONAI will appear to them, shooting arrows like lightning; the lord, God, will sound the *shofar*, advancing in a stormy south wind. *Adonai Tz'va-ot* will protect them. Zechariah 9:14–15
- And so, too, protect Your people Israel with Your peace.

וּבְדַבְרֵי קֹדֶשׁ כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

א עֲלֵה אֱלֹהִים בְּתְרוּעָה, יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר. תהלים מז ו

ב וּנְאֻמַּר: בְּחִצְצֹרוֹת וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר הָרִיעוּ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

יְהוָה. תהלים צח ו

ג וּנְאֻמַּר: תִּקְעוּ בַּחֲדָשׁ שׁוֹפָר, בַּכֶּסֶה לַיּוֹם חֲגֻנוּ.

כִּי חֶק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא, מִשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב. תהלים פא ד-ה

וּנְאֻמַּר: הִלְלוּ יְהוָה, הִלְלוּ-אֵל בְּקֹדֶשׁוֹ, הִלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקְיעַ עֲזוֹ.

הִלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרָתוֹ, הִלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גְּדֻלוֹ.

הִלְלוּהוּ בַּתִּקְעַת שׁוֹפָר, הִלְלוּהוּ בַּנֶּבֶל וּכְנֹר.

הִלְלוּהוּ בַּתֶּף וּמַחּוֹל, הִלְלוּהוּ בַּמִּנִּים וְעוּגָב.

הִלְלוּהוּ בַּצִּלְצְלֵי שִׁמְעַת, הִלְלוּהוּ בַּצִּלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה.

כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תִּהְלֵל יְהוָה, הִלְלוּהוּ. תהלים קנ א-ו

וְעַל יְדֵי עֲבָדֶיךָ הַנְּבִיאִים כָּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

א כָּל-יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל וְשֹׁכְנֵי אֶרֶץ, כְּנֹשָׂא נֶס הָרִים תִּרְאוּ,

וְכַתְּקַע שׁוֹפָר תִּשְׁמְעוּ. ישעיה יח ג

ב וּנְאֻמַּר: וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר גְּדוֹל,

וּבָאוּ הָאֲבָבִים בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשׁוּר וְהַנְּדָחִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם,

וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם. ישעיה כז יג

ג וּנְאֻמַּר: וַיְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם יִרְאֶה, וַיֵּצֵא כַּבָּרֶק חֲצוֹ,

וַאֲדָנֵי אֱלֹהִים בְּשׁוֹפָר יִתְקַע, וְהָלַךְ בְּסַעְרוֹת תִּימָן.

יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת יִגַּן עֲלֵיהֶם. זכריה ט יד-טו

כֵּן תִּגַּן עַל עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׁלּוּמָךְ.

VERSES FROM PSALMS.

The verses from the Book of Psalms speak of the shofar as the instrument announcing the day of judgment, as God ascends the divine throne.

GOD ASCENDS AMIDST

THE CRY עֲלֵה אֱלֹהִים בְּתְרוּעָה. According to the midrash (Leviticus Rabbah 29:3), this verse's use of the two names of God—Elohim (associated with strict justice) and Adonai (associated with compassion and loving-kindness)—reflects how God's relationship with us changes over the course of Rosh Hashanah. At the beginning, God ascends and sits on the Throne of Justice, as it is said, "Elohim ascends with the t'ru-ah [shofar alarm-call]." But when the people Israel blow the shofar, God's compassion is aroused and God moves from the Throne of Justice to the Throne of Compassion, and truly becomes Adonai, as the verse says, "With the shofar's sound, Adonai is enthroned."

SOUND THE SHOFAR ON

OUR FEAST DAY תִּקְעוּ בַּחֲדָשׁ שׁוֹפָר

Rosh Hashanah is the only festival that occurs on the new

moon. This verse, with its reference to when the moon is hidden, בַּכֶּסֶה (ba-keseh), is used in the Babylonian Talmud as the proof-text for God's judgment taking place on this day (Rosh Hashanah 8a-b).

AND SO, TOO, PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE ISRAEL

כֵּן תִּגַּן. Following these Shofarot verses is a brief liturgical coda that amplifies the plea for redemption just quoted in Zechariah 9:15.

III. From Despair to Hope

1. Exodus 3:11

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים מִי אֲנֹכִי כִּי אֵלֶךְ אֶל פַּרְעֹה וְכִי אוֹצִיא אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָיִם:

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt?"

2. Exodus 6:9

וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה בֶּן אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה מִקְצָר רוּחַ וּמַעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה

Moses related [God's message] to the Israelites, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their anguish of spirit and harsh labor.

3. Rashi on Exodus 6:9:2

מקצר רוח. כל מי שֶׁהוא מֵצָר, רוחו ונְשִׁימָתוֹ קָצָרָה, וְאֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לְהֵאָרִיד בְּנִשְׁימָתוֹ

Through anguish (lit. shortness) of spirit — If one is in anguish his breath comes in short gasps and he cannot draw long breaths.

