

God as Shliach Tzibbur: The Role of Selichot on Yom Kippur



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Yom Kippur Machzor

אֵל מְלֹךְ. יוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא רַחֲמִים. מְתַנְהֵג בְּחַסִּדוּת. מוֹחֵל עֲוֹנוֹת עַמּוֹ.
 מְעַבִּיר רֵאשׁוֹן רֵאשׁוֹן. מְרַבֵּה מְחִילָה לְחַטָּאִים וְסְלִיחָה לְפוֹשְׁעִים. עוֹשֶׂה
 צְדָקוֹת עִם כָּל בָּשָׂר וְרוּחַ. לֹא כֹרֵעַתָּם תִּגְמֹל: אֵל הוֹרִיתָ לָנוּ לומר
 שְׁלֹשׁ עֲשָׂרָה. וְזָכַר לָנוּ הַיּוֹם בְּרִית שְׁלֹשׁ עֲשָׂרָה. כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוֹדַעְתָּ לָעָנּוּ
 מִקֶּדֶם. כְּמוֹ שֶׁפָּתוּב וַיֵּרֵד יְהוָה בְּעָנָן וַיִּתְיַצֵּב עִמּוֹ שָׁם וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה:

Almighty! King! Who sits on the throne of mercy, governs with kindness forgives the iniquities of His people. He removes their sins one by one, increasing forgiveness to sinners, and pardon to transgressors. Acting righteously with all who are of flesh and spirit; not according to their wickedness does He repay them. Almighty! You instructed us to recite the thirteen Divine attributes; and remember unto us this day the covenant of thirteen Divine attributes, as You made them known to the humble Moshe of old, as it is written, “And Adonoy descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the Name, Adonoy.

שמות ל"ג

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵּךְ עֲלֵה אֶתְּהָ וְהָעָם אֲשֶׁר הִנְּעַלְתָּ

מֵאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק
וְלְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר לְזֶרְעֶךָ אֶתְנַנְּנָהּ: וְשָׁלַחְתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ מַלְאָךְ וְגִרְשִׁיתִי
אֶת־הַכְּנַעֲנִי הַאֲמֹרִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהַפְּרִזִּי הַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי: אֶל־אָרֶץ
זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ כִּי לֹא אֶעֱלֶה בְּקִרְבְּךָ כִּי עִם־קִשְׁי־הָעֶרְפָּה אֶתָּה
פֶּן־אֶכְלָדְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְךָ: וַיִּשְׁמַע הָעָם אֶת־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה הָרַע הַזֶּה וַיִּתְאַבְּלוּ
וְלֹא־אָשְׁתּוּ אִישׁ עֵדִיו עָלָיו: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֲמֹר
אֶל־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם עִם־קִשְׁי־הָעֶרְפָּה רָגַע אֶחָד אֶעֱלֶה בְּקִרְבְּךָ
וְכִלְיִתִּיךָ וְעַתָּה הוֹרֵד עִדֶיךָ מֵעָלֶיךָ וְאֲדַעָה מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה־לְךָ: וַיִּתְנַצְּלוּ
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־עֵדֵיהֶם מִהָר חוֹרֵב: וּמֹשֶׁה יָקַח אֶת־הָאֱהָל וְנָטָה־לוֹ
מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה הַרְחֵק מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה וְקָרָא לוֹ אֱהָל מוֹעֵד וְהָיָה
כָּל־מִבְּקֵשׁ יְהוָה יֵצֵא אֶל־אֱהָל מוֹעֵד אֲשֶׁר מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה: וְהָיָה
כְּצֵאת מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָאֱהָל יָקוּמוּ כָּל־הָעָם וְנִצְּבוּ אִישׁ פֶּתַח אֱהָלוֹ
וְהַבִּיטוּ אַחֲרַי מֹשֶׁה עַד־בָּאוּ הָאֱהָלָה: וְהָיָה כִּבְּאֵ מֹשֶׁה הָאֱהָלָה יֵרֵד
עִמּוֹד הָעֵנָן וְעָמַד פֶּתַח הָאֱהָל וְדִבֶּר עִם־מֹשֶׁה: וְרָאָה כָּל־הָעָם
אֶת־עִמּוֹד הָעֵנָן עֹמֵד פֶּתַח הָאֱהָל וְקָם כָּל־הָעָם וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ אִישׁ פֶּתַח
אֱהָלוֹ: וְדִבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים כַּאֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר אִישׁ
אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ וְשָׁב אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה וּמִשָּׁרְתוֹ יְהוֹשִׁעַ בֶּן־נוּן נֹעַר לֹא יָמִישׁ
מִתּוֹךְ הָאֱהָל: {פ} וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה רְאֵה אֶתָּה אֲמַר אֵלַי הֵעֵל
אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה וְאַתָּה לֹא הוֹדַעְתָּנִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־תִּשְׁלַח עִמִּי וְאַתָּה
אֲמַרְתָּ יְדַעְתִּיךָ בְּשֵׁם וְגַם־מִצָּאתָ חֵן בְּעֵינַי: וְעַתָּה אִם־נָא מִצָּאתִי חֵן

