

A Prayer for the Elimination of the Sins of Racism

Al Chet by Yavilah McCoy (2020)

I am saying *Al Chet*

For the sins of silence.

For the sins of using the “I” voice of individualism when a “We” born of collective accountability was called for.

For the sins of using “We” toward erasure of others and the elevation of a single narrative.

For the sins of failing to acknowledge our own and others’ Power.

For the sins of acknowledging Power that is misused and misplaced.

For the sins of judging others favorably and unfavorably without gaining proximity to their lived experience.

I am saying *Al Chet*

For the sins we have committed through conscious and unconscious racial bias.

For the sins we have committed through hardening our hearts to the need for change.

For the sins of colluding with racism both openly and secretly. For the sins we have committed through uttering racist words.

For the sins we have committed through acts of racial microaggression.

For the sins we have committed through insisting on urgency and perfectionism as a measure of human value.

I am saying *Al Chet*

For the sins we have committed through the denial of the tzelem elokim (the divine spark) within Black bodies.

For the sins we have committed through segregating Black bodies from participation and leadership within our institutions.

For the sins we have committed in deceiving others by not teaching our children the worth, value, and contributions of Black people

For the sins we have committed in not honoring and protecting the journeys of Black elders and Black children.

For the sins we have committed in commoditizing Black people and Black bodies in our business dealings.

For the sins we have committed in not caring for the ways that race and class intersect in our efforts to deepen community with Black people in Jewish spaces.

For the sins we have committed through turning Black bodies into objects of lust and sexual gratification.

For the sins we have committed through confessing our commitments to ending racism insincerely.

For the sins we have committed that desecrate the divine name by allowing White Supremacy habits to shape/determine our practice of Judaism.

For all these, we seek pardon, forgiveness, and atonement.

For the sins of racism that we have committed knowingly and unknowingly that continue to do damage to our siblings, children, families, and community.

For the sins of racism we have committed through creating hierarchies of value between our siblings from Europe and those from the Middle East, Asia, and Africa.

For the sins of racism we have committed through engaging in foolish racial talk and gossip in our places of worship.

For the sins of racism we have committed through haughty demeanor and proud looks.

For the sins of racism we have committed through the glances of our eyes.

For the sins of racism we have committed through passing judgement.

For the sins of racism that we have committed through baseless hatred.

For the sins of racism that we have committed through turning a blind eye to pain and suffering around us.

For the sins of racism that we have committed by not seeing racism as an evil among us.

For the sins of racism that we have committed by not committing to end it.

For all these, we seek pardon, forgiveness, and atonement.

May all of us be written and inscribed in the Book of Life. May joy and blessing follow our reflection, our atonement, and our commitments to living truth, reconciliation, and repair in our time.