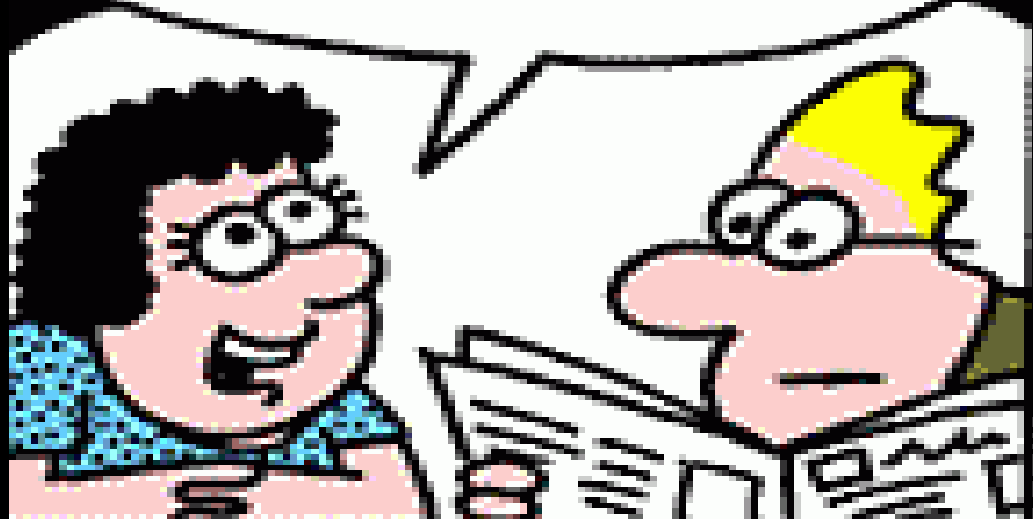


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YOM KIPPUR
IS THE DAY WE
USE TO LIST
OUR SINS AND
SHORTCOMINGS



THE WHOLE
WORLD NEEDS
A DAY LIKE
THAT.

NO
THEY
DON'T.



THEY USE
THE ENTIRE
YEAR...



... TO LIST
OUR SINS AND
SHORTCOMINGS.



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**Why Kol Nidre?
Renunciation of Vows?
And why on Erev Yom Kippur?**

Traditional text...

"All vows [Kol Nidre כּל נדרי], obligations, oaths, and anathemas, whether called 'k̇onam,' 'k̇onas,' or by any other name, which we may vow, or swear, or pledge, or whereby we may be bound, from this Day of Atonement until the next (whose happy coming we await)

we do repent. May they be deemed absolved, forgiven, annulled, and void, and made of no effect; they shall not bind us nor have power over us. The vows shall not be reckoned vows; the obligations shall not be obligatory; nor the oaths be oaths."

Hebrew scriptures about vows:

Dvarim/Dt 23.21-23 "When you make a **vow** to ADONI your God, you are not to delay in fulfilling it, for ADONI your God will certainly demand it of you...if a **vow** passes your lips, you must take care to perform it according to what you

Dvarim/Dt 23.21-23 **voluntarily vowed** to
ADONI your God, what you
promised in words spoken aloud.

Kohelet/ Eccles 5.4-6 If you make a **vow** to God, don't delay in discharging it. For God takes no pleasure in fools, so discharge your **vow**! Better not to make a vow than to make a vow and not discharge it. Don't let your words make you guilty, and don't tell the

Kohelet/ Eccles 5.4-6 temple official that
you made the **vow** by mistake.
Why give God reason to be angry
at what you say and destroy what
you have accomplished?

The main theme of Yom Kippur?

Vayikra/Lev 16.21 Aharon is to lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the transgressions, crimes and sins of the people of Isra'el; he is to put them on the head of the goat and then send it away into the desert with a man appointed for the purpose. [Broken vows??]

This gave rise to the rite of absolution from a vow ("hattarat nedarim" הַתְּרַת נְדָרִים) which might be performed only by a scholar or an expert (מִמְחָה מִמְחָה) on the one hand, or by a board of three laymen on the other. **What??**

Hence, the Kol Nidre.

The date of the composition of the declaration and its author are alike unknown; but it was in existence at the Geonic period (589–1038 CE).

Known by **controversies** it engendered then.

