

"In a democracy, some are guilty. All are responsible."
- Abraham Joshua Heschel

Al Kheynt - For the Sins We Have Committed Before You

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
indulging in luxuries

As the social gap has grown

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
insensitivity

Repeatedly cutting away the safety net from
underneath the weaker sections of society

For the sin which we have sinned against You
through Lashon HaRa (slander)

Claiming that the unemployed are "faking"

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
rashly blaming others

Blaming the victim and declaring war against
the unemployed rather than against
unemployment

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
shortsightedness

Transferring funds intended for health care
elsewhere at a time when the health system is
collapsing

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
casting aside the weak

Neglecting those requiring assisted living
and the mentally ill in the health care budget

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
desecrating your name

Reciting phrases about justice and caring in
our prayers, but failing to act upon our words

For the sin which we have sinned against You in
doing business

Rather than fighting those operating as
pimps and trading in women

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
chasing material gain

Through the exploitation of foreign workers

For the sin which we have sinned against You
intentionally or unintentionally

By ignoring or turning our heads away from
the disabled

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
scoffing,

Denigrating new immigrants and failing to
honor their traditions and cultures

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
intentionally forgetting

When we chose to ignore poor neighborhoods
and development towns

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
giving into the evil impulses

Of materialism and selfishness

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
withdrawing our hand
from the outstretched hand of a person in
need

For the sin which we have sinned against You
knowingly or unknowingly
Because we did not want to know how we might
be of help

For the sin which we have sinned against You by
thinking to ourselves and by whispering in
closed rooms
About that which we should have shouted from
the rooftops

For all these sins, forgiving God, forgive us,
pardon us, grant us atonement.

- Rabbis for Human Rights