בְּעֵינַיִךָ הוֹדַעְנִי נָא אֶת־דַּרְכְּךָ וְאֲדַעֲךָ לְמַעַן אֲמַצְאֶחֶן בְּעֵינַיִךָ וְרֹאֶה
 כִּי עֲמַךְ הִגִּוִי הַזֶּה: וַיֹּאמֶר פָּנַי יִלְכוּ וְהִנַּחְתִּי לָךְ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי אִם־אֵין
 פָּנֶיךָ הַלְכִים אֶל־תַּעֲלֵנוּ מִזֶּה: וּבַמָּה | יוֹדַע אֲפֹא כִי־מַצְאֵתִי חֵן
 בְּעֵינַיִךָ אָנֹכִי וְעַמְּךָ הֲלוֹא בְּלִכְתָּךְ עִמָּנוּ וְנִפְלִינוּ אָנֹכִי וְעַמְּךָ מִכָּל־הָעַם
 אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה: {פ} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה גַם אֶת־הַדָּבָר
 הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֲעֲשֶׂה כִי־מַצְאֵת חֵן בְּעֵינַי וְאֲדַעֲךָ בְּשֵׁם: וַיֹּאמֶר
 הֲרֹאֲנִי נָא אֶת־כְּבֹדְךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֶעֱבִיר כָּל־טוֹבִי עַל־פְּנֶיךָ וְקִרְאֵתִי
 בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לְפָנֶיךָ וְחִנַּתִּי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר אֲחֹן וְרַחֲמֵתִי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר אֲרַחֵם:
 וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא תוּכַל לִרְאֹת אֶת־פָּנַי כִּי לֹא־יִרְאֵנִי הָאָדָם וְחָי:
 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הִנֵּה מָקוֹם אֲתִי וְנִצַּבְתָּ עַל־הַצּוּר: וְהָיָה בְּעֵבֶר כְּבֹדִי
 וְשִׁמְתִּיךָ בְּנִקְרַת הַצּוּר וְשַׁכַּתִּי כַּפִּי עָלֶיךָ עַד־עֲבָרֶי: וְהִסְרֹתִי אֶת־כַּפִּי
 וְרִאִיתָ אֶת־אֲחֵרַי וּפְנֵי לֹא יִרְאוּ: {פ}

Exodus 33

Then יהוה said to Moses, “Set out from here, you and the people that you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your offspring will I give it’— I will send a messenger before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go in your midst, since you are a stiffnecked people, lest I destroy you on the way.” When the people heard this harsh word, they went into

mourning, and none put on finery. יהוה said to Moses, “Say to the Israelite people, ‘You are a stiffnecked people. If I were to go in your midst for one moment, I would destroy you. Now, then, leave off your finery, and I will consider what to do to you.’” So the Israelites remained stripped of their finery from Mount Horeb on. Now Moses would take the Tent and pitch it outside the camp, at some distance from the camp. It was called the Tent of Meeting, and whoever sought יהוה would go out to the Tent of Meeting that was outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the Tent, all the people would rise and stand, at the entrance of each tent, and gaze after Moses until he had entered the Tent. And when Moses entered the Tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the Tent, while [God] spoke with Moses. When all the people saw the pillar of cloud poised at the entrance of the Tent, all the people would rise and bow low, at the entrance of each tent. יהוה would speak to Moses face to face, as one person speaks to another. And he would then return to the camp; but his attendant, Joshua son of Nun, [serving as] deputy, would not stir out of the Tent. Moses said to יהוה, “See, You say to me, ‘Lead this people forward,’ but You have not made known to me whom You will send with me. Further, You have said, ‘I have singled you out by name, and you have, indeed, gained My favor.’ Now, if I have truly gained Your favor, pray let me know Your ways, that I may know You and continue in Your favor. Consider, too, that this nation is Your people.” And [God] said, “I will go in the lead and will