The readiness with which vows were made and the facility with which they were annulled by the scribes gave the Karaites

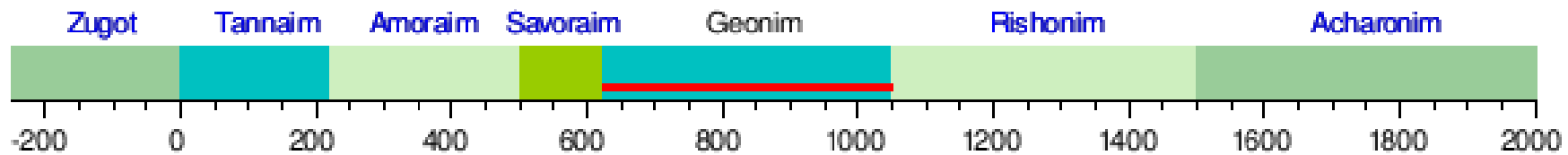
[a Jewish group only accepted the Tanakh/Old Testament as authoritative, not the Talmud, etc.]

an opportunity to attack the
Rabbinites, the Geonim גאונים
[Jewish leaders and scholars]

Geonim גאונים were the presidents of the two great Babylonian Talmudic Academies of Sura and Pumbedita, in the Abbasid Caliphate, and were the generally accepted spiritual leaders of the Jewish community worldwide in the early medieval era.



Abbasid Caliphate

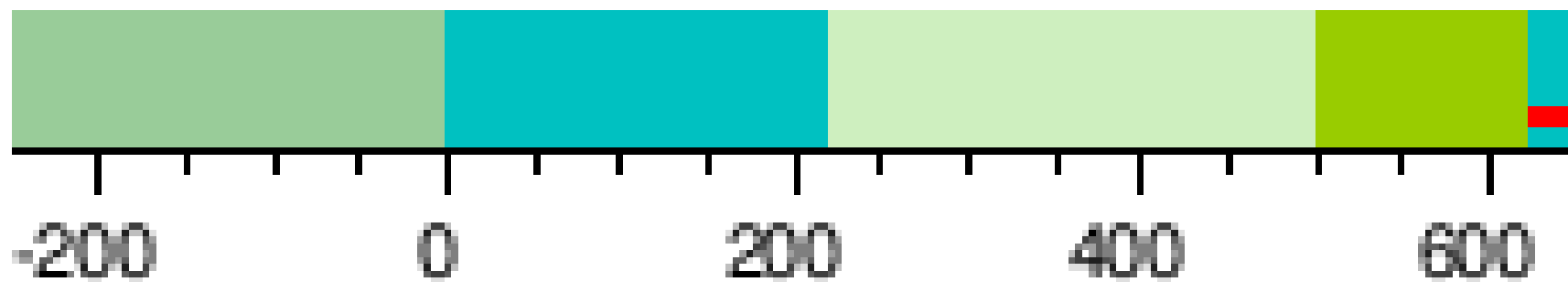


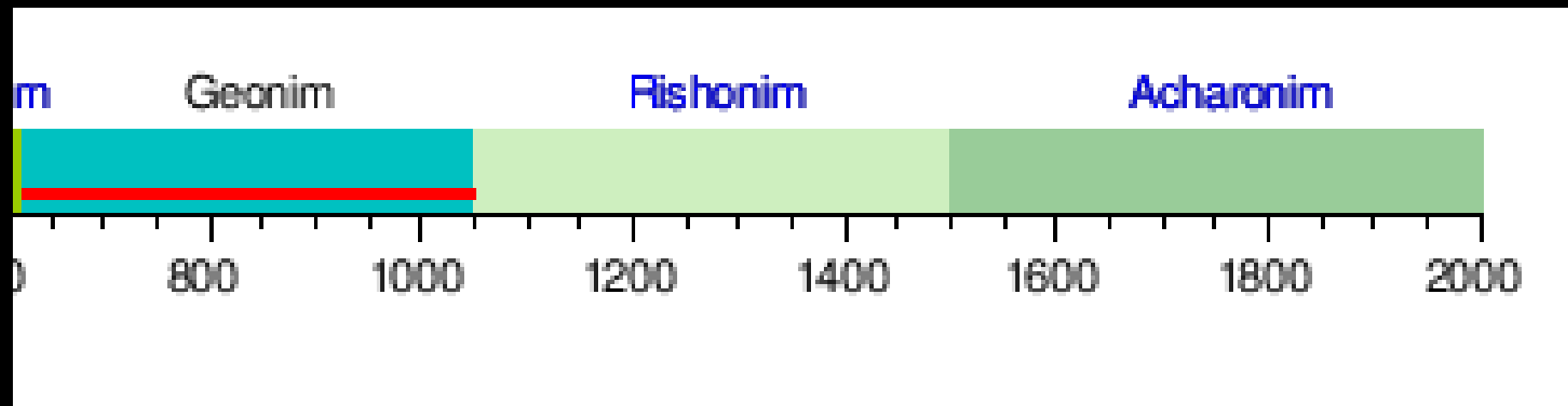
Zugot

Tannaim

Amoraim

Savoraim





-200 to 0	0 to 220	220 to 500	500 to 625	625 to 1050	1050 to 1500	1500 to 2000
זוגות Zugot	תנאים Tana-im	אמוראים Amora-im	סבוראים savora-im	גאונים Geonim	ראשונים Risho-nim	אחרונים Akharo-nim
pairs	Repeater teachers Mishnah	Sayers Gemara	Reasoner	Leaders Genius	First	Later

