

Unetane Tokef

Let us acclaim the majestic sanctity of this day, for it is awesome and mighty. Your kingdom is triumphantly proclaimed, Your throne established in mercy, and You occupy it in truth. In truth, You are judge and prosecutor, knowing motives, giving evidence, writing, sealing, counting, measuring, remembering all, even things we have forgotten. You open the book of remembrances, and it speaks for itself, for every person's signature is affixed to his deeds.

The great Shofar is sounded. A muted small voice is heard. The angels too are frightened, fear and trembling seize them, and they declare: "This is the day of judgment, of mustering the host on high!" In Your sight not even they are exempt from judgment. And all that have come into the world pass before You as a flock of sheep. As a shepherd gathers his flock, making his sheep pass beneath his staff, even so do You make pass, count, and muster the souls of all the living. You determine the latter end of every creature and record their ultimate verdict. On Rosh Hashanah it is written down for them, on Yom Kippur it is sealed: How many shall leave and how many shall be born, who shall live and who shall die, who shall attain his full span of life and who shall not, who shall perish by fire, and who by water, who by the sword and who by wild beasts, who by hunger and who by thirst, who by storm and who by plague, who shall have rest and who shall be restless, who shall find repose and who shall be wandering, who shall be free from sorrow and who shall be tormented, who shall be exalted and who shall be humbled, who shall be poor and who shall be rich. But Teshuvah (repentance), Prayer, and Good Deeds can avert the severity of the decree.

For your renown is as Your Name: slow to anger, ready to be soothed. You do not desire the guilty one's death, but that he turn from his way and live. You wait for him up to the very day of his death; if he returns You accept him at once. Verily You are their Creator and You know their inner drives; they are but flesh and blood.

As to man, his origin is dust and his end is dust, at the risk of his life he earns his bread, he is like a broken vessel of clay, like withering grass, a fading flower, a passing shadow, a drifting cloud, a fleeting breath, scattering dust, a transient dream, *But You are King, God, living and enduring!*