lighten your burden.” And he replied, “Unless You go in the lead, do not make us leave this place. For how shall it be known that Your people have gained Your favor unless You go with us, so that we may be distinguished, Your people and I, from every people on the face of the earth?” And יהוה said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have asked; for you have truly gained My favor and I have singled you out by name.” He said, “Oh, let me behold Your Presence!” And [God] answered, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim before you the name יהוה, and the grace that I grant and the compassion that I show,” continuing, “But you cannot see My face, for a human being may not see Me and live.” And יהוה said, “See, there is a place near Me. Station yourself on the rock and, as My Presence passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and shield you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you will see My back; but My face must not be seen.”

שמות ל"ד

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה פָּסֹל־לְךָ שְׁנֵי־לְחָת אֲבָנִים כְּרֹאשֵׁימִים וְכָתַבְתָּ לִּי
עַל־הַלְּחָת אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ עַל־הַלְּחָת הַרְּאשֵׁימִים אֲשֶׁר
שִׁבַּרְתָּ: וְהָיָה נֶכּוֹן לְבַקֵּר וְעָלִיתָ בְּבִקְרֵי אֶל־הָרִי וְנִצַּבְתָּ לִּי שָׁם
עַל־רֹאשׁ הָהָר: וְאִישׁ לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עִמָּךְ וְגַם־אִישׁ אֶל־יָרֵא בְּכָל־הָהָר
גַּם־הַצֹּאן וְהַבָּקָר אֶל־יָרְעוּ אֶל־מִוֶּלֶת הָהָר הַהוּא: וַיִּפְסֹל שְׁנֵי־לְחָת

אֲבָנִים כְּרֵאשֹׁנִים וַיִּשְׁכֵּם מֹשֶׁה בְּבֹקֶר וַיַּעַל אֶל־הַר סִינַי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
יְהוָה אֹתוֹ וַיִּקַּח בְּיָדוֹ שְׁנֵי לְחֹת אֲבָנִים: וַיֵּרַד יְהוָה בְּעָנָן וַיִּתְיַצֵּב
עַמּוֹ שָׁם וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה: וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה |
יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת: נֹצֵר חֶסֶד
לְאֲלֹפִים נֹשֵׂא עֹון וְפֹשֵׁעַ וְחַטָּאָה וְנִקְיָה לֹא יִנְקֶה פֶקֶד | עֹון
אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וְעַל־בְּנֵי בָנִים עַל־שְׂלֵשִׁים וְעַל־רַבְעִים: וַיִּמְהַר
מֹשֶׁה וַיִּקַּד אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵם־נָא מִצָּאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ
אֲדֹנָי יְיָ־נָא אֲדֹנָי בְּקִרְבְּנוּ כִּי עַם־קָשָׁה־עָרְף הוּא וְסָלַחְתָּ
לְעֹונֵנוּ וּלְחַטָּאתֵנוּ וּנְחַלְתָּנוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי כֹרֵת בְּרִית נֹגֵד
כָּל־עַמְךָ אֲעֲשֶׂה נִפְלְאוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נִבְרָאוּ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ
וּבְכָל־הַגּוֹיִם וְרָאָה כָּל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־אִתָּה בְּקִרְבּוֹ אֶת־מַעֲשֵׂה
יְהוָה כִּי־נֹרָא הוּא אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי עֹשֶׂה עִמָּךְ:

Exodus 34

יהוה said to Moses: “Carve two tablets of stone like the first, and I will inscribe upon the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you shattered. Be ready by morning, and in the morning come up to Mount Sinai and present yourself there to Me, on the top of the mountain. No one else shall come up with you, and no one else shall be seen anywhere on the mountain; neither shall the flocks and the herds graze at the foot of this mountain.” So Moses carved two

tablets of stone, like the first, and early in the morning he went up on Mount Sinai, as יהוה had commanded him, taking the two stone tablets with him. יהוה came down in a cloud—and stood with him there, proclaiming the name יהוה. יהוה passed before him and proclaimed: “יהוה! יהוה! a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness, extending kindness to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin—yet not remitting all punishment, but visiting the iniquity of parents upon children and children’s children, upon the third and fourth generations.” Moses hastened to bow low to the ground in homage, and said, “If I have gained Your favor, O my lord, pray, let my lord go in our midst, even though this is a stiffnecked people. Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Your own!” [God] said: I hereby make a covenant. Before all your people I will work such wonders as have not been wrought on all the earth or in any nation; and all the people who are with you shall see how awesome are יהוה’s deeds which I will perform for you.