Yehudai Gaon of Sura (760), went so far as to forbid any study whatsoever of Nedarim, the Talmudic treatise on oaths. Thus the "Kol Nidre" was discredited in both of the Babylonian academies

and was not accepted by as is
affirmed by the geonim Naṭronai
(853-856) and Hai Bar Naḥshon
(889-896

**Kol Nidre attacked and rejected in
the 700's, 800's**

The "Kol Nidre" has been one of the means widely used by Jewish apostates and by enemies of the Jews to cast suspicion on the trustworthiness of an oath taken by a Jew.

Yielding to the numerous accusations and complaints brought against the "Kol Nidre" in the course of centuries, the rabbinical conference held at Brunswick in 1844 decided unanimously

that the formula was not essential, and that the members of the convention should exert their influence toward **securing its speedy abolition.**

**But, the Kol Nidre endures
in Jewish liturgy**

**For many contemporary Jews,
attendance at Kol Nidre is one of
only a handful of non-negotiable
Jewish acts.**

The past few years, I've prayed on the High Holidays in a wonderful and homey synagogue in the Park Slope neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY.

There's always a flurry of activity as I walk into the sanctuary before the *Kol Nidre* prayers; some devoted volunteers finishing off the last minute preparations,

setting up the extra chairs for the anticipated overflow crowd. The scores of men and women who invariably wander in for their requisite once-a-year synagogue service.

In this inviting congregation, these people are kindly greeted as they enter, handed prayer-books

(and kippahs for the men) and shown to an unreserved seat. But despite the warm atmosphere, their self-consciousness is plainly evident, as they constantly cast not-so-furtive glances at the experienced congregants to make sure that they are doing the right thing.

I've often wondered, who are these people? And what motivates them to come to the synagogue on Yom Kippur? If they believe in G-d and seek atonement, if their Judaism is meaningful to them, where are they the rest of the year?

Because this prayer has often been held up by anti-Semites as proof that Jews are untrustworthy, the Reform movement removed it from the liturgy - temporarily, but **there was enough popular demand for its restoration**. In fact, the reverse is true: Jews cherish this ritual

because they take vows so seriously that they consider themselves bound even if they make the vows under duress or in times of stress when not thinking straight. This ritual gave comfort to those who were forcibly converted to Christianity

yet felt unable to break their vow to follow Christianity. In recognition of that history, the Reform movement restored this recitation to its liturgy.

There was a common theory that it commenced during and because of a period of extreme persecution, in which Jews were forced at sword's point to convert (either to Christianity or Islam) and that Kol Nidre was supposed to nullify that forced conversion

**For a Jew, the cross is
inextricably linked with those
ancient charges of being Christ-
killers.**

For Paul, too, the cross had represented victory--God's victory over the grip of death and evil. Lost now was the Pauline insight that the victory of the cross came through vulnerability.

The cross of the Constantinian era symbolized only triumph.

**Christians in their history have
made it a sign of conquering hate
rather than sacrificial love.**

Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 260-339) described the vision inspiring Constantine's order:

He said that about noon...he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, CONQUER BY THIS.

In the 11th century the victory motif began to be dramatized in a new and terrible way in the Crusades, so called because of the cross emblazoned on the tunic of each crusader. Here the cross became a clarion call to liberate the "Holy Land" from "infidels," the Muslims.

**In violation of papal policy,
however, the baser elements
among the crusaders raped, and
pillaged, and murdered "infidels"
closer to home, i.e., the Jews.**

As Marc Saperstein comments,
"the cross, the symbol in which
the massacres were perpetrated,
acquired powerful negative
associations for Jews that linger
to this day.

The Rhineland count, Emicho of Leiningen, His men massacred all the Jews they could find in the towns of Speyer, Worms and Mainz in May 1096; then they continued to Regesburg, Metz, Prague

and throughout Bohemia [but] on occasion spared Jews who converted to Christianity under the threat of the sword.

In our heavily Christian communities, Catholic funeral processions were always led by a young boy holding a long metal sceptre with a cross on top. Behind the child the priest would march, reading the prayers.


