

Home Service for Yom Kippur

Your Erev Yom Kippur table should be set with the following: Candles and kiddish cup with wine or grape juice. A tzedakah box (a homemade one is perfectly appropriate) should be placed on or near your table as well. It is traditional for each individual to give tzedakah as a part of the process of the High Holy Days. Begin your home service with each person contributing to the Tzedakah box. At the end of the meal, it is traditional to remove dishes from the table, and instead cover the table with holy books, symbolizing that prayer and study will be the food of our soul for the next 24 hours.

BEFORE THE MEAL

Reader: We are taught, "Happy are those who consider the needy." Eternal God, we hereby fulfill the Mitzvah of Tzedakah as we begin this day of holiness. We shall not forget the words of your prophet, who called on us to provide for those who need aid, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for the widow and the orphan. We take to heart the injunction "All Israel is responsible one for the other," as we place our contributions into our family tzedakah box. We pledge that the funds in this box will be contributed to _____.

All: May we, together with the whole household of Israel, be mindful of the needs of others, sharing with them the fruits of our labor, helping to sustain them in body and soul. And may we, ourselves, grow in understanding and in compassion as we give our tzedakah funds.

Reader: The holiest day of the year is about to begin. Let us use it well. May it be for each one of us a day of renewal. May it help us to overcome that which is unworthy within us, and to strengthen that which is good. May it bring us closer to one another, and make us more loyal to our community, to our faith and to our God.

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEAL

(These prayers are recited at the end of the meal, for it is only after the meal that Yom Kippur begins.)

Reader: These flames we kindle are a symbol of Your eternal flame. May they open our eyes to the good we must do, moving us to work for the betterment of our world so that through our hands the light of your presence may be felt by all those we touch.

(The candles are lit, and then the blessing is recited.)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל (שְׁבֵת וְשֶׁל) יוֹם טוֹב.

Baruch atah Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Yom Ha-kippurim.

Praised are You, Lord, our God, Ruler of the Universe, by whose Mitzvot we are hallowed, and who commands us to kindle the lights of Yom Kippur.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ
לְיוֹם הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah Adonai, elohaynu melech ha'olam, shehecheyanu v'kiyamanu v'higi' anu laz'man hazeh.

Praised are You, Lord, our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has granted us this New Year by giving us life, by sustaining us and by enabling us to reach this season.

All: As we enter into the solemn hours of Yom Kippur, as we prepare to stand before the Throne of Judgement, I want to make amends for any wrongs I may have done to anyone. Therefore, if I have offended any of you here, if I have wronged you, or hurt you, either intentionally or not, I beg you to forgive me.

Reader: O God, Creator of mercy and forgiveness, we pray that the Gates of Heaven will be open for us on this Yom Kippur. Hear our prayers, and accept our supplications. O God, pardon our transgressions against You, even as we forgive all who may have transgressed against us in the year now ended. Help us to purify our hearts that we might serve You in truth.