

Kol Nidre 5781

We feel short of breath, as if we have been climbing a steep slope. We long for a better place, where error ends, problems are resolved, separation ceases. We long for a unified world.

We come to atone, to admit our sins, to change ourselves; to stop harming and start helping, to silence shouting and begin singing, to quit griping and praise profusely, to halt hatred and endorse understanding, to trade acid for sweet, bitterness for gratitude, agony for ecstasy. We are here to turn malice into kindness and hate into love.

To improve, we study Torah. To help, we do mitzvot. To sing, we join the Cantor. To praise, we recite psalms. To understand, we listen. For sweetness, we smile. For gratitude, we thank others, even hug them when the pandemic ends. For ecstasy, we seek wholehearted enjoyment and let loose. For kindness, we express empathy. For love, we open our hearts and let the world in.

We have been climbing a long time, but we have slipped. We look up, wondering if we can make it to the top. We know the reward is worth the struggle. We have overcome before; we will do it again. When we slip, we regain our footing. We nurture hope, aim high. We inhale deeply and keep on climbing.

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