

For Spiritual Preparation For the eve of Yom Kippur, before you leave your home

I. Taking control of our lives - Eating and Fasting

The period of these High Holidays, the Days of Awe, is set aside for internal reflection and personal transformation. Fasting intensifies our sense of vulnerability and, hopefully, makes more urgent the need to reconnect with our soul and our life's purpose. A meal with family or friends initiates the 24 hour fast (neither food nor drink) of Yom Kippur. Children under 13 may choose to fast for part of the day, or to skip snacks. Anyone with compromised health should adjust the fast accordingly.

II. Remembering those who have died. Light a Yahrzeit candle

When the meal is over, and before coming to services, light a Yahrzeit/memorial candle. Place it safely out of reach of pets and children. Take time to name and to share memories of those whom you remember.

III. Blessing the ones with whom we share our lives.

If you are with children, take time to bless them. This is a Shabbat eve custom and as Yom Kippur is the "Sabbath of all Sabbaths," this beautiful custom is also practiced on the eve of Yom Kippur

Y'varechicha Adonai v'yishm'recha

Ya-eir Adonai panav ei-lecha viychunneka

Yisa Adonai panav ei-lecha v'yasem l'cha shalom

יְבָרְכֶךָ יי וַיְשִׁמְרֶךָ.
יָאֵר יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחֲנֶנֶךָ.
יִשָּׂא יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיָּשֶׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם.

May God bless you and keep you.

May the Light of God's Presence shine on you and be gracious to you.

May God's Presence be near to you and bless you with peace.

The following prayer may also be recited with friends or family:

To Love and to Care

We thank you, O God, for family and friends and for what we mean and bring to one another. We are grateful for the bonds of loyalty and affection which sustain us, and which keep us close to one another no matter how far apart we may be.

We thank You for implanting within us a deep need for each other, and for giving us the capacity to love and to care.

Help us to be modest in our demands of one another, but generous in our giving to each other. May we never measure how much love or encouragement we offer; may we never count the times we forgive. Rather, may we always be grateful that we have one another and that we are able to express our love in acts of kindness.

Keep us gentle in our speech. When we offer words of criticism, may they be chosen with care and spoken softly. May we waste no opportunity to speak words of sympathy, of appreciation, or praise.

Bless us with health, happiness, and contentment. Above all, grant us the wisdom to build a joyous and peaceful home in which Your spirit will always abide. (adapted from Likrat Shabbat)

IV. For Personal reflection before coming to services

I have been quick to anger with my family and I have been afraid to show them my love.

I have failed to listen to my teachers.

I have hurt others.

I have allowed others to be hurt without reaching out to help.

I have lied to myself and to others.

I have forgotten my better self.

I turn to those I have hurt and ask their forgiveness.

I turn to those who have hurt me and forgive them.

I turn within and forgive myself.