4. Ramban on Exodus 6:9:1

מִקְצָר רוּחַ וּמַעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה לֹא בַעֲבוּר שְׂלֵא יֵאֱמִינוּ בֵּה' וּבְנִבְיָאוֹ, רַק שְׂלֵא הָטוּ אֵינָן לְדַבְּרוֹ מִקְצָר רוּחַ, כְּאֶדָם שֶׁתִּקְצַר נִפְשׁוֹ בַּעֲמָלוֹ, וְלֹא יִרְצֶה לְחַיּוֹת רַגְעַ בְּצַעֲרוֹ, מִדַּעְתּוֹ שֶׁיִּרְוַח לוֹ אַחֲרֵי כֵן, וְקָצָר הָרוּחַ הוּא פְחָדָם שְׂלֵא יִהְיֶה פַרְעֹה בַּחֲרֵב פֶּאֶשֶׁר אָמְרוּ שׁוֹטְרֵיהֶם אֶל מֹשֶׁה, וְעַבֹּדָה קָשָׁה, הוּא הַדַּחֲק שֶׁהָיוּ הַנוֹגְשִׁים אֲצִים בָּהֶם וְלֹא יִתְּנוּם לְשִׁמְעַ דְּבָר וּלְחֹשֶׁב בּוֹ

This was not because they did not believe in God and in God's prophet. Rather, they paid no attention to his words because of impatience of spirit, as a person whose soul is grieved on account of their misery and who does not want to live another moment in their suffering even though they know that they will be relieved later. The "impatience of spirit" was their fear that Pharaoh would put them to death, as their officers said to Moses, and the "cruel bondage" was the pressure, for the taskmasters pressed upon them and hurried them [in their daily task], which gave them no chance to hear anything and consider it.

5. Sforno on Exodus 6:9:2

מקצר רוח. כי לא נאמנה את אל רוחם, ולא נתנו לב להתבונן:

For it did not appear believable to their present state of mind, so that their heart could not assimilate such a promise.

6. BT Makkot 24b

ר'בן גמליאל ור'בן אלעזר בן עזריה ור'בן יהושע ור'בן עקיבא ...
שוב פעם אחת היו עולין לירושלים, כיון שהגיעו להר הצופים קרעו בגדיהם, כיון שהגיעו להר הבית ראו שועל שיצא מבית קדשי הקדשים, התחילו הן בוכין ור'בן עקיבא מצחק. אמרו לו:
מפני מה אתה מצחק? אמר להם: מפני מה אתם בוכים? אמרו לו: מקום שפתוב בו "והזר הקרב יומת", ועכשיו שועלים הלכו בו, ולא נבכה? אמר להן: לכך אני מצחק, דכתיב: "ואעידה לי עדים נאמנים את אוריה הפהן ואת זכריה בן יברכיהו" – וכי מה ענין אוריה אצל זכריה? אוריה במקדש ראשון, וזכריה במקדש שני! אלא: תלה הפתוב נבואתו של זכריה בנבואתו של אוריה. באוריה כתיב "לכן בגללכם ציון שדה תחרש", בזכריה כתיב "עוד ישובו זקנים וזקנות ברחבות ירושלים". עד שלא נתקיימה נבואתו של אוריה הייתי מתירא שלא תתקיים נבואתו של זכריה, עכשיו שנתקיימה נבואתו של אוריה – בידיע שנבואתו של זכריה מתקיימת. בלשון הזה אמרו לו: עקיבא ניחמתנו, עקיבא ניחמתנו.

Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria, Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Akiva... were ascending to Jerusalem [after the destruction of the Temple.] When they arrived at Mount Scopus [and saw the site of the Temple,] they rent their garments. When they arrived at the Temple Mount, they saw a fox that emerged from the place where the Holy of Holies once stood. They began weeping, and Rabbi Akiva was laughing. They said to him: Why are you laughing? Rabbi Akiva said to them: Why are you weeping? They said to him: The place about which was written: "And the non-priest who approaches shall die" (Numbers 1:51), and now foxes walk in it (Lamentations 5:18); and shall we not weep? Rabbi Akiva said to them: That is why I am laughing, as it is written, when God revealed the future to the prophet Isaiah: "And I will take to Me reliable witnesses to attest: Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah" (Isaiah 8:2). Now what is the connection between Uriah and Zechariah? He clarifies the difficulty: Uriah prophesied during the First Temple period, and Zechariah prophesied during the Second Temple period, as he was among those who returned to Zion from Babylonia. Rather, the verse established that fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah is dependent on fulfillment of the prophecy of Uriah. In the prophecy of Uriah it is written: "Therefore, for your sake Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become rubble, and the Temple Mount as the high places of a forest" (Micah 3:12), where foxes are found. There is a rabbinic tradition that this was prophesied by Uriah. In the prophecy of Zechariah it is written: "There shall yet be elderly men and elderly women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem" (Zechariah 8:4).

Until the prophecy of Uriah with regard to the destruction of the city was fulfilled I was afraid that the prophecy of Zechariah would not be fulfilled, as the two prophecies are linked. Now that the prophecy of Uriah was fulfilled, it is evident that the prophecy of Zechariah remains valid. The Gemara adds: The Sages said to him, employing this formulation: Akiva, you have comforted us; Akiva, you have comforted us.

7. Abraham Joshua Heschel, On Prayer, 1969

I pray because God, the *Shekhinah*, is an outcast. I pray because God is in exile, because we all conspire to blur all signs of His presence in the present or in the past. I pray because I refuse to despair, because extreme denials and defiance are refuted in the confrontation of my own presumption and the mystery all around me. *I pray because I am unable to pray.*

8. Adrienne Rich (1929-2012)

What would it mean to live in a city whose people were changing each other's despair into hope? You yourself must change it.