Any Christian passer-by meeting the procession would remove his hat, bend his knee and bow to the cross. Jewish adults knew how to handle this situation, sometimes seeking shelter in doorways to avoid confronting the cross.

**Children were less experienced,
and were occasionally beaten
when the procession passed by
and they did not bend their knee
before the cross.**

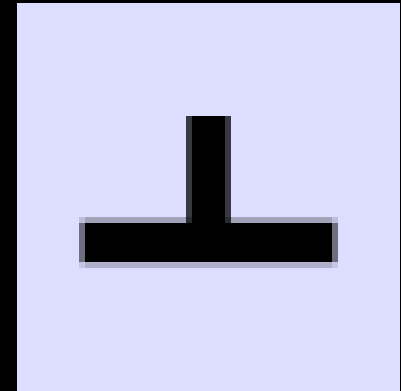


Bundesarchiv, Bild 146-1998-007-06A
Foto: Adendorf, Peter | August 1963

A Jewish tradition that dates from at least the 19th century is to write plus using a symbol like an inverted T. This practice was adopted into Israeli schools and is still commonplace today in elementary schools (including secular schools) but in fewer secondary schools.

The usual explanation for this practice is that it avoids the writing of a symbol "+" that **looks like a Christian cross**. Unicode: U+FB29 
HEBREW LETTER ALTERNATIVE PLUS SIGN

Headset volume control
on El Al flights



Kol Nidre has three sources of enduring significance.

1.a legal component relative to conscientiousness

2.an emotional component relative to forced conversionist VOWS

3.A visceral melodic enchantment

The melody that stirs the heart of Ashkenazic Jews is of unknown origin, but is part of a body of music known as מִסִּינַי "MiSinai melodies" that emerged in Germany between the 11th and 15th centuries. "MiSinai" literally means "from Sinai."

Judah the Pious in the thirteenth century, "chant your supplications to God in a melody that makes the heart weep, and your praises of Him in one that will make it sing. Thus you will be filled with love and joy for Him that seeth the heart

Its fame has spread far beyond the synagogue. A noted non-Jewish poet declared" "Such a mysterious song, redolent of a People's suffering, can hardly have been composed by one brain, however much inspired."

Kol Nidre is ultimately a **melodic affirmation** of life, forgiveness, shalom, in spite of our hopelessly broken vows, in spite of our enemies.

It hints at the spiritual, **ultimate affirmation**...

But, is the Kol Nidre really the answer to vows we cannot keep, or did not keep, or will not keep?

First, Kol Nidre was never intended to be applied to contracts and business relations.

Rabbis have always pointed out that the dispensation from vows in *Kol Nidre* refers only to those an individual voluntarily assumes for himself alone and in which no other persons or their interests are involved.

The first verse ends with a qualifier for all the forms of pledges and vows being annulled **עַל נַפְשֵׁתָנָא** regarding ourselves by which this formula is limited to annulling only those vows that would affect only ourselves but not vows that would affect any other person.

Second, there are scriptural mechanisms by which a vow can be redeemed.

Lev 27.14-15 **When a person consecrates [vows] his house to be holy for ADONI, the cohen is to set a value on it in relation to its good and bad points; the value set by the cohen will stand. If the consecrator wishes to redeem his house, he must add one-fifth to the value you have set on it; and it will revert to him.**

Mishlei/Prov. 6.1-5 My son, if you have put up security for your friend, if you committed yourself on behalf of another; you have been snared by the words of your mouth, caught by the words of your own mouth. Do this now, my son,

Mishlei/Prov. 6.1-5 and extricate
yourself, since you put yourself in
your friend's power: go, humble
yourself, and pester your friend;
give your eyes no sleep, give your
eyelids no rest; break free, like a
gazelle from the [hunter's] trap,
like a bird from the grip of the
fowler.

Third, Yeshua commented on
vows: Mtt. 5.33-37 “Again, you have
heard that our fathers were
told, ‘Do not break your oath,’ and
‘Keep your vows to ADONI.’ But I
tell you not to swear at all — not
‘by heaven,’

Mtt. 5.33-37 because it is God's throne; not 'by the earth,' because it is his footstool; and not 'by Yerushalayim,' because it is the city of the Great King. And don't swear by your head, because you can't make a single hair white or black.

Mtt. 5.33-37 Just let your 'Yes' be a simple 'Yes,' and your 'No' a simple 'No'; anything more than this has its origin in evil.

Lastly, there is mercy.

Acts 13.38-39 “Therefore, brothers, let it be known to you that through this man is proclaimed forgiveness of sins! That is, God clears everyone who puts his trust in this man, even in regard to all the things concerning which **you could not be cleared by the Torah of Moshe.**