ראש השנה י"ז ב'ה'

”וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה עַל פְּנֵיו וַיִּקְרָא.” אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אֱלֹמָּלָא מְקַרָּא
 כָּתוּב, אֵי אֶפְשָׁר לְאֹמְרוֹ. מְלַמֵּד שְׁנַת־עֶטְיָף הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
 כְּשֶׁלִּיחַ צְבוּר, וְהִרְאָה לוֹ לְמִשְׁחָה סֶדֶר תְּפִלָּה. אָמַר לוֹ: כָּל זְמַן

שִׁישְׂרָאֵל חוֹטְאִין — יַעֲשׂוּ לְפָנַי כַּסְדֵּר הַזֶּה וְאֲנִי מוֹחֵל לָהֶם.

Rosh Hashanah 17b:5

§ The verse states: **“And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed”** (Exodus 34:6). **Rabbi Yohanan said: Were it not explicitly written in the verse, it would be impossible to say this,** as it would be insulting to God’s honor. The verse **teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, wrapped Himself** in a prayer shawl **like a prayer leader and showed Moses** the structure of the **order of the prayer. He said to him: Whenever the Jewish people sin, let them act before Me in accordance with this order.** Let the prayer leader wrap himself in a prayer shawl and publicly recite the thirteen attributes of mercy, **and I will forgive them.**

4

סוטה י"ד א:ד'

אַלְא, לְהֵלֵךְ אַחַר מְדוּתָיו שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: מָה הוּא מְלַבֵּשׁ עָרוּמִים, דְּכָתִיב: “וַיַּעַשׂ ה' אֱלֹהִים לְאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כְּתָנוּת עוֹר וַיְלַבְּשֵׁם” — אַף אַתָּה הַלְבִּישׁ עָרוּמִים. הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בִּיקָר חוֹלִים, דְּכָתִיב: “וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה' בְּאַלְנֵי מִמְרָא” — אַף אַתָּה בִּיקָר חוֹלִים. הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא נִיחָם אַבְלִים, דְּכָתִיב: “וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ” — אַף אַתָּה נִיחָם אַבְלִים. הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא קָבֵר מֵתִים, דְּכָתִיב: “וַיִּקְבֹּר אוֹתוֹ בְּגִי” — אַף

אַתָּה קָבוֹר מֵתִים.

Sotah 14a:4

He explains: **Rather**, the meaning is **that one should follow the attributes of the Holy One, Blessed be He**. He provides several examples. **Just as He clothes the naked, as it is written: “And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin, and clothed them”** (Genesis 3:21), **so too, should you clothe the naked**. Just as **the Holy One, Blessed be He, visits the sick, as it is written with regard to God’s appearing to Abraham following his circumcision: “And the Lord appeared unto him by the terebinths of Mamre”** (Genesis 18:1), **so too, should you visit the sick**. Just as **the Holy One, Blessed be He, consoles mourners, as it is written: “And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed Isaac his son”** (Genesis 25:11), **so too, should you console mourners**. Just as **the Holy One, Blessed be He, buried the dead, as it is written: “And he was buried in the valley in the land of Moab”** (Deuteronomy 34:6), **so too, should you bury the dead**.

ברכות ד' א:ג'

אָמַר רַב זֹוּטְרָא בַּר טוֹבִיָּה, אָמַר רַב: "יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֵי שְׁיִכְבְּשׁוּ
רַחֲמֵי אֶת כַּעֲסִי, וַיְגֹלוּ רַחֲמֵי עַל מְדוּתֵי, וְאַתְנֵהֵג עִם בְּנֵי בְּמִדָּת

רַחֲמִים, וְאֶפְיֹס לָהֶם לְפָנִים מִשׁוֹרֵת הַדִּין”.

Berakhot 7a:3

Rav Zutra bar Tovia said that Rav said: God says: **May it be My will that My mercy will overcome My anger** towards Israel for their transgressions, **and may My mercy prevail over My other attributes** through which Israel is punished, **and may I conduct myself toward My children, Israel, with the attribute of mercy, and may I enter before them beyond the letter of the law.**

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